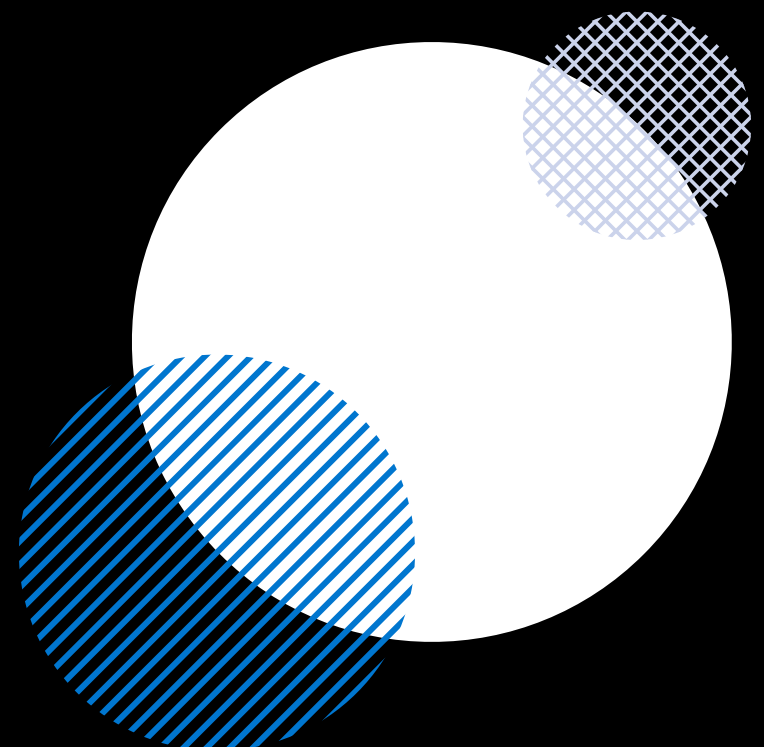
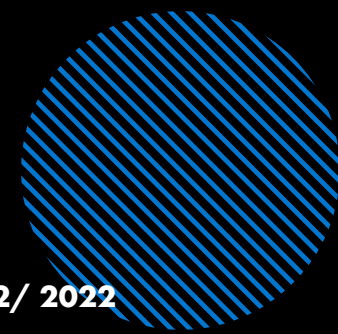




INNER CIRCLE FEBRUARY



#2/ 2022

This month

How to Create Long-Lasting Habits
for Language Learning

innovative LANGUAGE.COM

Welcome to the Inner Circle. Peter here. Last time, you learned how to get started with learning a language by using our Fundamentals Welcome pack. I told you I'd be learning Hindi this year.

I promised a minute of conversation, and I hit it. My goal for the year is thirty minutes, so I'll try to go up month by month. Most people that make New Year's resolutions usually fall off around this time...if they haven't done so in January. But the habits I've developed over all my years of learning languages make it easy to keep going. If you don't have good habits, you're going to struggle with any goal.

I notice with language learners that at the start, they are excited and come up with a routine or plan to stick to, like to learn for 30 minutes a day. It works when you're fresh and motivated, but you'll need habits later on.

So let's get into part 1 of this Inner Circle.

HOW TO CREATE LONG-LASTING HABITS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

1. The Habits I Rely on to Learn Languages
2. How to Create Your Own Habits



THE HABITS I RELY ON TO LEARN LANGUAGES

Believe it or not, I used to have terrible learning habits, and I wasn't always good at learning languages. I used to start strong but would get distracted by daily tasks, or I would tell myself I'd study again when I had time... and then somehow that time never appeared. It's hard to stick with things when you need to force yourself to get motivated.

People are pretty simple. If we get a good result or reward, we want to do something again. If we're punished, we don't. If the result is too slow, we might not do it again.

