

A Handbook of SPOKEN ENGLISH

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Readymade expressions for a variety of communicative functions.

Learn how to thank, apologise, pay a compliment, suggest, etc.



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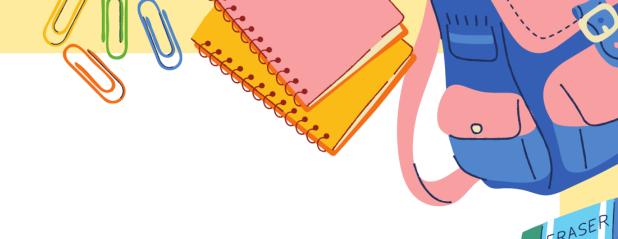
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1. Greeting people and responding to greetings

- Hi!
- Hello!
- How are you? It's always a pleasure to meet you.
- What's up? How have you been?
- Good day, mate. What's new?
- Nice/Glad/Wonderful to meet you.
- It's wonderful to see you again.
- Speak/talk of the devil ...
- What a pleasant surprise!
- How come you are here?
- Long time no see.
- What's brought you here?
- You are a sight for sore eyes.
- I've been meaning to call you all week, and see you are here.



2. Introducing oneself and others

- My name's ... I am ... This is ...
- I have been working as a teacher in SVI School for 10 years.
- I have a lot of experience working with kids/adults.
- Meet my friend/colleague ...

- Can/May/Could Lintroduce my friend/cousin/colleague...
- Let me have the pleasure of introducing Mr. Joshi to you all.
- This is Joy Parker from Global Marketing.
- I am delighted to introduce our new Director Mr Rohit Sen. He is a 20-year veteran of the Indian textile industry. He is a voracious reader and a prolific writer too.
- It gives me immense pleasure to say a few words about our chief guest.



3. Asking for and giving details

- Where do you live?
- Do you live in a joint family or a nuclear family?
- How many members are there in your family?
- What are your educational qualifications?
- What do you do?
- Have you ever been to any foreign country?
- How often do you visit a library?
- How long does it take you to reach your office from home?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- I live in Surat.
- I'm an MBA from London.
- I just turned 20 yesterday.



4. Expressing and responding to apology

- I'm extremely sorry.
- I apologize for the inconvenience.
- Please forgive me for my mistake.
- Pardon me for not attending your wedding.
- Sorry to keep you waiting. Sorry for being late.
- I do apologise to you for my inability to accept your proposal.
- It's okay. It doesn't matter.
- Forget about it, please.
- It's all right.



5. Expressing and responding to gratitude

- Thanks very much.
- Thank you so much!
- I am obliged to you.
- I am grateful to you for your help.
- I am indebted to you.
- It gives me immense pleasure and happiness in expressing my gratitude to you all.
- Pleasure's all mine!
- You're welcome.
- It's okay. It's my pleasure.
- It's all right. Please don't mention it.



6. Describing professional work

- I prepare reports for my clients.
- I handle inquiries.
- I look after the maintenance of the building.
- I generate leads for my bank.
- I respond to emails.
- I am responsible for keeping the books of account.
- I provide a written report on the progress of each employee.

7. Making and refusing requests

- May I come in, sir?
- May we go now?
- Can I ask you a question?
- Can I borrow your pen?
- Shall I try?
- Could you please wait here for some time?
- Could I have a word with you?
- May I join you?
- Might I make a suggestion?
- I am afraid you can't sit here.
- I am sorry that's not allowed.
- Excuse me, could I discuss a few things with you, sir?
- No way. The question doesn't arise at all.
- No one is allowed to do so.



8. Asking for clarification

- Pardon?
- Would you mind repeating that?
- What do you mean by that?
- Could you please elaborate on it?
- I am not sure I follow you. This point needs elaboration.
- Could you please explain it in more detail?



9. Interrupting politely

- I am sorry to interrupt but...
- Do you mind if I jump in here?
- Can I stop you there for a moment?
- Can I just butt in for a second?
- Before you go on, I would like to say something. May I?



10. Describing routines and habits

- I wake up at 5 a.m. every day.
- I exercise daily.
- I never tell a lie.

- I alway<mark>s wash my hands before and after lunch/dinner.</mark>
- I read two books every month.





11. Talking about past events and states

- I went to Canada last year.
- He played cricket very well.
- I attended a music concert yesterday.
- It was my parents' wedding anniversary last week.
- I had my breakfast this morning at 7 o'clock.
- Every morning we used to go for a walk.
- We would dance every evening when we were in London.
- He didn't know a word of English a year ago.
- Why did you invite him to your party?
- Didn't he know you at that time?
- He was extremely short-tempered in those days.



