

TOPIC: FOOD

Sample answers, useful
vocabulary and resources for
IELTS speaking exam

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References to teaching and authentic materials related to this topic: IELTS blogs, podcasts, videos and articles.

1. SAMPLE ANSWERS

PART 1

1. Can you cook?

- Oh yes, I love to cook. Honestly, I don't think I can **cook very well** but I always try my best. I consider it one of my hobbies.

2. Who does the cooking in your family?

- My mom does. Sometimes my older sister cooks for **dinner**. On weekends, I sometimes cook too.

3. What is your main meal in the day?

- Well, I can say, **lunch** is my main meal. I usually skip **breakfast** and I just have light **dinner**.

4. On what occasions do you eat special foods?

-I eat special foods on special occasions like birthday parties, weddings, New Year, etc. Even on small and simple gatherings, there are special foods too.

5. Which foods from your country do most foreign people enjoy?

-I think foreign people are always eager to try local and **exotic foods**. Tourists and foreigners eat our local and traditional foods in my country.

6. Do you eat much junk food?

- No, not very much. Aside from being **unhealthy**, I am not fond of salty foods.

PART 2

Talk about your favorite food. You should say:

- **what the food is**
- **what it is made of**
- **why you like it**

and explain why it is your favorite food

There are a lot of foods I like. It is quite difficult to think of one. So, let me talk about a popular menu in my country which is one of my **favorite** foods also. It is **steamed/plain rice** and chicken adobo. “Adobo” is the local name. Adobo can be **beef, pork, chicken, fish or even vegetables** but I like the chicken adobo particularly.

I will talk about how I cook my very own chicken adobo. A small amount of **oil** is placed in a heated **pan**. Then, sauté (*fried quickly in a little hot fat*) garlic until it turns golden brown. Add in **onions**. Add the chicken and sauté until it turns a little brown. **Pour** in about 2 **cups** of water and **let it boil**. After about 30 minutes, add about 2 **spoonfuls** of sugar, whole peppercorns and **let it simmer**. Then add about one-fourth cup of so sauce and let it boil for about 5 minutes. Then it is done and ready to be **served**. You may also add some **vegetables** like potatoes or fruits like banana or pineapple.

I like it because it is easy to prepare and it is very **delicious**. I am not quite sure about its **nutritional benefits** but I am sure that we can get some nutrients in it too, especially if vegetables are added.

This **recipe** is common in my country and I eat it for about three to four times a week. I like it because it does not require much effort to prepare and it is also not expensive.

PART 3

1. Tell me about the types of food that people eat in your country (What foods are popular in your country?)

In my country, the Philippines, rice is a **staple food**. We eat **rice** for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Rice comes with different kinds of viand (*piece of food, or a tasty dish*) such as pork, beef or chicken cooked with **vegetables** or **fruits** and other **ingredients**. Since my country is located in the tropics, tropical fruits are also popular here especially mangoes. They say that the best mangoes can be found in the Philippines. We also like to eat bread for breakfast or for snacks.

2. How are eating habits now in your country different from eating habits in the past?

I think people's **eating habits** have changed in the past years. Nowadays, there are already a lot of **fast-food** restaurants. **Processed foods** have become popular as well. I think people these days don't eat as much **healthy foods** compared in the past. Also, I think people in the past are more **concerned** about eating at the right time. However, nowadays, people tend to skip meals because of several reasons such as **dieting**, busy schedules and etc.

3. How healthy is your country's food?

It is the choice of the people whether to eat healthy or **unhealthy food**. In my country, there are many choices of healthy food especially vegetables and fruits. However, I don't think that people eat much healthy foods nowadays because of the presence of fast food and processed foods. Also, many dishes in my country is usually **greasy** and **salty** which I think are not very healthy.

2. KEY VOCABULARY

dinner

the meal itself, usually eaten at midday or in the evening (typically the largest meal of the day)

Sometimes my older sister cooks for **dinner**.

lunch

a meal, usually eaten around the middle of the day (12 - 2pm) and usually not as large or heavy as the evening meal

I can say, **lunch** is my main meal.

breakfast

the first meal you have in the morning

Breakfast consisted of fresh fruit , yoghurt , home-cooked bread and croissants as well as jams.

exotic foods

food from faraway place or striking and unusual in appearance or taste

I think foreign people are always eager to try local and **exotic foods**.

staple foods

a basic food or product that people eat or use regularly

In my country, the Philippines, rice is a **staple food**.

favorite food

preferred to all other of the same sort

Let me talk about a popular menu in my country which is one of my **favorite** foods also.

plain

simply cooked

I'd love a nice cup of tea, with a plain biscuit.

