

IELTS Writing Exam Time Management Strategy For Writing Task 1

A good IELTS writing exam time management strategy is a very important skill for IELTS candidates. It is something that you need to practice in order to do well on the day of your IELTS exam.

To improve your IELTS writing exam time management skills you will need to practice doing different tasks in a set amount of time. Practice at least one of these tasks on a daily basis. Over time you will find that things become easier and faster and your skill will also increase.

Know Your Structures For Each Writing Task

I see so many students wasting time in the writing exam because they don't know what to write. They spend a long time thinking about their structure and plan for each task. You should already know the structure and content of each task before you even get into the exam.

Here is an example of structure for writing task 1 to describe tables, bar charts, line graphs or pie charts. The structure will be a little different for describing a process or diagram.

Writing Task 1 Structure

Paraphrase: What does the chart show? Don't use the same words as the question.

Overview: What is the pattern or trend that is clear? Don't give details just describe the most obvious pattern.

Topic Sentence: Which group of data will you describe first? What is the pattern of this data?

Details: What were starting figures? How much change was there? What were the highest and lowest amounts? You may need to write 2 or 3 sentences giving details.

Comparisons: Use some comparative language to compare different groups of data or the same data over time.

Topic Sentence: Which group of data will you describe next? What is the pattern of this data?

Details: What were starting figures? How much change was there? What were the highest and lowest amounts? You may need to write 2 or 3 sentences giving details.

Comparisons: Use some comparative language to compare different groups of data or the same data over time.

Know Your Time Limits

Now that you know what you need to write, you need to learn how long you have to write each part. In the structures above we can see we have 3 paragraphs for writing task 1. Look at the time limits I have given below.

Time Limits For The IELTS Writing Exam Time Management Strategy For Writing Task 1

- After 5 minutes you should have completed your planning and have written your first 2 sentences.
- After 11 minutes you have completed another 3 or 4 sentences for paragraph 2.
- After 17 minutes you should have finished the writing task.
- Spend the final few minutes re-reading and correcting any small errors in spelling or grammar.

Do not worry if you can't do this now. It takes time and practice to be able to write quickly and well. The important thing is that you know your structures and time limits.

Start timing yourself every time you do a writing task. Make a note of how quickly you complete each paragraph. Your goal is to be able to complete task 1 in 20 minutes or less.

Focus On One Thing At A Time

The next step in this IELTS writing exam time management strategy is to break each task into smaller pieces. Don't waste time thinking about everything you are going to write. Just think of the next sentence then write it. Don't worry about it. Don't write a draft. Don't re-write anything (until the end).

Have a general idea of what you are going to write for each paragraph. Then start writing. Write the first sentence of the first paragraph. Then write the second sentence. Continue sentence by sentence. At the end, read through, review and make any corrections.

Practice Each Part Of The Writing Task

To improve your IELTS writing exam time management skills you need to practice them. Spend time each day timing yourself when completing a writing task. If you don't have enough time to sit down and do a complete task practice writing one paragraph.

If you have only 10 minutes to spare, practice writing an introductory paragraph. Analyse the question, paraphrase the question and write a general statement about the data. Then read what you have written and make any corrections.

Your aim is to practice so that it becomes easy and fast. The more you practice the faster you will be able to think and plan and this will give you more time to write.