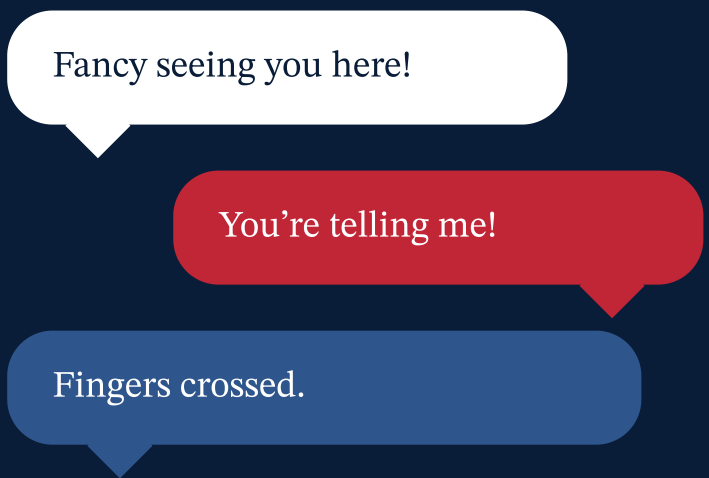
PS ENGLISH
Real English for Real Life

Small Talk

10 everyday conversations · Intermediate & Advanced



INTRODUCTION

Why Small Talk Matters

一見ささいに思えるスモールトークですが、実はとても強力なコミュニケーション術です。会議前のひと言、友人との近況報告、初対面の人との“きっかけ作り”などで、信頼をつくり、緊張をやわらげ、つながりを生みます。

このあと出てくる10の会話は、だれもがよく出会う場面です。左列は中級向けの自然な表現で、意味がつかみやすく使い回し（リサイクル）しやすいフレーズが中心。右列は上級向けで、イディオムやユーモアなど、少し攻めた言い方に挑戦できます。

ただし、スモールトークは相手次第。同僚や友人など気心の知れた相手と、初対面の人では話し方が変わります。

知っている相手には、共通の体験や身近な話題（仕事・家族・趣味）を土台に。お互いの理解があるので、温かく・くだけた・少し個人的になりがちです。

初対面では、礼儀正しく場を和ませ、共通点を見つけるのが目的。軽め・非個人的で、無難な話題（天気・旅行・同じイベント）に寄せます。

両方の型を身につけると、状況に合わせてトーンや語彙を選び、仕事のネットワーキングから日常の雑談まで自然に対応できます。

WHAT'S INSIDE

Small talk with people we know	Conversations 1-8
Small talk with people we don't know	Conversations 9-10

上級版には、使い方・トーンの注意や他の場面への応用ヒントも付いています。

KEY

- 😄 Informal
- 🎈 Playful / humorous
- 🙇 Polite
- 🙃 Sarcastic
- ♻️ Use it in another context

PART 1

Small talk with people we know

Conversations 1–8

01 Before a Meeting Begins

(You're waiting in a meeting room with a colleague.)

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
A Hi! How's your day going so far?	A **Survived the morning? It's been full-on, hasn't it?** 午前中、なんとか乗り切った？ 今日はめちゃくちゃ忙しいよね。
B Not bad, thanks. Very busy this morning. You?	B **You're telling me! I've been on the go all morning. How about you?** それな！ 朝からずっと動きっぱなし。君は？
A Same here. Let's hope this meeting is not too long.	A **Same here. Hope this meeting doesn't drag on like the last one.** こっちも同じ。前回みたいにダラダラ長引かないといいけど。
B I know. I have so many things to do!	B **True. I've got a million and one things to be getting on with.** そうだね。やることが山ほどあって、今すぐ片づけたい仕事ばかり。
A Yeah!	A **Fingers crossed.** うまくいくといいね。

PHRASE NOTES 表現メモ

"It's been full-on, hasn't it?"

😄 Informal.

This means "very intense or demanding."

♻️ **Another context:** "That new course is full-on this term, isn't it?"

"You're telling me!"

This means "I completely agree—it really has been like that."

