

# 500 GRAMMAR BASED CONVERSATION QUESTIONS

with explanations of grammar points

Conversation questions designed to elicit the  
thirty most common grammar points



LARRY PITTS

# **500 Grammar Based Conversation Questions**

**Larry Pitts**

500 Grammar Based Conversation Questions

Copyright © 2015 ECQ Publishing

All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-942116-01-1

For questions or comments please visit:

[www.eslconversationquestions.com](http://www.eslconversationquestions.com)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents .....	4
Quick Guide.....	7
Using conversation questions in the classroom.....	9
Extras .....	12
Adverbs of frequency.....	13
Adverbs of frequency questions .....	14
As ... as (equatives).....	15
As ... as questions .....	16
Be going to.....	17
Be going to questions.....	18
Comparatives .....	19
Comparative questions.....	20
Conditionals real with the future (first conditional).....	21
Conditionals real with the future questions.....	22
Conditionals real with the present (zero conditional) .....	23
Conditionals real with the present questions.....	24
Conditionals unreal with the past (third conditional) .....	25
Conditionals unreal with the past questions.....	27
Conditionals unreal with the present (second conditional).....	28
Conditionals unreal with the present questions.....	29
For, since .....	30
For, since questions.....	31
Gerunds vs. Infinitives .....	32
Gerund questions.....	34

Infinitive questions.....	35
Imperatives.....	36
Imperative questions .....	37
Modals of advice .....	38
Modals of advice questions .....	39
Modals of necessity .....	40
Modals of necessity questions .....	42
Modals of possibility and probability.....	43
Modals of possibility and probability questions.....	44
Nouns (count / noncount).....	45
Noun (count / noncount) questions.....	47
Passive voice in the present (Present passive voice) .....	48
Passive voice in the present questions .....	49
Passive voice with the past .....	50
Passive voice with the past questions .....	51
Past continuous .....	52
Past continuous questions .....	53
Present perfect.....	54
Present perfect questions.....	56
Present perfect continuous.....	57
Present perfect continuous questions.....	58
Quantifiers .....	59
Quantifier questions.....	60
Reported speech / indirect speech.....	61
Reported speech questions.....	65
Simple past.....	66

Simple past questions.....	68
Simple present.....	69
Simple present questions.....	71
Superlatives .....	72
Superlative questions.....	73
Tag questions .....	74
Tag question conversation questions .....	76
Used to, would .....	77
Used to, would questions .....	79
Will .....	80
Will questions .....	82
Would rather, prefer .....	83
Would rather, prefer questions .....	85
Enjoy the book? .....	87

# QUICK GUIDE

adverbs of frequency .....	13	future with will.....	80
always .....	13	gerunds.....	32
as ... as .....	15	going to.....	17
be going to .....	17	had better .....	38
can't.....	43	have got to.....	40
comparatives .....	19	have to.....	40
conditional real with the future .....	21	how many.....	59
conditional unreal with the past .....	25	how much .....	59
conditional unreal with the present .....	28	imperatives .....	36
conditionals real with the present.....	23	indirect speech .....	61
could .....	43	infinitives .....	32
count nouns.....	45	may.....	43
countable nouns .....	45	might.....	43
direct speech .....	61	modals of advice.....	38
equatives.....	15	modals of necessity.....	40
er (comparatives).....	19	modals of possibility and probability .....	43
est (superlatives).....	72	must .....	40, 43
ever.....	13	never.....	13
first conditional.....	21	noncount nouns .....	45
for (preposition).....	30	not as ... as.....	15
future real conditional.....	21	nouns.....	45
future with going to .....	17	often.....	13

ought to.....	38	should.....	38
passive voice in the present .....	48	simple past .....	66
passive voice with the past .....	50	simple present .....	69
past continuous .....	52	since (preposition).....	30
past passive voice.....	50	sometimes .....	13
past unreal conditional.....	25	superlatives.....	72
prefer.....	83	tag questions .....	74
present passive voice .....	48	tell (reported speech) .....	61
present perfect.....	54	third conditional .....	25
present perfect continuous.....	57	to + infinitive.....	32
present real conditional.....	23	uncountable nouns .....	45
present unreal conditional.....	28	used to.....	77
quantifiers .....	59	usually .....	13
rarely .....	13	will .....	80
reported speech .....	61	would .....	77
say .....	61	would prefer .....	83
second conditional .....	28	would rather.....	83
seldom.....	13	zero conditional .....	23



# USING CONVERSATION QUESTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Let me begin by saying, these tips on how to use conversation questions in the classroom are based on what I have found to work in my classes. You may have to tweak or disregard some of my advice to accommodate your own teaching style. With that in mind, let's get started.

