B1 Speaking Toolkit

Keep a conversation going

Your speaking focus

Talk about familiar topics, describe experiences and explain your reasons. You can pause to think and ask for help when you need it.

Build a longer answer

Give your answer, add a reason and give an example. Then ask your partner a related question. Use the expressions as starting points; change them to fit your own meaning.

Opinions and preferences

I think ... because ... / For me, ... / I prefer ... to ... / I would rather ... / The main reason is ...

Examples in context

I prefer travelling by train to driving because I can relax. For example, I can read during the journey. How do you usually travel?

Experiences and stories

Last year, I ... / At first, ... / While I was ..., ... / Then ... / In the end, ... / I felt ... because ...

Plans and possibilities

I'm planning to ... / I'd like to ... / I might ... / If I have time, I'll ... / I hope to ...

Compare and explain

... is cheaper than ... / Both ... and ... / The biggest difference is ... / One good thing about ... is ...

Try it now

Talk about a hobby for 45-60 seconds. Say what you do, why you enjoy it and when you last did it. Ask your partner one question. These timings are practice suggestions, not exam rules.

Vocabulary you can use

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Learn phrases, not isolated words

Choose three phrases from one topic. Say a true sentence with each one. Then use all three in a short conversation. The topics and phrases are practice selections, not an official CEFR vocabulary list.

Daily life and free time

spend time with friends; get some rest; keep in touch; take up a hobby; go for a walk.
Example: I took up photography last year, and now I go for a walk with my camera every weekend.

Learning and work

make progress; ask for help; work in a team; learn a new skill; look for a job.
Example: I make more progress when I ask for help instead of giving up.

Travel and places

book a room; miss the bus; get lost; ask for directions; a crowded street.
Example: We got lost, so we asked a shop assistant for directions.

Health and habits

get enough sleep; have a balanced diet; feel tired; do some exercise; change a habit.
Example: I feel less tired when I get enough sleep.

Shopping and money

save money; spend money on; try something on; return an item; good value.
Example: I tried the jacket on, but it was too small.

People and feelings

get on well with; feel nervous; be proud of; look forward to; help someone with something.
Example: I get on well with my neighbours because we often help each other.

Make it personal

Which habit would you like to change? Describe a journey when something went wrong. Tell your partner about a skill you want to learn. Include two phrases from this page in each answer.

Useful expressions for interaction

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Start and continue

How was your weekend? / What do you like about ...? / Really? What happened next? / How about you? / Can you tell me more about that?

Agree or disagree politely

I agree with you. / That's a good point. / I see what you mean, but ... / I'm not sure I agree because ...

Ask for clarification

Could you say that again, please? / Could you speak a little more slowly? / What does ... mean? / Do you mean ...?

Keep going when a word is missing

I can't remember the word, but it's something you use to ... / It's a kind of ... / It's a place where ... / What I mean is ...

Correct yourself naturally

Sorry, I meant Tuesday, not Thursday. / Let me say that again. / Actually, it was my cousin, not my brother.

Make suggestions and decide

Why don't we ...? / How about going ...? / We could ... / That sounds good. / Shall we choose ...?

A short conversation

A: Why don't we go cycling on Saturday?
B: That sounds good, but I haven't got a bike.
A: We could rent one near the park.
B: Do you mean the shop next to the station?
A: Yes, that's right. Shall we meet there at ten?
B: Fine. How much does it cost?

Practise with a partner

Plan an afternoon together. One person has a small budget; the other wants to be outdoors. Suggest two activities, ask a follow-up question and agree on a plan. Then exchange roles.

Model answers and sentence patterns

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A personal experience

Question: Tell me about a time you learned something new.
Last summer, I learned to cook a simple meal. At first, I was nervous because I rarely cooked. My sister showed me what to do, and we made vegetable soup together. I forgot to add salt, but the soup still tasted good. Now I cook once a week. I enjoy it because I can make something useful for my family.

An opinion with a reason

Question: Is it better to study alone or with a friend?
I usually prefer studying with a friend because we can explain difficult things to each other. For example, my friend is good at maths, and I can help her with English. However, I study alone when I need to read quietly. I think both ways are useful. It depends on what I am doing.

Useful sentence patterns

I enjoy cooking because it helps me relax.
I used to play football, but now I go swimming.
I've lived here for three years.
If the weather is good, we'll walk to the park.
Although the journey was long, I enjoyed it.

Notice the meaning

Use the past simple for a finished event: I visited Ankara last year. Use the present perfect for an experience without a finished time: I have visited Ankara twice. Choose the form that matches what you mean.

Sound clear

Say important words clearly: I went by TRAIN, not by BUS. Pause between ideas instead of after every word. Speak at a comfortable pace; you do not need to speak quickly.

Make the answer your own

Use each model to notice the order of ideas. Then close the page and give a different answer with your own details. Do not memorise a complete answer for every topic.

Speaking practice and self-check

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Questions to discuss

1. What do you enjoy doing after a busy day? Why?
2. Describe a person who has helped you.
3. Tell us about a journey you remember.
4. What would you like to learn next year?
5. Is your town a good place for young people?
6. Do you prefer shopping online or in a shop? Why?

Two practical tasks

Task A: Your friend is visiting your town. Suggest two places to visit and explain your choices.
Task B: You bought a bag, but the zip is broken. Explain the problem to a shop assistant and ask what you can do.

A ten-minute routine

Minutes 1-2: Choose a question and write three keywords.
Minutes 3-4: Speak or record yourself for about a minute.
Minutes 5-6: Listen and notice one unclear part.
Minutes 7-8: Try again with one extra detail.
Minutes 9-10: Answer a follow-up question without a script.

Check your progress

Did I answer the question? Did I add a reason or example? Did I connect my ideas? Could my partner understand me? Did I ask or answer a follow-up question? Choose one thing to improve next time.

For learners and teachers

Use this pack for individual, pair or small-group practice. Tasks are open-ended, so answers will vary. B1 is the intended practice level; using these phrases alone does not establish a CEFR level.

About this resource

All examples, vocabulary selections and tasks were written for BEREKET ELT Archive. Free to download, print and share for educational use. Level guidance is informed by the Council of Europe CEFR; this is an independent practice resource.

Level reference

Council of Europe: CEFR Global Scale and Qualitative Aspects of Spoken Language Use (Tables 1 and 3). Official links below. Accessed 27 October 2026.

CEFR level descriptions (Council of Europe)
Qualitative aspects of spoken language use (Table 3)