# **Comprehensive Content Plan for Conversational English: A Curriculum for Basic Proficiency Learners**

## **Introduction**

This content plan is designed for non-native English speakers who possess a basic proficiency in the language and aim to enhance their daily conversational skills. The curriculum focuses on practical application, building a solid foundation in essential grammar and vocabulary, and fostering confidence in everyday communication. The plan emphasizes a structured yet flexible approach, allowing for adaptation based on learner needs and progress.1 Each module is crafted to be accessible, with clear explanations, relatable examples, and engaging activities to ensure that learners can readily apply what they learn to real-world conversations. The overarching goal is to empower learners to communicate more effectively and naturally in English in their daily lives.2

## **Module 1: Foundational Grammar - The Building Blocks**

A solid understanding of foundational grammar is essential for constructing clear and correct sentences, which in turn boosts communication skills in both spoken and written English.4 This module lays the groundwork for all subsequent learning.

### **1.1. Importance of Grammar in Conversation**

While fluency is a key goal, grammatical accuracy prevents misunderstandings and allows for more nuanced expression. This section will emphasize how good grammar supports clear communication in everyday interactions, rather than focusing on rigid rule memorization. The aim is to show grammar as a tool for effective speaking.5

### **1.2. Overview of Topics Covered**

This curriculum will systematically cover core grammatical concepts essential for daily conversation. Learners will progress from basic parts of speech to more complex sentence structures and tenses, all geared towards practical application.6

## **Module 2: Parts of Speech - The Words We Use**

Understanding the different roles words play in a sentence (parts of speech) is fundamental to constructing meaningful and grammatically correct utterances. This module breaks down each part of speech, focusing on its function in everyday conversation.

### **2.1. Nouns**

Nouns are words that represent people, places, things, or ideas.7 They are the 'naming words' in English.

* **2.1.1. Types of Nouns:**
  + **Common Nouns:** General names for people, places, things, or ideas (e.g., *man, city, book, happiness*).7
    - *Conversational Example:* "I need to buy a **book**."
  + **Proper Nouns:** Specific names for people, places, or things, always capitalized (e.g., *John, London, Eiffel Tower*).7
    - *Conversational Example:* "**Sarah** is going to **London** next month."
  + **Concrete Nouns:** Nouns that can be perceived through the five senses (e.g., *table, music, flower, coffee*).8
    - *Conversational Example:* "This **coffee** smells good." "Can you hear the **music**?"
  + **Abstract Nouns:** Nouns representing ideas, qualities, or states that cannot be touched or seen (e.g., *love, freedom, happiness, idea*).7
    - *Conversational Example:* "**Honesty** is important in a friendship."
  + **Collective Nouns:** Nouns that refer to a group of people or things (e.g., *team, family, committee, flock*).7
    - *Conversational Example:* "My **family** is visiting this weekend."
  + **Compound Nouns:** Nouns made up of two or more words. These can be closed (e.g., *notebook, sunflower*), open (e.g., *ice cream, post office*), or hyphenated (e.g., *mother-in-law, check-in*).8
    - *Conversational Examples:* "I need a new **notebook**." "Let's get some **ice cream**." "My **mother-in-law** is very kind."
* **2.1.2. Singular and Plural Nouns:**
  + **Explanation:** Singular nouns refer to one person, place, thing, or idea, while plural nouns refer to more than one.4 Most plural nouns are formed by adding '-s' (e.g., *cat/cats, book/books*). Other rules include adding '-es' for nouns ending in s, x, ch, sh (e.g., *bus/buses, box/boxes*), changing 'y' to 'ies' (e.g., *baby/babies*), and irregular plurals (e.g., *man/men, child/children, mouse/mice*).12
  + **Conversational Examples:** "I have one **dog**, but my sister has two **dogs**." "There are many **children** in the park."
  + **Practice:** "Guessing Game": Describe objects in the room using quantity and other descriptors, and students guess the plural noun (e.g., "You can open and close these." - "Doors!").13 "Linguistic Investigation": Students categorize cards with singular and plural nouns to discover spelling patterns.13
* **2.1.3. Countable and Uncountable Nouns:**
  + **Explanation:** Countable nouns are things we can count (e.g., *apple, chair, idea*). They have singular and plural forms.4 Uncountable (or mass) nouns are things we cannot count individually (e.g., *water, rice, information, advice, music, furniture*). They usually only have a singular form and do not use 'a/an' directly.4 To quantify uncountable nouns, expressions like "a piece of," "a bottle of," "some" are used (e.g., *a piece of advice, a bottle of water, some rice*).7
  + **Conversational Examples:** "Can I have **three apples**, please?" (Countable) "I need **some water**." (Uncountable) "She gave me **some good advice**." (Uncountable)
  + **Common Mistakes:** Using plural forms for uncountable nouns (e.g., "advices," "furnitures") or trying to count them directly without quantifiers.12
  + **Practice:** "How Much or How Many?" activities focusing on food items.14 Dialogue practice discussing items for a party or groceries, deciding if they are countable or uncountable and how to quantify them. For example, "Do we need **much milk** or **many eggs**?"
* **2.1.4. Possessive Nouns:**
  + **Explanation:** Show ownership. Formed by adding an apostrophe + s ('s) to singular nouns (e.g., *the cat's toy*) and usually just an apostrophe (') to plural nouns ending in s (e.g., *the students' books*), or 's to irregular plurals (e.g., *the children's games*).4
  + **Conversational Examples:** "This is **John's** car." "Where are the **children's** coats?" "My **friend's** house is nearby."
  + **Practice:** Describing items belonging to classmates: "**Maria's** pen is blue." "These are **the teacher's** books."

### **2.2. Pronouns**

Pronouns are words that take the place of nouns to avoid repetition (e.g., *he, she, it, they, mine, yours, myself*).4

* **2.2.1. Types of Pronouns (Focus on conversational use):**
  + **Subject Pronouns:** Act as the subject of a verb (*I, you, he, she, it, we, they*).17
    - *Conversational Example:* "**She** is my friend." "**They** are coming to the party."
  + **Object Pronouns:** Act as the object of a verb or preposition (*me, you, him, her, it, us, them*).17
    - *Conversational Example:* "John called **me**." "I gave the book to **him**."
  + **Possessive Pronouns:** Show ownership and replace nouns (*mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs*).17 Note: These are different from possessive adjectives.
    - *Conversational Example:* "This book is **mine**." "Is that coat **yours**?"
  + **Possessive Adjectives (often taught with pronouns):** Modify nouns to show possession (*my, your, his, her, its, our, their*).18
    - *Conversational Example:* "This is **my** book." "**Her** car is red."
  + **Reflexive Pronouns:** Refer back to the subject (*myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves*).17
    - *Conversational Example:* "I made it **myself**." "He hurt **himself**."
  + **Demonstrative Pronouns:** Point to specific people or things (*this, that, these, those*).16
    - *Conversational Example:* "**This** is my pen." "**Those** are my shoes over there."
  + **Interrogative Pronouns:** Used to ask questions (*who, whom, whose, what, which*) - will be covered in detail in Module 9.16
  + **Indefinite Pronouns:** Refer to non-specific people or things (*someone, anybody, everything, no one*).16
    - *Conversational Example:* "**Someone** is at the door." "I don't need **anything**."
  + **Note on Singular 'They':** Explain the increasing use of 'they/them/their' as singular gender-neutral pronouns or when gender is unknown.18 Example: "If a student needs help, **they** should ask the teacher."
* **2.2.2. Practice Activities:**
  + **Sentence Substitution:** Rewrite sentences replacing nouns with appropriate pronouns.6
  + **Picture Description:** Show pictures of people doing actions and have students describe them using "he is," "she is," "they are".19
  + **"Who has it?" Game:** Use objects; ask "Who has the pen?" Students answer, "She has it," or "I have it".19
  + **Role-plays:** Create short dialogues where students need to use different pronouns in context, for example, discussing plans or sharing news.1

### **2.3. Verbs**

Verbs are action words or words that describe a state of being.20 They are essential for forming sentences.

* **2.3.1. Types of Verbs:**
  + **Action Verbs:** Describe an action (e.g., *run, eat, think, study*).4
    - *Conversational Example:* "I **run** in the park every morning." "She **is eating** lunch."
  + **Linking Verbs (State of Being Verbs):** Connect the subject to a noun or adjective that describes or identifies it. The most common is 'to be' (*am, is, are, was, were*). Others include *seem, become, feel, look, appear*.4
    - *Conversational Example:* "She **is** happy." "He **seems** tired." "The food **tastes** good."
  + **Auxiliary Verbs (Helping Verbs):** Help the main verb to express tense, mood, or voice. Common auxiliaries are *be, do, have*. Modal verbs are also a type of auxiliary verb.4
    - *Conversational Example:* "I **am studying** English." (be) "She **does not like** coffee." (do) "They **have finished** their work." (have)
  + **Modal Verbs:** A type of auxiliary verb that expresses ability, possibility, permission, obligation, etc. (e.g., *can, could, may, might, must, should, will, would*). These will be covered in detail in Module 13.4
    - *Brief Introduction Example:* "I **can** swim." "You **should** see a doctor."
* **2.3.2. Basic Verb Tenses (Introduction):** A brief overview, with detailed study in Module 11.
  + **Simple Present:** For habits, routines, and facts (e.g., "I **walk** to work.").26
  + **Simple Past:** For completed actions in the past (e.g., "She **walked** to work yesterday.").26
  + **Present Continuous:** For actions happening now (e.g., "He **is walking** to work now.").26
  + **Simple Future (will/be going to):** For future plans or predictions (e.g., "They **will walk** / **are going to walk** to work tomorrow.").30
* **2.3.3. Practice Activities:**
  + **Charades:** Act out verbs for others to guess.6
  + **Sentence Building:** Use flashcards with subjects and verbs to create simple sentences.26
  + **"What are they doing?"** Describe pictures or short video clips focusing on the actions.29
  + **Daily Routine Descriptions:** Students talk about their daily routines using simple present verbs.27

### **2.4. Adjectives**

Adjectives are words that modify or describe nouns or pronouns, providing more information about their qualities, characteristics, or states.4

