

Collins | English for Exams

SPEAKING FOR IELTS

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Audio available online



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Introduction

Who is this book for?

Speaking for IELTS will prepare you for the IELTS Speaking test whether you are taking the test for the first time, or re-sitting the test. It has been written for learners with band score 5–5.5 who are trying to achieve band score 6.5 or higher.

The structured approach, comprehensive answer key and model answers have been designed so that you can use the materials to study on your own. However, the book can also be used as a supplementary speaking skills course for IELTS preparation classes. The book provides enough material for approximately 50 hours of classroom time.

Content

Speaking for IELTS is divided into 12 units. Each unit focuses on a topic area that you are likely to encounter in the IELTS Speaking test. This helps you to build up a bank of vocabulary and ideas related to a variety of the topics.

Units 1–11 cover the vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and exam techniques to prepare you for the IELTS Speaking test. Every exercise is relevant to the exam. The aims listed at the start of each unit specify the key skills, techniques and language covered in the unit. You work towards Unit 12, which provides a final practice IELTS Speaking test.

Additionally, the book provides examination strategies telling you what to expect and how best to succeed in the exam. *Exam information* is presented in clear, easy-to-read boxes. *Exam tips* in each unit highlight essential exam techniques and can be rapidly reviewed at a glance.

The *Pronunciation* sections will help you to improve your speaking skills and increase your awareness of the characteristics of natural spoken English. There are also *Watch Out!* boxes that will help you avoid common errors made in the exam. Finally, the *Exam tutor* at the end of each unit gives you the opportunity to revise and consolidate the exam skills you have studied.

Unit structure

Each of the first 11 units is divided into two parts.

Part 1 Language development introduces vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation related to the topic. A range of exercises gives you the opportunity to express complex ideas and opinions so that you are able to do so in the IELTS Speaking test. The vocabulary is presented using Collins COBUILD dictionary definitions. In every unit, you are given the opportunity to practise the new language you have learnt by attempting questions from Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 of the IELTS Speaking test. These test questions increase your familiarity with the exam format and help to build your confidence.

Part 2 Exam skills teaches you exam techniques. The information and exercises raise your awareness of what constitutes an effective IELTS response and also provide you with strategies on how to achieve this. *Exam information* and *Exam tips* show you how to approach each question type and help you develop successful test-taking strategies. There is also an *Exam tutor* checklist after the exam practice that will help you assess your readiness for the actual exam.

Answer key and audio scripts

A comprehensive answer key is provided for all sections of the book including notes on why certain answers are correct or incorrect. You will also find full audio scripts of all speaking exercises at the back of the book.

Using the audio

 This icon indicates that there is an audio track to listen to. You can download the audio files at www.colinseil.com/audio.

Using the book for self-study

If you are new to IELTS, we recommend that you work systematically through the 12 units in order to benefit from its progressive structure. If you are a more experienced learner, you can use the aims listed at the start of each unit to select the most useful exercises.

Each unit contains between three to four hours of self-study material. Having access to someone who can provide informed feedback on the speaking practice exercises is an advantage. However, you can still learn a lot working alone or with a study partner willing to give and receive peer feedback.

Part 1: Language development

Ideally, you should begin each unit by working through the *Part 1: Language development* exercises. Try to answer the questions without looking at a dictionary in order to develop the skill of inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words from context.

Part 2: Exam skills

Work through the *Part 2: Exam skills* from beginning to end. It is important to study the *Exam information* and *Exam tips* about each of the question types, so that you become familiar with how to approach the different question types in the exam. Doing this will also help you develop more general skills for speaking. This section also contains exam practice questions and the *Exam tutor*. After you have done the exam practice questions, it is a good idea to spend some time reviewing why certain answers are the correct ones, then work through the *Exam tutor*. For this reason, we suggest you approach this part in the following way:

Record your answers to the exam practice questions if you can. It will develop your self-awareness: you will be able to hear where your strengths lie and which aspects of your speaking you need to improve. In addition, hearing how your speaking has improved over time will increase your confidence and motivation. Once you have answered the practice IELTS Speaking questions, listen to the sample answers. You can also read the sample answers in the audio scripts section at the back of the book.

Unit 12 Practice exam

This is a complete Speaking practice test. This should be done under exam conditions including setting yourself the time limits that are suggested. There is also a sample answer for this exam so you can listen to the audio and read the audio script to further learn from the experience of sitting this practice exam.

