

10 Reasons to Study French

With French, you can --

1. Communicate with French speakers around the world.

Spoken by over 200 million people on 5 continents, French has the status of official language in 32 countries and governments and is the only language beside English taught as a foreign language in every country.

2. Boost your academic skills.

The largest number of English words derives, not directly from Latin, but from French, which provides at least one out of three words used in English. Those who study French for several years will improve their standardized test scores.

3. Become proficient more quickly than with most world languages.

French is one of the languages that require the fewest instructional hours in order for an English-speaking learner to reach a high level of speaking proficiency. French is also a natural choice for speakers of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese because of their common roots in Latin.

4. Increase options for undergraduate and graduate studies.

Students with an interest in a variety of disciplines can take advantage of complementing their studies and doing research in a French-speaking country when they know French. Most graduate schools require knowledge of at least one foreign language, and French is a popular choice for many fields of study.

5. Connect your future to cutting-edge fields in science and technology.

French-speaking countries have been at the forefront of medical research in fields such as HIV virus research, medical genetics, and reconstructive surgery. They have also been on the cutting edge of scientific discoveries and technological innovations in nanotechnology, nuclear energy, voice compression, fiber optics, microchips, video gaming, aerospace technology, and high-speed rail services.

6. Invest in your career.

French speakers are in demand in banking and finance, hotel management, international trade, journalism and media, aviation, national security, health care, tourism, and law enforcement. Knowing French helps a person gain valuable understanding of cultural and business practices in other places.

7. Enjoy special leisure-time activities.

In the US, 50% of foreign films watched and 30% of foreign books read are in French. Sports enthusiasts can follow their favorite events and athletes in sports popular in the French-speaking world: cycling (Tour de France), tennis (French Open), motorcycle racing and Formula 1 automobile racing (24 Heures du Mans), and baseball and hockey (Canadian teams).

8. Benefit more from travel experiences.

Every continent offers French-speaking destinations, which are enjoyed more when the traveler can interact with the local residents in their language. While France is the most visited country in the world, destinations closer to home include Quebec, New Brunswick, St. Pierre and Miquelon, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, St. Martin, French Guyana, Maine, and Louisiana.

9. Appreciate Francophone contributions to world culture.

French-speakers have made a remarkable impact on literature, philosophy, cuisine, fashion, and the arts. Learn more firsthand about Camus and Césaire (literature), Sartre and Derrida (philosophy), Renoir and Matisse (painting), Truffaut and Arcand (cinema), to name just a few.

10. Understand a variety of world perspectives.

Because French is spoken in more than 56 countries, a person who knows French can work toward global consensus and peace and participate in humanitarian efforts, since French is an official or working language in many international agencies and organizations, including Amnesty International, World Health Organization, International Red Cross, United Nations, and Doctors without Borders.

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