



TOEFL® iBT Listening Tips

Preparation and Exam Taking Strategies for the TOEFL® iBT Listening Section

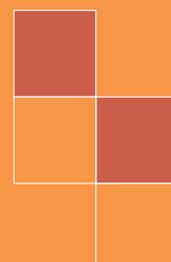
In TOEFL® iBT Listening section is delivered immediately after the Reading. The Listening section of TOEFL iBT measures your ability to understand spoken English in academic settings. Each part of the Listening section (2 or 3 parts) consists of 1 long conversation and two lectures. The test takers hear each lecture or conversation only once. Lectures and conversations are 3-5 minutes long. While listening the time is not running. The allotted time of 10 minutes for each part is only for answering the questions.



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TOEFL® iBT Listening Tips

[TOEFL® iBT Listening section](#) is delivered immediately after the Reading section. The Listening section of TOEFL iBT measures your ability to understand spoken English in academic settings. In [TOEFL® iBT](#) the listening is done for 3 major purposes:

1. Listening for basic comprehension.
2. Listening for pragmatic understanding.
3. To connect and combine ideas presented in multiple information sources.

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Preparation Strategies

Listen to spoken English from multiple sources as much as possible. Listen to English spoken movies and English spoken TV channels, listen to the radio and as many other listening sources as you may find. It would be better if your passages are academic or close to what is in TOEFL® iBT. The more you practice listening, the better listener you will become.

Listen for the main idea. It is usually found at the beginning of the listening passages, while the details are dispersed throughout the lecture. The main idea will give you understanding of what the conversation/lecture is about. Then you may listen for details.

Learn to **find how the ideas are presented** in the listening passage. Some of the main relations between ideas include cause/effect, compare/contrast, and steps in a process.

Learn to **listen for signal words** that indicate different part of the passage - introduction, major steps, examples, conclusions, etc.

Build your vocabulary. While listening, try to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from context. It is very important since there is a big chance to come across words you don't know at the real test. Then, you should guess their meaning. Write down every word you don't know and include it in your wordlist. Try to memorize it and use it in your speaking and writing. Flashcards could be a great way to improve your vocabulary.

Listen to conversations or lectures with **variety of accents**. In TOEFL® iBT Listening section there is a variety of accents and pronunciations. For this reason, you should practice listening to a people with different accents and pronunciation patterns.

Practice note-taking. Note-taking is allowed during all sections of TOEFL® iBT. Effective note-taking may highly improve your performance. It is almost impossible to memorize all clues and details provided in the Listening section. Moreover, you can hear the passages **ONLY ONCE**. Therefore, to answer the questions you have to rely on what you remember from the passage and your notes. See also our [Effective Note-Taking Strategies](#).



Summarize in writing what you have heard, using your notes. Thus, you will learn to find the purpose and main idea of the listening, and also the most important details. You will also learn to take and use notes. It also helps in improving your writing skills.

Familiarize yourself with the type of questions in TOEFL iBT. Make sure that during the preparation you learn what answers are required by the different types of question. Some questions may ask you to provide two answers, others to click in a chart box. If you are familiar with the question types, you may save important time.

At the exam strategies

Forget about the Reading section. Now it is time to fully concentrate on the Listening section.

The clock is ticking only when you are answering the questions and not when you are listening to the passages. So, when you listen, **forget about the clock.**

Prepare for note-taking. Before the section starts, write down the words 'main idea', 'major points', and 'important details'. Under which word you will place your notes from the listening passage.

Do not be distracted by the speaker's accent, speaking style and delivery. **Focus on the content** and flow of information the speaker(s) deliver.

Listen to find clues that will help you understand what the speaker's purpose, attitude and degree of certainty is. Listen for words that show relationship between ideas.

Pay attention to the **visual materials**. Some of the visual materials in the Listening section bring important information. Blackboards show important words or phrases that are discussed during the lecture. Illustrations and graphics support the information presented in the lecture. They are available only when the lecturer refers to them.

Answering is different. In the Listening section you may not return to the previous questions to correct your answers. Nevertheless, you have to confirm twice that you want to move to the next question. First, when you provide your answer you have to press the NEXT button. After pressing the NEXT button you may alter you answer. **To move to the next question you have to press OK button. Sometimes test takers forget this and lose important time. Please, set your mind that you have to press two buttons.**

Take a guess. There is no penalty for an incorrect answer in TOEFL® iBT. It doesn't bring any points. If you see you are running out of time, just take a guess and mark answers for all remaining questions. There is 25 % chances to guess the right answer.

Use i-Courses scored [TOEFL iBT listening materials](#) to practice, monitor your progress, and receive creative feedback with guidelines on how to improve your weaknesses and strengthen your strong sides.