

MORE ENGLISH FILLERS YOU'LL ACTUALLY USE | B1–B2

From knowing to speaking

In the first worksheet, you practised 10 common fillers and conversational expressions. Now it's time to expand your vocabulary and make your spoken English even more natural!

Learn these 15 additional expressions and practise using them in real-life situations.

PART 1 — Learn the expressions

1. Giving yourself time to think

Expression	Example
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Let's see...	"Let's see... I think I'm free on Friday."
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How can I put it?	"How can I put it? He's not the easiest person to work with."
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What was I saying?	"What was I saying? Oh, yes! We decided to leave early."
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2. Expressing opinions and uncertainty

Expression	Example
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I guess	"I guess we could try a different restaurant."
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I suppose	"I suppose you're right, but I'm still not convinced."
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To be honest	"To be honest, I didn't really enjoy the film."
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To be fair	"To be fair, she did warn us about the problem."
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3. Explaining and clarifying

Expression	Example
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The thing is	"The thing is, I don't have enough time."
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You see	"You see, I've never done anything like this before."
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In other words	"We need to reduce our expenses. In other words, we need to spend less."
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Sort of	"I was sort of disappointed with the result."
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4. Managing the conversation

Expression	Example
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By the way "By the way, have you heard from Anna?"

As I was saying "As I was saying, we need to finish this by Friday."

Right "Right, let's get started."

I see "Oh, I see. That explains everything."

Remember: Not all these expressions are hesitation fillers. Some help you organise your ideas, show your attitude or respond to another speaker.

EXERCISE 1 — Match the expression to its function

Match each expression (1–10) with its main function (A–J).

Expression	Answer	Function
1. To be honest	___	A. Introducing a new, unrelated topic
2. Let's see	___	B. Expressing a tentative opinion
3. By the way	___	C. Introducing a frank opinion
4. The thing is	___	D. Showing that you understand
5. I guess	___	E. Giving yourself thinking time
6. In other words	___	F. Introducing an important explanation
7. I see	___	G. Reformulating an idea
8. To be fair	___	H. Acknowledging another perspective
9. As I was saying	___	I. Returning to a previous point
10. How can I put it?	___	J. Searching for the right way to express something

EXERCISE 2 — Complete the conversations

Choose the most appropriate expression from the box. Use each expression once.

to be honest · let's see · by the way · the thing is · I suppose · you see · in other words · sort of · as I was saying · I see

1. A: Did you enjoy the party?

B: _____, I was a little bored.

2. A: Are you free next Wednesday?

B: _____... Yes, I think I am!

3. A: Why don't you join us for dinner?

B: I'd love to, but _____, I have to work late.

4. A: Do you think we should leave now?

B: _____ we could, but there's no need to rush.

5. A: What did your manager say?

B: We need to work more efficiently. _____, we have to achieve better results with fewer resources.

6. A: Have you finished that book?

B: Not yet. I'm _____ halfway through it.

7. A: Sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt you.

B: No problem. _____, the meeting starts at nine.

8. A: I can't come tomorrow because my car has broken down.

B: Oh, _____. I didn't realise you were having car trouble.

9. A: Why didn't you apply for the job?

B: _____, I don't have enough experience yet.

10. A: I almost forgot! _____, have you booked your holiday yet?

B: Not yet. We're still deciding where to go.

EXERCISE 3 — Choose the natural response

Choose the best answer for each situation.

1. Your friend asks whether you enjoyed a film, but you didn't.

A. By the way, I didn't really like it.

B. To be honest, I didn't really like it.

C. As I was saying, I didn't really like it.

2. You need a moment to check your schedule.

A. Let's see... I think I'm free on Thursday.

B. To be fair, I'm free on Thursday.

C. In other words, I'm free on Thursday.

3. You want to introduce a new topic.

A. I suppose, did you hear about Mark?

B. By the way, did you hear about Mark?

C. I see, did you hear about Mark?

4. Someone has just explained why they were late.

A. In other words! That explains it.

B. How can I put it? That explains it.

C. Oh, I see. That explains it.

5. You want to acknowledge someone's effort despite a disappointing result.

A. To be fair, she worked really hard.

B. Let's see, she worked really hard.

C. By the way, she worked really hard.

6. Someone interrupts your story. You want to return to it.

A. I guess, we finally arrived at the airport.

B. As I was saying, we finally arrived at the airport.

C. You see, we finally arrived at the airport.

EXERCISE 4 — Make it sound more natural

Rewrite the responses using the expression in brackets. You may need to change the sentence slightly.

1. A: Did you enjoy the concert?

B: I didn't really like the music. (to be honest)

2. A: Why can't you come on Saturday?

B: I have to work all weekend. (the thing is)

3. A: What do you think about moving abroad?

B: It could be a good opportunity. (I suppose)

4. A: What happened after you arrived?

B: We checked into the hotel and went straight to the beach. (as I was saying)

Imagine that someone has interrupted your story.

5. A: Is your new colleague difficult to work with?

B: He's not very flexible. (how can I put it?)

6. A: Did Sarah do a good job?

B: She made a few mistakes, but she worked very hard. (to be fair)

EXERCISE 5 — Make it personal

Complete the sentences with information about your own life.

1. To be honest, I don't really enjoy _____

2. I suppose I could _____

3. The thing is, I haven't _____

4. To be fair, my _____

5. I'm sort of _____

6. By the way, have you ever _____

EXERCISE 6 — Your turn: Speak naturally!

Answer the following questions aloud. Try to use the suggested expressions in your answers.

Don't prepare your answers in writing. Give yourself a few seconds to think, then speak.

Question

Try to use

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. What's a popular film or TV series you didn't enjoy? | To be honest |
| 2. Would you consider changing your career? | I suppose |
| 3. What's something you'd like to do but haven't done yet? | The thing is |
| 4. Describe someone who deserves more credit for their efforts. | To be fair |
| 5. What are your plans for next weekend? | Let's see |
| 6. Describe something that's difficult to explain. | How can I put it? |
| 7. Tell a short story. Imagine someone interrupts you, then continue. As I was saying | |
| 8. Ask your speaking partner an unexpected question. | By the way |

Final challenge — Keep the conversation going!

Choose a topic and speak for one minute.

Suggested topics:

- A difficult decision you've had to make
- Something you'd like to change about your daily routine
- An unexpected experience
- Your plans for the next few years

Try to use at least three expressions from this worksheet naturally.

Record yourself if possible, then listen again.

Self-check

- ☐ I used expressions to organise my ideas.
- ☐ I expressed my opinions and uncertainty naturally.
- ☐ I used expressions to clarify or explain something.
- ☐ I avoided adding fillers unnecessarily.
- ☐ I used at least three new expressions without looking at the worksheet.

Remember: The goal isn't to use as many fillers as possible. It's to choose the right expression at the right moment.