

From The People Who Make The Test!

The
Official
Guide to the
TOEFL iBT[®]
Test

SEVENTH EDITION



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The Official Guide to the TOEFL iBT® Test

Using the Digital Resources

Authentic TOEFL iBT test questions are used in this book. However, the screens and delivery formats are not identical to the actual test. When you take the actual TOEFL iBT test, you may notice some variations in how the questions are presented to you on screen.

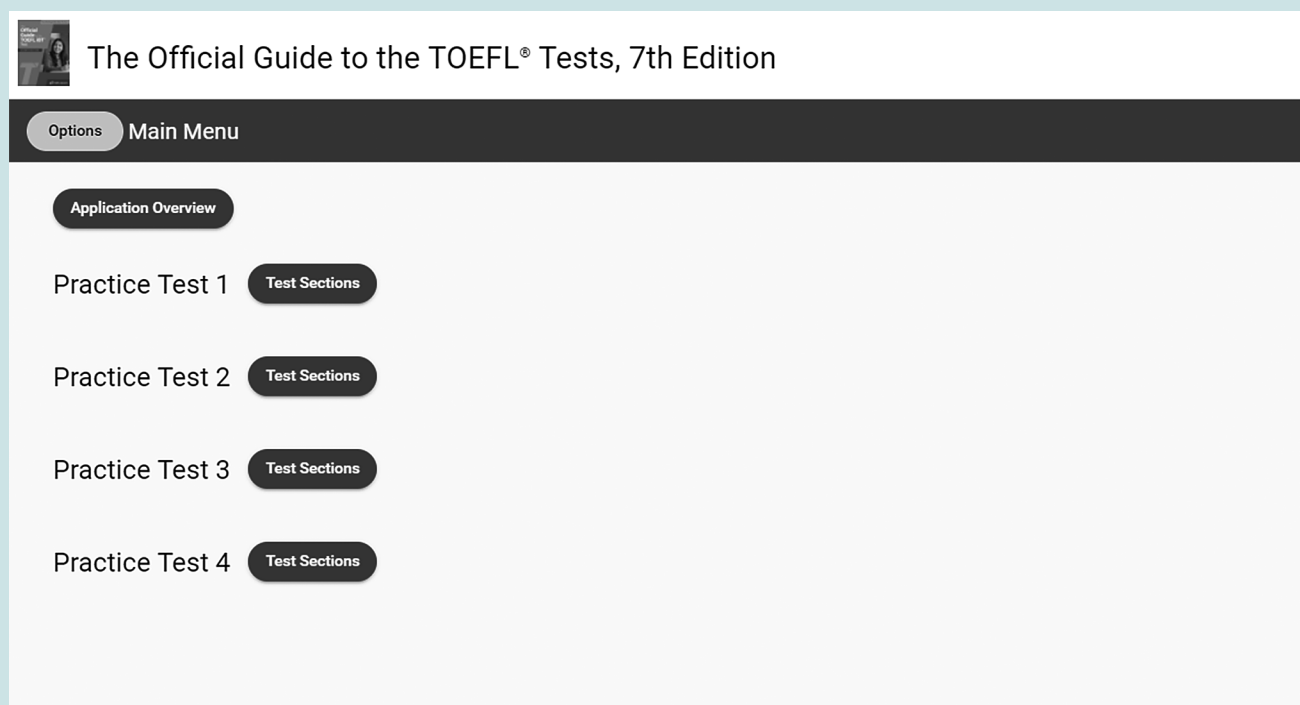
Installation

First, go to www.mhprofessional.com/toefl7e. Once on the site, you'll be prompted to enter your access code—if you are using a paperback, you will find your code inside the back cover. If you are using an eBook, your code will be in your ETS account. Please note that this code is redeemable only by you and a maximum of four times.

Once you enter your access code, a download will automatically begin. This download will contain the audio files you need as well as files that contain the practice tests in both PC and Mac® format.

Main Menu for Practice Tests

When you launch the program, the following screen will appear:



Taking TOEFL iBT® Practice Tests on Your Computer

From the **Main Menu**, choose Practice Test 1, 2, 3, or 4. Then select the test section you wish to take: **Reading**, **Listening**, **Speaking**, or **Writing**. Note that you can take each section more than once.

When you open a test section, you will first be provided with instructions for that section. A timer on the screen shows how many minutes and seconds you have left for that section. You can hide the timer if you find it distracting.

If you must take a break during the test, select **Main Menu** at the top of the screen. This will take you back to the main menu. When you are ready to resume, open the test section again, and select the **Continue** button. Your work will not be lost, and you will begin exactly where you left off. The timer clock will stop while you are on your break and will restart immediately when you resume the test. Try not to take breaks too often, because on the actual test the clock keeps running even if you leave the room on a break.

