

Speaking: introductions and meeting people

English A1

What this topic teaches

Meeting people is a dance with fixed steps: **greeting** , names, a moment of **small talk** , and a clean goodbye. You already know the dance in Chinese; this topic teaches the English music for it.

- The steps never change: hello, name, a friendly moment, goodbye.
- The music changes with the person: Hi for friends, Good morning for teachers.
- Memory hook: the same dance, three speeds: friend, classmate, teacher.

Choosing the greeting: the register dial

English greetings have a **register** dial, from relaxed to respectful. Turn the dial by person and place.

Person and place	Greeting	Answer
a friend, anywhere	Hi! / Hey!	Hi! / Hey!
a classmate, morning	Morning!	Morning!
a teacher, class start	Good morning, Ms Gao.	Good morning, class.
an office, first meeting	Hello. How do you do?	How do you do?

- Hi and Hello work almost everywhere; the titles (Ms, Mr, Mrs, Dr) do the respecting.
- Never mix the ends of the dial: *Yo, Mr Chen* is two speeds at once.

■ A first try

Greet each person correctly.

- your best friend at lunch (Hi!)
- your teacher at 9 a.m. (Good morning, Ms/Mr + name)
- a new student you just met (Hello! Nice to meet you.)

The name exchange, said out loud

This is speaking, not listening now: your name leaves your mouth with a stress on YOUR family name if you offer it.

- Offer: *I am Lin. Lin Xiaoyu.* (say the full name once; the listener keeps the loud part)
- Return: *And you?* or *What is your name?*

- Third person: *This is my friend Wei.* (you introduce others with *This is...*)

Small talk: the two-minute fuel

Small talk is friendly fuel, not information. At A1 you need exactly four lines.

Starter	The reply that keeps it alive
How are you?	Fine, thanks. And you?
Nice day today.	Yes, very sunny.
Is this your first year here?	Yes, it is. Everything is new.
Do you like the class?	Yes, the teacher is funny.

- The rule of the fuel: answer with one or two words PLUS one extra piece. *Fine* alone puts out the fire.
- The question back (*And you?*) returns the ball every time.

Leaving: the clean goodbye

Endings are steps too, and they end on a falling voice.

- *See you tomorrow.* / *See you in class.* (sure to meet again)
- *Goodbye. Have a good weekend.* (polite, any register)
- *Bye!* / *Bye-bye!* (friends only)

Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- Do not answer with one word and stop: *Fine.* is a full stop; *Fine, thanks. And you?* is a conversation.
- Do not translate the Chinese greeting word by word into *You good*: hello is one word.
- Titles travel with family names only: Ms Gao, not Ms Xiaoyu.

Check yourself

- Greet: your teacher at 9 a.m.; your friend at lunch.
- Offer your name and ask back, out loud, twice.
- Keep the fuel burning: reply to Nice day today with two pieces.
- Leave politely: you will see the person in class tomorrow.