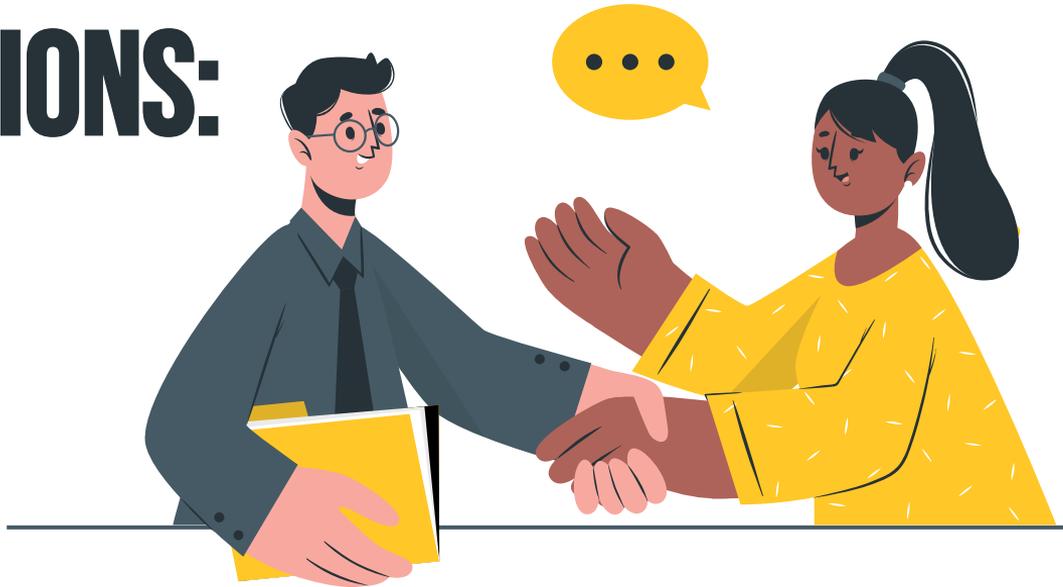


SMALL TALK, BIG CONNECTIONS: MASTERING ENGLISH FOR SOCIALIZING

Fiona Craddock
Thursday, March 13th



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SAYING HELLO

How to greet people

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INTRODUCTIONS

This is Fiona
Pleased to meet you

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MAKING SMALL TALK

Small talk, big connections

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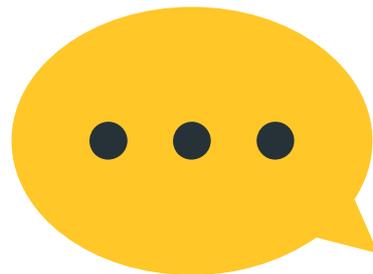
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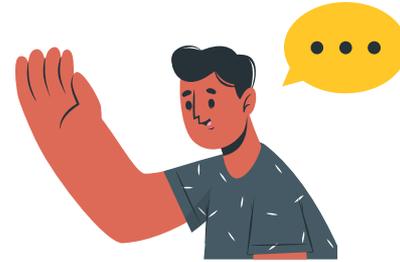


SAYING HELLO

BASICS



HELLO
HI
HEY
HIYA
WHAT'S UP?



GOOD MORNING
GOOD AFTERNOON
GOOD EVENING
~~GOOD NIGHT~~

BASICS



HOW ARE YOU?
HOW ARE YOU DOING?
HOW'VE YOU BEEN?



FINE, THANKS!
GREAT!
PRETTY GOOD

...AND YOU?



NOT BAD, THANKS

I'M ALRIGHT

SAME OLD, SAME OLD

I'VE BEEN BETTER



**SORRY TO HEAR THAT. IS
EVERYTHING ALRIGHT?**

WHAT'S GOING ON?

WHAT HAPPENED?

DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT?

I'M HERE IF YOU WANT TO TALK



INTRODUCTIONS

INTRODUCING PEOPLE



- Tips from Bridget Jones
- Mistakes to avoid

INTRODUCING PEOPLE



PERPETUA: Anyone going to *introduce / present* me?

BRIDGET: Ah, *introduce / present* people with thoughtful details.

Perpetua, *he / his name / this is* Mark Darcy. *He / Mark / This* is a prematurely middle-aged prick with a cruel-raced ex-wife. *She / Perpetua / This* is an old fart arse bag who spends her time bossing me around.

