

Alain de Raymond

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**To everyone who supported me while writing this book – especially my
parents.**

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Introduction: learning any new language

Hi, my name is Alain. I learnt 6 languages and I'm always busy learning new ones. Yes, six. The good part is that you can too. And this book will help you to learn any language.

No time or money to learn a new language? Great! This book is all about efficient and **free** or **cheap** ways to learn languages.

You'll find over 100 tips and advices to inspire and motivate you. Try them all out. Each person has strengths and weaknesses for learning languages, so let's start exploiting your strengths! Find out which tips work best for you.

Why learning languages? Because it is good for:

- Your brain and memory.
- Getting more job opportunities.
- Discovering new cultures.
- Better understanding your own language.
- Your ability to function in multilingual/multicultural environments.
- A multicultural social life.

Among too many other advantages to list here. So no excuses! Start reading the content:

- The book starts with tips to prepare to learn a new language.
- In the second chapter, you'll see which reliable resources to use and which good habits to adopt.
- We'll focus on what to learn in chapter three, so you'll use your time more efficiently.
- In the following chapter, you will learn which small changes in your home can boost your language learning.
- Tips to learn how to speak in your new language are in chapter five.
- Building on conversation in the next chapter, you'll learn how your social life can help you as well.
- Using your interests to learn a language more quickly is the subject of chapter seven.
- The last chapter focuses on tips to become a true language expert.

One last point before you get started: your **target language** is the language you're learning; we'll see the term a lot in this book!

Happy reading,

Alain

WWW: [Contact](#) | [Website](#) | [Courses](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Promotions](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Google+](#)

Discounts French, Dutch & Maltese course: see tip number 27.

Chapter 0: Prepare better to learn faster!

A good preparation helps you to learn your new language more effectively and efficiently. Especially if it's the first time, preparing to learn is as important as learning the language itself. So let's start with some tips to organise well before you learn your first words in your target language. You will also find psychological tips at the end of the chapter.



1. Organise, organise, organise

First question: what are your goals? Here are some examples to inspire you:

My goal is to be able to...

- Talk to my company's customers in French.
- Order food in Chinese, since I'm living in China and I never get what I want.
- Know the basics of Italian, because I'm spending next year in Italy.

Take some time to think about why you want to learn a new language. Based on these reasons, prepare a language-learning plan. What should you put in the plan? Simple, **what** you're going to do, **when** you're going to do it and **why** you're going to do it – that's the goals. Here's an example.

<i>Goal</i>	<i>What</i>	<i>When</i>
Learn basic Spanish to use during my vacations	Go to language classes	Wednesday
	Revise language classes	Friday
	Play language games	Sunday evening
	Talk in Spanish with friend over Skype	Once a month
	Vacations in Spain	Once a year

That's just one example. Make your own plan, but don't forget to:

- Let your brain rest, don't study every day, it's counterproductive.
- Learn frequently a bit, it's better than a lot infrequently.
- Have realistic goals and pursue them.
- Foresee enough means and time to achieve your goals.
- Tell your friends about the plan; they'll motivate you.
- Use tips from this book in your plan.
- Keep it simple, no need to overcomplicate.

2. Easy or difficult choice: which language?

Which language do you choose to study? It can be an easy choice, for example if your partner speaks a language you don't know. Think about the great impressions you can leave on his or her family. They'll love your dedication. Or if you live in a country you don't know the language of. Or if you can get a promotion at work by learning a new language. That's a good reason to start learning. These were some examples of specific motivations that can help you to choose the right language for you.

However, you might not have a specific motivation. In that case, it's better to choose a language that is **close to your own** language. Especially if it's the first foreign language you want to start learning. For example:

- If you're Dutch, you can learn German.
- If you're Japanese, study Chinese.
- If you're from Spain, it's easier to learn French.

So which languages are close to your own? It's easy to find out. Each language belongs to a language family. Choose a language within your language family. English, for example, belongs to the Indo-European family, and its sub-category is Germanic. German is part of the same family.

Find your language family here:

WWW: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_language_families

Esperanto?

Do you know Esperanto? It's a language based on European languages that was created in the 19th century. The goal is to make everyone around the world speak it. We would understand each other better, nice way to avoid wars! Nowadays, there are a few 1000s native speakers. Should you learn it? Yes, because it's made to be an easy language to learn. No, because there are few native speakers, and only a few millions know a few words in Esperanto.

3. Expensive courses

The more expensive a course is, the better? Wrong. Many of those courses have huge marketing budgets to get many students. You'll pay for these budgets on top of the course itself. It's easy to find cheaper alternatives. Just read on in this book. You'll find lots of cheap and **free alternatives**.

Unless you're 100% sure the teacher is really good and it's exactly what you want according to your goals, don't buy an expensive course.

4. Family and friends

Don't underestimate the power of your social network. Your family and friends will help you with your language learning in many ways. So let them know you're learning a new language even before you started!

5. University degree

Why not prepare by getting a university degree in a language? My advice: don't. You'll learn a lot about the language, but **not the language itself**. Going to a university is good for many reasons, but it's not the most efficient way to learn a language - and certainly not the cheapest way.



6. Language journal

Everyone gets demotivated at some point. So it's good to prepare for that moment by writing a language journal. What's that? That's a notebook where you **write** all your **important successes** while learning your target language. For example: 'I learnt the difficult conjugation of to have', or 'I went to my first class', or 'I asked a waiter for a drink', or 'I read Alain's book and applied all his tips'. If you did that last one, you made me happy as well.

Whenever you're down, read those successes in your journal. It's a psychological way to remind you that you already progressed a lot. You'll feel even more motivated to continue learning!

7. Know your strengths

Learning a language is different for everyone. Most of us learn by seeing grammar and vocabulary. That's why there are many visual tips to learn languages in this book. Others need to **see and hear**. And there are other students who need on top of that to establish a relationship between the two, and have some thought about the relationship.

If you have already learnt a language, find out what worked for you in the past. In any case, read this book and apply the tips.

8. 'Not good at languages'

Everyone is tempted to quit their language learning. It goes slowly. Speaking may seem difficult. 'I'm not good at languages', you often say to yourself. When you're demotivated, switch to **fun ways** to learn your language. Even saying 'I'm good at languages' aloud helps.

9. Stress

Yes, learning a language can be very stressful. It takes time and effort to learn a language, so foresee that in your language learning plan. When you study, do it when you're relaxed.

If you have any homework or exercises to do, start them in advance. You'll already be less nervous. And if you are stressed, first drink some tea, go run around the block, and listen to Mozart or anything else that calms you down. Relaxed students learn much faster.

10. 'I don't understand'

Don't understand what you're learning? The German articles and the French tenses can drive anyone mad. It's important to understand that not understanding is part of learning the language. If you understood everything from the beginning to the end, why would you learn the language? And when you found a difficulty, it means you're learning: before, you didn't know there was a difficulty. So it should be a motivation.

11. 'Too late as an adult'

Everyone tells us that children are better language learners than adults. Since everyone seems to be aware of that, it must be true. And since it must be true, adults argue: 'I'm too old, I should have learnt it when I was a kid'. Actually, it's just wrong.

There is no scientific evidence to prove children are better language learners. Some scientists argue that it's the opposite. Actually, I learnt most of my languages after I turned 12. But I only started to learn languages fast from my 22nd birthday on.

Children see languages as a game, not as a goal. And we adults understand much better that we have to make efforts to achieve our goals. So don't be discouraged, **anyone can learn a language anytime.**

12. The more languages, the merrier?

Thinking about studying two or more languages at the same time? Bonus points for your enthusiasm, but you better put all your energy in just one. If you still have too much energy, learn one language and then the other afterwards. Learning two languages at the same time can confuse your brain, especially if the languages are similar.

If you really want to learn two or more at the same time, help you brain to make the difference between the two:

- Learn the languages at different schools.
- Study the languages in different rooms.
- Use different books in different colours to study.
- Write in different colours (e.g. black for the one language, blue for the other one).

The goal is to give your brain visual clues about the languages you're learning, which will improve your ability to learn the two languages at the same time.

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Now that you have chosen our language, you're relaxed and made your language learning plan, and you're psychologically prepared to learn a language, let's see how to start learning a new language with tips to learn your first words!

