



iTEP Ability Guide

Use this table to see at a glance how well an individual can use English to communicate “in the real world” at each of iTEP’s testing levels.

iTEP	CEFR	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking
6.0 ↑ 5.5	C2 Mastery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehends overall meaning and virtually all details of lectures on diverse topics Understands English spoken in a variety of non-native accents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehends virtually all aspects of a wide variety of academic material for nonspecialists Reads at near-native speed Rarely requires use of dictionary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writes complex documents such as research reports using appropriate style and vocabulary Grammar and orthographic accuracy is at near-native level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates accurately and effectively on practically all academic and social topics in culturally appropriate ways Pronunciation is close to that of native speakers
5.4 ↑ 4.5	C1 Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies attitude and purpose of speakers Grasps main ideas and the majority of supporting details from lectures Is challenged by complex social and cultural references 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands main ideas and most of the details of academic texts, journal articles, and abstracts Requires little extra reading time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfies demands of most general academic tasks with occasional grammar and style mistakes Exhibits fairly good organization and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfies demands of most general academic tasks with rare grammar and style mistakes Exhibits good organization and development
4.4 ↑ 3.5	B2 Upper Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies main ideas and details in conversation Occasionally needs to ask for repetition or clarification Begins to determine the attitudes of speakers Understands main ideas from academic lectures, but misses significant details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizes contextual and syntactic clues to interpret meaning of complex sentences and new vocabulary Gathers most main ideas from textbooks, but has an uneven grasp of details Misinterprets some abstract content and cultural references 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writes reasonably coherent essays on familiar topics, but with some grammatical weakness Does not have a complete grasp of stylistic features Vocabulary frequently lacks precision and sophistication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to express abstract concepts, especially on familiar topics Fluency is occasionally hampered by gaps in vocabulary and grammar Sometimes is asked to repeat words or phrases
3.4 ↑ 2.5	B1 Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grasps the general outline of topics discussed in an academic setting Unfamiliarity with complex structures and higher-level vocabulary leaves major gaps in understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited vocabulary impedes speed Comprehends familiar subjects, and identifies some significant details Follows step-by-step instructions in exams, labs, and assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates basic ideas, but with weak organizational structure and grammatical mistakes Expresses him/herself with some circumlocution on familiar topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages day-to-day communications with peers and instructors, marked by frequent grammar and vocabulary errors Pronunciation requires significant effort from listeners
2.4 ↑ 2.0	A2 Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains comprehension during conversations on familiar topics Relies heavily on nonverbal cues and repetition Understands very basic exchanges when spoken slowly using simple vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major vocabulary gaps lead to frequently inaccurate or incomplete comprehension, and slow pace Begins to determine the meaning of words by context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considerable effort required by the reader to identify intended meaning Uses only basic vocabulary and simple grammatical structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates simple questions, greetings, expressions of needs, and preferences Pronunciation requires significant effort from listeners
1.9 ↑ 0	A1 Beginner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands simple greetings, statements, and questions when spoken with extra clarity Follows simple familiar instructions Frequently requires repetition for comprehension Understands a few isolated words or phrases spoken slowly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehends only highly simplified phrases or sentences Recognizes familiar cohesive devices and basic pronouns Demonstrates understanding of a few simple grammatical and lexical structures Recognizes the alphabet and isolated words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writes only short, simple sentences, often characterized by errors that obscure meaning Provides personal details with correct spelling and can copy familiar words and phrases Produces isolated words and phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech is marked with non-native stress and intonation patterns Communication is understood for short utterances Pauses, false starts, and reformulation are common Communicates with single words and short phrases at “survival level” Intense listener effort required Pronunciation is mostly unintelligible