LUPINFRENCH



Arsène Lupin

FRENCH A1

Learn French from zero with the gentleman-thief

20 LESSONS · EXTRA EXERCISES · BILINGUAL READER
FINAL EXAM · ANSWER KEY · LEBLANC'S ORIGINAL

After Maurice Leblanc, L'Arrestation d'Arsène Lupin (1905)

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French A1

Learn French from zero with the gentleman-thief



After *L'Arrestation d'Arsène Lupin* by Maurice Leblanc (1905)

lupinfrench.com

Arsène Lupin · French A1. Learn French from zero with the gentleman-thief.

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The original story, *L'Arrestation d'Arsène Lupin* by Maurice Leblanc (1864–1941), first published in the magazine *Je sais tout* in 1905 and collected in *Arsène Lupin, gentleman-cambrioleur* (1907), is in the public domain. The quotations from it in this book are taken from that public-domain text.

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Companion website: **lupinfrench.com** · Questions and corrections: **contact@lupinfrench.com**

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How to use this book

This book teaches you French from absolute zero to level A1 of the Common European Framework, through one story: *L'Arrestation d'Arsène Lupin*, the very first adventure of Maurice Leblanc's gentleman-thief, published in 1905. You read it in twenty short scenes, retold in simple present-tense French that grows a little richer with every lesson. In lesson 20 you will discover who Lupin really is, and at the end of the book you will read Leblanc's own sentences.

Each lesson

- **Before you read**: what you will learn, and ten key words.
- **The story**: one scene in French, with the English under every paragraph. Read the French first; look down only when you need to.
- **Grammar**: one point, explained for English speakers, with the classic mistake to avoid.
- **From the original**: one real sentence by Leblanc that you can already understand.
- **Exercises**: the practice from the website, on paper.
- **Book-only practice**: about ten extra exercises per lesson, written for this book and not available online.
- **At a glance**: a cheat sheet of the grammar and the vocabulary list, with the gender of every noun.

And then

- Four **reviews**, after lessons 5, 10, 15 and 20.
- **The whole story** as a continuous bilingual reader, French and English side by side.

- **Now you can read this**: passages of Leblanc's 1905 original, with glosses.
- A **final A1 exam**, marked out of 100.
- The **answer key** to everything, and a **glossary** of every word in the course.

> ONLY IN THIS BOOK
>
> The website lupinfrench.com is free and stays free. This book adds 202 new exercises (the 119 exercises from the website are here too), a cheat sheet and a vocabulary list with genders for every lesson, the continuous bilingual reader, the annotated passages of Leblanc's original, the final exam and a complete answer key.

A suggested rhythm

One lesson every two or three days is plenty. Day one: read the story twice, then the grammar. Day two: the exercises, then check them in the answer key with a pen of another colour. Day three: the book-only practice and the vocabulary list. Read the story aloud: French is a language for the ear.

A word on French punctuation

French puts a small space before *: ; ! ?* and inside the quotation marks « like this ». It is not a typo: this book follows the French rule in French sentences.

Your free bonus

Thank you for buying this book. It keeps the website free for everybody.

Your bonus page is **lupinfrench.com/bonus/**. That is where the **audio** of the twenty stories, read by a native speaker, will appear: it is free for every buyer of this book. The page will also collect corrections and any new material for the A1 course.

Found a mistake, or stuck on an exercise? Write to **contact@lupinfrench.com**. Every message is read.

The free website, with the same twenty lessons and interactive exercises: **lupinfrench.com**.

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PART I

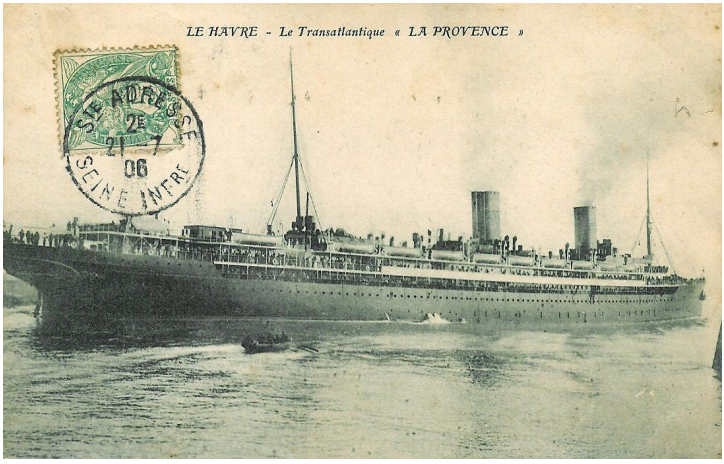
The twenty lessons

June 1905. The liner Provence *leaves Le Havre for New York. On board, a wireless message announces that Arsène Lupin, the gentleman-thief, is among the first-class passengers. Twenty lessons, twenty scenes, and your first real French.*

Un grand bateau

A big ship

An elegant Parisian boards the Provence, a fast liner bound for New York. The sky is blue. For now.



