

French

Beginners



200
exercises
+
model
answers

Workbook



French

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About this workbook

Designed for beginners in French, the 20 lessons in this workbook, which contain some 200 exercises, will allow you to progressively learn and practice the fundamentals of the language, from pronunciation and vocabulary through to simple sentence construction.

Each lesson deals with a key grammatical point such as verb conjugation and usage, parts of speech or sentence structure, as well as giving pronunciation tips. The exercises allow active and contextual reinforcement of the points covered, calling upon what you've learned about the language. The aim of the workbook is to provide a fun and systematic way to learn French.

As you work through the exercises, you can self-assess your results by selecting the appropriate icon after each exercise (😊 if the majority of your answers were correct, 😐 if around half of your answers were correct, or 😞 if less than half were correct). After a lesson, enter the number of icons of each type you received in the exercises, and then enter these totals into the final score table at the end of the workbook so you can tally your final results after completing all the exercises.

Note: the phonetic transcription used in this workbook was created by the author and simplified for beginners. The transcriptions may therefore differ slightly from those used in other ASSIMIL publications.

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Alphabet & pronunciation

(accents, silent letters, liaison)



The alphabet (L'alphabet)

The French alphabet is the same as the English alphabet, although some of the names of the letters are pronounced differently (see below).

A [ah]	G [jzay]	M [em]	S [es]	Y [eegrek]
B [bay]	H [ash]	N [en]	T [tay]	Z [zed]
C [say]	I [ee]	O [oh]	U [ew]	
D [day]	J [jee]	P [pay]	V [vay]	
E [uh]	K [kah]	Q [kew]	W [doobluh vay]	
F [ef]	L [el]	R [er]	X [eeks]	

- Note that the French letters **g** and **j** are swapped compared to the English pronunciation. (Also, the initial [zh] sound is similar to the 's' in *measure*.) Another difference is the letter **w**, which in French is a 'double v' as opposed to a 'double u'.
- To pronounce the French letter **u** [ew], purse your lips while saying [ee]. The result should sound something like the 'u' in *refuse*.

Greetings (Les salutations)

bonjour [boh ⁿ jzoor]	<i>good morning / good afternoon</i>
salut [salew]	<i>hello / hi</i>
bonsoir [boh ⁿ swar]	<i>good evening</i>
bonne nuit [bon new-ee]	<i>good night</i>
à bientôt [a bya ⁿ toh]	<i>see you soon (bientôt soon)</i>
au revoir [oh ruhvwar]	<i>goodbye</i>
monsieur [muhsee-uh]	<i>Mr, sir</i>
madame [madam]	<i>Mrs, madam</i>
mademoiselle [madmwazehl]	<i>miss</i>
Je m'appelle... [jzuh mapehl]	<i>My name is ...</i>
bienvenue [bya ⁿ vuhnew]	<i>welcome</i>
Ça va ? [sa va]	<i>How are things?</i>

In the wordbanks, the **red** letters are silent.



1 Spell these French first names aloud with the help of the letters on the previous page.

M-A-R-T-I-N-E
X-A-V-I-E-R

G-I-L-L-E-S

J-O-S-E-P-H
P-A-T-R-I-C-K



Note that if a vowel takes an accent, this is also the case for capital letters: *Élise*.

Saint's names

France is traditionally a Catholic country, and each day of the year has an associated saint's name. Those who are named after a saint are sometimes offered a small gift or card on their saint's day.

2 Match each French word or phrase to its English equivalent.

MONSIEUR AU REVOIR BONJOUR BONNE NUIT MADemoisELLE SALUT A BIENTÔT

GOOD MORNING HI GOOD NIGHT SEE YOU SOON SIR GOODBYE MISS

3 Put the letters in the right order in each of these words you've learned. Then write the meaning in English.

E.g. leelmmadsio → mademoiselle = miss

- a. lstau → =
- b. siobrnr → =
- c. aeammnd → =
- d. ttnbieô → =
- e. eeevnnibu → =



French written accents (Les accents français)

Certain letters in French have accents, which usually indicate how it is pronounced:

- The acute accent (l'accent aigu) é is used on the vowel e to show it is pronounced [ay].
- The grave accent (l'accent grave) è is mainly used on the vowel e to show it is pronounced [eh]. It can also be used on a or u to distinguish words that otherwise look alike, without changing the pronunciation (e.g. à to, at and a [he/she/it] has).
- The circumflex accent (l'accent circonflexe) ^ can be used on the vowels a, e, i, o and u. It changes the pronunciation slightly on certain letters, but beginners don't need to worry about this!
- The ¨ (le tréma) is used to indicate that a vowel must be pronounced separately rather than blended with another vowel: Noël [noh-el].
- Finally, the cedilla (la cédille) is a little hook at the bottom of the letter c, which indicates it is pronounced [s] as in ça this, that.

