PrepEx

CELPIP / STUDY GUIDE

Your CELPIP study guide

Tips and tricks / all four skills

One page per skill: the parts and tasks, timings, tips, traps and note shorthand.

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prepex.ai/celpip/study-guide

CELPIP study guide

One page per skill. Read the tips, then try the drills and free graded practice online.

Tips and tricks in one minute

- Answer every Listening and Reading question. A blank scores the same as a wrong answer, and a wrong answer costs nothing extra.
- In Listening, the questions come after each recording. Read the short scene description, then note who wants what, what changed and what was decided.
- In Reading Part 3, a statement that no paragraph gives you is E, and that includes a statement the text contradicts. CELPIP has no True/False/Not Given.
- In Speaking Task 5, you argue that your choice beats the new third option, not the option you turned down.
- Writing Task 2 is a survey. Say whether you prefer Option A or B in your first sentence, then compare it with the other one. It is not an essay.
- Learn what each task needs and say it in your own words. CELPIP's Test Day rules say responses that aren't original and spontaneous can lead to a cancelled score.

The test at a glance

Section	Parts or tasks	What you answer	Time	How it is scored
Listening	6 parts	38 questions, all multiple choice	About 46–55 minutes	Right or wrong, by computer
Reading	4 parts	38 questions	About 43–56 minutes; parts timed at 11, 9, 10 and 13 minutes	Right or wrong, by computer
Writing	2 tasks	An email and a survey response, 150–200 words each	53 minutes (27 + 26)	Four dimensions; an AI-human hybrid system, with raters reviewing every score
Speaking	8 tasks	8 recorded answers	About 15 minutes	Four dimensions, by trained raters

Listening and Reading may include one extra unscored part that looks like the others.

Next: take a CELPIP practice test online with a free PrepEx account.

prepex.ai/celpip-practice-test

Listening

The recording plays once, and you only see the questions after it ends. So you can't listen for an answer you haven't read yet. Instead, track the things the questions are usually about: the problem, the options, who said what, and what changed.

Part	Name	Qs	What you hear	Track this
1	Listening to Problem Solving	8	A man and a woman sort out a problem, in three sections with questions after each	The problem, each option, why options get ruled out, the final choice
2	Listening to a Daily Life Conversation	5	Two people who know each other	Who will do what, and how each person feels about it
3	Listening for Information	6	Two people: one asks, the other explains	Facts, steps and the reason behind a recommendation
4	Listening to a News Item	5	One news report, about a minute and a half	What happened, what is planned, who is affected, any conditions
5	Listening to a Discussion	8	A video of three people discussing a plan or problem	Each person's view, objections and what they finally agree on
6	Listening to Viewpoints	6	One speaker reports different people's views on an issue, about three minutes	Who thinks what, and why

Tips that save points

- In Parts 1–3, each question is spoken once and stays on screen for about 30 seconds. Answer and move on; you can't go back.
- Take notes on the paper you're given, in short form. Two columns work well for conversations: one per speaker.
- A preferred or suggested option isn't always the final choice. Mark rejected ideas with × and the final choice with OK.
- When you hear two times, dates or numbers, write both and draw an arrow from the old one to the new one.
- The answer options rarely repeat the recording's words. "Costs less" may appear as "is more affordable".
- In Part 2, tone carries meaning. "Fine, I guess" is reluctant agreement, not enthusiasm.
- In Part 5, label speakers by name or by something you can see, because questions may describe them that way.
- Guess rather than leave a blank.

Note shorthand

→ changed to, leads to × rejected **OK** chosen **#** number **$** cost **w/ · w/o** with · without **< · >** less · more **?** unsure: guess and move on

Signal words

Change of mind: actually, on second thought, in that case, come to think of it

Decision: let's go with, I'll book, that settles it, we'll do that

Disagreement: I'm not so sure, the trouble is, I see it differently

Reason: because, since, that's why, the main thing is

Next: do a full Listening Part 1 free, with audio and explanations.

prepex.ai/celpip/practice/listening-part-1-problem-solving

Reading

Each Reading part has its own timer: 11, 9, 10 and 13 minutes. Time you save in one part doesn't carry over, and you can't return to a part after you move on, so answer everything on the screen before you press Next.