La Provence, 1906 postcard · 1906

1 Before you read

In this lesson you will

- Say who you are and what something is like, using the verb *être*.
- Tell whether a French noun is masculine or feminine, and pick *un*, *une*, *le* or *la*.

- Give your nationality the French way, with no article: *je suis français*.

Key words

le bateau	the ship, the boat
le voyage	the journey, the voyage
le passager	the passenger — A woman is la passagère. French changes the word itself, not just the article.
le commandant ⚠	the captain (of a ship) — On a ship this is the captain, not a "commander".
la mer	the sea
le ciel	the sky
rapide	fast
confortable	comfortable — Spelt with an n: confortable. English speakers write it with an m for months.
aimable	kind, friendly
élégant	elegant, smart

> The verb *être* (to be) is in almost every sentence below: *je suis*, *est*, *sont*. Do not study it yet, just notice it. Notice too the little words in front of each noun: *un*, *une*, *le*, *la*. They are not decoration, and they are the point of this lesson.

2 The story

Je m'appelle Bernard d'Andrézy. Je suis français, de Paris.
My name is Bernard d'Andrézy. I am French, from Paris.

Je suis sur un bateau. Le bateau s'appelle la Provence.
I am on a ship. The ship is called the Provence.

La Provence est un grand bateau. Elle est rapide et confortable.
The Provence is a big ship. She is fast and comfortable.

Le voyage est long : la Provence va du Havre à New York.
The voyage is long: the Provence goes from Le Havre to New York.

Le commandant est un homme aimable. Il est grand et très calme.
The captain is a kind man. He is tall and very calm.

Les passagers sont élégants. Une dame est anglaise, un monsieur est italien.
The passengers are elegant. One lady is English, one gentleman is Italian.

Le ciel est bleu et la mer est calme. La vie est belle !
The sky is blue and the sea is calm. Life is beautiful!

C'est un voyage parfait. Pour le moment…
It is a perfect voyage. For now…

Did you understand?

1. Comment s'appelle le narrateur ? What is the narrator's name?

2. Il est de quelle ville ? Which city is he from?

3. Comment est la Provence ? What is the Provence like?

4. Où va le bateau ? Where is the ship going?

3 Grammar: Être (to be). Un, une, le, la

Look at these sentences from the story

- Je suis français, de Paris. I am French, from Paris.
- La Provence est un grand bateau. The Provence is a big ship.
- Le commandant est un homme aimable. The captain is a kind man.

The same verb is in all three sentences. Which one? And a second question: why la *Provence but* le *commandant, when English says "the" both times?*

All three sentences use the same verb, **être**, "to be". It is the most common verb in French and it is irregular, so you learn all six forms now and stop worrying about it.

	être	
je	**suis**	I am
tu	**es**	you are (one friend)
il / elle / on	**est**	he / she / it is, one is
nous	**sommes**	we are
vous	**êtes**	you are (polite, or several people)
ils / elles	**sont**	they are

Good news for your ears: *est* and *es* sound exactly the same, like "ay". The final *-s* and *-t* are silent.

Gender. Every French noun is masculine or feminine: not only people, but ships, seas and skies. There is nothing masculine about a boat. Gender is a label glued to the word, so learn every noun with its article attached: not *bateau* but *le bateau*.

	a / an	the
masculine	**un** bateau	**le** bateau
feminine	**une** dame	**la** mer

Before a vowel or a silent *h*, *le* and *la* both shrink to **l'**: *l'homme*, *l'Amérique*. Easier to say, and it hides the gender, so the dictionary is your friend there.

Ships are a fun exception to watch for: French usually says *la Provence*, *la France*, because the ship takes the gender of its name, but the word *bateau*

itself stays masculine. And an adjective that describes a feminine noun often takes an extra *-e*: *un grand bateau*, *une grande ville*. Lesson 2 is about exactly that.

FRENCH AND ENGLISH

English has one "the" for everything. French has two in the singular, *le* and *la*, and two "a": *un* and *une*. Pick by the gender of the noun, never by the meaning.

