

In this edition:
two useful
constructions:
après avoir + pp
and
après être + pp

Lesson 67

Notes

Après avoir bu de l'eau, nous n'avions pas soif *After having done something...*

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.

Last week we looked at two verbal constructions:

avant de faire quelque chose
before doing something

venir de faire quelque chose
to have just done something

Mark begins today's lesson with the following sentence:

avant de commencer la leçon aujourd'hui, nous allons faire un peu de révision
before starting the lesson today, we are going to do some revision

Below are two phrases which contain examples of *venir de*:

Anna vient d'arriver
Anna has just arrived

je viens d'arriver
I have just arrived

In Lesson 57, we look at another construction to help you increase your range of expression in French. This construction is actually the opposite of "before doing something", ie. "after doing something." However, unlike *avant de faire quelque chose* it does not take the infinitive of the verb. Instead it takes the past participle. It is probably easier to think of this in English as "after having done something" as this is closer to the French translation. Note however that it can also be translated into English as "after doing something."

après avoir fait quelque chose
after having done something
(lit. after to have done something)

après avoir mangé, je suis allé(e) au cinéma	after having eaten, I went to the cinema
après avoir fini mes devoirs, j'ai appelé mon copain	after having finished my homework, I called my friend
après avoir mangé les escargots, j'avais mal à l'estomac*	after having eaten the snails, I had a sore stomach
après avoir bu de l'eau, nous n'avions pas soif	after having drunk some water, we were not thirsty
après avoir bu de l'eau, nous n'avions plus soif**	after having drunk some water, we were no longer thirsty
après avoir lu l'article, ils ont acheté l'ordinateur	after having read the article, they bought the computer

*Note that the imperfect tense is used in *j'avais mal à l'estomac* as we are describing a feeling in the past.

**We already know that to make a phrase negative, we add *ne* and *pas* around the verb. There are different ways to make a phrase negative but one that Mark touched on in this week's lesson is "no longer." In this case we put the words *ne* and *plus* around the verb. So if *nous n'avions pas soif* means "we were not thirsty", we can change it to *nous n'avions plus soif* to make it "we were no longer thirsty" or "we were not thirsty anymore." Notice that the only thing that changes is that *pas* becomes *plus*.

One thing we need to think about carefully when using this construction is the subject of the sentence. Let's take the following example:

après avoir bu de l'eau, nous n'avions pas soif
after having drunk some water, we were not thirsty

The people who drank the water are the same people who were not thirsty. So this could be said as "after we drank some water, we were not thirsty". The construction *après avoir + pp* can only be used when the subjects are the same in both parts of the phrase or sentence.

As we know, there are some verbs which take *être* as their auxiliary verb in the perfect tense instead of *avoir*. So with these *être* verbs, we say:

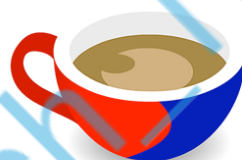
après être + pp
after having done something

Remember that the past participle has to agree with the subject when an *être* verb is used.

après être retourné(e), j'ai commencé à faire mes devoirs	after having returned, I started to do my homework
après être allé(e)s au marché, nous avons vu un film	after going to the market, we saw a film
après être arrivé, il a mangé les frites	after having arrived, he ate the French fries / chips

Mark then tests Anna on all the constructions covered in Lessons 66 and 67:

after having done her homework, she went out with her friend	après avoir fait ses devoirs, elle est sortie avec son copain / sa copine / son ami(e)
she has just arrived at the beach	elle vient d'arriver à la plage
the girls have just eaten the snails	les filles viennent de manger les escargots
after reading 'The Da Vinci Code' I wanted to buy 'The Lost Symbol'	après avoir lu 'Le Code Da Vinci' je voulais acheter 'Le Symbole Perdu'
after we arrived, we spoke about the situation	après être arrivé(e)s, nous avons parlé de la situation



CoffeeBreak
French

All materials ©Copyright Radio Lingua Ltd 2009

