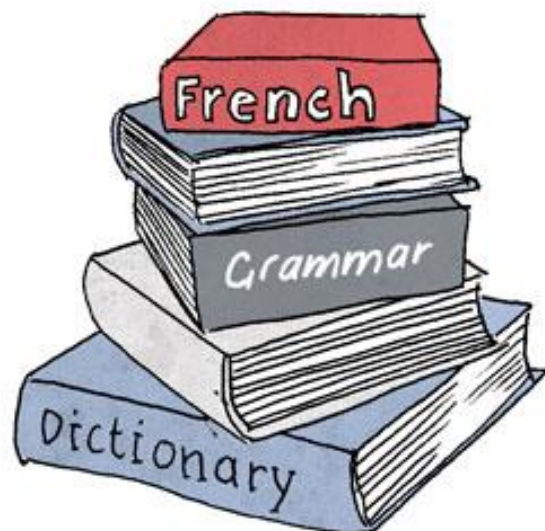


GCSE / A Level  
French  
Grammar  
Transition  
Booklet



## **Contents**

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## Nouns

Nouns in French are either masculine (**un / le**) or feminine (**une / la**). You can check the gender of a noun in a dictionary, but sometimes the ending of a noun can help you work out its gender.

**LE GENRE DES NOMS (INANIMÉS)**

Il n'y a pas de règle, mais parfois la terminaison du mot peut vous aider.

**Féminin (généralement)**

- ure : la voiture
- té : la beauté
- ion (-tion, -xion, -sion): la nation
- ie: la philosophie
- eur: la peur
- ée: la journée
- ance, -ence: la confiance

**Masculin (généralement)**

- ment: le vêtement
- isme: le séisme
- al: le journal
- ier: le saladier
- oir: le séchoir
- age: le lavage

Attention, il y a des exceptions !!!

le bonheur, le malheur  
le musée, le lycée  
le silence  
la page, l'image,  
la plage, la rage

l  
a  
c  
l  
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s  
s  
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e  
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e

**Task 1 – Here are some useful nouns for the AS French course. Find out how to write them in French AND what gender each noun is.**

problem	government
soap opera	TV viewer
marriage	divorce

Most French nouns add **-s** to make them plural. Those ending in **-s**, **-x** or **-z** stay the same. Nouns ending in **-al** change to **-aux** and **-eau** or **-eu** add **-x**.

**Task 2 – Translate these plural nouns into French**

newspapers	birds	castles
gases	children	voices
countries	horses	bottles

## Adjectives

Most adjectives in French go after the noun they describe, e.g. **une table bleue**. BUT some adjectives go before the noun. Can you list some here?

**Task 3 - Some adjectives which come before the noun they describe are:**



In French adjectives have to agree with the noun they are describing. For most adjectives you add an **-e** in the feminine version, an **-s** in the masculine plural version and **-es** in the feminine plural version, e.g.

Un stylo vert

Une table vertes

Des stylos verts

Des tables vertes

**Task 4 – Some Adjectives are Irregular and do not follow the pattern above. What happens to these adjectives?**

	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine plural	Feminine plural
-er	premier			
-if	sportif			
-al	local			
-eux	sérieux			
-el	officiel			
-c	public			
-on	bon			

## Possessive Adjectives

A possessive adjective must agree with its noun.

**Task 5 – Complete the table below**

	<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>	<b>Plural</b>
<b>My</b>	mon		
<b>Your</b>	ton		
<b>His/her</b>	son		
<b>Our</b>	notre		
<b>Your</b>	votre		
<b>their</b>	leur		

## Adverbs

An adjective describes a noun and an adverb describes a verb, e.g. the journey was slow (adjective) and he drove slowly (adverb).

French adverbs are formed from the feminine form of an adjective plus **-ment**.

e.g. franc/franche = frank



franchement = frankly

**Task 6 – Work out these French adverbs**

probably

normally

generally

slowly

quickly

softly

**Task 7 – Use each of these words in a sentence**

bon

mauvais

bien

mal

## Verbs – Present Tense



The Present Tense is used to describe what is happening now or what usually happens. We have 2 present tenses in English (“I eat” and “I am eating”), French has only one (“je mange”).

On the left you can see the Present Tense verb endings for **-er** verbs. The good news is that most French verbs are regular **-er** verbs and are conjugated in this way.

