

C1- C2 **Clauses, Phrasal Verbs and Collocations for Small Talk**

Improve your small talk skills and build better and more concise sentences to communicate effectively with your friends and colleagues.

To begin with, it's important to focus on using simple and clear language. Try to avoid using complex sentences and technical jargon unless necessary. Also, use active voice instead of passive voice to make your sentences more concise and engaging.

Here are some tips to improve your small talk skills:

1. **Start with a greeting:** Begin your conversation with a greeting such as "Hi," "Hello," or "Hey."
2. **Ask open-ended questions:** Ask questions that allow the other person to talk more, such as "How was your weekend?" or "What are your plans for the day?"
3. **Share your thoughts:** Share your thoughts on a topic and ask for the other person's opinion, such as "I think the weather today is great. What do you think?"
4. **Avoid negativity:** Avoid negative topics or complaints in small talk. Instead, focus on positive topics and experiences.
5. **End with a polite farewell:** End your conversation with a polite farewell such as "It was nice talking to you" or "Have a great day."

Clauses are groups of words that contain a subject and a verb, and they **may or may not** be able to stand alone as a sentence. There are two main types of clauses: **independent clauses** and **dependent clauses**.

Independent clauses can **stand alone as a sentence** because they **express a complete thought**, while **dependent clauses** cannot stand alone and need to be joined to an independent clause.

Examples of independent clauses are **"I am going to the store"** and **"She likes to read books."**

Examples of dependent clauses are **"Because I am hungry"** and **"If I have time."**

To use clauses smartly when talking with people, you can use them **to add detail, clarity, and emphasis to your statements**. Clauses can **help you express** your **thoughts** more **precisely** and **effectively**, and they can also help you **connect** with others by showing that you are interested in what they have to say.

For example, if someone tells you that they recently started a new job, you can use a clause to ask them more about it. Instead of just saying **"Oh, that's great,"** you can say **"That's really interesting. Can you tell me more about what you'll be doing at your new job?"** This shows that you are engaged in the conversation and are genuinely interested in learning more about the other person.

Additionally, using clauses can help you express your own opinions and perspectives in a more clear and concise way. Instead of just saying **"I like to travel,"** you can use a clause to explain why you like to travel, such as **"I like to travel because it exposes me to new cultures and experiences."**

Overall, using clauses smartly can help you communicate more effectively and build better connections with others.

Using clauses smartly when talking with people can help you to engage in more meaningful conversations and show a genuine interest in the other person. Here are some tips on how to use clauses effectively:

1. **Use them to ask open-ended questions:** Start your questions with phrases like "What's your opinion on..." or "How do you feel about..." to encourage the other person to share more information and keep the conversation going.
2. **Use them to provide context:** Use clauses to provide context for your statements or questions. For example, "Given that it's raining outside, do you have any suggestions for indoor activities we can do?"
3. **Use them to share your own thoughts and opinions:** Use clauses to express your own thoughts and opinions on a topic. For example, "In my opinion, the best way to approach this project is to divide it into smaller tasks."
4. **Use them to provide examples or illustrations:** Use clauses to provide examples or illustrations that can help the other person understand your point of view. For example, "For instance, I always start my day with a cup of coffee to help me wake up."
5. **Use them to summarize or conclude a discussion:** Use clauses to summarize or conclude a discussion or argument. For example, "In conclusion, I think that we need to focus more on sustainability to protect the environment for future generations."

By using clauses effectively in your conversations, you can demonstrate your communication skills, build rapport with others, and show that you are actively engaged and interested in what the other person has to say.

Here are some phrasal verbs and clauses that you can use to make sentences:

Phrasal verbs:

Catch up - to talk with someone you haven't seen in a while
I need to catch up with my old friend from high school.

Get along - to have a good relationship with someone
My colleagues and I get along very well.

Get on - have a harmonious or friendly relationship:

Hang out - to spend time with someone casually
Let's hang out after work and grab a drink.

Put up with - to tolerate or endure something or someone unpleasant
I can't put up with my noisy neighbors anymore.

Break up - to end a relationship
They broke up after dating for two years.

Clauses:

If I were you - used to give advice or make a suggestion
If I were you, I would study for the exam in advance.

As far as I'm concerned - used to express an opinion
As far as I'm concerned, the new policy is a good idea.

In my opinion - used to express an opinion
In my opinion, we should focus more on sustainability.

