

French Language Lessons

by Wikibooks

Table of Contents

Introduction

1. Introduction to Studying French
2. Reading French - Lire le français

Lessons

1. Leçon 1 : Se présenter
Lesson 1: Introducing Yourself
2. Leçon 2 : Grammaire de base
Lesson 2: Basic Grammar
3. Leçon 3 : Voyager
Lesson 3: Travelling
4. Leçon 4 : Verbes
Lesson 4: Verbs
5. Leçon 5 : Récréation
Lesson 5: Recreation
6. Leçon 6 : Le passé
Lesson 6: Past Tense
7. Leçon 7 : La famille
Lesson 7: Family
8. Leçon 8 : L'école
Lesson 8: School
9. Leçon 9 : La nourriture et les boissons
Lesson 9: Food and Drink
10. Leçon 10 : Faire des courses
Lesson 10: Shopping
11. Leçon 11 : La maison
Lesson 11: The House
12. Leçon 12 : Le corps

Lesson 12: The Body

13. Leçon 13 : La culture

Lesson 13: Culture

Introduction to Studying French

About French

French is a [Romance language](#), descended from Latin and closely related to Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and Romanian. It is the native tongue of over 77 million people and has an additional 68 million non-native speakers. In medieval times and until the 19th century, it was often the language used in diplomacy, culture, administration, royal courts across Europe and also in trade, thus appropriately becoming the *lingua franca* of its time.

In modern terms, it is still significantly used as a diplomatic language, being an official language of the United Nations, the Olympic Games, and the European Union. It is spoken in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Luxemburg, Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Haiti, the Ivory Coast, Madagascar, the Congo, Algeria, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Togo, Gabon, the Seychelles, Burundi, Chad, Rwanda, Djibouti, Cameroon, Mauritius, and Canada (mostly in the province of Québec, where it is the primary language, but it is also used in other parts of the country - notably New Brunswick, which is the only bilingual province. All consumer product packages in Canada are required by law to have both English and French labels).

French-speaking people have made incursions upon the British Isles many times in the past, most noticeably in the Norman Invasion of 1066. For this reason, although English is a [Germanic language](#), at least a third of the English lexicon is derived from French.

Advice on Studying French

French tends to have a bad reputation amongst English speakers as hard to learn. While it is true that it poses certain difficulties to native English-speakers, it may be noted that English is also considered to be 'difficult', and yet we learnt it without the benefit of already knowing a language.

Learning any new language requires some commitment, generally long-term. Remember that, like any skill, it requires a certain amount of effort. And if you do not practice your French regularly, it is highly likely that you will begin to forget it. Try to make it a part of your schedule; even if it's not daily, at least make it regular.

Remember that you are learning a new skill. Try to master the simple stuff before moving on to the more complex. We all have to add and subtract before we can do calculus.

French is a complete language. While this course can teach you to read and write in French, this is only half of the skills that make up fluency. A written document cannot teach much about listening to and speaking French. You must train all of these skills, and they will reinforce one another. For listening and speaking, finding a native speaker to help you once you have some skill will help you with these skills.

The very best way to learn French is to get amnesia in France or another French-speaking country. This allows you to start with a clean slate, as babies do. However, most of us are unwilling to take that step. The next best thing is immersion. If you are serious about learning French, a period of immersion (where you go to live in a Francophone culture) is a good idea once you are moderately studied. Most countries are in the relative vicinity of a French-speaking country.

If you can't travel to a French-speaking country, then try listening to French-language programs on the radio, TV, or the Internet. Rent or buy French-language movies. Pay attention to pronunciation. Grab a French speaker you meet and talk to him or her in French. Listen, speak, and practice.

Read French newspapers and magazines. Again, an excellent source is Google's news page, which links to French-language news stories, which will enrich your vocabulary.

Reading French - Lire le français

The French alphabet

letter	pronunciation	name in French(in IPA transcription)
Aa	like a in <i>father</i>	/a/
Bb	like b in <i>baby</i> *	/be/
Cc	before <i>e</i> and <i>i</i> : like c in <i>center</i> before <i>a</i> , <i>o</i> , or <i>u</i> : like c in <i>cat</i>	/se/
Dd	like d in <i>dog</i>	/de/
Ee	approx. like oo in <i>book</i> **	/ə/
Ff	like f in <i>fog</i>	/ɛf/
Gg	before <i>e</i> and <i>i</i> : like s in <i>measure</i> before <i>a</i> , <i>o</i> , or <i>u</i> : like g in <i>get</i>	/ʒe/
Hh	<i>aspirated h</i> : see note below* <i>non-aspirated h</i> : not pronounced***	/aʃ/
Ii	like ea in <i>team</i>	/i/
Jj	like s in <i>measure</i>	/ʒi/
Kk	like k in <i>kite</i>	/ka/
Ll	like l in <i>lemon</i>	/ɛl/
Mm	like m in <i>minute</i>	/ɛm/
Nn	like n in <i>note</i>	/ɛn/
Oo	<i>closed</i> : approx. like u in <i>nut</i>	/o/

	<i>open</i> : like o in <i>nose</i>	
Pp	like p in <i>pen</i> *	/pe/
Qq	like k in <i>kite</i>	/ky/ see 'u' for details
Rr	force air through the back of your throat just as if you were gargling	/εR/
Ss	like s in <i>sister</i> at beginning of word or with two s 's or like z in <i>amazing</i> if only one s	/εS/
Tt	like t in <i>top</i>	/te/
Uu	Say the English letter e , but make your lips say "oo".	/y/
Vv	like v in <i>violin</i>	/ve/
Ww	Depending on the derivation of the word, like v as in <i>violin</i> , or w in <i>water</i>	/dubløve/
Xx	either /ks/ in <i>socks</i> , or /gz/ in <i>exit</i>	/iks/
Yy	like ea in <i>leak</i>	/igrək/
Zz	like z in <i>zebra</i>	/zεd/

Audio: [OGG](#) (101KB)

Final consonants and the liaison

In French, certain consonants are silent when they are the final letter of a word. The letters *p* (as in 'coup'), *s* (as in 'héros'), *t* (as in 'chat') and *x* (as in 'paresseux'), are never pronounced at the end of a word.

b and *p*

Unlike English, when you pronounce the letters 'b' and 'p' in French, little to no air should be expended from your mouth. In terms of [phonetics](#), the difference in the French 'b' and 'p' and their English counterparts is one of [aspiration](#) (this is not related to the similarly named concept of '[h' aspiré](#)' below, but is a slight extra puff of air accompanies the [stop](#)). Fortunately, in English both aspirated and unaspirated variants ([allophones](#)) actually exist, but only in specific environments. If you're a native speaker, say the word 'pit' and then the word 'spit' out loud. Did you notice the extra puff of air in the first word that doesn't come with the second? The 'p' in 'pit' is aspirated [p^h]; the 'p' in 'spit' is not (like the 'p' in *any* position in French).

EXERCISE 1

1. Get a loose piece of printer paper or notebook paper.
2. Hold the piece of paper about one inch (or a couple of centimeters) in front of your face.

3. Say the words *baby*, and *puppy* like you normally would in English. Notice how the paper moved when you said the 'b' and the 'p' respectively.
4. Now, without making the piece of paper move, say the words *belle* (the feminine form of beautiful in French, pronounced like the English 'bell. '), and *papa*, (the French equivalent of "Dad").
 - If the paper moved, your pronunciation is slightly off. Concentrate, and try it again.
 - If the paper didn't move, congratulations! You pronounced the words correctly!

Aspirated vs. non-aspirated *h*

In French, the letter *h* can be aspirated, (*h aspiré*), or not aspirated, (*h non aspiré*), depending on which language the word was borrowed from. What do these terms mean?

- **Ex.:** the word **héros**, (*hero*) has an aspirated *h*, because when the definite article *le* is placed before it, the result is *le héros*, and both words must be pronounced separately. However, the feminine form of *héros*, **héroïne** is a non-aspirated *h*. Therefore, when you put the definite article in front of it, it becomes *l'héroïne*, and is pronounced as one word.

