

# Test Your Reading Speed

The average person reads approximately 240 words of light reading per minute. Read the passage below as you normally would but time yourself for one minute. At the bottom of the passage, work out if your reading speed is below, above or roughly average.

## Speed Reading

Speed-reading is a technique to help you decrease the time it takes you to read information. It's a process where you learn to move your eyes differently across a page of text. Do you remember how you learned to read? One way was to first learn letters, then came sounding out words by their syllables, then whole words by themselves, using your finger to guide you across the page word by word. Now reading is a habit.

Speed-reading takes the process another step, so that you can read groups of words at once and still understand the content. It works like this. Relax yourself into Alpha state, then place a book of text in front of your eyes. What you want to achieve is to train the eyes to stop looking at each individual word and focus on whole lines at a time. Stop only three times along each line. First, at the left third of the line, then the middle third, then the right third.

If you were reading a newspaper or magazine with short lines, your eyes would look only at the left half, then the right half of each line. When you start practicing, do not be too worried if you do not comprehend the information as well. At this stage you want to create a new habit of reading. Soon it will become automatic for you to read like this, and the comprehension will follow. One point to remember is to not say the words to yourself as you read. This can slow you down. As you get more skilled, see if you can read and understand the text without the inner dialogue.

## Study Reading

Peter Edwards (1989), in *Seven Keys to Successful Study*, describes many styles of reading, each with a particular purpose. Study reading is the slowest form of reading you will need. Its purpose is to get you to absorb what is being written so that it gets retained into your long-term memory. If the material does not need to be remembered, such as with a novel, speed-reading techniques can be helpful. In order to get the most out of your reading time, here are a number of tips that you might find useful. Never open a book and start detailed reading from the first page. Always survey the contents of the book to get a general gist of what is being covered and then identify areas that are of particular importance. This process should take around ten minutes depending on the size and detail of the book.

Start by reading the title, and drawing on your previous knowledge to prime your brain by building mental associations.

Read the table of contents to summarize the main points of what you are about to read. Each chapter in the book could have an outline discussed at the introduction or summary. Read this and allow yourself a moment to let it sink in.

Read all the major headings of each chapter, then look at the beginning of each paragraph. This is usually the topic sentence and gives insight to the following paragraph. Make a note of any illustrations, lists, or graphs. Finally, once you have reviewed the main points of each chapter, write down key words or diagrams to summarize what the chapter is about.

Ask yourself questions and give yourself answers about the text as you write. This will help consolidate your survey and give you a good basic understanding of what is to follow. It also helps you to retain the information in your long-term memory.

Total Words: 597. The 240 word is highlighted in this phrase: "**and** the comprehension will follow." (Third paragraph of speed-reading).

To get more information and to practice your reading speeds, go to: [www.turboread.com](http://www.turboread.com)