

Ladies Learn English



Hello and thank you for downloading my FREE eBook, *5 Steps to Becoming a Successful English Learner*! You have taken the first step in your journey to improving your English skills. I have written this eBook for you. That's right...you! I want to share tips and ideas that will help YOU become a more confident learner and speaker of English. I have been an English teacher for 10+ years so I know what a learner needs to do to be successful. I also know how difficult it is to learn another language because I live in a non-English speaking country. I moved from Canada to Italy a few years ago. I have had to learn another language, so really, I am just like you. The advice that I'll share in this eBook has helped me become a more confident speaker of Italian and it has also helped many of my students become successful English speakers.

First, I have a question:

How would your life be different if you could speak English better?

 **TASK:** Think of 5 ways that your life could be different and write them below or on a separate sheet of paper. Be specific and take time to think of 5 important reasons of why you *want* to know and speak English better.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Stop here! Don't read any more until you have thought of 5 ways your life could be different.

What were your answers? Maybe you answered that you could have a better job or you could meet more people from around the world. You could travel and communicate with more confidence. You could earn more money at work. Maybe you answered that you could communicate your wonderful ideas easier or maybe even meet a boyfriend or girlfriend from an English-speaking country!

Whatever your answers were, you know that if you could speak English better and with more confidence, your life could definitely change. There's no question about that. But how important is it to you to become a better English speaker? I think it must be pretty important to you, or you wouldn't have downloaded my eBook.

You don't need to be a 'language person' to learn a new language. You don't need to have a special talent or have a lot of money, either. You just need to do the *right things*.

You are probably ready to read about what the 'right things' are, so let's not waste any more time and look at the 5 ways you can become a successful English learner!



Step one → DESIRE TO LEARN

The first step is the most important step, in my opinion. This important step is having the desire to learn. Desire means to have a strong feeling of wanting something. You cannot learn successfully if you don't want to learn. This is true for anything in life, not only when learning a language.

Do you remember being a child and having to learn something new in school that you didn't want to learn? It wasn't very easy to remember that new thing, was it? That's because your brain wasn't interested so it couldn't keep or retain the new information. Here is an example from my own experience: I always had a difficult time with mathematics. Numbers confused me and frustrated me, so my brain would get tired and wouldn't 'keep' the information. When I got a little older and realized I wasn't as good at mathematics as most of the other kids, I decided that I really WANTED to learn. It was amazing what happened next. I became focused and interested – and patient. When I found my desire to learn, I suddenly began to understand the equations and the whole idea of mathematics. I *wanted* to learn new concepts, so I did.

If you really *don't* want to learn something, you won't be able to learn successfully. Maybe you'll be able to learn the basics – but you won't be able to deeply understand and connect with the subject. You won't be motivated and your brain will switch off.

So, do YOU have the desire to learn English?

If your answer is 'yes', then you have already succeeded with the first step! Congratulations 😊

If you answered 'no', look at the 5 reasons you wrote on page one to remind yourself about how your life can be different. If your reasons aren't motivating enough, maybe you don't *really* have the desire. Try to think about some other great reasons for a few minutes, maybe even for a day or two. During this time, write some more ideas that will *really* help motivate you. Once you feel good about your answers and understand how your life could be different, make sure you keep your ideas in your mind - or even better, write them down so you can see them during your learning process. It's important to have a visual of the goal you're working towards. Good luck!

Now, let's look at step number 2, which is another very important step.



Step two → PATIENCE

patient

adjective pa·tient \ˈpā-shənt\

Simple Definition of PATIENT

- able to remain calm and not become annoyed when waiting or when dealing with problems.
- done in a careful way over a long period of time without hurrying

source: Miriam-webster.com

“Patient” is an adjective – and the noun is PATIENCE. Patience is such an important part of any learning process. Here is a common saying in English: *“Good things come to those who wait but better things come to those who are patient.”* Another common quote is *“Patience is a virtue.”* I definitely agree and I try to remember these quotes when I’m learning or trying something new.

During your English learning journey, you’ll have to learn to be patient if you’re not already a patient person. As you know, unfortunately, you can’t learn English overnight.

If you have studied English, you know that it took a long time to arrive at your present skill-level. You may be able to express yourself in basic, general ways but to get beyond that, to English fluency, will take a long time. That is the point where you’ll have to be especially patient. To become fluent, you can't just learn the most useful words; you actually have to learn *most* of the words and expressions.

