

TOEIC[®] Listening and Reading Scores Descriptors and European CEFR levels



Total minimum score frequently required by higher education and companies

TOTAL minimum TOEIC [®] scores (10 to 990 pts)	Europeans CEFR levels*		CEFR General Description
945 pts	Proficient user - Effective Operational Proficiency	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
785 pts	Independent user - Vantage	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
550 pts	Independent user - Threshold	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
225 pts	Basic user - Waystage	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
120 pts	Basic user - Breakthrough	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

* CEFR: The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages outlines an ascending series of common reference levels for describing learner proficiency.

This CEFR describes both knowledge and skills in positive "can do" statements at six levels of proficiency for different language skills from A1 level (Basic User - Breakthrough) to C2 level (Proficient User - Mastery).

The benchmarking study of the TOEIC recommended minimum score requirements, or cut scores. The mapping of TOEIC minimum cut scores strictly.

For more information about this study please contact us at cef@etsglobal.org

N.B: For A1 to B1 levels ETS advise taking the TOEIC

TOEIC[®] Listening and Reading scores are reported in 5-point increments.

Can-Do Levels Table

TOTAL TOEIC® Listening and Reading score (from 10 to 990 points) =

Listening part + Reading part
(from 5 to 495 points) + (from 5 to 495 points)



LISTENING

Level	Strengths	Weaknesses
≈400 points	<p>400 Test takers who score around 400 typically have the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They can infer the central idea, purpose, and basic context of short spoken exchanges across a broad range of vocabulary, even when conversational responses are indirect or not easy to predict. They can infer the central idea, purpose, and basic context of extended spoken texts across a broad range of vocabulary. They can do this even when the information is not supported by repetition or paraphrase and when it is necessary to connect information across the text. They can understand details in short spoken exchanges, even when negative constructions are present, when the language is syntactically complex, or when difficult vocabulary is used. They can understand details in extended spoken texts, even when it is necessary to connect information across the text and when this information is not supported by repetition. They can understand details when the information is paraphrased or when negative constructions are present. 	<p>Test takers who receive a score at this level typically have weaknesses only when uncommon grammar or vocabulary is used.</p>
≈300 points	<p>Test takers who score around 300 typically have the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They can sometimes infer the central idea, purpose, and basic context of short spoken exchanges, especially when the vocabulary is not difficult. They can understand the central idea, purpose, and basic context of extended spoken texts when this information is supported by repetition or paraphrase. They can understand details in short spoken exchanges when easy or medium-level vocabulary is used. They can understand details in extended spoken texts when the information is supported by repetition and when the requested information comes at the beginning or end of the spoken text. They can understand details when the information is slightly paraphrased. 	<p>Test takers who score around 300 typically have the following weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They have difficulty understanding the central idea, purpose, and basic context of short spoken exchanges when conversational responses are indirect or difficult to predict or when the vocabulary is difficult. They do not understand the central idea, purpose, and basic context of extended spoken texts when it is necessary to connect information within the text or when difficult vocabulary is used. They do not understand details in short spoken exchanges when language is syntactically complex or when difficult vocabulary is used. They do not usually understand details that include negative constructions. They do not understand details in extended spoken texts when it is necessary to connect information across the text or when the information is not supported by repetition. They do not understand most paraphrased information or difficult grammatical constructions.
≈200 points	<p>Test takers who score around 200 typically have the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They can understand short (single-sentence) descriptions of the central idea of a photograph. They can sometimes understand the central idea, purpose, and basic context of extended spoken texts when this information is supported by a lot of repetition and easy vocabulary. They can understand details in short spoken exchanges and descriptions of photographs when the vocabulary is easy and when there is only a small amount of text that must be understood. They can understand details in extended spoken texts when the requested information comes at the beginning or end of the text and when it matches the words in the spoken text. 	<p>Test takers who score around 200 typically have the following weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They do not understand the central idea, purpose, or basic context of short spoken exchanges, even when the language is direct and no unexpected information is present. They do not understand the central idea, purpose, and basic context of extended spoken texts when it is necessary to connect information across the text or when the vocabulary is somewhat difficult. They do not understand details in short spoken exchanges when somewhat difficult vocabulary is used or when the language is syntactically complex. They do not understand details that include negative constructions. They do not understand details in extended spoken texts when the requested information is heard in the middle of the text. They do not understand paraphrased information or difficult grammatical constructions.



