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SPEAK ENGLISH THE RIGHT WAY

تنظیم و گردآوری: مژگان بهروزپور
زمستان 94

Speak English the right way

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زمستان 94

Greeting

There are different ways to greet people:

Greeting means welcoming someone with particular words or a particular action.

When meeting people formally for the first time, we greet by shaking hands and saying "How do you do?" or "Pleased to meet you."

"How do you do?" isn't really a question, it just means "Hello".

When young people meet informally they sometimes greet and say "Give me five!" and slap their hands together (high five).

Generally we do not greet by shaking hands with people we know well. We greet by just saying 'hi' or 'hello'

Here are some expressions you can use to greet people.

Greeting

Greeting HI, hello.

Good morning, good afternoon, good evening.

How are you?

How are you doing?

How do you do?

Responding to greeting

Hi, hello.

Good morning/Good afternoon/Good evening.

I'm fine thank you (thanks)/Okay! Thank you (thanks)/can't complain/Not bad.

How about you? /And you?

How do you do?

Things to remember about greeting:

When you greet someone and say:

"How do you do?"

This isn't really a question, it just means "Hello".

Saying Goodbye

There are different expressions or phrases to say goodbye. These parting phrases depend on situations and the people involved, their social status and personal relationship.

Leaving and saying goodbye

All right, everyone, it's time to head off.

Anyway, guys I'm going to make a move.

Ok, everyone, it's time to leave you.

See you later / tomorrow / soon.

Talk to you later!

If you want to say goodbye in a hurry

I'm so sorry, I've got to rush off / run / hurry!

I'm afraid I'm going to have to rush off / run / hurry!

Saying goodbye politely after meeting someone

Nice to see you.

It's been lovely to see you.

It was great to see you.

Good to see you.

Have a lovely / nice evening.

Have a good day.

Saying goodbye to your hosts

Thanks very much for dinner/ lunch - it was lovely!

Thank you very much for having me.

Other ways to say goodbye

Take care

Bye!

Bye Bye!

Later man!

Have a good one!

It's time to be going!

So Long!

Slang Goodbyes

Catch you later

Peace! / Peace out

I'm out!

Smell you later

Final goodbye

Farewell (when you intend never to see your interlocutor again)

Introducing yourself and others

Introducing yourself:

Here are expressions to introduce yourself: introducing people

My name is...

I'm....

Nice to meet you; I'm...

Pleased to meet you; I'm...

Let me introduce myself; I'm...

I'd like to introduce myself; I'm...

Introducing others:

Here are expressions to introduce others:

Jack, please meet Nicolas.

Jack, have you met Nicolas?

I'd like you to meet Liza.

I'd like to introduce you to Betty.

Leila, this is Barbara. Barbara this is Leila.

Useful responses when introducing yourself or other people:

Nice to meet you.

Pleased to meet you.

Happy to meet you.

How do you do?

Things to remember:

When introducing yourself or other people in a formal situation use full names. ("I'm Alex Letterman.")

"How do you do?" isn't really a question, it just means "Hello"

Talking about ability

How to express ability

To express that someone has the power or skill to do something, can and be able are used.

Examples:

I can't help you. I am busy.

I'm unable to help you.

When I was young I was able to earn my living pretty well; I could work hard. Now I can't. I'm too old.

I can stand on my head for five minutes.

Can you speak Arabic?

Yes, I can.

Expressing ability

In the present:

Express ability in the present as follows:

I can speak good English.

I can't stand on my head.

In the past

Express ability in the past as follows

I was unable to visit him.

I couldn't eat at all when I was ill.

In the future

Express ability in the future as follows

I will be able to buy a house when I get a good job.

The teacher can assist you after class if you have any questions.

Things to remember: I can make you smile

Can is always followed by an infinitive without "to."

Examples:

I can ride my bike and I can drive a car, but I can't drive a lorry.

Can in the past is was able or could

Examples:

When I was young I was able to earn my living pretty well. Now I can't; I'm too old.

I couldn't hear what he was saying.

Can in the future is will be able.

Example:

When I finish my studies, I will be able to find a job.

Asking For and Giving Permission

Asking for and giving permission:

When you ask for permission to use something that belongs to someone else you have to do your best to be polite. It is desirable to use the word "please."

Asking for Permission:

Can I go out, please?

May I open the window, please?

Please, can I have a look at your photo album?

Please, may I taste that hot spicy couscous dish?

