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Peter May
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Cambridge English



SECOND EDITION

First

TRAINER

SIX PRACTICE TESTS WITHOUT ANSWERS

Peter May

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Introduction

Second edition

Who is *First Trainer* for?

This book is suitable for anyone who is preparing to take the Cambridge English: First (FCE). You can use *First Trainer* in class with your teacher, or – in the case of the with-answers edition of the book – on your own at home.

What is *First Trainer*?

First Trainer contains six practice tests for Cambridge English: First, each covering the Reading and Use of English, Writing, Listening and Speaking papers. Guided Tests 1 and 2 consist of both training and practice for the exam, while Tests 3–6 are entirely practice. All six tests are at exam level and are of First standard.

Test 1 contains information about each part of each paper, plus step-by-step guidance to take you through each kind of First task type, with examples and tips clearly linked to the questions. In the Reading and Use of English, Writing and Speaking papers, it also presents and practises grammar, vocabulary and functional language directly relevant to particular task types. This is supported by work on correcting common grammar mistakes made by First candidates in the exam as shown by the **Cambridge Learner Corpus**. For more information on the Cambridge Learner Corpus see page 6. In Writing, you work with extracts from actual candidate scripts from the Corpus, and in Speaking you listen to sample recordings of each part of the paper. The **Explanatory answer key** tells you which answers are correct and why, and explains why other possible answers are wrong.



Test 2 also contains training for the exam, in addition to revision from Test 1. Here too there is language input, as well as some step-by-step guidance to task types with further examples, advice and tips. In Writing, there is a full focus on the task types not covered in Test 1.

Tests 3–6 contain a wide range of topics, text types and exam items, enabling you to practise the skills you have developed and the language you have learnt in Tests 1 and 2.

How to use *First Trainer*

Test 1 Training

- For each part of each paper you should begin by studying **Task information**, which tells you the facts you need to know, such as what the task type tests and the kinds of questions it uses.
- Throughout Test 1, you will see information marked **Tip!** These tips give you practical advice on how to tackle each task type.
- In all papers, training exercises help you develop the skills you need, e.g. reading for gist, by working through example items of a particular task type.
- For parts 1–4 of **Reading and Use of English**, both parts of **Writing** and all parts of **Speaking**, **Useful language** presents and practises grammatical structures, vocabulary or functional expressions that are often tested by particular task types.
- Many exercises involve focusing on and correcting common language mistakes made by actual First candidates, as shown by the **Cambridge Learner Corpus** (see page 6).

- In **Listening**, you are prompted to use one of the numbered CDs, e.g. . If you are working on your own using the with-answers edition of *First Trainer*, you will need a CD player (or a computer if you are using the downloadable MP3 files). Note that the numbers on these files are the same as the CD.
- In **Writing**, Test 1 covers Part 1 (essay), as well as the email, article and report tasks in Part 2. You study **sample answers** from the **Cambridge Learner Corpus** written by actual First candidates in the exam, as well as model answers to help you perfect your skills. The **Explanatory answer key** contains answers to the exercises, plus more model texts. You finish each part by writing your own text, bringing in what you have learnt in **Useful language**.
- In **Speaking**, you are prompted to use one of the numbered Mp3 files or CDs, e.g. , and do written tasks while you listen to examples of each part of the paper. You can practise speaking on your own or with a partner, using what you have learnt in **Useful language**.
- In all papers, **Action plan** gives you clear step-by-step guidance on how to approach each task type.
- You then work through an exam-style task, often doing exercises based on the guidance in **Action plan** and then following the exam instructions. As you do so, **Advice** boxes suggest ways of dealing with particular exam items.
- Answers to all items are in the **Explanatory answer key**, which explains why the correct answers are right and others are wrong. For **Listening**, the parts of the transcripts which give the correct answers are underlined in the texts.

