**Mobile learning: improve your English anytime, anywhere**

[**https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/mobile-learning-improve-english-anytime-anywhere**](https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/mobile-learning-improve-english-anytime-anywhere)

**By Emma Segev**

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There are hundreds of mobile apps available for English language students.  ©

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**Mobile devices and apps are changing the way people learn English. Online teacher**[**Emma Segev**](http://talk2meenglish.blogspot.co.uk/2014/01/top-10-tools-for-creating-teaching.html?_sm_au_=iHVL6t1Pt0pDJ8n5)**, who won last month's British Council Teaching English blog award, shares her ideas for learning English on the go. Comment below this post if you have further tips.**

**Technology and language learning**

My online teaching career has set me on a journey of discovery. It has provided me with creative freedom, endless resources and learning materials, and the possibility to teach students from all corners of the globe. I'm a true believer in the importance of technology in the classroom and e-learning as a platform for teaching.

However, more and more students are using mobile devices to connect to the web. Mobile learning (or m-learning) is the ability to learn anywhere and at any time using a portable electronic device. Mobile learning is less structured than e-learning, but in my opinion complements the latter perfectly.

**Mobile learning and language development**

Our world today is obsessed with doing everything quickly, learning included. Self-study is obviously important in language learning. From my experience, as little as one hour a week of self-study can boost a student's progress immensely. Yet the majority of my students have chosen to study online due to time restrictions, and in their first lesson, they make it quite clear they have no time for homework. So, how do I motivate my busy students to find the time?

As the use of mobile technology is increasing, why not offer students the possibility to study anytime, anyplace and at their own convenience through their mobile devices? I get my students started with small, realistic homework activities. I request that my students spend just five or ten minutes a day on English. I introduce them to some of the amazing apps available and encourage them to learn in a mobile way. And it works.

**Five free apps for learning English on the go**

There are hundreds of mobile phone apps available and it's possible to find free options suited to students on a budget. Here are my top five free apps that students can use for extra practice:

[British Council apps](http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/apps) offer a huge choice for smart phones. You can look at the options on their webpage and download the apps on Google Play, Apple's App Store or using a [QR code](http://www.qrstuff.com/). I particularly like 'Johnny Grammar's Word Challenge' - it's a fun way to improve grammar.

[Duolingo](https://www.duolingo.com/) is a wonderful app that has just won the 'Best education start-up award'. It's designed like a game and is pretty addictive. It's free, contains no adverts and is very effective.

[Two min English](http://twominenglish.com/) is free, has no adverts and contains more than two hundred two-minute video lessons on a variety of topics e.g., social English, business English, travel English, common mistakes in English, idioms and phrases.

[Game to learn English powowbox](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.powowbox.englishtracker&hl=en) is a multi-level game. Once downloaded, it appears as English tracker. The first three levels are free. You have to spot the mistake - if you get it wrong, you receive a clear explanation. It's fun and easy to play.

[Real English](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.modernenglishstudio.RealEnglishBusiness1&hl=en) offers a variety of apps at different levels – business and conversation apps at beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. The apps are free, but they contain adverts. Each app contains 20 lessons that focus on specific grammar/vocabulary areas. Each lesson is made up of five parts.

**Being creative with mobile devices**

Why not encourage your students to be creative and use the technology at their literal fingertips to prepare homework activities? I've chosen a few apps and looked at some of their educational possibilities:

[Whatsapp](https://www.whatsapp.com/) is a mobile messaging app which allows you to exchange messages. Users can create groups, send each other unlimited images, video and audio media messages over an internet connection.

Ideas:

* How about sending your students a short news article or podcast and asking them to send an audio response summarising it in their own words or giving their opinion?
* Students could send photos with captions to illustrate different tenses. Alternatively they could describe daily habits or routines, or create a set of instructions.
* Students could create a video or audio of themselves making a short business presentation or reviewing a movie/book or TV show.

[Ipadio](http://www.ipadio.com/default.aspx) lets you record up to 60 minutes of high-quality audio. You can then add titles, descriptions, images, and geo-locate your recording before instantly uploading to your ipadio.com account or cross-post to your Twitter, Facebook or blog.

Ideas:

* Set a research activity, get students to interview a number of people and record and edit their interview.
* You could record your lesson and send it to students who were absent.
* Create a revision podcast and send it to your students.
* Students could create a short story or poem with photos and audio.

Closed [Facebook groups](https://groups.fb.com/) can be a great way of communicating with your students. Students can share ideas, opinions and homework projects.

Ideas:

* Post quizzes and grammar tips.
* Get students to share book reviews.
* Brainstorm ideas about different topics.
* Have a different theme each week and get students to share songs, pictures and quotations connected to the theme.
* Generally create a place for students to interact with you and with each other outside the classroom.

To conclude, by supplying our students with easily accessible tools for studying 'on the go', we are enabling them to incorporate self-study into their busy lives, accelerating their progress and guaranteeing better results.

Happy teaching!

**Teachers, visit our [TeachingEnglish website](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/) for more lesson plans and activities, and find out how you can**[**become a TeachingEnglish blogger**](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/become-a-teachingenglish-blogger)**.**

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