Meta launches audio-only Ray-Ban glasses

LEVEL B2


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I. WARM-UP

1. What wearable tech have you tried, and how did it feel?
2. Where do you think cameras should not be allowed?
3. What makes a gadget feel safe to use in public?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

backlash
a strong negative public reaction to something that has happened

consent
permission from someone to let something happen

ban
an official rule stopping people from using or doing something

awareness
people's knowledge that something exists or is happening

Bluetooth
short-range wireless technology that connects devices

voice-activated
working when you speak a command to it

notorious
well known for a bad reason

harass
to repeatedly bother or intimidate someone

III. READING

Meta is launching Ray-Ban Meta Audio, a camera-free version of its smart glasses. The move follows a backlash against earlier camera models, which were linked to people filming others without consent and sharing clips.

Some UK venues, including JD Wetherspoon pubs, major theatres, Comic-Con, certain schools and Faslane naval base, have a ban in place. The glasses were first released in 2023 with Ray-Ban and became notorious among critics. Meta denies rushing the change, saying the audio model had been in development for two years.

It keeps the audio functions—phone calls and music—with sound funnelled towards the ear, and it is lighter and cheaper with better battery life. The glasses connect by Bluetooth to Meta's AI app and are voice-activated. Mark Zuckerberg has predicted smart glasses could replace phones.

Supporters say audio-only use aids navigation and safety, although public awareness may be low. However, using them means sharing location data with Meta, which worries some users after reports of people using camera models to harass others.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **BBC News***: "They were labelled 'pervert glasses'. Will a...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What new product version is Meta launching?
2. Why did earlier smart glasses face a backlash?
3. Which UK places have bans on the glasses?
4. What features does the audio-only model keep?
5. What does Meta say about the product's timeline?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Would you try audio-only glasses? Why or why not?
2. Where should wearables with cameras be banned, if anywhere?
3. Do hands-free audio benefits outweigh data-sharing risks?
4. How could firms raise awareness without making people anxious?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Past perfect continuous

Use had been + verb-ing to show an action that started before another past event and was still continuing then.

"Meta **had been developing** *the audio model for two years."*

"Supporters **had been expressing** *concern about camera models for months."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence using the past perfect continuous (had been + verb-ing).

1. By then, engineers (work) ___ on battery life for weeks. _____
2. Before the bans, people (film) ___ strangers for months. _____
3. Critics (warn) ___ about privacy for years before the change. _____
4. When the battery died, I (listen) ___ to music for hours. _____
5. Supporters (argue) ___ the benefits of audio-only glasses for weeks. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 10 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach product names (Meta, Ray-Ban) and pronunciation for Bluetooth, consent, notorious; concept-check consent vs permission and backlash.
- Run a skim-read (what changed in the new model?) then a scan for details (who banned them, which features stayed). The story mentions harassment and privacy worries, so start discussion in pairs and say students may talk about the news, not personal experiences.
- Differentiate: stronger students prepare a 70-word pitch for or against audio-only glasses; others highlight sentences showing benefits and risks.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Start with a quick poll, then pair sceptics with fans to compare one practical use each.
2. Board three sensitive spaces (schools, pubs, theatres) and ask groups to set one clear rule for each.
3. If answers stall at “it depends”, ask for two concrete moments when audio helps and one risk.
4. Have students design a short notice that informs users without using scary words; share and vote.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Debate: In teams, hold a 6-minute mini-debate: camera-free glasses solve the problem—yes or no.

Writing: Write a 90-word store notice explaining your venue’s policy on smart glasses.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Past perfect continuous

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What new product version is Meta launching?
   Ray-Ban Meta Audio, a camera-free smart glasses model.
2. Why did earlier smart glasses face a backlash?
   They were linked to filming people without consent and sharing clips.
3. Which UK places have bans on the glasses?
   JD Wetherspoon pubs, major theatres, Comic-Con, some schools and Faslane.
4. What features does the audio-only model keep?
   Phone calls and music, with sound funnelled to the ear.
5. What does Meta say about the product's timeline?
   It had been in development for two years and was not rushed.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence using the past perfect continuous (had been + verb-ing).

1. By then, engineers ___ on battery life for weeks. **had been working**
2. Before the bans, people ___ strangers for months. **had been filming**
3. Critics ___ about privacy for years before the change. **had been warning**
4. When the battery died, I ___ to music for hours. **had been listening**
5. Supporters ___ the benefits of audio-only glasses for weeks. **had been arguing**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use had been + verb-ing to show an action that started before another past event and was still continuing then. (Examples constructed.)

*"Meta **had been developing** the audio model for two years."*

*"Supporters **had been expressing** concern about camera models for months."*