

Talking About Sports in English – Video

In this lesson, you can learn how to talk about sport in English. Do you want to improve your English speaking? Talking about sports in English can be helpful for your communication skills.

Are you a sport fan? What sports do you like playing?

Sport is a common topic in English conversation, so whether you like sport or not, it's good to have something to say and be able to ask some questions about sport.

1. Do You Like Sport?

(<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/football.webp>)

Liam: Do you like sport?

Kasia: Yeah, I've always been really sporty. I played basketball and tennis at school and university, and recently I've got into cycling. What about you?

L: I'm not that into sport, to be honest. I'm not that athletic, and I find most sports boring to watch. I go to the gym occasionally.

K: It's hard to motivate yourself if you don't enjoy it.

L: Do you like watching sport, too?

K: Sometimes, though I'm not a fanatic. Football or tennis can be fun to watch, I think, but it's not a big part of my life.

L: I like watching tennis, too! It's one of the only sports I'll make an effort to see.

Do you like sport?

Think about how you could answer.

You could say something like:

I've always been really sporty.

I enjoy watching sport sometimes, though I'm not a fanatic.

I'm not that into sport, to be honest.

Do you know what the words 'sporty' and 'fanatic' mean?

'Sporty' describes someone who's really interested in sport, and who plays sport often.

A 'fanatic' literally means someone who only cares about one thing. You can use it with an indirect meaning to describe someone who's really interested in something.

So if you say, 'I enjoy some sports, though I'm not a fanatic', you mean that you like sport, but it's not the most important thing for you.

Okay, you have three sentences. Which is closest to your opinion?

These are good sentences to start talking, but remember that you should always add more detail if possible!

Let's add some reasons or details to the three sentences you saw:

I've always been really sporty. I played basketball and tennis at school and university, and recently I've got into cycling.

I enjoy some sports, though I'm not a fanatic. Playing football or something like that can be fun, but I don't want to take it too seriously.

I'm not that into sport, to be honest. I'm not very athletic and I find watching sport quite boring.

These are already much better. If you can add reasons or details when you speak, your speaking will sound better, too!

Let's look at some useful words here:

'Athletic' describes someone who's in good shape and who enjoys exercise and sport. If you say 'I'm not very athletic' you mean that you aren't very good at sport, and probably you don't really enjoy it, either.

Another very useful phrase is 'I find...', as in 'I find watching sport quite boring'. This is a very good way to give your opinion about something. For example:

I find watching snooker weirdly fascinating.

I find swimming very relaxing.

I found volleyball much more difficult to play than I was expecting.

So, what about you? Do you like sport?

Pause the video and make at least two sentences. Remember to add reasons and details. Learn more about this topic in this Oxford Online English lesson: Talking About Likes and Dislikes (<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/likes-dislikes-english>).

Okay? Next, we're going to look at how to talk in more detail about different kinds of sport that you do.

2. Talking About Sports You Do

Kasia: So, what are you up to this weekend?

Liam: We have a match on Saturday; no plans for Sunday yet.

K: A match? You mean you're playing?

L: Yeah, have I not told you before? I play 5-a-side football in a local league. We play most Saturdays.

K: Where do you play?

L: Indoors, actually, in a sports hall.

K: That sounds fun. How did you get into that?

L: I do it with some old friends from university. We played when we were students, and we've kept it going since then. Anyway, what about you? Any plans?

K: I also have a big sporting weekend! It's the marathon.

L: You're doing the marathon?!

K: Not exactly – I'm doing a half.

L: That's what, 21 kilometres?

K: Yup.

L: I didn't know you were so into running.

K: I wasn't. I used to go jogging once a week or so, just around the park or whatever. Then, I decided I needed a challenge, so on impulse I signed up for the half marathon.

L: So, you must have been training a lot?

K: Quite a lot, yes. I've been running three or four times a week for the last two months.

L: Are you confident?

K: Yeah, I think it'll be fine. I've done training runs that are around 20K, so I don't think finishing will be a problem.

Look at three sentences:

*I play 5-a-side football (<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/playing-football>) in a local league.
I used to go jogging once a week.
I do boxing at my gym.*

Which two did you hear in the dialogue?

You heard these two.

*I play 5-a-side football in a local league.
I used to go jogging once a week.*

Another question: here you have different sports with the verbs 'play', 'go', and 'do'. Can you think of three more sports you can use with each verb? Pause the video and think about your answers!

You use 'play' with most ball sports. That means you play tennis, play cricket, play golf, play basketball, and play volleyball; you can also play badminton, which is not a ball sport.

Use 'go' with activities ending in -ing. Most of these are individual sports; you can go swimming, go cycling, go surfing, go climbing, or go hiking.

