

FR

FRENCH LESSON

Basic Conversation 1 · Chapter 9 · Shopping & Prices

French Basic Conversation 1

Chapter 9 · Shopping & Prices



Shopping & Prices — Faire les courses et les achats

Ask how much something costs, say prices out loud, describe clothes and colours, try something on, and pay. You'll reuse the numbers from Chapter 3, and meet the "this / these" words (*ce, cette, ces*) and colour words that change with the noun.

① At the Market — C'est combien ?

A:

Bonjour, Madame. C'est combien, les pommes ?

bō-ZHOOR, mah-DAHM. say kō-BYĚ, lay POM
Hello, madam. How much are the apples?

B:

Trois euros cinquante le kilo.

trwah-zuh-ROH sē-KĀT luh kee-LOH
Three euros fifty a kilo.

A:

Je voudrais un kilo, s'il vous plaît.

zhuh voo-DRAY ē kee-LOH, seel voo PLAY
I'd like a kilo, please.

B:

Voilà. Et avec ceci ?

vwah-LAH. ay ah-VEK suh-SEE
Here you are. Anything else?

A:

C'est tout, merci. Ça fait combien ?

say TOO, mair-SEE. sah FAY kō-BYĚ
That's all, thanks. How much is that?

② Looking for a Jumper — Je cherche un pull

A:

Bonjour, je cherche un pull.

bō-ZHOOR, zhuh SHERSH ē PÜL
Hello, I'm looking for a jumper.

B:

Quelle taille, Monsieur ?

kel TAHY, muh-SYUH
What size, sir?

A:

Taille M, en bleu.

TAHY EM, ā BLUH
Size medium, in blue.

B:

Voici. La cabine est là-bas.

vwah-SEE. lah kah-BEEN ay lah-BAH
Here you are. The fitting room is over there.

A:

Je peux l'essayer ?

zhuh PUH lay-say-YAY
Can I try it on?

③ Too Big, a Bit Dear — Trop grand, trop cher

A:

Il est trop grand. Vous avez une taille plus petite ?

eel ay troh GRÃ. voo-zah-vay ün TAHY plü puh-TEET

It's too big. Do you have a smaller size?

B:

Oui, voici un S.

WEE, vwah-SEE ê ES

Yes, here's a small.

A:

Il est parfait ! C'est combien ?

eel ay par-FAY! say kô-BYÊ

It's perfect! How much is it?

B:

Quarante-cinq euros. Mais il est en solde : trente-cinq euros.

kah-rât-sê-kuh-ROH. may eel-ay-tã SOLD: trât-sê-kuh-ROH

Forty-five euros. But it's in the sale: thirty-five euros.

A:

Alors, je le prends.

ah-LOR, zhuh luh PRÃ

Then I'll take it.

④ Paying — Je paie par carte

A:

Vous acceptez les cartes ?

voo-zak-sep-tay lay KART

Do you accept cards?

B:

Oui, ou en espèces.

WEE, oo ã-nes-PES

Yes, or in cash.

A:

Je paie par carte, s'il vous plaît.

zhuh PAY par KART, seel voo PLAY

I'll pay by card, please.

B:

Voilà. Vous voulez un sac ?

vwah-LAH. voo voo-LAY ê SAHK

There you go. Would you like a bag?

A:

Non, merci. Bonne journée !

NÕ, mair-SEE. bon zhoor-NAY

No, thank you. Have a good day!

⑤ Friends Shopping — Cette robe rouge

A:

Regarde cette robe rouge ! Elle est jolie, non ?

⑥ Just Looking — Je regarde seulement

A:

Bonjour, je peux vous aider ?

bô-ZHOOR, zhuh PUH voo-zay-DAY

Hello, can I help you?

ruh-GARD set ROHB ROOZH! el-ay zhoh-LEE, NŌ

Look at this red dress! It's pretty, isn't it?

B:

Oui, mais elle est chère. C'est combien ?

