

# FRENCH

## FOR BEGINNERS

**THE BEST HANDBOOK FOR  
LEARNING TO SPEAK FRENCH!**



# French for Beginners

BY GETAWAY GUIDES

The Best Handbook for Learning to  
Speak French!

**2<sup>nd</sup> Edition**

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## Introduction

I want to thank you and congratulate you for downloading the book, “French for Beginners: The Best Handbook for Learning to Speak French!”

This book contains proven steps and strategies on how to start learning the French language. I hope that through this book, you will gain the confidence to start learning a new language, no matter how old you are. Do not worry if you have not yet learned any foreign language before. In this book, you will find the basic principles of the language which can make it easier for you to build phrases and sentences in French. You will learn not just basic phrases, but also French alphabet, sentence construction, as well as pronunciation.

Thanks again for downloading this book. I hope you enjoy it!

# Chapter 1: The French Language

People from all over the world love the French language and would love to learn it. In fact, there is a high likelihood that you are already familiar with some French phrases and words. Because of the French invasion in England during the eleventh century, the French language has given significant contributions to the English vocabulary. This means that even if you are not actively learning French but is adept in English, you are already using a lot of French words without you knowing.

Because of hundreds of years of interaction with the British and because of common ancient forefathers, French has offered English-speakers a fairly easy path to conversing using a different language. French and English share several similarities in sentence construction. You may even realize that a lot of French and English words have similar sounds. The limited French sounds may still be familiar to you because of movies and TV shows.

Some of these unique French sounds include the silent “h” and the gruff “r” sound; but this does not completely mean that everything you watch and hear on TV is totally accurate. Still, being able to adopt the French accent you have acquired from watching movies can help you a lot while learning the language.

Even if French is remotely related to the English language, it is more generally compared to other Romance languages such as Spanish and Italian. All these three languages were created from the Latin language used by the Romans during their invasions in 1 B.C.; but despite their common origin, the evolution of the French language is different from the evolution of Italian and Spanish (which still share a lot of similarities even up to today).

Currently, there are around thirty countries who name French as one of their official languages. In Canada, French is commonly used in the Quebec region only. While in Belgium, French is prevalently used in the Southern area only. The spread of the French language can be partly explained by the colonization of several nations in the Pacific, Africa and the Caribbean by France. On top of that, the French language was actually used as the official language for international diplomacy until the initial years of the twentieth century when the English language took over.

Until now, French is still used as the official language in several global

organizations such as the United Nations, the Red Cross and the International Olympic Committee. It is also used by the International Postal System which is why you can see “par avion” in most letters sent abroad.

There are also hundreds of English words that have exactly the same spelling in French. It has to be noted, though, that the pronunciation of these words vary and depends on whether the speaker is French or English. Also, the meaning of the words may be the same depending on the context in which it is used. In most instances, the gender of the noun for which these words are used is the same in both the English and French usage.

Some examples of these words include:

*Abattoir* - this word is spelled in exactly the same way both in French and English. It also has the same meaning even when it is used in various contexts. This is also one of the many words that originated in France and still retained its original French pronunciation.

*Absinthe* - this word has the same meaning when used in most contexts. However, the spelling could vary a little bit with the addition of either the letter 'L' or 'D' at the beginning of the word when used in certain contexts in French.

*Bourgeois* – this is one of the many words that migrated to the English world when the Normans conquered England in the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century. It is still pronounced in exactly the same way both in English and French and it has also retained its original meaning.

These similar words are one of the reasons that it is often very easy for native English-speakers to learn French in a matter of months. After all, these have given their tongues enough practice on how to roll about inside the mouth when pronouncing French words.

The similarity between these 2 words and a hundred or so other words can be attributed to the fact that the French and English alphabets both have the same basic letters. However, there are some variations on how each letter is pronounced, which is especially true with the consonants (this will be discussed further in succeeding chapters). Some letters are pronounced in a uniquely French fashion, while others such as the letter ‘z’ are pronounced in the same way that other major English-speaking countries pronounce them.

## **The French Alphabet**

The French alphabet is listed as follows along with its corresponding

pronunciation:

Aa – [ɑ]

Bb – [be]

Cc – [se]

Dd – [de]

Ee – [ə]

Ff – [ɛf]

Gg – [ʒe]

Hh – [[aʃ]

Ii – [i]

Jj – [ʒi]

Kk – [ka]

Ll – [ɛl]

Mm – [ɛm]

Nn – [ɛn]

Oo – [o]

Pp – [pe]

Qq – [ky]

Rr – [ɛr]

Ss – [ɛs]

Tt – [te]

Uu – [y]

Vv – [ve]

Ww – [dubl ə ve]

Xx – [iks]

Yy – [ig RE k]

Zz – [zɛd]

Note that the letter 'z' is pronounced as 'zed' in the same way that it is pronounced in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, and other countries that use English as its primary language.

## Chapter 2: The Role of Syllables in the French Language

In any language, syllables are always a necessary part of proper pronunciation. This is because syllables indicate the proper grouping, as well as the natural divisions, of the letters in every word. Syllables specifically affect the following aspects of pronunciation:

- Rythm
- Poetic meter
- Stress pattern

### **Rhythm and Word Stress**

Generally, all of the syllables in French words are stressed equally. It is common to hear English speakers put a stress on the 1<sup>st</sup> syllable which is certainly uncommon in French words. You can offset this minor error by trying to add a light stress at the last syllable of the word.

The rhythm of French sentences is established by cutting the sentence into relevant sections, and then putting a stress on the last syllable of every section. The stress on the last syllables is typified by a minor increase in intonation. Because of these stresses on the last syllables, the “beat” of French sentences is fairly regular.[transferred from Chapter 2 of the original book]

When dividing French words into syllables, the vowels that fall in each syllable should not be reduced into grunting ‘uh’ and ‘i’ sounds. This reduction may be common when speaking in English, but would be detrimental to the proper pronunciation of French syllables.

It should also be noted that French pronunciation has so-called open syllables. These are the syllables that end in vowel letters, specifically the letter ‘e’ and the letter ‘a’. The pronunciation of open syllables often depends on the group of letters that come before and after that syllable, as well as its placement within the group of letters that form the word. Often, the ‘e’ in an open syllable is pronounced as / ə / though most native French speakers drop it completely on words that are used in daily life.

Examples:

- *Ressembler* – there are three syllables: re-ssem-bler. Note that the first syllable ends in the letter ‘e’ while the second syllable has a consonant after the ‘e’. This means that the ‘e’ in re-is pronounced as /ə/ while the second ‘e’ is pronounced as a nasal vowel. So the pronunciation of the whole word would be /ʁə-sɑ̃-ble/.
- *Maternel* /mat ɛʁ n ɛ l/– on this example, the open syllable ends with the letter ‘a’ instead of ‘e’, but it is followed with two closed syllables that both have the letter ‘e’ as its only vowel. This means that the letter ‘e’ on both syllables would be pronounced as /ɛ/ like in the English words ‘help’ and ‘get’.

As opposed to open syllables where the pronunciation puts a stress on the ending vowel of a syllable, there are also several French words that end in consonants but are treated as open syllables because the last consonant letter is omitted. Most of these words are plural masculine forms and have the letters ‘e’ and ‘s’ at the end.

Examples are:

- *les* (pronounced as /le/) - the plural form of the word *le*(pronounced as /l ə /)
- *ces* (pronounced as /se/) – the plural form of the word *ce*(pronounced as /s ə /)

People who are trying to learn how to speak French wouldn’t have too much difficulty in learning the accent if they keep in mind that the word stress on all French words is always on the last syllable and if they understand how open syllables are treated in everyday usage.

## Chapter 3: Pronunciation

The different sounds you can hear in spoken French can nearly be heard in the English language, too, except for a few exceptions such as the deep-in-the-throat “r”, nasal vowels and the quaint “u” sound; but do not let these French sounds intimidate you. While learning the language, it can be quite effective to simply mimic the French accent you have heard from movies and TV shows.

### Vowel Sounds

In general, the sounds of French vowels are short and do not glide into other vowels. For instance, the word “café” is both included in the English and French vocabulary but their pronunciations slightly differ. The “ay” in the French “café” sounds sharper and shorter.

