

# LANGUAGE LEARNING TIPS

+49 176 59902812

krm.murray@outlook.com

www.commit2english.com

@commit.english





## COMMON STRUGGLES

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Many people have had difficulties trying to learn a new language but it all comes down to your approach. All too often, schools teach with grammar tables, very little spoken practice and outdated or useless topics. Although it's nice to know the name for kitchen utensils, how often are you using that vocabulary on the streets with regular people?

## MOTIVATION

- There are billions of people who have managed to learn a language and roughly 3.3 billion have managed to learn a second language.
- Language learning is easier now than it ever has been. There are endless apps, books, websites, teachers, videos and podcasts to help you along the way!
- It's not a matter of skill but rather consistency and motivation

## NEXT STEP

Find what works for you and what helps you stay motivated and consistent. Find interesting content that you will actually want to consume and use. This is key to your success. Don't waste time remembering vocabulary you will never use, instead, find what gets you excited and craving more! In the following pages, I will outline some of the best advice for success in learning your new language.

# LISTEN TO THE LANGUAGE EVERY DAY

A little bit every day goes a long way!  
Use your favorite types of audio input  
whenever you get a chance.



## Podcasts, movies, music, audiobooks

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When you are learning a new language, you need a lot of input. Think about how much a baby hears from their parents before they ever say a word. Resources like podcasts and interviews are very useful for natural speech and resources such as music and audiobooks can increase your vocabulary and give you a feel for the rhythm of the language.

Movies and T.V. shows can also be quite useful and on top of that, they are entertaining! This is another important factor that is often overlooked; if you're not enjoying the resources you're using, you're unlikely to learn much from them. When watching video materials make sure to keep the English or other target language's subtitles on, not your mother tongue! This can be confusing and reinforces the bad habit of translating.

Instead of simply watching or listening to an episode once and moving on, try to take your time with each episode. Listen or watch multiple times and take notes on the unknowns. This is much more effective for memorizing new terminology.





## Useful examples of success and failure

You can spend a lot of time debating which is the best book or which is the best method but that is highly dependent on the individual and their lifestyle.

I've heard countless stories of people buying a textbook only to leave it on their shelf to collect dust for years. I was also guilty of this! I used a book for maybe a couple chapters and moved on to materials that I found more effective and enjoyable for me.

## USE MATERIAL THAT IS USEFUL FOR YOU

People often look for the perfect book or the perfect class but that is less important than just starting. You should use whatever material is interesting for you and applicable to your life. If you find a book that someone recommends but it bores you to death, you will never use it. Stick with interesting short stories, podcasts that talk about things you care about or music that you can't stop listening to.



For a person who is always on the go, maybe it would be more useful to find listening exercises.



For a real book worm, maybe reading one of your favorite books in a new language would be a useful exercise.



Enjoy T.V. series? Go put on a show with the subtitles of the target language and take some notes.

Find what is meaningful to you and stick with it! Ideally you can pick a few methods and try to repeat those methods regularly.





## BUILD A DAILY ROUTINE

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Frequency beats duration any day. If you can put in 15 min every day, you will make more progress than an hour once a week. The higher the frequency, the more repetition you can have and memorization becomes easier than when you force repetition with things like flashcards.

### USE YOUR WORK COMMUTE

If you have a daily commute and you normally listen to music during that time, try replacing your music with a podcast, audiobook or auditory language lessons such as Pimsleur or Coffee Break Languages.

### READ WITH A COFFEE

Many people spend 15 to 30 minutes enjoying their coffee in the morning. Rather than zone out, use that time to practice your reading and expand your vocabulary. It doesn't have to be the largest or most challenging book but short stories, articles or the news can be a great boost for your vocabulary.

### JOURNAL

A nice way to unwind at the end of the day is to write about your experiences in your journal or diary. This can help you to express your thoughts, especially in the past tense and will help to improve your spelling.

# USE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED!

You can listen, watch, or read all day but in the end, you have to put that vocabulary to use. Without output of some kind, you'll always struggle to speak or to understand more complicated sentence structures.



