¡LET'S GET THE POINT!

TOPICS, MAIN IDEAS AND SUPPORTING DETAILS

FAVA - Formación en Ambientes Virtuales de Aprendizaje
SENA - Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje.

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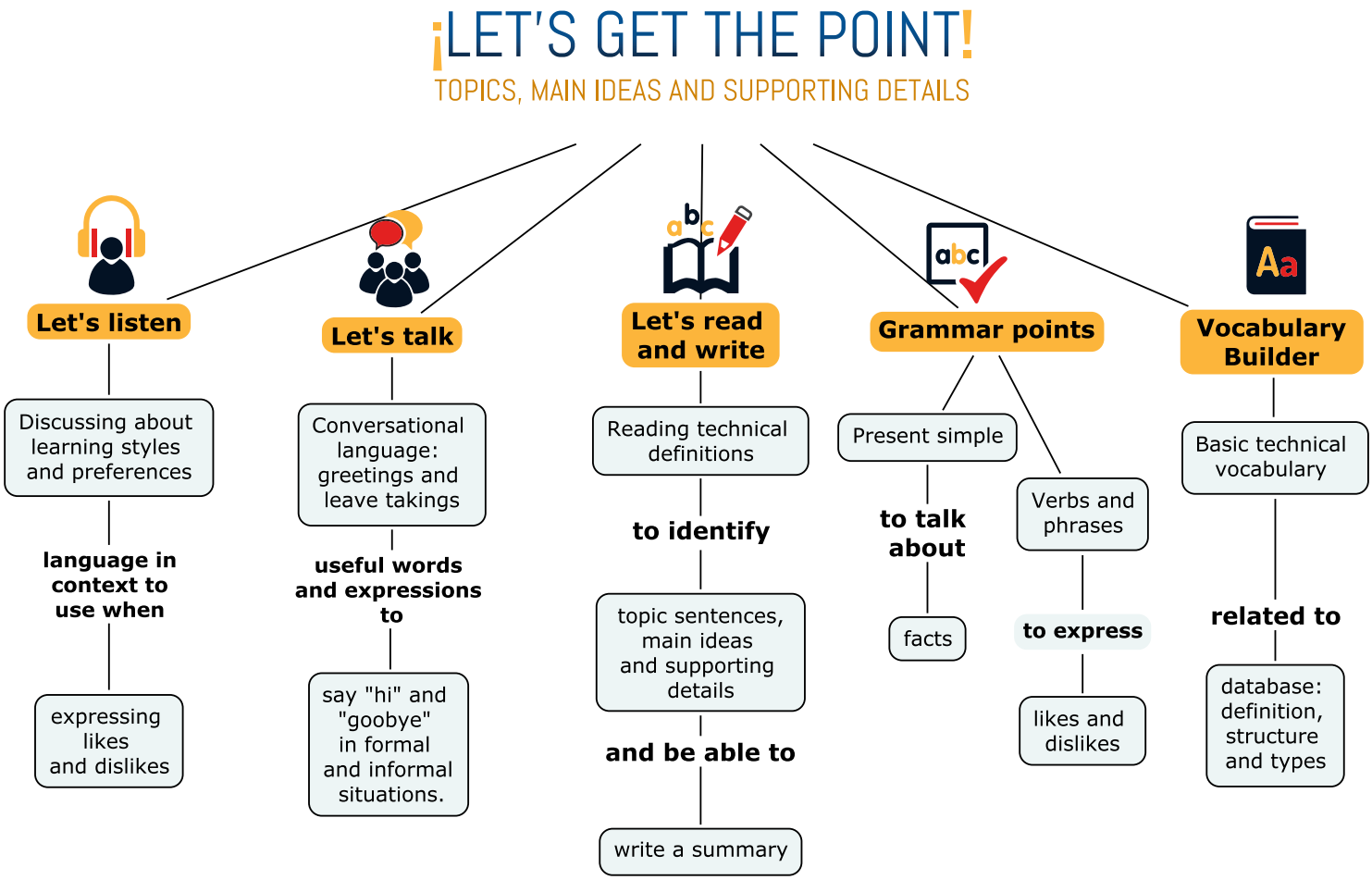
INTRODUCTION

One of the most rewarding aspects of speaking a foreign language is when you manage to use words and verb tenses appropriately in order to be able to understand and communicate your ideas clearly and precisely. However developing a skill like this takes a lot of work and a big effort.

To successfully communicate in oral and written forms in English, you will probably need to work on strengthen your reading and writing skills so you can get the main point when reading a textbook or an article. You may also need to improve your vocabulary and fluency if you want to interact with native speakers of the language you are learning at the moment.

The information we will check this time will be of great help to better understand how to use simple present tense and how to greet each other and express ourselves about the things we like or don't like.

MAPA DE CONTENIDO



DESARROLLO DE CONTENIDOS

1. Let´s listen

Hey, long time no see!

How are things? I hope everything is going well for you. This time I'm spending some quality time at the center's library because I need to work on some assignments for my Computer Science class. Our teacher asked us to read about databases and write a summary about this topic. I'm reading about it because I love reading and really enjoy writing down notes. It helps me to better understand technical concepts.

How about you? What's your learning style? When you want to learn something, do you like reading or watching videos about it? Well, people can process information in many ways, they have different preferences when it comes to learning. Some people for example like watching YouTube videos to learn how to do things. Others prefer to learn by doing things on their own.

Let's listen to the following conversation to find out more about ways in which we can talk about the things we like or don't like doing.

1.1. Discussing learning styles and preferences

A: Hey, Mary, long time no see!

B: Hi, Susana! How have you been? Did you finally get your internship?

A: Yeah! Now I'm a part of IT Master Solutions' staff. I started last Monday.

B: That's great, congrats! I'm very happy for you.

