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# **IELTS 12**

## **ACADEMIC**

**WITH ANSWERS**

**AUTHENTIC EXAMINATION PAPERS**

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# Contents

Introduction	4
Test 5	10
Test 6	30
Test 7	53
Test 8	74
Audioscripts	95
Listening and Reading Answer Keys	116
Sample answers for Writing tasks	124
Sample answer sheets	132
Acknowledgements	136

# Introduction

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is widely recognised as a reliable means of assessing the language ability of candidates who need to study or work where English is the language of communication. These Practice Tests are designed to give future IELTS candidates an idea of whether their English is at the required level.

IELTS is owned by three partners, Cambridge English Language Assessment, part of the University of Cambridge, the British Council and IDP Education Pty Limited (through its subsidiary company, IELTS Australia Pty Limited). Further information on IELTS can be found on the IELTS website [www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org).

## WHAT IS THE TEST FORMAT?

IELTS consists of four components. All candidates take the same Listening and Speaking tests. There is a choice of Reading and Writing tests according to whether a candidate is taking the Academic or General Training module.

<b>Academic</b> For candidates wishing to study at undergraduate or postgraduate levels, and for those seeking professional registration.	<b>General Training</b> For candidates wishing to migrate to an English-speaking country (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK), and for those wishing to train or study at below degree level.
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The test components are taken in the following order:

<b>Listening</b> 4 sections, 40 items, approximately 30 minutes		
<b>Academic Reading</b> 3 sections, 40 items 60 minutes	or	<b>General Training Reading</b> 3 sections, 40 items 60 minutes
<b>Academic Writing</b> 2 tasks 60 minutes	or	<b>General Training Writing</b> 2 tasks 60 minutes
<b>Speaking</b> 11 to 14 minutes		
<b>Total Test Time</b> 2 hours 44 minutes		



## ACADEMIC TEST FORMAT

### Listening

This test consists of four sections, each with ten questions. The first two sections are concerned with social needs. The first section is a conversation between two speakers and the second section is a monologue. The final two sections are concerned with situations related to educational or training contexts. The third section is a conversation between up to four people and the fourth section is a monologue.

A variety of question types is used, including: multiple choice, matching, plan/map/diagram labelling, form completion, note completion, table completion, flow-chart completion, summary completion, sentence completion and short-answer questions.

Candidates hear the recording once only and answer the questions as they listen. Ten minutes are allowed at the end for candidates to transfer their answers to the answer sheet.

### Reading

This test consists of three sections with 40 questions. There are three texts, which are taken from journals, books, magazines and newspapers. The texts are on topics of general interest. At least one text contains detailed logical argument.

A variety of question types is used, including: multiple choice, identifying information (True/False/Not Given), identifying the writer's views/claims (Yes/No/Not Given), matching information, matching headings, matching features, matching sentence endings, sentence completion, summary completion, note completion, table completion, flow-chart completion, diagram label completion and short-answer questions.

### Writing

This test consists of two tasks. It is suggested that candidates spend about 20 minutes on Task 1, which requires them to write at least 150 words, and 40 minutes on Task 2, which requires them to write at least 250 words. Task 2 contributes twice as much as Task 1 to the Writing score.

Task 1 requires candidates to look at a diagram or some data (in a graph, table or chart) and to present the information in their own words. They are assessed on their ability to organise, present and possibly compare data, and are required to describe the stages of a process, describe an object or event, or explain how something works.

In Task 2, candidates are presented with a point of view, argument or problem. They are assessed on their ability to present a solution to the problem, present and justify an opinion, compare and contrast evidence and opinions, and to evaluate and challenge ideas, evidence or arguments.

Candidates are also assessed on their ability to write in an appropriate style. More information on assessing the Writing test, including Writing assessment criteria (public version), is available on the IELTS website.

## *Introduction*

### **Speaking**

This test takes between 11 and 14 minutes and is conducted by a trained examiner. There are three parts:

#### *Part 1*

The candidate and the examiner introduce themselves. Candidates then answer general questions about themselves, their home/family, their job/studies, their interests and a wide range of similar familiar topic areas. This part lasts between four and five minutes.

