

CEFR Overall Illustrative English Proficiency Scales

CEFR Scale	CEFR OVERALL ORAL PRODUCTION Proficient User
C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning. • Can convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of modification devices. • Can backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly the interlocutor is hardly aware of it. • Can present complex topics confidently and articulately to an audience unfamiliar with it, structuring and adapting the talk flexibly to meet the audience's needs. • Fluency: Can express self at length with a natural, effortless, unhesitating flow. Pauses only to reflect on precisely the right words to express thoughts or to find an appropriate example or explanation. • Grammatical Accuracy: Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g. in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions).
C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can develop an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail. • Can easily keep up with the debate, even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics. • Can argue a formal position convincingly, responding to questions and comments and answering complex lines of counterargument fluently, spontaneously and appropriately. • Can give a clear, well-structured presentation of a complex subject, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples. • Fluency: Can express self fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. There is little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies; only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language. • Grammatical Accuracy: Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot.
CEFR OVERALL ORAL PRODUCTION Independent User	
B2+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, academic, vocational or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas. • Can give a clear, systematically developed presentation, with highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail. • Can keep up with an animated discussion, identifying accurately arguments supporting and opposing points of view. • Can express ideas and opinions with precision, present and respond to complex lines of argument convincingly. • Can give a clear, systematically developed presentation, with highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail. • Fluency: Can communicate spontaneously, often showing remarkable fluency and ease of expression in even longer complex stretches of speech. • Grammatical Accuracy: Good grammatical control. Occasional "slips" or non-systematic errors and minor flaws in sentence structure may still occur, but they are rare and can often be corrected in retrospect.
B2-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction, and sustained relationships with native speaker quite possible without imposing strain on either party. • Can highlight the personal significance of events and experiences, account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments. • Can participate actively in formal discussion. • Can develop an argument well enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time. • Can give a clear, prepared presentation, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options. • Fluency: can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party. • Grammatical Accuracy: Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make mistakes that lead to misunderstanding.
B1+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can communicate with some confidence on familiar routine and non-routine matters related to learner's interests and professional field. • Can exchange, check and confirm information, deal with less routine situations and explain why something is a problem. • Can express thoughts on more abstract, cultural topics such as films, books, music, etc. • Can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions. • Can give a prepared straightforward presentation on a familiar topic within learner's field, which is clear enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time. • Fluency: Can express ideas with relative ease. Despite some problems with formulation resulting in pauses and "cul-de-sacs", learner is able to keep going effectively without help. • Grammatical Accuracy: Communicates with reasonable accuracy in familiar contexts; generally good control though with noticeable mother tongue influence. Errors occur, but it is clear what learner is trying to express.

<p>B1-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can exploit a wide range of simple language to deal with most situations likely to arise while traveling. • Can enter unprepared into conversation of familiar topics, express personal opinions and exchange information on topics that are familiar, of personal interest, or pertinent to everyday life. • Can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions. • Can give a prepared straightforward presentation on a familiar topic within learner's field that is clear enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency: Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production. • Grammatical Accuracy: Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used grammar patterns associated with more predictable situations.
<p>CEFR OVERALL ORAL PRODUCTION Basic User</p>	
<p>A2+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can interact with reasonable ease in structured situations and short conversations, provided the other person helps if necessary. Can manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort. • Can ask and answer questions and exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday situations. • Can give short, rehearsed presentation on a topic pertinent to everyday life, with reasons and explanations, plans and actions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency: Can make self understood in short contributions, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident. • Grammatical Accuracy: Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes; nevertheless, it is usually clear what learner is trying to say.
<p>A2-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters to do with work and free time. • Can handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of own accord. • Can give a very short, rehearsed basic presentation on a familiar subject. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency: Can construct phrases on familiar topics with sufficient ease to handle short exchanges, despite very noticeable hesitation and false starts. • Grammatical Accuracy: Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes.
<p>A1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition at a slower rate of speech, rephrasing and repair. • Can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statement in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics. • Can produce simple mainly isolated phrases about people and places. • Can give a very short, rehearsed statement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluency: Can manage very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions and less familiar words. • Grammatical Accuracy: Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a learned repertoire.

