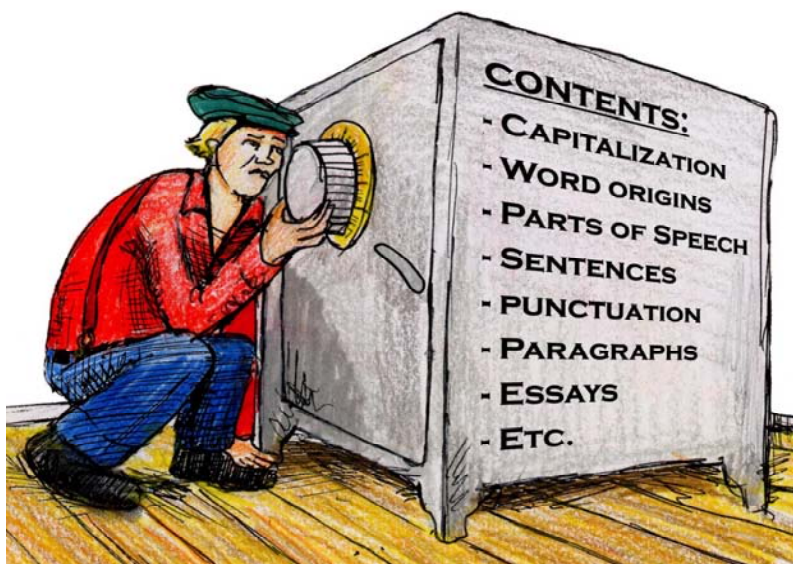


the Grammar Cracker

Unlocking English Grammar



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Vocalis Ltd.

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Table of Contents

Subject	Page
Introduction	8-9
I. LETTERS.....	11-36
A. Alphabet	11
1. Vowels	11
2. Consonants	11
B. Pronunciation	12-13
C. Spelling	14-23
1. Spelling suggestions (including rules)	15-20
2. American vs. British English spelling	21-23
D. Capitalization (including rules)	24-31
E. Short cuts	32-33
1. Initials	32
2. Acronyms.....	32
3. Abbreviations.....	33
4. Short forms	33
Exercises	34-36
II. PARTS OF A WORD	37-40
A. Word analysis.....	37-38
1. Prefixes.....	37
2. Roots	38
3. Suffixes.....	38-39
B. Syllables	39
1. Word division	39
2. Stress	39
Exercises	40
III. WORDS	41-92
A. Etymology.....	41-46
1. Word origins	41
2. History	42
3. Modern words.....	42-46
a. Foreign words (and gender in English).....	43-44
b. Neologisms (and outdated words).....	45
c. Eponyms.....	46

B. Parts of Speech	47-83
1. Nouns	47-53
a. Noun categories	47-48
(1) Proper	47
(2) Common	47-48
(a) Concrete	48
(b) Abstract	48
b. Compound words	48
c. Plurals	49-52
(1) Spelling of plurals	49-52
(2) Collective nouns	52
d. Possessives	53
2. Pronouns	54-58
a. Antecedents	54
b. Pronoun types	54-58
(1) Personal	55-56
(a) Subjective	55
(b) Objective	56
(c) Possessive	56
(2) Reflexive	57
(3) Demonstrative	57
(4) Interrogative	57-58
(5) Relative	58
(6) Indefinite	58
3. Adjectives	59-63
a. Placement	59
b. Adjective classifications	60-62
(1) Descriptive	60
(2) Possessive	60-61
(3) Limiting (including articles)	61-62
c. Degrees of comparison	63
(1) Positive	63
(2) Comparative	63
(3) Superlative	63
4. Verbs	64-79
a. Sentence position (including transitivity)	64
b. Types of verbs	65-67
(1) Action	65
(2) Linking ("passive")	65
(3) Auxiliary ("helping")	65-67

c. Conjugation (of regular verbs)	67-75
(1) Tense.....	67-73
(2) Contractions.....	75
d. Mood	76
(1) Indicative.....	76
(2) Subjunctive	76
(3) Imperative	77
e. Voice	77
(1) Active.....	77
(2) Passive	77
f. Verbals	78-79
(1) Gerunds.....	78
(2) Infinitives.....	78
(3) Participles	79
5. Adverbs	80
6. Prepositions.....	81-82
7. Conjunctions	82-83
8. Interjections	83
C. Related words	84-88
1. Synonyms.....	84
2. Antonyms.....	85
3. Homonyms (homophones)	86
4. Homographs (heteronyms).....	87
5. Confusing "sound-alikes".....	88
Exercises	89-92
IV. ALMOST A SENTENCE	93-107
A. Phrases	93-95
1. Appositive	93
2. Prepositional.....	93-94
3. Verbal	94-95
4. Dangling modifiers.....	95
B. Clauses	96-97
1. Independent ("main")	96
2. Subordinate ("dependent")	96
C. Figures of Speech	98-104
1. Alliteration.....	98
2. Allusion	98
3. Analogy.....	99
4. Circumlocution.....	99
5. Climax.....	99

6. Colloquialism	100
7. Euphemism.....	100
8. Hyperbole	101
9. Idiom (including cliché)	101
10. Irony	102
11. Jargon	102
12. Litotes.....	103
13. Metaphor	103
14. Metonymy (and synecdoche)	104
15. Onomatopoeia.....	104
16. Oxymoron.....	104
17. Parallelism.....	105
18. Personification.....	105
19. Simile	105
20. Slang	105
Exercises	106-108
V. PARTS OF A SENTENCE	109-114
A. Sentence elements.....	109-111
1. Subject.....	109
2. Predicate	109
3. Complement	110
a. Object.....	110
(1) Direct object.....	110
(2) Indirect object	110
b. Objective complement.....	110
c. Subjective complement	111
(1) Predicate nominative	111
(2) Predicate adjective	111
B. Diagramming	111-112
Exercises	113-114
VI. SENTENCES.....	115-124
A. Sentence classifications	115-116
1. Simple.....	115
2. Compound.....	115
3. Complex	115
4. Compound-complex	115-116
B. Types of sentences	116-117
1. Declarative.....	116
2. Interrogative.....	116
3. Imperative.....	116
4. Exclamatory.....	117

C. Punctuation	117-122
1. Apostrophe	117
2. Brackets.....	118
3. Colon	118
4. Comma	119
5. Dash	120
6. Ellipsis marks.....	120
7. Exclamation point	120
8. Highlighting / Italics / Underlining.....	120
9. Hyphen	121
10. Parentheses	122
11. Period.....	122
12. Question mark.....	122
13. Quotation marks.....	122
14. Semi-colon	122
Exercises	123-124
VII. MORE THAN A SENTENCE	125-127
A. Sayings (adages - proverbs)	125
B. Paragraphs	126
Exercises	127-128
VIII. ESSAYS, ARTICLES & BOOKS.....	129-136
A. Theme	129
B. Writing style.....	130-131
1. Voice (and tone)	130
2. Genre.....	130-131
a. Fiction.....	130
b. Nonfiction	131
C. Outlining.....	131-132
D. Structure.....	132-133
1. Table of Contents	133
2. Introduction / Foreword / Preface	133
3. Body of Work	133
4. Appendices.....	134
5. Glossary (mini-dictionary).....	134
6. Footnotes / Endnotes	134
7. Bibliography (sources).....	135
8. Index.....	135
E. Proofreading / Editing.....	135
Exercises	136

Introduction

Grammar is a system of rules governing the proper use of language. It is important to understand the main grammar principles in order to communicate effectively in English. Often when people are in a hurry to learn English, they skip over the "nitty gritty" grammar details and concentrate only on memorizing needed vocabulary words. That may be fine for getting by at the most basic level, such as choosing food from a menu, but it can be frustrating for the limited English speaker if any questions should arise.

The Grammar Cracker attempts to unlock English grammar rules and practices in a clear, simple manner. Its logical format presents subjects in order of increasing size and scope, from letters to words to sentences to paragraphs to essays, articles, etc. This linear design is now thought to be the best way of acquiring language skills. In the past, grammar books were set up in a less organized fashion, giving students exposure to a variety of topics indiscriminately. However, recent linguistic studies have shown that language acquisition is a more logical and ordered pursuit than was once recognized. Technology has aided greatly in understanding the mind's ability to analyze and absorb data; computers which measure the development of brain patterns, as new areas of discipline are undertaken, indicate a streamlined process. More sophisticated methods of tracking how people learn are being explored continually, and perhaps better ways to educate will be identified as time progresses. At the moment, however, teaching step-by-step distillation of knowledge is believed to be most effective, especially in the field of language instruction.

All of the material included herein is presented in direct and comprehensible terms. Eight detailed sections, hundreds of examples and exercises and many notes and hints make up the essence of this grammar guide. Everything is laid out in the Table of Contents, which serves as a thorough outline for the study of grammar. For now, here is a brief overview of the sections contained in **the Grammar Cracker**. Beginning with the alphabet as the basic foundation of English, the first section is all about letters: their pronunciation, ways they spell words, capitalization of them and various initials, acronyms and abbreviations they form. Next, word parts are analyzed, from prefixes, roots and suffixes to syllable division and stress. Then, different types of words are examined, spanning etymology through parts of speech to related words such as synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, etc. After this, words are grouped together to create phrases and clauses. Section V follows with sentence elements such as subjects, predicates and objects (shown diagrammed). The sixth section covers sentence classifications and types, as well as punctuation. Paragraphs come up next on the agenda. Finally, the development of written works is examined. The aforementioned incremental manner of teaching is applied throughout the sections.

This product has value at all levels of English learning. Beginning students can learn the basic grammar principles, while more advanced students can use it in review and as a reference tool. It is set up to be a supplemental guide in classroom, private-tutor or independent-study settings. The benefits of learning good grammar are many and varied, from ability to express spoken thoughts effectively to improved understanding of the written word and better writing skills. Students are given the right combination for unlocking the door to English grammar in **the Grammar Cracker**.

the Grammar Cracker

Unlocking English Grammar

LETTERS

Alphabet

The first step toward learning English is to become familiar with the letters of the alphabet.

~ Alphabet ~

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

These 26 letters are the building blocks of the English language, basic to every grammar principle discussed here.

Vowels

Of all the letters in the English alphabet, there are only six vowels, but they are very important. Since every word contains at least one, they can be thought of as the glue that holds a word together. The vowels are "A", "E", "I", "O", "U" and sometimes "Y". "Y" is considered a vowel when it is in the middle or at the end of a syllable; it is regarded as a consonant when it starts a syllable (see *syllables*, page 39).

Consonants

The remaining letters in the alphabet are consonants.

Examples:

"Y" as a vowel

bypass (by pass)

cymbal (cym bal)

slowly (slow ly)

"Y" as a consonant

beyond (be yond)

yardstick (yard stick)

yesteryear (yes ter year)

Pronunciation

Pronunciation is one of the most difficult areas of English to learn. Many of the letters, especially the vowels, have more than one sound. Though the subject of pronunciation could fill up the whole book, it is mentioned here only briefly in order to show its relation to spelling. This is a quick review of the most common sound for each letter of the alphabet (the first letter of the word):

A - apple



B - bell



C - corn



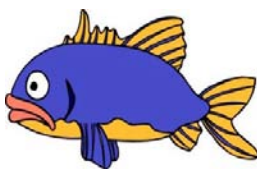
D - desk



E - envelope



F - fish



G - guitar



H - house



I - igloo



J - jacket



K - key



L - ladder



M - music



N - nurse



O - octopus



P - pencil



Q - queen



R - rose



S - sun



T - tiger



U - umbrella



V - volcano



W - watch



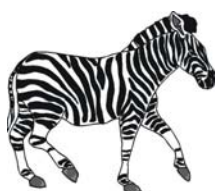
X - x-ray



Y - yacht



Z - zebra



Spelling

When pronunciation of the letters is known, it is often possible to spell words by "sounding them out". The word "hat", for example, is easy to spell because each of the letters can be sounded out; each letter in "hat" makes its most common sound. This doesn't always work, however, because spelling (like pronunciation) can be tricky in English. In other languages, such as Spanish, the words are always spelled the way they sound. This does not happen all the time in English, since the sounds can be spelled in different ways. The following poem captures many of the sound variations of English spelling:

Tough Enough

*I take it you already know
Of tough and bough and cough and dough?
Others may stumble but not you,
On hiccough, thorough, thought and through.*

*Beware of meat and great and threat,
They rhyme with suite and straight and debt.
And dead: it's said like bed not bead -
For goodness sake don't call it "deed"!*

*A moth is not the one in mother
Nor both in bother, broth in brother.
And here is not a match for there,
Nor dear and fear for bear and pear.*

*Then there's cork and work, card and ward,
Font and front, word and sword,
Thwart and part, does and goes,
Good and brood and lose and rose.*

*A dreadful read? Heavens nea!
I will master it if I live to be eighty-five.*

Spelling suggestions

Sound it out

It is often possible to get the spelling of a word right by listening to its phonetic sounds. A long, seemingly difficult word like "cantankerous" can be spelled correctly just by "sounding it out". It is spelled the way it sounds.

Memorize confusing words

Some words defy the rules and are fairly difficult to figure out. For these, it's necessary to commit them to memory. This can be done by repeated review. Write down the hard ones and study them often.

Also, there are helpful little ways which aid in spelling confusing words. Figure out a rhyme or saying, however silly it may seem, for the most troublesome part of the word.

Examples:

"laboratory" trips up many people because it is pronounced as LAB / ru / tor / ee; therefore, the first "o" sometimes is left out when spelling it. A tip for remembering the "o" would be to think of the "labor" (work) that scientists do in the laboratory.

"acquaint" is spelled incorrectly without the "c". To remember the "c", think of the word "see"; to see someone is to become acquainted with him or her.

"vegetable" can be spelled properly by considering that it has the words "get" and "able" within it. A vegetable is a nutritious food which allows people to "get" or become "able" to live in a healthy way.

Make up whatever memory aids (called "mnemonics") that work the best and are the easiest to remember.

Use a dictionary

For most words, you may have a general idea of how they should be spelled. Even if only the first letter or two is known, it is not too difficult to locate it in a dictionary. When using the dictionary, make sure the desired word is found, not a homophone or sound-alike (see page 88), by checking the word's definition.

Check "spell check"

There are many benefits to living in the technology age, such as having the tools which now exist for writing. One of these aids is "spell check", offered with most word-processing computer software. As with use of the dictionary, care must be taken not to select an unfit word with similar spelling.

Proofread

Often, spelling errors can be spotted by simply re-reading what has been written. Make it a habit to review and revise (if necessary).

Read, read, read

When words look familiar, it is easier to recognize and write their correct spelling. Reading a lot acquaints us with a variety of words over time. It can be of some help in the short run, and it definitely has long-term benefits as far as spelling is concerned.

Remember the rules

There are eight basic rules which serve as a guideline for accurate spelling. Spelling ability will be greatly improved by understanding them. Of course, as with most rules, there are exceptions, and these have been included.

Spelling Rules

1. Prefixes

Adding a prefix (see page 37) rarely affects the original spelling of a word.

Examples:

<u>Prefix</u>	+	<u>Word</u>	=	<u>New word</u>
dis-		satisfied		dissatisfied
im-		mobile		immobile
ir-		relevant		irrelevant
mis-		spell		misspell
non-		negotiable		nonnegotiable
over-		rate		overrate
un-		nerve		unnerve

2. Silent letters

Certain letters, when paired with others, are not pronounced. They are still included in the spelling of the word, though.

Examples:

<u>Letter combination</u>	<u>Silent letter</u>	<u>Words with silent letters</u>
at the beginning of a word:		
"kn"	k	knapsack, knit, knock
"ps"	p	psalm, psychology, psychic
"wr"	w	wreathe, write, wring
"rh"	h	rhetoric, rhinoceros, rhyme
"gn"	g	gnat, gnaw, gnome, gnu
in the middle or at the end of a word:		
"bt"	b	debt, doubt, subtle
"dg"	d	bludgeon, lodge, judge, edge
"mb"	b	climb, comb, lamb, numb
"mn"	n	autumn, column, hymn, solemn

Exceptions:

obtain, obtuse, subtraction, headgear
amber, member, number (others with "er" endings)
alumnus, amnesia, hymnal

3. "ie" and "ei"

Remember the following jingle to help in spelling "ie" or "ei" words:

*"i" before "e" except after "c"
or when sounded like "a"
as in neighbor and weigh.*

Examples:

("i" before "e") <u>"ie" words</u>	(except after c) <u>"ei" words</u>	("a" sounding) <u>ei words</u>
believe	receive	neighbor
relief	conceit	weigh
mien	ceiling	surveillance
tie	receipt	beige
pier	perceive	deign

Exceptions:

either, deity, foreign, height, leisure, seize, weird

4. Change of "y" to "i"

With words that end in "y" preceded by a consonant, change the "y" to "i" before adding any suffix (see page 38) except "ing".

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	+	<u>Suffix</u>	=	<u>New word</u>
happy		-ness		happiness
beauty		-ful		beautiful
hurry		-s		hurries
modify		-ed		modified
defy		-ance		defiance
study		-ous		studious
noisy		-ly		noisily
funny		-er		funnier
worry		-some		worrisome

Exceptions:

dyes (as in colors), spryly, slyest, wryness

5. Doubling final consonants

When a one-syllable word ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel (or when a word with more than one syllable ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel and has stress syllable), double that last consonant before on the last adding a suffix beginning with a vowel.

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	+	<u>Suffix</u>	=	<u>New word</u>
sit		-ing		sitting
nod		-ed		noded
occur		-ence		occurrence

Exceptions:

buses, fixed, preference, transferable

6. Final "e"

When a word ends in "e", drop the "e" before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel but keep the "e" for a suffix beginning with a consonant.

