

# IELTS JONATHAN TIPS

*A common English proficiency test taken around the globe, IELTS remains the fundamental requirement for admissions to many institutions worldwide.*

*It is, therefore, important that you understand the test and have a reliable strategy that works for you.*

*The test itself requires you to have a basic understanding of standard English conventions, common punctuation, diction, and a good level of vocabulary but, without a clear and easy-to-follow strategy, the preparation can be stressful for any test taker.*



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*Here is my Eight-step approach to help build a solid preparation strategy for the IELTS Exam:*

## *1 - Understand the test*

*Surprisingly this is often overlooked but to avoid a disappointing performance on the day of the test, go through the IELTS format in detail.*

*In particular, focus on the structure of the test, timing, and question types, how they are presented and if possible attempting a mock test before beginning your preparation. This will help you identify your strengths and weaknesses.*

## *2 - Improve your vocabulary*

*There is no vocabulary test component in IELTS however vocabulary is a critical marking component of the test.*

*As an estimate, almost 25 percent of your total marks in the writing and speaking section are dependent on your level of vocabulary.*



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*Creating a daily reading habit is essential in this respect to not only activate what you already know but create an awareness of IELTS vocabulary and what you should try and learn before the test.*

## *Simple ways of learning new words*

- Identify words that you do not know and create a list of their antonyms and synonyms.*
- To remember new words, try and use them in sentences to help you understand the contextual meaning and usage and recycle as and when you can.*
- Say the words and sentences out loud when you are on a walk or on your commute.*

## *2 - Improve your reading speed*

*Reading widely and from different genres is the first step to improving your vocabulary, so read the news or magazine articles.*



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*Focussed reading also improves your reading speed and will help you identify essential elements of a text quickly. It will enable you to skim and scan the important parts of a text.*

## Reading for IELTS

*Read from the websites that state the average reading time of the article.*

*Time yourself and aim to finish the article within that specified time.*

*Once you achieve a good average speed, focus on IELTS reading passages.*

*These will help you navigate general passages more accurately and efficiently.*

*Some IELTS reading questions, for example, may need to comment on an author's point of view as the main idea of the passage. So, practise identifying and paying attention to the lines where the author presents their opinion.*

## **3 - Learn how to generate ideas**

*To improve your score in the writing and reading section, create an idea bank*

*– this is a list of words that are new to you, topics that you like, news*



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articles of interest, a list of ideas relevant to your field of work etc. You can also create a bank of common IELTS topic themes.

Go through this idea bank in your IELTS preparation and before the test. It will provide variety to your sentences and help improve your writing and speaking ability.

## 4 - Perfect your speaking

Ask your friends, family, or siblings to ask you questions from the IELTS Speaking test. You can find [reliable cue cards](#) for IELTS speaking on my website.

You could record your response with an app like [flip.com](#). Listening to your recordings will help you improve your speaking skills.

## 5 - Immersion

Surround yourself in an environment where you store English in your mind in both active and passive ways. Watching movies or series is ok as is listening to songs. Regularly talking or chatting with friends in English are fun ways



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to help you improve your command of the language. Paying attention to English language culture in general can also help you to.

## 6 - Start a Study Plan

Divide your entire preparation into a number of phases and set a target score based on your admission requirements.

I've created an IELTS Study plan and you can get this for free by [signing up to my newsletter](#).

In Phase one, for example, focus on understanding the fundamentals for your weak areas. Attempt topic-based tests and once you have improved upon the weak areas, start trying focussed questions or tests. Note your score and the types of questions that were tricky and you need to work on so you can revisit these areas for improvement.

Phase two is about developmental practice, for example, practising sections of the reading or listening test or completing one IELTS writing rather than two.

Phase three of the preparation is all about focussed practice.



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*In Phase three, try to make sure that you practice the complete test from start to finish.*

*Create a test-like environment at home and take the test exactly as per the instructions given. Record the scores for each test including accuracy, the time spent on each question, and your errors.*

*Get your [study plan here](#).*

## **7 - Get Feedback**

*Practise every day.*

*In fact, practise all sections every day if time affords for different reasons.*

*Reading and listening are passive skills: they require you to process the information given and answer the questions.*

*However, writing and speaking are different. They are active skills where you make content independently.*

*[Feedback from an expert](#) in these areas is crucial to identify your mistakes and work on the relevant skill.*

## **Free Recommended Resources**



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The IELTS exam can become easy if you study using the following resources:

1. *Road to IELTS: Road to IELTS is the British Council's official online preparation course. It's an excellent resource to start your preparation.*
2. *The Official Cambridge Guide to IELTS: This book is suitable for both IELTS academic as well as general training.*
3. *Cambridge IELTS 1- 15 Academic Student's Book with Answers: This book gives access to authentic IELTS test papers. It also contains tips for each section and explains different question types.*
4. *Newspapers and magazines: Pick up an English language national newspaper or subscribe online to one for daily for reading and speaking practice. Focus on the editorial section of the newspaper to cultivate a reading habit and improve vocabulary. You can also refer to magazines such as The National Geographic and Nature.*

## 8 - Planning

Lastly, writing the exam at the right time is extremely important.





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*Begin with the end in mind and plan your IELTS test date in line with your choice of university admission's deadline.*

*Start preparing at least six months before the IELTS score submission deadline to ensure that you have enough time to **prepare** (30 to 60 days), **practice** (15 to 30 days), **write the exam** and **repeat** in case you don't get the required IELTS score in the first attempt.*

*My final words are: the day before your exam, relax, sleep, and eat well.*

*You can find more advice and further IELTS learning materials at my website [ielts-jonathan.com](https://ielts-jonathan.com) and start learning with my IELTS courses at [members.ielts-jonathan.com](https://members.ielts-jonathan.com)*

*Let me help you get the IELTS score that you need.*



*Jonathan*

