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The Grammar Valley

Advanced English Grammar

Compiled by

Syed Muhammad Waqas

A Comprehensive Look into the World of English Grammar

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To

My Honorable Teacher

Professor

Zaheer Ahmad Hanjra

Who Discovered the Hidden Talent of My Person and Polished It, Transforming Me into a True Man of Letters

What is Grammar?

Grammar is, in the simplest words, the system of the arrangement of a language. People sometimes describe grammar as the "rules" of a language; but in fact no language has rules.[1] If we use the word "rules", we suggest that somebody created the rules first and then spoke the language, like a new game. But languages did not start like that. Languages started by people making sounds which evolved into words, phrases and sentences. No commonly-spoken language is fixed. All languages change over time. What we call "grammar" is simply a reflection of a language at a particular time.

Do we need to study grammar to learn a language? The short answer is "no". Very many people in the world speak their own, native language without having studied its grammar. Children start to speak before they even know the word "grammar". But if you are serious about learning a foreign language, the long answer is "yes, grammar can help you to learn a language more quickly and more efficiently." It's important to think of grammar as something that can help you, like a friend. When you understand the grammar (or system) of a language, you can understand many things yourself, without having to ask a teacher or look in a book.
So think of grammar as something good, something positive, and something that you can use to find your way - like a signpost or a map.

Carefully speaking, grammar consists of those activators that are called “Parts of Speech”. About its accurate number, there is difference in the views of grammarians. But most popular used parts are eight in figure. They are like eight ways having sub-ways within themselves. It’s possible that some aspects of grammar remain out of them, but the domain of grammar is constituted by these activators.

[1] Except invented languages like Esperanto. And if Esperanto were widely spoken, its rules would soon be very different.

Parts of Speech

1. Verb

2. Adjective

3. Noun

4. Adverb

5. Pronoun

6. Conjunction

7. Preposition

8. Interjection

9. Other Grammatical Helps

1. VERB

VERBS tell of something being done:
To read, write, count, sing, jump, or run.

What are Verbs?

The verb is king in English. The shortest sentence contains a verb. You can make a one-word sentence with a verb, for example: Stop! You cannot make a one-word sentence with any other type of word.

Verbs are sometimes described as "action words". This is partly true. Many verbs give the idea of action, of "doing" something. For example, words like run, fight, do and work, all convey action.

But some verbs do not give the idea of action; they give the idea of existence, of state, of "being". For example, verbs like be, exist, seem and belong all convey state.
A verb always has a subject. (In the sentence "John speaks English", John is the subject and speaks is the verb.) In simple terms, therefore, we can say that verbs are words that tell us what a subject does or is; they describe:

- action (Asif plays football)
- state (John is English)

There is something very special about verbs in English. Most other words (adjectives, adverbs, prepositions etc) do not change in form (although nouns can have singular and plural forms). But almost all verbs change in form. For example, the verb to work has five forms:

- to work, work, works, worked, working

We divide verbs into two broad classifications:

Helping verbs (also called "Auxiliary Verbs")

These are the verbs that have no real meaning. They are necessary for the grammatical structure of the sentence, but they do not tell us very much alone. For example, will, would, may, might, do, have, be are helping verbs. We usually use helping verbs with main verbs. They "help" the main verb.[2]

Main verbs (also called "Lexical Verbs")

These are verbs that really mean something, they tell us something. For example, love, make, work are main verbs.

[2] For a detailed look, see the separate section on “Auxiliary Verbs” below.

Types of Main Verb

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Transitive verbs can take a direct object (subject + verb + object). Intransitive verbs do not take a direct object (subject + verb [+ indirect object]). Many verbs can be transitive or intransitive.

Transitive:

- He speaks *English*.
- We are watching *TV*.
- I saw *an elephant*.

Intransitive:

- He has arrived.
- She speaks fast.
- John goes to *school*.

Linking Verbs

Linking verbs are always intransitive. A linking verb does not have much meaning in itself. It "links" the subject to what is said about the subject. Usually, a linking verb shows equality (=) or a change to a different state or place (>).

- Mary *is* a teacher. (Mary = teacher)
- Tara *is* beautiful. (Tara = beautiful)
- That *sounds* interesting. (That = interesting)
- The sky *became* dark. (The sky > dark)
- The bread *has gone* bad. (Bread > bad)

Dynamic and Stative Verbs

Some verbs describe action. They are called "dynamic", and can be used with continuous tenses. Other verbs describe state (non-action, a situation). They are called "stative", and cannot normally be used with continuous tenses (though some of them can be used with continuous tenses with a change in meaning).

Dynamic Verbs: examples

- hit, explode, fight, run, go

Stative Verbs: examples

- be
- like, love, prefer, wish
- impress, please, surprise
- hear, see, sound
- belong to, consist of, contain, include, need
- appear, resemble, seem

Regular and Irregular Verbs

This is more a question of vocabulary than of grammar. The only real difference between regular and irregular verbs is that they have different endings for their past tense and past participle forms. For regular verbs, the past tense ending and past participle ending is always the same: -ed.

For irregular verbs, the past tense ending and the past participle ending is variable, so it is necessary to learn them by heart.
Regular verbs: base, past tense, and past participle

- look, looked, looked
- work, worked, worked

Irregular verbs: base, past tense, and past participle

- buy, bought, bought
- cut, cut, cut
- do, did, done

Regular Verbs

Unlike English irregular verbs, regular verbs change very little.
The past tense and past participle of regular verbs end in -ed, for example: work, worked
The list as follows consists of the important regular verbs. Past and past participle verb forms are not being written here because it is not troubling to add "ed".
Some examples of *regular verbs:*

Regular Verbs A-C

- accept
- add
- admire
- admit
- advise
- afford
- agree
- alert
- allow
- amuse
- analyse
- announce
- annoy
- answer
- apologise
- appear
- applaud
- appreciate
- approve
- argue
- arrange
- arrest
- arrive
- ask
- attach
- attack
- attempt
- attend
- attract
- avoid

b.

- back
- bake
- balance
- ban
- bang
- bare
- bat
- bathe
- battle
- beam
- beg
- behave
- belong
- bleach
- bless
- blind
- blink
- blot
- blush
- boast
- boil
- bolt
- bomb
- book
- bore
- borrow
- bounce
- bow
- box
- brake
- brake
- branch
- breathe
- bruise
- brush
- bubble
- bump
- burn
- bury
- buzz

c.

- calculate
- call
- camp
- care
- carry
- carve
- cause
- challenge
- choke
- chop
- claim
- clap
- clean
- clear
- clip
- close
- compare
- compete
- complain
- complete
- concentrate
- concern
- confess
- confuse
- cough
- count
- cover
- crack
- crash
- crawl
- cross
- crush

- change
- charge
- chase
- cheat
- check
- cheer
- chew
- coach
- coil
- collect
- colour
- comb
- command
- communicate
- connect
- consider
- consist
- contain
- continue
- copy
- correct
- cry
- cure
- curl
- curve
- cycle

Regular Verbs D-G

d.

- dam
- damage
- dance
- dare
- decay
- deceive
- decide
- decorate
- delay
- delight
- deliver
- depend
- describe
- desert
- deserve
- destroy
- detect
- develop
- disagree
- disappear
- disapprove
- disarm
- discover
- dislike
- divide
- double
- doubt
- drag
- drain
- dream
- dress
- drip
- drop
- drown
- drum
- dry
- dust

e.

- earn
- educate
- embarrass
- employ
- empty
- encourage
- end
- enjoy
- enter
- entertain
- escape
- examine
- excite
- excuse
- exercise
- exist
- expand
- expect
- explain
- explode
- extend

f.

- face
- fade
- fail
- fancy
- fasten
- fax
- fear
- fence
- fetch
- file
- fill
- film
- fire
- fit
- fix
- flap
- flash
- float
- flood
- flow
- flower
- fold
- follow
- fool
- force
- form
- found
- frame
- frighten
- fry

g.

- gather
- gaze
- glow
- glue
- grab
- grate
- grease
- greet
- grin
- grip
- groan
- guarantee
- guard
- guess
- guide

Regular Verbs H-M

h.

- hammer
- hand
- harm
- hate
- heat
- help
- hug
- hum

- handle
- hang
- happen
- harass
- haunt
- head
- heal
- heap
- hook
- hop
- hope
- hover
- hunt
- hurry

i.

- identify
- ignore
- imagine
- impress
- improve
- include
- increase
- influence
- inform
- inject
- injure
- instruct
- intend
- interest
- interfere
- interrupt
- introduce
- invent
- invite
- irritate
- itch

j.

- jail
- jam
- jog
- join
- joke
- judge
- juggle
- jump

k.

- kick
- kill
- kiss
- kneel
- knit
- knock
- knot

L.

- label
- land
- last
- laugh
- launch
- learn
- level
- license
- lick
- lie
- lighten
- like
- list
- listen
- live
- load
- lock
- long
- look
- love

m.

- man
- manage
- march
- mark
- marry
- match
- mate
- matter
- measure
- meddle
- melt
- memorise
- mend
- mess up
- milk
- mine
- miss
- mix
- moan
- moor
- mourn
- move
- muddle
- mug
- multiply
- murder

Regular Verbs N-R

n.

- nail
- name
- need
- nest
- nod
- note
- notice
- number

o.

- obey
- object
- observe
- obtain
- occur
- offend
- offer
- open
- order
- overflow
- owe
- own

p.

- pack
- paddle
- paint
- park
- part
- pass
- permit
- phone
- pick
- pinch
- pine
- place
- pop
- possess
- post
- pour
- practise
- pray
- prevent
- prick
- print
- produce
- program
- promise

- paste
- pat
- pause
- peck
- pedal
- peel
- peep
- perform
- plan
- plant
- play
- please
- plug
- point
- poke
- polish
- preach
- precede
- prefer
- prepare
- present
- preserve
- press
- pretend
- protect
- provide
- pull
- pump
- punch
- puncture
- punish
- push

q.