French vowels are also divided into soft vowels (the letters e and i) that are pronounced with a soft intonation, and hard vowels (the letters a, o, and u) that are pronounced with hard intonations. One thing to take note of about the vowel letters of the French language is that these are often pronounced in their purest forms. This is in contrast to the way that vowels are often pronounced by English-speakers with a ‘y’ or a ‘w’ sound at the end. For instance, in English, the letter o is often pronounced as ‘oh’ or ‘ow’, but in French it would just be pronounced as a short, sharp ‘o’.

There are also two different ways of writing, and therefore pronouncing, the letter ‘u’. When it is written as a single vowel right after a consonant, it should be pronounced with a short and sharp u sound similar to the English words ‘do’, ‘who’, and ‘shoes’. Some examples of French words with a short sharp u sound are:

- *fut*
- *jus*
- *tu*
- *vue*

A native English-speaker might pronounce these words with a ‘y’ sound before the ‘u’ so that the word *vue* would be pronounced as ‘view’. In order to avoid

this mistake, the speaker would have to make sure that the tongue is in the right position. Specifically, it should be bending slightly upward at the front portion of the mouth. The tip of the tongue should be reaching upward towards the alveolar ridge though it should not make contact with the ridge completely. The lips should be puckered in an o-looking position.

On the other hand, the letter u is also often written with a letter 'o' before it. Some examples of words with a combined o and u are:

- *fou*
- *tout*
- *vous*
- *bourreau*

The combined o and u vowels is pronounced in much the same way English-speakers would pronounce the word 'soup' albeit with a slight sound of the tongue sticking to the roof of the mouth. When pronouncing 'ou', the tongue is positioned in much the same way as pronouncing the single 'u' though this time it would be pulled backward instead of forward.

The slight differences in pronouncing French vowels, especially the 'u' and 'ou' sounds requires a lot of practice especially for English-speakers who are more used to pronouncing 'u' as 'yu'.

### **Nasal Vowel Sounds**

A nasal vowel is pronounced as if you are attempting to push the sound out of your nose instead of your mouth. Don't be intimidated because it is really simpler than you think. There are also some nasal vowels in the English language such as "sing" where "i" acquires a nasal sound because of the "ng". In French language, on the contrary, it is the nasal vowels that cause the succeeding nasal consonant sound to be dropped, but a "trace" of the dropped consonant can at times still be heard.

Most of the time, French nasal vowels are written right before the letters 'm' and 'n'. There may just be a single vowel causing the nasal quality of the word, such as the following:

- *blanc* - pronounced as /blông/ with a slight hint of a pronounced k at the end.

- *brun* - pronounced as /brung/
- *parfum* - the nasal sound is on the last syllable while the vowel on the first syllable is pronounced with a short and sharp intonation. This would then be pronounced as /pâhr-fang/, also with a slight trace of the m being pronounced at the end of the nasal sound.

Or there could also be two vowels that cause the nasal sound of the word. This often happens when the letter ‘a’ and ‘i’ or ‘i and e’ placed together right before the letter ‘m’ or ‘n’ in a sentence. Examples include:

- *faim* - pronounced as /fang/
- *certain* - pronounced as /cer-täng/
- *chien* - pronounced as /chi-yông/

Aside from all these, the French alphabet also has what is known as the open ‘eu’. Pronouncing these vowels would require the speaker to round his lips while keeping the mouth open. Words with open ‘eu’ vowels are pronounced in much the same way that the English words set, pet, and get are pronounced. Examples of words with open ‘eu’ vowels are:

- *fête* /fɛt/
- *tête* /tɛt/
- *père* /pɛr/
- *mère* /mɛr/

As is the case in French pronunciation of most words, the last vowel is completely omitted when pronouncing the words listed above.

There are also a lot of French words that contain the combined letters ‘e’, ‘a’, and ‘u’, such as the words *beau*, *chapeau*, and *chateau*. The combined ‘eau’ on these words is pronounced with a short ‘o’ sound, i.e. /bô/, /sha-pô/, and /sha-tô/. This is the same way that words with the combined letters ‘a’ and ‘u’ are pronounced, such as in words like *chaud* (hot) /shô/, *cauchemar*(nightmare) /kô ʒ h-mä/. Note that the final consonants are omitted from the pronunciation.

### **The Unstable ‘E’ Sound**

The letter ‘e’ is often considered as an unstable vowel in the French language because it is either pronounced or completely dropped when pronouncing certain words. Dropping the letter ‘e’ is often referred to as *élision* and the dropped ‘e’ can either be called an *e muet* or *e caduc*. *Élision* often happens when two

vowels are placed next to each other in two different words.

The vowel letter 'e' is often located at the end of the first word, and it is dropped if the second word starts with a vowel too. This means that the final pronunciation of the syllable with the *e muet* is completely without the *e* and with a stress on the vowel that has taken its place on the syllable. This often happens when any of the 9 basic French single-syllable pronouns are used before any word that starts with a vowel. These 9 syllables are:

*Ce* /sɛ/

*De* /dɛ/

*Je* /ʒɛ/

*Le* /lɛ/

*Me* /mɛ/

*Ne* /nɛ/

*Que* /kɛ/

*Se* /sɛ/

*Te* /tɛ/

Some examples include:

- *Je ne* (I do) – elided to *j'ne* /ʒə n/
- *Le arbre* (the tree) – elided to *l'arbre* /la R b R /

Other instances when the letter 'e' is dropped from pronunciation is when it is located beside other silent letters (letters that are completely dropped from intonation), especially if it is the last letter of the word.

Examples of these words include:

- *Homme* /awm/
- *Femme* /fɛm/

In some words, the letter 'e' is not completely dropped. The pronunciation is simply changed into a different vowel sound. This happens mostly on words wherein the letter 'e' is squeezed between two single consonants. Some examples include the following words:

- *Devoirs* /duh-vwar/

- *Logement*/l ɔ . ʒə . m ɑ̃ /
- *Galettes* /galta/
- *Parfaitement*/pa R f ε tm ɑ̃ /

On the other hand, emphasis is given to the pronunciation of the letter 'e' if it precedes a double consonant, such as on the following words:

- *Verrai*/v ε . ʒε /
- *Dessert* /dɛsɛr/

Being able to determine when to pronounce the letter 'e' and when not to is a basic necessity when on the process of learning the French accent. This is because a lot of French words contain this letter in the written spelling though only about half of these words actually pronounce the 'e' during intonation.

### **Consonant Sounds**

The consonant sounds in French are almost the same as the consonant sounds in English except for the "r" sound which is created at the back of the throat and somehow sounds like a roar or a growl. Of course, you can speak French using the English "r" but you will sound more like a natural French speaker if you can learn the French "r" sound. Believe me, it will be well worth your effort.

It is also important to remember that French consonants are pronounced with the tongues remaining tensed the whole time. And in order to properly pronounce the consonants, it is necessary to maintain an open mouth while enunciating. This is unlike the enunciation of most English words wherein the mouth is almost closed and the last letter, especially the consonant, is 'swallowed'.

### **The Semi-consonant W or Double V**

A lot of phonetics experts in the English language often refer to the letter 'W' as a vowel, specifically as a derivative of the letter 'u'. This is because it is often pronounced in a semi-vowel sort of way wherein the mouth is positioned in almost the same way as pronouncing the vowels. For instance, when trying to pronounce the word 'word', you might notice the lips puckering up at the beginning of the sentence.

On the other hand, the letter W is referred to as a semi-consonant in French because the letter itself is pronounced as a double v or du-blah-vay (since the letter V is pronounced as 'vay'). Most of the French words that have the semi-consonant double v are borrowed English. One example is the word *wagon* that denotes 'a train car' or 'a truckload of something' and is pronounced as /va-gôn/.

## The Semi-consonant Letter Y or i-grec

The French term for the letter Y, which is *igrec*, could be confusing for many non-French speaking individuals. But note that *igrec* does not denote how the letter is pronounced. It is used as a description or an indication of the letter's origin. Simply put, *igrec* should actually be written as "i grec" which means that it is the Greek symbol for the letter 'I'. This is also the same way that the letter Y is referred to in other European languages such as Russian and Italian.