It adds emphasis and shared frustration or humour. It's usually used about negative things.

♻️ **Another context:** "It's freezing today." — "You're telling me!"

“I’ve been on the go”

😄 Slightly informal.

This means “I’ve been busy and active without a break.” It suggests constant movement or tasks.

♻️ **Another context:** “I’ve been on the go since 6 a.m. with the kids.”

“~ doesn’t drag on”

“Doesn’t drag on” means “doesn’t last too long or feel slow and boring.” It’s often used for meetings, films, or speeches.

♻️ **Another context:** “I hope the ceremony doesn’t drag on; I need to catch a train.”

“a million and one things”

🎈 Exaggerated tone for comic effect.

♻️ **Another context:** “I’ve got a million and one things to sort before the trip.”

“to be getting on with”

This means “to have tasks you can continue doing now.” It often implies you’re busy and shouldn’t waste time.

♻️ **Another context:** “If the call is delayed, I’ve got emails to be getting on with.”

“Fingers crossed”

This means “Let’s hope for a good result.” It’s a friendly way to express hope.

♻️ **Another context:** “Exam results come out tomorrow—fingers crossed!”

02 After Returning from a Business Trip

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
A Hey, you're back! How was the trip?	A **Look who's back. How did you get on?** お帰り。うまくいった？
B Good, thanks. Very busy, but useful.	B **Productive, but I need a week to recover.** 成果は出たけど、回復に一週間はかかりそう。
A I can imagine. Did you have any free time?	A **I bet. Did you manage to find time to do your own thing?** だろうね。自分の時間はなんとか作れた？
B Yes. I found a nice restaurant near the hotel.	B **I did, luckily. I came across a great little restaurant just round the corner from the hotel.** うん、運よくね。ホテルのすぐ近くでいい感じの小さなレストランをたまたま見つけたよ。
A That's good. Listen, I'll update you on everything here later. Is that OK?	A **I'm glad. Give me a shout if you need me to fill you in on what's been happening here while you were away.** 良かった。留守中のことを説明してほしかったら声かけて。ちゃんと状況を共有するね。

PHRASE NOTES 表現メモ

"How did you get on?"

This means "How did it go?" or "How was your experience/result?" It's friendly and open-ended.

♻ **Another context:** "You had your job interview today—how did you get on?"

"I need a week to recover."

🎈 Exaggeration for comic effect.

♻ **Another context:** "That moving day was brutal—I need a week to recover."

“I bet.”

This means “I believe you” or “I can imagine that’s true,” often showing sympathy or agreement.

♻️ **Another context:** “The traffic was awful.” — “I bet.”

“Did you manage to ~?”

This asks whether someone succeeded in doing something, especially if it was difficult or there wasn’t much time.

♻️ **Another context:** “Did you manage to book the trains before the prices went up?”

“I came across …”

This means “I found/encountered something by chance, not on purpose.”

♻️ **Another context:** “I came across a great podcast on language learning.”

“Give me a shout.” 😄 Informal.

This means “Let me know” or “Contact me.”

♻️ **Another context:** “Give me a shout if you’re near the office and we’ll grab a coffee.”

“to fill you in on …”

This means “to give you the missing information or updates about something during your absence.”

♻️ **Another context:** “When you’re back from lunch, I’ll fill you in on the new schedule.”

03 Planning or Discussing Weekend Plans

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
A Doing anything fun this weekend?	A **Any exciting plans lined up for the weekend?** 週末、面白い予定がもう入ってる？
B Thinking of going for a hike.	B **Hoping to go hiking if the weather behaves.** 天気がもちこたえればハイキングに行きたいな。
A Oh nice. Where are you going?	A **Oh, that sounds far better than my plans! Whereabouts are you going?** うわ、私の予定よりずっと良さそう！ どのあたりに行くの？
B Not too far, just a long walk along the river.	B **Don't want to travel for miles—just a longish walk along the river.** 遠出はしたくなくて。川沿いをちょっと長めに歩くくらい。
A Well, I hope you have good weather.	A **I hope the rain keeps away for you.** 雨が降らないといいね。

PHRASE NOTES 表現メモ

"lined up"

Means "planned/arranged/scheduled." It suggests things are already set.

