

Level 5

How is my English?

5

Speaking 5

- I can join in conversations on familiar topics.
- I am beginning to use longer sentences, but sometimes I hesitate or pause.
- I know a lot of common, everyday vocabulary and some idioms.
- I use connecting words between my sentences, like 'and', 'but', 'first', 'next', and 'because'.
- I can use the phone for a simple conversation, but I still find it difficult.
- I feel comfortable using English with people I know in social settings.
- I can use formal and casual language.
- I ask for clarification when I don't understand.

Listening 5

- I can understand conversations if people speak slowly.
- I can follow simple, repetitive and predictable speech.
- I can catch many words and phrases in informal conversations at a normal speed in audio recordings and on the radio. I can follow the general idea if the subject is personally relevant.
- I can understand a range of common vocabulary and a few idioms.
- I often have to ask people to repeat, especially when they speak quickly.
- I can identify the situation, emotional state and relationship of speakers.
- I can understand a simple, predictable phone message.
- I catch some inferred meanings in advice, offers, compliments and suggestions.

Reading 5

- I can understand the main ideas, some details and some inferred meaning of a text 2 - 3 paragraphs long. The topics are familiar and personally relevant.
- I can read information that I receive regularly, such as a gas bill, or some items in a newspaper.
- Usually, I have to read something more than once to understand it.
- Sometimes, by looking at a whole sentence, I can understand what a new word means. However, most of the time, I use my dictionary for new words.
- I can follow instructions with 7 - 10 steps. Sometimes I need the help of pictures.
- I understand facts and some inferred meaning in everyday texts, such as memos and e-mails.
- I can locate specific details in extensive directories, charts and schedules. I can use tables of contents, indexes and glossaries.
- I can see the connection between paragraphs. I can predict what will come next.
- My vocabulary is mostly concrete, but I know some abstract, conceptual and technical words.

Writing 5

- I can write a paragraph about an idea or an opinion and give details.
- I can write a short letter, note, or e-mail using appropriate language.
- I can fill out an application form with 20 - 30 items.
- I can take a phone message with 5 - 7 details.
- I can write a paragraph with a main idea and supporting details.
- I can write sentences with good control of simple structures, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary.
- I can write a paragraph describing an event or an incident.
- I choose language and content that are appropriate and relevant to the occasion.



Level 6

How is my English?

6

Speaking 6

- I can participate in small group discussions where I express my opinion and ask for clarification. I can provide accurate and detailed information.
- I can interrupt politely when it's necessary.
- I can keep a conversation going and can hold my own when speaking to a group.
- I use a range of vocabulary, including idioms, phrasal verbs, and common expressions.
- I can explain a process or sequence of events.
- I can use a variety of complex sentences. I sound fluent when I speak, and I speak at almost normal speed.
- Although I make mistakes, people don't usually have trouble understanding my grammar and pronunciation.
- I know how to express and respond to regrets and excuses in a variety of situations. I can make, cancel, or rearrange an appointment. I can give my reasons or apologies.
- I use eye contact, tone of voice and volume familiar to Canadians.
- I am comfortable talking on the phone in familiar situations, but I sometimes find it hard to talk to strangers.
- I can change my style of speaking for different situations and people.

Listening 6

- I can follow a conversation about a familiar topic at a pace slightly slower than normal.
- I can listen to a short instructional talk and remember 7 - 10 points.
- I can pick out the main ideas, key details and inferred meaning from listening texts of up to 10 minutes.
- I can understand some idioms.
- I can understand the mood and attitude of the people I am listening to.
- I can understand short sets of instructions or directions and follow the sequence of the steps even if they are not in step-by-step form.
- I still often ask people to repeat what they have said.
- I can understand a short, predictable phone message.

