

Collaborative Dictionary » Guidelines

The guidelines below are meant to help you create interesting and relevant entries for the Collaborative Dictionary. You can contribute to the dictionary's enrichment and enhance its value for users who search within it and are willing to become proficient in a language. We have tried to be as clear and complete as possible by adding many concrete examples. However, if you think that some points are missing or have been left unclear, feel free to contact us at dictionary@reverso.net and make your suggestions.



Dos and Don'ts

▷ Make sure that the entry doesn't already exist in the dictionary

There is no point in having duplicated entries in our dictionaries. So, please make sure that the entry doesn't already exist or that you bring something new to the existing explanations/translation. If there is already a similar entry in the Collaborative Dictionary and you want to complete its meaning or translation, add details on the context of use, give examples or other info that may help the other users better understand it, we recommend you comment upon the existing entry. If your word or phrase exists in our general dictionary (Collins), but not all the meanings/translations are covered, you can use the option to suggest a new translation/definition and a new entry will be created in the Collaborative Dictionary under your name.

▷ Be correct and accurate in your definition or translation

- ✓ To choose the most adequate translation, make sure that you are accurate enough.
- ✓ If you are adding a definition, try to use clear explanations. Keep in mind that a user who has never heard the word or expression should be able to understand what it means and when it's used.
- ✓ If you are adding a translation, focus on the idiomatic equivalent of your word or expression. However, there are cases when a perfect match does not exist in the target language. In this case, offer the closest translation(s) and additional explanations to help users understand your entry.
- ✓ Avoid over-translating or under-translating.
 - ⇒ **Example 1: "petit chat"** => "kitten" Here, "kitten" is over-translated, since "petit chat" means "small cat", not necessarily "kitten".
 - ⇒ **Example 2: "tough guy"** => "dur". Here, "tough guy" is under-translated, "dur à cuire" would be more accurate than "dur".
- ✓ Pay attention to idioms and language specificity.
 - ⇒ **Example: "kick the bucket"** literally means "hit the bucket with one's foot", but it also means "to die" (figurative language).
- ✓ To help other users understand your entry, do not hesitate to add synonym or near-synonym translations. Separate them by a semi-colon (;).
- ✓ Specifying the context, the domain or the regions is important, especially if the translation changes as a result.
 - ⇒ **Example in French-English: "scratcher"** => 1. "scratch" [Music] 2. "crash ; break". Here, the word "scratcher" has two different meanings. Specifying that the first one is related to music helps other users understand it more precisely.

▷ Pay attention to spelling and punctuation

- ✓ Make sure your text is typed correctly (be careful with accents, double letters, spaces between words, hyphen separated words...). For English and French words, don't hesitate to use our free spelling and grammar checker.
- ✓ Note that in French, unlike in English or Spanish, there is a space before the following punctuation marks: ":", "!", and "?"

▷ Select the appropriate part of speech

Part of speech	Description	Example in English	Example in French	Example in Spanish
Verb	Simple word or expression that expresses an action or a state and can be conjugated	live on love alone ; come up	faire la tournée des grands ducs ; aimer	estar en el quinto pino ; hacer un favor
Adverb	Simple word or expression that adds information to the sentence (e.g. time, place, manner...) but is not strictly necessary for it to be well-formed	less importantly ; sometimes	à bicyclette ; sans dessus dessous	en el dominio literario
Noun	Simple word or expression used to name a person, an animal, a thing or an action	parenting ; ballot-rigging	animal de compagnie ; le meilleur des mondes	medidas encaminadas a
Adjective	Simple word or expression used for qualifying a noun	long-staple ; pretty	sans faille ; adjoint	ajustable ; ladino
Expression	Any idiomatic expression that doesn't fall under any of the previous categories	I can't take it; Come in!	je n'ai rien à ajouter	¿A quién se le puede ocurrir?

▷ Type in the base form

- ✓ For verbs, use the infinitive. Don't use gerund or other conjugated forms for stand-alone verbs!
- ✓ In English, don't write "to" in front of the verbs, except the case where the verb is part of a phrase in this form (for example "get to know something").

⇒ Examples

	Examples in English	Examples in French	Examples in Spanish
OK ✓	go hard to tell	connaître dans l'adversité, on connaît ses amis	curar ¿cómo estás?
Not OK ✗	to go going	connaît	curando estás

- ✓ For nouns, use generally the singular form without any articles.

