NCLCFrench

FREE CHEAT SHEET

TCF and TEF Canada vocabulary by theme

About 200 words and expressions in 12 themes, with genders, key verbs and collocations, for B1 to B2 learners aiming at NCLC 7.

Checked against official sources on October 6, 2026 Interactive version: nclcfrench.com/tcf-tef-vocabulary-list

QUICK ANSWER

A good TCF or TEF Canada vocabulary list is organised by theme: work and employment, housing, health, environment, technology, education, transport and city life, immigration and integration, money, culture and leisure, daily life and administration. For NCLC 7, learn each noun with its article, a few verbs per theme and one or two ready-made expressions you can reuse when you give your opinion.

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Learn the word with its article

A word without its gender is half a word: un problème or une problème changes every adjective and pronoun after it, and gender errors are among the most visible in writing. Always learn le loyer, never just loyer. Before a vowel the article becomes l', so those nouns are marked (m.) or (f.) below.

French vocabulary for work, housing and health

Travail et emploi (work and employment)

un emploi	a job
le poste	the position, the role
l'employeur	the employer *(m.)*
le salarié, la salariée	the employee
le salaire	the salary, the wage
le chômage	unemployment *Être au chômage = to be unemployed.*
l'entretien d'embauche	the job interview *(m.)*
le télétravail	remote work, working from home
un contrat à durée indéterminée	a permanent contract
les heures supplémentaires	overtime *(f. pl.)*
la conciliation travail-famille	work-family balance *Usual wording in Québec.*
embaucher	to hire
licencier	to lay off, to dismiss
démissionner	to resign
postuler à un emploi	to apply for a job *Collocation. Also: poser sa candidature.*
gagner sa vie	to earn a living *Collocation.*

Logement (housing)

le logement	housing, a place to live
le loyer	the rent
le ou la propriétaire	the landlord, the owner
le ou la locataire	the tenant

le bail	the lease *Plural: les baux.*
un appartement	an apartment *(m.) In Québec, un 4 ½ is a two-bedroom apartment.*
le quartier	the neighbourhood
le chauffage	heating
la colocation	flat-sharing, having roommates
la crise du logement	the housing crisis
l'accès à la propriété	home ownership, buying a home *(m.)*
déménager	to move (house)
emménager	to move in
louer	to rent
signer un bail	to sign a lease *Collocation.*
trouver un logement abordable	to find affordable housing *Collocation.*

Santé (health)

la santé	health
le médecin de famille	the family doctor
l'infirmier, l'infirmière	the nurse *(m.), (f.)*
la pharmacie	the pharmacy
l'ordonnance	the prescription *(f.)*
le rendez-vous	the appointment
les urgences	the emergency room *(f. pl.)*
le temps d'attente	the waiting time
la carte d'assurance maladie	the health insurance card
la santé mentale	mental health

l'alimentation	diet, food *(f.)*
le mode de vie	lifestyle
une maladie	an illness
se soigner	to get treatment, to look after your health
guérir	to recover, to heal
prendre rendez-vous	to make an appointment *Collocation.*
avoir mal à la tête	to have a headache *Avoir mal à + body part.*

Vocabulary for environment, technology and education

Environnement (environment)

l'environnement	the environment *(m.)*
les changements climatiques	climate change *(m. pl.) Usual in Canada; also le changement climatique.*
le réchauffement climatique	global warming
les gaz à effet de serre	greenhouse gases *(m. pl.)*
l'empreinte carbone	the carbon footprint *(f.)*
la pollution	pollution
les déchets	waste, garbage *(m. pl.)*
le recyclage	recycling
le compostage	composting
les énergies renouvelables	renewable energy *(f. pl.)*
la biodiversité	biodiversity
les feux de forêt	wildfires *(m. pl.)*
protéger	to protect

gaspiller	to waste
réduire	to reduce
trier ses déchets	to sort your waste *Collocation.*
lutter contre le réchauffement climatique	to fight global warming *Collocation: lutter contre + noun.*

