

LEARN ENGLISH WITH MUSIC

# Stay With Me

Sam Smith

COMPLETE LEARNING WORKBOOK

## Go beyond the song

Loneliness, self-awareness and the grammar of an intimate request.

17 verified learning cards / Level A2-B1 / guided practice

## SECTION 00

# Your learning journey

Watch first, explore second, practise from memory and finish with the complete card library.

|            |                                                         |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 WATCH    | Follow the official lyric video and synced cards.       |
| 2 EXPLORE  | Study language, extended vocabulary, culture and sound. |
| 3 PRACTISE | Complete the guided challenges without looking back.    |
| 4 REVIEW   | Use the final 17-card library by category.              |

### Three sources of value

**Song language** gives you patterns to reuse. **Extended vocabulary** helps you discuss the themes and music. **Context** helps you understand cultural references and form your own interpretation.

### Lyrics on video

#### [Open the lyric video used for this lesson](#)

Listen, read and return to the workbook whenever you want to explore a language point in greater depth.

## SECTION 01

# Map the song

Contrast what the speaker knows rationally with what the speaker asks for emotionally.

| STAGE       | LEARNING LENS                                                    |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Opening     | Identify the speaker, situation and first useful pattern.        |
| Development | Track the main contrast, image or relationship problem.          |
| Hook        | Notice how repetition changes emphasis and memory.               |
| Late return | Retrieve earlier language under new vocal or narrative pressure. |

### Listening challenge

For each stage, write one word for the sound and one for the speaker's emotional position. Then explain which language choice helped create that impression.

## SECTION 02

# Language Lab

Move beyond the quick cards: compare structures, notice register and learn how to avoid common mistakes.

| LANGUAGE POINT                     | GO DEEPER                                                                                                  | USE IT WELL                                                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>stay, remain and keep</b>       | Stay is everyday; remain is more formal; keep needs a complement such as keep calm or keep working.        | Remain here is formal; stay here is neutral.                                   |
| <b>need, want and would like</b>   | Need presents necessity; want presents desire; would like softens a request.                               | Emotional intensity does not automatically make need objectively true.         |
| <b>lie and lay in real usage</b>   | Standard grammar keeps lie intransitive and lay transitive, but many dialects merge them in casual speech. | Understand variation while retaining the standard distinction for formal work. |
| <b>deep down vs on the surface</b> | Deep down introduces a concealed belief; on the surface describes what appears outwardly.                  | The contrast is useful for discussing unreliable narrators.                    |

## SECTION 03

# Extended vocabulary: go beyond the lyrics

This bonus language expands what you can say about the narrative, emotion, performance and production.

|                              |                     |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>to stay over</b>          | phrasal verb        | To spend the night at someone else's home instead of going back to your own.<br><i>It was too late to drive home, so I stayed over at my cousin's flat.</i>     |
| <b>one-night stand</b>       | noun                | A single romantic or sexual encounter with no expectation of anything further.<br><i>What started as a one-night stand turned into a two-year relationship.</i> |
| <b>loneliness</b>            | noun                | The unhappy feeling of being alone or without company.<br><i>Moving to a new city can bring a sharp kind of loneliness at first.</i>                            |
| <b>vulnerable</b>            | adjective           | Emotionally exposed and open to being hurt.<br><i>Admitting you were wrong makes you vulnerable, but it also builds trust.</i>                                  |
| <b>companionship</b>         | noun                | The comfort and friendship of having someone else present.<br><i>After years alone, he adopted a dog just for the companionship.</i>                            |
| <b>guilty conscience</b>     | noun                | The uncomfortable feeling of having done something you believe is wrong.<br><i>A guilty conscience kept her checking her phone all evening.</i>                 |
| <b>commitment</b>            | noun                | A serious promise or obligation, especially to a relationship.<br><i>He wasn't ready for commitment after such a painful breakup.</i>                           |
| <b>deep down</b>             | adverb / expression | In your true, often hidden, feelings.<br><i>Deep down, she already knew the trip wasn't a good idea.</i>                                                        |
| <b>ashamed</b>               | adjective           | Feeling embarrassed or guilty about something you have done.<br><i>He was ashamed of how he'd treated his old friend.</i>                                       |
| <b>to hold someone</b>       | verb phrase         | To put your arms around someone, usually for comfort or affection.<br><i>She held him close while he cried on the platform.</i>                                 |
| <b>daylight</b>              | noun                | The natural light of day, often used to mean 'the morning after'.<br><i>Everything felt different once daylight came through the curtains.</i>                  |
| <b>to guide someone home</b> | expression          | To help or lead someone safely back to where they live.<br><i>The taxi driver guided the lost tourists back to their hotel.</i>                                 |