⇒ Examples

	Examples in English	Examples in French	Examples in Spanish
OK ✓	dress	robe	coincuino
Not OK ✗	dresses the dress	robes les robes	coincuinos el coincuino



Exceptions

- ✓ The noun is singular defective (it does not have a plural form).
 - ⇒ Examples: "jeans", "glasses" in English or "funérailles", "frais" in French.
- ✓ Together with the article, the noun gains a new meaning in certain contexts.
 - ⇒ Example: "the godfather" depending on the context, can have a different meaning: mafia leader, head of a criminal group.
- ✓ They are part of an expression, with definite/indefinite articles or in plural form.
 - ⇒ Examples: "the good and the bad", "la Belle et la Bête".

- ✓ For adjectives and nouns, you can write the masculine form and indicate the feminine form in the "Comment" field.

⇒ Example:

▷ Don't write in uppercase

- ✓ Type in lowercase letters except if the word only exists in capital letters (proper nouns, acronyms etc.) or if it is an expression used as a stand-alone sentence.

⇒ Examples

	Examples in English	Examples in French	Examples in Spanish
OK ✓	knowledge NDA Chinese whispers What a nice surprise!	savoir ADN Premier ministre Quelle belle journée !	candela ADN Día de Reyes ¡Qué día más bonito!

Not OK ✖	KNOWLEDGE Nda chinese whispers	Savoir adn premier ministre	CANDELA Adn día de reyes
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Structure of an entry

▷ "Source" field

- ✓ The "Source" contains the entry, in other words, the term that you want to define or translate. If it's a phrase, you can either add the base form (infinitive verb, indefinite pronouns...) or you can choose to add an inflected form, the one that seems to you most likely to be searched by users.

For instance, for the idiomatic phrase "make oneself at home", we can also choose to add the translation/definition of "make yourself at home" inflected form, having in mind that this one is the most frequently used.

- ✓ Avoid writing several "items" in the "source" field. If it's an adjective or a noun, write the masculine form in the "Source" field; you can indicate the feminine form in the "Comment" field.
- ✓ If there are variants that have exactly the same meaning, you can add them in the "Comment" field, as shown in the examples below.

⇒ Example 1:

⇒ Example 2:

▷ "Target" field

- ✓ The "Target" field contains the translation or the definition of the entry.
- ✓ If there are several translation variants, use semi-colon to separate them.
- ✓ If there are several meanings, number them. Try also, as much as possible, to prioritize them, based on the frequency of use.
- ✓ If appropriate, you can add indications of style, meaning, register, or region between brackets just after the meaning.

⇒ Example:

▷ "Comment" field

The "Comment" field is used for refinement: examples of use, opinions on suggested translations, cases. Comments help validating or completing entries and their translation/definition.

▷ "Domain/Speech/Register" field

Use the "Domain/Speech/Register" field to give details on the subject area, region or style the word/expression belongs to.

You can either type it manually directly in the field or use the shortcut buttons on the right. The list is obviously not exhaustive, but we tried to put the most frequent items.

Here is the glossary of the abbreviations used:

Abbreviation	Meaning
[Bus.]	Business
[Med.]	Medical
[Tech.]	Technical
[Leg.]	Legal/law
[Comp.]	Computer
[UK]	United Kingdom
[US]	United States
[Latam]	Latin America
[Slang]	Slang
[Fam.]	Familiar
[Hum.]	Humor
[Fig.]	Figurative



Examples

▷ Irrelevant or incorrect entries

Let's look at examples of bad entries and highlight the problems for each one.

⇒ **Example 1:**

This screenshot shows an entry form for the English phrase "Please go to drop me it's rained too much". The form includes fields for "Word or expression", "Grammar category" (set to Noun), and "Domain / Speech register / Region". Several callout boxes highlight errors:

- "Spelling and grammar mistakes" points to the word "drop" in the English text.
- "It's too specific and too long to be an entry" points to the entire English phrase.
- "It's not a noun" points to the "Noun" category selection.

 The French translation field contains "viens me déposer s'il te plait il a beaucoup plu".

This screenshot shows an entry form for the English phrase "long staple". The form includes fields for "Word or expression", "Grammar category" (set to Noun), and "Domain / Speech register / Region". Two callout boxes highlight errors:

- "The noun form is not very common. It's generally used as an adjective of 'cotton' and with a hyphen: 'long-staple'" points to the English text.
- "In this case, it should be translated by 'à longues fibres'" points to the French translation "fibre longue".

⇒ **Example 3:**

From **Spanish** To **French**

Word or expression: **alquitran** Translation / Definition: **goudron**

Further optional information

Comment / Example

Domain / Speech register / Region: [Bus.] [Med.] [Tech.] [Leg.] [Comp.] [UK] [US] [Latam] [Slang] [Fam.] [Hum.] [Fig.]

