

My LIST OF 200 FRENCH IDIOMS

*TOP FRENCH FUNNY PHRASES
THAT WILL MAKE YOU LAUGH!*

*by ShopaholicFromHome
who J'adore Lyon & France*



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My List of 200 French Idioms

1. À bon entendeur, salut!: 'Road to the wise'; a piece of advice/You have been warned/
2. À la côte: 'On the rocks'; referring to someone living on the edge, being down and out ; having hard times
3. À la fin: 'enough'! to illustrate that the speaker is out of patience.
4. À la mords-moi le noeud (le doigt, le jonc, le pif...): 'A cowboy job'; a little serious and not well done job that you cannot count on
5. À vos souhaits!: Bless you!
6. À la côte: 'On the rocks'; go to rack and ruin.
7. Aller comme un gant: fit like a glove
8. Appeler un chat un chat: (calling a cat a cat) talk about the bad situation as it is, very bluntly
9. Arriver comme un cheveu sur la soupe (arrive like the hair in a soup): enter a situation at the most awkward moment possible
10. Au diable vauvert: in the middle of nowhere
11. Autant / au temps pour moi: My bad! My mistake!
12. Avoir des fourmis dans le pied (ants in one's foot): ' have pins and needles'; waiting nervously for something to happen
13. Avoir du blé (have wheat): be loaded
14. Avoir du bol (to have a bowl): be lucky
15. Avoir du piston (to have some piston): have a friend at court
16. Avoir l'estomac dans les talons (to have one's stomach in

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17. Avoir la gueule de bois (to have a face of wood): to have a hangover
18. Avoir la main verte (to have the green hand): 'have a green thumb'; to have an ability to grow plans, be good at gardening
19. Avoir le cafard (to have the beetle): 'be down in the dumps', be unhappy
20. Avoir le cœur sur la main (to have the heart on the hand): to be generous
21. Avoir le cul bordé de nouilles (to have the ass surrounded by noodles): to be lucky
22. Avoir un chat dans la gorge (to have a cat in the throat): 'have a frog in one's throat'; to have difficulty speaking
24. Avoir un cœur d'artichaut (to have an artichoke heart): to fall in love too easily
25. Avoir un petit creux (J'ai un petit creux = I am peckish): feeling peckish
26. Avoir un poil dans la main (to have a hair in the hand): to be a lazybones
27. Avoir le melon (to have a melon): be sure of oneself
28. Baisser les bras (to lower the arms): 'throw in the towel'; give up
29. Bas de gamme (bottom of range): low-end, low quality
30. Bâtir des châteaux en Espagne (to build castles in Spain): 'build castles in the air'; daydream; make plans that can never come true



31. Bâton de maréchal (one 'field marshal's baton): the highest level one can rise to; one's limit
32. Battre comme Plâtre (beat someone flat): beat the living daylights out of someone
33. Battre froid à quelqu'un (beat cold to someone): give someone the cold shoulder
33. Bayer aux corneilles (to gape to crows): have head in the clouds; stand gaping, dreaming
34. Bel et bien (beautiful and good): well and truly; definitively; completely; altogether
35. Belle comme un canon (beautiful as a canon): beautiful girl
36. la Beuh / le Shit: to describe different terms for marijuana, the drugs like Cannabis, Mary Jane, weed,
37. Bien conduire sa barque (drive one's boat well): handle oneself well; do all right
38. Bien en chair (good in flesh): well padded; plump
39. Bien mener sa barque (manage one's boat well): handle oneself well; do all right
40. Bien roulée: well endowed, stacked
41. Boire comme un trou (drink like a hole): drink a lot, they never stop, even if they should
42. Boire comme une éponge: drink like a fish
43. Boire sec: be a heavy drinker
44. Bomber le torse: swagger; puff out one's chest
45. Bon vent!: Bon voyage!/ Get lost!

