

Unit 5

Asking for and Giving Advice



Part 1: Asking for Advice

Discussion Starter

- What kinds of advice did your parents give you when you were growing up?
- What advice would you offer someone who is thinking of going into your field?
- If you were having trouble with your classes, who would you ask for advice from? Why?

Language Lesson: Asking for Advice

There are many reasons to ask for advice. What are some things for which you have asked for advice?

There are certain words and phrases generally used to ask for advice.

How do I . . .

What do you recommend/suggest?

What would you do?

Any advice on . . .

Do you think I should . . .

Any ideas? / Any ideas on . . .

What do you think would help?

If this was you . . .

What should I do?

Note: The correct grammar is *If this were you*, but native speakers do not always use correct grammar.

If you were me, what would you do?

What do you think I should do?

Pronunciation Note: Native English speakers often link their words. **Linking** is connecting words to each other. The words will not sound the same as when they are spoken separately. Although linking is not clearly enunciated, it is very common. Recognizing linking will help you understand people more easily and help others understand you because you will sound more natural.

There are two main types of linking:

- o Consonant to vowel: Words that end with a consonant sound link to words beginning with a vowel sound.
- o Vowel to vowel: Words ending with a vowel sound link to words beginning with a vowel sound.

Examples:

How do I sounds like How dooeye (the do and I sound like one word).

What do you think sounds like Whaddayathink?

Should I sounds like Shouldeye.

PRACTICE 1: PARTICIPANTS

Decide which phrase you would use to ask for advice from each person.

1. student to professor: Wants to get better grade on paper

2. friend to friend: Wants to know the best teacher in the [English] department

3. student to professor: Wants to learn English faster

4. intern to boss: Hopes to advance with the company

5. classmate to classmate: Needs to know best place to take visitors for dinner

6. patient to doctor: Wants to know how to treat a cold

PRACTICE 2: DISCUSSION

Answer these questions with a partner.

1. Do you think any of these situations are easier than others when seeking advice? Which were easiest? Why?
2. Why did you choose the phrases you chose for each situation? How do factors such as age, gender, relationship, or status make a difference when asking for advice? Does tone of voice make a difference?
3. How do linking words and phrases sound as opposed to when they are not linked?
4. What advice would you offer for each of the situations in Practice 1?

Get Acquainted

Interview an American friend or classmate and ask for their advice. Take notes on the language they use and their answers.

Question	Notes
Where do you recommend I take my parents for dinner when they visit?	
Any advice on what kind of car to buy?	
What do you think would help if I had a cold?	
Which classes do you suggest that first-year students take?	
If you were me and had to choose between [Major] and [Major], which would you choose?	

PRACTICE 3: ANALYSIS

Work with a group. Compare your Get Acquainted charts and answer these questions.

1. In many cases, English is formulaic. You can predict what a person will say and prepare some phrases that are easy for you to remember and pronounce. Did your interviewees use any similar language? What patterns did you notice?
2. Did you notice if anyone answered using modals (should, could, must)? How would this change the advice?
3. Was their advice what you expected? Who got the best advice for each question? Share answers and choose one for your group. Share the best advice for each question with the other groups.