It seems to me - used to express an opinion or a belief
It seems to me that he is not happy in his current job.

As a matter of fact - used to introduce a fact or a correction
As a matter of fact, the meeting is scheduled for 2 pm, not 3 pm.

More useful clauses, phrasal verbs, and collocations that you can use to build sentences:

Phrasal verbs:

Look forward to - to feel excited or eager about something that is going to happen
I'm looking forward to our vacation next month.

Get over - to recover from a difficult experience or a loss
It took me a while to get over my breakup.

Turn down - to reject or refuse an offer or a request

She turned down the job offer because it didn't pay well.

Come up with - to think of an idea or a solution to a problem

We need to come up with a new marketing strategy.

Figure out - to understand or solve a problem

I need to figure out how to fix my laptop.

Clauses:

As a result - used to express the consequence of something

She skipped class, and as a result, she missed an important lecture.

On the other hand - used to introduce an alternative point of view

Some people prefer coffee in the morning, while on the other hand, others prefer tea.

In addition - used to add more information

In addition to his job, he also volunteers at a local shelter.

Despite the fact that - used to introduce a contrasting idea

Despite the fact that it was raining, they decided to go for a walk.

All in all - used to summarize or evaluate the overall situation

All in all, I think the event was a success.

Collocations:

Make a difference - to have an impact or influence on something

Your support can make a difference in the lives of these children.

Take into account - to consider or take into consideration when making a decision

We need to take into account the cost of living in this city.

Get the hang of - to learn how to do something

It took me a while to get the hang of using chopsticks.

Break the ice - to initiate a conversation or to make people feel more comfortable
We played a game to break the ice and get to know each other.

Keep in touch - to maintain contact with someone
Let's exchange numbers and keep in touch.

Example sentences that include the collocations, phrasal verbs, and clauses I listed earlier:

Phrasal verb: **Catch up**

Let's **catch up** over lunch next week and talk about what's been happening in our lives.

Clause: **If I were you**

If I were you, I would take a break and get some rest.

Collocation: **Make a difference**

Your donation can **make a difference** in the fight against climate change.

Phrasal verb: **Turn down**

She **turned down** the promotion because she didn't want to relocate.

Clause: **As a matter of fact**

As a matter of fact, I'm allergic to seafood, so I can't have sushi.

Collocation: **Get the hang of**

After a few tries, I finally **got the hang of** skiing and started enjoying it.

Phrasal verb: **Hang out**

Let's **hang out** after work and watch a movie.

Clause: **Despite the fact that**

Despite the fact that it was her first time giving a speech, she did an amazing job.

Collocation: **Keep in touch**

We should exchange phone numbers and **keep in touch**, even after the conference is over.

Phrasal verb: **Get over**

It took me a while to **get over** my fear of public speaking, but with practice, I became more confident.

More examples of sentences that include the collocations, phrasal verbs, and clauses:

Collocation: **Take into account**

When planning a trip, it's important to **take into account** the weather conditions of the destination.

Phrasal verb: **Figure out**

I need to **figure out** how to fix my bike before the weekend.

Clause: **All in all**

All in all, I think the presentation went well, but we could have included more examples.

Collocation: **Break the ice**

Let's play a game to **break the ice** and get to know each other better.

Phrasal verb: **Get along**

My sister and I **get along** very well and enjoy spending time together.

Clause: **In addition**

In addition to her job, she also volunteers at a local charity organization.

Collocation: **Make a difference**

By reducing our use of plastic, we can **make a difference** in protecting the environment.

Phrasal verb: **Look forward to**

I'm really **looking forward to** our vacation and relaxing on the beach.

Clause: **As far as I'm concerned**

As far as I'm concerned, the new policy is too strict and needs to be revised.

Collocation: **Put up with**

I can't **put up with** the noise from the construction site anymore, it's too disruptive.

Examples of open-ended questions that you can use for small talk:

- 1. What did you do over the weekend?**
2. How was your day?
- 3. Have you seen any good movies or TV shows lately?**
4. What's your favorite book or author?
- 5. What kind of music do you like to listen to?**
6. Do you have any travel plans coming up?
- 7. What's your favorite hobby or pastime?**
8. Have you tried any new restaurants or food lately?
- 9. What do you do for fun on weekends?**
10. What's the best thing that's happened to you recently?

More clauses that can help open up conversations for small talk:

"What do you think about...?"

"What do you think about the new office location?"

"How do you feel about...?"

