

B2 FIRST

Exam Structure

B2 First Cambridge Assessment English (as it is now called) lasts approximately 3,5 hours. It is divided in 4 papers:

Reading and Use of English	Writing	Listening	Speaking
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1. The **Reading and Use of English** Paper lasts 1 hour 15 minutes. This part of the exam tests vocabulary and grammar. It is divided into 7 parts:

part	task type	No. of questions	Format	
1	multiple choice gap-fill	8	You choose from words A, B, C or D to fill in each gap in a text.	It tests vocabulary but you may need to understand grammatical links between words, or text as a whole
2	open gap-fill	8	You think of a word to fill in each of the gaps in a text.	It tests grammar words (articles, auxiliary verbs, pronouns, prepositions, etc.
3	word formation	8	You have to modify a given word so that it fits correctly in a gap	It tests your ability to form new words and different parts of speech
4	key word transformations	6	You have to complete a sentence with a given word so that it means the same as another sentence.	It tests grammar and vocabulary
5	multiple choice	6	You read a text followed by questions with four options: A, B, C or D.	It tests your ability to understand overall meaning, main ideas or details, as well as attitudes or opinions
6	gapped text	6	You read a text with sentences removed, then fill in the gaps by choosing sentences from a jumbled list.	It test your understanding of the overall structure of the text, and the development of ideas, opinions and events
7	multiple matching	10	You read one or more texts and match the relevant sections to what the questions say.	It test your ability to find particular information in a text. You need to understand detail, attitudes and opinions in the questions, and find the part(s) of the text which express the same idea.

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2. The **Writing Paper** lasts 1 hour 20 minutes. There are 2 parts:

part	task type	No. of words	Format
1	essay	140-190	You give your opinion on a topic using the two ideas given plus and idea of your own.
2	possible tasks: email/letter, article, report or review	140-190	You do a task based on a situation

3. The **Listening Paper** last about 40 minutes. It has four tasks. You will hear the instructions for each task and you'll hear each task twice. You will have pauses which will allow you to read the questions and at the end, you'll have 5 minutes to transfer your answers to the answer sheet.

part	task type	No. of questions	Format	
1	multiple choice	8	You hear one or two people talking for about 30 seconds in eight different situations. For each question, you choose from answers A, B or C.	It tests your understanding of gist, detail, opinion, attitude, function, purpose, relationship, topic, place, situation, agreement, etc.
2	sentence completion	10	You hear one person talking for about three minutes. For each question, you complete sentences by writing a word or short phrase.	It tests your understanding of detail, stated opinion and specific information.
3	multiple matching	5	You hear five different extracts, of about 30 seconds each, with a common theme. For each one you choose from a list of eight answers.	It tests your understanding of gist, detail, opinion, attitude, function, purpose, relationship, topic, place, situation, agreement, etc.
4	multiple choice	7	You hear one or two people talking for about three minutes. For each question, you choose from answers A, B or C.	It tests your understanding of attitude, opinion, gist, main ideas and specific information.

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4. The **Speaking test** lasts 14 minutes and is done with another candidate (sometimes two other candidates). There will be two examiners, although only one will take part in the conversation; the other will just take notes.

The Speaking test is divided in four parts.

part	task type	min.	format	
1	The examiner asks you some questions.	2	You talk about yourself.	tests your ability to give information about yourself and to talk about everyday topics (work, studies, family, free time and future plans).
2	You talk on your own.	4	You talk about two pictures and then comment on the other candidate's pictures.	tests your ability to organise your speaking, and to compare, describe and give your opinions.
3	You talk to the other candidate.	4	You discuss some diagrams or pictures together.	tests your ability to talk about different possibilities, make suggestions, express opinions and give reasons, agree or disagree, and attempt to decide together.
4	You talk about things connected with the topic in Part 3	4	You take part in a discussion with both the other candidate and the examiner.	tests your ability to talk about issues in more depth than in the other three parts. You will need to express opinions and give reasons for them, and also to agree or disagree with different opinions.

Being familiar with the structure of the exam gives you the advantage of knowing what to expect, and therefore of feeling that you have the situation under control.