There aren't that many native French words that use the letter y or the *igrec* because it is often used only in borrowed English words. This letter functions as either a consonant or a vowel depending on its placement:

1. If it is placed at the beginning of either a word or a syllable, then Y functions as a consonant. It would then be pronounced in the same manner that the letter Y is pronounced in English. Examples are the words *yaourt* /yéurt/ (French word for yogurt) and *yeux* /yuh/ (eye).
2. It is used as a vowel when placed in between 2 consonant letters and is pronounced like the y /e/ in the English word happy. One good example of this is the word *cyclisme* /sek-lez-mé/ (cycling).

The letter Y is also used as an adverbial pronoun that is used for replacing a noun or a prepositional phrase. For instance, when the specific name of a place is mentioned in a preceding sentence, the *igrec* is used for replacing the place name on follow-up sentences or questions. More specifically, the *igrec* is used as an equivalent to the English word 'there'.

Take the sentence below as an example. (Note that it has been broken down into specific phrases to emphasize how the letter y has replaced the noun):

Initial sentence: *Je veux retourner...*- this phrase indicates that the speaker wishes to return to a place. It is often followed by the mention of a specific place to complete the sentence, such as *en France* (to France) or *en England* (to England).

Follow-up sentence: *J'y étais...*- in this follow-up phrase, the speaker is indicating that he 'was (*étais*) there (*J'y*)'. This would then be followed by the mention of a time or date that would complete the sentence.

The *igrec* is also often used for replacing the French preposition *a* when it is referring to a noun or a verb that is connected to a preposition and an indirect

object.

### **Intonation**

When posing a question, the intonation of the French sentence is normally increased. Increase in intonation is also normally done when enumerating items wherein you would normally hear people's voice going up after every item until all items on the list have been enumerated, whereupon the voice will fall. Even individual words and short phrases are given stress on the final syllable only. However, there are also some instances when the last syllable of word that immediately precedes the final word of the sentence or phrase is also stressed in preparation for the stress that would be placed on the last syllable of the last word.

### **Writing**

You may already know that written French is a lot more complex compared to spoken French. Just looking at how endings of verbs are spelled will show you how complicated written French is. A verb may end with up to 5 letters and still sound similar to a verb that ends with only 2 letters. For instance, verbs ending with “-ai” and “-aient” both sound like “ay”; but you can take comfort from the fact that even native French people themselves sometimes find it difficult to spell French words. You may even want to watch the yearly National Spelling Competition in France to see how spelling French words is extremely difficult.

### **Reading**

In the written French language, you will frequently see an l' before a word that starts with a silent “h” or a vowel. L' basically takes the place of “le” or “la”. French words starting with L' is pronounced just like how you would pronounce words starting with the letter “l” such as l'orange.

In general, consonants found at the end of a French word are not pronounced. For example, “faux” is pronounced as “fo”. One exception are words that end with the letter “c” such as “sec” which is pronounced as “sek”; but you need to remember that you need to pronounce the consonant at the end of a word if the word that follows it begins with an “h” or a vowel. An example is “faux ami” which is pronounced as “fo zami”.

## Chapter 4: Tools for Building Phrases

### A or An

In the French language, a/an has two counterparts that are used depending on the noun they refer to – un for masculine nouns and une for feminine nouns. Examples: un ticket (a ticket), une carte postale (a postcard).

### Adjectives

“Je cherche un hôtel confortable.” (I am looking for a comfortable hotel.)

In French, generally, an adjective comes after the noun, with a few exceptions. The two practical exceptions you should know are “grand” (big) and “petit” (small) that are used before the nouns they describe.

Unlike in English, French adjectives also have their plural forms. This means that you need to use an adjective in plural form if you are describing nouns in plural form. This gets more complicated because you also need to make sure that you are using the correct gender form of adjectives. In general, adjectives in feminine form end in “-e”. Examples: petit (masc.) and petite (fem.) ; both of which mean small.

### Future Tense

“Je vais arriver demain.” (I am going to arrive tomorrow.)

Just like in the English language, you can refer to the future by combining “go” in its present tense form with another verb.

I am going	Je vais
You are going	Tu vas (informal) or Vous allez (formal)
He/she is going	Il/elle va
We are going	Nous allons
They are going	Ils/elles vont

### Gender

Nouns in French have a specific gender which is either feminine or masculine. The gender assigned to a noun is not essentially related to the sex of the object. For example, a table is feminine in French – une table. The noun’s gender has a vital influence on the other elements of the sentence such as articles and adjectives.

## Have

“J’ai deux frères.” (I have two brothers.)

Just like in the English language, the verb form changes contingent on the subject used.

I have	J’ai
You have	Tu as (informal) or Vous avez (formal)
S/he has	Elle/Il a
We have	Nous avons
They have	Ils/Elles ont

## Locations

“Mon passeport est dans mon sac.” (My passport is in my bag.)

Just like in the English language, you can indicate the location of a particular thing by placing a preposition (such as “dans” or “in”) before the location or the **place**.

My and Your

“Voici mon mari et voici ma fille.” (This is my husband and this is my daughter.)

Both “my” and “your” have different forms in French depending on the gender of the noun it is referring to and on whether the noun is singular or plural.

Mon passeport (masc.)	My passport
Ma voiture (fem.)	My car
Mes bagages (plural)	My luggage
Votre passeport (masc.)	Your passport
Votre voiture (fem.)	Your car
Vos bagages (plural)	Your luggage

When the noun starts with an “h” or other vowel sounds, you should use “mon” and not “ma”, regardless of whether the noun is feminine or masculine.

For the French words of the informal “your” (ton, ta and tes) and his/her (son, sa, ses), you can simply follow the rules for “my”.

### **Negative Form**

“Je ne sais pas.” (I do not know.)

To create a negative sentence in French, you simply need to add “ne” before the verb and “pas” after it.

### **Plural Form**

“Je voudrais deux billets.” (I would like two tickets.)

In written French, nouns in plural form end with an –s but is frequently silent when spoken. The best ways to determine when a spoken French noun is plural is by noticing adjectives (such as “beaucoup de” or “a lot of”), numbers (such as “deux billets” or “two tickets) and plural articles (such as “les” which is the plural form of “the”).

“Je voudrais deux billets mensuels.” (I would like two monthly tickets.)

As discussed above, you need to change an adjective to its plural form when the noun it describes is plural. You can normally do this by adding an –s at the end of the adjective.

### **Pointing at something**

“C’est le bon train.” (That is the right train.)

The simplest way to point at something is to use “c’est” which can be literally translated as “it is”. You can also simply convert a sentence to a question answerable by a yes or a no by changing the period to a question mark. Example: “C’est le bon train?” which means “Is that the right train?”

### **Questions**

Who	Qui	Qui est-ce? Who is it?
What	Qu’est-ce que	Qu’est-ce que c’est? What is it?

Which	Quel (masc.) Quelle (fem.)	Lequel(le)? Which one?
When	Quand	Quand par le vol? When does the flight leave?
Where	Où	Où est le bar? Where is the bar?
How	Comment	Comment êtes-vous venu? How did you get here?
How much/ How many	Combien	Combien des billets? How many tickets?
Why	Pourquoi	Pourquoi riez-vous? Why are you laughing?

### **Some**

“Je voudrais des pommes, du pate et de l’eau.” (I would like some apples, some pate and some water.)

There are three words for “some” in the French language. They are used depending on the gender of the noun “some” is referring to and on whether the noun is singular or plural. “Du” is used for masculine and singular nouns. “De (la)” is used for feminine and singular nouns. “Des” is used for plural nouns.

### **Somebody’s**

“Le chambre de Marie” (Marie’s room)

To specify that something is owned by somebody, you can use “de” (of) in front of the noun.

### **The**

“Je prends les escargots, le bifteck et la tarte Tatin.” (I will have the snails, the steak and the tarte Tatin.)

In the French language, “the” has three counterpart words that are used depending on the gender of the noun it refers to and whether the noun is singular or plural. “Le” is used for masculine and singular nouns. “La” is used for feminine and singular nouns. “Les” is used for plural nouns.

“L’hotel près de la gare n’est pas cher.” (The hotel near the train station is not expensive.)

Both “le” and “la” is changed to “l’” when they are used before a noun that starts with an “h” or a vowel.

### **Yes or No Questions**

“Ici?” (Here?)

The easiest way to pose a question answerable by yes or no is to build a statement and then increase the intonation of the statement just like what you would do in English when asking a question. This simple rule can also be used even with just one word.

