

To engage in small talk with your guests, you'll need to have something to talk about besides the weather. Here are some tips to help you jump-start the conversation:

Know your current events



Make an effort to know what's going on in your community, your state, the world, and current sports and entertainment. Take a little time to think about topics you've come across in newspapers and magazines and on television and you'll be surprised at how naturally you can give a conversation going.

Know your guests

Consider their interests, hobbies, jobs, and accomplishments. This gives you lots to talk about- plus your guests will be flattered by the attention.

Ask people's opinions

Asking questions is the easiest way to start a conversation and/or to keep one going. People love to be asked for their opinion- so instead of simply giving your own take on the latest sports or celebrity gossip or that weird new diet you just read about, bring the topic up and ask your guest for her thoughts on the subject.

Be a good listener

Focus on the person you're talking to and maintain that focus. Wandering eyes make the other person feel as if you're just killing time. As you talk, respond with comments and questions to

show you're engaged.