Chapter 1: Take a head start with the right habits and resources

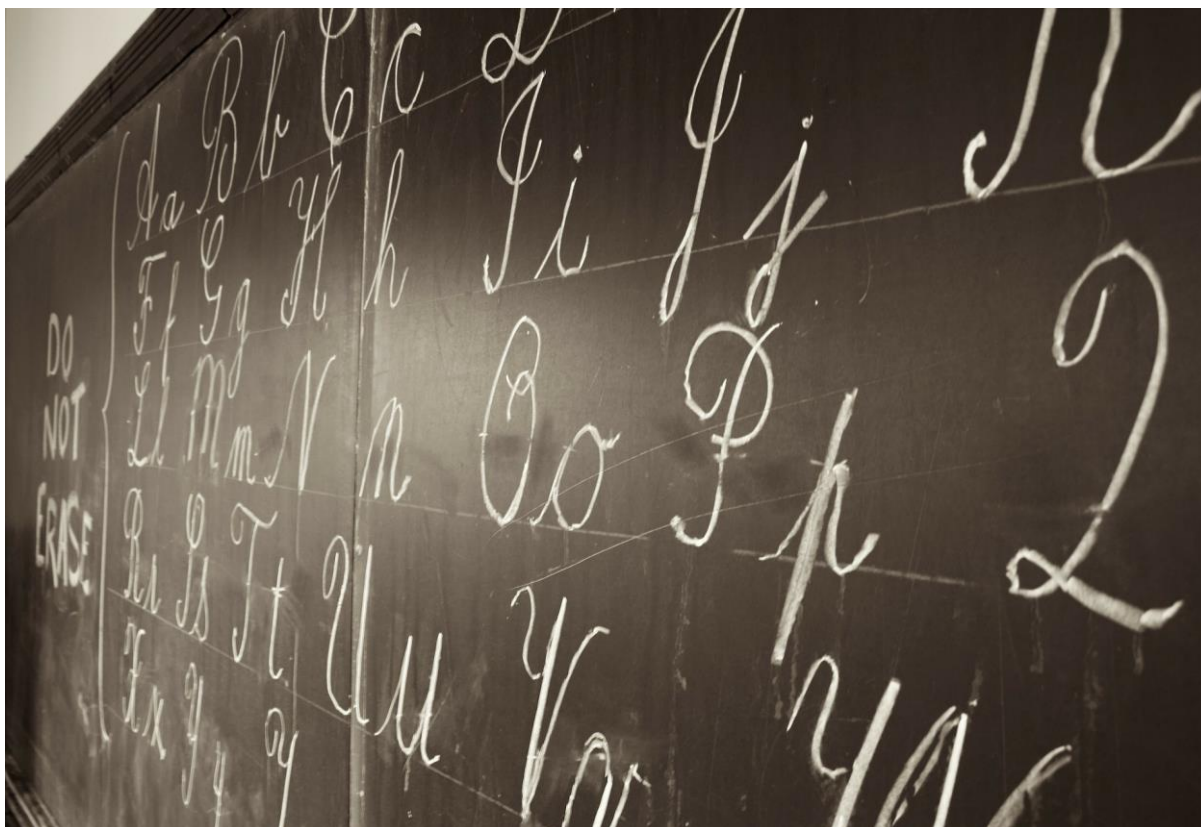
Prepared? Time to get started. Don't be afraid: learning a language is like any other skill. You just have to find good resources and have the right habits. It's easy for anyone! Check out the tips in this chapter to find those sources as well as some exercises you can do every day.

13. A, B, C

Does it make sense to learn the alphabet? It depends. If the alphabet is just the same as your own, you already know it. If there are different pronunciations, only learn those pronunciations that are different. If there are letters or signs you don't know, learn those.

However, if the alphabet is completely different, then you'll have to learn it. For example, the Greek, Bulgarian and Chinese alphabets are completely different from the English. You'll pick up many more details in your target language after learning the alphabet. Otherwise, you're only going to be able to talk.

A trick to learn those difficult alphabets is to **associate** a sign with something in your own language. For example, the Greek β, the β or Bèta, I can remember thanks to the word beta, which means silly person in French. Every time I see the β, I think of 'beta' and I know it's pronounced b.



14. Classes

Polyglots sometimes argue that group classes are a waste of time and money. Group classes always go as slow as the worst student, is the argument. That's too slow for polyglots, who already learnt several languages. They usually learn languages fast. So if you already speak a few languages, don't go to group classes.

If not, group classes are great! The government usually offers cheaper ones. And before you pay, try a class out to see if the course is at your level and if the teacher is good.

Once you started, **be active** in the class. Ask questions, ask for extra exercises, write your vocabulary in a separate book, don't miss any classes, and socialise with the other students. They have similar learning issues.

When you feel comfortable enough, ask the teacher to give a part of the course in your target language. Or even the whole course. That way, you'll pay attention and learn all the time. And try the same with the other students: why not speak with them in your target language?

Private classes? They'll go quickly, so prepare well. Let your teacher know in advance what you'd like to learn and what your goals are. Be picky, because those teachers are more expensive.

15. Exercise books

Exercise books can be excellent resources. Make sure you have a teacher to guide you through the book. These books enhance your reading and writing skills, and even your listening skills if there's a cd attached.

However, don't forget to:

- Read through them in a bookshop and buy them cheaper online.
- Check if there are second hand books for sale – they're cheaper.
- Ask your friends and family for used books – they're free.
- Ask your teacher if you need to buy a book before your first class, remember you'll have to pay for that too.

16. Homework

When you're following group classes, you'll be asked to do homework. It's a golden opportunity. Imagine a language expert is going to correct a text you wrote and teach you new words and expressions. And the expert is doing that for free – with a smile. Well, you paid for the course, but this is a little extra. Companies pay a lot of money for that kind of work!

When you receive the correction of your homework, make sure you understand everything. Otherwise, ask for more feedback.

If you're asked to write a text or make a presentation on a certain topic, write about something you're **passionate** about. If you like swimming on TV, describe the latest Olympics' final. If you like animals, write about your favourite pet. Writing about what you like will inspire you to learn even more.

17. Excel

In Microsoft Excel, write all the vocabulary you learn in one column, with the translation in another column. If you write the same word twice in the column, Excel will notify you so you won't do any double work.

When you're studying vocabulary, hide the column with the translation and write what you think the translation is in another column. Do it again for the translation: hide the words in your target language and guess what the original word is. You can

even print only one column to test your vocabulary on paper.

Add articles and plurals if necessary. Unlike English, some languages have different articles. In English, there's only 'a' or 'the'. No point in writing it in front of every noun. But do write them for languages that have more than one article, and do the same for the plural and the conjugations of irregular verbs.

Learning another language? Just add another column to your Excel file, and start over again.

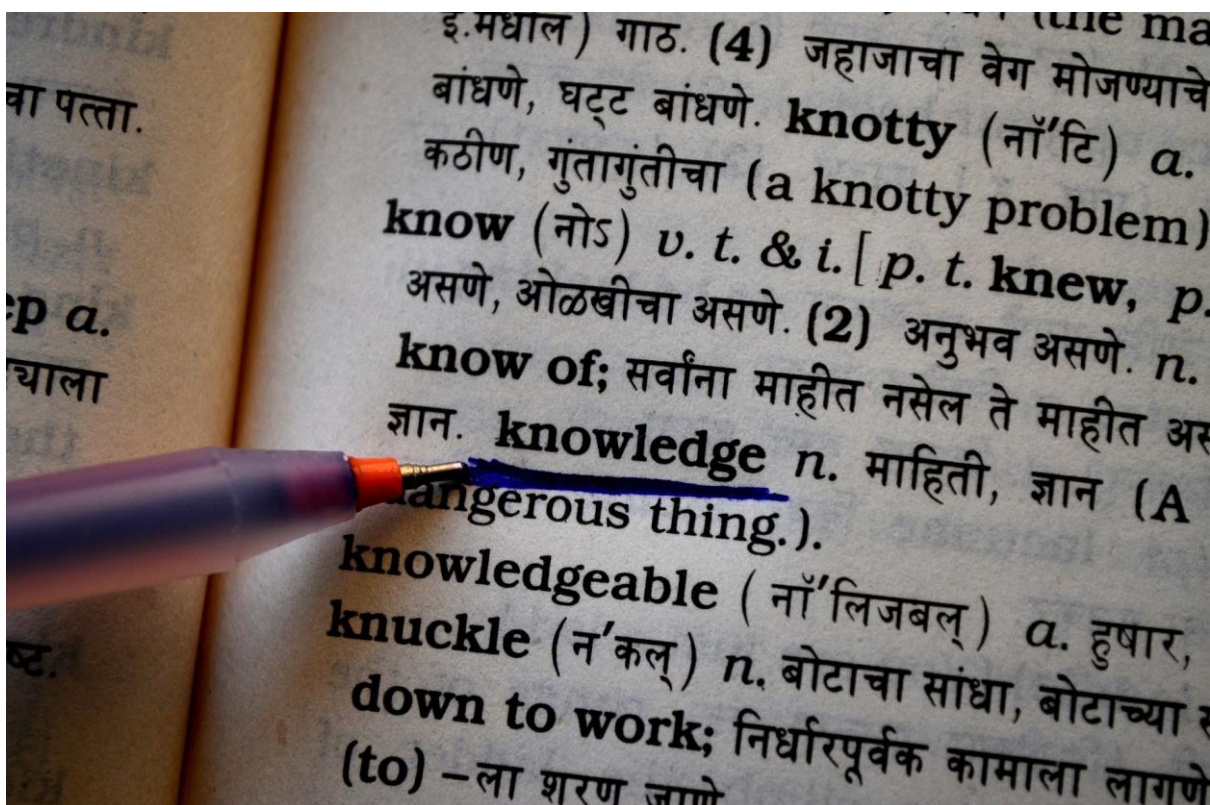
18. Vocabulary notebook

Write your vocabulary in a **notebook**, on top of your Excel file. Take the notebook to your classes or wherever you're learning your target language. Make a habit of writing your vocabulary in the notebook.

