

THE LISTENING PART A QUESTIONS**STRATEGIES FOR THE LISTENING PART A QUESTIONS**

1. As you listen to each short conversation, focus on the second line of the conversation. The answer to the question is generally found in the second line.
2. Keep in mind that the correct answer is probably a restatement of a key word or idea in the second line of the conversation. Think of possible restatements.
3. Keep in mind that certain structures and expressions are tested regularly in Listening Part A. Listen for these structures and expressions:
 - structures (passives, negatives, wishes, conditions)
 - functional expressions (agreement, uncertainty, suggestion, surprise)
 - idiomatic expressions (two-part verbs, three-part verbs, idioms)
4. Keep in mind that these questions generally progress from easy to difficult. This means that questions 1 through 5 will be the easiest, and questions 26 through 30 will be the hardest.
5. Read the answers and choose the best answer to each question. Remember to answer each question even if you are not sure of the correct response. Never leave any answers blank.
6. Even if you do not understand the complete conversation, you can find the correct answer.
 - If you only understood a few words or ideas in the second line, choose the answer that contains a restatement of those words or ideas.
 - If you did not understand anything at all in the second line of the conversation, choose the answer that sounds the most different from what you heard.
 - Never choose an answer because it sounds like what you heard in the conversation.

STRATEGIES

SKILL I: FOCUS ON THE LAST LINE

The short dialogues involve conversations between two people, each followed by a question. It is important to understand that the answer to this type of question is most often (but not always!) found in the last line of the conversation.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



On the recording, you hear:

- (man) *Billy really made a big mistake this time.*
 (woman) *Yes, he forgot to turn in his research paper.*
 (narrator) *What does the woman say about Billy?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) It was the first time he made a mistake.
 (B) He forgot to write his paper.
 (C) He turned in the paper in the wrong place.
 (D) He didn't remember to submit his assignment.

The last line of this dialogue indicates that *Billy forgot to turn in his research paper*, and this means that he *didn't remember to submit* it. The best answer is therefore answer (D).

The following chart outlines the most important strategy for the short dialogues:

STRATEGY #I: FOCUS ON THE LAST LINE

1. The last line of the dialogue probably contains the answer to the question.
2. Listen to the first line of the dialogue. If you understand it, that's good. If you don't understand it, don't worry because it probably does not contain the answer.
3. Be ready to focus on the last line of the dialogue because it probably contains the answer. Repeat the last line in your mind as you read through the answers in the text.

TOEFL EXERCISE 1: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should focus carefully on the last line.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE I.

1. (A) He is leaving now. ✓
 (B) He has to go out of his way.
 (C) He will not be leaving soon.
 (D) He will do it his own way.
2. (A) He locked the door.
 (B) He tried unsuccessfully to get into the house.
 (C) He was able to open the door. ✓
 (D) He left the house without locking the door.

3. (A) She doesn't like to listen to turkeys.
 (B) She thinks the dinner sounds special.
 (C) She especially likes the roast turkey.
 (D) She'd prefer a different dinner. 
5. (A) Her eyes hurt.
 (B) She thought the lecture was great.
 (C) The class was boring. 
 (D) She didn't want to watch Professor Martin.
4. (A) He'll be busy with her homework tonight.
 (B) He can't help her tonight.
 (C) He's sorry he can't ever help her.
 (D) He'll help her with her physics. 

SKILL 2: CHOOSE ANSWERS WITH SYONYMS

Often the correct answer in a short dialogue is an answer that contains synonyms (words with similar meanings but different sounds) for key words in the conversation.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



On the recording, you hear:

- (woman) Why is Barbara feeling so happy?
 (man) She just started working in a real estate agency.
 (narrator) What does the man say about Barbara?

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) She always liked her work in real estate.
 (B) She began a new job.
 (C) She just bought some real estate.
 (D) She bought a real estate agency.

In this dialogue, the key word *started* means *began*, and the key word *working* refers to *job*. The best answer to this question is therefore answer (B).

