

# 7 Hobbies

**Aims:** Expressing likes and dislikes | Talking about hobbies | Expressing frequency  
Using the present perfect (simple and continuous) | Pronunciation: The schwa  
Exam technique: Sounding polite

## Vocabulary: Likes and dislikes



- 1 Look at statements a–g and decide if they express positive or negative feelings or indifference about each activity.
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| a I'm keen on photography. _____        | e I'm fanatical about playing cards. _____               |
| b I can't stand board games. _____      | f Going to the theatre? I can take it or leave it. _____ |
| c I'm crazy about computer games. _____ | g Going to gigs is not my kind of thing. _____           |
| d I don't mind cooking. _____           |  |

- 2 Use each of the phrases in Exercise 1 to talk about how you feel about various pastimes. There are some more pastimes you could talk about below. Practise saying your sentences, paying attention to your pronunciation.

camping  
entertaining  
watching TV

crafts  
going clubbing  
woodwork

eating out  
going for walks  
working on cars

fishing  
listening to music

## Vocabulary: Hobbies

3 1 Complete each text with the words below. Words that form collocations are in italics.

## 1 Reading

about character opening page-turner set

The novel I'm reading at the moment is *a real* (1) \_\_\_\_\_. I just can't put it down. It's (2) \_\_\_\_\_ *in* Renaissance Italy and *is* (3) \_\_\_\_\_ young women who are forced to become nuns because they've brought shame on their families for various reasons. In *the* (4) \_\_\_\_\_ *chapters*, for example, a (5) \_\_\_\_\_ falls in love with her music teacher and the family don't approve.

## 2 Art

abstract exhibition hype original representational work

I'm sorry to say the student *art* (1) \_\_\_\_\_ was rather dull. I had expected it to be really thought-provoking after *all the* (2) \_\_\_\_\_ but none of the art was very (3) \_\_\_\_\_. It was mostly sculpture, though there were a couple of installations and quite a few paintings. Most of the painters seemed to think they needed to be *strictly* (4) \_\_\_\_\_, but I prefer (5) \_\_\_\_\_ *art*. It allows you to respond more personally to a (6) \_\_\_\_\_ *of art*.

## 3 Music

charts concert gigs live lyrics taken up tunes

I've just (1) \_\_\_\_\_ *the piano*. It was after a (2) \_\_\_\_\_ I went to that inspired me because the pianist was so talented. I love (3) \_\_\_\_\_ *performances*, though usually I'm more into (4) \_\_\_\_\_. I went to see my favourite band the other week, actually. What I like about them is their *thoughtful* (5) \_\_\_\_\_ and *catchy* (6) \_\_\_\_\_. Of course, the band write their own music unlike the manufactured groups you see so much these days. They always *reach the top of the* (7) \_\_\_\_\_ but I think it's more down to marketing than talent.

## 4 Film

genre predictable rave rom-com slow-moving star-studded

When it comes to film, my favourite (1) \_\_\_\_\_ is comedy. I went to see a (2) \_\_\_\_\_ last night, and it was so hilarious. It was well acted – well, it was a (3) \_\_\_\_\_ *cast* so that's not surprising. And it was so touching. Last weekend, my friends made me go and see a horror film with them. It was terrible, not scary at all. It was a (4) \_\_\_\_\_ *plot* and the ending was so (5) \_\_\_\_\_. My friends had wanted to see it for ages because it's getting (6) \_\_\_\_\_ *reviews* so they were really disappointed.

2 Check the meaning of any new vocabulary in these texts. Remember the correct definition may not be the first one in your dictionary. Note down any useful phrases, such as *I just can't put it down* and *they write their own music*.

**Exam tip:** Be prepared to talk about your hobbies and how often you do them. Search online or in language books for texts describing your pastimes. Note down and learn any useful words, phrases or collocations, and then practise talking about your hobbies with a friend.

## Language: Frequency

- 4 1 The phrases below express frequency. Put them in order from the most frequent to the least frequent.

once a fortnight  
every other day  
every Tuesday

every single day  
several times a year  
twice a year

- 2 Practise talking about things you do and how often you do them. You can change some of the phrases above to make them true for you.

Examples: *I sing karaoke **every other Saturday**. I go to the theatre **about three times a year**.*

**Exam tip:** Using phrases, rather than just single words, to express frequency will impress the examiner. Instead of *I **occasionally** play tennis*, say *I play tennis **every now and again***. Instead of *I **often** take photos*, try using this present continuous structure instead: *I'm **always** taking photos*.

And don't forget you can use these frequency phrases with any topic, not just with hobbies.

### IELTS Speaking Exam: Part 1



- 5 You are going to hear Part 1 questions that are typical of the exam. Listen to each question and give your answer. Record yourself. Remember, do not give answers that are too short: saying just one word or one short sentence is not enough.

Now listen to the sample answers. Notice that the candidate uses a range of language to express likes and dislikes, and a range of frequency phrases.



### IELTS Speaking Exam: Part 2

- 6 Read this Part 2 question. Give yourself one minute to plan your answer, making notes if you wish, then record yourself answering it. By now, you should be finding it easier to speak for two minutes on a topic.

Describe a hobby you enjoy.

You should say:

how long you have been doing it

how often you do it

what benefits you get from it

and explain why you enjoy it.

Now listen to the sample answer.

## Grammar: Present perfect

- 7 Read the rules and complete the example sentences.

We use the present perfect:

- 1 to talk about something that began in the past and continues now.

