

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
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SECTION ONE

Introduction.....	6
Part one: Primary Topics.....	7
• Unit 1: Job and Studies	7
• Unit 2: Where You Live	14
• Unit 3: Your Taste	24
• Unit 4: Family and Friends	35
• Unit 5: Sports	43
• Unit 6: Miscellaneous	46
Part two: Secondary Topics.....	51

SECTION TWO

Introduction.....	58
• Unit 1: People	59
• Unit 2: Places.....	76
• Unit 3: Events and Experiences.....	95
• Unit 4: Media.....	113
• Unit 5: Objects	129
• Unit 6: Your Country	146
• Unit 7: Your Favorites.....	153

SECTION THREE

Introduction.....	172
• Unit 1: The Environment.....	179
• Unit 2: Technology, Machines, and Buildings.....	184
• Unit 3: The Media.....	189
• Unit 4: Education.....	196
• Unit 5: Health and Leisure	201
• Unit 6: History,Traditions, and Gifts.....	209
• Unit 7: People and Relationships.....	214
• Unit 8: Tourism and Traveling.....	220
• Unit 9: Work, Finance, and Shopping	225
 Linking Words/Phrases, Fillers, etc.....	 233

Introduction

Overview of the IELTS Speaking Test

The IELTS Speaking Test is always a one-to-one interview with an examiner and can take place up to 7 days before or after the written test. It takes between 11 and 14 minutes and consists of three parts:

Section 1 Introduction and interview	After your identity is verified, you are asked a number of questions about yourself, your opinions, and other familiar topics.	4-5 minutes
Section 2 Individual long turn	You have one minute to prepare yourself to talk about one to two minutes on a topic chosen by the examiner.	3-4 minutes
Section 3 Discussion	You are asked some abstract questions, which are thematically related to the topic introduced in section 2.	4-5 minutes

Marking System

Your performance is scored at the IELTS bands (0-9) based on four main criteria:

- Fluency and Coherence
- Lexical Resource
- Grammatical Range and Accuracy
- Pronunciation

You are given a score for each area, and your overall score is the average of these four scores. The features of these areas in the IELTS marking system include:

Fluency and Coherence	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy	Pronunciation
• Ability to produce long responses • Amount of hesitation • Speed of speech • Use of linking words/phrases • Amount of self-correction	• Ability to use uncommon vocabulary • Use of idiomatic language • Paraphrasing • Ability to talk about unfamiliar topics • Ability to convey precise meaning	• Sentence formation • Accuracy of simple structures • Use and accuracy of complex structures • Range of tense use • Error density • Level of errors	• Comprehensibility • Word stress • Sentence stress • Intonation • Evidence of first-language accent

Score Description

Understanding what scores mean helps you maximize your probability of success by trying to fit the description of your desired score. IELTS examiners are given a table which contains a detailed description of requirements for every score in the four areas mentioned earlier. However, these descriptions are incomprehensible to the layman because of the use of jargon. The table on the following page is the simplified version of the table used by IELTS examiners to mark your speaking.

Band	6	7	8
Fluency and Coherence	• Able and willing to produce long responses to most questions • Produces a range of different linking words/phrases, but sometimes incorrectly • Uses some marker language (like fillers) • There is some hesitation/repetition/self-correction	• Able to produce long responses easily • Produces a wide range of linking words/phrases flexibly • Uses marker language (like fillers) easily • There is some hesitation/repetition/self-correction	• Able to produce long responses that are directly relevant to the topic easily • Produces a wide range of linking words/phrases accurately and fluently • Fluent use of a wide range of marker language • There is occasional hesitation/repetition/self-correction
Lexical Resource	• Able to produce vocabulary for most topics • Able to paraphrase • Some incorrect use of vocabulary	• Able to produce vocabulary for a variety of topics • Examples of uncommon vocabulary • Able to paraphrase • Some use of idiomatic language • Some examples of collocation • Some incorrect use of vocabulary, idioms, collocations	• A wide vocabulary range - enough for all topics • Able to use vocabulary to convey precise meaning • Able to paraphrase • Uses a wide range of uncommon words and idioms correctly • Correct use of collocations
Grammatical Range and Accuracy	• A mixture of both basic and complex structures • Basic structures are used accurately • Complex structures might contain errors • The grammar errors do not seriously influence meaning of the sentence • Tenses are often formed correctly, but not always used properly	• A wide range of sentence structures and tenses • Most sentences are without grammar errors • Use of complex sentence structures • Modals and subordinate clauses are used correctly • Small grammar errors	• A wide range of grammar structures and features • A wide range of complex sentence structures used correctly • Most sentences contain no grammar error • The occasional grammar errors are probably careless mistakes and do not affect meaning
Pronunciation	• Most of the language is comprehensible • Some examples of correct word and sentence stress • Some evidence of intonation • Some mispronounced words • Presence of first-language accent	• The language is fully comprehensible • Examples of correct word and sentence stress used to emphasize meaning • Use of intonation to emphasize important meaning • Able to vary speed of delivery to affect meaning • There may be some mispronounced words • First-language accent may still be present • Able to divide utterances in chunks	• The language is fully comprehensible • Uses intonation, word and sentence stress effectively • Fully able to use variation of speed, volume and pitch to emphasize meaning • There might be evidence of first-language accent • Some occasional minor errors with sentence intonation • Able to divide utterances in chunks

