

4 Parts of Speech



WHAT ARE THE PARTS OF SPEECH?

Every word in the English language is a part of speech. The role of a word in a sentence is referred to as “part of speech.” In traditional grammar, it is one of the nine major categories into which words are grouped according to their roles in sentences, such as nouns or verbs. These are the building blocks of grammar, sometimes known as word classes. The part of speech identifies how a word behaves in a sentence, both grammatically and in terms of meaning. A single word can act as more than one component of speech when used in different contexts. Knowing the parts of speech is essential when using a dictionary to determine the correct definition of a word. Every phrase written or spoken in English comprises words from one of the nine parts of speech. These include words like nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, articles/determiners, and interjections.

Open classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) and closed classes (pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, articles/determiners, and interjections) are the most prevalent divisions of speech. Open classes, on the other hand, can be changed and added to as the language evolves, whereas closed classes are pretty much set in stone. Every day, for example, new nouns are formed, but conjunctions do not change.

Nine parts of speech

The nine parts of speech in the English language are as follows: noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, interjection, and articles.

1. Noun (Naming word):

A noun is a word that refers to a specific person, place, thing, or idea. A noun is something that refers to a “thing.” Nouns are the most basic

of the nine components of speech. Depending on the situation, nouns can serve as the subject, direct object, indirect object, subject complement, object complement, appositive, or adjective in a phrase. Five types of nouns can be found in the English language:

- a. *Proper Noun*: A proper noun, which is a term that identifies a specific person, place, or thing. Proper nouns in written English begin with capital letters. e.g., John, India, Africa, Friday.
- b. *Common Noun*: Nouns that refer to people or things, in general, are known as common nouns, e.g., boy, country, bridge, city, birth, day, happiness.
- c. *Collective Noun*: Nouns that refer to groups of people or things are collective nouns, e.g., audience, family, government, team, jury.
- d. *Abstract Noun*: A noun that refers to concepts, traits, and conditions that cannot be seen or touched, as well as things that have no physical reality is known as an abstract noun is, e.g., truth, danger, happiness, time, friendship, humour.
- e. *Concrete Noun*: A noun that refers to persons and things that can be seen, touched, smelled, heard, or tasted and exists physically is known as a concrete noun, e.g., dog, building, coffee, tree, rain, beach, tune.

For example:

- **Stacy** lives in **Singapore**.
- **James** uses **pen** and **paper** to write **letters**.
- We live in **London**.
- Always speak the **truth**.
- A young **woman** brought me a chocolate **cake**.

2. Pronoun (Replaces a noun):

To eliminate redundancy, a pronoun is substituted for a noun or noun phrase. They’re



more generalised nouns that exclusively refer to people. A pronoun is frequently used to substitute an antecedent, which is a specific noun. They're used to avoid sounding unnatural by repeating the same noun in a sentence. Pronouns are further defined by type:

- a. *Personal pronouns*: Pronouns that are used in place of a specific person or thing are known as personal pronouns, e.g., I, you, she, he, it, we, they, me, us, them.
- b. *Relative pronouns*: Pronouns that are used to link one phrase or clause to another phrase or clause are known as relative pronouns. Relative pronouns introduce a subordinate clause, e.g., who, whom, which, what, that.
- c. *Reflexive pronouns*: Pronouns that refer back to the subject of the clause or sentence are known as reflexive pronouns. They are used when the subject of a sentence is also the object of the sentence. Reflexive pronoun ends with the suffix- self or selves, e.g., myself, yourself, itself, herself, himself, ourselves, themselves.
- d. *Demonstrative pronouns*: Pronoun that point to and identify a noun or a pronoun is known as a demonstrative pronoun, e.g., this, that, these, those.
- e. *Indefinite pronouns*: Indefinite pronouns refer to an identifiable, but not specified, person or thing. Indefinite pronouns convey the idea of all, any, none, or some, e.g., some, somebody, anyone, anywhere, nothing, everybody.
- f. *Reciprocal pronouns*: Reciprocal pronouns are used to express reciprocal relationships or acts., e.g., each other, one another.
- g. *Interrogative pronouns*: Pronouns that are used to ask questions about unknown people or things are known as interrogative pronouns, e.g., who, whom, what, which, whose

For example:

- **Someone**, please call the ambulance.
- **His** son has been kidnapped.

