

## Working on a Building Site: An ESOL Resource



Resource developed by Nicky Riddiford from authentic data collected by the Language in the Workplace Project, School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, Victoria University of Wellington.

Resource available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/lwp](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lwp)

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## ***About this resource***

### **Who this resource is for**

This resource is an English language listening resource designed for learners at a beginner/elementary level in reading, writing, listening and speaking who come from non-English speaking backgrounds and who plan to work in the construction industry.

It is designed for use in workplace focused ESOL classes or communication training courses in English speaking countries, especially, but not exclusive to, Australia and New Zealand. The book could also be used in one-to-one tutoring contexts.

### **How this resource is organised**

The resource has been developed from recordings of ordinary everyday interactions between builders as they go about their work on a building site. The recorded interactions were collected, transcribed and analysed by the Language in the Workplace researchers from the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at Victoria University of Wellington.

Each of the units in the resource addresses a speech function or set of related speech functions that are common in the construction industry. The first units focus on understanding directives on a building site.

Each unit is based on a rerecording of an authentic interaction on a building site. The units follow a top-down approach where learners are prompted to focus on the general meaning of the interaction before any intensive focus on the specific language features. The units provide opportunities for learners to listen to the interaction many times, to focus on and notice specific language features of the interaction and then to practise these features. Each unit is divided into the following parts:

1. Pre-listening activities where learners are encouraged to draw on their existing knowledge of the construction industry.
  - a. Setting the scene: Questions to introduce the first unit are: Look at the picture: Who works on a building site? What do they do? What do they use? What is your experience of working on a building site? Pictures and objects to supplement what is provided in the unit would be useful.
  - b. Prediction: In this section, learners are asked to predict what might be happening from the title and context of the unit. The teacher could then elicit possible content words, for example, the vocabulary for the predicted equipment and predicted actions.
  - c. Pre-teaching of content words: Teachers could use objects, pictures, actions wherever possible to supplement the pictures provided in the unit.

2. Listening activities. In this section learners are introduced to the listening activity using the top-down approach. Learners are encouraged to discuss their answers together, perhaps in small groups or pairs.

Each unit includes these features:

- a. Listening for the main ideas/gist while looking at the strip story. What is happening? The recording could be played many times.
- b. Listening to notice specific details: vocabulary.
- c. Listening and looking at the text.
- d. Listening for further details, for example, prepositions, actions.
- e. Listening for the language used in the directives.
- f. Listening for strategies for checking and clarifying directives.
- g. Opportunities to practise clarifying and checking.

3. Post-listening activities.

- a. Activities to retell and role-play the interaction.
- b. Suggestions for more open-ended role-plays.
- c. Vocabulary revision with an audio recording.

4. Audio recordings.

Re-recordings of the authentic conversations that form the basis of each unit are available for downloading from the website. The audio files for most units include:

- a. A word/picture matching exercise.
- b. The whole conversation with the participants speaking at a normal native speaker speed (labelled N).
- c. The whole conversation with the participants speaking more slowly (labelled S).
- d. Short clips of the conversation (slower version) for intensive listening to specific phrases and interactions.
- e. The key vocabulary in the unit.

# Understanding and following instructions on a building site



## Talk to your partner

Who works on a building site?

What do they do?

What do they use?

What do they say?

# Understanding and following instructions on a building site

## Unit 5: Drilling the holes



Look at the picture. Tell your partner what you can see.

What are the builders wearing?

What tools are they using?

What are they saying?



**Rob**

**Max**

Max wants Rob to drill some holes. First Rob needs to mark where the holes are going to be.

# 1. Vocabulary

a. Here are pictures of some of the words you will hear.

Listen to your teacher and repeat the words.



**pencil**



**pocket**



**climb up**



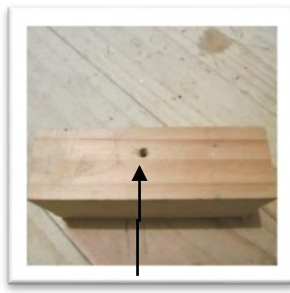
**ladder**



**stud**



**drill**



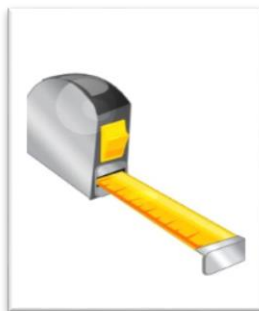
**screw hole**



**a sec**



**mark**



**tape measure**



**the ground**



**15 mm**

b. Listen and number the pictures in the order you hear. The first two are done for you:



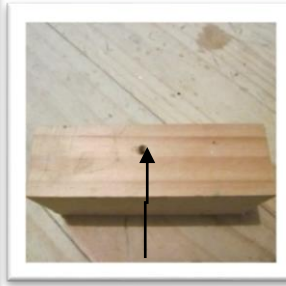
Audio clip 1



1



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



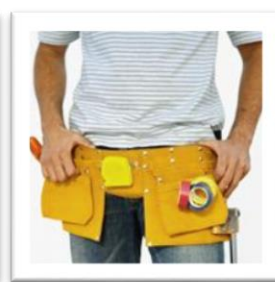
\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



2



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

## Did you hear?

1. drill
2. pencil
3. climb up
4. mark
5. stud
6. screw hole
7. pocket
8. ground
9. 15 mm
10. ladder
11. a sec
12. tape measure

## 2. Listen to the conversation between Max and Rob:



### Audio clip 2N and 2S

- a. Listen to the conversation and look at the pictures.

### Find out:

Who is talking?

What is happening?

What are their names?

What are they doing?

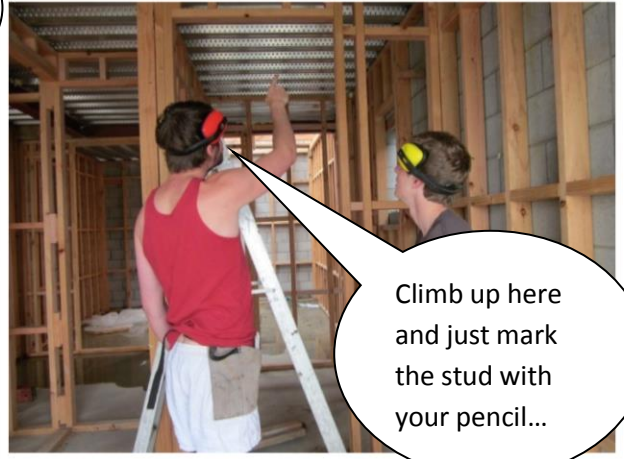
What does Rob have to do?

## Drilling the Holes

Now Rob, chuck this pencil in your pocket for a sec.



Climb up here and just mark the stud with your pencil...



...so we know where to drill the holes. Use your tape measure.



Ok.

How far apart are the holes?



15 mms.



Ok.



*A few minutes later*



A few minutes later



3. Listen to the conversation again.



Audio clip 2N or 2S

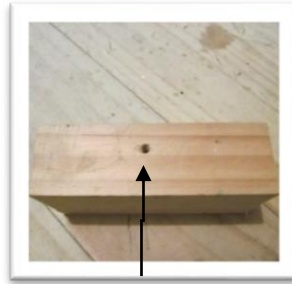
Tick the pictures for the words you hear. The first one is done for you.



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



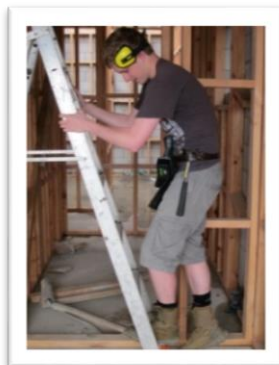
\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

## Did you hear?

- |             |                 |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. pencil   | 7. drill        |
| 2. pocket   | 8. holes        |
| 3. a sec    | 9. tape measure |
| 4. climb up | 10. drill       |
| 5. mark     | 11. holes       |
| 6. stud     | 12. ladder      |

### 4. Look at the text

1 Max Now Rob, chuck this pencil in your pocket for a sec. Climb up here and  
2 just mark the stud with your pencil... so we know where to drill the  
3 holes. Use your tape measure.

4 Rob Ok... How far apart are the holes?

5 Max 15 mm.

6 Rob Ok.

#### *A few minutes later*

7 Max Marked them all?

8 Rob Yep.

9 Max Ok, well, can you just drill those holes there now?

10 Rob Yep.

11 Max Cheers.

#### *A few minutes later*

12 Max Done the high ones?

13 Rob Yep.

14 Max Ok, good. Just, just jump off the ladder now.

15 Rob Ok.

16 Max Otherwise you're going to tip off it. You can do the rest from the ground.

17 Rob Ok.

## 5. What does Rob have to do?

- a. **Look** at the text. **Underline** what Rob has to do. Look at the pictures to help you. Check with your partner.

