

100 Most Useful IELTS Speaking Phrases

Exam-ready openers, opinion language, and Part 3 speculation phrases for Band 6.5-8 fluency.

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Tip: highlight 8-12 items this week, practise them in a timed mock, then unlock Pro for fuller banks and AI feedback.

Part 1 openers & expanders

Start cleanly, then add one detail so answers do not sound one-word short.

Phrase	When to use
That's a good question.	Buying a second to organise your answer
Well, to be honest,	Giving a candid but polite reply
I'd say that...	Soft opener before your main point
In my case,	Personalising a Part 1 answer
Generally speaking,	Talking about habits or routines
It depends, but usually...	When the answer is not black and white
I've always enjoyed...	Hobbies, free time, preferences
These days I tend to...	Contrasting past habits with now
What I mean is,	Clarifying or expanding a short answer
For example,	Adding a concrete detail after a claim
One reason is that...	Explaining why you like or dislike something
Apart from that,	Adding a second idea without repeating
On top of that,	Stacking an extra benefit or detail
That reminds me of...	Linking to a personal story briefly
I used to..., but now...	Showing change over time
If I had to choose,	Preference questions with options
Looking back,	Reflecting on childhood or past experience
As far as I'm concerned,	Stating a personal view calmly
To put it simply,	Simplifying after a denser sentence
That's pretty much it.	Soft close when you have covered the point

Giving opinions

Useful in Part 2 and especially Part 3 when the examiner asks what you think.

Phrase	When to use
In my opinion,	Standard, clear opinion opener
From my point of view,	Slightly more formal opinion
I firmly believe that...	Strong conviction (use sparingly)
I'm convinced that...	When evidence or experience backs you
I tend to think that...	Softer opinion; sounds natural
Personally, I feel that...	Emphasising it is your view
I would argue that...	Part 3 debate-style answers
It seems to me that...	Tentative but still clear stance

I'm of the view that...	Formal-sounding opinion phrase
As I see it,	Conversational opinion marker
My take on this is that...	Modern, natural opinion opener
I don't think it's fair to say...	Challenging a sweeping claim
There's no denying that...	Conceding a widely accepted point
What stands out for me is...	Highlighting one key idea
If you ask me,	Informal but acceptable in Speaking

Agree / soft disagree

Agree fully, partly, or disagree politely without sounding rude.

Phrase	When to use
I completely agree with that.	Full agreement
That's exactly how I see it.	Strong agreement with the examiner's point
You're right about that.	Short, natural agreement
I see where you're coming from.	Acknowledging before you nuance
I agree up to a point.	Partial agreement
That's partly true, but...	Agree then add a limitation
I wouldn't go that far.	Soft disagreement
I'm not entirely convinced.	Polite doubt
I take a slightly different view.	Disagree without confrontation
That may be true in some cases, however...	Limited agreement + contrast
I understand the argument, but...	Fair hearing then counterpoint
I have to disagree slightly.	Mild disagreement
On the contrary,	Clear opposite view (use carefully)
It's not as simple as that.	Pushing back on a black-and-white idea
We might be overlooking...	Suggesting a missing angle

Explaining reasons & examples

Examiners reward clear reasons and specific examples more than abstract claims.

Phrase	When to use
The main reason is that...	Primary cause or justification
This is largely because...	Linking effect to cause
One key factor is...	Part 3 social or abstract topics
A good illustration of this is...	Introducing an example formally
Take..., for instance.	Concrete example opener
To give you an example,	Everyday example lead-in
This can be seen when...	Situational example
In practice,	Moving from theory to real life
That happens mainly due to...	Cause after describing a trend
Another contributing factor is...	Second reason without repeating
The underlying issue is...	Deeper cause in Part 3
As a result,	Showing consequence
This leads to...	Cause-effect chain
For that reason,	Linking back to your opinion
Let me explain why.	Signpost before a longer reason

Comparing / contrasting

Handy for lifestyle, education, technology, and past-versus-present questions.

Phrase	When to use
Compared with...,	Direct comparison opener
In contrast,	Clear opposite idea
On the other hand,	Balanced two-sided answer
Whereas...,	Contrasting two subjects in one sentence
Unlike in the past,	Then-versus-now answers
By the same token,	Similar point on the other side
The key difference is that...	Spotlighting one contrast
Both have merits, but...	Comparing options then choosing
It's a trade-off between... and...	Pros and cons of two choices
That said,	Soft contrast after a concession

Speculating (Part 3)

Use modal language when you cannot be certain; it sounds more academic and natural.

Phrase	When to use
It could be that...	Gentle speculation
It's possible that...	Open possibility
I imagine that...	Personal speculation
Presumably,	Assuming something is likely
In all likelihood,	Higher-probability guess
There's a good chance that...	Conversational probability
This may well lead to...	Speculating about consequences
People might start to...	Future social change
One possible explanation is...	Why something happens
It stands to reason that...	Logical speculation
Looking ahead,	Future-focused Part 3 answers
In the long run,	Long-term effects
If this trend continues,	Extrapolating from now
We can't say for sure, but...	Honest uncertainty + guess
I'd speculate that...	Clear sign you are hypothesising

Fluency fillers that sound natural

Light fillers buy thinking time. Avoid overusing them or they become noise.

Phrase	When to use
Let me think for a second.	Honest pause before answering
How can I put it?	Searching for a precise word
What's the word...	Lexical retrieval (keep brief)
You know,	Light conversational filler (sparingly)
I mean,	Self-clarifying mid-sentence
Basically,	Simplifying a complex idea
In a sense,	Softening an absolute claim
At the end of the day,	Summing up your stance
Having said that,	Transition before a contrasting point
Anyway,	Returning to the main thread after a tangent

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