- I had forgotten **my** umbrella in the room.
- The person sitting by **your** side is **my** uncle.
- **She** wants to sleep.

3. Adjective (Describing word):

An adjective is a word that describes, modifies, or adds to the meaning of a noun or pronoun. They indicate which one, how much, and what type, among other things. Adjectives let readers and listeners visualise something more clearly by allowing them to engage their senses. Because the adjectives appear directly before the nouns they modify, they are simple to notice. They are frequently placed before the noun or pronoun that they modify to identify or quantify individual persons and distinct things. Multiple adjectives can also be seen in some sentences. Adjectives can be classified into the following types:

- a. *Descriptive adjectives*: An adjective describing a noun by expressing a quality or attribute is known as a descriptive adjective. They are the most common of the various types of adjectives.
- b. *Quantitative adjective*: A quantitative adjective provides information about the quantity of the nouns/pronouns.
- c. *Indefinite adjective*: An adjective that describes or modifies a noun unspecifically is known as an indefinite adjective. They give general/indefinite information about the noun.
- d. *Demonstrative adjective*: An adjective that directly refers to something or someone is known as a demonstrative adjective. They are always positioned directly in front of the noun they are modifying.
- e. *Interrogative adjective*: An interrogative adjective asks a question. A noun or a pronoun must come after an interrogative adjective. These words will not be considered adjectives unless they are followed by a noun.
- f. *Possessive adjective*: A possessive adjective indicates possession or ownership. It

suggests the belongingness of something to someone/something.

For example:

- I gave **some** candy to her.
- He is a **good** boy.
- They have **three** children.
- The **hungry** cats are crying.
- I have **ten** candies in my pocket.

4. Verb (Action word):

Verbs are parts of speech used to describe people's or things' activities, processes, situations, or states of being. They are verbs that describe what happens in a sentence. A verb expresses the action of someone or something. It is considered the soul of language since it is a vital aspect of a phrase. The following are various types of verbs:

- Finite verbs:** Finite verbs are ones that can take on different forms depending on the subject. It defines the time (past or present) as well as the subject. It also informs you of who is performing the action and when it will be completed.
- Infinitive verbs:** A verb's infinitive form is the verb in its most basic form. A verb's infinitive form is frequently preceded by the word "to." The "to" is a part of the verb when you use an infinitive verb. In this situation, it is not operating as a preposition.
- Transitive verbs:** In a sentence, a transitive verb is one that is accompanied by a direct object. The noun, pronoun, or noun phrase that is having something done to it by the sentence's subject is called the direct object. A transitive verb is one that requires an object to complete itself.
- Intransitive verbs:** A verb is an intransitive verb if it is not used with a direct object. Hence, a verb that doesn't need any object to complete itself is called an intransitive verb. Verbs that express action but do not take an object are known as intransitive verbs. Without an object, the subject and verb express a complete notion. The verb

can, however, be followed by an adverb or other modifier.

- Regular verbs:** If the past tense form and past participle of a verb ending in -ed, -d, or the verb is a -t variant verb, it is termed a regular verb.
- Irregular verbs:** An irregular verb is one that does not end in -ed, -d, or uses the -t variation in the past tense or past participle form.

For example:

- I **work** at a factory.
- The mansion **has** five bathrooms.
- Leonardo **ate** a delicious pepperoni pizza.
- Aeroplanes **fly**.
- The writing in this book is too small **to see**.

5. Adverb (Describes a verb):

An adverb is a word that is used to amend or qualify the meaning of an adjective, a verb, a clause, another adverb, or any other kind of word or phrase, with the exception of determiners and adjectives that directly modify nouns. Adverbs describe or modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs, but never nouns. They describe when, when, how, and why something happened, as well as the amount and frequency of the occurrence. Adverbs are broadly classified as follows:

- Adverbs of time:** Adverbs of time describe when the action of the verb occurred. These adverbs are typically found at the beginning or end of a sentence.
- Adverbs of manner:** Adverbs of manner describe how or in what way something was done. They usually modify verbs and appear at the end of a clause or immediately before the word they modify. This category comprises the most common adverbs—the ones that end in -ly.
- Adverbs of degree:** Adverbs of degree provide additional information about the verb's intensity in the sentence. They describe the extent to which something occurred. Adverbs of degree are frequently



placed before the word they modify, but in some cases, they can also be placed after the word.

