

Exploring Skills for English Tests

Listening Part 2: B1

Format of the task

There are three parts to the B1 Listening test. In **Part 2**, candidates will listen to a conversation between two speakers (one male and one female) of approximately 650-750 words. Topics will be on everyday issues (including general study contexts), which can be resolved through discussion appropriate to B1 level.

Questions found in this part consist of 10 three-option multiple choice questions (MCQs). The focus of these questions will be on understanding of specific, detailed information, opinions, attitudes and feelings, agreement/disagreement, and negotiation of meaning. Candidates will need to answer the questions as they listen.

Candidates will have time to read and check their answers. All audio recordings and questions are at B1 level. Candidates will hear this section played twice.

Skills/functions being assessed

- Understanding of specific, detailed information, opinions, attitudes and feelings, agreement/disagreement, and negotiation of meaning
- Understanding of main points/main message
- Comprehension of familiar matters of a factual or concrete nature encountered in work, study, or leisure activities, through discussion of issues of everyday interest, and suggestions and predictions of what will happen next

Tips for teachers

Provide candidates with:

- Practice in listening to a variety of dialogues and situations which cover different topics
- Skills to understand how informal and formal dialogues are organised
- Strategies to exploit different audio and question types
- Practice in listening and identifying key message, key information and factual information and to also identify specific information from both speakers

Tips for learners

- In preparation, listen to as many audio exercises in English as you can, paying attention to both speakers
- Read the questions carefully before listening and remember the key words from the question so you can locate the information you need from the recording
- Use the second listening to check your answers
- Practise identifying the main points made by both speakers in the recordings

Sample B1 Listening Part 2 Task

This is a short example extract from the type of recording and questions a candidate may encounter in Part 2.

Listen to 2 friends, Sue and Bob, talking about their plans for the weekend.

Sue	Oh, I'm so glad it's the weekend Bob!	The topic is about the weekend (everyday issues).
Bob	Me too Sue, it has been a long week, do you have any nice plans?	
Sue	Well, it's Martin's 40th birthday on Sunday. So, we thought we would have a long birthday weekend celebration.	
Bob	Ooh, that sounds lovely Sue, anything special?	
Sue	Err, well, on Friday night we are going to a French restaurant to meet up with some of Martin's mates . Ummm, then, on Saturday Martin said that he wants to watch football with some friends . Which is fine because we are having a party in the evening, and I have to make a dish for the family members who are coming over .	Q1
Bob	Good luck with that! It's never easy cooking for big groups, I usually make sandwiches , which is just about possible for someone with my skills. What are you going to make?	
Sue	Nothing too difficult, I was considering making a salad , because everyone is bringing a dish but I will probably just make pasta – which doesn't take too much preparation. Anyway, what about you Bob, are you guys doing anything special?	Q2
Bob	No, we won't be having as much fun as you - we had plans to go for a long walk but the weather forecast looks terrible. So, we are going to spend the whole weekend painting instead. We've been avoiding it for months now, but our hallway really needs some love and attention. There is so much to do but at least it means I can avoid tidying the house ...	Q3

You will hear the recording twice; you will hear a beep each time to tell you that the recording is about to start.

You will have 1 minute to read the questions.

1. What is Martin going to do on Saturday during the daytime?

a. Go to a restaurant.

b. Spend time with friends.

c. Meet his family.

2. What food is Sue making?

a. Salad.

b. Sandwiches.

c. Pasta.

The wrong options are also mentioned in the text, so listen for the details connected to each option in order to choose the correct answer. Answers are highlighted in green.

3. What is Bob doing at the weekend?

a. Going for a walk.

b. Doing some painting.

c. Tidying the house.

Questions are given in the order that they occur in the recording.

Answers:

1. b

2. C

3. b

Note: this sample task is for guidance purposes only. For examples of level-specific listening tasks, please refer to the Skills for English Practice Tests available through the Skills for English website: <https://skillsforenglish.com/language-learning/>