

Checklist: exam techniques and practice

How many ticks can you put next to the points on the checklist below?

	Tick (✓)
IELTS Listening	
I've done at least four full practice tests	
I know what to expect in each of the four sections	
I've seen at least one example of a 'trick' in the test	
IELTS Reading	
I know what the 'keyword technique' is, and I've practised using it	
I know how to do 'paragraph matching' questions	
I understand the difference between 'false' and 'not given'	
I've done at least four full practice tests	
IELTS Speaking	
I know how to answer part 1 questions	
I know what the six main topics are in part 2, and I've prepared ideas for them	
I've practised answering part 3 questions using the 3-step (or 4-step) answer technique	
I've done at least four full practice tests	
IELTS Writing Task 1 (Academic)	
I know how to write a one-sentence introduction	
I know what an 'overview' paragraph should include	
I've practised describing and comparing numbers, and describing trends	
I know how to describe a process	
I've written at least four task 1 reports and had them marked	
IELTS Writing Task 2	
I know how to write a two-sentence introduction, and what it should contain	
I can write a 5-sentence paragraph using a "one idea" structure	
I can write a 5-sentence paragraph using an "two or three ideas" structure	
I know how to write a one-sentence conclusion, and what it should contain	
I've written at least four task 2 essays and had them marked	

Notes:

- “four full practice tests”: I use four because there are four tests in each of the Cambridge IELTS books
- “listening tricks”: for example, the speaker gives an answer and then changes it
- “keyword technique”: you can find lessons about this on my blog
- “paragraph matching questions”: I recommend doing these last
- “six main topics in speaking part 2”: describe a person, place, object, activity, event, your favourite book / film / website
- “3-step (or 4-step) answer technique in speaking part 3”: answer, explain, example, alternative