

The Group Chat Survival Kit

LUMARA ENGLISH · *English for the life you actually live.*

You've been there. Your phone buzzes. Someone types "**BRB**" and you nod — but secretly have no idea what just happened. Or you write "**IMO**" and wonder if it came out rude. This pack is your decoder ring for the fast, fun, and slightly chaotic world of informal digital English. No jargon. No fluff. Just the real phrases people actually use in group chats, DMs, and everyday texts.

Learn It

Clear explanations + Spanish glosses for the phrases everyone uses but nobody teaches

See It

A real-feeling fictional chat thread showing all the phrases working naturally together

Try It

Quick exercises to make sure it all actually sticks — answers included at the back

Reviewed September 2026 · These are established phrases, not a list of the newest internet trends.

Wait – what does that even mean? 🤔

Picture this: your friend texts the group chat, *"btw are you guys coming tonight? idk if we need to book tbh lol"* — and somehow everyone else seems to know exactly what's going on. You're not missing social skills. You're missing the vocabulary. That's what this pack fixes.

Your 3 Goals for This Pack

1 Recognize the abbreviations

Know instantly what **BTW**, **IDK**, **IMO**, **TBH** and **BRB** mean when you see them — no more pretending you get it.

2 Use the phrases naturally

Learn **no worries**, **I'm in**, and **fair enough** so you can reply to invitations, plans, and casual conversations with confidence.

3 Get the register right

Understand that these phrases are **informal** — great for friends and group chats, but not for your boss, a job interview, or a formal email.

How to Use This Pack

Work through the cards in order — each one builds on the last. **Card 3** introduces the core phrases with explanations and examples. **Card 4** shows them all in a real-feeling fictional chat. **Card 5** gives you exercises to test yourself, and **Card 7** has all the answers. You can also jump straight to any section you need. This is your pack — use it your way.

📌 ⚠️ **Quick register reminder:** All the phrases in this pack are **informal**. They belong in casual conversations with friends, classmates, or people you know well. They are *not* appropriate for professional emails, academic writing, or formal situations. When in doubt, write it out in full!

A Few Things to Know First

Informal digital English is wonderfully messy. Punctuation means different things to different people — some use **no full stop** to sound friendly and relaxed, while others use them for emphasis or finality. Capitalization is often skipped entirely. And phrases like **LOL** are not always about actual laughter — they often just soften a message or show you're being light-hearted. None of these rules are universal. What matters is building your awareness, not memorizing rigid formulas.

The Phrases, Up Close

Here are the first five phrases from this pack — explained clearly, with natural examples and quick Spanish glosses so nothing gets lost in translation. Read each entry, say the examples out loud, and notice the register notes. They'll help you sound natural *and* avoid accidental awkwardness.

BTW — By the way

En español: por cierto / a propósito

Use **BTW** to add extra information that isn't the main point — a gentle side note. It can come at the beginning or end of a message.

- ✓ "BTW, the party starts at 8."
- ✓ "I loved the film, btw."

Register note: Very common in texts and chats. Occasionally used in casual spoken conversation too, but it always sounds informal.

IDK — I don't know

En español: no sé / ni idea

A quick, casual way to say you're uncertain. It's honest and relaxed, but in face-to-face situations, saying "I don't know" sounds more natural and polished.

- ✓ "IDK if she's coming tonight."
- ✓ "What should we eat? IDK, pizza?"

Register note: Fine between friends. Avoid it in any situation where you want to sound professional or thoughtful — it can come across as dismissive if used on its own without context.

IMO — In my opinion

En español: en mi opinión / desde mi punto de vista

Use **IMO** (or its stronger sibling **IMHO** — "in my humble opinion") to share your view on something. It signals that you know others might disagree.

- ✓ "IMO, the first season was better."
- ✓ "That was a weird decision, imho."

Register note: Be aware — without a friendly tone or emoji, **IMO** can sometimes sound blunt or even dismissive. Pair it with a softener if you're in a sensitive conversation: "IMO, but I totally get why you liked it."

TBH — To be honest

En español: para ser honestos / la verdad es que

Use **TBH** when you want to share a genuine opinion, admit something, or gently disagree. It signals honesty and often softens what follows — but it can also sound like mild criticism if you're not careful.

- ✓ "TBH, I wasn't that impressed."
- ✓ "TBH I forgot about the meeting, sorry!"

Register note: Like **IMO**, **TBH** can land as blunt if it introduces negative feedback. Reading the room — or the chat — matters a lot here.

