A free kit for residents of France

Calling in French without panic

Scripts for the 8 phone calls every resident has to make: what to say, what you will hear back, and what to do when you do not catch it.

How to use it

1. **Before the call,** tick what you need on the "Have ready" list and read your opening out loud twice.
2. **Read "What you will hear back"** out loud too, because a phrase you have said yourself is much easier to catch at full speed.
3. **During the call,** keep the page in front of you. The lifelines are there for the moment you lose the thread, and using one is a normal part of any call.
4. **After the call,** fill in the "How did it go?" box, so the next call starts from what you noticed.

The calls

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The people and businesses in the scripts are made up. The public services are real, and what the kit says about them was checked on these official pages on 4 November 2026:

- Service-public annuaire: Assurance Maladie, 3646. https://lannuaire.service-public.gouv.fr/centres-contact/R19040
- Service-public F17578: the déclaration préalable de travaux. https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F17578
- Service-public F163: médecin traitant and the coordinated care pathway. https://www.service-public.gouv.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F163
- Ministry of the Economy: what to do if your bank card is lost or stolen. https://www.economie.gouv.fr/particuliers/eviter-les-arnaques/que-faire-en-cas-de-perte-ou-de-vol-de-votre-carte-bancaire

Written by Yann Le Bouhellec, French coach for English-speaking adults in France. The latest version is at **frenchlevelup.com/calling-in-french/**

Before any call

Ten phrases that save a call

Bonjour, je vous appelle au sujet de…

Hello, I am calling about…

Le français n'est pas ma langue maternelle, alors je parle un peu lentement.

French is not my first language, so I speak a little slowly.

> Say it early. People slow down on their own once they hear it.

Pardon, vous pouvez répéter, s'il vous plaît ?

Sorry, could you say that again, please?

Vous pouvez parler un peu plus lentement, s'il vous plaît ?

Could you speak a little more slowly, please?

Vous pouvez me l'épeler ?

Could you spell it for me?

Je répète pour être sûre : …

Let me repeat it to be sure: …

> *sûre* if you are a woman, *sûr* if you are a man. They sound the same.

Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire, « … » ?

What does "…" mean?

Vous pouvez me l'envoyer par mail ou par SMS ?

Could you send it to me by email or by text?

Je peux laisser un message ?

Can I leave a message?

Merci beaucoup pour votre aide. Bonne journée, au revoir.

Thank you very much for your help. Have a good day, goodbye.

> After about 5 p.m., *Bonne soirée* (have a good evening).

The voice menu

What the recording says before a person picks up.

Tapez 1.

Press 1.

> *Appuyez sur 1* means the same.

Appuyez sur la touche étoile.

Press the star key (*).

… suivi de la touche dièse.

… followed by the hash key (#).

Dites ou tapez votre numéro client.

Say or key in your customer number.

Veuillez patienter, un conseiller va prendre votre appel.

Please hold, an adviser will take your call.

Tous nos conseillers sont actuellement en ligne.

All our advisers are busy at the moment.

> *En ligne* here means on another call, not online.

Cet appel est susceptible d'être enregistré.

This call may be recorded.

Pour réécouter ce menu, tapez étoile.

To hear this menu again, press star.

Nos bureaux sont actuellement fermés. Veuillez renouveler votre appel ultérieurement.

Our offices are closed at the moment. Please call again later.

Laissez votre message après le bip sonore.

Leave your message after the beep.

Spelling a name

A	Anatole	**B**	Berthe	**C**	Célestin	**D**	Désiré
E	Eugène	**F**	François	**G**	Gaston	**H**	Henri
I	Irma	**J**	Joseph	**K**	Kléber	**L**	Louis
M	Marcel	**N**	Nicolas	**O**	Oscar	**P**	Pierre
Q	Quintal	**R**	Raoul	**S**	Suzanne	**T**	Thérèse
U	Ursule	**V**	Victor	**W**	William	**X**	Xavier
Y	Yvonne	**Z**	Zoé				

The traditional phone alphabet. Any first name works too, as long as you say it clearly.

C comme Célestin, A comme Anatole, R comme Raoul…

C as in Célestin, A as in Anatole, R as in Raoul…

> Watch the letters English speakers mix up: E sounds like "uh", I like "ee", G like "zhay", J like "zhee", R like "air", and W is *double vé*.

E accent aigu. E accent grave. Deux L. Trait d'union.

E with an acute accent (é). E with a grave accent (è). Double L. Hyphen.

> For double letters, French says *deux L* (two L), never "double L".

Email addresses

helen point carter arobase exemple point f r

helen.carter@exemple.fr

> *arobase* is @, *point* a dot, *tiret* a hyphen, *tiret du bas* an underscore, and *tout attaché* means all one word.

Phone numbers, in pairs

06 42 17 93 58

zéro six, quarante-deux, dix-sept, quatre-vingt-treize, cinquante-huit

Mobile numbers start with 06 or 07. The pairs from 70 to 99 are the ones to practice, because they are built from smaller numbers.

70	soixante-dix
71	soixante et onze
77	soixante-dix-sept
80	quatre-vingts
81	quatre-vingt-un
90	quatre-vingt-dix
93	quatre-vingt-treize
99	quatre-vingt-dix-neuf

Dates and times

le mardi 14 janvier

Tuesday 14 January

> Said *le mardi quatorze janvier*. No "of", no "th".

le 1er avril

the 1st of April

> Said *le premier avril*. Only the first of the month is *premier*, the rest are plain numbers.

à 14 h 30

at 2:30 p.m.

> Said *à quatorze heures trente*. Appointments are given on the 24-hour clock.

à 9 h 15

at 9:15 a.m.