♻ **Another context:** "We've got a couple of interviews lined up for Tuesday."

"if the weather behaves"

🎈 Light and playful.

Means "if the weather is decent and doesn't cause problems." It's a playful way to say "if it doesn't rain or get too windy."

♻ **Another context:** "We'll have a picnic in the park if the weather behaves."

“Whereabouts”

Means “roughly where?” or “in which area?” It asks for location, not a full address.

♻️ **Another context:** “Whereabouts in Tokyo are you staying?”

“longish” 😄 Informal.

Means “rather long” or “a bit long,” but not extremely. It softens the word “long.”

♻️ **Another context:** “It’s a longish email—read it when you have time.”

“the rain keeps away”

Means “it doesn’t rain” or “the rain holds off.” Often used with hopes/plans.

♻️ **Another context:** “I hope the rain keeps away for the parade this afternoon.”

04 Bumping into a Friend Unexpectedly

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
A Oh hey! Long time no see!	A Wow, fancy seeing you here! うわ、ここで会うとは！
B Yeah! How's everything?	B I know, right? It's been ages. How have you been? だよね。すごく久しぶり。どうしてた？
A Good, thanks. Just busy lately.	A Oh, you know—same old, same old. まあね、相変わらずって感じ。
B Same. We should meet up properly.	B I know the feeling. We need a proper catch-up sooner rather than later! わかるわかる。早めにちゃんと近況報告し合おう！
A Yes, let's do that.	A Absolutely. ぜひ。

PHRASE NOTES 表現メモ

"Fancy seeing you here!"

🎈 Often playful.

A friendly surprise: "I didn't expect to see you here!"

♻ **Another context:** "Fancy seeing you here—do you come to this gym too?"

"same old, same old"

Means "nothing new; everything's the usual." Casual and slightly tired-sounding.

♻ **Another context:** "How's work?" — "Same old, same old."

"I know the feeling"

Means "I understand because I've had the same experience." Shows empathy.

♻ **Another context:** "I'm shattered after that shift." — "Yeah, I know the feeling."

"sooner rather than later"

Means "preferably soon; without waiting too long."

♻ **Another context:** "We should book the trains sooner rather than later before prices jump."

05 Congratulating Someone on a Small Win

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
A Hey, congrats on finishing the project!	A Hey, congratulations on getting that project over the line! あのプロジェクトをやり切ったね。おめでとう！
B Thanks! It took a lot of time.	B Cheers! It was a bit of a slog. ありがとう！ なかなか大変だったよ。
A You must be relieved.	A That must be a weight off your shoulders. 肩の荷が下りたでしょ。
B Definitely. I can finally relax tonight.	B Absolutely. I can finally switch off this evening. うん。今夜は完全オフにできる。
A Nice. You earned it.	A Well deserved—enjoy it. 当然のご褒美だね。楽しんで。

PHRASE NOTES 表現メモ

“over the line”

Means “finished successfully” or “completed after effort,” often for projects or deals.

♻ **Another context:** “The funding’s finally over the line—now we can start.”

“a bit of a slog” 😄 Informal.

Means “quite hard work and slow-going,” often tiring or tedious.

♻ **Another context:** “That last chapter was a bit of a slog to read.”

“a weight off your shoulders”

Means “a big relief after stress or responsibility is gone.”

♻ **Another context:** “Handing in the thesis must feel like a weight off your shoulders.”

06 Checking In After Being Off Sick

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
A Hey, how are you feeling now?	A **Hey, how are you holding up now?** ねえ、大丈夫そう？ うまくやれてる？
B Better, thanks. Still a bit tired.	B **On the mend, thanks—still a bit wiped out.** 回復中だよ、ありがとう。まだちょっとヘトヘトだけど。
A Glad you're back.	A **Good to have you back fighting fit again.** 元気に復帰してくれて嬉しいよ。
B Thanks. I'm working, but slowly today.	B **Cheers. I'm easing myself back in today.** ありがとう。今日は少しずつ慣らしでいくよ。
A If you need help, just ask.	A **Give us a shout if you need anything.** 何かあったら声かけて。

PHRASE NOTES 表現メモ

"How are you holding up?"

