

Spelling changes occur in the stems of several groups of **-er** verbs in the present tense. These spelling changes reflect the pronunciation of the present tense forms.


You may have already noticed the spelling change in the verb **s'appeler** (Je **m'appelle** ..., My name is ...). For verbs like **appeler** (to call), **rappeler** (to call back) and **jeter** (to throw), the consonant **-l** or **-t** in the stem doubles in all forms of the present tense, except in the first and second person plural (nous and vous). This follows the traditional boot pattern of **-er verb** conjugations in the present tense.

| appeler 'to call'               |                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| j' <b>appelle</b>               | nous <b>appelons</b>       |
| tu <b>appelles</b>              | vous <b>appelez</b>        |
| il/elle/on <b>appelle</b>       | ils/elles <b>appellent</b> |
| past participle : <b>appelé</b> |                            |

This same "boot" pattern is repeated in spelling change verbs like **préférer** (to prefer). In these verbs the **é** in the last syllable of the stem changes to an **è**, except in the first and second person plural (nous and vous). Listen carefully to the different pronunciations of **é** and **è** in the conjugations below.

| préféreré 'to prefer'            |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| je <b>préfère</b>                | nous <b>préférons</b>      |
| tu <b>préfères</b>               | vous <b>préférez</b>       |
| il/elle/on <b>préfère</b>        | ils/elles <b>préfèrent</b> |
| past participle : <b>préféré</b> |                            |


Verbs conjugated like **préférer** include:

-  **considérer**, to consider
- espérer**, to hope
- régler**, to regulate, pay, settle, adjust
- répéter**, to repeat
- sécher**, to dry, skip (a class)


In verbs which are conjugated like **acheter** (to buy), the **e** in the last syllable of the stem also changes to an **è**, again with the exception of the first and second person plural forms.

| acheter 'to buy'                |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| j' <b>achète</b>                | nous <b>achetons</b>      |
| tu <b>achètes</b>               | vous <b>achetez</b>       |
| il/elle/on <b>achète</b>        | ils/elles <b>achètent</b> |
| past participle : <b>acheté</b> |                           |

Verbs conjugated like **acheter** include:


-  **amener**, to bring somebody (along)  
**emmener**, to take somebody (along)  
**lever**, to lift, raise  
**mener**, to take, lead  
**peser**, to weigh

Another group of stem-changing verbs include those ending in **-ayer**, including **essayer** (to try) and **payer** (to pay). In these verbs the **y** changes to **i** in all persons except the first and second person plural (nous and vous).




| essayer 'to try'                |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| j' <b>essaie</b>                | nous <b>essayons</b>      |
| tu <b>essaies</b>               | vous <b>essayez</b>       |
| il/elle/on <b>essaie</b>        | ils/elles <b>essaient</b> |
| past participle : <b>essayé</b> |                           |

Finally, verbs ending in **-ger** like **voyager** (to travel) add an **e** after the **g** in the nous form of the present tense, so that the **g** is pronounced as a soft sound before the **-ons** ending (i.e. nous **voyageons**). Similarly, in verbs ending in **-cer**, **commencer** (to start), for example, the **c** in the nous form changes to **ç** to keep the soft c sound (nous **commençons**).




| voyager 'to travel'            |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| je <b>voyage</b>               | nous <b>voyageons</b>     |
| tu <b>voyages</b>              | vous <b>voyagez</b>       |
| il/elle/on <b>voyage</b>       | ils/elles <b>voyagent</b> |
| past participle: <b>voyagé</b> |                           |

Other verbs in this category include:

-  **corriger**, to correct  
**exiger**, to demand, require  
**manger**, to eat  
**nager**, to swim  
**partager**, to share  
**ranger**, to tidy up, arrange  
**rédigé**, to write, compose  
**songer**, to dream, reflect



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- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Quelle activité est-ce que vous <b>préférez</b> en été? | What activity do you prefer in the summer? |
| Rita: J' <b>emmène</b> mes enfants à la piscine.        | Rita: I take my children to the pool.      |
| Ses enfants: Nous <b>nageons</b> et nous                | Her children: We swim and we eat ice       |

mangeons de la glace.

cream.

Tammy: Moi, je préfère faire du shopping. J'achète beaucoup et papa paie tout.

Tammy: Me, I prefer shopping. I buy lots and daddy pays for everything.



texercises

### fill in the blanks

Fill in the blank with the correct form of the verb indicated in parentheses.

1. Tex: Je \_\_\_\_\_ parler français. (préférer)
2. Tammy, \_\_\_\_\_ -vous le prof de français ou le prof d'italien? (préférer)
3. Joe-Bob: Corey et moi, nous \_\_\_\_\_ à adorer le français. (commencer)
4. Tex: Mon amie \_\_\_\_\_ Tammy. (s'appeler)
5. Joe-Bob \_\_\_\_\_ faire de la planche à voile demain. (espérer)
6. Tammy \_\_\_\_\_ beaucoup au mall. (acheter)
7. Bette: Fiona et moi, nous \_\_\_\_\_ au Mexique en été. (voyager)
8. Joe-Bob et Corey \_\_\_\_\_ à Barton Springs. (nager)
9. Tex: J' \_\_\_\_\_ Tammy au cinéma ce soir. (amener)
10. Tammy: Tex et moi, nous \_\_\_\_\_ un ordinateur. (partager)
11. Tex: Mes chers étudiants, \_\_\_\_\_, s'il vous plaît. (répéter)
12. Rita, est-ce que tes enfants \_\_\_\_\_ de parler français? (essayer)

### listening comprehension • fill in the blanks

You will hear a series of sentences with stem-changing verbs. Complete each sentence with the correct form of the verb that you hear.

1. Edouard, tu \_\_\_\_\_ les baguettes ou le Wonderbread?
2. Il \_\_\_\_\_ Tex.
3. Tu \_\_\_\_\_ d'apprendre le français?
4. Nous \_\_\_\_\_ souvent.
5. Tex \_\_\_\_\_ toujours ses questions aux étudiants.
6. Tex ne \_\_\_\_\_ pas de cuisine de grenouilles.
7. Est-ce que nous \_\_\_\_\_ notre chambre?
8. Joe-Bob \_\_\_\_\_ ses devoirs à la poubelle.
9. Vous \_\_\_\_\_ la cuisine française, n'est-ce pas?
10. Tammy \_\_\_\_\_ un gâteau pour Tex.
11. Corey et Joe-Bob \_\_\_\_\_ un drapeau texan pour Tex.
12. Nous \_\_\_\_\_ à l'avenir.

