

French civic exam: the geography of France to remember

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Seas, oceans and river

6 questions

• The Atlantic Ocean

Which ocean borders the west coast of France?

In French: Quel océan borde la côte ouest française ? **The Atlantic Ocean**

Multi-year card

Remember: It borders the west coast.

Trap: The Channel is in the north, the Mediterranean in the south.

• The English Channel

Which sea lies between France and England?

In French: Quelle mer se situe entre la France et l'Angleterre ?

The English Channel (la Manche) Resident card · Naturalisation

Remember: The sea between France and England, in the north.

Trap: It is not the Mediterranean, the Baltic or the Black Sea.

• The Mediterranean Sea

Which sea lies to the south of mainland France?

In French: Quelle est la mer au sud de la France métropolitaine ?

The Mediterranean Sea Multi-year card

Which sea or ocean borders metropolitan France?

In French: Quelle mer ou océan borde la France métropolitaine ?

The Mediterranean Sea Resident card · Naturalisation

Remember: The sea in the south. Corsica and Nice are on the Mediterranean.

Trap: "Which sea or ocean borders metropolitan France?": the answer is the Mediterranean.

• The Seine

Which river flows through France? In French: Quel fleuve coule en France ? **The Seine**

Multi-year card

Which river flows through Paris? In French: Quel fleuve traverse Paris ? **The Seine**

Resident card · Naturalisation

Remember: The river that flows through Paris.

Trap: Not the Loire, the Rhône or the Garonne.



Mountains

4 questions

• The Alps

Which mountain range lies between France and Italy?

In French: Quelle chaîne de montagnes est située entre la France et l'Italie ? **The Alps**

Multi-year card · Naturalisation

What is the highest mountain in France?

In French: Quelle est la plus haute montagne de France ? **Mont Blanc** Naturalisation

Which French region is known for its ski resorts?

In French: Quelle région française est réputée pour ses stations de ski ?

Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Naturalisation

Remember: Between France and Italy. Mont Blanc, the highest mountain in France.

Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes is the region known for its ski resorts.

Trap: The Pyrenees are the border with Spain.

• The Pyrenees

Which mountain range lies between France and Spain?

In French: Quelle chaîne de montagnes est située entre la France et l'Espagne ?

The Pyrenees Resident card · Naturalisation

Remember: Between France and Spain.

Trap: The Alps are the border with Italy. The Vosges, the Jura and the Massif central are wrong options.

Europe and neighbours

4 questions

• Europe

On which continent is mainland France located?

In French: Sur quel continent se situe la France métropolitaine ? **Europe**

Multi-year card

Remember: Metropolitan France is in Europe.

• Belgium

Which country shares a land border with metropolitan France?

In French: Quel pays a une frontière terrestre avec la France métropolitaine ? **Belgium**

Resident card

Remember: Shares a land border with France.

Trap: Not Portugal or Austria.

- **Germany**

Which country borders metropolitan France to the north-east?

In French: Quel pays a une frontière avec la France métropolitaine au nord-est ?

Germany Resident card

Remember: Border in the north-east.

Trap: Not Spain or Andorra.

- **Italy**

Which of these countries shares land borders with France?

In French: Lequel de ces pays partage des frontières terrestres avec la France ? **Italy**

Resident card

Remember: Shares a land border. The Alps are between the two.

Cities and ports

17 questions

- **Paris**

What is Paris? In French: Qu'est-ce que Paris ? **The capital of France**

Multi-year card

What is the capital of France? In French: Quelle est la capitale de la France ? **Paris**

Multi-year card

What is the Louvre? In French: Qu'est-ce que le Louvre ? **A major museum in Paris**

Multi-year card

In which city is the Eiffel Tower? In French: Dans quelle ville se trouve la tour Eiffel ?

In Paris Multi-year card

Which of these French departments attracts the most tourists?

In French: Lequel de ces départements de France est le plus touristique ? **Paris**

Resident card

Which museum is in Paris? In French: Quel musée est situé à Paris ?

The Louvre Museum Resident card · Naturalisation

Which region has the largest population? In French: Quelle région est la plus peuplée ?

Île-de-France Resident card

Remember: The capital of France. The Eiffel Tower and the Louvre. The most visited département. Île-de-France is the most populated region.

- **Lyon**

Which city is French? In French: Quelle ville est française ? **Lyon** Multi-year card

What is the capital (chef-lieu) of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region?

In French: Quel est le chef-lieu de la région Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes ? **Lyon**

Naturalisation

Remember: A French city. Capital of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes.

Trap: Not Grenoble or Clermont-Ferrand.

- **Marseille**

Which city is a major seaport? In French: Quelle ville est un grand port maritime ?

Marseille Multi-year card

Which French city is a seaport? In French: Quelle ville française est un port maritime ?

Marseille Resident card

What is France's main seaport? In French: Quel est le principal port maritime de France ?

Marseille Naturalisation

What is the capital (chef-lieu) of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region?

In French: Quel est le chef-lieu de la région Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur ? **Marseille**

Naturalisation

Remember: Two answers: the main sea port of France, and the capital of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur.

Trap: For the PACA region, Nice is a wrong option.

- **Nice**

Which city is on the Mediterranean coast?

In French: Quelle ville est située au bord de la mer Méditerranée ? **Nice** Multi-year card

Remember: The Mediterranean city in the questions.

Trap: It is not the capital of PACA.

- **Bordeaux**

Which French city is one of the country's 10 largest metropolitan areas?

