

# Grammaire

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## VERB TABLES

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## Glossary of grammatical terms

- adjective** a describing word (*rouge, petite, intéressants*)  
The words for 'my', 'your', etc., are **possessive adjectives**.
- adverb** a word used to describe an action (*vite, souvent*)
- article** the word 'a', 'some' or 'the' before a noun (*un/une/des, le/la/les*)
- connective** a word used to join phrases or sentences (*mais, parce que*)
- gender** tells you whether a noun is masculine or feminine (*un crayon* is masculine, *une gomme* is feminine)
- imperative** the verb form you use when you are telling someone to do something (*copie et complète, levez-vous*)
- infinitive** the original, unchanged form of the verb, which you find in the dictionary (*parler* to speak, *avoir* to have)
- intensifier** a word or phrase placed before an adjective to make it stronger or weaker (*très, un peu*)
- irregular verb** a verb which does not follow the set rules of the main verb types but has its own pattern (*faire, être*)

<b>noun</b>	a word which names a thing or a person ( <i>stylo, mère</i> )
<b>plural</b>	referring to more than one person or item ( <i>les chats, nous, trois pommes</i> )
<b>preposition</b>	a word used to show where someone or something is ( <i>sur, à, de</i> )
<b>pronoun</b>	a word which stands in place of a noun ( <i>elle, tu</i> )
<b>reflexive verb</b>	a verb which includes a pronoun before the verb ( <i>se coucher</i> )
<b>regular verb</b>	a verb which follows the rules/pattern of the main verb types (-er verbs, -ir verbs, -re verbs)
<b>singular</b>	referring to only one person or item ( <i>un oiseau, tu</i> )
<b>tense</b>	relating to verbs, showing when the action takes place (the present tense, the perfect tense)
<b>verb</b>	a word used to say what is being done or what is happening ( <i>acheter, être</i> )

## SECTION 1 Nouns and pronouns

### 1.1 Gender

A noun is a word which names a thing or a person.

In French, all nouns are masculine or feminine.

Masculine	Feminine
un sandwich	une pizza

For most nouns, you have to learn the gender when you learn the new word. In the dictionary, you will see (m) or (f) after the noun.

As in English, some job nouns change to show the gender of the person doing them.

Il est serveur. *He is a waiter.*  
Elle est serveuse. *She is a waitress.*

	Masculine	Feminine
+ -e	étudiant	étudiante
-eur to -euse	vendeur	vendeuse
-teur to -trice	moniteur	monitrice
-en to -enne	électricien	électricienne
-er to -ère	infirmier	infirmière

Some don't change, e.g. agent de police (policeman/policewoman), fonctionnaire (civil servant). A few are always feminine, e.g. nourrice (childminder).

### 1.2 Singular/plural

Most nouns form their plural by adding -s.  
la montagne – singular → les montagnes  
– plural.

Words ending in -eau add -x.

un château → des châteaux

Words ending in -al change to end in -aux.

un animal → des animaux

### 1.3 The definite article

The definite article is *the*.

Masculine	Feminine	Plural
le sandwich	la pizza	les pizzas

**le** and **la** become **l'** before a vowel or *h*.  
Pomelette

You use the definite article before nouns when talking about likes and dislikes.

J'aime les carottes. *I like carrots.*

### 1.4 The indefinite article

The indefinite article is *a* (or *some* in the plural).

Masculine	Feminine	Plural
un village	une ville	des villages

When you are talking about jobs people do, you do not use the indefinite article.

Elle est infirmière. *She is a nurse.*

### 1.5 The partitive article

The partitive article is used when talking about a quantity of something: it means *some*.

Usage:

**du** before masculine nouns

**du** coca *some Coke*

**de la** before feminine nouns

**de la** limonade      *some lemonade*

**des** before plural nouns

**des** chips      *some crisps*

**de l'** before nouns which begin with a vowel or *h*

**de l'**Orangina      *some orangina*

You use the partitive article when talking about shopping, even though the word *some* is not always used in English.

J'achète **du** maquillage et **des** magazines.  
*I buy (some) make-up and (some) magazines.*

After a negative, **du**, **de la**, **de l'** and **des** become **de**.

Je n'ai pas **de** fromage.  
*I haven't got any cheese.*

**de** is also used after expressions of quantity.

un kilo **de** pommes      *a kilo of apples*  
beaucoup **de** devoirs      *lots of homework*

## 1.6 Subject pronouns

A pronoun stands in place of a noun in a sentence.

je/j'	<i>I</i>
tu	<i>you</i> (child, young person, someone you know well)
il	<i>he, it</i> (masculine noun)
elle	<i>she, it</i> (feminine noun)
on	<i>we, one, you, 'people'</i>
nous	<i>we</i>
vous	<i>you</i> (more than one person, someone you don't know well, a stranger)
ils	<i>they</i> (males/ mixed group/ masculine nouns)
elles	<i>they</i> (females/feminine nouns)

## 1.7 Direct object pronouns

The direct object of a sentence is the person or thing to whom the action is 'done'.

Je préfère **la** veste rouge.  
*I prefer the red jacket.*

You can replace the object of a sentence with a direct object pronoun.

Je **la** préfère.      *I prefer it.*

me	<i>me</i>
te	<i>you</i>
le	<i>him/it</i>
la	<i>her/it</i>
nous	<i>us</i>
vous	<i>you</i>
les	<i>them</i>

**me, te, le** and **la** → **m', t', l'** and **l'** before a vowel or silent *h*.  
*Je t'aime. I love you.*

Direct object pronouns go in front of the verb. Note: although **le**, **la** and **les** look like the definite article, they have a different meaning here.

Je **la** préfère.      *I prefer it.*

In the perfect tense, the direct object pronoun goes in front of the auxiliary. When the auxiliary is **avoir**, the past participle must agree with the direct object pronoun.

Tu as regardé la série? Oui, je l'ai regardée.  
*Did you watch the series? Yes, I watched it.*

Vous avez mangé les bananes? Oui, je **les** ai mangées.

