

# Expressions in English

*RTAF Language Center*



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## ACCEPTED FACTS

1. It's common knowledge that...
2. It's a fact (that)..
3. Anyone will tell you..
4. Everybody knows that...
5. It's a well-established fact that
6. Few people would deny that..
7. It's no secret that...
8. I think we can all accept / agree that..
9. It is generally assumed that...
10. It has been scientifically proven that...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. In phrases 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 the speaker is introducing ideas that everybody agrees are true.
2. The other 5 phrases are a little less strong, saying that a few people might disagree, but nearly everybody does agree with your statement.
3. Phrases 1, 5, 6 and 10 are good opening phrases for a discursive essay. You can use one of these phrases to establish the importance of the topic before introducing an aspect of the topic that is not agreed.
4. Phrases 3, 4, 7 and 8 are often used in spoken discussions or debates.
5. Phrase 10 is saying that somebody has done an experiment that proves your statement to be true. If using this in writing you may want to refer specifically to scientist or the experiment itself in your next sentence.



## ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS

1. I reckon you should stop now
2. Why don't you stop now?
3. How about stopping now?
4. If I were you, I'd stop now.
5. I suggest you stop now
6. You'd (really) better stop right now.
7. I would strongly advise you to stop
8. My advice would be to stop now
9. It might be a good idea to stop
10. You might try stopping

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2, 3 and 4 are quite informal. Phrases 2 and 3 are more tentative (you are trying not to be forceful with your ideas).
2. Phrase 4 is more forceful than the first three suggestion phrases.
3. Phrase 5 is neutral and can be used formally and informally. Using more stress on 'gest' of 'suggest' makes it more tentative and more stress on the main verb makes it more forceful.
4. Phrase 6 is quite forceful and gives the idea that not following the advice will have a negative result.
5. Phrases 7 and 8 are quite formal in tone. Phrase 7 is really quite forceful and phrase 8 less forceful.
6. Phrases 9 and 10 are the most tentative phrases (least forceful). Phrase 10 sounds more informal than phrase 9.





# APOLOGIZING

1. Sorry.
2. I'm (so / very / terribly) sorry.
3. Ever so sorry.
4. How stupid / careless / thoughtless of me.
5. Pardon (me)
6. That's my fault.
7. Sorry. It was all my fault.
8. Please excuse my (ignorance)
9. Please don't be mad at me.
10. Please accept our (sincerest) apologies.

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is a general short apology. We use this when we bump into people on the street. At other times, it sounds too weak.
2. In phrase 2, we use 'so', 'very' and 'terribly' to make the meaning stronger. 'Terribly' is the strongest. If we use one of the words in brackets, it is stressed.
3. Phrase 3 is quite formal but it's a stronger apology than just 'sorry'.
4. We use phrase 4 to criticize ourselves and the mistake that we have just made.
5. We use phrases 6 and 7 to take all the responsibility for what happened. Phrase 7 is a little stronger.
6. We use phrase 8 to apologize for our lack of knowledge or ability. We can replace the word in brackets with other nouns, e.g. carelessness, forgetfulness.
7. Phrase 9 is asking the other person not to get angry. The tone is quite informal.
8. Phrase 10 is often used in formal letters. The word 'sincerest' makes the apology very strong and very formal.



## ASKING ABOUT FUTURE PLANS

1. What are you doing tomorrow?
2. Got any plans for tomorrow?
3. What's your plan for tomorrow?
4. Are you doing anything tomorrow?
5. What's on the cards for tomorrow?
6. Busy tomorrow?
7. Have you got anything on tomorrow?
8. Have you got anything planned for tomorrow?
9. What's happening tomorrow?
10. How's tomorrow looking?

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is a general question and might be asked just out of curiosity.
2. Phrase 2 is a more relaxed and informal version of phrase 1.
3. Phrase 3 might imply that I have my plan, and I am asking you what your plan is. Your boss could ask this to check what you are doing.
4. Phrases 4, 6, 7 and 8 can all be used when you are hoping to arrange something with a friend or colleague.
5. Phrase 5 uses a fortune telling metaphor: 'it's on the cards' means it's likely, but not certain. This expression is often used in the negative form to say we have no intention of doing something.
6. In phrase 7, note that we use the expression 'I've got something on' to indicate a definite plan.
7. Phrase 9 is a general question, similar to phrase 1.
8. Phrase 10 could be used to check that something you have planned for tomorrow with a friend is still OK. You hope the answer is: 'fine' which means your plan is still on.



## ASKING ABOUT HEALTH OR LIFE

1. How are you?
2. How are things?
3. How's things?
4. How's it going?
5. How are you getting on?
6. How have you been?
7. What have you been (getting) up to?
8. I hope everything's okay?
9. Alright?
10. How have you been keeping?

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is the best known phrase but English people don't use it every time so it's useful to learn some of the others on this page.
2. Phrase 2 is a general inquiry about the other person's health and life. Your answer could be about your health, your work or your personal life.
3. Phrase 3 is similar to phrase 2 but the 'incorrect' grammar makes it much more informal.
4. Phrases 4 and 5 are asking about the other person's life (work or personal life).
5. Phrase 6 is really asking about health but the other person may answer with general information about their life.
6. Phrase 7 is really asking about what kind of activities the other person has been doing recently. It more often refers to their home life, not work.
7. Phrases 8 and 9 are asking about health and life with a yes / no question. Phrase 9 is much more informal than phrase 8.
8. Phrase 10 is more formal but still sincere and friendly and is asking about the other person's health.



## ASKING FOR APPROVAL

1. Do you think it's all right to do it?
2. What do you think about (me doing that)?
3. Do you think / reckon I ought to (do it)?
4. What would you say if I (did it)?
5. Would you approve of (doing something)?
6. What is your attitude to the idea of...
7. Are you in favor of (me doing something)?
8. You are in favor of ... aren't you?
9. Do you think anyone would mind if I...
10. Do you think it would be really awful if I

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2 and 3 are quite informal ways of asking if another person agrees with an action that you are planning to do.
2. Phrases 4 and 5 are hypothetical and so sound a bit more polite. Phrases 1 to 3 suggest that speaker probably will do it. 4 and 5 suggest that the speaker won't do it if another person doesn't agree.
3. Phrase 6 is asking another person for their feelings about an imagined action. The speaker doesn't actually say that she is thinking of doing it so is making the action more remote. This phrase is quite formal.
4. In phrase 7, the action being described will seem more remote if the speaker leaves out the word 'me', in a similar way to phrase 6.
5. In phrase 8, it is important that the intonation is falling on the first 'are' and is rising on the negative verb in the question tag 'aren't'.
6. Phrase 9 is quite informal and is asking the listener's opinion about other people's reactions. You follow this phrase with a past tense.
7. Phrase 10 is suggesting that the speaker expects that the other person will not agree but wants to know how strongly the other person disagrees with the intended action.



## ASKING FOR HELP

1. Can you give me a hand with this?
2. Could you help me for a second?
3. Can I ask a favor?
4. I wonder if you could help me with this.
5. I could do with some help, please.
6. I can't manage. Can you help?
7. Give me a hand with this, will you?
8. Lend me a hand with this, will you?
9. Could you spare a moment?
10. I need some help, please.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is quite a direct question to use with friends and people who you know quite well.
2. Phrase 2 is more polite. We include the words 'for a second' to show that we don't need a lot of help and that it will not be difficult.
3. Phrase 3 is a general way of introducing a request for help.
4. Phrase 4 is polite and can be used with people you don't know very well, or with your boss.
5. Phrase 5 is quite direct, and the focus is that you really need help. It's quite strong.
6. Phrase 6 shows you have a big problem. You are desperate for help. you often hear this phrase when somebody has too much work to do.
7. Phrases 7 and 8 are similar and are direct requests for help. 'Lend a hand' is a little more polite and old-fashioned than 'give me a hand.'
8. We use phrase 9 to show that we respect that the other person is really quite busy and to say that they will only need to help you for a short time.
9. Phrase 10 is a direct question and the asker does not expect the listener to say no. This is often used by people in authority e.g. bosses.



## ASKING FOR INFORMATION

1. Can you tell me...?
2. Could you tell me...?
3. I'd like to know...
4. D'you know...
5. (Got / Have you) any idea...?
6. Could anyone tell me...?
7. (Do / Would) you happen to know...?
8. I don't suppose you (would) know...?
9. I wonder if you could tell me...?
10. I wonder if someone could tell me...?

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 - 10 are all followed by indirect questions. So 'What's the time?' becomes 'Can you tell me what the time is?'.
2. Phrase 2 is a little more formal and polite than phrase 1.
3. Phrases 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are polite and are good to use if you are asking a stranger or you are asking at a public information desk.
4. Phrase 4 is more informal.
5. Phrases 5 and 7 are more informal if you say them without the part in () brackets.
6. Phrases 9 and 10 are very formal and in an informal situation some people may react strangely if they think that you are being sarcastic.
7. By using phrases 1 to 10, we make it easier for the listener to say 'Sorry I don't know'.



## ASKING FOR OPINION

1. What do you think of...?
2. What do you think about...?
3. How d'you feel (about...)?
4. What d'you reckon (about...)?
5. What's your opinion of...?
6. (What do think about) that?
7. What are your views on...?
8. Where do you stand (on...)?
9. What would you say to... / if we...?
10. Are you aware of.....?

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are followed by a noun or gerund (-ing form).
2. Phrases 1 and 2 are general phrases for asking for an opinion. We can use them both formally and informally. In informal speech, 'do you' becomes 'd'you?'.  
3. Phrases 3 and 4 are more informal. We can use them with 'about' and a noun or gerund phrase e.g. 'How d'you feel about having a class outside in the garden?'
4. We use phrase 6 (with that) after another sentence (e.g. They're going to build a new supermarket here. What do you think of that?).
5. Phrases 7 and 8 are more formal. You could use them in a business meeting and you might hear them on interviews on the news.
6. Phrase 9 is asking the other person's opinion of an idea or proposal. We follow 'to' with a noun or gerund and follow 'if we' with a sentence with a past verb.
7. Phrase 10 is an indirect way of asking for an opinion. We ask if the other person knows about the situation. They are then are expected to react with an opinion.



## ASKING PEOPLE TO WAIT

1. Hang on a moment / a mo.
2. Give us a second.
3. Half a moment / a mo.
4. I'll be right with you.
5. Sorry, I'm a bit tied up right now.
6. Wait and see.
7. You'll just have to be patient.
8. Give me a chance.
9. Don't be so impatient.
10. We wish to apologize for the delay to...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2, and 3 are quite informal but polite in tone. You are busy and expect to be able to help them quite soon.
2. Phrase 4 is especially useful in customer service situations where you want to ask a customer to wait for a few minutes.
3. Phrase 5 is really saying how busy you are but at the same time you are asking people to wait. It is quite polite.
4. Phrase 6 is refusing to tell somebody something about the near future. We often use it when we are preparing a surprise for somebody.
5. Phrases 7 and 8 are less polite and are suggesting that you think the other person is being too impatient.
6. Phrase 9 is more impolite and you are actually directly criticizing the other person for being impatient.
7. Phrase 10 is a formal announcement that you might hear on a train or plane in the UK. It is followed by a noun phrase.





# ATTITUDE TO THE FUTURE

1. I'm (really / so) looking forward to..
2. I can't wait until...
3. I'm counting the days till...
4. Roll on...
5. I've set my heart on...
6. I'm saving up to...
7. Sooner or later I'll get round to...
8. One day, I'm going to have to...
9. I'm trying to put off... as long as I can
10. I'm (really) dreading...

