



## French style guide- Instructions –

### Punctuation

**Non-breaking space** - to be used:

- between numbers and units, e.g. 3 km, 10 kg, 2 l 2
- between numbers and nouns, e.g. trois arbres, 24 heures, Chapitre 1, 200 passagers 2,3
- before the % sign and the degree Celsius, e.g. 10% and 25°C 2
- before an en-dash, colon, semi-colon, exclamation & interrogation mark, e.g. —, :, ;, ?, !  
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- between titles and names, e.g. D<sup>r</sup> Durand X
- as a thousand separator, e.g. 1 000 and 10 000 4
- after an opening guillemet and before a closing guillemet, e.g.: « exemple » 5,6

**French chevrons** («...») - use in all cases except in pure IT context such as UI strings.

**Lower-case** – use after colon, unless a quote or proper noun follows.

**Lists** – to be punctuated as follows: ... ; ... ; ... ; ... :

**Decimal separator** - use comma instead of dot, e.g.: 2,30

**Ampersand (&)** – use in business names only. In other cases, replace with “et”.

**The dash** avoid “–” as this is not common in French. Use brackets “()” or semicolons “;” instead.

### Abbreviations

1. Use a point for abbreviations only when the eluded letters are ending the word, e.g.:

- Monsieur -> M.
- Professeur -> Prof.

However, if the eluded letters are not ending the word, do not use a point, e.g.:

- Madame -> Mme
- Docteur -> D<sup>r</sup>

2. Common mistakes with abbreviations, and correct use.

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Correct abbreviation</u>	<u>Common mistake</u>
minute	min	mn
seconde	s	sec
heure	h	Hr
Ampère	A	Amp
et cetera	etc.	etc...



## Spelling

For **superscript in numbers**, use “<sup>er/ère</sup>” or “<sup>e</sup>”, e.g.: “la 1<sup>ère</sup> fois”, “le 1<sup>er</sup> mai”, “la 25<sup>e</sup> heure”.  
Never abbreviate as “<sup>ème</sup>”.

For **centuries**, use the Roman numbering system, e.g.: “au I<sup>er</sup> siècle”, “le XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle”.

## Common mistakes to be avoided / Tips

### Copyright

The “©” symbol is the abbreviation for “Copyright”. So, “© Copyright” is a pleonasm. Use either one or the other, but not both together. This error is frequent in source texts – please correct it in your translation.

### Accented capital letters

The *Academy française* and *Imprimerie nationale* recommend accenting capital letters. Please follow this recommendation.

If you don’t know the Alt code for a specific letter, you can type it in lower case, select it, then press Shift+F3 to toggle between cases, e.g. état > Shift+F3-> État > Shift+F3 > ÉTAT > Shift+F3 > état.

### Units

Follow the **International System** for the abbreviation of units.

### Hours

Please use the 24 hours system, use non-breaking spaces before and after “h”, and don’t specify “00” for o’clock times. For instance, write 12 h 30, **not** 12h30 and 12 h, **not** 12 h 00.

### Expressions

Both “De sorte à”/”De sorte que” are correct. But, “de sorte à ce que” is incorrect.

### Passive voice

Avoid passive voice, even when it is used in the source file, as it creates complex syntaxes and inedible sentences.

### Infinitive/Imperative

Use either the imperative or infinitive syntax in a document, but be consistent.

### French orthography reform of 1990

Use either the pre-reform or post-reform orthography, but be consistent.

### Foreign words in French text

Foreign words (Latin, Italian, English, etc.) that are not commonly used are to be written in italics, e.g. “continuer *ad libitum*” and “conformément au *Foreign Corrupt Practices Act* des États-Unis”.



### COD/COI reversal

Remember that the normal syntax of a French sentence is this one:

[Sujet] + [Verbe] + [Complément d'Objet Direct] + [Complément d'Objet Indirect]

Although you may reverse COD and COI for specific stylistic purposes (to make a long sentence clearer or to emphasize something), please use it wisely and don't abuse of it.

DO	DON'T
Je <b>donne</b> un ballon aux enfants.	Je <del>donne</del> aux enfants <del>un ballon</del> .
Nous <b>apportons</b> des solutions à nos clients.	Nous <del>apportons</del> à nos clients <del>des solutions</del> .

Also, remember as a pronoun in the imperative form, that the COD always comes first.

DO	DON'T
Donne- <b>le-moi</b>	Donne-moi- <b>le</b>

### Pour

Keep in mind that there are many alternatives to “pour”: “afin de”, “en vue de”, “de façon à”, “dans le but de”.

