

50 Essential Conversation Phrases

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Greeting / Leaving someone



1. **What have you been up to?** (= What have you been doing lately?)

Example conversation:

Tom: Hey Luke! Long time no see! What have you been up to?

Luke: Oh you know, this and that...

2. **Speak of the devil!** (= We've just been talking about you, and here you are!)

Example conversation:

Suzy: Have you heard from Debbie recently?

Kelly: No, I haven't. I thought she was on holiday.

(Debbie walks up to Suzy and Kelly)

Suzy: Speak of the devil!

3. **Take care** (= Look after yourself)

Example conversation:

Rob: OK, I'm going home. See you next week!

Pat: Take care then.

4. **Well I'll be off then..** (= I'm going now)

Example conversation:

Steve: Is there anything else you'd like me to do?

John: No, that's it for today. Thanks.

Steve: Well I'll be off then. See you tomorrow.

5. **(I'll) love you and leave you.** (= I'm going now)

Example conversation:

(Lisa and Jane are chatting, and Jane's phone rings.)

Jane: Hello?

(She looks at Lisa)

Lisa: Well, I'll love you and leave you!

Jane: Bye!

6. Catch you later. (= See you later)

Example conversation:

Nick: OK, I'm off now.

Ted: OK! Catch you later!

6. Gotta dash! (I've got to go)

Example conversation:

Rob: Is that the time? Gotta dash!

Jo: OK! Catch you later!

7. (I'm / He's, etc) off out for the evening. (= I'm / He's etc going out for the evening)

Son: OK, See you two later!

Dad: Where's he going?

Mum: He's off out for the evening.

Giving / receiving something



8. Here you go / There you go (= Here it is!)

Example conversation:

Customer: Can I have a can of coke, please?

Shop assistant (passing it to the customer): Here you go!

Customer: Thanks

9. I'm good thanks. (= No thank you)

Example conversation:

Food stall assistant: Would you like something to drink with that?

Customer: I'm good thanks.

Saying yes / hospitality



10. Be my guest! (= Of course - you can do something!)

Example conversation:

Passenger 1: Have you finished with your newspaper?

Passenger 2: Be my guest!

11. Help yourself! (= Take one)

Example conversation

Bill: Can I have one of your biscuits?

Anna: Help yourself!

12. Make yourself at home! (= Sit down and feel comfortable)

(John and Sue arrive at Debbie's house for dinner. Debbie shows them in.)

Debbie: Go and sit down. Make yourself at home! What can I get you to drink?

John: Thanks, a beer please...

Replying to “no” or an apology



13. Never mind! (= It doesn't matter)

Example conversation:

Ben: I'm sorry, but I can't come out tonight after all.

Liam: Never mind! Another time perhaps.

14. No worries! (= It doesn't matter)

Example conversation:

Richard: Can I borrow your car this evening?

Paul: I'm sorry, but I need to use it.

Richard: No worries!

Offering help / asking for help



15. Would you like a hand with that? (= Can I help you?)

Example conversation:

(Shop assistant sees a customer trying to get something down from a shelf)

Shop assistant: Would you like a hand with that?

Customer: Oh yes please!

16. Are you alright with that? (= Do you need help?)

Example conversation:

(David sees a woman with a heavy suitcase)

David: Are you alright with that?

Woman: I'm fine, thanks!

17. Have you got a (noun) on you? (= Do you have a / the...?)

Example conversation:

Mike: Have you got the time on you?

Andy: Yes, it's almost 3 o'clock.

Saying thank you



18. Ta! (= Thank you)

Example conversation:

Barbara: I'll leave you that magazine when I've finished with it.
Theresa: Ta!

19. Cheers! (= Thank you)

Example conversation:

(Neil comes back from the sandwich shop)
Neil: Here's the sandwich you wanted.
Will: Cheers mate!

20. Nice one! (= Thank you. This is particularly used by British men.)

Example situation:

Someone holds the door open for you, and you say "Nice one!" as you walk through the door.

Commenting on a situation / giving an opinion



21. Keep your chin up! (= Don't worry too much)

Example conversation:

Kirsty: I just had the most terrible meeting with Dan. I think he's going to fire me.
Julia: Keep your chin up! I'm sure it'll be fine.

22. I don't mind. (= Either option is fine with me)

Example conversation:

Emma: Do you fancy going out tonight or staying in?
Mark: I don't mind. Whatever you decide...

23. By the looks of it... (= From what I can see / understand)

Example conversation:

Charles: It's going to rain, by the looks of it.
Justine: Mmm. Better take an umbrella.

24. I've had it up to here with... (= I'm completely fed up with...)

Example conversation

(Two children arguing with each other)

Mum: I've had it up to here with you two! Why don't you go out and play?

25. Mind your own business! (= Don't be nosy - I'm not going to tell you what you want to know!)

Example conversation:

Sarah: How much do you earn?

