

IELTS BOOSTER

ACADEMIC



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**Self-Study
edition**

Official Cambridge IELTS Preparation

We provide you with the tools and resources you need to learn and show your skills to the world. Whether you're studying in a classroom, or at home, you can rely on us to help you get ready for test day.

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For useful information about preparing for the IELTS test, go to:

HOW TO USE THE IELTS BOOSTER

Welcome to the IELTS Booster Academic

What is the IELTS Booster?

The IELTS Booster provides focused test practice on all parts of the IELTS test. It will help you to prepare for the test and gain the confidence, skills and knowledge you need for test day.

How can I use it?

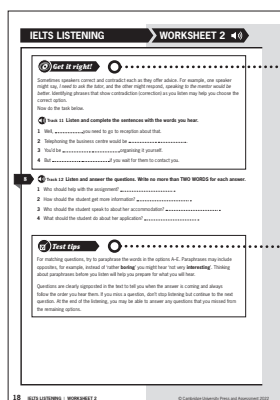
Pick and choose the areas you want to practise at any time.

Use the IELTS Booster alongside a coursebook or on its own as a self-study tool.

Download or print worksheets to use when you like.

How is it structured?

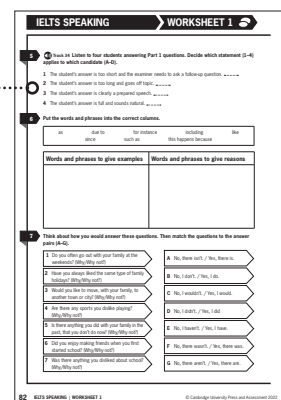
There are four sections which follow the order of the exam: Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking.



Avoid the most typical mistakes that real IELTS candidates make with *Get it right!* Identify and correct common errors.

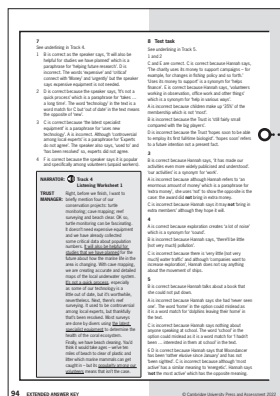
Test tips provide practical strategies and advice.

Practise vocabulary, grammar or functional language.



Access a complete answer key with sample answers for the Writing tasks and audiocscript.

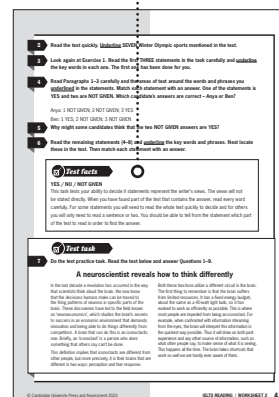
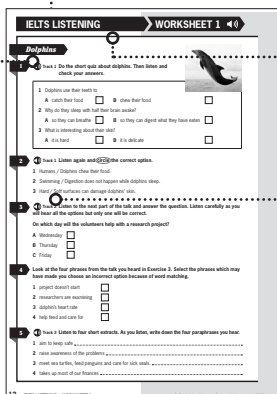
Test facts offer clear, concise information about the exercise type and best ways to approach it.



Look at a variety of topics from the test.

Go to www.cambridgeone.org to download the audio to your computer or device.

Find parts and exercises easily. There are several worksheets for each test part.



THE IELTS TEST

What are the two types of IELTS test?

The two types of tests are IELTS Academic and IELTS General Training. Both test English language abilities in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. The Listening and Speaking parts are the same for both tests, but the Reading and Writing parts are different.

IELTS Academic is suitable:

- for studying at an English-speaking university, or other higher educational institution, at under- or postgraduate level.
- for professional registration, e.g., to register as an engineer, nurse or accountant in an English-speaking country.

IELTS General Training is suitable:

- for migration to certain English-speaking countries, like Canada or New Zealand.
- for studying below degree level in an English-speaking country.
- for a work placement in an English-speaking country or your own country.

How can I take the IELTS test?

You can take the IELTS test on paper or on a computer.