Answering Questions

To answer the questions in the Reading and Listening sections, select the best answer or follow the instructions given. For some questions, you will need to select more than one answer. Select the **Next** button to move forward to the next question. In the Listening section, the **Next** button is enabled only after you select an answer choice or choices. In the Reading section, you can select the **Next** button at any time to move forward to the next question, and you can select the **Back** button to move back to the previous question.

For the Speaking section, you should record your response to each question using a recording device after you hear the instruction telling you to begin speaking. Stop recording once the response time expires.

For the Writing section, write your response to each question in the space provided within the time allowed.

When all the questions in a section have been answered, select the **Next** button to complete the section.


Playing Audio Tracks

In the Listening, Speaking, and Writing sections, you will listen to audio tracks. Audio controls are available at the bottom of the screen. At the end of a track, select the **Next** button to start answering questions.

Your Performance

On the **Main Menu**, select any test you have taken. The percentage of questions answered correctly will be displayed for only the Reading and Listening sections. By selecting a test section and then selecting **Review**, you will be able to review the questions from that section. For the Reading and Listening sections, you will see the correct answer for each question and the rationale explaining why the answer is correct. For the Speaking section, you will be provided with important points for each question, sample responses, and rater comments on the responses. Use these to evaluate your performance on the Speaking section. For the Writing section, you will be given topic notes, sample essays, and rater comments on the essays. Use these to evaluate your performance on the Writing section.

Audio Files for Working Through the Tests in the Book

You may choose to work with the tests printed in the book rather than with the tests on your computer. If so, you will still need to listen to the audio tracks. Once you copy the folder named "Audio Files" to your computer, you will be able to select the audio tracks by number as you proceed through the book. As you work through the tests in the book, a headphones symbol  will indicate each time you need to play a track. Select the number of the track as instructed in the book.



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1

About the TOEFL iBT® Test

Read this chapter to learn

- The main features of the TOEFL iBT test
- What kind of questions are on the test
- How you can use this book to help you prepare for the test

This Official Guide has been created to help English language learners understand the TOEFL iBT test and prepare for it. By preparing for the test, you will also be building the skills you need to succeed in an academic setting and go anywhere in your career and in life.

Getting Started

Start your preparation for the TOEFL iBT test by reading the following important information about the test, testing requirements, and your TOEFL iBT scores.

Undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate programs around the world require students to demonstrate their ability to communicate in English as an entrance requirement.

The TOEFL iBT test gives test takers the opportunity to prove they can communicate ideas effectively by simulating university classroom and student-life communication. The language used in the test reflects real-life English language usage in university lectures, classes, and laboratories. It is the same language professors use when they discuss coursework or concepts with students. It is the language students use in study groups and everyday university situations, such as buying books at the bookstore. The academic reading passages are based on textbooks and other academic publications.

TOEFL iBT Scores Can Help You Go Anywhere

The TOEFL iBT test measures how well test takers *use* English, not just their knowledge of the language. Because it is a valid and reliable test with unbiased, objective scoring, the TOEFL iBT test confirms that a student has the English language skills necessary to succeed in an academic setting.

That's why it's the world's premier academic English test. TOEFL iBT scores are accepted by more than 12,000 universities and other institutions in more than 160 countries, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United States,

the United Kingdom, and all across Europe and Asia. The test is administered at thousands of secure, ETS-approved test centers in more than 180 countries. More than 35 million people around the world have taken the TOEFL test to help achieve their dreams.

Who Creates the TOEFL iBT Test?

The TOEFL iBT test is developed and administered by ETS, the world's largest private educational testing and measurement organization. Our mission is to advance quality and equity in education. Providing fair, valid, and reliable assessments is central to why we exist.

Who Is Required to Take the TOEFL iBT Test?

Most colleges and universities where English is the language of instruction require an English proficiency test. The TOEFL iBT test is the most widely accepted English-language test worldwide, so it's a great choice to meet those requirements. Be sure to check with each institution where you are applying to confirm what scores they accept.

How Is the TOEFL iBT Test Used in the Admissions Process?

Your test scores will be considered together with other information you supply to the institution to determine if you have the appropriate academic and language background to be admitted to a regular or modified program of study. Often, your field of study and if you are applying as a graduate or undergraduate student will determine what TOEFL iBT scores you need.

Is There a Minimum Acceptable Score?

Each institution that uses TOEFL iBT scores sets its own minimum level of acceptable performance. These minimums vary from one institution to another, depending on factors such as the applicant's field of study, the level of study (undergraduate or graduate), whether the applicant will be a teaching assistant, and whether the institution offers English as a Second Language support for its students.

How to Use This Book

This book and its digital resources give you instruction, practice, and advice on strategies for performing well on the TOEFL iBT test.

- **Chapter 1** provides an overview of the test, information about test scores, and an introduction to the on-screen appearance of the different parts of the TOEFL iBT test, along with general test-taking suggestions.

