

●●● Julie Moore

Common mistakes at

IELTS Advanced

... and how to avoid them



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521692472

© Cambridge University Press 2007

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2007

9th printing 2013

Printed and bound in the United Kingdom by the MPG Books Group

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-69247-2 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in
this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,
or will remain, accurate or appropriate. Information regarding prices, travel
timetables and other factual information given in this work is correct at
the time of first printing but Cambridge University Press does not guarantee
the accuracy of such information thereafter.

Produced by Kamae Design, Oxford

Contents

1 Articles: *the* before general concepts 5

2 Articles: *a/an* before noun phrases 6

3 When do I use capital letters? 7

Test 1 8

4 When do I use *when*, *if* and *whether*? 10

5 Punctuation: commas with discourse markers 11

6 Punctuation: using apostrophes 12

Test 2 13

7 Common spelling mistakes 15

8 Spelling: one word or two? 16

9 Adjective forms 17

Test 3 18

10 Using prepositions: with nouns 20

11 Using prepositions: after verbs 21

12 Using prepositions: describing trends and changes 22

Test 4 23

13 Describing statistics: using prepositions 25

14 Describing statistics: nouns 26

15 Describing statistics: verbs 27

Test 5 28

16 *Number* and *amount* 30

17 Making comparisons 31

18 Expressing contrast 32

Test 6 33

19 Countable and uncountable nouns 35

20 Singular and plural verb forms 36

21 *It, they* and *them* 37

Test 7 38

22 Verbs: *being* and *having* 40

23 Commonly confused verbs: *join/attend, give/provide* 41

24 Verb collocations 42

Test 8 43

25 Commonly confused nouns: *habits, customs* and *practices* 45

26 Commonly confused nouns: *effect, influence* and *impact* 46

27 Commonly confused nouns: time words 47

Test 9 48

28 Using nouns: *appearance* and *communication* 50

29 Using nouns and adjectives: *male* or *men*? 51

30 Using nouns and adjectives: *Britain, British* or *Briton*? 52

Test 10 53

Answer key 55

Punctuation: commas with discourse markers

1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

- In conclusion, the world population is expanding at an unsustainable rate.
 - In conclusion the world population is expanding at an unsustainable rate.
- If we look for example, at sport in schools.
 - If we look, for example, at sport in schools.

Discourse markers are words or phrases which show how ideas in a text link together. They are often separated from the rest of the text by commas.

We usually use a comma after a phrase or an adverb which introduces a sentence:

In addition, many disabled people suffer discrimination at work.

On the other hand, the unemployment rate has fallen.

Finally, local councils need to consider the cost of recycling schemes.

Unfortunately, there were no more tickets available.

Similarly, animals kept outdoors are also vulnerable to infection.

We also use commas around certain words and phrases in the middle of a sentence:

This problem can't, however, be solved quite so simply.

There are more jobs in the city, but, of course, the cost of living is higher.

Which option you choose depends, to a certain extent, on your budget.

Water is particularly scarce in arid regions, for example/for instance, in Africa.

People who live in cold countries, such as/like Norway, have to spend more on heating.

☆ Where an adverb describes an adjective, commas are not needed:

*This was matched by a **similarly dramatic** increase in May.*

*However **careful** you are, accidents can always happen.*

2 Correct the mistake below.

Inevitably there's always
something you forget.

..... something you forget.



3 Add commas in the sentences below where needed.

- What happens if for example you forget your password?
- To sum up I'd like to recap the main advantages and disadvantages.
- Statistics can however be misleading.
- Low-lying countries such as Bangladesh are particularly at risk.
- Furthermore not everyone will be able to afford to install new telephones.
- Contact sports like rugby will inevitably involve more injuries.
- A similarly priced house in the city centre would only have one bedroom.
- We will of course reimburse any travel expenses.

3 In the letter below, there are 10 verbs in bold. In each case, underline the noun which is the subject of the verb. Is the verb in the correct form? Correct any which are wrong.

Dear Mohammed,

How are you? I'm getting in touch because I'm planning to come to Egypt on holiday soon and I'd like to ask you for some advice.

I know that a lot of tourists **visits** *visit* Egypt every year, so I'd like to choose a time when the main tourist attractions ¹**is** least crowded. When is the best time? I also know that your country ²**has** a hot climate. ³**Are** the weather hot all year round?

I'd be keen to know more about Egyptian customs too. What sort of dress ⁴**are** appropriate when you are out in the street? I realise that in many Muslim countries, women ⁵**cover** their heads and ⁶**wears** clothing which ⁷**cover** their arms and legs. Are tourists expected to dress in the same way?

And what about the food? I've heard that Egyptian cooking ⁸**use** a lot of spices and many dishes ⁹**contains** meat. As I'm a vegetarian, do you think I will have a problem?

Sorry for all my questions. Could you recommend any websites which ¹⁰**has** information about Egyptian culture and customs? Thanks for your help.

Best wishes,

Anna.

4 Vocabulary extension. Are these words countable or uncountable? Label them C or U. Use a good learner's dictionary to check if necessary.

computer	advice	hour	aspect	accommodation
nation	potential	job	heating	paperwork

3 Match the two halves of the sentences.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 There will be an inquiry into the behaviour | of the time. |
| 2 People don't realise the health consequences | of the police at the march. |
| 3 Tourists aren't familiar with the American custom | of heavy drinking. |
| 4 The shop was shut down for the duration | of trade unions. |
| 5 You should try to get out of the habit | of his resignation. |
| 6 The report assesses the potential impact | of five to ten years. |
| 7 We have seen the increasing political influence | of tipping 15% in restaurants. |
| 8 He works away from home most | of adding salt to your food. |
| 9 You pay the loan off gradually over a period | of the war. |
| 10 Many were surprised by the timing | of climate change. |

4 The paragraph below contains 10 errors. Edit the text by finding and correcting the errors.

The effects to employees of working for long hours can be very serious, especially over a scale of time. Businesses need to look at whether their working practises encourage overwork. We should consider the impact of long working times on health and for family life. Children whose parents are at work most of the times really miss out. Where parents have very little free-time to spend with their family, children often develop problems with their behaviours and get into bad habits. It is easy for children to get out of control because their busy parents leave very little influence on them.

5 Choose the best adjective from the box to complete the sentences. Use a good learner's dictionary to check any collocations you are not sure about.

common	annoying	unsocial	knock-on
serious	big	harmful	bad

- 1 Cuts to the service could have consequences for disabled people.
- 2 Nurses are often expected to work hours.
- 3 People claim the cartoon series is a influence on young people.
- 4 Always wear sun cream to avoid the effects of the sun.
- 5 The congestion charge has had a impact on traffic flow in the city.
- 6 It is practice to include a 10% service charge on the bill.
- 7 She has the habit of tapping her pen on the desk.
- 8 The rise in oil prices will have a effect on other industries.