- question
- queue

r.

- race
- radiate
- rain
- raise
- reach
- realise
- receive
- recognise
- record
- reduce
- reflect
- refuse
- regret
- reign
- reject
- rejoice
- relax
- release
- rely
- remain
- remember
- remind
- remove
- repair
- repeat
- replace
- reply
- report
- reproduce
- request
- rescue
- retire
- return
- rhyme
- rinse
- risk
- rob
- rock
- roll
- rot
- rub
- ruin
- rule
- rush

Regular Verbs S-T

s.

- sack
- sail
- satisfy
- save
- saw
- scare
- scatter
- scold
- scorch
- scrape
- scratch
- scream
- screw
- scribble
- scrub
- seal
- search
- separate
- serve
- settle
- shade
- share
- shiver
- shock
- shop
- shrug
- sigh
- sign
- signal
- sin
- sip
- ski
- skip
- slap
- slip
- slow
- smash
- smell
- smile
- smoke
- snatch
- sneeze
- sniff
- snore
- soothe
- sound
- spare
- spark
- sparkle
- spell
- spill
- spoil
- spot
- spray
- sprout
- squash
- squeak
- squeal
- squeeze
- stain
- stamp
- stare
- start
- stay
- steer
- step
- stop
- store
- strap
- strengthen
- stretch
- strip
- stroke
- stuff
- subtract
- succeed
- suck
- suffer
- suggest
- suit
- supply
- support
- suppose
- surprise
- surround
- suspect
- suspend
- switch

- shave
- shelter
- snow
- soak
- stir
- stitch

t.

- talk
- tame
- tap
- taste
- tease
- telephone
- tempt
- terrify
- test
- thank
- thaw
- tick
- tickle
- tie
- time
- tip
- tire
- touch
- tour
- tow
- trace
- trade
- train
- transport
- trap
- travel
- treat
- tremble
- trick
- trip
- trot
- trouble
- trust
- try
- tug
- tumble
- turn
- twist
- type

Regular Verbs U-Z

u.

- undress
- unfasten
- unite
- unlock
- unpack
- untidy
- use

v.

- vanish
- visit

w.

- wail
- wait
- walk
- wander
- want
- warm
- warn
- wash
- waste
- watch
- water
- wave
- weigh
- welcome
- whine
- whip
- whirl
- whisper
- whistle
- wink
- wipe
- wish
- wobble
- wonder
- work
- worry
- wrap
- wreck
- wrestle
- wriggle

x.

- x-ray

y.

- yawn
- yell

z.

- zip
- zoom

Note that there is no hard and fast rule for the making of irregular verbs. We are supposed to use them in the way the English have used them throughout their linguistic history. In a sense, the existence of irregular verbs can be rendered as a linguistic problem in English. They are fewer in number as compared to the regular verbs. Here is presented a list of most commonly employed irregular verbs.

Irregular Verbs A-C

Base form	Past Simple	Past Participle

Awake	Awoke	awoken
Be	was, were	been
Beat	beat	beaten
Become	became	become
Begin	began	begun
Bend	bent	bent
Bet	bet	bet
Bid	bid	bid
Bite	bit	bitten
Blow	blew	blown
Break	broke	broken
Bring	brought	brought
Broadcast	broadcast	Broadcast
Build	built	built
Burn	burned/burnt	burned/burnt
Buy	bought	bought
Catch	caught	caught
Choose	chose	chosen
Come	came	come
Cost	cost	cost
Cut	cut	cut

Irregular Verbs D-G

Base Form	Past Simple	Past Participle
Dig	Dug	dug
Do	Did	done
Draw	Drew	drawn
dream	dreamed/dreamt	dreamed/dreamt
Drive	Drove	driven
drink	Drunk	Drunk
Eat	ate	eaten
Fall	fell	fallen
Feel	felt	felt
Fight	fought	fought
Find	found	found
Fly	flew	flown
Forget	forgot	forgotten
Forgive	forgave	forgiven
Freeze	froze	frozen
Get	got	gotten
Give	gave	given
Go	went	gone
Grow	grew	grown

Irregular Verbs H-Q

Base Form	Past Simple	Past Participle
Hang	hung	hung
Have	had	had
Hear	heard	heard
Hide	Hid	hidden
Hit	Hit	hit
Hold	held	held
Hurt	hurt	hurt
Keep	kept	kept
Know	knew	known
Lay	Laid	laid
Lead	Led	led
Learn	learned/learnt	learned/learnt
Leave	Left	left
Lend	lent	lent
Let	Let	let
Lie	Lay	lain
Lose	lost	lost
Make	made	made
Mean	meant	meant
Meet	met	met

Irregular Verbs P-S

Base Form	Past Simple	Past Participle
Pay	paid	paid
Put	Put	put
Read	read	read
Ride	rode	ridden
Ring	rang	rung
Rise	rose	risen
Run	Ran	run
Say	Said	said
See	Saw	seen
Sell	Sold	sold
Send	sent	sent
Show	showed	showed/shown
Shut	shut	shut
Sing	sang	sung
Sit	Sat	sat
Sleep	slept	slept
Speak	spoke	spoken
Spend	spent	spent
Stand	stood	stood
Swim	swam	swum

Irregular Verbs T-Z

Base Form	Past Simple	Past Participle
Take	took	taken
Teach	taught	taught
Tear	tore	torn
Tell	told	told
Think	thought	thought
Throw	threw	thrown
understand	understood	Understood
Wake	woke	woken
Wear	wore	worn
Win	won	won
Write	wrote	written

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs (Analyzed)

Depending on the type of object they take, verb may be transitive, intransitive, or linking.
The meaning of a transitive verb is incomplete without a *direct object*, as in the following examples:

Incomplete

The shelf holds.

Complete

The shelf holds three books and a vase of flowers.

Incomplete

The committee named.

Complete

The committee named a new chairperson.

Incomplete

The child broke.

Complete

The child broke the plate.

An intransitive verb, on the other hand, cannot take a direct object:

This plant has thrived on the south windowsill.

The compound verb "has thrived" is intransitive and takes no direct object in this sentence. The prepositional phrase” on the south windowsill" acts as an adverb_describing where the plant thrives.

The sound of the choir carried through the cathedral.

The verb "carried" is used intransitively in this sentence and takes no direct object. The prepositional phrase "through the cathedral" acts as an adverb describing where the sound carried.

The train from Montreal arrived four hours late.

The intransitive verb "arrived" takes no direct object, and the noun phrase "four hours late" acts as an adverb describing when the train arrived.

Since the company was pleasant and the coffee both plentiful and good, we lingered in the restaurant for several hours.

The verb "lingered" is used intransitively and takes no direct object. The prepositional phrase "in the restaurant for several hours" acts as an adverb modifying "lingered".

The painting was hung on the south wall of the reception room.

The compound verb "was hung" is used intransitively and the sentence has no direct object. The prepositional phrase "on the south wall of the reception room" acts as a adverb describing where the paint hung.

Many verbs can be either transitive or intransitive, depending on their context in the sentence. In the following pairs of sentences, the first sentence uses the verb transitively and the second uses the same verb intransitively.

Transitive

According to the instructions, we must leave this goo in our hair for twenty minutes.

In this example, the verb "leave" takes a direct object, the noun phrase "this goo".

Intransitive

We would like to stay longer, but we must leave.

In this example, the verb "leave" does not take a direct object.

Transitive

The audience attentively watched the latest production of The Trojan Women.

In this example, the verb "watch" is used transitively and takes the noun phrase "the latest production of The Trojan Women" as a direct object.

Intransitive

The cook watched while the new dishwasher surreptitiously picked up the fragments of the broken dish.

In this example, the verb "watched" is used intransitively and takes no direct object.

Intransitive

The crowd moves across the field in an attempt to see the rock star get into her helicopter.

Here the verb "moves" is used as an intransitive verb and takes no direct object.

Transitive

Every spring, William moves all boxes and trunks from one side of the attic to the other.

In this sentence "moves" is used as a transitive verb and takes the noun phrase "all the boxes and trunk" as a direct object.

Progressive, Stative and Dynamic Verbs (Analyzed)

The progressive forms of a verb indicate that something is happening or was happening or will be happening. When used with the past, the progressive form shows the limited duration of an event: "While I was doing my homework, my brother came into my room." The past progressive also suggests that an action in the past was not entirely finished. (Compare "I did my homework." to "I was doing my homework.") This is even more evident in the passive progressive construction: "He was being strangled in the alley" suggests an action that was not finished, perhaps because the act was interrupted by a good citizen, whereas the simple past "He was strangled in the alley" suggests an action that was finished, unfortunately.

The progressive forms occur only with dynamic verbs, that is, with verbs that show qualities capable of change as opposed to stative verbs, which show qualities not capable of change. For instance, we do not say, "He is being tall" or "He is resembling his mother" or "I am wanting spaghetti for dinner" or "It is belonging to me." (We would say, instead: "He is tall," "He resembles his mother," "I want spaghetti," and "It belongs to me.") The best way to understand the difference between stative and dynamic verbs is to look at a table that lists them and breaks them into categories and then to build some sentences with them, trying out the progressive forms to see if they work or not.

Sequence of Verb Tenses

Although the various shades of time and sequence are usually conveyed adequately in informal speech and writing, especially by native speakers and writers, they can create havoc in academic writing and they sometimes are troublesome among students for whom English is a second language. This difficulty is especially evident in complex sentences when there is a difference between the time expressed in an independent clause and the time expressed in a dependent clause.

Another difficulty arises with the use of infinitives and participles, modals that also convey a sense of time. We hope the tables below will provide the order necessary to help writers sort out tense sequences.

As long as the main clause's verb is in neither the past nor the past perfect tense, the verb of the subordinate clause can be in any tense that conveys meaning accurately. When the main clause verb is in the past or past perfect, however, the verb in the subordinate clause must be in the past or past perfect. The exception to this rule is when the subordinate clause expresses what is commonly known as a general truth:

- In the 1950s, English teachers still believed that a background in Latin is essential for an understanding of English.
- Columbus somehow knew that the world is round.
- Slave owners widely understood that literacy among oppressed people is a dangerous thing.

