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French adjectives to describe someone

What are the body shapes in French? We are going to do the same for the weight.We are going to focus on 5 categories instead of giving a number with kilos. These categories will be: 1) skiny >>> maigre2) slim >>> mince3) « normal » >>> normal / normale 4) curvy >>> rond / ronde 5) obese >>> obèse Surely you know that it’s a bit tricky to talk about body shapes especially when you have some extra kilos.This is why I prefer the word « rond » instead of « gros / grosse » which means fat. So when you want to describe the height or the weight of a person you can use the adjectives that we have just seen with the verb to be beforehand. Learn the colors in French to describe the eyes. First things first. The word « eye » is complex in French for 2 reasons.Not only this word is irregular for the plural but the pronunciation is also very hard for both of them! one eye >>> un oeilthe eyes >>> les yeux I invite you to visit my Facebook page Learn French with Fun where you can find videos to check the pronunciation. These are 5 main colors (if you are looking for a fancy color for contact lenses you can have a look at other colors on this page) 1) blue >>> bleu2) green >>> vert3) black >>> noir4) grey >>> gris5) brown >>> marron Related post: WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS TO TALK ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS IN FRENCH For this list I put the adjectives with an « s » for the plural. You will see that it’s not the case for « marron » because this color comes from a fruit and is invariable. All about Hair in French: color, types of hair and length. Time to have fun! Let’s describe hair and play with colors, types of hair and length. Before diving into the subject, let me remind you that « hair » in French is always plural and masculine. If you choose the singular it means a single hair. Moreover the word « cheveux » is strictly related to human hairs on the head. In case that you want to talk about hairs on the other parts of the human body or for animals, the correct word is « poil ». When you learn a language you don’t want to be fancy with the vocabulary.It is best to stick with essential words. Therefore you will see 6 main colors that I have listed: 1) black >>> noirs2) brown >>> châtain3) white >>> blancs4) blond >>> blonds5) red /ginger >>> roux6) grey >>> gris As you can see we use special words for certain colors such as « roux » for ginger instead of « rouge » meaning red. And the literal translation of « châtain » is chestnut. What kind of hair do you have? Again let’s describe 3 main categories of kind of hair to be efficient in the learning process. The winners are: 1) straight >>> raides / lisses2) wavy >>> ondulés3) curly >>> bouclés / frisés How long is your hair? No need to measure your hair in order to describe it!Simply learn these 3 adjectives to give an estimation: 1) long >>> longs2) half-long >>> mi-longs3) short >>> courts Do you remember that hair in French is plural? That is why you should never forget the « s » even if you don’t say it.The element « mi » comes from Latin and means « in the middle or half ». Now let’s imagine that you don’t have any hair.The French word for bald is « chauve ». What is the color of your skin? Just like the weight you should be diplomatic when talking about the color of the skin so you don’t offend anyone. There is a large array of skin tones but for the purpose of this lesson we are going to stick to 5 main tones: 1) ginger skin >>> la peau rousse2) pale or white skin >>> la peau pâle3) olive or beige skin >>> la peau olive / beige4) brown skin >>> la peau marron5) black skin >>> la peau noire To finish with skin color, we could add the French word « bronzé » which means tanned. It is more the consequence of an exposure to the sun than a tone of your skin! How to get specific about your physical description? To finish this vocabulary part, we are going to give some final details.Now that you know the main elements of a description you can get specific with the following words. Men can change a according to their beard (« une barbe ») or moustache (« une moustache »). On your skin you may have some freckles (« des taches de rousseur »), a beauty spot (« un grain de beauté ») or a scar (« une cicatrice ») after an accident. Regarding your eyesight, do you wear glasses (« des lunettes ») or contact lenses (« des lentilles de contact »)? GRAM FOCUS For this lesson we are going to focus on 3 main categories. We are going to see the questions about description, pronouns and adjectives. How do you introduce and describe someone in French? Imagine that you see somebody for the first time or people are talking about somebody. It is natural to ask for the identity and the physical description to have a reference.What are the questions in French and how can you introduce and describe someone? Before diving in, remember that in French you usually have 3 options for questions from informal to formal. The essential question you need to remember is « who is it? ». To answer this question and introduce someone you have some alternatives like these: You will fill in the blanks with the name, the title, the position, the connection with you whether it’s a member of your family, a friend or a neighbour... Now if you want to identify a person, you can ask what the person looks like. In French it would be that way: How do you use the relative pronoun QUI in French? As you have just seen with the questions « qui » means who. And just like in English you can use the word for questions or to connect 2 sentences to avoid repetition. I am talking about the relative pronoun.You don’t have any clue? Let me explain