

NCSSFL-ACTFL CAN-DO STATEMENTS

**Communication and
Intercultural Competence**

Novice Low



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INSTRUCTIONS

The NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do **Benchmarks** are *italicized* and are followed by specific Can-Do **Indicators** in **bold**. The indicators break down the benchmarks into smaller steps. Directly below the can-do learning indicators is a bulleted list of **Examples** that illustrate and make transparent what such expectations might look like. Benchmarks and indicators are aligned to ACTFL proficiency levels and sublevels and as such should **NOT** be modified. The blank can-do statement is designed for that purpose – to personalize learning targets that illustrate your language skills and performance.

Each statement should be assessed separately to identify a level of proficiency.

| Self-Assessment Statement | Explanation |
|--|--|
| This is my goal. | This is something that I want to be able to do. |
| I can do this with help. | I am able to do this when prompted, when someone provides a word or hint, or after multiple tries. |
| I can do this consistently. | I have done this numerous times, comfortably and independently, without hesitation. |
| I have provided evidence to demonstrate this | Since I can do this without much effort, I have provided proof by sharing samples of my work that demonstrate this goal. |

These self-assessment statements are provided to help you understand and document what you can do with the language that you are learning in each of the three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal and presentational.

- The **interpretive mode*** describes how you interpret meaning from hearing, reading or viewing the language in a variety of ways (e.g. voice mail, podcasts, lyrics, television, stories, books, public announcements, etc.).
- The **interpersonal mode** describes how you engage in direct oral, written or signed communication with others (e.g. face-to-face conversations, online discussions or video conferences, emails, text messaging, etc.).
- The **presentational mode** describes how you speak, write or sign to a variety of audiences (e.g. leaving a voice message, making a presentation, giving directions to a group, delivering a speech, etc.).

* What elements of literacy lead to higher levels of understanding in the Interpretive Mode?

Learners move along the proficiency continuum at different speeds in listening, reading or viewing. Learners bring prior skills and experience in L1 and L2 to the Interpretive mode. Factors that impact how well learners understand texts include:

- a) text complexity or length
- b) familiarity with topic and background
- c) knowledgeability to use literacy strategies such as recognizing key words, detecting the main idea, identifying supporting details, noting organizational features, guessing meaning from context, identifying logical inferences, identifying the author's perspective and cultural perspectives/norms.

WHAT ARE THE NCSSFL-ACTFL CAN-DO STATEMENTS?

The 2017 NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements, the result of collaboration between the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), guide:

- Language learners to identify and set learning goals and chart their progress towards language and intercultural proficiency;
- Educators to write communication learning targets for curriculum, unit and lesson plans;
- Stakeholders to clarify how well learners at different stages can communicate.

The statements are organized according to the Interpretive, Interpersonal and Presentational Modes of Communication as described in the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages:

- Interpretive Communication: Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics.
- Interpersonal Communication: Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings and opinions.
- Presentational Communication: Learners present information, concepts and ideas to inform, explain, persuade and narrate on a variety of topics using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences of listeners, readers or viewers.

Aligned with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 and the ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners, the Can-Do Statements reflect the continuum of growth in communication skills through the Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior and Distinguished levels.

The NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication and the Reflection Tool for Learners provide a set of examples and scenarios that show how learners use the target language and knowledge of culture to demonstrate their Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC).

Just as the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for language clarify the Communication standards in the World Readiness Standards, this tool is intended to clarify and support the Cultures standards (use the language to investigate, explain and reflect on the relationship between the practices or products and perspectives of cultures) and lead learners toward developing ICC. For the purpose of this document, ICC refers to the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with people from other language and cultural backgrounds. ICC develops as the result of a process of intentional goal-setting and self-reflection around language and culture and involves attitudinal changes toward one's own and other cultures. Intercultural communicative competence is essential for establishing effective, positive relationships across cultural boundaries, required in a global society.

