

10 Essential Tips for Passing the B2 First (FCE) Exam

By EnglishExam.eu Team | 2/11/2026

Preparing for the FCE? detailed guide covers 10 essential tips to help you succeed in all four papers of the Cambridge B2 First exam.

1. UNDERSTAND THE FORMAT

The B2 First exam consists of four papers: Reading and Use of English, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. Familiarizing yourself with exactly what each part entails is half the battle. Don't walk into the exam room surprised by the structure.

2. TIME MANAGEMENT IS KEY

In the Reading and Use of English paper, you have 75 minutes to complete 7 parts. That's just over 10 minutes per part. Practice under timed conditions to ensure you don't run out of time.

3. EXPAND YOUR VOCABULARY

At B2 level, you need to show a range of vocabulary. Learn synonyms for common words like 'good', 'bad', 'happy', and 'sad'. Use phrasal verbs and collocations appropriately.

4. PRACTICE SPEAKING WITH A PARTNER

The Speaking test is done in pairs. Practice engaging in conversation, asking questions, and listening actively. Don't just wait for your turn to speak; react to what your partner says.

5. READ WIDELY

Don't just read textbooks. Read English news, magazines, and blogs. This will help you with the Reading paper and give you ideas for the Writing section.

6. LISTEN TO DIFFERENT ACCENTS

The Listening paper features speakers from different English-speaking backgrounds. Listen to podcasts and radio shows from the UK, USA, Australia, and New Zealand.

7. PLAN YOUR WRITING

Before you start writing your essay or report, spend 5 minutes planning. Structure your ideas into paragraphs. A well-structured piece of writing scores much higher than a disorganized one.

8. REVIEW YOUR GRAMMAR

Ensure you are comfortable with B2 grammar points such as conditionals, passive voice, and reported speech. Use of English Part 4 (Key Word Transformation) specifically tests this.

9. DON'T LEAVE BLANKS

There is no negative marking in the Cambridge exams. If you don't know an answer, guess! You have a 25% chance of getting it right in multiple-choice questions.

10. STAY CALM

On the day of the exam, get a good night's sleep and eat a healthy breakfast. Being calm and focused will help you perform at your best.

