

A2 Speaking — General English + Workplace English

JBK Independent Learning Program

Layer 1 — The Learning Goal

1.1 CEFR Learning Objective — A2 Speaking

Workplace Application (how to use this at work): Use the language in a real situation at work. Try a short role-play with a coworker, a customer, a supervisor, or AI. First, try to finish the task clearly.

By the end of this chapter, you will be better able to talk in simple, everyday situations and have short conversations about topics you know.

1.2 What Will I Learn?

Workplace Application: Practice short conversations at work: greet a coworker, ask for help, answer a simple question from a customer, give basic information, or say that there is a problem.

In this chapter, you will learn some practical ways to improve your speaking and become a more independent English learner.

You will learn how to:

- speak about topics you know;
- answer simple questions;
- ask simple questions;
- use simple words when you do not know a word;
- keep talking when you make mistakes;
- practice speaking in different ways;
- use AI to help your speaking practice; and
- choose speaking activities that match your own goals.

1.3 Why Should I Care About Speaking?

Workplace Application: At work, you may need to greet a customer, ask a coworker a simple question, give basic information, explain a simple problem, or ask for help. At A2, the goal is not perfect English. The goal is to be clear enough to finish a simple task at work.

You speak English when you:

- talk with other people;
- ask and answer questions;

- give information;
- explain something;
- communicate at work; and
- use English in everyday life.

Good speaking skills help you:

- communicate your ideas;
- take part in conversations;
- ask for information;
- solve simple problems;
- speak with more confidence; and
- use English in real situations.

You do not need perfect English to communicate.

At A2, an important goal is:

Keep communicating.

1.4 Your Learning Goal

Workplace Application: If you are learning English for work, you might choose a goal such as “I can have a short conversation with a coworker,” “I can ask a customer for information,” or “I can give simple information about my work.” Choose a workplace goal that is useful to you now.

There is no one speaking goal that is right for every A2 learner.

Your goal should come from your own needs and interests.

You can use the “I Can...” statements of the CEFR (the European scale of language levels, from A1 to C2) to help you choose a goal.

For example:

I can have a short conversation about familiar topics.

Or you can choose a goal about:

- everyday conversations;
- travel;
- shopping;
- work;
- family and friends;
- asking for information; or
- another situation that is important to you.

Choose a goal that is useful to you now.

If you do not understand your goal, ask AI to explain it in simple English and give you some examples.

1.5 How AI Can Help You Learn Speaking

Workplace Application: You can ask AI to play a coworker, customer, or supervisor. Then you can practice a short workplace conversation before you need it at work.

AI gives language learners many new ways to practice.

You can ask AI to:

- give you useful words and phrases;
- practice a conversation with you;
- ask you questions;
- help you prepare for a speaking activity;
- give you feedback (comments that help you improve);
- explain difficult language; and
- suggest another speaking activity.

AI can be your:

Speaking Coach • Practice Partner • Learning Assistant

But remember:

AI does not take the place of speaking practice.

You still need to speak.

AI can give you practice when no one else is there to practice with. But you are the learner who does the work.

Layer 2 — The Learning Method

2.1 How Can I Improve My Speaking?

There are many ways to improve speaking.

In this chapter, you will try a few strategies (ways to help you learn) that are very useful for A2 learners.

You do not need to use every strategy.

This chapter gives you a few useful tools to try.

Later, you can visit the **Resource Library** (a list of free websites and tools in Part 3) to find many more ideas.

2.2 The Speaking Learning Process

A simple speaking process is:

Listen → Understand → Practice → Communicate → Review → Reflect

You can use this process with many different speaking activities.

You can use this process in the Practice step of the JBK Independent Learning Cycle (seven steps to plan and check your own learning).

1. Listen

Before you speak, listen to some English.

You might:

- listen to a short conversation;
- listen to a model answer;
- listen to another person; or
- listen to an AI conversation.

Ask yourself:

- What words do I know?
- What useful phrases can I use?
- What is the person saying?

Listening first can give you ideas for your own speaking.

2. Understand

Make sure you understand the speaking activity.

Ask yourself:

- What do I need to talk about?
- Who am I talking to?
- What do I want to say?
- What words or phrases do I need?

