

**Aptitude Advanced**

# **Basic Grammar Rules Part II**

**eBook 03**

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## Chapter 1- Rules of Grammar - II

### 1.1 Rules for Usage of Articles

#### I. Articles of indefiniteness:

The articles of indefiniteness are used –

1. In exclamatory sentences before singular and countable nouns e.g. what a fine picture!
2. If we want to say something about speed or price. e.g. Five rupees a kilo. Fifty miles an hour.
3. With the words LITTLE and FEW when they mean 'some about' and a small number e.g. A few books were in the library.
4. With (a) singular noun (b) noun complement e.g. An elephant ran amuck. He was a great man.

#### The articles of indefiniteness are NOT used

1. with the names of the meals
  - a) if these are not preceded by an adjective or
  - b) if we are not referring to a particular meal. e.g. we take breakfast daily (no article is used). It was a

nice dinner (meal preceded by the adjective nice).  
A dinner is hosted by my friend.

2. With abstract nouns like confidence, honesty etc.  
Incorrect: A fear of death haunts him.  
*Correct: Fear of death haunts him.*
3. With materials like stone, wine, wood, iron etc. but they take an article of indefiniteness when they refer to one e.g.
  - a) Paper is costly these days (no article used).
  - b) This tumbler is made of glass (no article with glass) but it is correct to say "A glass of water costs 10 Paise."

## II. Articles of definiteness:

An article of definiteness is used:

1. With the things which are only one in this world.  
e.g. the earth, the sun, the moon.
2. When we refer to a specific person, thing or space.  
e.g. a) This is the person who instigated the agitation. (particular man)  
b) This is the book I need. (particular book)

3. With adjectives in the superlative degree. e.g. This is the best book in the market.
4. With ONLY when it is used as an adjective. e.g. 'The only thing I fear is defeat.'
5. With the name of the (a) mountains (b) seas (c) rivers e.g. 1. The Ganga is a sacred river. (b) The Alps is one of the highest mountains.
6. With musical instruments. e.g. the sitar, the harmonium.
7. With the titles when they are followed by a name e.g. 'The lord' but not 'The Lord Byron' , 'The Duke of Wellington' etc.
8. With proper nouns when they stand for some quality e.g. it is correct to say "Kalidas is the Shakespeare of India."
9. With adjectives when these are used for the whole class e.g. 'The rich,' "The virtuous."
10. With the different departments or ministries. e.g. The Defence Ministry; The department of English.

11. With ENGLISH, FRENCH, GERMAN etc. when we use THE for the English, French or German people. If article is not used they means languages.
12. With U.S.S.R, U.S.A., C.I.S. etc. As these are general names and can be used for Russia and America when 'the' is added.

### **The Articles of definiteness are NOT used**

1. With towns, countries and proper names unless they have general names. So we cannot say 'The Bombay', 'The Delhi', 'The India.'
2. With parts of the body. e.g. It is correct to say "You should do work with right hand" (not the right hand)
3. Whenever an indefinite plural is used in general sense e.g. Children are the future nation. (not 'The Children').
4. With SCHOOL when it means 'studying'. He goes to school (has started studying). He goes to the school (to a particular school).
5. With HOME when it is preceded by a possessive noun or pronoun . e.g. I would like to go home.

(correct) (b) We went to the home of a friend.  
(correct).

## 1.2 Participles

There are two types of participles

- A) Present Participle which formed by adding “ING” to the first form of the verb. It is used either as a verb or as an adjective. Gerund which is formed in this manner is used as a noun only.
- B) Past Participle is the third form of the verb. It is also use as on adjective or verb.

1. A participle cannot be left loose; it must be connected with the subject.

Incorrect: Crossing the road a car hit me. *Correct: While I was crossing the road, a car hit me.*

“Crossing” in the incorrect sentence is a loose participle. We do not know who was crossing the road.

**Exceptions:** Some participles like Considering, Judging, Regarding, Concerning take only an object and not a subject.

e.g. Regarding your claims I have nothing to say.

Considering your proposal I have said so.

2. The Verbs of sensation (some of them are given below) are followed by a noun or a pronoun + present participle.

**Hear, Listen, Look, observe, perceive, see, smell, feel etc**

|                   |         |            |
|-------------------|---------|------------|
| a) I saw          | him     | falling    |
| Verb of sensation | Pronoun | Participle |

b) I observed him laughing.

