

FRENCH DEFINITE ARTICLES

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To learn about the **definite articles** in French.
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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

- What is a definite article? A word used to define a particular object or person.
 - It is used in front of a noun, an adjective or a superlative.
 - In English, there is one: **the**.
 - In French, there are four: **le, la, les, l'**
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PART 2: LES AND L'

- **les** is used in front of a **plural** noun, regardless of the gender of the noun.
Examples: **les tables** (the tables), **les chaises** (the chairs), **les voitures** (the cars)
 - **l'** is used in front of a word starting with a vowel or an h, regardless of the gender of the noun.
Examples: **l'arbre** (the tree), **l'hôpital** (the hospital), **l'école** (the school)
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PART 3: LE AND LA

- **le** is used in front of a masculine word.
Examples: **le cinéma** (the cinema), **le sac** (the bag), **le bateau** (the boat), **le stylo** (the pen), **le chocolat** (the chocolate)
 - **la** is used in front of a feminine word.
Examples: **la tomate** (the tomato), **la table** (the table), **la chaise** (the chair), **la voiture** (the car), **la cassette** (the cassette), **la carotte** (the carrot)
 - *Tip: in many instances, a French word ending in **e** is feminine.*
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PART 4: A LITTLE GAME

What definite article would you put in front of the following words?

- banane
- porte
- ballons
- ballon
- tableau
- ordinateur
- livre
- verre
- téléphone
- télévision
- fille
- garçon
- femme
- homme

Answers: la banane, la porte, les ballons, le ballon, le tableau, l'ordinateur, le livre, le verre, le téléphone, la télévision, la fille, le garçon, la femme, l'homme.

PART 5: COUNTRIES

- The distinction masculine/feminine/plural also applies to countries.

Examples:

- **l'Angleterre** (England)
- **la France** (France)
- **la Belgique** (Belgium)
- **le Japon** (Japan)
- **le Portugal** (Portugal)
- **les États-Unis** (US)