



Practical ENGLISH for STUDENT NURSES



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PREFACE

Practical English for Student Nurses is designed to help nursing students build a solid foundation in English through simple vocabulary, expressions, and conversations used in daily nursing contexts. The book provides easy-to-follow lessons with examples, dialogues, and exercises to encourage active learning. Its aim is to improve English skills and boost confidence in professional communication. With these basics, students will be more prepared for clinical practice, advanced learning, and global healthcare. This book is also intended as a practical guide and inspiration for continuous professional growth.

The Writers

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide nursing students with fundamental English skills that are directly relevant to their academic and professional needs. The materials cover a wide range of topics such as welcoming people to the nursing community, small talks and socializing, describing symptoms, healthy diet and eating habits, addressing donor shortages, parts of the body, writing obligations and giving advice, using language for giving directions, navigating the hospital environment, preparing for the TOEFL test, and writing different genres critically based on specific contexts

CHAPTER 1

WELCOMING PEOPLE TO NURSING COMMUNITY

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, students are expected to be able to:

1. Identify appropriate expressions for greeting patients, families, and colleagues in both formal and informal contexts.
2. Apply subject-verb agreement and simple present tense correctly in spoken and written communication, in line with TOEFL grammar standards.
3. Apply reading TOEFL for nursing especially in welcoming people in nursing community
4. Produce short written and spoken dialogues that integrate greetings, empathy, and grammatical accuracy for clinical and academic purposes.

Introduction

Greeting is one of the most important skills for nurses. A simple greeting can make patients and their families feel welcomed, safe, and respected. Nurses should know how to greet people formally and informally, depending on the situation. In the nursing community, greetings also reflect professionalism and empathy.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS FOR GREETING

An *approach* is the broadest and most abstract concept. It refers to the underlying beliefs and theories

Formal Greetings (with patients/families)

Good morning, my name is ... I am your nurse today.

Hello, welcome to the hospital. How are you feeling today?

Good afternoon, may I help you?

Welcome to the ward. Please let me know if you need assistance.

Informal Greetings (with colleagues/friends)

Hi, how are you?

Hello, nice to see you again.

Good to see you!

How's everything going?

Dialogue 1: Greeting a Patient

Nurse : Good morning, Mrs. Smith. My name is Anna, and I will be your nurse today.

Patient : Good morning, Nurse Anna.

Nurse : How are you feeling this morning?

Patient : I feel a little better, thank you.

Dialogue 2: Greeting a Colleague

Nurse 1 : Hi, John. How's your shift today?

Nurse 2 : Pretty busy, but manageable. How about you?

Nurse 1 : The same here. Let's do our best!

PRACTICE

Role Play

Practice greeting patients and colleagues in pairs!

Substitution Drill

Replace names and greetings with different times of day (morning, afternoon, evening)!

Writing Task

Write 5 different greetings for patients and 5 for colleagues!

GRAMMAR FOCUS: TOEFL PREPARATION

Subject-Verb Agreement

In TOEFL, many questions test subject-verb agreement. Nurses also need this accuracy when writing medical records.

Rules:

Singular subject → singular verb

The nurse *is* ready.

A patient *has* a fever.

Plural subject → plural verb

The nurses *are* preparing medicine.

The patients *have* appointments today.

Common Mistakes in TOEFL:

Incorrect: The doctors *is* in the room.

Correct: The doctors *are* in the room.

EXERCISE

Choose the correct verb!

1. The nurse (check/checks) the patient every hour.
2. The patients (need/needs) more rest.
3. A donor (is/are) waiting in the lobby.

Simple Present Tense for Greeting and Routines

Nurses often use simple present tense when talking about routines. TOEFL also tests this grammar.

Examples:

I *work* in the emergency department.

She *takes* the patient's temperature.

They *assist* doctors during surgery.

Exercise:

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb.

1. The nurse ___ the patient. (*help*)
2. We ___ news students to the nursing community. (*welcome*)
3. He ___ directions to the visitor. (*give*)
4. The doctors ___ the patients every morning. (*check*)
5. My friend ___ interested in joining the nursing program. (*be*)
6. Neither the teacher nor the students ___ ready for the seminar. (*be*)
7. The number of applicants ___ increasing every year. (*be*)
8. A large amount of information ___ required for the research. (*be*)
9. Each of the nurses ___ given new uniforms. (*be*)
10. Either the doctor or the nurses ___ going to explain the procedure. (*be*)

Choose the best answer!

