

VOCABULARY BUILDER · IELTS

Sport & Leisure

23 high-band words to read, understand,
and actually use — from B2 to C2.

B2

C1

C2

How to use this pack

A word you can only recognise is not yet a word you own. This pack is built to move each term from “I’ve seen it” to “I can use it under exam pressure.” Work through it in order.

1 Test yourself first

Go straight to the **Before** page and write what you think each word means. Don’t look ahead — this is your baseline.

2 Study the word bank

Read each entry: the definition, the example sentence, the collocations and the word family. The example is the most important part — it shows the word alive in context.

3 Do the tasks

Gap-fill, matching, word formation, a full IELTS-style reading, and speaking & writing practice. Use a pencil so you can redo them.

4 Test yourself again

Return to the **After** page and write the meanings from memory. Compare with your baseline — that gap is your progress.

HOW TO READ AN ENTRY

noun / verb / adjective

part of speech

B2 · C1 · C2

CEFR difficulty level

/ˈsɪmbəl/

pronunciation (IPA)

e.g.

example sentence in context

↔

opposite / contrast

What do you already know?

BEFORE

Before you read a single definition, write what you think each word means – even a rough guess or a synonym. Tick how sure you are. This is your honest starting point; you'll come back at the end to measure how far you've moved.

#	WORD	SURE? know · unsure · new	WHAT I THINK IT MEANS
1	competitive	☐ ☐ ☐	
2	spectator	☐ ☐ ☐	
3	amateur	☐ ☐ ☐	
4	endurance	☐ ☐ ☐	
5	stamina	☐ ☐ ☐	
6	tournament	☐ ☐ ☐	
7	sponsorship	☐ ☐ ☐	
8	recreation	☐ ☐ ☐	
9	teamwork	☐ ☐ ☐	
10	perseverance	☐ ☐ ☐	
11	adrenaline	☐ ☐ ☐	
12	rivalry	☐ ☐ ☐	
13	camaraderie	☐ ☐ ☐	
14	leisure	☐ ☐ ☐	
15	pastime	☐ ☐ ☐	
16	coordination	☐ ☐ ☐	
17	elite	☐ ☐ ☐	
18	sportsmanship	☐ ☐ ☐	
19	exhilarating	☐ ☐ ☐	
20	doping	☐ ☐ ☐	
21	gruelling	☐ ☐ ☐	
22	agility	☐ ☐ ☐	
23	participation	☐ ☐ ☐	

The word bank

Twenty-three words, chosen for how often they earn marks in IELTS Writing Task 2 and Speaking Part 3.
Read the example sentence aloud – that is where the meaning sticks.

1 competitive /kəm'petətɪv/

adjective

B2

Involving competition; strongly wanting to win or be more successful than others.

e.g. Professional sport is intensely **competitive** at the highest level.

COLLOCATIONS

highly competitive • a competitive spirit

WORD FAMILY

compete (v), competition (n), competitor (n)

2 spectator /spek'tetə/

noun

B2

A person who watches an event, especially a sports match, without taking part.

e.g. Thousands of **spectators** filled the stadium for the final.

COLLOCATIONS

a spectator sport • excited spectators

WORD FAMILY

spectate (v)

3 amateur /'æmətə/

adjective

B2

Taking part in a sport or activity for enjoyment rather than as a paid job.

e.g. The tournament is open to both professional and **amateur** players.

COLLOCATIONS

an amateur athlete / player

WORD FAMILY

amateur (n) • opp. professional

4 **endurance** /ɪn'dʒʊərəns/

noun

C1

The ability to keep doing something difficult or tiring for a long time.

e.g. A marathon is the ultimate test of physical **endurance**.

COLLOCATIONS

physical endurance • an endurance event

WORD FAMILY

endure (v)

5 **stamina** /'stæmɪnə/

noun

C1

The physical or mental strength that lets you continue an effort for a long time.

e.g. Long-distance runners build up remarkable **stamina**.

