

# IMPROVING SPOKEN ENGLISH

There are many different ways of improving your spoken and written English

**ESOL courses:** ESOL = English for Speakers of Other Languages

These courses aim to help people who are looking for work or who want to study and live in the UK. Further education (FE) colleges offer part-time ESOL courses, which usually start in September, but there are often long waiting-lists.

Get course advice from the Advice and Guidance staff at your local FE college.

If you are having trouble finding a college offering a suitable ESOL course, ask your local Jobcentre Plus for assistance. Most ESOL courses are free of charge to UK citizens who are in receipt of JobSeekers Allowance but those on other benefits may have to pay 50%.

**Libraries:** you can join your local library free of charge, and borrow books, CDs and DVDs. You can read daily newspapers, use computers, and the library can be a good place to study. Check out the English language section. Some libraries run computer drop-in sessions.

**The media:** reading a daily newspaper will help you improve your English, as will watching TV, and listening to the radio.

**Course-books:** course-books (with DVD) at your level can be a huge help for self-driven learning. Go to the English language section at a good bookshop like Waterstones, and see what's available. You can also have a look at the Amazon website. You might find cheap second-hand books this way.

**Language exchange:**

Sites for swapping language skills. Practice your English in return for helping an English speaker who wants to learn Yiddish - all levels

## **Tandem**

Small number of people wanting to learn Yiddish - free.

Smartphone app only. <https://www.tandem.net/>

## **My Language Exchange**

Huge numbers of people wanting to learn Yiddish but only limited functionality with a free account. <https://www.mylanguageexchange.com/> .

## **ITalki**

Primarily a site selling English lessons, with a well-regarded free language exchange at the link here: <https://www.italki.com/partners>

## **Interpals**

Language exchange site: <https://www.interpals.net/>

**Grammarly:** Free grammar and spellchecker as you write. <https://www.grammarly.com/>

**You Tube:** Search 'Learn English' for free videos on language learning, listening, grammar, pronunciation etc.

**Voluntary work:** Voluntary work can help you improve your job prospects as well as your English. It can help you become more familiar with the UK working culture and gain new skills.

If you are receiving benefits, you can usually volunteer but check with your local Jobcentre first. Find more information at [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk) or <http://jobseekers.direct.gov.uk>

### **'Meet Up' Groups**

Well-known site for face-to-face 'meet ups' of all kinds, mostly social, but they also include English practice 'meet ups' for people wishing to improve their English. These are mostly free.

[https://www.meetup.com/topics/language-exchange/gb/17/london/?\\_cookie-check=NvjFVwITZtK8NakL](https://www.meetup.com/topics/language-exchange/gb/17/london/?_cookie-check=NvjFVwITZtK8NakL)

### **Podcasts for Practicing English**

*BBC English Language podcasts:* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts?q=english>

*BBC Six Minute English* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/6-minute-english>

*Luke's English Podcasts:* Funny subjects with online transcripts <https://teacherluke.co.uk/>

*Business English:* <https://www.businessenglishpod.com/about/free-podcast-subscription-options/>

*British Council 'Learn English' Podcasts:* <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/learnenglish-podcasts>

### **Language Learning Apps and Websites**

*Memrise:* basic English for Hebrew speakers: <https://www.memrise.com/courses/hebrew/english/>

### **Online Courses**

Free courses are available on the following education sites, often provided by Universities:

<https://www.futurelearn.com>

<https://www.coursera.org/>

<https://www.mooc-list.com/>

### **Useful websites:**

[www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise](http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish>

<http://www.ielts.org>

<http://www.fonetiks.org> – pronunciation

<http://www.howjsay.com> - pronunciation

<http://elt.oup.com/student/headway> - - coursebook with good activities on website

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en> - courses for Hebrew speakers or for people with an intermediate standard of English.

<https://www.reddit.com/r/languagelearning/wiki/index> a huge list of constantly updated tips, links, reviews and advice for language learning.

Don't be shy about speaking English - that's the best way to make progress!

Don't be shy about speaking English - that's the best way to make progress!