

LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS – Speaking

Asking for help

Excuse me. Could you tell me where ... is?
Excuse me. Can you tell me...?
Do you know...?
You wouldn't know..., would you?
Do you happen to know...?
I'd like to know..., please.
And there's another thing I'd like to know...
I would be interested to know...
Please could you tell me...

Asking for directions

Excuse me, could you tell me how to get to ... (place), please?
Which way is the ... (place), please?
Could you tell me where ... is, please?
Do you know where ... is?

Asking someone to repeat

Could you say that again, please?
Would you mind repeating that, please?
Could you repeat that, please?
I'm sorry I didn't catch that.
I'm sorry, what was ... again?
I'm sorry?
I beg your pardon?
I'm sorry, what was that?

Checking that you've understood

So, I / We have to...
Do you want me / us to...?
Am I / Are we supposed to...?
Should I...?
So, the (general/basic) idea is to...
Do you mean...?
Does this mean that...?
So am I right in saying...?
So, what you're saying is...

Asking for clarification

What exactly do you mean by....?
Could you explain a bit further...?

Would you like to add to your comments about.....?

Expressing uncertainty

I'm not really sure but I think...
I can't say for certain but...
It's difficult to say exactly but perhaps...
I couldn't say, really...
I'm not sure.
I don't know for sure but...

Giving yourself time to think

Well, let me see...
Let me think...
Let me get this right...
Um, well, that's a difficult question / that's an interesting question.
I'll have to / Let me think about that for a moment...
I think it's difficult to answer that question...
How shall I put it?...
Now, how can I best say this...?

Interrupting politely

Could I just say something?
Actually, I'd just like to say...
Sorry to interrupt, but...
Oh, while I remember / before I forget...
Excuse me (, but)...
May I interrupt?
Could I please ask....
May I ask a question?
Pardon me, but ...

Saying you don't know

I'm afraid I can't help you.
I'm sorry, I don't know.

BEING POLITE

Showing interest

Uh-huh!
Right!
Really?
That's interesting!
And?
What then?

Oh?
What happened next?

Showing that you're listening

Now, you mentioned...
So, that's how...?
Yes, I was going to ask you about that...
Could you give me / us an example of...?
Could you explain in more detail...?

Thanking and responding

Many thanks.
Thanks a lot.
Cheers!
That's very kind of you.
Thank you very much

Not at all.
It's a pleasure. / My pleasure.
You're welcome.
Don't mention it.
Any time.
That's OK / all right.
I'm glad to have been of some help.

Apologising (and making excuses)

Sorry
I'm very/awfully/so/extremely sorry.
Excuse me.
Sorry, (it was) my fault.
I do apologise.
Please accept my apologies.
I'm sorry but...
I apologise for...but...
Forgive me for... but ...

Accepting an apology

That's all right/OK.
Not to worry.
That's quite/perfectly all right.
No reason/need to apologise.
Don't worry about it

TALKING ABOUT ACTIONS

Giving instructions

Make sure...
Remember... (to do).
Be careful... (not to do).
Don't forget... (to do)

Giving directions

Go straight on.
Take the first/second on the left / right.
Turn left / right.
Go along... as far as...
Take the number 7 bus / tram.
Get off (the bus / tram) at... (place).
Carry on until you see...
Look out for...

Checking someone has understood

Are you with me?
Did you follow that?
Have you got that?
Is everything clear so far?
Does that seem to make sense?

Sequencing actions

First of all, .../ To begin with,

Next, .../Then, .../After that, ..//Secondly....

Finally, .../To finish with.....

Making suggestions

Shall I / we... (do)?
Let's... (do).
Why don't I / we... (do)?
How about... (doing)?
What about... (doing)?
I think we should... (do).
I suggest that we... (do).
It might be a good idea if we / you... (do).
I think the best way of dealing with this situation would be to... (do).
If you ask me, I think we / you should... (do).
We could...

Agreeing to a suggestion

Yes, I think that's a good idea.
That's probably the best option.
Sure, why not?
Yes, definitely.
By all means.
Good idea!

Rejecting a suggestion

Yes, but wouldn't it be better to... (do).
That's a good idea, but... (do).

Making invitations

What are you doing on... (day)?
Have you got any plans for... (day/time of day)?
Would you like to... (do)?
Do you fancy... (doing)?
What about... (doing)?

Accepting an invitation

Yes, I'd love to.
Yes, that would be great.

Refusing an invitation

I'm afraid I'm busy on... (day). How about next... (day)?
I'm sorry I can't. I'm... (doing something else).
I'm afraid I can't make it. I'm... (doing something else).
I'd love to, but...
That's very kind of you, but...

