

English Filler Words

https://www.fluentu.com/blog/english/english-filler-words/#toc_1

1. **Well:** “Well” can be used in a few different ways. You can use it to show that you’re thinking”

“Well, I guess \$20 is a good price for a pair of jeans.”

You can also use it to put a pause in a sentence:

“The apples and cinnamon go together like, well, apples and cinnamon.”

You can even use the word to stall (delay):

“Well... fine, you can borrow my car.”

2. **Um / Er / Uh:** “Um,” “er” and “uh” are mostly used for hesitation, such as when you don’t know the answer or don’t want to answer.

“Um, er, I uh thought the project was due tomorrow, not today.”

You can use any of the words at any time—they don’t all have to go together.

“Umm... I like the yellow dress better!”

3. **Hmm:** “Hmm” is a thoughtful sound, and it shows that you’re thinking or trying to decide something.

“Hmm, I like the red bag but I think I’ll buy the black one instead.”

4. **Like:** “Like” is sometimes used to mean that something is not exact:

“My neighbor has like ten dogs.”

In the above example, the neighbor probably doesn’t have exactly ten dogs. Rather, the neighbor has a lot of dogs. Usually, though, the word is used when you need a moment to figure out the next word to use.

“My friend was like, completely ready to like kick me out of the car if I didn’t stop using the word ‘like’.”

Keep in mind that the word “like” as a filler is seen as a negative thing. The word is often overused by young females, and can make you sound like you’re not sure what you’re talking about.

5. **Actually:** “Actually” is an adverb—a word that describes an action. Many [English adverbs](#) (though not all of them) have an “-ly” at the end of the word, which makes it easier to recognize them.

Some adverbs can be used as fillers to change the strength of a statement.

For example, the word “actually” is used to point out something you think is true, when others might

not agree:

*"Actually, **pugs** are really cute!"*

6. Basically: "Basically" is also an adverb. It is used when you're summarizing something, like a movie you saw:

"Basically, the last Batman movie was really exciting!"

7. Seriously: The adverb "seriously" is used to show how strongly you take the statement.

"Wow... That roller coaster was seriously scary!"

8. Literally: "Literally" is another adverb. It really means "something that is true," but many times in conversation it's used with a different meaning: to express strong feelings.

These strong feelings aren't always literal, though. For example:

"That's so funny! I'm literally dying of laughter right now!"

9. Totally: Our next adverb is "totally," which means "completely." It is used to show that you feel strongly about something or that something is important.

"You totally didn't see me, even though I was right in front of you."

10. Clearly: The adverb "clearly" means the same as "obviously." As a filler word, it is used to state something that is very obviously true.

"Clearly you don't know what you're talking about."

11. You see: "You see" is used to share a fact that you assume the listener doesn't know, like:

"I was going to try the app, but you see, I ran out of space on my phone."

12. You know: "You know" is used to share something that you assume the listener already knows.

"We stayed at that hotel, you know, the one down the street from Times Square."

It can also be used instead of an explanation, in cases where we feel the listener just understands what we mean.

"When the elevator went down, I got that weird feeling in my ears, you know?"

13. I mean: “I mean” is used to clarify or emphasize how you feel about something:

“I mean, he’s a great guy, I’m just not sure if he’s a good doctor.”

It’s also used to make corrections when you misspeak:

*“The duck and the tiger were awesome but scary. I mean, the tiger was scary, not the duck.”
“The cave is two thousand—I mean—twenty thousand years old!”*

14. You know what I mean?: “You know what I mean?” is used to make sure the listener is following what you’re saying.

“I really like that girl, you know what I mean?”

15. At the end of the day: “At the end of the day” is a phrase that means “in the end” or “in conclusion.”

“At the end of the day, we’re all just humans, and we all make mistakes.”

16. Believe me: “Believe me” is a way of asking your listener to trust what you’re saying.

“Believe me, I didn’t want this tiny house, but it was the only one I could afford.”

It’s also used to emphasize what you’re about to say, as in:

“Believe me, this is the cheapest, tiniest house ever!”

17. I guess / I suppose: “I guess” and “I suppose” are used to show that you’re hesitant, or not really sure about what you’re saying.

“I was going to eat dinner at home, but I guess I can go eat at a restaurant instead.”

“I guess” is used more often in speech, but “I suppose” can sound classier (a bit smarter).

18. Or something: “Or something” is a sentence ending that means you’re not being exact.

“The cake uses two sticks of butter and ten eggs, or something like that.”

19. Okay / So: “Okay” and “so” are usually used to start sentences, and can be a sign that a new topic is starting:

“So what are you doing next weekend?”

They can also be used to introduce a summary:

“Okay, so we’re going to need to buy supplies for our trip this weekend.”

20. Right / Mhm / Uh huh: “Right” and “uh huh” are affirmative responses—they both mean “yes.”

“Right, so let’s prepare a list of all the things we’ll need.”

“Mhm—I heard you.”

“Uh huh, that’s exactly what he told me too.”

21. Let me see... / Give me a sec...: Used when you need more time to think about something:

Let me see...I think we have everything...but let me check.

Give me a sec...I thought that you were coming here?