

39. Personal pronouns (3) - Order of pronouns

1 General

As has been mentioned in Unit 37 above, object pronouns come before the verb in simple tenses (like the present) or before the auxiliary verb *avoir* or *être* in compound tenses (like the perfect):

Tu connais Paul? - Oui, je **le** connais

Do you know Paul? - Yes, I know him

As-tu trouvé tes lunettes? - Oui, je **les** ai trouvées

Did you find your glasses? - Yes, I did find them

2 Two pronouns

In cases where there are two pronouns the order is as follows:

me					
te	le				
se	la	lui			
nous	les	leur	y	en	
vous					

This order is the same for affirmative sentences:

Elle **me les** a rendus - *She gave them back to me*

Ils **nous en** prêteront - *They will lend us some*

Il **y en** a encore - *There are more of them*

Negative sentences:

Je ne **la lui** ai pas envoyée - *I didn't send it to him / her*

Ils ne **nous en** prêteront pas - *They won't lend us any*

Il n'**y en** a plus - *There aren't more of them*

And all types of questions, including negative questions:

Me les a-t-elle rendus? - *Did she give them back to me?*

Nous en prêteront-ils? - *Will they lend us some?*

Ne **la lui** ai-je pas envoyée? - *Didn't I send it to him / her?*

Y en a-t-il encore? - *Are there any more of them?*

3 Use before infinitives

When a verb is used with an infinitive, the pronouns tend to come directly before the infinitive:

Je compte **la leur** présenter

I'm planning on introducing her to them

J'aurais bien aimé **l'avoir** rencontrée

I really would have liked to have met her

4 Use in imperative

4.1 In the affirmative imperative, pronouns come after the verb and are linked to it by a hyphen. Note that *moi* and *toi* are used instead of *me* and *te*:

Tu veux du chocolat? **Prends-en!**
Do you want some chocolate? Take some!
Ce sera bientôt l'anniversaire de ta mère. **Envoie-lui** une carte!
It will soon be your mother's birthday. Send her a card!
Tu as trouvé ses clefs? **Donne-les-lui!**
Did you find his keys? Give them to him!
Tu as des photos? **Montre-les-moi!**
Do you have some photos? Show them to me!

4.2 In the negative imperative, however, pronouns come before the verb. *Moi* and *toi* revert to *me* and *te*:

Ne les lui donne pas! <i>Don't give them to him!</i>	Ne me les montre pas! <i>Don't show them to me!</i>
Ne m'en donne pas! <i>Don't give me any!</i>	Ne leur en achète pas! <i>Don't buy them any!</i>