I think people usually feel impatient when they're struggling to express themselves because they memorize hundreds or thousands of words. They may study for months or years and are still not able to put their thoughts and ideas into English words, which can become *very* frustrating. Just remember to relax, don't stress and know that it's a normal part of the process. Once you get to that point, it'll be important to find a method that works for you and a method that will get you to the point where you can comfortably express yourself. I usually

recommend conversation lessons with a qualified mother-tongue English teacher or coach so you can practice in a real-life way, with a native-English speaker.

Once you can express yourself, the journey to fluency can often be a fun one. You can have comfortable conversations with people, write in a journal, exchange emails with other learners or even native English speakers, and eventually read novels and newspapers, and watch movies and TV shows with no major problems.

But first, you must remember that “patience is a virtue.”

 **TASK:** Look on the internet and find two quotes about patience that you really like. Write them below and come back to them when you need a reminder. It would be best to find English quotes, but they can also be in your native language if you’d like!

Patience Quote #1)

Patience Quote #2)

OK, now that you have some advice about desire and patience, let’s move on to Step 3!



Step three → PERSISTENCE

Step three is closely connected to step two. People often think that patience and persistence mean the same thing, but they're actually quite different. Most people want success in their lives and try to 'find it'. Unfortunately, many people end up not achieving success because they are not willing to put in the work; they only try to 'find' a quick solution. You cannot 'find' success, you must work towards it. **Persistence is the ability to stay with something even if it's challenging or takes time and effort.**

Here's a short story about the great scientist and inventor, Thomas Edison, who came home one day and saw his laboratory on fire.

In 1914 a fire broke out in Thomas Edison's laboratory. Machinery worth millions and all the papers pertaining to his lifelong research were burnt to ashes. His son, Charles, heard about the tragedy and came looking for him. Charles found his father standing by the side enjoying watching the flames burn his laboratory. When Edison saw his son, he said: "Where is your mother? Go find her and bring her here quickly; she will never see such an amazing sight again!"

The next day, walking amidst the ashes of his hopes and dreams, the 67 year-old inventor said: "There is such benefit to destruction! All our mistakes have been burnt to ashes, thankfully! Now we can begin fresh, all over again." [Source: A Cup of Tea, by Osho]

Now, I don't know if this is a true story or not, but I do know that it contains the formula we all need for success: Success can only be achieved through persistence, and tremendous amounts of trials, failures and even tragedies - like Thomas Edison's fire. Those of you who persist and are ready to face the challenges and obstacles that come your way with a positive attitude will succeed.

An excellent example of persistence is my own story. It's a love story ☺ In September of 2009, I met a man from Italy in my small northern Canadian town of Kitimat, British Columbia. His name is Eros and he was visiting Kitimat because his number one passion and hobby is fishing. (Kitimat has some of the best salmon fishing in the world.) Eros and I met through mutual friends and even though he would be returning to Italy in a couple of weeks, we went on a few dates and discovered that we really enjoyed each other's company.

The time came for Eros to go back to Italy in October and we said our sad goodbyes. We remained in contact and after continuing to get to know each other, we decided that we didn't

want our story to end. Eros saved all of his money for the next few months and returned to Kitimat to visit at Christmas. During his visit, Eros and I fell in love.

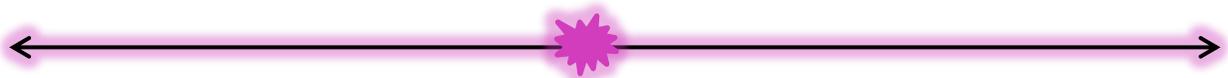
Unfortunately, we lived in two different countries so we knew we had some huge challenges ahead of us. We stayed positive and remained a couple, even though the distance was extremely difficult. There were times when we wanted to give up, but we didn't because we knew there was light at the end of the tunnel. We knew that if we were patient *and* persistent, we could make our love work.

In 2012, after three years of travelling back and forth, meeting each other's families and friends and becoming an extremely strong couple, Eros asked me to marry him while he was visiting me in Kitimat! We were now an engaged (long-distance) couple. For the next year, I worked *very* hard and saved as much money as I could. I sold many of my belongings because Eros and I decided to start our lives together (finally as a **non**-long-distance couple) in Italy. In the summer of 2013, I moved to Italy and in the summer of 2014, Eros and I were finally married at a lovely vineyard in northern Italy.

We are very happy, in love and the best part of this story is that we are together, in person and not communicating through the telephone and Skype.

Persistence in our relationship has brought us both the biggest rewards and much happiness.

OK, enough of my love story! Let's move right in to step 4.



Step four → PRACTICE

Practice, practice, PRACTICE!

