

A Detailed Guide to English Grammar and Composition

This guide provides a detailed breakdown of four essential topics in English: Parts of Speech, Subject-Verb Agreement, Tenses, and Paragraph Writing. Each section is designed to be a comprehensive resource.

1. Parts of Speech

In-depth Definition: Parts of speech are the fundamental categories to which words are assigned based on their function, role, and grammatical behavior in a sentence. Understanding them is the foundation for building correct and sophisticated sentences.

A. Noun

- **In-depth Definition:** A noun is a word that functions as the name of a specific person, place, thing, or idea. Nouns are the main "actors" or "subjects" in a sentence; they are what we talk about.
- **How to Identify:**
 1. Ask: "Can I have or own this?" (e.g., a **dog**, an **idea**, **sadness**).
 2. Check if it can be preceded by an article (**a**, **an**, **the**) or a possessive (**my**, **his**, **their**).
 3. See if it can be the subject (doing an action) or object (receiving an action) of a verb.
- **Examples:**
 - **Person:** **friend**, **teacher**, **Maria**
 - **Place:** **city**, **school**, **Paris**
 - **Thing:** **dog**, **table**, **book** (This includes physical objects)
 - **Idea:** **love**, **freedom**, **justice** (This includes concepts, qualities, and states)

Types of Nouns

1. Common Noun

- **Definition:** The *general*, non-specific name for a person, place, thing, or idea.
- **Key Rule:** It is not capitalized unless it begins a sentence or is part of a title.
- **Examples:** **dog**, **city**, **school**, **friend**, **book**, **love**

2. Proper Noun

- **Definition:** The *specific* name of a particular person, place, thing, or organization.
- **Key Rule:** It is always capitalized to signify its specific nature.
- **Examples:** **Max** (a specific dog), **Paris** (a specific city), **Harvard University** (a specific school)

3. Concrete Noun

- **Definition:** A noun that names something you can perceive with one or more of your five senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touch).

- **How to Identify:** Ask, "Can I see, hear, smell, taste, or touch it?"
- **Examples:** table (see/touch), music (hear), cloud (see), perfume (smell)

4. Abstract Noun

- **Definition:** A noun that names an idea, concept, quality, feeling, or state that you *cannot* perceive with your five senses.
- **Examples:** love, freedom, sadness, justice, courage, information

Categories & Properties of Nouns

1. Countable Noun (Count Noun)

- **Definition:** A noun that represents individual, countable units.
- **Key Rules:**
 - It can be made plural (usually by adding -s or -es).
 - It can be preceded by a number (one, two, three...).
 - It can be preceded by a or an.
- **Examples:** one book, two books; a cat, three cats

2. Uncountable Noun (Mass Noun)

- **Definition:** A noun that names a 'mass', substance, or concept that cannot be divided into separate, countable units.
- **Key Rules:**
 - It is not typically made plural (e.g., we don't say informations).
 - It is not used with numbers.
 - To quantify it, you must use a "counter word" or "partitive."
- **Examples:** water, information, advice, luggage, rice, music
- **Counting Exception:** a piece of advice, two bottles of water, three grains of rice

3. Collective Noun

- **Definition:** A singular word that names a group of people or things.
- **Examples:** team, family, committee, flock, audience, staff
- **Tricky Sub-Type (Agreement):** Collective nouns can be treated as singular or plural.
 - **Singular:** When the group acts as a single, unified entity. (e.g., The **team** *is* winning.)
 - **Plural (common in UK English):** When the individuals within the group are acting separately. (e.g., The **family** *are* arguing.)

B. Pronoun

- **In-depth Definition:** A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun or noun phrase to avoid repetition. The noun it replaces is called its "antecedent."
- **How to Identify:** It's a word from a small, closed class (you can memorize most of them) that can act as a subject or object but isn't a specific name.

- **Example:** **Maria** said **she** was tired. (Maria is the antecedent; she is the pronoun.)

