



10 EFFECTIVE WAYS

to help you improve your

ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILLS

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What makes English an important language? If you are reading this right now, you are on the right page and it will be best to read this towards the end of this article. Nowadays, English is one of the most spoken language in the world and it is an official language of the United Nations, the European Union, and many other international organizations and businesses.

The World Economic Forum estimates approximately 1.5 billion people around the world speak English; less than 400 million use it as a first language and that means over 1 billion use it as a secondary language.¹ Because so many people can speak the language, it helps connect us in a global world and it can also help us improve our personal and professional life. Whether you are just starting out in learning English, or you need some motivation to keep you going, understanding the value of the language will help you reach fluency and will make you a better English language learner.

So, if you aim to become a good English speaker, then take a look into the following tips below and surely, these will help you create good habits for better learning and help you make a plan to achieve what you really want:

1. Motivate yourself. Motivation is the key to success. You need to make yourself become interested in studying English because if you are not interested at all, you can never start learning and will never succeed. So, it is important to have a goal and imagine yourself in the big picture that you can talk to native speakers



just like how you talk in your first language. Imagine other people wanting to speak English as well as you do. Make an atmosphere in which you want to learn and not because you need to. It will be easier to learn when you are learning because you want and you love to. Remember that a lot of people become successful because they love what they do. So, love and embrace English as much as you can and stay motivated.

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2. Create an English environment. In a country where English is not an official language,



it can be hard to learn especially when you have little chance to use it. Some people study abroad especially in countries where English is a primary language and they have a chance to improve their English but when they come back to their home country where English is not being used, they tend to forget and feel less confident. One of the things that you need to do is to surround yourself in

English. Try to listen to the news in English everyday as well as songs, watch movies and read books. It will not only maintain the English environment but you will also learn a lot of vocabularies, English phrases and helpful expressions. Of course, you certainly use the computer on every day. Why don't you switch everything to English? Choose English as your default language for the operating system, office programs, and all other applications on your computers as well as your mobile phones. For that, you make yourself become accustomed with English.

Therefore, when you have English around you and even if you are not actively listening to it, believe me, your subconscious mind is absorbing everything.

3. Bear in mind that learning English requires action. Language learning is not just about planning to improve but actually doing it. We spend a lot of time thinking and talking about what we want but sometimes we just end up still thinking about it. Thinking about learning a language is the same as doing nothing.

Sometimes, it is very hard to do things, even if they will benefit us. We tend to say, "Soon, I will be good at English" but we never start even a single step. That is why not many people speak English well. It is time to use English and not only read about it. You will only be successful if you have the willpower to do it.



Just like driving a car or playing an instrument, you can only learn these skills if you do it. What are you waiting for? Begin now.



4. Think in English. One of the hardest things when speaking a new language is the way we process it in our minds. We tend to think in our native language and then try to speak English. It means that we always translate



between languages. Translating is such a hard thing to do. The best solution is to think in English. You can do this all the time. You can try to use English when you are talking about how your day went, what you did and the best part of your day. Make it a routine. You can also practice by telling a story that you know well and use English when you talk about it but always remember that you should not translate from your language to English. Think in English in order for you to become fluent. In that way, you never have to use your native language and you will be surprised how easier it is to speak in English.

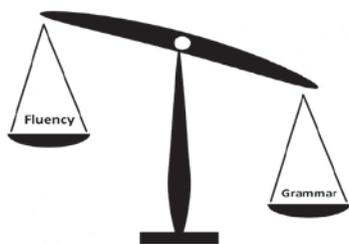
5. Don't depend so much on gadgets. Technology is one of the things that we enjoy using right now and admit it, it makes our lives easier. With regards to English language, we can download different application that can help us to improve. We can search for the meaning of the words instantly and can translate them to any kind of language that we want.



We can also use a voice translation. How can we resist all these benefits?

I am not saying that you should not use it but use it in a way that it will benefit you. Do not totally depend on technologies like saying *“Why do I have to learn English if I can just use my phone whenever I can?”* The reality is, technological dependence is destructive. There are a lot of dangers of technological dependence both on an individual and on a societal level—and we need to reject that dependence if we're going to keep innovating.²

Technology does help us but it is up to us on how to properly use it. We should not rely on technologies but rely on our own skills and capabilities.



