

Ultimate IELTS Series Book 5

VOCABULARY

for IELTS

*Essential vocabulary
you need to achieve
the best result*

Written and developed by Impact Learning

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It should come as no surprise that younger people spend much of their leisure time on their feet, engaged in energetic activities, whereas older people opt for more *sedentary* pursuits like going to the theatre or watching television.

[Click here to see the explanation](#)

The first clause talks about young people, energetic activities and being 'on their feet'. The word 'whereas' tells you that the second clause is a contrast, so sedentary must have the opposite meaning – not active or energetic, not 'on their feet'.

3 Explanation. Read the passage below. What do you think the word in italics means?

There are many examples of the cooperation between people and dogs. Guide dogs, for example, give essential assistance to the blind, while *beagles*, small dogs with short legs, are often used by hunters.

[Click here to see the explanation](#)

It is always a good idea to look closely at the sentence before and after vocabulary that is unfamiliar, as you often find that the word has been explained. From the passage, you know that beagles are 'small dogs with short legs'.

4 Word groups. Read the passage below. What do you think the word in italics means?

In my opinion, boxing is an *abhorrent* sport. Modern society should be opposed to such violent contact sports.

[Click here to see the explanation](#)

Look at the grammar. There is a subject (boxing), followed by the verb 'to be' (is), and the sentence ends with a noun (sport). So abhorrent must be an adjective of opinion and it follows from the second sentence that it has a negative meaning.

5 Logic. Read the passage below. What do you think the word in italics means?

Although technology has made mountain climbing both safer and easier, it is not a sport without risks. Bad weather can come quickly and last for long periods and the effects of severely cold weather can lead to *hypothermia* and, if untreated, death.

[Click here to see the explanation](#)

Think about it! Use your own knowledge and experience to work it out – what happens to people stuck in cold weather for long periods?

Now use the skills presented on this page. Read the sentences below – what do you think the words in italics mean?

A English football supporters are often accused of being *hooligans*, although the majority are actually well-behaved fans who have no intention of causing trouble.

B Although it can be a little expensive, *thermal* clothing is essential when skiing.

C *Pilates*, a form of exercise, is becoming increasingly popular.

D Children from *impoverished* families rarely have overseas holidays or modern toys.

E When climbing Everest, Sir Edmund Hillary experienced some of the world's harshest natural dangers, such as freezing weather, sudden snowstorms, and even *avalanches*.

[Click here to see the answers](#)

A: Hooligans – not well behaved fans / do intend to cause trouble

B: Thermal – warm clothing

C: Pilates – a form of exercise

D: Impoverished – lack of money, poor (something that prevents overseas holidays or modern toys)

E: Avalanches – snow and ice sliding down a mountain

No matter what skills you apply, you may find a word or words that you still do not understand. If this happens, do not panic. Take a guess and move on. Do not spend too much time trying to work it out. It has been scientifically proven that the human brain is unable to process more than 20 new words at a time before it starts to forget some. The best thing to do is to write 10 new words with a definition and an example sentence in a pocket-sized notebook and have it with you at all times. Waiting for the bus, sitting in a café or just relaxing at home – these are all good opportunities to quickly take out the notebook and revise. When you are sure you are familiar with these words, write down 10 more and start again. Once a week, review all the vocabulary you have written in your notebook.

Ready to practice your skills? Try [this exercise](#) (with complete reading text) to see if you can work with unknown vocabulary.

IELTS vocabulary by topic

IELTS vocabulary for a city environment

Essential IELTS vocabulary split into common IELTS topics and subsections. In this lesson, we are focusing on vocabulary used to describe cities, particularly the city environment – the places, buildings and locations that you can refer to when talking or writing about cities.



Take a look at the list below. How many words do you know? If there are any words you are not familiar with, we strongly recommend that you look them up in a dictionary. Once you have looked through the list, try the vocabulary exercise that follows.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. cosmopolitan (environment) | 16. housing complex |
| 2. metropolitan (city) | 17. industrial estate |
| 3. downtown | 18. housing estate |
| 4. city centre | 19. apartment (US) / flat (UK) |
| 5. urban | 20. house |
| 6. the suburbs / suburban areas | 21. villa |
| 7. rural | 22. 2-storey house |
| 8. the outskirts | 23. 5-level apartment building |
| 9. CBD (Central Business District) | 24. office tower |
| 10. city hall | 25. skyscraper |
| 11. coastal city | 26. landmark(s) buildings |
| 12. inland city | 27. marina |
| 13. mountainous city | 28. port / harbour |
| 14. housing | 29. airport |
| 15. accommodation | 30. bus/train/air terminal |
| | 31. urban sprawl |

Using words from the list above, match a definition with a word:

EXAMPLE: The 'edge' of the city, where it meets the countryside. ANSWER: ***Outskirts***

1. Opposite of rural
2. The main area where most business is done in the city
3. A city that has different influences from around the world

4. Residential areas of cities, in other words, where people live
5. An area with many factories
6. Famous buildings that identify a city, such as the Eiffel Tower
7. A very tall building
8. The rapid growth of a city, often with adverse (negative) effects
9. An area where a high concentration of people live
10. The main area at which public transport stops or starts from

Answers:

1. Urban
 2. CBD or Central Business District
 3. Cosmopolitan
 4. Suburbs / suburban areas
 5. Industrial estate
 6. Landmarks / landmark buildings
 7. Skyscraper
 8. Urban sprawl
 9. Housing estate
 10. Terminal
-
-

IELTS vocabulary for family

Essential IELTS vocabulary split into common IELTS topics and subsections. In this lesson, we are focusing on vocabulary used to describe families – the relationships between people, the structure and type of family and more.

Take a look at the list below. How many words do you know?

We will soon be adding vocabulary exercises to these pages, but for now, we hope the lists help!

Family

Family connections

- **Siblings** – brothers or sisters
- **Immediate family** – generally considered to be siblings, parents and children. However, some people also include grandparents in this list
- **Extended family** – people with a connection to you within the family tree (aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews etc).

Types of family

- A. **A nuclear family** – a couple and their children (considered to be the ‘average’ family structure). Statistically, a ‘nuclear family’ can currently has one mother, one father and 2.2 children – the average family unit)
- B. **A matriarchal family** – (can also be used to describe a society) – where the mother/female is considered to be the most important person
- C. **A patriarchal family** (can also be used to describe a society) – where the father/male is considered to be the most important person
- D. **Single parent family** – where the child/children has only a mother or father
- E. **Same-sex parents** – these are parents who are either both male (gay) or female (lesbian).

Connecting families and people

- **Genealogy** – studying the family history back into the past, often by hundreds and even thousands of years, to see where someone’s bloodline originally came from
 - **Family tree** – a diagram that represents all the members of a family
 - **Lineage** – the sequence of people before you (father > grandfather > great grandfather and so on).
-

IELTS vocabulary for law

Essential IELTS vocabulary split into common IELTS topics and subsections. In this lesson, we are focusing on vocabulary used to describe the law – crimes, criminals, the legal system and more.



Take a look at the list below. How many words do you know? We will soon be adding vocabulary exercises to these pages, but for now, we hope the lists help!

Degrees of crime

- A. **Misdemeanour** – A minor crime, punishable by a fine or a light jail term
- B. **Felony** [US English] – a crime punishable by death or imprisonment in excess of one year.
- C. **Infraction** – generally used to describe minor crimes when the law has been broken (e.g. riding a bicycle at night without lights – it’s breaking the law, but you’re not going to prison for it!)

Punishment

- A. **Capital punishment (the death penalty)** – being put to death by the state for crimes committed

- B. **Incarcerated** – a formal word meaning ‘to be put in prison’
- C. **Suspended sentence** – a person can be found guilty but their time in prison is delayed for a period of time. Often if a person has not broken the law within a given period, the prison time is dismissed.
- D. **Maximum security** – a prison where their prisoners are watched very closely and chances of escape are very low (compare this to minimum security prisons, which are generally more relaxed and reserved for lesser crimes)
- E. **Damages** – this is where the person or company accused of the crime is found guilty and required to pay money to the person / people they have wronged.

Types of crime

NOTE: There are hundreds of different types of crime – the list below covers only the words we think will be most useful in your IELTS test!

