

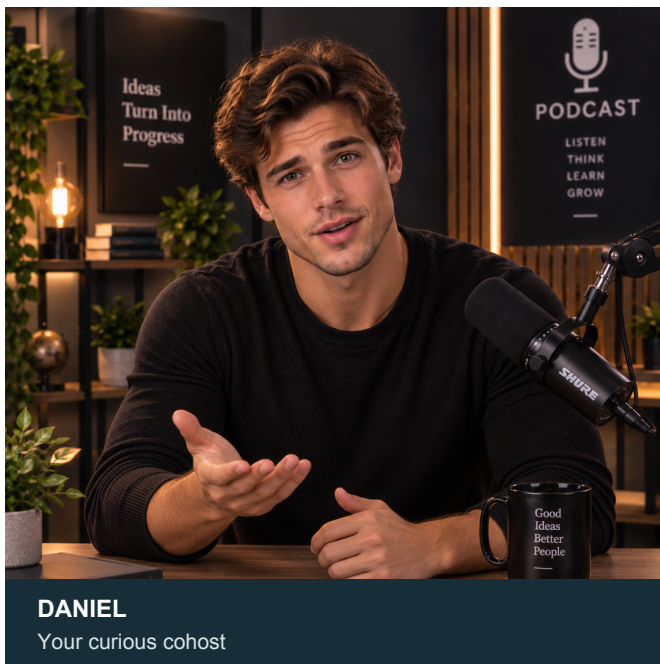


Starting University or a New Course

English listening & speaking with Daniel and Maya

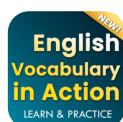
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Practise useful English from this episode.

B1-B2 / 18:57 AUDIO / FULL TRANSCRIPT



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



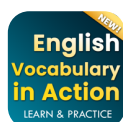
The conversation

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

00:00

The first morning

- Daniel** Welcome back! I'm Daniel, and today is my first day on a new course. I have a notebook, a pen, and the feeling that everyone else knows where the classroom is.
- Maya** I'm Maya, your English teacher. Many people feel that way on day one. Start with simple, useful language: "Excuse me, is this the room for the introduction session?" You don't need a perfect speech.
- Daniel** I see three people near a door. Could I ask, "Are you here for the same course?" Or does that sound as if I'm checking tickets?
- Maya** It's natural. Follow with your name and a question: "I'm Daniel. Is this your first day too?" That gives the other person an easy way to respond.
- Daniel** If they say yes, I can ask where they're from or what made them choose the course. But I shouldn't ask for their entire life story before coffee.
- Maya** Exactly. Try, "What made you choose this course?" If they give a short answer, share a little of your own reason. A conversation works better when it goes both ways.
- Daniel** The course coordinator says there will be an "orientation." Is that where someone tells us which direction north is?
- Maya** It can include directions, but orientation usually means an introduction to the place, people, rules, and resources. You might learn how to access the course site and where to ask for help.
- Daniel** I hear "enrolment" too. Is that the process of officially joining the course?
- Maya** Yes. "Enrol" in British English, or "enroll" in American English, means officially sign up. If you're unsure about your status, ask, "Could you confirm that my enrolment is complete?"
- Daniel** The coordinator speaks quickly. I understand most of it, but I miss the room number for tomorrow. Can I interrupt politely?
- Maya** Say, "Sorry, could you repeat the room number for tomorrow?" Or ask after the session. Write down the answer and check the timetable. A specific question is much easier than pretending you heard everything.
- Daniel** My first-day goal is now modest: find the room, learn two names, and not confuse orientation with a compass lesson.
- Maya** That's enough for a strong start. Confidence grows from small successful conversations, not from knowing the whole campus by lunchtime.





FULL TRANSCRIPT / 02 OF 08

The conversation

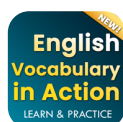
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