beef

meat from a cow

Cut the **beef** , which must be absolutely free of all fat and gristle.

pork

meat from a pig

Jews and Muslims do not eat **pork**.

chicken

a domestic fowl (bird) kept for its eggs or meat, especially a young one

Most of us think we're familiar with the sounds of the domestic **chicken**.

fish

a limbless cold-blooded vertebrate animal with gills and fins and living wholly in water

I just had to catch a **fish**.

vegetables

a plant or plant part eaten as food

Consider growing your own **vegetables** - many varieties can be grown in small gardens

pan

a container made of metal and used for cooking food in

Heat the butter in the same **pan**, when it has melted add the sugar and leave on heat

onions

an edible bulb (vegetable) with a pungent taste and smell, composed of several concentric layers, used in cooking

Place the steaks in a shallow dish with the sliced **onion**, garlic and red wine.

to pour

to cause (a liquid) to flow somewhere from a container

Pour the mixture into the two flan dishes.

spoon

a utensil consisting of a small shallow bowl at the end of a handle

There were three silver **spoons** placed in a row on the table.

to simmer

to cook something slowly, near boiling point

After about 30 minutes, add about 2 spoonful of sugar, whole peppercorns and **let it simmer**.

nutritional benefits

an advantage gained from substances that are essential for good health and growth

I am not quite sure about its **nutritional benefits**.

doesn't take long

does not require much time

It **doesn't take long** for me to cook breakfast for myself.

meal

- the food that you eat when having a meal

- The **meal** was so good

- an occasion when you eat

- Breakfast is the most important **meal** of the day.

roasted vegetables

vegetables (such as potatoes, cabbages, carrots etc) cooked by prolonged exposure to heat in an oven or over a fire

Follow the recipe to make **perfect roasted vegetable**.

balanced portion

an amount arranged in good proportions

Every pack is a perfectly **balanced portion**.

canned beans

beans preserved or supplied in a sealed can

Canned beans cost about two times more than dried beans.

easy to store

easy to collect and put sth somewhere

Root crops are pretty **easy to store**.

cereals

breakfast food made from roasted grain, typically eaten with milk

I sit down in the armchair and eat my **cereals**.

seasonings

salt, pepper or spices added to food

The Brazilian people use a variety of **seasonings** in their cooking and have many regional signature dishes

sugar

crystalline substances used as a sweetener in food and drink

Jam is made from fruit and **sugar**.

fats

a natural oily or greasy substance occurring in animal bodies, especially when deposited as a layer under the skin or around certain organs

Research now shows that eating enough **fat** is also important.

proteins

proteins are required for the structure, function, and regulation of the body's cells (sources: beef, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, nuts, seeds)

high protein diets, with low vegetable intake, contribute to osteoporosis

carbohydrates

provide body with energy (potatoes, grains, cakes and cookies)

Be careful not to accompany your chosen **carbohydrate** with large quantities of fat

nutrients

a substance that provides nourishment essential for growth and the maintenance of life

Fish is a source of many important nutrients, including protein, vitamins, and minerals.

to get obese

to become grossly fat or overweight

People tend **to get obese** as they get older

health awareness

knowledge or perception of how to maintain the state of being free from illness or injury

The global organic food and beverage market has witnessed growth in recent times due to increasing consumer **health awareness**.

prone to addiction

likely to or liable to suffer from condition of being addicted to a particular substance, thing, or activity

You may **be prone to addiction** to foods with excess sugar.

feeling of being full

not wanting to eat any more because you have eaten a lot

I have noticed lately though that I enjoy the **feeling of being full**.

high amounts

large quantity of something

High amounts of salt are still lurking in everyday foods.

addicting effect

a change resulting in being addicted to a particular substance, thing, or activity

Some research suggests sugar may have an **addicting effect** on the brain

to contain additives

to have or hold substance added to something in small quantities, typically to improve or preserve it

Low-fat mayonnaise generally **contains additives** to compensate for the lack of flavor.

to resist temptation

to withstand a desire to do something

It can be helpful to know the different ways to **resist temptation** when it comes to food.

snack

a small amount of food eaten between meals

Buy pre-cut fresh , crunchy vegetables for a quick **snack** .

health consciousness

being aware of how to maintain the state of being free from illness or injury

Researchers say global diets are changing to incorporate more plant."That's resulting in an increased focus on **health consciousness** in diet".

to gain a lot of weight

to get obese [fat]

It's not possible **to gain a lot of weight** over the course of one night.

delicious/tasty

having a good taste

Her recipes are gluten, dairy and sugar free and yet are **deliciously** tasty .

enjoy food

derive pleasure from the act of eating food

Research shows that people who **enjoy food** more eat less because they feel satisfied

delicacy

something that is good to eat

The French were the first to consider geese a culinary **delicacy**.