### **Importance of Liaisons**

Because word liaisons are very common in the French language, non-native French speakers often have difficulty in transcribing oral sentences into written words and vice versa. Word liaisons in French have two primary characteristics:

- The pronunciation of a word starts with the silent consonant of the word that precedes it. The succeeding word normally begins with the letter H or a vowel.
- Liaised consonants are pronounced differently. The most common consonants that experience a change in pronunciation include:

D – sound changed to /t/

F – changed to /v/

S – changed to /z/

X – changed to /z/

The consonants g, n, p, r, t, and z are also liaised but are still pronounced in the same way.

Word liaisons in the French language also have three different categories. These are:

1. *Liaisons obligatoires* or Required Liaisons – the words that fall under this category are usually linked either by the sense or function of the words. These words can fall under any of the following pairings:

1. Pronoun + verb, example: *vous avez* /vuzavé/
2. Article + noun
3. Adjective + noun, example: *bon ami* /bonɛmi/
4. Number + noun, example: *très occupé* /trezokuhpé/
5. 2 different single-syllable prepositions, example: *chez eux* /shezuh/

French language experts believe that Required Liaisons are the easiest to remember for non-native French speakers who are still learning the intricacies of the language.

2. *Liaisons interdites* or Forbidden Liaisons – this may sound like the title of some cheesy old movie, but it actually refers to letters that cannot be pronounced at all no matter how hard the speaker tries. These letters are often found on the following placements:
  1. After mentioning a person’s full name. Example: *Thomas est parti* /toma-ɛy-parti/ (rough translation: Thomas left)
  2. After the preposition *et* /ɛt/ (and). Example: *et en* /ɛyén/ some speakers might pronounce a hint of the letter ‘n’ at the end.
  3. Before the H aspirate or h-aspiré. Example: *en haut* / ɛ n ô / (top)
  4. When it is preceded by interrogative adverbs. Example: *Comment est-il* /komän-ɛitil/ (How is it?)
  5. When it is preceded by the *toujours* /tu ʒ u ʁ / (always or still). Example: *toujours ici* / tu ʒ u ʁ isi/ (still here).
3. *Liaisons facultatives* or Optional Liaisons – these liaisons are the words that have evolved through time. These are more difficult for beginners in the French language to completely master because the liaisons often depend on the level of formality between speakers. Some of the instances within which optional liaisons occur include:
  1. When the letter is preceded by a plural noun. Example: *femmes arrivent* /femzariv/
  2. When a noun is preceded by the present tense of the verb

*être* (to be), which is *il est* /éles/. Example: *il est idiot* / éleytidio/ (it is foolish).

3. When an adjective is preceded by *il est*. Example: *il est heureux* /éleyuru/ (he is happy).

It is important to remember that liaisons are different from *enchaînement*. In liaising, the silent consonants of stand-alone words are given emphasis due to the presence of a vowel that comes after it. In *enchaînement*, the consonant has always been pronounced even when the word is mentioned all by itself. However, once the word is attached to another word that begins with a vowel, the final consonant is transferred to beginning of the next word so that it would then be pronounced along with the first vowel letter.

Some examples of *enchaînement* include:

- *Avec* /ävək/ (along with). When the word is added to *avec*, it would then be pronounced as /ävε-kəl/ (roughly translated to ‘with it’).
- *Elle* /əl/ (it) – this is often used with the preposition *est*, and the prepositional phrase would then be pronounced as /ε-lé/ (she is).

There are many other words that are linked to other words via *enchaînement*. Luckily, these aren’t that difficult to pronounce since all the speaker would have to remember is that the final consonant of the first word would be attached to the beginning vowel of the next word.

## **Word Order**

Just like in the English language, the basic order of words in a sentence is subject – verb – object. When you are not sure, you can simply use the sentence structure that you would normally use when speaking in English. If you do this, you will be generally understood.

## Chapter 5: Understanding French Verb Forms

Verbs in the English language can easily be conjugated because the verb maintains the same form in most tenses while it would only require the addition of a single letter, such as the letter 's' when the tense or subject changes. In contrast, French verbs often have to be conjugated almost every single time that the verb tense changes. In order to understand how French verbs are conjugated, it would be best to first learn about the different categories that French verbs fall under. These categories include:

1. Regular -ER verbs - these are the French words that end in -er, such as *accompagner* (to accompany), *danser* (to dance), and so on. These verbs are the French counterparts of English verbs that are in the infinitive form. These are conjugated in 6 different ways depending on the pronoun to which it would be attached. The following shows the list of how the infinitive French verb *accompagner* is conjugated according to each French pronoun:

Pronoun	Rules for conjugation	Ending word
<i>Je</i>	Simply remove the last letter	<i>Accompagne</i>
<i>Tu</i>	Replace the -r with the letter -s	<i>Accompagnes</i>
<i>Il</i>	Same conjugation as with the pronoun Je	<i>Accompagne</i>
<i>Nous</i>	Replace -er with -ons	<i>Accompagnons</i>
<i>Vous</i>	Replace -r with -z	<i>Accompagnez</i>
<i>Ils</i>	Replace -r with -nt	<i>Accompagnent</i>

2. Regular -IR verbs - these verbs are words that end in -ir and are also the French counterparts of infinitive English verbs that require the use of the word 'to' preceding the verb. Conjugation also depends on the pronoun attached to the verb. Take for instance the verb *bâtir* (to build):

Pronoun	Rules for conjugation	Ending word
<i>Je</i>	Replace -r with -s	<i>Bâtis</i>
<i>Tu</i>	Same rule as with the pronoun <i>je</i>	<i>Bâtis</i>

<b>Il</b>	Replace -r with -t	<i>Bâtit</i>
<b>Nous</b>	Replace -r with -ssons	<i>Bâtissons</i>
<b>Vous</b>	Replace -r with -ssez	<i>Bâtissez</i>
<b>Ils</b>	Replace -r with -ssent	<i>Bâtissent</i>

3. Regular -RE verbs - these verbs end in -re and are also of the infinitive form. Conjugation still depends on the pronoun attached to the verb. Take as an example the word *défendre* (to defend):

<b>Pronoun</b>	<b>Rules for conjugation</b>	<b>Ending word</b>
<b>Je</b>	Replace the -re with -s	<i>Défends</i>
<b>Tu</b>	Same rule as with the pronoun <i>je</i>	<i>Défends</i>
<b>Il</b>	Remove the -re completely	<i>Défend</i>
<b>Nous</b>	Replace the -re with -ons	<i>Défendons</i>
<b>Vous</b>	Replace the -re with -ez	<i>Défendez</i>
<b>Ils</b>	Replace the -re with -ent	<i>Défendent</i>

4. Stem-changing verbs - just like in the English verb categories, French stem-changing verbs also have two different stems that change in spelling or syllable stress depending on whether it is used with singular or plural pronouns. These are also called boot verbs because when the pronouns are listed 3 to a column, the similar verbs for each pronoun would often end up forming the shape of a boot.

Take for example the word *geler* (to freeze). This is conjugated in the same way as regular verbs but then the spelling of the stem word undergoes a tiny change, mostly by changing the first 'e' with an 'é'. Conjugating this word in the present tense would go as follows:

<i>je géle</i>	<i>nous gelons</i>
<i>tu gèles</i>	<i>vous gelez</i>
<i>il géle</i>	<i>ils gélent</i>

If you draw an interconnected line to encircle the conjugations that have the letter 'é' as the first vowel, the resulting shape would be that of a boot

or a shoe. This process makes it easy for non-native French speakers to remember how stem-changing verbs are conjugated in everyday usage depending on the tense of the verb and the pronoun that is attached to the verb.

5. Irregular verbs - these verbs take the same form as regular verbs because they also end in -er, -ir, and -re. However, unlike regular French verbs, irregular verbs do not have a regular pattern for conjugation. In some cases, the spelling of the word could completely change in order to match the pronoun with which it is used. An example of this is the word être (to be). This word tops the list of the most widely-used French verbs, and it is conjugated in every usage through the following ways:

*Je suis*, sometimes shortened to *j'suis*

*Tu es*

*Il est*

*Nous sommes*

*Vous êtes*

*Ils sont*

It may take time for French-language learners to completely understand how French verbs are conjugated, especially given the fact that there are more than a thousand French verbs out there. However, once the individual has learned the basics of conjugating the most commonly-used verbs, he would often find it easier to move on to the more complex forms of French verbs.