* **2.4.1. Types of Adjectives (Focus on common descriptive adjectives):**
  + **Descriptive Adjectives:** Describe qualities like color, size, shape, opinion, etc. (e.g., *beautiful, big, red, happy, interesting*).33
    - *Conversational Example:* "She has a **beautiful** smile." "It's a **sunny** day."
  + **Quantitative Adjectives:** Indicate how much or how many (e.g., *many, few, some, several, two*).33
    - *Conversational Example:* "There are **many** people here." "I have **two** brothers."
  + **Demonstrative Adjectives:** Point out specific nouns (*this, that, these, those*) – note they are identical in form to demonstrative pronouns but function differently.
    - *Conversational Example:* "**This** book is interesting." "**Those** shoes are expensive."
  + **Possessive Adjectives:** Show possession (*my, your, his, her, its, our, their*) – already introduced with pronouns.
    - *Conversational Example:* "Where is **your** car?"
  + **Interrogative Adjectives:** Used in questions (*which, what, whose*) – modify nouns.
    - *Conversational Example:* "**Which** way is the station?" "**Whose** idea was this?"
  + **Comparative and Superlative Adjectives:** Used to compare two or more things (e.g., *bigger, biggest, more interesting, most interesting*).4
    - *Conversational Example:* "My car is **bigger** than yours." "This is the **most interesting** book I've read."
* **2.4.2. Placement of Adjectives:**
  + **Before the noun:** This is the most common position (e.g., "a **red** car," "a **happy** child").33
  + **After linking verbs (Predicate Adjectives):** (e.g., "The car **is red**." "The child **seems happy**.").34
* **2.4.3. Order of Adjectives (Brief Introduction for Awareness):**
  + When using multiple adjectives before a noun, there's a general preferred order: Opinion -> Size -> Age -> Shape -> Color -> Origin -> Material -> Purpose (e.g., "a **lovely small old square brown Italian wooden coffee** table").33 For basic learners, focus on using 2-3 common adjectives and their natural-sounding order rather than memorizing the full sequence. Start with opinion + fact (e.g., "a nice red car").
* **2.4.4. Practice Activities:**
  + **Describing Objects/People:** Students describe items in the classroom or pictures of people using adjectives.6 "The whiteboard is **big** and **white**."
  + **"Guess Who?" Game:** One student thinks of a person in the class or a famous person, and others ask yes/no questions with adjectives to guess who it is (e.g., "Is this person **tall**?").
  + **Opposites Match:** Match adjectives with their opposites (e.g., *big/small, happy/sad*).35
  + **Conversational Questions with Adjectives:** Use questions like those in 35 to prompt discussion (e.g., "What makes you **happy**?" "Is your city **big** or **small**?").35

### **2.5. Adverbs**

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs, providing more information about how, when, where, or to what extent an action is performed.4

* **2.5.1. Types of Adverbs (Focus on high-frequency types for conversation):**
  + **Adverbs of Manner:** Describe *how* an action is done (often end in -ly) (e.g., *quickly, slowly, happily, carefully, well*).36
    - *Conversational Example:* "She speaks English **fluently**." "He drives **carefully**."
    - **Formation:** Many are formed by adding -ly to an adjective (e.g., *quick -> quickly*). Note irregulars like *good -> well*, *fast -> fast*, *hard -> hard*.37
  + **Adverbs of Place:** Describe *where* an action happens (e.g., *here, there, everywhere, outside, upstairs*).36
    - *Conversational Example:* "Please put the book **here**." "The children are playing **outside**."
  + **Adverbs of Time:** Describe *when* or *how long* an action happens (e.g., *now, soon, yesterday, today, tomorrow, always, sometimes, never*).36
    - *Conversational Example:* "I will call you **later**." "She **always** arrives on time."
  + **Adverbs of Frequency:** Describe *how often* an action happens (e.g., *always, usually, often, sometimes, rarely, never*).36 These are often used with the Simple Present tense.
    - *Conversational Example:* "I **usually** drink coffee in the morning." "He **never** eats meat."
    - **Position:** Usually before the main verb, but after the verb 'to be' (e.g., "I *often go*." "She *is always* busy.").43
  + **Adverbs of Degree:** Describe the intensity or extent of an action, adjective, or another adverb (e.g., *very, too, enough, quite, extremely, almost, completely*).36
    - *Conversational Example:* "It's **very** hot today." "She is **almost** finished." "This soup is **too** salty." "Is your coffee hot **enough**?"
* **2.5.2. Placement of Adverbs:**
  + **Adverbs of Manner:** Often after the verb or object (e.g., "He speaks **slowly**." "She plays the piano **beautifully**.").37
  + **Adverbs of Place:** Usually after the main verb or object (e.g., "They live **nearby**." "She put the book **downstairs**.").39
  + **Adverbs of Time:** Often at the beginning or end of a sentence (e.g., "**Yesterday**, I went to the park." "I went to the park **yesterday**.").41
  + **Adverbs of Frequency:** Typically before the main verb but after 'be' verbs (e.g., "She **often** visits." "He **is always** late.").43
  + **Adverbs of Degree:** Usually before the adjective, adverb, or verb they modify (e.g., "**very** tired," "**almost** finished").45
* **2.5.3. Practice Activities:**
  + **"How do they do it?"** Students describe actions in pictures or mimes using adverbs of manner (e.g., "He is walking **slowly**.").38
  + **"Find Someone Who..."** with adverbs of frequency: "Find someone who **always** brushes their teeth before bed.".43
  + **Sentence Transformation:** Change adjectives to adverbs and use them in sentences (e.g., "She is a careful driver." -> "She drives **carefully**.").
  + **Dialogue Practice:** Create dialogues where students discuss their routines (frequency), how they do things (manner), or plans (time).43
  + **Storytelling with Adverbs:** Students create a story incorporating different types of adverbs.43

### **2.6. Prepositions**

Prepositions (e.g., *in, on, at, under, for, to, with*) show relationships between a noun or pronoun and other words in a sentence, often indicating location, time, or direction.4 Incorrect preposition usage is a common challenge for ESL learners.12 Teaching them in context and as part of common phrases or collocations is more effective than memorizing isolated meanings.48

* **2.6.1. Prepositions of Place (Focus on *in, on, at* and other common ones):**
  + **In:** Used for enclosed spaces (e.g., *in the room, in the box*), larger areas (e.g., *in London, in the park*), and vehicles where you sit inside (e.g., *in a car, in a taxi*).47
    - *Conversational Example:* "The keys are **in** my bag." "I live **in** Canada."
  + **On:** Used for surfaces (e.g., *on the table, on the floor*), specific streets/roads (e.g., *on Main Street*), and larger public transport where you can stand or walk (e.g., *on the bus, on a train, on a plane*).47
    - *Conversational Example:* "The book is **on** the desk." "The picture is **on** the wall."
  + **At:** Used for specific points or locations (e.g., *at the door, at the bus stop*), addresses (e.g., *at 123 Main Street*), public places/buildings (e.g., *at the cinema, at school, at work*), and home (e.g., *at home*).47
    - *Conversational Example:* "Let's meet **at** the coffee shop." "She is **at** work."
  + **Other common prepositions of place:**
    - **Under:** "The cat is **under** the table." 47
    - **Next to / Beside:** "The bank is **next to** the post office." 47
    - **Behind:** "The car is parked **behind** the house." 47
    - **Between:** "The shop is **between** the bank and the library." 47
    - **In front of:** "The bus stop is **in front of** the supermarket." 49
    - **Near:** "Is there a pharmacy **near** here?" 47
  + **Practice:**
    - Describing the classroom: "The whiteboard is **on** the wall. The teacher's desk is **in front of** the whiteboard. My chair is **next to** Maria's chair.".47
    - "Simon Says" using prepositions of place: "Simon says put your book **under** your chair.".6
    - Picture description: Students describe where things are in a picture.47
    - Giving simple directions: "The bank is **on** Green Street, **next to** the bakery."
* **2.6.2. Prepositions of Time (Focus on *in, on, at*):**
  + **At:** Used for specific times of day (e.g., *at 7 o'clock, at midnight*), mealtimes (e.g., *at breakfast, at lunchtime*), and certain fixed expressions (e.g., *at night, at the weekend [UK English], at Christmas/Easter* as a period).51
    - *Conversational Example:* "The movie starts **at** 8 PM." "I usually read **at** night."
  + **In:** Used for longer periods: parts of the day (e.g., *in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening* - but *at night*), months (e.g., *in January*), seasons (e.g., *in summer*), years (e.g., *in 2023*), decades (e.g., *in the 1990s*), centuries (e.g., *in the 21st century*).51
    - *Conversational Example:* "My birthday is **in** July." "I like to relax **in** the evening."
  + **On:** Used for specific days of the week (e.g., *on Monday*), dates (e.g., *on May 15th*), and specific holidays (e.g., *on New Year's Day, on your birthday*).51
    - *Conversational Example:* "We have English class **on** Tuesdays." "The party is **on** Saturday."
  + **No preposition with *last, next, every, this***: e.g., *last week, next Monday, every day, this morning*.52
  + **Common Mistakes:** Confusing *in/on/at* for times and dates is very common.48 For example, saying "*on July*" instead of "*in July*," or "*in Monday*" instead of "*on Monday*."
  + **Practice:**
    - Calendar/Schedule activities: Students talk about their weekly schedule or upcoming appointments using *in, on, at*. "I have a doctor's appointment **on** Wednesday **at** 2 PM.".50
    - "When is it?" quiz with dates, times, holidays.
    - Fill-in-the-blanks exercises with sentences about routines or events.51

### **2.7. Conjunctions and Connectors**

Conjunctions are words that connect words, phrases, or clauses.4 Connectors (or linking adverbs) link ideas between sentences.56 They are crucial for creating more complex and fluent sentences.

