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international
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dearstudents,

A **hearty welcome** to all of you who have chosen (or are about to choose) Paris as the destination of your exchange semester or year. We are happy that you consider spending your stay at the **Paris Graduate School of Management (PGSM)**.

Our top services in the areas of course offerings, advising, housing, as well as culture, social and events and the quality of life in the city of Paris will hopefully make your stay with us **personally and professionally enriching**.

To help you with the preparation of your stay in Paris, we have created this **student guide** which contains the most useful information on various aspects such as culture, academics and personal issues.

We wish you all the best for your exchange period at the **PGSM**. May this time in Paris remain an unforgettable period of your life—for the things you learn at **PGSM** as well as for all the other experiences outside the university.

With kind regards,

Your PGSM International Office



whyFrance?

For the quality and accessibility of its university system

#1

French higher education has a long tradition of **openness and accessibility**. No distinction is made between French and international students - under French law, the requirements for admission are the same, as are the degrees awarded. The country that coined the phrase human rights rejects all forms of discrimination. French higher education system, modern and dynamic, trains the leaders of a nation that plays a central role in the worlds of science, business, and culture.

Today France is the world's **fifth largest economy** and second largest exporter of services. The successes of France's scientists, engineers, and designers are known around the world through Airbus, the TGV (high-speed train), the Ariane rocket, the discovery of the human immune-deficiency virus, high fashion, luxury goods, fine food and wine, and much more. Whether your specialty is engineering, management, political science, the arts, or the humanities, you, too, can excel in France.

At present, about **190,000 international students** (10 percent of French postsecondary enrollments) **have chosen France** for all or part of their higher education. They enrich the French system with their culture, experience, energy, and accomplishments.

You'll benefit from the depth and breadth of French higher education

#2

France's 200+ universities and many specialized postsecondary schools are located throughout the country. Large and venerable universities are found alongside the modern campuses of leading schools of business and engineering that may enroll no more than a few hundred students in close-knit communities of learning. Specialized schools of a similar size are devoted to art, tourism, health, and many other subjects. They all welcome international applicants.

This broad array of institutions—universities and specialized schools large and small—together offer **thousands of degree programs** at all levels, extending into every corner of the universe of knowledge. The quality of the country's educational system is a source of pride for the French people, acting together through their national and regional governments. France devotes fully 20 percent of its annual budget to education. The central government closely monitors the quality of instruction as well as the curricular content of the country's national diplomas. For French and international students alike, the government subsidizes a very large part of the cost of instruction in France's universities and other public institutions.



You'll enjoy the quality of France's cultural, economic, and social life

#3

One big benefit of studying in France is the opportunity to live in the place that invented “savoir-vivre”—the art of living well. Did you know that France is the **most visited country in the world**? The French people are proud of their cultural heritage, lovely countryside, quiet towns, and fine restaurants—all of which they're eager to share with visitors. France is a relatively large country of amazing geographical variety. Its transportation and health systems are among the world's very best. France is a safe and tolerant country. In France you'll have access to a multitude of athletic, touristic, and cultural activities—all at special student prices. Most of France's institutions of higher education are located in city centers, close to cultural and social life. Museums, libraries, cinemas, theaters, and cafes are rarely very far away.

You'll study in the heart of Europe

#4

Studying in France rarely means studying only in France. Many if not most schools have added European components to their programs, offering courses on Europe or internships elsewhere in the European Union. Students have the opportunity to enrich their French experience with new discoveries and experiences. Not surprisingly, most courses in France are taught in French, a language spoken by more than 200 million people in 50 countries. But you'll have ample opportunities to learn or practice other European languages—English, in particular. Advanced English is taught in many programs, especially in business and engineering.

France is an ideal place for the student who wants to explore Europe. It's easy, really easy, to reach most of Europe's important cities (plus hundreds not so important but still worth the trip). Amsterdam, London, Brussels, Barcelona, Milan—all await you for the weekend or for a longer stay.

what you should know about

Main figures

France is the country with the **largest surface area** in Western Europe, and is one of the continent's **leading economic and diplomatic powers**, alongside the United Kingdom and Germany. It has a population of 64.5 million with an average GDP per capita of USD 46,500 (EUR 29,700). The unemployment rate, as calculated by the International Labor Organization in March 2006, was 7.5%, (1.5 million people), and between 6 and 7% of the population live below the poverty line.

While France is a secular state, about 65% of the population declare themselves Roman Catholics. Muslims account for approximately 6% of the population, followed by Protestants (2%) and Jews (about 1%). The 545,630 square km which make up France are less densely populated than any of its neighbours, except for Spain.

With the world's **fifth-largest economy**, France is a major manufacturing country, notably producing cars, chemicals, civil and military aircraft, shipbuilding, light and heavy machinery, metallurgy and electronics. Other important areas of its economy include food processing, banking and other service industries, and tourism.




France?

the pgsm group

Welcome to Paris Graduate School of Management

The Paris Graduate School of Management Group, set up in 1975, at that time called the ESG Group, is made up of five undergraduate and graduate institutions in the fields of management and information technology:

- ESG (École Supérieure de Gestion), which offers an accredited graduate management program in specializations: E-business, Marketing et Publicité, Luxury Management... / www.esg.fr
- ESG MBA's with its 24 MBA programs in French, English or Bilingual. / www.mba-esg.com
- ESGCI (École Supérieure de Gestion et Commerce International) has a five-year program taught in French, a special preparation program for management studies in French, and a BBA program fully taught in English and accredited by the IACBE. / www.esgci.com
- ESGF (École Supérieure de Gestion et Finance) offers a five-year French accredited degree program. The International Financial Management program is taught entirely in English. / www.esgf.com
- ESGI (École Supérieure de Génie Informatique), a school specializing in information technology offering a five-year French accredited degree and a specialization in software engineering in English. / www.esgi.fr
- The ESG Executive Center offers specific courses and seminars for executives, either at the Group's campuses or at the company's headquarters in France and across the globe.



The PGSM also has an institution for continuing and cooperative education. Those schools make PGSM one of the **most important centers** in France for higher education, giving it a very large scope and international renown with its 400 faculty members and professional experts and 3,000 business partners. PGSM has over **5,000 students** on the group's four campuses in Paris and **23,000 Alumni**. Seventy nationalities are represented in our student body. E-learning classes are available in English and several on-line programs have been set-up in partnership with American universities.

Exchange students from our partners universities can choose courses from each of our schools, in French as well as in English. If you are interested in doing a regular program (1-4 years) at one of our school, please contact us directly by mail or phone.

Our language center gives you the possibility to prepare French certificates as well as TEF, TOETC, GMAT, TOEIC, etc... **Paris Graduate School of Management** offers a wide range of courses in management, as well as double degrees with universities all over the world.

International students can enroll for the degree program in Paris in English or French, or come for a shorter period (one or two semesters or a summer session) either in the context of an **exchange program** between their university and the **PGSM Group**, or for **specialized seminars**.

Intensive language courses are also available for those who wish to progress in English or French. Our mission is to educate students and executives, professionally and personally, so they are effective in business and aim for excellence. Hence our motto:

improvingpeople

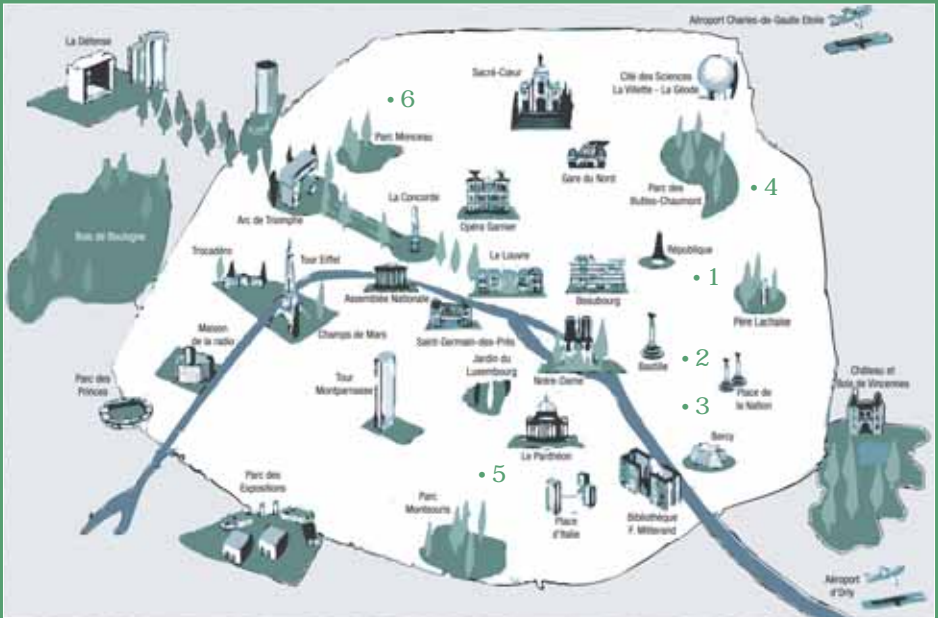
Pierre Azoulay,
CEO of PGSM Group



ESG is member of

- EFMD (European Foundation for Management and Development)
- AACSB International (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)
- EDUFRANCE
- IACBE: The International Association for Collegiate Business Education is an international, private accrediting body based in the United States that promotes and supports quality business and management education worldwide through accreditation and outcomes assessment. In the Spring of 2001, IACBE proudly accredited the BBA Program at ESGCI, one of the first to receive such an award in France.





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- 2 / ESGCI • BBA • ESGF
- 3 / MBA ESG
- 4 / ESGI • ESG Formation Continue
- 5 / ESGCI • BBA
- 6 / Test Sup

Paris Graduate School of Management is located in the heart of Paris in the midst of the historic Marais district. It borders both the famous “Place des Vosges” and the ultra-modern Bastille Opera House. The school is easily accessible by public transportation and is near a number of hospitals and cultural centers. Students have access to all university libraries and in particular the new National library François Mitterrand.



International relations

An International Perspective

Currently 20% of the student body at the PGSM Group is international with over 70 different nationalities represented. This diversity allows all students within the PGSM Group to study in a **truly multicultural environment** open to the world. The PGSM Group intends to increase the quality and diversity of its international student body, and to this end, the PGSM Group has put in place a number of degree programs taught entirely or partly in English.

Each program has a designated **career services department** that actively encourages all degree candidates to work and live abroad by pursuing student internships and other outplacement opportunities all over the world. The PGSM Group has a network with over **100 reputable universities** and schools throughout Europe, North America, Latin American, the Middle East, North Africa and Southeast Asia, involving student exchanges, double degree programs and visiting professorships. PGSM enthusiastically participates in the Socrates / Erasmus Program, sponsored by the European Union, and organizes seminars for students as well as executives from all over the world to study management sciences in Paris.