Hmm, maybe not.



PERPETUA: Anyone going to *introduce / present* me?

BRIDGET: Perpetua, *he / his name / this is* Mark Darcy.
He / Mark / This is a top barrister... who comes from Grafton Underwood. (To Mark) *She / Perpetua / This* is one of my work colleagues.

PERPETUA: Oh, Mark. I know you by reputation, of course.

(Natasha Glenville arrives).



MARK: Ah, Natasha – *she / her name / this* is Bridget Jones – Bridget, *she / her name / this* is Natasha. *She / This / Natasha* is a top attorney and specialises in family law. *She / This / Bridget* works in publishing and used to play naked in my paddling pool.

NATASHA: How *odd / interesting / curious*. Perpetua - how's the house-hunt going?

PERPETUA: Disaster!

KEY TAKEAWAYS



- Use the verb introduce (not present) when people are meeting each other for the first time
- Use “This is” to introduce other people
- Use people’s names when they are present (not he/she)

INTRODUCING YOURSELF

I don't think I've met you yet, my name's Fiona

Hi, I'm Fiona

Hello, my name is Fiona Craddock. I'm the English teacher at ABC Inc.

~~Who are you?~~

What's your name?



ENCANTADO/A - IGUALMENTE



- Nice to meet you too
- Good to meet you too
- Pleasure to meet you too
- Happy to meet you too

Likewise!

MISTAKES TO AVOID - PRONOUNS

Use people's names when they are present, don't use he or she.

This rule is relaxed for babies and young children.

Animals use the pronoun it. However, if it is an animal that people have affection for eg a pet or a famous animal, use he or she.

Some people now introduce themselves with their pronouns (subject and possessive only).
“Hi, I’m Fiona and I use she/her pronouns”

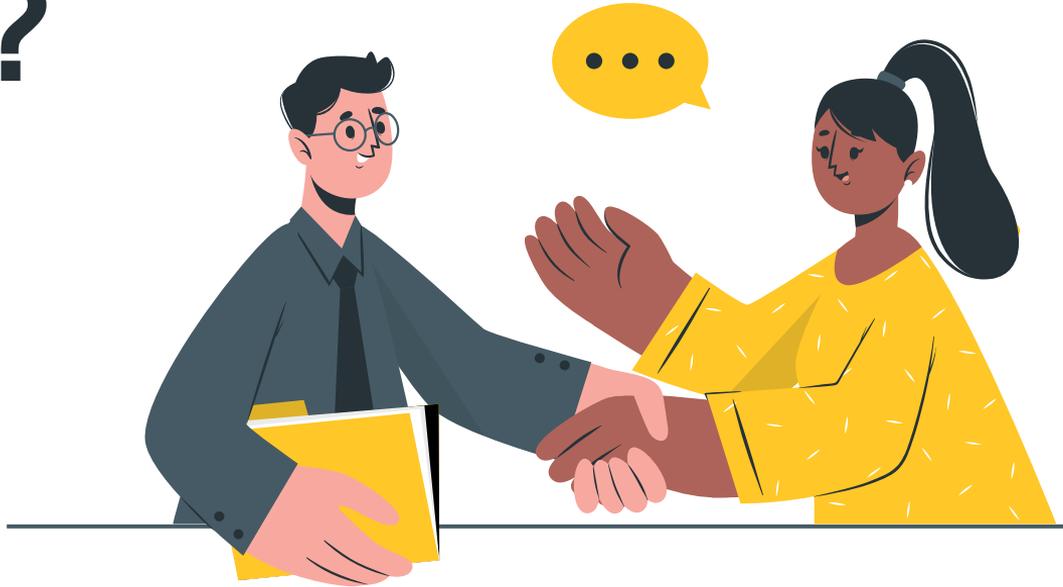




MAKING SMALL TALK

WHAT IS SMALL TALK?

Small talk is casual, light conversation that usually happens in social settings or when meeting someone new.



SMALL TALK CONVERSATION TOPICS



The day-to-day

The weather

Weekend / holiday plans

Family, friends, and mutual acquaintances

Pop culture

Compliments

Advice and recommendations

Current Events

Context specific (venue, why you're there)

SMALL TALK CONVERSATION TOPICS



THE DAY-TO-DAY



- How's it going?
- How was your weekend?
- How's your day going so far?
- Long time no see!
- What have you been up to since I last saw you?
- What have you been up to recently?