3. The following verbs are followed by a pronoun + past participle.

Feel, make, like, prefer, want, wish etc.

a) I found the house abandoned.

b) I want him arrested.

4. When the words “GET” and ‘HAVE’ mean ‘cause something done’ these are followed by a noun or pronoun + past participle

a) I got him arrested.

b) I have him freed.



5. The following verbs are also followed by pronoun + present participle: Find, keep, leave, catch, start etc.
- a) I kept him waiting.
  - b) I left him weeping
  - c) I caught him stealing.

### **1.3 Rules for Usage of Gerunds**

This is also called 'verbal noun' because it is formed by adding 'ING' to the first form of the verb. It is always used as a noun. e.g. smoking is a bad habit. (smoking is a gerund)

- 1. The following verbs are followed by a gerund: Avoid, help (when used in the sense of avoid), stop, enjoy, mind, prevent, dislike, no good, no use, keep (when used for continue), detest, risk etc.
  - a) We do not mind speaking to him.
  - b) Stop muttering
  - c) No use waiting for him.
- 2. Gerund is used when an action is being considered in a general sense. e.g. 'Saving is better than spending'
- 3. Gerund is used for short prohibitions. e.g. Parking is not allowed.

4. Phrases like 'is used', 'looking forward to, accustomed to, habituated to, tired of, tired with, fed up with are followed by a gerund, e.g.
- a) I am looking forward to visiting you.
  - b) He is used to telling lies.
  - c) I am tired of helping him.
5. Gerunds showing physical activity may be put immediately after COME and GO. e.g. "Come shopping with me" is a correct sentence and means "Come for shopping with me."

## 1.4 Rules for Usage of Infinitives

Infinitive is = to + first form of the verb.

Examples: to go, to come, to be, to have, to do etc.

1. The following verbs are followed by the infinitive. The verbs are

Learn, remember, forget, promise, swear, consent, agree, neglect, refuse, propose, regret, try, endeavor, attempt, fall, care, hope, hesitate, prepare, decide, determine, undertake, manage, arrange, cease, seen.

We promise to do it soon.

We learn to get good marks.

We endeavor to help everyone.

We hesitate to invite such persons.

2. There are certain words which are followed by object + infinitive. The verbs are Tell, order, invite, oblige, compel, allow, permit, teach, instruct, warn, urge, advise, tempt, encourage, request, forbid, show, remind.

He told us to come there.

The commander ordered them to go.

She showed them how to play on the harmonium.

3. There are verbs or expressions which are followed by infinitives without 'to'.

a) Will, shall, can do, must, may, let.

Incorrect: Let it to be done.

Correct: Let it be done.

Incorrect: Must we to go.

Correct: Must we go.

b) Expressions – would rather, would sooner, rather than, sooner than, had better, are followed by infinitive without 'to'.

You had better tell him.

I would do rather than suffer.

c) NEED and DARE except when they are conjugated with DO, will take infinitive without 'to'.  
You need not say anything.

He dares not do it.

d) Verbs of sensation: help, watch, prepositions but, except, make and bid (except in passive form) take infinitive without 'to'.

There was nothing to do but wait.

He will say anything except abuse you.

He helped me meet the officer. ('to' can also be used)

4. a) the infinitive is used to express purpose.

He went to Delhi to learn.

b) For + gerund is used to express general purpose of things.

This machine is meant for cutting.

Exceptions: generally no infinitive is put after the imperative go and come. 'See' can be used with infinitive or without it.

Go and finish this work.

Go to see him (infinitive)

Go and see him (without infinitive).

5. Infinitive can be used after the first, the second and the last, but only to replace a relative clause.

He is an honest worker.

He is the first to come. (the first who comes)

He is the only one to be interrogated. (the only one who was interrogated)

6. Infinitive is used when the construction of a sentence follows the pattern.

It is (or was) + adjective + of you (or him etc.)

1. It is good of you to inform me.

2. It was clever of him to evade arrest.

3. It is brave of him to remain firm.

7. The infinitive is used after adjectives expressing emotions like - delighted, angry, glad, astonished, surprised, horrified, disappointed etc.

