



Improving Your Reading Speed

What can slow reading down?

- Reading advanced text infrequently
- Reading aloud, under your breath or mouthing the words
- Do you read books from cover to cover
- Do you start reading before you have worked out what you need to know
- Do you read word by word
- Do you keep checking back along the line, re reading

How would you know if you can read at speed?

- Find something to read (of interest or familiar)
- Set your alarm for 10 minutes
- Read at a pace that allows you to understand what you are reading for the 10 minutes
- Count how many words you read
- Divide this by 10 find out how many words you read in a minute on average
- Do this using different text. If you read less than 200-250 words per minute even with material that is clear and interesting, it is worth trying to increase your speed



Not all of these tips will work for everyone
try them out and choose the best for you.

1. Use a pointer (a pen or your finger) to guide your eyes along the text.
2. Increase the speed of the pointer and make your eyes follow.
3. Try not to vocalise the words. You can practise blocking this habit by repeating a sequence (1, 2, 3, 4) as your eyes move over the text.
4. But – if you need to read aloud, record yourself so that you can play the recording again.
5. Stop yourself from re-reading by using a card to cover what you have read.
6. Read down the centre of the page and let your peripheral vision take in the text to the sides.
7. Read groups of words.
8. Read groups of lines (block mark 3 lines at a time using a card) – try holding the book further away than usual.

References:

- (Various authors). *How to Learn Speed Reading* (online). URL:
<http://www.wikihow.com/Learn-Speed-Reading> (Accessed 10 January 2013)
- Cottrell, S. (2008). *The Study Skills Handbook*, 3rd edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.