

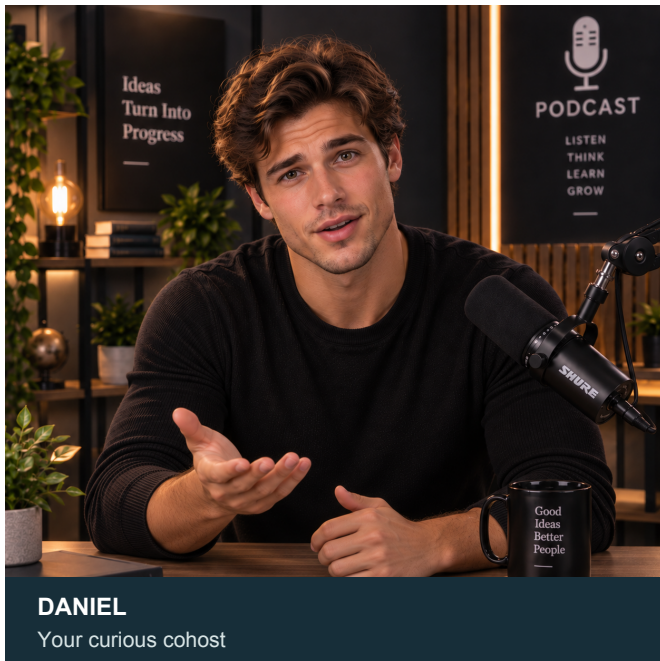


Invitations and Making Plans

English listening & speaking with Daniel and Maya

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Practise useful English from this episode.

B1-B2 / 19:29 AUDIO / FULL TRANSCRIPT



DANIEL

Your curious cohost



MAYA

Your English teacher

LISTEN. READ. SAY IT.

- 1 Listen once for the story.
- 2 Read along and notice useful expressions.
- 3 Choose one useful phrase and try saying it out loud.



Transcript edition 01

01 / 09



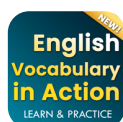
FULL TRANSCRIPT / 01 OF 08

The conversation

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

00:00 From vague idea to real plan

- Daniel** Welcome back! I'm Daniel, and I want to invite some friends out this weekend. My first message says, "We should do something sometime." It feels friendly, but it also feels like nothing will ever happen.
- Maya** I'm Maya, your English teacher, and you've found the problem. "We should do something sometime" is warm but vague. Add an activity and a possible day: "Would you like to go for a walk on Saturday afternoon?"
- Daniel** That's clear. But if I say Saturday, will they think I'm giving them an order? I don't want to sound like a calendar with shoes.
- Maya** A question keeps it open. "Are you free on Saturday?" or "Would you be up for a walk this weekend?" "Be up for" means feel interested in doing something. It sounds casual and friendly.
- Daniel** I could say, "Would you be up for trying the new café?" The café has enormous cakes. That may be my real reason for organising the whole event.
- Maya** Exactly. Give the person an easy way to answer. If you're inviting someone you don't know well, "Would you like to join us?" is polite. For close friends, "Do you fancy coming along?" is more informal in British English.
- Daniel** "Come along" means join the activity, not walk beside me for miles. Good. What if the invitation is to a study group, not cake? Do I use the same tone?
- Maya** You can. "A few of us are meeting to revise on Thursday. Would you like to come along?" The person knows who, what, and when. If the place isn't decided yet, say that honestly.
- Daniel** My usual message is, "Let's hang out," then I wait for someone else to become the event manager. What's the difference between "hang out" and "meet up"?
- Maya** "Hang out" is very casual and focuses on spending time together. "Meet up" focuses on arranging a meeting. You could say, "Let's meet up at the park and hang out for an hour." Both are common.
- Daniel** So a good invitation has enough detail to be real, but still gives people a choice. My cake plan is already becoming more professional.
- Maya** Yes. One clear suggestion is better than ten vague ones. You can adjust the plan together after someone says they're interested.



