

500+ Real English Phrases C1-C2

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10 Ways to Avoid Answering a Question

1. No comment.
2. I'm not at liberty to say. (= I don't have permission to give the information)
3. Wait and see. (= you will discover the answer later)
4. Let me get back to you. (= I will give you the answer later)
5. I'm sorry, that's confidential.
6. I'm sorry, that's personal.
7. I'd rather not talk about it.
8. It's none of your business.
9. Mind your own business.
10. Why do you want to know?

15 Phrases for Being Rich & Poor

1. He's short on cash.
2. He's broke. (= he has no money)
3. His bank account is overdrawn.
4. He's just scraping by. (= he is just barely surviving on little money)
5. He makes minimum wage. (= he earns the minimum salary)
6. He's pinching pennies.
7. He's scrimping and saving.
8. She's very wealthy.
9. She's quite well-off.
10. She's loaded.
11. She's filthy rich.
12. She inherited a fortune.
13. She's making a killing.
14. She's raking in the cash.
15. She's rolling in dough.

10 Phrases for Talking about Statistics

1. The crime rate rose.
2. The crime rate went up.
3. There was a sharp increase in crime. (*sharp = sudden and large*)
4. There was a gradual rise in crime.
5. There was a spike in crime. (*spike = a sudden increase and then decrease*)
6. The crime rate reached its peak. (*peak = the highest point*)
7. The crime rate plateaued. (*plateaued = stayed at the same level*)
8. There was a slight decrease in crime.
9. The crime rate dropped.
10. The crime rate plummeted. (= decreased a lot, very quickly)

10 Ways to Say Someone's Talented

1. She was born to... [dance].
2. He's a natural.
3. She could do it in her sleep.
4. He knows it inside out.
5. She knows [New York] like the back of her hand.
6. She's a walking encyclopedia of... [philosophy].
7. He's in a class of his own.
8. He's the best in the business.
9. She's very gifted.
10. He's a [chemistry] whiz.

10 Phrases for Telling Someone to Wait

1. Could you give me a minute?
2. **(informal)** Hang on a sec / Just a sec.
3. Hold on...
4. Let me see/think...
5. I'll be right with you.
6. Bear with me.
7. That'll have to wait.
8. Be patient.
9. Not so fast!
10. Hold your horses!

10 Phrases for Estimating & Guessing

1. If I had to take a guess, I'd say... [she's about 35 years old].
2. It's difficult to say, but I think... [our customers are more satisfied].
3. Off the top of my head, I'd say... [the company has 500 employees]. (= what I remember/estimate, without checking the actual statistics)
4. It's about... [10 miles away].
5. It's around... [three hours long].
6. I wouldn't be surprised if... [Peter asks Jill to marry him].
7. There's a good chance... [it'll rain tomorrow].
8. I have a feeling/hunch... [the boss won't be happy about this]. (*hunch = an instinctive feeling*)
9. I bet... [he'll be late].
10. Your guess is as good as mine. (= I don't know)

10 Phrases for Decisions

1. I'm debating between... [option A and option B]
2. I can't make up my mind.
3. I'm on the fence. (= I'm in the middle, I don't know what to decide)
4. I'll take that into consideration.
5. On the other hand...
6. I'm having second thoughts. (= I'm reconsidering my decision)
7. I changed my mind.
8. He convinced/persuaded me to...

9. Looking back, I know it was the right decision.
10. It's up to you. (= You can decide)

10 Phrases for Good Luck & Bad Luck

1. Good luck!
2. Better luck next time. (say this after someone fails, and you hope they do better next time)
3. Just my luck! (this is a sarcastic phrase meaning that something UNLUCKY happened)
4. Lucky you!
5. That was a stroke of luck. (= a sudden event of good luck)
6. Some people have all the luck. (say this when someone else is constantly lucky, and you feel like you're not lucky)
7. As luck would have it... (= by chance)
8. He's down on his luck. (= he's having a long period of bad luck or difficulty)
9. No such luck. (= something good that could have happened, didn't happen)
10. What rotten luck!

10 Phrases for Worries & Relief

1. I'm scared that...
2. I can't help thinking that... (use this for thoughts that you try to avoid, but they keep coming into your mind)
3. It's been keeping me up at night. (use this when you're so worried about something that you can't sleep)
4. What if... ?
5. Whew!
6. Thank goodness!
7. What a relief!
8. You had me worried for a moment.
9. You have no idea what a relief it is.
10. That's a huge load off my mind.

10 Phrases for Talking about the Future

1. It'll happen any day now.
2. It's right around the corner.
3. ...in the near future.
4. It will/won't happen in our lifetime. (= in the next 40-50 years)
5. It's a sign/taste of things to come. (= it indicates how things will be in the future)
6. I'm counting down the days until... (= I'm excited about the future event, I can't wait for it to happen)
7. Sooner or later... / It's bound to happen eventually. (= it will definitely happen sometime in the future)
8. I'll get around to it. (= I'll do it sometime in the future, but I don't know exactly when)
9. I'll do it right away. / I'll get right on it. (= I'll do it immediately)
10. Time will tell. (in the future, we will know if something is true/false or good/bad)

10 Phrases for Compliments

1. You look nice. / You look amazing!
2. What a beautiful [necklace/dress/etc.]!
3. I like your [shirt/shoes/haircut/etc.]
4. The lasagna is delicious.
5. You're a fantastic cook.
6. My compliments to the chef!
7. What a nice apartment!
8. You have a beautiful home.
9. He's/She's so cute!
10. Your kids are a lot of fun.

15 Phrases for Certainty & Probability

1. I'm absolutely sure.
2. I'm positive that...
3. I have no doubt that...
4. I'm a hundred percent certain.
5. I'm convinced that...
6. Chances are that... (= this will probably happen)

7. Odds are that... (= this will probably happen)
8. I seriously doubt it.
9. I don't think so.
10. Probably not.
11. It's not very likely.
12. There's not much chance of that.
13. I'd be very surprised if that happened.
14. I wouldn't bet on it. (= there's a small chance it could happen... but it probably won't happen)
15. That'll never happen.

10 Ways to Say Something is Interesting/Boring

1. It's fascinating.
2. It's intriguing.
3. I couldn't tear myself away.
4. I couldn't put it down. (this phrase is used for an extremely interesting book)
5. I was so into it, I lost track of time.
6. It does nothing for me.
7. I was bored to tears.
8. I was bored to death.
9. I was dying of boredom.
10. It's about as exciting as watching paint dry. (= it's very boring)

10 Phrases for Cheering Someone Up

1. What's the matter?
2. What's wrong?
3. Are you all right?
4. You look a bit down. (= a little sad)
5. Is there anything I can do to help?
6. Cheer up! / Chin up!
7. It's not so bad.
8. Everything will be OK.
9. Look on the bright side. (= consider the positive aspects)
10. It's not the end of the world. (this phrase is used when someone is upset about something small and trivial)

7 Phrases for Disappointment

1. What a pity!
2. What a shame.
3. How disappointing.
4. That's too bad.
5. Bummer.
6. It was a real letdown.
7. It didn't live up to my expectations.

10 Ways to Say You Don't Believe Someone

1. Yeah, right.
2. You're kidding.
3. You're pulling my leg.
4. That's a bit of an exaggeration.
5. He's stretching the truth.
6. He's not telling the whole truth.
7. She's being economical with the truth. (= she's lying or not telling the entire truth)
8. His story is fishy.
9. That's an outright lie.
10. That's a pack of lies.

