

FRENCH

GRAMMMAR:

VERBS

CONTENTS

Using the infinitive

The present tense

The irregular verbs

The reflexive verbs

The perfect tense

The imperfect tense

The future tense

The conditional tense

USING THE **INFINITIVE**

WHAT IS IT?

The unchanged form of the verb, which is found in the dictionary. In French, there are three types, ending in:

- -ER (e.g. jouer)
- -IR (e.g. finir)
- -RE (e.g. vendre)

Sometimes, you use the infinitive form, but it usually needs to be *conjugated* depending on the subject (je, tu, il/elle and so on).

WHEN DO YOU USE IT?

The infinitive can be used in the following ways *without* 'à' or 'de' in front of it:

- *After certain expressions*
e.g. Il faut ... (it is necessary to / you have to)
- *After these verbs*
e.g. adorer, aimer, détester, préférer
- *After modal verbs*
e.g. vouloir, pouvoir, devoir, savoir
- *When using 'pour'*
e.g. Je vais au centre sportif pour jouer au tennis.

THE **PRESENT** TENSE

WHAT IS IT?

It's used to talk about:

- what is happening now
- what usually happens

HOW DO YOU USE IT?

To use the present, you take off the ending of the infinitive form of the verb (-er, -ir or -re) and then add the right ending, depending on the subject and type of verb.

	-ER	-IR	-RE
je	-e	-is	-s
tu	-es	-is	-s
il/elle	-e	-it	-
nous	-ons	-issons	-ons
vous	-ez	-issez	-ez
ils/elles	-ent	-issent	-ent

EXAMPLES

- Je joue au tennis.
- Elle finit ses devoirs.
- Vendez-vous les pommes?

THE **IRREGULAR** VERBS

Here are the pesky, but important irregular verbs that don't conjugate like usual.

AVOIR (to have)	ÊTRE (to be)
j' ai	je suis
tu as	tu es
il/elle a	il/elle est
nous avons	nous sommes
vous avez	vous êtes
ils/elles ont	ils/elles sont

FAIRE (to do)	ALLER (to go)
je fais	je vais
tu fais	tu vas
il/elle fait	il/elle va
nous faisons	nous allons
vous faites	vous allez
ils/elles font	ils/elles vont

THE **REFLEXIVE** VERBS

WHAT ARE THEY?

They are conjugated in the same way as any verb, but we add the *reflexive pronoun* before the verb. This is because reflexive verbs are used when the action is done to oneself.

Common reflexives include:

- se reveiller (*to wake up*)
- se lever (*to get up*)
- se laver (*to wash*)
- se doucher (*to shower*)

The pronouns are:

- je me ...
- tu te ...
- il/elle se ...
- nous nous ...
- vous vous ...
- ils/elles se ...

EXAMPLES

Here are some examples of how to use the reflexive:

- Je me reveille.
- Tu te douches.
- Elle se lave.
- Nous nous levons.
- Vous vous douchez.
- Ils se reveillent.

THE **PERFECT** TENSE

WHAT IS IT?

It is used to talk about something which happened in the past. It is formed using the *present tense* of avoir or être and the past participle.

DO I USE AVOIR OR ETRE?

Almost all verbs take avoir. We use être for verbs of *movement*. To remember which to use, think:

M onter *to climb*

R ester *to stay*

S ortir *to go out*

V enir *to come*

A ller *to go*

N aître *to be born*

D escendre *to descend*

E ntrer *to enter*

R etourner *to return*

T omber *to fall*

R entrer *to go back in*

A rriver *to arrive*

M ourir *to die*

P artir *to leave*

Don't forget to add the correct agreements to the verb, if you're using être.

HOW DO I MAKE THE PAST PARTICIPLE?

It depends on the type of verb.

- -ER: remove ending and add 'é' (joué)
- -IR: remove ending and add 'i' (fini)
- -RE: remove ending and add 'u' (vendu)

IRREGULAR PAST PARTICIPLES

Naturally, there are irregular past participles! You have to just learn them off by heart...

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| • apprendre – appris | • avoir – eu |
| • boire – bu | • faire – fait |
| • comprendre – compris | • lire – lu |
| • connaître – connu | • metre – mis |
| • conduire – conduit | • prendre – pris |
| • croire – cru | • pouvoir – pu |
| • devoir – dû | • savoir – su |
| • écrire – écrit | • voir – vu |
| • être – été | • vouloir - voulu |

EXAMPLES

- J'ai joué.
- Tu es parti.
- Ils ont voulu.

THE **IMPERFECT** TENSE

WHAT IS IT?

It is used to:

- describe what things were like in the past
- say what was happening at a given moment
- say what used to happen

It is formed by taking the present 'nous' form of the verb, then adding on the correct imperfect ending.

THE IMPERFECT ENDINGS

je	-ais
tu	-ais
il/elle	-ait
nous	-ions
vous	-iez
ils/elles	-aient

EXAMPLES

- Je jouais au tennis.
- Nous finissions notre devoirs.
- Elle vendait les pommes.

THE **FUTURE** TENSE

WHAT IS IT?

It is used to:

- say what is *going to* happen (*futur proche*)
- say what *will* happen (*futur simple*)

FUTUR PROCHE

Form the *futur proche* by conjugating *aller* and using the infinitive afterwards. Here are some examples:

- Je vais jouer au tennis.
- Elle va finir ses devoirs.
- Nous allons vendre les pommes.

FUTUR SIMPLE

We form this with a future stem plus a future ending.

How do you form the future stem?

In –ER and –IR verbs, it's just the infinitive. In –RE verbs, only take off the 'e'.

- jouer becomes jouer-
- finir becomes finir-
- vendre becomes vendr-

Of course, there are irregular stems!

aller	ir-	faire	fer-
être	ser-	pouvoir	pour-
avoir	aur-	devoir	devr-
savoir	saur-	vouloir	voudr-

What are the future endings?

je	-ai
tu	-as
il/elle	-a
nous	-ons
vous	-ez
ils/elles	-ont

Here are some full examples:

- Je jouerai.
- Tu finiras.
- Elle vendra.
- Nous serons.
- Vous ferez.
- Ils sauront.

THE **CONDITIONAL** TENSE

WHAT IS IT?

It is used to say what would happen in the future.

It is formed using the future stem with the imperfect endings, so look back at previous pages to see them.

EXAMPLES

- J'irais en Amérique.
- Elle voudrais aller au cinéma.
- Ils voudraient rester à la maison.