

# Little French Words (articles, quantities & negatives)

\*\*\*The article is expressed in French before each noun, even though it may be omitted in English!!!

Definite Articles = le (m. sing), la (f. sing), l' (sing. w/ vowel), les (plur)  
Eng. meaning = the

le & la become l' when the next word begins with a vowel

\*Don't forget the contractions   à + le = au                      à + les = aux  
  de + le = du                      de + les = des

## Uses of definite articles

This is the **extreme** article...

A. With nouns used in a **general** sense:

L'acier est plus dur que le fer.	<i>Steel is harder than iron.</i>
Nous aimons les petits pois.	<i>We like peas.</i>

\*\*\*Frequently, you see definite articles used with verbs of preference.

( préférer \_\_\_\_\_, aimer \_\_\_\_\_, détester \_\_\_\_\_, adorer \_\_\_\_\_ )

B. When referring to a **specific** noun.

C'est le livre de Sophie.	<i>It's Sophie's book.</i>
S.v.p., donnez-moi l'appareil-photo.	<i>Please give me the camera.</i>

Indefinite Articles = un (m. sing) & une (f. sing)      Eng. meaning = a, an

This is for **non-specific** nouns. "Any old one will do"

Donnez-moi un stylo, s.v.p.   *Give me a pen, please.*

Partitive Articles = du (m. sing), de la (f. sing), de l' (sing. w/ vowel), des (plur)  
English meaning = some

\*\*\*Technically "des" is not a partitive article! It's an indefinite article. – But students do better in this unit if we place it here. Just don't complain to Madame years later that I gave you imperfect notes\*\*\*

This is for a portion of or "part" of a whole.

\*\*\*Helpful trick: "If you can say "some" in English, you must state it in French!

Elle a du travail à faire.	<i>She has (some) work to do.</i>
Avez-vous de l'argent?	<i>Do you have any money?</i>
Donnez-moi de la tarte, s.v.p.	<i>Give me (some) pie, please.</i>

## NEGATIVES



"The pas takes a de; The pas takes a de; After the negative, the pas takes a de!"



"The de stands alone; The de stands alone; After the negative, the de stands alone!"

The fine print for negatives

After negative expressions (ne...pas, ne...rien, ne...plus, ne...jamais, etc.):

Indefinite & Partitive articles change to **de** (or **d'** for a vowel). Definite articles do NOT change.

E.g. Elle a du poulet. VS. Elle n'a pas de poulet.  
She has some chicken She doesn't have any chicken.

Vous avez les notes. Vous n'avez pas les notes.  
You have the notes. You don't have the notes.

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## Quantities

Nouns that express quantity or measure are followed by de (or d' before a vowel) before another noun.

e.g. un paquet de thé une tranche d' ananas

It is **NEVER** des, even if the noun following it is plural.

Some frequent quantity expressions:

une boîte de	box <b>OR</b> can
une bouteille de	bottle
une cuillère à table de	tablespoon
une cuillère à thé de	teaspoon
une douzaine de	dozen
un kilogramme (kilo) de	kilogram (approx. 2.25 pounds)
un litre de	liter
une livre de	pound (notice <b>une</b> , un livre is a book)
un morceau de	piece
un paquet de	package
un sac de	sack
une tasse de	cup
une tranche de	slice
un verre de	glass (usually used with wine...)

Some helpful patterns to see regarding the food project:

**PLURALS** 2 kilos de boeuf / 3 pommes (no little word between the # & the noun)

**FRACTIONS** ¼ tasse de farine (put the fraction + noun (no need for "little word" inbetween))

1/3 = un tiers de      ¼ = un quart de      1/8 = un huitième de  
2/3 = deux tiers de      ¾ = trois quarts de      3/8 = trois huitièmes de

**HALF** **La moitié de** is used with an article for half of a "thing"  
*la moitié de l'eau*      *la moitié du sucre* (de + le = du)  
*la moitié d'un oignon*      *la moitié d'une pomme*

**Demi** is used for specific quantities  
*une demi-tasse de lait*      *une tasse et demie de lait*