



**Student:** What I really loved about your course was the feedback like the somebody speaking to you and reading out loud your essay and saying I'm not sure about this and I will go with that and look at this preposition.

[Music]

**Female Voice:** You are now listening to the IELTS Podcast. Learn from tutors and ex-examiners who are masters of IELTS preparation. Your host, Ben Worthington.

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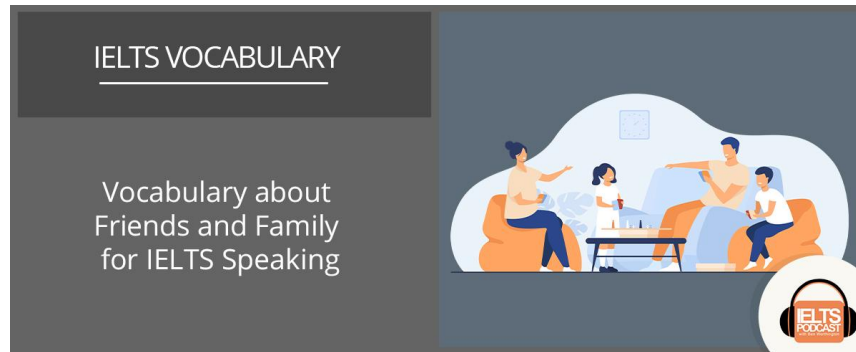
**Ben:** IELTS Speaking vocabulary. In this tutorial, we're going to look at describing people specifically friends and family. Now, the most common topics in the IELTS Speaking exam are usually describe a person, describe a place, describe an object and so if you've got a solid grip on your vocabulary for describing people, it's going to help you significantly.



When I mean a solid grip I mean like a higher level of vocabulary, not like oh, she's my best friend. She's really good. We do nice things. That's terrible. That's terrible. We need to be more descriptive. We need to be rich. We need to have richer vocabulary and I will share a list of collocations. I've got about 28 in front of me. I'll blast through them. If I were you, I would write down maybe three, four, five and just try and move these from your receptive vocabulary into your active vocabulary.

And you can do this by using them in an everyday conversation in the next 24 hours. Write them down, put it on the back of a business card perhaps, put it in your wallet or maybe put it as a screensaver on your phone or your laptop and then the next time you're speaking English or even if you're just talking to yourself-- ideally, you're talking to yourself aloud.

Just think 10 years ago you could not do that. If you walk down the street talking, people think you were insane. Now, you can do this because it's common. You're walking down the street and



you see somebody talking you probably find either a phone to their ear or an earbud or headphones or something like that is perfectly normal nowadays.

So, you can just walk down the streets, talk aloud. You don't have to talk in your head and you can just say oh yeah, this friend is dear to my heart, for example, all right? So anyway, you could even repeat them afterwards.

So, let's go through this list really fast and then I'll give you some very quick examples of how we can use them. Again, learning them in context will help you. So, that's why I'm going to give you a description afterwards.

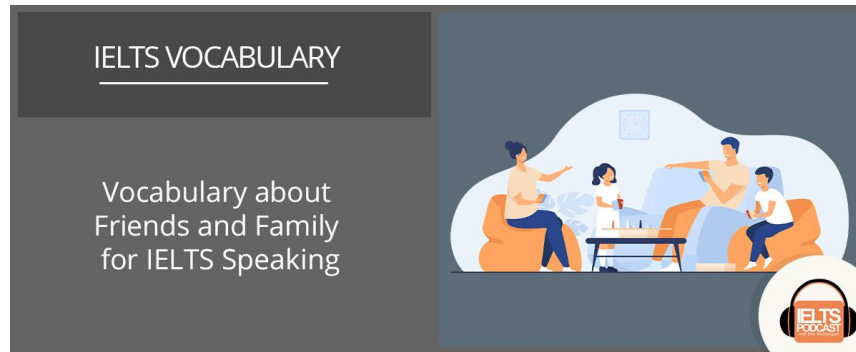
A lifelong friend. A lifelong friend: a friend that you've had for most of your life. Perhaps you could think of a friend now. I'm thinking maybe of my friend-- a couple of friends: Lucas or Pablo diablo we used to call him. A lifelong friend. A relationship of trust: a connection with another person you have faith or confidence in. To arrange a dinner date. That's quite self-explanatory.



A shoulder to cry on: someone to sympathize with. Pablo diablo has been a shoulder to cry on in the last few weeks, for example. I think he would just tear up into tears when he heard that. Close-knit family. Okay. Are you from a close-knit family or is your family quite distant? Do you have a close relationship with your family?