A: Thanks, Mary. And how about you? What are you up to?

B: Well, nothing exciting, really. I'm reading some books about databases design.

A: Let me guess, you need to write a summary for Mrs. Rodriguez' class, right?

B: Yeah, that's right. How did you know?

A: Well, I already did that homework, but instead of reading books, I watched a documentary about databases because I like learning through visuals like videos, movies and pictures.

B: In my case, I prefer learning by reading and writing down my ideas. I really enjoy making notes about what I read.

A: That's good, people can learn in different ways. For example I hate reading but I love watching videos. Other people learn better by doing things instead of reading about things.

B: That's true, all of us have different learning styles. Why don't you tell me a little bit about what you watched in the documentary and help me out with my summary?

A: Sure, no problem! How about meeting again here at the library tomorrow morning?

B: Great! See you tomorrow.

A: See you!

2. Let's talk

When speaking a foreign language, in this case English, learning how to say "hi" and "good bye" is the first thing people need to know to be able to interact with each other in any language.

You probably already know how to use "hello" and "how are you?" These are possibly the most commonly used greetings in English. However, English speakers don't always say "hello" and "how are you?" They may also use many other English greetings and expressions to mean different things. Knowing these English greetings can help you sound more natural, and to express yourself more clearly.

Let's learn how to use some other simple formal and informal English greetings. No matter whether you're a student or a professional, this vocabulary can be of great help in any situation.

2.1. Conversational language – Greetings and leave takings

Formal Greetings

Greeting	Context of use	Tips	Responses
Good morning/afternoon/evening	These are formal ways of saying "hello". They are used depending on the time of day.	Use **"good evening"** instead of **"good night"** to greet someone you meet late in the day. Good	- Hello. - Hello, good morning. - Good morning.
It's nice to meet you/Pleased to meet you	It is a very formal and polite greeting commonly used to greet someone you meet for the first time.	Only use these greetings the first time you meet a person.	- It's nice to meet you too.
How have you been?	This greeting is used by people who already met each other.	Use it to ask a person if he/she has been good since the last time you saw each other.	- I've been great. - Pretty good, thanks. - I've been terrible. - Not that good.
How do you do?	It is a very formal greeting.	Use it to sound corteous and polite with older people.	- I'm doing well - How do you do?

Informal Greetings

Greeting	Context of use	Tips	Responses
Hey / Hey man /Hi	These are frequently used by young people.	Use **"hey"** instead of **"hi"** to greet someone you already met.	- Hello. - Hi. - Hey.
How is it going?/How are you doing?	They are casual ways to say "how are you?"	If you prefer to be more polite, use "how are you?"	- It's going well. - I'm doing well.
What's up? / What's new? / What's going on?	They are casual ways to say "how are you?"	Use these expressions to greet someone you already met.	- Nothing. What about you? - Not much. What about you?
How is everything? / How are things? / How's life?	They are casual ways to say "how are you?"	Use these expressions to greet someone you met before.	G - ood. - Not bad.
Good to see you. / Nice to see you.	These are casual greetings used among friends, family members an co-workers.	You can use them along with a hug or handshake.	- Nice to see you too. - Thank you. It's good to see you too.
Long time no see/ It's been a while.	They are used when people haven't seen each other for a long time.	Used them along with "How have you been?" or "What's new?".	- Yeah, it's been a long time, how have you been?

Formal Leave takings

Leave taking	Context of use	Tips	Responses
Sorry, I have to go now.	This is a formal way to close a conversation and leave.	Use it if you need to apologize for leaving the conversation.	- Yes, of course. See you. -Sure, see you later.
It's been nice talking to you.	It is a very formal and polite way to say "good bye".	Use it to say goodbye to someone you have met for the first time.	- So long. -Take care. -I was really nice talking to you also.
Have a nice day!	This is a formal way to close a conversation.	It is used to say goodbye to someone, especially to customers in shops and restaurants when they are leaving.	You too!

Informal Leave takings

Leave taking	Context of use	Tips	Responses
Bye. / Goodbye.	these are used when you are leaving or when someone is leaving you.	Use goodbye with people you don't know well.	- Bye. -Goodbye
See you. / See you later. / Talk to you later.	It is used to say goodbye when you know you will see someone again.	You can also leave by saying: see you in a bit/ see you tomorrow/ see you in a while	- See you. -Take care. - Keep in touch.
See you around! /Take care.	This is a formal way to close a conversation.	It is used to say goodbye to someone, especially to customers in shops and restaurants when they are leaving.	- See you. -Take care. - Keep in touch.

3. Let's read and write

3.1. Reading for topics, main ideas and supporting details

Whether you are a first year student at a learning center or an executive employee at an IT company, understanding the topic or main point of a textbook chapter, an article, a paragraph, a sentence or a passage can be a quite difficult reading task if you don't have well-developed reading comprehension skills (Topics, Main Ideas, and Support, 2017).

Usually, pieces of writing such as textbooks, articles and passages are similar in that they all have topics and main ideas which are supported by details or additional information that helps to better get what main ideas are about. "Being able to locate the topic, main idea, and supporting details in a reading passage can help you understand the point(s) the writer wants to express. Identifying the relationship between these can increase your comprehension" (Topics, Main Ideas, and Support, 2017).

In order to improve reading comprehension skills, let´s check some useful tips to learn how to identify topics, main ideas and details in a short text. To do so we will look closely at the following technical definition of the word "Database", taken from TechTerms, an online dictionary of computer and Internet terms.