## Timing

First, let's talk about how much time to allocate for questions. When planning lessons, I most often follow a rough rule of a minimum of one minute per question and a maximum of three minutes per question. That doesn't really indicate how much time they will spend on each individual question; it's just a rough estimate for judging the amount of time it will take to finish a set of questions.

So if you give your students ten questions, you'll burn between ten to thirty minutes of class time. Now of course this isn't a steadfast rule. There will always be exceptions. All things considered though, about twenty minutes for ten questions is the average for my classes.

Another quick point, if you can limit how many questions they see at a time (using PowerPoint or spaced handouts) they will answer questions more fully and take more time. I find showing them five questions at a time makes for a good pace.

## Group Size

Next, you need to decide how many students to put into each group. As a general rule of thumb I find that three students in a group is the ideal number. I say this because with three students everyone gets a good chance to talk but there are still enough people to have a rich reservoir of ideas to discuss.

Two students really maximize talking time, but often the two students don't get along or you might have two shy students that end up together.

Four students can work, but often there isn't enough talk time for each student and shy students feel like they are on stage every time they talk.

Five students in a group is far too many and often they just won't talk. All this being said, ultimately it comes down to the dynamics of your class and its size.

If you have a really talkative class with a good dynamic, putting them in pairs works well. Groups of four generally work best with groups of shy students, because they feel more pressure to speak if everyone in the group is silent.

## **Mistakes are okay**

Assure your students that mistakes are okay. Tell them they should try to produce the target grammar correctly. If they make mistakes unrelated to the target grammar, let them know that it's okay. Tell them that you are happy when they make mistakes because that means they are trying new and difficult ways of saying things.

One thing to stress is that they shouldn't be speaking their native language. It is better to say something that is incorrect or unclear in English than correctly and clearly in their first language.

## **Let the conversation flow**

Another important point to stress is that they are free to discuss more than just the questions. Even though you are trying to focus on practicing grammar, a natural conversation moves from one subject to another; and this is what you want in your classes as well. As long as they are practicing the target grammar most of the time, don't get involved.

Very often students will treat questions like an ordered set of goals to accomplish. Let them know if they don't discuss them all, that's okay!

If they spend the whole time talking about just one question, that's great. It means they are having a natural conversation. Just make sure they are speaking only in English! I tell my students they can discuss whatever questions they think are interesting. If they don't think any questions are interesting, they should make their own questions.

## **Keep out of the discussion**

After you have put the students into groups and they are talking, there is one important point to remember. Stay out of the discussion! I know it may be tempting to make a comment, but this is their time to discuss.

The only time you should be interrupting their discussion is when they ask you for help. Sometimes you can interject if a student is repeatedly using the target grammar incorrectly. You don't want them practicing the grammar point incorrectly. Otherwise, stay out of the discussion.

So what are you doing while they are discussing? You are monitoring each group's discussion and taking notes.

## **Take notes**

While you are monitoring your students' discussion, you should be taking notes. Take note of any errors that are being made repeatedly (i.e. errors in grammar, pronunciation or vocabulary use), especially problems with the target grammar. Write down some specific sentences that contain common errors you hear or that contain errors you wish to work on.

Decide which errors or mistakes would be useful to go over with the class and at the end of class or at the end of the discussion go over some of these mistakes and errors. When you go over the errors, keep them anonymous and let students know that it's a good thing if they see their mistake on the board. You might let the class try to correct the errors or correct them yourself for the class depending on how much time you have.

So those are the tips I have for using conversation questions in an adult ESL class. You may find that these tips don't suit your teaching style. Give them a try and if they don't mesh with your teaching style, try something different. Every teacher teaches differently and every student learns differently. Ultimately the goal is to find what works best for you and your class.

# EXTRAS

There are just a couple of extras I want to you to be aware of as you look through this book and use it in your classes.

## Bounty for errors

If you find an error in this ebook, email me at:

[larrypitts@eslconversationquestions.com](mailto:larrypitts@eslconversationquestions.com)

As a reward I will send you a free copy of any one of our ebooks. You can choose from one of these ebooks:

[ESL Role Plays: 50 Engaging Role Plays for ESL and EFL Classes](#)

[1,000 Conversation Questions: Designed for Use in the ESL or EFL Classroom](#)

[ESL Worksheets and Activities for Kids](#)

[IELTS Study Guide: Quick Tips, Tricks, and Strategies](#)

## Join our reviewer program

We are always looking for qualified reviewers for our books. But we don't want to offer free review copies to just anyone. We want to offer them to people who are more likely to leave a review since they have left reviews in the past.

So if you leave a review of this book and are interested in receiving a free digital copy of one of our books as a review copy, let me know which of the reviews is yours and which book you are interested in at:

**[larrypitts@eslconversationquestions.com](mailto:larrypitts@eslconversationquestions.com)**

We only ask that you actually review the review copy we send you. Once you write a review of the book we sent you, we can send you a digital review copy of another one of our books.

