

TOP TIPS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH!

Here are some of our top tips for learning English. This is the first of a two-part series. More next month!

With just 20 minutes a day, you can really improve your English. Read for 10 minutes (an online article, a **graded reader**, etc.), and listen for 10 minutes (a YouTube video, the news, your favourite TV series, etc.). You'll soon notice the difference!

Try to learn 10 English words every day. In one week, you'll have learnt 70, in a month about 300, and in a year over 3,000! The average British person has an active vocabulary of about 5,000 words. So, it won't take you long to learn all the most important terms in English.

Don't worry about making "mistakes". Even native speakers get things wrong when speaking. It happens when you're talking fast.

Listening is the key to language learning. So, listen to English as much as you can! Just 10 minutes a day (but every day!) is enough to really help you improve your listening ability.

There's a very basic formula for learning a language. It's: input (reading and listening) + practice (speaking and writing) = learning! It's that simple!

Listening to English regularly will help you develop an **ear for the language**. Eventually, you'll be able to **distinguish** words and sounds, and then you'll start learning really quickly.

Repeat words and expressions after you hear them. This will develop your ability to produce language. It'll also help you memorise any words or expressions.

When listening, don't worry about understanding every single

word. Focus on the general meaning and try to **guess** what the speakers are saying. This is what you do in your own language.

Remember to listen for **gist** – a general understanding of what people are saying. It's extremely difficult to hear or understand every single word – not even native speakers do that.

Improve your speaking with "**simultaneous repetition**". Select a phrase or sentence in English from an audio file. Then, as the audio is playing, try to repeat the words at exactly the same time as the speaker. This is also a great way for memorising language and for improving your pronunciation.

Build up your own personal dictionary of words and expressions that you like. Then, spend time learning them. Also, try to use these words and expressions when you're speaking or writing.

Practise writing to develop your language skills. Use the **LCCC** method: **L**ook, **C**over, **C**opy, **C**heck. First, choose a piece of text (a sentence or two, or a short paragraph). Look at it for a couple of minutes. Then **cover** it and try to **copy** it out again word for word. Finally, **check** your version against the original.

Reading is a great way to learn. As you're enjoying a book or article, lots of new words and expressions will **flow into** your brain.

On top of that, you'll see how the language **fits together**.

And this will help with your understanding of grammar, language structures and **collocation**.

More next month! 🌱



GLOSSARY

- a graded reader** *n*
a book that has been simplified (made easier) for language students. Graded readers are often based on famous books, such as *Hamlet*, *Dracula*, etc.
- an ear for the language** *exp*
if you've got an "ear for a language", you're good at understanding it when people speak, and you can hear the different words or sounds quite easily
- to distinguish** *vb*
if you can "distinguish" A from B, you can see/hear how A is different from B
- to guess** *vb*
if you "guess" something, you imagine what the answer is, even though you aren't sure about it
- gist** *n*
the "gist" of a conversation (for example) is the general meaning of it
- simultaneous** *adj*
things which are "simultaneous" happen at the same time
- to flow into** *exp*
if A "flows into" B, A goes into B continuously
- to fit together** *exp*
the way that words "fit together" is the way they go together
- collocation** *n*
"collocation" is the way that words collocate (regularly go together): *heavy rain, free delivery, sales price*, etc.

TOP TIPS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH!

Here are some more of our top tips for learning English. This is the second part of a three-part series.

Listen to English when you're relaxing, doing the cleaning or doing some exercise. Simply let the language flow in. Without even realising it, you'll develop an ear for the language. Then, you'll start learning really fast.

Try to memorise short dialogues in English. Later, you can use the words, phrases or expressions from the dialogues in your *own* conversations.

When reading, always try to guess the meaning of any words or expressions that you aren't sure of. The more effort you make to work out the meaning of a word, the easier it'll be for you to remember it!

Read what you're interested in. This way you'll be more motivated. For example, if you're into cinema, read some movie reviews in English of films you've seen; or if you're a sports fan, check out the sports section of an online English-language newspaper.

Repeat difficult words, expressions and phrases over and over again until you can say them quickly and easily.

Write in English every day! It's good practice as it forces you to use the language you know. Also, you get to see where the gaps are in your knowledge. You could practise writing out stories or anecdotes. This would be good preparation for telling the stories later in conversation.

Watch your favourite TV series in English. TV series are great because they're full of dialogue, with lots of useful language for spoken English.

Watch your favourite films in English. As you already know what they're about, it'll be a lot easier for you to follow them and understand the dialogue.

Always keep a notebook with you when you're watching an English-language film or listening to something in English. Then, you can write down any useful words or phrases that you want to learn or remember.

Sing along to your favourite songs in English. This is a great way to improve your pronunciation. It'll also help you remember lots of words, expressions and phrases!

Good luck! 🍀

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LET'S SING A SONG IN ENGLISH!



TOP TIPS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH!

Here are some more of our top tips for learning English.
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Write out words you want to learn on little cards and try to learn them during the day. Or, record them and listen to them on an MP3 player. Remember to put the words or expressions in sentences! This way, you'll see which words go together.

After watching or reading the news in your language, try reading or listening to it in English. You'll be surprised at how much you understand.

Treat yourself to something nice if you can learn 10 words a day. Say, "If I learn these 10 words by the end of the day, I'll buy myself a bar of chocolate!" Set yourself bigger objectives (with nicer treats) for the month or year.

Use an English-to-English dictionary and try to understand the definitions when looking up new words. This will help you to start thinking in English.

English has a rhythm to it. Listen to phrases or sentences and try to repeat them with the same intonation and rhythm.

Remember, listening is extremely difficult. However, it comes with practice, and the more you listen to English, the easier it gets.

Read and listen to as much English as you can. It's the best way to improve. You can read online articles, listen to songs, watch films, TV series, YouTube videos... the options are limitless.

Don't worry about making mistakes – it's all part of the learning process. The most important thing is to read and listen a lot so you get a feel for the language. Then, you can start correcting yourself.

Make sure you practise a bit every day: reading an article, listening to a song, chatting with an English-speaking friend, etc. Doing 10 or 20 minutes every day is far better than doing four hours just once a week.

Talk to yourself in English to help you improve your speaking fluency. Tell yourself what you've done, what you're doing or what you're going to do. It's all good practice!

Use **mnemonics*** to help you memorise difficult words. As part of this, you could...
a) draw a picture of the word; **b)** create a funny sentence with it; **c)** base a short story around it; **d)** find a word that sounds or looks similar in your own language and make a connection between the two words...

Remember, you learn a language by reading it, listening to it and using it! It really is that simple. And the more you read, listen and use it, the better you'll be.

Good luck! 🍀

***Mnemonics:** a "mnemonic" (or "mnemonic device") is something that helps you remember a word or other information

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I'M TALKING TO MYSELF IN ENGLISH!

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