

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Edinburgh, showing a dense cluster of buildings with various rooflines and chimneys. In the background, a prominent church with a tall spire is visible on the left, and another large building with a dome is on the right. The sky is hazy. A large red rectangle is positioned at the top, and a teal rectangle is below it, both containing white text.

# IELTS SPEAKING VOCABULARY & SAMPLE ANSWERS

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## TOPIC-SPECIFIC VOCABULARY

At the beginning of your IELTS Speaking test, your examiner will ask you several questions about one of these topics: your work/studies, family, home, or hometown.

Below, you will find some sample answers and useful vocabulary for some of these topics. You should not learn any answers by heart as you may be penalized for giving memorized answers. However, feel free to learn any words and phrases to improve your answers.

### FAMILY

Do you have a large or small family?

My **immediate family** is small as I'm **an only child**. So it's just my parents, my husband and me, but I have two uncles and many cousins.

immediate family	= parents, spouse and children
extended family	= grandparents, uncles and aunts, cousins...
spouse	= husband or wife

only child	= someone who has no brothers or sisters
siblings	= brothers and sisters

I've grown up in a large family with three **younger siblings**, two brothers and a little sister. Now I'm married and have three children myself.

Do you have any brothers or sisters?

I'm an only child. Well, actually, I have **a half-sister**. My parents got divorced when I was 18. Then my father remarried and they have a daughter.

half-sister or half-brother	= you have only one common parent
divorced	= no longer married because the marriage has been legally ended
separated	= no longer living with your husband or wife

My parents aren't officially **divorced**, but they **separated** a long time ago.

to remarry	= to marry again
widow	= a woman whose husband has died
widower	= a man whose wife has died

### Do you think it's good to be the only child in the family?

I guess there are **pros and cons**. When I was little, I really wanted to have an older brother, but that definitely wasn't possible.

### Could you tell me something about your family?

It was actually my granny, my mum's mum, who **brought me up** until I was seven. My parents were geologists and spent most of their time on expeditions.

to bring up (brought up)	= to care for a child
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My grandmother **brought up** three sons.

My father was **brought up** to respect authority.

upbringing	= the way a child is cared for and taught how to behave while she/he is growing up
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I grew up with five **siblings**, so my **upbringing** prepared me for everything.

### What are your parents like?

What is someone like?	= Please describe their appearance, character, and behaviour
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What do your parents do?	= Please describe their occupations/jobs
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My parents are both **well-educated**, intelligent people. My mum is kind, attentive and likes **taking care of** the family. My dad is still really energetic and never **says no to a challenge**.

### Do you enjoy spending time with your family?

Definitely, although my family **live/lives** far away and I don't often have a chance to see them. My **in-laws** are in Brussels, so it's easy for us to spend a weekend together.

in-laws	= the relatives of your husband or wife
mother-in-law	= your spouse's mother
brother-in-law	= your spouse's father

### Do you get along well with your family?

Generally yes, especially with my mum. My dad is a bit **short-tempered**. We used to **quarrel** a fair bit when I was younger, but our **relationship** has improved in recent years.

to get along	= to have a good relationship, to like each other
short-tempered	= becoming angry quickly and easily
a quarrel	= an argument between people who usually get along well

a quarrel **with** somebody **about/over** something

I sometimes **quarrel with** my sister **over** domestic chores.

### Who are you close to in your family?

I'm **very close to** my mum. Even though we live in different countries, we speak several times a week. There's always been a bit of **sibling rivalry** between my elder sister and me, but I guess that's inevitable.

sibling rivalry	= competition between brothers and sisters
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I used to be really close to my grandmother and spent every summer holidays with her. Sadly, she **passed away** two years ago.

to pass away	= polite for 'to die'
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### Are people in your country generally close to their families?

Indeed, they are. It's not uncommon for three **generations to live under the same roof**. Elderly parents usually move in with their children and grandchildren rather than go to a care home.

three generations	= parents, children, grandchildren
to live under the same roof	= to live together

# HOME

Do you live in a house or a flat?

I've never lived in a house in my life. A few months ago, I moved to a **two-bedroom** flat on the second **floor** in North London.

Could you describe it?

