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FRENCH LESSON

# Basic Conversation 1 • Chapter 2 • Introducing Yourself

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# French Basic Conversation 1

Chapter 2 · Introducing Yourself



## Introducing Yourself — Se présenter

Say who you are, ask someone's name, say "nice to meet you", introduce a friend or colleague, and spell a name out loud. You'll also meet the two most important French verbs, être ("to be") and s'appeler ("to be called"), and the little words for I, you, he, she and we.



## Six Short Conversations — Conversations

Read each one aloud, using the pronunciation line. Remember: a spoken French sentence flows together, so don't pause between words, and let the last syllable of each word be the gentle emphasis (the capitals).

### ① A Formal Introduction — Je m'appelle ...

**A:**

Bonjour, je m'appelle Sophie  
Lambert.

bō-ZHOOR, zhuh mah-PEL soh-FEE lā-BAIR  
Hello, my name is Sophie Lambert.

**B:**

Bonjour, Madame. Je m'appelle  
Paul Moreau. Enchanté.

bō-ZHOOR, mah-DAHM. zhuh mah-PEL pohl  
moh-ROH. ā-shā-TAY

Hello, madam. My name is Paul Moreau.  
Pleased to meet you.

**A:**

Enchantée, Monsieur Moreau.

ā-shā-TAY, muh-SYUH moh-ROH  
Pleased to meet you, Mr Moreau.

**B:**

Appelez-moi Paul, s'il vous plaît.

### ② Among Friends — Tu t'appelles comment ?

**A:**

Salut ! Tu t'appelles comment ?

sah-LÜ! tü tah-PEL ko-MÃ  
Hi! What's your name?

**B:**

Moi, c'est Camille. Et toi ?

mwah, say kah-MEE. ay TWAH  
I'm Camille. And you?

**A:**

Moi, c'est Julien. Enchanté !

mwah, say zhü-LYË. ā-shā-TAY  
I'm Julien. Nice to meet you!

**B:**

Enchantée !

ā-shā-TAY  
Nice to meet you!

*ah-play-MWAH pohl, seel voo PLAY*

Please call me Paul.

### ③ Asking a Stranger — Comment vous appelez-vous ?

**A:**

Excusez-moi, Monsieur. Comment vous appelez-vous ?

*ek-skü-zay-MWAH, muh-SYUH. ko-mã voo-zah-play-VOO*

Excuse me, sir. What is your name?

**B:**

Je m'appelle Thomas Girard. Et vous ?

*zhuh mah-PEL toh-MAH zhee-RAHR. ay VOO*  
My name is Thomas Girard. And you?

**A:**

Nathalie Roux. Enchantée.

*nah-tah-LEE ROO. ã-shã-TAY*

Nathalie Roux. Pleased to meet you.

### ④ Introducing a Friend — Voici mon ami

**A:**

Camille, voici mon ami, Julien.

*kah-MEE, vwah-SEE mō-nah-MEE, zhü-LYË*

Camille, this is my friend, Julien.

**B:**

Salut, Julien ! Moi, c'est Camille.

*sah-LÛ, zhü-LYË! mwah, say kah-MEE*

Hi, Julien! I'm Camille.

**C:**

Salut, Camille ! Enchanté.

*sah-LÛ, kah-MEE! ã-shã-TAY*

Hi, Camille! Nice to meet you.

### ⑤ First Name & Surname — Comment ça s'écrit ?

**A:**

Comment ça s'écrit, votre nom ?

*ko-mã sah say-KREE, VOH-truh NÕ*

How is your surname spelled?

**B:**

Dubois : D-U-B-O-I-S.

*dü-BWAH: day – ü – bay – oh – ee – ess*

Dubois: D-U-B-O-I-S.

**A:**

Merci. Et votre prénom ?

### ⑥ Introducing a Colleague (formal) — Je vous présente ...

**A:**

Madame Roux, je vous présente Monsieur Girard.

*mah-DAHM ROO, zhuh voo pray-ZÃT muh-SYUH zhee-RAHR*

Mrs Roux, let me introduce Mr Girard.

**B:**

Enchantée, Monsieur Girard.

Bienvenue !

*mair-SEE. ay VOH-truh pray-NÔ*

Thank you. And your first name?

**B:**

Léa : L-É-A.

*lay-AH: ell – ay – ah*

Léa: L-É-A.