Dear to my heart: now we can use this to describe somebody, but we can also use it to describe something else. For example, my village in England is very close to my heart. It's very dear to my heart. Distant cousins: people who share a common ancestor, but are not closely related. So again, distant cousins or my family is quite distant. Extended family: your aunties, your uncles, your cousins are all part of your extended family.

Extend the hand of friendship: to reach out to someone in a friendly manner. Face-to-face is in person. Face-to-face classes, for example. Get to know one another: it's quite important that one phrasal verb get to know put it with one another, we've got a neat little collocation there. It took



us a while to get to know one another. It takes me a while to get to know other people. In my university class, it took us a while to get to know one another. To get to know each other.

A get together: sometimes we get together at the weekends. Also as a noun, I'm having a get together on Saturday, for example. Just basically means meetup. Immediate family, long lost friend, long-term relationships-- I'll skip through the ones I'm pretty confident you will know.

Nurture our friendships: nowadays, it's important to nurture our friendships because online there's so much plasticity and fakeness, okay? Looking after relationships with friends. Nurture our friendships. I nurture a few friendships that I have that I've met with people around the world. I set reminders to get in contact with them if it's been a while. I like to nurture productive friendships, quality friendships, professional relationships.

Another one. Relationship problems: difficulties with people with whom we interact regularly. Share a common background, okay? It's quite self-explanatory. To share a similar heritage or culture. Stand the test of time: to last a long time. Struck up a friendship. When I arrived in



Bangkok, I struck up a few friendships immediately with fellow English people because we shared a common background.

To have a good working relationship. When I worked in academies, I had very few good working relationships. I'm joking. I had a few good working relationships when I was working in English academies in Spain. To be honest, not that many because quite a few of those English teachers were just there to collect the payment. So, we didn't see eye to eye.

I quite enjoyed my teaching there. I quite enjoyed being a productive teacher, working around results and whatnot and with the teachers who I had something in common with, we shared a good working relationship. With the ones who just wanted to collect money for the weekend, for the beer money I wasn't such a good working relationship. To have a lot in common: basically to have shared interest. To hit it off, to keep in touch with, and to lose touch with; all quite straightforward.



As I said write down a few that you think would be useful that you can maybe see yourself using immediately. Maybe think of a person who you could think of to describe. I don't know. Maybe you're thinking of a friend who you have a lot of common with and it's a relationship that you want to nurture. You have a lot of in common with them because you share a common background. You share the same ideas and this relationship can stand the test of time.

Think of a friend and just try and attach to link these collocations and expressions with this friend or family member even.

Let's go. IELTS Speaking Part 1 sample questions and answers. Do you come from a large family? Remember IELTS Speaking Part 1; easy straightforward questions designed to get you comfortable with the examiner so you can give your truest demonstration of your ability to speak English.



Do you come from a large family? My immediate family is not very big. I have a large extended family that includes many uncles, aunts, and cousins. We are a close-knit family and we like to keep in touch with one another. So, birthdays and celebrations are noisy crowded affairs.

Great. When was the last time you had a family function? Our extended family got together last year to celebrate my grandfather's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. He is very dear to my heart. He has kept up a healthy relationship with the whole family. So, it was a happy occasion that we all enjoyed.

Again, a couple of sentences, sprinkled in quite a few collocations and expressions, topics specific vocabulary and that's how we get through Part 1.

IELTS Speaking Part 2 sample question and answer. Tell me about your best friend. To answer this question, discuss who the person is, the circumstances of your meeting, and what it is you like about them.





My best friend and I got to know each other when we were still very young. We lived in neighboring houses. We had a lot in common, so we soon hit it off. As we have grown older, we have moved apart. Because of this, we have to some degree lost touch, but anyone who has a lifelong friend would understand that they will always be dear to their heart.

When we do find ourselves in the same city, we arrange dinner dates so that we can enjoy each other's company. We share the same ideas and we share a common background. We enjoy reminiscing about our past exploits when we struck up a friendship as children. We were inseparable. In those early days, we built up a relationship of trust that time and distance cannot break.

That's a good answer. Personally, I would have added an anecdote or an example just to enrich it, just to make sure I hit two minutes and to add a little bit of detail in there. And the perfect opportunity would have been near to the end. When we struck up a friendship as children we were inseparable.



For example, once we found all my friend's sister's dolls and for some reason, we took off all the heads and put them back in the boxes and we were always up to silly typical ladish or boyish-- young boy, naughty boy behavior. In those early days, we built up a relationship of trust that time and distance cannot break.

Okay. Just a side note: it's okay to correct yourself in the exam as I just did there. Even native English speakers need to correct themselves. So, it's okay to do it in the exam. The problem is when you're doing it for every single sentence because then it definitely hinders your ability to communicate. It hinders your fluency score. So, don't do it for every sentence and try to get to the point where you only do it when it's absolutely necessary.

