

Demonstrative Adjectives and Pronouns

Demonstrative adjectives are very commonly used in English as well as French. They are the way we identify ‘which one’ of something we are referring to – ‘this’ or ‘these’.

Demonstrative adjectives are used with nouns, for example ‘this pen’ or ‘these books’.

Demonstrative pronouns, however, replace the noun. For example, we could ask ‘Which book(s) are you talking about?’. The answer, ‘this one’ or ‘those ones’, in English would be our demonstrative pronoun.

In this article, we will discuss how these words change grammatically in French. Examples of these adjectives and pronouns in use will also be given.

I. Demonstrative Adjectives

Demonstrative adjectives are how we would say ‘this’ or ‘these’ in English. In French, these words change according to gender and whether they are referring to singular or plural nouns. Their usage is the same as in English.

See the table below for the different forms of demonstrative adjectives.

<u>French Demonstrative Adjectives</u>	<u>Gender/Number</u>	<u>English Equivalents</u>
Ce	Masculine singular	This
Cet	Masculine singular for use with nouns starting with a vowel or silent ‘h’	This

Cette	Feminine singular	This
Ces	Masculine or feminine plural	These

1. Examples

1. 'Ce'

In the example below, 'ce' is used because 'travail' is a singular and masculine noun.

Ce travail est vraiment difficile parce que mon patron ne m'aide pas.

This job is really difficult because my boss doesn't help me.

2. 'Cet'

Cet emploi va améliorer mon cv et après je pourrai obtenir une meilleure poste.

This job will improve my CV and afterwards I will be able to obtain a better position.

The example shown takes 'cet' because 'emploi' is a masculine singular noun that begins with a vowel.

3. 'Cette'

'Cette' is used in the example below because 'école' is a feminine singular noun.

Les enfants n'aiment pas cette école. Ils me disent que les professeurs sont trop stricts.

The children don't like this school. They tell me that the teachers are too strict.

4. 'Ces'

'Ces' is used in the sentence below because 'gens' is a plural noun.

Ces gens ne protègent pas l'environnement, et c'est pour cette raison que la situation du monde va empirer.

These people don't protect the environment, and it is for this reason that the world's situation will get worse.

II. Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns mean either 'this one' or 'these/those ones'. In French, they also change grammatically to suit the gender and number of the noun they are replacing. See the table below for more details on these changes.

<u>French Demonstrative Pronouns</u>	<u>Gender/Number</u>	<u>English Equivalents</u>
Celui	Masculine singular	This one
Ceux	Masculine plural	These/those ones
Celle	Feminine singular	This one
Celles	Feminine plural	These/those ones

1. Additional Meanings

Further meaning can be added to demonstrative pronouns by adding 'ci' or 'la' to the word.

'Ci' can be translated as 'here' and 'la' can be translated as 'there'.

<u>French Demonstrative Pronouns</u>	<u>Gender/Number</u>	<u>English Equivalents</u>
Celui-ci	Masculine singular	This one here
Ceux-ci	Masculine plural	These ones here
Celle-ci	Feminine singular	This one here
Celles-ci	Feminine plural	These ones here

<u>French Demonstrative Pronouns</u>	<u>Gender/Number</u>	<u>English Equivalents</u>
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Celui-la	Masculine singular	That one there
Ceux-la	Masculine plural	Those ones there
Celle-la	Feminine singular	That one there
Celles-la	Feminine plural	Those ones there

2. Examples

1. 'Celui'

'Je veux acheter un t-shirt. Est-ce que tu préfères celui-ci ou celui-là ?'

'I want to buy a tshirt. Do you prefer this one (here) or that one (there)?'

'Un t-shirt' is a masculine singular noun, therefore 'celui' is used.

2. Ceux

'Ceux' is used below because 'pantalons' is a masculine plural noun.

'Est-ce que vous pouvez m'aider ? Je voudrais acheter des pantalons noirs. Est-ce que ceux-ci sont plus populaires, ou est-ce que je devrais essayer ceux-là ?'

'Can you help me? I would like to buy some black trousers. Are these ones (here) more popular, or should I try those ones (there)?'

3. Celle

The example below uses 'celle' because 'robe' is a feminine singular word.

'J'adore cette robe. Est-ce que tu aimes le couleur de celle-ci ou de celle-là?'

'I love this dress. Do you like the colour of this one (here) or of that one (there)?'

4. Celles

'Les roses' is a feminine plural noun, therefore 'celles' is used in the example below.

'Ma mère aime les roses, mais je ne sais pas si elle préférerait celles-ci ou celles-là.'

'My mother loves roses, but I don't know if she would prefer these ones (here) or those ones (there).'

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What are demonstrative adjectives?

- a) The same as demonstrative pronouns.
- b) Adjectives used in demonstrations.
- c) They are the way of identifying 'which one' in a sentence – 'this' or 'these' are English equivalents.
- d) They mean 'these ones' or 'those ones' in English.

2. Which of the below is an example of a demonstrative adjective in French?

- a) Celui-ci
- b) Celui-là
- c) Celles
- d) Cette

3. When is 'cet' used as a demonstrative adjective?

- a) It isn't – it is a demonstrative pronoun.
- b) It is used with a masculine singular noun that starts with a vowel or a silent 'h'.
- c) It is used with a feminine singular noun that starts with a vowel or a silent 'h'.
- d) It is used with plural nouns.

4. When is 'ces' used as a demonstrative adjective?

- a) Always.
- b) With feminine plural nouns.
- c) With masculine plural nouns.
- d) With plural nouns of either gender.

5. What are demonstrative pronouns?

- a) They also tell us 'which one' we are talking about, but they replace the noun completely. In English, we would say 'this one' or 'these ones' etc.
- b) They are the same as normal pronouns.

- c) They are the same as demonstrative adjectives.
- d) They replace the verb in the sentence.

6. Which of the below is an example of a demonstrative pronoun?

- a) Cette
- b) Ces
- c) Ceux-là
- d) Ce

7. What is the different between demonstrative pronouns that end in '-ci' and '-là'?

- a) There is no difference.
- b) '-ci' means 'there' and '-là' means 'here'.
- c) '-là' means 'there' and '-ci' means 'here'.
- d) '-ci' and '-là' both mean 'here'.

8. When do we use 'celles'?

- a) 'Celles' is used for feminine plural nouns as a demonstrative adjective.
- b) 'Celles' is used for feminine plural nouns as a demonstrative pronoun.
- c) It is used for plural nouns as a demonstrative adjective.
- d) It is used for plural nouns as a demonstrative pronoun.

9. What does 'celui-ci' mean?

- a) This one (here). It is used to replace feminine singular nouns.
- b) This one (here). It is used to replace masculine singular nouns.
- c) These ones (here). It is used to replace masculine plural nouns.
- d) Those ones (there). It is used to replace masculine plural nouns.

10. What does 'ceux-là' mean?

- a) This one (here). It is used to replace feminine singular nouns.
- b) This one (here). It is used to replace masculine singular nouns.
- c) These ones (here). It is used to replace feminine plural nouns.
- d) Those ones (there). It is used to replace masculine plural nouns.

Answers:

1. C
2. D
3. B
4. D
5. A
6. C
7. C
8. B
9. B
10. D