*ã-shã-TAY, muh-SYUH zhee-RAHR. byê-vuh-NÛ*

Pleased to meet you, Mr Girard. Welcome!

**C:**

Enchanté, Madame Roux. Merci.

*ã-shã-TAY, mah-DAHM ROO. mair-SEE*

Pleased to meet you, Mrs Roux. Thank you.

## Key Phrases at a Glance — Phrases clés

| SITUATION          | FORMAL                           | INFORMAL                                          |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| My name is...      | Je m'appelle ... / Je suis ...   | Je m'appelle ... / Moi, c'est ...                 |
| What's your name?  | Comment vous appelez-vous ?      | Tu t'appelles comment ? / Comment tu t'appelles ? |
| Nice to meet you   | Enchanté(e)                      | Enchanté(e)                                       |
| This is...         | Je vous présente ... / Voici ... | Voici ... / C'est ...                             |
| How is it spelled? | Comment ça s'écrit ?             | Comment ça s'écrit ?                              |

| FRENCH              | PRONUNCIATION                     | ENGLISH                         |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Je m'appelle Anna.  | <i>zhuh mah-PEL ah-NAH</i>        | My name is Anna.                |
| Je suis Anna.       | <i>zhuh SWEE ah-NAH</i>           | I am Anna.                      |
| Moi, c'est Anna.    | <i>mwah, say ah-NAH</i>           | I'm Anna. (informal)            |
| Voici mon ami Paul. | <i>vwah-SEE mō-nah-MEE pohl</i>   | This is my friend Paul.         |
| Voici mon amie Léa. | <i>vwah-SEE mō-nah-MEE lay-AH</i> | This is my (female) friend Léa. |

### "Enchanté" or "Enchantée"?

The word for "pleased to meet you" is spelled differently depending on who is speaking: a man writes *enchanté*, a woman writes *enchantée*. They sound exactly the same ("ã-shã-TAY"), so you

only need to remember the spelling when you write. The same happens with *ami* / *amie* (male / female friend): the extra *e* is silent.

## abc The French Alphabet — L'alphabet

*You need the letter names to spell your name, an email address or a street. Practise saying your own name letter by letter.*

| LETTER | SAY IT      | LETTER | SAY IT      | LETTER | SAY IT     | LETTER | SAY IT              |
|--------|-------------|--------|-------------|--------|------------|--------|---------------------|
| A      | <i>ah</i>   | H      | <i>ahsh</i> | O      | <i>oh</i>  | V      | <i>vay</i>          |
| B      | <i>bay</i>  | I      | <i>ee</i>   | P      | <i>pay</i> | W      | <i>doo-bluh-VAY</i> |
| C      | <i>say</i>  | J      | <i>zhee</i> | Q      | <i>kü</i>  | X      | <i>eeks</i>         |
| D      | <i>day</i>  | K      | <i>kah</i>  | R      | <i>air</i> | Y      | <i>ee-GREK</i>      |
| E      | <i>uh</i>   | L      | <i>ell</i>  | S      | <i>ess</i> | Z      | <i>zed</i>          |
| F      | <i>eff</i>  | M      | <i>emm</i>  | T      | <i>tay</i> |        |                     |
| G      | <i>zhay</i> | N      | <i>enn</i>  | U      | <i>ü</i>   |        |                     |

| WHEN SPELLING, YOU MAY ALSO HEAR | SAY IT                                                              | MEANING                                        |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| é · è · ê                        | <i>ay a-ksã-tay-GÜ · ay a-ksã-GRAHV ·<br/>ay a-ksã sir-kõ-FLEKS</i> | e with an acute · grave ·<br>circumflex accent |
| ç                                | <i>say say-DEE-yuh</i>                                              | c with a cedilla                               |
| un tiret                         | <i>ẽ tee-RAY</i>                                                    | a hyphen (e.g. Jean-Pierre)                    |
| deux « m »                       | <i>duh EMM</i>                                                      | double m                                       |

## Two Little Words for "You" and "I" — Les pronoms sujets

Before the two key verbs, here are the words that say who is doing the action. You'll see them in every chapter.

