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New York

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Published by Kaplan Publishing, a division of Kaplan, Inc.
1 Liberty Plaza, 24th Floor
New York, NY 10006

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Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

ISBN 13: 978-1-4195-5027-0

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Introduction

THE DESIGN OF THIS BOOK

This introduction provides an explanation of the organization of this book, some general information about TOEFL iBT, and details about the different sections of the test. In order to get the most benefits from this book, first read this Introduction thoroughly. Then, work through the four sections of the book, in which you will learn and practice the skills and strategies that will help you to succeed on test day.

This book has four sections: Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing. The four sections are in the same order as the sections of the actual TOEFL. Each section of the book demonstrates step-by-step strategies with examples for all the possible question types and task types on the TOEFL. The strategies for each question and task type are also followed by practice exercises, so you can use the specific strategies for each question or task. The Answer Key contains the answers for multiple-choice questions and sample answers for Speaking and Writing tasks.


The Reading and Listening sections of this book include strategies for all multiple-choice question types for TOEFL iBT. It is impossible to predict the exact order of multiple-choice questions on the actual test because their selection and order varies depending on the test. Therefore, in this book the Reading and Listening question types are ordered logically so that the skills and strategies for the earlier question types can be used in later ones. The strategies for each question type build on the ideas discussed earlier, so you can review and reinforce your knowledge as you study. Finally, the discussion of each question type includes strategies for choosing the correct answer as well as strategies for eliminating incorrect answers, or distracters.

The Speaking and Writing sections of this book also review all the task types for the TOEFL iBT. These task types are discussed in the same order in which they appear on the actual TOEFL iBT. As often as possible, the strategies for the Speaking and Writing tasks also refer back to and review the concepts and principles explained in the earlier sections.

The sample passages and practice activities in all four sections of this book cover the same academic fields as the TOEFL iBT: history, hard sciences (physics, chemistry, etc.), education, business and economics, social sciences, arts and literature, and technology. Like the topics

on the actual test, the topics in this book are mixed, meaning that they are not grouped according to field or category. However, the selection of topics in this book does not indicate or imply the order or choice of topics for any actual TOEFL test. The topics in this book were chosen to represent the academic level of those on the TOEFL iBT, and they are also meant to provide variety and interest to your learning experience.

If you follow the steps and explanations in this book, you will gain more than just facts about the TOEFL. After studying this book, you will know what question types to expect on the test, how to identify the correct answer, and how to avoid distracters in the multiple-choice questions. The explanations and examples are designed to help you improve your skills for the TOEFL iBT. The reason for this focus is the unique nature of TOEFL iBT. To succeed on this test, you must be able to read, listen, speak, and write proficiently in English.

Many of the practice exercises in this book require listening passages and lectures, which are contained on CD-ROM's 1 and 2. In this book, a headphones symbol  indicates when you must listen to a recording, and an instruction indicates the CD and track numbers, such as the following: **"Play CD XX, Track XX for the following lecture. Questions XX to XX for this lecture are Tracks XX to XX on the same CD."**

When you are ready to practice the skills and strategies you learn from this book, use the four full-length practice tests on The Practice Tests CD-ROM, which accompanies this book. And remember to refer to the tutorials on the CD-ROM to review some of the information in this introduction and to learn about the functionality, special features, and passage and question presentation on the test.

To practice your listening skills, use CD-ROM's 1 and 2, which are also included with this book. It contains audio files for sample lectures, conversations, and sample responses found throughout the lessons. Transcripts of audio files are found at the end of each chapter.

TEST OVERVIEW

TOEFL iBT: A Communicative Academic English Language Skills Test

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is a standardized test designed to measure the ability to understand and to use English as it is used in a North American academic setting, such as a university. Standardized tests are widely used in the United States for college and graduate school admissions and professional licensing. The TOEFL is produced and administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), a private, not-for-profit company based in Princeton, New Jersey.

Before 1998, the TOEFL was based on a model of language testing known as discrete-point testing. A discrete-point language test measures one isolated aspect of language knowledge and makes projections from this measurement about language proficiency. For example, on earlier versions of the test, a test taker's performance on questions that tested the meaning of vocabulary words was considered to be predictive of the test taker's reading comprehension skills. A test taker's performance on questions that tested the rules of English sentence structure was considered to be predictive of the test taker's writing abilities. Over time, some people questioned how well discrete-point language testing actually predicted test taker abilities, though. Some test takers might perform well on the sentence structure questions and yet not be able to write a solid, coherent essay in English. Some test takers might perform well on the test generally and yet not be able to speak English well. ETS decided to change the TOEFL.

