

English with Benen

Course library



CHOOSE YOUR EDUCATION

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About this library



I've created this library so that you can see all the full courses that I currently offer, and choose what you would like to study.

You can see a description of each course, the classes it contains, and how long it will take to complete.

You may notice that the most of the courses here are a little different to the English you have studied before! This is because I have created all of them based on what my students felt was missing from their education.

That's why you will see lots of courses on speaking, like conversation skills and pronunciation classes on the rhythm and flow of the English language. There are also classes on phrasal verbs (many students' nightmare!) and culture and accent in British English.

There are also more traditional classes on writing, grammar for CEFR levels (e.g. B2, C1) and IELTS preparation.

I hope you find a course you like here.

If not, don't worry, we will create a unique study plan together!

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Speaking: *everyday* *conversation essentials*

Description

This course is designed to give you skills to interact more comfortably in informal, everyday situations.

You will practise questions to open conversations, how to gain time to think with 'filler' words, how show your interest in the conversation, how to react to other people's opinions, and how to change the topic naturally.

All classes introduce new structures or techniques you can use, give exercises to practise them, and end with role-play situations where we practise real conversations.

Classes **(Each 1 hour)**


This course includes the following classes:

- Opening and closing conversations
- Gaining time to think
- Showing interest
- Asking for opinions
- Reacting to opinions
- Changing the topic

Recommended **study plan**

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-4 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new structures and put them into practice.



Speaking: *professional conversation essentials*

Description

This course is designed to give you skills to interact more comfortably in professional situations.

You will practise semi-formal language for agreeing and disagreeing, suggesting ideas, paraphrasing and building on ideas, giving constructive criticism, and clarifying misunderstandings.

All classes introduce new structures or techniques you can use, give exercises to practise them, and end with role-play situations where we practise real conversations.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following core classes:

- Polite requests
- Politely declining
- Agreeing and disagreeing
- Suggesting ideas
- Paraphrasing and building on ideas
- Giving constructive criticism
- Clarifying misunderstandings

There are also extra classes on tentative language, interrupting, and much more!

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-4 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new structures and put them into practice.

Speaking: *advanced story telling*

Description

Telling engaging stories in another language is really hard. Even at an advanced level, learners often really struggle with making stories engaging and natural.

In this short course, we look at vocabulary and techniques to help structure a good story, make your descriptions of feelings more vivid, and keep your listener interested.

In each class, we will introduce new vocabulary, practise it in structured exercises, and, finally, put it to use in real conversations.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following core classes:

- Advanced story sequencing
- Techniques to engage listeners
- Strong adjectives and descriptions

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-4 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new vocabulary and put it into practice.



Vocabulary: *better connectors*

Description

Connectors are essential for fluency and sounding natural.

This course looks at the most natural connectors to use in both informal and formal speaking situations.

We explore lots of examples of each connector and the correct grammar for each connector. We then use them in controlled practice exercises (e.g. gap fill), and in more free practice (e.g. speaking activities).

Classes (Each 1 hour)


This course includes the following classes:

- Informal connectors
- Formal connectors for ordering and expanding
- Formal connectors for cause and effect
- Formal connectors for comparing and contrasting

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-2 weeks, combined with conversation classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new connectors and put them into practice.



Vocabulary: *phrasal verbs and idioms for life*

Description

Phrasal verbs and idioms are often a nightmare for English learners!

So, this course covers phrasal verbs and idioms that are commonly used in everyday informal conversations.

In each class, we will read or listen to a conversation to guess the meaning of new expressions, then practise them in structured exercises.

We will then use them in our own conversations, and in role-play exercises.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:


Phrasal verbs and idioms for:

- Ideas
- Thinking
- Likes and dislikes
- Emotions
- Plans and friends
- Organising and reorganising plans
- Health
- Seasons (summer, autumn, winter)

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-2 weeks, combined with conversation classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new phrasal verbs and put them into practice.



Vocabulary: *phrasal verbs for work*

Description

Phrasal verbs are often a nightmare for English learners!

So, this course covers phrasal verbs that are commonly used in the workplace in speaking and writing.

In each class, we will read or listen to a conversation to guess the meaning of new phrasal verbs, then practise them in structured exercises.