- **White collar crime** – this refers to non-violent crimes done for money, generally by business and government professionals.
- **Homicide** – a more formal (legal) term for murder
- **Larceny** – a more formal (legal) term for theft
- **Arson** – setting fire to buildings or other property
- **Embezzlement** – taking money which the person has been trusted to look after (commonly when people steal money from the company they work for)
- **Forgery** – making illegal copies of official documents
- **Fraud** – to deceive (trick) someone for illegal gain
- **Hate crime** – a crime against a person because of a social group they are considered to belong to (could be race, colour, religion etc)

The people involved

- **Judge** – the person responsible for deciding the punishment for a guilty person
- **Defendant** – the person in a trial who has been accused of a crime

- **Prosecution** – the people who are trying to prove that the defendant is guilty
- **Jury** – 12 people who attend a trial and then decide whether the accused person is innocent or guilty.
- **Witness** – people that are brought into a trial to give evidence (this can be for the defendant, against the defendant or simply to give factual evidence)
- **Attorney / barrister** – these are law professionals that will often be present in court, either defending or prosecuting a case.

The legal process

- To **arrest** someone – to take someone into custody
- A **trial** – when the evidence against the accused person is considered by a judge and jury
- **Verdict** – the decision as to whether the defendant is innocent or guilty
- **Appeal** – when the final decision made by the judge is challenged
- **Confession** – when the accused person admits they are guilty
- **Testimony** – a written or spoken statement

Miscellaneous vocabulary for the law

- **Immunity** – when a criminal is not prosecuted for their crime(s) in exchange for their testimony about another criminal

IELTS vocabulary for a city infrastructure

Essential IELTS vocabulary split into common IELTS topics and subsections. In this lesson, we are focusing on vocabulary used to describe cities, particularly the city environment – the places, buildings and locations that you can refer to when talking or writing about cities.



Take a look at the list below. How many words do you know? If there are any words you are not familiar with, we strongly recommend that you look them up in a dictionary. Once you have looked through the list, try the vocabulary exercise that follows.

Public transportation:

1. subway/underground/train/metro/light rail/ferry/Tube (UK English)
2. mass transit/queue

Sanitation:

- landfill
- waste disposal

infrastructure:

- electricity
- sewage
- water
- power
- telecommunications

Amenities:

1. parks/libraries/clubs/zoos
2. megacentres/malls/boutiques
3. theatres/cinema complex/galleries/botanical gardens

Roads and traffic

- traffic jam(s)
- (heavy) traffic congestion
- motorway (UK English)
- freeway (US English)

- highway
- lane/road/street/boulevard/avenue

Pollution

- A** noise pollution
 - B** light pollution
 - C** Smog
-

- 1) The basic, and essential, facilities and services of a city such as bridges, roads and power supplies
- 2) Slow-moving traffic, because of too many vehicles
- 3) Waste water that needs to be safely removed from housing areas and cleaned
- 4) Where rubbish is buried in a hole and then eventually covered with earth
- 5) In many cities, the residents cannot see the night sky clearly because streets lamps and other factors cause too much
- 6) The British English word for a train service, often underground, that helps commute get around a city (most commonly in London)
- 7) A thick layer of pollution that hangs over a city, often looking like bad weather / grey sky

Answers:

1. Infrastructure
 2. Traffic jam OR traffic congestion
-

3. Sewage
4. Landfill
5. Light pollution
6. The Tube
7. Smog

IELTS vocabulary for the environment

Essential IELTS vocabulary split into common IELTS topics and subsections. In this lesson, we are focusing on IELTS vocabulary for the environment – pollution, solutions to the problem etc.

Take a look at the list below. How many words do you know? We will soon be adding vocabulary exercises to these pages, but for now, we hope the lists help!

Other words for environment

- habitat – the natural home of an animal or plant
- the natural world – used when talking about nature
- ecology – the relationship between animals and plants to their natural environment
- Dwelling – place where animals or plants live

Environmental issues

- Deforestation – clearing trees; changing forest into bare land
- Overpopulation – when there are too many of a species, more than available resources can support
- Intensive farming – farming techniques that can have a long term effect on the land



- Extinction – where an entire species of animal or plant is completely killed off; there are no more on the planet
- Greenhouse effect – where the sun's warmth is trapped inside the atmosphere due to greenhouse gases
- Renewable energy – where electricity is generated from sources that are not reduced by using them (e.g. hydro power or solar power)
- Fossil fuels – a natural fuel that often has an environmental impact when used (coal, gas and oil)

Types of pollution / other words you can use

- Acid rain – this is caused by rain becoming acidic due to air pollution
- contamination – this is where something is damaged or affected by another form of pollution (a secondary effect)
- Emissions – these are gases that are released into the atmosphere (e.g. car exhaust emissions)
- Soil erosion – when soil is easily washed away because trees or other plants are no longer holding it in place. Commonly happens after deforestation
- Toxic waste – this is the by product of producing something that is dangerous to the environment. Nuclear power has a lot of toxic waste.
- Smog – a thick form of air pollution that is like a fog (common in many large cities like London or Beijing)

Solutions to environmental problems

- Recycling – converting waste into something that is reusable
- Conservation – to keep something safe / protected; preventing damage of injury
- biodegradable – packaging or a product that decay (break down) naturally and harmlessly, therefore avoiding pollution

- Preservation – this is similar to conservation. The main difference is that conservation does allow changes that are not dangerous – preservation aims to maintain the present condition without changes.
- sustainable development – economic development where natural resources are used in a limited way and can therefore continue (e.g. planting new trees after cutting down existing trees)

The people involved

- Activists – people who campaign for the environment / environmental protection (Greenpeace, for example)
- Conservationists – people who acts to protect the environment. NOTE: we do not use the word ‘preservationist’

IELTS vocabulary for education

Essential IELTS vocabulary split into common IELTS topics and subsections. In this lesson, we are focusing on vocabulary used to describe education – schools, teachers, subjects and more.

Take a look at the list below. How many words do you know? We will soon be adding vocabulary exercises to these pages, but for now, we hope the lists help!



Types of schools

- Boarding school – where the students live, eat and sleep during the school term
- Private school – where parents have to pay for their child to enrol
- Public school [US English] – a school which is free and paid for by the government
- Public school [UK English] – an exclusive, expensive school, run independently

- Co-education – where male and female students study together (also referred to informally as a *co-ed* school)
- Single-sex school – where only male or only female students attend

Types of education

- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Tertiary education (also referred to as Higher education) – this is the first level of schooling that is not compulsory (you don't have to go). This includes universities and colleges

Types of certification

1. A certificate – issued for a short course
2. A diploma – issued for a course that is shorter than a degree
3. A degree – issued by a university at the end of longer course of study
4. A masters (degree) – issued by a university when the students has completed further study beyond a degree (often in a more specialised field than a degree)
5. A doctorate – this is the highest level of study issued by a university

School behaviour / character types / types of student

1. to play truant – to be absent from class without permission from parents or teachers
2. a bookworm – an informal word for someone who spends a lot time reading / studying
3. an academic – someone who is more comfortable with studying and writing rather than working with their hands in a more practical application
4. a scholar – a relatively old fashioned word for an academic
5. a mature student – someone who is older than the average student, often having gone back to college or universities after working or having a family
6. a freshman [US English] – someone in their first year of university or college
7. a sophomore – someone in their second year of university or college

8. an undergraduate – someone who has not yet completed their degree
9. a graduate (also referred to as a postgraduate) – someone who has complete degree

Types of learning

- Distance learning – this is done away from the school, where the student studies by themselves and rarely attends classes in a school building (lessons are sent by post or online)
- Online learning – this is generally 100% online, where you will not physically meet a teacher or attend classes in a school building
- Intensive courses – fast paced courses which give a lot of information quickly and in a short time
- Rote learning – a teaching style used in some countries / subjects where students simply repeat what they are told until they have memorised it.
- Lecture – often for larger groups of people, the focus is on hearing the teacher speak and making notes
- Tutorial – smaller groups of students, where students can ask questions (often following a lecture)

The cost of education

- tuition fees – the money paid for education
- a grant – money given by the government to support a student while studying
- a student loan – money which a student can borrow to while they are studying, but which has to be repaid
- a scholarship – money (often given by the institution themselves) to support a student while studying

The language of studying / useful collocations

- to revise – study or read something again in order to remember it better, often before exams

- to concentrate – to focus your attention on something
- to review – read over something again. Similar to revise, but more commonly done just after something and not in preparation for an exam
- to plagiarise – to copy another persons work without giving them credit or identifying the course
- to *sit / take* a test
- to *attend* a class
- to *meet* a deadline

Miscellaneous vocabulary for education

- literacy – the ability to read and write
- curriculum – the order in which subjects and topics are studied in a school (like a timetable)

IELTS vocabulary for city people

Essential IELTS vocabulary split into common IELTS topics and subsections. In this lesson, we are focusing on vocabulary used to describe cities, particularly the people that live in cities.



