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Foreword for language teachers

The *Easy Learning French Grammar & Practice* is designed to be used with both young and adult learners, as a group revision and practice book to complement your course book during classes, or as a recommended text for self-study and homework/coursework.

The text specifically targets learners from *ab initio* to intermediate or GCSE level, and therefore its structural content and vocabulary have been matched to the relevant specifications up to and including Higher GCSE.

The approach aims to develop knowledge and understanding of grammar and your learners' ability to apply it by:

- defining parts of speech at the start of each major section with examples in English to clarify concepts
- minimizing the use of grammar terminology and providing clear explanations of terms both within the text and in the **Glossary**
- illustrating all points with examples (and their translations) based on topics and contexts which are relevant to beginner and intermediate course content
- providing exercises which allow learners to practice grammar points

The text helps you develop positive attitudes to grammar learning in your classes by:

- giving clear, easy-to-follow explanations
- highlighting useful **Tips** to deal with common difficulties
- summarizing **Key points** at the end of sections to consolidate learning
- illustrating **Key points** with practice examples

Introduction for students

Whether you are starting to learn French for the very first time, brushing up on topics you have studied in class, or revising for your GCSE exams, the *Easy Learning French Grammar & Practice* is here to help. This easy-to-use revision and practice guide takes you through all the basics you will need to speak and understand modern, everyday French.

Newcomers can sometimes struggle with the technical terms they come across when they start to explore the grammar of a new language. The *Easy Learning French Grammar & Practice* explains how to get to grips with all the parts of speech you will need to know, using simple language and cutting out jargon.

The text is divided into sections, each dealing with a particular area of grammar. Each section can be studied individually, as numerous cross-references in the text point you to relevant points in other sections of the book for further information.

Every major section begins with an explanation of the area of grammar covered on the following pages. For quick reference, these definitions are also collected together on pages viii–xii in a glossary of essential grammar terms.

What is a verb?

A **verb** is a 'doing' word which describes what someone or something does, what someone or something is, or what happens to them, for example, *be, sing, live*.

Each grammar point in the text is followed by simple examples of real French, complete with English translations, to help you understand the rules. Underlining has been used in examples throughout the text to highlight the grammatical point being explained.

- If you are talking about a part of your body, you usually use a word like *my* or *his* in English, but in French you usually use the definite article.

Tourne la tête à gauche.

Turn your head to the left.

Il s'est cassé le bras.

He's broken his arm.

J'ai mal à la gorge.

My throat hurts.

In French, as with any foreign language, there are certain pitfalls which have to be avoided. **Tips** and **Information** notes throughout the text are useful reminders of the things that often trip learners up.

Tip

If you are in doubt as to which form of *you* to use, it is safest to use **vous** so you will not offend anybody.

Key points sum up all the important facts about a particular area of grammar, to save you time when you are revising and help you focus on the main grammatical points.

KEY POINTS

- ✓ With masculine singular nouns use **un**.
- ✓ With feminine singular nouns use **une**.
- ✓ With plural nouns use **des**.
- ✓ **un**, **une** and **des** change to **de** or **d'** in negative sentences.
- ✓ The indefinite article is not usually used when you say what jobs people do, or in exclamations with **quel**.

After each Key point you can find a number of exercises to help you practice all the important grammatical points. You can find the answer to each exercise on pages 260-276.

If you think you would like to continue with your French studies to a higher level, check out the **Grammar Extra** sections. These are intended for advanced students who are interested in knowing a little more about the structures they will come across beyond GCSE.

Grammar Extra!

If you want to use an adjective after **quelque chose**, **rien**, **quelqu'un** and **personne**, you link the words with **de**.

quelqu'un d'important

someone important

quelque chose d'intéressant

something interesting

rien d'amusant

nothing funny

Finally, the supplement at the end of the book contains **Verb Tables**, where 21 important French verbs (both regular and irregular) are declined in full. Examples show you how to use these verbs in your own work.

We hope that you will enjoy using the *Easy Learning French Grammar & Practice* and find it useful in the course of your studies.

