

STAGES OF LEARNING FRENCH

The European Framework of Reference for Languages (ECRL or CECRL) is a ranking system used to assess proficiency in a foreign language.



Alliance Française

Houston

Classes are divided by age group:

- Ages 3–4: Les Bambins (*The Toddlers*)
- Ages 4–6: Les Grands Bambins (*The Kindergartners*)
- Ages 7–9: Les Petits Écoliers (*The Young Learners*)
- Ages 10–16: Les Grands Écoliers (*The Junior Students*)

*Students over the age of 16 have the option to join either an adult class or remain in a teen group.

**PS: Petite Section
MS: Moyenne Section
GS: Grande Section



NEW STUDENT:

A placement test is required for all new students with prior experience in French.

Please contact youthprograms@alliancehouston.org.

If there is no prior experience in French, please register for level A1.0 in the appropriate age group.

BOOKS: All students must acquire the required textbooks for their class.



OUR TODDLERS LANGUAGE LEVELS (3-4 & 4-6 YO)

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By the end of each level, learners are generally able to:

PS

Toddlers class

- Basic greetings and introductions (e.g., Bonjour, Au revoir, Ça va ?)
- Numbers (usually 1 to 10)
- Colors and shapes
- Simple classroom instructions (e.g., Écoute, Regarde, Assieds-toi)
- Common vocabulary such as animals, family members, toys, and body parts
- Songs and nursery rhymes in French
- Expressing basic needs or preferences with short phrases (e.g., Je veux, J'aime)

MS

GS

Kindergartners classes

- Expanded vocabulary on familiar topics: family, animals, clothing, food, weather, emotions, parts of the body, school items.
- Simple sentence structures (e.g., J'ai un chat, Il fait beau, Je m'appelle...)
- Understanding and following classroom instructions in French.
- Introducing oneself and others, asking and answering simple questions (e.g., Comment tu t'appelles ?, Quel âge as-tu ?)
- Recognizing and using numbers (up to 20 or 30), days of the week, and basic time expressions.
- Participating in songs, chants, and short dialogues.
- Beginning to recognize French sounds and letters, especially if literacy is introduced in their native language.
- The focus remains on oral comprehension and expression, with gradual exposure to reading and writing if appropriate for their development and school program.



Classes are divided by age group:

– **Ages 3–4: Les Bambins** (*The Toddlers*)

– **Ages 4–6: Les Grands Bambins** (*The Kindergartners*)

****PS:** *Petite Section* | **MS:** *Moyenne Section* | **GS:** *Grande Section*

In the French education system, children begin their schooling in "école maternelle", which is the equivalent of preschool or kindergarten. It is divided into three main levels:

Petite Section (PS) – Ages 3–4: This is the first year of preschool. | Moyenne Section (MS) – Ages 4–5: This is the second year of preschool. Grande Section (GS) – Ages 5–6: This is the final year of preschool.

Salut !

OUR KIDS LANGUAGE LEVELS (7-9 YO)

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By the end of each level, learners are generally able to:

A1.1

Grand Débutant / Complete Beginner

- Introduce themselves and others (e.g., Je m'appelle Marie. Voici mon ami Paul.)
- Ask and answer simple questions about personal details (e.g., Tu as quel âge ?, Tu habites où ?)
- Understand and give basic information about themselves and their environment (e.g., J'ai un chien. J'habite à Londres.)
- Follow simple instructions and classroom language (e.g., Prenez vos cahiers. Écoutez. Répétez.)
- Talk about daily routines and preferences (e.g., J'aime le chocolat. Je me lève à 7 heures.)
- Recognize and use common vocabulary related to:
 - Family and friends
 - Numbers, colors, and days of the week
 - School, food, clothes, animals, and weather
 - Parts of the body and emotions
- Begin reading and writing short, simple texts, such as filling out a basic personal profile, labeling pictures, or writing a few short sentences about themselves.
- Understand simple listening texts, especially when supported by visuals and context.

