# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOUNS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Nouns</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender: Masculine, Feminine</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voila vs. il y a</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determiners</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Determiners</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determiners: Definite Articles</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determiners: Indefinite Articles</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessive Determiners</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbs</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Adverbs</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjectives</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Adjectives</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjective vs. adverb</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjectives: Formation and Placement</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Verbs</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- er verbs (regular) present tense</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- er verbs (stem changing) present tense</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ir verbs (irregular) partir, sortir, and dormir</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etre ‘to be’</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoir ‘to have’</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aller “to go”</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faire “to do, to make”</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faire expressions</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negation</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Negation</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Negation: ne ... pas</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Prepositions</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions with Places</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Pronouns</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Pronouns</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c’est vs il/elle/est</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense, Aspect, Mood, Voice</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro to Tense, Aspect, Mood, Voice</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>futur proche</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogatives</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes/No Questions: est-ce que, n'est-ce pas</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogative and Exclamative: quel</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**NOUNS**

*Introduction to Nouns*

A noun is essentially a label for places, things, events, ideas, concepts and so on. Like English, nouns in French may be categorized as common or proper, count or mass, singular or plural. However, unlike English, French nouns are also categorized as either masculine or feminine.

**common vs. proper**

Common nouns in English and French are the generic term for something. Common nouns are never spelled with a capital letter unless they begin a sentence.

- un tatou
- an armadillo

Proper nouns are specific names and thus begin with capital letters.

- Tex et Tammy
- Tex and Tammy

**count vs. mass**

Another way of classifying nouns is according to whether they can be counted or not. Count nouns identify individual entities that can be counted, like armadillos.

- un tatou, deux tatous
- one armadillo, two armadillos

In contrast, a mass noun refers to an entity as an uncountable unit. In the following example, the bread that Tex is eating is conceived of as a mass, that is, an undefined quantity.

- Tex mange du pain.
- Tex is eating bread.

The difference between count and mass nouns is usually clearcut. However, something that is typically countable such as an animal (one armadillo, two armadillos, three armadillos) can nevertheless be conceived of in terms of a mass, as in the following tasteless example.

- Berk! Il y a du tatou écrasé partout sur les autoroutes du Texas.
- Yuck! There’s squashed armadillo all over the Texas highways.

**singular vs. plural**

All nouns in French and English are marked for number, that is, for singular (one) or plural (more than one). French, like English, usually indicates plurality by adding an -s to the end of the base form, the singular noun. Count nouns have both singular and plural forms:

- le tatou, les tatous
- the armadillo, the armadillos
Mass nouns typically have only a singular form. Try saying the plural forms of the following English mass nouns:

sewage, mucus, plasma.

It sounds strange doesn't it? This shows that it is difficult to pluralize a mass noun.

**masculine vs. feminine**

In English, grammatical gender is based on biology and is only relevant for pronouns (he, she, it) and possessive determiners (his, her, its). Gender in French, on the other hand, affects all nouns, pronouns, adjectives and articles. A noun's gender is indicated by the article that precedes it. Masculine nouns are preceded by *le* and feminine nouns by *la*. The use of articles in French is more widespread than in English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>le garçon</td>
<td>the boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la fille</td>
<td>the girl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike English, the grammatical concept of gender in French has little to do with biological sex. Therefore, inanimate objects such as tables and desks are categorized as either masculine or feminine (there is no neuter gender in French grammar).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la table (feminine)</td>
<td>the table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le bureau (masculine)</td>
<td>the desk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember that gender in French, for the most part, is not about sex, but is simply an arbitrary category. The terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' really mean nothing more than 'noun class A' and 'noun class B'. Because grammatical gender is fairly arbitrary, it is essential to memorize a noun's gender along with its spelling and pronunciation.
In French, a noun is always feminine or masculine. It is introduced by a determiner, which usually indicates the gender of the noun.

**people**

When a noun refers to a person, the gender is determined by the person's sex (although some exceptions do exist).

In general, the feminine form of the noun is formed by adding an **-e** to the masculine noun. Note that the addition of the **-e** changes the pronunciation in some words:

- Joe-Bob est étudiant. Tammy est aussi étudiante.
- Tex est ami avec Joe-Bob, Tammy est aussi amie avec Joe-Bob.

There are cases when the feminine form of the noun changes more drastically.

- Edouard: Je suis serveur. Tammy: Je ne suis pas serveuse.
- Trey: Je suis musicien. Tammy: Je ne suis pas musicienne.
- Tex: Je suis un séducteur. Bette: Je suis une séductrice.
- Joe-Bob: Pour le travail, je ne suis pas champion. Fiona: C'est moi qui suis championne.
- Tex: Je suis le copain de Tammy. Tammy: Je suis la copine de Tex.

Joe-Bob is a student, Tammy is a student.

Tex is Joe-Bob's friend, Tammy is also Joe-Bob's friend.

Edouard: I'm a waiter. Tammy: I'm not a waiter.

Trey: I'm a musician. Tammy: I'm not a musician.

Tex: I'm a womanizer.

Bette: I'm a seductress.

Joe-Bob: I'm not a champion at working.

Fiona: I'm the one who is a champion.

Tex: I'm Tammy's pal.

Tammy: I'm Tex's pal.
In general, when the masculine noun ends in -e, the feminine noun remains unchanged. Only the determiner or the context indicates if it is a feminine or masculine noun.

Tex et Rita sont frère et soeur, mais ils ont des métiers tout à fait différents. Tex est poète. Rita est secrétaire. Tex n’est sûrement pas secrétaire et Rita n’est pas poète non plus.

Tex and Rita are brother and sister, but they have completely different jobs. Tex is a poet. Rita is a secretary. Tex is certainly not a secretary and Rita is not a poet either.
animals
The gender of animals is often arbitrary. Some animals are always masculine (un escargot, a snail), others are feminine (la fourmi, ant). However, for some animals there are irregular masculine and feminine forms.

le chat / la chatte, cat
le chien / la chiennne, dog
le coq / la poule, chicken (rooster / hen)
le boeuf, le taureau / la vache, ox / bull / cow

objects and ideas
The gender of nouns referring to things and abstractions is arbitrary. However, it can often be inferred from the ending of the word. Typically, words ending in -age, -ment, -eau, -phone, -isme are masculine and those ending in -tion, -sion, -té, -ette, -ance, -ie, -ure, -ode/-ade/-ude are feminine.

masculine endings
le fromage (cheese)
le monument (monument)
le sentiment (feeling)
le couteau (knife)
le téléphone (telephone)
le microscope (microscope)
le romantisme (romanticism)

feminine endings
la salade (salad, lettuce)
la fourchette (fork)
la télévision (television)
la culture (culture)
la situation (situation)
la société (society)
la différence (difference)
la philosophie (philosophy)

Tammy présente Tex pour la première fois à Bette et Fiona.
Tammy: Tex est un ami de Lyon. C’est un tuteur maintenant! Tex, la minette c’est mon ami e Bette, et la fourmi c’est ma copine Fiona. Bette et Fiona sont étudiantes.
Bette: Enchantée, Tex! J’adore la culture française.
Tex: Ah, donc tu, . . . tu aimes l’existentialisme?
Bette: Euh, oui, bien sûr, Tex.

Tammy introduit Tex for the first time to Bette and Fiona.
Tammy: Tex is a friend from Lyon. He is a tutor now! Tex, the kitty is my friend Bette and the ant is my pal Fiona. Bette and Fiona are students.
Bette: Nice to meet you, Tex. I adore French culture.
Tex: Ah, so you, . . . you like existentialism?
Bette: Uh, yes, of course, Tex.
Voilà vs. il y a

Il y a and voilà are two ways of introducing nouns. They are translated into English as ‘there is / there are’ or ‘here is / here are.’

Il y a
Il y a + noun usually indicates the existence of a person or a thing in the context of a particular setting. It is commonly translated as ‘there is’ or ‘there are.’ For example:

- A Austin, il y a une grande université.
- Dans cette université, il y a plusieurs animaux qui parlent le français!
- Parmi ces animaux, il y a des tatous, un escargot, une chatte, un écureuil, et plusieurs insectes! Attention!

Il y a + noun

The negation of ‘il y a’ is il n’y a pas, ‘there is / are not’. You will also find these forms:

- A Austin, il n’y a jamais de neige.
- Donc parmi ces animaux francophones, il n’y a pas de pingouin!

The verb avoir in the expression il y a may be conjugated in any tense or mood, for example, in the past (il y avait, ‘there was’) or in the future (il y aura, ‘there will be.’)

voilà/voici

Voilà + noun and voici + noun are commonly translated as ‘here is/are’. They are used to indicate the sudden appearance of something or someone, to introduce people or ideas. Alternating between voici and voilà is common when referring to more than one item.

- Tammy montre le campus à Tex: Voici la bibliothèque et voilà la célèbre tour!
- Tex: Oui, oui ...
- Tammy présente Tex: Tex, voici Joe-Bob et Corey ... et voilà Edouard qui arrive.
- Joe-Bob: Bonjour, Tex.
- Corey: Salut, Tex.
- Tex: Oh, la, la, de vrais Texans ...