We want results to stay motivated. But with long-term goals like language learning or even fitness, it takes time to see results. It's understandable why it's hard to make it a habit. You can come up with a nice routine on paper, but if you can't physically stick with

it, it's kind of useless. The trick is to keep going until it becomes a habit. So, one of the first things I did was set a specific time and location dedicated to language learning. Right now, I mostly study at a cafe on Monday and Wednesday mornings, and I take fifteen minutes at lunch each day to listen to a lesson. Time and location are the keys to habits. Maybe for you, 8 p.m. means dinner time. Midnight is when you brush your teeth. The office is the place you work. Setting a time and place gives you a plan to work from, so that at 8 p.m., you know what to do, no matter what else is going on.

That's the first step you have to take. Time and location are very powerful cues, especially location. When I go to the cafe, I see other people being productive, and I also want to be productive. That's why I mostly learn there. The cafe is popular with people who study or work, and even though we don't know each other, it

becomes an environment in which we know we have to focus.

The second tip is very similar: create an environment that's good for language learning, meaning a place where it's easy for you to learn. Again, for me, it's the cafe. It takes away some distractions from home and helps me concentrate. You could also turn a room or even a corner into a learning space. It's like how people say if you want to go running more, leave your running shoes out, so it's easy to put them on and go.

Your environment can make or break your habits. If you have a gym in your apartment building, it's easy to go. If it's five blocks away, it's harder. If it's five blocks on the way to work, where you'd be going anyway, then it's not as hard. The environment affects how likely you are to make something a habit.

The third thing you can do is piggybacking, also called "habit stacking," in the book *Atomic Habits* by James Clear.

With Piggybacking, you take a look at your existing habits and routines. For example, you wake up, eat breakfast, commute to work, get lunch, leave work, commute home, and maybe you walk your dog or go for a jog. So you look for a habit where you can piggyback language learning on top of that existing routine. In my case, it's on my commute to work. I'll use our Innovative Language Learning App and spend around 30 minutes on lessons. This is a habit I've stuck with for years. In the earlier days, I'd be on the train practicing reading or drilling physical flashcards. You can get 2 things done at the same time, and you don't have to push yourself to learn. If I'm already on the train, and there's not much, I can do, so it's very simple to play a lesson. I learn for 10 minutes while on the train to work. It's more likely to become a habit if you don't have to think about it. The whole point is to make it easy to show up.

The fourth tip is another example of making a habit easy to show up for, and it's called the two-minute rule. If you want to create a habit, do it only for two minutes.

After two minutes, you walk away. The whole point is to master the habit of showing up and learning. Two minutes isn't enough to make much progress, but it's enough to build a habit. With habits, it's not about how many hours you put in in every session. It's the frequency. Someone who did 100 two-minute lessons for two weeks will have a much stronger habit than someone who studied for an hour a day for 2 weeks and wore themselves out. That's why many of our lessons are very quick, some just three minutes.

And with such a short lesson, you feel like you want to learn more. Many first-time learners sit down for an hour on their first try, overwhelm themselves, and afterward, they don't want to do it again. So they quit. With short sessions, you end on a high note. You want to do more. And then you get used to it and build up to more time. Nowadays I spend around 30 to 40 minutes on a session, and sometimes an hour with my teacher, without a problem.

The fifth tip is to track your habits, and it's something I've done with a calendar. You cross the days on a calendar every time you do something. It's a good approach. Having that habit tracker does two things. First, it keeps the habit on top of your mind, and second, it gives you that reward or result. If you're consistent, you have the visual proof right in front of you.

If you're not, well, at least now you know your progress.

I think another big one I started doing later in my journey was that I'd always get an in-person teacher and use our Premium PLUS teacher as well. Recently, I've been attending our weekly Live Group Classes. Having someone waiting for you makes it harder to back out, and it's easier to create a strong habit. If you have a lesson every Thursday night, you have to be there.

This is another way to build a habit. It's called a commitment device, where one action dictates your future behavior. With my teacher, I pay for several sessions ahead of time, and the days and times are locked in, so I'm locked in and have to show up. For some people, this sounds inconvenient because you have to pay upfront, and your schedule is set ahead of time, but it's probably the best way to get a habit started.

