

IELTS spelling list: 155 Listening words people misspell

From the answers to IELTS Listening recordings in the Testmigo practice library. A misspelt answer scores nothing, so drill the trap in each word.

Hard

accommodation Double c and double m; accomodation (one m) is the classic slip.

environment The n before m is easy to drop in speech; enviroment is the common slip.

government The n before m is easy to drop in speech; goverment is the common slip.

vegetables Said veg-tables, but written with an e after veg: vegetables.

business The u sounds like i, the i after the s is silent, and it ends double s.

unnecessary Double n (un + necessary), one c, double s: not unneccessary or unnecessary.

restaurant rest + au + rant: the au is barely heard, and it ends -ant, not -ent.

questionnaire Double n and -aire at the end: not questionnaire or questionnair.

opportunity Double p, and the unclear vowel after the pp is o: not oppertunity or oportunity.

temperature Said temp-ra-ture, but written temper + ature: not tempreture or temprature.

comfortable Said comf-ta-ble, but the or is written: comfortable, not comftable.

temporary Fast speech squeezes the middle; written tempor + ary, not tempory or temporey.

laboratory Fast speech drops a vowel; written labor + a + tory, not labratory.

interest Said in-trest, but the e after int- is written: interest, not intrest.

chocolate Said choc-lit: the o after choc- is written, and it ends -ate, not -it.

experience The middle is -peri-, and it ends -ence: not expirience or experiance.

insurance Ends -ance, not -ence: insurence is the common slip.

attendance Double t, and -ance, not -ence: not atendance or attendence.

confidence Ends -ence, not -ance: confidance is the common slip.

reference One f, and -ence at the end: not refference or referance.

conference One f, and -ence at the end: not conference or conferance.

intelligence Double l, and -ence at the end: not inteligence or intelligance.

evidence Ends -ence, not -ance: evidance is the common slip.

absence s, then -ence: not absense or abscence.

residence Ends -ence, not -ance: residance is the common slip.

convenient -ven- then -ient: not convinient or convenient.

permanent The unclear vowels are a then e (perm-a-nent): not permanant or permanant.

consistent Ends -ent, not -ant: consistant is the common slip.

current Double r and -ent; currant, with -ant, is the dried fruit.

flexible Ends -ible, not -able: flexible is the common slip.

responsibility Ends -ibility, like responsible: not responsability.

science sc at the start (the c is silent) and -ence at the end: not sience or sciense.

island The s is silent, so it is easy to write iland.

climb The b is silent, so it is easy to write clim.

castle The t is silent, so it is easy to write casle or cassle.

design The g is silent, so it is easy to write desine or desin.

knowledge Silent k at the start and a d before the g: not nowledge or knowlege.

daughter augh sounds like aw and the gh is silent: not dauter or doughter.

exhibition The h after the x is silent: exibition is the common slip.

grandparents The d is often unpronounced, so granparents is the common slip.

architecture The ch sounds like k: arkitecture is the common slip.

technology The ch sounds like k: not teknology or tecnology.

surprise The first r is often dropped in speech (suprise), and it ends -ise, not -ize.

exercise c in the middle, then -ise: not excersise or exersize.

language In -guage the u comes before the a: not languge or langauge.

tongue Sounds like tung, but it ends -ngue with a silent u and e.

souvenirs The first vowel sound is written ou, and it ends -ir, not -eer: souvenirs.

leisure ei, not ie, then -sure: liesure and leasure are the common slips.

protein ei after the t, not ie: protien is the common slip.

achievement ie, not ei, and keep the e of achieve: not acheivement or achievment.

similar One m, one l, and -ar at the end: not simmilar or similiar.

grammar Double m, and it ends -ar: grammer is the classic slip.

analysis y after the l, not i: not analisis or analysys.

electrician Ends -cian, from electric: not electrition or electrision.

assessment Double s twice: not assesment or asessment.

approximately Double p, and keep the e before -ly: not aproximately or approximatly.

beginners Double n before -er: not beginers or begginers.

college Double l, and it ends -ege: not colege or colledge.

profession One f, double s: not proffession or profesion.

curtains Sounds like curt-ns, but written -ain: not curtens or curtins.

fountain Sounds like fount-n, but written -ain: not fountin or foutnen.

surface Sounds like sur-fis, but written -face: surfice is the common slip.

anxiety x after the n, then -iety: not angziety or anxevity.

oxygen y after the x, and g, not j: not oxigen or oxyjen.

desert One s for the sandy place; dessert, with double s, is the pudding.

pollution Double l: polution is the common slip.

communication Double m: comunication is the common slip.

appointment Double p: apointment is the common slip.

attention Double t: atention is the common slip.

traffic Double f and no k at the end: not trafic or traffick.

annual Double n: anual is the common slip.

apartments One p, unlike appointment: appartments is the common slip.

illegal il + legal gives double l: ilegal is the common slip.

irrigation Double r, one g: irigation is the common slip.

mammals Double m in the middle: mamals is the common slip.

mirror Double r, and it ends -or: not miror or mirrow.

umbrella One m, then double l: umbrella is the common slip.

written Double t after the short i: not writen (writing keeps one t).

assistant Double s, and it ends -ant: not asistant or assistent.

holiday One l, then i: not holliday or holyday.

dining One n, because the i is long (dine): dinning is the classic slip.

balance One l, and -ance at the end: not ballance or balence.

Tricky

vegetarian The vowel after veg is e: not vegetarian or vegterian.

behaviour / behavior British spelling ends -iour: behaviour (no i) is the common slip.

favourite / favorite British -our-, then -ite: not favorit or favourate.

colour / color British spelling has u before the r: colour (American color).

harbour / harbor British spelling has u before the r: harbour (American harbor).

centre / center British spelling ends -re, though it sounds like -er: centre.

theatre / theater British spelling ends -re, though it sounds like -er: theatre.

litre / liter British spelling ends -re, though it sounds like -er: litre.

cheque / check Sounds like check, but the bank document is cheque in British English.

grey / gray British spelling uses e: grey; gray is the American form.

catalogs / catalogues American form; British spelling is catalogues, with -ue before the s.

programs Computer programs: program even in British English; programme is for TV.

percent / per cent British style often writes per cent as two words; percent is American.

fertilisers / fertilizers -ise and -ize are both used in British English: fertilisers or fertilizers.

socialise / socialize -ise and -ize are both used in British English: socialise or socialize.

practice The noun practice ends -ice; practise, with s, is the British verb.

advertising advertise uses -ise even in American English, so avoid advertizing.

vocabulary -bu-, then -lary: not vocablary or vocabulery.

competition The unclear vowel after comp- is e (as in compete), then -tition.

certificate Ends -cate, though it sounds like -kit: not certificat or certifikit.

average Said av-rij, but the e after av is written, and it ends -age.

mathematics Said math-matics, but the e after math is written: mathematics.

silence Ends -ence, with c: not silance or silense.

emergency Ends -ency, not -ancy: emergancy is the common slip.

reliable The y of rely becomes i before -able: not relyable or reliabel.

visible Ends -ible, not -able: visable is the common slip.

label Ends -el, not -le: lable is the common slip.

disease Both s's sound like z, and ea follows the s: not desease or dizease.

confusion Ends -sion, not -tion: confusion is the common slip.

description Starts de-, not di-, and keeps the p: not discription or descrition.

development No e after the p: developement is the classic slip.

equipment No t before the m: equiptment is the classic slip.

management Keep the e of manage: managment is the common slip.

breathing From breathe: ea, and drop the final e before -ing: not breathing.

weather Sounds like whether (as in if), but this one is ea: weather.

friend i before e: freind is the common slip.

quiet quiet (no noise) ends -iet; quite (fairly) ends -ite.

weight Sounds like wait, but it is eigh with a silent gh: weight.

tough Sounds like tuff, but it is spelled with ough: tough.

route Sounds like root (or rout), but it's ou + te: route.

tourism Starts tour-, with ou: turism is the common slip.

museum Ends -eum: musuem and museam are the common slips.

whole Sounds like hole, but whole starts with a silent w.

physics The f sound is ph and the i sound is y: not fisics or phisics.

patients Sounds like patience (being calm), but people under care are patients.

council Sounds like counsel (advice); local government is council, with -cil.

diary Easily swapped with dairy (milk): diary has the i before the a.

brakes Sounds like breaks, but the parts that stop wheels turning are brakes.

waist Sounds like waste, but the body part is spelled with ai: waist.

persuading The su sounds like sw: not perswading or pursuading.

athletes Two syllables, no e between th and l: athelete is the common slip.

monkeys Keep the y and add s: monkies is the common slip.

Days, months and names

Wednesday Said wenz-day: the first d and the e after the n are silent.

February The first r is often dropped in speech, so Febuary is the common slip.

Thursday Thurs- with ur, though it sounds like er: not Thirsday or Thersday.

Saturday Satur- with a u, not an e: not Saterdag.

Tuesday ue after the T: not Tusday or Teusday.

January u after the n, then -ary: not Janury or Januery.

August Starts Au- with a capital A; lowercase august means grand.

September Ends -ber, not -bre: Septembre is the French spelling.

October Ends -ber, not -bre: Octobre is the French spelling.

November Ends -ber, not -bre: Novembre is the French spelling.

December Starts De-, not Di-, and ends -ber: not Decembre.

April Ends -il: not Aprel or Aprile.

Monday Sounds like Munday, but it is spelled with o: Monday.

Sunday u, as in sun: Sonday is the slip to avoid.

Friday Fri- with i and a capital F: not Fryday.

March Capital M for the month; lowercase march means to walk in step.

May Capital M for the month; lowercase may is a verb.

June Capital J and a final e: not Jun or lowercase june.

July Capital J, and it ends -y: not Juli or Julai.

Brisbane Sounds like Briz-bn, but it ends -bane: not Brisben or Brisbin.

Europe Starts Eu-, which sounds like you: not Yurope or Urope.