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	+	<u>Suffix</u>	=	<u>New word</u>
		(beginning with a vowel)		
hope		-ing		hoping
grieve		-ous		grievous
like		-able		likable
		(beginning with a consonant)		
hope		-ful		hopeful
achieve		-ment		achievement
like		-ly		likely

Exceptions (for vowel suffixes):

changeable, outrageous, hoeing, dyeing, singeing

Exceptions (for consonant suffixes):

argument, judgment, acknowledgment, truly

7. Words ending in "c"

In words ending in "c", put a "k" after the "c" before adding a suffix.

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	+	<u>Suffix</u>	=	<u>New word</u>
panic		-ed		panicked
colic		-y		colicky
picnic		-er		picnicker
traffic		-ing		trafficking

Exceptions:

lyrical, logical, magical, musical

8. Plurals ("s" or "es"?)

Add "s" to the end of most words to pluralize them.

Add "es" to words ending in "ch", "s", "sh", "x" or "z".

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	<u>Plural</u>
	(just add "s" at the end)
book	books
paper	papers
banana	bananas
trumpet	trumpets
	(add "es" at the end)
beach	beaches
loaf	*loaves
pass	passes
marsh	marshes
box	boxes
quiz	quizzes

Exceptions:

alumna, criteria, curricula, potatoes, tomatoes, sheep

- * When pluralizing words which end in a single "f", it is sometimes necessary to change the "f" to "v" before adding "es".

American vs. British spelling

American English differs from British English in that it has been "simplified" to reflect the pronunciation more accurately. In 1828, an American scholar named Noah Webster published a dictionary, An American Dictionary of the English Language, proposing that English spelling be simplified; he changed words like "centre", "colour" and "draught" to "center", "color" and "draft". Since then, spelling of other words, such as "realize" instead of "realise", have become accepted as the Americanized spelling.

<u>American</u>	<u>British</u>
-ck/k bank check	-que banque cheque
-ction connection deflection genuflection inflection reflection	-xion connexion deflexion genuflexion inflexion reflexion
e anesthesia encyclopedia esthetic hemophilia medieval	ae anaesthesia encyclopaedia aesthetic haemophilia mediaeval
e esophagus fetus homeopath	oe oesophagus foetus homoeopath
-ed burned dreamed kneeled leaped learned smelled spelled	-t burnt dreamt knelt leapt learnt smelt spelt

-er caliber
center
fiber
liter
theater

-re calibre
centre
fibre
litre
theatre

-ize apologize
capitalize
categorize
criticize
dramatize
finalize
memorize
organize
realize
recognize
stabilize
standardize

-ise apologise
capitalise
categorise
criticise
dramatise
finalise
memorise
organise
realise
recognise
stabilise
standardise

-ll appall
enroll
fulfill
install
willful

-l appal
enrol
fulfil
instal
wilful

-og analog
catalog
dialog
pedagog
travelog

-ogue analogue
catalogue
dialogue
pedagogue
travelogue

-or arbor
armor
behavior
candor
color
demeanor
endeavor
favor
favorite

-our arbour
armour
behaviour
candour
colour
demeanour
endeavour
favour
favourite

fervor
flavor
harbor
honor
humor
labor
neighbor
odor
parlor
rancor
rigor
rumor
savor
splendor
tumor
valor
vigor

fervour
flavour
harbour
honour
humour
labour
neighbour
odour
parlour
rancour
rigour
rumour
savour
splendour
tumour
valour
vigour

-se defense
license
offense
pretense

-ce defence
licence
offence
pretence

(other)

advisor
airplane
aluminum
behoove
citrus
curb
donut
gray
jewelry
mustache
pajamas
program
tidbit
tire

adviser
aeroplane
alumnium
behove
citrous
kerb
doughnut
grey
jewellery
moustache
pyjamas
programme
titbit
tyre

Capitalization

The letters of the English alphabet can be written in upper or lower case form. Here is a review of both types:

~ Alphabet ~

Upper case (capital) letters:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Lower case (small) letters:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Upper case letters are called "capitals". Capitalization is the act of writing an upper case letter as the first letter of a word. It indicates the start of sentences, identifies proper nouns (people, places or things) and shows respect (with titles). The following rules apply:

Capitalization Rules

1. First word

A. Sentence (and sentence fragments)

The first word of a sentence is capitalized.

Examples:

All of the children knew the answer.

What is the name of that restaurant?

That is a beautiful painting!

Sentence fragments, by themselves, also are capitalized.

Examples:

Always! (a one-word statement)

Because I said so!

And that's all she wrote.

B. Quotation

The first word of a quotation gets capitalized.

Examples:

Mary asked Jan, "How old are you?"

"Is that your sister?", Mrs. Minton questioned.

My mother always says, "Better safe than sorry".

C. Salutation

When writing a note, card or letter, capitalize the greeting.

Examples:

Dear Brian,

To the Class:

My Esteemed Colleagues,

D. Poetry

Traditionally, the first word of each line of a poem has been capitalized. However, modern poetry is more flexible and does not require this practice.

Examples:

Traditional

Dawn is now upon us;

The night has gone too soon.

Time it is to focus

And forget about the moon.

Modern

My idea of happiness

is a dog and a sandwich

or a dog IN a sandwich.

Hot dog!

2. Proper nouns (and proper adjectives)

Proper nouns (see page 47) are specific names of persons, places or things, including official institutions, and should be capitalized.

A. Persons

i. Name

A person's name is always capitalized.

Examples:

I am sending a letter to Lavinia Jones.

We invited Pam and Cindy to go shopping.

The only boys here are the Olsen brothers.

ii. Title

Capitalize a personal or official title (or its abbreviation) when it is used in a direct address, preceding a person's name or as part of a specific name (see rule 4 on titles).

Examples:

Listen, Judge Bram, I am innocent!

Michelle met Senator Gerard Klein.

Captain Ferrer, thank you for coming!

iii. Nationality

The origin, nationality or ethnicity of a person has capitals.

Examples:

Julio is from Mexico.

Those tourists are Japanese.

Gina Roselli is of Italian descent.

iv. Race

Examples:

Many Asians have moved to Canada.

Gerry's father is an American Indian.

This city is heavily Hispanic.

v. Religion

Examples:

Abdul Rahmed is a devout Muslim.

Steven was raised in the Jewish faith.

As a Catholic, Mary attended Mass weekly.

vi. Politics

Examples:

Jonathan was a life-long Democrat.
Libertarians believe in minimal government.
Does the Republican Party support this?

B. Places

Names of cities, states, countries (and their languages), particular geographic regions, landmarks, airports, buildings, monuments and other specific places should be capitalized.

Examples:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Language</u>	<u>Landmark</u>
Australia	English	the Outback
Brazil	Portuguese	Ipanema Beach
England	English	Stonehenge
Egypt	Arabic	the Nile River
France	French	the Eiffel Tower
Germany	German	the Black Forest
Japan	Japanese	Mount Fuji
Peru	Spanish	Machu Pichu
U.S.A.	English	Niagara Falls

C. Things

Distinct names of things, such as ships, cars, household items (including brand names), events and awards should be capitalized as long as they are actual names and not just general, commonplace terms. The distinction is presented as follows:

Examples:

<u>Common nouns</u>	<u>Proper nouns</u>
ship	the Titanic
bridge	the Golden Gate Bridge
film award	Oscar
newspaper	Washington Post
pear	Anjou pear
university	Boston University

A Proper Adjective is a name which describes a noun. As a name, it is capitalized; however, the noun it modifies is not capitalized, unless it is part of a complete title.

Examples:

an Independence Day parade
the California coastline
Swiss cheese

D. Institutions

Any institution, such as a government group, organization, business or religion, should begin its name with a capital letter.

i. Government

Examples:

Department of Defense
the Pentagon
General Accounting Office

ii. Organization

Examples:

Girls Scouts of America
World Health Organization
United Auto Workers

iii. Businesses

Examples:

Halliper & Sons, Ltd.
The Walker Corporation
Sarlow Co., Inc.

a. Brand names (or trademarks)

Examples:

Sony Walkman
Hershey's Quik
Hostess Twinkie

iv. Religions

Examples:

<u>Religion</u>	<u>Follower</u>
Buddhism	Buddhist
Christianity	Catholic Greek/Russian Orthodox Protestant: Baptist, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Mormon
Hinduism	Hindu
Judaism	Jew
Muslim	Sunni or Shiite Muslim
Shinto	Shintoist
Sikhism	Sikh
Taoism	Taoist

3. Titles

Both titles for people (usually denoting their jobs) and titles of books, movies, plays, newspapers, poems, paintings and other works need to be capitalized.

A. People

Use lower case letters for job titles when the titles are merely a description of a job, but capitalize them when they precede a person's name or are part of the name itself.

Examples:

<u>Lower case letters</u>	<u>Capitalization</u>
He was a mayor.	This is Mayor John Lang.
The doctor came.	Here is Doctor Lanos.
Shuli is our rabbi.	Let's call Rabbi Spiegel.
John saw the judge.	Judge Burr ruled the case.
There's the professor.	Professor Lee seems nice.
It's the commissioner.	Is Commissioner Diaz here?
I visited my uncle.	I saw Uncle Bob yesterday.

Also, capitalize titles of respect, academic degrees and honors (and their abbreviations) preceding or following a person's name.

Examples:

Mr. Richard Metcalf
Coach Reed
Sir James Kensington
Mark Cohen, Esq.
Ursula Harendt, Ph.D.
Tariq Shabazz, D.D.S.
Robert H. Carroway, Jr.

B. Works

Capitalize the first word and all important words in titles of written material (books, newspapers, magazines), performing arts (movies, radio programs, television shows) and musical works (songs, musicals, symphonies, operas).

Hint: Words with less than three letters (usually articles, conjunctions and prepositions) in the middle of the title do not have to be capitalized.

Examples:

<u>Type of work</u>	<u>Title</u>
book	<u>For Whom the Bell Tolls</u>
newspaper article	President to Sign Peace Treaty
magazine article	Great Honeymoon Spots
poem	Ode on a Grecian Urn
play	Death of a Salesman
movie	The Fountainhead
radio program	The Brad Flynn Hour
television show	Family Ties
song	Paper Doll
musical	The Pajama Game
symphony	Symphony No. 9 in D Minor (The "Choral" Symphony)
opera	Casta Diva

4. Time

A. Calendar

i. Days

The seven days of the week are capitalized.

~ Days of the Week ~

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

ii. Months

The twelve months of the year are capitalized.

~ Months ~

**January February March April May June July
August September October November December**

iii. Holidays

All holidays are given capital letters.

~ Holidays ~

**Christmas Ramadan Yom Kippur Election Day
St. Patrick's Day Independence Day Labor Day**

The seasons, however, are not capitalized.

B. Historical periods

Capitalize noteworthy eras (such as wars).

Examples:

the Great Depression
World War II
the Renaissance

C. Special events

Important and well-known events have capitals.

Examples:

the Winter Olympics
Spring Break
the World Cup

Shortcuts

Names can be shortened by initials, acronyms, abbreviations, and short forms.

Initials

An initial is the first letter of a word. Many people, organizations and institutions are referred to by their initials for short. Putting a period after each letter is optional.

Examples:

<u>Initials</u>	<u>Actual name</u>
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
IBM	International Business Machines
JFK	John Fitzgerald Kennedy
KFC	Kentucky Fried Chicken
M.B.A.	Masters of Business Administration
P.O.	Post Office or Purchase Order (business term)
U.F.O.	Unidentified Flying Object
the UN	United Nations

Acronyms

An acronym is a name formed from the initial letters of an official title. When these initials are put together (all capital letters), they form a separate word by itself which can be pronounced. The following names are acronyms and the official titles for which they stand.

Examples:

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Official title</u>
AID	Agency for International Development
COLA	Cost of Living Adjustment
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OPEC	Oil Producing and Exporting Countries
SCORE	Senior Corps of Retired Executives
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics
UNICEF	United Nations Int'l. Children's Emergency Fund

Abbreviations

Many words are shortened (abbreviated) with a period.

Examples:

<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>Full Word</u>
Mr.	Mister
Dr.	Doctor
Jr. or Sr.	Junior or Senior
Rev.	Reverend
Prof.	Professor
Sen. / Rep. / Gov.	Senator / Representative / Governor
St. / Rd. / Ave. / Blvd.	Street (or Saint) / Road / Avenue / Boulevard
Co. / Inc. / Ltd.	Company / Incorporated / Limited
ext.	extension
etc.	etcetera
vs.	versus

Short forms

Shortened forms of full words (without a period) have become known as words themselves. For example, "auto", short for "automobile", is universally accepted as a word itself. This includes people's names ("nicknames").

Examples:

<u>Short form</u>	<u>Full word</u>
ad	advertisement
bike	bicycle
dorm	dormitory
Ed (nickname)	Edward
FedEx	Federal Express
flu	influenza
frat	fraternity
Kathy (nickname)	Katherine
math	mathematics
phone	telephone
photo	photograph
plane	airplane
temp	temporary worker

Exercises

1. How many letters are there in the alphabet?

2. Is the letter "E" a vowel or a consonant?

3. In the word "try", is "y" a vowel or a consonant?

4. Write a word in which "y" is a consonant.

5. What kind of an animal barks? Sound it out and spell it.

6. Is there a good aid for remembering how to spell the word "statuesque"? Hint: It has a word within it.

7. Agree or disagree: It is a good practice to proofread written work because spelling or other errors may be found.

8. Spell the new word that is formed when the prefix "il" is put together with the word "logical".

9. Which letter is silent in the word "knot"?

10. Is the word "*yield*" spelled correctly? Or should it be "*yeild*"?
Hint: It follows one of the main spelling rules.

11. Add the suffix "*ful*" to the word "*plenty*". Spell the new word that is formed.

12. Spell the new word that is formed when the suffix "*est*" is added to the word "*lucky*".

13. Complete the spelling of the word "*happ_ess*" with "*i*" or "*y*".

14. Put the suffix "*ing*" onto the end of the word "*swim*". Spell the new word that is formed.

15. Make the following words plural: "*table*", "*beach*" and "*car*".

16. Is the word "*flavour*" spelled the British or American way?
Hint: American English is often simplified from the British.

17. What is the American way to spell "*centre*" ? (it's British here)

18. True or false: Lower case letters are called "*capitals*".

19. Re-write the following sentence and insert the correct capitals:
"*the grass in henderson park is brown*", *mike told rose*.

20. In the following sentence, pick out one word that needs to be capitalized: *Julia loved the book, Tennessee moon.*

21. Which of the following words should be capitalized:
"sweden", "mountain", "simmons college", "a boston judge"?

22. Pick out the word which is incorrectly capitalized:
John watched the popular Movie, "Ben Hur".

23. Should the names of holidays be capitalized?

24. What are the initials of *William Jennings Bryan*?

25. What is the acronym formed by *Association of Retired Mechanics*? Hint: It's also the name of a body part.

26. Abbreviate the word *"corporation"*.

27. For what does the abbreviation *"ext."* stand?

28. What short form is commonly used for the word *"examination"*?

29. What is one nickname for the name *"Elizabeth"*? (There are several).

PARTS OF A WORD

Word analysis

Many English words can be divided into various parts: prefixes, roots and suffixes. Usually, each part of a word has a meaning, so it is often possible to understand an unfamiliar word by analyzing its parts.

Prefixes

A prefix is a group of letters at the beginning of a word or specially added to the start of an already-existing word which changes its meaning and forms a new word.

Examples:

<u>Prefix</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Word examples</u>
ante	before	antecedent, anterior, anteroom
anti	against; opposed to	antidote, antiseptic, antithesis anti-American, anti-inflammatory
bi	two; twice	bilingual, bicycle, bifocals
dis	not	disagree, dislocate, disregard
ex	out of; former	exit, export, extricate ex-boss, ex-husband, ex-president
hyper	beyond	hyperactive, hypersensitive
in, un	not	unattractive, unnatural, inattentive
inter	between	intercept, interfere, international
micro	small	microfilm, microscope, microwave
mis	not	misappropriate, misunderstand
non	not	noncommittal, nonexistent, nontoxic
re	go back; repeat	recant, renege, return re-edit, re-establish, re-settle
pre	before; in front of	predict, prepare, prerequisite predominate, prefix, present
sub	under; below	submerge, subterranean, subway
trans	across	transfer, transmit, transport

Hint: Two prefixes can be used in one word, such as in "uninterrupted" or "nonrenewable".

Roots

A root is a word in its original and simplest form. A word may have prefixes or suffixes (called affixes) added on, but the root is the main part of it. Sometimes a root is called a base word.

Examples:

<u>Root</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Word examples</u>
aqua	water	aquarium, aquatic, aqueduct
audio	hear	audible, audience, audition
biblio	book	Bible, bibliophile, bibliography
bio	life	biography, biology, bionic
cent	hundred	centenarian, century, percent
chrono	time	chronicle, chronology, synchronize
cosmo	world	cosmopolitan, cosmos, microcosm
cred	belief	credit, credo, incredible
demo	people	democracy, demographics
fac	make	facile, factory, manufacture
finis	end	final, finish, infinite
fort	strong	fortify, fortress, fortune
geo	earth	geography, geologist, geopolitics
graph	write	autograph, biography, graphic
hydra	water	dehydrate, hydraulic, hydroplane
jud	legal	adjudicate, judge, judicial
liber	freedom	liberal, liberate, liberty
man	hand	manicure, manual, manuscript
mar	sea	marine, maritime, submarine
min	small	mince, minimal, minute
pater	father	paternity, patriot, patron
ped	foot	pedal, pedestrian, pedicure
phob	fear	agoraphobic, phobia, xenophobia
psych	mind	psyche, psychosis, psychotherapy
rupt	break	disrupt, interrupt, rupture
tac	touch	attack, tackle, tactile
voca	call	invocation, vocal, vociferous

Suffixes

A suffix is a group of letters added to the end of a word that changes its meaning and forms a new word.

