La négation
(Negative expressions)

To make sentences negative in French, you must place *ne ... pas* or another negative expression around the conjugated verb. Usually it is the first verb that is conjugated. Remember, if the verb begins with a vowel, *ne* must be contracted into *n'*.

- *Je ne mange pas de pizza.* (I do not eat pizza.)
- *Je n'aime pas écouter cette musique.* (I do not like to listen to this music.)

Here are some additional negative expressions which behave like *ne...pas* (placed on both sides of the conjugated verb):

- **ne ... plus** (no longer/no more) as in:
  
  - *Je ne vais plus à la bibliothèque.* (I no longer go to the library.)
  - *Je n'aime plus écouter cette musique.* (I no longer like to listen to this music.)

- **ne ... que** (only) isn’t technically a negation, but it acts like one, as in:
  
  - *Je ne mange que la pizza au fromage.* (I only eat cheese pizza.)
  - *Ils n’aient que ce genre de musique.* (They only like this kind of music.)

- **ne ... jamais** (never) as in:
  
  - *Je ne vais jamais au théâtre.* (I never go to the theater.)
  - *Je n’ai jamais mangé d’escargots.* (I have never eaten snails.)

- **ne ... aucun(e)** (none/not any/not even one) as in:
  
  - *Je n’aime aucun légume.* (I do not like any vegetable.)
  - *Il n’y a aucune viande rouge sur le menu.* (There isn’t any red meat on the menu.)

**NOTE:** With *aucun(e)*, you omit the article (*le, la, les, l’, un/une, des*) and make the gender agree with the noun. The noun used will always be singular.

- **ne/n’... ni ... ni** (neither...nor) as in:
  
  - *Je n’aime ni le foot, ni le basket.* (I like neither soccer nor basketball.)

**NOTE:** When using *ne/n’...ni...ni*, you usually keep the definite article (*le, la, les, l’*), but any other articles will be dropped.
**La négation**

**(Negative expressions)**

*ne ... personne* (no one/not anyone)

Je *n’aime personne*. (I do not like anyone.)

**NOTE:** *Personne* can also be used at the beginning of a statement as a subject. Used this way it means "no one." The *il/elle/on* form of the verb is then used. Make sure to add *ne/n’* in front of the verb in order to negate the whole statement.

For example:

*Personne ne m’aime.* (No one likes me.)
*Personne n’aime faire de devoirs.* (No one likes to do homework.)

*ne ... rien* (nothing/not anything) as in:

Je *ne mange rien*. (I eat nothing/I do not eat anything.)
*Vous n’avez rien fait.* (You haven’t done anything.)

**Note:** Just like *personne*, *rien* can be used at the beginning of a statement as the subject. Used this way it means “nothing.” The *il/elle/on* form of the verb is used. Make sure to add *ne/n’* in front of the conjugated verb.

For example:

*Rien ne m’intéresse.* (Nothing interests me.)
*Rien n’est parfait dans la vie.* (Nothing is perfect in life.)

Now you’ve seen ways to negate using all the tenses you’ve learned so far. This chart will help you review how to form these tenses and how to negate them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Présent</td>
<td>Subject + <em>ne</em> + verb + negative expression + rest of phrase</td>
<td><em>Je ne mange pas de pizza.</em> (I do not eat pizza.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impératif</td>
<td><em>Ne</em> + verb + negative expression + rest of phrase</td>
<td><em>Ne me donne pas de viande.</em> (Don’t give me any meat.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passé compose</td>
<td>Subject + <em>ne</em> + auxiliary verb + negative expression + past participle + rest of phrase</td>
<td><em>Je n’ai jamais mangé d’escargots.</em> (I have never eaten snails.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Futur proche</td>
<td>Subject + <em>ne</em> + <em>aller</em> conjugated in the present + negative expression + infinitive + rest of phrase</td>
<td><em>Je ne vais plus manger à la bibliothèque.</em> (I will no longer eat in the library.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Practice using negation so you are comfortable negating a sentence regardless of the tense or the expression that you want to use.