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2, 3, and 4 are showing a very positive feeling about something that is going to happen in the future.
2. Phrases 5 and 6 are talking about things that the speaker wants to happen. The speaker is actively trying to make these things happen.
3. Phrase 7 is something the speaker thinks she / he will do one day in the future. She / he is not very interested in doing this.
4. Phrase 8 is a little more negative but the speaker still expects he or she will do it one day.
5. Phrases 9 and 10 are things that the speaker doesn't want to do at all but in the end will have to do them.
6. We follow phrases 1, 5, 7, 9 and 10 with a gerund (-ing form) e.g. 'I'm so looking forward to going on the school trip to Yellow Stone Park'.
7. We follow phrases 2 and 3 with a sentence or clause e.g. 'I can't wait until I pass FCE'.
8. We follow phrase 4 with the day or time of an event (e.g. 'Roll on next Monday. It's the day of the school pancake party.')
9. We follow phrases 6 and 8 with an infinitive verb e.g. 'I'm saving up to come back and do another English course in the US'.



## AVOIDING GIVING INFORMATION

1. No comment.
2. I'm not at liberty to say.
3. Wait and see.
4. Let me get back to you.
5. I'm sorry, that's confidential.
6. (Sorry) That's personal.
7. I'd rather not talk about it.
8. Mind your own business.
9. Never mind.
10. I'll tell you when you're older.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is often used by politicians and celebrities when they are asked difficult or embarrassing questions by journalists.
2. We use phrases 2 and 5 to say there is a rule that prevents you giving information.
3. Phrase 3 is refusing to tell somebody something about the near future. We often use it when we are preparing a surprise for somebody.
4. Phrase 6 is telling the other person that you consider the information to be private. You are also criticizing the other person for asking.
5. Phrase 7 is a more polite way to say that the information is private and you don't want to talk about it.
6. Phrases 8 and 9 are not very polite and are criticizing the other person for asking for private information.
7. Parents often say phrase 10 to their children to avoid answering difficult or embarrassing questions. Usually they have no intention of ever answering the question.



## BAD PEOPLE

1. A crook
2. A villain
3. A scum bag
4. An evil witch
5. A heartless bastard
6. A nasty piece of work
7. A psycho / psychopath
8. A totally ruthless (person)
9. A creep
10. A two-faced cow

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are saying that you consider the other person to be a criminal and an unpleasant person.
2. Phrase 3 says that the other person is morally wrong but also of extremely low status e.g. 'people who rob elderly people are total scum bags'.
3. Phrase 4 is used to describe a woman who the speaker feels is very evil. Some people object to this phrase because it suggests that all witches are evil.
4. Phrase 5 describes somebody who does not have the normal human feelings of sympathy and kindness.
5. Phrase 6 describes somebody who is very unpleasant who deliberately does unpleasant things to other people.
6. Phrase 7 describes somebody who you think is both evil and crazy / mad.
7. Phrase 9 describes somebody who doesn't worry about hurting other people when making decisions.
8. Phrase 9 describes somebody who is not necessarily evil but has an odd and unpleasant personality.
9. Phrase 10 is used to describe a woman who lies to people and is pleasant to their faces but says bad things behind their backs. Some people think that 'cow' in this context is sexist.



## BEING AN EXPERT

1. He knows all about \_\_\_\_\_.
2. He's a \_\_\_\_\_ expert.
3. He's an expert on digital \_\_\_\_\_.
4. There's nothing he doesn't know about \_\_\_\_\_
5. He knows photography inside out.
6. You wouldn't believe what he knows about \_\_\_\_\_
7. He's a walking encyclopedia of \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_'s his subject.
9. He knows it from A - Z.
10. He's an authority on \_\_\_\_\_.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We use phrase 1 to say that a person knows a large amount on a certain topic.
2. Phrases 2 and 3 use the key term 'expert' in different ways. Phrase 2 is slightly stronger.
3. Phrase 4 is using an exaggeration to say that another person is very knowledgeable.
4. Phrase 5 is a common expression. You can also use it to say that somebody knows a place very well.
5. Phrase 6 is a stronger version of phrase 4, and implies that it is incredible that he knows so much.
6. Phrase 7 is a humorous expression to use when someone knows a lot about a subject.
7. Phrase 8 is quite a general comment. It implies you like it - but you may not be an expert.
8. Phrase 9 shows that another person knows a subject completely from beginning to end.
9. Phrase 10 is quite a formal phrase, and is often used in an academic context.



## BEING LUCKY

1. It's a good thing (that)..
2. It's just as well...
3. Fortunately, / Luckily,
4. As luck would have it...
5. That was a stroke of luck.
6. It's lucky...
7. It's very/most fortunate (that)...
8. That was a close thing / near miss
9. It must be your lucky day!
10. You lucky thing! / You jammy bastard!

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We use phrases 1 and 2 when something has prevented a disaster. We follow the phrases with a clause that describes the fortunate action or circumstance. They are both fairly informal.
2. We use phrases 3 and 4 when we are retelling a story and they are followed by some aspect of the situation that prevented a disaster from happening.
3. Phrase 5 is often used to react to a lucky story that somebody has told you. You can also use it to comment on your own good fortune at the time it occurs.
4. We use phrases 5, 6 and 7 in a similar way to phrases 1, 2 and 3. For example 'It's lucky you weren't wearing your best clothes when you fell over'.
5. We use phrase 8 when we have experienced a near disaster that was only just avoided.
6. Phrases 9 and 10 are used to say that you think another person has been lucky. 'You jammy bastard' is very informal and only used with people who you know very well.



## BEING OLD

1. old and wise
2. over the hill
3. past it
4. pushing ninety
5. in her nineties
6. a pensioner / senior citizen
7. getting a bit long in the tooth
8. in my twilight years / second childhood
9. losing her marbles / going senile
10. an old codger / an old biddy

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. In phrase 1, the words 'old' and 'wise' have often been associated. This is a common collocation.
2. Phrase 2 and 3 mean that the person is too old to do a certain job or task.
3. In phrase 4, the person is nearly ninety years old.
4. In phrase 5, the person is over ninety but less than one hundred years old.
5. Phrase 6 means that the person has retired and is receiving a state pension.
6. Phrase 7 was originally used to describe old horses and means that the person is too old for their current (work) position.
7. Phrases in 8 are more positive ways to refer to old age and retirement.
8. Phrases in 9 are saying that a person is losing their understanding of the world because of old age
9. Phrases in 10 are very negative and probably offensive. It is best to avoid using them as they indicate a very negative attitude to old age ('codger' is a man, 'biddy' is a woman).



## BEING POOR

1. He's short of cash / hard-up
2. She's got cash-flow problems
3. They were destitute
4. He's on the bread line
5. She's in debt / overdrawn / bankrupt
6. He's doing a minimum-wage job
7. Low-income families
8. She's on the dole
9. Below the poverty line
10. Those less fortunate than ourselves

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 means that the person doesn't have enough money so pay for everyday things.
2. Phrase 2 means that the person has problems with money but it's maybe only for a short time.
3. In 3, people who are 'destitute' have no money, no food and nowhere to live.
4. In 4, a person 'on the bread line' is very poor and in the past in the UK, could stand in a line and receive free bread from a charity.
5. In 5, a person 'in debt' owes money to somebody, if she is 'overdrawn' she owes money to the bank and if she is 'bankrupt' she has all her debts cancelled because she can never pay them.
6. In 6, a minimum-wage job pays the smallest amount legal in the UK. This is currently around five pounds an hour.
7. Phrase 7 is a common expression used by politicians and in the media when talking about social issues.
8. Phrase 8 means that the person has no job and is receiving financial help from the government. This word became popular in the early eighties when many UK people were out of work.
9. In 9, 'the poverty line' describes a minimum level of income needed to get basic things to live. It is usually used to describe conditions in the Third World.
10. Phrase 10 was originally used in a Christian prayer and encouraged Christians to think of people with less wealth and help them.



## BEING RICH

1. A wealthy person
2. A comfortably-off person
3. High-earning / Top-earning executives
4. She's well-off / well-heeled
5. I'm not short of a bob or two
6. He's rolling in it
7. They're filthy rich
8. They're a bit nouveau-riche
9. A millionaire friend of mine...
10. Fat cats

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. In 1, wealthy is a general word that says that somebody has a lot of money.
2. Phrase 2 is less strong. A 'comfortably-off' person has enough money not to be worried about money.
3. Phrases 3 are adjectives meaning that the person gets a high salary.
4. Phrase 4 means that the person has a lot of money in the bank.
5. Phrase 5 is an informal / colloquial expression which has a similar meaning to 4.
6. Phrases 6 and 7 mean that the person has a ridiculous amount of money - more than they need.
7. Phrase 8 means that the people have made a lot of money recently and are spending it very quickly.
8. In 9, 'millionaire' can be used as an adjective as well as a noun.
9. In 10, 'fat cats' are top executives who earn enormous salaries. In the late nineties there were a series of scandals about the high salaries of bosses of failed companies.





## BEING RELIEVED

1. Phew!
2. Thank God (for that)!
3. What a relief!
4. I'm so relieved to hear that.
5. You had me worried (there / for a moment).
6. That's a weight off my mind.
7. You've no idea what a relief it is to hear
8. That's one less thing to worry about.
9. What a stroke of luck!
10. (Oh well.) All's well that ends well!

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is very informal and is normally said with a rising then falling intonation.
2. Phrase 2 is religious in origin and may offend some very traditional or religious people. But most English people do say this.
3. Phrases 3 and 4 are general expressions for showing relief.
4. Phrases 5 and 6 are showing how much we were worried before.
5. Phrase 7 is telling the other speaker how happy you are to hear the good news.
6. Phrase 8 is saying that you are relieved about one thing but that you still have many other things to worry about.
7. Phrase 9 is saying how lucky you feel that bad things didn't happen. This phrase is most common when talking about relief but we also use it for general good luck.
8. Phrase 10 is an old saying that means that now the problem is finished you are not going to worry any more about the situation.



## BEING SURE / CERTAIN

1. I'm quite sure...
2. I'm absolutely positive...
3. I'm fairly / quite certain...
4. It must be right.
5. I know...
6. It's definitely...
7. You can be sure...
8. I've no doubt at all that...
9. I'm a hundred percent certain that...
10. I'm (utterly) convinced...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. All phrases are followed by a sentence or clause.
2. Phrases 1, 2, and 3 are very strong and show that you really are certain.
3. Phrase 4 is a little less strong than the others. There is just a little doubt in the speaker's mind.
4. Phrases 7 and 8 are used especially for reassuring other people who don't believe.
5. Phrases 9 and 10 are saying that there is no doubt at all. What you are saying is a fact.



## BEING WORRIED

1. I'm (so) worried about...
2. I'm afraid...
3. I can't help thinking...
4. I can't stop thinking about it.
5. I've been worried sick about...
6. It's been keeping me awake at night.
7. I'm scared stiff / to death that...
8. I'm really nervous.
9. I've got butterflies in my stomach.
10. I'm absolutely dreading...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We follow phrases 1, 5 and 10 with a noun, noun phrase or a gerund (-ing form).
2. We follow 2, 3, 7 with a sentence or clause saying what we think will happen (e.g I'm afraid he'll find out what happened'.)
3. Phrase 1 is a general statement of worry or concern. The word 'so' makes the statement much stronger.
4. Phrases 3 and 4 are saying that the person is always thinking about the problem.
5. Phrases 5 and 6 are saying that the person is worried now and that they have been feeling it for a long time before.
6. Phrases 2, 7, 8 and 9 are saying the person is worried about something that is going to happen and also is worried about their ability to manage the situation.
7. Phrase 10 is saying that something unavoidable is going to happen and the speaker is really not looking forward to it.



# BORING

1. How boring / tedious / dull!
2. What a bore!
3. It bores me to tears.
4. It leaves me cold.
5. It does nothing for me.
6. It's as dull as ditch-water.
7. I can't see what all the fuss is about.
8. It's as interesting as watching paint dry
9. I'm afraid I don't share your enthusiasm...
10. I can't say that I find it interesting.