Database

A database is a data structure that stores organized information. (1) Most databases contain multiple tables, which may each include several different fields. For example, a company database may include tables for products, employees, and financial records. Each of these tables would have different fields that are relevant to the information stored in the table.
(2) Nearly all e-commerce sites use databases to store product inventory and customer information. These sites use a database management system (or DBMS), such as Microsoft Access, FileMaker Pro, or MySQL as the "back end" to the website. (3) By storing website data in a database, the data can be easily searched, sorted, and updated. This flexibility is important for e-commerce sites and other types of dynamic websites.

(4) Early databases were relatively "flat," which means they were limited to simple rows and columns, like a spreadsheet. (See also "flat file database"). (5) However, today's relational databases allow users to access, update, and search information based on the relationship of data stored in different tables. Relational databases can also run queries that involve multiple databases. (6) While early databases could only store text or numeric data, modern databases also let users store other data types such as sound clips, pictures, and videos (Christensson, 2016).

Topic

The topic is the theme or subject the passage or reading is about. If you can identify what the topic is, you can easily find out what the main idea relates to. To find the topic of this reading passage, ask this simple question, what is the text about?

The topic of this short text is database.

Este contenido se debe desplegar al hacer clic en el recuadro de MAIN IDEA, que se refiere a la parte del texto resaltada en azul.

Main idea

"The main idea refers to the principal point an author is making about a topic. It reflects the author's primary message" (Langan, 2015).

In the reading passage about databases, the main point the author is trying to make is that a database is a data structure that stores organized information. Basically, the intention of the writer is to provide a definition of the concept of "Database", he is explaining what a database is.

Este contenido se debe desplegar al hacer clic en el recuadro de SUPPORTING DETAILS, que se refiere a la parte del texto resaltada en verde.

Supporting details

According to Langman (2015), supporting details in a paragraph refer to "facts, statements, examples-specifics which guide us to a full understanding of the main idea. They clarify, illuminate, explain, describe, expand and illustrate the main idea and are supporting details". They help to answer question raised by the main idea (who, what when, why or how).

Let´s check how the supporting details in our definition of database help to clarify the main idea:

1) This detail provides a full description of what a database is and shows an example of a database.
2) This detail explains what databases are used for.
3) This detail introduces a function of a database.
4) and (5) These details make a comparison between early databases and relational databases used nowadays.
6) Is also a comparison between early databases functionalities and today's databases.

3.2. Writing a summary

Writing a summary is a reading comprehension strategy that basically involves decoding vocabulary, identifying main ideas and key points, and finally expressing information using one's own words. As easy as it may seem, summarizing a reading passage requires a set of complex comprehension and expression skills that must be properly developed and exercised.

Let's check what we need to take into account to write a good summary:

- In a summary, you need to cover the main idea and key points of a reading.
- To write the summary you have to use your own words.
- Include only key ideas an necessary information.
- Use supporting details to elaborate key points.

Now, let's see a summary of the definition of database we worked on before.

Database

A database is a data structure used to store and organize information in different tables in order to make data easier to be searched, sorted and updated. Basically, the tables used to organize data may include several fields which are important to find the information stored in the table.

Compared to early databases, which functioned simply as spreadsheets, today's relational databases allow users to access, update, and search information based on the relationship of data stored in different tables. They are not limited to store only text or numeric data, they can store other data types such as sound clips, pictures, and videos (Christensson, 2016).

Main idea **Keypoint**

4. Grammar points

In English, learning how to form and use verb tenses properly can be a little bit difficult task if speakers don't know in which situations these tenses are used and what kind of meaning they convey. For example, simple present tense differs from present progressive tense in that it is normally used to talk about routines, habits and repeated or unchanging actions. To talk about or describe actions that are happening at the moment of speaking, people will probably use present progressive tense forms. Otherwise, using simple present might be awkward.

Understanding and knowing how to use one of the most common verb tenses in English is important to be a successful foreign language speaker. Let's check some useful grammar tips on how to form present simple tense and how to express likes and dislikes in English.

4.1. Simple present tense

In English, the simple present tense is generally used to describe the following situations:

Habits

Situations that never change

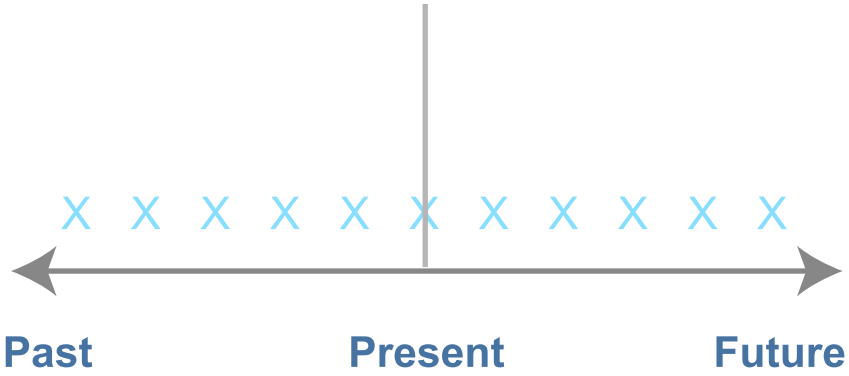
General truths

Fixed arrangements

To form the simple present tense is very easy. You just need to use the base form of the verb. But remember that for he/she/it, verbs take an –s at the end. Let's look at the following examples to see how it works:

Simple present

(verb) + (s or es - if using the 3rd person)



For habits	For repeated actions an events
• I always have scrambled eggs for breakfast. • My brother smokes five cigarettes a day. • My mom usually gets up at 5:00 am to get ready for work.	• We take the bus every morning at 7:00 am. • The store opens every Tuesday. • I work at CDE Shopping mall.

For general truths	For fixed arrangements
• The sun rises in the east. • Magnets attract iron. • I always arrive late at class.	• My English class starts at 8:00 am. • The bus leaves after the break. • My flight takes off tomorrow morning.

Now, let's see how we can form the simple present.

