**2.6 COMMON ERRORS**

**Introduction to the Topic**

The topic common error is designed to check your ability to identify grammatical errors which will ultimately help you to write grammatically correct English. It not only involves your complete knowledge of the topics like: Nouns, Pronouns, Adverbs, Verbs, Conjunctions, Tenses, Articles, but thorough understanding of the topic ‘Punctuation’ as well.

The rules of Punctuation will help you to make your prose more effective and their exact meaning changes over time.

**Relevance in CAT**

The questions related to common errors which usually come in CAT examination are of different types. Herein, a question may also have a sentence/s, part/s of sentence; which may be having an/many errors. A thorough understanding of all the grammar topics and punctuation rules will help you to deal with it correctly.

**COMMON ERRORS**

Errors in grammar spelling and punctuation are rightly called common errors, as they obscure the meaning of what is being said; decreases clarity and interfere with communication.

To deal with problems related to common error you need to have thorough knowledge of the rules related to:-

1. Nouns

2. Pronouns

3. Adjective

4. Verbs

5. Tenses

6. Gerund and Infinitive

7. Conjunction & Interjection

8. Articles

However some of the rules of punctuation are given below which are most common from exam point of view.

**■ Punctuation**

It means the right use of putting in points or stops in writing.

Following are principle stops and their usage:-

**● Full stop (.)** at the end of sentence.

It is also used after statements or imperatives

e.g. We went to school today.

**● The comma (,)** are used to show shorter pauses than a semicolon (;) or a full stop (.).

We usually put a comma between two main clauses before but, and or, but only if the second classes has a subject.

Commas are put after sub clauses and reported clauses.

e.g. He was an intelligent, young boy.

He was a vocal, boisterous man.

**● Semi – colon (;)** is used between two main clauses when the second main clause explains the first.

e.g. The mother and her daughter start work at every morning; they get up early because there is always a lot to do.

**● The Colon (:)**

Colons follow independent clauses and are used to draw attention to the information that comes after. Colons come after the independent clause and before the word, phrase, sentence, quotation, or list it is introducing.

e.g. Rani had only one thing on her mind: her career.

**● Question Mark (?)** comes after a question.

e.g. Do you love me?

What is your name?

**● Quotation marks (“…”)** are put before and after direct speech. We put a comma before or after the direct speech.

e.g. Priya said, “It‘s time for the movie”.

“It’s time for the movie,” Priya said.

**● The Apostrophe (’)**

Apostrophes are used in the possessive form of nouns and short form or contractions.

Some examples of **contractions**

We’ve – We have

Won’t – Will not

Aren’t – Are not

I’ll – I will

Apostrophes shows possession, they are placed before the‘s’ to show possession by the person/ persons.

e.g. The girl’s dress. (Singular )

The girls’ dresses. (Plural)

Mr. Singh’s house. (house belongs to one Singh).

The Singhs’ house. (house belongs to the family Singh.)

**● Ellipses (…)**

The Ellipses (…) consists of three evenly spaced dots. The Ellipses is when you’re quoting material and you want to omit some words. Use ellipses only when omitting words with citations.

e.g. The ceremony honored some….. form the UK.

**■ Basic Rules**

**Rule 1:** One can agree ‘with’ another person but agree ‘to’ something inanimate.

**Rule 2:** Use **compare to** for unlike things

e.g. The poet compared her to the morning sun.

Use compare with for like things.

The dog compared its ears with that of its sibling.

**■** The difference between **‘game’** and **‘sports’**. Sports involve

the physical element.

e.g. Therefore, chess is not a sport but a game.

**■** Thinking words (*i.e*. **belief, thought..**) are always followed by **‘that’**.

e.g. I thought that you will come to home on time.

Her belief that life is ephemeral was challenged by all her classmates.

**■** A different kind of problem is raised by the implied notion that is so often associated with the use of the preposition **‘into’.**

e.g. He walked into the room. **(Right)**

The book is into the table. **(Wrong)**

Also, He is into the room in contrast to He is in the room.

However, for many kind of motion, if we have the right kind of verb, we can use **‘in’**

e.g. He is running in the water, or (Isn’t it sounds interesting!!)