For IELTS on Paper, the Listening, Reading and Writing are completed on the same day and there are no breaks between them. The Speaking test can be completed up to seven days before or after. The total test time is 2 hours and 45 minutes.

For IELTS on Computer, the content and structure is the same as the paper test. You take the Listening, Reading and Writing test on the computer and the Speaking test is with an examiner face-to-face. The timings are a little different from the paper test as you do not have to transfer your answers to an answer sheet.

For more information about which test is suitable for you, and to check which organisations accept IELTS go to ielts.org.

Book your IELTS test at ielts.org/book-a-test

TEST OVERVIEW

Listening

approximately 30 minutes

Speakers will have a range of native English accents, including British, North American and Australian. You'll hear the listening **once only**.

The Listening has a total of 40 questions and is in four parts. Each part has 10 questions.

Part 1 – a conversation between two people about an everyday topic (e.g., finding out information about a job)

Part 2 – a monologue about an everyday topic (e.g., giving information about changes in a community)

Part 3 – a conversation, usually between two people, in a training or educational context (e.g., students discussing an assignment)

Part 4 – a monologue in an academic context (e.g., a lecture)

Below are the question types you might find in the Listening:

Question type	Task format	Task focus
1 Multiple choice	Choose one answer from three alternatives, A–C. Choose two answers from five alternatives, A–E.	Tests detailed understanding of specific points or the overall understanding of the main points.
2 Matching	Match a list of statements with a set of options in a box.	Tests the ability to listen for detail and information provided.
3 Plan, map, diagram labelling	Label a plan, map or diagram, with a list provided in the question paper.	Tests the ability to understand a description of a place which is represented visually, e.g., the ability to understand and follow directions.
4 Form, note, table, flowchart, summary completion	Complete a form, notes, a table, a flowchart or a summary with a word or words from the Listening text.*	Tests the ability to understand and record the main points of the text in different formats.
5 Sentence completion	Complete a set of sentences using a word or words from the Listening text.*	Tests the ability to understand the main points in a text, e.g., cause and effect.
6 Short-answer questions	Read a question and then answer it with a short answer from the Listening text.*	Tests the ability to understand facts, e.g., places, dates and times.

*Candidates will hear the word they need in the text, and do not need to change it. They will be penalised if they go over the word limit given in the question, e.g., 'Write ONE WORD ONLY for each answer.'

IELTS Academic reading has a total of 40 questions. There are three long texts which range from descriptive to factual and discursive to analytical. Below are the question types you might find:

Question type	Task format	Task focus
1 Multiple choice	Choose one answer from four alternatives, A–D. Choose two answers from five alternatives, A–E Choose three answers from seven alternatives, A– G	Tests detailed understanding of specific points or the overall understanding of the main points.
2 Identifying information	Write whether a statement is confirmed (True), states the opposite (False) or is neither confirmed nor contradicted (Not Given).	Tests the ability to identify specific information in a text.
3 Identifying writers' views/claims	Write whether a statement agrees with the claim or view (Yes), disagrees with the claim or view (No), or the claim or view is neither confirmed nor contradicted (Not Given).	Tests the ability to identify ideas and opinions.
4 Matching information	Match information to a paragraph or section of the text.	Tests the ability to scan for specific information in a text.
5 Matching headings	Match headings to the correct paragraph or section. There are always more headings than you need.	Tests the ability to recognise the main topic or idea of a paragraph or section.
6 Matching features	Match a list of statements to a list of possible answers in a box (e.g., match research findings to researchers). Some options might not be used.	Tests the ability to scan and to understand facts and opinions in a text.
7 Matching sentence endings	Choose the best way to complete a sentence from a list of options. There are more options than questions.	Tests the ability to understand the main ideas in a text.
8 Sentence completion	Complete a sentence with a word or words from the text.	Tests the ability to find specific information.
9 Summary, note, table, flowchart completion	Complete a summary, note, a table or a flowchart with a word or words from the text.	Tests the ability to understand details and main ideas of a text.
10 Diagram label completion	Label a diagram with the correct word from the text or list of options.	Tests the ability to understand a description and to transfer information to a diagram.
11 Short answer questions	Read a question and then answer with a short answer from the text.	Tests the ability to understand facts, e.g., places, dates and times.

