

French Grammar Express – Il faut...

il faut [eelfoh]

Comes from the verb '*falloir*' meaning 'to need' or 'to be necessary.'

It is an **impersonal** verb like the verb '*pleuvoir*' (to rain)

il pleut – it rains

Only conjugated with the 3rd person singular '*il*'.

il faut + noun

Used with a noun it means something like 'we need, you need, one needs something, or something is needed in general.'

Il faut **du pain**. – *we need bread.*

Il faut **une solution**. – *a solution is needed.*

Il faut **du courage**. – *you (people in general) need courage.*

Il faut **un, une (a) ...**

Il faut **du, de la, des, de l' (some)...**

Il me faut + noun

If you want to be specific about **who** needs something, then you must use an **indirect object pronoun**.

I need
you need
he, she, it needs
we need
you need
they need

il
me
te
lui
nous
vous
leur

faut

• Il **me** faut du pain.
I need bread.

• Il **lui** faut du courage.
she/he needs courage.

• Il **leur** faut une solution.
they need a solution.

Il faut + infinitive verb

Used with an infinitive verb, it means something like 'it's necessary to', 'you (people in general) must', 'we must.'

• Il faut **protéger** la planète
It's necessary to protect the planet.

• Il faut **choisir** un plat
You must choose a dish.

• Il faut **vendre** la maison
We must sell the house.

Il faut que...

If you want to be specific about who must do something, then add **que** followed by the **subjunctive**.

1. Take the *ils/elles* form of the present tense and remove the ending (-ent)

ils/elles dansent
subjunctive stem

2. Take the stem and add the endings of the subjunctive.

Je	dans e
Tu	dans es
Il, elle, on	dans e
Nous	dans ions
Vous	dans iez
Ils, elles	dans ent

3. Remember common irregular stems

faire (to do)	fass - [fas]
aller (to go)	aill - [ahee]
pouvoir (can)	puiss - [pwees]
vouloir (to want)	veuil - [vuhee]
savoir (to know)	sach - [sash]

- Il faut **que je fasse** les courses - *I must do the shopping.*
- Il faut **que tu ailles** à la banque - *you must go to the bank.*
- Il faut **que nous sachions** la vérité - *we have to know the truth.*

Il faut que...

Highly irregular verbs in the subjunctive:

être –to be		
Je	sois	[swah]
Tu	sois	[swah]
Il, elle, on	soit	[swah]
Nous	soyons	[swaheeø]
Vous	soyez	[swaheeø]
Ils/ elles	soient	[swah]

avoir –to have		
J'	aie	[eh]
Tu	aies	[eh]
Il, elle, on	ait	[eh]
Nous	ayons	[ehøø]
Vous	ayez	[ehøø]
Ils/ elles	aient	[eh]

Il faut **que tu sois** patient(e).
You must be patient

Il faut **que vous ayez** votre passeport.
You must have your passport.

Il faut and tenses

Present tense

Il faut – *It is necessary to, you/we must*

Perfect tense

Il **a fallu** – *It has been necessary to, you/we have had to*

Imperfect

Il **fallait** – *It was necessary to, you/we were having to*

Simple future

Il **faudra** – *It will be necessary to, you/we will have to*

Immediate future

Il **va falloir** – *It is going to be necessary to, you/we are going to have to*

Conditional

Il **faudrait** – *It would be necessary to, you/we would have to*