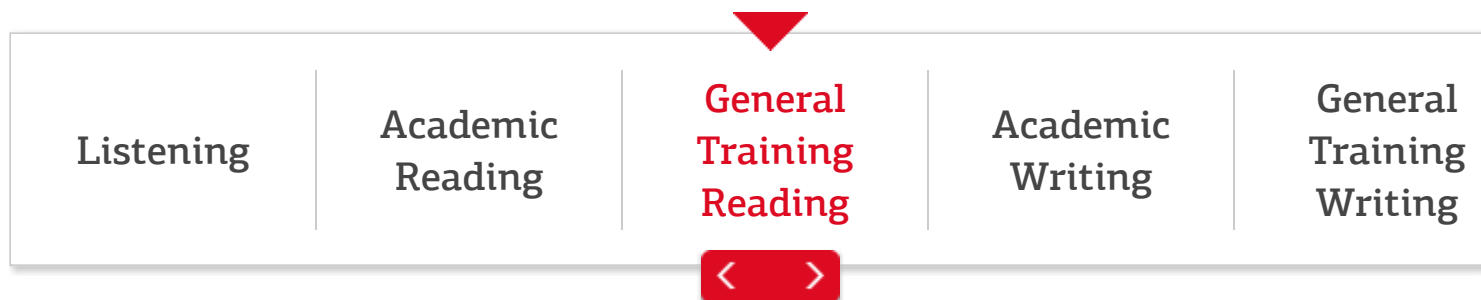


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Test format in detail



IELTS General Training Reading description

Paper format	There are three sections. Section 1 may contain two or three short texts or several short texts. Section 2 comprises two texts. In Section 3, there is one long text.
Timing	60 minutes
No. of questions	40
Task types	A variety of question types are used, chosen from the following: multiple choice, identifying information, identifying writer's views/claims, matching information, matching headings, matching features, matching sentence endings, sentence completion, summary completion, note completion, table completion, diagram label completion, short-answer questions.

Sources	<p>The second section, 'Workplace survival', focuses on the workplace context, for example contracts and staff development and training materials.</p> <p>The third section, 'general reading', involves reading more extended prose with a more emphasis on descriptive and instructive rather than argumentative texts, in a general the wide range of test takers involved, for example, newspapers, magazines and fictional extracts.</p>
Answering	Test takers are required to transfer their answers to an answer sheet during the time allowed. Extra time is allowed for transfer. Care should be taken when writing answers on the answer sheet. Spelling and grammar are penalized.
Marks	Each question is worth 1 mark.

IELTS General Training Reading in detail

A detailed look at the paper with links to related resources.

Task type 1 – Multiple choice

Task type and format	<p>In this task type, test takers choose the best answer from four alternatives A, B, C or D, or from five alternatives (A, B, C, D or E), or the best three answers from seven alternatives. They write the letter of the answer they have chosen on the answer sheet.</p> <p>The questions may involve completing a sentence, in which the 'stem' gives the first part of the sentence. Test takers choose the best way to complete it from the options, or could involve choosing the option which best answers them. The questions are in the same order as the information in the text. The answer to the first question in this group will be located in the text before the answer to the second question and so on. This task type may be used with any type of text.</p>
Task focus	This task type tests a wide range of reading skills including detailed understanding of specific information and understanding of the main points of the text.
No. of questions	Variable

Task type and format	<p>The test taker will be given a number of statements and asked: 'Do the following statements give the same information in the text?' They then write 'true', 'false' or 'not given' in the boxes on their answers. The questions are in the same order as the information in the text: that is, the answer to the first question will be located in the text before the answer to the second question and so on.</p> <p>It is important to understand the difference between 'false' and 'not given'. 'False' means that the statement is the opposite of the information in the text; 'not given' means that the statement is neither confirmed nor contradicted by the information in the passage.</p> <p>Any knowledge students bring with them from outside the passage should not play a part in their answers.</p>
Task focus	This task type assesses the test takers' ability to recognize particular points of information. It can thus be used with more factual texts.
No. of questions	Variable

Task type 3 – Identifying writer's views/claims

Task type and format	<p>The test taker will be given a number of statements and asked: 'Do the following statements agree with the views/claims of the writer?' They answer 'yes', 'no' or 'not given' in the boxes on their answers. The questions are in the same order as the information in the text: that is, the answer to the first question will be located in the text before the answer to the second question, and so on.</p> <p>It is important to understand the difference between 'no' and 'not given'. 'No' means that the test taker explicitly disagrees with the statement, i.e. the writer somewhere expresses the opposite view to the one given in the question; 'not given' means that the view or claim is neither confirmed nor contradicted. (Any knowledge students bring with them from outside the passage should not play a part when deciding on their answers.)</p>
Task focus	This task type assesses the test takers' ability to recognize opinions or ideas, and is thus used with discursive or argumentative texts.
No. of questions	Variable

Task type and format	Test takers locate specific information in the relevant paragraphs/sections of a text, and write correct paragraphs/sections in the boxes on their answer sheet. They may be asked to find, for example, a reason, a description, a comparison, a summary, an explanation. They will not find information in every paragraph/section of the text, but there may be more than one piece of information in a given paragraph/section. When this is the case, test takers will be told the letter more than once. The questions do not follow the same order as the information in the text. This task type can be used with any text as it may test a wide range of reading skills, from locating detail to identifying a summary or definition.
Task focus	This task type assesses the test takers' ability to scan for specific information. Unlike task types such as matching headings), it is concerned with specific information rather than with the main idea.
No. of questions	Variable

