

🇫🇷 Mastering French -ER Verbs



1. What Are “-ER Verbs”?

In French, many verbs (action words) end with **-er** in their basic form — this is called the **infinitive**.

Examples:

- 👉 **parler** (to speak)
- 👉 **aimer** (to love/like)
- 👉 **jouer** (to play)
- 👉 **habiter** (to live)
- 👉 **écouter** (to listen)

Over **80%** of all French verbs end in **-er**, so once you master this pattern, you'll already understand *most* verbs in French!

2. The Secret Recipe of -ER Verbs

To use a verb in French, you have to show **who** is doing the action — “I speak”, “you play”, “we listen”, etc.

In English, we often change the word (*I play*, *he plays*).

In French, we change the **ending** of the verb.

Here's how it works — your magic formula:

✨ **Step 1: Take the infinitive (example: parler = to speak)**

★ Step 2: Remove “-er” → you get the *stem* (parl-)

★ Step 3: Add the correct ending, depending on WHO does the action:

Subject	Ending	Example (parler)	Pronunciation
je (I)	-e	je parle	/parl/
tu (you)	-es	tu parles	/parl/
il / elle / on (he/she/one)	-e	il parle	/parl/
nous (we)	-ons	nous parlons	/par-lon/
vous (you)	-ez	vous parlez	/par-lay/
ils / elles (they)	-ent	ils parlent	/parl/ (the -ent is silent!)

↗ Pronunciation Secret:

Even though the spellings change, the first three forms **sound exactly the same**:
je parle – tu parles – il parle → all pronounced “parl”.

3. Why “-ER Verbs” Are So Logical

Think of it like LEGO bricks:

- The **stem** is your base brick (parl-)
 - The **ending** is the color or decoration you add depending on the person doing the action.
- Add the right piece, and voilà — your sentence fits perfectly.



GRAMMAIRE

Les verbes en -ER

A l'école nous **jouons** à beaucoup de jeux différents.

Moi, je **joue** au tennis et toi, à quoi tu **joues**?"

JOUER

Radical du
verbe
+ terminaisons

je	-e
tu	-es
il/elle/on	-e
nous	-ons
vous	-ez
ils/elles	-ent

4. Pronunciation Trick

In spoken French:

- “je parle”, “tu parles”, and “il parle” **all sound the same**
- “nous parlons” ends with a nasal sound /õ/
- “vous parlez” sounds like /par-lay/
- “ils parlent” — silent *ent* → sounds like *il parle*

So... you only really have 3 different sounds to learn! Easy, right? 😊

5. Spelling Tweaks (Tiny Changes That Keep French Beautiful)

Some verbs make *small spelling changes* to keep pronunciation smooth:

a) Verbs ending in -ger (like *manger* – to eat)

→ Add an e before “ons” in *nous* form
➡ nous **mangeons** (not *mangons*)

b) Verbs ending in -cer (like *commencer* – to start)

→ Add a ç before “ons”
➡ nous **commençons**

👉 Just two little “beauty fixes” — easy to remember!

6. Some Super Common -ER Verbs

Verb	Meaning	Example
parler	to speak	Je parle français.
aimer	to like/love	J'aime le chocolat.
jouer	to play	Nous jouons au foot.
habiter	to live	J'habite à Paris.
écouter	to listen	Tu écoutes la musique.
étudier	to study	Il étudie le français.
travailler	to work	Elle travaille à Londres.

Verb	Meaning	Example
regarder	to watch/look	Nous regardons la télé.
chanter	to sing	Ils chantent bien.

7. Mini Practice Time

A. Conjugate *parler* (to speak)

je _____

tu _____

il _____

nous _____

vous _____

ils _____

B. Choose the right form

1. Nous (parlons / parle) français.
2. Tu (manges / mange) une pizza.
3. Ils (chantent / chante) bien.
4. Je (écoute / écoutes) la musique.

D. Translate to French

1. I speak French.
2. She sings.
3. We play football.
4. Do you live here?

8. Common Mistakes (and How to Fix Them)

🚫 “Je parles” ✗ → ✨ “Je parle”
You don’t need the -s for *je*.

🚫 Pronouncing “ils parlent” with the -ent ✗ → ✨ Silent “-ent”!
It sounds just like “il parle”.

🚫 Forgetting the e/ç in *mangeons* / *commençons* ✗ → ✨ Remember sound rules.

9. Real-Life Practice Ideas

- Talk about your hobbies: *J'aime danser, je regarde Netflix, je joue au foot.*
 - Ask friends what they like: *Tu aimes la musique ?*
 - Describe your life: *J'habite à Tokyo. Je travaille beaucoup. Je parle français !*
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10. Takeaway Rule

💡 “Cut off **-ER**, keep the stem, add: **e, es, e, ons, ez, ent** — and you can speak 80% of French verbs!”

Un mot de plus, un monde de plus 

— Mr. Edem