La Marseillaise was composed by Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle in 1792 and was first declared the French national anthem in 1795. There is much more to the song's story, which you can find below.

- Rouget de Lisle originally wrote the first six verses. The seventh was added sometime later in 1792, according to the French government, though no one knows whom to credit for the last verse.
- It is typical that the refrain is repeated after each stanza.
- At public French performances today, including sporting events, you will often find that only the first verse and the refrain are sung.
- On occasion, the first, sixth, and seventh verses are sung. Again, the refrain is repeated between each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verse 1:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allons enfants de la patrie,</td>
<td>Let’s go, children of the Fatherland,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le jour de gloire est arrivé !</td>
<td>The day of glory has arrived!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contre nous de la tyrannie</td>
<td>Against us tyranny's</td>
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<tr>
<td>L'étendard sanglant est levé ! (bis)</td>
<td>Bloody flag is raised! (repeat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entendez-vous dans les campagnes,</td>
<td>In the countryside, do you hear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mugir ces féroces soldats ?</td>
<td>The roaring of these fierce soldiers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ils viennent jusque dans nos bras</td>
<td>They come right to our arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Égorger nos fils, nos compagnes</td>
<td>To slit the throats of our sons, our friends!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refrain:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aux armes, citoyens !</td>
<td>Grab your weapons, citizens!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formez vos bataillons !</td>
<td>Form your battalions!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marchons ! Marchons !</td>
<td>Let us march! Let us march!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qu'un sang impur</td>
<td>May impure blood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abreuve nos sillons</td>
<td>Water our fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verse 2:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Que veut cette horde d'esclaves,</td>
<td>This horde of slaves, traitors, plotting kings,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De traîtres, de rois conjurés ?</td>
<td>What do they want?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pour qui ces ignobles entraves,</td>
<td>For whom these vile shackles,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ces fers dès longtemps préparés ? (bis)</td>
<td>These long-prepared irons? (repeat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Français ! pour nous, ah ! quel outrage !</td>
<td>Frenchmen, for us, oh! what an insult!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quels transports il doit exciter !</td>
<td>What emotions that must excite!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C'est nous qu'on ose méditer</td>
<td>It is us that they dare to consider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De rendre à l'antique esclavage !</td>
<td>Returning to ancient slavery!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verse 3:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quoi ! ces cohortes étrangères</td>
<td>What! These foreign troops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feraient la loi dans nos foyers !</td>
<td>Would make laws in our home!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quoi ! ces phalanges mercenaires</td>
<td>What! These mercenary phalanxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrasseraient nos fiers guerriers ! (bis)</td>
<td>Would bring down our proud warriors! (repeat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Dieu ! par des mains enchaînées</td>
<td>Good Lord! By chained hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nos fronts sous le joug se ploraient !</td>
<td>Our brows would bend beneath the yoke!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
De vils despotes deviendraient
Les maîtres de nos destinées!

Vile despots would become
The masters of our fate!

**Verse 4:**

Tremblez, tyrans ! et vous, perfides,
L'opprobre de tous les partis,
Tremblez ! vos projets parricides
Vont enfin recevoir leur prix ! (bis)
Tout est soldat pour vous combattre,
S'ils tombent, nos jeunes héros,
La France en produit de nouveaux,
Contre vous tout prêts à se battre !

Tremble, tyrants! and you, traitors,
The disgrace of all groups,
Tremble! Your parricidal plans
Will finally pay the price! (repeat)
Everyone is a soldier to fight you,
If they fall, our young heroes,
France will make more,
Ready to battle you!

**Verse 5:**

Français, en guerriers magnanimes,
Portez ou retenez vos coups !
Épargnez ces tristes victimes,
A regret s'armant contre nous. (bis)
Mais ces despotes sanguinaires,
Mais ces complices de Bouillé,
Tous ces tigres qui, sans pitié,
Déchirent le sein de leur mère !

Frenchmen, as magnanimous warriors,
Bear or hold back your blows!
Spare these sad victims,
Regretfully arming against us. (repeat)
But not these bloodthirsty despots,
But not these accomplices of Bouillé,
All of these animals who, without pity,
Tear their mother's breast to pieces!

**Verse 6:**

Amour sacré de la patrie,
Conduis, soutiens nos bras vengeurs !
Liberté, Liberté chérie,
Combats avec tes défenseurs ! (bis)
Sous nos drapeaux, que la victoire
Accourez à tes mâles accents !
Que tes ennemis expirants
Voient ton triomphe et notre gloire !

Sacred love of France,
Lead, support our avenging arms!
Liberty, beloved Liberty,
Fight with your defenders! (repeat)
Under our flags, let victory
Hasten to your manly tones!
May your dying enemies
See your triumph and our glory!

**Verse 7:**

Nous entrerons dans la carrière
Quand nos aînés n'y seront plus ;
Nous y trouverons leur poussière
Et la trace de leurs vertus. (bis)
Bien moins jaloux de leur survivre
Que de partager leur cercueil,
Nous aurons le sublime orgueil
De les venger ou de les suivre !

We will enter the pit
When our elders are no longer there;
There, we will find their dust
And the traces of their virtues. (repeat)
Much less eager to outlive them
Than to share their casket,
We will have the sublime pride
Of avenging them or following them!

**The History of La Marseillaise**

On April 24, 1792, Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle was a captain of engineers stationed in Strasbourg near the Rhine River. The mayor of the town called for an anthem just days after the French declared war on Austria. The story says that the amateur musician penned the song in a single night, giving it the title of “Chant de guerre de l'armée du Rhin” (“Battle Hymn of the Army of the Rhine”). His new song was an instant hit with the French troops as they marched. It soon took on the name La Marseillaise because it was particularly popular with volunteer units from Marseille.

On July 14, 1795, the French declared La Marseillaise the national song.

As you may have noted in the lyrics, La Marseillaise has a very revolutionary tone. It is said that Rouget de Lisle himself supported the monarchy, but the spirit of the song was quickly picked up by revolutionaries. The controversy did not stop in the eighteenth century but has lasted over the years and the lyrics remain the subject of debate today.
Napoleon banned *La Marseillaise* under the Empire (1804-1815).
It was also banned in 1815 by King Louis XVIII.
*La Marseillaise* was reinstated in 1830.
Again, the song was banned during the rule of Napoleon III (1852-1870).
*La Marseillaise* was once again reinstated in 1879.
In 1887, an "official version" was adopted by France's Ministry of War.
After the liberation of France during World War II, the Ministry of Education encouraged school children to sing *La Marseillaise* to "celebrate our liberation and our martyrs."
*La Marseillaise* was declared the official national anthem in Article 2 of the 1946 and 1958 constitutions.

*La Marseillaise* is widely popular and it is not uncommon for the song to make an appearance in popular songs and movies. Most famously, it was used in part by Tchaikovsky in his *"1812 Overture"* (debuted in 1882). The song also formed an emotional and unforgettable scene in the 1942 classic film, *"Casablanca."*