**Did you find:**

<p><i>Chuck this pencil in your pocket for a sec.</i></p> <p><i>Climb up here.</i></p> <p><i>Just mark the stud</i></p>	<p><i>Just drill those holes there now.</i></p> <p><i>Just jump off the ladder now.</i></p> <p><i>You can do the rest from the ground.</i></p>
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### b. **Talk** to your partner

- i. What do these words mean: *chuck, mark, tip off*?
- ii. What is a sec? (line 1) What does it mean?
- iii. What other words have the same meaning?
- iv. What does *how far apart* mean? (line 4)
- v. What is a mm? (line 5). Choose the correct answer from the box below:

million	millilitre	millimetre
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- vi. How many millimetres apart are the holes? (line 5)
- vii. How do we write the word millimetre? Choose from the box below:

ml	mm	cm
----	----	----

- viii. What is the difference between *there* (line 9) and *here* (line 1)?
- ix. What does *cheers* mean? (line 11)
- x. What does *the rest* mean? (line 16)

## 6. Practice with measurements

Rob has to mark the stud to show where to drill the holes. He uses his tape measure.

- a. Practise measuring the items on your desk. Tell your partner the measurements using millimetres (mm).
- b. Write the measurements.
- c. Mark two points on your paper and tell your partner how far apart they are.



## 7. Listen again: What does Rob have to do first?



### Audio clip 2N or 2S

- a. First Rob has to .....
- b. Tell your partner what Rob has to do next.

Next Rob has to .....

8. **Listen again** to the conversation and number the pictures in the correct order. Some have been done for you. Check with your partner.



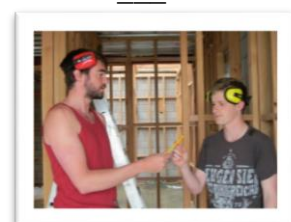
**Audio clip 2N or 2S**



5



1



2

*A few minutes later*



8



*A few minutes later*



11



9



## 9. Max's instructions

### Audio clip 2N and 2S

What does Max say when he wants Rob to drill the holes in the stud?

- a. **Listen** to Max speaking
- b. **Look** at the text. Underline **all** Max's instructions and questions.
- c. **Repeat** Max's instructions to your partner.



1 Max Now Rob, chuck this pencil in your pocket for a sec. Climb up here and  
2 just mark the stud with your pencil... so we know where to drill the  
3 holes. Use your tape measure.

4 Rob Ok... How far apart are the holes?

5 Max 15 mm.

6 Rob Ok.

*A few minutes later*

7 Max Marked them all?

8 Rob Yep.

9 Max Ok, well, can you just drill those holes there now?

10 Rob Yep.

11 Max Cheers.

*A few minutes later*

12 Max Done the high ones?

13 Rob Yep.

14 Max Ok, good. Just, just jump off the ladder now.

15 Rob Ok.

16 Max Otherwise you're going to tip off it. You can do the rest from the ground.

17 Rob Ok.

**d. Did you find:**

- a. *Chuck this pencil in your pocket for a sec.*
- b. *Climb up here.*
- c. *Just mark the stud.*
- d. *Use your tape measure.*
- e. *Marked them all?*
- f. *Can you just drill those holes now?*
- g. *Done the high ones?*
- h. *Just jump off the ladder now.*
- i. *You can do the rest from the ground.*

**Listen and check.**



**Audio clips 3S, a-i.**

- e. What does Max say to Rob when Rob understands the instructions?  
Did you find *Cheers*? (line 11)

10. **Complete** the sentences using words from the box below:

hammer	screws	staples	nails
pockets	finishing saw	bag	
skirting boards	bin	saw	broom
dummy	blocks	flooring nails	
cordless drill	box	pencil	stud
ladder	holes	tape measure	
	20 mm	the rest	

1. Do you want to bring the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Just use your \_\_\_\_\_ to mark the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. You can probably throw those \_\_\_\_\_ over there.
4. Just keep the \_\_\_\_\_ in your \_\_\_\_\_.
5. You can do the \_\_\_\_\_ now .
6. Might want to get some \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Just grab the \_\_\_\_\_ please.
8. Can you just \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Go find some more of those \_\_\_\_\_
10. We'll probably need a few of those \_\_\_\_\_
11. Just pop the \_\_\_\_\_ down in that black bin there.
12. Can you just go find a box of \_\_\_\_\_?
13. Climb up \_\_\_\_\_ .
14. You just grab a couple of those \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Stick them in the \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Can you just go find that \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Chuck that \_\_\_\_\_ in your \_\_\_\_\_.
18. Might grab the \_\_\_\_\_ as well.
19. Just grab the \_\_\_\_\_.

b. What *other* ways could Max tell Rob to do something?

c. **Listen** to the teacher giving instructions using the phrases above. **Do** what the teacher says.

