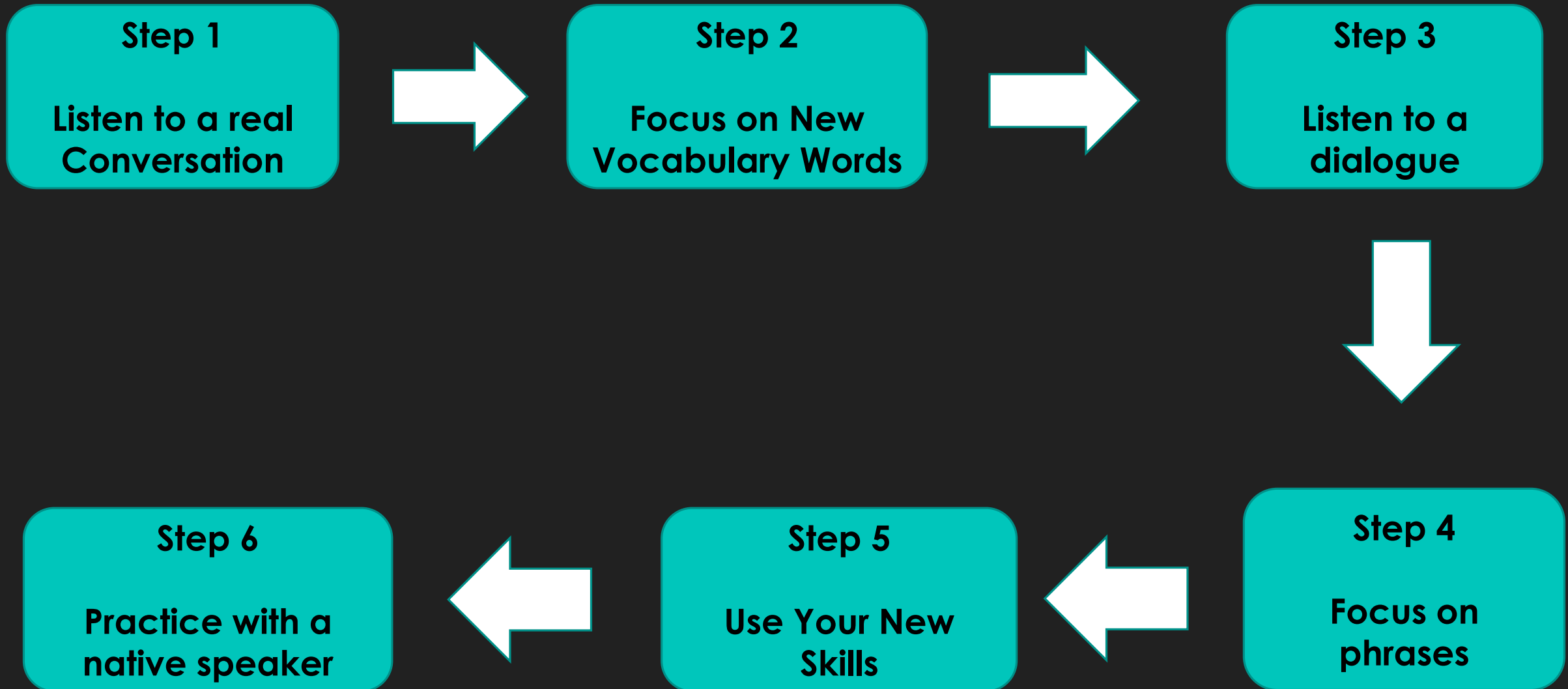


NO
Thank You

How to Decline an Invitation in English

A Vocabulary Lesson

Our Method



Step 1: Would You Like to Do a Language Exchange?



Please listen to Audio Step 1-Would You Like to Do a Language Exchange?

If someone invites you to participate in an activity that you don't want to do, how can you politely say no?

What cultural norms should you keep in mind? Find out in this conversation.

Please view Transcript Step 1- Would You Like to Do a Language Exchange?

