

talking the TALK French audio transcript

Track 1

Sophie **Bienvenue.** Welcome to **talking the Talk**. I'm Sophie Martin and with me is Nicolas Charpentier.

Nicolas **Bonjour! Ça va, Sophie?**

Sophie **Oui, ça va bien, merci!**

We're going to help you to speak French confidently – and to sound really French!

how to sound French & chapter 1: first impressions

Track 2

Nicolas We're going to start by taking you through some of the information in **how to Sound French**, and practising the sounds with language from chapter 1 – **first impressions**.

When we show you how to pronounce something, we'll give you time to say it yourself. Out loud of course – it's just not the same doing it in your head.

Sophie A good place to begin is with the vowels: **a, e, i, o, u**. French vowels sound a little different from English ones.

Nicolas Let's try some French vowels, using words from chapter 1. First of all:

a as in **ami, Paris** and **salut**.

You make the sound nearer the front of your mouth than you do in English: **a**

Sophie Listen to the sound of the **a** in **madame** and in **Ça va? How are you?** See if you can repeat this question: **Ça va, madame?**

Nicolas Moving on to **e**. **E** as in **je** or **demain tomorrow**. Try saying those, with the sound near the front of your mouth: **je, demain**. You can tell someone you'll meet them tomorrow by saying **Je te retrouve demain**. There are four **e** sounds in that little phrase! Have a go at repeating it.

Sophie **Je te retrouve demain.**

Nicolas When you see an **e** at the end of a word, it is often completely silent, so you don't pronounce it at all. I'm thinking of words like **madame, minute** and **famille**.

Sophie An accent above the letter **e** changes its pronunciation. A **grave** accent like the one on **mère** and **père** *mother* and *father* results in a subtle change, listen: **mère, père**. An acute accent like the one in **soirée** causes a different change in pronunciation, listen: **soirée**.

There are acute accents in these words too, try repeating them: **fiancée, présenter, journée**.

Nicolas Over to you! To introduce your fiancée Léa, you might say: **Je vous présente ma fiancée Léa**.

Sophie **Et je vous présente mon fiancé, Paul.**

OK, let's move on to **i**. **I** as in **il** *he* and **nuit** *night*.

This is not like the English *i* in words like *bin* or *sit*. Listen: **il**. It's a little bit like the *i* in *machine* or the *ee* in *see*. Have a go: **il, nuit**.

Je suis ici depuis lundi means *I've been here since Monday*. There are plenty of **i** sounds in that short sentence. See if you can repeat it after Nicolas, really concentrating on the **i** sound.

Nicolas **Je suis ici depuis lundi.**

Sophie Now the vowel **o**. You'll hear two different **o** sounds – sometimes they are called open and closed sounds. Let's look at the open sound first. **O** as in **olive** *olive* and **docteur**.

Nicolas It's also in **personne** *person* and **connaître** *to know*. Try repeating those: **personne, connaître**.

Sophie Repeat this sentence, which means that **Olivier** is ringing the doorbell: **Olivier sonne à la porte**.

Nicolas There's the closed **o** too. **O** as in **numéro** and **trop**.

Sophie Try repeating those: **numéro, trop**.

Nicolas And finally **u**, which can be quite a difficult sound for English-speakers to master. It's a sound made at the front of the mouth with the lips pushed forward and rounded. *You* is **tu**. **Tu**.

Sophie Try saying these words with the **u** sound: **super, salut, excusez-moi**.

Nicolas Don't confuse the **u** sound with the sound **ou**, which we find in the other word for *you*: **vous**. The **ou** sound is usually spelt **o – u**. Listen: **tu, vous**.

Tout, spelled **t – o – u – t**, means *everything*. Can you hear the difference? **Tu, tout**. You have a go: **tu, tout**.

Sophie Let's have a look now at French nasal vowels. They're called nasal because when you speak, the air comes through your nose as well as through your mouth. Nasal vowels are often written as a vowel followed by an **m** or an **n**. One example that you'll hear a lot is the word for *one* **un**.

Nicolas That sound is in words like **brun** *brown* and also **lundi** *Monday*. Try it yourself: **brun, lundi**. The nasal vowel sounds occur in a lot of common words and getting them right will really improve your pronunciation.

Sophie There are three other nasal vowel sounds. There's **an** as in **la France, comment** and **rendez-vous**.

Nicolas There's **in** as in **train, bien** and **cinq**.

Sophie And there's **on** as in **bonjour, non** and **question**.

Nicolas Try some short sentences, really making the nasal vowels authentic. To ask someone if they're getting the train on Monday, you'd say **Tu prends le train lundi?**

To say you're coming at eight o'clock tomorrow evening, it's **On vient à vingt heures demain.**

Try saying **mon petit lapin**, which literally means *my little rabbit* and is often used as a term of endearment to a child. **Mon petit lapin.** **Mon** also features in **mon chou** – another term of endearment, which is quite surprising since it means *my cabbage*.

Sophie And now, listen to a conversation at a wedding reception. See if you can work out who Sébastien and Lola are.

Track 3

Nicolas **Salut, Sophie! Je te présente ma mère, Dominique, et mon beau-père, Vincent ...**

Sophie **Enchantée.**

Nicolas **... et ma grand-mère ...**

Grand-mère **Enchantée!**

Sophie **Je suis heureuse de faire votre connaissance, madame. Asseyez-vous.**

Grand-mère **Merci.**

Nicolas **... et voici mon frère, Sébastien.**

Sébastien **Bonjour. Et voici ma fille, Lola.**

Grand-mère **Bonjour, Lola!**

Sébastien **Oh là là ... excusez-moi ... A tout à l'heure! Bonne journée à tous!**

Sophie **A plus tard!**

Nicolas **Viens, je vais te présenter à mon copain Karim, et à sa compagne, Delphine.**

Track 4

Sophie Did you work out that Sébastien is Nicolas' brother and Lola is his brother's daughter?

Nicolas Did you hear the the nasal sounds in **Viens** and **copain**? As well as in **Enchantée**?

Listen again. In fact, you can listen as many times as you like – and your Audio Support Pack has ideas and suggestions to help you make the most of our conversations to develop your listening.

Track 5

Sophie You never know when you might be asked to spell out your name or when you might want to know how somebody else spells theirs. The key question is

Comment ça s'écrit?, which literally means *How is it written?* Can you repeat that question? **Comment ça s'écrit?**

Now listen to how the letters of the alphabet sound in French:

Nicolas a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Nicolas s'écrit N – i – c – o – l – a – s. Mais je préfère Nico.

Sophie Can you spell your name in French?

Nicolas Now it's your turn. After Sophie's questions, you'll hear an instruction telling you what to say next. Focus on making the vowel sounds really French.

Sophie **Bonjour.**

Nicolas Return the greeting, remembering to add Sophie's name.

.....

Nicolas **Bonjour, Sophie.**

Now ask her how she is.

.....

Comment ça va?

Sophie **Ça va très bien, merci.**

Nicolas Introduce your brother.

.....

Voici mon frère or **Je te présente mon frère.**

Sophie **Je suis heureuse de faire votre connaissance.**

Nicolas Say, see you later.

.....

A plus tard!

chapter 2: getting to know people

Track 6

Sophie Chapter 2, **getting to know people.** Let's start with a few icebreakers, which make very useful pronunciation practice.

As well as different sounds, languages have their own rhythm and intonation. When you ask a question, your voice goes up at the end. Listen: *You are here on holiday* **Vous êtes ici en vacances;** *Are you here on holiday?* **Vous êtes ici en vacances?**

You often hear **c'est ça?** or **non?** at the end of a question. They are more common nowadays than **n'est-ce pas?** French uses them where English uses tags like *isn't it? is she? aren't you? won't they?*

Nicolas *Are you here on holiday or on business? Vous êtes ici en vacances ou pour le travail?* Listen carefully to the nasal vowel sounds in **en** and **vacances**: **Vous êtes ici en vacances ou pour le travail?** You try it.

Sophie *It's lovely here, isn't it? C'est joli ici, non? What a beautiful view! Quelle belle vue!*

Nicolas *You work here, don't you? Vous travaillez ici, c'est ça?*

Sophie *Are there always so many people here? Il y a toujours tant de monde ici?*

Nicolas *Is this the first time you've been here? C'est la première fois que vous venez ici?*

Sophie *We're in the same hotel, aren't we? On est dans le même hôtel, non?*

Sophie Listen to Nicolas talking to a woman next to him in a queue. Try to work out who she's with?

Track 7

Nicolas C'est joli ici, non?

English woman Oui, quelle belle vue!

Nicolas Vous êtes ici en vacances ou pour le travail?

English woman Je suis ici avec ma sœur.

Nicolas Vous êtes d'où?

English woman De Leeds. Nous sommes anglaises.

Nicolas Hmm ... Vous parlez bien le français.

English woman Merci. J'étudie le français.

Nicolas Ah.

Track 8

Nicolas Did you spot who was with her? It was her sister.

Sophie In French there are several ways of asking a question. You can make a statement into a question by making your voice go up at the end. You can also put **Est-ce que** at the beginning: **Il arrive mardi? Est-ce qu'il arrive mardi?**
Is he arriving on Tuesday?

Nicolas *Are you here for the match? Est-ce que vous êtes ici pour le match?*

Do you know where the stadium is? Est-ce que vous savez où se trouve le stade?

Can I help you? Est-ce que je peux vous aider? or Je peux vous aider?

Listen to some of the questions from the **asking questions** section in your book.

- Sophie** *Who? is* **Qui ?**
Who's the CEO? **Qui est le PDG?**
Who is not drinking wine? **Qui ne boit pas de vin?**
Whose are these keys? **À qui sont ces clés?**
- Nicolas** *When? is* **quand?**
When's his birthday? **C'est quand, son anniversaire?**
When did you two get married? **Quand est-ce que vous vous êtes mariés?**
When are they going to leave? **Quand est-ce qu'ils vont partir?**
- Sophie** *Where? is* **où?**
Where were you born? **Où est-ce que tu es né?**
Where are you going? **Tu vas où? Vous allez où?**
Where are you from? **Tu es d'où? Vous êtes d'où?**
- Nicolas** *Why? is* **pourquoi?**
Why are you staying in Paris? **Pourquoi est-ce que tu restes à Paris?**
Why are we waiting? **Pourquoi est-ce qu'on attend?**
Why not? **Pourquoi pas?**
- Sophie** *Which? is* **quel?**
Which restaurant is it? **C'est quel restaurant?**
Which language do you find easiest? **Quelle langue est-ce que vous trouvez la plus facile?**
What activities are planned? **Quelles activités sont prévues?**
- Nicolas** *There are a variety of words for what? The most common are* **qu'est-ce que** *and* **quoi.**
What's happening? **Qu'est-ce qui se passe?**
What do you want? **Qu'est-ce que vous voulez?**
What?!? **Quoi?!?**
What's the email address? **C'est quoi, l'adresse mail?**
- Sophie** *The word for how? is* **Comment?**
How are things going? **Comment ça va?**
How do you say 'website' in French? **Comment est-ce qu'on dit website en français?**
How do you eat snails? **Comment est-ce que on mange les escargots?**
- Nicolas** *How much? or how many? is* **combien?**
How much is it? **C'est combien?**

*How much do they earn? **Combien est-ce qu'ils gagnent?***

Don't forget that when **combien** is followed by a noun, you need to follow it with **de**, which literally means *how much, how many of ...*

*How much time have we got left? **Il nous reste combien de temps?***

*How many children do you have? **Vous avez combien d'enfants?***

Track 9

Nicolas **Avoir** means *to have* and is an essential verb to know.

