3 | It really drives me mad

Put the words in brackets in order, to make expressions that are typical responses when people are complaining to us.

1. A: Doesn't it bug you the way shops always charge £9.99 when you know it's really £10?

   B: I must admit, ...
   (like / me / things / that / really / bother / don't)

2. A: Look, I'm really sorry. There's no way I can come to your party tomorrow night. I've got to work late.

   B: Oh, well, don't worry . . . .
   (world / not / end / the / the / it's / of)

3. A: I really thought I'd got the job. I mean, my interview went really well, and then they tell me I'm not even short-listed!

   B: Oh, well. . . . .
   (let / you / get / down / it / don't)

4. A: I've got about five bills I'm supposed to pay by the end of the month. What do they think I am? Made of money?

   B: Oh well, ...
   (you / do / nothing / can / about / there's / it)

🎧 **Listen and check your answers, then practise the conversations with a partner. Try to keep the conversations going by adding further comments of your own.**

4 | Practice

Tell a partner which of the things in the list below really annoy you. They should respond using some of the expressions from Exercise 3.

1. finding public telephones always out of order when you need to use them

2. chewing gum on the pavement sticking to your shoes

3. people letting their dogs foul the pavement

4. people talking loudly in public on their mobiles

5. finding out before breakfast that you've run out of milk

6. discovering that a pair of trousers you bought have shrunk in the first wash

7. uncollected rubbish in the street

Choose the three most annoying things and discuss how to prevent them from happening. Can you use some of the if- sentence starters on page 122 to make suggestions?

5 Free practice

Use these sentence starters to make statements **that** are true for you.

1. One thing that really drives me mad is . . .
2. Doesn't it really bug you the way . . .
3. It really annoys me when people . . .
4. I don't know about you, but personally I can't stand . . .

Now walk around the class talking to some other **students** about the things that really annoy you.

> **Real English:** it really bugs me
> If something bugs you, it annoys you.
> It really bugs me when people don't return my pen after they've borrowed it..

6 More expressions with *bother*

Make short dialogues by matching 1–8 to the responses a–h. Then underline all the expressions with bother.

1. Do you fancy coming out for a quick jog?
2. I'm going to complain about that guy smoking.
3. That was really delicious. Let me wash up.
4. I think I'll try that new bar tonight.

5. Sorry to bother you, but have you got the time?
6. I was really upset by her letter.
7. I can't stand mobile phones going off in public!
8. Are you sure you don't mind giving me a lift?

a. No, it's OK. You needn't bother! I'll do it later.
b. Really? Things like that don't bother me.
c. Oh, it's no bother at all. I'm going your way.
d. Sorry, no, I haven't.
e. Oh, don't let it bother you. She didn't mean it.
f. No, I can't be bothered. I'm too tired.
g. Why bother! You'll only start an argument.
h. I wouldn't bother if I were you. It's dead.

Spend two minutes trying to memorise the responses a–h. Then cover Exercise 6 while your partner reads out 1–8. Can you remember all the responses?

Translate the eight expressions with bother into your language. You will almost certainly need to use more than one verb. How many verbs do you need?

7 Idioms focus

Complete the short dialogues below with the idiomatic expressions in the box.

> It's a Catch 22 situation, isn't it?
> Yes, and that's just the tip of the iceberg.
> It's a bit of a mixed blessing, isn't it?
> Yes, poor guy. It's a vicious circle, isn't it?

1. A: John drinks to stop himself worrying about money, and the more he drinks, the more he spends, and so on and so on.
    B: ....
2. A: The thing is, I can't get a work permit unless I've got a job and I can't get a job till I've got a work permit.
    B: ....
3. A: One hundred people have already lost their jobs.
    B: ....
    I think there's worse to come.
4. A: Our neighbours won half a million on the National Lottery last year, but six months later they separated and now they're divorced.
    B: ....

8 Speaking

Can you think of any other examples where the four idiomatic expressions in Exercise 7 above could apply?

BABY ON BOARD!