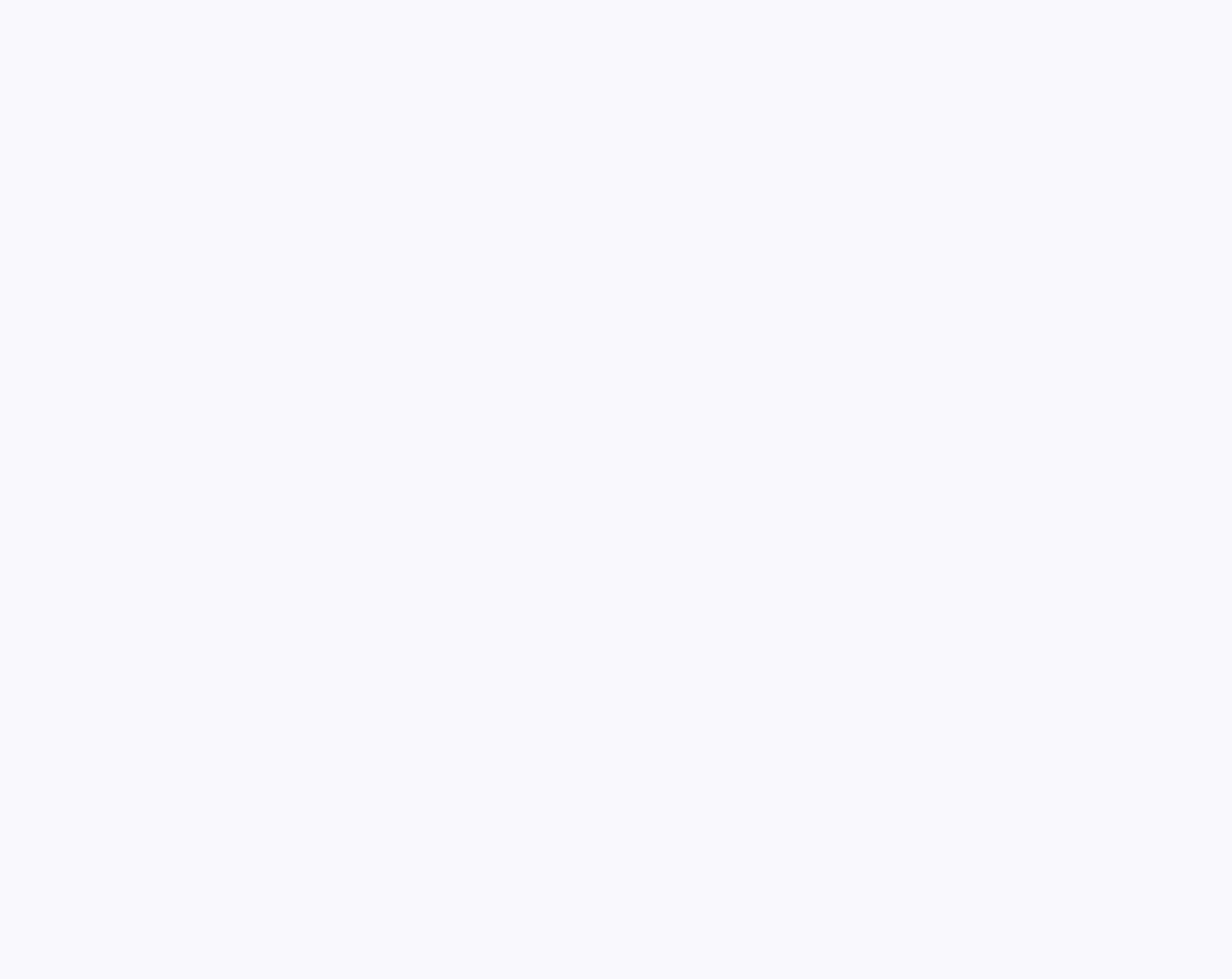


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Taking the TOEFL test can be an extremely challenging experience. Most universities have a minimum entrance score of 550. The range of grammar, reading and listening skills required to do well is enormous. One of the biggest challenges for teachers and students is identifying the correct areas to focus on in the limited amount of time available for preparation. In this feature, it is my pleasure to review an online course that specifically addresses this need. TestDEN TOEFL Trainer is an online TOEFL course which invites you to: "Join Meg and Max in the TOEFL Trainer. These two, upbeat and friendly personalities will find the areas you need to improve the most and create a special study program just for you! Your virtual trainers will also give you focused practice tests to strengthen your TOEFL skills, and send you daily test-taking tips." The course costs \$69 for a 60 day entrance period to the site. During this 60 day period you can take advantage of: personalized study guidesfull-length practice exams16 hours of audioover 7,000 questionsfull explanationse-mail test tips TestDEN's TOEFL Trainer credentials are also quite impressive. "TestDEN TOEFL Trainer is produced by ACT360 Media, a leading provider of education content. Since 1994, this innovative Vancouver company has been producing quality CD-ROM titles and Internet sites to enhance learning. Among these is the award-winning Digital Education Network and online tutorials for Microsoft Corporation." The only flaw seems to be that: "This program has not been reviewed or endorsed by ETS." During my test period, I found all of the above claims to be true. Most importantly, the course is extremely well-planned and helps test takers pinpoint exactly those areas which cause them the most difficulties. The course begins by requiring test takers to take an entire TOEFL examination called the "Pre-test Station". This examination is followed by another section entitled "Evaluation Station", which requires participants to take further sections of the examination. Both of these steps are required for the test taker to reach the heart of the program. While some people might become impatient with these steps, they are required to help the program assess problem areas. One reservation is that the test is not timed as in an actual TOEFL test. This is a minor point, as students can time themselves. The listening sections are presented using RealAudio. If the Internet connection is slow it can take quite a while to finish sections that require the opening of each listening exercise separately. Once both of the above sections have been finished, the test taker arrives at the "Practice Station". This section is by far the most impressive and important section of the program. The "Practice Station" takes the information gathered in the first two sections and prioritizes a learning program for the individual. The program is divided into three categories: Priority 1, Priority 2 and Priority 3. This section includes exercises as well as explanations and tips for the current task. In this manner, the student can focus on exactly what he/she needs to do well on the exam. The final section is a "Post-test Station" which gives the participant a final test of his/her improvement over the course of the program. Once this section of the program has been taken there is no going back to the practice section. Let's face it, taking the TOEFL test and doing well can be a long, hard process. The test itself often seems to have little to do with actually being able to communicate in the language. Instead, it can seem like a test that only measures the ability to perform well in an extremely academic setting using very dry and formal English. TestDEN's layout does a wonderful job of preparing test takers for the task while keeping the preparation rather enjoyable by its user interface. I would highly recommend TestDEN TOEFL Trainer to any student wanting to take the TOEFL. In fact, to be completely honest, I think this program may do a better job of addressing individual needs than many teachers can! Why is this? Based on in-depth pre-testing and statistical information, the program uses computer technology to find exactly those areas that need to be covered. Unfortunately, teachers are often not able to access student needs so quickly. This program is probably quite sufficient for any high-level