

THE

ENGLISH TALK

WITH **PARIS SOL**



Study Guide

Episode 1: The Power of Habits

(Upper-Intermediate to Advanced)

Transcript, Key Vocabulary, and Exercises



About the Creator

Hi! I'm Paris Sol, the director and founder of English Prism Language Academy. With over 18 years of international teaching experience and a PhD in English Language Teaching, I've had the privilege of helping thousands of language learners improve their English skills and achieve their goals. From mastering everyday communication to excelling in language exams like IELTS, TOEFL, and CELPIP, I've guided students from diverse backgrounds on their learning journeys.

Many of my students have encouraged me to start a podcast over the years, and I'm thrilled to finally share "The English Talk". This podcast is designed not only for English learners but also for anyone who enjoys thought-provoking talks on a variety of topics. I hope it inspires and educates you as much as I've enjoyed creating it.

Thank you so much for taking the time to listen.

With love,

Paris Sol

Episode 1: The Power of Habits

Transcript

Introduction

Hi everyone, and welcome to the very first episode of my podcast! I'm Paris Sol, and I'm so excited you're here. Thanks for tuning in! Have you ever wondered why some people achieve their goals while others struggle? Today, we're diving into the power of habits. In this podcast, we're going to explore all kinds of interesting topics—personal growth, life experiences, and of course, learning English.

Today, I want to kick things off, or start with a topic close to my heart—something I care deeply about: the power of habits. Now, I know what you might be thinking: habits? Aren't they just boring routines? Well, not really. Habits are the building blocks, the foundation of our daily lives. Whether we're aware of them or not, they play a huge role in shaping who we are and what we become. The habits we create today will determine our success tomorrow, in any area of life—from health to relationships, to career, and even learning a new language. But how do we form habits that stick? And why do some habits fail, while others last? Why do some habits work, while others just don't?

So, let me ask you: What is one habit you'd like to change or build in your life? Take a moment to think about it. Is it related to your health, your personal growth, or maybe learning a new language like English? Keep that habit in mind as we continue, and maybe you'll discover some tips today to help you along the way.

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My Personal Habit Journey

Let me take you back a few years. About four years ago, I immigrated to Vancouver, Canada. It was a fresh start, but the transition—the change—wasn't easy. The stress of moving, adjusting to a new place, and personal challenges hit me hard. It was tough to handle. And then, a year later, my dog was diagnosed with cancer. I did everything I could to help him, but after a tough battle, I lost him. That period was one of the hardest of my life.

During that tough time, I realized I needed to make a change. I started focusing on my health. Rather than trying to overhaul everything, completely change everything at once, I made small adjustments to my daily routine, just small tweaks that felt manageable. I walked more, exercised regularly—nothing too intense, but enough to feel better. I also tried intermittent fasting, starting with 8 hours of fasting and gradually increasing it to 14 hours. My body felt good, and I realized how much healthier I felt when I stopped eating right before going to bed and immediately after waking up. I'm not super strict though—if I'm out with friends or on a trip, I go with the flow—I adapt to the situation and don't stress myself about following my routine strictly and let myself relax a bit. This habit has really helped my body. And here's the thing: I always thought I was a night person because I preferred doing everything at night like projects, workouts, literally everything. But over time, I started waking up early, hitting the gym by 7 in the morning, and it turns out, my body adjusted. I can shift my habits. I can do whatever I set my mind to.

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Around this same time, I tried meditation. I thought it would be hard to sit still, not move for even 10 minutes, but it actually helped me feel more present and focused. Now, I wake up, I drink a glass of water, do my stretches and yoga, meditate for about 10 minutes, and then hit the gym. It's become such a great start to my day. As Rob Dial said in his podcast, start your day productively rather than reactively. When you start your day productively, you're taking control and setting your own agenda—your own plan—whether that's through exercise, meditation, or planning your tasks. This means doing something for yourself in the morning. On the other hand, starting your day reactively means you're jumping into tasks for others like responding to emails, notifications, or checking social media, which can leave you feeling rushed and overwhelmed—like there's too much to handle—instead of feeling focused and grounded, feeling calm and balanced. By focusing on your own well-being first, you set a positive tone for the rest of the day.

