

Les signes orthographiques

- French uses accents and spelling marks that do not exist in English
- These marks are part of the spelling and **cannot be left out**

In French, there are four accents that may appear on vowels

L'accent aigu (*acute accent*)

Cécile, Stéphanie

The acute accent occurs only on **e** to show it is pronounced /e/.

L'accent grave (*grave accent*)

Michèle, Hélène

The grave accent occurs mainly on **e** to show it's pronounced /ɛ/, and in the words à, là, and où.

L'accent circonflexe (*circumflex*)

Jérôme

The circumflex can appear on all vowels; often the corresponding English word has an "s": **forêt, hôpital, mât**

Le tréma (*diaeresis*)

Noël, Joëlle

The diaeresis is placed on the second of two vowels to show that they are pronounced separately: **naïf**.

There is only one spelling mark used with a consonant. It occurs under the letter "c"

La cédille (*cedilla*)

François

The c-cedilla is used before **a, o, u** to show that it is pronounced /s/: **ça, garçon, reçu**. Otherwise, **c** before **a, o, u** is pronounced /k/: **café, college, culturel**.