Means "How are you coping/managing?"—often used when someone's been ill, stressed, or busy.

♻ **Another context:** "It's been a tough week with deadlines—how are you holding up?"

"On the mend"

Means "recovering and getting better," usually after illness or injury.

♻ **Another context:** "I felt rough over the weekend, but I'm on the mend now."

"a bit wiped out" 😄 Informal.

Means "very tired/exhausted."

♻ **Another context:** "I'm a bit wiped out after that late flight."

"Good to have you back fighting fit again."

"Fighting fit" means "in full health and energy." The sentence warmly welcomes someone back to normal strength.

♻ **Another context:** "After a few physio sessions, you're looking fighting fit again."

“I’m easing myself back in.”

Means “I’m returning gradually, not all at once,” often after time off or illness.

♻ **Another context:** “First week back at the gym—I’m easing myself back in with light sessions.”

07 Talking About Last Night's TV

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
A Did you watch anything good last night?	A See anything decent on TV last night? 昨夜、テレビで良さげなのあった？
B Yeah, I watched that new drama.	B I did—tried that new drama everyone's talking about. あったよ。いま話題の新ドラマを試してみた。
A Oh nice. Was it any good?	A Nice—was it any good, or is it all hype? いいね。実際に良かった？ それとも話題先行（ハイプ）？
B Pretty good. The first episode was enjoyable.	B Surprisingly good. I've only seen the first episode, but it really had me hooked. 意外と良かった。第1話だけでハマった。
A What did you like most?	A What was it that made it particularly good? 特に良かったポイントは何？
B The acting was great, and the story moved fast.	B The whole cast was excellent, and the story kept moving; it never dragged. キャスト全員が良くて、話がダレずに進むんだ。
A I might watch it tonight. Don't tell me what happens!	A I might give it a go tonight—no spoilers, yeah? 今夜試してみようかな。ネタバレなしで頼むよ？
B Don't worry, I won't. You should watch it.	B My lips are sealed. You should definitely check it out. 口は堅いよ。絶対見てみるべき。

PHRASE NOTES　表現メモ

“Is it all hype?”

Means “Is it only popular because people are talking about it, not because it’s actually good?”

♻️ **Another context:** “Everyone’s raving about that new café—do you think it’s all hype?”

“~ had me hooked” 😄 Informal.

Means “it grabbed my interest strongly and I wanted to keep going,” often for shows/books/games.

♻️ **Another context:** “The first chapter had me hooked—I read the whole novel in two days.”

“give it a go” 😄 Slightly informal.

Means “try it” in a friendly, low-pressure way.

♻️ **Another context:** “I’ve never done yoga, but I might give it a go this weekend.”

“My lips are sealed.”

🎈 Often a little playful.

Means “I won’t tell anyone; I’ll keep the secret.” It’s friendly and reassuring.

♻️ **Another context:** “Don’t mention the surprise party to Sam.” — “Don’t worry, my lips are sealed.”

08 Talking About Lunch

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
A That looks really nice. What is it?	A That looks so good—what have you got there? すごくおいしそう——それ何持ってるの？
B It’s a chicken curry wrap.	B It’s a chicken curry wrap—bit of a treat. チキンカレーのラップ。ちょっとしたご褒美。
A Smells great. Where did you buy it?	A Smells amazing. Where did you get it? めっちゃいい匂い。どこで手に入れたの？
B The café nearby.	B The café down the road. この通りの先のカフェだよ。
A It looks healthy.	A Looks pretty healthy too, for something that smells so good. こんなにいい匂いなのに、結構ヘルシーそうだね。
B Yeah, it’s not too heavy.	B Yeah—fills you up without being too heavy. うん。満足感あるのに重くないんだ。
A Enjoy!	A Anyway, I’ll leave you in peace to enjoy it. じゃ、ゆっくりどうぞ。邪魔しないでおくね。

PHRASE NOTES 表現メモ

“What have you got there?”