The only way to tell if the *h* at the beginning of a word is aspirated is to look it up in the dictionary. Some dictionaries will place an asterisk (*) in front of the entry word in the French-English *H* section if the *h* is aspirated. Other dictionaries will include it in the pronunciation guide after the key word by placing a (') before the pronunciation. In short, the words must be memorized.

Here is a table of some basic *h* words that are aspirated and not aspirated:

aspirated	non-aspirated
héros , hero (<i>le héros</i>)	héroïne , heroine (<i>l'héroïne</i>)
haïr , to hate (<i>je hais or j'haïs...</i>)	habiter , to live (<i>j'habite...</i>)
huit , eight (<i>le huit novembre</i>)	harmonie , harmony (<i>l'harmonie</i>)

EXERCISE 2

1. Grab an English-French-English dictionary, and find at least ten aspirated *h* words, and ten non-aspirated *h* words
2. Make a column of the two categories of *h*-word.
3. Look at it every day and memorize the columns.

Accents

There are five different kinds of accent marks used in written French. They are:

accent	letters	examples
--------	---------	----------

	used	
acute accent (<i>accent aigu</i>)	é only	éléphant: <i>elephant</i>
grave accent (<i>accent grave</i>)	è, à, ù	fièvre: <i>fever</i> , là, <i>there</i> où: <i>where</i>
circumflex (<i>accent circonflexe</i>)	â, ê, î, ô, û	gâteau: <i>cake</i> , être: <i>to be</i> , île: <i>island</i> , chômage: <i>unemployment</i> , dû: <i>past participle of devoir</i>
diaeresis (<i>tréma</i>)	ë, ï, ü, ÿ**	Noël: <i>Christmas</i> , maïs: <i>corn</i> , aigüe: <i>acute(fem)*</i>
cedilla (<i>cétille</i>)	ç only	français: <i>French</i>

- Note : As of the spelling reform of 1990, the diaeresis indicating *gu* is not a digraph on words finishing in *guë* is now placed on the u in standard (AKA "académie française" French) : aigüe and not aiguë, cigüe and not ciguë, ambigüe and not ambiguë (acute(fem), conium, ambiguous). Since this reform is relatively recent and not known in vulgar surrounding, both spellings can be used interchangeably (you might even get a point knocked off if you write "aigüe" in a text, it happened to me!)
 - Note : The letter ÿ is only used in very rare words, most old town names : L'Haÿ-Les-Roses (Paris suburb). Pronounced like ï.

Acute accent, *accent aigu*

The **acute accent** (*French, accent aigu*) is the most common accent used in written French. It is only used with the letter *e* and is always pronounced /ay/.

One use of the *accent aigu* is to form the past participle or regular *-er* verbs.

infinitive	past participle
aimer, <i>to love</i>	aimé, <i>loved</i>
regarder, <i>to watch</i>	regardé, <i>watched</i>

Another thing to note is if you are unsure of how to translate certain words into English from French, and the word begins with *é*, replace that with the letter *s* and you will occasionally get the English word, or an approximation thereof:

- **Ex.:**
 - étable --> *stable* (for horses)
 - école --> *scole* --> *school*
 - il étudie --> *il studie* --> *he studies*
- And to combine what you already know about the *accent aigu*, here is one last example:
 - étranglé (from *étrangler*) --> *stranglé* --> *strangled*

NB: This will **not** work with **every** word that begins with *é*.

Grave accent, *accent grave*

- **à and ù**

In the case of the letters *à* and *ù*, the **grave accent** (*Fr. **accent grave***), is used to graphically distinguish one word from another.

without <i>accent grave</i>	with <i>accent grave</i>
a (3rd pers. sing of avoir , <i>to have</i>)	à (preposition, <i>to, at</i> , et al.)
la (definite article for feminine nouns)	là (<i>there</i>)
ou (conjunction, <i>or</i>)	où (<i>where</i>)

- **è**

Unlike *à* and *ù*, *è* is not used to distinguish words from one another. The *è* used for pronunciation. In careful speech, an unaccented *e* is pronounced /euh/, and in rapid speech is sometimes not pronounced at all. The *è* is pronounced like the letter *e* in *pet*.

Leçon 1 : Se présenter - Lesson 1: Introducing Yourself

Dialogue 1

Two good friends—Marie and Jean—are meeting:

- *Marie*: Salut Jean. Ça va ?
- *Jean*: Ça va bien, merci. Et toi, ça va ?
- *Marie*: Pas mal.
- *Jean*: Quoi de neuf ?
- *Marie*: Pas grand-chose.
- *Marie*: Au revoir Jean.
- *Jean*: Au revoir, à demain.

Vocabulary 1

Audio: [OGG](#) (353Kb)

bonjour, salut	hello (formal), hi (informal)
Comment allez-vous? (formal), comment ça va?/ça va ? (informal)	how are you?
ça va bien	I'm doing well (lit. I'm going well)
merci	thank you
et toi ? et vous ?	and you? (informal) and you? (formal)
pas mal	not bad
bien	good

pas si bien/pas très bien	not so well
comme ci, comme ça	so-so
Désolé(e)	I'm sorry.
quoi de neuf ?	what's up (about you)? (lit. what's new)
pas grand-chose	not much (lit. not big-thing)
au revoir	bye (lit. with reseeing, akin to German auf Wiedersehen)
à demain	see you tomorrow (lit. at tomorrow)
Au revoir, à demain.	Bye, see you tomorrow

Dialogue 2

Audio: [Ogg](#) (65 Kb)

Two people—Monsieur Bernard and Monsieur Lambert—are meeting for the first time:

- *Monsieur Bernard* : Bonjour. Comment vous appelez-vous ?
- *Monsieur Lambert* : Je m'appelle Jean-Paul Lambert. Et vous ?
- *Monsieur Bernard* : Moi, je suis Marc Bernard. Enchanté.
- *Monsieur Lambert* : Enchanté.

Vocabulary 2

Audio: [Ogg](#) (55Kb)

Bonjour	Hello; Good day
Comment vous appelez-vous?/Quel est votre nom?	What is your name? (formal) (lit. how are you called)
Tu t'appelles comment?	What is your name? (informal)
Je m'appelle...	My name is... (lit. I am called...)
Vous	You (formal)
Moi	Me
Je	I
Je suis...	I am...
Enchanté(e).	Nice to meet you (lit. enchanted)

Vous vs. tu

It is important to know when to use "vous" and when to use "tu" in French.

"Vous" is a plural form of "you". This is somewhat equivalent to "y'all", "youse", "you guys", "all of you", except that it is much more formal than all but the [latter](#) example.

"Vous" is also used to refer to single individuals to show respect, to be polite or to be neutral. It is used in occasions when talking to someone who is important, someone who is older than you are, or someone you are unfamiliar with. Note the conversation between M. Bernard and M. Lambert above as an example of this use.

Conversely, "tu" is the singular and informal form of "vous" (you) in French. It is commonly used when referring to a friend and a family member, and also used between children or when addressing a child. If it is used when speaking to a stranger, it signals disrespect.

As a rule of thumb, use "tu" only when you would call that person by his first name, otherwise use "vous". French people will make it known when they would like you to refer to them by "tu".

The French alphabet

The French alphabet is: **a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z**

An approximate pronunciation is: **ah bay say day euh eff jhay ash ee zhee kah el em enn oh pay ku air ess tay ue vay dubl-vay eeks ee-grehk zedh**

Audio: [OGG](#) (101KB)

In addition, French uses several accents which are worth understanding. These are: à, è, ù, (grave accents) and é (acute accent) which only applies to e. A circumflex applies to all vowels as well: â, ê, î, ô, û. And also a tréma (French for diaeresis) for vowels: ä, ë, ï, ö, ü, ÿ and combined letters: æ and œ

Describing yourself

Now that you have successfully said hello and how are you to your partner, it would be a good idea to tell them a little about yourself. When stating your nationality or job, it is not necessary to say that you are 'un(e)' whatever-it-is, only that, for example, "Je suis Australienne". This is an exception to the normal rule.

Please use the [The Nations of the World Appendix](#) to find out what your country is called in French, and its gender.

Please note that there is both a masculine and feminine form of saying your nationality - for males and females respectively.

