



SOCIALIZING & SMALL TALK

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1. Where Are You?

Imagine you are in one of these situations.

- A.** You are waiting for a meeting to start.
- B.** You are having coffee before a class.
- C.** You are waiting for a bus or train.
- D.** You are at a work event.
- E.** You are meeting someone for the first time.

What could you say to start a conversation?

Write one sentence for each situation.

3. Start the Conversation

Match each opening with a suitable situation.

1. "Is this your first time here?"
2. "Have you been waiting long?"
3. "How's your day going?"
4. "What do you do?"
5. "Have you tried the food here?"
6. "Are you enjoying the event?"

2. Safe Small-Talk Topics

Which topics are usually easy to talk about with someone you don't know well?

Choose six.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| ☐ the weather | ☐ religion |
| ☐ family problems | ☐ travel |
| ☐ local places | ☐ food |
| ☐ work or studies | ☐ hobbies |
| ☐ films and TV | ☐ sports |
| ☐ someone's age | ☐ money |
| | ☐ politics |

Compare your answers with a partner.

- a. You are at a conference.
- b. You are waiting for a bus.
- c. You are at a restaurant or food event.
- d. You are at a new place.
- e. You are at work.
- f. You meet someone at an event.

4. Keep It Simple

Work with a partner.

Choose one situation from Section 1.

Start a conversation.

Your goal is **not** to have a long conversation.

Your goal is simply to:

1. say hello,
2. ask one easy question,
3. listen to the answer,
4. ask one more question.

Then change roles.

REAL ENGLISH BOX

You don't need an interesting or clever opening.

Natural small talk often starts very simply:

"Hi, how's it going?"

"How's your day going?"

"Is this your first time here?"

"Have you been here before?"

"How do you know everyone here?"

Simple questions are often the best way to begin.

Teacher Key

Sections 1 and 4 are personal/speaking activities.

Section 2: Answers will vary. Money, politics, religion, age and family problems are generally less suitable for starting conversations with people you don't know well.

Section 3:

1-d

2-b

3-e

4-a

5-c

6-f