

Here is a chart that will help you associate the French subject pronouns with their English equivalent:

	<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>	
	English	French	English	French
First person	I	Je	We	Nous
Second person	You	Tu	You	Vous
Third person	He	Il	They (m.)	Ils
	She	Elle	They (f.)	Elles
	It	Il/Elle	They (m. / f.)	Ils/Elles
	One	On		

Look at that chart carefully-do you notice some differences between English and French?

The Two "Yous" in French: Knowing the Difference Between *tu* and *vous*

"You" in French is either *tu*, when referring to one person in an informal situation (singular), or *vous*, which can be either singular formal, or plural (both formal and informal) depending upon the conversation.

**On* means "one" in French, but it also means "we." It is a neutral and casual way of saying "we." Therefore, think of the French *on* as meaning "one" or "we."

Notice too that "it" in French is either *il* or *elle*. Similarly in the plural, "they" can either be translated as *ils* or *elles*. Because all French nouns have gender, "it" and "they" in French can either be masculine or feminine depending on the noun. For example, *table* (table) is a feminine word in French, so if you want to translate "it is in the kitchen" (where "it" refers to the table), you will say: *elle est dans la cuisine*.

Now, here is a neater version of the above diagram: (Notice that the terms are only in French-look above if you need to remember their meaning in English).

Les pronoms personnels en français

	<u>Singulier</u>	<u>Pluriel</u>
Première personne:	Je	Nous
Deuxième personne:	Tu	Vous
Troisième personne:	Il, elle, on	Ils, elles

It is important to memorize those pronouns in that specific order, so that you will keep them organized in your

mind. It will also help you be consistent when you conjugate verbs.

Review: Ways to know whether the situation calls for *tu* or *vous*

When to use *tu*:

- When speaking to a family member (mother, father, brother, aunt, grandparents, etc.)
- When speaking to a friend or classmate
- When speaking to someone your age you would like to become friends with
- In informal situations
- Used only when speaking to **one** person; never more than one at a time.

When to use *vous*:

- With people in a position of respect: doctors, lawyers, teachers, religious figures (rabbis, priests, ministers, imams), political figures (presidents, senators), etc.
- When addressing more than one person in a formal OR informal setting (when talking to a group of friends, giving a speech, a toast)
- With strangers
- In all formal and polite situations
- ****To let someone know you are not interested in getting to know them****

****When meeting someone or speaking to someone that you do not want to get acquainted with on a more personal level, you use *vous* to remain polite and distant and to let them know you are **not interested**. This is an extremely important thing to remember when speaking to strangers. To avoid seeming interested in the person, it is best to use the *vous* form of “you” until or unless you feel comfortable being less formal.****