WEE, may el-ay SHAIR. say kō-BYĒ

Yes, but it's expensive. How much is it?

A:

Quatre-vingt-neuf euros.

kah-truh-vē-nuh-vuh-ROH

Eighty-nine euros.

B:

Oh là là ! Et cette robe noire ?

Soixante euros. Je la prends !

oh lah LAH! ay set ROHB NWAHR? swah-sāt-uh-ROH. zhuh lah PRĀ

Oh dear! And this black dress? Sixty euros. I'll take it!

B:

Non, merci. Je regarde seulement.

NŌ, mair-SEE. zhuh ruh-GARD suhl-MĀ

No, thanks. I'm just looking.

B:

Excusez-moi, vous êtes ouvert dimanche ?

ek-skū-zay-MWAH, voo-ZET oo-VAIR dee-MĀSH

Excuse me, are you open on Sunday?

A:

Non, nous sommes fermés le dimanche. Nous sommes ouverts de neuf heures à dix-neuf heures.

NŌ, noo som fer-MAY luh dee-MĀSH. noo som oo-VAIR duh nuh-VUR ah dee-znuh-VUR

No, we're closed on Sundays. We're open from nine to seven.

Key Phrases at a Glance — Phrases clés

SITUATION	FORMAL / SHOP	INFORMAL
How much is it?	C'est combien ? / Ça coûte combien ?	C'est combien ?
I'm looking for...	Je cherche un pull.	Je cherche un pull.
Do you have...?	Vous avez ça en bleu ?	Tu as ça en bleu ?
Can I try it on?	Je peux l'essayer ?	Je peux l'essayer ?
Too big / too dear	C'est trop grand. / C'est trop cher.	C'est trop grand. / C'est trop cher.
I'll take it	Je le prends. / Je la prends.	Je le prends. / Je la prends.
Paying	Je paie par carte. / en espèces.	Je paie par carte.

SITUATION	FORMAL / SHOP	INFORMAL
Just looking	Je regarde seulement, merci.	Je regarde seulement.

Prices — Les prix

France uses the **euro** and the **centime**. A price is written with a comma: **12,50 €**, and said "twelve euros fifty", with no "and": *douze euros cinquante*.

WRITTEN	FRENCH	SAY IT
1 €	un euro	ẽ-nuh-ROH
2,50 €	deux euros cinquante	duh-zuh-ROH sě-KĀT
12,90 €	douze euros quatre-vingt-dix	dooz-uh-ROH kah-truh-vě-DEES
45 €	quarante-cinq euros	kah-rāt-sě-kuh-ROH
0,80 €	quatre-vingts centimes	kah-truh-vě sã-TEEM
100 €	cent euros	sã-tuh-ROH

Saying a Price

Say the euros, then the cents, with no "and" between them: 12,50 € is *douze euros cinquante*. The final consonant of a number links onto *euros* (*deux euros* is "duh-ZUH-roh", *neuf euros* is "nuh-VUH-roh"). To ask for a total, say *Ça fait combien ?* ("How much does that come to?"); the answer starts *Ça fait....* For several items you can also ask *C'est tout ?* or reply *C'est tout, merci*.

Clothes and Colours — Les vêtements et les couleurs

FRENCH	SAY IT	ENGLISH	FRENCH	SAY IT	ENGLISH
un pull	ẽ PÜL	a jumper	une robe	ün ROHB	a dress
un pantalon	ẽ pã-tah-LÕ	trousers	une jupe	ün ZHÜP	a skirt

FRENCH	SAY IT	ENGLISH	FRENCH	SAY IT	ENGLISH
un manteau	<i>ẽ mã-TOH</i>	a coat	une chemise	<i>ün shuh-MEEZ</i>	a shirt
un t-shirt	<i>ẽ tee-SHURT</i>	a T-shirt	des chaussures	<i>day shoh-SÜR</i>	shoes

