

# Common English Greetings and Expressions

## 1. Hey, Hey man, or Hi

You can use “**hey**” and “**hi**” to greet someone instead of “hello”. Both are particularly popular among younger people.

While “hi” is appropriate to use in any casual situation, “hey” is for people who have already met. If you say “hey” to a stranger, it might be confusing for that person because he or she will try to remember when you met before!

You can also add “man” to the end of “hey” when greeting males. Some people also use “hey man” to casually greet younger women, but only do this if you know the woman very well.

Remember that “hey” doesn’t always mean “hello”. “Hey” can also be used to call for someone’s attention.

## 2. How's it going? or How are you doing?

These are casual ways of asking “**how are you?**”

If you're trying to be particularly polite, stick with “how are you?” but otherwise, you can use these expressions to greet almost anyone. The word “going” is usually shortened, so it sounds more like “go-in”.

You can answer with “it's going well” or “I'm doing well” depending on the question. Although it's not grammatically correct, most people just answer “good” – and you can too. Like when responding to “how are you?” you can also follow your answer by asking “and you?”.

## 3. What's up?, What's new?, or What's going on?

These are some other informal ways of asking “**how are you?**” which are typically used to casually greet someone you have met before. Most people answer with “**nothing**” or “**not much**”. Or, if it feels right to make small talk, you could also briefly describe anything new or interesting that's going on in your life, before asking “**what about you?**” to continue the conversation.

## 4. Good to see you or Nice to see you

These casual greetings are used with friends, co-workers or family members that you haven't seen in a while. It's common for close friends to hug when they greet each other, particularly if they haven't seen each other in some time; so you might use this greeting along with a hug or handshake depending on your relationship with the person.

### Formal Greetings

#### Good morning, Good afternoon, or Good evening

These are formal ways of saying "hello", which change depending on the time of day. Keep in mind that "good night" is only used to say "good bye", so if you meet someone late in the day, remember to greet them with "good evening", rather than "good night". Good morning can be made more casual by simply saying "morning". You can also use "afternoon" or "evening" as informal greetings, but these are less commonly used.

#### 9. It's nice to meet you or Pleased to meet you

These greetings are formal and polite. If you say this to someone when you meet him or her for the first time, it will make you seem courteous. Remember to only use these greetings the *first* time you meet someone. Next time you see the person you can show that you remember him or her by saying "**it's nice to see you again**".

## Introducing other people

### Introducing a friend to a classmate

A: Sarah, have you met my friend John? or  
Sarah, I'd like you to introduce you to my friend John.

Sarah: Pleased to meet you, John. Or Nice to meet you, John.

John could say: Nice to meet you too, Sarah. Or Hello, Sarah.

### At a more informal party

When you introduce two of your friends to each other, you can simply say, "John, this is Sarah."

### Speaking Tip

**"How do you do?"** is quite formal for British English speakers and the reply to this question is to repeat the phrase, **"How do you do?"** (as strange as that may sound!)

## **Slang English Greetings**

### **Are you OK?, You alright?, or Alright mate?**

This casual way of asking both “hello” and “how are you” is common in Britain. You can respond “yeah, fine”, or simply “alright”.

### **Sup? or Whazzup?**

These greetings are abbreviations of “what’s up?” which are common among teenagers. Like with “what’s up?” you can answer “nothing” or “not much”.

- 1. If someone asks you "How are you?" you can answer**
  - Bad
  - Not bad
  - I can complain
- 2. If someone asks "How are things?" you can reply**
  - Thanks! And you?
  - Very fine thanks. And you?
  - Fine thanks. And you?
- 3. If someone says "Good morning!" you can reply**
  - Good morning!
  - Hi!
  - Hey!
- 4. If someone says "Nice to meet you" you can reply**
  - Yes! It's nice.
  - I'd like to introduce myself.
  - Pleased to meet you too
- 5. When you introduce a person (Jen) to another person (Sue), you can say**
  - Jen, this is Sue.
  - Jen, can you meet Sue.
  - Jen, will you meet Sue.
- 6. To give more information about the person, you can say**
  - She's a friend of me.
  - She's a friend of mine.
  - She's the my friend.
- 7. If someone says "How do you do?" you can reply**
  - Hi!
  - How are you?
  - How do you do?
- 8. What do you say to someone at 1pm?**
  - Good morning.
  - Good afternoon.
  - Good evening.
- 9. When you arrive at a restaurant for dinner you can say "Good evening". When you leave the restaurant, you can say**
  - Good evening.
  - Good night.
  - See you!
- 10. When you say good bye to a friend, you can say**
  - See you later.
  - Catch you later.
  - Both of these.

# Speaking skills practice: Meeting people

## Preparation

Write the words in the correct order to make sentences and questions.

1.     ? | OK | you | Are .....  
.....
2.     school. | I'm | new | this | at .....  
.....
3.     your | ? | name | What's .....  
.....
4.     do | you | it? | spell | How .....  
.....
5.     birthday | November. | My | in | is .....  
.....
6.     you | in? | class | What | are .....  
.....
7.     lost. | am | I .....  
.....
8.     yet. | know | don't | I .....  
.....

## 1. Check your understanding: true or false

Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

- |    |  |             |              |
|----|--|-------------|--------------|
| 1. | It's Makayla's first day at a new school.    | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 2. | Makayla knows a lot of people at the school. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 3. | Gemma is friendly and helpful.               | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 4. | Makayla is 18.                               | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 5. | Gemma and Makayla are both in Year 11.       | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 6. | Gemma will help Makayla find her teacher.    | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |



## 2. Check your understanding: ordering

Write numbers (1–7) to put the conversation in order.

.....	I need to go to the library. Do you know where it is?
.....	Where do you need to go?
.....	Yes, I do. I'm going to the library now. Let's go together.
.....	No problem. Come with me.
.....	Hi, how are you?
.....	Really? OK, great! Thank you!
.....	Hello. I'm OK, thanks ... but I'm lost.

### 3. Check your understanding: gap fill

Complete the sentences with a word from the box.

in	am	don't
spell	year	birthday

1. I \_\_\_\_\_ know anyone.
2. How do you \_\_\_\_\_ it? With a 'p' or a 'b'?
3. What \_\_\_\_\_ are you in at school?
4. I'm \_\_\_\_\_ Year 8.
5. I'm 15. My \_\_\_\_\_ is in June.
6. I \_\_\_\_\_ late!

Now practice this dialogue in groups. Use your real names.

A: Good afternoon!

B: Good afternoon! My name is \_\_\_\_\_(b)\_\_\_\_\_.

A: Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_(a)\_\_\_\_\_.

B: Have we met before?

A: No we haven't met. Pleased to meet you!

B: Pleased to meet you too. Have you met  
\_\_\_\_\_ (c) \_\_\_\_\_?

A: I'm not sure.

C: Yes, we have met before. Good to see you again!

A: Oh yes, I remember now. Good to see you again too!

C: How are you doing?

A: I'm not too good today.

C: I'm sorry to hear that.

A: And what about you?

C: Oh, I'm fine.

B: I have an idea. Let's go and get some lunch!