MICHAEL SWAN

Practical English Usage

Fully Revised

# Practical English Usage

...asier, faster reference

OXFORD

OXFORD

## 4 already

Already is used to say that something has happened earlier than expected, or earlier than it might have happened.

When's Sally going to come? ~ She's **already** here.
You must go to Scotland. ~ I've **already** been.
Have you **already** finished? That was quick!

Already usually goes with the verb, in 'mid-position' (see 24.) It can also go at the end of a clause, for emphasis.

Are you here **already**? You must have run all the way.

We do not usually put already before time expressions.

When I was fourteen I **already** knew that I wanted to be a doctor. (NOT *Already when I was fourteen . . .*)
In 1970 Britain's car industry was **already** in serious trouble. (NOT *Already in 1970 . . .*)

## 5 still not or not yet?

Still not looks back towards the past; not yet looks towards the future. Compare:

– She **still** hasn't got a job. (Looking back: she hasn't had a job since Christmas, and this situation is continuing.)
She hasn't got a job **yet**. (Looking forward: she hasn't got a job now, but we're hoping that she will get one.)
– I **still** can't speak French, after all these years of study.
I can't speak French **yet**, but I hope I will be able to soon.

## 6 yet or already in questions

Questions with already often suggest that something has happened. Compare:

– Have you met Professor Hawkins **yet**? (= I don't know whether you've met him.)
Have you **already** met Professor Hawkins? (= I think you've probably met him.)
– Is my coat dry **yet**?
Is my coat dry **already**? That was quick!

## 7 tenses

Various tenses are possible with all three words. In British English, perfect tenses are common with already and yet; Americans often use past tenses. Compare:

**Have you paid yet?** (BrE)     **Have you paid / Did you pay yet?** (AmE)
**She has already left.** (BrE)     **She (has) already left.** (AmE)

## 8 related to a past moment

All three words can be related to a past moment instead of to the present. This was

I went to see if she had woken up **yet**, but she was **still** asleep. This was embarrassing, because her friends had **already** arrived.

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Yet is normally used in questions and negative sentences. But it is sometimes used in affirmative sentences in a formal style to mean 'still'.

We have **yet** to hear from the bank. (= We are still waiting to hear . . .)

## 10 all ready

All ready is not the same as already: it simply means the same as **all + ready**.

Compare:

When's Jane coming? ~ She's **already** arrived.
Are you all **ready**? ~ No, Pete isn't.

# 567 subjunctive

## 1 What is the subjunctive?

Some languages have special verb forms called 'subjunctive', which are used especially to talk about 'unreal' situations: things which are possible, desirable or imaginary. Older English had subjunctives, but in modern English they have mostly been replaced by uses of should, would and other modal verbs, by special uses of past tenses (see 426), and by ordinary verb forms. English only has a few subjunctive forms left: third-person singular present verbs without -(e)s, (e.g. she see, he have) and special forms of be (e.g. I be, he were). Except for I/he/she/it were after if, they are not very common.

## 2 that she see

Ordinary verbs only have one subjunctive form: a third person singular present with no -(e)s (e.g. she see). It is sometimes used in that-clauses in a formal style, especially in American English, after words which express the idea that something is important or desirable (e.g. suggest, recommend, ask, insist, vital, essential, important, advice). The same forms are used in both present and past sentences.

It is essential that every child **have** the same educational opportunities.
It was important that James **contact** Arthur as soon as possible.
Our advice is that the company **invest** in new equipment.
The judge recommended that Simmons **remain** in prison for life.

Do is not used in negative subjunctives. Note the word order.

We felt it desirable that he **not leave** school before eighteen.

With verbs that are not third-person singular, the forms are the same as ordinary present-tense verbs (but they may refer to the past).

I recommended that you **move** to another office.

## 3 be

Be has special subjunctive forms: I be, you be etc.

It is important that Helen **be** present when we sign the papers.
The Director asked that he **be** allowed to advertise for more staff.

I were and he/she/it were, used for example after if (see 258.4) and wish (see 630) in a formal style, are also subjunctives.

If I **were** you I should stop smoking.
I wish it **were** Saturday.

## 571 suppose, supposing and what if

*Suppose, supposing* and *what if* can all be used with present tenses to make suggestions about things that might happen.

*I haven't got a table cloth. ~ Suppose we use a sheet.*
*Let's go swimming. ~ Supposing there are sharks.*
*What if we invite your mother next weekend and go away the week after?*

A past tense makes the suggestion sound less definite.

*Daddy, can I watch TV? ~ Suppose you did your homework first.*
*I'm going to climb up there. ~ No! supposing you slipped!*
*What if I came tomorrow instead of this afternoon?*

In sentences about the past, past perfect tenses are used to talk about situations that did not occur.

