



A2

A2 · UNIT 1 · EPISODE 4

Asking for Directions

How to ask for directions, and how to understand the answer.

KEY WORDS

How do I get to ...?	A question for asking the way to any place.	<i>How do I get to the train station?</i>
walking distance	Close enough to walk to.	<i>Is it walking distance?</i>
go straight	Keep going in the same direction.	<i>Go straight for two blocks.</i>
block	The part of a street between two corners.	<i>Go straight for two blocks.</i>
landmark	A building or thing that is easy to see.	<i>Turn left at the big bank.</i>
turn left	Change direction to the left.	<i>Turn left at the bank.</i>

THE STORY

- Nina** Hi, I'm Nina.
- Ray** And I'm Ray.
- Nina** Ray, what's harder — asking for directions, or understanding the answer?
- Ray** Understanding the answer. Easily.
- Nina** Same. I can ask. Then they talk for fifteen seconds and I just nod.
- Ray** And then you walk away and look at your phone.
- Nina** Every time. So today, both halves.
- Ray** Start with asking.
- Nina** One sentence does everything. How do I get to the station?
- Ray** How do I get to. That works for any place?
- Nina** Any place. A street, a shop, a building. How do I get to Fifth Avenue.
- Ray** And if I don't know whether to walk?
- Nina** Then add one more. Is it walking distance?
- Ray** Is it walking distance. I like that.
- Nina** It saves you from a forty-minute walk. Now — the hard half.
- Ray** Understanding.
- Nina** Here's the trick. You don't need every word. You need three things.
- Ray** Which three?

Nina A direction, a number, and a landmark.

Ray Direction, number, landmark.

Nina Left, right, straight. That's the direction. Two blocks, three lights. That's the number.

Ray And the landmark is a thing I can see.

Nina The bank, the church, the big red sign. Listen for those three and ignore the rest.

Ray That takes the pressure off.

Nina And one more sentence. The most useful one.

Ray What is it?

Nina So, left at the bank? You repeat the key part as a question.

Ray And they'll correct me if it's wrong.

Nina They always do. People love correcting directions.

Ray Let's practice. I'm lost.

Nina Go ahead.

Ray Excuse me, how do I get to the train station?

Nina Sure — go straight for two blocks, then turn left at the big bank, and it's right there on your right.

Ray So, straight two blocks, then left at the bank?

Nina Exactly.

Ray Is it walking distance?

Nina About ten minutes.

Ray Thank you very much.

Nina And that's it. You got a direction, a number, and a landmark.

Ray And I never said I don't understand.

Nina So — how do I get to, is it walking distance, and repeat it back as a question.

Ray Thanks, Nina.

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

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. **Nina says you only need to hear three things. What are they?**

- ☐ **A** A name, a street, and a city
- ☐ **B** A direction, a number, and a landmark
- ☐ **C** Left, right, and back

2. **How far is the train station?**

- ☐ **A** About two minutes
- ☐ **B** About forty minutes
- ☐ **C** About ten minutes

3. **Where does Ray turn left?**

- ☐ **A** At the church
- ☐ **B** At the big bank
- ☐ **C** At the big red sign

4. **How can you check that you understood?**

- ☐ **A** Say: I don't understand.
- ☐ **B** Repeat the key part as a question.
- ☐ **C** Just nod.

5. **In the practice, how do you get to the train station?**

- ☐ **A** Go straight two blocks, then turn left at the bank.
- ☐ **B** Turn right, then go straight three blocks.
- ☐ **C** Take the bus downtown.

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** A direction, a number, and a landmark. You can ignore the rest.
2. **C** Is it walking distance? About ten minutes.
3. **B** Go straight for two blocks, then turn left at the big bank.
4. **B** Repeat it back as a question: so, left at the bank? People will correct you.
5. **A** "Go straight for two blocks, then turn left at the big bank."

Watch this lesson: learn.klemhq.com/a2/u1/e4

More free lessons and workbooks: learn.klemhq.com · hello@klemhq.com