

Spelling changes occur in the stems of several groups of -er verbs in the present tense. These spelling changes reflect the pronunciation of the present tense forms.

You may have already noticed the spelling change in the verb **s'appeler** (Je m'appelle ..., My name is ...). For verbs like **appeler** (to call), **rappeler** (to call back) and **jeter** (to throw), the consonant -l or -t in the stem doubles in all forms of the present tense, except in the first and second person plural (nous and vous). This follows the traditional boot pattern of -er verb conjugations in the present tense.

|  <b>appeler</b> 'to call' |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| j'appelle  | nous <b>appelons</b>       |
| tu <b>appelles</b>   | vous <b>appelez</b>        |
| il/elle/on <b>appelle</b>  | ils/elles <b>appellent</b> |
| past participle : <b>appelé</b>  |                            |

This same "boot" pattern is repeated in spelling change verbs like **préférer** (to prefer). In these verbs the é in the last syllable of the stem changes to an è, except in the first and second person plural (nous and vous). Listen carefully to the different pronunciations of é and è in the conjugations below.

|  <b>préférer</b> 'to prefer' |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| je <b>préfère</b>   | nous <b>préférons</b>      |
| tu <b>préfères</b>  | vous <b>préférez</b>       |
| il/elle/on <b>préfère</b>   | ils/elles <b>préfèrent</b> |
| past participle : <b>préféré</b>  |                            |

Verbs conjugated like **préférer** include:

-  **considérer**, to consider
- espérer**, to hope
- régler**, to regulate, pay, settle, adjust
- répéter**, to repeat
- sécher**, to dry, skip (a class)

In verbs which are conjugated like **acheter** (to buy), the e in the last syllable of the stem also changes to an è, again with the exception of the first and second person plural forms.

|  <b>acheter</b> 'to buy' |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| j'achète  | nous <b>achetons</b>      |
| tu <b>achètes</b>   | vous <b>achetez</b>       |
| il/elle/on <b>achète</b>  | ils/elles <b>achètent</b> |
| past participle : <b>acheté</b>   |                           |

Verbs conjugated like **acheter** include:

..

-  **amener**, to bring somebody (along)  
**emmener**, to take somebody (along)  
**lever**, to lift, raise  
**mener**, to take, lead  
**peser**, to weigh

Another group of stem-changing verbs include those ending in **-ayer**, including **essayer** (to try) and **payer** (to pay). In these verbs the **y** changes to **i** in all persons except the first and second person plural (nous and vous).



| essayer 'to try'         |                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| j'essaie                 | nous essayons      |
| tu essaies               | vous essayez       |
| il/elle/on essaie        | ils/elles essaient |
| past participle : essayé |                    |

Finally, verbs ending in **-ger** like **voyager** (to travel) add an **e** after the **g** in the nous form of the present tense, so that the **g** is pronounced as a soft sound before the **-ons** ending (i.e. nous **voyageons**). Similarly, in verbs ending in **-cer**, **commencer** (to start), for example, the **c** in the nous form changes to **ç** to keep the soft c sound (**nous commençons**).



| voyager 'to travel'     |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| je voyage               | nous voyageons     |
| tu voyages              | vous voyagez       |
| il/elle/on voyage       | ils/elles voyagent |
| past participle: voyagé |                    |

Other verbs in this category include:

-  **corriger**, to correct  
**exiger**, to demand, require  
**manger**, to eat  
**nager**, to swim  
**partager**, to share  
**ranger**, to tidy up, arrange  
**rédiger**, to write, compose  
**songer**, to dream, reflect



-  Quelle activité est-ce que vous **préférez** en été?

Rita: J'**emmène** mes enfants à la piscine.

Ses enfants: Nous **nageons** et nous

What activity do you prefer in the summer?

Rita: I take my children to the pool.

Her children: We swim and we eat ice

**mangeons** de la glace.

cream.

Tammy: Moi, je **préfère** faire du shopping. J'**achète** beaucoup et papa **paie** tout.

Tammy: Me, I prefer shopping. I buy lots and daddy pays for everything.



## exercises

### fill in the blanks

Fill in the blank with the correct form of the verb indicated in parentheses.

1. Tex: Je \_\_\_\_\_ parler français. (préférer)
2. Tammy, \_\_\_\_\_ -vous le prof de français ou le prof d'italien? (préférer)
3. Joe-Bob: Corey et moi, nous \_\_\_\_\_ à adorer le français. (commencer)
4. Tex: Mon amie \_\_\_\_\_ Tammy. (s'appeler)
5. Joe-Bob \_\_\_\_\_ faire de la planche à voile demain. (espérer)
6. Tammy \_\_\_\_\_ beaucoup au mall. (acheter)
7. Bette: Fiona et moi, nous \_\_\_\_\_ au Mexique en été. (voyager)
8. Joe-Bob et Corey \_\_\_\_\_ à Barton Springs. (nager)
9. Tex: J' \_\_\_\_\_ Tammy au cinéma ce soir. (amener)
10. Tammy: Tex et moi, nous \_\_\_\_\_ un ordinateur. (partager)
11. Tex: Mes chers étudiants, \_\_\_\_\_, s'il vous plaît. (répéter)
12. Rita, est-ce que tes enfants \_\_\_\_\_ de parler français? (essayer)

### listening comprehension • fill in the blanks

You will hear a series of sentences with stem-changing verbs. Complete each sentence with the correct form of the verb that you hear.

- 1. Edouard, tu \_\_\_\_\_ les baguettes ou le Wonderbread?
- 2. Il \_\_\_\_\_ Tex.
- 3. Tu \_\_\_\_\_ d'apprendre le français?
- 4. Nous \_\_\_\_\_ souvent.
- 5. Tex \_\_\_\_\_ toujours ses questions aux étudiants.
- 6. Tex ne \_\_\_\_\_ pas de cuisine de grenouilles.
- 7. Est-ce que nous \_\_\_\_\_ notre chambre?
- 8. Joe-Bob \_\_\_\_\_ ses devoirs à la poubelle.
- 9. Vous \_\_\_\_\_ la cuisine française, n'est-ce pas?
- 10. Tammy \_\_\_\_\_ un gâteau pour Tex.
- 11. Corey et Joe-Bob \_\_\_\_\_ un drapeau texan pour Tex.
- 12. Nous \_\_\_\_\_ à l'avenir.

