Basic English:Golden Phrases That Are Incredibly Useful 2

**Phrases for Learning English**

As an English learner, you’ll need to tell others that English is not your first language. You’ll also need to ask native speakers to repeat phrases and words or to speak slower. The following phrases will be useful for this.

### 9. I’m learning English.

This simple phrase tells people that English is not your native language. If you’re a total beginner, add “just started” after I: “I just started learning English.”

My name is Sophie and ***I’m learning English***.

### 10. I don’t understand.

Use this phrase when you don’t understand what someone means.

Sorry, ***I don’t understand.***The [*U.S. Electoral College*](https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/about.html) seems very confusing!

### 11. Could you repeat that please?

If you’d like someone to say a word, question or phrase again, use this question. Since “to repeat” means “to say again,” you can also ask, “Could you say that again please?”

We can say “please” either at the end of the question or right after “you,” like this:

Could you ***please*** repeat that?

Could you repeat that ***please***?

### 12. Could you please talk slower?

Native speakers can talk very fast. Fast English is hard to understand! This is an easy way to ask someone to speak more slowly.

Note: This phrase is not grammatically correct. However, it’s used often in everyday (casual) speech. The grammatically correct question would be, “Could you please talk **more slowly**?”

That’s because “slowly” is an adverb, so it describes verbs (like “talk”). “Slower” is a comparative adjective, which means it should be used to describe nouns (people, places or thing), not verbs. (For example: My car is slower than yours.)

A: You can give us a call any weekday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at five five five, two five zero eight, extension three three—B: I’m sorry, ***could you please talk slower?***

### 13. Thank you. That helps a lot.

After someone starts speaking more slowly for you, thank them with this phrase.

You can use it in many other situations, too.

A: Ben, could you please make the font bigger? It’s hard for me to read the words.B: Sure! I’ll change it from size 10 to 16. How’s this?A: ***Thank you. That helps a lot.***

### 14. What does \_\_\_\_\_ mean?

When you hear or see a new word, use this phrase to ask what it means.

A: ***What does “***[***font***](http://learnersdictionary.com/definition/font)***” mean?***B: It’s the style of letters, numbers and punctuation marks when you type. A common font in the USA is Times New Roman.

### 15. How do you spell that?

[English spelling can be tricky](https://www.fluentu.com/english/blog/misspelled-english-words/), so make sure to learn this question. You could also ask someone, “Could you spell that for me?”

A: My name is Robbertah Handkerchief.B: ***How do you spell that?***

### 16. What do you mean?

When you understand the words one by one, but not what they mean together, use this question. You can ask it whenever you’re confused about what someone is telling you.

A: The Smiths do have a really nice house, but [*the grass is always greener*](https://www.fluentu.com/english/blog/useful-english-proverbs/) on the other side.B: ***What do you mean?***A: I mean that if we had the Smith’s house, we probably wouldn’t be happier. We always think other people have better lives than us, but other people have problems too.

## Phrases for Introducing Yourself and Making Friends

Here are some phrases [for introducing yourself](https://www.fluentu.com/english/blog/how-to-introduce-yourself-in-english/) when you meet new people, and questions to learn more about them.

### 17. Hi! I’m [Name]. (And you?)

Here’s an informal greeting you can use when you meet new friends. If the person doesn’t tell you their name, you can ask “And you?” or “And what’s your name?”

***Hi! I’m Rebecca.*** And you?

### 18. Nice to meet you.

After you learn each other’s names, it’s polite to say this phrase.

A: Hi Rebecca, I’m Chad.B: ***Nice to meet you***, Chad.A: ***Nice to meet you*** too.

### 19. Where are you from?

Ask this question to find out which country someone is from. You answer this question with “I’m from ~.”

Can you answer this question in English? Say both the question and answer aloud right now. (Four times, remember?)

A: Nice to meet you, Sergio. So, ***where are you from?***B: I’m from Spain.

### 20. What do you do?

Most adults ask each other this question when they meet. It means what do you do for a living (what is your job).

I think this question is boring, so I ask other questions. But many people will probably ask you this, so it’s important to know what it means.

A: ***What do you do,*** Cathleen?B: I work at the university as a financial specialist.

### 21. What do you like to do (in your free time)?

Instead of asking for someone’s job title, I prefer to ask what they enjoy doing. The responses (answers) are usually much more interesting!

A: So Cathleen, ***what do you like to do*** in your free time?B: I love to read and to garden. I picked two buckets of tomatoes last week!

### 22. What’s your phone number?

If you want to keep in contact with someone you just met, ask this question to find out their phone number. You can replace “phone number” with “email address” if you want to know their email address.

You might also hear people use the more casual “Can I get your ~?,” as in, “Can I get your phone number?”

It would be great to meet up again sometime. ***What’s your phone number?***

### 23. Do you have Facebook?

Many people keep in touch (contact) [through Facebook](https://www.fluentu.com/english/blog/learn-english-facebook/). Use this question to find out if someone has a Facebook account. You might also ask, “Are you on Facebook?”

Let’s keep in touch! ***Do you have Facebook?***

## Phrases for Work

Finally, here are seven basic [phrases you might use at a job](https://www.fluentu.com/english/blog/simple-english-sentences/).

### 24. How can I help you?

If you work in customer service, you’ll use this phrase a lot. It’s also a common phrase when answering the phone.

[On the phone]: Hello, this is Rebecca speaking. ***How can I help you?***

### 25. I’ll be with you in a moment.

When someone wants to see you, use this phrase if you need a minute to finish something first. If a client is waiting at a store, you can also use this phrase to show that their turn is next.

You can replace “moment” with “minute”: “I’ll be with you in (just) a minute.”

Another common phrase for this situation is “I’ll be right with you.”

Good morning! ***I’ll be with you in a moment.***

### 26. What time is our meeting?

You can use this question’s structure to ask the time of any event: “What time is [event]?”

If you want to ask about a meeting on a certain day, add “on [day].” For example, “What time is our meeting on Thursday?”

***What time is our meeting*** on Wednesday?

### 27. Please call me (back) at…

When you want someone to call you or to call you back (to return your call), use this phrase to give your phone number.

Hi, this is Cathleen from the financial office.I’m wondering if you found those missing receipts.***Please call me back at*** 555-5555. Thanks!