To say where you live now, you use the verb *habiter* - "to live (somewhere)" and you form it using the first person "Je" form (I/me) [present tense](#) - "*Je habite*" - which truncates to "*J'habite*". You then choose the right [gender](#) for the word "in", en, or aux.

Leçon 2 : Grammaire de base - Lesson 2: Basic Grammar

Grammar: Gender of Nouns | Grammaire: Genre des Noms

In French, all nouns have a **grammatical gender**, that is, they are masculine or feminine for the purposes of grammar only.

Most nouns that express entities with gender (people and animals) use both a feminine form and a masculine form, for example, the two words for "actor" in French are *acteur* (**m**) and *actrice* (**f**).

The nouns that express entities without gender (e.g., objects and abstract concepts) have only one form. This form can be masculine or feminine. For example, *la voiture* (the car) can only be feminine; *l'ordinateur* (the computer) can only be masculine.

There are some nouns that express entities with gender for which there is only one form, which is used regardless of the actual gender of the entity, for example, the word for person; *personne*; is always feminine, even if the person is male, and the word for teacher; *professeur*; is always masculine even if the teacher is female.

Examples:

Audio: [Ogg](#) (113 Kb)

Masculine

le cheval	the horse
le chien	the dog
le livre	the book
le bruit	the noise

Some endings that are usually used with masculine nouns are:

-age	le fromage	the cheese
-r	le professeur	the teacher
-t	le chat	the cat
-isme	le capitalisme	capitalism

Feminine

la colombe	the dove
la chemise	the shirt
la maison	the house
la liberté	liberty

Some endings that are usually used with feminine nouns are:

-ie	la boulangerie	the bakery
-ion	la nation	the nation
-ite/-	la fraternité	brotherhood

ité		
-nne/- mme/- lle	la fille	the girl
	l'indienne	the Indian
-nce	la balance	the scales

Unfortunately, there are many exceptions in French which can only be learnt. There are even words that are spelt the same, but have a different meaning when masculine or feminine; for example, *un livre* (**m**) means a book, but *une livre* (**f**) means a pound! Some words that appear to be masculine (like *la photo*) are in fact feminine, and vice versa. Then there are some that just don't make sense; *la foi* is feminine and means a belief, whereas *le foie* means liver. To help overcome this hurdle which many beginners find very difficult, be sure to **write vocabulary lists with the genders** and learn the genders along with the words.

Grammar: Definite and Indefinite Articles

The Definite Article

In English, the definite article is always “the”.

In French, the definite article is changed depending on the noun's:

1. Gender
2. Plurality
3. First letter of the word

There are three definite articles and an abbreviation. "Le" is used for masculine nouns, "La" is used for feminine nouns, "Les" is used for plural nouns (both masculine or feminine), and "L' " is used when the noun begins with a vowel or silent "h" (both masculine or feminine). It is similar to english, where "a" changes to "an" before a vowel.

Audio: [Ogg](#) (78Kb)

singular	feminine	la	la fille	the daughter
	masculine	le	le fils	the son
singular, starting with a vowel sound		l'	l'enfant	the child
plural		les	les filles	the daughters
			les fils	the sons
			les enfants	the children

Note: Unlike English, the definite article is used to talk about something in a general sense, a general statement or feeling about an idea or thing.

The Indefinite Article

In English, the indefinite articles are "a" and "an". "Some" is used as a plural article in English.

Again, indefinite articles in French take different forms depending on gender and plurality. The articles "Un" and "une" literally mean "one" in French.

Audio: [Ogg](#) (55Kb)

singular	feminine	une	une fille	a daughter
	masculine	un	un fils	a son
plural	des		des filles	some daughters
			des fils*	some sons

- Note : "des fils" does mean "some sons" but is an homograph: it can also mean "some threads".
- Note : *des* is used in French before plural nouns when no article is used in English. For example, In the sentence *I see people* , *people* would be *des gens* and not simply *gens*. Remember that if you are making a statement about people in general, such as *I like people*, *les gens* would be used.

Grammar: Subject pronouns

French has six different types of pronouns: the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person singular and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person plural.

Audio: [Ogg](#) (61Kb)

1st person	singular	je	I
	plural	nous	we
2nd person	singular	tu	you
	plural	vous	you
3rd person	singular	il, elle, on	he, she, one
	plural	ils, elles	they (masculine), they (feminine)

When referring to more than one person in the 2nd person, "vous" must be used. When referring to a single person, "vous" or "tu" may be used depending on the situation; see notes in lesson 1.

In addition to the nuances between *vous* and *tu*, as discussed in lesson 1, French pronouns carry meanings that do not exist in English pronouns. The French third person "on" has several meanings, but most closely matches the now archaic English "one". While in English, "One must be very careful in French grammar" sounds old-fashioned, the French equivalent "On doit faire beaucoup attention à la grammaire française" is quite acceptable. Also, while the third person plural "they" has no gender in English, the French equivalents "ils" and "elles" do. However, when pronounced, they normally sound the same as "il" and "elle", so distinguishing the difference requires understanding of the various conjugations of the verbs following the pronoun. Also, if a group of people consists of **both** males and females, the male form is used, even if there is only one male in a group of thousands of females.

In everyday language, “on” is used, instead of “nous”, to express “we”; the verb is always used in the 3rd person singular. For example, to say "We (are) meeting at 7 o'clock", you could say either “*On se rencontre au cinéma à sept heures.*” (colloquial) or “*Nous nous rencontrons au cinéma à sept heures.*” (formal).

Grammar: Conjugation

French verbs **conjugate**, which means they take different shapes depending on the subject. English verbs only have one conjugation; that is the third person singular (I see, you see, he/she **sees**, we see, they see). The only exception is the verb "to be", which is the only example of English verb conjugation; (I am; (thou art); you are; he/she is; we are; they are;). Most French verbs will conjugate into many different forms.

The verb être

Être can be translated to “to be” in English. Here, we will look at the conjugations in the present tense, or **present indicative**. There is one conjugation for each of the six subject pronouns.

Être Audio: [Ogg](#) (103Kb)

	French	English	French	English
1st person	je suis	I am	nous sommes	we are
2nd person	tu es	you are(familiar)	vous êtes	you are(polite or plural)
3rd person	il/elle/on est	he/she/on is	ils/elles sont	they are

Examples

Je suis avocat.	I am (a) lawyer.
Tu es à la banque.	You are at the bank.
Il est beau.	He is handsome.

Try to learn all these conjugations. They will become very useful in forming tenses.

Grammar: The verb avoir

"Avoir" can be translated as "to have".

Avoir Audio: [Ogg](#) (100Kb)

avoir - to have

	French	English	French	English
1st person	j'ai	I have	nous avons	we have
2nd person	tu as	you have	vous avez	you have (polite)
3rd person	il/elle/on a	he/she/one has	ils/elles ont	they have

Examples

J'ai deux stylos.	I have two pens.
Tu as trois frères.	You have three brothers.
Il a une idée.	He has an idea.

Leçon 3 : Voyager - Lesson 3: Travelling

Adjectives - Les adjectifs

Just like articles, French adjectives also have to match the nouns that they modify in gender and plurality.

Regular Formation

Most adjective changes occur in the following manner:

- Feminine: add an -e to the masculine form
 - un garçon intéressant --> une fille intéressante
 - un ami amusant --> une amie amusante
 - un camion lent --> une voiture lente
- Plural: add an -s to the masculine form
 - un garçon intéressant --> des garçons intéressants
 - une fille intéressante --> des filles intéressantes

Pronunciation

Generally, the final consonant is pronounced only when it comes before an -e. Most adjectives, such as those above, are affected by this rule.