*Have you eaten the bananas? Yes, I've eaten them.*

In a negative sentence, the direct object pronoun goes between **ne** and the verb.

Je **ne les** aime pas.      *I don't like them.*

Je **ne les** ai pas vus.      *I haven't seen them.*

## 1.8 Indirect object pronouns

If you can put *to* in front of a pronoun in a sentence, it is an indirect object pronoun.

*He gave me the book. = He gave the book to me.*

– so **me** in this sentence is an indirect object pronoun.

me	<i>to me</i>
te	<i>to you</i>
lui	<i>to him/her/it</i>
nous	<i>to us</i>
vous	<i>to you</i>
leur	<i>to them</i>

As with direct object pronouns, indirect object pronouns go before the verb.

Je **lui** donne un bonbon.

*I give a sweet to him/her/it.*

## 1.9 Relative pronouns: *qui, que* and *dont*

*qui* means *who, which* or *that*: it refers back to the **subject** of the verb which follows it.  
 J'ai un frère **qui** s'appelle Marc.  
*I have a brother **who** is called Marc.*

*que* means *who(m), which* or *that*: it refers back to the **object** of the verb which follows it.

Le garçon **que** je préfère s'appelle Ben.  
*The boy (**whom**) I prefer is called Ben.*

In English, you can sometimes miss out the word *who/whom/which/that*, but in French you must always include it.

**dont** means *whose* or *of which*.  
 La fille **dont** le frère est mécanicien.  
*The girl **whose** brother is a mechanic.*

**dont** is also used to replace **de** + the definite or indefinite article after an expression which takes **de**.  
 J'ai besoin **d'un** livre. Le livre **dont** j'ai besoin est rouge.  
*I need a book. The book (*which*) I need is red.*

### 1.10 *lequel* and *celui*

You use **lequel** and **celui** when you want to explain which person or thing you mean. They must agree with the noun they replace.

Tu aimes la chemise? **Laquelle?** **Celle-ci.**  
*Do you like the shirt? Which one? This one.*  
 Je vais acheter les gants. **Lesquels?** **Ceux-là.**  
*I'm going to buy the gloves. Which ones? Those ones.*

The words **-ci** or **-là** are added to **celui**, **celle**, etc., to make it clear whether you mean *this* or *that* (*these* or *those* in the plural.)

Singular	
Masculine	Feminine
lequel? <i>which one?</i>	laquelle? <i>which one?</i>
celui-ci/-là <i>this/that one</i>	celle-ci/-là <i>this/that one</i>

Plural	
Masculine	Feminine
lesquels? <i>which ones?</i>	lesquelles? <i>which ones?</i>
ceux-ci/-là <i>these/those ones</i>	celles-ci/-là <i>these/those ones</i>

### 1.11 Emphatic pronouns

Emphatic pronouns are used to emphasise a pronoun.

**Moi**, j'aime l'histoire. *I like history.*  
**Lui**, il est vraiment sympa. *He's really nice.*

With **on**, the pronoun **nous** is used.  
**Nous**, on adore Manchester City.  
*We love Manchester City.*

subject pronoun	emphatic pronoun
je	moi
tu	toi
il	lui
elle	elle
on	nous
nous	nous
vous	vous
ils	eux
elles	elles

These pronouns are also used after prepositions and when you want to say *me* or *him*, etc., on its own.

Tu viens avec **moi**?  
*Are you coming with me?*  
 Voici un cadeau pour **toi**.  
*Here is a present for you.*  
 On se retrouve chez **elle**.  
*We're meeting at her house.*  
 Qui a mangé tout le fromage? **Lui**.  
*Who ate all the cheese? Him.*

### 1.12 *y*

The pronoun **y** means *there*, referring to a place which has already been mentioned. It goes in front of the verb.

Je vais à **Paris** demain.  
*I'm going to Paris tomorrow.*  
 J'y vais demain. *I'm going there tomorrow.*  
 On y est allés hier. *We went there yesterday.*

### 1.13 en

The pronoun **en** means *of it* or *of them*, referring to something which has already been mentioned. It goes in front of the verb. Tu manges du chocolat? J'**en** mange beaucoup.

*Do you eat chocolate? I eat a lot (of it).*

In English, you can often omit *of it/them*, but **en** cannot be missed out in French.

## SECTION 2

### Adjectives and adverbs

#### 2.1 Position of adjectives

Most adjectives come **after** the noun they are describing.

une veste **rouge**                    *a red jacket*

Some short common adjectives come before the noun.

petit	joli	haut
grand	gros	long
nouveau	beau	
bon	vieux	

un **grand** livre **rouge**    *a big red book*

#### 2.2 Agreement of adjectives

Adjectives change according to whether the noun being described is masculine or feminine, singular or plural. This is called agreement.

For feminine, **add -e\***

une veste verte

For masculine plural, **add -s**

des tee-shirts noirs

For feminine plural, **add -es**

des chaussures bleues

\* If the adjective already ends in **-e**, there is no change in the feminine singular: *il/elle est égoïste.*

Some adjectives are **irregular**: they follow their own pattern. Other adjectives with the same ending work in the same way.

