

READING IN ENGLISH

 See other side
for advice on
*Writing in
English*

Develop basic concepts first

To understand more challenging concepts in a new area, it helps to become familiar with basic concepts first. This way you can link new ideas to what you already know.

Before reading complex texts on a new topic, try reading simpler ones on the same topic first. You might start with a facebook post, then a newspaper article or review before tackling an academic article.

Read in chunks

Try to read in chunks, taking in whole phrases rather than focusing on individual words. When words are unfamiliar, guess!

At the end of sections, pause for a moment. Ask yourself how what you are reading now relates to what you've just read.

Be an active reader

Use active reading strategies to familiarise yourself with the content and structure of a text before reading it in more depth. First scan through titles, subheadings and topic sentences to get a sense of the overall message of the text. Then pause to ask yourself questions based on the pre-reading and predict what you think the answers will be.

Don't worry if your questions aren't perfect or your answers correct. The purpose of these is simply to keep you alert as you read.

Read *STUDYSmarter's* Survival Guides "Read Effectively" and "Critical Thinking" for more active reading techniques.

Read widely and read often

Think about all your interests, and look for reading material in all of them: don't limit yourself to your course material, but seek out novels, blogs and twitter feeds that interest you. Make reading a regular part of your day.

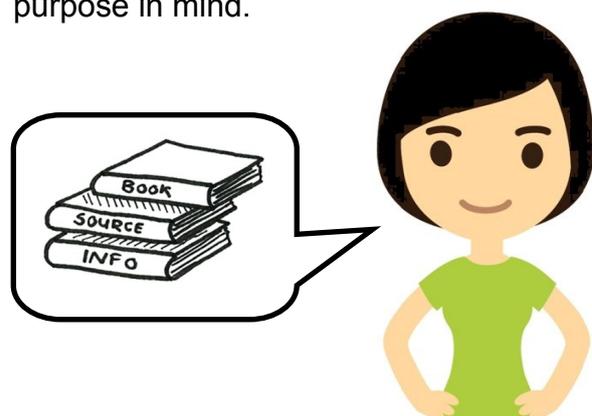
You might also enjoy reading 'parallel texts'. Parallel texts have two languages arranged side by side, and can help you understand words and phrases in context.

Read socially and read out loud

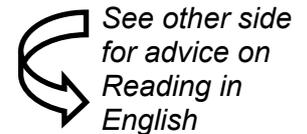
We tend to think of reading as a solitary activity, when it doesn't have to be that. For example, you can join a group of friends to read together.

Reading out loud will help you understand the rhythm of the text, and is an easy way to practise speaking without having to think of a topic yourself. Group reading can also help you develop your listening skills and understand different accents better.

Pay attention to sentence structures and turns of phrase that you can incorporate into your own writing and speaking. Remember that you are often reading in order to write or speak about a text, either in assignments or conversations with friends, so read with that purpose in mind.



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Start messy!

Good writing depends on good ideas and a clear message—but that doesn't mean you should aim to be perfect right away.

Instead, generate lots of ideas and try different ways of telling your story. This will help you think more clearly about what's most important: your key message.

There are many different techniques that can help you get your ideas on the page fast, so you can then move on to refining your writing. For example, you can try

free writing: Write on any topic for least 15 minutes. Don't edit your writing as you go: just keep writing. Free writing regularly will help increase the speed and fluency of your writing.

keeping a writing journal: Record your thoughts daily in a notebook, diary or social media. Aim to write at least 250 words a day. Writing regularly will help you try out new expressions and learn to think in English.

Know your grammar

Correct grammar is typically more important in written than in spoken English, and in order to do well in your assignments you need to understand English grammar very well.

STUDY*Smarter* can help you develop your grammar skills: you can attend the Grammar Bootcamp workshops, watch our Grammar School YouTube videos and refer to our Survival Guides on different points of grammar. We also encourage you to attend WRITE*Smart* drop-in for personalised advice on how to improve your grammar.

Read to write

To write well in English, read in English every day. This will help you expand your language and your ideas. As you read, don't read just for comprehension: pay attention to sentence structures and turns of phrase that you can incorporate into your own writing.

Get started!

To learn to write you have to practise writing—so start writing now!

Like this Survival Guide? Why not check out more of our guides...

Improving English at UWA, Listening and Speaking in English, Thinking in English and English Vocabulary, Writing a Literature Review, Writing a Research Proposal, Writing an Annotated Bibliography, Writing a Paragraph, Writing Thesis Statements, Quoting and Paraphrasing.

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Any suggestions?

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