

Spoken English

How to handle an emergency situation at a foreign location?

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You just walk across the street in your new locality at a foreign location and suddenly, you notice smoke emitting out of a building in front of you. You rush in to help but want to call for assistance as well. Being in a foreign location, you are at a loss on how to request for assistance like ambulance, fire fighters etc. Emergencies require [concise English communication skills](#) as people's lives are at stake. You should be prepared to handle any situation no matter how dire it looks.



Things To Keep In Mind When Handling An Emergency Situation At A Foreign Location:

1. Note the correct number

Different countries have different helpline numbers to report emergencies. For example, America has 911 for emergencies and so on. Make sure you have the correct number so that in case of any dire situation, you know whom to call. Precious time can be lost in finding the right number.

2. Give the exact details

Observe the situation and take the details. You will need it while making the emergency call. Operators taking the call need the exact details in order to pass them on to emergency services. In case you are not aware of your location, you can take help of street signs and adjacent building description. It is possible to be vague due to the anxiety in the situation, but try to keep calm and note everything. Use your [fluent English speaking skills](#) to give the proper details.

3. Get passersby to help

Involve others in helping you out. Generally, people in foreign countries are eager to help in case of any disaster. Notify others about the situation and pass on your assistance. However, be careful or you will endanger your life also. Wait for professional servicemen to arrive at the scene and render help. They are better equipped, trained and experienced to handle any emergencies. They will be more efficient in taking care of the victims or injured people.



Sample Conversation:

Situation: The Fire In The Building Gets Worse And You Dial 911. The Operator Picks Up.

You: Hello 911?

Operator: Yes. How May I Help You?

You: There Is A Fire In The Building On Fifth Avenue. Please Alert The Fire Fighters!

Operator: Could You Please Tell Us The Exact Address?

You: I Am New Here; I Don't Know The Exact Details.

Operator: Do You See A Street Sign Nearby?

You: Wait. Yeah, I See It. It Says Sequim Street, 21St Lane.

Operator: Okay. What Is The Building's Name?

You: It's Evergreen. I Think There Are Lots Of People In The Building. Please Send The Ambulances Also.

Operator: Okay. We Will Alert Them. They Will Be On Site In 10 – 15 Minutes.



The above sample will guide you on how to handle an emergency situation at a foreign location. Don't let the situation frighten you. Take assistance in the best manner and help save lives. Try to converse in Basic English as you are in a foreign locale and are unfamiliar about the communication pattern followed. To increase your level of language delivery and resultant confidence, you can take the help of [online English classes](#).

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- By Monika Agarwal

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