

DISCOVER FRANCE!



FUN FACTS

Official Name:	Republic of France
Capital:	Paris
National Holiday:	Bastille Day - July 14 (1789)
Population:	63,000,000
Administrative:	100 departments (including 4 overseas) and 22 regions
Religions:	Roughly 85% of the population is Roman Catholic, 5-10% Muslim, 2% Protestant, 1% Jewish and the remaining percent are unaffiliated
Currency:	The euro (prior to 2002 it was the franc) which is the shared currency of 12 European Union countries
Total Area:	211,209 sq. miles (the same size as Texas), it is the largest country in western Europe.
Climate:	* Oceanic in the west * Mediterranean in the south * Continental in the center and east
Terrain:	Flat plains and hills in the north and west, with the Pyrenees mountains in the south, the Alps in the east and the Massif Central mountains in the center. The Mont Blanc in the Alps is western Europe's highest summit.

SYMBOLS OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

The French Flag



The French flag, called the "tricolor," is made up of three vertical bands of color: blue, white and red. The flag was first used in 1789 during the French Revolution, and in 1880 it became the official flag of the French Republic.

Marianne

With her profile outlined on the official seal of France, "Marianne" symbolizes the Republic of France. During the French Revolution, the figure of a warrior woman wearing a Phrygian cap represented the ideal of liberty. Her name stems from "Marie-Anne," which was a popular name in the French countryside at the time.



La Marseillaise: the French National Anthem

La Marseillaise began as a battle song. After France declared war on Austria and Prussia in 1792, Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle, a French officer in Strasbourg, composed the "Battle Song of the Army of the Rhine." Banned under the Empire and the Restoration, *La Marseillaise* was rearranged by Hector Berlioz in 1830. It was declared the national anthem under the Third Republic in 1879. Listen to it here: www.elysee.fr (click on the British flag and choose "The Symbols of the Republic").

The Eiffel Tower

History

One of the most famous landmarks in the world, the Eiffel Tower (*La Tour Eiffel* in French), is located in Paris. The tower was designed and built by Gustave Eiffel over a period of two years and two months, between January 26, 1887 and March 31, 1889.

Statistics and Fun Facts

- * At 1,050 feet high, the Eiffel Tower was the world's tallest building until 1931, when the Chrysler Building was built in New York.
- * It weighs 7,000 tons.
- * There are 1,662 steps to the top.
- * 52 tons of brown paint were used to paint it!
- * The Eiffel Tower was climbed by a mountaineer in 1954, parachuted off of in 1984 by two Englishmen, and, in 1923, a journalist rode a bicycle down 347 stairs from the first level!



BRIEF HISTORY OF FRANCE

Cultural

1645 - Pascal invents the first calculator
1682 - The Palace of Versailles is built
1772 - Diderot and d'Alembert write the first Encyclopedia
1777-81 - General Lafayette helps win the American Revolution
1785-89 - Jefferson represents the U.S. in France
1803 - France sells Louisiana to the U.S.
1804 - David named Emperor's official painter
1827 - Niépce makes the first true photograph
1839 - Daguerre invents the first practical photography camera
1853 - Haussmann redesigns Paris
1854 - Bourseul builds an experimental phone
1886 - The Statue of Liberty is given to the U.S.
1889 - The Eiffel Tower is built in Paris
1895 - The Lumière Brothers invent the first portable movie camera
1903 - The first "Tour de France" bike race
1946 - The first Cannes International Film Festival
1951 - France launches the European integration project with 5 partners
1979 - Launch of the first French Rocket, *Ariane*
1981 - The first TGV
1994 - The tunnel going under the English Channel is completed.

Political

1643 - King Louis XIV
1774 - King Louis XVI
1777-83 - France helps the U.S. gain its independence.
1789 - **The French Revolution Begins!**
Storming of the Bastille; writing of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen
1792 - The First Republic is established
1804 - Napoleon becomes Emperor of France
1803-15 - Napoleonic Wars
1815-48 - The monarchy is restored, and France is ruled by several kings.
1848 - Second Revolution: the 2nd Republic begins
1852-70 - Napoleon III restores the Empire
1870-71 - Franco-Prussian War: 3rd Republic begins.
1914-18 - World War I, the U.S., France and Great Britain are allies.
1936 - The Popular Front launches social reforms.
1939-45 - World War II. The French Resistance fights the Nazi occupation. The U.S. helps liberate France.
1946-52 - France and Germany rebuild and become allies.
1950-60 - Independence is given to France's former colonies (in Africa and Asia)
1958 - President Charles de Gaulle is elected; a new Constitution is written
1995 - President Jacques Chirac is elected, and he is re-elected in 2002.