with examples. This woman is my boss. My boss wears a red dress. Cette femme est ma chef. My chef porte une robe rouge This woman who wears a red dress is my boss. Cette femme qui porte une robe rouge est ma chef. It comes very handy to describe someone. With the structure below you can fill in the blanks with what you have learnt in the vocabulary section. The person who... is... >>>> La personne qui ... est You can even go to a step further by using the structure of « the one who ... ». However in French it requires more effort since you have to pick the right gender and specify if it’s singular or plural. How do possessive adjectives work in French? Chances are when you describe someone you use possessive adjectives to talk about their eyes, their nose, their hair and other attributes. But what are they exactly? The possessive adjectives are these articles that you put before the nouns. In this case it would be the eyes, the nose, the hair and so on. And they are possessive because they indicate the owner of ...the eyes, the nose, the hair and so on! In English the possessive adjectives refer to the owner. The proof is that if you say « his eyes » we know that the owner is a man and with « her eyes » we know that the owner is a woman.In French it is more complex meaning exciting! Indeed the possessive adjectives in French refer to the object. What does it mean? Here is a tip to help you to pick the right possessive adjective in French. 1) check if the object is masculine or feminine2) find out if the object is singular or plural3) choose the correct possessive adjective according to the owner The main adjectives for physical descriptions for both genders in French. The indispensable elements you need to describe someone are adjectives.And, as usual you must take extra precautions when using them since they differ from one gender to another. Knowing the plural will help you as well. From the big list of adjectives, this is a list of the main ones including their opposite. In a nutshell French feminine adjectives can be in 3 categories: 1) masculine adjectives + « e » (petit >>> petite)2) masculine adjectives + « extra letter » + « e » (gros >>> grosse)3) completely different from the masculine form (beau >>> belle) The must-go Verbs to describe someone in French. In this part you are going to see the useful verbs that you should use in order to give an idea about somebody’s physical description. First things first, let’s see the regular verbs with the usual endings: to introduce (présenter), to wear (porter), to measure (mesurer) and to weigh (peser). Here are the verbs « présenter » and « porter ». For the second group you simply should know how to conjugate « grossir » (to gain weight) and « maigrir » (to lose weight). Concerning the irregular verbs let’s stick with 3 main ones: to be, to have and to describe. FRENCH IN ACTION Because it is easier to start with some examples, I’m sharing some. Be inspired and create your own sentences. A VOUS (Over to you). What do you look like? Are you tall? Do you wear glasses? What kind of hair do you have? What’s the color of your eyes? In English, adjectives are pretty easy to use. You put them before the noun they describe and you’re done. In French however, the placement of adjectives varies. And if that wasn’t enough to confuse you, adjectives also change depending on whether the noun they describe is masculine, feminine, singular or plural. Luckily, in today’s lesson, you’ll discover several rules that’ll make it easier for you to know how to place and use French adjectives. You’ll also discover how to use the most common French adjectives. Where should you place French adjectives? In English, you put adjectives before the noun they describe. So you’d say “a green bag”, or “a blue house”. Most French adjectives are placed after the noun they describe. So you’d say “un sac vert” (lit: a bag green) or “une maison bleue” (lit: a house blue). To remember that, imagine a Frenchman coming to you and asking with a heavy (and charming) French accent “excuse me, where is the house blue?”. You could consider that French adjectives are placed after the noun they describe and would be correct in most situations, however it’s important to know there are a few exceptions. Here come the bad boys or rather the BANGS boys: BeautyAgeNumberGoodnessSize Most adjectives expressing these (BANGS adjectives) are placed before the noun they describe. Une belle femme (a beautiful woman)Un viell homme (an old man)Un gros sandwich (a big sandwich) This is a useful rule to know, but hardly a reliable one since there are many exceptions. For example, some adjectives like “délicieux” (delicious) can come both before and after the noun they describe depending on the context. What’s the effect of gender and number on French adjectives? English adjectives are invariable, that’s not the case of French adjectives. In French, adjectives change depending on two things: The gender of the noun they describeThe number (plural or singular) of the noun they describe Here is a rule you can follow in most cases: You add a “e” to adjectives that describe a feminine noun, except if the adjective already ends with a silent “e” You add a “s” to adjectives that describe a plural noun, except if the adjective already ends in “s” Un petit croissant (a small croissant) Une petite surprise (a small surprise) Des petits changements (small changes) Now let’s review some common French adjectives and see how to place them and modify them based on what we’ve learned. How to place and modify the most common French adjectives? I’m convinced that the best way to learn grammar is to learn from realistic examples. So here is how to place and modify the most common French adjectives. You