George: Mind your own business!

Commenting on what other people say



26. You must be joking! (= Absolutely not!)

Example conversation:

Sean: Are you going to tell Melissa about your car accident?

Terry: You must be joking!

27. Speak for yourself! (= It might be true for you, but it isn't for me!)

Example conversation

Dave: Modern art is so stupid...

June: Speak for yourself! There are some great artists nowadays.

28. Look who's talking! (= You're criticising something that you do yourself!)

Example conversation:

Geoff: I hate it when people jump the queue.

Stella: Look who's talking! I saw you do it yesterday at the bus stop!

29. Well I never! (= When you're surprised at something)

Example conversation:

Irene: I just told Mr Harris he'd have to do the stock-taking himself.
Betty: Well I never! He won't like that!

Asking someone to hurry



30. Look lively! (= Hurry up!)

Example conversation:

Joe: Is that our train, Dad?

Dad: Yeah - look lively! It's going to leave in a couple of minutes.

31. Chop chop! (= Hurry up!)

Example conversation:

(Teacher asks her class to get their books out.)

Teacher: Chop chop! We haven't got all day!

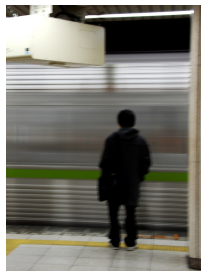
32. Get a move on! (= Hurry up!)

Example conversation:

Sally: What time do we need to leave?

Larry: In a couple of minutes. Come on! Get a move on!

Asking someone to wait



33. Just a sec / Hold on a sec. (= Wait a minute)

Example conversation

(In an office)

Nicola: Have you got the phone number for Sue?

Kate: Just a sec. I'll get it for you.

34. Let me get back to you. (= I'll need to find out the information then tell you later)

Example conversation:

Telephone caller: Can you confirm the list price for these items?

Office worker: Let me get back to you on that.

35. I'll be with you in a tick. (= I'll be able to serve you soon)

Example conversation:

(In a shop: the sales assistant is busy, but sees a customer who needs help)

Sales assistant: I'll be with you in a tick.

Customer: OK, thanks.

Time phrases



36. Have you got the time? (= What time is it?)

Example conversation:

(At a train station)

Passenger 1: Excuse me? Have you got the time?

Passenger 2: Yes, it's five to six.

37. It's just gone... (time) (= It's just past...)

Example conversation:

Louise: Have you got the time?

Simon: Yes, it's just gone five thirty.

Asking someone to be quiet



38. Put a sock in it! (= Stop talking! i.e. put a sock in your mouth to stop speaking)

Example conversation:

(When a child keeps complaining about the same thing)

Dad: Oh put a sock in it! You aren't going to the fun fair, and that's that!

39. Shut it! (= Shut up!)

Example conversation

(Two boys arguing.)

Fraser: I'm going to tell Mum that you stole those sweets.

Robert: Shut it!

Shopping



40. We're out of... (= We don't have any more ...)

Example conversation:

Lily: We're out of milk.

Tom: I'll get some on the way home.

41. We're running low on... (= We don't have much of ...)

Example conversation:

Colin: We're running low on sugar.

Ivan: OK - I'll get some when I go out.

42. Keep the change! (= You can have the change)

Example conversation:

(In a pub)

Barman: That'll be £10.70 please.)

Customer: Here's £11. Keep the change!

Talking about work



43. I'm up to my ears in it! (= I'm really busy)

Example conversation:

Wendy: How's it going?

Peter: Well, I'm up to my ears in it at the moment...

44. I'm a bit tied up... (= I'm busy at the moment)

Example conversation:

Tony: Can you help me with this report?

Sue: I'm a bit tied up at the moment. Can it wait?

45. I've got my hands full... (= I'm busy at the moment)

Example conversation:

Laura: Can I give you this project, Kate?

Kate: Well, I've got my hands full with the other one.

Games, competitions, etc



46. Your turn! (= It's your time to do something)

Example conversation:

Child A: Whose turn is it now?

Child B: It's your turn!

47. You go first. (= You are the first player.)

Example conversation:

(Three players need to roll the dice to start the game.)

Steven: Donna - you go first!

Donna: OK.

48. Time's up! (= When the time for an activity finishes)

Example conversation:

(In a game when a player has a limited time to answer a question)

Child 1: OK Mum! Time's up! What's your answer?

Mum: OK, I'm going to say 1812...

49. Ladies first! (= Women are allowed to be the first to do something)

Example conversation:

Dan: OK, ladies first! Jill: Who was the first person to walk on the moon?

Jill: That's an easy one!

50. Heads or tails? (= When you toss a coin to see which side faces up: the side which has the face of the important person, or "heads"; or the other side of the coin, which is "tails")

Example conversation:

Ben: Let's toss for it. Heads or tails?

Penny: Heads!

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