- Masculine Pronunciation: *intéressan, amusant, lent*

- Feminine Pronunciation: *intéressant, amusant, lent*

For more advanced rules, see the topic: [French Adjectives: Describing Nouns in French](#)

Vocabulary: Nationalities

Here is a list of nationalities: Audio: [Ogg](#) (300Kb)

Masculine	Feminine	English
allemand	allemande	German
américain	américaine	American
anglais	anglaise	English
australien	australienne	Australian
belge	belge	Belgian
birman	birmane	Burmese
cambodgien	cambodgienne	Cambodian
canadien	canadienne	Canadian
chinois	chinoise	Chinese
coréen	coréenne	Korean
espagnol	espagnole	Spanish
français	française	French
indien	indienne	Indian
indonésien	indonésienne	Indonesian
italien	italienne	Italian
japonais	japonaise	Japanese
malaisien	malaisienne	Malaysian
mauricien	mauricienne	Mauritian
néerlandais	néerlandaise	Dutch
philippin	philippine	Filipino
portugais	portugaise	Portuguese
singapourien	singapourienne	Singaporean
suédois	suédoise	Swedish
suisse	suisse	Swiss
thaïlandais	thaïlandaise	Thai
vénézuélien	vénézuélienne	Venezuelan
vietnamien	vietnamienne	Vietnamese

Nationalities are not capitalized as often in French as they are in English. If you are referring to a person, as in an Arab person or a Chinese person, the French equivalent is *un Arabe* or *un Chinois*.

However, if you are referring to the Arabic language or Chinese language, the French would not capitalize: *l'arabe*; *le chinois*. If the nationality is used as an adjective, it is normally left uncapitalized; un livre chinois, un tapis arabe.

Grammar - Negation

In order to say that one did *not* do something, the *ne ... pas* construction must be used. The *ne* is placed before the verb, while the *pas* is placed after.

Examples

Il est avocat.	He is [a] lawyer.
Il n'est pas avocat.	He is not [a] lawyer.
Nous faisons nos devoirs.	We are doing our homework.
Nous ne faisons pas nos devoirs.	We are not doing our homework.
Je joue du piano.	I play the piano.
Je ne joue pas du piano.	I do not play the piano.
Vous vendez votre voiture.	You sell your car.
Vous ne vendez pas votre voiture.	You do not sell your car.

When negating with the indefinite article (*un, une*), the indefinite article changes to *de*.

Examples

Il est belge.	He is Belgian.
Il n'est pas belge.	He is not Belgian.
Nous lisons un livre.	We read a book.
Nous ne lisons pas de livre.	We do not read a book.
Je mange une cerise.	I eat a cherry.
Je ne mange pas de cerise.	I do not eat a cherry.

When negating in the *passé composé*, the *ne ... pas* (in this case, *n'... pas*) are placed around the auxiliary *avoir*.

For more, see [Negative Expressions](#)

Vocabulary: Traveling

Audio: [Ogg](#) (Kb)

il y a	there is, there are
l'aéroport (m.)	airport
l'autobus (m.)	bus
l'avion (m.)	aircraft, airplane
les bagages	baggage
le billet	ticket (for train, airplane)
le métro	subway, underground
la poste	post office
le taxi	taxi
le ticket	ticket (for bus, métro)
le train	train
la valise	suitcase
la voiture	car

Vocabulary: Colors

Audio: [Ogg](#) (Kb)

Masculine	Feminine	English
blanc	blanche	white
gris	grise	gray
noir	noire	black
rouge	rouge	red
orange	orange	orange
jaune	jaune	yellow
vert	verte	green
bleu	bleue	blue
violet	violette	violet
marron	marron	brown

		(everything but hair)
brun	brune	brown (except for hair = Dark Haired)
rose	rose	pink
safran	safranne	saffron

Vocabulary: Numbers

Audio: [Ogg](#) (Kb)

un	1	une unité (a unity)
deux	2	
trois	3	
quatre	4	
cinq	5	
six	6	
sept	7	
huit	8	
neuf	9	
dix	10	une dizaine (one ten)
onze	11	
douze	12	une douzaine (one dozen)
treize	13	
quatorze	14	
quinze	15	
seize	16	
dix-sept	17	
dix-huit	18	
dix-neuf	19	
vingt	20	
vingt et un	21	
vingt [deux - neuf]	22-29	
trente	30	
trente et un	31	

trente [deux - neuf]	32-39	
quarante	40	
cinquante	50	
soixante	60	
soixante-dix	70	
soixante-et-onze	71	
soixante-[douze - dix-neuf]	72-79	
quatre-vingts	80	
quatre-vingt-un	81	
quatre-vingt-[deux - neuf]	82-89	
quatre-vingt-dix	90	
quatre-vingt-[onze - dix-neuf]	91-99	
cent	100	une centaine (one hundred)
[deux - neuf] cent	200-900	
mille	1.000	un millier (one thousand)
(un) million	1.000.000	
(un) milliard	1.000.000.000	

Things of note about numbers:

- For 70-79, it builds upon "soixante" but past that it builds upon a combination of terms for 80-99
- Only the first (21,31,41,51,etc) have "et un"; but past this it is simply both words consecutively (vingt-six, trente-trois, etc)
- For 100-199, it looks much like this list already save that "cent" is added before the rest of the number; this continues up to 1000 and onward.

Vocabulary: Time

Audio: [Ogg](#) (Kb)

In French, "il est" is used to express the time; though it would literally translate as "he is", it is actually, in this case, equivalent to "it is" (unpersonal "il"). Unlike in English, it is always important to use "heures" ("hours") when referring to the time. In English, it is OK to say, "It's nine," but this wouldn't make sense in French.

Quelle heure est-il ?	What time is it?
Il est une heure.	It is one o'clock.
Il est trois heures.	It is three o'clock.
Il est dix heures.	It is ten o'clock.

Il est midi.	It is noon.
Il est minuit.	It is midnight.
Il est quatre heures cinq.	It is five past four.
Il est quatre heures et quart.	It is a quarter past four.
Il est quatre heures quinze.	It is four fifteen.
Il est quatre heures et demie.	It is half past four.
Il est quatre heures trente.	It is four thirty.
Il est cinq heures moins vingt	It is twenty to five
Il est quatre heures quarante.	It is four forty.

Vocabulary: Days

Quel jour sommes-nous aujourd'hui ?	What day is it?
Nous sommes...	It is...
lundi	Monday
mardi	Tuesday
mercredi	Wednesday
jeudi	Thursday
vendredi	Friday
samedi	Saturday
dimanche	Sunday
avant-hier	the day before yesterday
hier	yesterday
aujourd'hui	today
demain	tomorrow
après-demain	the day after tomorrow

Notes:

- *What day is it today?* is equivalent to *Quel jour sommes-nous ?*.
 - *Quel jour sommes-nous ?* can be answered with *Nous sommes...*, *C'est...* or *On est...* (last two are less formal).
 - *Nous sommes...* is not used with *hier*, *aujourd'hui*, or *demain*. *C'était* (past) or *C'est* (present/future) must be used accordingly.
-

Leçon 4 : Verbes - Lesson 4: Verbs

Grammar - Regular Verbs

French has three different types of regular verbs: **-er**, **-ir**, and **-re** verbs. To conjugate, drop the **-er**, **-ir**, or **-re** to find the "stem" or "root". Add endings to the root based on the subject and tense, as demonstrated below for the present tense. Conjugations for *jouer* (to play), *finir* (to finish), and *attendre* (to wait) are shown as examples.

-er verbs; jouer - to play

pronoun	ending	verb
je	-e	joue
tu	-es	joues
il/elle	-e	joue
nous	-ons	jouons
vous	-ez	jouez
ils/elles	-ent	jouent

-ir verbs; finir - to finish

pronoun	ending	verb
je	-is	finis
tu	-is	finis
il/elle	-it	finit
nous	-issons	finissons
vous	-issez	finissez
ils/elles	-issent	finissent

-re verbs; attendre – to wait

pronoun	ending	verb
je (<i>j'</i>)	-s	attends
tu	-s	attends
il/elle	-	attend
nous	-ons	attendons
vous	-ez	attendez
ils/elles	-ent	attendent

Note: In all conjugations, *je* changes to *j'* when followed by a vowel. Example: J'attends. Also, as a rule of thumb: "h" is considered a vowel; as in "J'habite...".

