



Motivating your child

Have you ever wondered how you can motivate your child to practise their English? Follow our ten tips for success!

1. Be enthusiastic and involved

Be enthusiastic about the language yourself. If your child sees you reading, watching films and speaking in English, they will be inspired to do the same. Actively involve yourself in your child's English learning experience, rather than expecting them to study on their own. Giving your child lots of praise, encouragement and support will increase their self-confidence and motivation.

2. Make learning fun and enjoyable

Learning a language should be an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Try to incorporate an element of fun into activities. Children naturally like to play and love games for practising speaking and learning new vocabulary or grammar. Try card games such as [Memory](#), action games such as [Simon says](#), or board games such as [Snakes and ladders](#).

Use your child's sense of competition as a motivator, for example the child who uses their first language least during the game is allowed to choose the next game.

3. Follow your child's personality and interests

Think about your child's personality, interests and things that they like when suggesting ways for them to practise English. Very active children may like to play action games, quieter children may prefer word games or card games. If your child likes sport, they will enjoy stories, vocabulary games, etc. about sport. Choose a [topic](#) from our wide range on LearnEnglish Kids.

4. Let your child choose

Being part of the choosing process is a great motivator. It also allows your child to pick situations, subjects, etc. which they feel comfortable with in English. For example, you can encourage your child to read in English by choosing English books together at a local library or bookshop, or online.

5. Judge your child's mood

Try to choose the right time to encourage your child to practise their English. They should be receptive and alert rather than tired and grumpy. Putting your child under pressure to work on their English will make them feel stressed. If, after starting an activity, you notice that your child is not receptive, it is better to try again later rather than forcing them to continue.

6. Provide meaningful situations

Children love role-playing and using their imagination. Suggest some situations, such as at the toyshop, on the bus, at the restaurant, etc., and ask your child to choose. Take turns playing the different roles, e.g. customer and shopkeeper, and give language support as necessary. If they use phrases in their first language, repeat what they have said in English. Gradually your child will produce more of the speaking parts in the dialogues.



Make-believing the situation creates an immediate need to use English for your child, and their motivation will be high. Make the situation more meaningful by using real objects, e.g. toys for the toyshop; arrange chairs to make a bus; set a table for a restaurant. Making tickets, price tags, menus, etc. increases their involvement in the game. The more enthusiastically you play your role, the more motivated your child will be!

7. Support your child's schoolwork

Children are often reluctant to do their homework or study for school tests. Establish a regular homework routine, allowing your child some choice in what time and where they study. Provide help, and try to be supportive and encouraging. Praise your child for any effort they make, rather than criticise or threaten them. This will help your child to develop self-confidence and a positive attitude. A child who enjoys English will be intrinsically motivated to practise, improve and study.

Don't be afraid to talk to their teacher – they will be happy to advise you on how to support your child's learning.

8. Use apps and online materials

Even the most reluctant children are motivated to learn using new technologies, such as apps. The British Council has several [apps for kids](#).

On the LearnEnglish Kids website, we have many songs, stories, videos, games and activities to help your child enjoy practising their English. For example, if your child is reluctant to work on their grammar, suggest that they use our [grammar section](#) for fun opportunities to practise and improve.

You can use our [search tool](#) to find exactly what you are looking for.

9. Share the experience

Sharing the learning experience with family and friends will motivate your child. Encourage older children to help their younger siblings practise their English. Having a role of responsibility is highly motivational.

Why not let your child choose an English film and invite some friends or family to watch it? Arrange chairs to turn your living room into a cinema! Making [invitations and tickets](#) provides an opportunity to practise writing and makes the experience more fun.

Many children enjoy performing. Suggest that they put on a [play](#) or puppet show or sing some English [songs](#) for the family.

10. Find ways for your child to communicate with others in English

Having a genuine reason to communicate in English provides a high level of motivation. If possible, find an English-speaking group in your area, or activities for children in English. Encourage your child to write an email, letter or postcard to an English-speaking friend or relative.

You can also help your child to [register](#) on LearnEnglish Kids, where they can post comments and interact with other users in a safe online environment.

Read this article online <https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/helping-your-child/motivating-your-child>

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