

What Level? (Self-Assessment)

The descriptions in this document are adapted from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) level descriptors.

The CEFR provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. Its six reference levels have become widely accepted as the European standard for grading an individual's language proficiency.

The Common European Framework divides learners into three broad divisions that can be divided into six levels:

A Basic User

A1 Beginner

A2 Elementary

B Independent User

B1 Intermediate

B2 Upper intermediate

C Proficient User

C1 Advanced

C2 Mastery or proficiency

These descriptions can apply to any of the languages spoken in Europe. You can use this self-assessment for other languages, should you wish to do so.

The Framework is not seen as a closed system, but one which is open to further development in the light of experience. Some schools and institutions may add further divisions to the ones listed above, to further define the scope for a specific class.

The questionnaire in the following pages will help you determine at which CEFR level you are presently and which class would be most suitable for you.

Should you wish to speak with me about your assessment, you can contact me at elisa@esitaliano.com.

How to use this document:

1. Start the test from A1 level, unless you already have studied Italian for a few years and know you are at a higher level. In which case start at the level you think you are, and adjust backwards or forwards as necessary.
2. Read through the description for each level and tick everything you can do. You don't have to be able to do everything listed and you do not need to be able to do it perfectly!
3. When you feel that you have reached your limit, stop.
4. The last level you have ticked items for is your present level, what you can already do. To progress you will need to look for a class at the next level up.

Again, **you don't need to be able to do everything perfectly! It is sufficient that you can reasonably do most of the things listed for that level.**

Of course you can come back to this test in the future to check your new level and your progress.

Remember that this is only a rough guide. Specific classes may cover more or less ground in each level, or cover them in a different order, depending on the group, the tutor, the specific interests of the students and the purpose of the class. If you find that you fall in-between levels, you can choose whether you wish to challenge yourself and join a class at the next level, or keep safe and join one at the same level.

Whichever you decide, I suggest that, once you have found out your level and chosen a course, you talk with the tutor before enrolling, to make sure that that specific group/class is the right one for you.

What Level? (Self-Assessment)

A1 - Beginner

I can understand and use simple and familiar everyday expressions and basic phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations. (e.g. ask and answer questions about myself, ask for and give directions, ordering food and drinks, shopping.)	
I can interact in a simple way, recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly and are prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say.	
I can read and understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices, street signs and posters.	
I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	
I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings.	
I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	
I can use a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorised repertoire. (e.g. use of expressions such as "mi chiamo", "si chiama", "mi piace", "non mi piace"; use of present tense of a few common verbs; definite and indefinite articles; basic prepositions.)	

If you can do most of the things described above, proceed to the next level.

If you cannot, stop here. You are a complete beginner and you should join a level A1 – Beginner class to get started learning Italian.

What Level? (Self-Assessment)

A2 - Elementary

I can understand simple sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, and other everyday situations such as shopping, local geography, employment).	
I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.	
I can describe in simple terms my family and other people, aspects of my background, my job, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.	
I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	
I can read very short, simple texts and find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables.	
I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself and I may need to pause or reformulate frequently.	
I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate need.	
I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	
I can use a few simple grammatical structures but still with mistakes. (e.g. a few regular and irregular verbs, prepositions, prepositions + articles.)	

If you can do most of the things described above, proceed to the next page.

If you cannot, stop here. You are at level A1 - Beginner. You can join any class at A2 - Elementary level to progress in your Italian.

What Level? (Self-Assessment)

B1 - Intermediate

I have enough language to get by in most common situations. (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events)	
I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.	
I can reasonably deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken.	
I can produce simple text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.	
I can describe experiences and events, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.	
I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is slow and clear.	
I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job related language.	
I can initiate and maintain a conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life even if with some mistakes and pauses. (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	
I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	
I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.	
I can use some simple grammatical structures reasonably accurately.	

If you can do most of the things described above, proceed to the next page.

If you cannot, stop here. You are at level A2 - Elementary. You can join any class at B1 -Intermediate level to progress in your Italian.

What Level? (Self-Assessment)

B2 - Upper intermediate

I can understand the main ideas of relatively complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in my field of specialisation.	
I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without too much strain for either party.	
I 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.	
I can understand most points of extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar.	
I can understand the main ideas of most TV news and current affairs programmes.	
I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints and some contemporary literary prose.	
I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	
I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my fields of interest.	
I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	
I can write clear, detailed text on a range of subjects related to my interests.	
I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	
I can use the grammar I know with reasonable confidence and correct some of my own mistakes.	

If you can do most of the things described above, proceed to the next page.

If you cannot, stop here. You are at level B1 - Intermediate. You can join any class at B2 - Upper intermediate level to progress in your Italian.

What Level? (Self-Assessment)

C1 - Advanced

I can understand a wide range of more demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning.	
I can express myself reasonably fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions.	
I can use language flexibly and effectively for most social, academic and professional purposes.	
I can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on more complex subjects, showing controlled use of grammar and good range of vocabulary.	
I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly.	
I can understand most television programmes and films without too much effort.	
I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style.	
I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	
I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	
I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length.	
I can select the style most appropriate to the audience I have in mind.	
I can use grammar accurately and consistently most of the time.	

If you can do most of the things described above, proceed to the next page.

If you cannot, stop here. You are at level B2 - Upper intermediate. You can join any class at C1 - Advanced level to progress in your Italian.

What Level? (Self-Assessment)

C2 - Mastery or proficiency

I can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation.	
I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.	
I can read with ease most forms of the written language, including manuals, specialised articles and literary works.	
I can take part effortlessly in conversations or discussions and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.	
I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely.	
If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty smoothly so that other people are hardly aware of it.	
I can present a clear, smoothly flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.	
I can write clear, smoothly flowing text in an appropriate style.	
I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.	
I can use grammar accurately and consistently.	

If you can do most of the things described above you are at level C2 - Mastery. A conversation class would be the most appropriate to keep your language skills going, or you could choose any class at C2 level. The sky is the limit!

If you cannot you are at level C1 - Advanced . You can join any class at C2 - Mastery or proficiency to progress in your Italian. Or you could join a conversation class.

Sources used for this document:

- Council of Europe - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) - www.coe.int/lang-CEFR