

BREATHE FRENCH

Learning made as easy as Breathing



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FRENCH ALPHABET

Letter	Pronunciation
A	/ah/ - the sound in 'aa'
B	/beh/ - similar to 'bay'
C	/seh/ - similar to 'say'
D	/deh/ - similar to 'day'
E	/uh/ - the sound in 'wool'
F	/eff/ - similar to English
G	/zheh/ - similar to the g in 'massage'
H	/ah-sh/ - said like 'osh' in gosh, usually silent in French but there are a few words with an aspirated 'h'
I	/ee/-/uh/ - the sound in 'wool' les cheveux (lay shuh-vuh) means 'hair'
J	/zhee/ - similar to jhee
K	/kah/ - sounds like English (rarely used in French)
L	/ell/ - sounds like English
M	/ehm/ - sounds like English
N	/ehn/ - similar to English, sometimes nasal
O	/oh/ - similar to french alphabet Pronunciation /ah/ - the sound in 'aa' to English
P	/peh/ - said like the 'pu' in 'put'
Q	/keoo/ - said like KEE with rounded lips
R	/ehr/ - guttural throat 'r', like gargling
S	/ess/ - usually one 's' sounds like 'z' double 's' sounds like 's'
T	/teh/ - said like 'tay'
U	/eew/ - said like EE with rounded lips
V	/veh/ - said like 'vay'
W	/doobluh veh/ - sounds similar to double vay (rarely used in French)
X	/eeks/ - similar to English
Y	/ee grehk/ - sounds like EE then gr-ek
Z	/zehd/ - sounds like zed

In French, there are 26 letters,

a, b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, z

There are six vowels:

a, e, i, o, u, h and (y) I grec, meaning greek i)

a: as in bat, madame, page

e: as the 'u' in cut, le, me

i: as 'ee' in seen, Paris

'o': as in poste, mode.

u: there is no similar sound for o as in English.

You can try to put your lips in position of saying the English 'u' and say the English 'e'.

It is close to the French 'u'.

bus, tu.

y: the same sound as in 'i' cycle,

There are 20 consonants:

b, d, f, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, z

They have more or less the same sound as in English.

Note the following variations in the sounds of c, g, h, j, l

1. C combines with a, o, u, the sound is 'k'

canton, Colombie.

2. ch sounds like 'sh'

dimanche, Champion, chat.

3. 'ph' sounds like the 'f' in English

photo, physique.

Combination of vowels

eau, 'au' as 'o' in

gâteau, auto, automne, tableau.

ou: as 'oo' in moon. touriste, vous.

oi: as 'wa' in water. moi, bois, bonsoir.

eu: much like 'e' in "her" deux, jeudi, bleu.

ui: say the French sound 'u' huit. aujourd' hui, cuisine.

LES SALUTATIONS THE GREETINGS

Bonjour!	Hello!
Bonsoir	Good evening
Bonne nuit	Good night
Salut!	Hello! Bye!
Âllo	Hello
Au revoir	Goodbye!
Enchanté(e)	Nice to meet you
À demain!	See you tomorrow!
Bon week-end!	Have a good weekend!
Bonne journée!	Have a good day
Monsieur (M.)	Mr.
Madame	Mrs
Quoi de neuf?	What's up?
Mademoiselle (Mlle.)	Miss
Oui	Yes
Non	No
Comment Ça va? S'il vous plaît	How are you? Please
Pardon	Excuse me
Désolé.	Sorry
Merci!	Thank you!
Merci beaucoup!	Thank you very much!

Here some important greetings from the list are explained so that you can use in every day life which you can practice with your friends.

1. Bonjour – Good morning/hello

We can use *bonjour* to say “good morning” or “hello” to someone when you’re seeing them for the first time in the day. It can be any time of the day.

2. Bonsoir – Good evening

It is used when you meet them at evening for the first time. Here the time doesn’t matter if you are late also.

3. Bonne nuit – Good night

Bonne nuit it is used in the night when you taking a leave and going away.

4. Salut – Hi

It is a casual form of saying hello it can be literally translated as *hai* in English.

Salut is appropriate when you meet some one younger or the one who is very close to you.

5. Allo – Hello

This French greeting is used exclusively for conversations on the telephone.

