

VOCABULARY BUILDER · IELTS

Technology

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	innovation	☐ ☐ ☐	
2	automation	☐ ☐ ☐	
3	algorithm	☐ ☐ ☐	
4	cutting-edge	☐ ☐ ☐	
5	obsolete	☐ ☐ ☐	
6	surveillance	☐ ☐ ☐	
7	disruptive	☐ ☐ ☐	
8	encryption	☐ ☐ ☐	
9	breakthrough	☐ ☐ ☐	
10	cybersecurity	☐ ☐ ☐	
11	redundant	☐ ☐ ☐	
12	streamline	☐ ☐ ☐	
13	prototype	☐ ☐ ☐	
14	user-friendly	☐ ☐ ☐	
15	integrate	☐ ☐ ☐	
16	glitch	☐ ☐ ☐	
17	misinformation	☐ ☐ ☐	
18	anonymity	☐ ☐ ☐	
19	ubiquitous	☐ ☐ ☐	
20	exponential	☐ ☐ ☐	
21	infrastructure	☐ ☐ ☐	
22	digital divide	☐ ☐ ☐	
23	addictive	☐ ☐ ☐	

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 innovation /ˌɪnəˈveɪʃn/

noun

B2

A new idea, method or invention; the act of introducing new things.

e.g. Constant **innovation** in phone design makes last year's model feel outdated within months.

COLLOCATIONS

technological innovation • drive / foster innovation

WORD FAMILY

innovate (v), innovative (adj), innovator (n)

2 automation /ˌɔːtəˈmeɪʃn/

noun

C1

The use of machines and computers to do work that people used to do.

e.g. **Automation** in factories has raised output but wiped out many manual jobs.

COLLOCATIONS

industrial automation • increasing automation

WORD FAMILY

automate (v), automated (adj)

IELTS

The core word for “technology and employment” essays – pair it with “redundant”.

3 algorithm /ˈælgərɪðəm/

noun

C1

A set of step-by-step rules a computer follows to solve a problem or complete a task.

e.g. A social-media feed is shaped by an **algorithm** that decides what each user sees.

COLLOCATIONS

a complex / powerful algorithm • the algorithm ranks / decides

WORD FAMILY

algorithmic (adj)

4 cutting-edge /ˌkʌtɪŋ ˈedʒ/

adjective

C1

The most modern and advanced; at the very forefront of development.

e.g. The lab uses **cutting-edge** technology to sequence DNA in a matter of hours.

COLLOCATIONS

cutting-edge technology / research • at the cutting edge of

WORD FAMILY

(noun: the cutting edge)

5 obsolete /ˈɒbsəli:t/

adjective

C1

No longer used or useful because something newer has replaced it; out of date.

e.g. Smartphones have rendered many gadgets, from cameras to torches, virtually **obsolete**.

COLLOCATIONS

become / render obsolete • technologically obsolete

WORD FAMILY

obsolescence (n)

IELTS A high-band swap for “old-fashioned”; “render X obsolete” is a strong collocation.

6 surveillance /səˈveɪləns/

noun

C1

The careful watching of a person or place, especially by police or a government.

e.g. Critics warn that facial-recognition cameras have created a culture of constant **surveillance**.

COLLOCATIONS

mass / state surveillance • under surveillance

WORD FAMILY

surveil (v)

IELTS Central to “technology and privacy” essays.

7 disruptive /dɪs'rʌptɪv/

adjective

C1

Causing radical change to an existing industry, market or way of doing things.

e.g. Ride-sharing apps proved **disruptive**, forcing the traditional taxi trade to adapt or fail.

COLLOCATIONS

disruptive technology / innovation

WORD FAMILY

disrupt (v), disruption (n), disruptor (n)

8 encryption /ɪn'krɪptʃn/

noun

C1

The process of changing information into a secret code so only authorised people can read it.

e.g. End-to-end **encryption** means a message can be read only by its sender and receiver.

COLLOCATIONS

data / end-to-end encryption • strong encryption

WORD FAMILY

encrypt (v), encrypted (adj) • opp. decrypt

9 breakthrough /'breɪkθruː/

noun

B2

An important discovery or development that removes a barrier to progress.

e.g. A **breakthrough** in battery technology could finally make electric cars affordable for all.

COLLOCATIONS

a major / scientific breakthrough • make a breakthrough

WORD FAMILY

break through (v)

10 cybersecurity /ˈsaɪbəsɪ,kjʊərəti/

noun

C1

The protection of computer systems and data against attack or unauthorised access.

e.g. As banking moves online, **cybersecurity** has become a top priority for every institution.

COLLOCATIONS

a cybersecurity threat / breach • invest in cybersecurity

WORD FAMILY

cyberattack (n), cybercrime (n)

11 redundant /rɪˈdʌndənt/

adjective

C1

(of a worker) no longer employed because the job is no longer needed; (of a thing) unnecessary.

e.g. When the plant introduced robots, hundreds of workers were made **redundant**.

