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How to succeed in the listening paper of the C1–C2-level English examinations?

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Eesti tuleviku heaks

English Language Examinations available in Estonia and recognised by the Ministry

IELTSTM



Cambridge Assessment
English

PTE | PEARSON TEST OF ENGLISH
General

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What do you/ your students find difficult about listening tasks?



Listening tasks in Cambridge English and PTE General examinations



Cambridge English Qualifications:

General and higher education

Cambridge English
C1 Advanced
CEFR Level C1

Cambridge English
C2 Proficiency
CEFR Level C2

Key features of Cambridge English Qualifications:

- The examinations are based on realistic tasks and situations so that preparing for their exam gives learners real-life language skills.
- They test all four language skills accurately and consistently.
- They encourage positive learning experiences, and seek to achieve a positive impact on teaching.
- They are as fair as possible to all candidates, whatever their national, ethnic and linguistic background, gender or disability.

(CAE handbook for Teachers 2016)

Listening in C1 Advanced/ C2 Proficiency exams

- About 40 minutes
- 4 parts
- 30 questions
- Monologues: radio broadcasts, speeches, talks, lectures, anecdotes, etc.
- Interacting speakers: radio broadcasts, interviews, discussions, conversations, etc.

Summary of the task features (1)

	C1 Advanced	C2 Proficiency
Part 1 three- option multiple choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three short extracts from conversations between interacting speakers.• Listening for feeling, attitude, opinion, purpose, function, agreement, course of action, gist, detail, etc.• 6 questions, 1 mark each.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three short, unrelated recordings lasting approximately 1 minute each.• Listening for gist, detail, function, purpose, topic, speaker, addressee, feeling, attitude, opinion, etc.• 6 questions, 1 mark each.
Part 2 sentence completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A monologue lasting approximately 3 minutes.• Listening for specific information, stated opinion.• 8 questions, 1 mark each.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A monologue or prompted monologue lasting 3–4 minutes.• Listening for specific information, stated opinion.• 9 questions, 1 mark each.

Summary of the task features (2)

	C1 Advanced	C2 Proficiency
Part 3 four- option multiple choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A conversation between two or more speakers of about 4 minutes.• Listening for attitude, opinion, agreement, gist, feeling, speaker purpose, function and detail.• 6 questions, 1 mark each.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A recording with interacting speakers lasting 3–4 minutes.• Listening for opinion, gist, detail, inference.• 5 questions, 1 mark each.
Part 4 multiple matching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A series of five themed monologues of about 30 seconds each. You have to match each of the five speakers to one of eight possible answers.• Listening for gist, attitude, opinion, main points, speaker purpose and feeling; interpreting context.• 10 questions, 1 mark each.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Five short, themed monologues, of about 35 seconds each. The selection of the five correct options from a list of eight.• Gist, attitude, main points, interpreting context.• 10 questions, 1 mark each.



Pearson Qualifications

Resources

PTE | PEARSON TEST OF ENGLISH
General

Key features of PTE General:

- **Realistic themes, authentic sources and tasks**
 - The item types in each PTE General test are grouped together around topics referred to as themes. At Level 4 and Level 5, the theme tends to be quite abstract, such as global issues like pollution and conservation.
 - The written component of the test contains three themes and the spoken part two.
 - Most of the texts used to assess reading and listening, particularly at levels 3-5, are authentic. Hence PTE General is a measure of real, practical English.
- **Integrated skills**
 - PTE General incorporates integrated skills.

Level 4 (Advanced) and Level 5 (Proficient)

The overall timing for the written test at Level 4 is **2 hours and 30 minutes** and at Level 5 – **2 hours and 55 minutes**.

The written paper is divided into **nine sections** which are linked to a theme.

Sections	Skills	Score points
1	Listening	10
2	Listening and writing	5 listening, 5 writing
3	Listening	10
4-7	Reading	25
8-9	Writing	20

Listening

Section	Skills	Item types	Objectives	Stimulus
1	Listening	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main detail in short spoken utterances	Short authentic recordings, one or two speakers
2	Listening & writing	Dictation	To assess ability to understand an extended utterance by transcribing a spoken text	Simulated authentic extracts containing relatively formal language: instructions, news bulletins, announcements, broadcast features and factual information.
3	Listening	Note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts	Authentic recordings of one or two speakers giving or exchanging information.

[Free Practice Tests for learners of English: PTE General](#)

Listening, part 1 (1)

You will have 10 seconds to read each question and the corresponding options. Then listen to the recording. After the recording you will have 10 seconds to choose the correct option. There are 10 questions in this section.

What is the speaker describing?

- A a sports event.
- B a journey.
- C a theatrical event.

What does the report suggest the detectives know?

- A how the woman was taken.
- B where the woman was taken to.
- C where the woman disappeared.

Listening, part 1 (2)

You will have 10 seconds to read each question and the corresponding options. Then listen to the recording. After the recording you will have 10 seconds to choose the correct option. There are 10 questions in this section.

Sheila is talking to her

- A bank manager.
- B boss.
- C colleague.

Martin is a

- A fireman.
- B paramedic.
- C diver.

Dictation

You will hear a recording about budgeting. Listen to the whole recording once. Then you will hear the recording again with pauses for you to write down what you hear. Make sure you spell the words correctly.

What level do you think this task is at?

Note taking

You will hear a talk about hologram technology. First, read the notes below. Then listen and complete the notes with information from the message.

