

IELTS
ADVANTAGE



**SPEAKING &
LISTENING
SKILLS**

A step-by-step guide to
a high IELTS speaking
and listening score

JON MARKS

IELTS Advantage

Speaking & Listening Skills

Jon Marks

13579

سنت کالج برائے خواتین مظفر گڑھ



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• Try it first!

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• Exam skills 1

Choosing the best topic

Prepare and practise

• Listen 1

Pronunciation focus: the schwa

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The impersonal you

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Four practice Speaking test role-plays

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- Spotlight 1: Addresses and numbers
- Predicting and practising 1: Detailed information
- Predicting and practising 2: General information
- Preparing to answer 1

Listening Section 2: Social needs – monologue

- Spotlight 2: Directions and locations
- Predicting and practising 3: Labelling a map
- Preparing to answer 2
- Check and challenge

Unit 9 Looking at the bigger picture

Listening Section 3: Academic/training needs – conversation

- Spotlight 1: Language for talking about study
- Focus on formats 1
- Multiple choice: matching the question with the correct information
- Multiple choice: completing a sentence
- Multiple choice: choose two or more from a list
- Spotlight 2: Language for agreeing and disagreeing
- Preparing to answer 1

Listening Section 4: Lecture or formal talk

- Spotlight 3: Academic English
- Spotlight 4: Language for describing processes
- Focus on formats 2
- Flow charts
- Summary completion
- Preparing to answer 2
- Check and challenge

Audio transcripts

Answer key

- Track 1: Unit 1, Listen 1 (Speaking Part 1)
- Track 2: Unit 1, Listen 2 (Speaking Part 1)
- Track 3: Unit 2, Listen 1 (Speaking Part 1)
- Track 4: Unit 2, Listen 2 (Speaking Part 1)
- Track 5: Unit 3, Listen 1 (Speaking Part 2)
- Track 6: Unit 3, Listen 2 (Speaking Part 3)
- Track 7: Unit 4, Listen 1 (Speaking Part 2)
- Track 8: Unit 4, Listen 2 (Speaking Part 3)
- Track 9: Unit 5, Listen 1 (Speaking Part 2)
- Track 10: Unit 5, Listen 2 (Speaking Part 3)
- Track 11: Unit 6, Listen 1 (Speaking Part 2)
- Track 12: Unit 6, Listen 2 (Speaking Part 3)
- Track 13: Unit 7, Listen 1 (Speaking Part 2)
- Track 14: Unit 7, Listen 2 (Speaking Part 3)
- Track 15: Unit 8 (Listening Section 1, four extracts)
- Track 16: Unit 8 (Listening Section 1, full-length)
- Track 17: Unit 8 (Listening Section 2, three extracts)
- Track 18: Unit 8 (Listening Section 2, full-length)
- Track 19: Unit 8 (Listening Section 2, full-length)*
- Track 20: Unit 8 (Listening Section 2, full-length)
- Track 21: Unit 8 (Listening Section 2, full-length)*
- Track 22: Unit 9 (Listening Section 3, extract)
- Track 23: Unit 9 (Listening Section 3, full-length)*
- Track 24: Unit 9 (Listening Section 4, extract)
- Track 25: Unit 9 (Listening Section 4, full-length)*

* In the IELTS test, there is a sufficient pause to allow students to read the questions. The recordings on this CD need to be paused at the relevant point(s) to enable students to do this.

Aim of the book

IELTS Advantage Speaking & Listening Skills is designed for students who want to achieve a score of 6.5–7.0 or higher in the Speaking and Listening modules of the Academic IELTS exam. The majority of candidates aim to get at least 6.5, in order to study at university, work abroad, to apply for a visa or to have proof of a good level of English. The book aims to develop your speaking and listening skills up to and beyond this level. The book is one of two volumes in this series are *IELTS Advantage Writing Skills* and *IELTS Advantage Reading Skills*.

The book is divided into two sections: Speaking and Listening.

