GETTING ALONG WITH PEOPLE

B2 English • Stronger Speaking • Phrasal Verbs & Grammar

1. Make your speaking stronger

"I have to say…" is a useful phrase for introducing an honest opinion or emphasizing a point. It makes your answer sound more natural and considered.

Phrase	How to use it	Example
I have to say…	Introduce a strong or honest opinion.	*I have to say, I get along best with people who are open-minded.*
To be honest,…	Show that you are speaking frankly.	*To be honest, I find it hard to deal with people who interrupt.*
What I appreciate most is…	Emphasize a quality you value.	*What I appreciate most is a good sense of humour.*
The main reason is that…	Support your opinion with a reason.	*The main reason is that we can talk openly without judging each other.*
Having said that,…	Introduce a contrast or a qualification.	*Having said that, even close friends sometimes disagree.*
It all comes down to…	Summarize the key point.	*It all comes down to respect and communication.*

2. Phrasal verbs: meanings & examples

Phrasal verb	Meaning	Example	Pattern
Look forward to	Feel excited about something that will happen.	*I'm looking forward to seeing my friends this weekend.*	Usually intransitive in this meaning; **to** is a preposition, so use a noun or -ing form.
Clean up	Make a place clean and tidy.	*We cleaned up the kitchen after dinner.*	Transitive or intransitive: clean up the mess / clean up.
Give back	Return something to its owner.	*Could you give back the book I lent you?*	Transitive; the object can go after the particle or between the verb and particle: give the book back.
Give up	Stop trying or stop doing something.	*Don't give up just because you disagree.*	Usually intransitive when meaning 'stop trying'; transitive with an activity/object: give up smoking.
Come up	Happen or be mentioned; arise.	*A difficult question came up during our conversation.*	Intransitive: no direct object.
Go over	Review, check, or explain something carefully.	*Let's go over what happened and clear up the misunderstanding.*	Transitive: go over the details.
Put off	Delay or postpone something.	*They put off the meeting until Friday.*	Transitive: put off the meeting / put the meeting off.
Run out of	Use all of something so none is left.	*We ran out of things to talk about, so we played a game.*	Transitive pattern with an object after **of**: run out of time.
Have someone over	Invite someone to your home as a guest.	*We're having a few friends over for dinner.*	Transitive: 'someone' is the object.
Wake up	Stop sleeping; or make someone stop sleeping.	*I usually wake up at seven. / My alarm wakes me up.*	Intransitive: wake up. Transitive: wake someone up.

Important: In “look forward to,” *to* is a preposition, not part of an infinitive. Say “I’m looking forward to **meeting** them,” not “to meet them.”

3. Transitive vs. intransitive phrasal verbs

Transitive = the verb needs a direct object (someone or something receives the action). **Intransitive** = the verb does not take a direct object.

Type	Pattern	Example
Intransitive	verb + particle (no direct object)	*The subject came up during the conversation. / I woke up late.*
Transitive	verb + particle + object OR verb + object + particle (for separable verbs)	*Please give back the keys. / Please give the keys back.*
Transitive, inseparable pattern	verb + particle/preposition + object	*We ran out of time. / Let's go over the plan.*
Both	Some phrasal verbs can be used both ways, sometimes with a change in meaning.	*I woke up at six. (intransitive) / The noise woke me up. (transitive)*

Pronoun rule: With separable verbs such as *give back*, *put off*, and transitive *wake up*, a pronoun goes in the middle: "give it back," "put it off," "wake me up." Not "give back it."

4. Speaking: getting along with people

Main questions

1. Which people do you get along with best? What qualities do they have?
2. I have to say, I get along best with people who… Complete the sentence and explain why.
3. What kinds of people do you find difficult to get along with? How do you handle it?
4. How important are honesty, respect, humour, and co-operation in a friendship?
5. Do you prefer people who are similar to you or people who challenge your opinions?
6. What should you do when a disagreement comes up between friends or colleagues?
7. Is it better to talk about a problem immediately or put off the conversation until everyone has calmed down?
8. How can people give feedback without hurting someone's feelings?
9. Do you think social media makes it easier or harder to get along with people?
10. What can you do if you run out of patience with someone?
11. How do you keep a good relationship with someone whose opinions are very different from yours?
12. When was the last time you had someone over or spent quality time with friends? What did you do?

5. Pair-work challenge

Student A: Describe a person you get along with very well. Explain what you value about them and give a real or imagined example. Use at least three phrases from Section 1 and three phrasal verbs.

Student B: Ask follow-up questions, then describe a situation in which two people don't get along. Suggest two ways they could resolve the problem. Use "Having said that…" to introduce a different point of view.

6. Model answer

I have to say, I get along best with people who are considerate and open-minded. What I appreciate most is that they listen carefully instead of interrupting or judging others. If a disagreement comes up, I prefer to talk it through rather than put off the conversation. Having said that, I think it's sometimes wise to take a break and come back to the issue when everyone has calmed down. I also value people who can admit when they're wrong and give back the same respect they expect from others. In the end, it all comes down to honest communication and a willingness to understand different perspectives.

Your turn: Speak for 1–2 minutes. Include an opinion, two reasons, one example, a contrast, and a short conclusion.