

FRENCH BASIC TOOLS: What you need to get going!

(last update: September 15, 2018)

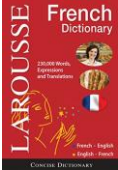
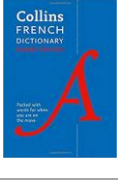

And so you have decided to learn French! Make sure to take advantage of the wide range of FIAF's cultural programs and the Library, which will allow you to develop and enhance your classroom experience. Below is a list of the suggested major tools that will help you get started on your way to French fluency.

Le Centre d'Auto-apprentissage Jacques et Alexandre Leviant (CAA)

An entire area in the Library has been dedicated to language learners. The "CAA" is located in the rear of the library. Materials are color-coded based on level of French. Materials with a **green label** are for beginners, the **blue labels** are for advanced beginners, and the **yellow labels** are for intermediate students.


A Bilingual Dictionary: Your first investment


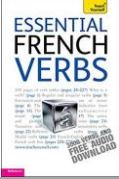


You will find a large selection of bi-lingual dictionaries in the *Centre de Ressources*. As a general rule, you will not need an expensive or elaborate dictionary to start. Pocket dictionaries will suit the bill. The most popular pocket bilingual dictionaries include:

	<p>Larousse Concise French/English English/French Dictionary The Larousse Concise Dictionary is a good first dictionary for students of French. It is a very convenient size and has over 80.000 words.</p>
	<p>Collins French Dictionary: Pocket Edition The entries are colored blue, with black definitions, which makes finding a word on the page easy. The dictionary is also very comprehensive with over 60,000 translations, a word game section to help you learn French, and all-important verb-form primers in both languages.</p>
	<p>The Online Dictionary of TV5Monde http://dictionnaire.tv5monde.com/ A multifunctional dictionary that includes conjugations, synonyms and style help. You will also find dictées, games, quizzes and blogs all about the French language. Excellent resource. Available on the computers of the CAA. For other online dictionaries and translators, see the pathfinder "Dictionaries"</p>

Verb books and guides: Your second necessary investment

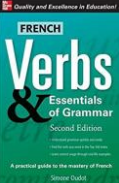

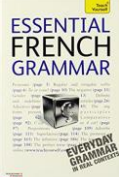

The many tenses of French verbs are tricky and will demand some work on your part. You will also find online conjugators on website such as www.conjugation-fr.com, www.verb2verbe.com, <https://leconjugueur.lefigaro.fr>, or <https://bescherelle.com/>. Some also offer exercises, games or other ways to test your knowledge.

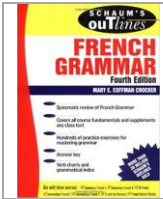
	<p>501 French Verbs: Fully conjugated in all the tenses This verb "Bible" is a mandatory purchase for any student of French. It contains approximately 1,000 French infinitives, conjugated and set up one-per-page in alphabetical order. You will also find verb drills and tests as well as definitions of important grammatical terms, an index of irregular verb forms, lists of vernacular expressions and idioms.</p>
---	---

	<p>Barron's 301 French Verbs Smaller than the above, this guide fits in your pocket and is thus handier for commuting and traveling. Approximately 300 most frequently used French verbs are presented, one verb per page, arranged alphabetically, fully conjugated, and identified by the English infinitive form.</p>
	<p>Teach Yourself French Verbs by Marie-Therese Weston Similar to the above, but this book contains example sentence for the more common tenses. It also includes translations of these sentences.</p>
	<p>Bescherelle 1: La Conjugaison Pour Tous The French equivalent to these books is the famous "red book". It provides tables of conjugations of all 85 tenses and moods for some 12,000 verbs. Small, compact and invaluable, it is beautifully typeset in colors and is visually appealing.</p>
	<p>FIAF's own Verb Wheel! The FIAF Verb Wheel shows 40 irregular French verbs. The wheel shows all six "persons" for six verb tenses: Présent, Passé Composé, Imparfait, Futur, Conditionnel, et le Subjonctif présent. Irregular conjugations are indicated by a bold font. The verb wheels may be purchased at the Library for \$5.</p>

A good grammar book: Your third useful investment

A simple, straight-forward introductory reference book to French grammar is very useful to help you clarify points that are presented in the communicative approach of the Alliance Française classroom situation. Here are some of the favorites of beginning students:

	<p>French verbs and the Essentials of Grammar by Simone Oudot This concise, two-in-one book provides a complete guide to French verbs and a compact guide to the fundamentals of grammar for advanced-beginning and intermediate students of French.</p>
	<p>The Ultimate French Review and Practice: Mastering French Grammar for Confident Communication by David M. Stillman It includes the essentials of French grammar with exercises (all with answers provided), culture notes, examples from newspaper advertisements, and a section on idiomatic usage. It may be a bit advanced for absolute beginners.</p>
	<p>Essential French Grammar by Seymour Resnick A very simple and basic text for key grammar points for beginners</p>
	<p>French Reference Grammar: A Complete Handbook of the French Language by Daniel J. Calvez A clear and precise presentation of grammar, often used as a grammar textbook in universities. Indexed in both French and English, this reference work is for all levels of students, including self-learners, with examples, details, exceptions, and many tables, which organize and present each grammatical element</p>



Schaum's Outline of French Grammar by Mary E. Coffman Crocker

This book contains a particularly clear presentation of verbs.

French language apps and websites: Modern and fun, but unfortunately, nothing as rich as your teacher!

Get some extra practice time in with some of these websites or apps that will test your knowledge of French as you go.

www.frenchpod101.com

<https://www.duolingo.com/>

<https://www.brainscape.com/learn/french>

<https://www.memrise.com/app/>

And lastly, don't forget.....

Useful Docs

Found on the library's website (<http://www.fiaf.org/library/learning.shtml>) these documents (like this one) give you useful information on how to better your language learning experience.

These include:

- [French Language-learning Resources on the Web](#)
- [French Dictionaries on the Web](#) (includes automatic translation sites)
- [Welcome to the Centre de Ressources](#)
- [Official Certification Diplomas \(DELFL / DALF\)](#)
- [Learning French with Cinema](#)

Homework Central

In the *Centre de Ressources*, nestled between the magazines and the BDs, you will find all of the library's reference books for French learners, including bilingual dictionaries, grammar usage guides, verb conjugation handbooks, specialized dictionaries, and much more to help you excel in your language classes here at FIAF.