

# Language for ...

## clothes shopping

**Age:** Young adult / adult



**Level:** Pre-Intermediate – Intermediate

**Length:** 90 minutes (approx.)

**Language Focus:** key expressions and vocabulary for typical conversations in a clothes shop

**Skills:** speaking, reading

**Materials:** one copy of the worksheet per student; one set of **Roleplay Cards** for each pair of students (you will need to cut these up before the lesson); if possible, a PC/projector with an internet connection in the classroom (but this is not essential)

**Aims:** to allow students to effectively understand and use common expressions for talking about clothes and for having typical conversations in a clothes shop, either as a customer or as a member of staff

### What are red words?

Ninety per cent of the time, speakers of English use just 7,500 words in speech and writing. These words appear in the Macmillan Dictionary in red and are graded with stars. One-star words are frequent, two-star words are more frequent and three-star words are the most frequent. 'Language for' lessons are based on red words and encourage students to improve their English through communicative tasks using collocation and commonly used phrases.

<https://www.macmillandictionary.com/learn/red-words.html>

- 1 Begin the lesson by asking the class when they last bought clothes or went shopping for clothes. Select one student and ask him/her to speak a little about what they bought. Encourage other students to ask questions to the selected student. If any useful "clothes" vocabulary comes up, make a note of it. Finally, tell students that today's lesson will focus on useful language for clothes shopping and discuss how this language will help them the next time they go out to shop for clothes.
- 2 Hand out the student worksheets and ask students to work in pairs on Task 1a. Tell students that the first pair to find all 10 items of clothing is the winner. Monitor the class as they search for the words, helping weaker pairs. Once one pair has finished, check that their answers are correct before announcing them as winners! Then ask the winners to call out the 10 items. Give feedback on the pronunciation of each adjective and elicit definitions for some of the more difficult adjectives (e.g. *tracksuit*, *skirt*).
- 3 Refer students to Task 1b and read the instructions aloud. Students work in small groups and have two minutes to think of as many words as possible. The winning group is the group with the most words.
- 4 Refer students to Task 1c and choose a confident student to describe what they are wearing today and how and where they got the clothes or accessories. Use the language in the example boxes to ask them questions, e.g. How did the shop assistant help you? Was it a gift?, etc. This is a good way to make students aware of the language they can use.
- 5 Use the clothes you are wearing or the man in the picture in Task 2a to elicit some of the parts of clothes. Complete the diagram as a whole class activity. If you need to add more energy to the lesson, you could shout out the names of parts of clothes and have students touch the relevant part on their body.
- 6 Now read aloud the instructions for Task 2b. Tell students that they must work individually. Highlight that they are only reading for gist, so no

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need to worry at this stage about difficult words and the empty gaps. Set a time limit of about 2 minutes and let students begin. Once the time is up, allow students to compare answers in pairs for a moment. Then elicit the correct answers.

- 7 Read aloud the instructions for Task 2c. This time, allow students a longer time to work in pairs and complete the gaps. Monitor the class as they do this, helping weaker pairs. Finally, elicit the correct answers and focus on the correct pronunciation of difficult words from both the answers and the glossary (e.g. *tight, loose, cash register, receipt, discount*).
- 8 Refer students to Task 3a. Ask students to work individually and complete the sentences using the correct word. Check answers.
- 9 Refer students to Task 3b. First, have students work individually on correcting the dialogues. Then after checking answers, ask students to work in pairs reading the dialogues with the correct words. Another way to check answers which can be more fun is to have students read the dialogues in pairs to an open class and have other students shout out the correct words.
- 10 For Task 4, put the students in new pairs of Student A and Student B and give them a lot of time to read the roleplay cards. There are four phases on each card and there are two cards: one has Student A as the customer and the other has Student B as the customer. Make sure that both students understand what they have to do as Customer and Shop Assistant. Monitor weaker students as they are performing the roleplays. In the end, elicit any interesting information which you may have overheard during the roleplays (e.g. *Juan, it sounds like you had a difficult customer. Can you tell us about that?*). Finally, provide feedback on both good language and errors which came up during the interviews.
- 11 Students remain in the same pairs. Refer them to Task 5. Give students a few minutes to discuss the questions, encouraging them to incorporate new language from this lesson. To wrap up the activity, ask students to share their interview tips (as per the final question). Finally, provide feedback on this entire task

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**KEY:**

1.

a:

Y	T	R	A	C	K	S	U	I	T
S	H	I	R	T	K	W	G	J	N
F	O	T	R	O	U	S	E	R	S
U	I	C	J	Y	L	Z	J	S	S
E	B	O	K	S	W	C	B	W	K
Z	F	Z	B	S	F	O	J	E	I
V	A	O	Y	V	R	A	H	A	R
V	J	A	C	K	E	T	L	T	T
K	I	Q	S	H	O	E	S	E	H
B	H	G	L	O	V	E	S	R	M

**Items (in any order):**

- shirt
- coat
- jacket
- trousers
- tracksuit
- skirt
- gloves
- socks
- sweater
- shoes

**b:**

Cold weather = scarf, **hat**, **coat**, woolly socks, etc.

Hot weather = sandals, cap, flip flops, swimsuit, bikini, swimming trunks, skirt, vest top

Formal event = **tie**, **dress**, high heels, **shirt**, blouse, etc.