#### *Part 2*

The candidate is given a task card with prompts and is asked to talk on a particular topic. The candidate has one minute to prepare and they can make some notes if they wish, before speaking for between one and two minutes. The examiner then asks one or two questions on the same topic.

#### *Part 3*

The examiner and the candidate engage in a discussion of more abstract issues which are thematically linked to the topic in Part 2. The discussion lasts between four and five minutes.

The Speaking test assesses whether candidates can communicate effectively in English. The assessment takes into account Fluency and Coherence, Lexical Resource, Grammatical Range and Accuracy, and Pronunciation. More information on assessing the Speaking test, including Speaking assessment criteria (public version), is available on the IELTS website.

## HOW IS IELTS SCORED?

IELTS results are reported on a nine-band scale. In addition to the score for overall language ability, IELTS provides a score in the form of a profile for each of the four skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking). These scores are also reported on a nine-band scale. All scores are recorded on the Test Report Form along with details of the candidate's nationality, first language and date of birth. Each Overall Band Score corresponds to a descriptive statement which gives a summary of the English language ability of a candidate classified at that level. The nine bands and their descriptive statements are as follows:

- 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 PRACTICE TESTS

### Listening and Reading

The Answer Keys are on pages 116–123.

Each question in the Listening and Reading tests is worth one mark.

#### *Questions which require letter / Roman numeral answers*

- For questions where the answers are letters or Roman numerals, you should write *only* the number of answers required. For example, if the answer is a single letter or numeral you should write only one answer. If you have written more letters or numerals than are required, the answer must be marked wrong.

#### *Questions which require answers in the form of words or numbers*

- Answers may be written in upper or lower case.
- Words in brackets are *optional* – they are correct, but not necessary.
- Alternative answers are separated by a slash (/).
- If you are asked to write an answer using a certain number of words and/or (a) number(s), you will be penalised if you exceed this. For example, if a question specifies an answer using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** and the correct answer is 'black leather coat', the answer 'coat of black leather' is *incorrect*.
- In questions where you are expected to complete a gap, you should only transfer the necessary missing word(s) onto the answer sheet. For example, to complete 'in the ...', where the correct answer is 'morning', the answer 'in the morning' would be *incorrect*.
- All answers require correct spelling (including words in brackets).
- Both US and UK spelling are acceptable and are included in the Answer Key.
- All standard alternatives for numbers, dates and currencies are acceptable.
- All standard abbreviations are acceptable.
- You will find additional notes about individual answers in the Answer Key.

### Writing

The sample answers are on pages 124–131. It is not possible for you to give yourself a mark for the Writing tasks. We have provided sample answers (written by candidates), showing their score and the examiner's comments. These sample answers will give you an insight into what is required for the Writing test.

## HOW SHOULD YOU INTERPRET YOUR SCORES?

At the end of each Listening and Reading Answer Key you will find a chart which will help you assess whether, on the basis of your Practice Test results, you are ready to take the IELTS test.

In interpreting your score, there are a number of points you should bear in mind. Your performance in the real IELTS test will be reported in two ways: there will be a Band Score from 1 to 9 for each of the components and an Overall Band Score from 1 to 9, which is the average of your scores in the four components. However, institutions considering your application are advised to look at both the Overall Band Score and the Bands for each component in order to determine whether you have the language skills needed for a particular course of study. For example, if your course involves a lot of reading and writing, but no lectures, listening skills might be less important and a score of 5 in Listening might be acceptable if the Overall Band Score was 7. However, for a course which has lots of lectures and spoken instructions, a score of 5 in Listening might be unacceptable even though the Overall Band Score was 7.

Once you have marked your tests, you should have some idea of whether your listening and reading skills are good enough for you to try the IELTS test. If you did well enough in one component, but not in others, you will have to decide for yourself whether you are ready to take the test.

