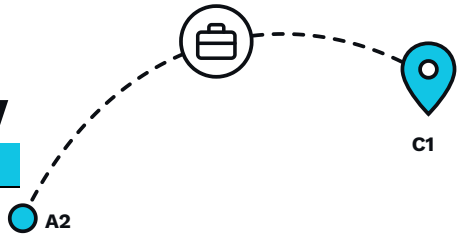
SPEAKING TOPICS TEMAS DE CONVERSACIÓN · A2 → C1

Work & study



Words, phrases and questions to talk about your job, your studies and your plans — at your level.

Todo lo que necesitas para hablar de tu trabajo y tus estudios en inglés, ordenado por nivel del MCER.

1. **Find your level.** Start with your column, then try the next one.
2. **Say it out loud.** Read every example sentence aloud — twice.
3. **Make it yours.** Answer the questions on page 3 about **your** life.

1 Vocabulary by level

Vocabulario por nivel

A2 Elementary	B1 Intermediate	B2 Upper-int.	C1 Advanced
job trabajo, puesto	**career** carrera profesional	**internship** prácticas	**work-life balance** conciliación
office oficina	**degree** carrera, título	**promotion** ascenso	**career path** trayectoria profesional
boss jefe/a	**deadline** fecha límite	**workplace** lugar de trabajo	**dissertation** TFG / TFM, tesina
subject asignatura	**interview** entrevista	**assignment** trabajo, tarea	**corporate culture** cultura empresarial
exam examen	**part-time** a tiempo parcial	**self-employed** autónomo/a	**job security** estabilidad laboral
homework deberes	**qualification** titulación	**remote work** teletrabajo	**hands-on** práctico
colleague compañero/a de trabajo	**experience** experiencia	**vocational training** FP, formación profesional	**perk** ventaja, beneficio extra
salary sueldo	**skills** competencias	**workload** carga de trabajo	**burnout** agotamiento

2 Phrasal verbs in action

Phrasal verbs con ejemplos

work on B1
spend time on a task
I'm **working on** a new project.

go over B1
check or review
Let's **go over** the notes before the exam.

take on B2
accept new work or responsibility
I've **taken on** too much this term.

look into B2
investigate
I'll **look into** the problem and call you back.

hand in B1
give work to a teacher
We have to **hand in** the essay on Friday.

catch up (on) B2
do work you didn't do earlier
I need to **catch up on** my emails.

drop out B2
leave a course before finishing
He **dropped out** of university in his second year.

run (something) by C1
ask for someone's opinion
Can I **run** an idea **by** you?

3 Work, job or career?

No es lo mismo

UNCOUNTABLE / VERB
work
The activity, or the place. Don't say "a work".
> **I have a lot of work. I go to work by bike.**

COUNTABLE NOUN
job
Your specific **position** — you can have **a** job.
> **She got a new job in a bank.**

LONG-TERM
career
All the jobs you do in your **working life**.
> **I'd like a career in medicine.**

4 Idioms & expressions

Para sonar como un nativo

hit the books B2
study hard
Exams are next week — time to hit the books.

be snowed under B2
have too much work
I'm snowed under this week.

go the extra mile B2
do more than expected
Our teacher always goes the extra mile.

climb the career ladder C1
get promoted step by step
She climbed the career ladder quickly.

call the shots C1
be in charge
In this team, the client calls the shots.

learn the ropes B2
learn how to do a new job
I'm still learning the ropes.

burn the midnight oil C1
work or study late at night
I burned the midnight oil before my finals.

get your foot in the door C1
get a first opportunity
An internship gets your foot in the door.

bite off more than you can chew C1
take on too much
I bit off more than I could chew with two jobs.

cut corners C1
do something badly to save time
Never cut corners on safety.

5 Spanish speakers' traps

Errores típicos

✗ ~~I study a career in Law.~~
✓ **I'm doing a degree in Law.**
"carrera universitaria" = **degree**

✗ ~~I have a work in a shop.~~
✓ **I have a job in a shop.**
work is uncountable → **a job**

✗ ~~I work since 2020.~~
✓ **I've worked here since 2020.**
present perfect + since

✗ ~~I work of teacher.~~
✓ **I work as a teacher.**
work **as** + a job

✗ ~~I must to finish this.~~
✓ **I must finish this.**
no **to** after must

✗ ~~I'm doing the practices.~~
✓ **I'm doing an internship.**
"prácticas" = **internship / work placement**

6 Quick check

¿Lo has pillado?

1. I've got a new job / work!
2. I'm snowed under / snowed over this week.
3. She works as / like a nurse.
4. I need to hand in / hand out my project.
5. I'm doing a degree / career in Biology.
6. I've worked / I work here since May.

Answers: 1 job · 2 snowed under · 3 as · 4 hand in · 5 degree · 6 I've worked

7 Questions for your level

Practica en voz alta

A2 Cambridge A2 Key style

1. Do you work or are you a student?
2. What's your favourite subject or task?
3. How do you get to work or school?
4. What do you want to be in the future?

B1 Cambridge B1 Preliminary style

1. What do you like most about your job or studies?
2. Would you prefer to work in an office or from home?
3. Describe a teacher or boss who helped you.

B2 Cambridge B2 First style

1. What skills do you think are most important for your career?
2. How do you deal with stress at work or during exams?
3. Would you rather have an interesting job or a well-paid one?

C1 Cambridge C1 Advanced style · discussion

1. How will AI change the jobs people do in the next ten years?
2. Is a university degree still worth the time and money?
3. Should companies offer a four-day working week?

8 Level up your answer

Sube de nivel

"What do you do?"

A2	I'm a student. I **study** at the university. I like it.	Present simple, short facts.
B1	I'm **doing a degree in** Nursing. It's hard work, but I really enjoy the practical classes.	Correct collocation + contrast with "but".
B2	I **work as** an engineer for a solar company. I've **recently taken on** a team of four, so I'm a bit **snowed under**.	Phrasal verbs + idiom + present perfect.
C1	I'm in marketing — **specifically**, digital campaigns. It's fast-paced, but **what I find most rewarding** is seeing an idea come to life.	Precise detail + cleft sentence.

9 Keep talking

Frases para alargar tu respuesta

Describe your job

I'm responsible for...
My job involves...
A typical day consists of...

Good and bad

The best part is...
The downside is that...
It can be quite...

The future

I'm hoping to...
In five years, I see myself...
I'd like to specialise in...

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