The myriad opportunities within the PGSM Group offer all students the chance to study and / or work abroad for either a small or significant part of their program. It is an opportunity to gain a different perspective on the world and grow as an individual.

The London Graduate School of Management

PGSM Group maintains a partnership with the London Graduate School of Management (LGSM), an independent business college located in the heart of London. LGSM provides quality education in a caring and stimulating environment where “personal development” is paramount.

The rôle of the International Office consists in:

- **Welcoming and informing** newly registered international students at the PGSM Group (information on the PGSM programs, student life at PGSM, administrative formalities, housing, transportation in Paris...).
- **Coordinating international exchange programs** (Socrates-Erasmus programs, bilateral agreements) in partnership with foreign universities in Europe, Latin America, USA, Australia and Asia.
- Developing **short-term international programs** (Seminars in European Management, Summer Sessions and Language Courses).
- Promoting the PGSM Schools all over the world.



If you have any questions, please contact us at international@esg.fr. We would be pleased to welcome you for 1 semester, academic year or a longer period of studies at the Groupe ESG / Paris Graduate School of Management.

Our international partners

Africa

- Institut International of Management, Algeria
- GMC, Ghana
- UFRA, Ivory Coast
- Technolab ISTA, Mali
- CFC, Morocco
- Sup de Co Dakar, Senegal
- ESGIS, Togo

Argentina

- Universidad de Belgrano

Austria

- FH Joanneum
- FH St. Pölten
- FHS Kufstein
- IMC University of Applied Sciences
- Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien

Australia

- Griffith University
- James Cook University
- MacQuarie University
- University of Technology Sydney
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- La Trobe University

Brazil

- Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul
- União de Negócios e Administração

Canada

- University of Northern British Columbia

Chile

- Universidad Católica de Valparaíso

China

- Shanghai University
- The Hong Kong Institute of Education
- Shanghai Normal University

Colombia

- Universidad del Rosario

Costa Rica

- Universidad de Costa Rica

Croatia

- Zagreb School of Economics and Management

Cyprus

- Cyprus International Institute of Management

Denmark

- Copenhagen Business School

England

- Millennium City Academy
- London Metropolitan University
- Middlesex University

- Warwick Business School
- Loughborough University

Estonia

- International University Audentes

Finland

- Tampere Polytechnic
- University of Jyväskylä

Germany

- Hochschule Für Bankwirtschaft
- Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
- Munich School of Management

Greece

- Athens University of Economics and Business

Hungary

- Budapest Business School

Iceland

- University of Iceland

India

- Institute of Management Technology
- WLC College India

Ireland

- Dublin Business School
- Griffith College Dublin

Israel

- Tel Aviv University

Italy

- Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano

Japan

- Kansai Gaidai University

Korea

- Ewha Womans University
- Sungkyunkwan University
- Yonsei University School of Business

Kuwait

- Kuwait University

Latvia

- International School of Economics & Business Administration
- Stockholm School of Economics

Liechtenstein

- Hochschule Liechtenstein

Mexico

- Escuela Bancaria y Comercial
- Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores
- Universidad Anáhuac del Sur
- Universidad de Monterrey

Netherlands

- Fontys University of applied sciences
- Hogeschool Van Utrecht / Utrecht Business School

Norway

- BI / Norwegian School of Management

Poland

- Leon Kosminski Academy of Entrepreneurship & Management
- Warsaw School of Economics

Portugal

- Instituto Politécnico do Porto
- IPAM
- Universidade de Coimbra

Russia

- Lomonosov University

Slovenia

- University of Ljubljana

Spain

- Universidad IQS Pompeu Fabra
- Universidad Antonio de Nebrija
- Universidad Politécnica de Valencia
- Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

Sweden

- Stockholm University School of Business
- Gotland University

Switzerland

- ZHW School of Management

Czech Republic

- University of New-York Prague

Thailand

- Bangkok School of Management

Turkey

- Beykent University
- Isik University

United Arab Emirates

- Institute of Management Technology of Dubai

USA

- Baylor College
- Boston University
- McKendree College
- Millikin University
- Monmouth College
- Suffolk University
- University of Arizona
- University of North Florida
- Clark University
- Johnson & Wales University
- Winthrop University
- Webber International University
- California Lutheran University

Web sites addresses available on www.business-school-pgsm.com/partner-universities.html

International Summer Programs in Paris for groups or individuals

Spend an exciting and enriching summer in Paris. Learn all you ever wanted to know about the French and European Culture and Business.

/ Summer Program “Culture and Management in Europe”

Taught in English (5 weeks)

/ Short Summer Program “Culture and Business in France”

Taught in French or in English (3 weeks) and an optional 1 week French-language workshop

/ Summer Session in our Bachelor of Business Administration

A choice of over 30 undergraduate courses taught in English

/ Intensive Summer Session in International Management

4 courses taught in English

/ Customized Seminars in Paris in European Management

• In French and / or English • In addition to French • Language Courses



Contact for information:

Ms Angela Feigl
International Relations Office
e-mail: afeigl@esg.fr

Become more international! Universities can offer their own courses with either their faculty-members or PGSM faculty-members using the PGSM facilities.

www.business-school-pgsm.com/abroad-program-study-summer.html



Student associations

About 20 Student associations were created in order to ensure a spirit of entrepreneurship, to train students to take on responsibilities, to multiply contacts with the world of economics, arts, literature and theater, and to encourage students to participate in sports.

The Event Launcher Association

The Event Launcher Association's goal is to animate the student life within PGSM, to bring students together through various cultural and social events, to manage those activities, and to promote the MBA programs and the school to other students and the world. Join us.

The Website Association

Welcome to the Website Association. This web site is built to present to you the MBA Programs and our school. We design and develop the website, which describes the activity of each association through text and pictures. Belong to our Association will develop your communication savoir faire, as well as your technical and artistic skills.

The yoga association

The yoga association enables students to have a weekly experience of ZEN, to stop for a moment and relax in the middle of all the studying they are surrounded by. Yoga association also proposes its philosophy on how to accept life in its simplicity. We highly recommend that every student experience this amazing art form.



The BBA Newsletter

The Newsletter is the opportunity to take your pen and write down what you feel and what you know. The Newsletter brings about our privileged and unique insights and the variety of our origins, experiences, and beliefs. Write articles on politics, economy, business, culture, religion, technology, sports, people, education, your country, or even the latest gossip.

The Golf Association

Each year, this association organizes the PGSM Group Trophy. This sporting event allows a unique opportunity to bring the school and corporations together, along with some of the best golfers from other schools. Our golfers also compete in national events throughout the year.

studying and working in France

Studying in France

France has about 230 free-standing, private schools of business and management, many of which are affiliated with chambers of commerce and industry. Most programs emphasize internships and international exchange, offering students ready access to the huge European job market. Teaching methods make use of the latest technology. French schools of business award national diplomas, signifying their adherence to international standards of quality.

International students who have completed two years of postsecondary education may apply for admission, sit for the entrance examination, and in 3 years earn a business degree. Graduates may go on for an MBA or specialized master's.

Obtaining a student visa

Students from outside Europe (that is, students from countries other than the 27 countries in the European Economic Zone) must obtain a visa marked "étudiant". There are 3 types of visas "étudiant":

#1 The short-term visa is for students who stay in France for 3 months maximum. Once in France, the students do not need to go to the Police authorities to obtain a residence permit.

#2 The long-term visa is for students who stay in France for **more than 6 months**. Once in France, the students must go to the Police authorities to obtain a **residence permit**. This procedure is mandatory.

#3 The temporary long-term visa is for students who stay in France for a period from 3 to 6 months. Once in France, the students do not need to go to the Police authorities to obtain a residence permit.

3 very important pieces of advice

#1 A tourist visa cannot be converted into a student visa in France or in any other country of the European Union.

#2 If you plan to complete two programs in succession (such as a program in French as a foreign language, followed by an academic program), obtain admission to both programs before applying for your visa so that your visa will be valid for the duration of your period of study. French visas can not be extended in France.

#3 Under no circumstances may temporary student visas be renewed or converted into long-term student visas.

Finally, a special 3-month visa (marked étudiant-concours) is granted to students traveling to France to sit for an entrance examination or receive preparatory training. Students who pass the examination and are admitted to an institution are

entitled to apply for a long-term student visa without returning to their home country. The "étudiant-concours" visa may be used in cases where the student must complete a short period of preparatory training before being admitted to an institution.

To obtain a visa, make an **appointment with the nearest French consulate** or with the **visa service** of the French embassy in your country. Neither CampusFrance nor any other organization, individual, or entity has any role in the visa-granting process, which is the responsibility of the **French consular service**. We urge you to make **early contact** with the French consulate in your area. Familiarize yourself with the list of documents to be submitted and note whether they need to be translated or authenticated. Submit only one file, and make sure it is complete in every way.

What documents are required to obtain a visa?

The following list is indicative and may not be exhaustive. Requirements vary from country to country.

• **A passport**

Your passport must be valid for the duration of your intended stay in France.

• **Proof of admission**

You must furnish either a positive response to your preliminary application for admission or a letter of admission from a public or private institution of higher education. The document must specify your discipline and level of study. Letters of admission from private institutions must specify the number of course hours and certify that tuition has been paid in full.

• **Proof of financial support**

The required level of financial resources is set by each embassy. The average is approximately EUR 460 per month. Scholarship students must provide documentation on the letterhead of the granting organization specifying the amount and duration of their grant.

If financial support will be provided by an individual residing in France, the student must furnish a signed statement of responsibility, a photocopy of the identity card of the guarantor, and evidence of adequate means to provide the promised support (such as the guarantor's 3 most recent pay stubs and the most recent income tax return).

If financial support will be provided from abroad, the student must furnish evidence of the opening of a bank account into which the necessary funds will be deposited and a written commitment from the guarantor to deposit the funds. The statement of commitment must be translated into French and bear a legalized (certified) signature. If the necessary funds will come from the student's home government, the government must provide a letter to that effect.

Prospective students under 18 years of age must furnish written authorization from their parents or legal guardians.

• **Vaccinations**

The consulate may require proof of vaccination against certain diseases (such as yellow fever and cholera) before granting a visa if health conditions in the student's home country merit such a requirement.



Libraries and resources for research in Paris

This list gives an annotated description of some of **the main research areas** in Paris with Anglophone collections. Note that some libraries, have membership fees, but any of the public libraries are free and open to the public for on-site consultation. For more detailed information on the collection and inscription information, see the librarian at Nation.

