

Small Talk: Conversation Starters

Talking about the weather

Beautiful day, isn't it?

Can you believe all of this rain we've been having?

It looks like it's going to snow.

It sure would be nice to be in Hawaii right about now.

I hear they're calling for thunderstorms all weekend.

We couldn't ask for a nicer day, could we?

How about this weather?

Did you order this sunshine?

Talking about current events

Did you catch the news today?

Did you hear about that fire on Fourth St?

What do you think about this transit strike?

I read in the paper today that the Sears Mall is closing.

I heard on the radio today that they are finally going to start building the new bridge.

How about those Reds? Do you think they're going to win tonight?

At the office

Looking forward to the weekend?

Have you worked here long?

I can't believe how busy/quiet we are today, can you?

Has it been a long week?

You look like you could use a cup of coffee.

What do you think of the new computers?

At a social event

So, how do you know Justin?

Have you tried the cabbage rolls that Sandy made?

Are you enjoying yourself?

It looks like you could use another drink.

Pretty nice place, huh?

I love your dress. Can I ask where you got it?

Out for a walk

How old is your baby?

What's your puppy's name?

The tulips are sure beautiful at this time of year, aren't they?

How do you like the new park?

Nice day to be outside, isn't it?

Waiting somewhere

I didn't think it would be so busy today.

You look like you've got your hands full (with children or goods).

The bus must be running late today.

It looks like we are going to be here a while, huh?

I'll have to remember not to come here on Mondays.

How long have you been waiting?

Practice 1: At a Bus Stop

Read the small talk below and find the 10 mistakes. Then check your answers.

Woman: We could ask for a better day, could we?

Man: I know. There isn't a cloud in the sky. I love this time of year.

Woman: Me too. The cherry blossoms are beautiful, you think?

Man: They sure are. But I heard he is calling for rain all weekend.

Woman: Really? Oh well. I have to work all weekend anyway. I'm a doctor.

Man: Wow. I'm sure you make good money with that diamond watch you have on.

Woman: Ah, this bus seems to be running late. How long of a wait is it already?

Man: I've been here for at least fifteen minutes now.

Woman: Where are you heading today?

Man: Actually, I'm going to the City Hall to cast my vote for mayor.

Woman: Oh, what a coincidence. So am I! Who are you voting for?

Man: Um, well...I'm still thinking about it.

Woman: Here comes a bus now.

Man: Oh good. Wait, that's not the bus we want. That bus goes downtown.

Woman: Well, it looks like we'll be waiting a little longer. I guess, I'll use this time to catch up on my reading.

Man: I love reading. Right now I'm reading a Stephen King book. Do you like Stephen King?

Woman: Not really.

Man: Oh, here's our bus.

Woman: Oh great. I thought it would never come. Well, have a nice day.

Man: Say, did you catch the news today?

Now check your answers. Did you find all 10 mistakes?

Practice 2: At the Office

Read the small talk below and find the 10 mistakes. Then check your answers.

Woman: Hi there.

Man: Hi. I haven't seen you around here before. Have you been working long?

Woman: No, I've only been here a few months. I work in the Human Resources Department.

Man: Oh, you must make more money than I do then. I'm in Sales.

Woman: Sales sounds like an interesting job.

Man: It's okay. Hey, you look like you could really have a coffee.

Woman: Yes, it's been a really hectic week.

Man: Tell me about it! At least it's supposing to be a nice weekend.

Woman: Yes, I've listened that they are calling for blue skies.

Man: Say, did you happen to catch the game last night?

Woman: No, I was working late.

Man: It was a great game. We won in overtime.

Woman: Actually, I don't even know who was playing. I don't really follow sports.

Man: The Chiefs! Do you think they're going to make it to the finals this year?

Woman: I'm not sure. Well, I better get back to my desk.

Man: Speaking of desks, what do you think of the new office furniture?

Woman: It's nice, but I would rather get paid for my overtime hours than have new furniture.

Man: Oh. Well, I think I'll be heading home early today. It might be snow.

Woman: I know. I can't believe all of this cold weather. Hopefully Spring will come soon.

Man: I can't wait until Spring.

Woman: Me neither! My divorce will finally come through by then!

Now check your answers. Did you find all 10 mistakes?

Practice 3: At a Party

Read the small talk below and find the 10 mistakes. Then check your answers.

Woman 1: (Standing in a corner drinking a glass of wine by herself)

Man: Hi there. Why aren't you dancing?

Woman 1: (Smiles. No response.)

Man: Hello. Have you tried Felicia's punch yet?

Woman 2: No, but I was just about to.

Man: Don't. It's terrible.

Woman 2: Oh. Okay.

Man: So, how are you knowing Rick?

Woman 2: Oh, Rick and I go way back. We studied nursing together.

Man: Nursing. Hmm. I heard on the radio today that all of you nurses are on strike. Are they not paying you enough?

Woman 2: Actually it's about working conditions.

Man: I see. So, have you had a chance to take a dip in the pool yet?

Woman 2: No, not yet. How about you?

Man: No, I need to lose some weight before I put on a bathing suit. But you have a great figure.

Woman 2: Uh, thanks. Well, I better go and jingle. There are a few people I haven't said hello to yet.

Man: Wait! Did you hear that the Pope is coming to town?

Woman 2: Ya. I heard that on the news today. I bet it'll be really tough to get to see him.

Man: I know. But I'm not Catholic anyway. Are you?

Woman 2: Yes, I am actually. Well, it looks the sun is finally coming out, I think I'll go take that swim.

Man: You better hurry. I hear they are asking for thunderstorms this afternoon.

Now check your answers. Did you find all 10 mistakes?