

1. regular formation
2. nouns ending in -s, -x, -z
3. nouns ending in -al, -au, -eu, -eau, -ou
4. irregular plurals

In French, a noun is always either singular or plural. It is usually introduced by a **determiner**, which reflects the number of the noun.

regular plural formation

As in English, the plural is formed by adding an **-s** to the singular form of the noun. Note, however, that the **-s** is not pronounced. In spoken language, the determiner is often the only indication that a noun is singular or plural.

 Tex est un **tatou**. Tex et Tammy sont des **tatous**.

Tex is an armadillo. Tex and Tammy are armadillos.

nouns ending in -s, -x, -z in the singular

Nouns ending in **-s**, **-x**, or **-z** do not change in the plural. For example:

 Tex a un long **nez**. Les tatous ont toujours de longs **nez**.

Tex has a long nose. Armadillos always have long noses.

Joe-Bob est un écureuil. Les écureuils adorent les **noix**. Joe-Bob mange au moins une **noix** par jour.

Joe-Bob is a squirrel. Squirrels adore nuts. Joe-Bob eats at least one nut every day.

Bette est une chatte. Les chats mangent des **souris**. Est-ce que Bette a jamais mangé une **souris**?

Bette is a cat. Cats eat mice. Has Bette ever eaten a mouse?

nouns ending in -al, -ail, -au, -eu, -eau, -ou in the singular

Nouns ending in **-al**, **-ail**, or **-au** in the singular end in **-aux** in the plural. For example:

 Edouard est un **animal** distingué. Corey et Fiona ne sont pas des **animaux**, ce sont des insectes peu sociables!

Edouard is a distinguished animal. Corey and Fiona are not animals. They are unsociable insects!

There are a few exceptions: **un bal** (ball, dance), **des bals**; **un carnaval** (carnival), **des carnavaux**; **un festival** (festival), **des festivals**; **un récital** (recital), **des récitals**.

Nouns ending in **-eu** or **-eau** in the singular add **-x** in the plural. For example:

 Edouard n'a pas un seul **cheveu**. Bien sûr, c'est un escargot! Mais Tammy a les **cheveux** longs. C'est une tatou extraordinaire!

Edouard does not have one single hair. Of course, he's a snail. But Tammy has long hair. She's an extraordinary armadillo!

Nouns ending in **-ou** end in **-oux** in the plural:

 un bijou (jewel), **des bijoux**
un caillou (stone, pebble), **des cailloux**
un chou (cabbage), **des choux**



un genou (knee), des **genoux**
un hibou (owl), des **hiboux**
un pou (louse), des **poux**



Exceptions include: un clou (nail), des **clous**; un sou (money), des **sous**; un trou (hole), des **trous**.

irregular plurals

Some nouns have an alternate form in the plural:

- 🔊 un oeil (eye), des **yeux**
- Madame (Madam), **Mesdames**
- Monsieur (Sir), **Messieurs**
- Mademoiselle (Miss), **Mesdemoiselles**

Note that some nouns follow the regular rule of plural formation but are pronounced differently in the plural. For example, the **f** is pronounced in the singular, but **not** in the plural. Listen:

- 🔊 un oeuf (egg), des oeufs
- un boeuf (steer), des boeufs
- un os (bone), des os

Listen to the dialogue:

🔊 Corey: Dis Bette, tu as déjà mangé une **souris**?

Bette: Oh oui! J'aime les **souris**! Et aussi les **rats**, les **oiseaux**, les **lézards**. Je ne mange jamais de **végétaux**, mais quelquefois des **insectes** ...

Corey: Des **insectes**! Allez, au revoir.

Corey: Bette, have you ever eaten a mouse?

Bette: Oh yes! I love mice! And rats, birds and lizards too! I never eat plants, but sometimes insects ...

Corey: Insects! Alright, bye-bye.



exercices

fill in the blanks

Give the plural form of the noun indicated in parentheses. Pay attention to both the article and the noun.

1. Bette aime _____. (le bijoux)
2. Fiona aime _____. (le cheval)

3. Joe-Bob aime _____ américaines. (la bière)
4. Tex n'aime pas _____. (le choix)
5. Joe-Bob n'aime pas _____. difficiles. (le cours)
6. Tammy n'aime pas _____. (l'hôpital)
7. Eduard aime _____. (le tableau)
8. Bette aime _____ de Tex. (l'oeil)
9. Tex aime _____ français. (le poète)
10. Corey aime _____ fraîches. (la boisson)
11. Tammy aime _____ américains. (le campus)
12. Corey n'aime pas _____. (l'examen)