



INTRODUCTION

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THIS CHAPTER

- Questions and Answers Concerning the TOEIC
- Study Plan for the TOEIC

Questions and Answers Concerning the TOEIC

More than 4,500,000 people take the TOEIC test each year, and this number is growing. The TOEIC is administered in Europe, Asia, North America, South America, and Central America. Since the test is relatively new (compared to the TOEFL, which was first given in 1963), many test-takers are unfamiliar with the TOEIC. The following are some commonly asked questions about the TOEIC. You can also learn more at the TOEIC web site <<http://www.toEIC.com>> or at my web site <<http://www.lougheed.com>>.

What Is the Purpose of the TOEIC?

Since 1979, the TOEIC (the Test of English for International Communication) has been used internationally as a standard assessment of English-language proficiency. The TOEIC has been developed by linguists, language experts, and staff at the The Chauncey Group International Ltd. to evaluate the English language skills of nonnative speakers of English in the field of business.

What Skills Are Tested on the TOEIC?

The TOEIC test consists of two sections: Listening Comprehension (100 multiple-choice questions) and Reading (100 multiple-choice questions). An audiotape is used to test Listening Comprehension.

The content of the TOEIC test is not specialized; the vocabulary and content are familiar to those individuals who use English in daily activities.

Who Uses the TOEIC?

Government agencies, multinational corporations, and international organizations use the TOEIC to ascertain the English-language capabilities of employees and prospective employees. The scores are used as an independent measure of proficiency and can be helpful in identifying personnel capable of handling language-specific responsibilities, in placing personnel in language-training programs, and in promoting personnel to positions where reliable linguistic standards are met.

Language-training programs use the TOEIC to establish language-training goals and to assess students' progress in overall English ability.

Who Takes the TOEIC?

In addition to the staffs of the companies and organizations above, individuals take the TOEIC to document their abilities for personal and professional reasons.

What Is the Format of the TOEIC?

The TOEIC consists of two sections:

Listening Comprehension

Part 1: Photographs	10 questions
Part 2: Question-Response	30 questions
Part 3: Conversations	30 questions
Part 4: Talks	30 questions

Reading

Part 5: Incomplete Sentences	40 questions
Part 6: Text Completion	12 questions
Part 7: Reading Comprehension	
• Single passages	28 questions
• Double passages	20 questions

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There are a total of 200 items; total time allowed for the test (including administrative tasks) is approximately 2½ hours. The Listening Comprehension section takes 45 minutes; the Reading section takes 75 minutes.

Why Are TOEIC Questions so Tricky?

TOEIC questions are carefully designed to test your knowledge of English. The questions must be difficult in order to discriminate between test-takers of varying abilities. That is, the difficult questions separate those who are more proficient in English from those who are less proficient. A test question and the answer options may use one or more of these tricks to test your language competence:

- Use words with similar sounds.
- Use homonyms.
- Use related words.
- Omit a necessary word.
- Include unnecessary words.
- Alter the correct word order.

How Is the TOEIC Score Determined?

Separate scores are given for Listening Comprehension (5 to 495) and Reading (5 to 495). These two sub-scores are added to arrive at the total score. The TOEIC score is represented on a scale of 10 to 990 and is based on the total number of correct answers.

What Do TOEIC Scores Mean?

There is no established minimum passing score; each institution, through experience, sets up its own acceptable score.

How Are TOEIC Scores Obtained?

TOEIC test-takers who are sponsored by companies, institutions, or organizations receive their scores from their sponsors. Those examinees who register individually to take the TOEIC receive their scores directly.

How Long Are TOEIC Scores Kept?

TOEIC representatives keep individual test scores for two years.

When and Where Can I Take the TOEIC?

The TOEIC test is offered worldwide and is generally available upon demand. The dates, times, and locations of the test sites are determined by the local TOEIC representatives. For test fees, test dates, and locations, contact the TOEIC office in your country or contact ETS in the USA. The TOEIC representative offices are listed on ETS Web site, www.ets.org.