We will then use them in our own conversations, and in role-play exercises.

Classes (Each 1 hour)


This course includes the following classes:

- Phrasal verbs for career trajectories
- Phrasal verbs for scheduling
- Phrasal verbs for documents
- Phrasal verbs for making progress
- Phrasal verbs for over-working
- Phrasal verbs for negotiations

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-2 weeks, combined with conversation classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new phrasal verbs and put them into practice.



Vocabulary: *better descriptions*

Description

When we are describing things (e.g. a news story, book, film) in a second language, it's easy to rely on the same repetitive phrases.

In this course, we look at more advanced ways to describe many different things, from books and films to social trends and memories.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:

- Describing a news story
- Describing topics
- Describing a novel
- Describing a film/series
- Describing memories
- Describing holidays
- Describing social trends
- Describing worldviews

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-2 weeks, combined with conversation classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new vocabulary and techniques, and to put them into practice.



Pronunciation: *the music of English*

Description

This course covers pronunciation features that will help you understand the music of the English language. We will not look at specific sounds, but instead look at the music of whole sentences and expressions.

We will look at rhythm and stress in English, for example which words should be stressed in a sentence, and which shouldn't.

We will also look at common patterns of intonation, meaning how the voice rises and falls in a sentence, and how to use intonation to express our attitudes.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:

- Content words
- Function words
- Common weak forms
- Common intonation patterns
- Intonation and attitude

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-4 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new concepts and put them into practice.



Pronunciation: *the flow of English*

Description

This course covers pronunciation features that will help you understand connected speech, or how words flow together in spoken English.

You may have noticed that native speakers don't separate all words when speaking, and that sometimes it is difficult to hear where one word ends and the next begins!

We will look at rules for when this happens, and practise listening to and developing connected speech.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:

- Catenation (consonant-vowel joining)
- Gemination (same letter joining)
- Intrusion (new sounds appearing)
- Elision (sounds disappearing)
- Questions (how common words join together)

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-4 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new structures and put them into practice.



Pronunciation: *pure vowels*

Description

This course looks at the 12 vowels of Standard British English.

We look at what factors make vowel sounds different from each other (tongue position, lip position, jaw position), how to make each vowel sound, and how each vowel sound is spelt.

You can take all the classes in this course to get a deeper understanding of the sounds of English, or you can just take classes on the sounds that are most difficult for you. I will recommend which vowel sounds you should work on.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

- An introduction to vowels
- The /e/ sound 'get'
- The /æ/ sound 'cat'
- The /ɑ:/ sound 'car'
- The /i:/ and /ɪ/ sounds 'see' and 'hit'
- The /ʊ/ and /u:/ sounds 'put' and 'food'
- The schwa /ə/ sound 'ago'
- The /ʌ/ sound 'cut'
- The /ɒ/ sound 'hot'
- The /ɔ:/ sound 'or'
- The /ɜ:/ sound 'her'

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-4 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new sounds and put them into practice.



Pronunciation: *problem sounds for Spanish speakers*

Description

This course focuses on specific sounds in the English language that are often challenging for Spanish speakers.

Each class includes detailed descriptions of how to make the sounds in the mouth, listening exercises to practise identifying the new sounds, and speaking exercises to practise the new pronunciation.

Which classes I will recommend for you depend on your specific pronunciation needs.

Classes (Each 30 minutes-1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:

- -ed word endings
- -ing word endings
- Words starting in 's'
- Th sounds
- The w sound
- The h sound
- B vs. v sounds
- J vs. y sounds
- S vs. sh sounds
- S vs. z sounds
- The /ʒ/ sound
- I sounds
- U sounds
- Long vowels ɔ: ɑ: ɜ:
- The schwa sound and 'disappearing' letters
- Word stress

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take 1 of these classes every 1-4 weeks, along with conversation classes to put what you've learnt into practice.

Please remember that learning pronunciation can be a very slow process, and it takes a lot of time to master new sounds!



Pronunciation: *problem sounds for Chinese speakers*

Description

This course focuses on pronunciation features and sounds that speakers of Chinese languages often have trouble with in English.