| FRENCH         | SAY IT      | ENGLISH                                 | NOTE                                                                  |
|----------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| je (j')        | zhuh        | I                                       | not capitalised, except at the start of a sentence; j' before a vowel |
| tu             | tü          | you (one person, informal)              | friends, family, children                                             |
| il / elle      | eel /<br>el | he / she                                | also "it", for masculine / feminine things                            |
| on             | õ           | one, we, people                         | very common in speech for "we"                                        |
| nous           | noo         | we                                      | a little more formal than <i>on</i>                                   |
| vous           | voo         | you (formal, or more than one person)   | strangers, respect, groups                                            |
| ils /<br>elles | eel /<br>el | they (masculine or mixed /<br>feminine) | a mixed group is always <i>ils</i>                                    |

## 🔑 Two Verbs You Just Used — Deux verbes

Verbs change their form for each person. These two are irregular, so learn the shapes as they are. Être ("to be") is the most important verb in French. S'appeler ("to be called", literally "to call oneself") is a reflexive verb: the little word *me / te / se* goes in front of the verb.

| WHO               | ÊTRE (TO BE)          | SAY IT               | S'APPELER (TO BE CALLED) | SAY IT       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| je                | je suis               | zhuh SWEE            | je m'appelle             | zhuh mah-PEL |
| tu                | tu es                 | tü AY                | tu t'appelles            | tü tah-PEL   |
| il / elle /<br>on | il / elle / on<br>est | eel / el / õ-<br>NAY | il / elle / on s'appelle | eel sah-PEL  |

| WHO         | ÊTRE (TO BE)     | SAY IT         | S'APPELER (TO BE CALLED) | SAY IT                      |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| nous        | nous sommes      | <i>noo SOM</i> | nous nous appelons       | <i>noo noo-zah-play-LŌ</i>  |
| vous        | vous êtes        | <i>voo-ZET</i> | vous vous appelez        | <i>voo voo-zah-play-LAY</i> |
| ils / elles | ils / elles sont | <i>eel SŌ</i>  | ils / elles s'appellent  | <i>eel sah-PEL</i>          |

### "Je m'appelle", "Je suis" or "Moi, c'est"?

All three are natural. *Je m'appelle Anna* is the standard way to give your name (literally "I call myself Anna"). *Je suis Anna* ("I am Anna") is equally correct and a little shorter. *Moi, c'est Anna* ("As for me, it's Anna") is a relaxed, informal way, perfect among friends. Notice the doubled **ll** in *je m'appelle*, *tu t'appelles*, *il s'appelle*, and the single **l** in *nous appelons*, *vous appelez*: it's a spelling quirk of this verb.

### Joining Words Together — Elision and Liaison

French likes words to flow into each other, and that explains two things you've already seen.

**Elision:** a short word ending in *e* (or *a*) drops it before a vowel sound and joins on with an apostrophe: *je + appelle* → *j'appelle* (and *me + appelle* → *m'appelle*), *ce + est* → *c'est*, *le + ami* → *l'ami*. **Liaison:** a silent final consonant is sometimes pronounced when the next word starts with a vowel: *mon ami* is "mō-nah-MEE", *vous êtes* is "voo-ZET", *vous appelez* is "voo-zah-play-LAY". You'll notice both better with every chapter, so just follow the pronunciation lines for now.

## Vocabulary — Vocabulaire

20 key words and phrases from this chapter. Nouns are shown with their gender (m. masculine, f. feminine) and the little word before them, which you should learn together with the noun.

| # | FRENCH       | SAY IT              | ENGLISH      | TYPE   | NOTE                                                     |
|---|--------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | je m'appelle | <i>zhuh mah-PEL</i> | my name is   | phrase | from s'appeler                                           |
| 2 | s'appeler    | <i>sah-play-LAY</i> | to be called | verb   | reflexive; ll in <i>je</i> / <i>tu</i> / <i>il</i> forms |

