

# THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO GRAMMAR

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Friday, 11:21 am

Hello there!

If you ever feel dread when you hear the word *grammar*, I understand. I used to feel the same way. For years, I thought that grammar was confusing and boring. I thought that I wasn't smart enough to "get" it – a self-limiting belief that stayed with me through most of college, where I was studying to become a teacher.

I was lucky enough to have a couple of amazing teachers later in my life, and they helped me understand grammar. I suddenly felt like I could conquer the world!

I started teaching my students using the same techniques that helped me, and they loved it! Once I saw how much they were learning and how much they were enjoying themselves, I realized how painless – and even fun – grammar could be.

My goal with Grammar Revolution is to open you up to the joy of understanding how language works. I want to turn your dread into confidence and your boredom into fascination. I want to help you love language.



I hope that you enjoy this guide and that it inspires you to learn more about grammar and sentence diagramming.

Welcome to the Grammar Revolution!

Happy learning,

☺ Elizabeth

## THE PARTS OF SPEECH

Let's get started! Did you know that we can categorize the words that we use into eight groups called ***the parts of speech?***

Just think about that fact for a minute. We use thousands of words, and they can all be separated into just eight groups! Isn't that the coolest thing ever?

1. Nouns
2. Pronouns
3. Verbs
4. Adjectives
5. Adverbs
6. Prepositions
7. Conjunctions
8. Interjections

Video Extension



[www.GrammarRevolution.com/parts-of-speech.html](http://www.GrammarRevolution.com/parts-of-speech.html)

Many words can function as multiple parts of speech.  
(Find this video at the bottom of the linked page.)

Video Extension



[www.GrammarRevolution.com/sentence-construction.html](http://www.GrammarRevolution.com/sentence-construction.html)

Sentences are simpler than you think!

For your learning pleasure, I've listed all eight parts of speech in this handy little guide.

You'll find a brief definition, a few examples, and a sentence diagram for each one. Are you familiar with sentence diagrams?

They are pictures of sentences. They are made up of lines and words, and they *show us* how each word in a sentence is related to the other words.

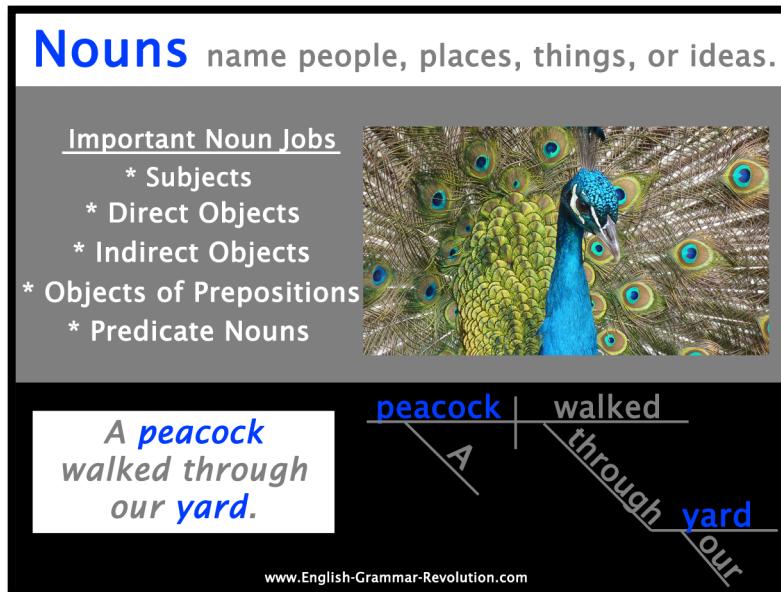
## RELAX

Remember that this is a *beginner's guide* and my goal is to give you a big-picture understanding of these categories. Do not fret about having a perfect understanding of all of this information. This is especially true if you're new to studying grammar and sentence diagramming. Just take in whatever you can. I can feel you getting smarter already. ☺

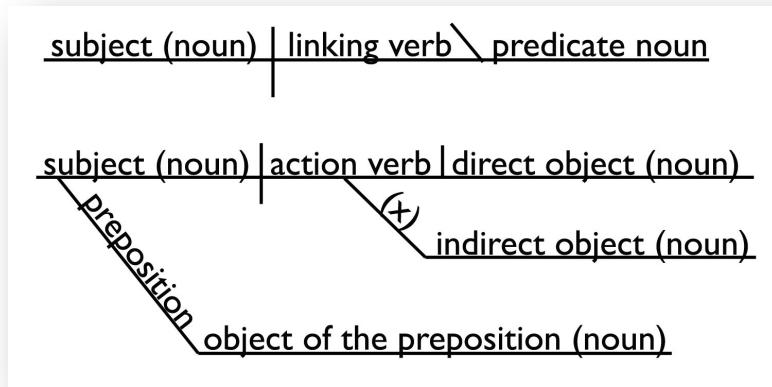
**1. Nouns** name people, places, things, or ideas.

