

Train Your Brain and Mouth to Speak with Confidence

English learning resource · EN

Key words & expressions · English

15 learning entries

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

1

I didn't catch that

DEF

A natural way to say that you did not hear or understand something.

Catch means hear and process here, not physically capture.

I did not catch that—what time did you say?

Sorry, I did not catch your surname.

2

to lower your voice

DEF

to speak more quietly than usual — for emphasis, to create intimacy, or to draw listeners closer

Lower your voice is the counterintuitive power move. A presenter who suddenly speaks very quietly does not lose the room — they pull the room in. Lowering your voice for emphasis is more effective than raising it, because it forces listeners to pay closer attention.

Lower your voice at key moments — it draws listeners in more powerfully than raising it.

She surprised the room by lowering her voice to almost a whisper at the most important line, and everyone leaned in.

3

to keep it simple

DEF

To avoid unnecessary complexity.

A common conversational instruction used in learning, design and planning.

Keep it simple when your mind is tired.

We kept the presentation simple and focused.

4

to take your time

DEF

To proceed without rushing.

Often used as a reassuring instruction.

Take your time and let each sentence settle.

The interviewer told me to take my time.



5

to ask for help

DEF

To clearly request assistance when it is needed.

In urgent situations this is a skill, not a sign of failure.

Asking for help made the treatment safer.

Do not hesitate to ask for help if you feel worse.

6

to breathe out

DEF

To send air out of the lungs.

Exhale is the more formal one-word equivalent.

Breathe out even more slowly.

He breathed out and relaxed his shoulders.

7

to slow down

DEF

to reduce your speed or pace; to move, think, or speak more deliberately and without rushing

Slowing down is harder than speeding up — it requires intention. In English learning, slowing down your listening or speaking reveals details you miss when rushing.

Slow down when you speak — clarity matters more than speed.

The podcast is designed to help you slow down and actually absorb the English around you.

8

get stuck

DEF

To become unable to continue or make progress.

Common informal expression for a mental, practical or physical blockage.

Where you get stuck, that is not failure.

If you get stuck, wait a few seconds before checking.

9

burn out

DEF

To become physically and emotionally exhausted after prolonged stress or overwork.

As a verb: burn out. The condition is the noun burnout, written as one word.

She burned out after months without a proper break.

Working harder is not useful if you burn out.

10

out loud

DEF

Using your voice so that the words can be heard, rather than saying or reading them silently.

Out loud and aloud have the same core meaning, but out loud is more common in everyday conversation.

Say the word out loud exactly as you heard it.

Reading the dialogue out loud helps you notice its rhythm.



11

to buy time

DEF

To gain a short period in which to think or prepare.

In conversation it often describes phrases that prevent an awkward silence.

Let me think is a natural way to buy time.

He asked a question to buy time before answering.

12

to warm up

DEF

to prepare your body or voice for activity through gentle, graduated exercises before the main effort begins

Warm up is borrowed from sport and music. Pronunciation work needs a warm-up too — the muscles of the mouth, jaw, and tongue need to be engaged before you ask them to perform difficult sounds.

Before you tackle the J sound, warm up your jaw and lips with some gentle sounds.

Professional singers always warm up before a performance — treat your English speaking the same way.

13

to paraphrase

DEF

to express the same meaning using different words — especially when you do not know or cannot recall the exact term

Paraphrase is one of the most powerful fluency tools. Instead of stopping when you cannot find a word, you describe it. 'The thing you use to open a wine bottle' is a perfectly acceptable paraphrase for 'corkscrew'. Native speakers paraphrase constantly — it is not a sign of weakness.

When you cannot remember a word, paraphrase it — describe the thing until the word comes or the listener helps.

She paraphrased brilliantly: 'It is the feeling when you are embarrassed for someone else' for the word she could not recall.

14

to rehearse

DEF

to practise what you are going to say, before saying it in the real situation

Rehearsing is not cheating — actors, speakers, and job candidates all rehearse. For language learners, rehearsing conversations before real interactions dramatically reduces anxiety.

She rehearsed her presentation in English three times in front of the mirror.

Rehearse the conversation you are going to have — even in your head — and you will feel far more confident.

15

muscle memory

DEF

the ability to perform a physical action automatically, without thinking, after enough practice

Muscle memory in speaking means your mouth moves correctly without conscious thought — the goal of pronunciation and fluency training. It's built through deliberate, repeated practice.

After months of shadowing, muscle memory took over and my accent became much clearer.

Speaking a language confidently is all about muscle memory — your mouth needs to learn the sounds.

