

# MY NORWEGIAN STORY IN A NUTSHELL, AND THE KEY TO KEEPING LANGUAGE FUN

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# Angela Balteskard – My Story

- Born in Manchester, went to Salford International University, Joint Honours in Modern Languages.
- Married a Norwegian in 1988 and moved to Stavanger the same year. Started taking Norwegian classes immediately.
- Worked as a translator and interpreter in the early nineties. Also taught French at High School...and had 3 children.
- In 1997 moved internationally, living in the U.S. and the U.K., as well as a short stint in the Middle East.
- President of the Norwegian-British Chamber of Commerce in London.
- Returned to Stavanger in 2017, started a linguistic services company – Linguistic Solutions by Angela Balteskard - in Stavanger.
- Recently appointed Lay Judge to the District Courts of Stavanger.



# Learning Norwegian is beneficial...!

Norwegians on the whole have a very good command of the English language, so you you can always get by...but by understanding the language you will;

- Show respect and courtesy to the host country
  - Not requiring all your Norwegian colleagues and friends to switch to English when you are around.
- Feel more integrated in the community
  - Understand what is being said and going on around you.
  - Read the local newspapers...watch TV programs in Norwegian.
  - Participate in group chats in Norwegian on social media.
- Build self-confidence
  - Learning another language is a gift for life.
- Self-improvement
  - Studies have shown that speaking a foreign language actually improves the functionality of your brain. You become smarter when you constantly challenge your brain to recognise different language systems and communicate in them. This in turn improves your ability to negotiate meaning in other problem-solving tasks as well.
- Forge friendships

*As Nelson Mandela once said "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart."*

# Learning Norwegian can be fun...!

- Don't take it too seriously!
  - The magic starts happening when you start practising. Make an effort to get to know your Norwegian neighbours and start reading Norwegian newspapers and books relevant to your personal interests.
  - Don't be afraid of making a mistake!
  - A foreign accent is a sign of bravery and triggers interest.
- Practise your Norwegian on social media. There are plenty of group chats in Norwegian which, unless you understand the language, you could not access or be included in. BlaBla Language Exchange is a very popular platform on Facebook geared specifically towards language-learning.
- Join a structured program, of which there are plenty in Stavanger.
  - Find one program that suits your schedule, budget and time commitment

...it is always worth making the effort...!

- Get the very most out of your time in Norway and give back in return.
- Build new friendships.
- Use the opportunity when here to learn a new language, a gift for life.

*-- Thank You! --*