1. The list of items on the desk ___ very long.

- A. is
- B. are
- C. were
- D. have

2. Neither the students nor the teacher ___ ready for the trip.

- A. are
- B. is
- C. were
- D. have

3. The number of applicants ___ increasing every year.

- A. are
- B. is
- C. were
- D. have

4. A large amount of information ___ needed for the research.

- A. are
- B. were
- C. is
- D. have

5. The committee ___ divided in their decision.

- A. are
- B. is
- C. has
- D. was

6. Each of the children ___ given a toy.

- A. have
- B. has
- C. were
- D. are

7. The books on the shelf ___ dusty.

- A. is
- B. has
- C. are
- D. was

8. One of my friends ___ studying in Canada now.

- A. are
- B. is
- C. were
- D. have

9. There ___ many reasons for his absence yesterday.

- A. is
- B. are
- C. was
- D. has

10. Either the teacher or the students ___ to prepare the presentation.

- A. have
- B. has
- C. is
- D. was

11. Mathematics ___ a difficult subject for some students.

- A. are
- B. is
- C. were
- D. have

12. A pair of shoes ___ lying under the bed.

- A. is
- B. are
- C. were
- D. have

13. The data ___ not accurate according to the expert.

- A. was
- B. is
- C. are
- D. has

14. None of the answers ___ correct.

- A. is
- B. are
- C. has
- D. was

15. The police ___ investigating the case right now.

- A. is
- B. are
- C. was
- D. has

16. The team ___ practicing hard for the upcoming tournament.

- A. is
- B. are
- C. have
- D. were

17. Five kilometers ___ too far to walk in this heat.

- A. are
- B. is
- C. have
- D. were

18. The quality of the products ___ improved significantly.

- A. have
- B. are
- C. is
- D. were

19. Several of the students ___ late to class yesterday.

- A. is
- B. was
- C. are
- D. were

20. Either my mother or my sisters ___ going to cook dinner tonight.

- A. is
- B. are
- C. has
- D. was

Integrated Practice is to Combine greeting expressions with correct grammar.

Example:

1. "Good morning, I am your nurse. I *take* care of you today."
2. "Hello, welcome to the hospital. The doctor *sees* patients in the morning."

Exercise

Write 5 sentences combining greetings with correct subject-verb agreement!

SELF-REFLECTION

1. How confident are you in greeting patients in English?

2. Can you give three examples of formal greetings and three examples of informal greetings?

3. What challenges do you face when using English greetings in professional settings?

4. How can subject-verb agreement help you sound more accurate when speaking or writing?

5. In what ways do you think greeting skills can influence patient trust and comfort?

TOEFL Reading Practice

Read the text and choose the correct answer!

Greetings are an essential part of communication in nursing. A simple “Good morning” or “Hello, my name is Anna, and I will be your nurse today” can help patients feel welcomed and respected. Proper greetings show professionalism and empathy, which are necessary for building trust between nurses and patients.

In healthcare, greetings are not only used with patients but also with families and colleagues. When nurses greet families politely, they reduce anxiety and create a supportive environment. Greeting colleagues is equally important because it strengthens teamwork and encourages collaboration during busy shifts.

From a language learning perspective, mastering greetings in English prepares nursing students for both local and international healthcare contexts. Using correct grammar, such as subject-verb agreement in sentences like “The nurse is ready” or “The patients are waiting”, is essential for clear and accurate communication. Therefore, greetings are more than social expressions; they are the foundation of effective professional interaction in nursing.

Questions

- 1.** What is the main purpose of greetings in nursing according to the passage?
 - a. To fill time during work
 - b. To build trust and show professionalism
 - c. To replace medical instructions
 - d. To shorten conversations

- 2.** Which of the following is an example of a proper greeting to a patient?
 - a. “Hey, what’s wrong with you?”
 - b. “Good morning, my name is Anna, and I will be your nurse today.”
 - c. “Sit there quietly.”
 - d. “Tell me your problem now.”

3. What effect does greeting families politely have?
- a. It makes them leave faster.
 - b. It reduces anxiety and creates a supportive environment.
 - c. It avoids questions from them.
 - d. It helps them with medical bills.
4. According to the passage, why is greeting colleagues important?
- a. It prevents patients from asking questions.
 - b. It strengthens teamwork and collaboration.
 - c. It replaces the need for medical reports.
 - d. It helps nurses avoid mistakes.
5. The word *essential* in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to:
- a. Optional
 - b. Important
 - c. Rare
 - d. Simple
6. Which of the following sentences shows correct subject-verb agreement?
- a. The nurse are ready.
 - b. The patients is waiting.
 - c. The patients are waiting.
 - d. The doctor have arrived.
7. What can be inferred from the passage about greetings?
- a. They are only used in informal settings.
 - b. They are necessary for effective professional interaction.
 - c. They are not useful in nursing.
 - d. They should be avoided in hospitals.