Take a look at the list below. How many words do you know? If there are any words you are not familiar with, we strongly recommend that you look them up in a dictionary. Once you have looked through the list, try the vocabulary exercise that follows.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. city-dwellers | 4. residents |
| 2. inhabitants | 5. commuters |
| 3. citizens | 6. overcrowded |
| | 7. urban lifestyle |

8. densely-populated

9. sparsely-populated

10. high-density housing

11. mayor

12. the civic authorities

13. city council

14. local community

15. neighbourhood

16. internal migrants

- 1) A word used to specifically describe people that live in cities.
- 2) People who travel to work in the morning, and home in the evening.
- 3) People who move from the countryside to the city in the same country.
- 4) The leader of the city.
- 5) The local government of a city, 'the civic _____'
- 6) Areas where a high number of people all live in a small area of land.

Answers:

1. City dwellers (residents, inhabitants and citizens all refer to people, but not specifically people in a city)
2. Commuters
3. Internal migrants
4. Mayor
5. authorities
6. densely-populated

IELTS vocabulary for communication

Essential IELTS vocabulary split into common IELTS topics and subsections. In this lesson, we are focusing on vocabulary used to describe communication – *how* we communicate, the words we use, non-verbal communication and more.

Take a look at the list below. How many words do you know?

Types of spoken communication

- **A discussion** – when two or more people discuss a specific matter. It is often a formal situation where topics are discussed, often from different points of view.
- **A conversation** – where two or more people talk informally. There may not be a specific topic to discuss or different points of view.
- **A dialogue** – very similar to a discussion, although often more formal and with the aim of finding a solution to a specific problem.
- **An interview** – a formal meeting where a person is asked questions and their answers are either evaluated or reported.
- **A monologue** – a single person speaking for a prolonged period. This is often used in acting, but can also indicate that someone has dominated the conversation and it is only them speaking.
- **A speech** – when a speaker talks in front of an audience for a given purpose (e.g. a wedding speech).
- **A lecture** – a speech given to an audience or class, especially for teaching purposes
- **A debate** – similar to a discussion, but often used as a formal contest of different points of view (e.g. a political debate)



Communicating without speaking

- **Body language** – how a person positions themselves (e.g. facing someone, looking at the floor, crossing their arms) that tells us how someone feels.
- **Non-verbal communication** – similar to sign language, but this can be clear, pre-arranged signals. A policeman directing traffic, for example, often uses his/her arms to tell drivers where to go, when to stop etc – this is non-verbal communication.
- **Sign language** – use of the hands to show words and meaning used by (and to communicate to) deaf people.

Language

- A. **Mother tongue** – (also called ‘Native language’ or ‘First language’) this is the language you were brought up listening to and speaking
- B. **Bilingual** – the ability to speak fluently and accurately in two languages
- C. **Multilingual** – the ability to speak fluently and accurately in more than two languages
- D. **Polyglot** – a person who is multilingual

Types of communicator / listener

- 1. **Active listener** – someone who listens and asks feedback questions to make sure they understood.
- 2. **Inattentive** – someone who does not pay close attention to what is being said or shown

Miscellaneous vocabulary for communication

- 1. **Gossip** – talking about the personal or private affairs of other people (often based only in rumours, not facts).
- 2. **Hint** – an indirect clue or indication, something not said directly (e.g. ‘she hinted that she would like a new computer for her birthday, but didn’t say so directly’).
- 3. **Confession** – admitting something that was wrong, illegal or shameful (he gave a confession to the police about the car he stole)

IELTS vocabulary for health

Essential IELTS vocabulary split into common IELTS topics and subsections. In this lesson, we are focusing on vocabulary used to describe health – people that work in the health service, common illnesses, types of healthcare and more.

Take a look at the list below. How many words do you know? We will soon be adding vocabulary exercises to these pages, but for now, we hope the lists help!



Types of healthcare

- **Alternative healthcare** – this is a term used by many western countries to describe more traditional types of healthcare that do not involve operations and pharmaceutical drugs. For example, acupuncture (see below).
- **Western medicine** – the type of medical treatment that is the most popular in North America and many European countries, based on the use of drugs and surgery to treat signs of illness.

Types of treatment / therapy

- **Acupuncture** – needles are inserted into the body at certain pressure points
- **Chemotherapy** – fighting a disease using toxic chemical substances (commonly used against cancer)
- **Naturopathy** – using natural ingredients (flowers etc) to heal sickness.

The people involved

- **Medical practitioner** – this is a formal term for a doctor or surgeon.
- **Surgeon** – a medical specialist who can perform surgery (cut open part of the body)
- **specialist** – someone who has a deep understanding of a specific area of something (e.g. a cancer specialist).
- **Patient** – the person who is unwell and needs medical attention
- **Emergency services** – this can refer to the fire department, the police or ambulance staff.

Stages of healthcare

- **Symptoms** – these are the signs of illness. For example, a headache and high temperature can be symptoms of a fever.

- **Rehabilitation** – this is the period after an illnesses or surgery where the patient is trying to return to their normal health or abilities. E.g. after a limb is removed, the patient will need to go through extensive rehabilitation to learn to move around freely.

Miscellaneous vocabulary for health

- **Immunity** – a body’s ability to not be affected by an illness or disease.
 - **Addiction** – a state where a person is unable to stop doing something (e.g. an addiction to smoking).
 - **Theatre** (UK English) **Theater** (US English) – the place where surgeries are carried out.
-

Common errors in IELTS writing – ‘government’

Using the correct words in your IELTS test can make the difference between succeeding and having to resit the test, so make sure you’ve got the right word or phrase!

For example, look at the use of the word ‘government’ in the sentences below. Are they used correctly or not? Consider the grammar, punctuation and syntax (sentence order).

1. The Government should be responsible for providing free education to all citizens.
2. Many people believe it is a government’s responsibility to provide a good standard of healthcare.
3. Governments should be held responsible for periods of economic recession.
4. The government legislation should be put in place to ensure that all criminals are sent to prison.
5. In addition to government’s laws, citizens should also feel morally obliged to keep their country clean.

6. It would be more effective if the government enforced the laws equally, regardless of wealth or status.
7. For instance, the government of Singapore has passed a law that each citizen should separate the waste and dispose in either in recycled or non-recycled trash bin.
8. It is therefore very clear that government should enforce strict legislation and raise public awareness against deforestation.
9. Without funding, cultural art centres would have to rely heavily on the government.
10. It would be a better form of the government if people were allowed to make more choices for themselves.
11. It is the responsibility of the governments to collect taxes.

Answers

1. This is not correct – when used in the middle of the sentence, there is no need for the word ‘government’ to have a capital letter.
2. This is not correct. Although the sentence may be talking in general, it is more natural to use ‘*the government*’.
3. This is not correct. Again, this would be more common as ‘the government’, even when referring about more than one government.
4. This is not correct. The use of ‘the’ here means that you are referring to specific legislation, but this legislation is not clearly given, so it should be simply ‘Government legislation...’
5. This is not correct and is a lot trickier to explain. This could have been expressed as ‘In addition to government laws, citizens...’ OR ‘In addition to *the government’s* laws, citizens...’
6. This is correct.
7. This is correct
8. This should either be plural (*governments*) or ‘*the government*’.
9. This is correct.

10. This is not correct. In this sentence, 'government' has been used not with the meaning of a particular group of people making decisions for the country, but general direction, control and decision making (as in 'The school should be allowed to govern itself').
11. This is not correct. The writer is referring to all governments around the world, but this should be expressed as 'It is the responsibility of governments to collect taxes'.
OR 'It is the responsibility of the government to collect taxes.'
-

IELTS vocabulary levels

The first step in being able to improve your vocabulary is to have a clear collection of words to study from, graded from the easier, more common language up to more advanced levels.

This series has a 10 level system to improve your IELTS vocabulary, from Level 1 to Level 10. Once you have looked through the list below, test yourself with the Level 1 vocabulary practice page.

