

Situational role-play

Starting a conversation

Excuse me. Can I tell / ask you something?
Can I talk to you for a moment?
Can I have a word?

Asking for directions / information

Excuse me. How do I get to ... ?
Is there a (*post office*) near here?
Could you tell me the way to ... ?
I'd like to know ... , please.
Do you know (*where the bus stop is*)?
And there is one more thing I'd like to know.
And you wouldn't know ... , would you?

Giving directions

Go straight ahead.
Turn left / right.
Take the first / second turning on your right / left.
Go past (*the school*).
Keep going until you get to ...
Go along (*Green Street*) as far as the traffic lights.
Then ...
You need to ...

Expressing opinions

► see under Debate

Apologising

(I'm) sorry for (sth / doing sth).
I'm really sorry.
I'm awfully sorry.
I apologise.

Making a request

Can / Could you ... ?
Would you mind (doing sth)?
Do you think you could ... ?
Do you think you could possibly ... ?
Will you ... ?

Agreeing to a request

OK. / All right.
Yes, sure.
Certainly.

Refusing a request

Sorry, but ...
I can't really ...
I'm afraid I can't ...

Making suggestions / arrangements to meet

Are you doing anything on ... ?
Would you like to (do sth)?
Do you fancy (sth / doing sth)?
Why don't we (do sth)?

Let's (do sth).

How / What about (doing sth)?
I was wondering if you'd like to (do sth)?
It would be great if we (did sth).

Accepting suggestions / arrangements to meet

(Yes,) I'd love to.
(Yes,) I'd be glad / happy to.
Sure, why not?
Sounds good to me.
Great!
Yes, that would be (*great / good / useful / excellent*).
Yes, (I think) that's a good idea.
That's a great idea!
That's a good / an excellent suggestion!
Yes, that's probably the best option.
That would / could be fun / interesting.

Rejecting suggestions / arrangements to meet

Sorry, but I can't.
Sorry, but I'm busy on ...
Sorry, but I've got to (do sth).
I'm afraid I can't.
That's a good idea, but ...
I'd love to, but ...
I don't think so, (because ...).
Well, I'd rather (do sth).
Yes, but don't you think it would be better to (do sth)?

Asking for help

Could you (do sth)?
Would you mind (doing sth)?
Can you help me, please?
Could you give / lend me a hand?

Offering something

Would you like (*a biscuit*)?
How about (*a cup of coffee*)?
Fancy (*a drink*)?
I'll do it for you.
Shall I help you to (do sth)?
How can I help (you)?

Accepting an offer

Yes, please. / Thanks.
Thank you very much. That's very kind of you.
That would be lovely, thank you.

Asking for permission

Could I ... ?
Is it OK / all right if I ... ?
Do you mind if I (do sth)?
Would you mind if I (did sth)?
Would it be OK if I (did sth)?
I was wondering if I could ... ?

Giving permission

Yes, of course.

Yes, sure.

Yes, that's fine.

No, that's fine.

No, go ahead.

No problem.

Refusing permission

Sorry, but ...

I'm afraid that's not possible.

I'd rather you didn't (if you don't mind).

Asking for advice

What do you think I should do?

Do you think I should ... ?

Can I ask your opinion about something?

Giving advice

I think you should / ought to ...

If I were you, I'd (do sth).

Have you thought about (doing sth)?

Have you considered (doing sth)?

Why don't you ... ?

You might enjoy (doing sth).

You could ...

Saying thanks

Thanks a lot. / Many thanks.

Thank you very much.

That was / is very kind of you.

Responding to thanks

Not at all.

No problem.

Don't mention it.

Any time.

That's OK.

You're welcome.

It's a pleasure. / My pleasure.

Picture- or statistics-based discussion

Describing a picture

In the picture I can see ...

The picture shows ...

They look (*tired*).

She seems / appears to be (*happy*) ...

On the right / left there is ...

At the top / bottom there are ...

In the top right-hand corner there seems to be ...

In the foreground / background ...

I think they represent ...

The image reminds me of / makes me think of ...

The setting is ...

Talking about statistics

Most ...

The vast majority of ...

Nearly half / all (of the respondents) ...

Less than half of ...

Nearly a third of ...

A quarter of ...

Hardly any ...

Compared to ... it's (*ten times / 55%*) more (*likely / common*) ...

The contrast between (*air travel*) and (*sea travel*) is (in)significant.

Explaining what something is

It's something that (*covers the window*). You can (*pull it*).

It's a kind of (*bed*) that you can (*sit on when you want to watch TV*).

It's (*a box*) made of (*wood*) where (*somebody keeps ...*)

Speculating

(I guess) they might / could be (*brother and sister*).

It must be (*some kind of a machine*).

She is probably (*more than 17*).

She can't be (*on holiday*), because ...

She could be ... or ...

He looks as if ...

It's not clear if ...

It looks like (*they're friends*).

They seem (*to be in love*).

I imagine they're ...

I expect that she's ...

I wonder if he's ...

Debate

Ordering arguments

To start with, ...

First of all, ... / Firstly, ...

Secondly, ...

Another thing is that ...

On the one hand ... but on the other hand ...

On the other hand, ...

The main reason is ...

Another reason is ...

Well, the thing is that ...

It's also true that ...

And on top of that ...

And finally ...

Giving examples

For example, ... / For instance, ...

To give you an idea, ...

One example of this is ...

Look at the case of ...

Summarising

So what it comes down to is ...

The point I'm trying to make is ...

Let me just recap what's been said so far.

In short ...

In other words ...

To sum up ...

Asking for someone's opinion

What do you think (of / about ...)?

Have you considered ... ?

What's your view / opinion / take on ... ?
Don't you agree that ... ?

Expressing opinions

I think (that) ...
In my view / opinion, ...
I'm convinced / positive that ...
To my mind, ...
Personally, I think ...
As I see it, ...
From my point of view, ...
As far as I'm concerned, ...
I don't think ...
I don't really know (if) ...
I'm not sure (about / if) ...
I don't have a strong / definite opinion about that.

Agreeing / Accepting the other person's viewpoint

Yes, I agree (with you).
I completely agree.
I couldn't agree with you more.
That's exactly what I think.
My point exactly.
I know.
I can go along with that.
(I think) you're right.
Right. / That's right.
True. / That's true.
Absolutely.
Exactly!
I suppose so.

Disagreeing

Yes / True, but ...
I'm afraid I disagree / can't agree with you.
I take / see your point, but ...
I see what you mean, but ...
I'm not sure about that.
I'm not sure that's true / correct / right.
I'm not sure I can accept that.
I agree to some extent, but ...
There might be some truth in that, but ...
I can't agree / go along with that.
I disagree.
I don't see why / how.
You must be joking!
Surely you don't think that ...
Actually, ...

Other useful functions

Responding to what someone has said

Do you? / Are you? / Is it? (the appropriate question tag from the statement)
That's interesting.
Really?
I see.
Oh, OK.

Playing for time

Let me see, ...
Well, let me think, ...
Hm, let me think about that for a moment ...
I'll have to think about it.
How shall / can I put it?
What's the word for it?

Asking for clarification / Saying you don't understand

Pardon?
Sorry?
Sorry, I didn't quite catch that.
Sorry, I missed that.
Do you mean ... ?
Does this mean ... ?
Can you say it / that again, please?
Would you mind repeating that, please?
Could you repeat that more slowly, please?
Could you spell that, please?