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**Female Voice:** You are now listening to the IELTS podcast. Learn from tutors and ex-examiners who are masters of IELTS preparation. Your host, Ben Worthington.

## INTRODUCTION

**Ben: IELTS Listening: Section 1 - Completion Questions.** In this tutorial, **you will become familiar with Section 1 of the listening test. We will look at how you will tackle completion questions in a more effective manner and we'll have a look at some of the common pitfalls, some of the common mistakes.**

My name is Ben Worthington. I'm from the UK as you probably know. Sometimes I say Huddersfield, sometimes I say Manchester. It depends on who I'm talking to. Anyway, let's jump into this. I don't think I need to tell you any more about me if you're listening to the



tutorial-- if you're listening to the tutorials on a daily basis, weekly basis, then you probably know a lot about me already.

This has just reminded me actually about one thing. If you could listen to a tutorial, one tutorial a day, just think how much of an impact that would have. Not only are you going to be improving your listening skills, obviously, but you will also be getting into the habit and learning-- you're getting into the habit of improving yourself daily, which I think is definitely good, but also you're going to be learning more and more and more about the IELTS exam whilst simultaneously improving your language skills although rather passively.

Another point that I want to mention-- don't worry, we will be getting to section 1 very soon, but another thing that I would like to mention is that when you are training for the [IELTS listening](#), nothing can beat doing the actual practice tests. However, these can become rather tedious and boring. It depends. If you've got your exam in 20 days, then they're probably not



tedious and boring. You're probably just going to be devouring them. You're just going to be listening to one every single day or even two or three because the pressure is on.

### **IMPROVING YOUR LISTENING SKILLS WHEN YOU HAVE TIME**

However, if your exam is a long time in the future and you want to just be basically improving your listening skills, what I would recommend is that you find material about a subject that you love, for example, you could listen to David Attenborough when he's narrating the Blue Planet series or the BBC Earth series. He's got a very typical Received Pronunciation accent.

Alternatively, and this is one thing that I realized the other day is you can listen to possibly talk shows and maybe some comedies on YouTube, for example, and the good thing about these is that not only will it be light entertainment-- it's going to be easy just to watch maybe 10 minutes of some comedy sketch, for example, but you're going to be exposed to a wide variety of accents very much like the IELTS listening test.



Of course, I think out of all the ones I've been watching, 90% were different UK-- are different English-- native-speaker English accents and especially regional ones. So, you've got a Yorkshire accent, Irish accent, a Scottish accent and then the specific program I was watching the Welsh accent and everybody was ripping on the Welsh guy. Everybody was taking the mickey out of the Welsh guy.

In the actual tutorial, I'll post a few examples and you can watch them on YouTube. Obviously, it's free, it's light-hearted, it's entertaining. Just take a break from maybe preparing for IELTS and have a chuckle.

## IELTS LISTENING SECTION 1

Anyway, let's get back into this. IELTS Listening: Section 1 - Completion Questions. Now, in Section 1, we will hear a conversation between two people and it's going to have a



transactional purpose. That means that there's going to-- one of them is trying to get information out of the other.

Now, typical conversations include asking about a course, booking accommodation or making an inquiry for an event, for example. Now, there are 10 questions in Section 1. Most of them or pretty much all of them are completion questions. This means that you have to fill in the gaps to complete a form or a table.

Now, **in the first section, the answers are usually one or two words and focus on factual information such as names, places or times.** Let me just repeat that. In Section 1, you are going to be asked to find factual information such as names, places, or times. So, as we've said in previous episodes, it's good to develop your prediction skills and to be completely familiar with the prepositions related to each of those especially for the times: in 1993, on Monday, at 3 o'clock. Places: in Huddersfield, in the UK, at the bridge, for example.



