

9 ROCKET SPEAKING SKILLS

FOR INTERMEDIATE
TO PROFICIENT STUDENTS

<https://nautilusenglish.com/>



SPEAKING CONFIDENCE AND ABILITY IS INFLUENCED BY:

1. Controlling your pace, pauses, word stresses and intonation.
2. How well you have practiced “speaking skills” exercises and techniques.
3. How much you practice daily conversations, at work, language partners, groups etc.
4. How confident and accurate is your pronunciation?
5. Your level, skill and ability to recall active vocabulary.
6. Knowing lots of common conversational phrases, idiomatic expressions, idioms etc.
7. Your understanding of grammar structures especially the verb tenses.
8. Knowing how to reply to a diversity of questions in a concise, accurate and clear way.
9. Overcoming any personal speaking issues or disabilities.
10. How you interrupt the world around you and can express that into the spoken word.



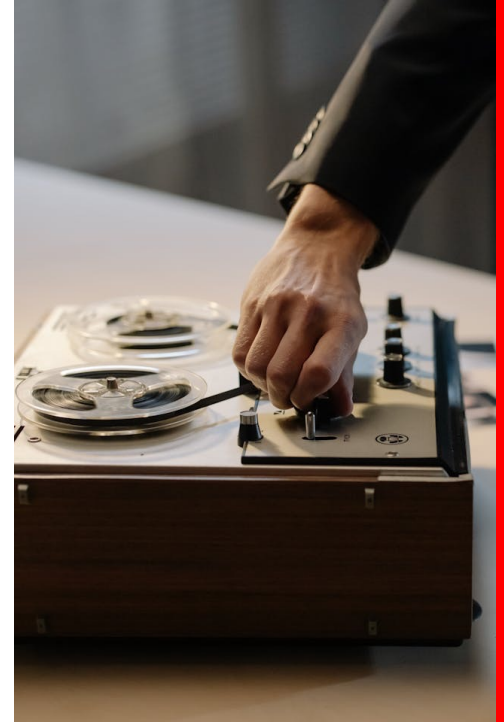
1. GET YOUR PACE RIGHT

- Conversation is between 120 to 150 words per minute (WPM).
- Less than 100 words and people will go to sleep.
- More than 190 words per minute and people might not understand.

- TED Talks average 163 WPM.
- Podcasts, radio hosts, audiobooks and YouTubers at 150-160 WPM.
- Commentators (sports) 250 to 400 WPM.

Action

Record yourself talking for 1 minute or reading out a passage. Count the words and find your wpm. Repeat 3 times using different scripts to get an average.



PACE IS **VARIABLE**

Speed up some words or a sentence to demonstrate urgency or cause excitement.

Slow down or pause some words or a sentence for emphasising a fact or statement and for dramatic effect.

When we are nervous, we **talk faster** and are more likely to confuse what we want to say.

When you **speak slower**, you can process the meaning of what you are saying better and can visualise and prepare for the next sentence.



2. SPEAK OUT LOUD TO YOURSELF (self-talk)

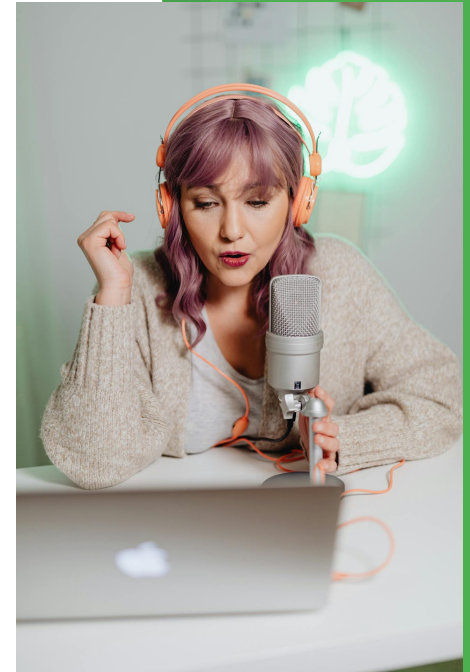
1. Find an interesting audio or video.
2. Play the audio and record yourself copying them speaking.
3. Listen well and try to copy as closely as possible the pronunciation characteristics.
4. Playback to see how well you imitated the sounds of the speaker.
5. Practice any unknown phrases, words or difficult pronunciation.
6. Select some phrases or sentences that could be useful.
7. Say out loud the new phrases and talk about the topic in your own words.



2. SPEAK OUT LOUD TO YOURSELF (materials to aid speaking skills)

Materials and resources to aid speaking skills.

1. Podcasts, audio books, YouTube, Spotify, movies, documentaries, Ted Talks, National Geographic.
2. **Mixing:** travel, historical, comedy, educational and instructional, political, short stories, autobiography, discussion, movie genres, interview style, debates.



3. LANGUAGE EXCHANGE PARTNER OR ENGLISH GROUPS

Think about how you get to engage in English conversation on a daily basis. Are you surrounded by the right environment to practice your English? It is enough? It is the right level? Are you making progress? If not, make some changes.