02:23 Introducing yourself to classmates

- Daniel** We have to introduce ourselves in pairs. I say, "Hello, my name is Daniel, and I'm interesting." That last part probably needs evidence.
- Maya** Try something concrete: "I'm Daniel. I work in design, and I joined this course because I want to improve my research skills." Then ask, "What brought you here?"
- Daniel** "What brought you here?" means why they chose the course, not which bus they took. Good. What if I don't have a clear career plan yet?
- Maya** You can be honest: "I'm exploring a few options and wanted to learn more about this subject." You don't need to invent a five-year plan for a two-minute introduction.
- Daniel** My partner tells me their name, but I miss it. I could say, "Sorry, I didn't catch your name." Is "catch" natural there?
- Maya** Very natural. "Catch" can mean hear or understand in conversation. You can add, "Could you say it again?" Then use the name once to help remember it.
- Daniel** What if I forget it five minutes later? I know I will. My brain has opened too many new tabs today.
- Maya** You can ask again politely: "I'm sorry, could you remind me of your name?" Most people prefer that to being called "hey, you" for an entire term.
- Daniel** Someone asks whether I live nearby. I don't want to give my exact address to a stranger. Could I say, "I live on the other side of town"?
- Maya** Of course. You can answer at the level of detail you prefer. "I commute from the west side" or "I'm still looking for a place nearby" is enough. You can redirect with, "How about you?"
- Daniel** We both like films. Could I say, "We have that in common," then ask what they saw recently?
- Maya** Yes. "Have something in common" means share an interest or experience. "What did you think of it?" is a good follow-up if you both know the same film.
- Daniel** If the conversation stops, I don't need to panic. I can ask about the course: "Have you seen the reading list yet?" That's at least a topic we share.
- Maya** Exactly. First-day small talk does not need fireworks. A name, a reason for being there, and one follow-up question can start a connection.

04:41 Understanding the timetable

- Daniel** I open the timetable and see "lecture," "seminar," "tutorial," and "workshop." They all seem to happen in rooms with chairs. What's the difference?



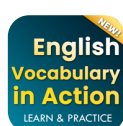


The conversation

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

04:41 Understanding the timetable (continued)

- Maya** It varies by institution, but a lecture is often a larger teaching session; a seminar is usually more discussion-based; a tutorial may be a smaller meeting; and a workshop usually involves hands-on practice. Check your course's descriptions.
- Daniel** The timetable says "weekly seminar, Room C twelve." Does "weekly" mean every week? I want to avoid arriving only on odd-numbered Tuesdays.
- Maya** Yes, it means every week, unless the schedule says otherwise. You can ask, "Does this seminar meet every Tuesday throughout the term?" Details may change around holidays or assessment weeks.
- Daniel** I also see "compulsory" and "optional." I assume one means I must attend and the other means I may choose?
- Maya** That's the general meaning. But ask what participation is expected for your particular course. "Is this workshop compulsory, or can I choose another session?" is a useful question.
- Daniel** There is a "reading list," and it looks longer than my holiday packing list. Am I supposed to read every book before the first class?
- Maya** Don't assume. Reading lists may have essential and recommended material. Ask, "Which readings should we complete before next week's seminar?" That gives you a clear starting point.
- Daniel** A deadline is printed in tiny type at the bottom. What's the difference between "due on Friday" and "due by Friday"?
- Maya** "Due on Friday" means Friday is the date. "Due by Friday" means no later than Friday, but the exact time may matter. Always check the stated submission time and time zone when an online system is involved.
- Daniel** The course site has an assignment tab, a calendar, and a message board. I feel like I need a map of the website.
- Maya** Ask, "Where should we check for changes to the timetable?" and "Where do we submit assignments?" A reliable place to check matters more than memorising every menu on day one.
- Daniel** If I notice two sessions overlap, I shouldn't just disappear from one. I can say, "My timetable shows a clash. Who should I contact?"
- Maya** Exactly. "A clash" is a scheduling conflict. Report it early so someone can help you find the right arrangement.
- Daniel** I now have one calendar with classes, deadlines, and the room number I actually heard correctly.





FULL TRANSCRIPT / 04 OF 08

The conversation

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

04:41 Understanding the timetable (continued)

Maya Excellent. A useful timetable is the one you can read and act on, not the one with the prettiest colours.

07:32 Asking questions in class

Daniel The teacher asks, "Any questions?" I have several, but my hand suddenly weighs as much as a chair. How can I begin?

Maya Try, "Could you clarify one point?" or "Can I check that I understood this correctly?" Then ask one specific question. Many classmates may be wondering the same thing.

Daniel What if my question is basic? I don't want everyone to think I wasn't listening when the teacher explained it ten minutes ago.

Maya You can say, "I may have missed this, but could you explain how the two ideas are different?" That is honest and focused. Learning involves asking, not performing certainty.

Daniel If I understood the example but not the rule, could I say, "Could you give another example?" Or should I explain exactly what confused me?

