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Your Phone is Ringing

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• The operator deserves courtesy.
• The person you’re calling appreciates every consideration.
• Everyone will be happier if you are definite and brief.

REMEMBER THESE THREE THINGS WHEN:

YOUR PHONE IS RINGING

by Alane Baird
Technical Journalism Sophomore

THELMA THOUGHTLESS picked up the phone and waited for the operator to answer. Ten seconds later after a pleasant, “Number, please,” she answered, “Did you enjoy your nap?”

Homer Hopeless waited two hours before he could get anything but a busy signal at Hallowed Hall. Before he could get his favorite gal for a Saturday night date, she was busy for the next three week-ends.

How do you rate on telephone courtesy? Are you guilty of being a Thelma? When using something as common as the telephone, many of us are apt to be careless.

You’ve all taken calls about meetings or dates only to spend the first minutes of the conversation trying to figure out just who you are talking to. We forget to identify ourselves when making calls, and it often leads to confusion and embarrassment. Then again the person you are talking to is left up in the air at the end of a call when you neglect to finish it with a firm “good-by” or “thank you.”

It is so easy to hear a telephone ring only to wait for the person next door or upstairs to answer it. A telephone should ring no more than four times before it is answered. When you are rushed in making and answering a call don’t forget to be polite instead of curt and abrupt.

One of the greatest problems at Iowa State is getting a call through to a sorority or dormitory. Lines are especially busy from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. and after 10 p.m. in the sorority houses. This, of course, is the logical time for most everyone to make their calls. Restrictions are placed in most residences for three or five minute calls. These are seldom followed and as a result many important calls go unmade. Think of the 30 or so other people using the same telephone and shorten the talk about plans for Saturday.

Suzi was casually greeted with, “A man called you this afternoon,” when she arrived home for dinner. “Whor” and “When?” were asked to no avail, for no message had been taken. The result was that an important Veishea meeting was missed. Leave your name if the person you call is not home. If you have placed the call, offer to leave a message. Confusion is saved and Suzi won’t wonder for the rest of the evening just what she is missing.

Smartness over the telephone is not really smart. An operator has 10 seconds in which to answer the phone. A longer wait which is very unusual is counted by the operators as a “long wait.” Such returns as “Where ya been?” and “I’ve waited so long I forgot my number,” are not at all necessary. Particularly during rush hours, stormy weather and at Homecoming and Veishea the calls come in too fast for the operators to handle them promptly. Sometimes 5,000 calls are made at one time. Imagine these being handled individually!

The operators are pleased to note that most of you say “please” when giving a number. But when, for some reason, you get a wrong number she would like to have you stay on the line and excuse yourself rather than hanging up and thereby placing the blame on the operator. A telephone operator is not infallible and does make mistakes, but you will find that the highest percentage of wrong numbers comes from the customers.

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Textiles and Clothing

A zig-zag attachment for your sewing machine will produce many fine handiwork effects quickly. By regulating the stitch size, different materials, such as lace, embroidery material, trimmings, and elastic shirring thread can be applied. Flexible zig-zag seams, especially for lingerie, are long lasting and easy to make.

Rub on and brush off. That’s all you have to do to clean with the new dry cleaner which comes in stick form. Rub the stick over the clothing stain and brush away all traces of spots ten minutes later.

Foods and Nutrition

A new nut cracker with a basic leverage principle makes nut cracking easy for even a small child. It can crack large or small nuts or lobster shells without crushing the meat. Put it to work, too, opening screw top bottles. This cracker is made in either plated or stainless steel.

Another fruit and vegetable juicer now on the market uses an automatic feed. No plunger is required to press fruits or vegetables into the juicer. It combines with a disintegrator knife to sever juice cells without bruising them. The heavy duty one-quarter horsepower motor is completely enclosed. Final juice extraction is done through centrifugal force. The juice bowl is made of stainless steel. All plastics and metals used for the juicer are impervious to fruit and vegetable acids.

Sizzling charcoal flavor of meats cooked out-of-doors can be added to over-broiled steaks. A new sauce has been developed which will flavor meats as well as tenderize them.

Your Phone Is Ringing

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A major complaint about the telephone calls is getting them while you are in a rush, only to have the other person chat on indefinitely.

You have all made calls and had the other party excuse himself in the middle of the conversation and seem to forget to return. If it is necessary to leave the telephone, explain why and make it short. If you find or know that you will be gone more than one or two minutes, make arrangements to call back.

Carelessness in answering the phone leads to many misunderstandings. A telephone should be answered with “Hello, this is ————.” In a business office it is correct to answer with the name of the establishment. Other answers are not correct, and smart answers are strictly taboo.

Follow the regulations set down for your particular telephone. In the dormitories it is not permissible to take a call after 8 p.m. nor to call out after 8. If there is a time limit on your calls – follow it. Those rules are for you and for your convenience. The situation of busy lines will improve 100% if everyone will follow the rules.

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