- **Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5** provide in-depth discussions of the kinds of questions that appear in each section of the test. Each chapter also includes practice questions and explanations of correct answers so that you will understand the language skills that are being tested in each section.
- **Chapters 6–9** provide four full-length TOEFL iBT tests that will give you an idea of how you might perform on the actual test.
- **Chapter 10** is the Writer’s Handbook for English Language Learners, a guide to help you write essays in English. It covers grammar, usage, mechanics, style, and organization and development. In addition, it contains a discussion of different types of essays, tips on how to improve your writing by revising, editing, and proofreading, and a glossary.
- The **digital download** supplied with this book provides on-screen versions of the full-length tests from Chapters 6–9. It also includes numbered audio tracks for all of the listening materials that accompany the practice questions in this book. For more information about how to use the digital resources, see the instruction page in the front of the book.

You can use this book to familiarize yourself with the format and content of the test, and to understand the language skills you will need to succeed on it. For additional practice tests and other materials, visit ets.org/toefl/shoptestprep.

Practice tests include TOEFL Practice Online, which offers an on-screen appearance and experience similar to the actual test, so you can become familiar with the way the test is delivered and what it is like to answer the questions under timed conditions. You also will receive performance feedback and scores for all four skills within 24 hours.

Use the practice tests in this book and from TOEFL Practice Online to determine which of your skills are the weakest. Then follow the advice in each skill chapter to improve those skills. You should use other materials to supplement the practice test questions in this book.

Because the TOEFL iBT test is designed to assess the actual skills you will need to be successful in your studies, the very best way to develop the skills being measured is to study in an English program that focuses on:

- communication using all four skills, especially speaking
- integrated skills (for example, listening/reading/speaking, listening/reading/writing)

However, even students who are not enrolled in an English program should practice the underlying skills that are assessed on the TOEFL iBT test. In other words, the best way to improve performance on the test is to improve your skills. Each chapter of this book gives you explicit advice on how to connect your learning activities to the kinds of questions you will be asked on the test. Perhaps you want to improve your score on the Reading section. The best way to improve your English reading skills is to read frequently and to read many different types of texts in various subject areas (sciences, social sciences, arts, business, and others). It is best to progress to reading texts that are more academic in style, the kind that would be found in university courses.

In addition, you might try these activities:

- Scan the passages to find and highlight key facts (dates, numbers, terms) and information.
- Increase vocabulary knowledge, perhaps by using flash cards.
- Rather than carefully reading each word and each sentence, practice skimming a passage quickly to get a general impression of the main idea.
- Choose some unfamiliar words in the passage and guess the meanings from the context (surrounding sentences).
- Practice making inferences and drawing conclusions based on what is implied in the passage as a whole.

All About the TOEFL iBT Test

The TOEFL iBT test consists of four sections: Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing. The estimated time to complete the test is under two hours, and all sections are taken on the same day.

Key Features

- **The TOEFL iBT test measures all four language skills that are important for effective communication: reading, listening, speaking, and writing**, emphasizing the test taker's ability to use English effectively in academic settings.
- **It reflects how language is really used** with integrated tasks that combine more than one skill, just as in real academic settings. The integrated questions ask test takers to:
 - read, listen, and then speak in response to a question
 - listen and then speak in response to a question
 - read, listen, and then write in response to a question
- **It represents the best practices in language learning and teaching.** In the past, English instruction focused on learning *about* the language (especially grammar), and students could receive high scores on tests without being able to communicate in English. Now teachers and learners understand the importance of using English to communicate, and activities that integrate language skills are popular in many English language programs.

Format

- The TOEFL iBT test is administered securely and conveniently around the world at test centers and at home.
- Instructions for answering questions are given with each section.

- The test is not computer-adaptive. Each test taker receives items that cover the full range of ability.
- Test takers can take notes throughout the entire test. At the end of testing, all notes are destroyed to ensure test security.
- The Listening and Speaking sections include English-speaker accents from North America, the U.K., Australia and New Zealand, to better reflect the variety of accents you might encounter while studying abroad. To hear samples, visit www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/about/content/.
- For the Speaking section, test takers speak into a microphone. Responses are recorded digitally and sent to ETS to be scored.
- For the Writing section, test takers type their responses. The typed responses are sent to ETS for scoring.
- For the Speaking and Writing responses, ETS uses both certified human raters and artificial intelligence (AI) scoring to provide a complete and accurate picture of a test taker's ability.
- After finishing the test, test takers will be able to view their unofficial scaled scores for the Reading and Listening sections. Scoring of the Speaking and Writing sections takes place only after the test administration and cannot be provided in real time.
- Official scores are reported both online and by mail.

The following chart shows the number of questions and the estimated timing for each section.

Test Format

Test Section	Number of Questions	Estimated Timing
Reading	2 passages, 10 questions per passage	35 minutes
Listening	3 lectures, 6 questions each 2 conversations, 5 questions each	36 minutes
Speaking	4 tasks: 1 independent and 3 integrated	16 minutes
Writing	1 integrated task	20 minutes
	1 writing for an academic discussion task	10 minutes

Toolbar

The on-screen toolbar in each section allows you to navigate through the test with ease. The following are examples of testing tools from the Reading and Listening sections of the test. The section is always listed in the upper left-hand corner of the toolbar.