1. He was glad to meet me.

2. I was astonished to find him at the wine ship.

3. I was horrified to see the scene.

8. The infinitive follows the sentences pattern;  
adjective (or adverb) + enough + infinitive.
  1. He is old enough to understand.
  2. He is clever enough to cheat you.
9. An infinitive may be represented only by 'to'. This is done after verbs like want, hate, hope, try and also auxiliaries like have, ought, need.
  1. You may go or not but I want to.
  2. You may not do but I will have to.

## Chapter 2: Punctuation

Punctuation can make an enormous difference in the meaning of whatever it is you're writing.

Consider the following classic examples of the change in meaning that punctuation can communicate:

- eats shoots and leaves
- Let's eat, Grandma!
- Woman, without her man, is nothing.
- eats, shoots, and leaves
- Let's eat Grandma!
- Woman! Without her, man is nothing.

Let's face it: proper punctuation can make or break the impact of an otherwise well-constructed sentence. These basic rules can strengthen your sentences with the punctuation they deserve, so that the quality of your ideas is communicated with precision and clarity

### Relevance in the Tests:

Errors of punctuation are frequently asked in SNAP, CET. Approx 2 -3 questions may be given from this area.

## 2.1 Punctuation Rules

### 1. Comma

A. Use commas to separate independent clauses in a sentence.

- The game was over, but the crowd refused to leave.
- Yesterday was her brother's birthday, so she took him out to dinner.

B. Use commas after introductory words, phrases, or clauses that come before the main clause:

- While I was eating, the cat scratched at the door.
- If you are ill, you ought to see a doctor.

C. Oxford comma when dealing with lists. It is also known as the Serial Comma or the Harvard Comma. When using the Oxford comma, all items in a list of three or more items are separated.

- I love apples, pears, and oranges.

2. **Colon-** A colon should be used after a complete statement in order to introduce one or more directly related ideas, such as a series of directions, a list, or a quotation or other comment illustrating or explaining the statement.



- The daily newspaper contains four sections: news, sports, entertainment, and classified ads.
- The strategies of corporatist industrial unionism have proven ineffective: compromises and concessions have left labor in a weakened position in the new “flexible” economy.

**3. Semicolon-** A semicolon to join related independent clauses in compound sentences.

- Jim worked hard to earn his degree; consequently, he was certain to achieve a distinction.
- Jane overslept by three hours; she was going to be late for work again.

The semicolon is also used to separate items in a series if the elements of the series already include commas.

- Members of the band include Harold Rostein, clarinetist; Tony Aluppo, tuba player; and Lee Jefferson, trumpeter.

**4. Parentheses--**Parentheses are occasionally and sparingly used for extra, nonessential material included in a sentence. For example, dates,

sources, or ideas that are subordinate or tangential to the rest of the sentence are set apart in parentheses. Parentheses always appear in pairs. Before arriving at the station, the old train (someone said it was a relic of frontier days) caught fire.

## 5. **Dash or Hyphen-**

**Dash-** Use the dash to emphasize a point or to set off an explanatory comment

- To some of you, my proposals may seem radical—even revolutionary.

## 6. **Hyphen-** Use a hyphen to join two or more words serving as a single adjective before a noun: chocolate-covered peanuts.

Don't use the hyphen when the noun comes first:

- The peanuts are chocolate covered

Use a hyphen with compound numbers: Forty-five. Use a hyphen with the prefixes ex- (meaning former), self, all-;

with the suffix -elect; between a prefix and a capitalized word; and with figures or letters:

1. ex-husband
2. self-assured
3. mid-September
4. all-inclusive
5. T-shirt

## 2.2 Practice Exercises

Use appropriate punctuation marks in the following sentences.

1. The men in question Harold Keene, Jim Peterson, and Gerald Greene deserve awards.
2. Several countries participated in the airlift Italy, Belgium, France, and Luxembourg.
3. Only one course was open to us surrender, said the ex-major, and we did.
4. Judge Carswell later to be nominated for the Supreme Court had ruled against civil rights.
5. In last week's New Yorker, one of my favorite magazines, I enjoyed reading Leland's article How Not to Go Camping.
6. Yes, Jim said, I'll be home by ten.
7. There was only one thing to do study till dawn.

8. Montaigne wrote the following A wise man never loses anything, if he has himself.
9. The following are the primary colors red, blue, and yellow.