> Said *neuf heures quinze* or *neuf heures et quart*.

en fin de matinée, en début d'après-midi

late in the morning, early in the afternoon

tous les quinze jours

every two weeks

> French counts fifteen days for a fortnight, and *huit jours* for a week.

Call 1 of 8

The mairie

Who picks up: The *mairie* reception, who often puts you through to a department.

You would like to replace your windows and want to know whether you need to file a *déclaration préalable de travaux* (the planning declaration for small works) before you start.

Have ready before you dial

- [ ] Your address
- [ ] A short description of the work (windows, a shed, a fence)
- [ ] Your email address, to receive the form or a link
- [ ] A pen and paper

Your opening

Bonjour, je m'appelle Helen Carter, j'habite au 12 chemin des Vignes.
Hello, my name is Helen Carter, I live at 12 chemin des Vignes.

J'aimerais changer mes fenêtres, et je voudrais savoir s'il faut faire une déclaration préalable de travaux.
I would like to replace my windows, and I would like to know whether I need to file a declaration of works.

À qui est-ce que je dois m'adresser ?
Who should I speak to?

When you don't understand

Excusez-moi, je n'ai pas compris le nom du service. Vous pouvez répéter ?
Sorry, I did not catch the name of the department. Could you repeat it?

Vous pouvez parler un peu plus lentement, s'il vous plaît ?
Could you speak a little more slowly, please?

Le Cerfa, c'est quel numéro ? Vous pouvez me le donner chiffre par chiffre ?
Which form number is it? Could you give it to me digit by digit?

Vous pouvez m'envoyer le lien par mail ?
Could you send me the link by email?

Donc je rappelle mardi matin, c'est bien ça ?
So I call back on Tuesday morning, is that right?

Closing the call

Très bien, merci beaucoup pour votre aide.
Very good, thank you very much for your help.

Bonne fin de journée, au revoir.
Have a good rest of the day, goodbye.

What you will hear back

- **Mairie de Saint-Aubin, bonjour.**
  Saint-Aubin town hall, hello.

- **Ne quittez pas, je vous passe le service urbanisme.**
  Hold the line, I am putting you through to the planning department.
  > *Ne quittez pas* means "don't hang up". Stay on the line.

- **Le service urbanisme ne reçoit que sur rendez-vous.**
  The planning department only sees people by appointment.

- **Elle n'est là que le mardi et le jeudi matin.**
  She is only in on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.
  > In a small mairie, one person often handles planning on a few half-days a week.

- **Vous êtes dans le périmètre des Bâtiments de France ?**
  Is your house within the protected area around a historic monument?
  > Near a listed church or château, the *Architecte des Bâtiments de France* has a say on what changes outside.

- **Il faut remplir le Cerfa et le déposer en mairie ou en ligne.**
  You need to fill in the form and file it at the mairie or online.
  > A *Cerfa* is any official numbered form.

- **Vous trouverez le formulaire sur service-public.**
  You will find the form on the service-public website.

- **Passez à l'accueil, on vous donnera le dossier.**
  Come by the reception desk, and we will give you the forms.

- **Rappelez en début d'après-midi, elle sera là.**
  Call back early in the afternoon, she will be in.

Spelling and numbers

Your name, your street and your email address. The alphabet and the numbers in pairs are on the "Before any call" page.

The bins

Le ramassage des poubelles, c'est quel jour dans ma rue ?
Which day are the bins collected in my street?

Le bac jaune, c'est tous les quinze jours, le mercredi.
The yellow recycling bin is collected every two weeks, on Wednesdays.

Pour les encombrants, il faut les déposer à la déchetterie.
Bulky items have to be taken to the recycling center.

Example call

Mairie — **Mairie de Saint-Aubin, bonjour.**
Saint-Aubin town hall, hello.

You — **Bonjour. J'aimerais changer mes fenêtres, et je voudrais savoir s'il faut une déclaration préalable.**
Hello. I would like to replace my windows, and I would like to know whether I need a declaration of works.

Mairie — **Pour ça, il faut voir avec l'urbanisme. Ne quittez pas, je vous passe le service.**
For that, you need the planning department. Hold the line, I will put you through.

Mairie — **Urbanisme, bonjour. Vous êtes à quelle adresse ?**
Planning, hello. What is your address?

You — **12 chemin des Vignes.**
12 chemin des Vignes.

Mairie — **Vous êtes dans le périmètre des Bâtiments de France, non ?**
You are within the protected area around a monument, aren't you?

You — **Pardon, je n'ai pas compris. Vous pouvez répéter plus lentement ?**
Sorry, I did not understand. Could you say it again more slowly?
The lifeline

Mairie — **Votre maison est près de l'église, c'est ça ? L'église est un monument historique.**
Your house is near the church, is that right? The church is a historic monument.

You — **Ah, oui. Elle est juste à côté.**
Oh, yes. It is right next to it.

Mairie — **Alors il faut une déclaration préalable. Vous pouvez la déposer en ligne ou ici, à la mairie.**
Then you need a declaration of works. You can file it online or here, at the mairie.

You — **D'accord. Vous pouvez m'envoyer le lien par mail ?**
All right. Could you send me the link by email?

Mairie — **Bien sûr. Vous me donnez votre adresse mail ?**
Of course. Can you give me your email address?

How did it go?

Date of the call _____

How it went circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 _____

What I want to practice next _____

Booking a doctor's appointment

Who picks up: The medical secretary (*le secrétariat*), or a voice menu if it is a medical center.

You want an appointment with a GP you have never seen, and you would like to ask whether the doctor takes new patients and could become your *médecin traitant* (your registered GP).

Have ready before you dial

- [ ] Your *carte Vitale*, or your *attestation de droits* if the card has not arrived
- [ ] Your date of birth
- [ ] Your diary, with two or three times that suit you
- [ ] A phone number where they can call you back

> In a medical center with a voice menu, listen for *secrétariat* or *prise de rendez-vous* (booking appointments).

