

Introduction to the TOEFL® iBT

What is the TOEFL® test?

The TOEFL® iBT (Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet-based Test) is designed to assess English proficiency in non-native speakers who want to achieve academic success as well as effective communication. It is not meant to test academic knowledge or computer ability; therefore, questions are always based on material found in the test.

The TOEFL® iBT test is divided into four sections:

- Reading
- Listening
- Speaking
- Writing

TOEFL® Scores

TOEFL® scores can be used for:

- Admission into university or college where instruction is in English
- Employers or government agencies who need to determine a person's English ability
- English-learning institutes that need to place students in the appropriate level of English instruction

It is estimated that about 4,400 universities and other institutions require a certain TOEFL® test score for admission.

The exact calculation of a TOEFL® test score is complicated and not necessary for the student to understand. However, it is helpful to know that:

- Each section in the Internet-based test is worth 30 points
- The highest possible score on the iBT is 120 points
- Each institution will have its own specific score requirements

* It is very important to check with each institution individually to find out what its admission requirements are.

Registering for the TOEFL® iBT

Students who wish to take the TOEFL® test must get registration information. Registration information can be obtained online at the ETS website. The Internet address is www.ets.org/toefl.

The website provides information such as:

- testing locations
- costs
- identification requirements
- other test preparation material
- registration information
- test center locations

This information will vary depending on the country in which you take the test. Be sure to follow the requirements carefully. If you do not have the proper requirements in order, you may not be able to take the test. Remember that if you register online, you will need to have your credit card information ready.

Introduction to the Speaking Section of the TOEFL® iBT

The purpose of the speaking section is to evaluate your ability to speak coherently on your opinions and experiences as well as on information that you have read or heard.

The speaking questions fall into two categories: independent and integrated.

The prompts for speaking questions on the TOEFL® iBT can be categorized into three types:

Question	Time			
	Reading	Listening	Preparation	Speaking
Independent Q1	---	---	15 seconds	45 seconds
Independent Q2				
Integrated Q3	45 seconds	1-2 minutes	30 seconds	60 seconds
Integrated Q4				
Integrated Q5	---	1-2 minutes	30 seconds	60 seconds
Integrated Q6				

For the two independent speaking questions, you should draw upon your own experience and knowledge.

For the remaining four speaking questions, you will speak about what you read and/or hear. Your ideas need to be well-organized, and the language you use needs to be accurate enough to be easily understood.

In particular, each question type will require test-takers to organize their ideas and speak toward different goals:

Question	Type	Materials	Description
1	Independent	None	Describe your experience
2	Independent	None	Give your opinion and explain why you think this
3	Integrated	Reading	Restate the opinion of the speaker and the examples used
		Conversation	
4	Integrated	Reading	Explain how the example from the lecture supports/refutes the reading
		Lecture	
5	Integrated	Conversation	Restate suggestions and tell which you think is better
6	Integrated	Lecture	Summarize what you heard

How Speaking Will Be Scored

ETS graders will score test-takers' responses according to the following scale:

Score	General Description	Key Points
4	The response answers the question or prompt well. The speaker is easy to understand and there are only minor mistakes with grammar or pronunciation.	Fluent speech that is easy to understand and follow, appropriate use of grammar and vocabulary, ideas explained clearly
3	The response answers the question or prompt, but not all of the ideas are fully developed. The speaker can be understood, but there are some noticeable mistakes in speaking.	At least two (2) of these problems: pronunciation, pace of speech, wrong word choice, limited use of grammar structures, or incorrect grammar
2	The response gives only a basic or minimal answer to the prompt. Most sentences can be understood, but some effort is required by the listener because speech is not fluent and pronunciation is not accurate. Some ideas are not clearly explained.	At least two (2) of these problems: the speech is choppy (not fluent), there are mistakes in pronunciation, word choice is incorrect, only basic grammar is used, grammar is used poorly, only basic ideas are presented, explanations are absent or limited.
1	The response is very short, does not show full understanding of the question or prompt, and is hard for the listener to understand.	At least two (2) of these problems: poor pronunciation is used, speech is choppy (not fluent), there are long or frequent pauses, poor grammar use makes ideas difficult to understand, obviously practiced or formulaic expressions are used, there is lots of repetition of expressions in the prompt.
0	There is no response or the response is not related to the question or prompt.	There is no response to grade, or the response is not related to the question or prompt.

