

# Nick's Guide to the IELTS Speaking Test

Here are my suggestions for improving your IELTS score.

## What is the interviewer looking for?

Each of the following four parts is worth 25% of the score.

### 1. Fluency and Coherence

- Speak at a natural pace without too much hesitation or self-correction.
- Give your answer in an order that is easy to follow.
- Link your ideas together with words like "for example", "because", or "on the other hand".

### 2. Lexical Resource

- Use a variety of different words.
- Use those words correctly and appropriately in a sentence.
- It's better to use simple words correctly than difficult words incorrectly.

### 3. Grammatical Range and Accuracy

- Use a variety of grammar structures.
- Use that grammar correctly and appropriately.
- It's better to use simple grammar correctly than difficult grammar incorrectly.

### 4. Pronunciation

- Speak clearly so that your words and meaning are easily understood.
- Use stress, rhythm and intonation to help make yourself easily understood.
- Accents do not affect the score as long as the interviewer can understand you.

## Nick's Recommendation for the IELTS Speaking Test

The MOST IMPORTANT thing is that the interviewer can understand you.

So, **keep it simple**.

You will speak more naturally if you use simple English with confidence.

You will **get points** for speaking correctly.

You will *NOT* speak more naturally if you force high level vocabulary and grammar into your answer.

You will **not get points** if you make mistakes and use words that aren't suitable.

**If the interviewer can clearly understand your answers, you will score well.**

Now, let's look at each part of the test...

# IELTS Speaking Test Part 1

Achieve your goal by communicating clearly and confidently.

## What You Need to Do

In **Part 1** of the Speaking test, you will answer questions about yourself, your life, and your interests. This part tests your ability to communicate effectively on **familiar topics**.

## Best Strategy: Clarity and Expansion

### **Statement - Reason - Example**

*Answer Directly:* Answer the question with a clear **statement**.

*Expand:* Add a **reason** followed by an **example**.

## Examples for Common Topics

### Hobbies

Q: "Do you enjoy reading?"

A: "**Yes, I do.** I enjoy reading **because** it's both relaxing and informative. **For example**, I recently read a novel about World War II, which taught me a lot about that period."

### Work/Studies

Q: "What do you study?"

A: "**I'm studying business management.** It's a field that fascinates me **because** it combines theory with real-world applications. **For instance**, last semester, we worked on a project that involved creating a business plan for a start-up."

### Family

Q: "Do you have a large family?"

A: "**Not really, my family is quite small.** We're close-knit, though, **and** we often spend weekends together. **Just last Sunday**, we had a family dinner at my aunt's house."

### Home

Q: "Where do you live?"

A: "**I live in a suburb just outside of the city.** It's a peaceful area **with** lots of green spaces. **For example**, there's a park near my house where I often go for walks."

## Nick's Recommendation for Success

Focus on speaking clearly and confidently. Use simple language accurately rather than trying to force complex vocabulary or grammar structures into your answers. The key to achieving your goal is effectively communicating your ideas with clarity and relevance.

# IELTS Speaking Test Part 2

Achieve your goal by structuring your talk and adding details.

## What You Need to Do

In Part 2 of the Speaking test, you will be given a **topic card** and asked to **speak** about it for **1-2 minutes**. You'll have **1 minute to prepare**. This part assesses your ability to speak at length on a given topic, organise your thoughts, and include relevant details.

## Best Strategy: Structure and Detail

*Introduction:* Briefly **introduce** your topic.

*Main Points:* Discuss two or three **main points**. Use the **Statement - Reason - Example pattern**.

*Conclusion:* **Summarise** or give a final thought.

## Using the Strategy

*Prepare:* Use your preparation minute to **note down your main points**.

*Introduction:* **Introduce your topic** clearly to set the stage.

*Expand:* For each main point, make a **statement**, give a **reason**, and then **examples**.

*Conclude:* Wrap up by **summarising** or sharing a thought on the topic.

*Transitions:* Use phrases like "First...", "Another point is...", and "To wrap up..."

## Examples for a Common Topic

### An achievement you are proud of

**Introduction:** "I want to tell you about something I'm really proud of: I finished my first marathon."

#### **Main Point 1:**

**S:** "First, The main reason this was a big deal for me is because it was tough."

**R:** "Running a marathon is hard. You need to be strong in your body and mind."

**E:** "While I was getting ready for it, I had to deal with hurting myself and doubting if I could do it.

Like, I hurt my ankle badly when I was half-done with my training, and it stopped me for a few weeks."

