

ARTICLES

A and *an* are indefinite articles that can be used only before singular countable nouns; *the* can be used before uncountable (mass) nouns and before countable plural nouns. No article, often called the zero article, identifies certain indefinite meanings of nouns. Articles are determiners and come before the nouns they modify. Except with ordinals such as the first, second, third, or the last, articles do not come directly before pronouns.

I- THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

a or an

a or an comes before a singular countable noun. A comes before a consonant sound, but an comes before a vowel sound. Choose according to pronunciation, not spelling.

a ball an apple a university

a hospital an eagle an honest man

a car an office a year

Use a (n)

1. Before an unidentified singular countable noun that is one example of its class, but the number one is not being emphasized.

A black dog is standing in the road.

(the emphasis is not on the number.)

One black dog is standing in the road.

(the emphasis is on the number one.)

2. Before an unidentified singular countable noun that is representative of its class, as in a definition.

A dog is a domestic animal.

3. Before a predicate noun after to be if no other determiner is used.

Mrs. Seckson is a good friend.

Man O'War was a famous racehorse.

4. With uncountable nouns to mean a kind of, or with kind of, or certain.

This man has an honesty that we all appreciate.

A greater unity is needed.

Literature of other countries gives us an insight into other cultures.

5. Before few and little to mean some but not many (see Confusing choices, few, a few) Plural forms for a(n) are the zero article and some.

II- THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

They can be used with all nouns.

1- Use the to identify a noun that shows

- ***Reference backward to a noun already mentioned.***

A dog has been barking all day and here is the dog now, standing outside the gate.

- ***Reference forward to an identification soon to be made, often by modifiers following the noun.***

The man at the door wants to speak to you.

The dog that has been barking all day has finally stopped

Barking. Every student should know something about the history of his own country.

2- Use the before superlatives and before ordinal numbers.

This is the best cake I have ever eaten.

China has the largest population of all countries in the world.

Mr. Everest is the highest mountain in the world.

Charles Lindbergh was the first person to fly the Atlantic alone.

Note: Ordinal numbers used alone may have the zero article.

She was first in her class.

Our team is third in the standings.

- ***Context known to both writer and reader.***

Here comes the teacher. (one teacher known to the class).

Turn on the light in the kitchen. (only one light in one kitchen)

Have you been to the mountains recently? (mountains nearby that are known to everyone)

They prefer to live in the city. (The reader, it is assumed, understands the difference between living in the country or suburbs and living in the city.)

- ***Identification of a class, especially in a generalization.***

Followed by a noun, often singular:

The child is the hope of the future.

The nuclear threat is frightening.

Followed by an adjective (see Adjectives, the + adjective):

The elderly are often lonely.

The handicapped need access to public buildings.

The poor were the victims.

- ***The beginning of a phrase containing an opposite.***

This is my friend, the one I was telling you about.

Do this experiment first, the experiment on page 29.

III- THE ZERO ARTICLE

1- Use the zero article (absence of an article)

- **To refer to all members of a class.**

Dogs are domestic animals. (all dogs)

Mary likes dogs. (all dogs)

Man proposes, God disposes. (Man in the sense of all human beings)

- **To distinguish one class from another**

Dogs, not squirrels, are domestic animals.

Mary likes dogs, not cats.

Man, not woman, boxers.

- ***To refer to an indefinite number but not necessarily to all members of a class.***

Leaves are beginning to fall. (many)

Engineers make good salaries. (many)

The edge of the field was marked by trees.

- ***With plural nouns after be.***

Most of my friends are students.

His sisters are teachers.

- ***With institutions and practices felt to be unique.***

School begins on Monday. (a particular Monday)

Breakfast will be late tomorrow. (there will be only one breakfast tomorrow)

People are angry with Congress. (there is only one Congress in the country)

But

People are angry with the state legislature. (one of many)

People are angry with the city council. (one of many)

- ***With set phrases, usually pairs, such as:***

Man and wife

Father and son

Brother and sister

Lock and key

Sun, moon, and stars

Heaven and hell

Wind and rain

Snow and sleet

Go (come) home

- ***With set prepositional phrases, such as:***

At war	In danger	On guard
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At peace	In need	On purpose
----------	---------	------------

At ease	In tears	On fire
---------	----------	---------

At rest	In reply	On sale
---------	----------	---------

At sea	In love	On vacation
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At lunch	In difficulty	On time
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On duty

On land (and sea)

By accident

Out of control

By design	Out of danger
By heart	Out of date
By surprise	Out of doors
By chance	Out of order
By mistake	Out of stock
By bus, plane, car	Out of turn

You can find set phrases in dictionaries. Look the object word up if you are not sure of its use: war, peace, danger, and so on. Dictionaries written for non-native speakers give more information about set phrases than other dictionaries do.

