



FREE A1 GUIDE · 8 PAGES

DEFINITE *Le · La · Les · L'*  
INDEFINITE *Un · Une · Des*  
PARTITIVE *Du · De la · De l'*

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## *Master French Articles in 30 minutes*

The 9 small words that make every  
French sentence sound right.

✓ 9 articles

✓ 6 rules

✓ 3 exercises

OUIVINVIN · FRENCH FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS

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## ★ YOUR FREE A1 GUIDE

# Welcome, future French speaker.

French articles are tiny words. *Le, la, un, une, du, de la, des...* Just one or two letters each. But they are everywhere, and getting them right is what separates a beginner from someone who sounds natural. This guide shows you all 9 articles, the 3 categories, and the traps English speakers fall into, in 8 focused pages.

## How to use this guide

### 01

#### Learn

Read each article page slowly. Notice the gender (masculine vs feminine). Say the examples out loud.

### 02

#### Practice

Do the 3 exercises on page 6. Write your answers directly on the PDF or in a notebook.

### 03

#### Check

Compare with the answer key on page 7. Each mistake comes with a short explanation, no judgement.

## ★ THE PROMISE

*In 30 minutes, you will recognize all 9 French articles, know which one to use, and avoid the most common English-speaker traps.*

## Symbols you will see



**Friction zone:** a place where French and English work differently. Slow down here.



**Memory tip:** a small trick to remember the rule without effort.



**English bridge:** a word-for-word comparison to feel how French logic works.



**Remember:** the essential rule of the section, in one sentence.



★ THE FIRST FAMILY OF ARTICLES

# Le, La, Les, L'

the definite article (English: « the »)

SCENE · AT A FRENCH RESTAURANT

**A.** *Bonjour ! Je voudrais le menu, s'il vous plaît.*

*Hello! I would like the menu, please.*

**B.** *Bien sûr. Vous aimez le vin rouge ou le vin blanc ?*

*Of course. Do you like (the) red wine or (the) white wine?*

**A.** *J'adore le vin rouge ! Et l'eau, aussi.*

*I love (the) red wine! And (the) water, too.*

## The 4 forms of the definite article

ARTICLE	WHEN TO USE	EXAMPLE
<b>le</b>	<b>masculine singular</b>	<i>le livre</i> <i>the book</i>
<b>la</b>	<b>feminine singular</b>	<i>la maison</i> <i>the house</i>
<b>l'</b>	<b>before a vowel or silent h</b>	<i>l'ami, l'hôtel</i> <i>the friend, the hotel</i>
<b>les</b>	<b>plural (any gender)</b>	<i>les livres, les maisons</i> <i>the books, the houses</i>

### 3 main uses

**01 Specific thing:** *le livre que je lis* (the book I'm reading)

**02 General concept:** *j'aime le café* (I love coffee, in general)

**03 Languages, days, body parts:** *le français, le lundi, la tête*

★ REMEMBER

Use *le, la, l', les* for something specific OR for a general love or hate. Always check the gender of the noun.

⚠ FRICTION ZONE

English drops « the » for general statements: *I love coffee* (no article). French keeps it: *J'aime le café*. Same logic for languages: *j'apprends le français*, not *j'apprends français*.

### 4 model sentences to memorize

*Le café est chaud.*  
The coffee is hot.

*J'aime la musique.*  
I like music.

*L'hôtel est grand.*  
The hotel is big.

*Les enfants jouent.*  
The children play.



★ THE SECOND FAMILY OF ARTICLES

# Un, Une, Des

the indefinite article (English: « a, an, some »)

SCENE · AT THE OUTDOOR MARKET

- A.** *Bonjour ! Je voudrais une baguette, s'il vous plaît.*  
Hello! I would like a baguette, please.
- B.** *Bien sûr. Et avec ça, un croissant ou des macarons ?*  
Of course. And with that, a croissant or some macaroons?
- A.** *Je vais prendre des macarons. C'est un cadeau pour une amie.*  
I'll take some macaroons. It's a gift for a (female) friend.