Glossary of Grammar Terms

ABSTRACT NOUN a word used to refer to a quality, idea, feeling or experience, rather than a physical object, for example, *size, reason, happiness*. Compare with **concrete noun**.

ADJECTIVE a 'describing' word that tells you more about a person or thing, such as their appearance, colour, size or other qualities, for example, *pretty, blue, big*.

ADVERB a word usually used with verbs, adjectives or other adverbs that gives more information about when, where, how or in what circumstances something happens, for example, *quickly, happily, now*.

AGREE (to) to change word endings according to whether you are referring to masculine, feminine, singular or plural people or things.

AGREEMENT changing word endings according to whether you are referring to masculine, feminine, singular or plural people or things.

APOSTROPHE S an ending ('s) added to a noun to show who or what someone or something belongs to, for example, *Danielle's dog, the doctor's wife, the book's cover*.

ARTICLE a word like *the, a* and *an*, which is used in front of a noun. See also **definite article**, **indefinite article** and **partitive article**.

AUXILIARY VERB a verb such as *be, have* and *do* when it is used with a main verb to form tenses and questions.

BASE FORM the form of the verb without any endings added to it, for example, *walk, have, be, go*. Compare with **infinitive**.

CARDINAL NUMBER a number used in counting, for example, *one, seven,*

ninety. Compare with **ordinal number**.

CLAUSE a group of words containing a verb.

COMPARATIVE an adjective or adverb with *-er* on the end of it, or *more* or *less* in front of it, that is used to compare people, things or actions, for example, *slower, less important, more carefully*.

COMPOUND NOUN a word for a living being, thing or idea, which is made up of two or more words, for example, *tin-opener, railway station*.

CONCRETE NOUN a word that refers to an object you can touch with your hand, rather than to a quality or idea, for example, *ball, map, apples*. Compare with **abstract noun**.

CONDITIONAL a verb form used to talk about things that would happen or would be true under certain conditions, for example, *I would help you if I could*. It is also used to say what you would like or need, for example, *Could you give me the bill?*

CONJUGATE (to) to give a verb different endings according to whether you are referring to *I, you, they* and so on, and according to whether you are referring to past, present or future, for example, *I have, she has, he had*.

CONJUGATION a group of verbs which have the same endings as each other or change according to the same pattern.

CONJUNCTION a word such as *and, because* or *but* that links two words or phrases of a similar type, or two parts of a sentence, for example, *Diane and I have been friends for years.; I left because I was bored*.

CONSONANT a letter of the alphabet which is not a vowel, for example, *b, f, m, s, v*. Compare with **vowel**.

CONSTRUCTION an arrangement of words together in a phrase or sentence.

DEFINITE ARTICLE the word *the*. Compare with **indefinite article**.

DEMONSTRATIVE ADJECTIVE one of the words *this, that, these* and *those* used with a noun to point out a particular person or thing, for example, *this woman, that dog*.

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN one of the words *this, that, these* and *those* used instead of a noun to point out people or things, for example, *That looks fun*.

DIRECT OBJECT a noun referring to the person or thing affected by the action described by a verb, for example, *She wrote her name*; *I shut the window*. Compare with **indirect object**.

DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN a word such as *me, him, us* and *them* which is used instead of a noun to stand in for the person or thing most directly affected by the action described by the verb. Compare with **indirect object pronoun**.

EMPHATIC PRONOUN a word used instead of a noun when you want to emphasize something, for example, *Is this for me?*; *'Who broke the window?' – 'He did.'* Also called **stressed pronoun**.

ENDING a form added to a verb, for example, *go* → *goes*, and to adjectives and nouns depending on whether they refer to masculine, feminine, singular or plural things.

EXCLAMATION a word, phrase or sentence that you use to show you are surprised, shocked, angry and so on, for example, *Wow!*; *How dare you!*; *What a surprise!*

FEMININE a form of noun, pronoun or adjective that is used to refer to a living being, thing or idea that is not classed as masculine.

FUTURE a verb tense used to talk

about something that will happen or will be true.

GENDER whether a noun, pronoun or adjective is feminine or masculine.