In French: Quelle ville française fait partie des 10 plus grandes métropoles du pays ?

Bordeaux Resident card · Naturalisation

Remember: One of the 10 largest metropolitan areas in the country.

- **Nantes**

What was the main French port involved in the Atlantic slave trade in the 18th century?

In French: Quel était le principal port français impliqué dans la traite négrière au XVIIIe siècle ?

Nantes Naturalisation

Remember: The main slave-trade port in the 18th century.

Trap: Not Marseille.

- **Rennes**

What is the capital (chef-lieu) of the Brittany (Bretagne) region?

In French: Quel est le chef-lieu de la région Bretagne ? **Rennes** Naturalisation

Remember: Capital of Brittany (Bretagne).

Trap: Not Brest, Quimper or Nantes.

Islands and overseas

11 questions

- **Corsica**

Where is Corsica? In French: Où se situe la Corse ? **In the Mediterranean Sea**

Multi-year card

Which island is French? In French: Quelle île est française ? **Corsica** Naturalisation

Remember: A French island, in the Mediterranean.

Trap: Corsica is not overseas.

- **Overseas France**

What is overseas France (la France d'outre-mer)?

In French: Qu'est ce que la France d'outre-mer ?

The territories of the Republic located far from Europe, in the oceans

Resident card · Naturalisation

Remember: The territories of the Republic located far from Europe, in the oceans.

- **Guadeloupe**

Which island is a French overseas department?

In French: Quelle île est un département d'outre-mer français ? **Guadeloupe**

Multi-year card · Naturalisation

Remember: An island, an overseas département.

- **Martinique**

Which island is part of the French Antilles?

In French: Quelle île fait partie des Antilles françaises ? **Martinique** Naturalisation

Remember: An island of the French Antilles.

Trap: Réunion is not in the Antilles.

- **French Guiana**

Which French department shares a border with Brazil?

In French: Quel département français a une frontière avec le Brésil ?

French Guiana (la Guyane) Naturalisation

From which French town does the Ariane rocket take off?

In French: De quelle ville française décolle la fusée Ariane ? **Kourou** Naturalisation

Remember: Borders Brazil. The Ariane rocket launches from Kourou.

Trap: Kourou, not Cayenne or Toulouse.

- **Mayotte**

Which has been France's 101st department since 2011?

In French: Quel est le 101ème département français depuis 2011 ? **Mayotte**

Naturalisation

Remember: The 101st département, since 2011.

- **Réunion**

Which French island is in the Indian Ocean?

In French: Quelle île française se trouve dans l'océan Indien ? **Réunion** Resident card

Which French island is in the Indian Ocean?

In French: Quelle île française est située dans l'océan indien ? **Réunion** Naturalisation

Which French island lies to the south-east of the African continent?

In French: Quelle île française se trouve au sud-est du continent africain ? **Réunion**

Naturalisation

Remember: An island in the Indian Ocean, south-east of Africa. The answer to 3 questions.

Trap: Not Martinique or Guadeloupe.

Regions and departments

5 questions

• The numbers

How many departments are there in France?

In French: Combien y a-t-il de départements en France ? **101**

Multi-year card · Naturalisation

How many regions are there in mainland France?

In French: Combien y a-t-il de régions en France métropolitaine ? **13**

Multi-year card · Naturalisation

How many regions are there in France?

In French: Combien y a-t-il de régions en France ? **18** Resident card

How is France organised administratively?

In French: Quelle est l'organisation administrative de la France ?

Into municipalities (communes), departments and regions Resident card

How is France divided administratively?

In French: Comment est organisé le découpage administratif de la France ?

Into municipalities, departments and regions Naturalisation

Remember: 13 regions in metropolitan France, 18 in total, 101 départements. France is organised into communes, départements and regions.

Trap: 13 regions in metropolitan France, but 18 including overseas.

Famous places

3 questions

• Normandy

In which region are some of the landing beaches that began the liberation of France?

In French: Dans quelle région est située une partie des plages du débarquement ayant permis d'engager la libération de la France ?

Normandy Naturalisation

Which historic monument stands on an island in Normandy?

In French: Quel monument historique se trouve sur une île en Normandie ?

Mont-Saint-Michel Naturalisation

Remember: Some of the D-Day landing beaches. Mont-Saint-Michel, on an island.

Trap: Not Brittany.

• Reims

In which city were the kings of France crowned?

In French: Dans quelle ville les rois de France étaient-ils couronnés ? **Reims**
Naturalisation

Remember: Where the kings of France were crowned.

Trap: Not Versailles.

Population

3 questions

• The population

What is the approximate population of France in 2025?

In French: Quelle est la population approximative de la France en 2025 ?

About 69 million inhabitants Resident card · Naturalisation

Where do most French people live? In French: Où habite la majorité des Français ?

In a town or city, or an urban area Resident card

Where are the main economic activities in France located?

In French: Où se trouvent les principales activités économiques en France ?

Mainly in large cities and their urban areas Resident card

Remember: About 69 million inhabitants. Most live in towns and cities, where most economic activity is.

The numbers

101

départements

13

regions in metropolitan France

18

regions in total

69M

inhabitants, approximately
(2025)

13 regions in metropolitan France, but 18 including overseas.

SOURCES

The questions come from the official lists of the French Ministry of the Interior (formation-civique.interieur.gouv.fr and immigration.interieur.gouv.fr).

The answer options, answers, English translations, explanations and map are by Recite. Base map: Natural Earth.