COLOUR (M.)	SAY IT	COLOUR (F.)	SAY IT	ENGLISH
rouge	<i>ROOZH</i>	rouge	<i>ROOZH</i>	red
bleu	<i>BLUH</i>	bleue	<i>BLUH</i>	blue
vert	<i>VAIR</i>	verte	<i>VAIRT</i>	green
noir	<i>NWAHR</i>	noire	<i>NWAHR</i>	black
blanc	<i>BLÃ</i>	blanche	<i>BLÃSH</i>	white
gris	<i>GREE</i>	grise	<i>GREEZ</i>	grey
jaune	<i>ZHOHN</i>	jaune	<i>ZHOHN</i>	yellow
marron	<i>mah-RÕ</i>	marron	<i>mah-RÕ</i>	brown (never changes)

Colours Come After the Noun and Agree With It

A colour follows the noun and matches its gender and number: *un pull bleu, une robe bleue, des chaussures vertes*. Colours ending in *-e* (*rouge, jaune*) don't change in the feminine, and *marron* (and *orange*) never change at all. Notice the sound shift in the feminine: *vert* "VAIR" → *verte* "VAIRT", *gris* "GREE" → *grise* "GREEZ", *blanc* "BLÃ" → *blanche* "BLÃSH".

👉 "This" and "These" — **ce, cet, cette, ces**

TYPE OF NOUN	THIS / THESE	EXAMPLE	SAY IT
masculine singular	ce	ce pull	<i>suh PÜL</i>
masculine singular, before a vowel	cet	cet article	<i>set ar-TEE-kluh</i>
feminine singular	cette	cette robe	<i>set ROHB</i>

TYPE OF NOUN	THIS / THESE	EXAMPLE	SAY IT
plural	ces	ces chaussures	say shoh-SÜR

"Ce Pull-ci" and "Ce Pull-là"

Ce covers both "this" and "that". To say which one, add **-ci** ("here", near) or **-là** ("there", far): *Je préfère ce pull-ci* (I prefer this one) or *Je prends ce pull-là* (I'll take that one). In everyday speech people often just say *ce pull* and point.

Three Verbs You Just Used — Trois verbes

Acheter ("to buy") and *payer* ("to pay") are regular -er verbs with small spelling changes, while *regarder* ("to look at") is completely regular. The spelling changes affect the writing only; the sounds are simple.

WHO	ACHETER (TO BUY)	SAY IT	PAYER (TO PAY)	SAY IT	REGARDER (TO LOOK AT)	SAY IT
je	j'achète	zhah-SHET	je paie	zhuh PAY	je regarde	zhuh ruh-GARD
tu	tu achètes	tü ah-SHET	tu paies	tü PAY	tu regardes	tü ruh-GARD
il / elle / on	il achète	eel ah-SHET	il paie	eel PAY	il regarde	eel ruh-GARD
nous	nous achetons	noo-zahsh-TÕ	nous payons	noo pay-YÕ	nous regardons	noo ruh-gar-DÕ
vous	vous achetez	voo-zahsh-TAY	vous payez	voo pay-YAY	vous regardez	voo ruh-gar-DAY
ils / elles	ils achètent	eel-zah-SHET	ils paient	eel PAY	ils regardent	eel ruh-GARD

Spelling Changes in Boot Verbs

In *acheter* the stem gets an accent in the "boot" forms (je, tu, il, ils): *j'achète*, but *nous achetons*. In *payer* the *y* becomes *i* in the same forms: *je paie*, *nous payons* (*je paye* is also accepted). You don't have to memorise every rule; just learn these two as patterns. Also remember *Je peux...* ("I can / may...", from *pouvoir*) as a ready-made phrase, as in *Je peux l'essayer ?* and *Je peux vous aider ?*

Vocabulary — Vocabulaire

20 key words and phrases from this chapter. Nouns are listed with their article.

