

## Progress Diagrams

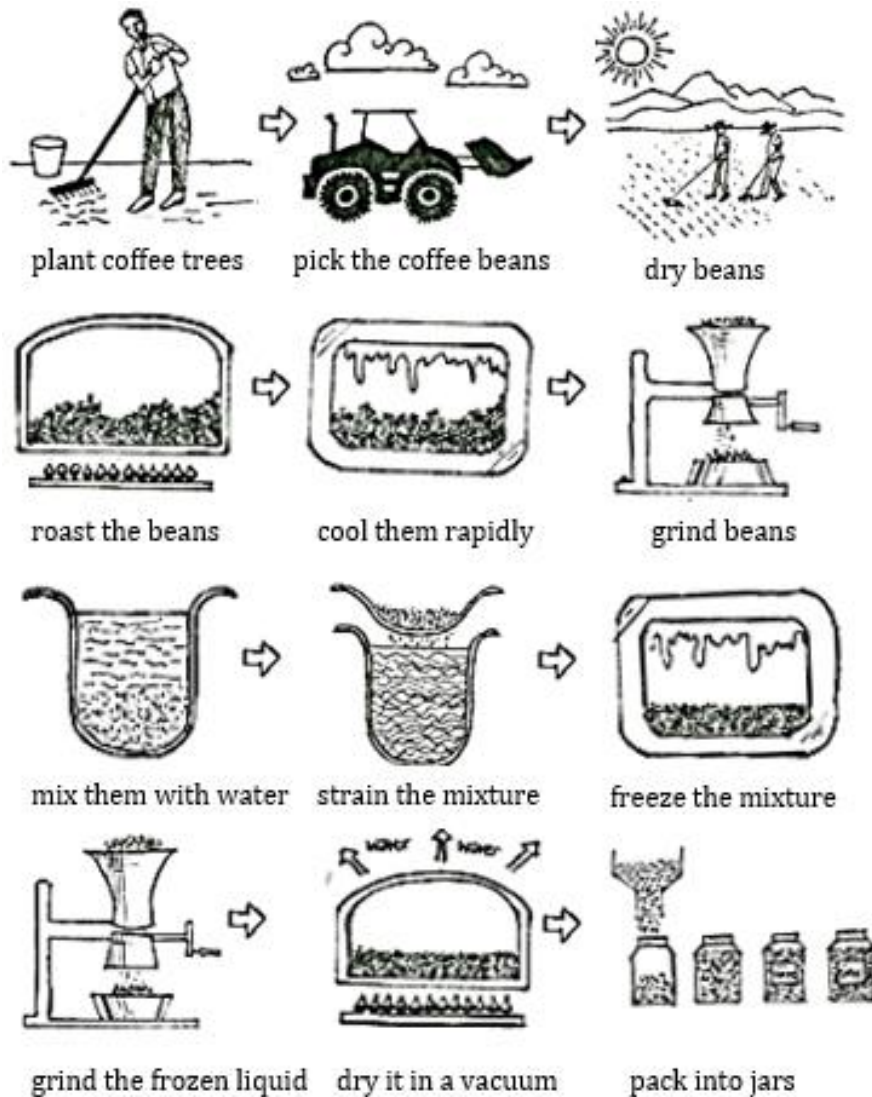
You are sometimes given a diagram that shows the process of how something is made or works.

Process diagrams need to be dealt with differently than charts and graphs. You can use this two-paragraph structure:

- A brief introduction
- A description of each stage in the process

Below, I provide a model answer and explain the important vocabulary and grammar that you should use.

Look at this example which shows how coffee is produced.



## Model answer

The diagram explains the process for the making of coffee. There is a total of twelve stages in the process, beginning with the planting of the coffee trees and finishing with the packaging of the coffee.

First, the coffee trees are planted in warm parts of the world, such as South America and Africa. Next, the coffee beans are picked by workers and then spread out in a field in order to be dried under the hot sun. Having been dried, the beans are roasted in an oven and then rapidly cooled. The next step is that the beans are grinded so that they can be mixed with hot water. The mixture is then strained and placed in a freezer. Once it is completely frozen, the mixture is then grinded before being dried in a vacuum. The beans are then packed into jars so that they can be sold in shops and supermarkets. (Word count: 153)

## **Sequence markers**

You need to use sequence markers to show the different stages. These are words such as *first/to begin, secondly, then, next etc.* Here are a few more advanced variations that will help to improve your grammar and vocabulary score.

### After / Once + full clause

*After the beans have been picked, they are laid out in a field in order to dry.*

*Once the beans have been picked, they are laid out in a field in order to dry.*

### Having + third form of verb

*Having been dried, the beans are then roasted in an oven.*

## **The Passive Voice**

We use the passive voice when it is not important who 'does' the action. This is important when writing a description of a process diagram because the focus is on the object that is being acted on. The passive is 'to be + past participle'.

Compare these two sentences:

*People plant the coffee trees.*

**Active**

*The coffee trees are planted.*

**Passive**

The active sentence sounds strange because it is obvious that it is people, in comparison to say, dogs, who plant the coffee trees.

If you want to focus the attention on the object but also include the subject, you can use 'by'.

*The coffee trees are planted by workers.    **Passive***

### **Showing purpose**

You often need to explain what a stage in a process is for. In other words, you need to explain the purpose of a stage. Here are two ways to do this:

#### So that + full clause

The beans are grinded so that they can be mixed with hot water.

#### In order to + infinitive

The coffee beans are picked by workers and then spread out in a field in order to be dried under the hot sun.

**Problem:** it can be hard to fulfill the word count for this task. Here are two ways to increase the word count:

1. **Fully describe the pictures** – You can describe every aspect of a stage in the process. For example, 'Next, the coffee beans are picked by workers and then spread out in a field in order to be dried under the hot sun'. *The underlined parts were not necessary, but the added description increased the word count.*
2. **Add extra details** – You can provide additional information to the illustrations. For instance, I wrote, 'First, the coffee trees are planted in warm parts of the world, such as South America and Africa'. *The illustration does not mention that coffee is grown in South America and Africa; however, this is common knowledge so it can be added.*

For exercises to go with this lesson, download my eBook 'IELTS Writing Task 1' - <https://ieltsdavid.com/shop/ols/products/ielts-writing-task-1-by-david-richards7>