

Collins

English for Exams

Pre-intermediate A2+

Get Ready for IELTS
WRITING

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 POWERED BY COBUILD

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Introduction

Who is this book for?

Get Ready for IELTS Writing has been written for learners with a band score of 3 or 4 who want to achieve a higher score. Using this book will help you improve your pre-intermediate writing skills for the IELTS Academic Writing test.

You can use *Get Ready for IELTS Writing*:

- as a self-study course. We recommend that you work systematically through the 12 units in order to benefit from its progressive structure.

- as a supplementary writing skills course for IELTS preparation classes. The book provides enough material for approximately 50 hours of classroom activity.

Get Ready for IELTS Writing

This book consists of **12 units**. Each unit focuses on a different topic and these topics are ones that often appear in the IELTS exam.

After every three units, there is a **Review unit** which helps you to revise the language and skills covered in the previous units.

At the end of the book the **Practice test** gives you the opportunity to take an IELTS-style test under test conditions.

There is also a full **answer key** at the back of the book so you can check your answers. Here you will find suggested answers for more open-ended questions and model answers for the exam practice questions in Part 3 of the unit.

The **glossary** at the back of the book lists the useful words from each unit with their Cobuild dictionary definitions.

Unit structure

Each unit starts with the **Aims** of the unit. They outline the key language and skills covered.

Part 1: Language development provides exercises on vocabulary related to the topic as well as key grammar related to the IELTS Task covered in the unit. Clear structures are provided.

Part 2: Skills development focuses on either a Task 1 or a Task 2 question and provides step-by-step exercises and guidance on the type of essay answer required and the key stages of the writing process. The particular requirements of each type of essay question and the different formats for presenting information (tables, bar charts, line graphs, pie charts, etc.) are clearly explained.

Part 3: Exam practice provides one exam practice question for either Task 1 or Task 2 in a format that follows the actual exam. You can use this to check whether or not you are ready for the test.

Finally, a **Progress check** helps you to check whether you have covered the key points in the unit.

Other features

Exam information boxes in each unit provide key background information about the IELTS Writing exam.

Exam tip boxes provide essential exam techniques and strategies.

Watch out! boxes highlight common errors often made in the exam.

Study tips

- Each unit contains approximately three hours of study material.
- Try to answer the questions without looking at a dictionary to develop the skill of guessing the meaning of unknown words from context. This is important because dictionaries cannot be used during the actual exam.
- Use a pencil to complete the exercises, so that you can erase your first answers and do the exercises again for revision.
- Try to revise what you have learnt in Parts 1 and 2 before doing the practice IELTS questions in Part 3. This will improve the quality of your answers, and using the new language will help you to remember it.
- It's recommended that you try and complete all questions in the unit as the skills needed to do well at the IELTS test can only be improved through extensive practice.
- Read the answer key carefully as this provides information on what kind of answer is awarded high marks.
- Part 3 contains exam practice with timed questions. This gives you the opportunity to practise writing to a time limit. If you find this difficult at first, you could focus first on writing a high-quality response of the correct length. Then you could start to reduce the time allowed gradually until you are able to write an acceptable answer within the time limit.
- You should become familiar enough with your own hand-writing so that you can accurately estimate the number of words you have written at a glance.

Information

Also available in the *Collins Get Ready for IELTS* series: *Reading, Listening and Speaking*.

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

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

IELTS Band Scores

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.ielts.org

1 Hobbies and interests

AIMS: Words describing hobbies and interests • The present simple • Quantifiers • Task 1 introductions • Analysing and describing a table for Task 1

Part 1: Language development



1 Look at the pictures of hobbies, then fill each gap below with the correct verb + noun.

Gabrielle: I have lots of hobbies. Every weekend I (1) *play golf* with my father. There is a club nearby, so we go there. It's really good fun, but it's much better being on the course if the weather is nice and sunny. My father is a better player than me. I usually take four or five shots to get the ball in the hole. In the evenings I (2) a lot. I especially like dramas and reality shows.

Yuan: I like sports quite a lot. I (3) three times a week! There is a pool near my house, so I usually go there before school. I really love it! I also (4) to a lot. My favourite singers are Justin Bieber and Miley Cyrus. I use my headphones at home because my mother doesn't like the loud noise!

2 It is important to use the correct verbs with hobbies and interests. Put the hobbies under the correct verbs in the table. (Some hobbies may be used with more than one verb.)

swimming shopping football gymnastics sports karate yoga
computer games the violin the guitar skating TV horse riding golf

do	go	play	watch
	<i>swimming</i>		

3 We use the present simple to describe repeated or regular activities.

I **play** (present simple) **tennis** (activity) every week.

We also use the present simple to talk about things we *like* / *don't like* / *love* / *hate*. These verbs can be followed by another verb in the *-ing* form.

