



Top 25 French Slang Words

French Lesson

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Video transcript

Hey there and welcome to Ablas! Today we'll be covering the top 25 French slang words and phrases, so you can sound just like a native speaker. Be sure to download the PDF of today's lesson from the link in the description!

Descriptive terms

Let's start off with some descriptive slang terms.

- "C'est chouette comme idée !" (That's a nice idea!) Chouette can also mean an owl, but in this context, it means "nice" or "cool".
- "Arrête d'être relou, laisse-le tranquille." (Stop being annoying, leave him alone.) This is our first example of verlan, which is when a word is reversed into a new slang alternative. Relou comes from the word lourd, meaning "heavy", but can mean "annoying" in an informal context.
- "C'est chelou, il n'a pas répondu à mes messages." (It's weird, he hasn't replied to my messages.) Chelou comes from the word louche, and it's often used when someone is acting weird or shady.
- "C'était chaud, on a failli rater le train. T'es chaud pour sortir ce soir ?" (That was a close call, we nearly missed the train. Are you up for going out tonight?) This one has a few different meanings: the standard meaning for chaud is "hot", but it can also mean something was risky or a close call. You can also use it to ask someone if they're up for doing something.
- "Ce concert était complètement ouf !" (That concert was absolutely insane!) Ouf comes from the word fou, meaning "crazy" or "insane".
- "Elle était tellement vénère qu'elle a claqué la porte." (She was so angry that she slammed the door.) Vénère comes from énervé, which is used when someone is furious or frustrated.
- "Il est grave doué." (He's seriously talented.) Grave is an intensifier that can be added to a sentence to emphasise something; it can also be used on its own.
- "Il cuisine vachement bien." (He cooks incredibly well.) This is another intensifier word to add extra emphasis to your sentence.

- "Passe-moi le truc là-bas." (Pass me that thing over there.) Truc is a good word to use when you don't know the name of something!

People

Now let's move on to slang terms about people.

- "C'est quoi le nom de ce mec ?" (What's that guy's name?) Mec is a common way to refer to a regular guy, or someone's boyfriend.
- "C'est sa meuf depuis deux ans." (She's been his girlfriend for two years.) Similarly, meuf can either refer to a woman or a girlfriend, and it comes from the word femme.
- "Je sors avec mes potes ce soir." (I'm going out with my buddies tonight.) Pote is a gender-neutral noun, so it can be used to refer to any of your friends.
- "T'inquiète pas, frérot, je suis là." (Don't worry, bro, I'm here.) This is another informal address that can mean "bro" or "brother".

Colloquial verbs

And let's finish off with some colloquial verbs.

- "Je kiffe trop cette chanson." (I absolutely love that song.) You can use kiffer in any informal context to say you love something or someone.
- "Il m'a planté au dernier moment. Il s'est planté d'arrêt." (He ditched me at the last minute. He left at the wrong stop.) Planter can mean different things depending on the context. It can generally mean "to plant something", but informally, it can be used when someone ditches someone else, or even when your computer crashes. But when we turn this into a reflexive, "il s'est planté", this now means to get something wrong.
- "Il est vexé parce que personne l'a invité." (He's offended because nobody invited him.) Vexer can mean to hurt someone's feelings or to offend them.
- "On a maté un film toute la nuit." (We watched a film all night.) Mater means to watch or stare at something.

- "Il a bouffé trois pizzas tout seul." (He ate three pizzas all by himself.) This is a common informal version of the verb "to eat".
- "Fais gaffe, le sol est glissant." (Watch out, the floor is slippery.) This is a common way to tell someone to be careful.
- "Laisse tomber, on trouvera une autre solution." (Never mind, we'll find another solution.) You'd generally use this phrase as a way of dropping a subject.
- "Il a le seum depuis que son équipe a perdu." (He's been mad ever since his team lost.) You can use this phrase when you're feeling bitter or mad about something.
- "Il a la flemme d'aller à la salle de sport." (He can't be bothered to go to the gym.) This is a common phrase that means you can't be bothered. You can also use the word flemme on its own.
- "Je me suis fait des films, en vrai c'était pas si grave." (I blew it out of proportion; it really wasn't that bad.) This phrase can be used when someone is imagining something, or getting carried away with believing something that's not entirely true.
- "Arrête de te prendre la tête pour ça." (Stop stressing out over that.) Without the reflexive, this phrase means "to take the lead", but when we add the reflexive, it means to get stressed out or overthink something.
- "Wesh, on se retrouve où ce soir ?" (Hey, where are we meeting up tonight?) This one's a bonus word that's not a verb exactly, but is often used among young people as an informal greeting or filler word.