## SECTION 04

# Idioms and expressive English

Use these additional expressions to discuss the song's situations and themes in natural English.

|                                     |           |                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>to stay the night</b>            | extension | To remain somewhere, sleeping there, rather than leaving.<br><i>The storm was so bad we ended up staying the night at the office.</i>             |
| <b>deep down</b>                    | extension | Describing what you truly feel, beneath what you show on the surface.<br><i>Deep down, he was terrified of failing the exam again.</i>            |
| <b>to need someone by your side</b> | extension | To want a person's support and physical presence close to you.<br><i>Before every match, she needs her coach by her side.</i>                     |
| <b>it's not like me</b>             | extension | A phrase used to admit that a behaviour is unusual for you personally.<br><i>Forgetting her birthday isn't like me at all - I feel terrible.</i>  |
| <b>to open up (to someone)</b>      | extension | To start sharing private feelings that you normally keep hidden.<br><i>It took him months of therapy before he could open up about his fears.</i> |

### Make the language yours

Complete the exercises later in the workbook to check meaning, structure and register.

## SECTION 05

# Pronunciation as performance

A sung voice is not a neutral accent sample. Listen for concrete features, then compare theatrical delivery with everyday speech.

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Non-rhotic R stretched across long notes</b> | Like most southern English speakers, Smith drops the R in words such as 'more', 'before' and 'door' - but on the song's sustained notes, that missing R becomes extra vowel length instead. Listen for the stretch, not a hidden R sound. |
| <b>One voice, multiplied into a choir</b>       | The 'gospel choir' sound behind the chorus is entirely Smith's own voice, recorded and layered around twenty times in the studio. Every harmony shares the exact same vowel colours and R-dropping - it's one British accent, stacked.    |
| <b>The falsetto crack</b>                       | On the song's highest notes, Smith's chest voice breaks into falsetto - a controlled crack that turns vulnerability into the song's biggest hook. Notice how the vowels thin out and lose their usual British roundness up there.         |
| <b>Softened T between vowels</b>                | In quick sung phrases like the title line, the T loosens toward a lighter, almost American-style tap rather than the crisp British T you'd hear in Smith's spoken interviews - a common shift when British singers perform pop.           |

### Three-pass shadowing

1. Tap only the stressed beats.
2. Reproduce the phrase slowly and clearly.
3. Contrast a natural spoken version with the musical performance.

## SECTION 06

# Context and creative choices

Discover the cultural and creative decisions that shaped the song, then listen again with this context in mind.

Stay With Me was written in barely half an hour. Sam Smith sat down with songwriters James Napier (known as Jimmy Napes) and William Phillips (who records as Tourist) at a studio on Old Street in London, and the three simple piano chords Phillips was playing turned into a full song almost immediately. It became the lead single from Smith's debut album, *In the Lonely Hour*, released in the United States on 14 April 2014 and in the United Kingdom the following month.

The song turned Smith, then just 21, into a global star almost overnight. It reached number one on the UK Singles Chart and topped the charts in Canada and New Zealand, while peaking at number two on the US Billboard Hot 100 - a remarkable result for a mostly acoustic soul ballad in a pop landscape dominated by up-tempo hits.

The famous 'gospel choir' heard behind the chorus isn't a choir at all: producer Steve Fitzmaurice had Smith record and layer his own voice roughly twenty times, stacking harmony on harmony until one singer sounded like a full congregation. A real gospel group, Enchorus, appears in the music video for the cameras, but every note on the actual record is Smith alone.

Success brought an unexpected complication: the chorus melody was widely compared to Tom Petty and Jeff Lynne's 1989 hit *I Won't Back Down*. Rather than fight it out in court, the two camps settled quietly - Petty and Lynne were given a 12.5% songwriting credit and a matching share of the royalties, a deal both sides later described as amicable, with Petty calling it simply 'one of those things.'

At the Grammy Awards in February 2015, *Stay With Me* helped Smith win four trophies in a single night: Song of the Year, Record of the Year (for the *Darkchild* remix), Best New Artist, and Best Pop Vocal Album for *In the Lonely Hour* - an extraordinary sweep for a debut record.

For English learners, it's a masterclass in emotional vulnerability delivered in clear, gently non-rhotic southern British English - a striking contrast to the louder, brasher accents and moods found elsewhere in this catalogue.



## SECTION 07

# Practice zone

Complete every activity without looking back, then use the answer key to correct your work independently.

