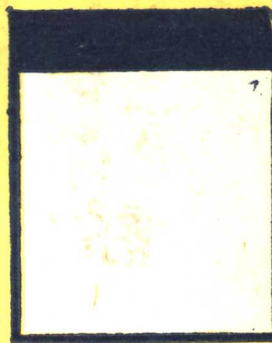


# Listening Plus

Authentic recordings with tasks  
to develop listening skills and  
learner training

*Student's Book*

**John McDowell  
Christopher Hart**



World Publishing Corp

**Edward Arnold**

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# Introduction

## What is *Listening Plus*?

It is a course consisting of a student's book, a teacher's book and a cassette, designed to train intermediate learners to listen effectively to English spoken at normal speed.

## What is listening?

We can analyse listening into a series of sub-skills and strategies that we use at different times depending on what we are listening to and why. What we listen to includes radio, television news, people talking to us, people talking to each other, and announcements. Our reasons for listening include listening for a specific piece of information, listening for general meaning, listening for the speaker's attitude, and listening for pleasure. By practising different listening strategies and sub-skills such as prediction skills, inference skills, listening for key words, listening for specific information, using our previous knowledge etc., we can develop the ability to listen effectively.

## What does *Listening Plus* do?

1. It helps you to understand everyday spoken English by developing listening sub-skills.
2. It integrates listening with speaking, with reading, and with writing.
3. It encourages you to look at methods of learning and to develop strategies which will help you to learn more effectively.

## How do you use *Listening Plus*?

First do Unit 0, Handy Hints. It is an introductory unit and gives you guidelines on

how to listen effectively and on how to use the material in this book. If you find the recorded material in this unit difficult to understand, do not worry! The unit is designed to prove to you that you can understand even the most difficult authentic discourse if you learn how to listen effectively. The tasks have not been designed to test you, but to help you to build up an understanding of the recordings.

When you have done Unit 0, you can then work through the other units in the order you choose. As you do them, remember what you read in Unit 0: that the tasks are organised in such a way that they will help you to build up understanding of the recorded texts little by little. You will probably not find the material in these units as hard as that in Unit 0, however.

## What does each unit consist of?

In each unit you will normally find:

- pre-listening task(s) to familiarise you with the topic of the unit and to help you to anticipate some of the information and language that you will hear on the tape.
- task(s) to help you to focus on the main ideas of the recordings.
- task(s) which will help you to listen more intensively and to focus on specific information or on language forms.
- related activities to link listening with other skills.

In most units you will be encouraged to think about learning in general and about your learning in particular. The objective is to help you to develop the learning style that works best for you.

# Unit 0

## Handy Hints

What I find difficult is if someone talks to me unexpectedly in the middle of a conversation where I know the topic, it's all right.

Sometimes I just get tired and stop listening. People speak so fast and it is a strain to listen.

I wish people would pause occasionally. It would give me time to think and work things out.

When I know what people are talking about, it's quite simple. I can follow the main ideas and just fill in the rest by guessing.

I find it easier when the person is talking only to me. If there is a group of people talking, I get lost.

The aim of this unit is to introduce *Listening Plus* and to give you some hints on how to make listening to English easier.

**1** Think about the problems you have when you listen to spoken English. Try to specify what it is that causes difficulty, and make a list. The comments on the left-hand side of this page, made by English people studying a foreign language, might help you to remember some of your own problems.

**2** All the material on the tape accompanying *Listening Plus* is authentic language in the sense that it has not been simplified or slowed down and there are a lot of different speakers and accents. You may find, then, that when you use *Listening Plus* you will meet some of the difficulties that you have just mentioned. However, the tasks in the book are designed to help you get over the difficulties and to give you practice in understanding 'real' English as it is normally spoken. Here are some hints to make it easier. Because the material on the tape is authentic, you might find that the people seem to talk very fast and that you have difficulty catching every word. Don't worry! Most people do not even try to listen for every word when they listen in their own language. Instead, they tend to listen out for the main words that give clues to what the message is about and then supply the rest themselves from what they already know.

