William: Hello and welcome to How To, my name is William Kremer. Occasionally, at work or at home, someone will say something that is very rude and offensive. You’ll be shocked and angry… we say in English that you take offence at their words – you take offence. In today’s programme, we’re going to look at a few things you might say in response to somebody very rude.

You’re going to hear Martin and Claire. They work in the same team. Martin isn’t very pleased with Claire’s work and he’s decided to tell her. But it’s important to note that Martin isn’t Claire’s boss, he’s just a co-worker or a colleague. And he isn’t a very nice person, so Claire is going to take offence at some of the things he says.

In this first clip, Martin mentions a discount which Claire gave a client without asking his advice. Claire wants to stop Martin speaking so that she can defend herself. How does she do this?

Martin: You know, for example that business with Argentinet, that discount that you gave them. You know, you didn’t ask for anyone’s advice and you know, I just sort of found out about it in the pub. Erm…

Claire: Just a minute, hang on, just a second.

William: Claire says, ‘Just a minute, hang on, just a second.’ Listen again.

Martin: Erm…

Claire: Just a minute, hang on, just a second.
William: Now, these phrases – ‘Just a minute’, ‘hang on’ and ‘just a second’ - can be used by themselves, they don’t have to be used all together. In the next clip, Martin is very rude to Claire. He says that at work she spends all her time on social networking sites on the Internet, or polishing her nails. How does Claire react to that?

Martin: I don’t necessarily see that er… spending most of the day on social networking sites and polishing your nails has much to do with that so…

Claire: Just a second! Just a second Martin, I really really take exception to that! OK, maybe I’m on social networking sites because that’s the way business works, but when we’re talking about ‘polishing your nails’ I really really do take exception to that!

William: Claire stops Martin by saying ‘Just a second, Martin.’ Claire is using Martin’s name here to give her words extra weight and perhaps to gain a slight power over Martin. After he’s stopped talking, she says ‘I really really take exception to that!’ Saying ‘I take exception to that’ is quite a strong way of indicating that you’re upset and offended by something someone has said. Listen again.

Martin: I don’t necessarily see that er… spending most of the day on social networking sites and polishing your nails has much to do with that so…

Claire: Just a second! Just a second Martin, I really really take exception to that! OK, maybe I’m on social networking sites because that’s the way business works, but when we’re talking about ‘polishing your nails’ I really really do take exception to that!

William: Notice how Claire gives extra emphasis to what she says by using really and do. At the end of that clip, she doesn’t say ‘I take exception to that’ but ‘I really really do take exception to that’ – she’s telling Martin that she is very offended indeed.
After something has been said it’s not possible to remove those words from history. But actually, we can ask someone to say that they regret saying something. Listen to this:

**Voice:** Take that back!

**William:** ‘Take that back!’ Or you could say…

**Voice:** I think you should take back what you just said!

**William:** ‘I think you should take back what you just said!’ The speaker is asking someone to say ‘sorry’ for what they just said. This is quite a serious phrase, so only use it if you’re very upset by what someone has said.

Let’s go back to Martin and Claire. Martin now makes a very offensive remark to Claire - he says that she has walked straight from the classroom and into the office. He means that she doesn’t have any work experience. Claire is so offended, that she threatens to make a complaint to their boss. Listen:

**Martin:** How do you think it looks if, you know, somebody who’s frankly walked straight out of a classroom into this office is driving around in a lim-

**Claire:** I’m sorry, I’m sorry Martin… I’m just, I’m not going to let you talk to me like that. I think you’ve got a very very rude rude manner, your choice of words is offensive and sexist and I’m really… I’m very close to putting in a complaint about you with that kind of language.

**William:** Claire says, ‘I’m sorry, Martin…’.

**Claire:** I’m sorry, I’m sorry Martin… I’m just, I’m not going to let you talk to me like that.
William: Claire isn’t actually apologising. Saying ‘Sorry’ here is a way of saying she can’t agree, that she has a very different opinion. She says ‘Sorry, I’m not going to let you talk to me like that’ and then she explains why she doesn’t like the way Martin talks to her. ‘Sorry, I’m not going to let you talk to me like that’. Listen again.

Claire: I’m sorry Martin… I’m just, I’m not going to let you talk to me like that. I think you’ve got a very very rude rude manner, your choice of words is offensive and sexist and I’m really… I’m very close to putting in a complaint about you with that kind of language.

William: So we’ve looked at a few different ways there that you can show that you’re shocked or upset by something that someone has said. It’s interesting language, but I hope it’s not very useful to you!