

Week 5

14/8/2025

Agreeing, disagreeing and apologizing

1. Express Strong Agreement

There are various ways of agreeing and disagreeing. It is possible to agree in a strong or weak manner; and it is possible to disagree in a strong or weak manner.

Study the following Dialogue 1 and 2 and underline the words or phrases that show strong agreement.

Sample Dialogue 1

Janine: I always get angry when I hear that an old person was robbed.

Jim: Me too. Imagine attacking someone who can't defend himself! It's shameful!

Janine: Absolutely! They should be in jail.

Jim: I couldn't agree with you more!

Sample Dialogue 2

Jorge: This place is wonderful, isn't it?

Betty: Sure is!

Jorge: Lovely trees, flowers and avenues.

Betty: Absolutely!

Jorge: Terrific restaurants with good food.

Betty: And how!

Jorge: And the nightlife is just fantastic.

Betty: No doubt about it!

2. Express Weak Agreement

Sometimes we agree but not so strongly. There are other times when we have to agree as we have no choice.

Study the following Dialogue 1 to 3 and underline the words or phrases that show weak agreement.

Dialogue 1

Jaime: Where'll we go for lunch? How about the coffee shop?

Bill: I don't mind.

Dialogue 2

Lee: I need some help with this lesson. Could you help me after class today?

Jane: I suppose so.

Dialogue 3

Howard (the boss): How about a cup of coffee before going home?

Jacques (an employee): Uh Okay.

When this is the case, we use expressions that show weak agreement. The following expressions and dialogues are examples of this.

<p align="center">Some words and expressions for agreeing strongly</p>	<p align="center">Some words and expressions for weak Agreement</p>
<p>Absolutely.</p> <p>I agree entirely.</p> <p>Certainly.</p> <p>I agree 100%.</p> <p>Definitely.</p> <p>I couldn't agree with you more.</p> <p>Sure.</p> <p>That's just what I think.</p> <p>It's true.</p> <p>That's exactly what I was thinking.</p> <p>No doubt about it.</p> <p>I agree with you completely.</p> <p>Sounds good.</p> <p>You know, that's exactly what I think.</p> <p>You're spot on.</p> <p>That makes a lot of sense.</p> <p>You've hit the nail on the head.</p>	<p>I don't mind.</p> <p>I suppose so.</p> <p>If you have to.</p> <p>Okay.</p> <p>Well, yes, but ...</p> <p>I've got mixed feelings about that.</p> <p>Well, I don't know ...</p> <p>Hmm, possibly, but ...</p> <p>You've got a point, but ...</p> <p>I agree up to a point ...</p>

Another way of showing weak agreement is to use an expression of strong agreement, adding words to show that it is weak agreement.

Look at how this is done in the following three dialogues and underline the words or phrases that show weak agreement. .

1. Ann: Good lunch, wasn't it?

Arnold: Sure, but it was a bit too salty.

2. Joan: This city is a great place to live.

Peter: I agree, but only in the summer.

3. Miriam: Will you come shopping with me?

Michael: I'd love to, but only for half an hour.

3. Expressing Disagree

Usually when we disagree with something in English, it's followed by some reason or explanation of why we disagree.

Look at this example and underline word or phrase of disagreement:

Sample Dialogue 1

Hau: John wants to buy a motorcycle with the money he's saved. I think that's a good idea.

Terry: I disagree with you because I think they're very dangerous.

Hau: I guess you're right. They are dangerous.

There is one way to disagree without using disagreeing expressions and still be polite. Look at the following:

Peter: This is a boring city to live in. There's nothing to do at night.

Ruth: I think there's lots to do. It takes time to learn about all the exciting things happenin

Notice that Ruth said: "I think ..." and then said the opposite of what Peter had said. This has the meaning of: "I disagree with you, Peter".