The TOEFL computer-based test (CBT), which was launched in 1998, maintained some discrete-point testing, but it included direct skill testing as well. A test taker's reading comprehension skills were measured on the TOEFL CBT not only by his or her knowledge of the meaning of vocabulary words, but by the ability to infer the meaning of a word from the context of a reading passage, identify the main idea of the passage, make inferences about the author's meaning, and so on—all reading skills that any good reader must use. A test taker's writing skills were measured on the TOEFL CBT not only by his or her knowledge of the rules of English sentence structure, but by the ability to apply those rules, as well as rules of discourse organization, vocabulary usage, and so on, in writing an actual essay.

The TOEFL Internet-based test (iBT), launched in 2005, includes no discrete-point testing. TOEFL iBT is a direct measure of the test taker's communicative abilities in all four basic skills—reading, listening, speaking, and writing. This change has made some test takers nervous, particularly those who have learned about English but have not had much opportunity to use English to communicate. Perhaps you are among this group! Whether you are nervous about taking TOEFL iBT or not, this book will help you prepare for the TOEFL by familiarizing you with the test and by helping you focus on the specific skills and strategies you will need to succeed on the test. For all test takers, it is important to keep in mind that recent changes to the TOEFL are ultimately to your benefit. It is possible that you may now need to work a bit harder to get ready for TOEFL iBT, but you will then be better prepared for the TOEFL and better prepared for your ultimate goal—academic study in an English-speaking environment.

TOEFL iBT Highlights

1. TOEFL iBT measures receptive and expressive skills equally. Half the total score on the test is based on reading and listening abilities—on how well you receive and understand English. Half the total score is based on speaking and writing abilities—on how well you express yourself using English. This book will help you develop your receptive and your expressive skills for the test.
2. TOEFL iBT measures integrated skills. In the Speaking and Writing sections of the test, there are several questions in which you must read and/or listen, then speak or write based on what you read and heard. This book will show you examples of the integrated skills questions and teach you how to prepare for them.
3. TOEFL iBT contains no Structure section. As already mentioned, TOEFL iBT includes no discrete-point testing. Your knowledge of the grammar of English is measured within the skills sections of the test. For example, you must correctly apply rules of English grammar when speaking on the test.
4. TOEFL iBT uses more authentic language in the reading and listening passages. For example, in the Listening section, speakers in a conversation may interrupt each other, just as two people naturally do when engaged in conversation. All the reading and listening passages in this book are modeled on the TOEFL iBT passages, so you will learn what to expect on the actual test.
5. TOEFL iBT allows note-taking. You can, and in fact should, take notes in every section of the test. This book will help you develop your note-taking skills.

TOEFL iBT Sections

TOEFL iBT has four sections:

Section	Total Time	Tasks
Reading	60–100 minutes	Read 3–5 passages Answer 12 to 14 questions on each passage
Listening	60–90 minutes	Listen to 2–3 conversations Answer 5 questions on each conversation Listen to 4–6 lectures, 2 of which include student comments Answer 6 questions on each lecture
Mandatory Break	10 minutes	
Speaking	20 minutes	Speak about familiar experience (2 independent tasks) Summarize a reading and/or a listening passage (4 integrated tasks)
Writing	50 minutes	1 integrated task: write an essay based on a reading and a listening passage (20 minutes) 1 independent task: write an essay based on a prompt only (30 minutes)

The times listed do not include the time needed to read and listen to section directions. The times listed for the Listening and Speaking sections are close approximations. There is a 10-minute break after the Listening section.

TOEFL iBT Scores

Each of the four sections of TOEFL iBT is scored on a scale of 0 to 30. The four section scores are then added together for a total test score of 0 to 120.

In addition to the section scores and total score, you will receive score descriptors as part of your result. These descriptors are brief explanations of what the numeric scores mean in terms of language skills and proficiency.

Most of the questions in the Reading and Listening sections are four-option multiple-choice.

A multiple-choice question with only one correct answer is worth one point. As you will learn in this book, several questions in these two sections are other variations of multiple-choice. Multiple-choice questions that are worth more than one point always clearly indicate their value, which can be between 2 and 4 points. Moreover, two question types in the Reading section, Drag-n-Drop Summary and Table Completion, involve partial scoring. In partial scoring, you can receive a portion of the total point value if some, but not all, of your answers are correct:

Drag-n-Drop Summary Question (3 correct answers)

3 correct answers = 2 points

2 correct answers = 1 point

1 correct answer = 0 points

Drag-n-Drop Table Completion Question (5 or 7 correct answers)

5 correct answers = 3 points

4 correct answers = 2 points

0-3 correct answers = 0 points

7 correct answers = 4 points

6 correct answers = 3 points

5 correct answers = 2 points

0-4 correct answers = 0 points

Your raw scores—the total number of questions you answer correctly in these two sections—are converted into scaled scores of 0 to 30. The speaking samples you provide in the Speaking section and the two essays that you write in the Writing section are all rated by human raters after you have completed your test. Each of your Speaking samples is given a score between 0 and 4, and each of your essays is given a score between 0 and 5. The scores that these human raters assign to your speaking samples and essays are then also converted into scaled scores of 0 to 30.

