

Writing and Study Skills Services – Laurier Brantford
Using the Correct French Verb Form

When writing in French, it is important to use the correct French verb form to express your meaning. Outlined below, you will find the most common French verb forms and the general circumstances in which they are mainly used.

<p>Le Présent Je mange → I eat Je pars → I leave Je me lève du lit → I get out of bed</p>	<p>Le Plus-que Parfait (I had _____)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To indicate an action in the past that occurred before another action in the past Avoir/Être (Imparfait) + Participe Passé <p>J'avais mangé → I had eaten J'étais parti(e) → I had left Je m'étais levé(e) du lit → I had gotten out of bed</p>
<p>Le Passé Composé (I have... / I did...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember the verbs that are used with avoir and être and the special agreements when using the passé composé with être and avoir verbs. Avoir/Être (Présent) + Participe Passé <p>J'ai mangé → I ate Je suis parti (e) → I left Je me suis levé(e) du lit → I got out of bed</p>	<p>L'Imparfait (I was .../ I used to...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To describe an ongoing/repetitive state or an incomplete action that happened in the past Present form of nous + (ais, ais, ait, ions, iez, aient) <p>Je mangeais → I used to eat, I was eating Je partais → I was leaving Je me levais → I used to get up</p>
<p>Le Passé Récent (I have just _____)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To express something that has just happened Venir (Présent) + de + Infinitive <p>Je viens de manger → I have just eaten Je viens de partir → I have just left Je viens de me lever du lit → I have just got out of bed</p>	<p>L'Infinitif Parfait (After having _____)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Après + Avoir/Être + Participe Passé <p>Après avoir mangé → After having eaten... Après être parti(e) → After having left... Après s'être levé(e) du lit → After having gotten out of bed...</p>
<p>Le Conditionnel (I would _____)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain a possible conclusion, event, possibility To request something in a more polite way To explain a wish or announce unconfirmed facts Infinitive + (ais, ais, ait, ions, iez, aient) <p>Je mangerais → I would eat Je partirais → I would leave Je me laverais du lit → I would get out of bed</p>	<p>Le Conditionnel Antérieur (I would have _____)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain an event that would have occurred if the past circumstances had happened differently Avoir/ Être (Conditionnel) + Participe Passé <p>J'aurais mangé → I would have eaten Je serais parti(e) → I would have left Je me serais levé(e) du lit → I would have gotten out of bed</p>

<p>Le Futur Proche (I am going to _____)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more common way to communicate about future events, especially when speaking • Used to express something that will happen in the immediate future • Aller (Présent) + Infinitive <p>Je vais manger → I am going to eat Je vais partir → I am going to leave Je vais me lever du lit → I am going to get out of bed</p>	<p>Le Futur Simple (I will _____)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To talk about something that will happen further ahead in time • Infinitive + (ai, as, a, ons, ez, ont) <p>Je mangerai → I will eat Je partirai → I will leave Je me lèverai du lit → I will get out of bed</p>
<p>Le Futur Antérieur (I will have _____)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To describe an action that will have occurred before another action in the future • Avoir/Être (Futur Simple) + Participe Passé <p>J'aurai mangé → I will have eaten Je serai parti(e) → I will have left Je me serai levé(e) du lit → I will have gotten out of bed</p>	<p>L'Impératif</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonly associated with: tu, nous and vous forms of the verb • Usually used as a direct command • The subject pronoun is omitted • Construction of the imperative with “tu:” <i>er</i> verbs end with e, while the <i>ir/re</i> verbs end with s <p>Mange! → Eat Partez → Leave Levons-nous du lit! → Let's get out of bed!</p>
<p>Le Subjonctif</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used after “que” • Expresses feelings, opinions, and doubts about facts • Be aware of the expressions with “que” that do not involve the subjonctif but the indicative mood (Ex. Croire que, penser que, être certain que...) • « Ils » form (minus “ent”) + e, es, e, ions, iez, ent <p>Il est nécessaire que tu manges → It is necessary that you eat Il est important que tu partes → It is important that you leave Je demande que tu te lèves du lit. → I ask that you get out of bed</p>	<p>Le Passé du Subjonctif (I have...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used when the verb that follows “que” happened before the verb in the main clause • Avoir/Être (Subjonctif) + Participe Passé <p>Penses-tu qu'elle ait mangé? → Do you think that she ate? Crois-tu qu'elle soit partie? → Do you believe that she left? C'était dommage qu'il ne soit pas venu à Brantford → It was too bad that he didn't come to Brantford</p>

Helpful Resources for French Students

- Word Reference www.wordreference.com
- French Verb Conjugating Site www.conjugation-fr.com

References

Favrod, Alain and Louise Morrison. *Mise en pratique: manuel de lecture, vocabulaire, grammaire et expression écrite*. 6th ed. Don Mills: Pearson Canada Inc., 2013. Print.