

6 Ways to Improve Your Speaking Skills Online

Learning a foreign language is an excellent way to connect with other people, travel, and learn about a new culture. The once intimidating process, fraught with unfriendly teachers and intimidating classroom environments, is now easier and more accessible than ever. It can be done online, using a variety of different platforms, and at a very low cost.

There are lots of different ways to try and enhance your language skills. Ultimately, it depends on the type of experience you want and the learning environment you excel in. Here are six tried and true tips to help you brainstorm how to begin acquiring a new language most effectively.

Tips For Improving Your Speaking Skills Online

1.) Talk With A Native Speaker

Perhaps the most effective way to learn a new language is to interact with a native speaker. Hiring an online tutor is an excellent option because it connects you with a professional who is trained in teaching their language and is committed to your success as a student. Weekly, if not daily, conversations and tutoring sessions will increase your confidence with the language rapidly.

Tutors will be able to give you advice in real-time and customize an experience that fits your learning style. Speaking in a new language as a beginner can be frightening or embarrassing. With a tutor, you can develop a trusting relationship and begin to feel more comfortable stepping outside your comfort zone.

2.) Use Flashcards

Remember those pesky flashcards from studying new vocabulary in preparation for standardized tests? Well, flashcards are also a proven technique for learning new words in a foreign language. As with most things, high repetition is crucial. Flashcards give you the ability to rapidly process hundreds of words in very little time. You will be recognizing new words and growing your vocabulary before you know it.

If you are not one for handwriting things, there are also websites and cellphone applications that generate word lists for you. Some will even utilize well-spaced repetition to help you learn more effectively.

3.) Consume Content In That Language

If your brain gets fried from all the flashcards, try switching gears to other types of media content. Watching videos and listening to music on platforms like Youtube, Netflix and Spotify is a perfect way to give your brain a break but still absorb new information. As you are starting out, subtitles can be helpful with the videos and movies. Eventually, you will not need them. Reaching the point where you can turn subtitles off is a huge reward!

Music is also beneficial. It is a fun way to learn about the culture that uses the language you are practicing. To be honest, listening to music in a foreign language can be difficult, even for more seasoned speakers. But have no fear. Accessing the lyrics online so you can follow along is easy to do. Eventually, like subtitles, you will be able to not rely on the written lyrics. Maybe, you will even be singing along.

Reading books in your target language is another helpful strategy. Start small. Start even with a book or short stories for children. If you are using an e-reader, then even better! Many of them have clickable text that can be translated on the spot.

4.) Utilize Social Networking

Using various social media platforms is another great way to immerse yourself in a new language. Joining groups and following accounts that speak your desired language is a really easy way to interact with individuals that speak the language.

Listening to them, hearing their accents, and reading their content all help to boost your learning. You might even learn a slang term or two.

5.) Take Advantage Of Free Resources

The worldwide web is a hotbed for virtually any type of information. Sources that help you learn a new language are no exception. And the good news? There are tons of it available out there, FOR FREE.

Yes, paying for a tutor, book, or downloadable content is an excellent option. However, if you are in a financial bind, accessing information to help you learn the language you've always wanted

is still possible. There are all sorts of blogs, websites, language applications, and free online courses that help you get started with the basics of practically any language.

One extremely popular and free cell phone app is called DuoLingo. You pick your language, take an “entrance exam” (to gauge your current level) and begin your exercises. There are a series of different mini-learning games that keep it interesting. The app tracks your progress and guides you on your way to fluency.

6.) Utilize Translators And Dictionaries

Downloadable translator applications and dictionaries are another way to help you enhance your language skills. They are often free and can be accessed on your phone, tablet, or computer.

Better yet, most of them now include audio files of real native speakers pronouncing each word. If there is ever a word or phrase that stumps you, just copy, paste, and be enlightened!

Final Thoughts

It is no longer necessary to be face to face with another person to learn a foreign language. Granted, there are some advantages to that style of teaching and learning. But it might not be possible for every learner. Some folks thrive using web-based platforms and learning at their own pace.

If you are intrinsically motivated, possess a genuine desire to learn a new language, and persevere through the inevitable setbacks, taking your learning to the internet may just be the solution you’ve been waiting for. There is only one way to find out!