You use it to talk about family

J'ai un frère et une soeur. *I've got one brother and one sister.*

Nous n'avons pas d'enfants. *We haven't got any children.*

... and you use it to talk about age:

Ma mère a soixante ans. *My mother's 60.*

Les jumeaux ont sept ans. *The twins are seven.*

It's also used in all sorts of expressions.

Sophie Like **avoir faim**, *to be hungry*, **avoir peur** *to be afraid*, **avoir mal au cœur** *to feel sick*. Try saying these: **avoir faim, avoir peur, avoir mal au cœur**

Nicolas **Avoir le cafard** is *to feel down in the dumps*: **J'ai le cafard** – *I'm feeling down.*

Sophie If **j'ai le cafard** means *I'm feeling down*. How do you think you say Nico's feeling down?

Nico a le cafard.

Track 10

Sophie I asked Nicolas about Sébastien, **Qui est Sébastien?** and it turns out he's his older brother, **son frère aîné**.

As you listen to Nicolas, see if you can find out the name of the town where Sébastien lives.

Track 11

Nicolas **Sébastien, c'est mon grand frère. Il a vingt-neuf ans. Il est marié mais il est séparé de sa femme et ils ne vivent pas ensemble. Il a une petite fille, Lola, qui a juste un an. Elle vit avec sa mère et, Sébastien, il vit tout seul. Il a une petite maison à Bayonne, près de la gare. Il n'a pas de jardin, mais il a une belle terrasse. La ville est très agréable ... c'est assez animée, surtout l'été. C'est parfait pour lui.**

Track 12

Sophie Did you spot that Sébastien lives in Bayonne?

Listen again, this time for the **r** sound in words like **marié, séparé** and **agréable**. The French **r** sound is nothing like the English sound. It is made at the back of your throat, not in the middle of your mouth like the English *r*. It's not a particularly easy sound for English speakers. It might help if you keep the tip of your tongue behind your bottom teeth as you say it. Try repeating a few individual words first: **Paris, français, arriver, mon frère**

Nicolas Now listen to to the next part of our conversation to find out what Sébastien is like. You'll hear **sympa** – which is a word you're bound to come across often. It mean *nice, pleasant* – **sympa**.

Track 13

Sophie Il est comment, Sébastien?

Nicolas Il est vraiment sympa. Il est très généreux et affectueux ... un peu paresseux pourtant, et horriblement maladroit!

Sophie Il est grand comme toi?

Nicolas Oui, il est assez grand mais pas très musclé! Je suis bien plus sportif que lui.

Track 14

Sophie If you listen again you'll hear lots of **r** sounds in Nicolas' description of his brother? Try repeating some of the phrases.

Nicolas Il est vraiment sympa.

Il est très généreux.

un peu paresseux

horriblement maladroit

Sophie Listen to this snippet of conversation. Who's Marion? Where does she live? What's she like?

Track 15

Nicolas Et toi, tu as des frères et sœurs, Sophie?

Sophie Moi, non! Je suis fille unique. Mais j'ai un cousin et trois cousines. Une de mes cousines, Marion, habite tout près d'ici. Elle a un joli petit appartement moderne.

Nicolas Elle est comment, ta cousine?

Sophie Elle est très élégante, brune, mince, cheveux longs ...

Nicolas Et elle est sympa?

Sophie Ben oui, un peu folle, mais très gentille!

Track 16

Nicolas Listen again to Sophie, concentrating this time on the feminine forms of the adjectives used to describe Marion: **élégante, brune, folle** and **gentille**.

Sophie How would you reply if you were asked **Tu as des frères et sœurs?**

Nicolas And how would you describe a man as a bit crazy but very kind?

.....

Sophie Un peu fou mais très gentil.

chapter 3: what you do in life

Track 17

Sophie Chapter 3: **what you do in life**. To talk about work, you're going to need the verb **travailler**. *I work* is **je travaille**. There are various different words you could use to say *my job*: **mon travail, mon métier, mon emploi, mon poste**.

Nicolas To find out what someone does, you can either ask **Qu'est-ce que vous faites comme travail?** or **Qu'est-ce que vous faites dans la vie?**

If you know the person well, you might use **tu**, so you'd say **tu fais** instead of **vous faites**: **Qu'est-ce que tu fais comme travail? Qu'est-ce que tu fais dans la vie?**

Sophie When you answer, remember that, unlike English, you don't need to use **un** or **une** in front of the job name:

I'm an accountant. **Je suis comptable.**

I'm a designer, **Je suis graphiste.**

I'm a trainee. **Je suis stagiaire.**

Nicolas One way that you can really improve your French pronunciation is to put the stress on the right syllable in words. It's easy, because unlike English (where the stress is totally unpredictable), in French the stress falls on the last syllable of a word. It's a more gentle stress than in English, but if you can get it right, you'll immediately sound much more French. Listen to these words and repeat them, making sure that you put the stress on the last syllable.

important

responsable

directeur

biologiste

Sophie Now try these sentences.

I'm doing work experience. **Je fais un stage en entreprise.**

He works in a hospital. Il travaille dans un hôpital.

Do you work for an international bank? Tu travailles pour une banque internationale?

I look after the company website. Je m'occupe du site web de l'entreprise.

Sophie Listen to this conversation with Nicolas. See if you can find out what his parents do.

Track 18

Sophie Ton frère Sébastien, qu'est-ce qu'il fait comme travail?

Nicolas Sébastien? Il est photographe pour un magazine de mode.

Sophie Waouh! Pas mal. Et ton père, il est professeur, non?

Nicolas Ah non, mon père est à la retraite. Il était ingénieur.

Sophie Ah. Et ta mère, qu'est-ce qu'elle fait?

Nicolas Elle, elle travaille dans un hôpital. Elle est responsable du système informatique.

Sophie Oh, intéressant! Moi aussi, j'aimerais faire un travail comme ça.

Track 19

Sophie Can you explain what Nicolas' parents do? His dad is retired, used to be a engineer. His mum works in a hospital, she manages the IT system.

Track 20

Sophie The most common verbs in French have an infinitive that ends in **-er**.

Nicolas ... like **travailler** to work, **aider** to help and **demander** to ask.

Sophie If you know the present tense endings, then you can apply them to any regular **-er** verb, even if it's one you have not met before. The good news is that all the singular endings, plus the ending for the *they* form of the verb all sound the same, even though the spelling is different.

Nicolas **Travailler** means *to work*. So how do you say *I work*?

.....

Sophie **je travaille**

Nicolas *you work* – using **tu**

.....

Sophie **tu travailles**

Nicolas *he works*
.....

Sophie **il travaille**

Nicolas *they work*
.....

Sophie **ils travaillent**

Nicolas How about **jouer** *to play*. How do you say *I play*?
.....

Sophie **je joue**

Nicolas *we play*
.....

Sophie **nous jouons**

Nicolas *you play, using vous_*
.....

Sophie **vous jouez**

Track 21

Sophie If you want to say how long something has been going on, French is a bit different from English. Whereas as in English we say *I have been working here for three years*, using a past tense, in French you use a verb in the present tense, together with the word **depuis** *since*. So *I have been working here for ten years* is **Je travaille ici depuis dix ans**.

Nicolas Try answering some questions using **depuis** in your answer. Follow the instruction.

Sophie **Vous êtes à Paris depuis combien de temps?**

Nicolas Say you've been in Paris for three weeks.
.....

Je suis à Paris depuis trois semaines.

Sophie **Vous travaillez à mi-temps depuis quand?**

Nicolas Say you've been working part-time since last year.
.....

Je travaille à mi-temps depuis l'année dernière.

Sophie **Votre frère est chef du marketing depuis quand?**

Nicolas Say your brother has been head of marketing since September.

.....

Mon frère est chef du marketing depuis le mois de septembre.

Nicolas Listen to the conversation to see what two jobs Sophie's mother does.

Track 22

Nicolas **Et toi, ta mère travaille, Sophie?**

Sophie **Oui, elle travaille dans le secteur du tourisme.**

Nicolas **Elle travaille dans un hôtel?**

Sophie **Non, elle travaille à l'office du tourisme. Elle s'occupe des relations publiques.**

Nicolas **Bien, c'est intéressant comme travail.**

Sophie **Oui, mais depuis six mois, elle travaille à mi-temps parce qu'elle s'occupe aussi du bébé de ma cousine.**

Nicolas **Ahhh! S'occuper d'un bébé, ça, c'est du travail!!**

Track 23

Nicolas Did you work out that Sophie's mother works part-time in PR – **les relations publiques** – in a tourist office, and she also looks after her niece's baby.

Sophie Listen again and focus on the way the stress on the last syllable makes many words that are very similar in English and French sound quite different: *tourism* **tourisme**, *sector* **secteur**, *relations* **relations**, *public* **publiques**, *interesting* **intéressant** and *cousin* **cousine**.

Nicolas Before we leave the subject of work, **le travail** isn't the only French word for a job – you'll also hear **le métier**. **Métier**.

Sophie ... not to mention **le boulot**, which is a slang word. **Boulot**. ... And **le job**.

chapter 4: conversation strategies

Track 24

Sophie Chapter 4. There's an art to conversation. A good conversation feels comfortable. As well as the odd pause now and then, it includes comments and prompts ... even interruptions in the form of a question or an exclamation.

Nicolas If you lose the thread, don't be afraid to say you don't understand:

Excuse-moi ...

Excusez-moi ...

Sophie **Je ne comprends pas ...** *I don't understand.*

Je ne sais pas si j'ai bien compris. *I don't know if I've understood properly.*

Nicolas You try it. **Excusez-moi, Je ne comprends pas, Je ne sais pas si j'ai bien compris.**

Sophie It helps to be specific. For example, if you hear **éteindre** and don't know that it means *to switch off*, you can say:

Je ne comprends pas le mot 'éteindre'. *I don't understand the word éteindre.*

Je n'ai pas compris le mot 'éteindre'. *I didn't understand the word éteindre.*

Qu'est-ce qu' 'éteindre' veut dire? *What does éteindre mean?*

Nicolas Try saying you don't understand the word **cerise**.

.....

Je ne comprends pas le mot 'cerise'. Je n'ai pas compris le mot 'cerise'.

Sophie **En anglais, une cerise, c'est a cherry.**

Nicolas Now ask what **poids lourd** means.

.....

Qu'est-ce que 'poids lourd' veut dire?

Sophie **Ça veut dire HGV.**

Track 25

Nicolas If you have trouble understanding, you can ask the other person to repeat or speak more slowly. If you know the person well, you can use **tu**:

Qu'est-ce que tu as dit? *What did you say?*

Est-ce que tu pourrais répéter, s'il te plaît? *Could you repeat that please?*

Tu peux parler plus lentement? *Can you speak more slowly?*

Sophie If you don't know someone well, you'll be using **vous**. Try repeating these questions.

