

Vocabulary

Note: Many English words and expressions about food come directly from French. This is why some words about food are written with an accent (for example: à la carte). However, you may also see such words written without accent.

Vocabulary <i>part of speech</i>	Meaning	Example sentence
à la carte <i>adjective</i>	without a side dish	Is it possible to get the steak à la carte? I don't eat potatoes.
à la mode <i>adjective</i>	with ice cream	Would you like your apple pie à la mode?
alcohol, liquor <i>noun</i>	a distilled liquid such as rum or whiskey	This beer has 5% alcohol.
all you can eat <i>adjective</i>	customers pay one fee and can eat as much as they wish	These are all you can eat fries, so let me know if you want more.
appetizer <i>noun</i>	small snack before a meal	Would you like some garlic bread or another appetizer to start?
appetizing <i>adjective</i>	looks pleasing to eat	I'm afraid these pancakes don't look very appetizing.
apron <i>noun</i>	a cloth covering worn over the clothes while cooking	Remove your apron before you come out to the dining room.
awful (taste) <i>adjective</i>	very bad taste	The customer said that her pasta was awful.
bar <i>noun</i>	place in an establishment where people go to get a drink (especially alcoholic drinks)	If you sit up at the bar you don't have to order any food.
barbeque <i>noun/verb</i>	southern style of cooking over a grill	The barbeque wings are our specialty.
barstool <i>noun</i>	tall seats that customers use at the bar	The guest fell off his barstool before he even ordered a drink.
bartender <i>noun</i>	staff member that mixes, pours, and serves alcoholic beverages	I do part-time work as a bartender in a local pub.
beverage <i>noun</i>	drink	Can I bring you some beverages while you look at the menus?
bill, cheque, check <i>noun</i>	the slip of paper that tells the customer how much to pay	Table 3 would like you to bring them their cheque.
black coffee	coffee without any milk	Should I bring some cream, or do

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black coffee coffee without any milk Should I bring some cream, or do

<i>adjective + noun</i>		you take your coffee black?
boil <i>verb</i>	style of cooking that involves placing food in a deep pot of extremely hot water	We usually boil the potatoes first so that they will cook faster.
book off <i>verb</i>	mark a day that you cannot work	I need to book off the first week of May.
booster seat <i>noun</i>	a plastic unit that fits on top of a chair to help small children reach the table	Will your child be needing a booster seat today?
booth/bench <i>noun</i>	type of seating in which people sit side by side on a cushioned area	We'd prefer a booth if you have one available.
booze <i>noun(idiom)</i>	alcohol	You've been into the booze already, haven't you?
bottle opener <i>noun</i>	a device used for opening beer bottles that don't twist off	All of the servers keep bottle openers on their keychains.
bread basket <i>noun</i>	slices of bread and butter served before and with a meal	I'll bring you a bread basket to hold the kids down until dinner.
breaded <i>adjective</i>	rolled and cooked in bread crumbs	The shrimp is breaded in our homemade batter.
buffet <i>noun</i>	self-serve tables of food that are set out for the customer to pick and choose from	The plates and everything you need are up at the buffet.
burnt <i>adjective</i>	overcooked to the point of turning black	The toast is burnt around the edges.
buspan <i>noun</i>	rubber tub used for collecting dirty dishes	The buspan is stacked so high it's too heavy for me to carry.
busboy, busser <i>noun</i>	a person who helps out in a restaurant (especially clearing and setting tables)	Ask the busboy to help you bring out all of the food.
cash <i>noun</i>	paper money payment	I don't have any cash. Do you accept Visa?
cash out <i>verb</i>	counting and submitting the payment of all of the customers bills at the end of one's shift	Don't forget to include any coupons from tonight when you cash out later.
cashier <i>noun</i>	staff member responsible for collecting customer's money at the front of an establishment	We don't have a cashier; you have to pay your server.
charge <i>verb</i>	to add a fee	I will have to charge you an extra dollar to add ice cream.
check on	make sure the guests are satisfied	You should always check on your

adjective + noun you take your coffee black?