IMPERATIVE the form of a verb used when giving orders and instructions, for example, *Shut the door!*; *Sit down!*; *Don't go!*

IMPERFECT one of the verb tenses used to talk about the past, especially in descriptions, and to say what was happening or used to happen, for example, *I used to walk to school*; *It was sunny at the weekend*. Compare with **perfect**.

IMPERSONAL VERB one which does not refer to a real person or thing, and where the subject is represented by *it*, for example, *It's going to rain*; *It's 10 o'clock*.

INDEFINITE ADJECTIVE one of a small group of adjectives used to talk about people or things in a general way, without saying who or what they are, for example, *several, all, every*.

INDEFINITE ARTICLE the words *a* and *an*. Compare with **definite article**.

INDEFINITE PRONOUN a small group of pronouns such as *everything, nobody* and *something*, which are used to refer to people or things in a general way, without saying exactly who or what they are.

INDIRECT OBJECT a noun used with verbs that take two objects. For example, in *I gave the carrot to the rabbit*, *the rabbit* is the indirect object and *carrot* is the direct object. Compare with **direct object**.

INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN when a verb has two objects (a direct one and an indirect one), the indirect object pronoun is used instead of a noun to show the person or the thing the action is intended to benefit or harm, for example, *me* in *He gave me a book* and *Can you get me a towel?* Compare with **direct object pronoun**.

INDIRECT QUESTION used to tell someone else about a question and introduced by a verb such as *ask*, *tell* or *wonder*, for example, *He asked me what the time was; I wonder who he is.*

INFINITIVE the form of the verb with *to* in front of it and without any endings added, for example, *to walk*, *to have*, *to be*, *to go*. Compare with **base form**.

INTERROGATIVE ADJECTIVE a question word used with a noun to ask *who?*, *what?* or *which?* for example, *What instruments do you play?*; *Which shoes do you like?*

INTERROGATIVE PRONOUN one of the words *who*, *whose*, *whom*, *what* and *which* when they are used instead of a noun to ask questions, for example, *What's happening?*; *Who's coming?*

INVARIABLE used to describe a form which does not change.

IRREGULAR VERB a verb whose forms do not follow a general pattern or the normal rules. Compare with **regular verb**.

MASCULINE a form of noun, pronoun or adjective that is used to refer to a living being, thing or idea that is not classed as feminine.

NEGATIVE a question or statement which contains a word such as *not*, *never* or *nothing*, and is used to say that something is not happening, is not true or is absent, for example, *I never eat meat; Don't you love me?*

NOUN a 'naming' word for a living being, thing or idea, for example, *woman*, *desk*, *happiness*, *Andrew*.

NUMBER used to say how many things you are referring to or where something comes in a sequence. See also **ordinal number** and **cardinal number**.

OBJECT a noun or pronoun which refers to a person or thing that is affected by the action described by the verb. Compare with **direct object**,

indirect object and **subject**.

OBJECT PRONOUN one of the set of pronouns including *me*, *him* and *them*, which are used instead of the noun as the object of a verb or preposition. Compare with **subject pronoun**.

ORDINAL NUMBER a number used to indicate where something comes in an order or sequence, for example, *first*, *fifth*, *sixteenth*. Compare with **cardinal number**.

PART OF SPEECH a word class, for example, *noun*, *verb*, *adjective*, *preposition*, *pronoun*.

PARTITIVE ARTICLE the words *some* or *any*, used to refer to part of a thing but not all of it, for example, *Have you got any money?*; *I'm going to buy some bread.*

PASSIVE a form of the verb that is used when the subject of the verb is the person or thing that is affected by the action, for example, *we were told*.

PAST PARTICIPLE a verb form which is used to form perfect and pluperfect tenses and passives, for example, *watched*, *swum*. Some past participles are also used as adjectives, for example, *a broken watch*.

PERFECT one of the verb tenses used to talk about the past, especially about actions that took place and were completed in the past. Compare with **imperfect**.

PERSON one of the three classes: the first person (*I*, *we*), the second person (*you* singular and *you* plural), and the third person (*he*, *she*, *it* and *they*).

PERSONAL PRONOUN one of the group of words including *I*, *you* and *they* which are used to refer to yourself, the people you are talking to, or the people or things you are talking about.

