

Synthèse de grammaire

1. Expressing who I am: *le verbe être et les adjectifs*

In this unit, you have seen three forms of the verb **être** (to be); all the present tense forms of this verb are given below:

	singular one person		plural two or more persons	
the speaker him or herself	je	suis	nous	sommes
the person spoken to	tu (<i>informal</i>)	es	vous (<i>formal or informal</i>)	êtes
	vous (<i>formal</i>)*	êtes		
the person or people spoken about	il	est	ils	sont
	elle	est	elles	sont

*The versatile subject pronoun **vous** may refer to either one person or any number of people since it can be found in both the singular and plural columns in the chart above. **Vous**, when referring to a singular person, has a formal tone as opposed to the word **tu**, which is used to reference someone informally, like a brother, sister or good friend. Use **vous** to refer to a teacher or an adult neighbor. For future reference, when you encounter a verb conjugation chart like the one above, **vous** will be located only on the plural side of those charts, no matter if it would be plural or singular, formal or informal.

The verb **être** can be used with adjectives to describe a person's identity:

— **Tristan est sérieux.**

Tristan is serious.

— **Carole est sérieuse.**

Carole is serious.

2. Expressing preferences: *j'aime/tu aimes*

In French, you can ask about a friend's likes and dislikes by using ***Est-ce que tu aimes*** ____, with the infinitive form of a verb (***-er, -ir, -re***) in the blank. To answer the question, use ***J'aime*** _____.

To express what you do not like, use ***Je n'aime pas*** _____.

—***Est-ce que tu aimes étudier?***

Do you like to study?

—***Oui, j'aime étudier, mais je n'aime pas écrire.***

Yes, I like to study, but I do not like to write.

For many verbs in French, the form used for ***je*** ends in ***-e*** and the form used for ***tu*** ends in ***-es***. You will learn other verbs that will have a different pattern.

3. Asking and answering questions: *questions et réponses*

Questions with a yes/no answer in French can be created in different ways:

- You can use the regular word order of a sentence and simply make it a question by using rising intonation, with the tone of your voice sounding higher at the end.

Tu parles français?

- Also, you can attach the question marker ***est-ce que*** to the beginning of a sentence, which signals the listener that what is to follow is a question.

Est-ce que tu parles français?

- Another way to make a question is to switch the order of the subject and the verb in the sentence. A regular sentence in French has the subject first and then the verb. Using the verb first and the subject second (with a dash in between) will make the sentence into a question.

Parles-tu français?

Information questions (in contrast to yes/no questions) require a question word or phrase (***qui, que, où, quand, pourquoi, comment, quel(le)(s)***). Sometimes you will see ***est-ce que*** after a question word as in the following examples:

Pourquoi est-ce que tu aimes chanter?

Quand est-ce que tu aimes jouer au basket?