Your opening

Bonjour, je voudrais prendre rendez-vous avec le docteur Morel, s'il vous plaît.
Hello, I would like to make an appointment with Dr Morel, please.

Je n'ai jamais consulté au cabinet, je viens de m'installer dans la région.
I have never been to the practice, I have just moved to the area.

Je cherche aussi un médecin traitant. Est-ce que le docteur prend de nouveaux patients ?
I am also looking for a regular GP. Is the doctor taking new patients?

When you don't understand

Pardon, vous avez dit mardi ou mercredi ?
Sorry, did you say Tuesday or Wednesday?

Vous pouvez répéter l'heure, s'il vous plaît ?
Could you repeat the time, please?

Je répète : jeudi 16 à 9 h 40, c'est bien ça ?
Let me repeat: Thursday the 16th at 9:40, is that right?

Je vous épelle mon nom : C comme Célestin, A comme Anatole…
Let me spell my name: C as in Célestin, A as in Anatole…

Est-ce que je peux recevoir une confirmation par SMS ?
Could I get a confirmation by text?

Closing the call

Parfait, merci beaucoup. À jeudi.
Perfect, thank you very much. See you on Thursday.

Bonne journée, au revoir.
Have a good day, goodbye.

What you will hear back

- **Cabinet du docteur Morel, bonjour.**
  Dr Morel's practice, hello.
- **Vous êtes déjà venue au cabinet ?**
  Have you been to the practice before?
  > Said to a woman. To a man, *venu*. It sounds the same.
- **Le docteur ne prend plus de nouveaux patients.**
  The doctor is not taking new patients.
  > Many GPs are full. Ask *Vous connaissez un médecin qui en prend ?* (Do you know a doctor who does?)
- **C'est pour une consultation ou pour un renouvellement ?**
  Is it for a consultation or for a repeat prescription?
- **C'est urgent ?**
  Is it urgent?
- **Je n'ai rien avant le 15.**
  I have nothing before the 15th.
  > *Rien* here means no free slot.
- **Le premier créneau que j'ai, c'est jeudi à 9 h 40.**
  The first slot I have is Thursday at 9:40.
  > A *créneau* is a time slot.
- **Ça vous va ?**
  Does that suit you?
- **C'est à quel nom ?**
  What name is it under?
- **Pensez à apporter votre carte Vitale.**
  Remember to bring your carte Vitale.

Spelling and numbers

Your surname, your date of birth, the day and the time of the appointment. The alphabet and the numbers in pairs are on the "Before any call" page.

If it cannot wait

Si c'est urgent, appelez le 15.

If it is an emergency, call 15.

> 15 is the medical emergency number (SAMU). 112 also works from any phone.

Example call

Secretary **Cabinet du docteur Morel, bonjour.**
Dr Morel's practice, hello.

You **Bonjour, je voudrais prendre rendez-vous avec le docteur Morel. Je n'ai jamais consulté au cabinet, je viens d'arriver dans la région.**
Hello, I would like to make an appointment with Dr Morel. I have never been to the practice, I have just moved to the area.

Secretary **Le docteur prend encore quelques nouveaux patients. C'est urgent ?**
The doctor is still taking a few new patients. Is it urgent?

You **Non, ce n'est pas urgent.**
No, it is not urgent.

Secretary **Alors, le premier créneau que j'ai, c'est mercredi 22 à 16 h 20.**
So, the first slot I have is Wednesday the 22nd at 4:20 p.m.

You **Pardon, vous pouvez répéter l'heure, s'il vous plaît ?**
Sorry, could you repeat the time, please?
The lifeline

Secretary **Seize heures vingt. Mercredi 22, seize heures vingt.**
Four twenty. Wednesday the 22nd, four twenty in the afternoon.

You **Mercredi 22 à seize heures vingt. C'est parfait.**
Wednesday the 22nd at 4:20. That is perfect.

Secretary **C'est à quel nom ?**
What name is it under?

You **Carter. C comme Célestin, A comme Anatole, R comme Raoul, T comme Thérèse, E comme Eugène, R comme Raoul.**
Carter. C as in Célestin, A as in Anatole, R as in Raoul, T as in Thérèse, E as in Eugène, R as in Raoul.

Secretary **Très bien, madame Carter. Pensez à apporter votre carte Vitale.**
Very good, Mrs Carter. Remember to bring your carte Vitale.

You **D'accord, merci beaucoup. Bonne journée !**
All right, thank you very much. Have a good day!

How did it go?

Date of the call _____

How it went circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 _____

What I want to practice next _____

A plumber, electrician or builder

Who picks up: The tradesperson in person, often on a mobile and often on a building site, or the voicemail.

A plumber came to look at your bathroom three weeks ago and promised a *devis* (a written quote), and it has not arrived. You call to chase it and to ask when the work could start.

Have ready before you dial

- [ ] The date of the visit and what the job is
- [ ] Your address, because they work on many sites
- [ ] Your email address, ready to spell
- [ ] Your diary, for the start date

> If it goes to voicemail, leave a short message: your name, your address, *au sujet du devis*, and your number said in pairs, twice.

Your opening

Bonjour, c'est Helen Carter, du 12 chemin des Vignes. Vous êtes passé il y a trois semaines pour la salle de bains.

Hello, it is Helen Carter, from 12 chemin des Vignes. You came round three weeks ago about the bathroom.

Je vous appelle au sujet du devis. Je ne l'ai pas encore reçu.

I am calling about the quote. I have not received it yet.

Vous savez quand vous pourrez me l'envoyer ?

Do you know when you will be able to send it to me?

When you don't understand

Pardon, la ligne est mauvaise. Vous pouvez répéter ?