PLUPERFECT one of the verb tenses used to describe something that *had* happened or had been true at a point in the past, for example, *I had forgotten to finish my homework*.

PLURAL the form of a word which is used to refer to more than one person or thing. Compare with **singular**.

POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVE one of the words *my, your, his, her, its, our* or *their*, used with a noun to show that one person or thing belongs to another.

POSSESSIVE PRONOUN one of the words *mine, yours, hers, his, ours* or *theirs*, used instead of a noun to show that one person or thing belongs to another.

PREPOSITION is a word such as *at, for, with, into* or *from*, which is usually followed by a noun, pronoun or, in English, a word ending in *-ing*. Prepositions show how people and things relate to the rest of the sentence, for example, *She's at home; a tool for cutting grass; It's from David.*

PRESENT a verb form used to talk about what is true at the moment, what happens regularly, and what is happening now, for example, *I'm a student; I travel to college by train; I'm studying languages.*

PRESENT PARTICIPLE a verb form ending in *-ing* which is used in English to form verb tenses, and which may be used as an adjective or a noun, for example, *What are you doing?; the setting sun; Swimming is easy!*

PRONOUN a word which you use instead of a noun, when you do not need or want to name someone or something directly, for example, *it, you, none.*

PROPER NOUN the name of a person, place, organization or thing. Proper nouns are always written with a capital letter, for example, *Kevin, Glasgow, Europe, London Eye.*

QUESTION WORD a word such as *why, where, who, which* or *how* which is used to ask a question.

REFLEXIVE PRONOUN a word ending in *-self* or *-selves*, such as *myself* or

themselves, which refers back to the subject, for example, *He hurt himself.; Take care of yourself.*

REFLEXIVE VERB a verb where the subject and object are the same, and where the action 'reflects back' on the subject. A reflexive verb is used with a reflexive pronoun such as *myself, yourself, herself*, for example, *I washed myself.; He hurt himself.*

REGULAR VERB a verb whose forms follow a general pattern or the normal rules. Compare with **irregular verb**.

RELATIVE PRONOUN a word such as *that, who* or *which*, when it is used to link two parts of a sentence together.

SENTENCE a group of words which usually has a verb and a subject. In writing, a sentence has a capital letter at the beginning and a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark at the end.

SINGULAR the form of a word which is used to refer to one person or thing. Compare with **plural**.

STEM the main part of a verb to which endings are added.

STRESSED PRONOUN a word used instead of a noun when you want to emphasize something, for example, *Is this for me?; 'Who broke the window?' – 'He did.'* Also called **emphatic pronoun**.

SUBJECT the noun in a sentence or phrase that refers to the person or thing that does the action described by the verb or is in the state described by the verb, for example, *My cat doesn't drink milk.* Compare with **object**.

SUBJECT PRONOUN a word such as *I, he, she* and *they* which carries out the action described by the verb. Pronouns stand in for nouns when it is clear who is being talked about, for example, *My brother isn't here at the moment. He'll be back in an hour.* Compare with **object pronoun**.

SUBJUNCTIVE a verb form used in certain circumstances to express some sort of feeling, or to show doubt about whether something will happen or whether something is true. It is only used occasionally in modern English, for example, *If I were you, I wouldn't bother.*; *So be it.*

SUPERLATIVE an adjective or adverb with *-est* on the end of it or *most* or *least* in front of it, that is used to compare people, things or actions, for example, *thinnest, most quickly, least interesting.*

SYLLABLE a consonant+vowel unit that makes up all or part of a word, for example, *ca-the-dral* (3 syllables), *im-po-ssi-ble* (4 syllables).

TENSE the form of a verb which shows whether you are referring to the past, present or future.

VERB a 'doing' word which describes what someone or something does, what someone or something is, or what happens to them, for example, *be, sing, live.*

VOWEL one of the letters *a, e, i, o* or *u*. Compare with **consonant**.

2 NOUNS

- ▶ When the same word is used to refer to either men/boys or women/girls, its gender usually changes depending on the sex of the person it refers to.

un camarade a (male) friend

une camarade a (female) friend

un Belge a Belgian (man)

une Belge a Belgian (woman)

Grammar Extra!

