

French in everyday situations

Module 6: Around town

7 Exercises • Duration: 20 min.

Around town

French

Read & listen online



Aller à et chez

Form	Example	Meaning
à la	à la gare	to the station
au	au lac	to the lake
aux	aux toilettes	to the toilets
chez	chez Mme Martin	to/at Mrs Martin's place
en	en Allemagne	in/to Germany
en train	Nous allons au lac en train.	by train
à pied	La gare est à cinq minutes à pied.	on foot

Use **aller** to say where you go. With many places, French uses **à** plus the place: **Je vais à la gare**. With masculine places beginning with a consonant, **à + le** becomes **au**: **Je vais au lac**. With plural places, **à + les** becomes **aux**: **Je vais aux toilettes**.

Use **chez** for a person, or for the home or workplace of a person: **Je vais chez Mme Martin, Je vais chez le médecin**. This is different from **à la gare** or **au marché**, which are places, not people.

For countries, use **en** with many feminine countries and with masculine countries starting with a vowel: **en Allemagne**. Use **au** with many masculine countries: **au Canada**. Use **aux** with plural

countries: **aux États-Unis**.

With transport, French often uses **en** for enclosed transport like **en train** and **en bus**, but **à** for **à pied** and **à vélo**.

Les quantités avec de

Form	Example	Meaning
un kilo de	un kilo de tomates	a kilo of tomatoes
deux kilos de	deux kilos de pommes de terre	two kilos of potatoes
un demi-kilo de	un demi-kilo de fromage	half a kilo of cheese
une bouteille de	une bouteille de lait	a bottle of milk
beaucoup de	beaucoup de poisson	a lot of fish
il faut	Il faut une carte.	You need / It is necessary to have a map.

After a quantity expression, French normally uses **de**: **un kilo de tomates, deux kilos de pommes de terre, beaucoup de poisson, une bouteille de lait**.

This is true even when the noun is plural: **dix kilos de pommes**.

The quantity word carries the main meaning, and **de** links it to the thing.

A very useful chunk is **il faut...** for 'you need / it is necessary'. At this level, learn it as a fixed expression: **Il faut un billet, Il faut deux kilos de pommes de terre**.

Some quantity expressions are very common in shops and markets: **un kilo de, un demi-kilo de, une bouteille de, un peu de, beaucoup de**.

En train / à vélo / notre

Use **en train**, **en bus** and **en voiture** for common transport, but **à vélo** and **à pied**. Timetables use twenty-four-hour readings: **neuf heures douze, dix-sept heures quarante**. A return ticket is **un aller-retour**.

Transport	Example	Meaning
en train	Nous allons au lac en train.	We go to the lake by train.
à vélo	Je vais à la gare à vélo.	I go to the station by bicycle.
à pied	Nous allons à la gare à pied.	We walk to the station.

Our and our (plural)

Use **notre** with one singular noun: **notre plan, notre carte, notre train**. Use **nos** with plural nouns: **nos billets, nos pommes**.

Like **mon/ma/mes** and **votre/vos**, these words agree with the thing owned, not with the owner. So **notre maison** is singular because **maison** is singular, and **nos amis** is plural because **amis** is plural.

French often uses these words in everyday talk about shared things: **notre café, notre ville, nos places**. They are very frequent and worth learning early.

At this level, the most useful contrast is simple: one thing = **notre**; more than one thing = **nos**.

Form	Example	Meaning
notre	notre plan	our plan
notre	notre ville	our town
nos	nos billets	our tickets
nos	nos enfants	our children

Pouvoir, savoir, connaître

Ability, permission and skills

Use **pouvoir** + infinitive to say that someone can do something, or that something is possible: **Je peux entendre, Vous pouvez acheter deux billets ?** It is also useful for permission: **Je peux entrer ?**

Use **savoir** for knowing a fact or knowing how to do something: **Je sais tout, Je sais où est la gare.** At this level, you will often see it with question words: **Je sais où, Je ne sais pas quand.**

Use **connaître** for being familiar with a person or a place: **Je connais Félix, Je connais le chemin.** Do not use **savoir** for knowing a person.

These three verbs are common and useful, but they are irregular. Learn the forms as chunks: **je peux, vous pouvez, je sais, vous savez, je connais.**

Form	Example	Meaning
je peux	Je peux tout entendre.	I can hear everything.
vous pouvez	Vous pouvez acheter deux billets ?	Can you buy two tickets?
je sais	Je sais où est la gare.	I know where the station is.
vous savez	Vous savez pourquoi ?	Do you know why?
je connais	Je connais Félix.	I know Félix.
connaître le chemin	Félix connaît le chemin.	to know the way

Aller et aller + infinitif

Form	Example	Meaning
je vais	Je vais à la poste.	I am going to the post office.
nous allons	Nous allons au lac.	We are going to the lake.
vous allez	Vous allez à droite.	You go to the right.
aller + infinitive	Je vais acheter deux billets.	I am going to buy two tickets.
tout droit	Allez tout droit.	Go straight on.

The verb **aller** means 'to go': **je vais, tu vas, il va, nous allons, vous allez, ils vont**. It is also very common in directions: **Vous allez à droite, Nous allons à la gare**.

