

THE iBT

The iBT is a timed test that consists of the four sections listed below.

Section 1	Reading 3–4 Passages	60–100 minutes 12–14 questions per passage
Section 2	Listening 2–3 Conversations 4–6 Lectures	60–90 minutes 5 questions per conversation 6 questions per lecture
Section 3	Speaking 2 Independent Tasks 4 Integrated Tasks	20 minutes
Section 4	Writing 1 Integrated Task 1 Independent Task	50 minutes

SECTION 1: READING

The iBT reading section is presented in two formats. The short format iBT gives you three passages of approximately 700 words. The long format contains four passages. After each passage, you will answer 12–14 test questions. If you are taking the long format iBT, only three sets of the test questions will be answered. The responses to the questions for the other two passages will be evaluated by ETS for use on future iBTs. You will have 60 minutes to read all of the passages and respond to the questions (100 minutes for the long format). You will be allowed to take notes while you read. You will see some words or phrases highlighted. You may see an explanation or definition of the word or phrase by clicking on it.

The majority of questions in this section are in the multiple-choice format. Make your answer choice for each and proceed to the next question by clicking on **Next**. To return to the previous question, click on **Back**. At any time, you can click on **Review** to see a list of the questions that you have and have not answered. You may return to any question while you are working on

this section, but once you have left the reading section, you may not return to it. A clock will appear on the screen to help you manage your time

In this section, you first read the passage completely. You do so by using the scroll bar to view the entire passage on the screen. The computer will not give you the questions until you have scrolled the entire reading selection. At that point, click on **Next**.

There are different response formats in the reading section. These involve clicking on a word, phrase, or sentence. Vocabulary items are usually tested by asking you to click on another word in the text that means the same thing as a bolded word. Sometimes you will be asked to click on a sentence or group of sentences where the answer to a particular question can be found. Sometimes, you may be asked to insert a sentence into the text. On cohesion items, you will be asked to click on the word or phrase in the bolded part of the passage that the cohesion word refers to. After you click on the word or phrase, it will darken.

Finally, the newest type of test question (“reading to learn”) will require you to complete a summary or fill in a chart by selecting which provided text options to include. The summary questions are worth up to two points each and the chart questions are worth three to four points, depending on whether five or seven options are presented.

SECTION 2: LISTENING

The listening section of the iBT tests your ability to understand spoken English that is typically found on the campuses of colleges and universities. The listening tasks are those that are typical of social and academic conversations found in these settings.

There are two formats for the listening section. In the short listening section, you will hear two conversations and four lectures. The long format contains three conversations and six lectures. Each conversation and lecture requires you to respond to five or six questions, most of which are multiple choice. The responses to the questions of the extra conversation and lectures do not count. The questions will be evaluated by ETS for use on future iBTs. Since you do not know which passages will count, it is important for you to do your best on all of the test questions. You have 25 minutes on the short format listening section and 30 on the long format section. A clock appears

on the screen to help you manage your time. It does not include the time while you are listening to the lectures and conversations.

You will hear each lecture and conversation and each of the questions only one time. You are allowed to take notes as you listen and use them to answer questions. Once a question is answered, you are not allowed to return to it, so be sure to choose your answers carefully.

On the iBT, stimuli will come to you through headphones, not through an audio CD as is the case with the ITP TOEFL. On the iBT, you will both see and hear each question; on the ITP TOEFL, you only hear the question. Following the question, the answer choices appear on the screen; the question stays on the screen until you have made your response. For multiple-choice items, each option is preceded by an oval [, instead of the letters (A), (B), (C), or (D).

On the iBT, you will be told both the context and the topic of the conversation. The extended conversations typically involve a main presenter who gives the information, and one or two other persons who ask questions of the main presenter. All speakers are pictured on the screen. Each stimulus is normally followed by three or four questions on what was said.

The iBT lectures also include an introduction that tells you who is speaking and the topic. Going back to the minitalk on Chicago, the introduction might be as follows:

“Listen to a tour guide as he tells a group of visitors about the city of Chicago.”

In the iBT lectures, the presentations usually simulate a lecture by a professor who is using visuals. The professor and the visuals are depicted on the screen. Using your mouse, you answer each question, after it is asked.

The iBT uses a greater variety of response types. For example, there may be more than one correct answer and you will be asked to click on the oval next to all correct answers. Whenever there is more than one correct answer, you will be told how many correct answers you should identify. To see an example, read the minitalk about [Chicago](#). Then answer the following question:

What can be inferred about the weather in Chicago?

(Click on 2 answers)

- It is influenced by a glacier.
- Summers are unpleasantly warm.
- The wind is usually accompanied by cold.
- It is very dry during the winter months.
- It is temperate and stable.

In the above example, you would click on the oval to the left of second and third statement.

Sometimes, a response format is visual. In that case, you click on the correct visual with your mouse. Sometimes, a response will involve matching. In that case, you must classify each new piece of information you are given into three or four categories, according to classifications or distinctions you learned when reading the stimulus. You do this with your mouse.

SECTION 3: SPEAKING

The speaking section tests your ability to use spoken English in academic settings. This section contains six speaking tasks. Each task requires you to respond to a single question, a talk, conversation, or lecture. The tasks will require you to listen to a lecture or conversation or to read a short passage. You will then respond to a question. You may take notes and use them to help you respond to the questions.

Your speaking proficiency is evaluated on the general fluency and accuracy with which you use the English language.

The speaking section lasts 20 minutes. You are given 45 to 60 seconds to respond to each question. Before responding to questions, you will be given 15 to 20 seconds to think about how you will respond to the question. A clock appears on the screen to help you manage your time.

SECTION 4: WRITING

The writing section tests your ability to perform the writing tasks that are typically required in college courses.

In the iBT, you will respond to two writing prompts. There are two types of writing tasks, an integrated essay task and an independent writing task.

The integrated essay task combines the language skills of reading, listening, and writing.

You will read a short passage, hear a short lecture on the topic, and then write an essay in response to a specific set of directions for the essay. You may take notes and use them to help you write your essay. You will have 20 minutes to plan and write your essay.

The independent writing task asks you to give your opinion on a familiar topic. You will have 30 minutes to plan and write your essay.

A clock appears on the screen to help you manage your time as you complete your essays.