If you do not understand the activity, ask your teacher or AI to explain it in simple English.

3. Practice

Practice before you communicate with another person.

You can:

- practice useful words and phrases;
- practice answering questions;
- speak for one minute;
- record yourself;
- listen to your recording; or
- practice with AI.

Choose the type of practice that helps you reach your goal.

4. Communicate

Now use English to communicate.

You can:

- talk with another person;
- talk with AI;
- answer questions;
- ask questions;
- describe something;
- tell a short story; or
- take part in a role-play.

The goal is not to speak perfect English.

The goal is to **communicate your meaning**.

5. Review

Workplace Application: After a workplace speaking activity, review what you could say easily and what was difficult. Notice useful phrases that you can use again at work.

After speaking, think about what you did.

You can:

- listen to your recording;
- review useful words;
- review useful phrases;
- notice what was easy; and
- notice what was difficult.

You can also repeat the same activity with a different topic.

The second time may be easier.

6. Reflect

Workplace Application: Ask yourself: “Could I communicate the message?” “Where did I need help?” and “What workplace situation should I practice next?”

After your practice, ask yourself:

- What was easy?
- What was difficult?
- Which strategy helped me?
- Could I communicate my meaning?
- What should I practice next?

Thinking about your practice helps you become a more independent learner.

2.3 A Few Speaking Strategies

We cannot teach every possible speaking strategy in one chapter.

Here are a few strategies that are very useful for A2 speaking.

Later, you can find more strategies in the Resource Library.

Rebecca Oxford Learning Strategies

Rebecca Oxford is a language learning researcher. She described many strategies that language learners use. Here are three that are useful for A2 speaking.

1. Prepare Before Speaking

Before you speak, prepare some useful words and phrases.

For example, if you are going to talk about your daily routine, you might prepare:

- get up;
- go to work;
- have lunch;
- go home; and
- go to bed.

You do not need to prepare everything you want to say.

Prepare a few useful words and phrases.

2. Use Simple Words

If you do not know a difficult word, use simple words to explain your meaning.

For example, if you do not know the word **pharmacy**, you can say:

“The place where you buy medicine.”

Do not stop speaking because you do not know one word.

3. Ask for Help

Workplace Application: At work, you can use polite phrases such as “Could you say that again?” “Could you speak more slowly?” or “What does that mean?”

If you do not understand someone, ask for help.

You can say:

- **Can you say that again?**
- **Please speak more slowly.**
- **What does ____ mean?**

Asking for help is a useful communication strategy.

Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies help you plan and check your learning.

Planning

Before speaking, decide:

- What do I want to practice?
- Why am I practicing it?
- How long will I practice?

Example:

“Today I want to practice talking about my daily routine for one minute.”

Monitoring

While speaking, ask yourself:

- Am I communicating my meaning?
- What is difficult?
- Do I need to try another way to say this?

Example:

"I don't know this word, so I will explain it another way."

Reviewing

After speaking, think about what you did well and what you want to practice again.

Example:

"I answered questions well, but I need more practice asking questions."

Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies help you **work with the English you are learning**.

Use Key Words

Choose a few important words before you speak.

For example, for a conversation about work:

job • hours • people • difficult • enjoy

Use these words to put your ideas in order.

Practice in Chunks

Learn groups of words (chunks) instead of single words.

For example:

Can you help me?

I'd like to...

I'm looking for...

What do you think about...?

These useful groups of words can make speaking easier.

Repeat and Use New Language

When you learn a useful word or phrase, use it many times.

Try to use it:

- in a sentence;
- in a conversation;
- in a role-play; and
- again later.

Using new language helps you remember it.

2.4 Personal Learning Strengths

Workplace Application: Choose workplace speaking activities that fit how you learn best. You might learn through role-play, repeating useful phrases, listening to workplace conversations, writing a few notes before speaking, or practicing with another person.

There is no single best way to learn English.

People enjoy different kinds of learning activities.

Howard Gardner was a researcher. He wrote about different kinds of intelligence. His work can give you some useful ideas.

For example:

- **Linguistic** — conversations, stories, and vocabulary;
- **Interpersonal** — speaking with another person;
- **Intrapersonal** — writing your thoughts and thinking about your learning; and
- **Musical** — noticing the beat, the strong sounds, and the music of English (rhythm, stress, and intonation).