Why bring the notebook to your classes? Otherwise, you will write vocabulary in your grammar book, or in the handouts of the teacher. And you're not going to look for vocabulary in your grammar book, aren't you? Keeping a separate vocabulary notebook will make your learning more efficient and effective.

19. Dictionaries

Is it a good idea to buy one of those big dictionaries? Yes and no. If you do so, ask a native what's 'the' dictionary for your target language. These are excellent resources but very expensive. Normally, those dictionaries also have a **free version** on the Internet. Use that one in the meantime. If your target language changes a lot over time, better rely on online dictionaries.



20. Google Translate and Wikipedia

Google Translate will translate all the words you want for free. So make a habit of using it. It translates even whole texts. For languages with many speakers, the translations are very accurate. If your target language has fewer speakers, the quality will be less.

You can also use Google Translate to translate **entire webpages**. Just copy the link of the website you want to translate, and paste it into the box of Google Translate. Hit enter, and Google Translate will start translating the website. You can continue surfing on the website in the language it's translated into.

For nouns, use Wikipedia. Find the word in your own language on Wikipedia. Then, look on the left below for your target language. It will be in your target language. So it's français instead of French, and Deutsch instead of German.

When you've clicked on your target language, you'll find the translation and explanations of your noun in your target language. That's very useful information if you need to give a presentation or write a text on a particular subject.

Your free online translators:

WWW: <https://translate.google.com>

www.wikipedia.org

21. Language learning games online

Keep it fun – and games are fun. There are millions of them to help you learn a language, mostly for free.

Start the fun with these links:

- www.duolingo.com
- www.berlitz.com
- www.pimsleur.com
- www.verbling.com
- www.mangolanguages.com
- www.transparent.com
- www.busuu.com
- www.rosettastone.com

Try a few ones. You'll find more than just games. Why not search the Internet for games in your target language?

Two remarks though:

- Give yourself time to play language games regularly. By repeating, you'll remember faster.
- You can't have a conversation with games. Practice what you've learnt with real persons.
- Look for games on topics you've already seen.

Search the Internet as well for websites about your target language. Many persons dedicate a lot of time on websites to explain their language from A to Z.

Follow me [here](#).

22. Time to play

Liked those language learning games of the previous tip? Do you have a smartphone? Then play your favourite games in your 'dead' moments for free. For example when you're waiting for the elevator, the bus, in a queue, in a traffic jam... Use this **precious time to learn**.

An even better idea is to use Google Translate to translate the objects that surround you. Google Translate is for free. Discuss with your bystanders to use your new vocabulary. For example, look up 'bus' and 'late', and people will already start talking to you in your target language! And that's great!

Translate the objects around you with:

WWW: <https://translate.google.com>

23. One word a day...

Do you have a friend, a flat mate, a partner or a colleague who speaks your target language? Good! Ask that person to teach you one word a day. One word a day, that's not much. But **365 words every year** is a lot!

It's a nice way to connect with a colleague. You're going to exchange more than just that one word. The colleague or friend will start talking about your target language. It's also great because that person will remind us about the words you've learnt before. And he or she will teach us words that are at our level – for free.

24. Main differences

We use our own language to learn our target language. You'll notice differences as soon as you start learning. In the beginning, discover what you're up against. Check the Internet for the main differences.

How do you find those main differences? Look on a search engine like Google for these words:

- '10 common mistakes in *target language*'
- '10 mistakes made when learning *target language*'
- 'Common mistakes by *own language* speakers in *target language*'

Translate those sentences into your own language (if it's not English) and you'll find many blogs and language websites that will help you learn more efficiently the differences between your own language and your target language. If your own language only has three tenses, and your target language has ten, you'll pay extra attention when you'll be studying the tenses.

25. Speak and write as much as possible

Speaking is one of the best ways to practice your target language. The same goes for writing. It helps your brain to memorise vocabulary and grammar, because you create and reproduce. Especially difficult words. Make a habit of re-writing them as many times as you need.

26. Repeat. Repeat.

Repetition is another technique to learn difficult grammar or vocabulary. Focus on

those parts you really have to learn, don't repeat useless grammar. And don't repeat too much. Give your brain time to breathe. Every day the same grammar won't work, but a few times a week should be ok.

27. Udemy and me

I instruct several languages online to 1000+ students, currently French, Dutch and Maltese. The **advantages** are that my courses:

- Start from 0, so no previous knowledge required.
- Are always available so you learn at your own rhythm.
- Can be viewed as many times as you want.
- Have a 30 days money back guarantee.
- Have free previews; check them out.
- Include updates for free.

Click for coupons with discounts (25% off):

WWW: [French course](#)



WWW: [Dutch course](#)



WWW: [Maltese course](#)

My profile:

WWW: <https://udemy.com/user/alainderaymond>

and [contact](#)

Check out if there are other courses for your target language on Udemy. See if there are free previews, so you can get a feel of the course.

Search for courses on:

WWW: www.udemy.com

-

You booked your classes, learnt your first words, wrote them in a separate notebook and know the differences between your language and your target language. Let's see what to learn first in the next chapter!

Chapter 2: Score with the right words first

So you're applying the practical tips of the previous chapter. That's essential, because good habits are a key element of language success. What now? Let's focus on what you have to learn first from the resources you're using. Learning the right words and vocabulary will put you ahead of other language learners.

28. Excuse me?

- *Could you please repeat that?*
- *Come again?*
- *Excuse me?*
- *What does the word 'x' mean in English?*
- *I'm sorry, I'm a foreigner, could you please speak (a bit) slower?*
- *How do you translate/say that word/the sentence in English/target language?*

What do these phrases have in common? Easy: they're the ones you'll use the most in the beginning. You should **learn** those phrases **as quickly as possible!** So translate them in your target language, and start using them.

29. Useful vocabulary

Which words do you need to use? Plutocrat and theology? Or ticket, office and chair? Probably the last ones. Don't learn difficult words you're not going to use in the near future. **Focus** on those words that you **need to use now**. Think as well of the words you've already learnt. Are they useful to you now?

For example: 'a one-day ticket for the metro, please' is a useful sentence if you're travelling with the metro. That's the kind of words and sentences you're looking for. Make a habit of using your target language in small conversations, whenever you can, even if it's just a few words.

Does your partner speak your target language? Great! Time to learn 'you look very good today' in your target language. Or 'you're very nice.' Or 'I love you so much.' Practice these and find other compliments, as much as possible. Your partner will be pleased and you're learning a new language at the same time. Two for the price of one!

If you like playing with your colleagues who speak your target language, say exactly the opposite of what you mean in your target language. For example 'it's very sunny' when it's raining. And then accuse another colleague to have taught you this. Only do it if you like your colleagues and they like you!

30. Hundred words

If you don't know which words to learn now, there's an easy way to find useful vocabulary. Look on the Internet for the **100 most used words** in your target language. Use a search engine like Google to look for '100 most used words in *target language*.' Translate that sentence into your target language and search again.

Write these words down in your notebook and your Excel file (see previous chapter) according to their meaning: verbs with verbs, nouns with nouns. If you need more inspiration, search the same sentence with the 300 most used words. Or even

more. Most persons only use 300 to 1000 words in a language for their everyday actions. Knowing those ones will improve your knowledge very quickly.

See the 100 most used words in English on:

WWW: <http://fourhourworkweek.com/2009/01/20/learning-language>

31. Better free flashcards

What's a flashcard? It's a card having one or a few words written on both sides. On the one side the word is in your target language; and on the other side the word is in your own language. Put many flashcards together in a bag, and you'll have a nice language learning game. After you take one out, translate the word into either your target language or your own language, depending on which one you see first. It's a fun way to learn new vocabulary.