"How do you feel about the recent changes in the company policies?"

"Tell me about..."

"Tell me about your recent trip to Europe."

"Do you have any plans for...?"

"Do you have any plans for the upcoming holidays?"

"Have you heard about...?"

"Have you heard about the new restaurant that just opened in town?"

"What's your opinion on...?"

"What's your opinion on the latest movie that just came out?"

"What's your experience with...?"

"What's your experience with working in a team?"

"What's your favorite...?"

"What's your favorite thing to do on weekends?"

"Do you have any recommendations for...?"

"Do you have any recommendations for a good place to eat in this area?"

"Can you tell me more about...?"

"Can you tell me more about your background and how you got into your profession?"

Remember, small talk is a great way to connect with others and build relationships. By using open-ended questions and showing interest in others, you can start engaging conversations and learn more about the people around you.

More useful and smart clauses that you can use for small talk with people:

"I heard that..."

"I heard that you're really good at playing the piano. Is that true?"

"I've been wondering..."

"I've been wondering what your thoughts are on the current state of the economy?"

"What's your take on...?"

"What's your take on the recent political situation?"

"I'm interested to know..."

"I'm interested to know what inspired you to pursue your career?"

"What's the most interesting thing that's happened to you recently?"

"What's the most interesting thing that's happened to you recently?"

"What do you think the future holds for...?"

"What do you think the future holds for technology and its impact on our lives?"

"Can you share your experience with...?"

"Can you share your experience with public speaking and any tips you have for being a better speaker?"

"What's something you've always wanted to try?"

"What's something you've always wanted to try but haven't had the chance to yet?"

"What's a skill or hobby you've recently picked up?"

"What's a skill or hobby you've recently picked up that you're really enjoying?"

"What's your favorite thing about your job/hobby/city?"

"What's your favorite thing about living in this city?"

Here are some more phrasal verbs and clauses that you can use to make sentences:

Phrasal verbs:

Look into - to investigate or research something

We need to look into the pricing of our competitors.

Run into - to meet someone unexpectedly

I ran into my old friend from college at the grocery store.

Put off - to postpone or delay something

I had to put off my vacation plans because of work.

Set up - to establish or create something

We need to set up a meeting with the client to discuss the project.

Go through - to experience or endure something difficult

She went through a tough time after her divorce.

Clauses:

In conclusion - used to summarize or conclude an argument or discussion

In conclusion, I believe that we should invest more in renewable energy.

As a matter of fact - used to introduce a fact or a correction

As a matter of fact, the meeting has been rescheduled for next week.

Given that - used to introduce a condition or a reason

Given that it's raining, we should cancel our picnic plans.

Even though - used to introduce a contrasting idea

Even though it's late, I'm still going to finish this project tonight.

For instance - used to give an example or an illustration

I enjoy outdoor activities, for instance, hiking and camping.

Here are some more clauses that you can use for small talk:

"What do you suggest we...?"

"What do you suggest we do for the team-building event next month?"

"How do you think we can...?"

"How do you think we can improve the quality of our customer service?"

"I'm curious to know..."

"I'm curious to know what motivates you to succeed in your career?"

"What do you think about the recent news on...?"

"What do you think about the recent news on climate change?"

"As far as I know..."

"As far as I know, the project deadline is next Friday."

"I'm not sure if you know, but..."

"I'm not sure if you know, but we have a new employee starting next week."

"What's your approach to...?"

"What's your approach to time management and staying productive?"

"What's your opinion on the best way to...?"

"What's your opinion on the best way to prepare for an important presentation?"

"I'm interested in hearing your thoughts on..."

"I'm interested in hearing your thoughts on the impact of social media on society."

"What's the biggest challenge you've faced recently?"

"What's the biggest challenge you've faced recently in your personal or professional life?"

Here are some activities for the phrasal verbs, collocations, and clauses you've learned in these lessons.

