

Free time plans for the weekend

French A1 (beginner) · Lesson

Quick answer: To talk about free time in French, use aimer, adorer or détester followed by an infinitive, faire with du, de la, de l' or des for sports, and aller plus an infinitive for plans. For example: J'aime nager, Je fais du vélo, Je vais cuisiner demain.

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

How do you say what you like to do?

Put the infinitive straight after aimer. French adds no word between the two verbs, where English adds "to".

Pronoun	Form
j'	aime
tu	aimes
il / elle	aime
nous	aimons
vous	aimez
ils / elles	aiment

Rule

aimer, adorer (love) and détester (hate) are followed directly by an infinitive. For a negative, put ne ... pas around the first verb.

Examples

- J'adore cuisiner. — I love cooking.
- Il déteste conduire. — He hates driving.
- Nous n'aimons pas courir. — We do not like running.

French	English
lire, cuisiner	to read, to cook
danser, nager	to dance, to swim

French	English
voyager, marcher	to travel, to walk
écouter de la musique	to listen to music
regarder des séries	to watch shows
jouer aux cartes	to play cards

SAMEDI	DIMANCHE
9 h faire du yoga	10 h marcher près du lac
14 h jouer au badminton	15 h lire un roman
20 h cuisiner avec Léo	19 h regarder un film

Aya's weekend plans, each with a time and an infinitive.

How do you talk about sports and activities with faire and jouer?

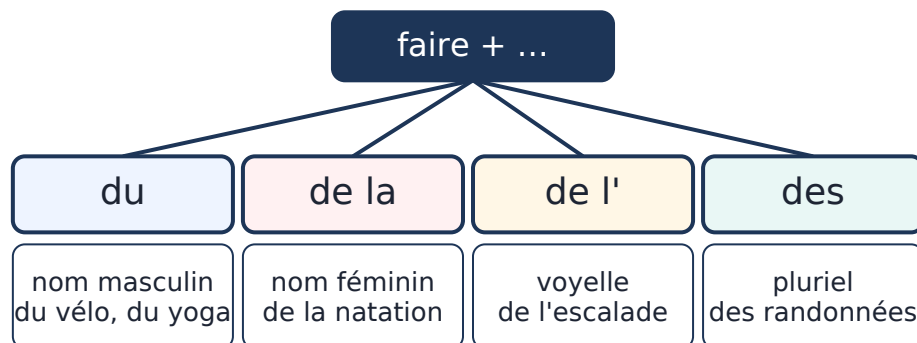
Faire is the verb for activities and sports. The article after it depends on the noun.

Pronoun	Form
je	fais
tu	fais
il / elle	fait
nous	faisons
vous	faites
ils / elles	font

Rule

faire + du (masculine) · de la (feminine) · de l' (vowel) · des (plural). After a negative, all four become de: Je ne fais pas de sport.

Examples: faire du vélo, faire de la natation, faire de l'escalade, faire des randonnées. For ball games and cards, use jouer à: jouer au tennis, jouer aux cartes.



Choosing the article after faire.

Watch out

Do not use jouer for every sport: say Je fais du vélo, never Je joue au vélo. And skip any preposition after aimer: J'aime nager, not J'aime à nager.

How do you say what you are going to do this weekend?

The near future uses aller in the present, then the infinitive: Samedi, nous allons visiter Annecy. — On Saturday we are going to visit Annecy.

Pronoun	Form
je	vais
tu	vas
il / elle	va
nous	allons
vous	allez
ils / elles	vont

French	English
demain	tomorrow
ce week-end	this weekend
samedi matin	Saturday morning
la semaine prochaine	next week
le dimanche	on Sundays (every week)

Notice the difference: Le dimanche, je fais du yoga. is a habit, while Dimanche, je vais faire du yoga. is one plan. To refuse, put ne ... pas around aller: Je ne vais pas travailler.

Zoé's tip

When you hear two verbs in a row, the first one is conjugated and the second stays in the infinitive: je vais nager, nous aimons danser. Say each pair aloud as one block.

Culture note

In many French towns, the Sunday morning market is a weekend ritual, and many shops close on Sunday afternoon. The word le week-end itself is borrowed from English.

Key points to remember

- Aimer is followed directly by an infinitive: J'aime lire, with no à or de.
- Faire takes du, de la, de l' or des; ball games use jouer au / aux.
- Near future: aller in the present + infinitive: Nous allons voyager.
- Faire is irregular: fais, fais, fait, faisons, faites, font.
- In the negative, faire du sport becomes ne pas faire de sport.

Free Time Plans for the Weekend: frequently asked questions

Do you need à or de between aimer and a verb?

No. After aimer, adorer and détester the infinitive comes right away: Elle adore danser. Adding a preposition is a typical English-speaker mistake.

When do you say jouer au and when faire du?

Use jouer au / aux for ball games, board games and cards: jouer au tennis, jouer aux cartes. Use faire du / de la for most other activities: faire du vélo, faire de la natation.

How do you form the near future?

Conjugate aller in the present and add an infinitive: je vais cuisiner, vous allez voyager. The negative surrounds aller: Je ne vais pas cuisiner.

Why is it du vélo but de la natation?

Vélo is masculine, so du is used. Natation is feminine, so de la is used. Before a vowel, de l' replaces both, as in de l'escalade.

How do you say "on Sundays" and "this Sunday"?

Use le dimanche for a weekly habit and plain dimanche for one specific day. Compare Le dimanche, je lis with Dimanche, je vais lire.