Do you mind if I smoke?

Would you mind if I asked you something?

Is it okay if I sit here?

Would it be all right if I borrowed your mobile Phone?

Giving Permission:

Permission yes, please do.

Sure, go ahead.

Sure.

No problem.

Please feel free.

Refusing to give permission:

No, please don't.

I'm sorry, but that's not possible.

I'm afraid, but you can't.

Talking About Favorite Things

When you talk about your favorite things you talk about the best liked or most enjoyed things.

Examples:

"What's your favorite color?" "Green."

Asking about favorite things: Talking about Favorite Things

What's your favorite sport?

What sport do you like best?

What sport do you like most?

What kind of sport do you like best?

Who's your favorite football player?

Responding:

My favorite sport is football.

I like football best.

I like football most.

My favorite football player is Ronaldo.

Things to remember:

"Favourite" is British spelling.

"Favorite" is American spelling.

Telling the Time

How to tell the time in English?

Clock

There are two common ways of telling the time in English. For 2:40 you can use one of these two ways.

Digital: the easier way - "Two forty"

Classical: you say the minutes first then the hour - "twenty to three"

Making Offers

How to make offers in English?

It is common that English speakers make offers in conversations in order to be polite and helpful. When they do so they use these expressions:

Can I...?

Shall I...?

Would you like ...?

How about...?

English learner must be able to make offers as well as accept or reject them. The following are useful expressions to do so.

Examples:

"Can I help you?"

"Shall I open the window for you?"

"Would you like another cup of coffee?"

"Would you like me to clean the board?"

"How about a juice?"

Remember:

Shall, can and will are followed by the verb without to.

Example:

"Can I help you?"

"Shall I bring you the mobile phone?"

Shall is more formal than can.

Would you like... is followed either by a noun, or by the verb with to.

Example:

"Would you like some tea?"

"Would you like to drink some coffee?"

Examples:

"Can I help you?"

"No thanks, I'm just having a look." (With a shop assistant.)

"Can I help you?"

"Do you know where the post office is?"

"Shall I help you with your math problem?"

"Yes, please. That would be very nice of you."

"Would you like a cup of tea?"

"No thanks." Or, "No thank you."

"Would you like another piece of cake?"

"Yes please, that would be nice."

"Yes please, I'd love one."

"Would you like me to do the ironing for you?"

"If you wouldn't mind."

"If you could."

"I'll do the washing, if you like."

"It's OK, I can do it."

"Don't worry, I'll do it."

"Thank you that would be great."

Shock and disbelief

Expressing shock and disbelief

It is sometimes difficult to say how you feel in unexpected situations, such as natural disasters, bad news .., especially when you feel sad.

Here's a list of some common expressions to help you express

Shock

And disbelief.

Shock:

Examples:

I was shocked to hear the news.

I was stunned / taken aback by the news

I was completely taken aback by his behavior.

I was just stunned by her clothes.

The news came as a complete shock.

We're all in complete shock.

Disbelief:

Examples:

I just can't believe he won the race.

It's unbelievable that they got married

I just can't imagine they were able to get along with each other.

Expressing Indifference

How to express indifference?

Sometimes you may have no particular interest or concern about something and you want to express indifference during a conversation. Here are some expressions you can use:

Expressing indifference

So what?

Who cares!

I don't care!

It's all the same to me.

I have no preference.

I suppose so.

I don't mind.

It doesn't matter to me

Whatever (you want).

Whatever you do?

I don't mind.

It's your decision.

Why should I care?

It makes no difference to me.

Making an Appointment

Making an appointment mobile

Being able to make and cancel an appointment is an important skill in English. You need to be able to:

Make an appointment,

Respond to an appointment and

Cancel an appointment.

Here are some expressions you can use to do this concisely and clearly.

Asking to meet:

Examples:

"Are you available on the 17th?"

"Can we meet on the 16th?"

"How does the 3rd sound to you?"

"Are you free next week?"

"Would Friday suit you?"

"Is next Tuesday convenient for you?"

"What about sometime next week?"

Responding to an appointment:

Examples:

"Yes, Monday is fine."

"Monday suits me."

"Thursday would be perfect."

"I'm afraid I can't on the 3rd. What about the 6th?"

"I'm sorry, I won't be able to make it on Monday. Could we meet on Tuesday instead?"

"Ah, Wednesday is going to be a little difficult. I'd much prefer Friday, if that's alright with you."

