



How to Conjugate Regular Verbs in French

KS4 FRENCH

MODERN LANGUAGES

Ages 12-16 ⌚ 3 min read

What Does Conjugation Mean?

Conjugation is the process of changing a verb to match who is doing the action and when it happens. In **French**, verbs are like shape-shifters — they change their endings depending on whether you're talking about yourself, your friend, or a group of people, and whether something is happening now or happened in the past.

Think of it like a smartphone that adapts to different users. Your mum might see different apps than you do, even though it's the same phone. Similarly, the same verb changes slightly for different people.

Regular Verbs Are the Easy Ones

Regular verbs follow clear, predictable patterns. In French, regular verbs fall into three main groups based on their endings: **-er verbs** (like *parler*, meaning "to speak"), **-ir verbs** (like *finir*, meaning "to finish"), and **-re verbs** (like *vendre*, meaning "to sell"). These groups are important because each one follows its own consistent pattern.

How -ER Verbs Work

Let's use **parler** (to speak) as an example. In the present tense (right now), it changes like this: **je parle** (I speak), **tu parles** (you speak), **il/elle parle** (he/she speaks), **nous parlons** (we speak), **vous parlez** (you all speak), and **ils/elles parlent** (they speak).

Think of it like changing letters in a word game. You keep the main part (*parl-*) the same, but swap the ending depending on who's speaking.

The Pattern Stays the Same

Once you learn how **-er verbs** work, you can use the same pattern for hundreds of other verbs like *danser* (to dance), *manger* (to eat), or *aimer* (to like). The **-ir** and **-re** groups have slightly different patterns, but they're equally reliable.

The key to mastering French conjugation is recognizing these patterns. Once your brain learns the shape-shifting rules, you can handle almost any regular verb without memorising it individually. That's why understanding regular verbs first makes irregular verbs (the tricky ones) much easier to tackle later!