English student preparing for the exam. The best solution for lower level students would be a combination of this program and a private teacher. TestDen can help identify and provide practice at home, and a private teacher can go into more detail when working on weak areas. Full PDF PackageDownload Full PDF PackageThis PaperA short summary of this paper3 Full PDFs related to this paperDownloadPDF Pack You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 19 to 69 are not shown in this preview. You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 75 to 78 are not shown in this preview. You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 92 to 93 are not shown in this preview. You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 117 to 182 are not shown in this preview. You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 193 to 206 are not shown in this preview. You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 217 to 219 are not shown in this preview. You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 230 to 234 are not shown in this preview. You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 245 to 255 are not shown in this preview. You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 289 to 383 are not shown in this preview. You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 423 to 432 are not shown in this preview. You're Reading a Free Preview Pages 461 to 555 are not shown in this preview. 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By the end of this short article, you will be able to distinguish the difference between the Reading, Listening, Speaking and Writing sections of the TOEFL. You will also discover five TOEFL study tips to help organize your study schedule and improve your TOEFL score. The first part of the exam is the TOEFL Reading section. In the reading section, there are three academic passages of approximately 700 words each. The subjects will consist of texts you might find in a typical university textbook. Following each passage are 10 questions about the reading passage. You will have one hour to read the three passages and answer the 30 questions in total. There are 10 types of questions in the Reading section of the TOEFL. The frequency of each question type varies. Here is a helpful chart of the question types with examples of the question phrasing. The Reading Section Question Types Question Type Frequency (per section) Time to Answer Question Phrasing 1. vocabulary 3-6 60 seconds "The word _____ in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to..." 2. factual information 4-8 90 seconds "According to paragraph 4, what..." "Which of the following..." "It is stated in paragraph 4 that..." 3. negative factual information 2-4 120 seconds "All of the following are mentioned in paragraph 3 EXCEPT..." "Which of the following is NOT mentioned..." 4. inference 2-4 90 seconds "What can be inferred from paragraph 5 about..." "Paragraph 5 implies that..." "Paragraph 5 suggests..." 5. rhetorical purpose 2-4 90 seconds "In paragraph 6, the author discusses _____ in order to..." "Why does the author mention..." 6. sentence simplification 2-3 120 seconds "Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence in paragraph 4?" 7. insert text 2-3 120 seconds "In paragraph 2 there is a missing sentence. Where would the sentence best fit?" 8. reference 0-1 60 seconds "The word _____ in paragraph 1 refers to..." 9. prose summary 2-3 150 seconds "An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage." 10. organization 0-1 150 seconds "Complete the table below to summarize information about _____ in the passage." "Match the appropriate statements to _____." For more information about the TOEFL Reading section, check out this post by Professional ESL Test Prep. After the Reading section, you will have another hour to complete the Listening section. The Listening section is divided into two identical parts. In each part, you will have three listening passages: one conversation, between a student and campus employee, and two academic lectures. The conversations last 2-4 minutes and the academic lectures are approximately five minutes each. You will be asked five questions after the conversation, ten in total, and six questions after each of the four academic lectures, 24 in total. The question types, like in the Reading section, vary. This chart explains the question types, with examples of phrasing, and the frequency of the question type: The Listening Section Question Types Question Type Frequency (per section) Question Value Question Phrasing 1. gist - content 6 1 "What is the topic of the discussion?" "What is the professor mainly discussing?" 