"I really don't think I can on the 17th. Can we meet up on the 19th?"

Cancelling an appointment

You can cancel an appointment as follows

Unfortunately, due to some unforeseen business, I will be unable to keep our appointment for tomorrow afternoon.

Would it be possible to arrange another time later in the week?

I'm afraid that I have to cancel our meeting on Wednesday, as something unexpected has come up.

Preferences

Talking about your preferences:

Questions about preferences tea or coffee

Which do you prefer tea or coffee?

Which do you prefer studying mathematics or physics?

Which do you prefer to drink juice or mineral water?

Which do you like better basketball or football?

Do you prefer pizza or spaghetti?

Would you prefer to eat a cake or an apple?

Would you rather eat a cake or an apple?

Replies

I prefer baseball.

I'd prefer to drink juice

I'd rather drink mineral water

If I had a choice, I would eat a sandwich.

A cup of coffee would be suitable.

Things to remember about preferences

"I'd prefer" + to + verb

"I'd rather" + verb

Making invitations

Do you know how to invite someone to your house for dinner or to go to the movies?

What do you say in English when someone invites you?

Here are some common expressions you can use when making or responding to invitations

Inviting:

Do you want to go to the movies tonight?

Would you like to go to the theater tomorrow?

Would you be interested in going to the stadium next Sunday?

How do you fancy going to the restaurant for dinner?

How about going to the movies?

Care to come over for lunch?

I was just wondering if you would like to come over for a drink.

We'd be delighted to have you over for my birthday party.

Accepting invitations:

Sure. What time?

I'd love to, thanks.

That's very kind of you, thanks.

That sounds lovely, thank you.

What a great idea, thank you.

Sure. When should I be there?

Declining invitations:

Invitational can't. I have to work.

This evening is no good. I have an appointment.

I'm busy tomorrow. Can I take a rain check* on that?

That's very kind of you, but actually I'm doing something else this afternoon.

Well, I'd love to, but I'm already going out to the restaurant.

I'm really sorry, but I've got something else on.

I really don't think I can - I'm supposed to be doing something else.

(*rain check: used to tell someone that you cannot accept invitations now, but would like to do so at a later time)

Talking about likes and dislikes

To talk about your likes and dislikes, you can use these expressions.

Expressing likes:

I like...

I love...

I adore...

I 'm crazy about...

I'm mad about...

I enjoy...

I'm keen on...

Expressing dislikes:

I don't like...

I dislike...

I hate...

I abhor...

I can't bear...

I can't stand...

I detest...

I loathe...

Examples of likes and dislikes:

I'm mad about basketball, but I can't bear ice hockey.

I adore reading poetry, but I loathe doing the housework.

If you neither like nor dislike something:

"I don't mind doing the housework."

Things to remember about likes and dislikes:

1. When these expressions are followed by a verb, the latter is put in the -ing form.

Examples:

"I like listening to music."

"I hate wearing sunglasses."

2. Note that "very much" & "a lot" always come after the things you like.

Examples:

"I like basketball very much/a lot. NOT" I like very much/a lot basketball."

3. be careful when you use "I don't mind..."

Examples:

"Do you mind playing football?"

"No, I don't mind." (Although it's in a negative form, it means that it's ok for me. I neither love it nor hate it.)

Expressing obligation

When it is necessary or obligatory to do something, you express obligation.

Obligation in the present:

I have to finish my work before this evening.

I have got to learn English if I want to live in the

I must see the doctor soon because I don't feel well.

It is obligatory that I stop when the traffic light turn red.

It is necessary that I take a taxi. I'm late.

Obligation in the past:

I had to work extra hours to pay my bills.

Obligation in the future:

I'll have to borrow money.

Things to remember:

1. The difference between "Have to" and "must" is that "have to "indicates that someone else has imposed conditions on us.

2. The simple past of "must" is "had to".

3. The simple future of "must" is "will have to".

4. Should also expresses obligation. But there is a difference between must / have to and should:

Must / have to = 100% obligation. "When the traffic light turn red, you must stop."

Should = 50% obligation. It's more an advice than an obligation. "You look tired. You should have a rest."

Expressing prohibition

To express prohibition the following expressions are used.

To express prohibition you can use:

It is prohibited to...

You aren't allowed to...

You mustn't...

You aren't permitted to...

It is forbidden to...

Examples:

Prohibition Parking is strictly prohibited between these gates.

Students aren't allowed to come too late to school.