COLLOCATIONS

build / have stamina

WORD FAMILY

—

6 **tournament** /'tʊənəmənt/

noun

B2

A competition in which many players or teams compete until one winner remains.

e.g. The team is preparing for next month's international **tournament**.

COLLOCATIONS

win / host a tournament • a knockout tournament

WORD FAMILY

—

7 sponsorship /'spɒnsəʃɪp/

noun

B2

Financial support given to a sport, event or athlete, usually by a company in return for advertising.

e.g. Top clubs earn millions from **sponsorship** deals.

COLLOCATIONS

a sponsorship deal • corporate sponsorship

WORD FAMILY

sponsor (v/n)

8 recreation /,rekri'eɪʃn/

noun

B2

Activities done for enjoyment and relaxation in your free time.

e.g. The park provides space for sport and other forms of **recreation**.

COLLOCATIONS

outdoor recreation • recreation facilities

WORD FAMILY

recreational (adj)

9 teamwork /'ti:mwɜ:k/

noun

B2

The combined effort of a group working together towards a shared goal.

e.g. Success in the sport depends on skill, fitness and **teamwork**.

COLLOCATIONS

good teamwork • a spirit of teamwork

WORD FAMILY

—

10 perseverance /ˌpɜːsɪˈvɪərəns/

noun

C1

Continued effort to achieve something despite difficulty or failure.

e.g. Reaching the top takes talent, but above all **perseverance**.

COLLOCATIONS

sheer perseverance • show perseverance

WORD FAMILY

persevere (v)

IELTS A high-value word beyond sport — great for essays on success and effort.

11 adrenaline /əˈdrenəlɪn/

noun

C1

A substance produced by the body in moments of excitement, fear or effort, giving a burst of energy.

e.g. Extreme sports appeal to people who enjoy the **adrenaline** rush.

COLLOCATIONS

an adrenaline rush • a shot of adrenaline

WORD FAMILY

—

12 rivalry /ˈraɪvlɪ/

noun

C1

A state of ongoing competition between people or teams.

e.g. The **rivalry** between the two clubs goes back over a century.

COLLOCATIONS

an intense / fierce rivalry

WORD FAMILY

rival (n/v)

13 camaraderie /ˌkæməˈrɑːdəri/

noun

C2

A feeling of friendship and trust among people who spend time together.

e.g. Team sports build a strong sense of **camaraderie**.

COLLOCATIONS

a sense of camaraderie

WORD FAMILY

—

IELTS A sophisticated word for team spirit and friendship.

14 leisure /ˈleɪʒə/

noun

B2

Time when you are free from work and can relax or do what you enjoy.

e.g. People today have more **leisure** time than previous generations.

COLLOCATIONS

leisure time / activities • a leisure centre

WORD FAMILY

leisurely (adj)

15 pastime /ˈpɑːstaɪm/

noun

B2

An activity done regularly for enjoyment rather than work; a hobby.

e.g. Fishing is one of the country's most popular **pastimes**.

COLLOCATIONS

a favourite / national pastime

WORD FAMILY

—

16 coordination /kəʊˌɔːdɪˈneɪʃn/

noun

C1

The ability to control the movements of your body smoothly and efficiently.

e.g. Ball sports improve balance and hand-eye **coordination**.

COLLOCATIONS

hand-eye coordination • poor coordination

WORD FAMILY

coordinate (v), coordinated (adj)

17 elite /eɪˈliːt/

adjective

C1

Belonging to the small group who are the best or most skilled.

e.g. Only a handful of **elite** athletes ever reach the Olympics.

COLLOCATIONS

elite athletes / sport • an elite level

WORD FAMILY

elite (n), elitism (n)

18 sportsmanship /ˈspɔːtsmənʃɪp/

noun

C1

Fair, generous and polite behaviour when playing a sport, whether winning or losing.

e.g. She was praised for her **sportsmanship** in congratulating her opponent.

COLLOCATIONS

good / poor sportsmanship

WORD FAMILY

—

19 exhilarating /ɪgˈzɪləreɪtɪŋ/

adjective

C1

Making you feel very excited, happy and full of energy.

e.g. Skiing down the mountain was an **exhilarating** experience.

