

English-French Cognates

Cognates—words in different languages that have similar spellings and meanings based on a shared ancestry—can help ESL/ELL students rapidly increase their understanding of English vocabulary. French-speaking students who are learning English must be careful not to assume that all English words that are spelled like French words have the same meaning. 'True friends', or vrais amis, are English-French pairs that do have similar spellings and meanings, for example, guitar and guitare. However, there are many, many English-French word pairs that are 'false friends', or faux amis. For example, in English the word main means 'key' or 'essential', while in French main means 'hand'; and the word addition in English means to 'add' but in French 'addition' refers to a restaurant bill.

To help with spelling, students should know some of the common equivalent suffixes: For example, a cognate that ends in -k in English often ends in -que in French.

English | French

-y		-e
-er		-re
-ary		-aire
-or		-eur
-ist		-iste
-ic or -ical		-ique
-ly		-ment
-ck		-que
-ed		-e
-ory		-oire
-ization		-isation
-ous		-eux or -euse

<u>English</u>		<u>French</u>	#	<u>English</u>		<u>French</u>
absence		absence	#	memory		mémoire
absolutely		absolument	#	mention		mention
accent		accent	#	menu		menu
accept		accepter	#	message		message
activity		activité	#	metropolitan		métropolitain
actor		acteur	#	migration		migration
actress		actrice	#	million		million
admire		admirer	#	miracle		miracle
adore		adore	#	missile		missile
adult		adulte	#	mission		mission
agency		agence	#	modern		moderne
agreeable		agréable	#	module		module
agriculture		agriculture	#	molecule		molécule
aid		aider	#	monster		monster
airport		aéroport	#	monument		monument
alarm		alarme	#	multiple		multiple
album		album	#	multiplication		multiplication

alligator		alligator	#	muscle		muscle
alphabet		alphabet	#	music		musique
animal		animal	#	nation		nation
apartment		appartement	#	nationality		nationalité
applaud		applaudir	#	naturally		naturellement
apricot		abricot	#	nectarine		nectarine
arrange		arranger	#	negative		négatif
arrive		arriver	#	negotiation		négociation
artist		artiste	#	neutron		neutron
aspirin		aspirine	#	no		non
attention		attention	#	November		novembre
authority		autorité	#	number		nombre
automatic		automatique	#	numeric		numérique
autumn		automne	#	obey		obeir
avenue		avenue	#	object		objet
banana		banane	#	objective		objectif
bank		banque	#	odor		odeur
beauty		beauté	#	office		office
bicycle		bicyclette	#	omelet		omelette
biology		biologie	#	onion		oignon
bleu		bleu	#	operation		opération
blizzard		blizzard	#	opinion		opinion
blue		bleu	#	orange		orange
bulletin		bulletin	#	page		page
café		café	#	painter		peintre
candidate		candidat	#	paper		papier
canyon		canyon	#	parents		parents
cape		cape	#	park		parc
center		centre	#	participant		participant
change		change	#	passport		passeport
check		chèque	#	pay		payer
cheeseburger		cheeseburger	#	peach		pêche
chocolate		chocolat	#	perfume		parfum
client		client	#	peril		peril
cola		cola	#	pharmacy		pharmacie
color		couleur	#	photocopier		photocopieur
comfortable		confortable	#	photography		photographie
composition		composition	#	poet		poète
constellation		constellation	#	pork		porc
continent		continent	#	prepare		préparer
continue		continuer	#	pretend		pretendre
correction		correction	#	professor		professeur
couple		couple	#	program		programme
coupon		coupon	#	pronunciation		prononciation
cousin		cousin	#	radio		radio
dance		danser	#	reserve		reserver
December		décembre	#	respond		repondre
decision		décision	#	restaurant		restaurant
democracy		démocratie	#	ridiculous		ridicule
demonstration		démonstration	#	safari		safari
dentist		dentiste	#	salad		salade
dessert		dessert	#	sandwich		sandwich
detail		détail	#	sauce		sauce
dictionary		dictionnaire	#	science		science

dinner		diner	#	scooter		scooter
disk		disque	#	script		script
edition		édition	#	segment		segment
elastic		élastique	#	September		septembre
electron		électron	#	serpent		serpent
elegant		élégant	#	sign		signer
elementary		élémentaire	#	sincerely		sincèrement
enemy		ennemi	#	society		société
equivalent		équivalent	#	soup		soupe
error		erreur	#	statue		statue
evaporate		évaporer	#	success		succès
excellent		excellent	#	surely		surement
exception		exception	#	sweater		sweater
excuse		excuse	#	table		table
exercise		exercice	#	tea		thé
fatigued		fatigué	#	telephone		téléphone
finish		finir	#	temperature		température
flatterer		flatteur	#	terror		terreur
fruit		fruits	#	tiger		tigre
globe		globe	#	toast		toast
glory		gloire	#	tomato		tomate
government		gouvernement	#	torment		tourment
graffiti		graffiti	#	tourist		touriste
grand		grand	#	train		traine
guitar		guitare	#	transfer		transferer
hazard		hasard	#	ulcer		ulcère
hello		allô	#	uncle		oncle
hospital		hôpital	#	unity		unite
hotel		hôtel	#	university		université
humid		humid	#	urban		urbain
impatient		impatient	#	urn		urne
insist		insister	#	vacant		vacante
invite		inviter	#	vacation		vacances
jacket		jaquette	#	valley		vallée
lamp		lampe	#	vein		veine
lesson		leçon	#	vender		vendeur
liberty		liberté	#	verdict		verdict
license		licence	#	victim		victime
linguistic		linguistique	#	visible		visible
liquid		liquide	#	vitamin		vitamine
machine		machine	#	waterproof		waterproof
magnificent		magnifique	#	web		web
management		management	#	webcam		webcam
manager		manager	#	weekend		week-end
mark		marque	#	western		western
marriage		mariage	#	xylophone		xylophone
martyr		martyr	#	yoga		yoga
maxim		maxime	#	zebra		zebra
May		mai	#	zero		zero
meander		meander	#	zest		zeste
media		media	#	zigzag		zigzag
medicine		médecine	#	zoom		zoom
memorable		memorable	#			