



CELTESTPIP

CELPPIV Vocabulary List

100+ words and phrases for Writing and Speaking, sorted by how
you use them on the test



By **Matthew Zare**, CELPIP Teacher

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Inside this lesson

Free to download and print. The online version, with video, is at celtestpip.com/learn/celpip-vocabulary-essential-words-phrases

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How to use this list

CELPIP does not test academic vocabulary. It tests everyday Canadian English: the words you would use in a workplace email, with a neighbour, or in a survey about your community. Using “frustrated” instead of “angry”, “commute” instead of “travel to work”, or “I’d recommend” instead of “you should” is the kind of change that moves an estimated level from 7 to 9.

Three rules for this list:

1. Variety beats difficulty. Three ways to say “big” shows range. One rare word used wrongly costs you.
2. Learn words in pairs and phrases, not alone. “Make a decision” is one item, not two words.
3. Use each word in a sentence you say out loud. Words you have used five times come back on test day. Words you only read do not.

How vocabulary is rated

Vocabulary is one of the four dimensions CELPIP rates in Writing (with Content/Coherence, Readability and Task Fulfillment) and in Speaking (with Content/Coherence, Listenability and Task Fulfillment). In our words, the raters are looking at the words you choose, how precise and accurate they are, how wide your range is, and whether they suit the situation and the reader.

Estimated level	What your vocabulary tends to look like
5 to 6	Basic words, frequent repetition, limited range
7 to 8	Good range, mostly accurate, some repetition
9 to 10	Varied and precise choices, rare repetition, natural collocations
11 to 12	Wide range with nuance, idiomatic, sophisticated but natural

This table is CELTESTPIP’s teaching summary, not CELPIP’s published descriptors.

Vocabulary also pays off in Listening and Reading: the more words you recognise instantly, the faster you process questions and answer choices.

Transition words and phrases

Transitions connect your ideas. Raters notice when they are missing or when the same one repeats.

Instead of always saying Try these

And	In addition · On top of that · What's more · Another point is
Also	Furthermore · Besides that · Along with this · Not to mention
But	However · That said · On the other hand · Despite this
Although	Even though · While it's true that · Regardless of
Because	Since · Given that · Due to · As a result of
So	Therefore · Consequently · This means that · Because of this
For example	For instance · To illustrate · A good example is · Take [X] for instance
Like	Such as · Including · Particularly · Especially
In conclusion	Overall · All things considered · To sum up · Taking everything into account
So basically	The bottom line is · Ultimately · In the end

Practice tip

Pick two or three new transitions this week and use them in every practice response. By test day they feel natural.

Try them in a real Writing Task 2 survey response, free with an account: [Writing Task 2 practice](#).

Opinion, advice and persuasion phrases

For Speaking Tasks 1, 5 and 7, and Writing Task 2.

Stating your opinion

In my opinion...

I strongly believe that...

From my perspective...

The way I see it...

I'm convinced that...

It seems clear to me that...

Giving advice (Speaking Task 1)

What I'd recommend is...

If I were in your position, I'd...

One option worth considering is...

My suggestion would be to...

You might want to think about...

The best approach, in my view, would be to...

Persuading (Speaking Task 5)

I'd strongly suggest going with [option] because...

The advantages of [option] clearly outweigh...

When you compare the two, [option] stands out because...

Here's why I think [option] is the better choice...

You won't regret choosing [option], and here's why...

Agreeing and disagreeing

I completely agree with that point.

That's a fair argument, but I'd say...

While I understand the other perspective...

I respectfully disagree because...

There's some truth to that, however...

Say them on the clock: the first [Speaking Task 1 question](#) and the first [Task 5 question](#) are free with an account, with AI feedback on your recording.

Workplace and professional vocabulary

CELPIP uses workplace scenarios in Listening, Reading and Writing prompts.