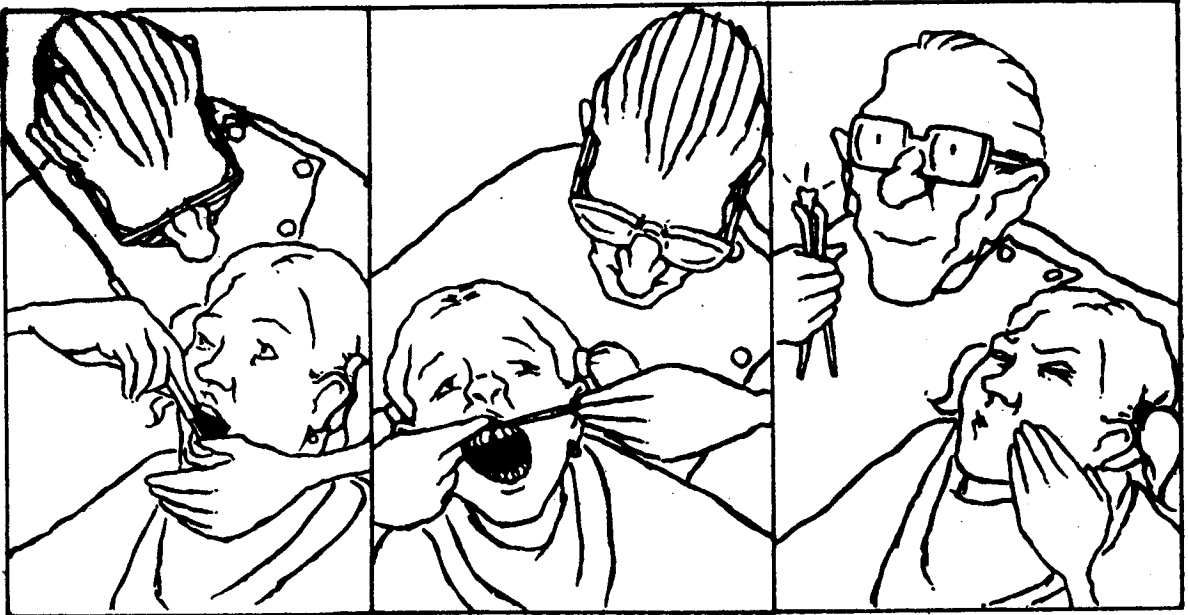
**3 a** Listen to Ruth and Nigel chatting. What they are talking about is not absolutely clear, but they keep repeating a word that gives us a good clue to what it might be. What is the word? And what do you think they are talking about (you might think of more than one possibility)?

**b** Now listen to the rest of the conversation. You should now be able to identify the exact topic of their conversation. Make a note of all the words that help you.

You probably couldn't hear every single word that Ruth and Nigel said, but you know what their conversation was about. What you did was to use all the words you did understand, together with what you know about sport, to help you get at the meaning. Try to do this when you work with the other tasks in *Listening Plus*. Listen out for key words and use all the other information you have to make guesses about what the meaning of the conversations could be.

**4** Here is a more difficult example of listening for clues. Alison is at a dinner party. Listen and try to guess what she is talking about. Make a note of the words that give you clues. You might not feel very certain but you can make good guesses.

Now look at these pictures. Do they help you? Which one do you think corresponds to what Alison is saying?



1

2

3

Listen to the tape again and try to get more details. First, read these questions, and try to answer them as you listen. Use some of these words in your answers: **rubber band, metal ring, wire, stuck out, zig-zag.**

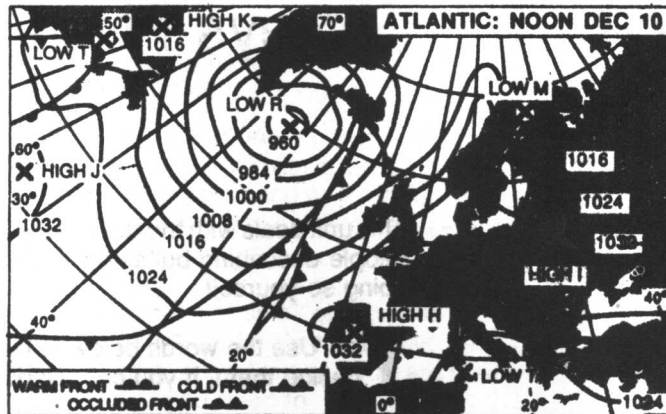
- a When did the experience she describes occur?
- b Why?
- c What was done to her teeth?
- d How long did it last?