Some French holidays (Quelques fêtes françaises)

Pâques [pak]	Easter
Noël [noehl]	Christmas
la Pentecôte [la pah ⁿ tkoht]	Pentecost
la Fête nationale [la feht nasyonâl]	Bastille Day (14th of July)
la Fête des mères/pères [la feht day mehr/pehr]	Mother's / Father's Day (la mère mother, le père father, la fête celebration)
l'Épiphanie [laypeefanee]	Epiphany
la Fête du travail [la feht dew trava-ee]	Labour Day
la Toussaint [la toosa ⁿ]	All Saints' Day



Time off

The French have 11 official public holidays, including 6 based on Catholic festivals.

4 Spell these French celebrations aloud, including the accents.

- a. P-Â-Q-U-E-S
- b. N-O-Ë-L
- c. P-E-N-T-E-C-Ô-T-E
- d. É-P-I-P-H-A-N-I-E
- e. P-È-R-E-S

5 Circle the right spelling for each word in the sentences below, then write their meaning (using a dictionary if you need to).

- a. âge / age / âge
- b. être / étre / ètre
- c. frere / frère / frère
- d. salüt / salut / salût
- e. Fransse / Françe / France
- f. français / francais / franscais
- g. fête / fête / fète



6 Use a dictionary to help you add the accents or cedilla to the following words. Then write their meaning, guessing first before you check.

- a. pere =
- b. aout =
- c. lecon =
- d. Suede =
- e. canoe =
- f. americain =

Silent letters in French (Les lettres muettes en français)

Unfortunately, French is rarely pronounced as it is written. Certain letters are not even pronounced at all! This often occurs at the end of words, such as with final consonants (**salut** *hi* [sahlew]) and the silent **e** (**femme** *woman* [fam]). It also occurs with the letter **h**, which is always silent (**homme** *man* [ohm]).

Numbers from 0 to 10 (Les nombres de 0 à 10)

0 to 10			
zéro [zayroh]	zero	six [sees]	six
un [a ⁿ]	one	sept [seht]	seven
deux [duh]	two	huit [ew-eet]	eight
trois [trwa]	three	neuf [nuhf]	nine
quatre [katr]	four	dix [dees]	ten
cinq [sa ⁿ k]	five		



7 Read these French words and their meanings. Then read them aloud (the red letters are silent).

estomac <i>stomach</i>	salut <i>hi</i>	abricot <i>apricot</i>	nerf <i>nerve</i>	trop <i>too much</i>
deux <i>two</i>	outil <i>tool</i>	trois <i>three</i>	mot <i>word</i>	froid <i>cold</i>

8 Match each French word to the corresponding number.

deux zéro dix neuf cinq huit sept

9 5 8 7 2 10 0

Liaison (La liaison)

- A liaison in French is when a consonant that is normally silent at the end of one word is pronounced at the beginning of the following word. Liaisons usually occur between two words when the first ends with a consonant and the second starts with a vowel: **un enfant** *a child* [aⁿ nahⁿfahⁿ].
- The letters **s**, **x**, **z**, **t**, **d**, **n** and **m**, which are normally silent at the end of a word, are sometimes pronounced if the following word starts with a vowel sound or a mute **h**: **les hommes** *the men* [leh zohm].
- Note that an **s** is pronounced [z] in a liaison.

9 Read the following phrases aloud, making the liaison as indicated in the phonetic pronunciations in brackets.

deux amis [duh zahmee]
(ami *friend*)

trois oncles [trwah zohⁿkl]
(oncle *uncle*)

six hôtels [see zohtehl]

un éléphant [aⁿ naylayfahⁿ]

un petit enfant [aⁿ puhtee tahⁿfahⁿ]
(petit *small*)

un grand homme [aⁿ grahⁿ tom]
(grand *tall or important*)

Complete the crossword using the French words you've learned so far.

Here are the clues in English:

Horizontal

- A. three
- B. age
- D. good morning
- F. zero
- G. American (masc.) – had (past participle)
- H. nine
- I. one
- J. Christmas
- L. ten

Vertical

- 1. friend (masc.)
- 3. two
- 5. Mr, sir
- 8. five
- 9. hi – not (... pas)
- 11. cold
- 12. mother
- 13. tool

Well done! You've reached the end of Lesson 1. It's time to count up how many of each type of icon you received. Then record your results here and in the final assessment table on page 128.









