

Wake Up, Speak Up: Daily Routines in Real English

English learning resource · EN

Key words & expressions · English

15 learning entries

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

1

to drag yourself out of bed

DEF

to force yourself to get up when you are very tired and do not want to

The phrase captures the physical effort of leaving a warm bed — the 'drag' suggests resistance and dead weight.

On winter mornings I have to drag myself out of bed no matter how early my alarm goes off.

She dragged herself out of bed at six, even though she had only slept four hours.

2

the daily grind

DEF

the routine and often tiring work or activities that fill each day

Usually said with a mild sense of acceptance or weariness — the 'grind' is the hard work of everyday life. Not necessarily negative; many people find meaning in it.

Back to the daily grind after a week's holiday — it feels tougher every time.

She finds the daily grind of campus life surprisingly energising.

3

a game-changer

DEF

something or someone that fundamentally changes the situation or the way something is done

Originally from sports (a player or move that changes the game), now used broadly for products, habits, people, or ideas that transform a situation.

Learning the Pomodoro Technique was a genuine game-changer for my study sessions.

This podcast has been a total game-changer for my English — I understand so much more now.

4

a food coma

DEF

a state of drowsiness and low energy that follows eating a large meal

Entirely informal — not a medical term — but universally understood. The image of a 'coma' humorously exaggerates how heavy and sleepy you feel.

After that three-course Sunday lunch, I fell into a complete food coma for two hours.

Avoid the food coma by eating lighter meals during the working day.



5

Pomodoro Technique

DEF

A focus method using timed work sessions followed by short breaks.

Named after the Italian word for tomato because its creator used a tomato-shaped timer.

The Pomodoro Technique helped her begin a task she was avoiding.

Try one twenty-five-minute Pomodoro before checking your phone.

6

to stay focused

DEF

to keep your attention and energy directed at your goal, without being pulled away by distractions

Staying focused in language learning is not about willpower — it is about design. If your phone is next to you, you will not stay focused. If the material is too hard or too easy, you will drift. Focused practice is the only kind that produces results.

Turn off notifications and stay focused for just twenty minutes — quality beats quantity every time.

She found it hard to stay focused while listening in English, so she started taking notes by hand.

7

to glance at

DEF

to look quickly at something without studying it carefully

Glance implies speed and lightness — you get just enough information without stopping to focus. Opposite of 'stare at' or 'study'.

She glanced at her planner and saw she had three deadlines that week.

He glanced at his phone just long enough to check the time.

8

to wind down

DEF

to gradually relax and prepare for rest; to bring something to a calm conclusion

The opposite of 'ramping up' — winding down means slowing your body and mind, reducing stimulation before sleep.

I always spend an hour winding down before bed — no screens, just reading.

The party started winding down around midnight as people began heading home.

9

to jot down

DEF

to write something quickly and briefly, usually as a note or reminder

Jotting is quick and informal — you jot down key points, not full paragraphs. Often done on paper, in a notebook, or in a phone.

She jotted down the key dates before closing her laptop.

Let me just jot down your number so I don't forget it.

10

to hop on

DEF

to quickly get onto a bus, train, or other vehicle with ease

Casual and energetic — 'hop on' suggests something light and easy, not a formal or difficult boarding. Common for short journeys.

If you miss the bus, just hop on the next one — they come every ten minutes.

I hopped on my bike and cycled to the library in five minutes.



11

to go off

DEF

(of an alarm, bell, or device) to start ringing, buzzing, or making a noise automatically

Key point for learners: 'go off' for alarms means START ringing — the opposite of what the words suggest. Also used for bombs exploding and food spoiling.

My alarm went off at 6 AM but I ignored it for another twenty minutes.

The smoke alarm went off while she was cooking, scaring everyone in the flat.

12

to recharge

DEF

to rest and recover energy, especially after a period of effort or stress

Like a battery, the brain needs to recharge. Sleep, play, and nature all recharge mental energy. For language learners, recharging is not laziness — it is a required part of the process.

Take a weekend off from studying to fully recharge — you will return sharper.

An hour of walking in nature recharges the mind better than an hour on social media.

13

to stretch

DEF

to extend your body, limbs, or muscles to their full length, especially after sleep or rest

Morning stretching signals the body that the day is beginning — a gentle physical reset that improves blood flow and reduces stiffness.

I stretch my arms above my head the moment I wake up.

A five-minute stretch in the morning sets your body up for the whole day.

14

overwhelmed

DEF

Feeling unable to cope because there is too much to do, think about or experience.

Describes a person's feeling. Common patterns are feel overwhelmed and be overwhelmed by/with something.

I felt overwhelmed.

I feel overwhelmed by everything I need to do.

15

to snooze

DEF

to briefly go back to sleep after an alarm sounds; to delay the alarm by pressing a button

Snoozed alarms give you 5-10 extra minutes — research shows they actually make you more tired, not less.

He snoozed his alarm three times before finally getting up.

Stop snoozing and get up — you have a 9 AM lecture.

