

Planning and booking your trip

French A2 (elementary) · Lesson

Quick answer: Use the futur proche (aller + infinitive) for plans that are decided and close, and the futur simple (infinitive + -ai, -as, -a, -ons, -ez, -ont) for promises, timetables and bookings. Both talk about the future, but conversation prefers the futur proche when you plan a trip.

Level: French A2 (CEFR elementary) · **Standards:** CEFR A2, Spoken production

How do you talk about a trip you are planning?

French offers two everyday ways to speak about the future. Choose by situation: is the plan decided and close, or is it a promise, a timetable or something that depends on another moment?



Three ways to place an action in time.

Futur proche: aller + infinitive

Conjugate aller in the present, then add the infinitive of the action. Use it for plans you have already made.

Pronoun	aller	Example	Meaning
je	vais	Je vais réserver une place.	I'm going to book a seat.
tu	vas	Tu vas rater le train !	You're going to miss the train!
il / elle	va	Elle va changer de quai.	She's going to change platforms.
nous	allons	Nous allons dormir en couchette.	We're going to sleep in a berth.
vous	allez	Vous allez arriver tôt.	You'll arrive early.
ils / elles	vont	Ils vont louer une voiture.	They're going to rent a car.

How do you form the futur simple?

Futur simple: infinitive + endings

Keep the whole infinitive and add **-ai, -as, -a, -ons, -ez, -ont**. Verbs in **-re** drop the final e: prendre → je prendrai. Spelling-change verbs keep their change: j'achèterai, j'appellerai.

Pronoun	partir	prendre
je	partirai	prendrai
tu	partiras	prendras
il / elle	partira	prendra
nous	partirons	prendrons
vous	partirez	prendrez
ils / elles	partiront	prendront

Some very common verbs use an irregular stem, but the endings never change:

Infinitive	Stem	je form
aller	ir-	j'irai
être	ser-	je serai
avoir	aur-	j'aurai
faire	fer-	je ferai
venir	viendr-	je viendrai
pouvoir	pourr-	je pourrai
voir	verr-	je verrai

How do you book a train or a flight?

French	English
un aller simple	one-way ticket
un aller-retour	round-trip ticket
réserver une place	to book a seat
le quai, la voie	platform, track
une correspondance	connection (change of train)

French	English
un retard	delay
l'enregistrement (m.)	check-in
la porte d'embarquement	boarding gate

BILLET ALLER SIMPLE		2e classe
Départ	Arrivée	
Nantes 08 h 15	Lyon 12 h 50	
Voiture 4	Place 61	Prix : 54 €

Read a ticket in this order: route, times, car, seat, price.

Useful sentences

- Je voudrais un aller-retour pour Lyon, vendredi matin. — I'd like a round-trip ticket to Lyon, Friday morning.
- Le train partira du quai 7 à 8 h 15. — The train will leave from platform 7 at 8:15.
- Nous allons rater la correspondance ! — We're going to miss the connection!

Common mistake

After quand and dès que, English uses the present but French uses the future: Quand nous arriverons à Lyon, nous déjeunerons. — When we arrive in Lyon, we'll have lunch. Also never combine the two futures: not *je vais prendrai*.

Culture note

French timetables and tickets use the 24-hour clock: 18 h 05 means 6:05 p.m. Say dix-huit heures cinq aloud.

Zoé's tip

Ask two questions before you speak. Decided and soon? Use aller. A promise, a schedule, or after quand? Use the futur simple.

Key points to remember

- Futur proche: present of aller + infinitive, as in je vais réserver.
- Futur simple: infinitive + -ai, -as, -a, -ons, -ez, -ont; -re verbs lose the final e.
- Irregular stems include ir-, ser-, aur-, fer-, viendr-, pourr-.
- After quand and dès que, French uses the future.
- Un aller simple is one way; un aller-retour is a round trip.

Planning and Booking Your Trip: frequently asked questions

When do I use the futur proche and when the futur simple?

Use the futur proche for a plan already decided that will happen soon. Use the futur simple for promises, schedules, formal announcements and after quand or dès que.

How do I form the futur simple of regular verbs?

Take the full infinitive and add -ai, -as, -a, -ons, -ez, -ont. Verbs ending in -re drop the final e, so prendre becomes je prendrai.

How do I ask for a round-trip ticket?

Say Je voudrais un aller-retour pour Lyon, s'il vous plaît. For a one-way ticket, say un aller simple.

Can I use the present tense for a future plan?

Yes. With a time expression, French often uses the present: Je pars demain. It sounds natural and is very common in speech.

Why does French use the future after quand?

If the action in the quand clause has not happened yet, French puts it in the future. English uses the present there, so this is a classic trap.