

Versant Speaking & Listening Cheat Sheet

2026

The night-before summary, built like the exam.

— Questions	17m Time limit	— Passing score
— Exam fee	Pearson Governing body	

Versant English Speaking and Listening Test: printable quick-reference

Use this sheet for the Versant by Pearson English Speaking and Listening Test, not the longer English Placement Test. This version lasts 17 minutes and has six sections: short answers, sentence repetition, conversation questions, passage questions, passage retelling, and opinion responses. For full teaching, use the study guide; for drills, use practice exercises. This page is a printable reference sheet, not a practice-question PDF.

Timer note: official limits are fixed where stated below. When practising, you may set a slightly stricter timer to build comfort, but treat that as training only, not as an official rule.

Task	Action	Cue to listen for	Self-review checklist	Concise response framework
Short-answer	Answer immediately with the most direct word or phrase. The official section has 8 items and allows 15 seconds per answer.	Question word: who, what, where, when, which, how many.	Did I answer the exact question? Did I avoid extra explanation? Was my final word clear?	Question word + key noun/number. Example pattern: "Where?" -> "At the station." "How many?" -> "Three."
Repeat	Repeat the sentence as accurately as possible. The official section has 16 items and allows 15 seconds per answer.	Meaning groups, stressed words, negatives, numbers, and verb endings.	Did I keep the same order? Did I include small grammar words? Did my rhythm sound natural?	Chunk, echo, finish. Hold 2–4 word chunks in memory, repeat in order, and do not restart unless you must.
Conversation	Listen to the short exchange, infer the situation, then answer the question. The official section has 6 items.	Speaker relationship, problem, request, agreement, refusal, or next action.	Did I identify who wants what? Did I base my answer on the whole exchange, not one word?	Person + purpose + result. "The woman needs help because the meeting time changed."
Passage questions	Listen for the passage's main idea and key details, then answer the question. The official section has 6 items.	Topic sentence, contrast words, sequence words, cause-effect language, numbers.	Did I separate main idea from detail? Did I notice words like but, because, and after?	Main idea first, detail second. "It is mainly about a schedule change; the event moved to Friday."

Retell	Retell the story in your own words. The official section has 2 retellings and allows 30 seconds per retelling.	Characters, setting, problem, sequence, ending.	Did I include beginning, middle, and end? Did I use past tense consistently where needed?	Someone + situation + problem + actions + outcome. Keep moving forward; do not list disconnected details.
Opinion	Give a clear view and support it. The official section has 2 responses and allows 40 seconds per response.	Choice, preference, advantage, disadvantage, agreement, or recommendation.	Did I state my opinion early? Did I give one reason and one concrete example? Did I close cleanly?	Position + reason + example + closing. "I prefer X because... For example... So I would choose X."

Task-by-task actions

- Short-answer: do not turn a one-word answer into a speech. Accuracy and speed matter more than creativity.
- Repeat: listen for grammar as well as meaning. Missing not, plural -s, or a number can change the sentence.
- Conversation: decide what each speaker is trying to do: ask, offer, complain, confirm, or suggest.
- Passage: build a mental headline while listening. Then attach two supporting facts to that headline.
- Retell: speak in connected sentences. If you forget a detail, continue with the next clear event instead of pausing too long.
- Opinion: use your real view or the easier view to explain. The goal is a coherent spoken answer, not a perfect personal philosophy.

Last-minute checklist

- Before practice: warm up your mouth with 60 seconds of clear reading, then record one short answer and one 40-second opinion.
- Practice timers: try 12 seconds for short-answer and repeat drills, 25 seconds for retell drills, and 35 seconds for opinion drills. These are stricter practice settings, not official timings.
- During speaking: start promptly, keep normal volume, and avoid filler chains such as "um, like, you know."
- After recording: check three things only: Did I answer the task? Was the order logical? Could a listener understand every key word?
- Do not memorize a universal script: fixed speeches can fail when the prompt changes. Memorize flexible frameworks instead.
- Administrative reminder: once a candidate attempts to use a TIN, it cannot be used again. If you cannot access your score report, your administrator may have restricted access, so contact the test administrator.

Official sources

- Pearson — English Speaking and Listening official test guide:
<https://www.pearson.com/content/dam/one-dot-com/one-dot-com/pearson-languages/en-gb/pdfs/versant-resources/versant-by-pearson-speaking-and-listening-test-official-test-guide.pdf>
- Pearson — Versant test-taker preparation and FAQs:
<https://www.pearson.com/languages/test-takers/versant-by-pearson/test-taker-preparation.html>
- Pearson — English Placement official test guide (different version):
<https://www.pearson.com/content/dam/one-dot-com/one-dot-com/pearson-languages/en-gb/pdfs/versant-resources/versant-by-pearson-english-placement-test-official-test-guide.pdf>

Free practice questions for this exam: www.everyexamprep.com/exams/versant-english-speaking-listening/practice-test