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200 IELTS Listening High-Frequency Words (2026)

Names, addresses, numbers, form traps, map language and process verbs that decide Section 1-4 marks.

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Tip: highlight 8-12 items this week, practise them in a timed mock, then unlock Pro for fuller banks and AI feedback.

Names & spelling patterns

Section 1 often spells surnames letter by letter. Train for doubles, silent letters and radio-style clarity.

Item	Category	Why it matters / tip
double L / double N	Spelling cue	Speaker says 'double'; write two letters, not one
hyphenated name	Name form	Listen for 'hyphen' between parts (e.g. Smith-Jones)
Mc- / Mac-	Surname prefix	Capitalisation may not matter; letter order does
O'Brien / O'Donnell	Apostrophe name	Do not drop the apostrophe pattern if spelling is given
Allison / Alison	Confusable spelling	Never guess; wait for letter-by-letter spelling
Bennett / Bennet	Double consonant	Final double T is a common miss
Philip / Phillip	One L vs two	Classic trap; listen for 'double L'
Catherine / Katherine	C vs K	Initial letter decides the blank
Stephen / Steven	Ph vs V	Same sound, different letters
Graham / Graeme	Variant spelling	Ask yourself: did they spell it?
Stewart / Stuart	EW vs U	Common British surname pair
Clarke / Clark	Silent E	Final E appears only if spelled
Thomson / Thompson	P insert	Listen carefully for the P
Johnston / Johnson	T vs no T	Do not auto-complete a familiar name
initial + surname	Form field	Sometimes only first letter of forename is needed
forename / first name	Form label	Same idea; match the form wording
surname / family name / last	Form label	All point to the same field
middle name / middle initial	Optional field	Often corrected after a false start
Mrs / Miss / Ms / Mr	Title	Titles change; wait for the final choice
Dr / Professor	Academic title	Common in campus booking dialogues
postcode / zip code	Address ID	Letters and numbers mixed; copy exactly
email: at / dot	Email spelling	'at' = @, 'dot' = . ; 'underscore' and 'hyphen' too
underscore (_)	Email/username	Easy to miss between words
dot-com / .co.uk	Domain ending	Write the ending the speaker confirms
capital / lower case	Spelling instruction	Rarely tested, but 'all capitals' can appear
B / P / D / T / V	Letter confusion	Minimal pairs when letters are spelled aloud
M / N	Letter confusion	Nasal pair; wait for clarification

S / F	Letter confusion	Especially over phone-style audio
A / 8 / H	Letter-number mix	In codes, A and 8 are easy to swap
oh / zero / nought	Digit 0	All can mean 0 in phone numbers and codes
double 6 / treble 2	Repeated digits	Write the digit the stated number of times
extension number	Phone field	Often after the main number; do not merge them
area code	Phone field	May be given separately from the local number
reference number	Booking ID	Mix of letters and digits; do not invent vowels
membership number	ID field	Corrections are common after the first attempt

Addresses & places

Street types, building names and place nouns fill many form blanks. Spelling and singular/plural both matter.

Item	Category	Why it matters / tip
Avenue / Ave	Street type	Often spelled; do not shorten unless the form shows it
Boulevard / Blvd	Street type	Less common; listen for full word
Crescent	Street type	Easy to misspell: c-r-e-s-c-e-n-t
Close	Street type	British housing street; not 'clothes'
Lane	Street type	Short word; still easy to mishear as 'line'
Drive	Street type	Common in suburban addresses
Terrace	Street type	Double R; candidates often write one
Gardens	Street type	Plural S is part of the name
Road / Street / Way	Street type	Do not swap these; they are different answers
flat / apartment	Housing unit	British papers prefer 'flat'
ground floor / first floor	Level	UK first floor is above ground floor
basement / cellar	Level	Map and building tours use both
reception / lobby	Building place	Common meeting-point answers
car park / parking lot	Facility	IELTS usually uses British 'car park'
hostel / hotel / guesthouse	Accommodation	Speakers often change booking type
campus / faculty / department	University place	Section 1-2 campus talks
hall of residence / dormitory	Student housing	British term is usually 'halls'
library / resource centre	Study place	Centre vs center spelling: follow audio/form
canteen / cafeteria / refectory	Food place	Same function, different labels
surgery / clinic	Health place	GP surgery is common UK listening content
chemist / pharmacy	Shop type	British 'chemist' appears often
newsagent	Shop type	High-frequency local-shop word
estate agent	Service	Housing dialogues in Section 1
post office	Service	Often next to map landmarks
town hall / civic centre	Public building	Map labelling favourite
leisure centre	Sports facility	Spelling: leisure, not 'lesure'
stadium / sports ground	Sports place	Ground may be the exact word needed
roundabout	Road feature	Map: circular junction
crossroads / junction	Road feature	Junction is broader than crossroads
pedestrian crossing / zebra crossing	Road feature	Directions often turn after this
cul-de-sac	Street form	Dead-end street; hyphenated

suburb / outskirts	Area type	Outskirts = edge of city
city centre / downtown	Area type	IELTS prefers 'city centre'
industrial estate	Area type	Workplace/map contexts
retail park	Area type	Clusters of large shops

Numbers, dates, times, prices

Write what the question asks for: a clock time, a duration, a date order, or a money unit.

