

Performance Descriptors for the TOEFL iBT® test

| Level | TOEFL iBT® Reading Section Performance Descriptors |
|--|--|
| Advanced Score range 24–30 CEFR Level C1 | <p>Test takers who receive a Reading section score at the ADVANCED level typically understand academic passages in English at the introductory university level. These passages are dense with propositions and information and can include difficult vocabulary; lengthy, complex sentences and paragraphs; and abstract or nuanced ideas that may be presented in complex ways.</p> <p>Test takers who score at the Advanced level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand a range of academic and low frequency- vocabulary as well as less common meanings of words. • Understand explicit connections among pieces of information and make appropriate inferences, even when the passage is conceptually dense and the language is complex. • Recognize the expository organization of a passage and the purpose that specific information serves within the larger context, even when the purpose of the information is not marked, and the passage is conceptually dense. • Follow a paragraph-length argument involving speculation, qualifications, counter-evidence, and subtle rhetorical shifts. • Synthesize information in passages that contain complex language and are conceptually dense. |
| High-Intermediate Score range 18–23 CEFR Level B2 | <p>Test takers who receive a Reading section score at the HIGH-INTERMEDIATE level typically understand the main ideas and important details of academic passages in English at the introductory university level, but they may have an incomplete or incorrect understanding of parts of passages that are especially dense with propositions and information, or complex in their presentation of ideas and information.</p> <p>Test takers who score at the High-Intermediate level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand common academic vocabulary, but sometimes have difficulty with low-frequency words or less common meanings of words. • Understand explicit connections among pieces of information and make appropriate inferences, but may have difficulty in parts of a passage that contain low-frequency vocabulary or that are conceptually dense, rhetorically complex, or abstract. • Distinguish important ideas from less important ones. • Often recognize the expository organization of a passage and the purpose of specific information within a passage, even when such information is not explicitly marked. • Synthesize information in a passage, but may have difficulty doing so when the passage is conceptually dense, rhetorically complex, or abstract. |
| Low-Intermediate Score range 4–17 CEFR Level B1 | <p>Test takers who receive a Reading section score at the LOW-INTERMEDIATE level typically understand some main ideas and important information presented in academic passages in English, but their overall understanding is limited. They are able to understand connections across two or more sentences when the relationships are clear and simple, such as a claim followed by a supporting example. However, they have difficulty following denser or more complex parts of a passage.</p> <p>Test takers who score at the Low-Intermediate level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand texts with basic grammar, but have inconsistent understanding of texts with complex grammatical structures. • Understand high-frequency academic vocabulary, but often have difficulty with lower-frequency words. • Locate information in a passage by matching words or relying on high-frequency vocabulary, but their limited ability to recognize paraphrases results in incomplete understanding of the connections among ideas and information. • Identify an author’s purpose when that purpose is explicitly stated or easy to infer from the context. • Recognize major ideas in a passage when the information is clearly presented, memorable, or illustrated by examples but have difficulty doing so when the passage is more demanding. |
| Below Low-Intermediate Score range 0–3 | <p>Test takers with a Reading section score below 4 have not yet demonstrated proficiency at the Low-Intermediate level.</p> |



Performance Descriptors for the TOEFL iBT® test

| Level | TOEFL iBT® Listening Section Performance Descriptors |
|--|---|
| Advanced Score range 22–30 CEFR Level C1 | <p>Test takers who receive a Listening section score at the ADVANCED level typically understand conversations and lectures that take place in academic settings. The conversations and lectures may include difficult vocabulary, abstract or complex ideas, complex sentence structures, various uses of intonation, and a large amount of information, possibly organized in complex ways.</p> <p>Test takers who score at the Advanced level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand main ideas and explicitly stated important details, even if not reinforced. • Distinguish important ideas from less important points. • Keep track of conceptually complex, sometimes conflicting, information over extended portions of a lecture. • Understand how information or examples are being used (for example, to provide evidence for or against a claim, to make comparisons or draw contrasts, or to express an opinion or a value judgment) and how pieces of information are connected (for example, in a cause-effect relationship). • Understand different ways that speakers use language for purposes other than to give information (for example, to express an emotion, to emphasize a point, to convey agreement or disagreement, or to communicate an intention). • Synthesize information, even when it is not presented in sequence, and make appropriate inferences on the basis of that information. |
| High-Intermediate Score range 17–21 CEFR Level B2 | <p>Test takers who receive a Listening section score at the HIGH-INTERMEDIATE level typically understand the main ideas and important details of conversations and lectures that take place in academic settings. The conversations and lectures may include difficult vocabulary, abstract or complex ideas, complex sentence structures, various uses of intonation, and information that must be tracked across sequences of utterances. However, lectures and conversations that are dense with information may present difficulty if the information is not reinforced.</p> <p>Test takers who score at the High-Intermediate level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand main ideas and explicitly stated important details that are reinforced (by repetition, paraphrase, or indirect reference). • Distinguish main ideas from other information. • Keep track of information over an extended portion of an information-rich lecture or conversation, and recognize multiple, possibly conflicting, points of view. • Understand how information or examples are being used (for example, to provide support for a claim), and how pieces of information are connected (for example, in a narrative explanation, a compare-and-contrast relationship, or a cause-effect chain). • Understand, though perhaps not consistently, ways that speakers use language for purposes other than to give information (for example, to emphasize a point, express agreement or disagreement, express opinions, or convey intentions indirectly), especially when the purpose is supported by intonation. • Synthesize information from adjacent parts of a lecture or conversation, and make appropriate inferences on the basis of that information, but may have difficulty synthesizing information from separate parts of a lecture or conversation. |
| Low-Intermediate Score range 9–16 CEFR Level B1 | <p>Test takers who receive a Listening section score at the LOW-INTERMEDIATE level typically understand the main idea and some important details of conversations and lectures that take place in academic settings. These conversations and lectures can include basic academic language, abstract or complex ideas that are significantly reinforced, complex sentence structures, certain uses of intonation, and a large amount of information that is repeated or significantly reinforced.</p> <p>Test takers at the Low-Intermediate level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand main ideas, even in complex discussions, when the ideas are repeatedly referred to, extensively elaborated on, or illustrated with multiple examples. • Understand explicitly-stated important details, but may have difficulty understanding details if they are not reinforced (such as through repetition or with an example) or marked as important, or if they are conveyed over several exchanges among different speakers. • Understand some ways that speakers use language to express an opinion or attitude (for example, agreement, disagreement, surprise), especially when the opinion or attitude is related to a central theme, clearly marked as important, or supported by intonation. • Understand connections between important ideas, particularly if the ideas are related to a central theme or are repeated, and can make appropriate inferences from information expressed in one or two sentences, especially when that information is reinforced. |
| Below Low-Intermediate Score range 0–8 | <p>Test takers with a Listening section score below 9 have not yet demonstrated proficiency at the Low-Intermediate level.</p> |



Performance Descriptors for the TOEFL iBT® test

| Level | TOEFL iBT® Speaking Section Performance Descriptors |
|--|--|
| Advanced Score range 25–30 CEFR Level C1 | Test takers who receive a Speaking section score at the ADVANCED level are typically able to communicate fluently and effectively on a wide range of topics with little difficulty. <p>Test takers who score at the Advanced level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak clearly and use intonation to support meaning so that speech is generally easy to understand and follow; any minor lapses do not obscure meaning. • Speak with relative ease on a range of general and academic topics, demonstrating control of an appropriate range of grammatical structures and vocabulary; any minor errors may be noticeable, but do not obscure meaning. • Convey mostly well-supported summaries, explanations, and opinions, including both concrete and abstract information, with generally well-controlled organization and cohesion; lapses may occur, but they rarely impact overall comprehensibility. |
| High-Intermediate Score range 20–24 CEFR Level B2 | Test takers who receive a Speaking section score at the HIGH-INTERMEDIATE level are typically able to communicate effectively on most general or familiar topics, and to make themselves understood when discussing more complex or academic topics. <p>Test takers who score at the High-Intermediate level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak clearly and without hesitancy on general or familiar topics, with overall good intelligibility; pauses and hesitations (to recall or plan information) are sometimes noticeable when more demanding content is produced, and any mispronunciations or intonation errors only occasionally cause problems for the listener. • Produce stretches of speech that demonstrate control of some complex structures and a range of vocabulary, although occasional lapses in precision and accuracy may obscure meaning at times. • Convey sufficient information to produce mostly complete summaries, explanations, and opinions, but some ideas may not be fully developed or may lack elaboration; any lapses in completeness and cohesion may at times affect the otherwise clear progression of ideas. |
| Low-Intermediate Score range 16–19 CEFR Level B1 | Test takers who receive a Speaking section score at the LOW-INTERMEDIATE level are typically able to talk about general or familiar topics with relative ease. <p>Test takers who score at the Low-Intermediate level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak clearly with minor hesitations about general or familiar topics; longer pauses are noticeable when speaking about more complex or academic topics, and mispronunciations may obscure meaning at times. • Produce short stretches of speech consisting of basic grammatical structures connected with “and”, “because” and “so”; attempts at longer utterances requiring more complex grammatical structures may be marked by errors and pauses for grammatical planning or repair; use vocabulary that is sufficient to discuss general or familiar topics, but limitations in range of vocabulary sometimes result in vague or unclear expression of ideas. • Convey some main points and other relevant information but summaries, explanations, and opinions are sometimes incomplete, inaccurate, and/or lack detail; long or complex explanations may lack coherence. |
| Basic Score range 10–15 CEFR Level A2 | Test takers who receive a Speaking section score at the BASIC level are typically able to communicate limited information about familiar, everyday topics. <p>Test takers who score at the Basic level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak slowly and carefully so that they make themselves understood, but pronunciation may be strongly influenced by the speaker’s first language and at times be unintelligible; speech may be marked by frequent pauses, reformulations, and false starts. • Produce mostly short utterances, connecting phrases with simple linking words (such as “and”) to make themselves understood; grammar and vocabulary are limited, and frequent pauses may occur while searching for words. • Convey some limited information about familiar topics; supporting points and/or details are generally missing, and main ideas may be absent, unclear, or not well connected. |
| Below Basic Score range 0–9 | Test takers with a Speaking section score below 10 have not yet demonstrated proficiency at the Basic level. |