Tips for using the vocabulary for IELTS lists:

- A. look carefully through the list to make sure you know the words and are confident that you can use them in your written or spoken English.
- B. Look up the meaning of any new words and put them in a sentence. If you're not sure your sentence is correct, post it in the comments section at the bottom of the page and we'll check it for you.
- C. Make a handwritten note of any new words, ideally in a separate note pad that you carry with you. Whenever you have a few minutes – waiting for a bus, just before going to sleep, waiting for the kettle to boil – take out the list and look through, reminding yourself of the word and the meaning.

D.Improving your vocabulary for IELTS takes practice, so try to use the new word(s) in any suitable situation over the next few weeks – using the new word will help you remember it!

E. Write the new word a number of times – writing down vocabulary will help you remember it and will also help with spelling.

IELTS vocabulary level 1

act	actor	actress	after	again
against	ago	all	always	another
any	around	ask	bar	bath
because	before	belt	between	busy
can	carry	cheap	check	choice
choose	circle	clean	clear	clever
clock	close	colour	copy	could
couple	cousin	cross	crowd	customer
daily	dark	deep	desk	dictionary
die	difficult	dig	dinner	doctor
dollar	drag	draw	dress	dry
each	earn	east	empty	enjoy
enter	entrance	envelope	equal	example
excellent	excite	excuse	exercise	expect
expensive	experience	experiment	explain	factory
fail	fair	familiar	fan	fancy
fatten	fear	fight	film	final
finger	firm	fix	flat	flavour
flood	floor	flow	follow	foot
forget	meal	forward	found	freeze
friend	friendly	fright	frighten	fruit
fry	funny	fur	further	gap

gift	glad	glass	goal	golden
ground	group	growth	guest	guide
gun	habit	hang	happen	harden
harm	heal	hear	heart	heavy
height	high	hill	hire	hit
hole	homework	hope	hurry	hurt
if	ill	inside	introduce	introduction
jaw	join	joke	joy	just
kill	kind	knee	knock	know
large	last	lately	laugh	lay
layer	lead	leaf	least	leave
lengthen	lessen	liar	library	lid
lie	light	likely	line	list
live	local	lock	loose	lord
lovely	miss	nephew	other	pain
photograph	relax	rob	rub	rug
short	should	sight	tape	taste
tax	team	tell	tense	total

IELTS vocabulary level 2

across	furniture	nobody	plenty	rough
add	island	none	pocket	round
agree	journal	noon	point	royal
air	loss	normal	police	rubber
alone	loud	nothing	popular	rubbish
along	machine	notice	pour	rude
avoid	main	noun	pretty	ruin
awake	mark	now	print	sadden
backward	marry	nurse	private	scientific
basic	master	ocean	product	search
battle	match	odd	production	season
become	matter	once	pump	second
bill	may	only	punish	secretary
both	maybe	onto	pupil	seed
box	mean	onwards	purchase	seek
bridge	mechanic	ordinary	pure	seem
bring	melt	otherwise	purpose	select
build	mend	ought	puzzle	self
burn	metre	owe	quarter	selfish
business	middle	own	question	sentence
camp	might	package	quite	set
catch	mild	pair	race	settle

conversation	mile	pale	rail	sew
corner	mistake	panel	raise	shake
cotton	mixture	parcel	ready	shall
country	month	part	real	share
crown	moon	pass	repair	sharpen
cycle	motor	passage	repeat	sheep
danger	mountain	passenger	replace	sheet
deaf	mouse	paste	reply	shoot
department	must	pastry	report	shorten
different	narrow	percent	rest	show
dip	neat	physical	return	sick
disagree	nest	pick	reward	side
disappear	net	picture	roast	sign
drum	never	piece	robbery	signal
either	new	pint	rock	stage
except	news	place	role	steady
flatten	next	plain	roll	target
forgive	niece	plan	room	task

IELTS vocabulary level 3

ability	compare	exchange	grind	journey
accept	condition	expert	guess	kneel
advantage	consider	explosion	guideline	knot
adventure	cooperate	export	handle	knowledge
afford	cottage	express	handshake	label
afraid	count	extend	handwriting	labour
although	damp	external	hardly	lack
altogether	darken	extreme	hatred	language
among	daylight	fact	headache	law
amount	deliver	factor	health	lawyer
anger	delivery	failure	heighten	lean
annoy	demand	fashion	hesitate	leather
appear	depth	fasten	honest	lighten
army	despite	favour	hook	limit
arrange	direction	favourite	horizon	link
arrive	director	fence	horizontal	liquid
article	discover	fever	hunt	load
attempt	distant	field	importance	loan
attend	document	figure	important	lonely
attention	doubt	file	inch	loosen
balance	drama	flag	income	plus
beat	drown	flame	indoor	practical

beauty	due	fool	industry	previous
behind	dull	foreign	ink	result
believe	during	forest	insect	scene
beyond	edge	form	instead	seldom
block	educate	formula	instrument	shore
blood	effect	frame	insurance	speech
board	effort	freedom	insure	split
borrow	elder	frequency	intelligence	spread
break	electric	frequent	interest	standard
bright	electrician	furthermore	intermediate	steam
broad	employ	future	international	sudden
capital	employee	gentle	invent	tender
century	engineer	gentleman	investigate	uniform
chief	enormous	grain	invite	village
circular	enough	grammar	iron	voluntary
climb	event	grammatical	item	vote
collect	evil	grand	jealous	worship
company	exact	greet	joint	youth

IELTS vocabulary level 4

active	modern	pound	regret	sense
advance	moment	powder	regular	sensitive
affair	musician	power	relation	servant

allow	nail	prepare	release	serve
amuse	nature	present	relief	service
apply	neither	press	religion	several
argue	nevertheless	pretend	remember	shade
aside	nonetheless	pretense	remind	shallow
cough	nor	prevent	remove	shatter
cure	number	prevention	rent	shave
dozen	nursery	prior	repetition	shelf
earth	office	priority	rescue	shell
environment	officer	prison	research	shine
extract	order	prize	respect	shout
grateful	outline	process	respond	shower
ideal	outward	profession	responsible	silence
luck	over	professional	restore	silent
lump	overseas	program	restrict	silk
madden	ownership	programme	retire	since
manage	paragraph	progress	reveal	site
margin	partner	project	revenge	skill
marriage	patience	promise	reverse	slight
material	patient	pronounce	review	slippery
meantime	pattern	pronunciation	revise	smell
meanwhile	pause	proper	roar	soil
measure	peace	prove	root	solid
medium	pearl	provide	rope	solution

member	perhaps	public	rot	sorrow
membership	period	publication	rotten	sound
mental	pile	publish	row	sour
message	pinch	punctual	royalty	source
messenger	pipe	quote	sale	sow
method	poem	railroad	salesman	spade
mind	poet	rapid	salt	special
mine	polite	rare	sample	spill
miner	population	reach	sand	spirit
minimal	portion	react	scratch	spit
minimise	position	receipt	screw	text
minimum	positive	recent	secret	upset
model	possible	register	seize	veil

IELTS vocabulary level 5

access	hinder	per	refuse	thunder
account	hindrance	perch	regard	thus
admire	hollow	perfect	region	tide
advertise	homecoming	perfection	relate	topic
arch	humble	perform	relative	trade
arrest	identify	performance	relevant	tradition
attack	idle	permanent	remain	transfer
attract	ignorance	permission	request	translate
chapter	illustrate	permit	require	transmit
coin	image	phase	reserve	transport
comment	imaginary	pity	resign	trend
competition	imaginative	pleasant	schedule	trial
concern	imagine	pleasure	steep	trick
create	immediate	plural	steer	urge
demonstrate	immense	poison	stem	urgent
desert	immigrate	politician	stick	vain
feast	impact	politics	strange	valid
federal	incidence	possess	stretch	value
fee	include	possessor	succeed	variety
fidelity	inclusive	poverty	success	vary
finance	incorporate	prefer	suffer	verse
float	indicate	preference	summary	version

forbid	individual	pressure	supply	vessel
force	inevitable	prevail	support	via
forthcoming	influence	pride	suppose	victory
fund	influential	priest	surface	violent
fundamental	inform	primary	survive	visual
funeral	judge	principal	suspect	voice
furnish	leadership	principle	swear	volume
general	necessary	probable	symbol	vowel
generate	occur	problem	sympathy	voyage
generation	offer	procession	system	wage
grant	opportunity	profit	telephone	waist
grass	opposite	promote	temperature	wealth
harbour	option	prompt	temporary	wicked
harvest	organise	proof	tempt	widow
debt	outcome	property	theme	widower
heaven	parallel	proposal	theory	wise
heavenly	parameter	propose	thread	witness
hence	passive	protect	threat	wrist

