

Proficiency Level: Upper Intermediate (Level 5), Common European Framework (CEF)

level C1.

Pre-requisite: Completion of Intermediate (Level 4) course or equivalent (Students without a formal qualification will be given a placement test to determine the level of proficiency.)

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed the Intermediate English Course or who have an Upper-intermediate level understanding of English.

Upper-Intermediate students are at the level where their knowledge, skills and abilities are considered at the high-level of the tier-5 spectrum- Foundation to Elementary (low level), Pre-Intermediate (average), Intermediate to Upper-Intermediate (higher levels). The language skills of the students at this level are enough for their daily communication needs. They can confidently and spontaneously communicate even in new, unfamiliar setting ranging from personal, general, academic and social topics in a wide range of contexts but can have some occasional and few minor grammatical slip-ups. They understand more complex speech and are already proficient readers. However, on some occasions they can have difficulty understanding abstract, intricate concepts. Students have a good command of academic, technical and informal vocabulary such as idioms and colloquialisms. Errors are minimal, sometimes difficult to spot but generally corrected when they occur.

Grammar, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation

At any level, the basic tools students need to speak English with confidence are Grammar, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation (G,V,P). All these three elements are given equal importance. Each lesson has clearly stated grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation aims. This keeps lessons focused and gives students concrete learning objectives and a sense of progress.

Grammar

Upper-Intermediate students need

- to revise their knowledge of the main structures.
- to learn more sophisticated grammar structures
- to have more opportunities to use their instinct
- to be provided with more student-friendly reference materials

The main course book begins with Grammar presentations **Check what you know**, this provides short exercises which revise Intermediate Grammar points, and are cross referenced to the Workbook, where students who are having problems can find rules and further practice. New grammar signals the presentation of a grammar point not previously covered in *New English File*. The Grammar banks give students a single, easy-to-access grammar reference section, with clear rules and example sentences.

Vocabulary

Upper-Intermediate students need

- systematic expansion of their vocabulary in topic-based lexical areas.
- opportunities to put new vocabulary into practice.
- To further develop their ability to “build” new words by adding affixes.
- Practice in pronouncing new lexis correctly and confidently.
- Reference material which aids memorization

At this level, expanding students’ vocabulary is the most visible and motivating measure of their progress. Every lesson has a clear lexical aim. Many lessons are linked to the Vocabulary Banks which help present and practice high-frequency, topic-based vocabulary in class and provide a clear reference bank designed to aid memorization. The stress in multi-syllable words is clearly marked and phonemic script is provided where necessary.

Pronunciation

Upper-Intermediate students need

- ‘fine-tuning’ of pronunciation of difficult sounds.
- to be able to use appropriate rhythm and intonation
- to continue to develop their instinct for spelling-pronunciation rules and patterns.
- to be able to use phonetic symbols in their dictionary to check pronunciation.

The objective is to make students totally *intelligible* to other speakers of English (native and non-native). However, it’s also important to make clear that perfection is not the aim. Most non-native speakers will always retain an accent. Every lesson has a pronunciation focus which often prepares students for a speaking activity. There is also a regular focus on word and sentence stress where students are encouraged to copy the rhythm of English. This will help students to pronounce new language with greater confidence.

Speaking

Upper-Intermediate students need

- up-to-date, stimulating topics to get them talking and exchanging opinions.
- the key words and phrases necessary to discuss a topic.
- practice in more extended speaking, e.g. role plays, debates.
- to improve accuracy as well as developing their fluency

Every lesson gives students many opportunities to speak and put into practice grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation that have been worked on earlier in the lesson. Every speaking activity has a GET IT RIGHT box which identifies an accuracy focus for that particular activity. There are communicative activities like pair work activities, mingles and speaking games.

Listening

Upper-Intermediate students need

- motivating, integrated listening material.
- achievable tasks but with an increasing level of challenge.
- exposure to longer listenings and a wide variety of accents.
- exposure to authentic and colloquial spoken language.