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2, 3 and 6 are really very strong. You can say this to somebody who probably agrees or who you know will not be offended.
2. Phrases 4 and 5 are saying that you feel no emotion at all about a certain thing or topic.
3. Phrase 7 means that other people are interested in the subject but that you cannot understand why they are interested.
4. Phrase 8 is saying that it is extremely boring by comparing it to watching paint drying - which most people consider a very boring activity.
5. Phrases 9 and 10 are more polite. However, you are still saying something negative so you may want to soften it by saying 'I'm afraid...' or 'I'm sorry to say...!'



## CHANGING YOUR MIND

1. (Actually,) I've changed my mind.
2. On second thoughts...
3. Come to think of it...
4. I've had a change of heart.
5. Hang on a minute / a second.
6. I've had a bit of a rethink.
7. Did I really say that?
8. What was I thinking?
9. On reflection...
10. After further consideration...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. All of the phrases are used immediately before a sentence containing our new (revised ideas). Phrases 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are whole sentences and the other phrases are sentence adverbs.
2. Phrase 1 is quite neutral in tone and can be used informally and formally.
3. Phrases 3 and 4 are quite informal. Phrase 3 is nearly always used in speech while phrase 4 can be spoken or written.
4. We say phrase 5 at the moment when we realize we were previously wrong. It is very informal and only ever used in spoken English.
5. Phrase 6 suggests that the speaker hasn't completely changed their previous ideas but has just altered them a little. But this phrase is sometimes used ironically to mean a total change of position.
6. Phrases 7 and 8 are quite informal and are used by the speaker to criticize their own previous (wrong) idea or decision.
7. Phrases 9 and 10 are more formal than the others and are usually used in writing. Phrase 10 is especially useful for formal letters to explain why we no longer want to do something we previously agreed to do.



## CHEERING PEOPLE UP

1. Cheer up! / Chin up!
2. Smile!
3. It's not the end of the world.
4. Worse things happen at sea.
5. Look on the bright side.....
6. Every cloud (has a silver lining).
7. Practice makes perfect.
8. There are plenty more fish in the sea.
9. Lighten up!
10. There's no use crying over spilt milk.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are informal and can be used when someone looks unhappy.
2. Phrases 3 and 4 are well-known sayings which can be used to console someone who feels that things are very bad. They should probably not be used if things really are very bad.
3. Phrases 5 and 6 are suggesting that the other person should try to see the positive side of the situation.
4. Phrase 7 is used to encourage and cheer up a person who is finding something difficult or feeling frustrated about not being able to do something.
5. Phrase 8 is used specifically to cheer up somebody who has just finished a relationship. The speaker is trying to encourage them to look for a new partner.
6. Phrases 9 and 10 can seem less sympathetic and suggest that the person needs to forget what has happened and move on.



## CRITICIZING MISTAKES

1. That wasn't very clever.
2. What were you thinking of?
3. I bet you wish you hadn't done that.
4. Why on Earth did you go and do that?
5. You made a right mess of that.
6. I wouldn't do that again (in a hurry)
7. Oops
8. What a total disaster
9. You put your foot in it (there)
10. That was a bit uncalled for.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are quite critical. Depending on the intonation they could be friendly criticism (big changes in pitch) or a harsh scolding (flatter intonation).
2. Phrases 3 and 4 are quite critical but almost certainly friendly or joking in tone. To achieve this effect, apply strong rise-fall intonation to 'bet' in phrase 3 and 'Earth' in phrase 4.
3. Phrase 5 is strongly critical and with flat intonation, not at all friendly. Using this phrase wrongly can offend people.
4. Phrases 6 and 7 are nearly always friendly in tone. In phrase 6, 'that' is stressed with strong rise-fall intonation.
5. In phrase 7, 'to' of 'total' is stressed strongly and with flat intonation this can sound quite rude / harsh. A rise-fall intonation on this syllable makes it sound more friendly / humorous.
6. Phrases 9 and 10 are criticizing something that somebody said. Phrase 9 is criticizing indiscretion and phrase 10 is saying that something you said was offensive or rude.



## COMPLAINING ABOUT HYPOCRISY

1. Look who's talking!
2. You can talk!
3. That's rich, coming from you!
4. That's the pot calling the kettle black.
5. I seem to remember, not so long ago...
6. Yeah, and you're so much better
7. And you're so squeaky clean.
8. Take a look in the mirror sometime.
9. People in glass houses...
10. Says Mr. Perfect.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We use phrases 1 and 2 to react (quite suddenly) when somebody says something hypocritical.
2. Phrase 4 is an old idiom. It refers to the time when people heated metal pots and kettles over a fire and they soon became black with soot from the fire.
3. We follow phrase 5 with a description of the time in the past when the other speaker did something that they are now criticizing.
4. Phrases 6 and 7 are quite sarcastic. Use with care.
5. Phrase 9 is the first part of an old idiom. The complete form is 'people in glasshouses shouldn't throw stones'.





## DELAYING ANSWERING

1. Well, you see...
2. Now, let me see.
3. Just a moment / Just a second
4. Hang on a moment / second / mo / sec
5. How shall I put it?
6. What's the word for it..
7. Now, let me think...
8. Let me get this right...
9. It's on the tip of my tongue..
10. (Now) that's an interesting question...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. All of the phrases finish with high intonation to show that you are going to continue speaking with your answer or contribution in just a second.
2. Phrases 1 and 2 are very common expressions that English people use all the time. You should not pause for more than a second or two after saying them.
3. Phrases 3 and 4 are actually asking the listener to wait. In phrase 4, we often shorten 'moment' to 'mo' and 'second' to 'sec' in informal speech.
4. Phrase 5 suggests that the speaker knows what to say but wants to organise the words to make them less unpleasant or annoying to the listener.
5. We say phrase 6 when we are trying to remember one particular word. If we still can't remember after another two seconds we often explain what the word means and hope that the listener can tell us what the word is.
6. Phrases 7 and 8 are used for requesting the listener to wait for one or two seconds. You can only wait a few seconds after saying these.
7. Phrase 9 means that we really think we know the word that we are searching our memory for but can't remember it at this moment.
8. Phrase 10 is often used by politicians when they are asked a difficult or embarrassing question. Very often, they change the subject and avoid answering altogether.



## DESCRIBING PEOPLE – BAD

1. Unfriendly / cold
2. Short-tempered / quick-tempered
3. Lazy
4. Stupid / dim-witted
5. Mean / stingy
6. Boring / dull
7. Inconsiderate / thoughtless
8. Strict / authoritarian
9. Unreliable
10. Dishonest

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Adjective 1 describes somebody who doesn't make friends easily and says and does things that make other people not like them.
2. Adjective 2 describes somebody who gets angry quickly or is often angry with other people
3. Adjective 3 describes somebody who doesn't do very much / tries to do as little work as possible.
4. Adjective 4 describes somebody who is not intelligent.
5. Adjective 5 describes a person who does not give things or help to other people very much.
6. Adjective 6 describes somebody who is not all interesting.
7. Adjective 7 describes a person who does not think about other people when they make decisions.
8. Adjective 8 describes somebody (usually a teacher / boss / parent) who makes very hard rules and makes other people keep these rules
9. Adjective 9 describes somebody who does not do things that they said they would do.
10. Adjective 10 describes a person who tells lies or who steals things from other people.



## DESCRIBING PEOPLE – GOOD

1. Warm-hearted / friendly
2. Good-looking
3. Hard-working
4. Bright
5. Generous / Kind
6. Full of energy / energetic
7. Thoughtful / Considerate
8. Easy-going
9. Reliable / responsible
10. Truthful / honest

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Adjective 1 describes somebody who can be friends with other people easily.
2. Adjective 2 describes somebody who looks beautiful - either women or men.
3. Adjective 3 describes somebody who does a lot of work.
4. Adjective 4 describes somebody who is intelligent.
5. Adjective 5 describes somebody who often gives things to other people or is happy to help them with their problems.
6. Adjective 6 describes a person who is always moving, never gets tired and has a lot of energy.
7. Adjective 7 describes somebody who thinks carefully about other people before they do things.
8. Adjective 8 describes somebody who is relaxed and calm and doesn't get angry with other people easily.
9. Adjective 9 describes a person who always does what they say they will do.
10. Adjective 10 describes somebody who tells the truth and doesn't steal or take things from other people.



## DESCRIBING WITH A PREDICTION

1. As if!
2. In your dreams!
3. You wish!
4. No chance!
5. Not a chance!
6. Not likely!
7. Dream on!
8. Never in a million years!
9. You'll be lucky!
10. Yes, and pigs might fly!

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2, and 3 not only show disbelief but are also quite dismissive of the person who made the prediction.
2. Phrases 4 and 5 are indicating that you think the prediction is totally impossible.
3. Phrase 6 is a little more tentative. You concede that there may be a small chance.
4. Phrase 7 suggests that you think the other person is just day-dreaming.
5. Phrases 9 and 10 are a little sarcastic. In phrase ten you are saying that the prediction is no more likely than pigs suddenly being able to fly.



## DISAGREEING WITH PEOPLE

1. I'm not sure about that!
2. You could be right, but...
3. (I'm afraid) I don't agree.
4. I agree up to a point, but..
5. That's an interesting idea, but..
6. Do you really think..?
7. Rubbish! / Nonsense!
8. You can't be serious!
9. Actually, as a matter of fact. I think..
10. That's not how I see it.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are quite polite and not too direct in saying you disagree.
2. Phrase 3 is neutral. We use 'I'm afraid' to soften it and make it less aggressive to the other speaker.
3. Phrases 4 and 5 are showing partial agreement with the other speaker but both are followed with the second speaker's (different) ideas.
4. Phrase 6 is used to question how the other speaker could really think something that you think is completely wrong.
5. Phrases 7 and 8 are saying that the other speaker is completely wrong in a very direct, blunt way.



# DISAPPOINTMENT

1. What a pity / shame!
2. How disappointing!
3. That's too bad.
4. What a bummer!
5. What a let-down!
6. That's (just) so disappointing!
7. I was so looking forward to...
8. We had high hopes for...
9. It did not live up to expectation.
10. What we had been led to expect was...

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 show quite a strong feeling of sadness at a personal disappointment.
2. Phrase 3 is often used to sympathize with another person's disappointment.
3. Phrases 4 and 5 are very informal and may be used to show anger or sadness at your own or other people's misfortune.
4. Phrases 7 and 8 emphasize the expectations that you had before the more negative result.
5. Phrase 9 is more formal and could be used in a formal letter of complaint.
6. Phrase 10 can be used in formal letters of complaint to explain what you had believed because of wrong information you were given.



## DISAPPROVING OF AN ACTION

1. I don't think much of that.
2. How appalling / dreadful!
3. I'm utterly appalled / disgusted.
4. I'm dead against people doing...
5. It shouldn't be allowed!
6. What a rotten / mean thing to do.
7. I take a very dim view of people doing...
8. Who do they think they are?
9. How can people do things like that?
10. Whatever next?

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is not very strong. The speaker does not approve of an action and is not very upset. You can use this phrase to weakly agree with other people who are more angry or upset.
2. Phrase 3 and 4 are stronger reactions to an action. You usually use these phrases immediately after you find out about the event or action.
3. Phrase 4 is speaking more generally about a kind of action that you always disapprove of.
4. Phrase 5 is saying that you would like a new law to prevent people from doing something that you think is bad. This also suggests that the action is legal at the moment.
5. Phrase 6 is a very strong negative reaction to an action that you have just heard about. The speaker is also showing sympathy with the victim of the action.
6. Phrase 7 is more formal and shows a general negative attitude to actions of a certain kind. You follow this phrase with a gerund (-ing form).
7. Phrases 8, 9 and 10 are showing strong negative reactions to an action. Phrases 8 and 9 are showing particular disapproval of the people who did the actions.