- Tammy is showing the campus to Tex: Here is the library, and there is the famous Tower.
- Tex: Yes, yes ...
- Tammy introduces Tex: Tex, here is Joe-Bob and Corey ... and there comes Edouard.
- Joe-Bob: Hello, Tex.
- Corey: Hi, Tex.
- Tex: Oh, la, la, real Texans ...
Determiners

Introduction to Determiners

A **determiner** is a word that determines or qualifies the meaning of a noun by expressing such concepts as quantity or definiteness. There is never more than one determiner per noun and it is always placed before the noun. Determiners always agree in gender and number with the nouns they modify.

**Articles** are the main group of determiners in French. There are three categories of articles: definite, indefinite, and partitive.

**Definite articles** (*le, la, les*) are used when the noun is specific. They are all translated as 'the' in English.

```
Le serveur donne la carte des vins à Tex.  The waiter gives the wine list to Tex.
```

**Indefinite articles** (*un, une, des*) introduce nouns that are not specific. They are translated as 'a' or 'an' in English.

```
Tex choisit un vin.  Tex chooses a wine.
```

**Partitive articles** (*du, de la, del*) are used to introduce mass nouns, that is nouns that are conceived of as a mass of indeterminate quantity. They are usually translated as 'some' in English.

```
Tex boit du vin.  Tex drinks some wine.
```

**Demonstrative determiners** (*ce, cet, cette, ces*) point out something, typically something within sight. They may be translated in English as 'this', 'that', 'these', 'those' depending on the number (singular or plural) and proximity (near or far).

```
Tex explique: Ce bassin est Barton Spring.  Tex explains: This pool is Barton Springs.
Cette piscine s'appelle Deep Eddy.  This swimming pool is Deep Eddy.
```

**Possessive determiners** (*mon, ma, mes*, etc.) indicate ownership or possession like 'my', 'your' 'his', 'her', 'our', 'their'.

```
Tex présente sa famille: Voici mon frère Trey, ma soeur Rita avec ses enfants et leur chien Fido.  Tex introduces his family: Here is my brother, Trey, my sister, Rita with her children and their dog Fido.  Our family is great.
```

`
Determiners: Definite Articles

Forms

In French, few nouns can stand alone. Most need to be introduced or 'determined' by an article. As in English, an article is characterized as either definite ("the") or indefinite ("a", "an"). In addition, French articles are also masculine or feminine, singular or plural, according to the gender and number of the noun they determine. Here are the definite articles in French:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>le (l')</td>
<td>les</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>la (l')</td>
<td>les</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tex le tatou</td>
<td>Tex the armadillo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe-Bob l'écureuil</td>
<td>Joe-Bob the squirrel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bette la chatte</td>
<td>Bette the cat (female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l'Université du Texas</td>
<td>The University of Texas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

élision and liaison

In the examples above, note that le and la both become l' when they precede a noun beginning with a vowel or a silent h: l'escargot, l'université. This is called elision.

Unlike le and la, les does not have a contracted, reduced form. When les is followed by a word starting with a vowel, the normally silent final s of les is pronounced, making a /z/ sound. This additional sound linking two words is called liaison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compulsory liaison with a vowel or silent h</th>
<th>No liaison with a consonant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>les insectes</td>
<td>les tatus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>les animaux</td>
<td>les fourmis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>les hommes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that elision and liaison occur with most words starting with h: l'homme, les hommes, l'hiver, les hivers. Exceptions to this rule are words beginning with an aspirate "h".

to identify a specific noun

The definite article is used to identify a specific noun or to refer to a noun that has already been specified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tex adore les croissants.</td>
<td>Tex loves croissants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy n'aime pas le café.</td>
<td>Tammy does not like coffee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edouard apprécie la bonne cuisine française.</td>
<td>Edouard appreciates good French cuisine.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to express general truths or concepts

French uses the definite article to express general truths or concepts. English, in contrast, uses no article at all. Compare the following sentences:

- Tex: L’argent ne rend pas l’homme heureux!
  - Tex: Money does not make man happy!

- Tammy: Tu as raison. L’amour et la santé sont plus importants!
  - Tammy: You are right. Love and health are more important!

- Tex: Bien sûr, pour les insectes et les animaux, l’argent n’existe pas! Mais l’amour est aussi important pour nous que pour les humains. Ah oui ... l’amour, toujours l’amour!
  - Tex: Of course, for insects and animals, money does not exist! But love is as important for us as it is for humans. Ah, yes, love, love, love, always love!

to express likes and dislikes

The French also use the definite article with verbs of preference, such as aimer, préférer, détester. Once again, English omits the article in such general statements. For example:

- Tex adore les croissants.
  - Tex loves croissants.

- Joe-Bob préfère les doughnuts.
  - Joe-Bob prefers doughnuts.

- Tammy n’aime pas le café.
  - Tammy does not like coffee.

- Edouard apprécie la bonne cuisine française.
  - Edouard appreciates good French cuisine.

to indicate habitual recurrence

The definite article is used in French with moments of the day, days of the week, and seasons to indicate habitual recurrence. For example:

- Le matin, Tammy va en cours.
  - Every morning, Tammy goes to class.

- L’après-midi, elle va à la bibliothèque.
  - Every afternoon, she goes to the library.

- Le lundi, Tex fait son jogging.
  - On Mondays, Tex goes for a jog.

- L’été, il se baigne avec Tammy à Barton Springs. L’hiver, il skie à Purgatory.
  - Every summer, he bathes with Tammy at Barton Springs. Every winter, he skis in Purgatory.
in a series
The article is usually repeated in a series, in contrast to English. For example:

Tammy: Tex, aide-moi à mettre la table! Tex, help me set the table! Bring the plates, Apporte les assiettes, les couteaux, les verres, les serviettes et le vin.

no article
Cities usually do not require an article in French. For example:

Tex habite à Austin. Tex lives in Austin, mais il préfère Paris. but he prefers Paris.

Continents, countries, states, regions, and oceans usually require an article (l'Afrique, la France, le Texas, la Bourgogne, l'Atlantique etc.), but there are a few exceptions, usually islands: Haïti, Israël, Madagascar. See prepositions with place names for more information.

Months never require an article: janvier, février, mars, etc.

Cependant Tex adore mars à Austin. Nevertheless Tex adores March in Austin.

Days of the week do not require an article in instances where they do not indicate habitual recurrence. For example:

Lundi, il a rendez-vous avec Tammy. Monday he has a date with Tammy.

Tammy: J'aime beaucoup le français. C'est la langue de Molière et de Hugo, et surtout c'est la langue maternelle de Tex! Tammy: I like French a lot. It is the language of Molière and of Hugo, and above all it is the mother tongue of Tex!

Bette: Alors comme ça Tammy, tu aimes bien les Français? Bette: So Tammy, you really like French men?

Tammy: Oh oui! Surtout les Français qui portent le béret! Tammy: I sure do! Especially French men who wear a beret!
Determiners: Indefinite Articles

In French, few nouns can stand alone. Most need to be introduced or 'determined' by an article. As in English, an article is characterized as either definite ('the') or indefinite ('a', 'an'). In French, articles are also masculine or feminine, and singular or plural, according to the gender and number of the noun they determine. Here are the indefinite articles in French:

- **masculine singular:** un
  - Tex est un tatou.
  - Joe-Bob est un écureuil.
  - Tex is an armadillo.
  - Joe-Bob is a squirrel.

- **feminine singular:** une
  - Bette est une chatte.
  - UT est une université
  - Bette is a cat.(female)
  - UT is a university.

- **plural:** des
  - des tatous
  - des écureuils
  - des chats
  - des universités
  - (some) armadillos
  - (some) squirrels (some) cats
  - (some) universities

Uses
As the English 'a' 'an' or 'some', the indefinite articles un, une, des refer to nouns which are non-specific. Un or une may also indicate quantity, 'a' or 'an' in the sense of 'one.' Contrast the use of the indefinite and definite articles in the first two sentences below. The indefinite plural des is always expressed in French, but its English equivalent 'some' is often omitted.

Joe-Bob et Corey ont une chambre dans une résidence universitaire à Austin.
Ils ont la chambre numéro 1735 dans la résidence Jester.
Joe-Bob et Corey sont des camarades de chambre.

Joe-Bob and Corey have a (one) room in a residence hall in Austin.
The have the room #1735 in the Jester residence hall.
Joe-Bob and Corey are roommates!

'de' after the negative
In a negative sentence, the indefinite articles un, une, des are replaced by de or d'.

- Tex: Joe-Bob, tu as un chien?
  - Tex: Joe-Bob, do you have a dog?
  - Joe-Bob: No, I don’t have a dog, I’m a squirrel.

- Tex: Corey, tu as des amis?
  - Corey: Mais non! Je n’ai pas d’amis. Je suis un cafard.
  - Tex: Corey, do you have friends?
  - Corey: No, I don’t have any friends. I’m a cockroach.
However, following the verb être, the indefinite articles un, une, des remain unchanged in the negative:

Edouard: Joe-Bob, c'est un écureuil. Ce n'est pas un tatou!