He is turning the pages in the book.

**■ Noun – verb mismatch**

e.g. “A herd of horses are better than a flock of sheep” (“herd” is singular). Also “The City feels that this is an innovative idea”. (A city can’t feel).

“This sheet of paper will describe…”

(Paper can’t describe; only people can)

**■ Split Infinitive**

e.g. “I urge you to not support this Bill”.

**■ It’s** vs. **Its**

This is another common mistake. It’s also easily avoided by thinking through what you’re trying to say. **“It’s”** is a contraction of **“it is”** or **“it has”.**

e.g. It’s a great idea.

The lion is in its den.

**■ “e.g.”** and **“i.e.”**

**●** “e.g.” is short for exempli gratia, and means “for example”.

“i.e. is short for id est, and means “that is”.

**●** Use “e.g.” when you want to give an example (or several examples) of something just mentioned.

**●** Use “i.e.” when you wish to explain briefly or to clarify what you just said, or say the same thing in other words.

**■ “Practice”, “Practice”, “advice”, “advise”, “licence”** and **“license”**

If the distinction is observed, it is easy to remember whether to spell with “c” or “s”:

The nouns have “c” and the verb have “s”.

**■ “that”** and **“which”**

The difference between “that” “which” (in this context) is the difference between identifying an object and describing

that object “That” is used for identification, as in ‘here is the book that you asked for. “Which” is used for description (as is “who”) as in:

“Hence is the file that you asked for and which we spent an hour looking for.”

The object of a statement has first to be identified to the hearer, which, when this is done by describing some quality of the object, is done by means of a “that” clause. This can stand alone, as in ‘’Hence is the book that you asked for.” If the speaker wishes to add further information concerning the object that has been identified then he or she can do so using the “which ‘ clause.

There are many more errors which can be detected if you go through the grammar fundamentals properly of the topics mentioned in the starting of this chapter.

**■ Phrasal Verbs**

1. Apprise is always followed by the preposition ‘of’.

2. Auction is always followed by the preposition ‘off’.

3. Average is always followed by the preposition ‘out’.

4. Bandage is always followed by the preposition ‘up’.

5. Bluff is always followed by the preposition ‘out’.

6. Bolster is always followed by the preposition ‘up’.

7. Browse is always followed by the preposition ‘through’.

8. Bumble is always followed by the preposition ‘about’ or ‘around’.

9. Cuddle is always followed by the preposition ‘up’.

10. Crumple is always followed by the preposition ‘up’.

11. Cream is always followed by the preposition ‘off’.

12. Crawl is always followed by the preposition ‘out’.

13. Drool is always followed by the preposition ‘over’.

14. Elaborate is always followed by the preposition ‘on/upon’.

15. Fritter is always followed by the preposition ‘away’.

16. Gloss is always followed by the preposition ‘over’.

17. Hammer is always followed by the preposition ‘away’.

18. Insinuate is always followed by the preposition ‘into’.

19. Kit is always followed by the preposition ‘out’.

20. Nestle is always followed by the preposition ‘up’.

21. Nuzzle is always followed by the preposition ‘up’.

22. Rustle is always followed by the preposition ‘up’.

23. Zero is always followed by the preposition ‘in’.

24. Top is always followed by the preposition ‘off’.

25. Act is always followed by the preposition ‘up’.

**Points To Remember**

● Some, More, Most and all can be singular or plural pronouns, depending on the noun it refers to.

● A number requires a plural verb.

e.g. A number of people are waiting outside the door.

● The number requires a singular verb.

e.g. The number of students is fewer in this class to select for the Annual Day Dance.

● In order for a modifying phrase to be used correctly it must be as close as possible to the word it modifies.

● With **‘did’** use first form of the verb.

e.g. I did go to school.

● With **‘to’** use first form of the verb. (Infinitives)

e.g. I like to swim.

● **‘Fruit’** in general is an uncountable noun.

e.g. Although it was raining, we enjoyed our picnic.

● An abstract noun has no plural number.

● A material noun has no plural number.

