

# Five tips to increase vocabulary

## 1. Meaning

Simply knowing the meaning of a word is not enough to really know a word. The meaning of a word is the first step to vocabulary learning, however, it is not the only one.

Every time you check the meaning of a word, make sure to write it down. You might want to add a picture or a diagram to help you remember it.

If you feel like you need to add the translation of the word as well, go ahead. But it is important to keep in mind that focusing only on the translation of a word might end up slowing you down further down the road.



## 2. Context

Besides meaning, it is important to add context to the new word. Write down the word in a sentence - or a couple of different sentences - underline different forms the word might take: if it is a verb, is it present, past, future? Is it simple or continuous?

The more context you have, the better you infer meaning. The better you infer meaning, the more comfortable with the word you are. The more comfortable you are, the more you use it. The more you use it... well, I guess you get the idea...

## 3. Part of Speech

This might seem a bit technical, but it is really important to write down the new word's part of the speech. It means you write down if it is a verb, a noun, an adjective, etc.

When you know whether a word is a verb or a noun, for example, you are able to use it correctly in a phrase. Take the word present. It can be a noun and it can be a verb.

- Paul had to present a result's report.
- Paul received a present.

In which of the sentences is it a verb? In which is it a noun? In the first sentence, it is a verb. In the second, a noun.

## 4. Pronunciation

By now you probably already know that English is not a phonetic language, which means there isn't a direct link between the way a word is written and the way it is pronounced. That's why it is so important to make note of how to say new words.

Did you know that we pronounce present (verb) and present (noun) differently? The first is preSENT and the latter is PREsent.

## 5. Neighbouring words

Collocations, dependent prepositions, expressions and phrasal verbs are all groups of words that are frequently used together. For example: high time, prime time, past time, full time, part time. Or come up, come out, come on, come in.

When we group words together, it is easier for us to remember the words themselves, and how to use them. So next time you take note of new vocabulary, do yourself a favour and also write down which prepositions are used with them, which adjectives or adverbs are frequently associated with them, and so forth.