

Slow Listening - The Secret to Fast English Fluency

English learning resource · EN

Key words & expressions · English

15 learning entries

Study task: Listen again and notice the expressions you studied.

1

a solid foundation

DEF

A strong base of knowledge, skills or trust that supports later progress.

Often used with build or lay. The foundation is a metaphor: basic skills support more complex ones like a base supports a building.

Slow listening helps you build a solid foundation in English.

Honest conversations laid a solid foundation for their friendship.

2

to build confidence

DEF

To gradually develop a stronger belief in your ability to do something.

Use build confidence in something or build someone's confidence. Build suggests gradual development through experience, not an instant change.

Understanding a whole sentence helped Poppy build confidence.

Practising her presentation with a friend built her confidence before the meeting.

3

neural pathway

DEF

A route along which signals travel between connected nerve cells.

This is a technical term. In the episode, it helps explain the idea of connections in the brain; it is not a synonym for a thought or a memory.

The hosts use the term neural pathway when discussing how the brain learns.

The diagram shows a neural pathway connecting different areas of the brain.

4

muscle memory

DEF

The ability to perform a practised movement with little conscious effort.

An uncountable expression: develop muscle memory, not a muscle memory. The name describes learned movements, not memories stored inside muscles.

The dancer repeated the slow steps to develop muscle memory.

After years of typing, muscle memory helps her find the keys without looking.

[Listen to this episode - yourenglishtoolbox.com](https://yourenglishtoolbox.com)

Read the complete resource online

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5

to pay attention

DEF

To deliberately focus on someone or something.

Use *pay attention* to followed by a noun or an -ing form. Unlike *notice*, it describes directing your attention, not simply becoming aware of something.

Pay attention to the rhythm when you listen again.

Please pay attention to where you put the keys.

6

to break something down

DEF

To divide something complex into smaller parts so it is easier to understand or practise.

This phrasal verb is separable: *break the sentence down* or *break down the sentence*. With a pronoun, say *break it down*, not *break down it*.

Break the sentence down into short groups of words.

The manager broke the project down into three manageable tasks.

7

to keep going

DEF

To continue an activity, especially when it becomes difficult.

Often used as encouragement: *Keep going!* It means *continue*, not necessarily *move faster*. A planned rest does not mean *giving up*.

Each small success encouraged Poppy to keep going.

The walk was tiring, but we kept going until we reached the village.

8

to slow down

DEF

To move, speak or do something at a lower speed.

It can stand alone or take an object: *slow down*, *slow the recording down*, *slow it down*. The opposite is *speed up*.

Slow the recording down if you cannot hear the word boundaries.

The driver slowed down as she approached the school.

9

to keep up

DEF

To continue at the same speed as someone or something without falling behind.

Use *keep up* with a person, a conversation or a changing situation. In listening, it means following what is being said.

Poppy found it hard to keep up with a fast Spanish podcast.

We walked more slowly so the children could keep up with us.



10

overwhelmed

DEF

Feeling unable to cope because there is too much to do or take in.

Common patterns are feel overwhelmed and be overwhelmed by or with something. Here the meaning is negative; overwhelmed with joy has a positive meaning.

She felt overwhelmed by the fast conversation.

I was overwhelmed by the number of messages waiting for me.

11

manageable

DEF

Possible to deal with or control without too much difficulty.

Common combinations include a manageable task, workload or amount. Manageable does not mean effortless; it means within your ability to cope.

Start with a manageable listening task, such as one short paragraph.

Sharing the work made the project manageable.

12

process

DEF

A series of actions or stages through which something happens or develops.

Here process is a noun. Focus on the process contrasts the steps and experience with the final result.

Trust the process and give yourself time to learn.

The application process includes a form and a short interview.



13

to add up

DEF

To gradually combine and produce a larger total or effect.

Use add up to before the total or result. Here it means accumulate; in another context, that doesn't add up means that something does not make sense.

All those small victories add up to real progress.

Small daily expenses can add up to a large bill.

14

to notice

DEF

To become aware of something by seeing, hearing or feeling it.

You can notice something without looking for it. Use notice a detail or notice that something has changed; pay attention to suggests deliberate focus.

At a slower speed, I noticed the final sound of each word.

She noticed that the front door was open.

15

to express yourself

DEF

To communicate your own thoughts, feelings or ideas.

The reflexive pronoun changes with the subject: I express myself; she expresses herself. You can express yourself in words, through art or in another language.

A wider vocabulary can help you express yourself in English.

He finds it easier to express himself through drawing.

