



MFL Sunderland Primary French Podcasts

lesson

17

Welcome to the MFL Sunderland Primary French podcast. Lesson 17 – Describing with colours

In this lesson you'll learn how to describe body parts using colours.

Revising body parts and
colours

*This lesson brings together the body parts from Lesson 14 and the colours from Lesson 15.
A good starting point would be to revise the body parts and the colours with your class.
You need two questions to be able to do this in the target language:*

Qu'est-ce que c'est ? *What is it ?*

C'est de quelle couleur ? *What colour is it ?*

Maintenant, à toi. Écoutez, répétez.

Qu'est-ce que c'est ? (pause) Qu'est-ce que c'est ? (pause)

C'est de quelle couleur ? (pause) C'est de quelle couleur ? (pause)

Listen to these descriptions of body parts:

le nez vert la tête verte les pieds verts les épaules vertes
le nez rouge la tête rouge les pieds rouges les épaules rouges

You'll notice, especially if you are following the transcript of this lesson, that the colours come after the body part each time. In French, most adjectives go after the noun that they describe. As well as this, adjectives in French have to change, or "agree" with the nouns that they describe. The 'default' or dictionary form of an adjective is masculine and singular, so the colours don't change when they're describing a masculine singular noun like "le nez". They do, however, have to change when describing feminine and plural nouns, which accounts for the differences in spelling and pronunciation.

There are two main groups of adjectives. "Bleu", "vert" and "noir" belong to the first group.

- When describing a feminine singular noun with one of these colours, you have to add an extra –e. With "vert" this will change the pronunciation to "verte", as –t is no longer the last letter and therefore no longer silent.
- When these colours describe a masculine plural noun, you have to add an extra –s. As you already know, when a French word ends in –s, that –s is silent, so this extra –s will not make any difference to the pronunciation.
- When you're describing something that is feminine plural, you have to add an extra –e and an extra –s. The extra –e will affect the pronunciation as before, but the final –s will still be silent.

Listen to these examples again:

le nez vert la tête verte les pieds verts les épaules vertes

The second main group of adjectives are those that end in –e, so "rouge", "jaune", "rose" and "orange" are in this group.

- You don't have to add anything to the feminine singular adjectives, as there is already an –e on the end.
- When describing a masculine plural noun with one of these colours, you add an –s. This –s doesn't affect the pronunciation, as, like before, final –s on a French word is silent. This is repeated with the feminine plural, as the final –e is already there.

Listen to these examples again:

le nez rouge la tête rouge les pieds rouges les épaules rouges

The remaining colours, "blanc", "violet", "marron" and "gris" are irregular, which means that they don't follow one of the set patterns.

- "Blanc" follows the first pattern, except it adds an extra –h- before the –e in the feminine forms.
- "Violet" also follows the first pattern, but doubles the –t- in the feminine forms.
- "Marron" never changes, regardless of what it is describing.
- "Gris" already has an –s on the end, so you don't need to add one to the masculine plural form. Apart from that it follows the first pattern.

Listen to these examples. You can find more information about these and the other patterns at the end of the transcript to this episode.

le nez blanc la tête blanche les pieds blancs les épaules blanches

le nez violet la tête violette les pieds violets les épaules violettes

le nez marron la tête marron les pieds marron les épaules marron

le nez gris la tête grise les pieds gris les épaules grises

Have a go at saying these descriptions in French. When you are comfortable with the speaking, why not use the transcript to help you with the writing ?

Say the French after the English.

the blue knees (pause) les genoux bleus (pause)

the yellow mouth (pause) la bouche jaune (pause)

the green eyes (pause) les yeux verts (pause)

the black ears (pause) les oreilles noires (pause)

the white feet (pause) les pieds blancs (pause)

the orange head (pause) la tête orange (pause)

the grey nose (pause) le nez gris (pause)

the purple shoulders (pause) les épaules violettes (pause)

That's the end of this podcast. If you think you need a bit more practice, go back to the beginning and work through the activities again.

Au revoir!

		masculine singular	feminine singular	masculine plural	feminine plural
	Body parts in this group	le nez	la tête la bouche	les genoux les pieds les yeux	les épaules les oreilles
Group 1	blue	bleu	bleue	bleus	bleues
	green	vert	verte	verts	vertes
	black	noir	noire	noirs	noires
Group 2	red	rouge	rouge	rouges	rouges
	yellow	jaune	jaune	jaunes	jaunes
	pink	rose	rose	roses	roses
	orange	orange	orange	oranges	oranges
Irregular	white	blanc	blanche	blancs	blanches
	purple	violet	violette	violets	violettes
	brown	marron	marron	marron	marron
	grey	gris	grise	gris	grises

*Please note there is no podcast for Lesson 16.