Buttons: Cancel Add entry

! The accent is missing in Spanish: alquitrán

⇒ **Example 4:**

From **Spanish** To **French**

Word or expression: **veranear** Translation / Definition: **vacances d'été**

Grammar category: **Adjective** (Noun Verb Adv. Adj. Exp.)

Further optional information

Comment / Example

Domain / Speech register / Region: [Bus.] [Med.] [Tech.] [Leg.] [Comp.] [UK] [US] [Latam] [Slang] [Fam.] [Hum.] [Fig.]

Buttons: Cancel Add entry

! The correct translation is "passer ses vacances d'été"

! The category (adj.) is incorrect; it's a verb

! An example could be added in the "comment" field: Voy a veranear en el campo cerca de mi familia = Je vais passer mes vacances d'été à la campagne près de ma famille

⇒ **Example 5:**

From **English** To **French**

Word or expression: **it's good memories** Translation / Definition: **ce sont de bonnes mémoires**

Grammar category: **Expression** (Noun Verb Adv. Adj. Exp.)

Further optional information

Comment / Example

Domain / Speech register / Region: [Bus.] [Med.] [Tech.] [Leg.] [Comp.] [UK] [US] [Latam] [Slang] [Fam.] [Hum.] [Fig.]

Buttons: Cancel Add entry

! Wrong translation: "memories" should be translated by "souvenir"

! It's more idiomatic to use the singular in the French translation. A correct translation would be "c'est un bon souvenir"

⇒ **Example 6:**

From **French** To **English**

Word or expression: **pleurer** Translation / Definition: **cry**

Grammar category: **Verb** (Noun Verb Adv. Adj. Exp.)

Further optional information

Comment / Example

Domain / Speech register / Region: [Bus.] [Med.] [Tech.] [Leg.] [Comp.] [UK] [US] [Latam] [Slang] [Fam.] [Hum.] [Fig.]

Buttons: Cancel Add entry

Entry	Cat.	Translation / Definition	Author
pleurer	vl.	cry	Reverso ..

! The entry already exists in the dictionary

▷ **Good entries**

Let's look at examples of good entries and highlight the strengths for each one.

Example 1:

From English To French

Word or expression: have deep pockets and short arms

Translation / Definition: être radin ; être avare

Grammar category: Verb

Domain / Speech register / Region: [Bus.] [Med.] [Tech.] [Leg.] [Comp.] [UK] [US] [Latam] [Slang] [Fam.] [Hum.] [Fig.]

Cancel Add entry

Example 2:

From French To English

Word or expression: à la pelle

Translation / Definition: 1. with a shovel [Lit.] 2. in great quantities ; in masses ; vastly ; largely ; by the dozen [Fig.]

Grammar category: Adverb

Further optional information: V

Comment / Example: Il y a un sens propre (1.) et un sens figuré (2.). Au figuré, "à la pelle" signifie "en grande quantité"

Domain / Speech register / Region: [Bus.] [Med.] [Tech.] [Leg.] [Comp.] [UK] [US] [Latam] [Slang] [Fam.] [Hum.] [Fig.]

Cancel Add entry

Example 3:

From French To Definition

Word or expression: ne pas avoir les yeux

Translation / Definition: 1. ne pas voir ce qu'on a sous le nez; faire l'aveugle 2. ne pas être bien réveillé

Grammar category: Verb

Further optional information: V

Comment / Example: Expression familière dite à qui ne voit pas ce qui se trouve en face. On dit aussi: tu bigles ou quoi ?!

Domain / Speech register / Region: [Fam.] [Bus.] [Med.] [Tech.] [Leg.] [Comp.] [UK] [US] [Latam] [Slang] [Fam.] [Hum.] [Fig.]

Cancel Add entry

? Frequent questions and answers

What is the Collaborative Dictionary for?

Every day, new words are created. Some of them are brought to the forefront by the media. Others are diverted from their original meaning. Simply put, language is continuously in creation. A dictionary can hardly claim to be really exhaustive; but we think that everyone can contribute to the creation of a place where people can exchange their knowledge about words and languages that they know.

The Collaborative Dictionary aims at gathering the greatest number of words and expressions from all around the world, ranging from slang expressions to very specialized jargon. To achieve it, we need your help. That's why it is designed so that you become the author of its content.

The Collaborative Dictionary was created in 2009 by the Reverso team led by its founder Theo. It was launched with Theo being the first contributor. But since then, people like you have been adding words to share with others and today, we count:

Over 100,000 activated members

Over 615,000 validated translations and definitions

What do you find in? Translations and definitions of words and phrases in many languages, written by users: idiomatic, new, poetic, argotic, slang, specialized vocabulary.

