

**1B.1 The verb être****Point de départ**

In French, as in English, the subject of a verb is the person or thing that carries out the action. The verb expresses the action itself.

SUBJECT	↔	VERB
Le professeur		parle français.
<i>The professor</i>		<i>speaks French.</i>

**1B.1 The verb être****Subject pronouns**

Subject pronouns replace a noun that is the subject of a verb.

SUBJECT PRONOUN	↔	VERB
Il		parle français.
He		speaks French.

**French subject pronouns**

	singular		plural	
first person	je	I	nous	we
second person	tu	you	vous	you
third person	il	he/it (masc.)	ils	they (masc.)
	elle	she/it (fem.)	elles	they (fem.)
	on	one		

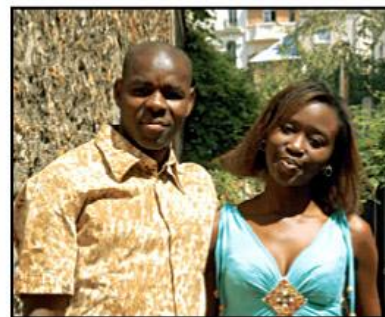
**1B.1 The verb être****Subject pronouns (continued)**

Subject pronouns in French show number (singular vs. plural) and gender (masculine vs. feminine). When a subject consists of both genders, use the masculine form.



**Ils** dansent très bien.

*They dance very well.*



**Ils** sont de Dakar.

*They are from Dakar.*

### 1B.1 The verb être

#### Subject pronouns (continued)

Use **tu** for informal address and **vous** for formal. **Vous** is also the plural form of *you*, both informal and formal.

Comment vas-**tu**?

*How's it going?*

Comment allez-**vous**?

*How are you?*

**1B.1 The verb être****Subject pronouns (continued)**

The subject pronoun **on** refers to people in general, just as the English subject pronouns *one*, *they*, or *you* sometimes do. **On** can also mean *we* in a casual style. **On** always takes the same verb form as **il** and **elle**.

En France, **on** parle français.

*In France, they speak French.*

**On** est au café.

*We are at the coffee shop.*

**1B.1 The verb être****The verb être**

**Être** (*to be*) is an irregular verb; its conjugation (set of forms for different subjects) does not follow a pattern. The form **être** is called the infinitive; it does not correspond to any particular subject.

**être (to be)**

<b>je suis</b>	<i>I am</i>	<b>nous sommes</b>	<i>we are</i>
<b>tu es</b>	<i>you are</i>	<b>vous êtes</b>	<i>you are</i>
<b>il/elle est</b>	<i>he/she/it is</i>	<b>ils/elles sont</b>	<i>they are</i>
<b>on est</b>	<i>one is</i>		

### 1B.1 The verb *être*

#### The verb *être* (continued)

Note that the **-s** of the subject pronoun **vous** is pronounced as an English z in the phrase **vous êtes**.

**Vous êtes** à Paris.

*You are in Paris.*

**Vous êtes** M. Leclerc? Enchantée.

*Are you Mr. Leclerc? Pleased to meet you.*



**1B.1 The verb être****C'est and il/elle est**

Use **c'est** or its plural form **ce sont** plus a noun to identify who or what someone or something is. Except with proper names, an article must always precede the noun.



**C'est** un téléphone.  
*That's a phone.*



**Ce sont** des photos.  
*Those are pictures.*



**C'est** Amina.  
*That's Amina.*



**1B.1 The verb être****C'est and il/elle est (continued)**

Use the phrases **il/elle est** and **ils/elles sont** to refer to someone or something previously mentioned. Any noun that follows directly must not be accompanied by an article or adjective.

La bibliothèque?  
**Elle est** moderne.

*The library?*  
*It's modern.*

Voilà M. Richard.  
**Il est** professeur.

*There's Mr. Richard.*  
*He's a professor.*

**BOÎTE À OUTILS**

Note that in French, unlike English, you cannot use an article before a profession after **il/elle est** and **ils/elles sont**: **il est chanteur** (he is a singer); **elles sont actrices** (they are actresses).

### 1B.1

### The verb *être*

**Essayez!**

Fill in the blanks with the correct forms of the verb *être*.

1. Je suis ici.

4. Nous \_\_\_\_\_ à Québec.

2. Ils \_\_\_\_\_ intelligents.

5. Vous \_\_\_\_\_ Mme Lacroix?

3. Tu \_\_\_\_\_ étudiante.

6. Marie \_\_\_\_\_ chanteuse.