

MEMBERS ONLY

2017



AUGUST 08

INNER CIRCLE

THIS MONTH

HOW TO MASTER 500 WORDS
WITH SPACED REPETITION

innovative LANGUAGE.COM

It's Almost Like Cheating!



Welcome to the Inner Circle, listeners.

Last time, you learned...

- how easy it is to reach a language goal IF you have a clear, step-by-step path laid out in front of you
- and how the Learning Paths study tool helps you accomplish this

Now, my goal for this past month was to master 500 Chinese words. And it's a perfect example of a measurable goal! Either you know 500 or you don't. So, how did I hit this goal? Did I write out flashcards by hand? No. I hit the goal with the help of 2 things - (1) a learning technique and (2) technology - which made it a lot easier. It's almost like cheating!

If you're a seasoned language learner, you've definitely heard of this tactic. If not, you'll learn about it in this Inner Circle.

How To Master 500 Words with Spaced Repetition

You'll learn...

- **The Problem with Learning Something Just "Once"**
- **The Power of Spaced Repetition Learning**
- **How I Reached My 500 Word Goal with Flashcards**
- **How You Can Take Full Advantage of This Study Tool**

I hit my goal with the help of two things:

- a learning technique
- technology

But first, let's jump into the first part.



1

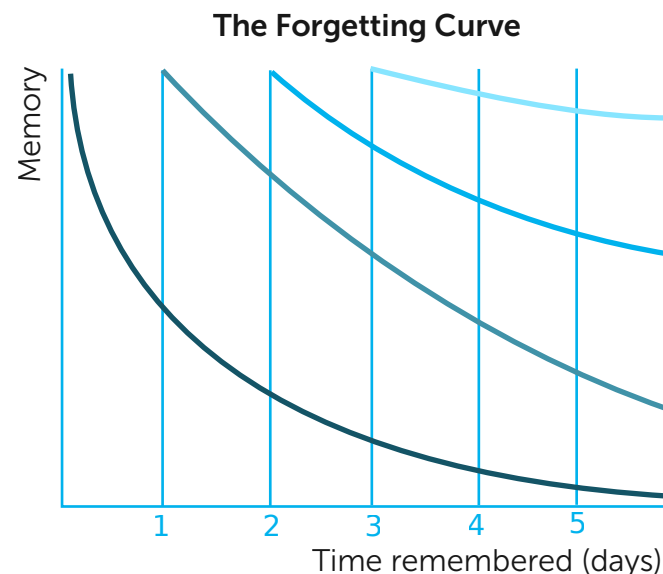
The Problem with Learning Something Just “Once”

First, let's give you a quick crash course on memory and learning.

If you learn 5 new words right now, and I ask you to tell me what you learned, you have a 100% chance of remembering. Sounds easy enough right? Now, if I asked you in 1 day, your memory retention would be less than 50%.

Where am I getting this from?

A long time ago, a German psychologist by the name of Hermann Ebbinghaus came up with a hypothesis on the nature of forgetting, and subsequently, came up with the “Forgetting Curve.” This was a graph that shows the relationship between memory and time.



Long story short, your memory naturally drops.

The other thing to know is that our brains are not computers. They're like muscles. Reading a word or phrase just once probably won't save it to your brain. Reviewing it every now and then is much more effective.

This is where Spaced Repetition comes in. Let's get into the second part.

2

The Power of Spaced Repetition Learning



Listeners, Spaced Repetition Learning simply means... revisiting or coming back to review something over time. And the space between each review session gets longer and longer. For example:

- Day 1: Learn a new word
- Day 3: Review the word
- Day 8: Review the word
- And so on.

So, if you just came across a new phrase or word, review it in 2 days, then in 5 days, then in 7 days and so on. That way, you refresh your brain and strengthen your memory in the long run. It's much more effective than cramming for hours.

But you might be thinking:

"Coming back to review... in 2 days, or 5 days. That's inconvenient. I have a hard enough time remembering words, so I won't remember to do that."

And you're right! It is inconvenient for most of us with busy schedules. But...when combined with technology that you listeners already have access to, your learning skyrockets, and your progress skyrockets. It's almost like cheating.

Let's get into the third part.

3

How I Reached My 500 Word Goal with Flashcards

Here's what I did. Since my goal was to learn 500 words based on the ChineseClass101 lessons I've been taking, I've been saving them to my WordBank as I go along. I simply made a Flashcard deck with the words in the WordBank.

Note: Remember, the WordBank is a Premium study tool where you can save words and phrases. You can also make Flashcard decks from the words in your WordBank.

So, this is where the Technology comes in - Spaced Repetition Flashcards. If you're a Premium or Premium *PLUS* member, you already have access to this study tool.