Conversation

Now that we've covered all those slang expressions, let's put them into practice with an everyday conversation.

	English	French
	It's a beautiful day on the beach near Montpellier. Three friends are walking along the water's edge: Raphaël, Sacha and Inès.	C'est une belle journée sur la plage près de Montpellier. Trois amis se promènent au bord de l'eau : Raphaël, Sacha et Inès.
Raphaël:	Yo, guys. Have you seen the sky today? It's so nice.	Wesh, les gars. Vous avez vu le ciel aujourd'hui ? C'est trop chouette.
Inès:	Totally. I can't be bothered to go home. I could stay here all day.	Grave. J'ai la flemme de rentrer, moi. Je resterais bien ici toute la journée.
Sacha:	Me too. By the way, have you heard from Kévin? He ditched us last night.	Moi aussi. Au fait, t'as des nouvelles de Kévin ? Il nous a plantés hier soir.
Raphaël:	Yeah, he sent me a weird message this morning.	Ouais, il m'a envoyé un message chelou ce matin.
Inès:	Forget it, that guy is so annoying. He never thinks about anyone else.	Laisse tomber, ce mec est relou. Il fait jamais gaffe aux autres.
Sacha:	True. Anyway, did you hear that Lucie and Thomas broke up?	C'est vrai. Bon, vous avez vu que Lucie et Thomas se sont séparés ?
Inès:	Seriously? She was really into that guy.	Sérieux ? Elle kiffait trop ce mec.
Raphaël:	Yeah but honestly, he was a bit shady, wasn't he?	Ouais mais franchement, il était un peu chelou, non ?
Sacha:	And she'd been building up a fantasy about their relationship from the start.	Et elle se faisait des films sur leur relation depuis le début.

	English	French
Inès:	It's still sad though. I hope she's doing okay.	C'est triste quand même. J'espère qu'elle va bien.
Raphaël:	She called me yesterday. She was furious at first, but she's doing better now.	Elle m'a appelé hier. Elle était vénère au début, mais maintenant ça va mieux.
Sacha:	And you Raphaël, how's the new job going?	Et toi Raphaël, ça se passe comment avec ton nouveau job ?
Raphaël:	Honestly, it's really good. We get Fridays off.	Franchement, c'est vachement bien. On a les vendredis off.
Inès:	Oh that's insane, you were so mad when you were working in Lyon!	Oh c'est ouf, t'avais trop le seum quand tu bossais à Lyon !
Raphaël:	Yeah, that was rough. I was really stressing out about everything.	Ouais, c'était chaud. Je me prenais trop la tête avec tout ça.
Sacha:	And you've got a flat now too, haven't you? It's weird seeing you so settled.	Et là t'as un appart aussi, non ? C'est chelou de te voir stable comme ça.
Raphaël:	Hey, it's not weird, bro! I've just grown up.	Hé, c'est pas chelou, frérot ! J'ai juste grandi.
Inès:	Right guys, I'm hungry. Shall we go eat something on a terrace?	Bon les mecs, j'ai faim. On va bouffer un truc en terrasse ?
Sacha:	Definitely, I can't be bothered to cook tonight.	Grave, j'ai la flemme de cuisiner ce soir.
Raphaël:	Let's go. I know a really great place not far from here.	On y va. Je connais un endroit vachement bien pas loin d'ici.

It's quiz time!

Did you spot the slang terms in that conversation? Feel free to leave us a comment with any questions. But we're not done yet – it's quiz time!

If someone says "laisse tomber", what do they want you to do?

- A. Hurry up
- B. Drop it
- C. Be careful

The correct answer is... they want you to drop it.

Which word means "shady" or "weird"?

- A. Relou
- B. Vénère
- C. Chelou

The correct answer is... chelou.

What does this mean: "Il m'a planté"?

- A. He ditched me
- B. He offended me
- C. He stared at me

The correct answer is... "He ditched me".

Your task

Well done for getting this far!

Now your task is to extend the conversation earlier with the three friends. Try to capture some more slang expressions we covered today.

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