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| Welcome to EnglishClass101.com’s English in Three Minutes. The fastest, easiest, and most fun way to learn English. | |
| Hey everyone, I’m Alisha! | |
| In this series, we’re going to learn some easy ways to ask and answer common questions in English. It’s really useful, and it only takes three minutes! | |
| In this lesson, you’re going to learn how to ask a really basic question in a polite but natural way - how old are you? | |
| In your English textbook, one of the first lessons may have been how to ask someone’s age by saying just: “How old are you?” | |
| However, | |
| in many English-language cultures, asking an adult’s age directly - particularly a woman’s age - is not polite. If you suddenly ask “How old are you?” to someone you’ve just met, they’ll understand you, but they might not be too happy about answering such a blunt and direct question. | |
| So how do you find out someone’s age without offending them? | |
| You just add a magic phrase to the beginning of the question! This phrase is: | |
| “Do you mind me asking...” | |
| This is an incredibly useful phrase that you should definitely memorize! It comes in handy whenever you want to ask a question that may be a little personal or come across as a little too direct. Native speakers of English use it all the time. | |
| So the full question would be: |  |
| “Do you mind me asking how old you are?” | |
| Pay attention to the word order. It’s not “Do you mind me asking how old are you.” It’s “Do you mind me asking how old you are.” | |
| [E screen-ws] | |
| The answer to this can be straight: |  |
| “I’m 25 years old.” | |
| Or just: |  |
| “I’m 25.” | |
| Or it can be a little more detailed; if you’ve just had a birthday, you can say... | |
| “I’ve just turned 25.” | |
| Or, if you’re about to have a birthday, you can say: | |
| “I’ll turn 25 this month.” | |
| Or: |  |
| “I’ll turn 25 in July.” | |
| It’s more natural here not to give your exact birthday (i.e. “July the 9th”), but just the month. | |
| So again, to turn this question back on the asker and find out his or her age, all you have to do is use that other magic phrase we introduced in previous lessons: | |
| “How about you?” | |
| Here it’s OK not to worry about being polite, since the other person asked you the question first. | |
| Now it’s time for Alisha’s Advice! | |
| We mentioned that asking someone’s age might not be polite, but if you do decide to ask this question, here’s another tip - some people like to reply with another question: “How old do you think I am?” Be careful! If you say an age that’s older than the person’s true age, they might be very offended - so it’s always safer to say a number lower than what you actually think. So if you think the person looks 40, say “35!” and see how happy they look! | |
| Did you hear about the great video series called English in Three Minutes? In the next lesson we’ll be learning how to talk about recent news stories using the phrase “Did you hear about...?” See you next time! | |