Correct answers are worth one mark each.

TEST OVERVIEW

Academic Writing

60 minutes

There are two writing tasks, and you must answer both. Aim to take about 20 minutes to answer Task 1 and 40 minutes to answer Task 2.

Task	Number of words	Task format
Writing Task 1	at least 150	You need to accurately describe and summarise visual information which might be presented in one or more charts, tables, graphs or diagrams. This might include describing facts and figures or a process.
Writing Task 2	at least 250	You need to write a discursive essay in response to an opinion, problem or issue. This might include providing a solution, evaluating a problem, challenging a point of view or contrasting two opposing ideas.

You will be assessed on the following criteria:

Writing Task 1	Task achievement	Coherence and cohesion	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy
Writing Task 2	Task response	Coherence and cohesion	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy

Each task is assessed independently. The assessment of Task 2 carries more weight in marking than Task 1.

Speaking

11–14 minutes

The test consists of a face-to-face interview with an examiner. Tests are in three parts and are recorded.

Task	Timing	Task format
Speaking Part 1 – Interview	4–5 minutes	You answer questions on familiar topics, e.g., family, hobbies, likes and dislikes.
Speaking Part 2 – Long turn	3–4 minutes (including 1 minute preparation time)	You are given a task card, e.g., 'Describe something you want to own'. You have one minute to make notes before talking for up to two minutes.
Speaking Part 3 – Discussion	4–5 minutes	The examiner will ask you more abstract questions about the topic in Task 2, e.g., 'Does owning lots of possessions make people happy?'

You will be assessed on the following criteria:

Fluency and coherence	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy	Pronunciation
How well you maintain your flow of speech; how logical your answer is; how well you connect your ideas	The accuracy and variety of the vocabulary you use	The range, accuracy and complexity of the grammar you use	How intelligible you are

HOW IS IELTS SCORED?


You'll be awarded a band score of between 0 and 9 for your overall language ability. In addition, you'll be awarded an individual band score of between 0 and 9 for each of the four skills: Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. All scores are recorded on the Test Report Form along with details of your nationality, first language and date of birth. Each of the nine bands corresponds to a descriptive summary of your English language ability:

- 9 Expert User** – has fully operational command of the language. Their use of English is appropriate, accurate and fluent, and shows complete understanding.
- 8 Very Good User** – has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriate usage. They may misunderstand some things in unfamiliar situations. They handle complex and detailed argumentation well.
- 7 Good User** – has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriate usage and misunderstandings in some situations. They generally handle complex language well and understand detailed reasoning.
- 6 Competent User** – has an effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriate usage and misunderstandings. They can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
- 5 Modest User** – has a partial command of the language and copes with overall meaning in most situations, although they are likely to make many mistakes. They should be able to handle basic communication in their own field.
- 4 Limited User** – basic competence is limited to familiar situations. They have frequent problems in understanding and expression.
- 3 Extremely Limited User** – conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
- 2 Intermittent User** – has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
- 1 Non User** – essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
- 0 Did not attempt the test** – did not answer the questions.

Most English-speaking universities accept an overall band score of between 6 and 7 for enrolment on degree courses. You should check which overall and individual band scores you need directly with the university or organisation you intend to apply to.

Dolphins




1  **Track 1** Do the short quiz about dolphins. Then listen and check your answers.

- 1 Dolphins use their teeth to
A catch their food ☐ **B** chew their food ☐
- 2 Why do they sleep with half their brain awake?
A so they can breathe ☐ **B** so they can digest what they have eaten ☐
- 3 What is interesting about their skin?
A it is hard ☐ **B** it is delicate ☐

2  **Track 1** Listen again and circle the correct option.

- 1 Humans / Dolphins chew their food.
- 2 Swimming / Digestion does not happen while dolphins sleep.
- 3 Hard / Soft surfaces can damage dolphins' skin.

3  **Track 2** Listen to the next part of the talk and answer the question. Listen carefully as you will hear all the options but only one will be correct.

On which day will the volunteers help with a research project?