IELTS vocabulary level 6

abroad	depend	fame	impossible	mention
accustom	describe	fate	improve	merchant
acquire	design	fault	increase	military
admit	detail	feather	indeed	milligram
adopt	diamond	feature	index	millilitre
affect	dine	fierce	insert	millimetre
agent	direct	flash	inspect	million
ahead	disappear	flesh	instance	mineral
aid	disappoint	flexible	instant	modest
alive	dismiss	focus	instruct	modesty
allowance	display	fond	insult	momentary
ash	distance	formal	interfere	motherhood
bathe	distribute	format	internal	motherly
bay	district	former	interpret	multiplication
blame	disturb	forth	interrupt	multiply
calm	draft	fortune	interruption	nation
cause	duty	foundation	invest	native
certain	eager	framework	involve	necessity
cheer	ease	function	inward	nonsense
chemical	effective	gather	issue	notion
coal	enable	generous	kingdom	numerous
coast	entertain	globe	ladder	obvious

code	envy	glory	lecture	offset
colleague	escape	grade	lend	ongoing
comfort	establish	gradual	liberal	opinion
complain	eventual	grave	liberty	output
confront	examine	greed	licence	overcome
coward	exceed	guarantee	likewise	overflow
crime	excess	guard	limb	overlap
criminal	excessive	guilt	locate	postpone
curious	exclude	haste	lodge	qualification
curl	exist	hesitation	logic	satisfactory
current	expense	highlight	major	strategy
curtain	explode	highway	male	stress
damage	explore	homemade	manufacture	structure
dare	expose	honesty	mature	undertake
haughty	extensive	honour	maximise	virtual
defeat	extent	host	medical	weapon
defend	fade	hunger	medicine	widespread
deny	faith	identical	memory	yield

IELTS vocabulary level 7

absent	behavior	committee	custom	domestic
absolute	belief	community	decade	drawer
absorb	belong	companion	decision	dream
academy	beneath	complication	decisive	drought
accurate	bind	comprehensive	decline	dubious
accuse	birth	compute	decrease	economy
achieve	bitter	confident	deed	edit
actual	blade	confidential	defense	efficiency
adequate	bleed	conflict	definite	efficient
advice	bless	confuse	degree	elastic
advise	boast	connect	delay	elect
agriculture	boil	consent	delicate	election
ambitious	border	consequent	delight	element
ancient	bound	consume	dependent	encourage
angle	boundary	contact	depress	enemy
anxiety	bow	contain	deserve	ensure
appearance	brass	content	desire	entire
application	breath	contract	despair	equip
appoint	breathe	contradict	detect	equivalent
approve	brick	contrary	determine	error
area	bunch	contrast	develop	essential
arise	bundle	contribute	device	estate

arrest	businesslike	converse	devote	estimate
ashamed	calculate	convert	differentiate	everlasting
astonish	calculation	convince	disapprove	evident
audience	calculator	coordinate	discomfort	exception
author	cape	corporate	discontent	exhibit
avoidance	cart	correspond	discuss	existence
awkward	castle	council	discussion	expand
baggage	charm	courage	disease	extraordinary
band	chart	course	disgust	faint
bare	chest	court	dispose	famine
bargain	childhood	creature	disregard	fluctuate
barrel	chimney	credit	disrespect	minor
basis	claim	crop	dissatisfaction	occupy
basket	classic	crucial	dissatisfy	reduce
beam	classify	cruel	distinct	rely
beard	clerk	culture	distinguish	severe
beg	cliff	currency	divide	shaow
behave	commit	cushion	division	volatile

IELTS vocabulary level 8

affliction	manner	official	pursue	reside
assess	manual	operate	quantity	resist
collision	media	operation	quarrel	resistance
conclude	mercy	operator	quashed	resolve
cork	mere	oppose	quenching	restrain
decay	migrate	opposition	radical	retain
enforce	minister	organ	random	reticent
facilitate	ministry	origin	range	revolution
initial	minuscule	participate	rank	sacred
injure	miserable	particular	ratio	sake
input	misery	patriotic	rational	scarce
inquire	mode	peculiar	raw	scatter
inquiry	moderate	perceive	ray	scent
insight	moderation	persist	razor	scheme
institute	modify	persuade	realise	scorn
integral	monitor	persuasion	reason	scrape
integrate	moral	policy	reasonable	sector
intend	moreover	polish	receive	sequence
intense	motif	pose	recognise	series
intention	motion	potential	recognition	serious
interference	motive	praise	recommend	significant
interval	murder	pray	record	simulate

intervene	mutual	preach	recover	situation
isolate	mystery	precede	refer	sketchy
jewel	nausea	precious	reference	slave
justice	needle	precise	refresh	social
justify	network	prejudice	regulate	society
landlord	neutral	preliminary	reinforce	sphere
latter	noble	presence	reject	spite
leash	noise	preserve	relate	stable
legal	nuclear	president	reluctance	stain
legislate	nuisance	presume	remark	statistic
literary	numerical	presumptuous	remedy	successor
literature	object	prime	replenish	sufficient
loyal	objection	proceed	represent	thorn
loyalty	objective	proportion	representative	transform
lung	obtain	prospect	reproduce	unify
maintain	occasion	provision	reproduction	uproar
manipulate	offend	proximity	republic	utilise
mankind	offense	psychology	reputation	violate

IELTS vocabulary level 9

acknowledge	cage	compile	convenience	displace
allocate	canal	complement	convenient	distort
animosity	capable	complex	convivial	diverse
aspect	capacity	complicity	core	docile
assemble	capricious	component	creep	doleful
assign	carriage	compose	criteria	domain
assist	case	composition	critic	dominant
association	category	compound	cryptic	dominate
assume	cattle	comprise	culpable	dormant
assure	caution	conceive	cultivate	duplicate
attach	cease	concentrate	curse	duration
attain	ceremony	concept	curtail	dynamic
attentive	challenge	concoct	curve	earnest
attitude	channel	concurrent	dearth	eccentric
attribute	character	condone	debate	efface
attrition	charisma	conduct	deceit	egocentric
authority	chastise	confer	deceive	elicit
automate	cheat	confess	declare	eliminate
autonomy	circumstance	confession	deduce	emerge
available	cite	confine	deference	eminent
avarice	citizen	confirm	define	emphasis
aware	civil	congenial	delineate	empire

ban	clarify	congratulate	denote	empirical
barber	clause	congratulation	derive	evolve
basin	coarse	conquer	derogatory	imitate
beak	cognitive	conqueror	descend	inherit
beast	coherent	conquest	descendant	obey
behalf	coincide	conscious	descent	obligation
belligerent	collapse	consensus	destroy	observe
beneficiary	collar	consist	destruction	predict
benefit	colony	constant	destructive	prohibit
bias	combine	constitute	deteriorate	reflect
bond	command	constrain	deviate	revenue
brave	commence	construct	devise	status
breadth	commerce	consult	diligent	stifled
bribe	commercial	contemporary	dimension	subordinate
bribery	commission	context	diminish	sustain
brief	communicate	contiguous	discrete	toil
broadcast	compatible	controversy	discriminate	vestige
bulk	compensate	convene	disparage	vindicate

