

# English Conversation

# 1

# Introduction

You have troubles making real English conversations?

You want to improve your Spoken English quickly?

Don't worry.

First of all, you need to learn the:

- **most frequently used words in English,**
- **common structures & sentence patterns,**
- **common expressions,**
- **common phrasal verbs, and**
- **idioms**

that are much used in daily life.

Next, you should learn **weekly conversations in English.**

Focus on each English as a Second Language conversation topic until you can speak English automatically and fluently on that topic before moving to the next one.

During this semester you will work on topics that you will encounter very often in your daily life.

Each lesson is designed as conversational questions and answers in English as a Second Language, followed by real conversation groups of 8-12 ITU students, which will definitely benefit your English conversation practice.

# Creating Fun English Club Activities to Learn English

## Why start an English Club?

- Use what you learn

An English Club is a place for language learners to use English in a casual setting.

- Make English-speaking friends

Starting an English Club is a great way to make new lasting friendships.

## How can I start an English Club?

- Post a sign-up sheet

You can start by putting up a sign up form in your school lobby or on a local library bulletin board.

- Seek help

Don't try to do everything yourself. Each member should contribute to the club.

- Hold an introductory meeting

After you have enough people sign up (6-10 people is a good number) you will need to hold an introductory meeting.

At the first meeting, members can learn each other's names and you can talk about what kind of club people are interested in.

One way to organize the club is by putting one member in charge of being the leader each week.

You can organize the weeks in terms of themes (music/food/travel...), or skills (reading/writing/listening...).

### ➤ Create rules and routines

At your meeting you can discuss what types of rules and routines the club should have.

For example, English Clubs usually have an "English only" rule.

## **Who will join my English Club?**

You can invite anyone to join your English Club, including **Info** and **Design** fellow students.

Teaching someone else a grammar point or explaining how to use a new word is one of the best ways to review your skills.

## **Where should we hold our English Club?**

### ➤ At ITUniversity

The easiest place to hold an English Club is in a spare classroom at an English school.

### ➤ In members' homes

You may want to take your club out of the classroom in order to make it feel less academic and more social.

## ➤ Outdoors

One of the best places to hold an English Club is outside.

## ➤ Consider atmosphere

Wherever you hold your club, remember that it is a club, not a class. To change the atmosphere in a classroom you might want to open windows or have background music or candles (if the school permits).

## When and how often should we meet for our English Club?

### ➤ About once a week

Some clubs fail because they expect too much of the members.

### ➤ The best time of day

Choose a meeting time that is convenient for the group.

Usually between **noon and 2p.m., late afternoons**, or weekend days are chosen so that the meetings don't conflict with school.

### ➤ Stop and begin again

Start a new club session approximately every three months.

This will keep the club alive!

Another good time to take a break is during holiday times, such as New Year's or Break.

## What can we do in our English Club?

### ➤ Establish a warm-up routine

You will notice that teachers often start class with a game or conversation exercise.

They do this to wake you up!

They also want to help you focus on a classroom activity that will follow.

### ➤ Themes or Skills

You can organize your club in many ways.

Some clubs will be full of members that only want to practice one skill, such as conversation.

Conversation club meetings are often very casual and require little planning.

### ➤ Have backup ideas on hand

What if your leader for the day doesn't show up?

Call another member and give them instructions about what was planned.

### ➤ Use a suggestion box

If it's possible, keep a suggestion box in the room where you hold your club meetings.

At the end of each meeting the leader should encourage members to write a comment or suggestion for the group.

➤ **Go on excursions as a group**

Outside of your weekly meetings, it is a good idea to have one excursion a month.

This helps create stronger bonds within the group.

**Enjoy!**

**Most common words in English**



# Introduction

With 2,500 to 3,000 words, you can understand **90%** of:

- everyday English conversations,
- English newspaper and magazine articles, and
- English used in the workplace.

The remaining **10%** you'll be able to learn from context, or ask questions about.

However, it's essential to learn the right English vocabulary words, so you don't waste your time trying to memorize a huge collection with very little benefit.

The alphabetical list below seems long, but when you can use all these words with confidence, your English vocabulary will be fully functional.

Practice using a few words in conversation each day.

The most valuable vocabulary words are those that you can remember and use almost automatically.

By experimenting in low-stakes situations, you can practice the art of word choice and, with a bit of trial and error, narrow down the right word for a particular context.

After all, learning vocabulary is only valuable if you can actually use the words in conversation and, equally important, use them correctly. Good luck!