Reading 6

- I can read a text written in plain English that is 3 - 5 paragraphs long and a little difficult. I can understand the main idea, key details and some inferred meanings.
- I can scan an extended chart or schedule for specific information. I can compare information from different texts.
- I am beginning to understand the writer's purpose, intent and attitude.
- I can read handwritten notes, memos, letters and schedules.
- I can learn new information from a text on a familiar topic. The text is well-organized and sometimes has pictures.
- The dictionary I use is for ESL learners, but it is only in English, not my first language.
- I read mostly about facts and things I can see, but I sometimes read about abstract or technical issues.
- When I see a new word, I can sometimes guess its meaning from the context.
- I am able to predict what will happen next in the story and retell or summarize the story.

Writing 6

- I can write a detailed description or comparison of people, places, objects and routines. I can describe a simple process.
- I can write a short letter, note or e-mail using appropriate language and layout.
- I can fill out a longer application form with 20 - 30 items.
- I can take a phone message with 5 - 7 details.
- When I write, I have a clear message. I include details to support the message. I think about who I am writing to.
- I can take notes from a short presentation without missing important details.
- I can write simple sentences with only a few errors in spelling, punctuation and vocabulary.
- I can write a structured paragraph in which I give an accurate description, comparison or sequence of events.



Level 7

How is my English?

7

Speaking 7

- I can participate in a small group discussion and express my opinions, feelings and reservations about a topic.
- I can express and respond to gratitude, appreciation, complaint, disappointment, dissatisfaction, satisfaction and hope.
- I can give clear instructions and directions related to moderately complex, familiar, technical and non-technical tasks.
- I am comfortable speaking about almost any topic that comes up in normal conversation.
- I am comfortable speaking formally or informally, on topics involving problem-solving or decision-making. I can make a detailed comparison.
- I can research, develop and deliver a 10-minute presentation.
- I can use a variety of sentence structures and idioms.
- I sound fluent when I speak. When I know that people do not understand me, I can correct myself or rephrase what I said.
- I am comfortable talking on the phone about familiar and routine matters. I can take a message for someone else and pass it on with specific details.
- I use a number of strategies to keep the conversation going. I can change the topic.

Listening 7

- I can understand the main points and important details of a conversation as well as inferred meanings.
- I can identify the situation, relationship, mood and attitude of the people I listen to.
- I can understand a formal or informal conversation on familiar topics at a descriptive level, especially if I am involved in the conversation.
- My vocabulary is expanding, and I know more idioms.
- I can predict consequences and outcomes.
- I can understand more complex, indirect questions about personal experience, familiar topics and general knowledge.
- I can understand routine, work-related conversation.
- I can understand a phone message if I am familiar with the topic.

- However, I sometimes require slower speech, repetition and rewording, especially on unfamiliar topics.
- I might still have trouble understanding native speakers when they speak quickly to one another.

Reading 7

- I can read authentic text that is 1 - 2 pages long and moderately complex.
- I can locate and integrate, or compare and contrast information from a variety of visually complex sources.
- I read for information, to learn English and develop reading skills. I am also beginning to read for pleasure.
- I can follow everyday instructional texts containing 10 - 15 steps.
- I use an English dictionary for ESL learners. Mostly, I use it for confirmation and to be precise.
- The language I read is both concrete and abstract, dealing with facts, opinions and feelings.
- When I see a new word, I can sometimes infer its meaning by the context or by the use of prefixes and suffixes in the word.
- I can paraphrase and summarize the main points of a story.

Writing 7

- I can respond in writing to appreciation, complaint, disappointment, satisfaction and hope.
- I can write personal and routine business letters.
- I summarize longer texts without losing essential information.
- I write coherent paragraphs on familiar, concrete topics with clear main ideas and some supporting details. I have a developing sense of audience.
- I can write 2 - 3 paragraphs to narrate a sequence of events or give a detailed description.
- I have fairly good control over complex structures, spelling and sentence mechanics although my sentences may sound 'foreign' to English readers.
- I can write down 7 - 10 points from a clear, pre-recorded phone message.
- I can complete moderately complex forms (40 items).
- I can write a report comparing two products or describing a process. I can write a detailed description or comparison of people, places, objects and routines. I can describe a simple process.



Level 8

How is my English?