**Practice Exercise – Easy**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1** − **20):** *Choose the grammatically correct sentence from the following four options.*

1.

a. Aravalis are a range of mountains

b. The Indian Ocean separates India from Sri Lanka.

c. You are almost Aryabhatta in your knowledge of mathematics.

d. You can stick this down with a fevicol.

2.

a. Sushant is going to London to cut his hair.

b. The Sun rises in the east.

c. I met George Bush today morning.

d. I may be able to by this place after a week.

3.

a. The Mount Abu is in Rajasthan.

b. He was Surdas in his country.

c. He is not fond of mathematics.

d. After 1970, the consumption of butter has increased each year.

4.

a. A fire broke out in our office.

b. The students gave the management exam.

c. Both of them did not go to party.

d. Peter has not come also.

5.

a. The students have been acting on all day.

b. Unless you have no objection, I will come tomorrow.

c. Men work because they may earn a living.

d. Shreya nuzzled up to her mother with a happy sigh.

6.

a. Look at the signature on this document.

b. I never buy rotten fruits.

c. Very few office workers get a good salary.

d. Have you learnt the alphabets.

7.

a. Give me all the informations that you have received.

b. She possesses many skills.

c. He learnt three poetries by heart.

d. The buffalo eats grass all day.

8.

a. He complained about the dirty bed liners.

b. She had four off springs.

c. These cattle are mine.

d. There are many dirts on the wall.

9.

a. The government should work to the upliftment of women.

b. He gave me a ten rupee note.

c. I have a pain in my leg.

d. The first four years plans were successful.

10.

a. I like a three year old dog.

b. The climate of Delhi is better than Mumbai.

c. I love you reading romatic novel.

d. His behaviour was such which could not be pardoned.

11.

a. The agendum were discussed in the meeting.

b. The data given in the book is quite correct.

c. Two deers were caught.

d. This monument is built from bricks and stones.

12.

a. My dog and yours are both lame.

b. As soon as I entered the classroom, he told to sit down.

c. The apparatuses kept in the science laboratory are new.

d. One should keep one’s promise.

13.

a. I and Ritu have come.

b. One should take care of his health.

c. The information given in the file is quite correct.

d. I like seven year old boy.

14.

a. This is the same mistake which you made yesterday.

b. This is the same book which is yours.

c. I hold in high esteem anybody and anything which reminds me of my attainment.

d. Who of the two students is more desiring.

15.

a. Move yourself over to this side.

b. Let you, Ritesh and I apprise the director of factual position.

c. He awarded of the offer.

d. She resigned to her fate.

16.

a. I engaged myself in this activity.

b. The clouds have dispersed.

c. She prepared for the trip.

d. This problem affects each of every one of us.

17.

a. Your separation distresses me.

b. She was sorry to find that she had a little money.

c. She spent the little money that she had.

d. I am glad I have little time left.

18.

a. I was sorry to have few rupees.

b. She read a few novels that she had.

c. I wish you would live here few days.

d. They all helped each other.

19.

a. This girl is more cunning than all the girls.

b. This book is more preferable than that.

c. Her strength is superior to mine.

d. Your height is inferior than mine.

20.

a. This manager is senior to that.

b. Aluminium is the useful metal than all.

c. She wrote a best novel.

d. You have a clearest style of writing.

**Practice Exercise – Medium**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1** − **25):** *Choose the grammatically correct sentence from the following four options.*

1.

a. The park seems to be more popular with elder people.

b. With few money she had been given, she bought an ice-cream and some chocolates.

c. This is an excellent portrait of Bhagat Singh.

d. A white, old, Japanese car is waiting outside you house.

2.

a. I am very astonished at the news.

b. I accept your offer much gladly.

c. The portrait was hanged on the wall.

d. The murderer was hanged.

3.

a. The sparrow has fled away from the cage.

b. The Yamuna has overflown its banks in the rainy season.

c. The army men fled for their lives.

d. Seems to be a very rough wind.

4.

a. Outside the gate stand a horse.

b. Why she told that falsehood?

c. What study she likes best?

d. What study does she prefers?

5.

a. I don’t want to sever ties with my cousins.

b. She will be drowned; nobody shall save her.

c. He is ill for three days.

d. I did not complete the work.

