

- **Read the dialogues** below to see how English is used in everyday situations.
- **Look at the tips** for the dos and don'ts of social English.
- **Study the vocabulary lists** and learn useful words and phrases.
- **Complete the exercises** and test your language knowledge.
- **Pull out this page** and use it as a reference tool and learning aid.



You can hear exercises about eating out on our CD/cassette

EVERYDAY ENGLISH

LANGUAGE

Language tips to pull out and keep



Eating out

Do you go out to dinner in English-speaking countries? What do you say when you ring up and book a table? How do you order a meal? Which words do you use to talk about the food? And what do you do when it comes to paying?

1. Booking a table by phone

Manager: **The Maltings**. Good evening!
 Oliver: Hello! **I was wondering if** I could book a table for Friday night.
 Manager: Friday. One second, please. For how many?
 Oliver: Four, please.
 Manager: Four. And what time, **sir**?
 Oliver: Half past seven, if that's possible.
 Manager: Fine. If I could just take your name.
 Oliver: Yes. It's Carter.
 Manager: OK. **Look forward to seeing you** on Friday.

- Tip!** In Britain, the manager of the restaurant would not normally say his name when answering the phone. Callers say their name only when booking a table.
- Tip!** The expression "I was wondering" is very common in spoken English. The past tense and the continuous form make what you are saying sound more polite and less direct.
- Tip!** As a sign of respect, the manager addresses Oliver with "sir". To a woman, he would say "madam".
- Tip!** When a verb comes after "to look forward to", it is always in the -ing form (gerund).

2. Arriving at the restaurant

Manager: Good evening!
 Oliver: Hello! We booked a table for **half seven**. The name's Carter.
 Manager: Yes, your table's ready. Shall I take your coats?
 Oliver: Thank you.
 Manager: Would you like to come through?
 Oliver: Alison, would you like to sit here?
 Alison: Yes, **that suits me fine**. Let me **squeeze through**.
 Janet: Now, remember, **everything's on me** tonight.
 Alison: Really? Are you sure, Janet?
 Janet: Absolutely!
 Manager: There's one small change to the **menu**. Instead of **mussels**, we have **trout** this evening.

- Tip!** "Half seven" is an informal way of saying "half past seven" in British English. Don't confuse it with German *halb sieben*, which is "half past six"!
- Tip!** The expression "everything's on me" is an indirect way of saying "I will pay for everything". A similar expression is "I'll treat you". In this situation, do not say "I will invite you".
- Tip!** The German word *Menü* is "a set meal" in English.

mussels ['masʊlz]	Miesmuscheln
squeeze through [skwi:z 'θru:]	sich durchzwängen
that suits me fine [su:ts]	etwa: prima
trout [traʊt]	Forelle

3. Ordering food

Waitress: Are you ready to order yet?
 Janet: I think so, yes. Alison, what are you going to have?
 Alison: Mmm. **I think I'll have** the **salmon**.
 Waiter: Salmon. Would you like a **starter**, madam?
 Alison: No. No starter for me, thanks.
 Janet: Tom, what about you?
 Thomas: Well, I think I'll try the trout. And then I'll have the steak for my **main course**.
 Waitress: OK. And how would you like the steak?
 Thomas: **Well done**, please.

- Tip!** Say "I'll have" or "I'm going to have", not "I take" when ordering food.
- Tip!** If someone else is paying the bill, it is polite to say "I think I'll have" rather than "I'm going to have". If you say "I'm going to have", it sounds as if you think you can have anything you want from the menu.
- Tip!** Another word for "starter" is "first course". Sometimes you may also hear the French "hors d'oeuvre". In the US, the word is "appetizer".
- Tip!** Steaks can be rare, medium rare, medium or well done.

main course [meɪn 'kɔ:s]	Hauptgericht
salmon ['sæmən]	Lachs

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4. Commenting on food

Janet: What's your steak like, Tom?
 Thomas: Excellent. **Want to try a bit?**
 Janet: No, thanks. But could I have a **parsnip**?
 Thomas: Help yourself. There's a whole **pile** of them.
 Janet: Mmm! **Delicious!** You can't beat roast parsnips.
 Shall we get another bottle of that lovely Rioja?
 Thomas: **Hold on a sec.** Who's driving tonight?
 Alison: I am. After all, it's not every day your friend
 gets a **pay rise**, is it?
 Janet: Thank you, Alison. Waiter! Waiter!

Tip! "Want to try a bit?" is a short form for "Do you want to try a bit?".

Tip! The word "delicious" is used only to describe food. People often say "absolutely delicious" or "simply delicious". Other positive food adjectives are "lovely", "excellent" and "gorgeous" (used more by women than men).

Tip! "Hold on a sec(ond)" is an informal way of saying "Wait a minute".

parsnip ['pɑːsnɪp]	Pastinake
pay rise ['peɪ raɪz] UK	Gehaltserhöhung
pile [paɪl]	Haufen

5. Paying and leaving

Janet: **Could we have the bill**, please?
 Waitress: Certainly.
 Thomas: Now, Janet, **are you quite sure** about the bill?
 Oliver: Of course she is!
 Janet: For once, I agree with my husband.
 Alison: OK, but we can at least **take care of** the wine.
 Janet: No, no. Please leave this with me. I insist.
 Thomas: Well, thanks, Janet. It was lovely.
 Alison: Yes, thanks very much.
 Janet: Well, I'm glad you could **make it**.
 Alison: Let's go to our **place** for coffee.

Tip! In Britain and the US, you will never be asked if you want a separate bill (US: check).

Tip! Thomas knows that Janet is going to pay the bill, but by asking "Are you quite sure?", he shows that he is not taking her generosity for **granted**.

Tip! Alison uses "take care of" to avoid saying "pay for".

Tip! In English, "place" can mean a person's house or flat, e.g. "They've bought a little place just outside Glasgow."

granted: take sth. for ~ ['grɑːntɪd]	etw. für selbstverständlich erachten
make it ['meɪk ɪt]	es schaffen

Spotlight 4/03

EXERCISES

1. Complete the following dialogue.

- I was _____ if I could book a table for tonight.
 ■ Tonight? What _____ were you thinking of?

- Well, at eight o'clock, _____ that's possible. Just for two.
 ■ Two. Yes, that's fine. Could I _____ your name, please?

2. Which word in the brackets is correct?

- Right. Where (**do / would**) you like to sit?
 ■ I don't (**care / mind**), really.
 ■ How (**about / is**) here?
 ■ That's (**delicious / great**).

3. Which answer goes with which question?

- a) Are you ready to order? **1. I'll have the fish.**
 b) What about a starter? **2. Well done.**
 c) And for the main course? **3. Not quite.**
 d) How would you like your steak? **4. Not for me, thanks.**

4. Which expression can you *not* use when you talk about food?

- a) This is lovely. b) These are gorgeous.
 c) Very fine. d) Mmm! Excellent!

5. Translate into English.

a) *Lass mich wenigstens den Wein bezahlen.*

b) *Nein, nein, das geht alles auf mich.*

c) *Also dann, vielen Dank. Es war ausgezeichnet.*

d) *Die Rechnung, bitte!*

me.
!