46. Bouche bée: agape, stunned
47. Bouche cousue: not a word; mum's the word
48. Bourrer le crâne: brainwash; stuff someone's head with ideas
49. Bourrer le mou: take somebody in; have somebody on
50. Boute-en-train (m): life of the party; live wire
51. Brancher: connect; put in touch, se brancher means to like
52. Branler dans le manche: be shaky; totter
53. Bras dessus, bras dessous: arm in arm
54. Bras droit: right-hand man
55. Brasser les affaires: 'wheel and deal', to do a lot of business
56. Bref means 'in short'; when you want to make a long story short and get to the point
57. Briller par son absence: be conspicuous by one's absence
58. Brouiller les cartes: 'cloud an issue'; confuse the situation
59. Broyer du noir: be down in the dumps; have the blues, feel down
60. Brûler (d'envie) de: be eager to; be spoiling for
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61. Brûler les étapes: go without stopping; go faster than expected, make rapid progress
62. Brûler une feu rouge: run a red light
63. C'est la cerise sur le gâteau (the cherry on the cake): that's the icing on the cake, a small details which adds a lot of value
64. C'est dommage (that's a shame): that's too bad
65. C'est Parti! Let's go or let's get started!



66. Ça marche (that works) means that you agree with sth; to confirm that you're on board
67. Ça me rend malade: it makes me sick
68. Ça me Saoule (it makes me drunk): to get on your nerves or that you're fed up with sth
69. Ça y est: 'finally', another way to say 'c'est fait / enfin'
70. Casser du sucre sur le dos (to break sugar on someone's back): to backbite
71. Ce n'est pas du gâteau (it is not a cake): 'it is not a piece of cake', it's not easy!
72. Chat échaudé craint l'eau froide: 'A burned child dreads the fire', any bad experience is a lesson of wisdom
73. Chercher midi à quatorze heures (to look for midday at 2 pm): to over-complicate things
74. Coup de foudre (strike of lightning): fell in love at first sight
75. Couper les cheveux en quatre (cut hairs in four): to split hairs; analyze in very detailed manner
76. Coûter les yeux de la tête (to cost the eyes of the head): 'it costs an arm and a leg'
it's a price that's unreasonable;
77. Cran: being edgy or nervous; it is used to describe a sneaky behavior; avoir du cran: have guts
78. Cucul la praline: silly
79. Déchiré (torn): wasted, hammered, drunk
80. Dormir à la belle étoile
sleep at the beautiful star): to sleep under the stars

82. Elle est bonne: 'She's hot', she is sexy, the expression with a strong sexual meaning
83. En faire tout un fromage (making a whole cheese): make a big deal out of something
84. En fait / Franchement : En fait can either connect two phrases, or be used as an interjection. Franchement accentuates speech and bring attention to an opinion.
85. En tout bien tout honneur: with the most honorable of intentions
86. Enculer les mouches (to assfuck the flies): split hair, be picky, obsessed wit details
87. Engueuler: to tell someone off
88. Etre à cheval sur les principes (to ride the principles): be a stickler for principles
89. Être à côté de ses pompes (to stand next to one's shoes): be beside oneself
90. Etre au taquet: be on the edge
91. Etre bonne poire (to be a good pear): be naïve
92. Etre dans la lune (to be in the moon): have one's head in the clouds
93. Etre à deux doigts de (to be two fingers from): 'be stone's throw from', to be very close to something
94. Etre fleur bleue (be a blue flower): be naive or sentimental
95. Être entre le marteau et l'enclume (be between the hammer and the anvil): 'To be between the Devil and the deep'; be between two opposing camps and be exposed to being hit from both sides



96. Etre haut comme trois pommes (be three apples tall): to be knee-high to a grasshopper
97. Etre le dindon de la farce: be fall guy ; the one that suffers ; the victim
98. Être (vivre) comme un coq en pâte: 'To be sitting on top of the world'; Lead a comfortable and cozy existence
99. Entre chien et loup (between the dog and wolf): 'at dusk'; in the nightfall
100. En dire / voir des vertes et des pas mûres (tell/see green and not ripe): 'ay spicy thing'; see or experience amazing things, shocking, excessive, unpleasant, painful
101. Faire gaffe: watch out, be careful, it's another way to say « faire attention » or pay attention
102. Faire la grasse matinée (have a fat morning): to sleep in
103. Faire la tête (do the head): be out of humor, sulk
104. Faire les cent pas (make a hundred steps): to pace back and forth
105. Tiré par les cheveux (drawn by the hair): be far-fetched
106. Garde la pêche! (keep the peach): keep my chin up/remain in good form
107. Haut les coeurs (keep the hearts): 'Cheer up'; have a courage, be brave
108. Il fait un froid de canard (it's duck cold): it's biting cold
109. Il fait un temps de chien (it's dog weather): the weather is terrible
110. Il pleut comme vache qui pisse (it is raining like a cow who pees): 'it's raining cats and dogs', it is a really heavy rain