## DISLIKES - ADVANCED

1. I'm not too keen on English food.
2. I'm not a big a fan of English food.
3. I can't work up any enthusiasm for it.
4. I'm not particularly fond of English food.
5. I can't stand it / I really hate it.
6. English food: I can take it or leave it.
7. English food leaves me cold.
8. I can't see what all the fuss is about.
9. I'm afraid it doesn't appeal to me.
10. I would rather cut off my right arm than...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are quite informal / spoken phrases. The level of dislike is not very strong. The speaker will probably agree to eat English food but won't enjoy it very much.
2. In phrases 3 and 4, the speaker is saying that she doesn't feel anything about English food. This is more formal.
3. Phrases in 5 are very strong. The speaker really does not want to ever eat English food again.
4. Phrases 6, 7 and 8 are quite informal and saying that English food doesn't cause any emotion or reaction from the speaker. This is dismissive and considered quite negative.
5. Phrase 9 is more formal and is saying that the speaker doesn't enjoy English food. This is a reasonably polite way of saying that you don't like something.
6. Phrase 10 is an exaggerated and humorous way of saying the speaker really, really hates something. It can also be quite impolite if used at the wrong time.





## ENCOURAGING

1. You're coming along well
2. Keep up the good work
3. That's a good effort
4. That's a real improvement
5. You're on the right lines
6. Keep going
7. Come on, you can do
8. Give it your best shot
9. What have you got to lose?
10. If at first you don't succeed...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 to 4 are often used to encourage someone who is working and doing well.
2. Phrase 5 is used to say someone is not exactly right but could get it right if they tried again.
3. Phrases 6 and 7 are general ways of encouraging and can suggest that the person should not stop.
4. Phrases 8 and 9 can be used to encourage someone to try something new.
5. ...try and try again. The first half of this phrase can be used to encourage someone to try again, even if the first attempt was unsuccessful.



## EXCUSES FOR BEING LATE

1. Sorry - I didn't hear the alarm clock.
2. The alarm didn't go off.
3. I slept right through the alarm.
4. I had to wait ages for a bus.
5. The bus was late.
6. The traffic was terrible.
7. I couldn't find a parking space.
8. The roads were chockablock.
9. I got lost coming here.
10. It's not an easy place to find.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 1, 2 and 3 are all about problems waking up. We blame the alarm clock. 2 shows there was a problem with the alarm clock. 3 shows you were so tired that the alarm didn't wake you up.
2. The traffic is often responsible for us being late. 4 says that the bus is responsible - it didn't arrive when it was supposed to. 5 is similar.
3. 6. Here we are saying the traffic in general was responsible. You can use this if you are driving or travelling on the bus.
4. 7 and 8 are common problems for drivers. 7 means that it was difficult to park.
5. We use 8 to say the roads were full of traffic, like when there is a traffic jam.
6. 9 and 10 are used when you are visiting a place for the first time and don't know the way.



## EXPRESSIONS WITH 'ONE'

1. One of these days...
2. That's one way of putting it.
3. It's one thing to say it...
4. One by one...
5. I'm not one to complain, but...
6. He's got a one-track mind.
7. A one-off payment
8. A one-hit wonder
9. The one and only (David Beckham)!
10. He's a right one!

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We use phrase 1 with an intention when we haven't decide when to do it although we are quite certain we will do it. Follow it with going to + infinitive.
2. We use phrase 2 to say that we don't really agree with another person's opinion or assessment. It can sound a little rude / dismissive of the other person's view.
3. We use phrase 3 to say that it's easy to talk about an action, but more difficult to do it.
4. We use phrase 4 as an adverb to show that people or animals performed the verb individually, not as a group.
5. People often say phrase 5 to introduce a complaint and to give the idea that their complaint is more serious.
6. We say phrase 6 to criticize a person (he or she) because they are always thing about the same subject, with no variety.
7. In phrase 7, a one-off payment is an amount of money that we only have to pay once. This is the opposite to paying 'in installments'.
8. We use phrase 8 to talk about a pop singer or group who only make one famous song and then stop being famous.
9. We use phrase 9 to introduce somebody famous to a group / crowd. We are saying that he is unique and special. It is usually said with strong exaggerated intonation.



## FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

1. She had a broad smile on her face.
2. He was wearing a frown.
3. She gave a grimace. She winced.
4. She gave me a dirty look
5. He looked down his nose at her.
6. She raised her eyebrows when she saw me.
7. The children were beaming from ear to ear.
8. Why the long face?
9. He was purple with rage.
10. If looks could kill...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 means that the person was very happy and her mouth was showing a very clear smile.
2. Phrase 2 means that he was looking annoyed or concerned and his eyebrows were lowered and forehead wrinkled.
3. In phrases in 3, a wince or a grimace is expressions of pain and / or disapproval. They are brief reactions to something unpleasant.
4. In phrase 4 a dirty look is a way of showing anger or disapproval. The person stared hard at me in an unfriendly way.
5. Phrase 5 means that the person is showing that he thinks the other person is 'lower' in importance or social status. He probably looks at her with his head tilted back.
6. In phrase 6, people in the UK raise their eyebrows to show surprise or disapproval.
7. Phrase 7 means that the children were very happy and had big smiles on their faces.
8. Phrase 8 is a very common question that we ask when somebody looks very sad.
9. In phrase 9, the person is so angry that parts of his face has changed color to purple.



## FORGETTING THINGS

1. (I'm afraid) I can't remember.
2. I've completely forgotten.
3. My mind's gone blank
4. (Sorry) I have no memory of...
5. (I'm afraid) it doesn't ring a bell.
6. I have no recollection of...
7. Sorry, I forgot.
8. I simply forgot to do it.
9. What was I thinking of?
10. Oh no, it completely slipped my mind.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 - 6 are for things in the past that we can't remember.
2. Phrases 7 - 10 are for things that we forgot to do in the present.
3. Phrase 3 gives the idea that I don't remember now but I might remember some time later.
4. Phrases 4, 5 and 6 mean that you don't even remember that you knew the information at one time in the past
5. Phrase 5 means that a name, place or face is completely unfamiliar when you see or hear it again.
6. Phrase 9 suggests that the speaker is angry with himself or herself for forgetting to do something.



## GENERALIZING

1. Ninety percent of the time...
2. Nine times out of ten...
3. More often than not...
4. Usually...
5. As a rule (of thumb)...
6. What normally happens is...
7. In general...
8. Generally speaking...
9. On the whole...
10. By and large...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 refer to numbers. These numbers are not literal.
2. Phrases 3 and 4 refer to the high frequency of the statement being true.
3. In phrase 5, a 'Rule of thumb' is a system of judgment that we use when it isn't possible to be precise
4. Phrase 6 is followed by a sentence describing the normal event, occurrence or situation.
5. Phrases 7 and 8 are formal and can be used in official or scientific writing.
6. Phrases 9 and 10 are less formal but are used in some business correspondence.



## GET – SHORT PHRASES

1. Get ready
2. Get out / get out of here
3. Get lost
4. Get going
5. Get a move on / Get moving
6. Get a life
7. Get well soon
8. Get real
9. Get out of my / the way
10. Get stuffed

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We say phrase 1 to somebody to warn them that they need to be prepared for something soon.
2. We say phrase 2 to somebody when we want them to leave. Depending on the tone of voice this can be quite strong and possibly offensive.
3. Phrase 3 is stronger than phrase 2 and means that we want the person to leave and we don't care where they go.
4. We say phrase 4 means that we want somebody to start an activity or start going somewhere.
5. We say phrase 5 to somebody when we want them to go faster or make faster progress with a task.
6. We say phrase 6 to somebody who spends a lot of time on a boring or pointless task.
7. We say phrase 7 to somebody who is unwell. This phrase is often written on greetings cards that we send to people who are sick.
8. We say phrase 8 to somebody who has an unrealistic idea or expects something that is impossible or very unlikely.
9. We say phrase 9 to somebody who is blocking our path. This is actually not polite and it is more polite to simply say 'excuse me'.
10. We say phrase 10 to somebody who we want to show great disrespect to. It is very rude and may cause the other person to react angrily / violently.



## GIVING A CHOICE

1. You choose.
2. It's up to you.
3. (You can) do what / as you like.
4. Do as you please.
5. The choice is yours.
6. Make up your own mind.
7. It's fine by me if you want to...
8. It's no skin off my nose.
9. It's your decision.
10. Don't mind me.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is simple but a little impolite in formal situations. To make it more polite say 'I'm happy for you to choose'.
2. Phrase 2 means that the other person can and must decide. The speaker will not give an opinion.
3. Phrases 3 and 4 mean that the speaker has no interest in what decision you make. You can do anything you like. Phrase 4 is slightly more formal.
4. Phrase 5 means that you have to make a choice because the speaker will not help you to choose.
5. Phrase 6 is telling the other person to make a decision or to form an opinion about something.
6. Phrases 7 and 8 are saying that the speaker is happy for the other person to make a one choice. The other person probably thought that the speaker wouldn't like it and the speaker is correcting this impression.
7. Phrase 9 is saying that the other person can make a decision.
8. Phrase 10 is telling the other person to make their choice or continue with an activity and to not worry about what the speaker thinks. Sometimes this phrase is used ironically.





## GIVING AN OPINION

1. I reckon...
2. I'd say...
3. Personally, I think...
4. What I reckon is...
5. If you ask me...
6. The way I see it...
7. As far as I'm concerned...
8. If you don't mind me saying...
9. I'm utterly convinced that...
10. In my humble opinion...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We follow all the phrases with a sentence or clause that shows the speaker's opinion.
2. Phrases 1 - 3 are really quite informal. You can use these phrases when you are discussing something with friends or people who you know well.
3. In phrase 1, 'reckon' is a very common word in the UK today. It means 'I think' but British people use the word 'reckon' much more often than 'think'.
4. Phrases 5, 6 and 7 are all quite polite and show clearly that the statement is only an opinion.
5. Phrase 8 is more polite because it says to the other speaker that they might not agree with what you are saying.
6. Phrase 9 shows a very strong opinion. The speaker has no doubt at all that it is true.
7. Phrase 10 is the most polite expression of the ten. It is often written on the Internet as the abbreviation 'IMHO' or 'imho'.



## GIVING YOUR OPINION

1. In my opinion, this one would be better.
2. To my mind this one's better.
3. If you ask me, this one's better.
4. To my way of thinking, this one's fine.
5. In my view, this one is best.
6. Know what I think? That one's best.
7. I'd say tomorrow that one's better.
8. What I think is that one's better.
9. For me, that one's better.
10. I tell you what I think, that one's best.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 'In my opinion' is the classic expression - but it's not the only one. Use moderately.
2. 'To my mind' is a common spoken form - and you can use it in writing, too.
3. 'If you ask me' is very, very common in spoken English, and can come first or last in a sentence.
4. 'To my way of thinking' is often used with emphasis on 'my' to give a strong opinion.
5. 'In my view' is common in spoken and written English.
6. The abbreviated question '(Do you) know what I think?' is very popular and is not rude.
7. The conditional structure I'd say is rarely taught as a conditional, but this is one of the most common ways of giving an opinion in English.
8. 'For me' is like 2 and 5.
9. 10 is similar to 6, and is quite direct.



## GRAPHS - RISE AND FALL

1. A sharp increase
2. A steep drop
3. A massive reduction
4. A gradual rise
5. A slight decline
6. A peak
7. A slow-down
8. A spike
9. A steady recovery
10. Fluctuations

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 describes something that goes up very fast
2. Phrase 2 describes something that comes down very fast
3. Phrase 3 describes something that comes down by a large amount
4. Phrase 4 describes something that goes up slowly over a (long) period of time
5. Phrase 5 describes something that goes down a little bit
6. Phrase 6 describes the time when something stops going up and starts going down
7. Phrase 7 describes something that is still going up but less and less quickly
8. Phrase 8 describes a time when something goes up a lot for a very short time.
9. Phrase 9 describes something that stops going down and then goes up at the same speed for a (long) period of time.
10. Phrase 10 describes a time when something goes up and down many times.