Some verbs end in **-ir** and are conjugated like this:

<b>FINIR – to finish</b>			
Je	<b>finis</b>	Nous	<b>finissons</b>
Tu	<b>finis</b>	Vous	<b>finissez</b>
Il/elle	<b>finit</b>	Ils/Elles	<b>finissent</b>

And some verbs end with **-re** and are conjugated like this:

<b>VENDRE – to sell</b>			
Je	<b>vends</b>	Nous	<b>vendons</b>
Tu	<b>vends</b>	Vous	<b>vendez</b>
Il/elle	<b>vend</b>	Ils/Elles	<b>vendent</b>

You can tell if a verb is regular if it says “**v reg**” in the dictionary after it.

**Task 8 – Look up these Regular Verbs in the dictionary. Are they -er, -ir, -re verbs?**

to wait

to vomit

to slow down

to invest

to begin

to stop

to lose

to hear

to choose

to obey

### **Task 9 – Translate these verbs in the Present Tense**

I am listening

He chooses

They start

We sell

She loses

You stop

We obey

They are slowing down

The Present Tense is also used in French with “depuis” to say how long you have been doing something.

e.g. J'apprends le français depuis 5 ans I've been learning French for 5 years

### **Task 10 – How would you write...?**

He's been eating a cheese sandwich for 2 hours.

They've been choosing an ice cream for 5 minutes.

## Irregular Verbs

Some verbs in French do not follow these patterns. Unfortunately these irregular verbs are some of the most commonly used verbs and need to be learnt by heart.

Les verbes: Indicative Present Common irregular verbs					
Conjugating the five most common <span style="color: red;">irregular</span> verbs used.					
1. être = to be		3. aller = to go		5. pouvoir = to be able to	
2. avoir = to have		4. faire = to do			
Pronoun	être	avoir	aller	faire	pouvoir
Je	suis	'ai	vais	fais	peux
Tu	es	as	vas	fais	peux
Il/Elle	est	a	va	fait	peut
Nous	sommes	avons	allons	faisons	pouvons
Vous	êtes	avez	allez	faites	pouvez
Ils/Elles	sont	ont	vont	font	peuvent
By Lingual-ism! @ <a href="http://jeannie-languages.tumblr.com" style="color: white;">jeannie-languages.tumblr.com</a>					

**Task 11 – Other Irregular Verbs. Complete the tables below.**

VOULOIR – to want			
Je		Nous	
Tu		Vous	
Il/elle		Ils/Elles	

<b>DEVOIR – to have to / must</b>			
Je		Nous	
Tu		Vous	
Il/elle		Ils/Elles	

<b>METTRE – to put</b>			
Je		Nous	
Tu		Vous	
Il/elle		Ils/Elles	

<b>PRENDRE – to take</b>			
Je		Nous	
Tu		Vous	
Il/elle		Ils/Elles	

<b>SAVOIR – to know (a fact)</b>			
Je		Nous	
Tu		Vous	
Il/elle		Ils/Elles	

<b>CONNAITRE – to know (a place/person)</b>			
Je		Nous	
Tu		Vous	
Il/elle		Ils/Elles	

## Perfect Tense

The perfect tense is used in French to talk about completed actions that happened in the past. It is the equivalent of both “I ate” and “I have eaten” in English.


You need 3 things in order to form the Perfect Tense correctly in French:

Subject	Auxiliary Verb	Past Participle	
J'	ai	mangé	I have eaten / I ate
Il	a	fait	He has done / He did



The most common mistake English speakers make with the Perfect Tense is missing out the Auxiliary Verb! It is really important to know the verbs AVOIR and ETRE in order to form the Perfect Tense correctly (see **Irregular Verbs**).

Most verbs use AVOIR but some use ETRE in the Perfect Tense. All Reflexive verbs take ETRE as well as the following verbs:

<b>Verbs Conjugated With Être In The Past Tense</b>		
<b>Mrs. &amp; Dr. Vandertramp</b>		
<b>INFINITIVE</b>		<b>PAST PARTICIPLE</b>
Devenir		Devenu(e)(s)
Revenir		Revenu(e)(s)
&		&
Monter		Monté(e)(s)
Rentrer		Rentr(é)(e)(s)
Sortir		Sorti(e)(s)
Venir		Venu(e)(s)
Arriver		Arrivé(e)(s)
Naître		Né(e)(s)
Descendre		Descendu(e)(s)
Entrer		Entré(e)(s)
Retourner		Retourne(e)(s)
Tomber		Tombé(e)(s)
Rester		Resté(e)(s)
Aller		Allé(e)(s)
Mourir		Mort(e)(s)
Partir		Parti(e)(s)
<small>LearnFrenchVideo.com</small>		

Verbs which take être as the auxiliary verb have an additional –e, –s or –es to agree with the subject.

