

FREE PTE STUDY PDF

PTE Syllabus PDF: Exam Pattern, Timing and Marks

The complete PTE Academic syllabus: all three parts, every one of the 22 question types with item counts, timing, prompts and skills scored, how essays and summaries are marked, the PTE Core differences, and a four-week plan.

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SECTION 1

PTE Academic at a glance

PTE Academic is a computer-based English test with three timed parts and 22 scored question types. Each part is timed separately and the whole test is taken in one sitting at a test centre or at home.

Part	Time	Types	Question types in order
Part 1: Speaking and Writing	76 to 84 minutes	9	Personal Introduction (unscored), Read Aloud, Repeat Sentence, Describe Image, Re-tell Lecture, Answer Short Question, Respond to a Situation, Summarize Group Discussion, Summarize Written Text, Write Essay
Part 2: Reading	23 to 30 minutes	5	Fill in the Blanks (Dropdown), Multiple Choice Multiple Answers, Re-order Paragraph, Fill in the Blanks (Drag and Drop), Multiple Choice Single Answer
Part 3: Listening	31 to 39 minutes	8	Summarize Spoken Text, Multiple Choice Multiple Answers, Fill in the Blanks, Highlight Correct Summary, Multiple Choice Single Answer, Select Missing Word, Highlight Incorrect Words, Write from Dictation

Scoring at a glance

You receive an Overall score and four communicative skills scores (Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing), each from 10 to 90. The Overall score is not an average of the four skills: it reflects your performance across all 22 question types. Enabling skills such as grammar and pronunciation are not reported as separate scores on the current score report.

Tip

Many question types score two skills at once. Repeat Sentence, for example, counts towards both Listening and Speaking, so weak listening lowers your speaking score too.

Common mistake

Preparing only for the question types you find hard. The high-count types (Repeat Sentence 10 to 12 items, Read Aloud 6 to 7) carry the most weight in Part 1.



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SECTION 2

Part 1: Speaking

Nine question types in 76 to 84 minutes, starting with the unscored Personal Introduction. Speaking items come first, then the two Writing items.

Question type	Items	Prompt	Timing	Skills scored
Personal Introduction	1 (not scored)	On-screen prompt	25 s to prepare, 30 s to record	None
Read Aloud	6 to 7	Text up to 60 words	30 to 40 s to prepare, then read	Speaking (and Reading)
Repeat Sentence	10 to 12	Audio of 3 to 9 seconds	15 s to respond	Listening and Speaking
Describe Image	5 to 6	An image, chart, graph, map or table	25 s to study, 40 s to respond	Speaking
Re-tell Lecture	2 to 3	Audio up to 90 seconds	10 s to prepare, 40 s to respond	Listening and Speaking
Answer Short Question	5 to 6	Audio of 3 to 9 seconds	10 s to respond	Listening
Respond to a Situation	2 to 3	Text up to 60 words plus audio	10 s to prepare, 40 s to respond	Speaking
Summarize Group Discussion	2 to 3	Audio of up to 3 minutes with several speakers	10 s to prepare, 2 minutes to respond	Listening and Speaking

Speaking: what to do and how to score

Personal Introduction · 1 (not scored) items

Prompt: On-screen prompt

Timing: 25 s to prepare, 30 s to record

Skills scored: None

What to do: Introduce yourself. The recording goes to institutions with your score report but does not affect your score.

Tip: Use it to settle your voice and microphone level.

Read Aloud · 6 to 7 items

Prompt: Text up to 60 words

Timing: 30 to 40 s to prepare, then read

Skills scored: Speaking (and Reading)

What to do: Read the text aloud clearly and naturally after the beep.

Tip: Read every word; skipped or replaced words cost content marks.

Repeat Sentence · 10 to 12 items

Prompt: Audio of 3 to 9 seconds

Timing: 15 s to respond

Skills scored: Listening and Speaking

What to do: Repeat the sentence exactly as you heard it.

Tip: Say what you remember in order; stopping and restarting hurts fluency.

Describe Image · 5 to 6 items

Prompt: An image, chart, graph, map or table

Timing: 25 s to study, 40 s to respond

Skills scored: Speaking

What to do: Describe the image in detail: what it shows, the main trends and one conclusion.

Tip: Content is scored first. If content is 0, pronunciation and fluency are not scored.

Re-tell Lecture · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Audio up to 90 seconds

Timing: 10 s to prepare, 40 s to respond

Skills scored: Listening and Speaking

What to do: Re-tell the lecture in your own words, covering the key points.

Tip: Take notes on the main idea, two supports and the conclusion.