# HABITS

1. I spend a lot of time...
2. I (often) tend to...
3. You'll always find me...
4. \_\_\_\_ is a big part of my life.
5. I always make a point of...
6. Whenever I get the chance, I...
7. I have a habit of..
8. I can't (seem to) stop...
9. I'm always...
10. I can't help...

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 10 are followed by a gerund. (-ing form)
2. Phrase 2 is followed by the infinitive of the main verb (e.g. I often tend to watch TV in the evenings.)
3. Phrase 4 needs a noun or gerund in the blank space.
4. Phrases 1 - 3 are quite neutral. The habit is neither a good one nor a bad one.
5. Phrase 4 is a bit more positive and phrases 5 and 6 show that the speaker likes doing these things and tries to do them a lot.
6. Phrase 7 suggests that the speaker often does something but that it's not intentional. It may be a bad habit.
7. Phrases 8 to 10 are habits that the speaker thinks are bad but cannot stop.



## HAVE A GUESS

1. Off the top of my head, I think she's 26.
2. Knowing (the English), he likes football.
3. If I had to take a guess, I'd say she's 26
4. I'd say she's 26.
5. Chances are she's 26.
6. At a guess, I'd say she's 26.
7. Probably about 26.
8. We're talking maybe late twenties.
9. About 6-ish
10. Around about 6 o'clock

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 can be used when guessing almost anything (age, height, time, personality, problems, etc.).
2. Phrase 2 is based on a generalization.
3. Phrases 3, 6 and 8 shows that the speaker really doesn't know the exact number.
4. Phrase 9 is only used with numbers and time.
5. Phrase 10 is usually used for numbers or a period of time.



## HOPING FOR SOMETHING

1. I hope it's sunny tomorrow
2. I'm hoping it'll be sunny tomorrow.
3. Hopefully, it'll be sunny tomorrow.
4. Let's hope it is sunny tomorrow.
5. Here's hoping we have a sunny day.
6. If we're lucky, it'll be sunny tomorrow
7. With any luck, it'll be sunny tomorrow.
8. I wish / If only it would be sunny...
9. I'm keeping my fingers crossed for...
10. I'm (really) counting on it being sunny

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2 and 3 are all saying that the speaker wants sunny weather tomorrow and that she thinks it might happen.
2. Phrase 4 is saying that the speaker wants sunny weather and he thinks that everybody wants sunny weather too.
3. Phrases 6 and 7 are saying that the speaker wants a sunny day but that it is very possible that it will rain.
4. Phrase 8 is saying that it will probably rain but that the speaker still wants it to be sunny.
5. Phrase 9 is saying that the speaker wants a sunny day and that he is not going to be prepared if it rains.
6. Phrase 10 is saying that the speaker really needs sunny weather. If it rains it will be a disaster.



## HOT WEATHER

1. It's nice and warm today.
2. It's pretty hot, isn't it?
3. We're having a heat wave!
4. It's so hot! It must be over 80.
5. It's nice in the sun.
6. The weather's lovely.
7. It's a lovely day.
8. It's absolutely boiling!
9. It's positively tropical today.
10. It is sunny today, isn't it?

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 1 we often combine 'nice' + 'warm' to be very positive.
2. 2 is useful when the weather is hot - maybe almost too hot.
3. 3 is used when the weather has been very hot for a number of days.
4. 4 this is like 2, so maybe it's almost too hot. Note we use Fahrenheit degrees.
5. 5 is useful even for winter days - in the sun it's nice, but in the shade it may be cold.
6. 6 and 7 are both common general expressions.
7. 8 and 9 are used when the weather is unusually hot.
8. 10 is the most common expression taught in books. It's particularly common with the tag question.



# IMPROBABILITY

1. I don't expect they'll win.
2. It's (quite) unlikely they'll win.
3. They are not very likely to win.
4. I shouldn't think they'll win.
5. There's not much hope / chance.
6. I'd be (very) surprised if they won.
7. I wouldn't bet on them winning.
8. There's no chance of them winning.
9. There's little likelihood of them winning.
10. It'll never happen in a month of Sundays.

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2 and 3 are quite improbable but not impossible.
2. Phrases 4 and 5 are a bit stronger. The chance of them winning is a bit less.
3. Phrases 6 and 7 are more like an opinion and less of a statement of fact.
4. Phrase 8 is saying that it is impossible for the team to win.
5. Phrase 9 says that there is a very small chance. This phrase is more formal than the others.
6. Phrase 10 is more idiomatic / informal. It says that it is almost impossible for them to win.





## IN THE NEAR FUTURE

1. It's going to happen (quite / very) soon.
2. In (just) a moment / minute..
3. In (just) a few minutes..
4. Any second / minute / day now,
5. Not long now.
6. In the near future...
7. Before long,
8. ...is just around the corner
9. ..will happen in our lifetimes
10. Watch this space.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We use phrase 1 to describe something that we will not need to wait a long time for the length of time could be minutes, hours or days.
2. Phrases 2 and 3 are used when something is a few minutes away (no more than ten minutes).
3. We use phrase 4 to show that we expect something to happen almost immediately but we can't predict exactly when it will happen.
4. We use phrase 5 to tell other people that they will not need to wait much longer. We often say this to impatient children.
5. We use phrases 6, 7, and 8 to predict an important change in the world. Phrases 6 and 7 come before a sentence about the future and phrase 8 comes after a noun or noun phrase.
6. We use phrase 9 to say that we expect an important change in the world in the next fifty or sixty years. Phrase 9 comes after a noun or noun phrase.
7. Phrase 10 is used in writing, especially journalism to say that the writer expects to be writing about a future event in the same publication tomorrow or a few days later.



## LIKES — ADVANCED

1. I'm a big fan of Indian food.
2. I'm (absolutely) crazy about it.
3. I'm quite partial to spicy things.
4. I'm really into it (in a big way).
5. You can't beat a good (Indian meal).
6. Give me Thai food any day.
7. I'm particularly fond of hot curries.
8. There's nothing I like more than...
9. Thai food is what I live for.
10. What I wouldn't give for a Thai curry!

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are saying quite strongly that speaker really likes Indian food. Phrase 2 is a bit stronger than phrase 1.
2. Phrase 3 is a bit more formal and more restrained than phrases 1 and 2.
3. In phrase 4, we can make the basic expression 'into it' stronger by adding 'really' and much stronger with 'in a big way'. It is a very informal expression.
4. Phrases 5, 6 and 8 are saying that the speaker thinks something is best and that nothing else is better.
5. Phrase 7 is quite strong but a more formal expression that can be used in writing and in polite company.
6. Phrase 9 is almost certainly an exaggeration. It is saying that Thai food is the most (only) important thing in the speaker's life.
7. Phrase 10 is very informal and again quite exaggerated. The speaker is saying that the speaker would anything (or everything they have) for a Thai curry.



## MAKING SUGGESTIONS

1. Why don't we go to the cinema?
2. Let's go to the cinema. What do you think?
3. How about going to the cinema?
4. How do you feel about seeing a film?
5. Fancy seeing a film?
6. I'd like to see a film. How about you?
7. We could always see a film.
8. Why not go and see a film?
9. Seeing a film's one idea.
10. It would be nice to see a film.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 1 and 3 are structures that are frequently taught in course books.
2. 2 and 4 are different because you are asking for your friend's opinion, so they are less forceful, especially 4.
3. 5 is very common in spoken English but is not often taught in course books. It's short for 'Do you fancy'
4. 6 is also like 2 because you put your own idea first as a preference. You can also say 'What about you?'
5. 7 notice the use of 'always' here in a suggestion. It doesn't refer to time or frequency. It means this is a possibility.
6. 8 is a version of 1, using a negative question. However, 8 can also be used when making a suggestion for someone else to do something. The speaker may or may not be included.
7. We use 'one idea' or 'one possibility' meaning: it's one thing we could do.
8. 10 is quite a strong way of politely expressing your own preference, like 6.



## NOISES WITH ADJECTIVES

1. A deafening roar
2. A high-pitched scream
3. A terrible din
4. A piercing shriek
5. A fading echo
6. A muffled reply
7. A booming voice
8. A creaking door
9. A low murmur
10. A bloody racket

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 1 suggests a very loud noise that is sustained for some time and prevents other sounds being heard.
2. 3 is similar to 1 but shows more disapproval from the speaker
3. A piercing shriek (4) is similar to a high-pitched scream (2) but shorter in length.
4. 5 suggests the kind of reverberation you get in a very large room e.g. in a cathedral
5. 6 suggests that person described is covering their mouth while speaking and may be deliberately obscuring their words
6. 7 suggests that the voice is both loud and deep
7. 9 suggests a low intensity, fluctuating sound usually low in pitch.
8. 10 is similar to 2 but with stronger disapproval from the speaker.
9. In 10 "bloody" is a mild swear word of religious origin



## NOT GIVING YOUR OPINION

1. I couldn't say.
2. I've never given it much thought.
3. I don't have any feelings either way.
4. Your guess is as good as mine.
5. I (really) don't know what to say.
6. I really can't say.
7. You're asking the wrong person.
8. It doesn't affect me (either way).
9. It doesn't make any difference to me.
10. That's an interesting question.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is a brief expression for saying that you don't have an opinion. Because of its brevity it might seem a bit rude.
2. Phrase 2 indicates (in a fairly polite way) that you don't think the question is very interesting because you never think about these things.
3. Phrase 3 might be an answer to a question about what somebody is going to do. You are saying that you don't really care.
4. Phrases 4 and 5 are saying that you don't have enough information to answer a factual question.
5. Phrase 6 is similar to phrase 1. It is saying that you have no opinion or idea about something.
6. Phrases 7, 8 and 9 are saying that you are not affected by the topic of the question and so you have no opinion or interest in the topic.
7. Phrase 10 is often used by politicians. Although they say that the question is interesting



# PARAPHRASING

1. Basically,
2. In a nutshell,
3. To paraphrase,
4. To put it another way,
5. What it all boils down to is...
6. To sum up (then)...
7. In other words,
8. What this means is (that)...
9. Put it this way.
10. Look at it this way.

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We say phrases 1 and 2 before giving a more simple explanation of something previously said.
2. Phrases 3 and 4 often introduce a more positive way of presenting the previous information to make it sound more agreeable to the listener / reader
3. Phrase 5 introduces a very short summary of a large amount of information or text.
4. Phrase 7 is often used in informal conversation but it can be used formally as well.
5. Phrases 9 and 10 are often used to persuade somebody that a previous idea or suggestion is good. They are both complete sentences and are followed by another sentence.



## PARTY PEOPLE

1. She's the life and soul of the party.
2. She's a great mixer.
3. She gets on with everyone.
4. She's a live wire.
5. She's a real party animal.
6. She's a scream.
7. She's a real laugh.
8. She's always up for a party.
9. She's good company.
10. She loves to party.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 1 is a real compliment to someone who everyone enjoys talking to and being with in a party.
2. 2 mixing with different people is an important skill in a party. That's why this is positive.
3. 3 is similar to 2, but is more general. 'Great mixer' refers mainly to parties, but getting on with people is a general skill which is useful in business etc.
4. 4 is like 1, but gives the impression of someone who is very dynamic and active.
5. 5 means she loves parties - maybe too much, sometimes!
6. 6 and 7 are similar. If someone is a 'real laugh' you enjoy their company, in pubs, parties, and even at work etc.
7. 8 and 10 are used to describe someone who never says 'no' to a party.
8. 9 is a more general version of 3. It's nice to be with someone like this - in a party or not.



