

# French Faux Amis: The Combined - A Fascinating Linguistic Journey

Have you ever come across a French word that sounded oh-so-familiar, only to discover that its meaning is completely different from what you initially expected? If so, then you've encountered a phenomenon known as "French Faux Amis" which translates to "false friends" in English. These words might appear harmless at first glance, but they often lead to hilarious misunderstandings and can even create embarrassing situations if used inappropriately.

French, being one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, has its fair share of faux amis. These linguistic tricksters share a surprising similarity with English words, making them all the more perplexing. In this article, we will explore some of the most intriguing French faux amis, their meanings, and the context in which they should be used. Get ready for a linguistic journey like no other!

## The Curious Case of "Préservatif"



## French Faux Amis, The Combined Book

by Saul H Rosenthal(Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 4.9 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 828 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Print length : 440 pages

Lending : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported



Let's start with an attention-grabbing example - "préservatif". This word might sound familiar to English speakers, but be warned, it does not mean "preservative" as you might expect. In French, "préservatif" refers to a condom. Imagine the perplexity that could arise if you mistake this word for something entirely different when conversing with a native French speaker!

This particular case illustrates why it is crucial to be aware of these deceptive French words. They can often lead to misunderstandings and even awkward situations that could have been easily avoided with the right knowledge. In this article, we aim to equip you with precisely that.

## **The Entangled World of "Actuellement" and "Actually"**



Coming across "actuellement," you might be tempted to think it means "actually" in English. However, to your surprise, "actuellement" translates to "currently" instead. While both words sound nearly identical, their meanings differ entirely.

These types of faux amis can be quite challenging, especially for French learners. Without being aware of their true meanings, one might easily slip into using them incorrectly. Imagine telling someone you're actually doing great when you meant to convey that you're currently doing great. Such misinterpretations can lead to confusion and unnecessary misunderstandings.

## The Bewitching Spell of "Soirée"



Another fascinating example of French faux amis is "soirée." This word sounds similar to the English term "soiree," which usually refers to an evening party or social gathering. However, the French word "soirée" encompasses both the concept of an evening as well as an event. In French, it simply means "evening."

While attending a soiree might sound like a delightful experience, it's crucial to understand the context in which the word is being used. Misusing this word can lead to confusion and the potential loss of a perfect evening plan!

## The Intriguing Case of "Préservatif"



The seemingly innocent word "contrôler" is yet another example of a French faux ami that can easily mislead English speakers. In English, "control" usually refers to having power over something or someone. However, in French, "contrôler" means "to check" or "to monitor."

This distinction is particularly important when discussing personal relationships. Misusing this word might lead to an unintentional power struggle or confusion over controlling someone's actions. Understanding the true meaning of "contrôler" is crucial to avoid any unnecessary disputes or misunderstandings.

## The Ever-Confusing "Attendre"

# FRENCH VERBS CONJUGATION

Attendre -  
Indicatif Passé  
composé

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↑ ABONNEZ-VOUS !

Le verbe « Attendre »

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1s	j'ai attendu	
2s	tu as attendu	
3s	il a attendu	
1p	nous avons attendu	
2p	vous avez attendu	
3p	ils ont attendu	

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Lastly, let's unravel the deceiving nature of "attendre". This word might sound similar to the English term "attend", which typically implies actively participating in an event or being present. However, in French, "attendre" simply translates to "wait." The difference in meanings might seem subtle, but it is essential to grasp the true essence of the word to avoid any communication mishaps.

Knowing the correct usage of the word "attendre" can save you from uncomfortable social situations. Imagine mistakenly telling someone you'll attend their party when you meant to say you'll wait for them. These blunders can be easily avoided with a little bit of linguistic awareness.

French faux amis may appear innocent and harmless due to their resemblance to English words. However, their deceptive nature hides quirky meanings that can lead to hilarious misunderstandings, awkward situations, and even possible offense. To navigate through the French linguistic realm successfully, it is essential to familiarize oneself with these fascinating false friends and their true meanings.