8. The passage suggests that greetings help in international healthcare because:

- a. They are the same in all languages.
- b. They prepare students to communicate in English clearly.
- c. They remove the need for translators.
- d. They make nursing students learn faster.

9. Which of the following best states the main idea of the passage?

- a. Greetings are important in nursing for building trust, teamwork, and professional interaction.
- b. Families prefer short greetings.
- c. Grammar is not necessary in greetings.
- d. Nurses must only greet doctors, not patients.

10. What is the author's purpose in writing this passage?

- a. To criticize nurses for poor communication skills
- b. To explain the importance of greetings in nursing communication
- c. To describe advanced medical procedures
- d. To show how greetings replace patient care

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, students have learned that greetings are not only polite expressions but also an essential part of nursing communication. A warm and respectful greeting helps patients feel welcome, secure, and valued, while also building trust between nurses, patients, and families. For colleagues, greetings play a role in creating a positive working atmosphere and strengthening professional relationships within the nursing community.

The chapter has also introduced students to important grammar points related to subject-verb agreement and the simple present tense, which are frequently tested in the TOEFL exam. By applying these structures in greetings and short dialogues, students gain both communicative competence in nursing contexts and accuracy in English grammar.

Ultimately, mastering the language of greetings and the related grammar equips nursing students with the confidence to start conversations, show empathy, and communicate clearly in both academic and clinical settings. This foundation prepares them for more advanced communication tasks in English, ensuring they can interact professionally with patients, colleagues, and the wider healthcare community.

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CHAPTER 2

SMALL TALKS AND SOCIALIZING

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, students are expected to be able to:

1. Recognize common expressions used in small talks and social interactions in nursing and healthcare settings.
2. Demonstrate the ability to start, maintain, and close conversations politely with patients, families, and colleagues.
3. Apply appropriate vocabulary and expressions to create a friendly and supportive atmosphere in both professional and informal contexts.
4. Apply grammar and reading TOEFL for nursing especially in small talks and socializing

INTRODUCTION

In nursing practice, small talks and social interactions are more than casual conversations. They play a vital role in building trust, reducing patient anxiety, and fostering teamwork with colleagues. By mastering simple yet polite English expressions, nurses can create a friendly and supportive atmosphere both in professional and informal contexts. This chapter focuses on recognizing common expressions, practicing conversations, and applying vocabulary that promotes empathy and professionalism.

Recognizing Common Expressions in Small Talks

1. Nurses often engage in small talks when:
2. Greeting patients while checking vital signs.
3. Talking to patients' families in the waiting area.
4. Socializing with colleagues during shifts or breaks.

Examples of Common Expressions

With patients:

"How are you feeling today?"

"Did you sleep well last night?"

"The weather is nice today, isn't it?"

"I hope you are more comfortable now."

With families:

"How is your family doing?"

"Is there anything I can do to help?"

"Thank you for waiting patiently."

With colleagues:

"How's your shift going?"

"It's been a busy day, hasn't it?"

"Let's grab a quick coffee when we finish."

Demonstrating Small Talk Skills

Starting a Conversation

"Good morning, Mr. Lee. How are you today?"

"Hello, it's nice to see you again."

Maintaining a Conversation

"I see you look better today."

"That must be difficult, but you're doing well."

"I understand. Could you tell me more about it?"

Closing a Conversation

"It was nice talking with you. I'll check on you again later."

“Take care, and let me know if you need anything.”

“I’ll see you at the meeting this afternoon.”

Dialogue Example 1 (With a Patient)

Nurse : Good afternoon, Mrs. Johnson. How are you feeling today?

Patient: I feel a bit tired, but better than yesterday.

Nurse: I’m glad to hear that. Did you manage to rest well last night?

Patient: Yes, thank you. The room was very quiet.

Nurse : That’s good. I’ll come back later to check your medication. Take care.

Dialogue Example 2 (With a Colleague)

Nurse A : Hi, James. How’s your shift today?

Nurse B : Quite busy! We had three new admissions this morning.

Nurse A : Oh, really? That must be exhausting.

Nurse B : Yes, but the team is very supportive.

Nurse A : Great. Let’s catch up after rounds.