- ***With nouns used in headlines in newspapers, captions in books, signs, labels and the like.***

PRISONER FREED ENTRANCE TO PARKING BEWARE OF DOG

Some

Use **some** of an indefinite amount with uncountable nouns.

He wants some rice.

She is taking some instruction in music now.

Mrs. Johnson gave us some good advice.

You can find some information about television shows in today's newspaper.

Any

Use **any** in place of some in questions and negatives.

(See **Confusion** choices, any, some, Negation and Questions)

He doesn't want any rice.

She isn't taking any instruction in music now.

Mrs. Johnson didn't give us any good advice.

You cannot find any information about television shows in today's newspaper.

Note: Any may be used in the sense of "it doesn't matter which."

Any of the suits on this rack will fit you.

He has enough money to buy any car he wants.

Any doctor can tell you what long hours he works.

IV- ARTICLES WITH PROPER NOUNS

1- Use A or An

- When using a proper noun to indicate the characteristics of the person named.

He is a Hercules. (very strong)

She is a Florence Nightingale. (a kind nurse)

- To mean “ a certain person whose name is.”

A Dr. Jones called this morning.

A Mr. Johnson is looking for you.

2- Use The

- ***For a family name in the plural.***

The Hendersons have moved.

The Smiths came this evening.

Note: Do not use an apostrophe in plural family names that are not possessive.

- ***To distinguish two people who have the same name.***

The George Brown who teaches here is not the George Brown you knew in college.

- ***When the article is accepted as part of a geographical name such as:***

COUNTRIES: The Netherlands The united States of the U.S.
 The Philippines The Soviet union or the U.S.S.R.

SEAS AND OCEANS: The Black Sea The Pacific (Ocean)
 The Red Sea The Atlantic (Ocean)
 The Indian Ocean The Baltic (Sea)
 The North Sea The Mediterranean (Sea)

Ocean or sea is always part of the name in the list on the left, but you may leave it out in the list on the right. Do not use the with names of individual lakes, but the Great Lakes means collectively Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, and Lake Ontario.

RIVERS: The Amazon The Mississippi
 The Ganges The Nile

MOUNTAIN RANGES:

The Alps, The Andes, The Rockies or the Rocky Mountains, The Himalayas or the Himalaya Mountains.

Most individual peaks do not have the in their name, but the Matterhorn does.

1. When the article is accepted as part of any kind of proper name.

The Arizona The Grof Spee

The Queen Elizabeth II The Norway

The Times The Times of India

The New York Times But Time (magazine)

NUMBER AND COLLECTIVES

I- NUMBER

The number of a noun is a characteristic which states whether it is plural or singular. Most nouns have a singular form used to denote one person or thing and a different plural form denoting more than one. Pronouns and verbs also have different singular and plural forms. Added to the singular and plural forms of the noun, some special forms of nouns are used to identify groups of persons, things or items in collection.

Look at the examples bellow:

Singular	Plural		Singular	Plural
Box	Boxes		Child	Children
Brush	Brushes		Foot	Feet
Fox	Foxes		Goose	Geese
Gas	Gases		Man	Men
Glass	Glasses		Mouse	Mice
Watch	Watches	Ox	Oxen	
Army	Armies		Tooth	Teeth
City	Cities		Woman	Women
Fly	Flies		Lady	Ladies
Brother	Brothers/Brethren	Calf		Calves
Half	Halves	Cloth		Cloths/Clothes

Knife	Knives	Leaf	Leaves
Life	Lives	Loaf	Loaves
Shelf	Shelves	Thief	Thieves
Wolf	Wolves	Chief	Chiefs
Dwarf	Dwarfs	Hoof	Hoofs; hooves
Reef	Reefs	Roof	Roofs
Shot	Shots	Cargo	Cargoes
Echo	Echoes	Hero	Heroes
Cannon	Cannon		
Wife	Wives	Cod	Cod
Potato	Potatoes	Deer	Deer
Banjo	Banjos	Dozen	Dozen
Day	Days	Grouse	Grouse
Halo	Halos	Salmon	Salmon
Piano	Pianos	Sheep	Sheep
Solo	Solos	Swine	Swine
Valley	Valleys	Trout	Trout

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Brother-in-law	Brothers-in-law	Bye-law	Bye-laws
By-way	By-ways	Coat-of-mail	Coats-of-mail
Cupful	Cupfuls	Mouse-trap	Mouse-traps
Hanger-on	Hangers-on	Passer-by	Passers-by
Maid-of-honour	Maids-of-honour	Son-in-law	Sons-in-law
Man-of-war	Men-of-war	spoonful	Spoonfuls

The following words have no singular:

Bellows, billiards, gallows, measles, pincers, pliers, scissors, shears, spectacles, thanks, tidings, tongs, trousers, tweezers, victuals.