You may find that some activities work better for you than others.

But try other activities too, not only your favorites.

A strategy that is not your favorite can still be useful when you need it.

For more ideas, visit the **Resource Library**.

2.5 Ways to Practice Speaking

You can practice speaking in different ways.

1. Another Person

You can speak with:

- a friend;
- a classmate;
- a teacher; or
- a conversation partner.

2. AI

You can ask AI to be your conversation partner.

For example:

“You are my A2 English conversation partner. Ask me simple questions about my daily routine. Ask one question at a time and wait for my answer.”

3. Yourself

You can record yourself speaking.

For example:

Speak for one minute about your daily routine. Record yourself. Then listen to your recording.

This is very useful when no one else is there to practice with.

Choose the way that you can use and that helps you.

2.6 Weekly Study Plan

Day	Activity	Time
Monday	Practice useful words and phrases	20 min
Tuesday	Speak for one minute and record yourself	20 min
Wednesday	Practice with AI	20 min
Thursday	Practice questions and answers	20 min
Friday	Have a short conversation	20 min
Saturday	Try a new speaking activity	20 min
Sunday	Review and reflect	20 min

You do not have to follow this plan exactly.

Change it to match your own goal and schedule.

2.7 My Strategy Record

Each time you practice speaking, write the strategy you tried. Did it help you?

My speaking goal:

Date	Strategy I tried	Did it help me? (Yes / A little / Not yet)	What will I try next time?

You do not need to use every strategy. Choose a strategy, try it, and decide if it works for you.

Layer 3 — The Learning Tools

Choose Your Tier

This layer has four tiers. A tier is a way to practice with the tools you have. Each tier adds to the tiers before it.

- **Tier 1 — Paper and People:** a notebook and a partner.
- **Tier 2 — Phone, No Internet:** any phone with a voice recorder, and your notebook.
- **Tier 3 — Limited Data:** short voice notes and AI in text.
- **Tier 4 — Good Internet:** live conversation with AI, video calls, and online resources.

3.1 Partner and AI Roles

Tier 1 — Paper and People

Practice Partner: Your partner asks you simple questions, and you ask your partner questions too.

If you have no partner, say your sentences aloud alone.

Tier 2 — Phone, No Internet

Recorder: Record your voice and listen to it.

Notebook: Keep your useful phrases in your paper notebook.

Text Messages (SMS): A partner sends you a question in English. Say your answer and record it. SMS does not need internet, but it can cost money. Use it sometimes.

Tier 3 — Limited Data

Voice-Note Partner: You and a partner send short voice notes. You do not need to be online at the same time.

AI in Text: AI gives you useful phrases and simple questions. Text uses very little data.

Tier 4 — Good Internet

For A2 speaking, AI can be your:

- **Speaking Coach**
- **Practice Partner**
- **Learning Assistant**

With good internet, you can also speak with AI by voice.

3.2 AI Functions

AI can help you:

- create speaking practice;
- explain difficult English;
- practice conversations;
- give feedback; and
- create more practice.

These are only some possibilities.

You can find more in the **Resource Library**.

3.3 AI Tasks

For example, you can ask AI to:

- give you useful phrases for a topic;
- ask you simple speaking questions;
- practice a role-play with you; and
- give you short feedback on your speaking.

3.4 Scripts and AI Prompts

Every tier has the same three tasks: prepare, practice, and get feedback. Only the tool is different.

Tier 1 — Scripts for a Partner

Say a script to your partner, or copy it onto paper.

Prepare: “I want to talk about my daily routine. What words and phrases can I use?” Write five in your notebook.

Practice: “Please ask me simple questions about my daily routine. Ask one question at a time.”

Feedback: “Please tell me one thing I did well and one thing I can improve.”

Tier 2 — Tasks with Your Phone

Prepare: Write five useful words or phrases in your notebook. Say each one in a sentence.

Practice: Write five simple questions. Record your answers.

Feedback: Listen to your recording. Is it clear? Is it too fast or too slow? Record it again.

Tier 3 — Voice Notes and Text Prompts

Prepare: Prompt 1 under Tier 4 is a text prompt (the message you write to AI). It uses little data, so you can use it too.

