SPEAKING IN ENGLISH

You can do it!

To improve your spoken English:

1 Focus on what you know
2 Watch what others do
3 Practise, persist and be positive

1 Focus on what you know

By the time you’ve made it to uni, you already know a lot about life, language and learning. Use your knowledge to help build new skills.

Think about how you say and do things in your first language, and about all the strategies you use to get your message across.

You use more than just words. You also use your body and voice. You repeat things, slow down, speak louder and more clearly when you need to.

Do this in English. Use intonation, gestures and facial expressions to get other people to understand what you mean. Let your whole body speak!

2 Watch what others do

Surround yourself by others who are speaking in English and observe what they do.

Watch more than their language. Look at how they gesture and how they use body language. Listen to their word stress and intonation.

Notice the different ways they explain things, and ask them questions to help you understand what they mean.

Let them know you’re working on your English, and you’ll probably find they’re happy to help.

3 Practise, persist and be positive

Although speaking in another language can be exhausting and frustrating at times, practise, persist and never give up!

Collect new words and expressions in a notebook and try using them when you speak.

When you hear native English speakers, copy the sounds they make and the music of their language.

And if you make mistakes, remember: this is just part of learning. It’s OK to fail sometimes. Be patient and try not to be too hard on yourself.

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

Be bigger and bolder than you normally would be. Smile more often. When you radiate positivity, people tend to respond in kind!

Most importantly, get out into the company of others. If it helps, buddy up with a friend. Join uni clubs, societies and workshops.

See the STUDYSmarter website for details.
Try these on your own

**Sing it—say it**
1. Download songs with lyrics or song videos with captions.
2. Do karaoke, playing segments and singing along.
3. Tap, dance or clap to get the rhythm and the beat.
4. Read the words out loud without music, focusing on rhythm and intonation.

**See it—say it**
1. Download visual charts of sounds you find tricky or new.
2. Look at the position of the tongue, palate and lips.
3. Listen and repeat several times.
4. Practise regularly—you are developing new muscles so they need practice!

**Listen to it—say it**
1. Select videos, podcasts, news broadcasts or talking books that you can replay.
2. Play short segments, stopping regularly to repeat what you hear.
3. Restart, stop and repeat out loud several times, rewinding as often as you like.
4. Check the transcript if you need to, but let your ears guide how you speak.

**Sign it—say it**
1. Select videos you can replay—the more dramatic the better.
2. Play sections with the sound turned off.
3. Mimic the gestures of the characters.
4. Rewind and replay, making up words to go with the gestures.
5. Rewind and replay with the subtitles and/or sound on. Act along.

Try these with a friend
Come along to LACE (for postgrads and staff), UniSkills (for first year undergrads) and the UWA Toastmasters Club (for all) to practise speaking.

**English Language Corner**
Check out the *English Language Corner* on the STUDY Smarter website for information about events, programs and resources to improve your English fast.

**UniSkills for undergrads or LACE for postgrads**

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Any suggestions?
We’d love to hear from you. Email us at [study.smarter@uwa.edu.au](mailto:study.smarter@uwa.edu.au)

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