

# Understanding the Parts of a Sentence

## English Parts of a Sentence

Subject | Predicate | Direct Object | Indirect Object  
Object of the Preposition | Transitive & Intransitive  
Verbs

Linking Verbs | Complements | Exercises

Understanding the **parts of a sentence**  
in English is **crucial** to your success in  
learning English grammar.



# In this section we will learn:

- What a sentence is.
- What the different parts of a sentence are.
- How to construct proper sentences in English.

# What is a sentence?

A sentence is a group of words that expresses a *complete idea*.

**"She feels sad."** <-- A complete idea



# **These are sentences (they express a complete idea):**

- I like to swim.
- Jane bakes tasty cookies.
- Mark will quit his job.

# These are not complete sentences (they don't express a complete idea):

- ***She gave me the.***  
(What did she give me?)
- ***Will build the house.***  
(Who will build the house?)
- ***Tony watching a movie.***  
(Is Tony watching the movie now? Was he watching the movie in the past? Or will he be watching the movie in the future?)

# A sentence can express:

- *A statement.*  
**Example:** You are tall.
- *A question.*  
**Example:** Are you tall?
- *An order.*  
**Example:** Be tall!
- *A wish.*  
**Example:** I wish I were taller.

## ***Writing tips***

**1)** In written English sentences begin with a CAPITAL letter.

**Correct:** You are tall.

**Incorrect:** you are tall.



2) Sentences can end with a period (.), a question mark (?), an exclamation point (!) or an ellipsis (. . .).

**Correct:** You are tall.

**Incorrect:** You are tall,

**Incorrect:** You are tall . . . . .

**Incorrect:** You are tall

**Why should you know  
the parts of a sentence?**

Once you know the parts of a sentence, and how to combine them, you can form **logical sentences** that will be well understood by others.

People usually prefer working with other people they can easily understand, so this is a very important quality to have for the workplace. Not to mention any other situation that involves other people!

Moreover, once you master the parts of a sentence, you can easily understand other people's sentences.

So go ahead and learn the English parts of a sentence.

Understand them, and practice using them in properly constructed sentences.

*This can serve you tremendously!*



**What are the parts of a  
sentence?**

- A sentence must minimally have a **subject** and a **verb**. Sometimes the subject can be omitted if it is understood.
- In the following examples the subject is **green** and the verb is **red**:

Tom walks.

We met Susan.

They are washing the dishes.

Lisa will arrive soon.

She is nice.

There is food on the table.

Leave!

(The subject in this sentence was omitted, since it is understood to be "you": You leave!)

There are other parts of a sentence you can use, in addition to a subject and a verb.

# Here is a list of the parts of a sentence (and other relevant subjects):

- Subject
- Predicate
- Direct object
- Indirect object
- Object of the preposition
- Transitive verbs and intransitive verbs
- Linking verbs
- Complements



# **The SUBJECT and PREDICATE**

The **subject** is the person or thing about which something is being stated.



"**Joe** is a good boy."

Who is a good boy?

Joe is.

So "**Joe**" is the subject.

# **The DIRECT OBJECT**

A direct object is a **person** or **thing** that is **affected by** the action of the **verb**. You could say that the direct object "**receives the action of the verb.**"

"He broke **the window.**"

What was affected by the action? The window was.

So "**the window**" is the direct object.



# **The INDIRECT OBJECT**

An indirect **object** is a **person** or thing that **the action is done to or for**.

The indirect object usually comes just before the direct object.

You could also say that the indirect object is the **receiver** of the direct object.

"He gave **his mother** flowers."



To whom did he give the flowers? To his mother.

So "**his mother**" is the indirect object.

# Is it a direct object or an indirect object?

How can you tell a **direct object** from an **indirect object**?

Here are some TIPS to help you:

- 1) A **direct object** **receives the action** of the verb. In other words, it is directly affected by it.
- 2) An **indirect object** is **the receiver** of the direct object, and it usually comes just before it.

Let's have another look at some of the previous examples (the direct object is **green**, the indirect object is **red**):



"He gave **his mother** **flowers**."



# The verb is "gave."

Who is directly affected by this action?  
The flowers. They are given!

So "flowers" is the **direct object**.

Who receives the flowers? His mother.

So "his mother" is the **indirect object**.

You can see that the indirect object ("his mother") is located just before the direct object ("flowers").

**The OBJECT of the PREPOSITION**

The object of the preposition is a **noun** or a **pronoun** that *completes its meaning*.

"The cat is looking at the **fish**."



# Example 1:

- She is thinking about.
  - This sentence is incomplete. We don't what is she thinking about.
- **Here is the complete version:**
  - She is thinking about your **idea**.
    - This sentence is complete. "Idea" is the object of the preposition "about."

# **TRANSITIVE & INTRANSITIVE VERBS**

# Not every **verb** takes a **direct object**.

- The direct object **completes the meaning** of the verb, but not every verb needs completion.
- **For example:**

I built last year.

- This sentence feels **incomplete**. Something is missing.  
*What did I build?*
- To complete the idea I should add a direct object: "I built a house last year."
- Now the idea is complete.

# **An opposite example:**

I ran yesterday.

- This sentence is completely fine just like that, right?
- The idea is complete, and the verb doesn't require a direct object.

# Definitions

Verbs that take direct objects are called **transitive verbs**.

The meaning of a transitive verb is **incomplete** without a direct object.

"She is **drinking** a glass of water."





Verbs that don't take direct objects are called **intransitive verbs**.

The meaning of an intransitive verb is **complete** on its own.

"She is standing."



# **LINKING VERBS**

A linking verb is a **verb** that connects the subject with an **adjective** or a **noun** that identifies or describes it.

"She **seems** very satisfied."



# COMPLEMENTS

A complement is a word or a group of words (usually an **adjective** or a **noun**), that is **used after linking verbs** (such as *be* and *become*). The complement **identifies** or **describes** the **subject** of the **verb**.

"She seems **very satisfied**."



# **English Parts of a Sentence Exercises,**

## **Identify the Part of a Sentence**

- Understanding English parts of a sentence is an important part of truly mastering English, so make sure you know what they are and can use them without hesitations.

# Parts of Speech Exercises

(Follow the links and do the exercises. Send your TL a screenshot of EACH completed exercise with a score above 75%)

[English Parts of a Sentence Exercises 1](#)

[English Parts of a Sentence Exercises 2](#)

[English Parts of a Sentence Exercises 3](#)

[English Parts of a Sentence Exercises 4](#)

# THE END!



Resource used for this material: [Really-Learn-English.com](http://Really-Learn-English.com). 2010-2014