Library and Multimedia Room for PSGM

ESG at Saint-Ambroise

25, rue Saint-Ambroise - 75011 Paris / Tel: 01 53 36 44 00

Metro: Saint-Ambroise

Hours: Monday to Friday from 8 am to 5 pm and Saturday from 8 am to 12 am

The complete collection of books and thesis's are located in notebooks in the library at Nation, or Saint-Ambroise. ESG subscribes to the Economist and Newsweek. See the attached for the complete listing of subscriptions. Internet access is available in the "Salle informatique" as well as various CD-ROMs in the "Salle des marchés des finances".

Saint-Ambroise Library Rules

All students can use the Saint-Ambroise center to consult the books and other sources necessary for their courses and studies. The reading room at Saint-Ambroise is open during business hours, where students can borrow books from **10 am to 1 pm and 2 pm to 5 pm**. Borrowing books is **free** upon presentation of your student card. Students can use the books in the library but cannot take them out. All materials lost must be reimbursed at purchase cost. Videocassettes, audiovisual materials, portable computers are given to students personally and remain within their responsibility.



Bibliothèques de la Ville de Paris / Paris Public Libraries

Web site for cultural affairs in Paris "Site internet des affaires culturelles de la Ville de Paris": www.paris-france.org

Bibliothèque Faidherbe (near Nation) / Faidherbe Library

18 rue Faidherbe - 75011 Paris / Tel: 01 43 71 71 16

Metro: Faidherbe-Chaligny

Hours: Tuesday to Saturday from 1 pm to 7 pm

Most public libraries in Paris have at least a small English Language collection of literature books. The Reference area has language dictionaries and other vocabulary tools. This particular library subscribes to TIME magazine.

Bibliothèque Américaine à Paris / American library in Paris

10, rue du Général-Camou - 75007 Paris / Tel: 01 53 59 12 60

Metro: École Militaire

Internet site: www.americanlibraryinparis.org

This library boasts the largest English language collection in Europe. The collection of 90,000 volumes includes over 100 periodical subscriptions to American journals and newspapers such as The New York Times, Herald Tribune, The Economist, Forbes, Fortune, and The New Yorker. There is also a reference room of CD-ROMs which includes a Business database and Readers Guide to Periodical Literature.

Bibliothèque Publique d'Information

Centre George Pompidou - 75004 Paris / Tel: 01 44 48 12 33

Metro: Châtelet / Rambuteau

Hours: Monday to Sunday (closed on Tuesday) from 12 pm to 10 pm

Internet site: www.bpi.fr

This renowned cultural center is among the largest of public libraries in France. Although it is primarily a French language collection, the newly renovated library is an excellent reading space, which is open until 10 pm. Make sure to take advantage of the Laboratoire des Langues, which is an impressive collection of language tapes accompanied by texts which you may use on-site.

Bibliothèque François Mitterrand

11 quai François Mauriac - 75013 Paris / Tel: 01 53 79 53 79

Metro: Bibliothèque François Mitterrand

Hours: Tuesday to Saturday from 12 pm to 8 pm and Sunday from 12 pm to 7 pm (closed on Monday)

Internet site: www.bnf.fr

The new National Library of France. This library has impressive reading rooms. Mainly used for researchers.

How to find a job?

If you are seeking employment in France, these are the essentials things you need to know about the job market before you begin the hunt. France has one of the **highest unemployment rates** in Western Europe at about 17% of the population under 25 ans around 7% of the working population. Of course, the national statistics don't tell the full story. The jobless rate varies from region to region and differs widely among professional categories and age groups. Thus, despite prevailing economic difficulties, there are jobs to be found.

Regardless of professional qualifications, English mother-tongue job candidates can hope to have an edge in certain sectors. The first thing to establish is whether you are **entitled** to work in France. Secondly, it is absolutely essential to have at least a **basic grasp** of the French language before applying. For qualified professionals there are three main routes for prospecting employment: by contacting the HR departments of French firms directly, by registering with a head-hunting agency (called a "cabinet de recrutement") or by searching job ad pages.

If you are writing to a French firm, whether it be a small business or a multi-national company, it is a key advantage to do so in French and to present your CV in the manner used in France. Fee-paying agencies which specialize in preparing CVs and other administrative documents can be found in the Yellow Pages or on the web under the title "conseils en formalités administratives".

For those looking for manual, secretarial and/or relatively unskilled jobs, the best approach is through **temporary employment agencies**, called "agences d'interim", and the small ads in the local and national press. Competition is at its highest in this category, and subsequently there are few employers in France who don't demand a minimum of school leaving qualifications plus one or more levels of training. The highest turnover of offers for non-skilled, English-speaking labor comes from the services sector, in particular in tourism.

 There are two types of working contract in France ; a CDD, or "Contrat de travail à Durée Déterminée", which is for a designed temporary period and a CDI, or "Contrat de travail à Durée Indéterminée", which is for a permanent post. A CDD, or cumulated CDDs, must be transformed into a CDI after 18 months.

Salary or earnings will be presented either as "brut", which is before direct deductions, or as "net", which is after direct deductions. These mostly concern mandatory contributions to the French welfare system, but do not include income tax, which is paid yearly.



Working in Paris

Now, all foreign students have the right to work during their studies in France provided that they are **enrolled in an education institution** that entitles them to **student coverage** under the French national health insurance system (Sécurité Sociale) and that they have a **residence permit** if they are non-EU nationals.

It's quite usual for students to look for ways to supplement their income during their studies. However, it's important to realize that working half-time in France won't allow you to cover all your expenses—it can only provide extra income. All students have the right to work, including those arriving for the first time or enrolled in their first year of study. French legislation now authorizes foreign students to work a maximum of 964 hours per year.

In France there is a **guaranteed minimum salary**, the SMIC, which is € 8.71 gross per hour (before the average 20% deduction for social security contributions). Students are no longer required to obtain a temporary work permit (autorisation provisoire de travail - APT) in order to work part time during their studies.

living in France

Finding housing

You've been admitted and you have your visa, now it's time to plan your stay

What will daily life be like? Follow the links below to see how people live in France and learn how to get the most out of your stay. After you've read the brief comments under each of the links, feel free to contact PGSM Group for more information. It can be hard to find student housing in France, especially in Paris.

Living in university housing

Universities throughout France offer rooms and studio apartments at reduced rates (between EUR 200 to 500 per month) in student residences managed by CROUS, the regional affiliates of the French national student-service agency, known as CNOUS. Space in these residences is allocated according to certain criteria, with recipients of French government scholarships receiving priority. In Paris, where there are 300,000 students and only 3,000 units of university housing, scholarship students are the only ones who have a chance at getting a room.

Relying on the private rental market

Monthly average rents average EUR 18 per square meter in Paris and EUR 9 per square meter elsewhere in France. The supply of units in privately owned student apartment buildings is rising. These buildings offer furnished and equipped studios and shared services such as cafeterias, coin laundries, and game rooms. The monthly rent for a studio in such a building is EUR 500 to 800 outside Paris and EUR 550 to 900 in Paris.

When you rent a unit in a private building you will have to sign a rental agreement or lease that specifies your rights and responsibilities and those of the property owner and his agent. Before the lease is signed, you will have to prove that you have sufficient resources to pay the rent. Usually this means that your monthly income must be at least three times the amount of your rent. You will also have to pay a security deposit equal to 2 months' rent. Vacancies are advertised by real estate agencies or directly by property owners in the classified section of newspapers such as *Le Figaro* (which is widely available abroad). Some educational institutions and CROUS offices maintain lists of vacancies.

Two forms of financial assistance

Two forms of financial assistance are available to students of all nationalities who rent housing in France. The precise amount of the monthly assistance varies according to the student's income, the type of housing, and the amount of the rent. The

two types of assistance are Allocation de logement sociale and Aide personnalisée au logement, often referred to as ALS and APL. Payments are made by local family assistance funds (Caisses d'Allocations Familiales, or CAF).

After having moved in, you have 3 months to ask for financial assistance to the **CAF**. All international students can apply for the grant, provided that they have a residence permit with a validity of **more than 4 months**. This is also valid for the European students. Do not wait until you have the residence permit delivered to send your application for the CAF grant, first send an incomplete file to the CAF, then send a copy of your residence permit as soon as you get it.

Accommodation agencies

APAS - Paris Apartments Services
20, rue Bachaumont
75002 Paris - 01 40 28 01 28
www.paris-apts.com

Rentals of studios and one-bedroom apartments, for short term, 5 days and more. Quality fully furnished apartments that provide comfort and charm. Stay in Paris and live as Parisians do, in the surrounding of your own home, Parisian style. In the historical heart of Paris, Opéra, Louvre, Le Marais, Rive Gauche. Bilingual staff dedicated 24 hours a day.

Lodgis
47 rue de Paradis 75010 Paris
01 70 39 11 11
www.lodgis.com

The specialist for furnished apartments in Paris since 1999 with a choice of 1,600 apartments. From EUR 400 a week or EUR 800 a month, you can have a beautiful apartment in Paris or a very close suburbs. You can see all our apartments on the website and also make reservations. Or call from Monday to Friday 9 am to 7 pm and Saturday from 9 am to 5 pm.

Adiantis
25 boulevard des Italiens -
75002 Paris
01 40 07 00 82
adiantis@wanadoo.fr

Flat Hunter
Square Emile Chautemps
3 rue Papin - 75003 Paris
01 44 85 59 41
www.flathunter.fr

**International Services
Prestige**
23 rue des Longs Prés -
92100 Boulogne
01 46 08 58 75

De Circourt Associates
11 rue Royale - 75008 Paris
01 43 12 98 00
www.homes-paris.com

Fraser Suites Serviced
Residences Harmonies
La Defense 1
6 boulevard de Neuilly -
92400 Courbevoie
01 44 13 33 90

Paris Housing Services
2 rue de l'Exposition -
75007 Paris
01 45 55 21 37
www.paris-housing.com

**Elie International
Property**
06 16 62 33 70 France
1 843 345 8583 USA
www.elieproperty.com

At Home In Paris
16 rue Médéric - 75017 Paris
01 42 12 40 40

France Apartments
97 avenue des Champs-
Élysées - 75008 Paris
01 56 89 31 00

A list of CAF centers in Paris:

- **Centre de gestion for the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th districts:**
19 rue du Pot de fer - 75005 Paris / Metro: Monge or Censier-Daubenton
- **Centre de Gestion for the 7th, 8th, 14th, 15th and 16th districts:**
50 rue du Docteur Finlay - 75015 Paris / Metro: Duplex
- **Centre de Gestion for the 9th, 10th, and 19th districts:**
67 avenue Jean Jaurès - 75016 Paris / Metro: Jaurès
- **Centre de Gestion for the 11th, 12th, 13th and 20th districts:**
101 rue Nationale - 75013 Paris / Metro: Nationale or Olympiades



Calling the CAF: 0820 25 75 10

Documents to be provided:

- a copy of your rental agreement,
- proof of your rental payment,
- a copy of your residence permit,
- a copy of your passport,
- a proof of a bank account,
- a copy of your tax return filed in France (proof of revenues).

