

IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

After discussing good and bad advice for someone doing Speaking Part Two in an IELTS exam, read through the tips below and cross off any which are not a good idea.

Before you start IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- If you think the topic is too difficult, ask for another one (“Sorry, can I change task?”, “I’m sorry but this is too difficult. Is there another choice?”, etc).
- In the very rare case that you really can’t talk about the topic, ask to talk about a different topic and explain why (“I’m afraid I can’t talk about this because I’ve never...”, “Sorry, the task says to talk about... but I haven’t experienced...”, etc).
- If there is anything on the question sheet you don’t understand, just ask (“Excuse me. Can I ask what one word means?”, “Sorry. Could you explain this word here?”, etc)
- If you are not sure if what you have thought of matches the task, just ask (“The only thing I can think of to speak about is... Is that okay?”, “Can I speak about...?”, “Is it okay to speak about...?”, “Is... a kind of...?”, “Does this topic include...?”, etc).
- The examiner will take the task card back before you start speaking, so you need to copy it or memorise it.
- It’s often best to brainstorm possible topics before you choose one.
- It’s usually best to write your notes in your own language to save time.
- It’s usually best to write your notes as a mind map.
- Write the beginning of your presentation out in full to read out when you start speaking (writing “I’m going to speak about my teacher when I was twelve. She...”, etc).
- You should generally use the whole minute to prepare, until you are asked to speak.
- If you want to start early (because you have fully prepared and are getting more nervous as you wait), just start when you like.
- If you want to start early (because you have fully prepared and are getting more nervous as you wait), just ask (“Can I start?”, “Is that one minute?”, “I think I’m ready”, “Shall I get started?”, etc).
- If you need extra time to prepare, just ask (“Just a moment, I’m nearly ready”, “Sorry, I just need to finish writing this”, “Sorry, I suddenly realised that I misunderstood the question. Can I have another minute?”, etc).

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- You should usually start by reading out the first words on the task sheet.
- It is possible to use the same starting phrase every time that you do a Speaking Part Two task (“I’d like to speak about...” “I’m going to talk about...”, “I’ve chosen to talk about...”, “I’ve decided to talk about...”, etc).
- A more creative and specific starting phrase would impress the examiner if it matches the situation (“I’m really glad I got this topic because...”, “There were many things I could have spoken about, but...”, “It’s a strange coincidence that I got this topic because just the other day...”, “The only thing I could think of to talk about was...”, “It was difficult to choose a topic but I finally settled on...”, etc).
- Starting formal presentations phrases are useful (“My presentation is divided into four parts”, “Thank you for inviting me here today”, etc).

The middle of IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- You should often correct yourself when you make language errors such as grammar mistakes (“Sorry, I should say...”, “Sorry for my bad grammar. I meant...”, “Sorry, that’s not correct. It should be...”, “Sorry, the past of ‘seek’ should be...”, etc).

- You should usually only correct yourself if the information is wrong or would be difficult to understand (“Sorry, that’s wrong. Actually,...”, “Come to think of it, it was actually...”, “I mean...”, “Sorry, maybe that doesn’t make sense. What I meant to say was...”, etc).
- You can show your range of language by rephrasing the words on the task sheet instead of repeating them.
- You have to deal with the four sub-topics in the same order as the task sheet.
- Make sure that you finish talking about all four sub-topics within two minutes.
- Make sure that you stick to the four sub-topics and make some progress through them (“Turning to the next question”, “And the next thing I’m supposed to talk about is...”, “And about...”, “Moving onto...”, etc).
- If you go off topic, stop talking about that and quickly get back on topic (“Sorry, I should have been speaking about...”, “Sorry, I went off topic for a second there. Anyway, getting back to the questions,...”, “Where was I? Oh yes,...”, etc).
- Try to add extra interesting information that isn’t asked for on the task sheet (“By the way,...”, “Going off topic for a second,...”, “That reminds me of a funny story”, “Before I go on,...”, etc).
- You should fill all silence if you can’t read your notes, can’t think of the right word in English, forget what you were going to say, need to look at the task sheet, etc (“Sorry, I’m just having problems...”, “Just a moment while I look at...”, “What was I going to say next? Oh yes,...”, etc).
- If you are unsure about something such as an event a long time ago, say so (“I’ve forgotten..., but...”, “As far as I remember,...”, “My memory is a little hazy, but...”, etc).
- Because the four sub-topics are all related, you’ll probably have to refer back to what you said earlier (“As I just said,...”, “Adding to what I said about...,...”, etc).
- You should ask questions to involve the examiner (“Do you know what I mean?”, “Do you know what... is?”, “Have you heard of...?”, “Did I already mention...?”, etc).

