

# Apps as the self learning tools to learn English vocabulary

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**Abstract:** Learning vocabulary is always a mundane task. It is always tough to keep learning vocabulary and adding new words into our repertoire from time to time. Learning new words and keeping them in our active memory needs rigorous practice and commitment from the learners. An expert trainer teaching the tips and techniques of memorizing the English vocabulary shall bring immense solace to the learners. But we hardly have any highly qualified expert trainers to teach English vocabulary in rural areas, and even in major cities in India. This methodology of using apps to learn English vocabulary is highly cherished and reaps great results, even without stretching the finance of the learners.

**IndexTerms**—English vocabulary, learning through apps.

Learning English vocabulary is always a mundane task. It is always tough to keep learning vocabulary and adding new words into our repertoire from time to time. Learning new words and keeping them in our active memory needs rigorous practice and commitment from the learners. An expert trainer teaching the tips and techniques of memorizing the English vocabulary shall bring immense solace to the learners. But we hardly have any highly qualified expert trainers to teach English vocabulary in rural areas, and even in major cities in India. This methodology of using apps to learn English vocabulary is highly cherished and reaps great results, even without stretching the finance of the learners.

All the apps are well organized and come up with a predefined/ proven ready-made structure to make the content interesting and to minimize the labors of the learner groups. By carefully selecting the apps and strictly adhering to their methodology the learner will benefit exorbitantly. Learning English vocabulary can never be accomplished in a day or two, it's time consuming and the learners need to have patience and belief in self. There are absolutely no short cuts to learn English vocabulary, so never venture with a notion of mastering the whole English vocabulary in a very short span, it takes time but once learned, the learner can relish it for life.

The English vocabulary building requires repeated revision from the learners for registering the new vocabulary, to revise one need to have the handy study material/ flash cards. As we usually carry mobiles with us all the time, an app to help us learn the English vocabulary is an adoring choice. By using apps the tough task of acquiring new English vocabulary is simplified to a large extent: carrying the learning material becomes painless, testing your knowledge from time to time becomes easy this can be done at regular intervals in a definite timeline (duration of the test can be for 2min/ 5min/ 7min/ 10min), an intrinsic tutor in the app shall guide the learner in tough times, chat with the fellow mates to address some queries shall improve the confidence level of the learner, and the learner centric apps shall cater to all the learning styles of a learner-visual, auditory, sensual all the above points add significance to the rationale, on why we should use the apps to learn English vocabulary. These handy apps help us and support us in our endeavor to learn more and more English vocabulary. The apps come up with wonderful features, at times when we are not in a mood to read, by using the pictorial app we can see the image and effortlessly learn the new words. The travelling time, waiting time, free time, break time can be effectively used to obtain our desired end result.

The following apps can be downloaded from the Google play store which is available in all the androids and windows operated smart phones. The apps that I have selected are free apps, and the user need not pay even a penny to download or use the app. I have even made a note of the app rating, which can be a guiding factor when one is selecting the app. The majority of the apps which I have discussed can be used offline, when the app is installed. At times, some features may require the internet facility to view the image, text, special characters etc.

1. **Painless Roots:** This is a freeware app offered by Philip Nguyen and the app rating is 4.2.

Features:

1. Comprehensive list of Roots
2. Each root provides the meaning and an example
3. Multiple choice questions with 5 options
4. Search option to identify a specific root
5. Plan your learning pace with the session size

Learning roots of the words are always demanding and time consuming. We normally tend to forget because of the desuetude. This app helps anyone revise the roots as often as possible. The features of painless roots include new session, root list, root cards. There are 159 ready sessions/ root words planned for learners, logically placed and help the learner learn the roots in the due course of time. One should learn the roots at a lesser pace, and not be in a hurry to learn the whole content in a day or two. In the new roots section, we have roots with their meanings as shown below:

Root: ASTER

Meaning: Star

Examples: Disaster- catastrophe (contrary star)

Asterisk- star like type character (\*)

Astronomy- study of the stars

Every time we click on the next key, we get the new root word, and if we are familiar with the root instead of viewing the meaning and examples, we can jump to the next root word; this saves time for the user. It is followed by exercises, where for every root word five options are provided, we can select or even guess the right meaning or straight away look at the meaning of the root. Root list can also be used for learning, where all the words are displayed with the root and its meaning; we can even search a particular root through the search option. The settings provide the user the option to plan his/ her learning pace, the preferred session size helps one to do it. The bigger the session size, lesser will be the time it takes to complete the learning. The user can also choose the word order by selecting randomized new entries or popular roots first. So plan yourself go ahead and learn the root painlessly.