boil verb

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<i>verb</i>		guests about two minutes after you serve the meal.
chef <i>noun</i>	staff member who is professionally trained to prepare food	Our head chef is one of the best cooks in town.
clear <i>verb</i>	remove finished or unused items from a table	You need to clear this table and set it for four.
cocktail <i>noun</i>	an alcoholic drink with juice	Would anyone care for a cocktail on this warm sunny day?
coffee maker <i>noun</i>	machine that dispenses coffee into a glass container for pouring	You need to teach the new waitress how to operate the coffee maker.
coffee round <i>noun</i>	an offering of coffee and refills around a section of a restaurant	Let's ask the busboy to do a coffee round while we take a smoke break.
combo, combination <i>noun</i>	mixture	The combo platter has veggies, ribs, and chicken fingers.
comment card <i>noun</i>	a piece of paper that customers are given to record their dining experience	When she asked for a comment card I knew she was going to complain about the food.
complaint <i>noun</i>	a problem with service or food	The guest brought his complaint to the manager.
condiments <i>noun</i>	types of sauces that are added for flavouring (i.e. mustard)	All of the condiments you should need are on the table.
cook <i>verb/noun</i>	prepare and heat food until it is ready to serve	The guest says that this chicken isn't cooked enough.
corkscrew <i>noun</i>	tool for removing the cork from the top of a wine bottle.	You will need to learn how to work a corkscrew before you start bartending.
counter <i>noun</i>	flat area often used for placing dishes on or preparing food	I left one of the salads on the kitchen counter by mistake.
coupon <i>noun</i>	a slip of paper that offers the customers a discounted rate	Your coupon is only valid for food, not for alcoholic drinks.
complimentary <i>adjective</i>	free of charge	The desserts are complimentary because the dinner took so long.
creamer <i>noun</i>	small plastic container of cream for coffee	Will you need more than two creamers for your coffee?
credit card <i>noun</i>	a plastic card that allows people to pay for something later	You forgot to sign your credit card slip.

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customer, guest <i>noun</i>	person who goes to an establishment to be served	It is our policy that the customer is always right.
customer service <i>noun</i>	treatment of guests	Our restaurant got the award for having the best customer service this year.
cutlery, silverware, utensils <i>noun</i>	tools for eating with (fork, knife, spoon)	In a fine dining restaurant the staff has to polish the silverware.
cut off <i>verb</i>	stop serving a customer any more alcohol	I cut off the man with the beard because he'd had too much to drink.
debit <i>noun</i>	use bank card to pay directly from bank account	Can we pay by debit here, or do you only take credit cards?
deep fried <i>adjective</i>	cooked in a large pot of oil	Most of the appetizers on our menu are deep fried.
defrost, thaw <i>verb</i>	remove frozen food from the freezer to prepare	Don't forget to defrost some pies for tomorrow.
delicious <i>adjective</i>	very good taste	The cookies were so delicious they were gone in half an hour.
delivery <i>noun</i>	food brought to the home	Do you have delivery or do we have to come in to eat?
designated driver <i>adjective + noun</i>	person in a party who agrees not to consume alcohol in order to drive everyone home safely	Is there a designated driver in your party or are you taking a taxi?
dessert <i>noun</i>	sweet treat after a meal	I think we're too full to have dessert tonight.
dessert tray <i>noun</i>	a plate of all of the desserts that customers can view and order from	I'll bring the dessert tray around and see if I can tempt any of you with a slice of cake or pie.
dirty dishes <i>adjective + noun</i>	plates that customers are finished with	I'll just clear these dirty dishes and make some room for you.
discount <i>noun</i>	at a cheaper cost	We got a discount because we are regular customers.
dishpit <i>noun</i>	area in the restaurant where the dirty dishes are placed.	Jody is not going to want to go into the dishpit today.
dishwasher <i>noun</i>	the staff member/machine that washes the dirty dishes	Can you bring the dishwasher these pans to clean?
doggie bag	unfinished food that is packed up for	I can't finish my steak, but I'll take