We'll also send you a review copy of any new books we come out with.

# ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY

We use **adverbs of frequency** to tell us how often something happens. We use them to talk about habits and how often we do things in the present or have done them in the past.

Here are some common **adverbs of frequency**:

**always, never, often, sometimes, usually, seldom/rarely, ever**

**Adverbs of frequency** come after '**be**' and other **auxiliary verbs**, but **before the main verb**.

*He **is** **always** sleepy.*

*She **sometimes** **takes** walks in the evening.*

**Sometimes** and **usually** can be put at the beginning of sentences.

***Sometimes** they watch movies late at night.*

***Usually** he gets up early.*

## Adverbs of frequency questions

- How often do you read? What types of books do you like to read?
- How often do you go out to eat on weekends?
- How often do you watch TV in the evening? What shows do you like?
- How often do you eat meat for dinner?
- How often do you stay up later than you should?
- How often do you go for walks? Where do you go?
- How often do you eat fast food for lunch?
- How often do you sing? What types of music do you sing?
- How often do you listen to classical music?
- How often do you go to the movies alone?
- How often do you go to the beach in summer?
- How often do you text?
- How often do you check your email?
- How often do you check social media platforms like Facebook?
- How often do you ride a bike to work or school?
- How often do you ask your friends for help?
- How often do you skip breakfast?

## AS ... AS (EQUATIVES)

We use **as ... as** to say that people or things are the same. We use **not as...as** to say that people or things are not the same.

We can use an **adjective, adverb, or quantifier** with **(not) as ... as**.

Adjective: *That car isn't as expensive as this car.*

Adverb: *Jack eats as quickly as Susan.*

Quantifier: *Our company doesn't have as many complaints as other companies.*

Many idioms in English use **as ... as** with an **adjective**.

*She was as mad as a hornet.*

\*Considering that most books focus on using **(not) as ... as** with **adjectives**, the following questions have been designed to elicit this structure with adjectives.\*

## As ... as questions

- Are your parents as supportive as your friends?
- Are the Rolling Stones as well known as the Beatles?
- Are puzzles as fun as crosswords?
- Is modern art as beautiful as classical art?
- Is watching a play as fun as watching a movie?
- Are cats as fun as dogs?
- What's as thrilling as a roller coaster ride?
- What's as delicious as fresh baked cookies?
- Who is as important as the president of the United States?
- What travel destinations are as popular as Rome?

- *Fill in the parentheses with your own idea* -

- Is (city) as entertaining as (city)?
- Is (fast food restaurant) as good as (fast food restaurant)?
- Is (actor) as talented as (actor)?
- Is the (cell phone) as good as the (cell phone)?
- Is (mode of transportation) as comfortable as (mode of transportation)?
- Are (animals) as cute as (animals)?
- Is (celebrity) as strange as (celebrity)?



# BE GOING TO

We form **be going to** with **present tense of be + going to + verb**. The 'be' in **be going to** is often turned into a contraction (*She's going to...*).

We use **be going to** in order to:

Talk about intentions or things we plan to do.

*I'm going to **apply** to universities next month.*

*The city government **is going to build** a new library.*

Make predictions about future events, usually when we have a reason or evidence for our predictions.

*Don't worry. **It's not going to rain**. There isn't a cloud in the sky.*

*He's **going to win** the race. Look how far ahead he is.*

## Be going to questions

- What are you going to do after class?
- Where are you going to go on your next vacation?
- What are you going to do this weekend?
- How are you going to improve yourself or your life in the next three years?
- Where are you going to eat dinner tonight?
- When are you going to retire?
- What's going to be your next big purchase? When are you going to buy it?
- What show or movie are you going to watch tonight?
- What are you going to use English for in the future?
- What's going to be your next big career change?
- Who are you going to meet this weekend?
- When are you going to get up tomorrow?
- What electronic device are you going to buy next?
- Are you going to play any games today? What are you going to play?
- What piece of clothing are you going to buy next?
- What housework are you going to do this week?
- What are you going to cook this week?

# COMPARATIVES

**Comparatives** are used to compare two things.

For one syllable adjectives: **adjective –er + than**

*He is **taller than** his cousin.*

For two or more syllable adjectives: **more + adjective + than** (to show the opposite use **less** instead of **more** before the adjective).

*This ring is **more expensive than** that one.*

For adjectives ending in 'y': **drop the 'y' and adjective –ier + than**

*She is **funnier than** him.*

There are exceptions – **good (better), bad (worse), far (further/farther)**, etc.

If the second person or thing being compared isn't mentioned in the sentence, we drop **than**.

*Which is **more important**, money or power? I think money is **more important**.*

We can also use **comparatives** to compare one person or thing with all the rest of the people or things in their group.

