

French Alphabet and Pronunciation Translation

Hello friends and welcome to a new video of Super Easy French. Have you ever wondered how the letters of the alphabet are pronounced in French? Or have you ever wondered how certain sounds are pronounced in French? Today, we're going to see all of that. Shall we begin?

In French, there are 26 letters that all have very specific pronunciations.

A makes the sound /a/. Anna bought an apricot. The letter A sometimes has a grave accent, like in the preposition à or in the word là. It can sometimes also have a circumflex accent, like in the word pâte. When A is followed by a U, it is pronounced au like in: *une pause* (a break).

When A is followed by an I, it is pronounced /eh/, like in: *une maison* (a house). *Bah alors Alan, tu fait une pause? Well then, Alan, are you taking a break?*

B is pronounced /b/, like in: *bonjour des amis : hello friends. Oh Bérénice, look at these beautiful baobabs!*

The letter C can be pronounced in three ways. /s/ when it is followed by an E, an I or a Y, like in: *ceci cela ou sygne - this, that or a swan.* /k/ when it is followed by an A, an O or a U. *Une casserole, un colier, un cure-dent - A saucepan, a necklace, a toothpick.* There is also the c-cedilla. It's a C with a small accent under the letter. And it is pronounced /s/, like in: *Français.* In a sentence, we can therefore have three ways of pronouncing a C, like in the sentence: *c'est un coq français - It's a French rooster.*

D is pronounced /d/, like in *dodo* or *odou* (chubby). *Le dodo dort dans son duvet. - The dodo sleeps in its duvet.*

E has several ways of being pronounced. At the end of a word, it is discreet or silent, like in *un malade: a sick person.* In the middle of a word, it is pronounced /i/ as in: *a meringue.*

The group EU is pronounced /eu/, like in the number *deux* two (2) When there is an acute accent on the E, it is pronounced ay Like in *step* or *key*. We say that it is a **closed E**. (ie *fermé*) When E is followed by two consonants, it is pronounced /eh/, like in *une lettre - a letter.* We say that it is an **open E** : E can have a **accent grave** like in: *père, mère, frère - father, mother, brother,* or a **accent circumflex** like in: *forêt - forest.* They are all pronounced /eh/. These are also open E sounds. *Mon père et ma mère m'ont emmené en forêt après le déjeuner. - My father and my mother took me to the forest after lunch.*

Après cette balade, je suis tombé malade. - After this walk, I fell sick.

F is pronounced /f/. Like in: *fête - celebration* or *fleur - flower.*

Félicien ramène des fleurs pour la fête. Félicien brings flowers for the celebration.

¹ Baobab is a nutrient-dense "superfruit" from the African "Tree of Life" (*Adansonia*), known for drying naturally on the branch into a powdery pulp. It is highly prized for its high vitamin C, fiber, and antioxidant content, often used in smoothies, juices, and health supplements. The tree itself is legendary, storing huge water volumes in its trunk and offering numerous traditional uses. Baobab fruits have a sweet, tangy, and refreshing taste suited for fresh and cooked preparations.

G is pronounced /gh/ when it is followed by an E, an I or a Y, like in *une girafe, un gyrophare ou un genou* - a giraffe, a flashing light, or a knee G followed by an A, a U or an O is pronounced /g/, like in: *Gaston, une goyave et une dégustation* - Gaston, a guava and a tasting.

But be careful, if there is a vowel after GU, the group GU is pronounced /g/, like in: a guitar.

Quand Gaston joue de la guitare, il la pose sur ses genoux. - When Gaston plays the guitar, he puts it on his knees.

H: in most cases the H is silent, like in : *une histoire, un hublot.* a story, a porthole. When an H follows a C, we pronounce it /sh/. *Un chien, un chat, une chaise.* A dog, a cat, a chair. When an H follows a P, we pronounce it /f/ like: *pharaon ou phare* - pharaoh or lighthouse. *Le chien et le chat se dirigent vers le phare* - The dog and the cat are heading toward the lighthouse.

I, makes the sound /ee/, like in *iguane ou illimité* - iguana or unlimited. *L'univers est illimité.* The universe is unlimited.

J is pronounced /gh/, like in *jouer ou Jean* - playing or Jean. *Jean joue dans le jardin.* - John is playing in the garden.

K: the letter K produces the sound /k/, like in *koala, yak, khaki.* - The koala is grey, not khaki.

L is pronounced /l/, like in *lion.* When an I is followed by two Ls, it is pronounced /yi/, like in *fille.* *Ta fille lit dans la file d'attente.* Your daughter is reading in the queue.

