Technology Vocabulary

Topic vocabulary for the IELTS exam

* Important
  - Do not try and learn this list of technology vocabulary. Identify
  the vocabulary you find useful for answering practise
  questions about technology.
  - Record these in your vocabulary notebook and practise using
  them regularly.

Set 1: Technology

**technology** – the application of scientific discoveries for practical purposes, especially in industry.

- **Technology** is advancing at such a rate that it’s difficult to imagine what our lives will be like in 20 years time.

**technological** – relating to or involving technology.

- Recent **technological advances** in computing and telecommunications mean that some of our staff work mainly from home and don’t need to travel into the office every day.

**technophile** – a person who is enthusiastic about new technology.

- My brother is a true **technophile** and can tell you about every new gadget on the market.

**a techie** – a person who knows a lot about technology, especially computers or other electronic equipment.

- I’m not surprised Sue Lin is working for a top computer agency as she was always a real **techie** at school.

**tech-savvy** – well informed about or proficient in the use of modern technology, especially computers.

- My kids are far more **tech-savvy** than I am, having grown up with computer technology.

**technophobe** – a person who fears or dislikes new technology, especially computers, and does not want to use it.

- I keep telling him how easy it is to send an email but he’s an ardent **technophobe** and refuses to even have a go.

Set 2: Progress

**progress** – to develop towards an improved or more advanced state.

- The pace of technological **progress** over the past 20 years has been astonishing.

**innovation** – the development and use of a new idea or method.

- Further **innovation** is needed in the farming industry if we are to be able to feed ourselves in the future.

**innovative** – the adjective form of innovation.

Guti was a much-valued member of the team as he often came up with **innovative** solutions to a problem.
an advance – a development or improvement.
- Scientists have made major **advances** in recent years in their search for a cure for Alzheimer's.

develop – to change into a stronger or more advanced form.
- I can confidently predict that computers will continue to **develop** at a rapid rate.

development – the process of developing something.
- Future **developments** in space travel may mean that our ancestors live on other planets.

revolutionary – involving or causing a complete or dramatic change and improvement.
- The development of personal computers has proved **revolutionary** for business owners.

revolutionise – to radically change something so it is much better.
- There’s no doubt that computers have **revolutionised** our lives.

breakthrough – important development or discovery.
Some people argue that the invention of the internal combustion engine was the most important technological **breakthrough** of all time.

modern – of the present time; using recent ideas and methods.
- **Modern** science is transforming the way we understand our world.

modify – to change something in order to make it better.
- Being disabled, I need a car that can be **modified** to meet my specific needs.

cutting-edge – very modern.
- Our new mobile phone is still in development but it is at the **cutting-edge** of technology.

state-of-the-art – the latest stage of development of a product, using the most recent ideas and method and including the latest features.
- The new aircraft design was **state-of-the-art** and was expected to revolutionise passenger's experience of flying.

advanced – modern and well developed.
- In the developing world, simple technologies such the mechanical water pump are often more practical solutions to everyday problems than the **advanced** computer technologies of the western world.

high tech – using or involving advanced technology.
- Some **high tech** solutions are less reliable than the basic technology they replace.

indispensable – something you could not manage without; absolutely necessary.
For many people, their mobile phone is **indispensable**.

outdated – out of date; old-fashioned.
Jared didn’t want to buy a new iPhone but his mobile looked so **outdated** compared to those of his friends that he felt pressured into updating it.

obsolete – not in use any more, having been replaced by something better.
Jerry had to close down his small printing business as his old printer had become **obsolete** and he couldn’t afford to replace it with the latest state-of-the-art equipment.
Set 3: Effect

**impact** – the effect of something.
- Modern technology has had a massive **impact** on the way we communicate with each other.

**to transform** – to markedly or dramatically change.
- There can be no denying that computers have **transformed** the way we work and study.

**game changer** – a new idea or factor that significantly changes an existing situation or way of doing something.
- The professor’s new theory was a **game changer** and if proved correct, brought the possibility of time travel one step closer.

**affect** – to influence or cause a change in something.
- Social media has radically **affected** both how we communicate and who we communicate with.

**influence** – the power to have an effect on the character, development or behaviour of someone or something.
- The **influence** of modern technology is evident in almost every aspect of our daily lives from how we shop to how we spend our leisure time.

Set 4: Computers

**computer literate** – to have sufficient knowledge and understanding to be able to use a computer effectively.
- The application form specified that candidates must be **computer literate** to be considered for the job.

**computer buff** – someone who knows a lot about computers and might be considered an expert.
- Although I have a good understanding of the software I use at work, I certainly wouldn’t call myself a **computer buff**.

**laptop** – portable computer.
- With a **laptop**, I can work almost anywhere as long as I have an internet connection.

**PC** – personal computer; not usually portable like a laptop.
- I have a **PC** in my office at work but prefer a laptop for home so that I can use it in different locations around the house.

**to boot up** – to start a computer.
- Of course I’ll show you how to send an email. You **boot up** the computer and I’ll be with you in a minute.

**word processing** – the process of producing, editing and storing text on a computer.
- I have to write a lot of reports for my job so **word processing** is what I use my computer for more than anything else.

**to upgrade** – to obtain a more powerful or feature-rich computer, electronic device or piece of software.
- My mobile phone company is always trying to persuade me to **upgrade** to the latest model.
**software** – the programmes and other operating information used by a computer and related devices.
- Bella was able to create some amazing photographic effects after installing the new **software** on her computer.