BRB — Be right back

En español: ahorita vuelvo / ya regreso

A quick way to tell someone you're stepping away for a moment — making a coffee, answering the door, or taking a call. It politely explains a short silence.

- ✓ "BRB, someone's at the door."
- ✓ "Brb — my dog is going absolutely feral."

Register note: Genuinely useful in live chats, group calls, and messaging apps. Not really used in email — there you'd just reply later.

The Chat Thread

Below is a fictional group chat between four friends planning a weekend trip. Every phrase from this pack appears naturally in context. As you read, notice *who* says it, *why* they say it, and *what effect* it has. The final column explains the remaining phrases: **no worries**, **I'm in**, and **fair enough**.

Group Chat: "Weekend plans"

Sofia: Hey guys! Are we still doing the camping trip this weekend?

Marco: IDK, I haven't checked the weather yet. Could be rainy tbh

Sofia: BTW, Priya said she can drive if we need a lift

Priya: Yes! I'm in 🥳 Just let me know what time

Marco: brb, looking up the forecast

Dani: IMO we should go even if it rains a little. It'll be fun!

Sofia: Fair enough 😊 We can always bring extra layers

Marco: Ok so forecast says partly cloudy but no rain! we're good

Priya: no worries then! 🎉 See you all Saturday?

Dani: Wait I just saw — is the campsite booked? idk if we need reservations

Sofia: Oh! Good point. Let me check... brb

Marco: lol she disappeared. classic Sofia

Sofia: Ok back! It's free-entry, no booking needed 🎉

Priya: Amazing. tbh I was worried for a second there

Dani: Same 😊 Btw should we do a food list? IDK what everyone eats

Sofia: I'm in for the food list! Great idea

Marco: Fair enough. Imo we need at least three different snack options. Non-negotiable.

Priya: lol agreed. No worries — I'll make a shared doc!

Your New Phrases

no worries

En español: no hay problema / sin problema

A friendly, relaxed way to say "that's fine" or "don't stress about it." It reassures someone that a mistake, delay, or inconvenience is not a problem. It can also just mean "great — no issues here."

✓ "Sorry I'm late!" → "No worries!"

Paired with good news, it signals relief: "No worries then!"

I'm in

En español: me apunto / cuenten conmigo

A short, enthusiastic way to say "I want to join / I agree to participate." It confirms you're on board with a plan, event, or idea. Think of it as the casual equivalent of "I'd love to come."

✓ "Pizza night Friday?" → "I'm in!"

✓ "I'm in for the food list!"

fair enough

En español: tiene sentido / es razonable

Use this when you accept someone's point — even if you didn't originally agree. It shows open-mindedness without gushing. It's also a great way to end a small debate gracefully. It does *not* mean "that is fair" in a legal or moral sense.

✓ "I'd rather leave early." → "Fair enough."

  Notice how **LOL** appears in the chat twice — and neither use is about actual laughter. "lol she disappeared" and "lol agreed" both just soften the tone and keep things light. LOL = friendly, not funny.

Let's See What You Know

Work through the tasks below. Write your answers in the spaces provided. There's no rush — take your time and think about what feels natural. Answers are at the back in Card 7. Don't peek! 😊

Task 1 – Match the abbreviation to its meaning

Draw a line or write the letter next to each number.

#	Abbreviation	Letter	Meaning
1	BTW	a	I don't know
2	IDK	b	In my opinion
3	BRB	c	By the way
4	IMO	d	Be right back

Task 2 – Rewrite this message more helpfully

A friend asks: "Do you know where the nearest pharmacy is?"

Someone replies: "IDK. Ask someone else."

That reply is honest but unhelpful and a little cold. Rewrite it in a way that is still honest but friendlier and more helpful.

👉 Your answer: _____

Task 3 – What does this mean?

Your friend sends this message to the group chat:

"Picnic in the park on Sunday — anyone want to come?"

You reply: "I'm in!"

What does your reply communicate? Choose the best answer and explain in your own words why.

👉 Your answer: _____

Now You Try It For Real

This is where the phrases stop being words on a page and become part of *your* English. Complete both tasks below at your own pace. There's a checklist at the end to help you reflect — honestly, without pressure.

Speaking Task

Scenario: A friend messages you: "Hey! A few of us are meeting for coffee Saturday morning — you free?"

You're going to reply out loud, as if you're sending a voice note. Use **at least three** phrases from this pack in your response. You can accept, decline, or ask for more details — your choice!

