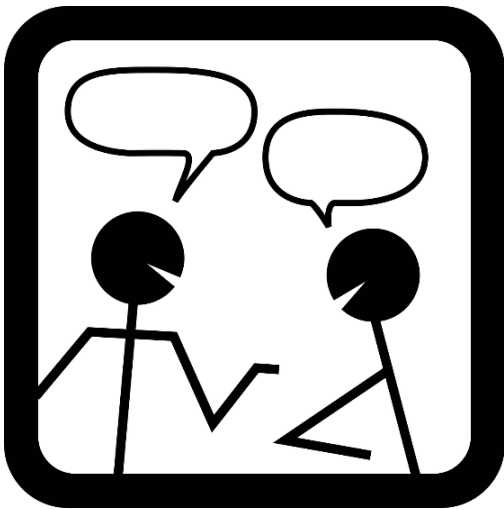


# How to start Social Conversation in English at a party

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Have you ever been to a party where you do not know too many people? Or perhaps look back and recollect your first office party - where everyone around seemed to know everyone but YOU? While some may have a natural flair for starting conversations in English with strangers or acquaintances, there are some others who feel out of place in such situations. This article shall quickly give you some valuable tips, to ensure that you can strike an engaging social conversation in English.



## Small Talk

While some steer away from small talk when at work or busy, and understandably so, this same small talk can be your saviour when you need to get rid of awkward silences. “Small Talk” as suggested, indicates speaking about relatively unimportant things, but is the best conversation starter. It is ideal to fill up silence and create a more comfortable equation. It allows the individuals to interact in a casual fashion without encroaching on each other’s minds.

## Introducing your self:

This might seem a daunting task for some, but trust us, it simply gets easier the more often you do it. A simple way to introduce yourself would be to smile and state your name. It would also be a good idea to include where you first met, or what you do so that there is a conversation flow created.

**E.g.:** “Good Evening – My name is Karan and I’m from the finance team -Delhi Branch. What about you?” OR “Hello Raj, I hope you remember, I’m Karan - we met last year in June at the Goa conference”

## General Topics:



With the advent of social media, most of us are glued into the happenings of the world in real time. Everyone knows something about everything you read, hear or see, so topics like current affairs, weather, sports or entertainment are safe bets if you want the conversation to gain steam.

**E.g.:** “Did you watch yesterday’s India SL Match?” OR “Terribly rainy day yesterday, wasn’t it?”

## Complimenting:

One of the easiest ways to break the ice at a party is by complimenting someone. It makes the recipient of the compliment feel more at ease with you.

**E.g.:** “I love your shoes – great shade of brown” OR “I really like your new hairstyle – it suits you well”

## Questioning:

There is an ancient Chinese proverb that says, “He who asks a question is a fool for five minutes: he who does not ask, remains a fool forever” – In simple terms, one should not underestimate the power of asking questions. This can come in handy to figure out common interests and lead towards an engaging conversation.

**E.g.:** “What kind of cuisine do you like? - I love Chinese” OR “What’s your type of music – I like Bollywood”

## Observing:

If you are a good observer, you will always see ways and means to take the small talk ahead. For instance, you notice an IPL sticker on a colleague and say – “Hi – I am also a big time Mumbai Indians fan, who’s your favourite player?” OR “I like the song being played – was my favourite in college”

So, as you can see, Small Talk can be quite a BIG help when you want to strike a social conversation. But do remember, never try too hard. Feel confident and be as authentic as possible.

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**- By Chander Madan**

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