

**LONGMANS' FRENCH
GRAMMAR: COMPLETE
EDITION WITH COPIOUS
EXERCISES AND VOCABULARIES**

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Longmans' French Grammar: Complete Edition with Copious Exercises and Vocabularies by T. H. Bertenshaw

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T. H. BERTENSHAW

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FRENCH GRAMMAR

COMPLETE EDITION

WITH COPIOUS EXERCISES AND VOCABULARIES

BY

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Words in parentheses () are to be translated or are explanatory.

Words in square brackets [] are not to be translated.

FRENCH GRAMMAR.

PART I.

INTRODUCTORY.¹

(Go to p. 6.)

1. THE FRENCH ALPHABET consists of twenty-six letters, of which the names are shown below :—

A	a (9) ²	J	ji (14, 22)	S	<i>esse</i>
B	bé (11)	K	ké	T	té
C	cé	L	<i>elle</i>	U	u (16)
D	dé	M	<i>emme</i>	V	vé
E	é	N	<i>enne</i>	W	double vé
F	<i>effe</i>	O	o	X	ics
G	gé (31)	P	pé	Y	i grec (14)
H	<i>ache</i> (30)	Q	qu (16)	Z	zède (12)
I	i (14)	R	<i>erre</i>		

Those in italics are feminine when used as nouns; the rest are masculine. K and W are only used in words borrowed from foreign languages.

2. **Accents.**—Three accents are used in French—the *acute* (´), the *grave* (`), the *circumflex* (^).

3. The *acute* accent is placed over the letter *e* to indicate a certain sound (v. Pron. 11).

4. The *grave* accent is placed over the letter *e* to indicate another sound (v. Pron. 12).

5. It is also used with *e*, *a*, and *u* to distinguish between certain words which are spelled alike but which have different meanings; e.g. *à* (*has*) and *à* (*at*), *là* (*the*) and *là* (*there*), *des* (*of the*) and *dés* (*since*), *ou* (*or*) and *où* (*where*).

6. The *circumflex* accent is used to denote a long vowel (v. Pron. 9).

In most cases the circumflex accent implies that a letter (usually *e*) has been elided: e.g. *la côte* (*the coast*), formerly spelled *côte*; *âge* (*age*), formerly *aage*.

¹ See Notes for Teachers, p. 173, note 1.

² These numbers refer to the Hints on Pronunciation, pp. 2-5.

7. It is also used, like the grave accent, to distinguish between two sets of words; e.g. le mur (*the wall*) and mûr (*ripe*), du (*of the*) and dû from *devoir*.

Other orthographic signs are—

8. The cedilla (ç) is placed *under* the letter c when before a, o, or u, to give it the sound of s; français (*v. Pron. 29*).

9. The diaeresis (¨) is placed over e, i, and u, to denote that they are to be sounded as a separate syllable; cf. mais (*one syllable*) and naïf (*two syllables*).

NOTE.—With the feminines of adjectives ending in -gu the diaeresis signifies that the u is to be distinctly pronounced as a syllable, while the e is mute.

Aigu, fem. aigüë, pronounced ai-gue.

10. The apostrophe (') is used to denote the elision of a letter; e.g. l'ami (*for le ami*), l'huile (*for la huile*).

The letter l is only elided when si comes before the pronouns il and ils: s'il, s'ils.

11. The hyphen (-) is used to join two or more words; e.g. avez-vous ? pierre-ponce.

HINTS ON PRONUNCIATION.¹

1. **Syllables.**—(a) When possible divide French words so that each syllable shall begin with a *consonant*: fa-ci-li-té, im-pos-si-bi-li-té. Note pri-é, cré-é.

(b) Two consonants in the middle of a word are separated: gar-der, oc-cu-pé, al-lu-mé

(c) But if the second consonant is r or l, or the two are gn, the combination is treated as a single consonant: ga-gner, at-tra-pé.

In speaking French almost the same stress is given to each syllable.

2. **Aspirate.**—In French h is never aspirated as much as it is in English, and in *most* words it is mute. These words are treated exactly as if they began with a vowel; e.g. l'habit (*pron. l'abit*). When the h is aspirated it is sounded very slightly and

¹ See Notes for Teachers, p. 178, note 1.

treated as a consonant; i.e. there is no elision and no liaison (v. Pron. 39), e.g. *la haie*.

