

Décider de vs Se décider à



At first glance, **décider de** and **se décider à** look almost the same, but that little “se” completely changes the meaning. Both deal with decisions, but one expresses **making a decision**, while the other means **finally deciding to take action**.

1. Décider de - To decide to do something / to make a decision

Use **décider de** when you're talking about **the choice itself**, when someone decides what to do.

Examples:

- J'ai décidé **de partir en France**. I decided to go to France.
- Ils ont décidé **de vendre leur maison**. They decided to sell their house.

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- Le gouvernement a décidé **de changer la loi**. The government decided to change the law.

If you could say “*to decide to...*” in English, you’ll use **décider de** in French.

2. Se décider à - To make up one’s mind to / to finally decide to do something

Use **se décider à** when you want to emphasize **the moment someone finally makes up their mind** after hesitation. It often implies that the decision wasn’t easy or took time.

Examples:

- Il s’est enfin décidé **à lui parler**. He finally decided to talk to her.
- Je me suis décidée **à apprendre le piano**. I made up my mind to learn the piano.
- Elle ne se décide pas **à choisir une robe**. She can’t make up her mind to choose a dress.

If you want to highlight the **act of deciding after hesitation**, choose **se décider à**.

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3. Simple way to remember

- **Décider de** - To decide **something**
- **Se décider à** - To finally decide **to do something**

That little **“se”** adds a personal, emotional element. It's about the *moment of resolve*, not just the decision itself.

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