## PARTY TALK

1. You look familiar - have I seen you before
2. Don't I know you? Haven't we met before?
3. Hi. I'm Paul. What's your name?
4. Can I offer you a drink?
5. Do you know anyone here?
6. You're a great dancer.
7. I like the way you dance.
8. Do you come here often?
9. Do you want to dance?
10. I like your jacket - where did you get it?

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 1 and 2. We often try to see if we have something in common with new people - and pretending to have seen them before is one way of doing this.
2. 3. Why not try a direct introduction? This is how.
3. 4. A common way of starting a conversation is by buying someone a drink.
4. 5. This can sound a bit desperate - but it's good if you can introduce the person to other people you know.
5. 6 and 7. Saying something nice about someone is a good start.
6. 8 This is a classic opening remark - but it is very boring and doesn't produce a long conversation!
7. 10 is like 6 and 7. Of course you don't only have to talk about jackets: tops, shirts, shoes, blouses anything will do!





## PHRASES YOU HEAR IN AN AIRPORT

1. What is the purpose of your trip?
2. Did you pack this bag yourself?
3. Please do not leave any bags unattended.
4. Do you have anything to declare?
5. Flight BA333 is now boarding.
6. Flight UA666 has been cancelled.
7. Flight SA999 has been delayed.
8. Would passenger Jo Page please come to...
9. This is the final call for flight BA111 to
- 10....please make your way to Gate 99.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. You hear phrase 1 when you arrive in the US. The answer can be 'business', 'study', or 'pleasure' if you are visiting for a holiday.
2. Phrase 2 is asking about who put things into your bags. You should always pack your bag yourself and you should always answer 'yes' to this question.
3. Phrase 3 is asking you to keep your bag with you all the time. If you put it down and walk away, people will maybe think it is a bomb.
4. Phrase 4 is asking if you have anything in your bags that you need to pay tax to bring it into the US (e.g. alcohol, tobacco, carpets).
5. Phrase 5 means that if your flight is BA333 you can now go to get onto the plane. Listen and they will tell you which gate to go to e.g. Gate number 16.
6. Phrase 6 means that this flight will not go. The airline has stopped it. If this is your flight it is very bad news.
7. Phrase 7 means that the flight is going to be late. Look at the information board and wait for new information.
8. Phrase 8 is asking for one person to go to an information desk. If it is not your name, don't worry about it.
9. Phrase 9 means that this flight will go very soon. If it is your flight, you must go quickly to plane.
10. Phrase 10 is telling you to go to Gate 99.



# POSSIBILITY

1. It's probably going to rain tomorrow.
2. There's a (good) chance it'll rain...
3. In all probability, it'll rain...
4. The odds are it'll rain tomorrow.
5. I wouldn't be surprised if it rained...
6. There's a fifty-fifty chance of rain...
7. It's quite likely it'll rain...
8. It may / might / could rain tomorrow.
9. Maybe it'll rain tomorrow.
10. There's (just) a chance it'll rain

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are saying that there is a high probability
2. Phrases 3 and 4 are a little weaker but still quite strong
3. Phrases 5 and 6 are saying that the chance is about 50 percent that it will rain.
4. In phrase 8, 'may' and 'might' are more probable if the word 'just' comes before (e.g. it just might rain tomorrow.)
5. Phrase 9 depends on the intonation. Increasing the rise-fall on 'May' makes the rain sound more probable.
6. Phrase 10 is saying that the probability is small.



## PREFERRING THINGS

1. I'd (much) prefer to stay in
2. I'd (much) rather stay in
3. I'd go for an Indian meal (any time).
4. I much prefer wine to lager.
5. Give me Italian wine any day.
6. If it was up to me, I'd choose London.
7. Going to a pub is more my kind of thing.
8. Given the choice, I'd rather stay in.
9. London would be preferable to Oxford.
10. The boys expressed a strong preference for

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. In phrases 1 and 2 the word 'much' makes the phrase much stronger.
2. Phrase 3 means that the speaker always prefers Indian food to the other choices.
3. Phrase 4 shows the speaker prefers wine a lot.
4. Phrase 5 is a strong, informal phrase that is probably spoken. The speaker is saying that she will always choose Italian wine over the other possible choices.
5. In phrase 6 the speaker is saying that he prefers London. He is also saying that his opinion is not the most important. This is polite.
6. Phrase 7 is an informal and quite gentle way of saying that the speaker prefers pubs to another suggestion.
7. Phrase 8 is saying that the speaker would prefer to stay in but that she will probably go out because other people want to do this.
8. Phrase 9 is a formal (possibly written) expression to say that the speaker prefers London.
9. Phrase 10 is a formal (possibly written) expression to say that somebody else (the boys) prefer something. Follow this with a noun or noun phrase.



## QUOTING AND DISBELIEVING

1. (The US Government) claims that...
2. (The US Government) alleges that...
3. They are trying to convince us that...
4. They are asserting that...
5. According to (the government)...
6. If (the government) is to be believed...
7. If they are to be believed...
8. Supposedly...
9. Apparently...
10. The so-called (success of the project)...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We use phrase 1 to show that we don't believe the sentence that follows.
2. Phrase 2 is similar but is used before a sentence that criticizes or accuses..  
e.g. 'The police are alleging that I stole the money.'
3. Phrase 6 suggests that the statement is untrue but also that anything the government says is likely to be untrue.
4. Phrases 8 and 9 are sentence adverbs and can be used to distance you from the statement.
5. In phrase 10, the adjective 'so-called' is used before a noun that you think is incorrectly named. In the example, the speaker thinks that the 'success' was really a failure.



## REASSURING SOMEBODY

1. Don't worry.
2. You'll be fine. / It'll be fine
3. What are you worrying for?
4. There's no need to worry.
5. There's nothing to worry about.
6. It'll turn out all right.
7. It isn't as bad as all that.
8. Whatever you may have heard...
9. Rest assured...
10. I can assure you that...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. The feeling of phrase 1 depends on intonation. If more stress and intonation are placed on 'don't' it sounds kind and reassuring. With more stress on 'wor' it sounds a little annoyed at the other person's anxiety.
2. Phrase 2 is showing your confidence in the situation having a good result.
3. Phrase 3 is mildly criticizing the other person for worrying.
4. Phrases 4 and 5 are saying that the situation is completely fine and there is danger in the future.
5. Phrases 6 and 7 are saying that the situation now is bad but that it won't continue or isn't as serious as it seems.
6. Phrase 8 is saying that the negative information is wrong. You follow this phrase with a sentence giving the true, (more optimistic) information.
7. Phrases 9 and 10 are more formal and could be used in business letters.



## REFUSING

1. No way
2. Absolutely not
3. No Chance
4. Not if you paid me
5. Get lost
6. No, full stop
7. Not likely
8. I don't want to
9. I'd rather not
10. No but thanks for asking

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2 and 3 are strong refusals
2. Phrase 4 is also a strong refusal and suggests that money will not change the speaker's mind
3. Phrase 5 is very informal and quite dismissive
4. Phrase 6 is used to say that the refusal is final and no more discussion will take place
5. Phrases 7 and 8 are not as final as phrase 6 but it is quite likely that the speaker will not change their mind
6. Phrases 9 and 10 are quite polite ways of refusing



## REMEMBERING THINGS

1. I remember...
2. I can (clearly) remember...
3. I'll never forget...
4. As far as I can remember...
5. As I recall...
6. If I remember correctly...
7. If I'm not / unless I'm - mistaken...
8. Now I come to think of it...
9. I have a vague recollection of...
10. It's on the tip of my tongue.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We use phrases 1, 2, 3 and 9 with a noun phrase or gerund after the phrase.
2. We follow phrases 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 with a whole sentence or clause.
3. Phrases 4, 5, 6 7 and 9 are for things that we don't remember very well. We have some memory of the event but it is not complete.
4. Phrases 2 and 4 are for things that we have a very good memory of with many details.
5. We use phrase 8 when we didn't remember much at first but then a clearer memory came back. We introduce our more accurate story with this phrase.
6. We use phrase 10 for a name or piece of information that we can't remember but we think that we almost have it and that if we keep thinking hard, it will come back.



## REMINDING PEOPLE TO DO THINGS

1. Don't forget to do it.
2. Remember to do it.
3. You will remember to do it.
4. You won't forget to do it, will you?
5. Can / Could I remind you to...?
6. I'd like to remind you about...
7. You haven't forgotten about \_\_\_, have you?
8. I hope you haven't forgotten to...
9. Sorry to be a bore but do remember to...
10. May I remind you / all passengers that...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. In phrase 1, the stress is on the word 'Don't' and in phrase 2 the stress is on 'mem' in the word 'remember'.
2. In phrase 3, you need to put stress on the word 'will'.
3. In phrase 4, you need to put stress on the word 'won't'.
4. Phrases 5 and 6 are little more polite and could be used with somebody who you don't know very well.
5. You use phrases 7 and 8 when you think the other person has forgotten and it is almost too late. If they haven't forgotten, they may get angry, so be careful.
6. Phrase 9 has an apology at the beginning which makes it slightly more polite.
7. Phrase 10 is formal and is safe to use with strangers, with groups of people and in customer service situations.
8. After phrases 1,2,3,4,5,8,9 we use the infinitive form. For example: Don't forget to check your grammar.
9. After phrases 6 and 7, you need to use a noun or a noun phrase. For example: I'd like to remind you about the party tomorrow night.
10. After phrase 10 we use a clause (mini sentence). For example: May I remind all passengers that smoking is not allowed on the plane.





## RESOLUTIONS

1. I guess I'd better stop overspending...
2. I suppose I really ought to go to the gym
3. I really should diet, but then again...
4. There's nothing for it. I'll have to do it
5. I promise I'll try harder to arrive early
6. I have every intention of passing the test
7. Never again will you catch me snoring...
8. Nothing is going to stop me finishing...
9. No matter what happens, I'm going to win...
10. Come hell or high water, I'll pay it back

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are really quite weak. The expressions 'I guess' and 'I suppose' show the speaker's unwillingness.
2. Phrase 3 sounds stronger at first but the second part 'but then again' could be introducing a different plan.
3. Phrase 4 suggests that the speaker must do this (no choice) but he / she doesn't really like the idea.
4. In phrase 5, the speaker is only promising to try, which suggests the possibility that she / he might fail to do it.
5. Phrases 6 and 7 are much stronger resolutions. But with more marked intonation indicates that the speaker is less sure.
6. Phrases 8, 9 and 10 are very strong resolutions. They all show strong determination to complete the task.
7. Phrase 3 is often followed by sentences containing modals could, may, might



## SAYING NO

1. In a word, no.
2. Not on your life.
3. Not likely.
4. Over my dead body.
5. Count me out.
6. I'd rather not (if you don't mind).
7. I'd love to, but...
8. No chance.
9. Not on your nelly!
10. No way!

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is refusing to do something and also refusing to discuss the matter anymore.
2. Phrases 2 and 3 are expressing refusal in an emphatic way.
3. We use phrase 4 to say that we will not allow somebody to do something.
4. We use phrase 5 to say that we don't want to be included in a group action or activity.
5. Phrases 6 and 7 are less strong and more polite / diplomatic than the other phrases.
6. Phrase 9 is a little old fashioned and can sound humorous.
7. Phrase 10 is very emphatic that you will not do something



## SAYING SOMEBODY IS ANGRY

1. (A bit) annoyed.
2. (A bit) peeved.
3. Wound up.
4. None too pleased.
5. In a foul mood. / In a temper
6. (Absolutely) furious / fuming
7. Go through the roof / Go ballistic
8. Be on the warpath
9. Storm out
10. See red

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2 and 3 are not very strong. They mean that the person is unhappy with the situation but not shouting or getting violent. If we use 'A bit' they are even weaker.
2. Phrase 4 is quite formal and a little old-fashioned. This phrase is suitable for formal letters and letters of complaint.
3. In phrase 5, a 'foul mood' is much stronger than a 'temper'.
4. Phrase 6 is very strong. If a person is furious or fuming, they are probably shouting or complaining a lot.
5. Phrase 7 means that the person suddenly becomes angry as a result of something that has happened.
6. Phrase 8 means that somebody is very angry and may verbally or physically attack somebody if they annoy him / her any more.
7. In phrase 9, if somebody 'storms out', they leave a room or meeting suddenly because something has made them very angry.
8. Phrase 10 means that somebody becomes extremely angry as a result of seeing or hearing something.