Examples:

<u>Suffix</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Word examples</u>
able, ible	capable of	attainable, edible, sensible
en	to become	harden, sadden, weaken
ess	female	actress, goddess, waitress
ful	full of	beautiful, forceful, hopeful
fy	to make	deify, glorify, purify
ist	one who is	idealist, pharmacist, linguist
less	without	careless, meaningless, painless
ly	like	expertly, humanly, simply
ness	condition	coziness, happiness, newness
ous	pertaining to	glorious, momentous, outrageous

Hint: More than one suffix can be used in a word, such as "painlessly" or "outrageousness".

Syllables

A syllable is a group of letters forming one sound. Every word has at least one syllable.

Word division

When a word has more than one syllable, it can be dissected into its individual syllables, usually between two consecutive consonants.

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	<u>Syllable(s)</u>
acrobat	ac' ro bat
carpenter	car' pen ter
dog	dog
mismanagement	mis man' age ment

Hint: Every syllable contains at least one vowel.

Stress

Many pronunciation guides indicate the stress (inflection of the voice) of the dominant syllable with an accent mark after the stressed syllable. Stress is often called "accent".

Exercises

1. What does the prefix *"pre"* mean?

2. What is the prefix in the word *"subterranean"* ?

3. Which of the following words contains a prefix meaning water: *"hyperactive"*, *"hydroplane"* or *"hysteria"* ? Hint: Think of what each word means, and if it has anything to do with water.

4. If the prefix *"micro"* means *"small"* and the root *"cosm"* has to do with *"world"*, does *"microcosm"* mean *"small world"* ?

5. To what does the root *"graph"* pertain?

6. True or false: *"A root can be called a base word"*.

7. What does the suffix *"ful"* mean in the word *"beautiful"*?

8. From the prefix *"in"* (meaning *"not"*), the root *"audio"* (meaning *"hear"*), and the suffix *"ible"* (meaning *"capable of"*), what does the word *"inaudible"* mean?

9. Separate the word *"fantastic"* into its three syllables.

10. Is the following syllabic separation correct: *P ract ica´ l* ? If not, separate this word *"practical"* into its correct syllables.

WORDS

Etymology

To study English words is to learn their origins and history, which is called etymology. Many of the words in use today are derived from Old English, as well as Latin and Greek. The English language is a living language, flexible enough to adopt words from other languages and absorb modern influences. Undoubtedly, it will continue to evolve and thrive for a long time to come.

Word origins

Most dictionaries will denote the origins of words, in addition to the definitions. Usually, the first few pages in a dictionary are devoted to explaining the format; a word coming from Latin, for example, will be indicated by **L.** or **Lat.** Derivations from other languages can be found in the prefixes, roots or suffixes of many words.

Examples:

<u>English word</u>	<u>Derivation</u>
abduct	Latin, French: abductus, abducere
awake	Old English: awacen
beneath	Old, Middle English: beneoþan, benethe
bibliography	Greek: bibliographía
community	Latin: communitat
democracy	Greek: demokratía
develop	French: développer
hypochondria	Greek: hypochóndrios
interject	Latin: interjectus
learn	Old English: leornian
nominal	Latin: nominalis
period	Greek: períodos
retrieve	French: retrouver
sword	Old English: sweord
uniform	Latin, French: uniformis, uniforme

History

The English language belongs to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family. What is referred to as Old English or Anglo-Saxon started being spoken in Britain in the 5th century, A.D. For the next 700 years, it grew and changed; other languages, particularly Latin, yielded influences. From 1100 to mid-1400 A.D., Middle English developed. Many words were borrowed from French, due to the Norman conquest of Britain in 1066, further enriching the vocabulary. During this time, a common word order arose. Finally, the era of Modern English was ushered in with the invention of typography and the printing press in the 1400's. Spelling, and thus pronunciation, became standardized. The Renaissance, which spread throughout Europe in the 1500's, played a role in encouraging the study of linguistics. Literature flourished and helped form the basis for an educational curriculum. William Shakespeare, generally considered the world's greatest poet and playwright, enjoyed immense popularity; this was due not only to his brilliant works, but partly because of the public's increased interest in and access to the performance of written material. The first English dictionary was published in 1604, and since then, countless lexicographers have dissected, analyzed and documented the never-ending changes to this vibrant language. Many movements and cultures have affected the history of English and continue to bear weight to this day.

Modern words

In a vital language like English, new words are introduced frequently. Words come into the English lexicon from other languages (foreign words), through contemporary creations (neologisms) and by people who are influential in some fashion (eponyms).

Foreign words

As international travel and trade increase, parts of other cultures captivate the English-speaking world. Foreign words being absorbed into English are found in all aspects of life: food, dress, music, film, politics, technology, etc. Eventually, newly-acquired words are adopted and find their way into English dictionaries.

Examples:

<u>Foreign words used in English</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Original language</u>
aficionado	expert	Spanish
apropos	appropriate; fitting	French
bistro	small cafe; tavern	French
blitz	attack; bombing	German
bon vivant	partier; fun person	French
bonanza	great abundance	Spanish
boondocks	remote and rural area	Tagalog
cappuccino	espresso coffee and milk	Italian
chutzpah	boldness; brashness	Yiddish
déjà vu	repeated experience	French
eureka!	expression of discovery	Greek
faux pas	social blunder	French
falafel	spicy pita sandwich	Arabic
gaucho	cowboy	Spanish
hoi polloi	common people	Greek
hors d'oeuvre	savory appetizer	French
karaoke	singing words to music	Japanese
karma	personal power; energy	Hindi
kimono	silky robe with sash	Japanese
klutz	clumsy person	Yiddish
kowtow	to show deference	Chinese
loofah	sponge	Arabic
paparazzi	celebrity photographers	Italian
potpourri	mixture; medley	French
presto	instantly; quickly	Italian
tortilla	unleavened bread	Spanish
veldt	flat, treeless plateau	Dutch
vendetta	feud between families	Italian
virtuoso	skilled musical performer	Italian
zeitgeist	feeling of an era	German

Gender

In some languages, all nouns are either masculine or feminine in gender (even abstract ideas). The gender determines the article and any modifying adjective associated with that noun. There are no neutral (also called neuter) nouns in Spanish, for example, as exist in English. However, English does have female and male names for people (and animals). There are roles and job titles which convey the sex of the persons performing their duties. In the 1970's, a movement began to eradicate the male characterization of certain jobs, such as changing "fireman" to "fire fighter". Below, the job titles which have a gender-neutral term are identified with an asterisk (*).

Examples:

<u>Prime (male) word</u>	<u>Female equivalent</u>	<u>Gender-neutral title</u>
actor	actress	-----
bachelor	spinster	singleton
boy	girl	child, kid
boar	sow	pig
brother	sister	sibling
chairman	chairwoman	* chairperson, chair
comedian	comedienne	-----
cock	hen	chicken
count	countess	-----
father	mother	parent
fireman	-----	* firefighter
host	hostess	-----
husband	wife	spouse
man	woman	adult
mailman	-----	* mail carrier
policeman	policewoman	* police officer
prince	princess	-----
ram	ewe	sheep
salesman	saleswoman	* salesperson
stallion	mare	horse
steward	stewardess	* flight attendant
waiter	waitress	* waitperson

Neologisms

Modern life brings newly made-up words, called neologisms, into the English lexicon.

Examples:

<u>Neologism</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
biodegradable	capable of decaying into the earth
byte	eight contiguous bits of personal computer data
cursor	position on computer screen
ethnocentric	viewing alien groups of people with disdain
dot-com	business selling via the internet
freeway	highway without tolls
satellite	object which orbits in space
skylight	roof window through which the sky can be seen
spreadsheet	electronic worksheet
sunscreen	skin lubricant for blocking the sun's harmful rays
sunroof	window in the roof of a car

Outdated words

Just as modern words soon become part of everyday vocabulary, there are other words that fall out of favor and no longer are used; in dictionaries, they are referred to as archaic, obsolete or old-fashioned, depending on how long they have been out of use.

Examples:

<u>Outdated word</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
afear'd	afraid; frightened
damsel	young unmarried woman
fetching	attractive; charming
knave	cheater; rogue
lad/lass	young boy/girl
moll	gangster's girlfriend
nigh	nearly; almost
ort	piece of food
smite	to strike hard
swain	male suitor
twain	two
wastrel	spendthrift
wench	young woman

Eponyms

Throughout time, there have been certain people who have made discoveries or influenced the culture in some way. The creations made by them have become "eponyms", meaning words coined from people's names.

Examples:

<u>Eponyms</u>	<u>People for whom words are named</u>
ampere	André Ampère (1775-1836), French physicist
bloomer	Amelia Bloomer (1818-1894), U.S. reformer
boson	S. N. Bose (born 1894), Indian physicist
cardigan	Earl of Cardigan (1797-1868), British general
chauvinism	Nicolas Chauvin (1800's), French soldier
daguerreotype	Louis Daguerre (1787-1851), French inventor
dahlia	Anders Dahl (died 1789), Swedish botanist
diesel	Rudolf Diesel (1858-1913), German inventor
draconian	Draco (died 621 B.C.), Greek lawmaker
epicurean	Epicurus (341-270 B.C.), Greek philosopher
galvanize	Luigi Galvani (1737-1798), Italian physiologist
gerrymander	Governor Elbridge Gerry (1744-1814), Massachusetts governor
guillotine	Dr. Joseph Guillotin (1738-1814), French doctor
lynch	Charles Lynch (1736-1786), U.S. public official
macadam	John L. McAdam (1756-1836), Scottish civil engineer
martinet	Jean Martinet (died 1672), French army officer
maverick	Samuel Maverick (1803-1870), U.S. attorney
ohm	Georg S. Ohm (1789-1854), German physicist
pasteurize	Professor Louis Pasteur (1822-1895), French chemist and microbiologist
platonic	Plato (428-348 B.C.), Greek philosopher
quisling	Vidkun A. Quisling (1887-1945), Norwegian politician
sadism	Marquis de Sade (1740-1814), French author
sandwich	Earl of Sandwich (1718-1792), English politician
shrapnel	General Henry Shrapnel (1761-1842), British general
valentine	St. Valentine (died 269 A.D.), Italian bishop
watt	James Watt (1736-1819), Scottish engineer

Parts of Speech

English words are separated into eight classifications, dubbed Parts of Speech: nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections.

Nouns

A noun is a person, place or thing. A "thing" can represent qualities, ideas and activities as well as material goods.

Examples:

<u>Nouns</u>	<u>Representation</u>
astronaut	person
basement	place
envelope	thing (material good)
likeability	thing (quality)
democracy	thing (idea)
bowling	thing (activity)

Noun categories

All nouns fall into the proper or common noun category:

Proper nouns

A proper noun names a particular, specific person, place or thing and must always be capitalized.

Common nouns

A common noun is a general, ordinary person, place or thing and never is capitalized.

Examples:

<u>Proper nouns</u>	<u>Common nouns</u>
Benjamin Franklin	inventor
Mother Teresa	nun
the White House	house
Massachusetts	state
Coca Cola	soda
Republican Party of Iowa	political party

Common nouns can be categorized further into concrete and abstract nouns.

Concrete nouns

A concrete noun identifies a person, place or thing that can be seen and touched.

Abstract nouns

An abstract noun is an intangible quality, such as a feeling or idea, that exists in the mind.

Examples:

Concrete nouns

airplane
dog
house
model
photograph
soldier

Abstract nouns

fear
loyalty
comfort
beautiful
nostalgia
bravery

Compound words

When two (or more) words are combined into a single word, a compound word is formed. It can be written as a single word, a hyphenated word or separate words grouped together. Regardless of how it is written, a compound word is thought of as one word. This subject is covered here in the noun section because most compound words are made of nouns.

Examples:

Compound word (noun)

doghouse
flowerpot
starfish
actor-director
self-control
sister-in-law
credit card
ice cream
road rage

Meaning of the combined words

a house made for a dog
a pot in which a flower is planted
a fish shaped like a star
a director who is also an actor
control over one's self
an in-law who is a sister
a card giving credit to its holder
a dessert made from cream and ice
rage occurring while driving on the road

Plurals

A noun becomes plural when it refers to more than one person, place, thing, feeling or idea.

Spelling rules for plurals

The following rules apply to the spelling of plurals:

Add "s" ending

In most cases, a plural is formed by adding "s" to the end of the noun.

Examples:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural (adding "s")</u>
ball	balls
carrot	carrots
napkin	napkins
symbol	symbols
thermometer	thermometers

Add "es" ending

Nouns that end in "ch", "s", "sh", "x" and "z" are made plural by adding "es" to the end.

Examples:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural adding "es"</u>
beach	beaches
loss	losses
marsh	marshes
quiz	quizzes
tax	taxes

Change "y" to "i" and add "es" ending

When a noun ends in "y" preceded by a consonant, change the "y" to "i" and add "es".

Hint: This does not apply to names of people: for example, the Kerry family is referred to as "the Kerrys", not "the Kerries".

Examples:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural adding "ies" (after taking off the "y")</u>
baby	babies
diary	diaries
family	families
luxury	luxuries
theory	theories

Note: Nouns ending in "y" preceded by a vowel are made plural by simply adding "s": alley/alleys, for example.

Sometimes change "f" to "ves" ending

Some words ending with "f" change the "f" to "ves" when plural.

Examples:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural adding "ves" (after taking off the "y")</u>
leaf	leaves
scarf	scarves
wolf	wolves

Note: There are many words ending in "f" which do not change the "f"; these just add an "s" on the end, the way usual plurals are formed.

Examples:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural</u>
chef	chefs
chief	chiefs
gulf	gulfs

Add an apostrophe and an "s" ending

The plural of numbers, letters and signs is formed by adding an apostrophe and an "s" at the end:

Examples:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural adding " 's"</u>
0	One million has six 0's in it.
r	The word, "tomorrow", is spelled with two r's.
#	My six-figure password is "4", "6" and four #'s.

Change in spelling

There are some nouns with irregular plural spellings.

Examples:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural (irregular spelling)</u>
child	children
crisis	crises
foot	feet
goose	geese
mouse	mice
ox	oxen
woman	women

These irregularities, like many areas of English, just have to be memorized. Here is a poem which highlights the confusion of spelling plurals.

Plural Confusion

*One may be that, and two may be those,
Yet diplomat in the plural wouldn't be "diplomose".*

*One chief is good, but better still are two chiefs,
Which doesn't exactly apply to thief and thieves.*

*Man can be many a thing, in number becoming men,
When younger, he is a child among many children.*

*Now see that learning plurals should be a criterion
For English study, among the many other criteria.*

Foreign/English plurals

Many nouns derived from Latin and Greek retain their foreign plurals for scientific or formal material and use English plurals in non-technical or informal writing.

Examples:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Foreign plural / English plural</u>
antenna	antennae / antennas
automaton	automata / automatons
formula	formulae / formulas
memorandum	memoranda / memorandums
nucleus	nuclei / nucleuses
phenomenon	phenomena / phenomenons
referendum	referenda / referendums
syllabus	syllabi / syllabuses
vertebra	vertebrae / vertebrae

No change

Some nouns have unchanged spelling in their plurals.

Examples:

<u>Noun</u>	<u>Plural (with singular spelling)</u>
Chinese	Chinese
deer	deer
grass	grass
series	series
sheep	sheep
species	species

Collective nouns

A collective noun appears singular in form but refers to more than one group of people, places or things.

Examples:

<u>Collective noun</u>	<u>Description</u>
audience	spectators or listeners of a public performance
class	people in the same school level or social rank
family	related persons, such as parents and children
group	an assemblage of persons or things
herd	animals of the same type kept together
jury	persons sworn to judge a court case
orchestra	musicians playing music together
staff	workers or helpers in an organization

Possessives

A noun (or pronoun*) denoting ownership and belonging is a possessive. The words, "of" or "belonging to", describe the relationship. The possessive case is shown by putting an apostrophe and "s" at the end of the "possessing" noun preceding the "possessed" noun that belongs to it.

* Possessive pronouns are explained in the pronoun section next. They have their own words to show possession and do not use an apostrophe and "s".

Note: Do not confuse the plural form of numbers, letters and signs with the possessive case, due to both having an apostrophe and "s".

Examples:

"Possessing" <u>noun</u>	"Possessed" <u>noun</u>	Description of <u>the relationship</u>
car	door	the car's door (the door of the car)
Spain	coast	Spain's coast (the coast of Spain)
Ted	dog	Ted's dog (the dog owned by Ted)

Singular possessives already ending in "s"

If a singular possessing noun happens to end in "s", just put an apostrophe after it (no extra "s").

Examples:

<u>Singular noun</u>	<u>Possessed noun</u>	<u>Relationship</u>
actress	role	the actress' role
Mr. Jones	apartment	Mr. Jones' apartment
Paris	skyline	Paris' skyline

Plural possessives ending in "s"

When a possessing noun is plural (ending in "s" already), just put an apostrophe at the end (no extra "s").

Examples:

<u>Plural noun</u>	<u>Possessed noun</u>	<u>Relationship</u>
animals	food	the animals' food
McCoys	house	the McCoy's' house
shirts	collars	the shirts' collars

Pronouns

A pronoun is a word that is used in place of a noun. It identifies persons, places or things without naming them. Pronouns are used to avoid repetition in writing.

~ Common pronouns ~

I	me	my	mine	myself	we	us	our	ours	ourselves
you	your		yours		yourself		yourselves	one	
oneself	he	him	his	himself	she	her	hers		
herself	it	its	itself	they	them	their	theirs		
themselves	what		whatever		which		whichever		
who	whom	whose	whoever		whomever	this	that		
these	those	all	another	any	anybody	anyone			
anything	both	each	either	enough	everybody				
everyone	everything	few	least	less	little	lots			
many	more	most	much	neither	nobody	no one			
none	nothing	other	plenty	some	somebody				
someone	something								

Antecedent

The word (noun) which is replaced by a pronoun is called an antecedent.