Types of Pronouns

1. Personal Pronoun

- **Definition:** Refers to specific people or things. They change form based on their role (subject, object).
- **Sub-type (Subject):** The one doing the action. I , you , he , she , it , we , they .
 - *Example:* **We** went to the store.
- **Sub-type (Object):** The one receiving the action. me , you , him , her , it , us , them .
 - *Example:* She gave the book to **me**.

2. Possessive Pronoun

- **Definition:** Shows ownership.
- **Sub-type (Adjective):** Used before a noun. my , your , his , her , its , our , their .
 - *Example:* That is **my** car.
- **Sub-type (Standalone):** Used in place of a noun. mine , yours , his , hers , ours , theirs .
 - *Example:* That car is **mine**.

3. Reflexive Pronoun

- **Definition:** Refers back to the subject of the sentence, "reflecting" the action. Ends in -self or -selves .
- **Examples:** myself , yourself , himself , herself , itself , ourselves , themselves .
 - *Example:* He taught **himself** to play guitar.

4. Indefinite Pronoun

- **Definition:** Refers to non-specific or general people or things.
- **Examples (Often singular):** someone , anybody , everything , nothing , each , either .
 - *Example:* **Everyone** is here.
- **Examples (Often plural):** many , few , both , several .
 - *Example:* **Many** are called.
- **Examples (Depends on context):** some , all , any , most , none .
 - *Example:* **Some** of the cake *is* gone. / **Some** of the cookies *are* gone.

5. Relative Pronoun

- **Definition:** Introduces a dependent (relative) clause, which gives more information about a noun.
- **Examples:** who , whom , whose , which , that .
 - *Example:* The person **who** called was my mom.
- **Tricky Sub-type (who vs. whom):**
 - who : Use as the subject of the clause. (Tip: Test by replacing with he/she/they).
 - **Who** is at the door? (**He** is...)

- **whom** : Use as the *object* of the clause. (Tip: Test by replacing with **him/her/ them**).
 • To ****whom**** did you give the book? (I gave it to ****him**...**)

C. Verb

- **In-depth Definition:** A verb is the core of a sentence, expressing an action (a "doing" word) or a state of being (a "being" word). No sentence is complete without a verb.
- **How to Identify:** Ask, "What is the action?" or "What is happening?" It often changes form to show tense (e.g., **walk**, **walked**, **walking**).

Types of Verbs

1. Action Verb

- **Definition:** Shows a physical or mental action.
- **Examples (Physical):** **run**, **jump**, **talk**, **write**
- **Examples (Mental):** **think**, **study**, **believe**, **wonder**

2. Linking (State of Being) Verb

- **Definition:** Connects the subject of the sentence to a word that describes or renames it (a subject complement). It does not show action.
- **Key Rule:** You can often replace a linking verb with an equals sign (=).
- **Examples:** **is**, **am**, **are**, **was**, **were**, **seem**, **feel**, **become**, **appear**
 - *Example:* She ****is** tall.** (She = tall)
 - *Example:* He ****feels** sick.** (He = sick)

Other Verb Forms & Functions

1. Helping (Auxiliary) Verb

- **Definition:** "Helps" the main verb to form a specific tense or mood.
- **Function:** They come *before* the main verb.
- **Examples:** **be** (is, am, are), **have** (has, had), **do** (does, did), **will**, **can**, **should**, **must**.
 - *Example:* I ****have** *eaten***. (have helps eaten form the present perfect tense).
 - *Example:* She ****is** *sleeping***. (is helps sleeping form the present continuous tense).
 - *Example:* You ****must** *study***. (must adds a mood of obligation).

2. Gerund

- **Definition:** A verb form that ends in **-ing** but functions as a **noun**.
- **Function:** It can be the subject, object, or object of a preposition.
- **Examples:**
 - ****Swimming**** is my favorite hobby. (Subject)
 - I love ****reading****. (Object)

3. Participle

- **Definition:** A verb form (usually ending in `-ing` or `-ed`) that functions as an **adjective**.
- **Function:** It modifies a noun or pronoun.
- **Examples:**
 - The ****running** water...** (`running` describes `water`)
 - The ****broken** glass...** (`broken` describes `glass`)

D. Adjective

- **In-depth Definition:** An adjective is a word that modifies (describes or defines) a noun or a pronoun.
- **How to Identify:** It almost always answers one of these questions about the noun:
 - *What kind?* (`a **red** car`)
 - *Which one?* (`the **tall** building`)
 - *How many?* (`**three** apples`)
- **Special Sub-type (Articles):** The words `a`, `an`, and `the` are a special type of adjective.