EXERCICES

1. State the plural of:

Loaf, man -of-war, piano, sheep, foot, echo, penny, life, deer, ox.

2. Give the singular of:

Ladies, thieves, geese, clothes, trout, passers-by, mice, knives, teeth, boxes.

3. Fill in the bank spaces – the singular or plural form – as required:

Army	.....	Son-in-law	.....
.....	Roofs	cargo	.....
.....	Women	.....	Children
Cupful	.....	.....	Flies
Swine	.....	Halo	.....
Dwarf	.....	.....	Potatoes

4. Give the plural of:

Police-constable, daughter-in-law, step-child, looker-on, Washer-woman, housewife, fireman.

5. Give the singular of:

Glasses, hoofs, heroes, feet, pence, fish, shelves, cities, men, leaves.

6. Change all Singulars into Plurals

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| (1) I heard the echo in the cave. | (11) It was a man's boot. |
| (2) The lady spoke to the child. | (12) The burglar tried to rob my shop. |
| (3) The boy went for a loaf. | (13) The prisoner says that he is innocent. |
| (4) The man fed the calf. | (14) The girl's hat was on the peg. |
| (5) The mouse ran into a hole. | (15) His tooth hurt him badly. |
| (6) The knife was lying on the table. | (16) The farmer ploughs his field. |
| (7) The fisherman caught a trout. | (17) The horse is eating a raw carrot. |
| (8) The dwarf gave him a stick. | (18) The child cried because he was tired. |
| (9) The ship struck the reef. | (19) This is the house in which I stay. |
| (10) My foot troubled me. | |

7. Change all Singulars into Plurals and verbs into the Past Tense.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (1) The rabbit runs from the dog. | (11) the child runs to the table |
| (2) The girl wears a blue dress. | (12) He is a man of means. |
| (3) The sailor swims to his ship. | (13) I keep the bird in a cage. |
| (4) The woman catches the goose. | (14) He writes my name. |
| (5) The man shoots the deer | (15) She tells me so |
| (6) The ox eats the potato. | (16) He has a sharp knife. |
| (7) The lady prefers the rose. | (17) She takes his pencil. |

(8)The sheep runs in the valley.
(9)Her foot is badly cut.

(18) the old woman sits on that seat.
(19) the man walks slowly to his job.

II-GROUP TERMS OR COLLECTIONS

ANIMATE

an army of soldiers	a litter of cubs
a band of musicians	a litter of pups
a bench of bishops	a nest of rabbits
a bench of magistrates	a pack of rascals
a bevy of ladies	a pack of wolves
a board of directors	a plague of insects
a brood of chickens	a plague of locusts
a building of rocks	a pride of lions
a choir of singers	a school of whales
a class of scholars	a shoal of herring
a company of actors	a staff of servants
a covey of grouse	a staff of teachers
a crew of sailors	a stud of horses
a drove of cattle	a swarm of bees
a flock of birds	a swarm of insects
a flock of sheep	a team of horses
a gaggle of geese	a team of oxen
a gang of labourers	a team of players
a gang of thieves	a tribe of natives
a herd of buffaloes	a troop of monkeys
a herd of cattle	a troupe of dancers
a host of angels	a troupe of minstrels

INANIMATE

a bale of cotton, wool	a forest of trees
a batch of bread	a hail of fire
a bouquet of flowers	a hedge of bushes
a bunch of grapes	a library of books
a bundle of rags	a pack of cards
a chest of drawers	a rope of pearls
a climb trees	a set of china, clubs, tools

a cluster of diamonds, stars	a sheaf of corn
a clutch of eggs	a stack of hay
a collection of pictures	a string of beads
a crate of fruits	a suit of clothes
a fleet of motor cars, ships	a suite of furniture, rooms
a flight of aeroplanes, steps	a tuft of grass

People

at a concert	an audience
In church	a throng
In the street	a crowd
In a riot	a mob
In a rowdy scene	a rabble