Practice: Send a partner a short voice note about your daily routine. Ask one question at the end.

Feedback: Type what you said. Then send it to AI with Prompt 3.

Tier 4 — AI Prompts

Prompt 1 — Prepare

“I am an A2 English learner. I want to talk about my daily routine. Give me five useful words or phrases and show me how to use them.”

Prompt 2 — Practice

“You are my A2 English conversation partner. Ask me simple questions about my daily routine. Ask one question at a time and wait for my answer.”

Prompt 3 — Feedback

“I am an A2 English learner. Here is what I said about my daily routine: [your words]. Tell me three things I did well and three things to improve. Correct only the three most important mistakes.”

AI cannot hear a recording on your phone. Type what you said, or speak to AI by voice if you have good internet.

Remember: AI does not need to correct every mistake.

Too many corrections can make speaking practice difficult.

The goal is to **communicate**.

3.5 Choose Your Speaking Practice

Workplace Application: Choose an A2 situation at work that is short and that you know, such as greeting someone, asking for information, making a simple request, giving directions, answering a simple question from a customer, or asking for help.

You do not need to use every activity in this chapter.

Choose one that matches your current goal.

You can choose General English or Workplace English.

You can also choose the kind of English that is most useful to you: American English, British English, or International English.

Topics for Any Tier

General English: my family, my daily routine, food I like, my town, my weekend.

Workplace English: greeting a visitor, asking for information, making a simple request, giving directions.

Tier 1 — Paper and People

- Ask and answer questions with a partner. Use a script from Section 3.4.
- Role-play a short situation, such as asking for directions.

Tier 2 — Phone, No Internet

- Record five sentences about your topic. Listen, and record them again.
- Play saved audio. Stop after each sentence and repeat it.

Tier 3 — Limited Data

- On ELLLO (ello.org), try a Speaking Challenge. You hear a question, and you have eight seconds to answer.
- Try ESL Fast or EnglishSpeak, in the Low-Data Edition of the Resource Library (its short list of websites that use little data). Listen to a short dialogue and repeat it.
- The three options under Tier 4 are text prompts. They use little data, so you can use them too.

Tier 4 — Good Internet

Option 1 — Everyday Speaking

Choose a speaking activity about an everyday topic.

Ask AI:

“I am an A2 learner. Please suggest a General English speaking activity about a useful everyday situation. I would like [American/British/International] English.”

Option 2 — Workplace Speaking

Choose a speaking activity related to a workplace situation.

Ask AI:

“I am an A2 learner. Please suggest a Workplace English speaking activity for a situation I may have at work. I would like [American/British/International] English.”

Option 3 — Personal Goal

Choose a speaking activity that helps with your own CEFR goal.

Ask AI:

“I am an A2 learner of [General English/Workplace English]. Please suggest a useful speaking activity for this situation: [describe your situation]. I would like [American/British/International] English.”

Choose only one activity for now.

You can try more activities later.

3.6 The JBK Independent Learning Cycle

Now use the learning system you learned in Part 1.

Note: The JBK Independent Learning Cycle is the author's own model. It is inspired by the European Language Portfolio (ELP), a record of your language goals and progress.

1. Assess

What can I do now?

2. Plan

What is my goal?

When and how will I practice?

3. Choose

Which activity or resource will I use?

4. Practice

Complete the activity.

Use AI if it helps you.

5. Evaluate

Did I reach my goal?

Could I communicate my meaning?

6. Reflect

What did I learn?

What worked well?

What was difficult?

7. Improve

What will I practice next?

Assess → Plan → Choose → Practice → Evaluate → Reflect → Improve

3.7 This Week's Practice

Plan one short speaking practice for this week.

My speaking goal:

Speaking activity:

My tier (1, 2, 3, or 4):

Strategy I will use:

When will I practice?

After you practice, fill in your Learning Record (your notes before and after each practice) in Section 3.8 and your Strategy Record (a table of the strategies you try) in Section 2.7.

3.8 My Learning Record

Workplace Application: Record the workplace situation, useful phrases, words you needed, what you were able to say, what was difficult, and what you want to practice next.

Your Learning Record helps you remember what you practiced, what you learned, and what you want to do next. Keep it in your Learning Notebook (your own notebook for this course).

