

Second-Language Training Options for Learning and Maintaining English

There are many effective tools and methods to help you acquire and maintain skills in your second official language. Fortunately, a good number of them are free and available to anyone, at any time. They also allow you to learn at your own pace. Check out one or more of the learning tools below and feel free to contact your manager for help, advice and suggestions to speed up your second-language learning journey.

Note: *Some formal training requires financial approval.*

Passion and dedication open up unlimited learning opportunities for you!

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Contact your manager or the language training coordinator within your department for more information related to language training, especially where there are associated costs.

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Language Schools



Individual or group language training

Consult the [Standing Offer List](#) to find out which schools you can attend. Costs and hourly rates vary.



Canada School of Public Service (CSPS)

CSPS offers courses and resources to help you acquire and improve skills in your second official language.

[Learning catalogue \(csps-efpc.gc.ca\)](https://csps-efpc.gc.ca/)



Language Research Development Group

This is an [online self-learning tool](#) that helps you develop your second-language skills. This resource is useful for employees because of its flexible approach and accessibility to training in your second official language. There is a cost associated with using this tool.

***“The most important ingredient in language learning is to enjoy it.”
~ Carl Dundas***

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Practice Tools

Read everything you can get your hands on

Reading the classics, paperbacks, newspapers, websites, emails, your social media feeds, cereal boxes: if they are written in English, read them.



Language Portal of Canada

Access free tools to improve your knowledge of English. Polish your [writing skills](#) with the [quizzes](#), contribute to the [Our Languages blog](#), and discover a collection of [links to Canadian language resources](#).



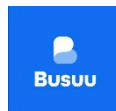
Official Languages Hub®

The [Official Languages Hub®](#) site has new resources on official languages, provided by various departments and agencies. Visit the Hub to find all the information you need in one place!



englishpage.com

[Free online lessons](#) on learning English. You will learn verb tenses and improve your vocabulary, among other things.



Busuu

[Busuu](#) is a language application developed in 2008. It is available in 12 languages, including English and French. The first part of each lesson focuses on vocabulary, then the same vocabulary is used in short dialogues adapted to your level. The lesson ends with a recap test. Members of the community correct your exercises. Participants help each other and correct each other's exercises.



BBC Languages

This tool is designed for beginner and intermediate learners. BBC Languages offers [online audio courses](#), including games, vocabulary, crossword puzzles, explanations and exercises on grammar points, and links to English news, radio and television.

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English Language Centre

Choose [your language level](#) (upper beginner, low intermediate, intermediate, upper intermediate, advanced) and start the grammar, reading and vocabulary exercises.



English Grammar Online

This tool offers a [fun way](#) to learn English as a second official language. It offers a wide range of tools and resources as well as interesting articles on various countries, animals, sports and literature.



Purdue University

You will find [exercises](#) on grammar, punctuation and writing. This is another fun way to learn English.



EFLnet – Phrasal verbs

This site offers [exercises](#) that help you improve your English vocabulary and sentence structure. People who want to acquire [more advanced vocabulary](#) will find a list of exercises. This site also offers several [idiomatic expressions](#) as well as [games](#).



Blair English Exercise

This provides a [list of exercises](#) covering different themes. Choose the topic that interests you, then start learning.



Towson University

This [site offers a number of exercises](#) to help you with sentence structure.



Perfect English Grammar

Fill out a free questionnaire to assess your level of understanding of English grammar. Then, you will be offered a [range of exercises and activities](#) to help you improve your skills.



Phrasal Verb Demon

[Learn the structure](#) of phrasal verbs and how to use them in a sentence.



Learn English Today

This [free product](#) allows you to learn English as a second official language. It offers grammar exercises, proverbs, vocabulary, games, quotations.

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“Learning a second language not only has cognitive and academic benefits but also supports a greater sense of openness to—and appreciation for—other cultures.”

~ Tochon, 2009

Applications and Podcasts

Podcasts for learning Canadian English

Do you like humour, politics, blogs, cooking? With topics covering every conceivable interest, you are sure to find an English-language podcast or YouTube channel that interests you. Subscribe to a few of them and listen to them in your car or while going for a walk.



Mauril

[Mauril](#) is a free platform for learning English or French through a wide range of stimulating and entertaining content from CBC/Radio-Canada.

Available on the App Store or on Google Play. Download it for free today!



Tandem

[Tandem](#) is a language learning application where millions of people teach each other.



Duolingo

Learning with [Duolingo](#) is fun! Duolingo allows you to earn points when you answer questions correctly in against-the-clock activities. These practical lessons are effective.

This tool is available on the internet as well as on an application for smartphones and tablets.