Expressing complete agreement	Agreeing in part	Expressing conditional agreement
<p>Exactly! Precisely! Totally! Absolutely! That's right! Correct! You're right! You're so right! That's so true! I couldn't agree with you more! I'm with you on that That's just what I was thinking! That's exactly what I think. That's a good point. That's just how I see it. My feelings exactly. I'll say! You can say that again!</p>	<p>Yes, perhaps, however ... Well, yes, but ... Yes, in a way, however ... Hmm, possibly, but ... Yes, I agree up to a point, however ... Well, you have a point there, but ... There's something there, I suppose, however... I guess you could be right, but ... Yes, I suppose so, however That's worth thinking about, but ...</p>	<p>I'd agree with you if ... I'd certainly agree if you're thinking of ...</p>

Expressing complete disagreement	Using irony to express disagreement	Dismissing an argument as irrelevant or improbable
I don't think so!	Come off it!	That isn't the point.
I disagree	Come on!	That's highly debatable.
I disagree entirely.	Do you really think so?	That's highly unlikely.
I'm afraid I can't agree.	What!	
I'm afraid you're wrong	You can't actually mean that!	
On the contrary!	You can't be serious!	
Definitely not!	Are you pulling my leg?	
Rubbish!	Are you kidding?	
Nonsense!	You must be kidding!	
That's ridiculous!		
Never in a million years!		

Disagreeing diplomatically	Countering politely
I wonder whether that's the case.	Yes, but remember that ...
Hmmm, I'm not sure about that.	Yes, but it isn't that ...
I'm not sure (that) it works like that.	That may be so, but ...
I'm not so sure about that.	That may be true, but ...
I'm not so certain	That may be so, ...
Well, I'm not sure whether you can really ...	That might have been the case once, but ...
Well, I don't know...	Well, maybe they do, but ...
Well, it depends...	You may be right about ..., but ...
I'm inclined to disagree with that...	Maybe. But the problem is...
	That's a good idea, but...
	That's a good point, but...
	I'd love to, but...
	That would be great, except that...
	That may be so, but...
	Possibly, but what I'm concerned with is...

Self-Study

Expressing Agreement	Expressing Disagreement
<p>I agree (with you). You're/That's right. That's/It's true. I know. I'll say! You can say that again! Absolutely! Definitely! No doubt about it! Me, too. I think so, too. I feel the same way. Yes, indeed. <i>It sure is.</i> I ___ either. That's just/exactly what I was thinking. I couldn't agree with you more. I feel the same way. That's exactly what I think. My feelings exactly. You can say that again! You took the words right out of my mouth! You're probably right. I suppose/guess you're right. I suppose/guess that's true. That might/may be true. You might/may be right. You have a point (there). I see your point. I know. Under the circumstances, I can see ... Given the circumstances, I can see ... Given the situation, I can see ...</p>	<p>I disagree. I don't agree. I can't agree. I don't think so. I wish I could agree (with you), but ... I hate to disagree (with you), but ... I don't mean to disagree (with you), but ... I don't want to argue (with you) (about that), but ... I don't want to start/get into an argument (with you) (about it), but ... I'm not so sure (about that). I don't know (about that). I'm not sure (if) I agree (with you on that). I wouldn't say that. I wouldn't go as far as that. I wouldn't go so far as to say that. But/However, wouldn't you agree (that) ___? But/However, wouldn't you say (that) _____? But/However, don't you think (that) .____? We don't see "eye to eye" when it comes to ...</p>

Apologizing

Apologizing is a powerful skill for resolving conflicts and maintaining healthy relationships. A sincere and genuine apology goes beyond simply saying "I'm sorry." Sometimes we can really hurt the people in our lives with our words and actions which may often require an apology. It should include:

- Acknowledgment and responsibility for your actions.
- Regret for how your actions made the other person feel.
- An intent to change your behavior.
- A willingness to make amends.

A good apology benefits both parties; it helps the person who was wronged feel heard and understood, and it allows the apologizer to take responsibility and reduce guilt.

Examples of how to apologize in various contexts:

- Sincerely for mistakes: Use empathy to understand how the other person feels, and tailor the apology to the specific situation.
- Professionally or in an email: Be direct and clear. Apologies for things like delays or mistakes should be followed by a solution or clarification.
- To a friend or partner: Address the specific hurt caused, whether it's a critical comment, a misunderstanding, or forgetting an important date.

- To someone you hurt: Focus on acknowledging their pain and expressing remorse for your role in it.

Apologies can be a great source building **communication** between you and your relationships and can allow an opportunity to learn from your mistakes (Howell, Turowski, & Buro, 2012; Schumann & Dweck, 2014).