- d. *Adverbs of frequency*: Frequency adverbs tell us how frequently something happens. These adverbs usually appear just before or after the main verb in the sentence.
- e. *Adverbs of place*: Adverbs of place tell us about where something happens or where something is. They come after the main verbs of the clauses that they modify.

For example:

- He trimmed the white roses **neatly**.
- This short essay is **hardly** sufficient.
- We **never** stay up past ten o'clock.
- You can park **anywhere**.
- They **recently** relocated to Santa Fe.

6. Preposition (Shows relationship):

A preposition illustrates how a noun or pronoun is related to another word. It's a word that comes before a noun or pronoun in a sentence to produce a phrase that modifies another word. The noun or pronoun that the preposition connects is the object of the preposition. The following are the five parts of preposition:

- a. *Simple prepositions*: Simple prepositions are common prepositions that can be used to describe a location, time, or place. These include words like at, for, in, off, on, over, under.
- b. *Compound prepositions*: To convey location, compound prepositions (also known as complicated prepositions) are made up of two or more words, usually a simple preposition and another word. These include words like in addition to, on behalf of, and in the middle of.
- c. *Double prepositions*: Double prepositions are two prepositions that are used together, usually to indicate direction. These include words like into, upon, onto, out of, from within.
- d. *Participle prepositions*: Participle prepositions have -ed and -ing endings.

These include words like considering, during, concerning, provided.

- e. *Phrase prepositions*: A preposition, an object, and the object's modifier make up phrase prepositions (or prepositional phrases). These include phrases like on time, at home, before class, and on the floor.

For example:

- He sat **on** the chair.
- The loud noise came **from within** the room.
- She has art class **in addition to** his regular classes today.
- The dog kept **following** him home.
- She lives **near** her workplace.

7. Conjunction (Joining word):

A conjunction joins two words, ideas, phrases, or clauses together in a sentence and shows how they are connected. We can build complex sentences with conjunctions that show a link between actions and ideas. The following are the three types of conjunctions:

- a. *Coordinating conjunctions*: Coordinating conjunctions link words or phrases in a sentence that have the same grammatical function. They join words or ideas together. The following are the seven main coordinating conjunctions in English that make up the acronym FANBOYS:
 - **For**—To explain the reason or purpose
 - **And**—To add one thing to another
 - **Nor**—To present an alternate negative idea
 - **But**—To show contrast
 - **Or**—To present a choice or an alternative.
 - **Yet**—To introduces a contrasting idea that follows the preceding idea logically
 - **So**—To indicate effect, result, or consequence
- b. *Subordinating conjunctions*: Subordinating conjunctions join a subordinate clause to a main clause and establish a relationship between the two. They also demonstrate that the dependent clause (or subordinate

clause) contains the less essential notion in the sentence, as opposed to the independent clause. There are many different types of subordinating clauses, but here are a handful of the most common ones: even if, even though, if, in order that, in case, in the event that, lest, now that, once, only, only if, provided that, since, so, supposing, that, till, unless, until, when, whenever, where, whereas, wherever, whether or not, while.

- c. **Correlative conjunctions:** Correlative conjunctions are pairs of conjunctions that work together. These conjunctions correlate, working in pairs to join phrases or words that carry equal importance within a sentence. Some common pairs include both/and, whether/or, either/or, neither/nor, not/but, not only/but also.

For example:

- Her favourite colours were purple **and** red.
- Lia plays **not only** the violin **but also** the drums.
- She was late for school **so** she took a shortcut.
- **Because** it was snowing, we had to cancel the plan.
- Jason went to get a drink of water **before** his exam started.

8. Interjection (Expressive word):

A word or phrase that displays a strong sentiment or emotion is called an interjection. It is a short exclamation. These are expressions that can stand alone or be used as part of a sentence. These words and phrases are frequently used to indicate strong emotions and reactions. They are frequently followed by an exclamation mark. Usually, an interjection is used in an informal language. Interjections communicate a wide range of emotions such as joy, grief, surprise, disgust, and so on, even though they are not grammatically related to the other parts of the sentence or help the reader grasp the link between words and

phrases in the sentence. The following are the different types of interjections:

- a. **The interjection of greeting:** The Interjection of greeting indicates the emotion of warmth to meet with anyone, such as hello!, hi!, hey!, and so on.
- b. **The interjection of joy:** The interjection of joy is used to communicate immediate delight and satisfaction in response to a specific event, such as wow!, hurrah!, congratulations!, good!, and so on.
- c. **The interjection of attention:** The interjection of attention is used to draw someone's attention to us, such as listen!, look!, shh!, behold!, hush!, and so on.
- d. **The interjection of approval:** The interjection of approval is used to convey approval or agreement in a sentence, such as bravo!, well done!, brilliant!, and so on.
- e. **The interjection of surprise:** The interjection of surprise is used to indicate surprise at any event that has occurred, for example, oh!, what!, ah!, ha!, etc.
- f. **The interjection of sorrow:** The interjection for sorrow is used to describe the sense of grief in a sentence, such as ah!, alas!, ouch!, oops!, and so on.

For example:

- **Hello!** I'm Adam, your new professor.
- **Wow!** You look so beautiful!
- **Shh!** keep the mouth shut.
- **What!** Are you serious?
- **Oops!** Sorry. It was my fault.

9. Article (Defining word):

An article is used before a noun. An article is a word that modifies a noun (a person, place, thing, or idea). An article is a type of adjective, which refers to any word that modifies a noun. Adjectives usually alter nouns by describing them, but articles are employed to point out or refer to nouns. There are two sorts of articles that we employ to point out or refer to a noun or group of nouns in writing and conversation:



- a. **Definite article:** This article is the word 'the,' which refers directly to a specific noun or groups of nouns. The definite article (the) comes before a noun to emphasise that the reader understands the word's identity. The definite article 'the' is used when the reader knows the specific identification of a noun (whether singular or plural, count or noncount).
- b. **Indefinite article:** The words 'a' and 'an' are indefinite articles. Each of these articles refers to a noun, however, the noun in question isn't a specific person, place, thing, or concept. Any noun from a set of nouns

can be used. When the identity of a noun is unclear, it is preceded with the indefinite article (a, an). When referring to a singular count noun whose identity is unknown to the reader, the indefinite article 'a' or 'an' should be used. Use 'a' before nouns that begin with a consonant sound, and 'an' before nouns that begin with a vowel sound.

For example:

- I ate **an** apple yesterday.
- **The** apple was juicy and delicious.
- I own **a** cat and two dogs.
- Thank you for **the** advice.
- I do not want **a** gun in my house.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Identify which part of speech the highlighted word is.

1. I bought a **shiny** watch at the mall.
2. She thinks **we** will arrive at roughly 3 pm.
3. The **music** is very loud.
4. She **quickly** packed her bag and left.
5. **Wow!** You have got a great score.
6. I went **to** Madras and met my friend.
7. Lia knocked on the door **but** nobody answered.
8. The baby crawled **under** the bed.
9. She was wearing a really **pretty** dress.
10. **Take** the second left then go over the bridge.
11. Today I wore my **blue** skirt.
12. I am **extremely** excited about our trip.
13. Let's make **cookies**.
14. Your suitcase is **in** the closet.
15. **Ouch!** That hurts.
16. **Hi**, it's good to see you.
17. He is the **best** in the area.
18. He probably hates **himself** now.
19. She handled it very **smoothly**.
20. **Reading** is important.

Fill in the blanks using the correct form of the word.

21. Today was a very ____ day.
A. Cold
B. Colder
C. Coldly
22. We will have to ____ if we do not want to be late.
A. Ran
B. Run
C. Running
23. ____ was that man you were talking to?
A. What
B. Why
C. Who
24. I forgot my umbrella ____ I got wet.
A. Because
B. So
C. Although
25. ____ is a global problem.
A. Poorness
B. Poor
C. Poverty

26. It's OK to use that phone, it's ____.

- A. Mine
- B. Me
- C. I

27. When was the last time you ____?

- A. Cried
- B. Cry
- C. Cries

28. Ask ____ what she thinks.

- A. She
- B. Her
- C. Hers

29. I ____ sleepy.

- A. Are
- B. Is
- C. Am

30. I sat ____ the chair.

- A. In
- B. On
- C. At

31. This song is ____ than that song.

- A. Better
- B. More better
- C. Best

32. Today, I ____ for three hours.

- A. Played
- B. Plays
- C. Playing

33. My brother and ____ got into a fight.

- A. Me
- B. I
- C. Mine

34. Your room is ____ than my room.

- A. More organized
- B. Most organized
- C. Best organized

35. ____ is my bag?

