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| Welcome to EnglishClass101.com’s English in Three Minutes. The fastest, easiest, and most fun way to learn English. | |
| Hey everyone, I’m Alisha! | |
| In this series, we’re going to learn some easy ways to ask and answer common questions in English. It’s really useful, and it only takes three minutes! | |
| In this lesson, you’re going to learn how to ask someone quite a personal question - whether or not they’re married or have a boyfriend or girlfriend! This might be useful for the single people out there among you, but it’s actually a really common question that comes up when two speakers have been chatting for a while. | |
| In an English textbook, you may see the question: “Are you married?” However, this is a little blunt, and can come across as slightly rude, or sound as if you’re trying to pick up the other person, when in fact all you want to do is find out some more information about him or her. | |
| There’s a really important little trick you can use to ask this question naturally. And that’s to say: | |
| “Are you married, or...?” | |
| Did you notice the “or...?” at the end? You stretch out the sound of the “or”. This has the effect of softening the question and making it sound less direct. | |
| Once you’ve asked this question, if the other person is married, the answer will most likely sound like this: | |
| “Yeah, I’ve been married for [3 / 5 / 10] years.” | |
| If you’re not married but are engaged, then how would you answer this? Just say: | |
| “Not yet, but I’m engaged.” | |
| (The correct response to this, by the way, is usually “Congratulations!”) | |
| If you aren’t yet engaged but do have a long-term boyfriend or girlfriend, this is a good opportunity to bring that up. | |
| “No, but I have a long-term boyfriend/girlfriend.” | |
| By the way, the word “steady” sometimes comes up in English textbooks, but this is a really old-fashioned way to say “long-term”, and people don’t really use it any more. | |
| But what if you’re not married, not engaged, and don’t have a boyfriend or girlfriend? | |
| Then you can reply: |  |
| “No, I’m single at the moment.” | |
| This “at the moment” is another way to soften what you’re saying and make it sound less blunt. | |
| Now it’s time for Alisha’s Advice! | |
| As I mentioned at the beginning, this question is a little personal, so it’s best to ask it only after you’ve been chatting for a little while. Asking it straight away can sound odd and as if all you want to know is whether the other person is single or not, and don’t care about other things. | |
| Do you know how to compliment someone on what they’re wearing in natural English? In this next lesson you’ll learn how! See you next time! | |