

Learning a New Language? Download These 5 Apps

By Emily Hochberg | August 17, 2016



Trying to learn a new language fast? There's an app for that — a few good ones in fact. Whether you're planning a big trip abroad, or simply want to make better use of your subway commute, downloading any of these desktop and mobile applications will surely translate (see what we did there?) into a good use of your tiempo.

Duolingo

This app and website promises to help you “learn a language for free, forever.” There are no hidden fees or premium content — just dozens of languages offered at casual, regular, serious, and insane paces (equivalent of 5-20 minutes per day). The content includes

drills, reading, writing, listening, and speaking exercises, and awards points and bonuses for correct answers. They also keep you motivated by sending reminders if you've started slacking. Feeling ambitious? Take on multiple courses simultaneously at no extra charge.

Memrise

As the name implies, Memrise seeks to teach a language through memorization techniques. The user-generated content offers over 300,000 courses focused on 200 languages for iOS and Android users. This one is for all the visual learners out there, as it utilizes "mems," or mnemonic flash cards, which feature easy to recall graphics, humor, and ideas. You can also give back to the community by uploading your own "mems" to share with other users. User content can be hit or miss, but it's all free!

Babbel

This one isn't gratis, but it won't break the bank. At prices ranging from \$6.95 to \$12.95 per month, it's certainly more affordable than other premium, well-known competitors, and delivers quality content in 13 languages. Babbel users focus on building basic conversational skills through intensive vocabulary studies, and listening and writing over speaking and reading — another style for another kind of user.

Busuu

They say if you want to truly experience a new culture, you have to live like a local. So why not learn a language from a local, too? Busuu is a social network that connects users with native speakers through audio-visual language courses. The website and mobile app offers free and premium features for 12 languages, though the free content is pretty limited. Fortunately, premium plans start at around five dollars a month, leaving you with more money to travel and put your studies to actual use.

Rosetta Stone

This is the crème-de-la-crème of language study. It's highly effective and perhaps the best known, but also the most costly — it can be up to hundreds of dollars. Used by individuals, corporations, and within classrooms, this immersive program was one of the first to offer accelerated language studies. It now includes cloud-based programs to learn

online or on-the-go, and even boasts neuroscientist-developed personalized training programs to keep your brain sharp. You can test out a free trial before laying down the big bucks, though. It's a worthy investment if you're serious about lapping up new language skills.

xx, The FabFitFun Team

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