



ENGLISH FOR TOUR GUIDES

1. Warm-up Speaking (5–7 minutes)

Activity: Surprise Question Challenge

In pairs: One person is the guide, the other quickly says a difficult/unexpected question (from the list below or your own).

The guide responds in 20–30 seconds — stay calm, polite, and professional.

Example questions to use:

- "Why is your country so expensive?"
- "I don't like this place — can we change the tour?"
- "Are you married? Do you have kids?"
- "How much do you earn as a guide?"

Switch roles 3–4 times.

Tip: Smile even if the question is tricky — it helps keep the mood positive!



2. Key Useful Phrases

Handling Difficult Questions

Buying time / polite deflection

- That's an interesting question...
- Let me think for a moment...
- I'm not sure about that, but...

Dealing with complaints / criticism

- I understand your concern...
- I'm sorry you feel that way. How can I make this better for you?
- Thank you for your feedback — I'll pass it on.

I don't know / can't answer

- I don't have that information right now, but I'll check for you later.
- That's a very good question — I'll find out and let you know.
- Unfortunately, I can't answer personal questions, but let's focus on the tour!

Pronunciation tips

- Unfortunately (un-FOR-chuh-nit-lee)
- Concern (kon-SERN)
- Feedback (FEED-bak)

Redirecting / turning it positive

- Let's get back to the tour...
- Instead, let me tell you about...
- Many tourists ask that — here's what I can say...

General polite responses

- That's a personal question, but... (smile)
- In my opinion... but everyone is different.
- Great question! Let's discuss it after the tour.

3. Gap-Fill Practice – Responding to Tricky Questions

Activity: Complete the Professional Responses

Fill in the gaps with words/phrases from the box to make polite, professional answers.

feedback / interesting / sure / personal / understand / check / instead / concern

1. Tourist: "How much money do you make?"

Guide: That's a very _____ question, but I don't answer _____ ones. Let's talk about the tour!

2. Tourist: "This place is boring!"

Guide: I _____ your _____. How can I make this better for you?

3. Tourist: "Why is everything so expensive here?"

Guide: I'm not _____ about prices, but I'll _____ and tell you later.

4. Tourist: "Can we skip this part?"

Guide: Thank you for your _____. _____, let me show you something even better ahead!

4. Matching – Question Type to Response Strategy

Activity: Match the Difficult Question to the Best Strategy

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A. "Are you single?" | Politely deflect + redirect to tour |
| B. "I hate this weather!" | Empathize + offer solution |
| C. "How old are you?" | Say it's personal + smile |
| D. "Is your government good?" | Buy time + promise to check |
| E. "I don't know what this is." | Avoid politics + focus on sights |

5. Main Speaking Practice – Role-Play (12–15 minutes)

Activity: Handle the Unexpected Question!

Work in small groups (3–5 people).

Student A = Tour Guide

Others = Tourists

Tourists:

Choose one difficult/unexpected question from the list (or make your own) and ask it suddenly during the "tour". Act a little challenging or curious.

Tour Guide:

Respond professionally in 30–60 seconds:

- Stay calm and smile
- Use empathy/deflection/buy time as needed
- Redirect back to the tour positively
- End with a question to re-engage the group

Example questions:

- "Why don't you speak better English?"
- "This tour is too slow!"
- "Can I smoke here?"
- "Your prices are too high!"
- "How many tourists die on this tour?" (extreme one!)
- "Are you religious?"

Switch roles so everyone practices being the guide.

Tip: Use the town map or landmark pictures to point back to the tour and change the subject smoothly.

6. Final Warm-down (5 minutes)

Activity: One Good Response

In a circle or quick round.

Each person shares **one sentence** about a good way to handle a difficult question they heard today.

Example:

"I liked how you said 'That's a good question — I'll check' and then moved on."

End with: "Thank you for handling tough questions like real professionals!"

Teacher's Key

Students learn to stay calm and professional when faced with tricky, unexpected, or challenging questions from tourists (e.g., personal questions, complaints, "I don't know" situations, sensitive topics, or impossible requests). Emphasis on polite deflection, buying time, redirecting, and maintaining positive group energy.

Activity: Complete the Professional Responses

Fill in the gaps with words/phrases from the box to make polite, professional answers.

1. Tourist: "How much money do you make?"

Guide: That's a very **interesting** question, but I don't answer **personal** ones. Let's talk about the tour!

2. Tourist: "This place is boring!"

Guide: I **understand** your **concern**. How can I make this better for you?

3. Tourist: "Why is everything so expensive here?"

Guide: I'm not **sure** about prices, but I'll **check** and tell you later.

4. Tourist: "Can we skip this part?"

Guide: Thank you for your **feedback**. **Instead**, let me show you something even better ahead!

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