There are several examples of contexts in which apologies may be necessary. For example, maybe you miss an important deadline on a project at work and failed to communicate any challenges you had.. However, an apology could be necessary to clear the air about miscommunication and allow you the opportunity to offer ways to help.

Whether you are at work, school, at home with your family, out with your partner and friends, or interacting with a stranger, mistakes can happen anywhere when you make a mistake or hurt someone, it is important to apologize to the person or people affected. Apologizing to others can be a really difficult experience.

A general overview of a good apology could include the following phrases:

1. What I did was wrong and I am so sorry for hurting you.
2. I wish I could take back what I said (or did) and be more considerate of your feelings.
3. Next time, I will be more mindful about what I say (or do).

4. What can I do right now to make you feel better or help our relationship?

Examples of apologizing sincerely:

- **If you had to cancel plans at the last minute:** I am so sorry I had to cancel our dinner when you had already made it to the restaurant. I should have let you know in advance that I was having a long day and wouldn't be able to be present with you. You deserve to be treated with more respect and I will ensure that I give you that next time.
- **If you took a joke too far:** I am truly sorry for poking fun at you. Although it wasn't my intention to hurt your feelings, I recognize that my words were hurtful. What can I do to make this better?
- **If you broke a nice vase at your friend's house:** I am sorry and feel awful about accidentally breaking your vase. It was beautiful and I should have been much more careful. I am happy to cover the cost and buy you a new one. What type of vase would you like?

Here are some examples to use if you are apologizing through email:

- I apologize for the confusion my last email caused. Let me clarify what I meant.

- My apologies for the delay in sending you the spreadsheet. I wanted to make sure that it was complete and up to standards. Please let me know how I can support you.
- Unfortunately, I am dealing with a situation outside of work that is occupying my mental capacity. Because of this, I will not be able to get you this document until next week. I sincerely apologize for the inconvenience and aim to send it to you as soon as possible.
- I made a terrible mistake and sent our client the wrong information. I have since cleared it up with them. I will be sure to be more watchful and cognizant of my work.

are hurt.

Some ways to apologize to a friend:

- **If you said something critical about them:** It was not fair of me to say that about you and I feel awful for how that came off and made you feel. I am so sorry for hurting your feelings.
- **If you said something behind their back:** I should have come to you first about our issues rather than telling other people. I am sorry for what I said to you when I was hurt. I know that hurt you and I regret that.
- **If you have a misunderstanding:** I think what I said came across as hurtful. I noticed you looking upset and I'm sorry for hurting your feelings. What I actually meant to say was

_____.

Here are a few more specific examples of apologizing if you've found yourself in a situation where someone was hurt by your actions:

- I am sorry for saying something insensitive. I should have been more careful and if I could go back and change what I said, I would. I hope you can forgive me.
- I am sorry for stepping on your foot while I had shoes on. I know that must have hurt really bad. Can I get you something to help you heal?
- I feel awful for dropping all the cookies you made on the floor. It was an accident, but I know how much time that took you and I'm so sorry for my carelessness. Can I help you make a new batch?
- I am sorry my loudness woke you up last night. I know you are a light sleeper and have an important meeting today. I should have been more considerate of you and I wish I could take it all back.
- I know I said I would be home early to watch the game with you and I'm so sorry I lost track of time with my friends. I love all the time we get to spend together and I know it must have made you feel awful when I didn't show up to be here with you. I have learned to put all our plans in my schedule and will make sure that moving forward I don't forget.

How To Stop Apologizing Too Much

It's also important to know when not to apologize. The text highlights that people, particularly women, often apologize for things that don't require an apology. In these situations, it suggests using alternatives like "Thank you for your patience" or simply stating your needs without an apology. This doesn't mean being impolite; it's about being assertive and reserving apologies for when they are truly necessary.

- **Instead of apologizing for sending a text or email late:** Thank you so much for your patience with me.
- **Instead of apologizing for respecting your boundaries and prioritizing self-care:** Thank you for the opportunity, but I am not able to do this at this time.
- **Instead of apologizing for rejecting someone:** Thank you, but I am not interested.

A lack of an apology does not mean a lack of politeness or respect. You can still be courteous without using the words, "I'm sorry."