6. Au revoir – Goodbye!

This is a safe way to say goodbye in French. We can use this word with anyone irrespective of his age and profession.

7. Enchanté(e) – Nice to meet you

It’s polite to indicate that you’re delighted to meet someone after they introduce themselves, and this French greeting is the perfect way to do so. We generally say *glad* or *glad to meet you* in English language.

8. À demain! – See you tomorrow!

The word *demain* can be replaced with any day of the week if you know that you will see the other person soon.

À literally means **at** we can even say *À weekend* which means see you in week end.

À lundi which means see you on Monday. Similarly we can use for rest of the weekdays, like *À mardi* which means see you on Tuesday and *À jeudi* which means see you on Thursday.

9. Bon week-end! – Have a good weekend!

The expression *weekend* is an English word. This word has come into regular usage now and is acceptable and we use it a lot in France. French word for it is “*la fin de semaine*” everything was closed on Sunday. This French law which aims to protect the French lifestyle and the traditional Sunday lunch with family.

On Friday after work, French people migrate. They take their car and visit a friends house or their farm house, “*la maison de campagne*”, (Guest house) which maybe in the countryside, by sea, or in the mountains, They come back on Sunday, usually late afternoon.

10. Bonne journée – It is used to say have a nice day.

Its used when you are leaving from that place.

“**Bonne journée**” is a “good bye” that you use upto 4 pm

then you use “**bonne soirée**” for the evening while leaving and finally we use

“**bonne nuit**” which means good night.

11. Ça va? – It is used to say, how are you? The answer for this can be Ça va bien merci, which mean fine thank you.

12. S’il vous plaît – S’il vous plait means please, it can be used as a request.

13. Désolé – Means sorry as we use in English and when you want to say, I am sorry we use je suis désolé.

Exercise

How do you greet

1. When you meet some one in the morning _____
2. When you meet some one in evening _____
3. When you are leaving in the night _____
4. When you want to express gratitude _____
5. When you meet your cousin _____
6. When you wish your boss _____
7. When you meet a distant relative _____
8. When you meet your grand mother _____

Write the following words in french

English	French	English	French
Good evening		Please	
Yes		Good morning sir	
No		Good evening madam	
Hi (informal)		Good night Mr	
Excuse me		Thank you very much madam	
Sorry		Please madam	
Have a good day		Bye madam	
Good bye		Yes madam	
Mrs		Sorry miss	

LES ARTICLES

In french the articles are of two types:

1. Definite articles

Le, La, l', Les

2. Indefinite articles

Un, une, des

The table below summarizes the different forms of French articles.

	Definite article	
Masculine singular	Le	The
Feminine singular	La	
in front of a vowel a, e, i, o, u, h	l'	
Plural (masc/fem)	Les	

	Indefinite article	
Masculine singular	un	A & an
Feminine singular	une	
in front of a vowel a, e, i, o, u, h		
Plural (masc/fem)	des	

Note: des can be translated as “some” in English while writing

While learning new vocabulary, make your vocabulary lists with a definite or indefinite article for each noun which will help you learn

the gender of each noun along with the word itself. Then you will be learning the gender also instantly, which will be helpful to you. Otherwise, you will be spending lot of time and some confusion when you will be having more words to learn.

Examples:

French word	Gender	English meaning
Le fils	masculine	The son
La femme	feminine	The woman
Le chien	masculine	The dog
La chienne	feminine	The bitch
La table	feminine	The table
Le stylo	masculine	The pen
La pomme	feminine	The apple
La gomme	feminine	The eraser
La chaise	feminine	The chair
Le portable	masculine	The laptop
Le cahier	masculine	The note book
Le chat	masculine	The cat
La chatte	feminine	The cat
La porte	feminine	The door
La fille	feminine	The girl
Le papier	masculine	The paper
Le cheval	masculine	The horse
Le sac	masculine	The bag
La famille	feminine	The family
Le cousin	masculine	The cousin
La cousine	feminine	The cousin
Le avocat	masculine	The advocate
Le musicien	masculine	The musician
La musicienne	feminine	The musician

Looking at the examples you will easily understand the gender of the word we are talking about and we will easily identify the noun that weather it is **masculine or feminine**.

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