I've also developed the habit of reading before bed. At first, it was just about 10 minutes a night, but it became such a calming routine that I now read for about 30 minutes to 40 minutes—both in English and Persian.

Another major shift was how I approached my daily tasks. I used to feel overwhelmed by everything, literally everything: work, cleaning, cooking, and staying healthy, trying to manage it all at once. But I realized that by breaking things down into small, manageable tasks each day, I could create a sense of balance and peace in my life.

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Part of this shift involved tackling my habit of procrastination. I used to leave everything until the last minute, but I came to understand how procrastination affects every area of life, increasing stress and limiting progress. So, instead of leaving things for the eleventh hour—the last minute—I consciously changed that habit by spreading my tasks throughout the day, which helped me feel more in control and productive.

What Makes Habits Stick?

So, how do we form habits that stick? Research shows that consistency is key. Doing something regularly is crucial. It often takes time to build a habit, and while some experts suggest it can take anywhere from 21 to 66 days—or even longer—this varies from person to person depending on motivation, consistency, and environment.

The most important factor is to start small and be patient with yourself. For example, if you want to develop a habit of reading more, instead of aiming to read an entire book each week, try starting with just 10 minutes a day. Set a specific time for this, like right before bed, and keep your book on your nightstand. This small, manageable change makes it easier to stick to. Over time, you might find yourself gradually increasing the time—maybe up to 20 or 30 minutes—making reading a natural part of your nightly routine.

But why do some habits fail while others last? Often, it comes down to motivation and how well the habit fits into our lives. If a habit feels overwhelming or doesn't align with our values, it's likely to fade away.

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Finding ways to make habits enjoyable and integrating them into your lifestyle is crucial for long-term success.

Now, I'm not the only one who has discovered the power of habits. Experts like James Clear, the author of *Atomic Habits*, emphasize that small, consistent changes can lead to major transformations. He encourages focusing on becoming the kind of person who regularly does the right things, rather than just fixating on the end goal or concentrating on the final outcome. If you want to be healthier, focus on cultivating the habits—developing the habits—of a healthy person. If you want to learn a language—like English—make it a habit to practice every day, even if it's just for 10 minutes. The key is to stay consistent and not give up too soon.

How Habits and English Learning Go Hand in Hand

So, how does this all tie back to learning English? Like forming any habit, learning a language isn't about cramming for hours—studying intensively. It's about small, consistent steps that fit into your life naturally. Listen to an English podcast during your morning routine, practice vocabulary for 10 minutes before bed, or try journaling in English every day, just like I've started doing.

Journaling not only helps with language learning, but it's also a great way to reflect on your progress and keep track of your goals. These small, daily habits will accumulate—will build up—over time, and you'll be amazed at how much you've improved.

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Closing Thoughts

Alright folks! That's it for today's episode! I hope my personal story has inspired you to reflect on the habits in your life—whether they're about improving your health, learning English, or simply creating a better routine. So here's our takeaway:

Take it one step at a time—focus on small steps rather than the entire journey at once. Remember, old habits die hard; it can be difficult to let go of habits you've had for years. But if you really want to change, sometimes you have to break the mold—step away from patterns you're used to and try something new. Remember, it's the small, daily actions that lead to big changes.

Thank you so much for joining me on this first episode! If you enjoyed it, don't forget to subscribe and share it with others who might find it helpful. If you're passionate about improving your English skills or just enjoy exploring interesting topics, head over to my website, www.englishprism.com, for a free PDF with key phrases and exercises from today's episode. I'd love to hear your thoughts on this podcast, so feel free to share your feedback, topic suggestions, and even tips on habit formation.

