

Unit 1 LEARNING ENGLISH

1. HOW DO YOU LEARN BEST?

The first step in learning to study successfully is to know as much as possible about yourself as a learner. Not everyone learns in the same way; it is important to know what helps you to succeed and what makes learning difficult for you.

TASK 1.1

Think about your preferred learning strategies and habits and discuss them with your partner. You may consider the following factors:

- planning (keeping to plans, dropping them, etc.)
- the time of the day/ night
- intensity (how many hours per day)
- the media used (notes, books, CDs, the Internet, etc.)
- school / home environment
- individual / group learning
- special diet? ☺

Do you think you could improve your studying skills?

What effective strategies can be employed in learning English or other languages?

TASK 1.2 Learning styles

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQYW6vYSGXs>)

Watch the video on different learning styles, then discuss the main points in pairs.

Different Learning Styles

Human beings absorb information in a number of different ways and for most people, one particular method of learning may be more efficient than the rest. These are known as 'learning styles' and are divided into three different segments: visual, auditory and kinesthetic (also known as tactile.) Knowing which learning style you are can help maximize your ability to process information.

Go through the list of learning styles and identify one point in each list which is not true:

Visual Learning Style

Visual learners process the most information using their eyes. They absorb what they see, making them excel in anything that has visual information, such as graphs and charts. Visual learners display traits such as:

- Good spelling ability
- Understanding of sign language
- Requirement of quiet study time
- Excellent eyesight
- Enjoyment when using charts
- Colourful dreams
- A good taste in fashion
- Time to think before absorbing information

If you are a visual learner, you can make the most of your particular style by making your notes as colourful and interesting as possible. Use highlighters on key passages and flashcards to help you memorize information – you could even divide information up into list form!

Auditory Learning Style

Auditory learners absorb the most information through their ears. Auditory learners display traits such as:

- Confidence to speak out loud in public
- Ability to explain information clearly
- Noticing sound effects in movies
- Greater success at remembering names
- Slow reading
- Inability to keep quiet
- Speaking in their sleep
- Fondness of music

Auditory learners should listen to as much information as they can, so audiotapes and videos are a fantastic method to make the most of your style!

Kinesthetic Learning Style

Kinesthetic learners tend to excel through experience. Kinesthetic learners:

- Can't keep still for long periods of time
- Have untidy handwriting
- Learns effectively on a fast moving train
- Study with loud music playing
- Enjoy roleplaying
- Take regular breaks
- Engage in sporting activities
- Have difficulty with spelling

Kinesthetic learners should keep on the move while studying and learn using interactive content such as quizzes and games.

Example of Learning Styles in Action

A good example of the different learning styles comes when learning to play the piano. Visual learners may prefer to read sheet music carefully, while auditory learners will want to listen to a lesson beforehand in order to repeat it. Kinesthetic learners, of course, will dive straight in, learning through doing! The important thing to remember is to try and maximize your particular style in order to get the most out of your learning experience!

(adapted from <http://video.about.com/homeworktips/How-to-Determine-Your-Learning-Style.htm>)

TASK 1.3

Look at the “successful studying recipe”. Fill in the missing numbers.

≈ For 1 Kg of **SUCCESS** ≈
.... grams motivation
.... grams cleverness
.... grams hard work
Mix with interest and
friends. Bake for years. ü

TASK 1.4

It is also very useful to determine the purpose of your learning. Write down why you are taking this course in as much detail as possible. Here are some general reasons that you may include or expand.

- to pass an exam
- to improve your speaking skills
- to revise the grammar you already know
- to learn sports terminology
- to overcome your fear of language learning
- to learn new information
- to get a better job

2. STUDY SKILLS

listening *speaking* *reading* *writing*

“Study skills” are the techniques you need for studying successfully. They are the ways of thinking and behaving that people use in order to learn any academic subject effectively.

TASK 2.1

Look at the list of study skills. Which of them do you feel are the most important for your own study? Which do you feel are the least important? Feel free to add more to the list. Talk to your partner.

STUDY SKILLS

- present ideas
- ask questions
- write a CV
- pass exams
- speak out in a group
- state the main idea of a lecture
- be able to spell correctly
- take notes
- give simple instructions
- ...

What do you think are your strong and weak points?

3. VOCABULARY

3.1 Vocabulary connected with study and learning

Alternatives to do and get:

Do an exam	sit/take an exam in....
Do research	carry out/conduct research, a project
Do a course	enrol on/take a course in....
Do a degree/diploma	study for/take a degree
Do a subject	study/take a subject
Do an essay/assignment	write an essay/assignment
Do a lecture/talk	give a lecture/talk
Get a degree/diploma	obtain/be awarded a degree, diploma
Get a grade	receive/be given a grade
Get a qualification	obtain a qualification
Get an education	receive an education

Exercise: replace the verbs **do** or **get** in this paragraph with more interesting words:

I have three daughters. The oldest one did a degree in economics at Birmingham University. She got her bachelor's degree last year and is now doing some research on taxation in different countries. The second one is doing a course at Newcastle University. She's doing history. She has to do a lot of assignments. My youngest daughter is still at school. She is doing her school-leaving exams in the summer. She will go to university next year if she gets good grades in her exams. She wants to do sociology and then get a social work qualification. My daughters are all getting a much better education than I ever had.

3.2 Vocabulary connected with written work for courses, etc.:

Composition	could be just 50-100 words, often used to refer to children's work
Essay	longer than a composition, more serious, hundreds or even thousands of words
Assignment	a long essay, often part of a course, usually thousands of words
Project	like an assignment, but emphasis on student's own material
Dissertation	a long, research-based work, perhaps 10-15,000 words, for a degree or diploma
Thesis	a very long, original, research-based work, perhaps 80-100,000 words, for a higher degree (e.g. PhD)

Exercise: Correct the wrong usage of words to do with written work:

1. His PhD assignment was 90,000 words long.
2. Little Suzy did her first dissertation in school today.
3. The teacher gave us the title of this week's project today. We have to write 1,000 words on the topic "If I ruled the world".
4. At the end of this course you have to do a 5,000- word thesis.
5. I will do a study of people's banking habits for my MSc /Master of Science/ composition. It has to be about 12,000 words.
6. I will do the dissertation instead of the two exams, because I like to do work where I can research something that interests me.

3.3 Vocabulary connected with exams:

Exercise: Fill in the gaps, the first letter is given.

1. I f_____ my exam first time round, so I'm going to r_____ it next month.
2. Lorna: Hi, did you p_____ your geography exam?
Ben: Yeah, I did quite well in fact, I got 76%.
Lorna: Oh well done! So they give you a per cent? I thought they gave g_____.
Ben: Yeah, they give you both. Mine was an A. So how about you?
Lorna: Well, we don't have exams, we have continuous a_____, so you just have to do coursework, and you get a m_____ for each essay.
3. Meg: Why did you s_____ classes yesterday?
Ed: Don't tell anyone but I was out till 3:30 the night before, so I just stayed in bed all day.
4. I d_____ well in my exams, I was really pleased.
5. A lot of students suffer from exam n_____.