The Best Way to Learn to Speak a Foreign Language

KS2 MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES Ages 10-14 ⏰ 3 min read

Start with Listening and Repetition

When you learn to speak a foreign language properly, the first step is **listening**. Your brain learns patterns from hearing words and phrases repeated. Watch cartoons, listen to songs, or use apps in your target language. Don't worry about understanding every word at first—your ear is learning the **sounds and rhythm** of the language.

Think of it like learning to recognise your friend's voice on the phone. You don't need to understand every word to know it's them—you recognise the pattern and tone.

Speak Out Loud, Even When Alone

Speaking aloud is crucial. Many learners only read and write, but real language learning requires using your mouth. Read sentences aloud, repeat after videos, or talk to yourself. This might feel silly, but it trains your mouth and brain to work together. You're building **muscle memory**—your lips and tongue learn the right shapes to make unfamiliar sounds.

Think of it like learning to kick a football. You can watch others kick all day, but you'll only get good when you actually practise kicking yourself.

Talk to Real People

The absolute best way to learn is by **speaking with real people**—native speakers if possible. Join a language club, find a **language exchange partner** online, or take lessons with a teacher. Real conversations teach you how language is actually used, not just textbook grammar. You'll learn what works, get feedback, and feel more confident.

Think of it like learning to play tennis. You can practise against a wall, but you only truly improve by playing against another person.

Be Consistent and Patient

Language learning isn't a sprint—it's a **marathon**. Studying **15 minutes daily** is better than cramming for **3 hours once a week**. Your brain learns through regular exposure. Set realistic goals, celebrate small wins, and don't expect perfection. Making mistakes is how you learn.

The magic formula combines **listening, speaking aloud, real conversation, and consistency**. Mix these together, and you'll speak properly before you know it.

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