CLASSIC MISTAKE

English speakers say ✗ *Je suis un français*, copying "I am a Frenchman". French drops the article after *être* with nationalities and jobs: ✓ *Je suis français*, ✓ *Il est commandant*. Nationalities also take a small letter in French: *français*, not *Français*.

4 The Provence was a real ship

The *Provence* was a real liner of the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique, launched in 1905 for the Le Havre to New York line. The crossing took about a week, and the first-class passengers spent it dressing for dinner three times a day.

That same year, 1905, a Norman writer called Maurice Leblanc was asked by the new magazine *Je sais tout* for a crime story, something in the spirit of Sherlock Holmes but French. He sent in *L'Arrestation d'Arsène Lupin*, the first Lupin adventure ever printed. It is the story you are now reading, one lesson at a time, and it has a twist at the end that we are not going to spoil.

Le Havre, by the way, is spelt with a capital *L*: the article is part of the name. So you go *au Havre* and come *du Havre*, exactly as in the story.

5 From the original

> *« La Provence est un transatlantique rapide, confortable, commandé par le plus affable des hommes. »*

The Provence is a fast, comfortable liner, commanded by the most affable of men.

Leblanc's very first description of the ship is this lesson's grammar: *La Provence est un…* plus adjectives. You can already read *est*, *un*, *rapide* and *confortable*. *Transatlantique* is a transatlantic liner, and *le plus affable des hommes* is "the most affable of men": in other words, the captain, *le commandant*.

6 Exercises

1.1 Choose the right answer

1. Bernard d'Andrézy est… Bernard d'Andrézy is…
   a) italien b) français c) américain
2. La Provence est… The Provence is…
   a) une ville b) une dame c) un bateau
3. Le commandant _____ un homme aimable.
   a) suis b) est c) sont
4. Quelle phrase est correcte ? Which sentence is correct?
   a) Je suis un français. b) Je suis français. c) Je suis la française.

1.2 Fill in the gaps

est · la · sont · suis · un

1. Je _____ français, de Paris.
2. Le ciel _____ bleu.
3. Les passagers _____ élégants.
4. _____ mer est calme.
5. C'est _____ voyage parfait.

1.3 Sort the words

dame · ville · commandant · vie · ciel · mer · voyage · bateau

1. le / un (masculine)

2. la / une (feminine)

1.4 Match

1. je (I)	a) es
2. tu (you, a friend)	b) suis
3. nous (we)	c) sont
4. vous (you, polite)	d) sommes
5. ils (they)	e) êtes

1.5 True or false?

1. **La Provence est un petit bateau.** The Provence is a small ship. T ☐ F ☐
2. **Le commandant est aimable.** The captain is kind. T ☐ F ☐
3. **La mer est calme.** The sea is calm. T ☐ F ☐

7 Book-only practice

These exercises are not on the website. Answers at the back of the book.

1.A The six forms of être

BOOK ONLY

Fill in the gap with the right form of être.

es · est · êtes · sommes · sont · suis

1. Nous _____ sur la Provence. We are on the Provence.
2. Tu _____ français ? Are you French?
3. Vous _____ le commandant ? Are you the captain?
4. Le commandant et la dame _____ sur le bateau. The captain and the lady are on the ship.
5. Je _____ très calme. I am very calm.
6. La vie _____ belle. Life is beautiful.

1.B Le, la or l'?

BOOK ONLY

Choose the right article.

1. _____ homme est aimable. The man is kind.
   a) Le b) La c) L'
2. _____ vie est belle. Life is beautiful.
   a) Le b) La c) L'
3. _____ ciel est bleu. The sky is blue.
   a) Le b) La c) L'
4. _____ voyage est long. The voyage is long.
   a) Le b) La c) L'
5. C'est _____ dame anglaise. She is an English lady.
   a) un b) une c) la
6. C'est _____ moment parfait. It is a perfect moment.
   a) un b) une c) le

1.C Who or what?

BOOK ONLY

Match each French phrase with its English meaning.

1. un homme aimable
2. une dame élégante
3. un voyage parfait
4. un bateau rapide
5. un monsieur italien
6. la mer calme

a) the calm sea
b) a perfect voyage
c) an elegant lady
d) an Italian gentleman
e) a kind man
f) a fast ship

1.D New subject

BOOK ONLY

Rewrite the sentence with the new subject. Change the form of être.