Drivers mustn't park their cars here.

It is forbidden to walk on grass.

Smoking isn't permitted in hospitals.

People aren't permitted to throw rubbish here.

Asking for and giving advice

Expressions

Asking for advice:

I've got a bad toothache. What do you suggest?

What do you advise me to do?

What should I do?

What ought I to do?

What's your advice?

If you were me what would you do?

Giving advice

If I were you, I would go to the dentist.

Why don't you go to the dentist?

You'd better brush your teeth regularly.

You ought to/should avoid eating sweets.

If you take my advice, you'll go to the dentist.

It might be a good idea to brush your teeth on a regular basis.

I advise you to brush your teeth on a regular basis.

Have you thought about seeing a dentist?

Declining to give advice

I don't know what to advise, I'm afraid.

I wish I could suggest something, but I can't.

I wish I could help.

I'm afraid I can't really help you.

Things to remember about asking for and giving advice: advice

1. "Advise" is a verb.

Example:

"I advise you to learn English. You will undoubtedly need it in your higher studies"

2. "Advice" is a noun.

Example:

"My father gave me this piece of advice when I was young: never give up"

3. "Ought to" has nearly the same meaning as "should". The only difference is that "ought to" refers to a moral or external obligation but should is more of an advice.

Example:

"You ought to stop smoking."

"You should stop smoking."

4. "You'd better" is the short form of "you had better"

Example:

"You'd better see a doctor!" = "You had better see the doctor"

Expressing lack of necessity (Absence of obligation)

Expressing lack of necessity

To express lack of necessity (also called absence of obligation), speakers usually use "don't have to", "don't need to", "needn't".

The form that we use to express lack of necessity could be one of the following:

He doesn't have to get up early.

He doesn't need to get up early.

He needn't get up early

Expressing lack of necessity in the present:

I don't have to drive fast.

I don't need to write the report myself. My secretary can do that for me.

I needn't buy all these things.

It isn't necessary to take your umbrella. It isn't raining.

Expressing lack of necessity in the past:

I didn't have to tell him about my project. He already knew everything about it.

Expressing lack of necessity in the future:

I won't have to call on my grandfather tomorrow morning. He'll be at the doctor's for his regular medical checkup.

Things to remember about expressing lack of necessity:

1. "Lack of necessity" is also called "absence of obligation".

2. "Needn't" is followed by an infinitive without "to".

Example: "I needn't buy tomatoes".

3. - In the past there is a difference in the negative forms of need:

Didn't need = didn't have to

I didn't need to wait, she was just on time.

(She was on time. I didn't have to wait.)

Needn't = absence of obligation/lack of necessity

We needn't have waited, they didn't come.

(It was useless to wait. They didn't come)

Making and responding to suggestions

Suggestions

The following English phrases and expressions are all used to make suggestions and give advice to people.

Making suggestions:

Let's revise our lessons.

What about going to the cinema tonight?

How about playing cards?

Why don't we do our homework?

Couldn't we invite your grandmother to our party?

Shall we have a walk along the river?

What would you say to a cup of coffee?

Don't you think it is a good idea to watch TV?

Does it matter if we use your car?

Accepting suggestions:

Suggestions Ok. Yes, let's.

Yes, I'd like to.

Yes, I'd love to.

What a good idea!

Why not?

Yes, with pleasure.

Yes, I feel like taking a walk.

That sounds like a good idea.

Refusing suggestions:

No, let's not.

No, I'd rather not.

I don't feel like it.

I dislike going for a walk.

What an awful / bad idea!

Things to remember about suggestions:

1. The verb "suggest" can be followed by either:

Should + verb = I suggest (that) we should go to the theater.

A verb (in the subjunctive form) = I suggest (that) we go to the movies.

2. "That" is optional:

"I suggest that we should visit Paris."

"I suggest we should visit Paris."

Expressing Thanks and Gratitude

How to express thanks and gratitude

This page will present different ways of expressing thanks and gratitude in English.

You express thanks to tell someone that you are grateful for something that they have done or given to you.

Expressing thanks and gratitude

Here are different ways to say thank you and to show your appreciation for something done or given to you.

Examples:

Thanks.

Sincere thanks.

Thank you.

I am indebted to you.

I appreciate what you've done for me.

I am grateful.

You've been very helpful.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

If anyone deserves thanks, it's you.

Thanks for being thoughtful.

What you've done means a lot to me.