The revised language Can-Do Statements were the year-long work of a writing team spearheaded by State Supervisors of World Languages Kathy Shelton (OH) and Lisa Harris (VA) and ACTFL Director of Education Paul Sandrock. Members included: Ruta Couet (SC), Lynn Fulton-Archer (DE), Jessica Haxhi (CT), Ali Moeller (NE), Debbie Nicholson (WV), Christina Oh (VA), Fernando Rubio (UT), Thomas Sauer (KY), and Jacque Bott Van Houten (KY). The writing team met face-to-face three times and collaborated online over a nine-month period. Once a draft was developed, feedback was provided by over 470 professionals through an online survey and focus groups. The new Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication were developed through a 2016-17 task force chaired by Jacque Van Houten (KY), with sub-committee chairs Ruta Couet (SC), Nathan Lutz (NJ), Ali Moeller (NE), Paul Sandrock (ACTFL), and Kathy Shelton (OH), and with task force members Donna Clementi (WI), Mara Cobe (NC), Bonnie Flint (UT), Paula Garrett-Rucks (GA), Deborah Hefferon (MD), Michael Kluemper (KY), Sarah Lindstrom (CT), Dorie Perugini (CT), Mary Lynn Redmond (NC), Julie Sykes (OR), Alicia Vinson (KY), and Manuela Wagner (CT).

| How to Use the Can-Do Statements | How NOT to use the Can-Do Statements |
|--|---|
| <p>Can-Do Statements describe what learners can do consistently over time</p> <p>Learners demonstrate what they “can do” consistently in each mode and at each sub-level, in numerous situations throughout the learning process. Learners may be at different levels for different modes (Interpretive, Interpersonal, Presentational) or skills (reading, listening, writing, speaking, signing)</p> | <p>Can-Do Statements are NOT a checklist of tasks to be demonstrated once and checked off</p> <p>It is not sufficient for learners to show evidence of performance in just one specific situation; the indicators and examples at each sublevel illustrate how learners might demonstrate skills in each mode of communication through a wide variety of evidence.</p> |
| <p>Can-Do Statements help learners set goals as they progress along the proficiency continuum</p> <p>Can-Do Statements describe what learners can independently do at each sublevel and help pave the way to higher levels. Higher level skills and functions (e.g., using timeframes, understanding complex texts) need to be introduced at lower sublevels and built upon in order to have independent control of those skills and functions at higher sublevels.</p> | <p>Can-Do Statements are NOT a limitation of what to learn or teach</p> <p>Can-Do Statements do not show what to learn or teach at each sublevel; the descriptors show the skills and functions that can be done with full control at that sublevel. Learners should work with authentic texts and real-life scenarios at all levels and sublevels and set goals for how to progress to the next higher level.</p> |
| <p>The sets of examples can be adapted to match school, district or postsecondary curriculum as well as independent learning goals</p> <p>The examples include topics that expand across the proficiency continuum, from familiar (daily life, personal experiences, classroom or researched topics) to concrete to abstract. Learners and educators are encouraged to customize the “I can . . .” examples in order to fit the content and context of the learning and the targeted proficiency level.</p> | <p>The sets of examples are NOT a prescribed curriculum</p> <p>The Can-Do Statements include examples of communicative performance to adapt or modify for local curricula; they are not intended to provide ready-made lessons. The examples provided do not claim to be exhaustive or specific to a level of schooling.</p> |
| <p>Can-Do statements are a starting point for self-assessment, goal-setting and the creation of rubrics for performance-based grading</p> <p>Learners and educators use the statements for self-evaluation to become more aware of what they know and can do in the target language. By using statements aligned to the proficiency scale, educators can more easily create rubrics that enable learners to chart their progress.</p> | <p>The Can-Do statements are NOT used as an instrument for determining a letter or number grade</p> <p>Growth in acquiring a language is measured over time when tasks are integrated into performance assessments and evaluated using rubrics based on the ACTFL proficiency descriptors.</p> |

Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication

Introduction

The NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication and the *Reflection Tool for Learners* provide a set of examples and scenarios that show how learners use the target language and knowledge of culture to demonstrate their Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC).

Just as the *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements* for language clarify the Communication standards in the World Readiness Standards, this tool is intended to clarify and support the Cultures standards and lead learners toward developing ICC. For the purpose of this document, ICC refers to the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with people from other language and cultural backgrounds. ICC develops as the result of a process of intentional goal-setting and self-reflection around language and culture and involves attitudinal changes toward one's own and other cultures. Intercultural communicative competence is essential for establishing effective, positive relationships across cultural boundaries, required in a global society.

Cultures Goal: Interact with cultural competence and understanding.

Standard: Learners use the language to investigate, explain and reflect on the relationship between **Practices and Perspectives** of the cultures studied.

Standard: Learners use the language to investigate, explain and reflect on the relationship between **Products and Perspectives** of the cultures studied.

