

Time			
à	Je vais à l'école à 8 heures.	I go to school at 8 'o clock.	specific time
en	Nous avons mangé en 40 minutes.	We ate in forty minutes.	length of time
dans	Nous partons dans une semaine.	We're leaving in a week.	future point in time

Time of day			
le matin	Je fais du jogging le matin.	I jog in the morning.	time of day
l'après-midi	Nous avons une réunion l'après-midi.	We have a meeting in the afternoon.	time of day
le soir	Je sors souvent le soir.	I often go out in the evening.	time of day
la nuit	Je préfère lire la nuit.	I prefer to read at night.	time of day

à midi

à minuit

le/la/l' = in the / at [time of day]

Months and Years			
en	En 1815, Napoléon fut vaincu.	In 1815, Napoleon was defeated.	specific year
en	Mon fils est né en septembre.	My son was born in September.	specific month

En is used with years and months. Never use dans.

Purpose			
pour	Elle a acheté de la farine pour faire un gâteau.	She bought flour (in order) to make a cake.	to express purpose
	Pour y aller, tu as besoin de prendre le bus.	To go there, you need to take the bus.	
à fin de	Je prends des leçons afin d'apprendre le français.	I'm taking lessons (in order) to learn French.	more elegant expression of purpose
penser que	Nous pensons que c'est une bonne idée.	We think it's a good idea.	

Purpose (cont)		
croire que	Elle croit que les anges existent.	She believes (that) angels exist.

When using verbs of opinions such as penser (to think) and croire (to believe) to say 'I believe that / I think that' in French, you always need to put que ('that') after them, whereas in English you can sometimes omit it.

Duration	
pendant	indicates duration
durant	
depuis	starting point is in the past
pour	

Before and After	
avant	
après	
devant	
derrière	

Holidays			
à	À Noël, on mange toujours trop !	At Christmas, we always eat too much.	holiday in general
le jour de	Je t'ai vu le jour de Noël.	I saw you on Christmas Day.	on the very day of the holiday

While à is more general (i.e. at Christmas), le jour de insists a bit more on the very day (i.e. on Christmas Day).

As Aïd starts with a vowel, we use à l' or le jour de l', in order to ease the pronunciation.

Distance			
à...de...	Je suis à 5 minutes de Paris.	I'm 5 minutes from Paris.	expressed a duration
à...de...	Le supermarché est à 500 m de la poste.	The supermarket is 500 m from the post office.	expressed as a physical distance

In French, you must always use à before the distance:

Note also that when locations are introduced by the definite articles le and les, de contracts into du and des.

