

CEFR levels

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

1. CEFR self-assessment grid

		A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
U N D E R S T A N D I N G	Listening	I can understand familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided. I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
	Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
S P E A K I N G	Spoken interaction	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
	Spoken production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating subthemes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points
W R I T I N G	Writing	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, wellstructured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select a style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

2. Examples

At the end of an **A1** level, I can:

- ✓ **Introduce myself :**
 - je m'appelle x, j'ai 35 ans, je suis écossaise, je suis professeure, j'habite à Edimbourg, j'ai deux enfants.
- ✓ **Express my likes and dislikes :**
 - j'aime le cinéma, je déteste la pluie, ma saison préférée est le printemps
- ✓ **Talk about my hobbies :**
 - je fais de la natation, je joue de la clarinette
- ✓ **Talk about my daily routine :**
 - le matin je me lève à 7h00 et je prends mon petit déjeuner à 7h30.
 - Le week-end, je vais au cinéma, je sors avec mes amis et je me repose.
- ✓ **Give and follow directions to a location :**
 - Pour aller à l'Institut français, prenez Princes Street vers l'ouest, tournez à droite sur Queensferry et continuez tout droit.

At the end of an **A2** level, I can:

- ✓ **Describe in simple terms myself, my background and my environment (my work, my house, my family):**
 - J'ai étudié les mathématiques à l'université de Glasgow.
 - Je suis grand, j'ai les yeux marrons, les cheveux bruns et la peau mate.
 - Je suis très sportif. J'aime les voyages et les langues étrangères. Je ne suis pas timide.
 - J'habite une grande maison avec trois chambres et un jardin. Mon salon est très confortable. Il y a une cheminée et un canapé et deux fauteuils en cuir.
- ✓ **Propose, accept or decline an invitation :**
 - Merci pour votre invitation ! Félicitations ! Je ne pourrai malheureusement pas venir à votre mariage car je serai en vacances en Australie chez ma sœur. Quel dommage !
- ✓ **Describe my schedule of activities (yesterday, today and tomorrow) :**
 - aujourd'hui, j'ai rendez-vous chez le dentiste à 15h00 et ensuite j'ai mon cours de français à l'Institut français à 17h30. Hier, je suis allé à Glasgow au festival Celtic Connection. Demain, je pars à Kircudbright pour passer le week-end avec mes amis.
- ✓ **State my opinion in simple terms:**
 - Je suis allé en vacances en Bretagne, j'ai visité le Mont Saint-Michel. C'était magnifique, mais il y avait beaucoup trop de monde.
 - A Saint-Malo, j'ai mangé des crêpes et j'ai visité la vieille ville, c'était super !
 - Je préfère la montagne à la mer. A la montagne, on peut faire du ski en hiver et des randonnées en été. A la mer, je m'ennuie.
- ✓ **Make a reservation, order a meal, plan a trip:**
 - Je voudrais une chambre pour 3 nuits avec vue sur la mer.
 - Je vais prendre une salade de crudités, un steak frites et en dessert, je prendrai une crème caramel.
 - Je voudrais réserver une table pour 2 personnes à 20h00.

At the end of a **B1** level, I can:

✓ **Make a critic of a film or a book**

- Ce film raconte l'histoire d'un ancien policier qui a pris sa retraite et a ouvert un hôtel dans une île sauvage. J'ai adoré les paysages et j'aime beaucoup l'acteur qui joue le policier. Par contre, le scénario est un peu trop simple et manque d'originalité.

✓ **Tell a story in the past**

- Lorsque j'étais petit, mes parents et moi allions tous les ans en vacances en France. Nous allions chaque année dans une région différente. Nous faisons parfois du camping, ou parfois nous allions à l'hôtel. Je me rappelle de notre été dans les Alpes. J'ai adoré le Lac d'Annecy et le Mont Blanc. Nous avons fait une randonnée de 3 jours dans le parc de la Vanoise. Un jour, nous avons été surpris par un orage et nous avons dû passer la nuit dans une cabane, c'est un souvenir mémorable.

✓ **Express a point of view**

- Selon moi, il est essentiel de parler plusieurs langues aujourd'hui. C'est important pour pouvoir communiquer lorsqu'on voyage, et pour connaître d'autres cultures. Parler plusieurs langues, c'est indispensable aujourd'hui pour trouver un travail.

✓ **Negotiate**

- Je ne suis pas d'accord. J'avais réservé une chambre avec vue sur la mer, et je donne sur le parking. Les voitures vont et viennent, il y a du bruit tout le temps et j'ai très mal dormi. Je suis très mécontent et je vous demande de me donner une chambre avec vue sur la mer.

3. How long will it take me to reach the next level?

The number of learning hours needed to reach the next CEFR level are not identical for each level: lower levels require less hours than higher levels.

Here is an idea of the number of hours you need to reach the next CEFR level. Please note that this number may vary depending on your mother tongue, the number of languages you speak, your learning style, your pace, your motivation, your prior learning experiences, your exposure to the language outside of class etc.

To reach	From the beginning	From the previous level
A1	+/- 60 hours	N/A
A2	+/- 180 hours	+/- 120 hours
B1	+/- 300 hours	+/- 120 hours
B2	+/- 500 hours	+/- 200 hours

Hints and tips:

- If you have learnt French at school, do remember things, but haven't had the opportunity to practise, chances are you will be at the middle of **A1** level.
- If you have a French higher, have had little opportunity to practise and remember partially, chances are you will be at the middle of **A2** level.
- If you have been living in a French speaking country for a year or more and had to interact in French, chances are you will be at the beginning of **B1** level.
- And if you spent your year speaking only French, you will most probably be at the **end of B1 or even further**.