# THE PAST TENSE IN FRENCH
# - REGULAR VERBS WITH AVOIR
## (a.k.a. the perfect tense)

## When to use it:

- when describing events that happened in the past
- when describing a single, completed action – 'I ate breakfast' etc
- when you would say "I went…" or "I have eaten…" or "I was bored…" in English

To conjugate a perfect tense verb, we must first revise the verb AVOIR (to have). Then we add our past participle:     *'we (have) + eaten our dinner'*

Here is the verb AVOIR:

| ENGLISH Subject pronoun | French Subject pronoun | AVOIR to have |
|---|---|---|
| I | j' | ai |
| you (sgl.) | tu | as |
| he / she / we | il / elle / on | a |
| we | nous | avons |
| you (pl.) | vous | avez |
| they (m.) / (f.) | ils / elles | ont |

**RULE:**

**1.Use the right subject pronoun** (I, you, he, she etc)

**2. Add the right part of *AVOIR*.**

**3. Add the past participle next to this (**check the verb ending: usually -é**)**

*i.e.     J'ai regardé*
*il a mangé*
*nous avons nagé*

Regular verbs follow a pattern;

| type of verb | -er verbs | -ir verbs | -re verbs |
|---|---|---|---|
| infinitive example | regarder | finir | vendre |
| past participle ending | -é | -i | -u |
| past participle example | regardé | fini | vendu |

Examples:

**-ER VERBS**

| to eat | = manger | PAST TENSE I have eaten | = | j'ai mangé |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| to listen | = écouter | PAST TENSE she (has) listened | = | elle a écouté |
| to fly/steal | = voler | PAST TENSE they flew/stole | = | ils ont volé |
| to buy | = acheter | PAST TENSE we (have) bought | = | nous avons mangé |

**-IR VERBS**

| to finish | = finir | PAST TENSE you (have) finished | = | tu as fini |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| to grasp | = saisir | PAST TENSE he (has) grasped | = | il a saisi |

**-RE VERBS**

| to sell | = vendre | PAST TENSE I (have) sold | = | j'ai vendu |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| to melt | = fondre | PAST TENSE we (have) melted | = | on a fondu |