diet

range of food that is usually eaten

Undeniably, fresh fruit is an important part of our **diet**.

organic food

food that is produced without using harmful chemicals

Organic food is much too expensive.

vegetarian food

food that does not contain meat

I'm a strict vegetarian right from my birth and I don't even know the taste of **non vegetarian food**.

processed food

food that has chemicals in it to make it last a long time

The term '**processed food**' applies to any food that has been altered from its natural state

junk food

food that is full of sugar or fat, and is bad for your health

The less **junk food** you eat, the less you want

fast food

food such as hamburgers, which is prepared quickly and which you can take away with you to eat

For one month, I ate nothing but **fast food**.

3. WORD FORMATION

to digest

verb

We always use a probiotic which helps it digest food properly.

digestive

adjective

Maintaining **digestive system** health is essential, as it turns foods into nourishment.

digestion

noun

There are two main types of protease enzymes involved in human digestion.

nutrient

noun

Fish is a source of many important **nutrients**, including protein, vitamins, and minerals.

nutritious

adjective

Organic growers deliver safe, **nutritious** food whilst preserving the environment for future generations.

nutrition

noun

Nutrition and exercise are essential to fitness and health.

fat

noun

Research now shows that eating enough **fat** is also important .

fatty

adjective

Eating **fatty** meat increases your chances of having a heart attack or developing cancer.

to taste

verb

I notice I can now smell and **taste** chemical additives in some foods in a rather unpleasant manner.

taste

noun

Smell and **taste** must be employed to help you judge what you're buying

tasty

adjective

Her recipes are gluten, dairy and sugar free and yet are deliciously **tasty**

diet

noun

Undeniably, fresh fruit is an important part of our **diet**.

dietary

adjective

Only in more recent years have our **dietary** habits changed.

to diet

verb

Most people who actively **diet** usually end up piling weight back on.

4. COLLOCATIONS AND PHRASES

good
delicious
tasty
fresh
healthy
nutritious
plain
spicy
salty
exotic
fatty

adverb+

food

consume
eat
have
enjoy
like
be off
go off
avoid
cut down on
cut out
offer

verb+

food

supply
distribution
crisis
shortage
industry
market
production
company
market
outlet
shop
store
supplier
poisoning
additives
colouring

food+noun

food

balanced
good
healthy
sensible
adequate
bad
poor
unhealthy
staple

adjective+

diet

eat
have
live on
survive on

verb+

diet

strict
slimming
weight-loss
weight-reducing
low-calorie
restricted
special
gluten-free
high/low-fibre
high/low-protein
low-fat
salt-free

adjective+

diet

great
exotic
rare
local

adjective+

delicacy

good
perfect
sure
delicious
tasty
favourite
basic
easy
simple
complicated
classic
old
original
traditional
secret
special
vegetarian

adjective+

recipe

cook
make
read
follow
stick to
use
discover
find

verb+

recipe

green
leafy
root
salad
cooked
raw
fresh
frozen
tinned
organic
early
seasonal
spring
summer

adjective+

vegetable

eat
have
boil
cook
overcook
steam
stir-fry
chop
peel

verb+

vegetable

5. USEFUL RESOURCES

THIS TOPIC ON IELTS BLOGS

- [IELTS Speaking Part 2: describe a meal \[ielts-simon.com\]](https://ielts-simon.com)
- [IELTS Topic Vocabulary for Speaking test: Food and Diet \[thetesttaker.com\]](https://thetesttaker.com)
- [IELTS Food Vocabulary \[ieltsspeaking.co.uk\]](https://ieltsspeaking.co.uk)
- [IELTS Cue Card Sample 140 - Talk about your favourite food \[ielts-mentor.com\]](https://ielts-mentor.com)

PODCASTS

- [Taking On Major Food Companies And Being A Champion For Health – With Vani Hari](#)
- [Cooking with Luke – Verbs and Expressions in the Kitchen \[teacherluke.co.uk\]](https://teacherluke.co.uk)
- [Podcast 54 – What Australians Eat \[slowenglish.info\]](https://slowenglish.info)

ARTICLES

- [What healthy food do you cook for your family on a budget? \[quora.com\]](https://quora.com)
- [Why Do So Many People Like To Eat Junk Food Even If They Know It's Bad For Their Health? \[quora.com\]](https://quora.com)

VIDEOS

- [Mark Bittman: What's Wrong With What We Eat \[ted.com\]](https://ted.com)
- [IELTS & TOEFL Vocabulary: Talking about Food \[engVid\]](#)
- [How to Talk About Food - Spoken English Lesson \[Oxford Online English\]](#)

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