* **2.7.1. Coordinating Conjunctions (FANBOYS):**
  + **Explanation:** Connect words, phrases, or independent clauses of equal grammatical rank. The acronym FANBOYS helps remember them: **F**or, **A**nd, **N**or, **B**ut, **O**r, **Y**et, **S**o.54
    - **For:** (Reason) "I went to bed, **for** I was tired." (More formal, *because* is more common in conversation).
    - **And:** (Addition) "I like coffee **and** tea." "He is tall **and** slim." 55
    - **Nor:** (Joins two negative alternatives – often requires inversion) "She doesn't like fish, **nor** does she like chicken." 55
    - **But:** (Contrast) "I want to go, **but** I am busy." "It's sunny, **but** it's cold." 55
    - **Or:** (Alternative/Choice) "Do you want tea **or** coffee?" "We can watch a movie **or** play a game." 55
    - **Yet:** (Contrast, similar to 'but', often implies something unexpected) "He studied hard, **yet** he failed the exam." 56
    - **So:** (Result/Consequence) "It was raining, **so** I took an umbrella." 55
  + **Conversational Examples:**
    - "I want to go to the park, **but** it's raining."
    - "Would you like pizza **or** pasta for dinner?"
    - "She was tired, **so** she went to bed early."
  + **Practice:**
    - Sentence combining exercises: Give two simple sentences and ask students to join them using an appropriate FANBOYS conjunction.57 Example: "I like apples. I like bananas." -> "I like apples **and** bananas."
    - "Link-Up Games": Students in pairs write a sentence each, then the class links them using conjunctions.60
    - Fill-in-the-blanks in dialogues.58
* **2.7.2. Basic Subordinating Conjunctions:**
  + **Explanation:** Introduce a dependent (subordinate) clause and connect it to an independent clause. A dependent clause cannot stand alone as a sentence. Common ones for basic conversation include *because, although, if, when, while, after, before, until, as*.4
    - **Because:** (Reason) "I am learning English **because** I want a better job." 54
    - **Although/Though:** (Contrast) "**Although** it was cold, he went swimming." 62
    - **If:** (Condition) "**If** it rains, we will stay home." 54
    - **When:** (Time) "I feel happy **when** I see my friends." 54
    - **While:** (Time - during the time that) "She called **while** I was cooking." 63
    - **After:** (Time) "We can go for a walk **after** dinner." 62
    - **Before:** (Time) "Brush your teeth **before** you go to bed." 62
    - **Until:** (Time - up to the point that) "Wait here **until** I come back." 62
    - **As:** (Reason, time - while) "I couldn't hear him **as** the music was too loud."
  + **Conversational Examples:**
    - "I'll call you **when** I get home."
    - "She is happy **because** she passed the exam."
    - "**If** you study, you will learn."
  + **Practice:**
    - Sentence completion: "I will go to the party **if**..."
    - Matching sentence halves: One half with the independent clause, the other with the dependent clause starting with a subordinating conjunction.63
    - Creating sentences about personal experiences using these conjunctions: "I watch TV **after** I finish my homework."
* **2.7.3. Basic Connectors (Linking Adverbs):**
  + **Explanation:** Briefly introduce a few simple connectors that link ideas between sentences or paragraphs to improve flow. For basic learners, focus on very common ones.
    - **However:** (Contrast) "He is very rich. **However**, he is not happy."
    - **Therefore/So:** (Result) "She studied hard. **Therefore/So**, she passed the exam."
    - **Also/Moreover/Furthermore:** (Addition) "The hotel is comfortable. **Also/Moreover**, it is in a great location." 56
    - **For example/For instance:** (Illustration) "I like many fruits. **For example**, I like apples and bananas."
  + **Conversational Examples:**
    - "It's a nice day. **However**, it might rain later."
    - "I need to buy groceries. **Also**, I need to go to the bank."
  + **Practice:**
    - Providing two related sentences and asking students to choose an appropriate connector.
    - Short paragraph writing where students are encouraged to use one or two connectors.

### **2.8. Interjections**

Interjections are short words or phrases used to express strong emotion or surprise. They are often used spontaneously and can stand alone or be part of a sentence.4

* **2.8.1. Common Interjections and Their Meanings:**
  + **Oh!** (Surprise, realization) - "**Oh!** I forgot my keys." 64
  + **Ouch!** (Pain) - "**Ouch!** That hurt." 64
  + **Wow!** (Amazement, surprise) - "**Wow!** That's a beautiful car." 65
  + **Oops! / Whoops!** (Mild apology for a small mistake) - "**Oops!** I spilled my coffee." 64
  + **Hey!** (To get attention, greeting) - "**Hey!** How are you?" 64
  + **Well...** (As a filler, or to show hesitation/thought) - "**Well...** I'm not sure."
  + **Ugh!** (Disgust, annoyance) - "**Ugh!** This food is terrible." 65
  + **Phew!** (Relief) - "**Phew!** I finished the exam." 65
  + **Yay! / Hooray!** (Joy, celebration) - "**Yay!** We won!" 64
  + **Hmm...** (Thinking, hesitation) - "**Hmm...** let me think about that."
  + **Aha!** (Discovery, understanding) - "**Aha!** Now I understand."
  + **Bravo!** (Approval, praise) - "**Bravo!** That was a great performance."
* **2.8.2. Using Interjections in Conversation:**
  + **Placement:** Often at the beginning of a sentence, followed by an exclamation mark or a comma.
  + **Tone:** The meaning can change with intonation.
  + **Conversational Examples:**
    - "**Wow!** Your new haircut looks great!"
    - "**Ouch!** I stubbed my toe."
    - "**Oh dear!** I hope you feel better soon."
    - "**Phew!** I'm glad that's over."
* **2.8.3. Practice Activities:**
  + **Reacting to Situations:** Present different scenarios (e.g., winning a prize, dropping something, seeing something surprising) and have students respond with appropriate interjections.
  + **Dialogue Fill-ins:** Provide dialogues with blanks where interjections would naturally fit.
  + **Role-playing:** Students act out short scenes that elicit emotional responses and the use of interjections. (e.g., one student shares exciting news, the other reacts with "Wow!" or "No way!").
* **Insight for Module 2 (Parts of Speech):** Understanding parts of speech is not just about labeling words; it's about recognizing how these building blocks combine to create meaning and how their correct use (and common errors) impacts clarity in daily conversation.4 For learners at a basic proficiency, the focus should always be on the most frequent and communicatively useful aspects of each part of speech, with constant recycling and contextualized practice.
  + The ability to distinguish between countable and uncountable nouns, for instance, directly affects the use of articles and quantifiers ("much" vs. "many," "a few" vs. "a little"), which are frequent in everyday requests, descriptions, and discussions about food, shopping, etc..4 Errors here, like "furnitures" or "advices," are common and mark speech as non-native.12
  + Similarly, correct pronoun usage (subject vs. object, possessives) is vital for clear reference and avoiding ambiguity in who is doing what to whom, or who owns something.18
  + The distinction between adjectives and adverbs, particularly the common error of using an adjective where an adverb of manner is needed (e.g., "He drives slow" instead of "He drives slowly"), is another key area for conversational accuracy.12

## **Module 3: Sentence Structure - Putting Words Together**

Understanding basic sentence structure is crucial for forming coherent thoughts and engaging in understandable conversations. This module focuses on the fundamental patterns and types of sentences used in everyday English.

### **3.1. Basic English Sentence Patterns**

Most English sentences are built around a few core patterns.67 Mastering these helps learners construct their own sentences correctly.

* **3.1.1. S-V (Subject-Verb):**
  + **Explanation:** The simplest pattern, consisting of a subject performing an action or being in a state.
  + **Examples:** "Birds **sing**." "She **is sleeping**." "John **arrived**." 67
  + **Conversational Practice:** Students create simple sentences about themselves or their surroundings. "I **walk**." "The sun **shines**."
* **3.1.2. S-V-O (Subject-Verb-Object):**
  + **Explanation:** The subject performs an action (verb) that affects a direct object.
  + **Examples:** "I **like coffee**." "She **reads books**." "They **are watching a movie**." 67
  + **Conversational Practice:** Talking about likes/dislikes, daily activities. "What do you **eat for breakfast**?" "I **eat toast**."
* **3.1.3. S-V-Adj (Subject-Verb-Adjective):**
  + **Explanation:** The subject is described by an adjective, connected by a linking verb (usually 'be', 'seem', 'feel', 'look').
  + **Examples:** "He **is happy**." "The food **tastes delicious**." "She **seems tired**." 67
  + **Conversational Practice:** Describing feelings, appearances, qualities. "How are you?" "I **am fine**." "This tea **is hot**."
* **3.1.4. S-V-Adv (Subject-Verb-Adverb):**
  + **Explanation:** The verb (often a linking verb) is modified by an adverb, typically indicating place or manner (though manner adverbs are more common with action verbs).
  + **Examples:** "The cat **is here**." "She **is outside**." "He **spoke quietly**." (S-V-Adv with action verb) 67
  + **Conversational Practice:** Stating location. "Where is the manager?" "He **is upstairs**."
* **3.1.5. S-V-N (Subject-Verb-Noun - Predicate Nominative):**
  + **Explanation:** The subject is identified or renamed by a noun, connected by a linking verb.
  + **Examples:** "She **is a doctor**." "They **are students**." "Mr. Smith **became the manager**." 67
  + **Conversational Practice:** Introductions, stating professions. "What do you do?" "I **am an engineer**."
* **Practice Activities for Basic Patterns:**
  + **Sentence Scrambles:** Provide jumbled words for students to arrange into correct sentence patterns.
  + **Sentence Building with Cards:** Use cards with subjects, verbs, objects, adjectives, and adverbs for students to create sentences.68
  + **Fill-in-the-Blanks:** "She \_\_\_\_\_\_ a book." (reads) "He is \_\_\_\_\_\_." (happy/a teacher/here).68
  + **Relating to Daily Life:** Students create sentences about their daily activities using these patterns (e.g., "I eat breakfast." (SVO), "I am tired." (SVA)).68

### **3.2. Types of Sentences (by Purpose)**

Sentences can be classified by their purpose in communication.69

* **3.2.1. Declarative Sentences (Statements):**
  + **Explanation:** Make a statement, provide information, tell something. End with a period (.). Most common sentence type. Can be positive or negative.
  + **Examples:** "I like coffee." "She is not coming to the party." "The sky is blue." 69
  + **Word Order:** Subject + Verb + Object/Complement.
  + **Conversational Practice:** Sharing information, stating facts, expressing opinions. "My favorite color is blue." "I don't like spicy food."
* **3.2.2. Interrogative Sentences (Questions):**
  + **Explanation:** Ask a question. End with a question mark (?). Used to request information.
  + **Examples:** "Do you like coffee?" "Where is she going?" "What time is it?" 69
  + **Word Order:** (WH-word +) Auxiliary Verb + Subject + Main Verb...? (More in Module 9).
  + **Conversational Practice:** Asking for information, starting conversations. "What's your name?" "How are you?"
* **3.2.3. Imperative Sentences (Commands/Requests):**
  + **Explanation:** Give a command, make a request, or give instructions. The subject 'you' is usually implied and not stated. Can end with a period (.) or an exclamation mark (!).
  + **Examples:** "Close the door." "Please sit down." "Don't touch that!" 69
  + **Word Order:** Base form of the verb (+ Object/Adverbial). For negative, "Do not/Don't" + base verb.
  + **Conversational Practice:** Giving directions, making polite requests. "Pass the salt, please." "Be quiet!"
* **3.2.4. Exclamatory Sentences (Exclamations):**
  + **Explanation:** Express strong emotion or surprise. End with an exclamation mark (!).
  + **Examples:** "What a beautiful day!" "How exciting!" "I won!" 69
  + **Word Order:** Often start with "What (+ adjective) + noun..." or "How (+ adjective/adverb)..." or can be a simple statement said with strong emotion.
  + **Conversational Practice:** Reacting to news, expressing strong feelings. "That's amazing!" "I can't believe it!"
* **Practice Activities for Sentence Types:**
  + **Identifying Sentence Types:** Provide a list of sentences and have students identify their type.
  + **Transforming Sentences:** Change a declarative sentence into a question or a command.
  + **Role-Playing:** Scenarios where students need to use different sentence types (e.g., one student asks for directions using interrogative sentences, another gives directions using imperative sentences).