For most students listening is still the hardest skill and it is vital that listening material is both interesting and provides the right level of challenge. The course books have motivating listening texts and tasks which are challenging, but always achievable and which expose students to a wide variety of accents and speed of speech. The Colloquial English lessons give students practice in listening to unscripted authentic speech when speakers are interviewed in a studio and in the street. There are also songs which students will find enjoyable and motivating. Most of these are cover versions.

Reading

Upper-Intermediate students need

- engaging topics and stimulating texts.
- exposure to a wide variety of authentic text types.
- challenging tasks which help them read better.

Many students need to read in English for their work or academic studies, or may want to read about their personal interests on English websites. Reading also plays an important part in helping to extend students' vocabulary and to consolidate grammar. The key to encouraging students to read **outside** class is to give them motivating material and tasks in class which help them develop their reading skills. Reading texts have been taken from variety of real sources (newspapers, magazines, the Internet) and chosen for their intrinsic interest, which will stimulate students to want to read them and will help spark classroom discussion.

There are sections in the books which include a more challenging text which helps students to measure their progress.

Writing

Upper-Intermediate students need

- clear models
- practice in planning, organizing, writing and checking.
- an awareness of register, structure, and fixed phrases.
- A focus on “micro” writing skills e.g. paragraphing

The purpose of the course is to provide advanced academic writing, by improving and enhancing the grammar and editing skills necessary to remedy usual errors in ESL Writing problems. The ever-growing amount of email communication and Internet-based writing (e.g. blogs, etc.) continues to raise the importance of writing skills. Students at this level may also be thinking about taking public exams where writing quickly and accurately is a vital skill. The Writing tasks focus on both electronic and “traditional” text types, and provide consolidation of grammar and lexis. There is also always a focus on a “micro skill” in each Writing lesson, for example, writing headings, paragraphing and using connecting expressions.

Colloquial English

Upper-Intermediate students need

- to get used to listening to authentic colloquial speech
- to be able to deal with different speeds and accents
- exposure to high frequency colloquial phrases and idioms

Most listening materials is controlled and graded in terms of language and level of difficulty. In the Colloquial English lessons students listen to completely unscripted and authentic English. The lessons consist firstly of an interview with a person who is an expert in his/her field (one of the File topics). In the second part of the lesson students hear street interviews where people answer questions related to the lesson topic. There is also a focus on “Common phrases” where students listen again and complete high-frequency expressions used in spoken English.

Revision

The higher the level the harder it is to see your progress. Upper-Intermediate students need to feel that they are increasing their knowledge, improving their skills, and using English more fluently and effectively. At the end of each File, there is a Revise & Check section. **What do you remember?** revises the grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of each File. **What can you do?** Provides a series of skills-based challenges and helps students to measure their progress in terms of competence. The photocopiable Grammar, Communicative, and Vocabulary activities also provide many opportunities for recycling.

Upper-Intermediate students need

- regular revision
- motivating reference and practice material
- a sense of progress

Assessment Structure

A comprehensive competency-based assessment focussing on Grammar, Reading, Writing, and Listening will be conducted twice each term on the 6th and the 12th week of the term. Speaking will be assessed in class as continuous assessment throughout the term to encourage more class participation.

Week 6	Mid-Term Assessment
Week 12	End of Term Assessment

Marks & Grade	
Grade	Description / Competency
A	Competent
B	Partially Achieved (Not Yet Competent)
C	Not Achieved (Not Yet Competent)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>To secure a passing grade to move up to the next level, students are required to be competent in all performance criteria in each component (Writing, Speaking, Grammar, Reading and Listening).</i>• <i>In addition, students are required to have a minimum of 80% attendance and/or have at least 80% attendance (accumulative) of 1 term (i.e. attended 45 days of classes) over his/her entire study duration for the level.</i>	

- If the student fails to achieve a passing grade, he/she may be eligible for recovery or re-assessment depending on the number of competent performance criteria achieved. Students who are not eligible for either have to repeat the whole term and retake all the assessments again.
- Recovery eligibility criteria

- Only 1-2 components and less than 25% of the component were not achieved.
- At least 80% attendance (45 days of classes)
- Recommended by teacher
- Recommendation will be based on the professional judgement of the teacher
- Re-assessment eligibility criteria
 - Achieved at least 75% of the competency in all the individual components.
 - At least 80% attendance (45 days of classes)