

If you want to follow tip #3 successfully, you will have to do it with a **growth mindset** because it will take time to see the results. Put an effort and be patient with yourself. You will not become an advanced conversationalist overnight but I guarantee, you will make progress.

Tip #3 – Listen to authentic language as much as you can

“authentic language”

Language learning resources often cover various topics because courses try to cater to the interests of diverse student population. Some of them, you may feel, you would never discuss in everyday life or you have no interest in. That is why, every language learning program must be supplemented by listening to actual native speakers, speaking the authentic language, on topics that interest you, at the normal pace. The resources are plentiful and at our fingertips.

“as much as you can”.

Identify times during your day when you are not engaged in an “intellectual” activity. Use those times to listen. Start at 10-15 minutes per day and build up to 45 minutes -1 hour per day. Resist the temptation to write things down. Try to guess the meaning of the words from the context. Stop the audio and repeat phrases you want to learn, but do not write anything down! Listen to the authentic language and memorize phrases naturally, like a child would.

This listening exercise is similar to how you would develop your writing skills – by writing a little every day, even if you don’t feel like it, even if you have a writer’s block, even if you know what you produced was no good. Follow the same advice for listening. Do it every day, even if you feel you do not understand half of what is being said. Be kind to yourself and persevere.

- Identify times during the day when you are doing something else but could be also listening
- Schedule listening during those times and build it into your daily routine
- Decide what to listen to before your scheduled time so it is ready to go when you are

RESOURCES

PODCASTS

Stories

- [This American Life](#) – with Ira Glass as a host, this is a weekly radio program and a podcast built around a specific theme and presenting 2-4 different stories built around that theme. The whole show is about an hour long so you may just choose to listen to just one story per day.
- [The Moth](#) – a story telling podcast. Just like This American Life, it contains various stories around the same topic only instead of investigative reporting it is a person telling his/her story. They also have a “Stories for the classroom” series which covers topics important to young people. Some of those come with transcripts.

Talks

- [TED Talks Podcasts](#) (Health, Technology, Education, Science and Medicine) or TedEx Shorts. TedEx Shorts are great because they are under 10 minutes and a great way to start listening regularly.

News

- If you listen to news in your native language, listening to news again in your target language will make understanding easier. For English, [BBC News \(center\)](#), [Fox News \(leaning right\)](#) and [CNN \(leaning left\)](#) all have their own version of every day, few minutes long news podcast.

Language Learning Podcasts

- [English Learning for Curious Minds](#) – interesting podcast about modern world. Topic examples: bitcoins, chocolate, Valentine’s Day. The host slows down his speech which makes his stories sound a bit unauthentic but definitely easier to understand.
- [VOA Learning English Broadcast](#) – geared for English learners and also spoken slower than the natives would speak.

BOOKS

- [Audible](#) – instead of searching within the Language Learning category put the target language in the search bar and in addition to language learning resources, short stories and books will also come up. Spanish has the largest selection, with a curated list of resources. Short story collections in various languages include vocabulary study, so you can pre-teach yourself what you will be listening to.

OTHER RESOURCES (including video)

- [Music](#) – Find the lyrics to your favorite song in the target language. Learn the vocabulary and sing along. Remember you have to repeat a new word or phrase multiple times if you want to remember it. Singing makes repetition more fun.
- [Newspapers](#) - many online newspapers have an option to listen to the audio of an article while you are looking at the transcript.
- [Movies](#) – find a movie in the target language or watch a movie you already know with target language voice over.
- [Children TV programs](#) – choose from many PBS or Cartoon Network programs.
- [TED Talks](#) – video version of previously recommended audio.
- [Voice of America](#) – their site for English learners has a variety of audio resources with transcripts, so you can follow. Again, the speech is slowed down.

Make a plan to utilize your non-intellectual times and start listening tomorrow!