The *h* is aspirated in *la hache, hagard, la haie, le haillon, la haine, haïr, haletant, la halle, le hangar, le hareng, la harpe, le hasard, hâter, haut, le héros* (but in *hérésie* and derivatives *h muète*), *le hibou, hideux, la Hollande, la honte, hors, la houille, le hussard, Huguenot, hurler, la hutte, &c.*

3. Final *e* without accent (called *e muète*) is not sounded (unless it is the only vowel of the word, as in *le*).

4. Final consonants are not usually pronounced (*drap, pron. dra*).

5. But if *e muète* is added to a word ending in a consonant the consonant is then sounded (*petit, petite*).

6. Final *c, f, l, r* are usually pronounced: *avec, captif, cheval, tour*.

NOTE.—*r* is frequently followed by another consonant which is mute (e.g. *lourd, pron. lour*).

7. But *e* is mute in *banc, blanc, clerc, estomac, franc, jonc, porc, tabac*. *f* is mute in *clef*.

NOTE.—*f* is *heard* in *bœuf, ouf, nerf, corf*, but *silent* in their plurals, *bœufs, œufs, nerfs, corfs*.

l is mute in *baril, chenil, fusil, gentil, outil*.

r is mute in *monsieur, messieurs*, and *most* words ending in *-er* (but *r* is sounded in *biver, amer, fier* [*proud*], *cuiller*, and a few others).

8. Final *-ent* (3rd pers. plur. of verb) is not sounded.

PRONUNCIATION OF VOWELS.

9. *A, â* like *ah* / but sometimes shorter; e.g. *la dame, drap*.

â like *ah* / but always long (*âme*).

10. *e* (without accent) like the first sound in *u-pon* (*le, de, che-val, re-te-nu*).

11. *é* like *ay* in *pay* (*école, trouvé*).

12. *è* like *ai* in *pair* (*père, mère*).

13. *ê* like No. 11, but with mouth opened a little wider (*tête*).

NOTE.—*e* followed by a mute consonant is like *é* (*mes, tes, ses*).

e followed by a sounded consonant is like *è* (*elle*).

14. *i* (*y*) like *ee* in *seen*, sometimes like *i* in *pin* (*nid*).

î always long like *ee* in *seen* (*île*).

15. *o* like *o* in *hole*, but sometimes shorter (*robe*).

ô like *o* in *hole*, always long (*trône*).

16. **u, û** are like no English sound ; in saying them hold the lips as if you were whistling (*vu, mûr*).
17. **ai, ei** like **ê** (No. 13) (*mais, lait, reine*).
18. **au, eau** like **ô** (No. 15) (*eau, chapeau*).
19. **eu, œu** sometimes like **u** in *furî* (*leur, sœur*), sometimes like no English sound ; press your lips close together and outwards (*neveu, deux*). NOTE.—*Monsieur* is pronounced *meu-sieu* (*r* silent).
20. **ou, où, oû** like **oo** in *moon* (*sous, où, goût*).
21. **oi** like **wa** in *wagon* ; sometimes like **wa** in *want* (*noix, bois*).
22. **y** (when after a vowel) like two successive **e**'s (English) : *pays = pay-ee*.
- 22a. Two vowel sounds pronounced so as to form one syllable are called a **diphthong**. The first sound is always very short : *piano, pied, Dieu, noix, ôti, ôtest, jûin*.

NASAL SOUNDS.

These sounds are really like no English sounds. They must be heard ; **an, am, &c.**, are something like **aun** in *taunt*, and **in** like **an** in *sank*. In the nasals there is no difference between **m** and **n**.

23. **an, am, en, em** (*dans,* champ,* entre, temps**).
24. **in, im, ain, aim, ein** (*jardin, pain, fain*).
25. **on, om** (*mon, pont,* nom*).
26. **un, um, eun** (*un, parfum*).

* NOTE 1.—The nasals are frequently followed by *mute* consonants (v. Pron. 4).

NOTE 2.—If the **n** or **m** is followed by a vowel, or doubled, it loses its nasal sound, and is pronounced as in English ; ex. *une, reine, cousine, inégal, bonne*.

LIQUID SOUNDS.

27. In **il** or **ille** at the end of a word, and **ll** in the middle of a word, the **l** is not sounded. In place of **l** a sound very like **ye** (v. Pron. 10) is heard (*travail = tra-vâ-ye, fille = fee-ye, caillou = câ-you*).