How Can I Prepare for the TOEIC?

If you plan to take the TOEIC test, make a concerted effort to use English as much as possible, and in many different situations.

The best preparation is using a book/tape combination such as this—a program designed to help you specifically with the TOEIC. Following through with this book will:

- make you aware of certain test-taking skills;
- make you familiar with the format of the test; and
- improve your total score.

Additional suggestions are found in the next section, entitled “Study Plan for the TOEIC.”

How Can I Get a Better Score on the TOEIC?

Assuming you have prepared well for the TOEIC, you can maximize your score on the test day by following these suggestions:

- Read the directions carefully.
- Work quickly.
- Do not make notes in the test booklet.
- Guess if you’re not sure.
- Mark only one answer.

Additional suggestions are found in the next section, “Study Plan for the TOEIC.”

Study Plan for the TOEIC

There is an English expression: You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink. Similarly, this book can lead you through the TOEIC test, but it can’t make you think. Learning is a self-motivated activity. Only you can prepare yourself for the TOEIC.

It takes a lot of discipline to learn a foreign language. The following suggestions will help you develop this discipline and improve your English at the same time.

Studying Before the Test

1. *Study regularly.* Pick the same time of day to practice. If you don’t develop a routine, you won’t develop good study habits. Tell yourself that you can’t watch TV at 7:30 because that is your TOEIC time. If you do miss your scheduled time one day, don’t worry. Try to make it up later in that day. But don’t study at a different time every day. You will never get any studying done.
2. *Do a little at a time.* Tell yourself that you will study for ten minutes on the train every morning or ten minutes just before you go to bed. It is better to learn one thing very well in a short period of time than to spend long periods trying to study everything.
3. *Budget your time.* The TOEIC is a timed test, so time your study sessions. Give yourself ten minutes to study and then stop. You must use your time effectively. Learn how to take advantage of short periods of time.
4. *Write out a study schedule.* If you put something in writing, you are more likely to do it.
5. *Listen to as much English as you can.* The best way to improve your listening comprehension is by listening. As you listen, ask yourself these questions:

Who is talking?
 Who are they talking to?
 What are they talking about?
 Where are they talking?
 Why are they talking?

As you answer these questions, you will improve your ability to understand English through context.

6. *Read as much English as you can.* It should be no surprise that the best and easiest way to improve your reading comprehension is by reading. Concentrate on weekly news magazines. Look at the tables of contents, the advertisements, the announcements, and the articles. Read anything in English you can find: want ads, train schedules, hotel registration forms, etc. Again, always ask yourself questions as you read.

Use the PSRA reading strategy technique discussed on pages 279–281. That will help you on the TOEIC and every time you read anything—even reading material in your own language!

7. *Keep a vocabulary notebook.* Be on the look out for new vocabulary. Be aggressive about it. Get on the Web and start reading Web sites. Any English Web site will be useful, but you can get both reading and listening practice on many of them such as CNN and BBC. Many newspapers, magazines, zines, and blogs are on the Web. Do a search on an area of interest to you. You may be surprised how many sites are available.

Don't bother learning long lists of words. That will not help you as much as learning words in context. Look at the suggestions in the "Analyzing Vocabulary" section on page 129.

If you are addicted to lists, there are lists in Chapter 2, Listening Comprehension Review, and in Chapter 3, Reading Review. Study the lists and the examples given in context.

8. *Know your goal.* Why are you taking the TOEIC? If it's to qualify for a better position in your company, picture yourself in that job. What kind of score will you need? Work for that score (or a higher one).
9. *Develop a positive attitude.* Before Olympic athletes compete, many shut their eyes and imagine themselves skiing down the mountain, running around the track, or swimming the fastest and passing the finish line first. They imagine themselves performing perfectly, scoring the best, and winning. This is the power of positive thinking. It is not just for athletes. You can use it, too.

You must have a positive attitude when you take the TOEIC. Every night just before you fall asleep (when the right side of the brain is most receptive) repeat the following sentence ten times. "I understand English very well, and I will score very high on the TOEIC." The subconscious mind is very powerful. If you convince yourself that you can succeed, you are more likely to succeed.