TEST SECTIONS

Reading

Section Functionality and Special Features

Reading is the first section of TOEFL iBT. In this section, reading passages appear on the right side of the divided computer screen, and questions appear on the left side. Because passages are long, it is necessary to scroll up and down to read an entire passage. You can scroll up and down by using the arrows and tab next to the passage. This function is similar to the scroll option that comes with Microsoft Word.

When the Reading section begins, you will see the instructions right away, not the first question. You should have already studied the functionality of the Reading section, so you should skip the instructions by clicking the Next button. This button brings up the first reading passage. The first question for a passage appears with the passage. In the Reading section, you can move forward through questions by clicking the Next button at the top of the screen, and move back to previous questions by clicking the Back button at the top of the screen.

The TOEFL iBT Reading section includes a Review function. Clicking the Review button at the top of the screen takes you to a Review screen where you can see all the questions in the section and their status—answered, not answered, not yet seen.

The Reading section also has a Glossary feature. A word highlighted in blue in a passage indicates that a definition is available for the word. Clicking on the word brings up this definition.

A Help button in all sections takes you to a list of topics for which helpful explanations are available.

Use The Practice Tests CD-ROM to get a better understanding of how the passages and questions appear on the screen in the Reading section of the test and of how the special features work.

Reading Passages

This section measures the ability to read, understand, and analyze short passages similar in topic and style to those that North American college and university students encounter in their courses. It contains three to five reading passages.

Each passage is roughly 675 to 725 words in length. Passages generally follow the typical American English organizational structure—a one-paragraph introduction, which includes a thesis statement, body paragraphs that develop the most important points as expressed in

the thesis statement, and a one-paragraph conclusion that summarizes. Some passages may vary from this structure, for example by containing an introduction that spreads over more than one paragraph.

Reading Questions

There are 10 different types of TOEFL iBT Reading section questions. They can be divided into three general categories, according to what each is testing: (1) understanding of language use, (2) basic comprehension, and (3) the ability to read to learn.

Language use questions test understanding of how language is used to express meanings and of how to determine these meanings while reading. For example, one type of language use question tests understanding of the meaning of a word. Basic comprehension questions test understanding of details presented in a passage, general understanding of the main idea of a passage, and the ability to make inferences based on information in a passage. Reading-to-learn questions test the ability to analyze and synthesize information while reading; in other words, they test the ability to learn while reading. For example, one of these questions tests the ability to summarize the most important points of a reading passage.

Following is an overview of the question types you will find in the Reading section of TOEFL iBT. The number of each question type per passage is a range since the exact number of each on the actual test may vary. Also, remember that the number of reading passages can vary from three to five per test.

Question Category	Question Types and Number per Passage
<p>Language Use: These questions generally come first for each passage, and they constitute about half of the total Reading section questions.</p>	<p>Vocabulary: 3 to 5 per passage Referent: 0 to 2 per passage Rhetorical structure: 0 to 2 per passage Paraphrasing: 0 to 1 per passage Coherence: 0 to 1 per passage</p>
<p>Basic Comprehension: These questions constitute roughly a third of the total Reading section questions.</p>	<p>Fact/Detail: 3 to 6 per passage NOT/EXCEPT (Negative facts): 0 to 2 per passage Inference: 0 to 2 per passage</p>
<p>Reading to Learn: These questions generally fall at the end of the set for a passage.</p>	<p>Drag-n-drop table completion: 0 to 1 per passage Drag-n-drop summary: 0 to 1 per passage</p>

Whenever a question refers to a specific word or sentence in the passage, the word or sentence is highlighted. You do not need to search for it. Also, many detail questions on TOEFL iBT identify the particular paragraph in which the answer can be found, so you do not need to scan the passage in order to find the relevant information in the passage for a detail question.

All Reading section questions are four-option multiple-choice, with the exception of drag-n-drop table completion and drag-n-drop summary. As the names suggest, you must drag answer choices with your mouse and drop them into the appropriate place in a chart. These two question types are also different from the others because they are each worth more than one point; each question can be worth 2 or 4 points. A note appears with these questions telling you their point value.

Use The Practice Tests CD-ROM to get a better understanding of how the questions appear on the screen in the Reading section of the test.

Listening

Section Functionality and Special Features

Beginning in the Listening section and continuing through to the Writing section, you wear headphones that have a special microphone for speaking. You have the opportunity to set the volume before the test resumes. After the section begins, a Volume button at the top of the screen can be used to change the volume at any time.