There are many flashcards available for sale online or in supermarkets. Don't buy those. **Make your own** ones for free. You know best which words to learn. So write those words on a small piece of paper and the translation on the back. Writing the difficult words will already help you to memorise them. Alternatively, add the words of the previous tip.

If you know the translation both ways, put them out of the bag. Put new flashcards in, so you keep on learning. It's great, because experts can practice this way as well.

Don't limit yourself to single words. Also write expressions you hear as well. Or conjugations of verbs you're struggling to learn. For example: 'he states that' or 'he has been working.'

32. Easy extra vocabulary

Languages that are close take over each other's words. So look on the Internet for a list of borrowed words from your own language in your target language. You'll easily learn those. However, beware of **false friends**: words that look similar in your own and your target language but mean something completely different. Linguists call those false friends *cognates*.

An example of those cognates or false friends: bellen in Dutch is to call someone with the telephone, but bellen in German is to bark, the sound that dogs make. Look for those examples in your target language on the Internet.

33. A sentence a day

Practice your new vocabulary and your new grammar by writing a sentence every day. Choose sentences that you need at your level, like 'where is the hotel?' or 'I'm watching the news.' It's even better to write sentences you've heard during the day in your target language, even if they were said in your own language.

In addition to practicing your writing skills, you'll remember and use the vocabulary and grammar you've learnt. In the end, we all talk in sentences, so why not practice them? Read the sentences aloud after writing them.

Another way is to **translate a sentence a day**. For example, headlines of online newspapers (see next tip).

Don't forget to write your sentences in the same notebook. You'll see the progress you've made. Seeing the progress encourages you to write even more sentences.

34. Headlines

Journalists write simple sentences on top of their articles. Translating them is quite easy (see previous tip). Make a habit of reading one headline a day in a good online newspaper of your target language. When you're motivated or interested, translate some more sentences of the article.

This will not only be good for your translating skills. You'll have subjects to talk about with your colleagues that speak your target language. And it will help you to discover a new culture.

Look for headlines on newspapers' websites on:

WWW: www.pressreader.com

35. Wordclouds

When you're reading a longer online article, or an online book, or anything else that's online and long, apply this trick. Select the whole text, and make a wordcloud from it. Wordcloud? That's a cloud of words, with the **most used words** of a text. The bigger the word, the more it is used in the text. Study the words in the wordclouds and you'll have learnt all the key words of the text. Reading will be much easier.

Make your own wordclouds on (the one below is of this book):

WWW: www.wordle.net



36. Pairs

Did you learn 'salt' in your target language? Learn 'pepper' as well at the same time! Making words come in pairs will help you memorise words. Other examples are left and right, man and woman or words that rhyme.

37. Small parts

You found an essential part of your target language way too difficult. No problem. Just break it down into smaller pieces. If there are 5 rules to use the plural in your target language, start with the first rule. You'll do the other ones one after another in the next days at your own rhythm.

38. Grammar

In the past, teachers focused on learning grammar. The conjugations, the right articles, the perfect use of the different tenses... all of them had to be learnt by heart. These teachers had the best of intentions, but they kept the fun out of the learning. And that's how many language learners lost their motivation.

Only learn the grammar you need to know. If there are three different tenses for the past, just learn one. Once you're comfortable, learn a second. So always ask yourself: do I really need to know this now? If the answer's no, just leave it for later.

Ask yourself as well if you're going to need the grammar when you're speaking or writing. Will it really matter if you're using the wrong article in the beginning? If the answer is no, leave it for later. Natives will already appreciate you know the noun without the article. You understand 'where is post office?' in English, you don't need to hear the 'the' in 'where is **the** post office?', right?

Remember: only learn the **grammar you need to know**. Knowing too much grammar can even be counterproductive in your conversations. You're going to think too much before speaking. So you'll even be more scared to speak, and that's not the point.

39. Roots and endings

In many languages, nouns, adjectives and verbs have a root. The root changes to make it clear that it's a noun, an adjective or something else. For example, worker, worked, works and working have one root: work.

After finding those roots, it will be much easier for you to learn a language. You're going to make links you didn't see before between nouns and adverbs, verbs and adjectives, and so on.

You understand it when a foreigner says: 'I worker at factory' instead of 'I work at a factory', right? The same goes for your target language. So first focus on the roots, the endings will come later.

40. YouTube for beginners

YouTube is a great site: millions, if not billions of movies are uploaded every day. Of course, there are several language videos in between those millions.

You'll find many language videos, but few series. So use YouTube if you have a very **specific subject** you want to know more about. For example, greeting in Portuguese. Or the Greek alphabet. Or the conjugation of the verb to work in Japanese. Type what you want to know in the search bar on YouTube when you need it.

But don't expect to find many good language courses. Good teachers will find better-paid alternatives to teach their languages than YouTube.

Find interesting language videos on:

WWW: www.youtube.com

And subscribe to [my channel](#).

41. Summarise

After reading a text or watching a movie, summarise what you've read and seen in the target language. Do it as if you're explaining it **to a friend**. Use words like: I think that... because... I liked the... This way, you will get more used to express yourself. You will also repeat the most important vocabulary. Write the summary down, read it out loud and ask your teacher to review it.

42. Review

Learnt the right words and the right grammar? Forgot the first ones? Forgetting is part of the learning process. Take the time to review the important and difficult vocabulary and grammar. Do it regularly, and include it in your language-learning plan.

A good way to review what you've learnt is to draw up schemes of the grammar. Draw a clock, for example, for how to say the time and write down the different times of the day.

43. Conversations

At the end of a conversation with anyone in your own language, think of the latest sentence. Pick one word to translate, and translate it. If you're feeling comfortable, just translate the whole sentence. This way, you'll learn many useful sentences.



44. Pocket dictionary

A pocket dictionary is a good idea. Keep one in your pocket. If you have some spare moments, **browse** through it and indicate with a pencil which words you already know. Since they're smaller than big dictionaries, they only have essential words. Don't use them in conversations though. That's annoying. Instead, try to explain the words you don't know in your target language.

Are you learning the right words and the right grammar? Do you notice you understand some words of the persons speaking in your target language? That's a good sign. Let's see the next step to step up your language learning: change your home.

Chapter 3: Small changes at home produce big results

Look who's going to help you with learning your language: your very own home. As well as your environment. Most persons spend more than half of their life at home. So why not turn your home into a language learning tool? Knowing those objects you see every day will help you think in your target language. And that's a big step; so let's take it.

45. Eat and learn

The more you're going to see your target language, the better. Let's start at your own table where you eat every day. Do you know those mats you put under the cutlery? They're there to prevent spots on your table. And crumbs.

Time to make your own. Take a piece of paper. Write the entire cutlery you're going to put on the mat in your target language. Knife, fork, glass, plate. Then you put that piece of paper in a machine that puts plastic around the paper and there you go!

Every time you're eating, take the '**language mats**' out. You'll learn while eating and when you're putting the cutlery on the table. And you'll always put the knives on the right side.

46. Unknown products

Look around in your home. There are many objects you don't know the name of in your target language. Take a piece of paper, write the translations on the paper, cut the paper, and paste the words on the objects with transparent duct tape.

Each time you're taking your toothbrush, you'll see the translation on it. Do it as well with bigger objects, like doors, tables, and windows. Putting the words in your target language on the objects will reinforce the visual link with the words. Read the words aloud when you see them.

Alternatively, use used magazines with loads of pictures. Write the translation on the objects shown in the pictures.

47. In the bathroom

When you're in the bathroom, you're spending a lot of time doing nothing. Well... waiting. Why not learn some languages in the meantime? Paste the difficult conjugations on your toilet's door. You'll be obliged to read them, since there's nothing else to do. Change the conjugations as soon as you know them.

You can also leave some magazines or books in your target language in the bathroom. Add the magazines of the previous tip. A visit to the bathroom will never be the same...

48. Stairs

When you're walking up or down the stairs, **count the steps** you're taking in your target language. You can even paste on a paper the numbers in full in your target language on your stairs. The same goes for when you're weightlifting at the gym, or when you're doing push-ups at home. Count out loud. In no time you'll be able to count in your target language.

49. Sleep

Learn while you're sleeping? Really? Is that even possible? Yes it is. By playing words in your sleep, you'll learn even while you're not awake. Nothing is more efficient and free.

Record your vocabulary and your conjugations with a recording device. A smartphone should be able to do the trick. Only record words you've heard before. Then, play those words in the **first few hours** you're asleep.

