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# A1 Test Information Sheet for Test Takers

Exploring Skills for  
English Tests

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# The A1 Student: CEFR Descriptors

According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), A1 students:

- can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type.
- can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has.
- can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Further details of the CEFR can be found in [this manual](#).

# The A1 Speaking Test

There are three parts to the Speaking test.

In Part 1, you will answer questions about yourself.

In Part 2, you will answer questions on two topics.

In Part 3, you will talk about a subject such as buying food or making a booking.

You will speak to the computer, not a real person; the computer asks the questions and records your answers.

After each question, you will hear a beep. You answer each question after each beep. There is a clock on the screen to show you how long you can speak. You can change the volume of the audio recording if you want to.

Examiners listen to your talk in both Parts 2 and 3 and give you a mark for both parts of the test on:

- Relevance and appropriacy of response – score between 0 and 5
- Accuracy of response (grammar and vocabulary) – score between 0 and 5
- Clarity and pronunciation – score between 0 and 5

You can take notes during the Speaking test. You will give these notes to someone at the end of each test.

## Speaking Part 1

### Format of the task

In Part 1, the computer will ask you five questions. These questions are always the same – in all tests and at all levels. You will hear each question once and you have 10 seconds to answer each one. Part 1 of the Speaking test is NOT assessed; this part helps you know what the test is like.



# Speaking Part 1 task

Here are the five questions the computer will ask you in Part 1 of the A1 Speaking test:

1. What is your name?
2. Can you spell your first name, please?
3. Where are you from?
4. What is your date of birth?
5. What do you do?

You have 10 seconds to answer each of these questions and the computer will record your answers

Speaking Part 1 questions are always the same so you can prepare and practise your answers

## Example responses

1. My name is Amir Hassan.
2. A - M - I - R
3. I am from Pakistan.
4. I was born on 16 July 2005.
5. I am a student.

You should practise spelling your first name

You should answer in full sentences where possible, but you can use short answers in Part 1

# Speaking Part 2

## Format of the task

In Part 2, the computer will ask you questions on two topics about personal and everyday life. There are five questions per topic, so ten questions in total for Part 2. You hear each question once, then you hear a beep. You have 15 seconds to answer each question after each beep.

The questions will be about family, likes and dislikes, food, weather, daily routines and leisure activities, homes and where you live, things you can and cannot do, describing people, and talking about past events or future plans in a simple way.

## Skills/functions you need for Part 2

In Part 2 of the Speaking test, you will talk about yourself using basic English. Questions will be about:

- Describing what they do and where they live in simple terms
- Describing simple aspects of daily life
- Giving simple descriptions of people, places and possessions
- Talking simply about likes and dislikes
- Talking simply about free time, weekend plans or holidays

# Example Speaking Part 2 task

You may see questions like this in Part 2 of the A1 Speaking test. There are five questions with five example answers. Part 2 of the Speaking test has two sets of five questions, so ten questions in total.

In Speaking Part 2, there are 10 questions: 5 about one topic and 5 about another

## Example questions

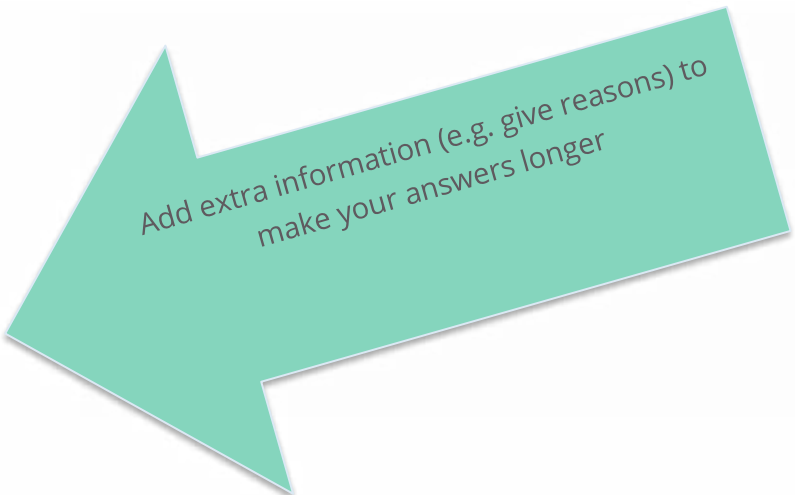
1. What do you like doing at weekends?
2. Who do you see at weekends?
3. What time do you go to bed at weekends?
4. What did you do last weekend?
5. What are you doing next weekend?

