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The English We Speak

Pain in the neck



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak from BBC Learning English, I'm Neil.

Helen

And I'm Helen.

Neil

Helen, you look upset, what's the matter? Have I done something wrong?

Helen

Oh, it's not you. It's my mobile phone company. I stopped my contract three months ago and they are still taking money out of my bank account. And it's impossible to get through to customer services.

Neil

Oh, no, I know what you mean. These mobile phone companies are a nightmare to deal with. They are a real pain in the neck.

Helen

Pain in your neck? Are you OK? You don't look so comfortable sitting in that chair? Is your neck hurting you?

Neil

I'm alright. My neck is a bit stiff but ok. When people say pain in the neck, it means something or someone is annoying, actually very annoying for a long time. Here are a few more examples:

Example

Sam is so disruptive in the class, he's a pain in the neck to deal with.
Completing this tax form is a real pain in the neck, there are so many boxes to fill in.
The telesales people are a real pain in the neck, they keep ringing me.

Helen

Well, I am really really really annoyed by this mobile phone company. They are a real pain in the neck to deal with.

Neil

My suggestion is that if they are still taking money out of your account, threaten them with legal action Helen.

Helen

I will do that. Thanks for the tip.

Neil

You're welcome.