

Learn and Remember

Essential Vocabulary

with Games and Puzzles

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What is essential vocabulary?

They are words which all ESL students need to know. They are the basic words you need to speak, read, hear and write at a high level.

The activities in this e-book teach about 450 essential words. That's a good start for high beginner and intermediate level students, but it's not enough for people who want to be fluent in English. Some people say ESL students need to learn and remember about 8000 words in order to communicate well in English.

The purpose of this e-book is not to teach you all the essential words. My goal is to help you learn and remember common words so that you can become a better writer. Many students memorize words, and that's good. But, they can't remember the words easily, and that's bad.

Here's my idea about learning and remembering. The brain's memory is like a muscle. The more you exercise it, the stronger it becomes. So, it's good to learn new words and practice remembering the old ones.

Why games and puzzles?

They are good learning tools. Games and puzzles help students learn new words and recall old words. Sometimes, they are fun, too.

This e-book has ten exercises. To find the answers you'll need to think creatively.

Here's a suggestion for you. Try one game or puzzle per day. Don't give up too easily and look at the answer sheet. That won't really help you learn.

If you can't find the answers, look in a dictionary or other reference books.

Enjoy.

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Build Compound Words

A compound word is two words put together to make a new word.

For example: hand, pipes, air bag
handbag, bagpipes, airbag

Which word can be added to make three compound words in each question?
The word can be placed in the front or back.

Activity 1

1. end, guide, scrap _____
2. light, keeper, boat _____
3. battle, friend, wreck _____
4. pan, cup, fruit _____
5. cloth, coffee, spoon _____
6. brush, paste, ache _____
7. switch, snow, white _____
8. shell, shore, food _____
9. phone, ache, ring _____
10. burn, flower, glasses _____

Activity 2

1. guest, hold, wife _____
2. stairs, town, sun _____
3. print, ball, wear _____
4. man, place, fly _____
5. mate, side, come _____
6. shoe, radish, power _____
7. wild, guard, boat _____
8. house, side, doors _____
9. club, mare, time _____
10. market, man, highway _____

Solve Homophone Puzzles

Homophones are words that have the same sound but different spellings and meanings. *Homo* means *same* and *phone* means *sound*.

Can you find one homophone for each word?

Activity 3	Activity 4
1. nose _____	1. pair _____
2. its _____	2. plain _____
3. mail _____	3. new _____
4. buy _____	4. pour _____
5. hi _____	5. night _____
6. meat _____	6. oar _____
7. dear _____	7. peace _____
8. four _____	8. in _____
9. red _____	9. hire _____
10. aunt _____	10. heal _____

Create a **Word** **List**

The box has 8 letters. How many words can you make with the letter A?

c	a	e	t
h	e	r	s

There are 3 rules.

1. Use the letter A in each word; at the start, in the middle or at the end.
2. Use each letter only one time per word.
3. Do not use any other letters.

Scoring:

- 10 or fewer words = poor.
- 11-19 words = good.
- 20 or more words = excellent.

Activity 5

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____
23. _____

Another Word List

The box has 9 letters. How many words can you make with the letter T?

e	t	a
g	s	t
i	h	p

There are 3 rules.

1. Use the letter T in each word; at the start, in the middle or at the end.
2. Use each letter only one time per word.
3. Do not use any other letters.

Scoring:

- 10 or fewer words = poor.
- 11-19 words = good.
- 20 or more words = excellent.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____
23. _____

Listen to **Word** **Sounds**

The letters /ph/ often make an /f/ sound.

How many words can you write with a /ph/ spelling and an /f/ sound?
For example: phone.

Scoring: 10 or fewer words = poor. 11-19 = good. 20 or more = excellent.

Activity 7

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Add **Vowel** **Combinations**

There are five vowels: a, e, i, o, u.

Here are twenty words. The vowels have been taken out. Add vowels to make words. For example, c _ ff _ _ could be coffee.

Activity 8

1. d _ _ n g _ _ r _ _ _ s
2. _ _ n l _ _ c k y
3. s _ _ g _ _ r
4. h _ _ _ s _ _
5. l _ _ t t _ _ c _ _
6. s w _ _ _ t p _ _ t _ _ t _ _
7. s p _ _ n _ _ c h
8. _ _ _ n t
9. n _ _ _ c _ _
10. _ _ s _ _ f _ _ l
11. d _ _ l _ _ t _ _
12. s _ _ x _ _ p h _ _ n _ _
13. _ _ s t r _ _ n _ _ m y
14. _ _ _ s t r _ _ l _ _ _
15. p _ _ _ r
16. f _ _ r n _ _ t _ _ r _ _
17. c h _ _ c _ _ l _ _ t _ _
18. c _ _ _ k _ _ _
19. _ _ s _ _ _ l l y
20. s _ _ f _ _

Twist The Anagrams

An anagram is a word puzzle.

