How to ... make informal invitations

Quiz

1) Are you ____ a pint?
   A. up for
   B. fancy
   C. want

2) Do you ____ a pint?
   A. up for
   B. fancy
   C. feel

3) Do you ____ like a pint?
   A. feel
   B. want
   C. fancy
Answers

1) A
2) B
3) A

Transcript

William
Hello and welcome to How To, the programme from BBC Learning English that tells you... well... it tells you how to say things.
My name's William Kremer and over the next three weeks, I'm going to be telling you how to invite people to do things and say yes or no to other people's invitations.

And today we're looking at informal invitations, and in particular, how to ask someone whether he or she would like to go for a pint. If you live in the UK, or have ever been to the UK, then you must know what I mean by a pint. I mean a glass of beer, usually served in a pub: a pint of beer. We also often say a drink to mean an alcoholic drink such as beer.

So, let's imagine that it's five o'clock on a Friday and you've had a hard week and it's time for a pint. What's a good way of asking other people if they'd like a drink too?

Well, in the next clip, Diarmuid is going to invite Catherine out for a pint. See if you can hear what words Diarmuid uses to do this.

EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Catherine, I'm just going for a drink after work this evening - do you fancy a pint?
Catherine
Ooh, I'd love one.

William
Diarmuid asks, Do you fancy a pint? In British English, if you fancy something, it means that right now you want to have it. For example, I fancy an ice cream, I fancy a hamburger.

EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Catherine, I'm just going for a drink after work this evening - do you fancy a pint?

Catherine
Ooh, I'd love one.

William
Catherine says that she'd love a pint, so she's agreeing to go for a drink with Diarmuid. Now let's hear another way of inviting someone out for a pint.

EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Are you up for a pint after work, Catherine?

William
Diarmuid asked Catherine if she was up for a pint.

EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Are you up for a pint after work, Catherine?

William
If someone is up for something, it often means that he or she would like to do something or try something. This is a common expression in spoken English.
EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Are you up for a pint after work, Catherine?

William
OK, let's look at a third way of inviting someone out for a pint.

EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Do you feel like a pint, Catherine?

William
In this situation, if you feel like something, you fancy it. And so the question for Diarmuid is, Do you feel like a pint?

EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Do you feel like a pint, Catherine?

William
Now, see if you can hear a difference between the following sentences:

EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Do you feel like a pint, Catherine?
Do you feel like going for a pint, Catherine?

William
Well, the second sentence features a gerund: going. We can use gerunds to talk about activities instead of objects. The activity we are talking about here is going for a pint. Listen again.
EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Do you feel like going for a pint, Catherine?

William
In this situation, Diarmuid can choose whether to talk about the pint itself Do you feel like a pint?, or the activity of going for a pint: Do you feel like going for a pint?
But sometimes we don't have a choice. For example, we can't say Do you feel like a museum? Because you can't buy a museum. So we would have to say Do you feel like going to a museum with me.
There are also gerund forms for the other questions we've heard.

EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Do you feel like a pint, Catherine?
Do you feel like going for a pint, Catherine?

William
Now, sometimes in very informal situations like this you don't even have to ask a question in order to invite people to do something. What do I mean? Well, listen to the following conversation. Diarmuid has just finished working.

EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Right, that's me finished. I think I might go down the bar for a pint.

Catherine
I'm up for that.

William
Diarmuid tells everyone that he's going to the bar. He hasn't asked if they want to come, but it's clear that they can come if they want. And as it happens,
Catherine is up for it.

EXAMPLE
Diarmuid
Right, that's me finished. I think I might go down the bar for a pint.

Catherine
I'm up for that.

William
Now a quick word about accepting invitations. At the start of the programme we heard Catherine say yes, like this:

EXAMPLE
Catherine
Ooh, I'd love one.

William
But if Catherine is being asked to do an activity, the response is slightly different.

EXAMPLES
Diarmuid
Do you fancy going for a pint, Catherine?

Catherine
Ooh, I'd love to. What time?

William
If we're talking about activities, we should say I'd love to - not I'd love one.
There're lots of other ways of accepting invitations. She could say something like:
EXAMPLE
Catherine
That'd be fun.

William
Or she could say...

EXAMPLE
Catherine
That sounds lovely.

William
Or she could just say...

EXAMPLE
Catherine
OK, cool.

William
Now, if you've been listening to this programme and you've been thinking... but I don't like beer. Well, we are going to be looking at the more complicated business of saying no to invitations in a separate programme. But for today that's me finished. I think I might go down the pub for a pint.