tex's french grammar

c'est vs il/elle est

1. c'est/ce sont
2. il/elle est / ils/elles sont

To describe and introduce things or people in French, two common phrases are used: **c'est** and **il**/**elle est**. The plural forms are **ce sont** and **ils**/**elles sont**.

The choice between **c'est** and **il** / **elle est** is not always easy, but there are basic principles which can guide you in the choice. A rule of thumb is that **c'est** or **ce sont** are followed by a determined noun ('le tatou', 'une Américaine', 'mes livres'). Remember that nouns in French are preceded by a determiner. **Il**/**elle est** and **ils**/**elles sont** are followed by an adjective ('content', 'sympathique').

c'est/ce sont

C'est and **ce sont** are followed by the following:

🔊 + *noun, including modified nouns*	Tex? **C'est** un tatou. **C'est** un Américain. **C'est** un petit tatou bilingue.	Tex? He's an armadillo. He is an American. He is a small bilingual armadillo.
	Tammy et Tex? Non, **ce ne sont pas** des chats! **Ce sont** des tatous.	Tammy and Tex? No they are not cats! They are armadillos.
+ *proper noun*	**C'est** Tex.	It's Tex.
+ *disjunctive pronoun*	Tammy: Allô Tex? **C'est** moi.	Tammy: Hello Tex? It's me.
	Tex: Qui est-ce? Ah, **c'est** toi Tammy!	Tex: Who is this? Oh, it's you Tammy!
+ *dates*	Tex: Mon anniversaire? **C'est** le quatorze juillet. **C'est** jeudi prochain!	Tex: My birthday? It's July 14th. It's next Thursday!
+ *an infinitive as subject*	Tex: Vivre, **c'est** parler français.	Tex: To live is to speak French!
+ *adjective for non-specific referents*	Tex: Ah **c'est** chouette! **C'est** incroyable!	Tex: Oh, that's neat! That's unbelievable.

il/elle est/ils/elles sont

Use **il/elle est** or **ils/elles sont** to introduce the following:

🔊 + *adjective alone*	Tex? **Il est** arrogant! **Il n'est pas** français. **Il est** américain.	Tex? He is arrogant! He isn't French. He is American.
	Tammy? **Elle est** gentille.	Tammy? She is nice.
+ *nationality, occupation, religion* (used as adjectives in French)	Tex? **Il est** poète.	Tex? He is a poet.
	Trey? **Il est** musicien.	Trey? He is a musician.
	Tammy? **Elle est** étudiante.	Tammy? She is a student.

Remember that **il(s)** and **elle(s)** refer to a specific person or thing. **Ce** does not refer to a specific person or thing; it is usually translated as **that**.

Il est stupide. (**He**'s stupid.)   **C'est** stupide. (**That**'s stupid.)

fill in the blanks

Fill in the blank with the correct form of c'est or il est: c'est, ce sont, il est, elle est, ils sont, or elles sont.

1. Edouard? _____ français.

2. Tex? _____ un tatou.

3. Bette? _____ américaine.

4. Fiona? _____ une fourmi.

5. Bette et Tammy? _____ intelligentes.

6. Fiona et Bette? _____ des étudiantes à l'université du Texas.

7. Corey et Joe-Bob? _____ texans.

8. Etudier le français? _____ amusant!

9. Tex: La date de l'examen final? _____ le 10 décembre.

10. Qui est au téléphone? _____ Paw-Paw.

11. Qui est-ce? _____ moi!

12. Tex et Tammy? _____ des tatous.