Note: Unless logic dictates otherwise, when discussing a work of literature, use the present tense: "Robert Frost describes the action of snow on the birch trees." "This line suggests the burden of the ice." "The use of the present tense in Carver's stories creates a sense of immediacy."

- agree, encourage, pretend, promise, recommend
- allow, can/can't afford, decide, manage, mean, refuse

The Infinitive

Form

The infinitive is the base form of a verb. It may be preceded by 'to' (the to-infinitive) or stand alone (the base or zero infinitive).

Infinitive with or without 'to'

The to-infinitive is used:
a. after certain verbs. e.g. want, wish, agree, fail, mean, decide, learn
b. after the auxiliaries to be to, to have to, and ought to
c. in the pattern 'it is + adjective + to-infinitive'
Examples:

With 'to'

- The elephant decided *to marry* the mouse.
- The mouse agreed *to marry* the elephant.
- You will have *to ask* her.
- You are *to leave* immediately.
- He ought *to relax*.
- She has *to go* to Berlin next week.
- It's easy *to speak* English.
- It is hard *to change* jobs after twenty years.
- It's stupid *to believe* everything you hear.

Without 'to'

- I would rather *visit* Rome.
- She would rather *live* in Italy.
- Would you rather *eat* steak or fish?
- He would rather *work* in a bank.
- I'd rather *be* a forest than a tree.

Infinitive or -ing?

Sometimes we need to decide whether to use a verb in its:

- -ing form ("doing")
  or
- Infinitive form ("to do").

For example, only one of the following sentences is correct. Which one?

- I dislike working late. (???)
- I dislike to work late. (???)

When to Use the Infinitive

- The infinitive form is used after certain verbs:
  - forget, help, learn, teach, train
  - choose, expect, hope, need, offer, want, would like
  I forgot *to close* the window.
- Mary needs *to leave* early.
- Why are they encouraged *to learn* English?

- We can't afford *to take* a long holiday.

The infinitive form is always used after adjectives, for example:
- disappointed, glad, happy, pleased, relieved, sad, surprised

- I was happy *to help* them.
- She will be delighted *to see* you.

This includes too + adjective:

- The water was too cold *to swim* in.
- Is your coffee too hot *to drink*?

The infinitive form is used after adjective + enough:

- He was strong enough *to lift* it.
- She is rich enough *to buy* two.

When to Use -ing

The -ing form is used when the word is the subject of a sentence or clause:

- *Swimming* is good exercise.
- Doctors say that *smoking* is bad for you.

The -ing form is used after a preposition:

- I look forward to *meeting* you.
- They left without *saying* goodbye.

The -ing form is used after certain verbs:
- avoid, dislike, enjoy, finish, give up, mind/not mind, practise

- I dislike *getting up* early.
- Would you mind *opening* the window?

Dr. Tips
Some verbs can be followed by the -ing form or the infinitive without a big change in meaning: begin, continue, hate, intend, like, love, prefer, propose, and start.
• It started to rain.
• It started raining.
• I like to play tennis.
• I like playing tennis.

Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are a group of multi-word verbs made from a verb plus another word or words. Many people refer to all multi-word verbs as phrasal verbs. On these pages we make a distinction between three types of multi-word verbs: prepositional verbs, phrasal verbs and phrasal-prepositional verbs. On this page, we look at phrasal verbs proper.

Phrasal verbs are made of:

Verb + adverb

Phrasal verbs can be:

- Intransitive (no direct object)
- Transitive (direct object)

Separable Phrasal Verbs

When phrasal verbs are transitive (that is, they have a direct object), we can usually separate the two parts. For example, "turn down" is a separable phrasal verb. We can say: "turn down my offer" or "turn my offer down".
However, if the direct object is a pronoun, we have no choice. We must separate the phrasal verb and insert the pronoun between the two parts. Please view this example:
They *looked* them *over* carefully.

Separable Phrasal Verbs

The object may come after the following phrasal verbs or it may separate the two parts: You have *to do* this paint job *over*. You have *to do over* this paint job.
When the object of the following phrasal verbs is a pronoun, the two parts of the phrasal verb must be separated:

- You have *to do* it *over*.

Verb	Meaning	Example
blow up	explode	The terrorists tried to *blow up* the railroad station.
bring up	mention a topic	My mother *brought up* that little matter of my prison record again.
bring up	raise children	It isn't easy to *bring up* children nowadays.
call off	cancel	They *called off* this afternoon's meeting
do over	repeat a job	*Do* this homework *over*.
fill out	complete a form	*Fill out* this application form and mail it in.
fill up	fill to capacity	She *filled up* the grocery cart with free food.
find out	discover	My sister *found out* that her husband had been planning a surprise party for her.
give away	give something to someone else for free	The filling station was *giving away* free gas.
give back	return an object	My brother borrowed my car. I have a feeling he's not about to *give* it *back*.
hand in	submit something (assignment)	The students *handed in* their papers and left the room.
hang up	put something on hook or receiver	She *hung up* the phone before she hung up her clothes.
hold up	delay	I hate to *hold up* the meeting, but I have to go to the bathroom.
hold up (2)	rob	Three masked gunmen *held up* the Security Bank this afternoon.
leave out	omit	You *left out* the part about the police chase down Asylum Avenue.
look over	examine, check	The lawyers *looked over* the papers carefully before questioning the witness. (They *looked* them *over* carefully.)
look up	search in a list	You've misspelled this word again. You'd better *look* it *up*.
make up	invent a story or lie	She knew she was in trouble, so she *made up* a

		story about going to the movies with her friends.
make out	hear, understand	He was so far away, we really couldn't *make out* what he was saying.
pick out	choose	There were three men in the line-up. She *picked out* the guy she thought had stolen her purse.
pick up	lift something off something else	The crane *picked up* the entire house. (Watch them *pick* it *up*.)
point out	call attention to	As we drove through Paris, Francoise *pointed out* the major historical sites.
put away	save or store	We *put away* money for our retirement. She *put away* the cereal boxes.
put off	postpone	We asked the boss to *put off* the meeting until tomorrow. (Please *put* it *off* for another day.)
put on	put clothing on the body	I *put on* a sweater and a jacket. (I *put* them *on* quickly.)
put out	extinguish	The firefighters *put out* the house fire before it could spread. (They *put* it *out* quickly.)
read over	peruse	I *read over* the homework, but couldn't make any sense of it.
set up	to arrange, begin	My wife *set up* the living room exactly the way she wanted it. She *set* it *up*.
take down	make a written note	These are your instructions. *Write* them *down* before you forget.
take off	remove clothing	It was so hot that I had to *take off* my shirt.
talk over	discuss	We have serious problems here. Let's *talk* them *over* like adults.
throw away	discard	That's a lot of money! Don't just *throw* it *away*.
try on	put clothing on to see if it fits	She *tried on* fifteen dresses before she found one she liked.
try out	test	I *tried out* four cars before I could find one that pleased me.
turn down	lower volume	Your radio is driving me crazy! Please *turn* it *down*.
turn down (2)	reject	He applied for a promotion twice this year, but he was *turned down* both times.
turn up	raise the volume	Grandpa couldn't hear, so he *turned up* his hearing aid.
turn off	switch off electricity	We *turned off* the lights before anyone could see us.
turn off (2)	repulse	It was a disgusting movie. It really *turned* me *off*.
turn on	switch on the electricity	*Turn on* the CD player so we can dance.
use up	exhaust, use completely	The gang members *used up* all the money and went out to rob some more banks.

Inseparable Verbs

When the “phrasal verb” is intransitive (having no direct object), we can’t separate it. This is called inseparable verb. Look into the examples given below in the chart.

Inseparable Phrasal Verbs (Transitive)

With the following phrasal verbs, the lexical part of the verb (the part of the phrasal verb that carries the "verb-meaning") cannot be separated from the prepositions (or other parts) that accompany it: "Who will *look after* my estate when I'm gone?"

Verb	Meaning	Example
call on	ask to recite in class	The teacher *called on* students in the back row.
call on (2)	Visit	The old minister continued to *call on* his sick parishioners.
get over	recover from sickness or disappointment	I *got over* the flu, but I don't know if I'll ever *get over* my broken heart.
go over	review	The students *went over* the material before the exam. They should have gone over it twice.
go through	use up; consume	They country *went through* most of its coal reserves in one year. Did he *go through* all his money already?
look after	take care of	My mother promised to *look after* my dog while I was gone.
look into	investigate	The police will *look into* the possibilities of embezzlement.
run across	find by chance	I *ran across* my old roommate at the college reunion.
run into	meet	Carlos *ran into* his English professor in the hallway.
take after	resemble	My second son seems to *take after* his mother.
wait on	serve	It seemed strange to see my old boss *wait on* tables.

Three-Word Phrasal Verbs (Transitive)

With the following phrasal verbs, you will find three parts: "My brother *dropped out of* school before he could graduate."

Verb	Meaning	Example
break in on	interrupt (a conversation)	I was talking to Mom on the phone when the operator *broke in on* our call.
catch up with	keep abreast	After our month-long trip, it was time to *catch up with* the neighbors and the news around town.
check up on	examine, investigate	The boys promised to *check up on* the condition of the summer house from time to time.
come up with	to contribute (suggestion, money)	After years of giving nothing, the old parishioner was able to *come up with* a thousand-dollar donation.
cut down on	curtail (expenses)	We tried to *cut down on* the money we were spending on entertainment.

drop out of	leave school	I hope none of my students *drop out of* school this semester.
get along with	have a good relationship with	I found it very hard to *get along with* my brother when we were young.
get away with	escape blame	Junaid cheated on the exam and then tried to *get away with* it.
get rid of	eliminate	The citizens tried to *get rid of* their corrupt mayor in the recent election.
get through with	finish	When will you ever *get through with* that program?
keep up with	maintain pace with	It's hard to *keep up with* the Joneses when you lose your job!
look forward to	anticipate with pleasure	I always *look forward to* the beginning of a new semester.
look down on	despise	It's typical of a jingoistic country that the citizens *look down on* their geographical neighbors.
look in on	visit (somebody)	We were going *to look in* on my brother-in-law, but he wasn't home.
look out for	be careful, anticipate	Good instructors will *look out for* early signs of failure in their students
look up to	respect	First-graders really *look up to* their teachers.
make sure of	verify	*Make sure of* the student's identity before you let him into the classroom.
put up with	tolerate	The teacher had to *put up with* a great deal of nonsense from the new students.
run out of	exhaust supply	The runners *ran out of* energy before the end of the race.
take care of	be responsible for	My oldest sister *took care of* us younger children after Mom died.
talk back to	answer impolitely	The star player *talked back to* the coach and was thrown off the team.
think back on	recall	I often *think back on* my childhood with great pleasure.
walk out on	abandon	Her husband *walked out on* her and their three children.

Intransitive Phrasal Verbs

The following phrasal verbs are not followed by an object: "Once you leave home, you can “break down” (stop functioning). That old Jeep had a tendency to *break down* just when I needed it the most. “Catch on” (become popular). Popular songs seem to *catch on* in California first and then spread eastward. “Come back” (return to a place). Father promised to come back the same night.

Dr. Tips

How to use separable or inseparable phrasal verbs? Some dictionaries tell you when phrasal verbs are separable. If a dictionary writes "look (something) up", you know that the phrasal verb "look up" is separable, and you can say "look something up" and "look up something". It's a good idea to write "something/somebody" as appropriate in your vocabulary book when you learn a new phrasal verb, like this:

- get up
- break down
- put something/somebody off
- turn something/somebody down

This tells you whether the verb needs a direct object (and where to put it).

Phrasal Verbs and Other Multi-Word Verbs

Phrasal verbs are part of a large group of verbs called "multi-word verbs". Phrasal verbs and other multi-word verbs are an important part of the English language. Multi-word verbs, including phrasal verbs, are very common, especially in spoken English. A multi-word verb is a verb like "pick up", "turn on" or "get on with". For convenience, many people refer to all multi-word verbs as phrasal verbs. These verbs consist of a basic verb + another word or words. The other word(s) can be prepositions and/or adverbs. The two or three words that make up multi-word verbs form a short "phrase"—which is why these verbs are often all called "phrasal verbs".

The important thing to remember is that a multi-word verb is still a verb. "Get" is a verb. "Get up", is also a verb, a different verb. "Get" and "get up" are two different verbs. They do not have the same meaning. So you should treat each multi-word verb as a separate verb, and learn it like any other verb.

Phrasal-Prepositional Verbs

Phrasal-prepositional verbs are a small group of multi-word verbs made from a verb plus another word or words. Many people refer to all multi-word verbs as phrasal verbs. On these pages we make a distinction between three types of multi-word verbs: prepositional verbs, phrasal verbs and phrasal-prepositional verbs. On this page we look at phrasal-prepositional verbs.

Phrasal-prepositional verbs are made of:

Verb + adverb + preposition

Gerunds after Certain Verbs

We sometimes use one verb after another verb. Often the second verb is in the infinitive form, for example:

- I want *to eat*.

But sometimes the second verb must be in gerund form, for example:

- I dislike *eating*.

This depends on the first verb. Here is a list of verbs that are usually followed by a verb in gerund form:

- admit, appreciate, avoid, carry on, consider, defer, delay, deny, detest, dislike, endure, enjoy, escape, excuse, face, feel like, finish, forgive, give up, can't help, imagine, involve, leave off, mention, mind, miss, postpone, practise, put off, report, resent, risk, can't stand, suggest, understand

Look at these examples:

- She is considering *having* a holiday.
- Do you feel like *going* out?
- I can't help *falling* in love with you.
- I can't stand not *seeing* you.

Dr. Tips.

The gerund form or the infinitive form can follow some verbs without a big change in meaning: begin, continue, hate, intend, like, love, prefer, propose, and start

- I like to play tennis.
- I like playing tennis.
- It started to rain.
- It started raining.

Plural Verbs with Singular Subjects

We often use singular nouns that refer to groups of people (e.g. government, committee, team etc.) as if they were plural. This is particularly true in British English. This is because we often think of the group as people, doing things that people do (eating, wanting, feeling etc). In such cases, we use:

- plural verb
- plural pronoun (they)
- who (not which)

Here are some examples:

- The committee want sandwiches for lunch. They have to leave early.
- My family, who don't see me often, have asked me home for Christmas.
- The team hope to win next time.

Here are some examples of words and expressions that can be considered singular or plural:

- choir, class, club, committee, company, family, government, jury, school, staff, team, union, the BBC, board of directors, the Conservative Party, Manchester United, the Ministry of Health

But when we consider the group as an impersonal unit, we use singular verbs and pronouns:

- The new company is the result of a merger.
- An average family consists of four people.
- The committee, which was formed in 1999, is made up of four men and four women.

Notice that this is often a question of style and logic. The important thing in any situation is to be consistent.

Dr. Tips.
Using a plural verb with singular subject is less common in American English.

Single Word Verbs and Verb Strings

A verb may be just one word:

> The moon's cycle, not the sun's, *governs* the tides. Therefore, low tide *comes* at a later time each day.

Often, however, a verb is a string of words made of a main verb with one or more auxiliaries in front of it.

> The tide *was changing* at 10:30 yesterday morning. It *should be turning* today at about 11:10 A.M. We probably *could have waited* until noon for our fishing trip.

The main verb identifies the event, which the sentence is reporting. The auxiliaries tell more about the time or conditions of the event, and they always come before the main verb. The verb string is the combination of auxiliaries and main verb acting together to play the role of verb in a sentence. In the following exercises, the verbs will be analyzed and marked like this:

> Single-word verb = SV
> Main verb = MV
> Auxiliary = X

Verbs in the simple present or simple past tense consist of just one word.

Verbs that emphasize the continuation of an event include some form of “to be” as an auxiliary (am, is, are, was, were, being).
Verbs that emphasize the completion of an event include some form of “to have” as an auxiliary (have, has, had).
Verbs that express a future event include the auxiliary will or shall.

Verbs may include several other auxiliaries to express shadings of time or condition. These additional auxiliaries are: do, does, did, can, could, should, would, may, might, and must.

Verbs in Question and Negative Statements

Questions and negative statements split verbs into two parts.
In a question, the subject splits the verb apart.

> Some of the union members *are voting* for the strike.
> *Are* some of the union members *voting* for the strike?

In a negative statement, the word not splits the verb.

> Some of the union members *are* not *voting* for the strike.

Sometimes the word not contracts and attaches itself to the first part of the split verb:

> Some of the union members *aren't voting* for the strike.

Tip for finding verbs: Look for auxiliaries. If you find one, look for a main verb accompanying it. Remember that auxiliaries are sometimes squeezed into contractions

Verbs: Time (Tense)

A verb gives clues about the time of an event.

> When Rehman *was making* flan, he *used* a couple of the eggs that we *had brought* from the farm. There *is* only one left, and we *have finished* all the other food in the house, so we *will have* a very small supper.

The verbs in the sentences above can be spread out on a time line like this below: (A verb usually changes to show time differences.)

Salma *is working* on the same paper she *worked* on last week. She *works* on it a little bit every day

Factitive Verbs

Verbs like make, choose, judge, elect, name, and select are called factitive verbs. These transitive verbs can take two objects, or seem to:

- They judged Hilbert's dog Best of Show. (Where "dog" is the direct object and "Best of Show" is the second complement).
- The faculty elected Dogsbreath the new Academic Dean. (Where Dogsbreath is the direct object and "Academic Dean" is the second complement).
- U.S. News and World Report named our college the best in the northeast. (Where "our college" is the direct object and "the best" is the second complement).

Participle: a verb form acting as an adjective. The running dog chased the fluttering moth. A present participle (like running or fluttering) describes a present condition; a past participle describes something that has happened: "The completely rotted tooth finally fell out of his mouth." The distinction can be important to the meaning of a sentence; there is a huge difference between a confusing student and a confused student.

Verbals

Verbals are words that seem to carry the idea of action or being but do not function as a true verb. The *verbals* are sometimes called "nonfinite" (unfinished or incomplete) verbs. Because time is involved with all verb forms, whether finite or nonfinite, however, following a logical Tense Sequence is important.
Verbals are frequently accompanied by other, related words in what is called a verbal phrase.

Tense

Tense shows the “time” of a verb's action or being. There are three inflected forms reflected by changes in the endings of verbs. The present tense indicates that something is happening or being now: "She is a student. She drives a new car." The simple past tense indicates that something happened in the past: "She was a student. She drove a new car." And the past participle form is combined with auxiliary verbs to indicate that something happened in the past prior to another action: "She has been a student. She had driven a new car."
Unlike most other languages, English does not have inflected forms for the future tense. Instead, English future forms are created with the use of auxiliaries: "She *will* be a student. She is *going* to drive a new car." English can even create the future by using the present tense, "The bus *arrives* later this afternoon," or the present progressive, "He *is relocating* to Portland later next month."

Mood

Mood in verbs refers to one of three attitudes that a writer or speaker has to what is being written or spoken. The indicative mood, which describes most sentences on this page, is used to make a statement or ask a question. The imperative mood is used when we're feeling sort of bossish and want to give a directive, strong suggestion, or order:

- Get your homework done before you watch television tonight.
- Please include cash payment with your order form.
- Get out of town!

Notice that there is no subject in these imperative sentences. The pronoun you (singular or plural, depending on context) is the "understood subject" in imperative sentences. Virtually all imperative sentences, then, have a second person (singular or plural) subject.

The sole exception is the first person construction, which includes an objective form as subject: "Let's (or Let us) work on these things together."