Singular		Meaning
Masculine	Feminine	
beau	belle	<i>beautiful</i>
blanc	blanche	<i>white</i>
italien	italienne	<i>Italian</i>
mignon	mignonne	<i>sweet, cute</i>
nul	nulle	<i>awful, rubbish</i>
ennuyeux	ennuyeuse	<i>boring</i>
nouveau	nouvelle	<i>new</i>
gros	grosse	<i>fat</i>
sportif	sportive	<i>sporty</i>
vieux	vieille	<i>old</i>
Plural		Meaning
Masculine	Feminine	
beaux	belles	<i>beautiful</i>
blancs	blanches	<i>white</i>
italiens	italiennes	<i>Italian</i>
mignons	mignonnes	<i>sweet, cute</i>
nuls	nulles	<i>awful, rubbish</i>
ennuyeux	ennuyeuses	<i>boring</i>
nouveaux	nouvelles	<i>new</i>
gros	grosses	<i>fat</i>
sportifs	sportives	<i>sporty</i>
vieux	vieilles	<i>old</i>

Some adjectives are **invariable**: they never change.

marron, cool, super, sympa

une veste cool/des baskets cool

Adjectives of colour which are made up of two parts do not change, e.g. **bleu clair** (*light blue*), **bleu foncé** (*dark blue*), **bleu marine** (*navy blue*)

une jupe **bleu foncé**    *a dark blue skirt*

**beau** (*beautiful, good-looking*), **nouveau** (*new*) and **vieux** (*old*) have a special form which is used in front of a masculine noun beginning with a vowel or silent *h*: un **bel** homme (*a good-looking man*) un **nouvel** appartement (*a new flat*) un **vieil** ami (*an old friend*).

## 2.3 Possessive adjectives

The words for *my*, *your*, etc., change according to whether the noun owned or possessed is masculine, feminine or plural:

	Masculine nouns	Feminine nouns	Plural nouns
<i>my</i>	<b>mon</b> professeur	<b>ma</b> classe	<b>mes</b> copains
<i>your</i> (tu)	<b>ton</b> professeur	<b>ta</b> classe	<b>tes</b> copains
<i>his or her</i>	<b>son</b> professeur	<b>sa</b> classe	<b>ses</b> copains
<i>our</i>	<b>notre</b> professeur/classe		<b>nos</b> copains
<i>your</i> (vous)	<b>votre</b> professeur/classe		<b>vos</b> copains
<i>their</i>	<b>leur</b> professeur/classe		<b>leurs</b> copains

For singular nouns beginning with a vowel or *h*, you use **mon**, **ton** or **son**.

**Mon** amie s'appelle Sophie.

*My friend is called Sophie.*

There is no 's in French. You show possession by using the pronoun **de**.  
les chaussures **de** Pete     *Pete's shoes*

## 2.4 Comparatives and superlatives

Adjectives can be used to compare nouns (Scotland is *smaller* than England).

To compare two nouns, use:

plus ... que                      *more ... than*

moins ... que                      *less ... than*

aussi ... que                      *as ... as*

Les films sont **plus** intéressants **que** les émissions de sport.

*Films are **more interesting than** sports programmes.*

Cette jupe est **moins** chère **que** la jupe bleue.  
*This skirt is **less expensive than** (cheaper than) the blue skirt.*

Le rugby est **aussi** passionnant **que** le foot.  
*Rugby is **as exciting as** football.*

The superlative is used to say something is 'the most'. It means *the biggest, the most interesting*, etc.

It comes before or after the noun depending on where the adjective would come. If it follows the noun, the definite article is repeated.

C'est **le plus grand** pays d'Europe.

*It's the biggest country in Europe.*

C'est **la matière la plus intéressante**.

*It's the most interesting subject.*

**bon** and **mauvais** are irregular:

Bill est **bon**, Marc est **meilleur**, Mike est **le meilleur**.

Sarah est **mauvaise**, Anne est **pire**, Julie est **la pire**.

## 2.5 Demonstrative adjectives: ce/cette/ces

There are different words for *this/these/that/those*, and they must agree with the noun they refer to:

**ce** before masculine nouns

**ce** village                      *this village*

**cette** before feminine nouns

**cette** ville                      *this town*

**ces** before plural nouns

**ces** montagnes                      *these mountains*

Before masculine singular nouns beginning with a vowel or *h*, use **cet**.

**cet** appartement                      *this flat*

You use **-ci** and **-là** to make it clear whether you mean *this/these* or *that/those*.

**cette** maison-**ci** *this house*

**cette** maison-**là** *that house*

## 2.6 Adverbs

Adverbs are used to describe how an action is done (e.g. *well, quickly, regularly*).

Most adverbs are formed by adding **-ment** to the feminine form of the adjective.

**lente**     *slow* → **lentement**                      *slowly*

**régulière** *regular* → **régulièrement** *regularly*

**bien** (*well*) and **mal** (*badly*) are irregular.

**mieux** and **le mieux** are the comparative and superlative forms of **bien**.

Elle joue **mieux** que les autres joueuses.

En fait, elle joue **le mieux**. *She plays better than the other players. In fact, she plays the best.*



## SECTION 3 Verbs

### 3.1 The infinitive

When you look up a verb in the dictionary, you find its original, unchanged form, which is called the **infinitive**, e.g. **habiter** (*to live*), **avoir** (*to have*), etc.

Most infinitives end in **-er**, **-ir** or **-re**.

### 3.2 The present tense

The present tense is used:

- to describe what is happening **now**  
*I am reading this book.*
- to describe what **usually** happens  
*I read a book every day.*

There is only one present tense in French:

je mange *I eat or I am eating*

To use a verb in the present tense, you must change the infinitive according to a set of rules. You need to learn these rules by heart.

There are three types of **regular verbs**:

**-er** verbs, **-ir** verbs and **-re** verbs.

**-er** verbs are the most common type.

trouver ( <i>to find</i> )	finir ( <i>to finish</i> )	attendre ( <i>to wait</i> )
je trouve	je finis	j'attends
tu trouves	tu finis	tu attends
il/elle/on trouve	il/elle/on finit	il/elle/on attend
nous trouvons	nous finissons	nous attendons
vous trouvez	vous finissez	vous attendez
ils/elles trouvent	ils/elles finissent	ils/elles attendent

Some verbs follow their own pattern. They are called **irregular verbs**. See verb tables at the end of this grammar reference.

### 3.3 The perfect tense

The perfect tense (*le passé composé*) is used to talk about a single event in the past.

j'ai joué *I played or I have played*

The perfect tense has two parts:

1 an auxiliary – part of the verb **avoir** (or **être**)

2 the past participle

To form the past participle of **regular verbs**:

for **-er** verbs, take off **-er** and add **-é**

j'ai regardé *I watched*

for **-ir** verbs, take off **-ir** and add **-i**

j'ai fini *I finished*

for **-re** verbs, take off **-re** and add **-u**

j'ai attendu *I waited*

Some key verbs are irregular in the perfect tense. See verb tables at the end of this grammar reference.

