**Source:** <https://www.espressoenglish.net/english-sentence-starters-for-everyday-speaking/>

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**English Sentence Starters for Everyday Speaking**

**English sentence starters + Verb**

* **I gotta…***Use phrase this for obligation or necessity*
* **I’d rather (not)…***Use this phrase to express your preferences*
* **I’ll help you…***Use this phrase to offer or promise assistance*
* **Let me… / Can I…? / Do you mind if I…?***Use these three phrases to ask permission to do something  
  (from most informal to most polite/formal)*
* **You could / You should…***Use these phrases to give advice – could is weaker, and should is stronger*
* **Please don’t…***Use this phrase to ask someone not to do something*
* **Let’s not…***Use this phrase to suggest that a group doesn’t do something*
* **Why don’t we…? / Why not…?***Use these phrases to make suggestions*

**Examples:**

**“I gotta put** some more gas in the car – the tank’s almost empty!”

**“I’d rather stay** home tonight.”

**“I’ll help you install** the new computer program.”

**“Let me carry** some of those books.”

**“Can I have** a glass of water?”

**“Do you mind if I turn** off the air conditioning?”

**“You could take** extra classes to help you catch up.”

**“You should study** harder.”

**“Please don’t feed** the animals.”

**“Let’s not jump** to conclusions.”

“**Why don’t we try** a new restaurant?” / “**Why not try** a new restaurant?”

**English sentence starters + to + verb**

* **I used to…**  
  *Use this phrase for something you did frequently in the past, but you don’t do now*
* **I’d like to…**  
  *Use this phrase for something you want to do*
* **I’m about to…**  
  *Use this phrase for something you’re going to do in the immediate future*
* **I didn’t mean to…**  
  *Use this phrase to talk about something you did accidentally*
* **I’m here to…**  
  *Use this phrase to announce your purpose for being in a place*
* **I’m dying to…**  
  *Use this phrase for something you REALLY want to do*
* **It takes (time) to…**  
  *Use this phrase to talk about how long something takes*
* **There’s no need to…**  
  *Use this phrase to talk about an unnecessary action*

**Examples:**

“**I used to play** tennis, but I rarely have time nowadays.”

“**I’d like to take** martial arts classes.”

“**I’m about to leave** for work, so I can’t talk very long.”

“**I didn’t mean to offend** anyone.”

“**I’m here to apply** for the internship.”

“**I’m dying to see** the new movie.”

“**It takes an hour to drive** from here to the city.”

“**There’s no need to print** out the document.”

**English sentence starters + verb-ING**

* **I’ve been…**  
  *Use this phrase to talk about your recent activities*
* **I’m busy… / I was busy…**  
  *Use this phrase to say how you are/were occupied*
* **I’m not used to…**  
  *Use this phrase to talk about something you’re not accustomed to*
* **I’m having a hard time…**  
  *Use this phrase to talk about something you’re having difficulty doing*
* **I’m looking forward to…**  
  *Use this phrase to talk about something you’re excited about in the future*
* **How about… ?**  
  *Use this phrase to make suggestions*
* **It’s no use… / There’s no point…**  
  *Use this phrase to say that something will have no result/effect*

**Examples:**

“**I’ve been running** 5 km every morning.”

“**I’m busy folding** laundry.”

“**I’m not used to driving** an automatic car.”

“**I’m having a hard time finding** clothes that fit.”

“**I’m looking forward to seeing** my family.”

“**How about having** a picnic in the park?”

“**It’s no use arguing** with him; his mind is made up.”

**English sentence starters + subject + verb**

* **I’ve heard that…**  
  *Use this to talk about news or facts*
* **I’m not sure if…**  
  *Use this to express uncertainty*
* **What if… ?**  
  *Use this to bring up a potential concern*
* **Let’s say that…**  
  *Use this to introduce a hypothetical situation*
* **That’s why…**  
  *Use this to explain a logical result*
* **How come… ?**  
  *Use this to ask “Why?” informally*

**Examples:**

“**I’ve heard that you’re** moving to a new place.”

“**I’m not sure if they’ll be** happy with the changes.”

“**What if you get** sick while traveling?”

“**Let’s say that things don’t go** as planned.”

“**That’s why we need** to be prepared.”

“**How come she didn’t tell** me?”

**English sentence starters + past participle**

* **I’ve…**  
  *Use this phrase to say something you’ve done in the past*
* **Have you… ?**  
  *Use this phrase to ask about something another person has done in the past*
* **I should(n’t) have…**  
  *Use this phrase to express your desire to have done something differently in the past*

**Examples:**

“**I’ve had** three surgeries on my knee.”

“**Have you cleaned** your room?”

“**I should have brought** a jacket. I’m freezing.”