Applying Vocabulary in Context

Vocabulary Focus

Polite phrases : Please, Thank you, Excuse me, May I...

Feelings : tired, better, weak, strong, comfortable, uncomfortable

Everyday topics: weather, family, food, hospital environment, schedule

Practice Activity

Fill in the blanks with the correct expression!

1. Nurse: "Good evening. ___ you feeling today?"
2. Patient: "I'm feeling ___ than yesterday."
3. Nurse: "That's great! I hope you ___ well tonight."

Grammar Focus for TOEFL

Small talks often use question forms. TOEFL grammar also tests them.

Yes/No Questions

Are you comfortable?

Do you feel better now?

Is the doctor available?

Wh- Questions

1. How are you today?
2. Where do you feel pain?
3. What time did you last eat?
4. Polite Questions (using modal verbs)
5. Could you tell me how you feel this morning?
6. Would you like some water?
7. May I help you with that?

Writing Task

Write a short dialogue between a nurse and a patient using at least 5 small talk expressions!

EXERCISES

Part A Multiple Choice (5 questions)

Choose the best answer!

1. Which of the following is a polite way to start a conversation with a patient?
 - a. "Hey, what's wrong with you?"
 - b. "Good morning, how are you feeling today?"
 - c. "Tell me your problem now."
 - d. "Why are you here?"
2. The correct closing expression is:
 - a. "See you later, take care."
 - b. "What's your problem?"
 - c. "You should not talk much."
 - d. "Why don't you leave?"
3. Which question is grammatically correct?
 - a. "She feeling better?"
 - b. "Do she feel better?"
 - c. "Does she feel better?"
 - d. "She does feel better?"
4. Which expression is suitable for socializing with colleagues?
 - a. "Let's grab a coffee after the shift."
 - b. "Take your medicine now."
 - c. "You must be quiet."
 - d. "Lie down, please."

5. Which phrase shows empathy?
- "I don't care about your pain."
 - "That must be difficult, but you're doing well."
 - "Stop talking too much."
 - "I cannot help you."

Part B Fill in the Blanks (5 questions)

Complete the sentences with appropriate expressions!

Nurse: "Good evening, Mr. Tom. How ___ you today?"

Patient: "I feel ___ than yesterday, thank you."

Nurse: "I'm glad to hear that. Did you ___ well last night?"

Nurse: "It was nice ___ with you. I'll check on you again later."

Nurse: "Hello, my name is Sarah. May I ___ you with your bag?"

Part C Matching (5 questions)

Match the expression in Column A with the correct function in Column B.

Column A

- "How are you feeling today?"
- "I'll see you at the meeting this afternoon."
- "It's been a busy day, hasn't it?"
- "Good morning, I'm your nurse today."
- "Would you like some water?"

Column B

- Closing a conversation
- Offering help politely
- Starting a conversation formally
- Maintaining small talk
- Asking about a patient's condition

Part D Short Answer (3 questions)

Answer briefly!

Give two examples of polite expressions to maintain small talks with a patient!

- 1.
- 2.

Write one informal and one formal greeting you can use with colleagues.

- 1.
- 2.

Why is small talk important in nursing communication?

- 1.
- 2.

Part E Role Play / Creative Task

In pairs, create a short dialogue between a nurse and a patient using at least 5 small talk expressions (start, maintain, and close) !

Write a dialogue between two nurses during their shift, using polite socializing expressions and at least two polite questions!

TOEFL READING PRACTICE

Read the text and choose the best answer !

In nursing practice, socializing and small talks are not just simple conversations. They serve an important role in building trust and reducing patients' anxiety. When nurses engage in small talks, such as asking about the weather, family, or daily routines that they create a friendly atmosphere that helps patients feel comfortable. This emotional connection often makes it easier for patients to share their health problems openly.

Socializing is also important among healthcare staff. A short chat during a busy shift can reduce stress, increase teamwork, and strengthen professional relationships. Effective small talks can also prevent misunderstandings in the workplace, as they improve communication among nurses, doctors, and other staff.

From a language perspective, small talks provide opportunities for learners of English to practice natural conversation. Using polite phrases such as "How are you doing?" or "It's nice to see you" is essential for creating positive interactions in both professional and social settings. Therefore, small talks are considered a valuable skill for nurses who want to provide holistic care and succeed in international healthcare environments.

Questions

1. What is the main purpose of small talks between nurses and patients?
 - a. To check the patient's blood pressure
 - b. To make patients feel comfortable and build trust