The subjunctive mood is used in dependent clauses that do the following: 1) express a wish; 2) begin with if and express a condition that does not exist (is contrary to fact); 3) begin with as if and as though when such clauses describe a speculation or condition contrary to fact; and 4) begin with that and express a demand, requirement, request, or suggestion.

- She wishes her boyfriend *were* here.
- If Juan *were* more aggressive, he'd be a better hockey player.
- We would have passed if we *had* studied harder.
- He acted as if he *were* guilty.
- I requested that he *be* present at the hearing.

The subjunctive is not as important a mood in English as it is in other languages, like French and Spanish, which happen to be more subtle and discriminating in hypothetical, doubtful, or wishful expressions. Using one of several auxiliary verbs in English satisfies many situations that would require the subjunctive in other languages.

Tenses

Tense in Independent Clause	Purpose of Dependent Clause/ Tense in Dependent Clause	Example(s)
Simple Present	To show same-time action, use the present tense	I am eager to go to the concert because I love the Wallflowers.
=	To show earlier action, use past tense	I know that I made the right choice.
=	To show a period of time extending from some point in the past to the present, use the present perfect tense.	They believe that they have elected the right candidate.
=	To show action to come, use the future tense.	The President says that he will veto the bill.

Past Simple

To show another completed past action, use the past tense.	I wanted to go home because I missed my parents.
To show an earlier action, use the past	She knew she had made the right choice.

perfect tense.	
To state a general truth, use the present tense.	The Deists believed that the universe is like a giant clock.

Present Perfect or Past Perfect

For any completed purpose, use the present tense.	She has grown a foot since she turned nine.
For any purpose, use the past tense.	The crowd had turned nasty before the sheriff returned.

Future

To show action happening at the same time, use the present tense.		I will be so happy if they fix my car today.
To show an earlier action, use the past tense.		You will surely pass this exam if you studied hard.
To show future action earlier than the action of the independent clause, use the present perfect tense.		The college will probably close its doors next summer if enrollments have not increased.
The present Future perfect. Perfect tense.	For any purpose, use Tense or present	Most students will have taken sixty credits by the time they graduate. Most students will have taken sixty credits by the time they have graduated.

Tense of Infinitive	Role of Infinitive	Example(s)
Present Infinitive (to see)	To show same-time action or action later than the verb	Coach Zaheer is eager to try out his new drills. [The eagerness is now; the trying out will happen later.]
		He would have liked to see more veterans returning. [The present infinitive to see is in the same time as the past would have liked.]
Perfect Infinitive		The fans would like to have seen some improvement this

(to have seen)	To show action earlier than the verb	year. ["Would like" describes a present condition; "to have seen" describes something prior to that time.] They consider the team to have been coached very well. [The perfect infinitive to have been coached indicates a time prior to the verb

Participles

Tense of Participle	Role of Participle	Example(s)
Present Participle (seeing)	To show action occurring at the same time as that of the verb	Working on the fundamentals, the team slowly began to improve. [The action expressed by began happened in the past, at the same time the working happened.]
Past Participle or Present Perfect Participle	To show action occurring earlier than that of the verb	Prepared by last year's experience, the coach knows not to expect too much. [The action expressed by knows is in the present, prepared expresses a time prior to that time.] Having experimented with several game plans, the coaching staff devised a master strategy. [The present perfect participle having experimented indicates a time prior to the past tense verb, devised.]

Sequence of Verb Tenses

Although the various shades of time and sequence are usually conveyed adequately in informal speech and writing, especially by native speakers and writers, they can create havoc in academic writing and they sometimes are troublesome among students for

whom English is a second language. This difficulty is especially evident in complex sentences when there is a difference between the time expressed in an independent clause and the time expressed in a dependent clause.

Another difficulty arises with the use of infinitives and participles, modals that also convey a sense of time. We hope the tables below will provide the order necessary to help writers sort out tense sequences.

As long as the main clause's verb is in neither the past nor the past perfect tense, the verb of the subordinate clause can be in any tense that conveys meaning accurately. When the main clause verb is in the past or past perfect, however, the verb in the subordinate clause must be in the past or past perfect. The exception to this rule is when the subordinate clause expresses what is commonly known as a general truth:

- In the 1950s, English teachers still believed that a background in Latin is essential for an understanding of English.
- Columbus somehow knew that the world is round.
- Slave owners widely understood that literacy among oppressed people is a dangerous thing

A Summary of Verb Tenses

Present Tenses

Simple present: She wants a drink.

Present continuous: They are walking home.

Past Tenses

Simple past: Zaheer lived in China in 1965.

Past continuous: I was reading when she arrived.

Perfect Tenses

Present perfect: I have lived here since 1987.

Present perfect continuous: I have been living here for years.

Past perfect: We had been to see her several times before she visited us.

Past perfect continuous: He had been watching her for some time when she turned and smiled.

Future perfect: We will have arrived in the States by the time you get this letter.

Future perfect continuous: By the end of your course, you will have been studying for five years.

Future Tenses

Simple future: They will go to Italy next week.

Future continuous: I will be travelling by train.

Conditional Tenses

Present conditional: If he had the money he would go.

Present continuous conditional: He would be getting up now if he were in Australia.

Perfect conditional: She would have visited me if she had had time.

Perfect continuous conditional: I would have been playing tennis if I hadn't broken my arm.

Verbs are also said to be either active (The executive committee *approved* the new policy) or passive (The new policy *was approved* by the executive committee) in voice. In the active voice, the subject and verb relationship is straightforward: the subject is a be-er or a do-er and the verb moves the sentence along. In the passive voice, the subject of the sentence is neither a do-er nor a be-er, but is acted upon by some other *agent* or by something unnamed (The new policy was approved). Computerized grammar checkers can pick out a passive voice construction from miles away and ask you to revise it to a more active construction. There is nothing inherently wrong with the passive voice, but if you can say the same thing in the active mode, do so. Your text will have more pizzazz as a result, since passive verb constructions tend to lie about in their pajamas and avoid actual work.

The passive voice is especially helpful (and even regarded as mandatory) in scientific or technical writing or lab reports, where the actor is not really important but the process or principle being described is of ultimate importance. Instead of writing "I poured 20 cc of acid into the beaker," we would write "Twenty cc of acid *is/was poured* into the beaker."

The Passive Voice

Passive Verb Formation

The passive forms of a verb are created by combining a form of the "to be verb" with the past participle of the main verb. Other helping verbs are also sometimes present: "The measure *could have been killed* in committee."

Passive Tenses and Active Equivalents

Notice that the tense of the verb to be in the passive voice is the same as the tense of the main verb in the active voice.

Example: to keep

Tense/Verb Form	Active Voice	Passive Voice
Simple Present	Keeps	Is kept
Present Continuous	Is keeping	Is being kept
Simple Past	Kept	Was kept
Past Continuous	Was keeping	Was being kept
Present Perfect	Have kept	Have been kept
Past Perfect	Had kept	Had been kept
Future	Will keep	Will be kept
Conditional Present	Would keep	Would be kept
Conditional Past	Would have kept	Would have been kept
Present Infinitive	To keep	To be kept

Perfect Infinitive	To have kept	To have been kept
Present Participle/Gerund	Keeping	Being kept
Perfect Participle	Having kept	Having been kept

Example sentences:
Active: I *keep* the butter in the fridge.
Passive: The butter *is kept* in the fridge.

Active: They *stole* the painting.
Passive: The painting *was stolen*.

Active: They *are repairing* the road.
Passive: The road *is being repaired*.

Active: Shakespeare *wrote* Hamlet.
Passive: Hamlet *was written* by Shakespeare.

Active: A dog *bit* him.
Passive: He *was bitten* by a dog

- When it is more important to draw our attention to the person or thing acted upon: The unidentified victim *was apparently struck* during the early morning hours.
- When the actor in the situation is not important: The aurora borealis *can be observed* in the early morning hours.

Choosing Active Voice

In most nonscientific writing situations, active voice is preferable to passive for the majority of your sentences. Even in scientific writing, overuse of passive voice or use of passive voice in long and complicated sentences can cause readers to lose interest or to become confused. Sentences in active voice are generally--though not always-- clearer and more direct than those in passive voice.
Sentences in active voice are also more concise than those in passive voice because fewer words are required to express action in active voice than in passive.

Changing Passive to Active

If you want to change a passive-voice sentence to active voice, find the agent in a "by the..." phrase, or consider carefully who or what is performing the action expressed in the verb. Make that agent the subject of the sentence, and change the verb accordingly. Sometimes you will need to infer the agent from the surrounding sentences, which provide context.

Choosing Passive Voice

While active voice helps to create clear and direct sentences, sometimes writers find that using an indirect expression is rhetorically effective in a given situation, so they choose passive voice. Also, as mentioned above, writers in the sciences conventionally use passive voice more often than writers in other discourses. Passive voice makes sense when the agent performing the action is obvious, unimportant, or unknown or when a writer wishes to postpone mentioning the agent until the last part of the sentence or to avoid mentioning the agent at all. The passive voice is effective in such circumstances because it highlights the action and what is acted upon rather than the agent performing the action.

Active	Passive
The dispatcher is notifying police that three prisoners have escaped.	Police are being notified that three prisoners have escaped.
Surgeons successfully performed a new experimental liver-transplant operation yesterday.	A new experimental liver-transplant operation was performed successfully yesterday.
"Authorities make rules to be broken," he said defiantly.	"Rules are made to be broken," he said defiantly.

In each of these examples, the passive voice makes sense because the agent is relatively unimportant compared to the action itself and what is acted upon.

Changing Active to Passive

If you want to change an active-voice sentence to passive voice, consider carefully who or what is performing the action expressed in the verb, and then make that agent the object of a "by the..." phrase. Make what is acted upon the subject of the sentence, and change the verb to a form of be + past participle. Including an explicit "by the..." phrase is optional.