Here, you found out little by little what the conversation was about by listening again and again, each time with a few more clues to help you. As you gained more information, it should have been easier to make sense of what Alison was saying. Remember this when you do the other tasks in this book. Listen to the tape as many times as you like and build on any information you have.



**5** Now here is something more difficult. You are going to hear an extract from which most of the words have been removed and only the key words left.

First, look at the drawing at the top of the next page. What would you expect the tape that accompanies it to be about?



Now listen to the tape, most of which has been erased, and answer these questions.

- a What is the weather like now?
- b What will it be like tonight?
- c What will it be like early tomorrow morning?

Even though a lot of the extract was in fact missing, you were probably able to answer all the above questions. You were able to take the key words that were left and to guess the rest from what you already know about weather forecasts in general and what you expect to hear in them. This confirms the value of the kind of task you were doing when you were listening to Nigel and Ruth and to Alison.

So, here are two pieces of advice for using this book and the cassette.

- Do all the anticipation exercises which are there to help you focus on the topic and build up your expectations.
- Do not try to listen for every word and do not worry if there are things that you do not understand. Focus on what you can understand and use that to build up the message. Then, when you have got the general message, you can go back and try to understand more if you feel that you want to.



**6** Here is another kind of task which involves using information to guess what someone is saying. Often, when you are in a room with someone who is talking on the telephone, you can guess what the person at the other end of the line is saying. Tina was at the same dinner party as Alison, and after the meal she made this telephone call. Listen and try to work out what the other person is saying.

- First listen straight through to get the general idea.
- Then listen again and try to write down what you think the other person is saying.



**7** Now do the same with the following conversation. John is making a telephone call.

**8** Now look back at the list of difficulties you compiled in task 1. Have you found any ways of solving some of them?



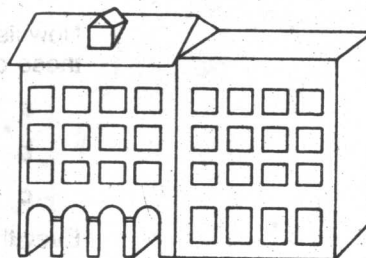
# Unit 1

## Storeys From Spain

This unit deals with the description of buildings. You will hear different people describing buildings and then you will be able to practise doing so yourself.

- 1 a** Use the words below to label different parts of the buildings beside them. If you can, work with a partner.

flat roof  
arches  
pillar  
turret  
sloping roof  
ground floor



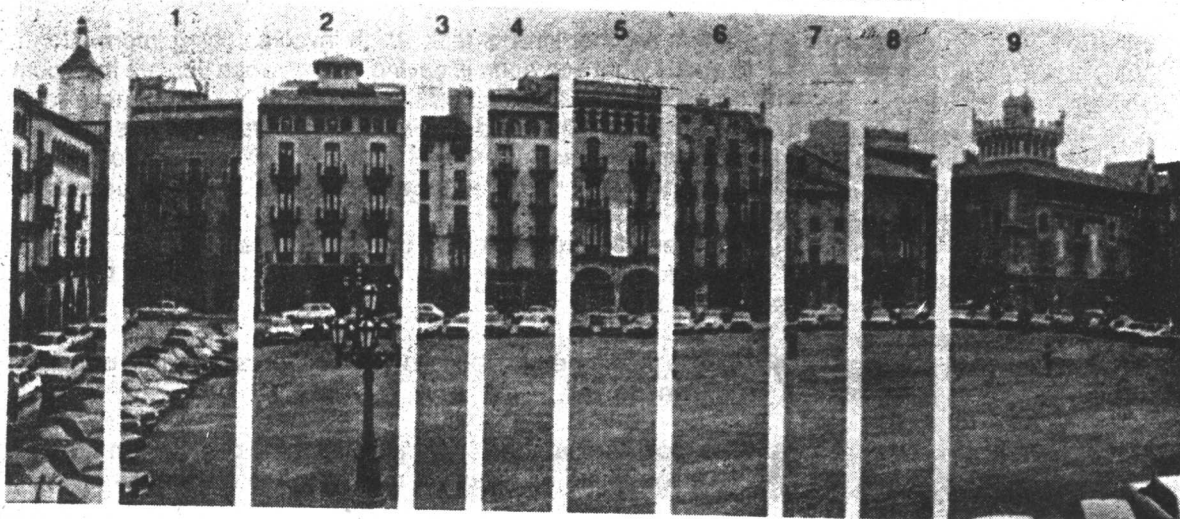
- b** What other words would you need if someone asked you to describe these buildings? Make a list. Again, if you can, work with a partner.



