

Preparing for IELTS

Get ready for a great IELTS score!

The basics

Identity checks

When you fill in the IELTS Application Form you specify your proof of identity document, which must be a national ID card or your passport. You must bring the same document on the test day(s).

Don't forget to bring your identity document for the Speaking test.

What to bring on test day(s)

You may need to bring two recent (not more than six months old), identical passport-sized photographs. Check your test documentation to see whether this applies to you. The only other items you can bring into the test are pens, pencils and erasers.

Taking the test

Listening comes first, then Reading and Writing. Speaking may be up to seven days before or after the written papers.

You must use a pencil on the answer paper. At the end of the test, stay in your seat until you are given permission to leave.

What if...

1 What if I fail to get the band score I need?

There are no restrictions on when you can retake IELTS.

2 What if I am ill or going to be late?

Contact the test centre. They may offer you a test on the next available test date.

3 What if I need to go to the toilet?

Put up your hand to attract the invigilator's attention. You can only leave the room when you've been given permission.

4 What if I have a disability?

Contact the test centre. Note that special arrangements can take up to three months to arrange.

5 What if I can't hear the Listening test recording?

If you can't hear properly, or if you have any other questions of this type, put up your hand and the invigilator will come and talk to you. If, after the test, you feel there are issues that have affected your performance, make sure you tell the invigilator immediately.

Preparing for the test

Understand the test

Do you know what you have to do in each of the four tests? Understanding the task types is a critical step on the road to the band score you need.

The proof? An analysis of 130,000 British Council IELTS candidates showed that those who practised the most with **Road to IELTS** improved their performance by up to 64%. This does not mean that their English improved 64%. It means that because they understood the questions better they were able to achieve much better scores.

Self analysis

You have a limited amount of time to prepare for the IELTS test. You need to spend that time where it will have the greatest benefit. So if you are good at speaking, but less good at writing, you should focus your time on improving your writing. This seems obvious, but research shows that students often practise the skills they are already good at. It's easier!

You probably have an idea of your strengths and weaknesses, but to be sure, work through the **Road To IELTS** Study Planner.

Clarify objectives

You will not significantly change your overall level of English in three weeks. But you can make a big difference in specific areas. For example, you could work on:

- Paragraphs and topic sentences to help you to structure your Writing Task 2
- Backing up your statements with reasons in the Speaking test
- Proofreading to eliminate errors (and save marks) in the Reading, Listening and Writing tests.