*That was very clever, but supposing you had slipped?*

For more about past tenses with present or future meanings, see 426.

## 572 supposed to

*Be supposed* + infinitive is used to say what people have to do (or not do) according to the rules or the law, or about what is (not) expected to happen.

*Catholics are supposed to go to church on Sundays.*
*We're supposed to pay the Council Tax at the beginning of the month.*
*You're not supposed to park on double yellow lines.*

There is often a suggestion that things do not happen as planned or expected.

*This country is supposed to be a democracy.*
*Lucy was supposed to come to lunch. What's happened?*
*Cats are supposed to be afraid of dogs, but ours isn't.*

Questions with supposed to can suggest that there are problems.

*The train's already left. What are we supposed to do now?*
*How am I supposed to finish all this work by ten o'clock?*
*That's a lovely picture, but what's it supposed to be?*

Another use of supposed to is to say what is generally believed.

*He's supposed to be quite rich, you know.*
*This stuff is supposed to kill flies. Let's try it.*

Note the pronunciation: /sə'pəust tə/, not /sə'pəuzd tə/.

## 573 surely

### 1 not the same as certainly

*Surely* does not usually mean the same as *certainly*. We use *certainly* when we simply tell people that something is true. We use *surely* mostly to ask for people's agreement: to persuade them that something must be true, or that there are good reasons for believing it. Compare:
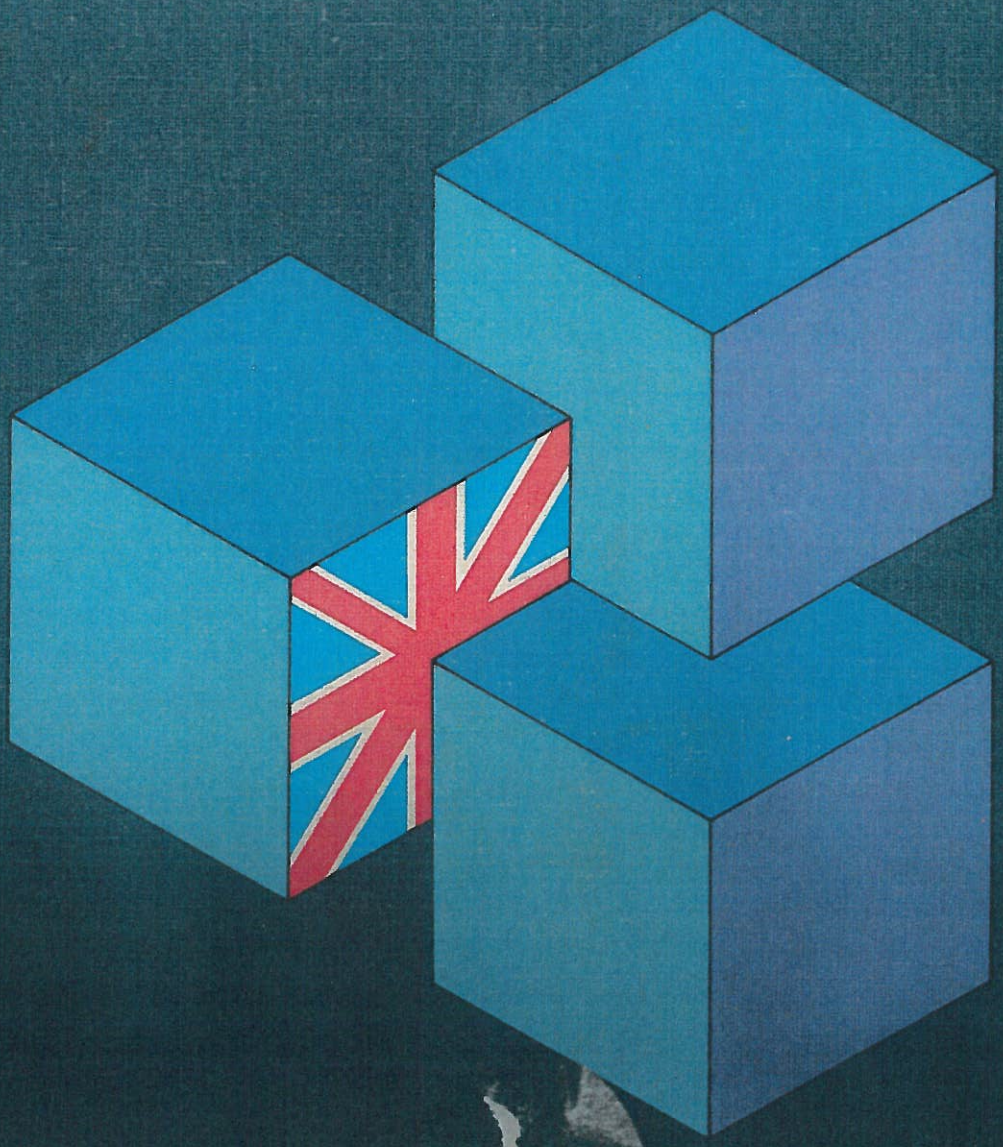
– *House prices are certainly rising fast at the moment.* ('I know this is so.')
– *House prices will surely stop rising soon.* ('I believe this must be so.')
– *I certainly posted the letter on Monday.* ('I know.')