Examples:

<u>Antecedent</u>	<u>Pronouns which could apply</u>
human beings	we, us, our, ours, ourselves
Laura	she, her, hers, herself
Mr. Breton	him, his, himself
neighbors	they, them, their, theirs, themselves
pencil	it, its, itself, this, that
statues	they, them, their, theirs, themselves, these, those

Pronoun types

Often, pronouns are not given sufficient attention in grammar studies. There are six types of pronouns (!), each with subtle differences: personal, reflexive, demonstrative, interrogative, relative and indefinite.

Personal pronouns

A personal pronoun points to a "person": 1st person is the speaker, 2nd person is whom the speaker is talking to and 3rd person is whom is being spoken about. There are three cases of personal pronouns: subjective (also called nominative), objective and possessive.

~ Personal pronouns ~			
	<u>Subjective</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Possessive</u>
1st person:			
singular.....	I.....	me.....	my, mine
plural.....	we.....	us.....	our, ours
2nd person:			
singular.....	you.....	you.....	your, yours
plural.....	you.....	you.....	your, yours
3rd person:			
singular			
- masculine.....	he.....	him.....	his
- feminine.....	she.....	her.....	her, hers
- neuter.....	it.....	it.....	its
plural.....	they.....	them.....	theirs

Subjective case

The subject is the main part of any sentence; it is what the sentence is about (more about sentence structure on pages 109 -111). Subjective pronouns are substituted for the person / thing doing the action.

Subjective pronouns: I we you he she it they
--

Examples:

I exercise to stay healthy.

We were tired after spending all day biking.

Gee, you are right.

Never did he express any doubt.

She climbed to the top of the mountain.

It is a beautiful work of art!

In the evening, they like to take a walk.

Objective case

An objective pronoun takes the place of the person or thing receiving action; it is not the leading part of a sentence. In the objective case, the pronoun follows the verb or preposition.

Objective pronouns: me us you him her it them

Examples:

Lillian gave me a sandwich.
The teacher scolded us for being late.
After supper, I will read a book to you.
The present was bought for him.
Can you help her carry the boxes?
I saw it in the window.
It was great to hear from them!

Possessive case

Possessive pronouns communicate to whom or to what something belongs. They function in the same way as possessive nouns do, except a pronoun is used instead of a noun.

Possessive pronouns: my our your his her their its
mine ours yours his hers theirs

Examples:

Sheila is my sister. She is mine.
Our house is blue. The blue house is ours.
Put your clean clothes away. The clothes are yours.
The third one on the right is his car. It is his.
The little camera belongs to her. The camera is hers.
Their dogs are cute! The cute dogs are theirs.
A book usually has its price on the inside cover.

Hint: Possessive pronouns never have an apostrophe, as possessive nouns do.

Reflexive pronouns

Reflexive pronouns can be used to reflect back on the subject of a sentence, to suggest doing something on one's own or to express emphasis (which could be subcategorized as "intensive" pronouns"). They always end in "self". or "selves".

Reflexive pronouns: myself yourself himself herself
ourselves yourselves themselves

Examples:

I gave myself a haircut.

You must tell him yourself!

He went to school by himself.

The elderly woman lives by herself.

We took ourselves to France last summer.

Give yourselves credit for finishing the test.

They themselves were guilty of theft!

Demonstrative pronouns

To point out someone / something or to clearly express an idea / desire, demonstrative pronouns can be used.

Demonstrative pronouns: this that these those

Hint: Use "this" and "that" for singular items, "these" and "those" for plural.

Examples:

I like this car. This is the car I want to buy.

That was a delicious dinner! That chef is top-notch.

Look at these animal books. These are interesting.

Were those shoes comfortable? Those were really old.

Interrogative pronouns

Questions are asked with an interrogative pronoun.

Interrogative pronouns: who whom whose which what

Examples:

Who is that man in the lobby?
To whom did you give the letter?
Do you know whose money this is?
Which of the contestants is the smartest?
What is the problem?

Relative pronouns

Relative pronouns introduce a descriptive clause about their antecedents (the nouns which they represent).

Relative pronouns: who whom what that which
--

Examples:

She is a singer who has a beautiful voice.
Here is the woman for whom the boat is named.
I will give you what you want.
When will we see the movie that won the Academy Award?
Sam likes the cookies which have the jelly filling.

Indefinite pronouns

When a pronoun represents an inexact or undetermined amount of persons or things, it is called an indefinite pronoun.

Indefinite pronouns: all any anybody anyone anything both each either enough everybody everyone everything few least less little lots many more most much neither nobody no one none nothing other plenty several some someone
--

Examples:

Is anybody still on the bus?
Lots of people showed up at the concert.
Many were chosen to be in the parade.
Alberto took several to class with him.
It was more than she bargained for.
The packages arrived, and some had been opened!

Adjectives

An adjective is a word that modifies a noun (or pronoun). To modify means to describe and make more specific by telling what kind, whose or how many.

Placement of adjectives

The most common position of an adjective in a sentence is directly before the word that it modifies (typically, a noun). Though sometimes adjectives directly follow the modified words, separated by a comma; in this case, there is often more than one adjective. Finally, an adjective can be the recipient of a linking verb (see page 65), and comes after it.

Adjectives preceding nouns

Most adjectives precede the words that they modify.

Examples:

The happy baby smiled at us.

It was a beautiful wedding.

Big footprints were found in the park.

Adjectives following nouns

Modifying adjectives can come after nouns.

Examples:

The lake, crystal clear, was full of fish.

Julie, trim from her diet, wore a sleeveless gown.

The cake, warm and moist, melted in our mouths.

Adjectives following a linking verb

Some adjectives are connected to a noun by a verb.

Examples:

She looks sophisticated in that suit.

It was hilarious!

The computer will be useful.

Adjective classifications

Adjectives are said to be descriptive, possessive or limiting.

Hint: Adjectives do not change form in the singular or plural.
For example, "a cloudy day" and "cloudy skies".

Descriptive adjectives

Descriptive adjectives express a quality or condition.
There are proper and common descriptive adjectives.

Proper descriptive adjectives

"Proper", in grammar, means relating to an actual name. Proper descriptive adjectives give names as descriptions, and they always should be capitalized.

Examples:

He gave me French perfume. The perfume is French.
That is a Dallas accent. The accent is from Dallas.
We visited on Friday night. The night was Friday.
St. Ann's is a Catholic church. The church is Catholic.
Asian culture is fascinating. The culture is Asian.

Common descriptive adjectives

The most frequently-used type of adjective is a common descriptive adjective; it tells of a feature or characteristic of the noun it is modifying.

Examples:

I like the blue car on the left. That car is blue.
He wears an expensive suit. His suit is expensive.
Jan has huge dogs. Her dogs are huge.
It was a difficult test. The test was difficult.
Clean houses show care. Those houses are clean.

Possessive adjectives

Adjectives which indicate ownership or belonging are called possessive adjectives. There are both proper-noun and pronoun possessive adjectives.

Proper-noun possessive adjectives

Proper nouns (see page 47) can be adjectives when they are used to show who possesses goods or qualities.

Examples:

These are the Reed's tools.

We lived through August's hurricane.

I like Ingrid's accent.

Have you seen Chris' new boat?

Pronoun possessive adjectives

Pronouns which are possessive (see page 56) can also be considered adjectives because they modify or describe nouns in telling who possesses them. Another name for pronoun possessive adjectives is pronominal adjectives.

Examples:

The red pliers and hammers are their tools.

We lived through its hurricane.

I like her accent.

Have you seen his new boat?

Limiting adjectives

By specifying a number or amount in the description, a limiting adjective thereby sets a limit.

Examples:

the fifth amendment

eight dollars

twin beds

a half tank

his only regret

the sole heir

Articles

Articles ("a", "an" and "the") are regarded as limiting adjectives because they make the nouns which follow them more specific. They can be indefinite or definite in nature.

Indefinite articles

"A" and "an" are indefinite articles. They point to any one of a group. "A" is used before words starting with a consonant sound; "an" is used before words that begin with a vowel sound.

Examples:

Indefinite article

a bell (in a tower)

an icicle (of an ice storm)

an ornament (on a door)

"A" vs. "an"

Sound, not spelling, determines the use of "a" or "an". If the next word starts with a consonant sound, use "a"; if it is a vowel sound, use "an" before it. The word "hour", for example, does not have a beginning consonant sound, even though "h" is a consonant (because it is silent in this word), so use "an" before it if referring to one hour.

Examples:

a

a fox

a horse

a unicycle

an

an F.B.I. investigation

an hour

an uncle

Definite article

"The" is the only definite article there is, which is probably the reason it is the most widely-used word in the English language (used five times in this sentence alone!). It refers to a certain member or members of a group.

Examples:

Definite articles

the apricot (a certain apricot)

the kittens (a specific group of kittens)

the teacher (a particular teacher)

Degrees of comparison

Adjectives take three forms to show degrees of comparison: positive, comparative and superlative.

Positive degree

An adjective in the positive degree assigns a quality to a person, thing or idea. There is no comparison involved.

Examples:

Miriam was happy.

This truck is big.

Yesterday, the weather was unpleasant.

Comparative degree

In the comparative degree, two or more persons, things or ideas are compared with each other by adding "er" as a suffix to the adjective involved in the stronger case.

Examples:

Lila was happier than Miriam.

That truck is bigger than this one.

Today, the weather is more unpleasant* than yesterday.

- * Generally, if an adjective has more than two syllables, the word "more" is used before it instead of attaching the "er" suffix in the comparative form and the word "most" in the superlative form.

Superlative degree

Three or more persons, things or ideas are compared in the superlative degree by adding "est" as a suffix to the adjective involved in the strongest case.

Examples:

Betty was the happiest of the three girls.

The Rodeo truck is the biggest of them all.

The most unpleasant weather came last January.

Verbs

A verb is a word that expresses an action (i.e., jump) or a state of being (i.e., seem). It is often said that the verb is the heart of English grammar because it is needed to make a full sentence.

Sentence position

The position of a verb in a sentence usually comes right after the noun or pronoun and before the object, if there is one.

Transitivity

In order for a sentence to be complete, a noun and verb must be present. However, some verbs are transitive, which means that they need an object (see page 110) to make sense. Verbs can be transitive or intransitive; there are some verbs which can be both, but at different times, depending on the sentences in which they appear (see examples below).

Transitive verbs

A transitive verb needs an object to complete its meaning. The object follows the verb.

Examples:

Transitive verb within a sentence

She remembered the songs from her youth.

Walter takes a nap every day at 4 o'clock.

The girls will bake cookies tomorrow.

Intransitive verbs

An intransitive verb is complete without an object.

Examples:

Intransitive verb within a sentence

Vanessa dances very well.

Jason relaxed all afternoon.

My aunt will be in London soon.

Types of verbs

There are action, linking and auxiliary verbs. All of these can be regular or irregular, which has to do with how they are conjugated (see page 67). Besides the various types of verbs, there are also tenses, moods and voice to learn.

Action verbs

A verb tells what a noun or pronoun are doing. An action verb expresses activity and movement. There are many more action verbs than linking or auxiliary verbs.

Examples:

drive
jump
throw

Linking (or "passive") verbs

A linking verb is also called a "passive" verb; instead of signifying physical action, it reflects a state of being. It is said to be linking because it connects a noun or pronoun with words that identify that noun or pronoun.

Examples:

appear: Jenny appears happy.
be: Lauren will be upset and angry at the news.
seem: Mr. Heinlein seemed pretty easygoing.

Auxiliary (or "helping") verbs

An auxiliary verb, also called a "helping" verb, is always paired with a main verb to help express action or make a statement. The main verb, which comes after the auxiliary verb, does not get conjugated and instead stays in its pure form. Auxiliary verbs are used to convey emphasis, ability, obligation, possibility, etc.

Examples:

I do love ice cream.
He can dance really well.
Ginny must return home before 10:00 p.m.

Emphasis

For emphasis, the verb "do" is placed before a main verb as an auxiliary verb. It can be used in the past and present tenses.

Examples:

Present

I do know the answer!

You do seem upset.

Rick does play baseball.

Past

I did know the answer!

You did seem upset.

Rick did play baseball.

Ability

The auxiliary verb "can" is used to show ability in the present tense; in the past (perfect) tense, use the verbs "could" or "could have" with the past participle.

Examples:

Present

They can walk there.

Marie can sew well.

You (all) can stay.

Past

They could walk there.

Marie could sew well.

You (all) could have stayed.

Obligation

"Must", "should" and "ought to" are the auxiliary verbs used to show obligation. Since the obligatory action will take place in the future (implied), the present and future tenses are indistinguishable. For obligations in the past (perfect) tense, use "had to", "should have" or "ought to have" with the past participle.

Examples:

Present/Future

I must visit my aunt.

Eric should call home.

He ought to try harder.

They must try harder.

Past

I had to visit my aunt.

Eric should have called home.

He ought to have tried harder.

They had to try harder.

Possibility

Auxiliary verbs of possibility are "may" and "might". The future is implied in the present tense. In the past (perfect) tense, use the verbs "may have" or "might have" with the past participle.

Examples:

Present and future

Julie may stay home.
Erin might see Adam.
We might go to Iowa.

Past

Julie may have stayed home.
Erin might have seen Adam.
We might have gone to Iowa.

Conjugation

Verbs change form to agree in person and number with the nouns or pronouns performing their actions or states of being. Conjugation is this act of verb formation. As detailed in the personal pronouns section on page 55, there are six forms: three "persons" (1st, 2nd and 3rd) and two numbers (singular and plural).

Examples:

<u>Verb</u>	<u>Person and number</u>	<u>Conjugation</u>
smile	1st person singular	I smile
"	2nd person singular	You smile
"	3rd person singular	He/She/it smiles
"	1st person plural	We smile
"	2nd person plural	You (all) smile
"	3rd person plural	They smile

Tense

The above example of verb conjugation is in the present tense. Tense expresses the time of an action or condition. Verbs have three basic tenses: present, past and future; in addition, each of these has a perfect, progressive and perfect progressive tense.

Note: The verbs, "have" and "be", are used as auxiliary verbs in various tenses.

Present tenses

The present tenses deal with current situations. Here are the conjugations for the regular verb "jump" in the present, present perfect, present progressive and present perfect progressive tenses:

Present tense

The present tense expresses what is happening at the moment. It simply uses the verb by itself.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I jump	We jump
<i>2nd person</i>	You jump	You (all) jump
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It jumps	They jump

Hint: For regular English verbs in the present tense, the form is the same in all the conjugations except *3rd person singular*, which adds an "s" to the end of the verb.

Present perfect tense

The present perfect tense suggests an action begun at some point in the past but completed presently. It uses the conjugated present tense of the verb "have" as an auxiliary verb in front of the past participle* of the verb.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	have jumped	We have jumped
<i>2nd person</i>	You have jumped	You (all) have jumped
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It has jumped	They have jumped

Hint: For all English verbs in the present perfect tense, the form is the same in all the conjugations except *3rd person singular*, which uses the word "has", instead of "have", in front of the past participle of the verb.

* The past participle is the past tense form of a verb used as part of a verb phrase in the perfect tenses.

Present progressive tense

The present progressive tense is used to show continuing action. It is formed with the conjugated present tense of the verb "be" as an auxiliary verb in front of the present participle* of the verb.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I am jumping	We are jumping
<i>2nd person</i>	You are jumping	You (all) are jumping
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It is jumping	They are jumping

Hint: For all English verbs in the present progressive tense, the form is the same in all the conjugations except *1st* and *3rd person singular*, which use the words "am" and "is", respectively, instead of "are", in front of the present participle of the verb.

* The present participle adds "ing" to the end of a verb. It is used to convey continuing action in the progressive tenses.

Present perfect progressive tense

The present perfect progressive tense tells of an action begun sometime in the past and continuing into the present. It uses the conjugated present tense of the verb "have" before the past participle of the verb "be" as auxiliary verbs in front of present participle of the verb.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I have been jumping	We have been jumping
<i>2nd person</i>	You have been jumping	You (all) have been jumping
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It has been jumping	They have been jumping

Hint: For all English verbs in the present perfect progressive tense, the form is the same in all the conjugations, except *3rd person singular*, which uses the word "has", instead of "have", in front of the word "been" and the present participle of the verb.

Past tenses

The past tenses deal with situations which have passed already. Here are the conjugations for the regular verb "jump" in the past, past perfect, past progressive and past perfect progressive tenses:

Past tense

The past tense expresses that which has happened already. It adds an "ed" (or just a "d", if the verb ends in "e" already) to the end of a regular verb to show past action.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I jumped	We jumped
<i>2nd person</i>	You jumped	You (all) jumped
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It jumped	They jumped

Hint: For regular English verbs in the past tense, the form is the same - an "ed" ending - in all the conjugations.

Past perfect tense

The past perfect tense suggests an action which was begun at some point in the past and completed later. It uses the conjugated past tense of the verb "have" as an auxiliary verb in front of the past participle of the verb.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I had jumped	We had jumped
<i>2nd person</i>	You had jumped	You (all) had jumped
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It had jumped	They had jumped

Hint: For all English verbs in the past perfect tense, the form is the same - the word "had" in front of the past participle of the verb - in all the conjugations.

Past progressive tense

The past progressive tense is used to show continuing action in the past. It is formed with the conjugated past tense of the verb "be" as an auxiliary verb in front of the present participle of the verb.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I was jumping	We were jumping
<i>2nd person</i>	You were jumping	You (all) were jumping
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It was jumping	They were jumping

Hint: For all English verbs in the past progressive tense, the form is the same in all the conjugations except *1st* and *3rd person singular*, which use the word "was" instead of "were", in front of the past participle of the verb.