person customer, guest

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<i>noun</i>	the customer to take home	a doggie bag.
double <i>noun</i>	two shots of alcohol in one drink	Make that a double in a tall glass, please.
draft <i>noun</i>	beer from a keg that pours out of a tap	We have a selection of local beers on draft.
dressing <i>noun</i>	liquid topping for salads	Would you like Italian or French dressing?
dry <i>adjective</i>	no sauce	I'll have dry toast with two eggs.
entrée, main course <i>noun</i>	the largest part of a meal (after appetizer, before dessert)	The entrées are after the lunch specials on page 6 of the menu.
fast-food <i>noun</i>	an eatery that offers quick inexpensive food	We don't provide table service. This is a fast-food restaurant.
fine dining <i>noun</i>	a very expensive eating establishment	The waiters wear bowties because it's a fine dining restaurant.
float <i>noun</i>	small amount of cash used to make change at the beginning of a server or bartender's shift	I need a roll of quarters for my float.
free refills <i>adjective + noun</i>	beverages that can be filled again without any cost	Have all of the soda you want; it's free refills here.
fry <i>verb</i>	cook over an element in oil	Don't fry the vegetables too long or they will go soggy.
garnish <i>noun/verb</i>	food that is added to a plate for appearance or colour (i.e. parsley or fruit)	Don't forget to garnish all of the entrees that go out.
glassware <i>noun</i>	group of drinking glasses	Make sure the glassware doesn't have any spots before you put it away.
gloves (plastic) <i>noun</i>	covering for the hands to prevent the spread of germs	Whenever you are handling food make sure you are wearing gloves.
gratuity/tip <i>noun</i>	extra money given as a thank you for service	When we have a large party we're allowed to add a 15% gratuity to the bill.
greet <i>verb</i>	say hello and welcome customers to the establishment	Your priority as a hostess is to greet the guests at the door with a smile.
grill <i>noun/verb</i>	cooking over iron slats that allow for oil and fat to drop down	The healthiest way to prepare meat is on a grill.

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double noun

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hairnet <i>noun</i>	a covering worn on the head while preparing food	If you don't want to wear a hat, you can wear a hairnet.
happy hour <i>noun</i>	short amount of time when alcoholic drinks are on sale	We're expecting a rush because it's almost happy hour.
highball <i>noun</i>	alcohol served with soda	Our highballs are on for half price today.
highchair <i>noun</i>	a tall chair with a plastic tray designed for a baby	The party is for ten plus a highchair.
hold <i>verb</i>	leave off/without	I'll take a hamburger, hold the bun.
homemade <i>adjective</i>	made from a recipe	We serve the best homemade soup in town.
host, hostess <i>noun</i>	staff member in charge of greeting and seating customers in a restaurant	Please wait and the hostess will seat you.
ingredients <i>noun</i>	all of the different foods that are combined in a recipe	I'll check the ingredients to make sure there aren't any nuts.
kettle <i>noun</i>	pot for boiling water for tea	I'll put the kettle on and make some fresh tea.
last call <i>noun</i>	the last chance for a person to get an alcoholic drink before the establishment closes	We'll have two more screwdrivers for last call.
lemon, lime wedge <i>noun</i>	a small segment of lemon or lime put on the rim of a glass	I'd like a lemon wedge for my ice water please.
lineup <i>noun/verb</i>	a number of people waiting for something	Is this the lineup to pay or get seated?
liqueur <i>noun</i>	alcohol that has a syrupy/sweet taste	Can I offer you a coffee liqueur to go with your dessert?
make change <i>verb + noun</i>	give customers money back from a payment	We can make change if all you have is large notes.
manager <i>noun/adjective</i>	person in charge of a section of a restaurant	I'd like to speak to the floor manager about the service.
melt <i>verb</i>	warm to soften (i.e. cheese/butter)	First, melt two tablespoons of butter in the microwave.
menu <i>noun</i>	a booklet of all of the food that can be ordered	Do you have a children's menu we could see?
microwave <i>noun</i>	a small appliance that heats and cooks food quickly	We can heat your dinner in the microwave if you like.