Some verbs are formed from other verbs

and therefore follow the same pattern:

**comprendre** (*to understand*) and

**apprendre** (*to learn*) follow **prendre** (past participles: **compris**, **appris**, like **pris**).

#### The perfect tense with être

13 verbs – mainly verbs of movement –

form their perfect tense with **être**, not **avoir**.

je suis allé *I have gone, I went*

il est resté *he has stayed, he stayed*

There are five pairs of opposites, and three others.

infinitive	meaning	past participle
aller	<i>to go</i>	allé(e)
venir	<i>to come</i>	venu(e)
arriver	<i>to arrive</i>	arrivé(e)
partir	<i>to leave</i>	parti(e)
entrer	<i>to enter</i>	entré(e)
sortir	<i>to go out</i>	sorti(e)
monter	<i>to go up</i>	monté(e)
descendre	<i>to come down</i>	descendu(e)
naître	<i>to be born</i>	né(e)
mourir	<i>to die</i>	mort(e)
rester	<i>to stay</i>	resté(e)
tomber	<i>to fall</i>	tombé(e)
retourner	<i>to return</i>	retourné(e)

Other verbs similar to these also take être (**rentrer, remonter, revenir**).  
All reflexive verbs also take être.

With these verbs, the past participle agrees with the subject of the sentence.

add -e for feminine

elle est allée *she went*

add -s/-es for plural

ils sont allés/elles sont allées *they went*

### 3.4 The imperfect tense

The imperfect tense (*l'imparfait*) is a past tense used to describe:

- what **used to** happen  
Il **jouait** au rugby, mais maintenant, il joue au foot.  
*He used to play rugby, but now he plays football.*
- repeated actions in the past  
Tous les jours, je me **levais** à sept heures et je **prenais** le bus.  
*Every day I got up at 7 o'clock and I caught the bus.*
- what was happening over a period of time  
Il **jouait** au rugby quand l'accident s'est passé.  
*He was playing rugby when the accident happened.*

It is formed with the imperfect stem + the appropriate endings. To get the imperfect stem, take the **nous** form of the present tense and remove the **-ons** ending.

**nous portons** → **je portais** = I used to wear

je portais	nous portions
tu portais	vous portiez
il/elle/on portait	ils/elles portaient

être has an irregular stem: **ét-**

j'étais *I used to be, I was*

The imperfect tense of **c'est** (*it is*) is **c'était** (*it was*).

The imperfect tense of **il y a** (*there is/there are*) is **il y avait** (*there was/there were*).

### 3.5 Mixing past tenses

When you are writing about the past, you often need to use a mixture of perfect and imperfect tense verbs.

<b>The perfect tense</b>	used for describing single actions	things that happened once
<b>The imperfect tense</b>	used for describing the state of things	how things were over a period of time or repeated actions

Sometimes you need to use both tenses in the same sentence (**perfect** and **imperfect**).  
Quand on **a quitté** la maison, il **pleuvait**.  
*When we left the house, it was raining.*

Pendant qu'on **attendait** le bus, j'**ai vu** un accident.  
*While we were waiting for the bus, I saw an accident.*

### 3.6 The perfect infinitive

To say 'after playing', 'after going', etc., use **après plus** the perfect infinitive. The perfect infinitive consists of **avoir** or **être** plus a past participle. The past participle of **être** verbs must agree with the subject.

Après **avoir visité** le château, on a mangé un sandwich.

*After visiting (= After having visited) the castle, we ate a sandwich.*

Après **être arrivée** à Paris, elle a téléphoné à sa mère.

*After arriving (= After having arrived) in Paris, she called her mother.*

### 3.7 The pluperfect tense

The **pluperfect** tense (*le plus-que-parfait*) is one step further back in time than the perfect tense. You use the pluperfect to say 'had done something'. It is formed by using the imperfect tense of **avoir** or **être** plus a past participle. The past participle of **être** verbs must agree with the subject of the sentence.

On **avait perdu** le match d'avant.

*We had lost the match before.*



J'**étais allé(e)** en vacances à Marseille.  
*I had gone on holiday to Marseilles.*

The **pluperfect** is sometimes used in a sentence with the **perfect** tense, to explain what happened before something else took place.

Elle **était** déjà **partie** quand il **est arrivé**.  
*She had already left when he arrived.*

### 3.8 The near future tense

The easiest way to talk about the future is by using the near future tense (*le futur proche*). It is formed using part of the verb **aller** + the infinitive.

Ce soir, je **vais regarder** la télé.

*Tonight I am going to watch TV.*

Demain, il **va faire** chaud.

*Tomorrow it's going to be hot.*

### 3.9 The future tense

To talk about the future you use either the near future tense (see 3.8) or the future tense (**le futur**). It is formed using the future stem + the appropriate endings. For **-er** verbs, the stem is the infinitive.

Un jour, je **serai** riche.

*In the future I will be rich.*

je donnerai	nous donnerons
tu donneras	vous donnerez
il/elle/on donnera	ils/elles donneront

Some verbs have irregular stems: **aller - ir-**, **avoir - aur-**, **être - ser-**, **faire - fer-**. When you use **quand** to refer to the future, all the verbs in the sentence have to be in the future tense.

Quand on **ira** à Paris, on **ira** au cinéma.

*When we go (= will go) to Paris, we will go to the cinema.*

The future tense of **c'est** (*it is*) is **ce sera** (*it will be*).

The future tense of **il y a** (*there is/there are*) is **il y aura** (*there will be*).

### 3.10 The conditional

The conditional (*le conditionnel*) is used to say *would*.

je <b>jouerais</b> au foot	<i>I would play tennis</i>
il <b>serait</b> content	<i>he would be happy</i>

To form the conditional, take the future tense stem of the verb (e.g. **jouer-** or **ser-**) and add the imperfect tense endings (**-ais** with **je**, **-ait** with **il**, etc.).