6.

a. Chandragupta Maurya founded the Maurya dynasty.

b. Aurangzeb has done much evil to the Mughal Empire.

c. She has not come at the time when she was ordered.

d. The rain has begun to fall as soon as the wind went down.

7.

a. I have finished my work last night.

b. I have matriculated in April last year.

c. I had bought three novels books yesterday.

d. I sent the application in November last.

8.

a. He was ill for three day, when the doctor was sent for.

b. The train steamed off when I reached the station.

c. If he works hard, he will pass.

d. If you would have worked hard, you would have passed.

9.

a. I heard her say so.

b. Bring me a chair to sit.

c. I want a ladder to climb.

d. I ask your favour of sending me a document.

10.

a. They prohibited me to enter a temple.

b. I insisted on his going away.

c. Rasgulla is too sweet.

d. He was too distressed at his colleague’s death.

11.

a. This way is quite dangerous.

b. She was a little pleased at her success.

c. The car stuck fast into the mud.

d. She was born at eleven o’clock in the morning on 14th October in the year 1995.

12.

a. I was afraid to open the door lest he follow me.

b. They were fully apprised for the task.

c. The hall and all its contents will be auctioned off next week.

d. If you make the average, there’s one bicycle stolen every five minutes.

13.

a. Rohan bandaged me until my parents came to take me to hospital.

b. If she asks any difficult questions, you will have to bluff.

c. They tried to bolster up his morale.

d. He browsed the TV channels while he waited for the food.

14.

a. I could hear my sister bumbling around our garden.

b. He crumbled her offer letter without even looking at it.

c. The minister is creaming out the public’s money.

d. This firm can crank up about 80 two wheelers an hour.

15.

a. The girls drooled at the dress in the showroom.

b. He said he was resigning but did not elaborate on his reason.

c. John has frittered out the money that his mother left for him.

d. The director hammering at the same point all through the annual general meeting.

16.

a. My sister kitted for the new job.

b. Suzi nestled with her mother on the sofa.

c. The kittens like to nuzzle up to their mother.

d. I will rustle some lunch for you.

17.

a. Wasting no time they zeroed in on the main issue.

b. Mr. Prabhat conducted interview, and his assistant wrote them.

c. He topped his career with World Cup Trophy.

d. The students have been acting on all day.

18.

a. She said that “I shall be there soon.”

b. He asked that how long you would be on leave.

c. No sooner he heard the news, he wept aloud.

d. If you have no objection, I will come day after tomorrow.

19.

a. Priya will come back within an hour.

b. He has put on a white shirt

c. They stop growing up at maturity.

d. When I grow I shall be an engineer.

20.

a. He picked his keys from the floor.

b. Police said Raju had robbed an old man just hours earlier.

c. Mamta robbed the money from boss’s account.

d. Chairs are usually made from wood.

21.

a. Chocolate is usually made from wheat.

b. They are replacing money for peace.

c. Last night a girl sunk in the swimming pool.

d. I shall sleep early tonight.

22.

a. I am pretty busy just now.

b. She completed writing in two and half hour.

c. Neha is my cousin sister.

d. The sceneries of Rajasthan are charming.

23.

a. Death is preferable to disgrace.

b. His problems are the same as my.

c. We were told to let you and she enter.

d. Chandigarh is the worth-seeing city.

24.

a. She helped everyone of those boys in doing their work.

b. One should do your duty.

c. He has lost all his luggages.

d. She took great pains.

25.

a. Both of my friend sisters are doctors.

b. The climate of Hyderabad is colder than Chennai.

c. He wants a little sugar for tea.

d. The two first chapters of this book are very important.

**Practice Exercise – Difficult**

**Directions (Q. Nos. 1** − **30):** *In each question, there are four sentences or parts of sentences that form a paragraph. Identify the sentence(s) or part(s) of sentence(s) that is/are correct in terms of grammar and usage. Then, choose the most appropriate option.*

1.

A. Automobile engineers at the IIT Kanpur have build the world’s fastest automatic car.

B. It is capable of sustaining 50 km speed per second.

The automobile department announced the breakthrough by Monday.