What did you say? **Qu'est-ce que vous avez dit?**

Could you repeat that please? **Est-ce que vous pourriez répéter, s'il vous plaît?**

Can you speak more slowly? **Vous pouvez parler plus lentement?**

Nicolas You'll also want to check that you're getting your message across.
Do you understand me? is **Vous me comprenez?** or **Tu me comprends?**

Sophie Or you can say *Are you following?* **Vous suivez?** or **Tu suis?**

Nicolas If you want to explain what you've just said, *Let me explain* or *Let me clarify*, you'd say: **Laissez-moi vous expliquer.** Try it:
Laissez-moi vous expliquer.

Sophie If ever you're stuck for a word, just say so:
I've forgotten the word. **J'ai oublié le mot.**

Nicolas Or even *It's on the tip of my tongue.* **Je l'ai sur le bout de la langue.**

Sophie Ask for help when you need it.
What's that called? **Comment ça s'appelle?**
What's this called in French? **Comment est-ce qu'on dit ça en français?**

Sophie How would you ask what the French is for *air conditioning*.
.....
Comment est-ce qu'on dit air-conditioning en français?

Nicolas *Air conditioning, c'est la climatisation.*

Track 26

Sophie You can show you're following with expressions that can convey just about any emotion, depending on how you say them:
Vraiment. Vraiment? Vraiment?

Nicolas **Sérieusement?**

Sophie **Oh là là!**

Nicolas **Waouh!**

Sophie **Mon Dieu!**

Sophie **Tiens donc! Incroyable!**

Nicolas **Sans blague!**

Sophie **Quel cauchemar!**

Nicolas Now you try a few.

Sophie **Quelle chance!**

Sophie **Sans blague!**

Nicolas **Mon Dieu!**

Sophie **Ouf!**

Sophie You can be more specific with **quel**:

How stupid! **Quelle bêtise!**

Nicolas *What a good idea!* **Quelle bonne idée!**

Sophie *What a disaster!* **Quelle catastrophe!**

Nicolas *What a coincidence!* **Quelle coïncidence!**

Sophie *What a pity!* **Quel dommage!**

Nicolas *How dreadful!* **Quelle horreur!**

Sophie *What a day!* **Quelle journée!**

Nicolas *What a pleasure!* **Quel plaisir!**

Sophie *What a surprise!* **Quelle surprise!**

Nicolas You can also use an adjective on its own or with **que c'est**:

How difficult. **Difficile.** Or **Que c'est difficile.**

Sophie *How sad.* **Triste.** **Que c'est triste.**

Nicolas *How easy.* **Facile.** **Que c'est facile.**

Sophie *How kind, How thoughtful.* **Gentil.** **Que c'est gentil.**

Track 27

Sophie It's your turn now. Answer these questions.

Nicolas Someone tells you some interesting news. How might you react?

.....

Que c'est intéressant!

Sophie Using **vous**, how do you check that the other person has understood and that they are following?

.....

Vous me comprenez? Vous suivez?

Nicolas How do you ask someone if she could repeat a question?

.....

Vous pouvez répéter la question, s'il vous plaît?

Sophie Somebody's been thoughtful towards you. What could you say?

.....

Que c'est gentil.

Nicolas How might you say *What a pity!*?

.....

Quel dommage!

Sophie And how would you show you're relieved?

.....

Ouf!

Track 28

Nicolas Everybody uses words that are not absolutely essential, such as *well then, right, let's see*. They make a conversation sound natural ... and they give you thinking time.

Sophie There are a couple of ways to say *Well then ..., So ..., Right then ...*: **Euh ben ..., Alors ..., Eh bien ...**

Other useful expressions are:

Nicolas *however* **pourtant**

Sophie *so, therefore* **alors**

Nicolas *anyway* **de toute façon**

Sophie *to be honest* **à vrai dire**

Nicolas *as a matter of fact* **en effet**

Sophie *for example* **par exemple**

Nicolas *that is, in other words* **c'est-à-dire**

Sophie *let's see* **on verra. Eh bien, Nico, on verra ...**

Track 29

Nicolas Listen to this conversation. You should be able to spot a number of those little words and phrases people use to keep the conversation flowing. How does Sophie react to the news of Sébastien's lottery win?

Track 30

Sophie **Alors, ça va, Nico?**

Nicolas **Euh ben, oui, ça va.**

Sophie **Et ton frère, Sébastien?**

Nicolas **Ben en fait, Sébastien, il a eu un accident de voiture.**

Sophie **Vraiment? Il va bien?**

Nicolas **Oui oui, mais sa voiture est irréparable.**

- Sophie** C'est dommage. Mais heureusement qu'il va bien.
- Nicolas** Tout à fait! Mais tu sais qu'il vient d'avoir une bonne nouvelle, là, récemment – il a gagné au Loto!
- Sophie** Il a gagné au Loto? Sans blague? Ben, c'est incroyable, ça! Quelle chance!
- Nicolas** Eh oui!
- Sophie** Alors, dis-moi tout. Il a gagné combien? Il peut acheter une voiture neuve!

Track 31

- Nicolas** Well, Sophie was amazed to hear that news. She could hardly believe Sébastien's stroke of good luck.

chapter 5: been there, done that

Track 32

- Nicolas** **Chapter 5, been there, done that** – all about the past. To talk about what you've done in French, you use the perfect tense. It's very similar to English: it uses the word *have* with a past participle: *I have found, I have visited, I have bought, I have eaten*. The difference is that in French **j'ai mangé** not only means *I have eaten*, but it also translates *I ate* and *I have been eating*.
- Sophie** A lot of French past participles end in **é** ... listen to a couple to remind you of the pronunciation:
- Nicolas** travaillé
mangé
laissé
- Sophie** Now try repeating these short sentences, paying particular attention to the **é** sound at the end of the past participle:
- Sophie** *I worked until 11 o'clock.*
- Nicolas** **J'ai travaillé jusqu'à onze heures.**
- Sophie** *Someone has left a message.*
- Nicolas** **Quelqu'un a laissé un message.**
- Sophie** *We have looked up his name on the internet.*
- Nicolas** **Nous avons recherché son nom sur internet.**
- Sophie** *What time did you start?*
- Nicolas** **Tu as commencé à quelle heure?**

Track 33

Sophie Some French past participles end in **u**. Remember you need to make this sound by pushing your lips forward and puckering them to make a small circle.

Nicolas Try repeating these past participles ending in **u**:

vu

bu

perdu

Sophie Have a go at some sentences and see if you can make that **u** sound really French:

Nicolas *He's lost his bag.*

Sophie **Il a perdu son sac.**

Nicolas *We drank the white wine.*

Sophie **Nous avons bu le vin blanc.**

Nicolas *Did you sell your old car?*

Sophie **Vous avez vendu votre vieille voiture?**

Track 34

Nicolas There's a third type of past participle, which ends in **i**: **fini, choisi, grandi**. Try saying them after Sophie.

Sophie **fini**

choisi

grandi

Nicolas Try some sentences from the book:

Sophie *I've finished the almond tart.*

Nicolas **J'ai fini la tarte aux amandes.**

Sophie *You son has grown much taller.*

Nicolas **Votre fils a beaucoup grandi.**

Sophie *What did you choose?*

Nicolas **Qu'est-ce que vous avez choisi?**

Track 35

Sophie All French verbs have two parts for the perfect tense, but a small group use **être** instead of **avoir** for the first part.

Nicolas These are mostly verbs relating to movement, like **aller** *to go* and **venir** *to come*, but some relate to a change of state, for example **naître** *to be born* and **mourir** *to die*.

Sophie Try repeating some of these:

Nicolas *I left*

Sophie **je suis partie**

Nicolas *he arrived*

Sophie **il est arrivé**

Nicolas *you came*

Sophie **vous êtes venu**

Nicolas Now have a go at a few sentences:

Sophie *Have you ever been to Brittany?*

Nicolas **Tu es déjà allé en Bretagne?**

Sophie *My parents stayed at home.*

Nicolas **Mes parents sont restés à la maison.**

Sophie *Why did she go out?*

Nicolas **Pourquoi est-ce qu'elle est sortie?**

Sophie Listen to this conversation about what Nicolas did yesterday evening – **hier soir**. See if you can work out what was wrong with him.

Track 36

Sophie **Qu'est-ce que tu as fait hier soir, Nico?**

Nicolas **Hier soir? Ben, rien de spécial.**

Sophie **Tu n'es pas sorti?**

Nicolas **Ben ... non. Je voulais sortir mais je n'ai pas pu, finalement.**

Sophie **Ah bon, pourquoi?**

Nicolas **J'ai eu une migraine abominable.**

Sophie **Oh non, mon pauvre! C'est horrible, les migraines. Ça va mieux maintenant?**

Nicolas **Oui, oui, aujourd'hui, ça va.**

Track 37

Sophie Nico had a really bad migraine so he couldn't go out – did you get that?

Nicolas Listen to that conversation again and count up how many perfect tense verbs there are. You might need to listen several times.

Track 38

Sophie There were four perfect tense verbs: **tu as fait, tu n'es pas sorti, je n'ai pas pu** and **j'ai eu**.

Nicolas And it was **Tu n'es pas sorti?** *Didn't you go out?* that used **être** and not **avoir** in front of the past participle.

Track 39

Nicolas Questions about what someone's been doing are a very good way of starting a conversation.

Sophie *Have you seen this film?* **Vous avez vu ce film?**

Nicolas *Have you tried this nice little Beaujolais Nouveau?* **Vous avez goûté de ce petit Beaujolais nouveau?**

Sophie *Did you visit the catacombs yesterday?* **Tu as visité les catacombes hier?**

Nicolas *What interesting things have you been up to this morning?* **Qu'est-ce que tu as fait de beau ce matin?**

Sophie *Were you brought up here in Normandy?* **Vous avez grandi ici en Normandie?**

Nicolas And in a crisis, being able to explain what's happened is vital.

Au secours! C'est une urgence!

Sophie That means *Help! It's an emergency!* so practise it, just in case!

Nicolas **Au secours! C'est une urgence!**

Sophie Now try repeating a few more key phrases ... Hopefully, though, you'll never need to use them!

Nicolas *I need help.* **J'ai besoin d'aide.**

Sophie *There's been a theft.* **Il y a eu un vol.**

My bag has been stolen. **On m'a volé mon sac.**

Nicolas *I've been attacked.* **On m'a agressé.**

Sophie *I fell off the ladder.* **Je suis tombée de l'échelle.**

Nicolas *He has lost consciousness.* **Il a perdu connaissance.**

Sophie *She's fainted. Elle s'est évanouie.*

Track 40

Nicolas To finish off this chapter, listen to the rest of my conversation with Sophie. See if you can work out where she went yesterday evening, and who with.

Track 41

Nicolas Et toi, Sophie? Tu es sortie?

Sophie Oui, je suis allée au cinéma avec un de mes collègues.

Nicolas Qu'est-ce que vous avez vu comme film?

Sophie On a vu un film d'amour un peu bête ... mais on s'est bien amusés!

Nicolas Un film d'amour ... eh! C'est romantique! Et après ça?