IELTS vocabulary level 10

advocate	flagrant	insatiate	omit	renaissance
alleviate	fracture	instigate	opaque	reproach
ambiguous	frugal	integrity	orient	reverberate
ambivalent	futile	interact	ornament	revere
apprehensive	gender	intimate	paradigm	rift
commodity	genetic	intrepid	particle	rival
conform	govern	intrinsic	pejorative	rivalry
conscience	governor	introspective	perception	rudimentary
defendant	grace	intuition	perspective	sacrifice
discipline	gratuitous	invoke	pervade	salvage
elucidate	gregarious	irate	petulant	scrupulous
enchant	heritage	jeopardy	phenomenon	sentient
enclose	heterogeneous	juvenile	philanthropy	serendipity
enclosure	hierarchy	laconic	philistine	shrink
encounter	homogeneous	lament	philosophy	shunned
endangered	hypocrisy	latent	pioneer	slavery
endeavour	hypothesis	levy	plethora	solemn
endure	ideology	linguist	plough	speculate
energy	illicit	lithe	ponderous	sporadic
engrossed	imitation	lucrative	postulate	sprawl
enhance	imminent	lurid	practitioner	squander
enigma	impediment	lustrous	precipitous	stagnation

enthral	implement	malign	precursor	strive
entity	implicate	mechanism	predominant	subjugate
equate	implicit	mediate	prodigious	sublime
erode	imply	misconception	prodigy	succumb
erroneous	impose	mundane	proliferate	superfluous
esoteric	impoverished	munificent	prolific	surreptitious
essence	incentive	negate	proprietary	taciturn
ethic	incline	neglect	protocol	tangible
ethical	indigenous	nihilism	provident	tenacious
ethnic	induce	nocturnal	prudent	tentative
evaluate	indulgent	nominal	qualitative	terrestrial
exacerbate	infer	notorious	rebound	thesis
explicit	infrastructure	noxious	reciprocal	vehemence
exploit	ingenuous	nuance	reclusive	venerate
extol	inherent	oblique	refine	verisimilitude
extraneous	inhibit	obscure	reflection	vigilance
exuberant	initiate	officious	regime	vilify
finite	innovate	omission	rejoice	vitriolic

IELTS vocabulary levels – practice exercises

IELTS vocabulary practice level 1

1. Chris really likes fresh strawberries – he says they have a lovely fl _____
2. It's important to eat well and do some ex_____ every day.

3. When you travel in a foreign country, it can be helpful to have a gu_____ who can show you around.
4. If he doesn't hu_____ he will miss the bus
5. I think there is someone at the door – I just heard a kn_____ .
6. Rachael couldn't find the book she wanted at the li_____ .
7. They are brothers but they are both very different – John is tall but Jack is sh_____ .
8. I think this milk is old – it has a strange ta_____ .
9. When working in a shop, it is important to be polite to the cu_____ .
10. If you don't know the meaning of a word, you should look in a di_____ .

Answer:

1. (flavour, flavor)
 2. (exercise)
 3. (guide)
 4. (hurry)
 5. (knock)
 6. (library)
 7. (short, shorter)
 8. (taste)
 9. (customer)
 10. (dictionary)
-

IELTS vocabulary practice level 2

1. John's alarm clock rang at 7 am, but he was already aw_____.
 2. To get to the beach, take the first left, go along the river then over the br_____.
-

3. He's just moved into a new house, so he's shopping for some new fu_____.
4. Veraneeca's car wasn't running very well, so she took it to a me_____.
5. Nick lives in the middle of the country so he rarely sees the oc_____, but that's OK – he doesn't really like swimming anyway.
6. Coca-cola is one of the most po_____ drinks in the world – people all over the world love it!

Answers:

1. (awake)
2. (bridge)
3. (furniture)
4. (mechanic)
5. (ocean)
6. (popular)

IELTS vocabulary practice level 3

1. Nurses have to wear a un_____ at work.
2. It was very quiet where I grew up – it was only a small vi_____.
3. During a wedding, it is common for the father to make a sp_____.
4. People who can speak more than one language have a definite ad_____ when looking for a job.
5. His first at_____ to climb the mountain failed, but he succeeded when he tried again.
6. The heart pumps bl_____ around the body.
7. Some people are selfish and do not co_____ the feelings of other people.
8. The company is offering an extra week of holiday for all em_____.

9. They are going to ex_____ the course an additional year, from 2 to 3 years.
10. Before travelling overseas, it is important to get some fo_____ currency.

Answers:

1. (uniform)
2. (village)
3. (speech)
4. (advantage)
5. (attempt)
6. (blood)
7. (consider)
8. (employees)
9. (extend)
10. (foreign)

IELTS vocabulary practice level 4

1. Pollution from cars and industry is causing damage to the en_____ .
2. My dentist is going to ex_____ three or my teeth tomorrow.
3. He was very gr_____ for all the work they had done. NOTE: Be extra careful with spelling for this answer!
4. In an id_____ world, there would be no need for the police.
5. I don't like classical music; I much prefer more mo_____ bands.
6. He doesn't have much pa_____ – he gets annoyed quite quickly.
7. The po_____ of the world is now more than 5 billion – that's a lot of people!

8. Many pharmaceutical companies spend a lot of money on re_____ and development.
9. This part of the beach is safe for children because the water is very sh_____ .
10. We still haven't found a good so_____ to the problem.

Answers:

1. (environment)
2. (extract)
3. (grateful)
4. (ideal)
5. (modern)
6. (patience)
7. (population)
8. (research)
9. (shallow)
10. (solution)

IELTS vocabulary practice level 5

1. The police want to talk to him because he was a wi_____ to the crime.
2. Mrs Thomas is on holiday, but if you need something ur_____ we have her mobile number.
3. During an emergency, it is important to remain ca_____ and not panic.
4. Rather than simply talking, the salesman de_____ how the product worked.
5. The government should take im_____ action to stop the rising level of unemployment before the problem gets worse.
6. The government is pr_____ their new scheme to improve education by talking to teachers and education specialists.

Answers:

1. (witness)
2. (urgent)
3. (calm)
4. (demonstrated)
5. (immediate)
6. (promoting)

IELTS vocabulary practice level 6

1. If you want to learn English, the most ef_____ method is to actually live in an English speaking country.
2. He had a wide and ext_____ knowledge of the subject.
3. In academic writing, you should aim to use fo_____ vocabulary rather than idioms, slang and phrasal verbs.
4. Bill Gates has made a fo_____ from his software.
5. He lost a li_____ in the accident, so he uses an artificial leg to get around, but he's lucky to be alive.
6. Some people believe a country should have a strong mi_____ to defend against attacks from other countries.
7. The meeting has been po_____ until next week because the Managing Director was unavailable.
8. He didn't get his High School qu_____ because he left before graduation.
9. Although he could have done better, his exam results were sa_____.

Answers:

1. (effective)
2. (extensive, extended)
3. (formal)
4. (fortune)
5. (limb)
6. (military)
7. (postponed)
8. (qualification)
9. (satisfactory)

IELTS vocabulary practice level 7

1. Many roads have been closed because of the se_____ weather.
2. The police are trained to handle highly vo_____ situations.
3. If you are under the age of 18, you may need to ask for your parents' co_____ before you get married.
4. To maintain the environment, it is important to di_____ of rubbish carefully.
5. It is difficult to di_____ between identical twins.
6. The price of petrol has fl_____ so much recently that even experts cannot tell whether it will go up or down next.

Answers:

1. (severe)
2. (volatile)
3. (consent)
4. (dispose)

5. (distinguish)
6. (fluctuated)

IELTS vocabulary practice level 8

1. Many poorer countries do not have su_____ food and water for the population.
2. The accountant asked the marketing manager to ju_____ how her department had spent so much.
3. They couldn't understand why he had committed the crime because he didn't seem to have any mo_____.
4. Despite asking for help from the technical department, Michael's computer problems pe_____ until he was forced to buy a new machine.
5. Gold and silver are the most well-known pr_____ metals.
6. In countries like Japan, natural resources such as coal and oil are sc_____, so they need to be imported from other countries.
7. Many birds mi_____ every winter to find warmer weather.
8. Experts advise eating high calorie foods in mo_____.
9. Jo has a good re_____ for making successful business deals.
10. A worrying st_____ is that the average person spends less than one hour a week exercising.

Answers:

1. (sufficient)
2. (justify)
3. (motive)
4. (persisted)

5. (precious)
6. (scarce)
7. (migrate)
8. (moderation)
9. (reputation)
10. (statistic)

IELTS vocabulary practice level 9

1. Although he ran very fast in the beginning, he couldn't su_____ the pace and was eventually overtaken.
2. Many governments are not willing to ban the sale of tobacco because of the significant re_____ generated from tax.
3. In the 1920s, the sale of alcohol was pr_____ by law in the USA.
4. He cl_____ his point by giving a real life example to make sure that everyone understood.
5. A dog should be trained to ob_____ its owner.
6. Throughout the lecture, Esther was very at_____, listening to every word.
7. In business, it often important to cu_____ relationships with people who have influence.
8. Some animals lie do_____ during the winter months and wake again in the spring.
9. Wealth should be al_____ evenly rather than having such divides between rich and poor.

