

How to use right filler words or 'gap words' in English conversation

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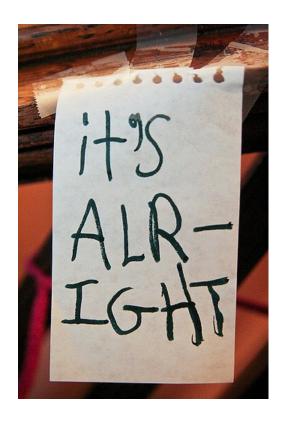
When trying to improve your spoken English, your aim shouldn't simply be to improve your vocabulary and be fluent. A good English speaker has to be clear and economical with the words they use. One trick is to use your words wisely, especially when it comes to filler words like 'alright', 'Well', 'Okay', 'hold on', and 'actually'. The tricky part about filler words is that if not used correctly, you might come across as a confusing, or even a rude person. You need to know when to use these filler words, in the right context. Worry not, we have just the right tips and tricks for you!



How to use the filler words

Alright:

First thing you need to understand that the actual word is 'all right', while 'alright' is more of a colloquial word. The word can be used in different ways, one is to show assent. For example, when someone presents an idea that you agree with, or even want to consider along with other ideas, you can say 'Alright, I understand what you are trying to say.' Another way you can use 'Alright' is when you don't want to object to what a person is saying, but also wish to present a different opinion or idea. For example, 'Alright, so this is what you think, but what I want to say is...' Another way of using 'Alright' is also in a sarcastic way. 'Alright, so you want to eat junk food so late in the night! Go ahead'.



Well:

When using 'well' in a sentence, the thumb rule is that you use it when the verb in the sentence is not the linking verb. But when using it as a filler word, you use it when you want to present a non-conforming or an opposite idea to what has been already presented. For example, when participating in a dialogue or debate, you can start your sentence with well as in 'Well, the ideas presented by XYZ are definitely tempting, but what I would like to say is that it does not necessarily serve the purpose."

Okay:

This word is usually meant to convey assent or your agreement. Or you can also use to acknowledge when someone gives you the turn to speak. You can also use okay when you are asked to do something or given an instruction and you wish to convey that you have understood and are willing to carry out the task.



Hold on:

This phrase is used when you want to ask people to wait for you or want them to stop talking so that you can finish whatever you are doing so that you can give your full attention. You may also

use this phrase when cutting off a person and presenting your own opinion. For example: "Hold on, I just updated the spreadsheet, I shall mail it to you shortly."

Actually:

Now this is a tricky word, 'Actually' can be used to convey a lot of different things, and the only way to differentiate it is by understanding the context in which it is used. You can use actually to mean 'thinking again': "I don't have a spare pen. Wait, actually I have one in my bag." 'Actually' can also mean 'In fact', when used in a sentence like: "That movie is actually a lot of fun!" 'Actually' can also be used interchangeably with 'really': "I can't believe she actually did it, such a daredevil!"

Take your time to understand and practice using these filler words, so that when you <u>speak English</u>, it is correct and flawless. All the best.

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- By Shailja Varma

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