Examples: *Maria, office, sunlight, happiness*

- *The fish swam through the water in the pond.*
- *A peacock walked through our yard.*



Sentence diagrams show us the jobs that words perform. As you can see in the following sentence diagram, nouns can perform many jobs. (You'll see the word *noun* where nouns can go.)



Not every sentence will have all of these nouns, but every sentence will have at least a subject. (The subject tells us whom or what a sentence is about.)

Remember! Do **not** let your head explode!

## 2. Pronouns take the place of one or more nouns.

Examples: *I, you, me, they, who, yourself*

- *Would you like to go with me to the beach?*
- *We walked across the bridge.*

**Pronouns** take the place of nouns.

Examples of Pronouns

*I, me, we, us, you,  
she, her, he, him, it,  
they, them, that, which,  
who, whom, this, that,  
these, those, myself*

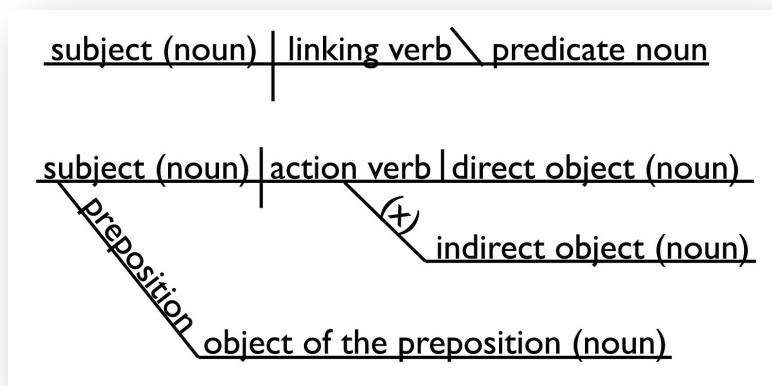
Pronouns can do anything that nouns can do.

**We** | **walked**  
**across** **bridge**  
**the**

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Since pronouns take the place of nouns, they can perform all of the same jobs that nouns perform! Pronouns can fit into any of the slots that say *noun*.



### 3. Verbs express actions or states of being.

Examples: eat, find, run, walk, become, feel, seem, are

- *The shuttle flew into space.*
- *He is president.*

**Verbs** express actions or states of being.

Main verbs express actions or states of being.  
*He swims.* (action)  
*He is president.* (state of being)

Helping verbs help main verbs. They can't stand alone. Together, helping verbs and main verbs form verb phrases.  
*She will swim.*  
*She has been president.*

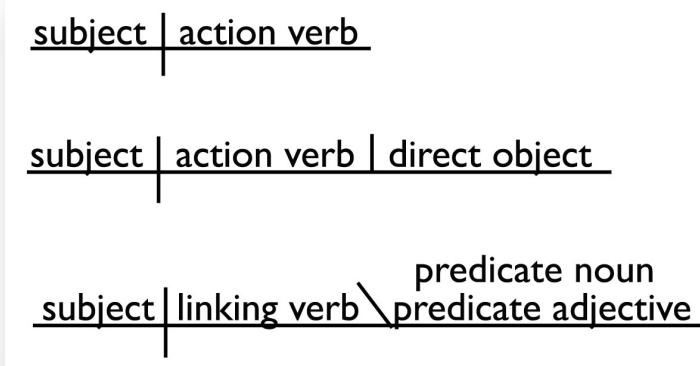


The shuttle flew into space.

shuttle | flew  
The | into space

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Every sentence needs to have a verb. It tells us what the subject is being or doing.



