Unit 7B Study Guide

**Adverbs**

[Adverbs](http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/adverbs.htm) are words that describe *how* something is done. They can modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.

In English, adverbs often end in *-ly*: “comfortably,” “unfortunately,” “obviously,” etc. Likewise, many French adverbs end in:

*ment*: *confortablement*(comfortably), *malheureusement*(unfortunately), *évidemment* (obviously).

So what's the one thing that English *-ly* adverbs and French -*ment* adverbs have in common? You guessed it—they all come from adjectives! Just take away the -*ly* and the -*ment* to get “unfortunate” (*malheureuse*), “easy” (*facile*), and “obvious” (*évident*).

However, this formula is a bit more complicated in French than in English. *Facilement* and *confortablement* can be neatly broken down into their separate components: the adjectives *facile* and *confortable* plus the ending -*ment*. But why do we have *malheureusement* and not "*malheureuxment*"? (*Malheureux* is the masculine form of *malheureuse*.) And why *évidemment* instead of "*évidentment*"?

The answer: French has a small set of rules for determining how to turn an adjective into an adverb. Once you learn them, you'll be able to spot the adverbs in any sentence effortlessly.

**How to form adverrbs in French:**

First take the **masculine** form of the adjective:

1. If the adjective ends in a **vowel**, simply add -***ment***.

We just saw some examples of this with *facile* + *ment* = *facilement* and *confortable* + *ment*= *confortablement*. Other common examples include:

*vrai*            → *vraiment* (true → truly)

*probable*  → *probablement* (probable → probably)

*spontané* → *spontanément* (spontaneous → spontaneously)

*absolu*      → *absolument* (absolute → absolutely)

2. If the adjective ends in a **consonant**, add -***ment*** to the **feminine** form of the adjective.

This is the case of *malheureux*/*malheureusement*. You’ll also see this rule at work in words such as:

*religieux* → *religieu****se****ment* (religious → religiously)

*direct*     → *direct****e****ment* (direct → directly)

*réel*        → *réel****le****ment* (real → really)

*léger*      → *lég****ère****ment* (light → lightly)

*massif*    → *massi****ve****ment* (massive → massively)

3. If the adjective ends in -***ant*** or -***ent***, replace the ending with -***amment*** or -***emment***, respectively.

So even though *évident* ends in a consonant, its adverbial form is not "*évident****e****ment*," but *évid****emment***. Likewise, you have:

*constant*   → *const****amment***(constant → constantly)

*récent*       → *réc****emment*** (recent → recently)

*apparent*  → *appar****emment***(apparent → apparently)

*brillant*      → *brill****amment*** (brilliant → brilliantly)

Although there are a few exceptions here and there, these are the basic rules for creating adverbs from adjectives in French. You can find a thorough list of these exceptions in this about.com article on the subject: <http://french.about.com/library/weekly/aa060300m.htm>

The one simple guideline underlying all three of these rules (which has no exceptions!) is that the adverbial ending -*ment* (or -*mment*) is **always** preceded by a vowel. So if you keep at least that in mind when constructing your adverbs, you should succeed *brillamment*!

**List of adverbs used in the textbook:**

actif ---activement

franc – franchement

heureux—heureusement

nerveux –nerveusement

dernier – dernièrement

sérieux – sérieusement

paresseux – paresseusement

premier – premièrement

lent – lentement

absolu – abolsument

vrai-vraiment

poli – poliment

facile facilement

difficile – difficilement

agréable – agréablement

modeste – modestement

égoïste – égoïstement

constant – constamment

courant – couramment

diiférent – différemment

evident – évidemment

patient – patiemment

independent –indépendamment

recent – récemment

frequent – fréquemment

intelligent – intelligemment

brilliant – brillament

méchant – méchamment

**Irregular adverbs:**

bon – bien

gentil – gentimment

mauvais – mal

petit – peu

vite – vite

Adverbs of frequency:

Jamais =

Souvent =

Rarement =

De temps en temps =

Encore =

Déjà =

The **placement of French adverbs** depends to some extent upon the type of adverb and the word that it is modifying.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **Short adverbs** that modify a verb usually **follow the conjugated verb**. (Remember that in [compound tenses](http://french.about.com/od/grammar/a/compound-tenses-and-moods.htm), the auxiliary verb is the conjugated verb, so the adverb follows that.)   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Nous mangeons bien. Nous avons bien mangé. Nous allons bien manger. | We eat well. We ate well.  We will eat well. |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Il fait souvent la cuisine. Il a souvent fait la cuisine. Il doit souvent faire la cuisine. | He often cooks. He often cooked.  He often has to cook. |   **Adverbs of frequency** are usually placed **after the verb**.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Exception:** parfois is normally placed at the beginning of the sentence. | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Je fais toujours mes devoirs. | I always do my homework. |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Parfois, Luc ne fait pas ses devoirs. | Sometimes Luc doesn't do his homework. |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Adverbs of time** which refer to **specific days**can be placed at the **beginning or end**of the sentence. | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Aujourd'hui, je vais acheter une voiture. | Today, I'm going to buy a car. |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Elles arriveront demain. | They'll arrive tomorrow. |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Long adverbs** are usually placed at the **beginning or end** of the sentence.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Généralement, nous mangeons avant 17h00. | Normally, we eat before 5pm. | | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Je ne l'ai pas trouvé, malheureusement. | I didn't find it, unfortunately. |   **However**, if the long adverb specifically modifies the verb, it is placed **after**the conjugated verb.   |  | | --- | | Il a immédiatement quitté Paris. = He left Paris immediately. | |  | |