111. Il pleut des cordes (it's raining ropes): it rains heavily

112. J'ai la banane (I have the banana): another way to say that you are in good shape

113. J'ai un chat dans la gorge (I have a cat in my throat): 'having a frog in one's throat', be unable to speak clearly

114. Je dis ça, je dis rien (I say that, I say nothing): it's a French way of saying what in English is 'I am just saying'

115. L'Arlésienne: waiting for Goddot, waiting for something to happen and it never does

116. L'enfer est pavé de bonnes intentions (the road to hell is paved with good intentions): it means that even the good intentions can bring bad results

117. L'habit ne fait pas le moine (the clothing doesn't make the monk): 'don't judge the book by its cover'; the appearing can be misleading

118. La bave du crapaud n'atteint pas la blanche colombe (the toad's drool doesn't reach the dove): 'sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me'; Bully's words can be just as hurtful as violence

119. La boîte de Pandore: 'Pandora box'; a source of unforeseen trouble

120. La fin des haricots (the end of the beans): 'the end of the line'; it's all over; the end of everything. The complete loss of hope

121. La moutarde me monte au nez (the mustard is getting to my nose): 'get hot under the collar', loose my temper, get angry, upset



122. La quille: 'be discharged'; coming back to life, be freed
123. La Vache! (cow!): 'bastard!, the bitch!'; is used to describe a wicked , mean, nasty person!
124. Laisse Tomber (leave fallen) it means, forget it, forget about it
125. Lécher les bottes (to lick somebody's boots): suck up to, kiss up to, seek the favor of in a servile, degraded way.
126. Le jeu n'en vaut pas la chandelle: 'the game is not worth the candle'; the effort is not worth the result
127. Les doigts dans le nez (fingers in the nose): 'a piece of piss', something is terribly easy, could be done with one hand tied behind your back, etc.
128. Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas: 'the heart has reasons which cannot be understand'; love is sometimes a better guide than our mind, even if at times, our heart can be mistaken
129. Manger sur le pouce (to eat on the thumb): to eat on the go; to grab a quick bite to eat
130. Manger (bouffer) comme un chancre (eat like a canker): 'eat like a pig'; eat extensively, overeat
131. Mettre son grain de sel (put in one's grain of salt): give someone an unrelated, unnecessary opinion
132. N'avoir ni queue ni tête (have neither tail nor head): to make no sense
133. Ne pas être sorti de l'auberge (not be out of the hostel): not be out of the woods, don't see the end of the situation without going through the difficulties
134. Ne rien savoir faire de ses dix doigts (not knowing how to do anything with one's ten fingers): it means that somebody is completely useless.

135. Ne pas valoir tripette: 'not be worth tuppence ; not be worth a hill of beans; not be worth a wooden nickel'; something is worthless, will have absolutely no interest.

136. Oh bonne mère: this is how the typical Marseillais expresses « oh mon dieu », 'Oh my God!

137. Par monts et par vaux: 'up the hill and down dale', far and wide, everywhere, on all sides

138. Parler français comme une vache espagnole (speak French like a Spanish cow): speak French poorly

139. Passer du coq à l'âne (go from rooster to donkey): to jump from one subject to another

140. Passer une nuit blanche (spend a white night): spend a sleepless night

141. Pédé comme un phoque: 'queer as a £2 note (UK); gay as a 3 dollar bill (US); gay as a trumpet; gay as a window', completely homosexual.