Transcript edition 01

02 / 09

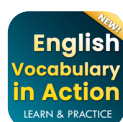


The conversation

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

02:27 Time, place, and the little details

- Daniel** My friend says yes to the café. Success! Then we both arrive at different branches. There are apparently three cafés with the same name. What should I have said?
- Maya** Give the exact location: "Let's meet at the café on King Street, near the library." If you're messaging, send the address or a map link. "Meet at" is for the place; "meet on" is for a street or a day.
- Daniel** And what about time? I say "around two," but my friend thinks two sharp and I think two thirty with a dramatic entrance.
- Maya** If the timing matters, be specific: "Shall we meet at two o'clock?" "Around two" means approximately two and allows some flexibility, but not unlimited flexibility. If you're delayed, let them know promptly.
- Daniel** Suppose I'm inviting four people. Can I write, "Let's meet Saturday, two, café," like a very tired robot?
- Maya** Better to make one complete sentence: "How about meeting at the King Street café at two on Saturday?" Then add, "Does that work for everyone?" That question invites people to mention conflicts before you book anything.
- Daniel** "Does that work for you?" means "Is that convenient for you," right? It doesn't mean they have to complete a task.
- Maya** Right. You can also ask, "Would another time suit you better?" "Suit" means be convenient in this context. For a group, offer two options rather than asking everybody to choose from every hour of the weekend.
- Daniel** I could say, "I can do Saturday at two or Sunday at eleven. Which works better?" That's much easier than thirty messages about everyone's calendars.
- Maya** Exactly. Mention the likely length too if it's useful: "I can stay for about an hour." A friend may feel more comfortable saying yes when they know it isn't an entire-day commitment.
- Daniel** What if the plan costs money? "Come to dinner" might sound like I'm buying dinner for everyone. My bank account would like a warning.
- Maya** Be clear before people agree: "There's a set menu for twenty pounds," or "We can each pay for our own meal." You don't need to make it awkward; a simple practical detail prevents a later surprise.
- Daniel** So people need the place, time, cost if relevant, and what to bring. My invitation is beginning to look like a tiny travel guide.
- Maya** Just enough information to help people decide. The friendly tone still matters more than perfect formatting.





FULL TRANSCRIPT / 03 OF 08

The conversation

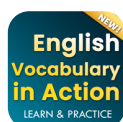
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

05:03 Saying yes without confusion

- Daniel** I'm on the other side now. Someone invites me to a film night. I say, "Maybe!" because I want to sound relaxed, but I really mean yes. Is that a problem?
- Maya** It can be. "Maybe" sounds uncertain. If you can go, say, "I'd love to. Thanks for inviting me." Then confirm the detail: "What time should I arrive?" That's warm and useful.
- Daniel** What if I like the idea but need to check something first? I don't want to promise and then discover my family has booked me for a three-hour furniture trip.
- Maya** Say, "That sounds great. Let me check my plans, and I'll get back to you by tomorrow." "Get back to you" means reply later with an answer. Give a time and actually follow through.
- Daniel** My old version was, "I'll let you know," then I vanished into the internet. I see why people might not invite me twice.
- Maya** "I'll let you know" is fine if you do it. The key is the follow-up. A short "I checked, and I can come" or "Thanks, but I can't make it this time" is better than silence.
- Daniel** Is "I'm in" okay as an answer? It sounds as if I've joined a secret organisation.
- Maya** "I'm in" is a very casual way to say you agree to join. Use it with friends: "A picnic on Sunday? I'm in!" For a more formal event, "Thank you for the invitation. I'd be pleased to attend" fits better.
- Daniel** Could I say, "Count me in"? I hear that too. Does it mean they should add me to the group?
- Maya** Yes. "Count me in" means include me. If there's a booking, make sure the organiser knows whether you're bringing anyone else. Don't assume a plus-one is welcome; ask first.
- Daniel** Ah, the surprise guest problem. If someone says "bring a friend," can I bring six friends and a small dog?
- Maya** Probably not. Ask, "Would it be all right if I brought my friend Sam?" Clear questions protect the host's space and budget. If it's a public event, the answer may be different.
- Daniel** Once I've said yes, what if I forget the address? Can I ask again, or does that prove I'm a terrible friend?
- Maya** Ask again. "Could you send me the address when you have a moment?" is completely normal. It is better than arriving at the wrong cinema and pretending you meant to see a different film.

07:32 Declining kindly and taking a rain check

- Daniel** Now the difficult part. My friend invites me to a six-in-the-morning run. I love my friend, but at six in the morning I am mostly a blanket.





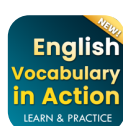
FULL TRANSCRIPT / 04 OF 08

The conversation

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

07:32 Declining kindly and taking a rain check (continued)