**L’impératif (Command form)**

The imperative, called l'impératif in French, is a verb mood which is used to:

give an order

express a desire

make a request

offer advice

recommend something

Unlike all other French verb tenses and personal moods, the subject pronoun is not used with the imperative:

Fermez la porte. = Close the door.

Mangeons maintenant. = Let's eat now.

The above are called "affirmative commands," because they are telling someone to do something. "Negative commands," which tell someone not to do something, are made by placing ne in front of the verb and the appropriate negative adverb after the verb:

Ne parle pas != Don't speak!

N'oublions pas les livres. = Let's not forget the books.

N'ayez jamais peur. = Never be afraid.

French imperative conjugations are relatively simple. There are only three grammatical persons that can be used in the imperative: tu, nous, and vous, and most of the conjugations are the same as the present tense - the only difference is that the subject pronoun is not used in the imperative.

-ER verbs (regular, stem-changing, spelling change, and irregular)

The imperative conjugations for nous and vous are the same as the present indicative, and the tu form of the imperative is the indicative minus the final s (but see item 4 on this page):

Parler: (tu) parle (nous) parlons (vous) parlez

Lever (tu) lève (nous) levon (vous) levez

aller (tu) va (nous) allon (vous) allez

Verbs which are conjugated like -ER verbs (meaning that in the indicative the tu form ends in -es), such as ouvrir and souffrir, follow the same rules as -ER verbs.

ouvrir (tu) ouvre (nous) ouvron (vous) ouvrez

-IR verbs and -RE verbs

The imperative conjugations for all regular and most\* irregular -IR and -RE verbs are the same as the present indicative conjugations.

finir (tu) finis (nous) finissons (vous) finissez

attendre (tu) attends (nous) attendons (vous) attendez

faire (tu) fais (nous) faisons (vous) faites

\*Except for verbs conjugated like -ER verbs and the following four irregular imperative verbs:

avoir (tu) aie (nous) ayons (vous) ayez

être (tu) sois (nous) soyons (vous) soyez

The order of words in a French sentence can be very confusing due to affirmative and negative imperative constructions and object and adverbial pronouns. This lesson will teach you exactly how to order your sentences when using the imperative. Remember that there are two kinds of imperatives, affirmative and negative, and the word order is different for each of them.

Negative imperatives are easier, because their word order is the same as that of all other simple verb conjugations: any object, reflexive, and/or adverbial pronouns precede the verb and the negative structure surrounds the pronoun(s) + verb:

Finis! - Finish!

Ne finis pas ! - Don't finish!

Ne le finis pas ! - Don't finish it!

Lisez ! - Read!

Ne lisez pas ! - Don't read!

Ne le lisez pas ! - Don't read it!

Ne me le lisez pas ! - Don't read it to me!

Affirmative commands are more complicated, for several reasons.

1. The word order is for affirmative commands is different from that of all other verb tenses/moods: any pronouns follow the verb and are connected to it and to each other with hyphens.

Finis-le ! - Finish it!

Allons-y ! - Let's go!

Mangez-les ! - Eat them!

Donne-lui-en ! - Give him some!

2. The order of the pronouns in affirmative commands is slightly different from all other verb tenses/moods (see table at the bottom of the page):

Envoie-le-nous ! - Send it to us!

Expliquons-la-leur ! - Let's explain it to them!

Donnez-nous-en ! - Give us some!

Donne-le-moi ! - Give it to me!

3. The pronouns me and te change to the stressed pronouns moi and toi...

Lève-toi ! - Get up!

Parlez-moi ! - Talk to me!

Dis-moi ! - Tell me!

New verbs:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| écrire | To write |
| J’écris | Nous écrivons |
| Tu écris | Vous écrivez |
| Il/Elle écrit | Ils/Elles écrivent |

Passé compose: avoir + écrit

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| dire | To say, to tell |
| Je dis | Nous disons |
| Tu dis | Vous dites |
| Il/Elle dit | Ils/Elles disent |

Passé compose: avoir + dit

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| lire | To read |
| Je lis | Nous lisons |
| Tu lis | Vous lisez |
| Il/Elle lit | Ils/Elles lisent |

Passé compose: avoir + lu

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