The Practice Tests have been checked to ensure that they are of approximately the same level of difficulty as the real IELTS test. However, we cannot guarantee that your score in the Practice Tests will be reflected in the real IELTS test. The Practice Tests can only give you an idea of your possible future performance and it is ultimately up to you to make decisions based on your score.

Different institutions accept different IELTS scores for different types of courses. We have based our recommendations on the average scores which the majority of institutions accept. The institution to which you are applying may, of course, require a higher or lower score than most other institutions.

### Further information

For more information about IELTS or any other Cambridge English Language Assessment examination, write to:

Cambridge English Language Assessment  
1 Hills Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2EU  
United Kingdom

<https://support.cambridgeenglish.org>  
<http://www.ielts.org>

# Test 5

## LISTENING

### SECTION 1 Questions 1–10

Complete the notes below.

Write **ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

FAMILY EXCURSIONS	
<b>Cruise on a lake</b>	
<i>Example</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Travel on an old ..... <u>steamship</u> .....</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can take photos of the <b>1</b> ..... that surround the lake</li></ul>
<b>Farm visit</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children can help feed the sheep</li><li>• Visit can include a 40-minute ride on a <b>2</b> .....</li><li>• Visitors can walk in the farm's <b>3</b> ..... by the lake</li><li>• <b>4</b> ..... is available at extra cost</li></ul>
<b>Cycling trips</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cyclists explore the Back Road</li><li>• A <b>5</b> ..... is provided</li><li>• Only suitable for cyclists who have some <b>6</b> .....</li><li>– Bikes can be hired from <b>7</b> ..... (near the Cruise Ship Terminal)</li></ul>

- Cyclists need:
  - a repair kit
  - food and drink
  - a **8** ..... (can be hired)
- There are no **9** ..... or accommodation in the area

**Cost**

- Total cost for whole family of cruise and farm visit: **10** \$ .....

## SECTION 2      **Questions 11–20**

### Questions 11–14

Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B** or **C**.

### Talk to new kitchen assistants

- 11 According to the manager, what do most people like about the job of kitchen assistant?
- A the variety of work
  - B the friendly atmosphere
  - C the opportunities for promotion
- 12 The manager is concerned about some of the new staff's
- A jewellery.
  - B hair styles.
  - C shoes.
- 13 The manager says that the day is likely to be busy for kitchen staff because
- A it is a public holiday.
  - B the head chef is absent.
  - C the restaurant is almost fully booked.
- 14 Only kitchen staff who are 18 or older are allowed to use
- A the waste disposal unit.
  - B the electric mixer.
  - C the meat slicer.

### Questions 15 and 16

Choose **TWO** letters, **A–E**.

According to the manager, which **TWO** things can make the job of kitchen assistant stressful?

- A They have to follow orders immediately.
- B The kitchen gets very hot.
- C They may not be able to take a break.
- D They have to do overtime.
- E The work is physically demanding.



Questions 17–20

What is the responsibility of each of the following restaurant staff?

Choose **FOUR** answers from the box and write the correct letter, **A–F**, next to Questions 17–20.

Responsibilities	
<b>A</b>	training courses
<b>B</b>	food stocks
<b>C</b>	first aid
<b>D</b>	breakages
<b>E</b>	staff discounts
<b>F</b>	timetables

**Restaurant staff**

- 17 Joy Parkins .....
- 18 David Field .....
- 19 Dexter Wills .....
- 20 Mike Smith .....

**SECTION 3      Questions 21–30**

*Questions 21–23*

*Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.*

**Paper on Public Libraries**

- 21** What will be the main topic of Trudie and Stewart's paper?
- A** how public library services are organised in different countries
  - B** how changes in society are reflected in public libraries
  - C** how the funding of public libraries has changed
- 22** They agree that one disadvantage of free digitalised books is that
- A** they may take a long time to read.
  - B** they can be difficult to read.
  - C** they are generally old.
- 23** Stewart expects that in the future libraries will
- A** maintain their traditional function.
  - B** become centres for local communities.
  - C** no longer contain any books.

