**Le Passé Composé: The Main Past Tense in French**

**Definition:** the passé composé is a past (passé) tense that is composed (composé) of two words. You use the P.C to make it clear that an action is done and complete and in the *past.*

In English, we have lots of ways to show an action is done and over with.

*To walk: I* ***walked,*** *I* ***have walked,*** *I* ***did walk****.* All of those bolded verb forms are past tense.

In French, those three English verb tenses become just **one** in French, the P.C.

*I* ***walked,*** *I* ***have walked,*** *I* ***did walk****. = J’****ai marché.***

**How do I form/conjugate the passé composé?**

Step 1: Conjugate AVOIR.

|  |  |
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| J’ai (I have) | Nous avons (we have) |
| Tu as (You have) | Vous avez (you have, plural/formal) |
| Il/elle a (He/she has) | Ils/elles ont (they have) |

Step 2: Add the verb you want to “past tense-ify.” However, you need to change them a little.  
ER verbs change –er to –é. RE verbs change –re to –u. IR verbs change –ir to –i.

This modified verb form is called a participle. Try making some below.

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| Regarder becomes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Entendre becomes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Vendre becomes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Perdre becomes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Donner becomes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Obéir becomes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

Step 3: Put the participle from step 2 next to the AVOIR form from step 1. You’re done!

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| --- | --- |
| **J’ai parlé/rendu/fini**  I have spoken, I have handed in, I have finished  I spoke, I handed in, I finished  I did speak, I did hand in, I did finish | **Nous avons parlé/rendu/fini**  We have spoken/handed in/finished  We spoke, we handed in, we finished  We did speak, we did hand in, we did finish |
| **Tu as parlé/rendu/fini**  You have spoken, you have handed in, you have finished  You spoke, you handed in, you finished  You did speak, you did hand in, you did finish | **Vous avez parlé/rendu/fini**  You have spoken/handed in/finished  You spoke, you handed in, you finished  You did speak, you did hand in, you did finish |
| **Il/elle a parlé/rendu/fini**  He has spoken/handed in/finished  He spoke, he handed in, he finished  He did speak, he did hand in, he did finish | **Ils/elles ont parlé/rendu/fini**  They have spoken/handed in/finished  They spoke, they handed in, they finished  They did speak, they did hand in, they did finish |

**Practice: French to English.** Give the three possible meanings.

|  |  |
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| J’ai mangé |  |
| Tu as habité |  |
| Vous avez entendu |  |
| Nous avons fini |  |
| Ils ont réussi |  |
| J’ai vendu |  |
| Elle a rendu |  |
| Nous avons maigri |  |

**Practice: English to French.** One of the three meanings is given, all will simplify to the P.C.

|  |  |
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| I have finished. |  |
| He gave. |  |
| I did speak. |  |
| We have studied. |  |
| You heard. |  |
| They disobeyed. |  |
| She did grow. |  |
| You liked the pizza. |  |