

Table 576-0009 1, 2, 3

Aboriginal peoples survey, self-rated ability to speak and understand an Aboriginal language, by Aboriginal identity, age group and sex, population aged 6 years and over, Canada, provinces and territories
occasional (persons)

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Geography = Northwest Territories
Aboriginal identity¹ = Total, Aboriginal identity
Statistics^{14, 15, 16} = Number of persons

Age group ⁴	Sex	Self-rated ability to speak and understand an Aboriginal language ²	2012
Total, 6 years and over	Both sexes	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	9,890
		Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	6,660
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²	1,470
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²	5,030
		Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}	160 ^E
		Does not speak an Aboriginal language	3,050
		Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	180 ^E
		Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	9,890
		Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²	7,640
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}	2,190
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}	5,330
		Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}	120 ^E
		Does not understand an Aboriginal language	2,070
		Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	180 ^E
	Male	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	4,590
		Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	2,970
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²	580
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²	2,310
		Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}	80 ^E
		Does not speak an Aboriginal language	1,520
		Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	110 ^E
		Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	4,590
		Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²	3,470
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}	950
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}	2,440
		Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}	70 ^E
		Does not understand an Aboriginal language	1,020
		Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	110 ^E
	Female	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	5,290
		Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	3,690
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²	880
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²	2,730
		Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}	70 ^E
		Does not speak an Aboriginal language	1,530
		Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F
		Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	5,290
Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²		4,170	
Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}		1,230	
Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}		2,890	
Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}		F	
Does not understand an Aboriginal language		1,050	
Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰		F	
6 to 14 years	Both sexes	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	1,840
		Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	1,230
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²	170 ^E
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²	1,010
		Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}	60 ^E
		Does not speak an Aboriginal language	610
		Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F
		Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	1,840
		Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²	1,400

Age group ⁴	Sex	Self-rated ability to speak and understand an Aboriginal language ²	2012
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}	220
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}	1,170
		Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}	F
		Does not understand an Aboriginal language	440
		Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F
	Male	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	920
		Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	570
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²	100 ^E
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²	450
		Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}	F
		Does not speak an Aboriginal language	340
		Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F
		Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	920
		Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²	660
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}	130 ^E
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}	530
		Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}	F
		Does not understand an Aboriginal language	250
		Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F
		Female	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language
	Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸		660
	Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²		60 ^E
	Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²		560
	Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}		F
	Does not speak an Aboriginal language		270
	Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰		F
	Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹		920
	Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²		740
	Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}		90 ^E
	Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}		640
	Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}		F
	Does not understand an Aboriginal language		180 ^E
	Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F	
15 to 34 years	Both sexes	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	3,950
		Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	2,600
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²	270
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²	2,270
		Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}	60 ^E
		Does not speak an Aboriginal language	1,240
		Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	110 ^E
		Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	3,950
		Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²	2,990
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}	510
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}	2,440
		Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}	50 ^E
		Does not understand an Aboriginal language	850
		Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	110 ^E
		Male	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language
	Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸		1,130
	Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²		100 ^E
	Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²		990
	Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}		40 ^E
	Does not speak an Aboriginal language		660
	Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰		F
	Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹		1,870
	Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²		1,340
	Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}		220
	Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}		1,070
	Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}		40 ^E
	Does not understand an Aboriginal language		460
	Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F	
	Female	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	2,080

Age group ⁴	Sex	Self-rated ability to speak and understand an Aboriginal language ²	2012	
		Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	1,470	
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²	170 ^E	
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²	1,280	
		Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}	F	
		Does not speak an Aboriginal language	570	
		Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F	
		Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	2,080	
		Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²	1,660	
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}	280	
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}	1,360	
		Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}	F	
		Does not understand an Aboriginal language	390	
		Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F	
		35 to 54 years	Both sexes	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language
Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	1,780			
Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²	490			
Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²	1,270			
Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}	F			
Does not speak an Aboriginal language	840			
Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F			
Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	2,680			
Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²	2,040			
Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}	720			
Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}	1,290			
Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}	F			
Does not understand an Aboriginal language	580			
Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F			
Male	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language		1,230	
	Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸		810	
	Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²		180 ^E	
	Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²		620	
	Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}		F	
	Does not speak an Aboriginal language		400	
	Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰		F	
	Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹		1,230	
	Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²		940	
	Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}		310	
	Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}		620	
	Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}		F	
	Does not understand an Aboriginal language		260	
	Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰		F	
	Female		Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	1,460
			Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	970
Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²		310 ^E		
Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²		650		
Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}		F		
Does not speak an Aboriginal language		440		
Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰		F		
Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹		1,460		
Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²		1,100		
Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}		410		
Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}		670		
Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}		F		
Does not understand an Aboriginal language		320 ^E		
Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰		F		
55 years and over		Both sexes	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	1,410
			Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	1,050
	Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²		540	
	Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²		480	
	Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}		F	
	Does not speak an Aboriginal language		360	
	Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰		F	