Tricky Cases for Adjectives

1. Order of Adjectives

- **Rule:** When using multiple adjectives, they often follow a specific (but unwritten) order.
- **Order:** Opinion -> Size -> Age -> Shape -> Color -> Origin -> Material -> Purpose
- **Example:** A ****beautiful**** (Opinion) ****old**** (Age) ****red**** (Color) ****sleeping**** (Purpose) bag.

2. Comparative / Superlative

- **Definition:** Adjectives change form to show comparison.
- **Sub-type (Comparative):** Compares two things. (e.g., `faster`, `more beautiful`).
- **Sub-type (Superlative):** Compares three or more things. (e.g., `fastest`, `most beautiful`).
- **Rule:** For one-syllable words, add `-er` / `-est`. For most words with two or more syllables, use `more` / `most`.

E. Adverb

- **In-depth Definition:** An adverb is a word that modifies (describes) a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.
- **How to Identify:** It often, but not always, ends in `-ly`. It answers one of these questions:
 - *How?* (`He ran **quickly**.` -> Modifies verb)
 - *When?* (`He ran **yesterday**.` -> Modifies verb)
 - *Where?* (`He ran **here**.` -> Modifies verb)
 - *How often?* (`He **always** runs.` -> Modifies verb)
 - *To what extent?* (`She is **very** smart.` -> Modifies adjective `smart`)
 - *To what extent?* (`He ran **too** quickly.` -> Modifies adverb `quickly`)

Tricky Cases for Adverbs

1. Adverbs Not Ending in `-ly` ("Flat Adverbs")

- **Rule:** Some adverbs have the same form as their adjective counterparts.
- **Examples:** `fast`, `hard`, `late`, `early`, `well`
 - *Example:* `He runs **fast**.` (NOT `fastly`)
 - *Example:* `She works **hard**.` (The word `hardly` is also an adverb, but it means "almost not at all.")

F. Preposition

- **In-depth Definition:** A preposition is a small word that shows the relationship between a noun/pronoun (its object) and another word in the sentence.
- **Function:** It typically indicates location, time, or direction. It begins a "prepositional phrase."
- **Examples:** `in`, `on`, `at`, `under`, `over`, `with`, `for`, `from`, `to`, `of`, `before`, `after`
 - *Example:* `The book is **on** the table.` (The phrase `on the table` shows the relationship between `book` and `table`).
 - *Example:* `I went **to** the store.`

Tricky Cases for Prepositions

1. Ending a Sentence

- **Rule:** Despite old rules, it is now perfectly acceptable in modern English to end a sentence with a preposition, especially in questions.
- **Example:** `Who did you talk **to**?` (This is more natural than the formal `To whom did you talk?`)

2. Phrasal Verbs

- **Definition:** A phrasal verb is a verb combined with a preposition (or adverb) to create a new meaning.
- **Examples:** `give up` (quit), `look after` (take care of), `run into` (meet by chance)

G. Conjunction

- **In-depth Definition:** A conjunction is a word that joins (conjoins) words, phrases, or clauses.

Types of Conjunctions

1. Coordinating Conjunction

- **Definition:** Joins two equal or parallel grammatical parts (e.g., two nouns, two verbs, two complete sentences).
- **List (FANBOYS):** `For`, `And`, `Nor`, `But`, `Or`, `Yet`, `So`
- **Example:** `I like tea, **but** he likes coffee.` (Joins two independent clauses)

2. Subordinating Conjunction

- **Definition:** Joins an independent (main) clause to a dependent (subordinate) clause. The subordinating conjunction makes one clause "less than" or dependent on the other.

- **Examples:** because, although, if, when, while, unless, since
- **Example:** He left **because** he was tired. (The clause because he was tired cannot stand alone as a sentence; it depends on He left).

H. Interjection

- **In-depth Definition:** An interjection is a word or short phrase that expresses strong, sudden emotion.
- **Function:** It is not grammatically connected to the rest of the sentence. It is often set apart by an exclamation mark or a comma.
- **Examples:** Wow!, Ouch!, Oh,, Hey!, Well,
 - *Example:* **Wow!** That's amazing.
 - *Example:* **Ouch,** that hurt.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

In-depth Definition (Core Principle): In a sentence, the subject (the noun or pronoun doing the action) and the verb (the action or state of being) must agree in number. This is the most fundamental rule of sentence structure.

- **Singular subjects take singular verbs.** (A singular verb often ends in -s, e.g., he walks).
- **Plural subjects take plural verbs.** (A plural verb usually has no -s, e.g., they walk).

Normal Cases

- **Singular:** The **dog** *barks*.
- **Plural:** The **dogs** *bark*.
- **Singular:** **She** *is* happy.
- **Plural:** **They** *are* happy.

Exceptional & Tricky Cases

1. Phrases Between Subject and Verb (Prepositional Phrases)

- **Rule:** The verb agrees with the subject, *not* with a noun in a phrase that comes between them (especially a prepositional phrase).
- **How to Identify:** Mentally cross out the phrase.
- **Examples:**
 - The **box** [of chocolates] *is* on the table. (The subject is box, not chocolates. The box is...)
 - The **politician**, [along with the reporters,] *is* expected shortly. (The subject is politician, not reporters. The politician is...)

2. Compound Subjects with "and"

- **Rule:** Two or more subjects joined by and are almost always plural.
- **Example:** A **cat and a dog** *are* friends.
- **Exception:** If the two items form a single unit, idea, or dish.

- Example: Peanut butter and jelly is my favorite sandwich. (Treated as one dish)
- Example: The bed and breakfast was charming. (Treated as one establishment)

3. Compound Subjects with "or" / "nor" (Proximity Rule)

- **Rule:** The verb agrees with the subject that is closest to it.
- **Examples:**
 - Either my sisters or my brother is picking me up. (brother is singular and closest)
 - Either my brother or my sisters are picking me up. (sisters is plural and closest)

4. Indefinite Pronouns

- **Rule (Always Singular):** Most indefinite pronouns are treated as singular.
- **List:** each, either, neither, one, everyone, everybody, someone, somebody, no one, nobody, anyone, anybody, anything, nothing.
- **Examples:**
 - Everyone is invited.
 - Neither of the answers is correct.
- **Rule (Always Plural):** both, few, many, several.
- Example: Many are called.
- **Rule (SANAM - Depends on the Object):** Some, Any, None, All, Most. The verb agrees with the noun (the object of the preposition of) they refer to.
 - Example: Some of the cake is gone. (Cake is singular/uncountable)
 - Example: Some of the cookies are gone. (Cookies are plural/countable)

5. Collective Nouns

- **Rule:** Can be singular or plural.
- **Singular:** When the group acts as a single, unified entity.
 - Example: The committee decides today. (The group acts as one.)
- **Plural:** When the individuals within the group are acting separately or are being emphasized.
 - Example: The committee are in disagreement. (The individuals are in disagreement.)

6. Inverted Sentences ("Here" / "There")

- **Rule:** In sentences beginning with Here or There, the true subject comes after the verb, but the verb must still agree with it.
- **How to Identify:** Find the subject first, then make the verb agree.
- **Examples:**
 - There is a problem. (Subject is problem)
 - There are many problems. (Subject is problems)

- Here *comes* the **bus**. (Subject is bus)

7. Tricky Singular Nouns

- **Rule:** Some nouns end in -s but are grammatically singular.
- **List:** news , measles , mumps , physics , mathematics , economics .
- **Examples:**
 - The **news** *is* on at six.
 - **Physics** *is* a difficult subject.

3. Tenses

In-depth Definition: Tenses are verb forms that show *when* an action occurs. English tenses are a combination of:

1. **Time:** Past, Present, or Future.
2. **Aspect:** The state of the action (is it simple, continuous, or completed?).
 - **Simple:** A simple fact or habit.
 - **Continuous (Progressive):** An action in progress.
 - **Perfect:** A completed action with relevance to another point in time.
 - **Perfect Continuous:** The duration of an ongoing, completed action.

A. Present Tenses

1. Simple Present

- **Formula:** Base verb (e.g., walk) / Base verb + -s (e.g., walks)
- **Core Function:** Used for actions, facts, or states that are generally true or habitual.
- **Specific Uses:**
 - **Habits/Routines:** She *drinks* coffee every morning.
 - **General Facts/Truths:** The **sun** *rises* in the east.
 - **Schedules:** The **train** *leaves* at 9 AM.

2. Present Continuous (Progressive)

- **Formula:** am/is/are + verb-ing
- **Core Function:** Used for an action that is currently in progress or is temporary.
- **Specific Uses:**
 - **Happening right now:** I *am typing* this document.
 - **Temporary situations:** He *is living* with his parents. (Not permanent)
 - **Future plans (firm):** We *are meeting* them for dinner tomorrow.

3. Present Perfect

- **Formula:** has/have + past participle (e.g., eaten , seen , walked)
- **Core Function:** Connects the past to the present.
- **Specific Uses:**

- **Unspecified Past Time:** An action that happened at *some point* in the past. (The time is not important).
 - *Example:* I *have seen* that movie before.
- **Past to Present:** An action that started in the past and continues to the present.
 - *Example:* She *has lived* here for ten years. (She still lives here.)

4. Present Perfect Continuous (Progressive)

- **Formula:** has/have been + verb-ing
- **Core Function:** Emphasizes the *duration* of an action that started in the past and is *still continuing*.
- **Specific Use:**
 - *Example:* I *have been waiting* for two hours. (Emphasizes the 2-hour duration of waiting).

B. Past Tenses

1. Simple Past

- **Formula:** verb + -ed (Regular) / Irregular form (e.g., went, saw)
- **Core Function:** A completed action at a *specific, finished* time in the past.
- **Specific Use:**
 - *Example:* I *walked* to the store **yesterday**.
- **Exceptional Case (Irregular Verbs):** Many common verbs are irregular.
 - *Examples:* go → went, see → saw, eat → ate, put → put

2. Past Continuous (Progressive)

- **Formula:** was/were + verb-ing
- **Core Function:** An action that was in progress at a *specific moment* in the past, often when it was interrupted by another action.
- **Specific Use:**
 - *Example:* I *was watching* TV when the phone *rang*. (The watching was in progress).

3. Past Perfect

- **Formula:** had + past participle
- **Core Function:** The "past of the past." An action that was completed *before* another past action.
- **Specific Use:**
 - *Example:* By the time I *arrived* (Past Action #2), he **had already left** (Past Action #1).

4. Past Perfect Continuous (Progressive)

- **Formula:** had been + verb-ing
- **Core Function:** Emphasizes the *duration* of an action that was happening *before* another past event.
- **Specific Use:**

- *Example:* She **had been working** for hours before she finally *took* a break.

C. Future Tenses

1. Simple Future

- **Formula 1 ("will"):** will + base verb
 - **Core Function:** Used for spontaneous decisions, predictions, or promises.
 - *Example (Spontaneous):* (Phone rings) I *will get* it!
 - *Example (Prediction):* I think it *will rain* tomorrow.
- **Formula 2 ("be going to"):** am/is/are going to + base verb
 - **Core Function:** Used for pre-made plans, intentions, or evidence-based predictions.
 - *Example (Plan):* I *am going to visit* my aunt next week.
 - *Example (Evidence):* Look at those clouds! It *is going to rain*.