The following chart outlines a very important strategy for short dialogues:

STRATEGY #2: CHOOSE ANSWERS WITH SYONYMS

- As you listen to the last line of the dialogue, focus on key words in that line.
- If you see any synonyms for key words in a particular answer, then you have probably found the correct answer.

TOEFL EXERCISE 2: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should look for synonyms for key words in the last line.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 2.

1. (A) The final exam was harder than the others.
 (B) There were two exams rather than one.
 (C) He thought the exam would be easier.
 (D) The exam was not very difficult.
2. (A) He's not feeling very well.
 (B) He's rather sick of working.
 (C) He's feeling better today than yesterday.
 (D) He'd really rather not answer the question.
3. (A) The company was founded about a year ago.
 (B) It was just established that he could go into business.
 (C) The family is well-established.
 (D) The business only lasted a year.
4. (A) He did not look at the right schedule.
 (B) The plane landed in the right place.
 (C) The plane arrived on time.
 (D) He had to wait for the plane to land.
5. (A) She'd rather go running.
 (B) She doesn't want to go into the pool.
 (C) She'll change clothes quickly and go swimming.
 (D) She needs a swimsuit to go running.

SKILL 3: AVOID SIMILAR SOUNDS

Often the incorrect answers in the short dialogues are answers that contain words with similar sounds but very different meanings from what you hear on the recording. You should definitely avoid these answers.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



On the recording, you hear:

- (man) Why couldn't Mark come with us?
 (woman) He was searching for a new apartment.
 (narrator) What does the woman say about Mark?

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) He was in the department office.
 (B) He was looking for a place to live.
 (C) He was working on his research project.
 (D) He had an appointment at church.

The key words in the last line of the dialogue are *searching* and *apartment*. In answers (C) and (D), the words *research* and *church* sound like *search*, so these answers are incorrect. In answers (A) and (D), the words *department* and *appointment* sound like *apartment*, so these answers are incorrect. The best answer is therefore answer (B).

The following chart outlines a very important strategy for the short dialogues:

STRATEGY #3: AVOID SIMILAR SOUNDS

1. Identify key words in the last line of the dialogue.
2. Identify words in the answers that contain similar sounds, and do not choose these answers.

TOEFL EXERCISE 3: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should be careful to avoid answers with similar sounds.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 3.

1. (A) She has to wait for some cash.
(B) The waiter is bringing a glass of water.
(C) The lawn is too dry.
(D) She needs to watch out for a crash.
2. (A) The sweater's the wrong size.
(B) The man's feet aren't sweating.
(C) The sweater makes the man seem fat.
(D) The sweet girl doesn't feel right.
3. (A) He has been regularly using a computer.
(B) He communicates with a Boston company.
(C) He regularly goes to communities around Boston.
(D) He has been traveling back and forth to Boston.
4. (A) He thought the lesson didn't matter.
(B) He couldn't learn the lesson.
(C) He learned a massive number of details.
(D) He didn't like most of the lesson.
5. (A) Some animals started the first fire.
(B) Animals are killed by forest fires.
(C) In the first frost, animals die.
(D) Frost can kill animals.

TOEFL EXERCISE (Skills 1–3): In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE (SKILLS 1–3).

1. (A) He would like some iced coffee.
(B) He wants to stop drinking coffee.
 (C) A drink seems like a good idea.
(D) He needs to drink something to stop his coughing.
2. (A) She would prefer a sunny day.
(B) The park is too crowded.
(C) She would like a place that is not so loud.
(D) She cannot walk because she's too old.
3. (A) He should open an account.
(B) He should take a ride on a ship.
(C) He should try to keep the cost cheap.
 (D) He should try something monotonous to get to sleep.
4. (A) The department is not changing the requirements.
(B) He hasn't heard anything about the change.
(C) The changes are believable.
 (D) What has happened is incredible to him.
5. (A) The wait has taken close to an hour.
(B) They were stranded in their car.
(C) Most of the people have been in line for hours.
(D) They made a line in the sand.
6. (A) The instructor is selecting several passages.
(B) The conductor is fair to the passengers.
(C) The stamp collector is conducting his business.
 (D) The riders are paying for the train trip.
7. (A) The managers will take the train to the program.
 (B) A program to develop new managers will commence soon.
(C) The new management program is very weak.
(D) The program will be maintained to the letter.
8. (A) The fire started to attack the building.
(B) The firefighter stared at the attacker.
 (C) The fire probably began at the top of the building.
(D) The firefighter started to attack the fire.
9. (A) He assured the woman that he knew the truth.
(B) He is sure that it isn't new.
 (C) He thought that the woman was aware of what happened.
(D) He soon will know the truth.
10. (A) The art professor is not one of his fans.
(B) His drawings were amazing.
(C) The catches that he made were fantastic.
 (D) His sketches showed a fantasy world.