Edouard: Joe-Bob is a squirrel. He is not an armadillo.

Tex et Tammy, ce sont des tatous. Ce ne sont pas des escargots.

Tex and Tammy are armadillos. They are not snails.

**before a plural adjective**

Before a plural adjective which precedes a noun, des usually becomes de. If the adjective comes after the noun, des does not change to de.

Edouard: Tex et Tammy sont de charmants amoureux.

Edouard: Tex and Tammy are charming lovers.

Bette: Ah bon? Ce ne sont pas seulement de bons amis?

Bette: Really? They are not just good friends?

Edouard: Tu ne trouves pas que Tex et Tammy sont des tatous parfaits l'un pour l'autre?

Edouard: Don't you think that Tex and Tammy are armadillos who are perfect for each other?

Bette: Absolument pas!

Bette: Absolutely not!

**with adjectives of profession, nationality, and religion**

Professions, nationalities and religions are considered adjectives in French and need no article after the verbs être and devenir.

Edouard: Tex devient professeur; il est américain; il n'est pas catholique.

Edouard: Tex is becoming a professor. He is American. He is not Catholic.

Bette et Tammy parlent entre femmes.

Bette and Tammy are talking woman-to-woman.

Bette: Je n'ai pas de véritables amis! Tout le monde pense que je suis une méchante chatte.

Bette: I have no real friends! Everybody thinks that I am a wicked cat.

Tammy: Mais non Bette! Toi et moi nous sommes de vieilles amies!

Tammy: That's not true Bette! You and I are old friends!

Bette: Oui, mais toi tu as un petit ami tandis que moi je n'ai pas de petit ami!

Bette: Yes, but you have a boyfriend whereas I don't have any boyfriend!

Tammy: Tu sais Bette, avoir un petit ami ce n'est pas toujours une partie de plaisir, surtout quand il s'appelle Tex!

Tammy: You know Bette, having a boyfriend is not always a fun thing, especially when he's called Tex!
Possessive Determiners

forms and uses
The possessive determiners serve to express ownership or possession (hence the name). They are also often called possessive adjectives because they agree in gender and number with the noun they introduce.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mon</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>mes</td>
<td>my</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ton</td>
<td>ta</td>
<td>tes</td>
<td>your (familiar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
<td>sa</td>
<td>ses</td>
<td>his or her or its</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notre</td>
<td>notre</td>
<td>nos</td>
<td>our</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>votre</td>
<td>votre</td>
<td>vos</td>
<td>your (formal or plural)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leur</td>
<td>leur</td>
<td>leurs</td>
<td>their</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Possessive articles, like all articles, must agree with the noun they modify. Thus, if the noun is feminine, the possessive article must be feminine, too. In the following example, the feminine noun famille requires a feminine form – sa. Note that sa has three potential translations in English: ‘his,’ ‘her,’ or ‘its.’ So, how do you know which meaning is intended? Context! Since the following example sentence refers to Tex, we know that sa means ‘his.’

Tex présente sa famille: Voici mon frère, Trey, et ma soeur, Rita, avec ses enfants et leur chien Fido. Notre famille est formidable!

Tex introduces his family. Here is my brother, Trey, and my sister, Rita with her children and their dog Fido. Our family is great!

liaison
Do not forget to make the liaison between the plural forms of the possessive determiners and words that begin with a vowel sound. Ma, ta, sa become mon, ton, son in front of feminine nouns beginning with a vowel sound.

Tex continues his introductions:

Tex: Voici Tammy, mon amie, et ses amies Bette et Fiona, c'est-à-dire nos amies.

Tammy parle avec Bette: Tex n'est plus mon ami! Il a complètement oublié mon cadeau et notre anniversaire! Il a oublié toutes ses promesses! Quel nul!

Tex: Here is Tammy, my friend, and her friends, Bette and Fiona, that is to say, our friends.

Tammy is talking with Bette: Tex is not my friend any more! He completely forgot my present and our anniversary! He forgot all his promises. What a loser!
Adverbs

Introduction to Adverbs

An adverb is a word that qualifies the action of the verb, that is, it specifies how or when the action is performed. In English, many adverbs are indicated by the -ly ending. In French, most adverbs end in -ment.

lentement slowly
attentivement carefully
souvent often

Adverbs answer questions about the action: how? how much? when? and where? While most adverbs in French and English modify verbs, they can also modify other adverbs as well as adjectives.

verb modified by adverb
adverb modified by adverb
adjective modified by adverb

Ecoute attentivement. Listen carefully.
trop lentement too slowly
extrêmement silencieux extremely quiet

Adverb vs. Adjective

It is common in non-standard English for speakers to use adjectives in place of adverbs.

Tex writes good. (instead of ‘well’)
Aggies talk too slow. (instead of ‘slowly’)

While this alternation is common in English, it is not common in French where adjectives are rarely used in place of the adverb. Remember that adverbs modify verbs (as well as other adverbs and adjectives) and adjectives modify nouns.

Tex écrit bien. Tex writes well.
La poésie de Tex est bonne. Tex’s poetry is good.
Adjectives

Introduction to Adjectives

An adjective is a word that describes a noun or pronoun. The major differences between adjectives in French and English concern agreement and placement. In French, an adjective is usually placed after the noun it modifies and must agree in gender and number with the noun. In English, an adjective usually comes before the noun it modifies and is invariable, that is, it does not agree.

Tex est un tatou **philosophique**.
Edouard est un escargot **raffiné**. Joe-Bob est un écureuil **aimable**. Bette est une chatte **capricieuse**. Corey est un cafard **ivre**.

Fiona est **travailluse**. (f)
Mais Joe-Bob n’est pas **travailleur**. (m)

Tex is a **philosophical** armadillo.
Edouard is a **refined** snail.
Joe-Bob is a **friendly** squirrel. Bette is a **temperamental** cat. Corey is an **intoxicated** cockroach.
Fiona is **hard-working**.
But Joe-Bob isn’t **hard-working**.
Adjective vs. adverb

It is common in nonstandard English for speakers to use adjectives in place of adverbs.

Joe-Bob says: "Gee, Tex writes real good." (instead of: "Tex writes well.")
Joe-Bob says "Gosh, Edouard, you walk real slow." (instead of: "Edouard, you talk slowly.")

French adjectives are rarely used in place of the adverbial form. Remember that adjectives modify nouns and adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs!

- Tex écrit bien. (adverb modifies verb) → Tex writes well.
- La poésie de Tex est bonne. (adjective modifies noun) → Tex’s poetry is good.
Adjectives: Formation and Placement

formation

Adjectives agree in both number and gender with the noun or pronoun they modify. For regular adjectives the masculine form is the base form to which endings are added. The feminine adjective is formed by adding an *e*. The plural adjective is formed by adding *s*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>masculine singular</th>
<th>feminine singular</th>
<th>masculine plural</th>
<th>feminine plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>petit</td>
<td>petite</td>
<td>petits</td>
<td>petites</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note how the singular and plural forms of the masculine adjective sound the same, and the singular and plural forms of the feminine adjective also sound the same.

Tex est *petit*.  
Tammy est *petite*.  
Tex et Trey sont *petits*.  
Tammy et Bette sont *petites*.

Tex is little.  
Tammy is little.  
Tex and Trey are little.  
Tammy and Bette are little.

Irregular adjectives do not follow the rules given above.

placement

In French, most adjectives follow the noun, unlike in English, where the adjective precedes the noun. Here are some examples of adjectives following the noun:

Tex porte toujours un béret *rond*, même quand il fait du sport. Il aime les romans *existentialistes*. Dans son enfance, Tex a habité chez des nonnes *catholiques*.

Tammy a un nez *pointu*. C'est une tatou *mince* et *sympathique*. Elle apprend la langue *française* et fait des études *littéraires*.

Bette est de caractère *méfiant*. Elle est d'humeur *changeante*. C'est une chatte très *maline*.

Tex always wears a round beret, even when he exercises. He likes existentialist novels. As a child, Tex lived with catholic nuns.

Tammy has a pointed nose. She is a slim and nice armadillo. She's learning the French language and is studying literature.

Bette has a mistrustful personality. She has changing moods. She's a very cunning cat.
Note that there is a small group of adjectives that normally precede the noun. Some adjectives can also be placed before or after the noun but changing the position of the adjectives can modify their meaning.

Tammy, Bette et Tex sont à Gregory Gym. Les deux filles parlent, puis se disputent, pendant que Tex fait son sport annuel.

Tammy: Regarde, Bette, comme ses ongles jaunes tapent sur le tapis roulant quand il court! Quel tatou adorabl e! Et ce museau fin et pointu, ces écailles étincelantes, ce corps souple, ces gestes et ces mouvements pleins de grâce ... 
Bette: Berk! Tu aimes vraiment ça!? Un corps humide de sueur et un poil gris comme une boule de papier mâché! Oh mon dieu! Et cette odeur désagréable! Comme un rat noyé! Tu n'es pas sérieuse!
Tammy: Bette, je ne suis pas idiote! Je connais tes intentions! Il est à moi!