SMALL TALK CONVERSATION TOPICS



THE WEATHER



What a (horrible/beautiful/strange) day!

What do you think about this weather we've been having?

I heard it's going to (rain/snow/clear up) tomorrow. What do you think?

This reminds me of weather back home in (city/country). What's the weather like where you're from?

SMALL TALK CONVERSATION TOPICS



WEEKEND/HOLIDAY PLANS



Do you have anything special planned for this weekend / the summer?

I'm thinking about (activity) this weekend. Any recommendations?

I'm planning a trip to (place). Have you ever been there?

Do you have any traditions for (upcoming holiday)?

SMALL TALK CONVERSATION TOPICS



FAMILY, FRIENDS, & MUTUAL ACQUAINTANCES



How do you know (name of mutual acquaintance)?

How's your family? Are they doing well?

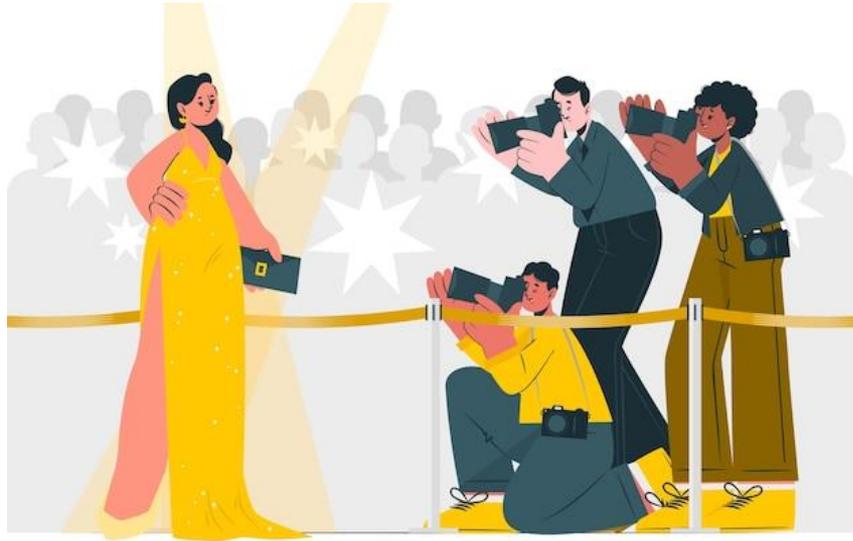
How is (name)? How is (name) doing?

Do you know anyone here?

SMALL TALK CONVERSATION TOPICS



POP CULTURE



Did you see (the Oscars, Eurovision, sports event) yesterday?

What do you think about (celebrity scandal)?

Have you heard about (pop culture news)?

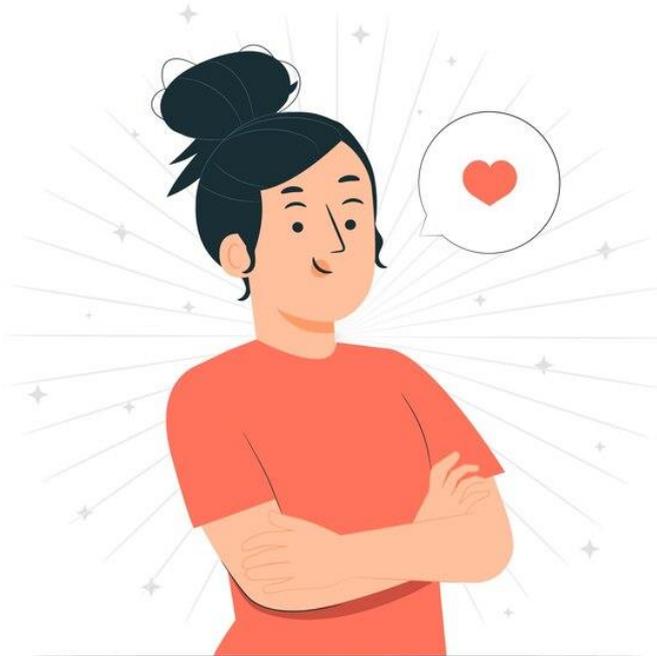
Do you watch (series, reality TV)?

Have you seen any good (movies, series) lately?

SMALL TALK CONVERSATION TOPICS



COMPLIMENTS



That's a really nice (item of clothing/accessory). Where did you get it?

