



1 Companies

Learning objectives in this unit

- Talking about what companies do
- Talking about your company using the present simple
- Making polite requests
- Introducing yourself and others

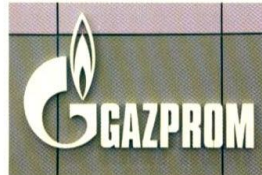
Activity

- Make that contact!

Starting point

- 1 Look at the pictures on this page. What do you know about these companies?
- 2 Do you think it's better to work for a large or a small company?
- 3 What kind of company do you work for?

Working with words | Company facts



1 Read these descriptions of some companies. Complete their names.

- 1 This company **provides** many different Internet services, including news, online shopping, and email. Most of its **sales** come from advertising on its website. Its head office is in Sunnyvale, California.
Y _____
- 2 This company **produces** tyres for cars and other vehicles. It is **based** in France, but it has more than 125,000 **employees** all over the world. It is also well known for its red and green travel guides.
M _____
- 3 This northern European company operates in the retail market. It **specializes** in low-price products, including furniture, bathrooms, and kitchens.
I _____
- 4 It's a **subsidiary** of the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS). The company makes planes for the commercial aircraft market, where its main **competitor** is Boeing.
A _____
- 5 This company makes many different electrical and electronic products, such as TVs, computers, and mobile phones. It is South Korea's largest company and exporter.
S _____



2 Complete these sentences with the words in bold in 1.

- 1 Some companies make or _____ goods.
- 2 Other companies _____ or offer services.
- 3 If you _____ in a particular product or service, it's your main activity.
- 4 If you work for a company, you are an _____.
- 5 If your head office is in a particular city, your company _____ there.
- 6 If you work in a _____, your company is part of a bigger group.
- 7 If you sell a lot of products, your _____ are very good.
- 8 If another company operates in the same market as you, it is your _____.

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 1** on page 102.

3 Work with a partner. Make sentences using the words in the table.

Gazprom	produces / makes ...
Pirelli	specializes in ...
AOL	operates in ...
Mitsubishi	provides / offers ...
Volkswagen	sells ...
UNICEF	's competitors are ...

4 01▶ An employee is talking about her company. Listen and complete the information in the table.

Name of company	BESAM
Products	¹ A _____ ² d _____ mechanisms: locks and ³ s _____ systems
Group	Assa Abloy
Nationality	⁴ S _____
Number of employees	⁵ _____,000
Sales	⁶ € _____ billion
Number of subsidiaries	⁷ _____ in 40 countries
Other information	Main ⁸ c _____ are the Eastern Company, Ingersoll-Rand, and Master Lock



5 Work with a partner. Talk about Besam, using some or all of these phrases and the information in 4.

- It's a(n) ... company / organization.
- It's a subsidiary of ... Its head office is ...
- It makes / produces ... It provides / offers ...
- It has ... employees It operates in ...
- It is based in ... It specializes in ...
- Its main competitors are ... It has sales of ...

6 Now talk about your company using the phrases in 5.

📍 » Interactive Workbook » Glossary

4 Read the text. Discuss the questions with a partner.

When you see the name Nestlé, perhaps you think of breakfast cereals, Nescafé instant coffee, or Nespresso machines. But what else do you know about the company? What other products does it sell, and where? How many people work for the company and why do they like working there? What does the company do to protect the environment?

Listen to *Nestlé in Focus* tonight at 8.00 p.m. to get answers to these and many other questions.



5 Work with a partner. Make questions about Nestlé using the prompts below.

Example: How old is the company?

- 1 How old / company?
- 2 What products / company / specialize in?
- 3 What / its annual sales?
- 4 Where / its head office?
- 5 How many factories / have?
- 6 company / sell / products / all five continents?
- 7 How many people / employ?
- 8 What / offer / its employees?
- 9 company / a lot of work in the community?
- 10 How / protect the environment?

Tip | Questions with prepositions

In a question with a preposition, the preposition is usually the last word, not the first.

*Where is he **from**?*

*Who do you work **for**?*

*What market do you sell **in**?*

Practically speaking | How to make polite requests

1 Complete these questions with I or you.

- 1 Could ___ speak to you for a moment?
- 2 Can ___ tell me your name?
- 3 Can ___ have another drink, please?
- 4 Could ___ call me again tomorrow?
- 5 Would ___ repeat that, please?
- 6 Could ___ help me for a moment?

