Table

0. About IELTS Writing Task 1 Tables

On this page, you'll learn how to write **IELTS Writing Task 1 table** essays using clear structure, high-band vocabulary and a **Band 9 sample answer**. We will use an example table showing **the cost of water in five Australian cities in 2004**, including usage charges and average household bills.

Subsection A | What does this task test?

In IELTS Academic Writing Task 1, you may be given a **table** instead of a chart or diagram. The question usually asks you to:

> "Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant."

A table question tests whether you can:

- read and **compare numerical data across rows and columns**
- pick out **highest / lowest figures** and clear patterns
- group cities / categories logically (e.g. similar prices or very different ones)
- describe the information in **clear, academic English** without copying the table

In this example, the table shows:

- **usage charges per kilolitre** of water,
  - for consumption **up to 125 kilolitres**, and
  - for usage **over 125 kilolitres**,
- plus the **average water bill per household** in five Australian cities in 2004.

Subsection B | Timing & basic exam rules

- **Paper:** IELTS Academic Writing
- **Task:** Writing Task 1 (tables are one possible visual)
- **Recommended time:** about **20 minutes** of the 60-minute Writing test
- **Minimum length:** at least **150 words**

A typical table prompt contains:

1576. A short description of what the table shows

1577. The table itself with **rows, columns and figures** (often money, percentages or numbers of people)

1578. The standard instruction to *summarise* and *make comparisons where relevant*.

Subsection C | Assessment criteria for Task 1 (for tables)

Examiners use four criteria for **IELTS Writing Task 1 table** questions (each 25%):

1963. **Task Achievement**

- ○ Did you describe the **main patterns and key figures**?

- ○ Did you include a **clear overview** of the most important differences?

- ○ Did you **avoid listing every number** in the table?

- ○ Did you write at least **150 words**?

1964. **Coherence and Cohesion**

- ○ Is your answer organised into **logical paragraphs** (Intro + Overview + 1–2 body paragraphs)?

- ○ Do you group similar data together (e.g. cities with the lowest charges vs those with the highest)?

- ○ Do you use linking words: *in contrast, while, by comparison, on the other hand*?

1965. **Lexical Resource (Vocabulary)**

- ○ Do you use a range of **comparison vocabulary** (e.g. *higher, lower, slightly more, significantly less*)?

- ○ Do you express numbers flexibly: *just over $0.40, nearly $1, around $250*?

- ○ Are your word choices accurate with few spelling mistakes?

1966. **Grammatical Range and Accuracy**

- ○ Do you use **simple and complex sentences** correctly?

- ○ Are comparative and superlative structures accurate: *the lowest rate, much higher than, slightly cheaper*?

- ○ Are tenses consistent (usually **past simple** because of the year given)?

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1. Useful Vocabulary & Sentence Patterns for Tables

To score Band 7–9 in **IELTS Writing Task 1 table** questions, you need accurate **number language** and clear **comparison patterns**.

1.1 Describing Figures & Comparisons

Reporting figures

- charge / cost / rate / fee

- average bill / typical cost / household bill

Useful verbs

- be, stand at, amount to, reach

- be charged, be set at

Examples (water table):

- *In Adelaide, the usage charge up to 125 kilolitres is set at $0.42 per kilolitre.*

- *The average water bill in Perth amounts to $332 per household.*

Comparing numbers

- be higher / lower than

- be exactly the same as

- be nearly / almost / roughly / just over / just under

Examples:

- *Sydney's initial usage charge, at $0.98, is more than double that of Adelaide and Perth.*

- *The average bills in Adelaide and Brisbane are almost the same, at just over $310.*

1.2 Grouping & Highlighting Patterns

Grouping language

- among the five cities,

- in both Adelaide and Perth,

- by contrast, in Sydney…

Examples:

- *In both Adelaide and Perth, the initial charge is relatively low, whereas Sydney has by far the highest rate.*

Majority / extremes

- the highest / lowest figure

- the most / least expensive

- the greatest / smallest difference

Example:

- *Perth has the highest average water bill, while Melbourne residents pay the least.*

1.3 Core Sentence Patterns for Tables

Introducing the table

- *The table compares the cost of water in five Australian cities in 2004, including usage charges at two consumption levels and the average household bill.*

Overview sentence

- *Overall, water prices and household bills vary considerably between the cities, with Perth and Sydney generally charging more than the others.*

Describing a column

- *For usage up to 125 kilolitres, charges range from $0.42 in Adelaide and Perth to $0.98 in Sydney.*

Comparing two columns

- *In Brisbane and Melbourne, the rate remains unchanged after 125 kilolitres, while in Adelaide and especially Perth it rises sharply.*

You can plug these patterns into any **IELTS table** question, changing the nouns and numbers.