Doing sports = football boots, tracksuit, baseball cap, trainers, etc.

Accessories = earrings, necklace, glasses, sunglasses, belt, etc.

2.

a: (1 collar 2 sleeve(s) 3 leg(s) 4 waist 5 chest

b: Situation 1 = You enter the shop; Situation 2 = You find an item that you like; Situation 3 = You buy an item; Situation 4 = You have a problem

c: 1. looking 2. department 3. size 4. try 5. take  
6. bigger 7. smaller 8. take 9. receipt 10. return  
11. refund 12. discount

3.

a: 1. take 2. loose 3. rack 4. cash register  
5. collar 6. exchange

b: 1. **Customer:** ... do you **have** this T-shirt ... /  
**have** you got this T-shirt ...

2. **Customer:** Can I try this **on** please?

3. **Customer:** ... I'm just **looking/browsing**.

4. **Customer:** ... I'll **take** it!

5. **Customer:** Hello. I want to **return/**  
**exchange** this coat ...

6. **Customer:** ... this item has a ten percent **discount**.

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### Role play 1

Student A: you are the <b>customer</b>	Student B: you are the <b>shop assistant</b>
<p><b>Phase 1: You enter the <b>shop</b></b></p> <p>You want to know where in the <b>shop</b> you can find shirts.</p>	<p><b>Phase 1: The <b>customer</b> enters the shop</b></p> <p>You work in a big <b>shop</b>. Listen to the <b>customer</b> and answer his/her <b>question</b>.</p>
<p><b>Phase 2: You find an <b>item</b> that you like</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You find a nice <b>shirt</b>, but on the rack, it seems too big/small. Ask for a different <b>size</b>.</li> <li>- You want to try on the <b>shirt</b> – but you need to know where the changing rooms are.</li> <li>- The <b>shirt</b> is still not the right <b>size</b>. Explain why. Again, ask for a different <b>size</b>.</li> <li>- Now the <b>shirt</b> is ok. You decide to buy it.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase 2: The <b>customer</b> finds an <b>item</b> that he/ she likes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to the <b>customer's question</b>. You need to check in the storeroom to see if there is a different <b>size</b>.</li> <li>- When the <b>customer</b> tries on the <b>item</b>, speak to him/her about the <b>size</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase 3: You buy an <b>item</b></b></p> <p>You want to pay in <b>cash</b>.</p>	<p><b>Phase 3: The <b>customer</b> buys an <b>item</b></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tell the <b>customer</b> the <b>price</b> of the <b>item</b>.</li> <li>- Ask if the <b>customer</b> wants a <b>bag</b> (bags cost an extra 25 pence).</li> <li>- Ask if the <b>customer</b> wants to pay in <b>cash</b> or by <b>card</b>.</li> <li>- Give the <b>customer</b> his/her <b>change</b>.</li> <li>- Say goodbye in a nice way.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase 4: You have a <b>problem</b></b></p> <p>On the rack, it says that the <b>shirt</b> has a 25% discount. But the shop assistant has not included this discount.</p>	<p><b>Phase 4: The <b>customer</b> has a <b>problem</b></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to the <b>customer's problem</b>.</li> <li>- Explain that the <b>price</b> includes the discount – the <b>customer</b> has not understood the <b>price</b> correctly.</li> </ul>

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### Role play 2

Student A: you are the shop assistant	Student B: you are the customer
<p><b>Phase 1: The customer enters the shop</b></p> <p>Ask the customer if he/she needs <b>help</b>.</p>	<p><b>Phase 1: You enter the shop</b></p> <p>You just want to look at the <b>clothes</b>, you don't need the shop assistant to help you.</p>
<p><b>Phase 2: The customer finds an item that he/she likes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to the customer's <b>question</b>. You need to check in the storeroom to see if there is a different <b>size</b>.</li> <li>- When the customer tries on the <b>item</b>, speak to him/her about the <b>size</b>.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase 2: You find an item that you like</b></p> <p>You find a nice pair of <b>shoes</b>. Ask if the shop has them in your <b>size</b>.</p> <p>You want to try on the <b>shoes</b>.</p> <p>The <b>shoes</b> are not exactly the right <b>size</b>. Explain why. Ask for a different <b>size</b>.</p> <p>Now the <b>shoes</b> are ok. You decide to buy them – but you need to know where the cash register is.</p>
<p><b>Phase 3: The customer buys an item</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tell the customer the <b>price</b> of the <b>item</b>.</li> <li>- Ask if the customer wants a <b>bag</b>. (The <b>shop</b> only has <b>paper bags</b>, not <b>plastic</b>. They cost 20 pence.)</li> <li>- Ask if the customer wants to pay in <b>cash</b> or by <b>card</b>.</li> <li>- Say goodbye in a nice way.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase 3: You buy an item</b></p> <p>You want to pay by <b>card</b>.</p>
<p><b>Phase 4: The customer has a problem</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is now one week later. Listen to the customer's <b>problem</b>.</li> <li>- Ask to see the receipt.</li> <li>- Try to convince the <b>customer</b> to <b>exchange</b> the <b>item</b> for a similar <b>item</b> from the <b>shop</b>.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Phase 4: You have a problem</b></p> <p>It is now one week later. The <b>shoes</b> are not very comfortable, so you want to return them. You want the <b>shop</b> to refund your money.</p>