

TCF Canada and TEF Canada exam day checklist

ID, what to bring, arrival rules, section-by-section tips and what happens after, from the test owners' rules.

Checked against official sources on October 6, 2026

Interactive version: nclcfrench.com/tcf-tef-exam-day-checklist

QUICK ANSWER

On TCF Canada or TEF Canada exam day, bring an original, valid photo ID (the same one you registered with) and your convocation, and arrive at the time on the convocation: neither test admits latecomers once the test has started. Phones are switched off and stored away. Only your ID, plus your convocation and a pen for the TCF, stay on the desk. Find your session in the [TCF Canada dates](#) or [TEF Canada dates](#).

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The two things that end your exam before it starts

No valid photo ID, no exam. France Éducation internationale (TCF) says you cannot enter the room without one and refuses digital copies. CCI Paris (TEF) checks that your ID matches the one you gave at registration. **Late means absent.** The TCF admits nobody after the exam material is handed out or once listening starts, and the TEF admits no latecomers once the test has begun. Without a valid reason, your fee is lost.

The week before your TCF or TEF

Paperwork

- ☐ **Booked yet? Register before you plan the day** If not booked

Follow [how to book the TCF Canada](#) or [how to book the TEF Canada](#).

- ☐ **Find your convocation and read it twice**

It gives the date, times and address. TEF centres send it by email: check your spam folder if it has not arrived a few days before.

- ☐ **Check the name on your registration matches your ID exactly**

Same spelling, same order, same document. Ask the centre to correct any difference now, not on the day.

- ☐ **Check your ID is valid on the exam date**

An ID that expires before the test is not accepted. Renewing a passport takes time.

- ☐ **Note which ID your centre asks for**

Many centres outside France ask for a passport, some ask for two IDs. Your convocation or the centre's website says which.

- ☐ **Ask for adjustments if you need them** If applicable

For a disability, both owners ask for a medical certificate sent to the centre in advance (TEF: before you register).

Logistics

- ☐ **Check the centre's address and plan your route**

Do a trial trip at the same time of day and plan a backup. Still choosing? Compare [test centres](#).

- ☐ **Check whether your TCF is on paper or computer**

Each centre decides for the TCF. The TEF is on computer for reading, listening and writing, with speaking face to face.

- ☐ **Read the centre's own rules**

Food, water, lockers and waiting areas vary by centre. Check them on the centre's page or ask by email.

- ☐ **Do one last full timed mock test**

Rehearse the real order and pace with a [free mock test](#), then stop heavy studying.

What to bring to the TCF Canada and TEF Canada

Pack the night before. The desk stays almost empty, so less is better.

Bring

- ☐ **Original photo ID, valid on the day** Original

The same document you registered with. No photocopies, no photos on your phone.

- ☐ **A second photo ID** Recommended

FEI may ask for a second one if your photo is hard to match, and some centres require two.

- ☐ **Your convocation**

Printed if your centre asks for paper. A printout is a safe backup anyway.

- ☐ **Two blue or black pens** TCF

FEI asks you to fill in the answer sheet with a blue or black pen.

- ☐ **Glasses and any medicine you need**

You may not get to your bag during the tests.

- ☐ **A light snack and water for breaks**

Eat before you go in. Centres decide whether food or drink is allowed in the room.

Leave at home or in the locker

- ☐ **Phone and smartwatch, switched off**

Both owners treat a phone or connected watch during the test as fraud, even if it is silent.

- ☐ **Notes, books and dictionaries**

No reference material is allowed in any section.

- ☐ **Your own scrap paper**

Use only the paper the centre gives you. For the TEF, no paper or notes at all in listening and speaking.

- ☐ **Earphones, recorders and cameras**

Listening on the TCF uses the centre's audio or headset. Recording or photographing the test is fraud.

At the test centre: check-in to first question

1 EVENING

The night before

Bag packed: ID, second ID, convocation, pens. Alarm set with margin. Stop studying early and sleep.

2

CHECK-IN**Arrive at the convocation time**

Not the start time of the first test. Use the bathroom and drink water before you go in.

3

AT THE DOOR**ID check and photo**

A supervisor checks your ID and convocation. For the TCF you sign an attendance sheet and are photographed at IRCC's request. TEF candidates also agree to be photographed by centre staff.