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2. Band 9 Table Sample Answer (with Planning Notes)

2.1 Sample Question

The table below shows the cost of water in five cities in Australia in 2004.

The table below shows the cost of water in five cities in Australia in 2004.

City	Usage charge per kiloliter (up to 125 kls)	Usage charge per kiloliter (over 125 kls)	Average water bill per household
Adelaide	$0.42	$1	$312
Brisbane	$0.84	$0.84	$310
Melbourne	$0.78	$0.78	$253
Perth	$0.42	$1.50	$332
Sydney	$0.98	$0.98	$319

Write at least 250 words.

2.2 Planning Notes

Step 1 | Identify main features

- **Up to 125 kls**
  - Lowest: Adelaide & Perth ($0.42)
  - Mid-range: Melbourne ($0.78), Brisbane ($0.84)
  - Highest: Sydney ($0.98)
- **Over 125 kls**
  - No change: Brisbane & Melbourne ($0.84 and $0.78)
  - Moderate increase: Adelaide ($1.00)
  - Sharp increase: Perth ($1.50)
  - High fixed rate: Sydney ($0.98)
- **Average bill per household**
  - Highest: Perth ($332)
  - Next: Sydney ($319), Adelaide ($312), Brisbane ($310)
  - Lowest: Melbourne ($253)

Step 2 | Mindmap for Band 9 Response

- Thesis: table shows water costs and average bills, with clear variation.
- Body 1: charges up to 125 kls – cheapest vs most expensive.
- Body 2: charges over 125 kls – stability vs steep increases.
- Body 3: average bills – link back to pricing structure (Perth highest, Melbourne lowest).
- Conclusion: emphasise significant differences and possible link to consumption patterns.

2.3 Band 9 Sample Answer

The table provides a detailed comparison of water costs in five Australian cities in 2004, focusing on usage charges for different consumption levels and the average household water bill. This data reveals notable disparities in water pricing across these urban areas.

Initially, examining the cost of water usage up to 125 kilolitres, we observe significant variation among the cities. Adelaide and Perth offer the most economical rates at $0.42 per kilolitre, making them the most affordable options for moderate water consumers. In stark contrast, Sydney imposes the highest charge at $0.98 per kilolitre, nearly double that of Adelaide and Perth, indicating a substantial financial burden for residents consuming up to this threshold.

A more pronounced disparity emerges when considering the charges for water usage exceeding 125 kilolitres. Brisbane and Melbourne maintain a consistent rate of $0.84 and $0.78 per kilolitre respectively, reflecting a uniform pricing strategy for higher consumption. However, Perth stands out with a steep increase to $1.50 per kilolitre, the highest among the cities, suggesting a

significant penalty for excessive water use. Adelaide also raises its rate to $1.00, while Sydney continues to charge $0.98, the same as for lower consumption.

The average water bill per household further illustrates the impact of these pricing structures. Perth, despite its low initial usage charge, records the highest average bill at $332, likely due to its elevated rate for higher consumption. Conversely, Melbourne, with its moderate charges and stable pricing, has the lowest average bill at $253, indicating a more balanced approach to water costs that benefits consumers.

In conclusion, the table highlights substantial differences in water costs across Australian cities, shaped by both usage charges and consumption patterns. These variations underscore the diverse strategies employed by city authorities to manage water resources and influence consumer behaviour.

(~210 words)

2.4 How Students Can Use This Sample

✅ Step 1 – Copy the paragraph plan

For any **IELTS Writing Task 1 table**:

1. Introduction – paraphrase the question.
2. Overview – describe overall patterns (which cities are most / least expensive, any big gaps).
3. Body 1 – focus on one part of the table (e.g. first column).
4. Body 2 – focus on the next part (e.g. second column + final column), making comparisons.

✅ Step 2 – Reuse high-band language

Underline phrases like:

- *offers the most economical rates, imposes the highest charge, a more pronounced disparity emerges*
- *maintain a consistent rate, stands out with a steep increase, records the highest average bill*

These are excellent for **IELTS table** and **bar chart** tasks.