WHO, WHAT, WHERE**SKILL 4: DRAW CONCLUSIONS ABOUT WHO, WHAT, WHERE**

It is common in the short dialogues to ask you to draw some kind of conclusion. In this type of question the answer is not clearly stated; instead you must draw a conclusion based on clues given in the dialogue. One kind of conclusion that is common in this part of the test is to ask you to determine *who* the speaker is, based on clues given in the dialogue.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests 

On the recording, you hear:

- (woman) *Can you tell me what assignments I missed when I was absent from your class?*
 (man) *You missed one homework assignment and a quiz.*
 (narrator) *Who is the man?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) A newspaper editor
 (B) A police officer
 (C) A teacher
 (D) A student

The clues *class*, *homework*, and *quiz* in the dialogue tell you that the man is probably a *teacher*. Answer (C) is therefore the correct answer.

Another type of conclusion that is common in the short dialogues is to determine *what* will probably happen next, based on clues given in the dialogue.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests 

On the recording, you hear:

- (woman) *Are you going to read those books here in the library?*
 (man) *I think I'd rather check them out now and take them home.*
 (narrator) *What will the man probably do next?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) Sit down in the library
 (B) Look for some more books
 (C) Return the books to the shelves
 (D) Go to the circulation desk

The man mentions *books* and says that he would like to *check them out now*. Since the *circulation desk* is where you go to check books out from a library, the man will probably go to the circulation desk next. The correct answer is therefore answer (D).

A final type of conclusion that is common in the short dialogues is to determine *where* the conversation probably takes place, based on clues given in the conversation.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests  

On the recording, you hear:

- (woman) *Are you going into the water, or are you just going to lie there on the sand?*
 (man) *I think I need to put on some suntan lotion.*
 (narrator) *Where does this conversation probably take place?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) At a beauty salon
 (B) At the beach
 (C) In a sandbox
 (D) At an outdoor restaurant

The clues *water*, *sand*, and *suntan lotion* in the dialogue tell you that this dialogue probably takes place at the *beach*. Answer (B) is therefore the correct answer.

The following chart outlines the key point that you should remember about this type of question:

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT WHO, WHAT, WHERE

It is common for you to be asked to draw one of the following conclusions in the short dialogues:

1. *WHO is probably talking?*
2. *WHAT will s/he probably do next?*
3. *WHERE does the dialogue probably take place?*

TOEFL EXERCISE 4: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording and then choose the best answer to the question. You will have to draw conclusions about *who*, *what*, and *where*.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 4.

1. (A) In a photography studio
(B) In a biology laboratory
 (C) In an office
 (D) In the library
2. (A) He's a pilot.
(B) He's a flight attendant.
 (C) He's a member of the ground crew.
 (D) He works clearing land.
3. (A) Wash the dishes immediately
 (B) Use as many dishes as possible
 (C) Wash the dishes for as long as possible
(D) Wait until later to clean up
4. (A) In a bank
(B) In a restaurant
 (C) At a service station
 (D) In a beauty salon
5. (A) A salesclerk in a shoe store
(B) A shoe repairperson
 (C) A party caterer
 (D) A salesclerk in a fixtures department

SKILL 5: LISTEN FOR WHO AND WHAT IN PASSIVES

It is sometimes difficult to understand *who* or *what* is doing the action in a passive sentence. This problem is often tested in the short dialogues.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests

On the recording, you hear:

- (man) *Did Sally go to the bank this morning?*
 (woman) *Yes, she did. She got a new checking account.*
 (narrator) *What does the woman imply?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) Sally wrote several checks.
 (B) Sally wanted to check up on the bank.
 (C) A new checking account was opened.
 (D) Sally checked on the balance in her account.