- A** Wednesday ☐
B Thursday ☐
C Friday ☐

4 Look at the four phrases from the talk you heard in Exercise 3. Select the phrases which may have made you choose an incorrect option because of word matching.

- 1 project doesn't start ☐
- 2 researchers are examining ☐
- 3 dolphin's heart rate ☐
- 4 help feed and care for ☐

5  **Track 3** Listen to four short extracts. As you listen, write down the four paraphrases you hear.

- 1 aim to keep safe
- 2 raise awareness of the problems
- 3 meet sea turtles, feed penguins and care for sick seals.
- 4 takes up most of our finances

6a

You are going to listen to the rest of the talk. Before you do, look at the extract below and underline any words that might make you select Option A because of word matching. Option A is one of the options you will be looking at in the next exercise.

Extract: 'It used to be controversial among local experts, but thankfully that's been resolved.'

Option A: Experts do not agree about its value.

6b

Look at the extract in Exercise 6a again. Read it carefully and think about meaning. Why is Option A an incorrect option?

7

Track 4 Now listen to the rest of the talk.

What comment is made about each of the following projects?

Choose four comments from the box and write the correct letters (A–F) next to Questions 1–4. Two options are not needed. The questions follow the order you hear them.

Comments	
A Experts do not agree about its value.	D It takes quite a long time.
B It is helping future research.	E Money is urgently needed.
C It uses new technology.	F A lot of volunteers want to do it.

Projects

- 1 turtle monitoring
- 2 cave mapping
- 3 reef surveying
- 4 beach clear



Test tips

When answering multiple-choice questions, don't choose an answer because it includes the same word you hear (word matching). Instead look for the option which expresses the same idea as the speaker but in a different way. Note that the questions will appear in the order you hear them.

Test task

8  **Track 5** Do the test practice task. Listen to a radio interview and answer the questions. Remember to listen for paraphrases and avoid word matching.

Questions 1 and 2

Choose TWO letters, A–E

Which TWO things does Hannah say about the Dolphin Conservation Trust?

- A** Children make up most of the membership.
- B** It is the country's largest conservation organisation.
- C** It helps finance campaigns for changes in fishing practices.
- D** It employs several dolphin experts full time.
- E** Volunteers help in various ways.

.....

Questions 3–5

Choose the correct letter, A, B, or C.

- 3** Why is Hannah so pleased the Trust has won the Charity Commission award?
 - A** It has brought in extra money.
 - B** It made the work of the Trust better known.
 - C** It has attracted more members.
- 4** Hannah says that a project in Scotland is causing problems for dolphins because of
 - A** sound.
 - B** oil leaks.
 - C** movement of ships.
- 5** Hannah became interested in dolphins when
 - A** she saw one swimming near her home.
 - B** she read a book about them.
 - C** she heard a speaker at her school.

Questions 6–9

What comment does Hannah make about each of the following dolphins?

Choose **FOUR** answers from the box and write the correct letter, A–F, next to Questions 6–9. Two options are not needed. The questions follow the order you hear them.

Comments

- A** It has a loving personality.
- B** It is photographed frequently.
- C** It is always very energetic.
- D** It has not been seen this year.
- E** It is the newest to the scheme.
- F** It has an unusual shape.

Dolphins

- 6** Moondancer
- 7** Echo
- 8** Kiwi
- 9** Samson

Studying and work

A



B



C



1 Match the photos (A–C) to one of the situations (1–3).

- 1 studying abroad
- 2 distance learning
- 3 work placement

2  Track 6 Listen. Which situation from Exercise 1 does the speaker want to discuss?

.....

3  Track 7 Look at the words and think about a suitable paraphrase. Then listen and write down the paraphrases you hear. You can listen more than once.

Advice

- 1 find something that is enjoyable
- 2 think about your future goals
- 3 show ability in the subject
- 4 make sure you work hard
- 5 get help

4 Look at the questions (1–5) and underline the words you think will be signposted in the listening text. The first one has been done for you.

Stages in doing a year abroad

- 1 in the second year of the course
- 2 when first choosing where to go
- 3 when sending your choices
- 4 when writing your personal statement
- 5 when doing the year abroad

5  Track 8 Listen to the short excerpt from a conversation between two students, Mia and Josh. Which question from Exercise 4 is Mia talking about?