Another common expression that you might have heard in English is “practice makes perfect.” To be honest, I don’t believe this expression is true because, well, no one is *perfect*, are they? Your goal is likely to become more confident and fluent, but that doesn’t mean perfection. It does mean, however, that in order to reach your goals, you will have to practice.

Practicing a language can happen in so many different ways. Sometimes you don’t even realize you’re practicing. Did you know that when you listen to English music, you’re technically practicing English? Cool, right?! Easy, right?! That is one of the many ways you can practice English.



TASK: What are some other ways you can practice English? Think of 4 or 5 different ways and write them here:

The most obvious ways you can practice English are to *read*, *write*, *listen*, and *speak* and I’m going to give you some specific advice about how you can practice each of these skills.

READ: Find information that you think is *especially* interesting. Don’t read something that you wouldn’t read in your native language. If you want to be interested and engaged, find material that you like. Find something that you understand, too. Don’t look for material that is too far above your English level or you may become frustrated. It is okay and normal not to understand every word you’re reading, but if you can only understand a small amount, you’ll lose interest quickly. So, find something interesting and suitable for your level. P.S. I think you are already doing very well with reading, because you’re reading my eBook. (Good work!)

WRITE: Writing doesn’t have to be time consuming (take up a lot of your time.) You can send a quick email, chat with family or an English speaking buddy online, keep an English journal or even start a blog. I have a diary-style book called ‘[One Line a Day](#)’, where I can write two or three sentences or thoughts about my day. This book has space to write for 5 years. It’s very cool and it allows me to look back and see my journey; my ups and downs, my accomplishments and achievements – and even the things that didn’t work for me. Try it! You

could even use it to write about what you did to practice English that specific day. The possibilities are endless. The most important thing is that you start *writing* English.

LISTEN: As with reading and writing, you'll have to find things to listen to that are interesting to you. As you probably know there are endless videos on YouTube, not only for learning English, but for learning many things. Do you like make-up and hair? Watch some YouTube tutorial videos about make-up and hair. Do you like cooking? Watch some YouTube recipe videos about cooking. Do you like gardening? Watch some YouTube videos about gardening. Do you like travelling? Watch some YouTube videos about travel. Do you like....? Okay, you get the idea!

Listening can be done in many different ways. You can listen to music; try to understand the words of your favourite English song. You can even go one step further and find the lyrics to that song online and then read the lyrics while you listen to the song. When you combine listening with reading, you will see the difference it makes. Of course you won't be able to do that during a 'real life' situation, but combining listening with reading will train your brain to understand what you hear in a better way. Another good example of this is when you watch an English film. Don't use the subtitles in your native language, use the English subtitles so you can read what you are hearing (if you need to). I know watching films in English can be difficult. It can be a little frustrating or even boring if you don't understand much of what you're hearing. As with most things you do in English, you'll have to find a film *suitable to your level*. A lot of my students begin by watching Disney cartoons or children's programs because the English is easier to understand. As they become more confident over time, and with patience and persistence, they begin to introduce films with more advanced English. Remember – you don't have to understand *every* word – just the general idea.

SPEAK: Try to speak as much as possible. The best way to become *fluent, comfortable and confident* is to hear your own voice using the English you know. Sometimes it can be hard to find other people to speak English with, right? If you really want to, you can find someone. There are many other people who want to practice and also don't have anyone to speak with. Many of these people can be found online, in English forums. You can connect with them and if you feel comfortable, eventually speak with them over Skype. Maybe there's an English club in your town or city? Perhaps a friend or family member speaks English. Ask these people if they want to practice speaking English with you.

It also is important to just go with it and don't focus on the perfect grammar. I know that sounds strange, but it's 100% true! The best way to become a 'good speaker' is actually NOT to

focus too much on the grammar – you’ll end up thinking about the rules too much rather than moving forward and becoming a better speaker.

Another good thing to do when speaking is to *think* in English. Try not to translate from your native language because the sentence structure will probably be different in English. Try to memorize specific sentences and phrases and practice them out loud. I have seen many students who have a large vocabulary but have a difficult time speaking because they never learned how to put the sentences together. Memorizing phrases and sentences has helped them tremendously.

The last bit of advice I share with my students is to *speak to yourself*. (Maybe you shouldn’t do this when walking down the street alone; people might think you’re a little crazy!) Sometimes my students say, “But how will I know if I make mistakes if I speak to myself?” My answer is, “It doesn’t matter if you make mistakes! The important thing is to become more comfortable hearing your English voice and practicing phrases and sentences.” I often tell my students a great place to practice speaking English to yourself is in your car. Other good places to practice are: in the shower, when you’re preparing a meal, and even in your office. There is really no bad place to practice. The important thing is to P-R-A-C-T-I-C-E!

