

Languages of the world:

Africa: English, French, Portuguese, Spanish (Equatorial Guinea), Arabic, Swahili, Somali...

Asia: Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Hindi, Turkish, Arabic, Korean, Thai, Armenian, Bengali, Indonesian, Nepali, Hebrew, Filipino, Vietnamese, English, French, Greek, Portuguese...

Europe: Spanish, Basque, Catalan, Galician, English, Irish, Welsh, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, Swedish, Polish, Romanian, Estonian, Hungarian, Icelandic, Serbian, Croatian, Czech...

Oceania: English, French, Maori, Chamorro, Samoan, aboriginal languages...

America: English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Dutch, American Indian languages...

CULTURAL NOTES: facts about the English language

- About 375,000,000 people speak English as a first language.
- About 375,000,000 people speak English as a second language.
- About 1,000,000,000 people study English around the world.
- About 1,000,000 people go to Britain or America to study English every year.

Learning a language:

Language learning: attend (a school), have day-time classes/ evening classes, do (an intensive German) course, grammar, language (listening/reading/writing/speaking) skills, pronunciation, registration form/period, speak with a (Spanish) accent, vocabulary; review (Italian), study (Russian); face-to-face (F2F) education, distance education (e.g. e-learning or online learning), blended learning (F2F + online) ...

Activities we do in class: do/take a (placement) test, read an article, speak with classmates, write an essay, listen to a CD, look up new words in a dictionary, show a PowerPoint presentation...

Purposes of learning a foreign language: to use (English) in your daily life/ at work/when you travel; it helps you find a job more easily; to study intensively to enter a British/US college or university; to read articles/ books/ newspapers/magazines/ webpages in English; to watch films/listen to songs in English and understand them without subtitles; to talk to (English) friends/relatives...

English language schools: if you go on an English course at a school, you should at least consider its location (England, Scotland, the USA...), the price, the class size (number of students in class), the number of hours per week, its social programme (students receive free tours around cities, free entry into museums, free trips on a tour bus, a barbecue every Saturday evening...), its facilities (computer room, games room, cafeteria, sports facilities, free use of a swimming pool, free sailing/surfing lessons, free bike hire, they are given a pass for a gym...), and the accommodation type (at the school, with a family, in shared flats, in caravans...).

Ways of learning a language:

A language school: advantages of the official languages schools in Spain are that they are almost free, there's usually one school near your house (there are quite a lot, seven in Tenerife), there are qualified teachers, you can learn different languages (Chinese, Japanese, German, French, etc. and even Spanish). Some disadvantages are that you only have 4 or 5 hours per week, so you have to study a lot at home, and that sometimes you get too many students in the class.

Online learning: some of the advantages of studying online are that it's usually cheap, you can study at your own pace, and you have access to the materials 24-hours-a-day from almost any computer in the world. However, you can't practice speaking - you don't get the human interaction of meeting people face-to-face.

Private teacher: it can be very expensive if you want to have a couple of lessons a week and don't want to learn with other students. On the other hand, the timetable for your lessons can be adapted to your needs.

Learn in tandem (with a friend/partner who is a native speaker): you can contact a native speaker and talk for a while in Spanish and then in English, so you can both learn a language for free. However, sometimes it's difficult for native speakers to explain why things are the way they are (i.e. to explain grammar, vocabulary, etc.).

Overseas learning: the advantages of going overseas are that you have opportunities to learn a new culture, meet new friends with whom you can use and practice the language 24 hours a day, and chances to see different parts of the world. However, there may be a number of disadvantages: it can be very expensive, you spend a lot of time away from your family, friends, school or work life, and you have to adapt to a new culture and way of life.



School subjects: art, citizenship, drama, geography, ICT (= information and communication technology), literature, foreign languages (English, French...), history, IT (= information technology), maths, music, PE (=physical education), religion, science (physics, chemistry and biology), social studies...

Grades and exams:

- **Grades:** the pass grades, from best to worst, are: A* ('A-star'), A, B, C, D, E, F, G. The grades D or C are usually enough to pass.
- **GCSE exams:** the **General Certificate of Secondary Education** is a set of exams taken in the United Kingdom, which are usually taken by students aged 16. Most schools require that a student passes 5 or more GCSE exams at grades C or above before they can move on to study A-levels.
- **A-levels:** the **Advanced Level General Certificate of Education** (commonly shortened to **A-Level**) is a set of exams taken in the United Kingdom, which are usually taken during the end of secondary school. In the UK, they are usually taken two years after the students have completed GCSE exams. The examination results of the A-Levels determine if a student is good enough to go to a university. Most universities require students who want to attend the university to pass three A-Levels.

The structure of the English educational system:

