IELTS Word List

Vocabulary List

Vocabulary and example	Write it

plateau n./v. /ˈplætəʊ/

a period when a figure stays at the same level after rising or falling

Use it with: reach a plateau · plateau at **Tip:** Use it only for the stretch that is really flat.

After 2016 the birth rate reached a **plateau** and stayed there for four years.
2016

steep adj. /stiːp/

rising or falling by a large amount in a short time

Family: steeply (adv.) **Use it with:** a steep rise · fall steeply **Tip:** Do not call a small change steep.

The **steep** fall in coal use came between 2010 and 2014.
2010 2014

respectively adv. /rɪˈspektɪvli/

in the same order as the things just mentioned

Use it with: X and Y were 10% and 20% respectively **Tip:** If the order is unclear, name each pair instead.

Coal and gas supplied 40 and 25 per cent **respectively**.
40% 25%

peak n./v. /piːk/

the highest point; or to reach the highest point

Use it with: reach a peak · peak at **Tip:** Say when the peak happened.

Sales **peaked** in August and then fell for the rest of the year.

comparison n. /kəmˈpærɪsn/

looking at how two or more things are different or similar

Family: compare (v.) **Use it with:** in comparison with · make a comparison

The chart allows a **comparison** of spending in two countries.

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forecast n./v. /ˈfɔːkɑːst/

a statement of what a figure is expected to be in the future

Use it with: be forecast to · a forecast for **Tip:** Keep predictions apart from recorded results: “is expected to”, “is projected to”.

Visitor numbers are **forecast** to reach two million by 2030.

2030 200

majority n. /məˈdʒɒrəti/

more than half of a group

Family: minority (n.) **Use it with:** the vast majority · a small minority **Tip:** Forty per cent can be the largest share and still not a majority.

In 2020 the **majority** of the budget went to education.

2020

rise v./n. /raɪz/

to go up; or an increase

Family: rose, risen (past) **Use it with:** rise sharply · a steady rise **Tip:** Rise (no object): prices rose. Raise (with an object): they raised prices.

The number of cyclists **rose** from 2,000 to 5,000.

2,000 5,000

surge n./v. /sɜːdʒ/

a sudden, large increase

Use it with: a surge in · surge to

There was a **surge** in online sales during the holiday season.

soar v. /sɔː/

to rise very quickly to a high level

Use it with: prices soared · soar to

House prices **soared** in the early 2000s.

2000s

plummet v. /ˈplʌmɪt/

to fall very quickly and suddenly

Use it with: plummet to · plummet by **Tip:** Stronger than “fall sharply”.

Sales of DVDs **plummeted** after 2010.

2010 DVD

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Vocabulary and example	Write it

dip n./v. /dɪp/

a small, short fall

Use it with: a slight dip · dip to

There was a slight **dip** in sales in March.

level off v. /ˈlevl ɒf/

to stop rising or falling and stay at about the same level

Use it with: level off at **Tip:** British: levelled; American: leveled.

Car sales grew quickly and then **levelled off** at around 3 million.

300

bottom out v. /ˈbɒtəm aʊt/

to reach the lowest point before starting to rise again

Use it with: bottom out at

Unemployment **bottomed out** at 4% in 2019.

2019 4%

remain unchanged phrase /rɪˈmeɪn ʌnˈtʃeɪndʒd/

to stay at the same level

Use it with: remain unchanged at **Tip:** Also: “remained the same”, “stayed constant”.

The price of bread **remained unchanged** throughout the period.

gradual adj. /ˈgrædʒuːəl/

happening slowly over a long time

Family: gradually (adv.) **Use it with:** a gradual decline · rise gradually

There was a **gradual** increase in the number of visitors.

sharp adj. /ʃɑːp/

sudden and large

Family: sharply (adv.) **Use it with:** a sharp increase · fall sharply

There was a **sharp** drop in profits in 2020.

2020

Vocabulary and example	Write it

slight adj. /slaɪt/

small in size or amount

Family: slightly (adv.) **Use it with:** a slight fall · slightly higher

Prices showed a **slight** increase in June.

steady adj. /ˈstedi/

happening at a regular, even rate

Family: steadily (adv.) **Use it with:** a steady increase · rise steadily

The population grew at a **steady** rate.

modest adj. /ˈmɒdɪst/

not large; moderate

Family: modestly (adv.) **Use it with:** a modest increase

The company reported a **modest** rise in sales.

account for v. /əˈkaʊnt fɔː/

to form a particular amount of a total

Use it with: account for a third of **Tip:** Very common in pie-chart reports.

Cars **account for** 60% of all journeys.

60%

a fraction of phrase /ə ˈfrækʃn ɒv/

a small part of something

Use it with: just a fraction of

Only **a fraction of** the waste was recycled.

double v. /ˈdʌbl/

to become twice as large

Family: triple (v.) · twofold (adj.) **Use it with:** double in size · nearly double **Tip:** Triple = become three times as large.

The number of students **doubled** between 2000 and 2010.

2000 2010

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Vocabulary and example	Write it

outnumber v. /aʊtˈnʌmbə/

to be more in number than another group

Use it with: outnumber by

Women **outnumbered** men in the arts subjects.

overtake v. /ˌəʊvəˈteɪk/

to become larger than something that was larger before

Use it with: overtake X as the largest **Tip:** Past forms: overtook, overtaken.

In 2015, online sales **overtook** shop sales for the first time.
2015

twice as many as phrase /twaɪs æz ˈmeni æz/

double the number of something else

Use it with: twice as much as (uncountable) **Tip:** Use “many” with countable nouns and “much” with uncountable ones.

There were **twice as many** female students **as** male students.

just under phrase /dʒʌst ˈʌndə/

a little less than

Family: just over (phrase) **Use it with:** just under a third · just over 50%

Just under half of the respondents agreed.

the remainder n. /ðə rɪˈmeɪndə/

the part that is left

Use it with: the remainder of **Tip:** Useful for the last slice of a pie chart.

Cars made up 70% of trips, and buses made up **the remainder**.
70%

in contrast to phrase /ɪn ˈkɒntræst tuː/

used to compare two very different things

Use it with: in contrast to the previous year **Tip:** Follow it with a noun.

In contrast to cars, bike sales rose.

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Vocabulary and example	Write it

demolish v. /dɪˈmɒlɪʃ/

to completely destroy a building

Family: demolition (n.) **Use it with:** be demolished · demolish a building **Tip:** Map tasks: use the passive voice.

The old factory was **demolished** to make space for houses.

relocate v. /rɪləʊˈkeɪt/

to move to a new place

Family: relocation (n.) **Use it with:** relocate to

The library was **relocated** to the town centre.

make way for phrase /meɪk weɪ fɔː/

to be removed so that something new can be built

Use it with: make way for new housing **Tip:** Map tasks: "The houses were demolished to make way for a road."

Trees were cut down to **make way for** a car park.

the lowest point phrase /ðə ˈləʊɪst pɔɪnt/

the smallest value in a set of data

Use it with: hit the lowest point · reach a low of

Sales reached **the lowest point** in 2009.

2009

the figure for phrase /ðə ˈfɪgə fɔː/

the number given for a particular group or item

Use it with: the figure for women **Tip:** A neat way to avoid repeating the noun.

The figure for Japan was much lower.

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