I **love** (like verb) **going** (-ing form) swimming.

Complete the text using the present simple tense.

I asked the people in my class about their hobbies and this is what I found out. Most people in the class like (1) **play** tennis. Julia and Pamela (2) tennis four times a week, and Peter (3) tennis three times a week. Over half my class (4) tennis every week. Brian doesn't like (5) tennis. He never plays! The most popular hobby is playing computer games. Nearly everyone (6) computer games. Four people (7) computer games every day. Only Ellen (8) not computer games. She thinks they are boring. Half of my class like playing football. John and Paul (9) football every day, and Arnold (10) football four times a week. Two girls (11) not football.

	Boys					Girls		
	Arnold	Peter	John	Paul	Brian	Ellen	Julia	Pamela
Football	x4 a week		every day!	every day!		x2 a week		
Tennis	x2 a week	x3 a week	x2 a week		Never!		x4 a week	x4 a week
Computer games	every day	every day	every day	x2 a week	x3 a week	Never!	x2 a week	every day
Swimming						x3 a week	every day	

4 There are many different words to describe quantity. Put the words from the box in the correct order from 0 (the smallest amount) to 100 (the largest amount).

0 _____ 100 **all**

all some few a lot of not many not much no

Look at the information in the table in Exercise 3 and complete the sentences below with the correct quantity words.

- 1** **A lot of** boys like football.
- 2** the students have at least one hobby.
- 3** boys like swimming.
- 4** students play tennis.
- 5** students go swimming.

Part 2: Skills development

Exam information | Describing tables

In Task 1 of the writing paper, you need to describe some visual information. This visual information might be a table. You need to identify and describe the key points in the table, using formal or semi-formal writing. You have 20 minutes to do this task and you must write 150 words or more.

- 1** Look at the table. Circle the correct option in each sentence below.

Sport	Number of students who like it	Number of students who don't like it
Tennis	8	2
Football	5	5
Hockey	3	7
Cricket	0	10

- 1 Football, Tennis is the most popular sport in the class.
- 2 A lot of students don't like *football / hockey*.
- 3 *Football / Hockey* is liked and disliked by the same number of students.
- 4 Few students dislike *tennis / football*.
- 5 All the students dislike *cricket / football*.

- 2** Now look at this table and write T (True) or F (False) next to each sentence. Give reasons for your answers.

Age range	Football	Swimming	Television	Computer games	Music
13–15 years	5	2	6	7	3
16–18 years	4	1.5	9	14	12

- 1 Older teenagers spend a lot of time swimming. **F**
- 2 All older teenagers like playing computer games.
- 3 Listening to music is more popular with older teenagers.
- 4 Teenagers don't spend much time swimming.
- 5 Younger teenagers spend a lot of hours listening to music.

Exam tip | Identifying key points

Make sure you understand the following in a table:

- (a) the main heading / title of the table
- (b) the column headings / categories and exactly what these show.

Look for the most important information in the table by comparing categories and groups. Notice any similarities, any differences, any obvious changes and / or trends. These are what you will need to write about in your answer.

- 3** Look at the table below, then choose the sentence, a, b or c, which best explains what the table shows.

Age group	Shopping	Social networking	Browsing news sites	Browsing sports sites	Playing games
10–15 years	0	23	2	5	70
16–20 years	10	51	8	10	21
21–29 years	24	44	8	6	16
30–39 years	35	25	16	14	10
40–49 years	29	10	30	19	2
50+ years	10	5	54	23	1

- a The table shows how much time people spend on the Internet.
- b The table shows how much time people spend on Internet activities depending on their age.
- c The table shows the percentage of time spent on types of Internet activity by age group.

Exam tip | Writing an introduction

Use the following structure for the introduction to a Task 1 answer:

- One sentence to explain what the table shows. (Use different words from the words used in the heading for the table wherever possible.)
- One or two sentences summarizing the information shown in the table.
- Do not include details in the introduction. Save the details for the main part of your text, after the introduction.

4 Read two different introductions (A and B) to a text about the table in Exercise 3 and answer the questions.

- 1 Circle all the verbs in the introductions. What tense are the verbs?
- 2 Look at the first sentence of each introduction. Do these sentences accurately explain the title of the table?
- 3 Underline any details in A and B.
- 4 Which introduction is better, A or B? Why?

Introduction A: The table shows how much time the age groups spend on different types of Internet activity. There are six age ranges in the table from 10–15 to over 50. The Internet activities include shopping, browsing, social networking and playing games.

Introduction B: The table shows how much people like the Internet depending on their age. 70% of children between ages 10–15 play games on the Internet, and no children between ages 10–15 like shopping. Most older people browse news sites. They spend 54% of their time reading the news on the Internet.