Each week, I'll be discussing a different topic, so join me as we continue to learn and grow. Until next time, take care!

Episode 1: The Power of Habits

Key Vocabulary and Expressions

1. Achieve a goal

To successfully reach or complete an objective or target.

دستیابی به یک هدف

He worked tirelessly to achieve his goal of becoming a doctor.

او بی‌وقفه تلاش کرد تا به هدفش که پزشک شدن بود، دست یابد.

2. Struggle

To experience difficulty or effort in doing something.

تلاش کردن، تقلا کردن

I'm struggling to finish this project on time.

من دارم تلاش می‌کنم که این پروژه را به موقع تمام کنم.

3. Dive into something

To begin doing something with energy and enthusiasm; to engage deeply in something.

با انرژی و علاقه شروع به کاری کردن، به طور عمیق در چیزی مشغول شدن

He dove into the new project with excitement and dedication.

او با هیجان و تعهد وارد پروژه جدید شد.

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Key Vocabulary and Expressions

4. Kick things off (informal)

To begin or start something, especially an event or activity.

شروع کردن، آغاز کردن (غیر رسمی)

Let's kick things off by introducing ourselves to the new members.

بیایید کار را با معرفی خودمون به اعضای جدید شروع کنیم.

5. Close to my heart

Something that is personally important or meaningful to someone.

مهم و عزیز بودن، چیزی که شخصاً برای کسی اهمیت دارد

Teaching English is more than just a job for me; it's something that's very close to my heart.

آموزش زبان انگلیسی برای من فقط یک شغل نیست؛ چیزی است که برایم بسیار عزیز و ارزشمند است.

6. Building blocks

Basic elements or components that make up a larger structure or idea.

اجزای اصلی، ارکان

Trust and communication are the building blocks of a strong relationship.

اعتماد و گفت و گو اجزای اصلی یک رابطه قوی هستند.

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Key Vocabulary and Expressions

7. Be aware of something

To have knowledge or understanding of something.

از چیزی آگاه بودن

It's important to be aware of the risks before making a decision.

مهم است که قبل از گرفتن تصمیم از خطرات آگاه باشی.

8. Habits stick (opposite of habits fail)

For a habit to become firmly established and regularly followed.

عادت‌ها ماندگار میشوند.

It took several months for the new habits to stick.

چند ماه طول کشید تا عادت‌های جدید ماندگار شوند.

9. Transition

To change or move from one state or condition to another.

گذار، تغییر حالت

The transition from traditional to digital marketing has transformed many industries.

تغییر از بازاریابی سنتی به دیجیتال بسیاری از صنایع را متحول کرده است.

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Key Vocabulary and Expressions

10. Adjust to something

To change or modify your behaviour, attitude, or routine to fit new circumstances.

خود را با چیزی تطبیق / وفق دادن

It was hard to adjust to the cold weather after moving from a warmer climate.

بعد از اینکه از یک آب و هوای گرم‌تر به اینجا اومدم، خیلی سخت بود که به هوای سرد عادت کنم و خودم رو وفق بدم.

11. Hit me hard (informal)

To have a strong emotional or physical impact on someone.

تأثیر عاطفی یا جسمی شدیدی روم داشت (خیلی برام سنگین بود)

The news of the accident hit her hard, and she couldn't stop thinking about it.

خبر تصادف خیلی سنگین بود براش و نتونست از فکر کردن بهش دست برداره.

12. Be diagnosed with

To be told by a medical professional that you have a specific condition or illness.

از سوی یک پزشک تشخیص ابتلا به یک بیماری یا وضعیت خاصی داده شدن

He was diagnosed with anxiety and started therapy to manage it.

او تشخیص داده شد اضطراب دارد و برای مدیریت آن شروع به درمان کرد.

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13. Overhaul

To completely change or improve something.

کاملاً تغییر دادن یا بهبود دادن چیزی

The company decided to overhaul its marketing strategy to attract more customers.