I really admire your (skill/talent/quality). How did you develop it?

I'm impressed by how knowledgeable you are about (topic). What sparked your interest in it?

That's a great idea! How did you come up with it?

SMALL TALK CONVERSATION TOPICS



ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS



I'm looking for a new series to watch. Any recommendations?

What are you reading at the moment?

What do you recommend I should do while I'm in (city/country)?

I'm looking for a good place to (eat/shop/visit) around here. Any recommendations?

Are you going to travel while you're here?

SMALL TALK CONVERSATION TOPICS



CURRENT EVENTS



What do you think about the recent (non-controversial local event)?

Have you been following the news about (event)?

Have you heard about the new (business/restaurant/park) opening nearby?

I noticed they're (construction/renovation) on (local landmark). Do you know what's happening?

SMALL TALK CONVERSATION TOPICS



CONTEXT SPECIFIC



How do you know (host/organizer) of this event?

What do you think of this venue?

What brings you to (event/conference)?

Have you been to other events like this before?

CHOOSE THE CORRECT OPTION

What / How is it going?

What's / How's going on?

How were / What about your holidays?

Did you hear / Have you heard the news about Elon Musk yesterday?

Did you hear / Have you heard anything from José Manuel recently?



Do you know Madrid / Have you been to Madrid before?

Isn't **this / it** a great venue?

What do you think **of / about** the venue?

When did you **get / arrive** here?

How was your **trip / travel / flight / journey**?

It's getting cold, **doesn't / isn't** it?





COMMON RESPONSES

THANK YOU



What is the correct response to **thank you**?

Thank you (~~Thanks to you~~)

You're welcome

No problem / No worries

Anytime

My pleasure

Don't mention it

COMMON RESPONSES

1. I can't meet you today, I'm not feeling very well.
2. Can I ask you a question?
3. We really enjoyed our stay.
4. Sorry, I'm late. The traffic was really bad.
5. I lost my smartphone.
6. I have an exam in two hours.
7. Could you pass me the salt, please?
8. I've passed my driving test!
9. I've got to go.
10. Have a nice weekend
11. 

Congratulations

Go ahead

Sorry to hear that

Glad to hear that

It was nice talking to you

Good luck

Get well soon

Don't worry

Same to you

Here you go

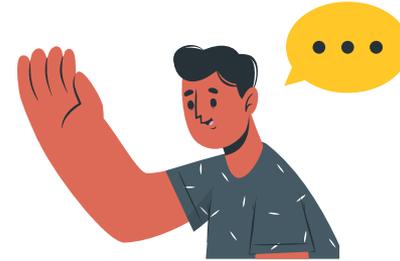
Bless you!

YO TAMBIEN / YO TAMPOCO



I'M GOING TO ANA'S PARTY

I'M NOT GOING TO ANA'S PARTY



ME TOO

ME NEITHER

I want to go – so do I / I do too, I will go – so will I/ I will too, I can go – so can I/I can too, I should go – so should I/
I should too, I have to go – so do I/I do too

I don't want to go – neither do I/I don't either, I won't go – neither will/I won't either I , I can't go – neither can I/ I
can't either, I shouldn't go – neither should I/I shouldn't either, I don't have to go – neither do I/I don't have to
either

COMMON RESPONSES – I DON'T MIND vs. I DON'T CARE

Both expressions show a lack of preference

I don't mind suggests that you are happy to conform with whatever decision is made. It's a neutral expression and quite polite

Can I smoke in your flat?
Of course, I don't mind

Do you want to eat at McDonald's or Burger King?
I don't mind, you choose.

COMMON RESPONSES – I DON'T MIND vs. I DON'T CARE

I don't care means that you are completely disinterested in the subject. It can sound rude or dismissive.

Do you want to go out tonight?
I don't care, do whatever you want

Who do you think will win, Real Madrid or Barcelona?
I don't care , I hate football

Skinny jeans are out of fashion. You should wear something else.
I don't care what people think, I'm going to wear whatever I want.



**ENCOURAGING &
VALIDATING**

KEEP GOING



- Ahuh
- Go on
- Then what happened? / What happened next?
- What did you think when that happened?
- How did you feel about that?

