

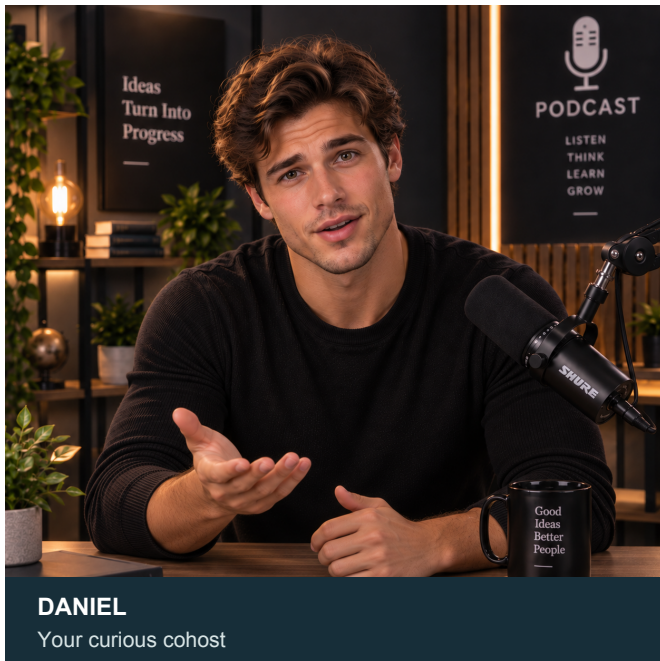


Study Habits That Work

English listening & speaking with Daniel and Maya

Read along with Daniel and Maya. Practise useful English from this episode.

B1-B2 / 18:54 AUDIO / FULL TRANSCRIPT



DANIEL
Your curious cohost



MAYA
Your English teacher

LISTEN. READ. SAY IT.

- 1 Listen once for the story.
- 2 Read along and notice useful expressions.
- 3 Choose one useful phrase and try saying it out loud.





FULL TRANSCRIPT / 01 OF 08

The conversation

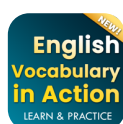
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

00:00 Studying without a plan

- Daniel** Welcome back! I'm Daniel. Yesterday I planned to study English. I cleaned my desk, arranged my pens by colour, and watched a video about the perfect notebook. Then it was bedtime.
- Maya** I'm Maya, your English teacher. Your desk sounds lovely, but none of that was language practice. Begin with a small, clear task: "I will learn five useful phrases and use each one in a sentence."
- Daniel** "Study English" is too broad, but "use five phrases" gives me something I can finish. Is that what people mean by a "specific goal"?
- Maya** Yes. A specific goal says what you'll do and how you'll know it's done. "Practise for twenty minutes" gives a time; "write five sentences" gives an output. Use whichever helps you begin.
- Daniel** I often say, "I'll get around to it later." Does "get around to" mean finally do something after a delay?
- Maya** Exactly. "I'll get around to it" can become a polite home for tasks we never start. Try, "I'll do ten minutes after breakfast," and put it in your calendar.
- Daniel** Ten minutes feels too short. Can I really improve if I only study for ten minutes on a busy day?
- Maya** One short session won't transform your English, but it can keep the habit going. On a less busy day, you can do more. The key is choosing a realistic task rather than waiting for a perfect hour.
- Daniel** I also try to learn thirty new words in one evening. By the end, the word for "umbrella" lives where my phone number should be.
- Maya** Choose fewer words that you can use. Learn them in a situation, make your own examples, and return to them later. "Follow up" is easier to remember if you connect it to an email you actually need to send.
- Daniel** So my goal today could be, "Write three polite follow-up emails in different situations." That's specific, and it sounds less like a mountain.
- Maya** Good. You could also speak the sentences aloud. At the end, ask, "Can I use this phrase without reading my notes?" That tells you what to practise next.

02:20 Making time in a real week

- Daniel** I made an ideal timetable with two hours of study every day. Then Monday happened. By Tuesday, my timetable looked like historical fiction.