| #  | FRENCH                        | SAY IT                           | ENGLISH                     | TYPE     | NOTE                                           |
|----|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|------------------------------------------------|
| 3  | être                          | <i>AY-truh</i>                   | to be                       | verb     | <i>je suis, tu es, il est</i>                  |
| 4  | présenter                     | <i>pray-zā-TAY</i>               | to introduce                | verb     | <i>je vous présente</i>                        |
| 5  | épeler                        | <i>ay-puh-LAY</i>                | to spell                    | verb     | <i>Pouvez-vous épeler ?</i>                    |
| 6  | enchanté /<br>enchantée       | <i>ā-shā-TAY</i>                 | pleased to meet<br>you      | adj      | <i>m. / f.; same sound</i>                     |
| 7  | comment                       | <i>ko-MÃ</i>                     | how                         | word     | <i>Comment ça s'écrit ?</i>                    |
| 8  | c'est                         | <i>say</i>                       | it is, this is              | phrase   | <i>ce + est; "Moi, c'est ..."</i>              |
| 9  | voici                         | <i>vwah-SEE</i>                  | here is, this is            | word     | <i>for pointing out a<br/>person or thing</i>  |
| 10 | moi                           | <i>mwah</i>                      | me, I (emphatic)            | word     | <i>"Moi, c'est Léa."</i>                       |
| 11 | toi                           | <i>twah</i>                      | you (emphatic,<br>informal) | word     | <i>"Et toi ?"</i>                              |
| 12 | aussi                         | <i>oh-SEE</i>                    | also, too                   | adv      | <i>"Moi aussi."</i>                            |
| 13 | le nom                        | <i>nõ</i>                        | name; surname               | noun, m. | <i>le nom de famille =<br/>surname</i>         |
| 14 | le prénom                     | <i>pray-NÕ</i>                   | first name                  | noun, m. | <i>"Votre prénom ?"</i>                        |
| 15 | un ami / une amie             | <i>ẽ-nah-MEE /<br/>ün-ah-MEE</i> | friend (m. / f.)            | noun     | <i>mon ami / mon amie</i>                      |
| 16 | un collègue / une<br>collègue | <i>ẽ ko-LEG / ün<br/>ko-LEG</i>  | colleague (m. / f.)         | noun     | <i>same word; only the<br/>article changes</i> |
| 17 | la lettre                     | <i>LET-truh</i>                  | letter (of the<br>alphabet) | noun, f. | <i>also means a letter<br/>you post</i>        |
| 18 | mon / ma                      | <i>mõ / mah</i>                  | my (m. / f.)                | word     | <i>mon ami, ma collègue</i>                    |
| 19 | bienvenue                     | <i>byẽ-vuh-NÜ</i>                | welcome                     | phrase   | <i>to greet a newcomer</i>                     |

| #  | FRENCH               | SAY IT                | ENGLISH              | TYPE   | NOTE                     |
|----|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------|--------------------------|
| 20 | Comment ça s'écrit ? | ko-mã sah<br>say-KREE | How is that spelled? | phrase | s'écrire = to be written |

### Real French Tip — Names, First Names and "Mon Copain"

In France you'll often be on first-name terms quickly at work, especially in younger or more casual companies, but *vous* and *Monsieur / Madame* stay the default until someone invites you to use first names and *tu*. Be careful with two words: *un ami* is simply a friend, but *mon copain / ma copine* and *mon petit ami / ma petite amie* often mean "my boyfriend / my girlfriend". If you mean a friend, *ami(e)* is the safe word.

### Quick Grammar Note — Why "Madame" and "Monsieur" Come First

When you address someone by title and surname, the order is simply *Madame Dubois, Monsieur Moreau*, as in English. On its own, *Madame / Monsieur* without a name is a polite way to speak to a stranger (*Excusez-moi, Madame*). Both are capitalised when you write them as a form of address.

## Try It Yourself — Exercices

Say each answer out loud first, then click to check.

1. You meet a business contact for the first time. Greet them, give your name, and say you're pleased to meet them.

▼ Show answer

Bonjour, Madame / Monsieur. Je m'appelle ... Enchanté(e). (A man writes *enchanté*, a woman *enchantée*.)

2. You meet a new friend at a party. Ask their name informally.

▼ Show answer

Tu t'appelles comment ? (or: Comment tu t'appelles ?) And you can add: Moi, c'est ...

3. Politely ask an older stranger for their name.

▼ Show answer

Excusez-moi, Monsieur / Madame. Comment vous appelez-vous ? (Use *vous*.)

4. Introduce your friend Julien to your colleague Madame Roux.

▼ Show answer

Madame Roux, voici mon ami, Julien. (Or formally: Je vous présente mon ami Julien.)

5. Spell the surname "Lambert" in French letter names.

▼ Show answer

L-A-M-B-E-R-T: ell – ah – emm – bay – uh – air – tay.

6. Say "I am Anna" in two different ways.

▼ Show answer

Je m'appelle Anna. / Je suis Anna. (Informally also: Moi, c'est Anna.)

### Coming Up in Chapter 3

You can now introduce yourself and others. Next up: **numbers, age and contact details:** counting, saying how old you are, and giving your phone number and email address.