6. Focus on fluency, grammar will follow. Have you ever experienced that when you speak English you know what you want to say in your mind but you cannot express it? That is about fluency. To become fluent is being able to speak English easily and continuously. This is the thing that you need to focus on. Some people know a lot of grammar rules but they couldn't express themselves. Thus, put emphasis on how to speak fluently instead of correctly. You can fill in the correct grammar and word rules as you learn them because you still need to have an understanding of grammar. To become fluent, you need to know not just words but also



commonly used phrases. As you know, there are hundreds of new words and phrases that are created everyday and it is good to be updated with the English trend. You need to know around 500 words and a few grammar rules to do basic communication in English.³

Try to constantly learn new words. Keep a notebook with you. When you feel like you're using the same word too frequently, look for synonyms. Soon, you will start using more and more new words. Also, try to use resources that are not too easy or too difficult. It should match your level. You need to use materials that challenge you but don't frustrate you. Don't force yourself. Don't rush things and never expect that you will move in the next level right away. Take a break and also find a way to relax from time to time.

7. Keep Learning. According to Albert Einstein, *"learning is not a product of schooling but the lifelong attempt to acquire it."* It means that we all need to be lifelong learners. We need to continually keep our minds sharp and we need to continue to grow and develop. In fact, I always believe that no one is too old to learn.



When people think about learning a new language, they always say: *"I am too old to learn a new language!"* As people get older, they feel their minds aren't as fresh as they used to be, thus they find it difficult to remember new details. Nevertheless, the argument that children have better memory and greater ability to learn languages is a myth. Saying that you're too old to learn something is just an excuse. Your brain still has power to process information. You have something that children don't have: commitment, focus, and determination.⁴

It doesn't matter how old you are and it is always never too late to learn a new language. It is all about determination and your eagerness to keep learning English.

8. Talk to yourself. Whether you think it is strange, talking to yourself is a helpful tool.



Look in the mirror. You can get few minutes of your time and spend it talking to yourself. The purpose of this is to watch your mouth, face and your body language as you speak. You can pretend that you are having a conversation with your friend, your boss or being interviewed by an interviewer. But you should also be cautious with your pronunciation because it can affect the meaning of what you are going



to say. You can also record yourself using your phone, take a video of yourself and try to take note on your weak points and find a way on how to improve it. Try it and it will surely be fun. It is always hard in the beginning but when you get accustomed to English, everything will fall into place.

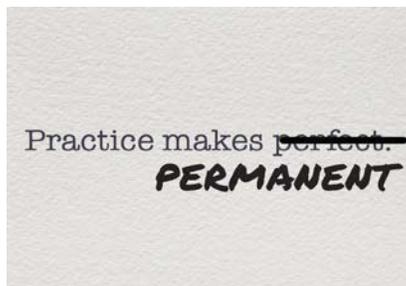
9. Share. Should you share others what you learn or keep your knowledge to yourself? Of course, the best answer is to share it because it helps you stay motivated and helps you grow. You could actually learn something from everybody in your life and they say, “two heads think better than one”. When different skills and experiences collide, new ideas and solution emerge. Sharing what you learn will definitely boost your confidence and will help you master your skills.



Learning together means growing together. It means exchanging ideas and understanding different perspectives to what we already know and sharing knowledge will make you become better at what you do. Think of the teacher. A teacher shares knowledge to the students and as she teaches constantly, she will be able to master her lessons and learns more along the way. With sharing, you will acquire new sets of skills and knowledge and you will certainly improve over time.

Therefore, learn English with a friend. It will also be good if you have someone you can practice with and you can motivate each other to study. When you share, you generate ideas. Sharing knowledge is beneficial to everyone so start communicating to others and continue sharing your knowledge.

10. Speak! Speak! Speak! Speak English whenever you can. For sure you are familiar with



the phrase “*use it or lose it*”. Obviously, it means that if you don’t continuously practice or use an ability like speaking a foreign language, you may eventually forget or lose that skill. Therefore, you need to practice English more often because they say, “*practice makes perfect*”. I know perfect may sound demanding for everyone, and we also believe that nothing is perfect.

Instead, we can say “practice makes permanent”.



Perfect and permanent are two very different things. From an early age in school, sports and other activities, children are taught that practice makes perfect, but that's simply not true. Practice certainly makes you *better* at something, but perfection is not always attainable.⁵

Therefore, you should improve your English by practicing effectively. One effective way is through repetition—doing it over and over again until it becomes a habit. We know that we always make mistakes and it is totally normal. Never be afraid because mistakes make us better and we all can learn from our mistakes. So just keep practicing and believe me, eventually, everything will be automatic and English will just come out naturally.

Now that you have 10 ways to master the English language, it is essential to have the will and the eagerness to learn it. Start working harder to get to your goals. Make it permanent and make it happen.

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