

Chapter 3: Chat and Conferencing

Topics discussed in this chapter:

- Online chats and instant messaging
- Video conferencing
- Internet telephony
- Cybercafés
- Netiquette

Course objectives

- To acquire specific vocabulary related to online chatting and video conferencing
- To use abbreviations in online chats

Language

- Chat abbreviations: ASAR BBS, BFN, BTW, F2F, GL, H&K, IC, ILU, IMO, IOW, LOL, TIA, UR, 2, 4, B, C, R, U
- Vocabulary: chat room, Instant Messaging, videoconference, Internet telephony, buddy list, Virtual reality, avatar, nickname, cybercafé, netiquette, FAQ, flame war, spamming.

Skills

- **Listening:** In this part, you will find out whether the information from an interview is right or wrong.
- **Speaking:** In this section, you will discuss chatting habits and how to plan a cybercafé.
- **Reading:** This part will help you Match headings to paragraphs in a text Finding specific information from a text.
- **Writing:** In this section, you will participating in an imaginary chat session, use abbreviations and make plans for your own cybercafé.

Chapter 2: Chat and Conferencing

Warm up

1 Online Chatting

Try to answer these questions

- 1 What is your favorite way to chat on the Internet?
- 2 How much time do you spend chatting?
- 3 Do you give out personal details in chat rooms?
Why should you be careful about this?
- 4 Have you ever had a bad experience in chatting?

2 Virtual Meetings

Read the following text, underline the difficult words then, look them up in the dictionary.

Virtual meetings

a _____

Imagine you want to assemble a group of people from around the world for a brainstorming session.

Conferencing programs such as NetMeeting or CU-SeeMe allow virtual workgroups to communicate via the Internet. To **videoconference**, you'll need a webcam. Participants see each other's faces in small windows on their monitors and hear each other's voices on the computer speakers. You can use just audio, video and audio simultaneously, or the screen-sharing capability to collaborate on documents without audio or video.

b _____

Internet telephony, also known as **VoIP** (Voice over Internet Protocol), almost eliminates long-distance phone charges, allowing you to call nearly anywhere in the world for the price of a local call. If you have flat-rate internet access, you can't beat the price – it's practically free.

With internet telephony, you can make a voice call from your computer to another person's computer, landline, or mobile phone. You can download telephony software such as Skype or Net2Phone from the Net, and it's even free!

c _____

People also use more traditional **chat conferencing** or **bulletin board systems (BBSs)** to communicate online. Note that during chat sessions, participants type messages to each other rather than communicate by voice. Chat software can be used on the Web with your browser to conduct online chat sessions with other users and can accommodate between 50 and 1,000 users simultaneously. Some companies even use chat conferencing on their websites to facilitate communication with customers.

B Read the text again and answer these questions.

- 1 Why is videoconferencing so useful for virtual workgroups?
- 2 What special hardware and software do you need to videoconference?
- 3 Which technology enables people to make phone calls over the Internet?
- 4 What is the difference between web chat rooms and Instant Messaging?
- 5 How do you log on to an IM server?

C Find terms in the text with the following meanings.

- 1 at a fixed price (lines 15–20) _____
- 2 a central system that provides information about whether users are online and passes instant messages between them (lines 35–40) _____
- 3 a friend list or contact list (lines 45–50) _____
- 4 happening immediately and without delay (lines 55–60) _____
- 5 artificial reality; a 3-D space generated by the computer (lines 60–65) _____
- 6 characters used when interacting with people online (lines 60–65) _____

3 Netiquette

A. Try to do this netiquette quiz. Read about netiquette rules on the Web if necessary.

1 Netiquette, or net etiquette, is a general code of behaviour for communicating online.
 True
 False

2 TYPING IN CAPITALS LETTERS looks like:
 the message is very important.
 you're shouting.

3 What should you avoid doing in chat rooms?
 Being respectful
 Giving out personal or financial information

4 Spamming means
 posting stupid comments in chat rooms.
 posting unsolicited advertising messages.

5 Before asking questions in a chat room or posting messages to forums, you should always
 read the FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions).
 introduce yourself and post a test message.

6 Avoid flame wars. Flames are
 angry responses or offensive comments.
 people who break the rules of netiquette.

7 Keep messages short and to the point, and check spelling and grammar.
 True
 False

4 R u free 4 a chat?

A Rewrite this IM chat, using full forms instead of abbreviations. Then look at the HELP box on page 92 to check your answers.

Abby: BTW, where r u going for ur holiday?
By the way, where are you going for your holiday?