CEFR Scale	CEFR OVERALL LISTENING COMPREHENSION Proficient User
C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, delivered at fast native speed. • Can recognize a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts. • Can follow extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly. • Can understand a wide range of recorded and audio material, including some non-standard usage, and identify finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers. • Is aware of the implications and allusions of what is said and can make notes on them as well as on the actual words used by the speaker.
C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics beyond learner's field, though learner may need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar. • Can recognize a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts. • Can follow extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly. • Can understand a wide range of recorded and audio material, including some non-standard usage, and identify finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers. • Can take detailed notes during a lecture on topics in field of interest, recording the information so accurately and so close to the original that the notes could also be useful to other people.
CEFR OVERALL LISTENING COMPREHENSION Independent User	
B2+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast, on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, social, academic or vocational life. • Can understand recordings in standard dialect likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life and identify speaker viewpoints and attitudes as well as the information content. • Can understand a clearly structured lecture on a familiar subject, and can take notes on points which strike learner as important, even though learner may miss some information.
B2-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand the main ideas of linguistically complex speech on both concrete and abstract topics delivered in a standard dialect, including technical discussion in learner's specialization. • Can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, and the direction of the talk is sign-posted by explicit markers. • Can understand most recorded or audio material delivered in standard dialect and can identify the speaker's mood, tone, etc. • Can understand a clearly structured lecture on a familiar subject, and can take notes on points which strike learner as important, even though learner may miss some information.
B1+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand straightforward factual information about common every day or job related topics, identifying both general messages and specific details, provided speech is clearly articulated in a generally familiar accent. • Can understand the information content of the majority of recorded material on topics of personal interest delivered in clear standard speech. • Can follow clearly articulated speech directed at learner in everyday conversation, though will sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases. • Can take notes during a lecture, which are precise enough for learner's own use at a later date, provided the topic is within learner's field of interest and the talk is clear and well-structured.
B1-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc., including short narratives. • Can understand the main points of simpler recorded material about familiar subjects delivered relatively slowly and clearly. • Can follow clearly articulated speech directed at learner in everyday conversation, though will sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases. • Can take notes as a list of key points during a straightforward lecture, provided the topic is familiar, and the talk is both formulated in simple language and delivered in clearly articulated standard speech.
CEFR OVERALL LISTENING COMPREHENSION Basic User	
A2+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand enough to be able to meet needs of a concrete type provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated. • Can understand and extract the essential information from short recorded passages dealing with predictable everyday matters that are delivered slowly and clearly. • Can understand enough to manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort. • Can generally understand clear, standard speech on familiar matters provided learner can ask for repetition.
A2-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand phrases and expressions related to areas of most immediate priority (e.g. basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment) provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated. • Can understand and extract the essential information from short recorded passages dealing with predictable everyday matters that are delivered slowly and clearly. • Can understand what is said clearly, slowly and directly in simple everyday conversation

A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can follow speech that is very slow and carefully articulated. • Can understand everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly in clear, slow and repeated speech • Can understand questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly • Can follow short, simple directions
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CEFR Scale	OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION Proficient User
C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand and interpret critically virtually all forms of the written language including abstract, structurally complex, or highly colloquial literary and non-literary writings. • Can understand a wide range of long and complex texts, appreciating subtle distinctions of style and implicit as well as explicit meaning. • Can summarize information from different sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation of the overall result.
C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand in detail lengthy, complex texts, whether or not they relate to learner's own area of specialty, provided learner can reread difficult sections. • Can understand a detail a wide range of lengthy, complex texts likely to be encountered in social, professional or academic life, identifying finer points of detail including attitudes and implied as well as stated opinions. • Can summarize long, demanding texts.
OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION Independent User	
B2+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. • Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low-frequency idioms. • Can obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialized sources within learner's field. • Can understand specialized articles outside learner's field, provided learner can use a dictionary occasionally. • Can summarize a wide range of factual and imaginative texts, commenting on and discussing contrasting points of view and the main themes.
B2-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. • Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low-frequency idioms. • Can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints. • Can summarize extracts from articles and news items containing opinions, argument and discussion.
B1+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to learner's field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension. • Can identify the main conclusions in clearly signaled argumentative texts. • Can recognize significant points in straightforward articles on familiar subjects. • Can collate short pieces of information from several sources and summarize them.
B1-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to learner's field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension. • Can recognize significant points in straightforward articles on familiar subjects. • Can summarize short written passages in a simple fashion.
OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION Basic User	
A2+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency every day or job-related language. • Can identify specific information in simpler written material learner encounters • Can pick out and reproduce key words and phrases or short sentences from a short text within the learner's limited competence and experience.
A2-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary. • Can identify specific information in simpler written material. • Can copy out short texts presented in standard printed format.
A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and basic phrases and rereading as required. • Can get an idea of the content of simpler informational material and short simple descriptions, especially if there is visual support. • Can copy single words and short texts presented in standard printed format.