About The Book

This book is divided into 3 sections, which correspond to the sections in The IELTS Speaking Test. Every section has an introduction of its own, giving useful information about the test and how each part of the book could help you prepare yourself for the exam.

The three sections of the book consist of a number of units that include a number of frequently asked questions and model answers to them. The target words and expressions of every unit are boldfaced and their definitions have been provided at the end of each unit. If they are repeated in other parts of the book, they are again printed in bold; however, their meaning is provided in a “Review” part, which can be found at the end of most units. Moreover, all words and phrases that are not among the target words and expressions but might be unfamiliar to an average IELTS learner have been defined. At the end of the book, useful linking words/phrases, fillers, vague expressions, etc. could be found.

Note:

1. **Instead of attempting to memorize the model answers, try to learn the words, expressions, idioms, collocations, etc.**
2. **Make sure to personalize the answers and make them longer by adding more information, examples, and so on.**
3. **The ideas in this book do not necessarily reflect the personal views of the authors.**

SECTION ONE

Introduction

Part One: Primary Topics

- Unit 1: Job and Studies
- Unit 2: Where You Live
- Unit 3: Your Taste
- Unit 4: Family and Friends
- Unit 5: Sports
- Unit 6: Miscellaneous

Part Two: Secondary Topics

SECTION 1

Introduction

The number of questions asked in section one of the speaking test varies for each candidate, but generally you are asked between 6 and 15 questions on 3 familiar topics. This means the minimum number of questions for each topic is 2 and the maximum 5. Those who give longer responses are asked fewer questions.

Initially, the examiner introduces himself/herself and asks your name. In this part, you do not have to provide a long answer since the test has not begun yet. All you need to do is say your first, (middle), and last name and give the examiner your passport or national ID card to confirm your identity. The test begins when you hear this sentence:

"In this first part, I would like to ask you some questions about yourself."

As a general rule, IELTS examiners start the test with either your job/studies or where you live. The first topic is followed by two more topics, which the examiner chooses. The list of the possible topics in section one is quite long and every year, more topics are added. However, a number of them are frequently recycled.

This section falls into two parts:

- A) Primary topics:** possible questions and model answers for the topics that are used frequently
- B) Secondary topics:** possible questions for many topics that are not used as regularly as the ones in the first part

In the first part, some possible answers have been supplied for the vast majority of questions so that candidates can choose the ones which suit them best. Clearly, if the possible answers offered by the book are not contradictory, some (not all) of them can be combined to generate longer and more complex answers.

In the second part, the questions have not been responded as you need to be able to answer questions you have not heard before. It is highly recommended that before you attempt to answer the questions supplied in this part, sections two and three of the book be studied because reading those two sections will surely promote your competence and performance.



PRIMARY TOPICS



Job and Studies

Unit One

Job

1. What do you do?

- I am a head nurse, working for a public hospital called Namazi. I have a number of **duties to perform**, such as....., ..., and..... Moreover, I am responsible for.....
- I'm a successful businessman, **running** a large company called Alborz. You know, my job **involves** a variety of activities, namely, ..., and..... In addition, I must

2. Do you think you are qualified for this job?

- Absolutely. As my university **major** is related to my job, I believe I am pretty **well-informed** and really **competent** at my job.
- Indeed I am. Not only is my university major related to my job, I have **practical qualifications**.
- Definitely. I am highly **experienced** and while I don't have any **academic qualifications**, I know all **the ins and outs** of my job.