10. *Relax.* Don't become anxious about the exam. Get a good night's rest the night before the exam. Don't study that night. Relax and have a good time. Your mind will be more receptive if you are calm. Relax before, during, and especially after the exam.

Using Barron's *How to Prepare for the TOEIC® Test*

1. *Become familiar with the TOEIC questions and directions.* Read the sections on the TOEIC and the introductions to the Listening Comprehension and Reading chapters carefully. They contain information and advice that will help you raise your score.
2. *Take a Model Test.* Use the Explanatory Answers as a guide to help you determine your weaknesses. If you miss more questions about prepositions than about adverbs of frequency, then you should spend your time studying prepositions. Use the lists of problems found on pages 16 and 125–126 to easily find the exercises you need most.
3. *Study efficiently.* When time is limited, concentrate on what you really need to study. Don't try to do everything if you don't have enough time.

4. *Study and use the strategies.* This book lists many strategies that will help you score well on the exam. A strategy is a technique to use to help you approach a problem. In this case, a strategy will help you comprehend spoken and written English.
5. *Study all the potential problems.* Know what to look for in the Listening Comprehension and Reading sections. You should learn how to recognize an incorrect answer.
6. *Do the exercises, Cumulative Review Exercises, and Mini-Tests.* All of the exercises are designed like those on the TOEIC. You will develop both your English ability and your test-taking skills by studying these exercises.
7. *Review the Explanatory Answers.* All of the answers for the review exercises, Mini-Tests, and the Model Tests are explained thoroughly in Chapter 7. Studying these explanations will sharpen your ability to analyze a test question. Knowing why you made an error will help you avoid the error the next time.

Chapter 6 contains Answer Keys. You can use these keys to quickly find out which questions you did not answer correctly. Then, go to the Explanatory Answers to learn where you went wrong. This will help you to focus your studies on the areas in which you need the most practice.

8. *Do a little every day.* It is worth repeating this advice. Following a consistent study routine will help you prepare for the TOEIC. You may not have to study everything in this book. Study the types of questions for which you need additional practice. But do it every day!

Taking the Test

1. *Be early.* You should avoid rushing on the test day. Leave yourself plenty of time to get to the testing center.
2. *Be comfortable.* If you can choose your own seat, pick one that is away from distractions. You don't want to be near an open door where you can watch people pass outside. On the other hand, you might want to be near a window to get good light. Try, if you can, to sit near the audio cassette player. If you can't hear well, be sure to tell the test administrator.
3. *Bring what you need.* Your test site may provide pencils with erasers, but to be safe you should bring three or four No. 2 pencils with erasers. You may find a watch useful, too.
4. *Listen to the directions.* Even though you will know the format after using this book, you should listen to the directions carefully. Listening to the familiar directions will help you relax.
5. *Answer all questions.* Even if you do not know an answer, you should mark your best answer. But try to make it an educated guess. When time is running out, just blacken any letter for the questions you have not answered—even if you didn't have time to read the question. You may be right.
6. *Match the numbers.* Make sure that the number on your answer sheet matches the number in your test book.
7. *Mark only one answer per question on the answer sheet.* Only one black mark will be counted. If you make a mistake and erase, do it completely. Do not make any other marks on the answer sheet.
8. *Answer the easy questions first.* In the Reading section, you can pace yourself. If you do not immediately know an answer to a question, skip that question and go to one you can answer. At the end of the section, come back and do the more difficult questions. This will give you an opportunity to answer as many questions as you can.
9. *Pace yourself.* The cassette player will keep you moving in the Listening Comprehension section. But in the Reading section you will be able to adjust your own pace. You will have less than 45 seconds for each question in the Reading section.
10. *Leave time at the end.* If you can, try to leave a minute at the end to go over your answer sheet and make sure you have filled in every question.
11. *Celebrate after the exam.* Go ahead. Have a good time. You deserve it. Congratulations on a job well done.