



French

PHRASEBOOK & DICTIONARY

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Look out for the following icons throughout the book:



'Shortcut' Phrase

Easy-to-remember alternative to the full phrase



Q&A Pair

Question-and-answer pair – we suggest a response to the question asked



Look For

Phrases you may see on signs, menus etc



Listen For

Phrases you may hear from officials, locals etc

LANGUAGE TIP

Language Tip

An insight into the foreign language

CULTURE TIP

Culture Tip

An insight into the local culture

How to read the phrases:

- Coloured words and phrases throughout the book are phonetic guides to help you pronounce the foreign language.
- Lists of phrases with tinted background are options you can choose to complete the phrase above them.

These abbreviations will help you choose the right words and phrases in this book:

a adjective
f feminine
inf informal
lit literal

m masculine
n noun
pl plural

pol polite
sg singular
v verb

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Learn about French, build your own sentences and pronounce words correctly.

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Travel Phrases

Ready-made phrases for every situation – buy a ticket, book a hotel and much more.



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Quick reference vocabulary guide – 3500 words to help you communicate.

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INTRO

French

français fron·say

Who Speaks French?

Official Language

CARIBBEAN

FRENCH GUIANA
GUADELOUPE
MARTINIQUE
HAITI

EUROPE

FRANCE
SWITZERLAND
LUXEMBOURG
BELGIUM
MONACOSOUTH
PACIFICFRENCH POLYNESIA
NEW CALEDONIA
WALLIS & FUTUNA
VANUATUCANADA
(QUEBEC)

AFRICA

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF
CONGO • GABON • CENTRAL
AFRICAN REPUBLIC • CHAD
NIGER • MALI • BURKINA FASO
CÔTE D'IVOIRE • TOGO • BENIN
CAMEROON • CONGO • RWANDA
BURUNDI • SENEGAL • GUINEA
COMOROS • MAYOTTE
MADAGASCAR • RÉUNION
SEYCHELLES • DJIBOUTI
GABON**Widely Understood** Algeria – Andorra – Egypt
Lebanon – Mauritania – Mauritius – Morocco – Tunisia**Why Bother**

You may be told of a cosy vineyard way off the tourist track, or discover that there's little merit in the stereotype about the French being rude.

Distinctive Sounds

Throaty **r**, silent **h**, nasal vowels (pronounced as if

you're trying to force the sound 'through the nose').

French in the World

French is the official language of a number of international organisations (including the UN and the International Olympic Committee). French films are

80 MILLION

speak French as their first language

50 MILLION

speak French as their second language

internationally renowned, and France has won the Nobel Prize in Literature more times than any other country.

French in France

Speaking a language other than their own is an emotional affair for the French, as attested by the online Musée des Horreurs (Museum of Horrors) of the Paris-based Défense de la Langue Française (DLF; Defence of the French Language; www.langue-francaise.org, in French).

False Friends

Warning: many French words look like English words but have a different

meaning altogether, eg *menu me·new* is a set lunch, not a menu (which is *carte kart* in French).

Language Family

Romance (developed from the Latin spoken by the Romans during their conquest of the 1st century BC). Close relatives include Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian.

Must-Know Grammar

French has a formal and informal word for 'you' (*vous voo* and *tu tew* respectively); it distinguishes between masculine and feminine forms of words, eg *beau/belle bo/bel m/f* (beautiful).

Donations to English

Numerous – thanks to the Norman invasion of England in the 11th century, some estimate that three-fifths of everyday English vocabulary arrived via French. You may recognise *café, déjà vu, bon vivant, cliché...*



A

B

C

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Understanding

KEY PHRASES

Do you speak English?

Parlez-vous anglais?

par·lay·voo ong·glay

I don't understand.

Je ne comprends pas.

zher ner kom·pron pa

What does ... mean?

Que veut dire ...?

ker ver deer ...

Q Do you speak English?

Parlez-vous anglais?
par·lay·voo ong·glay

A I speak a little.

Je parle un peu.
zher parl um per

Q Do you understand?

Comprenez-vous?
kom·prer·nay·voo

A I understand.

Je comprends.
zher kom·pron

A I don't understand.

Je ne comprends pas.
zher ner kom·pron pa

I need an interpreter who speaks English.

J'ai besoin d'un interprète de langue anglaise.
zhay ber·zwun dun nun·tair·pret der long ong·glay·zer

I'd like to practise French.

Je voudrais parler en français.
zher voo·dray par·lay on fron·say

What does ... mean?

Que veut dire ...?
ker ver deer ...

How do you pronounce this?

Comment le prononcez-vous?
ko·mon ler pro·non·say voo

LANGUAGE TIP
False Friends

Many French words look like English words but have a different meaning altogether – beware!

Here are a few:

car	kar coach/bus (not 'car', which is <i>voiture</i> vwa·tewr)
information	un-for·ma-syon news (not 'information', which is <i>renseignement</i> ron·sen·yer·mon)
introduire	un-tro·dweer insert (not 'introduce', which is <i>présenter</i> pray·zon·tay)
librairie	lee·bray·ree book shop (not 'library', which is <i>bibliothèque</i> bee·blee·o·tek)
menu	me·new set menu (not 'menu', which is <i>carte</i> kart)
prune	prewn plum (not 'prune', which is <i>pruneau</i> prew·no)
vacance	va·kons holidays (not 'vacancy', which is <i>poste vacant</i> post va·kon)

How do you write ...?

Comment est-ce qu'on écrit ...?
ko·mon es kon ay·kree ...

Could you please repeat that?

Pourriez-vous répéter, s'il vous plaît?
poo·ree·yay·voo ray·pay·tay seel voo play

Could you please write it down?

Pourriez-vous l'écrire, s'il vous plaît?
poo·ree·yay·voo lay·kreer seel voo play

LANGUAGE TIP

Reading French

In written French, you'll often see an *l'* in front of a word beginning with a vowel or a silent *h*: this replaces a *le* or a *la* (the) and is pronounced as a single word starting with an *l*, eg, *l'orange* lo·ronzh.

Generally, you don't pronounce a consonant at the end of a word, eg *faux* fo. There's one exception – final 'c', eg *sec* sek. Also, you do pronounce a final consonant if the next word starts with a vowel or an *h*, eg *faux ami* fo zami.

Could you please speak more slowly?

Pourriez-vous parler plus lentement, s'il vous plaît?
poo·ree·yay·voo par·lay plew
lon·ter·mon seel voo play



Slowly,
please!

Lentement,
s'il vous plaît!

lon·ter·mon
seel voo play