A	accomplish	actually	advanced	age	album
	according	ad	advantage	agency	alcohol
abandon	account	adapt	adventure	agenda	alive
ability	accurate	add	advertising	agent	all
able	accuse	addition	advice	aggressive	alliance
abortion	achieve	additional	advise	ago	allow
about	achievement	address	adviser	agree	ally
above	acid	adequate	advocate	agreement	almost
abroad	acknowledge	adjust	affair	agricultural	alone
absence	acquire	adjustment	affect	ah	along
absolute	across	administration	afford	ahead	already
absolutely	act	administrator	afraid	aid	also
absorb	action	admire	African	aide	alter
abuse	active	admission	African-	AIDS	alternative
academic	activist	admit	American	aim	although
accept	activity	adolescent	after	air	always
access	actor	adopt	afternoon	aircraft	AM
accident	actress	adult	again	airline	amazing
accompany	actual	advance	against	airport	

American	anybody	appropriate	article	association	authority
among	anymore	approval	artist	assume	auto
amount	anyone	approve	artistic	assumption	available
analysis	anything	approximately	as	assure	average
analyst	anyway	Arab	Asian	at	avoid
analyze	anywhere	architect	aside	athlete	award
ancient	apart	area	ask	athletic	aware
and	apartment	argue	asleep	atmosphere	awareness
anger	apparent	argument	aspect	attach	away
angle	apparently	arise	assault	attack	awful
angry	appeal	arm	assert	attempt	
animal	appear	armed	assess	attend	
anniversary	appearance	army	assessment	attention	
announce	apple	around	asset	attitude	
annual	application	arrange	assign	attorney	
another	apply	arrangement	assignment	attract	
answer	appoint	arrest	assist	attractive	
anticipate	appointment	arrival	assistance	attribute	
anxiety	appreciate	arrive	assistant	audience	
any	approach	art	associate	author	

# Basic English sentence structure

All the **parts of speech** in English are used to make sentences.

All sentences include **two** parts:

- the subject and
- the verb (this is also known as the predicate).

➤ The **subject** is the person or thing that does something or that is described in the sentence.

➤ The **verb** is the action the person or thing takes or the description of the person or thing.

If a sentence doesn't have a subject and a verb, it is not a complete sentence.

E.g., In the sentence

*"Went to bed,"*

we don't know who went to bed).

Here's your quick introduction to the basic English sentence structure.

# Simple, compound, & complex sentence structures

There are **three** types of sentences:

- simple,
- compound, and
- complex.

The type of sentence is determined by how many clauses, or subject–verb groups, are included in the sentence.

➤ A **simple sentence** structure has **one** independent clause:

*“I rode my bike.”*

➤ A **compound sentence** has at least **two** independent clauses:

*“I got in my car, and I drove into town.”*

In that sentence, both clauses can stand on their own as complete sentences.

➤ A **complex sentence** includes **an** independent clause and **one or more** dependent clauses:

*“I got in my car and then went to town.”*

In that sentence,

*“I got in my car”* works as a complete sentence but

*“then went to town”* does **not**.

Most sentences in English are constructed using one of the following **five** patterns:

Subject–Verb

Subject–Verb–Object

Subject–Verb–Adjective

Subject–Verb–Adverb

Subject–Verb–Noun

The subject is the person or thing taking an action or being described in the sentence.

The verb is the action the subject takes.

## **Subject–Verb**

This type of sentence begins with a core sentence such as

*“Jane walks.”*

Here, “Jane” is the subject and “walks” is the verb.

Different parts of speech can be added to expand the sentence.

You can add an **adverb** to make the sentence

*“Jane walks quickly,”*

or you can add an **expression of time** to tell when she walks, e.g.,

*“Jane walks all morning.”*

## Subject–Verb–Object

These sentences begin with a core sentence such as

*“She is playing a piano.”*

In this sentence, “She” is the subject, “is playing” is the verb, and “a piano” is the object.

You can add elements to expand the sentence, such as an adjective ,

*“She is playing a small piano”*

or an adverb

*“She is playing the piano beautifully”.*

## Subject–Verb–Adjective

This type of sentence begins with a core sentence like

*“He is handsome.”*

Here, “he” is the subject, “is” is the verb, and “handsome” is the adjective.

Like the other types of sentences, you can expand on the sentence by adding other parts of speech, such as

*“He is very handsome.”*

where “very” serves as an adverb.

## Subject–Verb–Adverb

These sentences begin with a core sentence such as “The girl walked away.” In this sentence, “the girl” is the subject, “walked” is the verb, and “away” is the adverb.

You can add elements to this type of sentence, such as “The girl slowly walked away,” where “slowly” is an adjective describing how the girl walked.

## Subject–Verb–Noun

Sentences of this type begin with a core sentence such as

*“The professor is a woman.”*

Here, “the professor” is the subject, “is” is the verb, and “a woman” is the noun.

As with the other sentence types, you can add words or phrases to expand on the sentence.

For example, you can add the **adjective** “intelligent” and the **adverbial phrase** “at the university” to say

*“The professor at the university is an intelligent woman”*

to describe the professor more and tell where she works.



# Practice 1

## Conversation questions & answers

- Following are 5 topics conversation questions and answers, that you will face very often in your daily life.

**1. Family**

**2. Restaurant**

**3. Books**

**4. Travel**

**5. Website**

- Form a group of 8-12 ITU students and take turns working on these topics.

