

What is the IELTS Reading Exam?

One of the most important sections is the reading section, which evaluates your ability to comprehend the general message, identify main ideas, extract relevant facts, and understand arguments, opinions, and purposes.

The academic as well as general IELTS reading section of the exam both last 60 minutes and tests your reading skills.

There are two types of Reading IELTS Tests:

ACADEMIC READING TEST	GENERAL READING TEST
Duration: 60 mins Sections: 3 Passages: 3 long passages Number of Questions: 40 Types of Questions: 7 Origin of Passages: > Business journals > Scientific journals > Scholarly work	Duration: 60 mins Parts/Sections: 3 Passages: 4 short passages + 1 long passage Number of Questions: 40 Types of Questions: 7 Origin of Passages: > Business literature/brochures > Public announcements > Scientific/Historical journals

How to approach the IELTS Reading Test:

- ❖ Read the passage like a story. Understand what every paragraph means/the individual topic of every paragraph. Do not focus on details or worry about remembering.
- ❖ Recap whatever you have read. Try to remember what type of information every paragraph/section of the passage contains.
- ❖ Then go to the questions - find **Keywords** from the question that can give you a clue about what type of information you're looking for.
- ❖ Once you finish a passage, transfer the answers of that passage immediately. This is only for the written exam, not the computer-based.

TIME CALCULATION

For **Academic** Passages:

20 mins per passage/section.

- ★ 6-7 mins for reading the passage.
- ★ 1-2 mins for skim reading/ scanning.
- ★ 9-11 mins for solving the questions.
- ★ 1-2 mins for transferring answers.

Total 3 Sections: 20 X 3 = 60 mins

For **General** Passages:

10 mins per short passage.

- ★ 3-4 mins for reading the passage.
- ★ 1 min for skim reading/ scanning.
- ★ 5-6 mins for solving the questions.
- ★ 1 min for transferring answers.

20 mins per long passage.

- ★ 6-7 mins for reading the passage.
- ★ 1-2 mins for skim reading/ scanning.
- ★ 9-10 mins for solving the questions.
- ★ 1-2 mins for transferring answers.

**Total = (10 X 4 = 40 mins) + (20 X 1 = 20 mins)
= 60 mins**

Question Type	Task
Short Q/A	Within the word limit, you are required to answer: provide the main idea.
Fill-in-the-blanks	Within the word limit, you are required to finish the given sentence . This means you may have to modify the word from the passage to fit the question statement.
True/False/Not Given	You have to write "True/False/Not Given" or "Yes/No/Not Given" depending on the information you are given in the question (in comparison to the information in the passage).
Multiple Choice Question	You have to choose the correct information from a lot of options that display incorrect or off-topic information.
Matching Heading	You are given some headings that you have to match with the information in the paragraph (usually alphabetized/ A-F etc.).
Matching Features	You are given some pieces of information and asked to match them with the name of a paragraph (usually alphabetized/ A-F etc.).
Matching Information	You are given a piece of information that you are asked to match with another piece of information (Eg. A person's name with an event mentioned in the passage).

Tips for Matching Headings

You can use two strategies when answering this question: read the questions first or read the text first. When choosing the appropriate heading for both techniques, try to use your time as efficiently as possible because this can take a lot of time. If you are unsure of the distinction between two or more headings, make a note of all the possible answers and move on to the following paragraph. As you read more of the passage, you may want to rule out potential answers. It is better to cross off the heading on the test booklet whenever you are certain that you have chosen the appropriate heading for the paragraph or have eliminated an option. As a result, you won't be wasting time reading the headings that you've already used. The ability to skim is crucial for time-consuming question types like matching headings. Thanks to the ability to skim, you'll give yourself additional time to answer the questions in the other reading sections.

Tips for True, False, and Not given

Keep in mind that you must find and identify specific information in order to answer this type of question. The text will convey this information as facts. The information in the text appears in the same order as the questions, so you can find the information for the first statement before the information for the second statement. When you read the given statement, you then have to decide if the information in the text is:

- TRUE because the statement agrees with the information
- FALSE because the statement contradicts the information
- NOT GIVEN because there is no information on this

General Reading Tips to Improve your Score

- **The answer is always paraphrased in the text provided**

It means that for ANY correct answer you need to choose from the options, there is ALWAYS a paraphrased fragment in the text that says absolutely the same. The IELTS reading test is designed to test your understanding of language complexities. It will assess your ability to understand the same (or similar) ideas hidden behind different wordings and expressions.

- **Skimming and Scanning**

Learn to skim and scan. Skimming is reading rapidly in order to get a general overview of the material. Scanning is reading rapidly in order to find specific facts. Always underline important specific information and numbers. You do not need to read every word. Look out for information like names, dates, figures, statistics etc. From the question, identify the keyword and then scan the text for it, and possible synonyms. This will help you find the answer more quickly.

- **Focus on the ideas, not the words**

Re-read, and then rephrase it in your own words. Explain to yourself what you have just read. This mini-analysis helps you to focus on the ideas, and the message rather than the words in front of you.

- **Find proof in the text, underline and number**

Find the exact location of the rephrased answer in the reading passage. Compare it to the keywords in your answer and rest assured that it is the ONE. That is the proof. Then underline that rephrased line in the passage. Then write the number on top of the question that is answered by that line.

- **Don't panic over unknown words. Use context.**

Try to look around at the new word. Maybe the content of the sentence can help you deduce whether it's positive or negative, a person or a job, an animal or a feature. Prefixes can help, un- means cancel an action, re- means repeat, or -wise means referring to something. Grammar will also help, if it comes before a noun, it might be describing how this noun is.

- **Don't leave any questions unanswered**

Never leave any box unanswered. When you know there's no time left, just guess and write something. Why? You won't be penalized for incorrect answers.