

# What do all those letters mean?

English Proficiency Tests for International Students

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# Commonly used English tests

- TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)
  - Developed by ETS (Educational Testing Services) Princeton, NJ
  - PBT
  - TWE
  - CBT
  - iBT
- IELTS (International English Language Testing System)
  - Developed by Cambridge (UK)
- PTE (Pearson Test of English)
  - Developed by Pearson Education (publisher)

# What's an "official" TOEFL score?

- Institutional TOEFL (PBT, no TWE)
- International TOEFL (iBT or PBT (select countries))
- U.S.: Alaska, California, DC, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin
- TOEFL scores expire after two years
- TOEFL scores (iBT) can be verified by ETS

# TOEFL

The TOEFL test is offered in two formats: the **Internet-based Test (TOEFL iBT™)** or the **Paper-based Test (TOEFL PBT)**. The format you take depends on the location of your test center.

- TOEFL **iBT** is offered 30 – 40 times a year at more than 4,500 authorized test centers throughout the world. Most test takers take the internet-based test.
- TOEFL **PBT** is offered six times a year in areas where Internet-based testing is not available.

<http://www.ets.org/bin/getprogram.cgi?test=toefl>

# PBT Test Locations (3-6 times annually)

Afghanistan, Algeria, American Samoa, Angola, Aruba, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guadeloupe, Guinea, Iceland, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Martinique, Mauritania, Micronesia, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands Antilles, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad/Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe (81 countries)

[http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/tclists/PBT\\_view\\_all.html](http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/tclists/PBT_view_all.html)

# TOEFL PBT (Paper-based Test)

| Test      | Section                                 | Time Limit    | No. of Questions |  |
|-----------|---|---------------|------------------|--|
| TOEFL PBT | <b>Listening Comprehension</b>          | 30-40 minutes | 50               |  |
|           | <b>Structure and Written Expression</b> | 25 minutes    | 40               |  |
|           | <b>Reading Comprehension</b>            | 55 minutes    | 50               |  |
| TWE       | <b>Test of Written English</b>          | 30 minutes    | 1 topic          |  |

# TOEFL iBT (internet-based test)

During the test, students are asked to perform tasks that combine more than one skill, such as:

- Read, listen and then speak in response to a question
- Listen and then speak in response to a question
- Read, listen and then write in response to a question

| Section          | Time Limit       | Questions         | Tasks  |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|--|
| <b>Listening</b> | 60 – 90 minutes  | 34 – 51 questions | Listen to lectures, classroom discussions and conversations, then answer questions.        |
| <b>Reading</b>   | 60 – 100 minutes | 36 – 70 questions | Read passages from academic texts and answer questions.                                    |
| <b>Break</b>     | 10 minutes       | —                 | —  |
| <b>Speaking</b>  | 20 minutes       | 6 tasks           | Express an opinion on a familiar topic; speak based on reading and listening tasks.        |
| <b>Writing</b>   | 50 minutes       | 2 tasks           | Write essay responses based on reading and listening tasks; support an opinion in writing. |

# The IELTS: International English Language Testing System

- University of Cambridge ESOL, the British Council and IDP:IELST Australia
- Offered world wide [including the US]
- Four Sections – Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing
- General and Academic formats available
- Scores reported in 1 – 9 Bands, 9 the highest
- Section and Total scores reported
- Website: [www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org)



# IELTS – Listening section

- 30 minutes
- 40 questions in 4 sections
- Monologues and conversations [up to 4 people]
- First 2 sections deal with social needs
- Second 2 sections academic
- A variety of accents
- Students write answers on question paper
- 10 minutes at end allotted to transfer answers to answer sheet

# IELTS – Reading section

- 60 minutes
- 40 questions based on 3 reading passages
- Passages are academic in nature [journals, texts]
- Texts academic but written for non-specialists
- Texts include logical argument and non-verbal materials
- Total of 2000 – 2750 words.

# IELTS – Writing section

- 60 minutes
- Two tasks
- First task – 150 words – suggested time 20 minutes
- Second task – 250 words – suggested time 40 minutes
- First task – describe information in a chart or graph or describe a process, object, or event.
- Second task – Respond to an opinion, argument, or problem.