How can I ever thank you enough for all you've done?

You have been extremely supportive through this difficult time.

I want to thank you for all the support and concern.

That was very kind of you.

Thank you for being there for me.

Responding to Thanks

How to respond to thanks

You can use different expressions or phrases to respond to thanks and show that you are happy to help. Being polite in your response depends on how you say these expressions. The sincerity of your response is conveyed very much more in the tone of your voice, the body language and the facial expression.

Ways to accept thanks

You're welcome

Don't mention

(It's) my pleasure

It's nothing

Think nothing of it

I'm glad/happy I could help

It's no bother

It's/that's all right

It's/that's ok

No problem

Not at all

Of course

Anytime

Sure

Expressing Your Opinion

How to express your opinion

Expressing opinion

I think...

As far as I'm concerned,

To my mind...

According to me...

As I see it,

It seems to me that...

In my point of view / my opinion,

From my point of view...

I am of the opinion that...

I take the view that. ..

My personal view is that...

In my experience...

As far as I understand / can see/see it...

Agreeing or disagreeing

Agreeing with an opinion:

I agree with this opinion.

I completely agree with this view.

This is absolutely right.

I couldn't / can't agree more.

Partial agreement:

I agree with this point of view, but...

This idea is right, but...

I agree with you, but...

Disagreeing with an opinion:

I'm afraid. I can't agree with you.

I disagree with you.

I don't agree with you.

I'm not sure I agree with you

I think you're wrong

Complaining - Talking about Complaints

What are complaints?

Complaints are expressions of "displeasure or annoyance" in response to an action that is seen by the speaker as unfavorable. Suppose you want to complain about the pizza you have just ordered because it's too salty, what are the expressions needed to express and respond to complaints?

Complaining:

Here are expressions you can use when complaining: complaining

I have a complaint to make. ...

Sorry to bother you but...

I'm sorry to say this but...

I'm afraid I've got a complaint about...

I'm afraid there is a slight problem with...

Excuse me but there is a problem about...

I want to complain about...

I'm angry about...

Responding to complaints

Positive response to complaints:

I'm so sorry, but this will never occur / happen again.

I'm sorry, we promise never to make the same mistake again.

I'm really sorry; we'll do our utmost/best not to do the same mistake again.

Negative response to complaints:

Sorry there is nothing we can do about it.

I'm afraid, there isn't much we can do about it.

We are sorry but the food is just alright.

Things to remember about complaints:

When expressing a complaint in English, it helps to be polite. Although "I'm angry about your pizza. It's too salty" is one possible way of expressing a complaint, it is considered too rude and you'd better use more polite expressions if you want to get what you want!

Expressing Hope

The difference between "wish" and "hope"

How to use "wish"

Wish is most commonly used in hypothetical (or imagined/unreal) situations:

Example:

I wish (that) you were here. (Unfortunately, you're not, and I miss you.)

Sometimes wish is used in greeting and expressions of goodwill:

Example:

We wish you a "Merry Christmas."

How to use "hope"

Hope can also be used in expressions of goodwill, but the grammar is slightly different:

Examples:

I hope (that) you have a Merry Christmas. (Some time in the future)

I hope (that) you had a nice Birthday. (Some time in the past)

Hope can be used to specify a desired outcome. For future hopes, the possibilities remain open, but for past hopes, the outcome has usually been determined already.

Examples:

I hope you can come to the party on Saturday. (Future possibility)

I was hoping that you would come to the party. (But you didn't)

I had hoped to see you at the party on Saturday. (But I didn't)

Other ways to express hope

You can also express hope in the following ways:

I would like to have a car.

I really want to have a car

What I really want is to have a car.

Remember:

"I wish you had done the work" is a regret. You didn't do the work (in the past) and I am annoyed because of that.

Expressing Regret

How to express regret

Expressing regret means having a feeling of sadness about something that you did or did not do. To express regret in English, you may use many different structures. Here are some of them.

Wish / if only

You can express regret by using wish or if only:

I wish / if only + Past perfect

Examples:

I wish I had worked harder.

If only I hadn't eaten so much.

Conditional type 3

You can also express regret by using a conditional sentence type 3.

If + past perfect + would + have + past participle

Examples:

If I had worked hard, I would have passed the exam.

If I hadn't eaten so much, I wouldn't have been sick.

Should have

Regret may also be expressed by using a modal should:

Should have + Past Participle

Examples:

I should have sent him an invitation.

