

10 Common Greetings Used by Native English Speakers

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Sound like a native speaker by using the following words and phrases to greet people.

1. Hi.

This is very informal and usually used when a person is in a hurry and doesn't have time to stop and have a lengthy conversation.

2. Hey.

This is also informal and used with close friends and family. Don't use this with your boss unless you have a close relationship with him or her. It isn't exactly rude, but if you use it with a stranger, they may wonder "Do I know this person?"

3. Hello.

Use "Hello" when greeting strangers or in formal situations. You can also use it with friends and family, but they may think you are being too formal. Hello is often used with "Nice to meet you." And "How are you?" As in

Hello. Nice to meet you. (or) Hello. How are you?

4. Howdy.

This is a common way to say hello in the southern states of America. This is very informal and people may think you are trying to be a cowboy if you use this in the northern states.

5. Greetings.

This is a common way for robots to greet people. So, if you are tired of using normal greetings like "Hi" and "Hello", you can use "Greetings."

6. Good morning.

This is used a lot by English speakers. We use this to greet family members when we get up in the morning. We also use "Good morning." This greeting is considered formal and can be used to greet co-workers and colleagues and people you do not know. Do not use "Good morning." After 12 noon. Instead use number 7.

7. Good afternoon.

Use "Good afternoon." To greet people from 12 noon to about 5pm. Like "Good morning.", "Good afternoon." is considered to be a formal greeting and can be used to greet co-workers and colleagues and people you do not know. Do not use "Good afternoon." Before 12 noon or after 5pm.

8. Good evening.

Like numbers 6 and 7, “Good evening.”, is considered to be a formal greeting and can be used to greet co-workers and colleagues and people you do not know. Use “Good evening.” after 5pm.

9. What’s up?

This is a very informal greeting and should only be used with friends and family. Does not always require an answer, but if you are greeted by someone using this expression and you want to answer, just reply, “Nothing much.”

10. How’s it going?

Like “What’s up?”, this looks like a questions, and like “What’s up?” it does not always require an answer. You can use “How’s it going?” when you want to acknowledge someone’s presence, but you don’t have time to stop and have a lengthy conversation. Also very informal greeting and should only be used with friends and family.

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