



The Top 10 Most Used Adjectives in French

Introduction

Welcome to our lesson on the top 10 most used adjectives in the French language! As an English speaker, learning these adjectives will not only enhance your vocabulary but also improve your ability to describe people, places, and things in French.

Important Note on Adjective Placement

In French, these adjectives typically come before the noun they modify, unlike in English where adjectives usually follow the noun. This is a crucial aspect of French grammar to remember.

1. bon, bonne (Good)

- **Bon** is used for masculine nouns: “**un bon livre**” (a good book).
- **Bonne** is for feminine nouns: “**une bonne idée**” (a good idea).

2. grand, grande (Big, Tall)

- **Grand** for masculine: “**un grand arbre**” (a big tree).
- **Grande** for feminine: “**une grande maison**” (a big house).

3. petit, petite (Small, Little)

- **Petit** for masculine: “**un petit chien**” (a small dog).
- **Petite** for feminine: “**une petite table**” (a small table).

4. jeune (Young)

- Used for both genders: “**un jeune homme**” (a young man), “**une jeune femme**” (a young woman).

5. vieux, vieille (Old)

- **Vieux** for masculine: “**un vieux livre**” (an old book).
- **Vieille** for feminine: “**une vieille chaise**” (an old chair).

6. beau, belle (Beautiful, Handsome)

- **Beau** before masculine nouns: “**un beau jardin**” (a beautiful garden).
- **Belle** for feminine: “**une belle vue**” (a beautiful view).

7. nouveau, nouvelle (New)

- **Nouveau** for masculine: “**un nouveau téléphone**” (a new phone).
- **Nouvelle** for feminine: “**une nouvelle voiture**” (a new car).

8. mauvais, mauvaise (Bad)

- **Mauvais** for masculine: “**un mauvais film**” (a bad movie).
- **Mauvaise** for feminine: “**une mauvaise expérience**” (a bad experience).

9. joli, jolie (Pretty)

- **Joli** for masculine: “**un joli tableau**” (a pretty painting).
- **Jolie** for feminine: “**une jolie fleur**” (a pretty flower).

10. long, longue (Long)

- **Long** for masculine: “**un long voyage**” (a long journey).
- **Longue** for feminine: “**une longue histoire**” (a long story).

Important

In French, the adjectives “nouveau,” “vieux,” and “beau” have special forms when followed by a masculine noun starting with a vowel or a mute ‘h.’ This rule is applied to facilitate pronunciation and to avoid an awkward pause between words. Here is the specific rule for each of these adjectives:

1. **Nouveau:**
 - Becomes “**nouvel**” in front of a masculine noun starting with a vowel or a mute ‘h.’
 - Example: “**un nouvel appartement**” (a new apartment) instead of “**un nouveau appartement.**”
2. **Vieux:**
 - Becomes “**vieil**” in the same case.
 - Example: “**un vieil homme**” (an old man) instead of “**un vieux homme.**”
3. **Beau:**
 - Becomes “**bel**” before a masculine noun starting with a vowel or a mute ‘h.’
 - Example: “**un bel arbre**” (a beautiful tree) instead of “**un beau arbre.**”

These forms are only used in the masculine singular and before a noun starting with a vowel or a mute ‘h’ to improve the flow of pronunciation in French.

Adjective	Special Form	Used Before	Example (Special Form)
nouveau	nouvel	Masculine noun starting with a vowel or mute ‘h’	un nouvel appartement
vieux	vieil	Masculine noun starting with a vowel or mute ‘h’	un vieil homme
beau	bel	Masculine noun starting with a vowel or mute ‘h’	un bel arbre

Conclusion

Understanding and using these top 10 French adjectives will greatly aid your communication in French. Remember, adjectives in French must agree in gender and number with the nouns they describe. Happy learning and bonne chance!

PRACTICE

➔ Exercise 1: Translate to French

Translate the following English sentences into French using the correct adjectives.

1. A beautiful song.
2. A tall tree.
3. A small house.
4. An old book.
5. A good idea.

➔ Exercise 2: Fill in the Blank

Fill in the blank in each French sentence with the correct adjective.

1. Une _____ voiture. (a new car)
2. Un _____ garçon. (a young boy)
3. Une _____ femme. (an old woman)
4. Un _____ chat. (a pretty cat)
5. Une _____ histoire. (a long story)

➔ Exercise 3: Choose the Correct Form

Choose the correct form of the adjective for each French sentence.

1. Une (**beau/belle**) fleur.
2. Un (**nouveau/nouvelle**) ami.
3. Une (**grand/grande**) porte.
4. Un (**mauvais/mauvaise**) rêve.
5. Un (**long/longue**) film.

➔ Exercise 4 : Practice Using Special Forms of “Nouveau,” “Vieux,” and “Beau”

For this exercise, choose the correct special form of the adjectives “nouveau,” “vieux,” or “beau” to complete the sentences. Remember, these special forms are used before masculine nouns starting with a vowel or a mute ‘h’.

1. Voici un (**nouveau/nouvel**) hôtel.
2. Son oncle est un (**vieux/vieil**) ami de la famille.
3. Tu regardes le (**beau/bel**) oiseau dans le jardin.
4. C’est un (**nouveau/nouvel**) ordinateur.
5. Le (**vieux/vieil**) arbre du jardin est toujours debout.