



EXPERT IELTS

Useful TOP TIPS for the exam

LISTENING

- 1 Use the questions to help you predict the topic and the possible answers.
- 2 Listen carefully to the introduction because it will tell you about the context.
- 3 Look out for signposting language – this will help you move on to the next question.
- 4 Don't panic if you miss an answer. Just move on to the next question.
- 5 Don't worry if you don't understand some words. You may not need to know them to answer the question.
- 6 Note down your answers quickly, but then check your spelling and transfer them carefully to the answer sheet. Check your answers match the question numbers.
- 7 Read the instructions carefully so you know the number of words required or if any answers could be a number.
- 8 Remember that the answers must be the exact words from the recordings.
- 9 If you have any gaps on your answer sheet, have a guess and write something.

READING

- 1 Allocate enough time for each question – you have 40 questions and only 60 minutes. Spend about 20 minutes on each passage.
- 2 Start with Part 1 and work through, as the passages become increasingly difficult.
- 3 Start by reading the questions, as they can give you a feel for the main ideas in the text.
- 4 Move on if you can't find an answer in two minutes. Guess and go back if you have time at the end.
- 5 Don't go back and change answers unless you are sure. Studies show test takers more often change correct answers to the wrong answers.
- 6 Don't read everything. Even native speakers cannot read all the text carefully and complete the tasks. Scan to locate information, then read carefully for the answer.
- 7 Check you have written answers as instructed and have not exceeded any word restrictions.
- 8 Double-check the spelling of your answers. American or British spelling is fine. If you make a mistake, cross it out and write the new answer beside it.

WRITING

- 1 Read the questions carefully and make sure you understand them.
- 2 Answer all parts of the question and organise your ideas clearly and logically. Spend about five minutes doing this for Task 1 and no more than ten minutes for Task 2.
- 3 Don't write a first draft in full and then write a second. You will not have time for this. Write your answer only once.
- 4 Write in paragraphs and connect your ideas with signposting words.
- 5 Use a variety of language and link your ideas with linkers such as 'as a result', 'however' or 'furthermore'.
- 6 Leave time to review your writing. Read it once to check it makes sense. Then, read it again and check your language accuracy, punctuation and spelling.
- 7 Remember to use a formal register for both tasks and try to avoid using features such as contractions.

SPEAKING

- 1 Speak as much as you can. You have 12–14 minutes to show the examiner the extent of your linguistic skills. Expand your answers by giving examples or reasons.
- 2 Speak as clearly as possible.
- 3 Speak confidently and sound interested in the topics and remember to smile at the examiner.
- 4 Try to speak fluently without too much hesitation, though use 'fillers' to give you time to think or cover hesitations.
- 5 Use intonation to communicate interest, surprise, disappointment, etc.
- 6 Use a wide variety of language.
- 7 Try to be as accurate as possible, but without disrupting fluency too much.
- 8 Use connecting words and phrases to join ideas together.

Expert IELTS is available in three levels:
Band 5 (suitable for students from band 4)
Band 6 (suitable for students from band 5)
Band 7.5 (suitable for students from band 6)

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