

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF)

The CEF was created by the Council of Europe and is designed as a scale for all European languages, not just English.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (abbreviated as CEFR or CEF) is a standard, international scale of levels for language learning. It has 6 levels. Language testers and examination boards are increasingly using the CEF as their scale of levels, though many give each level their own name (for example, "Upper-Intermediate" for "B2 Vantage"). The table below shows the 3 bands and 6 levels of the CEF, together with the approximate hours* required for each level and what a person is able to do with the language at each level.

CEF band	CEF level		hours*	level descriptor (ability at this level)
C Proficient user	C2	Mastery	1000-1200	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.
	C1	Effective Operational Proficiency	700-800	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
B Independent user	B2	Vantage	500-600	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree

				of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Threshold	350-400	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
A Basic user	A2	Waystage	180-200	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Breakthrough		Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

*Guided Learning Hours: it is impossible to say exactly how many hours of study are required for each level as this depends on factors such as the learner's language learning background, the intensity of study, the learner's age and motivation, and the amount of study and exposure outside class. The hours shown in the above table are approximate only.