

Esperanto - what's that then?

What is Esperanto?

It's an 'international' language. First published in 1887, it was designed to enable people with different native languages to communicate effectively whilst still retaining their own languages and cultural identities.



I've heard Esperanto is easy to learn. Is this true?

Well, any language requires a certain amount of study and perseverance, of course, in order to learn it effectively, but yes, in comparison with the time required to learn any other language Esperanto is easier. It has a compact set of fixed grammatical rules, completely regular verb endings, and phonetic pronunciation and spelling.

Is it a 'mixture' of languages?

It is based on ethnic languages. The vocabulary is based on Romance, Germanic and Slavic word roots, so an English speaker will recognise many of the words - like *kato* (cat) and *hundo* (dog). Many of the sounds of the letters in the Esperanto alphabet will be familiar too. But there are other words 'borrowed' from many other languages, which make it unique as an introductory language, and make it a very beautiful and practical language in its own right.

What can I do with Esperanto if I learn it?

Learn Esperanto and you gain access to a network of contacts around the world; you get the benefit of a unique culture which includes tens of thousands of publications, both translated and original – books, magazine, music and poetry; you open up endless travel opportunities and, believe it or not, it's great fun. Surf the net and make contacts world-wide through e-mail and chat-rooms and get up-to-date news from ordinary people who have experienced events first-hand.

Why 'educate' in Esperanto?

Children love to manipulate the language, to use its unique word-building system to create new words and to 'play'. Because of its simplicity and regularity, they progress quickly and gain an excellent insight into how languages and grammar work – a solid basis for further language learning.

Where can I find out more?

Check out the following web addresses if you want to know more. They'll give you information on lessons, courses and activities in Britain and abroad. You'll find links to other pages and a heap of ideas on what to do next.

<http://www.esperanto-gb.org/> (This is our main website)

<http://www.esperantoeducation.com/> (Our education website giving information on courses)

<http://www.springboard2languages.org/> (Our nationwide project to raise language awareness)

<http://uea.org/> (The international website serving world Esperantists)

<http://www.esperanto-usa.org/> (For contacts in the United States)

<http://www.esperanto.org.au/aea/> (For contacts in Australia)

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