



How to Crack TOEFL® iBT

TOEFL® iBT Summarizing Strategies

Summarizing can be applied not only when you sit for the TOEFL iBT exam, but in your academic studies, your employment or even everyday life. As for the TOEFL iBT exam, you will need the strategy of summarizing in all sections of the test, so it is essential to master it.

What is summarizing?

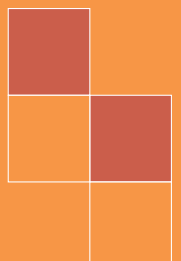
Summarizing is actually expressing the main idea(s) of a source material into **your own words**, including only the main point(s). Summaries are shorter than the original; they are actually the reduction of a large text, lecture or conversation to its main points: the main topic, main idea and supporting details. We summarize by cutting off the excessive information, the additional examples and by focusing on the key words and phrases that convey the general idea of the source material.



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To summarize you need to:

- identify the main ideas;
- identify the key details and then use them in the summary;
- simplify larger ideas;
- identify: **Who, What, When, Where, How, and Why**;
- make the summary clear, assuming that the target reader or listener has not gone through the source material that you have gone through and they have no idea what it is about.

What should you include in the summary?

In the summary, you should include only the basic information, which conveys the main idea of the source material and its supporting details. If you include examples in your summary, do not forget to explicitly connect them to the idea they are supporting.

Here is how you can organize your summary:

- first state the main idea;
- state the main stages of thought;
- state the subordinate ideas and the relationships between those ideas;
- state the conclusions in the source material.

What shouldn't you include in the summary?

- Do not add any new information;
- Do not state your personal opinion in the summary.

See also the section [Test Taking Strategies](#) for more tips for each particular TOEFL task – Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing.

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