How do we get to that point? Well, how do we speak accurately and automatically regularly where we get to the point where our fluency level is much more competent obviously? One small technique is just to slow down, add pauses, and briefly get your words in order before they come



out. You don't want to spend too much time on it, but just give yourself a few seconds and a little bit of drama; a pregnant pause it's called.

Put in those pauses in your speech, work throughout the entire exam and you'll sound much more coherent. And as I said, if you do have to correct yourself, go ahead and do it. It's okay to do it, but don't make a habit of it.

Part 3 sample questions and answers. Now, these are definitely good examples to add more anecdotes, more examples. We're probably going to be more abstract in this part. So, examples will help you describe. They will help you explain what you're saying.

Do you think that after-hour friendships between working colleagues are appropriate? I think that it is important to have a good working relationship. Colleagues should extend the hand of friendship to newcomers in the workplace. I don't believe however the professional relationships should extend into the domestic domain as this may affect office politics.



I remember when I started working in an academy and it was interesting because in this English academy, it turns out I was the only native English speaker from England. There was a Scottish tutor, a Welsh tutor, a few Polish tutors, and an American tutor. I was the only one from England and it kind of caused a little bit of-- I wouldn't say commotion, but I did feel like a bit of a curiosity and people were saying oh, you're from England. I don't know if they were being polite or if they were genuinely curious. Anyway, I did feel welcome in the workplace.

Maybe I went off on a tangent there. So, to rescue it, I could say that they did make me feel welcome when I arrived, but the friendship didn't really go anywhere especially after hours. It was just a cordial professional relationship. Just to bring it round to the question; rescue it.

Anyway, next one. Do you think that social media is changing the way that we relate to our friends and family? In some ways, yes. Social media allows us to build up relationships with distant cousins even with those that live on foreign soil. It also helps us to make connections with



long-lost friends who we may have never spoken to or seen again. On the other hand, we often spend far too much time on digital devices instead of socializing face to face.

For example, if you are regularly texting a friend, you might not feel the need to go outside and make plans with them because you feel you're in contact. So, just to go back to your question, I would definitely say it is changing the way that we interact or relate with our friends and family.

Again, could you see how just adding that little example I could extend the answer? For me, it was quite straightforward. I could think of something quite topical, quite realistic and this is what honestly has happened. I've got a friend here and we do message each other daily with jokes and stuff and I feel, unfortunately, that it has kind of reduced the need to go out; to make the effort to go out for a meal or to go out for a drink together. Anyway, my two cents as they say.

Do you think that people who enter into long-term relationships should continue with their friendships from their single days? I think that it is important to nurture our friendships whether or not we are in a long-term relationship. Not all relationships stand the test of time and if you



have relationship problems, you may one day need a shoulder to cry on. In my view, too many people abandon their friends when they become involved in relationships.

Okay. True. I think we've all had this. We had a friend at school and as soon as this friend found a girlfriend, he just ditched all his mates and stopped going out. It happened to me a few times actually maybe because my friends were getting girlfriends and I wasn't. Anyway, perhaps that was probably a little bit too open for a speaking exam. So it's a good example of what not to say.

You got to treat this like a job interview. So, you could use that example that I gave exactly what happened to you, but you don't have to mention that you didn't get any girlfriends. You're not going to get any points for that. I just did it to make this a little bit more entertaining for the listener. So, just to get it back.

It's important just to stay on topic. You don't have to reveal so much. Keep it kind of like a job interview. But if you do have the urge to share anecdotes like that, you're probably on the right



track because you've relaxed, you're feeling confident. Just be careful what you do share. That's all, all right? So, just keep it as I said in a job interview fashion.

So, we're coming to the end of this tutorial. If you've got any suggestions, then shoot us an email. I'd love to hear them. I'd love to do podcasts and tutorials about what you're struggling with, so let us know. And remember if you're still struggling, have a look at the IELTS Confidence Course. We're getting some fantastic results with that.

And also get in contact. Send us an email [ben@ieltspodcast.com](mailto:ben@ieltspodcast.com) and we can help you. We can guide you to some resources. Also remember to sign up for the newsletter. We've got lots of advice and tutorials and special offers available once you've signed up.

And if you're still struggling, get some feedback. We've got the Speaking Feedback service. We've got the Essay Correction service where we in both cases will give you feedback. We'll give you advice and we'll help you get to the next level.



And if you've got your exam coming up, you might want to have a look at the Jump to Band 7 or Its Free IELTS course and all of that's available at [ieltspodcast.com](http://ieltspodcast.com). My name is Ben Worthington. Thank you very much for listening and I wish you the best of luck with your upcoming IELTS exam. Take care.

[Music]

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