Test management

- You will speak into a microphone attached to a headset.
- Before you begin the speaking section, listen to the headset directions. It is very important that your microphone is working and that your voice can be heard clearly. It is also important that you can hear clearly during the listening section.
- Be aware of time constraints. Check the time with the clock shown in the title bar.
- Independent speaking questions come first.
- Note-taking is permitted. Paper will be provided by the test supervisor. These notes can be studied when preparing your response.
- If you miss something that is said in a conversation or lecture, do not panic. Forget about it, and simply keep listening. Even native speakers do not hear everything that is said.
- You must answer each question as it appears. You can NOT return to any questions later.
- Do not leave any question unanswered. You are NOT penalized for guessing an answer.

Introduction to the *Basic Skills for the TOEFL® iBT* series

Basic Skills for the TOEFL® iBT is a 3-level, 12-book test preparation series designed for beginning-level students of the TOEFL® iBT. Over the course of the series, students build on their current vocabulary to include common TOEFL® and academic vocabulary. They are also introduced to the innovative questions types found on the TOEFL® iBT, and are provided with practice of TOEFL® iBT reading, listening, speaking, and writing passages, conversations, lectures, and questions accessible to students of their level.

Basic Skills for the TOEFL® iBT enables students to build on both their language skills and their knowledge. The themes of the passages, lectures, and questions cover topics often seen on the TOEFL® iBT. In addition, the independent topics, while taking place in a university setting, are also accessible to and understood by students preparing to enter university. The academic topics are also ones that native speakers study.

Students accumulate vocabulary over the series. Vocabulary learned at the beginning of the series will appear in passages and lectures later in the book, level, and series. Each level gets progressively harder. The vocabulary becomes more difficult, the number of vocabulary words to be learned increases, and the passages, conversations, and lectures get longer and increase in level. By the end of the series, students will know all 570 words on the standard Academic Word List (AWL) used by TESOL and have a solid foundation in and understanding of the TOEFL® iBT.

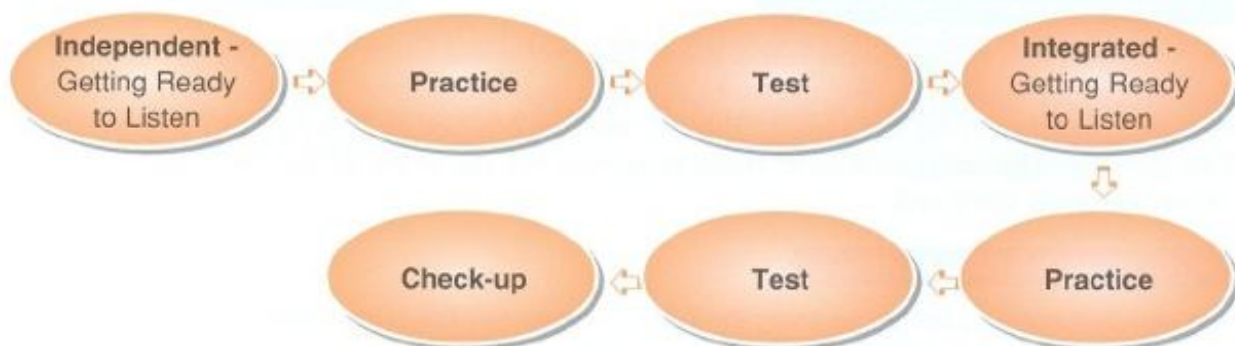
Not only will *Basic Skills for the TOEFL® iBT* start preparing students for the TOEFL® iBT, but it will also give students a well-rounded basis for either further academic study in English or further TOEFL® iBT study.

Introduction to the *Basic Skills for the TOEFL® iBT* Speaking Book

This is the first speaking book in the *Basic Skills for the TOEFL® iBT* series. Each unit focuses on a different integrated question.

Units	Integrated Question	Content
1, 5, 9	Q3	Announcement and student conversation
2, 6, 10	Q4	Reading passage and lecture
3, 7, 11	Q5	Student conversation
4, 8, 12	Q6	Lecture

Each unit is separated into 7 sections:



The following will outline the activities and aims of each section.