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### 2 so before adjective, adverb etc

We use *so* before an adjective alone (without a noun) or an adverb.

*She's so babyish.* (NOT *She's such babyish.*)
*The milk was so good that we couldn't stop drinking it.*
*Why do you talk so slowly?*

We can also use *so* before *much, many, few* and *little*.

*We've got so much to do, and so little time.*

We use *so much, not so*, before comparatives.

*I'm glad you're feeling so much better.* (NOT *...  so better.*)

For *so beautiful a day* etc, see 14.
For more about the meaning and use of *such*, see 568. For more about *so*, see 538.

## 570 suggest

### 1 infinitive not used

*Suggest* is not followed by object + infinitive. *That*-clauses and *-ing* structures are common.

*Her uncle suggested that she (should) get a job in a bank.* (NOT *Her uncle suggested her to get a job in a bank.*)
*Her uncle suggested getting a job in a bank.*

### 2 indirect object not used

*Suggest* is not normally followed by an indirect object without a preposition.

*Can you suggest a restaurant to us?* (NOT *Can you suggest us a restaurant?*)

### 3 verb forms in that-clauses

In *that*-clauses after suggest, various verb forms are possible when we suggest what people should do.

a    Ordinary present and past tenses can be used.

*Her uncle suggests that she gets a job in a bank.*
*He suggested that she got a job in a bank.*

b    *Should* + infinitive without *to* is common.

*He suggests that she should get a job in a bank.*
*He suggested that she should get a job in a bank.*

c    Subjunctives (see 567) are also used, especially in American English.

*He suggests that she get a job in a bank.*
*He suggested that she get a job in a bank.*

### 4 direct suggestions

In direct suggestions ('I suggest ...'), *should* is not generally used.

*I suggest (that) you get ...* (NOT *I suggest that you should get.*)

# MED SYNONYMER

**Aase Herskind**

**Uffe Gravers Pedersen**

K GRAMMATIK MED SYNONYMER

...vice-afsnit øger bogens praktiske brugsværdi: synonymer, præpo-
...sordl), »false friends« (faldgruber for danskere), staveproblemer
...revskrivning, mål og vægt, talord, det engelske alfabet og lydsy-

...matik med synonymer er i den grad skræddersyet til foreliggende
...ke kræver clairvoyance at spå denne bog en betragtelig levetid –
...uteralderen« (Gymnasieskolen, august 1984).

...gsbrug er der udarbejdet 2 Øvelseshæfter (tilrettelagt for gymna-
...integreret med grundbogen.

ENGELSK
GRAMMATIK
MED SYNONYMER

## ØVELSESHÆFTE 2

Birger Axen / Helle Brieghel
Kirsten Haaning / Aase Herskind
Annette Kjæetegaard / Uffe Gravers Pedersen

ENGELSK
GRAMMATIK
SYNONYMER

## ESHÆFTE 1

en / Helle Brieghel
ning / Aase Herskind
ard / Uffe Gravers Pedersen

## KALEIDOSCOPE

— Når verbet ender på en konsonant efter enkel, trykstærk vokal **fordobles** konsonanten. På britisk-engelsk, men ikke på amerikansk, fordobles l altid:

begin-beginning    occur-occurring    signal-signalling

Enkelte andre verber har konsonantfordobling, se 108a

## 110 Gamle endelser

I ældre tekster møder man undertiden de gamle præsensendelser:
2. person ental: -st    lovest    3. person ental: -th    loveth

## 111 Konjunktiv

1. Verbets grundform bruges i alle personer; d.v.s. der er ikke nogen s-form
2. were bruges i stedet for was

Konjunktiv bruges kun sjældent på britisk-engelsk, men noget hyppigere i USA. Den forekommer

— i en række **faste vendinger**:
**Be** that as it may...    = Lad det være, som det kan..
...as it **were**    = Så at sige

— i 1. og 3. person ental i visse sætninger, der indledes med **if, as if/as though** eller **even if/even though** kan konjunktivformen **were** bruges - i daglig tale bruges dog was:
Even if it **were** possible, I would not do it.
If I **were** a rich man, I would give it to you.
He talks as if he **were** the boss.
NB: Det hedder altid: If I **were** you...

