

Famous landmarks

- **The Eiffel Tower (la Tour Eiffel)** is in Paris and was built by company owned by Gustave Eiffel between 1887 and 1889. It was originally built as a temporary gateway to **L'Exposition Universelle** (Great Exhibition) which was held in 1889 and only had permission to be there for twenty years.
- However when it was realised that it would make an excellent radio antenna (in the days before the internet!), it was allowed to stay – it is still used for radio transmission and has an aerial mast at the very top!
- It is made of wrought iron and is 324 metres (1063 feet) high. It stands next to the River Seine on an area of land called le **Champ-de-Mars**. Its total weight is 10 100 tonnes. Until 1930 it was the tallest building in the world and is still the tallest building in Paris.
- **L'Arc de Triomphe** is a very large monument in Paris – it is a large arch standing just over 50 metres high and 45 metres wide.
- It stands in the middle of a huge roundabout where there is always a lot of traffic circling round. The ground where it stands is called **la Place de l'Étoile** because there are twelve roads running out from the centre making it look like a 12-point star.
- One of the roads leading away from L'Arc is l'Avenue des Champs d'Élysée, which is one of the most famous streets in the world. The famous cycling race, **La Tour de France**, finishes here every year.
- Underneath lies **la Tombe du Soldat Inconnu - The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier** - from the First World War (like the one in Westminster Abbey). An eternal flame was lit in 1923 and has remained ever since.

Fun facts

- Gustave Eiffel worked in an office at the very top of the Eiffel Tower, but had to climb many stairs to reach it, including a spiral staircase.
- Gustave Eiffel also built the metal interior of the Statue of Liberty which was a gift from France to America in 1886.
- The Eiffel Tower is re-painted every seven years in 3 different shades of brown similar to bronze, with the darkest shade at the bottom and the lightest at the top – the paint colour is even named after the tower (le brun Tour Eiffel).
- In 2014 a new glass floor was installed on the first floor of the Eiffel Tower – it is 57 metres from the ground, making it seem like you are walking on air!