Expressing a preference

I'd much rather... (do) than... (do something else).
I prefer... to...
I'd prefer to... (do).
I think... is much more interesting than...
I don't find... half as interesting as...
I like... better than...

Making recommendations

You mustn't miss the...
You must go to the...
You've got to... (do)
You'll love the...

I wouldn't recommend the...
You definitely wouldn't enjoy going to the...

Offering something

Would you like...?
What can I get you?
Help yourself to...
Please have some...
Would you care for some...?
Can I offer you...?
Can I get you a... / anything?
If you do..., I will...

Accepting something that's offered

Yes, please.
Thank you very much.
That would be very nice.
I'd like some... , please.
I'd be pleased to accept...
Fine, I agree to...

Declining something that's offered

I'm all right/I'm fine, thank you.
No, thanks.
Not this time, thanks.
I'm not sure I could, thank you.
I'm sorry, but I'd rather...
No thanks, I really prefer...

Asking for advice

What do you think I should do?
What would you do (if you were in my situation)?
What would you advise me to do?

Giving advice

I think you should... (do).
You could... (do).
Why don't you... (do)?
If I were you, I'd... (do).
Have you tried... (doing)?
You ought to (do)...
It's a good idea to...

Asking for permission

Can I.../May I..., please?
Do you mind if I...?
Mind if I...?
Any chance I could...?
I wonder/I was wondering if I could...
Would it be possible for me to...
Do you have any objection if I...?
Would it bother you if I...?

Giving permission

Of course.
By all means.
Certainly.
Yes, that's OK/fine.
You're welcome to...
Please feel free to...
Please don't hesitate to...
Sure.
OK.
Go ahead.
Why not?

Refusing permission

I'm afraid not.
I'm sorry it's not possible...
I'm afraid you can't.
I'm afraid that's out of the question.

COMMUNICATING IDEAS

Agreeing

I'd probably agree on that.
I think that's probably right.
That's absolutely right.
Sure! That's exactly what I think.
I couldn't agree with you more.
That's what I think.

Disagreeing

Yes, but...
True, but...
I see what you mean, but...
I suppose so, but...

Yes, but on the other hand...
I'm afraid I disagree / don't agree / can't agree...
I'm not sure if that's strictly true.
You have a point there, but...
Actually, I'm not sure if I agree with that.

Asking what someone thinks

What do you think?
What do you reckon?
What's your opinion about/of... ?
What's your position on...?
What's your reaction to...?
What's your take on... ?
Do you have any thoughts on... ?

Stating consequences

As a result, ...
Consequently, ...
Because of this, ...
Due to (cause),...

Expressing two points of view

On the one hand..., on the other hand...
Although I'd..., I certainly wouldn't...
While I might..., I don't think I'd...
Of course I'd..., but I'm not sure if I'd...
There's no doubt that it would..., but there's also a chance it might...

Giving examples

For example, ...
For instance, ...
One example of this is...
To give you an idea, ...
Look at the case of...
Take, for example, ...
Let' say, ...

Justifying your opinions

Personally, I (don't) think... because...
Let's (not)... because...
In my opinion, I (don't) feel... because...
I would definitely (not)... because...
It would be better to... as...
I (don't) feel that it's important to... as...

Linking what you're saying

Anyway, ...
True, but ...
As a matter of fact, ...
... sort of...
Hmm...
... you know...
... believe me...

Ordering / Sequencing

First of all, ...
To start with, ...
Secondly, ...
Another thing is that...
Alternatively, ...
Last but not least, ...

Persuading

But don't you agree that...
Yes, but I'm sure you'd agree that...
Don't you think that...

Presenting an opinion

(Personally), I think that...
It seems to me that...
From my point of view, ...
In my opinion, ...
I'm convinced that...
It is really clear that...
It is obvious that...
I believe that
I would say that....

Prioritising

... would be much more important than...
I don't think... would be nearly as important / urgent as...
... will definitely be the most / least ...

Speculating

It's difficult to say exactly but I suppose it could be...
I'm not sure but it might be...
It can't be... because...
It must be... because...
I would guess...

Opening

I'm going to talk about...

I'd like to say something about...

So, what can I say about..... ?

Speaking personally, (to introduce personal opinions or experience)

Summarising

So what it comes down to is...

The point I'm trying to make is...

Let me just recap what's been said so far.

In short, ...

To sum up, ...

Basically, ...

Overall, it would seem that...

Polite indirect questions

I'd like to know...

Could you tell me...

May I ask...

I don't know...