

HACK YOUR IELTS • EP. 2

60

Listening Trap Phrases

Spot the correction before it fools you.
Never write the bait again.

6 trap types • 10 each • real examples with the answer



THE LISTENING “CORRECTION” TRAP

The first answer is just bait.

The speaker says one answer, then changes it. Casually, like nothing happened. Hold on until the speaker finishes the thought.

QUESTION

Which day is the workshop you'll attend?

THE SPEAKER SAYS

“The workshop is on ~~Tuesday~~... oh, sorry, no, I mean ~~Wednesday~~. Actually,
wait, ~~Tuesday's the one for Sam.~~ The one I'll attend is on **Friday.**”

Red underline = alert words. Struck grey = bait. Red highlight = the real answer.

WHAT MOST PEOPLE WRITE

Tuesday / Wednesday

WHAT YOU SHOULD WRITE

Friday

The answer changed twice. Only the last confirmed one counts.

ALERT WORDS: PEN STOPS HERE

sorry

actually

wait

I mean

the one for...

hang on

Whatever comes right after these words is usually the real answer.

01 The U-Turn: Corrections

SECTIONS 1–4

TRAP PHRASE	YOU HEAR	WRITE
Sorry, I mean...	Fifteenth. Sorry, I mean the sixteenth.	16th
Actually...	It's £20. Actually, it's £25 now.	£25
Wait, no...	Room 12. Wait, no, room 21.	Room 21
Hang on...	Monday. Hang on, that's Thursday.	Thursday
Let me correct that...	Ten people. Let me correct that, twelve.	12
Or rather...	At nine, or rather, half past nine.	9.30
Make that...	Two tickets. Make that three.	3
On second thoughts...	The red one. On second thoughts, the blue.	blue
No, no, it's...	Park Road. No, no, it's Park Lane.	Park Lane
I got that wrong...	It's 6 pm. Oops, I got that wrong, 8 pm.	8 pm

02 The Plot Twist: Changes

SECTIONS 1–4

TRAP PHRASE	YOU HEAR	WRITE
It's been changed to...	It was Hall A, but it's been changed to Hall C.	Hall C
We've moved it to...	Tuesday's off. We've moved it to Thursday.	Thursday
Unfortunately...	Unfortunately, 10 am is full. Try 2 pm.	2 pm
But...	I like tennis, but I signed up for swimming.	swimming
Instead...	Not the bus. We're going by train instead.	train
Rather than...	Rather than Monday, we'll meet on Friday.	Friday
It used to be...	It used to be £8, but now it's £10.	£10
Originally...	Originally 30 places, but now there are 24.	24
As it turns out...	As it turns out, the café opens at 8.	8
In the end...	In the end, we chose the smaller hotel.	smaller hotel

Cover the right-hand column and try to spot the real answer first.

03 The Wrong Door: Eliminated

SECTIONS 1–4

TRAP PHRASE	YOU HEAR	WRITE
That's for someone else	Tuesday's the one for Sam. Mine's Friday.	Friday
It's full	Yoga's full, so I took pottery.	pottery
It's sold out	Blue is sold out. I'll take green.	green
Fully booked	Saturday is fully booked, so Sunday.	Sunday
Too expensive	Too expensive, so we got the cheaper room.	cheaper room
I'd rather not...	I'd rather not go early. Let's say noon.	noon
Doesn't work for me	Nine doesn't work for me. Ten is fine.	10
Not available	The lab isn't available, so room B.	Room B
I can't make it...	I can't make Monday, but Wednesday's fine.	Wednesday
It's been cancelled	The 3 pm talk is cancelled. The 5 pm stays.	5 pm

04 The Green Light: Final Decisions

SECTIONS 1–4

TRAP PHRASE	YOU HEAR	WRITE
I'll take...	Two sizes? I'll take the larger one.	larger
Let's go with...	Let's go with the afternoon session.	afternoon
I've decided on...	I've decided on Spanish.	Spanish
That works for me	Friday at two? That works for me.	Fri, 2
That sounds perfect	The garden room? That sounds perfect.	garden room
I'd go for...	I'd go for the cheaper option.	cheaper
We'll stick with...	We'll stick with the bus, then.	bus
Let's make it...	Let's make it Thursday.	Thursday
In that case...	In that case, I'll book Friday.	Friday
That's settled	Right, that's settled. Room 5.	Room 5

Cover the right-hand column and try to spot the real answer first.

05 Number & Spelling Traps

SECTIONS 1–4

TRAP PHRASE

WHAT IT MEANS

13 vs 30

thir-TEEN (stress at the end) vs THIR-ty (stress at the start).

15 vs 50

fif-TEEN vs FIF-ty. Same rule for 14/40, 16/60 and so on.

"Double seven"

Means 77. Write the digits, not the words.

"Oh" / "zero"

Both mean 0. In a phone number, write 0.

"Triple five"

Means 555. Common in phone numbers.

"A hundred and fifty"

Write 150, not 100 and 50.

"M as in Mike"

Write only the letter M, not the name.

"Was that B or D?"

The speaker is confirming a letter. Wait for the final one.

"All one word"

Spelling instruction: no space, no hyphen.

"Half past nine"

Means 9.30. "Quarter to ten" means 9.45.

06 Map & Direction Traps

SECTION 2

TRAP PHRASE

WHAT IT MEANS

Go past...

Go past the library. You don't turn there.

Just before...

The café is just before the bridge, on this side.

Just after...

The bank is just after the traffic lights.

Opposite...

The park is opposite the museum. Other side of the road.

Next to...

Next to the school means right beside it.

At the end of...

At the end of the road, turn left.

The second turning

Count the turnings. Don't take the first.

Behind...

The toilets are behind the hall. Check the back.

Straight ahead

Keep going straight until the crossroads.

On your left / right

Match it to the way you are facing on the map.

4 HABITS

Never get fooled again.

1

Use the preview time.

Before the audio plays, look at each question and guess what can change: a day, a price, a number, a name.

2

Underline the keyword.

"Which day...", "How much...", "What time...". Know exactly what you are listening for.

3

Jot lightly, lock in late.

Note the first answer, but don't commit until the speaker has moved on to the next point.

4

Check at the end.

Use the checking time you're given to review spelling, singular/plural and the word limit.

Don't trust the first answer.

Not your ex's. Not Listening's.

See you in Episode 3.