Job and career

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example
Apply for	Submit an application	I applied for the position last week
Hire / recruit	Bring someone onto the team	The company is hiring for three roles
Resign / step down	Leave a job voluntarily	She resigned for personal reasons
Promote / advancement	Move up in position	He was promoted to team lead
Deadline	Due date for work	The project deadline is next Friday
Workload	Amount of work assigned	The workload has been heavy this month
Performance review	Formal evaluation of work	My performance review went well
Overtime	Extra hours beyond schedule	I've been working overtime this week

Meetings and communication

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example
Schedule / arrange	Set up a meeting	Can we schedule a meeting for Monday?
Agenda	List of items to discuss	The agenda covers three main topics
Follow up	Check in after a discussion	I'll follow up with you by email
Reach out	Contact someone	Feel free to reach out if you need help
Touch base	Brief check-in	Let's touch base next week
Feedback	Comments on performance	I appreciate your feedback on the report
Collaborate	Work together	Our teams will collaborate on this project

Workplace issues

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example
Accommodate	Make adjustments for someone	The office can accommodate your schedule
Address (a concern)	Deal with a problem	We need to address this issue promptly
Implement	Put into action	We'll implement the new policy next month
Resolve	Find a solution	The dispute was resolved through mediation
Compromise	Meet in the middle	Both sides reached a compromise
Workload distribution	How work is divided	The workload distribution isn't fair

Most Writing Task 1 emails are workplace emails. Write the first one free, with AI feedback: [Writing Task 1 practice](#).

Daily life and community vocabulary

Housing and neighbourhood

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example
Tenant / landlord	Renter / property owner	The tenant reported a leak to the landlord
Maintenance	Upkeep and repairs	Maintenance includes snow removal
Utilities	Electricity, water, gas, internet	Utilities are included in the rent
Renovate / renovations	Improve or update a space	The building is undergoing renovations
Lease / rental agreement	Contract for renting	The lease expires in September
Neighbourhood / community	Local area	It's a quiet, family-friendly neighbourhood
Commute	Daily travel to work	My commute takes about 30 minutes

Health and wellness

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example
Appointment	Scheduled visit	I booked a doctor's appointment
Prescription	Doctor's order for medication	I need to pick up my prescription
Symptoms	Signs of illness	Common symptoms include fever and cough
Well-being	Overall health and happiness	Exercise improves mental well-being
Work-life balance	Time between work and personal life	A healthy work-life balance is key

Community and services

Word or phrase	Meaning	Example
Volunteer	Give time without pay	I volunteer at the community centre
Register / sign up	Enrol for something	You can register online for the workshop
Fundraiser	Event to raise money	The school is hosting a fundraiser
Public transit	Buses, subways, trains	Public transit is affordable and convenient
Recyclable / compostable	Can be recycled or composted	Please place recyclable items in the blue bin

Tone: informal, neutral, formal

Writing Task 1 tells you who the email is for. That decides your words. A friend gets casual language, a manager or a company gets formal language, a colleague sits in between. The tone does not need to be perfect. It needs to fit the reader.

Informal (friend, family)	Neutral (colleague)	Formal (manager, company)
Hey!	Hi [Name],	Dear [Name or Title],
Thanks a lot	Thank you	Thank you for your time
I wanted to tell you	I'd like to let you know	I am writing to inform you
Can you help me out?	Would you be able to assist?	I would appreciate your assistance
That's awesome	That sounds great	That would be most appreciated
Sorry about that	I apologize for the inconvenience	I sincerely apologize for
What do you think?	I'd love your input	I would value your perspective
I'm bummed out	I'm disappointed	I am dissatisfied with
Let me know	Please let me know	I look forward to your response
Talk soon!	Best regards,	Sincerely,

Descriptive vocabulary for Speaking

For Speaking Tasks 3 (describing a scene), 4 (making predictions) and 8 (describing an unusual situation).

Describing people

Category	Useful words
Appearance	wearing, dressed in, appears to be, looks like
Emotions	frustrated, pleased, anxious, relieved, content, puzzled
Actions	chatting, rushing, pointing at, leaning against, reaching for
Age or group	elderly, middle-aged, young professional, teenager

Describing settings

Category	Useful words
Location	in the foreground, in the background, on the left side, next to
Atmosphere	busy, peaceful, crowded, spacious, lively, cluttered
Weather and time	sunny, overcast, late afternoon, early morning
Type of place	office, park, restaurant, classroom, shopping mall

Making predictions (Task 4)

Phrase	How to use it
will likely	Strong prediction: She will likely call for help
might / may	Moderate prediction: He might decide to leave
it's possible that	Weaker prediction: It's possible that they'll reschedule
I expect / I anticipate	Formal prediction: I expect the situation to improve
based on what I see	Evidence-based: Based on what I see, they'll probably...
it seems like	Observational: It seems like the meeting is about to end

Describe a real picture against the clock: the first [Task 3](#), [Task 4](#) and [Task 8](#) questions are free with an account.