12. Reporting what people say

- He said he would help me.
- Rahul told me that he was going to play football.
- Simran said that she would be late to work.
- She asked me to stay back for lunch.
- Rishit asked me to come at 6 p.m.
- He said he is from Punjab.
- She said she wouldn't help us if we didn't accept her offer.



13. Talking about the future

- I am going to participate in the debate competition.
- We are meeting the principal tomorrow.
- I will perhaps watch a movie tonight.
- What are you doing this evening?
- When are you returning home?
- I am planning to go to Australia next year.
- I am thinking of buying a new car.



14. Buying and Selling

- I sold my motorbike for 90,000 rupees last month.
- I bought a MacBook Pro last week.
- I would like to sell my cell phone.

- I buy fresh vegetables and fruits every day.
- Amazon sells products online at affordable prices.
- I prefer shopping to wandering around the shops looking for the things I want.



15. Talking about the weather

- What a lovely morning!
- What lovely weather we have!
- It's very cold today, isn't it?
- Look at the clouds and the lowering skies.
- It's going to rain. You'd better carry an umbrella.
- It's awfully hot today.
- What bright sunshine!

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• It's foggy/misty/cloudy/sunny/windy/stormy today.

16. Talking about one's health

- How are you feeling now?
- I am a bit under the weather.
- I have had a fever for three days.
- He has a runny nose and has been continually sneezing.
- How have you been feeling recently?
- I often feel dizzy and rundown. I ache/I'm aching all over.
- My head has been hurting for days and weeks.
- I have a sore throat. What should I do?
- I have all sorts of aches and pains after the trip.
- Gargling thrice a day with a little warm salt water is a surefire way to soothe a sore throat.
- She has been coughing a lot these days.
- I haven't been feeling well lately.
- I need to blow my nose again and again. I am sick of it.
- I have been having headaches intermittently.
- I am still battling this severe migraine.
- Do you have a headache?
- I've had a stomach ache all morning. Yesterday we had spicy food and I know such food disagrees with me.
- Frying usually makes me cough.
- I am allergic to plastic / I have an allergy to plastic.
- I think he is suffering from insomnia.
- If you run/have a temperature, consult a doctor soon.
- My back aches. What should I do?
- My fingers are numb with cold.
- If I sit on the floor for long, my legs go numb.
- I have/get a migraine if I go out in the sun.
- I've got an itchy rash all over my body. Plus my arms and legs have gone to sleep. I cannot feel or control them.



17. Following and giving simple instructions

- Firstly, turn off the electricity.
- Put your arms in front of you.
- Sit down and raise your hands.
- Don't smoke here.
- Fill in/up the form in capital letters.
- Do as I say.
- Boil the vegetables for a few minutes.
- Ask if you aren't sure.
- Form a queue here.
- No queue-jumping, please.
- Don't put boiling water in the cup or it will crack.
- Knuckle down to work if you want to succeed.
- Put a lid on the saucepan and make sure the flame doesn't go out.
- Go straight home and tell your father to call me soon.
- Sit straight/stiff as a ramrod. Don't slouch back in your chair.



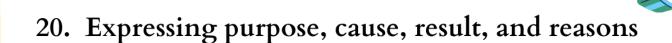
18. Asking the way and giving directions

- Excuse me, can you tell me where the police station is?
- Could you direct me to the railway station?
- he nearest cinema is two kilometers from here.
- Keep going straight ahead and you will see it on your left.
- Turn left past the gas station.
- Walk to the front gate and press the green button.
- How far is the KEM hospital from here?
- Is there a good restaurant nearby?
- What's the fastest way to get to the hospital?
- How can I reach London before midnight?
- Can I get there by public transport?
- Is it near here? How long will it take to reach there?
- Which station is nearest (to) your house?
- Can you tell me which route to take to avoid the usual rush hour traffic?



19. Making comparisons

- I prefer walking to running.
- The elephant is taller than most other animals.
- Travelling by train is faster than travelling by bus.
- Nirali is more talented than Aditya.
- He was the fastest bowler in the world once.
- Bungee jumping is as adventurous as skydiving.
- He isn't as intelligent as his sister.
- It's one of the biggest mistakes I have made in my life.
- Honestly, I've never felt happier in my life.
- This is the farthest away from home I've ever been.
- He is one of the most experienced teachers in our city.
- He runs faster than me / than I do.