1. Which phrasal verb means to meet someone unexpectedly?

- a. Look into
- b. Run into
- c. Put off
- d. Set up

2. Which collocation means to become familiar with or proficient in something?

- a. Make a difference
- b. Get the hang of
- c. Keep in touch
- d. Put up with

3. Which clause is used to introduce a contrasting idea?

- a. In addition
- b. Despite the fact that
- c. All in all
- d. As a matter of fact

4. Which phrasal verb means to investigate or research something?

- a. Look into
- b. Go through
- c. Set up
- d. Run into

5. Which collocation means to have a positive impact or effect?

- a. Make a difference
- b. Get along
- c. Turn down
- d. Catch up

6. Which clause is used to summarize or conclude an argument or discussion?

- a. Even though
- b. Given that
- c. As far as I'm concerned
- d. In conclusion

7. Which phrasal verb means to establish or create something?

- a. Go through
- b. Set up
- c. Put off
- d. Look into

8. Which collocation means to tolerate or endure something difficult or unpleasant?

- a. Keep in touch
- b. Put up with

- c. Make a difference
- d. Get the hang of

9. Which clause is used to introduce a fact or a correction?

- a. As far as I'm concerned
- b. In conclusion
- c. As a matter of fact
- d. Even though

10. Which phrasal verb means to postpone or delay something?

- a. Go through
- b. Set up
- c. Put off
- d. Look into

Answers:

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. b) to run into | 2. b) get the hang of | 3. b) despite the fact that |
| 4. a) look into | 5. a) make a difference | 6. d) in conclusion |
| 7. b) set up | | |
| 8. b) put up with | 9. c) as matter of fact | 10. c) put off |

Here are some more multiple-choice activities based on the clauses, phrasal verbs, and collocations we have discussed:

1. Which phrasal verb means to understand or comprehend something?

- a. Look forward to
- b. Figure out
- c. Take into account
- d. Break the ice

Answer: b. Figure out

2. Which collocation means to have a friendly relationship with someone?

- a. Get along with
- b. Turn down
- c. Keep in touch
- d. Make a difference

Answer: a. Get along with

3. Which clause is used to introduce a reason or explanation?

- a. Given that
- b. Even though
- c. In conclusion
- d. As a matter of fact

Answer: a. Given that

4. Which phrasal verb means to end a relationship or association?

- a. Break up
- b. Look into
- c. Run into
- d. Put off

Answer: a. Break up

5. Which collocation means to catch up with someone after a period of time?

- a. Keep in touch
- b. Put up with
- c. Get along with
- d. Figure out

Answer: a. Keep in touch

6. Which clause is used to introduce an example or illustration?

- a. As a matter of fact
- b. For instance
- c. All in all
- d. Given that

Answer: b. For instance

7. Which phrasal verb means to become familiar with or get used to something?

- a. Go through

- b. Get the hang of
- c. Put off
- d. Set up

Answer: b. Get the hang of

8. Which collocation means to have a negative impact or effect?

- a. Catch up with
- b. Put up with
- c. Make a difference
- d. Turn down

Answer: d. Turn down

9. Which clause is used to express a contrasting idea or opinion?

- a. Despite the fact that
- b. What's your take on
- c. I'm interested in hearing your thoughts on
- d. In conclusion

Answer: a. Despite the fact that

10. Which phrasal verb means to examine or scrutinize something carefully?

- a. Look into
- b. Set up
- c. Run into
- d. Put off

Answer: a. Look into

Instructions: Match each phrase on the left with its corresponding meaning on the right.

1. Get along with	a. To summarize or conclude
2. In conclusion	b. to have a good relationship with someone
3. Break up	c. To tolerate or endure something difficult or unpleasant
4. Figure out	d. To end a relationship or association
5. Keep in touch	e. To understand or comprehend something
6. Look into	f. Used to introduce a condition or a reason
7. Given that	g. To investigate or research
8. Put up with	h. To catch up on with someone after a period of time
9. What's your take on	i. Used to give an example or an illustration
10. For instance	j. To express an opinion or perspective on a topic

Answers:

1. b
2. a
3. d
4. e
5. h
6. g
7. f
8. c
9. j
10. i

Here's another multiple-choice activity based on the collocations, clauses, and phrasal verbs we have discussed:

1. Which phrasal verb means to become involved in a situation without being asked or wanted?

- a. Butt in
- b. Keep up with
- c. Break up with
- d. Turn down

2. Which collocation means to maintain contact or communication with someone?

- a. Keep in touch
- b. Get along with
- c. Make a difference
- d. Figure out

3. Which clause is used to express an opinion or perspective on a topic?

- a. As a matter of fact
- b. In conclusion
- c. Given that
- d. What's your take on