Step 2: Focus on New Vocabulary Words

To be
busy with
_____.

To have a
lot going
on with
_____.

To not have
the time to
commit to
_____.

To thank
someone
for _____.

To be
planning
for _____.

To already
have _____.
To already
be doing
_____.

To pass on
_____.

To not be
interested
in _____.

To be busy
with ____.
(expression)



Meaning: To be occupied with some other focus or activity

We were busy with wedding preparations all summer.

To have a lot
going on with

_____.

(expression)



Meaning: To have a lot of things happening, a lot of responsibilities

I have a lot going on with my college courses.

To not have
the time to
commit to____
(expression)



Meaning: To have a limited amount of time, to not have extra time

I don't have the time to commit to another class in the evenings.

To be
planning for

_____.

(expression)



Meaning: To be preparing for something so you don't have extra space or time in your schedule

I am busy planning for my son's birthday party.

To thank
someone
for_____.

(expression)



Meaning: To express your gratitude to someone for something that they have done

Thanks so much for inviting me to your beach house.

To already
have _____. To
already be
doing _____.

(expression)



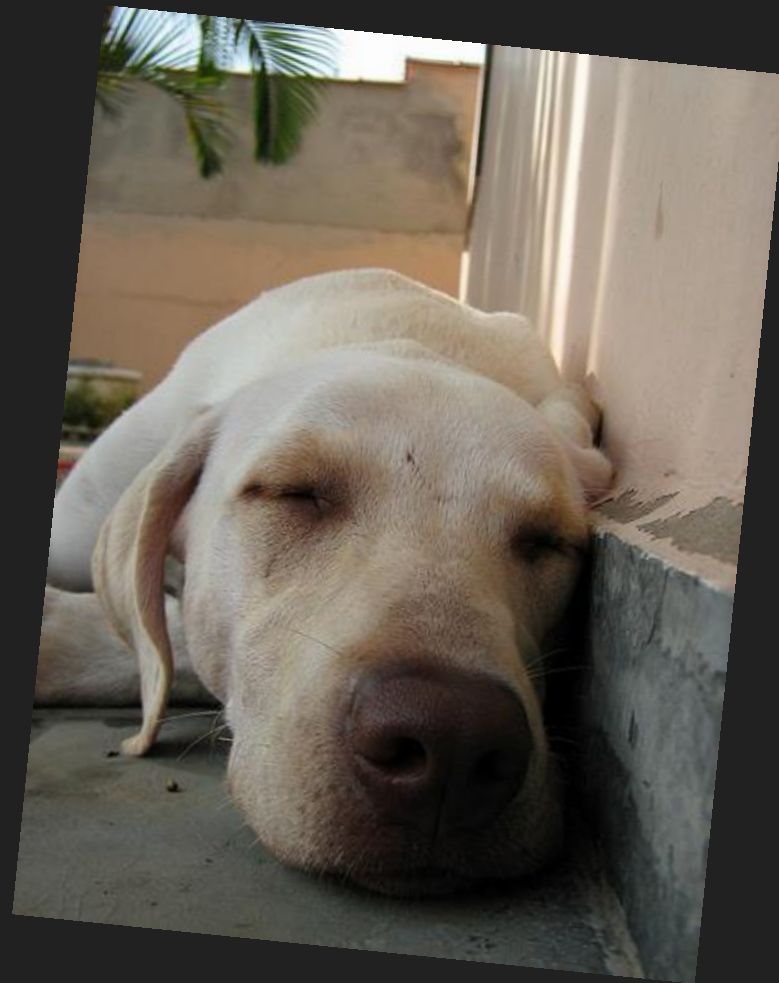
Meaning: To not need something because you have it at that time

Thanks for inviting me to your house for dinner, but I already have plans for Thanksgiving.

To not be
interested in

_____.

(expression)



Meaning: To not want something, to not be drawn to something

*I am not interested in your snacks. I just had lunch.
Your snacks don't interest me. I just had lunch.*

To pass on

_____.

(expression)



Meaning: To decline an offer, to say no

A: Do you want to play a game of cards? B: No I think I'll pass on that.

