

Foreign language competences at language skills levels A1-C2

Language skills level and description in CEFR ¹ global scale	A1	Understands and uses everyday expressions and basic phrases to meet their needs. Can introduce themselves and others and ask and answer questions about where they or others live, people they or others know and familiar things. Can interact using simple language provided that the interlocutor talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.			
Description of language usage		Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
<p>Can interact using simple language provided that the interlocutor agrees to correct them and to slowly repeat or reword utterances.</p> <p>Knows and uses a basic repertoire of simple expressions, words and phrases related to themselves, their specific needs and particular situations and places.</p> <p>Pronunciation can be understood with some effort by native speakers who are used to dealing with speakers of the same language.</p> <p>Produced texts are characterised by a few learnt constructions and sentence patterns, but errors may occur when using them. Links words and phrases with simple and few conjunctions. Frequently pauses to search for expressions, articulate less familiar words or adjust wording.</p>		<p>Can follow very slow and carefully articulated speech, requiring many pauses to assimilate meaning.</p>	<p>Understands very short, simple texts a phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and well-known phrases and rereading multiple times where necessary.</p>	<p>Can produce simple sentences and questions and answer them.</p> <p>Can use the most basic everyday politeness formulae (for greeting, farewell and introduction; can say “thank you”, “please”, “sorry”, etc.).</p>	<p>Can copy familiar words and short set phrases, such as basic signs and instructions and names of everyday objects and shops.</p> <p>Can ask for and pass on personal data in writing and write their name, address, nationality, age and date of birth as well as numbers and dates (e.g. on a hotel registration form).</p>
Language skills level and description in CEFR global scale	A2	Understands sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of relevance to them (e.g. personal and family information, shopping, local geography and work). Can communicate in everyday situations requiring a direct and simple exchange of information on familiar, routine topics. Can describe in simple phrases and sentences their family, other people and living conditions and express their needs.			
Description of language usage		Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
<p>Can produce short everyday expressions in order to handle certain simple situations (matters related to persons and daily routines).</p> <p>A narrow vocabulary limited to everyday needs enables them to meet main communicative needs, but pauses and difficulty with communication may occur in unforeseen situations and the message may, therefore, need to be simplified.</p> <p>Speech is hindered by hesitation, but pronunciation is generally clear enough, although there is a noticeable foreign accent. Can request repetition and indicate that they understood or could not follow what was said.</p> <p>Can derive the probable meaning of unknown words from the context of the overall meaning of certain types of short everyday texts and utterances.</p> <p>Produces texts using simple phrases and sentences linked with simple conjunctions and various basic patterns, memorised phrases and set expressions.</p> <p>Can spell words and expressions phonetically, but not always correctly.</p> <p>Makes frequent errors even in basic grammar, but the intended message is generally clear.</p>		<p>Understands clear and slow speech, clearly and slowly articulated phrases and other expressions related to their field of work and can generally grasp the topic of discussion.</p>	<p>Understands short, simple texts containing words frequently used and internationally present.</p>	<p>Can handle simple everyday conversations related to work if such conversations require simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics.</p> <p>Can exchange simple sentences, but cannot keep the conversation going of their own accord due to difficulty with understanding.</p> <p>Can use everyday politeness formulae of greeting and address.</p> <p>Can make and respond to invitations, suggestions and apologies.</p>	<p>Can write basic phrases and sentences on everyday topics related to work (e.g. directions how to get somewhere).</p> <p>Can express gratitude or make apologies in simple, short, work-related letters, write short messages and fill in simple forms.</p> <p>Can write down short and simple messages by ear provided that they have a chance to request repetition or rewording.</p> <p>Can write short, simple messages related to matters of necessity to them.</p>

¹ Common European Framework of Reference https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/euroopa_keelega_raamdokument.pdf