Some words for people have only one possible gender, whether they refer to a male or a female.

un bébé a (male or female) baby

un guide a (male or female) guide

une personne a (male or female) person

une vedette a (male or female) star

-
- ▶ In English, we can sometimes make a word masculine or feminine by changing the ending, for example, *Englishman* and *Englishwoman*, or *prince* and *princess*. In French, very often the ending of a noun changes depending on whether it refers to a man or a woman.

un Anglais an Englishman

une Anglaise an Englishwoman

un prince a prince

une princesse a princess

un employé a (male) employee

une employée a (female) employee

⇒ For more information on **Masculine and feminine forms of words**, see page 7.

Nouns referring to animals

- ▶ In English we can choose between words like *bull* or *cow*, depending on the sex of the animal we are referring to. In French too there are sometimes separate words for male and female animals.

un taureau a bull

une vache a cow

- ▶ Sometimes, the same word with different endings is used for male and female animals.

un chien a (male) dog

une chienne a (female) dog, a bitch

Tip

When you do not know or care what sex the animal is, you can usually use the masculine form as a general word.

- ▶ Words for other animals do not change according to the sex of the animal. Just learn the French word with its gender, which is always the same.

un poisson a fish

une souris a mouse

Nouns referring to things

- ▶ In English, we call all things – for example, *table*, *car*, *book*, *apple* – ‘it’. In French, however, things are either masculine or feminine. As things do not divide into sexes the way humans and animals do, there are no physical clues to help you with their gender in French. Try to learn the gender as you learn the word.

- There are lots of rules to help you:
 - words ending in **-e** are generally feminine
une boulangerie a baker's **une banque** a bank
 - words ending in a consonant (any letter except *a, e, i, o* or *u*) are generally masculine
un aéroport an airport **un film** a film
- There are some exceptions to these rules, so it is best to check in a dictionary if you are unsure.
- These endings are often found on masculine nouns.

Masculine ending	Examples
-age	un village a village but: un voyage a journey une image a picture un étage a floor une page a page le fromage cheese la plage the beach
-ment	un appartement a flat un bâtiment a building le ciment cement un vêtement a garment
-oir	un miroir a mirror un couloir a corridor le soir the evening un mouchoir a handkerchief
-sme	le tourisme tourism le racisme racism
-eau	un cadeau a present but: un chapeau a hat la peau skin un gâteau a cake l'eau water le rideau the curtain
-eu	un jeu a game
-ou	un chou a cabbage le genou the knee
-ier	le cahier the exercise book un quartier an area un escalier a staircase
-in	un magasin a shop but: un jardin a garden la fin the end un dessin a drawing une main a hand le vin the wine
-on	un champignon a mushroom but: un ballon a ball une maison a house le citron the lemon la saison the season

4 NOUNS

► The following types of word are also masculine:

- names of the days of the week, and the months and seasons of the year
le lundi Monday
septembre prochain next September
le printemps Spring
- the names of languages
le français French
le portugais Portuguese
Tu apprends le français depuis combien de temps? How long have you been learning French?
- most metric weights and measures
un gramme a gramme
un mètre a metre
un kilomètre a kilometre
- English nouns used in French
le football football
un tee-shirt a tee-shirt
un sandwich a sandwich

► These endings are often found on feminine nouns.

Feminine ending	Examples
-ance -anse -ence -ense	la chance luck, chance une danse a dance la patience patience la défense defence but: le silence silence
-ion	une région a region une addition a bill une réunion a meeting la circulation traffic but: un avion a plane
-té -tié	une spécialité a speciality la moitié half but: un été a summer le pâté pâté

Grammar Extra!

