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Saying sorry

There's an old saying in English: 'Manners maketh man'. It means that having good manners, or being polite to other people, will make you a successful and admirable person.

Well, in this programme we look at one important way of being polite – how to say sorry for something you've done wrong. As you'll hear, there are different ways of saying sorry in everyday situations, but the patterns are easy to learn and easy to use!

Language for saying sorry	
To emphasise how you feel	Examples
I'm really sorry...	I'm really sorry, Pete, I didn't mean to lose your book.
I'm so sorry...	I'm so sorry I forgot your birthday, Oliver!
To say why you're sorry	Examples
Sorry about...	Sorry about the mess. I'll clear up later.
Sorry for...	Sorry for taking your DVD.
To say sorry without using the words 'I'm sorry!'	
I'd like to apologise for...	I'd like to apologise for the way I spoke to you earlier.

Vocabulary around saying sorry
to apologise to say sorry, to ask for forgiveness, to express regret
an exclamation a word, phrase or sentence that is shouted out suddenly, often through surprise or anger
to hurt someone's feelings to make someone feel upset or unhappy
a misunderstanding this can mean 'a small disagreement'
trouble unhappiness, distress, worry or danger
a hard time a difficult time
to be out of order (informal) to be impolite or rude

Accepting apologies

In this programme, we find out what you can say when someone says sorry to *you* for something they've done wrong. As you'll hear, there are lots of short and friendly expressions that you can use to accept an apology in English. So there's no need to be lost for words ...

After you've listened to the programme, get some more practice by doing the activity at the bottom of the page.

Language for accepting apologies	Examples
That's OK.	I'm really sorry, Pete, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. That's OK.
No problem.	I'm so sorry I forgot your birthday, Oliver! No problem.
Don't worry about it.	I'm sorry about the trouble I've caused. Don't worry about it.
No worries.	I'm sorry for drinking all the milk. No worries.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT?

Use the expressions above to respond to these apologies.

I'm so sorry about the mess. I'll clear it up when I get back tonight.

Sorry I ate the last biscuit!

I'm really sorry I forgot to send you a card to say well done.

I'm sorry I took your dictionary without asking.