



Listening

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The listening comprehension portion of the TOEFL® iBT tests your ability to understand spoken English in a number of classroom and other campus settings. You will listen to recorded lectures and conversations and answer questions about them.



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Listening section Overview

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Listening Section Overview

You will hear:

- 4 academic lectures
- 2 conversations

The following listening skills are targeted with each conversation or lecture:


- Understanding main ideas/main topics
- Understanding key factual points
- Understanding how a speaker organizes a lecture (historical narrative, pros/cons, compare/contrast, etc.)
- Understanding how the speaker's intentions are shown through intonation
- Determining a speaker's stance on some point
- Determining why a speaker says something
- Graphically ordering and organizing information
- Recognizing inferred meaning

Testing Sequence

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Testing Sequence

Follow these steps as you take the listening portion of the TOEFL® iBT:

- You will see a computer screen showing a test taker wearing a headset. At this point, put on your headset.





PAUSE TESTCONTINUE

Now put on your headset.



Click on **Continue** to go on.

- You will see a screen that explains how to adjust the volume of your headset.
- You will see the directions screen for the listening portion of the test. Click on the Dismiss Directions button on the toolbar. The listening portion of the TOEFL® iBT will then follow.
- You will listen to an academic lecture or a conversation.
- Next, you will see an information/control panel similar to the following:

Title	Question	Time	Testing Tools			
Listening	1 of 34	00 : 00 : 00 <small>Hide</small>				

↑
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⑦

- Title button: shows that you are taking the listening portion of the test
- Question number button: shows which question you are currently answering
- Time button: counts down how much time remains to answer the questions
- Volume control button: click here to adjust the volume
- Help button: click here to read the directions for the listening section
- OK button: click here to confirm your answer selection
- Next button: click here to go on to the next question

- You will answer the five or six questions that appear on the screen.

Timing

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Timing

The listening section of the TOEFL® iBT consists of two or three blocks. Each block contains one conversation and two lectures. Some of the lectures take the form of a class discussion, with participation from students. Conversations are approximately three minutes long; lectures are three to five minutes long. Each conversation is followed by 5 questions; each lecture is followed by 6 questions, for a total of 17 questions within each block. You will have ten minutes to answer all 17 questions within the block. The time during which the conversation and lectures are played is not part of the 10-minute limit. Overall, the listening section takes 60 to 90 minutes to complete.

Authentic Spoken Language

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Authentic Spoken Language

The language you'll hear on the listening portion of the TOEFL® iBT sounds like the authentic spoken language of students, professors, and service workers on a North American university campus. This can include any or all of the following:


• Reduced speech:	
○ wanna = want to	
○ gonna = going to	
○ hafta = have to	
• False starts:	
	Today I'd like to [pause] I'd like to talk about genetic engineering.
• Mistakes with self-corrections:	
	So Matisse really influenced the graphic artists like [pause] graphic artists? I mean the <i>graffiti</i> artists like Haring, for instance.
• Hesitations:	
	I, uh, [pause] I won't be in your class next Friday. I, uh, [longer pause] have to go to my sister's wedding in L.A.
• Digressions:	
	I was thinking I'd like to do my term paper about how small businesses can advertise very cheaply. Like, well, what gave me the idea is that new burger place across from the school. You know, they put up these fliers. . . really eye-catching, on all the kiosks on campus. I really like the artwork on those. . . So anyway, I did some research and saw that there are all sorts of these so-called guerilla marketing techniques.
• Polite interruptions:	
	○ Excuse me, professor, but I didn't catch that.
	○ Sorry to interrupt, but could you go over that again?
	○ Pardon me, Professor Green, but I'm lost. Could you rephrase that?

Academic Lectures

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Academic Lectures





A professor or assistant professor always speaks in an academic lecture. One or two students participate in some academic lectures, called academic discussions, as well.


Overview of Academic Lectures:

- Location: generally in a classroom setting
- Content: varies greatly; for example, lectures commonly cover biology, anthropology, business, history, psychology, and so on.
- Level: first-year university level (101 classes)
- Format: there are three types of academic lectures:
 1. Professor's monologue: only professor talks
 2. Professor-led talk: professor may ask students questions; students may ask professor questions
 3. In-class discussion: students pose questions and may argue points with professor and/or classmates





Event Sequence:


1. You will see a screen with the name of the subject about which the professor is talking.

Title	Question	Time	Testing Tools
Listening	1 of 34	00 : 00 : 00 <small>Hide</small>	   



2. You will see a photograph of a professor lecturing to a class. Then you will hear the narrator introduce the lecture.
3. The lecture will begin. At the bottom of the screen is a time bar showing how much of the lecture remains.
4. During some, but not all, of the lectures you will see a blackboard screen. This is useful because it typically shows technical terminology from the lecture.

Title	Question	Time	Testing Tools
Listening	14 of 34	00 : 00 : 00 <small>Hide</small>	   




5. During some, but not all, of the lectures you will see an illustration, photograph, or map related to the lecture topic. Test questions will not refer to elements of visually presented images unless the elements are discussed in the lectures.
6. When the lecture is over, answer the questions based on what you've heard.

Conversations

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Conversations

A student and one other person speak in the conversations.

Overview of Conversations:

- Office hours:
 1. Location: A professor's office
 2. Participants: A student and a professor
 3. Topic: Typically an issue related to a class a student is taking—for example, scheduling difficulties, problems with an assignment, questions about information presented in class, or the focus of a term paper. Conversation topics may be partly or totally academic.
- Service encounters:
 1. Location: Somewhere on a university campus
 2. Participants: A student and a university employee—for example, a librarian, a counselor, a registrar, a loan office clerk, etc.
 3. Topics: Typically, a problem that the student is having—for example, not finding a book in the library, roommate issues, difficulty registering for a class, etc.


Event Sequence:

1. You will see a photograph of the two people who are talking. The test questions will not be based on this photograph. However, the photograph will set the scene, show the context of the talk, and show how many people are speaking. You will also hear the narrator introduce the conversation.
2. The conversation will begin. Note that at the bottom of the screen is a time bar showing how much of the conversation remains.
3. After you listen to the conversation, answer the questions based on what you've heard.

Taking Notes

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Taking Notes

You may take notes as you listen to a lecture or conversation and you may use your notes when answering questions. Many test takers find it useful to take notes, but some may find that it distracts them from listening. If you do take notes, it is recommended that you do not try to write down every detail or point made, but rather focus on the main ideas and supporting details and how the points are connected to one another.

Strategies for Listening Success

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Strategies for Listening Success

- Know the directions before taking the test. You may dismiss the listening-section directions when they appear on the screen. Although dismissing the directions won't give you any extra time for listening to the lectures and conversations or for answering the questions, you don't have to read or listen to these directions if you already know them.
- If you take notes, focus on the main ideas and supporting details and how the points are connected to one another.
- While listening to the lectures and conversations, try to guess what questions will be asked.
- Listen closely for the speaker's signal phrases--questions are often based on these. For example, "Let me give you an example of what I'm getting at here."
- As the answer choices appear on screen, try to answer them as quickly as possible.
- Answer each question as quickly as possible so that you have enough time to answer every question.
- Glance at the countdown clock frequently. Be sure to answer all of the questions before your time runs out.
- If you're unsure of an answer, use the process of elimination. Sometimes, one or more of the answer choices is clearly wrong.
- Stay focused on the task at hand. After answering one question, immediately go on to the next and forget about the previous one.