The toolbar for the Reading section has some important features.



You can view the entire passage when answering questions. For some questions, you need to select the **View Passage** to see the entire passage.

You can view all your answers by selecting **Review**. This allows you to return to any other question and change your answer. You can also see which questions you have skipped and still need to answer.

In the Reading section you can also select **Back** at any time to return to the previous question.

This is what the toolbar looks like in the Listening section.



- You will always know which question you are on and how much time remains for answering questions in the section. It is possible to hide the clock by selecting **Hide Time**.
- **Volume** allows you to adjust the volume as you listen.
- **Help** allows you to get relevant help. When you use the **Help** feature, the clock does not stop.
- **Next** allows you to proceed to the next question. In the Listening section, you cannot see a question again once you select **Next**.

Reading Section

Academic Reading Skills

The Reading section measures your ability to understand university-level academic texts and passages. In many academic settings around the world, students are expected to read and understand information from textbooks and other academic materials written in English. The following are three purposes for academic reading

Reading to find information

- effectively skimming text for key facts and important information
- increasing reading fluency and rate

Basic comprehension

- understanding the general topic or main idea, major points, important facts and details, vocabulary in context, and pronoun references¹
- making inferences² about what is implied in a passage

Reading to learn

- recognizing the organization and purpose of a passage
- understanding relationships between ideas
- organizing information into a summary in order to recall major points and important details
- inferring how ideas throughout the passage connect

Description

Reading Section Format

Length of Each Passage	Number of Passages and Questions	Estimated Timing
Approximately 700 words	2 passages 10 questions per passage	35 minutes

Reading Passages

The TOEFL iBT test uses reading passages from university-level books that introduce a discipline or topic. The excerpts are changed as little as possible so the test can measure how well test takers can read real-world academic materials.

The passages cover a variety of subjects. You should not be concerned if you are unfamiliar with a topic. The passage contains all the information needed to answer the questions.

1. Pronoun references: The nouns that pronouns refer to in a passage

2. Make an inference: To comprehend an argument or an idea that is strongly suggested but not explicitly stated in a passage

All passages are classified into three basic categories:

- exposition³
- argumentation⁴
- historical and biographical narrative

Often, passages present information about the topic from more than one perspective or point of view. This is something you should note as you read. Usually, you are asked at least one question that allows you to demonstrate that you understood the general organization of the passage. Common organization types that you should be able to recognize are:

- classification
- compare/contrast
- cause/effect
- problem/solution

You must read through or scroll to the end of each passage before receiving questions on that passage. Once the questions appear, the passage appears on the left side of the computer screen. The questions are on the right.

The screenshot shows the TOEFL iBT test interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ETS TOEFL logo, a volume control icon, a help icon, a review icon, and back/next navigation buttons. Below the navigation bar, the text "Reading | Question 3 of 20" is displayed on the left, and "00:35:48" with a "Hide Time" icon is on the right. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains a passage titled "Opportunists and Competitors" with three paragraphs of text. The right column contains a question: "In paragraph 1, the author explains the concept of energy expenditure by" followed by four radio button options.

ETS TOEFL Volume Help Review Back Next

Reading | Question 3 of 20 00:35:48 Hide Time

Opportunists and Competitors

Growth, reproduction, and daily metabolism all require an organism to expend energy. The expenditure of energy is essentially a process of budgeting, just as finances are budgeted. If all of one's money is spent on clothes, there may be none left to buy food or go to the movies. Similarly, a plant or animal cannot squander all its energy on growing a big body if none would be left over for reproduction, for this is the surest way to extinction.

All organisms, therefore, allocate energy to growth, reproduction, maintenance, and storage. No choice is involved; this allocation comes as part of the genetic package from the parents. Maintenance for a given body design of an organism is relatively constant. Storage is important, but ultimately that energy will be used for maintenance, reproduction, or growth. Therefore the principal differences in energy allocation are likely to be between growth and reproduction.

Almost all of an organism's energy can be diverted to reproduction, with very little allocated to building the body. Organisms at this extreme are "opportunists." At the other extreme are

In paragraph 1, the author explains the concept of energy expenditure by

- identifying types of organisms that became extinct
- comparing the scientific concept to a familiar human experience
- arguing that most organisms conserve rather than expend energy
- describing the processes of growth, reproduction, and metabolism

3. Exposition: Material that provides an explanation of a topic

4. Argumentation: Material that presents a point of view about a topic and provides evidence to support it

You do *not* need any special background knowledge to answer the questions in the Reading section correctly. The definition of special-purpose words or phrases in the passage may be provided. If you select a hyperlinked word, a definition appears in the lower right part of the screen.

The estimated time to complete the Reading section is 35 minutes, but you'll be allowed up to 36 minutes.