Less common examples

A baren of mules	a rag of colts
a bevy of quails	a siege of herons
a cast of hawks	a skulk of foxes
a cete of badgers	a sloth of bears
a clowder of cats	a smuck of jellyfish
a coffle of slaves	a stand of plovers
a covert of coots	a string of horses
a down of hares	a tribe of goats
a fall of woodcocks	a watch of nightingales
a field of runners	a wisp of snipe
a flight of doves	a skein of wool
a flight of swallows	a budget of papers
a gang of elks	a cast of flower-pots
a gathering of clans	a crate of crockery
a herd of antelopes	a fusillade of shots
a herd of cranes	a galaxy of stars
a host of sparrows	a group of islands
a kindle of kittens	a bunch of bananas
a labour of moles	a nest of machine-guns
a leap of leopards	a peal of bells
a muster of peacocks	a punnet of strawberries
a nest of mice	a sheaf of arrows

a nide of pheasants	a shock of wheat
a pace of asses	a skein of silk
a paddling of ducks	A truss of hay
A posse of sheriff's men	

TENSES AND ASPECTS

I- TENSE

In Modern English, we distinguish only two tenses: PRESENT + PAST. Future is not a tense but a verb form because we cannot have any inflected form of the verbs to express it.

e.g. to eat

I ate (past tense)

I eat (present tense)

I will eat (future).

The unrestricted simple present

1- The Present Tense

The present tense is used to express action and events connected to the present time. It has a variety of forms.

1-1 The Unrestricted Simple Present

In the most common use of the simple present no limitation is placed on the extension of a particular state of affairs (or event) through the present time into the past and future time: the Unrestrictive use. When we say that the reference is to present time,

we mean therefore a period of time without a definite beginning or end including the present moment.

The unrestricted simple present thus often carries the implication (a) that the utterance is of general application or (b) that it holds good for all time, therefore suitable for the expression of “eternal truths” such as scientific and mathematical statements and proverbs.

e.g. Doctors swear the Hippocratic oath.

Water boils at 100°.

Two squared is four.

1-2 The Iterative Simple Present

The simple present is also commonly used to indicate that something is habitual. This use is typically associated with event verbs: the *Iterative use*.

Iterative meaning, i.e. the implication that an event or phenomenon is habitual or recurrent, is sometimes reinforced by a plural noun phrase functioning as do; in other cases, an adverbial denoting frequency may help to bring out the notion of repetition/frequency.

e.g. It rains a lot in Koumakonda.

Paul writes detective stories.

I usually order my books from Bon Pasteur.

1-3 The Simultaneous Simple Present

A less common use of the simple present, typically associated with event verbs, is the one implying that the happening in question takes place simultaneously with the moment of speaking or - occasionally - of writing: the *Simultaneous use*.

The simultaneous simple present use is often limited to speech situations such as formal declarations of the type I hereby ... as in (a), or to radio and TV commentaries of sports such as football, basket, tennis, etc. as in (b).

e.g.

a. – I declare this meeting closed.

– We hereby announce the forthcoming wedding of Yao and Yawa.

–I appoint you P.M. of Togo. (i.e. President’s decree)

- I declare you husband and wife.

b. Adebayor heads the ball to Alexis Romao; Romao passes to Atakora Lalawe; and Atakora scores the goal!!!

1-4 The Historic Simple Present

The simple present tense is sometimes used to refer to past events or states: the historic use. In this use, a past event or state is described as if it were falling with the time span of the present moment. The historic present may be found:

a. In popular style of story telling

e.g. "... and I was just dozing off in front of the TV when my son rushes in shouting that the house is on fire."

b. With communication verbs such as hear, learn, tell, write to express the present effect of information received in the past.

e.g. I hear/ learn you've got a new job.

c. In newspaper headlines describing recent events.

e.g. Faure visits Lisbon.

d. In photographic captions

e.g. Pope Francis gives his first blessing.

1-5 The Future Simple Present

The simple present is also used to express future events or states: ***the Future simple present***. It is used to refer to future events –less commonly, states – which are conceived as "certain", either because they are determined in advance by calendar or timetable, or because they are part of a plan or an arrangement thought of as unalterable

e.g. Next X'mas falls on Friday.

Mr. Narto leaves at seven tomorrow.

2-1 The Simple Past Tense

The basic use of the simple past tense is to imply a definite point of period in the past excluding the present moment.

2-2 The Hypothetical Past Tense

It refers to a non-fact, and is typically found in adverbial clauses of rejected condition i.e. those denoting a condition which is not (likely to be) fulfilled.

The verb phrase in the subordinate clause typically consists of ***would/ should+ infinitive*** (but other auxiliaries such as ***could*** or ***might*** are also possible). The verb phrase in the sub-clause may also be complex; it consists of past tense forms ***could, might or would*** (denoting volition) + ***infinitive***.

Sub-clause

Subordinate clause

e.g. If you really studied your lesson, you wouldn't fail your exam.

If I could afford it, I should certainly buy a plane.

If Mary would take your advice, there would be no further trouble.

