

TOEFL OVERVIEW CLASS

Lesson Objective

By the end of this class, students will:

- Understand the **structure and timing** of the TOEFL iBT test.
- Learn what to expect in each **section** (Reading, Listening, Speaking, Writing).
- Discover **effective strategies** to manage time and improve performance.
- Understand the **difference between undergraduate and graduate requirements**.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT TOEFL

TOEFL iBT stands for **Test of English as a Foreign Language** –

It measures your ability to use and understand English at the **university level**.

Who takes the TOEFL?

- **Undergraduate programs (Bachelor's level):** Most schools require a score of **80+**.
- **Graduate or MBA programs:** Usually require a score of **100+**.

💡 *Note for French speakers:*

👉 “Undergraduate” = études de licence

👉 “Graduate” = études de master ou doctorat

2. TEST DURATION AND FORMAT

The test lasts about **2 hours and 36 minutes** and includes **4 sections**:

Section	Time	Number of Questions	Tasks
Reading	35–36 minutes	~20 questions	2 passages
Listening	36–41 minutes	~28 questions	Conversations & Lectures
Speaking	16 minutes	4 tasks	Personal + Academic topics
Writing	30–40 minutes	2 tasks	Integrated + Opinion essay

3. READING SECTION

Duration:

- **2 passages**, each 700 words, 3–7 paragraphs.
- **18 minutes per passage + 2 minutes to review answers**.
- **About 20 questions total**.

What you'll read:

- Topics from university textbooks (science, history, psychology, etc.)
- Each passage has **10 multiple-choice questions**.

Question types:

- Main idea
- Vocabulary in context
- Inference

- Reference
- Sentence insertion
- Summary

4. LISTENING SECTION

Duration:

- About **36–41 minutes**
- Around **5 listening passages**
 - **3 academic lectures** (6 questions each)
 - **2 campus conversations** (5 questions each)

Listening Types:

1. **Campus Conversations**
 - Between a student and a professor or campus staff (e.g., library assistant, academic advisor).
 - Everyday university situations.
2. **Academic Lectures**
 - Professors discussing academic topics: biology, business, history, etc.

Timing:

- 1–2 minutes of instructions.
- Each conversation lasts about **2 minutes**.
- Each lecture lasts about **4–6 minutes**.
- You answer **11–17 questions** in about **10 minutes total**.

Tips:

Take **short notes** — write key words, not full sentences.
 Listen for **tone and attitude** (Is the speaker agreeing? Disagreeing?).
 Use your notes to help you answer detail questions.

5. SPEAKING SECTION

 **Duration: ~16 minutes**

You'll record your answers through a microphone.
 There are **4 tasks** (called "Speaking Questions").

Question 1 – Independent Speaking

- You get a **short question (15–30 words)**.
- **15 seconds to prepare**, then **45 seconds to speak**.
- You give your **personal opinion** on a familiar topic.
- Example: "Do you prefer studying alone or in a group?"
- Tips:
 Use simple structure: *My preference is... because...*

Give **two clear reasons** and short examples.
Speak clearly, not fast.

Question 2 – Integrated Speaking (Campus)

- You **read** a short text (~100 words, 50 seconds).
- Then you **listen** to a 1-minute conversation about the same topic.
- The student gives an opinion about a change on campus (e.g., “Library hours reduced”).
- **30 seconds to prepare, 60 seconds to speak.**

Tips:

Summarize both the **reading** and **listening**.

Mention who (the student) agrees or disagrees with the change and why.

Question 3 – Integrated Academic Speaking

- You **read** a short passage (50 seconds).
- Then **listen** to a professor explain the same concept (about 2 minutes).
- **30 seconds to prepare, 60 seconds to speak.**

Topics:

Academic ideas like biology, business, psychology.

You must **explain the concept** using the reading and listening information.

Tips:

Don't give personal opinions — just **summarize information**.

Use linking phrases: *According to the reading...*, *The professor explains that...*

Question 4 – Listening + Speaking (Academic)

- You only **listen** (no reading).
- **Listening time:** 2 minutes.
- **20 seconds to prepare, 60 seconds to speak.**

Task: Summarize the main idea and key points of the lecture.

Tips:

Focus on the process or cause/effect relationship.

Note transitions (first, next, as a result, etc.).

6. WRITING SECTION

Duration: about 30–40 minutes

There are **2 tasks**:

Task 1 – Integrated Writing

- **Read** a passage (3 minutes).
- **Listen** to a lecture (2 minutes).
- Write an **essay in 20 minutes**.
- Goal:

- Tips:
Don't give your opinion — summarize both sides.
Structure: Explain how the listening supports or contradicts the reading.

- Introduction (state topic)
- 2–3 body paragraphs (compare points)
- Short conclusion

Task 2 – Independent Writing

- Write your **opinion essay** (minimum 100 words).
- Question example: “Do you agree or disagree that technology makes life easier?”
- Choose one side and give 2–3 reasons.

Structure:

1. Introduction (your opinion)
2. Body paragraph 1 (reason + example)
3. Body paragraph 2 (reason + example)
4. Conclusion

Tips:

Don't use very complex vocabulary — clarity is key.
Leave time to check grammar and punctuation.

7. Scoring System

Each section is scored from **0 to 30**.

Your total score = /120

Section Max Score

Reading 30

Listening 30

Speaking 30

Writing 30

8. GENERAL TOEFL TIPS FOR FRENCH LEARNERS

FR Because French and English have different sentence rhythm and structure:

- Practice **thinking in English** (not translating).
- Read **academic articles** in English daily (science, economy, etc.).
- Watch **TED Talks or university lectures** with subtitles.
- Practice **timed speaking** to manage pressure.
- Learn **linking words** and **transition expressions** (firstly, in contrast, as a result, etc.)

Summary Chart

Section	Skills Tested	Time	# of Tasks	Strategy
Reading	Comprehension	36 min	2 passages	Skim + scan for key ideas

Section	Skills Tested	Time	# of Tasks	Strategy
Listening	Understanding speech	36–41 min	5 audios	Take short notes
Speaking	Expression & pronunciation	16 min	4 tasks	Structure & time management
Writing	Academic writing	30–40 min	2 essays	Organize ideas clearly