2. **GRE Vocab Expert:** This is a freeware app offered by Lets Do and the app rating is 4.1.

Features:

1. A massive list of 4800 frequently used words included
2. Tutorial for guidance and effective usage of App
3. Highlight the favorite words, create your list of favorites
4. Test yourself in definite timeline of 2, 5, 7, 10 minutes
5. Performance report to monitor your progress

There are 4800 frequently used words. They can be practiced in alphabetical order or one can even go for random practice. The tutorial options provide all the details of the app and even suggest ways to effectively use the app. By tapping the search button all the words are put on view. By tapping on the word, the audio response is heard or meaning of the word is also displayed. The important words or words which we are learning for the first time can be marked with a star mark (\*).

All the star marked words are displayed in the favorite word list. It would be a great idea if we repeatedly revise the favorite words and once we are familiar with the word we can remove the star mark, thus remove the word from the favorite list. Lets quiz is a wonderful option, where we can cross check what we have learned. The test comes with a time limit. The duration of the test can be 2, 5, 7, 10 minutes, we can select the time limit and proceed to the test. The test timings and scores are stored for our further reference. We can scrutinize the performance report to know the facts like how many questions are correctly answered or incorrectly answered out of the total questions attempted. We can even erase or clear our performance report. 'More' is a new option where one can update wordlist, one can add a new word, its meaning and an example.

The attractive features turn even more stunning when we effectively use the app and get our desired benefit, i.e., by acquiring new English vocabulary.

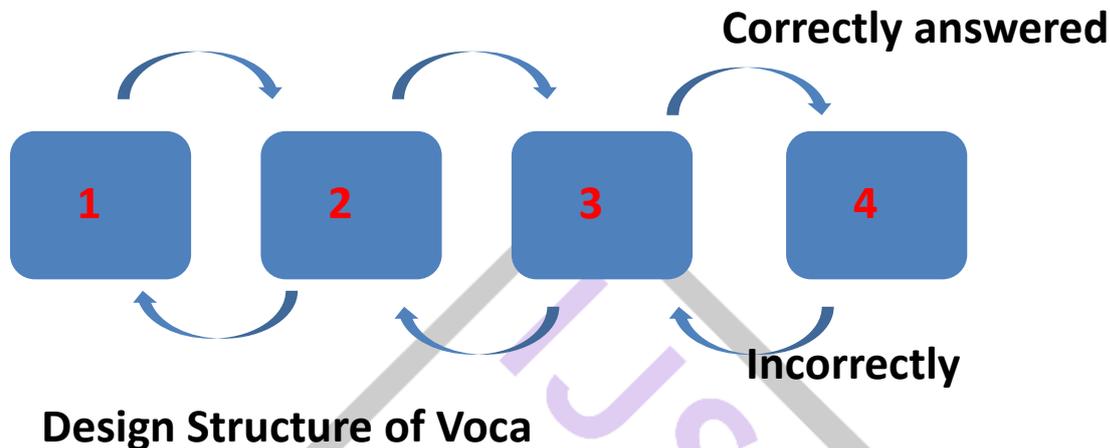
3. **Voca Boost:** This is a freeware app offered by Rushik Vartak and the app rating is 4.7.

Features:

1. Full fledged dictionary with examples
2. 5 pre-defined lists containing a total of 9412 words
3. A custom list to add unlimited unfamiliar words
4. A powerful memorizing strategy using flash cards to become familiar with the unfamiliar words
5. A Mnemonics (memory aids) study section with over 3900 words to study using Mnemonics meanings, synonyms, and examples.
6. A word pronunciation features in all the sections.
7. An option to set the number of words to study at a time.