Tammy, Bette and Tex are at Gregory Gym. The two girls talk, then argue, while Tex does his yearly workout.

Tammy: Bette, would you look at those yellow nails of his clicking on the treadmill when he runs! What an adorable armadillo! And that snout, so fine and pointy! Those shiny scales, that supple body, his every gesture and movement so full of grace ...
Bette: Yuck! You like that!? That clammy body, gray fur? Like a wad of paper maché! Oh, Lord! And that awful smell! Like a drowned rat! You're not serious!
Tammy: Bette, you don't fool me! I understand your intentions! He's mine!
A **verb** may be defined as the 'action word of the sentence'. To determine whether a word is a verb or not, consider its role in the sentence. How is the word 'access' used in the following sentences?

- Never give strangers **access** to your bank account.
- If you can't **access** the web pages during peak hours, try again.

In the first sentence, 'access' is a thing (a noun) that you can give to somebody. In the second sentence, 'access' is something you do (a verb) with your computer. The point is that whether a word is considered a noun or a verb depends on how it is used in the sentence.

**infinitives and conjugations**

When you study verbs, you will need to know the difference between the infinitive form of the verb and the finite forms, or conjugated forms. English infinitives are preceded by the word 'to'.

*to eat, to drink, to sleep*

These verbs are called infinitives because, like the concept of infinity, they are not bound by time. From the infinitive, we derive the conjugated forms of the verb, also known as the finite forms of the verb. They are called finite because they refer to events anchored in time, that is, to events that have a particular tense: past, present, future. Note the conjugated forms of the infinitive 'to study'.

- I **studied** French in high school.
- I **am studying** French in college this semester.
- I **will study** French next year overseas.

Verb conjugations are traditionally presented in textbooks according to paradigms, a grammatical term for pattern. A paradigm always includes the infinitive followed by the conjugations according to person which is divided into first, second and third, as well as number, which is the distinction between singular and plural.

Here is the paradigm for the present tense of the French verb **parler**, 'to speak'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person</td>
<td><strong>je parle</strong> (I speak)</td>
<td><strong>nous parlons</strong> (we speak)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person</td>
<td><strong>tu parles</strong> (you speak)</td>
<td><strong>vous parlez</strong> (you speak)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td><strong>il/elle/on parle</strong> (he/she/it speaks)</td>
<td><strong>ils/elles parlent</strong> (they speak)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regular French verbs fall into three classes based on the last two letters of the verb. Each class has a particular pattern of conjugation. These classes of verbs are generally referred to as first conjugation, second conjugation and third conjugation.
A participle is a special verb form that is derived from the infinitive but is not conjugated. In other words, while conjugations come in paradigms of six forms according to six different persons, participles have only two forms, named according to their uses: the present participle and the past participle.

A present participle in French ends in -ant and is frequently used as an adjective. French present participles are usually translated by the -ing form of the English verb. Note that the adjectival form of the present participle must agree in number and gender with the noun it modifies. In the example, the participle is made to agree with the plural noun (les animaux) by adding -s.

Les tatous sont des animaux fascinants. Armadillos are fascinating animals.

A past participle in French is used to form compound tenses, such as the ‘passé composé’. A past participle can also be used as an adjective in certain contexts. When used as an adjective, the participle agrees in number and gender with the noun it qualifies.

Tex a perdu une lettre d'amour de Bette. Tex lost a love letter from Bette.
Et Tammy a trouvé la lettre perdue! And Tammy found the lost letter!

In the first example, the participle ‘perdu’ combines with the auxiliary verb to form the past tense of perdre (to lose). In the second example, the participle is used as an adjective to modify the noun ‘la lettre’. Note how the final -e on the participle indicates agreement with the feminine noun.

Common auxiliaries and modals
Auxiliaries, often called ‘helping verbs’, are verbs that combine with the main verb to form a verb phrase. There are two groups of auxiliary verbs: common auxiliaries and modals. The two common auxiliary verbs in French, avoir (to have) and être (to be) are used to form many tenses. A tense that has only a main verb and no auxiliary is called a simple tense. A verb tense that is composed of a main verb and its auxiliary is called a compound tense.

Joe-Bob écoute de la musique country. Joe-Bob listens to country music.
Joe-Bob a écouté de la musique country Joe-Bob has listened to country music.
In the first example, the main verb ‘écouter’ is in the simple present tense. In the second example, the verb is in the compound past tense, a tense which combines the auxiliary verb ‘avoir’ with the past participle of ‘écouter’.

**Modals** are special auxiliary verbs that express the attitude of the speaker. In short, modal verbs are ‘moody verbs’. For example, modal verbs indicate subtle shades of meaning concerning such things as the likelihood of an event or the moral obligation of an event. The most frequent modal verbs in English are the following: should, could, may, might, ought to, must.

Note how the following modal verbs in French and English convey an attitude of increased urgency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tex <em>can</em> leave France.</td>
<td>Tex peut quitter la France.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tex <em>should</em> leave France!</td>
<td>Tex <em>devrait</em> quitter la France!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tex <em>must</em> leave France!!</td>
<td>Tex <em>doit</em> quitter la France!!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transitive vs. Intransitive verbs**

Transitive verbs require a direct object while intransitive verbs do not permit an object. A direct object is usually defined as the party which directly receives the action designated by the verb. The terms ‘transitive’ and ‘intransitive’ are derived from the grammatical term transitivity which refers to the transfer of an action from the subject (S) to the direct object (DO).

| Transitive | Tex (S) écrit un poème (DO). | Tex writes a poem. |
| Intransitive | Tex (S) sort. | Tex goes out. |

**French vs. English verbs**

There is one important difference between French and English verbs that often causes trouble for beginning language learners. There is a high frequency of English verbs which combine with a particle (typically a preposition) to express idiomatic meanings. English speakers can completely change the meaning of the verb by changing the particle. Consider the extremely versatile English verb ‘to get’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GET + particle</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>french equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to get about</td>
<td>to move around</td>
<td>se déplacer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to get better</td>
<td>to recover</td>
<td>se remettre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to get out</td>
<td>to leave</td>
<td>sortir, descendre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to get up</td>
<td>to get out of bed</td>
<td>se lever</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to convey the differences in meaning of the ‘get + particle’ constructions, note how French makes use of completely different verbs. As a consequence, when you translate such verbs from English into French, you must never translate word-for-word (i.e., translating the verb and particle separately). Since the verb and particle ‘go together’ in English, they must be translated as a unit in French.
-er verbs (regular) present tense

There are three major groups of regular verbs in French: verbs with infinitives ending in -er, verbs with infinitives ending in -ir, and verbs with infinitives ending in -re. Since -er verbs are the most numerous, they are considered the first conjugation. To conjugate these verbs, drop the -er from the infinitive to form the stem. Next, add the -er endings to the stem.

Different tenses have different endings.

The endings given below (-e, -es, -e, -ons, -ez, -ent) are for forming the present tense. The endings (-e, -es, -e, and -ent) are all silent. The only endings that are pronounced are the nous (-ons) and the vous (-ez) endings. The four silent endings form a boot shape in the verb conjugation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>je parle</th>
<th>nous parlons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu</td>
<td>parles</td>
<td>vous parlez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on</td>
<td>parle</td>
<td>ils/elles parlent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

past participle: parlé

Note that the pronunciation of each of the verbs is the same even though the conjugations are spelled differently.

Tex, il parle français? Mais c'est un tatou. Tex speaks French? But he's an armadillo.

Tex: Bien sûr je parle français et Tammy, elle aussi, elle parle français. Tex: Of course, I speak French and Tammy, too, she speaks French.

Eh bien dis donc, même les tatous parlent français au Texas? Well, I'll be, even the armadillos speak French in Texas?

Here is a list of common -er verbs:

- adorer, to adore
- aimer, to like
- aimer mieux, to prefer
- chanter, to sing
- chercher, to look for
- danser, to dance
- demander, to ask
- détester, to hate, to detest
- donner, to give
- écouter, to listen to
- étudier, to study
- habiter, to live
- jouer, to play
- montrer, to show
- présenter, to introduce
- regarder, to watch
- rencontrer, to meet (by chance)
- rester, to stay, remain
- téléphoner, to telephone
- travailler, to work
- trouver, to find

Je changes to j' before a verb starting with a vowel or a silent h (ex. j'adore, j'habite). This phenomenon is known as élision.

Tex: J'adore la musique rap et j'écoute souvent de la musique dans les clubs.
Je chante et je danse aussi

I love rap music and I often listen to music in clubs.

I sing and I dance, too.
Note also that the s in plural pronouns *(nous, vous, and ils/elles)* is usually silent except when it is followed by a verb that begins with a vowel sound. In such a case the silent s is pronounced as a /z/ and links the pronoun to the verb. This phenomenon is called *liaison* (‘linking’) and is very characteristic of French.