A few words have different meanings depending on whether they are masculine or feminine. These are the most common:

Masculine	Meaning	Example	Feminine	Meaning	Example
un livre	a book	un livre de poche a paperback	une livre	a pound	une livre sterling a pound sterling
un mode	a method	le mode d'emploi the directions for use	la mode	fashion	à la mode in fashion
un poste	a set (TV/radio); a post (job); an extension (phone)	un poste de professeur a teaching job	la poste	post the post office	mettre quelque chose à la poste to post something
un tour	a turn; a walk	faire un tour to go for a walk	une tour	tower	la tour Eiffel the Eiffel Tower

KEY POINTS

- ✓ Most nouns referring to men, boys and male animals are masculine; most nouns referring to women, girls and female animals are feminine. The ending of a French noun often changes depending on whether it refers to a male or a female.
- ✓ Generally, words ending in **-e** are feminine and words ending in a consonant are masculine, though there are many exceptions to this rule.
- ✓ These endings are often found on masculine nouns:
-age, -ment, -oir, -sme, -eau, -eu, -ou, -ier, -in and **-on**.
- ✓ These endings are often found on feminine nouns:
-ance, -anse, -ence, -ense, -ion, -té and **-tié**.
- ✓ Days of the week, months and seasons of the year are masculine. So are languages, most metric weights and measures, and English nouns used in French.

Masculine and feminine forms of words

- In French there are sometimes very different words for men and women, and for male and female animals, just as in English.

un homme	a man
une femme	a woman
un taureau	a bull
une vache	a cow
un neveu	a nephew
une nièce	a niece

- Many masculine French nouns can be made feminine simply by changing the ending. This is usually done by adding an **-e** to the masculine noun to form the feminine.

un ami	a (male) friend
une amie	a (female) friend
un employé	a (male) employee
une employée	a (female) employee
un Français	a Frenchman
une Française	a Frenchwoman

- If the masculine singular form already ends in **-e**, no further **e** is added.

un élève	a (male) pupil
une élève	a (female) pupil
un camarade	a (male) friend
une camarade	a (female) friend
un collègue	a (male) colleague
une collègue	a (female) colleague

Tip

If a masculine noun ends in a vowel, its pronunciation does not change when an **-e** is added to form the feminine. For example, **ami** and **amie** (meaning *friend*) are both pronounced the same.

If a masculine noun ends with a consonant that is not pronounced, for example, **-d**, **-s**, **-r** or **-t**, you DO pronounce that consonant when an **-e** is added in the feminine. For example, in **étudiant** (meaning *student*), you cannot hear the **t**; in **étudiante**, you can hear the **t**.

Tip

Some masculine nouns, such as **voisin** (meaning *neighbour*), end in what is called a nasal vowel and an **-n**. With these words, you pronounce the vowel 'through your nose' but DO NOT say the **n**. When an **-e** is added in the feminine – for example, **voisine** – the vowel becomes a normal one instead of a nasal vowel and you DO pronounce the **n**.

Some other patterns

- Some changes to endings from masculine to feminine are a little more complicated but still fall into a regular pattern.

Masculine ending	Feminine ending	Example	Meaning
-f	-ve	<u>un veuf/une veuve</u>	a widower/a widow
-x	-se	<u>un époux/une épouse</u>	a husband/a wife
-eur	-euse	<u>un danseur/une danseuse</u>	a (male) dancer/ a (female) dancer
-teur	-teuse -trice	<u>un chanteur/une chanteuse</u> <u>un acteur/une actrice</u>	a (male) singer/ a (female) singer an actor/an actress
-an	-anne	<u>un paysan/une paysanne</u>	a (male) farmer/ a (female) farmer
-ien	-ienne	<u>un Parisien/une Parisienne</u>	a (male) Parisian/ a (female) Parisian
-on	-onne	<u>un lion/une lionne</u>	a lion/a lioness
-er	-ère	<u>un étranger/une étrangère</u>	a (male) foreigner/ a (female) foreigner
-et	-ette	<u>le cadet/la cadette</u>	the youngest (male) child the youngest (female) child
-el	-elle	<u>un professionnel/une professionnelle</u>	a (male) professional/ a (female) professional

KEY POINTS

- ✓ Many masculine French nouns can be made to refer to females by adding an **-e**. If the masculine singular form already ends in **-e**, no further **e** is added.
- ✓ The pronunciation of feminine nouns is sometimes different from that of the corresponding masculine nouns.
- ✓ Other patterns include:

-f → -ve	-teur → -teuse or -trice	-er → -ère
-x → -se	-an, -ien and -on → -anne,	-et → -ette
-eur → -euse	-ienne and -onne	-el → -elle

Test yourself

4 Complete the phrase with the correct article.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| a ami, Paul | f Parisienne, Madame Durand |
| b amie, Justine | g employé, Luc Zola |
| c employée, Madame Camus | h Parisien, Fabien Renoir |
| d Français, Michel Leduc | i collègue, Emma Buchy |
| e Française, Alice Sorel | j camarade, Pierre |

5 Match each noun to its translation.

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| a une veuve | a lioness |
| b un veuf | a foreign man |
| c une lionne | a female singer |
| d une chanteuse | a widow |
| e un étranger | a widower |

6 Replace the highlighted masculine nouns with the feminine form.

- a** Ils vendent leur maison à **un Anglais**.
- b** Marie va à la piscine avec **un camarade**.
- c** Le chef parle avec **un employé**.
- d** C'est le palais d'**un roi**.
- e** Tu as vraiment l'air d'**un prince**!
- f** Elle vit avec **un Belge**.
- g** Nous avons **un chien** et deux chats.
- h** C'est la voiture d'**un Français**.
- i** C'est un joujou pour **un garçon**.
- j** Il y a **un homme** qui pleure.

7 Translate the phrase with an article and a noun.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a a schoolboy | f a female singer |
| b a schoolgirl | g an Englishwoman |
| c a female colleague | h the woman next door |
| d the youngest boy | i the man next door |
| e the youngest girl | j a Belgian woman |

Forming plurals

Plurals ending in -s

- In English we usually make nouns plural by adding an -s to the end (*garden* → *gardens*; *house* → *houses*), although we do have some nouns which are irregular and do not follow this pattern (*mouse* → *mice*; *child* → *children*).

Tip

Remember that **les** is the plural form of **le**, **la** and **l'**. Any adjective that goes with a plural noun has to agree with it, as does any pronoun that replaces it.

⇒ For more information on **Adjectives, Articles and Pronouns**, see pages 32, 14 and 55.

- Most French nouns also form their plural by adding an -s to their singular form.

un jardin	a garden
des jardins	gardens
une voiture	a car
des voitures	cars
un hôtel	a hotel
des hôtels	hotels

- If the singular noun ends in -s, -x or -z, no further -s is added in the plural.

un fils	a son
des fils	sons
une voix	a voice
des voix	voices
un nez	a nose
des nez	noses

Plurals ending in -x

- The following nouns add an -x instead of an -s in the plural:

- nouns ending in -eau

un chapeau	a hat
des chapeaux	hats

- most nouns ending in -eu

un jeu	a game
des jeux	games

- a FEW nouns ending in -ou (MOST nouns ending in -ou add -s as usual)

un bijou	a jewel
des bijoux	jewels
un caillou	a pebble
des cailloux	pebbles
un chou	a cabbage
des choux	cabbages
un genou	a knee
des genoux	knees

un hibou	an owl
des hiboux	owls
un joujou	a toy
des joujoux	toys
un pou	a louse
des poux	lice

Tip

Adding an **-s** or **-x** to the end of a noun does not usually change the way the word is pronounced. For example, **professeur** and **professeurs** and **chapeau** and **chapeaux** sound just the same when you say them out loud.

- If the singular noun ends in **-al** or **-ail**, the plural usually ends in **-aux**.

un journal	a newspaper
des journaux	newspapers
un animal	an animal
des animaux	animals
un travail	a job
des travaux	jobs

Tip

The plural of **un œil** (an eye) is **des yeux** (eyes).

Plural versus singular

- A few words relating to clothing are plural in English but **NOT** in French.

un slip	pants
un short	shorts
un pantalon	trousers

- A few common words are plural in French but **NOT** in English.

les affaires	business
les cheveux	hair
des renseignements	information

Grammar Extra!

When nouns are made up of two separate words, they are called compound nouns, for example, **les grands-parents** (meaning *grandparents*), **des ouvre-boîtes** (meaning *tin-openers*). The rules for forming the plural of compound nouns are complicated and it is best to check in a dictionary to see what the plural is.