*Questions 24–30*

*Complete the notes below.*

*Write **ONE WORD ONLY** for each answer.*

**Study of local library: possible questions**

- whether it has a **24** ..... of its own
- its policy regarding noise of various kinds
- how it's affected by laws regarding all aspects of **25** .....
- how the design needs to take the **26** ..... of customers into account
- what **27** ..... is required in case of accidents
- why a famous person's **28** ..... is located in the library
- whether it has a **29** ..... of local organisations
- how it's different from a library in a **30** .....

**SECTION 4      Questions 31–40**

Complete the notes below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.

### Four business values

Many business values can result in **31** .....

Senior managers need to understand and deal with the potential **32** ..... that may result.

#### Collaboration

During a training course, the speaker was in a team that had to build a **33** .....

Other teams experienced **34** ..... from trying to collaborate.

The speaker's team won because they reduced collaboration.

Sales of a **35** ..... were poor because of collaboration.

#### Industriousness

Hard work may be a bad use of various company **36** .....

The word 'lazy' in this context refers to people who avoid doing tasks that are **37** .....

#### Creativity

An advertising campaign for a **38** ..... was memorable but failed to boost sales.

Creativity should be used as a response to a particular **39** .....

#### Excellence

According to one study, on average, pioneers had a **40** ..... that was far higher than that of followers.

Companies that always aim at excellence may miss opportunities.

## READING

### READING PASSAGE 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1–13**, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

## Cork

Cork – the thick bark of the cork oak tree (*Quercus suber*) – is a remarkable material. It is tough, elastic, buoyant, and fire-resistant, and suitable for a wide range of purposes. It has also been used for millennia: the ancient Egyptians sealed their sarcophagi (stone coffins) with cork, while the ancient Greeks and Romans used it for anything from beehives to sandals.

And the cork oak itself is an extraordinary tree. Its bark grows up to 20 cm in thickness, insulating the tree like a coat wrapped around the trunk and branches and keeping the inside at a constant 20°C all year round. Developed most probably as a defence against forest fires, the bark of the cork oak has a particular cellular structure – with about 40 million cells per cubic centimetre – that technology has never succeeded in replicating. The cells are filled with air, which is why cork is so buoyant. It also has an elasticity that means you can squash it and watch it spring back to its original size and shape when you release the pressure.

Cork oaks grow in a number of Mediterranean countries, including

Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece and Morocco. They flourish in warm, sunny climates where there is a minimum of 400 millimetres of rain per year, and not more than 800 millimetres. Like grape vines, the trees thrive in poor soil, putting down deep roots in search of moisture and nutrients. Southern Portugal's Alentejo region meets all of these requirements, which explains why, by the early 20th century, this region had become the world's largest producer of cork, and why today it accounts for roughly half of all cork production around the world.

Most cork forests are family-owned. Many of these family businesses, and indeed many of the trees themselves, are around 200 years old. Cork production is, above all, an exercise in patience. From the planting of a cork sapling to the first harvest takes 25 years, and a gap of approximately a decade must separate harvests from an individual tree. And for top-quality cork, it's necessary to wait a further 15 or 20 years. You even have to wait for the right kind of summer's day to harvest cork. If the bark is stripped on a day when it's too cold – or when the air is damp – the tree will be damaged.

Cork harvesting is a very specialised profession. No mechanical means of stripping cork bark has been invented, so the job is done by teams of highly skilled workers. First, they make vertical cuts down the bark using small sharp axes, then lever it away in pieces as large as they can manage. The most skilful cork-strippers prise away a semi-circular husk that runs the length of the trunk from just above ground level to the first branches. It is then dried on the ground for about four months, before being taken to factories, where it is boiled to kill any insects that might remain in the cork. Over 60% of cork then goes on to be made into traditional bottle stoppers, with most of the remainder being used in the construction trade. Corkboard and cork tiles are ideal for thermal and acoustic insulation, while granules of cork are used in the manufacture of concrete.