## Speaking and writing

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It's necessary to use vocabulary through various methods. Speaking is most useful when you can get some feedback from your partner or teacher. Try to find people who are motivated to help and correct your mistakes. If you are unable to find someone or unable to afford a teacher, you can speak to yourself. This may sound funny but asking yourself questions and responding to those questions can help you to find gaps in your vocabulary.

People often focus on speaking, which is great, but there are other methods that are often overlooked. Another form of output could be writing. Here, we have a lot of variety as to what type of writing you could potentially do. Journaling or writing in a diary is a great way to get your thoughts out at the end of the day and to track your progress as time goes on. Maybe you spend the day learning new vocabulary for a hobby and you also do that hobby the same day. This would be a great opportunity to write about your day using that new vocabulary.

You can also find tandem partners with whom you can send messages to. This is a great, free option to get some feedback on the use of new terminology.



# LANGUAGE LEARNING TAILORED TO YOUR NEEDS

## WHICH ARE MOST APPEALING FOR YOU?

### INPUT

- Reading
  - books
  - short stories
  - articles
  - news
- Listening
  - books
  - podcasts
  - audio lessons
  - interviews
  - news
  - music
- Viewing
  - interviews
  - T.V. shows
  - movies
  - documentaries

### OUTPUT

- Speaking
  - lessons
  - conversations with friends
  - tandem exchanges
  - self-talk
  - meetups
  - voice messages
  - phone calls
- Writing
  - blog
  - diary/journal
  - messages to friends
  - creative writing
  - Language exchange apps

## FIRST STEP

Which options look most appealing for you? note down the ones that you would either like to try out or know that you enjoy from personal experience.

Now take some time and find some resources that could help you with these activities. Once you find some you like, try to work them into a plan of some sort. I find it's always best to start small in order to build the habit and then build up from there.

So, which one can you start today, tomorrow, this week? Use the planner to get things moving!

## INPUT

## OUTPUT

- Reading
  - books
  - short stories
  - articles
  - news
- Listening
  - books
  - podcasts
  - audio lessons
  - interviews
  - news
- Viewing
  - interviews
  - T.V. shows
  - movies
  - documentaries

- Lessons
  - One-on-one
  - Group
- Meetups
  - Language groups
- Tandem exchanges
  - Tandem App or in person
- Social groups in target language
  - Book clubs
  - Cooking classes
  - Dance lessons

- Speaking
  - lessons
  - conversations with friends
  - tandem exchange
  - with yourself
  - meetups
  - voice messages
- Writing
  - blog
  - diary/journal
  - messages to friends
  - creative writing

Find what is meaningful to you and stick with it! Ideally you can pick a few methods and try to repeat those methods regularly.



# LANGUAGE PLANNER EXAMPLE

## Today's Plans

6:00 am	
7:00 am	
8:00 am	Listen to tech podcast on commute (30 min)
9:00 am	
10:00 am	
11:00 am	
12:00 pm	Read short story during lunch break (15 min)
1:00 pm	
2:00 pm	
3:00 pm	
4:00 pm	
5:00 pm	
6:00 pm	Listen to tech podcast on commute (30 min)
7:00 pm	
8:00 pm	Use app (15 min)
9:00pm	Journal about your day (15 min)
10:00 pm	
11:00 pm	

## Goals/Topics

Learn terminology for sustainable energy and find new words and phrases useful for this topic.	

## Types of Input

1	Podcast
2	Short story
3	App

## Types of Output

1	Journaling
2	App
3	

## New Terminology

Renewable - Solar and wind energy are renewable sources of power.

Ecosystem - A healthy ecosystem supports a wide variety of plant and animal life.

Compost - Kitchen scraps can be turned into compost for your garden.

Efficiency - Energy efficiency can lower both costs and environmental impact.

Upcycle - She decided to upcycle old furniture instead of throwing it away.

Organic - Organic farming avoids the use of synthetic pesticides.

# LANGUAGE PLANNER

## Today's Plans

6:00 am

7:00 am

8:00 am

9:00 am

10:00 am

11:00 am

12:00 pm

1:00 pm

2:00 pm

3:00 pm

4:00 pm

5:00 pm

6:00 pm

7:00 pm

8:00 pm

9:00pm

10:00 pm

11:00 pm

## Goals/Topics

## Types of Input

1

2

3

## Types of Output

1

2

3

## New Terminology