World Readiness Standards

The NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication:

- Provide samples of how learners can develop and demonstrate their ICC through the language they are learning. The extent to which one can fully understand and participate in a culture is related to the level of language proficiency.
- Apply to a variety of learning and life environments, such as in elementary school, an immersion class, a high school or college course, independent learning, a study abroad situation, or a work setting.
- Serve as a framework, not a curriculum, to integrate target language use and intercultural competencies in instruction, making clear the inextricable link between language and culture.
- Focus on communicative interaction in another culture, i.e., the ability to communicate and articulate in the target language and behave appropriately in the target culture.
- Are illustrated with examples for each proficiency level, paired as complementary examples as learners Investigate and Interact.
- Support deeper learning by providing a Reflection tool with sample scenarios that show how educators can organize activities for intercultural reflection, both inside the classroom in the target language and outside the classroom in English or the target language.
- Are meant to be used as part of a school-wide program that includes educator collaboration with other content areas and time for guided learner reflection on their intercultural experiences.

The use of the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication can be a first step in the process to simplify the complexities of ICC and provide guidance for educators and learners. Rather than a linear process, ICC is more iterative and interactive, like a mosaic of various cultural experiences informed by self-reflection. Each individual begins at different cognitive, cultural and linguistic stages and progresses at various rates

NCSSFL-ACTFL CAN-DO STATEMENTS
Proficiency Benchmarks



| NOVICE | INTERMEDIATE | ADVANCED | SUPERIOR | DISTINGUISHED |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Interpretive Benchmarks | | | | |
| <p>I can identify the general topic and some basic information in both very familiar and everyday contexts by recognizing practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences in texts that are spoken, written or signed.</p> | <p>I can understand the main idea and some pieces of information on familiar topics from sentences and series of connected sentences within texts that are spoken, written or signed.</p> | <p>I can understand the main message and supporting details on a wide variety of familiar and general interest topics across various time frames from complex, organized texts that are spoken, written or signed.</p> | <p>I can interpret and infer meaning from complex, academic and professional texts on a range of unfamiliar, abstract, and specialized issues that are spoken, written or signed.</p> | <p>I can interpret and infer meaning from dense, structurally sophisticated texts on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts, with deeply embedded cultural references and colloquialisms and dialects that are spoken, written or signed.</p> |
| Interpersonal Benchmarks | | | | |
| <p>I can communicate in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations on both very familiar and everyday topics, using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences and questions.</p> | <p>I can participate in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations on familiar topics, creating sentences and series of sentences to ask and answer a variety of questions.</p> | <p>I can maintain spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations and discussions across various time frames on familiar, as well as unfamiliar, concrete topics using series of connected sentences and probing questions.</p> | <p>I can participate fully and effectively in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed discussions and debates on issues and ideas ranging from broad general interests to my areas of specialized expertise, including supporting arguments and exploring hypotheses.</p> | <p>I can interact, negotiate, and debate on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts, fully adapting to the cultural context of the conversation, using spoken, written or signed language.</p> |
| Presentational Benchmarks | | | | |
| <p>I can present information on both very familiar and everyday topics, using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences through spoken, written or signed language.</p> | <p>I can communicate information, make presentations and express my thoughts about familiar topics, using sentences and series of connected sentences through spoken, written or signed language.</p> | <p>I can deliver detailed and organized presentations on familiar as well as unfamiliar concrete topics, in paragraphs and using various time frames through spoken, written or signed language.</p> | <p>I can deliver extended presentations on hypothetical or abstract issues and ideas ranging from broad general interests to my areas of specialized expertise, with precision of expression and to a wide variety of audiences, using spoken, written or signed language.</p> | <p>I can deliver sophisticated and articulate presentations on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts, fully adapting to the cultural context of the audience, using spoken, written or signed language.</p> |

NOVICE LOW

Novice Benchmark

Interpretive Listening or Viewing

I can identify the general topic and some basic information in both very familiar and everyday contexts by recognizing practiced or memorized words, phrases and simple sentences in texts that are spoken, written or signed.

This is my goal.

I can do this with help.

I can do this consistently.

I have provided evidence to demonstrate this.

What can I understand or interpret in authentic informational texts that I hear or view?