The morning after, take a quiz to find out if this method works for you and continue if it does. Sure your partner will appreciate the language learning as well!

50. Switch products' language

There are many products you use that you can just **switch to your target language**. You can switch your computer, laptop and smartphone to your target language. Also switch the language of websites you visit often, like ebay or Facebook. That will help you think in a language. If you're a gamer, you can also switch the language settings of your favourite games.

Another obvious choice is reading the instructions for your new electronic products in the target language. You always have your own language to refer to if you don't understand.

51. Facebook

Even when you're checking what's up on Facebook, you can learn a language. That's a big advantage of social media. You'll see your target language even without having to think.

Subscribe to **groups** that are made for **language learning**. You'll see their posts appearing. You can even ask questions in those groups. For example if you have trouble doing your homework. You can even ask for **feedback – for free**. If you're creative, create some pictures with conjugations. Or post links to useful websites. Or a link to this book or my courses. Thank you in advance!

One important remark: Facebook automatically translates languages. Including your target language. Switch it off by clicking on '*automatically translated from your target language*' and then on '*never translate your target language*'.

Subscribe via:

WWW: [Facebook](#), [Google+](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

52. Sing

Some language learners are singers or compose songs. Why not make a song about the months of the year? Or about a difficult conjugation? Make them rhyme! And why not perform in front of natives of your target language?

53. Be creative

If you don't sing, maybe you like to draw, paint or make sculptures? Great. Paint the words you don't know. Or draw a conjugation of a verb that's difficult. And give your latest sculpture a name in your target language, preferably a sentence.

This will help your brain to link vocabulary to **visual clues**. And you're going to improve your creative skills at the same time! Don't forget to hang your paintings and drawings around your house and put your sculpture in a visible place in or around your home.



54. Look around you

You'll be amazed by how much **language surrounds you**. If you're living in a foreign country, it's obvious. Spot the advertisements and instructions and make a habit of translating them. Look at the names of the streets.

If you're not living in a foreign country, look for easy words written in your target language in international places. For example airports, international universities...

55. Your environment and other sources

Common mistake: some language learners learn only with their friends. They pick up a lot of slang, and are able to talk with anyone about anything. In itself, it's great: your environment encourages you to learn. It's social and it's fun.

However, you'll never be able to speak and write properly in your target language like that. If you apply for a job, you'll use familiar language and that's a disadvantage. Unless you have to talk informally in the job you're applying for.

Make sure to have good sources to learn languages, see Chapter 1. You'll learn the difference between **formal and informal speech**. And you'll be able to use both at the right time to your benefit.

56. Listen, natives

Living abroad, in a country of your target language? Listening to others is a goldmine: usually, those persons don't make mistakes because they're native speakers. You can also pick up many useful small words.

Mind the way they talk. For example, the way Italians 'speak 'with their hands. You only need to see it to know it's important. Mind as well the **distance** between

the speakers. In some countries, natives stand close to each other and sometimes even touch each other while speaking. In other countries, there's a bigger distance and touching is out of the question.

57. Libraries

A library in your neighbourhood? That's another goldmine just around the corner. There are so many books, magazines and sometimes DVDs to borrow. For free. Check if there are language-learning books.

As a beginner, **start with the children's books** and DVDs. Gradually work your way to the adult section. At that level, borrow books of your interest. Make it part of your language-learning plan. For example: to read one book a month.

If you're living in a country where your target language isn't spoken, ask if the library has books in your target language. Many libraries have international sections.



Turned your home in a language-learning machine? Picking up all the language signals from your environment? Found the library? Let's take everything you learnt in your neighbourhood further! Let's start to talk!

Chapter 4: Crucial: let's learn how to talk!

Your home is ready. Your mind is ready. And now, it's time to talk. In this chapter, we'll get you to talk. The better you become, the easier it will get. The first time someone talks to you in your target language is a moment you'll never forget. Let's see tips to get you there.

58. Pronounce alone

Talking in another language is scary. Especially in the beginning. There are so many things you have to pay attention to! A great way to practice is to practice alone. Find yourself a nice, **quiet spot** in front of a mirror.

Start reading out loud the conversations, sentences and words you've learnt, especially the difficult ones. Articulate well, and slow down if you need to. Invent conversations of your own. Record these conversations, and listen to them afterwards. The benefit is that you're the only one who's going to listen. So there's no pressure from anyone or anything.

59. Talk to yourself

Talking to yourself may seem odd at first, but it's a good way to practice sentences you've learnt. **Ask yourself questions** and answer them. Like: 'Why am I going to the supermarket? Yes, to buy tomatoes.'

Swearing, on the other hand, is good and bad. Bad because they aren't nice words. But good if you do it in the target language without thinking about which language you're swearing in. That means you're thinking in your target language.

60. The body speaks as well

Around 70 percent of our communication is non-verbal. Which means that the words you pronounce only account for 30 percent of what you communicate. Don't see this as a reason not to study a language though. Use it to your advantage.

By adding gestures, raising your eyebrows, laughing, or speaking silently you can communicate so much more. For example, when someone explains you the way to your destination, repeat the explanation as well with your body. Turning left, show to the left with your hands. It can save you some time.

Check as well **other persons' non-verbal communications**. People change their vocabulary according to their state of mind and to the person they're talking to.

61. Speaking: the great leap

Speaking for the first time in public in your target language can be very scary. For many persons, it's the most difficult step to take. Here are a few tips to get over that leap:

- See it as a game.
- Practice what you've learnt: 'I am Alain, you are...?' is already a conversation. Add some body language if you need to.
 - It's a sign of respect: you're doing an effort to speak to someone else in his or her language. You deserve their respect.
 - Start with one word, e.g. if you're in the elevator, ask: 'Floor?' to the other ones.

- Be proud of it. People laughing at you are just jealous about what they don't have the courage to do.
- It has to come from you anyway, so why not start today?

62. Well, than...

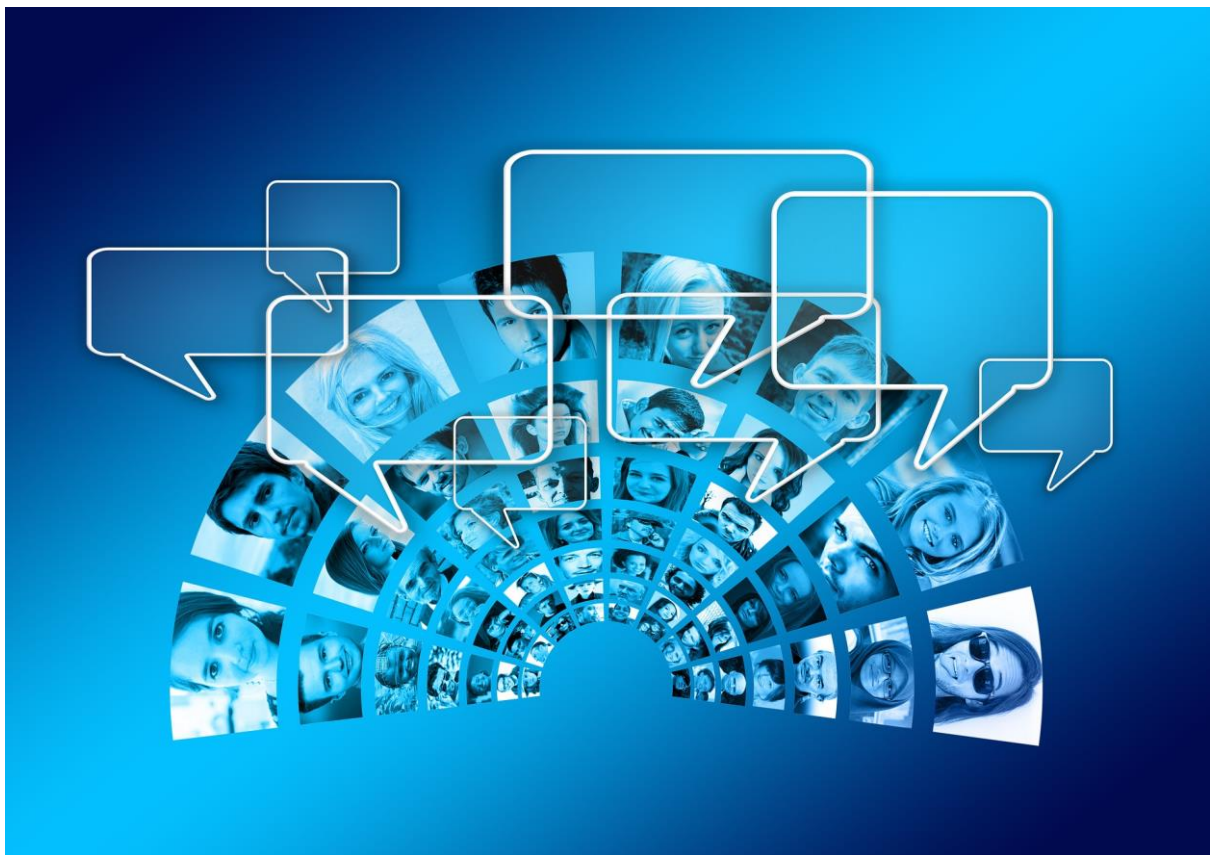
Blocked when talking? What helps, is those little words. In English, they're: well, than, furthermore, now, see. They're quite useless, because they don't mean anything.

