

Talking to Clients: Noisy Pipes – B1/B2

English for Plumbers | Intermediate to Upper Intermediate

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 56

Note: Exercise 8 (Listening) is completed using the interactive online lesson only.

Vocabulary

Term	Meaning	Example
water hammer	a loud banging noise caused by water stopping suddenly in a pipe, creating a pressure shock	"The banging sound every time the tap is turned off is classic water hammer."
air lock	a pocket of trapped air inside a pipe that causes gurgling or prevents flow	"An air lock in the hot water circuit is causing the intermittent gurgling."
thermal expansion	the movement of pipes as they expand when heated and contract when they cool down	"The ticking sound from the floor is thermal expansion as the pipes heat up."
banging	a loud knocking sound from pipes, usually caused by water hammer or loose pipework	"The banging started after the new tap was fitted."
vibration	a rapid shaking of a pipe caused by water flowing at high speed or pressure	"High water pressure is causing the pipe to vibrate inside the wall."
loose clip	a pipe bracket or fixing that has come away from the wall, allowing the pipe to move	"A loose clip is letting the pipe bang against the joist when water flows."
bracket	a fixing used to hold a pipe firmly against a wall or floor structure	"Fit an additional bracket between the two existing ones to stop the movement."
check valve	a valve that allows water to flow in one direction only, preventing pressure waves from travelling back	"Fitting a check valve at the tap will eliminate the water hammer."
pressure shock	a sudden spike in pressure inside a pipe when flow is stopped quickly	"The pressure shock travels back through the system and causes the banging sound."
diagnose	to identify the cause of a problem through systematic investigation	"I need to diagnose the cause before I can recommend a fix."
rattling	a loose, intermittent knocking or clattering sound from a pipe or fitting	"The rattling behind the bath panel happens every time the hot water is running."
isolate	to shut off water to a section in order to test or work on it safely	"I will isolate the hot circuit and check for air locks."
intermittent	not constant — happening at irregular intervals rather than all the time	"The noise is intermittent. It only happens when the heating comes on."
secure	to fix a pipe or fitting firmly in place so it cannot move	"I will secure the pipe to the joist with an additional clip."

pressure surge	a sudden increase in water pressure that passes through a system as a wave	"A pressure surge from the mains can trigger water hammer throughout the system."
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Exercise 1 - True or False?

Read each sentence. Write True or False on the line.

1. Water hammer is caused by water stopping suddenly and creating a pressure shock. _____
2. Thermal expansion causes pipes to make a banging sound when water is turned off. _____
3. A check valve allows water to flow in one direction only. _____
4. A loose clip allows a pipe to move and make contact with the surrounding structure. _____
5. An air lock is a pocket of trapped water that prevents air from flowing. _____
6. Intermittent noise happens constantly at all times of day. _____
7. A pressure surge is a sudden increase in water pressure that travels through a system. _____
8. Securing a pipe means fixing it firmly so it cannot move. _____

Exercise 2 - Multiple Choice

Circle the correct word or phrase.

1. The loud banging when the tap is turned off is a classic sign of ____.
thermal expansion / air lock / water hammer / rattling
2. The ticking sound from the floorboards is caused by ____ as the heating pipes warm up.
vibration / pressure surge / thermal expansion / water hammer
3. There is a ____ clip behind the bath panel. The pipe is free to move when water flows.
check / loose / rattling / intermittent
4. Fitting a ____ valve at the tap will stop the pressure shock from travelling back through the system.
thermal / check / pressure / loose
5. The noise is _____. It only happens when the boiler fires up in the morning.
diagnosed / secure / intermittent / vibrating
6. I need to ____ the cause before I can recommend the correct fix.
diagnose / secure / rattle / isolate
7. I will ____ the pipe to the joist with an additional bracket to stop the movement.
vibrate / check / isolate / secure
8. High water pressure is causing the pipe inside the wall to ____.
hammer / vibrate / rattle / air lock

Exercise 3 - Matching

Match each term (1-8) with the correct description (A-H).

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. water hammer ____ | A. A rapid wave of increased pressure that passes through pipework from the mains |
| 2. thermal expansion ____ | B. Rapid movement of a pipe caused by high-velocity water flow or excess pressure |

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 3. check valve ____ | C. The movement of pipes as they grow slightly longer when heated and shrink when cooled |
| 4. pressure shock ____ | D. A pipe bracket that has come away from its fixing, allowing the pipe to move freely |
| 5. loose clip ____ | E. A one-way valve that prevents pressure waves from travelling backwards through a system |
| 6. vibration ____ | F. A sudden spike in pipe pressure that occurs when fast-moving water is stopped abruptly |
| 7. intermittent ____ | G. Occurring at irregular intervals rather than continuously |
| 8. pressure surge ____ | H. A banging noise caused by a sudden stop in water flow creating a pressure shock wave |

Exercise 4 - Gap Fill

Write the correct word in each gap. The word is given in brackets.