Affirmative Statements

Subject	Base Verb or Base Verb + -s/-es	
I	take	the bus at 8:00 am.
You	start	work at 6:00 am
He/she/it	has	breakfast at the office.
We	run	5 miles every morning.
They/you (plural)	leave	the office at 5:00 pm.

Negative statements

Subject	Do not or Does not	Base Verb	
I	do not (don't)	like	reading books.
You	do not (don't)	work	on the weekends.
He/she/it	does not (doesn't)	speak	English.
We	do not (don't)	have	holidays.
They/you (plural)	do not (don't)	drive	to school. They walk.

Yes/No questions

Do/Does	Subject	Base Verb	
Do	you	like	swimming?
Does	he/she	speak	a foreign language?
Do	they/you (plural)	work	downtown?

Information questions

Wh- Word	Do/Does	Subject	Base Verb	
What	does	he	study	at SENA?
When	does	she	starts	her training?
Where	do	you	go?	
How	do	they	go	to work?

4.2. Expressing likes and dislikes

4.2.1. Talking about what you like doing

When you want to talk about things you like doing, you can use verbs such as: enjoy, love, adore, or expressions like "to be fond of", "to be keen on" or "to be crazy about" something or doing something. Let's check how these verbs and expressions are used by looking at some practical examples.

Enjoy / love/ like

I really	enjoy	reading	books about Computer Science.
Susana truly	enjoys	going	to the library to prepare for her exams.
Mary and Susana	enjoy	attending	Mrs. Rodríguez' class.
I	love	watching	YouTube video tutorials.
My brother	loves	studying	foreign languages.
Some people actually	love	calculating	numbers. They love mathematics.
Most Information systems analysts	like	learning/to learn	about computer science.

Pay attention to the verb form that follows the verbs "**enjoy**", **"like"** and "love". When you use these verbs, the verb that follows takes an **–ing** form.

I'm fond of / I'm keen on

I	am fond of	listening	to radio podcasts in English.
Susana	is fond of	watching	documentaries.
Mary	is keen on	making	notes about what she reads.
Susana and Mary	are keen on	going	to the movies.

"**To be fond of**" and "**to be keen on**" doing something are equivalent expressions and are used to mean that you like doing something very much. When you use these expressions, the verb that follows the prepositions "of" and "on" also takes an **–ing** form.

I'm crazy about / I'm mad about

I	am crazy about	eating	Chinese food.
My father	is mad about	cycling	on the highway.
Mrs. Rodríguez	is crazy about	teaching	Computer Science.
Susana and Mary	are mad about	exercising	at the center's gym.

"**To crazy be about**" and "**to be mad about**" something or doing something are equivalent expressions and are used to mean that you really like doing something very much. When you use these expressions, the verb that follows the preposition "about" also takes an **–ing** form.

Prefer

I	prefer	listening	to radio podcasts in English.
Susana	prefers	watching	documentaries.
Mary	prefers	to make	notes about what she reads.
Susana and Mary	prefer	to go	to the movies.

The verb "**prefer**" can be followed by either form of the verb, the **–ing** form or infinitive form. No matter what form you use, the meaning doesn't change.

4.2.2. Talking about what you don't like doing

Now let's check how to use some verbs and expressions that can be useful when talking about what we don't like doing.

Hate/can't stand/don't like

I	hate	waking up	early in the morning.
You	hate	solving	math problems.
Mary	can't stand	listening to	loud rock music when she is reading.
Susana and Mary	can't stand	missing	Mrs. Rodríguez' class. They love it!
I	don't like	being	late for class.

"**To hate**" and "**can't stand**" doing something are equivalent expressions and are used to mean that you don't like doing something. Notice that when you use these verbs, the verb that follows takes an **–ing** form.

Don't mind

I	don't mind	eating up	at the Chinese restaurante.
Mary	doesn't	studying	At the library after classes.

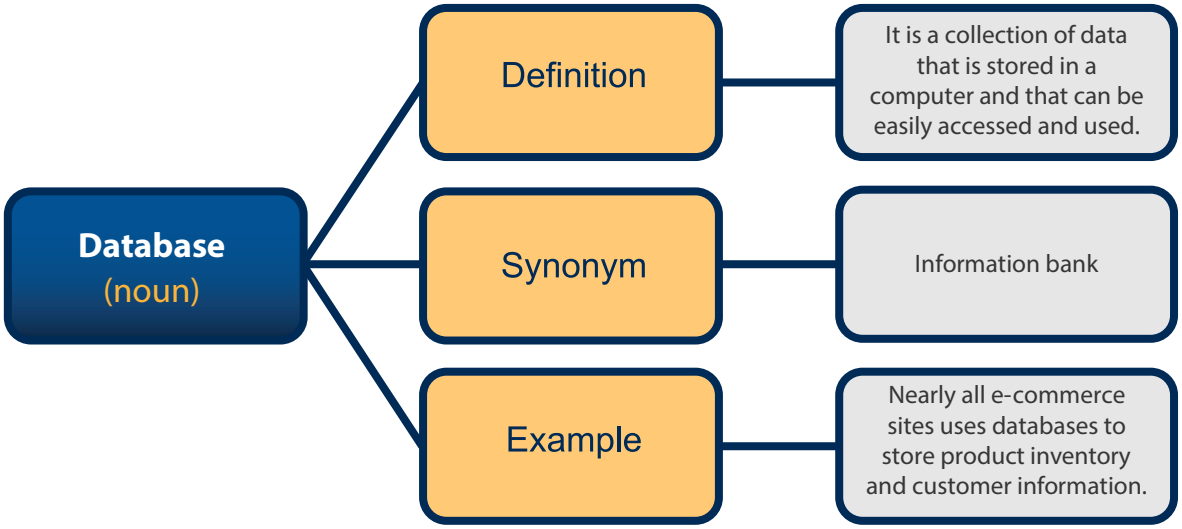
The expression "**don't mind**" means you are ok with doing something. It's not a problem to you.

