

# French for Beginners — Workbook

This workbook turns the French for Beginners course into daily practice. Each section mirrors a course module, moving you from the sound system through nouns and verbs to full travel conversations. Do the exercises out loud with audio in hand, fill in the worksheets as you build vocabulary, and use the checklists before you say you have a skill down. The templates give you a spaced-repetition log, a verb conjugation grid, and printable travel phrase cards you can take on a trip.

## Sounds, Spelling, and First Words

Train your ear on the French sound system, get the accent marks and silent letters right, and lock in your first polite phrases.

### Exercise: Minimal-Pair Listening Drill

Open Forvo.com and listen to each pair below said by native speakers. Say each word aloud, exaggerating the difference, then record yourself on your phone and compare. The goal is to hear and produce the vowels English does not have.

- tu (you) versus tout (everything): can you feel your lips rounding while your tongue stays forward for tu?  
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- deux (two) versus de (of): which one has the more open, rounded eu sound?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- vous (you, formal) versus vu (seen): one is a true oo, the other the front-rounded u — which is which?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- dessus (above) versus dessous (below): say both five times until a French listener could tell them apart  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Worksheet: Accent Marks and Silent Letters Reference

Fill in your own example word for each mark and rule as you meet them in the course. Keep this beside you when you start writing French so spelling becomes automatic.

Accent aigu example word (e only, e.g. cafe)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Accent grave example word (and what it distinguishes)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Accent circonflexe example word (and the dropped historical s if any)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Trema example word (two vowels said separately)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cedille example word (soft c before a/o/u)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Three words with a silent final consonant I keep forgetting  
\_\_\_\_\_

My CaReFuL check: a word ending in c, r, f, or l that IS pronounced  
\_\_\_\_\_

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A word starting with a silent h (vowel sound)

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### Checklist: Pronunciation and Greetings Mastery Check

- I can produce the u sound in tu (lips rounded, tongue forward)
- I can produce the eu sound in deux without substituting an English vowel
- I read the four accents and the cedilla correctly when reading aloud
- I leave final consonants silent except c, r, f, l (CaReFuL)
- I open every interaction with Bonjour plus Madame or Monsieur
- I default to vous with strangers and only use tu when invited
- I can deploy Parlez-vous anglais and Je ne comprends pas without hesitating

## Nouns, Articles, and Everyday Vocabulary

Practise gender and articles, get fluent with numbers, time, and money, and build a daily spaced-repetition habit.

### Exercise: Article and Gender Sorting

Take twenty nouns from your current vocabulary and write each with its correct definite article (le, la, l'). Use the ending-pattern clues from the lesson to predict gender before checking Larousse online.

- Which endings (-tion, -ette, -age, -ment) helped you guess correctly, and which words broke the pattern?

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- Rewrite five of your nouns with the indefinite article (un, une, des) instead

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- Find two -ee words that are masculine exceptions (hint: le musee, le lycee) and note them

### Exercise: Numbers, Time, and Price Out Loud

Say each of the following in French, then check yourself. Focus on the 70-80-90 arithmetic and the 24-hour clock, which trip up most beginners.

- Say these numbers: 17, 71, 80, 91, 99 (watch soixante-dix, quatre-vingts, quatre-vingt-dix)

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- Read these times on the 24-hour clock: 08h15, 14h30, 18h45, 23h00

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- Read these prices aloud: 4,50 EUR, 12,99 EUR, 2 500 EUR (remember the comma is the decimal point)

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- Give today's date in French, day-month-year, with no capital letters

### Worksheet: Spaced-Repetition Setup Sheet

Complete this once when you set up your vocabulary system, then revisit weekly to keep yourself honest about the daily habit.

Tool I will use (Anki / Memrise / other)

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Deck source (top-1000 frequency deck name, with audio?)

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New cards per day target

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Time of day I will review

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Themed travel sets I am front-loading (food, directions, transport, lodging, emergencies)

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Note format rule (article with every noun? example sentence on every card?)

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My current total words learned

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Longest streak of consecutive review days

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### Checklist: Vocabulary and Numbers Checklist

- I learn every noun together with its article, never alone
- I can use le/la/les, un/une/des, and the contractions au/aux correctly
- I can count to 100 including the soixante-dix and quatre-vingts forms
- I can read the 24-hour clock and tell time with Il est ... heures
- I read prices with the comma as the decimal separator
- I review my spaced-repetition deck every day, even briefly
- I have front-loaded themed travel vocabulary as mini-scripts

## Verbs and Building Sentences

Conjugate regular and essential irregular verbs, then negate, question, and connect ideas into real sentences.

### Worksheet: Present-Tense Conjugation Grid

Fill in the full present tense for each verb across all six subjects. Do it from memory first, then check. Note which forms sound identical so you remember to rely on the subject pronoun.

parler (-er): je, tu, il/elle, nous, vous, ils/elles

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finir (-ir): je, tu, il/elle, nous, vous, ils/elles

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vendre (-re): je, tu, il/elle, nous, vous, ils/elles

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etre (to be): all six forms

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avoir (to have): all six forms

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aller (to go): all six forms

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faire (to do/make): all six forms

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Which four forms of parler are pronounced identically?