COLLOCATIONS

make (sb) redundant • redundant roles / jobs

WORD FAMILY

redundancy (n)

IELTS In British English, "made redundant" = laid off. Gold for automation essays.

12 streamline /ˈstriːmlaɪn/

verb

C1

To make a system or process simpler, faster and more efficient.

e.g. The new software **streamlines** checkout, cutting waiting times in half.

COLLOCATIONS

streamline operations / processes

WORD FAMILY

streamlined (adj)

13 **prototype** /'prəʊtətaɪp/

noun

C1

The first working version of a product, built to test the idea before mass production.

e.g. Engineers tested several **prototypes** before releasing the final design.

COLLOCATIONS

build / test a prototype • a working prototype

WORD FAMILY

prototype (v)

14 **user-friendly** /,ju:zə 'frendli/

adjective

B2

Easy to use, understand or operate, even for a complete beginner.

e.g. The app succeeded because its **user-friendly** interface needed no instructions.

COLLOCATIONS

a user-friendly interface / design

WORD FAMILY

user (n), usability (n)

15 **integrate** /'ɪntɪɡreɪt/

verb

C1

To combine things so they work together as one; to bring into general use.

e.g. Many schools now **integrate** tablets and online resources into everyday lessons.

COLLOCATIONS

integrate (sth) into / with • fully integrated

WORD FAMILY

integration (n), integrated (adj)

16 glitch /glɪtʃ/

noun

C1

A small, sudden fault in a machine or system, often temporary.

e.g. A software **glitch** grounded hundreds of flights until engineers fixed it.

COLLOCATIONS

a technical / minor glitch • iron out the glitches

WORD FAMILY

glitchy (adj, informal)

17 misinformation /ˌmɪsɪnfəˈmeɪʃn/

noun

C1

False or inaccurate information, especially when spread without the intent to deceive.

e.g. Social media lets **misinformation** spread faster than the facts can catch up.

COLLOCATIONS

spread / combat misinformation • online misinformation

WORD FAMILY

misinform (v)

IELTS Distinguish it from “disinformation” (spread deliberately) – using both precisely impresses examiners.

18 anonymity /ˌænəˈnɪməti/

noun

C1

The state of being unknown or unnamed; keeping your identity hidden.

e.g. The **anonymity** of the internet can encourage people to post cruel comments.

COLLOCATIONS

preserve / protect anonymity • the cloak of anonymity

WORD FAMILY

anonymous (adj), anonymously (adv)

19 ubiquitous /ju:'bɪkwɪtəs/

adjective

C2

Seeming to be everywhere at the same time; extremely common.

e.g. Smartphones have become so **ubiquitous** that life without one is hard to imagine.

COLLOCATIONS

ubiquitous technology • increasingly ubiquitous

WORD FAMILY

ubiquity (n)

IELTS

A band-9 word for “how common technology is” — far stronger than “everywhere”.

20 exponential /ˌɛkspəˈnɛnʃl/

adjective

C2

Growing faster and faster; increasing at an ever-quickenening rate.

e.g. The **exponential** growth of computing power has transformed science in one generation.

COLLOCATIONS

exponential growth / increase / rise

WORD FAMILY

exponentially (adv)

21 infrastructure /ˈɪnfəstrʌktʃə/

noun

C1

The basic systems and structures a country or organisation needs to function.

e.g. Reliable digital **infrastructure**, such as high-speed internet, is vital to a modern economy.

COLLOCATIONS

digital / network infrastructure • invest in infrastructure

WORD FAMILY

infrastructural (adj)

22 digital divide /ˌdɪdʒɪtl dɪˈvaɪd/

noun

C1

The gap between people who have easy access to computers and the internet and those who do not.

e.g. The pandemic exposed a stark **digital divide** between wealthy and poorer households.

COLLOCATIONS

bridge / widen the digital divide

WORD FAMILY

digital (adj), divide (n)

IELTS

One of the most useful phrases for “technology and inequality” essays.

23 addictive /əˈdɪktɪv/

adjective

B2

Causing a strong, often harmful, need to keep doing or using something.

e.g. Designers deliberately make apps **addictive** so that users spend longer on screen.

COLLOCATIONS

highly / potentially addictive • addictive behaviour

WORD FAMILY

addict (n), addiction (n), addicted (adj)

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.

addictive

breakthrough

encryption

glitch

integrate

misinformation

obsolete

prototype

redundant

streamline

surveillance

ubiquitous

1. Privacy campaigners object to the growing use of _____ cameras in public spaces.
2. Rapid advances in AI risk making certain professions _____ within a decade.
3. The company introduced new software to _____ its ordering process.
4. When the factory automated its production line, two hundred staff were made _____.
5. Scientists have announced a major _____ in the treatment of the disease.
6. Studies suggest that endless scrolling is deliberately designed to be _____.
7. Strong _____ prevents hackers from reading intercepted messages.
8. A minor software _____ caused the website to crash for several hours.
9. Wireless internet is now so _____ that we barely notice it.
10. The team built a working _____ before investing in mass production.
11. Teachers are being trained to _____ new technology into their lessons.
12. During the election, _____ spread rapidly across social media.