Reading Question Formats

There are four question formats in the Reading section:

- questions with four choices and a single correct answer in traditional multiple-choice format
- multiple-choice questions with more than one answer (for example, two correct answers out of four choices)
- questions with four choices and a single answer that ask test takers to “insert a sentence” where it fits best in a passage
- reading-to-learn questions that have more than four choices and require more than one answer

Features

Reading-to-Learn Questions

These questions test your ability to recognize how the passage is organized and understand the relationships among facts and ideas in different parts of the passage.

You are asked to sort information by placing the text options provided into a **summary** (see the example on the next page). The summary questions are worth up to 2 points each. Partial credit is given for summary questions.

Reading to Learn—Prose Summary Question Example

ETS TOEFL

Volume | Help | Review | < Back | Next >

Reading | Question 10 of 20 | View Question | View Passage | 00:35:43 | Hide Time

Directions: An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage. This question is worth 2 points.

Drag your answer choices to the spaces where they belong. To review the passage, select **View Passage**.

Scholars have wondered about the meaning of the subjects, location, and overpainting of Lascaux cave images.

Answer Choices

<ul style="list-style-type: none">•• The paintings may have recorded information about animal migrations, and may only have been useful for one migration at a time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•• Unlike painters of the recently discovered paintings, other Lascaux cave painters usually painted on rocks near cave entrances or in open spaces outside the caves.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•• The human figures represented in the paintings appear to be less carefully shaped than those of animals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•• Some scholars believe that the paintings motivated hunters by allowing them to picture a successful hunt.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•• It is possible that the animals in the paintings were of mythical significance to the tribe, and the paintings reflected an important spiritual practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•• Scientific analysis suggests that paintings were sprayed onto the rock walls with tubes made from animal bones.

Glossary Feature

You can select some special-purpose words and phrases in the reading passages to view a definition or explanation of the term. In the example below, test takers can select the word “shamans” to view its definition.

The screenshot shows the TOEFL iBT interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ETS TOEFL logo, Volume, Help, Review, Back, and Next buttons. Below this, the interface is divided into two main sections: a reading passage on the left and a question on the right.

Reading Passage: The title is "Lascaux Cave Paintings". The text discusses a third opinion on the psychological motivation for cave paintings, mentioning a trance state and the word "shamans".

Question: "According to paragraph 5, why do some scholars refer to a trance state to help understand the cave paintings?"

Answer Choices:

- To explain the state of consciousness the artists were in when they painted their pictures
- To demonstrate the mythical significance of the strange geometric shapes
- To indicate that trance states were often associated with activities that took place inside caves
- To give a possible reason for the strange appearance of the men painted on the cave walls

Glossary Pop-up: A small window titled "Glossary" is open at the bottom right, showing the definition: "shamans: holy people who act as healers and diviners".

Listening Section

Academic Listening Skills

The Listening section measures your ability to understand spoken English. In academic settings, students must be able to listen to lectures and conversations. Three of the purposes of academic listening are:

Listening for basic comprehension

- comprehend the main idea, major points, and important details related to the main idea (comprehension of all details is not necessary)

Listening for pragmatic understanding

- recognize a speaker's attitude and degree of certainty
- recognize the function or purpose of a speaker's statement

Connecting and synthesizing⁵ information

- recognize the organization of information presented
- understand the relationships between ideas presented (for example, compare/contrast, cause/effect, or steps in a process)
- make inferences⁶ and draw conclusions based on what is implied in the material
- make connections among pieces of information in a conversation or lecture
- recognize topic changes (for example, digressions⁷ and aside statements⁸) in lectures and conversations, and recognize introductions and conclusions in lectures

Description

Listening material in the test includes academic lectures and long conversations. You can take notes on any listening material throughout the entire test, and you may use your notes to answer the questions though the estimated time for the Listening section is 36 minutes, you will have up to 41 minutes.

Listening Section Format

Listening Material	Number of Questions	Estimated Timing
3 lectures, each 4–5 minutes long, about 500–750 words	6 questions per lecture	36 minutes
2 conversations, each about 3 minutes long, about 12–25 exchanges	5 questions per conversation	

5. Synthesize: To combine information from two or more parts of a lecture or conversation

6. Make an inference: To comprehend an argument or an idea that is strongly suggested but not explicitly stated in a passage