Use this record before and after each speaking practice. A few short notes are enough.

Before I Practice

My speaking goal:

Activity or resource:

The strategy I will try:

After I Practice

Useful words or phrases:

What I could do:

What was difficult:

What helped me:

My next step:

3.9 Visit the Resource Library

You have now learned a few basic ways to improve your A2 speaking.

These are only a starting point.

Visit the **Resource Library** to find more:

- speaking activities;
- conversation questions;
- role-plays;
- speaking prompts;
- pronunciation activities;
- AI speaking activities; and
- other resources.

Look for resources that match:

- your A2 level;
- your speaking goal;

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- General English or Workplace English;
- the kind of English you want; and
- your interests.

You do not need to try everything.

Choose a few resources that look useful to you.

Make a short list of the ones you like.

Keep your list in your Learning Notebook and try one resource this week.

3.10 Language Accuracy and Communication

When you practice speaking, remember that **correct English and clear communication are not exactly the same.**

You can make grammar mistakes and still make your meaning clear.

At A2, do not ask only:

How many mistakes did I make?

Also ask:

Was I able to communicate my meaning?

This is an important part of becoming an independent learner.

Layer 4 — Reflection and Growth

4.1 Self-Assessment — “I Can...”

Now that you have finished this chapter, think about what you can do.

My English Skills

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
talk about familiar topics.	☐	☐	☐
answer simple questions.	☐	☐	☐
ask simple questions.	☐	☐	☐

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
communicate my meaning even when I do not know every word.	☐	☐	☐
use simple words to explain an unknown word.	☐	☐	☐
take part in a short conversation.	☐	☐	☐

My Learning Skills

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
use a few strategies to improve my speaking.	☐	☐	☐
choose a speaking activity that matches my goal.	☐	☐	☐
use AI to support my speaking practice.	☐	☐	☐
record and review my own speaking.	☐	☐	☐
think about what I need to practice next.	☐	☐	☐

Workplace Self-Assessment

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
choose an A2-level workplace speaking goal.	☐	☐	☐
take part in a short, simple workplace conversation.	☐	☐	☐
ask and answer simple questions at work.	☐	☐	☐
give basic information.	☐	☐	☐
ask for help or ask someone to explain.	☐	☐	☐
use simple strategies when I do not understand.	☐	☐	☐
practice a workplace speaking situation and reflect on my progress.	☐	☐	☐

You do not need to check “Yes” for everything today.

Your goal is to **keep improving**.

4.2 Reflection

Workplace Reflection: Think about a workplace speaking situation you may need soon. What can you already say? What do you need to practice? What phrase or strategy could help you communicate better?

Think about your experience.

- What was easiest for me?
- What was most difficult?
- Which speaking strategy helped me most?
- Was I able to communicate my meaning?
- Did AI help me? How?
- Which activity did I like?
- What would I like to practice next?

Record your answers in your Learning Notebook.

4.3 Independent Learning Tip

Workplace Application: When you cannot find the exact words, do not stop communicating. Use simpler words, ask a question, describe the problem, or ask the other person to repeat or explain.

Don't stop speaking because you don't know one word.

Try to explain the idea in another way.

For example:

Instead of stopping because you do not know **pharmacy**, you can say:

"The place where you buy medicine."

You do not need perfect English to communicate.

Keep talking. Keep practicing. Keep improving.

4.4 Your Next Step

Workplace Application: Choose one real workplace speaking situation and practice it again. Your next goal should be small, useful, and right for your A2 level.

You have learned several basic strategies and tools for A2 speaking.

Now choose one speaking goal and use the JBK Independent Learning Cycle from Section 3.6 to practice it.

These strategies and tools are not the only ways to improve.

As you go through the course, you will find more strategies, more ways to use AI, and more resources.

After the course, you can keep learning at your own speed with the Resource Library.

Your learning will grow as you find out:

- what you need;
- what you enjoy;
- what works for you; and
- what you want to improve next.

You don't need to open every door. Choose the door that helps you reach your current goal.

4.5 Remember

Assess → Plan → Choose → Practice → Evaluate → Reflect → Improve

You are not finished when you complete one speaking activity.

You choose your next goal and continue learning.

That is how you become your own English teacher.