

Cambridge English Key for Schools

Cambridge English: Key (KET) for Schools Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Is there a wordlist for Cambridge English: Key for Schools exams?

Yes. There is a [Cambridge English: Key \(KET\) for Schools vocabulary list](#) available.

What is the difference between Cambridge English: Key and Cambridge English: Key for Schools?

Cambridge English: Key and *Cambridge English: Key for Schools* exams follow exactly the same format. The level of the exams is the same – candidates are tested in all the same skills. However, the content of the exams is a bit different (the ‘for Schools’ version is specifically tailored to suit the interests and experiences of school-age candidates).

Do I have to be a particular age to be able to take a Cambridge English: Key for Schools exam?

No. Candidates of any age can take *Cambridge English: Key for Schools*. The content of these exams is aimed at school-age learners, so it might not be appropriate for older candidates. They might want to take *Cambridge English: Key* instead.

What will it say on my certificate, if I take a Cambridge English: Key for Schools exam?

Students who pass *Cambridge English: Key for Schools* receive the same internationally accepted certificate as those candidates who pass the standard version of this exam.

Do I have to pass each paper in order to pass the whole examination?

No. Your grade is based on your overall score in all the papers.

Reading and Writing

DO

- ✓ Read the instructions and study any examples carefully.
- ✓ Do exactly what the instructions say (for example, only write ONE word for each space in Part 7).
- ✓ Answer all the questions, even if you are not sure of your answers.
- ✓ Check your answers and make sure you have written them in the correct place on the answer sheet.
- ✓ Write your answers on the answer sheet including Parts 6, 7, 8 and 9.
- ✓ Take your time and don’t hurry. There is plenty of time to answer all of the questions.
- ✓ Use a pencil, not a pen, on the answer sheet.

DON'T

- ✗ Don't worry if there are words you don't understand. Try to guess what they mean.
- ✗ Don't make a spelling mistake when you are copying the words in Part 8.
- ✗ Don't write fewer than 25 words in Part 9.

How do I fill in the answer sheet correctly?

You should use a pencil and not a pen. For Parts 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 mark ONE letter for each question. In Parts 6, 7 and 8 write your answers in the spaces next to the numbers. If you make a mistake you can use an eraser and rub it out.

What is the recommended timing for each part?

There is no recommended timing as some tasks will take longer than others, depending on how you approach them. Candidates have different strengths and weaknesses, and this will affect how long they need to spend on each part. Overall, 1 hour and 10 minutes allows you plenty of time to complete all the tasks.

Listening

DO

- ✓ Practise listening to English as much as possible.
- ✓ Revise the letters of the alphabet and numbers.
- ✓ Revise vocabulary in topics (for example, jobs, sports, colours).
- ✓ Read the instructions carefully.
- ✓ Work through some past papers for practice.
- ✓ Make sure you understand how to complete the answer sheet.
- ✓ Check your answers at the second listening.

DON'T

- ✗ Don't get nervous in the exam. Just relax and do your best.
- ✗ Don't leave any answers blank (it's better to make a guess).
- ✗ Don't worry if you don't know how to spell a word – this might not be a problem.
- ✗ Don't forget to take care to transfer your answers to the answer sheet correctly.

How many times will I hear the recording for each part?

You hear each part twice. This means that you can check your answers, or fill in any gaps, at the second listening.

Are different accents used in the recordings?

Yes, there are some regional British accents and occasionally Irish, American or Australian speakers.

How quickly do the speakers in the recording speak?

All *Cambridge English: Key for Schools* recordings are delivered clearly, at slightly slower than natural speed.

How much time do I have for transferring my answers?

You have a total of 8 minutes to do this. You are warned after 7 minutes that you only have 1 minute left.

Which parts of the paper do candidates find most challenging?

Parts 4 and 5 (which involve listening and writing words or numbers) are often found to be challenging. Part 3, the multiple-choice task, is also quite challenging.

Which parts of the exam do candidates usually find the easiest?

The short dialogues in Part 1 are an easy introduction to the paper. Part 2, the matching task, is also usually done well by candidates.

Does it matter if I make a spelling mistake?

No (as long as it is possible to recognise the word), unless it is a common, high-frequency word, e.g. Monday, or where the spelling of the word is dictated.

Can I wear headphones for the Listening paper?

Ask your centre whether you can use headphones or not – it depends how they choose to run the exam.

Speaking

DO

- ✓ Make sure you know what you have to do in both parts of the test.
- ✓ Practise speaking English as much as possible, both inside and outside the classroom.
- ✓ Practise speaking English in many different situations so that you can speak clearly even if you are nervous.
- ✓ Listen carefully to the examiner's instructions and questions during the test.
- ✓ Speak clearly, so that both examiners can hear you.
- ✓ Talk to the examiner in Part 1.
- ✓ Talk to your partner in Part 2.
- ✓ Ask the examiner to repeat the instructions, or a question, if you have not understood.
- ✓ Listen to your partner's questions and answers in Part 2 and try to make it a natural conversation.
- ✓ Remember that the examiners want you to do your best.
- ✓ Try and relax and enjoy the test.
- ✓ Always try to answer the questions, even if you are worried about making mistakes. The examiners can't mark you if you don't say anything.

DON'T

- ✗ Don't worry too much about making grammar mistakes.
- ✗ Don't worry if you don't understand. Just ask the examiner to repeat or explain the question.
- ✗ Don't prepare long answers and try to learn them in advance.
- ✗ Don't worry if you think your partner is not as good at speaking English as you, or is much better than you. The examiners mark you individually.
- ✗ Don't be so nervous that you don't speak. The examiners can't mark you if you don't say anything.
- ✗ Don't worry if the examiner stops you. It is important that the tests are not too long.

Could I do the test together with someone from my own school?

This depends on the centre. In some centres, candidates from the same school are paired together. In others, where candidates from a number of different schools do the test at the same time, you may do the test with a student from another school. Check with your centre to find out more.

Do both examiners speak during the test?

No. Only one examiner (the interlocutor) speaks. The other examiner (the assessor) stays silent, except for saying hello and goodbye to you.

Do I need to speak to the other candidate as well as to the examiner?

Yes. In Part 1, you only speak to the examiner, but in Part 2, you must talk to each other. In this part, it is important that you speak to each other and NOT to the examiner, unless you need to ask them a question.

Does knowing your partner make it easier to do well?

There is no evidence that candidates do better in the Speaking test, or worse, if they know their partner. Some people feel more relaxed and confident when they do the test with someone that they know, while others may feel shy, or that the situation is unnatural. In both cases, the examiners are trained to give all candidates equal opportunities to do their best. In addition, the use of different tasks in the Speaking test allows candidates to perform both with and without a partner, so any possible effects of knowing your partner are minimised.

What if the two candidates have very different personalities (for example, one is very shy and one is very outgoing)?

Examiners are trained to deal with this situation and to be fair to all candidates. Everyone has the chance to show what they can do. Just remember to make the best use of the time you have to show your language skills, without dominating your partner.

What should I do if I don't understand the instructions?

Just ask the examiner to repeat the instructions.

What happens if there is an odd number of candidates left at the end of a Speaking test session?

In this case, the last candidates would be examined as a group of three, and the test would last for 13 to 15 minutes.

For more information about *Cambridge English: Key for Schools* visit our website:
www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/key-for-schools