Look at a word. Move the letters around. Make another word. Do not add other letters. For example: part - trap. More than one answer is possible for some words.

Activity 9

1. meat _____

2. news _____

3. note _____

4. page _____

5. steel _____

6. gates _____

7. name _____

8. taste _____

9. keen _____

10. garden _____

11. credit _____

12. south _____

13. able _____

14. cheap _____

15. cruel _____

16. false _____

17. past _____

18. tired _____

19. late _____

20. brake _____

Find **The** **Adjectives**

An adjective is a word that talks about a noun.

In 3 minutes, read the list. Circle the adjectives. There are 20 adjectives.

Activity 10

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. abnormal | 16. finely | 31. questions |
| 2. accept | 17. frequent | 32. rational |
| 3. because | 18. furthermore | 33. really |
| 4. biography | 19. gab | 34. rough |
| 5. breath | 20. handsome | 35. serial |
| 6. cartel | 21. healthy | 36. serious |
| 7. confidant | 22. human | 37. shareware |
| 8. creature | 23. illusion | 38. shear |
| 9. dabble | 24. Intense | 39. slowly |
| 10. daze | 25. lessen | 40. stiff |
| 11. defective | 26. narrow | 41. sudden |
| 12. difficult | 27. open | 42. teak |
| 13. duel | 28. plain | 43. vain |
| 14. early | 29. poetry | 44. which |
| 15. eventually | 30. quake | 45. white |

Check The Answers

Activity 1: Build Compound Words

- | | | |
|----------|----------|---------|
| 1. book | 5. table | 9. ear |
| 2. house | 6. tooth | 10. sun |
| 3. ship | 7. board | |
| 4. cake | 8. sea | |

Activity 2: Build Compound Words

- | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. house | 5. in | 9. night |
| 2. up | 6. horse | 10. super |
| 3. foot | 7. life | |
| 4. fire | 8. out | |

Activity 3: Solve Homophone Puzzles

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------|---------|
| 1. knows | 5. high | 9. read |
| 2. it's | 6. meet | 10. ant |
| 3. male | 7. deer | |
| 4. by/bye | 8. for/fore | |

Activity 4: Solve Homophone Puzzles

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. pear/pare | 5. knight | 9. higher |
| 2. plane | 6. or | 10. heel |
| 3. knew | 7. peace | |
| 4. pore | 8. inn | |

Activity 5: Create a Word List with A

The 8-letter word in the puzzle is "teachers."

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| 1. ace | 16. arts | 31. caster |
| 2. aces | 17. as | 32. cat |
| 3. ache | 18. ash | 33. cater |
| 4. aches | 19. at | 34. caters |
| 5. acre | 20. ate | 35. cats |
| 6. acres | 21. car | 36. cease |
| 7. act | 22. care | 37. char |
| 8. acts | 23. cares | 38. chart |
| 9. arc | 24. cars | 39. charts |
| 10. arch | 25. cart | 40. chase |
| 11. arches | 26. carts | 41. chaser |
| 12. arcs | 27. case | 42. chaste |
| 13. are | 28. cash | 43. chat |
| 14. arse | 29. cast | 44. chats |
| 15. art | 30. caste | 45. cheat |

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 46. cheater | 75. hate | 104. sat |
| 47. cheaters | 76. hater | 105. scar |
| 48. cheats | 77. haters | 106. scare |
| 49. crash | 78. hates | 107. sea |
| 50. crate | 79. hats | 108. sear |
| 51. crates | 80. hear | 109. search |
| 52. crease | 81. hears | 110. seat |
| 53. create | 82. hearse | 111. share |
| 54. creates | 83. heart | 112. shear |
| 55. each | 84. hearts | 113. star |
| 56. ear | 85. heat | 114. starch |
| 57. ears | 86. heater | 115. stare |
| 58. earth | 87. heaters | 116. tach |
| 59. ease | 88. heats | 117. tar |
| 60. east | 89. hectare | 118. tars |
| 61. Easter | 90. hectares | 119. tea |
| 62. eat | 91. race | 120. teach |
| 63. eater | 92. races | 121. teacher |
| 64. eaters | 93. rash | 122. teachers |
| 65. eats | 94. rat | 123. teaches |
| 66. era | 95. rate | 124. tear |
| 67. erase | 96. reach | 125. tears |
| 68. ha | 97. reaches | 126. teas |
| 69. hare | 98. react | 127. tease |
| 70. hares | 99. reacts | 128. teaser |
| 71. harts | 100. recast | 129. trace |
| 72. has | 101. reheat | 130. traces |
| 73. haste | 102. reheats | 131. trash |
| 74. hat | 103. reteach | 132. tsar |

Activity 6: Another Word List with T

The 9-letter word in the puzzle is "spaghetti."