## Chapter 5: French Pronouns: Formal and Informal Usage

As everyone is probably aware of, pronouns are used for replacing nouns in order to avoid redundancy or to simply make sentences shorter and more direct to the point. French pronouns function in the same way. However, unlike English pronouns, French pronouns usually take on different forms in order to fit into situations. Specifically, French pronouns are divided into two different categories

### Category 1: Personal Pronouns

There are 5 primary types of personal pronouns used in the French language. These are:

1. *Je* /ʒe/ - refers to the 1st-person singular and is used if the pronoun is the subject in the sentence. It is then changed to *me* /mə/ when the pronoun is the direct or indirect object in the sentence. In English, this is equivalent to the pronoun 'I' or 'me'.
2. *Tu* /ty/ - refers to the subject pronoun that is in the 2nd-person singular. This is then changed to *te* /tə/ when the pronoun is the direct or indirect object in the sentence. This is the equivalent of the English pronoun 'you'.
3. *Il* /i/ - refers to the masculine pronoun in the 3rd-person singular. This is changed to *le* when the pronoun is the direct object and then to *lui* /lui/ when it is the indirect object in a sentence. This pronoun is the rough equivalent of the English pronoun 'he' or 'him'.
4. *Elle* /ɛl/ - refers to the feminine pronoun in the 3rd-person singular. This is then changed to *la* /la/ if the pronoun is the direct object, and *lui* if it is the indirect object in a sentence. This is the French equivalent to 'she' or 'her'.

The plural forms for the 1st-person and 2nd-person pronouns remain the same regardless if the pronoun becomes the direct or indirect object in the sentence. The word *nous* /nu/ is used for 1st-person plural, and the word *vous*

/vu/ is used for 2nd-person plural references.

The pronoun *vous* is also used as a means of politely conversing with people whom the speaker does not bear a close relationship with. People who are just learning the French language often find it difficult to discern when the singular pronoun *tu* or the more polite plural pronoun *vous* is to be used. This is why they sometimes come out as too demanding in conversations when politeness or a show of deference is required. However, since even the native French-speakers admit that there is no strict rule for when to use *tu* or *vous*, foreigners are often forgiven for the seemingly impolite form of address.

The following are some of the indications that French-language learners can use in deciding whether to use *tu* or *vous*:

1. When unsure of which pronoun to use, it is better to be cautious by sounding a little too polite instead of a bit too rude. So the rule is: use *vous*. This is especially true in situations when the speaker is meeting somebody for the very first time.
2. Remember that *vous* is used to show deference for somebody who is in a position of authority, such your boss and the other high-ranking officials in a company. Other authority figures include doctors, lawyers, policemen, teachers, people who work at government offices, and so on. It would also be best for newly-hired employees to use *vous* when speaking with colleagues, unless they are specifically invited to use *tu* instead.
3. On this same note, always use *vous* with other adults unless they give the invitation to *tutoyer* (to use *tu*). These adults include neighbors, new acquaintances, and people who are at least 15 to 20 years older.
4. *Tu* is most commonly-used to refer to young people, especially to teenagers and people who are at least 20 years younger than the speaker. Using *vous* when talking to a teenager might invite a few strange looks, so just use *tu*.
5. Always use *vous* when talking to people who are paid to provide a service or are engaged in various trades, such as waiters and waitresses, vendors and salespeople in malls and supermarkets, cab drivers, and so on.

People who have known each other for a very long time usually use *tu* automatically despite any obvious difference in age or social status. Likewise, there are also cases when people who have been neighbors for many years are more comfortable in using *vous* than *tu*. There really are no

strict guidelines that French-speakers have to adhere to, and most of the time, the conversation can become awkward when one speaker uses *tu* while the other is using *vous*. This is why it is always better to politely use *vous* and endlessly wait for the invitation to *tutoyer* instead being the first one to use *tu*.

When you are conversing with someone you are familiar to like your family and friends, it is normal to use the informal form of “you” in French which is “tu” instead of the plural or polite form “vous”. This is the same norm when talking to children. When you are starting to feel that you have already become familiar with another person and you think you can start using the informal French form when talking to him or her, it is polite to ask first if it is alright with them to use it. You can ask the question: “Est-ce que je peux vous tutoyer?”

Aside from the plural pronouns *nous* and *vous* that roughly translate to 'they', 'them', and the plural use of 'you' (as in you guys or you all), the French language also has separate pronouns for masculine and feminine plurals. The plural masculine subject in a sentence is referred to as *ils* /il/, and this is changed to *les* /le/ when the noun becomes the direct object and *leur* /œ R /when the male is the indirect object. On the other hand, the plural feminine pronoun, *elles*, often remains the same regardless of its placement in a sentence.

## **Category 2: Impersonal Pronouns**

These are the pronouns that do not have to change form in order to match the 1st to 3rd-person POVs. However, these pronouns do change in order to match the gender of the noun as well as its number (singular or plural).

Impersonal pronouns are divided into:

1. Demonstrative pronouns - composed of the pronouns *celui* (singular masculine noun), *ceux* (plural masculine), *celle* (singular feminine), and *celles* (plural feminine). These are the pronouns that roughly translate to the English pronouns this, that, these, those. These pronouns cannot function as stand alone words so would have to be attached to either a suffix or a prepositional phrase.
2. Interrogative pronouns - these are pronouns that ask questions. There are two primary interrogative pronouns: *qui* /ki/ (who or whom) and *que* /ke/ (what). These pronouns change in form

depending on whether it is used as the subject or object in the sentence, as well as if it is followed by a preposition. Also, the phrase *est-ce* is added to the pronoun in order to indicate it as the subject or object in the sentence. This is illustrated below:

- *Qui est-ce que* /kɛsk ɔ / indicates that object in the question is the person referred to as 'whom'
- *Qui est-ce qui* /kɛski/ indicates that the subject in the question is the person referred to as 'who'.
- *Que est-ce que* /kɛskɛ/, often shortened to *qu'est-ce que*, indicates that the object is the thing that answers 'what'.

Notice that the phrases are almost the same except for the *qui* and *que* that comes at the end. Even when *qui* is listed after a preposition in a sentence, it still retains its *qui est-ce que* or *qui est-ce qui* format. On the other hand, if *que* (what) is listed after a preposition, it would then be changed to *quoi* /kwa/.

There is a third type of interrogative pronoun known as *lequel* /l ɔ k ɛ l/. This is considered by most French linguists as a difficult pronoun to learn. There are four different forms for *lequel* that are used in accordance with the gender and the number of the noun that is being replaced:

- Singular masculine: *lequel* /lak ɛ l/
- Singular feminine: *laquelle* /lak ɛ l/
- Plural masculine: *lesquels* /lek ɛ l/
- Plural feminine: *lesquelles* /lak ɛ l/

Aside from these basic forms, *lequel* is also spelled differently when it is listed right after the French preposition *a*, and then spelled differently again if it comes after the preposition *de* while still having to adhere to the number and the gender of the noun it has replaced:

After the preposition *à*:

Singular		Plural	
Feminine	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine
<i>Laquelle</i> /lak ɛ l/	<i>Auquel</i> /ok ɛ l/	<i>Auxquels</i>	<i>Auxquelles</i>

After the preposition *de*

Singular		Plural	
Feminine	Masculine	Feminie	Masculine
<i>Laquelle</i> /lak ɛ l/	<i>Duquel</i> /dyk ɛ l/	<i>Desquelles</i> /dek ɛ l/	<i>Desquels</i> /dek ɛ l/

Some examples for using *lequel*:

- *L'arbre sous lequel..* –roughly translates to ‘the tree in which..’
- *au centre de laquelle* – roughly translates to ‘the center of which’. This phrase is often used to describe places or give directions.

There is another type of impersonal pronoun that is often used for replacing nouns that come after the preposition *de*. This is known as the relative pronoun *dont* /dôn/ and it is used as a pronoun that roughly translates to ‘that’, ‘about whom’, ‘whose’, ‘out of/of which’ and pronouns that refer to non-human or inanimate objects.

