Oxford Dictionaries French is more than just a dictionary. Discover our additional French language resources and learn more about French language and culture.

Navigating an entry

On every entry page in our Premium dictionary, you will see the headword, pronunciation, part of speech, translations and labels where necessary.

Translations

The different senses of the headword itself are translated, with information to help you find which sense you need. In addition, many examples of a sense in use are provided and translated, especially when the main translation does not work in all contexts, or when unexpected verbs or prepositions may be needed.

Whenever a translation is a headword on the other side of the dictionary, it is blue and hyperlinked. You can click the hyperlink to go to that entry.

Links are provided to the same word in other dictionaries.

Definition of house in:
- British & World English dictionary
- US English dictionary
- English synonyms
- US English synonyms
- Spanish dictionary

Translate house into Arabic | into Chinese | into German | into Italian | into Portuguese | into Russian | into Spanish

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Pronunciations

Pronunciation is given using audio and IPA (symbols that show the sound that each letter represents in the word in question). Click on the IPA for an explanation of the symbols. Click on the speaker buttons to hear the word spoken aloud.

You can also click on the speaker button next to any French word or phrase on either side of the dictionary to hear it spoken aloud.

A detailed guide to the dictionary can be found here.

drive forward

Phrases, phrasal verbs, and derivative entries

Phrases, phrasal verbs, and derivative entries are given at the end of relevant entries, and also as standalone entries which link back to the parent.

Labels

You will see a region label such as US if the word is not used in all varieties of English, a domain label if the word is only used when speaking or writing about a particular subject (such as sport), or a register label if the word is not neutral, but rather informal, offensive, or humorous, etc.

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Usage guidance

Notes are provided to explain culturally specific terms, and grammar and usage notes are given for tricky entries.

Cultural Note: département

An administrative unit (of which there are 96 in Metropolitan France) based on a division dating from the Revolutionary period. Most are named after rivers or mountains within their border. The main town is the seat of the préfecture, and is often called the préfecture. Each département has a number and this appears as the first two digits in postcodes for addresses within the département and as the two-digit number at the end of registration numbers on motor vehicles.

Difficulties in French: False friends and franglais

FALSE FRIENDS (FAUX AMIS)

English belongs to the Germanic family of Indo-European languages, as can readily be seen from everyday words such as man, cat, man, wine, son, daughter, water, brother, house, garden, etc., to name but a handful. French, on the other hand, belongs to the Romance family which has its roots in the larger Latin of the Roman conquest of Europe and the Middle East. Nevertheless, the influence of French on the English language has been considerable and goes back to the year 1066, when William, Duke of Normandy, invaded England, starting off what is now called the Norman Conquest.

Verbs tables for regular verbs and the most common irregular verbs can be found by clicking ‘French verb tables’ at the bottom of any French verb entry:

Grammar and usage help for French:

French Grammar Notes for English speakers translating into French 11: GO
French verb tables
Sample letters
Vocabulary related to email and the internet

Quizzes

You can find quizzes to test your language skills on the French dictionary homepage, and in ............ the side bar for every entry.
Ways of searching

You can search for phrases by typing the phrase in the search box.

If that phrase is in the dictionary, it will take you to the entry and highlight the relevant section, as in this example: typing ‘talk about’ will take you to ‘to talk about’ in the entry for ‘about’.

Type parts of an idiom and you will be taken to the closest one. E.g. type ‘comme chien et chat’ and you will be taken to the idiom ‘être comme chien et chat’.

étre comme chien et chat

to be always at each other’s throats
See parent entry: → chien

Homographs

You can jump quickly between homograph entries (entries which have the same spelling but different origins) by clicking the numbers at the top of the page.

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