شرکت تصمیم گرفت استراتژی بازاریابی خود را به طور کامل تغییر دهد تا مشتریان بیشتری جذب کند.

14. Make adjustments

To alter or modify something to fit new conditions or needs.

تغییر دادن یا اصلاح چیزی برای انطباق با شرایط یا نیازهای جدید

After the test results, the teacher made adjustments to the lesson plan to address the students' needs.

بعد از نتایج آزمون، معلم تغییراتی در برنامه درسی ایجاد کرد تا نیازهای دانش‌آموزان را برطرف کند.

15. Tweak (verb)

To make small changes or improvements to something.

ایجاد تغییرات یا بهبودهای کوچک در چیزی (فعل)

She decided to tweak the design of the website to make it more user-friendly.

او تصمیم گرفت طراحی وبسایت را تغییر دهد تا کاربرپسندتر شود.

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16. Tweak (noun)

A small change or adjustment made to improve something.

یک تغییر یا اصلاح کوچک برای بهبود چیزی (اسم)

The app update included a few tweaks to improve its speed and functionality.

به روزرسانی اپلیکیشن شامل چند تغییر جزئی برای بهبود سرعت و عملکرد آن بود.

17. Go with the flow (informal)

To relax and accept things as they happen, without trying to control them.

آرامش داشتن و پذیرش اتفاقات بدون تلاش برای کنترل آنها

When you're traveling to a new place, sometimes it's best to just go with the flow and enjoy the experience.

وقتی به یه جای جدید سفر می‌کنی، بعضی وقت‌ها بهترین کار اینه که فقط با جریان پیش بری و از تجربه لذت ببری.

18. Shift habits

To change or modify existing habits.

تغییر دادن یا اصلاح عادت‌های موجود

After the health issue, he shifted his eating habits to include more vegetables.

بعد از مشکل سلامتی، او عادت‌های غذایی‌اش را تغییر داد و سبزیجات بیشتری را در رژیم خود گنجاند.

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Key Vocabulary and Expressions

19. Feel overwhelmed

To feel like there's too much to handle, often leading to stress or anxiety.

احساس تحت فشار بودن و استرس داشتن به خاطر حجم زیادی از کار

The workload at the new job was overwhelming, and she struggled to keep up.

حجم کار در شغل جدید خیلی زیاد بود و او برای همگام شدن با آن مشکل داشت.

20. Be overwhelming

To be too much to handle or deal with, often in an emotional or physical sense.

غیر قابل تحمل بودن، فشار آور بودن

Learning a new language can be overwhelming at first, especially when trying to remember all the new vocabulary and grammar rules.

یادگیری یک زبان جدید در ابتدا می‌تواند غیرقابل تحمل باشد، به‌ویژه زمانی که بخواهید تمام واژگان و قواعد گرامری جدید را به خاطر بسپارید.

21. Pick up a habit (informal)

To begin or develop a new habit.

یک عادت جدید پیدا کردن

She picked up the habit of reading a book before bed to relax.

او عادت کرد که قبل از خواب کتابی بخواند تا آرامش پیدا کند.

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Key Vocabulary and Expressions

22. Tackle a habit

To face and try to deal with a habit or behaviour, especially to overcome it.

مقابله کردن با یک عادت

She tackled her habit of procrastination by setting daily goals.
او با تعیین کردن اهداف روزانه با عادت تعویق انداختن خود مقابله کرد.

23. Procrastination

The act of delaying or postponing tasks or actions.

به تعویق انداختن

Procrastination can make simple tasks feel overwhelming and stressful.

تعویق انداختن می‌تواند کارهای ساده را غیرقابل تحمل و پر استرس کند.

24. Leave everything for the last minute (informal)

To wait until the last possible moment to do something, often leading to stress or poor outcomes.

همه چیز را برای لحظه آخر (دقیقه نود) گذاشتن

I tend to leave everything for the last minute and then panic when I realize there's not enough time.