In this dialogue, the woman uses the active statement *She got a new checking account*, which means that *Sally opened a checking account*. The correct answer uses the passive structure that *a new checking account was opened* to express the same idea. Therefore, the best answer to the question above is answer (C).

You should note the following about passive sentences in the short dialogues:

PASSIVE STATEMENTS

1. If the dialogue contains a *passive statement*, the answer to the question is often an *active statement*.
2. If the dialogue contains an *active statement*, the answer to the question is often a *passive statement*.

NOTE: Check carefully *who* or *what* is doing the action in these questions.

TOEFL EXERCISE 5: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should be particularly careful of passives.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 5.

1. (A) If the restaurant is on the corner
 (B) If the man would like to go to the restaurant
 (C) If the vegetables are fresh
 (D) If vegetarian food can be obtained
2. (A) He admitted that he wanted to go to law school in the fall.
 (B) The law school accepted him as a student.
 (C) The law professor admitted that he would be a student in the fall semester.
 (D) He would be admitted to law school after the fall semester.

3. (A) Mark's plants were cared for in his absence.
 (B) Mark's plan was to be out of town.
 (C) Mark was careful about his plans for the out-of-town trip.
 (D) She was careful while Mark was gone.
4. (A) The lights in the trees were destroyed in the storm.
 (B) The storm damaged the trees.
 (C) The falling trees destroyed a store.
 (D) In the light the destruction of the storm could be seen.
5. (A) She was broke from skiing.
 (B) She went skiing in spite of her accident.
 (C) Her leg was hurt on a skiing trip.
 (D) Her skis were broken in the mountains.

SKILL 6: LISTEN FOR WHO AND WHAT WITH MULTIPLE NOUNS

When there is more than one noun in a sentence in the short dialogues, it is common for the answers to confuse which noun does what.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



On the recording, you hear:

- (man) *Do you know who is in the band now?*
 (woman) *I heard that Mara replaced Robert in the band.*
 (narrator) *What does the woman say about the band?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) Robert became a new member of the band.
 (B) Robert took Mara's place in the band.
 (C) Mara didn't have a place in the band.
 (D) Mara took Robert's place in the band.

In the woman's response to the man's question, she talks about two people (*Mara* and *Robert*), and these two people are confused in the answers. Because *Mara replaced Robert*, this means that *Mara took Robert's place* in the band. The best answer is therefore answer (D).

The following chart outlines the key point that you should remember about questions with multiple nouns:

WHO AND WHAT WITH MULTIPLE NOUNS

When there are multiple nouns in a sentence, it is common for the answers to confuse which noun does what.

TOEFL EXERCISE 6: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should be particularly careful of who is doing what.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 6.

1. (A) The passenger waited at the corner.
(B) The passenger looked for a taxi at the corner.
 (C) The cab driver waited for the passenger.
(D) The passenger cornered the waiting taxi driver.
2. (A) It was hard for her to hear Jane last night.
 (B) Jane gave a harp recital last night.
(C) Jane was playing hard while she was hurt.
(D) She played the harp last night for Jane.
3. (A) The baby sister went to bed quite early.
 (B) The children were forced to go to bed early.
(C) The baby-sitter made the bed after the children got up.
(D) The baby-sitter did not stay up late.
4. (A) The man taught his son about football.
 (B) The boy is receiving the ball from his dad.
(C) The ball is being tossed into the air by the boy.
(D) The man is playing with the ball in the sun.
5. (A) The students were told to go listen to the speaker.
(B) The professor attended that evening's lecture.
(C) The students were given directions to the lecture.
(D) The professor was directed to the lecture hall.

TOEFL EXERCISE (Skills 4–6): In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE (SKILLS 4–6).

