

How to order food in English like a local?

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You are working in an advertising agency for the past three years and are handling clients from various industries. Recently, one of your clients from food industry loved your work and appreciated you for dedication towards your work. In the form of token of appreciation, you are offered a visit to client's five star restaurant in California for a week. Your level of happiness doubles up, as you start to prepare for your trip. The only concern is [speaking English](#) in a foreign country. You speak good English, but when it comes to speaking in front of native speakers, you lose your confidence. But, don't lose hope, we are here to help you out. We will share with you some exciting tips that will come handy on your foreign visit.

Four Simple And Useful Tips

You must be always confident while you speak English, because even if you practice conversational English, ordering something to eat can still be a challenge.

1. Start with a greeting

Usually when you go to a fast food counter to order, the waiter will say "hello" and might ask "how are you today?" You can reply to their "hello" and reply "I am fine". If they don't say "hello" first when you get to the counter, then you can start by saying, "hi, can I get a ____?" This is the best way to start an order because it shows respect for the employee. You can choose any friendly greeting to start off the conversation, like hello, hi, hey or how's it going?



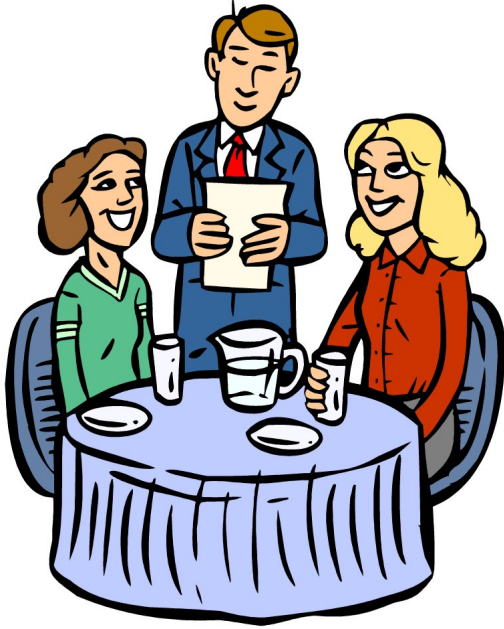
2. Ask instead of demanding

Always remember to be polite as it is the best way of communication in any language. Generally, in English speaking countries, people start with, "can I get ____?" instead of, "I want ____" as this sounds less demanding and can help the flow of the conversation. It makes you sound more polite to the person you are ordering to. For example, "Can I get a ____, please?" or "May I have a ____, please?" These are all questions instead of demands. When you are talking to strangers, you must sound more casual and polite. If the answer

to your request is “no” for any reason, you can quickly change your mind and ask something else.

3. 'For here' or 'to go'

Here, 'for here' means that you wish to have the food in the restaurant and 'to go' or 'take out' means taking your food with you outside the restaurant. However, 'to go' is usually used for both drinks and food (and anything else you might consume), while 'taking out' is only used for food. 'To go' is far more commonly used by English speakers.



4. Be prepared for extra questions

When you are with your friends or in a group you tend to order multiple things. Either you can try to list everything you want and order it at once or it's best to pause for a short amount of time after ordering each item. That way, the employee can ask you more questions! You may also be asked if you want something on top of your food, a certain preparation style for your food, if you would like to order any desserts and much more.

Always be polite and answer these questions, and never forget to end with a thank you. These tips will help you while ordering food in English. Remember, it's more about the way you say things than the words. When said in a light tone with a smile, anything will seem more polite and natural. [Practising conversation](#) can help you to speak fluent English.

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-By Shailja Varma

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