Some examples of using the pronoun *dont* include:

- *Le livre dont je suis..* – roughly translates to ‘The book I am...’ depending on what comes after the *je suis* (I am) phrase. *Je suis* is followed by the phrase *l'auteur est*, then the English translation changes to ‘the book which I am the author..’
- *Dont le tien..* – This roughly translates to including yours and it has the obvious implication that there is a noun in the preceeding sentence or phrase. If the word *tien* is replaced with the pronoun *vous*, then the translation now changes to ‘which you’.

There are so many ways of using French pronouns in everyday conversation. The important thing is that you learn all the basics listed in this chapter in order to be able to construct valid sentences.

## Chapter 6 : How Adverbs are Positioned in French Sentences

Adverbs are important parts of sentences in any language because these provide answers to the questions:

- When
- Where
- How (including how often)
- What

French grammar has much stricter rules when it comes to the placement of adverbs as compared to English grammar rules. Some of the rules for placing French adverbs include:

1. If the adverb does not modify a verb, it should be placed in front of the adjective, adverb, or noun phrase that it modifies.

Example: *vous êtes très à la mode* (You are very fashionable). The adverb *très* (very) is placed before the adjective *à la mode* (fashionable).

2. If it is a manner adverb that modifies the verb, then it should always be placed after the verb. In most cases, the verb would already be conjugated to match the adverb.

Example: *il parle étrangement* (He speaks strangely)

In English, it is possible to interchange the placement of the verb and the adverb yet the speaker would still be able to convey the same meaning. But this is a big no-no in the French language and the speaker would only end up speaking unintelligible words.

And just like the English adverbs, French adverbs are also differentiated into the following:

1. Adverbs of time, such as:
  - *Actuellement*/akt yɛ lm ɑ̃ / - this adverb is often mistaken by non-native French speakers to be the equivalent of the word 'actually' and its cognate *actuelle*/akt yɛ l/ to be 'actual'. This adverb actually means 'at the present time' or 'at present'. An example of how it can be used in a correct French sentence: *Je suis occupé à l'heure actuelle* (I am busy **at present**).

- À la fois /alafwa/ - this means ‘at once’, though it can also be taken literally to mean ‘at the time’. The phrase can also be used when the speaker wants to mean two things at once, as characterized by the English word ‘both’.

Example: Ils sont **à la fois** drôle et beau (They are **both** funny and handsome).

- *Auparavant*/opa R av ã / - this means ‘beforehand’ and can be used for putting emphasis on something that happened at a previous time. This is different from the word *avant* which can serve as either a preposition or an adverb. *Avant* is used as a simple way of expressing the time that something happens or has happened.

Example: *Prier **avant** d'aller dormir* (Pray first **before** going to sleep).

*Auparavant* is usually used in long sentences where the speaker has to make his point with much emphasis.

- Enfin / ã f Ë / - this can roughly be translated to ‘at last’ and is used to emphasize a long-awaited accomplishment.

Example: *Ils sont **enfin** arrivés* (They have finally arrived)

## 2. Adverbs of quantity includes the following:

- Autant /ot ã / - this is normally used to compare the quantity of two things and can roughly be translated to English to ‘as much’ or ‘so many’.

Example: Je ai fait **autant** que lui pour accomplir la tâche (I did **as much** as he to accomplish the task)

- Plus /plus/ or /plu/ - the pronunciation of this word, i.e. enunciating the letter ‘s’ or not, depends on how it is being used in the sentence. If it is used as an affirmative adverb, then it is pronounced /plus/, and if it is a negative adverb then it is pronounced as /plu/. /plus/ can be translated to mean ‘more than’ and ‘additional’, and /plu/ is roughly translated as ‘neither’ or ‘no more’.

Examples: *Je veux **plus** de crème* (I want **more** cream)

*Il n'y a pas **plus** de crème* (There's **no more** cream)

- Tant /t ã / - this should not be confused with autant because it

is never used for comparison but instead is used to intensify the verbal impact of a certain quantity. Rough English translation for this is 'so much' or 'too much'.

Example: *Vous me avez déjà donné tant d'amour* (You have already given me **so much** love)

Following the rules for the placement of adverbs and knowing some of the most basic and commonly-used adverbs would greatly help in making one fluent in the French language. This is because adverbs also serve the unspoken purpose of intensifying or emphasizing the impact of the nouns or verbs that it modifies. This means that adverbs are great for making conversations livelier and give people a better chance of becoming more familiar to each other.

## Chapter 7: Basic Vocabulary Words and Phrases

### Cardinal Numbers

- 0 – zero
- 1 – un/œ̃ /
- 2 – deux /dø/
- 3 – trois/t R w α /
- 4 – quatre/kat R /
- 5 – cinq/s ɛ̃ k/
- 6 – six /sis/
- 7 – sept /set/
- 8 – huit/ 'ɥ i(t)/
- 9 – neuf /nœf/
- 10 – dix /dis/
- 11 – onze/ ɔ̃ z/
- 12 – douze /duz/
- 13 – treize/t R ɛ z/
- 14 – quatorze/kat ɔR z/
- 15 – quinze/k ɛ̃ z/
- 16 – seize /sez/
- 17 – dix-sept/di(s)s ɛ t/
- 18 – dix-huit/di(s) 'ɥ i(t)/
- 19 – dix-neuf /diznœf/
- 20 – vingt/v ɛ̃ /
- 21 – vingt et un
- 22 – vingt-deux
- 30 – trente

- 40 – quarante
- 50 – cinquante
- 60 – soixante
- 70 – soixante-dix
- 80 – quatre-vingts
- 90 – quatre-vingt-dix
- 91 – quatre-vingt-onze
- 100 – cent
- 1,000 – mille
- 1,000,000 – un million

### **Ordinal Numbers**

- First – premier (masc.) or première (fem.)
- Second – deuxième
- Third – Troisième
- Fourth – Quatrième
- Fifth – Cinquième

### **Fractions**

- A quarter – un quart
- A third – un tiers
- A half – un demi
- Three-quarters – trois-quarts
- All – tout
- None – rien

### **Amounts**

- How many/how much? – Combien?
- Please give me... - Donnez-moi.... s'il vous plait.
- (100) grams – (cent) grammes

- (half a) dozen – (demi-)douzaine (fem.)
- A kilo – un kilo (masc.)
- A packet – un paquet (masc.)
- A slice – une tranche (fem.)
- A tin – une boîte (fem.)
- Less – moins
- (just) a little – (juste) un peu (masc.)
- Many/much/a lot – beaucoup de
- More – plus
- Some (apples) – quelques (pommes)

### **Telling the Time**

In the French language, the 24-hour clock is normally used when telling the time.

- What time is it? – Quelle heure est-il?
- It is (one) o'clock. – Il est (une) heure.
- It is (ten) o'clock. – Il est (dix) heures.
- Quarter past one – Il est une heure et quart.
- Twenty past one – Il est une heure vingt.
- Half past one – Il est une heure et demie.

After the half hour, the succeeding hour is normally used less (moins) the number of minutes there are before that hour comes.

- Twenty to one – Il est une heure moins vingt.
- Quarter to one – Il est une heure moins le quart.
- In the morning – du matin
- In the afternoon – de l'après-midi
- In the evening – du soir

### **Days of the week**

- Monday – lundi

- Tuesday – mardi
- Wednesday – mercredi
- Thursday – jeudi
- Friday – vendredi
- Saturday – samedi
- Sunday – dimanche

### **Months**

- January – janvier
- February – février
- March – mars
- April – avril
- May – mai
- June – juin
- July – juillet
- August – aout
- September – septembre
- October – octobre
- November – novembre
- December – décembre

### **Seasons**

- Summer – été (masc.)
- Autumn – automne (masc.)
- Winter – hiver (masc.)
- Spring – printemps (masc.)

### **Dates**

- What date? – Quelle date?
- What is today's date? – Quelle est la date aujourd'hui?
- It is (19 November) – C'est le (dix-neuf novembre).

