Adjectives After the Noun

When using adjectives in French, it is important to note that the majority of the adjectives come AFTER the noun, unlike how we would write in English. For example:

Un livre noir   Une femme canadienne

Une histoire intéressante   des gâteaux délicieux

- In these examples, the adjectives are noir, canadienne, intéressante, and délicieux.
- Adjectives that express a nationality, a colour, shape, taste, religion, social class, personality, and the type of mood, will always go after the noun.

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However, there are some verbs that will appear before the noun. The adjectives that come before the noun are usually the most basic types of adjectives and are very small words. Most of these adjectives you can memorize using the acronym "BAGS" (Beauty, Age, Goodness, Size). For example:

Beauty	Age	Goodness	Size
Beau	Jeune	Bon	Grand
Joli	Vieux	Vrai	Petit
	Nouveau	Mouvais	Gros
		Meilleur	Long
		Faux	Court
		Gentil	Bref
		Pire	
		Vilain	

The Exceptions:

Autre, Même

Remember: Make sure that the adjective agrees in gender and number with the noun to which it applies.

Adjectives that Change Meaning Depending on their Place

Certain adjectives have different meanings depending on whether they follow the noun or appear before the noun. Most of the time when the adjective is before the noun, it is used in a figurative sense. If the adjective follows the noun, it is used in a literal sense.

Adjective	English Translation before Noun	English Translation after Noun
ancien	*former*	*antique, old*
brave	*nice/good*	*courageous*
certain	*certain*	*definite*
cher	*dear*	*expensive*
dernier	*final*	*previous/last* (in expressions of time)
différent	*various*	*different*
drôle	*strange*	*amusing/funny*
grand (for people)	*great*	*tall*
gros	*big*	fat
même	same	itself/personified
nouveau	latest	brand-new
pauvre	*unfortunate*	*poor, broke*
prochain	*next* (in a sequence)	*next/following*
propre	(*my*) *own*	*clean*
sale	*nasty*	*dirty*
seul	*only*	*alone/single*
simple	*mere*	*simple*
vert	*fruitful*	green

Works Cited :

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