Answer Short Question · 5 to 6 items

Prompt: Audio of 3 to 9 seconds

Timing: 10 s to respond

Skills scored: Listening

What to do: Answer with one word or a few words.

Tip: A short, correct answer scores. Do not explain.

Respond to a Situation · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Text up to 60 words plus audio

Timing: 10 s to prepare, 40 s to respond

Skills scored: Speaking

What to do: Respond to the situation as you would in real life: greet, explain, request or apologise, and close.

Tip: Address every part of the situation; the task checks appropriacy as well as language.

Summarize Group Discussion · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Audio of up to 3 minutes with several speakers

Timing: 10 s to prepare, 2 minutes to respond

Skills scored: Listening and Speaking

What to do: Summarise the discussion: each speaker's position and any agreement or disagreement.

Tip: Note who said what. A summary that captures all speakers scores higher than one that follows a single view.

SECTION 3

Part 1: Writing

Two question types, both typed. Summarize Written Text comes before Write Essay.

Question type	Items	Prompt	Time	Skills scored
Summarize Written Text	2	Text up to 300 words	10 minutes	Reading and Writing
Write Essay	1	Prompt of 2 to 3 sentences	20 minutes	Writing

Summarize Written Text · 2 items

Prompt: Text up to 300 words

Timing: 10 minutes

Skills scored: Reading and Writing

What to do: Write one single sentence of 5 to 75 words that captures the main points.

Tip: One full stop only. Join ideas with commas, which, while and because.

Write Essay · 1 items

Prompt: Prompt of 2 to 3 sentences

Timing: 20 minutes

Skills scored: Writing

What to do: Write an argumentative essay of 200 to 300 words.

Tip: Plan for two minutes, write for fifteen, check spelling and length for three.

How Write Essay is scored

Trait	Points	What it checks
Content	0 to 6	Addresses the prompt fully with relevant, developed ideas
Form	0 to 2	200 to 300 words in paragraphs
Development, Structure and Coherence	0 to 6	Logical organisation and clear links between ideas
Grammar	0 to 2	Accurate, varied grammar
General Linguistic Range	0 to 6	Range of language used precisely
Vocabulary Range	0 to 2	Appropriate, varied vocabulary
Spelling	0 to 2	Correct spelling in one consistent variety of English

How Summarize Written Text is scored

Trait	Points	What it checks
Content	0 to 4	Covers the main points of the passage
Form	0 to 1	One single complete sentence of 5 to 75 words

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Trait	Points	What it checks
Grammar	0 to 2	Correct grammatical structure
Vocabulary	0 to 2	Appropriate word choice

SECTION 4

Part 2: Reading

Five question types in 23 to 30 minutes. The clock runs for the whole part, so manage your time across items.

Question type	Items	Prompt	Skills scored
Fill in the Blanks (Dropdown)	5 to 6	Text up to 200 words	Reading
Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers	2 to 3	Text up to 350 words	Reading
Re-order Paragraph	2 to 3	Text up to 110 words	Reading
Fill in the Blanks (Drag and Drop)	4 to 5	Text up to 80 words	Reading
Multiple Choice, Single Answer	2 to 3	Text up to 110 words	Reading

Fill in the Blanks (Dropdown) · 5 to 6 items

Prompt: Text up to 200 words

Timing: Part 2 clock

Skills scored: Reading

What to do: Choose the best word for each gap from a drop-down list.

Tip: Grammar and collocation decide most answers; read the whole sentence first.

Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Text up to 350 words

Timing: Part 2 clock

Skills scored: Reading

What to do: Choose all the correct options.

Tip: Wrong options lose points, so choose only what you can justify from the text.

Re-order Paragraph · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Text up to 110 words

Timing: Part 2 clock

Skills scored: Reading

What to do: Drag the text boxes into the correct order.

Tip: Find the topic sentence first, then follow pronouns and linking words.

Fill in the Blanks (Drag and Drop) · 4 to 5 items

Prompt: Text up to 80 words

Timing: Part 2 clock

Skills scored: Reading

What to do: Drag words from the box into the gaps; there are more words than gaps.

Tip: Check the part of speech each gap needs before you drag.

Multiple Choice, Single Answer · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Text up to 110 words

Timing: Part 2 clock

Skills scored: Reading

What to do: Choose the one correct option.

Tip: No negative marking here, so always answer.

Tip

Spend about two minutes on each Fill in the Blanks item and up to three on Re-order Paragraph. Multiple Choice items are worth less, so do not let them eat the clock.

Common mistake

Choosing every option in Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers. Wrong options lose points, so guessing can take you below zero for the item.



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SECTION 5

Part 3: Listening

Eight question types in 31 to 39 minutes. Every recording plays once only, and note-taking is allowed.