Questions – even at A1 – will have present simple, present continuous and past simple

You have 15 seconds to answer each question

You should practise talking about activities you do/don't like, relationships and family members, different times of the day, days of the week etc.

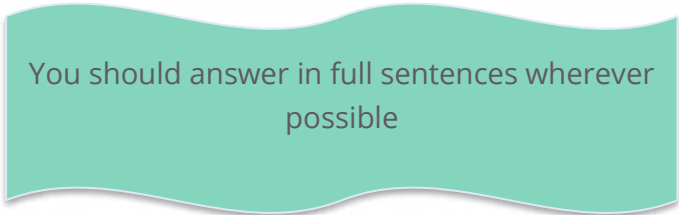
You should try not to repeat answers you use in other questions; for example, you could talk about football in Q1, eating in a restaurant in Q4 and going to the cinema in Q5 to avoid talking about the same activity three times



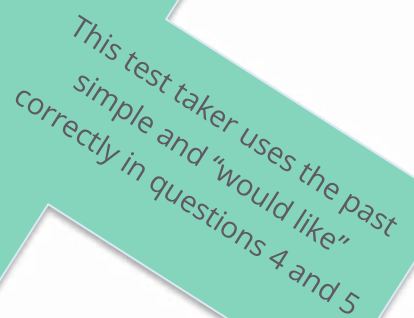
Add extra information (e.g. give reasons) to make your answers longer

## Example responses

1. I like going shopping or going to the cinema.
2. I see my friends at the weekend. Sometimes I see my cousins.
3. At weekends I go to bed at about 11.30 p.m.
4. I went to the cinema with my friends and then we ate pizza.
5. I would like to go to the beach if the weather is good.



You should answer in full sentences wherever possible



This test taker uses the past simple and "would like" correctly in questions 4 and 5



# Speaking Part 3

## Format of the task

In Part 3, you will see 5 prompts or questions about a situation. The task is about everyday conversations such as shopping, inviting a friend to a party, describing an event. You will hear each question or prompt once. You can also read the situation and the prompts on the screen.

After each prompt, you will hear a beep and then you have 35 seconds to give each answer.

## Skills/functions you need for Part 3

In Part 3 of the Speaking test, you need to use simple, basic English language to talk about an everyday situation such as:

- Giving the time, date and location of an event.
- Inviting someone to an event.
- Ordering food and drink in a café.
- Asking for goods and prices in a shop.
- Describing an event or plans.

## Example Speaking Part 3 task

Here is an example of the type of situation and questions you may see in Part 3 of the A1 Speaking test.

### Role Card: Buying something for a friend in a shop

1. Say who your friend is.
2. Say why you want to buy something for your friend.
3. Say what you want to buy.
4. Say why you think your friend will like it.
5. Ask how much it is.

You will have 35 seconds to answer each item on the role card

The situation is always given at the beginning of Part 3

You will have to use your personal everyday experiences to think of details, for example giving the reason in question 4

## Example responses

1. One of my best friends is Ahmed.
2. I want to buy him a nice present for his birthday. He is having a birthday party next Friday.
3. I want to get him a new jacket.
4. I think he will love this jacket because green is his favourite colour.
5. How much is it, please?

You need to use everyday language correctly at A1 level

You can add extra information to your answer

# The A1 Listening Test

There are three parts to the Listening test.