He should have done the work.

I regret...

You can express regret by using:

Regret + Verb + ing

OR

Regret + Noun

Examples:

He doesn't regret leaving her.

I regret the things I didn't do.

Agreement, partial agreement and disagreement

The way people agree or disagree in an argument or discussion varies in different languages.

Agreement:

It is worthwhile saying that silence is not understood as agreement. If you agree with an opinion or an idea, you are expected to say so.

Expressions

There is no doubt about it that...

I completely / absolutely agree with you.

I agree with you entirely.

I totally agree with you.

I simply must agree with that.

I am of the same opinion.

I am of the same opinion.

That's exactly what I think.

Disagreement:

Expressing disagreement is always respected as honest, and sometimes as courageous.

Expressions

I don't agree with you.

I'm sorry, but I disagree.

I'm afraid, I can't agree with you.

The problem is that...

I (very much) doubt whether...

This is in complete contradiction to...

With all due respect...

I am of a different opinion because...

I cannot share this / that / the view.

I cannot agree with this idea.

What I object to is...

I have my own thoughts about that.

Partial agreement:

Agreeing You can also agree but with reservation especially when there is a doubt or feeling of not being able to accept something completely

Expressions

It is only partly true that...

That's true, but...

I can agree with that only with reservations.

That seems obvious, but...

That is not necessarily so.

It is not as simple as it seems.

I agree with you in principle, but...

I agree with you in part, but...

Well, you could be right.

Talking about cause and effect

Cause and effect cause and effect

When we talk about an effect resulting from a certain cause, we use expressions such as:
because, since, as, owing to, due to...

Examples

The police arrested him because he broke into a bank.

The police arrested him since he broke into a bank.

She can't read the letter as she is illiterate.

He can't run fast for he is too fat.

Owing to his intelligence, he managed to solve the problem.

Due to the bad weather, they didn't go for a picnic.

Other ways to express cause and effect:

You can also express cause and effect as follows:

The cause of ...is...

...is caused by / is due to ...

Thanks to...

Is there a difference between due to and owing to?

Owing to and due to are used interchangeably by native speakers although some state that there is a difference.

A. Due to:

If you can use caused by then you can also use due to:

Example:

"The cancellation of the flight was due to (caused by) high winds."

B. Owing to:

If you can use because of then you should use owing to rather than due to:

Example:

"The flight was canceled owing to (because of) high winds."

Use of thanks to

People tend to use thanks to in positive situations.

Example:

"Thanks to his intelligence he managed to find the solution to that math problem."

Sometimes thanks to is used ironically in a negative way

Example:

"Did she lose the election?"

"Yeah, thanks to you and to all the others who didn't bother to vote?"

"The baby is awake thanks to your shouting."

Things to remember about cause and effect:

- a. Due to, because of, owing to and thanks to are followed by a noun.
- b. Because, since, as, for are followed by a verb.

Examples:

Due to his laziness, he didn't pass the exam.

Thanks to her beauty, she attracted the attention of all the guests.

Because / since /as / they are in love, they forgive each other's mistakes.

Apologizing

To apologize is to tell someone that you are sorry for having done something that has caused him inconvenience or unhappiness:

Examples:

I must apologize to Isabel for my late arrival.

I'd like to apologize for my trouble making.

Trains may be subject to delay on the northern line. We apologize for any inconvenience caused.

Here are some expressions you can use to make and respond to apologies

Making apologies :I am sorry

I do apologize for...

I must apologize for...

I apologize for...

I'd like to apologize for...

I am so sorry for...

I shouldn't have...

It's all my fault.

I'm ashamed of...

Please, forgive me for...

Excuse me for...

I'm terribly sorry for...

Pardon me for this...

Please, forgive me for my....

Please, accept my apologies for...

Accepting apologies: apologize

That's all right.

Never mind.

Don't apologize.

It doesn't matter.

Don't worry about it.

Don't mention it.

That's OK.

I quite understand.

You couldn't help it.

Forget about it.

Don't worry about it.

No harm done.

Remember:

"I'd like to apologize" is the short form of "I would like to apologize"

Expressing Possibility

What is the difference between possibility and probability?

Possibility is when there is a chance that something may happen or be true while probability is the likelihood of something happening or being true:

Example:

"Until yesterday, the project was just a possibility, but now it has become a real probability."

It is likely that it will happen.

Expressing Possibility

My grandmother may travel alone.

