

# B2 FIRST (FCE) CHEAT SHEET

CEFR LEVEL B2

Complete Exam Strategy, Timing & High-Scoring Formulae

## TOTAL DURATION

**~3.5 Hours**

4 Papers Total

## PASSING GRADE

**160 - 179**

Grade B or C (Grade A = C1)

## GOLDEN RULE

**No Negative Marks**

Always guess if unsure!

## 1. READING & USE OF ENGLISH (1H 15M – 40% OF TOTAL)

### Time Management Allocation:

Spend max **10 mins per part** for Parts 1–4 (Grammar/Vocab) and **12–15 mins per part** for Parts 5–7 (Text Reading). Save 5 mins to transfer answers!

### Part 1: Multiple Choice Cloze

Vocabulary

- **Focus:** Collocations, idioms, phrasal verbs, shades of meaning.
- **Strategy:** Read the title and full paragraph first. Look at options and check dependent prepositions (e.g., *depend ON*, *interested IN*).
- **Common Trap:** Words with similar meanings but different grammar structures (e.g., *suggest + -ing* vs *tell + person + to*).

### Part 2: Open Cloze

Grammar

- **Focus:** Articles, prepositions, auxiliary verbs, relative pronouns, linking words.
- **Strategy:** Look at words immediately before and after the gap. Write ONE word only.
- **Frequent Answers:** *which, although, unless, been, have, despite, far, as, if, too, enough*.

### Part 3: Word Formation

Morphology

- **Strategy:** Identify required Part of Speech (Noun, Verb, Adj, Adverb).
- **Check Negatives:** Does the context require a negative prefix? (e.g., *happy* → *UNhappy*, *possible* → *IMpossible*).
- **Common Suffixes:** Nouns (*-tion, -ment, -ity, -ness*), Adjectives (*-able, -ive, -ful*), Adverbs (*-ly*).

### Part 4: Key Word Transformations

High Value

- **Rules:** Write 2 to 5 words. DO NOT change the key word.
- **Scoring:** Each item is worth 2 points (divided into two parts).
- **Top Structures tested:**
  - Passive voice (*is said to be*)
  - Reported speech (*warned us not to*)
  - Conditionals / Wish (*If only I had...*)
  - Comparative / Prefer (*would rather... than*)

### Parts 5–7: Reading Comprehension Quick Guide

| Part   | Task Type                    | Winning Strategy                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Part 5 | Multiple Choice (6 items)    | Underline keywords in question stem FIRST. Find location in text before reading options (A-D) to avoid distractor traps.                                                  |
| Part 6 | Gapped Text (6 sentences)    | Look for reference words: Pronouns ( <i>he, it, these</i> ), time markers ( <i>then, later</i> ), and contrast linkers ( <i>however, instead</i> ) before and after gaps. |
| Part 7 | Multiple Matching (10 items) | Scan for synonyms! Question words will NEVER be identical to text words. Paraphrasing is the key.                                                                         |

## 2. WRITING PAPER (1H 20M – 20% OF TOTAL)

### Part 1: Compulsory Essay (140–190 words)

Mandatory

- **Structure:** 4 or 5 paragraphs (Intro, Point 1, Point 2, Point 3 [your own idea], Conclusion).
- **Tone:** Formal or semi-formal. Avoid contractions (*don't*, *can't*).
- **Essential:** Cover ALL 3 points in prompt. Give clear reasons and examples.

### Part 2: Choice of Task (140–190 words)

Select 1

- **Options:** Article, Email/Letter, Report, or Review.
- **Article:** Catchy title, engaging direct questions (*Have you ever...?*).
- **Report:** Clear headings, factual tone, recommendation at the end.
- **Review:** Descriptive adjectives, recommendations (*I strongly advise...*).

### High-Scoring Writing Formulas & Connectors

**Adding Points:** *Furthermore, In addition to this, Moreover, Not only... but also...*

**Contrasting:** *However, Despite the fact that, On the other hand, Whereas...*

**Expressing Opinion:** *It is widely believed that, From my perspective, It is worth noting...*

**Concluding:** *Taking everything into account, To conclude, All things considered...*

## 3. LISTENING PAPER (~40 MINS – 20% OF TOTAL)

### Part 1 & 2 Strategies

- **Part 1 (Short Extracts):** Identify speaker emotion, agreement, or purpose. Watch out for mind-changes (*I was going to... but...*).
- **Part 2 (Sentence Completion):** Expect exact words heard on audio. Check spelling! Don't alter the word form.

### Part 3 & 4 Strategies

- **Part 3 (Multiple Matching):** Read options and highlight key differences before audio plays. Beware of distractors!
- **Part 4 (Multiple Choice Interview):** Focus on feelings, attitudes, and opinions rather than facts.

## 4. SPEAKING PAPER (14 MINS PER PAIR – 20% OF TOTAL)

### Part 1: Interview (2 mins)

General questions about personal life/hobbies.

**Tip:** Never answer with just "Yes" or "No". Use *"Well, to be perfectly honest..."* to buy time.

### Part 2: Long Turn / Photos (4 mins)

Compare 2 photos and answer a question for 1 minute.

- *"Both pictures show... whereas this one..."*
- *"They might be feeling... judging by..."*

### Part 3: Collaborative Task (4 mins)

Discuss mind map options with partner & reach decision.

- *"Shall we start with this one?"*
- *"What are your thoughts on...?"*
- *"I see your point, but don't you think...?"*

### Part 4: Discussion (4 mins)

Broader topic questions based on Part 3.

- Develop ideas with reasons and examples.
- Interact naturally with your partner.
- *"That's an interesting question because..."*

### FINAL EXAM DAY CHECKLIST:

Bring valid photo ID (Passport/National ID) • Arrive 30 mins early • Use PENCIL for Reading/Listening and PEN for Writing • If you miss an answer in Listening, move on immediately!