

Before you start your reading program, we suggest you spend some time reading this leaflet. The questions in the different sections help you think about your needs and interests in reading.

Why do you want to improve your reading skills?

To cope with my course readings

If this applies to you, you may want to improve your reading speed so that you can cope with the large amounts of course readings. In that case, the advice sheet **Improving reading speed (R4)** will be helpful to you. Other than just improving your reading speed, you may also want to make sure that you have learned from your reading. The advice sheets **Reading for main points** and **Reading for specific information** will give you additional information, depending on whether you want to just read for main points (**R5**) or you have some specific information to look for in your reading (**R6**).

To improve my writing

If this is your aim, the advice sheet **Reading critically (R7)** may be helpful. This leaflet gives such advice as how to distinguish

opinions from facts, and how to understand text organization, so that when you are a writer yourself, you would be aware of how to formulate your argument persuasively and systematically. You may also want to refer to the advice sheet **Learning Vocabulary for Speaking and Writing (V8)**.

To improve my speaking

If you want to improve speaking through reading, read the first tip on the following page. You may also want to refer to the advice sheet **Learning vocabulary by reading or listening (V7)**.

To prepare myself for a reading test

If you are preparing yourself for a reading test, then you will have a very busy time. Since you do not know what exactly will be tested, you may need to work through all the reading subskills (R4-R7). Section 4 of the book "How to learn a language" on the *Study Skills* shelf will give you some ideas on developing reading strategies. At the end of the program, you would of course want to evaluate how much you have achieved. The advice sheet **Evaluating how much you have improved in reading (R3)** will help you assess the progress you have made.

If you still have not decided which reading subskill to work on, the following material (on the *Study Skills* shelf may give you some further ideas:

A guide to learning independently, Unit 8

What do you enjoy reading?

Now, ask yourself what you enjoy reading. If reading is always a boring activity to you, it could be because you choose the wrong material. Think about what you enjoy reading, either in English or in your own language. Start with the materials that you enjoy most:

- Newspapers / magazines?
- Stories / novels?
- Comics?
- Cookbooks?

Tips for solving problems in reading

1. What should I do if I do not know the words in a text?

Don't go to the dictionary so soon. Try to guess the meaning of the words. No clue? Try again! Don't give up. You may find some clue elsewhere in the text. The

words that you do not know may be expressed in some other way in the text.

If the same word keeps coming up in the text, it would be helpful to look it up in the dictionary. Apart from meaning, you may also want to check its pronunciation. Try to use the word in both your writing and speaking so that you may experiment with its usage.

2. What should I do if **the sentences are too long and complicated?**

Sentences are usually written in chunks or groups. Concentrate on the chunks that you understand and try to make some sense out of them.

If you have read a text for more than 5 minutes without understanding it, give it up! It is probably too difficult for you.

3. What can I do if **I am not motivated to read?**

- Don't read if you are too tired.
- Read at a place where you feel comfortable.
- Talk to someone who enjoys reading.
- Most important of all, identify a purpose in reading. This will give you a sense of achievement.

- And check out the advice sheet **How to Enjoy Reading (R9)**!

And now...

If you would like any help or advice, or just a chat about your progress, please get in touch - **we are here to support your independent learning!** To contact us:

- make an appointment to see an **adviser**. For details of advisers and their availability, please go to <https://ilang.cle.ust.hk/language-adviser-timetable/>.
- e-mail your questions to **iLANG** (icilang@ust.hk).
- ask at the reception counter of the Language Commons — if the receptionist cannot help you directly, s/he will pass your query on to one of the advisers.

What else can you do?

- browse the many physical (<https://ilang.cle.ust.hk/language-commons/#resources>) and online materials (<https://ilang.cle.ust.hk/resources-reading/>) for Reading.
- join a Reading activity or short course (<http://ilang.cle.ust.hk/reading/>).

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