5. Vocabulary builder

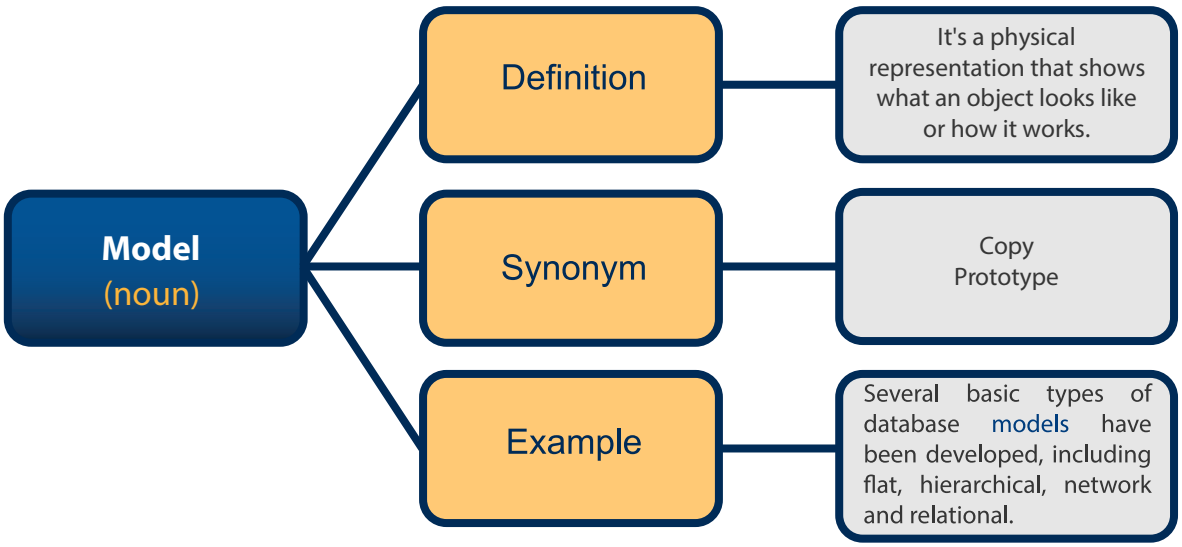
The following words are related to an essential subject for the performance of any information systems analyst, they are all connected to the concept of "database". You may find these words especially useful when you need to work on the design of the database for the information system you plan to implement as part of your project.

Don't forget to pay special attention to the context in which each word is used and work on expanding your vocabulary by learning the synonyms and phrases that appear along with each term.