## 112 Hjælpeverberne

er do, have, be samt modalverberne (mådesudsagnsordene) shall, will, can, may, must, ought to, used to, dare og need.
Do, be, have, dare og need kan også fungere som fuldverber.

## 113 have

### 113a have har flg. bøjningsformer:

-grundform    : have
-s-form    : has
-imperfektum    } : had
-perf. participium    : had

### 113b

I daglig tale møder man hyppigt **sammentrukne former** af have:
I have returned.    =**I've** returned.    (jvf. you've, we've, they've)
He has returned.    =**He's** returned.    (jvf. she's, it's)

Den sammentrukne form er den samme for is: He's=He is/He has.
I had returned.    =**I'd** returned.    (jvf. you'd, he'd, she'd, it'd, we'd, they'd)

Også i kombination med **not** sker sammentrækning:
have not=haven't  has not=hasn't  had not=hadn't

Sammentrækning bevirker ændret ordstilling:
John has left, **hasn't he**? = John has left, **has he not?**

### 113c

Sammen med perfektum participium af fuldverbet danner former af have **perfektum** og **pluskvamperfektum**.
I have eaten: Jeg har spist.    I had eaten: Jeg havde spist.

På dansk kan man bruge både at have og at være som hjælpeverber til at danne disse to tider, men på engelsk bruges **altid to have** (se dog 114h):
Han **er** lige vendt hjem. :    He **has** just returned.
Timen **var** lige begyndt. :    The lesson **had** just started.

### 113d

have to=must, se 126.

### 113e

have kan også være **fuldverbum** med særligt betydningsindhold, og det kan da have omskrivning med do:

— have=drikke, spise, få, modtage:
What did you have for dinner?    I didn't have any trouble with her.

Bemærk også konstruktionen: have+objekt+perfektum participium:
Where did you **have the car repaired?**=Hvor fik du bilen repareret?

— have=eje/være i besiddelse af har omskrivning på amerikansk og i stigende grad på britisk-engelsk; have erstattes dog ofte på britisk-engelsk i daglig tale af **have got**, som ikke omskrives:
Do you have
Have you got    } a pencil?
Have you

## 114 be

### 114a be har flg. bøjningsformer:

Præsens:

| | Ental | Flertal |
|---|---|---|
| | I am | we are |
| | you are | you are |
| | he, she, it is | they are |

Imperfektum:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | I was | we were |

THIRD EDITION

*Rediscover* **Grammar**

**David Crystal**

Ikke til hjemlån

*Rediscover* **Grammar**

**David Crystal**

PEARSON Longman

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THIRD EDITION

*Rediscover* **Grammar**

**David Crystal**

In this lively and illuminating book, David Crystal guides us effortlessly through the maze of structures and terminology of the English language. He shows how language structures link together, describes their features and usage, and cautions against easy mistakes. With every step he makes the complex seem simple.

Now in its third edition, *Rediscover Grammar* includes new sections on ethnic variation, language and electronic communications, and analyses of grammar in whole texts. It has also been updated to reflect the developments in terminology that followed the arrival of the National Curriculum.
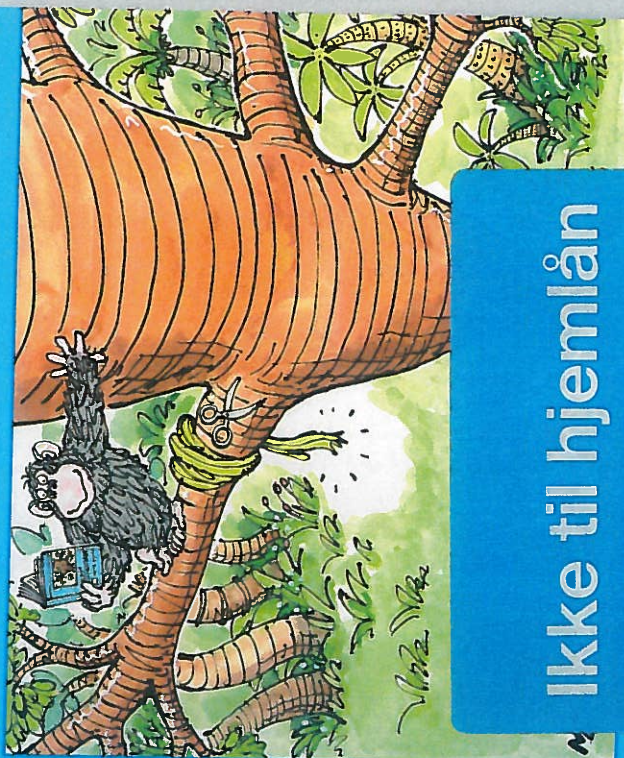
*Rediscover Grammar* remains the ideal guide and reference for teachers and students.