Using the book in the classroom

If you are a teacher, you can use *Speaking for IELTS* either as your main IELTS coursebook or as a supplementary course. Detailed teacher's notes for each unit are available at: www.colinseil.com/tesol.html.

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test

IELTS is jointly managed by the British Council, Cambridge ESOL Examinations and IDP Education, Australia. There are two versions of the test:

- Academic
- General Training

Academic is for students wishing to study at undergraduate or postgraduate levels in an English-medium environment. General Training is for people who wish to migrate to an English-speaking country. This book is primarily for students taking the Academic version.

The test

There are four modules:

- Listening** 30 minutes, plus 10 minutes for transferring answers to the answer sheet
NB: the audio is heard *only once*.
Approx. 10 questions per section
Section 1: two speakers discuss a social situation
Section 2: one speaker talks about a non-academic topic
Section 3: up to four speakers discuss an educational project
Section 4: one speaker gives a talk of general academic interest
- Reading** 60 minutes
3 texts, taken from authentic sources, on general, academic topics. They may contain diagrams, charts, etc.
40 questions: may include multiple choice, sentence completion, completing a diagram, graph or chart, choosing headings, yes/no, true/false questions, classification and matching exercises.
- Writing** Task 1: 20 minutes: description of a table, chart, graph or diagram (150 words minimum)
Task 2: 40 minutes: an essay in response to an argument or problem (250 words minimum)
- Speaking** 11–14 minutes
A three-part face-to-face oral interview with an examiner. The interview is recorded.
Part 1: introductions and general questions (4–5 mins)
Part 2: individual long turn (3–4 mins) – the candidate is given a task, has one minute to prepare, then talks for 1–2 minutes, with some questions from the examiner.
Part 3: two-way discussion (4–5 mins): the examiner asks further questions on the topic from Part 2, and gives the candidate the opportunity to discuss more abstract issues or ideas.
- Timetabling** Listening, Reading and Writing must be taken on the same day, and in the order listed above. Speaking can be taken up to 7 days before or after the other modules.
- Scoring** Each section is given a band score. The average of the four scores produces the Overall Band Score. You do not pass or fail IELTS; you receive a score.

IELTS and the Common European Framework of Reference

The CEFR shows the level of the learner and is used for many English as a Foreign Language examinations. The table below shows the approximate CEFR level and the equivalent IELTS Overall Band Score:

CEFR description	CEFR level	IELTS Band Score
Proficient user (Advanced)	C2 C1	9 7–8
Independent user (Intermediate – Upper Intermediate)	B2 B1	5–6.5 4–5

This table contains the general descriptors for the band scores 1–9:

IELTS Band Score		
9	Expert user	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
8	Very good user	Has fully operational command of the language, with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
7	Good user	Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
6	Competent user	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
5	Modest user	Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
4	Limited user	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
3	Extremely limited user	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
2	Intermittent user	No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
1	Non user	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
0	Did not attempt the test	No assessable information provided.

Marking

The Listening and Reading papers have 40 items, each worth one mark if correctly answered. Here are some examples of how marks are translated into band scores:

Listening:	16 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 5
	23 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 6
	30 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 7
Reading:	15 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 5
	23 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 6
	30 out of 40 correct answers:	band score 7

Writing and Speaking are marked according to performance descriptors.

Writing: examiners award a band score for each of four areas with equal weighting:

- Task achievement (Task 1)
- Task response (Task 2)
- Coherence and cohesion
- Lexical resource and grammatical range and accuracy

Speaking: examiners award a band score for each of four areas with equal weighting.

- Fluency and coherence
- Lexical resource
- Grammatical range
- Accuracy and pronunciation

For full details of how the examination is scored and marked, go to: www.ibt.org

1 People and relationships

Language development | Adjectives to describe personality; Relationship phrases; Adverbs to modify character adjectives; Using tenses correctly; Pronunciation: Weak and strong forms