Independent - Getting Ready to Listen

Key Vocabulary and TOEFL® Vocabulary

Students begin by studying the vocabulary they will encounter in the following section.

TOEFL® Vocabulary includes the words that have been found to appear most often in TOEFL® preparation materials or are Academic Word List (AWL) words. TOEFL® Vocabulary includes the most important words for the student to learn in order to build his or her vocabulary before further TOEFL® study. **Key Vocabulary** includes the other words that are important for the student to know in order to understand the conversation that will follow.

Prompt

In this part, students are asked some simple questions about an experience in their own lives. This introduces students to the theme of the independent section and gets students talking about things with which they are familiar.

Practice

Prompt 1

Students ask each other questions about another experience in their own lives and then make a list of descriptive words that fit in with the prompt and that will be useful later for the test section.

Prompt 2

Students write answers to another aspect of the independent section's theme and then tell their answers to a partner. They then make another list of descriptive words that will be useful for the test section.

Prompt 3

Students are now introduced to the main prompt that will also be used in the test section and are given a list of words or phrases that will be useful for the test section.

Sample Response and Outline

Students will listen to two sample responses to the prompt and will fill out the outlines for them. This will enable students to hear the structure a response should take, and give them ideas for their own response in the test section. They will also get practice on how they can prepare for their own response using an outline. These responses will use all the vocabulary words studied at the beginning of the unit.

TOEFL® Vocabulary Practice

The next part contains sentences using the TOEFL® vocabulary the student learned at the beginning of the section. This helps students practice the words in context.

Test

The test contains the same prompt that the students were introduced to in the practice section. They will now have the opportunity to create their own response.

The test is split into three steps and an extension. The first step allows the student to read the prompt as would happen in the real TOEFL® test. The second step then enables the student to prepare his or her response and in the third step students are given the opportunity to write out their responses to make them easier for the teacher to evaluate. The extension activity enables students to then practice responding to the prompt with three partners, and to time one another.

The answer key gives two further responses, which use many of the vocabulary words learned at the beginning of the section.

Integrated - Getting Ready to Listen

The integrated section varies depending on which TOEFL® question it is focusing on. This section will therefore identify which unit is being described.

Key Vocabulary and TOEFL® Vocabulary

This contains the Key Vocabulary and TOEFL® Vocabulary students will encounter in the following section. See the independent description for further details.

Units 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10 Reading

In these units, students will be asked to read an announcement or reading passage. They are then asked two questions about what they have just read and one question about what they think the conversation/lecture will be about. The aim is to introduce the students to the theme of the integrated section.

Units 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, and 12 Listening

In these units, students will be asked to listen to the first part of a conversation or lecture. They are then asked two questions about what they have just heard and one question about what they think the rest of the conversation/lecture will be about. The aim is to introduce the students to the theme of the integrated section.

Practice

Units 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10 Announcement/Reading Passage

Students read the announcement/reading passage again and underline the key information.

Note-taking

Students now listen to the corresponding conversation or lecture. The reading and listening together contain all the vocabulary words learned at the beginning of the integrated section.

Students take notes as they listen. The notes are guided so that the student can fill in the parts that are missing.

Prompt

Students are now given the prompt to which they need to respond.

Units 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, and 12 Note-taking

Students now listen to the full conversation or lecture. The listening contains all the vocabulary words learned at the beginning of the integrated section.

Students take notes as they listen. The notes are guided so that the student can fill in the parts that are missing.

The student is then asked to answer further questions about the listening. This helps the student prepare for his or her response.

Prompt

Students are now given the prompt to which they need to respond.

All Units Sample Response and Outline

The students now listen to a sample response and complete the outline for it. This will enable students to hear the structure a response should take and practice how they can prepare for their own response with an outline.

Speaking Practice

Students should now practice saying a response using the information in the completed outline.

TOEFL® Vocabulary Practice

The next part contains sentences using the TOEFL® vocabulary the student learned at the beginning of the integrated section. This helps students practice the words in context.