1. (A) In a department store
(B) In a stationery store
(C) At the post office
(D) At the airport
2. (A) The teacher gave the students a hand.
(B) The term papers were turned in.
(C) The students got the papers from the office.
(D) The teacher handed the papers to the students.
3. **(A) The attendant checked the oil in Mark's car.**
(B) Mark checked to see if he had enough oil in his car.
(C) Mark checked with the service station attendant.
(D) Mark wrote a check to pay for the oil.
4. (A) A delivery man
(B) A famous chef
(C) A clerk in a fast-food restaurant
(D) An airline steward
5. (A) They need new print for the additional copies.
(B) They can make extra copies if necessary.
(C) Printers are needed for the additional copies.
(D) Additional copies are needed immediately.
6. (A) The professor bought two books.
(B) The students had to purchase two books.
(C) The students sold two books to the professor.
(D) The students were required to read two books by the professor.
7. (A) The doctor returned to the office.
(B) Jim asked the doctor to come to the office.
(C) The doctor will not return until next week.
(D) Jim was told to come back.
8. (A) Go to work in the lab
(B) Sample the work from the lab
(C) Have the samples delivered
(D) Send a note to the lab
9. **(A) Mary became the new class president.**
(B) Sue took her place as class president.
(C) In place of Mary, Sue became senior class president.
(D) The senior class president replaced Sue and Mary.
10. (A) The panel was analyzed on the television program.
(B) A committee evaluated recent political events.
(C) The program featured a psychoanalyst.
(D) The panel discussed the television program.

NEGATIVES

SKILL 7: LISTEN FOR NEGATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Negative expressions are very common in the short dialogues, and the most common kind of correct response to a negative statement is a positive statement containing a word with an opposite meaning.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



On the recording, you hear:

- (man) *How did they get to their grandmother's house in Maine in only five hours?*
 (woman) *They didn't drive slowly on the trip to Maine.*
 (narrator) *What does the woman say about the trip?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) They drove rather quickly.
 (B) They couldn't have driven more slowly.
 (C) They wanted to travel slowly to Maine.
 (D) They didn't drive to Maine.

The correct answer is answer (A). If they *didn't* drive *slowly* to Maine, this means that they drove rather *quickly*. Notice that the correct answer uses *quickly*, the opposite of *slowly*. The answers that use *slowly* are not correct.

The following chart outlines the types of negative expressions that you should be careful of:

TYPES OF NEGATIVE EXPRESSIONS		
Expression	Example	Correct Answer
Regular negative: <i>not</i> or <i>n't</i>	<i>Tom is not sad about the results.</i>	<i>not sad = happy</i>
Other negatives: <i>nobody</i> , <i>none</i> , <i>nothing</i> , <i>never</i>	<i>Nobody arrived on time.</i> <i>Sal never works hard.</i>	<i>nobody ... on time = late</i> <i>never works hard = lazy</i>
Negative prefixes: <i>un-</i> , <i>in-</i> , <i>dis-</i>	<i>The patient was <i>insane</i>.</i>	<i>insane = not sane = crazy</i>

TOEFL EXERCISE 7: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should be particularly careful of negative expressions.



Now BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 7.

1. (A) She is very busy.
 (B) She has lots of free time.
 (C) It is not necessary to take out the trash.
 (D) She will do it if she has time.
2. (A) The interview is very important.
 (B) He is worried about the interview.
 (C) What he's wearing to the interview is important.
 (D) He is not concerned about the interview.
3. (A) He has almost all the notes.
 (B) His attendance was perfect.
 (C) He went to all the lectures but one.
 (D) He missed more than one psychology class.
4. (A) They passed the library at 6:00.
 (B) The library opens at 6:00 in the summer.
 (C) The library closes at 6:00.
 (D) You can't check out more than six books in the summer.
5. (A) Water the plants once a day.
 (B) Give the plants no more water.
 (C) Water the plants often while the man is gone.
 (D) Give the plants a limited amount of water.

SKILL 8: LISTEN FOR DOUBLE NEGATIVE EXPRESSIONS

It is possible for two negative ideas to appear in one sentence, and the result can be quite confusing.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



On the recording, you hear:

- (man) *I can't believe the news that I heard about the concert.*
 (woman) *Well, it isn't impossible for the concert to take place.*
 (narrator) *What does the woman say about the concert?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) There's no possibility that the concert will take place.
 (B) The concert will definitely not take place.
 (C) The concert might take place.
 (D) The concert can't take place.