Ending IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- If you stop and the examiner just waits in silence, that probably means that you’ve spoken for less than one minute and so you should find something else to say (“What else can I say? Well, I suppose...”, “One more thing I could say about... is...”, “About... I could add that...”, “Did I miss anything? Well, I suppose...”, etc).
- If you completely finish in under two minutes and have nothing more to say, say so (“That’s all I can think of to say”, “I think I’ve covered all four points”, “That about covers it”, etc).
- It’s normal to use ending business presentations or academic presentations language (“That brings me to the end of my presentation”, “That was all that I wanted to say today”, “That is all the time that I have to speak about this topic”, etc).
- If the examiner is trying to interrupt you, quickly finish off the rest of your presentation (“And anyway, in the end...”, “And to quickly answer the fourth question,...”, etc).
- You need a final conclusion or summary at the end of your presentation (“In conclusion,...”, “To sum all that up,...”, etc).
- When you finish, it is worth checking if your speaking was okay (“How did I do?”, “Did that answer all four questions?”, “Was I mostly on topic?”, etc).

Check which tips are bad as a class or with the suggested answers.

Suggested answers

The good tips are underlined.

Before you start IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- If you think the topic is too difficult, ask for another one (“Sorry, can I change task?”, “I’m sorry but this is too difficult. Is there another choice?”, etc).
- In the very rare case that you really can’t talk about the topic, ask to talk about a different topic (“I’m afraid I can’t talk about this because I’ve never...”, “Sorry, the task says to talk about... but I haven’t experienced...”, etc).
- If there is anything on the question sheet you don’t understand, just ask (“Excuse me. Can I ask what one word means?”, “Sorry. Could you explain this word here?”, etc)
- If you are not sure if what you have thought of matches the task, just ask (“The only thing I can think of to speak about is... Is that okay?”, “Can I speak about...?”, “Is it okay to speak about...?”, “Is... a kind of...?”, “Does this topic include...?”, etc).
- The examiner will take the task card back before you start speaking, so you need to copy it or memorise it.
- It’s often best to brainstorm possible topics before you choose one.
- It’s usually best to write your notes in your own language to save time.
- It’s usually best to write your notes as a mind map.
- Write the beginning of your presentation out in full to read out when you start speaking (writing “I’m going to speak about my teacher when I was twelve. She...”, etc).
- You should generally use the whole minute to prepare, until you are asked to speak.
- If you want to start early (because you have fully prepared and are getting more nervous as you wait), just start when you like.
- If you want to start early (because you have fully prepared and are getting more nervous as you wait), just ask (“Can I start?”, “Is that one minute?”, “I think I’m ready”, “Shall I get started?”, etc).
- If you need extra time to prepare, just ask (“Just a moment, I’m nearly ready”, “Sorry, I just need to finish writing this”, “Sorry, I suddenly realised that I misunderstood the question. Can I have another minute?”, etc).

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- You should usually start by reading out the first words on the task sheet.
- It is possible to use the same starting phrase every time that you do a Speaking Part Two task (“I’d like to speak about...” “I’m going to talk about...”, “I’ve chosen to talk about...”, “I’ve decided to talk about...”, etc).
- A more creative and specific starting phrase would impress the examiner if it matches the situation (“I’m really glad I got this topic because...”, “There were many things I could have spoken about, but...”, “It’s a strange coincidence that I got this topic because just the other day...”, “The only thing I could think of to talk about was...”, “It was difficult to choose a topic but I finally settled on...”, etc).
- Starting formal presentations phrases are useful (“My presentation is divided into four parts”, “Thank you for inviting me here today”, etc).

The middle of IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- You should often correct yourself when you make language errors such as grammar mistakes (“Sorry, I should say...”, “Sorry for my bad grammar. I meant...”, “Sorry, that’s not correct. It should be...”, “Sorry, the past of ‘seek’ should be...”, etc).