Vocabulary booster is an app to study GRE words using Mnemonics and Flashcards. Voca Boost comprises of a dictionary section, a flash cards study, using a powerful memorizing technique along with 5 other pre-defined lists containing total 9412 words. Mnemonics section enables the learner to study as well as revise mnemonics of over 3900 words. Voca Boost is the only app which uses the technique of Mnemonics and Flashcards.

The dictionary section provides answers for any typed word; by tapping on the speaker symbol the verbal message is heard. The words can even be added to the flashcards by highlighting the star. When the word has a star glowing that means the word is listed in the custom list. A box after the star indicated that the word is presented in a pre-defined list shown in fractions; by tapping on the fraction one can view the details of the lists. By tapping on the word the meaning is popped up. The flash cards help the reader to learn the words by using the efficient flashcard memorizing technique. The custom list includes 7 structured lists. The list is categorized as Barrons 8000+ words, Barrons 4800+ words, major tests 1500 words from vocabulary.com, 900+ essential words, graduates hotline.com 1300 words, 121 most common words from all lists. Each list is further subdivided into a group or wordlist (numbered) one can even change the list size on the basis of time allotted to learn. It is always advisable to complete one bit at a time. So the learning should be bit by bit (the bit size or list size depends on the time allotted by the learner or the capability of the person). One can plan for a big bit size to complete the sessions in a less time.



This is the design structure of Voca Boost, when the learner answers a question correctly, it will take him to the next question, as shown in the above figure. When the learner answers a question incorrectly, it will take him back to the earlier question.

4. **Spread the words! SAT:** This is a freeware app offered by Vocappulary and the app rating is 4.5.

Features:

1. 30 levels/ stages of word just like gaming.
2. Each level is a set of 10 words/ tasks to accomplish.
3. All the words are pictorially presented.
4. Big Quiz after every 5 levels to reinforce what is learned.
5. 'Lock and unlock' method is used to make the learner follow the definite structure or pattern.
6. A powerful tool for all the visual learners to learn English vocabulary.

This uses pictography as a medium to learn the vocabulary. There are 30 levels and in each level there are 10 words pictorially presented. Each level is further subdivided into the study and Quiz. The study provides the platform for the learners to learn the word. Each word has a picture to depict the concept; just below the picture we have the word and the meaning of the word. By touching on the word the examples of the word are displayed. This helps the learners to even think of a sequence or stance where this word can be used. Once we learn the 10 words, we can attempt the quiz. In the quiz, image is followed by multiple choice answers with the choices: a. b. c. d. When a wrong answer is marked it shows the wrong answer in red and the right answers in green. After completing the first 5 levels the big quiz#1 has to be attempted. The purpose of the big quiz is to reinforce what is learned, an attempt to quickly brush what has been learned earlier. 'Lock and unlock' method is used to make the learner follow the definite structure or pattern. Only after completing the first 5 levels big quiz#1 is unlocked. In a similar manner after every 5 levels we have a big quiz, which acts as a revision unit for the learner. The words can also be learned through index options, where all the words are displayed.

This methodology really works well for the visual learners, it's because they find it easy to get the word registered and connect through the image. This will also work wonders, especially with children because generally children are visual learners.

## Conclusion

Learning English vocabulary is a tough task, which is simplified by the use of apps. The general constraints for learning a new vocabulary are the availability of the study material, guidance from expert language trainers, tests from time to time to retain what is learned, all the above barriers are well addressed by the usage of apps. All the apps are free apps; one can download from Google play store. One can improve English vocabulary without attending personal tuitions and at absolutely with no added cost. It's only the determination of the learner that is very important the rest is available for free; a well structured learning

methodology is ready to guide the learners in the form of apps. These also help in creating a consummate skill for learner by effectively using the free time and learn English vocabulary.

### References

[1] Apps from Google play store: Painless Roots, GRE Vocab Expert, Voca Boost, and Spread the words! SAT