2 03▷ Work with a partner. Match the questions in 1 to responses a–f below. Listen and check your answers. Then practise the conversations.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| a Yes, sorry. The reference is 1256 K. ___ | d Sorry, but I'm very busy. ___ |
| b Yes, of course. ___ | e Certainly. Same again? ___ |
| c I'm afraid I'm on holiday. ___ | f Sure. It's Woody Neilson. ___ |

3 Work with a partner. Take turns to make and respond to requests, using the verbs in brackets.

Example: Can I have your telephone number, please?

- 1 I want your telephone number. (have)
- 2 I want your address. (give)
- 3 I don't understand you. (speak more slowly)
- 4 I need your signature on this document. (sign)
- 5 I need two chairs for my table. You have two free chairs at your table. (take)
- 6 I don't have time to speak to you now. (talk later)
- 7 I need your pen to sign the visitor's book. (borrow)
- 8 I didn't hear what you said. (say)

Tip | can, could, and would

Could and *would* are generally more polite and formal than *can*.

Would is not used with *I*:

Could I speak to you?

NOT *Would I speak to you?*

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Describing companies from different countries

Choose a company below that you know quite well and describe it until your partner guesses which one you are talking about. Then discuss if they agree with your description.

<i>Amazon.com</i>	<i>Bridgestone</i>	<i>AXA</i>	<i>Adidas</i>
<i>Avon</i>	<i>Canon</i>	<i>Alcatel</i>	<i>BASF</i>
<i>Boeing</i>	<i>Hitachi</i>	<i>Bic</i>	<i>BMW</i>
<i>Caterpillar</i>	<i>Kenwood</i>	<i>Carrefour</i>	<i>DHL</i>
<i>Coca Cola</i>	<i>Nintendo</i>	<i>Cartier</i>	<i>Grundig</i>
<i>DuPont</i>	<i>Nissan</i>	<i>Chanel</i>	<i>Hugo Boss</i>
<i>Estee Lauder</i>	<i>Sharp</i>	<i>Christian Dior</i>	<i>Mercedes Benz</i>
<i>FedEx</i>	<i>Shiseido</i>	<i>Danone</i>	<i>Nivea</i>
<i>Gap</i>	<i>Sony</i>	<i>L'Oreal</i>	<i>Porsche</i>
<i>Gillette</i>	<i>Subaru</i>	<i>Michelin</i>	<i>T-Mobile</i>
<i>GM</i>	<i>Suzuki</i>	<i>Renault</i>	<i>Triumph</i>
<i>Goodyear</i>	<i>Toshiba</i>	<i>Microsoft</i>	<i>Audi</i>
<i>Google</i>	<i>Yamaha</i>	<i>Motorola</i>	<i>Wella</i>
<i>Harley-Davidson</i>	<i>Kellogg's</i>	<i>Nike</i>	<i>Pfizer</i>
<i>IBM</i>	<i>Kodak</i>	<i>Tiffany</i>	<i>Procter and Gamble</i>
<i>Intel</i>	<i>MAN</i>	<i>Wal-Mart</i>	<i>Starbucks</i>
		<i>Xerox</i>	

Useful phrases to talk about companies

- Its HQ/ headquarters/ head office is in...
- It has an office/ a branch/ a factory/ a plant in...
- It produces/ manufactures/ makes...
- It a/ an ... company (but it is owned by a/ an company)
- It sells/ distributes...
- It provides/ offers...
- In this country, it...
- It's a multinational company
- It does most/ a lot of business in...
- Its main business is...
- It has a subsidiary which...
- Its (main) competitors (in this country) are...
- It's a market leader
- It was in the news (recently) because...
- It's the largest/ second largest company in...
- It was set up/ founded...
- It operates in...
- It has ... employees (in...)
- It has ... subsidiaries (which...)
- It is owned by...
- It's a privately-owned company (= limited company)/ publically-owned company (=PLC/ public corporation)/ government-owned company/ partnership
- It exports/ imports/ distributes...
- It's a wholesaler/ retailer/ manufacturer/ miner/ distributor/ technology company/ telecommunications company/ conglomerate
- Its most famous product (in this country) is...
- The CEO/ Managing Director/ Chairman/ founder/ owner is...

Vocabulary and discussion questions

- What countries do the firms above come from? (Each box is one country)
- Are there any companies which are too unimportant to be included on the list?
- Are there any other companies which should be included, e.g. from your sector or country?

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- Were you surprised by the number of companies or lack of companies from any of the countries?
- Use the phrases above to describe companies which are not on the list. Can your partner guess which you are talking about?
- Use the phrases above to describe your own company, then ask questions from your partner.