

Exam countdown – top tips

Answer key

Nine months before

- You've already built up a good knowledge of English and now you're starting on the final year of preparation for the *Cambridge English: Advanced* examination. Work consistently, study conscientiously and above all, enjoy learning!
- Establish good habits from the outset.
- Keep vocabulary lists in your notebook that include derivations, opposites, useful phrases, etc.
- Note down any word formations that might present a problem.
- Read widely outside the classroom. Use the resources of the internet to help you (online newspapers, magazines, etc.) plus official Cambridge ESOL guidelines and advice.
- Make use of communication websites to listen to interesting talks in English in order to develop your listening skills further.

Six months before

- Start looking back at what you've learnt over the previous three months. Constant revision is essential to successful learning. It's no use leaving it all until the last minute! The more often you study a new word or phrase, the more likely it is to remain fixed in your memory.
- Go through your written work. Are you developing your use of language sufficiently? Make a conscious effort to use new language in your written work.

Three months before

- By now, you should have acquired a comprehensive understanding of the exam and its requirements and you should be completely familiar with all the exam tasks.
- Revise your vocabulary and word formation lists, highlighting any areas that you feel need special attention. Spend as much time as possible on your English.
- Start to practise the exam tasks under exam conditions: whenever you do an exam task, time yourself so that you can finish it within the time limit.

On the day

- Make sure you take your identification. It must have your photo on it and must be the original document, not a copy.
- You will also need a pen, an HB or B pencil and an eraser.
- You should feel confident, knowing that you have prepared as well as you can for the exam.
- There will be a clock in the exam room but wear a watch if possible and time each section of the exam very carefully. There won't be very much time to spare, so it's important that you know exactly how much time you have. Try not to run over your timing for each part.
- Answer all questions as you work through the paper since you might not have time to check your answers at the end. Ideally, however, you should plan to spend time at the end of each paper checking your answers so that you can change them if necessary.

The day before

- You should have a quick look through your most important notes, the highlighted points in your vocabulary and word formations, together with any other important areas. Do not try to cram in new material that you haven't managed to cover before.
- Know when to say 'Enough is enough', and get a good night's sleep. Your brain cannot work efficiently on five hours' sleep!

One month before

- Having done so much exam practice and preparation, you should by now feel confident in your knowledge of the language and your ability to cope successfully in the exam.
- You know that lexical chunks (verb phrases, prepositional phrases and so on) make up a large part of language learning. Revise all the phrases you have learnt, highlighting any particular ones that you find difficult to remember.
- Do a mock exam under exam conditions, whether through your school or on your own at home, if you are following a course of self-study. Check your performance according to timing, word count, etc.

Module 1

Vocabulary development 1

- 1 strong preference
2 high salary
3 main priority
- 1 set
2 taken
3 put
4 overcome
- 1 pleasure in
2 ply on
3 aback by
4 exception to
- 1 successful, applicant, confident
2 qualifications, evidence, interested
3 disappointment, optimistic, determined
4 reliability, communicator, flexibility

Use of English

- 3 1 B 2 D 3 C 4 A 5 A 6 D 7 C 8 B

Expert language

- 2 (meet deadlines)

Language development 1

- 1 've gained
2 was
3 has made
4 had never had
- 1 a was travelling; b travelled
2 a have been reading; b read
3 a stays; b is staying
4 a had eaten; b had been eating
5 a will probably be leaving; b will leave
- 1 am working
2 have been writing
3 gives
4 am
5 feel/ have felt/ have been feeling
6 don't get/ am not getting
7 realise
8 has been/ is
9 have acquired/ am acquiring
10 still think

Use of English

- 3 1 who
2 on
3 though/ if
- 4 make
5 out
6 what
- 7 more
8 before

Expert language

- 2 (switched her **on** to the legal profession) and 5 (figuring out problems)

Listening

- 1 three
2 Extract One: two law graduates talking about their education and career; Extract Two: an interview with a recent graduate; Extract Three: a discussion programme about career choices
- We know that the speakers are law graduates and that they will be talking about their education and career. We know that one of the speakers is surprised about something, and that they both appreciate a particular aspect of studying law.