But if you want to sound more fluent, start using those. It will give you a break to think about your next sentence. You'll also sound much more authentic. And they're never really wrong.

It also increases the chance that natives will reply to you in your target language. And it colours your use of the language. So **pick** some of those words that **sound nice** to you.

63. Questions without answers

If someone asks you a question in your target language, there are two options. One, you know the answer in your target language and can reply accordingly. And two, you don't. In the second case, **repeat the question** in your target language so you practice your pronunciation skills. Afterwards, you can always say I don't know, I'm a foreigner. So study this sentence in your target language.



64. Too fast

When a native person speaks way too fast to you – yes they all do that – always ask 'could you please repeat that?' Hopefully, he or she'll talk slower, using easier

words. If not: you've spoken in your target language, even if it's only one sentence! Victory! Hurray!

65. Restaurants

When you've seen how to order food in your target language, it's time to practice. If you're learning French, go to a French restaurant. Studying Italian? Find the nearest Italian pizzeria. Ask your teacher for the nearest place if you don't know.

The waiters or the owners will be very pleased if you **order in their language**. Some might even start to chat with you. Or maybe give you discounts. You can even chat with other customers.

An ambitious way is to pretend in any restaurant that you're a foreign customer who only speaks your target language. Why not give it a try?

66. Practice with Skype

Language lessons via Skype have many advantages. It's flexible, you can learn anytime as long as a teacher is online. You can do it **from your couch** at home in your pyjamas. Also, language lessons via Skype can be relatively cheap. However, it's important to:

- Find the right teacher that teaches you the things you want to be taught.
- Let the teacher know in advance what you want to learn.
- Prepare well before the lesson starts.
- Listen to your target language just before the lesson starts.
- Prepare and ask questions if you don't understand.
- Talk as much as possible in the target language. Why not the whole class?

Find your Skype teacher on:

WWW: <https://www.colanguage.com>

<https://www.italki.com/home>

<http://www.verbalplanet.com>

<https://www.livelingua.com>

<http://www.language-exchanges.org>

Another tip: search 'Skype Lessons' plus 'target language' in Google, you'll find many more! Most of the online language schools focus on one language, so try it this way as well.

67. Comics

Is your home full of comics? Good. Time to buy or borrow comic books in your target language. When you're reading them, take the time to understand everything. Let the context of the images guide you. There's more space for images than words, so it doesn't look scary to begin with.

If you found a language partner, why not **read together** in the target language? The partner reads one part of the dialogues and you read the other parts. Afterwards, discuss what happened in your target language.

68. 'No own language'

That's one of my favourites. It starts with a situation you know already. You've taken all your courage to start a conversation with someone in your target language. They hear very soon you're a foreigner and switch to your language, or English. And that's the opposite of what you wanted to achieve.

Just say '**no English**', or '*no own language*'. And say you're from a country far away. That way, they'll be obliged to speak in your target language. And that's exactly what you want.

69. Mistakes, great

The more mistakes you speak out, the merrier. It means you're practicing. So don't apologise for it, unless you can apologise in your target language. Don't let it demotivate you and converse and write as much as possible! **Without mistakes** there's **no progress**.

70. Practice creates experts

Exercise gives birth to art - that's a Dutch saying. So the more you practice, the further you'll get. It's important to apply all the things you've learnt. Even when you know the way home, ask a stranger for it in your target language. The more you do it, the better.

71. Expressions

Expressions are very funny, especially if a foreigner pronounces them. So try to learn some expressions every month, and speak them out with colleagues or friends at the right moments. It's also a great way to learn vocabulary and put words in the right order in a sentence.

-

You're having good conversations with yourself, and you manage to have some basic conversations with bystanders. Some persons even had to smile when you used a funny expression. Exciting and excellent! Let's see how you can take the next steps!

Chapter 5: The next level: making friends for fast improvements

Learning to speak is learning to talk to people. And the more you speak to them, the better friends they become. Getting to know other persons is not only good for learning languages. It's good for your mental and physical health. So no excuses for starting to bond with others in your target language!

72. Pen pals

Writing emails or letters to each another is a great way to practice your target language. Facebook and Twitter are also possible easy options. Find a pen pal, agree on a minimum or maximum of words, in which language you're writing, and start writing!

And how about writing real letters to each other? There's no autocorrecting, and isn't it fun to receive a real letter in your mailbox?

Find your pen pal via:

WWW: www.penpalworld.com

www.penpalsnow.com

www.studentsoftheworld.info

www.interpals.net

www.sassociations.net

www.mylanguageexchange.com/penpals.asp

www.slf.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/etandem/etindex-en.html

www.polyglotclub.com

It can be a great experience, but **watch out** though! Some persons try to get money from you, or ask for credit card numbers... Don't do that!

73. Language exchange

To do a good language exchange, there are two possibilities. Either you find a person at the same level and speak your target language together. Or you find someone who teaches you your target language, and you teach that person your own language. Online or offline.

Either way it's great. And best of all: it's free and fun.

Find your language exchange partner via:

WWW: www.language-exchanges.org

www.italki.com/partners

Also check Facebook for language exchange groups in your neighbourhood.

74. Holidays

Planning your holidays? Just go to a country of your target language. Combine it with language classes with a native teacher if you can. Focus on holiday and **tourist vocabulary**, like asking the way, where there's a machine to withdraw cash...

Practice all you've learnt as much as possible. Registering at the hotel, ordering food and buying souvenirs in the shops are a must in your target language. Pretend to other tourists you don't speak your own language. And have all your small conversations in your target language.

If you liked the place you've been on holidays, why not come back? You'll make friends, and they'll encourage you to practice when they see your progress.

Do you like backpacking on your own? On top of this amazing experience, there's no better way to get truly immersed.



75. Couchsurfing

Heard of couchsurfing? People an empty couch or bed offer it for free to anyone who's registered on the website. Usually it's for one or a few nights. If you have a couch or bed you're not using, why not register?

There are two ways to benefit from couchsurfing. If you go abroad to a country of your target language, you can use those couches for free. But you're going to talk a lot to those persons that are offering you these couches – for free as well. However, I'd advise you to cook for them, or to give them a little present at the end. You're not paying for the free hotel or for the free language classes.

Another way is by accepting guests in your own home. But then, you're not sure if the people coming will speak your target language. You might be luckier in a touristic country.

Register and start couchsurfing on:

WWW: www.couchsurfing.com

76. Foreign exchange

Studying at a university? Great, check if there is a **foreign exchange programme**. The Erasmus programme is quite famous in Europe, but it's not the only one. You'll basically get paid to go abroad and you'll go to loads of parties. Apart from having an amazing time, you can use it to practice your language. Another way is to check if there are internships abroad. In any case, meet up with the other interns or students to make some friends for life.

Find your exchange programme or internship via (they're not the only ones):

WWW: www.erasmusprogramme.com

www.ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm

77. Embassies

How can embassies help you learning a language? Well, if you're living in a country where your target language isn't spoken, it's good to contact embassies of countries of your target language.

They may have:

- An events calendar
- A newsletter
- A Facebook group
- Information of target language organisations, like expat groups

Go to these events to meet natives, and you might end up with some new friends. And consulates are the same as embassies, but smaller. So check if there are consulates or embassies in your area.

78. Cultural events

Cultural events are not only there for culture: you can have a really great time, make friends, speak your target language and have loads of fun. Some examples of foreign events are:

- The national days of the countries (ask the embassies, see previous tip).
- The world championships of big sports on big screen.
- Midsommerfest for Sweden.

Every country has its cultural events – so check them out for countries of your target language. And go there to meet and speak.

Little plus: **couchsurfing** organises international events, so you can make friends there as well.

79. The elder: dream partners

Do you have parents or grandparents who know your target language? Or do you know other senior persons who do so? Great! They should be your first language partners.

You'll have to pay a lot of attention to your pronunciation and you will have to speak very, very slowly. That's the ideal situation because it will give you **time to**

think about the order of your sentence, the conjugations and everything that goes with it.

