

Planning a student year in France

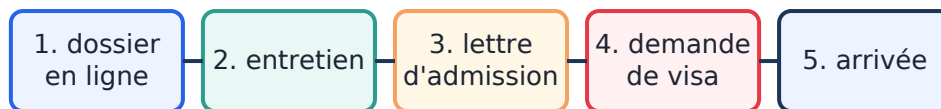
French B1 (intermediate) · Lesson

Quick answer: To study in France, create an online application with the admissions agency, pass an interview, receive an admission letter, then apply for a long-stay student visa. Plan your housing and budget early, and talk about it with the simple future and si + present: Si j'obtiens mon visa, je partirai en septembre.

Level: French B1 (CEFR intermediate) · **Standards:** CEFR B1, Reading

How do you apply to study in France?

Many international students start with an online application to the national agency that handles admissions abroad, usually called Campus France. You create an account, upload your diplomas and a letter of motivation, then wait for an interview and, if all goes well, an admission letter.



Chaque étape ouvre la suivante.

From application to arrival

With the admission letter you apply for a visa. Most students receive a long-stay visa that acts as a residence permit, called un visa long séjour valant titre de séjour. After you arrive, you must confirm it online within the legal deadline. You also pay a student life fee, la CVEC, of about 100 €.

Where do students live, and how much do they spend?

Students can apply for a room in a university residence, une résidence universitaire, or rent privately. A landlord usually asks for une caution (a deposit) and sometimes for a guarantor, un garant. Housing aid from the family allowance office, l'APL, may be available to students who rent.

Loyer	380 €
Repas	210 €
Loisirs	60 €
Transport	30 €
Assurance	25 €
Téléphone	15 €

Un budget mensuel de 720 € en tout

Always count rent, food, transport, insurance and phone, then compare the total with your income: une bourse, family help or a part-time job.

How do you talk about plans with the simple future?

To describe what will happen in your study plan, use the simple future. For most verbs, add -ai, -as, -a, -ons, -ez, -ont to the infinitive; drop the final -e of -re verbs.

Subject	déposer	finir	prendre
je / j'	déposerai	finirai	prendrai
tu	déposeras	finiras	prendras
il / elle	déposera	finira	prendra
nous	déposerons	finirons	prendrons
vous	déposerez	finirez	prendrez
ils / elles	déposeront	finiront	prendront

Infinitive	Future stem	Example
aller	ir-	J'irai à Lyon.
avoir	aur-	Elle aura une bourse.
être	ser-	Nous serons prêts.
faire	fer-	Tu feras ton dossier.
pouvoir	pourr-	Je pourrai travailler.
venir	viendr-	Ils viendront en août.
envoyer	enverr-	J'enverrai mes notes.

Rule: si + present, future

For a real possibility, use *si* + present in the condition and the future in the result: *Si j'obtiens mon visa, je partirai en septembre.* — If I get my visa, I'll leave in September.

Common mistake

Never put the future after *si*: say *Si j'ai une bourse*, not *Si j'aurai*. But French uses the future after *quand*, unlike English: *Quand j'arriverai à Nantes, je chercherai un logement.* — When I arrive in Nantes, I'll look for housing.

Culture note

Many French universities and cities offer reception days for international students, where you can open a bank account, get advice on housing and meet other newcomers.

Zoé's tip

Write your plan as a list of future sentences, one per month. *En septembre, je serai à Lyon* is easier to say aloud when you have rehearsed it!

Key points to remember

- The steps are application, interview, admission letter, visa, arrival and validation.
- A deposit is *une caution*; a scholarship is *une bourse*.
- Simple future: infinitive + *-ai, -as, -a, -ons, -ez, -ont*.
- Irregular stems include *ir-, aur-, ser-, fer-, pourr-, viendr-*.
- After *si* use the present; after *quand* use the future.

Planning a student year in France: frequently asked questions

How do I apply to a French university from abroad?

In many countries you start with the national admissions agency's online platform, where you submit your file and attend an interview. After admission, you apply for the visa. Rules vary by country, so check the French embassy page for yours.

What is a student visa called in France?

Most students get *un visa long séjour valant titre de séjour*, often shortened to *VLS-TS*. It serves as both visa and residence permit once you validate it online after arriving, within the deadline shown on the document.

How do I say I will rent a room in French?

Say Je louerai une chambre. The future of louer is formed from the infinitive: je louerai, tu loueras, nous louerons. If it depends on something, use Si je trouve une résidence, je louerai une chambre là-bas.

Can I use the future after si?

No. After si meaning “if”, French uses the present or the imparfait. Say Si j'ai le temps, je viendrai, never Si j'aurai. The future appears in the other half of the sentence.

What does une caution mean for a rental?

It has two meanings: the deposit the landlord keeps as security, and the guarantee a person or service provides. Context decides: Je verse une caution de 400 € is the deposit, J'ai une caution may mean a guarantor.