142. Peigner la girafe: 'beat a dead horse; do busy work; whistle into the wind; piss into the wind (vul)', do very long, uneffective work

143. Pierre qui roule n'amasse pas mousse: 'a rolling stone gathers no moss', an adventurous life does not bring the wealth, someone who does not settle in one place rarely prospers

144. Pisser dans un violon (to piss in a violin): 'pissing into the wind'; do something completely ineffective and useless

145. Partir ventre à terre (leave belly-to-ground):



160. S'entendre comme chien et chat (get along like a cat and dog): fight violently all the time
161. S'occuper de ses oignons (take care of one's onions): mind one's own business
162. Santé! to express 'cheers!'; as well as it is a way to wish well upon each other's health.
163. Sauter du coq à l'âne (jump from the rooster to the donkey): to jump from topic to topic in conversation
164. Se croire sorti de la cuisse de Jupiter (believe to be out of the thigh of Jupiter): 'think that someone is the bees' knees; think that the sun shines out of someone's ass'; think of oneself as God's gift to the world; think the world revolves around oneself;
165. Se faire marcher sur les pieds (be run on the feet): let someone tread on your toes; be pushed around
166. Se mettre en quatre (quarter oneself): 'to bend over backwards'; go to a great deal of trouble
167. Se mettre le doigt dans l'œil (put one's finger in one's eye): be wrong
168. Se ressembler comme deux gouttes d'eau (ressemble like two drops of water): 'be like two peas in a pod'; look identical
169. Soupe au lait: 'have a thin skin; change the character quickly
170. Sucrer les fraises (sweet strawberries): 'go dotty', become somewhat eccentric, odd, or mentally unbalanced.
171. Sortir de ses gonds (off its hinges): 'fly off the handle'; get suddenly angry,
172. Se mettre sur son trente et un (stand on his thirty-one): ' get dressed up to the nines'; put on his best clothes

173. Sans sou ni maille (without a penny): without a cent; be broke

174. Sauter au cou de quelqu'un (throw one's arms around someone's neck): 'fly in somebody's arms'; hug;

175. Se casser le nez (break one's nose): have no luck; get no answer

176. Se casser les dents sur (break one's teeth on): unable to deal with

177. Tirer le diable par la queue: 'to live from hand to mouth'; have not sufficient resources, struggling with money, be broke

178. Tendre l'oreille à: listen intently; listen closely

179. Tomber à l'eau (fall in the water): to fall through

180. Tomber dans les pommes (fall into the apples): faint

181. Tomber de Charybde en Scylla: 'jump out of the frying pan into the fire'; falling from bad to worse

182. Tomber des nues: be extremely surprised; be taken aback by an unexpected event

183. Toucher du bois: 'touch the wood'; ward off bad luck.

184. Tourner autour du pot (circle around the pot): 'beat around the bush'; 'go round in circles'; keep going over the same ideas or repeating the same actions, often resulting in confusion, without reaching a satisfactory decision or conclusion.

185. Trois fois rien (three times nothing): it's nothing

186. Trouver chaussure à son pied (find a shoe that fits one's foot): find a suitable match



187. Tuer les mouches à quinze pas (kill flies): have bad breath
188. Un coureur de jupons (an underskirt chaser): a casanova
189. Un de ces quatre: see you those days, see you soon
190. Un froid de canard: a freezing cold
191. Un jus de chaussettes (sock-juice): bad coffee
192. Un petit bisou: a peck on the cheek; please note: un baiser means a kiss and the verb baiser means to make sex
193. Un bon coup de fourchette: a hearty appetite
194. Vert de jalousie (green with envy): very jealous
195. Voir la vie en rose (see life in pink): 'see life through rose-coloured glasses'; be an optimist
196. Voir midi à sa porte (view noon at this door): be wrapped up in oneself, judge something or situation according to his own point of view.
197. Vouloir le beurre et l'argent du beurre (to want the butter and the butter's money): have a cake and eat it; have it all, win on all fronts
198. Vendre chèrement sa peau: 'sell one's life dearly'; not give up easily
199. Voir le monde par le petit bout de la lorgnette: exaggerate about oneself; see things disproportionately
200. Voir trop grand: bite off more than one can know; bite off too much

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