

77 Tips to a Better English Using the Internet
A Guide for Second Language Learners,
2nd Edition

Tip Sample

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(Publisher: ESL International)

Authors: Christine Lépine and Paola Di Muzio

ISBN: 978-0-9739836-1-6

Publication Date: 11/01/2009

Introduction



We live in a world where there is so much information and too little time to assimilate it. We are on information overload. This is particularly true when it comes to learning or perfecting a second language or finding appropriate information on a specific subject on the Internet.

Have you ever spent long, excruciating hours in front of your computer screen trying to find the information you so desperately require? Have you ever wasted precious time only to find information that was not at all relevant to your needs or perhaps did not apply to the subject matter you were researching in the first place? There are tens of thousands of resources related to learning English as a Second or Foreign Language on the Internet. By performing a search for the words "learn English" we've obtained 933,000,000 search results at Yahoo and 149,000,000 at Google. This is why finding appropriate and useful online information to help you better your English is truly becoming more and more of a challenge.

How does a second language learner go about recognizing useful, high quality material? This is precisely the problem that we want to help you solve here. We have put this book together in order to make the learning of English a more relaxing and pleasurable experience for you, the student. We have transformed mountains of raw data into specialized knowledge that you can quickly and easily assimilate and immediately put into good use. From the most traditional methods to the modern, most innovative aspects of

learning a second language, our time-friendly bank of information provides the best online resources to help you better meet all your second language needs.

We are happy to launch the Second Edition of our e-book. We have listened to you, our faithful readers and made the necessary adjustments to allow you greater success in your language-learning quest. We strive to introduce you to the best and most up-to-date resources available on the Internet today.

This book aims to be useful to people of widely different backgrounds from those with little previous experience in learning English to more advanced high intermediate learners. Although naturally, quite a bit of research was necessary, we have discarded most of the difficult technical ideas and terms used by linguists and chose to write in clear and simple English.

Our guide can be read sequentially, one tip at a time, or randomly, i.e. not in order. Some will prefer to simply read it from beginning to end while others will go directly to the sections of greater interest to them. The Table of Contents is designed to make it easy for you to select items of interest and get or return to them at your convenience with only one click.


Our information bank is divided into ten parts that cover all four language skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing), as well as many other important topics such as: Correct Attitude, Learning Strategies, Stress and Pronunciation, Grammar, Vocabulary, and Games.

Although the new version is similar to the original in its purpose, we have added material which will allow you to discover other aspects and points of interest. For example, you will find new sections devoted to podcasts, vodcasts, and ESL / EFL blogs. You will also find that many of the sections found in the First Edition have been considerably expanded. You can now, for instance, enjoy more vocabulary and visual vocabulary resources, as well as a greater number of audio, film and video links. The same applies to new reading, listening and grammar resources. And last but not least, you will discover new tools to improve both your speaking skills (stress and pronunciation, vocal chats, telephone English) and writing skills (written chats, online forums and messaging, keypals, spelling rules, and punctuation).

The new e-book features enhancements which allow the learner to once again navigate the web successfully and time efficiently. Each of our resources was carefully chosen based on its excellence and usefulness. As a whole, these resources cover a great variety of information to suit your needs and broaden your horizons toward the entire second language learning experience. In this perspective, the process of learning English goes beyond learning new vocabulary words and grammar rules.

Embark yourself on a personal development passage that will ultimately transform you and the way you look at the world. This is truly a journey with a beginning but no end.

Symbols Used in this Book

 = symbol found before the name of each ESL (English as a Second Language) resource listed in this book

▶ = symbol found before an Internet link to an ESL resource

▲ = resource at the beginner level

▲ = resource at the intermediate level

▲ = resource at the advanced level

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Section 3 - Listening Comprehension



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Practice listening to English by making use of audio files on the Internet.

There exist thousands of graded Internet audio files to choose from that help second language learners sharpen their listening skills. Here is a list of links to ten of these extraordinary sites:

► **Great Audio Links**

🔑 **Randall's ESL Cyber-Listening Lab:** One of the best listening sites to improve your listening comprehension skills through practice with self-grading listening quiz pages. The site contains general listening quizzes, listening quizzes for academic purposes, 20-minute ESL vocabulary lessons, language learning and life tips, and long conversations with RealVideo.

► <http://www.esl-lab.com>




🔑 **ESL About.com:** English listening skills and activities for effective listening practice for ESL and EFL learners and teachers.

Comprehension quizzes for listening skill improvement for beginner, intermediate and advanced ESL and EFL English levels.


► <http://esl.about.com/od/englishlistening/>



 **Real-English.com:** An ESL video and listening site maintained by Mike Marzio. Designed for ESL and EFL students who want to improve their listening comprehension and speaking skills via EFL and ESL video, lessons and interactive self-grading exercises and quizzes.


► <http://www.real-english.com>



 **ELLLO.org (English Language Listening Lab Online):** Learn English by listening to English speakers from all over the world. Over 500 listening activities to choose from! Listening games, news center, song page, and theme page. Choose speakers by nationality or choose subject by theme.


► <http://www.ello.org>



 **BreakingNewsEnglish.com:** Interested in current affairs? Daily uploaded English news lessons. Free EFL/ESL lesson plans, handouts and podcasts for learning about current events and current affairs lessons, and business English.


► <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com>



 **1-Language.com:** Real-life situations for students and users of American English. This Audio Center features 40 Units of English focusing on practical conversations and academic language as commonly found in American universities. Conversation starters, getting around, telephone conversations, assignments, classes, and short talks.