- 3 1 A 2 B 3 A 4 C 5 A 6 B

Expert language

- Present: 2, 6

- past: 1, 3, 4, 5

Vocabulary development 2

- 1 tense, intimidated by
2 motivated, distracted
3 apprehensive, daunted
4 frustrated, overwhelmed by

1b 1 keep up (with)

- 2 take in
3 put (me) off
4 dropped out (of)

- 2 1 Professors 4 Teachers 7 Trainers
2 Tutors 5 Lecturers
3 Instructors 6 Coaches
- 3 1 at, on 3 with, from 5 by, in
2 by, of 4 to, under 6 about, by
- 4 1 top 4 status 7 key
2 clear 5 investment 8 outcomes
3 pay 6 value

Reading

- 4-5 1 C 2 D 3 A 4 B 5 C 6 A 7 D 8 A 9 C 10 B
- 6 1 frazzled 6 trumpeting
2 supplementary 7 enhance
3 stirred up 8 steered (towards)
4 flux 9 dropped
5 tap into 10 foster

Expert language

science, technology, engineering, maths, English literature and composition, (American) history, calculus, US politics and government, psychology, (world) history, biology, chemistry, computing science, physics; poetry, humanities, English, French, art, social anthropology, literature

Language development 2

- 1 will be/is going to be
2 were/had been
3 was
- 1 is located
2 are always taught
3 was originally opened
4 have been developed
- 1 I think you should be taught by a reputable driving instructor rather than your parents.
2 Some models of vehicle can't be used for the test.
3 Your test might be cancelled if you don't have the right documents.
4 I should have been taken on the big roundabout before I took the test.
5 You may be shouted at (by the instructor) sometimes.
6 Your provisional licence has to be shown to the instructor on your first lesson.
- 1 ... is being **criticised** for ...
2 ... be prepared to be **asking asked** some ...
3 ... insisted on being **told**.
4 ... resent **be being** made ...
5 ... want to be **kept** informed ...
6 ... expecting to be **picked** up ...
- 1 He is said to have been a truly inspirational teacher.
2 They are expected to be arriving at around six o'clock.
3 It is now known that the situation is far worse than had been first thought.
4 It is believed that the Education Secretary will be handing in his resignation later today.
5 There is understood to be very little chance of a peace agreement at this stage.
6 It is hoped that they will have more news before the end of the evening.

Use of English

- 1 came as a great/big surprise to
2 had great difficulty (in)
3 was on the point of accepting
4 matter how hard she works
5 did not/didn't meet with her parents'
- 6 was a source of disappointment to
7 should/may/can students
8 lived up to Gina's very seriously
9 (really) took his studies priority is the repayment

Writing

- 1 your cousin
2 to give advice
3 informal
4 advice about whether or not to (1) look for a permanent job (2) get work experience (3) go travelling overseas
- 1 going straight into a permanent job (against) travelling overseas (for)
3 doing work experience (against) going straight into a permanent job (for)
5 travelling overseas (against) doing work experience (for)
- 1 I'd advise you not to ...
2 Why don't you ...?
3 I'd ... if I were you.
4 What I've found great ... is ...
5 I don't recommend ...
6 It might be good for ...

- 5a 1 In addition
2 Nevertheless
3 In my view
4 In contrast
- 5b Suggested answers
• Why don't you see a bit of the world, which will give you the time and space to think about what to do next? Mind you, the problem is that you'd need to ...
• I'd be careful if I were you. It can be hard work and you may feel resentful if you're not paid for it. Even so, it might be good for your CV ...

- Opening: 1, 4
Closing: 1, 3, 4, 5
Model answer
Hi Sara,
It was great to hear from you, and I'm really sorry I haven't been in touch for so long - it's been mad here at work recently! Anyway, you certainly have a tough decision to make!

Personally, I wouldn't think of settling down just yet; once you're in a permanent job, it's hard to leave - and remember: it's for the rest of your life! It's great to be earning money but there's plenty of time for that. After all, you've only just turned 21! So I'd suggest seeing a bit of the world and having a break after your exams. You could go to Australia - you've always wanted to go there. Of course, unless you manage to find paid work there, you'll have to do some casual work here first to pay for your flight, and living expenses. But six months should do it, especially if you can save money by living at home! Why not see if that little restaurant I worked at has any vacancies? The pay wasn't bad and it was quite fun at times.

As for work experience, it's difficult. It's OK if they pay your expenses or give you a small salary but otherwise it's annoying having to work for nothing. Why not think about that when you get back from your travels? Anyway, good luck with whatever you decide, and hope to see you very soon.
Take care,
Liz

Audio script 02

Extract One
M: Not many kids I grew up with went to university. I mean, they got jobs, learnt to be electricians or carpenters or whatever, but they didn't have horizons beyond that. So for me, it was a really big step. My grandfather was a docker in London - he couldn't ever have imagined that his grandson would go to university to study law - it was like a massive shock to him. So when I got to Manchester, it was like, really baffling to me to come across students who just seemed to be there to have a good time. I gave them a wide berth, generally.