KEY POINTS

- ✓ Most French nouns form their plural by adding an **-s** to their singular form. If the singular noun ends in **-s**, **-x** or **-z**, no further **-s** is added in the plural.
- ✓ Most nouns ending in **-eau** or **-eu** add an **-x** in the plural.
- ✓ Most nouns ending in **-ou** take an **-s** in the plural, with a few exceptions.
- ✓ If the singular noun ends in **-al** or **-ail**, the plural usually ends in **-aux**.
- ✓ Adding an **-s** or **-x** to the end of a noun does not generally affect the way the word is pronounced.
- ✓ A few common words are plural in English but not in French, and vice versa.

Test yourself

8 Translate the noun, leaving the number as a figure.

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| a 1 car | f 3 pebbles..... |
| b 3 sons..... | g 1 cabbage..... |
| c 2 voices | h 2 owls |
| d 2 hotels | i 3 newspapers..... |
| e 10 games..... | j 1000 jobs..... |

9 Write the plural form of the noun after the number.

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| a 2 (jardin) | f 2 (fils) |
| b 2 (ami) | g 3 (chapeau) |
| c 2 (femme) | h 2 (jeu) |
| d 3 (animal) | i 2 (chou) |
| e 2 (bijou) | j 2 (genou) |

10 Write 1 in the gap if the noun is singular, and 2 if it is plural.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| a homme | f joujoux |
| b femmes | g chapeaux |
| c camarades | h voisin |
| d amies | i pantalon |
| e hibou | j slip |

11 Translate the following phrases into French.

- a** the hair and the skin
- b** business and tourism
- c** shorts and a tee-shirt
- d** trousers and a hat
- e** a job and a flat.....
- f** games and toys.....
- g** 8 mushrooms and 2 cabbages
- h** 2 sons and 1 nephew
- i** 1 spring and 2 summers
- j** a meeting and information

Nouns

- 1 **a** princesse
b Anglaise
c employée
d reine
e vache
f chienne
g une Belge
h une camarade
i une serveuse
j une joueuse
- 2 **a** un champignon, un chou, un citron
b un appartement, une maison, un jardin
c un tee-shirt, un chapeau, un mouchoir
d la main, le genou, la peau
e la patience, le silence, la chance
f une page, une image, un dessin
g un couteau, une fourchette, une cuillère
h un chat, un chien, une perruche
i une brosse à dents, une serviette, un shampoing
j une boulangerie, un café, un supermarché
- 3 **a** **le lundi** = a day of the week: masculine noun
b **le français** = a language: masculine noun
c **un sandwich** = an English noun used in French: masculine noun
d **un gramme** = a metric weight: masculine noun
e **le printemps** = a season: masculine noun
- 4 **a** un
b une
c une
d un
e une
f une
g un
h un
i une
j un
- 5 **a** une veuve = **a widow**
b un veuf = **a widower**
c une lionne = **a lioness**
d une chanteuse = **a female singer**
e un étranger = **a foreign man**
- 6 **a** une Anglaise
b une camarade
c une employée
d une reine
e une princesse
f une Belge
g une chienne
h une Française
i une fille
j une femme
- 7 **a** un élève
b une élève
c une collègue
d le cadet
e la cadette
f une chanteuse
g une Anglaise
h la voisine
i le voisin
j une Belge
- 8 **a** 1 voiture
b 3 fils
c 2 voix
d 2 hôtels
- e** 10 jeux
f 3 cailloux
g 1 chou
h 2 hiboux
i 3 journaux
j 1000 travaux
- 9 **a** jardins
b amis
c femmes
d animaux
e bijoux
f fils
g chapeaux
h jeux
i choux
j genoux
- 10 **a** 1
b 2
c 2
d 2
e 1
f 2
g 2
h 1
i 1
j 1
- 11 **a** les cheveux et la peau
b les affaires et le tourisme
c un short et un tee-shirt
d un pantalon et un chapeau
e un travail et un appartement
f des jeux et des joujoux
g 8 champignons et 2 choux
h 2 fils et 1 neveu
i 1 printemps et 2 étés
j une réunion et des renseignements