

# Talk About Love and Relationships – Video

In this lesson, you'll learn how to talk about love and relationships in English.

You'll learn how to talk about dating, getting engaged, good relationships, bad relationships and break-ups. You can see lots of useful vocabulary used in natural dialogues, and we'll give you explanations to help you use this language clearly and naturally in your spoken English.

## 1. Talking About Dating

(<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/man-woman-date.webp>)

Oli: So, your friend Claire...

Lori: Yeah?

O: She seems nice...

L: Oh, you like her?

O: Yeah, I do.

L: Aren't you going out with that charity worker. What's her name again?

O: Georgia? No, that's over.

L: What happened? I liked her.

O: Sometimes things just don't work out.

L: Let me guess, she was too clingy?

O: Yeah, how'd you know?

L: Everyone's 'too clingy' for you.

O: Anyway, what about Claire? Can you put me in touch?

L: Why don't you just ask her out yourself?

O: I don't have her number, or any way to get in contact.

L: I think she'll be at Sam's housewarming party on Saturday. Maybe you should go.

O: Maybe I will!

If you're single and you meet someone you like, what's the next step? Of course, this is quite different in different parts of the world!

However, in many places, you can ask the other person on a date. British and American English (<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/british-american-pronunciation>) use different words here. In British English, you say 'ask someone out' and 'go out with someone'; in American English, you say 'ask someone on a date' and 'go on a date with someone.' The meanings are the same. 'Go out with' and 'date'—both verbs—can also have the meaning that you're seeing someone regularly, as girlfriend or boyfriend. However, it could also mean something less serious. For example, in the dialogue, you heard: 'Aren't you

going out with that charity worker?' Here, 'go out' doesn't clearly mean that they're in a couple. It could also refer to a situation where two people are meeting each other regularly, but they aren't a serious couple.

You could use this language in other ways; for example:

*They've been going out for about a year now.*

*She's dating a guy I used to work with.*

As you heard before, 'go out with' is more common in UK English, while 'date' is more common in US English. In these examples, the context tells you that you're talking about more serious relationships. However, in many cases you would use these words—go out with someone, date someone—to talk about couples in the early stages of a relationship. If two people have been in a relationship for some time, you can use the term 'be together'. For example:

*How long have you and your boyfriend been together?*

*They were together for about four years, but then they broke up.*

You can also use the verb 'see' to mean 'have a relationship with someone'. For example:

*Are you seeing anyone at the moment?*

*I'm sure he's seeing someone, but he won't tell me who it is.*

Like 'go out with' or 'date', these sentences probably refer to the early stages of a relationship. If you're going out with someone and everything's going well, what next to talk about love and relationships in English?

## 2. Getting Engaged

(<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Marriage-proposal.webp>)

Oli: Did you hear Jen's news?

Lori: No, what?

O: She's engaged.

L: Really? That's great! When did it happen?

O: A couple of weeks ago. Phil proposed to her while they were on holiday in Rome.

L: How romantic! When's the wedding?

O: I don't think they've decided yet.

L: I'll have to call her to say congratulations. Did she have a ring?

O: Maybe. I didn't notice.

L: You're useless!

Here's a question: can you complete this missing word from the dialogue? It means: the situation before two people get married.

*get e--d*

The word is 'engaged'. Be careful with 'get engaged' and 'be engaged'. Do you know the difference? 'Get engaged' is an action. When you first agree to get married, you get engaged. After you get engaged, you \*are\* engaged. 'Be engaged' is a state. For example:

*They got engaged in June, and got married in July.*

*They've been engaged for two years now. They say they're too busy to plan a wedding!*

There's a similar difference between 'get married' and 'be married'. Learn more about 'get' with this lesson from Oxford Online English on how to use have and get (<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/use-have-get>).

Next question! Before you get engaged, one person has to ask the other to get married. Can you complete this sentence from the dialogue?

*Phil p—d to her while they were on holiday.*

Do you remember? The verb is 'propose'. Colloquially (<https://www.quora.com/What-are-colloquial-expressions>), you can also say 'pop the question' which has the same meaning. For example:

*He popped the question while they were on holiday.*

These are conversational responses (<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/natural-english-conversation-responses>) and phrases, so if you're not sure, use 'propose'. Let's do two more. Can you complete the sentences from the dialogue?

*I'll have to call her to say -----*

*Did she have a --?*

Do you remember the answers?

*I'll have to call her to say congratulations.*

*Did she have a ring?*

The full term is 'engagement ring'. However, in this context, it's clear what she meant.

Now, do you know any couples that have a really good marriage? That's our next topic!

### 3. Talking About Good Relationships

Oli: How long have you been married now?

Lori: Ooh... Almost ten years.

O: That's a long time! No regrets?

L: No! There are ups and downs, of course, but I wouldn't change it for anything.

O: You two seem like a really good couple.

L: Yeah, it works well. Of course, part of being a good couple is knowing when to give each other some space.

O: That's true.

L: I see a lot of couples who move in together, and they give up all of the things which make them individuals. We spend a lot of time together, but we have our own friends, our own hobbies, and so on.

O: Sure, I mean, you don't want to be \*too\* dependent on each other.

L: Absolutely. Although, you need to strike a balance. You need to make time for each other, too.

O: Of course. I imagine that it can be easy to let things slip when you've been together so long.

L: Yeah, it's dangerous, actually.