May be she will make the trip alone.

Perhaps she will visit London.

Possibly, she will go by plane.

It's possible that someone will meet her at the airport.

She might buy some presents for the family before she goes.

I suppose she might spend a lot of money on the presents.

There's a chance she'll like the city.

She will take an umbrella as it could rain heavily there.

Expressing impossibility

No, it's impossible to repair that old Chevrolet.

Even a good mechanic can't possibly fix it.

We may not be able to travel by car.

There's no chance my father repairs it tomorrow.

Making and responding to a request

It's important to be polite when you ask for something.

You can make a request by using:

Can you...?

Could you...?

Will you...?

Would you mind...?

Making Request:

Please hear me Can you show me your photo album, please?

Will you lend me your book, please?

Could you possibly show me the way to the post office, please?

Would you help me with this exercise, please?

Would you mind lending me your pen, please?

Responding to request:

Sure here you are.

Okay.

No, I'm sorry I need it

I'm afraid I can't.

Things to remember about making a request:

1. "Would you mind..." is followed by a gerund (verb +ing)

Example: "Would you mind lending me your book?"

2. The response to the following request:

A: "Would you mind giving me your book?"

Is either

"No, I don't mind." (Which is a positive response to the request. It means that I accept to lend you my book)

Or "Yes." (Which is a negative response to the request. It means that I don't want to lend you my book.)

3. Could is more polite than can.

Talking about fear

Fear talking about fear

There are many words and expressions you can use to talk about fear.

Questions:

How did you feel?

How did you react?

What was your reaction?

Were you afraid of...?

Were you scared of...?

Were you terrified of...?

Responses:

I was terrified, spooked, petrified...

Afraid of...

Frightened of...

Scared of...

It was a terrifying ordeal.

It scared the hell out of me.

Sent shivers out of me.

Frightened the life out of me.

Gave me goose bumps.

I jumped out of my skin.

Shook with fear.

Making Predictions

Predictions:

When making predictions (what we think will happen in the future) we can either use:

Will followed by the verb without to,

or going to followed by the verb

Examples of making predictions:

"What do you think will happen next year?"

"Next week is going to be very busy, I think."

"There won't be a rise in house prices next year."

"He isn't going to win the election."

Things to remember about making predictions

"He won't do it" is the short form of "he will not do it."

Expressing lack of understanding and asking for clarification

Here is a list of useful English phrases you can use to express lack of understanding (that is, when you fail to understand what has been said to you) and seek clarification from the person you are talking to.

How to express lack of understanding

When you fail to understand what has been said to you can use these expressions:

I beg your pardon?

I beg your pardon, but I don't quite understand.

I'm not quite sure I know what you mean.

I'm not quite sure I follow you.

I don't quite see what you mean.

I'm not sure I got your point.

Sorry, I didn't quite hear what you said.

Sorry, I didn't get your point.

I don't quite see what you're getting at.

How do ask for clarification

When you don't understand what someone has said, you can ask for clarification using the following expressions:

What do you mean by...?

Do you mean...?

Could you say that again, please?

Could you repeat please?

Could you clarify that, please?

Would you elaborate on that, please?

Could you be more explicit?

Could you explain what you mean by...?

Could you give us an example?

I wonder if you could say that in a different way.

Could you put it differently, please?

Could you be more specific, please?

Clarifying one's point or idea

To clarify your idea you can use the following expressions:

Let me explain that...

Let me explain that in more detail...

Let me put it in another way...

Sorry let me explain...

In other words...

To say this differently...

To put it differently...

Asking about and giving directions

Asking about direction

To ask about directions use these questions:

How can I get to . . . from here?

How can I get to . . . ?

Can you show me the way to...?

Can you tell me how to get to . . . ?

Where is . . . ?

What's the best way to get to . . . ?

Giving directions

To give directions use these expressions:

Go straight on

Turn left/right

Take the first (turning) to the left/right.

Go past the restaurant/school...

The ... is beside/in front of/next to...the....

Shopping

Shopping expressions

These are expressions used when you go shopping:

Can / May I help you?

Can I try it / them on?

What size do you wear? What size are you?

What color would you like?

Extra small, small, medium, large, extra large

How does it fit?

Where is the changing room?

How would you like to pay?

Can I pay by credit card / in cash?

Shopping for a T-shirt

A: Can I help you?

B: Yes, I'm looking for a T-shirt.

A: What size are you?