Answers:

1. (sustain)
2. (revenue)

3. (prohibited)
4. (clarified)
5. (obey)
6. (attentive)
7. (cultivate)
8. (dormant)
9. (allocated)

IELTS vocabulary practice level 10

1. The de_____ was found not guilty and was free to leave the court.
2. Mastering a martial art or learning to play an instrument requires a lot of di_____ – you can't expect to learn in just a few days.
3. He was ap_____ about meeting her for the first time, but they ended up having a great time.
4. A rebel is defined as someone who does not co_____ to the rules and restrictions of everyday society.
5. He stole the money, but returned it the following day; nobody knew what he had done, but his co_____ would not allow him to keep it.
6. Adding a little salt to your food while cooking can often en_____ the flavour.
7. Resources such as oil and coal are fi_____. We should not expect them to last forever.
8. The Aborigines are the in_____ people of Australia.
9. The plan is now in je_____ because they did not receive funding and may be forced to close.
10. One of the world's most amazing ph_____ is the Aurora Borealis, or 'Northern Lights', which occurs north of the Arctic Circle.

Answers:

1. (defendant)
 2. (discipline)
 3. (apprehensive)
 4. (conform)
 5. (conscience)
 6. (enhance)
 7. (finite)
 8. (indigenous)
 9. (jeopardy)
 10. (phenomenon)
-

Phrasal verbs and idioms in IELTS

An **idiom** is a phrase created from a group of words that does not necessarily have any meaning related to the words themselves.

For example, 'that rings a bell' actually has nothing to do with ringing or bells – it simply means that something is 'vaguely familiar'.

'Have you ever met David Madison?' 'Hmmm... the name *rings a bell* but I'm not sure exactly.'

A **phrasal verb** is similar in that it can be a meaning created from a collection of words.

For example, 'The plane took off ten minutes late' – in this sentence, 'take off' means to leave or depart.



Everybody had a whale of a time at the party.

Common errors with idioms and phrasal verbs in IELTS

In the IELTS test, you need to be very careful with the use of both idioms and phrasal verbs because in the majority of cases they are considered informal (not academic) English.

Here are some **errors** we commonly hear or read when assessing students speaking or writing:

In a Task II essay: 'It is a complicated issue as **every coin has two sides**', 'Many people find it difficult **to give up** smoking', 'Criminals should not be allowed **to get away with** their crimes'

In Part Three of the speaking test: 'It should be **a piece of cake** to reduce government spending in many areas', 'New technology often **costs an arm and a leg** when it is first introduced to the market, but becomes significantly cheaper after just a few months', 'Teachers should not **put up with** poor behaviour from students'.

In all of the examples above, the sentences could have been presented in a more formal manner, sometimes by changing the word or phrase and at other times by restructuring the sentence. For example:

'It is a complicated issue as **there are two points of view to consider**',

'Many people find it difficult **to quit** smoking',

'Criminals should **be held accountable for** their crimes'

'It should be **a relatively simple matter** to reduce government spending in many areas'

'New technology often **has a considerably higher price** when it is first introduced to the market, but becomes significantly cheaper after just a few months'

'Teachers should not **tolerate** poor behaviour from students'.

12 useful idioms

Complete the English idioms exercises by choosing the correct option (a) or (b) to complete each of the sentences.

1. The mistake occurred because of lack of care. If he'd _____ everything would have been fine.	(a) drawn the line (b) kept his eye on the ball
2. Clearly the homeless man had little money of his own, yet he handed in the wallet. It goes to show you should never _____.	(a) make up your mind (b) judge a book by its cover
3. What you did is unacceptable! I must _____ when it comes to this kind of behaviour and will make an official complaint.	(a) draw the line (b) toe the line
4. This is only a _____ I can confirm more specific details in my full report.	(a) catch 22 (b) ball park figure
5. I think he feels better now he's _____. He needed some release as he was so stressed.	(a) let of some steam (b) over the moon
6. He didn't take any personal responsibility for his errors; he just wanted to _____.	(a) toe the line (b) pass the buck
7. He likes to _____ and suggest different points of view.	(a) play devil's advocate (b) sit on the fence
8. Everyone is doing it! It's amazing how everyone is _____ with this new social media craze.	(a) letting off steam (b) jumping on the bandwagon
9. It's okay to _____ every now and then! You've been working so hard, go and have some fun!	(a) let off steam (b) make up your mind
10. _____ I have no idea if the project will be a success or not	(a) Your guess is as good as mine (b) I wouldn't be caught dead
11. Staff conditions are getting worse and worse. The situation is _____ from what the founder had wanted for his workers.	(a) the best of both worlds (b) a far cry
12. He should not have _____. The quality is not as good as it used to be.	(a) kept his eye on the ball (b) cut corners

Answers:

1. *Correct answer is B.*
2. *Correct answer is B.*
3. *Correct answer is A.*
4. *Correct answer is B.*
5. *Correct answer is A.*
6. *Correct answer is B.*
7. *Correct answer is A.*
8. *Correct answer is B.*
9. *Correct answer is A.*
10. *Correct answer is A.*
11. *Correct answer is B.*
12. *Correct answer is B.*

Phrasal verbs with 'read and write'

There are a few different phrasal verbs with 'read and write'.

We'll cover some of the most useful ones in this lesson.

Note: Remember, as for all phrasal verbs, phrasal verbs with 'read and write' are best used in spoken English and informal written English. It is often best to avoid using them in formal writing and even in some formal spoken situations (for example, you should avoid using them in Part 3 of the IELTS speaking test).

Phrasal verbs with 'read and write' examples

- read about
- read up on

- read over
- read (something) into (something)
- write down
- write up
- write in (to something)
- write off

'read' / 'write' (about) examples

- read about (something)
- write about (something)

This is the basic meaning. We read 'about' or write 'about' something to learn or share information.

1. Did you **read about** their wedding in the newspaper? They are two of my favourite celebrities." (find out information about a topic through reading)
2. I'm **writing about** developments in the tourism industry for my college assignment." (make a written record of information about a topic)

Phrasal verbs with 'read' (up on) examples

- read up on (something)

1. I don't really know much about the company I have an interview with next week. I must **read up on** them before my interview. (research, find out more information with purpose)

Phrasal verbs with 'read' (into) examples

- read (something) into (something)

1. I'm sure you're **reading** too much **into** the situation. I don't think she's angry with you, I think she's just stressed because of her job. (make an assumption about something through feelings / intuition)

Phrasal verbs with 'write' (down) examples

- write down (something) / write (something) down

1. I can't remember information very well unless I **write** it **down**. (make notes, make a written record)

Phrasal verbs with 'write' (up) examples

- write up (something) / write (something) up

1. I've researched all the information I need, but I haven't started **writing up** my report yet. (put something in to writing; e.g. a report, an assignment)

Phrasal verbs with 'write' (in) examples

- write in (to something)

1. I **write in** to my favourite magazine quite often. I love it when they publish my letters. (write a letter to a newspaper, television company, or other organization, to express an opinion or ask something)

Phrasal verbs with 'write' (off) examples

- write off (something – an object)

1. The insurance company has decided to **write off** my car as it was so badly damaged in the crash. (action taken by an insurance company when a vehicle or other object that is too badly damaged to be repaired.)

- write off (something – a debt of asset)

2. Organisations are entitled to **write off** certain expenses that are required to run the business, or have been incurred in the operation of the business. (cancellation from an account of a bad debt or worthless asset)

- write off (someone / something)

3. Don't write off Tom quite yet! He's had a lot of bad luck lately and I'm sure he'll be back to his normal self soon. (to give up on someone or something as a waste of time, hopeless case)

Phrasal verbs with 'read and write' exercises

Complete the phrasal verbs with 'read and write' exercises below by choosing the correct answer (a), (b) or (c) to test your knowledge of phrasal verbs.

Example:

I love reading musicians' autobiographies. It's so interesting reading _____ their lives.



(a) about (b) into (c) over

Complete the phrasal verbs with 'read and write' exercises below by choosing the correct answer (a), (b) or (c) to test your knowledge of phrasal verbs.