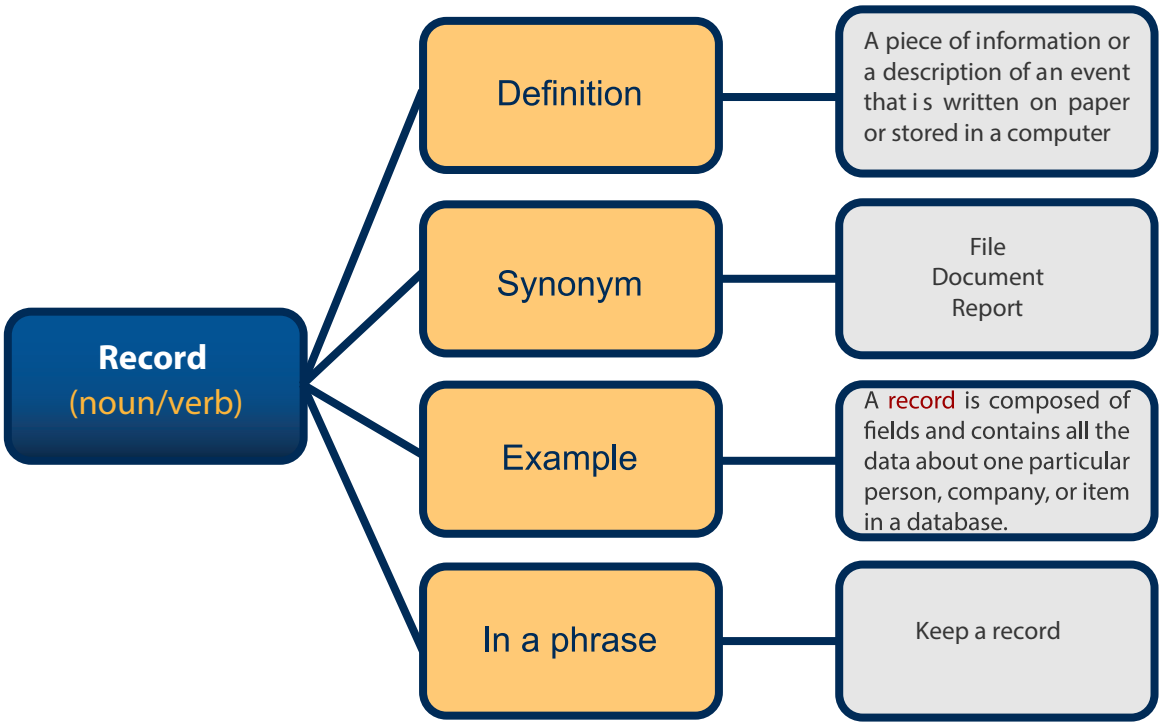
Database



Model



Record



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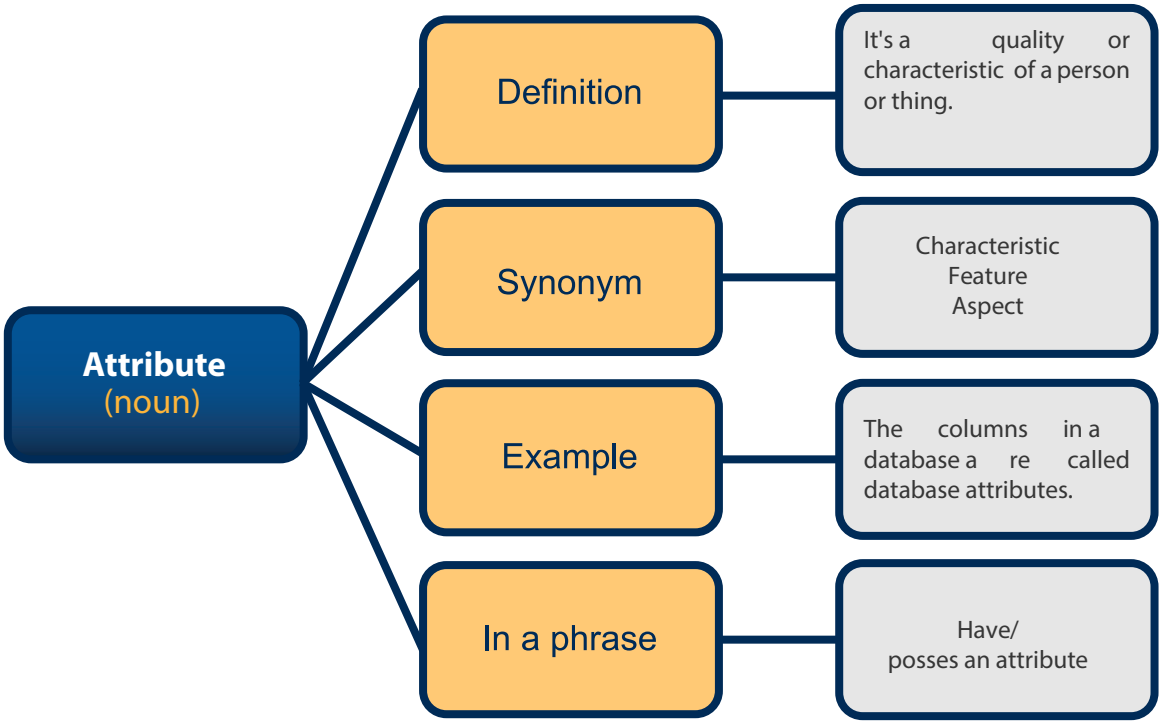
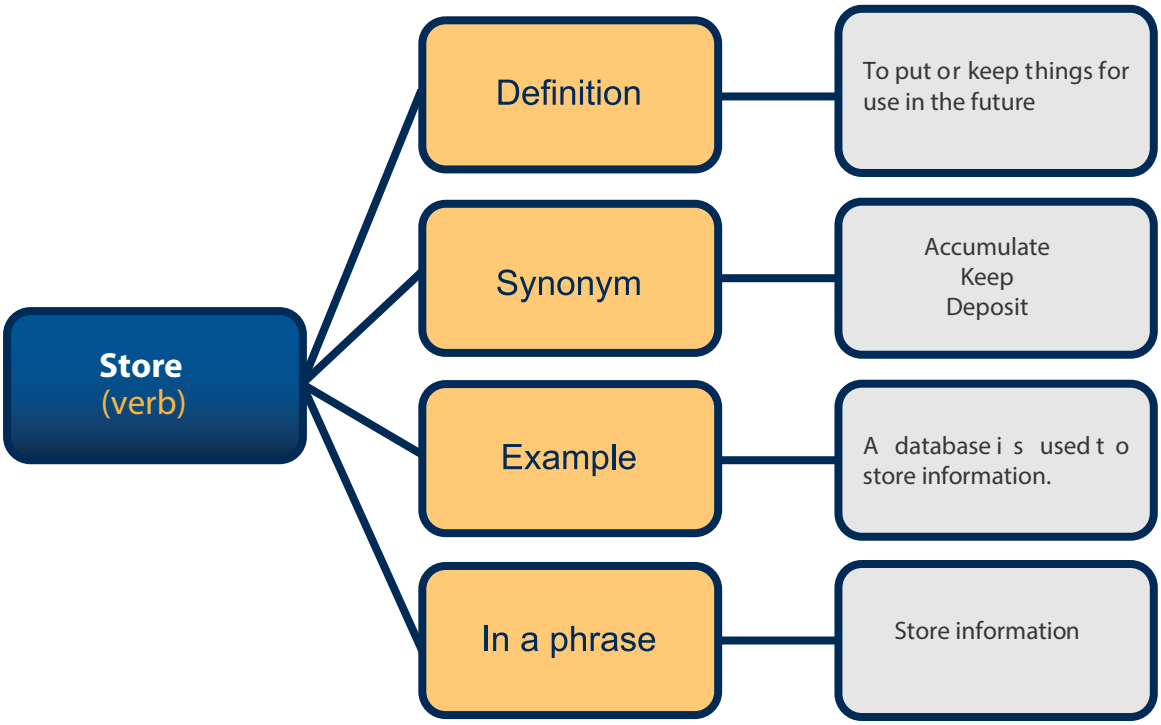
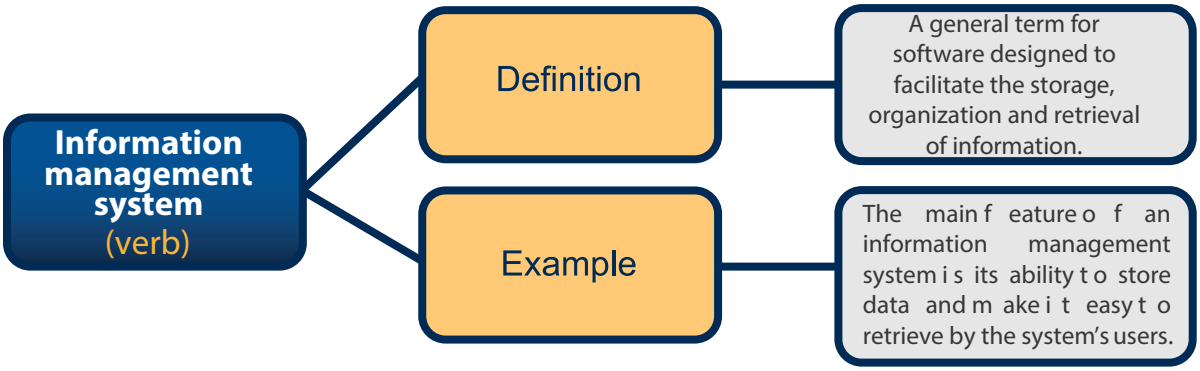