If you listen to the past Inner Circle episodes. I was failing my monthly goals for German, so I joined an in-person class to get back on track. But as with all of these tips, the whole point is to make it easy for you to start and stick with a habit, and then it's a matter of time until it becomes part of you.

But how long does it take to form a habit? Some say 21 days. Then there are studies that say 2 months on average. But the most important part again is... frequency. The current habits you have... have done hundreds and hundreds of times which is what makes

them automatic. When it becomes a part of you, it's much harder to quit... because it becomes a part of your identity. That's what you want to aim for, rather than a specific number of days.

2

HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN HABITS

Our lives are governed by routines and habits, and a lot of the time, we're doing things out of habit without having to think or motivate ourselves.

Now imagine if you could do that for language learning, where you can easily slide in and start learning without needing to push yourself. That's where habits come in. Habits start with a cue, an outside signal - for example, it's 8 p.m. Then the response is that you eat. And then the reward: you feel satisfied.

But building habits is tricky, especially when there's no instant reward. Here's a quick recap with examples.

First: Set a time and location.

This one depends on you and how much free time you have. Keep it simple and don't aim too high—for example, 8-8:10 p.m. at home. 2-2:30 p.m. at the cafe

every Saturday and Sunday. Time and location are powerful cues for our behavior. There are certain times we sleep, eat, do work, and there are places where we work, and so if you want to build a habit, start here first.

Second: Create an environment that makes language learning easy.

You can turn a room or a corner of a room into a learning space where you don't have any distractions in the way and where it's easy to start learning. If your home isn't the best place, then try a cafe. The whole point is to make learning easier to jump into.

Third: Piggyback on your existing routines and habits.

In other words, combine language learning with a routine that you already do, like commuting to work, doing chores, or taking a walk. That way, your brain

automatically starts associating your commute time with language time without you having to push and motivate yourself.

Fourth: Use the two-minute rule.

If you want to create a habit, do it only for two minutes and immediately walk away after. The whole point is to build the habit of showing up to language learning, and you don't need to put in hours. It's all about how many times you've shown up, not the hours.

You can easily learn with our lessons or even the word of the day emails.

Fifth: Track your habits and don't skip two days in a row.

If you can track and measure something, that means you can also improve it. The same applies to language learning. If you see that you were able to stick with it for a week, that's a powerful reward, which means you're more likely to keep at it without breaking the chain.

By the way, we included a habit tracking calendar with this Inner Circle for you to download, print, and use.

Sixth: Surround yourself with other language learners, or get a language teacher.

Like the environment, people have a big impact on your habits. If you're a Premium PLUS user, be sure to take advantage of teachers available in our program or sign up for live classes. Our next semester opens up in May for Japanese, Korean, Spanish, French, Chinese, Italian, German, and English.

NOW BACK TO GOALS

For the first month, I want to reach three minutes of speaking.

My deadline is March 31st, 2022.

Let us know what your measurable monthly goal is. Email us at inner.circle@innovativelanguage.com, and stay tuned for the next Inner Circle.

HABIT TRACKER

INNER CIRCLE 11

MONTH 1

GOAL Finish 15 Lessons

DEADLINE March 31st, 2022

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	- Take lesson #1 of the Level 1 Pathway - Lesson audio - Read lesson notes - Take quiz	Review Lesson #1 - Listen to the dialogue track - Reread lesson notes - Practice speaking with the dialogue tool	Take lesson #2	Review Lesson #1		Practice the Conversation from Lessons #1 & 2 with the Dialogue Tool
	Take lesson #3	Review Lesson #3	Take lesson #4	Review Lesson #4		Practice the Conversation from Lessons #3 & 4 with the Dialogue Tool
	Take lesson #5	Review Lesson #5	Take lesson #6	Review Lesson #6		Practice the Conversation from Lessons #5 & 6 with the Dialogue Tool
	Take lesson #7	Review Lesson #7	Take lesson #8	Review Lesson #8		Practice the Conversation from Lessons #7 & 8 with the Dialogue Tool

MONTH _____

GOAL _____

DEADLINE _____

[illegible]