- A. Who
- B. Where
- C. What

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate article:

36. Ravi made ____ error of judgement.

37. She gave me ____ call in the evening.

38. Suresh is ____ tallest boy in my class.

39. ____ Earth moves around ____ Sun.

40. We saw ____ tiger in ____ zoo.

Solution

1. **Adjective** An adjective adds to the meaning of a noun. Here, shiny adds to the meaning of a watch.

2. **Pronoun** Pronouns replace nouns. Here, "we" is replacing the people the speaker is referring to.

3. **Noun** A noun is a word that refers to persons, places, things, or ideas. The noun here is music, which is a thing.

4. **Adverb** Adverbs modify verbs, nouns, and other adverbs. This is modifying the verb packed.

5. **Interjection** Interjections are unrelated to the rest of the sentence and express enthusiasm or emotion. Wow implies amazement or surprise in this context.

6. **Preposition** A preposition shows the relationship of a noun or pronoun to another word. Here, 'to' shows the relationship of 'I' to and where 'I' went.

7. **Conjunction** Conjunctions join two or more words, phrases, or clauses together. This conjunction "and" is joining "Andy knocked on the door" and "nobody answered."



- 8. Preposition** Prepositions indicate the relationship between nouns or pronouns and other words or elements in the sentence. Here, it shows the relationship between the baby and where it crawled to.
- 9. Adjective** An adjective adds to the meaning of a noun. Here, pretty adds to the meaning of dress.
- 10. Verb** Verbs show an action or state of being. In the given sentence, there is no subject as it is a command/instruction, so the first word is the verb.
- 11. Adjective** An adjective modifies a noun or pronoun. Here, blue modifies the skirt.
- 12. Adverb** Adverbs modify verbs, nouns, and other adverbs. This is modifying the verb excited.
- 13. Noun** A noun specifies people, places, things, or ideas. This noun is a thing, cookies.
- 14. Preposition** Prepositions show the relationship between nouns or pronouns and other words or elements in the sentence. Here, in the given sentence, it shows the relationship between the suitcase and where it is.
- 15. Interjection** Interjections show excitement or emotion and are not connected to the rest of the sentence. Here, no is showing emotion of sadness.
- 16. Interjection** Interjections show excitement or emotion and are not connected to the rest of the sentence. Here, hi is an interjection of greeting.
- 17. Adjective** An adjective modifies a noun or pronoun. Here, best modifies him.
- 18. Pronoun** Pronouns replace nouns. Here, “himself” is replacing the person the speaker is referring to.
- 19. Adverb** Adverbs modify verbs, nouns, and other adverbs. This is modifying the verb handled.
- 20. Noun** A noun specifies people, places, things, or ideas. This noun is an idea, reading.
- 21. (A)** Today was a very *cold* day.
- 22. (B)** We will have to *run* if we do not want to be late.
- 23. (C)** *Who* was that man you were talking to?
- 24. (B)** I forgot my umbrella so I got wet.
- 25. (C)** *Poverty* is a global problem.
- 26. (A)** It's OK to use that phone, it's *mine*.
- 27. (A)** When was the last time you *cried*?
- 28. (B)** Ask *her* what she thinks.
- 29. (C)** I *am* sleepy.
- 30. (B)** I sat *on* the chair.
- 31. (A)** This song is *better* than that song.
- 32. (A)** Today I *played* for three hours.
- 33. (B)** My brother and I got into flight.
- 34. (A)** Your room is *more organized* than my room.
- 35. (B)** Where is my bag?
- 36. An** Here, the identification of a noun is unknown and since the noun starts with a vowel sound, the indefinite article, ‘a’ is used.
- 37. A** Here, the identification of a noun is unknown and since the noun starts with a consonant sound, the indefinite article, ‘a’ is used.
- 38. The** Here, the exact identity of the noun is known. Hence the definite article ‘the’ is used.
- 39. The** Here, the exact identity of both the nouns are known. Hence the definite article ‘the’ is used in both places.
- 40. A, the** Here, the identification of the first noun is unknown and since the noun starts with a consonant sound, the indefinite article, ‘a’ is used. The exact identity of the second noun is known and hence the definite article ‘the’ is used.