F: I know what you mean. Basically, it's like an extension of school for some people - they're still growing up - don't really know where they're heading careerwise. I mean, that's the thing about doing a subject like ours - the future's kind of mapped out in many ways and that makes it easier to knuckle down.

M: Well, it's not completely pre-programmed. I mean, either of us could've gone into industry rather than a legal practice, but your goals are more concrete than in a lot of subjects you might study.

- F:** Sure, there are choices to make along the road, but the roads always there - that's what appeals to me, actually.
- Extract Two**
F: So how did it feel when your final exams were over and you were out there in the job market?

M: I spent the first couple of weeks letting off steam - getting student life out of my system for the last time - then I got on the internet. I mean, some people'd been going to careers events, lining stuff up all through their final year, but I thought that was tempting fate rather - better to get your results under your belt first, and it wasn't as if I was looking to join a graduate recruitment programme with a big company anyway.

F: So what did you do?
M: I went for the blanket coverage approach. A quick scan of the job ad, attach your CV, then click. Sometimes I only read the full job spec after I'd applied. At the end of the day, applying doesn't commit you to anything. At least you keep things moving and get experience. Like, I got invited to a group interview for an internship and got temporary work writing stuff for a blog - all grist to the mill. Then finally, after seven weeks, I got lucky and landed a paid job in a call centre, which is exactly the sector I was hoping to go into long term. I was sorted.

Extract Three

F: So was your career path mapped out from the outset, Bob?
M: Hardly. I jumped at the first job opportunity I was given. Not that this is necessarily a bad move if that first opportunity's the right fit. But I chose to become a sales consultant because the salary package was incredible. What I discovered, however, was that this couldn't compensate for the lack of purpose I felt crunching numbers on a daily basis.

F: Sure ...
M: Ultimately, I decided to leave that career and pursue something I was truly passionate about: working with children. Though financially I've taken a large hit from this decision, I'd trade that any day for the daily satisfaction I get from changing kids' lives. How about you?

F: Well, I chose English as my major in college, mainly for lack of anything I was more interested in. After trying out a couple of different careers, which were fun but not always fulfilling, I stumbled upon something that's pretty much a perfect fit for me: proofreading. It was pure chance, really, because it's not something I ever thought about as a job, while I was in college, so I had no idea I was preparing for it at that time. But it worked out perfectly!

Module 2

Vocabulary development 1

- 1 e 2 h 3 a 4 g 5 f 6 c 7 d 8 b
All the adjectives are hyphenated, with the exception of *straightforward* and *outspoken*.
- 1 laid-back
2 level-headed
3 be self-contained
4 is quick-witted
5 high-spirited
6 outspoken
7 straightforward
8 absent-minded

- 3 1 tactless, insensitive
2 unsoccable, inconsiderate
4 1 down
2 down
3 out
4 on
5 off
6 down
7 after
8 over
- 5 1 supportive
2 passionate
6 1 a
2 in
3 aggressive
4 critical
5 over/round
6 for

Use of English

- 3 1 B 2 C 3 A 4 D 5 A 6 B 7 C 8 D
- Expert language**
had aroused, had gone, had placed
- Language development 1**
- 1 ... Revell, who has just ... by the Heart Foundation, ...
2 hospital, where ...
3 which/that
4 ... end, which was ...
5 which/that
6 Simon, whose stories ... book, ...
7 who/that

- 2 1 The woman I met at your party inspired me to go into publishing.
2 That singer, whose name I can never remember, was fantastic.
3 I got the idea from my brother, who went there last year.
4 The concert is on 10 March, (which is) when I'm supposed to be going to the dentist's.
5 We're going to Andorra for a couple of days, which should be very interesting.
6 It was after midnight when I finally got to bed.
7 We went to a restaurant I'd never been to before.
8 Fred, who lives over the road, is hoping to be an actor.

- 3 1 ... charity, **who** whose aim is ...
2 ... bullying, **that** which is so common ...
3 ... problem, **which** it needs ...
4 ✓
5 ✓
6 ✓
7 ... singer, **whose** whose son was ...
8 ... project, **which** it's is said ...

Use of English

- 4 1 on which
2 both of which
3 I went with
4 how
5 Although/Though/While
6 take
7 As
8 them/one

Expert language

- signed up, cut back (on)
- Listening**
- 1 five
2a what first impressed the speakers
2b how each speaker feels now