

# THE PERFECT TENSE

Bonjour

## Easy as 1-2-3

What is the Perfect Tense?

In French you use the Perfect Tense (le passé composé) to say what you have done at a certain time in the past.

**1** First comes the **subject**. This is the person doing the action. Remember:  
**Je - Tu - Il - Elle - On - Nous - Vous - Ils - Elles**  
But it could also be Marc, Celine, Mes parents, La glace, Le professeur  
It is whoever is doing the verb!

Je

**2** This is the part of **avoir** or **être**, known as the auxiliary. The auxiliary is conjugated in the **present**:

J'ai  
Tu as  
Il/elle/on a  
Nous **avons**  
Vous **avez**  
Ils / elles **ont**



Je **suis**  
Tu **es**  
Il/elle/on **est**  
Nous **sommes**  
Vous **êtes**  
Ils/elles **sont**

How do you know which one to use?  
If it's one of the MRS VAN DER TRAMP verbs (see right), then it's être, otherwise it's avoir.

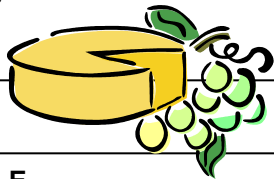
### DR MRS VAN DER TRAMP

These verbs take **être**  
Devenir (to become) - devenu  
Revenir (to come back) - revenu  
Mourir (to die) - mort  
Retourner (to return) - retourné  
Sortir (to go out) - sorti  
Venir (to come) - venu  
Arriver (to arrive) - arrivé  
Naître (to be born) - né  
Descendre (to go down) - descendu  
Entrer (to enter) - entré  
Rentrer (to return) - rentré  
Tomber (to fall) - tombé  
Rester (to stay) - resté  
Aller (to go) - allé  
Monter (to go up) - monté  
Partir (to leave) - parti



### IRREGULAR PAST PARTICIPLES:

Apprendre (to learn) - appris  
Avoir (to have) - eu  
Boire (to drink) - bu  
Comprendre (to understand) - compris  
Courir (to run) - couru  
Dire (to say) - dit  
Écrire (to write) - écrit  
Faire (to do) - fait  
Lire (to read) - lu  
Mettre (to put) - mis  
Ouvrir (to open) - ouvert  
Prendre (to take) - pris  
Recevoir (to receive) - reçu  
Voir (to see) - vu  
THERE ARE MANY MORE THAN THIS!



**3** This is the **PAST PARTICIPLE**.  
For **most** verbs (regular verbs) you can follow the simple rules to change the infinitive to the past participle:

For -ER verbs, take off the ER and add an **É**      Regarder → Regardé  
For -IR verbs, take off the IR and add an **I**      Finir → Fini  
For -RE verbs, take off the RE and add a **U**      Répondre → Répondu



**HOWEVER** lots of verbs are **irregular** and we need to learn the past participles of these.  
(17 of the Top 20 most used french verbs are irregular!!)

**DON'T FORGET TO MAKE THE PP 'AGREE' IF IT IS AN ÊTRE VERB! (see right)**

**DON'T FORGET** to make the Past Participle **agree** with the subject (who is doing the action) if it goes with être.

For feminine, add an extra **E**  
For masculine plural, add an **S**  
For feminine plural, add **ES**

Eg. Elle est allée  
Nous sommes allé(e)s  
Ils sont allés

A BIENTÔT