- Maya** You can decline without a long excuse. "Thanks for thinking of me, but I can't make it on Saturday." "Can't make it" means can't attend. If you want to meet another time, suggest a real alternative.
- Daniel** Could I say, "I'll take a rain check"? What if there's no rain, and the run is indoors?
- Maya** A "rain check" is an informal promise to do it another time. Weather doesn't matter now. You might say, "Could I take a rain check? I'd love to meet for coffee next week." Use it only if you truly want to reschedule.
- Daniel** If I don't want to run ever, I shouldn't say "rain check," because my friend will return with running shoes and hope.
- Maya** Exactly. You can be kind and clear: "Thanks for inviting me. Running isn't really my thing, but I hope you have a great time." You don't need to insult the activity or invent a dramatic illness.
- Daniel** Sometimes I can't afford the plan. Can I say that without announcing the contents of my wallet to the whole group?
- Maya** Yes. "That sounds fun, but it's a bit outside my budget right now." Or simply, "I can't do that this week. Would you be up for a free walk instead?" You can offer an alternative that works for you.
- Daniel** What if I already said yes and must cancel? Is "Sorry, plans changed" enough?
- Maya** Tell them as soon as you know. "I'm sorry, I won't be able to come tonight. Something has come up." "Come up" means happen unexpectedly. If a booking depends on your place, acknowledge that and help if you can.
- Daniel** So I shouldn't cancel five minutes before dinner with a picture of my sofa and the words "It won't."
- Maya** Please don't. You could say, "I know you booked a table, and I'm sorry for the late notice." If you're still interested, suggest a new date. The purpose isn't to produce a perfect excuse; it's to respect the other person's effort.
- Daniel** And if someone declines my invitation, I should not ask for a detailed report on why they prefer their sofa.
- Maya** Right. Reply, "No problem at all. Maybe another time." Leave the door open without pressure. An invitation is an offer, not a debt.



Transcript edition 01

05 / 09

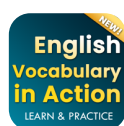


The conversation

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

09:59 Making plans with a group

- Daniel** A group plan has escaped from my phone. Six people want to meet, two have different free days, one wants a restaurant, and someone has sent only a dancing penguin picture.
- Maya** Group chats can become noisy. Send one clear summary: "So far, Saturday at six works for four of us. Shall we go with that?" Give people a simple question to answer and a deadline for replies.
- Daniel** A deadline for a social plan sounds serious. Could I say, "Please let me know by Thursday so I can book the table"?
- Maya** Perfect. The reason makes it friendly. You can also say, "I'll book for everyone who confirms by Thursday." That tells the group what will happen without chasing each person every hour.
- Daniel** What if someone replies, "I'm flexible"? Is that helpful, or does it mean they can bend like a gymnast?
- Maya** It means several options work for them. You might answer, "Great, I'll put you down for Saturday unless you say otherwise." "Put you down for" means include your name on the plan or booking.
- Daniel** Now the group wants a picnic. Should I tell everyone to bring food, or will we end up with six bags of crisps and one lonely carrot?
- Maya** Assign simple categories: "Could you bring drinks?" "I'll bring sandwiches." "Who can bring fruit?" For a potluck, where everyone contributes food, ask about allergies or dietary needs without making assumptions.
- Daniel** "Does anyone have any food allergies or dietary requirements I should know about?" That sounds much more useful than guessing from someone's face.
- Maya** Exactly. Confirm practical things too: where to meet, whether there's a cost, and what happens if the weather changes. Put the final plan in one message so no one has to search through fifty penguins.
- Daniel** "Final plan: Saturday at one, north entrance to the park. Bring something small to share. I'll bring the picnic blanket and an unreasonable amount of napkins."
- Maya** That's clear, warm, and memorable. A light joke is fine when the details remain easy to find.
- Daniel** What if someone never answers? I don't want to count them, but I also don't want them to feel left out.
- Maya** Send one gentle reminder: "I'm booking tonight, so let me know if you'd like to join." After that, make the booking for the people who confirmed. You have done your part.



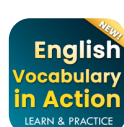


The conversation

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

12:27 When a plan has to change

- Daniel** It's picnic day. The weather forecast says heavy rain, and the sky agrees. Can I say, "The picnic is off," or does that sound too sudden?
- Maya** "The picnic is off" clearly means cancelled, but add an explanation and an alternative: "It's raining heavily, so the picnic is off. Would everyone be happy to meet at the café instead?"
- Daniel** If I move it to another day, do I say "put it off"? I learned that can mean delay something, but it sometimes sounds like I'm avoiding it.
- Maya** "Put it off" means postpone it, and context matters. "Let's put the picnic off until next Saturday" is fine. "I've been putting it off for weeks" suggests you kept avoiding it. You can also say "postpone" or "reschedule."
- Daniel** I want to keep the tone positive. "The weather has other plans, but we can meet next Saturday." Is that natural?
- Maya** Very natural. Say what changes and what stays the same: "Same place, same time, one week later." Then ask people to confirm again. Someone who was free this week may not be free next week.
- Daniel** What if the café has closed early? I don't want to send everyone on a tour of locked doors.
- Maya** Check before you announce it. Then send an update: "Change of plan: the café closes at four, so let's meet at the library café at three." If people are already travelling, call or message them directly.
- Daniel** How do I ask whether people saw the update without sounding like an angry manager? "Acknowledge receipt of this message immediately" seems unfriendly.
- Maya** Try, "Could you give this a quick thumbs-up when you see it?" In a small group, that's enough. For a bigger event, put the new time and place at the start of the message.
- Daniel** I see: "NEW PLACE: library café. NEW TIME: three o'clock." My capital letters have finally found a useful job.
- Maya** Yes, as long as the whole message isn't shouting. Changes happen. People care most about knowing the new plan in time.
- Daniel** And if the plan really cannot happen, I can say, "I'm sorry to cancel. I hope we can get together soon."
- Maya** Exactly. "Get together" means meet socially. A simple, honest cancellation is better than keeping a bad plan alive because you're embarrassed to change it.