## **The Present**

- Now – maintenant
- Right now – tout de suite
- This afternoon – cet après-midi
- This month – ce mois
- This morning – ce matin
- This week – cette semaine
- This year – cette année
- Today – aujourd’hui
- Tonight – ce soir

## **The Past**

- (Three days) ago – il y a (trois) jours.
- Half an hour ago – une demi-heure avant.
- A while ago – il y a un moment.
- (Five) years ago – il y a (cinq) ans.
- Day before yesterday – avant-hier
- Last night – hier soir
- Last week – la semaine dernière
- Last month – le mois dernière
- Last year – l’année dernière
- Since (April) – depuis avril
- Yesterday afternoon – hier après-midi
- Yesterday evening – hier soir
- Yesterday morning – hier matin

## **The Future**

- Day after tomorrow – après-demain
- In (five) days – dans (cinq) jours
- In (ten) minutes – dans (dix) minutes

- Next week – la semaine prochaine
- Next month – le mois prochain
- Next year – l'année prochaine
- Tomorrow – demain
- Tomorrow morning – demain matin
- Tomorrow afternoon – demain après-midi
- Tomorrow evening – demain soir
- Until (Tuesday) – jusqu'à (mardi)
- Within an hour – d'ici une heure

### **During the Day**

- Afternoon – l'après-midi (masc.)
- Dawn – aube (fem.)
- Day – jour (masc.)
- Evening – le soir (masc.)
- Midday – midi (masc.)
- Midnight – minuit (masc.)
- Morning – le matin (masc.)
- Night – nuit (fem.)
- Sunrise – lever (masc.) de soleil
- Sunset – coucher (masc.) de soleil

### **Money**

- How much is it? – Ça fait combien?
- Can you write down the price? – Pouvez-vous écrire le prix?
- Do you accept credit cards? – Est-ce que je peux payer avec une carte de crédit?
- Do you accept debit cards? - Est-ce que je peux payer avec une carte de débit?
- Do you accept travellers cheques? - Est-ce que je peux payer avec des

chèques de voyages?

- I would like to cash a cheque. – Je voudrais encaisser un chèque.
- I would like to change a travellers cheque – Je voudrais changer des chèques de voyage
- I would like to change money. – Je voudrais changer de l'argent.
- Where is the nearest ATM? – Ou est le guichet automatique le plus proche?
- Where is the nearest foreign exchange office? – Ou est le bureau de change le plus proche?
- Can I get a cash advance? – Puis-je avoir une avance de credit?
- What is the charge? – Quel est le tariff?
- What is the exchange rate? – Quel est le taux de change?
- It is free. – C'est gratuit.
- It is (15) euros. – C'est quinze euros.

Before attempting to memorize the proper way of asking questions related to numbers and money in French, it would be best to memorize the French terminologies first. This, along with your basic knowledge of how to form questions as well as a deep understanding of the rules for subject-verb-agreement would make it easy to formulate the questions.

## Chapter 8: Socializing in French

Here are the basic social words that you need to learn by heart:

- Yes – oui
- No – non
- Please – s’il vous plait
- Thank you. – Merci.
- You are welcome. – Je vous en prie.
- Excuse me. – Excusez-moi.
- Sorry – pardon

### Greetings

When you are in France, you will commonly see people give a kiss on both cheeks when greeting family and friends ; but between two men, shaking hands is the more standard norm of greeting. This is the same standard when a man is introduced to a woman for the first time.

- Hello – bonjour
- Hi – salut
- Good morning or good afternoon – bonjour
- Good evening – bonsoir
- See you later. - à bientôt.
- Goodbye – au revoir
- How are you? – Comment allez-vous? (formal) or Ça va? (informal)
- Fine, thank you. – Bien, merci.
- What is your name? – Comment vous appelez-vous? (formal) or Comment tu? (informal)
- My name is... - Je m’appelle...
- I would like to introduce you to... - Je vous présente...
- I am pleased to meet you. – Enchante (masc.) or Enchantée (fem.)

You may also observe that the French people are quite formal when they address people whom they are not acquainted to. You will normally hear them use “monsieur”, “madame” or “mademoiselle” in instances where English speakers will not use any such term of address. “Monsieur” is used both to pertain to Mister or Sir. “Madame” is used to pertain to Mrs. or Miss (formal). “Mademoiselle” is used to pertain to a “Miss”.

### **Making Conversations**

When you are in a party, the topics considered to be the safest to discuss with other guests are culture and sports. The topic of food, on the other hand, is the best way for you to get a French person to start talking; but you are highly advised not to talk about money including income and prices.

- Do you speak English? – Parlez-vous anglais?
- Do you live here? – Vous habitez ici?
- Do you like it here? – Ca vous plait ici?
- I love it here. – Ca me plait beaucoup ici.
- Where are you going? – Ou allez-vous?
- What are you doing? – Que faites-vous?
- Are you waiting (for a taxi)? – Attendez-vous un taxi?
- Can I have a light? – Vous avez du feu?
- What do you think (about...)? – Que pensez-vous (de...)?
- What is this called? – Comment ça s’appelle?
- Can I take a photo (of you)? – Je peux (vous) prendre en photo?
- That is beautiful, is it not? – C’est (beau), non?
- Are you here on a holiday? – Vous êtes ici pour les vacances?
- I am here for a holiday. – Je suis ici pour les vacances.
- I am here on business. – Je suis ici pour le travail.
- I am here to study. – Je suis ici pour les études.
- I am here with my family. – Je suis ici avec ma famille.
- I am here with my partner. – Je suis ici avec mon/ma partenaire (masc. or fem.)

- This is my first trip (to France). – C’est la première fois que je viens (en France).
- How long are you here for? – Vous êtes ici depuis quand?
- I am here for... days/weeks. – Je reste ici ... jours/semaines.
- Have you ever been (to England)? – Es-ce-que vous êtes déjà allés (en Angleterre)?
- Do you want to come out with me? – Voulez-vous sortir avec moi?
- This is my son. – Voici mon fils.
- This is my daughter. – Voici ma fille.
- This is my friend. – Voici mon ami (masc.) or Voici ma amie (fem.).
- This is my husband. – Voici mon mari.
- This is my wife. – Voici ma femme.

Here are some local words and phrases used by French people:

- Hey! – He!
- Great! – Formidable!
- No problem. – Pas de problème.
- Sure. – D’accord
- Maybe. – Peut-être.
- No way! – Pas question!
- It is alright. – C’est bien.
- OK. – Bien.
- Look! – Regardez! (formal)
- Listen (to this)! – Ecoutez (ceci)! (formal)
- I am ready. – Je suis prêt(e). (masc. or fem.)
- Are you ready? – Vous êtes prêt(e)? (formal) or Tu es prêt(e)? (informal)
- Just a minute. – Une minute.
- Just joking! – Je blaguais!

- I am pulling your leg! – Je te fais marcher! (informal)

### **Nationalities**

- Where are you from? – D’où êtes-vous? (formal) or D’où es-tu? (informal)
- What part of (Africa) do you come from? – D’où est-ce que vous venez (en Afrique)? (formal) or D’où est-ce que tu viens (en Afrique)? (informal)
- I am from (Singapore). – Je suis de (Singapour).

### **Age**

- How old are you? – Quel âge avez-vous? (formal) or Quel âge as-tu? (informal)
- I am (20) years old. – J’ai (vingt) ans.
- Too old! – Trop vieux/vieille! (masc. or fem.)
- I am younger than I look. – Je ne fais pas mon âge.
- He/She is... years old. – Il/Elle a... ans.

### **Occupations and Study**

- What is your occupation? – Vous faites quoi comme métier? (formal) or Tu fais quoi comme métier? (informal)
- I am a businessperson. – Je suis un(e) homme / femme d’affaires. (masc. or fem.)
- I am a chef. – Je suis un(e) cuisinier / cuisinière. (masc. or fem.)
- I am a drag queen. - Je suis un(e) travel. (masc.)
- I work in education. – Je travaille dans l’enseignement.
- I work in health. - Je travaille dans la santé.
- I work in sales and marketing. - Je travaille dans la vente et le marketing.
- I am retired. – Je suis retraite(e). (masc. or fem.)
- I am self-employed. – Je suis Independent(e). (masc. or fem.)
- I am unemployed. – Je suis chômeur/chômeuse. (masc. or fem.)
- What are you studying? – Que faites-vous comme études? (formal)

Que fais-tu comme études? (informal)

- I am studying engineering. – Je fais des études d'ingénieur.
- I am studying French. - Je fais des études de français.
- I am studying media. - Je fais des études des medias.