M and N behave the same way. M is pronounced /m/, while N is pronounced /n/. But when M or N follow a vowel, they sound different, like in: *name, morning, perfume or child.* *Ma maman sent le parfum le matin.* My mother smells like perfume in the morning. *Ninon ne s'ennuie pas la nuit.* Ninon is not bored at night.

O is pronounced /oh/, like in *gros or un pot* - large/fat or pot. When O is followed by U, it is pronounced /oo/, like in *un fou ou un bijou* - a fool or a jewel.- *Michou joue avec un doudou.* Michou is playing with a teddy bear. When O is followed by I, we pronounce /wa/, like in *oiseau* - bird. Be careful, there is an exception with the word onion, which we do not pronounce wa-nion. - *Cette oie se rend au bois, mais n'aime pas les oignons.* - This goose goes to the woods, but does not like onions.

P is pronounced /p/, like in: *papa or je pars.* dad or I am leaving. *Papa phoque dort près du phare.* Daddy seal sleeps near the lighthouse.

The letter Q is generally followed by the letter U and produces the sound /k/ like in: *qui, que, quoi, quand* - who, what, which, when. Sometimes, QU produces the sound /kw/ in words of Latin or foreign origin, like in: *aquarium, Équateur ou équation* - aquarium, Ecuador or equation.

Quand Quentin résout une équation à l'aquarium, When Quentin solves an equation at the aquarium, *il s' imagine sur une plage en Équateur* - he imagines himself on a beach in Ecuador.

R produces the sound /rr from the back of the throat/. *Je viens te chercher en Roumanie.* - I am coming to pick you up in Romania.

S has two ways of being pronounced: /s/ or /z/. When it is at the beginning of a word, we pronounce it /**s**/, like in *un sac* (a bag) or in the verb to ski. When it is in the middle of a word, it depends on the number of **s**. If there is only one S, we pronounce it /z/, like in the name Lisa. But if there are two S, we pronounce it /s/, like in *assis* (seated). When it is at the end of a word, it depends. *Accrochez-vous, cela va bien se passer. Hold on tight, it will be fine.* Sometimes the S is silent, especially in verbs like to do, or in pairs. If there is a vowel after a word ending with S, we pronounce the S /z/, like in *des amis* (friends). There are also some words where the S is pronounced at the end, like in the words *un os, un bonus ou plus. a bone, a bonus or more. Lisa organise des soirées assises. Lisa organizes seated evenings.*

T produces the sound /t/. *Théo et Thibault tentent de vendre leur tente. Théo and Thibault are trying to stretch their tent.*

U produces the sound /y/, like in Uranus. As a reminder, when U follows A, it produces the sound /au/. When it follows E, it produces the sound /eu/. And when U follows the letter O, it produces the sound /ou/. *Eugène et Auguste ont rendez-vous en Ouganda. - Eugène and Auguste have a meeting in Uganda. U followed by I is pronounced /ee/, like in the number eight (huit) or in the word oyster huitre. - J'ai acheté huit douzaines d'huitres. - I bought eight dozen oysters.*

V produces the sound /v/. *Je vais en vacances à Varsovie avec Viviane - I am going on vacation to Warsaw with Viviane.*

W can be pronounced /w/ or /v/, like in: *wagon* (pronounced *vagon*) or *wapiti* - *wagon* or *elk*. *J'ai un wapiti que j'ai acheté à Waterloo et je le ramène dans mon wagon. I have an elk that I bought in Waterloo and I am bringing it back in my wagon.*

X can be pronounced in many different ways. It can be /gz/ like in *exam*, /**ks** like in *taxi*, /**s**/ like in *dix* (ten), /z/ like in *deuxième* (second), or it can be silent like in the word *prix* (price).

Xavier et moi avons créé dix oxymores, mais moi je ne veux pas en faire dix de plus, - Xavier and I created ten oxymorons, but me, I don't want to make ten more.

Y can be pronounced in three different ways. /ee/ like in the name Yvan, /ye/ like in the name Yolande, and when it is followed by M or N, we pronounce /eu/, like in *synchronicity* or a *cymbal*.

Yolande et Yvan ont acheté des cymbales. - Yolande and Yvan bought cymbals.

Z produces the sound /z/. *Zacharie sème la zizanie à Zanzibar. - Zacharie is spreading trouble in Zanzibar.*

And there you go, the mysteries of pronunciation in French will no longer hold any secrets for you.

We will see you next week. Goodbye.