

Pre-Intermediate Level



The Pre-Intermediate level, along with the Intermediate level, is the core foundation of English. If we were building a house, Starter and Elementary would be the clearing and smoothing of the ground whereas Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate would be the concrete foundation and core structure. Students at this level can understand longer listening texts but may still

require some clarification on behalf of the speaker to ensure comprehension. Gestures and body language are generally not necessary except on occasion to assist clarification. Periods of listening are still relatively short – five minutes at most – but students can participate in a conversation about simple topics with little trouble. **At the completion of this level, students will be able to:**

Listen & understand...

- Detailed personal information
- Questions about free time
- Relationships & romance in the past
- Job requirements
- Types of music & movies
- Other people's opinions
- Predictions for the future
- Detailed plans for the future
- Descriptions of extended families
- Descriptions of family problems
- Holiday arrangements in the future
- Descriptions of different holiday destinations
- Description of life experiences
- Word & sentence stress
- Cultural advice
- Possible future problems
- Descriptions of neighbours
- Past & present life comparisons
- Conversations in a clothes shop

Pre-Intermediate (along with Intermediate) is a very important stage when students begin to break away from reliance on their first language and start to become much more comfortable speaking in English. Listening comprehension is still more advanced than speaking ability but the gap is closing. Students can now express themselves in longer, more complex utterances about themselves, family or close friends, and start to express

deeper ideas on society, global issues, etc. Translation is now used far less often. Pronunciation and sentence structure are still influenced by the student's first language but much less than previously. Pronunciation continues to improve and fluency increases dramatically compared to earlier stages. **At the completion of this level, students will be able to:**

Speak to express ideas about...

- Problems at work
- Detailed conversations about life
- Travelling to work
- Detailed conversations about free time
- Small talk at parties
- Special meals
- Relationships & dating in the past
- Socialising online
- Finding a job
- Decisions, plans & predictions for the future
- Describing music & movies
- Asking questions about past experiences
- Agreeing & disagreeing
- Problems in the future
- Discussions about environmental problems
- Comparing friends & extended family
- Conversations on the telephone
- Comparing holidays

Reading comprehension at this stage expands to longer, but still relatively simple, texts on a variety of topics. Unknown words and phrases still present obstacles to comprehension but less so than before. Reading is still based on direct comprehension with the beginnings of understanding inferences and “reading between the lines”. **At the completion of this level, students should be able to:**

Read to Comprehend...

- Magazine articles
- Detailed descriptions of other people’s lives
- Descriptions of transport
- Detailed descriptions of past events
- Texts about relationships
- Job requirements
- Letters to the editor
- Movie reviews
- Simple statistics & data
- Discussions & debates
- News stories
- Travel blogs
- Travel itineraries
- Descriptions of life
- Comparisons of family & friends experiences
- Descriptions of different cultures
- Texts about seeking advice
- Descriptions of famous companies
- Stories about crime

Writing is the weakest skill at this stage, with the possibility of frustration and reluctance to write from students due to its difficulty. Direct translation from the student’s first language may still persist, leading to errors which in turn leads to frustration. Progress is occurring though, with students starting to write longer texts using a variety of times and tenses and the introduction of complex sentences. **At the completion of this level, students will be able to:**

Write...

- Predictions about the future
- Questions with question words
- Subject and object questions
- Past simple questions
- Detailed descriptions of people
- About job requirements
- Questions with “have to”
- Dialogues about work
- Short paragraphs about life experiences
- Questions with “have you ever”
- Questions in the passive
- Questions with “do you think you will”
- About hopes, plans & ambitions
- Descriptions of family & friends
- Present continuous questions for future
- Questions with “how long”
- Cultural advice
- Descriptions of problems in a city/country
- Sentences about routines in the past

As previously mentioned, this level (and the next) is the foundation for English. Students are challenged by a variety of new grammar structures which are necessary for more complex language comprehension and production. Students are starting to break away from reliance on their first language grammatical rules although interference and confusion may continue for some time. **At the completion of this level, students should be able to use the following:**

Grammar...

- Going to, planning to, looking forward to
- Subject vs object questions
- Past simple
- Past continuous vs past simple
- Have to/had to
- Present continuous vs present simple
- State vs activity verbs
- Present perfect for life experiences
- Present perfect vs past simple
- Will/might for predictions
- Second conditional
- Comparatives with “much”, “a bit”, “as..As”
- Superlatives
- Present continuous for future
- Quantifiers
- Present perfect with “for/since”
- First conditional
- Too, too much, too many, enough
- Present and past simple passive
- Used to

Vocabulary begins to expand rapidly at this level. The acquisition of new structures and improved listening and reading comprehension allows students to learn new words in a variety of places and contexts, not just the classroom. This means students are exposed to and learning new vocabulary at a much quicker rate than before. Unknown vocabulary still presents an obstacle to communication but students have increasing ways to work around these obstacles and get meaning across in other ways with much less need for translation. **At the completion of this level, students will be able to use the following:**

Vocabulary...

- Tv nouns and verbs, adjectives with “-ed/-ing”
- Collocations about work
- Questions about travel
- Frequency adverbs & expressions
- Past time phrases
- Relationships
- Conjunctions
- Finding employment
- Noun endings
- Types of film & music
- Clothes shopping
- Environmental problems
- Character adjectives
- Adjectives with prefixes
- Travel and things we take on holiday
- Describing home
- Going to dinner
- Everyday problems
- Feelings adjectives
- Crime