2-3 The Attitudinal Past Tense

Whereas the hypothetical past is found in the subordinate clauses, the attitudinal use of the simple past occurs in independent clauses expressing a question, request or suggestion. Its effect is to make the question/request/ suggestion less direct, implying a polite attitude on the part of the speaker.

e.g. Did you want me?

Yes, I hoped you would give me a hand with this little job.

We wondered if you would look after the baby for an hour.

N.B. The use of the past progressive would strike a further overtone of politeness.

e.g. We were wondering if you would look after the baby for an hour.

MODAL AUXILIARIES

Modal auxiliaries are also known as helping verbs. They help other verbs in formation of sentences.

The following are Modal Auxiliaries:

- a- can and could
- b- may and might
- c- shall and should
- d- will and would
- e- must and ought to
- f- dare
- g- need

1. CAN and COULD

1-1 Can and could are used to express ability, capacity, or capability.

“Can” is used in the Present Tense, while “Could” is used in the Past Tense

e.g. Lambo can run fast if he likes.

Akua could run faster if she were not tired.

I can answer this question extempore.

Korkor could do well in the examination if she worked hard.

1-2 Can and could are also used to make

requests or ask favours.

e.g. Can I use your pen to write a letter to my mother?

Could I use your telephone to ring my neighbour?

Can you help this poor man with some money and food?

Could you please check up your accounts?

NOTE: Could is more polite than can.

2. MAY and MIGHT

- **Might is used in the past tense in place of may.**

e.g. He asked me if he might go there.

She asked me if she might come at eight p.m.

- **May and might are used to express permission.**

May I go out, sir?

Might I come in, sir?

Note: Might is more polite than may, but its usage in this sense is less common.

- May is also used to express wish, prayer, or curse.

e.g.

May God help you! (prayer)

May you succeed in your new venture! (prayer)

May I have a look at your album of postage stamps!(wish)

May he die! (curse)

3. SHALL and SHOULD

- **Should** is used in the past tense in place of **shall**.

e.g. He told me that he should do his duty.

- **Shall** is used with the first person singular and plural in the Future Tense.

e.g. I shall go there to participate in the Spot Painting Contest.

We shall go to town to buy some necessary stationery items.

- **Shall is also used as a threat.**

e.g. You shall have to apologize.

The miscreant shall be punished.

- **Should is used to express duty or obligation.**

e.g. You should do your duty. (duty)

You should keep your promise. (obligation)

You should obey your parents. (duty)

- **Shall is also used to prohibit somebody from something.**

e.g.: You shall not tell lies.

You shall not pluck the flowers.

4. WILL and WOULD

- **Would is used in the Past Tense in place of will.**

e.g. She told us that she would not tell a lie.

- **Will is used with second person and third person singular and plural in the Future Tense.**

e.g. You will return the library books within a fortnight.

He will dance in the party if he is asked to do so.

They will go to a picnic next Sunday if their plan materialises.

- **Would is used to express a strong wish.**

e.g. Would that I were a billionaire !

Would that I were a king!

Would that he had lived to confess his sins.

5. MUST and OUGHT TO

- **Must and ought are used to express duty, obligation, determination, expectation and probability.**

e.g. You ought to love your country. (obligation)

You must obey your elders. (duty)

Abo ought to come soon. (expectation)

Yao ought to come first in her class.

(probability)

We must win this match. (determination)

Note: After “ought” we must write ‘to’.

6. DARE

- **Dare is used to express courageousness.**

e.g. How dare you touch me?

How dare you tell me a cock and bull story?

Note: When “dare” is used as an auxiliary, never use “to” with it. But when it is used to challenge somebody, “to” is used after it. In such a case, “dare” is used as a finite verb.

e.g. Adamu dared me to kill the snake.

Kwabena dared me to slap him on the face.

7. NEED

- **Need is used to express some necessity or obligation, generally in an Interrogative Sentence in the Present Tense.**

e.g.: Need I speak more words after what I

have already said in plainly candid terms?

Need I give you more assurance after what I

have already promised?

QUESTION TAG

A- THE NEGATIVE AND THE INTERRONEGATIVE SENTENCES

I- THE NEGATIVE FORM

1.1 Negative of ordinary verbs

The negative form of ordinary verbs is built with the auxiliary “**DO**” and the adverb “**NOT**”.
(**DO + NOT**)

The use of “**DO**” varies according to the number of the subject or pronoun and the tense of the verb. The reason why we often use “**DO, DOES or DID**” is the formation of the negative.
(**DO / DOES / DID + NOT**)

e.g:

* (affir.) Tedi has an exam to take.

(neg.) Tedi **does** not have an exam to take.

* (affir.) They go to the cinema.

(neg.) They **do** not go to the cinema.

*(affir.) The spectators enjoyed the victory of their team.