Recent years have seen the end of the virtual monopoly of cork as the material for bottle stoppers, due to concerns about the effect it may have on the contents of the bottle. This

is caused by a chemical compound called 2,4,6-trichloroanisole (TCA), which forms through the interaction of plant phenols, chlorine and mould. The tiniest concentrations – as little as three or four parts to a trillion – can spoil the taste of the product contained in the bottle. The result has been a gradual yet steady move first towards plastic stoppers and, more recently, to aluminium screw caps. These substitutes are cheaper to manufacture and, in the case of screw caps, more convenient for the user.

The classic cork stopper does have several advantages, however. Firstly, its traditional image is more in keeping with that of the type of high quality goods with which it has long been associated. Secondly – and very importantly – cork is a sustainable product that can be recycled without difficulty. Moreover, cork forests are a resource which support local biodiversity, and prevent desertification in the regions where they are planted. So, given the current concerns about environmental issues, the future of this ancient material once again looks promising.

Test 5

Questions 1–5

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 1–5 on your answer sheet, write

**TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information  
**FALSE** if the statement contradicts the information  
**NOT GIVEN** if there is no information on this

- 1 The cork oak has the thickest bark of any living tree.
- 2 Scientists have developed a synthetic cork with the same cellular structure as natural cork.
- 3 Individual cork oak trees must be left for 25 years between the first and second harvest.
- 4 Cork bark should be stripped in dry atmospheric conditions.
- 5 The only way to remove the bark from cork oak trees is by hand.

Questions 6–13

Complete the notes below.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 6–13 on your answer sheet.

## Comparison of aluminium screw caps and cork bottle stoppers

### Advantages of aluminium screw caps

- do not affect the **6** ..... of the bottle contents
- are **7** ..... to produce
- are **8** ..... to use

### Advantages of cork bottle stoppers

- suit the **9** ..... of quality products
- made from a **10** ..... material
- easily **11** .....
- cork forests aid **12** .....
- cork forests stop **13** ..... happening

## READING PASSAGE 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 14–26**, which are based on Reading Passage 2 below.

# COLLECTING AS A HOBBY

Collecting must be one of the most varied of human activities, and it's one that many of us psychologists find fascinating. Many forms of collecting have been dignified with a technical name: an archtophilist collects teddy bears, a philatelist collects postage stamps, and a deltiologist collects postcards. Amassing hundreds or even thousands of postcards, chocolate wrappers or whatever, takes time, energy and money that could surely be put to much more productive use. And yet there are millions of collectors around the world. Why do they do it?

There are the people who collect because they want to make money – this could be called an instrumental reason for collecting; that is, collecting as a means to an end. They'll look for, say, antiques that they can buy cheaply and expect to be able to sell at a profit. But there may well be a psychological element, too – buying cheap and selling dear can give the collector a sense of triumph. And as selling online is so easy, more and more people are joining in.

Many collectors collect to develop their social life, attending meetings of a group of collectors and exchanging information on items. This is a variant on joining a bridge club or a gym, and similarly brings them into contact with like-minded people.

Another motive for collecting is the desire to find something special, or a particular example of the collected item, such as a rare early recording by a particular singer.

Some may spend their whole lives in a hunt for this. Psychologically, this can give a purpose to a life that otherwise feels aimless. There is a danger, though, that if the individual is ever lucky enough to find what they're looking for, rather than celebrating their success, they may feel empty, now that the goal that drove them on has gone.

If you think about collecting postage stamps, another potential reason for it – or, perhaps, a result of collecting – is its educational value. Stamp collecting opens a window to other countries, and to the plants, animals, or famous people shown on their stamps. Similarly, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many collectors amassed fossils, animals and plants from around the globe, and their collections provided a vast amount of information about the natural world. Without those collections, our understanding would be greatly inferior to what it is.

In the past – and nowadays, too, though to a lesser extent – a popular form of collecting, particularly among boys and men, was trainspotting. This might involve trying to see every locomotive of a particular type, using published data that identifies each one, and ticking off each engine as it is seen. Trainspotters exchange information, these days often by mobile phone, so they can work out where to go to, to see a particular engine. As a by-product, many practitioners of the hobby become very knowledgeable about railway