

IELTS Speaking Part 2

Talk about a piece of technology that is no longer used

You should say:

- what it is
- how long it has not been used
- why you think it is not used anymore

and say whether you personally still use it

Model answer

I'd like to talk about the compact disc. Its heyday was from the early nineties until around 2005 and people would first use them for listening to music and later to store data such as pictures or software. They were pretty popular with people around me, and I used them a lot myself. When I think of it, I haven't seen one for well over a decade.

The reason people moved away from using it is very clear: the Internet. As the web gained more adoption, no longer reserved for the few like it was in the mid-nineties, it proved to be much easier and more efficient for storing as well as transferring data. People no longer had to burn CDs to share data. Another possible technological advancement that ousted the compact disc was the USB flash drive, colloquially referred to as a memory stick. It has everything a CD would, but is quicker, cheaper, and much more compact.

Do I still use CDs? Well, I have some old music CDs lying around. I play them occasionally for nostalgia's sake. So I guess you could say I do use them to this day, yeah.

IELTS Speaking Part 3

Technology and people

Some people argue that technology is making us more isolated and less social. Do you agree? Why?

On one hand, technology has allowed us to connect with more people than ever before through social media and messenger apps. However, such virtual communication can be superficial and lack the depth and intimacy of face-to-face interactions. Proponents of the argument that technology is in the way of real communication also believe that social media can create a false sense of connection and reduce the need to see people in the real-world. And indeed, we can witness examples of this happening: teens are glued to the screens of their phones, paying little attention to people around them.

However, it's not as bad as it might seem. Technology has also made it easier for people to stay in touch with friends and family who may live far away or have busy schedules. Another advantage worth noting is greater access to social events and communities, enabling people to connect with like-minded individuals they may not have met otherwise. Ultimately, whether technology is making us more reclusive and socially passive depends on how we use it and the balance we strike between virtual and real-world interactions.

With the rise of automation and artificial intelligence, some experts predict that many jobs will be lost in the years ahead. What do you think about this?

This is becoming an issue of growing concern for many. It has been extremely prevalent in the past year, when we

saw huge advances in AI and machine learning. People also now have public access to AI models they can play around with, throwing tasks at them and seeing how impressively effective they are at dealing with those. One particular field seems to be of interest now: writing code. A well-phrased prompt that describes the programme you want from the AI will return an immaculately-written code within seconds, and free of charge. One can only guess how much better the machines can get at doing things like this, as well as many other spheres. This could indeed **render** many professions, and even entire industries, useless. This is not as horrible as it might sound, and eventually the job market will adapt to **make room for** these newly unemployed specialists. However, the **interim** period of uncertainty might take a while, and people of many professions may indeed struggle to find employment, or even purpose.

In what ways has technology helped to address some of the world's most pressing social, economic, and environmental issues?

I'd like to focus on two **domains of science** that technology has helped to develop drastically. One is the education sector. There are now numerous online courses, educational apps, and e-learning platforms that have made knowledge **accessible** to all. Even getting a degree online is possible, and it will have the same **credibility** as the traditional one from a university or college. Another sphere that greatly benefited from progress in technology is agriculture. Various new systems can provide accurate and **timely** data regarding **soil** composition, weather patterns, and crop productivity. Farm machines, drip irrigation and other such technologies have also helped increase crop yields and reduce waste. Consequently, farming is now less labour-intensive and more cost-efficient, which indirectly has made food more affordable.

Progress in our lives

In what ways has the development of technology affected the job market?

From my personal experience, I can say that one of the positive developments that technology advancement has brought to the table is the job search procedure. In the past, you had to send your resumes to a number of **prospective** employers, show up for interviews and so on. This process was pretty **arduous** and had huge opportunity costs. Job hunting can be seen as work too, but without providing you with any financial compensation, security or useful experience.

Thankfully, the job hunting game has changed, mostly because of career platforms like LinkedIn. The entire process has been **streamlined**. Now, you only need to upload your CV to the website and make sure it is up-to-date. Now employers can search and filter the applicants without **going through the hoops of** having the person over for preliminary interviewing. The initial meeting now usually takes place online, and if both parties find the collaboration possible, then a formal face-to-face meeting takes place to finalise the employment contract. Isn't technology wonderful?

