

1. What are the Different CEFR Levels?

The CEFR organises language proficiency in six levels, A1 to C2, which can be regrouped into three broad levels: Basic User, Independent User and Proficient User, and that can be further subdivided according to the needs of the local context.

2. Why do we need the CEFR?

The CEFR helps us understand the different levels of language proficiency. It also helps us understand how learners progress through the levels. Cambridge English Language Assessment estimates that learners typically take the following guided learning hours to progress between levels.

3. When do CEFR levels not matter?

Outside of the professional or academic realm, CEFR levels are not as important. They're really only necessary if you want to define where you're at with your target language. In a more casual language-learning environment, or when you're just learning languages because you enjoy them, then CEFR levels are just another tool to help with your language learning. Sitting an exam requires a lot of study. If your goal is speaking a language, that time you spend reading, listening and writing to meet the exam requirements will be time you could have used to improve your speaking skills.

In the past I've done exams for German, French and Italian as well as the HSK exam for Mandarin Chinese. In preparation for all these exams, I had to study materials that were completely unrelated to my end goals for the languages.