- You should usually only correct yourself if the information is wrong or would be difficult to understand (“Sorry, that’s wrong. Actually...”, “Come to think of it, it was actually...”, “I mean...”, “Sorry, maybe that doesn’t make sense. What I meant to say was...”, etc).
- You can show your range of language by rephrasing the words on the task sheet instead of repeating them.
- You have to deal with the four sub-topics in the same order as the task sheet.
- Make sure that you finish talking about all four sub-topics within two minutes.
- Make sure that you stick to the four sub-topics and make some progress through them (“Turning to the next question”, “And the next thing I’m supposed to talk about is...”, “And about...”, “Moving onto...”, etc).
- If you go off topic, stop talking about that and quickly get back on topic (“Sorry, I should have been speaking about...”, “Sorry, I went off topic for a second there. Anyway, getting back to the questions...”, “Where was I? Oh yes...”, etc).
- Try to add extra interesting information that isn’t asked for on the task sheet (“By the way...”, “Going off topic for a second...”, “That reminds me of a funny story”, “Before I go on...”, etc).
- You should fill all silence if you can’t read your notes, can’t think of the right word in English, forget what you were going to say, need to look at the task sheet, etc (“Sorry, I’m just having problems...”, “Just a moment while I look at...”, “What was I going to say next? Oh yes...”, etc).
- If you are unsure about something such as an event a long time ago, say so (“I’ve forgotten..., but...”, “As far as I remember...”, “My memory is a little hazy, but...”, etc).
- Because the four sub-topics are all related, you’ll probably have to refer back to what you said earlier (“As I just said...”, “Adding to what I said about...”, etc).
- You should ask questions to involve the examiner (“Do you know what I mean?”, “Do you know what... is?”, “Have you heard of...?”, “Did I already mention...?”, etc).

Ending IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

- If you stop and the examiner just waits in silence, that probably means that you’ve spoken for less than one minute and so you should find something else to say (“What else can I say? Well, I suppose...”, “One more thing I could say about... is...”, “About... I could add that...”, “Did I miss anything? Well, I suppose...”, etc).
- If you completely finish in under two minutes and have nothing more to say, say so (“That’s all I can think of to say”, “I think I’ve covered all four points”, “That about covers it”, etc).
- It’s normal to use ending business presentations or academic presentations language (“That brings me to the end of my presentation”, “That was all that I wanted to say today”, “That is all the time that I have to speak about this topic”, etc).
- If the examiner is trying to interrupt you, quickly finish off the rest of your presentation (“And anyway, in the end...”, “And to quickly answer the fourth question...”, etc).
- You need a final conclusion or summary at the end of your presentation (“In conclusion...”, “To sum all that up...”, etc).
- When you finish, it is worth checking if your speaking was okay (“How did I do?”, “Did that answer all four questions?”, “Was I mostly on topic?”, etc).

Ask about any different choices you made, phrases you don’t understand, etc.

Brainstorming stage

Without looking above, brainstorm useful phrases for the good tips below into the gaps.

In the very rare case that you really can't talk about the topic, ask to talk about a different topic and explain why:

If there is anything on the question sheet you don't understand, just ask:

If you are not sure if what you have thought of matches the task, just ask:

If you want to start early (because you have fully prepared and are getting more nervous as you wait), just ask:

Starting IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

It is possible to use the same starting phrase every time that you do a Speaking Part Two task:

A more creative and specific starting phrase would impress the examiner if it matches the situation:

The middle of IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

You should usually only correct yourself if the information is wrong or would be difficult to understand:

Make sure that you stick to the four sub-topics and make some progress through them:

If you go off topic, stop talking about that and quickly get back on topic:

You should fill all silence if you can't read your notes, can't think of the right word in English, forget what you were going to say, need to look at the task sheet, etc:

If you are unsure about something such as an event a long time ago, say so:

Because the four sub-topics are all related, you'll probably have to refer back to what you said earlier:

Ending IELTS Speaking Part Two tips and useful phrases

If you stop and the examiner just waits in silence, that probably means that you've spoken for less than one minute and so you should find something else to say:

If you completely finish in under two minutes and have nothing more to say, say so:

Check above, brainstorm more useful phrases for the same situations

Check your extra ideas as a class and/ or with lists of useful phrases.