

FREE

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7



SECRETS

for **ESL**

Learners

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7 Secrets for ESL Learners

Dear English Learner,

These secrets are the earliest secrets that I wrote for English learners when I started EnglishClub back in 1997—and they still hold good today. They are very simple but they carry a lot of weight. If you put them into practice your English WILL improve.

Here's to your progress!

Best regards,
Josef

Josef Essberger, Founder
EnglishClub.com
Cambridge 2020

Secret #1: Learn about Word Stress

Word Stress is golden key number One for speaking and understanding English.

Word Stress is very important. You can try to learn about Word Stress. This is one of the best ways for you to understand spoken English—especially English spoken fast.

What is Word Stress?

Take 3 words: ***photograph***, ***photographer***, ***photographic***, for example. Do they sound the same when spoken? No! They sound very different, because one syllable in each word is "stressed" (stronger than the others).

PHOtograph

phoTOgrapher

photoGRAPHic

This happens in all words with two or more syllables:

TEACHer, JaPAN, CHINa, aBOVE, converSAtion,
INteresting, imPORtant, deMAND, etCETera

The syllables that are not stressed are “weak” or “small” or “quiet”. Native speakers of English listen for the stressed syllables, not the weak syllables. If you use Word Stress in your speech, you will instantly and automatically improve your pronunciation and your comprehension.

If you have an English teacher, ask him or her to help you understand Word Stress. Try to hear the stress in words each time you listen to English—on the radio, or in films for example. Your first step is to hear and recognise it. After that, you can use it!

More about Word Stress—with audio—at:
[**www.englishclub.com/word-stress**](http://www.englishclub.com/word-stress)

Secret #2: Sentence Stress

Sentence Stress is golden key number two for speaking and understanding English. With Sentence Stress, some **words** in a sentence are “stressed” (loud) and other words are weak (quiet). Look at the following sentence:

We want to go.

Do we say every word with the same stress or force? No! We make the important words **big** and the unimportant words small. What are the important words in this sentence? Yes, you're right: WANT and GO.

We WANT to GO.

We WANT to GO to WORK.

We DON'T WANT to GO to WORK.

We DON'T WANT to GO to WORK at NIGHT.

It's impossible to explain everything about Sentence Stress in this short ebook. The important thing for you is that you know it exists and try to learn about it. Sentence Stress is **very important!**

More about Sentence Stress—with audio—at:
www.englishclub.com/sentence-stress

Secret #3: Listen! Listen! Listen!

Students sometimes say: “I don’t listen to the BBC news on the radio because it’s too fast for me and I can’t understand it.” That's a pity! When it’s too fast for you, when you can’t understand it, that is exactly when you **NEED** to **listen** to it!!!

How can you improve if you don't listen and practise?

When you were a baby, did you understand your own language? When you were 3 weeks old, or 2 months, or 1 year, did you understand everything? Of course not! But you **learned** to understand by **listening**. Think about it. You learned to understand your own language by listening, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. After that, you learned to speak. Then you learned to read. And then you learned to write. **But listening came first!**

More about Listening at:

www.englishclub.com/listening

Secret #4: Don't Listen!

In the last secret I said listen! listen! listen! Now I say **don't listen!** What do I mean?!

Do you know the difference between the verbs *listen* and *hear*? TO LISTEN is active. TO HEAR is passive. Sometimes you can LISTEN too hard. Sometimes you can TRY too hard. Sometimes it is better only to HEAR. Let the radio play. Let the MP3 play. But DON'T listen. Just HEAR. Your subconscious will listen for you. And you will still learn. If you consciously listen and try to understand, you may block on one word and get frustrated. Don't worry! Just HEAR! Believe me, you will still be learning. The important thing is to let the radio or MP3 or television or DVD PLAY. Let it play. And you—you do nothing. Your brain will HEAR, your subconscious will LISTEN and you will LEARN!

WordChecker:

passive (adjective): accepting; allowing what happens without resistance

subconscious (noun): the part of our mind that we are not fully aware of

More about NOT Listening

www.englishclub.com/listening

Secret #5: Improve Your Vocabulary With 5 Words a Day

Vocabulary is easy! How many days in a year are there? 365, normally (on Earth).

If you learn only 5 new words a day, you will learn $5 \times 365 = 1,825$ new words in a year. ONE THOUSAND, EIGHT HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE WORDS.

That is a lot of new words.

And we are not counting all the other words you will learn in other ways - reading, conversation and so on.

Buy a notebook and write in 5 new words **each** day, **every** day. Learn them! You will soon have an excellent vocabulary.

More about Vocabulary at:

www.englishclub.com/vocabulary

Secret #6: 30 Minutes a Day Better Than 3.5 Hours a Week

In fact, 30 minutes of English study once a day is better than 5 HOURS once a week! Study **regularly**. Study **often**.

LITTLE + OFTEN is better than LOT + SOMETIMES.

It's easier, too. You can easily find 30 minutes each day. How? You can get up 30 minutes earlier. Or have a shorter lunch break. Fix a particular time every day—and keep it!

Some games and quizzes to look at every day:

www.englishclub.com/esl-games

www.englishclub.com/esl-quizzes

Secret #7: Revise! Revise! Revise!

If you **revise**, you'll improve your learning by 100%.

What does “revise” mean? It means “read again” (BrE). You should be systematic about this. When you learn something, you should note it. Then you should **look at it again**, 3 times:

- after 1 day
- after 1 week
- after 1 month

Each time you revise, test yourself.

Learn, revise, test.

Revise, test.

Revise, test.

WordChecker:

revise (verb)

1 (BrE): re-read to improve knowledge

2 (BrE & AmE): read and update

Some grammar and homework to help you revise:

www.englishclub.com/grammar

eBooks from Josef Essberger

Learn English in Seven

Improve your English with the power of 7

English Prepositions List

“Really useful.” Profr. José Antonio Avilés Cosio, Instituto de Inglés América, La Paz, Mexico

Essential Business Words

Vocabulary for success in business