Language skills level and description in CEFR global scale	B1	Understands everything of relevance on familiar topics, such as work, school and leisure. Can handle most situations while in a foreign country where the relevant language is spoken. Can produce simple texts on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences, events, dreams and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for their opinions and plans.			
Description of language usage		Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
<p>Has a good enough grasp of the language to express themselves on everyday topics (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events) and to voice various needs.</p> <p>Expresses their thoughts in a sequence of simple sentences and uses high-frequency expressions and a neutral register. Hesitation and circumlocution may occur in speech.</p> <p>Has a command of core vocabulary, but errors occur when expressing more complex ideas or handling unfamiliar conversation topics and situations. Knows and can use specialised concepts and terms. Limited vocabulary may cause repetition or even difficulty with wording. Can extrapolate the meaning of unknown words from the context and deduce sentence meaning.</p> <p>Can initiate, maintain and end simple face-to-face conversations on topics that are familiar or of personal interest without having to prepare in advance; can repeat back what the previous speaker said to confirm mutual understanding and keep the conversation on the right course; can involve others in the discussion. Can express themselves comprehensibly, although frequently pauses in longer stretches of speech to search for words and grammatical forms or to adjust wording. It may sometimes remain unclear what they would like to say.</p> <p>Pronunciation is clear and comprehensible, although a foreign accent and pronunciation errors are noticeable at times.</p> <p>Can use typical linguistic forms and formation patterns with reasonable accuracy in ordinary situations.</p>		<p>Understands the main points of clear standard speech on matters regularly encountered at work.</p> <p>Can follow clearly articulated speech directed at them in everyday conversations, but may sometimes request repetition or explanation.</p>	<p>Reads straightforward factual texts related to their work with a satisfactory level of comprehension.</p>	<p>Can express their opinions and give and ask for information on everyday or personal life.</p> <p>Can provide reasonably fluent, but general descriptions on topics within their field of interest.</p> <p>Can deliver short, prepared messages in everyday work situations.</p>	<p>Can write straightforward connected texts and fill in standard documents.</p> <p>Can convey information and thoughts on both abstract and concrete topics with reasonable precision, check information and request and provide explanations.</p>

Language skills level and description in CEFR global scale	B2	Understands the main ideas of complex texts on abstract or concrete topics and of discussions in their field of speciality. Can spontaneously and fluently converse with native speakers of the same language. Can produce clear, detailed texts on a wide range of topics, explain their viewpoint and consider the pros and cons of points under discussion.			
Description of language usage		Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
<p>Has a good enough grasp of the language to give clear descriptions of relevant points, express opinions and give reasons without searching for words. Also uses complex sentences and non-finite clauses.</p> <p>Can interact reasonably fluently and spontaneously with native speakers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them or requiring them to behave other than they would normally. Can, with some effort, participate in and contribute to discussions even when speech is colloquial and fast. Can express themselves according to the situation and avoid substantial wording errors.</p> <p>Has an extensive vocabulary for general conversation topics and their field of activity. Wording is generally accurate. Can usually vary expression to avoid repetition. Lexical gaps can still cause hesitation or circumlocution, but communication is not hindered.</p> <p>Can use a variety of strategies to achieve comprehension (e.g. listening for main points and comprehending texts by using contextual clues).</p> <p>Can intervene in discussion and help it along, confirming comprehension, involving others, giving feedback and contributing their own opinions, conclusions, etc. Can adjust to the changes of direction, style or emphasis in conversation.</p> <p>Can initiate, maintain and end conversations according to the situation, but may not always do so in the most elegant way. Can use set phrases (e.g. "That's a good question") to gain time and keep their turn while formulating what to say.</p> <p>Can maintain a fairly even tempo even during longer stretches of speech. May hesitate when choosing forms and expressions, but long pauses are rare.</p> <p>Has attained a clear, natural pronunciation and intonation.</p> <p>Can write clearly and comprehensibly, following textual layout and paragraphing conventions and with correct punctuation.</p> <p>Does not make grammatical errors that cause misunderstanding.</p>		<p>Understands the main ideas of relatively long and complex speech delivered in standard dialect and debates related to their field of speciality on both concrete and abstract topics.</p> <p>Can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument provided that the topic is familiar and the direction of the conversation is signposted by explicit keywords.</p>	<p>Reads mostly independently, adapting style and speed of reading according to the text and reading purpose and using appropriate auxiliary materials.</p> <p>Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may have some difficulty understanding low-frequency idioms.</p>	<p>Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on a wide range of topics related to their field of interest.</p> <p>Can expand and support their ideas with additional points and relevant examples.</p>	<p>Can write clear, detailed texts on topics related to their field of interest, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources.</p> <p>Can word messages and opinions and relate them to those given by others.</p>