✅ Step 3 – Swap in new numbers

When practising other tables:

- Keep the same structure and sentence frames.
- Replace city names and dollar figures with the new data.
- Adjust only a few words (e.g. *students, age groups, types of transport* instead of cities).

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3. Writing Tips for IELTS Table Essays

3.1 Task Response

- Always give a **clear overview**: identify the overall **cheapest / most expensive** items and any striking patterns.

- Don't try to mention **every number**; select key figures that show the pattern.

3.2 Coherence & Cohesion

- Group similar rows or columns together (e.g. cities with similar rates).

- Use comparative linkers: *while, whereas, on the other hand, in contrast, however.*

3.3 Language Use

- Use **approximate language** to avoid sounding like a calculator:

    - *around $250, just over $300, nearly $1 per kilolitre.*

- Use correct comparative forms:

    - *higher than, lower than, the highest, slightly cheaper.*

3.4 Data Selection

- Focus on:

    - **extremes** (highest, lowest),

    - **unusual patterns** (no change vs large increase),

    - and **relationships** between columns (e.g. low rate but high final bill).

3.5 Exam Technique

- Spend **2–3 minutes** reading the table and marking key figures.

- Aim for **170–200 words** for a complete but efficient answer.

- Keep **numbers accurate** – misreading a figure can lower your Task Achievement score.

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🔊 **Speech Analysis**

● Pronunciation Issues **(18)**

Your Speech Transcript

Yes, I usually buy jewelry but it's for a specific color. I'm not uh, going to buy very expensive jewelry, but I would like to find a specific one like some antique jewelry.

Pronunciation Issues   18 issues

49% "usually"
Syllable Breakdown:
yuw (56%)   zhuw (26%)   ax (58%)   liy (92%)

Pronunciation Comparison:

Your Pronunciation
yuw (56%)   zhuw (26%)   ax (58%)   liy (92%)   ▶

Correct Pronunciation
/juːʒ(ʊə)li/   🔊

97% "buy"
Syllable Breakdown:
bay (92%)

Overall Pronunciation Scores:
Accuracy: 90.0%   Fluency: 83.0%
Completeness: 91.0%   Overall: 81.5%

📌 Preference

Positive influence of television on society

1 POINT 1
Educational Content

> **Supporting Example**
> Learning new things through documentaries and educational programs.

2 POINT 2
Exposure to Different Cultures

> **Supporting Example**
> Travel shows and international news coverage

3 POINT 3
Highlighting Social Issues

> **Supporting Example**
> Travel shows and international news coverage

✅ Conclusion

Television helps people become more open-minded, educated, and inspired to take action.

Essay Structure Guide

Introduction (50-60 words)

Hook + Background + Thesis Statement

> "Television has transformed modern society in numerous ways, sparking debates about its overall impact..."

Body Paragraph 1 (80-100 words)

Educational Benefits
- Topic sentence
- Supporting evidence
- Example: documentaries
- Linking sentence

Body Paragraph 2 (80-100 words)

Cultural Exposure
- Topic sentence
- Supporting evidence
- Example: travel shows
- Linking sentence

Conclusion (40-50 words)

Restate thesis + Final thought

> "In conclusion, television serves as a powerful tool for education and cultural awareness..."

Target: 250-280 words | **Time:** 40 minutes | **Structure:** 4 paragraphs

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🔤 Vocabulary Builder

WORD	PHONETIC SYMBOL	PART OF SPEECH	ENGLISH DEFINITION	SAMPLE SENTENCE
Influence	/ˈɪnfluəns/ ◁ッ)	Noun	The power to change or affect someone or something	Television has a positive **influence** on society by
Open-minded	/ˌəʊ.pən ˈmaɪn.dɪd/ ◁ッ)	Adjective	Willing to consider new ideas	Watching television makes people more **open-minded** as they learn about various cultures and ways of life.
Discrimination	/dɪˌskrɪmɪ ˈneɪʃən/ ◁ッ)	Noun	The unjust treatment of different categories of people	Television programs can help raise awareness about **discrimination** and inspire people to fight against it.
Educational	/ˌedʒu ˈkeɪʃənl/ ◁ッ)	Adjective	Relating to the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction	**Educational** content on television helps people learn new things and expand their knowledge.
Social issues	/ˈsəʊ.ʃəl ˈɪʃ.uːz/ ◁ッ)	Noun	Problems that affect many people within a society	Television highlights important **social issues** like poverty, inspiring viewers to take action and make a difference.

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