

# TALK, TALK, TALK

## Describing People

When you want to know what someone looks like, you are going to ask for a description. When describing people adjectives are used. Below are many common adjectives used when describing someone.

<b>Hair:</b>	long straight bald blond	short curly ponytail gray	shoulder length wavy bangs	crew cut receding hairline salt and pepper
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<b>Body build:</b>	skinny muscular obese stocky	thin fat overweight tall	slender chubby beer belly short	average weight plump, average build medium height
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<b>Facial features:</b>	mustache dimples round face	beard round eyes wears glasses	side burns square chin	pimples big nose
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Descriptions can be very simple, such as "He's ugly".

Or they can be or very descriptive and detailed, such as

"She's 5 feet 4 inches tall, with straight flaming red shoulder length hair, sparkling dark green eyes, a dazzling pearly white smile, with a cute dimple on her left cheek, and lightly tanned facial skin as smooth as a baby's behind, with a body like Marilyn Monroe".

Below are some common structures and expressions that can be used when asking for describing people.

### Expression

**What does (... she) look like?**

**What color is her hair?**

**What color are his eyes?**

**How tall is she?**

**How much do you weight?**

**Does he have any distinguishing characteristics?**

**How old is your mother?**

**Does the professor wear glasses?**

**What is she wearing?**

### Response

She looks like a model.

It's black?

They're blue.

She is five feet, four inches tall.

I weight 75 kilos.

He has a scar on his left cheek.

She's 45 years old.

No, but he wears contacts.

She is wearing a red T-shirt, tight blue jeans, and sandals.

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When giving descriptions, it is also sometimes useful to talk about what the person is wearing. There are many words that can be used to identify apparel.

### Types of Clothing

<u>Tops</u>	<u>Under Garments</u>	<u>Women's Wear</u>	<u>Outer Wear</u>
casual shirt	underwear (men)	skirt	jacket
dress shirt	briefs (men)	dress	coat
tee-shirt	panties (women)	pant suit	wind breaker
top	bra (women)	blouse	sweater
sweat shirt	stocking (women)		
	nylons (women)		
	socks (both)		

  

<u>Bottoms</u>	<u>Shoes</u>	<u>Accessories</u>	<u>Clothing Material</u>
jeans	dress shoes	hat/cap	wool
pants	loafers	tie	polyester
trousers	sandals	belt	cotton
shorts	tennis shoes	scarf	denim
cut offs	high heels	gloves	plastic
	pumps	glasses	leather
	sports shoes	jewelry	silk

Read the dialogue below and note the expressions used for describing people.

**Matt:** What does your girl friend look like?

**John:** She's very beautiful, with dark brown eyes and shoulder length blond hair.

**Matt:** How tall is she?

**John:** She's my height: five feet, four inches.

**Matt:** And is she slim, plump, average weight, obese?

**John:** She's slim, like a model. And she has a great figure.

**Matt:** And she's in her early twenty's, right?

**John:** Yes, she's the same age as me.

Why all the questions about my girl friend?

**Matt:** Just curious. Besides, I think that's her over there across the street.

**John:** Where? I don't see her.

**Matt:** Under that big tree. Isn't she the one kissing the sailor?

**John:** What! Gloria!



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Descriptions of people are not limited to physical descriptions but also to their character and personality. Below are a number of vocabulary that describe someone's personality or character.

shy	outgoing	demanding	easy going
confident	insecure	pushy	laid back
domineering	meek	intelligent	stupid
attentive	neglectful	concerned	carefree
passionate	indifferent	hot blooded	mellow
strict	lenient	tolerant	intolerant

Below are a number of structures and expressions that can be used when asking about someone's personality.

Expression	Response
<b>What's</b> (... your room mate) <b>like</b> ?	She's very friendly, but shy.
<b>What kind of</b> (... boss) <b>do you have</b> ?	He's very intelligent, but very demanding and somewhat of a perfectionist.
<b>What kind of personality do</b> (... you look for in a spouse)?	Someone who is assertive, but not aggressive; outgoing, but not dominating; confident, but not insecure.
<b>How's</b> (... your co-worker), <b>personality wise</b> ?	She's fairly helpful and considerate, but extremely opinionated.

Very often, when describing someone, compliments may be paid. Every one likes to hear compliments. Compliments make people feel good about themselves, and we all need that at times. Compliments can be made about how a person looks, about their dress, about a skill or ability, or about a behavior. There are a number of expressions that can be used to compliment someone. Look at the examples below.

Expression	Response
<b>What a beautiful</b> (...new dress).	Thanks, <b>I'm glad you like it.</b>
<b>You look</b> (...absolutely gorgeous). (Your daughter can certainly play the Violin... ) <b>with best of them.</b>	<b>How kind of you to say so.</b> Thank you, <b>I'm glad you appreciate</b> her talent.
<b>Nice tie. Is it new</b> ?	Yes, it was a birthday present from my wife. She has great taste.
<b>Your presentation</b> (... was superb. The entire audience was spellbound).	Thanks, <b>I appreciate that</b> , but I was so nervous.

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### Practice: Paired Conversation

Describe people (family, friends, classmates, teachers, well known personalities in your country) you know to your partner. Your partner should ask questions to get more details or information. Include the below items in your description the persons:

- height and weight
- hair style
- any distinguishing features (beard, mustache, scars, dimples, freckles, tattoos, glasses, etc.)
- type of clothes they normally wear
- eye and hair color
- approximate age

### Practice: Paired Conversation

Give compliments to your partner about the following. Your partner should respond appropriately, but with humility.

- A new dress or shirt
- A new hair cut
- An oral presentation in front of the class
- Their violin performance at a concert
- A nose job

### Practice: Group work, a fashion show

Get into groups of 6-8 students. Select one person from each group as moderator. As a group, write descriptions of the people in the group. Include in the descriptions the person's:

approximate height  
approximate weight  
eye color  
hair color and style  
distinguishing marks (scar, beard, dimples, etc.)  
if they have glasses (describe the glasses)  
also describe what the people are wearing, including the color, style, and brand of clothing

Use as many adjectives as possible in your descriptions. Once the descriptions are complete, have a fashion show in the class room.

The moderator should introduce and give a physical description of the models. The models should describe in detail what they are wearing as they walk down the runway. Have fun.

