

Stop Saying "These Days / Nowadays" Every Sentence!

babo level: ★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

Too many Korean ESL students begin every sentence with "these days" or "nowadays" . It is completely unnecessary, and **manifests** into a bad habit.

Incorrect:

What's your favorite sport?

These days, I love baseball.

How old are you?

Nowadays, I'm 33 years old.

How do you spend your weekends?

These days, I spend my weekends studying for my upcoming exam.

Correct:

What's your favorite sport?

I love baseball.

How old are you?

I'm 34.

How do you spend your weekends?

I spend my weekend studying.

When to use "these days" / "nowadays":

Use 'these days' and 'nowadays' when you are **contrasting** the past and the present. For example:

Do you still live in Seoul?

I haven't lived in for over three years now. These days, I'm living South of Seoul in Cheongju

Do you still work for Jeju Airlines?

I used to, but three months ago I quit. These days, I'm working at Korean Air; the pay is much better.

What instrument did you play as a child, and do you still play it?

When I was a child I played the piano, but nowadays, I don't have the time nor the talent to practice, so I quit.

Notice how all the above examples are comparing the past and the present? This is when to use "these days" and 'nowadays.'

Tips:

- 1.) Many English speakers use "these days" and "nowadays" and it's not a big problem. However, I've met so many advanced level ESL students who start every sentence with this English pattern. It is **redundant** and becomes annoying fast! Use it **sparingly**.
- 2.) Now, recently, currently, as of late, at the moment, and lately, are all **suitable** words to use in exchange of "these days" and "nowadays".

Vocabulary:

- **manifest**: To become more and more obvious. *"His habit of starting every sentence with "these days" began to manifest into a much bigger problem.*

- **contrast:** To be very different from something else. For example: day and night, or past and present. *"I'm surprised they get along so well their personalities contrast so much."*
- **redundant:** No longer needed or useful. *"His speech kept making the same points over and over, it became quite redundant."*
- **sparingly:** To not use or give a lot of something; a little of. *"My mother told me to use my credit card as sparingly as possible.."*
- **suitable:** Good or appropriate for a particular situation; fitting, acceptable. *"I think any teacher would be more suitable than Dan for teaching English."*

Daily Expressions & Idioms:

1.) **"It's highly (un)likely":** When the chance of something happening is very high or very low.

"I will try my best, but I think it's highly unlikely that I'll get the job." "No one is more suitable for the promotion than him. It's highly likely he'll get the promotion."

2.) **"It's out of my hands":** Something you have no control over.

"Can you tell your boss to hire me? I did my best and got you an interview, whether he hires you or not is out of my hands."