

Overview

Carefully read the following descriptions and determine which category best describes your skills. Keep in mind that you will be given a placement test once you arrive at the school.

AmeriSpan's Language Levels vs. CEF Levels

AmeriSpan's language levels are different than CEF's language levels. AmeriSpan's Levels are based on ACTFL's OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview) as most language immersion programs are focused on developing Speaking & Listening skills. The CEF (Common European Framework) Levels were developed by the Council of Europe in order to try and set clear, attainable standards at different levels of language learning for European languages. CEF's scale incorporates reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, and are used by universities, corporations and other organizations when evaluating foreign applicants. Go here to get a chart that compares AmeriSpan and CEF levels:

http://www.amerispan.com/pdf_files/language_level_comparison.pdf

Low Beginner (CEF Equivalent A1)

No real functional ability in the language. Speech is characterized by a few memorized words or phrases. Unable to handle a typical "survival situation". Utterances rarely consist of more than two or three words with frequent long pauses. Understanding limited to occasional words, cognates, and short slowly spoken utterances. No practical communicative writing skills.

IN OTHER WORDS: You know a few words and phrases, but would not be able to hold a basic survival situation type conversation (ordering food, asking for bus information, getting a hotel room price, etc.). You have no writing skills in the language, but can recognize some written words.

Mid Beginner (CEF Equivalent A1)

Speaking ability still limited to memorized words and phrases, although quantity is increased. Vocabulary is limited to expressing very basic needs and courtesies. Utterances are limited to a few words at a time with frequent pauses. Can understand simple commonly used phrases and questions. Requires native speaker to speak slowly and often repeat a phrase before comprehension is achieved.

IN OTHER WORDS: You can introduce yourself and ask someone's name. You can ask and answer the questions, "How are you? Where are you from?". You can handle some basic survival situations such as ordering a meal. You know the alphabet and some numbers.

High Beginner (CEF Equivalent A2)

Limited to simple conversation dealing with common everyday themes. Ability to operate in only a very limited capacity with difficulty constructing sentences properly in the present tense. Can ask and answer questions based on memorized utterances. Vocabulary is sufficient only for handling simple, elementary needs and expressing basic courtesies. Frequent repetition and slower speech is required for comprehension. Can read standardized messages, phrases, expressions, schedules, menus, and signs. Can supply information on simple forms and documents.

IN OTHER WORDS: You can have a basic conversation in the present tense. You can handle a basic survival situation such as making hotel reservations. Your speech is slow with frequent pauses. You can understand what is said if it is said slowly and repeated a few times. You can ask and tell time and the date. You can ask basic what and when questions. You can use possessive adjectives. You can talk about the weather. You are aware of when to use formal and informal 2nd person. You still sometimes require slow and repeated speech in order to understand what is being said.

Low Intermediate (CEF Equivalent A2)

Able to handle successfully only a limited number of interactive, task-oriented, and social situations. Capable of using simple structures and a general, limited vocabulary. Speaks with general ease in the present tense and can give simple commands. Can get by in restaurants, banks, asking directions, and discussing familiar topics. Can initiate and respond to simple statements. Able to understand sentence length utterances. Misunderstandings frequently arise but with repetition and slower speech can understand and be understood. Able to understand main ideas or some facts from simple texts. Capable of writing short messages.

IN OTHER WORDS: You feel comfortable speaking in the present tense. Your vocabulary is extended to include such topics as clothing, colors, foods, recreational activities, professions. You can express likes and dislikes. You can ask and understand directions. You can talk about clothing. Ask about cost. For Spanish, you are familiar with when to use "ser" and "estar". You know some irregular verbs like "tener" and "dar". You can use expressions with "tener".

Mid Intermediate (CEF Equivalent B1)

Able to handle basic communicative tasks and social situations. Can ask and answer questions and participate in simple conversations on topics beyond basic needs such as leisure activities and personal history. Sentence length is increased, but still characterized by frequent pauses. Can understand sentence length utterances in face to face conversation as well as over the phone.

IN OTHER WORDS: You can identify most places in a town and give directions to them. You can request information, express opinions. Can ask and tell where someone is going, how they are getting there, what they will do and when. You have limited use of simple future tense and present progressive tenses.

High Intermediate (CEF Equivalent B2)

Can understand and use tenses such as the simple present, present progressive, preterit and simple future. Have knowledge of the subjunctive in a limited capacity. Can talk easily about self and others. Ability to converse on topics beyond immediate needs such as personal history, leisure interests and work. Has frequent errors in grammar and vocabulary but uses more irregular verbs and has increased vocabulary.

IN OTHER WORDS: You can express surprise, emotion, certainty, and doubt. You can say what one can and can't do. You can give reasons for something. You can hold a telephone conversation. Can discuss simple health problems. You can ask and tell how long something lasts. You feel comfortable in most conversational contexts, but are still limited in how well you can express yourself.

Low Advanced (CEF: B2) / Mid Advanced (CEF: C1) / High Advanced/Superior (CEF: C2)

Rate yourself according to your skill in performing the following tasks: Ability to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal contexts. Can handle unknown topics and situations, give supported opinions, hypothesize, provide complicated explanations, and can describe in detail with a great deal of precision any practical, social, professional, or abstract topic. Ability to use all tenses and common idioms.