## 4. Adjectives

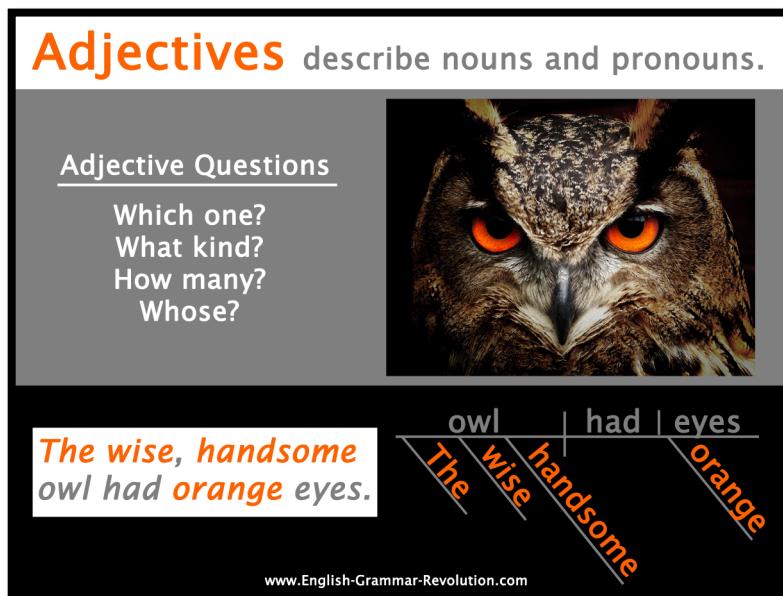
describe - or *modify* - nouns and pronouns.

Examples: *the, orange, special, many, Charlie's*

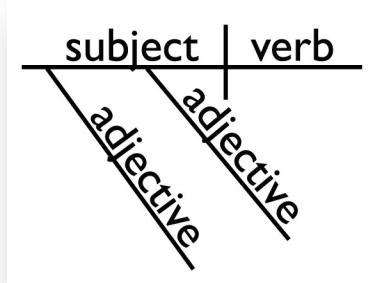
- **Seven** swans swam across **the lake in front of Jane's house**.
- **The wise, handsome owl had orange eyes.**

Adjectives answer certain questions that we call the *adjective questions*.

- **Which one?** (*Which owl? the wise, handsome owl*)
- **What kind?** (*What kind of eyes? orange eyes*)
- **How many?** (*How many swans? seven swans*)
- **Whose?** (*Whose house? Jane's house*)



Since adjectives describe nouns and pronouns, we diagram them on diagonal lines coming off of the noun or pronoun that they are describing. Isn't that neat?



### Video Extension



[www.GrammarRevolution.com/adjective-questions.html](http://www.GrammarRevolution.com/adjective-questions.html)

I'll show you how the adjective questions work.

## 5. Adverbs

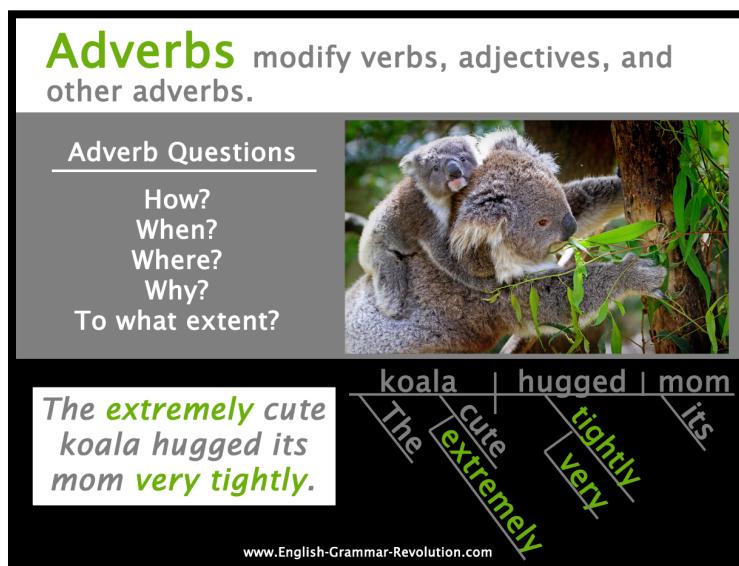
Adverbs describe verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

Examples: *quickly, silently, well, yesterday, very, so*

- ***Yesterday, we shopped everywhere!***
- ***The extremely cute koala hugged its mom very tightly.***

Adverbs answer certain questions that we call the *adverb questions*.

- **How?** (*How did the koala hug its mom? tightly*)
- **When?** (*When did you shop? yesterday*)
- **Where?** (*Where did you shop? everywhere*)
- **To what extent?** (*To what extent did the koala hug tightly? very*)
- **Why?** (Adverbs that answer this question are typically made up of more than one word. Example: I shopped *because I needed new shoes*.)