Modal verbs are often used in the conditional.

je **devrais** *I ought to, I should*

je **pourrais** *I could*

je **voudrais** *I would like to*

### 3.11 The imperative

You use the **imperative** to tell somebody to do or not do something.

With people you address as **tu**, the imperative is the present tense **tu** form minus the word **tu**. **-er** verbs drop the **s** at the end of the verb.

**Bois** assez d'eau. *Drink enough water.*

With people you address as **vous**, the imperative is the present tense **vous** form minus the word **vous**.

Ne **fumez** pas. *Don't smoke.*

### 3.12 The passive

The passive is used to describe things that **are done** (or have been done, will be done, etc.) to someone or something. It consists of the relevant tense of **être**, plus a past participle. The past participle must agree with the subject.

Present    Plusieurs kilomètres de la côte **sont menacés**.

*Several kilometres of coastline are threatened.*

Perfect    La forêt **a été détruite**.

*The forest has been destroyed.*

Imperfect    La rivière **était empoisonnée**.

*The river was/used to be poisoned.*

Future    Le village **sera inondé**.

*The village will be flooded.*

### 3.13 Negatives

To make a sentence negative, that is to say what you don't do or what isn't happening,

put **ne ... pas** around the verb. (**ne** shortens to **n'** before a vowel sound.)

Je **ne** vais **pas** à Paris.  
*I am not going to Paris.*  
Elle **n'**aime **pas** le prof.  
*She doesn't like the teacher.*

Other negatives work in the same way, forming a sandwich around the verb.

ne ... jamais	<i>never</i>
ne ... rien	<i>nothing, not anything</i>
ne ... que	<i>only</i>
ne ... plus	<i>no longer, not any more</i>
ne ... ni ... ni	<i>neither ... nor</i>

Je **ne** fume **plus**.  
*I no longer smoke/I don't smoke any more.*  
Je **ne** mange **rien**.  
*I eat nothing/I don't eat anything.*  
Il **n'**y a **ni** cinéma **ni** théâtre.  
*There's neither a cinema nor a theatre.*

**ne ... aucun** means *not any*. **aucun** must agree with the subject of the sentence.  
Je **n'**ai **aucune** sœur et **aucun** animal.  
*I don't have any sisters or any pets.*

In the perfect tense, the negative forms a sandwich around the auxiliary verb (**avoir** or **être**).  
Je **n'**ai **pas** vu le film. *I didn't see the film.*

If there are two verbs together in a sentence, most negatives form a sandwich round the first verb.  
Je **ne** veux **pas** aller à Paris.  
*I don't want to go to Paris.*  
Il **ne** va **plus** visiter le musée.  
*He isn't going to visit the museum any more.*

### 3.14 Question forms

#### Questions without question words

The easiest way to ask questions is to use the sentence form with rising intonation, i.e. you make your voice go up at the end.  
C'est vrai? *Is it true?*



**Est-ce que** can also be used to turn a sentence into a question.  
**Est-ce que** tu viens? *Are you coming?*

The third way of asking questions involves **inversion**, i.e. the order of the subject and

the verb is changed around.  
**Est-elle** absente? *Is she absent?*

An extra pronoun is added if a noun is used.  
La maison est-elle grande?  
*Is the house big?*

An extra **t** is added in between two vowels to help with pronunciation.  
Thierry Henry joue-**t-il** pour Liverpool?  
*Does Thierry Henry play for Liverpool?*

#### Questions using question words

If the question contains a question word, the question word is usually at the start of the sentence and is followed by **est-ce que**. See section 4.2 for a list of question words.  
**Où est-ce que** tu vas? *Where are you going?*

Sometimes inversion is used.  
Comment **voyages-tu**?  
*How are you travelling?*

#### Asking questions in the perfect tense

The rules above also apply to questions in the perfect tense.  
Tu as fini? *Have you finished?*  
**Est-ce qu'**il a vu le film?  
*Has he seen the film?*

When inversion is used, the subject pronoun and the auxiliary verb (the part of **avoir** or **être**) are inverted.  
**As-tu** fini? *Have you finished?*  
Pourquoi **a-t-elle** manqué le match?  
*Why did she miss the match?*

#### quel/quelle

**quel/quelle** means *which* or *what*. It is used when *what* refers to a noun (compare **Qu'est-ce que** with a verb) and agrees with the noun it refers to.  
**Quelle** est la date? *What is the date?*

	Masculine	Feminine
Singular	<b>quel</b> livre?	<b>quelle</b> page?
Plural	<b>quels</b> livres?	<b>quelles</b> pages?

### 3.15 Reflexive verbs

Reflexive verbs are verbs which include an extra pronoun (before the verb). The infinitive of a reflexive verb has the pronoun **se**. The reflexive pronouns **me**, **te** and **se** shorten to **m'**, **t'** and **s'** in front of a vowel sound.

se coucher (*to go to bed*)  
 je **me** couche                    nous **nous** couchons  
 tu **te** couches                    vous **vous** couchez  
 il/elle/on se couche    ils/elles se couchent

Je **me** lève à sept heures.

*I get up at 7 o'clock.*

Tu **te** couches à quelle heure?

*What time do you go to bed?*

In the perfect tense, reflexive verbs use **être**. As with all **être** verbs, the past participle agrees with the subject.

Elle **s'est** levée à sept heures.

*She got up at 7 o'clock.*

Nous **nous sommes** amusés.

*We enjoyed ourselves.*

### 3.16 Verbs with the infinitive

If there are two different verbs in a row in a sentence (apart from verbs in the perfect tense), the second verb is an infinitive.

J'adore **apprendre** le français.

*I love learning French.*

Elle déteste **ranger** sa chambre.

*She hates tidying her bedroom.*

#### Modal verbs

Modal verbs are usually followed by the infinitive.

devoir *to have to*

Il doit **rester** ici. *He must stay here.*

pouvoir *to be able to*

Tu peux **aller** au cinéma?

