

Speed Reading Techniques

1. **Clear your mind of everything**, except for your text. This may seem impossible, but take two minutes before you start reading to get rid of any thoughts. Also, turn your music off! The brain can only process one thing at a time. It can jump back and forth between music and reading, but why waste time?
2. **Raise your comfort level.** How comfortable are you speeding in a car? How fast do you have to go before you feel you are “on the edge?” 70 MPH? 90? 120? How about 210 MPH, the speed the Indy car drivers can average? Get the point? Some people have learned to drive faster; their comfort level has been raised. You can do the same thing for reading. Face it, speed-reading isn’t mostly about technique; it is about mind set. Indeed this may be the reason you can play a CD while reading — you are merely driving along at 25MPH. Can you imagine an Indy car driver playing music in the background? No. The driver focuses all his or her skills on the track. If you are out for a Sunday afternoon stroll in your book, then ignore this. But if you are serious about becoming a speed-reader, then start expecting more of yourself. (Rock Town)
3. **Use your finger.** It may sound childish, but it will keep you focused on your text. It will also keep your pace consistent.
4. **Vocabulary.** Wait until you are finished to look up unfamiliar words. Stopping decreases your comprehension level.
5. **Eliminate “Bus Stops” (Eye rests).** As your eyes read down this line they stop periodically and “rest” on a word. Children’s eyes often rest on every single word as they learn to read. Then as you grow your eyes move smoothly down the line like a lawn mower, then you stop a split second on a word, then start back up again. Most reader never get over this habit, but like a bus stopping at every corner, it slows down your progress. Try to reduce your eye rests to 3-4 per line, maybe even less as you get better... keep the eye moving smoothly line after line, letting your mind drink in the knowledge on the line. (Rock Town)
6. **Take breaks.** The research is clear. Steady reading hour after hour is less efficient than taking a five minute break every hour or less. (Rock Town)
7. **Make it fun.** Think of it as a race and try to read as many words as possible in a minute. Keep practicing with material you enjoy.
8. **Practice, Practice, Practice-** Like anything else in your life, reading faster takes practice. Spend a little less time watching TV, playing video games, or Facebooking and read instead. An extra 20-30 minutes of practice speed reading a day will really help you improve.