

FACILE À VS FACILE DE



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"Facile à" and "Facile de"

The distinction between "facile à" and "facile de" in French lies in whether you are describing something specific or a general situation. A key rule is that "facile de" is always preceded by "il est" or "c'est."

1. When to Use "Facile à"

Use "facile à" when the subject of the sentence is directly tied to the action of the verb. This structure highlights what is easy to perform or use.

Structure:

Specific subject + être facile à + infinitive

Examples:

Cette porte est facile à ouvrir.
This door is easy to open.

Ces exercices sont faciles à comprendre.
These exercises are easy to understand.

Une voiture électrique est facile à conduire.
An electric car is easy to drive.

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2. When to Use "Facile de"

Use "facile de" when describing a general situation or action, not tied to a specific object. This expression is always introduced by "il est" or "c'est", making it impersonal.

Structure:

Il est/C'est + facile de + infinitive

Examples:

Il est facile de faire une erreur.
It is easy to make a mistake.

C'est facile de comprendre les règles.
It's easy to understand the rules.

Ce n'est pas facile de parler une nouvelle langue.
It's not easy to speak a new language.

3. Summary of Rules

Facile à

Subject: A specific thing or person performing or undergoing the action.

Focus: What is easy to perform or use.

Preceded by: A concrete subject

Example: Un vélo est facile à réparer.

Facile de

Subject: A general or abstract subject (e.g., "il est," "c'est").

Focus: The ease of the process or action.

Preceded by: Always "il est" or "c'est."

Example: C'est facile de réparer un vélo.

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4. Additional Tips

If it's a specific, tangible subject (e.g., "porte," "texte"), use facile à.

If it's general or abstract, use facile de with "il est" or "c'est."

Impersonal constructions:

Only "facile de" can be used in sentences starting with "il est" or "c'est."

Focus difference:

Focus on the object or thing being easy? → Use facile à.

Focus on the ease of the action or process? → Use facile de.

Examples for Comparison

Un vélo est facile à réparer.

A bike is easy to repair.

→ The bike itself is easy to repair.

C'est facile de réparer un vélo.

It's easy to repair a bike.

→ The focus is on the action of repairing a bike, not the bike itself.

Ces règles sont faciles à suivre.

These rules are easy to follow.

→ The rules themselves are easy to follow.

C'est facile de suivre ces règles.

It's easy to follow these rules.

→ The focus is on the act of following, not the rules themselves.

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