### **3.3. Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences (Introduction)**

Understanding how to combine clauses allows for more varied and sophisticated communication.59

* **3.3.1. Simple Sentences:**
  + **Explanation:** Contains one independent clause (one subject + one verb combination expressing a complete thought).
  + **Examples:** "I like tea." "The dog barked." "She is reading a book." 71
  + **Conversational Practice:** Review basic sentence patterns.
* **3.3.2. Compound Sentences:**
  + **Explanation:** Contains two or more independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) or a semicolon. Each clause could stand alone as a simple sentence. A comma is usually placed before the conjunction.
  + **Examples:** "I like tea, **and** he likes coffee." "She studied hard, **but** she didn't pass." "It was late, **so** we went home." 59
  + **Conversational Practice:** Combining related ideas. "I want to go to the beach, **but** it's too cold." "We can eat now, **or** we can eat later."
  + **Activity:** Provide pairs of simple sentences and ask students to combine them using FANBOYS.59
* **3.3.3. Complex Sentences (Basic Introduction):**
  + **Explanation:** Contains one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. A dependent clause begins with a subordinating conjunction (e.g., *because, when, if, although*) or a relative pronoun (e.g., *who, which, that*) and cannot stand alone.
  + **Examples:** "**When it rains**, I stay inside." "I stay inside **when it rains**." "She is happy **because she got a new job**." "I know the man **who lives there**." 71
  + **Conversational Practice:** Explaining reasons, conditions, or time relationships. "I'll call you **when I finish work**." "**If you need help**, please ask me."
  + **Activity:** Provide an independent clause and a subordinating conjunction, and have students complete the dependent clause, or vice versa. "I will go to the park... (if...)."
* **Insight for Module 3 (Sentence Structure):** For basic learners, the immediate goal is to move beyond single-word or very short phrase responses to forming complete, simple sentences for common daily interactions.67 Introducing compound sentences with high-frequency conjunctions like 'and,' 'but,' and 'so' is a natural next step to add a little more complexity and flow to their speech. Complex sentences should be introduced very gently, perhaps focusing only on common subordinators like 'because' and 'when' initially, as the concept of dependent vs. independent clauses can be challenging.
  + The ability to form different types of sentences (declarative, interrogative, imperative) is fundamental for varied communication. For example, being able to make a statement ("I am hungry."), ask a question ("What time is it?"), and make a request ("Please pass the water.") covers a wide range of daily conversational needs.69 The focus should be on functional use rather than grammatical labels.

## **Module 4: Building Your Word Power - Vocabulary**

Expanding vocabulary is crucial for expressing oneself more precisely and understanding others better. This module focuses on strategies for learning and retaining new words, particularly those relevant to daily conversations.

### **4.1. Strategies for Vocabulary Acquisition**

Effective vocabulary learning involves more than just memorizing lists. Adult learners benefit from strategies that connect new words to existing knowledge and real-world use.72

* **4.1.1. Learning in Context:**
  + **Explanation:** Introduce new words within sentences, dialogues, stories, or articles rather than in isolation. This helps learners understand meaning and usage.5
  + **Example:** Instead of just "delicious," present "This pizza is **delicious**."
  + **Activity:** Provide short texts or dialogues. Have students identify new words and guess their meanings from context before looking them up.
* **4.1.2. Using Visual Aids:**
  + **Explanation:** Pictures, drawings, and real objects (realia) are powerful tools for teaching vocabulary, especially for concrete nouns and actions.6
  + **Example:** Show a picture of an apple when teaching the word "apple." Use real food items when teaching food vocabulary.73
  + **Activity:** "Pictionary" or describing objects/pictures using new vocabulary.
* **4.1.3. Relating to Personal Experience:**
  + **Explanation:** Connect new vocabulary to learners' own lives, hobbies, and experiences to make it more memorable and relevant.72
  + **Example:** When teaching "hobby," ask students, "What is your **hobby**?"
  + **Activity:** Students create sentences or short stories using new vocabulary words to describe their own experiences or opinions.
* **4.1.4. Understanding Word Families and Cognates:**
  + **Word Families:** Briefly introduce the idea that words can have different forms (e.g., *happy* (adj), *happiness* (n), *happily* (adv)). This helps expand vocabulary more efficiently.75
  + **Cognates:** For learners whose native language shares roots with English (e.g., Spanish, French), pointing out cognates (words that look and mean similar things, like *information/información*) can be a helpful shortcut.74 Be cautious of false cognates.
* **4.1.5. Using Antonyms and Synonyms:**
  + **Explanation:** Teaching words with their opposites (antonyms) or similar meaning words (synonyms) can help reinforce understanding and expand vocabulary.73
  + **Example:** Teach "happy" along with "sad" (antonym) or "glad" (synonym).
  + **Activity:** Matching games with synonyms or antonyms. Fill-in-the-blanks using antonyms: "The sun is in the sky during the day. We can see the **moon** at **night**.".73

### **4.2. Strategies for Vocabulary Retention and Active Use**

Learning new words is only half the battle; retaining and using them actively in conversation is the goal.75

* **4.2.1. Repetition and Spaced Repetition:**
  + **Explanation:** Regular review and practice are key. Spaced repetition (reviewing words at increasing intervals) is more effective than cramming.75
  + **Activity:** Use flashcards (digital or physical) for regular review. Incorporate previously learned vocabulary into new lessons.
* **4.2.2. Creating a Vocabulary Notebook/Spreadsheet:**
  + **Explanation:** Encourage students to keep a personal vocabulary notebook or digital list where they write down new words, their meanings, example sentences, translations (if helpful), and pronunciation notes.75
  + **Why it matters:** Writing things down aids memory, and a personalized list becomes a valuable study tool.
* **4.2.3. Active Use in Speaking and Writing:**
  + **Explanation:** The most effective way to retain vocabulary is to use it. Encourage students to use new words in classroom discussions, role-plays, and writing tasks.1
  + **Activity:** "Word of the Day/Week" – challenge students to use a specific new word in conversation. Storytelling activities where students must incorporate a list of new words.75
* **4.2.4. Focus on Pronunciation:**
  + **Explanation:** Knowing how to pronounce a word correctly makes learners more confident to use it. Teach pronunciation along with meaning.75
  + **Activity:** Teacher models pronunciation, students repeat. Use online dictionaries with audio. Record and listen back.

### **4.3. High-Frequency Words for Daily Conversation**

Focusing on the most common English words provides learners with the tools for basic communication quickly.77

* **4.3.1. Lists of Common Words (Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs, Prepositions, Pronouns, Conjunctions):**
  + Provide curated lists of the most frequent words in English, categorized by part of speech, with simple example sentences relevant to daily life.77
  + **Example Nouns:** *time, person, year, way, day, thing, man, world, life, hand, part, child, eye, woman, place, work, week, case, point, government, company, number, group, problem, fact*.77
    - *Conversational Use:* "What **time** is it?" "Many **people** like coffee."
  + **Example Verbs:** *be, have, do, say, get, make, go, know, take, see, come, think, look, want, give, use, find, tell, ask, work, seem, feel, try, leave, call*.77
    - *Conversational Use:* "**Do** you **have** a pen?" "**Can** you **tell** me the way?"
  + **Example Adjectives:** *good, new, first, last, long, great, little, own, other, old, right, big, high, different, small, large, next, early, young, important, few, public, bad, same, able*.77
    - *Conversational Use:* "It's a **good** day." "She is a **young** woman."
  + **Example Adverbs:** *up, so, out, just, now, how, then, more, also, here, well, only, very, even, back, there, down, still, in, as, to, when, where, why, how* (Note: some of these also function as other parts of speech depending on context).77
    - *Conversational Use:* "Please speak **slowly**." "She will be here **soon**."
  + **Example Prepositions:** *to, of, in, for, on, with, at, by, from, up, about, into, over, after*.77
    - *Conversational Use:* "I'm going **to** the store." "The book is **on** the table."
  + **Example Conjunctions:** *and, but, or, if, because, when, so, that*.77
    - *Conversational Use:* "I am tired, **but** I will finish." "I will go **if** you go."

### **4.4. Common Phrases for Everyday Situations**

Learning set phrases for common situations can significantly boost conversational fluency and confidence.79

* **4.4.1. Greetings and Introductions:**
  + *Phrases:* "Hello!", "Hi!", "Good morning/afternoon/evening.", "How are you?", "How's it going?", "What's up?", "Nice to meet you.", "My name is...", "What's your name?".79
  + *Example Dialogue:*
    - A: "Good morning! How are you?"
    - B: "Good morning! I'm fine, thanks. And you?"
    - A: "I'm great! My name is Alex."
    - B: "Nice to meet you, Alex. I'm Maria."
* **4.4.2. Talking About Daily Routines:**
  + *Vocabulary:* *wake up, get up, have breakfast/lunch/dinner, go to work/school, start work, finish work, watch TV, go to bed*.80
  + *Phrases:* "I usually wake up at...", "First, I...", "Then, I...", "After that...", "In the evening, I...", "Before I go to bed, I...".80
  + *Example Dialogue:*
    - A: "What time do you usually **get up**?"
    - B: "I **get up** at 7 AM. Then I **have breakfast**."
* **4.4.3. Ordering Food:**
  + *Phrases:* "Can I see the menu, please?", "What do you recommend?", "I'd like to order...", "Can I have...?", "Does this dish contain...?", "Is this spicy?", "Can I have the bill/check, please?", "Do you accept credit cards?".79
  + *Example Dialogue (Waiter/Customer):*
    - Waiter: "Hello, can I take your order?"
    - Customer: "Yes, I'd like the chicken sandwich, please. And can I have a glass of water?"
    - Waiter: "Sure. Anything else?"
    - Customer: "No, that's all. Thank you."
* **4.4.4. Asking for and Giving Directions:**
  + *Phrases (Asking):* "Excuse me, how do I get to...?", "Where is the nearest...?", "Is it far from here?", "Can you show me on the map?".79
  + *Phrases (Giving):* "Go straight.", "Turn left/right.", "It's on the corner.", "It's next to...", "It's opposite..."
  + *Example Dialogue:*
    - A: "Excuse me, **where is the post office**?"
    - B: "**Go straight** for two blocks and **turn right**. It's **next to** the bank."
* **4.4.5. Shopping:**
  + *Phrases:* "How much is this?", "Do you have this in a different size/color?", "Can I try this on?", "I'll take it.", "Can I pay by card?".79
  + *Example Dialogue:*
    - Customer: "**How much does this shirt cost**?"
    - Shop Assistant: "It's $20."
    - Customer: "**Do you have it in blue**?"
* **4.4.6. Making Polite Requests and Apologies:**
  + *Requests:* "Could you please...?", "Would you mind...?", "Can I...?".81
  + *Apologies:* "I'm sorry.", "Excuse me.".81
  + *Example:* "Could you please speak slower?" "I'm sorry, I didn't understand."
* **Practice Activities for Common Phrases:**
  + **Role-playing** these scenarios is highly effective.1
  + **Dialogue completion** exercises.
  + **Matching phrases** to situations.
  + Students create their own short dialogues for different scenarios.
* **Insight for Module 4 (Vocabulary):** For basic proficiency learners aiming for conversational skills, vocabulary instruction must prioritize high-frequency words and practical, everyday phrases.77 While expanding vocabulary is important, ensuring learners can *actively use* a core set of words and phrases in common situations (greetings, ordering food, asking for directions) builds immediate communicative competence and confidence. Strategies that involve context, visuals, personal connection, and active use (speaking and writing) are far more effective than rote memorization.72
  + The selection of vocabulary should be driven by its utility in daily interactions. For example, learning "delicious" is more immediately useful for talking about food than a rare culinary term. Similarly, mastering phrases like "How much is this?" or "Where is...?" empowers learners in real-world situations.79 The focus should be on functional language that allows learners to accomplish communicative tasks.

