

# eslactive

## Speed Dating

Tags: [advanced](#), [beginner](#), [describing people](#), [icebreaker](#), [intermediate](#), [jobs](#), [kids](#), [love](#), [reported speech](#), [sports and hobbies](#)

In the Speed Dating ESL activity, students meet lots of different people for a short time.

 8+  15-30 mins  Chairs; Timer

### Setup

Arrange the chairs in two or more lines so the students sit facing one other person. If possible put a line of tables in between to make the setup more realistic.

Depending on how well your students know each other (and your target language), they can either use their real identities or invent a person to play. If they invent people, they should write the following on a small piece of paper/card:

- Name
- Age
- Nationality
- Job
- Hobbies
- Personality
- Likes/Dislikes (optional, hobbies and personality types)

Students can either keep their own card, or to make things more interesting, put all the cards in a hat and draw a random person.

### Activity

1. The students introduce themselves to the person opposite and talk for two or three minutes, finding out as much as they can about each other.
2. At the end of the time, the students on one side move one space to their left. The students then start another conversation with their new partner.

3. Repeat as many times as desired, or until the students arrive back at their original partner.
4. After the activity, students talk as a class or in small groups about the people they met and what they found out. For example, *I met Gloria, she's from Colombia and she likes swimming and dancing etc.*

If students used invented people, they can give their impressions of personality, and see if the adjectives they use match what was written on the card. Plus, they can say who they think is the best match for them as a friend, (based on hobbies, personality, likes and dislikes).

If you wish, they could also do the above as a written activity, as a message to a friend (describing how the speed dating went). This is a particularly good idea when your target language is reported speech.

### Target Language

The Speed Dating ESL Activity is a fun way for students to get to know each other, as an initial [icebreaker](#) or one or two classes in. If you want to practise [jobs](#) or [sports and hobbies](#) in particular, ask students to focus on those topics.

If students invent characters, it lends itself well to using personality adjectives for [describing people](#) (e.g. talkative, shy). Students cement their knowledge of this vocabulary by both acting and recognising different personalities.

Another option is to use it with the topic of [love](#) – although as suggested you might wish to stress that this is ‘friend love’! In this case make sure you include the [likes and dislikes](#) section, so students can find out who’s a good match.

Finally, for more advanced students you could focus on [reported speech](#). Here the key part of the Speed Dating ESL activity is after the dates, when students talk/write about what their partners said. To get a variety of direct speech, give the students more freedom in their discussions and encourage them to make plans too (e.g. *She said she would call me tomorrow*).

For another similar activity, try [Personality Party](#).