*Can you go to the cinema?*

vouloir *to want to*

Je veux **être** riche. *I want to be rich.*

In certain situations, modal verbs can be used on their own.

Tu peux aller au cinéma samedi?

Oui, je **peux**. *Can you go to the cinema on Saturday? Yes, I can.*

#### Verbs which take **à** or **de**

Some French verbs need to have **à** or **de** before the infinitive.

J'ai décidé **de** **rester** à la maison.

*I decided to stay at home.*

Elle commence **à être** plus raisonnable.

*She is beginning to be more reasonable.*

When talking about playing an instrument, you use jouer **de**. When talking about playing a sport, you use jouer **à**.

Je joue **du** piano. *I play piano.*

On a joué **au** football. *We played football.*

### 3.17 *si* clauses

If you use **si** in a sentence consisting of two clauses, the tenses of the verbs usually follow one of these patterns:

- 1 **Si** + present tense + present tense  
 S'il **pleut**, je **lis** ou je **regarde** la télé.  
*If it's raining, I read or watch TV.*
- 2 **Si** + present tense + future tense  
 Si on **prend** le train, on **arrivera** plus tôt.  
*If we take the train, we will arrive earlier.*
- 3 **Si** + imperfect tense + conditional  
 Si on **prenait** le train, on **arriverait** plus tôt.  
*If we took the train, we would arrive earlier.*

## SECTION 4 Structural features

Structural features are words or sets of words which occur in sentences and texts.

### 4.1 Prepositions

Prepositions are words which tell us where someone or something is.

avec *with*

dans *in*

devant *in front of*

derrière *behind*

entre *between*

sur *on*

sous *under*

à *at, to or in (with name of town\*)*

en *to or in (with name of country\*)*

de *of*

#### in/at/to places

To say *in* or *to* a town or country, use:

- **à** before the name of a town  
 – *Elle habite à Paris.*
- **en** before the name of most countries  
 – *Il va en France.*
- **au** before the name of masculine countries – *J'habite au Pays de Galles.*
- **aux** before the name of plural countries  
 – *On va aux États-Unis.*

## de

Some prepositions are followed by **de**:

à côté <b>de</b>	<i>next to</i>
au bout <b>de</b>	<i>at the end of</i>
de l'autre côté <b>de</b>	<i>on the other side of</i>
en face <b>de</b>	<i>opposite</i>
près <b>de</b>	<i>near</i>

**de + le** becomes **du**, and **de + les** becomes **des**.

à côté <b>du</b> cinéma	<i>next to the cinema</i>
près <b>des</b> toilettes	<i>near the toilets</i>

## à (to, that)

**à + le** becomes **au**, and **à + les** becomes **aux**.

Je vais **au** cinéma, mais il va **aux** magasins.  
*I'm going to the cinema, but he's going to the shops.*

**jusqu'à** means *as far as* or *until*.

**jusqu'aux** feux *as far as the traffic lights*

## 4.2 Question words

où?	<i>where?</i>
combien de?	<i>how many?</i>
qui?	<i>who?</i>
à quelle heure?	<i>at what time?</i>
quand?	<i>when?</i>
comment?	<i>how?</i>
qu'est-ce que?	<i>what?</i>
quel(le) (+ noun)?	<i>what?/which?</i>
pourquoi?	<i>why?</i>

## 4.3 Intensifiers

Intensifiers are words placed before adjectives to make them stronger or weaker.

très	<i>very</i>	tout à fait	<i>completely</i>
assez	<i>quite</i>	trop	<i>too</i>
un peu	<i>a little bit</i>	vraiment	<i>really</i>
si	<i>so*</i>		

Le français est **très** intéressant.

*French is **very** interesting.*

C'est **trop** cher. *It's **too** dear.*

\* **si** has three meanings:

- **so** Elle est **si** bavarde.  
*She is **so** talkative.*
- **if** Je ne sais pas **si** je peux venir.  
*I don't know **if** I can come.*
- **yes** (in reply to a negative question or statement) Tu ne viens pas. **Si!**  
*You aren't coming. **Yes**, (I am)!*

## 4.4 Connectives

Connectives are used to join up phrases and sentences.

et <i>and</i>	car <i>because</i>	si <i>if</i>
mais <i>but</i>	puis <i>then</i>	ou <i>or</i>
quand <i>when</i>	donc <i>therefore</i>	
parce que <i>because</i>		

## 4.5 depuis

To say how long something has been happening, you use **depuis** (*since*) with the present tense.

J'**habite** ici **depuis** cinq ans.

*I **have lived** here for five years.*

Elle est absente **depuis** trois mois.

*She **has been** absent for three months.*

## 4.6 Impersonal verbs

Impersonal verbs are normally only used in the **il** form. The most common of these is  **falloir** (*to be necessary*) → **il faut** (*it is necessary* or *I/you have to* or *he/she/it has to*).

**il faut** is often followed by the infinitive, but it can be followed by a noun.

Il faut **écouter** le professeur.

*You must listen to the teacher.*

Il faut **de la musique**.

*We need music.*

The perfect tense of **il faut** is **il a fallu**.

The imperfect is **il fallait**.

The following verbs can also be used impersonally:

**manquer** (*to miss*) → **il manque** (*it's missing/lacking*)

Il me **manque** du papier.

*I haven't got any paper.*

**rester** (*to stay*) → **il reste** (*there is/are left*)

Il **reste** trois jours avant mon anniversaire.

*There are three days left until my birthday.*

## 4.7 Expressions with avoir

Some expressions with the verb *to be* in English use **avoir** in French.