COLLOCATIONS

an exhilarating ride / experience

WORD FAMILY

exhilaration (n), exhilarated (adj)

20 doping /ˈdɒpɪŋ/

noun

C1

The illegal use of drugs to improve performance in sport.

e.g. Several athletes were banned after failing **doping** tests.

COLLOCATIONS

a doping scandal • a doping test

WORD FAMILY

dope (v)

21 gruelling /ˈɡruːəlɪŋ/

adjective

C2

Extremely tiring and demanding. (US: grueling)

e.g. The cyclists faced a **gruelling** climb through the mountains.

COLLOCATIONS

a gruelling race / schedule / training session

WORD FAMILY

—

22 agility /ə'dʒɪləti/

noun

C1

The ability to move quickly and easily.

e.g. Gymnastics requires extraordinary strength and **agility**.

COLLOCATIONS

speed and agility • mental agility

WORD FAMILY

agile (adj)

23 participation /pɑːˌtɪsɪˈpeɪʃn/

noun

B2

The act of taking part in an activity or event.

e.g. Schools are trying to increase **participation** in sport among girls.

COLLOCATIONS

active participation • participation rates

WORD FAMILY

participate (v), participant (n)

Task 1 · Gap-fill

Complete each sentence with a word from the bank. You may need to change the form (tense, ending). Each word is used once.

amateur

doping

elite

endurance

exhilarating

gruelling

participation

perseverance

rivalry

spectator

sponsorship

stamina

1. Completing a marathon demands months of _____ training.
2. Football is the world's most popular _____ sport.
3. The club relies on _____ from a major electronics brand.
4. Her success was the result of talent and sheer _____.
5. The runner was stripped of her medal after a _____ scandal.
6. The team faced a _____ schedule of five games in ten days.
7. Only _____ athletes are selected for the national squad.
8. Many great players began their careers as _____.
9. The campaign aims to boost _____ in local sports clubs.
10. Riders describe the sport as absolutely _____.
11. The _____ between the two teams draws huge crowds.
12. Swimmers need great _____ to train for hours each day.

Task 2 · Match the meaning

Write the letter of the correct definition next to each word.

1 competitive	☐	a a substance giving a burst of energy
2 tournament	☐	b a competition until one winner remains
3 recreation	☐	c an activity done regularly for enjoyment
4 teamwork	☐	d strongly wanting to win
5 adrenaline	☐	e fair, polite behaviour in sport
6 camaraderie	☐	f activities done for enjoyment in free time
7 leisure	☐	g free time away from work
8 pastime	☐	h the combined effort of a group
9 coordination	☐	i controlling body movements smoothly
10 sportsmanship	☐	j friendship and trust within a group

Task 3 · Word formation

Change the word in **CAPITALS** into the correct form to complete each sentence.

1. **COMPETE** Sport teaches children how to handle _____.
2. **PARTICIPATE** Every _____ received a medal at the end.
3. **RECREATION** The park offers many _____ activities for families.
4. **COORDINATE** Dancers need excellent _____ and balance.
5. **PERSEVERE** With great _____, she finally qualified for the team.
6. **AGILE** Gymnasts are famous for their remarkable _____.
7. **SPONSOR** The whole event was _____ by a local bank.
8. **ENDURE** The race is a real test of _____.

Task 4 · Reading in context

Read the passage, then answer the questions. This mirrors an IELTS reading set – notice how many of your new words appear naturally.

More Than a Game?

Sport occupies a remarkable place in modern life. Millions of people take part for fun and fitness, while billions more follow their favourite teams as spectators. At the top level, sport has also become a vast industry, generating enormous sums through television deals, ticket sales and sponsorship.

Supporters argue that this success brings real benefits. Regular participation in sport improves physical health and mental wellbeing, and teaches valuable lessons in teamwork and perseverance. Great sporting events can unite a nation and inspire young people to be active. Even the money, they say, funds facilities and coaching that ordinary players could never afford alone.

