

Spoken English

How to clarify billing questions with a utility company?

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You live in uptown Buenos Aires, Argentina, and receive an exorbitant electricity bill. Surprised, you decide to lodge a complaint with your service provider. However, you are new in the city and are not sure of the best way to file a complaint. It can be very tough to converse [in fluent English](#), especially in foreign, non-English speaking countries. But with confidence and excellent command, you will be in control of any situation. You should not let the circumstances or situations get on your nerves. Converse politely when you explain the situation to the relevant authorities.



Things To Keep In Mind When Clarifying Billing Questions With A Utility Company:

1. Find the right contact number

Almost all the utility companies have their contact numbers listed on the bills. In case they are absent, you can search for the correct contact number on their website. Trying the right number is important as it solves your query faster without any time wastage. If you keep on trying the wrong number, it will only add to your frustrations.

2. Justification

When lodging a complaint at the customer service, always be sure you can justify your complaint. For example, if your bills are large, then check whether you have utilized it beyond your capacity. Unnecessary lodging of complaints can only lead to embarrassment later on. When you are sure that the problem is not from your side, you will be more confident while lodging a complaint.

3. Note the name of the executive/complaint number

It is important to make a note of the name of executive who takes your complaint. This is to ensure that the complaint does not get lost with red tape. Most often, different executives work on the same complaint, so it is your responsibility to keep a track of the lodged complaint.

Sample Conversation:

Situation: You usually receive electricity bills of 200 pesos per month. However, for the month of July, the bill comes to around 500 pesos. Surprised, you check around the house and find that the usage is normal. You dial the customer care number.

You: Hello, Is this Alcatel customer care number?

Executive: Yes Sir, how may I help you today?

You: Have you guys increased power charges?

Executive: No Sir, we have not. If there was any update we would have surely informed our customers.

You: Then how come my bill for the month of July says 500 pesos?

Executive: Sir, please give me a minute to check.

You: Ok.

Executive: Before I check your records, may I have your account number please?

You: Sure. Its 489687.

Executive: Thank you.

Executive: Sir, it seems there is a problem in our billing system. What I can do right now is raise a complaint ticket.

You: Okay. Thanks. How long will the resolution take?

Executive: You can expect a call from us within 48 hours.

You: Great. May I know your name?

Executive: It's Denores.

You: Thanks a lot Denores. Have a great day!

The above sample shows how you should clarify and raise a complaint with your utility provider in fluent English. Increase your confidence with the help of an online English guide and solve all your issues.

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- By Monika Agarwal

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