

DEFINITE ARTICLE

In French nouns can be classified into Masculine and Feminine Gender.

The Definite Article coming :-

- before Masculine Singular(MS) Nouns is `le`
- before Feminine Singular (FS) nouns is `la`
- before Masculine and Feminine Singular nouns beginning with a vowel or `h` is `l`
- before Masculine Plural & Feminine Plural Nouns is `les`

SINGULAR		PLURAL	
le livre(MS)	The book	les livres(MP)	The books
la table(FS)	The table	les tables(FP)	The tables
le garçon(MS)	The boy	les garçons(MP)	The boys
la fille(FS)	The girl	les filles(FP)	The girls
l'enfant(MS)vowel	The child	les enfants(MP)	The children
L'homme(MS)	The man	les hommes(MP)	The men
L'image(FS)	The picture	les images(FP)	The Pictures

So we can see that for one word `the` in English there are four equivalents in FRENCH

the	MS (Masculine Singular)	FS (Masculine Singular)	Singular(vowel or h)	PLURAL
	le	la	l'	les

- When you learn the meaning of a noun in French, let's say `book` we have to learn it ideally with the `Definite Article` ;-eg: le livre..

So we know that `book` in French is a Masculine Singular Noun.

- Some nouns have a gender, either Masculine or Feminine which is obvious; eg., `the boy` = `le garçon`...This is obviously Masculine. `the girl` = `la fille` is obviously Feminine.

- For nouns beginning with a 'vowel' or 'h' it is better to learn the noun with the indefinite Article 'a' or 'an' which is 'un' for Masculine and 'une' for Feminine.
Eg., un arbre = a tree ... So 'tree' in French is Masculine
Une image= a picture ...So 'picture' in French is Feminine
(the Definite Article in both the above cases is 'l' ... so we cannot determine the gender of the noun just by the Definite Article 'l'arbre'= the 'the tree' and 'L'image' = 'the picture')
- For some uncountable nouns beginning with a vowel in French ...eg., 'eau'(Feminine)= 'water'
we have to make note of the 'gender' when we learn it with the Definite Article;- eg 'l'eau'...
as we usually do not use the indefinite Article 'un' or 'une' with such uncountable nouns.
'l'eau' = 'water' and is Feminine
& 'l'encre'= ink and is Feminine