### Answer Key

1. The men in question (Harold Keene, Jim Peterson, and Gerald Greene) deserve awards.
2. Several countries participated in the airlift: Italy, Belgium, France, and Luxembourg.
3. "Only one course was open to us: surrender," said the ex-major, "and we did."
4. Judge Carswell--later to be nominated for the Supreme Court--had ruled against civil rights.
5. In last week's New Yorker, one of my favorite magazines, I enjoyed reading Leland's article "How Not to Go Camping."
6. "Yes," Jim said, "I'll be home by ten."
7. There was only one thing to do--study till dawn.
8. Montaigne wrote the following: "A wise man never loses anything, if he has himself."
9. The following are the primary colors: red, blue, and yellow.
10. Arriving on the 8:10 plane were Liz Brooks, my old roommate; her husband; and Tim, their son.

## Chapter 3: List of Grammar Terms

### I. Units of Meaning (Big to Small)

**Sentence** - A sentence is the basic unit that constitutes a declarative or interrogative statement. With the exception of single-word imperatives (such as Look!) a sentence contains at least two words and consists of a subject and a predicate. A simple sentence contains a single clause. A compound sentence contains more than one clause.

**Clause** - A clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate. We can distinguish main clauses, which can stand as sentences in their own right, and subordinate clauses which cannot. Examples:

Free-standing main clause: My brother likes fast cars.

Two coordinated main clauses: My brother likes fast cars, but he drives badly. A main clause and a subordinate clause: He likes cars which can go fast.

**Phrase** - A phrase is a group of words which form a single unit of meaning. Examples:

The man in the red shirt is a phrase, but so is the red shirt on its own.

**Nonrestrictive Phrase** -- A subordinate clause that is not essential to the meaning of the sentence but adds a relevant detail.

**Restrictive Phrase** -- A subordinate clause that is essential in specifying something about the thing it modifies.

Nonrestrictive Phrase example: *I gave a few coins to the street musician, who gave me a smile back.*

Restrictive Phrase example: *I gave a few coins to the street musician who played the sweetest song.*

**Word** - a word is the smallest complete free-standing unit of meaning in a language. Words come into several different categories which we call "parts of speech". These are detailed below.

## **II. Structural elements of a sentence**

**Subject:** The subject is the main actor or the main topic of a sentence. In a basic declarative sentence, the subject comes before the verb. The subject may be just a single pronoun or noun, such as He or The cat ; but in many sentences it is may be quite a bit more, including adjectives, prepositional phrases, relative clauses or

more. In this example, all the words in red make up the subject

Example: The old man in the red shirt who's talking too loudly is my uncle.

**Verb:** See Parts of speech chapter

**Predicate:** Everything in a sentence that is not the subject. The predicate includes the verb, or verbs, plus any other elements that may be present, notably objects or adverb phrases

**Direct Object:** The direct object is the entity (person, thing, process) that is directly concerned by the action expressed through the verb, or is the entity that explains the action or process. It is the complement of a transitive verb. It can be a pronoun, a noun, a noun phrase, or more than one of these.

Examples: I like chocolate / I like them / I like people who are friendly / I like people who are friendly and don't smoke cigarettes, including you.

**Indirect object:** The indirect object is the person or entity that is the recipient of the action, or for whom the action is done. When the indirect object follows the direct

object, it is introduced with the preposition to; but if it precedes the direct object, to is omitted.

Examples: I gave a bone to the dog

I gave the dog a bone / I gave it a bone.

**Main clause:** The main clause is the principal clause in a sentence. There can be one main clause or more in a sentence; if this is the case, the main clauses will be separated by a semi-colon (;), or by a coordinating conjunction such as and, but or yet.

**Subordinate clause:** A subordinate or dependent clause cannot exist without a main clause. It is normally introduced by a subordinating conjunction, such as since, if, because or as, or by a relative pronoun such as who or that.

Examples: You can go home now if you've finished your project.

As I said, there are no tickets left for the concert.

When he reached Manchester, he looked for a hotel.



### III. Other grammatical terms A-Z

**Apposition:** Normally a direct sequence of two nouns, with no intervening preposition, which both refer to the same entity:

Examples: Prince William / The car, a Jaguar, ..

The painting, a work by Rembrandt,....

In English, except in titles (such as Doctor Jekyll), the second or "apposed" noun requires a determiner, normally an article. Apposition should not be confused with compound nouns, in which two nouns placed next to each other refer to different things; for example The shop window

**Aspect:** In English, verbs can be expressed in two aspects, the simple aspect (such as I drink) or the progressive aspect (such as I am drinking).