Transcript edition 01

02 / 09



FULL TRANSCRIPT / 02 OF 08

The conversation

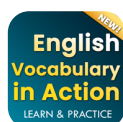
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

02:20 Making time in a real week (continued)

- Maya** Build around your real week. Mark work, classes, meals, and rest first. Find a few short study slots you can repeat. Say, "I can review phrases on the train and practise speaking on Sunday."
- Daniel** If I study on the train, I can't always speak aloud. The person next to me may not want a dramatic dialogue about office printers.
- Maya** Choose a quiet task for the train: read, listen, or review. Do speaking practice at home or while walking somewhere suitable. A good plan fits the place as well as the time.
- Daniel** What does "fit in" mean in this context? I hear, "I can't fit study into my week."
- Maya** It means find room in your schedule. You can ask, "Where could I fit in fifteen minutes?" It helps to attach study to an existing routine, such as after breakfast or before a familiar journey.
- Daniel** I worry that if I miss one day, the whole habit has failed. Then I skip the next day because I'm annoyed with myself.
- Maya** Try a reset rule: "If I miss Tuesday, I return on Wednesday with a small task." You don't need to make up every missed minute. "Pick up where you left off" means continue from your last point.
- Daniel** That's a useful phrasal verb. "I missed a day, but I'll pick up where I left off." It sounds kinder than "I have destroyed the entire calendar."
- Maya** Exactly. Plan a minimum session for busy days and a longer one when you have space. Your minimum might be five minutes of reviewing yesterday's expressions.
- Daniel** How do I decide whether the plan is working? I don't want to buy another calendar just to stare at it.
- Maya** After a week, ask, "Which sessions did I actually do? Which times were difficult?" Change the schedule based on that evidence. If evenings never work, try another time.

04:35 Remembering vocabulary

- Daniel** I read a list of new words, recognise them, and feel clever. Then someone asks me to use one in a sentence, and my brain shows a loading symbol.
- Maya** Recognition and use are different. After learning a word, close the list and try to recall it. Then put it in a sentence about your own life. For "postpone," you might say, "We postponed the meeting until Thursday."



Transcript edition 01

03 / 09



The conversation

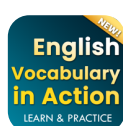
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

04:35 Remembering vocabulary (continued)

- Daniel** So instead of reading “postpone” ten times, I test whether I can produce it. What if I get it wrong?
- Maya** Check the answer, correct yourself, and try again later. The mistake shows what needs more practice. You can say, “I mixed up these two words,” then write one clear example for each.
- Daniel** I mix up “borrow” and “lend.” Could I build a tiny story: “I borrow Maya’s pen; Maya lends me her pen”?
- Maya** Perfect. The same event has two viewpoints. You borrow from someone; they lend to you. A personal example can be more memorable than two isolated definitions.
- Daniel** What does “go over” mean in study language? I heard, “Go over your notes before class.”
- Maya** It means review them carefully. But don’t only reread. Cover a definition and ask yourself for the word. Or see the word and explain it without looking. Then check what you missed.
- Daniel** How often should I return to old words? I tend to study a new set and forget the previous set as soon as I see a shiny new page.
- Maya** Make regular review part of your plan. You can revisit words after a short gap and again later. The exact schedule can be flexible; what matters is returning to them rather than meeting them only once.
- Daniel** Could I keep a “useful phrases” list from real conversations instead of copying every strange word in a film?
- Maya** Yes. Note the phrase, the situation, and your own example. “Could you clarify?” from class is more useful when you write a real question you might ask.
- Daniel** My list will be smaller, but I might actually use it. The shiny page can wait.
- Maya** That’s the idea. Learning a phrase includes recognising it, recalling it, and using it in a new situation.

07:02 Listening and speaking practice

- Daniel** I listen to podcasts, but sometimes they become background noise while I wash dishes. Does that count as practice?
- Maya** It can expose you to English, but if your goal is to understand a phrase, use a short section actively. Listen once for the main idea, then again for a useful expression.
- Daniel** Should I pause after every sentence? That would turn a five-minute recording into a two-hour archaeological expedition.





FULL TRANSCRIPT / 04 OF 08

The conversation

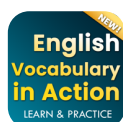
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07:02 Listening and speaking practice (continued)

