

Language specifications

Candidates who are successful in A2 Key for Schools should be able to satisfy their basic communicative needs in a range of everyday situations with both native and non-native speakers of English.

The following is a list of the language specifications that the A2 Key for Schools examination is based on.

Inventory of functions, notions and communicative tasks

The realisations of these functions, notions and communicative tasks will be in the simplest possible ways.

greeting people and responding to greetings (in person and on the phone)

introducing oneself and other people

asking for and giving personal details: (full) name, age, address, names of relatives and friends, etc.

understanding and completing forms giving personal details

describing education

describing people (personal appearance, qualities)

asking and answering questions about personal possessions

asking for repetition and clarification

restating what has been said

checking on meaning and intention

helping others to express their ideas

interrupting a conversation

asking for and giving the spelling and meaning of words

counting and using numbers

asking and telling people the time, day and/or date

asking for and giving information about routines and habits

understanding and giving information about everyday activities

talking about what people are doing at the moment

talking about past events and states in the past, recent activities and completed actions

understanding and producing simple narratives

reporting what people say

talking about future situations

talking about future plans or intentions

making predictions

identifying and describing accommodation (houses, flats, rooms, furniture, etc.)

buying things (costs and amounts)

talking about food and ordering meals

talking about the weather

talking about one's health

following and giving simple instructions

understanding simple signs and notices

asking the way and giving directions

asking for and giving travel information

asking for and giving simple information about places

identifying and describing simple objects (shape, size, weight, colour, purpose or use, etc.)

making comparisons and expressing degrees of difference

expressing purpose, cause and result, and giving reasons

making and granting/refusing simple requests

making and responding to offers and suggestions

expressing and responding to thanks

giving and responding to invitations

giving advice

giving warnings and stating prohibitions

asking/telling people to do something

expressing obligation and lack of obligation

asking and giving/refusing permission to do something

making and responding to apologies and excuses

expressing agreement and disagreement, and contradicting people

paying compliments

sympathising

expressing preferences, likes and dislikes (especially about hobbies and leisure activities)

talking about feelings

expressing opinions and making choices

expressing needs and wants

expressing (in)ability in the present and in the past

talking about (im)probability and (im)possibility

expressing degrees of certainty and doubt

Inventory of grammatical areas

Verbs

Regular and irregular forms

Modals

can (ability; requests; permission)

could (ability; polite requests)

would (polite requests)

will (future)

shall (suggestion; offer)

should (advice)

may (possibility)

have (got) to (obligation)

must (obligation)

mustn't (prohibition)

need (necessity)

needn't (lack of necessity)

Tenses

Present simple: states, habits, systems and processes and with future meaning (and verbs not used in the continuous form)

Present continuous: present actions and future meaning

Present perfect simple: recent past with *just*, indefinite past with *yet, already, never, ever*; unfinished past with *for* and *since*

Past simple: past events

Past continuous: parallel past actions, continuous actions interrupted by the past simple tense

Future with *going to*

Future with *will* and *shall*: offers, promises, predictions, etc.

Verb forms

Affirmative, interrogative, negative

Imperatives

Infinitives (with and without *to*) after verbs and adjectives

Gerunds (-ing form) after verbs and prepositions

Gerunds as subjects and objects

Passive forms: present and past simple

Short questions (*Can you?*) and answers (*No, he doesn't*)

Clause types

Main clause: *Carlos is Spanish.*

Co-ordinate clause: *Carlos is Spanish and his wife is English.*

Subordinate clause following *sure, certain*: *I'm sure (that) she's a doctor.*

Subordinate clause following *know, think, believe, hope*: *I hope you're well.*

Subordinate clause following *say, tell*: *She says (that) she's his sister.*

Subordinate clause following *if, when, where, because*:

I'll leave if you do that again.

He'll come when you call.

He'll follow where you go.

I came because you asked me.

Interrogatives

What; What (+ noun)

Where; When

Who; Whose; Which

How; How much; How many; How often; How long; etc.

Why

(including the interrogative forms of all tenses and modals listed)

Nouns

Singular and plural (regular and irregular forms)

Countable and uncountable nouns with *some* and *any*

Abstract nouns

Compound nouns

Noun phrases

Genitive: 's and s'

Double genitive: *a friend of theirs*

Pronouns

Personal (subject, object, possessive)

Impersonal: *it, there*

Demonstrative: *this, that, these, those*

Quantitative: *one, something, everybody*, etc.

Indefinite: *some, any, something, one*, etc.

Relative: *who, which, that*

Determiners

a + countable nouns

the + countable/uncountable nouns

Adjectives

Colour, size, shape, quality, nationality

Predicative and attributive

Cardinal and ordinal numbers

Possessive: *my, your, his, her*, etc.

Demonstrative: *this, that, these, those*

Quantitative: *some, any, many, much, a few, a lot of, all, other, every*, etc.

Comparative and superlative forms (regular and irregular)

Order of adjectives

Participles as adjectives

Adverbs

Regular and irregular forms

Manner: *quickly, carefully*, etc.

Frequency: *often, never, twice a day*, etc.

Definite time: *now, last week*, etc.

Indefinite time: *already, just, yet*, etc.

Degree: *very, too, rather*, etc.

Place: *here, there*, etc.

Direction: *left, right*, etc.

Sequence: *first, next*, etc.

Pre-verbal, post-verbal and end-position adverbs

Comparative and superlative forms (regular and irregular)

Prepositions

Location: *to, on, inside, next to, at (home)*, etc.

Time: *at, on, in, during*, etc.

Direction: *to, into, out of, from*, etc.

Instrument: *by, with*

Miscellaneous: *like, about*, etc.

Prepositional phrases: *at the end of, in front of*, etc.

Prepositions preceding nouns and adjectives: *by car, for sale, on holiday*, etc.

Connectives

and, but, or

when, where, because, if

Note that students will meet forms other than those listed above in A2 Key for Schools, on which they will not be directly tested.

Topics

Clothes

Daily life

Entertainment and media

Food and drink

Health, medicine and exercise

Hobbies and leisure

House and home

Language

People

Personal feelings, opinions and experiences

Personal identification

Places and buildings

School and study

Services

Shopping

Social interaction

Sport

The natural world

Transport

Travel and holidays

Weather

Lexis

The A2 Key for Schools vocabulary list includes items which normally occur in the everyday vocabulary of native speakers using English today.

Candidates should know the lexis appropriate to their personal requirements, for example, nationalities, hobbies, likes and dislikes.

Note that the use of American pronunciation, spelling and lexis is acceptable in A2 Key for Schools.

A list of vocabulary that may appear in the A2 Key and A2 Key for Schools examinations is available on our website:

[cambridgeenglish.org/exams/key/preparation](https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/key/preparation)

The list does not provide an exhaustive register of all the words which could appear in A2 Key for Schools question papers and candidates should not confine their study of vocabulary to the list alone.

International English

English is used in a wide range of international contexts. To reflect this, candidates' responses to tasks in Cambridge English Qualifications are acceptable in all varieties and accents of English, provided they do not interfere with communication. Materials used feature a range of accents and texts from English-speaking countries, including the UK, North America and Australia. US and other versions of spelling are accepted if used consistently.