## The 3 forms of the indefinite article

ARTICLE	WHEN TO USE	EXAMPLE
<b>un</b>	<b>masculine singular</b>	<i>un livre</i> a book
<b>une</b>	<b>feminine singular</b>	<i>une maison</i> a house
<b>des</b>	<b>plural (any gender)</b>	<i>des livres, des maisons</i> some books, some houses

### 3 main uses

- 01 One unspecified thing:** *un chat* (a cat, any cat)
- 02 Plural countable:** *des chats* (some cats)
- 03 After c'est:** *c'est un livre* (it's a book)

★ REMEMBER

Use *un, une, des* when introducing something for the first time, or when the quantity is not specified.

⚠ FRICTION ZONE

English has no plural for « a », it just disappears: *I have books*. French keeps an article: *J'ai des livres*, never *j'ai livres*. The little word *des* is invisible in English, but mandatory in French.

### 4 model sentences to memorize

*J'ai un frère.*  
I have a brother.

*C'est une bonne idée.*  
It's a good idea.

*Je veux des fleurs.*  
I want some flowers.

*Tu as un stylo ?*  
Do you have a pen?

★ THE THIRD FAMILY · THE ONE ENGLISH DOES NOT HAVE

# Du, De la, De l', Des

The partitive article (English: *some, any*, but often invisible). This is the article you have to add in French even when English drops it completely.

## The 4 forms of the partitive article

ARTICLE	WHEN TO USE	EXAMPLE
<i>du</i>	masculine singular	<i>je bois du café</i> <i>I drink coffee</i>
<i>de la</i>	feminine singular	<i>je mange de la salade</i> <i>I eat salad</i>
<i>de l'</i>	before a vowel or silent h	<i>je bois de l'eau</i> <i>I drink water</i>
<i>des</i>	plural (any gender)	<i>je mange des fruits</i> <i>I eat fruit</i>

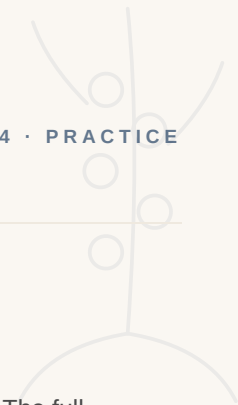
## The 5 places English speakers forget the partitive

ENGLISH SAYS	FRENCH SAYS
<b>01</b> I drink ☹ coffee	→ <b>Je bois du café.</b> <i>literally: I drink some coffee</i>
<b>02</b> I eat ☹ bread	→ <b>Je mange du pain.</b> <i>literally: I eat some bread</i>
<b>03</b> She wants ☹ water	→ <b>Elle veut de l'eau.</b> <i>literally: she wants some water</i>
<b>04</b> We have ☹ patience	→ <b>Nous avons de la patience.</b> <i>literally: we have some patience</i>
<b>05</b> They buy ☹ apples	→ <b>Ils achètent des pommes.</b> <i>literally: they buy some apples</i>



**MEMORY TIP · THE GOLDEN RULE**

In English, « *some* » is optional. In French, it is **never optional**. Whenever you talk about an unspecified quantity of food, drink, or abstract things, you **MUST** use **du, de la, de l', or des**. If a noun has no article in French, the sentence is broken.



★ YOUR TURN

# Practice time

Three short exercises, three levels. Write your answers directly on this page (or in a notebook). The full answer key is on the next page. *Take your time.*

## 01 Definite or indefinite?

EASY

Choose the right article: *le, la, les* (definite) or *un, une, des* (indefinite).

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. J'adore _____ café.         | 5. Tu as _____ chien ?        |
| 2. Je voudrais _____ baguette. | 6. Elle écoute _____ musique. |
| 3. C'est _____ bonne idée !    | 4. _____ enfants jouent.      |
| 7. Il y a _____ problème.      | 8. J'apprends _____ français. |

## 02 Fill in the partitive article

MEDIUM

Choose between *du, de la, de l', des*.

- |                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Je bois _____ eau.        | 4. Il mange _____ pain.       |
| 2. Tu veux _____ café ?      | 5. Nous avons _____ chance.   |
| 3. Elle achète _____ fleurs. | 6. Vous mangez _____ salade ? |

## 03 Translate into French

HARDER

Watch out: English often drops the article, but French keeps it.