The content of the Speaking section has five main features:

- Format explanations and exam tips to help you predict and prepare for the Speaking test
- Grammar, vocabulary, collocations and expressions relating to the common themes and topics featured in the Speaking test
- Exam skills and strategies for the Speaking test
- Plentiful opportunities to practise speaking in the format of the Speaking test
- Audio examples on the accompanying CD of model Speaking tests

The content of the Listening section has three main features:

- Format explanations and exam tips to help you predict and prepare for the Listening test
- Development of strategies for listening and extracting the information necessary to answer the questions
- Listening practice material based on the accompanying CD

Using this book in the classroom

Each unit comprises around 90–120 minutes of classroom material. The lessons can be taught as a short stand-alone course of around 20 to 30 hours, or can be used as supplementary material.

Using this book for self study

This book has much to offer as a self-study resource. The exam tips and explanations, the language-practice activities and the audio material on the CD will provide a thorough preparation for the Speaking and Listening tests. To get the best from the speaking activities, work with a 'study buddy'. For most of these activities, one person plays the role of the examiner and the other plays the role of the candidate. Then you reverse roles and repeat.

Organization of the book

- Units 1 and 2: These focus on Speaking Part 1. In this part of the Speaking test, the examiner asks the candidate questions about familiar topics relating to his/her life.
- Units 3 to 7: These have an introductory section based on Speaking Part 1, followed by the main focus on Speaking Parts 2 and 3. In these parts of the test, the candidate prepares and delivers a short talk (Part 2), then discusses related topics further with the examiner (Part 3).
- Units 8 and 9: Listening

Speaking section

Some features of the Speaking section

- **Topic**
You are encouraged to role-play speaking on the topic of the unit. This can help to show you the strong and weak points of your speaking and how you need to improve.
- **Spoken language**
Explanations and practice of grammar, vocabulary, collocations and expressions which are particularly useful for talking about the topics of the unit and for answering the kinds of question typically asked in the Speaking test.
- **Exam skills**
Skills and strategies for improving the quality of your replies to the examiner's questions. These will help you to give more complex answers which fully demonstrate your ability to use English.
- **Prepare and practise**
Activities for organizing and developing your ideas so you will have plenty to say on the topics. These are followed by a role-play speaking on the topic as if in the exam, aiming to use language learned in the unit as much as possible.
- **Listen**
Listen to extracts from the Speaking test. Compare the model with your version in order to learn further useful ideas and strategies.
- **Pronunciation focus**
Tasks and suggestions for improving this essential aspect of spoken English.
- **Tips**
Extra advice and information for improving your performance on the day of the test.
- **Check and challenge**
Activities which review the content of the unit, plus suggestions for further study and skills development.
- **Four practice Speaking test role-plays**
Four full-length Speaking tests covering other topics which commonly appear in the exam. These give additional opportunities to practise speaking, and further demonstrate the structure of the test.

Some features of the Listening section

Explanations, advice, strategy ideas and practice relating to all the formats of the Listening test:

- Multiple choice
- Matching
- Completing sentences
- Completing tables
- Completing forms
- Completing notes
- Writing short answers
- Completing summaries
- Completing flow charts
- Labelling maps/diagrams

Part 1

You will have 2-3 minutes to prepare your answer. You will then have 1-2 minutes to speak.

Part 2

You will have 1-2 minutes to prepare your answer. You will then have 1-2 minutes to speak.

Part 3

You will have 1-2 minutes to prepare your answer. You will then have 1-2 minutes to speak.

The total length is 11 to 14 minutes, and the whole interview is recorded.

During the test

IELTS examiners are thoroughly trained to give standard conditions in the tests. They are assessing your ability to communicate effectively, and you will not usually lose marks for minor errors or hesitations. It's normal to feel nervous before the test, and the examiner will try to help you feel more relaxed. He/She will talk to you in a friendly and informal manner, and will not try to trick you into making mistakes.