Past Participles (pipis!) of regular verbs are formed like this:

-er verbs	→	-é	e.g. J'ai joué
-ir verbs	→	-i	e.g. J'ai fini
-re verbs	→	-u	e.g. J'ai vendu



### Task 12 – Irregular Past Participles

What are the past participles of the following common verbs?

avoir	boire	connaître
devoir	dire	écrire
être	faire	lire
mettre	ouvrir	pouvoir
prendre	recevoir	savoir
vivre	voir	vouloir

When you are forming the Perfect Tense you need to think about the following 4 questions...

**1 What is the subject of the sentence?**

**2 Does the verb I want to use take avoir / être ?**

**3 What is the past participle?**

**4 If I have used être, do I need to add –e, –s or –es to the past participle?**

**Task 13 – Now translate these verbs in the Perfect Tense**

I bought

I read

He went

He wrote

They ate

They returned

She took

She stayed

The teachers arrived

The teachers swam

You drank

You entered

## Imperfect Tense

The Imperfect Tense is used for:

- A general description in the past (It was interesting...)
- A continuous or interrupted action in the past (I was reading when...)
- A repeated or habitual action in the past (I used to play tennis...)

To form the Imperfect Tense, take **the stem** which is the nous form of the present tense without the –ons.

Avoir: nous avons → av-

Finir: nous finissons → finiss-



Then add the endings shown below to the **stem**:

Subject	Endings	Examples
je	-ais	Je faisais
tu	-ais	Tu avais
Il/elle/on	-ait	Il /elle / on finissait
Nous	-ions	Nous regardions
vous	-iez	Vous achetiez
Ils/elles	-aient	Ils/elles prenaient

### Task 14 – Now translate these verbs in the Imperfect Tense

I was watching

I was drinking

I used to eat

He used to take

She used to be

They used to like

You used to do

They were buying

## Future Tense

The future tense is used to make predictions and statements about the future: to say something “will” happen.

The good news is most verbs have a regular future tense! 😊 Take the infinitive (for –re verbs remove the final –e!) and add these endings:



	<b>endings</b>	<b>regarder</b>	<b>choisir</b>	<b>répondre</b>
je	-ai	regarderai	choisirai	répondrai
tu	-as	regarderas	choisiras	répondras
Il/elle/on	-a	regardera	choisira	répondra
Nous	-ons	regarderons	choisirons	répondrons
Vous	-ez	regarderez	choisirez	répondrez
Ils/elles	-ont	regarderont	choisiront	répondront

Some key verbs use an irregular future stem instead of the infinitive, but the endings are still regular:

aller	ir -	J'irai
avoir	aur-	J'aurai
devoir	devr-	Je devrai
être	ser-	Je serai
faire	fer-	Je ferai
pouvoir	pourr-	Je pourrai
savoir	saur-	Je saurai
venir	viendr-	Je viendrai
voir	verr-	Je verrai
vouloir	voudr-	Je voudrai

### **Task 15 – Now translate these sentences in the Future Tense**

I will be richer

She will eat more vegetables

They will be able to speak French

## Conditional Tense



The Conditional Tense is used to say what “would”, “could” or “should” happen or how something would be.

To form the conditional you take the infinitive and add the following endings (The same endings as the imperfect tense!):

	<b>endings</b>	<b>regarder</b>	<b>choisir</b>	<b>répondre</b>
je	-ais	regarderais	choiserais	répondrais
tu	-ais	regarderais	choiserais	répondrais
Il/elle/on	-ait	regarderait	choisirait	répondrait
Nous	-ions	regarderions	choisirions	répondrions
Vous	-iez	regarderiez	choisiriez	répondriez
Ils/elles	-aient	regarderaient	choisiraient	répondraient

The irregular verbs in the conditional tense are the same ones as the future tense:

aller	ir -	J'irais
avoir	aur-	J'aurais
devoir	devr-	Je devrais
être	ser-	Je serais
faire	fer-	Je ferais
pouvoir	pourr-	Je pourrais
savoir	saur-	Je saurais
venir	viendr-	Je viendrais
voir	verr-	Je verrais
vouloir	voudr-	Je voudrais

### **Task 16 – Now translate these sentences in the Conditional Tense**

I would be richer

She would eat more vegetables

They would be able to speak French

## Reflexive Verbs

Reflexive verbs are conjugated in the same way as other verbs in all the tenses, but they have a reflexive pronoun between the subject and the verb:

### **Se laver – to wash yourself**

Je **me** lave

Nous **nous** lavons

Tu **te** laves

Vous **vous** lavez

Il/Elle/On **se** lave

Ils / Elles **se** lavent

Infinitives of reflexive verbs in the dictionary begin with **se** or **s'** and have a “**vr**” next to them to help you identify them. Providing you remember to add the reflexive pronoun they are very straightforward to use. The only tense which sometimes causes problems is the Perfect Tense. Reflexive Verbs take être and the past participle agrees with the subject:

Je **me** suis lavé (e)

Nous **nous** sommes lavé (e)s

Tu **t'**es lavé (e)

Vous **vous** êtes lavé (e)s

Il/Elle/On **s'**est lavé (e)(s)

Ils / Elles **se** sont lavé (e)s

### **Task 17 – Look up these verbs in a dictionary. Are they reflexive verbs or not?**

to look after

to dream

to encourage

to sit down

to shower

to worry

## Negatives

The Negative Sandwich



In French to make a sentence negative you put a ne...pas around the verb (or the auxiliary verb in the perfect tense)...

Je ne fais pas de sport

Je n'ai pas fait de sport hier

Other negative expressions work in exactly the same way.

Ne ... plus	No longer / no more	Je <b>ne</b> fume <b>plus</b>
Ne ... jamais	never	Je <b>ne</b> joue <b>jamais</b> au rugby
Ne... rien	Nothing	Ils <b>ne</b> font <b>rien</b>
Ne ... personne	No-one, nobody	Elle <b>n'</b> aime <b>personne</b>
Ne ... que	Only	Je <b>n'</b> ai <b>qu'</b> une soeur
Ne ... ni ... ni ...	Neither ... nor ...	Il <b>n'</b> aime <b>ni</b> le tennis <b>ni</b> le cricket

### Task 18 – Translate these sentences

I never drink Coke

I have never drunk Coke

He no longer eats meat

They see nothing

They saw nothing

## Object Pronouns

An object pronoun replaces a noun that is the object of the sentence and it goes before the verb, unlike in English.

e.g. I love them = Je les aime

A direct object pronoun (le / la / les) replaces a noun linked directly to the verb.

e.g. Tu aimes les haricots? Je les adore!

### **Task 19 – Translate these sentences**

Sport? I love it!

The teachers? I hate them!

Mme McGarrick? I can see her!

Benedict Cumberbatch? I love him.

Soap operas? I watch them all the time.

Apples? I never eat them.

## Relative Pronouns

Relative pronouns are words like “who”, “which” and “that”, used to connect two parts of a sentence.

**Qui** is the most common relative pronoun. It represents someone or something that is the subject of the verb that follows:

L’homme qui est très beau (The man who is very handsome)

**Que** represents someone or something that is the object of the sentence:

L’homme que j’ai vu hier (The man whom I saw yesterday)

In practice this means that **qui** is followed by a verb and **que** by a noun/subject pronoun.

NB: que is contracted to qu’ before a vowel, but qui is never contracted!

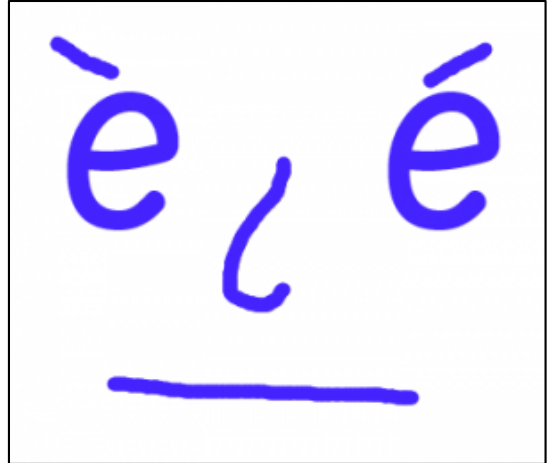
### **Task 20 – Is “qui” or “que” needed in each sentence?**

1. Le match \_\_\_\_\_ j’ai vu samedi était extraordinaire.
2. Le livre \_\_\_\_\_ j’ai acheté est japonais.
3. Mon père, \_\_\_\_\_ est docteur, travaille à Nice.
4. C’est une voiture \_\_\_\_\_ est très populaire en Allemagne.
5. La voiture \_\_\_\_\_ il a achetée est toute neuve.
6. C’est une fille \_\_\_\_\_ fait toujours ses devoirs correctement.
7. C’est la voiture \_\_\_\_\_ a gagné le concours à Detroit.

## Spellings and Accents

Some of the most commonly misspelt words at A-level French are:

le problème	(the problem)
beaucoup de	(lots of)
tout le temps	(all the time)
le travail	(work)
Je travaille	(I work)
les vacances	(holidays)
Par exemple	(for example)
Je préfère	(I prefer)
Mon sport préféré	(my favourite sport)



**Task 21 – Put the words above into some sentences below (making sure to spell them correctly!)**