Only transitive verbs (those that take objects) can be transformed into passive constructions. Furthermore, active sentences containing certain verbs cannot be transformed into passive structures. To have is the most important of these verbs. We can say "He has a new car," but we cannot say, "A new car is had by him." We can say "Josefina lacked finesse," but we cannot say, "Finesse was lacked." Here is a brief list of such verbs:

Resemble	Look like	Equal	Agree with
Mean	Contain	Hold	Comprise
Lack	Suit	Fit	Become

Verbals in Passive Structures

Verbals or verb forms can also take on features of the passive voice. An infinitive phrase in the passive voice, for instance, can perform various functions within a sentence (just like the active forms of the infinitive).

- Subject: *To be elected* by my peers is a great honor.
- Object: That child really likes *to be read to* by her mother.
- Modifier: Grasso was the first woman *to be elected* governor in her own right.

The same is true of passive gerunds.

- Subject: *Being elected* by my peers was a great thrill.
- Object: I really don't like *being lectured to* by my boss.
- Object of preposition: I am so tired *of being lectured to* by my boss.

With passive participles, part of the passive construction is often omitted, the result being a simple modifying participial phrase.

- [~~Having been~~] designed for off-road performance, the Pathseeker does not always behave well on paved highways.

Some Suggestions!

1. Avoid starting a sentence in active voice and then shifting to passive.

Unnecessary shift in voice	**Revised**
Many customers in the restaurant found the coffee too bitter to drink, but it was still ordered frequently.	Many customers in the restaurant found the coffee too bitter to drink, but they still ordered it frequently.
He tried to act cool when he slipped in the puddle, but he was still laughed at by the other students.	He tried to act cool when he slipped in the puddle, but the other students still laughed at him.

2. Avoid dangling modifiers caused by the use of passive voice. A dangling modifier is a word or phrase that modifies a word not clearly stated in the sentence.

Dangling modifier with passive voice	**Revised**
To save time, the paper was written on a computer. (Who was saving time? The paper?)	To save time, Kristin wrote the paper on a computer.
Seeking to lay off workers without taking the blame, consultants were hired to break the bad news. Who was seeking to lay off workers? The consultants?)	Seeking to lay off workers without taking the blame, the CEO hired consultants to break the bad news.

3. Don't trust the grammar-checking programs in word-processing software. Many grammar checkers flag all passive constructions, but you may want to keep some that are

flagged. Trust your judgement, or ask another human being for their opinion about which sentence sounds best.

Tenses in Active Voice (The Obsession of a User)

Notice that sometimes the use of passive voice can create awkward sentences, as in the last example above. Also, overuse of passive voice throughout an essay can cause your prose to seem flat and uninteresting. In scientific writing, however, passive voice is more readily accepted since using it allows one to write without using personal pronouns or the names of particular researchers as the subjects of sentences (see the third example above). This practice helps to create the appearance of an objective, fact-based discourse because writers can present research and conclusions without attributing them to particular agents. Instead, the writing appears to convey information that is not limited or biased by individual perspectives or personal interests.

You can recognize passive-voice expressions because the verb phrase will always include a form of be, such as am, is, was, were, are, or been. The presence of a be-verb, however, does not necessarily mean that the sentence is in passive voice. Another way to recognize passive-voice sentences is that they may include a "by the..." phrase after the verb; the agent performing the action, if named, is the object of the preposition in this phrase.

Verb Tenses in Active Voice	Singular	Plural
Simple Tenses Indicate that an action is present, past or future relative to the speaker or writer.		
Present		
1st person	I walk/draw	we walk/draw
2nd person	you walk/draw	you walk/draw
3rd person	he/she/it walks/draws	they walk/draw
Past		
1st person	I walked/drew	we walked/drew
2nd person	you walked/drew	you walked/drew
3rd person	he/she/it walked/drew	they walked/drew
Future		
1st person	I will walk/draw	we will walk/draw
2nd person	you will walk/draw	you will walk/draw
3rd person	he/she/it will walk/draw	they will walk/draw

Perfect Tenses Indicate that an action was or will be completed before another time or action.		
Present Perfect		
1st person	I have walked/drawn	we have walked/drawn
2nd person	you have walked/drawn	you have walked/drawn
3rd person	he/she/it has walked/drawn	they have walked/drawn
Past Perfect		
1st person	I had walked/drawn	we had walked/drawn
2nd person	you had walked/drawn	you had walked/drawn
3rd person	he/she/it had walked/drawn	they had walked/drawn
Future Perfect		
1st person	I will have walked/drawn	we will have walked/ drawn
2nd person	you will have walked/drawn	you will have walked/ drawn
3rd person	he/she/it will have walked/drawn	they will have walked/drawn
Progressive Tenses Indicate continuing/continuous action.		
Present Progressive		
1st person	I am walking/drawing	we are walking/drawing
2nd person	you are walking/drawing	you are walking/drawing
3rd person	he/she/it is walking/drawing	they are walking/drawing
Past Progressive		
1st person	I was walking/drawing	we were walking/drawing
2nd person	you were walking/drawing	you were walking/drawing
3rd person	he/she/it was walking/drawing	they were walking/drawing
Future Progressive		
1st person	I will be	we will be

	walking/drawing	walking/drawing
2nd person	you will be walking/ drawing	you will be walking/drawing
3rd person	he/she/it will be walking/drawing	they will be walking/drawing
Present Perfect Progressive		
1st person	I have been walking/drawing	we have been walking/drawing
2nd person	you have been walking/drawing	you have been walking/drawing
3rd person	he/she/it has been walking/drawing	they have been walking/drawing
Past Perfect Progressive		
1st person	I had been walking/drawing	we had been walking/drawing
2nd person	you had been walking/drawing	you had been walking/drawing
3rd person	he/she/it had been walking/drawing	they had been walking/drawing
Future Perfect Progressive		
1st person	I will have been walking/drawing	we will have been walking/drawing
2nd person	you will have been walking/drawing	you will have been walking/drawing
3rd person	he/she/it will have been walking/drawing	they will have been walking/drawing

Verb Meanings with Continuous Tenses

There are some verbs that we do not normally use in the continuous tense. And there are other verbs that we use in the simple tense with one meaning and in the continuous tense with another meaning. In this lesson we look at:

- Verbs not used with *continuous* tenses
- Verbs with *two* meanings

Verbs not Used with Continuous Tenses

We usually use the following verbs with simple tenses only (not continuous tenses):

- hate, like, love, need, prefer, want, wish
- believe, imagine, know, mean, realize, recognize, remember, suppose, understand

- belong, concern, consist, contain, depend, involve, matter, need, owe, own, possess
- appear, resemble, seem,
- hear, see

Here are some examples:

I want a coffee.	not I am wanting a coffee.
I don't believe you are right.	not I am not believing you are right.
Does this pen belong to you?	not Is this pen belonging to you?
It seemed wrong.	not It was seeming wrong.
I don't hear anything.	not I am not hearing anything.

Notice that we often use can + see/hear:

- I can see someone in the distance. (not I am seeing someone in the distance.)
- I can't hear you very well. (not I am not hearing you very well.)

Dr. Tips.

With verbs that we don't use in the continuous tense, there is no real action or activity. Compare "to hear" and "to listen". "To hear" means "to receive sound in your ears". There is no real action or activity by you. We use "to hear" with simple tenses only. But "to listen" means "to try to hear". You make an effort to hear. There is a kind of action or activity. We can use "to listen" with simple or continuous tenses.

Verbs with Two Meanings

Some verbs have two different meanings or senses. For one sense we must use a simple tense. For the other sense we can use a continuous or simple tense.

For example, the verb to think has two different senses:

1. to believe, to have an opinion (example: I think Ricky Martin is hot.)
2. to reflect, to use your brain to solve a problem (example: I am thinking about my homework.)

In sense 1. There is no real action, no activity. This sense is called "stative". In sense 2. There is a kind of action, a kind of activity. This sense is called "dynamic".

When we use the stative sense, we use a simple tense. When we use the dynamic sense, we can use a simple or continuous tense (depending on the situation).

Look at these examples:

"Stative" sense (no real action)	"Dynamic" sense (a kind of action)	
Simple only	Continuous	Simple
I think she is beautiful.	Be quiet. I'm thinking.	I will think about this problem tomorrow.
I don't consider that he is	We are considering your job	We consider every job

the right man for the job.	application and will give you our answer in a few days.	application very carefully.
This table measures 4 x 6 feet.	She is measuring the room for a new carpet.	A good carpenter measures his wood carefully.
Does the wine taste good?	I was tasting the wine when I dropped the glass.	I always taste wine before I drink it.
Mariam has three children.	Please phone later. We are having dinner now.	We have dinner at 8pm every day.

Dr. Tips.

If you have a doubt about a particular verb, ask yourself the question: "Is there any real action or activity?"

Auxiliary Verbs (or Helping Verbs)

do, does, don't, doesn't (Present Simple Auxiliary Verbs)

The auxiliary “do” is used mainly to form questions and negative sentences with the present simple tense. It is not normally used in affirmative sentences.

It is also used in forming tag questions and shortened answers. Study the following examples:

- I enjoy cycling in the countryside, but I don't enjoy cycling in towns.
- She doesn't play the ballgames that girls usually play, but she plays football.
- You don't really like Helen, do you?' 'Of course I do! / No, it's true. I don't.
- Do all cats drink milk?' 'Most do, some don't.

Doesn't he ever take a day off work?' 'He did once in 1999, but he hasn't so far this year!

Do may be used in affirmative sentences, but when it is used in this way, it denotes strong contrastive emphasis with heavy word stress on the auxiliary itself.

Quite a lot of emotion is usually involved. Study the following examples:

- Do come in! Please don't stand there on the doorstep.
- He thinks I don't love him, but I do love him with all my heart!
- He's not a vegetarian! He does eat meat! I have seen him eat meat!

did, didn't (Past Simple Auxiliary Verbs)

Did and didn't are used as past simple 'helping' verbs in exactly the same way as do/don't and does/doesn't are used in the present simple.

