

TOEIC 8-Week Course **Introduction**

Course Description:

This is a preparatory course for the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), which will help students improve their overall TOEIC-taking skills and TOEIC score. Concurrently, students' English language skills in listening, reading, writing, and grammar will also improve. The course is comprised of two sections: listening comprehension and reading, which reflect the two sections of the actual TOEIC test.

The listening component of the course focuses on listening practice as prescribed by the course text (audio CDs accompany the course text) and by engaging in semi-structured group discussions. The reading component of the course focuses on reading practice as prescribed by the course text and with supplementary reading material from other sources provided by the instructor. These may include material from other TOEIC-related texts as well as print and audio sources. Both the listening and reading components of this TOEIC course provide on-going introduction, review, and practice of English grammar, vocabulary, and general communication.

Course Objectives:

Students who complete this course will be able to:

- develop a clear understanding of each component of the TOEIC test as well as its format
- receive plenty of practice exercises
- study detailed strategies to eliminate wrong answers and determine correct answers
- take two complete practice tests (depending on the length of the course) and receive a sample TOEIC score
- study TOEIC-related vocabulary
- review advanced English grammar
- attain their ideal TOEIC score

Course Textbook and Supplementary Sources:

The textbook for this course is Barron's "How to Prepare for the TOEIC Test" with supplementary exercises and practice tests from Kaplan's TOEIC Exam (Second Edition) as well as from other resources the instructor deems helpful. The main text may be adhered to as much as time and inclination allow, with the Kaplan textbook acting as an alternate resource. Instructors are advised to review Chapter 2 – "Preparing for the Test Day" of the Kaplan text because there are hints on developing a study planner, effective study skills, strategies for effective guessing during the TOEIC test, and advice on how to combat nervousness during a test. Other sources include newspapers, on-line news sources, magazines, video, and audio. These may be used to engage students in group discussion and debate.

The general timetable for the TOEIC test is as follows:

Timetable for the TOEIC

Total Time: 2 hours

Section 1 (45 minutes)	Listening Comprehension Part I: Picture Part II: Question-Response Part III: Short Conversation Part IV: Short Talks	20 Questions 30 Questions 30 Questions 20 Questions
Section 2 (75 minutes)	Reading Part V: Incomplete Sentences Part VI: Error Recognition Part VII: Reading Comprehension	40 Questions 20 Questions 40 Questions

Taken from Barron's "How to Prepare for the TOEIC Test" by Lin Lougheed. Copyright 2003.

The general schedule of this TOEIC course, therefore, reflects the timetable for the TOEIC test with half of the allotted time devoted to listening comprehension and the other half devoted to reading.

A proposed daily-course schedule for the Saturday 6-hour course may be:

Session One (1.5 hrs.): Review

Break: 15 minutes

Session Two (1.5 hrs.): Reading

Lunch Break

Session Three (1.5 hrs.): Listening

Break: 15 minutes

Session Four (1.5 hrs.): Vocabulary & grammar, extra practice, etc.

A proposed daily-course schedule for the Monday to Thursday 4-hour course may be:

Monday: 1st Hour: Homework Review
2nd Hour: Reading from Textbook
3rd Hour: Listening from Textbook
4th Hour: Extra Practice, vocabulary building, grammar

Tuesday: 1st Hour: Homework Review
2nd Hour: Reading from Textbook
3rd Hour: Listening from Textbook
4th Hour: Extra Practice, vocabulary building, grammar

Wednesday: 1st Hour: Homework Review
2nd Hour: Reading from Textbook
3rd Hour: Listening from Textbook
4th Hour: Extra Practice, vocabulary building, grammar

Thursday: 1st Hour: Homework Review
2nd Hour: Reading from Textbook
3rd Hour: Listening from Textbook
4th Hour: Mini-Test

NOTE: 1 week of the 8-week curriculum can be completed in 2 days during the 4-week weekday course. A comparison of the hours between the two course options is as follows:

(Weekday) 2 days = 8 hours

(Weekend) 1 day = 6 hours

The Seven Parts of the TOEIC:

Part 1: Listening Comprehension: Photographs

Part 2: Listening Comprehension: Question-Response

Part 3: Listening Comprehension: Short Conversations

Part 4: Listening Comprehension: Short Talks

Part 5: Reading: Incomplete Sentences

Part 6: Reading: Error Recognition

Part 7: Reading: Reading Comprehension

Teaching with Precision and Clarity:

Students taking a TOEIC course are well versed in English grammar so it's important for a TOEIC instructor to address the finer points of English grammar as precisely and clearly as possible. Barron's "How to Prepare for the TOEIC Test (3rd Edition) has a section that provides explanatory answers for each of the TOEIC review exercises, mini-tests, and model tests (pp. 527-605), which instructors should thoroughly review prior to starting a TOEIC course. In addition, instructors may also wish to review the "To the Teacher" (pp. vi-ix) and "Introduction" (pp. 1-9) sections of the text.

