There are three major groups of regular verbs in French: verbs with infinitives ending in -er, verbs with infinitives ending in -ir, and verbs with infinitives ending in -re. Since -er verbs are the most numerous, they are considered the first conjugation. To conjugate these verbs, drop the -er from the infinitive to form the stem. Next, add the -er endings to the stem. Different tenses have different endings.

The endings given below (-e, -es, -e, -ons, -ez, -ent) are for forming the present tense. The endings (-e, -es, -e, and -ent) are all silent. The only endings that are pronounced are the nous (-ons) and the vous (-ez) endings. The four silent endings form a boot shape in the verb conjugation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>parler 'to speak'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>je parle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu parles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>il/elle/on parle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nous parlons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vous parlez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ils/elles parlent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

past participle: parlé

Listen carefully to the following sentences. Note that the pronunciation of each of the verbs is the same even though the conjugations are spelled differently.

Tex, il parle français? Mais c'est un tatou.

Tex: Bien sûr, je parle français et Tammy, elle aussi, elle parle français.

Eh bien dis donc, même les tatous parlent français au Texas?

Tex: Of course, I speak French and Tammy, too, she speaks French.

Well, I'll be, even the armadillos speak French in Texas?

Eh bien dis donc, même les tatous parlent français au Texas?

Here is a list of common -er verbs:

- adorer, to adore
- aimer, to like
- aimer mieux, to prefer
- chanter, to sing
- chercher, to look for
- danser, to dance
- demander, to ask
- détester, to hate, to detest
- donner, to give
- écouter, to listen to
- étudier, to study
- habiter, to live
- jouer, to play
- montrer, to show
- présenter, to introduce
- regarder, to watch
- rencontrer, to meet (by chance)
- rester, to stay, remain
- téléphoner, to telephone
- travailler, to work
- trouver, to find

Je changes to j' before a verb starting with a vowel or a silent h (ex. j'adore, j'habite). This phenomenon is known as élision. Listen to the following sentences. Can you hear the élision in the first two examples?

Tex: J'adore la musique rap et j'écoute souvent de la musique dans les clubs.

I love rap music and I often listen to music in clubs.
Je chante et je danse aussi. I sing and I dance, too.

Note also that the s in plural pronouns (nous, vous, and ils/elles) is usually silent except when it is followed by a verb that begins with a vowel sound. In such a case the silent s is pronounced as a /z/ and links the pronoun to the verb. This phenomenon is called liaison ('linking') and is very characteristic of French. Listen carefully to the sentences below. Which sentences contain examples of liaison?

Tex et Tammy, ils écoutent de la musique cadienne avec Paw-Paw!
Tammy: Nous adorons danser.
Tex: Oui, oui, c'est vrai. Nous dansons beaucoup.

Tammy: Nous adorons danser.
Tex: Oui, oui, c'est vrai. Nous dansons beaucoup.

fill in the blanks

Give the correct form of the verb indicated in parentheses.

1. Tex et Tammy, ils ______ à Austin. (habiter)
2. Tammy ______ le français. (étudier)
3. Je ______ un peu. (chanter)
4. J'______ la musique française. (adorer)
5. Nous ______ au foot. (jouer)
6. Vous ______ la musique texane? (aimer)
7. Quelle sorte de musique est-ce que tu ______? (aimer)
8. Tammy ______ les sports. (détester)
9. Joe-Bob ______ de la guitare. (jouer)
10. Est-ce que tu ______ du piano? (jouer)
11. Joe-Bob ______ son ami Corey. (chercher)
12. Tammy et Bette ______ la télévision. (regarder)

listening comprehension

Listen to the following sentences and decide if they refer to Tex (singular), Tex and Tammy (plural) -- or if it's impossible to tell. Hint: Pay close attention to liaison between subject pronoun and verb.

1. __Tex __Tex et Tammy __impossible à distinguer
2. __Tex __Tex et Tammy __impossible à distinguer
3. __Tex __Tex et Tammy __impossible à distinguer
4. __Tex __Tex et Tammy __impossible à distinguer
5. __Tex __Tex et Tammy __impossible à distinguer
6. __Tex __Tex et Tammy __impossible à distinguer
7. __Tex __Tex et Tammy __impossible à distinguer
8. ___Tex ___Tex et Tammy ___impossible à distinguer
9. ___Tex ___Tex et Tammy ___impossible à distinguer
10. ___Tex ___Tex et Tammy ___impossible à distinguer
11. ___Tex ___Tex et Tammy ___impossible à distinguer
12. ___Tex ___Tex et Tammy ___impossible à distinguer