More on pronunciation

(nasal vowels and semi-consonants, the French r and u)



Key sounds in French

French sound	English equivalent	French sound	English equivalent
sa, là, femme, pâte	[a], an [a] in between pat and father	balle	[b] as in ball
thé, ses	[ay] as in say	carte, kaki, quart	[k] as in cat (the u after q is often silent)
baguette, chaise, ouvert	[eh] as in bet	chou, shampooing	[sh] as in shin or bush
île, si	[ee] as in beet	danse	[d] as in dot
homme, drôle, bateau	[o] as in open	frère, photo	[f] as in father
où, pour	[oo] as in food	garage	[g] as in goat
me, sœur, jeune, peu	[uh] as in about	jour	[jz] as in vision
tu	[ew] as in refuse (to make this sound, purse the lips while pronouncing [ee])	homme	h before a vowel is silent
ouest, oui	[w] as in wet or week	lampe	[l] as in lamp
yeux, billet	[y] as in yes	mère	[m] as in mother
travail	[a]-[ee] as in fight	nez	[n] as in near
abeille	[eh]-[ee] as in laying	ligne	[ny] as in canyon
policier	[ee]-[ay], but said quickly sounds like [yay]	père	[p] as in pot
bière	[ee]-[eh], but said quickly sounds like [yeh]	rouge	[r] guttural r as in the Scottish word loch
vieux	[ee]-[uh], but said quickly sounds like [yuh]	sous, place, ça, option, dix	[s] as in sit
grenouille	[oo]-[ee] as in gooey	tortue	[t] as in turtle
feuille	[uh]-[ee]	vert	[v] as in verb
nuit	[ew]-[ee], as in few + week, and said quickly sounds similar to [wee]	zéro, dix-huit, vase	[z] as in zoo
		blanc, champ, embrasse, son, vin, loin	vowels or diphthongs* followed by n or m are nasalized: pronounce the vowel as if it was followed by [ng] (for example, song): [ah ⁿ], [oh ⁿ], [a ⁿ], [wa ⁿ] etc.

* A diphthong is a combination of vowels that are pronounced as a single syllable, in which the sound begins as one vowel and blends into the next.

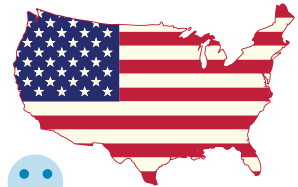
Numbers from 11 to 22
(Les nombres de 11 à 22)

11 to 22	
onze [oh ⁿ z]	eleven
douze [dooz]	twelve
treize [trehz]	thirteen
quatorze [katorz]	fourteen
quinze [ka ⁿ z]	fifteen
seize [sehzh]	sixteen
dix-sept [deeseht]	seventeen
dix-huit [deezew-eet]	eighteen
dix-neuf [deeznuhf]	nineteen
vingt [va ⁿ]	twenty
vingt et un [va ⁿ teh-a ⁿ]	twenty-one
vingt-deux [va ⁿ tduh]	twenty-two

Note: the numbers from 23 to 29 follow the same pattern as 22.

I Use the phonetic transcription to write the French word (use the table on the previous page if you need to) and then write the English equivalent.

- a. [salew] = =
- b. [amee] = =
- c. [mehr] = =
- d. [katr] = =
- e. [moh] = =
- f. [amayreekaⁿ] =
=



2 Unscramble the letters to write these numbers in French and then write the English equivalents.

- a. éorz = =
- b. rqazoute = =
- c. iuth = =
- d. xdi-fune = =
- e. tnigv = =
- f. eerzit = =

Nasal vowels and semi-consonants (Voyelles nasales et semi-consonnes)

In French syllables ending in **m** or **n**, the vowel sound is nasalized. The **m** or **n** is silent, and the preceding vowel sound is pronounced in a way similar to a vowel followed by *ng* in English, as in *song* (**train** [traⁿ] *train*, **oncle** [ohⁿkl] *uncle*). Here are some examples of **nasal vowel sounds** in French:

- **en/em:** [ahⁿ] (**trente** [trahⁿt] *thirty*)
- **an/am:** [ahⁿ] (**tante** [tahⁿt] *aunt*)
- **ain/aim/ein/eim/in/im/un/um/ien:** [aⁿ] (**vingt** [vaⁿ] *twenty*, **pain** [paⁿ] *bread*,

plein [plaⁿ] *full*, **brun** [braⁿ] *brown*, **rien** [ree-aⁿ] *nothing*)

- **on/om:** [ohⁿ] (**garçon** [garsohⁿ] *boy*, **tomber** [tohⁿbay] *to fall*)

Semi-consonants (or semi-vowels)

In some contexts, certain diphthongs are pronounced like consonants:

- **ui:** [ew-ee] (**huit** [ew-eet] *eight*)
- **ail:** [a-ye] (**travail** [trava-ee-ay] *work*)
- **ou:** [w] (**oui** [wee] *yes*)

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This easy-to-use workbook has been designed specifically for beginners in French. It includes 200 fun-filled exercises (with answers) which follow a logical progression. You will be able to self-assess your level at the end of each chapter. Every aspect of the language has been covered, including grammar, spelling, vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation and accentuation.

- **200 fun-filled exercises (with answers) to learn French**
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