



The art of conversation

Speaking lesson



1



2



3

A. Look at the pictures above and answer the questions:

- What kind of relationship do people have?
- What are they probably talking about?
- Which topics may be appropriate to discuss?

B. Discuss the quotes. How do you understand them? How far do you agree with them?



- *“Silence is one of the great arts of conversation.”*
- *“Conversation should touch everything, but should concentrate itself on nothing.”*
- *“Most conversations are simply monologues delivered in the presence of a witness.”*



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C. See the list of conversational topics below. Range them in order of interest for you and explain your choice:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| • Family | • TV, movies, and popular culture | • Music |
| • Interests/Hobbies | • Interesting places in the city | • Current events |
| • Sports | | • Travel |

D. Answer the questions:

1. Have you ever had a great conversation with a complete stranger?
 - What made it so great?
 - What did you talk about?
 - Where were you?
2. Who communicates better: men or women?
 - What makes their style better?
 - What makes it worse?
3. How do conversations between men and women differ?
4. Do you like to argue? What do you like to argue about?
5. What topics are taboo for your culture? What about other cultures? (America, Japan, etc.)
6. What are some topics that you can't stand to talk about? Why?
7. Do you have better conversations when you are drinking?
8. Is there such a thing as being too honest? Explain.
9. If you could have a conversation with a famous deceased person, who would you talk to? What would you talk about, and why?
10. Would you like to have a career that requires you to talk to a lot of people? Why? Which career? If not, why not?



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E. Look at the list of typical questions for starting the conversation with a new person. Think of your examples to complete them. Make up at least one follow-up question to complement them.

Conversation starters	Usage example	Follow-up question
PERSONALLY, I _____ . HOW ABOUT YOU?	<i>Personally, I find this conference incredibly informative. How about you?</i>	<i>Which speech did you enjoy the most?</i>
HAVE YOU EVER _____ ?		
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF _____ ?		
HOW ABOUT THE _____ ?		
WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT _____ ?		
I LIKE _____. WHAT ARE YOU IN TO?		

F. Choose 2-3 questions and practice the conversation.