Computer-based Cambridge English Qualifications
Frequently Asked Questions

Here you can find answers to questions candidates often ask about the computer-based exams.

General questions about computer-based exams

What are the benefits of taking a computer-based exam?

Some people take the computer-based exam because they would like to get their results faster and because they want to type on a keyboard rather than write by hand. Other benefits include:

- You can do the listening tests with headphones, so the sound quality is good.
- You can adjust the volume of the audio to suit you.
- You can adjust the size and colour of the font to suit you.
- You can easily edit your writing and use the word count to see how many words you've written.
- You don't need to transfer your answers to a separate answer sheet.

What is the difference between the paper-based and the computer-based exam?

The only difference is the way you take the exam. The content of the exams, the scoring and the final certificate are the same. The Speaking test is the same for the paper-based and computer-based exam: you will be speaking to an examiner with one or two other candidates.

What if there are technical issues on the day of the exam?

Technical issues are not common and, if there are any, your exam centre can usually resolve them quickly. They will advise you on what you need to do.

What if my computer has technical issues during the exam?

In the case of technical issues during the exam (e.g. your computer does not respond, or the audio is not playing), please raise your hand immediately.

Can I bring a pen and paper to the exam to take notes?

You can bring a pen or pencil to take notes. The paper will be provided by the exam centre. Leave the paper on the table once the exam is finished.

If I can't answer a question, can I come back to it again later?

Yes, you can check and change your answers at any time before the end of the test.

How will I know which questions I haven't answered yet?

The questions you've answered will appear grey and underlined at the bottom of your screen.
The unanswered questions will stay as black squares.
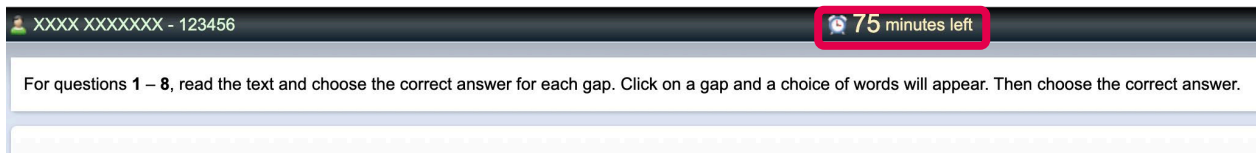
Part 1: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

What is the review button in the bottom left corner for?

The review button is a useful tool for you to know which questions you want to check again before the end of the exam. Tick review and the question number will become a blue circle.
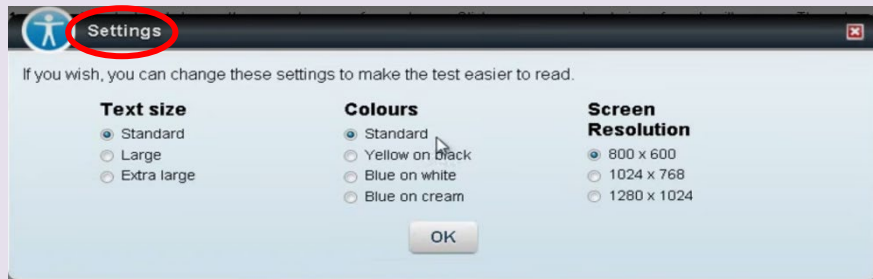

How do I know how much time I have left?

There is a timer at the top of the screen.

For the Reading & Use of English and Writing tests, the clock will turn red and flash when you have ten and five minutes left. The tests will automatically stop when the time finishes.

Can I adjust font size, colour and resolution?

Yes, you can click on Settings and adjust the font size, colour and resolution, so it is right for you.

Will I be able to do the exam from home?

No, you will take the exam in an exam centre, at your school, or at another location, depending on local arrangements. Check with your teacher or exam centre.

Can I use the internet to look up words or answers?

No, you will not have access to the internet from the test computer.

Is there a sample test for the computer-based exam?

Yes, you can find a sample test for the computer-based exam on our website. **Choose the exam** you want to take, and you will find an example of a computer-based test. Make sure you also watch the **tutorial** for the exam you are taking.

Common questions about the computer-based Reading paper

How can I underline or highlight text?

Select the text you want to highlight, right click and choose "Highlight".

To remove the highlighted passages, right clicking again and choose "Clear". Choose "Clear all" to remove all highlighted passages.

How can I make notes?

Select the passage you would like to make notes about, right click and choose "Notes". This will automatically highlight the passage too. You can copy and paste from your electronic notes to the answers.

You can also make notes on a piece of paper.

To look at your notes, move your cursor over the highlighted passages and will see a small square.

You can remove the notes by right clicking again and choose "Clear". You can choose "Clear all" if you want to remove all highlighted passages and notes.

Can I see all the text and questions at the same time?

You may have to move the scroll bar to read the whole text and see all the questions.

Common questions about the computer-based Writing paper

Will the words I type be counted automatically?

Yes, the words are counted automatically as you're typing.

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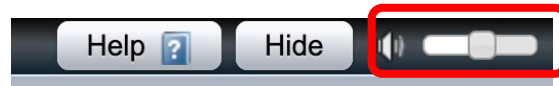| **Can I edit my writing?** |
|---|
| Yes, you can copy and paste, delete and edit what you write at any time during the Writing paper. |
| **Is there a spell-checker?** |
| No. It is important to proofread your answer before the end of the test. |
| **Can I plan and make notes for the Writing part on paper?** |
| Yes, you will be given paper that you can use to plan and make notes for the Writing paper. Please make sure to leave all the paper in the exam room once the exam has finished. |

Common questions about the computer-based Listening paper
Can I adjust the volume of the audio?
Yes, you can change the volume by using the bar in the top-right at any time during the test.
Can I pause the listening?
No, you cannot pause the listening. You will hear each track twice.
Do I have any time to review my answers before the end of the test?
Yes, you have two minutes to check your answers before the test ends.

Common questions about the Speaking paper for computer-based exams
How is the Speaking test done in the computer-based exam?
The Speaking test is the same as in the paper-based exam. You take it together with one or two other candidates. There are two examiners. One of the examiners talks to you and the other examiner listens.