

About the Test

TOWES can typically be completed within 2 to 2 ½ hours. TOWES tests contain about 18 problem sets - a problem set is made up of an authentic workplace document and a series of questions or "tasks" directly related to the document. Although you may not be familiar with the subject matter of the document, all the information needed to answer the questions is contained within the material provided. You should be able to answer the question or "perform" the task because your Essential Skills are transferable from one environment to another!

How to write a TOWES Test

1. Prepare for Writing TOWES

The best way to prepare for your TOWES test is to review the [TOWES Preparation Guide](#). The Preparation Guide contains tips for writing TOWES and includes a practice problem set, along with the steps for solving the questions, so that you become familiar with the types of questions that appear on TOWES. If you are unable to access an electronic version, please contact your TOWES Test Administrator.

There are many [additional online resources](#) available to help you prepare for the TOWES Test, so please take advantage of them! Your TOWES test score can significantly increase if you spend time reviewing the Essential Skills and practice problem sets.

2. Gather Equipment

TOWES is a paper and pencil test. You will need a pen/pencil, highlighter and a basic calculator to successfully complete your test. You should also remember to bring your glasses if you have difficulty reading small text.

The following items will not be permitted in your testing session: programmable calculators, PDA's, cellular phones and dictionaries (including electronic or translation dictionaries). Please note: test markers will not deduct marks for incorrect spelling.

3. Writing the Test

Carefully read the test instructions and test questions. The questions on the test are not designed to trick you; however, if you rush through the problem sets you may miss important information needed to answer the questions. Attempt all questions on the test - you will not lose marks for incorrect answers. Make sure that your answer is clear to the test marker, if the test marker is uncertain about what you intended for your answer they will mark your response as incorrect.

Please keep your own record of your TOWES test booklet number. This will be required if you need additional copies of your results at a later time.

4. Retesting

In some circumstances you may need to rewrite TOWES. There is a mandatory one-month waiting

period between testing sessions. Please contact your TOWES Test Administrator for more information on retesting.

Interpreting your TOWES Results?

Test results are distributed on an ongoing basis. At your testing session, your test administrator will provide you with all the information you will need to pick up your results. Results are kept confidential.

You will receive an Individual Results Report that will display your current Essential Skills levels for reading text, document use and numeracy. The report will include examples of how your Essential Skill levels relate to typical workplace tasks and will suggest skills to build on.

Some Individual Results Reports will also outline the range of skill levels needed for different occupations profiled by the Government of Canada. This information can help you to evaluate how your Essential Skill levels compare to the requirements of over 200 occupations profiled by the Government of Canada. You are much more likely to succeed at work if you have the skills needed for your chosen occupation!

Visit the [HRSDC \(Human Resource Skills Development of Canada\) Essential Skills Database](#) to view the required skill levels for your desired profiled occupation.

Measuring Essential Skills

The complexity of workplace tasks is described on a 5-point scale; Level 1 tasks are considered least difficult and Level 5 tasks are considered most difficult. All occupations require workers to perform a range of tasks at a range of levels, but some occupations require workers to perform more difficult tasks on a more frequent basis.