Past perfect progressive tense

The past progressive tense speaks of an action which was begun sometime in the past and continued for a while but is now completed. It uses the conjugated past tense of the verb "have" before the past participle of the verb "be" as auxiliary verbs in front of the present participle of the verb.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I had been jumping	We had been jumping
<i>2nd person</i>	You had been jumping	You (all) had been jumping
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It had been jumping	They had been jumping

Hint: For all English verbs in the past perfect progressive tense, the form is the same - the words "had been" in front of the present participle of the verb - in all the conjugations.

Future tenses

The future tenses deal with situations which have not happened yet. Here are the conjugations for the regular verb "jump" in the future, future perfect, future progressive and future perfect progressive tenses:

Future tense

The future tense describes action or condition which has not happened yet but will occur in time. It adds the word "will" (or the more formal "shall") in front of the present tense of the verb.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I will jump	We will jump
<i>2nd person</i>	You will jump	You (all) will jump
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It will jump	They will jump

Hint: For all English verbs in the future tense, the form is the same - "will" (or "shall") before the verb - in all the conjugations.

Future perfect tense

The future perfect tense suggests an action that will be completed at a specific time in the future. It uses the word "will" (or "shall") before the verb "have" as auxiliary verbs in front of the past participle of the verb.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I will have jumped	We will have jumped
<i>2nd person</i>	You will have jumped	You (all) will have jumped
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It will have jumped	They will have jumped

Hint: For all English verbs in the future perfect tense, the form is the same - "will have" (or "shall have") before the past participle of the verb - in all the conjugations.

Future progressive tense

The future progressive tense is used to show continuing action in the future. It is formed with the word "will" (or "shall") before the verb "be" as auxiliary verbs in front of the present participle of the verb.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I will be jumping	We will be jumping
<i>2nd person</i>	You will be jumping	You (all) will be jumping
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It will be jumping	They will be jumping

Hint: For all English verbs in the future progressive tense, the form is the same - the words "will be" (or "shall be") in front of the present participle of the verb - in all the conjugations.

Future perfect progressive tense

The future perfect progressive tense speaks of an action which will begin in the future and continue for a while before coming to an end. It uses the word "will" (or "shall") before the verb "have" before the past participle of the verb "be" as auxiliary verbs in front of the present participle of the verb.

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>1st person</i>	I will have been jumping	We will have been jumping
<i>2nd person</i>	You will have been jumping	You (all) will have been jumping
<i>3rd person</i>	He/She/It will have been jumping	They will have been jumping

Hint: For all English verbs in the future perfect progressive tense, the form is the same - the words "will have been" in front of the present participle of the verb - in all the conjugations.

Note: "Regular verbs" are mentioned throughout the subject of conjugation. Most verbs in English are regular, referring to the standard way that they are conjugated. "Irregular" verbs do not follow the charted course for conjugation completely, especially in the past and perfect tenses. Compare the regular verb "talk" with the irregular verb "speak" in the three basic tenses:

(notice that "speak" is irregular in the past tense, because it does not have an "ed" endings)

	<u>talk</u> (regular)	<u>speak</u> (irregular)
present 1st person singular:	I talk	I speak
tense: 2nd person singular:	You talk	You speak
3rd person singular:	He/She/It talks	He/She/It speaks
1st person plural:	We talk	We speak
2nd person plural:	You (all) talk	You (all) speak
3rd person plural:	They talk	They speak
past 1st person singular:	I talked	I spoke
tense: 2nd person singular:	You talked	You spoke
3rd person singular:	He/She/It talked	He/She/It spoke
1st person plural:	We talked	We spoke
2nd person plural:	You (all) talked	You (all) spoke
3rd person plural:	They talked	They spoke
future 1st person singular:	I will talk	I will speak
tense: 2nd person singular:	You will talk	You will speak
3rd person singular:	He/She/It will talk	He/She/It will speak
1st person plural:	We will talk	We will speak
2nd person plural:	You (all) will talk	You (all) will speak
3rd person plural:	They will talk	They will speak

Examples:

Regular verb

I have started school already.

James received a letter.

He had reported the fall.

The boys will have walked far.

Irregular verb

I have begun school already.

James got a letter today.

He had given a fall report.

The boys will have gone far.

Contractions

A contraction is the combination of two words into one informal, shortened word with an apostrophe in place of the omitted letter(s). Most contractions involve a pronoun and verb ("be" or "have"), two verbs or a verb and a negative.

Present tense: "be"

I am = I'm
we are = we're
you are = you're
he is = he's*
she is = she's*
it is = it's*
they are = they're

here is = here's
that is = that's
there is = there's
what is = what's
who is = who's*

Present tense: "have"

I have = I've
we have = we've
you have = you've
he has = he's*
she has = she's*
it has = it's*
they have = they've

who has = who's*
would have = would've
could have = could've
should have = should've
might have = might've

Negative

are not = aren't
cannot = can't
could not = couldn't
do not = don't
does not = doesn't
did not = didn't
had not = hadn't
have not = haven't
has not = hasn't
is not = isn't
might not = mightn't
must not = mustn't
need not = needn't
should not = shouldn't
was not = wasn't
were not = weren't
will not = won't
would not = wouldn't

* the contractions for some of the verb tenses are identical; in order to distinguish, examine the context.

Future tense

I will = I'll
we will = we'll
you will = you'll
he will = he'll
she will = she'll
it will = it'll
they will = they'll

that will = that'll
there will = there'll
who will = who'll

Past tense: "have"

I had = I'd*
we had = we'd*
you had = you'd*
he had = he'd*
she had = she'd*
it had = it'd*
they had = they'd*

there had = there'd*
who had = who'd*

Auxiliary verb: "would"

I would = I'd*
we would = we'd*
you would = you'd*
he would = he'd*
she would = she'd*
it would = it'd*
they would = they'd*

there would = there'd*
who would = who'd*

Note: Contractions are not used in formal writing. They are, however, part of spoken English and informal writing.

Mood

Mood (also called mode) reveals the feeling and tone of a sentence through the verb used. There are three moods: indicative, subjunctive and imperative.

Indicative mood

The most common mood is the indicative, which makes a statement or asks a question.

Examples:

Sheila plays tennis on Thursdays.

He is a very talented musician.

Did the Bensons go on vacation yet?

Subjunctive mood

The subjunctive mood is used in an imagined or uncertain situation. It is found in sentences with the words: "I wish", "if" (indicating an unlikely situation) and "that" (in verbal expressions like "insist that", "ask that" and "require that"). The word "were", "would", and un-conjugated verbs are used in the subjunctive mood.

Examples:

Wish (use the word "were")

I wish I were thinner.

Tom wished that he were in Paris instead of prison.

Don't you wish you were in better health?

If (use the word "were", then "would")

If I were thinner, I would wear a mini-skirt.

If Tom were in Paris, would he buy a baguette?

If you were in better health, you would run in the marathon.

Verbal expressions with "that" (use a un-conjugated verb)

The librarian requests that we return the books this week.

Jane urges that he sign* the petition.

I suggest that Ken be* invited to the beach with us.

* Both "sign" and "be" are un-conjugated verbs; usually in 3rd person singular (when not in the subjunctive mood), they would be conjugated as "signs" and "is".

Imperative mood

The imperative mode expresses an order or request. The subject (you) is almost always omitted, though implied. The imperative verb is conjugated as *2nd person singular or plural*.

Examples:

Call me later, o.k.?

When the dog barks, let him in.

Come here now!

Do not touch the broken glass!

Voice

The voice tells whether the subject of a sentence acts or is acted upon, demonstrated by the verb(s) used. The two voices are active and passive. They appear in all the tenses.

Active voice

The active voice means that the subject is doing the action.

Examples:

Kendra is playing the saxophone.

Larry talks about sports often.

They helped immigrants with their problems.

We will gather firewood today.

Passive

When the subject is receiving, not doing, the action, the verb is passive. The past participle (or past tense) of the verb should be used, preceded by the appropriate form of the helping verb "be".

Examples:

The saxophone is being played by Kendra.

Sports are talked about often by Larry.

Immigrants were helped by them.

Firewood will be gathered by us today.

Hint: Only transitive verbs (with an object) can be passive, as the action is being done by the object, not the subject.

Verbals

Verbals are verb forms that function as other parts of speech, such as nouns or adjectives. Gerunds, infinitives and participles are three types of verbals.

Gerunds

A gerund is a verb form which ends in "ing" and is used as a noun; it names an activity or state of being.

Examples:

Skating is a good form of exercise.

Bob enjoys fishing.

Her singing moved everyone in the audience.

Infinitives

An infinitive is a verb with the word "to" preceding it and is used as a noun; it names an activity or state of being.

Examples:

It is important to listen to your children.

I want to go with you.

To practice takes dedication.

Note: Split Infinitives

Some grammar experts believe that infinitives should never be "split", which happens when a word is inserted between the word "to" and the verb (for example, "to really listen"). Though they consider it bad form, it has become an acceptable practice. In fact, sometimes it is awkward not to do it if the sentence needs it.

Examples:

Awkward

I did not get the chance to thank him truly.

Carl wanted to see actually the diamonds.

He urged, "Please tell Joy to call me definitely".

Clear

I did not get the chance to truly thank him.

Carl wanted to actually see the diamonds.

He urged, "Please tell Joy to definitely call me".

Participles

A participle is a verb form that functions as an adjective. There are two kinds of participles: present and past.

Present participle

The "ing" ending is put on a verb (regular or irregular) to form a present participle. It differs from the gerund, even though they both have "ing" endings, because it is used as an adjective and not a noun.

Examples:

There is nothing sweeter than a smiling baby.

My oldest living relative is 98 years old.

I heard them laughing.

Past participle

A past participle puts a past-tense ending ("ed" for a regular verb) on a verb and uses it as an adjective.

Examples:

The excited kids couldn't wait to get to the beach.

He slammed into a parked car.

Richard had a surprised look on his face.

Hint: Participles do not function primarily as verbals; they are used mainly in verb phrases as part of the tenses (see pages 68-73).

~ Irregular-verb past participles ~

All present participles have "ing" endings, unlike past participles, which can vary from the regular "ed" ending to the irregular "n", "d", "me", "t", "g" or "k" endings.

<u>Verb</u>	<u>past tense</u>	<u>past participle</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>past tense</u>	<u>past participle</u>
fall	fell	fallen	become	become	become
bite	bit	bitten	cost	cost	cost
choose	chose	chosen	hurt	hurt	hurt
draw	drew	drawn	swim	swam	swum
find	found	found	drink	drank	drunk
have	had	had	strike	struck	struck

Adverbs

An adverb is a word used to modify (describe) a verb, an adjective or another adverb. It tells how, when, how often, how much, where or to what extent an action is done.

Examples:

Katherine walked quickly. (tells *how*)

She went shopping frequently. (tells *how often*)

They repeatedly lost the championship. (tells *how much*)

My homework is completely done! (tells *to what extent*)

Hint: Most adverbs end in "ly". However, not all words ending in "ly" are adverbs. If the word, without the "ly" ending, is an adjective, then adding "ly" at the end can turn it into an adverb; but if the word is a noun, then adding "ly" will make it an adjective.

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	<u>Adjective/Noun</u>	<u>+ "ly" ending</u>	<u>= Adverb/Adjective</u>
smooth	adjective	smoothly	adverb
friend	noun	friendly	adjective
man	noun	manly	adjective
careful	adjective	carefully	adverb

Adverb-adjective differentiation

Adverbs and adjectives are similar in that they are both modifiers. However, adjectives modify nouns (or pronouns), whereas adverbs describe verbs, adjectives or other adverbs.

Intensifiers and Qualifiers

An intensifier is an adverb which increases the force of an adjective or other adverb; a qualifier is an adverb which usually lessens the impact of an adjective or other adverb. They are positioned in front of the modifying word.

Examples:

The dog was very happy to get a bone.

Roberto talked so passionately about his music career.

We are quite satisfied with the new house.

They acted rather rude to us.

He was less enthusiastic than I expected.

You seem somewhat troubled today.

Prepositions

A preposition is a relationship word used to connect a noun or pronoun to other words in a sentence. It is considered the most difficult part of speech to use because learning what makes the appropriate preposition is often a matter of developing a good sense of what sounds correct.

~ Common prepositions ~

about	above	across	after	against	along
amid	among	around	at	before	behind
below	beneath	beside	between	beyond	by
concerning	considering	down	during	except	
for	from	in	inside	into	like
near	of				
off	on	onto	out	outside	over
past					
regarding	respecting	since	through	throughout	
till	to	toward	under	underneath	until
unto	up	upon	via	with	within
					without

Examples:

I enjoyed the joke about the bear and the turtle.

It always smells so fresh after a rainfall.

The janitor cleaned behind the sinks.

Sharon was sleeping during the lecture!

The house near the stadium looks deserted.

He swept the dirt under a rug.

Note: A preposition usually precedes its object. However, it can be placed at the end of a sentence, especially when a question is being asked (for example, "Have all the children been accounted for?"). There is no other way, without choosing entirely different wording, to ask this question. Besides, sometimes a sentence will sound awkward if the preposition does not come at the end, such as "This is the house in up which my mother grew" rather than "This is the house which my mother grew up in."

Grammar books used to warn against the placement of a preposition at the end of a sentence, but now it is an acceptable practice. It is no longer a "solecism", meaning a faulty word usage or sentence construction.

Compound prepositions

A compound preposition is a preposition consisting of more than one word.

~ Common compound prepositions ~

according to	agree with	ahead of	apart from	as far as
as much as	as of	as well as	aside from	because of
by means of	contrary to	due to	in addition to	in back of
in front of	in place of	in regard to	in respect to	in spite of
in view of	instead of	on account of	out of	prior to

Examples:

According to Mike, farmers work harder than anyone else.
Sarah couldn't get to work yesterday because of car trouble.
She voted for Gerry Torino, in spite of his inexperience.
Don't say anything about the surprise in front of Jodie!
I chose the plaid shirt instead of the silk one.
He was in good health prior to retiring.

Conjunctions

Like the preposition, the conjunction is another connecting word; it joins words or groups of words. There are three types of conjunctions: coordinating, correlative and subordinating.

Coordinating conjunctions

A coordinating conjunction connects similar words or groups of words that have the same function in a sentence; the words "and" or "or" at the end of a list are coordinating conjunctions.

Common coordinating conjunctions:	and	or	but	yet	nor
-----------------------------------	-----	----	-----	-----	-----

Examples:

The committee hired Ted, Henry, Mark and Janice.
Do you want ice cream or cake for dessert?
I hate to wash dishes, but I don't mind drying them.
Tennis is a challenging yet rewarding game.
We don't care for operas, nor do we like musicals.

Correlative conjunctions

A correlative conjunction consists of two (or more) words that function together. It is like a coordinating conjunction except that it always contains a pair of correlating words.

Common correlative conjunctions: whether/or both/and either/or
 neither/nor not only/but also

Examples:

I don't know whether Kate will be leaving now or after the show.

Both the girls and the boys are taking cooking classes.

Judy wants to go to either the park or the beach.

Subordinating conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions are used to begin subordinate clauses (see page 96), which are sentence fragments that contain a noun and a verb but cannot stand alone.

Common subordinating conjunctions: after although as because
 before if since than though
 unless until when whenever

Examples:

You can go home after all of the leaves are raked.

Although it's only May, we have gone swimming already.

Ynez listened to the radio as she drove down the street.

Interjections

An interjection is a word or phrase that expresses strong feelings and excitement. It can stand alone, usually followed by an exclamation point, or appear in a sentence set apart by a comma.

Examples:

Help!

My goodness, you've grown so tall!

Oh, now what are we going to do?

Fire!

I thought to myself, wow, that was a close call!

Gee, I didn't think that was a very good movie.

Related words

There are many words in English which are related in one way or another, whether they have the same (or opposite) meanings, sound alike, are spelled alike or are just close enough in any of these areas to be confusing. Synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, homographs and often-confused "sound alike" words are covered here, along with examples.

Synonyms

Synonyms are words with same or similar meanings and usually can be substituted for each other (like "joyous" and "happy"). A thesaurus contains a treasury of synonyms.

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	<u>Synonyms</u>
agree	assent, correspond, concede, concur, consent
ask	beg, beseech, implore, plead, query, question
bizarre	crazy, exotic, odd, peculiar, strange, weird, unusual
bother	annoy, disturb, harass, irritate, irk, pester, vex
brave	adventurous, bold, courageous, daring, fearless
correct	accurate, exact, precise, right, true, unmistakable
defeat	beat, conquer, overcome, overthrow, vanquish
empty	bare, blank, clear, devoid, unfilled, vacant, void
fat	corpulent, heavy, obese, overweight, portly, stout
gigantic	colossal, enormous, great, huge, immense, large
happy	cheerful, delighted, ecstatic, elated, joyous, merry
imitate	ape, copy, duplicate, follow, mimic, reproduce
job	employment, occupation, profession, task, work
leave	abandon, depart, desert, escape, go, withdraw
messy	disheveled, disorderly, rumpled, sloppy, untidy
quiet	hushed, serene, silent, still, subdued, tranquil
report	announce, communicate, declare, proclaim, tell
spirit	attitude, energy, enthusiasm, life, strength, vitality
teach	develop, educate, inform, instruct, train, tutor
try	attempt, endeavor, experiment, strive, undertake
usual	common, customary, normal, ordinary, regular
wise	clever, intelligent, logical, sage, sensible, smart

Antonyms

Also found in a thesaurus are antonyms. Antonyms are words with opposite meanings (like "big" and "little").

