

Information for students about IELTS practice tests from www.oxfordenglishtesting.com

What is [oxfordenglishtesting.com](http://www.oxfordenglishtesting.com)?

- It is a website that gives students and teachers of English access to interactive practice tests.
- It is where students who have bought OUP materials can access online practice tests via a MultiROM.

What is the IELTS exam?

IELTS is an international exam that assesses people who need to work or study in English. You can go to www.ielts.org/test_takers_information.aspx for more information about the IELTS exam and why it might benefit you.

What do the online IELTS practice tests consist of?

The IELTS online practice tests reflect what happens in the real exam. Each online practice test covers every paper in the exam. The practice tests are all full length. For a guide to the content of IELTS, see page 2.

You do not print the tests in order to do them. Instead you take them online and most questions can be marked automatically. In addition, there is a range of help features that you can use during the test. These include dictionary look-up, exam tips, audio scripts, the ability to mark and change individual answers, and get feedback on answers. See page 4 for more details on these features.

The combination of online marking and help features makes the practice tests ideal for self-study.

IELTS content and overview

Duration and format	Task types	Marks
<p>LISTENING</p> <p>About 30 minutes</p> <p>Four sections</p> <p>40 questions</p>	<p>Sections 1 and 2: concerned with social needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1 is a conversation between two speakers. • Section 2 is a monologue. <p>Sections 3 and 4: concerned with situations related more closely to educational or training contexts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 3 is a conversation between up to four people. • Section 4 is a monologue. <p>A variety of questions are used, chosen from the following types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multiple choice • short-answer questions • sentence completion • note/summary/flow-chart/table completion • labelling a diagram • classification • matching 	<p>One mark for each correct answer.</p> <p>Scores out of 40 are translated into the IELTS 9-band scale.</p>
<p>ACADEMIC READING</p> <p>60 minutes</p> <p>40 questions</p> <p>There are three texts, taken from magazines, journals, books, and newspapers. Texts have been written for a non-specialist audience and are of general interest.</p> <p>At least one text contains detailed logical argument. Texts may contain non-verbal materials such as diagrams, graphs, or illustrations. If texts contain technical terms, a simple glossary is provided.</p>	<p>A variety of questions are used, chosen from the following types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multiple choice • short-answer questions • sentence completion • note/summary/flow-chart/table completion • labelling a diagram • matching headings for identified paragraphs/ sections of the text • identification of information in the text – true, false, or not given • classification • matching lists/phrases 	<p>One mark for each correct answer.</p> <p>Scores out of 40 are translated into the IELTS 9-band scale.</p>
<p>ACADEMIC WRITING</p> <p>60 minutes</p> <p>Two tasks. It is suggested that about 20 minutes is spent on Task 1 (150 words) and about 40 minutes on Task 2 (at least 250 words).</p>	<p>Task 1 Candidates are asked to describe some information (graph, table, chart, or diagram) in their own words.</p> <p>Task 2 Candidates are presented with a point of view or argument or problem.</p>	<p>Task 1 is assessed according to the following criteria: task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, grammatical range, and accuracy.</p> <p>Task 2 is assessed according to the following criteria: task response, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, grammatical range, and accuracy.</p>
<p>SPEAKING</p> <p>11–14 minutes</p>	<p>Part 1 Examiner interviews candidate using verbal questions selected from familiar topic frames. 4–5 minutes.</p> <p>Part 2 Examiner asks candidate to speak for 1–2 minutes on a particular topic based on a written input in the form of a candidate task card and content-focused prompts. Examiner asks one or two questions to round off the long turn. 3–4 minutes (including 1 minute preparation time).</p> <p>Part 3 Examiner invites candidate to participate in discussion of a more abstract nature, based on verbal questions thematically linked to Part 2 topic. 4–5 minutes.</p>	<p>Assessed according to the following criteria: fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation.</p>

How do I do a practice test?

You can do a practice test wherever you have access to a computer and the Internet. You will need an e-mail address and to be online when you do the tests. There is a demo about the practice tests on the homepage. Instructions on how to take a test can be found in the **Quick-start guide for students**, on your **My study space** screen.

For further details about system requirements, see page 5. You have access to the test for 365 days from the time you pay, or put your MultiROM into the computer and register. After 365 days you will have to submit the test for final marking.

You do not have to do the whole test at one time. You can answer and then mark a question, a part, a paper, or the whole test. All your answers are automatically saved when you leave the site, and you can come back to the test at any time. You can also skip questions and come back to them later.

You can monitor your progress via the **Test Overview**, which records questions not attempted, attempted but not marked, right and wrong answers, and questions that cannot be marked automatically. You can also print the **Test Overview** and **Results** page.

When doing the Listening paper, you can start, stop, and repeat the audio as many times as you like. If you still find it difficult to understand the audio, you can read or print an audio script after you have attempted the questions. If you need to control the volume of the audio, please use the controls on your computer to do so.

The testing site has a **Dictionary look-up facility**. Just double-click on any word in the test and get a definition from the *Oxford Student's Dictionary*.

