

NB: This is not a word for word transcript

Feifei: Hello! I'm Feifei and this is 6 Minute English, with me is Neil. How are you Neil?

Neil: Ah... tell you what, I'm going to write a very strong letter to the train company – it took 4 hours to get to work today.

Feifei: I know, it took me ages yesterday as well.

Neil: Well, it's a good thing we're looking at complaining in today's programme! Whether you're making a complaint or you're dealing with an unhappy customer, we'll be looking at useful language and also some dos and don'ts, but first I have a question for you Feifei -

Feifei: Go on then...

Neil: What do you think more people complain about? Is it transport or shopping?

Feifei: Based on what we just talked about, I'd go for transport.

Neil: Well, according to the UK website HowtoComplain.com, almost 17% of customer complaints in the UK are about transport and travel, compared with the shopping and retail sector which receives about 25% of complaints. So Feifei you were absolutely wrong about that one, I'm afraid.

Feifei: That can't be true!

Neil: Now, if you want to complain about something in English, it always helps to know the right thing to say. And if I'm not mistaken -

Neil/ FF: It's Business Betty!

BB: Hello!

Feifei: Hello Business Betty, can you give us some tips on complaining in English?

BB: Of course! Whether you're complaining or dealing with a complaint, it's important to be polite, calm and clear. Let's look at the customer's complaint first. Imagine you own a clothes shop and you're unhappy about some t-shirts you've just bought. You're talking to the supplier about it. First of all, be clear that you have a complaint. Say "I'm afraid I've got a complaint."

Feifei: *I'm afraid I've got a complaint.*

BB: Or you can say "Actually, there's a problem."

Feifei: *Actually, there's a problem.*

BB: Well done Feifei. Next, state exactly what the problem is. What's the problem, Feifei?

Feifei: *I ordered 200 blue t-shirts, but the ones you sent are black.*

BB: Next, say how you want the problem to be fixed.

Feifei: *Can you get the right ones over to us by the end of the week?*

BB: Good! Try saying that one another way:

Feifei: *Look, I really need the blue t-shirts as soon as possible.*

BB: Well done Feifei. And remember to be polite!

Feifei: I will. Thanks for your help, Betty.

BB: You're welcome.

Feifei: Neil, I feel a role-play coming on.

Neil: So do I. Of course, today it's my turn to be the boss.

Feifei: But I'm afraid there isn't a boss in this role-play...

Neil: Awwwww....typical!

Feifei: But you can be the customer service representative if you like. I'm a client who isn't happy with your company's service, and you have to deal with my complaint. Okay?

Neil: OK I think I'll be good at that. Shall we start?

Feifei: Let's go!

Role-play

Feifei: *Ring ring, ring ring...*

Neil: *Hello?*

Feifei: *Good morning, my name is Feifei from Feifei's Fashions and I'm afraid I've got a complaint.*

Neil: *Oh yeah? You are not the only one.*

Feifei: *I ordered 200 blue t-shirts, but the ones you sent are black.*

Neil: *Oh yeah? It happens all the time, that's life eh...*

Feifei: *Look, I really need the blue t-shirts as soon as possible.*

Neil: *Hmm yeah, OK I'll tell someone, alright? Bye!*

Feifei: *Err, just a minute – Hello? Hello!*

Neil: Ooh that was good. How was it for you?

Feifei: Hmm... well, I think we need to ask Business Betty for some feedback.

Neil: OK – Business Betty, how did we do??

BB: Well. Feifei - you were great and you did everything I told you. But Neil: we need to work on your customer service skills. When a customer has a complaint, take it seriously! Find out what the problem is:

Neil: *I see, what exactly is the problem?*

BB: If there is a problem, apologise.

Neil: *I'm so sorry about that.*

BB: Investigate the problem.

Neil: *Let me check your order.*

BB: Say what you're doing to solve the problem.

Neil: *I'll get the correct order sent to you by the end of today.*

BB: And be polite!

Neil: *Thanks for calling.*

BB: So, Neil, do you think that will help?

Neil: I think that should do nicely. Thanks Betty.

BB: You're welcome. And if there's nothing else, I'll be leaving now. Bye!

Neil / FF: Bye!

Neil: Shall we have another go at the role-play?

Feifei: I think we, or should I say you, need to.

Role-play

Feifei: *Ring ring, ring ring...*

Neil: *Hello?*

Feifei: *Good morning, I'm calling from Feifei's fashions and I'm afraid I've got a complaint.*

Neil: *I see, what exactly is the problem?*

Feifei: *I ordered 200 blue t-shirts, but the ones you sent are black.*

Neil: *I'm so sorry about that. Let me check your order.*

Feifei: *Look, I need the blue t-shirts as soon as possible.*

Neil: *Yes of course, I'll get the correct order sent to you by the end of today.*

Feifei: *Thanks for your help.*

Neil: *Thank you for calling.*

Neil: And that's the end of today's role-play!

- Feifei:** That was better: I think I even believe you might send me the right t-shirts this time.
- Neil:** Of course I will. Anyway, it wasn't my fault, somebody else sent the wrong t-shirts, I never ever get anything wrong, you know that...
- Feifei:** That's it for today Neil! But we'll be back soon, and we hope you don't feel like complaining about that! Join us again for more 6 Minute English! Bye!
- Neil:** Stop your moaning, bye!

Complaining: Key phrases

Saying you have a complaint	I'm afraid I've got a complaint.
	Actually, there's a problem.
Saying what the problem is	I ordered 200 blue t-shirts, but the ones you sent are black.
Saying how you want the problem to be fixed	Look, I really need the blue t-shirts as soon as possible.
	Can you get the right ones over to us by the end of the week?
Apologising	I'm so sorry about that.
Investigating the problem	Let me check your order.
Solving the problem	I'll get the correct order sent to you by the end of today.
Being polite	Thanks for calling.