Action

1. Make a list of where, and with whom, you get to converse daily in English.
2. Consider finding a language exchange partner.
3. Consider joining an English language exchange group.
4. Take paid classes with a community (not qualified) or professional teacher (qualified).



4. PRONUNCIATION ISSUES

1. Mistakes in pronunciation during conversation can be destroying.
2. Minute minute, content content, wind wind, dove dove, lead lead.
3. Desert dessert, though, tough, through, thorough, thought.

Action

- Can you pronunciation the 44 phonemes correctly?
- Research intonation, disappearing syllables, assimilation, stress and syllables.
- Write down any pronunciation issues effecting your speaking confidence.
- Use pronunciation correction apps.

SINGLE VOWELS

1 2 3 4 i See Meek Me Beach	1 2 3 4 ɪ Kit Fish Sit Hit	1 2 3 4 u Look Foot Book Bush	1 2 3 4 ʊ Shoe Shoot School
1 2 3 4 e Yes Mess Test Pest	1 2 3 4 ə Weather Carrot About	1 2 3 4 ɜ: Turn Her Hurt Nurse	1 2 3 4 ɔ: Caught Bought Taught
1 2 3 4 əʊ Now Now Now Now	1 2 3 4 ʌ But But But But	1 2 3 4 ɑ: Father Father Father	1 2 3 4 ɒ Bob Bob Bob Bob

MONOPHTHONGS

1 2 3 4 ɪə Here ear steer cheer	1 2 3 4 eɪ Wait They Way Pay	1 2 3 4 ɔɪ Tourist Cure	1 2 3 4 ɔɪ Coin Join Boy Buy
1 2 3 4 əʊ Show Throw Vote	1 2 3 4 eə Care Air Stair Wear	1 2 3 4 aɪ Like Pie Island Sky	1 2 3 4 aʊ Mouth Shout Now

DIPHTHONGS

VOICED CONSONANTS

1 2 3 4 m Mouse Summer Comb	1 2 3 4 n Now Funny Know	1 2 3 4 ŋ Thing Ring Tongue	1 2 3 4 h Hope Hop Who
1 2 3 4 w We Wit Why	1 2 3 4 l Love Live Well	1 2 3 4 r Run Carrot Wrench	1 2 3 4 j You Onion Hallelujah

UNVOICED CONSONANTS

1 2 3 4 p Pea Pin Dippy	1 2 3 4 f Free Fat Cliff Half	1 2 3 4 θ Thing Month Thorough	1 2 3 4 t Tree Tip Matter
1 2 3 4 s See Course Less	1 2 3 4 ʃ Show Special Machine	1 2 3 4 tʃ Cheese Watch future	1 2 3 4 k Coin Chris Folk Queen

VOICED CONSONANTS

1 2 3 4 b Bubble Boat	1 2 3 4 v Video Vine Five	1 2 3 4 ð This leather Brother	1 2 3 4 d Dog Dad Add
-----------------------------	---------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-----------------------------

UNVOICED CONSONANTS

1 2 3 4 z Zoo Butz Craze	1 2 3 4 ʒ Measure Division	1 2 3 4 dʒ Joke Jet Jam Giraffe	1 2 3 4 g Go Ghost Guest
--------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------



5. VOCABULARY LEVEL

The connection between vocabulary level and speaking confidence is huge.

Students with a low-level vocabulary just can't find the words to express the topic.

Extremely beautiful: stunning, gorgeous, ravishing, exquisite.

Extremely busy: hectic, frenetic.

Extremely large: ginormous, massive, whopping, vast.

Extremely angry: furious, fuming, hopping mad, livid.

Extremely happy: ecstatic, elated.



Some important vocabulary you should know:

- ✓ Oxford 3000 & 5000 most frequent words. **Free** on the internet.
- ✓ Academic word list.(if in studies) **Free** on the internet.
- ✓ Idioms, similes, collocations and phrasal verbs. **Free** on the internet.
- ✓ Personality descriptions words.
- ✓ The five senses.
- ✓ Emotions and feelings. B2 C1 C2
- ✓ Movement and action verbs. Required for expressing situations.
- ✓ Remarkable words to describe amazing experiences.
- ✓ Vocabulary related to specific topics. **For example:** Environment, nature, science, technology, business, lifestyle, geo-political, sustainability, historical, geographical, agriculture, health and fitness, the arts etc.
- ✓ Review of basic A1 A2 B1 vocabulary. **For example:** Animals and nature, colours, meat and fish, fruits and vegetables, house and furniture, electro-domestic, parts of the body, relationships, cooking, countries, clothes, shopping, describing people and describing places.