3. What do you like about your job?

- The best thing about my job is the **benefits package** offered by the company I work for. I enjoy special **privileges** like **paid-leaves**, a **company car**, and regular **pay rise**.
- My job is really **well-paid** and has excellent **promotion prospects**. Moreover, it is a real **high-powered** job.
- It is absolutely **worthwhile**. It provides me with the chance to **make a difference**, and thus brings me great **satisfaction**.
- The business I run/own is really **lucrative** and whereas I work long hours, I can go on fun-filled overseas **holidays** every year.

4. Is there something you dislike about your job?

- What annoys me most is that I **live from hand to mouth** because my job is **poorly-paid**. Furthermore, I always have to **work overtime to make ends meet**.

SECTION 1

- The major drawback is that it is a **dead-end job** and there is almost no chance of **progress**. Moreover, I don't have **job security** and my job is not likely to be **permanent**.
- The only shortcoming my job has is that it is a bit **stressful** because we are always in **competition** with other companies.

5. What are your working hours like?

- I work 8 hours a day. You know, I have to **punch in** at 8 a.m. and **punch out** at 4 p.m.
- I work **flexi-time** and I can change the time I start or finish work. However, I'd rather work in the morning.
- I do **shift work**. Um, I usually work on **even/odd days**, but at different times of the day and night.

6. What are your occupational goals for the future?

- I **have my heart set on setting up** my own **business**. I would really like to run my own **firm** and be my own boss if I got the chance.
- I intend to **further** my career; you know, to **work my way up** the **career ladder**.
- I am going to make an important **career move** by gaining more experience and **excelling** in my job.
- I am planning on **expanding** my business over the next couple of years and opening more local and foreign **branches**.

7. Does your job require any particular skills/traits?

- Businessmen need to be **creative** as being able to **think outside the box** is **vital** to this job. In addition, it is important to be prepared to **sacrifice** having free time if you wish to succeed.
- It is **imperative** to be a **team player** since being able to work closely with others is not something you can **do without** in my job. Moreover, unless you have problem-solving skills, you are not **cut out for** this job.

8. Do you prefer to work independently or on a team?

- I much prefer to work on a team. **Collaborative work** offers me a great opportunity to **broaden my horizons** and learn from others.
- I'd rather work **individually**. I am really **hard-working** and **skilled**, so I want to earn **recognition** for my **accomplishments**.

Studies

1. Tell me about your studies.

- I hold a **bachelor's degree** in mathematics. I **graduated** 10 years ago from Tehran University.
- I have a **master's degree** in architecture. I **earned** my degree in 2004.
- I am a **doctoral graduate**. I **majored** in chemistry and graduated in 2005. Shiraz University **granted** my degree.
- I am an **undergraduate student** majoring in English translation at Isfahan University. Actually I am a **freshman/sophomore/junior/senior**.

SECTION 1

- I am a **graduate student** majoring in English teaching at Tehran University.. I am currently working on my **thesis**.
- I am a **Ph.D. candidate** majoring in English teaching. I am doing my **dissertation** on the effect of motivation on learning vocabulary.

2. What are your future educational plans?

- After receiving my degree, I plan to continue my education. I am working hard to be **admitted** to a **top university**.
- I would like to **obtain a higher degree**. I have already **applied** to a number of **elite universities**.
- I would like to do/take a degree in architecture. This could help me **land a decent job**.

3. How do you like your major?

- To tell you the truth, I wish I had done something more **vocational**, like..... Unfortunately, my major doesn't **guarantee** a job.
- Not much. I was going to study....., but the **entry requirements** to that major were very high, so I had to do
- I love it. It is totally **practical** and provides a host of **job opportunities**. I can't imagine doing anything else.
- I adore my major. All graduates in architecture possess **professional qualifications** and don't need to worry about finding a job.

4. How do you like your university?

- I am fond of it. The **professors** are **the cream of the crop** and the **facilities** are **second to none**.
- I adore it. It offers **high-quality education** and also provides a relaxed friendly **atmosphere**.
- I don't really like it. Most students end up learning nothing because the professors are either lazy or **absent-minded**.
- I can't stand it anymore. The quality of education is really low and the atmosphere is totally **tense**. Another drawback is the **inadequate** facilities.