Grammar - Irregular Verbs

Grammar - Faire

The verb *faire* is translated to *to do* or *to make*. It is irregularly conjugated (it does not count as a regular -re verb) as follows:

faire - to do, to make

	French	English	French	English
1st person	je fais	I do	nous faisons	we do
2nd person	tu fais	you do	vous faites	you do (polite)
3rd person	il/elle fait	he/she/it does	ils/elles font	they do

Grammar - Avoir

The verb *avoir* translates to *to have*. It is not a regular -ir verb; it is irregularly conjugated.

avoir - to have

	French	English	French	English
1st person	j'ai	I have	nous avons	we have
2nd person	tu as	you have	vous avez	you have (polite)
3rd person	il/elle a	he/she/it has	ils/elles ont	they have

For a list of all irregular verbs, see [Irregular Verb Conjugations](#)

Leçon 5 : Récréation - Lesson 5: Recreation

Example Dialog

Here is a short dialog about people planning/doing leisure activities. Besides the new vocabulary you should also have a look at how the verbs are conjugated depending on the subject of the sentence.

- *Jean-Paul* : Qu'est-ce que vous faites ?
- *Marc et Paul* : Nous jouons au tennis.
- *Marie* : Je finis mes devoirs.
- *Michel* : J'attends mon ami.
- *Pierre* : Je vais au parc.
- *Christophe* : Je viens du stade.

Vocabulary for Dialog

Qu'est-ce que vous faites?	What are you doing?
faire	to do
jouer	to play
finir	to finish
(mes) devoirs	(my) homework
attendre	to wait (for)
(mon) ami(e)	(my) friend
aller	to go
le parc	park
venir	to come
le stade	stadium

Grammar - À and De

The preposition *à* can indicate a destination, a location, a characteristic, measurement, a point in time, purpose, and several other things which will be covered later.

When *le* follows *à*, the *à* and *le* combine into *au*. Similarly, *à* and *les* combine into *aux*.

The preposition *de* can indicate an origin, contents, possession, cause, manner, and several other things which will be covered later.

When *le* follows *de*, the *de* and *le* combine into *du*. Similarly, *de* and *les* combine into *des*.

Grammar - Aller

The verb *aller* is translated to *to go*. It is irregularly conjugated (it does not count as a regular -er verb) as follows:

aller

je	vais
tu	vas
il	va
nous	allons
vous	allez
ils	vont

Aller is used with the preposition *à*. Example: *Je vais au stade*.

Grammar - Venir

The verb *venir* is translated to *to come*. It is irregularly conjugated (it does not count as a regular -ir verb) as follows:

venir

je	viens
tu	viens
il	vient
nous	venons
vous	venez
ils	viennent

When it means *to come from*, *venir* is used with the preposition *de*. Example: *Nous venons du stade*.

You can also use *venir* with a verb to state that you have recently accomplished an action. Example: *Je viens de finir mes devoirs* (I've just finished my homework).

Vocabulary - Places

la bibliothèque	library (caution: a <i>librairie</i> is a bookshop)
le parc	park
la piscine	swimming pool
la plage	beach
le restaurant	restaurant
salle de concert	concert hall
le stade	stadium
le théâtre	theater

Grammar - Jouer

The verb *jouer* is a regular -er verb meaning *to play*. It can be used to refer to both sports and instruments.

When referring to sports, use *jouer à*, but when referring to instruments, use *jouer de...*

As always, *jouer* must be conjugated rather than left in the infinitive.

jouer (à)

au baseball	baseball
au basket	basketball
au football	soccer; football
au football américain	American football
au golf	golf
au tennis	tennis
au volley	volleyball
aux cartes	cards
aux dames	checkers/ draughts
aux échecs	chess

jouer (de)

de la clarinette	clarinet
du piano	piano
de la batterie	drums (singular in French)
du violon	violin
de la guitare	guitar

Leçon 6 : Le passé - Lesson 6: Past Tense

Grammar - Past Tense

Passé composé, *passé simple*, *imparfait* and *plus-que-parfait* are the four most common past tenses in French, though *passé simple* is used in writing only.

Passé composé

It is a compound tense--it has two parts. The first is the *auxiliary verb*, the second is the *past participle*. Every verb has one past participle that does not change (there are some exceptions, as one will learn later).

There are two auxiliary verbs: *avoir* and *être*. One must only conjugate the proper auxiliary, and then merely add on the past participle.

To find the past participle, the stem of the infinitive must be determined. To do so, drop the -er, -ir, -oir or -re, as usual. Then, add an ending as shown in the following table:

word	Example Verb	Remove Ending	Add Ending	Example P. Part
	jouer	-er	-é	joué
	finir	-ir	-i	fini
	vouloir	-oir	-u	voulu
	attendre	-re	-u	attendu

However, the verbs *avoir*, *être*, and *faire* have irregular past participles.

verb	P. Part.
avoir	eu
être	été
faire	fait

Most verbs form the *passé composé* with *avoir*, however there are a small number of verbs that are always conjugated with *être*. The most common are:

verb	example	
aller	Je suis allé au cinéma.	I went to the cinema.
venir	Je suis venu en france.	I came to France.
arriver	Le train est arrivé.	The train has arrived.
partir	Elle est partie travailler.	She left to go to work.
rester	Je suis resté à la maison.	I stayed home.
retourner	Il est retourné au restaurant.	He returned to the restaurant.
tomber	Je suis tombé dans la piscine.	I fell into the pool.
naître	Je suis né en octobre.	I was born in october.

mourir	Il est mort en 1917.	He died in 1917.
passer	Il est passé devant la maison.	It happened in front of the house.
monter	Je suis monté au sommet.	I climbed to the top.
descendre	Il est descendu du train.	He got out of the train.
sortir	Je suis sorti avec mes amies.	I went out with my friends.
entrer	Je suis entré dans ma chambre.	I entered my room.
rentrer	Il est rentré tôt de l'école.	He came back early from school.

(I recommend adding this, and don't know how to put in the circumflex). Also, reflexive or pronomial verbs must be conjugated with être under most circumstances. For example, the verb "se réfléchir" is conjugated in the first person singular by je me suis réfléchi.

The verbs that take être can be easily remembered by the Acronym MRS. RD VANDERTRAMP:

- M:monté
- R:resté
- S:sorti
- R:revenu
- D:devenu
- V:venu
- A:arrivé
- N:né
- D:descendu
- E:entré
- R:rentré
- T:tombé
- R:retourné
- A:allé
- M:mort
- P:parti

However, One must know that these verbs take their conjugated avoir when they are immediately followed by a direct object

For Example:

- *Je suis* descendu with the direct object "mes baggages" becomes:
- *J'ai* descendu mes baggages

Another example:

- Je *suis* monté with the direct object "mes baggages" becomes:
- J'*ai* monté mes baggages

Yet another example but with ils instead of Je:

- Ils *sont* sortis with direct object "leur passport" becomes:
- Ils *ont* sorti leur passport

Passé simple

Unlike English, there is a literary past tense, used when writing formally. This past tense is named the *passé simple*. It is relatively simple to predict when to use this tense; for every occurrence of the *passé composé* in conversational French, one simply uses the *passé simple* in literary French.

To conjugate in this tense, one finds the stem and appends the following, as according to the table:

Subject	Add Ending	Conjugated Verb
Je	-ai	dansai
Tu	-as	dansas
Il / Elle / On	-a	dansa
Nous	-âmes	dansâmes
Vous	-âtes	dansâtes
Ils / Elles	-èrent	dansèrent

It should be noted that être, along with a few other verbs are consistent in their irregularities in the *passé simple* as well.

Imperfect - Imparfait

The imparfait is used to "set the tone" of a past situation. An example in English being: "We were singing when Dad came home." It tells what was going on when a particular action or event occurred. In French, the above example would be: "Nous chantions quand papa est rentré."

