

Online Resources for French Pronunciation

WordReference, Forvo, UCLA Vowels and Semivowels, Linguee, Acapela Group

The screenshot shows the WordReference.com website interface. At the top, it says "WordReference.com | Dictionnaires de langue en ligne" and "Dictionnaire Français-Anglais | totalement". A search bar is visible with "French-English" selected. The main content area displays the word "totalement" with an audio icon and "ECOUTER: FRANCE CANADA". Below the word, there are links for "en espagnol", "Conjugeur de verbes", "en contexte", and "images". A sidebar on the left lists related words like "tortue", "tortueux", etc. The main definition section shows "Principales traductions" with a table:

Français	Anglais
totalement <i>adv</i> (complètement, entièrement)	completely, totally, entirely, wholly <i>adv</i> utterly <i>adv</i>

Below the table, an example sentence is provided: "La ville a été totalement détruite." with its English translation: "The city was completely destroyed."

WordReference

<http://www.wordreference.com/fren/>

Description

While primarily known as a multilingual dictionary, this ever-updating website has many tools to support learner pronunciation. Many dictionary entries have IPA transcriptions that show feminine and masculine production variation, examples of the entry in context, and audio files of the word pronounced in different dialects. There is also a lively online forum community where native and non-native speakers discuss grammar, usage, and pronunciation questions.

Example of Use

Choose a specific word to work on. Listen to the audio file of the word in different dialects and practice speaking the word aloud in contexts provided by the site. Ask a question about pronunciation and sociolinguistics on the forum and interact with speakers around the world about these topics.

This content is also featured in upcoming publications:

- Bajorek, Joan Palmiter (2017). "Free Pronunciation Technology: Maximizing the Potential of Forvo and NetProF Pronunciation Feedback" Ed. Edwige Simon. *The FLTMag*. <http://fltmag.com/>

The screenshot shows the Forvo website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Languages', 'Categories', 'Pronounce', 'Events', and 'Users'. A search bar contains the text 'saperlipopette' and a dropdown menu shows suggestions: 'saperlipopette', 'Saperlipopette !', and 'Saperlipopette !'. Below the search bar, the main heading is 'How to pronounce saperlipopette'. Underneath, it says 'Add categories to saperlipopette' and 'Added on: 2010-01-08 Listened to: 8.0K times'. The main content area shows 'saperlipopette pronunciation in French (fr)' with a 'gosh' button. There are three pronunciation entries: 'Pronunciation by Constant (Male from France)' with 1 vote, 'Pronunciation by Newdelly (Female from France)' with 0 votes, and 'Pronunciation by wblondel (Male from France)' with 0 votes. A 'Modify word' section on the right includes options to 'Add languages', 'Add categories', and a link 'Is there anything wrong with this word?'. At the bottom right, there's a 'Not satisfied?' button.

Forvo

<https://forvo.com/>

Description

Geared towards more intermediate learners, Forvo is wikipedia-like large collection of over 100,000 spoken sound files, many which are repetitions of the same utterance in Spanish that include information about the speaker such as their gender and geographical location. Sound files are voted on by users of the site and the word or phrase is often shown in context. Registered users can be more active members of the community and can add words to be pronounced, vote on sound files, create a list of favorites, add files themselves, and download sound files.

This site requires users to have pre-existing knowledge of vocabulary and grammar structures to understand and navigate through the site to find specific information, thus it may not be as helpful for beginning learners.

Example of Use

Learners can search for specific words or phrases and listen to them in context. Especially for entries with several sound files, students can consider dialectal differences among varieties of French.

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Peter Ladefoged
A Course in Phonetics

Performance Exercises 11 G French

li 'bed'	ly 'read [p.p.]'	lu 'wolf'		
le 'the [pl.]'	lø 'the [m.sg.]'	lo 'prize'	lõ 'long'	
lɛ 'ugly'	læɜ 'their'	lɔɜ (name)	lɛ̃ 'flax'	lœ̃di 'Monday'
la 'there'		la 'tired'	lã 'slow'	

UCLA Phonetics: French Vowels

<http://www.phonetics.ucla.edu/course/chapter11/french/french.html>

Description

A simple but effective interface, this website shows the approximate height and backness of fifteen French vowels. Each vowel is shown in a /IV/ environment with an English gloss and a sound file attached to the word if clicked. The vocabulary used is high to low frequency words of different word classes. Learners may be very familiar with versions of “the” and “their,” but not as familiar with items such as “flax” and “wolf.” This is an especially important tool for French mid-vowels that are often difficult for L1 English L2 French learners to contrast for both perception and production.

Example of Use

This tool would be most effective for beginner and intermediate learners who are learning to map orthographic forms, meaning, and phonetic realizations. Learners could memorize these words and contrast them when interpreting other words in novel contexts.