Anyway, let's have a look at a sample Section 1, okay? We've got a table in front of us and in this table-- it's called restaurants in Wickford and just above that, we've got the instructions in capital letters saying no more than one word and/or a number for each answer. So, as we've said before, it's usually best to-- when we get a number is just to write that number. **Don't write out the word T-H-R-E-E for three. Just write the number 3.**

So, along the top of the table, it's restaurants in Wickford. Then we've got three sub-columns: **name, useful information, and comments.** So, one of the restaurants is called The Blue. Useful information: near the Save Money supermarket. Comments: the food is delicious, it's quite expensive. So, we've got a table there showing the information. However, in some of the squares, there are blanks and this is your opportunity-- not opportunity. This is your task to fill in those blanks.

For example, for the-- I won't give you the answers actually, but what we'll do is we're going to listen to a conversation between two people. You'll probably recognize one of the voices and



the prompt is you will hear a woman who recently moved to the area asking a neighbor for information about some local restaurants, okay?

So, you've got about 30 seconds to look through the task and it's important to make the most of this time. Go through it, try and look for predictions, try and spot in which cases you're going to need a number, in which cases you're going to need an adjective and this will help you to extract key information points a little bit easier than as if you hadn't.

Next one. So, as we can see from the table, it's clear that we're going to complete the name of the restaurant, so it might be spelled out for you. So, it's important in this case, to recognize the letters of the alphabet. I know that for me when I was in Spain, that the vowel sounds always tripped me up because what was an e in English I think was i in Spanish. I always got those mixed up, so it's good to have a look just to refresh the ABCDE.



Also, when I give somebody my last name, I usually have to spell it out and when I do I can see them struggling writing it down because I'm literally using the words of the alphabet. I think I'm making it easy for them, but these are slightly easy, but it's a bit more challenging.

Before we listen to the audio, let's just have a look at the questions again. So, in this table, in the first column, we've got the name and it's The Blue something. So, we are expecting it could be The Blue Whale, The Blue Octopus, The Blue Train. We know it's going to be some kind of noun I think. It's unlikely to be something like The Blue Happy. It can-- just doesn't make any sense.

Anyway, in the next column, we've got useful information. So, we say near the Save Money supermarket. This is for The Blue something restaurant. If we look at the second column, it's useful information is closed on blank. What does that mean? Closed on Christmas? No, because it would be closed during I imagine. So, it's obviously going to be a day of the week. Closed on February? No. That doesn't make any sense. So, it's closed on something day of the week.



Next one. In the next column for The Blue something, the comments we have the food is delicious. It's quite expensive. The staff are very... What are we going to expect here? The staff are very obese? Unlikely. The staff are very dishonest? Probably not. The staff are very unfriendly. The staff are very friendly. The staff are very helpful. The staff are very charming. Obviously, it's going to be some kind of adjective and it's-- I was going to say it's going to be positive, but that's-- you can't really assume that, actually. So, let's just say it's going to be some adjective there.

Next one. In the comments for the second restaurant, The Green Papaya, excellent food it says, friendly efficient service, something are essential. What does that mean? Guns? Probably not. It's going to be something to do with the restaurant trade. So, it could be bring your own drinks is essential. So, it's obviously not going to be that. So, it's something are essential there.

Final one. Main Street Restaurant. Useful information: blank Main Street. What's that going to be then? Could it be the number of the street? Could it be King Main Street? Queen Main



Street? I don't know, but we're going to find out soon and the final column it says-- for comments for Main Street Restaurant it says quite new, easy to get a table, the prices are...

Now, this is quite straightforward. As we know, this is Section 1 at the end of the day, so it's not going to be anything mind-blowingly difficult. The prices are unfair, prices are a rip-off, the prices are amazing, the prices are fair, the prices are unfair. It could be any of those, but it's definitely not going to be a number, for example, or days of the week.

This is what we talked about when we're talking about predicting the answers. So, let's have a listen now and as I said before, you're probably going to recognize one of the accents and **if you can identify the second accent, then send it in and we've got a prize for the first people who can identify her accent.**

**Speaker 1:** *One place you could try is The Blue Truck.*

**Speaker 2:** *The Blue what?*



**Speaker 1:** Truck, you know like a lorry. T-R-U-C-K.

**Speaker 2:** Oh, okay.

**Speaker 1:** Just one word of warning though.

**Speaker 2:** What's that?

**Speaker 1:** Well, food is delicious, but the staff are a completely different matter.

**Speaker 2:** What do you mean?

**Speaker 1:** Well, I've been there several times and I'm afraid I have to say they are very unfriendly. I feel like I'm inconveniencing them when I order. It's a real shame, actually especially when the food is so good.