For the “Crous” Center in Paris

CROUS provides various housing services for students in private residences. For information, call 01 40 51 35 77.

Centre Régional des Oeuvres Universitaires et Sociales (CROUS)

39 Avenue Georges Bernanos - 75005 Paris (RER: Port-Royal)

Reception: 01 40 51 36 00 - Housing Department: 01 40 51 35 95

www.crous-paris.fr

The International Student Organization for Housing

27, rue Hénard - 75012 Paris (Subway Station: Montgallet) / Tel: 01 53 17 08 10

L'oeil is an organization that helps students find housing in the private sector. Students can consult listings on the site at www.oeil-fr.com, and can contact landlords directly after paying a small subscription fee of EUR 80.

Living in Someone's Home

You will find a complete list of homes, which provide apartment for young people, mix housing and religious housing on the site: www.pariserve.tm.fr/logement/foyer.htm
At CIDJ (Centre d'Information et de Documentation Jeunesse, the center for information and documents for young people)

101 Quai Branly - 75015 Paris (Subway Station: Bir-Hakeim) / Tel: 01 44 49 12 00

You must consult their listing at the center.

Internet sites that list apartment rentals:

www.fusac.fr • www.immostreet.fr • www.pap.fr • www.lodgis.com
www.appartement.org • www.parisloc.com • www.parisattitude.com

Local Newspapers and Magazines: Rental Offerings

Consult the magazine FUSAC, or the American Church, or go to W.H. Smith Bookstore on Rivoli Street. Also don't forget the magazine PAP (Particulier à Particulier), which appears every Thursday morning or consult their site www.pap.fr

Centre de Documentation du Groupe PGSM

25 rue Saint-Ambroise - 75011 Paris (Subway Station: Saint-Ambroise)

Tel: 01 53 36 44 00

The Center has files that list various housing offers that come into the school, primarily from local landlords, and can provide you with information on rooms, studios and apartments available during your stay.

Cité Universitaire Internationale

19 boulevard Jourdan - 75014 Paris (Subway Station: Cité Universitaire)

Admission Department - Tel: 01 44 16 64 48 / Fax: 01 44 16 64 03

This organization offers students, under 30 years old and registered in an undergraduate program, housing possibilities in dormitories and other university facilities, either double or single rooms. The rooms are furnished with a shared bathroom and kitchen. Cité Universitaire has all the necessary services such as a restaurant (average prices are EUR 2.80 per meal and you can buy a book of 10 tickets), washing machines, telephone, and a computer room.

For all this, you must fill out a request either by going directly to the Admissions Department (open Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 7 pm) or sending an e-mail to admissions@ciup.fr, or registering directly on the site: www.admissions.ciup.fr



The capital is flooded with restaurants, bars and bistros: classic, exotic, not so hot spots, popular, stuffy, or happening, and they all provide a delicious blend of cultures and flavors from all over the world. Prices vary from one area to another. So be sure to check the prices usually listed outside of all restaurants. Get ready to hit the streets of Paris to check out what's happening. Open up your eyes ... and your appetite! Check out the various Parisian online guides to stay updated and see what's happening.

Eating

University restaurants are a fixture of student life in France. The prices are low: a complete meal costs just EUR 2.85. Anyone with a valid student ID card can use any of the **450 university restaurants** found throughout France. Some are open nights and on weekends. France's university restaurants are managed by CROUS.



For more information:

- CROUS de Paris

www.crous-paris.fr/

Presentation, prices and description of each resto U in Paris.

- Ville de Paris

http://www.paris.fr/portail/Education/Portal.lut?page_id=7910

Complete description of restos U in the capital, district by district.

You can also get a good meal in the many cafés and restaurants you'll find in every French city. Prices for a complete meal (appetizer, entrée and dessert) range from EUR 10 to astronomical sums in 3-star “temples of French gastronomy” such as Alain Ducasse, Paul Bocuse, and Bernard Loiseau. Between these two extremes you will find many friendly establishments serving very good food.

If your residence has cooking facilities, you should explore the food stores in your area. You'll find small neighborhood shops, supermarkets, and open-air markets. And no matter where you live in France, you won't be far from a bakery where you can buy baguettes and croissants.

Drinking

Wine is an institution in France. You may be familiar with the grands crûs of Bordeaux, Burgundy, and the Côtes du Rhône, but there are many other wine regions, including the Loire Valley, Alsace, and southern France. Wine is enjoyed among friends, with a good meal, and in moderation. You can order wine in a café, but, as the name implies, cafés specialize in coffee. Some terminology may be in order: in France, a restaurant serves meals, a brasserie meals and hot and cold drinks, and a café mostly drinks.

Managing your money

Major credit cards (such as Visa and MasterCard) are accepted by most merchants for payments in excess of EUR 15. Automated teller machines (cash machines) are readily available in cities. The French make extensive use of checks. But checks drawn on foreign banks are rarely accepted by French merchants. The **Euro** is now the sole currency used for cash transactions in France.

International students may open nonresident bank accounts in Euros or another currency if they have been in France for less than 2 years. They may open a resident account if their stay is longer. Ask your home bank if it is associated with a banking institution in France. The connection may make things easier when you go to open an account in France. Have you prepared a budget? Have you looked into scholarships and grants from the French government?

Getting around

How will I get around in France? France has a comfortable and efficient **rail network** that includes many high-speed lines. It's easy to get from city to city, even when those cities are far apart. A four-hour ride takes you 1,000 km from Marseille, in the far south, to Lille, in the far north. International and domestic air connections from all large French cities reach every spot on the globe.

France's highways and roads are excellent. A dense network of picturesque secondary roads allows you to discover the charm of France's nature reserves and rural areas. You may use your **driver's license** from home to drive in France. The speed limit is 45 to 50 kmh in towns and cities, 90 kmh on departmental roads and national highways, and 130 kmh on the autoroute. Used cars in good condition usually cost more than EUR 3,000, but you will find it easy to rent new cars anywhere you go. Buses provide public transportation in all French cities. Some have tramways as well. The largest cities have underground rail systems.





Staying healthy

All hospitals have an emergency room that is open 24 hours a day. Physicians and pharmacies are on call nights and weekends. The renowned French system of health insurance reimburses a portion of participants' medical expenses in return for a mandatory annual contribution of EUR 196. Student group health plans are available to cover all or part of that portion of your medical bills that is not covered by the basic national system. Premiums for such supplemental coverage start at EUR 110 per year.

The French health-care system is one of the **best in the world**. The level of care in French hospitals is of very high quality, and universal insurance makes care available to everyone. Students, in particular, enjoy ready access to medical services and preventive care. To be eligible for the national student health plan, students must be under 28 and enrolled in a participating institution of higher education. Students 28 and older must obtain private health insurance.

Medical exam

To obtain a **residence permit**, you must, like all non European Union nationals, pass a medical exam in France. This is undertaken by the Office of International Migrations (OMI), a national-public establishment in charge of implementing immigration policies passed by legislation. You will be given an appointment for the medical exam at the time of submitting your papers for a residence permit. You will receive a convocation for the medical exam and directions making it easier for you to get there.

The exam takes places at:

Délégation régionale OMI "Paris Nord"

53 rue Hoche - 93177 Bagnolet / Mail: cspn@omi.social.fr

The day of the medical exam, you will undergo a series of medical tests, in particular, a radiography. You will be issued a medical certificate at the end of the visit. Exceptionally, a supplementary medical exam may be indicated. Keep your medical certificate carefully as it is indispensable for all administrative procedures. It is not necessary to fast beforehand. If you have a medical file, medical prescriptions, or if you wear glasses, you must bring them along with you for the visit.

Once you have your medical results, you must return to the "Préfecture de Police de la Cité" to pick up your visa or "Carte de Séjour". You can also request for it to be sent by the post office.



Remember, if you change address during your stay in France, you must inform the Préfecture and fill out the necessary forms.



Medical insurance

International students outside the European Union

All foreign students from outside the European Union and between 20 and 28 years old staying in France must have medical insurance to cover potential medical costs, hospitalization and repatriation. Attention: in case of accident, the PGSM Group is not responsible.

Beyond the 4 month stay in the exchange program, international students must pay into the **French national social system** (around EUR 196 will cover your medical costs while in Paris). To do this, you must fill out a social security form provided by the administration when you register (upon presentation of your passport and visa). Checks are made payable to the school and all social security costs are entirely the student's responsibility. Exchange students who will be staying for less than 4 months must provide proof that they are covered under an insurance policy in the country of origin.

Students from the European Union

Before coming to France, students from the EU must fill out the Form **E-128** (certification that they benefit from social security in their country of origin) with their national social security office to obtain reimbursement of their medical costs in France. EU students may receive their reimbursement by presenting Form E-128 to the Center for International Relations for the Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie de Paris, 173 rue de Bercy - 75012 Paris / Tel: 01 40 19 55 30.

Remember, the request for renewal must be made in the two months preceding the expiry of your current visa. To renew your student residence permit, you must make an appointment directly on the Préfecture of Police Paris website: http://www.prefecture-police-paris.interieur.gouv.fr/module_rdv/etudiants/etranger01.htm. In the event of problems with the Internet, call at 0 800 95 95 75 (toll free).

More information

Ministère des Affaires étrangères

http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/france_159/entering-france_2045/index.html

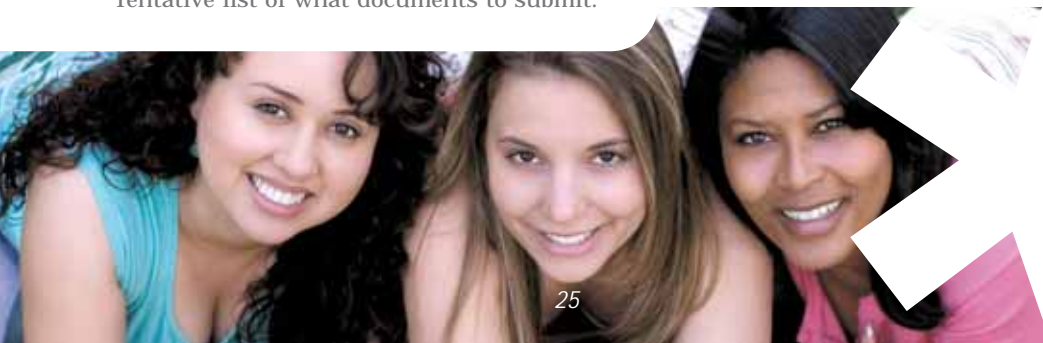
Detailed list of documents to submit with a visa application. The list varies from case to case, based on the duration of your stay and nationality.