من اغلب همه چیز را برای لحظه آخر می‌گذارم و بعداً وقتی می‌بینم وقت کافی ندارم، دچار استرس می‌شوم.

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Key Vocabulary and Expressions

25. The eleventh hour (informal)

The last moment or almost too late

لحظه آخر (دقیقه نود)

We always leave things for the eleventh hour, which means we're always running out of time.

ما همیشه کارها را برای لحظه آخر (دقیقه نود) می‌گذاریم و در نتیجه همیشه وقت کم می‌آوریم.

26. Consistency

The ability to perform an action regularly over time, even when it feels challenging, in order to build habits that last.

ثبات، پایداری

The key to lasting habits is consistency—doing something regularly until it becomes routine.

کلید عادت‌های ماندگار، ثبات است—انجام کاری به‌طور منظم تا زمانی که به یک روتین تبدیل شود.

27. Align

To arrange or adjust things in a straight line or to bring them into agreement or harmony.

هم راستا کردن، هماهنگ کردن

The company aligned its policies with the new government regulations.

شرکت سیاست‌های خود را با مقررات جدید دولت هماهنگ کرد.

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Key Vocabulary and Expressions

28. Fade away

To gradually disappear or become less noticeable over time.

محو شدن، کم رنگ شدن

Over time, his old bad habits started to fade away as he developed new routines.

با گذشت زمان، وقتی که عادت های جدیدی را ایجاد کرد، عادت های بد قدیمی اش کم کم از بین رفتند.

29. Fixate on something

To focus on something to the point of obsession or excessive attention.

روی چیزی متمرکز شدن

He tends to fixate on small details, which sometimes slows down his progress.

او اغلب روی جزئیات کوچک متمرکز میشود، که گاهی پیشرفت او را کند می کند.

30. Cultivate a habit

To intentionally develop or nurture a habit over time through consistent effort and practice.

ایجاد کردن یک عادت

She cultivated the habit of drinking water throughout the day to stay hydrated.

او عادت نوشیدن آب در طول روز را ایجاد کرد تا بدنش هیدراته (مرطوب) بماند.

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31. Tie back

To connect or relate something to a previous point, idea, or situation.

بازگشت به، مرتبط کردن به، ربط داشتن به

The teacher tied back her lesson to real-life examples to make it more relatable for the students.

معلم درس خود را به مثال های واقعی ربط داد تا آن را برای دانش آموزان قابل فهم تر کند.

32. Reflect on something

To think deeply or carefully about something, often in order to gain insight or understanding.

تفکر کردن در مورد چیزی، بازنگری کردن در مورد چیزی

After the meeting, he took some time to reflect on the feedback he received and how he could improve.

بعد از جلسه، او کمی زمان صرف کرد تا در مورد بازخوردی که دریافت کرده بود و چگونگی بهبود خود فکر کند.

33. Keep track of something

To monitor or record the progress or details of something over time.

پیگیری کردن چیزی، حساب چیزی رو داشتن

She kept track of her expenses to make sure she stayed within her budget.

او حواسش به هزینه هایش بود تا مطمئن شود که بیشتر از بودجه اش خرج نکند.

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34. Accumulate

To gradually gather or increase over time, especially through repeated actions or behaviours.

انباشته شدن، جمع شدن

Over the years, he accumulated a large collection of rare books.
طی سال‌ها، او مجموعه بزرگی از کتاب‌های نادر جمع‌آوری کرد.

35. Take it one step at a time

To focus on a task or goal gradually, one stage at a time, without overwhelming yourself.

قدم به قدم یا مرحله به مرحله پیش رفتن

Don't try to fix everything at once—take it one step at a time.

تلاش نکن همه چیز را یک جا درست کنی، قدم به قدم پیش برو.

36. Old habits die hard

It's difficult to change long-standing behaviours or routines, especially if they've been ingrained for a long time.

ترک عادت موجب مرض است.