PEARSON Longman

# The moods of the verb phrase

Finite verb phrases (p.82) can be grouped into three broad types, based on the kind of general meaning they convey. These types, known as **moods**, show whether a clause is expressing a factual, nonfactual, or directive meaning.

- Most verb phrases are in the **indicative** mood, which is used for stating or questioning ('indicating') matters of a **factual** kind:

  **It's sunny.    We aren't ready.    Is John in?**

- The **subjunctive** mood is used to express wishes, conditions, and other **nonfactual** situations:

  **I insisted that John pay on time.**

  The indicative would be *I insisted that John pays on time*. It states a fact (that John **does** pay on time), whereas the subjunctive expresses a hope (that John **will** pay on time).

- The **imperative** mood is used to express **directive** utterances (p.52):

  **Put it down.    Sit in the corner.**

## The subjunctive

The subjunctive is used very little in modern English, being mainly restricted to formal or formulaic expression. There are three patterns of use.
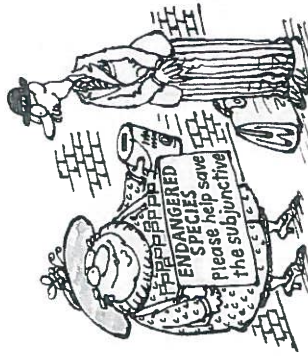
- The **mandative** subjunctive is found in the expression of proposals, resolutions, demands, and other 'mandatory' attitudes. It consists of the base form of the verb, and is distinctive only in the third person singular of the present tense (p.100):

  **I request that he write to the Council.**

- The **formulaic** subjunctive also consists of the base form of the verb. It is used in several fixed expressions:

  **Come what may …    Heaven forbid …**
  **Suffice it to say …    Be it noted …**

- The **were-** **subjunctive** (or 'past' subjunctive) expresses a hypothetical or unreal meaning, and is mainly used in clauses introduced by *if* or *though*. This form is distinctive only in the first and third person singular (p.160) of the past tense of *be*:

  **If I were you …    I wish it were finished.**

## Usage

- The indicative form *was* replaces *were* in informal styles: *if I was you ...* . This use of *was* tends to attract criticism when it appears in written expression.

- The mandative subjunctive is much more common in American than in British English. In Britain, it is formal and somewhat legalistic in style, and tends to be replaced either by the indicative or by a construction with *should*:

**I demand that he leave at once.** (subjunctive use)
**I demand that he leaves at once.** (indicative use)
**I demand that he should leave at once.** (use of *should*)

The American preference seems to be currently increasing in Britain.

## Caution

- Indicative sentences using modal verbs (p.84) sometimes express meanings close to imperatives and subjunctives. *You must go* is similar to *Go!*, and *she might go* to *if she were to go*.

- Some grammarians also regard the **infinitive** (p.83) as a verbal mood, on the grounds that this form also typically expresses nonfactual meaning (*To sleep, perchance to dream ...*). In the present approach, however, only **finite** forms of the verb (p.82) are analysed into moods.

## Suffixes that form verbs

| Suffix | Add to | Example |
| --- | --- | --- |
| -ate | noun | orchestrate, chlorinate |
| -en | adjective | deafen, quicken |
| -(i)fy | adjective or noun | simplify, beautify |
| -ize/-ise | adjective or noun | modernize, hospitalise |

## Usage

- The over-use of the *-ise* suffix attracts stylistic criticism, and new forms ending in *-ise* are often attacked. Forms which were criticised a generation ago (such as *finalise, hospitalise* and *publicise*) are now widely accepted. But there is still considerable opposition to more recent forms, such as *privatise, prioritise, routinise, cosmeticise, coordinatise,* and their associated nouns (*comprehensivisation,* etc.).

- The choice of *-ise* vs. *-ize* is a common cause of spelling difficulty. Some verbs are never spelled with a z (e.g. *advertise, advise, arise, comprise, despise, exercise, rise*). But for most verbs, *-ize* is the standard spelling in American English (e.g. *organize, finalize, idolize, realize*), and it is increasingly the form being used by British publishing houses. However, some British writers avoid *-ize* on principle, simply because it is American in origin!