6. PHRASES FOR CONVERSATION

Avoiding gaps in speech. hmm and er

Asking for clarification

Complaining about something

To agree or disagree

Advantages and disadvantages

Assumptions

Likes and dislikes

Expressing opinions

Giving examples

Expressing contrasts

Talking about causes

Talking about things that create effects

Talking about solutions

Saying something in another way

Making suggestions

Speculations

Asking for opinions

Polite ways to disagree

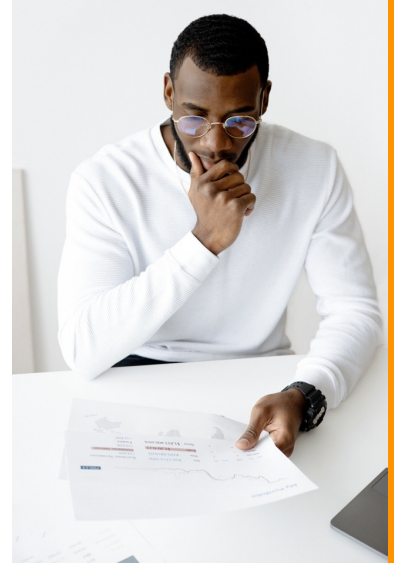
Refusing politely



7. GRAMMAR AND CONVERSATION

Action

1. Start to document any grammar issues.
2. Put the list in priority of learning and take action.
3. Consult a grammar list showing what should be known at what level.



8. LEARNING THE SKILL OF ANALYSING IMAGES

- A. Consult the detailed PDF list of how to analyse art and visuals.
- B. Find an image and write up to 400 words about it.
- C. After writing, read it aloud alone or with a teacher and practice your conversation control and pace. Record yourself and play it back. What could you improve?
- D. This technique creates repetition, visualization and confidence building and increases the ability and skill of effective communication.
- E. In time you can be given a photograph to critic and will not need to write it down first. It will be a spontaneous reply. This process will eventually filter into your daily conversations.



9. ANSWERING QUESTIONS GIVING REPLIES

Practice speaking by replying to questions with 30 or 60 second answers.

Method

1. You are given some questions and have to reply in 30 seconds. (75 words)
2. You are given some questions and have to reply in 60 seconds. (150 words)



9. ANSWERING QUESTIONS **GIVING REPLIES**

Why would it be interesting to live in the 1920s?

Why would it not be good to live in the 1920s?

Education – employment – health care – social security – standard of living – quality of housing – violence – social issues – inequalities – marriage – religion – laws.

Write out a reply between 70 to 90 words (30 to 40 seconds) for each question. Say it out loud as if you are talking to someone.



NOTE: Not all question types can be answered this way.

Note down the key points and put them in order. Is it a data, statistic or visual type of question?

Physically write it out in a quick and simple way. Then go through and change words, rephrase the sentences, add an idiom, simile, metaphor, some phrasal verbs etc. Check for double words and unnecessary words. Choose 1st person or 3rd person.

1. The question?

2. Note down the key bullet points

3. Write it out

4. Speak aloud

Let's find some questions to answer. You could use a diversity of subjects: science, arts, technology, health, travel, culture, environment, lifestyle, politics, etc., and not just the topics you like.

When you are happy, speak it aloud. Practice intonation, pace and pronunciation.



Why would it be interesting to live in the 1920s?

80 words | 37 seconds | **first** person

Living at this time would be fascinating. I'd enjoy the simplicity of life, free from constant digital distractions. Communities were close-knit, and people connected deeply face-to-face. The world felt less industrialized, with cleaner air and beautiful natural landscapes. I'd love experiencing the cultural vibrancy of the 1920s—jazz music, elegant fashion, and exciting social changes. Life moved at a slower pace, giving more time to appreciate simple joys, creativity, and personal relationships. It seems grounding and enriching.



Why would it be interesting to live in the 1920s?

80 words | 37 seconds | **third** person

Living at this time would appeal to those seeking simplicity and connection. Life moved at a slower pace, fostering deeper relationships and a stronger sense of community. Without the distractions of modern technology, people enjoyed more face-to-face interactions and time spent in nature. The early 20th century also celebrated cultural vibrancy, with jazz, art, and literature thriving. For those yearning for a more grounded existence, the era offered cleaner environments and a focus on local craftsmanship and traditions.



Why would it **not be good** to live in the 1920s?

82 words | 40 seconds | **first** person

Living at this time would be challenging for me. Medical advancements were limited, and many diseases we cure today were often fatal. Social inequalities were widespread, and opportunities were restricted based on gender, race, and class. Daily life lacked modern conveniences like the internet, making communication and access to information difficult. The work was often physically demanding, with fewer rights and protections for workers. I'd also miss the advancements in entertainment, travel, and technology that make life richer and more convenient today.



Why would it **not be good** to live in the 1920s?

82 words | 40 seconds | **third** person

Living at this time would not be ideal due to significant social, medical, and technological limitations. Many people faced harsh inequalities, with limited rights for women and marginalized groups. Medical care was rudimentary, with life-threatening diseases lacking effective treatments. Technology was primitive, making communication and travel time-consuming. Economic instability and global tensions, including the aftermath of World War I, created uncertainty. Life lacked many conveniences and opportunities for education and career growth that are now widely accessible in modern society.



PERSONAL ISSUES

A social phobia.

Anthropophobia is the fear of being around other people.

Glossophobia or speech anxiety is the fear of public speaking.

Sociophobia is the fear of social evaluation. Social anxiety disorder.

A speaking disability such as a stutter.

A shy personality. A bit too introvert.