In order to conjugate the imperfect,

- take the 1st person plural of the verb you want to conjugate:

jouer (to play)

	singular	plural
1st person	je joue	<i>nous jouons</i>
2nd person	tu joues	vous jouez
3rd person	il joue	ils jouent

- Remove the *-ons* ending to find the stem, and add these endings:

subject	ending	jouer (<i>nous jouons</i>)	finir (<i>nous finissons</i>)	attendre (<i>nous attendons</i>)
je	<i>-ais</i>	jouais	finissais	attendais
tu	<i>-ais</i>	jouais	finissais	attendais
il/elle/on	<i>-ait</i>	jouait	finissait	attendait
nous	<i>-ions</i>	jouions	finissions	attendions
vous	<i>-iez</i>	jouiez	finissiez	attendiez
ils/elles/	<i>-aient</i>	jouaient	finissaient	attendaient

- Note: The only verb that has an irregular stem (one not derived from the *nous* form of the present indicative) is être. The imperfect ending are added to ét___. Every other verb uses the *nous* form of the present indicative as its root.
- Note: For more information, see [Imperfect \(French\)](#)

Plus-que-parfait

The *plus-que-parfait* is used when there are two occurrences in the past and one wants to symbolise that one occurrence happened before the other. In English, this is used in a phrase like "I *had given* him the toy before he went to sleep." In this example, there are two past tenses, but they occur at different times. The *plus-que-parfait* can be used to indicate the occurrence of one before the other. Essentially, the past before the past.

In French, the *plus-que-parfait* is formed by conjugating the auxiliary verb in the *imparfait* and adding the past participle. So to conjugate *je mange* (I eat) in the *plus-que-parfait*, one finds the appropriate auxiliary verb (*avoir*), conjugates it (*avais*) and finds the past participle of *manger* (*mangé*). So, the conjugation of *Je mange* in the *plus-que-parfait* becomes *j'avais mangé* or, in English, *I had eaten*.

Examples

J'ai parlé français.	I spoke French (<i>on one particular occasion</i>).
Je parlais français.	I spoke French (<i>during a period of time, and I don't speak French any more</i>).
Nous avons réussi l'examen.	We passed the test.

Il a été mon ami.	He was my friend (<i>and he is not my friend any more</i>)
Il était mon ami lorsque...	He was my friend when . . .
Ils ont fait leurs devoirs.	They did their homework.
Il est venu.	He came (<i>and I don't need to say when</i>)
Il vint le lendemain.	He came the day after.
Il venait tous les jours.	He came/used to come every day.
Il était déjà venu.	He had already come.

It should be noted that these examples are making use of all the possible past tenses; not just the plus-que-parfait.

Grammar - Object Pronouns

Direct Objects

While the subject of a sentence initiates an action (the verb), the direct object is the one that is affected by the action. A direct object pronoun is used to refer to the direct object of a previous sentence:

Pierre mange du pain .	Pierre eats some bread .
Pierre le mange.	Pierre eats it .

The following table shows the various types of direct object pronouns:

me/ m'	me
te/ t'	you
le/ l'	he, it
la/ l'	she, it
nous	us

vous	you
les	them

Notes:

- The pronoun form with an apostrophe is used before a vowel.
- The direct object pronoun for *nous* and *vous* is the same as the subject.
- When the direct object comes before a verb in a perfect tense, a tense that uses a past participle, the direct object must agree in gender and plurality with the past participle. For example, in the phrase *Je les ai eus*, or *I had them*, the past participle would be spelled *eus* if the direct object, *les*, was referring to a masculine object, and *eues* if *les* is referring to a feminine object.

Indirect Objects

An indirect object is an object that would be asked for with *To whom...?* or *From whom...?*. It is called indirect because it occurs usually together with a direct object which is affected directly by the action:

L'homme donne du pain <i>à Pierre</i> .	The man gives some bread <i>to Pierre</i> .
Il lui donne du pain.	He gives bread to him .

The following table shows the various types of direct object pronouns:

me/ m'	me
te/ t'	you
lui	he, she, it
nous	us
vous	you
leur	them

Notes:

- The pronoun form with an apostrophe is used before a vowel.
- The direct object pronoun for *nous* and *vous* is the same as the subject.

The bread *is given* by the man (direct). Pierre *gets the given* apple (indirect).

Leçon 7 : La famille - Lesson 7: Family

Vocabulary - The Family

les parents	parents
le père	father
la mère	mother
le frère	brother
la soeur	sister
les enfants	children
le fils	son
la fille	daughter
les grand-parents	grandparents
le grand-père	grandfather
la grand-mère	grandmother
les petits-enfants	grandchildren
le petit-fils	grandson
la petite-fille	granddaughter
l'oncle	uncle
la tante	aunt
le neveu	nephew
la nièce	niece
le cousin	cousin (m)
la cousine	cousin (f)
le mari	husband
la femme	wife
ma famille éloignée	my extended family

Leçon 8 : L'école - Lesson 8: School

Vocabulary - School

le professeur	teacher
l'étudiant	student (m)
l'étudiante	student (f)
le stylo	pen
le crayon	pencil
la calculatrice	calculator
le pupitre	desk
le tableau	chalkboard
la craie	chalk
le livre	book
le bouquin	book
le cahier	notebook
le papier	paper
la feuille de papier	sheet of paper
l'école (f)	school
le collège	high school (grades 6-9)
le lycée	high school (grades 10-12)
l'université (f)	university
la fac(ulté)	university
la bibliothèque	library
la bourse	scholarship
l'examen (m)	test
les devoirs	homework
la classe	class
intelligent(e)	intelligent
stupide	stupid

Note:

- The word *professeur* is considered masculine at all times, even if the teacher is female. The only case when "professeur" can be preceded by feminine determiner is either when contracting it in colloquial language "la prof", or when adding a few words before : "madame/mademoiselle la/le professeur".

The Subjunctive Mood - Le subjonctif

The subjunctive mood is rarely used in English. It is used in French, we conjugate the verb differently to express:

- doubt (Je doute que...)
- emotion (Je crois[believe] que...)
- desire (Je veux[want] que...)
- other 'subjunctive' expression. (Il faut que...)

An example expression that uses the subjunctive: *Je veux que tu viennes*. meaning "I want you to come" (literally: "I want that you come").

Another common example is the "Il faut que..." phrase, meaning "It is necessary that".

The conjugation of the present subjunctive (the present tense in the subjunctive mood) is not that difficult. Simply remove the 'ent' from the 'ils/elles' form of the verb and add the appropriate endings.

MANGER - Ils/Elles mangent - Stem **mang**

Que je mange
Que tu manges
Que il/elle/on mange
Que nous mangions
Que vous mangiez
Que ils/elles mangent

The ending are the same for most irregular verbs as well as 'ir' and 're' verbs.

FINIR - Ils/Elles finissent - Stem **finiss'**

Que je finisse
Que tu finisses
Que il/elle/on finisse
Que nous finissions
Que vous finissiez
Que ils/elles finissent

Unfortunately there are many verbs which are irregular in the subjunctive mood.

Our good friends **être** and **avoir** are irregular in the present subjunctive as well. These are important because in the past subjunctive (the passé composé in subjunctive) what is needed is the auxiliary verbs in the subjunctive.

ETRE

Que je sois
Que tu sois
Qu'il/elle/on soit
Que nous soyons
Que vous soyez
Qu'ils/elles soient

AVOIR

Que j'**aie**
Que tu **aies**
Qu'il/elle/on **ait**
Que nous **ayons**
Que vous **ayez**
Qu'ils/elles **aient**

Other irregular verbs in the subjunctive

ALLER

Que je **aille**
Que tu **ailles**
Qu'il/elle/on **aille**
Que nous **allions**
Que vous **alliez**
Qu'ils/elles **allient**

FAIRE

Que je **fasse**
Que tu **fasses**
Qu'il/elle/on **fasse**
Que nous **fassions**
Que vous **fassiez**
Qu'ils/elles **fassent**

Phrases

Present

- Il faut que vous fassiez vos devoirs.
- Il faut que vous alliez à l'école.
- Il faut écouter la prof. - It's necessary to listen to the teacher

-To make a general statement using "Il faut que..." that does not have a subject, you may use the infinitive.

- Je crois que tu aies lu le livre. (I believe that you have read the book)

-This statement is in the Passé Subjonctif. Notice how the "helping verb" is conjugated in the subjunctive, but the Passé Composé participle is used for the verb. -Lu is the past participle for Lire, to read.

- Note: For more information see [the topic](#).
-

Leçon 9 : La nourriture et les boissons - Lesson 9: Food and Drink

Vocabulary - Food and Drink

General

la cuisine	kitchen
la salle à manger	dining room
le restaurant	restaurant
avoir faim	to be hungry
avoir soif	to be thirsty
manger	to eat
boire	to drink
prendre	to take
vouloir	to want
le repas	the meal
le petit-déjeuner	breakfast
le déjeuner	lunch
le dîner	dinner

Canadian and Belgian French has an off-by-one behaviour with meals : breakfast is called *déjeuner*, lunch is called *dîner* and dinner is *souper*.

