

In this edition:
making a phone
call in French

Lesson 70

Notes

Allô, c'est Mark à l'appareil

Making a phone call in French

Programme Notes

Welcome to Coffee Break French, the podcast aimed at independent learners of French. Our regular podcasts will introduce you to the French language in easy steps.

In Lesson 70, the final lesson in Unit 7, we talk about something that many people find quite difficult in a foreign language: making phone calls. The difficulty could lie in the fact that when we are on the phone, we can't see the person we are talking to so we are relying purely on our listening skills to help us understand what is being said. As we have done in the past few lessons, we start by looking at some vocabulary and use it to build phrases with the language we already know.

le téléphone	telephone
le numéro de téléphone	telephone number
composer	to dial
composer le numéro	to dial the number
téléphoner	to phone
appeler	to call

Appeler is a tricky verb as there are some spelling changes:



appeler (to call) - present tense	
j'appelle	nous appelons
tu appelles	vous appelez
il/elle appelle	ils/elles appellent

Let's move onto look at some more vocabulary and phrases.

un message	a message
laisser un message	to leave a message
quel est votre numéro de téléphone?	what is your telephone number? (formal)

quel est ton numéro de téléphone?	what is your telephone number? (informal)
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Quel literally means “which.” Since we are talking about a masculine noun (*le numéro de téléphone*) we use the masculine form of *quel*. If the noun is feminine, we add *-le* to *quel* to give *quelle*. For example, “which house are we going to buy?” would be *quelle maison est-ce qu’on va acheter?* since *la maison* is feminine.

Let’s now think about the kinds of words and phrases we need to make a phone call in French. Normally “hello” would be *bonjour* but when you are on the phone it is more natural to say *allô*.

allô	hello
c’est...	it’s...
allô, c’est Mark	hello, it’s Mark
allô, c’est Anna	hello, it’s Anna
qui est à l’appareil?	who is speaking? (lit. who is at the apparatus?)
c’est Mark à l’appareil	it’s Mark here
est-ce que je peux parler avec Mark, s’il vous plaît?	can I speak to Mark please?
désolé(e), il/elle n’est pas là	sorry, he/she is not here
ne quittez pas	hang on a moment (formal)
ne quitte pas	hang on a moment (informal)
patientez, s’il vous plaît	wait just a moment, please (lit. be patient, please) (used in more formal situations)
voulez-vous patienter?	would you like to wait a moment?
se tromper	to make a mistake
je me suis trompé(e)	I made a mistake / I have made a mistake
je me suis trompé(e) de numéro	I have dialed the wrong number
désolé(e), je me suis trompé(e) de numéro	sorry, I have dialed the wrong number
rappeler	to call back
je rappellerai*	I will call back

**Je rappellerai* is actually a future tense in French but we will come back to how to form and use this tense in a future lesson. Usually this kind of future tense is formed by adding an ending onto the infinitive or “future stem” but with *rappeler*, we also have to add an extra *-l-* so “I’ll call back” becomes *je rappellerai*.

To practice the language we have learned in this lesson, Mark and Anna take part in a phone conversation between a young man (Mark) and his girlfriend's mother (Anna).

Anna	Allô
Mark	Allô. C'est Mark à l'appareil.
Anna	Ah bonjour, Mark. Ça va?
Mark	Oui, ça va très bien. Je peux parler avec Julie, s'il vous plaît?
Anna	Ne quittez pas... ah désolée, elle n'est pas là en ce moment.
Mark	À quelle heure est-ce qu'elle reviendra?
Anna	Je ne sais pas. Elle est sortie avec sa sœur.
Mark	Pouvez-vous lui dire que j'ai appelé?
Anna	Bien sûr.
Mark	Merci. Au revoir.
Anna	Au revoir.



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