**Ben:** Okay. So, hopefully, you'll be able to get at least the first two from those six questions we said earlier. So, we've got The Blue what is obviously The Blue Truck and then the staff are very something unfriendly. The next answers, we don't have time for the script, but it was closed on



Thursdays. Remember that to be able to get full points you need to be able to spell Thursdays correctly.

So, if you're doing practice tests, which I strongly recommend you do, be brutal with yourself. If it's not the exact answer that's in the answer booklet, then don't give it to yourself. Don't trick yourself. It's better to be harsh and keep improving rather than trick yourself into thinking oh yes, it was obvious what I wanted to say. No. Mark it as incorrect.

The next one: reservations. Unfortunately, we couldn't say that either in the recording, but anyway, reservations. That's some very typical restaurant vocabulary. Also, if you put reservation, you're not going to get points. And the fifth one, something Main Street. Well, it was two ten; 210 and as we've said before, you need to write that down. 210. Do not write T-W-0 hundred H-U-N-D-R-E-D and ten. Do not write something like that. It has to be 210 and the prices are-- as we said before, it's going to be something like reasonable, are fair. It just depends.



### FINAL TIP

Finishing up now, just one last thing I'd like to say is that **these completion tasks can also appear in other sections of the test, not just in part 1.** They're usually quite straightforward and they usually involve extracting simple facts, completion-- completing a form or a table. Now, if you encounter these types of tasks in other sections of the test, you'll need to focus on the main ideas and complete a set of notes or complete a flow chart, but the basic idea remains the same.

Now, that's everything for today. I just wanted to make this tutorial a bite-sized snack with some tips, some information, but the real muscle-building, so to speak, is going to be sitting down doing practice tests and not just aimlessly doing practice tests five a day or whatever.



**Do your practice tests and then identify the parts where you lose points** and then in the next practice test, just do that exact area and focus on that and then go back and do another whole practice test and then try to identify the types of questions that are tripping you up. Maybe it's always part 3, maybe it's always part 2 depending on your ability.

That's everything from me today. Thank you for listening to us and as I said before, if you can identify the accent of that girl talking before, then send us an email and we can send you a surprise.

If you're enjoying these tutorials, please share them with your friends. If you know anybody who might be struggling with the IELTS exam at the moment then, send them some [links](#), send them some love and together we can help them pass.

If you are struggling with the IELTS exam, get in contact. [Email us](#) and we can definitely help you pass. We've got lots of students passing every single week. It's going really well. We've got an amazing team of ex-IELTS examiners and-- all native English-speakers correcting essays, doing



fast essay corrections, [giving feedback](#) and seeing the students improve. It's quite an enjoyable workspace at the moment.

The final thing I would like to mention is the [IELTS writing course: Jump to Band 7 or It's Free](#). If you're struggling with the IELTS exam, especially the writing, then you might want to have a look at that. As I said, we're getting some great results. Every single week, we're getting a thank-you email from a student who's passed their exam. Sometimes they're passing the first time, sometimes they need more essay corrections, but eventually, we get them there. We don't give up on them.

We don't do gimmicks either. We don't do these gimmicks where oh lots of people want to join. Join the waiting list. And then you sign up to the waiting list and they say oh, by the way, students just passed, so this is free up-- there's an opportunity for you. We don't do gimmicks like that.



We just want to get you through the exam and we want to get you out of our system as fast as possible. Join, get the exam, pass, do it-- sorry. Join us, pass the exam, get the certificate, and move on. That's what we want.

So, my name is Ben Worthington. Thank you very much for listening today and as I said, if you've got any problems, [sign up to the email list](#). You'll get our email address there and you can send us an email. Ask us your question and we can reply and help you. So, let's keep moving forward. Let's keep progressing. Let's keep on improving and eventually, you will pass IELTS. Take care.

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