

Try not to look at this until you've done all the exercises that go with the listening.

Lost and found

- Richard: What do a wedding dress and 28,000 bags have in common?
- Jackie: These are just some of the items lost on the London Underground last year.
- Richard: So for this week's podcastsinenglish.com we're going to talk about the London Underground Lost Property Office.
- Jackie: Now we use the word 'office' but in fact it's a very special place. It's absolutely enormous, Richard, isn't it?
- Richard: Yes, it collects and returns lost items from the London Underground, the tube in other words, the buses and the Victoria Coach station and all the taxis in London, the black cabs.
- Jackie: Yeah. There are thirty nine full time staff and amazingly in a year about 200,000 items are lost on the public transport in London.
- Richard: And of those 300 are returned to their owners every day.
- Jackie: So where is it? Well, if you've lost something um... on London transport, you'll find it under Baker Street Station and there you'll find some of the thousands and thousands of items that other people have lost.
- Richard: In addition to the 28,000 bags they also have about 36,000 books, thousands of mobile phones, glasses, umbrellas, suitcases...
- Jackie: Yes, all the normal stuff um... shopping bags people have left behind, keys, loads and loads of keys er... laptops as well but Richard, you know, there are some very unusual things that people lose on the Underground as well, not just wedding dresses.
- Richard: Yes, apparently they've lost wheelchairs...
- Jackie: How can someone lose a wheelchair? [both laugh] You go down there with a wheelchair and you can't walk, how can you lose a wheelchair?
- Richard: Yes. False teeth, and also there's also been a bag with 10,000 pounds of cash in it.

- Jackie: I must admit if I was on the.. on the tube with a bag with 10,000 pounds, I wouldn't lose it. [laughs]
- Richard: Yes, it doesn't matter how big, how expensive or how important things are, people lose almost anything.
- Jackie: Yes. No wonder they have so many staff, Richard, but um... it's an expensive business to find all the things and then give them back to their owners.
- Richard: Yes. If you want to get your things back, for instance small things like an umbrella, you have to pay a charge of about a pound um... and if you've lost a laptop, to get that back, it's about 20 pounds.
- Jackie: But if you've lost something very expensive and you don't reclaim it well I'm afraid that will go to an auction.
- Richard: Er... and the rest, it just goes to the charity shops.
- Jackie: Yes, so if you go into a charity shop and find your wedding dress there, well, you only have yourself to blame. [Richard laughs]