I can identify memorized or familiar words when they are supported by gestures or visuals in informational texts.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can recognize familiar names of people and places in a public announcement.
- I can understand simple directions to a familiar place.
- I can follow instructions for simple class routines.
- I can understand names and titles when speakers are introduced.
- I can understand a cell phone number.

What can I understand or interpret in authentic fictional texts that I hear or view?

I can identify memorized or familiar words when they are supported by gestures or visuals in fictional texts.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can recognize a few individual words of a read-aloud story.
- I can recognize a few individual words in a read-aloud poem.
- I can recognize a character's name in a folk tale.
- I can recognize common opening and closing words in oral storytelling.
- I can recognize a few familiar words from a music video.

What can I understand or interpret in conversations or discussions that I hear or view, in which I am not a participant?

I can understand memorized or familiar words when they are supported by gestures or visuals in conversations.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can recognize when greetings and leave-taking are expressed.
- I can recognize people's names and their titles when they are introduced.
- I can recognize a few individual question words in a conversation among visitors in school.
- I can recognize familiar names of places discussed on a tour.
- I can understand simple words of praise by a teacher to a student.

NOVICE LOW

Novice Benchmark Interpretive Reading

I can identify the general topic and some basic information in both very familiar and everyday contexts by recognizing practiced or memorized words, phrases and simple sentences in texts that are spoken, written or signed.

This is my goal.

I can do this with help.

I can do this consistently.

I have provided evidence to demonstrate this.

What can I understand or interpret in authentic informational texts that I read?

I can identify memorized or familiar words when they are supported by visuals in informational texts.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can identify some locations or stores by their signs.
- I can match a word or character in a headline to a related visual.
- I can recognize some names of cities on a map.
- I can identify labeled aisles in a store.
- I can recognize the labels on a recycling bin.

What can I understand or interpret in authentic fictional texts that I read?

I can identify memorized or familiar words when they are supported by visuals in fictional texts.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can recognize a few individual words in the title of a story.
- I can recognize a few individual words in a picture book.
- I can recognize a few individual words in a poem.
- I can recognize a characters' name in a folk tale.
- I can recognize common opening and closing words of a fairy tale.

What can I understand or interpret in conversations or discussions that I read, in which I am not a participant?

I can identify memorized or familiar words when they are supported by visuals in conversations.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can recognize names and titles in an email introduction.
- I can recognize familiar place names in a brochure.
- I can recognize greetings and leave taking words in an email.
- I can recognize salutation words in a business letter.
- I can recognize question words in a text message.

NOVICE LOW

Novice Benchmark

Interpersonal Listening/Speaking or Signing

I can communicate in spontaneous spoken, written or signed conversations on both very familiar and everyday topics, using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences and questions.

This is my goal.

I can do this with help.

I can do this consistently.

I have provided evidence to demonstrate this.

How can I exchange information and ideas in conversations?

I can provide information by answering a few simple questions on very familiar topics, using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can introduce myself when I meet people.
- I can answer questions about who is in my family.
- I can answer questions about my favorite weekend activities.
- I can respond to a basic math question using numbers.
- I can respond when asked to name the style of music I am playing.

How can I meet my needs in conversations?

I can express some basic needs, using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can tell someone my name.
- I can greet and take leave in a polite way.
- I can tell the customs official which countries I visited.
- I can tell someone if I understand him/her.
- I can say how much money I need to pay for my lunch.

How can I express and react to preferences and opinions in conversations?

I can express basic preferences or feelings, using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can say if I feel well, so-so or sick.
- I can identify my favorite people, places or things from a list.
- I can say what sport I play.
- I can say what food I like or dislike.
- I can say if I agree with someone about basic preferences.

NOVICE LOW

Novice Benchmark

Interpersonal Reading/Writing

I can communicate in spontaneous spoken, written or signed conversations on both very familiar and everyday topics, using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences and questions.

This is my goal.

I can do this with help.

I can do this consistently.

I have provided evidence to demonstrate this.

How can I exchange information and ideas in conversations?

I can provide information by answering a few simple questions on very familiar topics, using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can respond to personal questions such as my name, age or family in an online forum.
- I can fill out an online form to provide my class schedule.
- I can fill in a chat box by answering who, what, where or when questions.
- I can text a friend the time and day we plan to meet.
- I can respond to a text message that asks where I am going.

How can I meet my needs in conversations?