5 Now complete the rest of the text about the table, using the words from the box.

In general there are many differences depending on age group. The table shows that (1) spend a lot of time playing games, but older people do not spend (2) time playing games. Younger people spend more time social networking than older people, especially the age range (3) They spend 51% of their time on social networking. Most age groups shop on the Internet except for the age group (4) (5) people in this age group shop on the Internet. Browsing news and sports sites is popular with (6) age groups. Overall, young people like playing games and social networking but older people (7) reading news and (8) on the Internet.

16–20 younger age groups 10–15 shopping older like much No

Exam tip | Using the right tense

Always use the present tense to describe a table, unless it contains information about a time in the past or if past dates, e.g. years, are used as categories.

Part 3: Exam Practice

Writing Task 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The table below shows the television viewing figures for sports by country, in millions.

Summarize the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 100 words.

Country	Tennis	Golf	Motor racing	Athletics	Totals
Australia	6.2	4.5	3.7	3	17.4
UK	6.6	2.8	6.4	4.5	20.3
USA	7	11.2	1.5	5.5	25.2
Canada	6.1	3.4	1.1	3.9	14.5
Total	25.9	21.9	12.7	16.9	

Progress check

How many boxes can you tick? You should work towards being able to tick them all.

Did you ...

make sure you understood the title, headings and categories of the table?

use the present simple to describe the table (if the information in the table is about the present)?

use quantifiers accurately to describe quantities?

use the introduction to describe the table in general?

2 Education

AIMS: Education words and collocations • The past simple • Quantifiers • Analysing and describing a bar chart for Task 1

Part 1: Language development



1 Look at the pictures. Complete the sentences by putting the letters of the bold words in the correct order.

- At school, you have **s a l c s e s** *classes* for different subjects, such as maths, science and history.
- The **e t r e a h c** will answer any questions you may have.
- Sometimes at the end of the year, students take an **m e a x** to check what they have learnt.
- Some students go on to university, where they will learn through seminars and **c t u r s e l e**
- Sometimes a university student gives a **s e i n r t a p n e t o** to other students.

2 When you learn new vocabulary, try to learn which words usually go together (or collocate). Put the verbs in the box next to the nouns in the table. (You can use each verb more than once, and each noun can have more than one verb.)

take sit do give write study make pass fail get

verbs	nouns	verbs	nouns
take,	an exam		an essay
	a qualification		a subject (e.g. biology)
	a course		a presentation

Complete the text with verbs from the table.

Mustafa: I have just finished school. I (1) *passed* all my exams so I am really happy! I'm going to go to university. I want to (2) Engineering. I have to (3) an entrance exam for my English because I want to study in Australia. The course sounds really good. It's at a really good university and has a mixture of assessments; I'll need to (4) essays, (5) presentations and (6) exams. I will also get some work experience! It's a lot of work but I think I will (7) a really good qualification.

Watch Out!

To pass an exam means to reach the required grade or pass mark, not to take the exam.

3 The notes show what the class of 2009 did after they left school. Because the information refers to a time in the past, we must use past tense verbs to describe it. Complete the sentences below with the correct past tense forms of the verbs in brackets and the correct numbers from the notes:

Destinations of school leavers, 2009

University: 12 boys 14 girls

Local college: 7 boys 1 girl

Work: 5 boys 8 girls

- 1 *fourteen* girls *went* (go) to university after leaving school.
- 2 girl (start) college.
- 3 boys and girls (start) work straight after school.
- 4 school leavers (continue) studying after leaving school.
- 5 Only school leavers (not go) to university or college.
- 6 school leavers (decide) to go to college.

4

We can also use comparative forms to compare items. Look at the information below.

Student numbers at local primary schools, 2008

Percival School: 80 boys,	40 girls
St James School: 100 boys,	100 girls
Roysters School: 60 boys,	80 girls
Bilsing School: 35 boys,	35 girls

As much / many + noun + as (to show a quantity is the same): *St James School had as many boys as girls in 2008.*

Not as much / many + noun + as + noun (to show that a quantity is less): *Percival School didn't have as many girls as St James School.*

More + noun + than + noun (to show one quantity is larger than another): *Percival School had more boys than girls.*

Less / fewer + noun + than + noun (to show one quantity is smaller than another): *Percival School had fewer boys than St James School* (Note: *fewer* is used for countable nouns, and *less* for uncountable nouns.)

Complete the sentences about Roysters and Bilsing schools using the words in brackets and the expressions above.

- 1 Roysters School had (girls / boys) in 2008.
- 2 Bilsing School had (boys / girls).
- 3 Roysters School had (boys / girls)
- 4 Bilsing School had (students) Roysters School.
- 5 Roysters School had (students) Bilsing School.

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Make a start on your IELTS preparation with *Collins Get Ready for IELTS*. This book gives you everything you need to improve your pre-intermediate writing skills for the IELTS Writing test.

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