Why is progress such an important element in human society?

Progress is a very general term, so in order to address the question in a more focused manner, we have to be specific. Let's talk about scientific progress first. Developments in areas such as healthcare and medicine drastically improve the quality of life as well as enable people to live longer. Most **incurable** diseases are a thing of the past nowadays, thanks to breakthroughs in biochemistry and medical practice in general. The same could be said about the affordability of previously **prohibitively expensive** medications.

One other example of progress is that of a different kind—societal and cultural. Humanity has learned to understand **confessional** and cultural differences and be more acceptive to them. People are no longer oppressed for having an

alternative lifestyle, like having no kids or not working full-time, enjoying their lives instead. The population is more broad-minded nowadays, receptive to and welcoming of differences, all thanks to progress.

Can progress be achieved without sacrificing cultural values and traditions?

Yes, this is achievable. In fact, incorporating traditional values and cultural practices can often enhance progress and **pave the way for** sustainable development. For instance, a cultural custom of many nationalities **to pass on** belongings from older generation to younger ones is a great environmental practice. Similarly, many cultures promote spirituality over materialism, further helping reduce **carbon footprint** among other things. Therefore, it is possible for modernization and traditional practices to coexist and **complement** each other, leading to a more **sustainable**, environmentally **-savvy** society.

Technology and progress vocabulary

Heyday (n) - the best, happiest, or most successful time for somebody (or even something). *In its heyday, this company controlled over half of the entire industry.*

Advancement (n) - progress or breakthrough in something.

Domains of - spheres or fields of something; used especially in scientific context. *New discoveries in the domain of chemistry are made almost daily now.*

Accessible (adj) - (here) easy to get.

Credibility (n) - if something or someone has credibility, then they can be trusted.

Streamline (v) - to make something easier by improving or optimising the process. *Streamlining our business is going to help cut costs and make profits considerably higher.*

Prohibitively expensive - too expensive to be affordable to most people.

Sustainable (adj) - possible to continue over a long period of time.

General vocabulary

Oust (v) - to replace something, especially in a forceful way. *They ousted the old boss, and his replacement was a young guy who latter turned out to be the chief manager's nephew.*

Colloquially (adv) - in a spoken and informal, rather than official way.

Superficial (adj) - appearing different on the surface, usually better than it really is. Used negatively.

Proponent (n) - somebody who supports the idea; the opposite for 'opponent'.

Like-minded (adj) - with similar thoughts, ideas or opinions. *Like-minded people naturally gravitate towards each other.*

Reclusive (adj) - preferring to be alone rather than with others.

Prevalent (adj) - existing in larger number or amount than anything else. *Songbirds are prevalent in temperate-climate forests.*

Render (v) - to change the state of something. *We rendered this animal harmless by putting it in a cage.*

Make room for - to create additional space (either literal or figurative) for something or someone. *I'm sure you could make room for another meeting in your schedule.*

Interim (adj) - something temporary, used in place of the permanent thing. *An interim solution is to make all employees work from home while we are looking for a new office building.*

Timely (adj) - happening at the right time, making it useful or effective. *Your timely help is really appreciated.*

Soil (n) - a more technical word for earth or ground and all the elements that make it. *The soil here is very fertile, making it a perfect place for farming and agriculture.*

Prospective (adj) - something or somebody that is likely to become it in the future. *All prospective students should be well-informed about the numerous challenges of academic work.*

Arduous (adj) - tiring and requiring lots of effort to do. *The arduous harvesting season has began, which means that we will have to wake up at dawn and work hard till dusk.*

Go through the hoops - go through various challenges to prove one's worth.

Incurable (adj) - impossible to cure.

Confessional (adj) - relating to one's religious beliefs or traditions.

Pave the way for - to make it easier for things or people that will be doing the same or similar things later. *The Industrial Revolution paved the way for large-scale production around the globe.*

To pass on (phr v) - to give something (either material or immaterial) to younger generations. *Teachers and mentors try their best to pass their experience to students so that it wouldn't be lost.*

Carbon footprint - the amount of carbon monoxide (CO) that one produces as a by-product of their existence.

Complement (v) - to be a welcomed and fitting addition to something else. *Your jewellery complements your elegant dress.*

-savvy (adj) - knowledgeable about something.