

Dates, seasons and the weather report

French 1 (high school) · Lesson

Quick answer: In French, days and months are written in lowercase: lundi, mardi, janvier, février. Give the date with le + number + month (le 12 mars) and use le premier for the 1st. Describe the weather with Quel temps fait-il ? and Il fait chaud, Il pleut, Il neige. Seasons use au printemps and en été, en automne, en hiver.

Level: French 1 (high school, ACTFL Novice) · **Standards:** ACTFL Novice Mid, WL 1.1 Interpersonal, WL 1.2 Interpretive, WL 1.3 Presentational

How do you say the days and months in French?

The seven days of the week are lundi, mardi, mercredi, jeudi, vendredi, samedi, dimanche. The week starts on Monday on French calendars. The twelve months are janvier, février, mars, avril, mai, juin, juillet, août, septembre, octobre, novembre, décembre.

Common mistake

English capitalizes Monday and March, but French does not. Write lundi and mars with a lowercase first letter, even at the middle of a sentence. Also, le lundi means every Monday, while lundi alone means this Monday: Le samedi, je joue au foot. Samedi, je vais à Lyon.

mars						
lun	mar	mer	jeu	ven	sam	dim
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

The circled day is mercredi 12 mars: weekday, number, month, with no capital letters.

How do you give the date?

Rule: le + number + month

Ask Quelle est la date ? or Quel jour sommes-nous ? Answer with Nous sommes le or C'est le

plus the day number and the month. Use a cardinal number, except for the first day of the month, which is le premier.

Examples

- Nous sommes le **douze** mars. — It is March 12th.
- Mon anniversaire est le **premier** novembre. — My birthday is November 1st.
- La Fête nationale est le quatorze juillet. — Bastille Day is July 14th.
- Aujourd'hui, c'est jeudi. — Today is Thursday.

How do you describe the weather and the seasons?

Ask Quel temps fait-il ? and answer with one of these patterns.

Pattern	Examples
Il fait + adjective	Il fait beau. Il fait chaud. Il fait froid. Il fait mauvais.
Il fait + number + degrés	Il fait vingt-deux degrés. Il fait moins cinq.
Il + verb	Il pleut. Il neige.
Il y a + noun	Il y a du vent. Il y a des nuages. Il y a un orage.



Il fait beau.



Il pleut.



Il neige.



Il y a du vent.

Four weather sentences you will use every day.

Rule: seasons

le printemps takes **au** printemps. The other three take **en**: en été, en automne, en hiver. Months also take en: en mai.

Culture note

France and Québec use Celsius. In a Montréal winter you may hear Il fait moins quinze, which is about 5 °F. The Fête nationale of France is on the 14th of July, and Québec celebrates its own Fête nationale on the 24th of June.

Zoé's tip

Say il fait for what the weather is like, and j'ai chaud for how you feel. Never say je suis chaud for being warm.

Key points to remember

- Days and months are not capitalized: lundi, mars, décembre.
- Dates are day first: le 14 juillet; only the 1st is ordinal, le premier mai.
- Le lundi means every Monday; lundi alone means this coming Monday.
- Quel temps fait-il ? is answered with Il fait + adjective, Il pleut or Il neige.
- Au printemps, but en été, en automne, en hiver.

Dates, Seasons and the Weather Report: frequently asked questions

Do days and months have capital letters in French?

No. Days of the week and months of the year are written in lowercase: lundi, mardi, janvier, mars. Only proper names such as the Fête nationale keep a capital.

How do you say the date in French?

Say le plus the day number and the month, such as le douze mars. For the first day, say le premier: le premier mai. Day always comes before month, as in 14/07.

What is the difference between lundi and le lundi?

Lundi alone means this coming Monday, a single event. Le lundi means every Monday, a habit. Le samedi, je joue means I play on Saturdays.

How do you ask about the weather?

Ask Quel temps fait-il ? The usual answers are Il fait beau, Il fait froid, Il pleut, Il neige and Il y a du vent.

Why is it au printemps but en été?

Printemps is the only season that starts with a consonant and is masculine, so it takes au. Été, automne and hiver start with a vowel and take en.