Step 3: Do You Want to Go Surfing with Me?

In these two conversations, listen to the differences in how to decline an invitation based on how well you know the person.

**Listen to Audio Steps 3 and 4-
Exercise Class or Surfing?**



Step 4: Focus on the Vocabulary Phrases

Learn the new vocabulary in context!

Please open Transcript Steps 3 and 4 – Exercise Class or Surfing?

- “I am really busy with all of the arrangements.”
- “I have a lot going on with the event.”
- “I don’t think I have the time to commit to another exercise class every week.”
- “Oh wow, thank you so much for asking.”
- “I’m planning for my parents’ 50th anniversary party this spring.”
- “Actually I am already doing a pilates class on Thursday nights”
- “Uh, I’m not really interested in surfing.” Or “surfing doesn’t really interest me.”
- “I’ll pass on that, but thanks anyway.”

Bonus! Say It Another Way!

Learn how to say the phrases in a different way!

Click on the file “Say It Another Way”

Step 5: Use Your New Skills

To be
busy
with
_____.

To have a
lot going on
with _____.

To not
have the
time to
commit to
_____.

To thank
someone
for _____.

To already
have _____. To
already be
doing _____.

To be
planning for
_____.

To not be
interested in
_____.

To pass on
_____.

A: Hi what are you up to this weekend?

B: Well I am __1__(occupied) with my term paper that's due on Monday.

A: Wow, you __2__ (have a lot of responsibilities) with school, don't you?

B: Yeah, unfortunately

A: Well we're having a surprise party for my girlfriend on Saturday night. Do you want to come?

B: __3__ (express gratitude) for inviting me. I already have plans to meet with my study group that night, but thanks anyway.

A: Ok well best of luck!

** See answers at the end of the module*



To be busy
with ____.

Prepare Your Vocabulary Cards

To thank
someone for
_____.



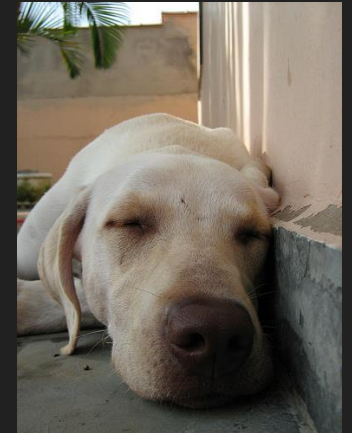
To already
have, to already
be doing



To not have the
time to commit
to ____.



To pass on
something.



To have a lot
going on
with ____.



To be planning
for ____.

To not be
interested
in ____.

Step 6: Practice with a Native

Please act out the following situation and then switch roles. The student should use these expressions: “Thank you for___” and “I already have”

Student: Your mom is in the hospital so you have to go back to your hometown this weekend

Conversation partner: You are having a huge surprise party for your friend and you want to invite the student to come.

○ Bonus Conversation 1: Please use the phrases from Say It Another Way

(A= friend, B= friend)

B: What are you doing this weekend?

A: (student) You didn't hear? My mom is in the hospital. She got food poisoning.

B: Oh I'm sorry to hear that. I was going to invite you to our party this weekend.

A: Well I _____ (already have plans) to go see my mom. _____ (Thank you) for asking.

Step 6: Practice with a Native

Please act out the following situation and then switch roles. The student should use these expressions: **“To pass on___”** and **“To not be interested in ___”**

Student: You hate to play golf.

Conversation partner: You are going golfing this weekend and you want to invite your friend

Bonus Conversation 2: Please use the phrases from Say It Another Way

(A= friend, B= friend)

B: Hey would you like to join me on the golf course this weekend?

A: (student) _____ (I'll pass on that).

B: Really? Why? Do you have something more interesting going on?

A: No _____ (I am not interested in) golf, but have fun!