Tex et Tammy, ils *écouter* de la musique cadienne avec Paw-Paw!

Tammy: Nous *adorer* danser.

Tex: Oui, oui, c’est vrai. Nous *danser* beaucoup.

Tex and Tammy, they *listen to* Cajun music with Paw-Paw!

Tammy: We *love to* dance.

Tex: Yes, yes, that’s true. We *dance a lot.*
- er verbs (stem changing) present tense

Spelling changes occur in the stems of several groups of -er verbs in the present tense. These spelling changes reflect the pronunciation of the present tense forms.

You may have already noticed the spelling change in the verb s'appeler (Je m'appelle ... , My name is ...). For verbs like appeler (to call), rappeler (to call back) and jeter (to throw), the consonant -l or -t in the the stem doubles in all forms of the present tense, except in the first and second person plural (nous and vous). This follows the traditional boot pattern of -er verb conjugations in the present tense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>appeler 'to call'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>j'appelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu appelles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on appelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past participle : appelé</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This same "boot" pattern is repeated in spelling change verbs like préférer (to prefer). In these verbs the é in the last syllable of the stem changes to an è, except in the first and second person plural (nous and vous).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>préféreré 'to prefer'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>je préfère</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu préfères</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on préfère</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past participle : préféré</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbs conjugated like préférer include:
- considérer, to consider
- espérer, to hope
- régler, to regulate, pay, settle, adjust
- répéter, to repeat
- sécher, to dry, skip (a class)

In verbs which are conjugated like acheter (to buy), the e in the last syllable of the stem also changes to an è, again with the exception of the first and second person plural forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>acheter 'to buy'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>j'achète</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu achêtes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on achète</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past participle : acheté</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verbs conjugated like *acheter* include:

- **amener**, to bring somebody (along)
- **emmener**, to take somebody (along)
- **lever**, to lift, raise
- **mener**, to take, lead
- **peser**, to weigh

Another group of stem-changing verbs include those ending in **-ayer**, including **essayer** (to try) and **payer** (to pay). In these verbs the *y* changes to *i* in all persons except the first and second person plural (nous and vous).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>1sg</th>
<th>2sg</th>
<th>3sg</th>
<th>1pl</th>
<th>2pl</th>
<th>3pl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>essayer</em> 'to try'</td>
<td><em>j’essaie</em></td>
<td><em>tu essaies</em></td>
<td><em>il/elle/on essaie</em></td>
<td><em>nous essayons</em></td>
<td><em>vous essayez</em></td>
<td><em>ils/elles essaient</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>1sg</th>
<th>2sg</th>
<th>3sg</th>
<th>1pl</th>
<th>2pl</th>
<th>3pl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>voyager</em> 'to travel'</td>
<td><em>je voyage</em></td>
<td><em>tu voyages</em></td>
<td><em>il/elle/on voyage</em></td>
<td><em>nous voyageons</em></td>
<td><em>vous voyagez</em></td>
<td><em>ils/elles voyagent</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, verbs ending in **-ger** like *voyager* (to travel) add an *e* after the *g* in the nous form of the present tense, so that the *g* is pronounced as a soft sound before the **-ons** ending (i.e. nous *voyageons*). Similarly, in verbs ending in **-cer, commencer** (to start), for example, the *c* in the nous form changes to *ç* to keep the soft c sound (nous *commençons*).

Other verbs in this category include:

- **corriger**, to correct
- **exiger**, to demand, require
- **manger**, to eat
- **nager**, to swim
- **partager**, to share
- **ranger**, to tidy up, arrange
- **rédiger**, to write, compose
- **songer**, to dream, reflect

Quelle activité est-ce que vous **préfère** en été?
Rita: J’emmène mes enfants à la piscine.
Ses enfants: Nous nageons et nous **mangeons** de la glace.
Tammy: Moi, je **préfère** faire du shopping. J’**achète** beaucoup et papa **paie** tout.

What activity do you prefer in the summer?
Rita: I take my children to the pool.
Her children: We swim and we eat ice cream.
Tammy: Me, I prefer shopping. I buy lots and daddy pays for everything.
- ir verbs (irregular) partir, sortir, and dormir

The verbs partir, sortir, and dormir are irregular in the present tense, that is, they are not conjugated like regular -ir verbs.

### partir 'to leave'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>je pars</th>
<th>nous partons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu pars</td>
<td></td>
<td>vous partez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on part</td>
<td></td>
<td>ils/elles partent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Past participle: parti

### sortir 'to exit, go out'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>je sors</th>
<th>nous sortons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu sors</td>
<td></td>
<td>vous sortez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on sort</td>
<td></td>
<td>ils/elles sortent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Past participle: sorti

### dormir 'to sleep'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>je dors</th>
<th>nous dormons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu dors</td>
<td></td>
<td>vous dormez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on dort</td>
<td></td>
<td>ils/elles dorment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Past participle: dormi

Bette: Tammy, tu pars ce week-end?

Tammy: Oui, je pars pour la Louisiane avec Tex. Nous allons rendre visite à Paw-Paw. Samedi soir nous sortons danser et manger de la cuisine cadienne.

Bette: Et Paw-Paw, il sort avec vous?

Tammy: Non, il préfère rester à la maison pour dormir.

Bette: Tammy, are you leaving this weekend?

Tammy: Yes, I'm going to Louisianna with Tex. We're going to visit Paw-Paw. We're going out Saturday night to dance and eat some Cajun food.

Bette: And does Paw-Paw go out with you?

Tammy: No, he prefers to stay at home and sleep.
**etre ‘to be’**

The verb *être* is an irregular verb in the present tense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>être ‘to be’</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>je <strong>suis</strong></td>
<td>nous <strong>sommes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu <strong>es</strong></td>
<td>vous <strong>êtes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on <strong>est</strong></td>
<td>ils/elles <strong>sont</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

past participle: **été**

Edouard: Mais non, Joe-Bob, tu n’**es** pas un tatou!  
Edouard: But no, Joe-Bob, you are not an armadillo!

Tex **est** un tatou. Tex et Tammy **sont** des tatous.  
Tex is an armadillo. Tex and Tammy are armadillos.

Toi et moi, nous ne **sommes** pas des tatous.  
You and I, we are not armadillos.

Toi, tu **es** un écureuil et moi, je **suis** un escargot, un escargot français.  
You are a squirrel and I am a snail, a French snail.

*C’est* (plural *Ce sont*) is a common expression used to describe and introduce people or things. See *c’est vs. il/elle est* for more information. *Être* is also used as an auxiliary in compound tenses (*passé composé with être*, *passé composé of pronominal verbs*, *plus-que-parfait*, etc.)
**avoir ‘to have’**

The verb *avoir* is irregular in the present tense. This *liaison*, or linking, is especially important in distinguishing *ilsont* (they have) from the third person plural of *être* *ilssont* (they are).

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>j'ai</strong></td>
<td><strong>nous avons</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>tu as</strong></td>
<td><strong>vous avez</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>il/elle/on a</strong></td>
<td><strong>ils/elles ont</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Past participle: *eu*

*Avoir* is also used as an auxiliary in compound tenses (passé composé with *avoir*, plus-que-parfait, futur antérieur, etc.) Besides ownership, the verb *avoir* expresses age in French, unlike the English equivalent, which uses the verb ‘to be.’

Tex, *tu as* des frères et des soeurs?

Tex: Oui, *j'ai* une soeur et un frère.

Quel âge *ont*-ils?

Tex: Ma soeur Rita *a* 30 ans et mon frère Trey *a* 16 ans.

Tex, do you have brothers and sisters?

Tex: Yes, I have a sister and a brother.

How old are they?

Tex: My sister Rita is 30 and my brother Trey is 16.
The verb *aller* is irregular in the present tense. This *-s* is pronounced as a /z/ to link with the vowel sound in the plural forms *allons* and *allez*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>aller</th>
<th>‘to go’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>je vais</td>
<td>nous allons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu vas</td>
<td>vous allez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on va</td>
<td>ils/elles vont</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Past participle:** allé

*Aller* literally means 'to go', but is used figuratively in salutations to say how one is doing.

Corey: Salut, Joe-Bob, où vas-tu?
Joe-Bob: Je vais au café.
Corey: Mais, tu as cours maintenant.
Joe-Bob: Oui, mais le prof est horrible, vraiment horrible!
Corey: Attention! Il arrive!
Joe-Bob: Ah, bonjour monsieur le professeur. Comment allez-vous aujourd'hui?

Corey: Hey, Joe-Bob, where are you going?
Joe-Bob: I'm going to a coffee shop.
Corey: But, you have class right now.
Joe-Bob: Yes but, the prof is horrible, really horrible.
Corey: Watch out! He's coming!
Joe-Bob: Oh, hello, professor. How are you today?
**faire "to do, to make"**

The verb *faire* is irregular in the present tense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>je fais</th>
<th>nous faisons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tu fais</td>
<td>vous faites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on fait</td>
<td>ils/elles font</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Past participle**: fait

Note the vous form *faites*. It is unusual because it does not end in *-ez*. *Faire* is one of only three verbs where this is the case *(The others are *être*: vous êtes, and *dire*: vous dites*). You may notice, too, the similarity in the third person plural forms of *aller*, *être*, and *faire*:

- ils vont (they go),
- ils sont (they are), and
- ils font (they do/make).