Sophie Eh bien, après, euh ... on est allés prendre un café ... dans le bar, tu sais, près de la gare.

Nicolas Soirée sympa, alors!

Sophie Ben ... oui et non! Parce que, malheureusement, la soirée a mal fini.

Nicolas Ah bon, pourquoi? Qu'est-ce qui s'est passé?

Sophie Ben, au bar, on m'a volé mon sac ... je l'avais mis sous la table, et puis ...

Nicolas Oh non! Tu as appelé la police?

Track 42

Sophie Not a good ending to our evening at the cinema! Did you work out what happened? If not, listen again and try some of the techniques suggested in the Audio Support Pack.

chapter 6: how things were

Track 43

Sophie Chapter 6 is about describing how things were in the past and saying what you did or what you used to do. The tense for that is the imperfect.

To form it, take the **nous** form of the verb in the present tense, remove the ending **-ons** and replace it with the appropriate imperfect endings.

Nicolas So **aller** is **nous allons** in the present and in the imperfect it is **j'allais, tu allais, il allait, nous allions, vous alliez** and **ils allaient**. Did you notice how the endings sound the same except for those with **nous** and **vous**?

- Sophie** Try repeating these sentences, which use imperfect tense verbs: *I often used to go to Brittany.* **J'allais souvent en Bretagne.**
- Nicolas** *I played on the beach for hours on end.* **Je jouais sur la plage des heures entières.**
- Sophie** *We would stay in the same hotel every year.* **Nous descendions au même hôtel tous les ans.**
- Nicolas** *We used to buy our cheese in the market.* **Nous achetions notre fromage au marché.**

Track 44

- Sophie** Listen out for the ending of the verb after *they*. It's spelt **a-i-e-n-t** but pronounced **-aient**: *My grandparents lived a very simple life.* **Mes grands-parents vivaient très simplement. vivaient**
- Nicolas** *They often used to spend their holidays abroad.* **Ils passaient souvent leurs vacances à l'étranger. passaient**
- Sophie** Did you notice that you can't hear the final **e-n-t**?
- Nicolas** Yes, the ending **e-n-t** is silent in the present tense and it's silent in the imperfect too.
- Sophie** So *they play* is **ils jouent** and *they used to play or were playing* is **ils jouaient. jouent, jouaient**
- Nicolas** Try them with the verb *to talk*: **parler.**
 What is *they talk* or *they're talking*?

ils parlent
- Sophie** And what about *they used to talk* or *they were talking*?
ils parlaient

Track 45

- Nicolas** The most useful verb to describe how things were in the past is **être to be**: **j'étais, tu étais, il était, nous étions, vous étiez, ils étaient**
- Sophie** *The film was captivating.* **Le film était passionnant.**
- Nicolas** *It was very nice.* **C'était très sympa.**
- Sophie** *When I was young ...* **Quand j'étais jeune ...**
- Nicolas** *When we were children ...* **Quand nous étions enfants ... Quand nous étions enfants, nous habitions un village près du lac de Neuchâtel. ... we lived in a village near Lake Neuchâtel.**

Track 46

Sophie There are other expressions to refer to the past, for example: **il y a longtemps** *a long time ago*

Nicolas **à cette époque-là** *at that time* – or you can also say **en ce temps-là**

Sophie **dans les années quatre-vingt-dix** *is in the nineties*

Sophie And a famous line which opens most fairytales: **il était une fois** *once upon a time*

Nicolas So how would you say: *At that time, I used to live in France?*

.....

Sophie **À cette époque-là, j’habitais en France.**

Nicolas *In the eighties, I was working freelance – à mon compte.*

.....

Sophie **Dans les années quatre-vingt, je travaillais à mon compte.**

Track 47

Sophie A lot of phrases you can use to be more precise about how often something used to happen rely on good pronunciation of the sound **en**, so have a go at repeating after us: *often* **souvent**

Sophie *usually* **habituellement**

Nicolas **normalement**

Sophie **généralement**

Nicolas *regularly* **régulièrement**

Sophie *now and then* **de temps en temps**

Nicolas *once in a while* **une fois de temps en temps**

Sophie *rarely* **rarement**

Track 48

Nicolas Over to you!

Sophie If *every day* is **tous les jours**, how would you say *every month*?

.....

Nicolas **tous les mois.** And *every year*?

.....

Sophie **tous les ans**

And the next one is a bit tricky. *Every week?*

Nicolas toutes les semaines

Track 49

Sophie Nicolas and I had a chat about our childhood. Listen. Did we both feel the same way about school?

Track 50

Nico Tu aimais l'école quand tu étais petite?

Sophie Ah oui! J'adorais l'école primaire. J'habitais dans un petit village et l'école n'était pas très grande et donc il n'y avait pas beaucoup d'élèves. C'était sympa, je connaissais tout le monde. Et toi?

Nico Ah moi, je détestais l'école!

Sophie C'est vrai?

Nico Absolument! Je ne voulais jamais y aller. À midi, je rentrais manger à la maison, et quelquefois, je ne retournais pas en classe l'après-midi.

Sophie Oh là là!

Track 51

Nicolas Did you catch what Sophie said about school? **J'adorais l'école, c'était sympa, je connaissais tout le monde.**

Sophie Yes, I really liked school! But you didn't, did you Nico? **Tu détestais l'école!**

Track 52

Nicolas If you want to insist on the idea of being right in the middle of doing something when something else happened, use the imperfect of **être en train de** and a verb in the infinitive.

Sophie *I was just saving the file when the computer crashed.* **J'étais en train de sauvegarder le document quand l'ordinateur s'est arrêté tout seul.**

Track 53

Nicolas Sophie and I chatted about the time I was living in Africa.

Sophie Listen out for why he lived in Africa, where he lived and for how long.

Track 54

- Sophie** Tu habitais en Afrique quand tu étais petit, non?
- Nico** Oui. Mon père était ingénieur et on voyageait beaucoup à cause de son travail. Nous avons passé cinq ans au Sénégal.
- Sophie** Intéressant! Ça t'a plu?
- Nico** Oui, assez. Nous avons un grand appartement à Dakar – la capitale. J'avais beaucoup de copains là-bas.
- Sophie** Et quand est-ce que vous êtes revenus en France alors?
- Nico** Oh, il y a longtemps! Je suis revenu quand j'avais dix ans.
- Sophie** Ah oui, en effet!

Track 55

- Sophie** Did you understand the main points of what Nico said?
- Nicolas** If so, *well done*, **bravo!** If not, listen again.

chapter 7: lifestyle choices

Track 56

- Sophie** Chapter 7, **lifestyle choices**: all about what you like and what interests you ...
Saying you like or don't like something is easy in French. The verb to use is **aimer**. Use it on its own if you are madly in love with someone or something:
- Nicolas** **Je t'aime, mon amour.** *I love you, darling.*
- Sophie** **J'aime mon pays.** *I love my country.*
- Nicolas** Use **aimer** with **bien** to say what you like:
- Sophie** *I like coffee.* **J'aime bien le café.**
- Nicolas** *Do you like your colleagues?* **Tu aimes bien tes collègues?**
- Sophie** You can change the emphasis by replacing **bien** with other words like:
assez *quite*, **beaucoup** *a lot*, **vraiment** *really*, **énormément** *enormously*
- Nicolas** *I like living here very much.* **J'aime beaucoup habiter ici.**
- Sophie** *I absolutely love working with children.* **J'aime énormément travailler avec les enfants.**
- It's just as straightforward to say what someone else likes.
They really like the room. **Ils aiment vraiment la chambre.**
We quite like this climate. **Nous aimons assez ce climat.**

They like the new system so much. Ils aiment tellement le nouveau système.

Nicolas *Do you really like it? Vous aimez vraiment ça?*

Sophie To say what you don't like, you put **n'** before **aimer** and **pas** after it:

I don't like this colour. Je n'aime pas cette couleur.

My parents don't like tattoos. Mes parents n'aiment pas les tatouages.

Nicolas For the things you really don't like, you can add **pas du tout** *not at all* for emphasis:

I really don't like insects. Je n'aime pas du tout les insectes.

I can't stand rudeness. Je n'aime pas du tout l'impolitesse.

Track 57

Sophie How would you say you can't stand television?

.....

Je n'aime pas du tout la télévision.

Nicolas Or that you really don't like bananas?

.....

Je n'aime pas du tout les bananes.

Track 58

Sophie To say you used to like something, all you do is replace **j'aime** with **j'aimais**.

Quand j'étais petite, j'aimais bien la lecture. *When I was little I used to like reading.*

Tu n'aimais pas l'école? *Didn't you like school?*

Nicolas Another way to talk about what you like is to say what interests you.

M'intéresse ... *I'm interested in ...* is the phrase to use. It literally means *... interests me.*

Sophie *I'm interested in history. L'histoire m'intéresse.*

Your point interests me greatly. Votre argument m'intéresse beaucoup.

I'm interested in her theories. Ses théories m'intéressent.

Nicolas For things that don't interest you, you put **ne** before **m'intéresse** and **pas** afterwards:

Sophie *Skating doesn't appeal to me. Le patinage ne m'intéresse pas.*
Crosswords don't interest me. Les mots croisés ne m'intéressent pas.

Track 59

Sophie Have a go at saying you like things:
Say you like the cinema
.....

Nicolas **J'aime bien le cinéma.**

Sophie Say you're interested in photography.
.....

Nicolas **La photographie m'intéresse.**

Sophie Say you like sport a lot.
.....

Nicolas **J'aime beaucoup le sport.**

Sophie Say the children quite like classical music.
.....

Nicolas **Les enfants aiment assez la musique classique.**

Sophie **Je préfère** means *I prefer*. Written down, **préférer** looks very similar to the English word prefer, but those French **r** sounds make it sound very different. Try repeating it: **préférer**

Nicolas *I prefer swimming. Je préfère la natation.*

Sophie *I prefer sailing. Je préfère la voile.*

Nicolas Now you say which sport or activity you prefer.
.....

Nicolas The word for *favourite* is also **préféré**. *Vivaldi's my favourite composer. Vivaldi est mon compositeur préféré.*

Sophie *London is my favourite city. Londres est ma ville préférée.*
Here are my favourite recipes. Voici mes recettes préférées.

Nicolas Now you say which is your favourite town or city.
.....

Track 60

Sophie Words that end in **-t-i-o-n** in French sound rather different from the way we would pronounce them in English. Compare the word *nation* with **nation**, *conversation* with **conversation**. Try repeating these words, remembering to put the stress on the last syllable:

nation

Nicolas **nation**

Sophie *conversation*

Nicolas **conversation**

Sophie *conservation*

Nicolas **conservation**

Sophie *immigration*

Nicolas **immigration**

Nicolas Listen to the conversation. Can you work out why Sophie doesn't like outdoor activities?