Test 2 Training

- Test 2 contains many of the same features as Test 1, including exercises that focus on exam instructions, texts and tasks, **Tip!** information, **Advice** boxes for many exam items, **Useful language** and an **Explanatory answer key**.
- There is further work based on mistakes frequently made by First candidates as shown by the **Cambridge Learner Corpus**.
- There is also an emphasis on revision, with cross-references for each task type to the relevant **Task information** and **Action plan** in Test 1. You should refer back to these before you begin working through each part.
- Test 2 **Writing** covers Part 1 (essay) plus the letter, review and article tasks in Part 2, also with sample answers and authentic candidates' texts from the **Cambridge Learner Corpus**.
- You should try to do the exam tasks under exam conditions where possible.


Tests 3–6 Exam practice

- In Tests 3, 4, 5 and 6, you can apply the skills and language you have learnt in guided Tests 1 and 2.
- You can do these tests and the four papers within them in any order, but you should always try to keep to the time recommended for each paper. For the Listening paper, you must **listen to each recording twice only**.
- It will be easier to keep to the exam instructions if you can find somewhere quiet to work, and ensure there are no interruptions.
- For the Speaking paper it is better if you can work with a partner, but if not, you can follow the instructions and do all four parts on your own.
- If you have the with-answers edition of the book, you can check your answers for yourself, and also study the Listening transcripts after you have completed the tasks.

The Cambridge Learner Corpus (CLC)

The Cambridge Learner Corpus (CLC) is a large collection of exam scripts written by candidates taking Cambridge ESOL English exams around the world. It currently contains over 90,000 scripts and is growing all the time. It forms part of the Cambridge International Corpus (CIC) and it has been built up by Cambridge University Press and Cambridge ESOL. The CLC currently contains scripts from over:

- 90,000 students
- 100 different first languages
- 180 different countries

Exercises and extracts from candidates’ answers from Writing in *First Trainer* which are based on the CLC are indicated by this icon:  Find out about the Cambridge Learner Corpus at www.cambridge.org/corpus.

Other features of *First Trainer*

- Full-colour **visual material** for the Speaking paper of all six tests in the Speaking appendix.
- For Tests 1 and 2, the **Explanatory answer key** in the with-answers edition on pages 183–234 tells you which answers are correct, and why. In some cases, such as multiple-choice questions, it also explains why the other options are wrong.
- In the **with-answers** edition, you can check your answers to Tests 3–6 in the key at the back. In the case of Listening, the parts of the transcript that give the correct answers are underlined.
- **Photocopiable answer sheets** for the Reading and Use of English and Listening papers are at the back of the book. Before you take the exam, you should study these so that you know how to mark or write your answers correctly. In Writing, the question paper has plenty of lined space for you to write your answers.
- **Three audio CDs also available as downloadable MP3 files** containing recordings for the Listening papers of the six First tests plus recordings of different parts of the Speaking test to serve as samples. The listening material is indicated by a different icon in *First Trainer* for each of the CDs:



The Cambridge English: First examination

Level of the Cambridge English: First examination

First is at level B2 on the Common European Framework (CEF). When you reach this level, these are some of the things you should be able to do:

- You can scan written texts for the information you need, and understand detailed instructions or advice.
- You can understand or give a talk on a familiar subject, and keep a conversation going on quite a wide range of subjects.
- You can make notes while someone is talking, and write a letter that includes different kinds of requests.

Grading

- The overall First grade that you receive is based on the total score you achieve in all four papers.
- The Reading and Use of English paper carries 40% of the possible marks, while each of Writing, Listening and Speaking carry 20% of the possible marks.
- There is no minimum score for each paper, so you don’t have to ‘pass’ all four in order to pass the exam.
- You receive a certificate if you pass the exam with grade A (the highest grade), B or C. Grades D and E are fails.
- Whatever your grade, you will receive a Statement of Results. This includes a graphical profile of how well you did in each paper and shows your relative performance in each one.
- For more information on grading and results, go to the Cambridge English Language Assessment website (see ‘Further information’ on page 9).

Content of the Cambridge English: First examination

The Cambridge English: First examination has four papers, each consisting of a number of parts. For details on each part, see the page reference under the *Task information* heading in these tables.

