

A guide to IELTS Listening

The listening test has four sections. You have 40 questions to answer in total and there are ten questions in each section. All questions are equally important: you get one mark for each correct answer, which makes 40 marks in total.

The listening test lasts for 40 minutes. This includes ten minutes to copy your answers onto the answer sheet. Each section is played once only. IELTS recordings may include a range of world English varieties, including British, Australian, New Zealand and North American.

Section Focus	
1 A conversation in an everyday social situation, e.g. two colleagues in the office or a customer and staff member in a department store	
2 One person speaking in an everyday social situation	
3 A conversation between two or more people in an educational or training context, e.g. tutorial or seminar	
4 A lecture or talk on a topic of general academic interest	

What kind of tasks to expect

Expect to find a variety of task types and answer formats. Here are examples of the main task types:

- Forms
- Multiple choice
- Short-answer questions
- Flow-chart completion
- Sentence completion
- Table completion
- Labeling a diagram, plan or map

You might also find summary, notes completion and matching tasks. These question types might appear in any of the four sections.

And remember, not all question types appear in any individual listening test.

Forms

Questions 1–6

Complete the form below.

*Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.*

Application Form for use of Library Internet Service

Family name: Milton
 First names: **1** Jayne
 Address: **2**
 35 Maximilian Way
 Whitfield
 Post code: **3**
 Occupation: Nurse
 (works the **4**)
 Home phone: N/A
 Mobile: 0412 214 418
 Type of ID: **5**
 ID number: AZ 1985331
 Date of birth: 25th **6**
Example Answer
 Existing cardholder? **Yes**

Multiple Choice

Questions 36–40

Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.

36 We are all present hedonists

- A at school
- B at birth
- C while eating and drinking

Short-answer Questions

Questions 9 and 10

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

9 How much does it cost to register as an Internet user?

.....

10 What is the maximum amount of time allowed per single daily Internet session?

.....

Flow-chart Completion

Questions 26–30

Complete the flow-chart below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.

Part Two – Process

Sentence Completion

Questions 1–5

Complete the notes below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

Transport from Bayswater

--	--

<i>Example</i>	<i>Answer</i>
Destination	Harbour City

- Express train leaves at **1**
- Nearest station is **2**
- Number 706 bus goes to **3**
- Number **4** bus goes to station
- Earlier bus leaves at **5**

Table Completion

Questions 6–10

Complete the table below.

Write **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

Transport	Cash fare	Card fare
Bus	6 \$	\$1.50
Train (peak)	\$10	\$10
Train (off-peak) – before 5pm or after 7 pm)	\$10	8 \$
9 ferry	\$4.50	\$3.55
Tourist ferry (10)	\$35	–
Tourist ferry (whole day)	\$65	–

Labelling a Diagram, Plan or Map

Questions 11–17

Label the plan below.

Write the correct letter, **A–J**, next to questions 11–17.

- 11** Administration office
- 12** Sports medicine clinic
- 13** Bike racks
- 14** Café
- 15** Conference room
- 16** Men’s locker room
- 17** Pool shop

Tips and advice for getting the score you need

How to approach the task

Read the instructions for each task carefully. Check the maximum number of words allowed.

After a short introduction, the speaker on the recording tells you that you have 30 seconds to read the task. Use this time to study the questions.

When you read the questions...

- Make sure you understand what you have to do.
- Think about the situation or context and try to guess what vocabulary you might hear.
- Highlight or underline key words. You are allowed to mark the question paper.
- As far as possible, predict answers. In particular, try and identify what type of word are you listening for: name, number, place; what part of speech: noun, verb or adjective?

Remember, listening effectively does not mean you need to understand every single word you hear. In fact, you should not even try. Native speaker listeners pick up on the most important words and phrases which carry meaning, and that is what you should try and do.

Do not panic if you do not understand each word!

Be careful when you transfer your answers to the answer sheet at the end. Check spelling and basic grammar. Be especially careful to write plural forms of nouns when necessary.

Make sure you include symbols such as decimal points for numbers and currency symbols for money.

One final tip, if you lose your place completely during the listening: notice when other candidates turn over the page in their booklets, and do the same!

While you are listening

- Listen for “signposting” language such as “... *and secondly*”, “*moving to the next point*”, “... *and most importantly*”.
- Be aware of synonyms. For example, if one of the multiple choice answers is “*on foot*”, the answer could be “*John walks to work.*”
- Answer items are often pronounced clearly, stressed or repeated. If a speaker whispers or mumbles the words, it is probably not the correct answer.
- Do not automatically write the first thing you hear that sounds right. There are sometimes “distractors” on the listening test.
- While you are listening, do not try and write down everything you hear. You will not succeed and you will miss important information as a result.
- You can save time while you are listening by writing abbreviations. For example, “*hos*” for *hospital*. However, make sure you write the word in full or use the standard abbreviation when you transfer your answer.
- When you are given a diagram, map or process flow-chart, it is absolutely essential to locate your starting point first.
- Do not write more than the maximum number of words or letters allowed for each answer.
- It is better to guess than to leave an answer blank. You will not lose a mark for a wrong answer.

Good luck in your listening test!