CampusFrance / www.edufrance.fr/fr/a-etudier/etudes05-3.htm

Tentative list and description of what documents to submit.

CNOUS / http://www.cnous.fr/_etudier_78.htm

Tentative list of what documents to submit.





Having fun in France

Cultural life in France is intense. No matter what city you live in, you can see a recent film or play. And with your student ID card, you won't pay as much for your ticket. Every city has at least one full-service library where you can borrow books, recordings, videos, and more for a very modest membership fee. Every city has **bookstores** that will happily introduce you to the vibrant contemporary literary scene. You'll also find **museums** endowed with rich collections of art, from prehistory to the present. From the student associations that operate in all French educational institutions you can get inside information on contemporary cultural events.

You came to France to study, but that's no reason not to stay in shape. Most French institutions have **athletic facilities** for their students. Teams and leagues and clubs devoted to the practice of every sport can be found in and around every town. Membership fees are modest and often include insurance against injuries. Track, sailing, diving, golf, riding, martial arts, tennis, football (soccer), mountain climbing, rugby, squash, skiing, basketball, volleyball—the list goes on. If you want to compete, the national university athletics federation organizes games between student teams. Lastly, your fellow students will probably waste no time in asking you to join in some of the many student-led events that are one of the pleasures of student life.

On sale at all the newspaper stands and bookstores: "Pariscope" (EUR 0.40) and "L'Officiel des Spectacles" (EUR 0.39), and weekly magazines that come out every Wednesday and have all the information you need on concerts, films, theater, sports, restaurants and other activities in Paris.

The international press is also available at news stands and bookstores, particularly those near the train stations, such as: USA Today, International Herald Tribune, The Times, The Financial Times, The Wall Street Journal.

Concerts, cinemas, theatres, museums, bars, clubs, festivals...

Music lovers enjoy: Parisian musical life is rich and abounds in concert halls, where you will be able to listen to all types of music. Every evening, you have a choice of more than thirty concerts, and still more the weekend.

Small intimate rooms at the Stade of France, boats on the Seine, jazz clubs and at Olympia, all have an ambiance and music to your liking. Because Paris is the capital, there is hardly a pop or salsa, abstract hip-hop or international rock'n'roll artist, who will come to France without performing on a Parisian stage.



More information



Infoconcert

All concerts and all of the performers are accessible through a search engine.

www.infoconcert.com

Lylo

The guide Lylo, that is "Les Yeux, Les Oreilles", is the Parisian scene's bible. This free guide gives the dates and places of concerts and is available in the concert-bars of the capital. An indispensable bimonthly, it will be your faithful companion throughout your Parisian outings.



Concert houses

Le Zénith / www.le-zenith.com/paris

6,000 places for a selection of international artistes.

Glaz'art / www.glazart.com

400 places, a pleasant ambiance and staff and a selection as varied as well thought out.

L'Élysée Montmartre / www.elyseemontmartre.com

La Cigale / www.lacigale.fr

Le nouveau casino / www.nouveaucasino.net

Le Bataclan / www.le-bataclan.com





Cinemas

To go see a movie, you have an amazing choice: art, neighborhood, cinemas, large commercial cinema halls or thematic screenings. With its 86 cinemas, 372 screens and 30 million spectators each year, Paris holds a privileged place on the French cinematographic scene. Such dynamism has to be savored to the hilt!

- Ville de Paris: http://www.paris.fr/portail/Culture/Portal.lut?page_id=8359
Calendar of outings, cinema, bars and restaurants, shows, etc.
- Cityvox: paris.cityvox.com/fra/paris/accueil.html
Calendar of outings, cinema, bars and restaurants, shows, etc.
- Allociné: www.allocine.fr
Hours, halls, and films playing.

Theatres

About fifty private theatres exist in Paris: the Comédie Française, the Châtelet Theatre, Odéon, Colline, Chaillot, etc. You will have, once more, an endless array of choices, to fill in your Parisian evenings. If you are under 27 years, try your luck and get hold of places around 9, the majority of the Parisian theatres.

- Café-theatre: prices, places, performances, etc...
- Theatres: national theatres, theatres outside Paris, improv, etc...
http://www.paris.fr/portail/Culture/Portal.lut?page_id=589

Museums

The Centre Georges Pompidou, African or Asian collections, arts, classics or impressionists, Rodin, Musée de l'Armée, Cité de la Musique, Institut du Monde Arabe, Maison européenne de la photographie, le Louvre, Palais de la Découverte or Petit Palais: Paris is brimming over with municipal or national museums, permanent collections or exhibitions, each one as unique and diverse as it is outstanding.

- Ville de Paris: www.paris.fr/musees/
All the museums in the capital: events, addresses, collections, maps, useful info, national museums, etc. Links towards museum websites.





Bars and clubs

Between techno night-clubs, current music, and jazz, go out and get high on the atmosphere in town, thanks to the numerous bars and clubs of the capital.

- Office de tourisme de Paris

<http://www.parisinfo.com/sortir-a-paris/paris-la-nuit/>

Addresses to make the most of your Parisian nights: billiards, night-club, cabarets, bars and pub, etc...

<http://www.parisinfo.com/sortir-a-paris/l-affiche-du-mois/>

Monthly selection of Parisian events: exhibitions, music, salons, fairs, markets, performances, sports.

The following is a selection of websites that will give you all the information on night life in Paris as well as all the special events, expositions, and addresses of restaurants and special attractions in the capital.

- www.pariserve.tm.fr: discover Paris, its culture, housing offers, hotels, and shopping
- www.pariscope.fr: information on cinema, expositions, sports, forums and restaurants
- www.paris.org: transportation, museums and expositions
- www.parisinfo.com
- www.sortiraparis.com
- www.parisbouge.com

Practicing your religion in France

France is a secular state with a Roman Catholic tradition. The many Roman and Gothic cathedrals, as well as churches and chapels found in the most out-of-the-way corners of the country, testify to that tradition. Individuals are free to practice the religion of their choice. Discrimination on the basis of religious practice or affiliation is prohibited by law. The major faiths in France are Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, and Judaism. Churches, mosques, and temples coexist peacefully in a spirit of harmony and mutual respect.

French identity card

All EU and non-EU students desiring to study in France for more than three months must obtain a French identity card or “Carte de Séjour” (valid for one year and given by the “Préfecture de Police”) when requested according to the Visa you were delivered. If you can read French please see the web site it is very helpful.

http://www.prefecture-police-paris.interieur.gouv.fr/module_rdv/etudiants/primotranstranger02.htm

The request must be made **as soon as you arrive in France**, or within the 3 months following your entry. A residence permit is obligatory as per French immigration laws. It is valid for one year or less, depending on the duration of your studies, and the date of expiry of your passport. The residence permit will be given in the form of a sticker on your passport, within the limit of validity of the latter. For this, you must go to the “Centre de Réception des Étudiants Étrangers de la Préfecture de Police de Paris”, which is located at 13 rue Miollis - 75015 Paris, (Subway Station: Cambronne), Tel: 01 53 71 51 68, with the following documents:

First time student resident permits

- a copy of your current passport or another photo identity,
- proof that you are accepted and admitted in a private or public school,
- proof that you have obtained housing,
- a copy of your last gas, electric or phone bill,
- your student entry visa (only for non EU Citizens),
- a copy of you social security card or form E 128,
- proof of solvency, showing sufficient resources (a letter from your bank),
- proof of any financial aid, showing the amount you receive,
- three black and white identity photos (not scanned),
- an pre-stamped envelope (EUR 0.55),
- a tax stamp (please confirm with the Préfecture the price).



You must then present all these documents to the “Préfecture de Police”, 9 boulevard du Palais - 75014 Paris (Subway Station: Cité), Tel: 01 53 71 51 68. The police will give you an appointment for your medical examination

For those who live outside Paris, please check the Préfecture de Police of your area:

Seine et Marne (Melun 77) / 01 64 71 77 77

Yvelines (Versailles 78) / 01 39 49 78 00 / www.yvelines.pref.gouv.fr

Essonne (Evry 91) / 01 69 91 91 91 / www.essonne.pref.gouv.fr

Hauts-de-Seine (Nanterre 92) / 01 40 97 20 00 / www.hauts-de-seine.pref.gouv.fr

Seine-Saint-Denis (Bobigny 93) / 01 41 60 60 60 / www.seine-saint-denis.pref.gouv.fr

Val-de-Marne (Créteil 94) / 01 49 56 60 00 / www.val-de-marne.pref.gouv.fr

Val-d'Oise (Cergy-Pontoise 95) / 01 34 25 25 25

Guide to banking in France

For new arrivals: paying for things in France is easy by credit card, but as a resident you'll soon need a French bank account. Here's the basics on how to set up and manage your French bank account. The official French currency is the Euro and the former Franc is no longer legal tender.

While most shops still list prices in both currencies, the French have largely adapted to the Euro with ease other than complaining that everything costs more since the euro changeover. It is still common however to hear sums quoted in Francs, especially for larger sums like the price of a car or of re-plumbing a bathroom. The Euro/Franc conversion rate is **one Euro = 6.55957 French Francs**.

Surviving on credit

On arrival in France, you should have few problems in paying with your “home” credit card if it is one of the major operators like Visa MasterCard or American Express although you may soon tire of paying conversion rates. There are **24-hour** cash dispensers, or teller machines, easily accessible all over France, and in cities and towns there is a choice of several on almost every high street. They are called distributeurs automatiques de billets, and are always situated on the premises of a bank or at large post offices.

While some small shops may refuse credit cards, there are so many places that do accept them that you can survive for quite a while with credit card payment alone. However, if you are an active resident in France, you will very soon need a **French bank account** both to be paid your wages and to gain access to many essential services that require your bank details as a guarantee of payment. Without a local account, you won't be able to rent a home or subscribe to utility services. And having a French cheque book will be a welcome practicality, especially in rural areas.

Opening a French bank account

It is best to choose a major bank with a widespread national network of branches (see below) to take full advantage of whatever needs may arise during your travels. You may also want to consider opening an account with La Poste, which is not technically a bank but the post office. But it offers nearly all the same services and many French people prefer to keep their money in a public institution.

By the way, La Poste's website features helpful financial information in English, including translations for a list of French financial terms. The one thing La Poste can't do for you is accept wire transfers from an overseas bank—only an actual bank can do that. If you don't think you'll need to do that, La Poste does offer comparable services for less than most banks.



To open an account with any bank, you will need to provide:

- personal identification (a residence permit or passport),
- proof of your home address in France (a phone or electricity bill or rental agreement),
- in most cases, some written proof of earnings (pay slip or other) to decide your
- credit limit.



