

IELTS Listening Part 2: Overview

A comprehensive introductory guide to understanding the format, key skills, question types, and strategies for success.

💡 Key Concept

Part 2 features **one person speaking about an everyday, social situation**. You will hear the recording **once only**.

Where Is Part 2 in the Listening Test?

Part	Main Situation
Part 1	Everyday conversation between two people
Part 2	Everyday talk — one person speaking (monologue)
Part 3	Education or training conversation (up to 4 people)
Part 4	Academic talk or university lecture



40 Questions Total

10 questions per part across the entire test.



Questions 11–20

Part 2 covers the second block of 10 items.



Hear Once Only

There are no repeats or second listenings.

What Is Part 2 Like?



Monologue Format

One person speaks for most or all of the recording.

The topic is strictly **everyday and social** — not academic. You do *not* need special topic knowledge.

Common Topic Examples

 Tour guide talking about a town or historic building

 Information broadcast regarding a local community service

 Speaker explaining a leisure centre or local facility

 Radio presenter talking about upcoming local events

 Club member giving advice on an activity or pastime

Key Facts and Numbers

Feature	Details
Questions	10 questions (Questions 11–20)
Speakers	1 main speaker (monologue)
Length	Approximately 4–5 minutes
Repetitions	Once only
Relative Difficulty	Slightly harder than Part 1

-  **What Part 2 Tests**
-  **Following Directions:** Navigating maps, layouts, and site plans.
-  **Understanding Main Ideas:** Grasping overall purpose and structure.
-  **Finding Specific Details:** Identifying numbers, names, and places.

What Skills Does Part 2 Test?

- ✓ Understanding the **main idea** of the talk
- ✓ Finding **specific information** (names, numbers, places)
- ✓ Following the **order and structure** of the talk

- ✓ Understanding specific **details**
- ✓ Following **directions** (left, right, next to, opposite)
- ✓ Recognising **synonyms and paraphrases**

! Essential Exam Strategy

You do **not** need to understand every single word spoken. Focus strictly on listening for the specific information needed to answer the questions.

Question Types in Part 2



Visual Tasks

- Map / Plan labelling
 - Diagram labelling
- (Very common in Part 2)*



Selection Tasks

- Multiple choice (Choose 1)
- Multiple choice (Choose 2)
- Matching items



Completion Tasks

- Note & Table completion
- Sentence & Summary completion
- Flow-chart & Short-answer

Preparation Tip

Question types vary from test to test. Always read the instructions carefully before the recording starts to confirm what is required.

Map and Plan Labelling

Common Locations to Label

-  Buildings, rooms, or exhibition halls
-  Roads, footpaths, or walking trails
-  Main entrances, exits, and gates
-  Facilities (car parks, cafés, toilets)

Direction Phrase	Meaning
next to	beside something
opposite	on the other side
between	in the middle of two things
on the left / right	to the left or right side
at the end of	at the furthest point
straight ahead	forward, without turning
in the corner	where two walls/edges meet

How to Use a Map During the Recording

Before Listening

-  Locate the **starting point** ("You are here", Entrance, Main Gate).
-  Scan all lettered options on the map (A, B, C...).
-  Check for compass directions (North, South, East, West).

While Listening

-  Keep your pen or finger on the map and move along.
-  Listen closely for directional and spatial words.
-  Write the correct letter next to each question number.

Helpful Map Insight

The speaker almost always guides you around the map in a clear, logical sequence.

Completion Questions

Predict the Answer Type

Before listening, check each gap and ask what is needed:

Number: Price, date, time

👤 **Name:** Person, place

📦 **Noun:** Thing, facility

👄 **Adjective:** Quality

Golden Rules for Completion

⚠️ **Check Word Limit:** e.g., *NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER*. Writing 3 words is automatically marked incorrect.

🗣️ **Exact Words Only:** Write the exact word(s) you hear. Do not change the form or grammar.

Multiple Choice Questions

Question Formats

1. **Single Answer:** Choose 1 option from A, B, or C.
2. **Double Answer:** Choose 2 correct letters from a list of 5 (A–E).

Preparation Steps

- ✓ Read the main stem and options quickly.
- ✓ Underline key words to focus your listening.

⚠ Beware of Distractors!

- ✗ The speaker will often mention **all of the options**.
- ✗ One option may be something the speaker **rejects** or changes their mind about.
- ⚠ Do **not** select an option just because you hear the exact same word. Listen for overall meaning.

Paraphrasing: The Words Will Change

Example Paraphrase:

Question: The museum is _____ from the station.

Recording: "The museum is about ten minutes' walk away from the station."

Question Word	What You May Hear in the Recording
cheap	not very expensive
near / close	just a short walk from
free entry	you don't have to pay anything
every day	open seven days a week
begin / start	get underway / kick off
renovated	modernised / rebuilt / updated
large	spacious / big / wide

Signpost Words

Starting

- First of all...
- To begin with...
- Let's start with...

Moving On

- Now let's turn to...
- Moving on to...
- Next, I'd like to...

Adding Info

- Also...
- In addition...
- What's more...

Changing Direction

- However... / But...
- On the other hand...

Finishing

- Finally... / To finish...
- Last but not least...

📌 Why Are Signpost Words Useful?

They help you follow the structure of the monologue and signal when the speaker is moving to the next question.

Before the Recording Starts

- STEP 1** **Read Questions 11–20:** Read as many questions as possible in the preparation time.
- STEP 2** **Underline Key Words:** Highlight essential words in each question stem and option.
- STEP 3** **Predict Answer Type:** Ask if you need a number, name, place, or letter.
- STEP 4** **Map Preparation:** Find the starting point and scan all letters/compass directions.
- STEP 5** **Think About Topic:** Use the introduction to anticipate upcoming vocabulary.

↓ Sequential Order Rule

The answers in the recording always follow the exact numerical order of the questions.

Listening & Common Problems

Problem	Action / Solution
"I missed one answer."	Move on immediately to the next question. Do not dwell on it.
"I heard a word from an option."	Listen for the overall meaning, not just word matching.
"The speaker uses different words."	Stay alert for synonyms and paraphrased expressions.
"I cannot follow the map."	Re-locate the starting point and re-focus on direction words.
"I don't know a word."	Use context clues around it and keep moving forward.
"I'm not sure of my answer."	Make an educated guess. There is no penalty for wrong answers.

Your Part 2 Checklist

- ✓ Know Part 2 features one main speaker
- ✓ Topics are everyday & social
- ✓ Read questions beforehand
- ✓ Underline key keywords
- ✓ Predict answer types for gaps
- ✓ Check word limits strictly

- ✓ Find map starting point first
- ✓ Listen for direction words
- ✓ Listen for synonyms/paraphrases
- ✓ Follow signpost words
- ✓ Move on if you miss an answer
- ✓ Write an answer for every item

Core Strategy: Prepare → Listen → Find the Answer → Move On