Collocations and phrasal verbs

Collocations are words that go together. The right one sounds natural; the wrong one sounds off even when the meaning is clear.

Sounds off	Natural
Do a mistake	Make a mistake
Make homework	Do homework
Strong rain	Heavy rain
Open the TV	Turn on the TV
Close the light	Turn off the light
Say me	Tell me
Do a decision	Make a decision
Make a photo	Take a photo

Phrasal verbs that appear in Listening and Reading

Phrasal verb	Meaning	Example
Look into	Investigate	I'll look into the issue
Come up with	Think of, create	She came up with a great idea
Put off	Postpone	Don't put off your preparation
Turn down	Reject	He turned down the job offer
Bring up	Mention, raise a topic	She brought up an important point
Figure out	Solve, understand	I need to figure out the schedule
Get along with	Have a good relationship	I get along with my coworkers
Run into	Meet by chance	I ran into my old colleague
Look forward to	Anticipate with pleasure	I look forward to hearing from you
Take on	Accept responsibility	He took on extra work this month
Set up	Arrange, establish	We need to set up a meeting
Keep up with	Stay at the same pace	It's hard to keep up with the workload

Swap your defaults

The quickest Vocabulary gain is to stop repeating the same basic words.

Default	Stronger alternatives
Good	Excellent, impressive, outstanding, effective, beneficial
Bad	Poor, inadequate, unsatisfactory, detrimental, problematic
Big	Significant, substantial, considerable, major, extensive
Small	Minor, minimal, slight, modest, limited
Important	Essential, critical, vital, key, meaningful
Happy	Pleased, delighted, satisfied, grateful, content
Sad	Disappointed, upset, disheartened, concerned
Interesting	Engaging, fascinating, compelling, thought-provoking
Difficult	Challenging, demanding, complex, tough
Nice	Pleasant, enjoyable, lovely, welcoming, appealing
A lot	Numerous, a significant number of, plenty of, a great deal of
Very	Highly, extremely, remarkably, particularly, exceptionally

Warning

Do not reach for the fanciest word you know. "The restaurant was phenomenally outstanding" sounds worse than "The restaurant was impressive." The goal is variety, not complexity.

A one-week plan

When	What
Daily, 10 to 15 minutes	Learn 3 to 5 words from this list. Write each in a sentence and say it aloud. Replace one default word in your everyday English.
Daily	Read one Canadian news article and note the words you do not know.
Weekly	Write one email or survey response using at least 5 words from this list. Record one Speaking answer and listen for repeated words.
The week before the test	Review transitions, opinion phrases and the tone pairs. Learn nothing new. Use what you know with confidence.

CELTESTPIP, CELPIP Vocabulary: 100+ Words and Phrases to Score Higher (the online version of this list). Rating dimensions: CELPIP Writing and Speaking Performance Standards, celPIP.ca, described here in our own words. Written by Matthew Zare, CELPIP Teacher. CELTESTPIP is an independent preparation platform and is not affiliated with CELPIP or Prometric.

Put the words to work

Every CELPIP part on CELTESTPIP has a free first practice set with instant AI feedback: sign up free, answer the first question of any task, and see which of these words you actually used. Writing and Speaking give you up to three free AI-scored tries on that first question.

Start free practice →

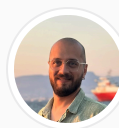
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Keep going

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Task-by-task word lists at
celtestpip.com/words

About the author



Matthew Zare

CELPIP Teacher, CELTESTPIP

Matthew is a CELPIP teacher on the CELTESTPIP team and the voice of most of our YouTube lessons. He focuses on helping candidates reach the CLB level their immigration or PR file needs.

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