J'ai froid. *I **am** cold.*

**avoir 14 ans** *to be 14 years old*

**avoir chaud** *to be hot*

**avoir froid** *to be cold*

<b>avoir faim</b>	<i>to be hungry</i>
<b>avoir soif</b>	<i>to be thirsty</i>
<b>avoir raison</b>	<i>to be right</i>
<b>avoir tort</b>	<i>to be wrong</i>
<b>avoir peur</b>	<i>to be afraid</i>

**avoir besoin de** (*to need*) can be followed by a noun or a verb in the infinitive.

J'ai besoin **d'un stylo**. *I need a pen.*

As-tu besoin **d'acheter** du lait?

*Do you need to buy some milk?*

## 4.8 Time expressions

Certain time expressions are usually used with certain tenses.

Past	Present	Future
l'année dernière <i>last year</i>	normalement <i>normally</i>	l'été prochain <i>next summer</i>
samedi dernier <i>last Saturday</i>	généralement <i>generally</i>	l'année prochaine <i>next year</i>
hier <i>yesterday</i>	d'habitude <i>usually</i>	demain <i>tomorrow</i>
	de temps en temps <i>from time to time</i>	
	parfois <i>sometimes</i>	

When **il y a** is used before an expression of time, it means *ago*.

**il y a une semaine** *a week ago*

## SECTION 5 Extras

### 5.1 Numbers

1 un	14 quatorze
2 deux	15 quinze
3 trois	16 seize
4 quatre	17 dix-sept
5 cinq	18 dix-huit
6 six	19 dix-neuf
7 sept	20 vingt
8 huit	21 vingt et un
9 neuf	22 vingt-deux
10 dix	30 trente
11 onze	40 quarante
12 douze	50 cinquante
13 treize	60 soixante

70 soixante-dix	91 quatre-vingt-onze
71 soixante et onze	92 quatre-vingt-douze
72 soixante-douze	100 cent
80 quatre-vingts	101 cent un
81 quatre-vingt-un	200 deux cents
82 quatre-vingt-deux	300 trois cents
90 quatre-vingt-dix	1000 mille
	2000 deux mille

### 5.2 Days

In French the days of the week and the months do not begin with a capital letter.

lundi	<i>Monday</i>	vendredi	<i>Friday</i>
mardi	<i>Tuesday</i>	samedi	<i>Saturday</i>
mercredi	<i>Wednesday</i>	dimanche	<i>Sunday</i>
jeudi	<i>Thursday</i>		

lundi *on Monday*

le lundi / tous les lundis  
*every Monday, on Mondays*

lundi matin/après-midi/soir  
*on Monday morning/afternoon/evening*

### 5.3 Dates

janvier	<i>January</i>	juillet	<i>July</i>
février	<i>February</i>	août	<i>August</i>
mars	<i>March</i>	septembre	<i>September</i>
avril	<i>April</i>	octobre	<i>October</i>
mai	<i>May</i>	novembre	<i>November</i>
juin	<i>June</i>	décembre	<i>December</i>

le 12 février *on the 12th of February*

On va en France le 3 août.

*We are going to France on the 3rd of August.*

le premier mai *the 1st of May*

### 5.4 Times

sept heures	<i>seven o'clock</i>
sept heures dix	<i>ten past seven</i>
sept heures et quart	<i>quarter past seven</i>
sept heures et demie	<i>half past seven</i>
sept heures quarante-cinq	<i>seven forty-five</i>
huit heures moins le quart	<i>quarter to eight</i>
midi/minuit	<i>12 midday/ midnight</i>

The 24-hour clock is used much more frequently in French than it is in English.

neuf heures vingt *9.20 am*

quinze heures quinze *3.15 pm*

vingt heures quarante-cinq *8.45 pm*

Quelle heure est-il? *What time is it?*

Il est neuf heures. *It is nine o'clock.*

à dix heures *at ten o'clock*

# Verb tables

## Regular verbs

<i>infinitive</i>	<i>present tense</i>		<i>perfect tense</i>	<i>future</i>	<i>imperfect</i>
<b>-er verbs</b> jouer ( <i>to play</i> )	je joue tu joues il/elle/on joue	nous jouons vous jouez ils/elles jouent	j'ai joué	je jouerai	je jouais
<b>-ir verbs</b> finir ( <i>to finish</i> )	je finis tu finis il/elle/on finit	nous finissons vous finissez ils/elles finissent	j'ai fini	je finirai	je finissais
<b>-re verbs</b> attendre ( <i>to wait for</i> )	j'attends tu attends il/elle/on attend	nous attendons vous attendez ils/elles attendent	j'ai attendu	j'attendrai	j'attendais
<b>Reflexive verbs</b> se coucher ( <i>to go to bed</i> )	je <b>me</b> couche tu <b>te</b> couches il/elle/on se couche	nous <b>nous</b> couchons vous <b>vous</b> couchez ils/elles se couchent	je me suis couché(e)	je me coucherai	je me couchais

## Key irregular verbs

<i>infinitive</i>	<i>present tense</i>		<i>perfect tense</i>	<i>future</i>	<i>imperfect</i>
<b>aller</b> ( <i>to go</i> )	je vais tu vas il/elle/on va	nous allons vous allez ils/elles vont	je suis allé(e)	j'irai	j'allais
<b>avoir</b> ( <i>to have</i> )	j'ai tu as il/elle/on a	nous avons vous avez ils/elles ont	j'ai eu	j'aurai	j'avais
<b>être</b> ( <i>to be</i> )	je suis tu es il/elle/on est	nous sommes vous êtes ils/elles sont	j'ai été	je serai	j'étais
<b>faire</b> ( <i>to do/make</i> )	je fais tu fais il/elle/on fait	nous faisons vous faites ils/elles font	j'ai fait	je ferai	je faisais

## Other irregular verbs

<i>infinitive</i>	<i>present tense</i>		<i>perfect tense</i>	<i>future</i>	<i>imperfect</i>
<b>acheter</b> ( <i>to buy</i> )	j'achète tu achètes il/elle/on achète	nous achetons vous achetez ils/elles achètent	j'ai acheté	j'achèterai	j'achetais
<b>s'appeler</b> ( <i>to be called</i> )	je m'appelle tu t'appelles il/elle/on s'appelle	nous nous appelons vous vous appelez ils/elles s'appellent	je me suis appelé(e)	je m'appellerai	je m'appelais
<b>apprendre (to learn) – see prendre</b>					
<b>boire</b> ( <i>to drink</i> )	je bois tu bois il/elle/on boit	nous buvons vous buvez ils/elles boivent	j'ai bu	je boirai	je buvais



