

Reference books

1 French grammars written in English

Thalia Marriott and Mireille Ribière, *Help Yourself to Advanced French Grammar*, Longman, 1998. Formerly called *Help Yourself to French Grammar*, this revised edition contains the same format : beginning with diagnostic exercises, there is then a grammatical explanation followed by reinforcement exercises. Grammatical explanations are well presented, and there are extensive appendices, including verb tables, verb constructions and vocabulary, plus the answers to the exercises. Aimed at Sixth Formers and those in their first year at University, it is ideal for revising and consolidating on 'A' level grammar.

Margaret Jubb and Annie Rouxeville, *French Grammar in Context*, Arnold, 1998. Like *Help Yourself*, this book is aimed at Sixth Formers as well as undergraduates, and as such is good for revision and consolidation. Each chapter begins with an introductory text serving to illustrate a particular grammatical point, followed by a preliminary explanation of the grammatical point based on examples in the text. After this there is a more general explanation and exercises (with answers in the back).

L.S.R.Byrne, E.L.Churchill, *A comprehensive French Grammar*, Blackwell, 1986. An extremely extensive and detailed description of French grammar written in accessible language and suitable for use at all stages of advanced language learning.

Margaret Lang and Isabelle Perez, *Modern French Grammar - A Practical Guide*, Routledge, 1996. This book grammar reference differs from most others in that it combines a structural approach (dividing chapters according to language forms such as nouns, verbs etc.) with a functional approach (dividing chapters according to meaning, such as expressing approval, dislike etc.) There is an accompanying workbook called *Modern French Grammar - Workbook*.

David Nott, *French Grammar Explained*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1998. Designed for use by post-A Level undergraduates rather than Sixth Formers, it is longer (546 pages) and more detailed than most other grammar books. It contains practical hints on learning French, information about pronunciation, sound and spelling, language and meaning, syntax and parts of speech, appropriateness of language, and dictionary use, in addition to the usual grammatical topics. Also includes exercises (with answers), verb tables, and a detailed glossary.

J. Morton, *English Grammar for students of French*, Olivia and Hill, 1993. This book provides a useful introduction to grammatical terminology and rules with illustrations in English and in French. Suitable for beginners or intermediate learners.

Anne Judge and F.G.Healey, *A Reference Grammar of Modern French*, Arnold, 1983. Possibly the most comprehensive English-language French grammar currently available. It is, however, very technical and linguistics-orientated, and is thus probably better suited to 4th Years / Postgraduates.

Roger Hawkins and Richard Towell, *French Grammar and Usage*, Arnold, 1996. Written by two of the country's leading academic linguists, this is a very comprehensive yet extremely accessible grammar book. It has an excellent glossary of grammatical terms, plus a very clear index. There is an accompanying workbook called *Practising French Grammar*.

Batchelor, R & Offord, M, *Using French - A Guide to Contemporary Usage*, 2nd Edition Cambridge, 1993. A highly innovative reference book, it has not only a grammar section but also an extensive vocabulary section covering false friends, synonyms, homonyms (words that sound the same), paronyms (words that sound very similar) and "semantic cells" (words that are linked thematically). It also contains a detailed section on language register.

2 French grammars written in French

Grammaire du français : Cours de civilisation française de la Sorbonne, Hachette, 1991. An excellent French-language grammar designed for non-natives. With very accessible format and illustrative cartoons, it can be used either as a course book or as a reference book. Accompanying exercises have been produced in separate publications entitled *Grammaire - 350 Exercices*, the *Moyen* and *Supérieur* levels of which are appropriate for advanced learners.

G.Mauger, *Grammaire pratique du français d'aujourd'hui*, Hachette, 1968. A more technical precursor of the above Hachette grammar, it is nonetheless extremely well written and well worth consulting if you have access to a copy.

Bescherelle (3) - La Grammaire pour tous, Hatier, 1990. Although written with native French speakers in mind, this is an excellently presented and structured description of French grammar suitable for non-native learners. Accompanying publications in the series are devoted to verb conjugation (1) and spelling (2).

Maurice Grevisse, *Le Bon Usage*, Duculot, 1980. The ultimate reference book on the French language, it is for most French people an object of reverence rather than a source of reference. At £39.99, this should be considered a low-priority purchase, akin to the complete 20-volume set of the Oxford English Dictionary.

3 Dictionaries

Oxford-Hachette English-French Dictionary, Second Edition, 1997. Prepared using a computer database or "corpus" of millions of words, the OHD boasts more words and phrases than any other single volume French dictionary, plus items such as an effective communication guide including things such as sample letters and CVs, an encyclopedic supplement, and useful boxed sections within the main body of the dictionary focussing on specific lexical and grammatical problems.

Collins-Robert English-French Dictionary, New Edition, 1995. It was Collins-Robert who pioneered the user-friendly reference techniques that are now standard in all single-volume bilingual dictionaries. The New Edition has been fully updated and now contains an excellent corpus-based language-in-use supplement.

Le Petit Robert - Dictionnaire de la langue française, 1995. It is important that as you get more advanced in French you start using a monolingual dictionary. The Petit Robert is possibly the most respected single-volume dictionary in France.

4 **English grammars**

There is a huge range of English grammars on the market, mainly because of demand from EFL students. Of the various shorter English grammars available which are aimed at English native speakers, two of the best are David Crystal's *Rediscover Grammar* (Longman, 1988), and Dennis Freeborn's *A Coursebook in English Grammar* (Macmillan, 1st Ed. 1987, 2nd Ed. 1995).

5 **Books on the history and development of French**

Walter, Henriette (translated by Peter Fawcett), *French Inside Out*, Routledge, 1994. An excellent, accessible and often humorous introduction to the French language. Suitable for all readers.

Singleton, David, *French - Some historical background*, Authentik, 1992. More of a pamphlet than a book, this provides a very good and concise introduction to the French language. Suitable for all readers, although aimed at students.

Rickard, Peter, *A History of the French Language*, 2nd Edition, Unwin Hyman, 1989. A more academic and detailed history of French, the book is nevertheless very readable and particularly good for reference.

Battye, Adrian, & Hintze, Marie-Anne, *The French Language Today*, Routledge, 1992. Although aimed at students of linguistics, the book is nevertheless of interest to general language students, particularly as reference. The book covers French history, sounds, word and sentence structure and also deals with different varieties of French.

Fox, J and Wood, R, *A Concise History of the French Language*, Blackwell, 1968. A good technical account of the development of French, its conciseness makes it suitable to more general French students.

Anthony Lodge, R, Armstrong, N and others, *Exploring the French Language*, Arnold, 1997. A very up-to-date overview of the core topics of French Linguistics.

Anthony Lodge, R, *French: From Dialect to Standard*, Routledge, 1993. A detailed history of French focussing on the way that Standard French came into being and its relationship with other varieties of French.

Labrune, G & Toutain, P, *L'Histoire de France*, Nathan, 1986. Written in French, this is a highly accessible and concise chronology of French History, in an innovative chart format. Suitable both for reference and for reading through.

6 **Books on the history and development of English**

McCrum, R, Cran W & MacNeil, R, P, *The Story of English*, BBC, 1987. Based on a BBC documentary series shown during the 1980s, the book provides a broad-ranging and entertaining introduction to all aspects of the development of English in the World, aimed at the general reader.

Barber, Charles, *The English Language: A Historical Introduction*, Cambridge, 1993. A very detailed yet accessible account of the development of English, from its origins in Indo-European and Germanic to its contemporary role as a world language. It begins with a chapter focussing on the nature of language and covering many of the key elements of conventional linguistics.