It's quite **spacious** for London, with **a south-facing** living room, a **well-equipped** kitchen, a **master** bedroom with an **en-suite** bathroom, a small guest bedroom and a study.

spacious	= with a lot of space
an open-plan living room	= your kitchen and living room are together
a master bedroom	= the main bedroom
an en-suite bathroom	= it's directly connected to a bedroom
a guest bedroom	= a spare bedroom for your guests
a study	= an office
a conservatory	= a room with glass walls and a glass roof

What kind of building do you live in?

I live in a **four-storey red-brick** mansion built in the 1930s. It **has nice architecture** and **a private garden** that we share with other residents.

I live on the second **floor** of a **four-storey** building.

I live in a **modern high-rise building** in a **gated development**. We have a good range of facilities on its territory: a supermarket, a gym and a couple of coffee-shops.

I live in a typical **single-storey** house with a small **garden at the back** and a **parking space at the front**. Our **neighbours'** houses look very similar.

What do you like about living there?

I like that most of the rooms **face south**, which means we **get a lot of natural light**. The living room has **an open** view overlooking **a green lawn**. What's more, the location is really **convenient**. All the **facilities** are within **walking distance** and it takes half-an-hour by Tube to get to central London.

Could you describe your favourite room?

I would say it's the living room because it's the most **spacious** room in the flat, with two big windows, a comfy sofa and a big glass table where we eat dinner every night. That's the room where the whole **family gathers together**.

Would you change anything about your home?

There's quite a lot, actually. Before we **moved in**, we only had time to do a basic **refurbishment**. We **changed the floors** and **repainted the walls** a creamy colour. We still need to buy lamps and decorations and **at some point**, redo the bathroom completely.

*I love my house a lot the way it is. But there's always scope for improvement, I guess. I would...*

Would you like to move to a different home in the future? What sort of accommodation would you most like to live in?

One day I'd like to live in a house with more **space** and **privacy**. My dream house would have **a large open plan living-dining area**, a garden with a BBQ and a **conservatory**, to **make the most out of sunny days**.

**There's no place like home.**

**... feels like home.**

*I was born in Kazakhstan, but I've lived in London for so long that **it feels like home** now.*

# HOMETOWN

Are you from a town or a village?

*I'm from a city called Almaty. It's the former capital of Kazakhstan.*

*I'm from a small village called Teke in south Kazakhstan.*

What is your hometown like?

*It's quite a large and modern city of over two million people. It's growing fast because many people move there to work or study; I like its **hustle and bustle**. The city is located in the foothills of the Alatau mountains, which means that the views are beautiful and we can easily go hiking in summer and skiing in winter.*

hustle and bustle

= a large amount of activity and work, usually in a noisy surrounding

a bustling city/neighbourhood

= full of people moving about

What kinds of public transport are there in your hometown?

*There are buses, electric trolleybuses and trams and one metro line, which took over twenty years to build. That's definitely not enough for such a large city. As a result, most people use cars **and traffic congestion** is a major problem.*

public transport (Br)

= public transportation (Am)  
= buses, trains, taxis, etc.

*to travel by **public transport***

traffic congestion

= there are so many cars on the roads that they move very slowly

traffic jam

= cars stop as a result of congestion, snow or an accident

### What are people like in your hometown?

I find that people are generally friendly and quite open. I mean they share personal information with you freely, so it's easy to make friends. But I must admit that not everyone **respects the queue**, so queue jumping is quite common, which stresses me out.

talkative	= like to talk
to respect the queue	= to wait in line for your turn
to jump the queue	= to go to the front of a line of people without waiting for your turn

### What is it known for?

#### What is the most interesting part of your town?

#### What would you recommend a visitor to see or do in this town?

On the **outskirts** of Almaty, there's an outdoor skating rink called Medeu. It's famous because of its high altitude, and it's even hosted some international competitions. I think it's definitely worth seeing, even for people who don't skate, because the views from there are simply **breathtaking**.

on the outskirts of the city	= near the edge of the city; far from the city centre
to be worth seeing	
breathtaking	= very beautiful
a breathtaking view	

### What kinds of jobs do the people in your town/village do?

I suppose that most people work in manufacturing – I know that there are some big factories in Almaty. Others work in **small businesses**, such as shops and restaurants. Almaty is known as the financial centre of Kazakhstan, which means that some of the country's largest banks and the stock exchange are also based in the city.

small and medium-sized businesses	= shops, restaurants, etc.
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Has your hometown changed much since you were a child?