Lyrics training

You can [learn the words to songs](#) in English and have fun while doing it.

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Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab

Improve your [active listening skills in English](#) with activities and games. This learning environment covers people of all levels, from beginners to those with advanced skills.



Moment of Science – podcast

[Learn English by listening](#) to podcasts providing scientific explanations of life's most complex mysteries.



Memrise

[Memrise](#) is a tool for beginners and those of intermediate level. It offers thousands of examples of English-language videos used in real life. This tool offers fun tests that boost memory and build your language abilities quickly.

EnglishCLUB English Club

[Listen to and learn English](#) as a second official language. You will find lessons on grammar, vocabulary, phonetics, active listening, speaking, reading and writing



English podcast series – Canada School of Public Service

[The series features](#) a range of learning topics such as innovation in the public service, project management, Indigenous learning and much more!

Episodes are produced for and by public servants and offer expert advice, interviews, analysis and stories that will pique your interest and support your learning needs.



Polyglot Perspective

This is a [youth-led community](#) that aims to inspire young immigrants to dive into the world of languages by publishing articles and artwork and conducting podcast interviews.



CBC Radio – podcasts

[CBC Radio](#) offers podcasts on various topics. Listen to them in English to improve your listening skills as well as your comprehension and vocabulary.

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TV Shows, Movies and YouTube (short videos)



TED Talks

[TED](#) is a non-profit organization dedicated to spreading ideas, usually in the form of short presentations (18 minutes or less) that will help you develop your active listening skills.



National Film Board

Don't forget that the [National Film Board](#) offers films and documentaries in English that may be of interest to you.



Learn English with Anna – Voice of America

Assess your level of English language skills and learn to [read and listen in English](#).



National Geographic

Discover the world with the series of short episodes titled “[Overhead at National Geographic](#).” Topics covered include geography, science, history, culture, photography, animal life, protection of endangered species and archaeology.



Dave's English Cafe

[Dave created his virtual café](#) to allow teachers and students from around the world to meet and chat.



Purdue Writing Lab

You will find, in the form of short videos, examples of students who consult with teachers from the [Purdue Writing Lab](#) in order to improve their university projects. This tool will allow you to listen to the teachers' corrections.



Oxford University Press resources for English language teaching

Learn English with [Oxford University Press](#). The tool offers many activities, English learning communities, assessments, etc. These are all available online and give you flexibility in your learning.

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Media and Radio Stations



MSN and Sympatico Portal

[Canada's customizable](#) and curated collection of Canadian and world news plus coverage of sports, entertainment, money, weather, travel, health, etc.



radio

CBC Radio

Listening to [CBC Radio](#) is a good way to improve your listening skills in English.



News: Government of Canada

[Check out what is](#) being presented in the news, in English, by the Government of Canada. You can use filters to select the service and type of news you want to read.



InfoMedia

NewsDesk – InfoMedia

If your organization is part of the [InfoMedia group](#), you will have access to different news articles from different English-language newspapers.

“One Language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way.”

~ Frank Smith

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Tools for Conversation Practice

Find a language partner or sign up for a language exchange.

Why not find a language partner in the workplace, or use web-based services that match language learners with native speakers? You can also participate in a local language encounter group or similar groups that bring together people looking to improve their language skills.



My Language Exchange

Become fluent in English while making friends. This is the [only website](#) offering a proven language-exchange method and lesson plans to give you fun and effective practice. Created by a qualified language teacher who specializes in language-exchange learning, this method allows you to improve your language skills in a safe and positive learning environment.



Toastmasters

[Toastmasters](#) is an environment of mutual support that provides each member with the opportunity to develop their communication and leadership skills in English and French. Select “Find a Club Near You” at the following link: [Toastmasters International – Find a Club](#)



Tips for Language Conversation Groups

- Limit the number of people in the group (6 to 8 is ideal).
- Give everyone an opportunity to speak.
- Meet regularly to practice; the more practice the better.
- Have a facilitator or a conversation leader for the group – could be rotational depending on the level of the group.
 - Ensure everyone gets a chance to speak and keep the conversation going.
 - It could be the first person to start the conversation.
 - Ensure the group keeps the conversation going in English.

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- Choose topics based on the skill level of the group. It can sometimes be planned ahead of time to give participants time to prepare and do research.
 - Choose simple topics such as movies and the weather.
 - Explore more advanced topics and topics that can be debated.
- Establish group rules.

Dictionaries and Guides

[Merriam-Webster](#)

[Grand dictionnaire terminologique](#)

[Clés de la rédaction](#)

[Writing Tips Plus](#)

[TERMIUM Plus®](#)

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