

Tips and Resources for Improving Proficiency in Portuguese

Complied by Dr. Blair Bateman; adapted from materials prepared by Dr. Cherice Montgomery

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines were created by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in order to provide a means of assessing the proficiency of a foreign language speaker. The guidelines are broken up into different proficiency levels: Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior, and Distinguished. Additionally, each of these (except Superior and Distinguished) is further subdivided into Low, Mid and High. These proficiency levels are defined separately for speaking, listening, reading, and writing:

<http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org/>

Speaking proficiency is rated through an Oral Proficiency Interviews. For more information, see <https://www.languageTesting.com/oral-proficiency-interview-opi>

Check out some expert advice from Professor Chantal Thompson on how to prepare for the OPI, and especially **how to improve your speaking skills at the Advanced level:**

<http://frenchitalian.byu.edu/opi>

Below are some specific ideas and online resources for improving your Portuguese proficiency.

Speaking

- **Online language exchanges**

Do a search for “online language exchanges” to find sites that will put you in touch with a native-speaking partner online to practice your Portuguese. Some sites will match you up with someone who also wants to learn English. Some examples include:

<https://wespeke.com/>

https://www.rosettastone.com/?prid=sharedtalk_com

- **Church meetings**

<https://www.lds.org/maps/meetinghouses/>

Attend a Portuguese-speaking ward (click on the link to find locations and times)

- **Conversation classes**

Enroll in one or more conversation classes (PORT 211R or 311R). These classes are specifically designed to improve students' proficiency and move you into either the advanced or superior levels. They are always taught by native speakers and are repeatable.

- **Foreign Language Student Residence**

<http://cls.byu.edu/programs/languagehouses/>

Live in the Spanish house in the Foreign Language Student Residence

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- **Study Abroad**

<http://kennedy.byu.edu/isp/#>

Search for BYU study abroad programs in Portuguese-speaking countries. Fliers about specific programs are also available in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, 3190 JFSB, or outside the Kennedy Center in the HRCB.

Pronunciation

- **Ask native speakers** to correct you and clarify questions you may have. A good way to do this is to make two copies of any printed text in Portuguese and read aloud from one copy while the native listens to you and makes notes on the other copy, marking the sounds that need improvement.
- **'Tá falado**
<http://www.coerll.utexas.edu/brazilpod/tafalado/>
Short podcasts for Portuguese learners, especially those who speak Spanish. Many of the podcasts explain aspects of Portuguese pronunciation that differ from Spanish.
- **Forvo**
<https://forvo.com/languages/pt/>
Portuguese pronunciation dictionary

Listening

- **Broadcast-Live**
<http://broadcast-live.com/>
Live radio, TV, newspapers from around the world, organized by genre and searchable by language and country/continent
- **Open Culture**
<http://www.openculture.com/freelanguagelessons>
List of audio courses and podcasts in a variety of languages, including Portuguese
- **'Tá falado**
<http://www.coerll.utexas.edu/brazilpod/tafalado/>
Short podcasts for Portuguese learners, especially those who speak Spanish. Contains sections explaining aspects of Portuguese pronunciation and grammar that differ from Spanish.

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- **Língua da gente**
<http://linguadagente.coerll.utexas.edu/about/>
<https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/lingua-da-gente/id862545884?mt=2>
Podcasts built around dialogues at three difficult levels (Beginning, Elementary, Intermediate), with discussions of aspects of grammar, vocabulary, and culture.
- **Radioteca**
<https://radioteca.net/audios-list/>
Links to audio texts, read/performed by native speakers, and searchable by language, country, topic, and type of text (commentaries, interviews, legends, news, news magazines, radio novels, radio plays, podcasts, poetry, reports, short stories, songs, etc.)

Reading

- **Newseum**
<http://www.newseum.org/todaysfrontpages/>
The front page of newspapers from around the world for the current day. A fast and easy way to learn vocabulary related to current events!
- **Kiosko.net**
<http://kiosko.net>
Newspapers from all over the world.
- **General Conference Reports in Portuguese**
<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/conferences?lang=por>
If necessary, click on the globe in the upper right-hand corner to change the language to Portuguese

Writing

- **Typing Accent Marks**
In Windows, the easiest way to type accent marks is by installing and selecting the U.S. International Keyboard. To find the latest instructions, do a search for “US International Keyboard Windows.”
On a Mac, do a search for “accent marks on a Mac.”
- **My Language Exchange**
<https://www.mylanguageexchange.com/penpals.asp>
Website that puts you in contact with native Portuguese speakers (search by language), some of whom want to learn English as well, for email exchanges

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Grammar

- **WebCLIPS**
<https://webclips.byu.edu/>
A series of online Portuguese grammar diagnostic tests, tutorials, and practice questions. “CLIPS” stands for “Computerized Language Instruction and Practice Software.”
- **Só português**
<https://www.soportugues.com.br/>
Website designed for Brazilian children and youth to teach aspects of Portuguese language usage. Includes grammar explanations, games, common expressions, trivia, and more.
- **Conjuga-me**
<http://www.conjuga-me.net/en/>
Portuguese verb conjugator

Vocabulary

- **Read the news** or other text in Portuguese (see resources under “Reading”).
- **Keep an ongoing list** of Portuguese words, phrases, and mistakes you are prone to making can be extremely helpful. Google sheets on your phone is one option.
- **Portuguese corpora**
<https://www.corpusdoportugues.org/>
<https://frazee.it/>
These are two searchable corpora (plural of “corpus” – e.g., databases) where you can search for examples of any Portuguese word or phrase (included conjugated verb forms) used in sentences.
- **Linguee**
<https://www.linguee.com/>
A searchable corpus with examples of any Portuguese word or phrase used in sentences, along with examples of how translators have translated these words to English (or vice-versa)