Track 61

Nicolas **Dis donc, Sophie, tu n'aimes pas le sport, toi?**

Sophie **Si, moi, j'aime bien. Je fais même beaucoup de sport. Je fais un peu d'équitation, mais surtout de la natation. En fait, mon sport préféré, c'est la voile. J'adore ça! Et toi, tu es sportif?**

Nicolas **Euh ben ... oui, assez. L'activité physique, c'est super important pour le bien-être, hein! Moi, je fais de l'escalade; ça me plaît bien et j'ai les qualités qu'il faut: je suis déterminé et je sais coopérer avec les autres. C'est important, ça, la coopération, quand on fait de l'escalade.**

Sophie **De l'escalade, tu es sérieux? Mais c'est hyper dangereux, ça, non?**

Nicolas **Noooooon! C'est génial! Mais, à vrai dire, je pense que mon activité préférée, c'est la randonnée.**

Sophie **Vraiment? Tu aimes les activités de plein air, alors!**

Nicolas **Exact. Pas toi? Les beaux paysages, l'air pur ...**

Sophie **Mmm. Les mouches, les abeilles, les guêpes, les moustiques ...**

Nicolas **Oh là là ... je vois, tu n'aimes pas les insectes! Je comprends maintenant pourquoi tu choisis les sports nautiques!**

Track 62

Nicolas So now we know: Sophie doesn't like outdoor activities because she doesn't like insects.

Listen to the conversation again and see if you can pick out the words that end in **-t-i-o-n**.

Track 63

Sophie Now it's your turn to talk about what you like. Answer the questions.

Vous préférez les villes ou la campagne?

.....

Nicolas **Vous aimez les activités en plein air?**

.....

Sophie **Les tâches ménagères vous intéressent?**

.....

Nicolas **Qu'est-ce que vous aimez faire quand vous avez du temps libre à la maison?**

.....

Sophie **Et qu'est-ce que vous n'aimez pas faire?**

.....

Nicolas **Est-ce que vous aimez manger au restaurant?**

.....

Sophie **Quel est votre plat préféré?**

Track 64

Sophie Let's finish the chapter with **on**. Remember, literally it means *one*, but in modern everyday conversation in English, **on** is usually translated as *you, we, they* or *people*. French speakers very often use **on** instead of **nous**.

Nicolas Here's a quick reminder of the sort of sentences where you might find this useful little word. Try repeating the sentences.

Sophie *Let's go!* **On y va!**

Shall we go out tomorrow? **On sort demain?**

Can we go round the museum? **Est-ce qu'on peut visiter le musée?**

We get up at six o'clock. **On se lève à six heures.**

We like to have a lie-in. **On aime bien faire la grasse matinée.**

chapter 8: making plans

Track 65

Nicolas Chapter 8 is about making plans.

To arrange when to meet, simply say the day: **lundi, mardi, mercredi** on *Monday, on Tuesday, on Wednesday*. Or **jeudi soir** on *Thursday night*. If you use a date, use the word **le** in front of the day and date. So, *on Friday the 10th* is **le vendredi dix**.

Sophie Use **à** in front of the time, and remember you can't leave out the word **heure**: so to tell a friend you'll meet up *on Saturday the 10th at 11*, you'll need to say: **le samedi dix, à onze heures**.

Track 66

Sophie To tell the time, French people use either the 12- or 24-hour system, so if you want to meet at 6 p.m, you can either say **à six heures du soir**, or **à dix-huit heures**.

How would you say, *on Sunday the 23rd at 8 p.m*?

.....

Nicolas **Le dimanche vingt-trois, à huit heures du soir** or **le dimanche vingt-trois, à vingt heures**.

Track 67

Nicolas There are various ways of suggesting things to do. The simplest is to use a straightforward sentence and raise your voice. *Shall we go to the beach?* **On va à la plage?** *Shall we meet on the 22nd?* **On se retrouve le vingt-deux?**

Another option is to use **si on** with the imperfect, **Si on allait prendre un verre au bar?** *Let's have a drink in the bar.* **Si on faisait un piquenique?** *Shall we have a picnic?*

Sophie You can also say **Ça te dit de ...?** or **Ça vous dit de ...?** *Do you fancy ...?* or *Would you like to ...?* **Ça vous dit de faire une promenade?** *Would you like to go for a walk?*

Nicolas You can also use **Tu voudrais ...?** or **Vous voudriez ...?** *Would you like to ...?*

Sophie Or **On pourrait ...?** *What about ...?* Literally, *We could ...*

Sophie Listen to these suggestions and focus particularly on the intonation.

Nicolas *Shall we go to the restaurant tomorrow night?* **On va au restaurant demain soir?**

Sophie *Would you like to do a bit of sailing on the lake?* **Ça te dit de faire un peu de voile sur le lac?**

Sophie Have a go at repeating these, making sure your voice goes up towards the end: *Would you like to join us in the bar?* **Vous voudriez venir nous retrouver au bar?** *How about going to the cinema?* **On pourrait aller au ciné?**

Nicolas Now ask a couple of friends if they fancy going into town tomorrow.

On va en ville demain? Ça vous dit d'aller en ville demain? Vous voudriez aller en ville demain? On pourrait aller en ville demain?

Sophie Listen to some other ways of making a suggestion.

Nicolas *Why not ... Pourquoi ne pas ... Why don't we have a game of tennis tomorrow?* **Pourquoi ne pas faire une partie de tennis demain?** Like those phrases you've just practised, this one is easy to use as it's followed by an infinitive.

Sophie Did you notice: this time Nicolas' intonation was slightly different. **Pourquoi ne pas faire une partie de tennis demain?**

Nicolas And it is with this phrase too, which starts with **si**: **Si tu venais déjeuner à la maison demain?** *How about you come to us for lunch tomorrow?* With these two expressions, you don't need the rising intonation at the end.

Track 68

Nicolas I rang Sophie the other day to invite her out. Listen and see if you can get the gist of what we planned.

Track 69

Nicolas **On se retrouve mardi soir?**

Sophie **Mardi soir?**

Nicolas **Ben oui, je sais que ce n'est pas la Chandeleur mais si on allait manger des crêpes? Il y a une nouvelle crêperie, rue Saint-Jean.**

Sophie **Bien volontiers. J'adore les crêpes!**

Nicolas **Rendez-vous là-bas alors, à neuf heures, ça te va?**

Sophie **Neuf heures, c'est un peu tard, non? Je mange plus tôt, moi!**

Nicolas **À quelle heure alors? Huit heures, ça te convient mieux?**

Sophie **Oui, d'accord, huit heures, c'est parfait! Alors, à mardi soir!**

Nicolas **D'accord. Ciao!**

Track 70

Sophie Listen again and make a note of the details – the day, the time and the place. You might need to listen a few times.

Track 71

Nicolas If you want to accept an invitation straightaway, you can say *I'd love to* or *We'd love to* **Bien volontiers** or *OK, Yes please!* **D'accord!**

Sophie Or say *Certainly* **Certainement**.

Gladly. **Je serais ravie.**

Nicolas *With great pleasure.* **Avec grand plaisir.**

What a good idea! **Quelle bonne idée!**

Nicolas So, if I were to invite you for a **crêpe**, how would you respond? Say: *I'll be there.*

.....

J'y serai!

Track 72

Sophie You might not always be able to accept an invitation, so it's worth knowing how to say 'no':

Sophie *Unfortunately ...* **Malheureusement ...**

Nicolas *I'm sorry but ...* **Je regrette mais ...**

Sophie *I won't be able to.* **Je ne pourrai pas.**

Nicolas *I wish I could but ...* **J'aimerais bien mais ...**

Track 73

Sophie You may want to explain why you can't accept: **Je ne peux pas ...**

Nicolas *for work reasons. ...* **à cause du travail.**

Sophie *because I'm not free. ...* **parce que je ne suis pas libre.**

Track 74

Nicolas You may also want to leave it open: *I'll see what I can do ...* **Je vais voir ce que je peux faire; Maybe another day** **Peut-être un autre jour.**

Track 75

Sophie Or, if you're not keen and you want to be upfront, say:

It doesn't really appeal to me. **Ça ne me dit rien.**

Track 76

- Nicolas** There are several ways to say what you're going to do in French.
- Sophie** You can use a verb in the future tense. There's a distinctive **-r-** sound before the ending, listen: *I will arrive* **J'arriverai**; *I will go out* **Je sortirai**; *I will reply* **Je répondrai**.
- Nicolas** To invite someone to stay for dinner tonight, say **Vous resterez bien manger ce soir? resterez**
- Sophie** And **Vous viendrez bien au marché avec moi?** is *You'll be coming to the market with me, won't you?*
- Nicolas** So how would you say to your friend *Will you come to the party with me this evening?*
- Sophie** **Tu viendras avec moi à la fête ce soir?**

Track 77

- Nicolas** The alternative to the future tense is to use the verb **aller** followed by an infinitive.
- Sophie** To respond to an invitation, you can say: *I'm going to do my best.* **Je vais faire de mon mieux. je vais faire**
- Nicolas** Or *I'm not going to go out tonight.* **Je ne vais pas sortir ce soir. je ne vais pas sortir**
- Sophie** So how will you ask your friends: *What are you going to do tomorrow?* **Qu'est-ce que vous allez faire demain? vous allez faire**

Track 78

- Sophie** Arrangements often depend on the weather.
- Nicolas** *What's the weather going to be like tomorrow?* **Il va faire quel temps demain?**
- Sophie** *The forecast is for sun on Sunday.* **On prévoit du soleil pour dimanche.**
- Nicolas** As there's never any certainty about the weather, use **si** to make suggestions:
If there's enough snow, we can go snowboarding. **S'il y a assez de neige, on peut aller faire du snowboard.**
- Sophie** *If the weather's nice, I'd like to go windsurfing.*
S'il fait beau, je voudrais faire de la planche à voile.

Track 79

Nicolas To describe the weather, you often need the verb **faire** in French:

*It's a lovely day today. **Il fait beau aujourd'hui.***

*It's too hot, it's a heat wave. **Il fait trop chaud, c'est la canicule.***

*It's cold. **Il fait froid.***

Sophie You also need **il y a** as in **Il y a un petit vent frais.** *There's a bit of a breeze.*

Il n'y a pas beaucoup de neige. *There's not much snow.*

Track 80

Sophie Now it's your turn to make some arrangements. Imagine you're making plans with a few friends.

Ask *What are we going to do tomorrow?*

.....

Nicolas **Qu'est-ce qu'on va faire demain?**

Sophie **S'il fait beau, on va faire une promenade en bateau.**

Nicolas So ... did you understand that your friend has suggested going on a boat trip if the weather is nice tomorrow?

Say it doesn't really appeal to you, and that if it's not raining you'd like to go into town.

.....

Nicolas **Ça ne me dit rien. S'il ne pleut pas, je voudrais aller en ville.**

Sophie **D'accord, avec plaisir. On déjeunera en ville si tu veux.**

Nicolas Your friend is suggesting having lunch in town. You like the sound of that. Say you'd love to. And *See you tomorrow.*

.....