Question type	Items	Audio	Response	Skills scored
Summarize Spoken Text	1	Audio of 60 to 90 seconds	10 minutes; 50 to 70 words	Listening and Writing
Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers	2 to 3	Audio of 80 to 120 seconds	Choose all correct options	Listening
Fill in the Blanks	2 to 3	Audio of 30 to 60 seconds	Type the missing words	Listening and Writing
Highlight Correct Summary	2 to 3	Audio of 30 to 90 seconds	Choose one summary	Listening and Reading
Multiple Choice, Single Answer	2 to 3	Audio of 30 to 60 seconds	Choose one option	Listening
Select Missing Word	1 to 2	Audio of 20 to 70 seconds	3 to 5 options	Listening
Highlight Incorrect Words	2 to 3	Audio of 15 to 50 seconds	Click the wrong words	Listening and Reading
Write from Dictation	3 to 4	Audio of 3 to 5 seconds	Type the sentence	Listening and Writing

Summarize Spoken Text · 1 items

Prompt: Audio of 60 to 90 seconds

Timing: 10 minutes; 50 to 70 words

Skills scored: Listening and Writing

What to do: Write a summary of the recording.

Tip: Under 40 or over 100 words scores zero.

Multiple Choice, Multiple Answers · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Audio of 80 to 120 seconds

Timing: Choose all correct options

Skills scored: Listening

What to do: Choose all the correct options.

Tip: Negative marking applies: wrong choices lose points.

Fill in the Blanks · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Audio of 30 to 60 seconds

Timing: Type the missing words

Skills scored: Listening and Writing

What to do: Type the missing words into the transcript as you listen.

Tip: One point per correct, correctly spelled word.

Highlight Correct Summary · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Audio of 30 to 90 seconds

Timing: Choose one summary

Skills scored: Listening and Reading

What to do: Choose the paragraph that best summarises the recording.

Tip: Listen first, then read; the options are long.

Multiple Choice, Single Answer · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Audio of 30 to 60 seconds

Timing: Choose one option

Skills scored: Listening

What to do: Choose the one correct option.

Tip: Read the question before the audio starts.

Select Missing Word · 1 to 2 items

Prompt: Audio of 20 to 70 seconds

Timing: 3 to 5 options

Skills scored: Listening

What to do: Choose the word or phrase that completes the recording.

Tip: Predict the ending from the speaker's tone and topic.

Highlight Incorrect Words · 2 to 3 items

Prompt: Audio of 15 to 50 seconds

Timing: Click the wrong words

Skills scored: Listening and Reading

What to do: Click the words in the transcript that differ from what you hear.

Tip: Negative marking: click only what you are sure of.

Write from Dictation · 3 to 4 items

Prompt: Audio of 3 to 5 seconds

Timing: Type the sentence

Skills scored: Listening and Writing

What to do: Type the sentence exactly as you hear it.

Tip: Every correct word scores, so write even a partial sentence.

SECTION 6

PTE Academic and PTE Core: the differences

PTE Core is the version accepted for Canadian immigration and citizenship. It uses the same 10 to 90 scale and the same test interface, but a few question types differ.

Area	PTE Academic	PTE Core
Purpose	Study, work and migration (accepted in Australia, New Zealand, the UK and elsewhere)	Canadian economic migration and citizenship
Content	Academic English	Everyday and workplace English
Summarize Written Text	One sentence of 5 to 75 words	A paragraph of 25 to 50 words
Essay	Write Essay, 200 to 300 words	Write Email instead of an essay
Scores	Overall plus four communicative skills, 10 to 90	Overall plus four communicative skills, 10 to 90

Which test do you need?

Check the requirement of the institution or visa you are applying for before you book. Gurully offers mock tests for both PTE Academic and PTE Core.

SECTION 7

A four-week preparation plan

A simple plan built around the syllabus above. Adjust the weeks to your start level.

Week	Focus	What to do
1	Know the test	Take one full mock test to find your baseline. Learn the format, timing and scoring of every question type in this PDF.
2	High-weight Speaking and Listening	Daily practice of Read Aloud, Repeat Sentence, Write from Dictation and Fill in the Blanks. These items feed two skills each.
3	Writing and Reading	Learn one essay structure and one Summarize Written Text sentence pattern. Practice Reading Fill in the Blanks for grammar and collocation.
4	Full tests and review	Two or three full mock tests under exam timing. Review every scored section and repeat the weakest question types.

Tip

Practice on a computer with a headset, not on paper. The real test is typed and recorded, and typing speed and microphone technique both affect scores.

Common mistake

Skipping the Personal Introduction in practice. It is unscored, but it is your only chance to check your microphone before Read Aloud begins.



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