- Maya** Not every sentence. Choose one short passage. Pause, repeat what you heard, and check the transcript if you need it. Then listen again without reading to see what you can catch.
- Daniel** I heard someone say “catch” for understand speech. “I didn’t catch the last word.” That works outside the classroom too, right?
- Maya** Yes. If you miss something in conversation, say, “Sorry, I didn’t catch that. Could you say it again?” It’s natural and more useful than nodding at an answer you didn’t hear.
- Daniel** Speaking is harder because I want the perfect sentence before I open my mouth. While I’m searching for it, the conversation moves to dessert.
- Maya** Aim for a clear first sentence. “I think the plan could work, but I have one concern.” You can add detail after that. Speaking is a live skill, not a polished essay read aloud.
- Daniel** Could I record myself for thirty seconds? I might not enjoy listening to my own voice, but I could notice where I pause.
- Maya** Yes, if that feels useful. Give yourself a simple prompt, such as “Describe a place you know.” Listen for one thing to improve, not every tiny imperfection.
- Daniel** My recording might include “um” and “let me think.” Are those failures?
- Maya** No. People use pauses in natural speech. Practise useful holding phrases like “Let me think for a second” or “What I mean is...” They help you continue without rushing.
- Daniel** So active listening is a short section with a purpose, and speaking practice is a small real message, not a performance in perfect grammar.
- Maya** Exactly. Make the task focused enough that you can repeat it next week and notice what gets easier.

09:29 Focus and distractions

- Daniel** I sit down to study, and my phone lights up. I check one message. Twenty minutes later I’m watching a video about a cat that can open doors.
- Maya** Before you begin, decide what the session is for. Put the materials you need nearby and move other distractions out of easy reach. You could say, “I’ll focus on this task for fifteen minutes, then take a break.”
- Daniel** What does “get sidetracked” mean? It sounds like a train leaving the main track to visit a bakery.





FULL TRANSCRIPT / 05 OF 08

The conversation

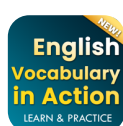
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

09:29 Focus and distractions (continued)

- Maya** That's a good image. "Get sidetracked" means your attention moves away from the main task. "I got sidetracked by messages" is natural. Notice what distracts you, then change one part of the setup.
- Daniel** My phone is one problem. Another is choosing between six different study apps. Comparing features becomes my new hobby.
- Maya** Use the tools you already have unless a missing feature is truly blocking you. A notebook, a timer, and a short audio clip may be enough. The best system is one you will actually use.
- Daniel** If I need to look up a word, I sometimes end up reading ten unrelated articles. How do I stop without refusing to be curious?
- Maya** Keep a "later" list. Write the interesting question down and return to your current task. You can explore it after the session if you still want to.
- Daniel** I like that. "I'll look it up later" can mean a real note, not a promise floating in the air.
- Maya** Exactly. If your focus slips, don't spend the remaining time blaming yourself. Say, "I got sidetracked; I'm coming back to my five sentences." A reset can take ten seconds.
- Daniel** What if I study in a noisy place? I can't always move to a quiet room. Sometimes the café is the only place between work and home where I can open my notes.
- Maya** Choose a task that suits the setting. In a noisy café, you might review flashcards or write examples, while a careful listening exercise may work better elsewhere. You can ask yourself, "What can I do well here?" rather than waiting for a perfect environment.

11:48 Seeing your progress

- Daniel** Some weeks I feel as if my English isn't improving. Then I find an old recording and realise I can answer the same question much more clearly now.
- Maya** That's useful evidence. Save a small sample once in a while: a short recording, a paragraph, or a few sentences. Compare it with an older sample, not with a perfect imaginary speaker.
- Daniel** What should I look for? My older recording has more pauses, but the newer one has one grammar mistake I didn't make before.
- Maya** Look at several things: clarity, range of words, confidence, and whether you can handle a real task. Progress is rarely perfectly smooth. One mistake doesn't cancel a stronger overall answer.
- Daniel** Could I say, "I'm getting better at explaining my opinion, but I still need to work on questions"? That sounds more useful than "I'm good" or "I'm terrible."



Transcript edition 01

06 / 09



FULL TRANSCRIPT / 06 OF 08

The conversation

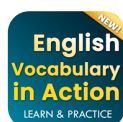
Read along with Daniel and Maya. Times mark the start of each chapter.

11:48 Seeing your progress (continued)