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	<u>Antonym</u>	<u>Word</u>	<u>Antonym</u>
above	below	open	close
add	subtract	over	under
always	never	pacify	excite
alive	dead	pain	comfort
arrive	leave	parallel	divergent
begin	end	passion	indifference
big	little	peril	safety
boy	girl	pride	shame
come	go	quiet	loud
day	night	random	targeted
empty	full	real	fake
even	odd	refuse	allow
fat	thin	repel	attract
first	last	right	wrong
found	lost	rough	smooth
friend	enemy	same	different
give	receive	shiny	dull
good	bad	slow	fast
happy	sad	small	large
hard	soft	smile	frown
high	low	sorrow	joy
in	out	start	stop
left	right	tall	short
light	dark	tense	relaxed
long	short	tight	loose
loud	soft	together	apart
love	hate	top	bottom
many	few	tragic	comical
more	less	true	false
morning	night	ugly	pretty
most	least	up	down
near	far	vacant	full
new	old	wet	dry
on	off	yes	no

Homonyms (homophones)

Other related words are homonyms, words that have the same sound but usually are spelled differently and have different meanings (like "air" that is breathed and "heir" who will inherit money). Another word for homonym is homophone.

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	<u>Homonym(s)</u>	<u>Word</u>	<u>Homonym(s)</u>
accept	except	desert	dessert
affect	effect	dew	do / due
aisle	isle / I'll	earn	urn
allowed	aloud	ewe	U (letter) / yew / you
altar	alter	fair	fare
ascent	assent	feat	feet
ate	eight	flair	flare
bail	bale	flew	flu / flue
bare	bear	for	fore / four
baring	bearing	forth	fourth
base	bass	foul	fowl
bazaar	bizarre	gait	gate
beach	beech	grate	great
berth	birth	hail	hale
blew	blue	hair	hare
board	bored	heal	heel / he'll
bough	bow	hear	here
brake	break	heard	herd
bread	bred	idle	idol
bridal	bridle	knew	new / gnu
buy	by / bye	lead	led
canvas	canvass	lessen	lesson
capital	capitol	made	maid
ceiling	sealing	meat	meet / mete
cell	sell	one	won
chord	cord	pair	pare / pear
cite	sight / site	rain	reign / rein
clause	claws	raise	rays / raze
coarse	course	rite	right / write
colonel	kernel	sea	C (letter) / see
council	counsel	their	there / they're
dear	deer	to	too / two

Homographs (heteronyms)

Much less common than homonyms are homographs. Homographs are words that are spelled alike but are neither pronounced the same nor have the same meaning (like the noun "desert", which is a sandy area, and the verb "desert", which is to leave). Another term for a homograph is heteronym.

Examples:

<u>Word</u>	<u>1st meaning</u>	<u>2nd meaning</u>
address	noun: where people live	verb: to speak; to write to
close	verb: to shut; to end	adjective: near
compound	noun: a group of buildings	verb: to increase
compress	noun: medicine on a cloth	verb: to condense
conduct	noun: behavior	verb: to orchestrate
gill	noun: a fish's breathing organ	noun: liquid measure
lead	noun: a type of metal	verb: to guide; to direct
minute	noun: 60 seconds	adjective: very small
present	noun: a gift	verb: to give; to introduce
produce	noun: fruits and vegetables	verb: to make
read	verb: to interpret and scan written words	verb: past tense of reading
record	noun: a music or spoken (audio) account	verb: to make an (audio) account*
report	noun: a written account	verb: to write down*
resent	verb: to harbor jealousy	verb: to have sent again
row	noun: a line	noun: a fight
subject	noun: topic or theme	verb: to expose to; to cause the submission of
won	noun: past tense of winning	noun: Korean money

* A standard homograph is the verb and noun form of the same two-syllable word (like record or report); they are pronounced differently only in that the stress shifts from the first to the second syllable for the verb form.

Confusing "sound-alikes"

Words that have similar, but not identical, sounds (like advice and advise) informally are called "sound-alikes". They are not spelled the same and have different meanings. Often, they are misused by people confused by their similarity in sound.

Examples:

Frequently misused words

adapt / adopt
access / excess
adverse / averse
allude / elude
allusion / elusion / illusion
appraise / apprise
censor / censure
conscience / conscious
detract / distract
device / devise
elicit / illicit
emigrate / immigrate
eminent / imminent
emit / omit
formally / formerly
genus / genius
human / humane
imply / infer
ingenious / ingenuous
later / latter
moral / morale
officially / officiously
personal / personnel
persecute / prosecute
practicable / practical
precede / proceed
recent / resent
respectfully / respectively
than / then
wander / wonder
weather / whether

Exercises

1. What does "*etymology*" mean?

2. Name a language which has had an influence on English.

3. Which language is indicated by an abbreviated "*L.*" or "*Lat.*"?

4. Which word is derived from the Old English word, "*leornian*"?

5. In which century was the printing press invented?

6. Is it true that the Renaissance played a role in the development of the English language?

7. Use the word "*klutz*" in a sentence.

8. From which language does the word "*virtuoso*" come?

9. What is the female equivalent to the word "*waiter*"?

10. Is there a gender-neutral title for "*mailman*" ?

11. What does the "e" in "*e-mail*" stand for?

12. For what creation is Dr. Joseph Guillotin known?

13. What is a noun?

14. Is the word "*street*" a proper or common noun?

15. Is the noun "*happiness*" concrete or abstract?

16. What is the plural of "*box*" ?

17. Finish the second sentence; put in the possessive:

Yolanda has two dogs.

The names of _____'s dogs are Max and Mum.

18. The masculine equivalent to the pronouns "*she*" and "*herself*" are "*he*" and _____?

19. Write three adjectives that describe the winter.

20. Fill in the following comparison:

A whale is big.

A whale is bigger than a dolphin.

A whale is the _____ animal in the sea.

21. A verb can express action or state of being. Which does the verb "*talk*" express?

22. What is the *3rd person singular* form of the regular verb "*ask*"?

21. How is the past tense formed with regular verbs?

22. Of the following two sentences, which is in the passive voice?

Jane prepared a wonderful meal.

A wonderful meal was prepared by Jane.

23. Which verb is in the gerund form: *type painted driving* ?

24. List the compound verbs in the following sentence:

*Margie talked to Karen, listened to the radio
and ironed her clothes this afternoon.*

25. If an adjective modifies a noun, which Part of Speech does an adverb modify?

26. Put the intensifier "very" into the following sentence:

Lawrence is a busy man who has two jobs.

27. Make up a sentence with the preposition "for" in it.

28. True or false: an interjection is usually followed by an exclamation point (!) ?

29. Write the part of speech each of the following words are:

"slowly" / "they" / "book" / "or" / "large" / "wow!" / "from" / "sell"

<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>noun</i>	<i>pronoun</i>	<i>adjective</i>	<i>verb</i>

<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>adverb</i>	<i>preposition</i>	<i>conjunction</i>	<i>interjection</i>

ALMOST A SENTENCE

Phrases

A phrase is a group of words within a sentence that cannot stand alone because it does not have either a noun or a verb. There are three kinds of phrases: appositive, prepositional and verbal.

Appositive phrase

An appositive phrase is a descriptive phrase which usually follows the noun or pronoun it is identifying or explaining. It is known also as a "noun or pronoun" phrase because it uses a noun or pronoun to describe another noun or pronoun in a sentence.

Examples:

Jenny, an avid skier, takes vacations in the winter.

Did he buy that one, the silver convertible?

A spicy dish, paella is served at many Spanish restaurants.

Note: An appositive phrase usually follows the noun or pronoun it describes, but sometimes it may precede it.

Prepositional phrase

A phrase that begins with a preposition and usually ends with a noun or pronoun is a prepositional phrase. There are two types of prepositional phrases: adjective and adverb.

Adjective phrase

The type of prepositional phrase that modifies a noun or pronoun is an adjective phrase.

Examples:

Julia liked the dress with polka dots.

The pizza in the oven has extra cheese on it.

I got those books from the library.

Adverb phrase

A prepositional phrase that modifies a verb, an adjective or another adverb is called an adverb phrase. It usually answers *how?*, *when?* or *what for?* questions.

Examples:

Laine dances with great rhythm.

Is your coat warm in the winter, Sally?

Harrison met us for coffee and donuts earlier that day.

Verbal phrase

A verbal phrase consists of a verbal - which is a verb form functioning as another part of speech, such as a noun or an adjective - plus a complement (see page 110) and sometimes a modifier. There are three types of verbal phrases: gerund, infinitive and participial.

Gerund phrase

A gerund phrase contains a gerund - a verbal that ends in "ing" and acts as a noun - and any complements or modifiers it may have.

Examples:

Teaching English overseas, Gianna earned much money.

Jan tells me that her hobby, playing the piano, is enjoyable.

By studying hard, he was able to get the highest test score.

Infinitive phrase

An infinitive phrase consists of an infinitive - a verbal, usually preceded by the word "to", that is used as a noun or a modifier - and any complements or modifiers it may have.

Examples:

Kevin decided to catch the evening train.

To swim in the ocean, a lifelong dream for Tad, was fun!

They want to leave Rome soon, because their visas will expire.

Participial phrase

A participial phrase is made up of a participle - a verbal that functions as an adjective - and any complements or modifiers it may have.

Examples:

Ruined by the flood, the tennis courts now are growing grass.
She looked down at her hands, trembling from the excitement.
Setting over Mount McCann, the sun turned gold and purple.

Dangling modifiers

A dangling modifier is a modifying phrase that is used incorrectly. When the modifying phrase does not sensibly, clearly and cohesively describe a word in a sentence, the phrase is said to be "dangling". To correct dangling modifiers, it is necessary to identify the "doer" of the action, revise the sentence or leave out the modifying phrase altogether.

Examples:

Dangling modifiers

After coming home from work, the dog ran up to greet him.

(Not sensible: did the dog come home from work?)

Jane was born four years before Abby, but she looked older.

(Not clear: which girl is older?)

The circus will be seen sitting in the balcony clearly.

(Not cohesive: will the circus itself be sitting in the balcony?)

Corrected by identification

After **he** came home from work, the dog ran up to greet him.

Jane was born four years before Abby, but **Abby** looked older.

The circus will be seen clearly **by people** sitting in the balcony.

Corrected by revising the sentence

The dog ran up to greet him after he came home from work.

Jane is four years older than Abby but looks younger.

People sitting in the balcony will see the circus clearly.

Corrected by leaving out the modifying phrase

The dog ran up to greet him.

Jane was born four years before Abby.

The circus will be seen clearly.

Clauses

A clause is a phrase that contains both a noun and a verb and is used as part of a sentence. There are two types of clauses: independent ("main") and subordinate ("dependent").

Independent clause

An independent clause, sometimes called a "main" clause, can really stand alone as its own sentence, but it is considered to be a clause when it is part of a larger sentence.

Examples:

Susan forgot to lock the door but has a dog for protection.

When I get home from work, I will take the kids to the beach.

Wendy wants to go swimming, even though the water is icy.

Subordinate clause

A subordinate clause, often called a "dependent" clause, cannot stand by itself as a complete sentence, because it does not express a complete thought. Most subordinate clauses begin with a conjunction or pronoun. Like phrases, subordinate clauses can act as various parts of speech; there are adjective, adverb and noun clauses.

Adjective clause

An adjective clause is a subordinate clause that modifies a noun or pronoun. Most adjective clause begin with a relative pronoun ("who", "whom", "that" and "which"), relative adjective ("whose") or with a relative adverb ("when", "where" and "why").

Examples:

The girl who is wearing the green coat wants to talk with us.

Ben Franklin was a man whose ideas and ideals were lofty.

You will pass by the school where I spent eight long years.

Note: The word "relative" means that the relative pronoun, adjective or adverb refers back to a noun or pronoun which has come before.

Adverb clause

An adverb clause is a subordinate clause which modifies a verb, an adjective or an adverb. It illustrates how, when, where, why, to what extent or under what conditions.

Examples:

Kelsey will play tennis later today if it is not raining.

Terence is going to Peru because he wants to see Machu Pichu.

When she was five years old, Debby learned to ride a bike.

Elliptical clause

Clauses which leave out a word(s) necessary for grammatical completeness but not for meaning are called elliptical clauses. The meaning is still clear from the context or by words borrowed from the rest of the sentence.

Examples:

Omitted word(s)

Chris tries harder than Jill.

I worry about money more than love.

When in Italy, order a cappuccino.

With the word(s) put back in

Chris tries harder than Jill tries.

I worry about money more than I worry about love.

When you are in Italy, order a cappuccino.

Noun clause

A subordinate clause which functions as a noun is called a noun clause. It is usually introduced by the words "that", "who", "whoever", "what", "whatever", "why", "when", "where" and "whether".

Examples:

That Frank was sad was obvious to everybody.

The nurses wondered what would happen to their patients.

Ann asked whether I wanted a donut or a bagel for breakfast.

Figures of Speech

A Figure of Speech is a popular expression or saying in which words are used in an unusual sense to add emphasis. There are so many different devices of language; here are some of the best-known concepts: alliteration, allusion, analogy, circumlocution, climax, colloquialism, euphemism, hyperbole, idiom (and cliché), irony, jargon, litotes, metaphor, metonymy, onomatopoeia, parallelism, personification, simile and slang.

Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of the same initial sound in a phrase or series of words, usually done to create a catchy, melodic effect. There are many alliterative expressions used in everyday English, but often they are made up for particular advertising or political slogans.

Examples:

Everyday expressions

nice and neat
stem to stern
through thick and thin

Special slogans

Cabin Candy - cool camping confections!
Art Roderick is a REFORMER With REAL RESULTS!
Watch WGKS "Weekend Web", the wildest web-cast in the West!

Allusion

An allusion is a reference to a popular person, place, thing or event in history familiar to most people. It can convey much meaning in just a word or two.

Examples:

As far as dieting goes, chocolate is my Achilles heel.

(reference: weak or vulnerable area)

Brian has a Machiavellian attitude when it comes to business.

(reference: cunning, deceitful and shark-like)

The boss has a real Napoleon complex.

(reference: short in stature, long in arrogance; dictatorial)

Analogy

An analogy is a comparison of two similar things or situations, used to explain or illustrate a point more clearly. Also, many standardized tests contain analogical sections to measure reasoning capacity.

Examples:

Explanation analogies

A chemist, like a chef, measures and mixes ingredients together.

Writing a book is like building a house, from framework to finish.

Their love was akin to Romeo and Juliet's; both families opposed it.

Test analogies

Toes are to a foot as fingers are to a _____. (hand)

Uncle is to aunt as _____ is to wife. (husband)

_____ are to a bird as scales are to a fish. (Feathers)

Circumlocution

Circumlocution is the use of excessive words to state an idea, especially when a shorter way of saying it is possible. In the examples below, the unnecessary words are in brackets.

Examples:

[It was] on Friday at 6:30 a.m. [in the morning], Lucy was born [into this world].

The coat was blue [in color], petite [in size] and had a modern [up-to-date] look.

The [true] fact was that they [both] cooperated [together].

Climax

Climax is the arrangement of a series of words, phrases or sentences in ascending order. **The Grammar Cracker** has attempted to organize its contents in a climactic manner, by starting with letters and working through words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, essays, etc.

Examples:

I sent letters, went to protests and even testified to Congress.

The flood disrupted power, ruined crops and left many homeless.

Sal first did dishes, then waited tables and now runs the restaurant.

Colloquialism

A colloquialism is a word or an expression used in informal conversation. It is a mild (less coarse) form of slang, and like slang, it evolves within regions of familiarity.

Examples:

As a kid, Lenny was kind of bratty and had lots of scuffles.

I took a snooze on the lounger, a cool and comfy chair.

Her old man flipped out when he saw the war paint on her face.

Euphemism

A euphemism is a polite, inoffensive and tactful word or expression, used in place of a blunt, graphic or unpleasant one. Euphemisms are used frequently in formal writing.

Examples:

Euphemism

ambitious
conflict
dentures
difference of opinion
expecting; in a motherly way
financial reorganization
halitosis
high maintenance
intoxicated; under the influence
large; plump; full-figured; stout
low income; disadvantaged
memorial park
misspoke; misstated
negative incentive
passed away; deceased
pre-owned
physically challenged
required to resign
revenue enhancement
sanitary engineer
senior citizens; the elderly
spirited; energetic
strong-willed
wealthy; well-to-do

Blunt word

pushy
war
false teeth
argument
pregnant
bankruptcy
bad breath
spoiled
drunk
fat
poor
cemetery
lied
punishment
died
used; secondhand
crippled
fired
tax
garbage worker
old people
boisterous; hyperactive
bossy
rich

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a purposely exaggerated expression that is meant for effect.

Examples:

Washing dishes at a restaurant is a Sisyphean task.

It was 500 degrees in the shade today!

She told us that story a million times already.

Idiom

An idiom is a phrase or expression characteristic of a certain language and commonly used by its speakers in the present day. Idioms seldom mean what they say literally, nor are they always grammatically correct; however, through usage, they have gained acceptance.

Examples:

Idiom

as thick as thieves
at the eleventh hour
babe in the woods
blow off steam
clean slate
cream of the crop
cut the mustard
green-eyed monster
much ado about nothing
no bed of roses
not one's cup of tea
to carry the ball

Meaning

very close; conspiratorial
at the last minute
naive, innocent person
complain loudly; vent frustration
fresh, new start; old debts cleared
the best of the selection
perform or live up to a standard
envy; jealousy; resentment
fuss made over a small matter
an unpleasant situation; not easy
unappealing to a particular person
to be in charge; to take action

Cliché

A cliché is a trite idiom, one that has been overused in time. Many idioms become clichés after being said once too often.

Examples:

Idiom - cliché

pleased as punch
snug as a bug in a rug
over the hill

Meaning

very happy with oneself; smug
set up; comfortable and cozy
old and past the prime of life

Irony

Irony is an expression of the incongruity between what is expected and what has actually occurred.