- I am learning English so that I may get a good job.
- We went there early so that we could meet him personally.
- I did not go to work because/as/since it was raining.
- You must exercise so that you can stay fit.
- Film directors use special effects in order to make their films impressive.
- Nirali reads books so as to increase her vocabulary.
- Kevin wore gloves so as not to get his hands dirty.
- The reason why he resigned is that he wasn't treated well.
- If he doesn't take care, he will be blind soon.
- We eat that we may live.
- He worked so hard that he got the first rank.
- I decided not to complain as I didn't want to cause trouble.
- He may/might have forgotten to do so.
- If left unattended, it will result in a chaos.



21. Making and responding to offers and suggestions

- Shall we go out for dinner?
- I'd like to recommend this medicine to you.
- What about having a cup of tea?
- I suggest you buy this dictionary.
- I recommend/suggest writing your feelings down on paper.
- Why not eat out this evening?
- How about going for a walk?
- Let's go for a cuppa, shall we?
- Great. I'm dying for a cup of tea.
- What would you like to have, tea or coffee?
- You could start your own business.
- I'd love to.
- Yes, why not?



22. Giving and responding to invitations

- Would you like to join me for a coffee?
- Sure, I would love to.
- How about a movie tonight?
- That sounds fun!
- You must come to watch me perform tomorrow.
- It'll be my pleasure.



23. Giving advice

- You should wear a jacket as it's very cold outside.
- I think you should watch movies to improve your English.
- I guess you should buy a new laptop.
- Have you thought about trying your hand at acting?
- If I were you, I wouldn't choose that cake.
- You need to hire a good technician for this work.
- You can ask your consultant about it.
- It's advisable to wait for a few days before complaining.
- Why not join a gymnasium? I am sure it will help you.



24. Warning and responding to them

- Don't touch it, it's a live wire!
- Don't cross the road when the pedestrian light is red.
- Be careful! The pan is too hot!
- Look/Watch out! There's a car coming.
- Watch your step! The floor is wet!
- Oh... thank you very much.

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• Thank you for letting me know!



25. Asking people to do something

- Can you bring me a glass of water, please?
- Wait in the corridor, please, till I call you.
- Could you open the window, please?
- Can you suggest a movie, please?
- Would you please hold the door for me?
- Can you turn on the music, please?
- May I ask you to post this letter for me?
- Would you be kind enough to carry my luggage?
- Could you hold on for a moment, please?
- Hold the fort for me, will you?
- Buy me a dress, would you?



26. Expressing agreement and disagreement

- I entirely agree with you.
- I couldn't agree more.
- Yes, you are right!
- Yes, you have a point there.
- I don't think that's right.
- I don't think I agree with you.
- Let's agree to disagree.
- I find it hard to believe.
- Nonsense!
- You can say that again.
- I don't think he sees eye to eye with his father.

27. Paying compliments

- You look gorgeous/stunning/beautiful/charming!
- You have a mellifluous voice.
- You've always been my rock.
- I admire your skills/dedication/commitment.
- You have a vivacious personality.
- That is an amazingly beautiful painting! You rock!
- What a shot! I wish I knew how to play like that.
- Your performance was just breathtaking.
- The pizza is delicious. How did you make it?
- You sing so melodiously. Who taught you?
- I wish I knew how to write/sing/dress like you.
- That's a really cute outfit.
- Your selection is amazing.
- I wonder how easily/effortlessly you do this.
- You have a pretty face.
- I love to listen to you for hours and hours.
- You look stunning in this dress.
- What a spiffy suit you have worn!
- You have an amazing sense of humour.
- Not many can do as efficiently as you do.
- You are a sight for sore eyes. (Br Eng)
- You have an enviable command of English.
- You are a gifted artist.

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• I have a high regard for your commitment to quality.



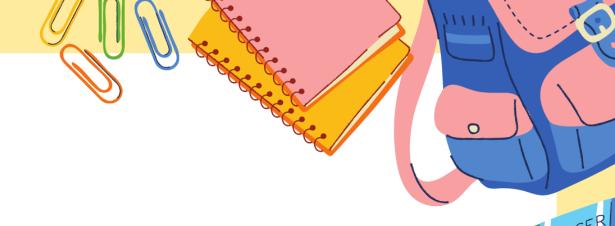
- You look pretty with your hair loose/down.
- You are so cool—as cool as a cucumber.
- You are the epitome of beauty.
- You are endowed with all the qualities one craves.
- You ooze with confidence.
- Your smile is contagious.
- Not a hair ruffled, what calmness!
- What an effervescent personality!
- You are truly indefatigable.
- You have nerves of steel.
- We knew we could depend on you.
- You are a storehouse of energy.
- You make one swoon.
- You are a fatherly/motherly figure for your employees.
- We can always fall back on you.
- You are so resourceful and still so down-to-earth.
- You're so understanding and caring. Hats off to you.
- You are radiating health and charm and confidence.
- You have the gift of the gab.
- You dance so gracefully.