6



Track 9 Now listen to the first part of the same conversation and choose the correct option. Remember to listen carefully as soon as you hear the words that tell you (signpost) when the answer is coming.

- 1 In the second year of the course Josh should
- A make travel arrangements and bookings.
 - B show ability in Theatre Studies.

7a

You are going to listen to the whole conversation between Mia and Josh. Before you listen, look at the remaining options and write down the paraphrases you might hear. B has been done for you.

Actions

- | | |
|---|---|
| A make travel arrangements and bookings | ..... |
| B show ability in Theatre Studies | <i>get good marks and know the subject well</i> |
| C be on time | ..... |
| D get a letter of recommendation | ..... |
| E plan for the final year | ..... |
| F make sure the focus of the course is relevant | ..... |
| G ask for help | ..... |

7b



Track 10 Now listen. Choose **FOUR** answers from the box in Exercise 7a and write the correct letter next to Questions 2–5. Remember there will always be options that you do not need. Question 1 has been done for you.

Stages in doing a 'year abroad'

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1 in the second year of the course | <i>B</i> |
| 2 when choosing where to go | ..... |
| 3 when sending your choices | ..... |
| 4 when writing your personal statement | ..... |
| 5 when doing the year abroad | ..... |



Get it right!

Sometimes speakers correct and contradict each as they offer advice. For example, one speaker might say, *I need to ask the tutor*, and the other might respond, *speaking to the mentor would be better*. Identifying phrases that show contradiction (correction) as you listen may help you choose the correct option.

Now do the task below.



Track 11 Listen and complete the sentences with the words you hear.

- 1 Well, you need to go to reception about that.
- 2 Telephoning the business centre would be
- 3 You'd be organising it yourself.
- 4 But if you wait for them to contact you.

8



Track 12 Listen and answer the questions. Write no more than TWO WORDS for each answer.

- 1 Who should help with the assignment?
- 2 How should the student get more information?
- 3 Who should the student speak to about her accommodation?
- 4 What should the student do about her application?



Test tips

For matching questions, try to paraphrase the words in the options A–E. Paraphrases may include opposites, for example, instead of 'rather **boring**' you might hear 'not very **interesting**'. Thinking about paraphrases before you listen will help you prepare for what you will hear.

Questions are clearly signposted in the text to tell you when the answer is coming and always follow the order you hear them. If you miss a question, don't stop listening but continue to the next question. At the end of the listening, you may be able to answer any questions that you missed from the remaining options.



Test task

9



Track 13 Do the test practice task. Listen to the conversation about work placement and answer the questions. What source of information should Alex use at each of the following stages of the work placement?

Choose **SIX** answers from the box and write the correct letter, A–G, next to Questions 1–6.

Stages of the work placement

- A get updates
- B discuss options
- C supply a reference
- D informing about outcome of interview
- E responding to invitation for interview
- F obtain company information
- G register with STEP

Sources of information

- 1 careers officer
- 2 work experience fair
- 3 the internet
- 4 mentor
- 5 human resources department
- 6 personal tutor

Films and filmmaking

- 1**  **Track 14** What do you know about films and filmmaking? Complete the short quiz, then listen and check your answers. You can listen more than once.



- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 A 'mainstream' film can be described as</p> <p>A a film with lots of special effects. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>B a film made by a large production company. <input type="checkbox"/></p> | <p>3 Most studio films are funded by</p> <p>A private investors and individuals. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>B the studio that is making them. <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| <p>2 What type of films enter film festival competitions?</p> <p>A independent films <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>B studio films <input type="checkbox"/></p> | <p>4 Film production consists of</p> <p>A seven stages. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>B ten stages. <input type="checkbox"/></p> |

- 2** Look at the flowchart opposite and answer the questions with no more than TWO WORDS. Do not fill in the gaps in the flowchart just yet.

- What process is being described?
- How many steps are there in the process?
- Do you need to answer a question in each stage?
- For the third gap, do you need a singular or plural noun?.....