Sorry, the line is bad. Could you say that again?

> True on most building sites, and it gives you a second chance without explaining anything.

Vous pouvez me l'envoyer par SMS ? Comme ça, j'ai une trace écrite.

Could you text it to me? That way I have it in writing.

Fin mars, c'est-à-dire ? Vous avez une date ?

The end of March, meaning when? Do you have a date?

L'acompte, c'est combien ?

How much is the deposit?

Je vous redonne mon adresse mail : …

Let me give you my email address again: …

Closing the call

D'accord, j'attends votre mail. Merci beaucoup.

All right, I will look out for your email. Thank you very much.

Bon courage sur le chantier !

Good luck with the job!

> A warm way to end with someone at work. *Bon courage* is said to anyone with a hard day ahead.

What you will hear back

- **Ah oui, la salle de bains ! Je suis sur un chantier, là.**
  Oh yes, the bathroom! I am on a job right now.
  > *Là* at the end means "right now".
- **Je vous rappelle ce soir.**
  I will call you back this evening.
- **Le devis est parti par mail la semaine dernière.**
  The quote went out by email last week.
- **Vous avez regardé dans vos spams ?**
  Have you looked in your spam folder?
- **J'attends le prix du fournisseur.**
  I am waiting for the supplier's price.
- **On a pris du retard sur un autre chantier.**
  We have fallen behind on another job.
  > *On* is everyday French for *nous* (we).
- **Je ne pourrai pas commencer avant fin mars.**
  I will not be able to start before the end of March.
- **Il faudra verser un acompte à la signature du devis.**
  You will need to pay a deposit when you sign the quote.
- **Je passe jeter un œil mardi.**
  I will come by and take a look on Tuesday.
- **Pas de souci.**
  No problem.
  > Very common and friendly. You can say it too.

Spelling and numbers

Your email address, and any date they give you. The alphabet and the numbers in pairs are on the "Before any call" page.

Example call

Plumber **Allô ?**
Hello?
> *Allô* is only used on the phone.

You **Bonjour monsieur Garnier, c'est Helen Carter, du 12 chemin des Vignes. Vous êtes passé pour la salle de bains.**
Hello Mr Garnier, it is Helen Carter, from 12 chemin des Vignes. You came round about the bathroom.

Plumber **Ah oui, bonjour ! Excusez-moi, je suis sur un chantier, là.**
Oh yes, hello! Sorry, I am on a job right now.

You **Je vous appelle au sujet du devis. Je ne l'ai pas encore reçu.**
I am calling about the quote. I have not received it yet.

Plumber **Ah bon ? Il est parti par mail la semaine dernière. Vous avez regardé dans vos spams ?**
Really? It went out by email last week. Have you looked in your spam folder?

You **Oui, je n'ai rien. Vous pouvez me le renvoyer ?**
Yes, there is nothing. Could you send it again?

Plumber **Pas de souci, je vous le renvoie ce soir. Par contre, je ne pourrai pas commencer avant fin mars.**
No problem, I will send it again this evening. But I will not be able to start before the end of March.

You **Pardon, la ligne est mauvaise. Vous avez dit fin mars ?**
Sorry, the line is bad. Did you say the end of March?
The lifeline

Plumber **Oui, fin mars, début avril. On a pris du retard sur un autre chantier.**
Yes, the end of March or early April. We have fallen behind on another job.

You **D'accord. Vous pouvez me confirmer la date par SMS ?**
All right. Could you confirm the date by text?

Plumber **Oui, je vous envoie un texto.**
Yes, I will send you a text.

You **Merci beaucoup, et bon courage sur le chantier !**
Thank you very much, and good luck with the job!

How did it go?

Date of the call _____

How it went circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 _____

What I want to practice next _____

Call 4 of 8

The internet or electricity provider

Who picks up: A voice menu first, then a customer adviser (*un conseiller*).

Your internet box stopped working last night and its light is red, so you call your provider's technical support.

Have ready before you dial

- [ ] Your customer number (*numéro client*), printed on every bill
- [ ] The account holder's name and the address
- [ ] Your phone, charged, and a place to call from next to the box
- [ ] A pen for the case number

> For a power cut, the number to call is the emergency line printed on your electricity bill, under *dépannage*, rather than your supplier's customer service.

Your opening

Bonjour, je vous appelle parce que ma box ne fonctionne plus depuis hier soir.
Hello, I am calling because my internet box has not been working since last night.

> *La box* is what everyone calls the router.

Le voyant est rouge et je n'ai plus internet.
The light is red and I have no internet.

Mon numéro client, c'est le…
My customer number is…

When you don't understand

Attendez, je vais près de la box.
Wait, I am going over to the box.

Excusez-moi, je n'ai pas compris. Je débranche quel câble ?
Sorry, I did not understand. Which cable do I unplug?

Vous pouvez me redonner le numéro de dossier, chiffre par chiffre ?
Could you give me the case number again, digit by digit?

Le technicien passe quel jour, et à quelle heure ?
Which day is the technician coming, and at what time?

Vous pouvez m'envoyer tout ça par SMS ?
Could you send all that to me by text?

Closing the call

Très bien, je note le numéro de dossier. Merci pour votre aide.
Very good, I am writing down the case number. Thank you for your help.

Bonne journée, au revoir.
Have a good day, goodbye.