La carte bleue

You will be offered a carte bleue or debit card with your account; you pay an annual fee for these, which can be quite expensive, but will permit you to pay nearly everywhere in Euros. You may be offered an “international” card that you can use back home as well, but these are more expensive. Don't pay extra if you can still use a credit card or debit card from your home account. You will also probably be offered insurance on these cards; this is because you will have to pay to replace them if they are lost or stolen. Most basic French bank accounts deduct all debit-card payments at the end of each month; wherever you use yours, you'll be asked to type in your PIN or code.

Checking accounts

Cheques take an average three working days to clear. When paying by cheque, you may be asked for proof of identity, such as a residence permit or a passport; French driving licenses are sometimes accepted but less often than they used to be. Choosing a bank requires some homework. Some banks are starting to offer modest interest payments on checking accounts, but most do not. Each cheque book contains a page referencing your bank account details, called a relevé d'identité bancaire, or RIB.

You will be asked for a RIB for any ongoing commercial transaction, such as opening a mobile phone account or any kind of utility account. Some banks charge a small service fee for setting up an automatic deduction for the same amount every month, such as paying your rent or mortgage.

If you are engaged in such a contract requiring regular payments—such as utility bills—it is common practice to receive a bill that is paid by returning a signed detachable slip, called a TIP, already made out with your bank details. This doesn't cost extra service fees but reassures the company you're dealing with that they will be paid as they have your banking information.

Some banks now offer electronic access to your account, although online bill payment still has to take off in France. Most banks will, again, charge a small service fee for this. Banking service, or lack thereof, is routinely the subject of much complaining in France; the consumer-advocacy magazine “Que choisir” is a good source of information (in French) on banking services and how they compare.

Major French banks

These banks maintain branches across the country:

- Le Crédit Agricole
- BNP Paribas
- LCL (Le Crédit Lyonnais)
- Société Générale
- La Caisse d'Épargne
- La Poste (Financial services)

Insurance

Make sure that you are properly insured while living in France, where personal insurance is a legal requirement. The French insurance market offers a wide choice of companies and policies to choose from. All the major companies offering insurance, which is called “assurance”, have high street offices and are big enough to offer an umbrella policy for all your needs, as well as just a specific policy.

If you are an employee of a major firm or institution, it is well worth asking the HR department whether there is an agreement with a particular company offering lower than usual tariffs. Insurance is a legal requirement for vehicles (“assurance automobile”), homes (“assurance d’habitation”), for civil liability (“assurance responsabilité civile”) and for young children (“assurance scolaire”).

Home insurance

You are legally required to insure your home, whether you rent or own it and before moving in, against all risks of damage it might cause to a third party. Most policies are comprehensive, insuring you also against theft, and are called “assurances multirisques habitation”. It is strongly advisable to ensure you that you understand the small print of any policy, especially regarding what weather risks are covered for how much.

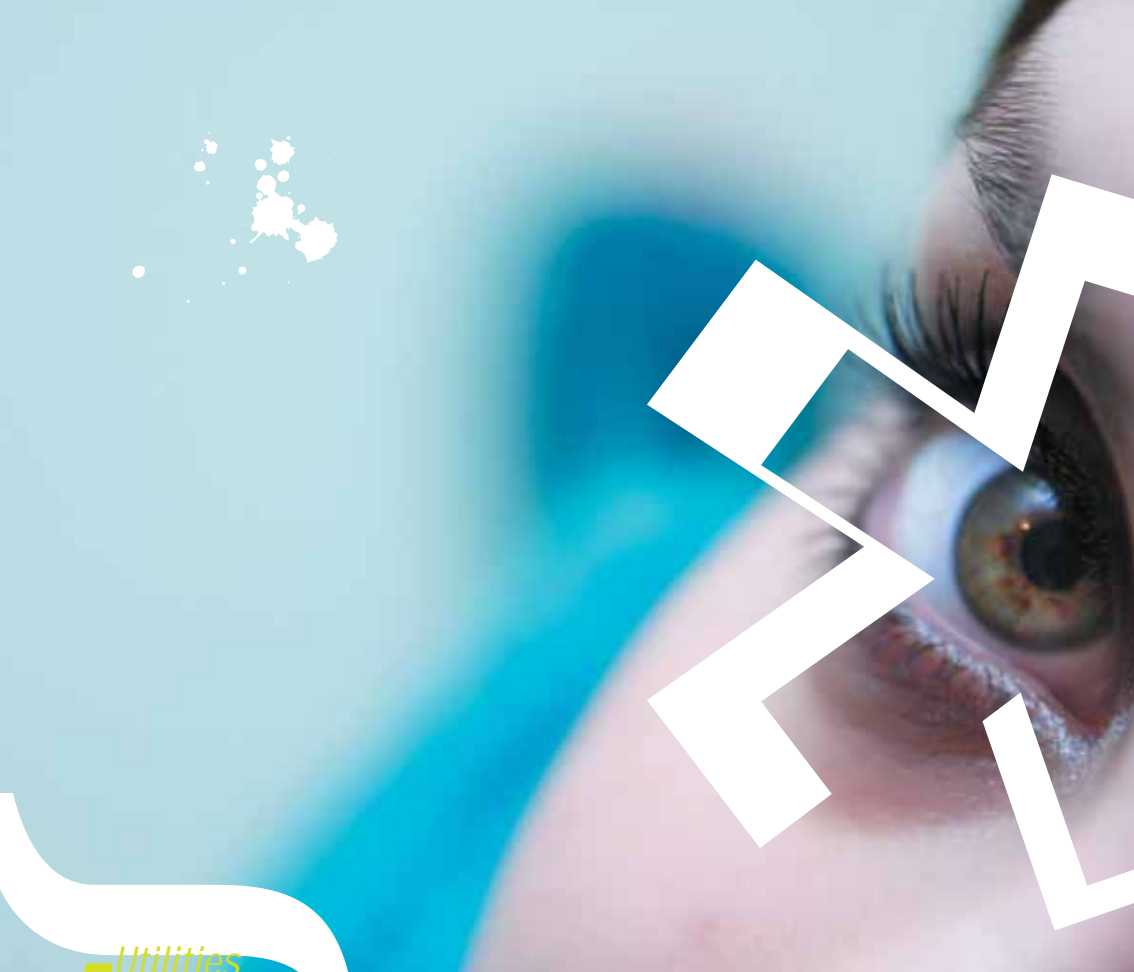
Vehicles

All vehicles in France must be insured, even if they are not in use. When taking out a policy, you will be issued with a certificate testifying to the validity of your insurance, called “un certificat d’assurance”, and which must be fixed clearly visible on your vehicle windscreen. Policies are either third party (“au tiers”) or comprehensive (“tous risques”).

You are also legally required to carry a document proving you are insured, called “une attestation d’assurance”, which is issued by your insurer, whenever you use your vehicle. Your insurer will also issue you with standard form, called “un constat amiable d’accident”, to complete in the event of an accident. It provides space to fill in insurance details, for a written and graphic description of the accident, and it must be completed and signed by both you and the other party involved. It is a carbon copy sheet, and both parties send their copy back to their respective insurer to establish responsibility.

Schooling, civil liability

Under French law you must be covered by an **insurance for civil liability**, and your child must also be specifically insured for this while at school. In most cases civil liability is covered with a comprehensive home policy, but always make absolutely certain of this. There are insurance companies which specialize in insurance for schoolchildren, which costs about EUR 30 per year. Indeed, the majority of pupils have a separate specific insurance policy.



Utilities

The French utilities companies are mostly public, although the country's energy market has begun opening up to private competition for industrial supplies, as a first step before privatization and competition in domestic services. For the moment, however, the only privatized domestic utility service is the **supply of household water**. To ask for any utility service, you will need proof of both your identity passport, residence permit and that you reside at the address concerned. The latter can be your rental agreement or rent receipt.

In most cases, where you are occupying a home vacated by someone else, that person will provide you with a document detailing when services were cut off by the utility company. This will speed up the process of restoring them and provide you with proof of when consumption began. It is also quite common, and more practical, to enter into an agreement with the person vacating your new home not to cut off the supply but rather to agree on a date at which you take over the contract, which will be re-established in your name.

Postal services

France has just one public postal service, called **La Poste**. This entirely state-run organization is generally efficient, although occasionally subject to strikes. There are post offices, called bureaux de poste, in every urban neighborhood and most rural villages, and are easily identified by their blue-on-yellow logo. Stamps for sending letters (up to 20 grams) within France and the EU cost EUR 0,55 for the Rapide service, and EUR 0,45 for slower Economique service.

In most cases, a letter posted before 5pm with a rapide stamp will be delivered to an address in France the next morning. La Poste also offers same-day deliveries, as do the many private courier firms in France, which include all the major operators.

Waste disposal

Rubbish collection is organized by the local authorities in charge of your commune, based at the local town hall, called la mairie. The frequency of the service varies from place to place; in Paris, rubbish collection is daily, but in small towns it is often only three times or less per week. In all cases, rubbish is collected from outside your residence, generally early in the morning. The local authorities provide the regulatory large plastic “wheely” bins free or charge. All apartment buildings have a bin area, where residents deposit their waste. In large buildings it is the caretaker, called gardien or concierge, who looks after the collection. Otherwise, it is for you to ask your local mairie on what days the rubbish collectors pass. Bins are placed in the street the night before. Waste recycling has begun in France, but it is not mandatory and depends on provisions by the local authorities. It is illegal to dispose of dangerous substances, including batteries and motor oil, in domestic bins. Most supermarkets, and every town hall, have used-battery bins. A full list of collection points can be found at the mairie.

In many areas there are **separate collections** of cardboard and paper waste and all other domestic waste, and separate bins are provided. There are bottle banks in most French neighborhoods and on large supermarket car-parks, but it is both legal and common to dispose of bottles in bins. Nearly every mairie also organizes a less frequent collection (often once a month) of large domestic throw-outs, from old chairs to TVs, called les objets encombrants. There are also drive-in rubbish tips (called “une décharge”) somewhere near you, although always outside towns and cities. Unwanted drugs can be disposed of at any chemist shop.



Electricity

The only supplier of domestic electricity in France is the state-run service company called Electricité de France, more commonly known as **EDF**. Personalized services are available whereby you can opt for a cheap rate “window” at specific overnight times. It is also the EDF you must contact if you wish the installment of a more powerful supply than already exists for your home. You can find your local EDF office through the phone book, or via internet at <http://particuliers.edf.fr>. You can also phone the national general enquiries line on 0 810 010 333 (local rate). Supplies are generally re-established within 48 hours.

The French domestic electrical current is 220 volts AC. All modern sockets and plugs are three-pin, although some relatively recent appliances are still two-pin. If you arriving with appliances from the UK or outside the EU, you are likely to need an adaptor and, as in the case of appliances from North America, a transformer.