The correct answer to this question is answer (C). If it *isn't impossible* for the concert to take place, then it is possible, and the modal *might* indicates possibility.

The following chart outlines the situations where double negatives can occur:

DOUBLE NEGATIVES		
Situation	Example	Meaning
negative word (e.g., <i>not</i> , <i>no</i> , <i>none</i>) and a negative prefix (e.g., <i>in-</i> , <i>un-</i> , <i>dis-</i>)	<i>He didn't like the unclean office.</i>	<i>did not like unclean office</i> = liked clean office
two negative verbs	<i>It isn't snowing, so they aren't going to the mountains.</i>	implies that they would go if it were snowing
<i>neither or not ... either</i>	<i>Sue didn't like the movie, and neither did Mark.</i>	both did not like the movie

TOEFL EXERCISE 8: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should be particularly careful of double negatives.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 8.

1. (A) He'll definitely be elected.
 (B) The election is now complete.
 (C) She has high hopes for his chances.
 (D) It may happen.
2. (A) Both parts of his game were bad.
 (B) He served better than he volleyed.
 (C) Some parts of his game were better than others.
 (D) He played rather well.

3. (A) It is a surprise that he was prepared.
(B) He was not ready, as usual.
 (C) He prepared a really big surprise.
 (D) His strong preparation came as no surprise.
4. (A) She felt good enough to go out.
 (B) She went out to get some medicine.
 (C) She felt like dancing, so she went out with everyone.
(D) She stayed home because she was sick.
5. (A) She has problems that others aren't aware of.
 (B) Others aren't aware of her problems.
(C) She knows she's been a problem.
 (D) She doesn't have a care in the world.

SKILL 9: LISTEN FOR “ALMOST NEGATIVE” EXPRESSIONS

Certain expressions in English have “almost negative” meanings. These expressions are common in the short dialogues.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



On the recording, you hear:

- (woman) *Were you able to pay the electric bill?*
 (man) *I had barely enough money.*
 (narrator) *What does the man imply?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) He had plenty of money for the bill.
 (B) He did not have enough money for the bill.
 (C) He paid the bill but has no money left.
 (D) He was unable to pay the bill.

In the man’s statement, the word *enough* indicates that there was *enough*, so he *paid the bill*. However, it was *barely* enough, so he almost did not have enough and certainly *has no money left*. The correct answer is therefore answer (C).

The following chart outlines common “almost negative” expressions:

COMMON ALMOST NEGATIVE EXPRESSIONS		
Meaning	Expression	Example
almost none	<i>hardly, barely, scarcely, only</i>	There is <i>hardly</i> any food in the refrigerator.
almost never	<i>rarely, seldom</i>	He <i>rarely</i> drives to work.

TOEFL EXERCISE 9: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should be particularly careful of “almost negative” expressions.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 9.

1. ~~(A)~~ There's little rain in July.
 (B) In July it never rains.
 (C) It rains hard in July.
 (D) When it rains in July, it rains hard.
2. (A) The university accepted three students.
 (B) None of the students is going to the university.
 (C) John was not accepted.
~~(D)~~ Two were not admitted.
3. ~~(A)~~ Although he did pass, Mark's exam grade wasn't too good.
 (B) Mark failed his history exam.
 (C) The highest grade on the history exam went to Mark.
 (D) Professor Franks didn't pass Mark on the history exam.
4. (A) He often has long waits in Dr. Roberts's office.
~~(B)~~ He must wait patiently for Robert.
~~(C)~~ Dr. Roberts is generally punctual.
 (D) He doesn't mind waiting for Dr. Roberts.
5. (A) Betty often takes vacations in winter.
 (B) Betty prefers to take vacations in winter.
 (C) Occasionally Betty works one week during vacation.
~~(D)~~ A winter vacation is unusual for Betty.