<i>infinitive</i>	<i>present tense</i>		<i>perfect tense</i>	<i>future</i>	<i>imperfect</i>
<b>comprendre (to understand) – see prendre</b>					
<b>conduire</b> (to drive)	je conduis tu conduis il/elle/on conduit	nous conduisons vous conduisez ils/elles conduisent	j'ai conduit	je conduirai	je conduisais
<b>connaître</b> (to know)	je connais tu connais il/elle/on connaît	nous connaissons vous connaissez ils/elles connaissent	j'ai connu	je connaîtrai	je connaissais
<b>courir</b> (to run)	je cours tu cours il/elle/on court	nous courons vous courez ils/elles courent	j'ai couru	je courrai	je courais
<b>croire</b> (to believe)	je crois tu crois il/elle/on croit	nous croyons vous croyez ils/elles croient	j'ai cru	je croirai	je croyais
<b>décrire (to describe) – see écrire</b>					
<b>devenir (to become) – see venir</b>					
<b>devoir</b> (to have to/ ... must)	je dois tu dois il/elle/on doit	nous devons vous devez ils/elles doivent	j'ai dû	je devrai	je devais
<b>dire</b> (to say)	je dis tu dis il/elle/on dit	nous disons vous dites ils/elles disent	j'ai dit	je dirai	je disais
<b>dormir</b> (to sleep)	je dors tu dors il/elle/on dort	nous dormons vous dormez ils/elles dorment	j'ai dormi	je dormirai	je dormais
<b>écrire</b> (to write)	j'écris tu écris il/elle/on écrit	nous écrivons vous écrivez ils/elles écrivent	j'ai écrit	j'écrirai	j'écrivais
<b>envoyer</b> (to send)	j'envoie tu envoies il/elle/on envoie	nous envoyons vous envoyez ils/elles envoient	j'ai envoyé	j'enverrai	j'envoyais
<b>essayer</b> (to try)	j'essaie tu essaies il/elle/on essaie	nous essayons vous essayez ils/elles essaient	j'ai essayé	j'essaierai	j'essayais
<b>se lever</b> (to get up)	je me lève tu te lèves il/elle/on se lève	nous nous levons vous vous levez ils/elles se lèvent	je me <b>suis</b> levé(e)	je me lèverai	je me levais
<b>lire</b> (to read)	je lis tu lis il/elle/on lit	nous lisons vous lisez ils/elles lisent	j'ai lu	je lirai	je lisais
<b>manger</b> (to eat)	je mange tu manges il/elle/on mange	nous mangeons vous mangez ils/elles mangent	j'ai mangé	je mangerai	je mangeais

<i>infinitive</i>	<i>present tense</i>		<i>perfect tense</i>	<i>future</i>	<i>imperfect</i>
<b>mettre</b> ( <i>to put</i> )	je mets tu mets il/elle/on met	nous mettons vous mettez ils/elles mettent	j'ai mis	je mettrai	je mettais
<b>ouvrir</b> ( <i>to open</i> )	j'ouvre tu ouvres il/elle/on ouvre	nous ouvrons vous ouvrez ils/elles ouvrent	j'ai ouvert	j'ouvrirai	j'ouvrais
<b>partir</b> ( <i>to leave</i> )	je pars tu pars il/elle/on part	nous partons vous partez ils/elles partent	je suis parti(e)	je partirai	je partais
<b>pouvoir</b> ( <i>to be able to/ ... can</i> )	je peux tu peux il/elle/on peut	nous pouvons vous pouvez ils/elles peuvent	j'ai pu	je pourrai	je pouvais
<b>préférer</b> ( <i>to prefer</i> )	je préfère tu préfères il/elle/on préfère	nous préférons vous préférez ils/elles préfèrent	j'ai préféré	je préférerai	je préférerais
<b>prendre</b> ( <i>to take</i> )	je prends tu prends il/elle/on prend	nous prenons vous prenez ils/elles prennent	j'ai pris	je prendrai	je prenais
<b>recevoir</b> ( <i>to receive</i> )	je reçois tu reçois il/elle/on reçoit	nous recevons vous recevez ils/elles reçoivent	j'ai reçu	je recevrai	je recevais
<b>rire</b> ( <i>to laugh</i> )	je ris tu ris il/elle/on rit	nous rions vous riez ils/elles rient	j'ai ri	je rirai	je riais
<b>savoir</b> ( <i>to know</i> )	je sais tu sais il/elle/on sait	nous savons vous savez ils/elles savent	j'ai su	je saurai	je savais
<b>sentir</b> ( <i>to feel</i> )	je sens tu sens il/elle/on sent	nous sentons vous sentez ils/elles sentent	j'ai senti	je sentirai	je sentais
<b>servir</b> ( <i>to serve</i> )	je sers tu sers il/elle/on sert	nous servons vous servez ils/elles servent	j'ai servi	je servirai	je servais
<b>sortir</b> ( <i>to go out</i> )	je sors tu sors il/elle/on sort	nous sortons vous sortez ils/elles sortent	je suis sorti(e)	je sortirai	je sortais
<b>venir</b> ( <i>to come</i> )	je viens tu viens il/elle/on vient	nous venons vous venez ils/elles viennent	je suis venu(e)	je viendrai	je venais
<b>voir</b> ( <i>to see</i> )	je vois tu vois il/elle/on voit	nous voyons vous voyez ils/elles voient	j'ai vu	je verrai	je voyais
<b>vouloir</b> ( <i>to want to</i> )	je veux tu veux il/elle/on veut	nous voulons vous voulez ils/elles veulent	j'ai voulu	je voudrai	je voulais