2. Future Continuous (Progressive)

- **Formula:** will be + verb-ing
- **Core Function:** An action that will be in progress at a specific time in the future.
- **Specific Use:**
 - *Example:* This time tomorrow, I *will be flying* to Mexico.

3. Future Perfect

- **Formula:** will have + past participle
- **Core Function:** An action that will be completed by a specific time in the future.
- **Specific Use:**
 - *Example:* By 2025, she *will have graduated* from college.

4. Future Perfect Continuous (Progressive)

- **Formula:** will have been + verb-ing
- **Core Function:** Emphasizes the duration of an action up to a specific point in the future.
- **Specific Use:**
 - *Example:* In June, I *will have been working* here for five years.

4. Paragraph Writing

In-depth Definition: A paragraph is a distinct unit of writing, composed of a group of related sentences, that develops a single main idea. It is the fundamental building block of an essay or report.

The "Standard" Body Paragraph (PIE/TEE Model)

A strong body paragraph has three main parts:

1. P = Point (Topic Sentence)

- **Definition:** The first and most important sentence. It states the paragraph's single main idea and connects it to the overall thesis.
- **Example:** The most important quality for a student is self-discipline.

2. I/E = Illustration / Evidence (Supporting Sentences)

- **Definition:** The middle sentences that develop the main idea. They provide facts, examples, explanations, quotes, and details to prove the topic sentence.
- **Example:** Discipline allows a student to manage their time effectively, prioritizing homework over recreation. For instance, a disciplined student will finish their essay before playing video games, ensuring their work is not rushed. It also gives them the focus to study even when the material is difficult.

3. E = Explanation (Concluding/Transitional Sentence)

- **Definition:** The last sentence, which wraps up the idea (often by explaining *why* the evidence matters) and can optionally provide a smooth link to the next paragraph's idea.
- **Example:** Ultimately, without this self-control, raw intelligence is often not enough to achieve academic success.

Qualities of a Good Paragraph

1. Unity

- **Definition:** All sentences in the paragraph relate directly to the single main idea presented in the topic sentence.
- **How to Identify:** Read the topic sentence, then read each following sentence and ask, "Does this sentence directly support or explain that main idea?"
- **Bad Example (Loses Unity):** ...It also gives them the focus to study. My school also has a great football team. (The football team is off-topic).

2. Coherence

- **Definition:** The sentences are arranged in a logical order and flow smoothly from one to the next, making the paragraph easy to read.
- **How to Achieve:**
 - **Logical Order:** e.g., chronological (time), order of importance, cause and effect.
 - **Transition Words:** Use "signpost" words to guide the reader: However, Therefore, In addition, Furthermore, As a result, For example, First, Second, Finally...

3. Development

- **Definition:** The topic sentence is fully supported with sufficient detail. A paragraph with only two or three sentences is often underdeveloped.
- **How to Identify:** Ask, "Has the author given enough evidence to convince me of the topic sentence? Are there any unanswered questions?"

Special Paragraph Types

1. Introductory Paragraph

- **Function:** To grab the reader's attention, provide necessary background context, and state the essay's main argument (the thesis statement).
- **Structure (Funnel Shape):**

1. **Hook:** A broad, attention-grabbing opening (e.g., a surprising fact, a relevant quote, a strong question).
2. **Context:** Narrows the topic, giving background.
3. **Thesis Statement:** The specific, one-sentence argument of the entire essay.

2. Concluding Paragraph

- **Function:** To provide a sense of closure, summarize the main points, and leave the reader with a final, memorable thought.
- **Structure (Reverse Funnel):**
 1. **Restate Thesis:** Rephrase the thesis statement in new words.
 2. **Summarize:** Briefly recap the main points from the body paragraphs.
 3. **Final Thought (So What?):** A final "big picture" statement that answers "Why does this matter?"
- **Key Rule:** Do *not* introduce new information or arguments.

3. Transitional Paragraph

- **Definition:** A very short paragraph (often just one or two sentences) used in longer papers.
- **Function:** To create a "bridge," summarizing the section that just finished and introducing the