What you will hear back

- **Pour un problème technique, tapez 2.**
  For a technical problem, press 2.
  > The voice menu. See the "Before any call" page.
- **Je vais vous demander de confirmer votre identité.**
  I am going to ask you to confirm your identity.
- **Vous êtes le titulaire du contrat ?**
  Are you the account holder?
  > *La titulaire* if the holder is a woman.
- **Je lance un test de ligne à distance.**
  I am running a line test from here.
- **Vous pouvez débrancher la box et la rebrancher ?**
  Could you unplug the box and plug it back in?
- **Le voyant est de quelle couleur ?**
  What color is the light?
- **Il y a un incident en cours dans votre secteur.**
  There is a fault in your area at the moment.
- **Je vous ouvre un ticket.**
  I am opening a case for you.
  > You will also hear *Je vous crée un dossier.*
- **Un technicien va passer. Il faudra être présent.**
  A technician will come. Someone will need to be at home.
- **Vous allez recevoir un SMS de confirmation.**
  You will receive a confirmation text.

Spelling and numbers

Your customer number and the case number, digit by digit. The alphabet and the numbers in pairs are on the "Before any call" page.

For the electricity

Je voudrais transmettre mon relevé de compteur.
I would like to give you my meter reading.

Ma dernière facture est beaucoup plus élevée que d'habitude.
My last bill is much higher than usual.

Votre facture a été établie sur une estimation.
Your bill was based on an estimate.

Example call

Voice menu *Pour un problème technique, tapez 2.*
For a technical problem, press 2.

Adviser **Bonjour, Julien à l'appareil. Votre numéro client, s'il vous plaît ?**
Hello, Julien speaking. Your customer number, please?
> *À l'appareil* means "speaking", on the phone.

You **Oui : quatre, huit, deux, zéro, trois, un, sept.**
Yes: four, eight, two, zero, three, one, seven.

Adviser **Merci. Qu'est-ce qui se passe avec votre box ?**
Thank you. What is happening with your box?

You **Elle ne fonctionne plus depuis hier soir. Le voyant est rouge.**
It has not been working since last night. The light is red.

Adviser **D'accord, je lance un test… Alors, il y a un incident en cours dans votre secteur.**
All right, I am running a test… So, there is a fault in your area at the moment.

You **Pardon, un incident en cours, qu'est-ce que ça veut dire ?**
Sorry, what does "un incident en cours" mean?
The lifeline

Adviser **Ça veut dire qu'il y a une panne dans votre quartier. Ce n'est pas votre box, nos techniciens sont dessus.**
It means there is a fault in your neighborhood. It is not your box, our technicians are working on it.
> *Ils sont dessus* is everyday French for "they are on it".

You **Et ce sera réparé quand ?**
And when will it be fixed?

Adviser **Normalement d'ici 48 heures. Vous allez recevoir un SMS.**
Within 48 hours, normally. You will receive a text.

You **Très bien. Vous pouvez me donner un numéro de dossier ?**
Very good. Could you give me a case number?

Adviser **Bien sûr : cinq, sept, trois, un, deux. Bonne journée, madame.**
Of course: five, seven, three, one, two. Have a good day, madam.

How did it go?

Date of the call _____

How it went circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 _____

What I want to practice next _____

Call 5 of 8

The bank

Who picks up: Your branch, the bank's customer line, or your own adviser (*votre conseiller* or *votre conseillère*).

Your card was refused twice at the supermarket this morning. You call your bank to find out why and to make sure it works again.

Have ready before you dial

- [ ] Your account number, or the last four digits of your card
- [ ] Your date of birth and your address, for the security questions
- [ ] Your adviser's name
- [ ] Your banking app open, in case they ask you to approve something

> Your bank will never ask you for your passwords or for a code it has just sent you by text. If someone calls you and asks for one, hang up and call your branch on the number you already have.

Your opening

Bonjour, je suis cliente chez vous. Ma carte a été refusée deux fois ce matin.
Hello, I am a customer of yours. My card was refused twice this morning.
> *Cliente* for a woman, *client* for a man.

Je voudrais savoir si elle est bloquée.
I would like to know whether it is blocked.

Je voudrais aussi prendre rendez-vous avec mon conseiller, monsieur Lambert.
I would also like to make an appointment with my adviser, Mr Lambert.

When you don't understand

Pardon, je ne connais pas ce mot. Le plafond, c'est quoi ?
Sorry, I do not know that word. What is "le plafond"?

Vous pouvez répéter plus lentement ? Le vocabulaire de la banque, c'est difficile pour moi.
Could you say it again more slowly? Banking words are hard for me.

Donc ma carte fonctionne à nouveau, c'est bien ça ?
So my card works again, is that right?

Vous pouvez me confirmer le rendez-vous par mail ?
Could you confirm the appointment by email?

Je préfère venir en agence. C'est possible ?
I would rather come into the branch. Is that possible?

Closing the call

Très bien, merci pour votre aide.
Very good, thank you for your help.

Bonne journée, au revoir.
Have a good day, goodbye.

What you will hear back

- **Pour des raisons de sécurité, je dois vous poser quelques questions.**
  For security reasons, I have to ask you a few questions.
- **Vous pouvez me confirmer votre date de naissance ?**
  Could you confirm your date of birth?
- **Vous avez atteint votre plafond de paiement.**
  You have reached your card spending limit.
  > *Le plafond* is literally the ceiling.
- **Votre carte a été bloquée par précaution, suite à une opération inhabituelle.**
  Your card was blocked as a precaution, after an unusual transaction.
- **Il faut valider l'opération dans votre application.**
  You need to approve the transaction in your app.
- **Je peux augmenter votre plafond temporairement.**
  I can raise your limit for a while.
- **Votre conseiller est en rendez-vous.**
  Your adviser is with a client.
- **Je lui laisse un message pour qu'il vous rappelle.**
  I will leave him a message to call you back.
- **Ça, ce n'est pas possible par téléphone. Il faut passer en agence.**
  That cannot be done over the phone. You need to come into the branch.
- **Vous préférez un rendez-vous en agence ou par téléphone ?**
  Would you prefer an appointment at the branch or by phone?

