Intermediate Grammar Project

2026-01-11

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1 Intermediate Grammar Project

This is my submission for the project of the Intermediate Grammar Specialization.

2 Introduction

This grammar scrapbook is the capstone project for the **Intermediate Grammar Specialization**.
Its main purpose is to review, organize, and reflect on the most important grammar points covered throughout the program, while connecting them to **real-life English usage**.

Rather than presenting grammar as isolated rules, this scrapbook focuses on **how grammar actually appears in everyday communication**, such as conversations, classroom language, media, and professional contexts. Each grammar point is explained in **my own words**, followed by original examples and real-world examples that show how English is used naturally.

The scrapbook includes **15 key grammar topics**, ranging from verb tenses and modal structures to adjective order and clause reduction. Each page follows a consistent structure to make the content clear and accessible:
a brief explanation of the rule, examples created by me, real-world language samples, and common mistakes learners often make.

This project also helped me become more aware of grammar in the English I encounter daily. While working on it, I noticed how often these structures appear in spoken English, written texts, and instructional language. As a result, the scrapbook is not only a review tool, but also a personal reference that I can return to in the future.

Overall, this grammar scrapbook represents both a **summary of what I have learned** and a demonstration of my ability to **use and explain English grammar meaningfully**, beyond memorization of rules.

3 Present Perfect Simple

3.1 Rule

We use the **present perfect** to connect a past action to the present.
The exact time is not important; the result or connection **now** is what matters.

3.2 Form

have/has + past participle (V3)

- **I/You/We/They** have + V3 → *I have finished.*
- **He/She/It** has + V3 → *She has finished.*

3.3 When to use it

- **Life experience** (no specific time): *I've visited Ecuador.*
- **Recent past with a present result**: *She has broken her arm* (it affects now).
- **Unfinished situation up to now** (often with *yet/already/just*): *I haven't decided yet.*

> Tip
>
> If you say **when** it happened (*yesterday, in 2020, last week*), you usually need **simple past**, not present perfect.

3.4 My example

I have taught statistics for years, so I have seen many common grammar mistakes.

Why it works: The action started in the past and has a clear connection to now (my experience today).

3.5 Real-world example (song)

U2 – "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" (official music video)

> I haven't found what I'm looking for.

Why it works: The search started in the past and is still unfinished now, so the present connection is clear.

3.6 Common mistakes

- *I have lived in Costa Rica for 3 years.* (still true now)
  I lived in Costa Rica for 3 years. (sounds finished)
- *I have seen that movie.* (experience)
  I saw that movie last night. (specific time → simple past)

3.7 References

- British Council: Present perfect
- Cambridge Dictionary: Present perfect simple

4 Present Perfect Progressive

4.1 Rule

We use the **present perfect progressive** to show that an action **started in the past** and is **still continuing now**, or has **just recently stopped** but its effects are still visible.
It emphasizes **duration** (how long) or the **ongoing activity**, not just the result.

4.2 Form

have/has + been + verb-ing

- **I/You/We/They** have been + V-ing → *I have been studying.*
- **He/She/It** has been + V-ing → *She has been studying.*

4.2.1 Common time expressions

- **for** + period → *for two hours, for three years*
- **since** + starting point → *since 2020, since Monday*
- **lately / recently / all day / all week**

4.3 When to use it

- **Duration up to now** (ongoing): *I have been working here since 2022.*
- **Temporary activity** (not permanent): *She has been staying with a friend this week.*
- **Recent activity with present evidence**: *You've been running* (you're sweaty now).

> Tip
>
> If you want to emphasize the **result** more than the duration, you often use **present perfect simple** instead. Example: *I've written three emails* (result) vs. *I've been writing emails* (activity).

4.4 My example

I have been building this grammar scrapbook for several weeks, and I'm still improving each page.

Why it works: The project started in the past, it has continued over time, and it is still ongoing now.

4.5 Real-world example (video)

Bruno Mars – "Uptown Funk"

> *Don't believe me, just watch.*

(We use the song mainly as a **multimedia example**. Now here's a present perfect progressive line that appears in many real conversations and interviews:)

Interview-style example (real-world usage):
We have been working on this project for months.

Why it works: It highlights **how long** the work has continued up to the present.

4.6 Common mistakes

- *I have been living in Costa Rica for 3 years.* (duration emphasized; still true)
  I have lived in Costa Rica for 3 years. (also possible; more "state/result")
  I am living in Costa Rica for 3 years. (incorrect)
- *She has been studying all morning.* (activity + duration)
  She has been studied all morning. (wrong form)
- *They have been waiting since 9:00.*
  They have been waiting from 9:00. (use **since**, not from, for a starting point)

4.7 Mini comparison: Simple vs Progressive

- **Present perfect simple** → result / completed count: *I've read 5 articles.*
- **Present perfect progressive** → activity / duration: *I've been reading articles all day.*

4.8 References

- British Council: Present perfect continuous
- Cambridge Dictionary: Present perfect continuous

5 Past Perfect Simple

5.1 Rule

We use the **past perfect simple** to talk about an action that was **completed before another action in the past**.
It helps us make the order of past events clear when the sequence is important.

5.2 Form

had + past participle (V3)

- I / You / We / They / He / She / It **had + V3**
  → *She had finished the report.*

5.3 When to use it

- **Two past actions, one happened first**:
  She left because she had finished her work.
- **Reported speech** (looking back further in time):
  He said he had already seen the movie.
- **Past cause → past result**:
  They were tired because they had worked all night.

> Tip
>
> If the order of events is already clear (for example, with **before/after**), the simple past is sometimes enough.

5.4 My example

By the time the class started, I had already prepared all the materials.

Why it works:
Preparing the materials happened **before** the class started (both are in the past, but one is earlier).

5.5 Real-world example (TV series)

Friends – Season 2

> *I had never seen anything like that before.*

Why it works:
The experience (seeing something) happened **before** the moment the character is talking about in the past.

> **Note**
>
> Past perfect is very common in TV series when characters explain background information or earlier experiences.

5.6 Common mistakes

- *When I arrived, they had already left.*
  When I arrived, they already left. (sequence unclear)
- *She had finished her homework before she went out.*
  She finished her homework before she had gone out. (wrong tense order)
- *She had went home.*
  She had gone home. (use past participle, not past tense)

5.7 Mini timeline

- **Earlier past** → *had + V3*
- **Later past** → *simple past*

Example:
*I realized I **had forgotten** my keys when I **got** to the office.*

5.8 References

- British Council: Past perfect
- Cambridge Dictionary: Past perfect simple

6 Past Perfect Progressive

6.1 Rule

We use the **past perfect progressive** to show that an action **started before a specific moment in the past** and **was still in progress up to that moment**.
The focus is on the **duration or ongoing nature** of the activity, not just the result.

6.2 Form

had + been + verb-ing

- I / You / We / They / He / She / It **had been + V-ing**
  → *She had been working all night.*

6.3 When to use it

- **Duration before a past moment**:
  He was tired because he had been studying for hours.
- **Background action interrupted by another past event**:
  She had been waiting when the bus finally arrived.
- **Explaining causes in the past**:
  They were angry because they had been arguing.

> Tip
>
> If you want to emphasize the **completed result**, use **past perfect simple** instead.
> *He had written three emails* (result) vs. *He had been writing emails* (activity).

6.4 My example

Before the semester ended, I had been reviewing grammar topics every week.

Why it works:
The reviewing started earlier and continued **up to a specific moment in the past** (the end of the semester).

6.5 Real-world example (TV series – transcript)

South Park – Season 14, Episode 13 (episode script)

> *…a cult, in existence for years, that had been waiting for Cthulhu's arrival!*

Why it works:
The cult started waiting **before** that past moment in the story and the waiting continued **up to that point**.
The focus is on the **long duration** ("for years") before the past event.

6.6 Common mistakes

- *She was tired because she had been working all day.*
  She was tired because she had worked all day. (possible, but focuses on result, not duration)
- *They had been wait for hours.*
  They had been waiting for hours.
- *He had been studying since two hours.*
  He had been studying for two hours.

6.7 Mini timeline

- **Earlier past (ongoing)** → *had been + V-ing*
- **Later past event** → *simple past*

Example:
*I **had been driving** for hours when I **realized** I was lost.*

6.8 Mini comparison

- **Past perfect simple** → completed action
  She had finished the report.
- **Past perfect progressive** → duration / background action
  She had been working on the report all morning.

7 Modals of Possibility and Probability

7.1 Rule

We use **modals of possibility and probability** to express how sure or unsure we are about a situation.
They help us show **degrees of certainty**, not facts.

7.2 Main modals and meaning

Modal	Degree of certainty	Meaning
might / may / could	low–medium	something is possible
must	very high	we are almost sure
can't / couldn't	very low	something is almost impossible

7.3 Form

modal + base verb

- *She **might** be at home.*
- *They **must** be tired.*
- *He **can't** be serious.*

> Tip
>
> These modals are followed by the **base form** of the verb (no *to*, no *-s*).

7.4 When to use them

- **Guessing about the present**:
  *He isn't answering — he **might** be busy.*
- **Logical conclusions**:
  *The lights are off; they **must** be asleep.*
- **Rejecting an idea**:
  *That **can't** be the answer.*

7.5 My example

Some students might feel confused at first, but they must improve with practice.

Why it works:
The speaker shows **uncertainty** (*might*) and then a **strong logical belief* (*must*).

7.6 Real-world example (TV series – dialogue)

Friends

> *She must be stuck in traffic.*

Why it works:
The speaker does not have complete information, but based on the situation, they make a **logical conclusion** using **must**.

> **Note**
>
> In everyday conversations and TV series, these modals are very common for guessing, explaining, or reacting to situations.

7.7 Real-world example (news-style language)

> *The increase in temperatures could affect agricultural production.*

Why it works:
News and reports often use **could** to express **possible consequences** without sounding too certain.

7.8 Common mistakes

- *She must to be tired.*
  She must be tired.
- *He might is late.*
  He might be late.
- *That mustn't be true.* (wrong meaning)
  That can't be true. (logical impossibility)

7.9 Mini comparison

- **might / may / could** → possibility
  It might rain later.
- **must** → strong probability
  It must be raining; the streets are wet.
- **can't** → logical impossibility
  He can't be at home; I just saw him leave.

7.10 Why this grammar point matters

These modals allow speakers to sound **natural, polite, and realistic** when they are not 100 % sure, which is very common in real communication.

8 Phrasal Modals

8.1 Rule

Phrasal modals are multi-word expressions that work like modal verbs. They express ideas such as **obligation, advice, expectation, or ability**. They are common in everyday English because they often sound more natural than single modals.

8.2 Common phrasal modals and meaning

Phrasal modal	Meaning	Typical context
have (got) to	strong obligation / necessity	rules, deadlines
be able to	ability (present/future/past)	skills, possibility
ought to	advice / expectation (moral "should")	recommendations
be supposed to	expectation / rule / plan	duties, rules, schedules
be going to	planned intention / strong prediction	plans, evidence

8.3 Form and grammar notes

8.3.1 have (got) to

- **Present:** *I have to leave. / I've got to leave.*
- **Past:** *I had to leave.*
- **Negative:** *I don't have to leave.* (no necessity)

> Tip
>
> **Don't have to** = not necessary
> **Mustn't** = prohibited (very different meaning)

8.3.2 ought to

- *You ought to study more.*
  ("to" is part of the structure)

8.3.3 be able to

- *I am able to help today.*

- *I was able to fix it yesterday.* (useful when "could" is ambiguous)

8.3.4 be supposed to

- *We are supposed to submit it by Friday.* (expectation / rule)
- *The bus is supposed to arrive at 8.* (schedule)

8.4 When to use them

- **Obligation / necessity:** *I've got to finish this today.*
- **Advice / expectation:** *You ought to sleep earlier.*
- **Ability across tenses:** *She was able to solve it quickly.*
- **Rules / expectations / plans:** *You're supposed to sign here.*

8.5 My example

I've got to update my Quarto site this week, and I'm supposed to submit the final link on time.

Why it works:
Both expressions communicate obligation/expectation in a natural way.

8.6 Real-world example (TV series–style dialogue)

Friends (dialogue style)

> *We're supposed to be there at 7.*
> *I've got to go now.*

Why it works:
These phrasal modals sound very natural in spoken English. They show: - **expected plan/rule** (*supposed to*) - **strong necessity** (*have got to*)

> **Note**
>
> If video clips are blocked, a dialogue-style "real-world" example still reflects authentic spoken English (the way people actually talk in sitcoms and daily life).

8.7 Common mistakes

- *I have to to go.*
  I have to go.
- *You ought study more.*
  You ought to study more.
- *I don't have to go = I mustn't go.*
  I don't have to go (not necessary)
  I mustn't go (not allowed)
- *I am able to go yesterday.*
  I was able to go yesterday.

8.8 Mini comparison

- **must** (strong obligation, often formal)
  I must finish this report.
- **have to / have got to** (strong obligation, very common in conversation)
  I've got to finish this report.
- **should / ought to** (advice)
  You ought to rest.
- **can / be able to** (ability; "be able to" works better across tenses)
  I wasn't able to join the meeting yesterday.

9 Order of Adjectives

9.1 Rule

In English, when we use **more than one adjective before a noun**, they usually follow a **natural and fixed order**.
Native speakers don't think about the rule consciously, but changing the order often sounds unnatural.

9.2 The usual adjective order

Opinion → Size → Age → Shape → Color → Origin → Material → Purpose → Noun

9.2.1 Example pattern

*a **beautiful small old round brown Italian wooden coffee** table*

> Tip
>
> You don't need to use all categories. Most sentences use **two or three adjectives** at most.

9.3 Common categories with examples

Category	Example adjectives
Opinion	beautiful, interesting, terrible
Size	big, small, tiny
Age	old, new, modern
Shape	round, square, long
Color	red, blue, dark
Origin	Italian, Costa Rican

Category	Example adjectives
Material	wooden, metal, plastic
Purpose	coffee (table), running (shoes)

9.4 My examples

- *She bought a **beautiful small old house** near the university.*
- *I use a **large new metal water bottle** every day.*

Why they work:
The adjectives follow the expected order, so the sentences sound natural and fluent.

9.5 Real-world example (everyday language)

a big old red bus

Why it works:
The speaker describes **size → age → color** before the noun, which follows the natural English pattern.

> **Note**
>
> This order appears constantly in everyday speech, advertising, and product descriptions, even if speakers are not aware of the rule.

9.6 Common mistakes

- *a red big car*
  a big red car
- *a wooden old table*
  an old wooden table
- *an Italian beautiful painting*
  a beautiful Italian painting

9.7 Mini practice check

Which one sounds better?

- *a small black leather bag*
- *a leather black small bag*

9.8 Why this grammar point matters

Correct adjective order helps learners sound **more natural and fluent**, even when they already know many adjectives.

10 Adjective Clauses – Subject Pronouns

10.1 Rule

An **adjective clause** (relative clause) describes a noun.
When the relative pronoun (**who / that / which**) is the **subject of the clause**, we **must keep it** (we cannot omit it).

10.2 Which pronoun to use

- **who** → for people
  *The student **who** asked the question is here.*
- **which** → for things/animals
  *The book **which** explains this topic is helpful.*
- **that** → for people or things (more informal/neutral)
  *The app **that** I use is free.*

> Tip
>
> If the pronoun is the **subject**, you cannot delete it: *The teacher **who** explains clearly is popular.*
> *The teacher explains clearly is popular.*

10.3 How to recognize a "subject pronoun" clause

Look inside the adjective clause:

- If **who/that/which** is doing the verb → it's the **subject**.
  - *who **teaches…*** → "who" teaches (subject)

Examples: - *The man **who lives** next door is friendly.*
- *The movie **that starts** at 7 is sold out.*
- *The device **which measures** rainfall is accurate.*

10.4 My examples

- *I have a colleague **who teaches** online statistics.*
- *This is a website **that helps** learners practice grammar.*
- *I bought a sensor **which measures** temperature and humidity.*

Why they work:
In each adjective clause, the pronoun (**who/that/which**) is the **subject** of the verb (*teaches / helps / measures*), so it cannot be omitted.

10.5 Real-world example (everyday language)

> *Looking for someone **who can help** with English?*

Why it works:
This type of sentence is common in ads, posts, and conversations.
The clause **who can help** describes *someone*, and **who** is the subject of **can help**.

> **Note**
>
> "Who/that/which as subject" clauses appear constantly in real communication: advertisements, job posts, classroom instructions, and casual speech.

10.6 Common mistakes

- *I know a person can fix computers.*
  *I know a person **who** can fix computers.*
- *This is the book explains adjective clauses.*
  *This is the book **that** explains adjective clauses.*
- *The phone which I bought yesterday is expensive.* (not wrong, but too formal sometimes)
  *The phone **that** I bought yesterday is expensive.* (more common in speech)

10.7 Mini comparison: subject vs. object pronoun (important)

- **Subject pronoun (cannot omit)**
  *The woman **who lives** here is my neighbor.*
  (who = subject of lives)
- **Object pronoun (can omit)**
  *The woman (**who**) I met yesterday is my neighbor.*
  (who = object of met → optional)

10.8 Why this grammar point matters

Using adjective clauses correctly helps learners write and speak with more detail, without creating long, repetitive sentences.

11 Reduced Adjective Clauses

11.1 Rule

A **reduced adjective clause** is a shorter version of an adjective (relative) clause.
We reduce the clause **when the relative pronoun is the subject** and the verb is: - **be + verb-ing**, or - **be + adjective / noun**

The goal is to make sentences **shorter and more natural**, especially in writing.

11.2 Basic reduction patterns

11.2.1 1. be + verb-ing → verb-ing

- Full clause:
  *The student **who is studying** online needs help.*
- Reduced clause:
  *The student **studying** online needs help.*

11.2.2 2. be + adjective / noun → adjective / noun phrase

- Full clause:
  *The device **that is new** works well.*
- Reduced clause:
  *The **new** device works well.*

> Tip
>
> You can only reduce the clause if **who/that/which is the subject** of the adjective clause.

11.3 When you can reduce (and when you can't)

11.3.1 You can reduce:

- *The report **that is written** in English is clear.*
  *→ The report **written** in English is clear.*

11.3.2 You cannot reduce:

- *The report **that I wrote** is clear.*
  ("that" is the **object** of *wrote*, not the subject)

11.4 My examples

- *Students **taking** online courses need good time management skills.*
- *The files **stored** on the server are backed up daily.*
- *Equipment **used** in the lab must be cleaned.*

Why they work:
In each case, the relative pronoun is the **subject**, so the clause can be reduced.

11.5 Real-world example (formal writing style)

> *Applicants **interested** in the position should apply online.*

Why it works:
This structure is very common in **job ads, instructions, and academic writing**. The reduced clause makes the sentence clear and concise.

> **Note**
>
> Reduced adjective clauses are especially frequent in **written English** (job postings, manuals, reports).

11.6 Common mistakes

- *The man talking to I met yesterday.*
  *The man **who I met** yesterday.* (cannot reduce)
- *The students are studying online need help.*
  *The students **studying** online need help.*
- *The report that written in English is long.*
  *The report **written** in English is long.*

11.7 Mini comparison: full vs. reduced

- **Full:** *The book **which is used** in the course is expensive.*
- **Reduced:** *The book **used** in the course is expensive.*
- **Full:** *The people **who are waiting** outside are students.*
- **Reduced:** *The people **waiting** outside are students.*

11.8 Why this grammar point matters

Reduced adjective clauses help learners write **more efficiently and professionally**, especially in academic and formal contexts.

12 Gerunds vs. Infinitives

12.1 Rule

Some verbs in English are followed by a **gerund** (*verb + -ing*), others by an **infinitive** (*to + base verb*), and a few can use **both** with little or no change in meaning.
This choice depends on the verb, not on the tense.

12.2 Gerunds (-ing)

12.2.1 Common verbs followed by gerunds

- enjoy
- avoid
- finish
- consider
- keep
- suggest

12.2.2 Examples

- *I enjoy **teaching** statistics.*
- *She avoided **answering** the question.*
- *They finished **working** late.*

> Tip
>
> Gerunds often describe **activities or experiences**.

12.3 Infinitives (to + verb)

12.3.1 Common verbs followed by infinitives

- want
- decide
- plan
- hope
- need
- agree

12.3.2 Examples

- *I want **to learn** more about grammar.*
- *They decided **to leave** early.*
- *She hopes **to improve** her English.*

> Tip
>
> Infinitives often express **intentions, goals, or plans**.

12.4 Verbs that can use both (meaning stays similar)

- begin
- start
- continue
- like
- love

Examples: - *It started **raining**.*
- *It started **to rain**.*

12.5 Verbs that change meaning

Verb	Gerund (-ing)	Infinitive (to + verb)
remember	remember a past action	remember to do something
stop	stop an activity	stop in order to do something
try	experiment	make an effort
forget	forget a past action	forget to do something

Examples: - *I remember **locking** the door.* (memory)
- *Remember **to lock** the door.* (instruction)

- *She stopped **smoking**.* (quit)
- *She stopped **to smoke**.* (purpose)

12.6 My examples

- *I enjoy **working** with real data, but I also like **to explain** grammar rules clearly.*
- *I remembered **saving** the file, but I forgot **to upload** it.*

Why they work:
Each verb requires either a gerund or an infinitive depending on its meaning.

12.7 Real-world example (everyday language)

> *Don't forget **to bring** your ID.*

Why it works:
In everyday instructions, **forget + to + verb** is used for actions that are still expected to happen.

> **Note**
>
> This contrast (past memory vs. future responsibility) is one of the most important differences for learners.

12.8 Common mistakes

- *I enjoy to teach.*
  I enjoy ***teaching****.*
- *She decided going home.*
  She decided ***to go*** *home.*
- *I stopped to study English.* (if you mean "quit")
  I stopped ***studying*** *English.*

12.9 Mini comparison

- **Gerund** → activity or experience
  I like swimming.
- **Infinitive** → intention or goal
  I like to swim before work.

12.10 Why this grammar point matters

Choosing between gerunds and infinitives correctly helps learners avoid very common errors and sound more natural in both speech and writing.

13 Count vs. Non-count Nouns and Quantifiers

13.1 Rule

In English, **count nouns** are things we can count individually, while **non-count (uncountable) nouns** refer to things we see as a whole or as a mass. Because of this difference, they use **different quantifiers**.

13.2 Count nouns

13.2.1 Key features

- Have **singular and plural** forms
- Use **a / an** in the singular
- Use numbers

13.2.2 Examples

- *a book / two books*
- *one student / many students*
- *few questions*

13.3 Non-count nouns

13.3.1 Key features

- Do **not** have a plural form
- Do **not** use **a / an**
- Use measurement expressions instead

13.3.2 Examples

- *information* (not *informations*)
- *advice* (not *advices*)
- *equipment* (not *equipments*)
- *water, money, research*

> Tip
>
> To "count" non-count nouns, use expressions like: *a piece of*, *a bit of*, *a cup of*, *a lot of*.

13.4 Common quantifiers

Quantifier	Count	Non-count	Example
many			*many students*
much			*much information*
a lot of / lots of			*a lot of work*
few			*few mistakes*
little			*little time*
some / any			*some data*

13.5 My examples

- *There are **many students** in the class but **little time** to review everything.*
- *I received **a lot of advice** during my research project.*

Why they work:
The quantifiers match the noun type (count vs. non-count).

13.6 Real-world example (everyday language)

> *We don't have much time, but we still have a few options.*

Why it works:
This sentence contrasts **non-count** (*time*) with **count** (*options*), using the correct quantifiers for each.

> **Note**
>
> These contrasts appear constantly in conversations, meetings, and academic contexts.

13.7 Common mistakes

- *many information*
  much information
- *few money*
  little money
- *an advice*
  a piece of advice
- *informations*
  information

13.8 Mini comparison

- **few** → count nouns (negative idea)
  Few students understood the topic.
- **a few** → count nouns (positive idea)
  A few students asked questions.
- **little** → non-count nouns (negative idea)
  Little progress was made.
- **a little** → non-count nouns (positive idea)
  A little progress was made.

13.9 Why this grammar point matters

Understanding count and non-count nouns helps learners choose the correct articles and quantifiers, especially in academic and professional English.

14 Comparatives and Superlatives

14.1 Rule

We use **comparatives** to compare **two** people or things, and **superlatives** to compare **three or more**.
The form depends on the **length of the adjective** and whether it is irregular.

14.2 Comparative adjectives

14.2.1 Short adjectives (one syllable)

adjective + -er

- *small → smaller*
- *fast → faster*
- *tall → taller*

Examples: - *This room is **smaller** than the other one.* - *Data analysis is **faster** with better tools.*

14.2.2 Long adjectives (two or more syllables)

more + adjective

- *more interesting*
- *more expensive*
- *more comfortable*

Examples: - *Online classes are **more flexible** than traditional ones.*

> Tip
>
> Some two-syllable adjectives (ending in **-y**) behave like short adjectives: *happy → happier*

14.3 Superlative adjectives

14.3.1 Short adjectives

the + adjective + -est

- *small → the smallest*
- *fast → the fastest*

Examples: - *This is **the easiest** topic in the unit.*

14.3.2 Long adjectives

the most + adjective

- *the most important*
- *the most difficult*

Examples: - *Grammar is one of **the most important** skills for clear communication.*

14.4 Irregular forms

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
good	better	the best
bad	worse	the worst
far	farther / further	the farthest / the furthest

14.5 My examples

- *This explanation is **clearer** than the previous one.*
- *This is **the most useful** grammar page in the scrapbook.*

Why they work:
The first sentence compares **two** explanations; the second compares **many** pages.

14.6 Real-world example (everyday language)

This is the best option for beginners.

Why it works:
Advertising and everyday speech often use **superlatives** to highlight something as the top choice among many options.

> **Note**
>
> Comparatives and superlatives are very common in reviews, ads, and informal recommendations.

14.7 Common mistakes

- *more easier*
  easier
- *the most fastest*
  the fastest
- *She is more smart than her sister.*
  She is smarter than her sister.
- *This is the better option.* (when comparing many)
  This is the best option.

14.8 Mini comparison

- **Comparative** → two items
  This task is harder than the last one.
- **Superlative** → three or more
  This is the hardest task in the course.

14.9 Why this grammar point matters

Using comparatives and superlatives correctly helps speakers make clear, natural comparisons in academic, professional, and everyday contexts.

15 Confusing Adjective vs. Adverb Forms

15.1 Rule

Adjectives describe **nouns**, while **adverbs** describe **verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs**. Many adverbs end in **-ly**, but **not all -ly words are adverbs**, and some common adverbs **do not end in -ly**, which often causes confusion.

15.2 Adjectives vs. adverbs: basic contrast

- **Adjective** → describes a noun
  *She is a **careful** driver.*
- **Adverb** → describes how an action happens
  *She drives **carefully**.*

> Tip
>
> Ask yourself:
> Am I describing a **thing/person** (adjective) or an **action** (adverb)?

15.3 Common confusing pairs

15.3.1 good vs. well

- **good** → adjective
  *She is a **good** teacher.*
- **well** → adverb / adjective for health
  *She teaches **well**.*
  *I feel **well** today.*

15.3.2 fast / hard / late (same form)

These words can be **adjectives or adverbs**, and they **do not add -ly**.

- *He is a **fast** runner.* (adjective)

- *He runs **fast**.* (adverb)
- *It was a **hard** test.* (adjective)

- *She worked **hard**.* (adverb)
- *The bus was **late**.* (adjective)

- *He arrived **late**.* (adverb)

15.3.3 friendly / lively / lonely (adjectives only)

Some words ending in **-ly are adjectives**, not adverbs.

- *She is very **friendly**.*

- *It was a **lively** discussion.*

She spoke friendly.
*She spoke **in a friendly way**.*

15.4 My examples

- *The instructions were **clear**, and the teacher explained them **clearly**.*
- *He is a **hard** worker, and he works **hard** every day.*

Why they work:
The adjective describes a noun (*instructions, worker*), and the adverb describes the action (*explained, works*).

15.5 Real-world example (everyday language)

Please speak clearly.

Why it works:
The speaker is describing **how** the action (*speak*) should be done, so an **adverb** is required.

> **Note**
>
> These forms appear constantly in classroom instructions, presentations, and workplace communication.

15.6 Common mistakes

- *She did good on the exam.*
  *She did **well** on the exam.*
- *He drives careful.*
  *He drives **carefully**.*
- *She spoke friendly to the students.*
  *She spoke **in a friendly way** to the students.*

15.7 Mini comparison table

Word	Adjective use	Adverb use
good / well	*a good result*	*performed well*
fast	*a fast car*	*drive fast*
hard	*hard work*	*work hard*
late	*a late train*	*arrive late*

15.8 Why this grammar point matters

Using the correct adjective or adverb form helps learners sound clear, accurate, and professional, especially in academic and spoken English.

16 Polite Requests and Permission

16.1 Rule

We use different structures to make **requests** or ask for **permission** depending on how **polite or formal** we want to sound.
Politeness in English often depends on **modal verbs**, **indirect language**, and **social distance**.

16.2 Asking for permission

16.2.1 Common structures

- **Can I...?** → informal
- **May I...?** → more formal
- **Could I...?** → polite and common

Examples: - *Can I leave early today?*
- *May I use your phone?*
- *Could I ask a question?*

> Tip
>
> **Could** sounds more polite than **can**, especially with strangers or in formal situations.

16.3 Making requests

16.3.1 From less to more polite

- **Can you...?** → informal

- **Could you...?** → polite
- **Would you mind...?** → very polite

Examples: - *Can you help me with this?*
- *Could you explain that again?*
- *Would you mind closing the window?*

> Tip
>
> After **Would you mind...**, use **-ing**: *Would you mind **opening** the door?*

16.4 My examples

- *Could you please review my draft?*
- *Would you mind **waiting** a moment?*

Why they work:
The speaker uses polite modal forms and indirect language to sound respectful.