1. Je suis sur la Provence. → Nous

2. Il est à Paris. → Vous

3. Tu es sur le bateau. → Ils

4. Nous sommes à New York. → Je

5. Vous êtes de Paris. → Elle

6. Elles sont sur la mer. → Tu

1.E On board the Provence

BOOK ONLY

True or false? Think about the story.

1. **Bernard d'Andrézy est de Paris.** Bernard d'Andrézy is from Paris. T ☐ F ☐
2. **La Provence va de New York au Havre.** The Provence goes from New York to Le Havre. T ☐ F ☐
3. **Le commandant est petit.** The captain is short. T ☐ F ☐
4. **Le bateau est confortable.** The ship is comfortable. T ☐ F ☐
5. **Une dame est italienne.** One lady is Italian. T ☐ F ☐

1.F Spot the mistake

BOOK ONLY

Each sentence has one mistake. Write the correct sentence.

1. Le mer est calme.

2. Nous sont sur un bateau.

3. Le homme est aimable.

4. Il est un commandant.

5. Bernard est Français.

6. Vous est le commandant ?

1.G Into French

BOOK ONLY

Translate into French.

1. We are on a big ship.

2. The captain is very calm.

3. You are kind. (to a friend)

4. The voyage is long.

5. She is English.

6. It is a perfect moment.

1.H Word order

BOOK ONLY

Put the words in order to make a sentence.

1. Le bateau / très / est / rapide

2. élégante / une / dame / C'est

3. de Paris / sommes / Nous

4. ciel / bleu / est / Le / très

5. homme / un / Le passager / élégant / est

1.I Questions on the story

BOOK ONLY

Answer in a full French sentence.

1. Comment s'appelle le bateau ? What is the ship called?

2. Comment est le commandant ? What is the captain like?

3. La mer est calme ? Is the sea calm?

4. Bernard est italien ? Is Bernard Italian?

1.J Introduce yourself

BOOK ONLY

Write a short text about you, like Bernard at the start of the story.

Présente-toi : ton nom, ta nationalité, ta ville. Où es-tu ? Comment est le moment ? Utilise *je suis* et *c'est*.

Introduce yourself: your name, your nationality, your town. Where are you? What is the moment like? Use *je suis* and *c'est*.

je m'appelle · je suis · c'est · un · une · très

8 At a glance

CHEAT SHEET

Être · un, une, le, la

- **être** (to be): je *suis*, tu *es*, il/elle/on *est*, nous *sommes*, vous *êtes*, ils/elles *sont*.
- *es* and *est* sound the same (“ay”): the final -s and -t are silent.
- Every noun is masculine or feminine. Learn it with its article: *le bateau*, *la mer*.
- a / an: **un** (m.), **une** (f.) · the: **le** (m.), **la** (f.).
- Before a vowel or a silent h, le and la become **l’**: *l’homme*, *l’Amérique*.
- No article with a nationality or a job after être: *Je suis français. Il est commandant.*
- Nationalities take a small letter: *français*, *anglaise*, *italien*.

- Je suis français, de Paris. I am French, from Paris.
- Le commandant est un homme aimable. The captain is a kind man.
- Nous sommes sur un grand bateau. We are on a big ship.

Vocabulary

On board

le bateau m.	the ship, the boat
le voyage m.	the voyage, the journey
le commandant m.	the captain
le passager / la passagère m./f.	the passenger
la mer f.	the sea
le ciel m.	the sky

People

un homme m.	a man
une dame f.	a lady
un monsieur m.	a gentleman
la vie f.	life
le moment m.	the moment

What it is like

grand / grande	big, tall
long / longue	long
rapide	fast
confortable	comfortable
calme	calm
aimable	kind
élégant / élégante	elegant
bleu / bleue	blue
parfait / parfaite	perfect

Nationalities

français / française	French
anglais / anglaise	English
italien / italienne	Italian
américain / américaine	American

Now I can

- ☐ Say my name and nationality: *Je suis…*
- ☐ Use all six forms of *être*.
- ☐ Put *un*, *une*, *le*, *la* or *l'* in front of a noun.
- ☐ Describe a ship, a person or the weather with *être* + adjective.

Enjoyed lesson 1?

The rest of the voyage is waiting

This was the first of twenty lessons. The full book continues the crossing of the *Provence* all the way to New York, and to the moment Arsène Lupin is unmasked.

- 19 more lessons, each with story, grammar, website exercises and about ten book-only exercises;
- a cheat sheet and a vocabulary list with genders for every lesson;
- four reviews and a final A1 exam marked out of 100;
- the whole story as a bilingual reader, French and English side by side;
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