The conversation

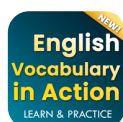
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

14:56 Two invitations in real time

- Daniel** Let's practise two conversations. First, you're a classmate I know a little. I want to invite you to a free film screening on campus.
- Maya** I'll be the classmate. "Hi, Daniel. How's your week going?"
- Daniel** "Busy, but good. By the way, there's a free film screening on Friday evening. Would you be up for coming along?"
- Maya** "That sounds fun. What time does it start?"
- Daniel** "At seven. I thought we could meet outside the main entrance at quarter to seven. Does that work for you?"
- Maya** "I think so, but I need to check another plan. Can I get back to you tomorrow?"
- Daniel** "Of course. Let me know by tomorrow evening, and I'll save you a seat if you can make it." Is that too much pressure?
- Maya** Not at all. You gave a useful deadline and explained why. As the classmate, I might answer the next day: "I checked, and I can come. Thanks for asking!"
- Daniel** Great. Now a second scene: a friend invites me to a very expensive restaurant, and I need to suggest something cheaper.
- Maya** "A few of us are going to the new restaurant on Saturday. Would you like to join us?"
- Daniel** "Thanks for inviting me. It sounds lovely, but it's outside my budget this month. Would you be up for coffee together next week instead?"
- Maya** Excellent. You didn't criticise their choice or pretend you were busy. I could say, "Absolutely. Let's meet up on Tuesday after class."
- Daniel** "Tuesday works for me. Shall we meet at the café by the station at five?"
- Maya** "Perfect. See you there." Notice how both plans became easy to understand because you mentioned the activity, time, place, and whether you could actually commit.
- Daniel** And no one had to decode my first message, "We should do something sometime." That message can retire peacefully.
- Maya** It has earned its retirement. The simple phrases did the work.

16:51 A plan listeners can use

- Daniel** I need a quick recap before I organise another picnic. My friends may have recovered from the dancing penguin by then.





The conversation

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

16:51 A plan listeners can use (continued)

- Maya** Start with the invitation: "Would you like to come along?" or "Would you be up for trying the new café?" Add a real day, time, and place. Then ask, "Does that work for you?"
- Daniel** To say yes: "I'd love to. What time should I arrive?" With friends, "I'm in" or "Count me in." To answer later: "I'll check and get back to you by tomorrow."
- Maya** To decline: "Thanks for thinking of me, but I can't make it." If you want another plan, ask for a rain check and suggest a date. Don't use "rain check" if you don't mean it.
- Daniel** And for changes: "The picnic is off because of the rain. Shall we put it off until next Saturday?" Then confirm whether the new date actually works for everyone.
- Maya** Let's give listeners a small practice task. Invite someone to a free activity this weekend. Pause and say one complete invitation aloud, including the activity, day, and place. It can be a walk, a game, or a visit to a museum.
- Daniel** Mine is: "Would you be up for a walk by the river on Sunday afternoon? We could meet outside the library at two." I feel like a person with a calendar and a personality.
- Maya** Good. Now imagine they say, "I'd love to, but I can't do Sunday." Offer one alternative instead of ten. "No problem. Would Saturday morning suit you better?"
- Daniel** And if Saturday doesn't work either, I can say, "Let's find another time," then follow up with a real suggestion. No endless "sometime" floating in the air.
- Maya** Exactly. Remember that a plan is a conversation. The other person can accept, decline, or suggest something different. Clear language makes all three answers easier.
- Daniel** My final checklist: ask kindly, share the details, listen to the answer, confirm the plan, and tell people quickly if something changes.
- Maya** And if you are the guest, answer when you can. A short clear reply is a small gift to the person doing the organising.
- Daniel** Thanks, Maya. I'm off to plan the picnic. If it rains, I'll bring the napkins to the café; apparently I have enough for the entire city.
- Maya** See you next time, everyone. Make one simple invitation this week and enjoy the conversation it starts!

