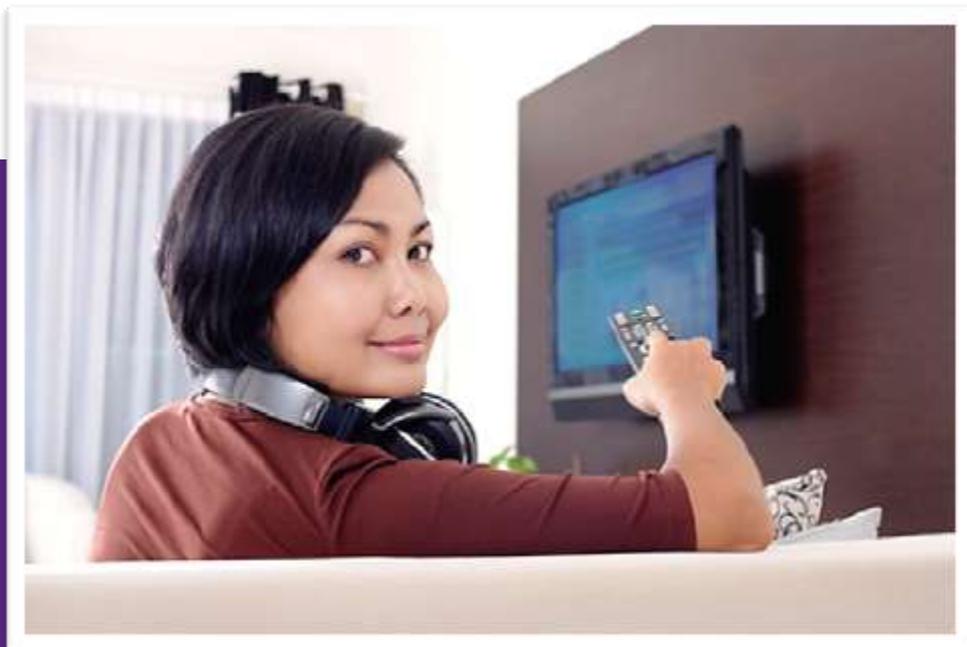




BLOOMSBURY INTERNATIONAL

Learning English with Movies

How to improve your English listening and speaking skills with movies.

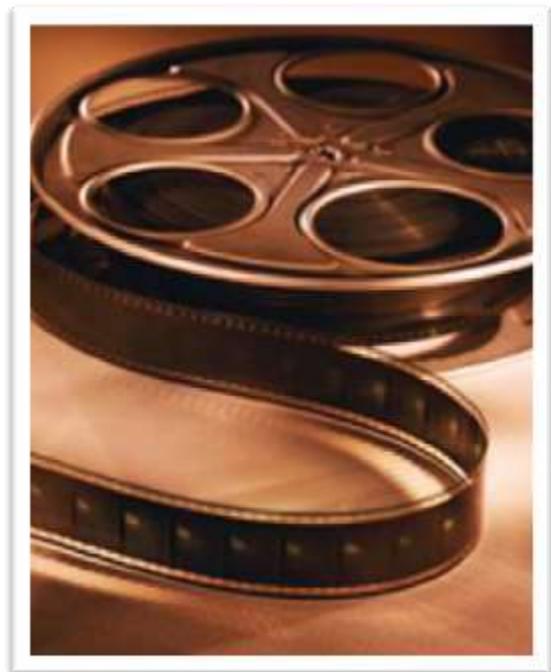


How to improve your English with movies

Watching movies is a great way for you to improve your English, especially your listening and speaking skills.

Films are not usually created for English language learners – they are made for native English speakers. Therefore, the language is exactly how you hear it in real life – it is spoken quickly, with native accents and pronunciation and using many idioms and colloquial expressions.

It is not a good idea to use this as your only method of learning English; it is much more advisable to study at an English school. However, I would definitely recommend all English language students to watch films in English in their spare time for additional practice that you might not get in a classroom.



Which film should I watch?

Choosing a film to watch that is suitable for your level of English can be difficult. If your level of English is quite low, choose a movie that you have already seen or a movie made for children which uses simpler language (for example, Pixar films). However, if you have a higher level of English, you can try to challenge yourself and watch films with more advanced language.

Whatever your level of English is, you might be tempted to switch on subtitles. If so, I would recommend using English subtitles so you can read along while you are listening. Of course, if watching a film in English and reading English subtitles is too difficult, you should start by watching films with subtitles in your language (this is meant to be a fun way to learn English after all!).

Don't be afraid to replay parts of the film that you don't understand, or turn subtitles on just for one important scene. If you have time you can even watch the film (or part of the film) first with no subtitles, then with English subtitles and if you still don't understand fully, you can watch it a final time with subtitles in your language. This will really help you practise your English listening skills!

If you are a student at Bloomsbury International, you can borrow a DVD from the selection in our Student Resource Centre. Speak to your English teacher for recommendations of good films to watch for your level of English.

This website is a very good alternative to subtitles: www.eslnotes.com. It has guides to many popular movies, including plot summaries and a list of words and phrases you might not know from the film. If you read this first and then watch the film, you are more likely to understand it!

How will watching English films help me?

Watching movies in English will help you in many ways:



1. Listening skills:

You will hear English being used in a very natural way. Some parts may be spoken too fast for you to understand but it will be a perfect way for you to get used to hearing native speakers talk to each other. You will also hear informal English and slang words and phrases that you often do not find in books or dictionaries.

2. Speaking skills:

Hearing natives speak will also help your speaking skills, especially your fluency. You will hear how to link your words together and where to put intonation on certain words and sentences. Why not watch films with your friends and speak about them afterwards? Or you could even find movie scripts online and act out scenes with your friends! You can then play the scene to check if your pronunciation was correct.

3. Pronunciation:

We all know that English pronunciation is extremely difficult and when you read words it is hard to know how they should be said. Hearing native English speakers talk to each other will help you to hear how words are pronounced. If you are using English subtitles, you will also be able to see how the words are written.

4. Vocabulary:

By watching English movies, you will hear many new words and phrases, especially idioms and colloquial expressions. I would suggest keeping a notebook with you and writing down any new words or phrases you hear and you would like to remember or you don't understand. You can look up the meaning later or ask your English teacher.

5. Put knowledge into practice:

In your English classes you will learn a lot of vocabulary and grammar but you may not know how to use it in real life. Watching English films will help you understand how to use all the knowledge you have learnt in everyday situations.

It's much more enjoyable to watch movies in their original language so turn off the dubbing, turn on the subtitles (if you wish) and enjoy!