The company specialises in _____

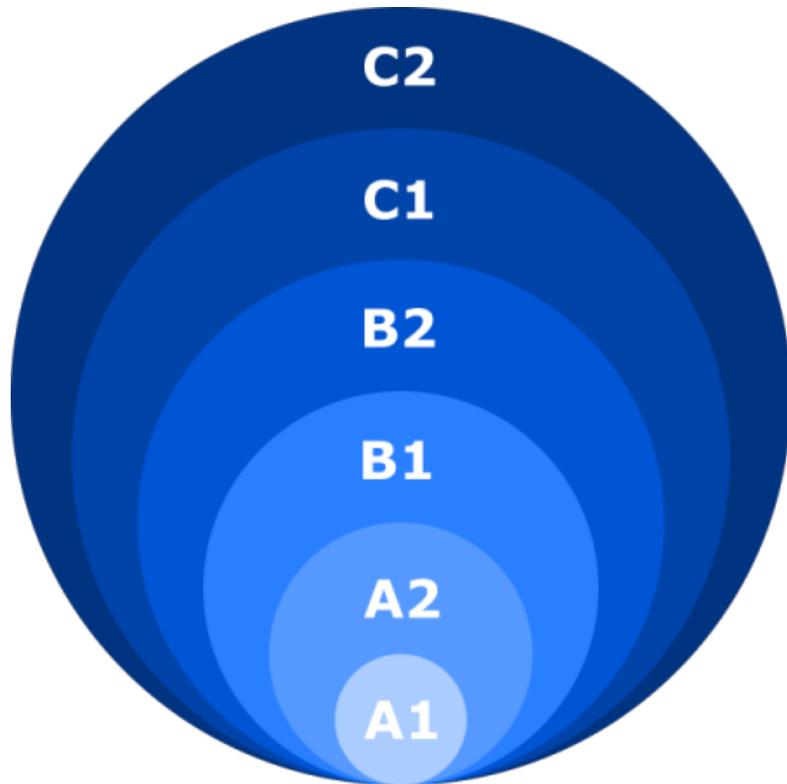
An advantage of this is _____

It is expected to be ready for household use _____.

The product demonstration is on _____

To get a free ticket you need to send a _____ with your details.

The ticket is for you and _____



What characterises listening comprehension at C1 and C2 levels?

How does C1 listening ability differ from B2 listening ability?

Listening comprehension scales in CEFR

Overall Listening Comprehension

Understanding interaction between other speakers

Listening as a member of a live audience

Listening to announcements & instructions

Listening to audio media & recordings

Audio-visual (Watching TV, film & video)

Which level – B2, B2+, C1, C2?

Can understand with ease virtually any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, delivered at fast natural speed.

Can understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics beyond his/her own field, though he/she may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar.

Can recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts.

Can follow extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly.

Can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, social, academic or vocational life. Only extreme background noise, inadequate discourse structure and/or idiomatic usage influence the ability to understand.

Can understand the main ideas of propositionally and linguistically complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in standard speech, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation.

Can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is sign-posted by explicit markers.

How does listening comprehension differ at higher levels ?

	B2	C1	C2
What types of text the language user understands			
What the language user understands in these texts			
How well the language user understands it			
Conditions and limitations			



Helping our students (and ourselves) to reach the C-levels



**Which of the listening activities
you have used have worked well?**

Some tips

Listen to **authentic** audio and video texts – accents!

Develop the skill of **guessing** what words mean based on context.

Try to **predict answers** before you listen. Read the question, underline the key words, and then think what is the most likely answer. Predicting the answer helps you 'tune in' to the recording.

One of the best ways to improve your test-taking skills is to **read the transcript** of the recording **after** you have listened to it.

[CAE Exam Tips](#)

[CPE Exam Tips \(or How to Pass Proficiency\)](#)

[12 articles to help your students prepare for PTE General](#)

[How to use authentic listening materials in class](#)

Using podcasts

Find a podcast that interests you and is not too difficult.

Make listening to a podcast part of your everyday routine.

Make time in your schedule for it.

Listen to a podcast when you are out and about so that you are not tempted to consult the transcript.

Summarise what you hear and identify key points and key vocabulary.

Occasionally, study a podcast more thoroughly. Read the transcript to check your understanding and to identify new vocabulary.

Get more advice on how to use podcasts from [7 British English Podcasts to Improve your Advanced English](#)

Podcasts to listen to

Two podcasts featuring ordinary people and everyday topics:

[The Listening Project](#) – a partnership between BBC Radio 4, BBC local and national radio stations, and the British Library started in 2012; a collection of intimate conversations between friends or relatives.

[StoryCorps](#) – the American project that was the inspiration for The Listening Project.

Two more podcasts from the BBC:

[Bookclub](#) – led by James Naughtie, a group of readers talk to acclaimed authors about their best-known novels

[Kermode and Mayo's Film Review](#) – Mark Kermode joins Simon Mayo to give his verdict on the week's movies

Find more suggestions from:

[8 Podcasts for Fluent English: Advanced English Listening](#) – from Vanessa

[12 Native English Podcasts for Learning English](#) – from FluentU English Language and Culture Blog

Ready-made materials to use

Listening tasks with activities or complete lesson plans:

[Listening - Advanced C1](#) from the British Council LearnEnglish

[Advanced C1 listening](#) from Learn English Teens by the British Council

[EF Class](#) – a fully interactive free classroom application that comes with hundreds of hours of modifiable lesson materials

A new lesson is added every week during term time, exploring the latest news, events, and trends.

There is, among other things, a Listening Diagnostic Test which

Contains [Advanced – Estonian edition](#), consisting of 6 units (21 lessons) at level C1 based on the Estonian National Curriculum for Upper-Secondary Schools.



Thank you.



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