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A Course in Phonetics

French semivowels

mʝɛt	mɥɛt	mwɛt
'crumb'	'mute'	'gull'
lʝe	lɥi	lwi
'tied'	'him'	(name)
	ɥit	wi
	'eight'	'yes'

UCLA Phonetics: French Semi-Vowels

<http://www.phonetics.ucla.edu/course/chapter11/frvowel/frenchvowel.html>

Description

A simple but effective interface, this website shows the approximate height and backness of eight French semi-vowels. Vowels are shown in /mV/, /lV/, or /VV/ environments with an English gloss and a sound file attached to the word if clicked. The vocabulary used is high to low frequency words of different word classes.

Example of Use

This tool would be most effective for beginner and intermediate learners who are learning to map orthographic forms, meaning, and phonetic realizations. Learners could memorize these words and contrast them when interpreting other words in novel contexts.

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The screenshot shows the Linguee website interface. At the top, there are navigation links: "À propos de Linguee", "Linguee in English", "Connexion", and "Contact". Below these is a language selector set to "français ↔ anglais" and a search bar containing the word "workaholic". The search results are displayed under the heading "Dictionnaire anglais-français". The word "workaholic" is listed as a noun (nom) with a pronunciation icon. Below it, the French translation "bourreau de travail m" is given, along with a note "plus rare : mordu du travail m". A copyright notice "© Dictionnaire Linguee, 2017" is visible. Below the dictionary entry, there are sections for "Wikipédia" and "Sources externes (non révisées)". The external sources section contains four entries, each with an English sentence, a French translation, and a source link:

It is going it alone as a single parent or living with a workaholic .	C'est de confronter la vie seule parce que vous vivez avec un bourreau de travail ou que vous êtes chef de famille monoparentale.
A self-confessed workaholic , he continued to put in the gruelling hours and demanded even more of himself than ever before.	Bourreau de travail avéré, il a continué à travailler les longues heures requises et a été encore plus exigeant envers lui-même.
Risk of becoming a workaholic .	Danger de devenir un bourreau de travail.
Your manager, Mohamed Mestar, once said that you were such a workaholic in the early days of your career that you pretty much missed out on being a teenager ?	Mohamed Mestar qui est votre manager dit de vous que vous étiez tellement acharné au travail à vos débuts que vous n'avez quasiment pas eu d'adolescence?

Linguee

<http://www.linguee.fr/anglais-francais>

Description

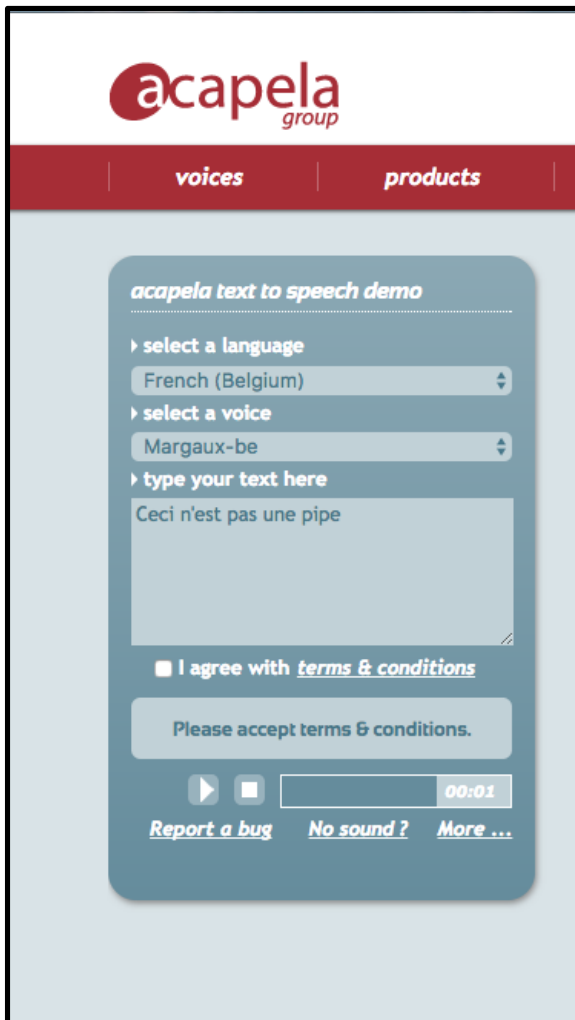
Part dictionary, part corpus search, this website and phone app shows dictionary translations with sound files for the different vocabulary terms. The site also provides the word or phrase in context from online searches with a side to side translation. In addition to the website corpus the dictionary draws upon, the website publishes the most popular searches on Linguee by frequency and are constantly updated.

Example of Use

Learners can use this site to consider pronunciation and usage context to better understand appropriateness of words in online contexts.

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Acapela Group

<http://www.acapela-group.com/>

Description

This website provides text-to-speech audio for short to medium length texts.

10 voices from Belgium, 1 voice from Canada, and 16 voices from France are supported for the French language. Some of the voices have several variations such as “happy,” “sad,” and “from afar.” Although some voices are more naturalistic than others, the segmental and suprasegmental features are addressed in the sound production. The voices will also pronounce nonwords and incorrect spellings of words.

Example of Use

Learners can use this resource to listen to longer utterances and compare varieties of French using the specific texts they are most interested in.

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