

# ESL Session 1: Conversation Basics for College Students

Hello College Student!

## What You'll Practice Today

- Essential English conversations for campus life
- Voice patterns and intonation for natural speech
- Word stress in English
- Expressing different emotions
- Similar-sounding words (minimal pairs)
- Reading comprehension

## Section 1: Conversation Practice

### How to practice:

1. Read each conversation phrase out loud
2. Practice saying it clearly and naturally
3. Try using hand gestures or facial expressions

## Meeting New People

**Example:** "Hi, my name is [Your Name]. What's your name?" 🙋

### Try saying:

- "Hello, I'm [Your Name]. Nice to meet you."
- "Hey there! I'm [Your Name] from [Your Country]."

**Your Practice:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tip:** Make eye contact and smile when introducing yourself.

## Introducing Yourself

**Example:** "I'm a student at [University Name]. I'm studying English." 🎓

### Try saying:

- "I'm majoring in [Your Major] at [University Name]."
- "I'm an international student from [Country]. This is my first semester here."

**Your Practice:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tip:** Speak clearly and with confidence when sharing about yourself.

## Asking for Help on Campus

**Example:** "Excuse me, could you help me find the library?" 🙋

**Try saying:**

- "Excuse me, do you know where the Student Center is?"
- "I'm looking for the Science Building. Can you give me directions?"

**Your Practice:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tip:** Start with "excuse me" to politely get someone's attention.

## Talking About Your Classes

**Example:** "I'm taking five courses this semester. My favorite is Psychology." 🎓

**Try saying:**

- "I have classes on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Tuesdays are my free days."
- "My hardest class is Chemistry, but I find it interesting."

**Your Practice:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tip:** Use enthusiasm when talking about subjects you enjoy.

## Making New Friends

**Example:** "What do you like to do in your free time?" 🤝

**Try saying:**

- "Are you interested in joining any campus clubs?"
- "Would you like to grab coffee after class sometime?"

**Your Practice:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tip:** Show genuine interest when asking questions about others.

## Section 2: Pitch & Intonation Practice

**How to do this:**

1. Read each sentence out loud
2. Try the different voice patterns (up, down, flat)
3. Check the one that sounds most natural

### **Hi! How's your semester going?**

Voice pattern: ☐ Rising  ☐ Falling  ☐ Flat →

Usually said with: Rising tone (voice goes up at the end for questions)

### **I'm studying Computer Science.**

Voice pattern: ☐ Rising  ☐ Falling  ☐ Flat →

Usually said with: Falling tone (voice goes down at the end for statements)

### **Wow! That's an amazing project!**

Voice pattern: ☐ Rising  ☐ Falling  ☐ Flat →

Usually said with: Rise-Fall (voice goes up for "Wow" then down for "project")

### **Can I borrow your notes?**

Voice pattern: ☐ Rising  ☐ Falling  ☐ Flat →

Usually said with: Rising tone (voice goes up at the end for yes/no questions)

### **The lecture was interesting.**

Voice pattern: ☐ Rising  ☐ Falling  ☐ Flat →

Usually said with: Falling tone (voice goes down at the end for statements)

## **Section 3: Word Stress Practice**

### **How to do this:**

1. The CAPITAL letters show the stressed syllable
2. Say that part LOUDER and slightly longer
3. Practice each word several times

### **university**

Say it like: u-ni-VER-si-ty (stress on third syllable)

Try it in a sentence: "I attend a u-ni-VER-si-ty in this city."

### **professor**

Say it like: pro-FES-sor (stress on second syllable)

Try it in a sentence: "My pro-FES-sor explained the homework assignment."

### **assignment**

Say it like: a-SIGN-ment (stress on second syllable)

Try it in a sentence: "I need to finish my a-SIGN-ment before tomorrow."

### **semester**

Say it like: se-MES-ter (stress on second syllable)

Try it in a sentence: "This is my first se-MES-ter at college."

### **education**

Say it like: e-du-CA-tion (stress on third syllable)

Try it in a sentence: "Getting a good e-du-CA-tion is important to me."

## **Section 4: Expressing Emotions**

### **How to do this:**

1. Read each sentence with the feeling shown
2. Pay attention to your tone of voice and face
3. Practice showing the emotion clearly

### **I passed my final exam! 😄**

(Express: Excited - speak louder, faster, with enthusiasm)

Voice: Higher pitch, energetic tone

Face: Big smile, wide eyes

### **I don't understand this assignment. 😬**

(Express: Confused - speak slower, uncertain tone)

Voice: Lower volume, slightly hesitant

Face: Furrowed eyebrows, slight head tilt

### **Could you explain that concept again? 😬**

(Express: Serious - speak clearly, with focus)

Voice: Measured pace, clear articulation

Face: Attentive expression, direct eye contact

### **Excuse me, I'm late for class. 😬**

(Express: Apologetic - speak quickly, concerned tone)

Voice: Slightly higher pitch, faster pace

Face: Apologetic expression, slight grimace

### **I'm looking forward to the weekend! 😊**

(Express: Happy - enthusiastic, warm tone)

Voice: Energetic, emphasis on "looking forward"

Face: Smile, relaxed expression



## Section 5: Minimal Pairs Practice

### How to do this:

1. Listen carefully to each pair of words
2. Try saying both words and feel the difference
3. Make a sentence using each word

### **class vs. glass**

(Different beginning sounds: "c" vs. "g")



Say both:  class (back of tongue touches roof of mouth) -  glass (back of tongue raised but not touching)

Make sentences:

- "My economics class starts at 10 AM."
- "I need a glass of water before the lecture."

### **live vs. leave**

(Different vowel sounds: short "i" vs. long "ee")

Say both:  live (short, relaxed sound) -  leave (longer, tense sound)

Make sentences:

- "Many students live in the campus dorms."
- "We need to leave for the lecture soon."

### **major vs. manager**

(Different middle sound: "j" vs. "n")


Say both:  major (softer "j" sound) -  manager (nasal "n" sound)

Make sentences:

- "My major is International Business."
- "The manager of the cafeteria is very helpful."

### **write vs. right**

(Same sound, different meaning)



Say both:  write (action of writing) -  right (correct or direction)

Make sentences:

- "I need to write my research paper."
- "Turn right at the Student Center to find the library."

## course vs. curse

(Different vowel sounds: "or" vs. "er")

Say both:  course (rounded lips, "or" sound) -  curse (less rounded, "er" sound)



Make sentences:

- "This literature course is fascinating."
- "Late assignments can curse your GPA."


## Section 6: Reading Practice: First Week on Campus



### How to do this:


1. First read silently
2. Then read out loud, sentence by sentence
3. Pay attention to punctuation and emotions

Today is my first week at university. I'm both excited and nervous!  

I walk into my first lecture. The professor smiles and says, "Welcome to Psychology 101!" 



I sit next to another student. "Hi, I'm Maya," I say. "This is my first semester here." 

"Nice to meet you, Maya!" she responds. "I'm Sophia. It's my second year."  






After class, Sophia asks, "Do you want to get coffee at the Student Center?" 

"That would be great," I reply. "Can you show me where it is?" 

At the café, we talk about our classes and interests. I think I've made my first friend! 

"Let's exchange phone numbers," Sophia suggests. "We can study together sometime."  

### Reading Tips:

- Pause at commas (,) 
- Stop at periods (.) 
- Sound excited at exclamation points (!) 
- Make your voice go up for questions (?) 
- Use different voices for dialogue (" ") 

## Wrap-Up: For Next Time

### New Words I Want to Learn:

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**Things to Practice:**

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