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**Step by Step
Simplified FRENCH
GRAMMAR Booklet 4**

**Le Passé-Composé.
Qu'est-Ce que C'est?
Sample**

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Grammar Booklet

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Table of Contents

Introduction	4
When is the Passé-Composé used?	5
How is the Passé-Composé formed?	5
What is a past participle?	5
4 Roles for the Past Participle	6
How do you form the Passé-Composé with the auxiliaire avoir?	7
How do you conjugate at the Passé-Composé a regular verb of the -ER group (premier groupe)?	7
How do you conjugate at the Passé-Composé a regular verb of the -IR group (deuxième groupe)?	8
How do you conjugate at the Passé-Composé a verb of the third group (troisième groupe)?	8
When & How do you form the Passé-Composé with the auxiliaire être?	8
En Résumé: 5 Things You Need to Know about the Passé-Composé	12
Au travail! : 2 Different Ways to Practice	13
Appendix : Solutions aux Activités	17
A Note about the Author	21
Copyrights	22
You might Also Like	23

Introduction: A Word about Grammar

Grammar. Just saying or reading the word makes most of the learners panic! People have a negative feeling about French grammar. They have heard about irregular verbs, weird tenses, nouns and gender...

That's why this booklet concentrates only on one grammar subject and is compiled with only very simplified grammatical points.

You will be guided step by step and all the points are defined and explained.

At the end of each mini lesson, you will be able to test your knowledge and learn new vocabulary by working with cultural and authentic literary texts.

Grammar, which knows how to control even kings. Molière

Le **passé-composé** in French is the equivalent of the past tense in English and is the past tense the most used in French.

When is the passé-composé used?

Action completed in the past.

➡ **As-tu beaucoup étudié** ce weekend? *Did you study a lot this weekend?*

A series of action completed in the past.

➡ Samedi, il **a vu** sa mère, **a parlé** au médecin et **a trouvé** un chat. *Saturday he saw his mother, talked to the doctor, and found a cat.*

An action repeated a few times in the past.

➡ Je t'ai **téléphoné** cinq fois hier. *I phoned you 5 times yesterday.*

How is the passé-composé formed?

2 elements:

✗ 1 auxiliary (être or avoir) at the **present** tense.

✗ 1 past participle/ **participe passé** of the verb.

What is a past participle?

The French **Participe-Passé** is quite similar to the English past participle.

In English **-ed** is added at the end of the regular verbs to form the past participle.

➡ *I have **worked** all my life.*

In French we will add :

- ☑ **-é** for the **1st group verb ending in -ER** : J'ai rêvé (verbe rêver)
- ☑ **-i** for the **2nd group verbs ending in -IR** : J'ai fini (verbe finir)
- ☑ **-u** for the **3rd group verbs ending in -RE** : j'ai bu (verbe boire)

! Notice some exceptions though:
j'ai pris (verbe prendre)
j'ai mis (verbe mettre)
etc...

4 Roles for the Past Participle

1. To form the passé-composé with an auxiliary être or avoir.
➡ Je suis **devenu(e)**. *I have become.*

2. To form other compound tenses with auxiliaries (e.g. plus que perfect).
➡ J'étais **parti(e)** au Canada. *I was gone to Canada.*

3. To form the passive voice with the auxiliary être.
➡ Le chat est **nourri** tous les matins. *The cat is fed every morning.*

4. On its own as an adjective alone.
➡ **Appeuré**, il s'enfuit en courant. *Frightened, he ran away.*

How do you form the passé-composé with the auxiliaire avoir?

The past participle stays neutral and doesn't need to agree with the subject of the sentence.

Exception: the past participle will have to agree with its direct object. The direct object will often be a pronoun *le, la, les* and will be before the verb.

- ➡ Je te rends **ta robe**, je **l'**ai portée hier soir. (*l'* stands for *ta robe*, to avoid repetition)
- ➡ Je te rends **tes chaussures**, je **les** ai mises au mariage de mon cousin. (*les* stands for *tes chaussures*, to avoid repetition)

✗ The direct object answers to the question **WHAT?**

- ➡ *Here's your dress back; I wore it Saturday night.* → I wore **WHAT?** **It** (your dress)
→ **it** is a direct object/ un complément d'objet direct.

Un complément d'objet direct represents the people or things in a sentence which receive the action of the verb. To find the direct object in a sentence, ask the questions *What?* or *Who?*

Un complément d'objet indirect represents the people or things in a sentence **to** or **for whom/what** the action of the verb occurs.

How do you conjugate at the passé-composé a regular verb of the -ER group (premier groupe)?

Let's take the verb **louer** (to rent): add the auxiliary **avoir** + remove the infinitive ending **-ER** to get **lou** and add the ending **-é**:

	LOUER	Singulier	Pluriel
1 ^{ere}	personne	J'ai loué	Nous avons loué
2 ^{eme}	personne	Tu as loué	Vous avez loué
3 ^{eme}	personne	Il/ Elle/On a loué	Ils/Elles ont loué

How do you conjugate at the passé-composé a regular verb of the -IR group (deuxième groupe)?

Let's take the verb **grandir** (to grow up): add the auxiliary **avoir** + remove the infinitive ending **-IR** to get **grand** and add the ending **-i**:

GRANDIR	Singulier	Pluriel
1 ^{ere} personne	J'ai grandi	Nous avons grandi
2 ^{eme} personne	Tu as grandi	Vous avez grandi
3 ^{eme} personne	Il/ Elle/On a grandi	Ils/Elles ont grandi

How do you conjugate at the passé-composé a verb of the third group (troisième groupe)?

Let's take the verb **vendre** (to sell): add the auxiliary **avoir** + remove the infinitive ending **-RE** to get **vend** and add the ending **-u**:

VENDRE	Singulier	Pluriel
1 ^{ere} personne	J'ai vendu	Nous avons vendu
2 ^{eme} personne	Tu as vendu	Vous avez vendu
3 ^{eme} personne	Il/ Elle/On a vendu	Ils/Elles ont vendu

When & How do you form the passé-composé with the auxiliaire être?

The past participle has to agree with the subject of the sentence.