Item	Category	Why it matters / tip
thirteen / thirty	Teen vs ty	Stress and final -n decide the digit
fourteen / forty	Teen vs ty	Forty has no U; fourteen does
fifteen / fifty	Teen vs ty	Classic correction trap
sixteen / sixty	Teen vs ty	Wait for confirmation words like 'sorry'
seventeen / seventy	Teen vs ty	Same trap family
eighteen / eighty	Teen vs ty	Watch vowel length
nineteen / ninety	Teen vs ty	Final answer often replaces the first figure
half past / quarter past / quarter	Clock phrases	Convert only if the form needs digits
a.m. / p.m.	Time of day	Missing this can lose the mark
noon / midday / midnight	Time words	Midnight is 12 a.m. confusion risk
fortnight	Duration	Means two weeks
decade / century	Long duration	Do not confuse with year counts
the 3rd of May / May the 3rd	Date order	UK day-month habit; copy the required form
03/05 vs 05/03	Date numerals	Know whether day or month comes first
weekday / weekend / weekday evenings	Schedule	Speakers often change the day
opening hours / closing time	Schedule	Closing time is frequently corrected
appointment / booking /	Service word	Same slot idea; match form label
deposit / instalment / balance	Payment stages	Write the stage the question asks for
fee / charge / fare / toll	Money type	Fare = transport; toll = road/bridge
discount / reduction / special	Price change	Final price often follows a rejected figure
pound / dollar / euro	Currency	Number alone is not enough if unit is required
pence / cents	Small units	50p vs £50 is a deadly trap
percent / percentage	Quantity	Form may want the bare number only
one in four / a quarter / 25%	Equivalent forms	Answer with the form the blank needs
roughly / approximately / about	Approximation	Still write the stated number, not a guess
minimum / maximum / average	Stat words	Section 4 graphs and studies
increase / decrease / remain	Trend verbs	Paraphrase of chart language
peak / low point / plateau	Trend points	Peak = highest point
per person / per night / per hour	Rate basis	Missing 'per' phrase changes meaning
serial number / batch number	ID digits	Read digit groups; do not reorder
flight number	Travel code	Letter + digits (e.g. BA mid-numbers)
gate number / platform number	Travel field	Often changed after announcement
temperature / degrees	Measurement	Section 2 weather or science talks
kilometre / mile / metre	Distance unit	Unit word may be the answer
kilogram / gram / litre / millilitre	Amount unit	Science and cooking contexts
capacity / limit / quota	Upper bound	Forms and regulations
deadline / due date	Time limit	Assignments and applications

duration: for two hours vs until 2	Duration vs clock	Match the question type exactly
year of birth vs age	Bio number	1998 is not the same answer as eighteen
odd / even numbers	Number quality	Room or seat allocation talks

Form-filling traps

Speakers correct themselves, reject first options, and paraphrase form labels. Stay flexible until the end of the turn.

Item	Category	Why it matters / tip
I was going to... but	Correction signal	Delete the first plan; write the new one
instead / rather than	Replacement	The answer comes after the change word
sorry, I mean...	Self-repair	Overwrite what you just wrote
no, wait...	Self-repair	Common before the real figure or day
not any more	Change over time	Old detail is a distractor
used to, but now	Past vs present	Form usually wants the current detail
available / unavailable / fully booked	Availability	First option is often unavailable
optional / compulsory / required	Requirement	Compulsory items fill many blanks
included / extra / excluded	What you get	Price answers depend on this
refundable / non-refundable	Payment rule	One word can be the whole answer
in advance / on the day / in	Payment timing	Listen for when money is paid
part-time / full-time / flexible	Work/study mode	Speakers often switch after asking
temporary / permanent / fixed-	Contract type	Job and housing forms
single / double / twin / family	Room type	Twin "` double
en-suite / shared bathroom	Facility	Housing and hotel bookings
vegetarian / vegan / gluten-free	Diet field	Corrections after menu talk
allergies / medical conditions	Health field	Write the exact condition named
emergency contact	Form field	Name and number may be separate questions
nationality / country of origin	Identity field	Not always the same as residence
occupation / job title	Work field	Paraphrase: teacher = educator, etc.
marital status	Identity field	Single/married/divorced answers
date of arrival / departure	Travel field	Arrival is often corrected
length of stay	Travel field	Duration, not the checkout clock time
purpose of visit	Travel field	Business/tourism/study
how did you hear about us?	Marketing field	Poster/friend/website/radio
preferred contact method	Communication	Email vs phone vs text
yes/no then detail	Two-step answer	Do not write the detail in a yes/no blank
ONE WORD ONLY	Instruction	Extra words lose the mark even if meaning is right
NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS	Instruction	Count words before you commit
and / & in answers	Word count	Check whether & counts as a word on that paper

