

GRAMMAR

GRAMMAR REVIEW

1. RULES

A rule in grammar is a generalization. It is a formula that *one* makes to account for how a given grammatical construction *usually* behaves. A rule is *not* necessarily true in every instance. It is *generally* true. Don't be concerned if you see or hear something that does *not* coincide with a rule in this book.

In this guide:

Parentheses () indicate optional usage when used in a rule.

Braces { } indicate either one choice or the other.

$\begin{Bmatrix} has \\ have \end{Bmatrix}$ = either *have* or *has*

2. METHOD OF STUDY

The best method of improving your use of English grammar with this guide is to study the formulas and sample sentences. Then do the practice exercise at the end of each section. After each group of lessons, there is an exercise using grammatical points from the preceding explanations. If you still make errors, the practice test answer keys and the index give you the page number of the explanation to study again.

3. NORMAL SENTENCE PATTERN IN ENGLISH

subject	verb	complement	modifier
John and I We	are studied	a pizza "present perfect"	last night last week

SUBJECT AREA REVIEWS

SUBJECT

The subject is the agent of the sentence in the active voice; it is the person or thing that performs or is responsible for the action of the sentence, and it normally precedes the verb. **NOTE: Every sentence in English must have a subject.** (In the case of commands, the subject [you] is understood.) The subject may be a single noun.

Coffee is delicious.

Milk contains calcium.

The subject may be a noun phrase. A noun phrase is a group of words ending with a noun. (It CANNOT begin with a preposition.)

The book is on the table.

That new red car is John's.

Examples of subjects:

We girls are not going to that movie.

George likes boats.

Mary, John, George, and I went to a restaurant last night.

The weather was very bad yesterday.

The chemistry professor canceled class today.

The bank closed at two o'clock.

It can act as a pronoun for a noun or can be the subject of an impersonal verb. As the subject of an impersonal verb, the pronoun is not actually used in place of a noun, but is part of an idiomatic expression.

It rains quite often here in the summer.

It is hard to believe that he is dead.

In some sentences, the true subject does not appear in normal subject position. **There** can act as a pseudo-subject and is treated like a subject when changing word order to a question. However, the true subject appears after the verb, and the number of the true subject controls the verb.

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There was a fire in that building last month
verb (singular) subject (singular)

Was there a fire in that building last month?
verb subject

There were many students in the room.
verb (singular) subject (plural)

Were there many students in the room?
verb subject

VERB

The verb follows the subject in a declarative sentence; it generally shows the action of the sentence. **NOTE: Every sentence must have a verb.** The verb may be a single word.

John drives too fast.

They hate spinach.

The verb may be a verb phrase. A verb phrase consists of one or more auxiliaries and one main verb. **The auxiliaries always precede the main verb.**

John is going to Miami tomorrow.
(auxiliary--*is*; main verb--*going*)

Jane has been reading that book.
(auxiliaries---*has, been*; main verb--*reading*)

Examples of verbs and verb phrases:

She will go to Boston next week.

Jane is very tall.

She must have gone to the bank.

Joe has gone home.

Mary is watching television.

It was raining at six o'clock last night.

SUBJECT AREA REVIEWS

COMPLEMENT

A complement completes the verb. It is similar to the subject because it is usually a noun or noun phrase; however, it generally follows the verb when the sentence is in the active voice. **NOTE:** *Every sentence does not require a complement. The complement CANNOT begin with a preposition.* A complement answers the question what? or whom?

Examples of complements:

John bought <u>a cake</u> yesterday.	(What did John buy?)
Jill was driving <u>a new car</u> .	(What was Jill driving?)
He wants to drink <u>some water</u> .	(What does he want to drink?)
She saw <u>John</u> at the movies last night.	(Whom did she see at the movies?)
They called <u>Mary</u> yesterday.	(Whom did they call yesterday?)
He was smoking <u>a cigarette</u> .	(What was he smoking?)

MODIFIER

A modifier tells the time, place, or manner of the action. Very often it is a prepositional phrase. A prepositional phrase is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun. **NOTE:** *A modifier of time usually comes last if more than one modifier is present.*

Examples of prepositional phrases:

in the morning, at the university, on the table

A modifier can also be an adverb or an adverbial phrase.

last night, hurriedly, next year, outdoors, yesterday

NOTE: *Every sentence does not require a modifier. A modifier answers the question when? where? or how?*

