

IELTS Exam Tips

IELTS Exam Tip 1

Listening Tip

When you have to answer **multiple choice questions**, remember that the information might be expressed in different ways in the recording.

Listen for **ideas**, not particular words and phrases.

Reading Tip

Remember that **skimming** and **scanning** are important exam skills. Skimming is the quickest way of finding out what a text, or part of a text is about, and once you know the general subject, it's easier to read for detail. Scanning is the most efficient way of locating the information you need to answer exam questions.

It's important to underline or **highlight** key words or phrases in the questions. This helps you to focus on the Information you need to find in the text.

Writing Tip

Make good use of modal verbs to frame your ideas.

Use:

- 1) **"will" to state your intention:** *In this essay I **will** outline three measures that can be taken to reduce the risk of violent behavior.*
- 2) **emphatic modal verbs such as "must" and "should" to express a necessity:** *In my view, the government **must** bear some of this responsibility.*
- 3) **"can" and "could" to make suggestions:** *Firstly, the government **can** ensure that its policies take the interests of children into account.*
- 4) **"would" to indicate the consequences of implementing a suggestion:** *This **would** ensure that the particular circumstances of each case are properly identified and taken into account.*

Speaking Tip

In the IELTS Speaking exam you will be judged on your use of **vocabulary**. Having a good vocabulary is not just about knowing lots of words and phrases. You have to know

how to **use** them. If you use slang in the exam, it might sound inappropriate.

Equally, some words that are extremely formal or old-fashioned are not often used in speaking, and might also sound inappropriate.

IELTS Exam Tip 2

Listening Tip

When you have to complete **short-answer questions**, remember that the questions are in the same order as the information in the recording.

Remember to stick to the **word limit**.

Reading Tip

Locating information and **Matching headings** tasks are similar. In both, you have to match information to sections of a text.

The difference is that **headings** generally summarise information in a section while **locating information questions** usually pick out a key point.

Writing Tip

Make sure you complete your essay by writing a **conclusion**, even if this consists of only one sentence.

If you are running short of time, it is better to shorten or omit one of your body paragraphs than to fail to complete the task.

Speaking Tip

You can be asked to talk about things you **like** or **dislike** in all three parts of the **IELTS Speaking** module.

To do well, you'll need to be able to **express** your feelings confidently and correctly, using a variety of expressions.

Don't forget to give reasons too!

IELTS Exam Tip 3

Listening Tip

When you have to complete a **flow chart**, remember to listen for **sequencing** words such as *then* and *next* as they help you understand the stages of the process.

Reading Tip

True, False, Not Given questions

False means that the information in the question is factually wrong.

Not Given means that the information in the statement is impossible to check because it is not mentioned in the text.

Use the questions to help guide you through the reading passage. Look for **clues** in the questions to find the correct part of the passage then read this section carefully.

Writing Tip

One of the most useful strategies for **linking** points between sentences is to use the demonstrative *this* or *these*.

This or *these* can be used either on its own or followed by a summary word which captures the main point of the preceding sentence.

Study the example bellow:

*In the past, many people believed that people over the age of sixty-five were too old to work. **This** view is no longer widely held.*

Speaking Tip

You can always **exploit the vocabulary** in the questions.

For example, you might be asked about a time when you won a game, and then you can use the vocabulary to talk about how you played and won a match.

Or you may be asked to describe a famous person you admire. Then you could describe a sporting hero and talk about their skill in their sport and a time when they an opponent.

Always think about how you can **transfer** vocabulary you have learnt to other exam questions.

IELTS Exam Tip 4

Listening Tip

You will have time at the start of each listening section to Look at the questions. Read all of the information carefully.

For **notes completion** questions you should check how many words you need to write.

You should also use the information in the questions to help you **predict** the type of word you need to listen for (e.g. a number, a date, or a name).

Reading Tip

When you have to **match paragraph headings to paragraphs**, skim each paragraph in turn.

Decide what the main point of the paragraph is, then find a heading that means the same things.

Writing Tip

In **IELTS Writing** tasks, don't copy information from the question paper, use your own words. Make sure that you describe the most important information and that your figures are accurate.

Check your spelling when you have finished and make sure you have written at least **150 words** for Task 1 and at least **250 words** for Task 2.

Speaking Tip

The correct **intonation** that reflects accurately how you feel, will improve your marks.

If you are telling an exciting story, but your intonation makes you sound bored, the examiner will probably find your story less interesting.

We use different intonation to express different emotions. The best way to improve your intonation is to listen to how English-speakers say something, as well as what they say.

You could watch a film and listen carefully to how the characters sound when they are sad, happy, frightened, and so on. Pause the film and imitate them.

IELTS Exam Tip 5

Listening Tip

In Section 1 of the IELTS listening exam, you may have to complete a **form**. Normally, each answer is one or two words.

In Section 1, the information is **factual**; for example, **dates**, **telephone numbers** and **places**.

Reading Tip

In IELTS Reading exam, follow the **instructions** carefully. In tasks that ask you to **summarize**, the following instructions apply:

- 1) *You are told how many words you can use in your answer.*
- 2) *Numbers can be written using words or figures. A number or symbol counts as one word.*
- 3) *Hyphenated words count as single words.*

Writing Tip

In **Academic Writing Task 1**, don't forget that you are not expected to give your **opinion** on the information you are given.

You should merely describe the information **factually**.

Speaking Tip

In **IELTS Speaking exam**, when you have to answer questions in Part 1, think for a moment before you respond.

You can use **conversation fillers** such as, "*Let me think for a moment*" or "*What an interesting question!*".

IELTS Exam Tip 6

Listening Tip

In IELTS Listening exam, when you have to [complete sentences](#), make sure that the word or phrase you write is correct both in terms of **meaning** and in terms of its **grammar**.

If it doesn't fit **grammatically**, it's the **wrong** answer.

Reading Tip

It is easy to forget the meaning of new words. Try to work with new words you come across: look at the different related meanings, look up the different word forms and use them in a sentence about yourself.

The more you do with a word when you first come across it, the more likely you are to remember its meaning later.

Writing Tip

In Writing Task 2, if the question asks you to “**discuss both views**” then you need a balanced argument, so make a list of ideas **for** and **against** the issue, and then give your opinion (I believe; I think).

Note that Task 2 counts for **twice** the marks of Task 1 so spend twice the amount of time on it. It is important to write at least 150 words for Task 1 and 250 words for Task 2.

Speaking Tip

In [IELTS Speaking exam](#), when you have to answer questions in Part 1, don't just give one-word answers. You have to show that you can **communicate** in English. Try to say several sentences for each answer.