Exam skills | What it means to 'know' a word

Exam practice | Parts 1, 2 and 3

Part 1: Language development

Vocabulary: Adjectives to describe personality



1 Match the adjectives (1–15) with their definitions (a–o).

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1 ambitious _____ | a intelligent and able to understand things easily or plan things well |
| 2 blunt _____ | b willing to listen to and consider other people's ideas and suggestions |
| 3 clever _____ | c putting a lot of effort into your work |
| 4 creative _____ | d saying exactly what you think without trying to be polite |
| 5 good fun _____ | e can be trusted to work well or to behave in the way that someone wants you to |
| 6 hard-working _____ | f unwilling to spend money |
| 7 impatient _____ | g too quick to criticize people |
| 8 judgemental _____ | h having confidence in your own abilities |
| 9 nosy _____ | i with a strong desire to be successful, rich, or powerful |
| 10 open-minded _____ | j very friendly and likes meeting and talking to people |
| 11 outgoing _____ | k too easily offended |
| 12 over-sensitive _____ | l interested in things that do not concern you |
| 13 reliable _____ | m with the ability to invent and develop original ideas, especially in the arts |
| 14 self-assured _____ | n easily irritated by things |
| 15 stingy _____ | o enjoyable to be with because you say and do interesting or amusing things |



Exam tip

The vocabulary on personality and relationships will be useful in Parts 1 and 2 of the exam if you are asked to talk about yourself or people you know.

2 Mark the positive adjectives in Exercise 1 with (+) and the negative adjectives with (-).

3 Which adjectives from Exercise 1 would you use to describe yourself?

I consider myself to be ... I would say I was ...

Vocabulary: Relationship phrases

4 Match phrases 1–8 with definitions a–h.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 get on with somebody | a argue and stop being friendly with somebody |
| 2 look up to somebody | b have a good relationship |
| 3 be in touch with somebody | c gradually have a less close relationship with somebody |
| 4 fall out with somebody | d be in communication with somebody |
| 5 grow apart from somebody | e know somebody well and see or talk to them often |
| 6 take after somebody | f have many childhood and adolescent experiences in common with somebody |
| 7 grow up together/with somebody | g respect somebody |
| 8 be close to somebody | h resemble somebody in your family (in appearance or personality) |



Exam tip

Remember to use a good range of phrases to talk about relationships in the Speaking exam. This will help you get a better score.

5 Using phrases from Exercise 4, make eight sentences describing relationships you have.

I take after my dad – we're both quite careless.

6 Listen to three people talk about their relatives. Make notes as you listen. How do they describe their relatives and their relationships with them?



- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

7 Listen again. Did you understand more this time? Make further notes above, if so. Look up any language you do not know in a dictionary and make a note of it.



Vocabulary: Adverbs to modify character adjectives

8 Listen to Track 01 again and notice how the adjectives describing character and personality are modified. Complete sentences 1–10 with the modifying adverbs you hear.

- 1 She's _____ outgoing.
- 2 She's _____ hard-working.
- 3 She can be _____ impatient.
- 4 He was _____ creative.
- 5 He's not _____ reliable.
- 6 She's _____ nosy.
- 7 She's _____ blunt.
- 8 She can be _____ stingy.
- 9 She's _____ clever.
- 10 She's _____ self-assured and ambitious.

9 Read the information in the box about modifying adjectives. Then write descriptions, similar to those on Track 01, about different members of your family. Include the following:

- Adjectives from Part 1 of this unit.
- Modifiers with the adjectives that help to explain or expand on each characteristic.
- At least one negative point for each person.

Modifying adjectives

- 1 We can use adverbs like *really* and *so* before a positive adjective:
*She's **really** outgoing. He was **so** creative.*
- 2 We can use the same adverbs before a negative adjective, but we normally do this only if we do not like the person or are angry with them.
*She's **so** nosy.*
- 3 If we say something negative about someone, e.g. *She is impatient*, or *He is unreliable*, it can sound rude or too direct. We often 'soften' negative comments for this reason. Here are two ways of doing this:
with *can be a bit*
*She **can be a bit** impatient.*
with *not very* + a positive adjective:
*He's **not very** reliable.*

10 Read your descriptions in Exercise 9 then cover them and practise talking to an English-speaking friend about your relatives or record yourself. Doing this will help you practise your speaking skills and remember the vocabulary you have learnt.

Exam tip

If you use a character adjective to describe someone in the exam, you should expand on it or explain it, e.g. *She's really outgoing – she's always going out with friends and colleagues. He's not very reliable, so, for example, if I message him, he won't respond.*

Watch out

Don't forget to add an *s* to present tense verbs for the third person (*he, she, it*), e.g. *She likes cooking.*

Watch out

It can be difficult to know which negative prefix to use with a word, so make an effort to learn them, e.g. *impatient, disloyal, unreliable.*

Exam tip

Practise using the new language you learn, but don't memorise whole sentences or whole answers. You should speak spontaneously in the exam.