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### Exercise: Avoir Idioms and the Near Future

Translate the following into French out loud, paying attention to where French uses avoir instead of etre, and how aller plus an infinitive makes the easy near future.

- Say your age the French way (J'ai ... ans), then I am hungry and I am cold using avoir
- Make three near-future sentences with aller plus an infinitive (e.g. I am going to eat, we are going to leave)

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- Describe today's weather with faire (Il fait beau / Il fait froid / Il fait chaud)
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- Use Comment allez-vous and the casual Ça va in a two-line exchange
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### Exercise: Negate, Question, Connect

Take five simple statements you can already make and transform them. This drills the three skills that turn words into conversation.

- Make each statement negative with ne ... pas (remember n' before a vowel)
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- Turn each into a question three ways: by intonation, with Est-ce que, and by inversion
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- Add a question word to two of them (Ou, Quand, Pourquoi, Comment, Combien)
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- Join two short sentences with et, mais, parce que, or donc
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### Checklist: Verbs and Sentences Checklist

- ] I can conjugate regular -er, -ir, and -re verbs in the present tense
- ] I know that four -er forms sound identical and I rely on the subject pronoun
- ] I have memorised être, avoir, aller, and faire in full
- ] I use avoir for age, hunger, thirst, and temperature idioms
- ] I form the near future with aller plus an infinitive
- ] I can negate a verb with ne ... pas and shorten ne to n' before a vowel
- ] I can ask a question three ways and lead with question words
- ] I link ideas with et, mais, parce que, and alors

## Real Conversations for Travel and Daily Life

Rehearse complete dialogues for dining, shopping, transport, and lodging, handle emergencies, and set a routine to keep improving.

### Exercise: Cafe and Restaurant Role-Play

Run the full cafe dialogue from the course aloud, playing both roles, then adapt it with different orders. Order politely with Je voudrais and remember to request the bill.

- Order a drink and a pastry using Je voudrais ..., s'il vous plait
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- Ask for free tap water with une carafe d'eau and check service compris on a sample menu
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- Ask for the bill with L'addition, s'il vous plait, then ask to pay by card
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- Swap entrée into your order and note why it is a false friend (starter, not main)
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### Worksheet: My Trip Survival Sheet

Fill this in before a real or imagined trip to France so the right phrases are ready for each situation you will face.

How I will order food (my go-to Je voudrais sentence)

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How I will ask the price and say I will take it

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Three direction words I must recognise by ear

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My train-ticket sentence (aller simple or aller-retour, destination)

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My hotel check-in sentence (reservation under my name, number of nights)

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The emergency number in France and the phrase for I need a doctor

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Where the nearest pharmacy phrase (Ou est la pharmacie la plus proche)

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One phrase to keep a conversation alive (Pouvez-vous repeter, s'il vous plait)

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### Exercise: Directions, Station, and Hotel Drills

Practise the three travel scripts from the final module. Say each exchange aloud and listen to native audio of the key replies so you recognise them at speed.

- Ask the way to two places with *Ou est ...* and *Pour aller a ...*
- Buy an aller-retour to a city for tomorrow morning, then ask which platform (*le quai*)
- Check in at a hotel for three nights and ask whether breakfast is included
- Politely report a room problem with *Il y a un probleme avec ...* and *Pourriez-vous ...*

### Checklist: Travel Readiness and Habit Checklist

- I can order a full meal and request l'addition without prompting
- I can buy items and understand a spoken price
- I recognise a gauche, a droite, and tout droit by ear
- I can buy a train ticket and read a 24-hour departure time
- I can check in to a hotel and raise a problem politely
- I know the EU emergency number 112 and the phrase for a doctor
- I have a daily 15-30 minute routine mixing Anki, an app, listening, and speaking
- I have booked or planned real speaking practice via italki, Tandem, or HelloTalk

## Your Action Plan

1. Spend your first week training your ear on Forvo and slow native audio before drilling grammar
2. Memorise the five diacritics and the CaReFuL silent-letter rule by reading short texts aloud
3. Build the politeness habit: open every interaction with *Bonjour plus Madame or Monsieur*, default to *vous*
4. Set up an Anki deck of the top 1000 French words with audio and commit to 15-20 new cards a day
5. Drill numbers to 100, the 24-hour clock, and reading prices with the comma decimal separator
6. Memorise the present tense of *parler*, *finir*, and *vendre* as your three regular-verb templates
7. Over-practise *etre*, *avoir*, *aller*, and *faire* until they are automatic, including the *avoir* idioms
8. Master negation with *ne ... pas* and asking questions three ways (intonation, *Est-ce que*, inversion)
9. Rehearse the cafe, market, directions, train, and hotel dialogues aloud until they are scripts you own
10. Lock in a daily 15-30 minute routine and book weekly speaking practice with a tutor or exchange partner to push toward A2









