

101 Ways to Improve Your English

For Non-native Speakers

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I am a non-native English speaker, and I always seek ways to improve my English whether in speaking or in writing. And less than two years ago my fluency efforts doubled when I moved to US from the Philippines. If I want to make myself marketable in the US especially in my industry, I can't just take learning English for granted. Fluency in English is a must for me.

If you and I are in a similar situation, one way or another, and are looking at the same goal, you may find the 101 ways I listed below helpful and a list worth referring to in the future. These are the techniques I had done, been doing, and will be doing to keep improving my English.

Most of these techniques use materials commonly found online, at home, at school, at work, or in the library. Some methods require interaction with other people while others are practical ways to learn in your spare time.

There's no need to do all the techniques. You can just pick out those that match your learning style, personality type, or level of proficiency. And alternatively, you can choose the ones that use easily accessible materials.

Now, enjoy reading this long list and take notes of those methods you are more likely to follow.

By using images and drawings

1. Use an English visual dictionary to learn words referring to people, animals, places, and things.
2. Use images to learn descriptive words.
3. Take photos or draw scenes and items you see everyday, then write their captions in English.
4. Label images indexed in Google Image search.
5. Use Google Translate and Google Images together to learn names of places and things.

By using your first language

6. Keep and use an English dictionary with you that translates to your first language.
7. Translate words, phrases, and sentences you always use in your first language.
8. Translate questions you commonly ask in your native language to English.
9. Translate your local TV shows to English in Viki.com.
10. Translate songs written on your native language to English.
11. Fill a jar with strips of paper containing random sentences written on your native language. Then once a day, draw a strip of paper from the jar and translate the sentence to English.

By using real items

12. Learn new words from reading English texts printed in product labels or packaging.
13. Label things found in your house or in your office.
14. Hold or point to the actual item when you are describing it.

By using videos

15. Watch English TV shows.
16. Watch English TV shows with English captions on.
17. Watch news from English-speaking news channels.
18. Watch English videos that teach you how to do things.
19. Watch movies and shows without English subtitles.
20. Watch free lectures that interest you in AcademicEarth.org.

21. Watch English video lessons online.
22. Watch free English documentaries online.

By listening

23. Listen to English radio shows, commentaries, and advertising.
24. Listen to the correct pronunciations of words online.
25. Listen to English audio books, which you can probably find in your local libraries.
26. Listen to English podcasts.

Through Lists

27. Master the 1000 most commonly used English words.
28. List and memorize new English words and phrases you think you will be comfortable using.
29. List and group words that are in any way related or similar to each other.

Through music

30. Learn from singing English popular songs like those from the Beatles and Abba.
31. Sing English nursery songs.
32. Listen to songs made for teaching English grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Through games

33. Play Scrabble.
34. Play Boggle.
35. Answer English crossword puzzles.
36. Play word guessing games.
37. Play English typing games.
38. Choose English as the default language of computer games you play.

By reading

39. Keep and use an English dictionary with you that has sample sentences.
40. Read English books and magazines regularly.
41. Read English webpages that write about topics that interest you.
42. Read book and product reviews in Amazon.com.
43. Read comments written by English native speakers online.
44. Take the meaning of the word from how it is used in the text you are reading.
45. Read blogs that publish tips on English usage, grammar, and vocabulary.

By learning English patterns and word usage

46. Learn and master the basic patterns in English grammar.
47. Compare English grammar with that of your first language.
48. Learn the rules of parallelism and practice using it.
49. Learn how to use modifiers, and practice using them.
50. Learn how to use phrasal verbs and idioms, and practice using them.
51. Get any copy of the best grammar books.
52. Learn English spelling patterns.
53. Spell English words on paper or spell it out loud, over and over again.
54. Research and familiarize yourself with slang words and phrases.

By speaking

55. Spend an hour reading English texts out loud.
56. Recite English words and phrases while exercising.
57. Tell everyday stories in English.
58. Describe everyday situations and events in English.
59. Record yourself speaking in English and listen to it.
60. Talk in English with a friend who is also working on their English.
61. Participate in English discussions at school.
62. Work as a customer service representative who supports English speakers over the phone.

63. Join the conversations in public Google Plus hangouts with mostly English-speaking people.
64. Find a native-English speaker to practice speaking English with one-on-one.
65. Participate in language exchange activities.
66. Participate in English club activities.
67. Join English book clubs in your area.
68. Speak in English when you have a chance.
69. Publish a YouTube video where you share topics about your country, culture, and language.

By thinking

70. Commit yourself to at least one day of thinking in English.

By writing

71. Write in English for at least an hour a day.
72. Blog in English regularly.
73. Write tweets and statuses in English.
74. Write on Microsoft Word without the spelling and grammar checker features on.
75. Write your own English descriptions when you bookmark web pages online.
76. Use correct spelling and grammar when sending text messages to or writing messages online.
77. Write English skits.

While traveling

78. Collect English reading materials as you travel so you can use these as study materials.
79. Read the English public signs and notices wherever you go.
80. Listen to conversations of English-speaking people in public places.

By using other computer and web technologies

81. Use English apps that help you improve your English.
82. Use English as the default language on your browser, search engines, and websites.
83. Answer English usage tests and quizzes online.
84. Use English when searching online.
85. Use search engine operators.
86. Participate in English forums and Q&A site.

Through drama, demonstration, and directions

87. Role play everyday scenes using English in the dialogues.
88. Do a monologue in English.
89. Demonstrate how to do things in English.
90. Practice giving directions in English.

By using other memory techniques

91. Use flash cards for English words and phrases you want to master.
92. Use a mind map to organize English words related to each other.
93. Use a four square to increase vocabulary learning.
94. Recite English words or sentences you want to remember before going to bed.
95. Create your own English practice worksheets or download some from here (soon).

Through Continuous Practice

96. Answer English textbook exercises diligently on separate sheets.
97. Rephrase English sentences in your own words.
98. Practice making your own sentences using the English words you just learned.
99. Describe yourself and your interests in English.
100. Memorize common transitions in English and use them in writing or speaking.
101. Keep your English essays, notes, and audio/video recordings to use as materials for comparison in the future.

This is really a long list, isn't it? I hope you have found some tips you can put into action as soon as you can!