

## Tenses - An overview

**Verbs:** Verbs are words which we use to describe what is happening. They are also known as doing words.

*Eg: I go to Paris. He goes to Paris. We went to Paris.*  
*Eg: Je vais à Paris. Il va à Paris. Nous sommes allés à Paris.*

**The infinitive:** The infinitive of a verb is the part you look up in the dictionary. It is the stem or the root of the verb, the most basic part. In French the infinitive normally ends in -er, -ir, -re.

*Eg: To play To eat To go To be To have To like*  
*Eg: Jouer Manger Aller Être Avoir Aimer*

**The present tense:** A verb in the present tense describes an action which is taking place now or which takes place regularly.

*Eg: I go/ am going to the cinema: je vais au cinéma. (right now)*  
*Eg: I go to the cinema on Mondays: Je vais au cinéma le lundi. (every Monday)*

**Forming the present tense:** In French verb endings change according to who is doing the action (this is a bit like English where we say I play but he plays)

*Eg: Je regarde la télé. but Nous regardons la télé*  
*Eg: I watch TV. but We watch TV*

In French most verbs follow the same patterns. They have regular endings: