

What Is The Passé Composé?

The passé composé is a grammatical concept in French. The concept's main point is to talk about something that happened in the past. Here are two examples of passé composé in use with English translations:

J'ai visité ma tante. I have visited my aunt.	Vous avez voyagé à Paris. You have traveled to Paris.
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And here are the same two examples, in present tense:

Je visite ma tante. I visit my aunt.	Vous voyagez à Paris. You travel to Paris.
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As you may see, in the passé composé examples, the verb "avoir" is used to represent passé composé in both cases.

The verb "avoir" in French is the equivalent to the English "to have." Here are the following forms of the verb

Conjugant	Conjugation
Je	J'ai
Tu	Tu as
Il/elle/on	Il/elle/on a
Nous	Nous avons
Vous	Vous avez
Ils/elles	Ils/elles ont

Je = I/Tu = You/Il = He/Elle - She/On = We/Nous = We/Vous = You/Ils = They/Elles = They

Now onto the meat of this, how does one conjugate any French word into the passé composé? Easy! Just shift the word endings using this helpful guide:

Words Ending In:	Become:
-er	-é
-ir	-i
-re	-u

Examples:

Original	Passé Composé
Je parle français. I speak French.	Je parlé français. I spoke French.
Vous finissez votre travail. You finish your work.	Vous avez fini votre travail. You finished your work.
Il connaît l'anglais. He knows English.	Il a connu l'anglais. He has known English.

And then there is also the passé composé with the verb "être" which corresponds to "to be" in English.

I was	J'ai été
You were	Tu as été
He/she was	Il/elle a été
We were	Nous avons été
You were	Vous avez été
They were	Ils/elles ont été

The passé composé with the verb “être” works in the same way as the passé composé with the verb “avoir.”

Now what you’ve just learned about passé composé may seem daunting, complex, and difficult but *practice makes perfect*.