**hardware** – the physical parts of a computer and related devices.
- Computer **hardware** includes the monitor, keyboard, disk drive, mouse and wiring.

**to crash** – to suddenly stop working.
- Guti was in the middle of his online English lesson when his computer **crashed**.

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**Set 5: The internet**

**internet** – the extensive global system of connected computers that allows people to share information and communicate with each other.
- I love the fact that I can get free English lessons on the **internet**.

**to surf the internet** – to look at a series of websites one after the other.
- I spent hours **surfing the internet** searching for the best holiday deals.

**online** – connected to the internet.
- Most of my friends do their grocery shopping **online** but I prefer to go to the supermarket and choose my food items myself.

**website** – a set of pages of information on the internet about a particular subject, published by a single person or organization.
- I found an excellent **website** about how to train puppies the other day.

**to browse** – to look for and look at information on the internet.
- I often **browse** the internet for gift ideas when a friend has a birthday coming up.

**wifi** – using radio or microwaves rather than wires to connect to the internet.
- Having a **wifi** connection gives me so much more freedom in the way I work as I'm no longer tied to my desk.

**wifi hotspot** – an area with an accessible wireless network, often a public place.
- Whenever the ship was in port, the crew flocked to the nearest **wifi hotspot** to connect with their families back home.

**internet connection** – the link between a computer and the internet.
- There is such a poor **internet connection** where I live that I have to go to the library when I want to get online.

**social media** – websites and computer programmes such as Facebook or Twitter that allow people to connect and share content online.
- I have to admit that I connect with my friends on **social media** more often than I see them face-to-face.

**viral** – an image, video or piece of information that becomes very popular very quickly on the internet.
- The video of her cat riding on a giant tortoise went **viral** and achieve nearly a million views.
**e-commerce** – commercial transactions conducted electronically on the internet.
- Their business really took off when they built an **e-commerce** website and started selling their products online.

**e-book** – a book published in digital form and read on a computer or other dedicated electronic device.
- The best thing about **e-books** is that you can download them instantly and start reading them immediately.

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**Set 6: Internet security**

**privacy** – the right to keep personal information secret.
- Many internet users are very concerned about the **privacy** of their personal information.

**censorship** – suppressing or stopping certain information being available to the public.
- The Chinese have their own social media channels as government **censorship** means they can't access Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

**internet security** – computer systems implemented or actions taken by computer users to protect their data while using the internet.
- **Internet security** is a real concern for people making credit card purchases online.

**internet safety** – computer systems implemented or actions taken by computer users to stay safe while using the internet.
- I want to learn more about **internet safety** as I've heard many stories about children being befriended by paedophiles online and I want to protect my own kids

**hacker** – a person who illegally gains access to a computer system to steal information or tamper with the system.
- Computer **hackers** cause huge disruption within the organisations they target and could even pose a threat to our country’s security.

**computer virus** – a piece of code which is capable of copying itself and typically has a detrimental effect, such as corrupting the system or destroying data.
- Timor's computer was infected with a **computer virus** and many of his files were damaged.

**cyber** – involving, using, or relating to computers, especially the internet.
- Many business owners live in fear of a **cyber** attack, especially infection of their computer network with a virus.

**cybersecurity** – the measures taken to protect against the criminal or unauthorised access of electronic data.
- **Cybersecurity** has become a major industry as computer hackers have become more and more skilled at breaking into supposedly secures computer systems.

**cybercrime** – criminal activities carried out by means of computers or the internet.
- Identity theft, where someone steals and misuses your personal information, is one of the most common types of **cybercrime**.
Set 7: Other useful vocabulary

device – a thing made or adapted for a particular purpose, especially a piece of mechanical or electronic equipment. It is usually quite small.
- A FitBit is a device that helps people improve their health by tracking their activity, exercise, food, weight and sleep.

labour-saving device – a device or piece of equipment that reduces the effort needed to do something.
- The labour-saving device I'm most grateful for is my washing machine.

gadget – a small mechanical or electronic device or tool, often ingenious, novel or fun as well as being useful.
- Paulo is always buying the latest gadget to go with his digital camera.

user-friendly – simple to understand and easy to use.
- I didn’t find my new mobile phone user-friendly at first but my grandson was able to show me how to use it and now I understand what to do.

microchip – a very small piece of silicon with electronic circuits on it that can hold large quantities of information or perform mathematical and logical operations.
- One of the greatest technological breakthroughs of modern times was the development of the microchip.

the digital age – the time since personal computers were introduced and became central to people’s lives.
- I envy people born in the digital age as they’ve grown up with computers and seem to find it easier to adapt to new technologies than us older generation.

AI (artificial intelligence) – the development of computers or computer-controlled robots to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence.
- Although AI is still largely confined to science fiction, some people believe there will come a time when computers will rule the world.

electronic – a device that operates by electric current passing through it.
- Electronic games are extremely popular with both adults and children.

appliance – typically a piece of electrical equipment, such as a kettle or toaster, that uses less advanced technology.
- Modern kitchen appliances make cooking and baking much easier than they would have been 100 years ago and save so much time.

IELTS-Style Practise Questions

For IELTS-style practise questions and sample answers visit:

www.ieltsjacky.com/technology-vocabulary.html