FOOD AND SPORTS

Food

French people take food very seriously, which may be why French cooking is said to be the best in the world! Here are some well-known French foods:



The Baguette: This is a long, thin bread that has a hard outer crust, and a soft yummy middle.

Cheese: France has over 400 cheeses. Cheese is usually served just before the dessert. Two very well-known cheeses are Camembert and Brie.

Wine: With more than 900,000 hectares of vineyards across the countryside, and over 60 regional and local wines, it is no surprise that wine is common at many French meals.

Sports and Leisure Activity

Athletics are very important to the French. In fact, more than 10 million people belong to sports clubs in France! Here are some of France's more popular sports:

Soccer: With more than two million amateur players, France's national soccer program gained world-wide recognition after its national team, *Les Bleus* (the Blues), won the Soccer World Cup for the first time in 1998.



Jubilant celebrations across the country lasted for days.

Tennis: Tennis, enjoyed and played by many in France, is celebrated every year with a Grand Slam event, played on the famous clay courts of Roland Garros, near Paris.

Tour de France: The world's most famous cycling race is held in France every July. The three-week race covers more than 3,000 kilometers of French countryside, and ends in a sprint down the Champs Elysées, the most famous avenue in Paris. America's Lance Armstrong, who won the previous six races, won again in 2005 for a record seventh time!

Rugby: Similar to American football, rugby players try to get the ball into the other team's goal by running and passing it up the field. They have to be tough and strong!

Pétanque: One of the most traditional leisure activities in France, it is enjoyed by people of all ages and from every region. The game, similar to lawn bowling, is played by trying to get your ball (made of solid metal) closest to the target (a smaller ball made of wood).

POLITICS, SOCIETY, & BUSINESS

President of the Republic

The President is elected directly by the people for a five-year term. The President lives in the Elysée Palace. Jacques Chirac became the fifth President of the Republic on May 7, 1995, and he was reelected on May 5, 2002. The President



appoints the Prime Minister and the other members of government. He presides over the Council of Ministers, where many important decisions are made. He also certifies laws, and is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.



Prime Minister and Government

Under the direction of the Prime Minister, the government establishes and carries out national policies for which it is accountable before Parliament. The Prime Minister directs the government's operations and ensures that legislation is carried out. Dominique de Villepin was appointed Prime Minister by President Jacques Chirac in June 2005.

Parliament

The Parliament includes two assemblies, the Senate and the National Assembly. Members of the Senate are elected for a six-year term by an electoral college comprised of local political officials. Members of the National Assembly are elected directly by the French people for a five-year term. The most recent general election was held in June 2002.

In addition to providing a check on the government, the two assemblies draw up and pass legislation. In case of disagreement on a law, the National Assembly makes the final decision.

Work and Social Protection

Most French people work 35 hours a week, compared with 40 hours a week in the U.S., and they all enjoy five weeks of paid vacation a year. In France, the right to health care for all is considered essential. The country's social security system covers nearly the entire cost of medical treatment and medication for all workers and their families, during their entire lives.

Business

France is the world's fifth leading economic power and the third largest destination of foreign investment in the world. France is the world's third largest exporter of automobiles, the second largest exporter of wines, cheeses, and aircraft, and the leading exporter of perfumes and luxury goods!

USEFUL WEB SITES

Do you still need more information about France? If so, we have a list of Web sites that may be able to help you with your research! The Web sites listed below are in English, but some of the links on their pages might lead you to sites that are only in French.

Embassy of France in the U.S.:

www.ambafrance-us.org
www.ambafrance-us.org/kids - Just for kids!

U.S. Embassy in France:

www.amb-usa.fr

Tourist Information:

us.franceguide.com - French Tourist Office in the U.S.