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You are a role model for many.



- That dress becomes you.
- That's a most becoming dress.
- You are the life and soul of the party.
- You look smart in this blue dress.
- You have a captivating smile.
- You are the picture of health / innocence.
- You are always dressed up to the nines.
- That beauty spot enhances your elegance.
- I admire your calm demeanour.
- What an elegant woman you are!
- You have a bewitching smile.
- You always steal the limelight / scene / show.
- You have an angelic smile / face.
- You'll turn heads today—you look gorgeous.
- You have carved out a niche for yourself in this field.
- You have a heart of gold.



28. Sympathising

- I understand your problem.
- I sympathies with you.
- It's hard not to feel sympathy for anyone in your situation.
- Our sympathise are with you all.
- Let me express our sincerest sympathy for you.
- Let me offer our deepest sympathy to you and your family.
- I wish you didn't have to face this situation.
- Don't worry. It's a passing phase.
- You deserve our sympathy.
- Our sympathy goes out to you in your unbearable loss.
- I know what you are going through.
- I feel for your loss.

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• Please let me know if I can help you in any way.



29. Expressing preferences

- I would prefer to watch a horror movie tonight.
- I like pizza more than pasta.
- I prefer tea to coffee.
- I find Hollywood movies more interesting than any other movies.
- I'd rather have hot chocolate than coffee.
- I have a strong preference for cloak-and-dagger novels.

30. Talking about feelings

- I feel a bit nervous before going on stage.
- I am so excited to go to the cinema tomorrow.
- I am happy to know that you are selected in our team.

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- I am relieved as my exams are over.
- I am confused about what to wear for my interview.
- I am disgusted with their behavior.
- I am upset with you.
- You know I am annoyed with your stupid comments.
- I am delighted to see you.
- I'm on cloud nine / on top of the world / in seventh heaven / over the moon / pleased as Punch / tickled pink.
- I have butterflies in my stomach before any performance.
- She feels down in the dumps.
- This experience is depressing, really.
- We are deeply frustrated with the system.
- This loud noise drives me up the wall.
- His behavior makes me see red.
- I can't bear to see you in trouble.
- He is deeply upset about the way she treats him.
- I am dying to meet my beloved.
- Why do you look crestfallen? What's the matter?
- You seem disappointed with his performance.
- He seems like an irate customer.
- I have a strange sense of déjà vu.







31. Expressing opinions and making choices

- I think black suits you.
- I suppose we should have Rasgulla for dessert.
- In my opinion, football needs more stamina than cricket.
- Ruskin Bond is one of the best writers in the world.
- Music isn't my cup of tea.
- In my view, he is a great teacher.
- To my mind, she needs some rest.
- If I were to select a dress, I'd buy a black one.



32. Expressing needs and wants

- Maulik needs to improve his English.
- I want to buy a new mobile.
- I need a new bike to travel to work.
- I would like to have a pizza and something to drink.
- I need more time to complete my work.
- I wish to learn cooking before I go abroad.



33. Expressing degrees of certainty and doubt

- I am quite sure he has missed the train.
- Yes, this bus goes to the university.
- I don't know whether to choose a blue or a white shirt.
- I am not certain about when he is going to America.
- I am in two minds about that, actually.
- I am still dithering over whether to accept her proposal.
- You may be right.
- I might start my own business soon.
- It could be anywhere between 30 and 40.
- He must be busy now.
- She can't have done it.
- You may / might have made a mistake.

34. Encouraging and motivating others

- Well done! Keep it up!
- That's really fine. Congratulations!
- You can do it. I have every / complete confidence in you.
- If not you, who else can do it? Come on.
- Don't give up before trying.
- Go ahead. Success is yours.
- You can win this match easily.
- Have faith in your ability and just do it!
- Everything will work out well.
- Keep up the good work!
- It's child's play. Do it.

- I'm sure you will win hands down.
- Nobody has succeeded without failing a few times.
- Sooner or later, victory will be yours.
- You are bound to succeed. It's as sure as eggs is eggs.

The Road Ahead

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