

Demonstrative and interrogative pronouns :

Lequel and *celui* are interrogative and demonstrative pronouns that can be used in place of nouns. When referring to a noun that has already been stated, these pronouns can be used instead of repeating the noun again.

Lequel-

Lequel correlates to the English phrase “which one?” It is an interrogative and is used when you are making a choice between multiple objects or people. There are four different forms of *lequel* that have to do with the gender and number of the noun it refers to. Depending on the gender and the number, *lequel* must be in agreement.

Masculine singular	—————▶	lequel
Masculine plural	—————▶	lesquels
Feminine singular	—————▶	laquelle
Feminine plural	—————▶	lesquelles

For example :

Lesquelles attaches préférez-vous ? Le noir, le gris, ou le bleu ?

Which of these ties do you prefer ? The black, the grey, or the blue?

As you can see in this example, you are required to choose between three different colors of ties.

Therefore, because there are multiple ties, and it is a feminine noun, *lesquelles* is used.

Celui-

Celui in contrast is a demonstrative pronoun. This means that after referring to an object, the proper form of *celui* can be used as a stand in for the noun. Like *lequel*, *celui* must be in agreement with the gender and the number of the noun. Make sure when using these, you do not drop the preposition if there is one in the previous sentence. Place the preposition before *celui* in the final sentence.

Masculine singular	→	celui
Masculine plural	→	ceux
Feminine singular	→	celle
Feminine plural	→	celles

For example :

Lesquelles de ces bijouterie préférez-vous ?

Celui en argent.

Which of these jewelry do you prefer ?

I prefer the silver one.

When using *celui*, you can also use the suffixes *-ci* and *-là* to refer to locations. When using them, place them at the end of *celui*, with a hyphen. *-ci* is equivalent to the English word here, and *-là* refers to there.

For example:

Quelle robe achetez-vous?

Celle-ci parce que j'aime la soie.

Which dress are you buying? This one here because I love silk.

My experience:

Celui and *lequel* are helpful because they make writing and speaking much more fluid. It is much more natural and easier to use these pronouns instead of having to consistently repeat the same noun over and over. Particularly because in English we do not repeat nouns, these phrases make French flow much easier.

Exercise- Use the proper form of *lequel*, *celui* and *-ci/-là*:

1. _____ parfum as-tu acheté?
2. J'ai acheté _____ (un parachute) parce que ça sent très bon.
3. _____ livre est ton favori ? _____ ou _____ ?
4. Elle préfère _____ (le chat) parce que les chiens sont trop forts.