10 Expressions for Bad People

1. He's a creep. (= unpleasant, suspicious, makes you afraid/uneasy)
2. He's a pervert. (= someone with disgusting sexual tendencies)
3. He's a sicko.
4. He's a scumbag.
5. He's an asshole.
6. He's a jerk.
7. He's a bastard.
8. She's a bitch. (= she's irritating and unpleasant)
9. She's a psycho. (= crazy, irrational)
10. She's a slut. (= she has sex with a lot of people)

10 Words for Describing Speaking

1. He yelled.
2. She screamed.
3. I whispered. (= spoke in an extremely quiet voice)
4. We chatted. (= had an informal conversation)
5. He mumbled. (= spoke in a low voice, not clearly, without opening his mouth much)
6. My kids whined. (= complained)
7. He rambled. / He went on and on. (= talked too much without stopping)
8. She stammered.
9. I snapped at my husband. (= said a quick and angry remark)
10. He muttered. (= spoke in a low voice, usually making complaints or negative comments)

10 Phrases for Facial Expressions

1. She was beaming. (= she had a big, radiant smile)
2. The kids were smiling from ear to ear.
3. He looked puzzled. (= confused)
4. She grinned. (= had a small smile)
5. He winced when the doctor gave him an injection. (= had a quick expression of pain)
6. She gave me a dirty look. (= looked at me angrily)
7. She blushed. (= her face turned red because she was embarrassed)
8. His eyes were glazed over. (= he appeared)
9. Why the long face? (an informal expression to ask why someone looks sad or upset)
10. Her expression was unreadable. (= you can't know what she is feeling)

10 Phrases to Describe Offending or Upsetting People

1. They got off on the wrong foot. (= when they first met, they didn't get along)
2. He got on the teacher's bad side.
3. She took offense at his comment.
4. He has a chip on his shoulder. (= he is easily offended)
5. She got bent out of shape.
6. He left in a huff.
7. She got her panties in a wad.
8. He has a short fuse. (= he gets angry easily)
9. She dissed my mother. (= she insulted/disrespected my mother)
10. He got his nose out of joint.

10 Phrases for Bad Travel Experiences

1. My flight was overbooked. (overbooked = there were too many passengers and not enough seats)
2. My flight was delayed/canceled.
3. My luggage was lost.
4. I was jet-lagged. (= I felt tired because of the time zone difference between my origin and destination)
5. My hotel was in a seedy area. (seedy = possibly unsafe)
6. I was mugged. (= I was robbed on the street)
7. The weather was miserable.
8. I got the runs. (= diarrhea)



9. *The place was a tourist trap. (= made only for tourists; not authentic)*
10. *I couldn't wait to get back home.*

10 Phrases for Drinking (Alcohol)

1. *It's on me. (= I'll buy you a drink)*
2. *I'd like to make a toast. (= I'd like to honor a person/event/idea)*
3. *Here's to... (your health / the New Year / our success)!*
4. *Another round of drinks, please.*
5. *Put it on my tab. (tab = bill to pay later, before you leave)*
6. *He's a bit tipsy. (= a little bit drunk)*
7. *He's completely sloshed/wasted/plastered. (= completely drunk)*
8. *She's trying to drown her sorrows. (= drinking alcohol for relief from pain/sadness)*
9. *I'm the designated driver. (= I'm not drinking alcohol because I will drive other people home later)*
10. *I had a hangover. / I was hung over. (= the bad feeling you have the morning after drinking too much)*

15 Comparative Idioms

1. *It's as light as a feather.*
2. *It's as dry as a bone.*
3. *It's as flat as a pancake.*
4. *He's as mad as a hornet.*
5. *It's as old as the hills.*
6. *It's as quick as lightning.*
7. *She's as sick as a dog.*
8. *He's as strong as an ox.*
9. *They're as different as night and day.*
10. *She's as stubborn as a mule.*
11. *He's as proud as a peacock.*
12. *She's as white as a sheet. (usually used when someone is very afraid or very sick)*
13. *It's as solid as a rock.*
14. *It's as good as new. (used after something broken has been repaired)*
15. *It's as clear as mud. (= it's not clear at all)*