Step 6: Practice with a Native

Please act out the following situation and then switch roles. The student should use these expressions: **“To be busy with”** and **“to not have the time to commit to”**

Student: You are an accountant and you are busy because it's tax season

Conversation partner: You want your friend to enroll in a cooking class with you

Bonus Conversation 3: Please use the phrases from Say It Another Way

(A= friend, B= friend)

B: Hey are you busy these days?

A: (student) Yeah _____ (I'm busy with tax returns) for my clients

B: Well I am going to start a cooking class. Do you want to take it with me?

A: No _____ (I don't have the time to commit to that) but maybe in the fall I will join you.

Step 6: Practice with a Native

Please act out the following situation and then switch roles. The student should use these expressions: **“To have a lot going on with___”** and **“To be planning for___”**

Student: You are celebrating your 25th wedding anniversary in a few weeks and you are busy preparing for it

Conversation partner: You want to try a new restaurant with your friend

Bonus Conversation 4: Please use the phrases from Say It Another Way

(A= friend, B= friend)

B: Let's go have lunch at that new Thai restaurant in town.

A: (student) I can't! _____ (I have a lot going on with my upcoming wedding anniversary)

B: Oh yeah, I forgot about that. Congratulations!

A: Thanks, _____ (I'll be busy planning for it) this weekend.

Additional conversation questions

- Based on what you heard in audio # 1, is it important to respond to American people soon after they invite you to participate in an activity or is it ok to wait until the last minute **to get back to someone about their invitation?** Is this different from the cultural norms in your country regarding invitations? How quick should your response be in your culture?
- In audio #1, Susan said that if someone you know invites you out and you don't want to go, you don't need to **dance around it** and you can be direct. Is this true in your culture? In your culture and language, if you just don't want to go, can you be honest?
- Have you ever faced an awkward situation where someone invited you to do something in English and you didn't know how to decline the invitation? Please tell the story.

Additional conversation question

- Have you ever lived in another country (not the US and not your home country)? What were the norms for declining invitations there? Did anything surprise you that you learned?

Step 5 Answers

A: Hi what are you up to this weekend?

B: Well **I am busy with my term paper (1)** that's due on Monday.

A: Wow, **you have a lot going on with school, (2)** don't you?

B: Yeah, unfortunately

A: Well we're having a surprise party for my girlfriend on Saturday night. Do you want to come?

B: **Thanks so much (3)** for inviting me. I already have plans to meet with my study group that night, but thanks anyway.

A: Ok well best of luck!

Bonus Conversation Answers

Bonus Conversation 1

B: What are you doing this weekend?

A: *(student)* You didn't hear? My mom is in the hospital, she got food poisoning.

B: Oh I'm sorry to hear that. I was going to invite you to our party this weekend

A: *Well I am already planning (changed tense) to go see my mom. It was thoughtful of you to ask.*

Bonus Conversation 2

B: Hey would you like to join me on the golf course this weekend?

A: *(student)* I'd rather not. Thanks.

B: Really? Why? Do you have something more interesting going on?

A: No I'm not into golf, but have fun!

Bonus Conversation 3

B: Hey are you busy these days?

A: *(student)* Yeah I'm swamped with tax returns for my clients

B: Well I am going to start a cooking class. Do you want to take it with me?

A: *No I'm not going to be able to make a commitment to taking a cooking class every week, but maybe in the fall I will join you.*

Bonus Conversation 4

B: Let's go have lunch at that new Thai restaurant in town

A: *(student)* I am involved in a lot of different aspects of planning for my upcoming wedding anniversary

B: Oh yeah, I forgot about that. Congratulations!

A: *Thanks, I'll be busy making plans for it this weekend*

Credits

- Wedding prep: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/nunoduarte/>
- Courses: http://www.flickr.com/photos/nazareth_college/
- Time: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/purple-lover/>
- Birthday: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/spool32/>
- Thank you: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/orinrobertjohn/>
- Thanksgiving: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/8136496@N05/>
- Not interested dog: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ehabkost/>
- Cards: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/basykes/>
- Surf: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/miguelnavaza/>