2. gist - purpose 3-5 1 "Why does the student visit the professor?" "Why does the professor mention...?" 3. detail 10-12 1-2 "What is stated in the passage about..." "According to the speaker..." 4. understanding the speaker's attitude 3-5 1 "What is the professor's opinion of...?" "What can be inferred about the student?" 5. understanding the function 3-4 1 "What does the speaker mean when he says..." "Why does the professor say this..." 6. making inferences 5-6 1 "What can be inferred about...?" "What does the speaker imply about...?" 7. understanding organization 4 1-3 "How does the professor organize the information about..." "Curious what these conversations and lectures sound like? Exam English provides some audio samples here. Then you will get a 10 minutes break... Use this break wisely! Stand up, stretch your legs, use the restroom, or have a small snack. When you return, you will still have two hours left in your TOEFL test. When you return to your computer, you will begin the speaking section. The structure of this section is different from the reading and listening. In the speaking section, you will encounter four questions. The first is an independent question, and the next three are integrated questions. Let's take a closer look at each since they all follow a different structure. The first question is usually a paired-choice question, which means you must decide between two choices. For example: "Do you agree or disagree: all high school students should wear school uniforms." The questions range in subject matter, so there is no way to prepare a specific answer before the exam. You might be asked a question about business, travel, education, family, friendship, and so on. After the question is asked, you will be given 15 seconds to prepare a response and 45 seconds to speak. Question two is the first of three integrated speaking questions. This is probably the easiest of all the integrated speaking questions. First, you will read a short announcement about a new rule or policy on campus. Like question two, question three will begin with a short reading passage. In task four, you are expected to listen to an academic topic for two to three minutes and then report on the information you heard. You will be given 20 seconds to prepare and 60 seconds to speak. In your response, you must be able to identify the topic of the lecture and the most important details. The Speaking Section Question Types Question Type Question Details Question Explanation Time Breakdown Independent Speaking Question 1 Paired Choice Asks about your general opinion on a wide range of possible issues. You usually have just two options. 15 seconds to prepare 45 seconds to speak Integrated Speaking Question 2 Campus Announcement and Conversation Report on the opinion of one of the speakers in the conversation and explain why he or she feels that way 50 seconds to read/take notes 60-120 seconds to listen/take notes 30 seconds to prepare 60 seconds to speak Question 3 Academic Reading and Lecture Explain the academic topic introduced in the reading and describe the main points about the topic described in the lecture. 50 seconds to read/take notes 60-120 seconds to listen/take notes 30 seconds to prepare 60 seconds to speak Question 4 Academic Lecture Sum up the topic and main points from the lecture. 120-180 seconds to listen/take notes 20 seconds to prepare 60 seconds to speak Finally, you have arrived at the last section, the TOEFL Writing section. The Writing section also lasts one hour. Here, you will be expected to write an essay in response to two separate writing tasks. The first is an independent writing task, and the second is an independent writing task. The integrated writing is almost identical to question #4 in the Speaking Section above. You will read a passage, listen to a lecture, and then write about the two. The last question on the exam is the independent writing task. You will be asked for your opinion about a topic, similar to Speaking questions #1 and #2 above. Here is a breakdown of the tasks and the time allocations for the TOEFL Writing section: The Writing Section Question Types Question Type Question Explanation Time to Answer Integrated Essay - Academic reading, listening and writing (250-300 