A1

Débutant / Beginner

- Introduce themselves and others, and ask and answer questions about personal details (e.g., Comment tu t'appelles ? Où habites-tu ? Tu as des frères et sœurs ?)
- Talk about their daily life: school, hobbies, routines, likes and dislikes (e.g., Je vais à l'école à huit heures. J'aime jouer au foot.)
- Describe people, animals, and objects using simple adjectives (e.g., Il est grand et gentil. C'est un petit chien blanc.)
- Use common verbs in the present tense (e.g., avoir, être, aimer, aller, faire, parler)
- Understand and give simple directions and instructions (e.g., Va tout droit. Ouvre ton livre. Écoute bien.)
- Talk about the weather, seasons, dates, and celebrations
- Ask and answer questions about quantities, prices, or preferences in basic role-play situations (e.g., in a shop, at a café)
- Read and understand short texts such as personal profiles, messages, postcards, or simple stories
- Write short sentences and simple paragraphs about familiar topics (e.g., Ma famille, Mon animal préféré, Une journée à l'école)

A2

Élémentaire / Elementary

- Give more detailed personal information (e.g., Je suis en CE2. J'ai un petit frère. Nous habitons dans une maison près d'un parc.)
- Talk about past and future events using simple tenses (e.g., Hier, je suis allé au parc. Demain, je vais faire un gâteau.)
- Describe daily routines, school life, vacations, hobbies, and celebrations with more structure and vocabulary
- Express opinions and preferences with justification (e.g., Je préfère le sport parce que c'est amusant. Je n'aime pas les légumes.)
- Tell simple stories or describe events in sequence (e.g., D'abord, j'ai pris mon petit déjeuner. Ensuite, je suis allé à l'école.)
- Understand longer listening texts and dialogues, especially if supported with visuals or repetition
- Read and understand short texts, including letters, descriptions, diary entries, or simple narratives
- Write short paragraphs or messages, such as invitations, thank-you notes, descriptions, or story summaries
- Use a broader range of vocabulary and basic grammar, including: Present, near future (futur proche), and past (passé composé), pronouns (e.g., le, la, les, lui, leur), connectors (e.g., et, mais, parce que, puis, après), comparatives and some reflexive verbs

1 year of French or 100 hours
Can take the DELF Prim A1.1 exam

DELF
Prim
A1.1



2 years of French or 200 hours
Can take the DELF Prim A1 exam

DELF
Prim
A1



3 years of French or 300 hrs
Can take the DELF Prim A2 exam

DELF
Prim
A2

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Bonjour !

OUR TEENS LANGUAGE LEVELS (10-16 YO)

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By the end of each level, learners are generally able to:



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A1

Débutant / Beginner

- Understand short and slow speech on familiar topics
- Recognize common words in everyday contexts (e.g., at school, at home, in town)
- Introduce themselves and others (e.g., Je m'appelle Sam. Voici mon ami Max.)
- Ask and answer simple questions about personal details: age, nationality, family, school, hobbies (e.g., Quel âge as-tu ?, Tu aimes le sport ?)
- Participate in short interactions (e.g., Je voudrais une pizza, s'il vous plaît.)
- Describe people, places, and things using basic adjectives and expressions (e.g., Il est grand. C'est une petite ville.)
- Read and understand short texts such as personal profiles, simple emails or messages, descriptions or short dialogues
- Fill out simple forms or write short personal texts (e.g., about themselves, their family, a typical day)
- Use short phrases structures to write descriptions or messages (J'ai deux sœurs. J'aime le foot.)
- Use of present tense of regular and common irregular verbs (être, avoir, aller, faire), definite and indefinite articles, basic question and negation forms, common nouns, adjectives, prepositions, and connectors (et, mais, parce que)