## 11. Checking and clarifying instructions.

- a. Listen to the conversation again: What does Rob say to check the instructions?
- b. Listen and check.  
**Audio clip 4S**

Did you hear:  
*How far apart are the holes?*



- c. Repeat what Rob says to check.
- d. Underline the words in the text.
- e. What does Rob say to show he understands the instructions?  
Did you find: *Yep.*
- f. What else could Rob say to show he had understood the instructions?
- Repeat the key words, for example:
    - Up here?
    - This tape measure?
    - \_\_\_\_\_
  - Repeat the meaning:
    - So mark the stud first?
    - So mark the holes 15mm apart?
    - \_\_\_\_\_
- g. What could Rob say if he didn't understand the instructions?
- How many holes?
  - Sorry, I don't understand 'far apart'. What does it mean?
  - \_\_\_\_\_?

h. **Look** at the pictures and **tell** your partner what Rob *could* say to check the instructions.



Marked them all?

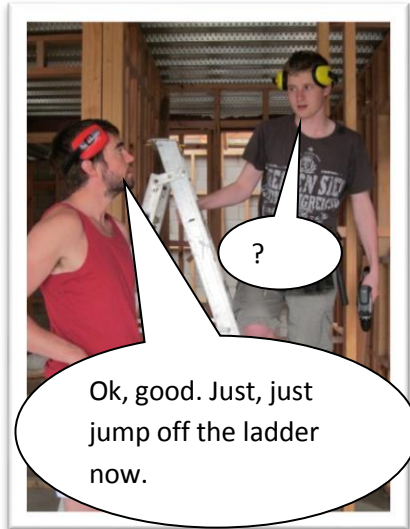


Okay, well, can you just drill those holes there now?



*A few minutes later*

Done the high ones?



## 12. Practise checking and clarifying instructions

- a. Tell your partner to do something using *drill*, *bring*, *chuck*, *do*, *climb*, *mark*, *tip off*, *jump off*.
- b. Your partner will check the instructions with you by
  - i. repeating the key words
  - ii. summarising the instructions
  - iii. asking you to repeat the instructions.

## 13. Look at the pictures and retell the story. Do the actions.



*A few minutes later*



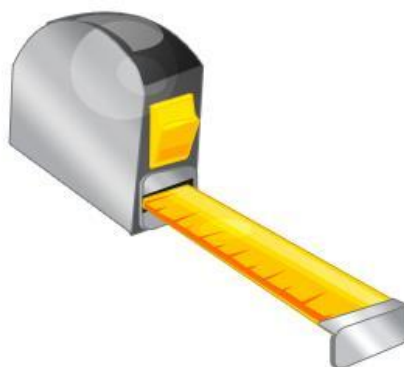
*A few minutes later*



14. **Practise** with your partner

Role A (Max): Ask Rob to measure the distance between the window and the door and to tell you the measurement in millimetres. Then ask Rob to mark every 10 mms to show where he will drill the holes. Use some of these words: *mark, pencil, window, door, millimetres, hole, tape measure, drill.*

Role B (Rob): Ask Max to repeat the instructions. Then check by repeating the key words.



15. **Key Vocabulary** in this unit.



**Audio clip 5**

pencil	chuck	here
pocket	climb	far
a sec	mark	apart
stud	drill	mills
holes	use	there
tape measure	done	now
all	jump off	
high ones	tip off	
ladder		
the rest		
ground		

**Audio clips for this unit:**

1. Word/picture matching exercise
2. The conversation between Max and Rob: (illustrated in the strip story)
3. Max's instructions, questions and comments
  - a. *Chuck this pencil in your pocket for a sec.*
  - b. *Climb up here.*
  - c. *Just mark the stud so we know where to drill the holes.*
  - d. *Use your tape measure.*
  - e. *Marked them all?*
  - f. *Can you just drill those holes now?*
  - g. *Done the high ones?*
  - h. *Just jump off the ladder now.*
  - i. *You can do the rest from the ground.*
4. Rob checking the instructions.  
*How far apart are the holes?*
5. Key vocabulary in this unit