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mild <i>adjective</i>	not spicy	I'd like a half dozen mild chicken wings.
nightclub <i>noun</i>	establishment where adults go to dance and drink alcoholic beverages	If you work at the nightclub you will have to stay until 2 AM.
non alcoholic beverage <i>adjective + noun</i>	a drink that resembles a certain drink without the alcohol	Can I order a non alcoholic beer?
notepad <i>noun</i>	paper that a server uses to write down orders	Just let me grab my notepad and I'll take your order.
on the rocks <i>preposition + noun</i>	on ice	I'll take a whiskey on the rocks.
on the side <i>preposition + noun</i>	request for a food item to NOT be put on top of another food item	For the nachos, can we have the sour cream on the side?
order <i>verb/noun</i>	make a request to a server	Is everyone ready to order lunch now?
over charge <i>verb</i>	give a customer a bill that is too high (by mistake)	I think you over charged us for our drinks; we only had one each.
pack up <i>verb</i>	put in a take-out container for the customer to bring home	Would you like me to pack up the rest of that pizza?
party <i>noun</i>	group of people at or waiting for a table	A party of twelve just walked in without a reservation.
patio <i>noun</i>	outdoor seating	We closed the patio because it looks like it's going to rain.
paycheque <i>noun</i>	money given to the staff every week or two	You'll get a paycheque every other Monday.
pitcher, jug <i>noun</i>	a container with a spout to pour water, beer, or other beverages out of	We'll take a pitcher of beer with four glasses.
portion <i>noun/verb</i>	a separate amount of food	The chicken fingers are already portioned in the freezer.
pour <i>verb</i>	dispense liquid from a container	Can I pour you folks another glass of water?
prepare <i>verb</i>	get food ready	The servers have to prepare the salads themselves.
pub <i>noun</i>	establishment that specializes in casual food and alcoholic beverages	I can wear whatever I want when I work at the pub.
punch clock and punch card <i>noun</i>	a machine that staff members place a card into when they begin and finish a work shift	I don't want staff members hanging around the punch clock.

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The servers have to prepare the salads themselves.

pub noun

get food ready

I can wear whatever I want when I work at the pub.

punch clock and punch card noun

establishment that specializes in casual food and alcoholic beverages

a machine that staff members place a card into when they begin and finish a work shift

I don't want staff members hanging around the punch clock.

punch in, out <i>verb</i>	put a card in the punch clock to mark the time you start and end a shift	You can punch out as soon as you finish sweeping the floors.
punch <i>something</i> in <i>verb</i>	enter an order into a computer system	I'm going to punch in a large order now, so get ready.
rare <i>adjective</i>	cooked meat that is pink inside	This steak is too rare for me to eat.
recipe <i>noun</i>	list of ingredients and instructions for preparing a certain type of food	Our chef is so talented that he almost never bothers with a recipe.
regulars <i>noun</i>	people who come into an establishment often	You can give the regulars a complimentary drink from time to time.
reservation <i>noun</i>	a request to have a table saved for a certain amount of people	We don't take any reservations; it's first come first served here.
restrooms <i>noun</i>	place for people to use a toilet and wash hands	The restrooms are to your left and down the stairs.
roll-up <i>noun</i>	a set of cutlery wrapped in a napkin	Before we punch out we have to prepare enough roll-ups for the night shift.
rush <i>noun</i>	a large amount of customers arriving at the same time	We always have a rush after church on Sundays.
rush <i>noun/verb</i>	prepare quickly for a certain reason	Can you put a rush on this spaghetti; I forgot to punch it in.
sauce <i>noun</i>	liquid flavouring added to food	What kind of sauce would you like on your ice cream, butterscotch or chocolate?
schedule <i>noun/verb</i>	a notice of the time and date each staff member has to work in a certain period of time	If you want to book off a day, let me know before I make the schedule.
seasoning <i>noun</i>	dry flavouring added to food	He wants the chicken plain without any seasoning.
self-serve <i>adjective</i>	the customers bring their own food items to the table and do not pay for service	We have a buffet on, so it's self-serve for lunch.
senior's discount <i>noun</i>	a reduced price for people over a certain age (i.e. over 65)	We have a senior's discount of 25% off on Mondays.
separate cheques <i>adjective + noun/verb + noun</i>	a different bill for each member/group sitting at a table	We asked for separate cheques but it all came on one bill.

