

## Before you start

- 1 Compare how many e-mails, phone calls and letters you make/send and receive each week.

## Reading

- 2 Read the different opinions. Which one do you most agree with?

Which do our readers like using most: e-mail, telephones or the post? Here are three typical responses from last week's survey.

### Lida, 28

For me it has to be e-mail. It's very fast, cheap and modern – you can download music and video, send letters and pictures, and it's informal, which I like. I know privacy and security can be problems but who sends important documents by e-mail? I get annoyed if I get hundreds of e-mails at work and they all expect an instant response, and obviously I hate getting spam, or even worse, a virus.



### Jarek, 65

Well, I use all three, but I prefer the phone. It's more expensive, especially for long-distance calls, but I like the instant interaction and I think you can understand more when you hear a person's voice. I like the informality and speed and you can also use your mobile phone for e-mail and sending images. With mobile phones you don't get a lot of unwanted communication, apart from the occasional wrong number.



### Andrea, 39

I like modern things, but I still prefer the post. I know postal delivery is slow, but it's cheap, and you can be sure no one will read your mail or listen to your conversations. You can send anything by post, which you can't do with e-mail. Personally, I like receiving handwritten letters – they look, feel and smell different from e-mails. I think it's sad that young people don't write letters now – they're usually more formal than e-mail and students can practise their grammar and spelling. Now, what I don't like is getting bills and junk mail!



- 3 Read the quotes again. Tick (✓) the features of each type of communication.

	E-mail	Telephones	Post
cheap	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
send pictures/images	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
instant delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
instant reply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
interactive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
modern	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
private	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
secure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
slow	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
send sound	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
unwanted communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
usually formal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Vocabulary

- 4 Which of the words in the box do people usually think of as positive? Which do they think of as negative?

bills ■ communication ■ instant ■ interaction  
■ privacy ■ security ■ spam ■ virus

## Speaking

- 5 Work in pairs. How do you feel about getting these unwelcome messages? Why? Add other types of unwanted communication to the list.

wrong number phone calls ■ spam ■ viruses  
■ junk mail ■ joke calls ■ bills  
■ calls from telephone salespeople

*I don't mind getting ...*

*I don't really like getting ...*

*I really don't like / can't stand / (really) hate ...*

## Writing

- 6 Write a paragraph describing the advantages and disadvantages of e-mail or telephones or the postal service.

### Get real

Work in pairs. Send each other a handwritten letter in English through the post. Also send each other an e-mail. (They can have the same content.) Describe how the letter looked, how it felt and how it smelt when you received it. Compare the letter to the e-mail you have received. Tell the class which you preferred and why.