Maya Both help. "I follow the example, but I'm not sure when we use this method. Could you give another example?" gives the teacher useful context.

Daniel The teacher asks us to "discuss in groups." I have an idea, but I don't want to cut somebody off. What's a polite entry?

Maya "Could I add something?" or "Building on that point..." works well. If you disagree, try, "I see your point, but I interpreted the data differently." Then explain why.

Daniel "Building on that point" means I'm adding to an earlier idea. It sounds more cooperative than "My turn now, please stop talking."

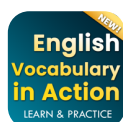
Maya It does. And if someone interrupts you, you can say, "I'd like to finish this thought, then I'd be interested to hear your view." Calm and direct.

Daniel What if the discussion moves too quickly? I need a moment to think, but I don't want silence to look like confusion.

Maya Say, "That's an interesting question. Let me think for a moment." Or write down a thought and return to it. Pausing is normal, especially in a second language.

Daniel I like that. I can take part without speaking at the speed of the fastest person in the room.

Maya Exactly. A clear contribution is worth more than a rushed one. You belong in the conversation even while you're learning the vocabulary.



Transcript edition 01

05 / 09

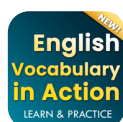


The conversation

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

09:51 Working with a group

- Daniel** We have a group assignment. Everyone is friendly until the teacher says, "Choose who will do what." Suddenly we're all studying our notebooks.
- Maya** Start with a practical question: "What tasks do we need to complete, and when is the deadline?" Then divide the work in a way everyone understands.
- Daniel** Can I say, "I'm happy to put together the slides, but I'd like someone else to check the sources"? Is "put together" good for making something from parts?
- Maya** Yes. "Put together the slides" means create and organise them. "Check the sources" means verify where information comes from. Ask each person to confirm their task rather than assuming silence means agreement.
- Daniel** One classmate says, "I'll do the research." That's broad. How can I ask what they mean without sounding controlling?
- Maya** "Which part of the research would you like to take on?" "Take on" means accept responsibility for a task. You can agree on a specific section and a date to share it.
- Daniel** Another classmate can't meet on Wednesday. I want to say, "Could we find a time that works for everyone?" not "Wednesday is destiny."
- Maya** Exactly. Offer options: "I can meet Thursday afternoon or Friday morning. Would either work?" If schedules are difficult, a short online meeting may be easier.
- Daniel** What if one person doesn't send their part? I don't want to begin with, "The entire project is doomed."
- Maya** First follow up politely: "Hi, we're putting the sections together tomorrow. Could you send your part by this evening, or let us know if you need help?" It states the deadline and offers a way forward.
- Daniel** And if I'm the late person, I should own up to it and give a realistic new time.
- Maya** Yes. "I'm sorry, I haven't finished my section. I can send a draft by six, then the final version tomorrow morning." A specific update helps your group plan.
- Daniel** Before we submit, can I ask, "Who will proofread the final version?" I don't want four excellent sections and one title that says "Final Final Really Final."
- Maya** Please do. Agree who checks the complete work and who submits it. Good group work depends on clear responsibilities as much as good ideas.





FULL TRANSCRIPT / 06 OF 08

The conversation

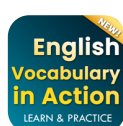
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

12:11 Asking a teacher for help

- Daniel** I need help with an assignment. I could send, "Hi teacher, I don't get it." That might be the honest version, but it's not very useful.
- Maya** Use a clear subject and one or two specific questions. "Subject: Question about the research assignment. Hello, I understand the topic, but I'm unsure how to choose sources. Could you clarify the requirements?"
- Daniel** Should I mention what I've already tried? Otherwise it may sound like I want the teacher to do the work for me.
- Maya** Yes. "I've read the instructions and checked the examples, but I'm still unsure about the number of sources." That shows your effort and points to the exact issue.
- Daniel** The course says the teacher has "office hours." Do I need to find an actual office with a clock in it?
- Maya** Office hours are set times when a teacher is available for student questions. They may be in person or online. Ask, "Could I come to office hours to discuss my outline?"
- Daniel** If I can't attend those times, can I ask for another appointment?
- Maya** Certainly. "I have a class during your office hours. Would it be possible to arrange another time?" Offer a couple of options and be flexible.
- Daniel** What should I bring to the meeting? My current outline is three bullet points and a worried face.
- Maya** Bring your instructions, draft or outline, and two or three questions. You could say, "I have two possible topics. Could you help me understand which one fits the assignment better?"
- Daniel** If I don't understand the answer, I can repeat it back: "So I should narrow the topic and use at least two academic sources. Is that right?"
- Maya** Exactly. Summarising checks your understanding. Afterwards, you can write down the next steps while they're fresh, rather than trusting a brain full of first-week information.
- Daniel** A useful email and a prepared question are much better than my original message, "I don't get it."
- Maya** Yes. They make it easier for the teacher to help and easier for you to act on the answer.

