

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages" was developed by the Council of Europe to describe achievements of learners of foreign languages and to make language testing and training in Europe comparable. The European framework of reference distinguishes between six different reference levels of knowledge from the elementary use of language (A1) to the autonomous language ability (C2). On all reference levels "can-do" descriptors indicate what a learner is supposed to be able to do in reading, listening, speaking and writing at each level:

A 1 – Elementary use of language - learner can:

- understand and use familiar, everyday expressions and very simple sentences, which relate to the satisfying of concrete needs
- introduce him/herself and others as well as ask others about themselves – e.g. where they live, who they know and what they own – and can respond to questions of this nature
- communicate in a simple manner if the person they are speaking to speaks slowly and clearly and is willing to help

A 2 – Elementary use of language - learner can:

- understand sentences and commonly used expressions associated with topics directly related to his/her direct circumstances (e.g. personal information or information about his/her family, shopping, work, immediate surroundings)
- make him/herself understood in simple, routine situations dealing with a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and common topics
- describe his/her background and education, immediate surroundings and other things associated with immediate needs in a simple way

B 1 – Independent language use - learner can:

- understand the main points when clear, standard language is used and the focus is on familiar topics associated with work, school, leisure time, etc.
- deal with most situations typically encountered when travelling in the language region
- express him/herself simply and coherently regarding familiar topics and areas of personal interest
- report on experiences and events, describe dreams, hopes and goals as well as make short statements to justify or explain his/her own views and plans

B 2 – Independent language use - learner can:

- understand the main contents of complex texts on concrete and abstract topics
- understand specialized discussions in his/her own primary area of specialization
- communicate so spontaneously and fluently that a normal conversation with native speakers is easily possible without a great deal of effort on either side
- express him/herself on a wide range of topics in a clear and detailed manner
- explain his/her position on a current issue and indicate the benefits and drawbacks of various options

C 2 – Autonomous language ability - learner can:

- understand a wide range of challenging, longer texts and also grasp implicit meanings
- express him/herself spontaneously and fluently without having to search for words frequently and noticeably
- use the language effectively and flexibly in his/her social and professional life or in training and studies
- make clear, structured and detailed statements on complex topics and apply various means of text association appropriately in the process

C 2 – Autonomous language ability - learner can:

- effortlessly understand practically everything which he/she reads or hears
- summarize information from various written and spoken sources, logically recounting the reasons and explanations
- express him/herself spontaneously with high fluency and precision and also make finer nuances of meaning clear in more complex topics