5. Is it important to have higher education in your opinion?

- Absolutely. For one thing, it opens up plenty of opportunities since many jobs require academic qualifications. In addition, it **broadens your prospect** on life.
- As far as I'm concerned, it is vital to have higher education. The more qualifications you have, the more chances you have of finding a decent job.
- Not really. Being a university graduate and holding a degree doesn't help getting a job like it used to.
- Not really. Going to university is really expensive. The **tuition fees** and the books **cost an arm and a leg** and if you live away from home, you have to pay **accommodation fees** as well.

Definitions

Job

Question 1

duties: tasks that are part of your job

perform: to do an action or a piece of work

run: to be in charge of a business, etc.

involve: If an activity involves something, that thing is an important or necessary part of it.

Question 2

major: the main subject or course of a student at college or university

well-informed: having a lot of knowledge or information about a particular subject or things in general

competent: having enough skill or knowledge to do something well

practical qualification: a skill or type of experience that you need for a particular job or activity that is connected with real situations rather than with ideas or theories

experienced: having skill or knowledge because you have done something many times

academic qualification: the degree obtained by students who successfully complete a university or college course

the ins and outs: the detailed or complicated facts of something

Question 3

benefits package: things such as medical insurance that employees receive in addition to money

privilege: an advantage that only one person or group of people has

paid leave: a period of time when you are allowed to be away from work for a holiday/vacation while being paid

company car: a car which is provided by the company that you work for

pay rise: an increase in the fixed amount of money you earn for doing your job

well-paid: providing a lot of money

promotion prospect: the possibility that someone is raised to a higher or more important position or rank

high-powered: important, with a lot of responsibility

worthwhile: important, enjoyable, interesting, etc.; worth spending time or effort on

make a difference: to improve a situation, especially people's lives

satisfaction: a pleasant feeling which you get when you receive something you wanted, or when you have done something you wanted to do

lucrative: producing a lot of money

fun-filled: full of fun

overseas: to other countries

holiday: a period of time spent traveling or resting away from home

Question 4

annoy: to make someone feel worried or upset

live from hand to mouth: to have just enough money to live on and nothing extra

poorly-paid: providing little money

work overtime: work after the usual time needed or expected in a job

make ends meet: to have enough money to pay for the things that you need

major drawback: main disadvantage

dead-end job: a job in which there is no chance of being raised to a better, more important job

progress: when someone is raised to a higher or more important position or rank

SECTION 1

job security: the guarantee that you will keep your job

not likely: not probable

permanent: continuing to exist for a long time or for all the time in the future

shortcoming: disadvantage

stressful: making you feel worried and nervous

competition: a situation in which people or organizations are trying to be more successful than others

Question 5

punch in: to record the time you arrive at work by putting a card into a special machine

punch out: to record the time you leave work by putting a card into a special machine

flexi-time: a system of working in which people work a set number of hours within a fixed period of time, but can change the time they start or finish work

shift work: a pattern of work in which you sometimes work during the day and sometimes during the night

even days: Even days of the month are 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, etc.

odd days: Odd days of the month are 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, etc.

Question 6

have your heart set on something: to want to get or achieve something very much

set up: establish

business: a commercial organization such as a company, shop/store or factory

firm: a company or business

further: to make something promote or be more successful

work your way up: move up

career ladder: a series of stages by which you can make progress in a career or an organization

career move: something that will help your career

excel: to be very good at doing something

expand: If a business expands or is expanded, new branches are opened, it makes more money, etc.

branch: one of the offices or groups that form part of a large business organization

Question 7

creative: producing or using original and unusual ideas

think outside the box: to be creative

vital: extremely important

sacrifice: to give up something that is valuable to you

wish: want

imperative: extremely important or urgent

team player: someone who is good at working closely with other people

do without: to manage without someone/something

be cut out for something: to have the qualities and abilities needed for something