C. The computer will be used to help maintain its route and speed.

D. This new car will bring revolution worldwide.

a. B, C & D b. A only

c. B & C d. C only

2.

A. Authenticity for corporate governance is a distinctly this century’s concept made relevant by a

B. conflux of factors. The public’s trust of large companies is in imbue.

C. Consumers’ media savvy have pulled back the wizard’s curtain on insincere.

D. Marketing gimmics that are only surface-sexy, reality TV and online social role and avatars have redefined our sense of reality, bringing the question of what is real into mainstream dialogue.

a. A & D b. B only

c. B & D d. B, C & D

3.

A. Hiring executives in the hospitality industry are likely to

B. be impressed by the similar type of soft skills that are in demand at every industry.

C. Candidate who convincingly display characteristics such as leadership, teamwork, conflict management, problem solving, innovation, and good

D. communication skills are always going to have an edge in the hiring process.

a. B only b. C & D

c. D only d. A & C

4.

A. Habits are conical.

B. We reach for them mindlessly, relaxing into

C. the unconscious comfort of familiar routine. “Not choice, but habit rules the

D. unreflecting herd: “William Wordsworth says in one of his great fiction. In the ever-changing 21st century, the word “habit” has negative connotation.

a. A, B & C b. C only

c. D only d. A, C & D

5.

A. Over the last decade, college graduates ages 20 – 45, who make up an increasing

B. large portion of the population, have stopped listening FM ten times faster than

C. Non-graduates. Today, they listen to 10 hours and 30 minutes of FM a week,

D. while their peers without degrees listen to 20 hours and 45 minutes weekly. “In part, it’s the nature of the work that people do,” Mr. Rajesh said.

a. B & C b. C & D

c. B only d. A & C

6.

A. One of my interesting things over the world of standup comedy is that there’s

B. justice. Perfect, quick, almost–100%-accurate justice. Unlike with almost every other

C. media form, a public does not make blunders when it comes to stand-up

D. comedians. It knows when it’s got hold of a really great one. And at 32, Kapil Sharma is a really greater one.

a. C & D b. C only

c. B & D d. B & C

7.

A. iPhone 4.0 users will be able to download new application via the iPhone App

B. Store, which will launch with the new phone. But those pioneers won’t get the

C. greater speed or true global positioning due to hardware issues. The older phone

D. triangulates user’s position via cell-phone towers. The new one has a GPS receiver that can track a user in minimal time.

a. A, C & D b. D only

c. B only d. C & E

8.

A. During periods of major change, corporate leaders are under immense pressure form

B. investors, board members, clients and the government to deliver result-

C. and to do it fast. Because of the need for speed it tends, to shortcut the

D. process that is critical for employee engagement. But organizations change only if people change, so how an organization helps its people to transition will directly affect corporate outcomes.

a. C & E b. B & C

c. D only d. A, B & D

9.

A. The grass began to sprout, as the rains have now set in.

B. The rain has ceased yesterday.

C. I saw a little vexed at having failed.

D. The kittens cuddled up together for warmth.

a. C only b. B only

c. C & D d. A, B & D

10.

A. Tell me whether you will return soon.

B. Men work because they may earn a living.

C. I am trying to recollect our first meeting of introduction.

D. One of his sons is a lawyer.

a. D only b. A, C & D

c. A, B & C d. B only

11.

A. The priest will arrive just now.

B. He prefers editing to directing.

C. I heard that she is not very polite.

D. The boat was beginning to drown fast.

a. C only b. B only

c. A, B & C d. D only

12.

A. There are two 8 in this number

B. I went to bed as I was feeling tired.

C. 15th August, 1947 India got its freedom.

D. No, it is not late.

a. D only b. B, C & D

c. B only d. A & C

13.

A. I like him better than she do.

B. The rural poor has been ignored by the ministers.

C. My sister is less patient than my brother.

D. We were supposed leaving early.

a. A only b. C only

c. D only d. B & C

14.

A. The woman ran on catching the bus.

B. He did cry in the party.

C. The student who reads the fastest will finish first.

D. She certainly drove slow in that rugged road.

a. B only b. A, B & D

c. C only d. C & D

15.