4. Which phrasal verb means to maintain a pace or level of performance?

- a. Butt in
- b. Keep up with
- c. Break up with
- d. Turn down

5. Which collocation means to have a negative impact or effect?

- a. Catch up with
- b. Put up with
- c. Make a difference
- d. Turn down

6. Which clause is used to introduce a condition or a reason?

- a. Despite the fact that

- b. In conclusion
- c. All things considered
- d. Given that

7. Which phrasal verb means to cancel or reject an offer or proposal?

- a. Turn down
- b. Look into
- c. Set up
- d. Go through

8. Which collocation means to tolerate or endure something difficult or unpleasant?

- a. Get along with
- b. Put up with
- c. Keep in touch
- d. Figure out

9. Which clause is used to give an example or an illustration?

- a. For instance
- b. All in all
- c. As a matter of fact
- d. In conclusion

10. Which phrasal verb means to go through or examine something carefully?

- a. Look into
- b. Set up
- c. Go through
- d. Put off

Answer:

- 1. a. Butt in
- 2. a. Keep in touch
- 3. d. What's your take on
- 4. b. Keep up with
- 5. b. Keep up with
- 6. d. Given that

- 7. d. Given that
- 8. b. Put up with
- 9. a. For instance
- 10. c. Go through

Here's another multiple-choice activity based on the collocations, clauses, and phrasal verbs we have discussed:

Which phrasal verb means to manage to stay at the same level or pace as something or someone?

- a. Keep up with
- b. Set up
- c. Put up with
- d. Run into

Answer: a. Keep up with

Which collocation means to have a friendly relationship with someone?

- a. Get along with
- b. Break up with
- c. Figure out
- d. Look into

Answer: a. Get along with

Which clause is used to introduce a contrasting idea or opinion?

- a. In conclusion
- b. Despite the fact that
- c. As far as I'm concerned
- d. All in all

Answer: b. Despite the fact that

Which phrasal verb means to cancel or postpone something?

- a. Set up
- b. Look into
- c. Put off
- d. Run into

Answer: c. Put off

Which collocation means to become familiar with or proficient in something?

- a. Turn down
- b. Get the hang of
- c. Make a difference
- d. Catch up with

Answer: b. Get the hang of

Which clause is used to introduce an example or illustration?

- a. In conclusion
- b. All things considered
- c. As a matter of fact
- d. For instance

Answer: d. For instance

Which phrasal verb means to investigate or research something?

- a. Go through
- b. Set up
- c. Look into
- d. Put off

Answer: c. Look into

Which collocation means to tolerate or endure something difficult or unpleasant?

- a. Put up with
- b. Keep in touch
- c. Get along with
- d. Figure out

Answer: a. Put up with

Which clause is used to introduce a condition or a reason?

- a. All in all
- b. Given that
- c. Despite the fact that
- d. In conclusion

Answer: b. Given that

Which phrasal verb means to establish or create something?

- a. Set up
- b. Run into
- c. Go through
- d. Put off

Answer: a. Set up

Instructions: Match each phrase on the left with its corresponding meaning on the right.

1. Put up with

a. Used to introduce a contrasting idea

	or opinion
2. Despite the fact that	b. To tolerate or endure something difficult or unpleasant
3. Run into	c. To have a friendly relationship with someone
4. Figure out	d. To maintain contact or communication with someone
5. Keep in touch	e. To comprehend or understand something
6. Given that	f. Used to summarize or conclude an argument or discussion
7. Look into	g. To investigate or research something
8. Get along with	h. To meet someone unexpectedly
9. For instance	i. Used to introduce a reason or a condition
10. In conclusion	j. Used to give an example or an illustration

Answers:

1. b
2. a
3. h
4. e
5. d
6. i
7. g
8. c
9. j
10. f

Here's another matching activity based on the collocations, clauses, and phrasal verbs we have discussed:

Instructions: Match each phrase on the left with its corresponding meaning on the right.

1. All in all	A. To have a positive impact or effect
2. Get the hang of	B. used to express an opinion
3. Take in account	C. To anticipate or be excited about something in the future
4. Turn down	D. used to introduce an alternative point of view
5. Catch up with	E. used to summarize or evaluate the overall situation
6. Look forward to	F. To manage to stay at the same level or pace as something or someone
7. Despite	G. To become familiar with or proficient in something
8. On the oth	H. To cancel or reject an offer or proposal
9. Make a difference	I. to consider or take into consideration when making a decision
10. As far as I'm concerned	J. Used to introduce a contrasting idea or opinion

Answers:

1. e
2. b
3. i
4. h
5. f
6. c
7. j
8. d
9. a
10. b