Map labelling (directions, landmarks)

Section 2 maps reward direction phrases and fixed landmarks. Track the speaker's starting point.

Item	Category	Why it matters / tip
go straight on / go straight	Direction	Do not turn yet; keep following the path
turn left / turn right	Direction	Left/right from the speaker's facing direction
take the second left	Direction	Ordinal number is the answer key

bear left / bear right	Direction	Gentle turn, not a sharp corner
opposite / across from	Location	Facing the landmark
next to / beside / adjacent to	Location	Immediate neighbour
between A and B	Location	Needs both reference points
in front of / behind	Location	Front/back relative to the entrance often
at the end of the corridor	Location	Common indoor map phrase
at the far end	Location	Farther than the near option on the map
in the corner	Location	Specify which corner if options exist
in the middle / in the centre	Location	Central blank on many maps
just past / just before	Sequence on path	Past = after you reach the landmark
beyond the bridge	Sequence on path	Further than the bridge
via / through	Route	Path goes through a named area
follow the path / footpath	Route	Outdoor campus and park maps
staircase / stairs / lift / elevator	Indoor route	IELTS usually uses 'lift'
entrance / exit / main gate	Access point	Starting point for many tours
car park entrance	Access point	Different from the building entrance
fountain	Landmark	Classic park/campus map feature
statue / monument	Landmark	Meeting-point language
bridge	Landmark	River and garden maps
pond / lake	Landmark	Water feature used as reference
playground	Landmark	Family park maps
picnic area	Landmark	Often near toilets or car park
toilets / restrooms	Facility landmark	British papers use 'toilets'
information desk / help desk	Facility landmark	Indoor venue maps
ticket office / box office	Facility landmark	Events and stations
cloakroom / luggage storage	Facility landmark	Museums and theatres
cafe / kiosk	Facility landmark	Kiosk is smaller and outdoor-friendly

Sequence/process verbs & order words

Section 3-4 talks and process diagrams hinge on order language. Miss the sequencer, miss the stage.

Item	Category	Why it matters / tip
first / firstly / to begin with	Order word	Marks stage 1 of a process
second / secondly / next	Order word	Do not renumber if a step is optional
then / after that / afterwards	Order word	After that "` at the same time
meanwhile / at the same time	Order word	Parallel step, not a later step
previously / earlier	Order word	Refers backward; watch tense
subsequently / later on	Order word	Formal later-stage marker
finally / lastly / in the end	Order word	Final stage; 'in the end' "` 'at the end' always
prior to / before	Order word	Stage that must come first
once / as soon as	Conditioned order	Next step starts when a condition is met
until	Limit in time	Action continues up to a point
during / throughout	Time span	Throughout = for the whole period
step / stage / phase	Process noun	Diagram labels often use these
procedure / process / method	Process noun	Section 4 science and manufacturing
cycle / loop / repeat	Process noun	Circular processes (water cycle, etc.)
collect / gather / obtain	Process verb	First data or material step

measure / record / monitor	Process verb	Lab and research listening
analyse / examine / assess	Process verb	British spelling 'analyse' common
compare / contrast / evaluate	Process verb	Academic discussion tasks
select / choose / shortlist	Process verb	Application and research design
remove / extract / filter	Process verb	Manufacturing and science processes
heat / cool / freeze / thaw	Process verb	Temperature-change stages
mix / combine / dissolve	Process verb	Chemistry and cooking processes
store / keep / preserve	Process verb	Often the final practical stage
deliver / distribute / release	Process verb	End of supply or publication chain
install / assemble / construct	Process verb	Technical how-to talks
check / verify / confirm	Process verb	Quality-control stage
revise / update / modify	Process verb	Drafting and project work
submit / hand in / lodge	Process verb	Assignments and applications
hypothesis / finding / conclusion	Research order	Section 3-4 academic sequence
input / output / feedback	System words	Engineering and study-skills talks

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