*John is **more diligent than** all of his classmates.*

## Comparative questions

- Is it better to have many friends or just a few close friends?
- Compare two recent movies. Which one is more entertaining?
- Which cell phone OS do you think is better? Why?
- Which is more important, money or happiness?
- Compare two types of foreign food. Which is more delicious? Which is cheaper?
- Which is more enjoyable, going to a theme park or going to a museum? Why?
- Who is more influential, politicians or celebrities?
- Which is more relaxing, reading a book or watching TV? Why?
- Do you think that corruption or poverty is a bigger problem? Why?
- Compare two countries. Which one is a better vacation spot?
- Is it better to have more free time or more money? Why?
- Which is more important, friends or family? Why?
- Is it better to live in the country or in a city? Why?
- Compare two musicians. Who do you think is more talented?
- Which is more exciting, playing a video game or playing a sport? Why?
- Which is more comfortable, a couch or a recliner?
- Which is a better place to have a vacation, mountains or a beach? Why?

# CONDITIONALS REAL WITH THE FUTURE (FIRST CONDITIONAL)

For all **conditional sentences** there are two parts, the **conditional clause** ('if' clause) and the **consequence clause** (main clause).

The **future real conditional / conditional real with the future / first conditional** is formed with **if + present simple** for the conditional clause and the **simple future will + verb** for the consequence clause. **Will** is most commonly used in the consequence clause. But **going to, must, should**, or an **imperative** can be used instead of **will**.

*If I **finish** my homework, my teacher **will be** happy.*

*If I **finish** my homework (conditional clause / if clause),*

*my teacher **will be** happy (consequence clause / main clause).*

The **first conditional** is used when talking about something that may happen in the future. The **consequence clause** is a realistic and possible outcome of the **conditional clause**. It is a 'real' possibility.

*If you **exercise**, you'll **be** healthier.*

*If he **doesn't study**, he'll **never pass** the test.*

The conditional clause can come first or second in a conditional sentence. If the conditional clause is first, a comma usually is put between the consequence and conditional clause. A comma usually isn't needed when the consequence clause is first.

*My teacher **will be** happy **if I finish** my homework.*

***If I finish** my homework, my teacher **will be** happy.*

## Conditionals real with the future questions

- What will you do if someone talks loudly in a movie theater while you're watching a movie?
- What will you do if you drop your phone in the toilet?
- If you go out for dinner this evening, what will you eat?
- What will you do if the power goes out in your home tonight?
- What will you do if you forget an important birthday?
- If your friend asks you to go out tomorrow evening, what will you say?
- What will you do if you crack the screen on your phone?
- What will you do if you get a raise at work or graduate from university?
- If it rains this weekend, what will you do?
- Who will you eat with if you go out to dinner this week?
- Where will go if you get an unexpected day off?
- If you meet a celebrity you admire, what will you do?
- What will countries do if the sea level keeps rising?
- What will happen if there is another financial crisis?
- If you need relationship advice, who do you call?
- What will happen if the European Union splits up?
- If humans start mining asteroids, what will happen?

## CONDITIONALS REAL WITH THE PRESENT (ZERO CONDITIONAL)

For all conditional sentences there are two parts. The **conditional clause** ('if' clause) and the **consequence clause** (main clause).

The **present real conditional / conditional real with the present / zero conditional** is formed with **if + present simple tense** for the conditional and the **simple present** for the consequence clause.

*If I forget my homework, my teacher gets angry.*

*If I forget my homework (conditional / if clause),*

*my teacher gets angry (consequence clause / main clause).*

The **zero conditional** is used to talk about things that always happen or things that happen the same way every time. Because the situations happen they are 'real'. The **zero conditional** is used to talk about facts and behavior which don't change.

*If I am bored, I read a book.*

*If he forgets where his keys are, he asks his wife.*

The conditional clause can come first or second in a conditional sentence. If the conditional clause is first, a comma usually is put between the consequence and conditional clause. A comma usually isn't needed when the consequence clause is first.

*My teacher gets angry if I forget my homework.*

*If I forget my homework, my teacher gets angry.*

## Conditionals real with the present questions

- What do you do if you're bored?
- Where do you go if you want to buy clothes?
- Who do you talk to if you have a problem?
- Where do you go if you want to read a book?
- How long does it take you to ask for help if you don't know how to do something?
- If you can't get a jar open, what do you do?
- If you go out to eat, what type of food do you eat?
- If a friend asks you for money, what do you tell them?
- If you call your parents, how long do you talk?
- If you go to the movies, do you buy popcorn and drinks? Why or why not?
- Who do you call if you're lonely?
- What do you do if you're stressed?
- If you're in a bad mood, what do you do?
- If you have a cold, what medicine do you take?
- If you want to celebrate a special occasion, where do you go or what do you do?
- Who do you talk to if you need a second opinion on something?
- What do you do if it's really hot outside?