## **Module 5: Articles - 'A/An' and 'The'**

Articles (*a, an, the*) are small words that can cause significant confusion for ESL learners, especially if their native language does not use them or uses them differently.84 This module focuses on the basic rules for using indefinite (*a/an*) and definite (*the*) articles, as well as when no article (zero article) is needed, in the context of everyday conversation.

### **5.1. Understanding Articles**

Articles specify whether a noun is general or specific.

### **5.2. Indefinite Articles: 'A' and 'An'**

* **Explanation:**
  + Used with singular, countable nouns when referring to something general, non-specific, or mentioned for the first time.84
  + **'A'** is used before words beginning with a consonant sound (e.g., *a cat, a big apple, a university* - 'university' starts with a 'y' sound).12
  + **'An'** is used before words beginning with a vowel sound (a, e, i, o, u) (e.g., *an apple, an interesting book, an hour* - 'hour' starts with a vowel sound as 'h' is silent).12
* **Conversational Examples:**
  + "I saw **a** dog in the park." (First mention, any dog)
  + "She is **an** engineer." (Describing profession)
  + "I need **a** new phone." (Any new phone, not a specific one)
* **Common Mistakes:** Using 'a' before vowel sounds or 'an' before consonant sounds; using 'a/an' with plural or uncountable nouns.12 For instance, "I have ~~a news~~" should be "I have some news" or "I have a piece of news."

### **5.3. Definite Article: 'The'**

* **Explanation:**
  + Used with singular and plural, countable and uncountable nouns.4
  + Used when talking about something specific that both the speaker and listener know about (e.g., it's clear which one we mean).84
  + **Second mention:** When a noun has already been introduced. Example: "I saw **a** cat. **The** cat was black.".84
  + **Unique things:** Things that are one of a kind (e.g., *the sun, the moon, the sky, the internet, the world*).84
  + **Specific nouns identified by a phrase or clause:** (e.g., *the book on the table, the man who called you*).84
  + **Superlatives:** (e.g., *the best student, the tallest building*).
  + Certain proper nouns: (e.g., names of rivers, oceans, mountain ranges, some countries like *the United States*, *the Philippines*). For basic learners, this can be simplified to common, easily recognizable examples like "the USA."
* **Conversational Examples:**
  + "Can you pass me **the** salt, please?" (Specific salt, understood by listener)
  + "**The** weather is nice today." (Specific weather of today)
  + "I liked **the** movie we watched last night." (Specific movie)
  + "**The** president will give a speech." (Unique in context)
* **Common Mistakes:** Using 'the' for general statements where no article or 'a/an' is needed (e.g., "~~The~~ dogs are friendly animals" should be "Dogs are friendly animals").85 Overusing 'the' before all nouns.

### **5.4. Zero Article (No Article)**

* **Explanation:** Situations where no article is used before a noun.
  + With **plural countable nouns** when talking about them in general.85
    - *Example:* "**Cats** are good pets." (Not "The cats are good pets" unless referring to specific cats).
  + With **uncountable nouns** when talking about them in general.85
    - *Example:* "**Water** is essential for life." "**Music** helps me relax."
  + With **most proper nouns**: Names of people (e.g., *John, Maria*), most cities and countries (e.g., *London, Canada*), continents, streets, mountains, lakes.85
    - *Example:* "I live in **Canada**." "We visited **Lake Ontario**."
  + With **meals** (breakfast, lunch, dinner) when speaking generally.85
    - *Example:* "I have **breakfast** at 7 AM." (But: "**The dinner** we had last night was delicious." - specific dinner).
  + With **languages and nationalities** (e.g., "She speaks **Spanish**." "He is **French**.").
  + With **sports and games** (e.g., "I play **soccer**.").
  + With **academic subjects** (e.g., "She studies **history**.").
  + With **days of the week, months, seasons (often), and years** when used generally or with prepositions like 'in' or 'on' (e.g., "I was born in **July**." "Classes start in **September**.").85
* **Conversational Examples:**
  + "I like **dogs**." (General plural countable)
  + "She drinks **coffee** every morning." (General uncountable)
  + "We are going to **Paris** next month." (Proper noun - city)
  + "**Dinner** is ready." (General meal)
* **Common Mistakes:** Using 'the' with general plural or uncountable nouns (e.g., "I like ~~the~~ apples" when meaning apples in general) or unnecessarily with proper nouns where it's not required.

### **5.5. Common Mistakes and Conversational Practice**

The abstract nature of "specificity" and "generality" makes articles one of the most challenging areas for ESL learners, as their first language may lack articles entirely or use them differently.84 Constant exposure to articles in meaningful conversational contexts, rather than just rule memorization, is key to developing an intuitive feel for their use.

* **Common Mistakes Review:** 12
  + Using 'the' for first mention of a general singular countable noun: "I saw ~~the~~ cat." -> "I saw **a** cat." 86
  + Omitting an article with a singular countable noun: "I have ~~car~~." -> "I have **a** car."
  + Using 'a/an' with uncountable nouns: "I need ~~an~~ advice." -> "I need **some** advice / **a piece of** advice." 12
  + Using 'the' with general plural/uncountable nouns: "~~The~~ books are expensive." -> "**Books** are expensive." 85
  + Confusion with 'a' vs 'an' based on spelling not sound: "~~a~~ hour" -> "**an** hour." 84
* **Practice Activities:** 87
  + **"The Correct Article" Game:** Students draw noun cards and say the correct article. For advanced practice, they can use it in a sentence or explain their choice.87
  + **"Article Marathon":** Designate areas in the room for 'a', 'an', 'the', and 'zero article'. Call out nouns or show pictures, and students run to the correct zone.87
  + **"Correct the Teacher":** Prepare sentences with common article mistakes and have students identify and correct them.87
  + **"What's in the Bag?":** Pull items from a bag and have students say, "It's **a/an** [item]." Then ask questions about it using "the": "What color is **the** [item]?".87
  + **Gap-fill Exercises in Dialogues:**
    - A: "I bought \_\_\_ new phone yesterday." (a)
    - B: "Oh, really? Is \_\_\_ phone good?" (the)
    - A: "Yes, \_\_\_ phone has \_\_\_ amazing camera." (the, an)
    - B: "I need \_\_\_ advice. I want to buy \_\_\_ new laptop." (some/zero, a)
  + **Story Building:** Students collaboratively build a story, paying attention to article use for first and subsequent mentions.87
    - Student 1: "Yesterday, I saw **a** cat."
    - Student 2: "**The** cat was black and white."
    - Student 3: "**The** cat was sitting under **a** tree."
  + **Describing a Room/Picture:** Students describe a picture or their own room, focusing on using articles correctly. "There is **a** bed in my room. **The** bed is next to **the** window. I have **books** on **a** shelf."

## **Module 6: Asking for Information - WH Questions**

WH questions are essential tools for gathering specific information, engaging in meaningful conversations, and understanding the world. They are called WH questions because most of them start with the letters 'W' and 'H' (Who, What, Where, When, Why, Which, Whose, How).89 Unlike Yes/No questions, WH questions require more detailed answers.

### **6.1. Introduction to WH Question Words**

This section introduces the core WH question words and their primary functions in seeking information. Understanding which word to use for what type of information is the first step.

**Table 1: WH Question Words and Their Uses**

| **WH-Word** | **Asks About** | **Conversational Example** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Who | People (subject) | "**Who** is your teacher?" / "**Who** called me?" |
| Whom | People (object - more formal) | "**Whom** did you meet?" (Often "**Who** did you meet?" in conversation) |
| Whose | Possession | "**Whose** jacket is this?" |
| What | Things, Actions, Ideas, Information | "**What** is your name?" / "**What** are you doing?" / "**What** time is it?" |
| Where | Place, Location | "**Where** do you live?" / "**Where** is the bank?" |
| When | Time, Date | "**When** is the party?" / "**When** did you arrive?" |
| Why | Reason, Purpose | "**Why** are you studying English?" / "**Why** is he late?" |
| Which | Choice (from a limited or specific set) | "**Which** color do you like, blue or red?" / "**Which** book is yours?" |
| How | Manner, Method, Condition, Degree | "**How** are you?" / "**How** do you cook this?" / "**How** was the movie?" |
| How much | Quantity (uncountable nouns), Price | "**How much** sugar do you want?" / "**How much** does this cost?" |
| How many | Quantity (countable nouns) | "**How many** students are in the class?" |
| How often | Frequency | "**How often** do you visit your family?" |
| How long | Duration | "**How long** will the meeting last?" |
| How far | Distance | "**How far** is it to the station?" |

*Source: Adapted from 89*

This table is invaluable for learners as it clearly connects each WH-word to the specific type of information it elicits, providing an immediate conversational context. This direct association helps learners quickly grasp the function of each word and begin to formulate their own questions for everyday interactions, such as asking for names, locations, times, reasons, and descriptions.

### **6.2. Forming WH Questions**

Correct structure is essential for WH questions to be understood. There are two main patterns:

* 6.2.1. With an Auxiliary Verb (be, do, have) or Modal Verb (can, will, should, etc.):  
  The most common structure is:  
  WH-word + Auxiliary/Modal Verb + Subject + Main Verb (+ rest of sentence)? 89
  + *Examples with 'be':*
    - "**What is** your name?"
    - "**Where are** they going?"
    - "**When was** she here?"
  + *Examples with 'do/does/did' (for simple present and simple past of most verbs):*
    - "**What do** you want?"
    - "**Where does** he live?"
    - "**When did** you arrive?"
  + *Examples with 'have/has/had' (for perfect tenses):*
    - "**What have** you done?"
    - "**Where has** she been?"
  + *Examples with modal verbs:*
    - "**What can** I do for you?"
    - "**When will** the train leave?"
    - "**Why should** I go?"
  + A common error for learners is forgetting the subject-auxiliary inversion, leading to sentences like "*What you are doing?*" instead of "**What are** you doing?".12 This inversion is a key structural shift from declarative sentences and requires focused practice.
* 6.2.2. Without an Auxiliary Verb (when the WH-word is the Subject):  
  If the WH-word (who, what, which) is the subject of the question (i.e., it performs the action of the verb), we do not use an auxiliary verb do/does/did. The structure is:  
  WH-word (as Subject) + Main Verb (+ rest of sentence)? 90
  + *Examples:*
    - "**Who called** you?" (Here, "Who" is the subject; someone called.)
      * *Incorrect:* "**Who did call** you?"
    - "**What happened**?" ("What" is the subject; something happened.)
    - "**Which car costs** more?" ("Which car" is the subject.)
  + This distinction between the WH-word as subject versus object is a frequent point of confusion. Learners often overgeneralize the use of 'do/does/did'.90

### **6.3. Practicing WH Questions in Daily Conversation**

The goal is to use WH questions naturally to seek information in everyday scenarios.