Fruits and Vegetables

les fruits	fruits
la banane	banana
la cerise	cherry
le citron	lemon
la fraise	strawberry
l'orange (f)	orange
la pomme	apple
le raisin	grape
les légumes	vegetables

la carotte	carrot
les épinards	spinach
l'oignon (m)	onion
les petits pois	peas
la pomme de terre	potato
la tomate	tomato

Meat and Seafood

la viande	meat
l'agneau (m)	lamb
la dinde	turkey
le jambon	ham
le porc	pork
le poulet	chicken
le boeuf	beef
la saucisse	sausage
les fruits de mer (m pl)	shellfish, seafood
La coquille Saint-Jacques(f)	scallop
le poisson	fish
les anchois (m pl)	anchovies
le saumon	salmon
l'anguille (f)	eel

Dairy Products

les produits laitiers - dairy products

le beurre	butter
le fromage	cheese
le lait	milk
le yaourt/le yoghurt	yogurt

Drinks

la bière	beer
le café	coffee
le chocolat chaud	hot chocolate
la limonade	lemonade
l'eau (f)	water
le jus	juice
le jus d'orange	orange juice
le jus de pomme	apple juice
le jus de raisin	grape juice
le jus de tomate	tomato juice
le thé	tea
le vin	wine

les boissons - drinks

Desserts

le bonbon	candy
le chocolat	chocolate
le gâteau	cake
la glace	ice cream
la mousse	mousse
la tarte	pie

le dessert - dessert

Other Foods

la confiture	jam
les frites	"French fries"
la mayonnaise	mayonnaise
la moutarde	mustard
le pain	bread
le poivre	pepper
le riz	rice

le sel	salt
le sucre	sugar

Silverware, Etc.

l'assiette (f)	plate
le bol	bowl
le couteau	knife
la cuillère	spoon
la fourchette	fork
la serviette	napkin
la tasse	cup
le verre	glass

Grammar - Manger

The verb *manger* is translated to *to eat*. It is a regular -er verb that is *stem changing*. Stem changing verbs have slight changes in the stem, but use endings employed in conjugating other regular verbs.

For *manger* and all other regular -ger verbs, the stem change is adding an *e* after the *g*. This only applies in the nous form. In this case, the change is made to preserve the soft *g* pronunciation rather than the hard *g* that would be present if the *e* were not included.

manger - to eat

je	mange
tu	manges
il	mange
nous	mangeons
vous	mangez
ils	mangent

Grammar - Boire

The verb *boire* is translated to *to drink*. It is irregularly conjugated (it does not count as a regular -re verb) as follows:

boire - to drink

je	bois
----	------

tu	bois
il	boit
nous	buvons
vous	buvez
ils	boivent

The irregular past participle for *boire* is *bu*.

Grammar - Vouloir

The verb *vouloir* is translated to *to want*. It is irregularly conjugated (it does not count as a regular -ir verb) as follows:

vouloir - to want

je	veux
tu	veux
il	veut
nous	voulons
vous	voulez
ils	veulent

Grammar - Partitive Article

The partitive article *de* indicates, among other things, the word *some*. As learnt earlier, *de* and *le* contract (combine) into *du*, as *de* and *les* contract into *des*. Also, instead of *du* or *de la*, *de l'* is used in front of vowels.

When speaking about food, the partitive article is used at some times while the definite article (*le, la, les*) is used at other times, and the indefinite article (*un, une*) in yet another set of situations.

When speaking about preferences, use the definite article:

J'aime <i>la</i> glace.	I like ice cream.
Nous préférons le steak.	We prefer steak.
Vous aimez les frites	You like French fries.

When speaking about eating or drinking an item, there are specific situations for the use of each article.

Def. art.	specific/whole items
J'ai mangé <i>la</i> tarte.	I ate the (whole) pie.
Ind. art.	known quantity
J'ai mangé <i>une</i> tarte.	I ate a pie.

Part. art.	unknown quantity
J'ai mangé <i>de la</i> tarte.	I ate some pie.

In the negative construction, certain rules apply. As one has learnt in a previous lesson, *un* or *une* changes to *de* (meaning, in this context, any) in a negative construction. Similarly, *du*, *de la*, or *des* change to *de* in negative constructions.

Nous avons mangé <i>une</i> tarte.	We ate a pie.
Nous n'avons pas mangé <i>de</i> tarte.	We did not eat a pie/ We did not eat any pie.
Nous avons mangé <i>de la</i> tarte.	We ate some pie.
Nous n'avons pas mangé <i>de</i> tarte.	We did not eat some pie/ We did not eat any pie.

Note : Now you should understand better how that "Quoi de neuf?"(what's new?) encountered in the very first lesson was constructed... "Quoi de plus beau?!" (what is there prettier?)

Grammar - En & Y

Note how we say *Je veux du pain* to say 'I want some bread' ? But what happens when we want to say 'I want some' without specifying what we want? In these cases, we use the pronoun 'en'. As well, 'en' can mean 'of it' when 'it' is not specified. For instance, instead of saying *J'ai besoin de l'argent*, if the idea of money has already been raised, we can just say 'J'en ai besoin'. This is because what *en* does is replace *du*, *de la* or *des* when there is nothing after it.

Like with 'me', 'te' and other pronouns, *en* (meaning 'some') comes before the verb.

Tu joues du piano? Non, je n'en joue pas	Do you play piano? No, I don't play it.
Vous prenez du poisson? Oui, j'en prends.	Are you having fish? Yes, I'm having some.
Vous avez commandé de l'eau? Oui, nous en avons commandé.	Did you order some water? Yes, we ordered some.

The other pronoun that works like this is 'y'. Just as *en* replaces *du*, *de la*, and *des* when there is no noun specified, 'y' replaces *au*, *à*, and *aux* when there is no noun specified. It mostly means *there*.

Tu vas à l'école? Oui, j'y vais.	Do you go to school? Yes, I go there.
Vous êtes allées au nouveau café? Non, nous n'y sommes pas allées.	Did you go to the new cafe? No, we didn't go there.
Ils jouent au foot? Oui, ils y jouent.	Do they play football/soccer? Yes, they play it.
Elle pense aux garçons. Oui, j'y pense aussi.	She thinks about boys. Yes, I think about it (them) as well.

For more detailed information, see [French Pronouns](#)

Leçon 10 : Faire des courses - Lesson 10: Shopping

Vocabulary - Shopping

French	English
faire des courses; faire du shopping	to go shopping
faire du lèche-vitrine	to go window shopping
acheter	to buy
payer	to pay
vendre	to sell
le magasin	shop; store
le supermarché	supermarket
le hypermarché	hypermarket; big supermarket
le grand magasin	department store
la boucherie	butcher shop 1
la boulangerie	bakery 2
le dépôt de pain	a place that sells bread 2
la charcuterie	delicatessen 3
l'épicerie	grocery 4
le marché	outdoor market
la pâtisserie	pastry shop
la pharmacie	pharmacy; chemist

1. French butchers do not sell pork, pork products, nor horsemeat. For these products, go to a *charcuterie*.
2. In France, bakeries only sell fresh bread. Places where they sell bread that is not fresh are called *dépôt de pain*.
3. '*Charcuteries*' sell things besides pork products, including pâte, salami, cold meats, salads, quiches and pizzas.
4. An alternative to an '*épicerie*' is an *alimentation générale* (a general foodstore).

