Quiz

1 Hello, I'd like to _____ an appointment, please.
   A. do
   B. order
   C. book

2) I'd like to book an appointment _____ the doctor, please.
   A. on
   B. with
   C. at

3) I'd like to see the doctor ____ Monday, please.
   A. on
   B. at
   C. in
Answers

1) C
2) B
3) A

TRANSCRIPT

Yvonne
Hello, this is How To, from bbclearningenglish.com and I'm Yvonne Archer. In today's programme: how to make an appointment in English! Coming up: some key words and phrases that are useful, whether we need to see a doctor, a dentist, a hairdresser, a lawyer or even a plumber. Listen out for the phrase Hina uses to make a doctor's appointment.

EXAMPLE

Receptionist
Bushy Hill Surgery?

Hina
Hello, I'd like to book an appointment, please.

Receptionist
Right, we have Thursday morning at 10 or Friday afternoon at 3pm.

Hina
Thursday morning suits me and I'd prefer to see a lady doctor, if that's possible.

Yvonne
Hina said, I'd like to book - I would like to book - and then adds an appointment, please - I'd like to book an appointment, please. Let's hear that again, but this time, listen out for Hina's special request once she's agreed the day and time for her appointment. It shows that she thought about what she needed before she made her phone call.

EXAMPLE
Receptionist
Bushy Hill Surgery?

Hina
Hello, I'd like to book an appointment, please.

Receptionist
Right, we have Thursday morning at 10 or Friday afternoon at 3pm.

Hina
Thursday morning suits me and I'd prefer to see a lady doctor, if that's possible.

Yvonne
Hina decided that she wanted to see a female or a woman doctor, so she said, I'd prefer to see a lady doctor, if that's possible.

EXAMPLE

Hina
Thursday morning suits me and I'd prefer to see a lady doctor, if that's possible.

Yvonne
Like the word please, adding if that's possible is also a simple and polite way to soften a request, and that probably encourages the receptionist or the person we're booking an appointment with to be even more helpful!

Next, Finn has a terrible toothache and wants to make an appointment with the dentist. Again, we hear the same key phrase plus an appointment being used. But what special request does Finn have and how does he make it sound polite?

EXAMPLE

Receptionist
Good morning, Northern Dental Surgery.

Finn
Oh hello there. I've got a toothache and I'd like to book an appointment to see the dentist today, if you can.

Receptionist
Hmmm, we're kind of booked up today - oh, actually, we could squeeze you in at 5.

_Yvonne_
Finn adds if you can rather than if possible to his special request so that he sounds polite when asking for an urgent appointment: he wants to see the dentist at very short notice. Both phrases, if possible and if you can, have the same meaning and do the same job so you can use either!
But back to our key phrase I'd like to book - this time, an appointment plus the infinitive of a verb - to see - plus the job title of the person he wants to see the dentist are all added. Listen again.

EXAMPLE

_Finn_
I'd like to book an appointment to see the dentist today, if you can.

_Yvonne_
So it's simple enough to make our key phrase longer when we want to add extra information. Finn didn't know the dentist's name, but if you do know the name of the person you want to see, you can simply add the preposition with plus their name to our key phrase. For example, I'd like to book an appointment with Steve. And if you only know the person's job title, you can say, for example, I'd like to book an appointment with the plumber please.
Here's Finn again as he tries to make another appointment. Which noun does he add to the key phrase I'd like to book?

EXAMPLE

_Receptionist_
Good morning, A Cut Above.

_Finn_
Oh, hello there. I'd like to book a haircut for today, please.

_Yvonne_
Finn wants a haircut so he simply says, I'd like to book a haircut, and of course, he adds please.
EXAMPLE
Receptionist
Good morning, A Cut Above.

Finn
Oh, hello there. I'd like to book a haircut for today, please.

Yvonne
So to recap, we can book something, like a service for our car or a haircut:

EXAMPLE

Finn
Oh, hello there. I'd like to book a haircut for today, please.

Yvonne
But we book an appointment to see someone, like a doctor or a specific named person:

EXAMPLE

Finn
I'd like to book an appointment to see the dentist today, if you can.

Yvonne
Well, that's all for today's How To, but why not visit us at bbclearningenglish.com for more on how to make an appointment, plus test what you've learned with our quizzes, games and other programmes?