



TITLE:

Benefits of Sports

# IELTS

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The article below is taken from **un.org** aiming to help IELTS candidates boost their vocabulary and have enough ideas for them to fully cover any topic in Speaking and Writing. The useful ideas are written in **Bold**, collocations highlighted with relevant terms being underlined, followed by their definitions coming along.

## Benefits of Sports

### SPORTS AND EATING HABITS

Playing sports **facilitates fun and exercise**. It leads to **improved community relations, better health, and longevity**. However, nowadays, outdoor games with friends and neighbours have been replaced by more popular but sedentary pastimes, such as video games, watching television, and surfing the web. According to the World Health Organization, current obesity levels range from below 5 per cent in China, Japan, and certain African countries, to over 75 per cent in urban Samoa.

Childhood obesity is epidemic in some regions, and on the rise in others. Worldwide, twenty-two-million children under the age of five are estimated to be overweight. **Nutritional changes have led to increased consumption of energy-dense foods high in saturated fat and sugar.**

**Obesity and being overweight increase the risk of chronic illnesses**, including cardiovascular disease, hypertension and stroke, certain forms of cancer, and type 2 diabetes, **all of which result in a reduced quality of life**. Nutrition has a large impact on the performance of an athlete at any level of competition. Athletes who care about performance tend to pay greater attention to their diets. Therefore, by extension, **involvement in sports can lead to better eating habits and healthier lifestyles.**

### SPORTS AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH



The sports experience can also have a positive effect on a child's emotional and mental health, as it offers fulfilment and provides a core group of people with whom the child can relate and interact. When a child joins a team, he or she automatically becomes a part of an in-group, forming a special bond with teammates as they undergo the rigors of physically challenging and emotionally taxing training. Nevertheless, this nurtures self-discipline and self-motivation.

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When playing sports, children are encouraged to communicate, give positive feedback, and set and achieve goals, which **boosts self-esteem**. Though **performance anxiety** can be a problem for some athletes, when they do overcome it, **stage fright** can disappear and lead to a skill such as **public speaking**. In sports, sometimes there are disappointments and **frustrations** such as losing a game or missing a shot, but maintaining self-control in interacting with others, and respecting both **authority** and opponents show true sportsmanship. As such, **true sportspersons** should have good values which they seek to honour both on and off the field.



Life is unpredictable at times, and the ability to adapt to change is an asset. **Athletes are physically fit, and they are also balanced mentally, and both of these states help with being more productive not only at play but also at academics, since physical exercise has been shown to improve attention span.** It makes sense, therefore, to **incorporate exercise regimes into school curriculum**.

A **well-rounded student athlete**, enriched with the experience of interacting with peers outside of the classroom, can transfer the discipline and **maturity** into daily activities, including at the work place. Furthermore, **athletes in all sports generally develop the skills of strategizing, compromising, and on-the-go thinking.**

So, even the capacity to be an independent thinker can lead to **entrepreneurial success**, as self-driven individuals have the **tenacity** to push through opposition rather than give up at the first sign of resistance. **Sports also foster time management skills, as student athletes have to balance sports sessions, school assignments, and a social life.**



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## ON-TOPIC ITEMS:

- **Longevity:** *noun* UK /lɒn'dʒevəti/ US /lɔ:n'dʒevəti/  
long life; the fact of lasting a long time
- **Obesity:** *noun* UK /əʊ'bi:səti/ US /oʊ'bisəti/  
the quality or fact of being very fat, in a way that is not healthy
- **Estimate:** *verb* UK, US /'estɪmeɪt/  
to form an idea of the cost, size, value etc. of something, but without calculating it exactly
- **Consumption:** *noun* UK, US /kən'sʌmpʃn/  
the act of using energy, food or materials; the amount used
- **Chronic:** *adjective* UK /'krɒnɪk/ US /'kra:nɪk/  
(of a disease) lasting for a long time; difficult to cure
- **Nurture:** *verb* UK /'nɜ:tʃə/ US /'nɜ:rtʃər/  
to care for and protect somebody/something while they are growing and developing
- **Rigor:** *noun* UK /'rɪgə/ US /'rɪgər/  
the fact of being careful and paying great attention to detail
- **Frustration:** *noun* UK, US /frʌ'streɪʃn/  
the feeling of being annoyed and impatient because you cannot do or achieve what you want
- **Authority:** *noun* UK /ɔ:'θɔrəti/ US /ə'θɔ:rəti/  
the power to give orders to people
- **Maturity:** *noun* UK /mə'tʃʊərəti/ US /mə'tʃʊərəti/  
the quality of thinking and behaving in a sensible, adult manner
- **Compromising:** *adjective* UK /'kɒmprəmaɪzɪŋ/ US /'kɑ:mpɹəmaɪzɪŋ/  
if something is compromising, it shows or tells people something that you want to keep secret, because it is wrong or embarrassing
- **Entrepreneurial:** *adjective* UK /,ɒnrəprə'nɜ:riəl/ US /,ɑ:nrəprə'nɜ:riəl/  
connected with making money by starting or running businesses, especially when this involves taking financial risks
- **Tenacity:** *noun* UK, US /tə'næsəti/  
the quality of not giving up something easily; the quality of being determined

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## SPORTS FOR PEACE

Sports bring people together and facilitate problem solving and communication. The best way to dissipate anger is to introduce fun. In war-torn communities, for example, where sadness is often an overwhelming emotional state, bringing smiles to the faces of children is a great way to distract them from the pressures of life. By giving children a productive way to expend their energy, sports can be a vehicle to achieve peace.

**Discipline and self-control, values that promote accord, can also be mixed with the fun of sports. Congratulating the winner, respecting opponents, obeying the rules, and encouraging fair play promote equality for all.** Fair play practices are tied to good moral values, such as the Golden Rule (the antithesis of conflict in sports), and have been used as a means to encourage peaceful behaviour. In 2001, the United Nations created the Office on Sport for Development and Peace to promote peace through sports.

Ultimately, **sports can be used to achieve a balanced life -- with the necessary time and space allotted to academic excellence and personal well-being.** Choose a sport that you love, one that you always wanted to learn to play. Call up a couple of friends, get out there, do it for the fun, do it for the health benefits. Experience joy, victory, defeat, and enrichment, and witness improvements in your life on and off the court. You will achieve a sense of accomplishment. Get the thrill that you have been missing by being stuck in the office, lab, or classroom all day. Come out and play!

### ON-TOPIC ITEMS:

- **Dissipate:** *verb* UK, US /'dɪsɪpeɪt/  
*to gradually become or make something become weaker until it disappears*
- **Overwhelming:** *adjective* UK /əʊvə'welmɪŋ/ US /,əʊvər'welmɪŋ/  
*very great or very strong; so powerful that you cannot resist it or decide how to react*
- **Allot:** *verb* UK /ə'lɒt/ US /ə'lɑ:t/  
*to give time, money, tasks, etc. to somebody/something as a share of what is available*
- **Accomplishment:** *noun* UK /ə'kʌmplɪʃmənt/ US /ə'kɑ:mplɪʃmənt/  
*an impressive thing that is done or achieved after a lot of work*
- **Thrill:** *noun* UK, US /θrɪl/  
*a strong feeling of excitement or pleasure; an experience that gives you this feeling*

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