Although *faire* is often used in a question, it does not automatically have to be used in the response.

|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|

*Faire* is used in many expressions, including weather, sports, and household tasks.
The verb *faire* is used in many impersonal weather expressions.

- **Quel temps fait-il?** What's the weather like?
  - *Il fait beau.* It's beautiful.
  - *Il fait chaud.* It's hot.
  - *Il fait du brouillard.* It's foggy.
  - *Il fait du soleil.* It's sunny.
  - *Il fait du vent.* It's windy.
  - *Il fait frais.* It's cool.
  - *Il fait froid.* It's cold.
  - *Il fait mauvais.* It's bad.

Other weather expressions which do not use *faire* include:

- *Il y a des nuages.* It's cloudy.
- *Il y a des orages.* There are storms.
- *Il y a de l'orage.* It's stormy.
- *Il pleut.* It's raining.
- *Il neige.* It's snowing.

*Faire* is also used to talk about sports and leisure activities. Here is a list of common expressions.

- *faire de la bicyclette*, to go bicycle riding
- *faire du bateau*, to go boating
- *faire de la lecture*, to read
- *faire de la planche à voile*, to go windsurfing
- *faire des randonnées*, to go hiking
- *faire du ski*, to go skiing
- *faire du vélo*, to go bicycle riding, cycling
- *faire de la voile*, to go sailing
- *faire une promenade*, to take a walk

*Faire* is also used in many expressions dealing with household chores.

- *faire des achats (du shopping)*, to go shopping
- *faire la cuisine*, to do the cooking
- *faire des courses*, to run errands
- *faire la lessive*, to do the laundry
- *faire le lit*, to make the bed
- *faire le marché*, to do the grocery shopping
- *aire le ménage*, to do the housework
- *faire la vaisselle*, to do the dishes
Quand il fait du soleil, Tex et Tammy font une promenade dans le parc.

Quand il fait mauvais, Tex fait le ménage et Tammy fait de la lecture.

When it's sunny, Tex and Tammy take a walk in the park.

When the weather's bad, Tex does the housework and Tammy reads.
Negation

Introduction to Negation

Negation is a grammatical term for the contradiction of some or all of the meaning of an affirmative (positive) sentence. In English, a sentence is commonly negated by inserting a single negative word (not, don't, didn't, won't, etc.) into the appropriate place in the sentence. In French, a sentence is commonly negated by inserting two words.

basic negation

*Ne* ... *pas* is placed around the conjugated verb to negate an affirmative sentence in French. Note that the *ne* changes to *n'* before a verb beginning with a vowel.

Joe-Bob, l'écureuil, court vite.  
Edouard, l'escargot, *ne* court *pas* vite.

Trey aime le rap.  
Joe-Bob *n’aime pas* le rap.

alternate forms of negation

There are many other French words that one can use to negate a positive statement besides the basic form *ne ... pas*. Moreover, negative words can be used to contradict the verb as well as other parts of the original affirmative sentence.

Joe-Bob écoute de la musique country.  
*n’écoute jamais* de musique country.  
Trey *n’écoute que* du rap.  
Fiona *n’écoute rien*.

Presque personne *n’écoute de musique country en France*.

Joe-Bob, the squirrel, runs fast.  
Edouard the snail *doesn’t* run fast.

Trey likes rap.  
Joe-Bob *doesn’t* like rap.

Joe-Bob *écoute de la musique country*.  
Tex *never* listens to country.  
Trey *only* listens to rap.  
Fiona listens to *nothing*.

Almost **nobody** listens to country music in France.
Basic Negation: ne ... pas

Basic negation is formed by placing ne ... pas around the conjugated verb. Ne becomes n’ in front of a verb starting with a vowel or a mute h.

![Image of negation example]

Tex: Tu ne vas pas en cours aujourd'hui, Tammy?


Tex: Tu n’as pas de chance! Ce soir, il y a une fête chez Edouard!

Tammy: Tu n'es pas d'un grand réconfort, tu sais!

Tex: You're not going to class today Tammy?

Tammy: No. I am not well. I cannot eat and I have a headache.

Tex: That's too bad [literally 'you are not lucky']! Tonight there is a party at Edouard's!

Tammy: You are not a lot of comfort, you know!

In compound tenses, like the passé composé, the ne ... pas are also placed around the conjugated verb, which is the auxiliary, avoir or être. In the periphrastic future, ne ... pas goes around the verb aller.

Tex n'a pas été très gentil.

Tammy ne va pas passer la soirée chez Edouard.

Tex was not very nice.

Tammy is not going to spend the evening at Edouard's.

Note that in spoken French, the ne/n' is sometimes dropped. In familiar speech, tu is often pronounced as t' before a vowel.

Tammy: Tex, t'es (tu es) pas très gentil.

Tammy: Tex, you are not very nice.
**Introduction to Prepositions**

A **preposition** is a word used to establish relationships between nouns, between nouns and verbs and between different parts of a sentence. Prepositions usually have spatial or temporal meanings (e.g. beneath, between, in front of, before, after, during, etc). Prepositions are invariable, that is, they have one form with the exception of *à* and *de* which contract with the definite articles (*le, la, les*).

Translating prepositions is notoriously tricky. Never assume that French will use the same preposition as English to express a particular meaning. In fact, there are many cases where one language requires a preposition where the other does not. This is particularly problematic with infinitives followed by prepositions. In general, it is best to treat prepositions as vocabulary items requiring memorization.

In the following sentences, these problems are demonstrated by translating the French prepositions literally. Note how awkward the English translation is as a result.

- Bette est fâchée contre Tammy.  
  Bette is angry against Tammy.  
- Tex téléphone à Joe-Bob.  
  Tex telephones to Joe-Bob.

Literal translations are also awkward in situations where a preposition is not used in French but is required in English.

- Fiona attend le bus.  
  Fiona waits the bus.  
- Joe-Bob écoute la radio.  
  Joe-Bob listens the radio.
Prepositions with Places

Prepositions are used in expressions which relate where you are, where you are going and where you are coming from. The preposition used in such expressions depends on the geographic location discussed.

**geographic location**
- to/in: à/in
- from: de (d’)

**cites (Paris, Londres, Austin)**
- à Paris: à Paris
- de Austin: à Austin

**islands (Cuba, Tahiti)**
- à Cuba: à Cuba
- de Tahiti: à Tahiti

**feminine (usually ending in -e)**
- to/in: en
- from: de (d’)

**countries (la France)**
- en France: en France
- de France: en France

**states (la Californie)**
- en Californie: en Californie
- de Californie: en Californie

**provinces (la Bourgogne)**
- en Bourgogne: en Bourgogne
- de Bourgogne: en Bourgogne

**continents (l’Europe)**
- en Europe: en Europe
- de Europe: en Europe

**masculine**
- to/in: au
- from: du

**countries (le Canada, le Texas :-)**
- au Canada: au Canada
- du Texas: au Texas

**provinces/states (le Colorado)**
- au Colorado: au Colorado
- du Colorado: au Colorado

**masculine beginning with a vowel**
- to/in: en
- from: de (d’)

**countries (l’Iran)**
- en Iran: en Iran
- de Iran: en Iran

**provinces/states (l’Ontario)**
- en Ontario: en Ontario
- de Ontario: en Ontario

**plural countries and regions**
- to/in: aux
- from: des

**countries and regions (les Etats-Unis)**
- aux Etats-Unis: aux Etats-Unis
- des Etats-Unis: aux Etats-Unis
Tex est né au Texas, bien sûr. Mais par accident il a grandi en Europe. Comment expliquer cette histoire incroyable?

Eh bien, quand il était tout petit, on l’a mis dans un avion avec les bagages à l’aéroport Bush International à Houston.

Son avion est arrivé à Paris (en France) où il a rencontré des nonnes françaises qui venaient de faire un voyage aux États-Unis. Elles arrivaient de Houston, elles aussi. Quelle coïncidence!

Elles ont eu pitié de ce pauvre tatou égaré et elles l’ont emmené au couvent à Lyon. Tex a vécu heureux chez les nonnes pendant plusieurs années.

Malheureusement, un jour il a été expulsé de France, et il est retourné dans son pays natal, c’est-à-dire au Texas!

Tex was born in Texas, of course, but by accident he grew up in Europe. How do we explain this unbelievable story?

Well, when he was very little, he was put with the luggage in a plane at Bush International Airport in Houston.

His plane arrived in Paris (in France) where he met some French nuns who had just taken a trip to the United States. They, too, were arriving from Houston. What a coincidence!

They took pity on this poor lost armadillo and they took him to their convent in Lyon. Tex lived happily with the nuns for several years.

