In an earlier "How to ... " Callum Robertson looked at the language for describing a process - giving instructions for doing something. In that programme we saw that the imperative was the standard verb form to use and that linking words were important when describing the sequence of instructions. In this programme Callum goes back into the kitchen to look at some more words and phrases which help to link different instructions together.

Linking by the numbers

It is possible to list and link instructions using 'ly' adverbs based on ordinal numbers - i.e. Firstly, secondly, thirdy ... etc .

Here are some simple instructions for using a breadmaking machine using this method.

"**Firstly**, put all the dry ingredients into the pan. **Secondly**, add the water or milk
Thirdly, put pan into the breadmaker and **finally** select the right programme and press start."
Note that the final instruction rather than being from a number is usually **finally** or **lastly**.

This method is useful for short lists of instructions only, with a maximum of three or four items. It is possible to carry on indefinitely but it is not natural to do so in spoken English.

More linking words & expressions

Beginning
The first thing you do is ...
To begin with ...
To start with ...
First ...

Continuing
And ...
Then ...
And then ...
Next ...
After this ....
Following this ...
When (this is done) / (you've done this) ...
Once (this is done) / (you've done this) ...
While (something else is happening) ...

+ verb in imperative form
(infinitive without to)

Ending
Finally ...
Lastly ...
To finish ...

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT?

Activity
Here's another recipe from Carrie. This one is for a snack called "Stripy Tigers". For each instruction choose the correct linking word or phrase. For help you can listen to Carrie. You can also download the activity in printable form along with the audio from the links below the exercise.

Listen to Carrie

1. ---- ▼ cut as many slices of bread as you need - white bread is best. Not too thin or it will end up soggy.

2. ---- ▼ grill some rashers of bacon.

3. ---- ▼ the bacon is grilling, break 2 eggs in to a bowl.

4. ---- ▼ add about 142 millilitres of milk and beat the milk and the eggs together.

5. ---- ▼ dip the bread in to the bowl of eggs and milk and leave for a few seconds to soak up the mixture.

6. ---- ▼ heat some oil in a frying pan

7. ---- ▼ take the bread out of the bowl and put it in to the frying pan

8. ---- ▼ golden brown on both sides take it out of the frying pan. Eat while it's hot, topped with the rashers of bacon. If you don't like bacon, try spreading on some jam or tomato ketchup!

Check answers