And your grandparents? They'll love it that you come speak to them. They also speak very slowly, so it's easy to understand them. And they'll love to explain words to you.

80. Online gaming

Do you like playing online games with other persons? Good. Find some gaming partners from a country where they speak your target language and start playing with or against each other.

You can communicate them either via the online **chat** or via **headsets**. If you like battle games, sure you'll know the words for 'incoming grenade' very quickly!

Prepare well the relevant vocabulary you'll need. See which vocabulary you use in your own language and translate it into your target language. Who knows, maybe you'll make friends and visit them in real life one day?

81. Team up!

Find yourself a language partner you like. Ideally, he or she should have the same level of the target language as you. You'll give each other time to make mistakes, and you'll motivate each other to speak in your target language. You may find a language buddy in your group classes.

82. Pictionary

If you find a few language buddies, why not organise a Pictionary evening? Draw a word on a board and the other ones have to guess it. The word should be in the target language of course. An alternative is to explain the word in the target language without saying or spelling the word.

Another nice game is the **hangman**. Guess the letters of a word, and if you guessed too many times, you lose. Look it up on Google to see practical examples.

83. Sports

Be part of a sports team in your target language! You'll make new friends, and you don't need much vocabulary for the sport itself.

Do you like watching sports? Good, start watching your favourite sports with **comments in your target language**. On the Internet, there are many channels that broadcast in different languages.

You'll already know the terms, so you don't start from zero. If it's your favourite team, you'll know the names of the players. That's a major advantage.

Make it social! Watch the games with a friend from your classes and give comments in your target language. Or find a pub where they broadcast the games, if you live in a country where your target language is spoken. Listen to the comments of the other persons watching, and return to the same pub next time. Sure you'll make friends there as well.

84. Move to another country

Go to another country. When, you may wonder. In my experience, it's a good idea to prepare first before the move, so you can directly speak in the target language.

Conversations will be a bit difficult in the beginning, but make a habit out of **only speaking in the target language**. Avoid persons that try to speak with you in your own language. If you have children, it's great so they will learn a new language as well at school - for free.

85. Accent/dialect

Picking up the local accent or speaking the dialect is a good way to practice your language. Some dialects might even sound like another language, but speaking with the accent and in the local dialect will increase the chances locals will reply to you in their language. Learn as well the typical **local expressions** and listen carefully at the local pub.

86. Native friends

Did you already make a native friend in your target language? Well, it's time to make one. Native speakers are the best friends. Ask them to correct you if you make any mistakes, but don't let them correct every other word, that's annoying.

87. Dating

Single? Dating someone is one of the best ways to learn a language. You'll do anything to **impress** your date with your language, and it's a good motivation to learn nice words. You'll try to make a good impression on your date's family and will discover a whole new culture at the same time! Make sure you like the person though; otherwise it's like using someone.

If it didn't work out and you've stopped seeing each other, at least you learnt a language. For free. Unless you bought your date loads of presents. Don't blame me for that, please.



88. Rule: first things first

To conclude this chapter, use this rule that has always worked for me. Whenever your target language can be spoken, **speak first in your target language**. You should only make the switch to your own language if there's no other possible way.

Classes are the ideal place to do so, as well as when you're with your language buddies. They will give you the time to explain yourself. Maybe they'll even correct you, the teacher will for sure. Listen also carefully to them and you'll learn a lot.

If you make the switch 'target language first', you're way ahead of many language learners! You'll think in your target language. You will try to find solutions within your target language and will leave your own language.

-

Made some friends in your target language? Going to the local pub regularly to meet your language and drinking buddies? Spent some time abroad? Taking part in international events? If the answer's yes: congratulations! Learning will become much easier. Let's see how to deepen your knowledge of your target language in the following chapter.

Chapter 6: Your interests help you to learn

Everyone has hobbies: favourite shows on TV, outdoors activities, sports, and music. That's just a few examples. Let's turn your hobbies and interests into language learning exercises. Here are tips for how to do that.

89. Social media 2.0

Time to start subscribing on social media. Subscribe to:

- Your favourite music bands' fan pages in your target language.
- News sites in your target language.
- Meeting up groups.
- Anything you like. In your target language, of course.

By following the news you find interesting in your target language, you'll be able to chat with friends and colleagues in your target language.

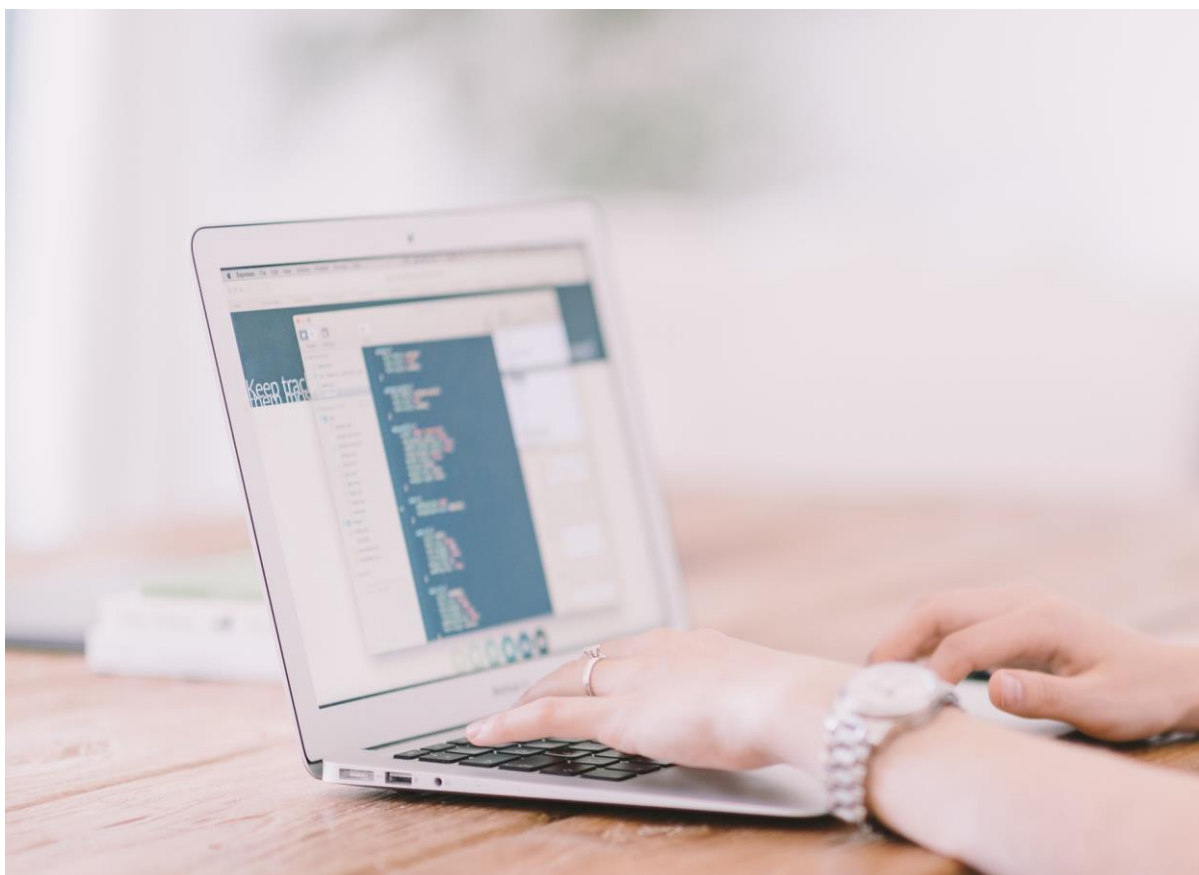
Subscribe via:

WWW: [Facebook](#), [Google+](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

90. Foreign chat rooms

Have you tried foreign language chat rooms? They're similar to Facebook groups. Find yourself a group and start chatting. It's a good way to **learn slang**. Make sure you stay in your own interests, for example if you like politics, you can start making endless arguments that no one ever wins, but now it's useful, because you're learning to argue in a new language.

If you like chatting on forums, just look up forums of your interest! You can even have epic political arguments there!



91. Blogs

Are you into blogs? Great, start following some in your target language. Make sure to choose important ones that do not have spelling mistakes. And why not following a blog **about your target language**?

And start writing your own blog in the target language, about something you're really passionate about. You'll have loads of conversations with your followers. Here's two free popular blogging platforms, it takes just a few clicks to start your first article:

WWW: www.wordpress.com

www.blogger.com

[My blog](#) can serve as an example.