In Part 1, you will listen to 5 short recordings and answer one 3-option multiple choice question (MCQ) after each recording.

In Part 2, you will listen to a longer conversation and answer 5 MCQs.

In Part 3, you will listen to a longer monologue and complete 5 “drag and drop” sentences.

You will hear each recording twice. You have time to read the questions before the recordings start and time to check your answers after. However, you must answer the questions on the screen at the end of each recording before you move to the next part of the test.

You can take notes during the Listening test as you listen to the recordings. Someone from the test centre will collect these notes at the end of the Listening test.

## Listening Part 1

### Format of the task

In Part 1, you will listen to 5 short recordings, which may be one person or two people talking. The topics will be on everyday life situations. Each recording will be 30 to 60 words.

There is one three-option multiple choice question (MCQ) for each recording in this part. These questions will be on one main point, and you will need to answer the questions as you listen. You will have time to read and check your answers, and you will hear each recording twice.

### Skills/functions you need for Part 1

- Comprehension of the main message in monologues and in simple conversations for a given purpose.
- Understanding of specific, concrete information of an everyday, personal nature.
- Understanding of language relating to numbers, times, directions, locations, likes, needs, agreement and disagreement.

# Example Listening Part 1 task

Here is an example of the type of recording and question you may see in Part 1 of the A1 Listening test.

You may hear recordings of both one person and two people in Part 1

## Sample Script

Speaker 1	What did you do yesterday, Ann?
Speaker 2	Well, I wanted to go <u>swimming</u> , but it was raining.
Speaker 1	So, did you go to the <u>cinema</u> ?
Speaker 2	No, Dad. I didn't have any money.
Speaker 1	So, did you stay at home?
Speaker 2	Yes, and I read a good book.

You will hear each recording twice

You will also hear something about the wrong options (a and c, underlined) in the recording

You may find the correct answer from one or both speakers

## Sample Question

What did Ann do yesterday?

- a. She swam.
- b. She read a book.**
- c. She went to the cinema.

The options may not be in the same order as in the recording

MCQs will always have 3 options: 2 wrong answers (distractors) and 1 correct answer

# Listening Part 2

## Format of the task

In Part 2, you will listen to a conversation between two speakers (one male and one female). The speakers will talk about everyday topics. For Part 2, the recording will be 200 to 250 words.

There are 5 three-option multiple choice questions (MCQ) in this part. These questions are on key information which can come from one or both speakers. You will need to answer the questions as you listen to the recording, and you will have time to read the questions before you listen and check your answers after. You will hear this part twice.

## Skills/functions you need for Part 2

- Comprehension of the main message in simple conversations for a given purpose.
- Understanding of specific, concrete information of an everyday, personal nature.
- Understanding of language relating to numbers, times, directions, locations, likes, needs, agreement and disagreement.

## Example Listening Part 2 task

Here is an example of the type of recording and questions you may see in Part 2 of the A1 Listening test.

The first few lines of the recording usually describe the situation

Part 2 is always a conversation between 2 people: 1 male voice and 1 female voice

### Sample Script

Speaker 1	Sam, I'm so happy about our holiday next week.
Speaker 2	Me too. It's very exciting!
Speaker 1	What are we going to do on Monday? What about swimming?
Speaker 2	Yes, we can go to the beach in the morning and then we can go shopping in the afternoon.
Speaker 1	I'd like to go shopping on Friday, our last day. Are you okay with that?
Speaker 2	Okay, that's fine. So, about Monday afternoon then ... what about going to a nice restaurant by the sea?
Speaker 1	That's fine with me.
Speaker 2	And what would you like to do on Tuesday?
Speaker 1	Well, I'd like to go swimming again. I know there is also walking or shopping, but swimming really is my favourite thing to do, and we can't go to the beach very much in England. What do you think?
Speaker 2	You are right. I love swimming too.
Speaker 1	Great! It will be fun.
Speaker 2	Can we walk in the town on Wednesday, then?
Speaker 1	Why not? We can go to the park too. There's a beautiful park near the cinema, behind the museum.
Speaker 2	Great. Are we walking by the river on Thursday morning?
Speaker 1	Not in the morning because it's too hot. We can go late in the afternoon. But we need to be back at the hotel before seven in the evening because there is a band playing.