Question 8

collaborative work: work that involves, or is done by, several people or groups of people

broaden someone's horizons: to increase the range of things that someone knows about or has experienced

individually: separately, rather than as a group

hard-working: always doing a lot of work

skilled: having the abilities needed to do an activity or job well

recognition: admiration and respect for your achievements

accomplishment: achievement

Studies

Question 1

bachelor's degree: a first degree at college or university

graduate: to complete a university degree successfully

master's degree: an advanced college or university degree

earn: receive

doctoral graduate: someone who has the highest college or university degree

major: to study something as your main subject at university

grant: to give someone something, usually in an official way

undergraduate student: a student who is studying for their first degree at college or university

freshman: a student who is in his or her first year at a university or college

sophomore: a student in the second year of a course of study at a college or university

junior: a student in the third year of a course of study at a college or university

senior: a student in the last year of a course of study at a college or university

graduate student: a student at a more advanced level than a first degree

currently: at the present time

thesis: a long piece of writing on a particular subject, especially one that is done for a higher college or university degree

Ph.D. candidate: a Ph.D. student

dissertation: a long piece of writing on a particular subject, especially one that is done as a part of a course at college or university

Question 2

admit: to allow someone to become a member of a school, or a university

top university: a university which is the highest in position or rank

obtain: get

higher degree: more advanced degree

apply: to make a formal request, usually in writing, for something such as a job, a place at college, university, etc.

elite university: a university which is one of the highest in position or rank

land a job: to find or get a job

decent job: good/great job

Question 3

vocational: providing skills and education that prepare you for a job

guarantee: If something guarantees something else, it makes certain that it will happen.

entry requirement: qualifications you need to be admitted to a university

practical: connected with real situations rather than with ideas or theories

a host of: a large number of

job opportunity: the chance to get a job

adore: to love someone or something very much

possess: to have or own something, or to have a particular quality

professional qualifications: qualifications that are related to work and can be obtained through special training or education

SECTION 1

Question 4

fond: having a great liking for someone or something

professor: a teacher at a university or college

the cream of the crop: the best

facilities: the buildings, equipment and services provided for a particular purpose

second to none: the best

high-quality education: excellent education

atmosphere: the feeling or mood that you have in a particular place or situation

end up: to find yourself in a place or situation that you did not intend or expect to be in

absent-minded: describes someone who often forgets things or does not pay attention to what is happening near them because they are thinking about other things

tense: If a situation is tense, it causes feelings of worry or nervousness.

inadequate: not good enough or too low in quality

Question 5

broaden someone's prospects: to increase the range of things that someone knows about or has experienced

tuition fees: the money that you pay to be taught, especially in a college or university

cost an arm and a leg: to be extremely expensive

accommodation fees: the money that you pay for a place to live

SECTION 1

2 Where You Live

Unit Two

Country

1. Where are you from?

- I come from Iran, a country in southwestern Asia, **located** on the northeastern **shore** of the Persian Gulf. Its **population** was estimated at roughly 75 million in 2012.
- I am a **citizen** of Iran, a country in the Middle East, which has a population of 75 million as reported by the latest census.

2. What languages are spoken in your country?

- Modern Persian is the **official language**, but important languages of the **minority groups** include Azeri, Arabic, and Kurdish.
- The official language and **lingua franca** in Iran is Persian. Next to it, there are **publications** and **broadcastings** in Arabic, Azeri, and Kurdish.

3. What is the climate like there?

- The **vast size** of Iran results in a varied climate, which **ranges** from **subtropical** to **subpolar**.
- Its varied **landscape** produces several different climates, including **arid**, subtropical and subpolar.

4. What are the primary religions in Iran?

- Religion in Iran is **dominated** by Islam. Actually, only 2% of Iranians are non-Muslims, namely Christians, Jews, and so on.
- The **state religion** of Iran is Islam to which 98% of Iranians belong. Non-Muslims like Christians, Jews, etc. account for the remaining 2% of the population.

5. Are/Is there any traditional arts/music you recommend to a visitor to your country?

- Listening to Iranian **folk music**, which is marked by **unique vocal styles** and **distinct musical instruments**, such as “the Tar”, “the Santur” and “the Setar”, is a **must-do** and highly **recommended** in Iran.
- I strongly recommend watching “Ta’zia”, a type of **passion play** which **depicts** events of the Shia religious history. However, to watch it, you must visit Iran at certain times of the year.

6. What can people buy as a souvenir of your country?

- In my opinion, “Khatamkari”, which is a Persian form of **marquetry**. Actually, Khatamkari, or **inlaid articles**, are made by decorating the surface of wooden stuff with pieces of wood, bones, and other things.
- Persian carpet in general, and **hand-woven** carpet in particular, is the most **distinguished manifestation** of Iranian culture and art and absolutely **exquisite**.

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