READING

Level	Strengths	Weaknesses
≈450 points	<p>Test takers who score around 450 typically have the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They can infer the central idea and purpose of a written text, and they can make inferences about details. They can read for meaning. They can understand factual information, even when it is paraphrased. They can connect information across an entire text, and they can make connections between two related texts. They can understand a broad range of vocabulary, unusual meanings of common words, and idiomatic usage. They can also make distinctions between the meanings of closely related words. They can understand rule-based grammatical structures. They can also understand difficult, complex, and uncommon grammatical constructions. 	<p>Test takers who score around 450 typically have weaknesses only when the information tested is particularly dense or involves difficult vocabulary.</p>
≈350 points	<p>Test takers who score around 350 typically have the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They can infer the central idea and purpose of a written text, and they can make inferences about details. They can read for meaning. They can understand factual information, even when it is paraphrased. They can connect information across a small area within a text, even when the vocabulary and grammar of the text are difficult. They can understand medium-level vocabulary. They can sometimes understand difficult vocabulary in context, unusual meanings of common words, and idiomatic usage. They can understand rule-based grammatical structures. They can also understand difficult, complex, and uncommon grammatical constructions. 	<p>Test takers who score around 350 typically have the following weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They do not connect information across a wide area within a text. They do not consistently understand difficult vocabulary, unusual meanings of common words, or idiomatic usage. They usually cannot make distinctions between the meanings of closely related words.
≈250 points	<p>Test takers who score around 250 typically have the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They can make simple inferences based on a limited amount of text. They can locate the correct answer to a factual question when the language of the text matches the information that is required. They can sometimes answer a factual question when the answer is a simple paraphrase of the information in the text. They can sometimes connect information within one or two sentences. They can understand easy vocabulary, and they can sometimes understand medium-level vocabulary. They can understand common, rule-based grammatical structures. They can make correct grammatical choices, even when other features of language, such as difficult vocabulary or the need to connect information, are present. 	<p>Test takers who score around 250 typically have the following weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They do not understand inferences that require paraphrase or connecting information. They have a very limited ability to understand factual information expressed as a paraphrase using difficult vocabulary. They often depend on finding words and phrases in the text that match the same words and phrases in the question. They usually do not connect information beyond two sentences. They do not understand difficult vocabulary, unusual meanings of common words, or idiomatic usage. They usually cannot make distinctions between the meanings of closely related words. They do not understand more-difficult, complex, or uncommon grammatical constructions.
≈150 points	<p>Test takers who score around 150 typically have the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They can locate the correct answer to a factual question when not very much reading is necessary and when the language of the text matches the information that is required. They can understand easy vocabulary and common phrases. They can understand the most-common, rule-based grammatical constructions when not very much reading is necessary. 	<p>Test takers who score around 150 typically have the following weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They cannot make inferences about information in written texts. They do not understand paraphrased factual information. They rely on matching words and phrases in the text to answer questions. They are often unable to connect information even within a single sentence. They understand only a limited range of vocabulary. They do not understand even easy grammatical constructions when other language features, such as difficult vocabulary or the need to connect information, are also required.

TOEIC[®] Speaking & Writing Scores Descriptors and European CEFR Levels

MRCE	Europeans CEFR Levels	TOEIC [®] Speaking	TOEIC [®] Writing	CEFR GENERAL DESCRIPTION
A1	Basic User Breakthrough	50	30	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
A2	Basic User Waystage	90	70	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
B1	Independent User Threshold	120	120	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
B2	Independent User Vantage	160	150	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
C1	Proficient User Effective Operational Proficiency	180	180	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

INFORMATION REPORTED ON THE SCORE CERTIFICATE

After a test taker has completed the **TOEIC Speaking and Writing tests**, he/she will receive a Speaking test score and a Writing test score. Each one is reported on a scale of 0 to 200 in increments of 10. The scores indicate the general proficiency in speaking and writing that a test taker has demonstrated by his/her performance on the tests. In addition to scaled scores, test takers will receive an indicator of general skills and abilities in speaking or writing. The Speaking test offers 8 proficiency levels whereas the Writing test offers 9 proficiency levels.

The **TOEIC Speaking and Writing tests** are designed in such a way that the earlier tasks require less proficiency in spoken and written English than the later tasks do. Performance on the higher-level tasks contributes more to the overall score than the test taker’s performance on lower-level tasks.