Nicolas **Volontiers. À demain!**

Track 81

Sophie I enjoyed going out for a **crêpe** with Nicolas and we've decided to plan another get-together, and maybe I can get to meet his brother Sébastien again ... Listen and work out what's going to happen and when

Track 82

Sophie **Quelle bonne idée de venir ici! J'ai trouvé les crêpes super bonnes.**

Nicolas **Moi aussi!**

- Sophie** Qu'est-ce qu'il a fait beau aujourd'hui! Quel temps il va faire samedi?
- Nicolas** On prévoit du soleil ... à partir de demain, ce sera même la canicule, il paraît!
- Sophie** J'ai une idée ... Pourquoi ne pas faire un barbecue chez moi, samedi, s'il fait beau?
- Nicolas** Ah mince, désolé, samedi, je ne peux pas. J'aimerais bien mais samedi, s'il ne fait pas trop chaud, j'ai promis à mon frère de faire un peu d'escalade en montagne avec lui. Tu connais mon frère, non? Sébastien?
- Sophie** Sébastien, oui! Un peu. Bon alors, euh ... Dimanche peut-être? Ça te dit, un barbecue, dimanche?
- Nicolas** Ah oui, dimanche, je peux être là!
- Sophie** Et tu pourrais inviter Sébastien aussi, si tu veux, j'aimerais bien le revoir.
- Nicolas** Sébastien, euh oui, pourquoi pas? Ben ... D'accord, je lui en parle ...

Track 83

- Nicolas** Did you get what Sophie's planning and when? She seems very keen on inviting Sébastien.

chapter 9: needs must

Track 84

- Nicolas** Chapter 9 **needs must** is about saying what you want or would like to do, what you must do and what you can do. For this, you need special verbs like **vouloir** *to want*, **devoir** *to have to* and **pouvoir** *to be able to*.
- Sophie** To say what you want to do, use **vouloir**. *I want* is **je veux**. *We want* is **nous voulons**. *They want* is **ils veulent**.
- Nicolas** Be careful, in just those three different forms of that one verb there are three different sounds: **je veux, nous voulons, ils veulent**
- Sophie** Although the sound **eu** is spelt the same, **e – u**, it is pronounced differently: you say **je veux** but it's a more open sound in **ils veulent**. Have a go: **je veux, tu veux, il veut, ils veulent**
- Nicolas** You'll find these two sounds in a lot of common words. Have a go at repeating them: *It's two o'clock. Il est deux heures. Do you want a flower? Tu veux une fleur?*

Track 85

- Nicolas** **Je veux** is the verb to use once you have made up your mind what you want to do. *I want to get fit. Je veux retrouver la forme.*
- Sophie** *I want to change jobs. Je veux changer de profession.*

Nicolas *I want to visit Berlin.* **Je veux visiter Berlin.**

Track 86

Sophie To be a little more aspirational, use the conditional form of **vouloir**: **je voudrais** *I'd like to* or *I'd love to*. For instance, there may be things on your bucket list, like swimming with dolphins: **Je voudrais nager avec les dauphins.**

Nicolas *I'd like to dive in the Great Barrier Reef.* **Je voudrais faire de la plongée sur la Grande Barrière de Corail.**

Nicolas You can also use the conditional form of **vouloir** to make polite suggestions: *Would you like to try some oysters?* **Tu voudrais goûter aux huîtres?** or **Vous voudriez goûter aux huîtres?**

Sophie So how would you ask a good friend if they want to go swimming?

.....

Tu voudrais aller nager?

Nicolas And ask several friends this: *Would you like to go to the match?*

.....

Vous voudriez aller au match?

Track 87

Sophie To talk about what you wanted to do, use the imperfect form of the verb **vouloir**: **je voulais** *I wanted*

Nicolas *When I was little, I wanted to be a teacher.* **Quand j'étais petit, je voulais être professeur.**

Sophie Or use the perfect tense: *We have always wanted to travel.* **Nous avons toujours voulu voyager.**

Track 88

Sophie To say what you have to, or need to, do, you'll need the verb **devoir** in the present tense. It is irregular: **je dois, nous devons, ils doivent**

Nicolas *I must congratulate you.* **Je dois vous féliciter.**

Sophie *We need to confirm the date.* **Nous devons confirmer la date.**

Nicolas *I need to charge my mobile.* **Je dois recharger mon portable.**

Track 89

Sophie Another very common way of saying what has to be done is to use the impersonal verb **il faut**.

Nicolas *We have to leave now. Il faut partir maintenant.*

Sophie *What needs to be done? Qu'est-ce qu'il faut faire?*

Track 90

Nicolas If you want to say what you *should* or *ought to do*, use **devoir** in the conditional: **je devrais**. *I should do a bit more exercise. Je devrais faire un peu plus d'exercise.*

Sophie *You ought to leave a message. Tu devrais laisser un message.*

Track 91

Nicolas Note that **r** sound before the ending, a sign that it is a conditional.

je devrais, nous devrions, ils devraient

Sophie If you don't hear the **r** sound, then it is a different tense, the imperfect, and the meaning changes: **je devais** means *I had to* or *was supposed to*.

Nicolas *I had to wait for them. Je devais les attendre.*

Nicolas So how do you say *I was supposed to come*?

.....

Sophie **Je devais venir.** *And You were supposed to call me yesterday.*

.....

Nicolas **Tu devais m'appeler hier.**

Sophie In the perfect tense, *I had to* is **j'ai dû**. *Last night I had to leave very quickly. Hier soir j'ai dû partir très vite.*

Track 92

Sophie The verb you use to say or ask what you *can* or *may* do is **pouvoir**. Like **vouloir**, it is irregular: *I can* is **je peux**. *We can* is **nous pouvons**. *They can* is **ils peuvent**.

Nicolas Like **vouloir**, it has three different sounds: **je peux, nous pouvons, ils peuvent**

Sophie So, to say what French people so often hear as children, *Where there's a will, there's a way*. Or literally *When you want to, you can*, it's **Quand on veut, on peut**.

Nicolas How will you ask *May I see*?

.....

Je peux voir?

Sophie And *Can I help you?*

.....

Je peux vous aider? or **Je peux t'aider?**

Track 93

Nicolas To say *I could, I would be able to* or *I might*, you need the conditional form of **pouvoir**, with its distinctive **r** sound in the middle of the verb: **je pourrais**.

We could is **nous pourrions. Nous pourrions.**

You can use it to make a suggestion.

I could give you a hand. Je pourrais te donner un coup de main. Je pourrais ... I would be able to ...

Nous pourrions aller la voir? *Could we go and see her?* **Nous pourrions aller la voir?**

You try using it to suggest going into town.

.....

Nous pourrions aller en ville?

Track 94

Sophie Compare **je pourrais** with **je pouvais**. While **je pourrais** means *I could* in the sense of *I would be able to*, **je pouvais**, which is the imperfect, means *I could* in the sense of *I used to be able to*. **Je pourrais, je pouvais.**

Nicolas Listen to these two sentences. Which one means *He used to be able to come everyday?*

Il pouvait venir tous les jours or **Il pourrait venir tous les jours.**

Sophie It's the first one: **Il pouvait venir tous les jours.** The second one, **Il pourrait venir tous les jours**, means *He could or would be able to come everyday.*

Track 95

Nicolas You can also use the perfect tense of **pouvoir** to say what *you could* or *were able to do*: **j'ai pu**

Sophie *I could* or *I was able to talk to him this morning.* **J'ai pu lui parler ce matin.**

Nicolas *We couldn't get in.* **Nous n'avons pas pu entrer.**

Nicolas So how would you say: *I couldn't come.*

.....

Sophie **Je n'ai pas pu venir.**

Track 96

Nicolas When *can* means *know how to*, you need to use the verb **savoir**.

I can swim is **Je sais nager**.

Does he know how to cook? **Il sait faire la cuisine?**

Nicolas So how will you ask a friend if they know how to light the barbecue **allumer le barbecue?**

.....

Tu sais allumer le barbecue?

Track 97

Nicolas Sophie called me after our evening at the **crêperie** and we started planning for the barbecue she's organising on Sunday.

Sophie Listen to the conversation. See if you can work out what Nicolas will be helping me with, and also, what will Sébastien have to do before he can join us?

Track 98

Nicolas Allô.

Sophie Allô, Nico. C'est Sophie.

Nicolas Salut!

Sophie Écoute ... Je veux te remercier pour hier soir. C'était très sympa.

Nicolas Je t'en prie. C'est vrai, c'était sympa ... Et au fait, pour le barbecue dimanche, tu veux un peu d'aide? Je peux te donner un coup de main si tu veux.

Sophie Oh merci! Oui, il y a beaucoup de choses à faire! Je dois faire une liste. Tu pourrais peut-être organiser la musique?

Nicolas Bien sûr! Pas de problème! Mais le plus important, c'est le repas, non? Tu sais faire la cuisine, j'espère?

Sophie Je sais faire un barbecue, oui ... plus ou moins.

Nicolas Je peux t'aider. Nous pouvons le faire ensemble, si tu veux!

Sophie D'accord, je veux bien. À propos ... tu as pu inviter ton frère? Il peut venir?

Nicolas Sébastien? Oui, il doit organiser un baby-sitter, mais il veut bien venir.

Sophie Super!

Track 99

- Nicolas** Did you get that I will help Sophie sort out the music as well as the barbecue, which we'll do together?
- Sophie** And Sébastien, what did he need to do? Listen again if you need to.
- Nicolas** Now listen to the next part of our conversation to hear how I was able to sort out the problem with *the drinks, les boissons*.

Track 100

- Sophie** Catastrophe!
- Nicolas** Quoi? Ça ne va pas?
- Sophie** J'ai voulu acheter les boissons pour le barbecue mais je n'ai pas pu!
- Nicolas** Pourquoi, je ne comprends pas ...
- Sophie** Je n'avais pas ma carte de crédit avec moi, je ne la trouve plus. J'ai dû la laisser chez un copain ... enfin, j'espère!
- Nicolas** Ne panique pas, je peux les acheter, les boissons, ce n'est pas un problème! Tu pourras me rembourser plus tard.
- Sophie** Super, merci beaucoup. Si tu savais comme je suis soulagée ...

Track 101

- Sophie** Nico saved the day by getting the drinks.

chapter 10: sharing opinions

Track 102

- Sophie** Chapter 10 is about sharing opinions. The simplest way to ask someone for their opinion is to add **Tu ne trouves pas?** or **Vous ne trouvez pas?** after a statement. Literally that means *Don't you find?* or *Don't you think?*

Practise having a go at adding that to a question yourself. Using **tu**, how would you say:

It's complicated, don't you think?

.....

C'est compliqué, tu ne trouves pas?

- Nicolas** Try the same question using **vous**.

.....

- Nicolas** **C'est compliqué, vous ne trouvez pas?**

- Sophie** **C'est facile le français, tu ne trouves pas, Nicolas?**

Nicolas Très facile!

Track 103

Sophie Have a go at some other ways of asking people what they think. You can use **Qu'est-ce que tu en dis?** or **Qu'est-ce que vous en dites?** *What do you think about it? What's your view on this?*

Nicolas There are a number of useful phrases which all mean *in your opinion*: **à ton avis** or **à votre avis**; **d'après toi** or **d'après vous**; or **selon toi** or **selon vous**.

Do you think ...? is **Tu penses que ... ?** or **Vous pensez que ... ?**

Sophie And also **Tu crois que ...?** or **Vous croyez que ...?**

Nicolas So now, ask a group of friends *Do you think it's a good idea?*

.....

Sophie **Vous pensez que c'est une bonne idée?** or **Vous croyez que c'est une bonne idée?**

Track 104

Nicolas To give your own opinion, just start the sentence with **à mon avis** or **selon moi** or **d'après moi**.