Grammar - Acheter

The verb *acheter* translates to *to buy*. It is a regular -er verb, but, like *manger*, it is stem changing. Unlike *manger*, the stem change applies to all forms *except nous* and *vous*. The stem change, which applies in all verbs with an *e* in the second-to-last syllable, involves adding a grave accent (`) over the *e* in the stem, as shown in the following table:

acheter - to buy

	French	English	French	English
1st person	j'achète	I buy	nous achetons	we buy

2nd person	tu achètes	you buy	vous achetez	you buy (polite)
3rd person	il/elle achète	he/she/it buys	ils/elles achètent	they buy

[\[edit\]](#)

Grammar - Payer

The verb *payer* translates to *to pay*. It is a regular -er verb, but, it is also stem changing. Like *acheter*, the stem change applies to all forms *except nous* and *vous*. The stem change, which applies in all verbs ending in -yer, involves changing the *y* to an *i*, as shown in the following table:

payer - to pay

	French	English	French	English
1st person	je paie	I pay	nous payons	we pay
2nd person	tu paies	you pay	vous payez	you pay (polite)
3rd person	il/elle paie	he/she/it pay	ils/elles paient	they pay

Grammar - Vendre

The verb *vendre* is a regular -re verb:

vendre - to sell

	French	English	French	English
1st person	je vends	I sell	nous vendons	we sell
2nd person	tu vends	you sell	vous vendez	you sell (polite)
3rd person	il/elle vend	he/she/it sells	ils/elles vendent	they sell

Practise Conversations

Let's practise some of these words and verbs in some everyday shopping talk:

1. À la boulangerie (At the bakery)

Bernard (le boulanger) : *Bonjour madame*

Camille (la cliente) : *Bonjour monsieur*

Bernard : *Qu'est-ce que vous voulez ?*

Camille : *Je voudrais **acheter** une baguette, s'il vous plaît*

Bernard : *C'est tout ?*

Camille : *Non, je voudrais deux croissants aussi*

Bernard : *Très bien - ça fait deux euros, s'il vous plaît*

Camille : *Merci beaucoup*

Useful vocabulary here:

"Qu'est-ce que vous voulez ?" - What would you like?

"Je voudrais..." - I would like . . .

"C'est tout ?" - Is that all?

"Ça fait deux euros" - That'll be two euros

Remember your verb - **acheter** (to buy).

Note of a frenchman :

"Qu'est-ce que vous voulez ?" is a little abrupt. We use mostly "Que voulez-vous ?" or "Que désirez-vous ?".

Same for "C'est tout ?", we use most of the time "Ce sera tout ?" (future tense) or "Et avec ceci ?" (and with this?).

2. Au marché (At the market)

Marie (la marchande) : *Bonjour monsieur*

Clément (le client) : *Bonjour madame*

Clément : *Qu'est-ce que vous avez à **vendre** ?*

Marie : *J'ai un grand choix de fruits et légumes*

Clément : *Très bien. Est-ce que vous avez des cerises ?*

Marie : *Oui... elles coûtent deux euros le kilo*

Clément : *Bon, je voudrais trois kilos, s'il vous plaît*

Marie : *Très bien, monsieur. Alors, pour trois kilos il faut **payer** six euros, s'il vous plaît.*

Useful vocabulary here:

"Qu'est-ce que vous avez... ?" - What do you have?

"Un grand choix" - A large range

"Des cerises" - Some cherries

"Elles coûtent deux euros le kilo" - They (feminine) cost two euros per kilo

"Il faut" - One must/You need to

Remember your verbs - **vendre** (to sell) and **payer** (to pay).

Leçon 11 : La maison - Lesson 11: The House

Vocabulary - the Household

French	English
La maison	House/Home
L'appartement(m)	Flat/Apartment
La pièce	Room
Le plafond	Ceiling
Le sol	Ground
La cave	Basement
Le grenier	Attic
La cuisine	Kitchen
La salle à manger	Dining room
La salle de bain	Bathroom
La chambre à coucher	Bedroom
Les toilettes (f) (no singular)	Water-closet
La porte	Door
La fenêtre	Window
Le toit	Roof
Le mur	Wall
L'escalier (m)	Stair
L'étage (m)	Level
Le rideau	Curtain
La chaise	Chair
La table	Table
L'armoire (f)	Cupboard
Le lit	Bed
Le tapis	Carpet

Vocabulary - Housework

le ménage

the housework

faire la cuisine	to do the cooking
faire la lessive/le linge	to do the laundry
faire le jardin	to do the gardening
faire le lit	to make the bed
faire le ménage	to do the housework
faire la vaisselle	to do the dishes
faire les carreaux	to do the windows
faire les courses	to do the shopping/errands
faire le repassage	to do the ironing
mettre le couvert	to set the table
préparer un repas	to prepare a meal

Future and Conditional Tenses

There are three versions of the futur tense in French, the *futur simple*, the *futur composé*, and the *futur antérieur* (future perfect). The *futur composé* is formed by inserting the present form of *aller* before the infinitive, e.g. *elle va réussir* (she will pass, or she is going to pass) is the futur composé of *elle réussit*.

To conjugate a verb in the futur simple, one takes the infinitive and appends the following, as according to the table:

Subject	Add Ending	Conjugated Verb
Je	-ai	réussirai
Tu	-as	réussiras
Il / Elle / On	-a	réussira
Nous	-ons	réussirons
Vous	-ez	réussirez
Ils / Elles	-ont	réussiront

To conjugate a verb in the Conditional, one takes the infinitive and appends the following, as according to the table:

Subject	Add Ending	Conjugated Verb
Je	-ais	réussirais

Tu	-ais	réussirais
Il / Elle / On	-ait	réussirait
Nous	-ions	réussirions
Vous	-iez	réussiriez
Ils / Elles	-aient	réussiraient

Exercises

Try to describe your house or bedroom using the vocabulary. Don't forget prepositions.
You may also wish to talk about what housework you do.

Leçon 12 : Le corps - Lesson 12: The Body

Body parts

Here is the vocabulary to speak about body parts :

French	English
La tête	Head
Le corps	Body
Le bras	Arm
La jambe	Leg
La poitrine	Chest
Le ventre	Belly
L'épaule (f)	Shoulder
Le coude	Elbow
Le poignet	Wrist
La main	Hand
Le doigt	Finger

Le genou	Knee
Le pied	Foot
L'orteil (m)	Toe
L'oeil (m) (pl. les yeux)	Eye
La bouche	Mouth
La dent	Tooth
Le nez	Nose
L'oreille (f)	Ear
Le cou	Neck
La langue	Tongue
Les cheveux	Hair
L'ongle (m)	Nail
Le poumon	Lung
L'estomac (m)	Stomach
Le coeur	Heart
Le foie	Liver
L'intestin (m)	Intestine
L'os (m)	Bone
Le crâne	Skull
Le muscle	Muscle
Le cerveau	Brain
La rate	Spleen
L'utérus	Womb
Le nombril	Navel, belly button

Body position

And here is the vocabulary for body positions :

French	English
Debout	Standing
Assis	Seating
Couché	Laying down
À genoux	Kneeling

Accroupi

Squatted

Common sentences

When you 'catch a cold' you 'attrapes un rhume'. When you're sick, *tu es malade*. When you wish to say that parts of your body are sore, you say "J'ai mal à [body part] ...". Example: J'ai mal à la tête. (I have a headache); J'ai mal aux dents (My teeth hurt).

Exercises

- Point to different parts of the body and recite its name in French *par cœur*.

Leçon 13 : La culture - Lesson 13: Culture

Vocabulary - Culture

French Life

la religion	religion
le musulman	Muslim
Chrétien	Christian
L'Islam	Islam
l'athée (m.)	athiest
Le Père Noël	Santa Clause
le 14 june	Bastille Day
la langue	language
le fromage	cheese
l'agglomération (f.)	urban area
'Hexagone	France (borders)

News and Current Events

un quotidien

a daily newspaper

un hebdomadaire	a weekly magazine
l'actualité	news, current events
les nouvelles	news
les faits divers	local news items
se tenir informé(e)	to stay informed
la une	the frontpage

French Social Problems

le cambrioleur	burglar
un voleur	a thief
l'incendie (f.)	fire
le vanalisme	vandalism
l'acte de terrorisme (m.)	terrorism
la criminalité	crime

Les loisirs - Leisure Activities

le cinéma	cinema
la musique	music
le baladeur	walkman
une sortie	going out
un spectacle	a show
le théâtre	the theater
le repos	rest
le vacancier	a vacationer
la danse	dance
allumer/éteindre	to turn on/turn off
la télévision	television
le(la) télé spectateur(trice)	television viewer
le sport	sport