



Tips and tricks to study

General tips and tricks


- Schedule in 30 minutes to learn English every day.
- Subscribe to podcasts, read books, go abroad, find a pen pal ...
Find something that will keep you motivated.
- Keep motivational posts. These can contain your reasons of studying the language or just a motivational speech from family or yourself.
F.e.: 'summer= London!' or 'Good luck sweetie, I believe in you! - mom'
- Don't think about what you can't do but focus on what you have already learned and achieved.
Take a look at your vocabulary notebook, how many do you still remember? Can you use them in a sentence now? Congratulate yourself!

Grammar

- Find your errors and problems. Where do you struggle?
Is it the conjugation of to be while making the present continuous?
- Do you have trouble with the formation (to be + ing-form) or with the function (ongoing actions at the moment of speaking)? Focus on the problem by rereading the grammar and doing exercises.
- Use templating. Start a sentence with the same structure f.e. I have never ...
Fill this out with 5 different outcomes. This is templating. It will have you understand and use the target structure.
- Don't try to focus on grammar that you might not use. For example, the passive is not as important in speech as the present perfect. Focus on your main goal: speaking English!

Vocabulary

- Make a vocabulary notebook. It's a small book where you write down new words or words that you don't really know the meaning of. The meaning should be in English or a picture.
f.e: the word the meaning an example sentence

boy  or not a girl I think he is a boy because he has short hair.

- While studying new vocabulary, try to make your own sentence with the words you're learning.
- Make flashcards. Write the meaning or picture on one side and the word on the other side. It works best if you make a sentence with the word. Quizlet.com has an amazing and free platform that allows you to make flashcards.
- Is a certain English song stuck in your head? Why don't you try to understand it better? Print the lyrics and try to translate as much of it as you possibly can without a dictionary. Next step, singing as loud as you can to improve your pronunciation!
- Don't study random words that sound nice. Focus on words that you actually heard and might use. Words as 'misogynist' are for example too difficult.
- Don't study 200 words in one day. Some people learn very quickly, others more slowly. Do you have 5 days to study 200 words? Then study 50 words on the first day, the second day you revise the previous 50 and add 50 and so on. On the last day, revise the 200 words.
- Subscribe to podcasts, read books, go abroad, find a pen pal. Whichever one you pick, try to find about 30 minutes a day to focus on your language learning.
- Make a mind map (with pictures) to help you study vocabulary. For example, write down the word 'food' in the middle and think about all the food you could get: meat, vegetables, fruit ... and go on. See how much vocabulary you already know?

Reading

- Do you hate reading? Take a step back and write down why you don't like reading. Is it too difficult? Vocabulary? Grammar? Idioms? Try to find a solution or ask someone for help.
- Find books, magazines, articles that you are interested in to keep you reading. The more you read, the faster it will eventually go.
- Ask yourself questions during and after reading the text. How much have you understood?
- Don't just read an article or text once, read it at least twice so you can understand even more. In the meanwhile, your brain is processing new grammar and vocabulary.
- Reread a book that you have read in your mother tongue but this time in English.
- During a reading comprehension exercise or test, read the questions first and then read the text. That way, you can highlight what is very important in pink, rather important in yellow and might be important in green.
- If you don't understand anything that you are reading during a test or exam, slow down. Reread the sentences that you don't understand and take some time to think about it. Try to find words that you do know and try to derive the meaning of the word by its context.

Writing

- Start with a little scheme: what are you writing about, plot, characters, important questions that have to be answered in the writing.
- A writing exercise has to contain three important pieces: the beginning or set-up, the body and the end or conclusion. The beginning should intrigue the readers and should therefore include a question. In the body you explain everything that could possibly answer the question. The conclusion gives the final answer to the question without giving new information.
- Reread your text out loud. Did you use the word 'again' four times in two sentences? Is the grammar and sentence structure correct?
- Use linking words such as: and, therefore, on the one hand ... on the other hand. But don't exaggerate. Using too many linking words could make your text very boring or hard to read. Think about your linking words while you are rereading the text.
- Kill your darlings. You might have written something down that is grammatically perfect and shows your understanding of the target vocabulary but may be off topic. Killing your darlings or simply erasing something, is very important in the writing process.

Listening

- Don't focus on one accent. English is spoken in England, Scotland, Ireland, America, Australia and so on. It is important to adapt your ears to these accents.
- Watch a movie or series that you love in English. You already know the story, so you can focus on the grammar and vocabulary. Watch it without subtitles the first time and then watch it again with the subtitles, how much did you truly understand?
- Don't like reading? Try an audiobook that you find interesting and judge it by your level.
- First listening should always be for understanding the overall story. The second or even third listening is for details. Try to pick out different details every time you listen.

Speaking

- Watch a movie or series that you love in English. You already know the story, so you can focus on the grammar and vocabulary. Try to repeat some of the sentences that you have heard to improve your speaking. This will also help you pick up new words easily.
- Use Cambridge dictionary if you don't know the pronunciation of the word. On this website you can easily find the word and the meaning as well as the pronunciation in British and American English.
- Is a certain English song stuck in your head? Why don't you try to understand it better? Print the lyrics and try to translate as much of it as you possibly can without a dictionary. Next step, singing as loud as you can to improve your pronunciation!
- When speaking to foreign people, ask them to correct you when you make an error. Also, repeat certain words that are new to you.