

Visiting and renting your first apartment

French A1 (beginner) · Lesson

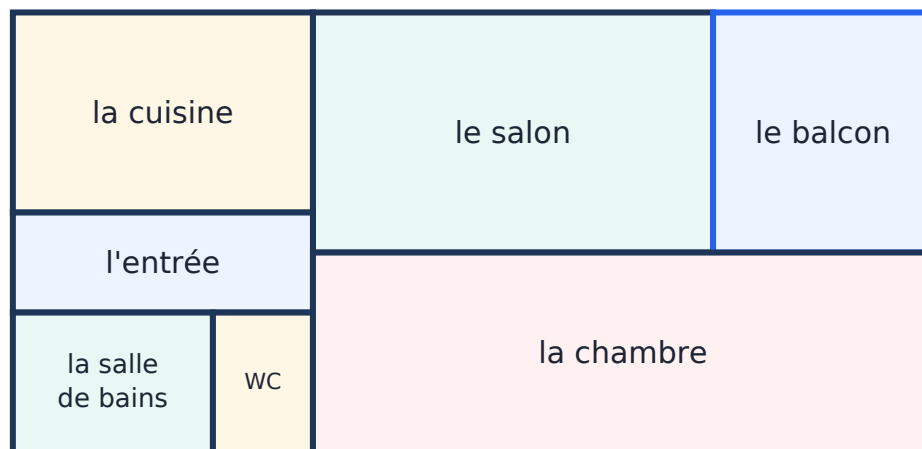
Quick answer: To describe a home in French, name the room (la cuisine, le salon, la chambre), say what is in it with il y a, and add an adjective that agrees with the noun: un petit balcon, une cuisine claire. In rental ads, codes such as F3 and 52 m² give the size.

Level: French A1 (CEFR beginner) · **Standards:** CEFR A1, Spoken production

How do you name the rooms of a home in French?

Every room has a fixed gender, so learn each noun together with its article. The gender decides how the adjective ends later on.

French	English
la cuisine	kitchen
le salon	living room
la chambre	bedroom
la salle de bains	bathroom
les toilettes (f. pl.)	toilet
l'entrée (f.)	entrance hall
le balcon, la cave	balcony, basement storage room



A small apartment with its rooms labeled in French.

Watch out

La chambre means bedroom, never "chamber". For a room in the general sense, French says une pièce. A bathroom rarely contains the toilet: les toilettes is usually a separate little room.

How do you say what is in a room?

Rule: il y a

Il y a means "there is" and "there are". It never changes. The negative is il n'y a pas de + noun, with no article. For a question, add est-ce qu' in front.

Examples

- Dans le salon, il y a un canapé gris. — In the living room there is a gray sofa.
- Il y a deux chambres et un petit balcon. — There are two bedrooms and a small balcony.
- Il n'y a pas de lave-vaisselle. — There is no dishwasher.
- Est-ce qu'il y a un ascenseur ? — Is there an elevator?

How do grand, petit and clair change?

An adjective agrees with its noun. Add **-e** for the feminine and **-s** for the plural. Grand and petit usually go before the noun; clair (bright) goes after it.

Masculine	Feminine	Masc. plural	Fem. plural
grand	grand e	grand s	grand es
petit	petit e	petit s	petit es
clair	clair e	clair s	clair es

Un grand salon, une petite cuisine, des chambres claires. The opposite of clair is sombre (dark).

How do you read a rental ad?

Ads use short codes to save space. The mock-up below shows the ones you will meet most often.

Location - Nantes centreT3 - 58 m² - 2e étage**Loyer : 780 € / mois CC**

Cuisine équipée - balcon - cave

Non meublé - libre le 1er mars

A typical ad: size, rent, features and move-in date.

- F3 / T3: three main rooms (living room + two bedrooms).
- le loyer: the rent; CC = charges comprises.
- meublé furnished; équipée fitted with appliances.

Culture

French surfaces are given in square meters and the rent is monthly. A one-room flat is a studio; the kitchen and bathroom are not counted in F3.

Zoé's tip

Before a visit, write three questions on your phone: Il y a un ascenseur ?, C'est meublé ?, Le loyer, c'est combien ? Short questions with rising intonation are perfectly polite.

Key points to remember

- Il y a means both "there is" and "there are" and never changes.
- After a negative, il n'y a pas de replaces un, une and des.
- Adjectives agree in gender and number: grand, grande, grands, grandes.
- In a rental ad, F3 or T3 means three main rooms: a living room and two bedrooms.
- Charges comprises (CC) means utilities are included in the rent.

Visiting and Renting Your First Apartment: frequently asked questions

How do you say "there is" and "there are" in French?

Use il y a for both. It never changes, so il y a un lit and il y a deux lits use the same two words.

What does F3 or T3 mean in a rental ad?

It means three main rooms, usually a living room and two bedrooms. The kitchen, bathroom and

hall are not counted.

Why is it une grande cuisine but un grand salon?

Adjectives agree with the noun. Cuisine is feminine, so grand becomes grande. Salon is masculine, so the adjective stays grand.

How do you say that something does not exist in a room?

Use il n'y a pas de followed by the noun, for example il n'y a pas de balcon. The article un or une disappears.

What does charges comprises mean?

It means that costs such as water or building maintenance are already in the rent. Ads often abbreviate it to CC.