You can't take things for granted, otherwise your relationship will suffer. If two people go well together, you can say they're a good couple. You could also say 'a great couple', or 'a perfect couple'. What do you think makes two people a good couple?

(<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/couple-young-apartment-home-move.webp>)

In the dialogue, you heard these:

*Part of being a good couple is knowing when to give each other some space.*

*You need to make time for each other.*

*You can't take things for granted, otherwise your relationship will suffer.*

Do you know what 'take things for granted' means? If you take something for granted, you've had something for a long time and you get used to it. Then, you don't appreciate it any more. For example, imagine you eat in an amazing restaurant. The food is incredible, and you have a great time. Now, imagine you eat in the same restaurant every night for a year. Will you still appreciate it? Probably not. You'll get bored of it, and it won't be special any more. You'll take it for granted.

What do you think? Do you agree with these ideas? Could you add any more suggestions for a successful relationship? Of course, there are many ideas! Here are three more:

*The most important thing is to listen to each other.*

*Accept that you'll have ups and downs; don't expect everything to be perfect.*

*If you're unhappy about something, deal with it quickly. Don't let things fester.*

'Fester' here means that you don't deal with a problem, so it becomes bigger and more serious as time goes by.

Of course, not all relationships go perfectly. Next, let's see how you can talk about relationship problems with love and relationships in English.

#### 4. Relationship Problems

Lori: Have you seen Sasha lately?

Oli: Yeah, we met for a beer the other evening.

L: How's he doing? I haven't seen him for ages.

O: Not so well. It seems like he and Maria are having a difficult time.

L: Really? I remember seeing them together in the summer, and they seemed like the perfect match.

O: I guess things have gone a bit sour since then. From what he said, they aren't getting on well at all, so they're fighting all the time. He didn't seem happy.

L: What's he going to do?

O: He wasn't sure.

L: Do they live together?

O: Yeah.

L: That complicates things...

O: It does. Maybe they'll work things out. You should call him. He'd be glad to hear from you.

L: Mmm... I'll give him a call tonight.

Look at three sentences from the dialogue. Can you explain what they mean?

*He and Maria are having a difficult time.*

*I guess things have gone a bit sour since then.*

*They aren't getting on well at all.*

If a couple are having a difficult time, it means they're having some relationship problems. You can also say 'have problems'. For example: 'He and Maria are having problems.'

'Go sour (<https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/go+sour>)' is an idiom. Here, it means that things were fine in the past, but now they're not. Literally, 'go sour' is used with milk and other dairy products. If you keep milk for too long, it'll go sour, and then it smells bad and you shouldn't drink it. Here, you're using 'go sour' metaphorically.

Lastly, 'they aren't getting on well at all' means that they have a lot of conflict. You might also say something like:

*They're fighting all the time.*

*They're arguing a lot.*

*They just aren't seeing eye-to-eye at the moment.*

'Seeing eye-to-eye' is another idiom. If you see eye-to-eye with someone, you understand each other and you have a good relationship. You can use this in other contexts, not just to talk about romantic relationships.

Finally, let's talk about what happens when relationships end.

## 5. Divorces and Break-Ups

(<https://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Man-walking-away-with-luggage.webp>)

Lori: Are we still doing movie night at yours tonight?

Oli: Ah... Maybe not. My friend Jon is staying. It's a bit of a messy situation—he left his wife, and I think it's for good.

L: Poor guy! That must be tough.

O: Well... don't feel too sorry for him. He was cheating all over the place, and it was his decision to walk out.

L: OK then, poor wife! Soon to be ex-wife, I suppose...

O: Probably. They're that kind of couple, though: they break up, get back together, break up again... This time, though, I don't see how they can patch things up.

L: Yeah... I don't know them, but I don't think I could stay with someone who cheated on me. It's too big a betrayal.

O: I agree. I guess it's for them to deal with. Anyway, I was going to ask: can we do the movie night at yours instead? Please say yes; I've already told everyone that it's at your house.

L: Yeah, sure!

When you're talking about the end of a relationship, you need different words depending on whether the couple you're talking about is married or not. For an unmarried couple, you mostly use 'break up'. 'Break up' can be an intransitive verb—used without an object—or you can break up *\*with\** someone. For example:

*They broke up about six months ago.*

*She broke up with him because he didn't seem serious enough about their relationship.*

For a married couple, you can use the verb 'separate', meaning that the two people are still legally married, but they aren't in a relationship any more. Then, you can use the phrases 'get divorced' and 'be divorced', in the same way as you can use 'get married' and 'be married'. For example:

*They've been living apart for ages, and they finally got divorced last year.*

*She's divorced. She left her husband last year.*

You can also use the verb phrase 'leave someone'. This is more common with married couples, but you could use it for unmarried couples, too. Look at three more sentences which you heard in this dialogue, and one from the last section.

*Maybe they'll work things out.*

*I don't see how they can patch things up.*

*They break up, get back together, break up again...*

Do you know what these sentences mean?

'Work things out' is a general phrase, but if you're talking about a relationship, it means that two people find a way to solve their problems, or at least to accept them.

'Patch things up' has the idea of repairing or fixing something. If a couple have a big fight, or if one person does something bad to the other, they might need to patch things up, meaning they try to make things better again.

Some couples might break up, and then get back together again. You can use 'get together' to talk about a couple starting a relationship, but 'get back together' has a different meaning; it means that two people are going back to a relationship which ended previously.

That's everything. Hope you learned some useful phrases to talk about love and relationships in English! Thanks for watching!