Since adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs, we diagram them on diagonal lines coming off of the verb, adjective, or adverb that they are modifying!

Video Extension

[www.GrammarRevolution.com/adverb-questions.html](http://www.GrammarRevolution.com/adverb-questions.html)

See the adverb questions in action!

**6. Prepositions** show the relationship between a noun or a pronoun and some other word or element in the rest of the sentence.

They are always in prepositional phrases (a **preposition** + a noun or pronoun).

Examples: *above, behind, below, from, inside, up, over*

- *The monkey with stripes is cute.*
- *The frog sat in the flower.*

**Prepositions** show the relationship between a noun and another word or element in the sentence.

**Prepositions** are always in *prepositional phrases*.

*at home  
during the movie  
from your imagination  
inside the cave  
over the river*

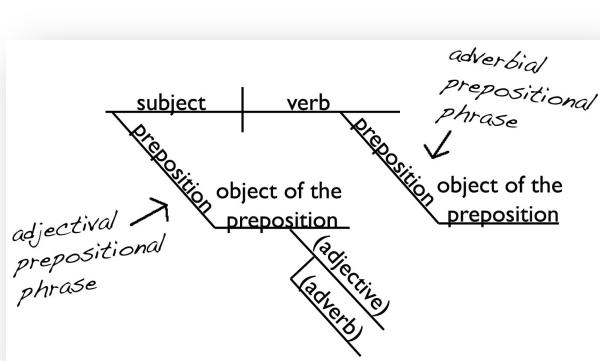
*The frog sat  
in the flower.*

frog | sat  
The | in flower  
the

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Note that prepositional phrases need to have a noun or a pronoun and that noun or pronoun may be modified by an adjective!



Video Extension



The Preposition Song

[www.GrammarRevolution.com/list-of-prepositions.html](http://www.GrammarRevolution.com/list-of-prepositions.html)

I'll sing you a song!

## 7. Conjunctions

connect two or more words, phrases, or clauses.

Examples: *and, but, or, so, when, because, if*

- *Whenever I feel sad, I go for a walk.*
- *The hummingbird sat **and** waited.*

**Conjunctions** connect two or more words, phrases, or clauses.

\* Words      *tired **but** happy*

\* Phrases      *by the river **or** near the lake*

\* Clauses      *The lion roared, **and** the mouse ran.*

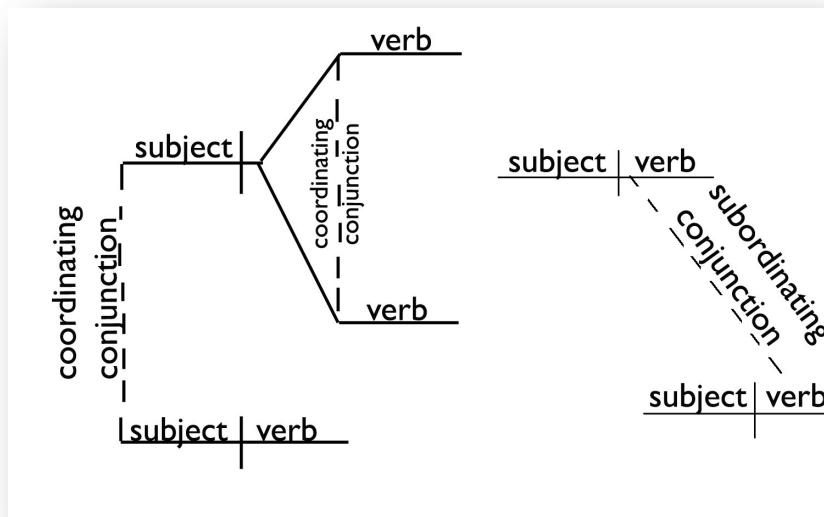


*The hummingbird **sat** **and** waited.*

The diagram shows the sentence "The hummingbird sat and waited." with the word "and" highlighted in purple. A bracket connects the subject "hummingbird" and the verb "waited". The article "The" is crossed out with a diagonal line.

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There are different kinds of conjunctions, but they are all connectors. They are also all diagrammed on dotted lines that connect the elements they are joining.



