

Lesson 3: De

I. Silent Letters

In French, not all letters of a word are pronounced. **Often in time, the final letter of a word is silent.** As we have seen in the past lessons, “grands” is pronounced as [ga-lond], not [ga-londs]. In this section, we will go over some basic rules of silent letters.

CaReFuL

If a word ends with one of the letters highlighted (C, R, F, or L), then the final letter of a French word is **usually** pronounced. Words end with any other letter **usually have silent sound.**

La fac: The university [la fa-k]

Notice the final letter “c” is pronounced as it follows the CaReFuL rule.

Paris: Paris [pa-heh-li]

Notice the final letter “s” is not pronounced, as it is of the “silent letters”.



Source: <https://images.google.com/>

II. Applications of De

In lesson 2, we have seen an example with de: “Je suis de Portland”, which translates to I am from Portland. There are also other usages and written forms of “de”, which we will further explore in this section.

1.) Possession

C'est un stylo **de** Carlos. [set un steelo duh Carlos]
This is Carlos's pen.

2.) Origin

Vous êtes **de** Baltimore. [voo zet duh Baltimore]
You are from Baltimore.

3.) Description

Elle a beaucoup d'argent. [L ah boo-coop dar-john]
She has a lot of money.

III. De+ Le/La/Les

In French, nouns are feminine, masculine, or plural. Le/la/les are definite articles, where they emphasize the specific category that a noun follows. **What happens if de is combined with definite articles?**

De+ Le => Du

Je suis **de le** Canada. => Je suis **du** Canada. [je swee du Canada]
I am from Canada.

De+ La => De La

Jean est le frère de l'actrice. [John aye luh feh-lair duh lac-trice]
Jean is the brother of the actress.

De+ Les => Des [They]

IV. Q&A on De

1.) Why is it “l'actrice” instead of “la actrice”?

In French, when le or la is followed by nouns that start with a vowel, le/la is changed to l'. La actrice becomes l'actrice; similarly, le homme is changed to l'homme because **h is sometimes considered as a vowel in French.**

2.) Why is it “beaucoup d'argent” instead of “beaucoup de argent”?

The reason is similar to the answer to number one. If de is followed by a noun that begins with a vowel, then de is changed to d'argent. In addition, **de is always used followed by adverbs of quantity (beaucoup de/ un peu de/ assez de)**

3.) What is the difference between la/le/les?

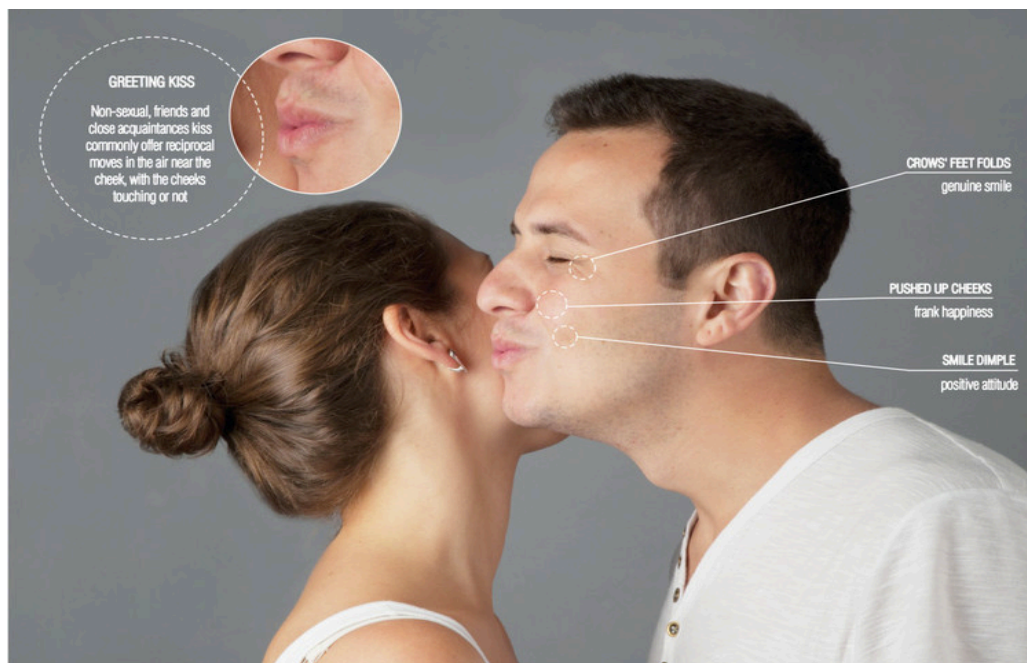
While they are all definite articles in French, **le** is used with masculine nouns, **la** is used with feminine nouns, and **les** is used with any plural nouns.

V. Faire la Bise

You have probably seen French people kissing each other on the cheeks before, whether or not it's in real life or through films. This special form of greeting is called "faire la bise", which translates to "to give a kiss" in English. Whether or not to "faire la bise" depends on the relationship, gender, and age of the two people involved.

Here are some interesting facts about faire la bise:

- 1.) It is common to use it with people you have already met and when you meet close friends-of-friends for the first time. It is less common professionally and with unrelated strangers: If you walk into a bank for a first meeting with an accountant, you would give them a handshake.
- 2.) Between men, la bise is far less common. Family and very close friends do it, as do most teenagers. Adult acquaintances, new friends, tennis partners- probably not.
- 3.) If faire la bise is not used in greeting, handshakes are always replaced.



Information source: <http://blog.francedc.org/>

Image source: Source: <https://images.google.com/>