- 2** This is a photograph of the main square in Vic, a town in Catalonia in the north-east of Spain. On the tape, you will hear different people describing buildings in the square. Listen and decide which building each person is describing. (There are six people but some of them describe the same building.)

The people you hear are:

- |          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| 1 Peter  | 4 Brenda    |
| 2 Alison | 5 Elizabeth |
| 3 Nigel  | 6 Deborah   |





**3** It is sometimes difficult to describe things very exactly, so we often use expressions like:

*It seems to be* a hotel.

*It looks as though it is* a hotel.

These express a degree of uncertainty or tentativeness. The people on the tape all use similar expressions with the verbs 'to seem' or 'to look'. Listen again and write down the expressions you hear. (You should try to write down one expression for each person.) How do the expressions differ?

**4** Work in pairs or small groups and look at the photograph of Vic. Take it in turns to choose a building and describe it while the others try to guess which one you are describing. Use the language from task 3 if you need to.



**5** The people you listened to on the tape qualified their comments on the different buildings. They did this by using adverbs of degree to modify the adjectives they chose to describe the buildings.

For example: '*very ugly*'.

Listen to the tape again and write down all the different adverbs you hear which modify adjectives. Try to find five.



**6** Apart from the expressions you noted in task 3, Deborah uses different ways of describing something that she cannot be exact about.

For example: 'It's got a *kind of* open gallery ...

It *looks sort of* Dutch 17th century

... a *very-difficult-to-describe kind of* structure ...

... a *Dutch-looking* little building ...'

Listen to her again and make sure you understand how she uses these expressions.

**7** Now use some of the expressions in task 6 to describe this photograph.



# Unit 2

# Phobias

This unit is about common fears and anxieties. You will hear different people talking about the things which frighten them and, if you want to, you will be able to talk about the things which bother you.

- 1** Look at the words and expressions in the box below and classify them according to whether they are:
- strong                      quite strong                      not so strong**

<b>phobia</b> (n)	<b>anxiety</b> (n)	<b>uneasiness</b> (n)
<b>afraid of</b> (adj)	<b>terrified of</b> (adj)	<b>petrified of</b> (adj)
<b>can't stand</b> (v)	<b>hate</b> (v)	<b>makes me feel uneasy</b>



- 2** Listen to these five people talking about things which frighten them. What exactly is each person afraid of?

- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 1 Donald | 4 Mike    |
| 2 Pat    | 5 Deborah |
| 3 Tina   |           |

- 3** Can you think of any things that people are afraid of? Make a list of those you have noticed. If possible, work in pairs or small groups.



- 4** Now listen to Dr John Hart, a psychiatrist, talking about fears and anxieties. Read the following questions and dictionary extract before you listen to the tape.

- a** How does Dr Hart define a phobia? Is his definition the same as this one from the Penguin Dictionary of Psychology?

**phobia** A term from the Greek for *fear* or *dread*; in keeping with this etymology, specific phobias are properly given Greek root qualifiers, e.g., *pyrophobia* = fear of fire, *nyctophobia* = fear of the night, etc. In standard psychiatric work, a reaction requires several factors before it is properly classified as a phobia. Specifically, the fear must be persistent and intense, there must be a compelling need to flee or avoid the

phobic object or situation and the fear must be irrational and not based on sound judgement. ◇ *phobic disorder* for some additional points on the contemporary classification scheme.

**phobia, simple** An umbrella term for any ◇ *phobic disorder* associated with a relatively well-defined (i.e. "simple") stimulus. Most phobias other than ◇ *agoraphobia* and the ◇ *social* \*phobias are included here.