**8. Interjections** show emotion. They are not grammatically related to the rest of the sentence.

Examples: *rats, gee, darn, gosh, yes, holy cow*

- *Oh no, we lost the game.*
- *Wow! That jump was amazing!*

**Interjections** show emotion. They are not grammatically related to the rest of the sentence.

Examples of Interjections

*congratulations, golly, gosh, hey, holy cow, uh-oh, ugh, whoa, whoops, wow, yikes, yippee, yuck*



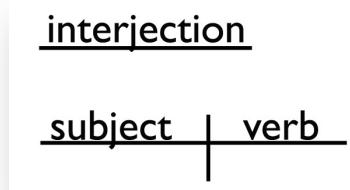
**Wow**

jump | was \ amazing

That

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Since interjections aren't grammatically related to the rest of the sentence, we diagram them on lonely little lines that hang above the rest of the sentence.



## Nice work!

Give yourself a pat on the back. You just read through all eight parts of speech. Wahoo! Would you like to give yourself a little quiz now?

## Tiny Quiz

**Directions:** Identify each word's part of speech in the following sentences. Try to diagram the sentences if you can!

1. Flowers grow.
2. Sydney has been playing.
3. Walter ran very quickly.
4. The green box fell.
5. Cathy is my mom.
6. The flowers in the garden are growing.

You can use this space to write your answers, or you can write them on another sheet of paper. You'll find the answers on the next page.

## Tiny Quiz Answers

1. Flowers grow.

Flowers | grow

<i>Flowers grow.</i>	sentence
<i>Flowers</i>	subject (noun)
<i>grow</i>	verb

2. Sydney has been playing.

Sydney | has been playing

<i>Sydney has been playing.</i>	sentence
<i>Sydney</i>	subject (noun)
<i>has been playing</i>	verbs (This is called a verb phrase.)

3. Walter ran very quickly.

Walter | ran  
           | quickly  
           | very

<i>Walter ran very quickly.</i>	sentence
<i>Walter</i>	subject (noun)
<i>ran</i>	verb
<i>quickly</i>	adverb (modifying <i>ran</i> )
<i>very</i>	adverb (modifying <i>quickly</i> )

4. The green box fell.

box | fell  
The | green

<i>The green box fell.</i>	sentence
<i>box</i>	subject (noun)
<i>The, green</i>	adjectives (modifying <i>box</i> )
<i>fell</i>	verb

5. Cathy is my mom.

Cathy | is | my mom  
           |            | my

<i>Cathy is my mom.</i>	sentence
<i>Cathy</i>	subject (noun)
<i>is</i>	verb
<i>mom</i>	noun
<i>my</i>	adjective

6. The flowers in the garden are growing.

flowers | are growing  
The | in | garden  
           |            | the

<i>The flowers in the garden are growing.</i>	sentence
<i>flowers</i>	subject (noun)
<i>are growing</i>	verbs (This is a verb phrase.)
<i>The</i>	adjective (modifying <i>flowers</i> )
<i>in the garden</i>	prepositional phrase
<i>in</i>	preposition
<i>garden</i>	object of the preposition (noun)
<i>the</i>	adjective (modifying <i>garden</i> )



Thanks for taking the time to read through this guide. I hope that you found it helpful.

If you'd like to learn (or teach) more, I'm here to help.

[www.GrammarRevolution.com](http://www.GrammarRevolution.com)

P.S. I love hearing from people, so feel free to drop me a line and let me know what you thought of this guide.

*Elizabeth*

Elizabeth O'Brien

[www.GrammarRevolution.com/contact.html](http://www.GrammarRevolution.com/contact.html)

*Your materials are a life-saver and a confidence-booster.*

- Lori

*We LOVE your curriculum. I tell everyone who will listen about your program and how they will not regret getting it for their children (and themselves).*

- Mindy, Homeschool Mom

*I recently purchased your online Get Smart program. I am a huge fan! You are the one who made grammar, in all its complexity, simple for me. That's the sign of a true genius! :) Seriously! Honestly, your work is remarkable.*

- Becky, Tutor

*Because of sentence diagramming, my students were 'climbing all over each other' to go to the board. They loved it.*

- A Lowe, Teacher

*I have to tell you how much I love your product [Get Smart]. I have struggled with understanding grammar my whole life, and I felt like I was stupid because I could not memorize the rules.*

*I was seriously leaning towards walking away from my dream job as a college professor because of my embarrassment and fear of getting caught as being a fraud! Thank God for you! I have confidence, and I actually love grammar now. Thank you for everything!*

- C., College Professor

Learn more about our video grammar lessons here:

[www.GrammarRevolution.com/daily-diagrams.html](http://www.GrammarRevolution.com/daily-diagrams.html)