

the French alphabet

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French Steps

Stage 5: Booking a room

Watch as Hakim M'Barek is asked to spell his name and fax his credit card details when he rings a hotel to book a room for the weekend. Then go to *Pronunciation tips*, listen at your own pace to the sounds of the French alphabet and find out how to spell out email and internet addresses. You'll find helpful tips on pronouncing French in all units of French Steps.

Key language

Votre nom? Your name?

Comment ça s'écrit? How is it written?

deux emm double M

arobase @

point full-stop

oblique slash

The words in italics next to the letters represent the approximate English pronunciation of the alphabet

A = *ah*

B = *beh*

C = *seh*

D = *deh*

E = *ugh*

F = *eff*

G = *jeh*

H = *ash*

I = *ee*

J = *jee*

K = *kah*

L = *ell*

M = *emm*

N = *enn*

O = *oh*

P = *peh*

Q = *ku*

R = *air*

S = *ess*

T = *teh*

U = *u*

V = *veh*

W = *doobler veh*

X = *eeks*

Y = *ee-greck*

Z = *zed*

Learning hint

Some English personal and place names can be difficult for French speakers, which is why it's useful to be able to spell them out, particularly over the phone or on voicemail. You're most likely to need to know how to spell out your own details, so make sure you practise spelling your name and address and the names of anyone who might be travelling with you.

Acquiring a good French accent is about more than knowing the alphabet, and it's very important to say words and phrases out loud on a regular basis. Listen as often as you can to Hakim and the people he meets in French Steps and make a concerted effort to imitate them closely.

Quiz

The following spell the French names for 6 European countries. Say them out loud and work out what countries they are.

1. aah – enn - jeh - ell - ugh - teh - ugh - deux air - ugh
2. ee - teh - aah - ell – ee - ugh
3. ugh - ess - peh - ah - jeh - enn - ugh
4. ess - u – ee - deux ess - ugh
5. bay - ugh - ell - jay - ee - kuh - u - ugh
6. ash - oh - enn - jeh - air – ee - ugh

Answers on www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/answers.shtml