

Politeness in making arrangements and future tenses review

Tick the most formal option/ the politest option in each group of phrases below. You can also put crosses (X) next to the less polite forms if you like.

Vocabulary

... if that is convenient with you.
... if that's OK with you.

... if you are available.
... if you're free.

That's okay.
That's perfect.
That would be absolutely perfect, thanks.

Modal verbs

Could you make it then?
Can you make it then?

Grammar – future tenses/ future forms

I want to meet you next week.
I'd like to meet you next week.
I need to meet you next week.

I'm sorry, I might meet my boss at that time.
I'm sorry, I'm meeting my boss at that time.
I'm sorry, I'm going to make an appointment to meet my boss at that time.
I'm sorry, I will probably meet my boss at that time.

I would have loved to, but unfortunately the last bus leaves at 9 pm.
I would have loved to, but unfortunately I'm going to drive home at about 6 pm.

I've got another appointment, but I'm going to change it anyway.
I've got another appointment, but I'll change it to another time so I can meet you then.

Find examples of the things described below in the grammar section above and use them to check your ticks and crosses. Skip if you get stuck, as the example below might help.

- This is a more polite way of asking to meet someone because it's a normal or more formal way to talk about **desires** and request.
- This is not such a polite way of asking because it's a very casual way to talk about **desires** and requests.
- This is a more polite way of saying no because it is a scheduled **timetabled event** that I can't change (and perhaps nobody can change) and so sounds like it can't be moved.
- It's a more polite way of saying yes because it shows that you have made a **spontaneous decision** while you are speaking to do something to help them (meaning you hadn't planned to do that before speaking to them).
- It's not such a polite way of saying yes, because it means that your **plan** was already to cancel the other event anyway and so you aren't making a special effort to meet that person.
- This is a more polite way of saying no because it sounds like the other event has already been **arranged** and so it seems very fixed and difficult or impossible to change.
- This is not such a polite way of saying no because it seems that the other event is just my **plan** that I have decided (and so should be something that I could just change my mind about)
- This is not a polite way of saying no because it's just a **prediction** (= my imagination of the future) and so it isn't a good enough reason not to meet someone.
- This is a very impolite way of saying no because it sounds like a very unsure **prediction** and so it is a terrible reason for not meeting someone.

Write these key words from the statements above next to the phrases on the last page. If they are written with "x 2", that means there is more than one form with that function on the last page.

- arrangement (= something already fixed with another person)
- desire x 2
- plan
- prediction x 2 (= imagination of the future)
- spontaneous decision (= instant decision made while you are speaking)
- timetabled event

Match these forms to the descriptions above.

- am/ is/ are + v + ing
- be going to
- might
- want
- will
- would like
- Present Simple (go/ goes, do/ does, etc)

Check your answers as a class, then discuss how that affects politeness and why.