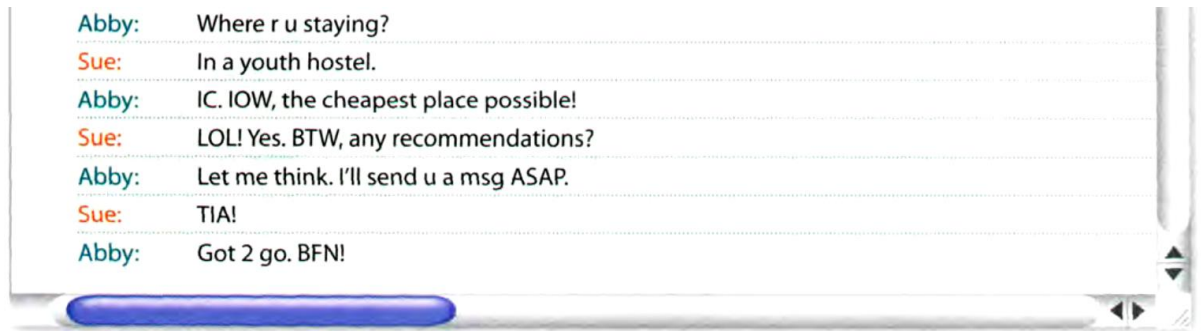
Sue: Girona. Have u been?

Abby: Yes. I went 2 Girona last summer.

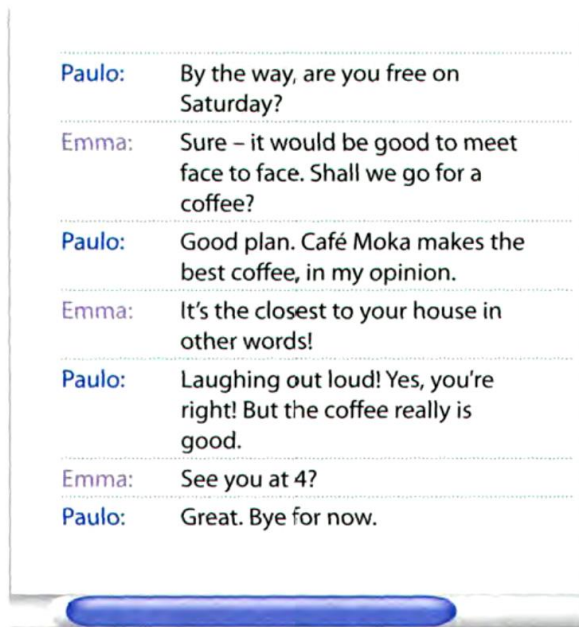
Sue: Did u have a good time?


Abby: It's great, IMO. How r u going 2 travel?

Sue: We're flying.



B Rewrite this IM chat using abbreviations.



C  **In pairs, practise having an online conversation. Write a short note and give it to your partner. Use abbreviations as necessary. Your partner will write a short response and give it back to you. Continue the conversation and try not to talk. Choose one of these topics.**

- Your plans for the weekend
- What you did last night
- Your holiday plans
- What happened at school/work today
- Music / TV / The Web


HELP box

Chat abbreviations

We often use abbreviations in online chats and Instant Messaging. Some common examples are:

| | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| ASAP | As soon as possible |
| BBS | Be back soon |
| BFN | Bye for now |
| BTW | By the way |
| F2F | Face to face |
| GL | Good luck |
| H&K | Hug and kiss |
| IC | I see |
| ILU | I love you |
| IMO | In my opinion |
| IOW | In other words |
| LOL | Laughing out loud |
| TIA | Thanks in advance |
| msg | Message |
| ur | your/you're |
| 2 | to |
| 4 | for |
| b | be |
| c | see |
| r | are |
| u | you |

It's OK to use chat abbreviations, but try not to rely on them too much – they can make a conversation difficult to follow. They are also very informal.


D  **In pairs, discuss these questions. Give reasons for your answers.**


- 1 Which program do you use to chat with friends?
- 2 Do you use abbreviations when you chat online or when you send text messages?
- 3 Do you use voice or video while chatting? How?
- 4 Have you ever used the Internet to make cheap calls?
- 5 Does Instant Messaging distract you from work?
- 6 Do you use your real name or a nickname in chat rooms?
- 7 Do you talk to strangers during web chats? Why shouldn't you?
- 8 Would you ever go on a date with somebody you'd met on the Net?

5 **At a cybercafé**

A  **In pairs, discuss these questions. Give reasons for your answers.**

- 1 Do you ever go to cybercafés?
- 2 What services would you expect a cybercafé to offer?

B  **Listen to an interview with Daniel Sturdy, the manager of a cybercafé in London. Does Daniel like where he works?**

C  **Listen again and decide whether these sentences are true or false. Correct the false ones.**

- 1 A cybercafé is a café where you can have access to the Internet and related services.
- 2 You can talk to people over the Internet using internet telephony at Daniel's café.
- 3 They don't help people who have problems while using the Internet.
- 4 Using a computer with internet access costs £2 per hour or £80 for a week.
- 5 At the moment they've got a lot of international customers.
- 6 You have to pay long-distance phone rates on the Internet.
- 7 In the café area you can sit, drink coffee and chat to people.



A cybercafé

6. Plan your own Cybercafé

A. Try to plan how you would open a cybercafé in your town. Consider these areas.

*Money needed

* Type of customer

*Location

*Services you will offer (just internet access? Food and drinks? Newspapers and magazines? Tutorials?)

*Furniture and decoration

*How to create a nice atmosphere (music, lighting, private areas, etc..)

*What type of hardware and software you need

*How much you will charge

*A name and slogan for your cybercafé