**Auxiliary:** A verb that comes before a main verb to designate a tense, a modality or the passive voice. The basic auxiliaries are be and have: modal auxiliaries are will, shall, may, might, must, can, be able to and their other forms.

**Consecutive verbs:** Verbs that can be followed directly by a second verb, with no intervening noun or pronoun (as in I like playing football).

**Complement:** the main element of the predicate after the verb. See object above.

**Conjunctive adverb:** A type of connector, a type of sentence adverb used to express a particular relationship between a first clause and a second clause that follows. Examples: Therefore, however, similarly.

**Connector:** a word that links two similar items (words, phrases, clauses). Connectors are either conjunctions or conjunctive adverbs.

**Declarative:** A declarative sentence is a normal sentence, which is neither an interrogative sentence (question), nor an exclamation, nor an imperative . A declarative sentence can be affirmative or negative. Examples: The man is sitting on a chair, and The man is not sitting on a chair are both declarative statements.

**Determiner:** Determiners are used at the start of a noun phrase. The most common determiners are articles; but determiners also include demonstratives, numerals, or possessive determiners. All nouns or noun phrases

require a determiner unless they are used as generalisations.

Examples: The man is eating his dinner, and That man is eating chips.

**Gerund:** a Gerund is a type of -ing word. To distinguish gerunds from present participles, see

**Imperative:** the form of the verb that we use when we give an order or a command.

**Indicative:** In English, almost all verbs are used in the indicative mood. The subjunctive, the other principal mood, is rare

**Intensifier:** a type of adverb that is used to give extra force to the meaning of an adjective. Examples: very / extremely / most / highly

**Modal verb:** Modal verbs, or modal auxiliaries, such as can or must, are used to express possibility, obligation, probability or futurity.

**Modify:** in grammar, the word modify most commonly means to give a specific meaning to a noun or verb. Modifiers include adjectives, adverbs and prepositional phrases

**Mood:** In English there are two moods, the indicative and the subjunctive. The subjunctive is very rarely used.

**Participle:** participles are nonfinite forms of verbs. This means that they cannot by themselves function as the verb of a sentence, but must be coupled to an auxiliary. English has two participles, the present participle ending in -ing, and the past participle most commonly ending in -ed.

**Predicate:** one of the two essential constituents of a sentence, the other one being the subject. The predicate is made up of everything in the sentence that is not contained in the subject. In a normal affirmative sentence, it follows the subject. It must contain a verb.

**Punctuation:** an aspect of syntax, punctuation consists of a small number of symbols that are used to delimit, when necessary, words, phrases or sentences.

**Quantifier:** A quantifier expresses an imprecise or undefined quantity; it can be contrasted with a number that expresses a precise quantity. Quantifiers include words such as some, many, a few, several.

**Relative:** A relative clause is a clause introduced by a relative pronoun such as who, which, whose etc.

**Subject:** the actor or topic of a sentence. In a simple sentence, the subject comes first, before the predicate.

**Style:** the manner in which ideas are expressed as words. Style can be anything from formal to informal, or oral to written.

**Superlative:** the highest degree of an adjective or adverb. Superlatives are formed either by adding -est to a the adjective or adverb

**Syntax:** an aspect of grammar, syntax deals with the way in which words are organised and ordered. It includes word order and punctuation.

**Tense:** tenses are specific forms of verbs which are used to situate an action in time.

**Transitive:** Verbs are either transitive or intransitive. Some verbs are always one or the other, some verbs can be either depending on their use. A transitive verb is a verb that must have a direct object.

Example: The dog was barking / The dog was eating a bone

In the first example, barking is intransitive. It cannot take an object. In the second example, eating is used transitively, because there is an object bone. The verb eat can also be used intransitively, i.e. with no object, as in : The dog was eating.

**Voice:** A key factor describing the way in which a verb is used. There are two voices, the active and the passive.

**Active Voice** -- A sentence style in which the subject performs the action is active voice. It is usually preferable to passive voice unless the passive is specifically called for.

**Passive Voice**- A sentence style in which the action is performed on the subject is passive voice. It is usually inferior to the active voice unless specifically called for.

**Active Voice example:** Lightning struck the tree.

**Passive Voice example:** The tree was struck by lightning.