- b** Which of the five people you listened to in task 2 may not have a phobia? Give reasons for your answer.



**5** Now listen to Dr Hart defining three types of phobia. Read the following questions before you listen.

- a What are the three types of phobia?
- b Classify the five cases from task 2 according to type.



**6** The psychiatrist goes on to talk about 'free-floating anxiety'. Read the following questions before you listen to him.

- a What is 'free-floating anxiety'?
- b How do people tolerate 'free-floating anxiety'?
- c Which of the five cases from task 2 may be explained in this way?



**7** There are several ways of treating people with phobias. Here, Dr Hart discusses the most popular way. Read the following tasks, and then listen to the tape.

- a List the stages in the treatment of someone who is afraid of spiders.
- b Choose one of the five cases we have heard about and explain how this method may be applied.

**8** Read this extract from *Nineteen eighty-four* by George Orwell. When you have read it, talk about how you felt or what sensations you had as you read it.

"You asked me once," said O'Brien, "what was in Room 101. I told you that you knew the answer already. Everyone knows it. The thing that is in Room 101 is the worst thing in the world."

The door opened again. A guard came in carrying something made of wire, a box or basket of some kind. He set it down on the further table. Because of the position in which O'Brien was standing, Winston could not see what the thing was.

"The worst thing in the world," said O'Brien, "varies from individual to individual. It may be burial alive, or death by fire, or by drowning or by impalement, or fifty other deaths. There are cases where it is some quite trivial thing, not even fatal."

He had moved a little to one side, so that Winston had a better view of the thing on the table. It was an oblong wire cage with a handle on top for carrying it by. Fixed to the front of it was something that looked like a fencing mask, with the concave side outwards. Although it was three or four metres away from him, he could see that the cage was divided lengthways into two compartments, and that there was some kind of creature in each. They were rats.

"In your case," said O'Brien, "the worst thing in the world happens to be rats."

**9** Not long after these recordings were made, Deborah, to whom you listened in task 2, went to a seminar to try to get over her fear of flying. She wrote to tell us about it. Read her letter and then do the following tasks.

**a** Make a note of the different things she did at the seminar and how she felt about each one.

**b** Compare the seminar with the treatment that Dr Hart described in task 7.

Dear John,

Just a quick note to tell you about the flying phobia seminar and its results. Three fearful fliers met at Guy's Hospital and were first asked to talk about past experiences and present fears. We then listened to the psychologist explaining why a plane stays up in the air, followed by some deep breathing exercises - all nice and easy. The afternoon was spent in the "flight simulator", an ingenious mock-up of the interior of a plane, with a video'd take-off and landing. This was very realistic and somewhat distressing for all of us. However, we all turned up at Heathrow Airport next day to be shown round Concorde, which is a beautiful machine. We were also taken into the radar room and the control tower (a special privilege) and allowed to try on headphones, push buttons etc. This was all absolutely fascinating and very reassuring as none of us had realised that a flight really is monitored every inch of the way. We then all got on a plane and went off to Paris.

More about the flight another time, but basically I feel I can now cope with flying, although it will never be my favourite activity!

Love,

Deborah

**10** Did you find some of the speakers in this unit easier to understand than others? If you did, think about why that was. Was it due to:

- what the person was talking about?
- how fast they were talking?
- the kind of words they used?
- their accent?
- whether they were a man or a woman?
- how often they paused?

Are there any other factors which made the speakers more difficult or easier to understand?

Keep a note of the factors which make listening difficult for you and pay particular attention to them when you are doing listening practice.

## Unit 3

## Bumping Into People

Different people often see the same thing in different ways. In this unit you will hear people talking about a road accident that they either saw or were involved in. You will have to compare their statements.

On the 24th August 1986, at about midday, a car and a motorbike collided on a road in south London. Nobody was seriously injured, but detailed statements had to be made to the police (to decide if the law had been broken) and to insurance companies (to decide who was to pay for the damage).

**1** Here is part of the statement that Mr J. McDonald, the car driver, made to the police. Copy the map below. Read Mr McDonald's statement, and mark on the map the positions and directions of the two vehicles at the time of the accident, and any other vehicles that were in the road at that time. Remember that, in Britain, people drive on the left.