Each has their own specific meaning that may be more adapted to the sentence than “pour”. So, please consider them rather than systematically translating “to” into “pour”.

**TIP: In Transit, use the shortcut Alt + 0160 to add a non-breaking space**

### Regular expressions for non-breaking spaces

To quickly find in Transit if the non-breaking spaces have not been used for the categories below, use the “find” regular expression. To replace all instances where the non-breaking space was not used, use the “replace” regular expression. The numbers below correspond to those in the Non-breaking space section in page 1.

#### 1 Punctuation except guillemets

Find: #([a-zâçèéêîôûæœ])0\s#([-|\\;|\\:|\\?|\\!])1

Replace: #0\u00A0#1

#### 2 Numbers before words

Find: #([0-9]|[0-9]\\.)0\s#([a-zâçèéêîôûæœ]|\\%|°C|°F|°K)1

Replace: #0\u00A0#1

#### 3 Numbers after words

Find: #([a-zâçèéêîôûæœ])0\s#([0-9]+)1

Replace: #0\u00A0#1



#### 4 Thousand separator

Find: `#([0-9] | [0-9]\. )0\s#([0-9]+)1`

Replace: `#0\u00A0#1`

#### 5 Opening guillemets

Find: `\u00AB\s|\u00AB#([a-zâçèéêîôûæœ])0`

Replace: `\u00AB\u00A0#0`

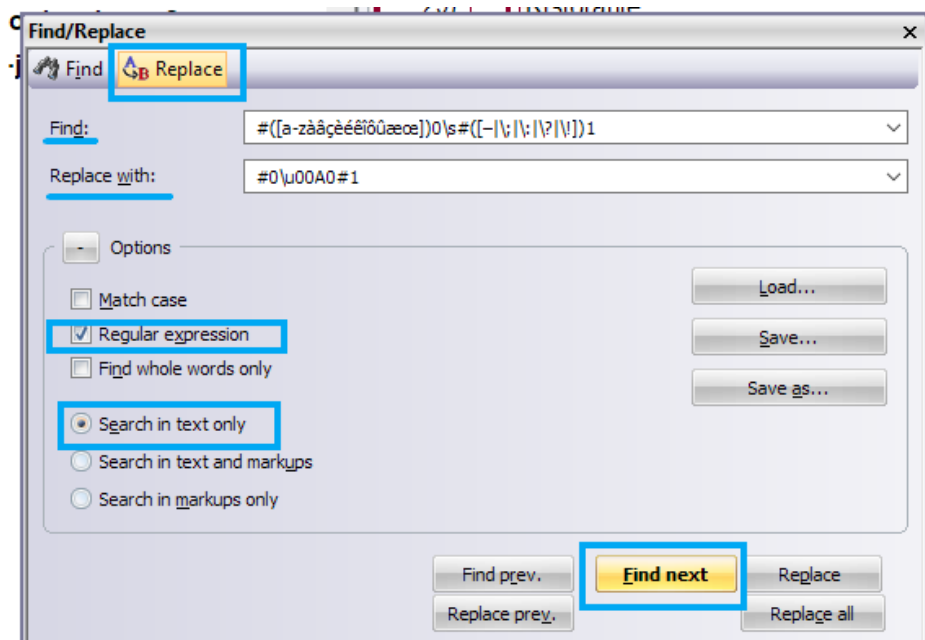
#### 6 Closing guillemets

Find: `#([a-zâçèéêîôûæœ])0\s\u00BB|\u00BB`

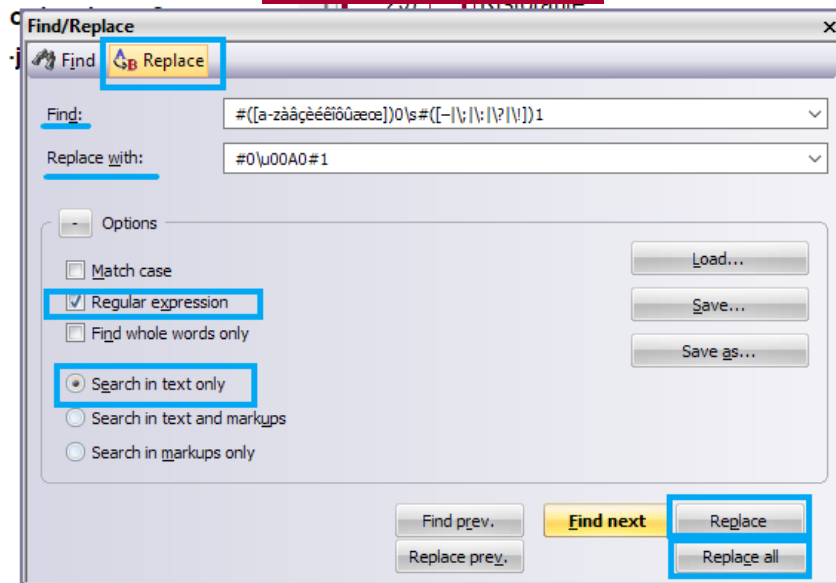
Replace: `#0\u00A0\u00BB`

### How to use Regular Expressions for Find/Replace in Transit

- Press Ctrl + F for the Find/Replace screen to pop up in your screen, as shown in the picture.
- Move to the “Replace” tab, and copy the find/search regular expression that you want to use from this guide and paste it in the “find”/“replace” field.
- Make sure the “Regular Expression” and the “Search in text only” boxes are ticked.
- Press “Find Next”.

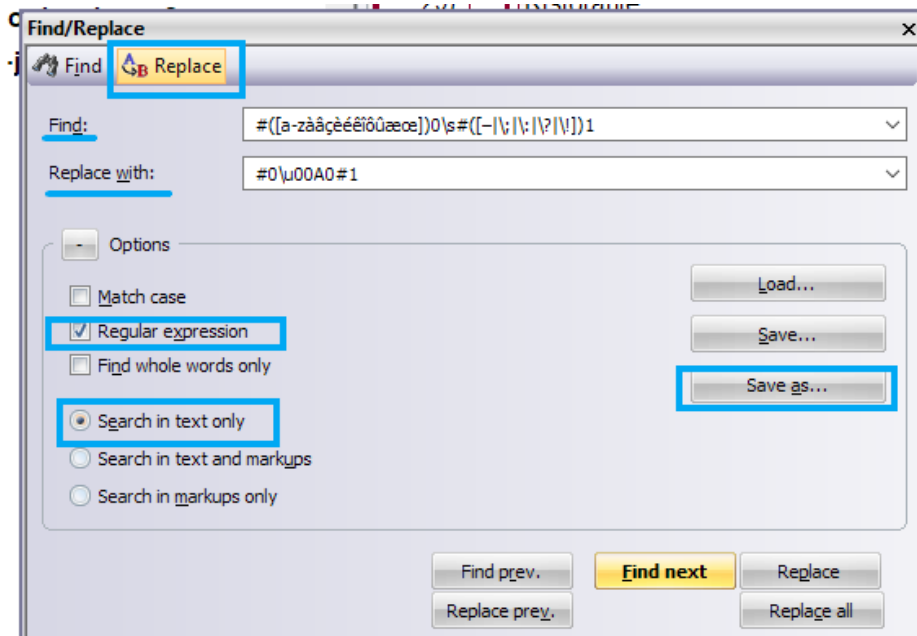


- Press “replace” or “replace all” if you want to replace automatically the instances where a non-breaking space should be added.