ENCOURAGING



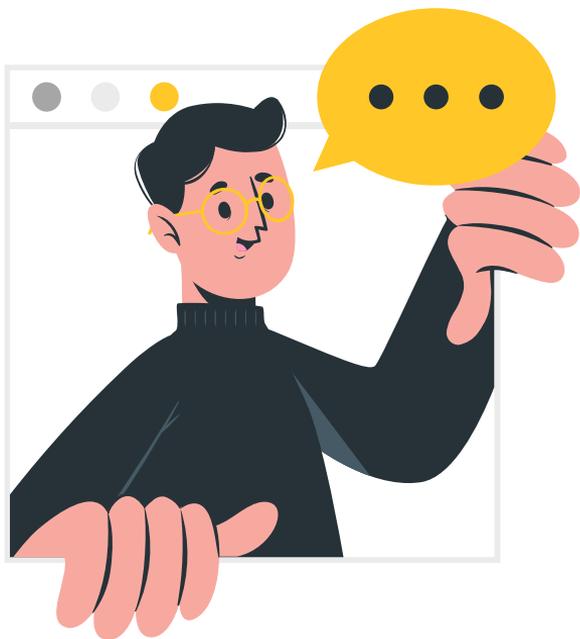
- Really?
- Wow!
- You're joking
- Sounds pretty good
- That's awesome

EMPATHETIC



- Really?
- Wow!
- You're joking
- Oh no!
- That's awful
- I'm so sorry
- That sounds very frustrating

WHAT (+ A/AN)+ ADJECTIVE + NOUN



- **What a fabulous teacher!**
What + a + adjective + singular noun
- **What useful grammar!**
What + adjective + uncountable noun
- **What great slides!**
What + adjectives + plural noun



What a beautiful sunset!



How gorgeous!





What a cute picture!

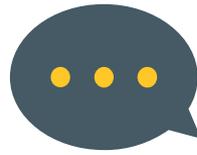


How sweet!





What terrible news

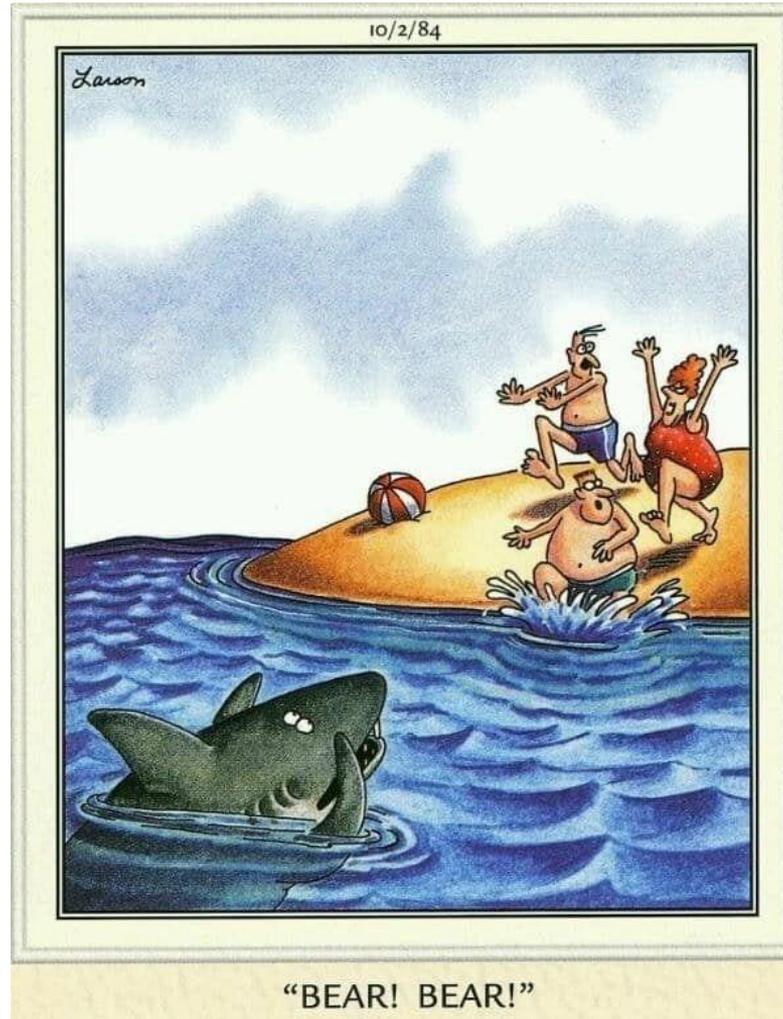


How awful





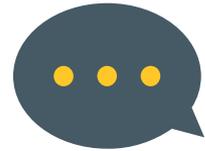
What a funny cartoon!