Why is the Collaborative Dictionary different from other dictionaries or forums?

When looking up a definition or a translation, you expect to find an answer quickly and to not be forced to go through lines and lines of discussion. The Collaborative Dictionary gets straight to the point. It is not a forum! It is a dictionary, with headwords and related definitions

or translations.

It's not a forum, but it's collaborative. It means that we encourage not only people's contributions but also interactions between them. If you don't find the definition or translation you were looking for, you can ask for it by creating an entry in the Collaborative Dictionary. If people from the community have an answer, they will complete it. You can vote for their contribution and add a comment to explain your vote.

▷ Can I also add phrases to the Collaborative Dictionary?

Of course! You can create an entry made of several words or you can add a phrase as long as they sound idiomatic and they correspond to what users can search for.

⇒ **Example:** get on like a house on fire (EN) = s'entendre à merveille (FR)

<http://dictionnaire.reverso.net/anglais-francais/get%20on%20like%20a%20house%20on%20fire>

If you have other questions, do not hesitate to contact us at dictionary@reverso.net.

▷ How should I proceed when the entry has several parts of speech?

For example, the term "à base de fruits" in French can be used both as an adjective and an adverb. But the translation in English will be different according to the part of speech: the adjective will be translated by "fruit-based", whereas the adverb will simply be "with fruits". In this case, it is clearer to create two separate entries, namely one for "à base de fruits" as an adjective and the other for "à base de fruit" as an adverb.

⇒ **Examples:**

Adv. : se nourrir à base de fruits = feed oneself with fruits, have a fruit-based diet.

Adj. : dessert à base de fruits=fruit-based desert

However if the term has two grammar categories and the translation is the same in any case, you can create a single entry and pick up the corresponding compound part of speech from the drop-down menu. For example, "all" in English is both adverb and adjective and it will be translated in French by "tout", which is also both adverb and adjective. In this case you create only one entry for "all" and choose the part of speech "Adverb Adjective" in the drop-down menu. Do not hesitate to add examples for each part of speech.

The screenshot shows the entry creation interface for the word "all". The "From" language is set to English and the "To" language is set to French. The "Word or expression" field contains "all" and the "Translation / Definition" field contains "tout". The "Grammar category" dropdown menu is open, showing a list of options. The "Adverb Adjective" option is selected and highlighted in blue. Other options include Noun, Verb, Noun - Feminine Singular Plural, Noun Adjective, Verb - Transitive, Verb - Intransitive, Verb - Pronominal, Verb - Perfective, Verb - Imperfective, Verb - Transitive Intransitive, Verb - Reflexive, Verb - Inflected, Present Participle, Past participle, Quantitative word, Comparative word, Article, Negation, Quote, Idiomatic expression, and Other. There are also buttons for "Cancel" and "Add entry".

⇒ **Examples:**

Adv. : all clean=tout propre (The laundry is all clean = Le linge est tout propre)

Adj. : all the people= tout le monde (all the people I know = tous les gens que je connais)

▷ How should I proceed when the entry has different meanings and translations?

Words and expressions can often be translated in several ways. When what we fill in in the translation field is just another way of saying the same thing, we recommend you to separate the various translations by a semi-colon, as shown in the example below.

The screenshot shows the entry creation interface for the phrase "head over to". The "From" language is set to English and the "To" language is set to French. The "Word or expression" field contains "head over to" and the "Translation / Definition" field contains "se diriger vers; aller faire un tour (quelque part); visiter". The "Grammar category" dropdown menu is set to "Verb". There are also buttons for "Cancel" and "Save Changes".

On the other hand, when the entry has multiple translations with different meanings, we prefer to number them. As shown in the example below, you can add information into brackets in order to specify the use or the context for each.

! The different meanings are numbered

From

To English

Word or expression

à la pelle

Translation / Definition

1. with a shovel [Lit.] 2. in great quantities ; in masses ; vastly ; largely ; by the dozen [Fig.]

Grammar category

Adverb

Noun Verb Adv. Adj. Exp.

Further optional information

Comment / Example

Il y a un sens propre (1.) et un sens figuré (2.). Au figuré, "à la pelle" signifie "en grande quantité"

Domain / Speech register / Region

[Bus.] [Med.] [Tech.] [Leg.] [Comp.]
[UK] [US] [Latam] [Slang] [Fam.] [Hum.] [Fig.]

Cancel Add entry

! As there are several meanings, you can add details into brackets at the end of each