I say it's almost like cheating because you'd agree that learning 500 words up front is hard work, right? With Spaced Repetition, it's easy because the goal is NOT to cram but to study a little a day and space out your study sessions.

You don't study 500 all at once.

You study a limited number of words in the first session and the system introduces a few more as you get acclimated to the words.

In the second session, which is a few days later, you review the words you learned last time. And, the system continues introducing new words as you master the previous ones.



How long does a session take? It's up to the size of your deck.

With my deck, I'd have between 20 or 40 cards, sometimes a few more, to review for the day. Each study session would take me about about 5 to 7 minutes. Sometimes I went up to 20 minutes just to put in extra work and start on new words.

And, with our flashcards, you mark how well you know them.

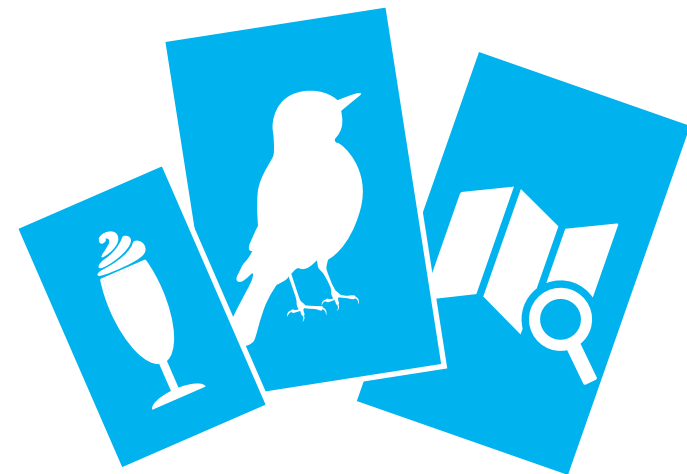
If you don't know a word, you'll keep seeing that word in that study session until you remember it. If you get it right, you'll see it again in 2 days, or possibly later.

When you're done with a session, you're done for the day. The flashcard deck will tell you "NO CARDS DUE RIGHT NOW. Study again on this date."

I say it's like cheating because the technology, **Flashcards**, combined with the learning technique, **Spaced repetition**, makes learning easy. The flashcards do the hard work for you.

- They redisplay words so that you don't forget them
- They quiz you on words that you struggle with most
- They remind you when to study next and when to stop
- And you learn a small chunk of words at a time to avoid cramming

So, how can you take advantage of this?

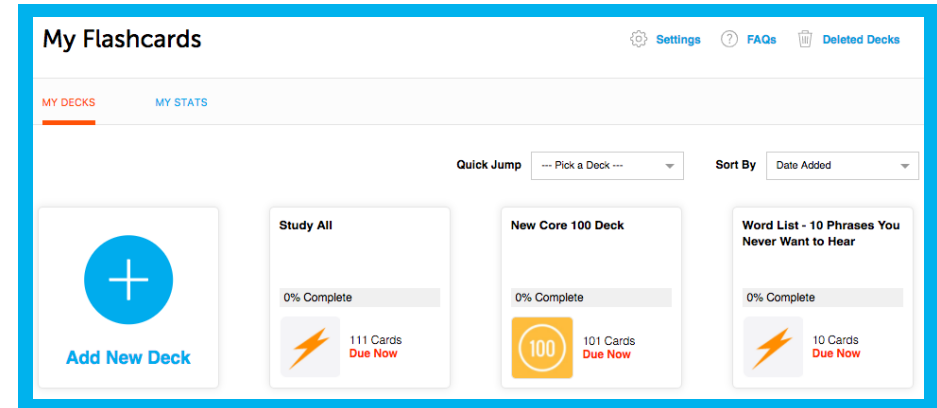


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How To Learn with Spaced Repetition Flashcards

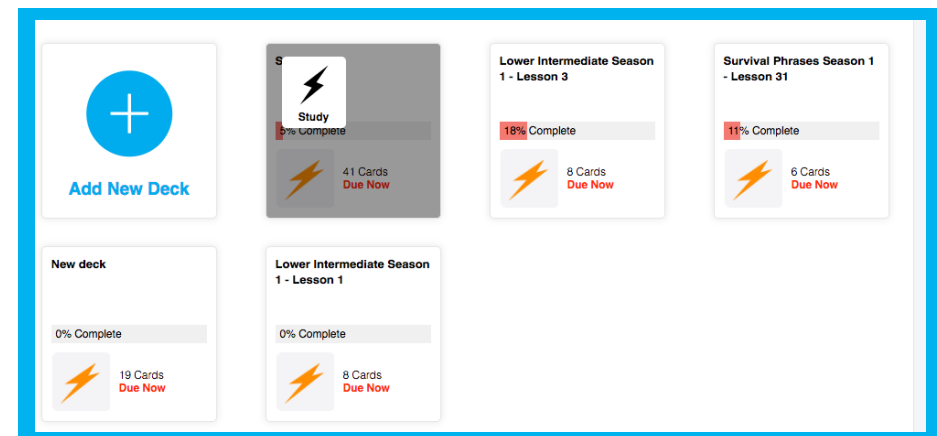


Listeners, find your Flashcards in the vocabulary drop-down menu on the site. There you should already have the 100 must-know words deck.