A. He calls his son as often as possible.

B. I really doesn’t want this.

C. Lately, he couldn’t seem to be on time for anything.

D. They heartily endorsed the new brand.

a. A, C & D b. B & C

c. A, B & D d. B & D

16.

A. He had many trouble.

B. India and Pakistan have been quarreling from a century.

C. He was fascinated by and enamored of this prudent woman.

D. The children were interested by and disguised in the movie.

a. A & D b. B only

c. B & C d. A & B

17.

A. This time we added six times the amount of cleanser.

B. Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians are the prevalent protestant congregation in Okholoma.

C. Much students want to study abroad.

D. Many a orange has fallen by September.

a. A & C b. A only

c. B & C d. D only

18.

A. Rohan plays basket ball well, and his favourite sport is badminton.

B. It is hard to say whether Atif Aslam and Arijit Singh is the more interesting singing icon of his day.

C. Live free or die.

D. That is neither what I said or what I meant.

a. A & B b. D only

c. B, C & D d. C only

19.

A. He is not the only common wealth games athlete in his family, so are his sister, father, his uncle Rakesh.

B. Either you win this race or lose it doesn’t matter as long as you do your best.

C. Unless we act now, all is lost.

D. He took to the stage even though he had been preparing for this moment all his life.

a. C only b. A & D

c. B & C d. D only

20.

A. Our picnic was such a grand experience.

B. Three fourth of the respondents reported that half the medication was sufficient.

C. What a idiot he was.

D. This bus holds three times passengers as that minivan.

a. C & D b. A & B

c. A only d. B only

21.

A. These muffins are delicious.

B. She seemed to say whichever came to mind.

C. Kanika, Akash and I have deceived ourselves into believing in my aunt.

D. I already told my parents what I know about it.

a. A, C & D b. C & D

c. B & D d. A only

22.

A. The truck demolish the orphanage.

B. Get out of town?

C. I requested her to be present at the meeting.

D. She suggested that we on time tomorrow.

a. C only b. D only

c. A & B d. B & C

23.

A. Shreya prefers to swim rather than jogging in the evening.

B. Scarcely had he entered the room the students stood up and greeted him.

C. He has made a fairly hot coffee.

D. He was decent enough to admit his mistake and apologise for it.

a. D only b. B, C & D

c. A & C d. C & D

24.

A. I have often told him to write neatly.

B. Generally, his lectures are very interesting.

C. This library has hardly any good books on English grammar.

D. His father scolded Raj for driving very fast.

a. A & B b. B & C

c. A, B, C & D d. D only

25.

A. Whom were you talking to just now!

B. Neither of these novels are any good to me.

C. They were no more guilty than we were.

D. Neither his friends nor his parents were able to help him.

a. A & B b. B only

c. C only d. C & D

26.

A. The road was lined with tress just like Japan.

B. I cannot open the drawer in which my father put the paper in.

C. I am so exhausted that I can scarcely keep eyes open.

D. Let you and I see to it that we do not make such mistakes.

a. B, C & D b. C & D

c. A & C d. A & D

27.

A. A weeks are a long time to wait for gift.

B. Such rules do not apply to you and I.

C. She cannot jog as fast as me.

D. None of these girls read so well.

a. A and B b. D only

c. C only d. B, C & D

28.

A. Some of the boys are misbehaving.

B. I wonder whether your scheme will work or not.

C. Everyone applauded when Rehan rendered the song melodiously.

D. The train which is usually on time came late yesterday.

a. B, C & D b. A, B, C & D

c. C & D d. B & C

29.

A. Each one of the actors in the movie require a special being of dict.

B. He is one of the best footballer who have ever played.

C. Akansha did not take cooking classes; she taught herself.

D. His house is bigger than these of his friends and relatives.

a. A, B & C b. B & C

c. A only d. D only

30.

A. None of us liked the food.

B. My friend a novelist has sent me two short novels of her asking me to go through them.

C. It is our positive thinking which makes life more interesting and important to us.

D. You, Rajesh and I must take the blame for losing the match.

a. B & C b. A & C

c. A, B & C d. B, C & D