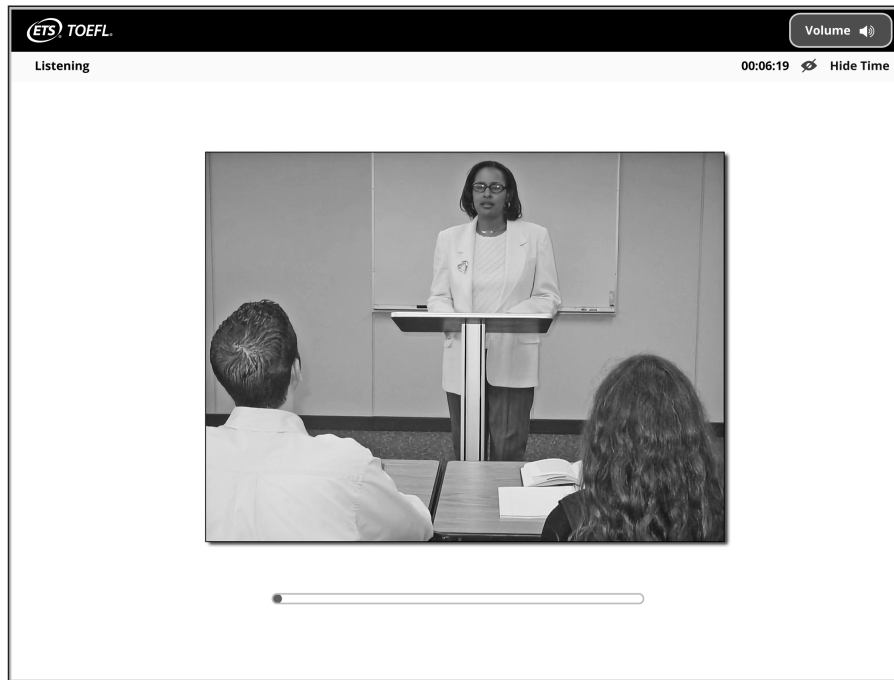
7. Digressions: Side comments in which the speaker briefly moves away from the main topic and then returns

8. Aside statements: Comments interrupt the flow of information or ideas (Example: "Pay attention now; this will be on the test.")

Academic Lectures

The lectures in the TOEFL iBT test reflect the kind of listening and speaking that occurs in the classroom. In some of the lectures, the professor does all or almost all of the talking, with an occasional comment by a student. In other lectures, the professor may engage the students in discussion by asking questions that are answered by the students. Pictures on the computer screen are intended to help you identify the roles of the speakers.

Professor Giving a Lecture



The screenshot shows a TOEFL listening test interface. At the top left is the ETS TOEFL logo. To the right of the logo is a volume control icon labeled "Volume". Below the logo, the word "Listening" is displayed on the left, and "00:06:19" followed by a refresh icon and "Hide Time" is on the right. The main content area features a video player showing a black and white photograph of a female professor in a white blazer standing at a podium in a classroom, addressing students. The back of two students' heads is visible in the foreground. Below the video player is a progress bar.

Professor Interacting with a Student



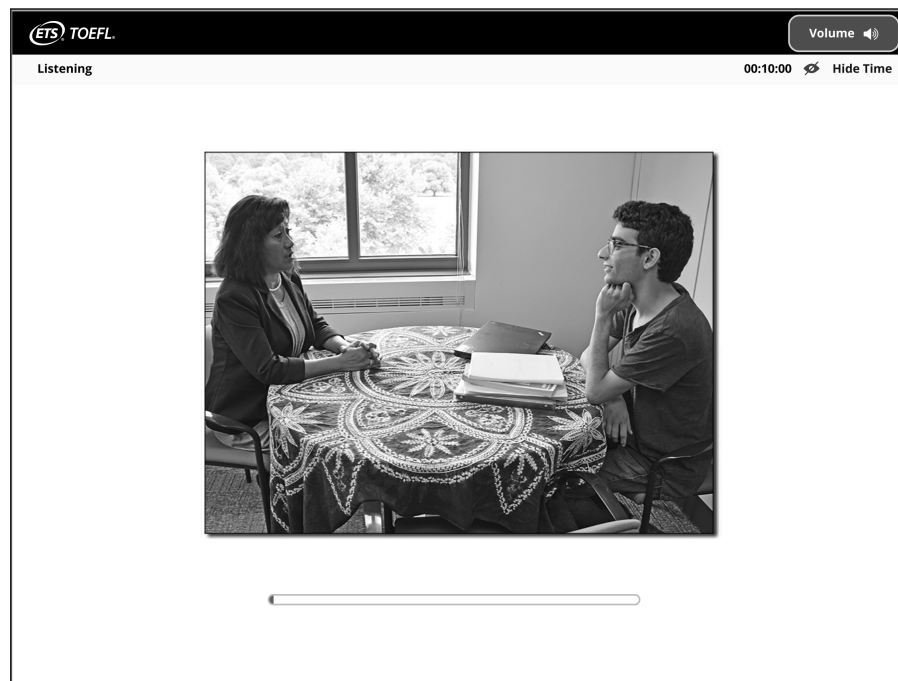
The screenshot shows a TOEFL listening test interface. At the top left is the ETS TOEFL logo. To the right of the logo is a volume control icon labeled "Volume". Below the logo, the word "Listening" is displayed on the left, and "00:04:13" followed by a refresh icon and "Hide Time" is on the right. The main content area features a video player showing a black and white photograph of a male professor in a suit standing and talking to a student in a classroom. Other students are seated at desks in the background. Below the video player is a progress bar.