You should know the days of the week, months, and times

You should know how to talk about what you prefer and like/dislike

The two speakers may disagree with each other and/or refuse a suggestion

You should practise using prepositions of place: *on, at, in*, etc.

Speaker 2	Okay. Then we'll go shopping on the last day. What are you going to buy?
Speaker 1	Well, I want to buy something for mum. And I need something to give dad for his birthday when we get home too. And you?
Speaker 2	I want to buy a picture for mum and a t-shirt for my friend Jim.

You will hear this recording twice – like in all parts of the Listening test

Sometimes the words in the recordings are not the same as the words in the questions, for example "mum" here in the recording and "mother" in question 5

### Sample Questions

- Where will Sam and Sue go on Monday afternoon?
  - The beach.
  - A restaurant.**
  - Shopping.
- What activity do Sam and Sue both love to do?
  - Swimming.**
  - Walking.
  - Shopping.
- On Wednesday, Sam and Sue will ...
  - go to the cinema.
  - walk in the town.**
  - visit the museum.
- They will walk by the river ...
  - on Thursday morning.
  - on Thursday afternoon.**
  - on Thursday evening.
- Sam and Sue both want to buy presents for ...
  - their friend.
  - their father.
  - their mother.**

MCQs will always have 3 options: 2 wrong answers (distractors) and 1 correct answer

You will see a mix of MCQs: some questions to answer and some sentences to complete

You will always hear something about the wrong answers (the distractors) in the recording, so you must listen for the details for each option

# Listening Part 3

## Format of the task

In Part 3, you will listen to one person speaking, for example someone leaving a voicemail message or an announcement. Recordings are between 120 and 160 words at A1 level. Topics will be about everyday issues.

There are five questions in Listening Part 3. You must complete five sentences by using “drag and drop” to choose from ten options. These questions will be on key information. You will need to answer the questions as you listen, but you will not need to spell any words as you will choose from options on the screen.

You will have time to read the questions before you hear the recording, and time to check your answers after you listen. You will hear the recording twice.

## Skills/functions you need for Part 3

- Comprehension of the main message in monologues for a given purpose
- Understanding of specific, concrete information of an everyday, personal nature
- Understanding of language relating to numbers, times, directions, locations, likes, needs, agreements and disagreements



## Example Listening Part 3

Here is an example of the type of recording and questions you may see in Part 3 of the A1 Listening test.

Listening Part 3 is always only one speaker

### Sample Script

Hi Mum. I'm phoning to tell you about the girl who is living in my new flat. Her name is Sandra. She looks younger than me, but she's three years older. She is tall with long hair and blue eyes. Her mum is from England and her dad is from Scotland, but they live in Germany. Sandra works as a doctor five or six days a week and she loves her job. Sometimes she works at night, but she doesn't like doing that. She loves cooking and she's really good at it. Most days I only eat a sandwich for lunch, but yesterday Sandra made a really nice pizza. But there's one problem. You see, she needs to sleep in the day sometimes because she works at night. I can't invite my friends here or listen to music because there's too much noise. Well, you will meet Sandra soon and I am sure you will like her. Bye for now.

### Sample Questions

1. Sandra is \_\_\_\_\_ than Marie.
2. Sandra's parents live in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Sandra doesn't like working \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Sandra made \_\_\_\_\_ yesterday.
5. Sandra often \_\_\_\_\_ in the day.

### Answers

1. younger than
2. Germany
3. at night
4. a pizza
5. sleeps



as a doctor

younger

older

a pizza

Germany

sleeps

at night

Scotland

a sandwich

listens to music

You can change your answers by dragging a new option