B: I'm a medium.

A: What color would you like?

B: A blue one.

A: Here you are.

B: Thank you. Can I try it on?

A: Certainly, the changing room is over there.

B: Thank you.

A: How does it fit?

B: It's fantastic. I like it.

A: Yes it looks nice on you.

B: Thank you. I'll buy it.

A: OK, how would you like to pay?

B: Do you take credit cards?

B: Yes, we do.

A: OK, here's my credit card.

B: Thank you. Have a nice day!

A: Thank you, goodbye.

Conversations on the Phone

Telephone conversations

It is common that English speakers make phone calls either for business reasons or personal affairs. These are expressions you can use in your conversations on the phone.

You've reached.... Company/department.

How can I help you?

Can I speak to Mr. /Mrs.....?

Could I speak to, please?

Who shall I say is calling?

Who's calling, please?

Who's speaking?

It's Mr. /Mrs... Here.

It's Mr. /Mrs... Speaking.

Mr. /Mrs... Speaking.

Please hold and I'll put you through.

Just a second. I'll see if s/he is in.

Hang on for a moment.

Interrupting People

Interrupting People politely

Sometimes, when you don't understand what your interlocutors are saying or you don't agree with them, you want to interrupt them to ask for clarification or to disagree with the point they are making. Here are some useful expressions for interrupting people.

Useful expressions to interrupt people

Excuse me for interrupting, but...

Do you mind if I interrupt you...

Sorry to butt in, but May I just...

Before we move on to the next point, may I add...?

Excuse me, may I add to that...?

Do you mind if I jump in here?

I don't mean to intrude, but...

Pardon me, but...

Excuse me, but...

Just a minute! ...

Expressing Feelings

Expressing Feelings

Sometimes you will need to express an emotion such as joy or sorrow to the person you're talking to. This page will list the different ways of expressing feelings in English.

Asking about Feelings

To ask about feelings you can use the following questions:

How are you feeling today?

You look sad / upset. Are you OK?

You seem a little bit distracted. Are you alright?

You seem kind of low today. What's wrong?

You seem a little blue today. What's the matter?

What's wrong?

What's the matter?

Are you OK / alright?

Are you happy / angry...?

Is everything OK / alright...?

Expressing Feelings

To respond to a question about feelings you can use the following expressions.

I feel a little sad / happy / angry /....

I am a little sad / happy / angry /....

To be honest, I'm a little bit sad / happy / angry /....

It's been a difficult day.

The thing is that, I am angry / sad /...

I am mad at him / her...

Vocabulary about feelings

Sad / unhappy

Feel blue

Feel low / down

Depressed

Downhearted

Angry

Cross

Annoyed

Irritated

Mad

Furious

Vexed

Indignant

Irate

Seething

Expressing condolence in English

Expressing condolence

Sometimes you will have to sympathize with a person who has experienced pain or grief for the loss of someone dear to them. This page presents some of the phrases that you can use to express condolence in English.

How to express condolence in English

Expressing condolence:

I am deeply sorry to hear about the death of...

I am really sorry to hear about the death of...

I was heartbroken by the sad news.

Words can't express the sadness I feel about...

Words fall short of expressing my sadness.

Let me express my sorrow for the loss of...

Please accept our heartfelt condolences.

We will never forget....

We will always remember...

We will sadly miss...

Sorry, I am at a loss for words to express my sadness.

Conversation Fillers

What are conversation fillers?

During a conversation, silence can be embarrassing. In order to keep the conversation going, it is recommended to use conversation fillers. These are words, phrases or merely sounds that we use to actively listen to someone speaking or to give ourselves thinking time before we answer a question, especially if we don't understand it. Conversation fillers fall under the category of formulaic language that we retrieve from memory to sound fluent.

Conversation fillers

Conversation fillers will help you sound fluent like a native speaker. Here are some examples of conversation fillers.

While listening

Really?

Right

Sure

How awful!

Oh no!

You're joking!

What a pity!

Auxiliary verbs to make short questions (as in "Have you? Did you? Is it?")

Non-words (as in "mmm, uh-huh...")

While speaking

Well

Ok

So

Let me think...

I mean

I guess/think

You know

Like (as in "I'm... like... really sad that you lost your...")

What I want to say is...

The point I want to make is....

Anyway...

Well, what I mean is that ...

Back to our topic ...

As I was saying ...

The basic idea is...

Kind of... (As in "he's kind of nice...")

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