PROFICIENCY LEVELS

The proficiency levels correspond to a scaled score range and describe the types of general skills and proficiencies in spoken or written English that are common for most people who have achieved a score similar to the test takers. The descriptor associated with the level that the test taker has achieved will help him/her understand the strengths and weaknesses of his/her ability to speak or write in English.

SPEAKING 	
Scaled Score	Proficiency Level
0 - 30	1
40 - 50	2
60 - 70	3
80 - 100	4
110 - 120	5
130 - 150	6
160 - 180	7
190 - 200	8

WRITING 	
Scaled Score	Proficiency Level
0 - 30	1
40	2
50- 60	3
70 - 80	4
90 - 100	5
110 - 130	6
140 - 160	7
170 - 190	8
200	9

Level 1 Scale Score 0 – 30

Test takers at level 1 left part or parts of the TOEIC Writing Test unanswered. Test takers at level 1 may need to improve their reading ability in order to understand the test directions and the content of test questions.

Level 2 Scale Score 40

Typically, test takers at level 2 have only very limited ability to express an opinion and give straightforward information.

When attempting to explain an opinion, the responses show one or more of the following serious flaws:

- serious disorganization or underdevelopment of ideas
- little or no detail or irrelevant specifics
- serious and frequent grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices

At level 2, test takers cannot give straightforward information. Typical weaknesses at this level include:

- not including any of the important information
- missing or obscure connections between ideas
- frequent grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices

At level 2, test takers are unable to produce grammatically correct sentences.

Level 3 Scale Score 50 – 60

Typically, test takers at level 3 have limited ability to express an opinion and to give straightforward information. When attempting to explain an opinion, the responses show one or more of the following serious flaws:

- serious disorganization or underdevelopment of ideas
- little or no detail or irrelevant specifics
- serious and frequent grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices

When giving straightforward information, asking questions, giving instructions, or making requests, the responses do not successfully complete the task because of:

- missing information
- missing or obscure connections between sentences
- many grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices

At level 3, test takers have some ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, but they are inconsistent.

Level 4 Scale Score 70 – 80

Typically, test takers at level 4 have some developing ability to express an opinion and to give straightforward information. However, communication is limited. When attempting to explain an opinion, significant weaknesses that interfere with communication occur, such as:

- not providing enough examples, explanations, or details to support the opinion or they are inappropriate
- inadequate organization or connection of ideas
- limited development of ideas
- serious grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices

When giving straightforward information, asking questions, giving instructions, or making requests, the responses do not successfully complete the task because of:

- missing information
- missing or obscure connections between sentences
- many grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices

At level 4, test takers have some ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, but they are inconsistent.

Level 5 Scale Score 90 –100

Typically, test takers at level 5 are at least partially successful when giving straightforward information. However, when supporting an opinion with reasons, examples, or explanations, they are mostly unsuccessful.

When giving straightforward information, asking questions, giving instructions, or making requests, the message omits important information or is partly unintelligible.

When attempting to explain an opinion, significant weaknesses that interfere with communication occur, such as:

- not providing enough examples, explanations, or details to support the opinion or they are inappropriate
- inadequate organization or connection of ideas
- limited development of ideas
- serious grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices

Level 6 Scale Score 110 –130

Typically, test takers at level 6 are partially successful when giving straightforward information or supporting an opinion with reasons, examples, or explanations. When giving straightforward information, asking questions, giving instructions, or making requests, the message omits important information or is partly unintelligible.

When attempting to explain an opinion, their writing presents relevant ideas and some support. Typical weaknesses at this level include:

- not providing enough specific support and development for the main points
- unclear connections between the points that are made
- grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices

Level 7 Scale Score 140 –160

Typically, test takers at level 7 can effectively give straightforward information, ask questions, give instructions, or make requests, but are only partially successful when using reasons, examples, or explanations to support an opinion. When attempting to explain an opinion, their writing presents relevant ideas and some support. Typical weaknesses at this level include:

- not enough specific support and development for the main points
- unclear connections between the points that are made
- grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices

When giving straightforward information, asking questions, giving instructions, or making requests, their writing is clear, coherent, and effective.

Level 8 Scale score 170 –190

Typically, test takers at level 8 can communicate straightforward information effectively and use reasons, examples, or explanations to support an opinion. When giving straightforward information, asking questions, giving instructions, or making requests, their writing is clear, coherent, and effective.

