

# Speak Fluently – A2



## Lesson 1: Meeting People

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Welcome to Lesson 1 of the Speak Fluently course!

Many students are afraid of making a mistake or “saying the wrong thing” when talking with a native English speaker. These social English lessons will teach you phrases you can use with confidence in various social situations. Let’s start with some basic expressions.

### Situation #1 – Saying hello and goodbye

There are many different ways to say “hello” in English, and some of them require a different answer.

If the other person says...

- “Hello”
- “Hi”
- “Hi there”
- “Hey”
- “Hiya”
- “Howdy”

You can say...

- “Hi”
- “Hey”

In these phrases, “hello” is the most formal, and “hey,” “hiya,” and “howdy” are the least formal.

Instead of “hello,” the other person might also say...

- “How ya doin’?”

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- “How are ya?”
- “How’s it goin’?”
- “How are things?”
- “How’s life?”

If everything is **good**, you can say...

- “Great! Thanks for asking.”
- “Good – how about you?”
- “All right.”

If everything is **not good**, you can say...

- “Not so good.”
- “Could be better.”

If you give one of the “not good” responses, be prepared to say **why** you are feeling bad, because the other person will probably say something like this:

- “Oh, what’s wrong?”
- “Oh, what’s the matter?”

Now let’s learn the greetings beginning with “what...” If the other person says...

- “What’s up?”
- “What’s new?”
- “What’s happenin’?”
- “What’s goin’ on?”

You can respond...

- “Not much.”
- “Not much. How about you?”
- “Not much.” [then add a sentence about something you are doing, something you did recently, or something you're planning to do.]
  - “Not much. I just got back from a business trip.”
  - “Not much. I’ve been studying a lot lately.”
  - “Not much. I’m looking forward to the dance festival this weekend.”

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There are also a number of ways to say **goodbye** in English:

## Formal or informal:

- “Bye / Bye-bye”
- “See you soon / later!”  
*(only say this if you will definitely see the other person later)*
- “Take care”
- “Have a good one!”
- “So long”

## Informal only:

- “Take it easy.”
- “Catch ya later.”
- “Later!”
- “I’m off / I’m out.”
- “Peace / Peace out.”

## Situation #2 – Talking about your country and job

It’s common for people you meet to ask about your country and job.

If someone asks, “Where are you from?” you can respond:

- **“I’m from Russia.”**
- **“I’m originally from Russia, but now I live in Italy.”**
- **“I was born in Russia, but I grew up in France.”**

To ask about your profession, native English speakers don’t usually ask “What is your job?” Instead, we say:

- **“What do you do?”**
- **“What do you do for a living?”**

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The correct way to answer this question is to say **“I’m...”** and then your profession, for example:

- I’m an engineer.
- I’m a nurse.
- I’m a student.
- I’m a teacher.
- I’m a freelance writer.
- I’m between jobs at the moment. (*this means “I’m unemployed.”*)

## Situation #3 – Not Understanding

There will probably be a few moments in your English conversations when you don’t understand what the other person said. Don’t worry – it’s OK!

If you didn’t hear what the other person said, you can say...

- **“Pardon?”**
- **“Sorry?”**
- **“Could you repeat that?”**
- **“Sorry – I didn’t hear what you said.”**
- **“Could you speak a little slower, please?”**

If you understood the basics, but you want to get more information or details, you can say...

- **“What do you mean?”** (*this asks the other person to re-state their idea in different words, or in more detail*)

If you want to check if the other person understood YOU, then you can say...

- **“Do you know what I mean?”**

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- “Does that make sense?”

## Situation #4 – Showing Interest in the Conversation

When the other person is talking for a long time or telling a story, it’s good to show that you are interested in what they are saying. You can say...

- “Really?”
- “That’s interesting.”
- “Uh-huh.”
- “Right.”
- “Gotcha.”
- “Sure.”

We’ll learn more of these small responses to conversations in a later lesson.

Finally, here are two tips to keep a conversation going:

1. Try to ask questions that start with **Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How**. Try to avoid yes/no questions.
2. In each of your answers, **give one or two details** that will help continue the conversation. You don’t need to talk for a long time.

For example, if someone asks you,

- “What did you think of the New York City bus tour? Did you like it?”  
...don’t just say “Yes.”

Instead, you can say,

- “Yes – my favorite part was visiting the Empire State Building.”

That encourages the other person to make a comment about the tour, or ask you another question – and the conversation continues.

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## Situation #5 – Ending a Conversation

It's a good idea to say **“Anyway, it was nice talking to you...”** or **“Anyway, it was nice chatting with you...”** This signals to the other person that you want to bring the conversation to a close. Then, complete the sentence with one of these options:

- Anyway, it was nice talking to you, **but I should get going.**
- Anyway, it was nice chatting with you, **but I've gotta head out.**
- Anyway, it was nice talking to you, **but I've gotta run.**

All of these options mean that **you need to leave.**

## Practice: Time for you to speak

- 1- When you meet someone, what would you say?
- 2- If someone asks: “Where are you from?”, how would you respond?
- 3- If someone asks you: “What did you think of London? Did you like it?”, how would you respond?
- 4- Complete the following conversation:
  - A: Hello
  - B:
  - A: “How's it goin'?”
  - B:
  - A: Not so good
  - B:
  - A: I just got back from my trip and found lots of things that need to be done.
  - B: oh! I understand what you mean.
  - A: Anyway, it was nice chatting with you after that long time, but I've gotta head out.
  - B: Catch ya later
  - A: see ya.. bye bye

You've finished Lesson 1! Now you know typical expressions for handling social conversations in English. There's no homework for today, you just need to study what you've just learned .