I can express some basic needs, using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can introduce myself on an online site.
- I can enter a word in an online Scrabble game.
- I can respond with the appropriate greeting to a text message.
- I can add Happy Birthday to a social media post.
- I can reply to a message asking the price for a service.

How can I express and react to preferences and opinions in conversations?

I can express basic preferences or feelings, using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can respond to a social media post asking about best restaurants or best sports teams indicating approval or disapproval
- I can text my friend about where I prefer to meet and when.
- I can text someone what I prefer for dinner tonight.
- I can choose my preference for clothing brands in an online survey.
- I can complete a simple survey about what I like and don't like about a store or service.

NOVICE LOW

Novice Benchmark

Presentational Speaking or Signing

I can present information on both very familiar and everyday topics using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases and simple sentences through spoken, written or signed language.

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| This is my goal. | I can do this with help. | I can do this consistently. | I have provided evidence to demonstrate this. |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|

How can I present information to narrate about my life, experiences and events?

I can introduce myself using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can say my name, age and where I live to introduce myself.
- I can say my phone number, home address and email address.
- I can say some activities I do every day.
- I can tell the names of places I go on the weekend.
- I can state my physical or personality traits.

| | | | |
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How can I present information to give a preference or opinion?

I can express my likes and dislikes using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can list places I like to go to see art or listen to music.
- I can tell sports I like or don't like.
- I can say names of my favorite animals based on pictures I see.
- I can look at pictures on a menu and name foods based on my likes and dislikes.
- I can state some activities that I enjoy.

| | | | |
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How can I present information to inform or describe?

I can name very familiar people, places and objects, using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can name items I see every day.
- I can say numbers from 1 - 10.
- I can say the date and the day of the week.
- I can name some countries on a map when planning a trip.
- I can name some famous landmarks and people.

| | | | |
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NOVICE LOW

Novice Benchmark Presentational Writing

I can present information on both very familiar and everyday topics using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases and simple sentences through spoken, written or signed language.

This is my goal.

I can do this with help.

can do this consistently.

I have provided evidence to demonstrate this.

How can I present information to narrate about my life, experiences and events?

I can introduce myself using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can write my name, age and where I live on a simple form.
- I can write my phone number, home address and email address on a simple form.
- I can write how I'm feeling in a short journal entry.
- I can write a list of what I need to pack for an upcoming trip.
- I can write a shopping list of what I need to buy.

How can I present information to give a preference or opinion?

I can express my likes and dislikes using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can list places I like to go to see art or listen to music.
- I can create a simple chart of a few things I like and dislike.
- I can label the things I like and don't like in a picture.
- I can write a list of desirable and undesirable characteristics of a friend.
- I can list my favorite free-time activities to create a survey for my peers.

How can I present information to inform or describe?

I can name very familiar people, places and objects, using practiced or memorized words and phrases, with the help of gestures or visuals.

Examples

- I can _____
- I can list items I see every day.
- I can fill out a simple form with my name, address, phone number, birth date and nationality.
- I can label familiar people, places and objects in pictures and posters.
- I can write the names of places on a map.
- I can copy a simple phrase like "Happy Birthday," "Happy Holidays," etc.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Investigate

INVESTIGATE PRODUCTS AND PRACTICES TO UNDERSTAND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

NOVICE BENCHMARK

In my own and other cultures I can identify products and practices to help me understand perspectives.

In my own and other cultures I can identify some typical products related to familiar everyday life.

In my own and other cultures I can identify some typical practices related to familiar everyday life.

INTERMEDIATE BENCHMARK

In my own and other cultures I can make comparisons between products and practices to help me understand perspectives.

In my own and other cultures I can compare products related to everyday life and personal interests or studies.

In my own and other cultures I can compare practices related to everyday life and personal interests or studies.

Interact

INTERACT WITH OTHERS IN AND FROM ANOTHER CULTURE

NOVICE BENCHMARK

I can interact at a survival level in some familiar everyday contexts.

I can communicate with others from the target culture in familiar everyday situations, using memorized language and showing basic cultural awareness.

I can use appropriate rehearsed behaviors and recognize some obviously inappropriate behaviors in familiar everyday situations.

INTERMEDIATE BENCHMARK

I can interact at a functional level in some familiar contexts.

I can converse with peers from the target culture in familiar situations at school, work or play, and show interest in basic cultural similarities and differences.

I can recognize that significant differences in behaviors exist among cultures, use appropriate learned behaviors and avoid major social blunders.