You use the Next button at the top of the screen to move through the Listening section. On choosing an answer for a question, you must click Next to proceed to the next question, and you also must confirm each answer choice as your final answer. Before you finalize your answer, you can change your selection, but once you confirm your answer, the next question begins right away. It is not possible to return to any question in the Listening section.

While conversations and lectures play, photos of people in academic settings appear on the screen. These photos are sometimes helpful in providing very limited context to the conversation or lecture. For example, the photo for a conversation between a student and a librarian may show two people in a library with one of them—the librarian—seated behind a reference desk. This offers a small clue to the location of the conversation. However, the photos do not offer any detailed information that is directly relevant to answering the questions. Therefore, do not study the photos; focus on listening instead.

After a conversation or lecture has finished, questions appear on the screen one at a time. Each question is spoken by a narrator as it appears on the screen, though answer choices are not. A few Listening section question types require listening again to an excerpt from the conversation or lecture. In these cases, the narrator mentions that you must listen to an excerpt, and a sign appears on the screen as the excerpt plays.

A Help button in all sections takes you to a list of topics for which helpful explanations are available. However, with the help of this book, you should be familiar enough with the test that you won't need to use the Help function.

Use CD-ROMs 1 and 2 to get a better understanding of how the conversations and lectures play.

Listening Passages

The Listening section of the TOEFL measures the ability to understand English as it is spoken in North American academic settings. The section contains:

- Two conversations between two people, each followed by five questions
- Two lectures with student comments and questions, each followed by six questions
- Two straight lectures, each followed by six questions

The conversations are generally between a student and a professor or other university staff member, such as a librarian, counselor, administrative assistant in a university office, and so on. The conversations are often of a problem/resolution type, where the student needs assistance from the other person and must explain his or her needs in an attempt to obtain the desired assistance, and the other person attempts to assist the student. The conversations average two and a half minutes or more.

The lectures are on a range of topics, covering history, art, business, science, and social science. The lectures do not assume specialized knowledge in any field, nor do they assume detailed knowledge of United States culture, government, history, and so on. However, a basic, introductory-level understanding of a variety of fields will make the lectures (and reading) much easier to follow. Lectures average four to five minutes.

Markers of authentic speech—such as pauses, digressions, interruptions, hesitations, false starts (e.g., “I’m not . . . I don’t really know the answer to that question”), idioms (e.g., “I don’t have a clue what you mean.”), and colloquial language (e.g., “The scientists were sort of surprised by the results”)—are evident in both the conversations and lectures.

Listening Questions

There are eight different question types on the TOEFL iBT Listening section. You can expect to find most or all of these question types on the lectures, but only three or four of them on the conversations. Like the Reading section questions, Listening questions can be divided into three general categories, according to what each is testing: (1) understanding of language use, (2) basic comprehension, and (3) the ability to listen to learn.

Following is an overview of the question types you will find in the Listening section of the TOEFL. The number of each type per test is an approximation since the number on the actual test may vary.

Language Use

Rhetorical function (speaker to listener): 3 to 5 per test

Rhetorical structure (text support): 5 or 6 per test

Basic Comprehension

Main idea questions (lectures only): 4 per test

Purpose questions: 3 to 5 per test

Detail questions: 12 to 14 per test

Inference questions: 3 to 5 per test

Listening to Learn

Content relationship questions (lectures only): 2 per test

For most of the language use questions, you will hear an excerpt—that is, a repeated portion—from the conversation or lecture. The excerpt contains a word, expression, or comment that is the focus of the question. Often, the proper interpretation of the excerpt depends on the intonation and exact word choice of the speaker. Therefore, you should listen carefully to these excerpts, and you should also think back to the broader context of the conversation or lecture as you hear the excerpt. The strategies in this book will make that clearer once you review them later.

All Listening section questions are four-option multiple-choice, with the exception of content relationship questions. This question type comes in two formats, both of which present five options. In the first format, you must choose the three correct answers from the five choices. In the second format, you must click Yes or No for each of the five options. In addition, one or two of the detail questions on lectures may ask you to choose two correct answers out of four options.

Use The Practice Test CD-ROM to get a better understanding of how the questions appear on the screen in the Listening section of the test.

Speaking

Section Functionality and Special Features

The first thing you must do in the Speaking section is to adjust the microphone on your headset. At the beginning of the section, an instruction will appear, asking you to give a short sample of your speech in order to adjust the recording equipment to your voice. The question may ask you to speak for only 30 seconds about a familiar topic, such as your hometown. This preliminary exercise does not count towards your mark; it is only used to ensure that the computer can record the volume of your voice accurately. This adjustment is