Examples:

The musician noted the irony in giving birth to a deaf child.
It was ironic that the ambulance crashed into the patient.
Ironically, the travel agent's last words were, "Go far away!".

Jargon

Jargon is the specialized, often technical, vocabulary of a particular industry or profession. It is also known as lingo.

Examples:

Medical

anesthetic
arteriosclerosis
blood pressure
bone mass
catheter
cholesterol
clinic
CPR
diagnosis
EKG
hepatitis
inoculation
injection
intensive care unit
laboratory
myocardial infarction
operation
pathology
pulse
prescription
relapse
scalpel
stethoscope
vaporizer

Legal

affidavit
allegation
a priori
boilerplate
burden of proof
chattel
codicil
conservator
covenant
deponent
docket
escrow
exonerate
fifth amendment
garnishment
inchoate
indictment
ipso facto
jurisdiction
litigious
prima facie
pro bono
restitution
subpoena

Business

accounts payable
asset
audit
bond
capital gains
cash flow
CPA
cost of sales
excise tax
FIFO
holding company
incorporated
ledger
LIFO
liquidate
merger
negotiations
profit-maker
pro forma invoice
proprietor
R & D
retained earnings
spread sheet
value added tax

Litotes

Litotes is a deliberate understatement in which a description is made by stating the negative of an opposite.

Examples:

She is not a dumb woman. (*in fact, she is very smart*)

Cleaning a mansion is no small job. (*it is quite a big job, in reality*)

I was none too pleased about it. (*actually, I was pretty upset*)

Metaphor

Comparing two apparently different things in some way, without using the words "like" or "as", is making use of a metaphor. The similarity is implied rather than stated.

Examples:

The feather quilt was a fluffy cloud on which to float away.

John's fingers were tap dancers on the keyboard.

When I'm alone, the TV is a good dinner companion.

Mixed metaphor

A mixed metaphor happens when inconsistent comparisons are given in the same sentence.

Examples:

The plane was an eagle galloping across the air.

(*an eagle does not gallop, does it?*)

Jim's grades fell from treetop levels to lower than fallen rain.

(*trees and rain don't compare, except maybe in beauty*)

A child is a bud growing in the spring and hatching in the fall.

(*buds do not hatch - ever!*)

Literal vs. figurative meaning

Metaphors and similes (see page 105) are figurative expressions. It is important to understand the difference between "literal" and "figurative" meanings: a literal statement is one that writer means exactly what is written; a figurative one should be interpreted as an exaggerated comparison or stretch of the imagination. For example, to "get the ax" is to be fired from a job. Obviously, the dismissed employee does not receive a chop from an actual ax (unless perhaps he or she had REALLY bad behavior!).

Metonymy

Metonymy happens when the name of a closely associated thing is used in place of another that it symbolizes, such as referring to the stock market as "Wall Street", the actual location of the New York Stock Exchange.

Examples:

Officer O'Dell always wanted to be one of the men in blue.

(reference: police force)

Let's see what the White House says about this.

(reference: the U.S. President)

He had a long battle with the bottle. (reference: a drinking problem)

Synecdoche

A synecdoche is a form of metonymy whereby the name of a part is substituted for that of the whole and vice versa.

Examples:

Joe just got a new set of wheels. (a car)

The Robinsons had seven mouths to feed. (children)

Do you think that Brazil will win the World Cup next year?

(the Brazilian soccer team)

Onomatopoeia

Using a word(s) that imitates the sound made by a certain thing or action for audio effect is called onomatopoeia.

Examples:

Playing ping pong is good for relaxation.

A bee was buzzing in the window all morning long.

It was funny when the dog bit the balloon and popped it.

Oxymoron

An oxymoron is a pairing of two contradictory or opposite items, like "jumbo shrimp", often used to command attention.

Examples:

There was deafening silence in the house after Ed left.

Felicia said that there was an organized mess on her desk.

Of the 20 people here, there are only a few lazy workers.

Parallelism

Parallelism exists when sentence elements of equal value are given the same grammatical forms; consistency is kept in tense, number, person and tone. This makes for smoother writing, reading and understanding of sentences.

Examples:

I need to buy groceries, cook dinner and wash dishes tonight.
Renee has the talent, the looks, and the will to succeed.
Camping, hiking, fishing and boating are naturally fun.

Personification

Personification is a grammar device that attributes human characteristics to animals, lifeless objects or abstract ideas.

Examples:

A squirrel was glaring with envy at me as I ate nuts outside.
The sea swallowed the little boat, and it was never seen again.
The help we humbly accepted was kind and nonjudgmental.

Simile

A simile is similar to a metaphor, because it compares two seemingly unrelated things, but it uses the word "as" or "like" to draw the comparison.

Examples:

Her voice was as smooth as a stick of melted butter.
On a hot day, lemonade is as refreshing as a dip in the pool.
The marching band outfits look like Civil War uniforms!

Slang

Slang is a contemporary, nonstandard use of words, more informal than colloquialisms, often including misspelled words and even vulgar expressions. It is mainly spoken, not written.

Examples:

Man, that good-for-nuthin' car is on the blink again!
What's the deal with what's-her-name? She's all in a snit.
I'm like, "I gotta go". And he goes, "Cool, catch ya' later".

Exercises

1. Identify the following phrases and clauses below:

- A. The girl who is wearing the green coat wants to talk with us.
- B. The pizza in the oven has extra cheese on it.
- C. After coming home from work, the dog ran up to greet him.
- D. Wendy wants to go swimming, even though the water is icy.
- E. Chris tries harder than Jill.
- F. Did he buy that car, the silver convertible?
- G. Ruined by the flood, the tennis courts now are growing grass.
- H. That Frank was sad was obvious to everybody.
- I. They want to leave Rome soon, because their visas will expire.
- J. Laine dances with great rhythm.
- K. Kelsey will play tennis later today if it is not raining.
- L. Jan tells me that her hobby, playing the piano, is enjoyable.

Write in the appropriate letter

adjective phrase

participial phrase

elliptical clause

infinitive phrase

dangling modifier

adverb phrase

noun clause

independent clause

gerund phrase

adverb clause

appositive phrase

adjective clause

2. Identify the following Figures of Speech below:

- A. The sea swallowed the little boat, and it was never seen again.
- B. It was much ado about nothing.
- C. Cleaning a mansion is no small job.
- D. Let's see what the White House says about this..
- E. John's fingers were tap dancers on the keyboard.
- F. Watch WGKS "Weekend Web", the wildest web-cast in the West!
- G. She told us that story a million times already.
- H. I took a snooze on the lounger, a cool and comfy chair.
- I. Playing ping pong is good for relaxation.
- J. The boss has a real Napoleon complex.
- K. The large man was required to resign as a sanitary engineer.
- L. Writing a book is like building a house, from framework to finish.
- M. Her voice was as smooth as a stick of melted butter.
- N. There was a deafening silence in the house after Ed left.
- O. The musician noted the irony in giving birth to a deaf child.
- P. The diagnosis of arteriosclerosis was made in the clinic.

Write in the appropriate letter

onomatopoeia

litotes

jargon

metaphor

allusion

metonymy

personification

analogy

oxymoron

alliteration

hyperbole

irony

colloquialism

euphemism

idiom

simile

3. Does this sentence contain an adjective or adverb phrase?
Murray conducted the orchestra with much passion.

4. In the following sentence, identify the infinitive phrase:
Jeremy's goal is to get into medical school.

5. Are there any dangling modifiers in the following sentence?
Mr. Dale, a tax attorney, took the 6:00 p.m. train to Madison, a beautiful town on the Connecticut coast.

6. True or false: *an independent clause can stand alone as a complete sentence.*

7. What Figure of Speech is used in the following sentence?
Tom took two tomatoes to Teddy on Tuesday.

8. Give two euphemisms for the word, "fat".

9. Construct a sentence containing some computer jargon.

10. Complete the following sentence with a simile.
Jay runs all the time and is as fast as _____.

PARTS OF A SENTENCE

Sentence elements

A sentence is a group of words containing a subject (noun or noun equivalent*) and a predicate (verb) which expresses a complete thought. There is often another element in addition to the subject and predicate: a complement, which can be an object, an objective complement or a subjective complement. Diagramming a sentence shows its elements.

* A noun equivalent is a pronoun, gerund, infinitive or noun clause.

Subject

The subject, made of a noun or noun equivalent, tells what the sentence is about. It ordinarily comes first in a sentence.

Examples:

Rice grows in wet lands called paddies. (subject: noun)

She teaches History at Union College. (subject: pronoun)

Walking is good exercise. (subject: gerund)

To laugh is therapeutic. (subject: infinitive)

Whoever built this house was creative. (subject: noun clause)

Predicate

A predicate (a verb) makes a statement about the subject. It usually follows the subject in a sentence.

Examples:

Rice grows in wet lands called paddies.

She teaches History at Union College.

Walking is good exercise.

Compound subject/predicate

A compound subject consists of more than one noun or noun equivalent with a common predicate; a compound predicate has more than one verb and shares the same subject.

Examples:

Tara, Sean and Dave camped deep in the forest.

She typed, printed and mailed the contracts today.

Complement

A complement is a word or group of words that completes a sentence by clarifying the subject, the predicate or the object (explained below). It can be made up of an object (direct and indirect), an objective complement or a subjective complement.

Object

An object is a noun or a pronoun that comes after an action verb in the active voice. There are two types of objects: direct and indirect.

Direct object

A direct object receives the action of the verb in a sentence.

Examples:

My boyfriend sang a song.

Chris bought a ruby necklace yesterday.

Uncle Joe made salad from his garden.

Indirect object

An indirect object is the person or thing to or for whom the action is performed.

Examples:

My boyfriend sang me a song.

Chris bought Debby a ruby necklace yesterday.

Uncle Joe made us salad from his garden.

Objective complement

An objective complement is a noun or an adjective that describes the direct object.

Examples:

The boss appointed Aaron credit manager. (noun)

Russell finds the ocean soothing. (adjective)

Danielle thinks her son gifted. (adjective)

Subjective complement

A subjective complement is a word that identifies the subject; it follows a linking verb ("be", "seem", "appear", "look", etc.). The two types of subjective complements are predicate nominatives and predicate adjectives.

Predicate nominative

A predicate nominative is a noun that identifies the subject of a sentence following a linking verb. It is sometimes referred to as a predicate noun.

Examples:

Justine is an accountant.

The American flag remains a symbol of freedom.

That movie will be a blockbuster!

Predicate adjective

A predicate adjective is an adjective that describes the subject of a sentence following a linking verb.

Examples:

Betty seemed depressed yesterday.

The pie smells delicious!

We felt tired after staying up all night.

Diagramming

Diagramming is the act of separating a sentence into its parts: subject, predicate, complement, object (direct object and indirect object), objective complement and subjective complement (predicate nominative and predicate adjective). A diagram is a visual aid, a line drawing, used to show sentence structure.

Examples:

(diagramming to follow)

Erik sent me roses.

We appointed Martin chairman.

Ms. Jensen made her upset.

1. The first step is to identify each element in the sentences.

<u>Erik</u> (subject)	<u>sent</u> (predicate)	<u>me</u> (indirect object)	<u>roses</u> (direct object)
<u>We</u> (subject)	<u>appointed</u> (predicate)	<u>Martin</u> (indirect object)	<u>chairman</u> (predicate nominative)
<u>Ms. Jensen</u> (subject)	<u>made</u> (predicate)	<u>her</u> (indirect object)	<u>upset</u> (predicate adjective)

2. Then, the subject must be separated from the predicate.

<u>Erik</u> (subject)	<u>sent</u> (predicate)
<u>We</u> (subject)	<u>appointed</u> (predicate)
<u>Ms. Jensen</u> (subject)	<u>made</u> (predicate)

3. Next, put in the direct object.

<u>Erik</u> (subject)	<u>sent</u> (predicate)	<u>roses</u> (direct object)
<u>We</u> (subject)	<u>appointed</u> (predicate)	<u>Mary</u> (direct object)
<u>Ms. Jensen</u> (subject)	<u>made</u> (predicate)	<u>her</u> (direct object)

4. Finally, the indirect object drops down from the predicate.

<u>Erik</u> (subject)	<u>sent</u> (predicate)	<u>roses</u> (direct object)	<u>me</u> (indirect object)
<u>We</u> (subject)	<u>appointed</u> (predicate)	<u>Martin</u> (direct object)	<u>chairman</u> (predicate nominative)
<u>Ms. Jensen</u> (subject)	<u>made</u> (predicate)	<u>her</u> (direct object)	<u>upset</u> (predicate adjective)

Exercises

1. Name two elements that each complete sentence must have.

2. What Part of Speech is the subject of a sentence?

3. True or false: *A predicate is always a verb.*

4. What is a compound subject?

5. Identify which word is the complement in the following sentence:
Mexicans speak Spanish.

6. Is an object a type of subject, predicate or complement?

7. Pick out the indirect object in the following sentence:
Dr. Singh, a dermatologist, gave me ointment for my burn.

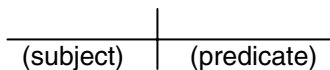
8. Agree or disagree with the following statement:
Since a predicate nominative is a noun that identifies the subject, it could also be called a predicate noun.

9. What is the process of separating a sentence into its elements by a line drawing called?

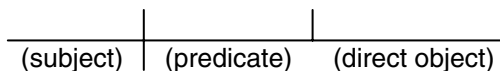
Diagramming

Fill in the diagrams for the following sentences:

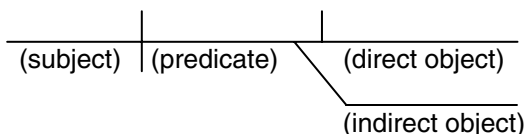
Marla sings.



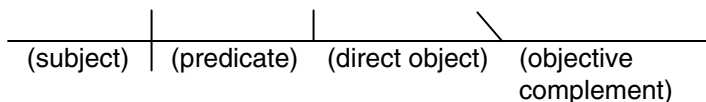
Henry drinks water.



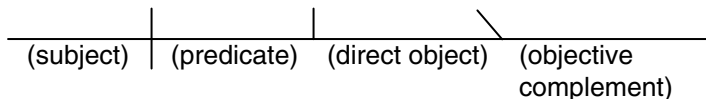
She tells us stories.



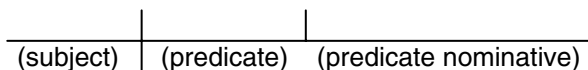
People elected Norman governor.



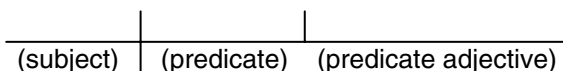
They found Paris lovely.



Svetlana is Russian.



Children are interesting!



SENTENCES

Sentence classifications

Sentences are classified as simple, compound, complex and compound-complex.

Simple

A simple sentence, composed of a subject, predicate and sometimes a complement, is an independent clause which stands alone.

Examples:

The crowd roared.

I took my mother to the supermarket yesterday.

Good music lifts my spirits.

Compound

A compound sentence is two or more independent clauses joined by a conjunction.

Examples:

We wanted to go swimming, but the pool was closed.

Today is Savanna's birthday, and we are planning a party.

There are many things to do, so let's get started soon.

Complex

A complex sentence is composed of one independent clause and at least one subordinate (dependent) clause.

Examples:

Popcorn, though very filling, does not have many calories.

After the car accident, Colin was afraid to drive.

Paula served cherry-chocolate cake, which was so delicious!

Compound-complex sentence

A compound-complex sentence has two or more independent clauses and at least one subordinate clause.

Examples:

Although it is fun to go to the beach, people should be wary of getting too much sun exposure, because it can lead to skin cancer, which is a very serious matter.

Gary wants to go skiing, and since he loves Canada, he may go to the Canadian Rockies.

While it is expensive, college is a necessity for most careers; it is looked on as a mark of accomplishment, and employers view that positively.

Types of sentences

There are four types of sentences, based on how they are spoken and their purpose: declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory.

Declarative

A declarative sentence makes a statement about something. It is the most common and straightforward type of sentence.

Examples:

The dog is playful.

Nora played golf last week.

Penny is studying to be a veterinarian.

Interrogative

An interrogative sentence asks a question.

Examples:

How old is Maureen now?

Why did Kenny go to Alaska?

Are Robert and Roy identical or fraternal twins?

Imperative

An imperative sentence gives an order or makes a request.

Examples:

Put the cat down and come eat your supper, Marlene.

Buy some milk at the store, please.

Take a break soon, or else you will be exhausted.

Exclamatory

A exclamatory sentence is an expression of strong feeling, and it almost always ends with an exclamation mark.

Examples:

That's ridiculous!
I want to go!
Good luck on your test!

Note: Also, **highlighting**, *italicizing* and underlining are used on certain words for emphasis, particularly when only one word needs to be stressed and not the whole sentence.

Punctuation

Punctuation clarifies the meaning of the written sentence. The various marks of punctuation suggest the pauses, intonations and gestures that would be used in speech; apostrophes, brackets, colons, commas, dashes, ellipsis marks, exclamation points (as well as highlighting, italicizing and underlining for emphasis), hyphens, parentheses, periods, quotation marks, question marks and semi-colons will be examined.

Apostrophe



Apostrophes are used in possessives, contractions and some plurals (of numbers, letters and symbols).

Examples:

Possessives

Jean's mother is nice.
That is Chris' office.
Those are the girls' hats.

Contractions

She's going to India.
Patty won't come with us.
Meet me at 2 o'clock.

Plurals

Put the 100's in the safe.
There are two i's in "skiing".
Did you get all the invoice #'s?

Brackets

[]

Brackets are used to make an insertion in quoted material or parentheses to clarify meaning.

Examples:

Quote inserts

"The pen [writing] is mightier than the sword [fighting]."
The child printed, "I am from Rusha [meaning Russia]."
Marie Antoinette said, "Let them [her subjects] eat cake".