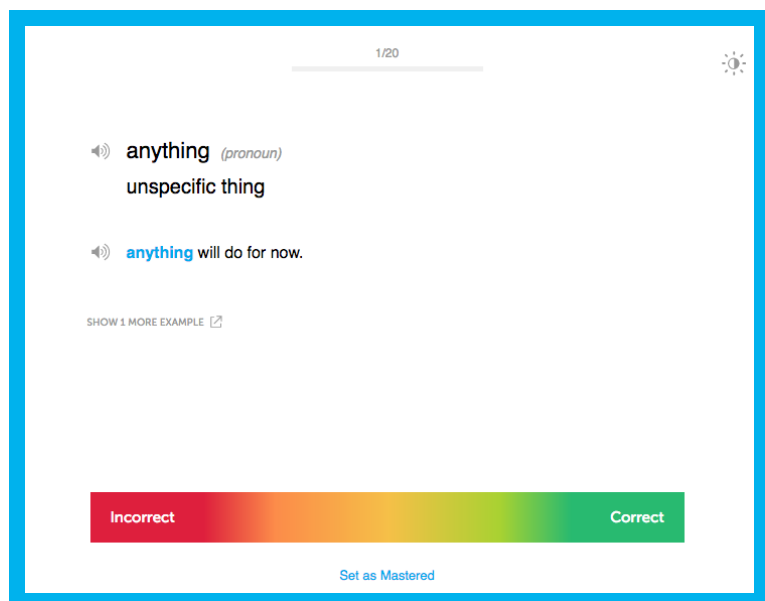
That's the default deck, but you can always create others.

Click on "Study" and "Start Session" to start learning.



It'll start quizzing you. You'll get the flashcard with the word in the target language.

Click on "Show Answer" to confirm the meaning and mark it as correct or incorrect.



Based on your answer, the flashcard system will start sorting the words for you.

So if you know that word, you won't see it for another 2 days.

But if you don't... it's going to hound you until you remember it! Then, just keep on going until you're done with the session for that day.

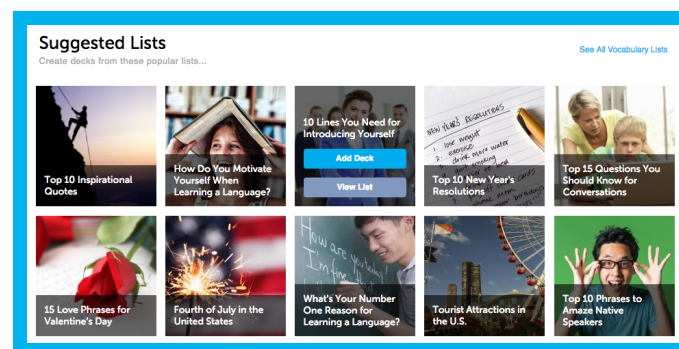
You can study with 3 modes:

1. Recognition - you get the word in the target language and see if you know the meaning
2. Production - you get the meaning and see if you know it in the target language
3. Listening - you hear the pronunciation and see if you know the meaning

You can create flashcard decks from...

- Words you learn in Lessons
- The 2,000 Core Word List
- Entries in Your WordBank
- And the Words and Phrases in our Free Vocab Lists

In fact, there are suggested lists right below your decks to help you get started.



The beauty of these Flashcards is that all you have to do is put in the time.

Don't worry about rushing or cramming. Do the ones for today and that's it. The flashcards will tell you when to come back. Then, stick with the deck until you've mastered it.

So, listeners, be sure to take advantage of Flashcards.

Find this study tool in the Vocabulary drop-down menu.

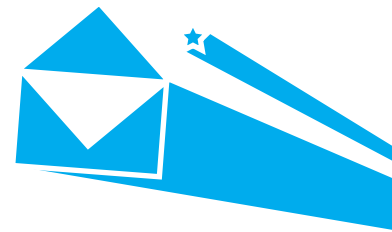
Now, let's talk goals. There are 4 months left in the year. Not much time left. I've done enough listening, reading and vocab study these past few months to prep me for my yearly goal of taking a proficiency test. So, my next monthly goal will be to take a practice test.

The deadline? September 30th.

Let me know what your goals are for the month.

Shoot me an email at
inner.circle@innovativelanguage.com

See you next month!



To your fluency,
Peter Galante
Founder, InnovativeLanguage.com