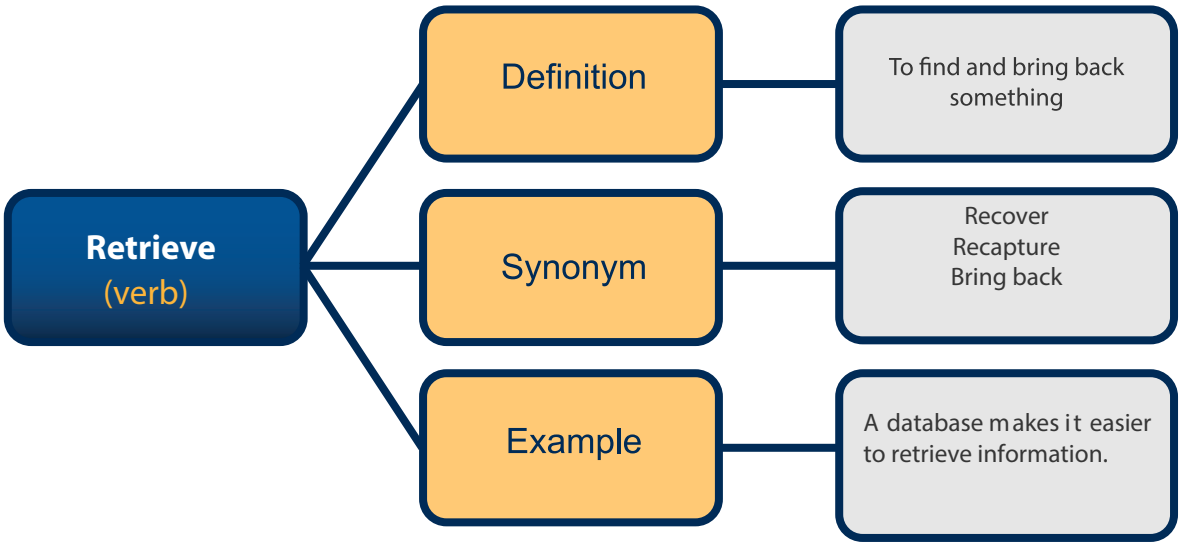
Store



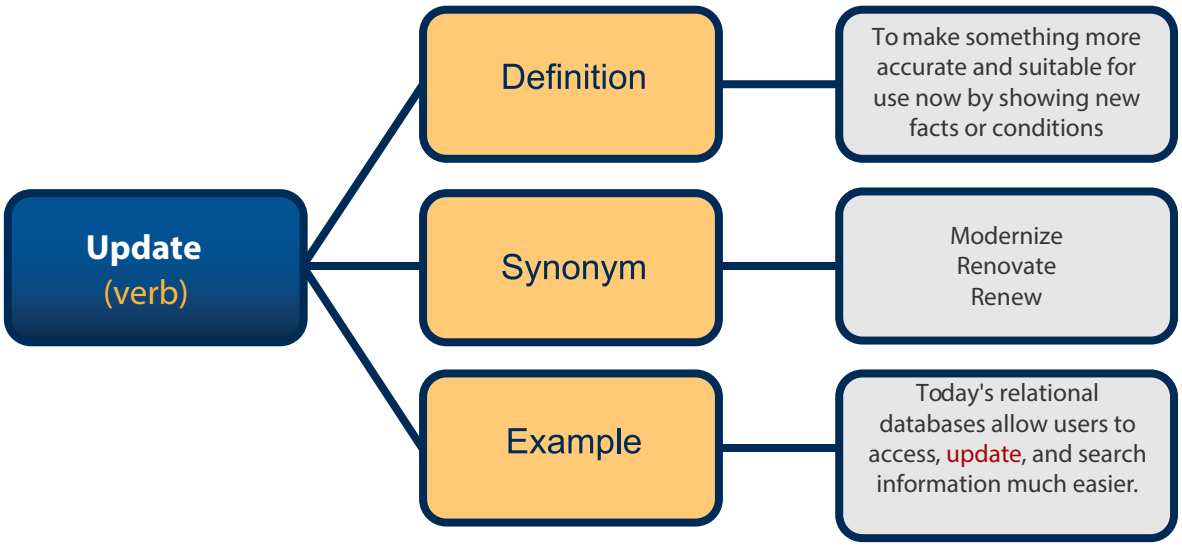
Information management system



Retrieve



Update



Table

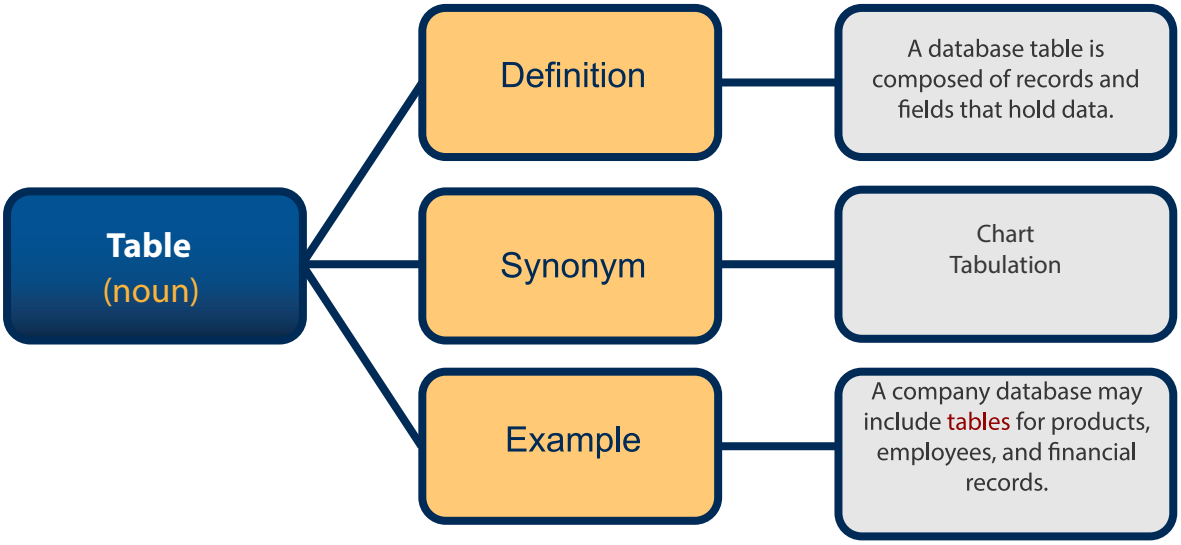
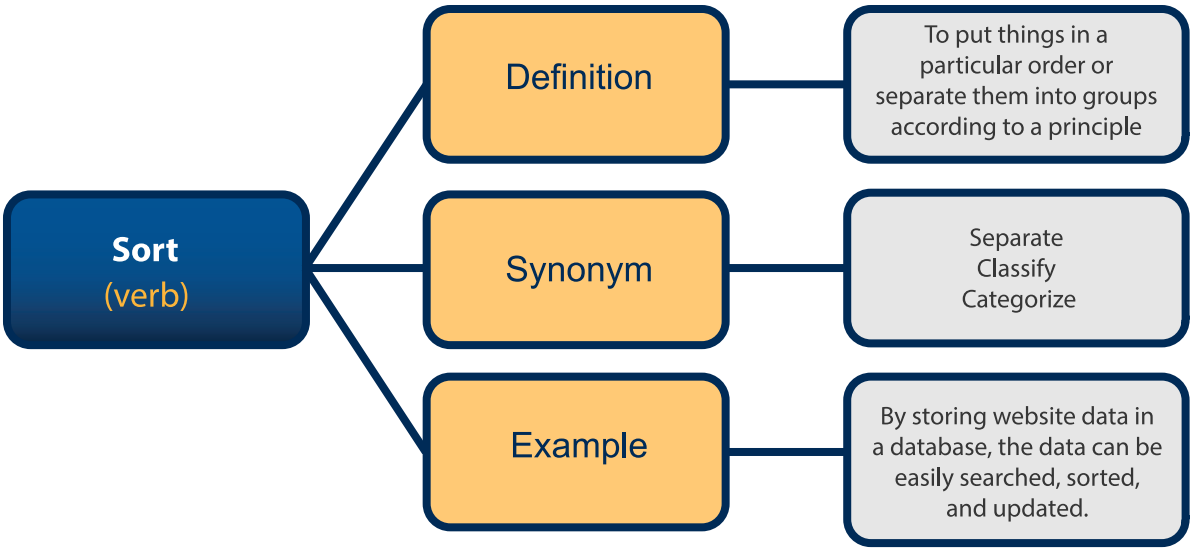


Table
(noun)
Definition
A database table is composed of records and fields that hold data.
Synonym
Chart
Tabulation
Example
A company database may include tables for products, employees, and financial records.

Sort


Sort
(verb)
Definition
To put things in a particular order or separate them into groups according to a principle
Synonym
Separate
Classify
Categorize
Example
By storing website data in a database, the data can be easily searched, sorted, and updated.

GLOSARIO

Attribute (noun): It is a quality or characteristic of a person or thing.

Database (noun): It is a collection of data that is stored in a computer and can be easily accessed and used.

Information management system (noun): It is a general term for software designed to facilitate the storage, organization and retrieval of information.

Main idea: "The main idea refers to the principal point an author is making about a topic. It reflects the author's primary message" (Langan, 2015).

Model (noun): It is a physical representation that shows what an object looks like or how it works.

Record (noun): It is a piece of information or a description of an event that is written on paper or stored in a computer.

Retrieve (noun): To find and bring back something
Sort (verb): To put things in a particular order or separate them into groups according to a principle.

Store (verb): To put or keep things for use in the future.

Summarize (verb): To provide a clear statement of the important points.

Summary (noun): It is a brief, clear statement giving the most important facts about something.

Table (noun): A database table is composed of records and fields that hold data.

Topic (noun): The topic is the theme or subject a passage or reading is about.

Update (verb): To make something more accurate and suitable for use now by showing new facts or conditions.

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CONTROL DEL DOCUMENTO

CONSTRUCCIÓN OBJETO DE APRENDIZAJE

SENA

¡LET'S GET THE POINT! - TOPICS, MAIN IDEAS AND SUPPORTING DETAILS

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Diseño multimedia:	Oscar Julian Marquez Sanabria
Programador:	Francisco José Lizcano Reyes
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