may notice that the majority of the following French adjectives are placed before the noun they describe. That’s because many common French adjectives belong to the BANGS group I mentioned earlier. As a reminder, BANGS adjectives (beauty, age, number, goodness, size) are adjectives that are placed before the noun they describe. The advantage is that once you know these common adjectives, you’ll mainly encounter adjectives that follow the normal placement of adjectives and are therefore placed after the noun they describe. How to use regular French adjectives In most cases French adjectives change the following way: You add a “e” if the word it describes is feminine (except if the adjective ends with a silent “e”, that is a “e” without accent)You add a “s” if the word it describes is plural except if the adjective already ends with a “s”. Note: unlike English, French adjectives of nationality don’t start with a capital letter. Here are a few examples with common adjectives: Petit (small) This is an adjective you probably already know. Une petite fille (feminine singular)A little girl Un petit garçon (masculine singular)A little boy Ces petits gâteaux sont délicieux. (masculine plural)These small cakes are delicious Ces petites friandises sont délicieuses (feminine plural)These little sweets are delicious Here you can see that “délicieux” becomes “délicieuses”. That’s because the ending of adjectives ending in “eux” often becomes “euse” if they describe a feminine noun. The additional “s” indicate that the adjective describes a plural noun too. Jeune (young) “Jeune” follows the regular pattern. The only difference is that you don’t need to add a “e” when it comes before a feminine noun since “jeune” already ends with a “e”. Le jeune homme est parti (masculine singular)The young man is gone La jeune femme est partie (feminine singular)The young woman is gone Les jeunes hommes sont partis (masculine plural)The young men are gone Les jeunes femmes sont parties (feminine plural)The young women are gone Bon (good) “Bon” is the most common French adjective. In addition to adding a “e” when it describes feminine words and a “s” when it describes plural words, don’t forget to double the “n” when it describes feminine words. C’est une bonne idée (feminine singular)It is a good idea C’est un bon restaurant (masculine singular)It is a good restaurantLes macarons de Pierre Hermé sont bons (masculine plural)The macarons from Pierre Hermé are good Les fraises du marché sont bonnes (feminine plural)The strawberries from (the) market are good Délicieux (delicious) Adjectives ending in “ieux” (except “vieux”) have a feminine form ending in “euse” and remain the same if they describe a plural noun. Un repas délicieux (masculine singular)A delicious mealUne tarte délicieuse (feminine singular)A delicious pie Des gâteaux délicieux (masculine plural)Delicious cakes Des crêpes délicieuses (feminine plural)Delicious crêpes Australien (Australian) Adjectives ending in “ien” have a feminine form ending in “ienne”. Mon copain est australien (masculine singular)My boyfriend is Australian Ma copine est australienne (feminine singular)My girlfriend is Australian Ils sont australiens (masculine plural)They are Australian Elles sont australiennes (feminine plural)They are Australian How to use irregular French adjectives Irregular French adjectives are adjectives that don’t follow the usual pattern of French adjectives. I’m not going to list all irregular French adjectives, because learning them would be a waste of time. Instead, here is a selection of essential irregular French adjectives. These are adjectives you’re certain to encounter as a French learner. Vieux (old) This is one of the most tricky French adjectives. Luckily it’s also one of the most common, so you’ll quickly know how to use it if you get a lot of exposure to the French language. Le vieil homme est ici (masculine singular) The old man is here La vieille femme est ici (feminine singular) The old woman is here Les vieux quartiers de Paris sont magnifiques (masculine plural) The old districts of Paris are beautiful Les vieilles maisons sont moins chères (feminine plural) (The) old houses are less expensive Beau (beautiful) Here is another tricky and extremely common French adjective. Elle a un beau visage (masculine singular)She has a beautiful face C’est un bel homme (masculine singular)He (lit: it) is a handsome man In both cases, “beau” describes a masculine noun, so you probably wonder why “beau” becomes “bel” in the second case. The reason is simple. “Beau” becomes “bel” before masculine nouns starting with a vowel or a silent “h”. Il a une belle peau (feminine singular)He has a beautiful skin Il est dans de beaux draps (masculine plural)He is in a right mess This is a French idiom that literally translates as “to be in beautiful sheets”. Il y a beaucoup de belles femmes en France (feminine plural)There are a lot of beautiful women in France Nouveau (new) “Nouveau” follows the same pattern as “beau”. J’adore ton nouveau manteau (masculine singular) I love your new coat J’ai acheté un nouvel ordinateur (masculine singular) I bought a new computer Jean a une nouvelle copine (feminine singular)Jean has a new girlfriend Il a reçu ses nouveaux vêtements hier (masculine plural)He received his new clothes yesterday. Mes nouvelles chaussures ont beaucoup de succès (feminine plural)My new shoes have a lot of success That’s it, you now know the most common French adjectives. Practice is what will allow you to become fluent in French, so pick an adjective and create a sentence with it in the comment section below this article! And don’t worry about making mistakes, I’ll happily correct you).

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