Some of the biggest problems Chinese speakers have are with sentence stress and flow in English. For this reason, I will usually advise starting with the following courses:

Classes (Each 30 minutes-1 hour)

- Rhythm of English (looking at what stress is, which words are stressed and which words are de stressed)
- Flow of English (looking at how words join together in English)

After this, we will work on some of the individual sounds that Chinese speakers have trouble with. This will be unique to you, as you may have mastered some sounds but not others. Classes include:

- /l/ vs /r/
- Th sounds in English
- /v/ vs /w/
- Short, lax vowels vs long, tense vowels
- Word final consonants
- Consonant clusters

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take 1 of these classes every 1-4 weeks, along with conversation classes to put what you've learnt into practice.

Please remember that learning pronunciation can be a very slow process, and it takes a lot of time to master new sounds!



Listening: *what English really sounds like*

Description

In this course we work on improving listening skills.

First, we look at how to ask people to repeat what they've said, and how to ask people to clarify. These can help you gain time to listen in real life situations.

We then look at what spoken English really sounds like, and how different it is to written language.

Classes (Each 30 minutes-1 hour)

We look at topics like what questions really sound like in spoken English, which words we hear clearly and which words seem to “disappear”, and how words join together in spoken English.

Exact classes include:

- Asking for repetition and clarification
- Connected speech in questions and basic phrases
- Content words: words native speakers say strongly
- Function words: words that native speakers say weakly
- Connected speech: how words join together in real speech (includes catenation, gemination, intrusion, and elision).

We will then move on to applying all of these concepts in listening practice.

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take 1 of these classes every 1-4 weeks, along with conversation classes to put what you've learnt into practice.



Writing: *building complex sentences*

Description

This course is designed to improve your writing by going back to the basics of sentence construction.

We will look at the building blocks of sentences (clauses), how to build different types of complex sentences, different connectors and how to use them, and also how to use commas correctly and effectively.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:

- Compound sentences
- Complex sentences
- Correlative conjunctions
- Conjunctive adverbs
- Relative clauses

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-4 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute writing correction classes.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new structures and put them into practice.



Writing: *informal and formal emails*

Description

This course is designed to help you effectively write emails in English.

We will look at key grammar, vocabulary, and organisational features of both informal, formal, and semi-formal emails. We will reflect on differences in these three styles, and what situations we can use each style in.

We will, of course, have lots of practice writing emails together!

Classes (Each 1 hour)


This course includes the following classes:

- Informal emails: essentials
- Formal emails: essentials
- Semi-formal emails: essentials

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-4 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute writing correction classes, which we can use to correct your emails.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new structures and put them into practice.



British English: *vocabulary and grammar*

Description

This course is designed to help you understand the key ways in which British English differs structurally from American English.

We will look at words that are different in the two countries, some key spelling differences, and some subtle but important grammatical differences.

You can also take extra classes on British politeness , humour, and informal vocabulary to understand linguistic differences even further!

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following core classes:

- Key British vocabulary
- British vs. American spelling
- British vs. American grammar
- British tag questions

And the following optional classes:

- British politeness
- British humour
- British informal vocabulary

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-4 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes, which we can use to practise what we've learnt.

This allows you enough time to get used to the new structures and put them into practice.



British English: *accent*

Description

This course is designed to help you begin to hear and copy the key sounds that make a British accent different from an American one.

We will mostly look at individual sounds (i.e. consonants and vowels) on this course, but will also look at one key intonation pattern that makes British English different from American English.

Classes (Each 1 hour)


This course includes the following classes:

- The silent 'r'
- 'Tu' and 'du'
- The British 't'
- The short British 'o'
- Long British vowels
- British intonation

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 4 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes, which we can use to practise what we've learnt.

Pronunciation and learning an accent is a very slow process, and it is good to have at least a month to focus on each new sound to begin to properly copy and use it.



B2 grammar: *time and possibility*

Description

This course is a course for upper intermediate students (B2). It is designed to help you practise the most important grammar related to time and possibility in English.

This grammar will help you talk more accurately about events and conversations in the past, present, and future. It will also teach you how to talk about wishes, predictions, and speculations.

In all classes we will do lots of practice activities, and build up to using the grammar in real-world situations.


Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:

- Will and going to, for prediction
- Future perfect and future continuous
- Past perfect and past continuous
- Would and used to
- Future in the past
- All narrative tenses
- Reported speech
- Modals of deduction and speculation
- Conditional structures
- Wish structures

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-3 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes, which we can use to practise what we've learnt.



B2 grammar: *language patterns*

Description

This course is a course for upper intermediate students (B2). It is designed to help you practise the grammar related to common language patterns in English.

For example, we will look at patterns of when to use the gerund, infinitive, and bare infinitive. We will also look at differences between active and stative verbs, and at patterns related to phrasal verbs and prepositions.

In all classes we will do lots of practice activities, and build up to using the grammar in real-world situations.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:

- Gerund vs. infinitive
- Active vs. stative verbs
- Types of phrasal verbs
- Common collocations with prepositions
- Causatives 'get' and 'have'

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-3 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes, which we can use to practise what we've learnt.

C1 grammar: *essential* review

Description

This course is a course for advanced students (C1). It is designed to help you practise essential advanced grammar.

We will work to ensure a solid foundation in all of the different tenses in English, as well as communication of possibilities, hopes, desires, and wishes. We will also look at key grammar for phrasal verbs and the passive voice.

You will see that a lot of topics are shared with B2 level. The difference at C1 level is that these topics should not just be learnt, but truly mastered.

In all classes we will do lots of practice activities, and build up to using the grammar in real-world situations.


Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:

- Narrative tenses
- Future tenses
- Zero-third conditionals
- Mixed conditionals
- Modals in the past
- Expressing wishes
- Phrasal verb grammar
- The passive voice

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-3 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes, which we can use to practise what we've learnt.



Grammar: *auxiliary verbs in conversation*

Description

Auxiliary verbs are a very common feature of all conversation in English, and can help your speaking sound much more natural. However, few learners fully master them.

In this course, we review what auxiliary verbs are, and look at the most frequent uses of them in conversation.

We look at short answers, tag questions, echo questions, and how to respond to these questions.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:

- Short answers
- Tag questions
- Answering tag questions
- Echo questions

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take one of these classes every 1-3 weeks, combined with weekly 30 minute conversation classes, which we can use to practise what we've learnt.



IELTS speaking: *an introduction*

Description

This course is designed to give you an introduction to the IELTS speaking exam.

We will look at the assessment criteria for the exam, and general tips to help you with nerves and fluency. We will then look at the different parts of the speaking exam, and useful tips and structures that can help you deal with each part of the test.

After you've taken this introduction, you should continue to take IELTS topic-based speaking classes, where we will do practise exams and build topic-based vocabulary.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:


- Introduction (structure of exam, assessment criteria, and general speaking tips)
- IELTS part 1 (common question types, useful tips)
- IELTS part 2 (common topics, structure, useful tips)
- IELTS part 3 (common question types, useful structures)

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take 1 of these classes per week, and that you also take one 30 minute IELTS speaking class per week to practise what we've learnt.

However, if you are preparing for IELTS in a hurry, I recommend you take these classes 3 days in a row. After you've taken then, we can begin practice speaking exams and building topic-based vocabulary.

I highly recommend you prepare for IELTS at least three months in advance.



IELTS writing: *an introduction*

Description

This course is designed to give you an introduction to the IELTS writing exam.

We will look generally at the assessment criteria for the exam and the two parts of the exam.

We will also look at key structure, grammar, vocabulary for task 1, and all the different types of visual data that you may find in task 1.

For task 2, we will first look at question types and suggested essay structures. We will then look at how to craft a well-flowing text, how to use synonyms, and how to use academic language.

Classes (Each 1 hour)

This course includes the following classes:

- Introduction (the assessment criteria, the 2 parts of the writing exam)
- Task 1: structure
- Task 1: vocabulary
- Task 1: grammar
- Task 1: maps
- Task 1: process diagrams
- Task 2: structure
- Task 2: coherence and cohesion
- Task 2: synonyms and alternatives
- Task 2: academic language

Recommended study plan

I recommend you take 1 of these classes per week, combined with one or more 30 minute writing correction sessions, to begin to practise essay writing right away.

I highly recommend you start preparing for IELTS at least 3 months in advance.



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