

Encore vs Toujours



Although both **encore** and **toujours** can be translated as “*still*”, they have different nuances and uses. Getting them right will make your French sound natural and precise.

1. Encore - Still / Again / Yet

Encore is often used to show that **something continues longer than expected**, or to indicate **repetition**. It's commonly translated as “*still*” when the activity might have been expected to end.

Examples:

- Il travaille **encore** à 22h.
- He's **still** working at 10 p.m. (*implying it's later than expected*)

- Tu es **encore** fatigué?
- You're **still** tired? (*surprised that it continues*)

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- Je voudrais **encore** un café.
- I'd like **another** coffee. (*repetition*)

Remember:

- **Encore** can also mean “again” when paired with verbs:
 - Il chante **encore** cette chanson.
 - He's singing this song **again**.

2. Toujours - Always / Still

Toujours is used in two main ways:

1. Habitual actions - “Always”

- Je prends **toujours** le métro pour aller au travail.
- I **always** take the subway to work.

- Elle est **toujours** gentille avec ses collègues.
- She is always kind to her coworkers.

2. Continued states - “Still”

- Il est **toujours** malade.
- He is **still** sick.

- La boutique est **toujours** ouverte.

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- The shop is **still** open.

Remember:

- When **toujours** is used to mean “still,” it often has a **neutral sense**. It doesn’t carry the same surprise or implied “longer than expected” nuance as **encore**.
- **Toujours** can also emphasize **consistency or permanence**:
 - Ils sont **toujours** ensemble.
 - They are **always** together.

3. Quick way to remember

- **Encore** - “still / again / yet” - implies **continuation beyond expectation** or **repetition**.
- **Toujours** - “always / still” - emphasizes **habit, permanence, or neutral continuation**.

Rule of thumb: If there’s an element of **surprise or unexpected continuation**, use **encore**. If you’re talking about **habit or neutral ongoing state**, use **toujours**.

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