

THE IMPROVE YOUR LISTENING TOOLKIT

This resource accompanies my article on improving your listening.

Read it here: <http://wp.me/p6ZvLT-jy>

In this toolkit, you're going to get several pieces of essential information.

1. A list of resources of suitable listening material. This resource list will save you precious time which you could be using for listening.
2. A list of listening strategies. This strategy list is incredible, and you will find some strategies which work for you!
3. A Listening Tracker. Use this template to track what you listened to, which strategies you used and what you focused on. Print a new one out whenever you practice listening.

FREE LISTENING RESOURCES

Here are resources for any situation... whether you have an hour or five minutes.

What's more, these are all **free** resources and they're authentic.

LingoRank: This site lets you choose a TED Talk based on your level. It's quite a good tool for choosing something which isn't too difficult. <http://lingorank.com/talks/> If you'd rather use the TED Talk site, you can go here: <http://www.ted.com/> TED Talks are basically innovative or inspiring presentations.

MIT: Lectures on a huge range of subject topics: <http://video.mit.edu/browse/>

Three-Minute Thesis: This is a really unique and authentic resource. It features PhD students explaining their research projects. And they do it all in only three minutes. Really good for beginners and if you only have five minutes: <http://threeminutethesis.org/3mt-showcase>

University of Oxford Podcasts: These are podcasts which you can download for free.
<http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/>

University of Reading Lectures: These are lectures about living and studying in the UK. There are also some lectures about subject topics. There are transcripts and questions to answer:
<http://www.reading.ac.uk/SACLL/UniversityofReadingLectures/SACLL-UniofReadingLectures.aspx>



LIST OF STRATEGIES

Try different strategies to see which ones work for you. Evaluate each strategy when you've tried it a few times. Use this scale: 1= doesn't work for me / 5 = works well for me. This list is not a complete list of strategies. You should try to think of your own, too.

Strategies for before listening:

Strategy	Evaluation
Have a plan of how to achieve the task	1 2 3 4 5
Predict the content of the lecture	1 2 3 4 5
Discuss the topic of the listening with others before you listen	1 2 3 4 5
Do some background reading	1 2 3 4 5
Think of what you already know about the topic before listening	1 2 3 4 5
Think of questions that you'd like to answer	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5

Strategies for during listening

Strategy	Evaluation
Focus on the topic	1 2 3 4 5
Focus on key words	1 2 3 4 5
Use abbreviations (ex = for example)	1 2 3 4 5
Use a list note-taking format	1 2 3 4 5
Use a table note-taking format	1 2 3 4 5
Use a brainstorm note-taking format	1 2 3 4 5
Listen for signposting language (My next point is... One reason for this is...)	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5

Strategies for after listening

Strategy	Evaluation
Evaluate your listening	1 2 3 4 5
Summarise your notes	1 2 3 4 5
Comment on the listening	1 2 3 4 5
Discuss the listening with others	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5



LISTENING TRACKER TEMPLATE

<i>Date</i>	<i>Title of listening</i>	<i>Topic</i>
<i>Strategies before listening</i>	<i>Strategies during listening</i>	<i>Strategies after listening</i>

Take notes here:

Evaluate:

<i>What did I do well?</i>	<i>What didn't I do well?</i>	<i>What should I focus on next time?</i>
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HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

So, now you've had a good look at everything, I'm going to tell you how to use it all.

First, this toolkit won't work on its own. You need to practise in order to improve your listening.

If you don't practise, you don't improve. It's that simple!

But, let's not be negative! This toolkit makes it **extremely** easy to improve. Here's what you can do:

1. Find a listening text. My recommendation would be a Three Minute Thesis or a TED Talk.
2. Choose a few listening strategies to use.
3. Print out a copy of the Listening Tracker Template (or draw your own) and fill it in. Don't start listening yet, though!
4. Do your 'Before listening strategies', such as reading about the topic.
5. Listen to your listening text. Remember to take notes as you listen.
6. Evaluate how you did.

Then do it all over again the next day!

FINAL WORDS

Improving listening isn't always easy, but it's definitely possible. The best way to improve listening is to practise often, evaluate your progress, and to listen to a range of material.

I hope this toolkit helps you in your English language learning journey (and it shows you that you can improve without spending money!)

If you liked this resource:

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