French Government Information:

www.elysee.fr - French President (click on the British flag)
www.premier-ministre.gouv.fr/en - Prime Minister
www.assemblee-nat.fr/english - National Assembly
www.senat.fr/international/english - Senate
www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/index_gb.html - Foreign Ministry

Museums and Landmarks:

www.nps.gov/stli - The Statue of Liberty's official site
www.tour-eiffel.fr/teiffel/uk - The Eiffel Tower's official site
www.louvre.fr/llv - Louvre Museum
www.musee-orsay.fr - Musée d'Orsay

French Culture in the U.S.:

www.frenchculture.org

French Recipes:

www.recipesource.com/ethnic/europe/french/indexall.html

French Books, Music, and Videos:

www.amazon.ca - Amazon in Canada
www.schoenhofs.com - International Bookstore
www.francevision.com - French videos and music

Penpals:

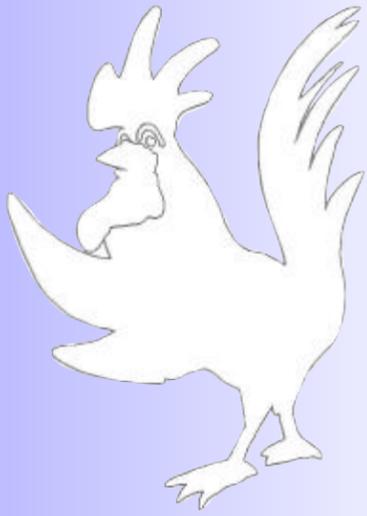
french.about.com/od/penpals
www.epals.com

Photos of France (free to download!):

www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/images2france



Color in the National Bird of France...



The Rooster!

FRANCE

Bonjour! My name is Pierre. Let's have fun discovering France!



Match the Picture with the Place

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| A. American WWII cemetery in Normandy | I. Arc de Triomphe in Paris |
| B. Cathedral in Amiens | J. Surfing in Biarritz |
| C. Typical street in Strasbourg | K. Roman Aqueduct over the Gard River |
| D. Typical house in Brittany | L. The colorful rooftops of Beaune |
| E. Mont Saint-Michel | M. The Towers of La Rochelle |
| F. Castle of Chambord | N. The Alps |
| G. Fortified village of Carcassonne | O. Herding sheep in the Pyrenees |
| H. French Riviera | P. The TGV, the world's fastest conventional train |

Can't figure it out? See the answers below!

WordSearch

M	L	I	P	R	I	T	O	W	R	L		
S	S	L	A	S	S	B	C	I	K	J	D	
K	C	U	E	C	J	C	S	N	W	I	B	
W	A	T	G	L	A	C	R	A	F	L	C	E
N	R	Y	X	N	L	G	C	W	R	I	M	H
A	G	A	J	Q	L	Z	X	V	R	G	A	B
P	Y	P	:	D	I	R	I	G	H	I	D	J
O	R	K	S	L	E	M	S	J	N	N	E	T
T	C	N	B	O	R	P	S	Q	R	M	S	T
R	V	H	:	A	T	V	O	W	X	A	B	S
Q	Y	A	J	B	O	C	C	D	E	R	P	O
N	U	G	T	E	H	T	C	A	R	I	H	C
I	R	I	S	K	S	L	F	M	N	A	D	I
P	B	Q	?	S	T	F	R	T	I	N	V	E
W	M	E	?	C	I	X	Y	7	-	K	A	C
B	E	P	:	J	E	K	M	O	Q	E	R	N
S	U	W	:	X	N	R	H	G	R	Y	Z	A
M	A	F	S	C	I	L	L	A	I	S	E	B
A	C	C	:	G	W	H	K	L	K	P	O	F
F	R	E	X	C	H	R	I	V	I	R	R	A

Hidden Words: France, Napoleon, Marseillaise, Marianne, Chirac, Eiffel Tower, Wine, Cheese, Baguette, Escargot (French for snail), French Riviera, Tennis, Soccer, Rugby, Les Bleus, Merci.
Hint: some of the words are reversed or upside down! (for example: *CARIHC* instead of *CHIRAC*)

Let's Learn French

French

- Bonjour / Au revoir
- Comment vas-tu? Je vais bien!
- Merci / De rien
- Quel âge as tu? J'ai ___ ans.
- Je viens de _____.
- Quel temps fait-il? Il fait beau.
- Je t'aime!
- J'ai une soeur / J'ai un frère.
- J'aime la France. C'est un pays magnifique.

English

- Hello / Goodbye
- How are you? I'm doing well!
- Thank you / You're welcome
- How old are you? I'm ___ years old.
- I come from _____.
- How is the weather? It is nice.
- I love you!
- I have a sister / I have a brother.
- I love France. It's a beautiful country.

Geography

Name 5 countries and 2 large bodies of water that surround France!

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
 Press & Information Office,
 Embassy of France
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Answers: Match the Picture: A-16, B-3, C-4, D-14, E-15, F-13, G-9, H-7, I-1, J-11, K-8, L-5, M-12, N-6, O-10, P-2
 Geography: Possible countries include: Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg
 Possible bodies of water: Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, North Sea, English Channel