

ACTFL Speaking Proficiency Levels

ACTFL Level	Features of Speaker Performance
Novice Low/Mid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce words and phrases ● Communicate by repeating conversation partner's words and with learned utterances
Novice High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sometimes but not consistently maintain simple conversation ● Communicate via a combination of learned utterances and spontaneous language in the present
Intermediate Low/Mid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain simple conversation ● Express own meaning ● Produce complete sentences or strings of sentences in present tense ● Control basic vocabulary related to familiar topics (e.g., home, family, school) ● Comprehensible to people who have experience with language learners
Intermediate High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tell stories about past events; keep discourse in past tense most of the time ● Explain and describe in detail sometimes but not consistently ● Produce coherent discourse across groups of sentences most of the time ● Comprehensible to people who may not have experience with language learners
Advanced Low/Mid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tell stories about past events; keep discourse in past tense ● Express (and sometimes support) opinions on abstract issues ● Explain and describe in detail ● Produce coherent discourse across groups of sentences ● Control distinction between preterite and imperfect in context of storytelling ● Comprehensible to people who may not have experience with language learners
Advanced High/Superior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Express opinions about abstract/controversial issues ● Support opinions about abstract/controversial issues in response to objections/arguments ● Produce coherent argumentation in extended discourse ● Use anecdotes only to support arguments, not in place of them ● Control use of subjunctive and other low-frequency or complex structures ● Easily use paraphrasing and other strategies to compensate for gaps in lexical knowledge ● Errors still present, but do not distract from the content of the discourse

Note: Some ACTFL levels have been combined to provide a broad understanding of speakers at those levels. For detailed descriptions of each level, see the [ACTFL Proficiency Guideline for Speaking](#). You can also view video clips of interviews in English for each level.