

# Grammaire

à l'œuvre



Grammavision

## The imparfait



- 1 The imparfait (imperfect) tense tells *how things were* or what *used to happen repeatedly* in the past. To form the imperfect, drop the **-ons** from the present-tense **nous** form and add these endings.

parler	finir	vendre
je parlais	finissais	vendais
tu parlais	finissais	vendais
il/elle/on parlait	finissait	vendait
nous parlions	finissions	vendions
vous parliez	finissiez	vendiez
ils/elles parlaient	finissaient	vendaient

- 2 Verbs like *manger* and *commencer* that have spelling changes in the **nous** form keep the spelling change in the imperfect, except in the **nous** and **vous** forms.

(nous mangions)

je mangeais, *but* nous mangions

(nous commençons)

je commençais, *but* nous commencions

- 3 Être is the only verb that has an irregular stem: **ét-**

Quand j'étais jeune, j'étais très timide!

Vocabulaire et grammaire, pp. 64–65  
Cahier d'activités, pp. 51–53



Online  
workbooks



## The *passé composé* and the *imparfait*



### En anglais

In English, we use *was/were . . . ing* to talk about something that was going on when something else happened.

What is the difference in meaning between these two sentences?

*When Alicia arrived, we were climbing the tree.*

*When Alicia arrived, we climbed the tree.*

In French, use the **imparfait** to talk about something that was going on when something else happened.

- 1 Use both the **passé composé** and the **imparfait** to talk about the past. Use the **imparfait** to tell how things *were* or what *used to happen* over and over.

Quand j'étais jeune, nous allions à la plage chaque été.

*When I was young, we used to go to the beach every summer.*

- 2 You also use the **imparfait** to give descriptions.

Il faisait très beau. Il y avait beaucoup de fleurs.

*The weather was beautiful. There were a lot of flowers.*

- 3 Use the **passé composé** to say what *happened* or what someone *did* in a set period of time.

Une fois, j'ai fait un château de sable incroyable!

- 4 Sometimes you need to use both the **passé composé** and the **imparfait** in the same sentence. You can tell what was going on (**imparfait**) when another action happened (**passé composé**).

Je jouais aux dames quand le téléphone a sonné.

Vocabulaire et grammaire, pp. 64-65  
Cahier d'activités, pp. 51-53



## Un peu plus Révisions



### Adverb placement

- 1 Generally, place adverbs that tell how much, how often, or how well someone does something *after* the conjugated verb.

Je joue souvent aux dames et hier, j'ai bien joué.

- 2 **Comme ci comme ça**, **quelquefois**, and **de temps en temps** are exceptions.

Je joue aux dames **comme ci comme ça**. **De temps en temps**, je joue avec mon frère. **Quelquefois** je gagne, mais je perds **quelquefois** aussi.

- 3 Most other adverbs, such as those of time (**hier**, **maintenant**) and those ending in **-ment** usually go at the beginning or end of the sentence.

**Normalement**, je passe le samedi avec mes copains.

Vocabulaire et grammaire, p. 66  
Cahier d'activités, pp. 51-53