Part	Name	Qs	What you get	Approach
1	Reading Correspondence	11	An email with 6 questions, then a reply with 5 gaps	Who is writing to whom, and why. Gap answers must fit the reply's facts and tone
2	Reading to Apply a Diagram	8	A diagram and an email about it with 5 gaps, then 3 questions	Each gap depends on a detail in the diagram and on what the writer needs
3	Reading for Information	9	Four paragraphs, A–D. Match each statement to a paragraph, or E if none gives it	Match the whole statement, not a word it shares with a paragraph
4	Reading for Viewpoints	10	An article quoting several people, with 5 questions, then a reader's comment with 5 gaps	Who believes what, why, and where people partly agree

Tips that save points

- Look at the question type before you read, so you know whether you're reading for a detail, a purpose or an opinion.
- You can't highlight the screen. Jot a two-word topic for each Part 3 paragraph on your notepaper.
- Part 3 has no True or False. If no paragraph supports the whole statement, including when the text says the opposite, choose E.
- Watch for the right fact attached to the wrong person, especially in Part 4, where two people may partly agree.
- Check absolute words like always, only and never against the text before you trust them.
- Guess rather than leave a blank. There is no penalty for a wrong answer.

Paraphrases to expect

The text says	An option may say
cheap, low-cost	affordable, inexpensive
begin, launch	start, introduce
rise sharply	increase significantly
worry	concern
back, support	favour, endorse

Next: do a full Reading Part 3 free, timed, with the evidence for every answer.
prepex.ai/celpip/practice/reading-part-3-information

Speaking

Each task gives you a short time to prepare, then records you. Raters listen for four things: how well you develop and organize ideas, your vocabulary, how easy you are to follow, and whether you did what the task asked.

Task	Name	Prepare	Speak	What it asks	Cover this
1	Giving Advice	30 s	90 s	Advise someone who has a problem	At least three suggestions, each with a reason or example
2	Talking about a Personal Experience	30 s	60 s	Describe something that happened to you	When and where, what happened in order, how you felt
3	Describing a Scene	30 s	60 s	Describe a picture to someone who can't see it	The overall setting first, then the details that matter
4	Making Predictions	30 s	60 s	Say what will probably happen next in a picture	Realistic predictions, each tied to something you can see
5	Comparing and Persuading	60 s to choose, then 60 s	60 s	Choose one of two options, then persuade someone that your choice beats a new third option	Your choice against the new option, point by point
6	Dealing with a Difficult Situation	60 s	60 s	Choose one of two people to talk to, and explain a decision to them	The decision and your reasons, considerate but firm
7	Expressing Opinions	30 s	90 s	Answer a yes-or-no question	A clear position and about three developed reasons
8	Describing an Unusual Situation	30 s	60 s	Describe something unusual to a person on the phone	What they can't see, then what the prompt asks you to do

Tips that lift a level

- Use prep time for two or three keywords per point. Full sentences take too long to write and sound read aloud.
- Use the whole response time and make your main point early. A last idea cut off by the timer isn't fatal, but aim to finish your sentence.
- If you stumble, correct yourself and keep going. Raters don't expect a script.
- Match your tone to the listener: relaxed with a friend, polite and clear with a manager or customer.
- Pick the word that fits exactly: angry and frustrated mean different things.
- Learn the moves each task needs and say them in your own words. CELPIP advises against memorizing model answers or using them as templates.

Next: record a Task 5 answer and get it graded free (one free grade a day across Writing and Speaking, no account).
prepex.ai/celpip/practice/speaking-task-5-compare-persuade

Writing

Both tasks ask for about 150–200 words. Your answer is scored on four dimensions, and Task Fulfillment includes word count, so an answer far outside that range loses marks even when it's well written.

Task	Name	Time	Length	What it asks
1	Writing an Email	27 minutes	150–200 words	Reply to a situation. The prompt usually lists three things to cover
2	Responding to Survey Questions	26 minutes	150–200 words	Choose Option A or B in a survey and explain your choice

Tips for both tasks

- Plan for 4–5 minutes, write, then keep about 3 minutes to check spelling, punctuation and the word count.
- In the email, give each point in the prompt its own paragraph, in the order the prompt lists them.
- Write a purpose sentence for this prompt. A former CELPIP Writing rater says memorized openings earn no credit.
- In Task 2, state your choice in the first sentence. Give reasons tied to the survey details, and compare your choice with the other option.
- Pick one option and stay with it. Not choosing is one of the most common Task 2 mistakes.
- Use connectors where the logic needs them: however, as a result, for example.

Email greeting and sign-off

Writing to	Greeting	Sign-off
A manager, company or official	Dear Ms. Carter,	Sincerely,
A neighbour or acquaintance	Hello Mr. Lee,	Best regards,
A friend or family member	Hi Sam,	Take care,

Next: write an email and get it graded free (one free grade a day across Writing and Speaking, no account).

prepex.ai/celpip/practice/writing-task-1-email

Checked against CELPIP's 2026 study packs and policy pages on November 17, 2026. Drills, sources and the online edition: prepex.ai/celpip/study-guide.