Spelling and numbers

Your date of birth, the last four digits of your card, and the time of any appointment. The alphabet and the numbers in pairs are on the "Before any call" page.

A lost or stolen card

Je voudrais faire opposition sur ma carte. On me l'a volée.

I would like to cancel my card. It has been stolen.

> *Faire opposition* stops the card for good, and the bank sends a new one.

Je voudrais faire un virement vers mon compte au Royaume-Uni.

I would like to make a transfer to my account in the UK.

> Or *aux États-Unis* (in the US).

Example call

Bank — **Banque du Val, Sophie à l'appareil, bonjour.**
Banque du Val, Sophie speaking, hello.

You — **Bonjour, je suis cliente chez vous. Ma carte a été refusée deux fois ce matin.**
Hello, I am a customer of yours. My card was refused twice this morning.

Bank — **D'accord. Pour des raisons de sécurité, vous pouvez me confirmer votre nom et votre date de naissance ?**
All right. For security reasons, could you confirm your name and your date of birth?

You — **Helen Carter, née le 3 avril 1962.**
Helen Carter, born on 3 April 1962.

> Said *née le trois avril mille neuf cent soixante-deux. Né* for a man.

Bank — **Merci. Alors, je vois que vous avez atteint votre plafond de paiement.**
Thank you. So, I can see that you have reached your card spending limit.

You — **Pardon, je ne connais pas ce mot. Le plafond, c'est quoi ?**
Sorry, I do not know that word. What is "le plafond"?
The lifeline

Bank — **C'est le montant maximum que vous pouvez payer avec votre carte sur trente jours.**
It is the most you can pay with your card over thirty days.

You — **Ah, d'accord ! On a payé le plombier cette semaine.**
Oh, I see! We paid the plumber this week.

Bank — **Je peux augmenter votre plafond pour une semaine, si vous voulez.**
I can raise your limit for a week, if you like.

You — **Oui, merci. Donc ma carte fonctionne à nouveau, c'est bien ça ?**
Yes, thank you. So my card works again, is that right?

Bank — **Oui, d'ici une heure environ.**
Yes, within an hour or so.

You — **Parfait. Merci beaucoup, bonne journée.**
Perfect. Thank you very much, have a good day.

How did it go?

Date of the call _____

How it went circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 _____

What I want to practice next _____

The notaire's office

Who picks up: The office (*l'étude* or *l'office notarial*), usually an assistant or the clerk who handles your file, rarely the *notaire*.

You signed the *compromis de vente* (the preliminary contract) to sell your house two months ago, and you have no news of the date for the final signature.

Have ready before you dial

- [ ] The file reference (*la référence du dossier*) from the notaire's letters or emails
- [ ] The property address and the date you signed the *compromis*
- [ ] The names of the buyer and the seller
- [ ] A pen, because the terms are technical

Your opening

Bonjour, je suis Helen Carter. J'ai signé un compromis de vente dans votre étude en novembre, pour une maison à Saint-Aubin.
Hello, I am Helen Carter. I signed a preliminary sale contract at your office in November, for a house in Saint-Aubin.

Je voudrais savoir où en est le dossier.
I would like to know how the file is progressing.

Est-ce que je peux parler à la personne qui suit le dossier ?
Could I speak to the person who is handling the file?

When you don't understand

Pardon, c'est un peu technique pour moi. Vous pouvez m'expliquer plus simplement ?
Sorry, that is a bit technical for me. Could you explain it more simply?

Vous pouvez me redonner le nom de la personne qui suit le dossier ?
Could you give me the name of the person handling the file again?

Vous pouvez me l'écrire dans un mail ? C'est plus facile pour moi avec les termes juridiques.
Could you put that in an email? It is easier for me with the legal terms.

Il manque un document de mon côté ? Lequel ?
Is a document missing on my side? Which one?

Fin février, vous avez une date plus précise ?
The end of February, do you have a more precise date?

Closing the call

Merci beaucoup. J'attends votre mail.
Thank you very much. I will look out for your email.

Bonne journée, au revoir.
Have a good day, goodbye.

What you will hear back

- **Étude de maître Roussel, bonjour.**
  Maître Roussel's office, hello.
  > *Maître* is the title of a notaire or a lawyer.

- **C'est à quel nom, le dossier ?**
  What name is the file under?

- **Vous êtes l'acquéreur ou le vendeur ?**
  Are you the buyer or the seller?
  > The forms are masculine by default. You can answer *la vendeuse* or *le vendeur*.

- **Je vous passe son assistante.**
  I am putting you through to her assistant.

- **Elle est en rendez-vous de signature.**
  She is in a signing appointment.

- **Le dossier est en cours.**
  The file is in progress.

- **On attend encore des pièces.**
  We are still waiting for some documents.
  > *Une pièce* here is a document.

- **On attend l'accord de prêt de l'acquéreur.**
  We are waiting for the buyer's mortgage approval.

- **On attend le retour de la mairie pour le droit de préemption.**
  We are waiting for the mairie's answer on its right to buy first.

- **Je vous envoie un mail dès que j'ai des nouvelles.**
  I will email you as soon as I hear anything.

Spelling and numbers

Your surname and the file reference, letter by letter and digit by digit. The alphabet and the numbers in pairs are on the "Before any call" page.

Words you will meet

la signature de l'acte (authentique)
the signing of the final deed

le délai de rétractation
the cooling-off period

les diagnostics
the property surveys required for a sale

Example call

Office **Étude de maître Roussel, bonjour.**
Maître Roussel's office, hello.

You **Bonjour, je suis Helen Carter. J'ai signé un compromis de vente chez vous en novembre, et je voudrais savoir où en est le dossier.**
Hello, I am Helen Carter. I signed a preliminary sale contract with you in November, and I would like to know how the file is progressing.