Teaching with Flexibility:

Because the TOEIC is a structured test, teaching it necessitates a similar approach; however, this rigidity can be limiting. It is, therefore, important for the instructor to incorporate flexibility in this course. Such flexibility accommodates students' individual needs and circumstances. This flexibility may manifest as deviating from the structure of the TOEIC text (time allowing) and engaging students in discussions on controversial topics or recent news items. Such activity would augment the TOEIC lessons by focusing on skills such as listening, speaking, and debating. It would also help in vocabulary building with the added benefit of having such vocabulary explained by the instructor contextually. Allowing students to suggest topics or initiate discussion mitigates the superior role instructors are regularly placed in by students, cultivating a more equitable classroom environment. In placing students in an active role, discussion and debate also mitigate the passivity TOEIC lessons typify. Finally, it's important to consider this curriculum as a guide, whose exercises and activities may be adapted, altered, or omitted according to what the instructor deems appropriate. In this way, flexibility plays a major role in conducting this course.

Learning English Contextually:

One of the most effective ways to learning a language is to learn it contextually. Contextual learning contrasts with traditional approaches to learning that involve memorization and regurgitation because when one learns a language in a more natural setting – for instance, when a

language is incorporated into daily life – internalizing the language is more likely. In this TOEIC course, tools and tips provided students will, therefore, reflect a more contextual approach.

a. The Personal Dictionary:

This is a pre-made template consisting of a table with three headings: “Term”, “My Definition”, and “Context/Circumstance in which I Learned this Word”. Students are provided this template (or encouraged to create their own using a small notepad or notebook: the more personal the better) in which they enter a term, phrase, idiom, or sentence at the time (or as close as possible to it that) they hear or see it. If practical, they may ask the term’s meaning from the person from whom they heard it. Students are encouraged to consult the same person for the spelling of the term. Students then write in their own words the term’s definition in the appropriate column of the template. Finally, students are encouraged to write a description of the context or circumstance in which they learned, read, or heard the term. Of course, referring to a dictionary for a term’s “precise” meaning and grammatical use is an irreplaceable exercise, but having a context (circumstance, event, person, or time) helps students retain a term’s meaning. Because developing one’s own dictionary reflects a person’s individual experience with a language, it is this difference that assures retention.

b. Supplementary Reading/Listening Sources:

Additional reading and listening sources, particularly ones to which students can relate can augment the TOEIC lesson. Such resources can include:

- i. newspaper or on-line news articles:
 - a) choose topics to which students can easily relate
 - b) have students read the article aloud
 - c) review the article one paragraph at a time for comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar issues
 - d) encourage students to note new vocabulary in their personal dictionaries
 - e) engage students in discussion on the article’s topic

- ii. talking books (entire books that have been recorded on to cassette tapes or CDs):
 - a) have students choose a talking book of interest to them
 - b) assign one chapter at a time for homework
 - c) have students write down new vocabulary in their personal dictionaries
 - d) have students orally summarize the chapter in class
 - e) address any questions about vocabulary/grammar as they arise

- iii. games and resources that encourage discussion or group work:
 - a) there’s a wealth of information on the World Wide Web on TOEIC-related activities, which can be adapted for one’s class
 - b) TOEFL resources, which focus on similar skills as the TOEIC may also be used to augment a TOEIC class. Resources and activities may be adapted

Resources:

Azar, B.S. (2000). *Understanding and using English grammar: Chartbook: A reference grammar (third edition)*. White Plains: Longman

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English-Test.net (2006). *TOEIC prep*. Web site at: <http://www.english-test.net/toEIC/index.html>.

Friesen, H. & Block, K. (2000). *Creating meaning: Advanced reading and writing*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Lougheed, L. (2003). *How to prepare for the TOEIC test (Test of English for International Communication) (third edition)*. Hauppauge, New York: Barron's Educational Services, Inc.

Rymniuk, M.J. (2005). *TOEIC exam (second edition)*. New York: Kaplan, Inc.