Unfortunately, one day he was deported from France and he returned to his native country, that is, to Texas!
Pronouns

Introduction to Pronouns

A pronoun is a word used to replace a noun. It is commonly used to avoid repeating a previously mentioned noun known as the antecedent. In the following example, pronouns in bold face are used to replace the underlined antecedents.

Tex a écrit un poème érotique, Tex wrote an erotic poem and
et puis il l’a envoyé à Tammy. Elle then he sent it to Tammy. She
a été choquée quand elle l’a lu. was shocked when she read it.

The different kinds of pronouns are named according to their grammatical function.

subject pronouns
je, tu, il, elle, on,
nous, vous, ils, elles
I, you, he, she, one,
we, you, they (m), they (f)

direct object pronouns
me, te, le, la
nous, vous, les
me, you, him / it, her / it us,
you, them (m) / (f)

indirect object pronouns
me, te, lui
nous, vous, leur
to me, to you, to him / her
to us, to you, to them (m) / (f)

the pronouns y and en
y
en
there (replaces preposition + location) some, any,
not any (replaces ‘de’ + noun)

disjunctive pronouns
moi, toi, lui, elle, soi
nous, vous, eux, elles
me, you, he, she, one
we, you, them (m), them (f)

reflexive pronouns
me, te, se
nous, vous, se
myself, yourself, himself, herselfourselves,
yourselves, themselves

interrogative pronouns
qui
que
whowhat

demonstrative pronouns
celui, celle
ceux
this one / that one (m,f) these,
those

relative pronouns
qui, que
lequel, laquelle
who, whom, which which

indefinite pronouns
quelqu’un
quel que chose
someone something
Subject Pronouns

A pronoun replaces a noun in order to avoid repetition. Subject pronouns are subjects of verbs. In French, a subject pronoun is immediately or almost immediately followed by its verb. The use of subject pronouns is mandatory in French; always use a subject pronoun to construct sentences in the absence of a noun subject. Here are the French subject pronouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>person</th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person</td>
<td>je, I</td>
<td>nous, we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person</td>
<td>tu, you</td>
<td>vous, you’/all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td>il, he/it</td>
<td>ils, they (masc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>elle, she/it</td>
<td>elles, they (fem.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on, one/we (colloquial)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subject pronouns are labelled by the term 'person', referring to the subject's role in the conversation. 1st person refers to the person(s) speaking (I, we); 2nd person to the person(s) spoken to (you); and 3rd person to the person(s) or thing(s) spoken about (he, she, it, they).

je
Unlike the English pronoun 'I', je is not capitalized unless it begins a sentence.

tu
The pronoun tu is singular and, importantly, informal. Use tu to address people your own age and those you know well.

on
The pronoun on means 'one', or 'they' in a nonspecific sense: 'comme on dit' (as they say). On often replaces 'nous' in spoken French: 'On y va?' (Shall we go?).

vous
The pronoun vous is conjugated with a plural verb so it obviously refers to more than one person. However, it is also the customary form of address when you are talking to only one person you do not know well, such as an elder, a boss, a shopkeeper, etc. Inappropriate use of the tu form is considered a sign of disrespect.

Tammy: Bonjour, Paw-Paw. Vous allez bien?
Tammy: Hello Paw-Paw. Are you doing well?
Paw-Paw: Ah, oui! Et vous, mes enfants, Tex, Tammy, vous allez bien?
Paw-Paw: Ah, yes! And you, kids, Tex, Tammy, are you doing OK?

il/elle
Il and elle besides meaning 'he' and 'she' can both express the meaning 'it' depending on the gender of the noun being replaced. For example:

Bette: La musique est bonne, n'est-ce pas?
Bette: The music is good, isn't it?
Tex: Non, elle est terrible! Je déteste la musique country.
Tex: No, it's terrible. I hate country music.
Bette: Oh, qu'est-ce que tu as fait, Tex?
Bette: Oh, what did you do, Tex?
Le juke-box est cassé?
The juke-box is broken
Tex: Oui, il est cassé!
Tex: Yes, it is broken!
**ils/elles**

*ils* and *elles* are similar to *il* and *elle* since they agree with the gender of the noun they replace. *ils* and *elles* may refer to people or things. *Elles* is used to mean 'they' if it replaces people who are all women or objects that are all feminine in gender. On the other hand, *ils* is used to mean 'they' for objects that are masculine in gender or a group of all men or any group where there is at least one male person or masculine object in the group.

Bette et Tex sont de bons amis.
Normalement *ils* s'entendent bien, mais pas aujourd'hui!

Bette and Tex are good friends.
Normally, they get along well, but not today!

Fiona: Bonjour Tex, *tu* vas bien?

Fiona: Ah bon? *Elle* est toujours là?

Fiona: Tiens, *nous* y allons, toi et moi?
Tex: *Tu* ne m'as pas entendu? *Je* n'aime pas la musique country!!! Beurk! Qu'est-ce qu'*on* aime la musique country au Texas!

Fiona: Hi Tex, are you doing well?
Tex: Not at all. I'm doing poorly. I want to listen to some French music. And then Bette and I had a fight.

Fiona: Oh really? Is she still here?
Tex: Non, she left with Tammy. They went to the Broken Spoke.

Fiona: Hey, why don't you and I go there?
Tex: Didn't you hear me? I don't like country music!!! Argh! People really like country music in Texas!
To describe and introduce things or people in French, two common phrases are used: c'est and il/elle est. The plural forms are ce sont and ils/elles sont.

The choice between c'est and il/elle est is not always easy, but there are basic principles which can guide you in the choice. A rule of thumb is that c'est or ce sont are followed by a determined noun ('le tatou', 'une Américaine', 'mes livres'). Remember that nouns in French are preceded by a determiner. il/elle est and ils/elles sont are followed by an adjective ('content', 'sympathique').

### c'est/ce sont

C'est and ce sont are followed by the following:

- **nouns, including modified nouns**
  - Tex? C'est un tatou. C'est un Américain. C'est un petit tatou bilingue.
  - Tammy et Tex? Non, ce ne sont pas des chats! Ce sont des tatous.
- **proper noun**
  - C'est Tex. It's Tex.
- **disjunctive pronoun**
- **dates**
  - Tex: Mon anniversaire? C'est le quatorze juillet. C'est jeudi prochain!
  - Tex: To live is to speak French!
- **an infinitive as subject**
  - Tex: Vivre, c'est parler français.
  - Tex: Ah c'est chouette! C'est incroyable!
- **adjective for non-specific referents**
  - Tex: Il est stupide. Il n'est pas français. Il est arrogant! Il n'est pas américain.
  - Tammy? Elle est gentille.

### il/elle est/ils/elles sont

Use il/elle est or il/elle sont to introduce the following:

- **adjective alone**
  - Tex? Il est arrogant! Il n'est pas français. Il est arrogant! He isn't French. He is American.
  - Tammy? Elle est gentille.
- **nationality, occupation, religion (used as adjectives in French)**
  - Tammy? Elle est étudiante. Tammy? She is a student.

Remember that il (s) and elle(s) refer to a specific person or thing. Ce does not refer to a specific person or thing; it is usually translated as that.

Il est stupide. (He's stupid.) C'est stupide. (That's stupid.)
Tense, Aspect, Mood, Voice

Intro to Tense, Aspect, Mood, Voice

Tense

Tense is the grammatical term that refers to the time when the action of the verb occurs: past, present, future. The time frame of an action is usually established by referring to the present moment; for example, the passé composé and the future are respectively past and future in relation to the present.

However, some tenses establish their time frame by referring to other actions in the past or in the future. For example, the plus-que-parfait tense indicates a past action that occurred prior to the completion of another past action. The futur antérieur tense indicates a future action that will have occurred before another future action. Actions that occur before another action are described as being anterior.

Tenses are also described by their number of parts. For example, a tense with only one verb form is called a simple tense (ie, le passé simple). In contrast, a tense comprising two forms, the auxiliary verb and the participle, is referred to as a compound tense (ie, le passé composé).

Aspect

Aspect, unlike tense, is not concerned with placing events on a time line. Rather, aspect is concerned with making distinctions about the kinds of actions that are described by verbs: progressive actions, punctual actions, habitual actions, etc.

The most important aspectual distinction in French concerns the difference between the two most common past tenses: the imparfait and the passé composé. While both tenses refer to actions in the past, they are used for very different types of actions. The imparfait indicates an action that is ongoing or habitual. Actions in the imparfait may be simultaneous or overlapping. The passé composé on the other hand, indicates an action that is in a strict sequence in relation to another action. In other words, an event in the passé composé must be completed before another may be used in narration.

These aspectual differences are best understood in a narrative context where the imparfait is typically used to set the scene of a story by giving background information.

Installé à la terrasse du Cactus Cafe, Tex regardait les filles qui passaient. Il savourait une tasse de café, mais quelque chose manquait... une cigarette!

Seated on the terrace of the Cactus Cafe, Tex was watching the girls who walked by. He was enjoying a cup of coffee, but something was missing... a cigarette!

The passé composé is used for the foreground, that is, the plot line events. Note that plot line events are sequential, that is, an event must be completed before another event begins.