SKILL 10: LISTEN FOR NEGATIVES WITH COMPARATIVES

Negatives can be used with comparatives in the short dialogues of the TOEFL test. A sentence with a negative and a comparative has a superlative, or very strong, meaning.

Example from the Paper and Computer TOEFL® Tests



On the recording, you hear:

- (woman) *What do you think of the new student in math class?*
 (man) *No one is more intelligent than she is.*
 (narrator) *What does the man say about the new student?*

In your test book or on the computer screen, you read:

- (A) She is not very smart.
 (B) He is smarter than she is.
 (C) Other students are smarter than she is.
 (D) She is the smartest student in the class.

The man responds to the woman's question with the negative *No* and the comparative *more intelligent*, and this combination has a superlative meaning, *the smartest*. The best answer is therefore answer (D).

The following chart outlines comparisons that you should be careful of when they are used with negatives:

COMPARATIVES WITH NEGATIVES		
Comparative	Example	Meaning
more	No one is <i>more</i> beautiful than she is.	She is <i>the most</i> beautiful.
-er	He couldn't be happier.	He is <i>extremely</i> happy.

TOEFL EXERCISE 10: In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question. You should be particularly careful of comparatives with negatives.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE 10.

1. (A) She's not very happy.
(B) She didn't do very well on the exam.
(C) She could be somewhat happier.
~~(D)~~ She's delighted with the results.
2. (A) Paula is always lazy.
(B) Paula didn't work very hard this semester.
~~(C)~~ Paula made a strong effort.
(D) Paula could have worked harder.
3. ~~(A)~~ The prices were great!
(B) The prices were too high.
(C) She didn't buy much because of the prices.
(D) The prices could have been lower.
4. (A) She is not very smart.
(B) She always tells him everything.
(C) He doesn't know her very well.
~~(D)~~ She's extremely intelligent.
5. ~~(A)~~ The patient absolutely didn't need the surgery.
(B) The necessity for the surgery was unquestionable.
(C) The surgeon felt that the operation was necessary.
(D) It was essential that the surgery be performed immediately.

TOEFL EXERCISE (Skills 7–10): In this exercise, listen carefully to each short dialogue and question on the recording, and then choose the best answer to the question.



NOW BEGIN THE RECORDING AT TOEFL EXERCISE (SKILLS 7–10).

1. (A) She can try a little harder.
(B) There is a lot more that she can do.
(C) She's doing the best that she can.
(D) It is impossible for her to do anything.
2. (A) She's always been late for the bus.
(B) The bus has always been late.
(C) The bus only left on time once.
(D) Only on this trip has the bus been on time.
3. (A) There wasn't enough soup to go around.
(B) We had so much soup that we couldn't finish it.
(C) Everyone got one serving of soup, but there wasn't enough for seconds.
(D) Everyone around the table had a lot of soup.
4. (A) She does want to see the movie.
(B) It's extremely important to her to go.
(C) She doesn't want to go there anymore.
(D) She really couldn't move there.
5. (A) She handed the paper in on time.
(B) She was able to complete the paper, but she didn't turn it in.
(C) The paper was a complete mess, so she didn't turn it in.
(D) The paper was unfinished.
6. (A) Neither Tim nor Sylvia is taking care of Art.
(B) Sylvia likes modern art even less than Tim does.
(C) Sylvia doesn't care for anything Tim does.
(D) Sylvia and Tim agree in their opinion of modern art.
7. (A) They always work hard in the afternoon.
(B) They don't do much after lunch.
(C) After noon they never work.
(D) It's never hard for them to work in the afternoon.
8. (A) It's hard for him to work when it gets warm.
(B) Whenever it gets warm, he turns on the air-conditioner.
(C) The air-conditioner only works when it isn't needed.
(D) He likes to use the air-conditioner when it is warm.
9. **(A)** He did really poorly.
(B) He's felt worse before.
(C) The results could not have been better.
(D) He's not too unhappy with the results.
10. (A) With so many members present, the committee couldn't reach a decision.
(B) The committee should've waited until more members were present.
(C) The issue shouldn't have been decided by all the committed members.
(D) The issue wasn't decided because so many members were absent.