Study the following examples:

- I played a lot of rugby as a young man, but I didn't ever play football.
- You didn't forget to post my letter, did you? Of course I didn't.
- Did he pass his exam? He did, yeah!
- I did remember to put salt into the dishwasher. It's not my fault that it's not working.

Contrastive Emphasis

There are three other circumstances when do is used in affirmative sentences or clauses. It is used for contrastive emphasis when we want to contrast one set of circumstances or point in time with another. Study the following:

- I wish I could lose some weight. Yes, well you do eat rather a lot of sweet things.
- Why didn't you ask him for a loan? I did ask him, but he said he had no money.
- I hardly ever see my ex-wife, but I do see my children every week.

Polite Imperatives

It is sometimes used with imperatives when we want to make a suggestion or invitation more polite or welcoming. Study the following:

- Do have some more strawberries! Help yourself!
- Do come in! Do sit down!
- Do be careful on holiday! Don't take any risks!
- Do write and tell us how you're getting on!

Avoiding Repetition

It is often used when we want to avoid repeating a verb, which we have already used in the first part of the sentence. Consider the following:

- Can I have another go with your game boy? Yes, do!
- She said she'd help me with the ironing and she did!
- Did you see Maria when she was over in London? Yes, I did!

have/haven't, has/hasn't, had/hadn't
(Present Perfect and Past Perfect Auxiliary Verbs)

The auxiliaries have and had are used as 'helping' verbs in the construction of the perfect and past perfect forms of all main verbs. They are often pronounced as contracted weak forms in affirmative sentences and contracted weak forms are also used in the negative. Study the following examples and say them to yourself as you read them:

- They've been living in Calcutta for three years now, but they still haven't got used to the heat.
- He's collected his medication from the chemist, but he hasn't actually taken any of the pills yet.
- Have you seen my green pullover anywhere, Sandra?' 'No, sorry, I haven't.
- This was a lie, for she'd borrowed his green pullover and had forgotten to return it.
- They told me that they'd lived in Wiltshire all their lives, but had never visited Stonehenge.
- We have paid for the flights, but we haven't paid the travel insurance yet.

Notice that in this last example there is strong contrastive emphasis, so the weak contracted form of have is not used in the affirmative part of the utterance. This equates to the emphatic use of do in the earlier examples.

Be Able to

Although we look at be able to here, it is not a modal verb. It is simply the verb "to be" plus an adjective (able) followed by the infinitive. We look at "be able to" here because we sometimes use it instead of "can" and "could". We use "be able to":

- to talk about ability

Structure of *be able to*

The structure of be able to is:
subject + be + able + infinitive

Sentence Nature	Subject	Verb (Be)	Adjective (Able)	Infinitive
+	I	am	able	to drive
-	She	isn't/is not	able	to drive
	Are you	(verb placed before subject)	able	to drive

Notice that *be able to* is possible in all tenses, for example:

- I was able to drive...
- I will be able to drive...
- I have been able to drive...

Notice too that *be able to* has an infinitive form:

- I would like to be able to speak Chinese.

Use of *be able to*

Be able to: ability

We use be able to to express ability. "Able" is an adjective meaning: having the power, skill or means to do something. If we say, "I am able to swim", it is like saying "I can swim". We sometimes use "be able to" instead of "can" or "could" for ability. "Be able to" is possible in all tenses—but "can" is possible only in the present and "could" is possible only in the past for ability. In addition, "can" and "could" have no infinitive form. So we use "be able to" when we want to use other tenses or the infinitive. Look at these examples:

- I have been able to swim since I was five. (present perfect)
- You will be able to speak perfect English very soon. (future simple)

I would like to be able to fly an airplane. (infinitive)

Dr. Tips

Be able to is not a modal auxiliary verb. We include it here for convenience, because it is often used like "can" and "could", which are modal auxiliary verbs.

Modal Auxiliary Verbs

Can

Can is an auxiliary verb, a modal auxiliary verb. We use "can" to:

- talk about possibility and ability
- make requests
- ask for or give permission

Structure of Can

subject + can + main verb
The main verb is always the bare infinitive (infinitive without "to").

	subject	auxiliary verb	main verb	
+	I	Can	Play	tennis.
-	He	Cannot / can't	Play	tennis.
?	Can you	(auxiliary verb placed before subject)	Play	tennis?

Notice that:

- Can is invariable. There is only one form of can.
- The main verb is always the bare infinitive.

Dr. Tips.
The main verb is always the bare infinitive (infinitive without "to).

Use of *Can* (Multi Dimensional)

Can: Possibility and Ability

We use can to talk about what is possible, what we are able or free to do:

- She can drive a car.
- Javed can speak Spanish.
- I cannot hear you. (I can't hear you.)
- Can you hear me?

Normally, we use can for the present. But it is possible to use can when we make present decisions about future ability.

A.Can you help me with my homework? (Present)
B.Sorry. I'm busy today. But I can help you tomorrow. (Future)

Can: Requests and Orders

We often use can in a question to ask somebody to do something. This is not a real question - we do not really want to know if the person is able to do something, we want them to do it! The use of can in this way is informal (mainly between friends and family):

- Can you make a cup of coffee, please!
- Can you put the TV on.
- Can you come here a minute.
- Can you be quiet!

Can: Permission

We sometimes use can to ask or give permission for something:

A.Can I smoke in this room?

B.You can't smoke here, but you can smoke in the garden.

(Note that we also use could, may, might for permission. The use of can for permission is informal.)

Could

Could is an auxiliary verb, a modal auxiliary verb. We use could to:

- talk about past possibility or ability
- make requests

Structure of *Could*

subject + could + main verb

The main verb is always the bare infinitive (infinitive without "to").

	Subject	auxiliary verb	main verb	
+	My grandmother	Could	speak	Japanese.
-	She	could not couldn't	speak	Chinese.
?	Could	your grandmother	speak	Japanese?

✓ Notice that:

- Could is invariable. There is only one form of could.
- The main verb is always the bare infinitive.

Dr. Tips.

The main verb is always the bare infinitive.

Use of Could

Could: Past Possibility or Ability

We use could to talk about what was possible in the past, what we were able or free to do:

- I could swim when I was 5 years old.
- My grandmother could speak seven languages.

- When we arrived home, we could not open the door. (...couldn't open the door.)
- Could you understand what he was saying?

We use could (positive) and couldn't (negative) for general ability in the past. But when we talk about one special occasion in the past, we use be able to (positive) and couldn't (negative). Look at these examples:

	Past	
	General	Specific Occasion
+	My grandmother could speak Spanish.	A man fell into the river yesterday. The police were able to save him.
-	My grandmother couldn't speak Spanish.	A man fell into the river yesterday. The police couldn't save him.

Could: Requests

We often use could in a question to ask somebody to do something. The use of could in this way is fairly polite (formal):

- Could you tell me where the bank is, please?
- Could you send me a catalogue, please?

Must

(Subjective Obligation)

We often use must to say that something is essential or necessary, for example:

- I must go.

Structure of *Must*

"Must" is a modal auxiliary verb. It is followed by a main verb. The structure is:
subject + must + main verb
The main verb is the base verb (infinitive without "to").
Look at these examples:

Subject	**Auxiliary "Must"**	**Main Verb**	
I	must	go	home.
You	must	visit	us.
We	must	stop	now.

Dr. Tips.
Like all auxiliary verbs, "must" cannot be followed by an infinitive. So, we say:

- I must go now. (not I must to go now.)

Use of Must

In general, "must" expresses personal obligation. "Must" expresses what the speaker thinks is necessary. "Must" is subjective. Look at these examples:

*0I must stop smoking.
*1You must visit us soon.
*2He must work harder.

In each of the above cases, the "obligation" is the opinion or idea of the person speaking. In fact, it is not a real obligation. It is not imposed from outside.

Dr. Tips.
It is sometimes possible to use "must" for real obligation, for example a rule or a law. But generally we use "have to" for this.

We can use "must" to talk about the present or the future. Look at these examples:

*3I must go now. (Present)
*4I must call my mother tomorrow. (Future)

There is no past tense for "must". We use "have to" to talk about the past.

Must Not (Prohibition)

We use must not to say that something is not permitted or allowed, for example:

*0Passengers must not talk to the driver.

Structure of Must Not

"Must" is an auxiliary verb. It is followed by a main verb. The structure for "Must Not" is:

*1Subject + Must Not + Main Verb

The Main Verb is the base verb (infinitive without "to").
"Must Not" is often contracted to "mustn't".
Look at these examples:

Subject	Auxiliary Must + Not/Mustn't	Main Verb	
I	mustn't	forget	my keys.
You	mustn't	disturb	him.
Students	must not	be	late.

Notice: like all auxiliary verbs, "must" cannot be followed by an infinitive. So, we say:

*0You mustn't arrive late. (not You mustn't to arrive late.)

Use of Must Not

"Must Not" expresses prohibition - something that is not permitted, not allowed. The prohibition can be subjective (the speaker's opinion) or objective (a real law or rule). Look at these examples:

*1I mustn't eat so much sugar. (subjective)
*2You mustn't watch so much television. (subjective)
*3Students must not leave bicycles here. (objective)

*4Policemen must not drink on duty. (objective)

We use "Must Not" to talk about the present or the future:

*5Visitors must not smoke. (present)

*6I mustn't forget Tara's birthday. (future)

We cannot use "Must Not" for the past. We use another structure to talk about the past, for example:

*7We were not allowed to enter.

*8I couldn't park outside the shop.

Dr. Tips.

Modal auxiliary verbs may sound difficult but in fact they're easy. They are invariable (no conjugation). And the main verb is always the "bare infinitive" (the infinitive without "to").

May

May is a modal auxiliary verb that is used to,

a. Ask for permission.

b. Express possibility in affirmative sentence.

c. May is fluently used in optative sentences.

Examples with structures

1. Possibility:

Zaheer may go tomorrow.

It may be hot today.

Structure

Subject + may + main verb

Subject	Auxiliary	Main Verb	
I	may	watch	TV at night.
Salma	may	win	the first prize.