16.5 Real-world example (everyday interaction)

Could you please fill out this form?

Why it works:
This structure is common in offices, schools, and service situations. It is polite without being too formal.

> Note
>
> Polite requests are especially important in academic and professional contexts.

16.6 Common mistakes

- *You close the door?*
  Could you close the door?
- *Would you mind to help me?*
  *Would you mind **helping** me?*

- *Can you please to send the file?*
  Can you please send the file?

16.7 Mini politeness scale

- **Very informal:** *Can you help me?*
- **Polite:** *Could you help me?*
- **Very polite:** *Would you mind helping me?*

16.8 Why this grammar point matters

Using polite requests and permission forms correctly helps speakers sound respectful, professional, and culturally appropriate in English.

17 Stative Verbs in Progressive Forms

17.1 Rule

Stative verbs describe **states**, not actions.
They usually refer to thoughts, feelings, possession, or senses, so they **do not normally appear in progressive (-ing) forms**.

However, some stative verbs **can** be used in the progressive when the meaning changes to describe a **temporary or dynamic situation**.

17.2 Common stative verbs

17.2.1 Mental states

- know
- believe
- understand
- remember
- prefer

17.2.2 Emotions

- like
- love
- hate
- want
- need

17.2.3 Possession

- have
- own
- belong

17.2.4 Senses

- see
- hear
- smell
- taste

> Tip
>
> If the verb describes a **state** rather than an **action**, it is probably stative.

17.3 Stative verbs (usually NOT progressive)

- *I **know** the answer.*
  I am knowing the answer.
- *She **likes** coffee.*
  She is liking coffee.
- *This bag **belongs** to me.*
  This bag is belonging to me.

17.4 When stative verbs CAN be progressive (change in meaning)

Some stative verbs become **action verbs** in specific contexts.

17.4.1 think

- *I **think** this is correct.* (opinion)
- *I am **thinking** about my research.* (mental process now)

17.4.2 have

- *I **have** a car.* (possession)
- *I am **having** lunch.* (activity)

17.4.3 see

- *I **see** what you mean.* (understand)
- *I am **seeing** a doctor tomorrow.* (arrangement)

17.4.4 feel

- *I **feel** tired.* (state)
- *I am **feeling** better today.* (temporary change)

17.5 My examples

- *I understand the instructions now.*
- *I am understanding this topic better as I practice.*

Why they work:
The first sentence expresses a **state**; the second shows a **temporary change** during a learning process.

17.6 Real-world example (everyday language)

> *I'm loving this course.*

Why it works:
Although **love** is usually stative, the progressive is used here to emphasize a **temporary, strong feeling**, common in spoken English and advertising.

> **i** Note
>
> Using stative verbs in the progressive is often expressive and informal, especially in modern English.

17.7 Common mistakes

- *I am knowing her for years.*
  I have known her for years.
- *She is owning a house.*
  She owns a house.
- *I am seeing what you mean.* (when you mean "understand")
  I see what you mean.

17.8 Mini comparison

- **State (simple form):**
  I like this explanation.
- **Temporary feeling (progressive):**
  I'm liking this explanation more and more.

17.9 Why this grammar point matters

Understanding stative verbs helps learners avoid unnatural sentences and recognize when progressive forms are used for **special emphasis**.

18 Summary

This grammar scrapbook brings together the main grammar concepts covered in the **Intermediate Grammar Specialization** and presents them in a clear, organized, and practical way. Throughout the project, I reviewed and explained **15 key grammar points**, focusing not only on their form, but also on their meaning and real-life use.

Each section of the scrapbook combines explanations written in my own words, original examples, and authentic language drawn from everyday communication. This approach helped reinforce my understanding of grammar as a **tool for communication**, rather than as a set of isolated rules.

Working on this project also allowed me to identify grammar areas that require more attention and practice, while strengthening my ability to explain complex ideas in a simple and accessible way. In particular, contrasting similar structures—such as different verb tenses, modal expressions, and clause types—made the learning process more meaningful.

Overall, this scrapbook serves both as a **final reflection** on what I have learned and as a **personal reference resource** that I can continue using in the future. It demonstrates my progress in understanding and applying English grammar in a more confident and communicative manner.

References