In simple terms, the Speaking test starts easy and gradually becomes more difficult. However, that doesn't mean that you shouldn't aim to give complex answers in Part 2. The examiner works from a printed set of questions, but has some flexibility to ask additional questions in order to discover the extent of your English ability as accurately as possible.

You should try to give your ideas and opinions, but will be assessed solely on the quality of your English, not your knowledge of the topic or your personal views. The examiner will not ask you directly about politics or religion. You can refer to those if you wish (provided they are relevant to the question), but you are recommended to avoid topics which make you feel emotional, as this may distract you from giving your best possible performance in English.

What are the examiners looking for?

The IELTS examiners are assessing several different things, and this book is designed to help you in each of these areas:

• Vocabulary

You need to have a good range of words and phrases relating to the typical topics featured in the test. Unlike the Writing test, it's not necessary to use formal, academic English. Standard conversational English is acceptable. You will gain marks for your use of collocations (or 'word partnerships'), fixed expressions and words and phrases for linking ideas.

• Grammar

You need to use grammar accurately. To get a high score, you need to show you can use a range of complex structures for purposes such as describing relationships between the past, present and future, and describing relationships of cause and effect. A common mistake made by candidates is to answer using simple and repetitive grammar rather than showing they can use more complex language.

• Organization

You need to speak in a clear, well-organized way and give answers which are easy to follow. The structure is not quite as important as it is in the Writing test, but you will gain marks for presenting your ideas in a well-structured way. A common mistake, especially in Part 2, is to give ideas which lack structure and a clear purpose.

... to consider and well-developed ideas and to answer the
... least points of view. Common mistakes are failing to answer
... and giving answers which don't go into enough
... a high level of English

... pronunciation is very important. Speaking with a non-native
... but the examiner will assess how easy it is for a listener to
... pronunciation

... it will make what you say difficult to follow, especially if you also
... and pronunciation errors. If you speak too slowly, it may suggest
... too much thinking time for normal conversation. It may also mean you
... enough time to demonstrate your English fully

... features are often summarized as:

- fluency and coherence (general ability to communicate effectively)
- lexical resource (vocabulary)
- grammatical range and accuracy
- pronunciation.

About the Listening test

Structure

There are four sections, each comprising ten questions. You get one mark for each correct answer.

- **Section 1:** a conversation between two people in an everyday social situation
- **Section 2:** a monologue in an everyday social context
- **Section 3:** a conversation between two (or occasionally more than two) people in an education or training situation
- **Section 4:** a talk or lecture in an academic style on a subject of general interest

The test lasts for approximately 30 minutes, followed by ten minutes for transferring answers to the answer sheet. Each part of the recording is played only once.

What are the examiners looking for?

The test is designed to assess your skills in several different areas, including:

- listening for the gist
- listening for the main points
- listening for detailed information
- listening to understand a complex idea or argument
- listening to infer the opinion of a speaker
- listening to make deductions about an unfamiliar topic
- listening to make deductions despite not understanding all the words.

The IELTS scoring system

IELTS exam scores go up in steps of 0.5 from 1.0 to 9.0. A score of 9.0 is considered to be very near native-speaker level. However, as the tasks are difficult and the time is limited, even native speakers are not guaranteed to get a score of 9.0. It's rare for a non-native speaker to get more than 8.0, and very few organizations and institutions require a score of more than 7.5.

The Common European Framework of languages (CEF) categorizes IELTS scores as follows:

level	CEF	IELTS
Upper-intermediate	B2	5.0/5.5/6.0
Advanced	C1	6.5/7.0
Upper-advanced/Proficiency	C2	7.5+

Here is a guide to what you can normally do with these scores. However, be sure to check with the employer or educational institution you are applying to.

- 5.5–6.0 Entry to a university Foundation course
- 6.0–6.5 Entry to a Bachelor's degree course
- 6.5–7.0 Entry to a Master's degree course
- 7.0+ Typically required to work in English-speaking countries in professions such as medicine, law and accounting