Age group ⁴	Sex	Self-rated ability to speak and understand an Aboriginal language ²	2012
		Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	1,410
		Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²	1,200
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}	740
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}	440
		Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}	F
		Does not understand an Aboriginal language	210 ^E
		Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F
	Male	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	570
		Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	470
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²	200 ^E
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²	250 ^E
		Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}	F
		Does not speak an Aboriginal language	110 ^E
		Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F
		Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	570
		Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²	530
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}	290 ^E
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}	230 ^E
		Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}	F
		Does not understand an Aboriginal language	F
		Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F
	Female	Total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language	840
		Speaks an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ⁸	590
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ²	340 ^E
		Speaks primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ²	230 ^E
		Ability to speak primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{2, 10}	F
		Does not speak an Aboriginal language	250 ^E
		Not specified if speaks an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F
		Total, ability to understand an Aboriginal language ¹¹	840
		Understands an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words ¹²	680
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, very well or relatively well ^{12, 13}	450
		Understands primary Aboriginal language, with effort or only a few words ^{12, 13}	210 ^E
		Ability to understand primary Aboriginal language not specified ^{10, 12, 13}	F
		Does not understand an Aboriginal language	160 ^E
		Not specified if understands an Aboriginal language ¹⁰	F

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Symbol legend:

- ^E Use with caution
- ^F Too unreliable to be published

Footnotes:

1. Source: Aboriginal Peoples Survey 2012.
2. Excludes persons living on Indian reserves or settlements.
3. Aboriginal identity includes persons living off reserve who reported being an Aboriginal person, that is, First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit) and/or those who reported Registered or Treaty Indian status, that is registered under the Indian Act of Canada, and/or those who reported membership in a First Nation or Indian band. The sum of the categories included in this variable is greater than the total population estimate for Aboriginal identity because a person may have reported more than one Aboriginal identity: for example, a person could self-identify as both First Nations and Métis.
4. Atlantic includes Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick.
5. Registered or Treaty Indian status refers to whether or not a person reported being a Registered or Treaty Indian. Registered Indians are persons who are registered under the Indian Act of Canada. Treaty Indians are persons who belong to a First Nation or Indian band that signed a treaty with the Crown. Registered or Treaty Indians are sometimes also called Status Indians.
6. Proxy reporting was used in the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey for most children aged 6 to 14 years, nearly half of youth aged 15 to 17 years and for adults in certain specific situations (for example when the selected adult was not able to answer for health related reasons, due to a language barrier, or because the selected respondent was going to be away from home for the duration of the survey.)
7. All percentages for "self-rated ability to speak and understand an Aboriginal language" are calculated using the number of persons in "total, ability to speak an Aboriginal language" as denominator.
8. Respondents who indicated being able to speak an Aboriginal language and who identified their primary Aboriginal language spoken (see following footnote) were asked, "How would you rate your ability to speak this Aboriginal language? Would you say you can speak... Very well? Relatively well? With effort? Only a few words?".
9. The primary Aboriginal language spoken is either (1) the only Aboriginal language a person is able to speak, or (2) the Aboriginal language that the person can speak the best, if he or she can speak more than one Aboriginal language (up to three languages can be reported). Secondary Aboriginal languages have not been assessed for ability level.
10. "Not specified" categories consist of item non-response ("Refusal", "Don't know", and "Not stated").
11. Respondents who indicated not being able to speak an Aboriginal language were asked if they were able to understand an Aboriginal language, even if only a few words. All respondents who indicated being able to either speak or understand an Aboriginal language and who identified their primary Aboriginal language spoken or understood (see footnotes 9, 13) were asked, "How would you rate your ability to understand this Aboriginal language? Would you say you can understand... Very well? Relatively well? With effort? Only a few words?".
12. Includes persons who are able to speak an Aboriginal language, and persons who are not able to speak an Aboriginal language but are able to understand an Aboriginal language.
13. The primary Aboriginal language understood is either (1) the only Aboriginal language a person is able to understand, or (2) the Aboriginal language that the person can understand the best, if he or she can understand more than one Aboriginal language (up to three languages can be reported). Secondary Aboriginal languages have not been assessed for ability level. Persons who can speak an Aboriginal language were not asked to indicate their primary Aboriginal language understood, since it is assumed that their primary Aboriginal language spoken is also their primary Aboriginal language understood.
14. Bootstrapping techniques were used to produce the coefficient of variation (CV) and 95% confidence intervals (CIs).
15. Data with a coefficient of variation (CV) from 16.6% to 33.3% are identified by an (E) and should be interpreted with caution.
16. Data with a coefficient of variation (CV) greater than 33.3% were suppressed (F) due to extreme sampling variability.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 576-0009 - Aboriginal peoples survey, self-rated ability to speak and understand an Aboriginal language, by Aboriginal identity, age group and sex, population aged 6 years and over, Canada, provinces and territories, occasional (persons unless otherwise noted), CANSIM (database). (accessed:)

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