

LANGUAGE: FRENCH

Language Family: Indo-European

Genus: Romance

Number of Speakers Worldwide: 75+ million (L1 – First language)
700 million (L2 – Second language)

Where Spoken: France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Canada, Switzerland, Italy, the USA, Lebanon, French Guiana, north, west and central Africa, Madagascar, a number of islands in the Indian Ocean, Haiti and other Caribbean islands, Indochina, New Caledonia, the New Hebrides and the French Pacific Territories

French Alphabet (l'alphabet français):

A a	B b	C c	D d	E e	F f	G g	H h	I i	J j	K k	L l	M m
[a]	[be]	[se]	[de]	[ə]	[ɛf]	[ʒe]	[aʃ]	[i]	[ʒi]	[ka]	[ɛl]	[ɛm]
N n	O o	P p	Q q	R r	S s	T t	U u	V v	W w	X x	Y y	Z z
[ɛn]	[o]	[pe]	[ky]	[ɛR]	[ɛs]	[te]	[y]	[ve]	[dubləve]	[iks]	[igRɛk]	[zɛd]

Sample text:

Tous les êtres humains naissent libres et égaux en dignité et en droits. Ils sont doués de raison et de conscience et doivent agir les uns envers les autres dans un esprit de fraternité.

Translation:

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.
(Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

Useful French phrases: <http://omniglot.com/language/phrases/french.php>

What do you need to know about the culture of French speakers?

More than 13 million Americans claim some French ancestry and French is currently the fourth most spoken language in the country after English, Spanish and Chinese, with 1.6 million speakers. Additionally, 450,000 U.S. residents speak a French-based Creole language. French Americans are most numerous in New England, northern New York, the Midwest and Louisiana. The French in the United States are known as Franco-Americans. The majority of Americans of French and French Canadian descent are descendants of those who first settled in Canada in the 17th century.

There are three major groups of **French dialects** in the United States:

- [Missouri French](#)
- [Acadian](#) (or New England) French
- [Louisiana French](#), of which there are three dialects:
 - [Colonial French](#) – also known as Colonial Louisiana French, a dialect formerly spoken widely in Louisiana, now considered to have merged with the Cajun dialect
 - Louisiana Creole French - a language spoken by the Louisiana Creole people, contains elements of French, Native American, Spanish, and West African roots
 - [Cajun French](#) - also known as Louisiana Regional French, a dialect spoken primarily in Louisiana, specifically in the southern and southwestern parishes (Cajuns are descendants of Acadian exiles who fled the Canadian maritime provinces during the 1700s)

Pidgin versus Creole Languages:

- Pidgin Language – a communication system which has grown up among people who don't share a common language, but who want to speak to each other
 - Also known as a ‘makeshift’, ‘marginal’ or mixed language
 - Has limited vocabulary and grammatical structure, thus a narrower range of functions
- Creole language – a contact language, often arising from a pidgin, which begins in an unpremeditated manner and becomes the mother tongue of a community
 - Vocabulary consists of cognates from the parent language(s), but with many phonetic and semantic differences stemming from the pidgin

Religions: Most Franco-Americans are Roman Catholic by heritage, including the Cajuns.