Water

French water supplies come via one of the dozens of private companies with the public supply contract for your local area. It is responsible for every aspect of the supply. You have no choice between companies. Your water bill is calculated by the number of cubic meters of water you consume, and this is recorded on a sealed counter situated on the property you occupy. You can expect to be given the details of the water company by the person vacating the property you are moving into, but in all cases you can find this out at the local mairie. Rates vary enormously across France, and can sometimes be expensive. On average, expect to pay EUR 3 per cubic meter.

Domestic supplies are for drinkable water, and this is regulated by the national authorities. However, there have been many cases of pollution of water supplies. Mostly for reasons of taste, it is common for French people to choose bottled mineral water for drinking.

Gas

As is the case with electricity, there is only one supplier of gas for homes in France. This is the state-run company called **Gaz de France**, more commonly known as GDF. You can find your local Gaz de France office through the phone book or via internet at www.gazdefrance.com or phone the general enquiries line on 0 810 800 801 (local rate). Supplies are generally re-established within 48 hours.

Telephone

The installation and maintenance of all telephone lines in France is handled by **France Telecom**. To open a line you will need proof of residence and proof of personal identity (a residence permit or passport). The basic line subscription costs EUR 16 per month and to get connected takes about 24 hours.

France Telecom has sales point boutiques in most urban neighborhoods, or can be reached by calling **10 14**. Once you open a line, you will automatically be billed for calls by France Telecom although you can subsequently subscribe to a service from one of several private telephone operators. The phone books are the pages blanches for all numbers and the pages jaunes for trade lists.

Transport

National and inter-regional transport is covered by the state-run railway network, the SNCF, as well as by inter-city flights operated by the Air France group and an ever-decreasing number of small regional airline companies. The major French cities offer at least adequate and often comprehensive public transport as a cheap alternative to the use of vehicles, which many urban authorities are increasingly discouraging.

Paris

The public transport system in and around Paris is probably the best of many city in Europe in terms of geographical spread, speed, upkeep and tariffs. The capital is criss-crossed with publicity-run services by bus, underground (or subway) and overhead rail and trams, which are all grouped under one authority, called the **RATP**. You can buy one-journey tickets or the cheaper travel passes which allow you to use any of the services as often as you please. The pass commonly used by commuters in and around the capital is called the carte orange, which covers transport across an area of up to some 50 kilometers (30 miles) around the capital.

The Paris underground metro train lines serve every small neighborhood in the capital, and run from **5.30 am until 00.30 am** (01.30 am on Fridays and Saturdays). The average frequency of metro trains is about every **five minutes**. The metro lines are designated by number, and the direction of the terminus station. There is also an express commuter train service, called the RER, which links regions outlying Paris with the centre of the capital, where it runs underground.

Tickets for travel within the city limits cost EUR 1,60 each (un ticket) or EUR 11,40 for a set of ten, called un carnet de tickets (2008 prices). One ticket gives you access to either the bus or metro, and for the duration of one uninterrupted journey only, although in the case of the metro you can ride as many lines as necessary to get to your destination. Prices for the carte orange vary according to the geographical zone you choose, but start at EUR 55,10 per month for Paris only and finish at EUR 122,10 per month for the entire Paris-region. There are also weekly and inter-suburban rates.

You can find tickets, passes and information from any metro station, and carnets of tickets are also available at any Tabac (specially licensed tobacconist shop). The RATP has an information line in English on **32 46** and online at www.ratp.fr.



The RER and all overhead rail services to, from and around the capital are operated by the SNCF, in affiliation with the RATP. The SNCF offers information by phone on 0 890 36 10 10 or online at www.sncf.com.

Other French cities

Every French town and city has a public transport service, and regional coach companies operate bus lines in rural areas. Lille, Lyon, Marseille, Rennes and Toulouse all have metro services. Tickets or passes from the local transport service will cover all travel in your town, city or rural region.

Taxis

French taxis are licensed by the local prefecture, which imposes strict rules on road-worthiness, passenger capacity (a maximum of three) and working hours. There is **no two-tier system**, and they all operate in the same manner and to the same tariffs in each region. However, for especially long journeys it is common to ask for a fixed price (un forfait). Taxis in Paris can be hailed in the street, at the numerous taxi ranks found in every district or booked by phone. Two of the largest taxi operating companies in the capital are G7 (Tel: 01 47 39 47 39) and Taxis Bleus (Tel: 01 49 36 10 10).

National rail services

The French railway network is run by a single authority, the state-run SNCF, and is managed as a public service. The network is comprehensive, trains run with the precision of a Swiss watch and tariffs are cheaper per kilometer than most other European countries.

The network includes suburban, regional and national and international lines. The SNCF operates a high speed train (**TGV**) service linking most French regions between themselves and with the capital. The TGV is a speedy (it travels at around 250 kph) and cheaper inter-city transport alternative to the plane. International TGV services also link Paris with London (by Eurostar) and Brussels and Amsterdam (by Thalys). You can buy all types of rail tickets by major credit card and at any SNCF station, or online at www.voyages-sncf.com. Information concerning all services is also available online.

Airports

The biggest carrier is Air France which connects Paris with the major French cities, while an ever-decreasing number of smaller air companies offer provincial inter-city links. Air travel is more expensive than rail and unexpected delays are more frequent. However, air links are quicker for traveling from one end of the country to the other. **Air France** flight reservations and information is on 0 820 820 820 and online at www.airfrance.com. For other companies contact a travel agent or the airport directly. You can also check for departure and arrival times from all companies on Aéroports de Paris website: www.adp.fr



Traveling in and out of Paris, France

To have low travel prices, you should contact the following travel agencies:

- Nouvelles Frontières: 13 avenue de l'Opéra - 75001 Paris / Tel: 0 825 000 825
www.nouvelles-frontieres.fr
- FRAM Voyages: 128 rue de Rivoli - 75001 Paris / Tel: 01 40 26 20 00
www.fram.fr

or surf the following Internet sites: www.lastminute.com • www.bourse-des-vols.com • www.expedia.fr • www.govoyages.com

Airline companies in Paris

Iberia: 1 rue Scribe - 75009 Paris / Tel: 0 802 075 075

Air France: 14 avenue de l'Opéra - 75001 Paris / Tel: 0 820 820 820

KLM: 16 rue Chauveau Lagarde - 75008 Paris / Tel: 0 810 556 556

Luftansa: 106 boulevard Haussmann - 75001 Paris / Tel: 0 802 02 00 30

British Airways: 13 boulevard de la Madeleine - 75001 Paris / Tel: 0 802 802 902

American Airlines: 109 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré - 75008 Paris /
Tel: 0 810 872 872

United Airlines: 55 boulevard Raspail - 92532 Levallois / Tel: 0 810 72 72 72

Alitalia: 69 boulevard Haussmann - 75008 Paris / Tel: 01 44 94 44 00

Aeromexico: 1 boulevard de la Madeleine - 75001 Paris / Tel: 0 800 42 30 91



Buses in Europe

With prices 30% to 50% less expensive than the train and plane, buses are often the cheapest way to travel. Eurolines is the number one European coach line with regular departures to over 1,500 European cities in over 26 countries. The company serves over 87 cities in France, and the coaches are equipped with air conditioning, television and toilets. The "Pass Eurolines" is ideal for those who wish to travel all over Europe and its capitals. For EUR 225, you can travel anywhere you like and as often as you like for 30 days.

For information, contact: Eurolines - www.eurolines.fr / Tel: 0 892 89 90 91

Air travel

To obtain competitive prices on airline tickets, in France or Europe, please contact the major airline companies, travel agencies or other specialized companies. For some examples:

Air France

Tickets at a discount for young travelers with Air France are called "Tempo Jeunes" and are only available just one hour before departure for either one way tickets or round trip tickets with an open departure date. You can change your reservation or obtain reimbursement without costs on flights within Europe. Do you travel a lot during the year? The card "Flying Blue Jeune" is free and can give you miles. Three round trip tickets within a year between Paris and Nice for example will give you a free flight. For information: 0 820 820 820 / www.airfrance.fr

Budget Airlines

A simple reservation number is enough to reserve a flight. The earlier you reserve, the cheaper your ticket will be. Prices are generally half the normal price as on other carriers, provided you are flexible on your departure and return dates.



For information:

- Ryan Air - www.ryanair.com
- Easy Jet - www.easyjet.com / Tel: 0 825 08 25 08
- Vueling - www.vueling.fr
- Sky Europe - www.skyeurope.com

The train

Paris has **six railroad stations**: Gare Saint-Lazare (Subway Station: Saint-Lazare), Gare Montparnasse (Subway Station: Montparnasse), Gare du Nord (Subway Station: Gare du Nord), Gare de Lyon (Subway Station: Gare de Lyon), Gare de l'Est (Subway Station: Gare de l'Est) and Gare d'Austerlitz (Subway Station: Gare d'Austerlitz).

For information on the train (destinations, timetables, reservations), consult the site www.voyages-sncf.fr. You can also buy or reserve your tickets at the train station.

The TGV (high speed train) allows you to discover all the major cities in France in record time:

Paris / Annecy - 3:40	Paris / Deauville - 1:43	Paris / Poitiers - 2:23
Paris / Avignon - 3:30	Paris / Lyon - 2:04	Paris / Rennes - 2:03
Paris / Bordeaux - 2:55	Paris / Marseille - 3:00	Paris / Strasbourg - 3:50
Paris / Chamonix - 5:04	Paris / Nantes - 1:59	Paris / Tours - 1:02

With a pass for those between 12-25 years old, you can benefit from a 50% reduction on all prices, depending upon availability, class (first or second class) and travel period. The cost of the pass for one year is 49 euros. The SNCF also has **special prices** called "tarifs découvertes" to promote tourism in France and to attract travelers under the age of 25 and couples. Prices at discounts of 20% to 50% are possible if you reserve your tickets in advance (called Ticket Prem's). For more information, go to the train station or consult Internet.