In this article, we have only scratched the surface of the vast world of French faux amis. Embrace this linguistic journey and continue exploring other fascinating examples. The more you delve into this linguistic phenomenon, the better equipped you'll be to navigate the French language with confidence and avoid any unnecessary communication mishaps.



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It's easy to assume that French words mean the same as English words, when they look and sound pretty much the same. While that is often true, unfortunately some words may have entirely different meanings than what you might expect. They are called false friends, or faux amis. These faux amis can cause



misunderstandings and awkward situations when they really mean something entirely different than what you anticipated.

“French Faux Amis” will help you avoid these embarrassing situations. It isn’t a dry list of faux amis. It’s written in conversational language and it’s easy and fun to read. Each faux ami word pair is explained so that you will understand how the French word is used compared to English usage. You’ll also see examples of its use in sentences and phrases.

When you’ve finished reading this book you’ll have learned most of these faux amis without ever having had to consciously memorize them, simply because they’re so interesting.

This book combines three previous books by the same author: “Speaking Better French, Faux Amis”, “Speaking Better French, More Faux Amis” and “Speaking Better French, Still More Faux Amis”. It allows you to have all the faux amis in one place for much easier reference.

Praise for “Speaking Better French, Faux Amis” by the same author:

“I am amazed at how much fun to read, as well as how incredibly informative, the book is. It's a wonderful tool that I'll be happy to recommend to my colleagues and students.”.....Professoor Brigitte Humbert, Middlebury College

"I love the Faux Amis, especially the relaxed, conversational presentation. I'm going to suggest that we recommend it for students in our intermediate and advanced classes as a supplementary reference book."....Professor Norman Shapiro, Wesleyan University

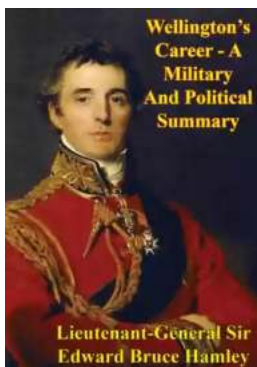
“I think your books are wonderful. You have made a fantastic contribution to the French language profession.”.... Professor Judy Baughin, Raymond Walters College

“I have very much enjoyed Faux Amis and plan to order it for my translation class this coming semester. I put a great deal of emphasis on these false friends in the course. You have done a real service to learners of French...This is important work.”... Professor John Romeiser, University of Tennessee

I love your books! They are easy to navigate, and they are extremely useful to ... non-native French speakers. I actually enjoy reading them at night in bed before falling to sleep, they're that entertaining. ---- Professor John Turvaville, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

“Your little books are great!” ---- Professor AG Fralin, Washington and Lee University

“I was a little skeptical when I ordered this book, and felt it would end up being just a list of words I'd have to memorize. But it's an amazingly interesting book” --  
- Reader reviewer, amazon.com



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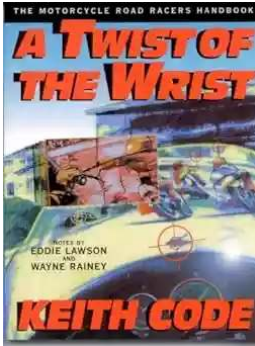
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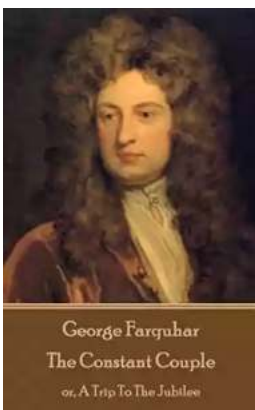
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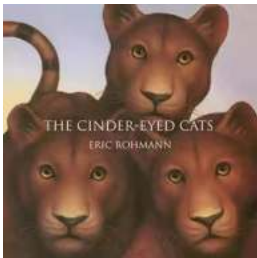
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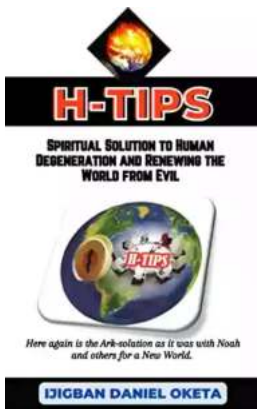
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