French also uses **aller** + infinitive for the near future, very often in speech: **Je vais acheter deux billets, Nous allons suivre Félix**. This usually means 'going to do something'.

For maps and directions, French often combines **aller** with place expressions: **aller tout droit, aller à gauche, aller au coin, aller jusqu'à la gare**.

At A1 level, learn very useful chunks for movement: **allez tout droit, tournez à gauche, nous allons partir**. Some direction commands like **tournez** are fixed phrases you can use even before learning every detail.

GRAMMAR

G1) NOTICE THE USEFUL PATTERN

Underline the form practised in this unit.

- 1 Demain, nous allons au lac en train.

Meaning: Tomorrow, we are going to the lake by train.

- 2 Je voudrais un kilo de tomates.

Meaning: I would like a kilo of tomatoes.

- 3 Je peux payer aujourd'hui.

Meaning: I can pay today.

- 4 Voilà notre plan B.

Meaning: Here is our plan B.

G2) CHOOSE THE FORM

Use the English meaning and the pattern in this unit.

1 Demain, nous allons _____ lac en train.

- ☐ A à la
- ☐ B au
- ☐ C chez

Meaning: Tomorrow, we are going to the lake by train.

2 Je voudrais un kilo _____ tomates.

- ☐ A du
- ☐ B de
- ☐ C des

Meaning: I would like a kilo of tomatoes.

3 Je _____ payer aujourd'hui.

- ☐ A sais
- ☐ B peux
- ☐ C connais

Meaning: I can pay today.

4 Voilà _____ plan B.

- ☐ A nos
- ☐ B notre
- ☐ C votre

Meaning: Here is our plan B.

5 Demain, nous _____ au lac.

- ☐ A sommes
- ☐ B allons
- ☐ C avons

Meaning: Tomorrow, we are going to the lake.

G3) COMPLETE THE MESSAGES

Fill the gaps with the words from the box.

sais peux

Je _____ payer aujourd'hui.

Meaning: I can pay today.

nos notre

Voilà _____ plan B.

Meaning: Here is our plan B.

avons allons

Demain, nous _____ au lac.

Meaning: Tomorrow, we are going to the lake.

G4) BUILD A SENTENCE

Put the words in order.

1 allons au Demain, nous en lac train.

Meaning: Tomorrow, we are going to the lake by train.

2 tomates. de un kilo Je voudrais

Meaning: I would like a kilo of tomatoes.

3 aujourd'hui. peux payer Je

Meaning: I can pay today.

4 Voilà notre B. plan

Meaning: Here is our plan B.

5 Demain, nous au lac. allons

Meaning: Tomorrow, we are going to the lake.

G5) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Choose the right words for the situation.

1 Tomorrow, we are going to the lake by train. You say:

- ☐ A Demain, nous allons au lac en train.
- ☐ B Demain, nous allons à la lac en train.

2 I would like a kilo of tomatoes. You say:

- ☐ A Je voudrais un kilo des tomates.
- ☐ B Je voudrais un kilo de tomates.

3 I can pay today. You say:

- ☐ A Je peux payer aujourd'hui.
- ☐ B Je sais payer aujourd'hui.

4 Here is our plan B. You say:

- ☐ A Voilà notre plan B.
- ☐ B Voilà nos plan B.

G6) CONNECT MESSAGES AND MEANINGS

Match the pairs.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ① Demain, nous allons
au lac en train. | ⑤ I can pay today. |
| ② Je peux payer
aujourd'hui. | ⑥ Tomorrow, we are going to the
lake by train. |
| ③ Voilà notre plan B. | ⑦ I would like a kilo of tomatoes. |
| ④ Je voudrais un kilo
de tomates. | ⑧ Tomorrow, we are going to the
lake. |
| ⑤ Demain, nous allons
au lac. | ⑨ Here is our plan B. |

G7) SPEAK AS YOURSELF

Use the form for Lukas or Lena.

1 Lukas: Je suis _____.

- ☐ A voisines
- ☐ B fatigués
- ☐ C fatigué

Meaning: I am tired.

2 Lena: Je suis _____.

- ☐ A fatiguée
- ☐ B voisines
- ☐ C fatigués

Meaning: I am tired.

3 Lukas: Je suis le nouveau _____.

- ☐ A voisines
- ☐ B voisin
- ☐ C fatigués

Meaning: I am the new neighbour.

4 Lena: Je suis la nouvelle _____.

- ☐ A voisines
- ☐ B voisine
- ☐ C fatigués

Meaning: I am the new neighbour.

5 Lukas: Je suis _____.

- ☐ A content
- ☐ B voisines
- ☐ C fatigués

Meaning: I am happy.

6 Lena: Je suis _____.

- ☐ A contente
- ☐ B fatigués
- ☐ C voisines

Meaning: I am happy.

7 Lukas: Je suis un _____ de Julien.

- ☐ A voisin
- ☐ B fatigués
- ☐ C voisines

Meaning: I am a neighbour of Julien.

8 Lena: Je suis une _____ de Julien.

- ☐ A fatigués
- ☐ B voisine
- ☐ C voisines

Meaning: I am a neighbour of Julien.