

SPEAKING IN ENGLISH

Persist and be positive

Speaking in another language can be exhausting at times, but it will get easier if you practise and persist with it.

When you make mistakes, remember: this is just part of learning. It's OK to fail sometimes. Be patient and don't be too hard on yourself.

You might feel like you're on an emotional roller coaster, but try to relax and have fun by being creative and experimenting with language.

Record yourself

Record yourself speaking as you prepare for a presentation, talk through a problem or practise a conversation.

When you listen to the recording, take notes of what went well and what you would like to improve.

Keep an archive! Over time you will hear yourself improve.

Speak socially

Look for opportunities to speak English outside the classroom. This is particularly important if you speak your first language at home. You might even find it helpful to start a hobby you are not familiar with in your first language so that you are not tempted to translate back and forth between languages.

Attend workshops

Come along to *STUDYSmarter's* Communicate with Confidence workshops: these sessions are designed to help you develop your speaking skills in a relaxing and supportive environment.

Speak up in tutorials

You don't have to have all of the answers in order to participate in class discussions. Ask questions and don't be afraid to ask other speakers to slow down and explain things in a different way.

Try phrases such as

"When you say '[x]' do you mean..."

"I'd like to go back to the question about [y]..."

"I didn't understand what you meant by '[z]' - could you explain it again?"

Finally,

Just start talking!

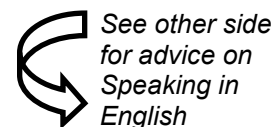
Language is like music: you have to practise as you would practise any instrument—and you can only practise by doing.

Don't overthink it, and don't be afraid to make mistakes. No one speaks in grammatically pure sentences, so don't let that hold you back.

Start conversations, ask questions and be positive.



LISTENING IN ENGLISH



Immerse yourself

The best way to learn a language is to immerse yourself in it. To a certain extent you are already doing this because you live in Australia. However, make sure you are surrounded by English: have the radio on in the background at home, sing along to music, listen to podcasts and so on.

Remember that you are learning English not just as a student, but as a whole person: a badminton player, a friend, a science fiction fan and so on. Give every part of you the opportunity to learn English.

Predict

As you listen to a person speaking try to predict what they will say next or how the sentence will end. If you are watching a video or listening to a recording you can pause regularly and do your predictions in short sections.

Getting better at predicting means you will also get better at participating in social situations and tutorial conversations.

Listen in lectures

Sit near the front so you can see facial expressions, gestures, slides and videos.

Write down questions as they occur and make sure to ask these when there's a chance.

Don't try to write down everything a lecturer says: copying the lecture too effectively often means you don't have time to understand what is being said, which means you end up wasting your time and effort.

Remember that you can listen to lecture recordings at different speeds.

Take cues from other senses

When you listen, don't just listen out for words. Pay attention to a speaker's gestures, facial expressions as well as tone of voice and intonation.

You can even try watching a video with the sound off and see how much information you can glean just from the speaker's body language.

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