

Create a Language Clinic – Chapter 3

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Chapter Three: So When You Build A Language, What Do You Build?

The following shows the steps you'll take in creating your language, and a rough approximation of the minimum amount of time (after reading the instructions) it will take you to complete each step. Each step is also a stopping point—if all you want are some cool names for your world, do steps One and Two (about 48 min). If you want to include your characters speaking short bits in your story, you're committed through Step Five (roughly 3 hrs). If you want a workable written language, you're all the way into Step Seven (about 5 total hours). For a language you and friends can use yourselves, figure a minimum of about three weeks putting in several hours each day if you're going it alone. If your friends pitch in, you can cut that time down considerably.

If you want to use language as a point of conflict of a story or novel, or even the main theme, start by doing the *Concepts That Do Not Exist in English* mini-workshop at the back of the book, then decide how much language you want to have on hand to support this, and return to step One to begin creating your language.

Language Creation Steps

- The sound of the spoken language (15 min)
- The history and background of your language (3 min + updates)
- Easy proper names (30 min)
- A workable short list of nouns and verbs, adjectives and adverbs, pronouns and conjunctions (1 hr)
- Rudimentary grammar (1 hr)
- Complex proper names (15 min)
- Complete sentences (1 hr)
- A workable written language (2 hrs)
- A reasonably speakable language with a minimal acceptable vocabulary and writing system. (3 wks working several hours a day on it)

The times listed here do not include reading the accompanying material. They are the times I estimate it will take you (somewhat longer, in most cases, than it takes me, to doodle around with concepts and come up with some you like well enough to write down on your worksheets.

With each of these steps, you can expand considerably. The same steps that give you a handful of easy proper names will also yield a nice word hoard; with extra effort a rudimentary grammar can become a rich and fully usable one; and a handful of language concepts can give way to a complete philosophy and culture. (We'll get into this in detail in *Holly Lisle's Create A Culture Clinic* , the next book in **The Worldbuilding Course** .)

Where to buy

•Holly's Writing Classes

- Amazon
- Barnes & Noble

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