Speaking exam: Part 1



Exam information

Part 1: Introduction and interview (4–5 minutes)

- The examiner will introduce him/herself and confirm your identity.
- The examiner will then ask you general questions on some familiar topics such as home, family, work, studies and interests. In each unit of this book, you will practise answering Part 1 questions on one topic.
- Part 1 tests your ability to communicate opinions and information on everyday topics and common experiences or situations.

11



You are going to hear questions that are typical of Part 1 of the exam. Listen to each question and give your answer. Try to use some of the vocabulary and language you have learnt in this unit.

12



Now listen to the sample answers and compare them to your own answers.



Exam information

Part 2: Individual long turn (3–4 minutes, including preparation time)

- The examiner will give you a task card that asks you to talk about a particular topic and includes points that you can cover in your talk. You do not have to talk about the points in order.
- You will be given one minute to prepare your talk, and you will be given a pencil and paper to make notes (do not write on the task card).
- You must talk for one to two minutes on the topic.
- The examiner will then ask you one or two questions on the same topic.
- Part 2 tests your ability to talk at length, using appropriate language and organising your ideas coherently. You will attempt a Part 2 answer in each unit in this book.

Speaking exam: Part 2

13

Read this Part 2 question. Give yourself one minute to plan your answer, making notes if you wish. Then talk for one to two minutes.

Describe a close friend.

You should say:

how long you have known this person

how you met

what kind of person he/she is

and explain why you like him/her.



Exam tip

You can also use the vocabulary you have learnt in this unit to talk about friendship.

Grammar: Using tenses correctly

14 Read the exam questions below from Exercise 13. Which tenses are you likely to use in your responses?

- 1 How long have you known this person?
- 2 How did you meet?
- 3 What kind of person is he/she?
- 4 Explain why you like him/her.

15 Listen to the sample answer to the Part 2 Exam question in Exercise 13. Then read the extracts below. What tenses does the speaker use and why does he use those tenses?

- 1 We got to know each other on the tennis courts.
- 2 He'd often suggest doing something and I'd go along with it.
- 3 We've never fallen out.

16 Now answer the Part 2 Exam question in Exercise 13 again. Try to aim for accuracy in your use of tenses.



Exam tip

In the exam, look carefully at the tenses used in the Part 2 questions, and listen carefully to the examiner to hear which tenses they use in their questions. Does the question relate to the past, present, future, or something imagined? This will help you use the correct tenses when you speak.

Pronunciation: Weak and strong forms

17 Read sentences 1–5 and circle the prepositions.

- 1 Can I have a cup of tea?
- 2 We met at university.
- 3 I've known him for ten years.
- 4 I'm from Dubai.
- 5 It's quarter to ten.

18 Listen to sentences 1–5 from Exercise 17 and repeat them. Make sure you pronounce the weak forms of the prepositions correctly, but be careful not to stress them.



Pronunciation

Some words have two pronunciations: a strong form and a weak form. In normal speech, we usually use the weak form, as in the sentences in Exercise 17.



Exam tip

If you use weak forms correctly, you will be more fluent, and you will sound more like a native speaker. This will get you higher marks in the exam. Recognising weak forms will also help you understand the examiner more easily. It is easy to miss weak forms because they are unstressed.



- 19** Look at the table. Listen and repeat the strong and weak prepositions.
 Note that *to* and *for* have different weak forms when they come before vowel sounds.

Word	Strong form	Weak form(s)	Weak form before a vowel sound
to	/tu:/	/tə/	/tu/ e.g. <i>I'm going to Egypt.</i>
of	/ɒv/	/əv/, /ə/	-
at	/æt/	/ət/	-
from	/frɒm/	/frəm/	-
for	/fɔ:/	/fə/	/fər/ e.g. <i>This is for Andy.</i>

! Watch out

Sometimes, even in fast speech, we use the strong form of a word:

- if we want to emphasise it, or contrast it with another word.
- if it comes before a pause.
- if it comes at the end of a sentence.

P Pronunciation

Other function words (or grammatical words) also have weak forms. Some common ones are:

- positive auxiliary verbs (e.g. *can, must, do, shall, was, are*)
- pronouns (e.g. *her, you, them, your*)
- conjunctions (e.g. *and, but, because ('cos), than*)
- articles (*the, a, an*)

- 20** Underline the function words that you think are pronounced using a weak form. Then listen to check your answers and repeat the sentences.

- 1 She met her best friend at work and then they set up a business together.
- 2 He can play the piano really well because he had lessons for years when he was younger.
- 3 We helped them, but they didn't thank us.