put punch in, out

a card in the punch clock to mark

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but it all came on one bill.

serve <i>verb</i>	look after a customer, bring items to a customer	Is there someone in charge of serving out on the patio?
set <i>verb</i>	get a table ready with items such as cutlery and glassware	I need you to clear and set table five for a party of eight.
shade <i>noun</i>	place outside that is not in the sun	We'd like to sit on the patio if there is any shade.
shot <i>noun</i>	one ounce of alcohol served in a small glass (shot glass)	Let's do a shot to get this party started.
shooter <i>noun</i>	an ounce of alcohol and juice combined	Is there a shooter that has orange juice in it?
side dish <i>noun</i>	choice of food that goes with a main meal	The two side dishes are mashed potatoes or french fries.
sour <i>adjective</i>	acid or fermented taste	I think the milk has gone sour from sitting out of the fridge too long.
sous chef <i>noun</i>	staff member who works under and assists the main chef	Our sous chef is leaving to become the head chef at another restaurant.
specials <i>noun</i>	items that were prepared particularly for a certain day and are usually at a reduced price	Would you like to hear the specials before you decide on lunch.
specialty <i>noun</i>	food item that a restaurant is popular for	Homemade fish and chips is our specialty.
spicy <i>adjective</i>	hot flavour	Any item with three chillies beside it means that the dish is very spicy.
stay <i>verb</i>	to eat in the restaurant	Are these coffees to go or to stay.
stir, mix <i>verb</i>	spin round and round with a spoon	Stir the soup for a few minutes before you serve it.
straw <i>noun</i>	long hollow plastic stick for drinking out of	Can I please get a straw for my ice tea?
straight up <i>adjective</i>	alcoholic drink without any mix or ice	He always has a straight up glass of rum after his meal.
substitute <i>verb</i>	replace one item for another	Can I substitute the carrots for corn?
supervisor <i>noun</i>	staff member in charge of watching over things and dealing with problems	When I'm not here George will be your supervisor.
sweet <i>adjective</i>	taste with a lot of sugar	If you like sweet things, you'll love our chocolate cheesecake.

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take-out <i>adjective/verb</i>	food that is packed up and eaten at home	You can either eat in or order food to take-out.
two-minute check <i>noun</i>	a visit to a table approximately two minutes after the food has been served to check for satisfaction	Don't forget to do your two-minute check to make sure the steak is cooked properly.
terminal <i>noun</i>	computer system for punching in food orders	There's one terminal in the kitchen and one on the bar.
till <i>noun</i>	drawer of a cash register that money is kept in	You need a key to open the till and make change.
to go <i>verb</i>	to take out of the restaurant	We're just going to order a pizza to go.
toppings <i>noun</i>	food items that go on top of other food items to add flavour	What type of toppings would you like to have on your pizza?
uniform <i>noun</i>	clothing that staff members have to wear	The uniform here is black pants and a white shirt.
waiter, waitress <i>noun</i>	staff member in charge of taking orders and serving food and beverages	When I got promoted from a hostess to a waitress I started making tips.
waiting list <i>noun</i>	list of groups who want a table to eat at	We have a twenty minute waiting list tonight.
warm up <i>verb</i>	heat food to an enjoyable temperature for eating	Would you mind warming up the baby's bottle for me?
well- done <i>adjective</i>	cooked for longer than average	The meat was so well-done it had no flavour.
wine list <i>noun</i>	a menu of all of the wine you can order from the glass, litre, or bottle	You will notice that we have a lot of local wine on our wine list.
winery <i>noun</i>	a place where wine is made, tasted, and sold	There is another winery up the hill that you might enjoy stopping at.
wine tasting <i>adjective</i>	sampling different types of wine	If you are intersted in trying some wines you should go on a wine tasting tour.

food take-out

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food adjective/verb

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to take-out.**two-minute check noun**

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