
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Take Away English 随身英语

Language-learning apps

用语言学习应用软件学外语



词汇: learning 学习

Are you learning another language? Maybe you're trying to **get to grips with** it for work or study, or maybe you're trying to **master** it just for the fun of it? Language learning is nothing new, of course, but technology has made it easier than ever to **grasp**.

The popularity of language-learning apps in particular has boomed around the world, especially as more people are working or studying at home. They are usually easy and **convenient** to use because you can **access** them on your **smartphone**. And apps can offer languages not popular enough to be taught at **evening classes** or schools or universities.

Many of us are aiming to be **bilingual** to enable us to **communicate** with people around the world. But, maybe surprisingly, it's the British, who are not renowned for their **enthusiasm** for language learning, who are leading the way in the growth of these apps. US firm Duolingo told the BBC that in 2020 new user numbers globally were up 67% compared with 2019, while in the UK they **shot up** by 132%, almost **double** the worldwide average. And London-based Busuu, saw a similar trend for learners based in the UK.

But for anyone **trying their hand** at a new language, what **motivates** them to carry on learning when there isn't a teacher around to manage their **progress**? Colin Watkins from Duolingo told the BBC that for UK learners at least, "people are learning because of culture, **brain training**, family, and relationships, along with school and travel. We want a positive use of our time, and to do something **productive** on our phones." The recent lockdowns have given us more time to do this. Certainly, becoming bilingual or a **polyglot** is a good thing, and it helps us to bring the world a little closer together.

词汇表

get to grips with something	认真理解并学习
master	掌握, 精通
grasp	理解, 掌握
convenient	方便的, 省事的
access	使用, 访问
smartphone	智能手机
evening class	夜校课程
bilingual	能用两种语言的
communicate	交流
enthusiasm	热情, 热忱
shoot up	猛增, 暴涨
double	两倍的
try one's hand	试试手, 尝试
motivate	激发...的积极性
progress	进度
brain training	头脑训练, 智力开发
productive	富有成效的
polyglot	通晓多种语言的人

测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. What has helped to make learning a language easier?
2. Why might we be surprised that the British are leading the rise in the use of language-learning apps?
3. True or false? *Duolingo found that last year there were almost double the number of new users on their app from the UK, compared with the average for the rest of the world.*
4. According to Colin Watkins from Duolingo, is learning a language a good use of our smartphone time?
5. Compared with traditional learning, what might you not get from learning via an app?

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. I can't _____ with this new laptop – it doesn't work the same way as my old one.

getting to grips	get to grips	get to gripping	grip
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2. The _____ chef has opened a new restaurant close to my home, so I might try it out.

boomed	motivate	renowned	renewed
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3. I'm making good _____ at school, but I need to work harder on my English grammar.

progress	productive	brain training	grasp
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4. I'm not a great cook, but I'm going to _____ at making a chocolate cake.

try your hand	try my hand	try my handing	try hand
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5. Having a lesson at 1.30 is not very _____ – I'm going to miss my lunch break.

convenient	renowned	access	boomed
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答案

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. What has helped to make learning a language easier?

Technology – and specifically apps – has made learning a language easier.

2. Why might we be surprised that the British are leading the rise in the use of language-learning apps?

Because the British are not renowned for their enthusiasm for language learning.

3. True or false? *Duolingo found that last year, there were almost double the number of new users on their app from the UK, compared with the average for the rest of the world.*

True. US firm Duolingo told the BBC that in 2020 new user numbers globally were up 67% compared with 2019, while in the UK they shot up by 132%, almost double the worldwide average.

4. According to Colin Watkins from Duolingo, is learning a language a good use of our smartphone time?

Yes. He says it's a positive use of our time and is something productive to do on our phones.

5. Compared with traditional learning, what might you not get from learning via an app?

There isn't a teacher around to manage your progress.

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. I can't **get to grips** with this new laptop – it doesn't work the same way as my old one.

2. The **renowned** chef has opened a new restaurant close to my home, so I might try it out.

3. I'm making good **progress** at school, but I need to work harder on my English grammar.

4. I'm not a great cook, but I'm going to **try my hand** at making a chocolate cake.

5. Having a lesson at 1.30 is not very **convenient** – I'm going to miss my lunch break.