# IELTS: Speaking section

- 11 – 14 minutes
- One on one interview with an examiner
- Three parts
- Part One – a question about a general familiar topic. 4 – 5 minutes
- Part Two – Examinee given a prompt card on a topic, has one minute to prepare a response, speaks for 2 minutes and then questioned
- Part Three – discussion of abstract issues and concepts from topic prompt in part 2. 4 – 5 minutes

# IELTS – Overall

- Not computer based
- Scores available within 13 days
- Scores verifiable on-line
- Like TOEFL – each test version guaranteed to be new items

# PTE – Pearson Test of English - Academic

- New test
- Totally computer based
- Overall and subscores available
- All items are machine scored
- Score range 10 – 90
- Becoming more recognized and accepted
- Website: [www.pearsonpte.com](http://www.pearsonpte.com)

# PTE Academic – Speaking

- Part 1 – Personal introduction – 1 minute
  - Part 2 -Read aloud – Read a text exactly as it appears
  - Part 3 – Repeat sentence – Hear a sentence and repeat it
  - Part 4 – Describe an image
  - Part 5 - Retell a lecture – listen or watch a lecture, retell it
  - Part 6 – Answer short questions
- 
- Total time – 30 – 35 minutes

# PTE Academic – Writing

- Part 1 – Summarize written text – 20 minutes
- Part 2 – Summarize written text or write essay – 10-20 minutes
- Part 3 – Write essay – 20 minutes
  
- Total time – 50 – 60 minutes
- N.B. – Speaking and Writing together are Part 1 of the PTE



# PTE Academic – Reading

- Five item types
- Item type 1 – Multiple choice – choose single answer – text up to 300 words
- Item type 2 – Multiple choice – choose multiple answers – text up to 300 words
- Item type 3 – Reorder paragraphs – text up to 150 words
- Item type 4 – Fill in the blanks – drag words or phrases to fill in the blanks – text up to 80 words
- Item type 5 – Reading and Writing – fill in the blanks – read text and fill in blanks from choices in drop down boxes – Text up to 300 words
- Total time – 32 – 41 minutes

# PTE Academic - Listening

- Eight item types
- Item type 1 – Summarize spoken text in writing
- Item type 2 – Listen and then answer a multiple choice question with several correct answers regarding content or tone of recording
- Item type 3 – Fill in the blanks – See a transcript with blanks, fill in the blanks as you hear the recording
- Item type 4 – Listen to a text, choose the best summary
- Item type 5 – Multiple choice with single answer
- Item type 6 – Listen to text, select missing word or words that complete the text
- Item type 7 – Read transcript while listening, select incorrect words
- Item type 8 – Dictation – Listen to a sentence and type it.
- Total time 45 – 57 minutes

# PTE – Academic - Overall

- New Test
- Becoming more available world wide
- Scores available within 5 business days
- On line results available
- Score range 10 – 90

# Comparison of the three tests

| TOEFL PBT | TOEFL iBT | IELTS     | PTE    |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| 600       | 100       | 7.0       | 66 -72 |
| 550       | 80        | 6.0 – 6.5 | 50-58  |
| 500       | 61        | 5.5       | 42-58  |

# safe: The Eiken: test in practical English Proficiency – [STEP]

- Japanese test
- Tests: Reading, Listening, Speaking and Writing
- Website: [www.stepeiken.org](http://www.stepeiken.org)
- Test administered 3 times a year
- Two stages – more advanced levels take stage 2 – the next month
- Stage 1 is paper based test
- Stage 2 is one-on-one interview
- Only for Japanese students
- Useful for exchange programs especially

# Eiken – TOEFL concordance

| <b>Eiken</b> | <b>TOEFL - PBT</b> | <b>TOEFL - iBT</b> |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Grade 1      | 600                | 100                |
| Grade Pre-1  | 550                | 80                 |
| Grade 2A     | 500                | 61                 |
| Grade 2      | 450                | 45                 |
| Grade Pre-2  | 400                | 32                 |