

## Year 6

<http://www.terrace.qld.edu.au/academic/lote/french/icotourf.htm>



### **Le Tour de France - The Facts!**

**July is the month in which Le Tour de France takes place. This is one of the most famous cycle races in the world. It lasts three weeks.**

#### **When did it start?**

The race was started in 1903, sponsored by the magazine "L'Auto" ( a rather unusual sponsorship since this is a cycle race!) Then, as now, the course ran through the whole of France; in recent years, the race has often included neighbouring countries too.

#### **Why is it special?**

What makes this race so special is the fact that the riders have to be very skilled - they are expected to be able to sprint, ride cross country, have the stamina to race over enormous distances and be expert climbers since the course crosses some of the highest mountain passes in Europe.

#### **Who competes?**

As with most cycling races, competitors enter as part of a team. The race normally consists of 20-22 teams of 9 riders each. Traditionally, entry in the Tour de France is extended to teams by invitation only, with invitations being granted only to the best of the world's professional teams. Each team, known by the name of its primary sponsor, wears distinctive jerseys and assists one another, and has access to a shared 'team car' (a mobile version of the pit crews seen in auto racing). However, most scoring is individual, and no substitution is permitted.

## **Where does it go?**

Each year a different course is designed, with the route of the "Tour" running clockwise or anti-clockwise around France (the direction alternates each year.) The route designers aim to cover the distance in about 20 "stages" which roughly average about 250 km each, making a total length of 3,000 to 4,000km (1,864 to 2,486 miles). In recent years, the Tour has been preceded by a short individual time trial (1 to 15km) called the *prologue*. The prologue is to decide who wears yellow on the opening day, and provide a spectacle for the organising city.

Rather like the Olympic Games, the tour brings sponsorship money and visitors to the towns it passes through.

Towns and villages close for the day that the Tour passes through. People line the streets and the roads through the countryside to cheer on the riders. The day becomes a picnic day for the thousands who live near the route of the Tour.

## What types of terrain does it cover and how are they classified?

Stages of the Tour can be flat, undulating or mountainous. They are normally contested by all the riders starting together with the first over the line being accorded the victory, but they can also be run as races against the clock for individuals or teams. The time-trials often have a very significant effect on the overall outcome because they separate riders by substantial margins, whereas in some conventional stages the participants finish packed together or in a few large groups. The overall winner is almost always a master of the mountain stages and time trials, rather than the more straightforward flat stages. The design of the route incorporates all types of terrain. The mountain rides are classified on a scale of 4 (least difficulty) to 1 (highest difficulty), and a special category of "hors catégorie" (beyond a category!) for the ascents which are so extreme that they are beyond the "1" classification.

These classifications are determined by the gradient of the slope, the length of the climb and the general difficulties presented by local conditions. The first three winners of a "4" climb are awarded 5, 3 and 1 points respectively. The "hors catégorie" ascents, though, award the first fifteen riders with points, the winner receiving 40.

## How do cyclists win?

The race is determined on points. Riders perform as individuals and as part of a team. Each day, there are sprint sections and climbs as part of the route and the overall winners are awarded coloured jerseys as shown below.

Award	Winner	Origin of award
Yellow jersey - the "maillot jaune."	Overall points winner for the day.	This prize was sponsored by "L'Auto" magazine, whose pages were coloured yellow. Thus, this advertised the magazine.
Green jersey - the	Winner of the	This prize was introduced during the 1930s

"maillot vert".	sprints for the day.	by a chain of gardening stores, who felt that green would advertise their products.
Polka dot jersey - "maillot aux pois rouges"	Awarded to the 'King of the Mountain'.	A chocolate firm was a major sponsor of the race and decided to award a prize for the best mountain climber. One of its best-known bars had a wrapping of white with red spots, so it was felt that this colour would give the sponsors maximum exposure.

The route is designed so that the final day is held in Paris, when the traditional sprint for the finishing line takes place in the Avenue des Champs Elysées.



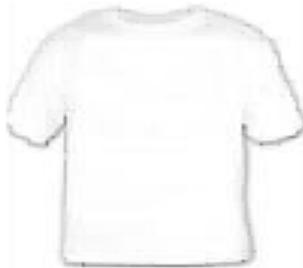
## Les maillots du Tour de France

Les leaders portent un maillot spécial.

Read the French and colour the shirts in the right colours.

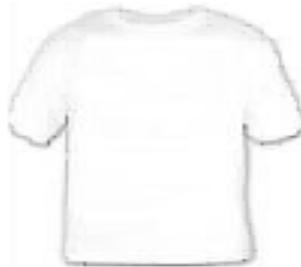
### Le maillot jaune

This is worn by the fastest cyclist.



### Le maillot vert

This is worn by the cyclist with the highest number of points.



### Le maillot blanc à pois rouges

This is worn by the cyclist who is best in the mountains.



### Le maillot blanc

This is worn by the best cyclist aged under 25.



# Le cyclisme

Learn some French words connected with cycling!

Look at the pictures. Then choose the right French word from the box and write it under the picture.

un vélo      un maillot      un short      un casque



.....



.....



.....



.....

*Draw lines to match the French words with their English meanings.*

vélo

jersey

maillot

helmet

short

racer

casque

team

coureur

plain, flat land

équipe

shorts

montagne

bicycle

plaine

cycling

cyclisme

mountain

Thanks to [Primary Language Resource](#)

Le Tour de France parcourt le pays entier. / The Tour de France covers the whole of France.

Can you write a few words on a particular French town of your choice ?

Ex. Cette ville s'appelle Bordeaux. Elle est située dans le Sud-Ouest de la France. On peut visiter le Grand Théâtre. On peut manger des cannelés. On peut faire du surf à 30km de Bordeaux à Lacanau Océan.

Cette ville s'appelle.....	
Elle est située dans.....	
On peut visiter.....	
On peut manger.....	
On peut + activités.....	