

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Languages and Dialects of France

France is a country known for its rich culture, history, and language. The official language of France is French, spoken by most people across the country. However, did you know that there are many regional languages in France? These languages have been spoken for centuries and are still used in certain parts of the country today.

### French – The Official Language

French is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. It is the official language of France and is used in schools, government, and business. French is also

spoken in many other countries, such as Canada, Belgium, and parts of Africa.

The French language has a long history and comes from Latin, the language of the Romans. Over time, it changed and developed into the French we hear today. Many English words also come from French, such as restaurant, ballet, and souvenir!

### Regional Languages in France

Even though French is the main language, there are still regional languages spoken in different parts of the country. These languages were spoken long before French became dominant and are part of France's cultural heritage.

Here are a few important regional languages:

- **Breton** – Spoken in Brittany, a region in the northwest of France. Breton is a Celtic language, similar to Welsh and Irish.
- **Occitan** – Spoken in the south of France, Occitan was once widely spoken in medieval times. It has different dialects, such as Provençal.
- **Alsatian** – Spoken in the Alsace region, near the border with Germany. Alsatian is a Germanic language, meaning it is related to German.

There are also other regional languages, such as Corsican (spoken on the island of Corsica) and Basque (spoken in the southwest, near Spain).

### Preserving Regional Languages

Over time, fewer people have spoken these regional languages because French became the main language in schools and daily life. However, many efforts are being made to preserve these languages. Some schools now teach Breton, Occitan, and Alsatian, and local communities celebrate their linguistic heritage through festivals and cultural events.

Even though most people in France speak French today, these regional languages remain an important part of the country's history and identity. They remind people of their ancestors and the diverse cultures that make up France.