

Making Small Talk. Function Lesson.

the
TEFL
DROP



Lesson 023
B1-level
90 minutes

Making Small Talk.

Lesson Guide.

Introduction.

Welcome to a 'TEFL Drop' lesson pdf. At the TEFL Drop we believe in engaging, interactive and realistic ESL lessons. This pdf contains all you need for a 90-minute ESL Lesson. Each pdf contains a range of presentation slides and activity handouts to be printed, cut up and used in your class. TEFL Drop materials are all about being creative, we want you to adapt them for your own activities, there is no wrong way of using our materials, it is simply up to you. Have fun!

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Making Small Talk. Warmer.

**Brainstorm 10 tips for making small talk...
You have three minutes.**

01. Be polite.



Making Small Talk. Discussion.

Discuss the questions in pairs.

Student A.

What is 'Small Talk'?

Do you like making 'Small Talk'? Why?

Are there any rules for 'Small Talk' in your country? What are they?

What do you think you should do when making 'Small Talk' in the UK?

What do you think you shouldn't do when making 'Small Talk' in the UK?

Student B.

Why is making 'Small Talk' important?

What are some good topics to talk about when making 'Small Talk'?

When do we often make 'Small Talk'?

Have you had to make 'Small Talk' before? When? How did it go?

Have you ever had a situation where you didn't know what to talk about?



Making Small Talk. Dialogue.

Hi, nice to meet you! The weather's a bit mad today, isn't it?

Yeah, typical British weather! Sunny one minute, raining the next. Did you bring a coat?

No, just an umbrella. What do you think of the conference so far?

It's been good, a bit intense. Have you been to one before?

A couple of times. I prefer meeting people face-to-face. What do you think of the venue?

I like it, though it's a bit chilly. You come to many of these events?

I try to. It's good for networking. I noticed you're into marketing—how'd you get into that?

I started in design, then moved into marketing. What about you?

I was in PR, then switched to content. Do you have any hobbies outside work?

I'm into cycling. I'm training for a charity ride. You?

I do yoga a few times a week. Keeps me calm! Been on any trips lately?

Went to Barcelona last month. Loved it! You?

Edinburgh in the summer. Loved it. Got plans after the conference?

Not really. Fancy a coffee before the next session?

Definitely, See you when it finishes.



Making Small Talk. Techniques.

Talk about the weather.

It's cold today, isn't it?

Talk about recent TV shows, news or movies.

Have you seen 'The Bear'? It's so good.

Compliment people.

I love your new bag. Where's it from?

Comment on your surroundings.

It's busy today, isn't it?

Share a fun fact.

I've been here twice before.

Mention pets.

Do you have a cat? I've got two.

Be polite.

Can I ask if you're from here?

Show genuine interest.

That's amazing! I love it.



Making Small Talk. Worksheet.

Write a statement or question for each of the 'Small Talk' prompts or topics.

01. Start with the weather:

It's cold today, isn't it?

02. Comment on surroundings

03. Talk about recent TV shows or movies

04. Discuss local news

05. Use humor

06. Ask open-ended questions

07. Share a fun fact

08. Ask about their weekend plans

09. Talk about travel

10. Mention pets

11. Use gentle compliments

12. Show genuine interest

Making Small Talk.

Role-Play.

Situation 1 Role A **Back from Holidays**

You work in an office, your friend has just come back from a holiday and they look super tanned! Greet them, compliment them on their tan and ask them a range of questions about their holiday, sound interested and enthusiastic!

Situation 1 Role B **Back from Holidays**

You work in an office, you've just come back from beautiful hot beach holiday, think of where you went and other details. Make it sound like the best holiday you've had, give them lots of interesting details to your holiday.

Situation 2 Role A **Meeting a New Colleague**

You are attending a professional conference and strike up a conversation with someone during a coffee break. Introduce yourself and ask them about their role, company, and what brought them to the event. Be friendly and show genuine interest in their answers.

Situation 2 Role B **Meeting a New Colleague**

You are attending a work conference to learn and network. Someone introduces themselves to you during a coffee break. Share your name, your job role, the company you work for, and what you're hoping to gain from the conference. Be open and approachable, and ask them about their role too!

Situation 3 Role A **Moving House**

Your coworker mentions they're moving house soon. Ask them where they're moving, why they chose the new place, and how the process is going. Show empathy and enthusiasm, offering advice or sharing your own experiences if relevant.

Situation 3 Role B **Moving House**

You're in the process of moving to a new house or apartment. Explain why you're moving, what you like about the new place, and any challenges you've faced with packing or organizing. Express excitement about the new chapter.

Making Small Talk. Presentation.

Prepare a presentation on:
Making Small Talk in the UK.

Rules

- Include what we have learned in the class
- Give examples comments or questions
- Cover at least 5 different tips / points
- You have 15 minutes to prepare
- Your presentation can't go over 2 minutes



Making Small Talk.

Small Talk Tips.

<p>Start with the weather. This is a classic topic. Commenting on the weather is a safe, neutral opener that almost every English person can relate to.</p>	<p>Ask open-ended questions. Instead of yes/no questions, ask questions that invite more detailed responses, like "What do you think of..." or "How was your weekend?"</p>	<p>Stay modest. Modesty is generally appreciated, so avoid boasting or being overly self-promotional in initial interactions.</p>
<p>Show genuine interest. Listen actively and follow up with relevant questions. People generally appreciate when others show curiosity about their opinions or experiences.</p>	<p>Comment on surroundings. Whether you're at a café, park, or event, a simple observation about your setting can be a natural conversation starter.</p>	<p>Talk about travel. Brits enjoy discussing places they've visited or dream of visiting. Ask if they have any upcoming trips or favorite travel spots.</p>
<p>Be lighthearted. Avoid diving into heavy topics immediately. Stick to lighter subjects initially, like hobbies, entertainment, or recent local events, avoid topics like politics or religion.</p>	<p>Avoid overly personal questions. British culture tends to value privacy, so steer clear of questions about finances, age, or family matters until the relationship builds.</p>	<p>Mention pets. If appropriate, talking about pets is usually a hit. Many Brits are animal lovers, and it's a relatable, easy topic.</p>
<p>Talk about recent TV shows or movies. This is a common conversation topic in the UK, especially popular shows like those on Netflix or the BBC.</p>	<p>Use humor. A bit of dry or self-deprecating humor is often well-received. Keep it friendly and avoid sarcasm that could be taken the wrong way.</p>	<p>Use gentle compliments. Complimenting someone's shoes, scarf, or a recent achievement is often well-received if done genuinely.</p>
<p>Share a fun fact. British people appreciate quirky or interesting bits of information. It can make you more memorable and spark curiosity.</p>	<p>Ask about their weekend plans. This is a common small talk topic. Whether before or after the weekend, it opens up a friendly discussion.</p>	<p>Be polite. Saying "please" and "thank you" goes a long way. British people are generally polite and appreciate good manners.</p>

Making Small Talk.

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