- | | | |
|------------|-------------|------------|
| 1. at | 28. pat | 55. step |
| 2. apt | 29. pate | 56. tag |
| 3. ate | 30. pates | 57. tags |
| 4. atheist | 31. path | 58. tap |
| 5. east | 32. paths | 59. tape |
| 6. eat | 33. pats | 60. tapes |
| 7. eats | 34. patties | 61. taps |
| 8. eight | 35. peat | 62. taste |
| 9. gait | 36. pest | 63. tat |
| 10. gate | 37. pet | 64. tats |
| 11. gates | 38. pets | 65. tea |
| 12. get | 39. pit | 66. teas |
| 13. gets | 40. pita | 67. teat |
| 14. haste | 41. pitas | 68. teats |
| 15. hat | 42. pits | 69. test |
| 16. hate | 43. sat | 70. that |
| 17. hates | 44. seat | 71. the |
| 18. hats | 45. set | 72. this |
| 19. heat | 46. sight | 73. tie |
| 20. heats | 47. sit | 74. ties |
| 21. heist | 48. site | 75. tight |
| 22. hit | 49. spat | 76. tights |
| 23. hits | 50. spit | 77. tip |
| 24. it | 51. spite | 78. tips |
| 25. its | 52. stag | 79. tit |
| 26. past | 53. stage | 80. tithe |
| 27. paste | 54. state | 81. tithes |

Activity 7: Listen to Word Sounds

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. alphabet | 16. pharmacist |
| 2. apostrophe | 17. pharmacy |
| 3. asphalt | 18. phase |
| 4. autograph | 19. pheasant |
| 5. biography | 20. phone |
| 6. elephant | 21. phonics |
| 7. emphasize | 22. photo |
| 8. geography | 23. photograph |
| 9. graph | 24. photography |
| 10. hyphen | 25. phrase |
| 11. metaphor | 26. physical |
| 12. microphone | 27. saxophone |
| 13. nephew | 28. symphony |
| 14. pamphlet | 29. telephone |
| 15. paragraph | 30. trophy |

Activity 8: Add Vowel Combinations

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. dangerous | 11. delete |
| 2. unlucky | 12. saxophone |
| 3. sugar | 13. astronomy |
| 4. house | 14. Australia |
| 5. lettuce | 15. pear/pour |
| 6. sweet potato | 16. furniture |
| 7. spinach | 17. chocolate |
| 8. aunt | 18. cookie |
| 9. niece | 19. usually |
| 10. useful | 20. sofa |

Activity 9: Twist the Anagrams

- | | |
|------------|------------------|
| 1. meat | mate, tame |
| 2. news | sewn |
| 3. note | tone |
| 4. page | gape |
| 5. steel | sleet |
| 6. gates | stage |
| 7. name | mane, mean, amen |
| 8. taste | state |
| 9. keen | knee |
| 10. garden | danger |
| 11. credit | direct |
| 12. south | shout |
| 13. able | bale |
| 14. cheap | peach |
| 15. cruel | ulcer |
| 16. false | fleas |
| 17. past | spat, taps, pats |
| 18. tired | tried |
| 19. late | tale, teal |
| 20. brake | break, baker |

Activity 10: Find the Adjectives

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. abnormal | adjective |
| 2. accept | verb |
| 3. because | conjunction |
| 4. biography | noun |
| 5. breath | noun |
| 6. cartel | noun |
| 7. confidant | noun |
| 8. creature | noun |
| 9. dabble | verb |
| 10. daze | verb |
| 11. defective | adjective |
| 12. difficult | adjective |
| 13. duel | noun |
| 14. early | adverb |
| 15. eventually | adverb |
| 16. finely | adverb |
| 17. frequent | adjective |
| 18. furthermore | adverb |
| 19. gab | verb |
| 20. handsome | adjective |
| 21. healthy | adjective |
| 22. human | adjective |
| 23. illusion | noun |
| 24. intense | adjective |
| 25. lessen | verb |
| 26. narrow | adjective |
| 27. open | adjective |
| 28. plain | adjective |
| 29. poetry | noun |
| 30. quake | noun/verb |
| 31. questions | noun |
| 32. rational | adjective |
| 33. really | adjective |
| 34. rough | adjective |
| 35. serial | adjective |
| 36. serious | adjective |
| 37. shareware | noun |
| 38. shear | verb |
| 39. slowly | adverb |
| 40. stiff | adjective |
| 41. sudden | adjective |
| 42. teak | noun |
| 43. vain | adjective |
| 44. which | adjective |
| 45. white | adjective |