

HOW TO USE THE FRENCH PRONOUN «EN»



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How to use the pronoun EN in French

The French pronoun EN replaces a QUANTITY

EN refers to a noun that is introduced by:

- De / de la / du / des / d'
- Un, une or any other number
- Expressions of quantity like: un verre de / un kilo de / une bouteille de..
- Adverbs of quantity like: beaucoup de / peu de / assez de..

EN is normally translated by "some", "any" or "one" in English. Many times we don't need to say "some" or "of them" in English, but you can't avoid it in French. That's why you need this pronoun.

Examples

In these examples the pronoun EN replaces a QUANTITY.

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<p>Nous voudrions 2 <u>baguettes</u>.</p> <p>We would like 2 baguettes.</p>	<p>Nous <u>en</u> voudrions 2.</p> <p>We would like 2 of them.</p> <p>*Note that the EN comes right before the verb in the present tense.</p> <p>*Note that the number needs to be repeated.</p>
<p>Je ne mange pas <u>de frites</u>.</p> <p>I'm not eating any fries.</p>	<p>Je n'<u>en</u> mange pas.</p> <p>I'm not eating any of them.</p> <p>*Note the placement of ne / pas when using the pronoun EN.</p> <p>*Note that the form of "de" that introduces the noun also gets replaced.</p>
<p>Tu vas servir <u>du champagne</u>?</p> <p>Are you going to serve champagne?</p>	<p>Tu vas <u>en</u> servir?</p> <p>Are you going to serve some of that?</p> <p>*Note that when you have an infinitive in the sentence</p>

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	the EN comes right before it.
<p>Vous achetiez beaucoup <u>de citrons</u>?</p> <p>Were you buying a lot of lemons?</p>	<p>Vous <u>en</u> achetiez beaucoup?</p> <p>Were you buying a lot of them?</p> <p>*Note that even when using another tense like the imperfect the EN comes right before the verb.</p> <p>*Note that you have to repeat the word <i>beaucoup</i> or any other adverb of quantity.</p>
<p>J'ai bu 8 verres <u>d'eau</u>.</p> <p>I drank 8 glasses of water.</p>	<p>J'<u>en</u> ai bu 8 verres.</p> <p>I drank 8 glasses of it.</p> <p>*Note that in the passé composé the EN comes right before the helping verb.</p>

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	*Note that you have to repeat the quantity and the expression of quantity.
Il n'a pas voulu <u>de poulet</u> . He didn't want any chicken.	Il n' <u>en</u> a pas voulu. He didn't want any of it. *Note the placement of ne / pas when using EN with negation in the passé composé.

The French pronoun EN replaces a THING

EN replaces a THING that has been introduced by a verb and that is preceded by: de / de la / du / des / d'

Many French verbs are followed by the preposition DE

Here are just a few of the most common French verbs followed by DE:

- Avoir peur de quelque chose / to be afraid of something
 - J'ai peur des serpents.
 - J'en ai peur.
- Avoir besoin de quelque chose / to need something

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- Tu as besoin d'argent?
- Tu en as besoin?
- Avoir envie de quelque chose / to desire or want something
 - Il a envie de manger une pizza.
 - Il en a envie.
- Avoir l'intention de quelque chose / to have the intention of doing something
 - Nous avons l'intention de partir en vacances.
 - Nous en avons l'intention.
- S'excuser de faire quelque chose / to excuse oneself for doing something
 - Vous vous excusez d'arriver en retard.
 - Vous vous en excusez.
- Rêver de faire quelque chose / to dream of doing something
 - Elles rêvent de faire le tour du monde.
 - Elles en rêvent.
- Se souvenir de faire quelque chose / to remember something
 - Je me souviens de ce restaurant.
 - Je m'en souviens.

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- Profiter de faire quelque chose / to take advantage of something
 - Tu profites de tes vacances.
 - Tu en profites.
- Se servir de quelque chose / to use something
 - Elle se sert de ma voiture.
 - Elle s'en sert.

Restate these questions using EN, then respond both affirmatively and negatively.

Tu veux acheter <u>des</u> <u>clémentines</u> ?	Tu veux <u>en</u> acheter?
	Oui, je veux <u>en</u> acheter.
	Non, je ne veux pas <u>en</u> acheter.
Tu as un <u>stylo</u> ?	Tu <u>en</u> as un?
	Oui, j' <u>en</u> ai un.
	Non, je n' <u>en</u> ai pas.
Il y a <u>du lait</u> dans le frigo?	Il y <u>en</u> a (dans le frigo)?

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*when you have Y and EN in the same sentence you must always place Y before EN.	
	Oui, il y <u>en</u> a (dans le frigo).
	Non, il n'y <u>en</u> a pas (dans le frigo).
Est-ce que vous avez vu des chats dans le jardin?	Est-ce que vous en avez vu dans le jardin?
	Oui, j'en ai vu dans le jardin.
	Non, je n'en ai pas vu dans le jardin.
Il y a <u>du lait</u> dans le frigo? *when you have Y and EN in the same sentence you must always place Y before EN.	Il y <u>en</u> a (dans le frigo)?

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	Oui, il y <u>en</u> a (dans le frigo).
	Non, il n'y <u>en</u> a pas (dans le frigo).

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