Test

Units 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10

In these units, the test is split into five steps and an extension. In **step one**, students read the announcement/passage. In **step two**, they listen to the conversation/lecture and complete the notes. In **step three**, they read the prompt. In **step four**, they complete an outline for their response. In **step five**, they write out a full response and in the extension, they practice their response with three partners, and time one another.

Units 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, and 12

In these units, the test is split into four steps and an extension. In **step one**, students listen to the conversation/lecture and complete the notes. In **step two**, they read the prompt. In **step three**, they complete an outline for their response. In **step four**, they write out a full response and in the extension they practice their response with three partners, and time one another.

Check-up

Key Vocabulary Practice

This part is sentences using the Key vocabulary the student learned over the course of the unit. This helps students practice the words in context.

Basic Skills for the TOEFL® iBT

Sample Speaking Lesson Plan - 50 minutes

Homework Check	5 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that students completed their homework and talk about any problems they had.
Review	5 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the strategies discussed in the previous unit and talk about other strategies students might have employed when they did homework. • Compare the answers different students gave in their homework and ask some students to speak in front of the class while the rest of the class is split into groups and evaluates them using the form at the back of the book. All students should have to speak in front of the class at least once over the course of the book.
Main Lesson	35 min.	<p>* Students often find the independent sections easier, so these could be completed for homework. The independent and integrated sections may also be alternately taught in the classroom.</p> <p>Integrated - Getting Ready to Speak (Unit 1 used as an example)</p> <p>A. Learn the words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preview the vocabulary and have students read the words aloud. • Talk about what parts of speech the words belong to. <p>B. Read/Listen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the students read and then answer the questions with a partner. • As a class, predict what the conversation will be about. <p>Practice</p> <p>A. Announcement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the announcement again, this time as a class. Try to identify the most important information in it. <p>B. Note-taking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students listening to the conversation and take notes. • Ask students to compare their notes with a classmate and ensure they all have the main information. Emphasize that each student's notes may be written differently, but that they should all include the same main points. <p>C. Prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the prompt as a class and discuss the meaning of it. Ensure that all students have the same understanding of the prompt. <p>D. Sample response and outline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put students into groups and play the sample response. You may need to play it two or three times. The group should then have a completed outline. • Compare each group's outline and ensure that each has the correct information. <p>E. Speaking practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have each student in the group take turns saying the response by following the same completed outline. Emphasize that each response should include the same information but that sentences and vocabulary may differ. <p>F. TOEFL vocabulary practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to complete the sentences and check their answers in pairs. <p>Test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should complete the test individually. • Compare outlines and practice the response with a partner. They should evaluate each other using the form at the back of the book. <p>Independent - Getting Ready to Speak (Next unit)</p> <p>A. Learn the words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preview the vocabulary and have students read the words aloud. • Talk about what parts of speech the words belong to. <p>B. Read the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should read the prompt and answer the related questions with a partner. • Students could also ask each other further questions related to the prompt. • Have students listen to the sample and repeat it.
Wrap-up	5 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give homework (the rest of the independent section.) * The Integrated test and the check-up can also be given as homework.

Teaching Tips

- It is strongly recommended that the class go through the target vocabulary prior to starting the rest of the unit.
- It is a good idea to have students make their own vocabulary lists on their PCs or in notebooks. Putting the words under thematic categories (categories of subjects) would be an effective way to study the words.
- It is important to emphasize understanding of the main idea of the conversations and lectures. Students often listen without constructing the framework, which could cause them problems understanding the main points and how they relate to the announcement/passage and the prompt.
- The first class should take time to introduce the outline format. Then, when students are asked to use the outlines later, they are familiar and therefore not as intimidating.
- Note-taking practice needs to be done in class with the teacher's assistance in the beginning because not many students are familiar with note-taking. Gradually, have students take notes in groups, pairs, and then individually.
- Timing students' responses is an effective activity. Teachers can give a target length of time and increase it over the course of the book or series.
- Encourage students to do timed-activities even when they do their homework.
- If students have access to recording devices, then it is good practice to record themselves giving their response and listen back to it, noting where they think they could improve and how long their response is.
- Students can use the definitions and synonyms in the vocabulary section when they give their responses.
- Use the test at the end of each unit as a progress check. Students' responses should become more organized and longer as the book and series progresses.