Means “What is that you’re holding/eating/working on?” Friendly curiosity about an object.

♻ **Another context:** (In a meeting) “What have you got there—is that a new phone?”

“down the road”

Means “nearby; a short distance away,” often on the same street or in the local area.

♻ **Another context:** “There’s a great bakery down the road from the station.”

“I’ll leave you in peace.” Polite.

Means “I’ll go now so you can carry on undisturbed.” A polite way to end a chat when someone’s busy.

Another context: “You look snowed under—I’ll leave you in peace and catch you later.”

PART 2

Small talk with people we don’t know

Conversations 9–10

09 At a Bus Stop

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
A Hi. Is the bus coming, do you know?	A **Been waiting long?** 長く待ってますか？
B I think it's running late.	B **I think it's got caught up in traffic.** 渋滞に巻き込まれたっぽいですね。
A Typical for a Monday.	A **Sounds about right for a Monday.** 月曜ならそんなもんですよね。
B And it's raining, which doesn't help.	B **And with this weather—it's a great start to the week!** それにこの天気——最高の週明けだこと！（※皮肉）
A I know.	A **Tell me about it.** ほんとそれ。
B It's usually OK, to be fair.	B **Most days it's pretty reliable, to be fair.** まあ、たいていは時間通りなんですけどね。
A Ah, it's coming. Finally.	A **Ah, at last. Speak of the devil.** あ、やっと。うわ、来た来た（噂をすれば影）。

PHRASE NOTES 表現メモ

"got caught up"

Means "became busy or delayed by something unexpected," so you couldn't do what you planned.

♻ **Another context:** "Sorry I'm late—I got caught up in a call that ran over."

"with this weather—it's a great start to the week"

🙃 Sarcastic.

The rain and the delayed bus make Monday bad, so the speaker says the opposite for effect. Tone and context signal the sarcasm.

♻ **Another context:** (sarcastic) "With these prices—what a bargain."

“Tell me about it.”

Strong agreement that something is difficult/annoying; shows empathy without adding new detail.

♻️ **Another context:** “The trains were chaos this morning.” — “Tell me about it.”

“at last”

Means “finally, after waiting.” Often said with relief.

♻️ **Another context:** “At last, the results are out.”

“Speak of the devil” 🎈 Light and playful.

Said when the person or thing you were just talking about appears.

♻️ **Another context:** “Speak of the devil! We were just discussing your idea.”

10 In the Conference Foyer (During Lunch)

INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
A Do you mind if I sit here?	A **Mind if I grab this last seat?** 最後の席、使ってもいいですか？
B Sure.	B **Not at all—loads of room.** もちろん。まだ余裕ありますよ。
A Are you enjoying the conference?	A **How are you finding the conference so far?** カンファレンス、ここまでいかがですか？
B Good—lots of useful talks.	B **It's proving to be pretty useful. I'm glad I came.** 思った以上に有益ですね。来てよかったです。
A The keynote this morning was interesting.	A **The keynote speaker this morning was thought-provoking.** 今朝の基調講演、考えさせられる内容でした。
B Agreed.	B **Agreed—the Q&A was very good.** 同感です——質疑応答が特に良かったですね。
A What area do you work in?	A **What's your field, if you don't mind me asking?** もし差し支えなければ、ご専門はどの分野ですか？
B Marketing, mainly digital. How about you?	B **Marketing—mostly digital. What about yourself?** マーケティング——主にデジタルです。あなたは？

PHRASE NOTES 表現メモ

"It's proving to be ~"

Means "it is turning out to be ~," especially after some experience shows the result (often slower/harder/better than expected). It suggests the situation is ongoing and the evidence is building.

♻ **Another context:** "The new software is proving to be a real time-saver."

"if you don't mind me asking?"

🙏 Polite.

A softener added to a personal or sensitive question. It shows respect and gives the other person an easy way not to answer.

♻ **Another context:** "How much were the tickets, if you don't mind me asking?"

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