Useful phrases to choose from:

- I'm in! / Sorry, I can't make it
- BTW, where are you meeting?
- IDK if I can make it that early, tbh
- No worries if the time changes!
- Fair enough — let me check my plans

Planning space — jot your ideas:



Record yourself or say it to a friend. Aim for 3–5 natural sentences.

Writing Task

Scenario: Your classmate sends you this message:

"Hey, are you joining the study group tonight? We're starting at 7. Also, we moved it to Ana's place — did anyone tell you?"

Write a reply of **3–5 sentences**. Use at least **two** phrases from this pack. Try to sound natural and friendly — not too formal, not too casual.



Meme of the Moment



Caption (editable — make it your own!):

"My plans fell through. IDK what we're doing. BRB figuring out my life."

 **Language note:** Notice how **IDK** and **BRB** are used here not literally, but for comic effect. "**BRB figuring out my life**" does not mean you'll actually be back in two minutes — it's a funny, self-aware exaggeration. This is very common in English-language humour online. The joke works because the speaker is *not* panicking — they're using super casual language to show they're fine with the chaos. The contrast between the calm dog and the flames mirrors that tone perfectly.

Try writing your own caption using two or more phrases from this pack! There's no wrong answer — just have fun with it.

 Your caption:

Success Checklist

Be honest with yourself — that's how you grow! Tick everything that applies after completing the tasks.

- ☐ I can recognize all 8 phrases without checking my notes
- ☐ I understand when NOT to use these phrases (formal situations)
- ☐ I used at least 3 phrases in my speaking task
- ☐ I used at least 2 phrases in my writing task
- ☐ I know that LOL doesn't always mean actual laughter
- ☐ I can explain what "fair enough" means to a friend
- ☐ I feel confident enough to use one of these phrases this week

Check Your Work

Here are the answers to all the tasks in Card 5, plus model responses for the speaking and writing tasks in Card 6. Remember: model responses are *examples* of what a good answer looks like — not the one single correct answer. Your own natural response may be equally good, or even better!

Task 1 – Matching Answers

1 → c BTW = by the way	2 → a IDK = I don't know
3 → d BRB = be right back	4 → b IMO = in my opinion

Task 2 – Model Rewrite

Original: "IDK. Ask someone else."

Model answer: "I'm not sure, but Maya may be able to help — she lives nearby!"

Why does this work? The model answer keeps the honesty of "I don't know" but adds value — it suggests a resource and even a small reason. This makes the reply feel helpful and warm rather than dismissive. Replacing **IDK** with "I'm not sure" also lifts the register slightly, making it suitable for a wider range of situations. The key learning point: being honest doesn't have to mean being unhelpful. You can say you don't know *and* still be a good conversation partner.

Task 3 – What "I'm in" Communicates

Best answer: "I want to join / I agree to participate in the picnic."

Why does this work? **I'm in** is a confident, enthusiastic acceptance. It confirms you're joining the plan and sounds genuinely positive — much more energetic than a flat "yes" or "okay." In this context, it tells your friend you're excited about the idea, not just reluctantly agreeing. It's one of the friendliest two-word replies in English.

Model Responses for Card 6

Speaking – Model Response

"Oh, I'm in! Saturday morning is perfect, tbh. BTW, where are you all meeting? IDK that area very well, so it'd be great to get the address. No worries if plans change — just let me know!"

Language notes:

- **I'm in** — enthusiastic, immediate acceptance
- **tbh** — adds a natural, honest touch
- **BTW** — introduces a side question smoothly
- **IDK** — honest admission without being negative
- **No worries** — closes the message warmly, showing flexibility

Notice how the phrases don't pile up awkwardly — they each do a job in the message. That's the goal.

Writing – Model Response

"Hey! I'm in for tonight — 7 works for me. BTW, no one told me about Ana's place, so thanks for the heads up! IDK exactly where she lives, could you send the address? No worries if it's easier to share in the group chat."

Language notes:

- **I'm in** — confirms attendance clearly and positively
- **BTW** — signals extra info without making it the whole point
- **IDK** — honest and direct, paired with a question so it's helpful
- **No worries** — takes pressure off the other person; very friendly

Your answer doesn't need to match this word for word. If you used 2+ phrases naturally and your message sounds friendly and clear, that is a great response.

Quick Recap – 8 Phrases, One Pack

BTW by the way	IDK I don't know	IMO in my opinion	TBH to be honest
BRB be right back	no worries that's fine / don't stress	I'm in I want to join	fair enough that's reasonable / I accept that

Reviewed September 2026 · These are established, widely used phrases — not a list of the newest trends. Usage and interpretations may vary by person and context.