words) Connect the topic of the reading with the academic lecture. Show how the main points in the reading are contrasted by the lecturer. Only report on the information you heard and read 3 minutes to read 2-3 minutes to listen 20 minutes to write Independent Writing -Write your opinion on a random topic (400-500 words) Write about your opinion. Include supporting reasons and personal anecdotes 30 minutes to write Looking for more information on the Writing section? Check out this link from the ETS website. Woo hoo! The TOEFL is so exciting, right? Excited enough to download the PDF version of a free and complete TOEFL practice test? Download our free Practice Test Now that you are familiar with the structure of the TOEFL, it's time to check out some exclusive TST Prep TOEFL Tips. Here are five actions you must take while studying for the TOEFL so you can improve your score. This is a timed IBT test! And, each section of the TOEFL lasts somewhere between 30 minutes to an hour. Therefore, it is very important to get used to working with the clock. When studying at home, ALWAYS do practice tests under the test time constraints. This will prepare you to work under pressure and manage your time on test day. See the time breakdowns above for each section of the exam. If you are struggling, practice without a timer first. Start to incorporate the timer with your TOEFL studies once you feel more comfortable working under the clock. On the TOEFL exam, you will not have access to spellcheck. Therefore, you should be practicing with spellcheck turned off! You are going to be responsible for finding your own grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes on test day, so start practicing this now! This is especially true for the Writing section, where you will be writing 300 to 400-word essays. Give yourself extra time to edit and proofread your answers since you won't have spellcheck there to do it for you. Want more tips for how to tackle the Writing section? Check out our Ten Awesome Tips for the Writing Section of the TOEFL.® Test Throughout the test, one of the most important things to do is to take notes! You will need to give yourself a little extra time to gather your thoughts and plan your answers. So, during the exam, you need to take good notes. Therefore, you should practice taking notes on your practice tests too. I can't emphasize this enough. Note taking is important for EVERY section of the exam! Want to know more about taking notes in the Reading section? Check out Guide to TOEFL Reading Time Management As you prepare for the TOEFL, you should do a lot of TOEFL practice tests. Grading the TOEFL Reading and Listening sections of the exam is easy, but the speaking and writing sections will require professional help from a teacher or TOEFL expert. Don't make the same mistake as others. You need someone who knows about the TOEFL to listen to your speaking and read your writing responses. They will tell you your strengths, weaknesses and exactly what you need to do to improve. If you just download the free TOEFL practice PDF without asking someone to grade your speaking and writing, then you are NOT putting yourself in a position to improve. That's why there are certified English teachers out there who are available to give you feedback on your practice exams, especially for the Speaking and Writing sections. Reach out to them to get the help you need while preparing for the TOEFL. Be prepared for a noisy room on test day. At the test center, you will hear the voices of other students because everyone will be responding to the speaking section questions at different times. There will also be noise from people dropping their pencils, coughing, opening, and closing doors, etc. Trust us, it is not going to be ideal for test-taking. So, in order to simulate this kind of test environment, take your complete TOEFL IBT practice tests in a coffee shop or in another, louder area. That way, you will already know how to ignore these kinds of distractions on test day! Look, we know the TOEFL exam is a huge undertaking, and kudos to you for taking it on! The fastest and easiest way to your TOEFL score is through practice. Use this free test to get started: Complete Test #13 Did you find these TOEFL tips helpful? Is there another TOEFL tip you believe is useful? Let us know in the comments section below. And we are always here to help if you have any questions:



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