

1.1 The rules of conversation

Vocabulary conversation

- 1 Replace the words in *italics* in each sentence with the correct form of a phrase from the box.

dominate the conversation entertaining story
establish shared interests have a row make small talk
put (somebody) at ease put your foot in it

- 1 She tends to *do too much talking* and doesn't give others a chance to speak. dominate the conversation
- 2 I hate *having conversations about unimportant things* with people I don't know at parties.
- 3 I *did a really silly and embarrassing thing* when I asked Meg about the party. It turned out she hadn't been invited.
- 4 He told some *interesting and amusing anecdotes* in his wedding speech.
- 5 The examiner asked me some simple questions to *help me feel relaxed and confident*.
- 6 When getting to know someone new, it helps to *find out what you've got in common*.
- 7 The couple at the next table were *having an argument* with the waiter about the bill.

- 2 Complete the article with words and phrases from the box.

appropriate awkward enthusiastically good impression
hit it off misunderstanding offended put my foot in it
small talk

PRONUNCIATION same sounds in words (1)

- 3a Look at the letters in **bold**. Choose the word which has a different sound.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1 a establish | b impression | c offence |
| 2 a ease | b enthusiastic | c misunderstanding |
| 3 a entertaining | b dominate | c appropriate |
| 4 a awkward | b small | c story |
| 5 a loud | b talk | c row (n) |

- b 1.1 Listen, check and repeat.



Peaches and coconuts

It was my first dinner party in France and I was keen to make a ¹ good impression on the host couple. All was going well until I asked: 'How did the two of you meet?' There was an ² _____ silence, and my (French) husband shot me a look of horror. Asking a French stranger that question, he later explained, is 'like asking them the colour of their underpants'. I had completely ³ _____.

But I'd learnt an important lesson about what questions are or aren't ⁴ _____ to ask someone from another culture. The mistake I'd made was a classic example of what is known as the 'peach and coconut' divide. This theory, popularized by culture expert Fons Trompenaars, suggests that the world is divided into 'peach' and 'coconut' cultures. Peach cultures, such as North Americans and Brazilians, are 'soft' on the outside: they smile at strangers, share information about themselves, and ask personal questions of those they hardly know. But after a while, you may hit the 'hard stone' in the middle when the peach suddenly isn't willing to share any more. Coconuts, on the other hand, such as Russians and Germans, have 'a hard shell'. They rarely smile at strangers, and generally listen and talk less ⁵ _____ than peaches. Once you get past the shell, however, coconuts gradually become warmer and friendlier. Relationships are built up slowly, but tend to last longer.

An example of a ⁶ _____ between a peach and coconut happened when a Russian colleague of mine sat next to an American stranger on a flight to New York. The American gave very personal information about himself, including information about his relationship with his wife. In turn, my Russian colleague shared his personal story, thinking he had really ⁷ _____ with this guy and made a new friend. After all, their conversation had been more than ⁸ _____. He felt quite ⁹ _____ when, at the end of the flight, as he was preparing to swap phone numbers, the American just stood up and with a wave of his hand said: 'Have a great trip!'



Grammar using different question types

4a Read the article, then choose the correct options to complete questions 1–7.

- 1 What do you look / look you like, Siri?
- 2 Who did invent / invented you?
- 3 What did you have / had you for breakfast?
- 4 Why did Apple make / Apple made you?
- 5 What do you want / want you for your birthday?
- 6 What came / did come first, the chicken or the egg?
- 7 What means 'Siri' / does 'Siri' mean?

b Match the questions in exercise 4a to the real answers given by Siri, a–g.

- a It appears that human civilization has been awfully preoccupied with this question. ____
- b I try to be satisfied with what I have. ____
- c It's kind of you to ask, but I don't eat. ____
- d To help you. ____
- e Shiny. 1
- f I, Siri, was designed by Apple in California. ____
- g I don't think I can explain it in your language. Sorry. ____

5 Tick the questions that are correct and correct the incorrect questions.

- 1 What ~~did cause~~ the fire? What caused the fire?
- 2 Who lives next door to you? _____
- 3 At what are they staring? _____
- 4 Who this pen belongs to? _____
- 5 From where are you calling? _____
- 6 What did happen at the party? _____
- 7 Who phoned you earlier? _____
- 8 What did make that strange noise? _____
- 9 Who did you go on holiday with? _____
- 10 About what are you thinking? _____

6 Rewrite the direct questions as indirect questions. Use contractions where possible.

- 1 What time does the lesson finish?
Do you know what time the lesson finishes?
- 2 Will he come to the meeting?
Do you think _____
- 3 What is he talking about?
Do you have any idea _____
- 4 Where did you put the keys?
Can you remember _____
- 5 How does this coffee machine work?
Do you know _____

Conversations with the internet

What can I help you with?



Even those who don't own an iPhone or iPad know about Siri, a smart voice-powered assistant that can do everything a personal assistant would – schedule dates in your calendar, find directions, send messages or make calls. But what makes Siri different from traditional voice-recognition software is 'her' (Siri doesn't have a gender) ability to give intelligent answers to all sorts of questions. Many people find it entertaining to have conversations with Siri. See some of the most popular questions and the answers 'she' gives in the exercises.

I can ...

Very well Quite well More practice

talk about conversation in different cultures.

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use different question types.

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