💡 Exam tip

A good dictionary will give you guidance on strong and weak pronunciations. Practise using weak forms by choosing some sentences, marking the words with weak forms and then reading out the sentences.



Part 2: Exam skills

What it means to 'know' a word

1 Match words 1–7 with their more neutral synonyms a–g. Which of the words 1–7 are informal and which are old-fashioned?

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 mate | a parents |
| 2 beau | b boyfriend |
| 3 bloke | c friend |
| 4 folks | d wife, husband or partner |
| 5 kinsfolk | e man |
| 6 other half | f members of a family |
| 7 in-laws | g the parents of your husband or wife |

2 To really *know* a piece of vocabulary, you should study the information in points 1–7. Choose five items of vocabulary you have learnt in this unit and, for each item, answer the questions in points 1–7.

- What part of speech is it? For example, noun, verb, adjective or adverb.
- What are the other parts of speech for that word? For example, *formality* (n), *formalise* (v), *formal* (adj), *formally* (adv).
- Is the word slang, informal, formal, or old-fashioned? Is it used in all English-speaking countries or just in some countries? For example, *bloke* is used in the UK but not in the US.
- Does the word have any connotations you should be aware of? For example, both *slim* and *skinny* mean *thin*, but *skinny* is insulting and *slim* is complimentary.
- How do you pronounce the word, and which syllable is stressed? For example, *boyfriend* /bɔɪˈfrend/.
- Note the grammar of the word or phrase. Is it an irregular verb (for example, *seek–sought–sought*) or a noun with an irregular plural (for example, *man–men*)? Is it followed by a particular preposition (for example, *be anxious about something*)?
- Are there any useful collocations? For example, collocations with the word *friend* include: *a close friend*, *make friends (with somebody)*, *a circle of friends*.



Exam tip

In the Speaking exam, you will be assessed on your use of vocabulary. You should have a good range of vocabulary and know how to use the words. If you use slang, very formal or old-fashioned language in the exam, it might sound inappropriate.

Speaking Part 3



Exam information

Part 3: Discussion (4–5 minutes)

- Part 3 is a discussion between you and the examiner. In the units of this book you will hear typical Part 3 questions and practise answering them.
- The questions in Part 3 will be connected to the topic of Part 2.
- They allow you to discuss more general and abstract issues and ideas.
- Part 3 tests your ability to express and justify opinions, and to analyse, discuss and speculate.

- 3** You are going to hear two sets of Part 3 questions about family and friends. Record yourself answering the questions.



Listen to your responses. Try to judge your use of vocabulary, and ask an English-speaking friend to help you if you like. Work through the following:

- Was your vocabulary appropriate, or did you use some very informal or old-fashioned language?
- Did you use a good range of vocabulary, or did you use the same words repeatedly?
- To enrich your vocabulary, find appropriate synonyms for five or more words or phrases.

- 4** Listen to the sample answer. Then answer the Part 3 questions again using these new words.



Exam tip

The best way to find new vocabulary is in context, such as in the sample answers in this unit or in an article or book.



Exam tutor

- 1 What have you learnt in this unit that will help you in the exam if you are asked about people and relationships? What have you learnt in this unit that you can transfer to any topic?
- 2 When noting down new vocabulary, what information should you include?
- 3 What kind of questions will the examiner ask you in Part 1 of the exam?
- 4 What will you have to do in Part 2 of the exam?
- 5 What kind of questions will the examiner ask you in Part 3 of the exam?

SECOND EDITION

If your speaking skills are preventing you from getting the score you need, *Collins Speaking for IELTS* can help. Don't let one skill hold you back.

Online audio provides interviews and practice exercises like those used in the IELTS Speaking test

Pronunciation sections help you improve your speaking skills and Watch Out boxes help you avoid common errors

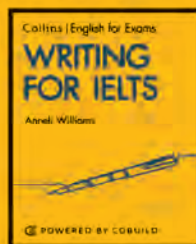
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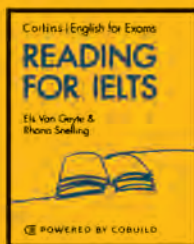
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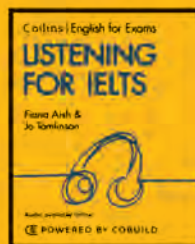
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CEFR
B1+

For learners with band score 5–5.5 who are aiming for 6.5 or higher

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