Technologie et numérique (technology and digital life)

le numérique	digital technology
un ordinateur	a computer *(m.)*
un téléphone intelligent	a smartphone *Usual in Canada; in France, un smartphone.*
l'application	the app *(f.)*
les réseaux sociaux	social media *(m. pl.)*
le courriel	email *Usual in Canada; in France also le mail.*
le mot de passe	the password
les données personnelles	personal data *(f. pl.)*
la vie privée	privacy
l'intelligence artificielle	artificial intelligence *(f.)*
l'écran	the screen *(m.)*
le temps d'écran	screen time
la fracture numérique	the digital divide
télécharger	to download
se connecter	to log in, to connect
passer trop de temps devant les écrans	to spend too much time on screens *Collocation.*
protéger ses données	to protect your data *Collocation.*

Éducation et formation (education and training)

l'éducation	education *(f.)*
la formation	training, a course
la formation continue	continuing education
l'école primaire, l'école secondaire	elementary school, high school *(f.) In France: le collège, le lycée.*
le cégep	Québec's college (between high school and university)
l'université	the university *(f.)*
l'enseignant, l'enseignante	the teacher *(m.), (f.)*
les études	studies *(f. pl.)*
le diplôme	the degree, the diploma
les frais de scolarité	tuition fees *(m. pl.)*
une bourse	a scholarship, a grant
l'apprentissage	learning; an apprenticeship *(m.)*
la reconnaissance des diplômes	credential recognition
s'inscrire à un cours	to enrol in a course *Collocation.*
réussir un examen	to pass an exam *False friend: passer un examen = to take (sit) an exam.*
obtenir son diplôme	to graduate *Collocation.*

Vocabulary for city life, immigration and money

Transports et ville (transport and city life)

les transports en commun	public transit *(m. pl.)*

l'autobus, le métro	the bus, the subway *(m.) Also le bus.*
l'heure de pointe	rush hour *(f.)*
la circulation	traffic
les embouteillages	traffic jams *(m. pl.) Also les bouchons.*
le trajet	the journey, the commute
la piste cyclable	the bike lane
le stationnement	parking *Usual in Canada; in France, le parking.*
le permis de conduire	the driver's licence
le centre-ville	downtown
la banlieue	the suburbs
les infrastructures	infrastructure *(f. pl.)*
l'aménagement urbain	urban planning *(m.)*
le covoiturage	carpooling
se déplacer	to get around
prendre les transports en commun	to take public transit *Collocation.*
être coincé dans la circulation	to be stuck in traffic *Collocation.*

Immigration et intégration (immigration and integration)

l'immigration	immigration *(f.)*
le nouvel arrivant, la nouvelle arrivante	the newcomer *The usual word in Canada.*
la résidence permanente	permanent residence
le résident permanent, la résidente permanente	the permanent resident
le permis de travail	the work permit
la citoyenneté	citizenship

le pays d'origine	the home country, the country of origin
le pays d'accueil	the host country
l'intégration	integration *(f.)*
la francisation	French courses for newcomers and workers *Québec term (Francisation Québec).*
les communautés francophones en situation minoritaire	Francophone minority communities *(f. pl.) French-speaking communities outside Québec, such as in New Brunswick, Ontario or Manitoba.*
l'expérience canadienne	Canadian experience *(f.)*
le choc culturel	culture shock
le mal du pays	homesickness
la diversité culturelle	cultural diversity
s'installer	to settle
s'intégrer dans la société d'accueil	to integrate into the host society *Collocation.*
faire une demande de résidence permanente	to apply for permanent residence *Collocation: faire une demande de + noun.*