Office **Vous êtes l'acquéreur ou le vendeur ?**
Are you the buyer or the seller?

You **Je suis la vendeuse. C'est la maison du 12 chemin des Vignes.**
I am the seller. It is the house at 12 chemin des Vignes.

Office **Ne quittez pas, je regarde… Alors, on attend encore la purge du droit de préemption.**
Hold the line, I am looking… So, we are still waiting for the right of first refusal to be cleared.

You **Pardon, c'est un peu technique pour moi. Vous pouvez m'expliquer plus simplement ?**
Sorry, that is a bit technical for me. Could you explain it more simply?
The lifeline

Office **Bien sûr. La mairie peut acheter la maison en priorité. On attend qu'elle nous dise qu'elle ne l'achète pas.**
Of course. The mairie can buy the house before anyone else. We are waiting for it to tell us it is not buying.

You **Ah, d'accord. Et après, on peut fixer la date de signature ?**
Oh, I see. And after that, we can set the signing date?

Office **Oui, s'il ne manque rien du côté de l'acquéreur. Je vous envoie un mail dès que j'ai la réponse.**
Yes, if nothing is missing on the buyer's side. I will email you as soon as I have the answer.

You **Parfait. Merci beaucoup, bonne journée.**
Perfect. Thank you very much, have a good day.

How did it go?

Date of the call _____

How it went circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 _____

What I want to practice next _____

Assurance Maladie (3646)

Who picks up: A recorded welcome, then an Assurance Maladie adviser.

You asked for your *carte Vitale* two months ago and it has not arrived, so you call the health insurance line to find out where your request stands.

Have ready before you dial

- [ ] Your social security number (*numéro de sécurité sociale*), all 15 digits, from your *attestation de droits* or any letter
- [ ] Your date of birth and your address
- [ ] The date you sent your request
- [ ] Your ameli account login, in case they send you there

Assurance Maladie answers on *3646*, Monday to Friday, generally from at least 8:30 to 17:30, and the hours can vary by département. The service is free, and you pay only the price of the call. From abroad, the number is +33 1 84 90 36 46.

Your opening

Bonjour, j'ai demandé ma carte Vitale il y a deux mois et je ne l'ai toujours pas reçue.
Hello, I asked for my carte Vitale two months ago and I still have not received it.

Je voudrais savoir où en est ma demande.
I would like to know where my request stands.

Mon numéro de sécurité sociale, c'est le…
My social security number is…

When you don't understand

Pardon, je n'ai pas compris. Il manque quoi, exactement ?
Sorry, I did not understand. What exactly is missing?

Le français n'est pas ma langue maternelle. Vous pouvez parler un peu plus lentement ?
French is not my first language. Could you speak a little more slowly?

Je vous redonne mon numéro, chiffre par chiffre.
Let me give you my number again, digit by digit.

J'envoie le document comment ? Par courrier ou sur mon compte ameli ?
How do I send the document? By post or through my ameli account?

C'est dans quelle rubrique, sur mon compte ?
Which section of my account is it in?

Closing the call

Très bien, je fais ça aujourd'hui. Merci beaucoup.
Very good, I will do it today. Thank you very much.

Bonne journée, au revoir.
Have a good day, goodbye.

What you will hear back

- **Assurance Maladie, bonjour. Un conseiller va prendre votre appel.**
  Assurance Maladie, hello. An adviser will take your call.
- **Votre numéro de sécurité sociale, avec la clé, s'il vous plaît.**
  Your social security number, with the key, please.
  > The key (*la clé*) is the last two digits.
- **Vous pouvez me confirmer votre date de naissance ?**
  Could you confirm your date of birth?
- **Votre carte est en cours de fabrication.**
  Your card is being made.
- **Il nous manque une pièce justificative.**
  We are missing a supporting document.
- **Il nous manque votre photo.**
  We are missing your photo.
- **Vous avez un compte ameli ?**
  Do you have an ameli account?
- **Vous pouvez le faire directement sur votre compte ameli.**
  You can do it directly in your ameli account.
- **En attendant, vous pouvez télécharger votre attestation de droits.**
  In the meantime, you can download your certificate of entitlement.
  > Doctors and pharmacies accept it while you wait for the card.
- **Je vous fais une relance.**
  I will chase it up for you.

Spelling and numbers

Your social security number, read in small groups, and your date of birth. The alphabet and the numbers in pairs are on the "Before any call" page.

Example call

Voice menu *Assurance Maladie, bonjour. Cet appel est susceptible d'être enregistré.*
Assurance Maladie, hello. This call may be recorded.

Adviser **Bonjour, Nadia, conseillère de l'Assurance Maladie. Je vous écoute.**
Hello, this is Nadia, an Assurance Maladie adviser. How can I help?
> *Je vous écoute*, literally "I am listening to you", means "go ahead".

You **Bonjour, j'ai demandé ma carte Vitale il y a deux mois et je ne l'ai toujours pas reçue.**
Hello, I asked for my carte Vitale two months ago and I still have not received it.

Adviser **Je vais vous demander votre numéro de sécurité sociale, avec la clé.**
I am going to ask you for your social security number, with the key.

You **Oui : deux, soixante-deux, zéro quatre, quatre-vingt-dix-neuf…**
Yes: two, sixty-two, zero four, ninety-nine…
> Read it in the groups printed on your attestation, then the two digits of the key.

Adviser **Merci. Alors, votre demande est bien arrivée, mais il manque une pièce justificative.**
Thank you. So, your request did arrive, but a supporting document is missing.

You **Pardon, une pièce… ? Vous pouvez répéter plus lentement ?**
Sorry, a what? Could you say it again more slowly?
The lifeline

Adviser **Une pièce justificative, un document. Ici, il nous manque la copie de votre pièce d'identité.**
A supporting document. Here, we are missing the copy of your ID.

