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## Why English is important



IF YOU are currently learning English in a school, college or institute of further education, you join approximately one billion other people around the world who are engaged in the same pursuit. However, as you try to memorise proper grammar, and try to avoid the mistakes common to most students of English, you may wonder why you are learning the language in the first place.

So, why is English important?

After Mandarin, English is spoken by more people than any other language, and is the native language of more than 350 million people. More people speak English than those who speak the Arabic and French languages combined.

Moreover, English is the international language of diplomacy, business, science, technology, banking, computing, medicine, aviation, UN & NATO armed forces, engineering, tourism, Hollywood films and arguably the best pop and rock music in the world.

English has plenty of words to choose from. In fact, an English speaker is offered the biggest vocabulary of any language with a choice of 500,000 to 1,000,000 words (including technical and scientific terms).

But don't panic, most English speakers do very well with a vocabulary of around 20,000 words.

English can be fun too. For instance, the music of such stars as Elvis Presley, The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Michael Jackson and Madonna has encouraged fans to speak the language of their idols, whilst others have enrolled in English classes to improve their understanding of the dialogue in films and TV shows.

Or perhaps they have embraced English to enjoy the writing of Stephen King, George Orwell or J.K. Rowling. They may even have an interest in speaking English just to converse with travellers from other countries, who communicate by using the English global interlingua while travelling abroad.

Finally, if you are studying English at school, college or university, remember that getting an 'A' grade in English is almost worthless, in terms of communication, if you cannot speak the language. Spoken English is used in the best careers, the best universities, and is increasingly being used at job interviews. So like it or not, English is a very important language to learn how to speak.