To add extra emphasis, say **personnellement**, or **pour ma part**, or *as far as I'm concerned* **en ce qui me concerne**, ...

Sophie Or you can do what the French often do, start with **Moi, je ...**

Nicolas *I don't agree at all.* **Moi, je ne suis pas du tout d'accord.**

Sophie *I think it's good.* **Moi, je pense que c'est bien.**

Nicolas *I believe in ghosts!* **Moi, je crois aux fantômes!**

Sophie Do you remember my barbecue? I discussed the choice of music with Nicolas before my guests arrived. Try and spot all three phrases asking for an opinion.

Track 105

Nicolas **Tu aimes cet album, Sophie? C'est génial, comme musique, tu ne trouves pas?**

Sophie Euh ... oui ...

Nicolas **À mon avis, ce serait une playlist idéale pour le barbecue. Qu'est-ce que tu en dis?**

Sophie **Personnellement, je trouve ça un peu trop déprimant, comme musique, pour un barbecue.**

Nicolas Ah bon, tu crois? Moi, je ne suis pas vraiment d'accord. C'est calme, reposant.

Sophie Ben, d'après moi, il faudrait quelque chose d'un peu plus joyeux que ça pour une fête!

Les invités commencent à arriver ... je vais servir des boissons ...

Track 106

Nicolas Did you hear the three phrases? They were: **Tu ne trouves pas?; Qu'est-ce que tu en dis?** and **Tu crois?**

Sophie Now listen again and this time, try to catch what Sophie thinks of the choice of music for the barbecue.

Track 107

Nicolas Sophie found the choice of music a bit *too depressing* **trop déprimant**. She wanted *something a little more cheerful* **quelque chose d'un peu plus joyeux!**

Track 108

Nicolas Now some phrases for agreeing with someone's opinion. In order to pronounce them fluently, you'll need to keep in mind the need for liaisons in French.

Sophie A liaison is when a consonant which is normally silent at the end of a word is pronounced and runs into the word that follows it if that second word starts with a vowel or a mute **h**.

Nicolas For instance, *Indeed!* is not **en - effet** but **en effet**: you sound the **n** at the end of **en**. Your turn: **En effet**.

Sophie There's a liaison in another little phrase you've come across that also means *indeed* **tout à fait**: you sound the **t** at the end of **tout**.

Nicolas Can you spot the liaison in the next phrase meaning *I agree with you*. **Je suis de ton avis**.

Sophie **Je suis de ton avis, ton avis** not **ton - avis**.

Nicolas When you create a liaison with a word ending in **s**, the **s** sound is pronounced as a **z**. To say *You're right* when you use **vous** is not **vous - avez raison** but **vous avez raison**.

Sophie And *undoubtedly* is not **sans - aucun doute** but **sans aucun doute**.

Track 109

Nicolas To disagree with what someone is saying, use **J'en doute!** *I doubt it*. **J'en doute!**

Sophie Or say *It's a matter of opinion*. **C'est une question d'opinion**.

Nicolas If you want to use something a bit stronger, you might say: *Nothing of the sort!*
Ce n'est pas du tout ça!

Sophie Or even *Absolutely not!* **Absolument pas!**

Track 110

Nicolas In any discussion, you may need to justify your opinion. Let's have a look at some useful phrases you can use to introduce your arguments. The equivalent of *because* is **parce que** or **car**.

Sophie *Given that* is **vu que**.

Nicolas Can you remember the two words that mean *since* or *as*?: **puisque** or **comme**
Now try repeating a couple of longer sentences justifying your point of view, for example:

Sophie *I find his reaction odd given that he doesn't know me.* **Je trouve sa réaction étrange vu qu'il ne me connaît pas.**

Nicolas *I'm keeping quiet because the issue is too complex.* **Je ne m'engage pas car la question est trop complexe.**

Nicolas Using **vous**, how would you say: *I agree with you because you are right?*

.....

Sophie **Je suis d'accord avec vous parce que or car vous avez raison.**

Nicolas And what about: *As I don't believe you, I don't agree?*

.....

Sophie **Comme je ne vous crois pas, je ne suis pas d'accord.**

Track 111

Sophie To discuss important social issues, like unemployment, racism or terrorism, note that a word ending in *-ism* in English is generally a masculine word ending in **-isme** in French. So can you work out the French for the following: *sexism* **le sexisme**, *extremism* **l'extrémisme**, *fundamentalism* **le fondamentalisme**.

Nicolas Similarly, English words ending in *-ty* are usually feminine words ending in **-té** in French. *Freedom* or *liberty* is **la liberté**. So can you give the French for *diversity*? **la diversité** And *security*? **la sécurité**

Sophie And a word ending in *-ment* in English, like *government*, is often a masculine word ending in **-ment** in French: **le gouvernement**. So, bearing that in mind, how would you say *a segment*? **un segment** *The environment*? **l'environnement**

Nicolas And remember, words that end in *-tion* are pronounced **-tion** in French: **la migration** and **l'immigration**.

Track 112

- Nicolas** In discussions, *figures* **les chiffres** or *percentages* **les pourcentages** might come in handy. There are various ways you can bring them into the conversation.
- Sophie** *According to the latest figures, ...* **Selon les derniers chiffres, ...**
- Nicolas** *The figures reveal that ...* **Les chiffres révèlent que ...**
- Sophie** If you are going to speak about percentages, the word to use is **pour cent percent**.
- Nicolas** *The figures show an increase of 5%.* **Les chiffres indiquent une augmentation de cinq pour cent.**
- Sophie** Instead of *point* in figures such as *zero point three*, the French use the word **virgule**, meaning *comma*.
- Nicolas** *The bank is predicting growth of between 2.5 and 3.0%.* **La banque prévoit une croissance comprise entre deux virgule cinq et trois pour cent.**

Track 113

- Sophie** When you're not too certain about figures, you can approximate.
About ten is **une dizaine**, *a dozen* is **une douzaine**. So work out how to say *about 20* **une vingtaine** and *about 100* **une centaine**.
- Nicolas** *About a thousand* is **un millier**. *Millions* is **des millions** and *billions* is **des milliards**.

Track 114

- Sophie** To compare, use **plus ... que** *more ... than* and **moins ... que** *less ... than*. These words go around an adjective.
- Nicolas** For example: *You're more patient than me* is **Tu es plus patiente que moi**.
So how will you say: *You're less patient than me?*
.....
- Sophie** **Tu es moins patient que moi.**

Track 115

- Nicolas** When you want to say something is *the most* or *the least*, use **le, la** or **les plus** and **le, la** or **les moins**.
- Sophie** *It's the biggest shopping centre in Europe.* **C'est le centre commercial le plus grand d'Europe.**
- Nicolas** *They are the least expensive towns in France.* **Ce sont les villes les moins chères de France.**

Sophie So how will you say: *It's the most expensive shopping centre in Europe?*

.....

Nicolas **C'est le centre commercial le plus cher d'Europe.**

Track 116

Nicolas Some of the conversation between the guests at Sophie's barbecue became very heated.

Sophie Listen. What is the man particularly concerned about?

Nicolas And do you think the woman agrees with him or not?

Track 117

male guest **Pour ma part, je crois profondément que le plus grand problème aujourd'hui est l'immigration.**

female guest **Quoi?!**

male guest **Eh oui! Nous acceptons bien trop de migrants économiques. Je suis persuadé que notre économie en souffre!**

female guest **D'accord, notre économie est fragile ...**

male guest **En effet!**

female guest **... mais, selon vous, tout est à cause des immigrés? Ce n'est pas du tout ça! Je crains que la question soit un peu plus complexe!**

male guest **Nous recevons des milliers d'immigrés ...**

female guest **Tout à fait! Mais ce n'est pas juste de les tenir responsables de nos problèmes, puisqu'eux aussi, ils paient des impôts. Ils contribuent à la société!**

male guest **Évidemment, c'est une question d'opinion. Mais, moi, je ne suis pas convaincu que vous compreniez la gravité de la situation.**

female guest **Si vous voulez parler de problèmes, parlons du changement climatique, du sexisme, du racisme, des abus des droits de l'homme ...**

Track 118

Sophie Did you get that the man was worried about immigration, the cause of all our economic problems according to him: **Nous acceptons bien trop d'immigrés économiques. Je suis persuadée que notre économie en souffre!**

Nicolas The woman clearly doesn't agree! Listen again and note the phrase she uses to contradict him and also the issues she's more concerned about.

chapter 11: inside information

Track 119

Nicolas Chapter 11: **inside information.**

There's no better way of finding out about a place than by talking to local people.

Il y a *there is* or *there are* is an incredibly useful little phrase for finding out what's available. It's used with both people and things ... and it can be adapted to work in any tense.

Sophie **Il y a de la circulation ce matin.** *There's a lot of traffic this morning.*

Il y a un docteur ici? *Is there a doctor here?*

Nicolas **Il y aura un choix d'entrées.** *There will be a choice of starters.*

Il y aura des toilettes? *Will there be toilets?*

Sophie **Il y avait beaucoup de gens.** *There were a lot of people.*

Qu'est-ce qu'il y avait comme dessert? *What was there for dessert?*

Nicolas **Il y a eu une tempête en mer.** *There's been a sea storm.*

Est-ce qu'il y a eu des retards? *Have there been any delays?*

Sophie So, how would you say: *Is there a problem?*

.....

Nicolas **Il y a un problème?**

Sophie And how would you ask if there will be a dessert?

.....

Nicolas **Est-ce qu'il y aura un dessert?**

Sophie To say *there isn't* or *there aren't*, the phrase changes to **il n'y a pas**, which is usually followed by **de**.

Il n'y a pas de place. *There's no room.*

Nicolas **Il n'y a pas de serviettes.** *There aren't any towels.*

Sophie So how would you say *There's no time* **temps**?

.....

Nicolas **Il n'y a pas de temps.**

Sophie And how would you say *There aren't any problems?*

.....

Nicolas **Il n'y a pas de problèmes.**

Track 120

Sophie There's another way to say something's not there, using the verb **il manque**.

Nicolas **Il manque une personne du groupe.** *Someone from the group isn't here.*

Sophie **Il manque deux verres.** *We're two glasses short.*

Nicolas You can also use the verb **manquer** to say that you're missing somebody or something in an emotional sense:

Tu me manques! *I miss you!*

Sophie **La France te manque?** *Do you miss France?*

Nicolas **Manquer** is not an exact translation of the English *to miss*, though, it works in a rather different way. Did you notice that in French the person or thing that is missed is the subject of the sentence **Tu me manques** and not the object, which it is in English: *I miss you*?

Sophie So, bearing that in mind, can you work out how to say *I'm missing my family*?

.....

Nicolas **Ma famille me manque.**

Track 121

Nicolas Listen to a conversation Sophie and I had while we were getting ready for the barbecue at her place. Listen out for which item of food I think is missing.