* **Conversational Examples for Common Situations:**
  + **Meeting Someone New:**
    - "**What**'s your name?"
    - "**Where** are you from?"
    - "**What** do you do?" (for work/study)
    - "**How** are you today?"
  + **Making Plans:**
    - "**When** should we meet?"
    - "**Where** do you want to go?"
    - "**What** time works for you?"
  + **At a Shop:**
    - "**How much** is this?"
    - "**Where** can I find the bread?"
    - "**What** time do you close?"
  + **Asking for Help/Clarification:**
    - "**How** do I get to the library?" 89
    - "**What** does this word mean?" 92
    - "**Why** did you say that?"
  + **Talking about Preferences/Experiences:**
    - "**Which** movie do you want to see?"
    - "**What** kind of music do you like?"
    - "**When** did you last go on holiday?"
* **Practice Activities:**
  + **"Getting to Know You" Interviews:** Students work in pairs, preparing and asking each other WH questions about their hobbies, family, work, daily routines, etc. They then report some information about their partner to the class or another pair.93 This activity provides an authentic reason to ask and answer questions.
    - *Example questions:* "**What** are your favorite hobbies?" "**How much** time do you spend on your hobbies daily?".94
  + **Information Gap Activities:** Student A has a picture/schedule/story with some missing information, and Student B has the complementary information. They must ask each other WH questions to complete their own information (e.g., "Where is the bank on your map?" "What time does the train leave?").
  + **Role-Plays:** 1
    - *Tourist and Local:* Tourist asks for directions, information about places. "**How** can I get to the museum?" "**What** are the opening hours?"
    - *Customer and Shop Assistant:* Customer asks about products, prices. "**How much** are these apples?" "**Where** are the fitting rooms?"
    - *Doctor and Patient:* Patient describes symptoms, doctor asks questions. "**What** are your symptoms?" "**When** did it start?"
  + **"Find Someone Who..." with WH Questions:** Instead of just finding someone who "likes pizza," students ask, "**Who** in the class likes pizza and **why**?" or "**What** kind of pizza do you like?"
  + **Picture Prompts:** Show a picture with a lot of activity. Students ask WH questions about the picture (e.g., "**Who** is wearing a red hat?" "**What** is the dog doing?" "**Why** is the man running?").95
  + **Question Chain:** One student asks a WH question to another. That student answers and then asks a different WH question to a third student, and so on.43
  + **Daily Question Practice:** Start each class with a few simple WH questions related to the day, weather, or students' well-being: "**What** day is it today?" "**How** is the weather?" "**What did** you do yesterday evening?"

Mastering WH questions is fundamental to conversational fluency. While learning the individual WH words is relatively straightforward, the structural rules for forming questions, especially subject-auxiliary inversion and the correct use or omission of auxiliaries like *do/does/did*, often pose challenges for learners.12 Repeated oral drills and communicative practice, where the genuine need for information drives the question formation, are more effective than purely written exercises. The focus should be not only on *which* WH-word to use but significantly on *how* to structure the question correctly in various conversational contexts.

## **Module 7: Connecting Ideas - Prepositions**

Prepositions are small but mighty words (e.g., *in, on, at, under, for, to, with*) that establish relationships between nouns/pronouns and other words in a sentence. They typically indicate location (place), time, or direction.4 For ESL learners, prepositions can be tricky because their usage is often idiomatic and doesn't always translate directly from their native language.12 This module will focus on the most common prepositions used in daily conversation, particularly those of place and time, emphasizing contextual learning and common collocations.

### **7.1. Introduction to Prepositions**

Prepositions are essential for adding detail and clarity to sentences, helping to specify *where* something is, *when* something happens, or *how* something is done. Incorrect preposition use is a very frequent error area for learners.12

### **7.2. Prepositions of Place**

These prepositions help us describe the location of people and things. Using visual aids and real objects in the classroom is highly effective for teaching these.6

* **In:** Indicates something is inside an enclosed space or a larger area.
  + *Examples:* "The keys are **in** the bag." "She lives **in** London." "The milk is **in** the fridge." "I am **in** the car." 47
  + *Conversational use:* "Where's my phone?" "It's **in** your pocket."
* **On:** Indicates something is on a surface, or for specific modes of transport where one can stand or walk.
  + *Examples:* "The book is **on** the table." "The picture is **on** the wall." "He is **on** the bus." "My house is **on** Park Street." 47
  + *Conversational use:* "Where did you put the remote?" "It's **on** the sofa."
* **At:** Indicates a specific point, location, or building.
  + *Examples:* "She is waiting **at** the bus stop." "I will meet you **at** the cafe." "He is **at** work." "Someone is **at** the door." 47
  + *Conversational use:* "Where are you?" "I'm **at** the library."
* **Under:** Indicates something is below or beneath another object.
  + *Examples:* "The cat is sleeping **under** the chair." "Your shoes are **under** the bed." 47
  + *Conversational use:* "I can't find my pen." "Maybe it's **under** those papers."
* **Next to / Beside:** Indicates something is at the side of another object.
  + *Examples:* "The bank is **next to** the supermarket." "He sat **beside** me." 47
  + *Conversational use:* "Can I sit **next to** you?"
* **Behind:** Indicates something is at the back of another object.
  + *Examples:* "The garden is **behind** the house." "Look **behind** you!" 47
  + *Conversational use:* "The car is parked **behind** the truck."
* **Between:** Indicates something is in the space separating two other things or people.
  + *Examples:* "The shop is **between** the bank and the pharmacy." "She sat **between** her two friends." 47
  + *Conversational use:* "The remote is **between** the cushions."
* **In front of:** Indicates something is directly before another object.
  + *Examples:* "The car is parked **in front of** the building." "Don't stand **in front of** the TV." 49
  + *Conversational use:* "There's a big tree **in front of** my house."

**Table 2: Common Prepositions of Place**

| **Preposition** | **Meaning/Use** | **Conversational Example** | **Visual Cue (Description)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **In** | Inside an enclosed space/area | "The milk is **in** the fridge." | (e.g., dot inside a box) |
| **On** | On a surface | "The book is **on** the table." | (e.g., dot on a line) |
| **At** | A specific point/location | "I'll meet you **at** the bus stop." | (e.g., dot next to a point) |
| **Under** | Below, covered by | "Your shoes are **under** the bed." | (e.g., dot beneath a line) |
| **Next to/Beside** | At the side of | "The bank is **next to** the pharmacy." | (e.g., dot beside another dot) |
| **Behind** | At the back of | "The garden is **behind** the house." | (e.g., dot hidden by a shape) |
| **Between** | In the middle of two things | "She sat **between** her two friends." | (e.g., dot in the middle of two other dots) |
| **In front of** | Directly before | "The car is parked **in front of** the building." | (e.g., dot before a shape) |

*Source: Adapted from 47*

This table offers a quick visual and conceptual link between the preposition, its core meaning for place, a common conversational example, and a simple visual cue. This multi-modal approach aids understanding and retention for basic learners, especially considering prepositions of place are highly visual. Correct use of these is essential for basic tasks like asking for/giving directions and describing where things are.

* **Practice Activities for Prepositions of Place:**
  + **"Simon Says" with prepositions:** "Simon says put your hand **on** your head.".6
  + **Describing the classroom/pictures:** Students describe where objects are located. "The clock is **on** the wall, **above** the whiteboard.".47
  + **Barrier Games:** Student A describes an arrangement of objects using prepositions; Student B, who cannot see Student A's arrangement, tries to replicate it based on the description.
  + **Treasure Hunt:** Hide objects and provide clues using prepositions (e.g., "The key is **under** the blue book **on** the shelf.").47
  + **Drawing to Instruction:** One student gives instructions with prepositions (e.g., "Draw a sun **above** the house. Draw a tree **next to** the house."), and the other student draws.50

### **7.3. Prepositions of Time**

These prepositions help us talk about *when* something happens. The most common and often confused are *at, in,* and *on*.

* **At:** Used for precise times, specific parts of the day, and certain fixed expressions.
  + *Precise times:* **at** 7 o'clock, **at** 10:30 AM, **at** noon, **at** midnight.51
  + *Mealtimes:* **at** breakfast time, **at** lunchtime, **at** dinnertime.51
  + *Fixed expressions:* **at** night, **at** the weekend (common in British English), **at** Christmas/Easter (referring to the holiday period).51
  + *Conversational use:* "The meeting is **at** 3 PM." "I usually watch TV **at** night."
* **In:** Used for longer, less specific periods of time.
  + *Parts of the day (except night):* **in** the morning, **in** the afternoon, **in** the evening.51
  + *Months:* **in** January, **in** August.51
  + *Seasons:* **in** (the) spring, **in** summer.51
  + *Years, Decades, Centuries:* **in** 2024, **in** the 1990s, **in** the 21st century.51
  + *Longer periods:* **in** the past, **in** the future, **in** a few minutes.51
  + *Conversational use:* "My birthday is **in** October." "I'll see you **in** the morning."
* **On:** Used for specific days and dates.
  + *Days of the week:* **on** Monday, **on** Fridays.51
  + *Specific dates:* **on** March 6th, **on** December 25th, 2010.51
  + *Specific holidays/days:* **on** Christmas Day, **on** my birthday, **on** New Year's Eve.51
  + *Note:* "On the weekend" is common in American English.51
  + *Conversational use:* "I have a meeting **on** Wednesday." "The party is **on** Saturday night."
* **No Preposition with *last, next, every, this***:
  + *Examples:* "I went to London **last** June." (not *in last June*) "He's coming back **next** Tuesday." (not *on next Tuesday*) "We'll call you **this** evening." (not *in this evening*).52

**Table 3: Prepositions of Time (at, in, on)**

| **Preposition** | **Used For** | **Conversational Example** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **At** | Precise times, mealtimes, night, specific points/holiday periods | "The movie starts **at** 8 PM." / "I sleep **at** night." |
| **In** | Months, seasons, years, centuries, long periods, parts of the day (not night) | "My birthday is **in** June." / "I like to read **in** the evening." |
| **On** | Days, dates, specific holidays (referring to the day itself) | "We have class **on** Mondays." / "The party is **on** New Year's Eve." |

*Source: Adapted from 51*

This table simplifies the primary uses of 'at,' 'in,' and 'on' for time, which are frequently confused. The direct comparison helps differentiate their applications, crucial for making plans, understanding schedules, and discussing events accurately.