Performance Descriptors for the TOEFL iBT® test

| Level | TOEFL iBT® Writing Section Performance Descriptors |
|--|--|
| Advanced Score range 24–30 CEFR Level C1 | <p>Test takers who receive a Writing section score at the ADVANCED level are typically able to write in English on a wide range of academic and non-academic topics with confidence and clarity.</p> <p>Test takers who score at the Advanced level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce clear, well-developed, and well-organized text; ungrammatical, unclear, or unidiomatic use of English is rare. • Express an opinion on a controversial issue, and support that opinion with appropriate details and explanations in writing, demonstrating variety and range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. • Select important information from multiple sources, integrate it, and present it coherently and clearly in writing, with only occasional minor imprecision in the summary of the source information. |
| High-Intermediate Score range 17–23 CEFR Level B2 | <p>Test takers who receive a Writing section score at the HIGH-INTERMEDIATE level are typically able to write in English well on general or familiar topics. When writing about complex ideas or ideas on academic topics, they can convey most of the main ideas.</p> <p>Test takers who score at the High-Intermediate level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce summaries of multiple sources that include most of the main ideas; some important ideas from the sources may be missing, unclear, or inaccurate. • Express an opinion on an issue clearly; some ideas and explanations may not be fully developed and lapses in cohesion may at times affect a clear progression of ideas. • Write with some degree of facility; grammatical mistakes or vague/incorrect uses of words may make the writing difficult to follow in some places. |
| Low-Intermediate Score range 13–16 CEFR Level B1 | <p>Test takers who receive a Writing section score at the LOW-INTERMEDIATE level are typically able to produce simple written texts in English on general or familiar topics.</p> <p>Test takers who score at the Low-Intermediate level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a simple text that expresses some ideas on an issue, but the development of ideas is limited because of insufficient or inappropriate details and explanations. • Summarize some relevant information from multiple sources, but important ideas from the sources are omitted or significantly misrepresented, especially ideas that require unfamiliar vocabulary or are complex. • Write with limited facility, with language errors obscuring connections or meaning at key junctures between ideas in the text. |
| Basic Score range 7–12 CEFR Level A2 | <p>Test takers who receive a Writing section score at the BASIC level are typically able to communicate very basic information in written English.</p> <p>Test takers who score at the Basic level typically can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce some text that is related to the topic, but with little detail and/or lack of organization. • Convey some information from the sources or some ideas on an issue, but grammatical errors, unclear expressions, and/or poor sentence structure make their writing difficult to comprehend. |
| Below Basic Score range 0–6 | <p>Test takers with a Writing section score below 7 have not yet demonstrated proficiency at the Basic level.</p> |

