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# How to use this book

There are no magic formulas or secret keys that guarantee a good score in the IELTS test. The best way to prepare for the exam is to gradually improve your overall English listening, reading, writing and speaking abilities.

It is useful to train for the kinds of texts and questions you will face in the IELTS exam. *Focusing on IELTS: General Training Practice Tests* contains complete Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking practice tests for you to try out. Each test in this book is identical in format to the General Training IELTS tests themselves. You should work through these under test conditions, which means working in a room where you won't be disturbed and only spending an hour on each Reading and Writing Test. There are sample answer sheets at the end of the Listening and Reading units for you to photocopy and use each time you do a practice Listening or Reading Test. This book also contains three recorded sample Speaking Tests for you to listen to. You can read the transcripts of these Sample Tests, along with an analysis of each of the three candidates' performances. At the back of the book, there are transcripts for the Listening Tests and an answer key for the Listening and Reading Tests. There are sample answers for the Writing Tests.

You can use this book individually as an independent study guide to prepare for the General Training IELTS test or as practice materials for an IELTS preparation course with a teacher.

You may also want to work more intensively on the skills needed in the different sections of the test. For this reason *Focusing on IELTS: General Training Practice Tests* has been written to accompany *Focusing on IELTS: Reading and Writing Skills* by Jeremy Lindeck, Jannette Greenwood and Kerry O'Sullivan (Macmillan 2011) and *Focusing on IELTS: Listening and Speaking Skills* by Steven Thurlow and Kerry O'Sullivan (Macmillan 2011). These two books thoroughly examine the skills you need and teach useful strategies to help you perform well in the test.