(neg.) The spectators **did** not enjoy the victory of their team.

1.2 The Negative of Auxiliary Verbs

The negative form of auxiliary verbs is formed by adding “**NOT**” to the auxiliary verb used in the sentence.

eg: (Affir.): She will go home.

(neg.): She will not go home.

(Affir.): You may talk to the teacher. (Neg): You may not talk to the teacher.

(Affir.): This man can drive a truck. (Neg): This man cannot drive a truck.

(Affir.): We are travelling to the country. (Neg): We are not travelling to the country.

(Affir.): We have seen the book. (Neg.): We have not seen the book.

2- THE INTERRO-NEGATIVE FORMS

The interro-negative form is built with an inversion of the subject and a question mark at the end of the sentence.

eg: (Affir.): We have sent the mail. (Interro-Neg.): Have we not sent the mail?

(Affir.): She bought a BMW last week-end. (Interro-Neg.): Did she not buy a BMW last week-end?

(Affir.): You will do your assignment before going to bed.

(Interro-Neg.): Will you not do your assignment before going to bed?

II – THE QUESTION TAG

A question is a short interrogative or interro-negative phrase that we use after a statement, especially when we expect approbation (an agreement on what we have just said). Generally, it is built with an auxiliary, a personal pronoun and a question mark. It is often marked with contraction because question tags are used in oral expression.

The question tag of affirmative sentences takes an interro-negative form while the tag of a negative sentence is interrogative.

AFFIRMATIVE: AUXILIARY (in the interro-negative) + PERSONAL PRONOUN

Ali sells fruits on the market place, doesn't he?

We signed the contract last month, didn't we?

They should work hard, shouldn't they?

NEGATIVE: AUXILIARY (in the interrogative) + PERSONAL PRONOUN

Those men do not believe in God, do they?

The students have not seen the teacher coming, have they?

The boy will not go to school tomorrow, will he?

1- THE QUESTION TAG OF ORDINARY VERBS

This form of question tag is built using DO, DOES and DID.

e.g. We do not eat mangoes, do we?

She likes horror movies, doesn't she?

I spoke to the partners yesterday, didn't I?

We have spent much time waiting, haven't we?

2- THE QUESTION TAG OF AUXILIARY VERBS

In the case of auxiliary verbs the question tag is built using the auxiliary verbs which is used in the statement.

e.g. You are a good student, aren't you?

She couldn't walk when she woke up, could she?

He can cook fried egg, can't he?

Shoukrana has a nice purse, hasn't she?

As for Kodjo, he doesn't drink beer at all, does he?

3- SPECIAL CASES

1. I + TO BE

The tag for "I am" is "aren't I?"

e.g. I am a good student, aren't I?

I am the new king, aren't I?

2. THE IMPERATIVE SENTENCES (GIVING ORDERS)

The question tag for "imperative sentences" is built with WILL or SHALL. There is no interro-negative form for this case.

e.g. Come here, will you?

Shut up, will you?

Let's go, shall we?

Don't come here, will you?

Don't go out today, will you?

3. SENTENCES USING NEARLY, BARELY, SCARCELY, HARDLY

The words nearly, barely, scarcely and hardly often have a negative meaning. So, when they are used in a sentence, the tag is in the interrogative.

e.g. She nearly fainted, did she?

He scarcely comes to classes, does he?

Note: Hardly and scarcely can be used to mean almost never.

4. SENTENCES WITH NOBODY, SOMEBODY, ANYBODY, etc.

When the pronouns such as **nobody**, **somebody**, **someone**, **anybody**, and **everybody** are used in a statement, they are replaced with **THEY** in the tag.

e.g. Nobody likes football here, do they?

Everybody hates lies, don't they?

SINCE – FOR – AGO

I- SINCE

Since is used to show the starting point of an action that began some time in the past but continues in the present or at least continued in the past and was not yet completed at the time when a particular past event that is referred to occurred. Therefore, it is used with the present perfect or present perfect continuous and depending on the context, with the past perfect or past perfect continuous.

e.g.

1. The beautiful lady has been singing since 1997.
2. I haven't seen him since he brilliantly won the scholarship.
3. Tricky Amlima has been telling lies since childhood.
4. Togo has been independent since 1960.
5. When I met her she had already been living alone since the death of her two parents.
6. The day I got the A' Level, I had not felt so strong and proud since my Baptism day.
7. I can tell from their frown face that they have been waiting since 10 o'clock.
8. Since the end of the war, the Ivorians have never been so worried. Actually, it is understandable because Drogba is about to shoot a miss-and-lose penalty.

N.B. Be careful not to confuse the above 'since' with the conjunction 'since' meaning 'because' or 'as'.

e.g.

