



## Reading to improve your English

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English teachers are often asked for tips on how to improve one's English. One suggestion is to read as much English as possible. Even more than listening or speaking, reading is a surefire way to increase vocabulary and build language skills. Why is reading so good for your English?

1. **You learn new vocabulary in context.** When you encounter a new word in the context of a story you're better able to understand that word, to understand how it's used naturally, and you're more likely to remember it too.
2. **You see examples of "good English."** When people write in English, they usually use correctly structured sentences and grammatical phrases. This is certainly not the case when we speak in English! Reading helps you become aware of the way English is supposed to look and sound, even if you don't always hear it used that way.
3. **You can go at your own speed.** When you're listening to someone speak, you have to listen as fast as that person is speaking. But when you're reading, you can set your own pace. You can go back and re-read. You can speed up and slow down as you please.
4. **You get a glimpse of other cultures and places in the world.** Most of us don't have the time or money to visit as many places as we'd like to. Reading is a chance to expand your horizons without spending a fortune or quitting your job. What an opportunity!
5. **You improve your career.** It's true. Studies show that people who read regularly are more creative, more focused and have a better memory than those who don't read. And there is nothing employers like more than an employee who is well read.



Now, you may be thinking to yourself, “I understand that reading is good for me, but I don’t actual *enjoy* reading very much. It’s boring.” That’s okay. Some people learn to love reading and others don’t. But everybody can make an effort to read a little more and a little better every day, even if it’s not their favorite thing. And someday you may be surprised to find that reading is your first choice of activity. Here are some tips for improving your reading skills and getting the most out of your experience.

1. **Try to read at the right level.** Reading should be fun, so make sure the texts you choose are not too difficult for you. If the book or article you are reading is a chore, then find something easier.
2. **Write down the new vocabulary you learn.** Just the act of writing it down with your pencil on paper will help you remember the word. And you don’t have to look up each new word in a dictionary as you encounter it. Just mark it down and come back when you’re finished to look up the definition and write it down.
3. **Make reading a regular habit.** Establish a routine and stick with it. Even reading for a short amount of time, like 15 or 20 minutes every day, is a worthwhile practice.
4. **Read what interests you.** If you like sports, read about sports. If you like business and economics, then read about that. Books, magazines, newspapers, journals – all are beneficial reading material. If you’re reading something you’re interested in then you won’t get bored and you’ll enjoy the experience.

So give reading a try. You’ll be glad you did!