When using reasons, examples, or explanations to support an opinion, their writing is generally good. It is generally well-organized and uses a variety of sentence structures and appropriate vocabulary. It may also include one of the following weaknesses:

- occasional unnecessary repetition of ideas or unclear connections between ideas
- noticeable minor grammatical mistakes or incorrect word choices

Level 9 Scale Score 200

Typically, test takers at level 9 can communicate straightforward information effectively and use reasons, examples, or explanations to support an opinion.

When using reasons, examples, or explanations to support an opinion, their writing is well-organized and well-developed. The use of English is natural, with a variety of sentence structures and appropriate word choice, and is grammatically accurate. When giving straightforward information, asking questions, giving instructions, or making requests, their writing is clear, coherent, and effective.

Level 1 Scale Score 0 –30

Test takers at level 1 left a significant part of the TOEIC Speaking Test unanswered. Test takers at level 1 may not have the listening or reading skills in English necessary to understand the test directions or the content of the test questions.

Level 2 Scale Score 40 –50

Typically, test takers at level 2 cannot state an opinion or support it. They either do not respond to complicated requests or the response is not at all relevant. In routine social and occupational interactions such as answering questions and giving basic information, test takers at level 2 are difficult to understand. When reading aloud, speakers at level 2 may be difficult to understand.

Level 3 Scale Score 60 –70

Typically, test takers at level 3 can, with some difficulty, state an opinion, but they cannot support the opinion. Any response to a complicated request is severely limited. Most of the time, test takers at level 3 cannot answer questions and give basic information.

Typically, test takers at level 3 have insufficient vocabulary or grammar to create simple descriptions. When reading aloud, speakers at level 3 may be difficult to understand.

Level 4 Scale Score 80 –100

Typically, test takers at level 4 are unsuccessful when attempting to explain an opinion or respond to a complicated request. The response may be limited to a single sentence or part of a sentence. Other problems may include:

- severely limited language use
- minimal or no audience awareness
- consistent pronunciation, stress, and intonation difficulties
- long pauses and frequent hesitations
- severely limited vocabulary

Most of the time, test takers at level 4 cannot answer questions or give basic information.

When reading aloud, test takers at Level 4 vary in intelligibility. However, when they are creating language, speakers at level 4 usually have problems with pronunciation and intonation and stress.

Level 5 Scale Score 110 –120

Typically, test takers at level 5 have limited success at expressing an opinion or responding to a complicated request. Responses include problems such as:

- language that is inaccurate, vague, or repetitive
- minimal or no awareness of audience
- long pauses and frequent hesitations
- limited expression of ideas and connections between ideas
- limited vocabulary

Most of the time, test takers at level 5 can answer questions and give basic information. However, sometimes their responses are difficult to understand or interpret. When reading aloud, test takers at Level 5 are generally intelligible. However, when creating language, their pronunciation, intonation, and stress may be inconsistent.

Level 6 Scale Score 130 –150

Typically, test takers at level 6 are able to create a relevant response when asked to express an opinion or respond to a complicated request. However, at least part of the time, the reasons for, or explanations of, the opinion are unclear to a listener. This may be because of the following:

- unclear pronunciation or inappropriate intonation or stress when the speaker must create language
- mistakes in grammar
- a limited range of vocabulary

Most of the time, test takers at level 6 can answer questions and give basic information. However, sometimes their responses are difficult to understand or interpret. When reading aloud, test takers at Level 6 are intelligible.

Level 7 Scale Score 160 –180

Typically, test takers at level 7 can create connected, sustained discourse appropriate to a typical workplace. They can express opinions or respond to complicated requests effectively. In extended responses, some of the following weaknesses may sometimes occur, but they do not interfere with the message:

- minor difficulties with pronunciation, intonation, or hesitation when creating language
- some errors when using complex grammatical structures
- some imprecise vocabulary

Test takers at level 7 can also use spoken language to answer questions and give basic information. When reading aloud, test takers at level 7 are highly intelligible.

Level 8 Scale Score 190 –200

Typically, test takers at level 8 can create connected, sustained discourse appropriate to a typical workplace. When they express opinions or respond to complicated requests, their speech is highly intelligible. Their use of basic and complex grammar is good and their use of vocabulary is accurate and precise. Test takers at level 8 can also use spoken language to answer questions and give basic information. Their pronunciation, intonation and stress are at all times highly intelligible.