Small talk questions in English for ESL classes

24 question cards in three level bands. Print, cut and let learners draw a card, or share the page on screen.

A1–A2 · Beginner and elementary

How are you today?

SMALL TALK · A1–A2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

How was your weekend?

SMALL TALK · A1–A2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Where are you calling from?

SMALL TALK · A1–A2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Is it hot there today?

SMALL TALK · A1–A2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Did you have a good trip?

SMALL TALK · A1–A2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Are you busy this week?

SMALL TALK · A1–A2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Have you had lunch?

SMALL TALK · A1–A2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Any plans for the weekend?

SMALL TALK · A1–A2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

B1–B2 · Intermediate

How long have you been working here?

SMALL TALK · B1–B2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

What brought you to this event?

SMALL TALK · B1–B2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Have you been to this city before?

SMALL TALK · B1–B2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

How do you know the host?

SMALL TALK · B1–B2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

What have you been up to lately?

SMALL TALK · B1–B2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Did you see the match or the show last night?

SMALL TALK · B1–B2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

How is the project going?

SMALL TALK · B1–B2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Are you doing anything nice over the holidays?

SMALL TALK · B1–B2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

C1–C2 · Advanced

What do you do when a conversation runs out of things to say?

SMALL TALK · C1–C2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

How is small talk different in your culture?

SMALL TALK · C1–C2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Which topics are safe with a new client, and which would you avoid?

SMALL TALK · C1–C2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

How do you leave a conversation politely?

SMALL TALK · C1–C2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Is small talk a waste of time or the start of every relationship?

SMALL TALK · C1–C2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

How do you make small talk on a video call feel natural?

SMALL TALK · C1–C2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

What is the best opening line you have heard?

SMALL TALK · C1–C2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Why do some people find small talk so tiring?

SMALL TALK · C1–C2 ENGLISHCUE.APP

Useful language

- How's it going? / How are things?
- Oh really? / That sounds great. / What was that like?
- Anyway, I'd better let you go.
- Not bad, thanks. And you?
- By the way... / Speaking of...
- It was nice talking to you.