A lot. When I see old photographs of Almaty I can hardly recognize it. **It used to be** a quiet medium-sized town, but in recent years big developments have **sprung up like mushrooms**. The city centre is now dominated by **glass and concrete offices** and big shopping malls. I think the city has almost **doubled in size** in the last twenty years and has completely changed its appearance.

It used to be

= something was true in the past but isn't true anymore

to spring up like mushrooms

= to grow very quickly (talking about buildings)

glass and concrete offices

shopping malls

to double in size

Would you say it's a good place to live? Why?

I think there are a lot of great things about it. I like its climate – the hot, sunny summers and snowy winters. I also think that Almaty's universities are the best in the country and the city offers **good job opportunities**. However, **traffic congestion** and related **air pollution** are big problems in the city and need to be addressed.

great/limited job opportunities

traffic congestion

air pollution

# WORK

Do you work or study?

*I **graduated** last year and now I **work full-time**.*

to graduate

= to finish university

to work full-time

= to work 30 or 40 hours per week

to work part-time

= to work less than 30 hours per week

*I'm **employed full-time**. I work for Coca-Cola.*

*I was **unemployed** for several months and have just **joined a new company**.*

to be unemployed

= not to have a job

to join the company

= to find a new job

What is your job?

*It's just an admin **nine-to-five office job**. I'm a personal assistant at a law firm.*

nine-to-five

= the normal working hours in an office

*I work **nine to five**.*

*I've **been working** in accounting **for** a few years and now I'm a senior accountant at a big **multinational corporation**.*

I have been working in (accounting)/as (an accountant) for...years = This is a great opportunity to use the present perfect continuous tense.

Why did you choose this job?

*Both of my parents are lawyers. I guess **it runs in the family**.*

to run in the family =

If a quality, ability, disease, etc. runs in the family, many members of the family have it

*I needed a job and the office across the road **advertised a vacancy**. So I thought, "Why not?"*

*I guess I chose to become a photographer because **I'm deeply fond of** photography. In my **occupation, no two days are alike.***

to be fond of something = to like something for a long time

an occupation = (formal) profession or job

*Is it a popular job in your country?*

*Absolutely. Every company needs an accountant. I suppose it's a popular job in every country.*

*Not really. It seems that most people don't think that being a YouTuber is a real job.*

*Do you like your job?*

*The **perk** of being a travel agent is that I've travelled to so many destinations for free. **The pay could be better,** though.*

the perk = something you receive as well as your wages for doing a particular job

high-paid job

low-paid job

*Accounting can be a bit boring at times but **the money is good.***

*Being a teacher is not **a high-paid job,** but a deeply **rewarding** one.*

rewarding work/job/career = it gives the sense of doing something important

fulfilling work/job/career = it gives you personal satisfaction or happiness

***I find something satisfying** in recording every little transaction correctly.*

*What do you dislike about your job?*

*I have to **work overtime** quite regularly and I'd prefer not to.*

overtime = time worked in addition to one's normal working hours

to work long hours

overwhelming = very great in amount

Sometimes the amount of work is simply **overwhelming**. At other times, it's so quiet that I have nothing to do.

### Do you get on well with your colleagues?

to get on/along with somebody = to have a friendly relationship with somebody

I'm lucky to work with very nice people, and we all sometimes **have drinks** together after work.

I **have a good working relationship** with most of my colleagues, but I prefer to **keep my private and professional lives separate**.

### What was your first day at work like?

I had **an induction day** when my manager explained how things work in more detail and **took me around the office** to introduce me to my colleagues.

induction = introducing somebody to a new job or skill

### What responsibilities do you have at work?

I'm **responsible for** answering calls and booking appointments for new clients. I also **support** more senior colleagues **with any admin tasks**, such as updating reports, answering emails, or collecting information.

### What is your typical day like at work?

I usually start at 9 am and take about an hour to answer all the emails or **finish** any small but **urgent tasks** for the day. Then I start working on more important projects, such as creating new courses or recording new videos, and the day flies by. I only **take a short lunch break** and try to finish no later than 7pm.

### Would you like to change your job in the future?

I'd like **to progress with my career** in accountancy and **gain more responsibilities** in the future, so I may **change jobs** one day.

I'm thinking about moving to auditing in a couple of years. I just need to gain **the required skills and knowledge** first.



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