CEFR Scale	CEFR OVERALL WRITTEN PRODUCTION Proficient User
C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write clear, highly accurate and smoothly flowing, complex texts in an appropriate and effective style conveying finer shades of meaning. • Can use a logical structure which helps the reader to find significant points. • Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g. in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions). • Demonstrates a sophisticated use and wide range of academic and technical vocabulary.
C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write clear, well-structured texts of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples, and rounding off with a n appropriate conclusion. • Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot. • Demonstrates a sophisticated use and wide range of academic and technical vocabulary.
CEFR OVERALL WRITTEN PRODUCTION Independent User	
B2+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to learner's field of interest, synthesizing and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources. • Can write an essay or report that develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail. • Can evaluate different ideas or solutions to a problem. • Has very good grammatical control. Occasional "slips" or non-systematic errors and minor flaws in sentence structure may still occur, but they are rare and can often be corrected in retrospect. • Demonstrates a sophisticated use and wide range of vocabulary.
B2-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to learner's field of interest, synthesizing and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources. • Can write an essay or report which develops an argument, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of various options. • Uses an effective variety of sentence structures. • Uses verb tense and aspect appropriately. • Has strong accuracy; few errors create little to no obscurity of meaning. • Clearly articulates ideas in an extended, well-developed essay. • Demonstrates good coherence through organization and word choice. • Demonstrates strong fluency and well-developed expression of ideas. • Demonstrates a sophisticated use and wide range of vocabulary.
B1+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write short essays on topics of interest. • Can summarize, report and give opinion about accumulated factual information on familiar matters within learner's field with some confidence. • Uses a variety of sentence structures. • Has good control of verb tense and aspect with occasional errors. • Has good accuracy of other structures in extended discourse, and meaning is clear. • Produces extended, well-developed essay. • Demonstrates coherence through organization and word choice. • Demonstrates good fluency and expression of ideas in writing. • Demonstrates a wide range of vocabulary.
B1-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within learner's field of interest. • Uses a variety of simple and compound sentences, and some complex sentences. • Has strong control of simple verb tense use. • Has some control of verb tense and aspect, but occasionally obscures meaning. • Has reasonable accuracy of other structures in extended discourse. • Produces a well-developed paragraph(s) and may attempt an essay, but unsuccessfully. • Demonstrates strong understanding of paragraph organization. • Demonstrates some coherence through organization and word choice. • Demonstrates adequate fluency and expression of ideas. • Demonstrates appropriate vocabulary to express ideas.
CEFR OVERALL WRITTEN PRODUCTION Basic User	
A2+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write about everyday aspects of learner's environment • Can write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences. • Uses simple and compound sentences, and limited complex sentences (e.g. because, when, before, after). • Has good control of simple verb tense use. • Has some errors in structure that may obscure meaning. • Produces paragraph(s) with supporting ideas. • Demonstrates good understanding of paragraph organization. • Demonstrates limited coherence. • Demonstrates adequate fluency and expression of ideas. • Demonstrates sufficient vocabulary to express ideas.

Adapted from CEFR Scales
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A2-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences about family, living conditions, educational background, or job. • Writes simple and compound sentences. • Has frequent errors in structure and simple verb tense use, which can obscure meaning. • Demonstrates understanding of paragraph organization. • Produces a paragraph with minimal supporting ideas. • Demonstrates some fluency and expression of ideas. • Uses limited vocabulary.
A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences about self, living conditions, or job. • Has limited verb use and minimal control. • Has frequent errors in structure that can obscure meaning. • Demonstrates minimal organizational skills. • Has little development. • Demonstrates minimal flow of expression. • Uses limited vocabulary.

IEC Placement Levels		
IEC Level	CEFR Level	Descriptor
INTRO	A1	Basic User
Basic 1	A2-	Basic User
Basic 2	A2+	Basic User
Intermediate 1	B1-	Basic User
Intermediate 2	B1+	Independent User
Intermediate 3	B2-	Independent User
Advanced 1	B2+	Independent User
Advanced 2	C1	Proficient User