Since you are the owner of the bag, open it yourself.

I thought that, since he succeeded the exam, an impromptu party would do him some good.

II- FOR

For is used to indicate the duration of an action, i.e. how long the action takes place or in other words to indicate a period of time. The same rule as in the case of 'since' applies with regard to the tenses.

e.g.

1. I've lived in this house for eleven years.
2. The lazy student has slept in class for almost one hour.
3. Hello buddy! Listen: you urgently have to come NOW. We have been waiting for you for forty five minutes and the guest says he can't wait any longer.
4. They had lived in that country for fifteen years.

5. When the police arrested the criminal, he had been on the run for almost one year.

III- AGO

Ago is used to indicate the time that has elapsed from a particular action to the moment somebody is speaking. The particularity of 'ago' is that it is always used with the simple past tense. This is because the past action referred to is completed or ended.

e.g.

1. He met her a week ago.
2. My father came back from Wahala two days ago.
3. We caught the thief only twenty minutes ago.
4. My two children left for the far west six months ago. I wonder what happened to them.

THE REPORTED SPEECH

It is a grammatical structure which consists in telling or accounting for something another person said directly some time ago, recently or at a time far back in the past. In the reported speech (indirect speech) the speaker tells of an event or a statement someone talked about or put before. Because the statement he is making is not a repetition but a new statement, there is a series of changes based on the nature of the **reporting verbs, the sentences, the person, time, and place** that we need to consider when turning sentences from the direct to the indirect speech.

I- The Nature of the Sentences

Turning sentences from the direct speech to the indirect speech requires a clear identification of the type of sentences we have to work on. Students or language users must know if the sentence is a statement (a declarative sentence), a question (interrogative sentence) or an order (imperative sentence). This first step orients the various changes in reported sentences.

Example of sentences:

1- Declaratives

She has downloaded the literature course.

You can speak good English.

Students are very hardworking.

2- Interrogatives:

What is your name?

Can you drive a car?

Have they come on time?

3- Imperatives:

Come closer.

Stand up!

Come here!

II- Reporting Verbs

Reporting verbs are the verbs that you use in order to report a sentence. Every type of sentence has typical reporting verbs that language users or students have to use in order to report what has been said before.

1- Statements or Declarative Sentences:

For reported statements, we often use verbs such as: to say, to tell, to state, to affirm, to reply, to object, to explain, to claim, etc.

2- Questions or Interrogative Sentences:

Reported questions often impose the use of: to ask, to worry, to wonder, to want to know, to enquire, etc.

3- Orders or Imperative Sentences

In the case of reported orders verbs often used are: to recommend, to command, to request, to order, etc.

III- THE OCCURRENCE OF CHANGES

The changes often concern pronouns (personal, possessives, reflexives, and demonstratives), adverbs (of place and time) and tenses.

1- CHANGE OF PRONOUNS

a- Personal Pronouns

Direct speech	Becomes	Indirect speech
I, you, he, she, it.		He, she, it. (I, you.)
We, you, they.		They (we, you.)
Me, you, him, her, it		Him, her, it (me, you.)
Us, you, them		Them (us, you.)

b- Possessives -Adjectives

Direct speech	Becomes	Indirect speech
My, your, his, her, its		His, hers, its, (my, your.)

Our, your, their		Their, (our, your)
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- Pronouns

Direct speech	Becomes	Indirect speech
Mine, yours, his, hers		His, her (mine, yours).
Ours, yours, theirs		Theirs (ours, yours).

- Reflexives

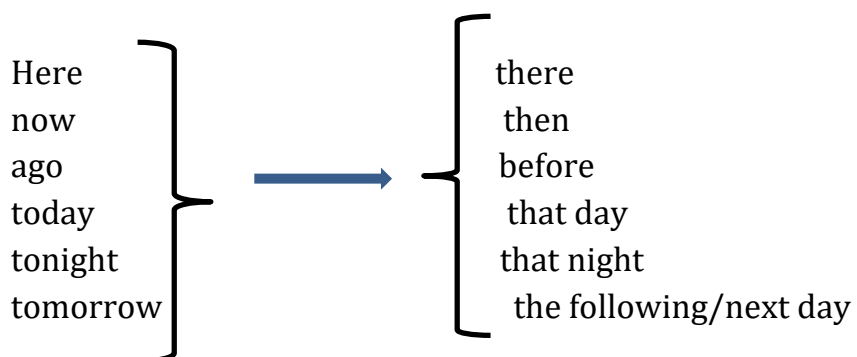
Direct speech	Becomes	Indirect speech
Myself, yourself Himself, herself, itself		Himself, herself, itself (myself, yourself)
Ourselves, yourselves, themselves		Themselves, (ourselves, yourselves)