How amusing!



What terrible traffic!



How frustrating!



What awful weather



How miserable





What bad luck!



How typical!





What a great idea!



How clever!





What lovely colours



How beautiful





IDIOMS & EXPRESSIONS

IDIOMS & EXPRESSIONS



Things going well:



To break the ice

To do or say something that makes people feel more relaxed in a social situation

"He told a joke to break the ice at the beginning of the meeting."

To get on with someone

To have a good relationship with someone; to like each other and enjoy spending time together

"It's important to get on with your colleagues since you spend so much time together."

IDIOMS & EXPRESSIONS



Things going well:



To hit it off

To establish a good relationship immediately
"We hit it off right away at the conference."

To click with someone

To immediately feel a connection with someone
"I just clicked with my new colleague from the first conversation."

IDIOMS & EXPRESSIONS



Things going badly:



To put your foot in your mouth

To say something embarrassing or offensive without meaning to

"I put my foot in my mouth when I asked about her ex-husband"

Not my cup of tea

Not something you enjoy or are interested in
"Heavy metal music is not my cup of tea, but I respect that you enjoy it"

IDIOMS & EXPRESSIONS

Social Dynamics



To read the room

To understand the mood or atmosphere of a social situation

"You need to read the room better—no one was in the mood for jokes after the announcement."

To be the life of the party

To understand the mood or atmosphere of a social situation

"You need to read the room better—no one was in the mood for jokes after the announcement."



A young woman with dark hair and glasses is sitting on the floor, looking at a silver laptop. She has her hand on her chin, appearing thoughtful. The background shows a bookshelf with blue binders and a clock.

MORE RESOURCES

MORE RESOURCES



Celeste Hadlee –
10 ways to have a better conversation

https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste_headlee_10_ways_to_have_a_better_conversation

How to have meaningful conversations
playlist

https://www.ted.com/playlists/211/the_art_of_meaningful_conversa

MORE RESOURCES

Brene Brown-
The Power of Empathy



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>

With subtitles in Spanish →

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMk-2OWyfvo&t=2s>



MORE RESOURCES



Conversation Exchange Website

<https://www.conversationexchange.com/search.php?lg=en>

 onversation
*  xchange

Search

Results



Describe your language partner

Speaks

English

Learning

Spanish

Learning Level

From

Pre-intermedi...

To

Upper-Interm...

Country

- All -

Town

State/Province

Time Zone

From

GMT -2:00

To

GMT +3:00

Type of Exchange

Face to face conversation

Correspondence (Pen-Pal)

Using a chat software (?)

Any

Age From

35

To

55

Gender:

All

Keyword:

Sort results by:

Profile date



Last login

Reset Form

Search

GENDER, AGE Male , 35

COUNTRY, TOWN Spain, Málaga , (Spain)

NATIVE LANGUAGE English

PRACTICING LANGUAGE Spanish
Korean

TYPE OF EXCHANGE Face to face conversation
Correspondence (Pen-Pal)
Chat using ChitChat (Conv. Exch)

DESCRIPTION I'm an English teacher from Scotland. I'd like to improve my Spanish and I can help with your English :)

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS Yoga, playing guitar, boxing, tennis, travelling

LAST LOGIN 09 March 2025

PROFILE DATE 29 January 2016

<https://www.commisceo-global.com/resources>



Country Guides

Free information on 80+ countries giving you a look at the language, people, cultural norms, etiquette tips for business people and taboos to avoid for visitors.

The Business Culture Complexity Index™

Ranks the top 50 economies according to the potential complexity or ease of their business cultures.

Intercultural Quizzes

Cross Cultural Management Guides

Articles and Blogs

Cross Cultural Communication: Self-Study Guide

Free download

Country Insight Reports

In-depth cultural insights

Free e-Learning Course on Cultural Awareness

Free e-Learning Course on Japanese Culture

Free e-Learning Course on Arab Culture



MORE RESOURCES



How to start a conversation

Tips and tricks for how to start a conversation with anyone

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiAZUeHD-Ng>

mmmEnglish

- Small talk useful phrases and questions
- Small talk & conversation
- Keep your conversation going

<https://www.youtube.com/@mmmEnglish>
Emma



THANKS!

DOES ANYONE HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

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