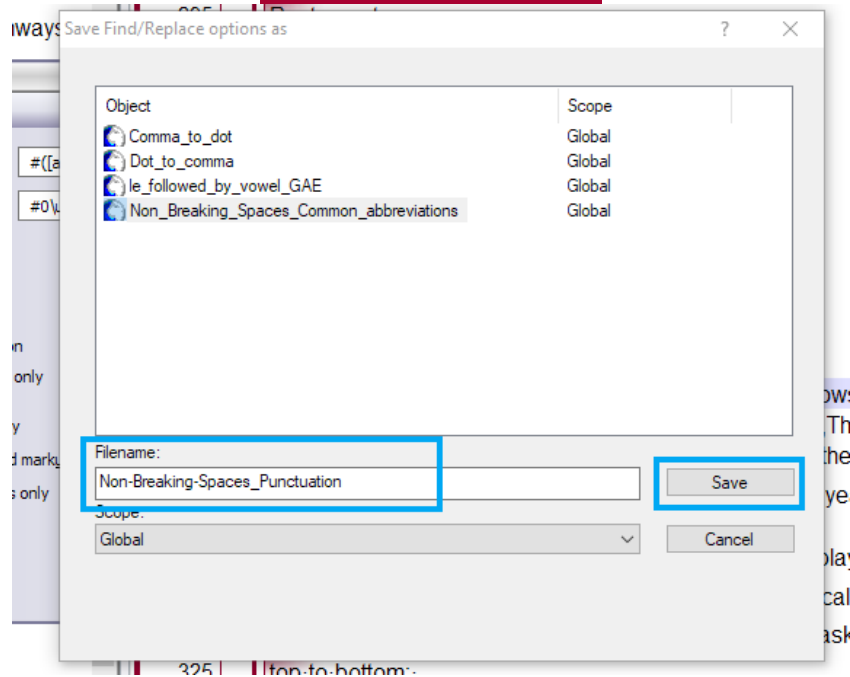


### How to save a specific Find/Replace search in Transit

- Open the “replace” screen and add the correspondent regular expression for both “find” and “replace with”.
- Make sure that you have ticked the boxes “regular expression” and “search in text only”.
- Click “save as”.

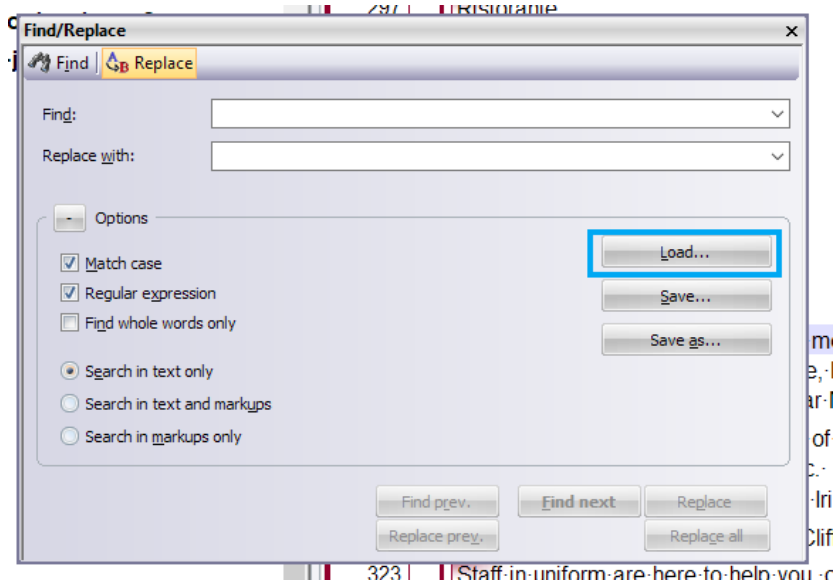


- Add a filename for that regular expression and click “save”.

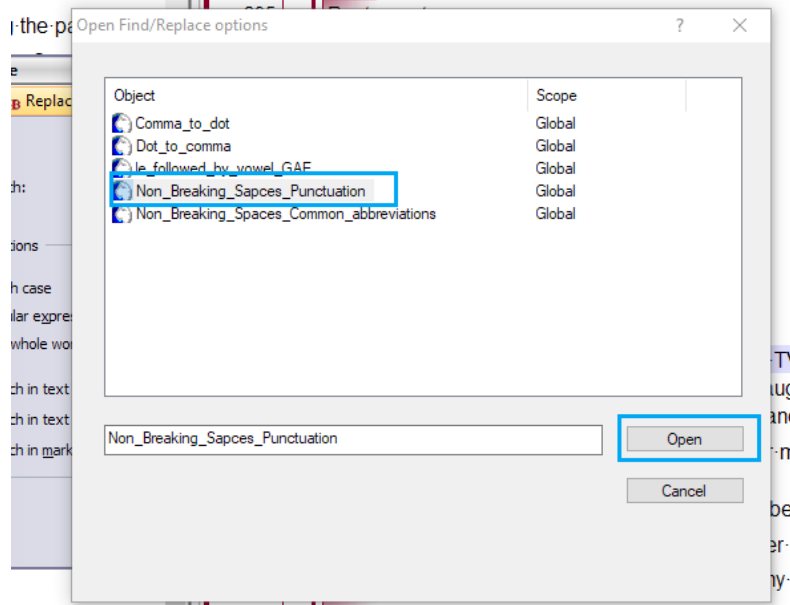


## How to load a specific Find/Replace search in Transit

a) Open the “find” or “replace” screen and click “load”.



b) Choose the regular expression that you’ve previously saved and click “open”.



c) The regular expression in both “find” and “replace with” fields will appear without having to copy and paste anything.