

# Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs)

Alberta Routes

Tip Sheet 9

The CLBs are a series of descriptions of language ability in English as an Additional Language (EAL). The CLBs are divided into beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Each stage has four levels (CLBs) for 12 benchmarks. Within each four, the following skills, listening (L), speaking (S), reading (R), and writing (W), are considered.

For each skill (L, S, R, W) in each benchmark, the CLB includes:

- A profile of learner abilities that includes the conditions under which the learner can perform the task (e.g., “The learner can...when the communication is...”).
- Four categories of competencies, such as: interacting with others, giving (or receiving) instructions, getting things done, and understanding (or sharing) information.
- Statements of competencies and tasks that learners can do in English that are not specific to a context but can be applied to different contexts.
- Sample tasks for each competency statement, contextualized into community, work, and study settings.
- Indicators of ability for each competency statement are useful for identifying sub-skills to focus on and are useful for assessing a learner’s success when performing a task.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/pub/language-benchmarks.pdf](http://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/pub/language-benchmarks.pdf)

## Using the CLBs

<b>Assessing learners':</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• language levels</li> <li>• performance</li> </ul>
<b>Identifying:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language learning needs</li> <li>• Outcomes, objectives, and goals</li> </ul>
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programs</li> <li>• Curricula</li> <li>• Instruction</li> </ul>

## Factors that Affect How Fast Learners Progress Through the CLBs

These are only some of the many factors that can affect how fast learners progress through the CLB levels.

- How different their first language is from English.
- How much formal education they have had.
- How much English they are exposed to outside of the classroom.
- What learning strategies they use.
- How and what motivates them to learn.
- Any learning challenges or trauma they experienced.
- Their stage of cultural adjustment.
- That CLB they start from.

## Resources

- [Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks](#) Check out the foundational CLB PDF, the Support Kit, Can Do Statements, and sample lesson plans
- <file:///Users/hilary.mchale/Desktop/Templates/norquest.caTutel> – an online resource for ESL professional

## Alberta Routes Workshops

<https://albertaroutes.norquest.ca/events.aspx>

## Next Review Date

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## Revision History

August 2014: Sara Gnida (creator)

June 2020: Marth Urquhart

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