



A2

A2 · UNIT 1 · EPISODE 1

Ordering at a Restaurant

Five sentences that get you through a whole meal.

KEY WORDS

freeze	To suddenly stop and not know what to say.	<i>A lot of people freeze when the waiter talks fast.</i>
for here or to go	Do you want to eat here, or take the food with you?	<i>For here or to go? To go, please.</i>
I'll have ...	A normal, friendly way to order.	<i>I'll have a coffee, please.</i>
ready to order	Ready to say what food you want.	<i>Are you ready to order?</i>
a few more minutes	A polite way to ask for more time.	<i>A few more minutes, please.</i>
polite	Kind and respectful in the way you speak.	<i>I'd like the chicken is the most polite way to order.</i>
the check	The paper that shows how much you pay.	<i>Can I get the check, please?</i>

THE STORY

Nina Hi, I'm Nina.

Ray And I'm Ray.

Nina Today: ordering food. In a restaurant.

Ray This one is easy, right?

Nina It looks easy. But a lot of people freeze.

Ray Why?

Nina Because the waiter talks fast. And they ask questions you don't expect.

Ray Like what?

Nina Like, for here or to go?

Ray In here, or take it away.

Nina Yes. Four words. But they come out in one second.

Ray So you don't hear four words. You hear one sound.

Nina Right. So learn the sound, not the words.

Ray Okay. Let's start at the beginning. I sit down. What happens?

Nina The waiter comes. He says, can I get you something to drink?

Ray And I say?

Nina Just water is fine. Or, I'll have a coffee.

Ray I'll have. Not I want.

Nina I want sounds like a child. I'll have sounds normal.

Ray Good. Then he brings the water. Then what?

Nina He asks, are you ready to order?

Ray And if I'm not ready?

Nina Say, a few more minutes, please.

Ray That's polite? It feels short.

Nina It's short and polite. Please does all the work.

Ray Okay. Now I'm ready. How do I order?

Nina Three ways. I'll have the chicken. Or, I'd like the chicken. Or, can I get the chicken?

Ray Are they different?

Nina A little. Can I get is the most casual. I'd like is the most polite.

Ray And I'll have?

Nina In the middle. Use that one. It always works.

Ray Now the hard part. He asks more questions.

Nina Yes. Soup or salad. That's a famous one.

Ray Famous why?

Nina People hear super salad. One word. They say yes.

Ray And yes is not an answer.

Nina No. It's a choice. Say soup, please. Or salad, please.

Ray What if I really didn't hear it?

Nina Sorry, one more time?

Ray That's it? So simple.

Nina That's it. Nobody minds. They say it all day.

Ray Okay, last thing. The food is finished. I want to pay.

Nina Can I get the check, please?

Ray The check. Not the bill.

Nina In America, the check. In England, the bill. Both are fine.

Ray So, five sentences for the whole meal.

Nina Just water is fine. A few more minutes, please. I'll have the chicken. Sorry, one more time? Can I get the check, please?

Ray That's a whole dinner.

Nina That's it for today. See you next time.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What does "for here or to go" mean?

- ☐ A Pay now or pay later?
- ☐ B Eat here, or take the food with you?
- ☐ C Sit inside or sit outside?

2. Which way of ordering is the most polite?

- ☐ A Can I get the chicken?
- ☐ B I want the chicken.
- ☐ C I'd like the chicken.

3. The waiter asks, "Soup or salad?" What is a good answer?

- ☐ A Yes, please.
- ☐ B Soup, please.
- ☐ C Super salad, please.

4. In America, what do you ask for when you want to pay?

- ☐ A The check
- ☐ B The bill
- ☐ C The money

5. You are not ready to order yet. What do you say?

- ☐ A I want later.
- ☐ B Soup, please.
- ☐ C A few more minutes, please.

Shadowing tip. Pick three lines you like from the story. Say each one five times, faster each time, until it sounds natural.

ANSWER KEY

1. **B** For here means you eat in the restaurant. To go means you take it with you.
2. **C** Nina says I'd like is the most polite. I want sounds like a child.
3. **B** It's a choice, so yes is not an answer. Pick one: soup, please, or salad, please.
4. **A** In America, people say the check. In England, they say the bill.
5. **C** It is short and polite. "Please does all the work."

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