- 14 In your opinion who was to blame for the accident?  
Give your reasons briefly.

*I hold the motorcyclist responsible for the accident. He was going much too fast. I had stopped at the junction of Terrapin Rd. and Bushnell Rd. and was just turning left into Bushnell Rd. There were lots of parked cars making Bushnell Rd. quite narrow. The motorcyclist suddenly appeared from the left. He must have been doing at least 40 m.p.h. and was unable to stop before hitting me.*

If you wish, draw a rough sketch in the space available below.



TOOTING BEC  
COMMON

BUSHNELL ROAD

TERRAPIN RD



**2 a** Now listen to Mr D. Wilson, the motorcyclist, giving his account of the accident to a policeman. How is this account different from Mr McDonald's statement?

**b** Look at the form below, and note down what features of the driver the police would like a description of. Listen to the tape again, and write a description of Mr McDonald.

11. Describe the driver referred to in 8–10 above. *If possible, include sex, approximate age, height, build, complexion, colour of hair and eyes, and any other distinctive features.* Say whether you could recognise the driver again. State also whether the vehicle displayed 'L' plates and whether the driver was accompanied.

.....  
.....  
.....

12. State whether you recorded the registration mark of a vehicle (give the mark) or whether this was recorded by someone else and passed to you. If the latter, give the name and address of the person who gave you the note. Say who has the note now and (if you have it) that you will be able to keep it safely and produce it at court if necessary.



**3** A few weeks later, Miss Smith, of Terrapin Road, received the following letter:

**SNATCH AND LEGGIT MOTOR INSURANCE CO.**

Miss S. Smith

45 Terrapin Rd.

London SW 12

2nd Oct. 1986

Dear Miss Smith,

Accident 24th August 1986

Our Client: D.M. Wilson

We understand that you were a witness to the above incident involving a car and a motorbike and we would appreciate it if you could assist us by forwarding a description of the accident.

We enclose a stamped addressed envelope and would thank you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Snatch and Leggit



On the tape, Miss Smith is talking to a friend about the accident. Listen and take notes. (Miss Smith is the first person to speak.) Then copy the beginning of her reply to the insurance company below and complete it with the information you have got from the tape.

45 Terrapin Rd.,  
London. SW12  
7th Oct. 1986

Snatch and Leggit

Dear Sir/Madam,

With reference to the accident on 24th August 1986 involving your client, Mr. D.M. Wilson, to which I was a witness.

.....

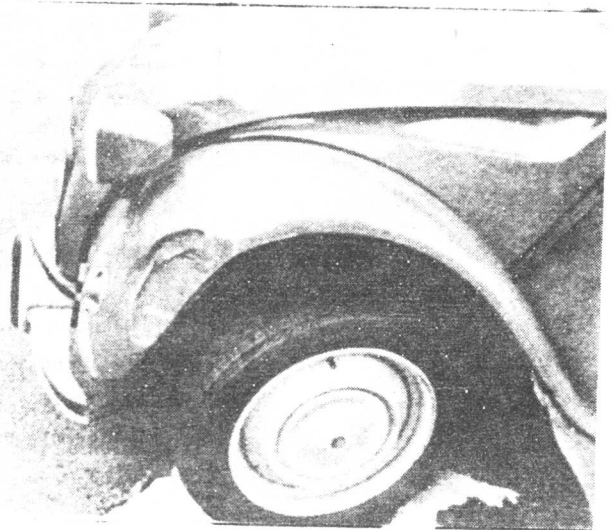
**4** Form two groups. One group will be Snatch and Leggit, the other McKillet and Skinnet Ins. Co. (representing Mr McDonald). Talk together and reach an agreement on who will pay for the damage to the vehicles.

### SWINDLE GARAGE

Front nearside	40
wheel arch	65
Labour	
	£105

### POCKETT MOTORCYCLE SERVICES

Front headlamp unit	52
Front wheel	24
Labour	30
	£106



**5** Miss Smith and her friend use the following verbs when they are talking about the accident (task 3):

knock down  
knock off

turn into  
pull out of

Use these verbs to describe what is happening in the two pictures at the top of the next page. If you are not sure what the words mean, listen to the tape again first.