
Top tips for learning English

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Top tips for learning English

Matt: Our topic for today is **top ten tips** for English learners. So, number one, what would you say is the most important thing that English learners should do when they want to learn the language?

Monika: I think it's a very typical thing that is always suggested by teachers, but I think that it really helps: watching television would be my first one, yeah.

Matt: Absolutely. Or YouTube.

Monika: Or YouTube, yeah. Anything that you can find on the Internet these days would definitely help and, like, really trying to... to do it regularly 'cause I think this is where it goes wrong sometimes, that people **start with the best intentions** and then they don't have the time or forget to do it, so...

Matt: Absolutely.

Monika: ... as often as you can, basically.

Matt: Yeah. If you can do daily practice...

Monika: Yeah, that would be good, wouldn't it? And there's so much interesting stuff on the Internet these days, so I don't think you would **struggle to find something** that...

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Matt: Sure.

Monika: ...that would help.

Matt: Well, yeah, I mean you can listen to podcasts as well, online radio, and that would certainly help with your listening skills.

Monika: Yeah, definitely.

Matt: What about reading, if you want to practise your reading, what would be the best tip, do you think?

Monika: Uhm.. reading newspapers, or if you don't have access to these 'cause you're not in the UK, then you can always, again, find it on the Internet, so you can find lots and lots of newspapers, news on the Internet...

Matt: Yeah.

Monika: ...just make sure that you do it in English, yeah.

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Matt: Yeah, you know, the BBC website is a good one if you want something a little bit more challenging, 'The Guardian' as well. You can read news stories that interest you. That's probably a good tip as well I'd suggest. Read or listen or watch things that you're interested in.

Monika: Yep, yeah. It makes it easier, doesn't it?

Matt: Yeah.

Monika: You don't feel like you're **forcing yourself to do something** you don't want to do if you find something that is interesting to you.

Matt: It feels less like work or study...

Monika: Exactly, more like pleasure, yeah?

Matt: Just learning for fun.

Monika: Yeah, exactly. It's a lot easier these days, would you agree?

Matt: Sure, absolutely, yeah. And what about people who want to, let's say, improve their grammar or vocabulary or just **brush up their general English**.

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Monika: Well, there are a lot of books you can use but you can always get yourself a teacher online. That always helps, doesn't it? And they will help you.

Matt: Excellent idea.

Monika: I think it is, yeah.

Matt: An online English teacher can certainly help you with your conversation, with your grammar and vocabulary, anything really.

Monika: Correct the mistakes you make.

Matt: Yes, that's it. A lot of... a lot of people when they're learning really like to be corrected and so... yes, if you've got a native speaker who can listen and correct your mistakes as you go, then you're much more likely to learn quickly and improve your English.

Monika: Yes, I agree with that. Yeah.

Matt: Ok, so we've talked about listening and reading; what about writing? What about if you want to develop your writing skills, any tips there?

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Monika: I think that's a difficult one because you can try to teach yourself but again you need someone to correct your writing for you, so we go back to the same tip again, that it's useful to have a teacher, yeah, and a teacher online can do that for you as well - correct your writing, because you just never know if you're doing it well. You can try to do it yourself...

Matt: Sure.

Monika: ...but you need someone to help you, don't you?

Matt: Yeah, and writing is often required for exams, like the IELTS or the Cambridge exams.

Monika: Uhm... yes. That's for sure.

Matt: So that's... that's where a teacher would certainly help, absolutely.

Monika: Yeah.

Matt: But I suppose you can still practise writing emails to a friend or something like that to... to develop your... your writing skills.

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Monika: Yes, and there are a lot of materials online or printed materials you can... you can buy or you can look at to improve your writing, so you can do it.

Matt: Sure. And if spelling's an issue, then a dictionary.

Monika: Yeah, a dictionary or the good old spellchecker.

Matt: Yeah, that's right, if you're writing on your computer. My favourite dictionary is the Macmillan Online Dictionary.

Monika: I think I would agree with that, that is a good one.

Matt: Sure.

Monika: Very good for learners, isn't it. Lots of tips and extra information.so...

Matt: Very much so. Ok, so, sounds like lots of useful tips...

Monika: Yes.

Matt: ...and hints.

Monika: I hope so, I hope so.

Matt: Thank you very much.

Expressions and vocabulary

- top ten tips
 - start with the best intentions
 - struggle to find something
 - forcing yourself to do something
 - brush up their general English
 - required for exams
 - if spelling's an issue
 - hints
-

Activity 1

Match the vocabulary and the definitions

Vocabulary

1. top ten **tips**
2. start with the best **intentions**
3. **struggle** to find something
4. **forcing** yourself to do something
5. **brush up** their general English
6. **required** for exams
7. if spelling's an **issue**
8. hints

Definitions

- A. try hard to do something that you find difficult
 - B. a piece of advice
 - C. to practise and improve
 - D. a useful suggestion
 - E. to make yourself do something you don't want to do.
 - F. a plan in your mind to do something
 - G. a problem
 - H. you need something
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Activity 1 - Answers

1. top ten **tips** = **D.** a useful suggestion
 2. start with the best **intentions** = **F.** a plan in your mind to do something
 3. **struggle** to find something = **A.** try hard to do something that you find difficult
 4. **forcing** yourself to do something = **E.** to make yourself do something you don't want to do.
 5. **brush up** their general English = **C.** to practise and improve
 6. **required** for exams = **H.** you need something
 7. if spelling's an **issue** = **G.** a problem
 8. hints = **B.** pieces of advice
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Activity 2

Look at these items of vocabulary for one minute. Try to memorise the expressions and then test your memory on the next page.

- top ten tips
 - start with the best intentions
 - struggle to find something
 - forcing yourself to do something
 - brush up their general English
 - required for exams
 - if spelling's an issue
 - hints
-

Activity 2 continued

- top ten t _ _ _ _
 - start with the b _ _ _ _ i _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
 - s _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to find something
 - f _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ yourself to do something
 - b _ _ _ _ _ u _ _ their general English
 - r _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ for exams
 - if spelling's an i _ _ _ _ _
 - h _ _ _ _ _
-

Activity 3 - Listen and repeat

- **top ten tips** for English learners
 - people start with the **best intentions**
 - I don't think you would **struggle** to find something
 - you don't feel like you're **forcing yourself** to do something
 - **brush up** your general English
 - writing is often **required** for exams
 - if spelling's **an issue** then use a dictionary
 - lots of useful tips and **hints**
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