



À ou DE

Grammaire

Grammar

Links for this topic

Click or cut-and-paste

Leçon

<https://frenchhour.com/blog/a-or-de/>

Enregistrement

<https://frenchetc.org/wp-content/fichiers/nouveau/a-or-de.mp3>

Cours

<https://frenchhour.com/take-your-pick/>

Description

French is run by a set of rules one has to understand in order to speak the language fluently. Some of these rules are straight forward. In that case, all you need to do is understand the rule and apply it. And some of these rules are riddled with exceptions. Anne explains all of the French grammar rules with many practice exercises and answers.

The best way to learn French grammar is to practice. As you practice, you'll answer your own questions, one step at a time. Make sure you 'revisit' this topic on a regular basis. Tame your French grammar, one rule a time.

How to use this document

Print this lesson and download the recording. Read and practice several times in a short period of time.

Repetition is the key to success to bring your French to the next level.



À or DE Grammar

In this lesson about À or DE, you'll find

- examples
- rules
- practice and answers

The two prepositions À and DE are always tricky to use. How do they work?

À is **AT, TO, IN, FOR** and **WITH**
and
DE is **FROM, BY** and **OF**

- Je vais **à** Paris. ≠ Je viens **de** Paris. -- *I go/am going **to** Paris. ≠ I come/am coming **from** Paris.*
- C'est une lettre **de** Voltaire écrite **à** la main. ≠ C'est une lettre écrite de la main **de** Voltaire. -- *It's a letter from Voltaire written by hand. ≠ It's a letter written **by** Voltaire himself. (written with his own hand).*
- J'achète le plat **à** légumes. ≠ Je prends le plat **de** légumes. - *I'm buying/getting the vegetable dish. (the dish for vegetables) ≠ I'm taking the vegetable dish. (the dish of vegetables)*

Règles – Rules

However, there are subtleties with the rules. Let's try to lay them out here.

With an ADJECTIVE

À

adjective + **À** + verb with a real subject

Le livre est difficile **à** lire. -- *The book is hard to read.*

DE

adjective + DE + verb with an impersonal subject: il est -- *Il est difficile de lire ce livre.* or *It's hard to read this book.*

With FOOD

À

about food, with that ingredient -> à, à la, à l', au, aux

Je mange une tarte aux pommes. -- I'm eating an apple pie. (a pie made with some apples, but apples are not the main ingredient)

DE

about food, made from that ingredient mostly-> de

Je bois un jus de pomme. -- I'm drinking apple juice. (a juice made almost exclusively from apples)

TIP with C'EST

À

C'est difficile **à** lire. -- *It's hard to read.* or *This is hard to read.*

DE and comma

C'est difficile, **de** lire ce passage. -- *Reading this passage is hard.*

In Idiomatic Expressions

À

- une copine **à** moi -- a friend of mine
- une salle **à** manger -- a dining room
- en venir **à** -- to come to

DE

- une copine **de** Henri -- one of Henri's friend (expresses possession)
- une salle **de** bain -- a bathroom
- venir **de** -- to just have (done...)

And that's about it for the difference between **À** and **DE**. I hope this lesson was helpful. Let me know at anne@frenchhour.com.

Exercice – Practice

Translate from French to English

Je suis en déplacement. Je viens **de** Bordeaux et je vais **à** Rennes demain. Mon chef m'a remis un mot écrit **de** sa main. Il veut que je lui donne le rapport en fin de semaine. En fait, je suis en train de le taper **à** l'ordi en ce moment. Dès que j'aurai fini, j'irai acheter le cadeau de mariage de France. Je vais lui prendre un plat **à** fruits de mer. Ensuite, j'irai au resto. J'ai rendez-vous avec des copains. Les repas entre potes sont souvent faciles **à** prévoir, mais il est difficile **de** s'entendre pour le menu. Heureusement, pour ce soir, on est tous bretons, donc on a commandé un plateau **de** fruits de mer. On aime tous ça. Le lendemain, j'irai **de** Rennes **à** Paris où je pourrai me reposer.

Or, for more challenge, translate from English to French

I'm out of town for work. I just came **from** Bordeaux and I'm going **to** Rennes tomorrow. My boss handed me a note he wrote **himself** by hand. He wants me to give him a report by the end of the week. I'm actually typing it **on the** computer. As soon as I'm done, I'll go and buy France her wedding present. I'll get her **a seafood dish**. Then, I'll go to the restaurant. I'm meeting some friends. Meals with friends can be easy **to** plan but it's hard to come **to** an agreement for the menu. Luckily, tonight, everyone is Breton, so we ordered **a seafood platter**. We all love it. The next day, I'll go **from** Rennes **to** Paris where I'll be able to rest.



Voltaire's statue at La Comédie Française in Paris

Et après ? – What next?

Further your French with this material

Petite Colle

<https://frenchhour.com/blog/prepositions-a-and-de-quiz/>

Move on to your next grammar course

<https://frenchhour.com/grammar-courses/>