* **Common Mistakes for Prepositions of Time:** 48
  + Using 'on' for months: "~~on July~~" -> "**in** July."
  + Using 'in' for days: "~~in Monday~~" -> "**on** Monday."
  + Confusing 'at night' with 'in the morning/afternoon/evening'.
* **Practice Activities for Prepositions of Time:**
  + **Calendar/Schedule Talk:** Students discuss their weekly schedules, birthdays, or upcoming holidays using *in, on, at*. "My birthday is **on** June 5th. I usually have a party **in** the evening.".50
  + **"When is it?" Quiz:** Teacher calls out events (e.g., "Christmas Day," "lunchtime," "your English class," "the year 2050"), and students respond with the correct preposition and time phrase.
  + **Fill-in-the-blanks:** "I go to the gym \_\_\_ Mondays. I usually go \_\_\_ the morning, \_\_\_ 8 AM." (on, in, at).52
  + **Dialogue practice about plans:** "What are you doing **on** Saturday?" "I'm going to a concert **at** 7 PM."

### **7.4. Other Common Prepositions (Brief Introduction)**

While place and time are primary for basic conversation, a brief introduction to other common prepositions can be beneficial.

* **For:** (duration, purpose, recipient) "I studied **for** two hours." "This gift is **for** you." "I'm going out **for** a walk." 4
* **To:** (direction, recipient, infinitive marker) "I am going **to** the park." "Give the book **to** Mary." "I want **to** learn." 4
* **With:** (accompanying, using an instrument, characteristic) "I'm going **with** my friends." "She writes **with** a pen." "A man **with** a hat." 4
* **From:** (origin, starting point) "I am **from** Japan." "The train **from** London arrives at 2 PM."
* **By:** (agent in passive voice, method of transport, deadline) "The book was written **by** him." "I travel **by** bus." "Finish it **by** Friday." 4
* **About:** (topic) "We are talking **about** our holidays."
* **Of:** (possession, part of something) "The color **of** the car." "A piece **of** cake." 4
* **Practice:** Simple sentence completion or matching exercises to familiarize learners with these prepositions in common contexts. "This letter is \_\_\_\_ you." (for) "I like to travel \_\_\_\_ train." (by)

Prepositions are highly idiomatic, and their meanings can shift based on context. Focusing on learning them in chunks or common phrases (collocations like "listen **to** music," "arrive **at** the airport," "interested **in** something") is generally more effective for conversational fluency than memorizing isolated meanings or abstract rules.12 When learners acquire prepositions as part of these natural language chunks, they are more likely to use them correctly and spontaneously in daily interactions.

## **Module 8: Talking About Time - Tenses**

Understanding and correctly using verb tenses is fundamental to expressing when actions occur – in the present, past, or future. For conversational fluency, mastering the most common tenses for everyday situations is key. This module will focus on the Simple Present, Simple Past, Present Continuous, and the basic Future forms (will and be going to), along with a brief introduction to the Present Perfect. Common mistakes will be addressed, and communicative practice will be emphasized.66

### **8.1. Simple Present Tense**

* **Use:**
  + Habits and daily routines: Actions that happen regularly. 27
  + Facts and general truths: Things that are always true. 27
  + Scheduled future events (less common for basic learners, but good to be aware of).
  + Opinions and feelings. 27
* **Form:**
  + Base form of the verb (e.g., *I work, you play, we study, they eat*).
  + Add **-s** or **-es** for third-person singular subjects (he, she, it) (e.g., *he works, she plays, it eats*). 4
  + Negative: *do/does + not + base verb* (e.g., "I **do not (don't)** like coffee." "She **does not (doesn't)** work here.")
  + Question: *Do/Does + subject + base verb?* (e.g., "**Do** you like tea?" "**Does** he live nearby?")
* **Signal Words (Adverbs of Frequency):** *always, usually, often, sometimes, rarely, never, every day/week/month/year, on Mondays*, etc. 27
* **Conversational Examples:**
  + "I **wake up** at 7 AM every day." 82
  + "She **drinks** coffee in the morning."
  + "The Earth **goes** around the Sun."
  + "**Do** you **watch** TV in the evening?"
  + "He **doesn't play** video games."
* **Common Mistakes:**
  + Forgetting the -s/-es for the third-person singular: "He like coffee" instead of "He like**s** coffee." 12
  + Incorrect formation of negatives and questions (e.g., "He no like coffee." or "Like you coffee?").
* **Practice Activities:**
  + **Describing Daily Routines:** Students talk or write about their typical day or the routine of a family member.27 "What do you **do** after work?"
  + **"Find Someone Who..."**: Students ask classmates questions to find someone who matches descriptions (e.g., "Find someone who **always eats** breakfast.").
  + **Fact Sharing:** Students share simple facts they know (e.g., "Water **boils** at 100 degrees Celsius.").
  + **Role-play:** Interviews about jobs or hobbies.27

### **8.2. Simple Past Tense**

* **Use:**
  + Completed actions or events that happened at a specific time in the past and are now finished.28
* **Form:**
  + **Regular Verbs:** Add **-ed** to the base form (e.g., *walk -> walked, play -> played, study -> studied*). Pronunciation of -ed endings (/t/, /d/, /ɪd/) should be addressed.28
  + **Irregular Verbs:** Have unique past forms that must be memorized (e.g., *go -> went, eat -> ate, see -> saw, buy -> bought*). Providing a list of common irregular verbs is essential.4
  + The form is the same for all subjects.
  + Negative: *did + not + base verb* (e.g., "I **did not (didn't) go**." "She **didn't see** the movie.").28
  + Question: *Did + subject + base verb?* (e.g., "**Did** you **go**?" "**Did** she **see** the movie?").28
* **Signal Words:** *yesterday, last night/week/month/year,...ago (e.g., two days ago), in 2010, when I was a child*.28
* **Conversational Examples:**
  + "I **visited** my parents last weekend." 97
  + "She **ate** pizza for dinner yesterday."
  + "**Did** you **watch** the game last night?"
  + "We **didn't go** to the beach because it **rained**."
* **Common Mistakes:**
  + Using the present tense instead of the past: "I go to the party yesterday."
  + Incorrect irregular verb forms: "I goed" or "I eated." 12
  + Using the past form of the main verb in negatives and questions with 'did': "I didn't went" or "Did you went?" (Correct: "I didn't go," "Did you go?").28
* **Practice Activities:**
  + **Storytelling:** Students tell a short story about something they did yesterday, last weekend, or on a past holiday.28 This is a very effective way to practice past tense in a meaningful context.
  + **"What did you do?" Chain:** One student says what they did, the next student repeats and adds their own activity.
  + **Picture Prompts:** Show pictures of past events and have students describe what happened.28
  + **Timeline Creation:** Students create a timeline of important events in their lives and describe them using the past simple.28
  + **Dialogue Practice:** "A: **Did** you **have** a good weekend? B: Yes, I **did**. I **went** to the cinema."

### **8.3. Present Continuous Tense (also known as Present Progressive)**

* **Use:**
  + Actions happening right now, at the moment of speaking.29
  + Temporary actions happening around the present time (but not necessarily at the exact moment of speaking).29
  + Definite future plans (especially with a time expression).29
* **Form:**
  + *Subject + am/is/are + verb-ing* (e.g., "I **am talking**." "She **is reading**." "They **are playing**.").29
  + Negative: *Subject + am/is/are + not + verb-ing* (e.g., "I **am not sleeping**." "He **isn't working**.")
  + Question: *Am/Is/Are + subject + verb-ing?* (e.g., "**Are** you **listening**?" "**Is** she **coming**?")
* **Signal Words:** *now, right now, at the moment, today, this week/month/year* (for ongoing temporary actions), *Look!, Listen!*
* **Conversational Examples:**
  + "What **are** you **doing**?" "I **am watching** TV." 32
  + "**Is** it **raining** outside?" "No, it **isn't raining** right now." 29
  + "She **is studying** for her exams this week." (Temporary action around now) 29
  + "We **are meeting** friends for dinner tonight." (Future plan) 29
* **Common Mistakes:**
  + Forgetting the 'be' verb: "She reading a book." instead of "She **is** reading a book.".29
  + Forgetting the '-ing' ending: "He is talk on the phone." instead of "He is talk**ing**...".29
  + Using present continuous with stative verbs (verbs describing states, not actions, e.g., *know, like, want, understand, believe, need*). For example, "I am knowing the answer" is incorrect; it should be "I know the answer." This is a crucial distinction for learners.
* **Practice Activities:**
  + **Describing Classroom Actions:** "What **am I doing**?" (Teacher mimes an action). "What **is Maria doing**?".29
  + **Picture Description:** Students describe what people are doing in a busy picture.32
  + **Charades/Miming Games:** Students act out actions for others to guess using the present continuous.29
  + **"What's Happening?"** Play short video clips without sound, and students describe the actions.
  + **Talking about Current Projects/Studies:** "What **are** you **working on** these days?"

### **8.4. Simple Future Tense ('will' and 'be going to')**

Used to talk about future events. While there are nuances, for basic learners, introducing them as largely interchangeable for many situations is a good starting point, then gradually introducing distinctions.30

* **8.4.1. Using 'Will':**
  + **Use:**
    - Spontaneous decisions made at the moment of speaking.30
    - Predictions about the future (often based on opinion or general belief).30
    - Promises, offers, requests.
    - Formal announcements or scheduled events (less common for basic conversation).
  + **Form:** *Subject + will + base verb* (e.g., "I **will go**.")
    - Contraction: *'ll* (e.g., "I'**ll** go.") 31
    - Negative: *Subject + will not (won't) + base verb* (e.g., "She **will not (won't) come**.") 31
    - Question: *Will + subject + base verb?* (e.g., "**Will** you **help** me?") 31
  + **Conversational Examples:**
    - (Phone rings) "I'**ll get** it!" (Spontaneous decision) 30
    - "I think it **will rain** tomorrow." (Prediction) 31
    - "I **will call** you later." (Promise)
    - "**Will** you marry me?" (Request/Proposal)
  + **Common Mistakes:** Using 'will' for pre-made plans where 'be going to' is more natural.
* **8.4.2. Using 'Be going to':**
  + **Use:**
    - Future plans and intentions that have already been decided.30
    - Predictions based on present evidence (something we can see or know now that indicates what will happen).30
  + **Form:** *Subject + am/is/are + going to + base verb* (e.g., "I **am going to travel**.")
    - Negative: *Subject + am/is/are + not + going to + base verb* (e.g., "They **are not (aren't) going to study**.")
    - Question: *Am/Is/Are + subject + going to + base verb?* (e.g., "**Are** you **going to watch** the movie?")
  + **Conversational Examples:**
    - "I **am going to visit** my grandmother next weekend." (Plan) 30
    - "Look at those dark clouds! It **is going to rain**." (Prediction based on evidence) 30
    - "**Are** you **going to** the party tonight?"
  + **Common Mistakes:** Using 'be going to' for very spontaneous decisions. Spelling/pronunciation of "going to" (often reduced to "gonna" in informal speech, which students should recognize but be guided to use the full form in more formal learning contexts).
* **8.4.3. 'Will' vs. 'Be going to' - Simplified for Basic Learners:**
  + A simple distinction: Use 'will' for spontaneous decisions ("Are you cold? I **will** close the window") and general predictions. Use 'be going to' for plans made before speaking ("I **am going to** the cinema tonight").30
  + It should be stressed that in many cases, they can be used interchangeably without a major change in meaning, especially for predictions.30
* **Practice Activities for Future Tenses:**
  + **Making Weekend/Holiday Plans:** Students discuss their plans using 'be going to'.30 "What **are you going to do** this weekend?"
  + **Spontaneous Decisions Role-Play:** Create scenarios where students have to make quick decisions using 'will' (e.g., someone drops something, the phone rings).30
    - Tom says: "I'm hungry." Mary says: "I'**ll make** you a sandwich." 30
  + **Predictions:** "What **will** life be like in 50 years?" or "What **is going to happen** in this video?" (show a clip about to have an obvious outcome).
  + **"My Future" Presentation:** Students talk about their future plans and aspirations.