#### **Main Point 2:**

**S:** "Another thing that made finishing the race special was my friends and family."

**R:** "They helped so much and they kept me going when it got hard."

**E:** "My friend, Alex, ran with me on the long runs to help me train. And on the day, my family was there cheering for me. They made signs and shouted to cheer me up."

**Conclusion:** "So, to wrap up, finishing the marathon is something I'm really proud of. It showed me I can do tough things, especially with people I love helping me. I'll always remember it."

## Nick's Recommendation for Success

In Part 2, the structure and clarity of your speech are key. Use examples to give each main point more detail. If you use the Statement - Reason - Example approach for each main point, your speech should be easy for the interviewer to follow.

# IELTS Speaking Test Part 3

Achieve your goal by navigating complex topics with clarity and confidence

## What You Need to Do

In Part 3, you'll engage in a **conversation with the examiner** about topics connected to what you spoke about in Part 2. This discussion typically involves **4 to 6 questions** over about **4-5 minutes**. It's your chance to show how you handle talking about more complex ideas and issues.

## Best Strategy: Stay Clear, Relevant, and Simple

*Be sure:* Make sure you **understand the question** before you answer.

*Opinion:* Begin with a clear, straightforward **statement**.

*Justify:* Provide a simple **reason** or explanation for your opinion.

*Example:* If possible, give a real-life **example** or hypothetical situation.

*Relevance:* Keep your answers **on topic**.

## Don't Panic

### Asking for Clarification

- "Could you please explain what you mean by \_\_\_\_\_?"
- "I'm sorry, could you rephrase that question for me?"
- "Would you mind clarifying what you're asking?"

### Taking a Moment to Think

- "That's an interesting question. Let me think about it for a moment."
- "Give me a second to gather my thoughts, please."
- "I just need a moment to consider my answer."

## Examples for Common Topics

### Discussing Environmental Issues

Q: "What do you think is the biggest environmental issue facing your country today?"

A: "[**S**] In my opinion, the biggest issue is plastic pollution. [**R**] It's everywhere, from our cities to our oceans. [**E**] For example, I recently read a report stating that our local rivers are becoming heavily polluted with plastic waste. This is harming marine life and affecting water quality."

### Talking About Education

Q: "Do you believe the education system in your country prepares students for real-world challenges?"

A: "[**S**] Honestly, I think there's room for improvement. [**R**] While we do learn a lot, there's not enough focus on practical skills. [**E**] For instance, we rarely get the chance to apply what we learn in real-life situations, which I believe is crucial for truly understanding and mastering those skills."

## Nick's Recommendation for Success

Remember, your goal in Part 3 is to communicate your ideas clearly and logically. You don't need to aim for perfection or complex language. Expressing a clear opinion, justifying it with a simple reason, and giving an example when you can, is a good approach to scoring points in this part of the test.

## Part 1: Introduction and Interview Examples

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself?
2. What do you like to do in your free time?
3. Do you prefer to spend time with family or friends? Why?
4. What kind of food do you like?
5. How do you usually travel to work or school?
6. Do you enjoy watching sports? Which ones?
7. What's your favourite part of the day?
8. Are you a morning person?
9. How often do you go shopping?
10. What kind of music do you listen to?

## Part 2: Long Turn Examples

1. Describe a book that you recently read and enjoyed.
2. Talk about an important event you celebrated.
3. Describe your favourite movie and why you like it.
4. Explain about a hobby or activity you do in your free time.
5. Describe a memorable trip you took.
6. Talk about a person who has had a significant influence on you.
7. Describe a place near water (such as a river, a lake, or the ocean) that you enjoyed visiting.
8. Talk about a gift you gave or received that was meaningful.
9. Describe an interesting tradition in your country.
10. Explain about a piece of technology you like using other than computers.

## Part 3: Discussion Examples

1. How do you think reading habits have changed due to digital technology?
2. What role do public celebrations play in society?
3. How has cinema influenced popular culture in your country?
4. How important is it for people to have hobbies for their personal development?
5. What impact does international tourism have on local cultures?
6. Do you think young people today lack positive role models?
7. What are the benefits of having national parks and wildlife reserves?
8. How can communities help reduce the effects of global warming?
9. Do you believe that traditional skills are still important in today's world?
10. How do you think technology has changed the way we work?