

The Flag Game Checklist



To eliminate fillers from your conversation, play this game 20 times in 20 days. Each game session should take three to five minutes. Be sure to speak in complete sentences and elaborate on each of your five choices for at least a paragraph.

The best solution for eliminating fillers is to pause, so feel free to take your time. At first, it's likely to take a great deal of concentration to eliminate the fillers. However, most people will be able to get through this exercise without fillers in fewer than 10 practice sessions. However, you must do the drill the full 20 times. It's like taking antibiotics— you must complete the full course if you expect the results to stick.

It's most effective to work on one type of filler at a time. For the first few days, ask your partner to flag only the uses of "uh" and "um" in your speech. Once these are under control, pay attention to the overuse of "and" and "so." Finally, focus on filler words and phrases such as "you know," "like," "kind of," "sort of," "I mean," "really," "actually," "basically," "right," and "okay."

(Note that filler words can be tricky. Sometimes these words are vital to the sentence structure— "Do you know the address?" or "It was like being in a zoo." One way to tell if the filler is extraneous is to repeat the sentence without the filler to see if the idea is stronger without it.)

<input type="radio"/>	Day 1:	Name five celebrities whom you'd like to meet.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 2:	Name five modern inventions you don't want to live without.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 3:	Name five vacation spots you'd like to visit.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 4:	Name five occupations you would find fascinating.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 5:	Name five foods you loved as a child.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 6:	Name five things that make you laugh.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 7:	Name five movies you've seen.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 8:	Name five things you do to relax.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 9:	Name five things that stress you out.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 10:	Name five people who have made a difference in your life.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 11:	Name five things you like about the city in which you live.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 12:	Name five books you've read.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 13:	Name five modes of transportation you've used.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 14:	Name five chores you dislike doing.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 15:	Name five things you'd buy if you won the lottery.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 16:	Name five moments in history you'd like to visit if you could.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 17:	Name five objects you use every single day.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 18:	Name five things you do well.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 19:	Name five retail stores in which you enjoy shopping.
<input type="radio"/>	Day 20:	Name five personal possessions you would hate to lose.