## SAYING SOMEBODY IS CORRECT

1. Yes, that's right.
2. You're quite right.
3. Yes, that's correct.
4. That's spot on.
5. You're dead right (there).
6. Absolutely.
7. You've hit the nail on the head.
8. You could say so.
9. I'm afraid so.
10. (I'm) sorry to say so.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2, and 3 are quite neutral and are just saying that what the other person asked is true.
2. Phrases 4, 5, and 6 also say that the information is very exact and maybe you are surprised at how accurate the other speaker is.
3. Phrase 7 is an idiom that means that the other person's question or statement is exactly true.
4. Phrase 8 says that you think this is correct but that other people disagree.
5. Phrases 9 and 10 are saying that the other speaker is correct but that you are unhappy about this information.



## SAYING SOMEBODY IS HAPPY

1. She's absolutely delighted.
2. He's over the moon.
3. I'm (dead) chuffed.
4. He couldn't be happier.
5. We're very pleased.
6. She's on cloud nine.
7. I'm having a whale of a time.
8. He's loving every moment of it.
9. She's having the time of her life.
10. We're (most) satisfied.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2 and 3 are saying that somebody is extremely happy about something that has happened.
2. Phrase 3 is very informal / colloquial and phrase 2 is a little more informal than phrase 1.
3. Phrase 5 is less strong than the first 4 phrases.
4. Phrase 6 is saying that somebody is so happy that it is like being in heaven.
5. Phrases 7, 8 and 9 are saying that somebody is really enjoying an event or situation. It is usually used for describing enjoyment during an extended situation.



# SAYING SOMEBODY IS STUPID

1. A bit thick.
2. A bit dense
3. A total airhead.
4. Not all there.
5. A few bricks short of a full load.
6. Not the sharpest knife in the drawer
7. Thick as two short planks
8. Not academically gifted
9. A dimwit
10. Not the smartest...

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are colloquial ways of saying that somebody is unintelligent.
2. Phrase 3 suggests that the person has air in their head where their brain should be
3. Phrases 4 and 5 are probably the cruelest. They suggest that part of the other person's brain is missing.
4. Phrase 8 is less direct. It states that the other person is not good at studies rather than directly saying they are stupid.
5. Phrase 9 is slightly old-fashioned but people still use it today.
6. Phrase 10 is followed by a noun to describe what kind of person you are talking about. e.g. 'He's not the smartest president'.



## SAYING SOMEBODY IS WRONG

1. I'm afraid that's not quite right.
2. Actually, I think you'll find that...
3. I'm afraid you're mistaken.
4. I don't think you're right about...
5. Actually, I don't think...
6. No, you've got it wrong.
7. No, that's all wrong.
8. Rubbish! / You're talking rubbish.
9. Where did you hear that?
10. If you check your facts, you'll find...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are fairly polite. If you really want to be polite you could make an apology first e.g. 'I'm sorry to disagree, but...'
2. Phrases 3 and 4 are a little stronger and a little less polite
3. You follow phrase 4 with a noun phrase or a gerund.
4. Phrases 6 and 7 are very strong. You may upset the person you are talking to so you should be really sure about your own facts before you say one of these.
5. Phrases 8 and 9 are actually quite rude. Even people who know each other quite well may not say these phrases to each other.
6. Phrase 10 is followed by a sentence or clause with the correct information



# SAYING SOMETHING IS DIFFICULT

1. It's not so easy...
2. It's a bit tricky...
3. It's not the easiest \_\_\_ in the world...
4. It's quite tough at times...
5. It's (quite / a bit) hard going...
6. It's nigh on impossible...
7. The course is quite demanding.
8. The course can be grueling at times
9. It isn't a walk in the park
10. It's not a course for the faint-hearted.

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2 and 3 are saying that it is a little difficult for some people.
2. Phrase 4 says that some parts of the course are difficult.
3. Phrase 5 says that the course is difficult and that many people will not keep going and give up before they finish.
4. Phrase 6 is saying that the course is nearly impossible.
5. Phrases 7 and 8 are saying that you will need a lot of effort and determination to complete the course.
6. Phrase 9 is saying that the course is not easy.
7. Phrase 10 says that people who give up easily should not start the course as they will probably not finish.





# SAYING SOMETHING IS EASY

1. It's a doddle.
2. Easy peasy.
3. It's a cinch.
4. There's nothing to it.
5. Anyone can do it.
6. It's Childs play.
7. It's a walk in the park.
8. It's not rocket science.
9. It's easy as pie / easy as a, b, c
10. I can do it with my eyes shut

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2 and 3 are saying that something is totally simple.
2. Phrase 4 is saying that you don't need to think about it. you can do it without thinking.
3. Phrase 5 says that it's so easy that everybody can do it.
4. Phrases 6 and 9 say that it's so easy that young children can do it.
5. Phrase 8 is saying that it is not difficult like building rockets.
6. Phrase 10 is saying that it is so easy that you can do it without looking - with your eyes shut.



## SAYING SOMETHING IS EXPENSIVE

1. That's a bit steep.
2. That's a bit pricey.
3. You paid a bit over the odds.
4. That's a bit on the dear side
5. It cost me an arm and a leg.
6. You're paying through the nose
7. That's exorbitant
8. It cost a fortune.
9. That's daylight robbery.
10. They must have seen you coming

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2 and 3 suggest that something is a little more expensive than it should be.
2. Phrase 4 is slightly less strong than the first three.
3. Phrase 5 suggests that something was very expensive but not necessarily too much.
4. Phrases 6, 7 and 8 suggest that something costs a lot of money and is unfairly priced.
5. Phrase 9 suggests that the seller was dishonest to sell something for such a high price.
6. Phrase 10 suggests that the buyer was stupid to pay such a high price for something.



## SAYING SOMETHING IS TRUE

1. I'm sure...
2. I'm absolutely positive...
3. I'm a hundred percent certain...
4. I'm utterly convinced...
5. I can assure you that...
6. I couldn't be surer of...
7. I'd stake my life on it.
8. It's a known fact that...
9. Everybody knows that...
10. I can state categorically that...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. The strength of phrase 1 depends on intonation. If the speaker's voice rises at the end of the sentence she may be less certain and is inviting somebody else to correct the information.
2. Phrases 2, 3, and 4 come before a sentence that gives information. They all say strongly that you believe in this information's truth.
3. We often use phrase 5 to contradict a statement or opinion of a previous speaker.
4. If somebody says phrase 7, he is saying that you can kill him if he is wrong.
5. Phrases 8 and 9 are saying that the statement is a fact and that everybody already knows about it.
6. Phrase 10 is a very strong assurance - often used by politicians and public relations officials.



## SAYING YOU ARE UNWELL

1. Not too good.
2. Not so great.
3. A little under the weather.
4. A bit rough.
5. A bit the worse for wear.
6. Much the same as yesterday.
7. A bit better.
8. As well as can be expected.
9. (I feel) lousy.
10. Bloody awful.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2, 3 and 4 are only a little negative and are fairly polite. But English people may use them when they are feeling very ill.
2. We often use phrase 5 when we did something earlier that has made us feel ill. We often say it the morning after drinking a lot of alcohol, when we have a hangover.
3. We use phrase 6 if the person we are talking to knows that we were ill yesterday also.
4. Phrases 7 and 8 sound positive but usually mean that the speaker still feels quite bad.
5. Phrases 9 and 10 are very strong. It is not normally polite to answer a friendly question so negatively. Only say them to friends and people who you know well.



## SAYING YOU DON'T BELIEVE

1. You're having me on.
2. You're pulling my leg.
3. That's a bit of an exaggeration.
4. That's an outright lie.
5. That's a pack of lies.
6. That's a fishy story.
7. What you're saying is libelous.
8. A half-truth
9. That's a fib
10. That's stretching the truth a bit

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 suggest that the other speaker might be lying as a joke.
2. Phrase 3 suggests that the other speaker has described something as larger or stronger than it really is.
3. Phrase 4 is a strong accusation that the previous statement is totally untrue.
4. Phrase 5 suggests that the other speaker has made a number of statements and that all of them are untrue.
5. Phrase 6 suggests that you are suspicious of a statement but you are not sure that it is a lie.
6. Phrase 7 says that the statement is untrue and could be punished in a law court.
7. Phrase 10 is the most gentle of these phrases but often the speaker still thinks the previous statement was a complete lie.



## SAYING YOU DON'T KNOW

1. Sorry. I don't know.
2. (I'm afraid,) I've no idea.
3. (Sorry,) I can't help you there.
4. I don't know anything about..(cars)
5. I don't know the first thing about (cars)
6. I haven't got a clue.
7. Search me.
8. Don't ask me.
9. What are you asking me for?
10. How the hell should I know?

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. In phrases 1, 2 and 3 we can use either 'sorry' or 'I'm afraid' or we can leave this part of the phrase out. These phrases are quite polite.
2. Phrases 4 and 5 are saying that you don't know the answer and that you don't know about the whole topic area (cars).
3. Phrases 6 and 7 are saying (more strongly) that you don't know anything about the topic.
4. If you say phrases 8 or 9, you are probably a little angry that somebody asked you a question about this topic.
5. Phrase 10 is showing stronger annoyance that somebody asked you about a certain topic.



## SHOWING CONCERN

1. What's the matter?
2. Are you alright?
3. What's getting you down?
4. What's up (with you)?
5. Why the long face?
6. You look a bit down.
7. Is there anything I can do to help?
8. Do you need a shoulder to cry on?
9. You look like you could do with a drink.
10. Oh you poor thing!

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are asking the other person what their problem is.
2. Phrases 1, 2, and 3 are more sympathetic while phrases 4 and 5 are less friendly.
3. Phrase 6 is a simple observation that the other person looks sad. But you expect the other person to explain the problem.
4. Phrases 7 and 8 are offering help or sympathy.
5. Phrase 8 is specifically offering to listen while the other person talks about their problem or reason for sadness.
6. Phrase 9 is an offer of a drink (alcohol or a cup of tea). This is a typical British response to somebody with a major problem or after a disaster of some kind.
7. Phrase 10 is intended to sound sympathetic. This expression can sound patronizing to some people.



# SOMETIMES

1. fairly often...
2. more often than not...
3. (at least) half the time...
4. almost every other day...
5. several times a week / a year
6. every so often...
7. now and then...
8. from time to time...
9. once in a while...
10. on a good day...

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1, 2, and 3 are quite positive. When we use 'at least' with phrase 3 it means more than half of the time.
2. Phrase 4 means a little less than half the time.
3. In Phrase 5, several sounds quite positive. It means a number more than 3. It also says that 3 times a week is often.
4. Phrases 6, 7, 8, and 9 are less often, they are similar in meaning to 'occasionally'.
5. Phrase 10 suggests that something doesn't happen very often but that when it happens, it's a good thing.