1. I don't know why you bother with James. He's so selfish, if I were you I'd just write him _____ !

(a) down (b) over (c) off

2. I think I'm too sensitive sometimes. I shouldn't read so much _____ other people's behaviour.

(a) about (b) into (c) down

3. I have a lot of information to read _____ this evening, as I have an important presentation to make in the morning.

(a) down (b) off (c) up on

4. I can read _____ your report if you like . It can be difficult proof-reading your own work.

(a) about (b) up on (c) over

5. I need to write _____ the notes I made in class today, then we can go for a coffee.

(a) up (b) off (c) over

6. Jane wrote _____ to the radio station and she has won three free tickets for the show!

(a) in (b) up (c) down

7. Can you write _____ everything we need in a shopping list or I'm sure I'll forget something!

(a) in (b) off (c) down

8. The government has had to write _____ a huge amount of national debt this year because of the world wide recession.

(a) off (b) down (c) over

Answers:

1. C
2. B
3. C
4. C
5. A
6. A
7. C
8. A

Tips for better spelling

Improving your spelling is a very important factor in getting a good result in the IELTS writing, reading and listening tests. Incorrectly spelled words in reading and listening can mean that your answer is marked as incorrect, and in the writing it can mean lost points for the vocabulary section of your grade.



Modern technology, although very useful, has made poor spelling increasingly common even amongst native speakers – autocorrect on phones and computers has often corrected our errors, so when we come to write them on paper the error has become the natural way of spelling.

On this page we have gathered some useful hints to help you get better spelling skills, not just for IELTS but also for life in general.

Tip #1 for better spelling: write it down

It is a scientifically proven fact that the more you write a word using a pen and paper (not a computer) the more chance you have of remembering the spelling. Our brains process the word as an image, which is why sometimes a misspelled word can simply ‘look’ wrong even before you have identified the actual error.

Doing this two or three times a day for a few days in a row will help you get used to the shape of the word with correct spelling, making it easier to repeat under exam pressure.

Tip #2 for better spelling: find your weaknesses

Very often, people find particular words difficult to spell. Work through the vocabulary section of these pages, and practice spelling the words without looking to find which words you find difficult, then add them to your own notebook. Whenever you have a spare minute, simply write the word repeatedly (as recommended in Tip #1).

Tip #3 for better spelling: have realistic expectations

Limit the number of new words that you are trying to learn to spell, and write them in your notebook. Don't write every word you have problems with – just work on 5 at a time, repeatedly writing them down then checking over a period of a few days or more. Once you are sure you have remembered the spelling, add some new words. Adding too many words at one time becomes confusing, and spelling and meaning are often only partly or incorrectly remembered.

Tip #4 for better spelling: use memory techniques

This can often help in situations where you repeatedly spell a word incorrectly. For example, is the correct spelling SEPARATE or SEPERATE? One way to help you remember is that this word always has a **rat** in the middle, so the correct answer is SEPARATE.

Another memory technique is to spell a phrase or sentence from the letters of the word you are having trouble with. For example, take the word NECESSARY – this could be remembered as 'Never Eat Crisps, Eat Salad Sandwiches And Remain Young'.

Tip #5 for better spelling: learn some of the rules that will help you

Spelling rules in English

1. Using i before e

The rule: 'use i before e, except after c'

Examples (no c directly before):

believe, chief, niece, piece, thief

Examples (after c):

deceive, receive, ceiling

OR when the word has an "eh" sound

Examples (with 'aye' sound)

weigh, freight, neighbour

Remember that there are ALWAYS exceptions to spelling rules in English!

Common exceptions: efficient, weird, height, neither, ancient, caffeine, foreign.

2. Spelling words with *-ible* and *-able*

Not sure whether to spell a word with '-ible' or '-able'? One general spelling rule is that if you take the end of the word away and you are still left with a complete word, you can usually (but not always!) use -able. If not, use -ible.

For example:

1. *dependable* = **depend** + able
2. *adorable* + **adore** + able
3. *possible* = **poss** + ible

Spelling rules in English – more examples of words that end in -able

adaptable; amiable; believable; capable; changeable; comfortable; conceivable; debatable; desirable; disposable; durable; excitable; excusable; fashionable; impressionable; justifiable; knowledgeable; laughable; likeable; lovable; manageable; measurable; noticeable; objectionable; operable; payable; peaceable; pleasurable; preferable; reliable; serviceable; sizeable; suitable; tolerable; transferable.

Remember that there are ALWAYS exceptions to spelling rules in English!

Note the differences, where some words, e.g. knowledgeable 'keep' the 'e' from the complete word *knowledge*, but others 'drop' the 'e', e.g. believable – no 'e' from the 'complete' word *believe*.

Spelling rules in English – more examples of words that end in -ible

illegible; responsible; eligible; incredible; reversible; invincible; suggestible; contemptible; feasible; negligible; susceptible; convertible; flexible; ostensible; tangible; gullible; terrible; horrible; plausible.

Remember that there are ALWAYS exceptions to spelling rules in English! Some of the words in the list above do not follow the rules.... You just need to learn them.

3. Spelling words with **-ance** and **-ence**

The endings *-ance* and *-ence* are used to change the **verb** form of a word into a **noun** form, or to turn an **adjective** into a **noun**.

For example:

- perform (verb) becomes *performance* (noun)
- intelligent (adjective) becomes *intelligence* (noun)

You will mostly just need to learn which words are spelled in which way; however, there are a couple of spelling rules in English that can help you with spelling words ending in *-ance* and *-ence* correctly.

a. If the word is formed from a verb that ends in *-y*, *-ure*, *-ear* or *-ate* then according to the general rule the ending will usually be *-ance*.

For example:

1. comply (verb ending in *-y*) becomes *compliance* (noun)
2. endure (verb ending in *-ure*) becomes *endurance* (noun)
3. appear (verb ending in *-ear*) becomes *appearance* (noun)
4. tolerate (verb ending in *-ate*) becomes *tolerance* (noun)

Spelling rules in English – more examples of words to learn that end in *-ance*

acceptance; allowance; appliance; assistance; attendance; balance; circumstance; clearance; distance; disturbance; dominance; fragrance; grievance; guidance; ignorance; importance; instance; insurance; maintenance; nuisance; relevance; resemblance; substance.

Make a short list of words that you want to learn, and keep that list with you wherever you go. A pocket-sized notebook, or the 'notes' function on a mobile phone, is a good way to start. You can also pin short lists of words around the house – above your bed, next to your computer, even in the back of the bathroom door! Keep your list well organised, with a clear structure. For example:

WORD	WORD FAMILY	SENTENCE
keyboard	Noun	I think it is easier to use a keyboard than write by hand.

You can also add a translation of the word in your own language, but be careful. Although this can be useful at a lower level of English, the more advanced your English becomes, the more you will find that words are not exact matches between languages, and you can miss subtle differences.

Tip 3: Use the words in a sentence

Research has proven that putting a word in context in a sentence is much more effective than trying to learn a word on its own. Create sentences that are true about you and your life. For example, if you were trying to learn the word 'garden', then think about where you live – do you have a garden? Does anyone you know have a garden that you like? Your example sentence should be about something personal to you.

Tip 4: Use a dictionary

Although this is an obvious tip, you can make a dictionary more effective for you by getting into the habit of looking up new words. We recommend using a paper dictionary, as you can then put a clear mark beside the word in a bright coloured pen and look through the dictionary from time to time refreshing your memory. If you find you have forgotten the word, put it back on your list and write another sentence to help you.

Tip 5: Test yourself

Free vocabulary tests are widely available on the internet and in these pages. You should also ask a friend to help you (if you followed Tip 4, you can hand them your dictionary and ask them to find a word you have marked and ask you for the meaning – or they can give you the meaning and you tell them the word).

Tip 6: Use the new word

When you learn a new word, it is common to find that you suddenly start hearing or seeing the word a lot more, and it becomes easier to remember. However, there are also times when you learn a new word and then don't see it or use for a long time, and this will cause is to forget. One way to help you remember the word is to repeat it 5 or 6 times in a row, repeating this pattern every day for three or four days – this will help seal the new word in your long term memory.

Tip 7: Use word families

If you learn a new word – for example, happy – then find all the words in the same family (happily, happiness). That way you can quickly expand your vocabulary.

Tip 8: Read widely

This is definitely the best way to learn new words. It is also good practice to check what the word may mean in context.

Tip 9: Use a variety of ways to remember new words.

You don't have to write new words to remember them. Some words are better drawn as pictures or acted out like a play, and flash cards, with the word on one side and a definition on the other, can also be very handy. Don't feel you need to use the same techniques over and over again.

Tip 10: Find your vocabulary level

It can be helpful to find out your level of vocabulary, so you have some idea of what level you are. English vocabulary can be split into different levels, so take a look at the vocabulary section page 28.