Complete the gaps with the present perfect and *for* with a period of time, and *since* with a point in time.

I \_\_\_\_\_ (live) in Granada \_\_\_\_\_ over ten years and have no plans to move.  
I love it here.

I \_\_\_\_\_ (know) her \_\_\_\_\_ before she was famous. She hasn't changed at all.

- 2 to talk about something that happened at an unspecified time in the past.

Fill the gaps with *already*, *ever* and *never*.

Have you \_\_\_\_\_ been bungee jumping? – No, \_\_\_\_\_. Have you?

I've \_\_\_\_\_ told you. Don't borrow my clothes – you don't look after them!

- 3 to give up-to-date news without specifying when it happened.

Note that if we give more details, we usually change tenses.

The government \_\_\_\_\_ (announce) that a number of libraries are set to close over the next year. They \_\_\_\_\_ (make) the announcement at Prime Minister's Questions yesterday.

4 to show the present result of something that happened in the unspecified past.  
*I can't go out with you because I \_\_\_\_\_ (lose) my wallet. (I still don't have my wallet now.)*

*Oh dear! What's happened to your leg? - I \_\_\_\_\_ (break) it. (My leg is broken now.)*

5 with unfinished time periods.

Note that with finished time periods we use past tenses, even if a finished time period is implied but not stated, for example if we are talking about somebody no longer alive.

[The time is 10.30 am] Poor me. I \_\_\_\_\_ (not have) a break this morning.

[The time is 6.00 pm] Poor me. I \_\_\_\_\_ (not have) a break this morning.

I \_\_\_\_\_ (be) married twice.

Marilyn Monroe \_\_\_\_\_ (be) married three times.



8 Answer the questions you hear so that they are true for you. Use the present perfect simple, changing tenses if appropriate.

**Exam tip:** Be careful if your language has a tense that is constructed similarly to the present perfect tenses in English, e.g. in Latin languages. There are almost certainly some differences in the way the tenses are used. Make sure you know what the differences are.

9 Do you know when to use the present perfect simple and when to use the present perfect continuous?

present perfect simple	have/has + past participle e.g. <b>has done</b>
present perfect continuous	have/has + been + -ing e.g. <b>has been doing</b>

1 You can use either tense to talk about how long an activity has been going on.

*I've done yoga for six years.*

*I've been doing yoga for six years.*

The present perfect simple may be preferable if the situation is permanent or of long duration.

*I've lived in Reading for twenty years.*

*I've been living with my mum for the past two weeks because my flat is being refurbished.*

2 In other instances, only one tense is appropriate:

*I've watched the film you recommended. I loved it.*

The focus here is that the person has finished watching the film.

*What have you been doing? - I've been watching the film you recommended.*

The focus here is on the action of watching the film. We do not know if they have finished watching the film or not.

3 **I've planted** some new flowers. Don't they look beautiful?

The focus here is on the result of the planting.

Why are you covered in mud? – **I've been planting** some new flowers.

The focus here is on the activity that has made the person dirty. We do not know nor are we interested in whether the planting is finished or not.

4 The present perfect continuous is also used to emphasise how long something has been going on.

He tried to tell me I didn't understand the rules of the game. **I've been playing** badminton for twenty years. He's only **been playing** for three months!

Note that state verbs – e.g. *know, believe, see, want* – do not generally have a continuous form so you cannot use them in the present perfect continuous even if the meaning seems to demand it.

10 1 Complete the sentences with either the present perfect simple or continuous of the verbs in brackets, and where necessary *for* or *since*.

1 I \_\_\_\_\_ (play) the clarinet \_\_\_\_\_ I was a child.

2 I \_\_\_\_\_ only \_\_\_\_\_ (go) scuba-diving twice.

3 I \_\_\_\_\_ (know) her \_\_\_\_\_ three and a half years.

4 I \_\_\_\_\_ (read) your book. You can have it back now.

5 I \_\_\_\_\_ (watch) TV all morning. I'm so lazy!

2 Listen to check your answers. Then, for each question, give a reason why that tense is correct.

3 Listen to Track 02 again and repeat the sentences, focusing on your pronunciation. Pay attention to any difficult sounds, weak forms, and word and sentence stress.

11 Answer the questions you hear using either the present perfect simple or continuous.

**IELTS Speaking Exam: Part 3**

12 You are going to hear questions that are typical of Part 3 of the exam. Listen to each question and give your answers. Practise what you have learnt in this unit. Record your answers.

Now listen to the sample answers.





## Pronunciation: The schwa /ə/

**Exam tip:** The schwa is the most common sound in English. It cannot appear in a stressed syllable. In writing, any vowel can be used to represent it and it can be represented by more than one letter (including *r*).



05  
CD2

- 13** Listen to the schwa sound and repeat it. Remember that to pronounce it you just relax your mouth.



06  
CD2

- 14** 1 Listen to the following words being said. For each word, underline the stressed syllable.

author	yoga
today	England
summer	Internet
collection	suppose
person	gardening
leisure	photography
famous	opinion

- 2 Listen to the words again. Underline in a different colour any letters that are pronounced as a schwa.
- 3 Check your answers, then practise saying the words. Remember not to stress the schwas.

- 15** Listen to the recording of your Part 3 answers. Did you use any of the words from Exercise 14? If so, did you pronounce them using the schwa? Write down ten key content words you used that you want to check the pronunciation of. Mark the stressed syllables and any schwas. Practise saying the words. Then re-record your answer, focusing on word stress and the schwa. Remember that schwas also appear in the weak forms of certain function words.