4

IN THE ROOM**Store your things**

Phone off, bag where the supervisor says. On the TCF desk: ID, convocation and a pen. On the TEF desk: your ID only.

5

BEFORE YOU START**Listen to the briefing**

The supervisor explains the format, instructions, timing and cheating rules. It is your last chance to ask a practical question.

6

DURING THE TEST**Report any problem at once**

If the audio, headset or computer fails, raise your hand immediately. A problem reported after the test is much harder to fix.

TCF Canada and TEF Canada format at a glance

The official format of each test. The TEF Canada is taken in this order (reading, listening, writing, speaking) and all four tests must be on the same day. The TCF Canada order can vary by centre: your convocation tells you.

TCF Canada

Section	Time	Format
Compréhension orale	35 min	39 questions
Compréhension écrite	60 min	39 questions
Expression écrite	60 min	3 tasks
Expression orale	12 min	3 tasks

Total: 167 min · Results valid 2 years for IRCC · Retake wait: 20 days

TEF Canada

Section	Time	Format
Compréhension écrite	60 min	40 questions
Compréhension orale	40 min	40 questions
Expression écrite	60 min	2 tasks
Expression orale	15 min	2 tasks

Total: 175 min · Results valid 2 years for IRCC · Retake wait: 20 days

Section by section: exam day tips

What actually happens in each test, and the one habit that protects your score.

Section	TCF Canada	TEF Canada
Listening	Nobody enters once it starts and you cannot leave during it. Each recording plays once and the question comes after it: listen for who, what and why first.	On computer, audio starts on its own and plays once. You cannot go back, so answer every question before the next audio.
Reading	Questions get harder as you go. Never leave a box blank: wrong answers score 0, the same as blanks.	You can move freely between questions. Do the quick ones first, note the long press articles and come back to them.
Writing	Stay inside each task's minimum and maximum word count, do all three tasks in order, and never use your real name: sign with a made-up one. On paper, only the booklet is marked, not your draft.	Each section has its own time limit, so you cannot borrow time from A for B. Use the on-screen keyboard for accents and check the minimum word count.
Speaking	Face to face and recorded. Task 2 is the only one with preparation time. Ask real questions and keep talking until the examiner stops you.	Face to face and recorded, with no notes allowed. In A, ask around ten polite questions (vous). In B, the examiner as your friend will keep disagreeing: keep giving new arguments.

Rehearse the speaking tasks with our [TCF and TEF speaking questions](#) and keep the [exam cheat sheet](#) for the night before.

After the exam: results, validity and retakes

TCF Canada: France Éducation international says results come within 15 working days after it receives the session material, and you download your attestation from your TCF-Candidat account. You can ask for your writing or speaking to be re-evaluated within one month after the centre receives the attestations, and the result can go down as well as up. Read your scores with our [TCF Canada results](#) guide.

TEF Canada: CCI Paris says results come 1 to 10 working days after the test. For Express Entry, enter the "Équivalence ancien score" column, not "Score / 699". An appeal is possible within 30 days of the attestation date, but only for a serious problem during the test. Our guide on [TCF Canada exam day](#) covers the TCF day in more detail.

Both results are valid for 2 years, and both owners require a 20-day wait before you sit the same test again. Convert your scores with the [NCLC score converter](#).

- Do not share or post exam questions: the content stays confidential after the exam, and both owners can cancel results and ban candidates for fraud.

- Missed the exam for illness or another serious reason? Send proof to your centre within one month: a justified absence can be refunded or moved to a new date.

Exam day dos and don'ts

DO

- Register with your name exactly as it appears on the ID you will bring.
- Arrive at the convocation time and use the bathroom before you go in.
- Raise your hand straight away if the audio or computer has a problem.
- Answer every multiple-choice question: blanks score nothing.
- Use the bathroom first: you cannot leave the room during TCF listening or during the TEF computer tests.
- Keep talking in speaking until the examiner ends the task.

DON'T

- Don't bring an expired ID or a photo of your passport on your phone.
- Don't keep your phone or smartwatch on you, even switched off.
- Don't write your real name in the TCF writing test.
- Don't plan to sit the TEF over two days: all four tests must be on the same day to count.
- Don't book a retake earlier than 20 days after your test.

Ready to test yourself?

Take a full timed TCF Canada or TEF Canada mock test in the real format, with an NCLC estimate for every skill.

Start a free mock test



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