## **Family**

- Mother – une mère
- Father – un père
- Husband – un mari
- Wife – une femme
- Sister – une sœur
- Brother – un frère
- Child – un/une enfant (masc. or fem.)
- Boyfriend – un petit ami
- Girlfriend – une petite amie
- Family – une famille
- Partner – un/une partenaire (masc. or fem.)
- Do you have a...? – Vous avez...? (formal) or Tu as...? (informal)
- I have a... - J'ai...
- I do not have a... - Je n'ai pas...
- This is my... - Voici mon/ma/mes... (masc., fem., or plural)
- Are you married? – Est-ce que vous êtes marié(e)? (masc. or fem.) or Est-ce que tu es marié(e)?
- I am married. – Je suis marié(e).
- I am single. - Je suis célibataire.
- I am separated. – Je suis séparé(e).

## **Feelings**

In French, emotions are normally described using either a noun or an adjective. When using a noun, you need to add “have”, as in “I have thirst”. When using

an adjective, you need to use “be” just like in English.

- I am cold. – J’ai froid.
- I am not cold. – Je n’ai pas froid.
- Are you cold? – Vous avez froid? (formal) or Tu as froid? (informal)
- I am hot. – J’ai chaud.
- I am not hot. – Je n’ai pas chaud.
- Are you hot? – Vous avez chaud? (formal) or Tu as chaud? (informal)
- I am hungry. – J’ai faim.
- I am not hungry. – Je n’ai pas faim.
- Are you hungry? – Vous avez faim? (formal) or Tu as faim? (informal)
- I am thirsty. – J’ai soif.
- I am not thirsty. – Je n’ai pas soif.
- Are you thirsty? – Vous avez soif? (formal) or Tu as soif? (informal)
- I am tired. - J’ai sommeil.
- I am not tired. – Je n’ai pas sommeil.
- Are you tired? – Vous êtes fatigué? (formal) or Tu es fatigué? (informal)
- I am OK. – Je vais bien.
- I am not OK. – Je ne vais pas bien.
- Are you OK? – Ça va?

### **Opinions**

- Did you like it? – Cela vous a plu?
- What did you think of it? – Qu’est-ce que vous en avez pensé?
- I thought it was... - Je l’ai trouvé...
- It is... - C’est...
- Beautiful – beau

- Better – mieux
- Bizarre – bizarre
- Great – formidable
- Horrible – horrible
- OK – bien
- Strange- étrange
- Weird – bizarre
- Worse – pire

### **Degree Levels**

- A little – un peu
- I am a little sad. – Je suis un peu triste.
- Really – vraiment
- I am really sorry. – Je suis vraiment navré.
- Very – très
- I feel very vulnerable. – je me sens très vulnérable.

### **When You are Having Difficulties**

- Do you speak English? – Vous parlez anglais?
- Does anyone speak English? – Y a-t-il quelqu'un qui parle anglais?
- Do you understand? – Vous comprenez?
- I understand. – Je comprends.
- I do not understand. – Je ne comprends pas.
- I speak a little. – Je parle un peu.
- What does 'fesses' mean? – Que veut dire 'fesses'?
- Could you please repeat that? – Pourriez-vous répéter, s'il vous plait?
- Could you please speak more slowly? – Pourriez-vous parler plus lentement, s'il vous plait?
- Could you please write it down? – Pourriez-vous l'écrire, s'il vous plait?

- How do you...? – Comment...?
- How do you pronounce this? – Comment le prononcez-vous?
- How do you write “bonjour”? – comment est-ce qu’on écrit “bonjour”?

## Chapter 9. More Tips For Beginners

When asking for help, it is important that you speak slowly. This would give the other person enough time to digest what has been said by discerning any accent-related mistakes in pronouncing certain words.

It would be best to keep practicing on the accent even when there is no one else around to speak French with. This way, should a really difficult situation arrive, asking for help wouldn't take too much time. Read up on a lot of children's books that are written in French because, just like all other children's books in any language, these contain the most basic forms of the language that are easy for children and language-learners to understand.

Linguists also suggest that aside from reading up and vocalizing the French language, it would also be best to practice writing it. This way, the brain would have time to become attuned to the different nuances of the language and would be better able to discern the words that denote numbers and similar-sounding words that have a completely different meaning.

Admittedly, it is easier to learn how to speak French than to write it. So in order to gain a better understanding of how French words are written and read, it is best to start with a French-language book that has an accompanying audio file. This way, you can listen to the words as they are being read on the audio file while at the same time reading along with the words written on the book.

Also, when syllabifying or practicing how to say the French letters out loud, the best approach is to master the vowels first because often require intricate tongue and lip-formations that need a lot of practice to perfect. It would also be good to have a learning buddy who would be able to assist in learning complexities of reading and writing the French language.

Once you get the hang of reading and writing easy French words, it would be best to move on to learning more complex French words. Subscribing to a French-language newspaper or TV show would be a big help on this step.

## Conclusion

Thank you again for downloading this book!

I hope this book was able to help you to take the first few steps in learning to speak French.

The next step is to persist in becoming an expert.

Finally, if you enjoyed this book, please take the time to share your thoughts and post a review on Amazon. We do our best to reach out to readers and provide the best value we can. Your positive review will help us achieve that. It'd be greatly appreciated!

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No...I insist...Thank You!

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# **Preview of ‘The Best Of England For Tourists: The Ultimate Guide to England’s Sites, Restaurants, Shopping, and Beaches for Tourists!’**

## **Chapter 1 - Restaurants**

When visiting a foreign place, one of the first things that you should do is explore the local food scene. In England, there are a variety of restaurants that you can choose from. Some of them are considered as historical landmarks of the country because they have been there for such a long period of time. However, there are also younger and newly-built restaurants that are making a name in the British culinary industry because of their fresh and delicious menu. Check out the top restaurants that you should check out in England.

### **1. Rules**

Located in the middle of Covent Garden, Rules are considered as the longest running restaurant in London. This place has been serving hungry travelers and locals alike ever since its inception in 1798. Rules is well known for serving mouth-watering games, puddings, and aquatic dishes. To ensure the quality of their dishes, this restaurant has set up its very own place called the Lartington Estate. Found in the High Pennies, it is a large patch of land where they source out the finest game birds, deer, and their most popular Galloway beef.

### **2. Simpson's-in-the-Strand**

For people who love meat and fish, this eatery is ideal for them. Simpson’s-in-the-Strand was established in 1828. They are popular around the area for serving traditional British food and their very classic ornate interior. If you will ever visit this place, it is highly recommended that you try their Scottish beef on the bone. This dish is instantly whittled at your dining table using an aged silver-domed trolley. This special tradition has been loved by their diners for more than a century.

### **3. Corrigan's Mayfair**

This restaurant is named after the well-renowned Irish chef named Richard

Corrigan. Corrigan's Mayfair infuses a luxurious interior and a menu that is replete with seasonal and simple meals. Most of the foods that they serve here were inspired by Corrigan's rich and happy childhood in Ireland.

Every ingredient is hand-picked from skilled producers, so you can ensure that every dish that they serve is rich and flavorful. They have the standard British dish that you can enjoy in a la carte, or you can enjoy their fixed-price Sunday lunch meals that are composed of three courses.

#### **4. Roast**

If there is one restaurant that is utterly dedicated in preparing authentic British dishes, it is Roast. From potted shrimps to roast beef, this eatery only uses the best seasonal ingredients to cook their traditional meals. In Roast, you can also find a wide array of fine English spirits and local cheeses on their menu. In addition to the good food, you will also have a spectacular view of the busy Borough Market, where most of their ingredients are sourced.

#### **5. Kensington Place**

Kensington Place is a neighborhood restaurant that sprang up in Notting Hill in 1987. The most sought-after dish that they can offer is the traditional British brasserie. However, they have also added new meals on their menu that more fish-oriented. To ensure the freshness of their ingredients, you can head over to the fish shop that is near their restaurant and pick your catch. They will be more than happy to cook it just the way you like. Other foods that you should try in Kensington Place include steak fries, suckling pig belly, or Cornish scallops.

#### **6. The Bingham**

Aside from their peaceful and airy dining hall, The Bingham offers a majestic riverside terrace that is highly ideal for a romantic al fresco dining. They also boast the freshest sustainable ingredients that are locally produced. Their menu consists of a wide array of meals such as grouse, organic salmon, and even artichoke ragu. Whether you are a meat lover or a vegetarian, this restaurant can definitely satisfy your appetite.

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