Also, find your favourite websites in your target language and put them in your bookmarks.

92. Books

Buy some books based on your interests, or search some flea markets for some good books at expert level. Or ask friends and families if they have good books. They are always good to refresh your memory, or for on a plane or in a train. And you'll always learn something new every time you read it again.

Personally, I think it's a great **refresher** if I haven't heard the language for a while. Also, become part of a book club, so you can find some extra friends with shared interests.

93. Movies

By seeing movies, you can learn new languages. There's several ways to learn from movies in your target language:

- Watch with subtitles in your own language (beginners).
- Watch with subtitles in the target language (advanced).
- Watch without subtitles (experts).
- Action movies have fewer dialogues so they are easier.
- Comedies have difficult jokes so they're more difficult.
- Print the script of the movie, and pronounce the words together with the actors.
- Watch movies with friends and talk about them afterwards.

One last way: watch movies in your own language with subtitles in your target language. I wouldn't recommend dubbing, that's just weird.

Watch movies here:

WWW: www.netflix.com

www.blockbuster.com

94. Watch television

Watching television is very passive, but why not make it more interesting by changing to a channel in your target language? Do it on a **regular basis**, for example by watching a series in which there's an actor or actress you find insanely attractive.

Watch live television here:

WWW: www.broadcast-live.com/television

95. News & documentaries

Watching documentaries and the news is a good tradition to keep. You'll enlarge your vocabulary on particular topics, and will pick up **new words every day**. The more you know a language, the more you'll learn by seeing the news.

96. Listen to music

Do you like music? Great, start listening to music in your target language. There's music **in every style**, whether you like rap or pop. Put the music on your iPod, it's a great way to discover a new culture. Make sure to check if there's any interesting playlists on YouTube.

Why not organise a karaoke evening with your language-learning buddies, with songs exclusively in your target language. And if you sing yourself, then start singing songs in your target language. Go to live concerts as well – you might find some friends.

97. Listen to your favourites

Audio lessons or audiobooks, or anything that you can listen to, can help us learn a language when you're working out at the gym, or if you're running. Or walking. Or

crawling, if you like doing that. Or sitting. Or lying in bed. Or bungee-jumping. Or... well, whenever you can, I'm sure you get the picture!

You're combining pleasure with language, which makes it double pleasure. If you like a book, say one of those Harry Potter books, and you know it by heart in your own language, why not listen to it in your target language? Check as well if there's a podcast especially made for runners/walkers/sitters/crawlers/... in your target language.

98. Radio

Radio and podcasts are good because the people, who speak on those channels, have an **excellent pronunciation**. It's radio, so they speak for their audience who should understand them. Put the radio on in your car in the traffic jam. Wait no, turn it on as soon as you get into your car.

Listen to the radio online:

WWW: www.broadcast-live.com/languages.html

www.tunein.com

99. Certificates

Have you thought of getting a certificate? It can be a perfect source of motivation. Normally, certificates use the categories of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. A1 is the lowest level, and via A2, B1, B2, C1 we arrive at native level, which is C2. Include your certificates **on your CV**. You'll get more job opportunities.

Find more information about the classification system on:

WWW: www.coe.int/lang-CEFR

100. Goals

Learning a language is a big undertaking. Usually, your first words are new and exciting, but along the way you lose motivation. That's normal, learning languages takes time. Having a goal is as much as important as the vocabulary you're learning.

For example, you have a test to pass, or you want to put a new language on your cv. It's important to **know why you're doing it**. Remember the language-learning plan? Update it and find some other tips in this book!

101. University events

Many universities organise events, where you can debate important issues according to your interests. Also check for NGO's and other **civil society** organisations. They don't necessarily need to be about languages. Don't forget to subscribe to their newsletters to stay tuned.

-

You let your interests immerse you in a language. That's one of the most beautiful ways to continue learning: you don't even notice you're learning. Your target language is now your language. However, there's always a point where you want to be challenged again. So let's see how to address that in the following chapter.

Chapter 7: How to become a true language expert

Ready to some challenging language tips? Ready to become an expert? Ready to discuss with natives their language issues? If the answer is yes, continue with the tips of this chapter...

102. Paper newspaper

Subscribing to a paper newspaper in your target language will oblige you to read. It's a good investment if you're interested in public affairs. You'll discover many new points of view on topics you haven't read about before.

If you prefer popular news, subscribe to a popular newspaper. If you prefer sports, buy a newspaper full of sports. Or if you like magazines about horses, subscribe to one in your target language. Every day, there will be a new newspaper to lie around in the house, so no escape to it.

Most newspapers have sections for readers. **Engage** with your newspaper by writing letters. You're doing the community a service as well as yourself.



103. Facebook language

There are Facebook groups about language issues. It's interesting to subscribe to those. Some native language speakers are really concerned about their language, and like to **discuss** it with others.

They ask questions, and answer them. Post your difficult questions and check the group's discussions, since you will be asking those same questions when you perfect your language.

Find those groups as quickly as possible on:

WWW: [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com)

104. YouTube movies

It's time to watch movies on YouTube. There are loads of good movies there. One of the good aspects is that you can actually learn **2 languages at the same time**. The movie is spoken in one target language. And the subtitles in another target language.

Find interesting movies on:

WWW: www.youtube.com

And subscribe to [my channel](#).

105. Find the right word

How do you know which word is the right word, if you found two ways to write it? An easy way to check it is to put the words between brackets in Google. Search for both of them separately. Whichever results in the most search results, must be the right one. Or at least the most used one.

106. Scrabble

Playing Scrabble - either on line or with friends - is fun and above all a great way to perfect your language. You need to find words according to the letters you're pulling out of a bag. You'll become very creative. Put a dictionary next to you, and start finding words in your target language.

Type in Google "Scrabble play *target language*" and you'll find the game online in your target language.

107. Language institutes

Language institutes are experts, and it's from the experts that you can learn now. Some languages only have one language institute in their mother country. Other languages have an **international influence** and have institutes all over the world. Make sure to check if there's a language institute in the neighbourhood, subscribe to their newsletter, and go to their events.

108. Difficult sayings

Already heard:

- *De koetsier poetst de postkoets.*
- *Un chasseur sachant chasser sans son chien est un bon chasseur?*

Yes, those kinds of sayings are a good practice for your pronunciation. Impress your date or your colleagues with them, and study the unusual vocabulary that accompanies the saying. You'll find many on the Internet.

The sayings above mean:

- The stagecoach driver cleans the stagecoach. (from Dutch)
- A hunter knowing how to hunt without his dog is a good hunter. (from French)

109. Work

If you're not working in your target language, you definitely should! If you're working for an international company, ask if you can go work abroad. Or ask to work for or with clients who speak your target language. It's the ultimate accomplishment. It means you truly mastered the language.

110. Google translate experts

Start contributing to Google Translate. You're making the translation engine better, and practicing your research skills at the same time.

Help to translate at Google at:

WWW: www.translate.google.be/community

111. Wikipedia

At Wikipedia, they are always looking for persons writing good articles. It's great because you can write on anything you like in your target language. So let your creative self have a go at Wikipedia. It's also nice to put on your CV.

Unleash your creative demons on:

WWW: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Contributing_to_Wikipedia

Or you can also find other websites that need writers. Ask your native friends and your teacher for those websites.



112. Teaching

Teaching your target language is one of the best ways to understand a language fully. As Einstein said, if you can't explain something in a simple way, you don't understand it. So explain simply what you know.

You've been through the process, so you're an expert on what's difficult in that language. And it's a way to make money out of your efforts.

By the way, Einstein was really bad at speaking in English. But that's because he moved to the USA in his fifties. He knew French and German, and he was a genius in many other ways. So no bad words about him.

The final word – About the author

We're at the end of the book - congratulations, you're much better prepared to learn a language. Keep finding motivation everywhere, and find your own tips. And take this book in your hands (or on your laptop or whatever gets invented to read this) to find some inspiration.

About the author



Curiously, when Alain de Raymond was young, many language teachers told him he wasn't so good at languages. His Dutch was poor. His English teacher even advised him to follow extra courses.

He discovered he loved languages when he went to Germany in 2010. He had some basic German skills but started to speak in German from day one. What he got in return was amazing: friendship, love, respect and a good level of German. Since then, he's passionate about languages.

Now he's proud to be able to express himself in French, Dutch, English, German, Maltese and Spanish. He also has some Portuguese notions. And he's always busy learning new languages and taught some of his languages via tutoring.

He also has a life besides languages. He loves economics, politics and all the processes that shape society. He worked in communications a few years and holds 3 degrees: in Journalism, EU Studies and Management.

Find more information on Alain and learning languages:

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