#	FRENCH	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE	NOTE
1	le prix	PREE	price	noun, m.	same in the plural
2	cher / chère	SHAIR	expensive; dear	adj	sounds the same in m. and f.
3	bon marché	bõ mar-SHAY	cheap, good value	adj	never changes
4	l'euro	uh-ROH	euro	noun, m.	written € after the number
5	le centime	sã-TEEM	cent (1/100 euro)	noun, m.	cinquante centimes
6	la taille	TAHY	size (clothes); height	noun, f.	Quelle taille ?
7	la pointure	pwẽ-TÜR	shoe size	noun, f.	Quelle pointure ?
8	le pull	PÜL	jumper, sweater	noun, m.	short for "pull-over"
9	la robe	ROHB	dress	noun, f.	une robe noire
10	le pantalon	pã-tah-LÕ	trousers	noun, m.	singular in French
11	les chaussures	shoh-SÜR	shoes	noun, f. pl.	une paire de chaussures
12	le sac	SAHK	bag	noun, m.	un sac en plastique
13	les espèces	es-PES	cash	noun, f. pl.	en espèces

#	FRENCH	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE	NOTE
14	ouvert / fermé	oo-VAIR / fer-MAY	open / closed	adj	<i>ouverte, fermée in the f.</i>
15	trop	TROH	too, too much	adv	<i>trop cher, trop grand</i>
16	coûter	koo-TAY	to cost	verb	<i>Ça coûte combien ?</i>
17	acheter	ahsh-TAY	to buy	verb	<i>j'achète</i>
18	payer	pay-YAY	to pay	verb	<i>je paie</i>
19	essayer	ay-say-YAY	to try, to try on	verb	<i>Je peux l'essayer ?</i>
20	les soldes	SOLD	the sales	noun, m. pl.	<i>en solde = in the sale</i>

Real French Tip — Say "Bonjour" and Watch the Sales

When you enter a French shop, say *Bonjour* to the person behind the counter, even if you're just browsing, and *Merci, au revoir* on the way out. A silent walk-in feels rude. *Les soldes* (the sales) are national events that take place twice a year, in winter and summer, on dates set by the government, so you'll see *SOLDES* in every window and plenty of people shopping with real purpose. Many shops close on Sundays (and some at lunchtime, especially in small towns), so check the *horaires* (opening hours).

Sizes: "La Taille" and "La Pointure"

Clothing sizes in France are numbers, not S/M/L: roughly a UK size 10 is a French 38, a 12 is a 40, and so on (*Je fais du 40*, "I'm a 40"), though shops also use S, M, L. Shoes have their own word, *la pointure*, with numbers like 38 or 42 that differ from UK sizes, so try shoes on (*Je peux essayer ?*) rather than guess.

Try It Yourself — Exercices

Say each answer out loud first, then click to check.

1. Ask the price of a jumper and of the apples.

▼ Show answer

C'est combien, ce pull ? / C'est combien, les pommes ?

2. Say these prices: 2,50 € · 12,90 € · 89 €.

▼ Show answer

deux euros cinquante · douze euros quatre-vingt-dix · quatre-vingt-neuf euros.

3. Make the colour agree: une robe ____ (noir) · un pull ____ (blanc) · des chaussures ____ (vert).

▼ Show answer

une robe noire · un pull blanc · des chaussures vertes.

4. Choose *ce*, *cet*, *cette* or *ces*: ____ pull · ____ robe · ____ chaussures · ____ article.

▼ Show answer

ce pull · cette robe · ces chaussures · cet article.

5. Say "It's too big. Do you have a smaller size?"

▼ Show answer

Il est trop grand. Vous avez une taille plus petite ?

6. Ask if they accept cards, then say you'll pay by card.

▼ Show answer

Vous acceptez les cartes ? / Je paie par carte.

Coming Up in Chapter 10

You can now shop and pay. Next up: **asking for directions**: *Où est... ?*, left, right and straight on, and understanding the answer.