

LESSON NOTES

Learn English in Three Minutes #1

I'm Fine

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GRAMMAR

The focus of this lesson is "How are you?" in English

Topic 1: How to answer the question "How are you?"

Sentence from the lesson:

'I'm fine.'

1. If someone says: "How are you?," you can say: "I'm fine."
2. Another way to answer: "Pretty good." — This means about the same thing as "I'm fine."
3. We also have: "Not bad." You can use this if you are feeling just okay, or so-so.

Topic 2: How to ask how someone is

Sentence from the lesson:

'How are you?'

1. "How are you?" is the most well-known way of asking how someone is. You could use it when you want to be polite.
2. A more casual and much more common way to ask is "Hey, how's it going?"
3. You can answer this in many ways. If you're feeling good, you can say: "Good," "Pretty good." or "Not bad.."
4. Even though these answers mean the same thing as "I'm fine," you can't answer "How's it going?" with "I'm fine." It will sound a bit strange.
5. If you're *not* feeling good, you can say: "Not so good," "Not great" or "Not so well."
6. Be careful: If you say one of these, the other person will usually ask, "Why, what's wrong?" to be polite. Then, you will have to explain!
7. Another casual, but very common version of "How are you?" is "What's up?"
8. To reply, use a cheerful voice as you say: "Not much!" or "Nothing much!" This means you're free and able to chat. Since "What's up" is just another way of saying "Hello," you can also reply with: "Hey!" or "Hi!"

Language Tip!

A lot of the time, when we ask questions that mean "how are you?" in English, we're not *actually* asking about the other person's health — we're only asking to be polite! You should think of these kinds of questions as another way of saying "Hello" — a way for the conversation to get started — instead of actual literal questions. In fact, when someone asks you "what's up?" you don't even have to answer! Just say "What's up?" in reply.