Track 122

Nico **Sophie, tes invités vont avoir faim après toutes ces discussions sur l'immigration et l'économie! Tout est prêt pour ce fameux barbecue?**

Sophie **Je ne sais pas. Je crois que oui.**

Nico **Qu'est-ce qu'il y a à manger? Est-ce qu'il y a des hamburgers?**

Sophie **Oui, il y a des hamburgers, du poulet, des merguez, des saucisses ... Voyons ... Qu'est-ce qui manque?**

Nico **Il n'y a pas de salade. Il y avait de la salade quelque part, je l'ai vue!**

Sophie **Oui, oui, la salade est dans le frigo.**

Nico **Les autres invités vont bientôt arriver. Tu leur as dit vers dix-neuf heures, c'est ça? Il y aura beaucoup de monde?**

Sophie **Une trentaine de personnes. J'espère qu'il y aura assez de place!**

Track 123

Sophie Listen again and see if you can find out what other food I have ready for the barbecue.

Track 124

Nicolas To make sure you sound really French, remember that the plural **-s** at the end of French words generally isn't pronounced:

Listen to the way Sophie says *hamburgers* and *sausages*.

Sophie **Des hamburgers, des saucisses.**

Nicolas Yes, **un hamburger, deux hamburgers** – the words sound exactly the same, don't they? **Une saucisse, deux saucisses.**

Sophie So if one guest is **un invité**, how would you say *two guests*?

.....

Nicolas **Deux invités.**

Sophie And how do you say *two people*?

.....

Nicolas **Deux personnes.**

Track 125

Nicolas To find out how to do just about anything, the key word is **comment**. You can use either **on fait comment** or **comment est-ce qu'on fait** followed by **pour** and an infinitive.

Listen to the rhythm of these questions:

Sophie **Comment est-ce qu'on fait pour éteindre l'ordinateur?** *How do you turn the computer off?*

Nicolas **Comment est-ce qu'on fait pour se connecter à la wifi?** *How do you connect to the Wi-Fi?*

Comment est-ce qu'on fait pour s'inscrire? *How do you subscribe?*

Sophie Now you try asking how you go about booking online: **réserver en ligne.**

.....

Nicolas **On fait comment pour réserver en ligne?**

Sophie Or **Comment est-ce qu'on fait pour réserver en ligne?**

Track 126

Sophie Sometimes you'll hear **Comment est-ce qu'on ...?** followed by the third person of a verb, that is to say, the one used with **il** and **elle**. The English equivalent is usually *How do I ...? How do you ...? How does one ...?*

Nicolas **Comment est-ce qu'on allume la lumière?** *How do you switch the light on?*

Sophie **Comment est-ce qu'on change les piles?** *How do you change the batteries?*

Nicolas Try it yourself. How would you ask how to switch on the TV: **allumer la télé?**

.....

Sophie **Comment est-ce qu'on allume la télé?**

Track 127

Nicolas You'll sometimes hear a question starting with **Vous pourriez me dire ...?** It means *Could you tell me ...?* and it makes your question sound more polite and a bit less abrupt.

Vous pourriez me dire ce qui s'est passé? *Could you tell me what happened?*

Sophie **Vous pourriez me dire le numéro à appeler?** *Could you tell me what number I need to call?*

Nicolas Try it yourself. How would you ask someone if they could give you Marie's address?

.....

Sophie **Vous pourriez me donner l'adresse de Marie?**

Track 128

Sophie Eating plays such a central role in French life that it's good to have some food-related expressions ready.

Phrases like: **Vous avez faim?** *Are you hungry?*

Nicolas **J'ai faim.** *I'm hungry.*

J'ai soif. *I'm thirsty.*

J'ai une faim de loup. *I could eat a horse.*

Sophie Try repeating these: *Is it good?* **C'est bon?**

Nicolas *It's very good.* **C'est très bon.**

It's a bit too spicy for me. **C'est un peu trop épicé pour moi.**

It's not sweet enough. **Ce n'est pas assez sucré.**

Sophie Mind you, not all expressions should be taken literally.

Nicolas Indeed! **Je ne suis pas dans mon assiette** literally means *I'm not in my plate*. But what it actually means is *I feel a bit under the weather*.

Track 129

Nicolas There are times when you need to offer an explanation of, for example, why you can't eat something or take part in an activity. Or you might need to explain on behalf of someone else. Try repeating these handy phrases.

Sophie *I'm diabetic.* **Je suis diabétique.**

Nicolas *My friend's vegan.* **Mon copain est végétalien.**

Sophie *She feels dreadful.* **Elle se sent très mal.**

Nicolas *She has food poisoning.* **Elle fait une intoxication alimentaire.**

Sophie *I don't drink alcohol.* **Je ne bois pas d'alcool.**

Nicolas *I take medication for high blood pressure.* **Je prends des médicaments pour la tension.**

Sophie *I'm pregnant.* **Je suis enceinte.**

Track 130

Nicolas Listen to this conversation I had with Sophie at the barbecue and see if you can work out why I wasn't feeling too well.

Track 131

Nico **Dis, Sophie, comment est-ce qu'on allume ce barbecue?**

Sophie **Pousse le bouton rouge et ça s'allume automatiquement. Vas-y, mais fais bien attention.**

Nico **Génial! Ça marche!**

Sophie **Mmm, elles sont bonnes, les saucisses, hein, tu ne trouves pas?**

Nico **Euh ... oui, mais ... euh ...**

Sophie **Tu ne manges pas? Tu n'as pas faim?**

Nico **Ben non, non ... enfin, là, je ne suis pas dans mon assiette ...**

Sophie **Ah bon? Mais qu'est-ce qu'il y a? Tu es malade?**

Nico **Je ne me sens pas très bien en fait ... Dis, les saucisses, là, qu'est-ce qu'il y a dedans?**

Sophie **Ben, du porc ... pourquoi?**

Nico Ah c'est ça, je suis allergique au porc! Je croyais que c'était du bœuf ...
Vite, passe-moi un verre d'eau, je dois tout de suite prendre un médicament.

Track 132

Sophie Poor Nico! Did you work out what upset him? If not, don't worry – it was a lot to take in. Listen again and try some of the techniques in the Audio Support pack.

chapter 12: keeping in touch

Track 133

Nicolas Chapter 12, **keeping in touch**. The easiest way to keep in touch with people is via the internet. Many French words relating to the internet are borrowed or adapted from English ... you just have to remember to pronounce them with a French accent.

Sophie Yes, **le Français** is growing every day – and those borrowed words follow the rules of French grammar. So, for instance, *to google* is **googler**; *to tweet* is **tweeter**.

Nicolas So what do you think the following words are in French? *To chat* (when it's online) **tchatter**

Sophie *to download* **downloader** and *to upload* **uploader**

Nicolas *to like* **liker** and *to tag* **tagguer**

Sophie What do you think **Ma fille tchatte en ligne pendant des heures** means? **Ma fille tchatte en ligne pendant des heures.**

.....

Nicolas It means: *My daughter chats online for hours.*

Sophie Your turn. How do you think you say *He tweets every day*?

.....

Nicolas **Il tweete tous les jours.**

Sophie *He tagged me on a photo?*

.....

Nicolas **Il m'a taggué sur une photo.**

Sophie And finally: *They liked my page!*

.....

Nicolas **Ils ont liké ma page!**

Track 134

Sophie Spending time with friends is fun, but all good things come to an end. Here are some expressions you can use when the time comes to say thanks and goodbye. Listen, then say them.

Nicolas *Thanks for everything. Merci pour tout.*

Sophie *I don't know how to thank you. Je ne sais pas comment vous remercier.*

Nicolas You can show your appreciation by saying *I've really enjoyed myself. Je me suis vraiment bien amusé.*

Sophie *We've had a great time. Nous avons passé un excellent moment.*

Nicolas And for people you've recently met: *It's been a pleasure meeting you. J'ai été ravi de faire votre connaissance.*

Sophie And do you remember how to tell your friends you're going to miss them? **Vous allez me manquer.**

Nicolas Say *Let's stay in touch. Restons en contact.*

Track 135

Sophie To keep in touch with people, you need to share contact details.

What's your email? C'est quoi, votre adresse mail?

Nicolas *What's your phone number? C'est quoi, votre numéro de téléphone?*

Sophie *Send me a text or an email. Envoie-moi un sms ou un mail.*

Nicolas *Don't forget to share the photos. N'oublie pas de partager les photos.*

Track 136

Sophie I enjoyed my barbecue. It was a real success.

Nicolas It was ... apart from the sausages. ... But Sophie seems to have an ulterior motive. Listen to see if you can catch what it is.

Track 137

Sophie **Merci mille fois pour ton aide, Nico! Tu es un ange!**

Nico **Il n'y a pas de quoi. On fait une bonne équipe tous les deux! Je me suis vraiment bien amusé ... même si je n'ai pas pu manger de saucisses!**

Sophie **Oui! Moi aussi, je me suis bien amusée. Et ton frère Sébastien, il est vraiment sympa.**

Nico **Sébastien? Oui. Ok, je vois.**

Sophie **Tu pourrais me donner son numéro de portable? J'aimerais rester en contact avec lui.**

Nico D'accord, je crois que j'ai bien compris.

Sophie J'aimerais lui poser une question.

Nico Tu veux sortir avec mon frère, c'est ça?

Sophie Sortir avec ton frère? Mais non, pas du tout. Mais vu qu'il travaille pour un magazine de mode, je voudrais lui demander s'il peut m'aider à trouver un travail ...

Track 138

Nicolas Did you get that Sophie wanted Sébastien's mobile number? She said: **Tu pourrais me donner son numéro de portable?**

Sophie Listen to the rest of our conversation. I reassured Nicolas I didn't want to go out with his brother! Listen out to what I told him to do.

Track 139

Nico Alors, tu n'as pas le coup de foudre pour Sébastien? Tu ne veux pas sortir avec lui?

Sophie Non, je ne veux pas sortir avec lui. Je voudrais seulement rester en contact avec lui, pour des raisons ... professionnelles. Pourquoi? Tu n'es pas jaloux?

Nico Et si tu restais en contact avec moi? Pour des raisons ... moins professionnelles.

Sophie Nico, tu m'invites à sortir avec toi?

Nico Euh, ben ...

Sophie Appelle-moi demain.

Track 140

Nicolas So that's why she wanted Sébastien's number. I'll call her tomorrow then!

Track 141

Sophie And that's just about it from us. It's been great working with Nicolas. He rang me last night. Listen ... see if you can work out what he's done.

Track 142

Nico Allô, Sophie? C'est Nico.

Sophie Salut!

Nico Écoute, je voulais t'envoyer mes photos du barbecue par mail ...

Sophie Ah oui, sympa! Tu as un bon appareil en plus ...

Nico Oui, mais j'ai téléchargé mes photos, et après ça, mon ordi a crashé.

Sophie Oh non! Tu avais sauvegardé tes documents?

Nico Malheureusement non, je suis vraiment idiot.

Sophie Écoute, tant pis. Les autres vont sûrement mettre leurs photos sur Facebook.

Nico Oui, sans doute. Euh ... Sophie, je voulais te demander ... je peux t'inviter à dîner ce soir?

Sophie Mais oui, bien sûr! J'attendais que tu me le demandes!

Track 143

Sophie I can't believe he's lost those photos! ... But someone will have some.

Nicolas Eh bien. Alors ... We've reached the end of the programme.
So we'll leave you and say **Au revoir! Bon travail.**

Sophie **Au revoir! ... A ce soir, Nico!**