Language skills level and description in CEFR global scale	C1	Understands long and complex texts and assimilates even implicit meanings. Can spontaneously and fluently make themselves comprehensible without having to look for expressions all that often. Can use language flexibly and effectively in public, academic and work environment. Can produce clear, logical, detailed texts on complex topics, using cohesive devices and techniques that create cohesion.			
Description of language usage		Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
<p>Can select appropriate wording from a broad repertoire of language in order to express themselves clearly; does not have to restrict what they want to express.</p> <p>Recognises a wide range of idioms and colloquialisms and notices register shifts; may, however, need to occasionally confirm words, especially if the pronunciation is unfamiliar.</p> <p>Can follow conversations where slang, dialect, etc. is used.</p> <p>Uses language mostly flexibly and effectively, has a command of emotional and allusive language and can make jokes.</p> <p>Has a rich vocabulary and can overcome lexical gaps with circumlocution; rarely searches for words or avoids expressions.</p> <p>Minor slips in language occur, but no significant wording errors.</p> <p>Can use contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to infer attitudes, mood and intentions and anticipate what will come next.</p> <p>Can easily select appropriate phrases to take their turn to speak or to gain time and keep their turn while thinking. Can skilfully relate their contribution to those of other speakers.</p> <p>Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. However, more complex topics may still hinder a natural, smooth flow of speech.</p> <p>Can vary intonation and place sentence stress correctly in order to express finer shades of meaning.</p> <p>Can select the means of expression according to the situation and addressee of the message. Can adopt a level of formality appropriate to the situation.</p> <p>Maintains grammatical accuracy. Errors are rare and difficult to spot.</p>		<p>Can understand enough to follow extended speech on abstract and complex topics that may be unfamiliar, even when speech is not clearly structured and some relationships between points are not explicitly voiced. May still occasionally ask to confirm details, especially if the pronunciation is unfamiliar.</p>	<p>Understands in detail long and complex texts, whether or not they belong to their field, provided that they have a chance to reread difficult parts.</p>	<p>Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex topics. Can integrate sub-topics, develop arguments and round off with an appropriate conclusion.</p>	<p>Can write clear, well-structured texts on complex topics, underscoring relevant points, supporting their opinions with explanations, reasons and relevant examples and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.</p>
Language skills level and description in CEFR global scale	C2	Understands everything heard and read with ease. Can summarise information from different types of spoken and written sources and express reasons and arguments presented therein. Can express themselves spontaneously, fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.			
Description of language usage		Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
<p>Has a diverse vocabulary; can formulate ideas flexibly, express themselves unequivocally and give emphasis to or differentiate relevant points. Can voice everything they want to express, varying language usage according to the situation or interlocutor.</p> <p>Has a good command of idioms and colloquialisms and notices connotative meanings².</p> <p>Notes the sociolinguistic and sociocultural norms present in the language used by native speakers and can take these into account in their own language usage.</p> <p>Can effectively mediate the interaction between speakers of the target language and those of their own mother tongue. Can take into account sociocultural and sociolinguistic differences while mediating.</p> <p>Wording is consistently correct and appropriate. Vocabulary is rich.</p> <p>Can express themselves naturally, effortlessly and without hesitation. Pauses only to find more precise wording or an appropriate example and explanation.</p> <p>Uses grammatically correct language consistently, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g. while planning their words or monitoring others' reactions).</p>		<p>Understands spoken language, whether live or broadcast, delivered at any speed without difficulty.</p>	<p>Understands and can critically interpret virtually any type of written text, including abstract, structurally complex or highly colloquial literary and other texts.</p> <p>Understands most long and complex texts, appreciating very subtle stylistic nuances and explicit and implicit meanings.</p>	<p>Can convey finer shades of meaning with reasonable precision. Can start again and reword difficult parts, where necessary, so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.</p> <p>Can produce clear, fluent, well-structured and logical speech in such a way that it is easy for the listener to notice and remember relevant points.</p>	<p>Can write clear and smoothly flowing complex texts in an appropriate and effective style; the logical structure of the text helps the reader to notice relevant points.</p>

² Affective or evaluative meaning supplementing the basic meaning of a word (understood here as knowing connotations frequently present in standard language, e.g. the pejorative meaning of the word *lake* or the hypocoristic meaning of the affix *-ke* in certain contexts, e.g. *emake*).