You might be thinking: "what about 'boxing'?" Even though it ends with -ing, you say 'do boxing' – it's an exception.

Use 'do' with other activities, mostly individual sports. You do yoga, do gymnastics, do judo, or do Pilates.

(<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/yoga-scaled.webp>)

There's one more question you heard in the dialogue: 'how did you get into (<https://www.idoceonline.com/dictionary/get-into>) that?' What does this mean?

This question is asking how or why you started something.

Now, think about some questions: what sports do you do? How did you get into it? Where and how often do you do them?

Think about how you could answer these questions. Before you try, let's look at three examples.

I really enjoy playing cricket. I joined an online group and we meet in the park once a week for a game.

I started doing judo about a year ago. I go to classes twice a week at a sport centre near my office. At first, I just wanted a new hobby, but I really like it and I think I'll start training more regularly.

I like playing basketball. I've been playing since I was a kid, and now I play for a local team. We train three times a week and have matches once or twice a week, sometimes in our town, and sometimes in other cities.

OK, now it's your turn! Think about a sport or physical activity you do. Try to make a few sentences talking about it; say where you do it, how often, and how you started. Pause the video and do it now!

How was that? Remember that you can always review a dialogue or a section if you need to.

Let's move on to our next point.

3. Talking About Why You Do Sport

Liam: How was the game?

Kasia: Amazing! We crushed them!

L: 'Crushed them'? That sounds dramatic!

K: It was great. There's no better feeling than winning.

L: Wow... You're so competitive.

K: Yes, true! I love it. Some people say that sport's about taking part, not winning, but I don't agree.

L: That sounds a bit intense. I play a lot of tennis and badminton, but for me, it's more about the social side. Also, I just like the feeling of getting some physical activity after sitting in an office all day.

K: Fair enough. Personally, I can't motivate myself to do any sport unless it's competitive. That's why I mostly just do team sports. I can't go jogging, or go to the gym, or anything like that. I just don't see the point.

L: I don't know... I think if it gets too competitive, then it stops being fun. Personally, I play sport to hang out with my friends and relax. It's nice to win, but I don't care that much.

Why do people do sport? How many different reasons can you think of?

Some people do sport to socialize. Others love to compete. For some people, sport is just a way to get fit and stay healthy. What about you? Why do you do sport?

In the dialogue, you heard some possible answers to this question.

I love competing. There's no better feeling than winning.

For me, it's more about the social side.

I just like the feeling of getting some physical activity after sitting in an office all day.

Personally, I play sport to hang out with my friends and relax.

You can see some useful language here for giving your opinion about things.

There's no better feeling than...

For me...

I just like...

Personally...

You can use these phrases to give your opinion about many different things. For example:

There's no better feeling than when you're tired after a good game.

For me, the most important thing is just spending time outdoors in the fresh air.

I just like the feeling of pushing myself to the limit.

Personally, I've always loved being in the water.

What about you? Can you describe why you do sport, and why you like the sports you like?

Pause the video, and try to make two or three sentences. Use the language from this section if you can.

Alright, so now you can say quite a lot about sport. Let's put everything together.

4. Making a Longer Answer

To make a longer answer, you need to talk about your general attitude towards sport, talk about which sports you like, say where and how often you do sport, and who you do them with, and talk about why you do sport.

Here's one example:

I enjoy some sports, though I'm not a fanatic. Playing football or something like that can be fun, but I don't want to take it too seriously. I play 5-a-side football with some friends every Sunday. We rent a sports hall and play a 60-minute match. For me, the most important thing is the social side. I don't really care about the game, or who wins. I just like having a laugh with some good friends and getting a beer afterwards.

This example only uses language from the lesson. You can see how you can build an interesting, detailed answer using simple ideas.

Let's do one more example, using original language and ideas:

I don't really like sport that much, but fitness and staying healthy are important to me. That's why I go swimming and do some weight training regularly. I mostly just exercise by myself at the sports centre. Personally, I just do it because I feel I have to. I don't really enjoy it, although I don't mind it, either. I do like feeling healthy and fit, but exercising always feels more like work than something fun.

Okay, now it's your turn.

Make a longer answer like the two you've just seen. Follow the same structure, and use the language from the lesson if you can.

Don't forget that you can write your answer down if you want extra practice.

Also, it's a good idea to practise your answer several times, until it's really fluent and comfortable.

Then, if you're really serious, don't just make one answer! Make several answers, talking about different sports. Even better, make an answer from someone else's point of view. If you practise like this, your English will get better very fast!

Thanks for watching!

Keep practicing your English speaking with our other lesson on Talking About Football
(<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/talk-about-football>).