Parenthetical inserts

Juan spoke two languages (Spanish and Portuguese [Brazilian]).
She is a waitress (at Leo's [formerly The Dinner Room]).
We met an exchange student (who is French [but from Belgium]).

Colon

:

A colon is used to show that something is about to follow: a statement (or letter), an explanation or items in a series. In addition, clock time, Biblical passages, play acts and other miscellaneous articles are noted with a colon.

Examples:

Statements

The judge said curtly: "Sir, your case has no merit. Dismissed!".
Mr. Hale announced: "Tomorrow will be my last day at CHT, Inc."
Georgia addressed the letter, "To whom it may concern:".

Explanations

The article cited the chief cause of high blood pressure: obesity.
Jim's counselor offered treatment: medication and counseling.
Herb explained re-marriage: the triumph of hope over experience.

Items in a series

The citrus fruits are: grapefruits, oranges, lemons and limes.
My favorite artists include: Picasso, Kandinsky, Klee and Gell.
I am grateful for: challenging work, good health and a nice family.

Miscellaneous articles

The Smiths invited us to their house for brunch at 10:30 a.m.
In the Bible, the story of Noah's Arc begins in Genesis 6:8.
The play, Tough Love, had a memorable line in Scene II: 2.

Comma

,

A comma is the most common mark of punctuation. It is used to separate the following items: phrases and clauses in sentences, items in a series or list, direct quotations and interjections, geographical addresses, dates and numbers.

Phrases and clauses

Phrases and clauses are separated by commas.

Examples:

Mary bought a horse, a filly, last year.

Lois wants to go, but she lost her ticket.

After the flood, I moved to San Diego.

Lists

Use commas to list items. With three or more items in a series, a comma should be placed after each except the last.

Examples:

I bought milk, flour, sugar, bread and yogurt at the store.

She swept, mopped and buffed the kitchen floor.

Lori invited Joe, Lisa, Eddie and Warren to dinner.

Quotations and Interjections

Insert commas to separate quotations or interjections.

Examples:

"You're the best!", Greta said to Carl.

The words, "Oh, no!", came to my mind as I saw the mess.

Arlene thanked Tom by saying, "I owe you one, Tom".

Addresses, dates and numbers

Street addresses, cities and territories are among the many geographic locations distinguished by commas. In the U.S.A., dates are divided by commas between the month and the year. Numbers over 999 have commas.

Examples:

My address is 5-B, Chen St., Kowloon, Hong Kong, China.

Sheila and Vic were married on April 12, 1995.

There are about 1,000,000,000 (a billion) people in India.

Dash

-

A dash is used to show a quick break in thought. Also, it is substituted for a colon sometimes, to give an explanation. Finally, it is used instead of the word, "through", "until" or "to".

Examples:

That match - if you could call it that - lasted only 20 minutes.

I have to go to the supermarket - we need some food!

All of the classes, freshman - senior, went to the concert.

Ellipsis marks

...

Ellipsis marks indicate that material has been omitted, usually when part of a longer quotation is given. Use three spaced periods when the omission is in the middle of a sentence, but use four spaced periods at the end (an extra one for the period).

Examples:

He gave her flowers, then a ring . . . then they got married!

" . . . that's all she wrote", Flora Doheney said at the end.

Oscar Wilde once said, "We are all in the gutter . . .".

Exclamation point

!

An exclamation point is the simplest of all the marks of punctuation. It is used for emphasis only.

Examples:

Oh, dear! What happened?

A boy needs his toys!

Janna is going to come!

Highlighting / Italics / Underlining

Highlighting, italicizing and underlining are used on certain words for emphasis, particularly when only one word needs to be stressed, not the whole sentence.

Examples:

No, I said, **soup**, not soap.

Was that man really from *the North Pole*?

Next time, take a taxi-cab! Don't attempt to walk!

Hyphen

-

A hyphen is used to separate a word at the end of a line (in a paragraph) so that the margin remains intact, with numbers 21-99, with prefixes before a proper noun or adjective or when there is a compound adjective modifying a noun.

Separating a word

Place the hyphen at the end of a syllable when separating a word from line to line.

Example:

The Gibson family decided to go to Mexico on their vacation, because of its warm weather.

Numbers

Numbers 21 through 99 are hyphenated between the tens and ones when written out.

Examples:

Isabella turned forty-eight years old today.

Greg bought twenty-two cans of diet soda for the party.

Will you give me the ninety-five dollars that you owe me?

Prefixes

Prefixes before proper nouns or adjectives have a hyphen.

Examples:

Censorship is an un-American idea.

Those were the old anti-Russian missiles.

Many protesters of the European Union are pro-British.

Compound adjectives

Hyphenate a compound adjective when it precedes before the word it modifies.

Examples:

Manuel has a third-floor apartment.

She succeeded in door-to-door cosmetic sales.

Victor Kiam was a self-made man.

Parentheses

()

Parentheses enclose explanatory matter.

Examples:

Julie worked at a hotel (during tourist season).

Kevin loved dogs (especially Doberman Pinschers).

I want to go to Africa (Kenya, in particular).

Period

.

A period ends a sentence. In some countries, a period is known as a "full stop" (Australia and England).

Question mark

?

A question mark is used for interrogatives.

Examples:

Was Benny interesting?

Did Myrna clean the garage?

When will you visit Singapore?

Quotation marks

" "

Quotation marks indicate spoken words.

Examples:

Minnie said, "I like your house - it's cheery!"

"Paul called you", my roommate told me.

That saying, "it's all good", is becoming over-used.

Semi-colon

;

A semi-colon is used to connect two independent sentences that are related in some way (usually subject matter).

Examples:

The rug is old; in fact, the whole house needs to be re-done.

Atlas Shrugged was a great novel; it is discussed often.

They must have gone on vacation; here are the airline stubs.

Exercises

1. Write a simple sentence.

2. Join these two sentences to make one compound sentence:

Denise got her hair cut by a professional hair stylist.

She wanted to look good for the prom.

3. How do compound and complex sentences differ?

4. Mark the space that identifies the following sentence:

After the game, Jill and Hailey drove home.

simple

complex

compound

compound-complex

5. True or false: *A declarative sentence makes a statement.*

6. What type of sentence asks a question?

7. Which of the following sentences is imperative?

Please give the ball to me.

What's your name?

The puppy is so cute!

8. Which word best describes an exclamatory sentence:

boring

hidden

excited

questionable

calm

9. In a contraction, an apostrophe takes the place of the letter(s).
What letters are replaced by apostrophes in these examples?

isn't

they're

he's

I've

she'll

you'd

10. Write a sentence that contains a colon.

11. Name one reason to use a comma.

12. True or false:

Sometimes, ellipsis marks can be used in place of an omitted word or words.

13. Are highlighting, italics and underlining all used for emphasis?

14. What mark of punctuation is also known as a "*full stop*"?

Hint: It ends a declarative sentence.

14. When is a *question mark* put at the end of a sentence?

15. Which does a semi-colon separate, two independent or two subordinate clauses?

MORE THAN A SENTENCE

Sayings

A saying is a repeated expression with some meaning or lesson attached to it. There are many similar types of sayings: adages, aphorisms, bromides, epigrams, maxims, proverbs, etc. They all provide short and witty commentaries on life. The following examples highlight their similarities:

Saying (meaningful statement)

We do not inherit the land from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.

- *Native American saying*

Adage (traditional words of wisdom)

Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.

- *attributed to Ben Franklin (though it may pre-date him)*

Aphorism (brief, pithy notion)

Waste not; want not.

- *anonymous*

Bromide (dull, clichéd truism)

You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

- *anonymous*

Epigram (clever, often satirical remark)

Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes.

- *Oscar Wilde*

Maxim (generally-accepted moral truth)

To err is human, to forgive divine.

- *Alexander Pope*

Proverb (well-known, memorable reflection)

Birds of a feather flock together.

- *English proverb*

Paragraphs

A paragraph is a group of sentences put together to form one central point or idea. Paragraphs can vary in length, depending on how long (how many words) it takes to develop the main idea. There are three needs that every paragraph has: a topic sentence, substance and unity of expression.

Example:

The piano is a beautiful and intricate instrument. The keyboard has 88 keys (52 white and 36 black, which contribute to the elegant look of the piano), spanning more than seven octaves altogether. When a key is played, a little hammer hits a string of the harp area, making a unique and lovely sound. It is possible for the player to control the sound by hitting the keys loudly or softly and depressing the three pedals located on the floor. Since its invention almost 300 years ago, the piano has continued to charm and fascinate people the world over.

Analysis

Topic sentence: The paragraph's theme is evident in the topic (first) sentence. "The piano is a beautiful and intricate instrument" tells what the paragraph is about.

Substance: The heart of the paragraph is explanatory and substantive. There are three middle sentences which support the notion that the instrument has a lovely sound and complex apparatus.

Unity of expression: There is no sentence within the paragraph which does not speak of the piano and its beauty or intricacy. Also, there does not seem to be excess information. Therefore, it has unity of expression.

Exercises

Saying:

On this page, write three sayings (create anew or choose from another source) about any of the sample subjects:

Sample subjects: *art / music / justice / nature / travel /
family / movies / books / happiness /
love / technology / language / religion*

1.

2.

3.

Paragraph:

Place the following sentences in proper order to make a sensible paragraph about hosting a fun dinner party:

Good planning will ensure that the meal is made with ease, and a cheerful attitude will put guests into a happy mood.

Bon appetit!

The meal does not have to be complicated, nor does it need to cost much money.

Every once in a while, it's fun to make dinner for friends.

A great dinner party happens when everyone, including the host (you), enjoys the evening.

All that is necessary is a little organization and a lot of enthusiasm.

ESSAYS, ARTICLES, BOOKS

This section briefly surveys the formation of written works. The general term, "written works", used here refers to essays, articles, research papers, dissertations, manuals, books, etc. (any written material of thematic substance). The field of grammar provides the basis for structuring a composition but does not extend to the actual writing itself. However, many grammar guides do include expository writing sections and devote varying space to the analysis of written works.

Theme

The theme (subject matter) of a written work is its essence. Describing the theme is the first step in the writing process, though to do this cleverly and concisely is often one of the hardest tasks a writer faces. A thesis statement explaining the central idea should be composed, its aim being to define the theme and capture the essence of the composition in one sentence.

Examples of themes of popular works:

Work

Thesis statement

The Fountainhead

This is the dramatic story of Howard Roark, a brilliant and uncompromising architect whose idealistic building designs lead him into a moral battle against society's traditional outlook.

Candide

Here is the philosophically-optimistic tale of gentle and naive Candide, who experiences many misfortunes in his world travels but clings desperately to the belief that all is "always for the best".

Iron and Silk

The humorous adventures of a young American English teacher and martial arts enthusiast in China are sketched against the backdrop of Modern China.

Writing style

Style of writing can be characterized not only by the voice of the writer but also by the type of written work undertaken.

Voice (and tone)

Voice refers to the point of view and narration that the writer assumes in a written work; it tells from whose perspective the ideas are being presented. The two points of view are "1st person" and "3rd person": 1st person is a familiar style in which the writer includes himself /herself in the work as "I" and relates to the reader as "you"; 3rd person is used in a more formal written setting with the writer as an observer, never addressing the reader directly nor inserting himself/herself into the story as a participant. Tone describes the mood or feeling that a writer imparts with a certain choice of words and the way in which the theme is developed. When asked in what voice and tone a work is written, a reader may answer that the voice is from a 1st person perspective and the tone is narrated in a casual manner, for example.

Genre

Genre means type or class, especially of literary composition. There are many different genres into which written works can be placed. The two major headings given to the various literary genres are fiction and nonfiction.

Fiction

Fiction refers to written works consisting of invented, not factual, narrative. Because it is not constrained by facts or actual events, fiction can be quite imaginative and creative. Hugely popular, works of fiction make up the majority of books sold and appearing in critical reviews. When a person calls a book, "a good read", he/she usually is speaking about a fictional work.

Examples of fiction writing:

science fiction
fantasy
surreal
comedy (including satire)
drama (including tragedy)
mystery
love

Nonfiction

Nonfiction writing actually comprises the majority of work published, though generally it is not given as much attention as fiction because it does not sell as well, book for book. There will always be a need for publishers to concentrate on educational materials, however, as long as there are students and others with the need and desire to learn. University presses, for example, abound and their output gets critical acclaim, more often than not, for interesting subject matter and good writing.

Examples of nonfiction writing:

instructional ("how to")
self-help
personal finance
informational
travel (including maps)
scientific
medical
technical
historical
biographical

Outlining

Outlining is a very helpful tool in delineating how an essay, article or book should be pieced together. Here are some rules to follow in developing an outline:

1. The title should be written above the outline form; it is not part of the letters/numbers of the outline itself.

2. Use Roman numerals, each followed by a period, for main topics. Sub-topics are written in descending order of significance, beginning with capital letters with periods, then Arabic numbers with periods, small letters with periods, Arabic numbers in parentheses and, finally, small letters in parentheses.

3. Capitalize only the first letter of a subtopic, unless there are proper nouns or titles (which always start with capital letters) within that subtopic.

4. Do not put periods after main topics or subtopics.

5. Do not ever list a lone subtopic; there must be two or more subtopics or none at all.

6. Use parallelism in main topics and subtopics.

Example of outlining layout:

- I. Main topic 1
 - A. Subtopic 1
 - 1. Sub-subtopic 1
 - a. so on
 - (1) another subject 1
 - (a) final subject 1
 - (b) final subject 2
 - (2) another subject 2
 - b. so on
 - 2. Sub-subtopic 2
 - B. Subtopic 2
- II. Main topic 2

Structure

The structure of a written work can be flexible, but most books are set up in the following order: Table of Contents, Introduction (also called Foreword or Preface), Body of Work, Footnotes / Endnotes, Bibliography (optional for books), Appendices, Glossary and Index. This may change, however, with the advent of electronic publishing. For now, the layout of a standard written book or formal paper will be discussed.

Table of Contents

The contents of a written work are displayed in the Table of Contents section at the beginning. Its purpose is to show readers on which pages various subjects will be covered.

Example:

Table of Contents

<u>Subjects:</u>	<u>Page number</u>
Introduction	page 1-2
Chapter 1	page 3-14
[Final] Chapter 12	page 144-167
Footnotes	page 168-169
Bibliography	page 170-171
Appendices	page 172-175
Glossary	page 176-182
Index	page 183-188

Introduction / Foreword / Preface

The introduction (often called foreword or preface) is the writer's explanation of how the written work came into being, what its purpose is and who helped in its preparation.

Body of Work

The bulk of a written piece lies in the Body of Work, where the main ideas are developed and defended with solid arguments and relevant details. The best attempt at well-constructed writing is made first in planning/preparing, then in writing/revising and finally in checking/churning the material over again and again. Any incoherent logic, wordiness (circumlocution) and sloppy grammar found in the review process should be rooted out and thrown away. A writer does not need profound literary talent in order to produce decent written work; what is arguably as important as clever writing is the determination to present the clearest points in the cleanest way possible.

Appendices

An appendix (appendices is plural) is a table or list that takes up too much space in the middle of a written work or wherever it would interrupt the material, so it is placed at the end. An example of an appendix for a book on wild animals might be a compendium of endangered species.

Glossary

A glossary is a small dictionary at the back of a written work defining the particular terms mentioned within the work or specific to the subject matter.

Footnotes / Endnotes

Periodically, ideas or quotes are included in a written piece that come directly from another source. Credit must be given in the form of a footnote or endnote, indicated by a small number above the line where the borrowed material lies. A footnote cites the source at the bottom (foot) of the same page; an endnote is grouped together with all of the other endnotes at the conclusion of the text. Most types of writing employ footnotes. Research papers, however, only use endnotes. The name of the author, title, publisher's city and name, year of publication and page number are given in both note forms. Throughout the text, notes are numbered in ascending order.

Example:

Text:

In Words in the News, a muckraker is defined as "an investigative reporter who exposes corruption in public organizations".¹

Note:

¹ Barbara Feinberg, Words in the News (New York: Franklin Watts, 1993), p. 84.

Bibliography

A bibliography is a complete list of sources used in a written work. It is grouped in alphabetical order on a separate page at the end of the written work.

Example:

Steig, Jeanne. A Gift from Zeus. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001.

Note: Mention must be made here about plagiarism. The act of plagiarizing is done by using another writer's words without crediting him/her, which is wrong. Failing to acknowledge borrowed material amounts to literary theft. Cite all sources of quotes and specific ideas belonging to others.

Index

The final section of a written work is the Index. The Index, like the Table of Contents, tells on which page each subject is discussed. However, the Index has its entries itemized in alphabetical order, whereas the Table of Contents lists its subjects in the order in which they are presented. Since the Index can have "sub-listings" (for example, the listing for verbs would include verb conjugation as a sub-listing), the reader is handily provided with much of the detailed material covered in the work at a quick glance.

Proofreading / Editing

Proofreading and editing are not physical parts of a written work - they are used in the review and revise stage of writing, done after the writing has been completed. Readers never see this process; although it should be noted that it probably would be noticed if a book had not been edited. Mistakes that even the best proofreader or editor might miss tend to jump out to a fresh pair of eyes. The key to good "copy" (writing) is *read, review, revise . . . repeat . . . and then, only then, relax*.

Note: The term "proofreading" means checking for spelling and punctuation errors, while the term "editing" usually refers to analyzing grammar and content coherence.

Exercises

1. Write the theme (thesis statement) of your favorite book.

2. Is a "fix it" manual fiction or nonfiction?

3. In outlining, can a subtopic be listed alone?

4. What is another word for preface?

5. Where are footnotes found? And endnotes?

6. Name one table that might be in a fishing manual's appendix.

7. Is the index found in the beginning or at the back of a book?

8. What kind of mistake can be found in the proofreading of a written work?
