

The Price of Convenience

B2 | Adults / Teens | Reading + Vocabulary + Discussion | 50-60 minutes

BEFORE YOU READ

Talk with a partner. What modern service saves you the most time? What might be the hidden cost of that convenience?

1. Match the words (1-6) with the definitions (A-F).

- | | | |
|----------------|-------|--|
| 1. convenience | _____ | A. a result of an action |
| 2. expectation | _____ | B. a belief about what should happen |
| 3. immediate | _____ | C. happening without delay |
| 4. demand | _____ | D. working well without wasting time or energy |
| 5. efficient | _____ | E. a strong need or request |
| 6. consequence | _____ | F. the quality of being easy and useful |

2. Read the article. The bold words are the vocabulary from Activity 1.

1. Ordering food, booking a taxi or buying a gift can now take less than a minute. Digital services promise **convenience**: fewer queues, less planning and more choice. For many people, these services make daily life easier. But when ease becomes an **expectation**, it can also change the way people value time and work.
2. Customers may begin to expect **immediate** results. A delivery that arrives tomorrow can feel slow, even when it involves packing, transport and careful organisation. Businesses respond to this **demand** by creating faster systems, but the pressure is often carried by workers whose schedules become less predictable.
3. Speed is not always the same as being **efficient**. Sending several vehicles to the same street at different times may be fast for individual customers, but it can increase traffic and packaging. A service may save one person ten minutes while using much more fuel, labour and material overall.
4. This does not mean that people should reject every convenient service. Online booking can help people with limited mobility, and home delivery can be valuable for busy families or people who live far from shops. The question is whether customers understand the wider **consequences** of the choices they make.
5. Some companies are experimenting with slower, cheaper delivery options or collection points where several orders can be collected together. These systems ask customers to plan ahead, but they may reduce waste and pressure. The future of convenience may depend not only on what technology can do, but also on what people are willing to wait for.

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UNDERSTAND, DISCUSS AND WRITE

3. Comprehension. Answer in complete sentences. Use the article to help you.

1. How can convenience change customers' expectations?

2. Who may carry the pressure created by faster services?

3. Why is speed not always efficient?

4. What examples show that convenient services can be valuable?

5. What alternatives are some companies testing?

4. Discuss. Talk in small groups. Give reasons and examples.

- What are you willing to wait for?
- Should fast delivery cost more?
- How can a company be convenient and responsible?
- Has technology made people less patient?

5. Homework: Write an opinion paragraph.

Write 140-170 words about one convenient service you use. Explain its benefits, its possible consequences, and one change that would make it more responsible.

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ANSWER KEY AND TEACHING NOTE

Vocabulary matching

1. convenience - F
2. expectation - B
3. immediate - C
4. demand - E
5. efficient - D
6. consequence - A

Comprehension answers

1. How can convenience change customers' expectations?

It can make people expect results immediately and see normal waiting times as slow.

2. Who may carry the pressure created by faster services?

Workers may carry it through less predictable schedules and greater pressure.

3. Why is speed not always efficient?

Fast individual deliveries can use more vehicles, fuel, labour and packaging overall.

4. What examples show that convenient services can be valuable?

They can help people with limited mobility, busy families and people far from shops.

5. What alternatives are some companies testing?

They are testing slower cheaper delivery and collection points for combined orders.

Teaching note

Compare vocabulary answers before reading. Help learners plan a convenient service: benefits, consequences and a responsible change. Accept accurate comprehension paraphrases and supported personal responses.