You **Ah, d'accord. Je l'envoie comment ?**
Oh, I see. How do I send it?

Adviser **Le plus simple, c'est par votre compte ameli, dans la messagerie.**
The easiest way is through your ameli account, in the messages section.

You **Parfait, je fais ça aujourd'hui. Merci beaucoup, au revoir.**
Perfect, I will do it today. Thank you very much, goodbye.

How did it go?

Date of the call _____

How it went circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 _____

What I want to practice next _____

A neighbor or the village club

Who picks up: Someone you know a little, who may suggest you switch from *vous* to *tu*.

Your neighbors Martine and Bernard helped you when your car broke down, and you want to invite them for a drink on Saturday.

Have ready before you dial

- [ ] The day and the time you have in mind
- [ ] What you want to thank them for
- [ ] Your address, if they have never been to your house

> Start with *vous*, as you would with any adult you do not know well. If they say *On se tutoie ?* or *Tu peux me tutoyer*, switch to *tu* and stay there, because going back to *vous* would feel cold. *Vous* is also the plural, so you still say *vous* to Martine and Bernard together.

Your opening

Bonjour Martine, c'est Helen, votre voisine. Je ne vous dérange pas ?
Hello Martine, it is Helen, your neighbor. I am not disturbing you?
> *Voisine* for a woman, *voisin* for a man.

Je voulais vous remercier pour l'autre jour, avec la voiture.
I wanted to thank you for the other day, with the car.

Vous seriez libres samedi pour venir prendre l'apéritif, avec Bernard ?
Would you both be free on Saturday to come over for a drink, with Bernard?
> The *apéritif* (often *l'apéro*) is drinks and nibbles before dinner.

When you don't understand

Pardon, je n'ai pas bien compris. Tu peux répéter ?
Sorry, I did not quite understand. Can you say that again?
> You will hear *J'ai pas compris*, without the *ne*. Both are fine.

Tu peux parler un peu moins vite ? Mon français a besoin de temps !
Can you speak a little less fast? My French needs time!

Ça veut dire quoi, « … » ?
What does "…" mean?

Je t'envoie l'adresse par texto.
I will text you the address.

Pour moi, c'est plus facile par message. Je t'écris ?
It is easier for me by message. Shall I write to you?

Closing the call

Super, à samedi alors !
Great, see you on Saturday then!

Bonne soirée, et merci encore.
Have a good evening, and thank you again.

What you will hear back

- **Ah, Helen ! Ça va ?**
  Oh, Helen! How are you?
- **Mais non, tu ne me déranges pas !**
  No, not at all, you are not disturbing me!
  > She has switched to *tu*.
- **On se tutoie, non ?**
  Shall we say tu to each other?
- **Avec plaisir !**
  With pleasure!
- **Samedi, ça marche.**
  Saturday works.
- **Ah, samedi, ça va être compliqué.**
  Oh, Saturday will be difficult.
  > The polite way to say no. Suggest another day.
- **On apporte quelque chose ?**
  Shall we bring something?
- **T'inquiète, c'est normal.**
  Don't worry, it was nothing.
  > *T'inquiète* is *Ne t'inquiète pas* cut short. You will hear the *ne* dropped all the time in casual French.
- **Bon, je te laisse.**
  Right, I will let you go.
  > The usual signal that the other person is about to hang up.
- **Allez, à samedi ! Bises.**
  Right, see you on Saturday! Love.
  > *Bises* or *bisou* ends a call between friends.

The village club

Bonjour, je suis nouvelle au village et j'aimerais m'inscrire au club de randonnée.

Hello, I am new in the village and I would like to join the walking club.

> *Nouveau* for a man. Start with *vous* here too.

C'est combien, l'adhésion pour l'année ?

How much is the membership for the year?

Les sorties, c'est le dimanche matin. Rendez-vous à 9 heures devant la mairie.

The walks are on Sunday mornings. We meet at 9 outside the mairie.

Example call

Martine **Allô ?**
Hello?

You **Bonjour Martine, c'est Helen, votre voisine. Je ne vous dérange pas ?**
Hello Martine, it is Helen, your neighbor. I am not disturbing you?

Martine **Ah, Helen ! Mais non, pas du tout. Et on se tutoie, non ?**
Oh, Helen! No, not at all. And we can say tu, can't we?

You **Oui, avec plaisir ! Je voulais te remercier pour l'autre jour, avec la voiture.**
Yes, with pleasure! I wanted to thank you for the other day, with the car.

Martine **T'inquiète, c'est normal entre voisins !**
Don't worry, that is what neighbors are for!

You **Pardon, tu peux répéter ? « T'inquiète » ?**
Sorry, can you say that again? "T'inquiète"?
The lifeline

Martine **Ne t'inquiète pas, c'est normal. On dit « t'inquiète », c'est plus court !**
Don't worry, it was nothing. We say "t'inquiète", it is shorter!

You **Ah, d'accord ! Tu es libre samedi pour venir prendre l'apéro, avec Bernard ?**
Oh, I see! Are you free on Saturday to come for a drink, with Bernard?

Martine **Samedi, ça marche. On apporte quelque chose ?**
Saturday works. Shall we bring something?

You **Non, rien du tout. Vers 18 heures, ça vous va ?**
No, nothing at all. Around 6 p.m., does that suit you both?

> *Vous* again, because she is asking for the two of them.

Martine **Parfait ! Bon, je te laisse. À samedi, bises !**
Perfect! Right, I will let you go. See you on Saturday, love!

You **À samedi, bonne soirée !**
See you on Saturday, have a good evening!

How did it go?

Date of the call _____

How it went circle one: 1 2 3 4 5 _____

What I want to practice next _____