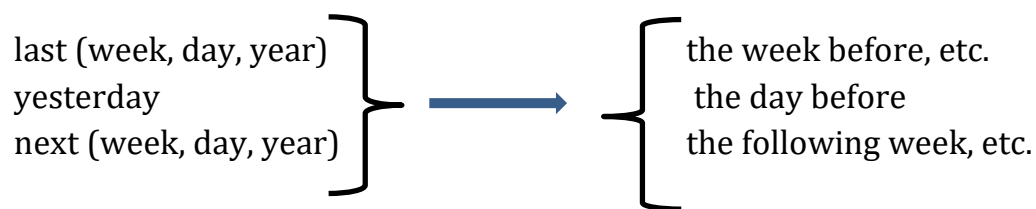
- Demonstratives

Direct speech	Becomes	Indirect speech
This		That
these		those

2- CHANGE OF ADVERBS

The change of adverbs concerns adverbs of time and place. And these changes describe the possible movements in space or the passing of time before the reported speech is built by the one reporting. The following changes occur with adverbs of time and place:





3- CHANGE OF TENSES

The change of tenses relates to the time that has just gone between the moment the direct speech has been produced and the moment the one reporting has talked.

	DIRECT SPEECH	INDIRECT SPEECH
PRESENT	Simple present	Simple past
	Present perfect	Past perfect
	Present progressive	Past progressive
	Present perfect prog	prog. Past perfect prog
PAST	Simple past	Past Perfect
	Past perfect	Past perfect
	Past progressive	Past perfect prog.
	Past perfect prog	Past perfect prog.
FUTURE	Simple future	Conditional
	Future perfect	Conditional perfect
	Future perfect progressive	Cond perfect prog.
	Conditional	----- Conditional
	Imperative	Infinitive

Considering the various changes above, turn the following sentences adding a subject and reporting verb.

- 1- "I am sick and tired"
- 2- "You will work in collaboration with the supervisors."
- 3- "Come over here."
- 4- "We did the maximum two days ago."
- 5- "Mum has been admitted for an X-ray examination."

- 6- "She was planning a trip to the Kilimanjaro, when the inundation occurred."
- 7- "The boys had been summoned for a medical checkup."
- 8- "We shall buy a Prado for Ankou's birthday gift."
- 9- "The book was not found."
- 10- "They could expect better results."
- 11- "We should have made greater provisions."
- 12- "She had been protesting as an activist."
- 13- "The room was empty on our arrival."
- 14- "Bend your knees and sit down."
- 15- "I should have been careful to notice this."

IV- Reported Questions

The reporting of questions is done according to the type of questions asked namely the auxiliary question or Yes/No Questions and the "WH/how Questions.

1- Auxiliary/ Yes or No Questions

The reported speech of these questions requires the use of "IF" or "WHETHER".

e.g. "Will you come to the club meeting?"

He wanted to know if he would come to the meeting.

"May I talk to you, please?"

He asked me if he might talk to me.

Practice with the following questions:

"Can you drive a bulldozer?"

"Shall we be waiting for the contractors?"

"Could one see the waves from here?"

"Must we work hard now?"

"Is he your brother?"

2- "WH" and "How" Questions:

In the reported speech of these questions, the question words are used before the subject of the sentence.

e.g. "When is the party?"

She asked me when the party was.

"Who is this man?"

They wondered who that man was.

Practice with the following questions:

"Where are we heading now?"

"How did you achieve the qualities you have?"

"Whose is this car?"

"What is the time?"

"At which time are we meeting tonight?"

Note:

1- **There is no change in tense when:**

② **The sentence in the direct speech states a general truth**

e.g.

They said "The sun rises in the east and sets in the west."

They said that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west.

The biologist said "Only women bear pregnancies."

The biologist said that only women bear pregnancies.

② **The reporting verb is not conjugated in the past.**

e.g. She says "I am happy"

She says that she is happy.

I have declared "We shall overcome this system."

He has declared that they shall overcome that system.

2- **Sentences in the reported speech do not bear the quotation marks.**

3- **The reported question does not take an interrogation mark at the end of the sentence.**

V- SPECIAL CASES

Some sentences embody **two statements**, or **statements** and **questions**. The reporting of such sentences requires an identification of the reporting verb and then its use before the question or statement.

e.g.

"I will call her first and she will send a copy of the contract."

He said he would call her first and she would send a copy of the contract.

"My name is Karou. What is your name?"

He said his name was Karou and asked me what my name was.

"Are you done? I am about to finish."

He asked me if I was done and told me he was about to finish.