- Maya** Exactly. "Work on" means put effort into improving something. Choose one focus for the next week, such as asking follow-up questions in conversation.
- Daniel** I can track tasks too: "This month I understood a short meeting without reading the notes." That's a real result, even if my accent hasn't magically changed.
- Maya** Yes. Write down achievements that matter to you. Maybe you asked for clarification, made a phone call, or understood a podcast episode. Those are meaningful uses of English.
- Daniel** How do I know when to change my plan? I don't want to practise the same five phrases forever just because they feel comfortable.
- Maya** If a task has become easy, make it a little harder. Use the phrase in a new situation, speak without notes, or respond to an unexpected question. If it's too hard, make the task smaller.
- Daniel** Could I ask my teacher or a friend for a small progress check? I don't need a long report; I want to know whether my explanation is easier to follow.
- Maya** Yes. Ask a focused question: "Could you listen to this one-minute explanation and tell me where you lost the thread?" "Lose the thread" means stop understanding how the ideas connect. Specific feedback gives you something you can change in the next recording.
- Daniel** And if they say the opening is clear but the ending gets confusing, I can practise a simple closing sentence instead of rewriting everything.
- Maya** Exactly. "Let me sum up" is a useful spoken phrase. Try ending with, "So the main problem is the timing, and I'd like to suggest a new date." One clear ending can make the whole explanation easier to follow.

14:42 Studying with other people

- Daniel** A friend wants to practise English together. I'm happy about it, but I worry we'll spend the whole time speaking our first language about what to practise next.
- Maya** Agree on a simple plan in advance. "Let's speak English for ten minutes about weekend plans, then give each other one helpful comment." A clear topic and time limit make it easier to begin.
- Daniel** What if my friend makes a mistake? I don't want to interrupt every sentence and become the grammar police.
- Maya** Ask what kind of feedback they want. "Would you like me to correct you as we speak, or make notes for the end?" Then focus on one or two useful corrections.



Transcript edition 01

07 / 09



FULL TRANSCRIPT / 07 OF 08

The conversation

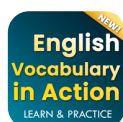
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14:42 Studying with other people (continued)

- Daniel** I would prefer notes at the end. If someone stops me each time, my sentence will never reach the exciting part.
- Maya** That's fair. You can say, "Please let me finish, then tell me one thing I can improve." It protects the flow of conversation while leaving room to learn.
- Daniel** What if we're at different levels? My friend speaks quickly, and I need time to find words.
- Maya** Set a pace that works for both of you. "Could we slow down a little?" or "Could you give me a moment to think?" is completely reasonable. You can choose tasks with room for both short and detailed answers.
- Daniel** We could each tell a story, then ask two follow-up questions. That gives us listening and speaking practice without inventing a new lesson every week.
- Maya** Great. Rotate roles. One person tells the story, the other listens and asks. Then switch. At the end, share one expression each person used well.
- Daniel** If we miss a session, we can reschedule instead of declaring our learning partnership over.
- Maya** Exactly. Say, "I can't make it on Thursday. Could we pick up where we left off on Saturday?" A flexible routine lasts longer than a perfect schedule nobody follows.

16:43 A realistic study week

- Daniel** Let's make a plan for someone with a busy week. I'll be the learner who wants better spoken English and has about twenty minutes on most days.
- Maya** What would you like to be able to do more confidently in four weeks?
- Daniel** I'd like to explain a problem at work and ask a clear question without writing a whole script first.
- Maya** Good. On Monday, choose three useful phrases and make your own examples. On Tuesday, listen to a short dialogue about a problem and note one question you hear.
- Daniel** Wednesday could be a thirty-second recording: "The printer stopped working. I've tried restarting it. Could you take a look?" Then I listen for clarity, not perfection.
- Maya** Exactly. Thursday can be a busy-day review: five minutes to recall the phrases without reading. Friday, use one phrase in a new situation.
- Daniel** On the weekend, I can practise with my friend. We each explain a small problem, ask follow-up questions, and give one useful comment.
- Maya** That's a balanced week. What will you do if Tuesday disappears under work and life?



Transcript edition 01

08 / 09



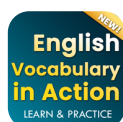
FULL TRANSCRIPT / 08 OF 08

The conversation

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16:43 A realistic study week (continued)

- Daniel** I'll pick up where I left off on Wednesday. I won't try to fit two days into one evening or declare my notebook a failure.
- Maya** Excellent. Listeners, pause and choose one real task for tomorrow. Make it small enough to start and useful enough to care about.
- Daniel** Recap: "get around to" means finally do a delayed task; "pick up where you left off" means continue; "go over" means review; "get sidetracked" means lose focus; and "work on" means improve through effort.
- Maya** Use two of those in sentences about your week. Then do one short session. The plan becomes real when you begin the task, not when you buy a new pen.
- Daniel** My pens are devastated, but I'm ready to learn. Thanks for listening, everyone.
- Maya** See you next time. Keep the next step clear, and let a missed day be a pause rather than the end of your progress.



Transcript edition 01

09 / 09