

French For Gringos Lesson 4 Numbers 20100 Money Prices 2026 10 05

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Maya: Bonjour, and welcome back to French for Gringos. I'm Maya.

Devon: And I'm Devon. You've got one through twenty down. Today we're climbing higher: the tens from thirty to one hundred, plus the words that make money work when you're shopping, eating, and taxiing your way around France and QuØbec.

Maya: Let's start at thirty. Trente. Say trah(n)t. Tip: it's a nasal vowel, so hum trah through the nose, and don't say trench, say trah(n)t.

Devon: Forty is quarante. Say kah-rah(n)t. Tip: the final e is silent, so the word ends on that nasal t, kah-rah(n)t. Two syllables, said slow.

Maya: Fifty is cinquante. Say sah(n)-kah(n)t. Tip: two nasal vowels in a row, sah(n)-kah(n)t. Breathe through your nose and it sings.

Devon: Sixty is soixante. Say swah-sah(n)t. Tip: the oi in French sounds like wah, swah, and the x is silent. So swah-sah(n)t, never six-antee.

Maya: Now seventy is where French gets fun. It's soixante-dix, literally sixty-ten. Say swah-sah(n)t-dees. Tip: you already know both halves from last lesson, so just glue them together. And in QuØbec you'll often hear septante, seh-p-tah(n)t, which is way more logical. Either one works everywhere.

Devon: Eighty is the famous one: quatre-vingts, literally four-twenties. Say kah-truh-vah(n). Tip: the final s is silent when the word stands alone, so kah-truh-vah(n), no buzz at the end. The French counted fingers and toes, and we're still paying for it.

Maya: Ninety is quatre-vingt-dix, literally four-twenty-ten. Say kah-truh-vah(n)-dees. Tip: now the s comes back as a buzz, kah-truh-vah(n)-dees, because a vowel follows. In QuØbec you might hear nonante, noh-nah(n)t, logical again. In France, stick with quatre-vingt-dix.

Devon: And one hundred is cent. Say sah(n). Tip: just one nasal vowel, sah(n), and the t is silent. Careful though, cent also means a penny, depending on context.

Maya: Now the money phrase you'll use a hundred times a day, literally. Combien ça coØte? It means, how much does it cost? Say koh(n)-byah(n) sah koot. Tip: the n in combien is nasal, koh(n), and coØte is one clean syllable, koot. Pair it with euros, uh-roh, and you're unstoppable.

Devon: Let's demo. Scene: a flea market in Paris. I'm the vendor, Maya's eyeing a scarf.

Maya: Bonjour! Combien ça coØte, seel voo pleh?

Devon: Trente euros.

Maya: Trente euros. D'accord. Merci!

Devon: Merci! ÀbientØ!

Maya: Cultural note for today: in France, the price on the tag is the price you pay. Tax is already included, what the French call tout taxes comprises, so there is no surprise math at the register. In OuØbec it's the opposite: the listed price does