Task type 5 – Matching headings

Task type and format	Test takers are given a list of headings, usually identified with lower-case Roman numerals, and must match the heading to the main idea of the paragraph or section of the text. They must match the heading to the paragraph or section, which are marked alphabetically, and write the appropriate Roman numerals on their answer sheets. There will always be more headings than there are paragraphs or sections, so some headings will not be used. It is also possible that some paragraphs or sections may not be included in the text. More paragraphs or sections may already be matched with a heading as an example. No heading can be used more than once. This task type is used with texts that contain paragraphs or sections with specific themes.
Task focus	This task tests the ability to recognize the main idea or theme in the paragraphs or sections and to distinguish main ideas from supporting ones.
No. of questions	Variable

Task type 6 – Matching features

Task type and format	Test takers match a set of statements or pieces of information to a list of options. These options are taken from the text, and are identified by letters. Test takers may, for example, be required to match characteristics to age groups or events to historical periods, etc. It is possible that some options may be used more than once.
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Task focus	This task assesses the ability to recognize relationships and connections between facts or to recognize opinions and theories. It may be used both with texts dealing with factual information or with narrative. Test takers need to be able to skim and scan the text in order to locate the required information. They may be asked to read for detail.
No. of questions	Variable

Task type 7 – Matching sentence endings

Task type and format	Test takers are given the first half of a sentence based on the text and choose the best word or phrase to complete the sentence from a list of possible options. They will have more options to choose from than there are questions. The questions are in the same order as the information in the text: that is, the answer to the first question in the group will be found before the answer to the second question, and so on. This task type may be used with any type of text.
Task focus	This task type assesses the test takers' ability to understand the main ideas.
No. of questions	Variable

Task type 8 – Sentence completion

Task type and format	Test takers complete sentences in a given number of words taken from the text, writing the answers on an answer sheet. The instructions will make it clear how many words/numbers should be in the answer. Examples of instructions are: 'MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER from the passage', 'ONE WORD OR TWO WORDS'. If test takers write more than the number of words asked for, they will not be marked. Numbers can be written using figures or words. Contracted words will not be tested. Hyphenated words will be tested as single words. The questions are in the same order as the information in the passage: that is, the answer to the first question in this group will be found before the answer to the second question, and so on.
Task focus	This task type assesses the test takers' ability to locate detail/specific information.
No. of questions	Variable

Task type 9 – Summary, note, table, flow-chart completion

Task type and format	<p>Test takers are given a summary of a section of the text, and are required to complete it with information from the text. Note that the summary will usually be of only one part of the passage rather than the entire passage. The given information may be in the form of: several connected sentences (referred to as a summary), a list of words (referred to as notes), a table with some of its cells empty or partially empty (referred to as a table completion), boxes or steps linked by arrows to show a sequence of events, with some of the boxes or steps empty (referred to as a flow-chart). The answers will not necessarily occur in the order in which they are asked for in the text. However, they will usually come from one section rather than the entire text. There are four variations of this task type. Test takers may be asked either to select words from the text or to select from a list of words. If words have to be selected from the passage, the instructions will make it clear how many words test takers should use in their answers, e.g. 'NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER FROM THE PASSAGE', 'ONE WORD ONLY' or 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS'. If test takers write more words than asked for, they will lose the mark. Numbers can be written using figures or words. Contractions will not be tested. Hyphenated words count as single words. Where a list of answers is provided, it must consist of a single word. There are always more words or phrases in the box than there are gaps to fill. This task type often relates to precise factual information, it is often used with descriptive texts.</p>
Task focus	<p>This task type assesses the test takers' ability to understand details and/or the main ideas of a text. In the variations involving a summary or notes, they need to be aware of the type of word needed to fill a given gap (for example, whether a noun is needed, or a verb, etc.).</p>
No. of questions	Variable

Task type 10 – Diagram label completion

Task type and format	<p>Test takers complete labels on a diagram which relates to a description contained in the text. The instructions will make it clear how many words/numbers test takers should use in their answers, e.g. 'NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER FROM THE PASSAGE', 'ONE WORD ONLY' or 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS'. If test takers write more than the number of words asked for, they will lose the mark. Numbers can be written using figures or words. Contractions will not be tested. Hyphenated words count as single words. Where a list of answers is provided, it must consist of a single word. This task type often relates to precise factual information, it is often used with descriptive texts.</p> <p>However, they will usually come from one section rather than the entire text. The diagram may be of a machine, or of parts of a building or of any other element that can be represented pictorially. This task type is often used with texts describing processes or with descriptive texts.</p>
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No. of questions	Variable
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Task type 11 – Short-answer questions

Task type and format	Test takers answer questions about factual details in the text. Test takers must write their numbers on the answer sheet. Test takers must write their answers using words from the text. They will make it clear how many words/numbers test takers should use in their answers, e.g. 'I NEED THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER from the passage', 'ONE WORD ONLY' or 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS'. If they write more than the number of words asked for, they will lose the mark. Answers must be in the same order as the information in the text: that is, the answer to the first question will be located in the text before the answer to the second question, and so on.
Task focus	This task type assesses the ability to locate and understand precise information in the text.
No. of questions	Variable

IELTS General Training Reading - How it's marked

The General Training Reading test is marked by certificated markers, who are regularly monitored to ensure accuracy. All answer sheets, are further analyzed by Cambridge Assessment English.

Band score conversion

A band score conversion table is produced for each version of the General Training Reading test which translates scores into the IELTS 9-band scale. Scores are reported in whole bands and half bands.

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