Marking the practice test

The system can automatically mark the Reading and Listening papers. You can read and print **Feedback** for answers, if you mark the questions as you go. The **Feedback** gives explanations of the correct and incorrect answers.

If you are asked to key in your answers, the automatic marking system will only accept words that are spelled correctly. Answers may be typed in upper case or lower case, but not a mixture of the two (e.g. 'CORRECT ANSWER' and 'correct answer' but not 'Correct answer', unless at the start of a sentence, or a proper name). Both British and American spelling will be accepted. When you take your answer from a text provided, make sure you copy the word exactly.

The system cannot automatically mark the Speaking paper. You can see all parts of the Speaking paper online and ask a fellow student to practice with you. If your teacher would like to do a Speaking paper with you, you can download and print the entire Speaking paper via the link on the **Learning resources** section of the **My Tests** page. You can enter your marks for the Speaking paper on your **Results** page.

The Writing paper tasks also cannot be marked automatically. You have the choice of printing them or e-mailing them for your teacher to mark. You can then enter the marks on your **Results** page once you have submitted all your answers for final marking. You can read or print off a **Sample answer** for each Writing task to help you understand what is expected of you.

The test results you see include scores for the separate skills and a total score. If you do not enter Writing or Speaking marks, the marking scheme will take this into account.

It is very important to remember that these are only practice tests, not the real exam, and so your final mark will only be an indication of how you might perform in the real exam.

What help is available while I do the test?

Features	Benefits
Test tips	You can see a Tip on how to answer every type of question.
Dictionary look-up	You can look up the meaning of any word in the practice test. Just double click it and a definition will pop up from the <i>Oxford Student's Dictionary</i> . You will need to have pop-up windows enabled.
Instant marking and feedback	When you have answered a question in the Reading or Listening paper, you can mark it immediately to see whether you got it right. You can then get Feedback to find out why it was right or wrong. You can print the feedback if you wish. Understanding why you answered a question incorrectly helps you think more clearly about a similar question next time.
Change your answer	You can go back and try to answer the question again as many times as you like.
Save and come back later	You do not have to complete a paper or test at one time. Your answers are saved as you take the test and kept when you log out. You can come back to it at any time. You have 365 days before you have to submit the practice test for final marking. The My tests page tells you when the test expires.
Mark individual answers, a part, a paper, or the whole test	However much you have done of the practice test, you can mark it and see how well you are doing. The Reading and Listening papers are both marked automatically.
Audio scripts	These are available for all parts of the Listening paper. Reading the Audio script will help you understand anything you did not understand when you were listening to them. You can also print the audio scripts.
Sample answers for questions in the Writing paper	You can see Sample answers after you have written your own response. The sample answers have been written by real students, and will give you a good idea of what is expected. The answers contain incorrectly spelled words that can't be found in the dictionary look-up. What you write will not be marked automatically. If you would like your teacher to mark it, you can print it off to give to them or e-mail it to them. When they have marked it, you can enter the mark on your Results page. It does not matter if you do not enter a mark, the final marks will be adjusted to take that into account.
Results page	You will see your score by paper and part and as a percentage. Remember this is a practice test and you will only get an indication of what your score may be in the actual IELTS test.
Try sample questions first	You can try out a short version of a practice test before you do a real one. The sample questions allow you to find out how to use a test before you start. The samples are available in the Online shop , or by clicking the link to Try a free sample on the homepage.

Buying tests

You can buy tests online by clicking on the link to the **Online shop**. You will be asked to fill in a **Registration form** before you buy the test if you have not already registered. You may already have access to a test with an OUP coursebook, workbook, dictionary, or grammar book. The tests that you can buy online are different from the ones available via the MultiROM.

Where can I find more about oxfordenglishtesting.com?

There is a demo on the individual site that will give you a clear understanding of the site and the practice tests. You can access it via the **Online shop** or the **My study space** screen.

For more help, click on the **Support** tab on www.oxfordenglishtesting.com. You'll find a comprehensive list of **Frequently Asked Questions** (FAQs) covering technical issues, registering, buying tests, doing tests, and other topics. You can also contact us at customerservice.eltonline@oup.com.

System requirements

Browsers

Internet Explorer® 7 or later

Firefox® 3 or later

Safari® 3 or later

The test delivery software requires JavaScript™ and pop-up windows to be enabled on your browser.

Hardware

128 MB RAM

Monitor capable of 1024 x 768 resolution

Sound card with headphones or speakers

You will need to be online to access tests.

You need an email address to register and get access to the tests.

You will need to have Adobe® Reader® in order to download PDF documents (available from www.adobe.com).

Audio

To play audio for the listening parts of the tests, you will require Adobe® Flash Player® 9 or higher (available from www.adobe.com).

Display

You will need a colour display.

The test delivery software has been optimized to appear in a browser window sized at 1024 x 768 pixels. You therefore need a monitor that can have the display set to a resolution of at least 1024 x 768 pixels.

Bandwidth

The audio files in the tests are up to three megabytes and will be slow at dial-up speeds. Because of this we recommend you have a broadband connection to take the tests.