Tex a sorti une cigarette de son paquet. Il l’a allumée et il a tiré une grande bouffée. Mmm... extase!

Tex took out a cigarette from his pack. He lit it and took a long drag. Mmm... ecstasy!

Mood

Mood is a grammatical category distinguishing verb tenses. There are four moods in French: indicative, subjunctive, conditional, and imperative. All of these moods, except the imperative, may be conjugated in different tenses. Each of these moods has a different function.

The indicative mood is the most common and is used to relate facts and objective statements.

Tammy se réveille tôt le matin. (present tense of the indicative mood)

Tammy gets up early in the morning.
The subjunctive mood is used more commonly in French than in English. It is used to express opinions and feelings (subjective thoughts).

Il est dommage que les parents de Tex soient morts. (present tense of the subjunctive mood)

It is too bad that Tex's parents are dead.

The conditional mood is used to express hypothetical or contrary-to-fact statements.

Si Corey était beau, il aurait une copine. (present tense of the conditional mood)

If Corey were handsome, he would have a girlfriend.

The imperative mood is used to give direct orders or commands.

Tex, réveille-toi! Tex, get up!

Voice

Voice is a grammatical category describing the relationship between a verb and its subject. Voice is either active or passive. Active voice refers to the situation where the subject of the sentence performs the action of the verb.

Les autorités ont expulsé Tex de France. The authorities expelled Tex from France.

On the other hand, passive voice refers to the situation where the subject receives the action of the verb.

Tex a été expulsé de France (par les autorités) Tex was expelled from France (by the authorities)
futur proche

There are two future tenses in French, the simple future and the near future (le futur proche). The futur proche is usually translated into English as going + infinitive (e.g., going to eat, going to drink, going to talk). The futur proche is characteristic of spoken French but may be used in informal writing. It is formed with the verb aller (to go) conjugated in the present tense followed by an infinitive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nager</th>
<th>to swim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>je vais nager, I am going to swim</td>
<td>nous allons nager, we are going to swim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu vas nager, you are going to swim</td>
<td>vous allez nager, you are going to swim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il, elle / on va nager, he, she (it) / one is going to swim</td>
<td>ils / elles vont nager, they are going to swim</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To negate the futur proche, place ne ... pas around the conjugated form of aller: Je ne vais pas nager. (I am not going to swim).

Corey: Je vais aller à Barton Springs. J’adore l’eau. Je vais nager. Tu viens avec moi, Bette?

Bette: Tu es fou! Il fait trop froid! Je ne vais pas nager!

Corey: I am going to go to Barton Springs. I love water. I am going to swim. Are you coming with me, Bette?

Bette: Are you crazy? It is too cold! I am not going to swim!

Uses
The futur proche is used to refer to most future events in informal conversation. For details on usage see future: usage.

Corey: Tex! Tammy! Nous allons aller à Barton Springs.

Bette: Mais il y a de gros nuages gris, il va pleuvoir.

Corey: Chouette! Je vais nager sous la pluie.

Corey: Tex! Tammy! We are going to go to Barton Springs.

Bette: But there are big gray clouds. It’s going to rain.

Corey: Great! I am going to swim in the rain.

aller in the imperfect + infinitive

The construction aller + infinitive is also found with the verb aller in the imperfect (l’imparfait) to indicate what someone was going to do. For example:

Les copains allaient partir pour Barton Springs, quand ils ont vu un éclair.

Bette: Corey, tu vas te faire électrocuter! Moi, je vais faire du shopping. Qui va venir avec moi?

The friends were going to leave for Barton Springs, when they saw lightening.

Bette: Corey, you are going to get yourself electrocuted! I’m going to do some shopping. Who’s going to come with me?
Interrogatives
Introduction to Interrogatives

An interrogative construction is a grammatical form used to ask a question. There are two kinds of questions: yes/no questions and information questions. So-called yes/no questions may be answered with a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

Are you a student at the University of Texas?
Have you ever been to Sixth Street or Barton Springs?
Do you know how many Aggies it takes to screw in a lightbulb?

Information questions contain a specific interrogative word (who, what, when, why, how) and cannot be answered with a yes or no. Their purpose is to elicit a specific piece of information.

Who is Tex?
When did he come to Texas?
How did he learn French?

Besides using ‘est-ce que’, questions in French can be formed by inversion of the subject and verb.

Parlez-vous français? Do you speak

formulating questions
The word ‘do’ is used in English question formation. In similar fashion, French yes / no questions can be formed with the phrase est-ce que.

There are several other ways to ask a question in French. For instance, a tag question is a question word or phrase 'tagged' on to the end of a statement which requires a confirmation with a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer.

Vous parlez français, n’est-ce pas? You speak French, don’t you?

Finally, the most common way to ask a question in French conversation is to use rising intonation. In this kind of interrogative construction, the word order is the same as a declarative sentence, but the speaker’s voice rises at the end to signal the question.
questions with intonation

One of the easiest ways to ask a question that may be answered by yes/no is to raise the pitch of your voice at the end of a statement. In a declarative statement, the pitch normally falls.

Tex: Trey, tu aimes la philosophie?
Trey: Non. Je n’aime pas la philosophie.
Tex: Tu connais Sartre?
Trey: Non. Qui est-ce?
Tex: Gloups! C’est l’auteur du chef d’oeuvre existentialiste, La Nausée.

Tex: Trey, do you like philosophy?
Trey: No. I do not like philosophy.
Tex: Do you know Sartre?
Trey: No. Who is that?
Tex: Gulp! He’s the author of the existentialist masterpiece, Nausea.

questions using ‘est-ce que ... ?’

Another way to ask a yes/no question is to place est-ce que before a statement. Note that que becomes qu’ before a vowel.

Trey: Et toi, Tex, est-ce que tu aimes les films?
Tex: Bien sûr, j’adore les films.
Trey: Est-ce que tu connais Yoda?
Tex: Non. Qui est-ce?
Trey: Duh ...

Trey: And you, Tex, do you like films?
Tex: Of course, I adore films.
Trey: Do you know Yoda?
Tex: No. Who is that?
Trey: Duh

questions using n’est-ce pas ?’

N’est-ce pas? is added to the end of a yes/no question when the speaker expects an affirmative response.

Trey: Tu connais 'La guerre des étoiles,' n’est-ce pas? Yoda, c’est le petit sage.
Trey: Yoda est mon héros. Tu ne connaispas Yoda?
Tex: Ah, si, si, si*, je connais le petit philosophe. Est-ce que tu es fou? Yodan’est pas Sartre.
Trey: Oh, mais la philosophie de Yoda est plus intéressante que la philosophie existentialiste de La Nausée! Tu esd’accord, n’est-ce pas?

Trey: You know ‘Star Wars,’ don’t you? Yoda is the little wise man.
Trey: Yoda is my hero. You don’t know Yoda?
Tex: Ah, yes, yes, yes, I do know the little philosopher. Are you crazy? Yoda is not Sartre.
Trey: Oh, but Yoda’s philosophy is more interesting than the existentialist philosophy of La Nausée! You agree, don’t you?

Tex: Quel crétin! Retourne à tes jeux électroniques!

Tex: What an idiot! Go back to your video games!

*Si is used to answer ‘yes’ to a negative question.
Interrogative and Exclamative: quel

Quel is an adjective. Like any other adjective, it agrees in number and gender with the noun it modifies. Remember to make the liaison between quels / quelles and a following word beginning with a vowel (quels animaux).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mascuine singular</th>
<th>mascuine plural</th>
<th>feminine singular</th>
<th>feminine plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>quel</td>
<td>quels</td>
<td>quelle</td>
<td>quelles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**interrogative quel**

Quel is generally translated into English by 'what' or 'which'. It is always followed by a noun or by the verb 'être' + noun.

- Un petit tatou: Maman, maman, quel est le nom de ce tatou?
  - Rita: Oh, c'est Tex, ton oncle.
- Un petit tatou: Quel âge a Tex ?
  - Rita: On ne sait pas.
- Un petit tatou: Quelles sont les qualités de Tex?
  - Rita: Oh, il est intelligent, débrouillard, mais aussi cynique et pessimiste.
  - A little armadillo: What's the name of this armadillo?
  - Rita: Oh, it's Tex, your uncle.
  - A little armadillo: How old is Tex?
  - Rita: We don't know.
  - A little armadillo: What are Tex's good points?
  - Rita: Oh, he's intelligent, resourceful, but also cynical and pessimistic.

**exclamative quel**

Quel may also be used for emphasis. In this instance, quel is followed either by an adjective or a noun, and it means 'what' or 'what a'. Note that there is an exclamation mark at the end of the sentence.

- Tammy: Quel beau tatou!
  - Tammy: What a handsome armadillo!
- Joe-Bob: Non, quel tatou snob!
  - Joe-Bob: No, what a snobby armadillo!
  - Quelle belleminette!
  - What a beautiful kitty!
- Tammy: Quelle chatte méchante!
  - Tammy: What a mean cat!
- Ah, quels animaux absurdes!
  - Ah, what absurd animals!