Conversations in an Academic Setting

The conversations on the TOEFL iBT test may take place during an office meeting with a professor or teaching assistant, during a service encounter with university staff, or between two students. The contents of the office conversations are generally academic in nature or related to course requirements. Service encounters could involve conversations about nonacademic university activities such as making a housing payment, registering for a class, or requesting information at the library. Student conversations could be about a class project or an event on campus, for example.

Pictures on the computer screen help you imagine the setting and the roles of the speakers.

Professor Meeting with a Student



Listening Question Formats




After the listening material is played, you will answer questions about it. Each question will be displayed on the screen and read aloud before the answer choices are displayed.


There are four question formats in the Listening section:

- traditional multiple-choice questions with four answer choices and a single correct answer
- multiple-choice questions with more than one answer (for example, two correct answers out of four choices or three answers out of five choices)
- questions that require you to order events or steps in a process
- questions that require you to match objects or text to categories in a chart or place check marks in a cell

Chart Question Example

ETS TOEFL

Volume  Help  Next 

Listening | Question 13 of 17 00:05:12  Hide Time

In the lecture, the professor describes the steps in AHP. Indicate whether each of the following is a step in the process.


Select the correct box for each phrase.


	Yes	No
Establish the goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
List alternative courses of action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Select key criteria and subcriteria	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make pairwise comparisons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revise the goal based on choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Features

- Taking notes is allowed. After testing, all notes are destroyed to ensure test security.
- Most questions are worth one point. Some questions, however, are worth two points. Special directions will indicate which, if any, questions are worth two points. No more than one such question will appear on any test.
- In some questions, a portion of the lecture or conversation is replayed. In the replay format, you listen to part of the conversation or lecture again and then answer a question.

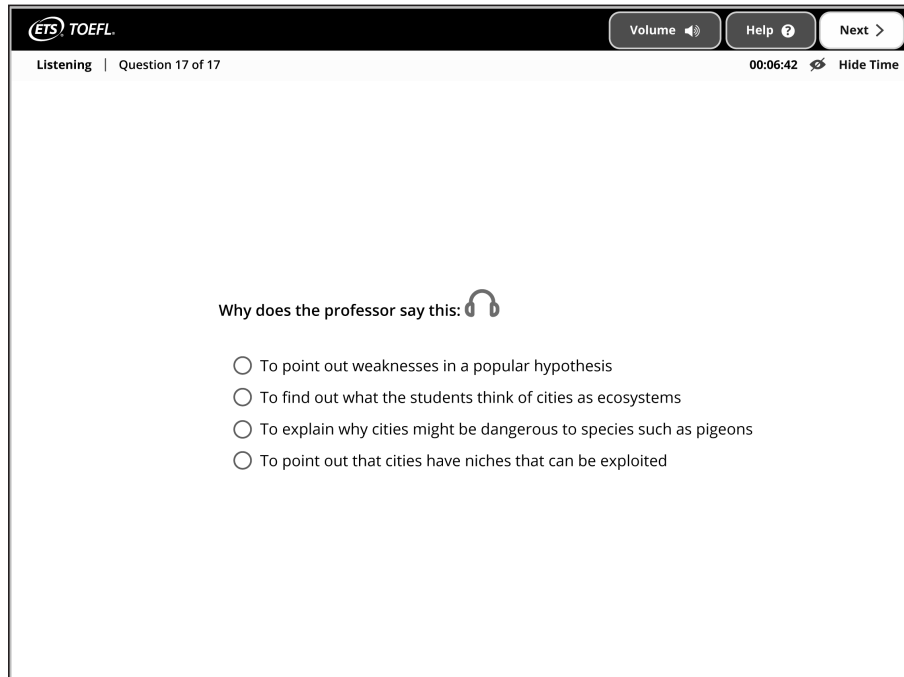
ETS TOEFL

Volume 

Listening | Question 17 of 17 00:08:15  Hide Time

Listen again to part of the lecture.
Then answer the question.

This is an example of a replay question. The headphones icon indicates that you will hear a small part of a lecture or conversation again. The question “Why does the professor say this?” is an example of a question that asks about the purpose of a speaker’s statement.



The screenshot shows a TOEFL iBT listening question interface. At the top, there is a black header bar with the ETS TOEFL logo on the left, and three buttons: "Volume" with a speaker icon, "Help" with a question mark icon, and "Next" with a right arrow icon. Below the header, the text "Listening | Question 17 of 17" is on the left, and "00:06:42" with a refresh icon and "Hide Time" is on the right. The main content area is white and contains the question text "Why does the professor say this:" followed by a headphones icon. Below the question text are four radio button options:

- To point out weaknesses in a popular hypothesis
- To find out what the students think of cities as ecosystems
- To explain why cities might be dangerous to species such as pigeons
- To point out that cities have niches that can be exploited

Speaking Section

Academic Speaking Skills

Students should be able to speak English successfully in and outside the classroom. The Speaking section measures your ability to speak effectively in academic and campus settings.