8

Speaking 8

- I am comfortable speaking about almost any topic that comes up in normal conversation in social situations or at work.
- I can manage a conversation, check comprehension, encourage others and handle minor conflicts.
- I am able to address large groups or participate in group discussions.
- I can speak on familiar topics at both concrete and abstract levels (15 - 20 minutes). I can present information, give instructions, propose and recommend.
- I can provide descriptions, opinions and explanations. I can synthesize abstract complex ideas and hypothesize.
- I can ask questions, analyze and compare information in order to make decisions.
- I have an expanded inventory of concrete, idiomatic and conceptual language.
- People rarely have trouble understanding me.
- I am comfortable talking on the phone.

Listening 8

- When someone is speaking, I can understand the main points, details, purpose, and attitude. I can recognize different levels of formality.
- I can understand some technical conversations, especially about my line of work.
- I can understand abstract and complex ideas on a familiar topic.
- I recognize other people's moods, attitudes and feelings.
- I can understand many local idioms and expressions and can follow detailed stories of general interest.
- I can follow detailed and extended instructions if they are clear and coherent.
- I can usually understand phone messages, even on unfamiliar, non-routine subjects.

Reading 8

- I can follow main ideas, key words and important details in a text of 2 – 3 pages on a familiar topic.
- I can read popular newspapers, magazine articles, popular easy fiction, as well as academic and business materials.
- I can find relevant points in a text, but sometimes I need clarification of idioms or cultural references.
- I can locate and integrate several specific pieces of information in a table or a directory, or across paragraphs.
- I am able to follow an extended set of multistep instructions for an established process.
- I read in English to get information, to improve my English and develop my reading skills.
- I use a unilingual dictionary for vocabulary building.
- I can read about abstract, conceptual or technical topics.
- I can infer the writer's intention in messages containing general opinions and assessments.

Writing 8

- I can write routine business letters and personal and formal social messages.
- I can link sentences and 3 – 4 paragraphs to form coherent texts to express ideas on familiar, abstract topics with some support for main ideas and an appropriate sense of audience.
- I can write down a set of simple instructions based on clear oral communication or simple procedural text of greater length.
- I can fill out complex forms.
- I can extract key information and relevant detail from a page-long text or 10 - 15 minute oral presentation, and write an outline or a one-paragraph summary. I reduce information to the main points with no major omissions.
- I demonstrate good control over common sentence patterns, grammar, and spelling. I have occasional difficulty with complex structures and style.
- I can write an effective resume and cover letter.
- I can write an incident report or memo.



Level 9

9

How is my English?

Speaking 9

- I can provide and exchange important information in social and academic situations or at work.
- I can prepare a 15-30 minute formal presentation.
- I can help to manage a discussion or debate in a work meeting or academic seminar.
- I can participate in business meetings, discussions, and debates on complex, abstract, conceptual and detailed topics to analyze, solve problems and make decisions.
- I can provide clear, multi-step instructions for familiar technical or non-technical processes.
- I can ask questions to get detailed and complex information and respond to questions with needed information.
- I am comfortable speaking face to face, in groups, and on the phone, with managers, professors and other authority figures.
- I speak at a normal or fast rate with only occasional errors in grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation.

Listening 9

- When someone speaks clearly and in a familiar accent, I can understand a broad range of general interest topics and technical topics in my field. I sometimes miss some details and may not always understand humour, infrequently-used idioms, and cultural references.
- I can separate facts from opinions and identify a speaker's purpose and point of view; sometimes I can understand a speaker's personal attitudes and emotions.
- I can identify the roles, relationships and status of speakers in formal business and academic settings.
- I can understand key information from 15-30 minute complex discussions, presentations and training sessions at work or in academic and social situations.
- I can understand information and paraphrase or summarize the key facts and details at work or at school.
- I can understand lengthy suggestions, recommendations and proposals for solutions to problems.
- I can combine a few pieces of detailed oral information to follow multi-step instructions for a familiar process or procedure.