► <http://www.1-language.com/audiocourse/index.htm>



 **BBC World Service:** One of the best sites in the world to improve your English (mostly British English). Excellent audio and video clip section. Watch and listen: pronunciation tips, welcome to London, top of the pops, singer and the song, beyond the postcard, music directory, video nation, retro English and more.


► <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/multimedia/index.shtml>



 **5MinuteEnglish.com:** ESL listening lessons. Free short self-study English lessons and quick tips for ESL students. List of topics includes: Dogs, Dogs, Dogs, Get the phone, The Birthday Party, The Fishing Spot, Asking about Restaurants, The Weather's Great, What do you like to do?, Movies, Chores, The Job Interview, The New Apartment, Let's Take a Picture, In a Hotel, Shopping for Clothes, Telephone Call to a Business, A Thief in the Night.


► <http://www.5minuteenglish.com/listening.htm>




 **Focus English.com:** Audio exercises that focus on learning idiomatic and everyday expressions to help you deal with daily conversational situations. Each dialogue is accompanied by carefully designed exercises. Follow the recommended steps and practice at your own pace. List of topics includes: Communication, Eating, Emotions, Fashion, Friendship, Health, Housing, Life, Memory, Money, Romance, Shopping, Time, Traffic, Traveling, Vacation, Weather, and Work.

► <http://www.focusenglish.com/dialogues/conversation.html>




 **Voice of America:** Wordmaster is a five-minute radio feature heard each Wednesday on VOA News Now. It is a weekly analysis of American English as spoken today. Read and listen to hundreds of audio files. List of topics includes: Grammar, Idioms, Slang, Regional English, Topical Issues, and Archives.

▶ <http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/wordmaster/index.cfm> ▲ ▲


 **ELL (English Listening Lounge):** Paying site that offers three free listener menus containing each 10 audio listening passages, questions and answers, and transcripts. A great variety of topics are covered. The site is in American English.

▶ <http://www.englishlistening.com> ▲ ▲


 **World English.org:** Click on any of the flags on that page to hear accents from some of the main English-speaking countries in the world. Hear English accents from: Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Indonesia, Israel, Singapore, Scotland, South Africa, Sweden, the United States, Vietnam, and Wales.

▶ <http://www.world-english.org/listening.htm> ▲ ▲

► Great Film and Video Resources


 **LingualNet.net:** A wonderful site where you can learn English through movies. Watch narratives, documentaries, short animation films, cine-poetry, travel, homemade videos, and a lot more. Transcripts included.

► <http://www.lingual.net>  

 **BBC Video Nation:** Meet people from across the UK and hear on video clips what they have to say about their lives and the world around them. British English. No transcripts.


► <http://www.bbc.co.uk/videonation/>  

► <http://www.bbc.co.uk/videonation/archive/index.shtml> (archives)  

 **English Bites:** Australia Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). An informative and entertaining way to improve your English. Free videos with transcripts and vocabulary exercises. Australian English.


► <http://australianetwork.com/englishbites/>  

► <http://australianetwork.com/englishbites/archives.htm> (archives)  

 **YouTube.com:** A free website that is loaded with hundreds of thousands of videos for people to watch and share worldwide through a Web experience. First-hand accounts of current events, hobbies and interests, as well as the quirky and unusual. No transcripts.


▶ <http://www.youtube.com>



 **Atom Films:** Watch films, videos, shorts, and online movies ranging from 1 to 30 minutes in length. Also provides on-demand viewing of over 1,500 world-class film and animation titles. Free registration. No transcripts.


▶ <http://www.atomfilms.com>



 **EnglishTrailers.com:** A non-profit, free educational site made by teachers for students studying English as a second / foreign language. This site uses movie commercials (movie clips) to help you better your English. Includes summaries, cloze tests, transcripts, talking activities, quizzes and a forum. Lots of fun!


▶ <http://www.english-trailers.com>



 **FreeMoviesOnline.com:** FMO is a free movie website where you can watch hundreds of movies, cartoons, TV series and TV shows for free.


▶ <http://www.freemooviesonline.com>



 **Movies.Go.com:** Film news, trailers, featurettes, overview, multimedia, photos, reviews, a fan forum, crew news and features. Also showtimes and tickets, and synopsis summaries for films currently in theaters and new to DVD and video. A wealth of information. Amazing everything you can find about movies for free at this site. No transcripts.

▶ <http://movies.go.com>



 **Apple.com:** Watch the latest theatrical film trailers of new and upcoming movies, from Apple.com. Organized by production studio. Requires the QuickTime software that you can download for free at this site. No transcripts.

▶ <http://www.apple.com/trailers/>



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About the Authors

Christine Lépine has taught English as a Second Language (ESL) for the past seventeen years. She currently teaches ESL at the collegial level in Quebec, Canada and is also the founder and Director of ESL All as well as the editor of the ESL All Newsletter. She holds a Master's degree in Second Language Education from McGill University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature from Concordia University. Her areas of research are Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and ESL material development.

Email address: clepine@eslall.com

Paola Di Muzio has been teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) as well as Italian as a Foreign Language for sixteen years. She currently teaches ESL at the collegial level in Quebec, Canada. After earning a Bachelor of Arts degree specializing in languages from the Université de Moncton in New Brunswick, Canada as well as completing Italian studies from the Université de Montréal and Concordia University, she pursued a career in teaching as well as translation. For the past several years, she has taught and developed material for second language learners.

Email address: p_dm@live.ca