

How to Improve Your English Speaking Skills

Improving your English speaking skills is essential to enjoying your international study experience. Throughout your academic journey here in Australia, you will have to speak to your classmates, teachers, and colleagues in English. It's also likely that you will have to speak in front of your class and attend a [job interview](#). If you decide to stay in Australia or move to another English-speaking country after your education is complete, your English speaking skills will become even more important.

So, how can you improve your English speaking skills as an international student? We also spoke with Qasem Ahmed Q Sharif, who shared his experience of learning English, as well as some useful tips for confidently speaking the language. Hailing from Saudi Arabia, Qasem is currently a food science and technology undergraduate student at RMIT University.

Improving your English vocabulary

Expanding your vocabulary will improve your speaking skills and allow you to have more sophisticated conversations in English. If you learn one new English word every day, you will have added 365 new words to your English vocabulary by the end of the year! If that's not enough, you might decide to learn five new words per day, or even challenge yourself to learn ten. Try writing down any unfamiliar words you hear during the day, then dedicate some time to reviewing them each night. With these simple methods, your English vocabulary will grow quickly.

Learn phrases

Learning phrases, which are groups of words commonly used together, will help you to sound more like a native speaker. For example, it's better to learn the phrase 'a bowl of soup', than to simply learn the word 'soup'. When you learn a new word, it's good practice to check a dictionary to learn how that word can be used in a sentence.

Qasem says phrases can also be good conversation starters if you're wondering how to speak to Australians. His favourites are "How's it going?", "Beautiful day, isn't it?" and "Did you catch the news today?".

Use apps and online resources

There are so many [apps and free online resources](#) that you can use to improve your English speaking skills. [Duolingo](#) is a free language learning app that teaches English through a fun mix of reading, listening, and speaking challenges. The apps [Tandem](#) and [HelloTalk](#) match you with English speakers who want to practise your native language so that you help each other.

You can also check out Qasem's favourite YouTube channel [Aussie English](#) and others such as [BBC Learning English](#) and [Speak English With Mr Duncan](#).

Develop strong writing habits

Believe it or not, a great way of improving your English speaking skills is to develop the habit of writing in English. Consider starting a journal where you jot down how your day went, what new things you

learnt or experienced, or some of your goals. Writing will help you to articulate your thoughts more clearly, and learn to form structured sentences and paragraphs. This skill helps you to communicate your opinions and ideas more fluently when speaking. Remember, there are many [grammar apps](#) you can use to hone your writing skills and, as a result, your speaking skills, too!

Speak with others

Some English words will be harder to say than others, especially when communicating locally. You might have to learn words you've never heard of or used. By talking with Aussies, you'll learn the meanings and pronunciations of these terms directly from native English speakers. Take advantage of living in Australia and strike up a conversation with the people in your local community to get the practice you need. Chat to your supermarket cashier or the barista at your favourite café. You can also talk to your classmates, your co-workers and your teachers.

Many local community centres and education providers offer English language meet-ups or groups, so be sure to check if any are available near you. Additionally, you can also seek out private tutoring online or in person. Qasem uses [Cambly](#), a private English tutoring platform where he gets to converse with native speakers.

When speaking to Australians, Qasem says not to worry too much about being perfect.

“Don't be shy or worried if you make pronunciation or wording mistakes,” he says. “After all, you improve with practice!”

He also recommends speaking with different people who have different interests, as this builds your vocabulary and allows you to talk about a wide range of topics.

Talk to yourself

It might feel strange at first, but talking to yourself is the best way to get comfortable with speaking English. Try reading a few pages from a book aloud, or simply narrate whatever activity you're doing. It might be as simple as saying "I'm chopping up the carrots" or "I'm going to go to the shops".

Listening back to your speech will help you hear anything that needs improving. For example, you might be incorrectly pronouncing a word, stumbling over a phrase, or speaking too slowly or quickly. If you have a recording, you can also ask an English-speaking teacher or friend for their feedback.

Listen to English

One of the easiest ways to improve your English speaking skills is to consume English-language media. You might choose to tune into an English-language radio station while commuting, listen to [audiobooks](#) or [podcasts](#), watch a movie or TV show or simply enjoy some music. While you're enjoying your chosen media, make note of any new words, slang or expressions you hear, so that you can look them up afterwards and begin using them yourself.