I've been trying to stop drinking soda, but old habits die hard.

سعی کردم نوشابه خوردن را ترک کنم، ولی ترک عادت موجب مرض است.
(ترک عادت خیلی سخت است.)

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37. Break the mold

To do something in a new or different way, especially if it's unconventional.

از چارچوب قبلی بیرون آمدن

It's time to break the mold, leave my old habits behind, and start living a healthier life.

وقتشه که از چارچوب قبلی پیام بیرون، عاداتهای قدیمی رو کنار بذارم و یه زندگی سالمتر رو شروع کنم.

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Episode 1: The Power of Habits

Practice Time!

Fill in the Blanks

Complete each sentence with the correct word or phrase from the list below:

A achieve a goal

B go with the flow

C tweak (noun)

D feel overwhelmed

E building blocks

F transition

G adjust

H consistency

I kick off

J procrastination

1. To succeed in anything, you need _____ and determination to keep going.

2. When moving to a new country, it can take time to _____ to the culture and daily life.

3. Let's _____ the meeting by discussing our goals for the next quarter.

4. The small changes she made were just a slight _____ to improve her performance.

5. When life feels stressful, it's often better to _____ and adapt to the situation.

6. Trust and honesty are the _____ of a healthy relationship.

Episode 1: The Power of Habits

Practice Time!

Fill in the Blanks

A achieve a goal

B go with the flow

C tweak (noun)

D feel overwhelmed

E building blocks

F transition

G adjust

H consistency

I kick off

J procrastination

7. _____ can make it hard to get work done on time and lead to unnecessary stress.

8. It's easy to _____ when you have too many responsibilities all at once.

9. Completing this project will help you _____ and move forward in your career.

10. The _____ from high school to university can be challenging but also exciting.

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Practice Time!

Multiple Choice

Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

11. To improve his life, he decided to _____ and break free from his old bad habits.

- a) keep track of
- b) accumulate
- c) fixate on
- d) break the mold

12. Over the years, she managed to _____ enough money to buy her dream house.

- a) align
- b) fixate on
- c) accumulate
- d) keep track of

13. It's important to _____ your progress when you're working on long-term goals.

- a) align
- b) keep track of
- c) accumulate
- d) break the mold

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Practice Time!

Multiple Choice

14. He tends to _____ small details and often misses the bigger picture.

- a) fixate on
- b) break the mold
- c) keep track of
- d) align

15. The team had to _____ their priorities with the client's expectations before starting the project.

- a) fixate on
- b) align
- c) accumulate
- d) keep track of

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Practice Time!

True/False

Read each statement carefully. Decide whether it is True or False based on the meaning of the phrases.

16. The phrase “the eleventh hour” refers to doing something at the very last moment.

17. If something “hit me hard,” it means I found it mildly amusing or unimportant.

18. To “be overwhelming” means to feel completely in control and relaxed.

19. To “overhaul” something means to completely change or improve it.

20. “Pick up a habit” means to intentionally avoid a behaviour or routine.

Episode 1: The Power of Habits

Practice Time!

Answer Key

1. Consistency
2. Adjust
3. Kick off
4. Tweak (noun)
5. Go with the flow
6. Building blocks
7. Procrastination
8. Feel overwhelmed
9. Achieve a goal
10. Transition
11. Break the mold
12. Accumulate
13. Keep track of
14. Fixate on
15. Align
16. True
17. False ("Hit me hard" means something affected me deeply or strongly, either emotionally or physically)
18. False (To "be overwhelming" means to feel extremely stressed and pressured by something)
19. True
20. False ("Pick up a habit" means to start or acquire a new behaviour or routine, not to avoid one.)

Well done!

Thank you for taking the time to use this study guide. Your dedication to improving your English is inspiring, and every small step you take brings you closer to achieving your goals. Remember, learning a language is a journey, and you're doing great! Keep going—you've got this!

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"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out."

– Robert Collier