## 1. FAMILY

- How many people are there in your family?
- There are 5 people in my family: my father, mother, brother, sister, and me.
- Does your family live in a house or an apartment?
- We live in a house in the countryside.
- What does your father do?
- My father is a doctor. He works at the local hospital.
- How old is your mother?
- She is 40 years old, 1 year younger than my father.
- Do you have any siblings? What's his/her name?
- Yes, I do. I have 1 elder brother, David, and 1 younger sister, Mary.
- Are you the oldest amongst your brothers and sisters?
- No, I'm not. I'm the second child in my family.
- What does your mother/father like?
- My father likes playing football and my mother likes cooking.
- Do your parents let you stay out late?
- Of course not. They always ask me to get home before 10 pm each night.
- Do you stay with your parents?
- Right now, no, but I used to.
- Does your family usually have dinner together?
- Yes, we do. My mom always prepares delicious meals for us.

## 2. RESTAURANT

- How often do you eat out? Who do you go with?
- I often eat out on weekends, when I hang out with my friends.
- What restaurant do you usually visit?
- Well, there are not many restaurants in my neighborhood, so my best choice is the deli in convenient stores like the Circle K, Mini-Stop, B-smart.
- What type of food do you enjoy to eat? Western or Asian?
- I'm interested in Asian food, Western food is not my thing.
- How much do you usually pay when you eat out?
- It's not very expensive, just around \$5 for each meal.
- Do you enjoy spicy food?
- Yes, I do, especially on cold days.
- Are the servers there friendly to you?
- Yes, they are. Most of them are really helpful.
- Have you ever tried Italian food?
- Yes, at least once, when I was in my friend's wedding party.
- Are you concerned about calories when eating out?
- Yes, I am. I'm on diet now, so this really matters to me.
- Are fast food restaurants like KFC or McDonald's famous in your country?
- Yes, they are. The youth in my country are big fans of fast food.
- Do you often drink alcohol when eating out?
- No, not often. Just when I have parties with my friends.

### **3. BOOKS**

- How often do you read books?
- I read books almost every night before I go to bed.
- What's your favorite type of book?
- I love reading about different cultures.
- What can you learn from books?
- Books can broaden my horizon about thousands of things around the world, and books are also my best friends.
- Where do you read books?
- I read books at home, sometimes in the library.
- What's the most interesting book you have ever read?
- I think that would be Nepal, a book written about the country of Nepal, published in 1999.
- How long does it take you to finish a book?
- Well, it depends on the length of the book, but it usually takes me a week to finish a 300-page book.
- Do you usually bring books with you when you travel?
- Yes, I do. When I'm at the airport or bus station, I read books to kill time.
- Is there any bookstore or library in your area?
- Unfortunately, there are none near my house. The nearest one is 3 kilometers away.

#### 4. TRAVEL

- How many places have you traveled to?
- I've visited all the provinces throughout my country.
- Who do you usually go with?
- I often go with my family, sometimes with my best friends.
- What's your favorite tourist attraction?
- That would be Venice city in Italy. I love riding the gondola along the canals while watching Italian people live their daily lives.
- Have you ever been abroad?
- Yes, I have. I came to Italy last year for a business trip.
- What language do you use when traveling?
- English, but sometimes I have to use body language since not all people are good at English.
- What do you usually do during your trip?
- I often go sightseeing, take pictures, mingle with the local people & sample the local cuisine.
- What do you do to prepare for your trip?
- Before the trip, I search for information about the location, weather, famous tourist attractions, transportation, local cuisine and prices on the internet.
- What do you usually bring when you travel?
- I usually pack my suitcase with some necessary items such as clothes, medicine, food, a map, and a camera.
- Do you prefer traveling by car, train or plane?
- I prefer planes although it can be a little expensive. Planes are much faster than any other mode of transport.
- Do you prefer traveling alone or joining a guided tour?
- I love backpacking with my friends who share the same interests as me.

## 5. WEBSITE

- What type of websites do you often search for?
- It varies depending on my goal. I prefer entertainment and education websites such as facebook.com, wikipedia.org and VOA Special English.
- How long have you been using them?
- I have been using these websites since I was a freshman at university.
- What do you visit those websites for?
- I use them to study online or relax after working.
- What's your favorite website?
- I think it's probably youtube.com.
- Can you read websites in English?
- Yes, I can. Most useful websites are written in English.
- What's the most popular website in your country?
- I'm not quite sure, but I guess it would be facebook.com.
- Do you think the youth should use websites as a reliable source of knowledge?
- Not always, they should choose their sources carefully.



# Set (1) - I've swallowed the bait

## DIALOGUE

Mike : What's wrong with you these days John? You have always **kept your nose clean!**

John : It's all **a hoax** . I must admit that I've **swallowed the bait** .

Mike : **How come** !

John : Unfortunately; I **barked up the wrong tree** when I **counted on** Jessie. It **turned out** that she had also been planning to **get rid of me**.

Mike : Oh; I don't believe it. That's **pathetic** .

## VOCABULARY

**Keep one's nose clean** : to stay out of trouble.

**A hoax** : a plan to deceive someone.

**Swallow the bait** : to respond to someone's actions or words in the way that they intended.

**How come** : used to ask about the reason for something.

**Bark up the wrong tree** : to be wrong about the reason for something or the way to achieve something.

**Count on** : to depend on someone or expect something.

**Turn out** : prove to be the case.

**Get rid of** : take action so as to be free of (a troublesome or unwanted person or thing).

**Pathetic** : making you feel sad or upset.