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Introduction

Top Tips for IELTS is an essential part of your revision for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test.

Each of the four main sections (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking) follows the same structure and is based on a series of pieces of advice (the 'tips') which IELTS' materials writers have collected from many years' experience of involvement in the production of IELTS tests. Each section starts with a tip at the top of the page. The tip is followed by an example taken from IELTS material and a clear explanation to help you understand exactly what it means. Each section ends with some more 'General tips' for that component.

There is also a handy section at the beginning of the book on how to revise for IELTS and a very important section at the back on what you should do on the day of the test.

There is a companion publication to this book, *Top Tips for IELTS General Training*. Please note that the Listening and Speaking sections are common to both books.

IELTS is jointly managed by British Council, University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Cambridge ESOL) and IDP: IELTS Australia.

How to use *Top Tips for IELTS*

Take the *Top Tips for IELTS* book with you and read it when you have a few minutes during the day. Then use the CD-ROM to practise at home: it contains an IELTS practice test for you to try, together with the answers for Listening and Reading and some sample answers for the Writing. The CD-ROM also includes all the recordings for the Listening and a video of a candidate doing an example IELTS Speaking test, to show you exactly what you will have to do when you take the test. Practise with some classmates using the Speaking test material on the CD-ROM and compare your performance with the student on the video.

Top Tips for IELTS is flexible. You can look at a different tip from a different section every day, or you can start at the beginning with the tips for the Listening test and work through until you get to the end of the tips for the Speaking test. Whichever method you prefer, read the example and the explanation carefully to make sure that you understand each tip. When you have understood all the tips for each section, try the test on the CD-ROM.

Guide to symbols



This symbol introduces the ‘tip’ which is at the top of the page. Each tip is some useful advice to help you find the right answer for Listening and Reading. For Writing, the tips show you how to write a better answer to the question, and for Speaking, they explain how you can give good answers which show your true level of English to the examiner.



This is an extra piece of advice which is important for this particular part of the test.



This symbol tells you to go to the CD-ROM, where you will find an IELTS practice test to try.


We hope that *Top Tips for IELTS* will help you with your preparation for taking the IELTS test.

Cambridge ESOL



The IELTS Listening test

What's in the Listening test?

Section 1  a conversation in an everyday social context between two people

Section 2  a monologue in an everyday social context

Section 3  a conversation in an educational or training context between two or more people

Section 4  a lecture or talk on a topic of general academic interest



1 mark for each correct answer



Approximately **40 minutes**

(including 10 minutes to copy your answers onto the answer sheet)

Each section has 10 questions.

The following question types are used in the Listening test:

- multiple choice
- matching
- plan, map, diagram labelling
- note completion
- form completion
- table completion
- sentence completion
- short-answer questions
- summary completion
- flow-chart completion

Any of these question types may appear in any section. Not all question types will appear in an individual Listening test.

Listening: multiple choice



TIP: Don't choose an option just because you hear a word from it. Think about the whole meaning of what is said.

Example

Here is a question from a task about a field trip.



What did the students see on their walk in the mountains?

- A** a group of unusual animals
- B** some rare plants ✓
- C** an interesting geological feature



TAPESCRIPT

- TUTOR:** How did you enjoy the field trip to Scotland?
- STUDENT:** Well, we had some fantastic walks. One day we walked along an amazing deserted beach. We must have walked for about fifteen miles and we saw a seal which was basking in the sunshine. It was there all by itself.
- TUTOR:** How lucky! They're such beautiful animals and it's quite unusual to see them there.
- STUDENT:** That's right. Another day we climbed the mountain behind the hut where we were staying. We were hoping to find some rare ferns that are supposed to grow there and nowhere else in Scotland. We'd just about given up hope when we found some at the bottom of a rocky slope. They have a number of very interesting features, for example ...

Explanation: The correct answer is **B**, but the mention of an unusual animal (a seal, although only one) might lead you to believe that **A** is correct. Similarly, the phrase 'interesting features' might tempt you to the answer **C**. In other words, you need to understand the recording as a whole rather than jump to a conclusion simply because you hear words from one of the options.