- The loud bang every time the washing machine stops is caused by _____. (water hammer)
- The ticking noise from under the floor is _____ expansion as the pipes heat up. (thermal)
- There is a _____ clip behind the panel. I can hear the pipe hitting the joist. (loose)
- Fitting a _____ valve will stop the pressure shock from bouncing back through the system. (check)
- The noise is _____. It only happens when two or more outlets are open at the same time. (intermittent)
- I will _____ the pipe to the wall with two additional brackets to stop the rattling. (secure)
- I will _____ the hot circuit to check for trapped air before investigating further. (isolate)
- High pressure is causing _____ in the pipe inside the cavity wall. (vibration)

Exercise 5 - Word Order

Put the words in the correct order.

- to / the / need / cause / I / diagnose

- the / water / hammer / valve / Fit / check / to / stop

- panel / the / is / loose / a / There / behind / clip

- Secure / the / joist / bracket / to / an / with / pipe / additional / the

- sound / The / ticking / thermal / is / expansion

- check / Isolate / the / for / air / locks / hot / circuit

- The / noise / and / only / in / intermittent / the / is / morning / happens

8. pressure / pipe / High / vibration / a / causing / the / is / in

Exercise 6 - Word Sort

Write each term in the correct column.

Terms: rattling | bracket | check valve | secure | thermal expansion | vibration | loose clip | water hammer

Describing the Noise	Causes and Fixes
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Exercise 7 - Complete the Conversation

Choose the correct word or phrase to complete each gap.

Client: We have a really loud banging noise every time we turn the taps off. It shakes the whole wall.

Plumber: That is a classic description of _____. It happens when water stops suddenly and creates a pressure shock.

(water hammer / air lock / rattling / vibration)

Client: And there is also a rattling sound from the pipes behind the bath panel when the hot water is running.

Plumber: That sounds like a _____ clip. The pipe is free to move and knocks against the structure when water flows.

(thermal / loose / check / pressure)

Client: Can both problems be fixed?

Plumber: Yes. For the banging, I will fit a _____ valve at the tap. It stops the pressure shock from travelling back.

(check / surge / pressure / thermal)

Client: And the rattling behind the bath?

Plumber: I will remove the panel, find the loose clip, and _____ the pipe to the joist with an additional bracket.

(secure / isolate / rattle / diagnose)

Client: There is also an occasional ticking from under the floorboards when the heating comes on.

Plumber: That is almost certainly _____ expansion. The pipes grow slightly as they heat up and rub against the joists.

(pressure / thermal / vibration / water)

Client: Is that something to worry about?

Plumber: Not usually. But I can fit pipe insulation around the contact points to _____ the noise.

(isolate / diagnose / eliminate / vibrate)

TEACHER ANSWER KEY - DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS

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Teacher Answer Key

Note: Exercise 8 (Listening) is online only and not included in this PDF.

Exercise 1

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. False
6. False
7. True
8. True

Exercise 2

1. water hammer
2. thermal expansion
3. loose
4. check
5. intermittent
6. diagnose
7. secure
8. vibrate

Exercise 3

1. water hammer -> H
2. thermal expansion -> C
3. check valve -> E
4. pressure shock -> F
5. loose clip -> D
6. vibration -> B
7. intermittent -> G
8. pressure surge -> A

Exercise 4

1. water hammer
2. thermal
3. loose
4. check

- 5. intermittent
- 6. secure
- 7. isolate
- 8. vibration

Exercise 5

- 1. I need to diagnose the cause
- 2. Fit the check valve to stop water hammer
- 3. There is a loose clip behind the panel
- 4. Secure the pipe to the joist with an additional bracket
- 5. The ticking sound is thermal expansion
- 6. Isolate the hot circuit check for air locks
- 7. The noise is intermittent and only happens in the morning
- 8. High pressure is causing vibration in the pipe

Exercise 6

Describing the Noise: water hammer, thermal expansion, rattling, vibration

Causes and Fixes: check valve, loose clip, bracket, secure

Exercise 7

Plumber: water hammer

Plumber: loose

Plumber: check

Plumber: secure

Plumber: thermal

Plumber: eliminate