

Part 1. How would you react to each of these? Tick one column for each. Then compare your answers. Which ones make your blood boil, and which do you just shrug off?

	<i>Shrug it off</i>	<i>Have a moan</i>	<i>Kick up a fuss</i>
Your train is delayed for the third time this week			
The wifi keeps dropping out during a video call			
Someone near you is eating very loudly			
A parcel is left outside in the rain			
The restaurant brings you the wrong order			
You're put on hold for 40 minutes			
A colleague takes credit for your idea			
Your favourite café puts its prices up again			
It's raining, again			

Part 2. Which of these sound like you? Choose two and give an example.

- I moan about things I have no intention of changing.
- I've moaned about someone, then told them everything was fine to their face.
- I'm more likely to leave a bad online review than say something at the time.
- I sometimes moan just to have something to talk about.
- I find it hard to listen to other people moaning for long.
- I've bonded with a total stranger over a shared moan.

Part 3. Discuss the questions.

- In Britain, people say “Mustn’t grumble” and then grumble for ten minutes. What do people in your country love to moan about?
- Do you feel better after a good moan, or worse?
- Is there a difference between moaning and complaining? Where’s the line?
- Who do you go to when you need to get something off your chest?
- Who’s the biggest moaner you know? Do you secretly enjoy it?

Part 4. Choose a topic and have a proper moan about it for 1 minute. When you’re listening, your job is to find the silver lining. Then take turns.

Public transport	Self-service checkouts
Work emails	Airports
The weather	Your phone
Modern dating	Your neighbours

Useful phrases

*Don’t get me started on... · What really gets me is... · It drives me up the wall when...
And another thing... · Look on the bright side... · At least... · It could be worse.*

Part 5. Choose one option in each pair and explain your choice.

A friend who moans all the time	or	a friend who never admits anything’s wrong
Getting it off your chest	or	keeping the peace
A colleague who moans	or	a colleague who’s relentlessly positive
Someone who just listens	or	someone who tries to fix it
Complaining face to face	or	complaining in writing

Part 6. What would you do? Choose an option or come up with a better one. Be honest about what you'd actually do.

Your meal arrives lukewarm, and it isn't what you ordered. The waiter smiles and asks, "Is everything all right?"

1. *Say "Lovely, thanks" and moan about it later.*
2. *Point it out politely and ask for it to be changed.*
3. *Eat it and leave a scathing review.*
4. *Mention it when you pay, without making a scene.*

A friend has moaned about their job every time you've met for two years. They have no plans to leave.

1. *Keep listening. That's what friends are for.*
2. *Gently ask what they're going to do about it.*
3. *Steer the conversation elsewhere whenever it comes up.*
4. *Tell them, kindly, that it's starting to wear you down.*

Your team spends every lunch break moaning about the new manager. You actually think she's quite good.

1. *Join in to keep the peace.*
2. *Keep your head down and eat your lunch.*
3. *Politely say you see it differently.*
4. *Start having lunch somewhere else.*

Part 7. Read the two viewpoints. Which is closer to what you think? Explain where you sit.

Viewpoint A

A good moan is one of life's small pleasures. It lets off steam, it reminds you you're not the only one, and half the time it's the start of a proper conversation. Bottling things up is far worse.

Viewpoint B

Moaning feels good for five minutes, then it keeps you stuck. The more you go on about something, the bigger it gets in your head. If you can change it, do something. If you can't, let it go.

Part 8. Do you agree, disagree or partly agree? Explain why.

- A good moan is good for your mental health.
- Moaning is just complaining without the courage to do anything about it.
- People who never complain aren't happier, just better at hiding it.
- Nothing brings strangers together like a shared moan.
- Online reviews have turned everyone into a critic.
- Relentless positivity is more annoying than moaning.

Part 9. Tell the story of a time you finally complained about something, or a time you really wish you had.**Think about:**

- What the problem was
- How long you'd put up with it
- What you said, or didn't say
- How it turned out

Reflection**Complete the sentences in your own words.**

1. The thing I moan about most is...
2. Something I should stop moaning about and actually change is...
3. When someone has a moan to me, I usually...
4. An expression from today I'm going to use is...