Consommation et argent (shopping and money)

l'argent	money *(m.)*
le coût de la vie	the cost of living
le pouvoir d'achat	purchasing power
l'épicerie	the grocery store; groceries *(f.) In Canada, faire l'épicerie = to do the grocery shopping.*
le budget	the budget
les économies	savings *(f. pl.)*
la dette	debt
le compte bancaire	the bank account
la carte de crédit	the credit card
la facture	the bill, the invoice

le remboursement	the refund; the repayment
l'achat en ligne	online shopping, an online purchase *(m.)*
la consommation responsable	responsible consumption
dépenser	to spend
emprunter	to borrow
faire des économies	to save money *Collocation.*
joindre les deux bouts	to make ends meet *Idiom.*

Vocabulary for leisure, daily life and paperwork

Culture et loisirs (culture and leisure)

les loisirs	leisure activities, hobbies *(m. pl.)*
le temps libre	free time
la lecture	reading
le spectacle	the show
le festival	the festival
l'exposition	the exhibition *(f.)*
le musée	the museum
la bibliothèque	the library *False friend: a bookshop is une librairie.*
la randonnée	hiking, a hike
le bénévolat	volunteering
l'activité physique	physical activity *(f.)*
le patrimoine	heritage
la sortie	an outing, a night out
se détendre	to relax

faire du sport	to do sport, to exercise *Collocation: faire du / de la / de l' + activity.*
assister à un concert	to attend a concert *False friend: assister à = to attend, not to assist.*

Société et vie quotidienne (society and daily life)

la vie quotidienne	daily life
les tâches ménagères	household chores *(f. pl.)*
la garderie	daycare *Usual in Québec; in France, la crèche.*
les habitudes	habits *(f. pl.)*
le bien-être	well-being
la solitude	loneliness
le voisinage	the neighbours, the neighbourhood
les personnes âgées	older people, seniors *(f. pl.) Feminine even when the people are men.*
les jeunes	young people *(m. pl.)*
le vieillissement de la population	the ageing population
l'égalité	equality *(f.)*
la sécurité	safety, security
s'occuper de	to look after, to take care of
partager	to share
prendre soin de soi	to take care of yourself *Collocation.*
avoir du mal à	to struggle to *Collocation: avoir du mal à + infinitive.*

Administration et démarches (administration and paperwork)

les démarches administratives	paperwork, administrative steps *(f. pl.)*
le formulaire	the form

la demande	the application, the request
le dossier	the file, the application
la pièce d'identité	the ID document
la preuve de résidence	proof of address
le numéro d'assurance sociale (NAS)	the Social Insurance Number (SIN)
la déclaration de revenus	the tax return
le délai	the deadline; the processing time *False friend: not just a delay.*
le service à la clientèle	customer service *Usual in Canada; in France, le service client.*
la pièce jointe	the attachment
l'hôtel de ville	city hall *(m.)*
renouveler	to renew
se renseigner	to find out, to ask for information *The key verb for the information role-play in speaking.*
remplir un formulaire	to fill in a form *Collocation.*
déposer une demande	to submit an application *Collocation.*

How to learn this vocabulary so it sticks

1. **Learn chunks, not single words**
   Write each word with its article and an expression: le loyer › payer le loyer, un loyer trop élevé. Chunks come out faster under exam pressure than words you have to assemble.

2. **Use spaced repetition**
   Put the words in a flashcard app or on paper cards and review them after one day, then a few days, then a week. Ten minutes a day beats an hour on Sunday. Test yourself from English to French: that's the direction you need for writing and speaking.

3. **Say them out loud in an opinion answer**
   Take one theme, pick five words and use them in a two-minute spoken opinion, the kind asked in TCF speaking task 3 or TEF section B. Record it and listen back. Questions to practise with are on the speaking questions sheet.

4 **Write one paragraph per theme**
Write 120 words on the theme with two linking words from the **writing phrases sheet**. Underline the new words: if you used them correctly, they are yours.

5 **Meet them again in listening and reading**
Recognising a word at natural speed is a different skill from knowing it on paper. Practise with the **listening exercises** and the **reading practice**, and note every theme word you catch.

6 **Check your progress under real conditions**
Start with the **free French level check**, then sit the **full mock test** to see whether your vocabulary holds up against the clock.

Ready to test yourself?

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