

# COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY: 7 TIPS TO INCREASE YOUR VOCABULARY

[kimcubitt.alphalifestyleacademy.com](http://kimcubitt.alphalifestyleacademy.com)

There are a lot of words in the English language that you don't know. Unabridged dictionaries contain over 400,000 words. Experts estimate that there are as many as 800,000 to even 1 million words in English!

Sadly, the average college graduate only knows anywhere from 20,000 to 35,000 words, depending on whose numbers you believe. That's less than 10% of the language!

**Imagine how much you'd impress your friends if you knew a few more words.** Not only that, but with a larger vocabulary, your exact meanings of whatever you're talking about will be clearer. Your feelings and opinions will be better understood.

Learning new words isn't easy, especially if you don't see or hear them regularly. But you can successfully increase your vocabulary if you choose.

**Try these techniques to increase your vocabulary:**

**1. Find the right word lists.** Given that there are over 900,000 words you don't know, which words are you going to learn? There's little value in learning words that no one else knows, because no one will understand what you're saying! Try these ideas:

- Word lists that are recommended for standardized tests like the ACT, SAT, and GRE are a great place to start.
- Frequency word lists. This is a list of words in order of frequency in which they're used. Start at the beginning and scan down until you find a word

that you're not completely familiar with. Begin making your own list.

**2. Read more.** A great way to increase your vocabulary is to simply read more. Of course, it's important to read books and magazine articles written at an appropriate level. The optimal level is dependent on your current reading level.

- Anytime you find a word you don't understand, write it down and make a point to look it up.

**3. Learn 25 words per week. Avoid trying to learn too many words at once.**

While you may accumulate a long list of words, limit yourself to only 25 words per week. If you struggle with 25, cut the weekly list down to a size you're comfortable with.

- Twenty-five words might not sound like a lot, but it's well over a thousand words a year.

**4. Speak and write the words.** Once you have a list of words and definitions, avoid the tendency to just read them. You'll learn them quicker and more completely by both speaking and writing. Practice using the words in sentences. **Begin using your new words in everyday conversations and emails.**

**5. Use technology.** There are many programs available online, such as Anki, that simulate a stack of flashcards. These programs can be very helpful by exposing you to words at a regular frequency. Many of these programs are free and are great tools for learning new vocabulary.

**6. Repetition is key.** As with many other things, **repetition is a key to learning and permanently remembering your new vocabulary words.** Once you've committed a new word to memory, periodically go back and review that word. A word that you never use won't stay in your memory forever.

- Carry your list of words with you. Whenever you have a few spare minutes, pull out your list and put in a little work.

**7. Make learning new words a habit.** This isn't the type of endeavor that can be done once a week. It's imperative to set aside time each day to either learn new words or to reinforce newly-learned words. Remember, repetition is key.

Be a hit at dinner parties with your fancy vocabulary! **Increasing your vocabulary will enable you to communicate more effectively and make more challenging reading materials more accessible.**

You might even find the process of learning new words enjoyable. Boost your vocabulary in your spare time and you'll enjoy the results.