

# 3 Could you do me a favor?

## 1 **SNAPSHOT**

### Favors People Dislike Being Asked

Could you . . . ?



let me use your car



drive me to the airport



lend me some money



lend me your hairbrush



take care of my pet while I'm away



help me move into my new apartment



let me borrow your homework



let me stay at your place for a while

Source: [www.web.com](http://www.web.com) © between the ages of 18 and 50

Which of these favors would bother you the most? Which would bother you the least?  
 What are three other favors that you dislike being asked?  
 Imagine that a close friend asked you each of these favors. What would you say?

## 2 **CONVERSATION** Would you mind . . . ?


A Listen and practice.

Rod: Hello.  
 Jana: Hi, Rod. This is Jana.  
 Rod: Oh, hi, Jana. What's up?  
 Jana: I'm going to my best friend's wedding this weekend. I'd love to take some pictures for his Web site. Would you mind if I borrowed your new digital camera?  
 Rod: Um, no. That's OK, I guess. I don't think I'll need it for anything.  
 Jana: Thanks a million.  
 Rod: Sure. Uh, have you used a digital camera before? It's sort of complicated.  
 Jana: Oh-huh, sure, a couple of times. Would it be OK if I picked it up on Friday night?  
 Rod: Yeah, I guess so.



B Listen to two more calls Jana makes. What else does she want to borrow? Do her friends agree?

**Requests with modals, if clauses, and gerunds**

Less formal	<p>Can I borrow your pencil?          Could you lend me a jacket?          Is it OK if I use your phone?          Do you mind if I use your CD burner?          Would it be OK if I picked it up on Friday night?          Would you mind if I borrowed your digital camera?          Would you mind letting me use your laptop?          I wonder if I could borrow some money.</p>
	
More formal	<p>I was wondering if you'd mind lending me your car.</p>

**A** Make requests using these cues. Then practice with a partner. Which requests need to be more formal?

1. You want to borrow your classmate's underwater camera for a diving trip.  
 A: I was wondering ...  
 B: Sure, that's fine. But please be careful with it.
2. You want to use your roommate's computer.  
 A: Is it OK ...?  
 B: You can use it, but please save my work first.
3. Your neighbor has a car. You need a ride to class.  
 A: ...  
 B: I'd be glad to. What time?
4. You want a friend to help you move on Saturday.  
 A: ...  
 B: I'm really sorry. I'm busy the whole weekend.
5. You want to borrow your cousin's DVD of *Spider Man*.  
 A: ...  
 B: Actually, I already lent it to Serena. Sorry!
6. You would like a second piece of your aunt's cherry pie.  
 A: ...  
 B: Yes, of course! Just pass me your plate.



**B** Rewrite these requests to make them more formal. Then practice making your requests with a partner. Accept or decline each request.

1. Lend me some money for an espresso.
2. Take these books back to the library for me.
3. Let me wear your leather jacket to the party this weekend.
4. I'd like to borrow your cell phone to call my friend in London.
5. Can I look at that newspaper when you've finished reading it?
6. Take care of my pet rabbit while I'm on vacation.

<p><i>Would you mind lending me some money for an espresso?</i></p>
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