- I love coffee.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- She wants water.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The hotel is closed. (*closed = fermé*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I have brothers and sisters. (*brothers = frères, sisters = sœurs*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- They eat bread every morning. (*every morning = tous les matins*)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DONE? GREAT WORK**

★ *Don't check the answers immediately. Sleep on it, come back tomorrow, and try again. Memory loves space and repetition.*

## ★ HOW DID YOU DO?

## Answer key

Each answer comes with a one-line explanation. Read every line, even the ones you got right. *Mistakes are how the brain learns.*

## 01 Definite or indefinite?

EASY

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. J'adore <b>le</b> café.<br/><i>general love = definite</i></p> <hr/> <p>2. Je voudrais <b>une</b> baguette.<br/><i>a (one) baguette = indefinite, fem.</i></p> <hr/> <p>3. C'est <b>une</b> bonne idée !<br/><i>after c'est, idée is fem.</i></p> <hr/> <p>7. Il y a <b>un</b> problème.<br/><i>a (one) problem = indefinite, masc.</i></p> | <p>5. Tu as <b>un</b> chien ?<br/><i>a (one) dog = indefinite</i></p> <hr/> <p>6. Elle écoute <b>la</b> musique.<br/><i>music in general = definite, fem.</i></p> <hr/> <p>4. <b>Les</b> enfants jouent.<br/><i>specific group = definite plural</i></p> <hr/> <p>8. J'apprends <b>le</b> français.<br/><i>languages always take definite</i></p> |
|---|---|

## 02 Fill in the partitive article

MEDIUM

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Je bois <b>de l'</b> eau.<br/><i>eau starts with a vowel = de l'</i></p> <hr/> <p>2. Tu veux <b>du</b> café ?<br/><i>café is masc. = du</i></p> <hr/> <p>3. Elle achète <b>des</b> fleurs.<br/><i>plural noun = des</i></p> | <p>4. Il mange <b>du</b> pain.<br/><i>pain is masc. = du</i></p> <hr/> <p>5. Nous avons <b>de la</b> chance.<br/><i>chance is fem. = de la</i></p> <hr/> <p>6. Vous mangez <b>de la</b> salade ?<br/><i>salade is fem. = de la</i></p> |
|---|--|

## 03 Translate into French

HARDER

1. I love coffee. → **J'aime le** café.  
*General love = definite article. English drops the article, French keeps it.*

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2. She wants water. → **Elle veut de l'** eau.  
*Unspecified quantity = partitive. Eau starts with a vowel, so de l'.*

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3. The hotel is closed. → **L' hôtel** est fermé.  
*Specific hotel = definite. Hôtel starts with silent h, so l'.*

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4. I have brothers and sisters. → **J'ai des** frères et **des** sœurs.  
*Plural unspecified = des, used twice (one for each noun).*

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5. They eat bread every morning. → **Ils mangent du** pain tous les matins.  
*Unspecified quantity of food = partitive. Pain is masc. = du.*

## EVEN 70% IS A WIN

- ★ *If you got 13 out of 19 right, you already have the foundation of French articles. The hardest part, partitives, takes weeks to feel natural. Be patient with yourself.*

★ YOU FINISHED THE GUIDE

# Félicitations !

You now know all 9 French articles and the rules behind them. *Ready for the next level?*

YOUR NEXT STEP · A1 LEVEL

## French Articles Mastered

The complete 16-page guide: every rule, every exception, every trap, plus 50 graded exercises with detailed answers.

PAGES	RULES	EXERCISES	PRICE
16	12	50	1,99 € or 1 credit

GET THE FULL GUIDE →

### Three reasons to keep going

**01**

#### Every exception covered

Articles after negation, before professions, with body parts, and the tricky transformations of the partitive.

**02**

#### 50 graded exercises

From simple recognition to free production, with detailed answer keys explaining every choice.

**03**

#### Less than a coffee

1,99 € or 1 credit. The cost of a small coffee for a guide that will save you years of confusion.



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