

Word Order in French

(Present and Passé composé)

Reminder

The default French word order is **Subject** / Verb / **Object** (SVO).

👉 If you want to add to this, remember:

Adverbs (toujours, jamais, etc.) usually come **after the verb**

Adjectives usually come **after the object** but some go before

Object and quantity **pronouns** must come **before the verb**

Negation splits around the verb (if you speak, just remember to skip the “ne” and place the “pas” after the verb)

Present tense – affirmative sentence with indefinite object

Je mange une pomme

Subject - verb - **indefinite object**

J'en mange une

Subject - **quantity pronoun** - verb - **object**

Je mange une pomme verte

Subject - verb - **object (adjective)**

J'en mange une verte

Subject - **quantity pronoun** - verb - **implied object (adjective)**

Je mange une petite pomme verte

Subject - verb - **(adjective) object (adjective)**

J'en mange une petite verte

Subject - **quantity pronoun** - verb - **(adjective) implied object (adjective)**

Je mange toujours une petite pomme verte

Subject - verb - adverb - (adjective) object (adjective)

J'en mange toujours une petite verte

Subject - quantity pronoun - verb - adverb - (adjective) implied object (adjective)

Present tense – Negative sentence with indefinite object

Je ne mange pas de pomme

Subject - (negation) verb (negation) - indefinite object

Je n'en mange pas

Subject - (negation) quantity pronoun - verb (negation)

Je ne mange pas de pomme verte

Subject - (negation) verb (negation) - object (adjective)

Je n'en mange pas de verte

Subject - (negation) quantity pronoun - verb (negation) implied object (adjective)

Present tense – affirmative sentence with definite object

Je mange la pomme

Subject - verb - definite object

Je la mange

Subject - object pronoun - verb

Je mange la pomme verte

Subject - verb - object (adjective)

Je mange la verte

Subject - verb - implied object (adjective)

Je mange la petite pomme verte

Subject - verb - (adjective) object (adjective)

Je mange la petite verte

Subject - verb - (adjective) implied object (adjective)

Je mange toujours la petite pomme verte

Subject - verb - adverb - (adjective) object (adjective)

Je mange toujours la petite verte

Subject - verb - adverb - (adjective) implied object (adjective)

Present tense – Negative sentence with definite object

Je ne mange pas la pomme

Subject - (negation) verb (negation) - definite object

Je ne la mange pas

Subject - (negation) object pronoun - verb (negation)

Je ne mange pas la pomme verte

Subject - (negation) verb (negation) - object (adjective)

Je ne mange pas la verte

Subject - (negation) verb (negation) - implied object (adjective)

Passé composé – sentence with indefinite object

J'ai mangé une pomme

Subject - auxiliary verb + past participle - indefinite object

J'en ai mangé une

Subject - quantity pronoun - auxiliary verb + past participle - object

Je n'ai pas mangé de pomme

Subject - (negation) auxiliary verb (negation) past participle - object

Je n'en ai pas mangé

Subject - (negation) quantity pronoun - auxiliary verb (negation) past participle

Passé composé – sentence with definite object

J'ai mangé la pomme

Subject - auxiliary verb + past participle - definite object

Je l'ai mangée

Subject - object pronoun - auxiliary verb + past participle

Je n'ai pas mangé la pomme

Subject - (negation) auxiliary verb (negation) past participle - object

Je ne l'ai pas mangée

Subject - (negation) object pronoun - auxiliary verb (negation) past participle