## A. Extended vocabulary in context

1. Choose the best term for this meaning: *To spend the night at someone else's home instead of going back to your own.*  
**to stay over / one-night stand**
2. Choose the best term for this meaning: *A single romantic or sexual encounter with no expectation of anything further.*  
**one-night stand / loneliness**
3. Choose the best term for this meaning: *The unhappy feeling of being alone or without company.*  
**loneliness / vulnerable**
4. Choose the best term for this meaning: *Emotionally exposed and open to being hurt.*  
**vulnerable / companionship**
5. Choose the best term for this meaning: *The comfort and friendship of having someone else present.*  
**companionship / guilty conscience**
6. Choose the best term for this meaning: *The uncomfortable feeling of having done something you believe is wrong.*  
**guilty conscience / to stay over**

## B. Retrieve the expression

7. Which expression matches this meaning: *To remain somewhere, sleeping there, rather than leaving.?*
8. Which expression matches this meaning: *Describing what you truly feel, beneath what you show on the surface.?*
9. Which expression matches this meaning: *To want a person's support and physical presence close to you.?*
10. Which expression matches this meaning: *A phrase used to admit that a behaviour is unusual for you personally.?*

## C. Accuracy check

11. Correct the form: **I listened the song carefully.**
12. Choose the careful form: **The contrast lead to a new meaning / leads to a new meaning.**

## SECTION 08

# Answer key

Check each answer and return to the Language Lab when a form or distinction is still unclear.

1. to stay over
2. one-night stand
3. loneliness
4. vulnerable
5. companionship
6. guilty conscience
7. to stay the night
8. deep down
9. to need someone by your side
10. it's not like me
11. I listened to the song carefully
12. The contrast leads to a new meaning

### Review again

Cover the answers and repeat the activities after a few days. A delayed second attempt is a better test of learning than immediate rereading.

## SECTION 09

# Complete 17-card library

Use this compact summary for quick revision or return to the video cue when you want to hear a point again.

## Vocabulary / 2 cards

VOCABULARY / VIDEO 0:15

### one-night stand

A one-night stand is a sexual relationship lasting one night. It is direct adult vocabulary and carries different judgments in different contexts.

VOCABULARY / VIDEO 1:18

### darling: intimate address

Darling is a term of affection. It can sound warm, old-fashioned, romantic or patronising depending on speaker and context.

## Grammar / 9 cards

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 0:09

### guess it is true

Guess can introduce a tentative conclusion. It softens the admission compared with saying it is definitely true.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 0:24

### I still need love

Still shows that a situation continues despite an expected contrast. Need takes the noun love directly.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 0:33

### these nights never seem to go to plan

Seem takes a to-infinitive. Go to plan means happen as intended; never makes the repeated failure categorical.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 0:42

### I do not want you to leave

Want + object + to-infinitive identifies who performs the second action: you leave.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 1:09

### it is clear to see

Clear can be followed by a to-infinitive. The phrase means the evidence is easy to understand.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 1:27

### why am I so emotional?

Questions with be invert subject and verb: why am I, not why I am. So intensifies the adjective emotional.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 1:45

### gain some self-control

Gain means obtain gradually. Self-control is an uncountable compound noun describing regulation of impulses.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 2:03

### I know this never works

Present simple describes a repeated pattern. Never works expresses the speaker's generalised conclusion from experience.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 2:15

### you can lay with me?

Standard careful English distinguishes lie (recline) from lay (put something down). Informal usage often merges them; here standard prose would prefer lie with me.

## Idioms / 3 cards

IDIOM / VIDEO 0:51

### hold my hand

Hold my hand is literal, but it also conventionally signals reassurance, intimacy and support.

IDIOM / VIDEO 1:36

### not a good look

Not a good look informally means behaviour creates a bad impression, not merely that someone's appearance is unattractive.

IDIOM / VIDEO 1:54

### deep down

Deep down introduces a private truth that the speaker recognises beneath immediate emotion.

## Culture / 1 cards

CULTURE / VIDEO 2:27

### gospel-style choir

Layered choir vocals borrow the communal intensity of gospel, making a private request sound larger and almost devotional.

## Pronunciation / 2 cards

PHONETICS / VIDEO 1:00

### stay with me: weak with

With is normally unstressed between the stronger words stay and me. Its vowel compresses in natural connected speech.

PHONETICS / VIDEO 2:39

### final plea: repetition and vowel length

The final stay is sustained, but everyday speech would be shorter. Use the repetition to hear emotional prosody, not as a neutral pronunciation model.

### Keep learning

[Return to the synced learning experience.](#)