



Writing TASK 1 – Top Tips

TOP TIPS – for IELTS writing TASK 1

- 1) Make sure you understand the different types of Writing Task 1 questions you may get during the test:
 - **Line Graphs**
 - **Bar Charts**
 - **Tables**
 - **Pie Charts**
 - **Map Diagrams**
 - **Process Diagrams**
 - **Mixed Questions**
- 2) Be sure to use paragraphing effectively (We recommend using 4 Paragraphs)
 - **Introduction**
 - **Overview**
 - **Details 1**
 - **Details 2**
- 3) Firstly you should analyse the chart, graph or table carefully. Be clear about whether it shows change over time or whether is it fixed in time (*comparison only*).
- 4) Do not copy the question in the introduction. You need to rewrite it in your own words (*paraphrase*).
- 5) Clearly separate your paragraphs by leaving a blank line between each one.
- 6) You need to have a good overview paragraph as you cannot get a high score without it (*the overview is specifically mentioned in the band score descriptors*). Try and write about at least two things describing them in general terms.
- 7) Group data in a logical way and compare the data if possible (*don't describe items separately, such as lines on a graph*).
- 8) Don't try and include all the data from a chart, graph or table. A key skill is being able to decide what is important and what can be left out.



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- 9) Use a mix of sentence structures (*simple and complex sentences*)
- 10) Use the appropriate tense for the question (*is it in the past? or is some of it in the past and some in the future?*).
- 11) Think about word count. In writing Task 1 you need to write a minimum of 150 words, but we do not recommend you write more than 200 words. The more you write, the more mistakes you will make. A good target would be somewhere in the range of 180–200 words.
- 12) Allow time to check and correct your answer. Ideally you should spend two minutes doing this. By making these changes it could help to push you up to the next band score.
- 13) Do not spend too long on Writing Task 1. The recommended time is 20 minutes and then you need to move on to Task 2 (*it is worth more of your overall writing score*).
- 14) Manage your 20 minutes carefully in the test:
 - **5 minutes** - **Read question / pick out trends and key data**
 - **5 minutes** - **Write introduction and overview paragraphs**
 - **4 minutes** - **Write Details 1 paragraph**
 - **4 minutes** - **Write Details 2 paragraph**
 - **2 minutes** - **Check and correct report**
- 15) Make sure you understand the band score descriptors and how you are marked (*task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource and grammar*).



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