## SPECULATING

1. No doubt the Joneses will be there
2. It's unlikely that she'll come now
3. I bet / you can bet (that) they'll be late
4. I imagine (that) it'll be busy
5. The chances are that he'll win
6. There's no chance of them coming now
7. In all probability, it will be raining
8. My guess is that she'll lose
9. There's just a chance that it will work
10. I wouldn't be surprised if it rained

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 6 suggests that we are certain that something is not going to happen.
2. Phrases 1, 2 and 7 are a little weaker. They are used when we think something is very likely or unlikely to happen.
3. Phrase 3 is similar to phrase 1, but less formal.
4. Phrases 4, 5, 8 and 10 are used when we think something is quite likely, but we aren't really very confident of it.
5. Phrase 9 is much weaker. We think that something is unlikely, but is possible.



# SURPRISE

1. Really?
2. What?
3. What a surprise!
4. Well I never! / Blimey!
5. That's the last thing I expected
6. You're kidding!
7. I don't believe it! / Are you serious?
8. I'm speechless!
9. I'd never have guessed.
10. You don't say!

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We say phrases 1 and 2 with rising intonation. It's important to make your voice go up at the end. You are inviting the other speaker to give you more information.
2. Phrase 3 is a general expression of surprise
3. Phrases in 4 are strong exclamations. 'Blimey!' is a little rude as it literally means 'God blind me!'
4. We say phrase 5 when something is completely different to what you expected - after a surprising event.
5. Phrases in 6 and 7 are saying that we really don't believe the information.
6. Phrase 8 is saying that you are so surprised that you can't speak.
7. Phrase 10 is a little old fashioned. If people say this nowadays, they are probably being sarcastic and they really mean that it isn't surprising at all.



## TALKING ABOUT BARGAINS

1. It was cheaper than usual.
2. It was discounted.
3. I got two for the price of one.
4. It was 20% off.
5. It was a real bargain.
6. It was on special offer.
7. They knocked £10 off the price.
8. It was reduced by £10.
9. It was in the sale.
10. I got it half-price.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 1 doesn't give a lot of information about price, and suggests that you saved a little money and were happy with this - perhaps it was a surprise for you.
2. 2 is similar to 1, but a bit more formal.
3. 3 is a common marketing ploy in shops and supermarkets nowadays, but is better than 'three for the price of two' or 'buy two, get one free.'
4. 4 and 8 focus on the saving you made - we all like to save money!
5. 5 is common when we are really happy with something we bought because it was cheap. We emphasize REAL a lot.
6. 6 and 9 are similar - and are often used to justify buying something that maybe you don't actually need.
7. 7 means that the seller gave you a special deal for something and decided to reduce the price just for you. This can happen if you notice a slight problem with what you are buying.
8. 10 is like 5, and also like 3 - but the focus is on the saving you made, not the product.



## TALKING ABOUT CHEAP PRICES

1. It was quite cheap.
2. It didn't cost that much.
3. It wasn't very expensive.
4. It wasn't that expensive, really.
5. It was quite reasonable, actually.
6. It was good value for money.
7. I thought it'd be more expensive.
8. I'm happy with the price.
9. That's a good price.
10. You pay a lot more in other places.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 1 is common - notice we often soften talk about price with words like 'very/quite' - it's very natural English.
2. With 2 we put a strong emphasis on 'THAT' to mean 'not as much as you think'.
3. 3 is normal - but things that are 'not expensive' normally cost more than things that we say 'are cheap'. This is because positive verbs are stronger than negative verbs in English.
4. 4 is like 2 with emphatic THAT. We use this expression sometimes to justify buying something.
5. When prices are reasonable, they are fair - neither cheap nor expensive.
6. In business, you often hear about 'value for money' like in 6. Things can be expensive, but you get a lot of additional features for your money.
7. We use 7 to show we are pleasantly surprised by the cost of something. Again, this can be used to justify buying something.
8. 8 and 9 are quite often used when negotiating about prices in business, or when buying something like a second-hand car. 9 could also be used by the seller to convince you to buy.
9. 10 is another sort of justification for buying something. It's also the sort of thing you can say on holiday in a cheap country: You pay a lot more for this at home.



## TALKING ABOUT GOOD IDEAS

1. That's a great idea.
2. That's an idea.
3. Good idea!
4. What a great idea!
5. I think that's a fantastic idea.
6. I like that idea.
7. I like the idea of that.
8. That's not a bad idea.
9. You know what? That's a good idea.
10. Cool!

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 1 and 2 are very common expressions. 2 has stress on THAT'S, and 1 can have double stress on THAT'S and GREAT.
2. 3 Shows more enthusiasm, which is why it is a short expression. You can also say 'Great/Fantastic/Wonderful idea, etc.
3. The structure in 4 is very useful: What a/an/- + adjective + noun: What a nice person/what a terrible mistake/What great shoes!
4. Adding 'I think' in 5 shows your personal appreciation, and we often stress 'I' to emphasize this.
5. 6 and 7 are similar, but we stress LIKE in 6, and normally IDEA in 7.
6. 8 is a variant of 6. We often use a negative structure (not + negative adjective: it's not uncommon, it's not impossible, it's not unlikely) for a positive effect for emphasis.
7. 9 uses a rhetorical question: You know what (I think)? And is a strong way of giving your opinion of something.
8. 10 This is a common informal way of saying you like an idea or suggestion.



## TALKING ABOUT RAIN

1. Is that rain?
2. It's only a shower.
3. It's pouring.
4. It's bucketing down.
5. We'd better run for it.
6. It's been raining all day.
7. I'm soaked to the skin.
8. I'm drenched.
9. Looks like rain.
10. We could do with some rain.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. We say 1 when we feel the first drop of rain, before it starts to rain hard.
2. We say 2 if we think it's going to stop raining soon.
3. 3 and 4 are talking about really heavy rain.
4. 5 is a suggestion to run somewhere to get out of the rain.
5. With 7 and 8, we are saying that we are very wet or our clothes are very wet.
6. 9 is something we say when we think it is going to rain soon. The speaker is probably looking at big black rain clouds.
7. We say 10 when we want it to rain soon. Nowadays, many parts of Britain don't have enough rain. Farmers and gardeners often say this.



## TALKING ABOUT WEATHER

1. It's freezing outside!
2. It's a bit chilly. Wrap up warm.
3. It's cold.
4. It's Arctic out there.
5. It's quite fresh - take a jumper.
6. You can see your breath in the air.
7. It's below zero.
8. It must be minus five or more.
9. It's pretty frosty today.
10. My car's iced up, it's that cold.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. 1 is useful when it's very cold.
2. 2. This is advice to wear warm clothes and a coat etc because it is getting cold. We can use this for summer nights and for winter days.
3. 3 is the basic expression you can use in all situations.
4. 4 Arctic indicates that it is very cold - colder than normal.
5. 5. Some people don't feel the cold - so we use 'fresh' as a positive term.
6. 6 describes cold days when your breath forms a cloud - it's poetic!
7. 7 indicates the temperature is very cold. Note we don't say 'less than zero.'
8. 8 We use 'minus' with a number to give the exact temperature.
9. 9 Frosty mornings are quite common in winter.
10. 10 When there is ice on your windscreen, we use this expression.



## TALKING ABOUT TALENT

1. He's very good at math.
2. He's a born footballer.
3. She's a great dancer. She's a natural.
4. She's head and shoulders above the rest.
5. She's a first rate teacher.
6. He's in a class of his own.
7. He's got a natural talent for sports.
8. She can do it in her sleep.
9. No-one comes close to him as a painter.
10. As a driver, he's one of a kind.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Notice we say 'good AT' for ability.
2. This means you were born to play football.
3. Being a natural at something is very positive.
4. This image shows she stands out, so is better.
5. It is better to be first rate than second or third rate!
6. This means no-one is close to his ability.
7. This is a version of 3.
8. She is so good she can even perform asleep.
9. This is a stronger version of 4 and 6.
10. This means he is unique, like in 6.





## TALKING ABOUT TV

1. What's on tonight?
2. What's on the other side?
3. It's starting!
4. Where's the remote?
5. It's a repeat.
6. This is a load of rubbish.
7. Quiet! I'm trying to watch this.
8. Are you watching or can I turn over?
9. I've set the video.
10. My program's on in a minute.

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. This is the most useful question about the programs on TV tonight.
2. We use this expression to see if there is a better program on another channel.
3. We use 3 to warn someone that a favorite program is about to start.
4. 4 is a common way of asking for control of the TV. Another question is "who's got the remote?"
5. We use 5 when we have seen the program before. This happens more and more.
6. 6 is a useful negative comment on a program or film you don't like.
7. This is useful if someone is making noise while you are trying to concentrate.
8. If a boring program is on and you want to change, you use 8.
9. This tells someone that you are recording a program, now or in the future.
10. We often refer to our favorite program as 'my program.'



# TEN WAYS OF TALKING ABOUT EATING

1. I'm full.
2. I couldn't eat another mouthful.
3. I've done very well, thanks.
4. I'll burst if I eat another mouthful.
5. I couldn't manage another mouthful.
6. I'm stuffed.
7. I've had all I can eat.
8. I can hardly move.
9. There's no room for any more.
10. I can't eat any more, thanks.

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is a very common expression to show you have eaten enough.
2. Phrase 3 is quite polite.
3. Phrases 2 and 5 are similar and show you are completely full.
4. Phrase 4 is a dramatic image - and not a very nice one! - that shows how full you are.
5. Phrase 6 is very informal and we use it with friends only.
6. Phrase 7 is quite factual, and is similar to 2 and 5.
7. Phrases 8, 9 and 10 are all quite neutral expressions and can be used in semi-formal situations and relaxed situations.



## WANTING THINGS

1. I'd really like / I'd love a day off
2. I wouldn't mind a...
3. I could (really) do with a...
4. I could use a...
5. What I'd really like / love is a...
6. All (that) we need is a day off
7. Ideally, what I'd like is a day off
8. A \_\_\_\_\_ would be (much) appreciated
9. A \_\_\_\_\_ would go down well.
10. I'm dying for / longing for...

### How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrase 1 is quite strong. The speaker really wants a day off.
2. Phrases 2, 3 and 4 are a little less strong. The speaker still really wants a day off but she is being less forceful.
3. In phrase 5, if you put stress on 'really' it is saying that a day off is something that you want in your heart. But if you don't have it you will be okay.
4. Phrase 6 is saying that if you have (a day off) you will be happy and you will not want anything else.
5. Phrase 7 is saying that the best thing is for you to have a day off. But if it doesn't happen you will be okay.
6. Phrases 8 is more formal and more polite. You could use it in a formal letter of request.
7. Phrases 9 and 10 are more informal. Phrase 10 is really quite strong and not very polite. It's best to use this with friends and people who you know well.



# WAYS OF SAYING SOMEONE IS DRUNK

1. Tipsy
2. Merry
3. Pissed / sloshed
4. Tanked up
5. Drunk as a skunk
6. Legless
7. Wrecked / hammered
8. Out for the count
9. Intoxicated
10. Under the influence (of alcohol)

## How To Use These Phrases In Your English

1. Phrases 1 and 2 are not very strong and mean that the person has only had a little alcohol and is not very drunk. Phrase 2 also suggests enjoyment in a group.
2. Phrase 3 is a bit stronger. People who are 'pissed' have lost their inhibitions, are talking loudly and may have started singing.
3. Phrase 4 says that the person is very drunk and has consumed a large amount of liquid (probably beer).
4. Phrase 5 is used to describe somebody who has had too much. He / she probably cannot talk in a normal way.
5. Phrase 6 is used to describe somebody who cannot walk properly. Seeing two friends carrying a 'legless' drinker along the street is a common sight around UK city centers most nights of the week.
6. Phrase 7 says that the person is very drunk and emphasizes the destructive effect of the alcohol. Surprisingly, many younger Britons use this word in a positive way to say how much they enjoyed a night out.
7. Phrase 8 means that the person is no longer conscious.
8. Phrases 9 and 10 are more formal. Phrase 10 in particular is used by the police and in the legal profession.





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