Reading 9

- I can read a wide variety of authentic multipurpose texts: newspaper articles, short stories, novels, academic materials, manuals and business documents.
- I can read clearly-written texts of 3-5 pages on abstract, conceptual and technical topics.
- I can identify and explain a writer's intent and point of view.
- I can read formal advisory, instructional texts on familiar processes and procedures: policy and procedure manuals, equipment installation manuals, user product guides and health and safety advisories.
- I can locate and integrate information across paragraphs or sections of text to correctly interpret and follow instructions for a familiar process or procedure.
- I can understand flow charts, graphs, pictographs and diagrams and explain them to others in an alternative way.
- I can use several complex sources of information (reports, charts, graphs, emails) to complete academic or business tasks.
- I can find a specific piece of information through a complex search using on-line search engines and libraries.

Writing 9

- I can write formal and informal notes or emails to schedule, cancel or reschedule business or academic appointments.
- I can write a coherent essay or report of 3-5 typed pages to present information on a researched topic.
- I can summarize and convey the main ideas of an article and support them with details.
- I can fill out complex and detailed forms with over 40 pieces of required information.
- I can write summary reports of data, lab inspections or meetings.
- I can write outlines or summaries of material taken from several sources.
- I use paragraphs but my writing still lacks flexibility in tone and style; occasionally I still make errors in grammar and spelling.
- I use accepted formats for formal and informal documents such as letters, essays, reports, emails.
- I can proofread and make revisions to my own work; sometimes I need input from others.



Level 10

How is my English?

10

Speaking 10

- I can obtain, exchange and present information, ideas and opinions for important social and academic tasks or at work.
- I can prepare a 20-40 minute formal presentation.
- I can manage routine meetings and discussions or debates in a small familiar group.
- I can actively participate in business meetings and in social and academic discussions on complex, detailed and abstract topics.
- I can persuade, counsel, assess basic needs, or evaluate detailed information in one-on-one routine situations.
- I can provide complex multi-step instructions for familiar procedures and processes in demanding and sometimes stressful situations.
- I can respond appropriately to perceived hostility, blame, putdowns, sarcasm, lies or condescension.
- I speak fluently and accurately; any errors in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation are not a barrier to communication.

Listening 10

- When people speak at a normal rate, I can understand most general interest and technical topics in my field. I occasionally miss a topic change and may not always understand cultural references and humour, especially when people speak quickly.
- I can identify and explain the personal attitudes, emotions and intentions of speakers to one another and to the topic being discussed.
- I can understand 30-60 minute complex discussions, meetings, presentations and training sessions and extract detailed information, ideas and opinions.
- I can follow and evaluate the organization, development and reasoning of a detailed argument.
- I can understand and critically evaluate a lot of “unspoken” information.
- I can follow extensive and detailed oral instructions and carry out multi-step complex instructions for a familiar procedure or process.

Reading 10

- I can read a wide variety of complex multipurpose texts in printed or electronic format: charts, tables, forms, letters, and research papers.
- I sometimes have difficulty with infrequently-used idioms and cultural references.
- I can understand 5-10 pages of dense complex texts on abstract, conceptual topics, some of which may be new to me.
- I can interpret and convert data from documents such as questionnaires, surveys, schedules, programs and timetables.
- I can understand and summarize complex instructional texts on familiar processes and procedures, even when they are not sequential: legal and administrative procedures; scientific and experimental procedures.
- I can locate and interpret information from several complex texts, forms, graphs: standard legal contracts, formal reports, surveys, complex tables and other documents. I can transfer the data to other business or academic forms or reports.
- I can search through several displays of complex information and integrate explicit and implied information.
- I can follow and critically evaluate the development of complex arguments.

Writing 10

- I can write effectively for most academic and business tasks and for most audiences: detailed minutes of meetings, conferences and symposia; faxes; memos; email and reports.
- I can write a complex, research paper or formal report of 10 typed pages.
- I can write to inform, express opinions and ideas, communicate solutions and decisions, present an argument, and persuade.
- I can fill out complex forms with over 50 items of required information.
- I can reproduce complex information and ideas from several sources to prepare reports, summaries or abstracts for other people to use.
- I organize my writing well with only occasional minor errors in grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation.
- I can edit and proofread the work of others.