14:18 Deadlines and feedback

- Daniel** The assignment is due soon. I know the date, but I'm unclear about the time. Should I assume it means midnight?



Transcript edition 01

07 / 09



The conversation

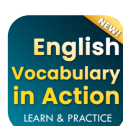
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

14:18 Deadlines and feedback (continued)

- Maya** No. Check the course site and ask, "What is the exact submission deadline, including the time and time zone?" A date alone may not answer every detail.
- Daniel** I see the word "extension." Does that mean I get more time automatically if I ask politely enough?
- Maya** An extension is extra time granted under the course's process. It isn't automatic. If you need one, read the policy and contact the right person as early as possible, explaining your situation accurately.
- Daniel** Could I say, "I'm struggling to finish by the deadline. Could you tell me whether an extension is possible and what I need to do?" That asks without assuming.
- Maya** Exactly. Follow the stated procedure. If you cannot get an extension, ask what options remain. Don't simply stop communicating.
- Daniel** After submission I get feedback. The teacher writes, "Your argument is clear, but the examples need more support." How should I respond?
- Maya** First, identify what the comment asks you to improve. You might say, "Could you show me one place where an example needs stronger evidence?" This turns a broad comment into an action.
- Daniel** What if I disagree with part of the feedback? I don't want to say, "Actually, my essay is perfect and your pen is wrong."
- Maya** Try, "I understand your point about the evidence. Could I explain what I intended in this paragraph and ask whether it comes across?" That invites a useful conversation.
- Daniel** "Comes across" means how my meaning is received by the reader. I can ask, "Does my main point come across clearly?"
- Maya** Exactly. Feedback is most helpful when you use it on the next piece of work. Make a short list: keep the clear argument, add stronger examples, and check citations before submitting.
- Daniel** So a grade ends one assignment, but feedback can improve the next one.
- Maya** That's a strong way to think about it. Ask for clarification where needed, then put one change into practice.

16:35 Your first-week conversation

- Daniel** Let's do a first-week role-play. You're a new classmate. I'll try to be friendly, find the right room, and ask a question about the course.





The conversation

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

16:35 Your first-week conversation (continued)

- Maya** Hi, are you here for the research course? I'm Maya. I think the introduction is in Room C twelve, but I'm not completely sure.
- Daniel** Hi, I'm Daniel. Yes, it's my first day. Could we check the timetable together? I don't want us to become a group assignment in finding the wrong room.
- Maya** Good idea. It says Room C twelve. What made you choose this course?
- Daniel** I work in design and want to get better at research. How about you? Are you new to the subject too?
- Maya** I am. I'm exploring whether I'd like to study it further. Have you seen the reading list for next week's seminar?
- Daniel** I have, but I'm not sure which readings are essential. I'll ask the teacher, "Which two should we complete before Tuesday?" Would you like to compare notes later?
- Maya** Yes, that would be helpful. How did that feel?
- Daniel** Natural. I introduced myself, asked a follow-up question, checked a detail, and suggested a next step. Nobody needed a five-year plan or a map of the entire campus.
- Maya** Exactly. Listeners, pause and introduce yourself in two sentences. Then ask a classmate one question about the course. You can practise even if you're starting a workplace class or an online programme.
- Daniel** Recap time: "enrol" means officially join; "compulsory" means required; "take on" means accept responsibility; "put together" means create from parts; and "come across" describes how your meaning is understood.
- Maya** And a useful question pattern is, "Could you clarify...?" followed by one specific point. Ask early when a deadline, timetable, or requirement is unclear.
- Daniel** My first week still has surprises, but I know how to ask for help. I may even remember two names, if my brain closes a few tabs.
- Maya** That's progress. Thanks for listening. See you next time, and good luck with your own first conversation. Before you go, choose one question from this episode and say it aloud twice: once slowly, then at a natural pace. That small practice will make the real question easier.