### **8.5. Present Perfect Tense (Brief Introduction for Experiences)**

The Present Perfect is complex, but a basic introduction for talking about life experiences (without specifying when) is very useful for conversation.

* **Use:**
  + Life experiences (actions that happened at an unspecified time before now).98
  + Actions that started in the past and continue to the present (often with *for/since*).98
  + Recent past actions with results in the present (often with *just, already, yet*).98
  + For basic conversational learners, the "life experience" use is the most accessible starting point.
* **Form:** *Subject + have/has + past participle* (e.g., "I **have seen** that movie." "She **has traveled** to Japan.")
  + Negative: *Subject + have/has + not + past participle* (e.g., "I **haven't eaten** sushi.")
  + Question: *Have/Has + subject + past participle?* (e.g., "**Have** you **ever been** to Paris?")
* **Signal Words for Experiences:** *ever, never, before, once, twice, many times*.
* **Signal Words for Past to Present/Recent Past:** *for, since, already, yet, just*. (These can be introduced gradually).
* **Conversational Examples (Focus on Experiences):**
  + "**Have** you **ever eaten** Thai food?" "Yes, I **have eaten** it many times." / "No, I **have never eaten** it." 99
  + "She **has visited** three countries in Europe." 98
  + "I'**ve seen** that film before."
* **Common Mistakes:** 12
  + Using Simple Past instead of Present Perfect for general experiences (e.g., "Did you ever eat sushi?" instead of "Have you ever eaten sushi?").
  + Using Present Perfect with specific past time markers: "I have seen that movie yesterday." (Correct: "I saw that movie yesterday." or "I have seen that movie.") This is a very common error as many languages use a perfect-like tense for specific past events.98
  + Incorrect past participle forms.
* **Practice Activities:**
  + **"Have you ever...?" Survey:** Students create questions starting with "Have you ever...?" and survey their classmates.98 (e.g., "Have you ever ridden a horse?" "Have you ever been to another country?").
  + **Life Experiences Bingo:** Bingo cards with experiences (e.g., "been to Paris," "eaten sushi"). Students ask "Have you ever...?" to get signatures.
  + **Storytelling about experiences:** "Tell me about an interesting place you **have visited**."
* **Insight for Module 8 (Tenses):** Learners often struggle with choosing the correct tense because the way time is expressed can vary significantly across languages.66 For conversational English, focusing on the *function* and *common contexts* of each tense is more effective than abstract grammatical rules. For instance, associating Simple Past with "storytelling about finished events" and Present Perfect with "talking about life experiences up to now" provides clearer usage guidelines. The distinction between Simple Past (specific time) and Present Perfect (unspecified time/connection to present) is a notorious difficulty.98 Communicative activities that highlight these functional differences, like comparing "What did you do yesterday?" (Simple Past) with "What interesting things have you done in your life?" (Present Perfect), are crucial.96

## **Module 9: Expressing Yourself - Modals**

Modal verbs (also called modal auxiliaries) are special verbs that modify other verbs to express ideas such as ability, possibility, permission, obligation, advice, and logical certainty. They are essential for nuanced and polite conversation. The main modal verbs are: *can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would*.4 Modals are always followed by the base form of the main verb (e.g., "I *can swim*", not "I can to swim" or "I can swims").24 They do not change form for the third-person singular.24

### **9.1. Ability: 'Can' and 'Could'**

* **Can (Present Ability):** Expresses ability or capacity in the present.
  + *Form:* Subject + can + base verb.
  + *Negative:* cannot / can't.
  + *Question:* Can + subject + base verb?
  + *Conversational Examples:*
    - "I **can** speak English." 24
    - "**Can** you play the guitar?" 24
    - "She **can't** drive a car."
  + *Practice:* Students discuss things they can and can't do. "What **can** you do well?".25 "Ability Bingo" where students ask "Can you...?".101
* **Could (Past Ability / Polite Request / Possibility):**
  + *Past Ability:* Expresses general ability in the past.
    - *Conversational Example:* "When I was young, I **could** run very fast." 24
    - *Practice:* "What **could** you do when you were a child that you can't do now?".25
  + (Polite requests and possibility will be covered below).

### **9.2. Permission: 'Can', 'Could', and 'May'**

* **Can (Informal Permission):** Used to ask for or give permission in informal situations.
  + *Conversational Examples:*
    - "**Can** I borrow your pen?" 25
    - "Yes, you **can**." / "No, you **can't**."
* **Could (Polite Permission):** A more polite way to ask for permission than 'can'.
  + *Conversational Examples:*
    - "**Could** I use your phone, please?" 23
    - "**Could** I ask you a question?"
* **May (Formal Permission):** The most formal way to ask for or give permission.
  + *Conversational Examples:*
    - "**May** I leave early today?" 23
    - "Yes, you **may**."
  + **Practice:** Role-playing scenarios asking for permission in different contexts (e.g., asking a friend vs. asking a boss).25 "One student asks, '**Can** I borrow your pen?' The other student responds, 'Sure, you **can**.'".25

### **9.3. Possibility: 'May', 'Might', and 'Could'**

These modals express the chance that something is true or will happen.

* **May (Possibility - quite likely):** Suggests a reasonable possibility.
  + *Conversational Examples:*
    - "It **may** rain later, so take an umbrella." (Often implies a 50% chance) 24
    - "She **may** be at home now."
* **Might (Possibility - less likely):** Suggests a smaller possibility than 'may'.
  + *Conversational Examples:*
    - "I **might** go to the party, but I'm not sure." (Often implies a <30% chance) 23
    - "He **might** arrive late."
* **Could (Possibility - one of several possibilities):** Suggests something is possible, similar to 'may' or 'might'.
  + *Conversational Examples:*
    - "This **could** be the right answer."
    - "It **could** rain tomorrow." 23
    - "What do you think **could** happen if we miss the train?" 25
  + **Note:** The difference in likelihood between *may, might,* and *could* can be subtle. For basic learners, focus on them all expressing possibility, with *might* often being a bit weaker.
  + **Practice:** Discussing future plans with uncertainty: "What **might** you do this weekend if the weather is good?" "Where **could** we go for dinner?" Making predictions about simple scenarios.25

### **9.4. Obligation and Necessity: 'Must' and 'Have to'**

* **Must (Strong Obligation/Necessity - often internal or from authority):** Expresses a strong obligation, often felt by the speaker or a rule.
  + *Conversational Examples:*
    - "I **must** finish this report by 5 PM." (Speaker feels it's necessary)
    - "You **must** wear a seatbelt in the car." (It's a rule/law) 25
    - "Students **must** arrive on time." 25
  + **Must not / Mustn't (Prohibition):**
    - "You **mustn't** smoke in here."
* **Have to (Strong Obligation/Necessity - often external):** Expresses an obligation that often comes from an external source (rule, situation). Very common in spoken English.
  + *Form:* Subject + have/has to + base verb.
  + *Negative:* don't/doesn't have to (means no obligation, it's not necessary).
  + *Question:* Do/Does + subject + have to + base verb?
  + *Conversational Examples:*
    - "I **have to** go to work tomorrow." (External obligation) 25
    - "She **has to** study for her exam."
    - "Do I **have to** wear a tie?" "No, you **don't have to**." (No obligation) 25
  + **Comparing 'must' and 'have to':** Often interchangeable, but 'must' can sound stronger or more personal, while 'have to' is common for general obligations.25 For negative, "mustn't" (prohibition) is very different from "don't have to" (no necessity).
  + **Practice:** Discussing rules at work/school, daily responsibilities. "What **do** you **have to** do every day?" "What **must** you do to get a driver's license in your country?"

### **9.5. Advice and Suggestions: 'Should'**

* **Should (Advice/Recommendation):** Used to give advice, make recommendations, or say what is the right or best thing to do. It's not as strong as 'must' or 'have to'.
  + *Form:* Subject + should + base verb.
  + *Negative:* should not / shouldn't.
  + *Question:* Should + subject + base verb?
  + *Conversational Examples:*
    - "You **should** see a doctor if you're sick." 23
    - "We **should** leave early to avoid traffic."
    - "He **shouldn't** eat so much junk food."
    - "**Should** I call him?"
  + **Practice:** Giving advice for common problems (e.g., "I have a headache." -> "You **should** take some medicine."). Role-playing scenarios where one person asks for advice and the other gives it. "What **should** I do if I want to improve my English?".102

### **9.6. Polite Requests and Offers: 'Would' and 'Will'**

* **Would (Polite Requests/Offers/Preferences):**
  + "**Would** you like some coffee?" (Offer) 24
  + "**Would** you mind closing the window?" (Very polite request)
  + "I **would** like a cup of tea, please." (Polite way to state a preference/order food)
* **Will (Willingness/Offers/Requests):**
  + "**Will** you help me with this bag?" (Request)
  + "I'**ll** help you." (Offer of help, willingness) 25
  + **Practice:** Ordering food in a restaurant ("I **would** like..."), making polite requests in various situations. "If your friend asks you for help, **will** you help?".25
* **Insight for Module 9 (Modals):** Modals are challenging because one modal can have multiple meanings/functions (e.g., 'could' for past ability, polite request, possibility) and different modals can express similar functions with varying degrees of formality or strength (e.g., permission: can/could/may).24 For basic learners, it's crucial to introduce modals function by function, using clear conversational contexts and contrasting them where necessary (e.g., *must* vs. *should* for obligation/advice).
  + Focusing on the communicative purpose – what the speaker wants to *do* with the language (ask for permission

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