A1/A2

Élémentaire / Elementary

- Understand short, clear messages, announcements, or conversations on familiar topics (at school, in shops, with friends)
- Identify the main ideas in a simple conversation or audio clip when spoken slowly and clearly
- Express personal opinions, preferences, and experiences (e.g., Je préfère les films d'action. J'ai visité Paris l'année dernière.)
- Ask and answer questions in short conversations, such as: making plans (e.g., Tu veux aller au cinéma ?), giving directions (e.g., Tourne à gauche, puis va tout droit.), shopping or ordering food (e.g., Je voudrais un sandwich au fromage, s'il vous plaît.)
- Describe: daily routines and habits, past events using the passé composé, future intentions using aller + infinitive
- Read and understand short texts like: emails, notes, short articles, blogs, brochures, descriptions of people, places, activities, and events
- Extract key information from signs, timetables, menus, or advertisements
- Write short, connected texts on familiar topics, such as: personal introductions, descriptions of a person, place, or event, simple stories in the past, mails or messages to friends
- Use of present, passé composé, and near future (futur proche) tenses, reflexive verbs and common irregular verbs, expressions of frequency, time, and quantity, comparative and superlative forms, coordinating and subordinating conjunctions (parce que, quand, ensuite, après)

A2

Indépendant/ Independent

- Understand the main points of clear, standard speech on familiar topics (school, free time, current events)
- Follow the main idea of short narratives, interviews, or news reports, especially with visual support
- Participate in conversations on familiar topics and exchange ideas, opinions, and experiences
- Describe dreams, hopes, and goals, briefly explain opinions, plans (Je voudrais devenir médecin parce que j'aime aider les gens.)
- Narrate stories and past experiences using appropriate tenses (e.g., passé composé, imparfait)
- Handle common real-life situations, such as: making arrangements, giving advice, expressing agreement or disagreement, making suggestions or hypotheses
- Understand texts dealing with topics of personal interest or general relevance (e.g., youth magazines, blogs, simple articles)
- Read and interpret opinions, arguments, or explanations in short texts or dialogues
- Write coherent, structured texts (150-180 words) such as: personal letters and emails, narratives and biographies, descriptions and comparisons, short essays expressing opinions with justification (e.g., À mon avis, il est important de recycler...)
- Confident use of: present, past (passé composé, imparfait), future, and conditional tenses, relative pronouns (qui, que, dont, où), direct and indirect object pronouns, complex sentences with conjunctions and clauses

B1

Avancé/ Advanced

- Understand extended speech, including arguments, discussions, and lectures on both concrete and abstract topics
- Follow most news broadcasts, interviews, podcasts, or videos
- Identify the speaker's tone, purpose, and point of view in various audio contexts
- Participate actively in extended conversations and debates
- Express and justify opinions, arguments, and reactions clearly and fluently (e.g., Je pense que les réseaux sociaux ont des effets positifs, mais aussi des dangers importants.)
- Present clear, detailed descriptions or explanations, including advantages/disadvantages, causes/consequences, and solutions
- Use nuanced vocabulary, appropriate register (formal, informal)
- Understand longer and more complex texts: news articles, opinion pieces, essays, literary extracts, biographies, blog posts
- Identify arguments, tone, intent, and cultural references
- Read critically and compare points of view
- Write structured and detailed texts such as: essays and argumentative texts, letters, formal emails, reviews and articles
- Express personal views with clarity, reasoning, and coherence (e.g.: Bien que je sois d'accord avec cette idée, je pense que...)
- Use appropriate connectors to support structure and flow
- Use of a wide range of verb tenses, including subjunctive, conditional, plus-que-parfait, complex sentence structures: relative clauses, passive voice, indirect speech
- Idiomatic expressions and advanced connectors (e.g., cependant, en revanche, d'une part... d'autre part)

DELF Junior A1



1 year of French or 100 hours of Teen class
Can take the DELF Junior A1 exam

DELF Junior A1/A2



2 yrs or 200 hrs of Teen class
DELF Junior A1 or A2 exam

DELF Junior A2/B1



3 yrs or 300 hrs of Teen class
DELF Junior A2 or B1 exam

DELF Junior B1/B2

4 yrs or 400 hrs of Teen class
DELF Junior B1 or B2 exam