



TOEIC: Overview & Understanding the Test

English Now!

The Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), developed and administered by Educational Testing Service (ETS), assesses English language proficiency of non-native English speakers. It is designed to measure language proficiency in an international workplace. The TOEIC test is well-known around the world, particularly in Japan, Korea, Europe, and the Middle East. ETS indicates that TOEIC test scores are used by nearly 14,000 companies, government agencies, and English language learning programs in 150 countries. According to ETS, more than seven million TOEIC tests are administered per year.

Who takes the TOEIC test? Individuals at all stages of their careers take the TOEIC tests to demonstrate their English proficiency and enhance their competitiveness in the global workplace environment. For example, professionals who currently work in an international company or organization, employees advancing in their organizations, job candidates seeking to raise their competitiveness, and students preparing to enter today's global marketplace might all consider taking the TOEIC tests. In addition, many organizations around the world use the TOEIC tests as a tool to evaluate prospective or existing employees in English-language proficiency in the workplace. English language schools also offer the TOEIC tests in order for their students to verify their overall ability to use English and see how they have progressed in their English language learning goals.

How is the TOEIC different than the TOEFL? The TOEIC is different than the better-known Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) test and has a different purpose. The TOEIC measures English language proficiency in a professional workplace. The TOEFL measures language proficiency in an academic/higher education context. Most U.S. colleges and universities accept the TOEFL test, and students should take the TOEFL if their objective is to study in a U.S. college or university, but sometimes colleges and universities accept a TOEIC score for admissions purposes.

Why should someone consider taking the TOEIC? The TOEIC is an internationally-recognized English test credential that can be provided to employers or potential employers, as evidence of English language proficiency. It may be appropriate for students that are resident in the United States and working on their English, and who wish to provide evidence of their English proficiency upon return to their home country. Also, the TOEIC can provide a structured testing environment that permit a motivated adult student the ability to measure their progress over time.

Who takes the TOEIC test in the United States? Not many people take the TOEIC in the U.S. The TOEIC test was developed starting in 1977 and was first administered in Japan. It was developed by ETS working in concert with large international companies and has achieved broad

use overseas, but it is not widely known in the United States. In fact, one part of the TOEIC test, the Speaking & Writing test, was not administered in the U.S. until 2009.

Until 2016, when English Now! became a TOEIC Speaking & Writing test center, the closest TOEIC Speaking & Writing test center to Washington, D.C. was the University of Delaware in Dover, Delaware!

What is on the TOEIC test? Test questions reflect the fact that TOEIC is designed to assess proficiency for the English language workplace. Questions are drawn from a variety of contexts to see how well people communicate in English with others in topics such as business, commerce, and industry. For example, contexts might include corporate development, dining out, finance and budgeting, purchasing, and travel, but individuals are not required to know specialized business and technical vocabulary in order to take the TOEIC.

How is the TOEIC test structured? The TOEIC is administered in two parts: (1) Listening & Reading and (2) Speaking & Writing. This structure reflects an effort to separately test comprehension (listening and reading) and production (speaking and writing).

TOEIC Listening & Reading tests are paper-based, multiple-choice test. Each section contains 100 multiple-choice questions.

- Listening questions are drawn from statements, questions, conversations, and talks recorded by voice actors from several different English-speaking countries. This section includes four parts and lasts about 45 minutes. It is administered by CD.
- Reading questions are drawn from a variety of written material. This section includes three parts and lasts about 75 minutes.

TOEIC Speaking & Writing tests are computer-based tests.

- The Speaking test has 11 questions that require oral responses, such as reading a text aloud, describing pictures, responding to questions after reading a short text and listening to a related spoken text, and listening to a short spoken text and then proposing a solution or expressing an opinion. This section takes about 20 minutes.
- The Writing test has eight questions that require test takers to write a sentence based on a picture, respond to written requests, and write an essay that states, explains, and supports an opinion on an issue. This section takes about 60 minutes.

“Public” versus “Institutional” tests. One final aspect of TOEIC is that it is administered in both “public” and “institutional” formats. “Public” tests are administered on specific test dates at approved test centers, much like the TOEFL. For example, public test dates for the TOEIC Speaking & Writing test in 2016 are September 24 and November 12. In addition, TOEIC is administered in an “institutional” format. In this format, ETS licenses organizations (including companies and schools) to administer the test on other dates. Institutional test sites are still required to follow prescribed test processes. Students are provided scores on the same basis as for the “public” test, but they receive an institutional score report rather than an ETS score report. For more information about the difference between public and institutional tests, see https://www.ets.org/s/toEIC/pdf/comparing_institutional_and_public_testing.pdf.

Taking the test, registration, and cost. English Now! is a TOEIC Speaking & Writing test center and offers both “public” and “institutional” tests. You may register to take the Speaking & Writing test at English Now! at: https://apply.amideast.org/toeic_usa/testpurchase.aspx. (Note: Amideast, a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit organization, oversees registration for TOEIC Speaking & Writing tests in North America. Students pay Amideast \$140 to take the public Speaking & Writing tests.) Students may take the Listening & Reading test elsewhere in the Washington, D.C. area. Registrations for the Listening & Reading test in North America are managed through ETS directly https://www.ets.org/toeic/test_takers/listening_reading/register.

Preparing for the TOEIC test. English Now! is happy to help students prepare for both the TOEIC Speaking & Writing and Listening & Reading tests. Preparation is usually through private lessons, but ask us if a semi-private lesson of two or three students is possible (this depends on the levels of students, their schedules, and the schedules of our instructors). Tuition for private lessons is \$40 per hour, and for semi-private lessons is \$28 per hour per student. Textbook materials for TOEIC preparation cost between \$30 and \$50.

For More Information. Contact English Now! at 301 718 3575 or info@english-now.com, or better yet visit us to ask a member of our team about whether the test makes sense for you.