Task 2 · Match the meaning

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

1 innovation	☐	a causing radical change to an industry
2 automation	☐	b using machines to do work people once did
3 algorithm	☐	c growing faster and faster
4 cutting-edge	☐	d a new idea, method or invention
5 disruptive	☐	e the gap between those with and without internet access
6 cybersecurity	☐	f a set of steps a computer follows to solve a problem
7 anonymity	☐	g the state of keeping your identity hidden
8 exponential	☐	h the most modern and advanced
9 infrastructure	☐	i the basic systems something needs to function
10 digital divide	☐	j the protection of systems and data from attack

Task 3 · Word formation

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

1. **INNOVATE** The smartphone was a genuinely _____ product when it first launched.
2. **AUTOMATE** The rise of _____ threatens many routine clerical jobs.
3. **ANONYMOUS** Users valued the _____ that the platform offered them.
4. **DISRUPT** Streaming services have caused major _____ in the film industry.
5. **EXPONENTIAL** The volume of data we generate is growing _____ every year.
6. **ENCRYPT** All sensitive files are _____ before they are stored.
7. **INTEGRATE** The tool offers seamless _____ with existing systems.
8. **ADDICT** Excessive screen use can lead to genuine _____.

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.

The Double-Edged Screen

Few forces have reshaped daily life as quickly as digital technology. Within a single generation, the smartphone has become ubiquitous, and services that once required a trip into town can now be completed in seconds. Supporters of this transformation point to a stream of breakthroughs – from instant global communication to medical tools that diagnose illness with remarkable accuracy.

Yet the same technology brings new problems. Automation, while it streamlines production and lowers costs, has also made many traditional roles redundant, and workers without digital skills are increasingly left behind. This has widened the digital divide, separating those who can take advantage of new tools from those who cannot afford or use them.

Concerns about privacy have grown too. Governments and corporations now gather vast amounts of personal data, and constant surveillance has become a feature of modern cities. Meanwhile, the anonymity of the internet allows misinformation to spread unchecked, sometimes with serious consequences for public health and democracy.

None of this means that progress should be resisted. Rather, most experts argue that technology must be designed responsibly – with strong encryption to protect users, clear rules to limit harm, and investment in the skills people need to keep pace. Handled wisely, innovation can serve society; handled carelessly, it can deepen the very inequalities it promised to solve.

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 | The smartphone became common only gradually, over several generations. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 2 | Automation has helped to reduce production costs. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 3 | The passage states that most workers today have strong digital skills. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 4 | The writer believes technological progress should be stopped. | T / F / NG |
| <hr/> | | |
| 5 | Experts agree on exactly which laws are needed to control technology. | T / F / NG |

Questions 6–9 · Vocabulary in context

- | | | |
|-------|---|-------|
| 6 | Find a word/phrase meaning: seeming to be everywhere at once | _____ |
| <hr/> | | |
| 7 | Find a word/phrase meaning: no longer needed (of workers or jobs) | _____ |
| <hr/> | | |
| 8 | Find a word/phrase meaning: false information that spreads online | _____ |
| <hr/> | | |
| 9 | Find a word/phrase meaning: the gap between those with and without access to technology | _____ |

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 think **automation** will create more jobs than it destroys?
2. How can societies bridge the **digital divide**?
3. Are you concerned about **surveillance** and the loss of privacy online?
4. Should platforms do more to stop the spread of **misinformation**?

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.

Some people believe that technological **innovation** improves our quality of life, while others argue it creates as many problems as it solves. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

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	innovation		☐
2	automation		☐
3	algorithm		☐
4	cutting-edge		☐
5	obsolete		☐
6	surveillance		☐
7	disruptive		☐
8	encryption		☐
9	breakthrough		☐
10	cybersecurity		☐
11	redundant		☐
12	streamline		☐
13	prototype		☐
14	user-friendly		☐
15	integrate		☐
16	glitch		☐
17	misinformation		☐
18	anonymity		☐
19	ubiquitous		☐
20	exponential		☐
21	infrastructure		☐
22	digital divide		☐
23	addictive		☐

Answer key

TASK 1 · GAP-FILL

1 surveillance 2 obsolete 3 streamline 4 redundant 5 breakthrough 6 addictive 7 encryption 8 glitch
9 ubiquitous 10 prototype 11 integrate 12 misinformation

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 innovative 2 automation 3 anonymity 4 disruption 5 exponentially 6 encrypted 7 integration 8 addiction

TASK 4 · TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

1 FALSE 2 TRUE 3 NOT GIVEN 4 FALSE 5 NOT GIVEN

TASK 4 · VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

6 ubiquitous 7 redundant 8 misinformation 9 digital divide



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.