This last part of the practice chapter is the most important part. Students often think that they need to dedicate an hour or two per day to practicing English if they want to become fluent. This is NOT TRUE (and not recommended)! The most important thing is simply that you practice. I do recommend that you try to practice *every day*. We are all busy adults and many of us don’t have a lot of free time, right? That’s ok! Even if you can only practice for 10 minutes, it’s better than not practicing at all. So, find 10 or 15 minutes most days, and one or two days a week that you can dedicate a little more time to (half an hour or an hour) and you’ll see the difference it makes. Using the English part of your brain on a daily basis will be a wonderful thing and will help you with your goal of becoming fluent and confident.



Step five → Take One-to-one Lessons

Learning and practicing with a (qualified) native English-speaking teacher will definitely help you. I recommend one-to-one lessons because you are at a high enough level that you should be getting your teacher's full attention so the focus is on you and *your* unique needs. It's very important to do some research and find the right teacher for your requirements. You can take lessons in-person, if you have the option. Some teachers will even come right to your home or office, which might be the most convenient option for you. Think of one-to-one lessons as an investment and not as an expense. Remember those goals from step one? Learning and working with a qualified teacher can surely help you reach your goals.

If you don't have the opportunity to take lessons in person, another wonderful option is online English lessons. There are many *online* teachers who specialize in specific subjects. There are online teachers who specialize in business English. Business English teachers can teach many types of English; business-related vocabulary, etiquette in different business settings or countries and some can also assist students to prepare work-related material (a report, presentation, meeting or speech). There are online teachers who specialize in pronunciation, general conversation or even conversation about specific things (maybe you're planning to travel and need to improve your travel vocabulary.) There are also online teachers who teach grammar-based lessons. There are even online teachers who do small group lessons. Maybe you and a few of your friends or some family members want to share the cost (usually group lessons cost a little less.) The options are endless. *Make sure you do your research and find the right teacher for you.*

One online teacher I can recommend is ME 😊 I specialize in general conversation, with a focus on new vocabulary and pronunciation. My website and concept was created with women in mind but I also teach men. My students have always been satisfied with my classes and often take multiple courses with me because they really see an improvement with their fluency and confidence.

A good, professional online teacher will usually offer a trial mini-lesson for a low price. You can take trial lessons from multiple teachers and then decide which teacher you'd like to take a course or a package of lessons with.

Whatever your needs are, I highly recommend that you continue your English learning journey with a *qualified* English teacher in a small group or one-to-one setting, in person or online.



5 steps to becoming a successful English learner

Alannah@ ladieslearnenglish.com

Desire to learn

You cannot learn successfully if you don't want to learn! The first step is wanting to learn.

STEP 01



STEP 02

Patience

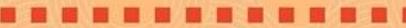
All good things take time. You cannot expect to learn a language overnight.



Persistence

Although you will encounter difficulties, keep trying! Be committed and dedicated.

STEP 03



STEP 04

Practice

Make time to practice daily - even if it's only for 5-10 minutes per day. Listen, speak, read, write...just practice!



Take lessons

Invest in English lessons - whether it's conversational English or a little grammar practice. Learning with a mother tongue qualified teacher will surely help you!

STEP 05



Created by: ladieslearnenglish.com



Congratulations! You finished reading my eBook. As an extra bonus, I am going to provide you with some excellent resources that can definitely help you with your journey to English fluency and help you become more successful with English.



RESOURCES

You can find lots of different information (grammar, vocabulary, YouTube lessons, etc.) here:
www.ladieslearnenglish.com/free-lessons or
www.youtube.com/channel/UCOWgRh4od3nngl2NvEpmXpw

Learn more about my online lessons and how I can help you become *fluent and confident* here:
<http://www.ladieslearnenglish.com/learn-with-me>

Here are some great websites where you can watch videos and learn about specific subjects:
www.youtube.com , www.vimeo.com , www.ted.com

This is a popular website where you can watch TV series, documentaries and movies:
www.netflix.com

You can read the news in English here: www.bbc.com , www.huffingtonpost.com or
www.yahoo.com

Listen to podcasts in English: www.podcasts.com



Remember to relax, have fun and follow the 5 steps I wrote about. You can do it, ladies and gentlemen!

Thanks for reading my eBook – if you liked it, don't forget to share it with friends and family on social media! (Sharing is caring 😊)

-Alannah, Ladies Learn English