In classrooms, students must:

- respond to questions
- participate in academic discussions with other students
- synthesize and summarize what they have read in their textbooks and heard in class
- express their views on topics under discussion

Outside of the classroom, students must:

- participate in casual conversations
- express their opinions
- communicate with people in such places as the bookstore, the library, and the housing office

Description

The Speaking section is approximately 16 minutes long and includes four tasks.

- The first task is an **independent speaking task** asking you to make a choice about a topic familiar to you. It asks you to draw upon your own ideas, opinions, and experiences to support your response.
- The remaining three tasks are **integrated tasks**, so you must use more than one skill when responding. Two of the tasks require you to read, listen, and then speak in response to a question. The other task requires you to listen and then speak in response to a question. You can take notes and use those notes when responding to the speaking tasks.

Like the other sections of the test, the Speaking section is delivered via the internet. For all speaking tasks, you will deliver your response into a microphone. Responses are digitally recorded and sent to ETS, where they are scored by certified raters and the automated scoring system.

Speaking Task Types

Task Type	Task Description	Timing
Independent Task		
1: Paired Choice	This question asks the test taker to make and defend a personal choice between two contrasting behaviors, ideas, or courses of action.	Preparation time: 15 seconds Response time: 45 seconds
Integrated Tasks		
Read/Listen/Speak		
2: Fit and Explain Campus Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reading passage (approximately 90–115 words) presents a campus-related issue. A conversation (60–80 seconds) features two speakers commenting on the issue in the reading passage. The question asks the test taker to summarize the opinion of one of the speakers within the context of the reading passage. 	Preparation time: 30 seconds Response time: 60 seconds
3: General/Specific Academic Course Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reading passage (approximately 90–115 words) broadly defines a term, process, or idea from an academic subject. An excerpt from a lecture (60–90 seconds) provides examples and specific information to illustrate the term, process, or idea from the reading passage. The question asks the test taker to combine and convey important information from the reading passage and the lecture excerpt. 	Preparation time: 30 seconds Response time: 60 seconds
Listen/Speak		
4: Summary Academic Course Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An excerpt from a lecture (90–120 seconds) explains a term or concept and gives concrete examples to illustrate that term or concept. The question asks the test taker to summarize the lecture and demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the examples and the overall topic. 	Preparation time: 20 seconds Response time: 60 seconds
Estimated Total Time		16 minutes

Writing Section

Academic Writing Skills

In all academic situations where writing in English is required, students must be able to present their ideas in a clear, well-organized manner. The Writing section measures your ability to write in English in an academic setting.

Often, students need to write a paper or an essay response about what they are learning in their classes. This requires combining information they have heard in class lectures with what they have read in textbooks or other materials. This type of writing is referred to as **integrated writing**. In this type of writing, students must:

- take notes on what they hear and read, and use them to organize information before writing
- summarize, paraphrase, and refer to information from the source material accurately
- write about the ways the information they heard relates to the information they read

For example, in an academic course, a student might be asked to compare and contrast the points of view expressed by the professor in class with those expressed by an author in the assigned reading material. The student must successfully draw information from each source to explain the contrast.

In all types of writing, it is helpful for students to:

- express information in an organized, logical, and coherent manner
- use effective linking words (transitional phrases) to connect ideas and help the reader understand the flow of ideas
- use a range of grammar and vocabulary for effective expression
- use grammar and vocabulary accurately; use idiomatic expressions appropriately
- follow the conventions of spelling, punctuation, and layout

Description

The total response time for the Writing section is 30 minutes. Test takers write their responses to two writing tasks (see the following table). Responses are typed into the computer and sent to ETS, where they are scored by both certified raters and the automated scoring system.

Writing Task Types

Task Type	Task Description
Task 1 Integrated Writing: Read/Listen/Write	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test takers read a short text of about 250–300 words (reading time, 3 minutes) on an academic topic. • Test takers may take notes on the reading passage. • The reading passage disappears from the screen during the lecture that follows. It reappears when test takers begin writing so they can refer to it as they work. • Test takers listen to a speaker discuss the same topic from a different perspective. The listening passage is about 250–320 words long (listening time, about 2 minutes). • The listening passage provides additional information that relates to points made in the reading passage. Test takers may take notes on the listening passage. • Test takers express information in an organized, logical, and coherent manner. • Response time: 20 minutes
Task 2 Writing for an Academic Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test takers write a post that contributes to an online academic discussion. The discussion has been initiated by a professor’s question, and two classmates have already contributed their posts. An effective response will usually contain a minimum of 100 words. • Test takers may refer to or engage with their classmates’ posts or introduce entirely new ideas in response to the professor’s question. Test takers’ posts must be relevant to the discussion and test takers must clearly contribute to the discussion in their own words. • Typical discussion topics ask students whether they agree or disagree with a position or an argument, prompt them to choose between different positions or arguments, or ask them to articulate their own opinion and explain it. • Response time: 10 minutes