Reading and Use of English 1 hour 15 minutes

Parts 1 and 3 mainly test your vocabulary; Part 2 mainly tests your grammar. Part 4 often tests both. There is one mark for each correct answer in Parts 1, 2 and 3, but two marks for a correct answer in Part 4. You can write on the question paper, but you must remember to transfer your answers to the separate answer sheet before the end of the test.

Texts in Part 5 are 550–650 words each, while those in Parts 6 and 7 are 500–600 words each. They are taken from newspaper and magazine articles, fiction, reports, advertisements, correspondence, messages and informational material such as brochures, guides or manuals. There are two marks for each correct answer in Parts 5 and 6; there is one mark for every correct answer in Part 7.

Part	Task type	No. of questions	Format	Task information
1	multiple choice gap-fill	8	You choose from words A, B, C or D to fill in each gap in a text.	page 10
2	open gap-fill	8	You think of a word to fill in each of the gaps in a text.	page 14
3	word formation	8	You think of the correct form of a given word to fill in each gap in a text.	page 17
4	key word transformations	6	You have to complete a sentence with a given word so that it means the same as another sentence.	page 20
5	multiple choice	6	You read a text followed by questions with four options: A, B, C or D.	page 24
6	gapped text	6	You read a text with sentences removed, then fill in the gaps by choosing sentences from a jumbled list.	page 28
7	multiple matching	10	You read one or more texts and match the relevant sections to what the questions say.	page 31

Writing 1 hour 20 minutes

You have to do Part 1 (question 1) plus any **one** of the Part 2 tasks. In Part 2 you can choose one of questions 2–4. The possible marks for Part 1 and Part 2 are the same. In all tasks you are told who you are writing to and why.

Part	Task type	No. of words	Format	Task information
1	Question 1: essay	140–190	You give your opinion on a topic using the two ideas given plus an idea of your own.	page 34
2	Questions 2–4 possible tasks: email/ letter, article, report or review	140–190	You do a task based on a situation.	pages 38, 43, 47

Listening about 40 minutes

You will both hear and see the instructions for each task, and you will hear each of the four parts twice. You will hear pauses announced, and you can use this time to look at the task and the questions. At the end of the test you will have five minutes to copy your answers onto the answer sheet.

If one person is speaking, you may hear information, news, instructions, a commentary, a documentary, a lecture, a message, a public announcement, a report, a speech, a talk or an advertisement. If two people are talking, you might hear a conversation, a discussion, an interview, part of a radio play, etc.

Part	Task type	No. of questions	Format	Task information
1	multiple choice	8	You hear one or two people talking for about 30 seconds in eight different situations. For each question, you choose from answers A, B or C.	page 50
2	sentence completion	10	You hear one person talking for about three minutes. For each question, you complete sentences by writing a word or short phrase.	page 53
3	multiple matching	5	You hear five different extracts, of about 30 seconds each, with a common theme. For each one you choose from a list of eight possible answers.	page 55
4	multiple choice	7	You hear one or two people talking for about three minutes. For each question, you choose from answers A, B or C.	page 57

Speaking 14 minutes

You will probably do the Speaking test with one other candidate, though sometimes it is necessary to form groups of three. There will be two examiners, but one of them does not take part in the conversation. The examiner will indicate who you should talk to in each part of the test.

Part	Task type	Minutes	Format	Task information
1	The examiner asks you some questions.	2	You talk about yourself.	page 59
2	You talk on your own.	4	You talk about two pictures and then comment on the other candidate's pictures.	page 61
3	You talk to the other candidate.	4	You discuss some diagrams or pictures together.	page 64
4	You talk about things connected with the topic of Part 3.	4	You take part in a discussion with both the other candidate and the examiner.	page 66

Further information

The information about Cambridge English: First contained in *First Trainer* is designed to be an overview of the exam. For a full description of the First examination, including information about task types, testing focus and preparation for the exam, please see the Cambridge English: First Handbook, which can be obtained from the Cambridge English Language Assessment website or from the address below.

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