Weekend visits

Here is a non exhaustive list of some interesting sites, not far from Paris, which you can visit on a weekend:

- The Cathedral at Chartres
- Claude Monet's house at Giverny
- The City of Rouen and its cathedral (departure from the Saint-Lazare train station)
- The Château Versailles (take the RER C)
- The Château Vaux-Le-Vicomte (take the RER D)
- The Château Saint-Germain en Laye (take the RER A)
- The Château Fontainebleau and its forest (take the RER B)
- The Port of Honfleur, in Normandy (departure from the Saint-Lazare train station)
- Mount Saint-Michel (departure from the Montparnasse train station)
- The castles of the Loire (departure from the Montparnasse train station)



Attraction Parks

Euro Disney (take the RER A - Marne La Vallée) - www.disneylandparis.com
Parc Astérix - www.parcasterix.fr / Tel: 0 826 30 10 40

Shopping

France has a lively, competitive retail trade which offers a vast choice of goods, a wide range of specialist stores and a trolley-load of hypermarket chains. France still has a lively high street shopping scene in most towns and cities and, naturally enough, this includes a vast number of food stores. Every city and large town hold street markets on specific days, usually two or three times a week. Most large villages and every neighborhood in big towns and cities have one or more chemist's stores. Every city has several purpose-built shopping centers, or malls, and France is dotted with hypermarkets, usually in out of town locations, where just about anything can be found from every kind of food to car tires and gardening equipment.

High street opening hours vary. Most local shops not selling food are closed on Sundays and Mondays, and the rest of the time are open from about **10 am until 1 pm**, and from **3.30 pm until 7.30 pm**. Food stores, from bakers to greengrocers, are closed from Sunday midday through Monday, and the rest of the time open from about 8.30 am through to 1.30 pm and from 4 pm through to 8 pm. Bakers open earlier, usually at about 7.30 am. In the cities, some local neighborhood grocers are open until 11 pm.

Chemists are usually open from Monday to Saturday, and on Sundays there is always a nearby chemist available to open for emergencies and urgent prescriptions, details of which are pinned up at your local store. Town and city department stores, supermarkets and city shops not selling food are usually open uninterrupted from 9.30 am until 7.30 pm, from Monday to Saturday. Hypermarkets are open Monday to Saturday, usually from 8.30 am until 8.30 pm in the provinces, and from 8.30 am to 9.30 pm or even 10 pm in the Paris region and some big French cities. Very few big stores are open on Sundays, with the exception of some selling furniture and DIY goods.

Embassies

Australia

4 rue Jean Rey - 75015 Paris
01 40 59 33 00 / www.austgov.fr

Austria

6 rue Faber - 75007 Paris
01 45 55 95 66 / www.bmaa.gov.at

Belgium

9 rue de Tilsitt - 75017 Paris
01 44 09 39 39 / www.diplobel.org/france

Brazil

34 cours Albert 1^{er} - 75008 Paris
01 45 61 63 00 / www.bresil.org

Canada

35 avenue Montaigne - 75008 Paris
01 44 43 29 00 / www.amb-canada.fr

China

11 avenue George V - 75008 Paris
01 47 23 34 45 / www.amb-chine.fr

Denmark

77 avenue Marceau - 75116 Paris
01 44 31 21 21 / www.amb-danemark.fr

Finland

2 rue Faber - 75007 Paris
01 44 18 28 29

Germany

13-15 avenue Franklin-Roosevelt - 75008 Paris
01 53 83 45 00 / www.amb-allemande.fr

Greece

17 rue Auguste-Vacquerie - 75116 Paris
01 47 23 72 28

India

15 rue Alfred Dehodencq - 75016 Paris
01 40 50 70 70 / www.amb-inde.fr

Ireland (Republic of)

4 rue Rude - 75116 Paris
01 45 00 20 87

Israel

3 rue Rabelais - 75008 Paris
01 40 76 55 00 / www.amb-israel.fr

Italy

51 rue de Varenne - 75007 Paris
01 49 54 03 00 / www.amb-italie.fr

Japan

7 avenue Hoche - 75008 Paris
01 48 88 62 00 / www.fr.emb-japan.go.jp

Mexico

9 rue de Longchamp - 75116 Paris
01 53 70 27 70 / www.sre.gob.mx/francia

Netherlands

7 rue Eblé - 75007 Paris
01 40 62 33 00 / www.amb-pays-bas.fr

New Zealand

7 ter rue Léonard de Vinci - 75116 Paris
01 45 01 43 10 / www.ambafrance-nz.org

Norway

28 rue Bayard - 75008 Paris
01 53 67 04 00 / www.amb-norvege.fr

Poland

1 rue de Talleyrand - 75007 Paris
01 43 17 34 05 / www.paris.polemb.net

Portugal

3 rue de Noisiel - 75116 Paris
01 47 27 35 29 / www.embaixada-portugal-fr.org

Russia (Federation of)

40-50 boulevard Lannes - 75116 Paris
01 45 04 05 50 / www.france.mid.ru

Singapore

12 square avenue Foch - 75116 Paris
01 45 00 33 61

South Africa

59 quai d'Orsay - 75007 Paris
01 53 59 23 23 / www.afriquesud.net

Spain

22 avenue Marceau - 75008 Paris
01 44 43 18 00 / www.amb-espagne.fr

Sweden

17 rue Barbet-de-Jouy - 75007 Paris
01 44 18 88 00 / www.amb-suede.fr

Switzerland

142 rue de Grenelle - 75007 Paris
01 49 55 67 00 / www.amb-suisse.fr

Turkey

16 avenue de Lamballe - 75116 Paris
01 45 24 52 24

United Kingdom

35 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré - 75008 Paris
01 44 51 31 00 / www.amb-grande-bretagne.fr

United States of America

2 avenue Gabriel - 75008 Paris
01 43 12 22 22 / <http://france.usembassy.gov>



Holidays

All Saints Day November 1 / Toussaint
Armistice 1918 November 11 / Armistice
Christmas Day December 25 / Noël
New Year's Day January 1 / Jour de l'An
Easter mid April (Monday) / Pâques

Labor Day May 1 / Fête du travail
Ascension mid May (Thursday) / Ascension
Victory 1945 May 8 / Victoire
National Day July 14 / Fête Nationale
Assumption August 15 / Assomption

Customs

 **The French have some very formal rules about manners and etiquette. Avoid embarrassment with this guide to essential situations.**

Meeting people

The French shake hands almost whenever they meet, and always when meeting someone for the first time or for business. Arriving at work, it is quite common to greet colleagues with a handshake, and to shake hands again when leaving. Greeting anyone familiar (like a favorite restaurant waiter or a next-door neighbor) is also usually begun with a crisp handshake. When colleagues know each other well, and in situations between friends, women will often greet each other, and male colleagues or friends, with a **kiss on the cheek**. Beware: don't take the first step if you are uncertain, but be ready to embrace!

In a formal situation, the French say “Bonjour monsieur” or “Bonjour madame”, otherwise it is the straight “Bonjour”. The less formal “Salut !”, used for hello and goodbye, is strictly for people who know each other well. The choice of “vous” and “tu” to say you in French is confusing, and sometimes very subtle. But a simple rule is that the more intimate tu is only employed amongst family or friends. It is common for work colleagues to say “tu”, but wait until someone else does it first.

Socializing

A common way of getting to know someone is to have a drink together. But the French are not into bar binges, and an aperitif is usually sipped and stops at two. Wine accompanies dinner and never replaces it, and a glass is filled to three-quarters, never to the brim. Dinner guests are expected to bring a gift, however modest, and this is usually a bottle of wine, flowers, or a pre-agreed desert or cheese dish. The French keep their arms above the table, not in their lap.

Essential formalities

While people in France can sometimes appear to behave impolitely, the use of polite form in language is sacrosanct. When addressing a stranger, always add Monsieur or Madame, as in Excusez-moi, madame if asking directions.

A typical gesture of politeness, which becomes the opposite if you don't apply it, is to let another person pass through a door first, and a man always gives way in to a woman. If someone gives way to you, it is common to thank them or say pardon. Asking pardon is often a devalued term, and can be used in restrained anger, as when you move someone out of your way. The French may be proud of being republicans, but they still love titles! All sorts of people, and especially politicians, expect their position to be recognized. When addressing the local mayor, it is usual to say Monsieur (or Madame) le maire. A policeman is Monsieur l'agent.

When writing any formal letter, even to the phone company, it is usual to end it, before signing, with a declaration of respect, a longer version of "Yours sincerely". A common phrase which can be used in most situations is: "Veuillez accepter, Madame (or Monsieur), mes salutations distinguées".

Useful numbers

Police | 17

Fire Brigade | 18

Medical Emergency and Ambulance | 15

From a mobile phone | 112

Time | 36 99

Emergency Doctor (SOS Médecins de Paris) | 36 24

Dental Emergencies (SOS Dentistes) | 01 43 37 51 00

Anti-Poison Center | 01 40 05 48 48

Saint-Antoine Hospital | 01 49 28 20 00

Electrical and Gas Emergency | 08 10 01 03 33

Tourism Office | 08 92 68 30 00

Weights and measures

Women's clothing

US	UK	FR
6	8	36
8	10	38
10	12	40
12	14	42
14	16	44
16	18	46
18	20	48
20	22	50

Men's shirts

US	UK	FR
14 ^{1/2}	14 ^{1/2}	37
15	15	38
15 ^{1/2}	15 ^{1/2}	39
16	16	41
16 ^{1/2}	16 ^{1/2}	42
17	17	43
17 ^{1/2}	17 ^{1/2}	44

Men's clothing

US	UK	FR
36	36	46
38	36	48
40	36	50
42	36	52
44	36	54

Women's shoes

US	UK	FR
5 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	36,5
6	4	37
6 ^{1/2}	4 ^{1/2}	37,5
7	5	38
7 ^{1/2}	5 ^{1/2}	38,5
8	6	39

Men's shoes

US	UK	FR
8	7 ^{1/2}	40
8 ^{1/2}	8	42
9	8 ^{1/2}	43
9 ^{1/2}	9	44
10	9 ^{1/2}	45

Men's sweaters

US	UK	FR
S	34	44
M	36-38	46-48
L	40	50
XL	42-44	52-54

Linear measures

1 centimetre	0.39 inch
2.54 centimetres	1 inch
30.05 centimetres	1 foot
91.4 centimetres	1 yard
1 meter	39.37 inches
1 kilometer (1000 m)	0.62137 miles
1.609344 kilometers	1 mile

Oven temperatures

Oven	C	F	Gas mark
Very cool	130	260	0.5-1
Cool	150	300	2
Warm	170	325	3
Moderate	180	350	5
Fairly hot	200	380	5-6
Hot	220+	460	7-8

Dry measures

g	oz
30	1
115	4
170	6
225	8
450	16 (1lb)

Liquid measures

ml	fl oz
30	1
60	2
150	5
240	8
300	10
450	15
900	32
1000	34

Thermometer

C	F
25	77
23	73
20	68
18	64
15	59
13	55
10	50
8	46
5	41
3	37
0	32
-5	23
-10	14
-15	5

Body temperature

C	F
36	96.8
36.5	97.7
37	98.6
37.5	99.5
38	100.4
38.5	101.3
39	102.2
39.5	103.1
40	104
40.5	104.9
41	105.8



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01 53 36 44 00 - www.pgsm.fr