Critics, however, worry that commercial pressures are distorting sport. The vast salaries paid to a few elite athletes seem out of proportion to their contribution to society. The pressure to win at all costs has led to cheating and doping scandals, and some fear that the spirit of fair play – good sportsmanship – is being lost. When winning becomes everything, the simple joy of taking part can be forgotten.

Most people would agree that sport, at its best, is about far more than money. Whether played in a local park or a packed stadium, it offers health, friendship and a sense of achievement. The challenge is to make sure that, as the business of sport grows, these deeper values are not left behind.

Questions 1–5 · True / False / Not Given

TRUE = the passage says so. **FALSE** = the passage says the opposite. **NOT GIVEN** = the passage doesn't say.

- | | | |
|-------|--|------------|
| 1 | Sport has become a large industry that generates significant income. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 2 | Taking part in sport can improve mental wellbeing. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 3 | The writer states that all professional athletes are overpaid. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 4 | The passage names the highest-paid athlete in the world. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 5 | The writer believes sport is only about making money. | T / F / NG |

Questions 6–9 · Vocabulary in context

- | | | |
|-------|---|-------|
| 6 | Find a word/phrase meaning: people who watch an event without taking part | _____ |
| <hr/> | | |
| 7 | Find a word/phrase meaning: continued effort despite difficulty | _____ |
| <hr/> | | |
| 8 | Find a word/phrase meaning: the illegal use of drugs in sport | _____ |
| <hr/> | | |
| 9 | Find a word/phrase meaning: fair and polite behaviour in sport | _____ |

Task 5 · Use it yourself

Recognising a word is easy; producing it is what raises your band. Answer out loud, then in writing.

SPEAK Speaking — Part 3 style

Answer each question in 3–4 sentences. Try to use the words in **bold** accurately.

1. Do you prefer playing sport or watching it as a **spectator**?
2. Are top athletes paid too much, given their salaries and **sponsorship** deals?
3. What life skills can **teamwork** in sport teach young people?
4. How can schools increase **participation** in sport?

WRITE Writing — Task 2 mini

Write an introduction and one body paragraph (about 80–100 words) for this prompt. Use **at least four** words from this pack.

In many countries, **participation** in sport is falling, especially among young people. What are the causes of this, and how could greater participation be encouraged?

Now, from memory

AFTER

Cover the word bank. Write each meaning from memory and tick the box only if you could also use the word in your own sentence. Compare this page with your **Before** page – every word you can now explain is a mark you've earned.

#	WORD	MEANING (FROM MEMORY)	CAN USE IT
1	competitive		☐
2	spectator		☐
3	amateur		☐
4	endurance		☐
5	stamina		☐
6	tournament		☐
7	sponsorship		☐
8	recreation		☐
9	teamwork		☐
10	perseverance		☐
11	adrenaline		☐
12	rivalry		☐
13	camaraderie		☐
14	leisure		☐
15	pastime		☐
16	coordination		☐
17	elite		☐
18	sportsmanship		☐
19	exhilarating		☐
20	doping		☐
21	gruelling		☐
22	agility		☐
23	participation		☐

Answer key

TASK 1 · GAP-FILL

1 endurance 2 spectator 3 sponsorship 4 perseverance 5 doping 6 gruelling 7 elite 8 amateur 9 participation
10 exhilarating 11 rivalry 12 stamina

TASK 2 · MATCHING

1 d 2 b 3 f 4 h 5 a 6 j 7 g 8 c 9 i 10 e

TASK 3 · WORD FORMATION

1 competition 2 participant 3 recreational 4 coordination 5 perseverance 6 agility 7 sponsored 8 endurance

TASK 4 · TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

1 TRUE 2 TRUE 3 FALSE 4 NOT GIVEN 5 FALSE

TASK 4 · VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

6 spectators 7 perseverance 8 doping 9 sportsmanship



Nicely done. Revisit this pack in a week and again in a month — spaced review is what turns a recognised word into an automatic one. More themed packs at prepex.ai.