2. Asking for permission.

May I come in madam?

Structure

May + subject + main verb

Auxiliary	Subject	Main Verb	
May	I	come	in?
May	we	sit	here?
May	he	be	with us?

3. Wishing somebody good complements. (Optative Sentences)

May you live long!

Structure

May + object(Indirect subject) + main verb

Auxiliary	Indirect Subject	Main Verb	
May	God	bless	you!
May	your son	succeed!	

Dr. Tips
Subject is indirect in this kind of sentences, for direct subject is out of scene so we may name it "object". Such sentences are less fluently used now a days and we may also be confused between "may of possibility" and "may of optative" sentences. Only question mark can help us to distinguish.

Might

Might is the modal auxiliary verb that is used in these ways:
1. Might is used as past equivalent or form of May.
2. When somewhat more doubt is found in situation.
3. Asking for permission in a less positive and hesitant way.
4. Expressing a degree of dissatisfaction or reproach.

Examples with Structures

1. Past Form of May

He said I might take a bath in after noon.
She said that she might be the topper.

Structure

Subject + might + main verb

Subject	Modal Auxiliary "Might"	Main Verb	
I thought I	might	chase	him.
Junaid wondered whether it	might	be	lie.

Dr. Tips
In this kind of sentences, might is just replaced with may without changing the meanings, because always past follows past.

2. More Doubt in Situation than "May" Contains

It might rain tomorrow.
I might not attend the party tonight.

Structure

Subject + might + main verb

Subject	Modal Auxiliary "Might"	Main Verb	
He	might	be	the winner.
It	might	snows	today.
I	might not	succeed	in exams.

3. Asking for Permission in Hesitant Way

He said I might sit.

Might my brother play in this match captain?

Structure

Might + subject + main verb

Modal Auxiliary	Subject	Main Verb
Might	I	Choose you as roommate?

Dr. Tips

This is a situation we rarely face. It may be a part of grammar, but in spoken, it is informal and almost abjured. May is frequently used in spoken.

Expressing a degree of dissatisfaction.

You might attend a little more your appearance.

He might pay some money to guard himself.

Should

Should is a modal auxiliary verb that is used in various ways.

1. Should is used, as the past equivalent of shall.
2. Should is frequently used in all persons to express obligation or duty.
3. Should is used to express probability.

Conditional

Verb Forms

If I had a hammer, I'd hammer in the morning,
I'd hammer in the evening, all over this land.
I'd hammer out danger, I'd hammer out warning,
I'd hammer out love between my brothers and my sisters
Oh, oh, all over this land.

If I had a bell, I'd ring it in the morning,
I'd ring it in the evening, all over this land.
I'd ring out danger, I'd ring out warning,
I'd ring out love between my brothers and my sisters
Oh, oh, all over this land

So go the first two stanzas of Lee Hays and Pete Seeger's folk tune, "If I had a hammer," one of the most famous tunes and lyrics in the history of American song. The grammar of the lyrics uses what is called the conditional. The writer expresses an action or an idea (hammering out danger and warning and love) that is dependent on a condition, on something that is only imagined (having a hammer or a bell — or, in the next stanza, a song). In this situation, the lyricist imagines what he would do if he "had a hammer" —

now, in the present. He might also have imagined what he would have done if he "had had a hammer," in the past, prior to something else happening:

- "If I had had a hammer, I would have hammered a warning."

The conditional is possible also in the future tense:

- "If I have a hammer tomorrow, I might hammer out warning.
  OR
  . . . I will hammer out warning."
  OR
  "If I were to have a hammer tomorrow, I would hammer out warning."

And, finally, he could imagine what is called the habitual present conditional:

- "If/when I have a hammer, I hammer out warning." [I do it all the time, whenever I have a hammer.]

The Factual versus the Unreal or Hypothetical

In expressing a conditional situation, we must be able to distinguish between what is a factual statement and what is a hypothetical statement. (Other terms for hypothetical could be unreal, imagined, wished for, only possible, etc.) For instance, if we say

- "The horse *is* always happy when Dad *stays* home,"

That's a simple statement of present habitual fact. A general truth is expressed in the same way:

- "If the sun *shines* all day, it *gets* hot."

Statements of habitual fact can also be made in the past:

- "If we *ate* out at all, it *was* always in a cheap restaurant."

Hypothetical Statements

When we express the hypothetical in English in the present tense, we end up using the past tense in an interesting way.

- If you *liked* tennis, we could go play on the new courts.

(Instead of could, we could have used would or might in that sentence.) The speaker of that sentence is not talking about something in the past tense, even though he uses the past tense "liked." The speaker implies, in fact, that you *don't like* to play tennis (in the present), so there's no point, now, in going to the new tennis courts

When we use the hypothetical in this conditional mode, we accommodate our need to speculate on how things could have been different, how we wish things were different, how we imagine that things could be different in the future, etc. In order to express the unreal, the hypothetical, the speculative, or imagined (all those being the same in this case), English has adopted an interesting habit of moving time one step backward. Two verbs are involved: one in the clause stating the condition (the "if" clause) and one in the result clause. Watch how the verbs change.

If the hypothetical result is in the future, we put the verb in the condition clause one step back — into the present:

- If the Bulls *win* the game tomorrow, they *will be* champs again.

For present unreal events, we put the verb in the condition clause one step back — into the past:

- If the Bulls *won* another championship, Zaheer *would drive* into Barcelona for the celebration.
- I *wish* I *had* tickets.
- If they *were* available anywhere, I *would pay* any price for them.
- If he *were* a good friend, he *would buy* them for me.

Note that wishing is always an unreal condition. Note, too, that the verb to be uses the form were in an unreal condition.

For past unreal events — things that didn't happen, but we can imagine — we put the verb in the condition clause a further step back — into the past perfect:

- If the Shaheens *had won*, Aunt Salma *would have been* rich.
- If she *had bet* that much money on the Bulls, she and Uncle Asim *could have retired*.
- I wish I *had lived* in Islamabad when the WAPDA *had* Shahbaz Senior.
- If I *had known* you were coming, I *would have baked* a cake.

In this last sentence, note the conditional clause in the past perfect (had known) and the result clause that uses the conditional modal + have + the past participle of the main verb (would have baked).

Some writers seem to think that the subjunctive mood is disappearing from English, but that's probably not true. We use the subjunctive all the time to accommodate this human urge to express possibility, the hypothetical, and the imagined.[3]

Frequently, conditional expressions require that we use “were” where we would otherwise have used another form of to be. The switch to “were” is not the only manifestation of the subjunctive in expressing the conditional, but it is the most common.

- If my brother *were* my boss, I *wouldn't have* a job today.
- If I *were* to lose my job, I *wouldn't be* able to pay my bills. [Notice how this is more uncertain, more "iffy" than "If I lose my job, I won't be able to pay my bills."]
- If I *were* eight feet tall, I*'d be* one heck of a basketball player. [The subjunctive is sometimes to express purely imaginary situation.]
- If I *should grow* to be eight feet tall, I*'d be* a great basketball player. [This statement seems even more imaginary and unlikely.]

[3] You can review the Verbs and Verbals section for further help understanding the Subjunctive Mood.

Using Would and Could

When expressing the unreal, the result clauses need would, could or will. The condition clauses do not use those verbs; the condition clauses, instead, use verbs moved one step back in time from the result (as we will see in the tables in the coming pages).

Future Conditionals versus Hypothetical Conditionals

When we want to predict something conditional about the future (what we think might happen), we can use the present tense in the "if" clause and will or be going + the base form of the verb in the result clause.

- If Junaid *grows* any taller, the basketball coach *is going to recruit* him for the team.
- If he *doesn't grow* more, the coach *will ignore* him.

On the other hand, the hypothetical conditional allows us to express quite unlikely situations or situations that are downright impossible.

- If I *boxed* against Evander Holyfield, he *would kill* me.
- If my dad *had been* seven feet tall instead of less than six feet tall, he *would have been* a great athlete.

Other Forms of Conditional Statements

The conditional can also be signaled by means of a subject-verb inversion. This inversion replaces the word "if"; it is inappropriate to use both the word "if" and the subject-verb inversion in the same sentence.

- Were Aisha a better student, she would have a better relationship with her instructors.
- Had Aisha studied harder last fall, she would not have to take so many courses this spring.

Various Tenses in the Conditional

The following tables divide the uses of the conditional into three types, according to the time expressed in the if clause: (1) true in the present or future or possibly true in the future; (2) untrue or contrary to fact in the present; or (3) untrue or contrary to fact in the past. Notice the one step backward in time in the condition clause.

True in the Present	
If clause	Independent clause
True as habit or fact	
If + subject + present tense	Subject + present tense
If Salma works hard,	She gets good grades.
True as one-time future event	
If + subject + present tense	Subject + future tense
If Salma hands in her paper early tomorrow,	She'll probably get an A.

Possibly true in the future	
If + subject + present tense	Subject + modal + base form
If Salma hands in her paper early tomorrow,	She may/might/could/should get an A.

Untrue in the Present	
If clause	Independent clause
If + subject + past tense	Subject + would/could/might + simple form of verb
If Salma worked this hard in all her courses,	She would/could/might get on the Dean's List.
If + subject + to be verb	Subject + would/could/might + simple form of verb
If Salma were president of her class,	She could work to reform the grading policy.

Untrue in the Past	
If clause	Independent clause
If + subject + past perfect tense	Subject + modal + have + past participle
If Aisha had worked this hard in all her courses,	She would not have failed this semester.

2. ADJECTIVE

Definition

Adjectives are words that describe or modify another person or thing in the sentence. The Articles—a, an, and the — are adjectives.

- *the tall* professor
- *the lugubrious* lieutenant
- *a solid* commitment
- *a month's* pay
- *a six-year-old* child
- *the unhappiest, richest* man

If a group of words containing a subject and verb acts as an adjective, it is called an "Adjective Clause". My sister, *who is much older than I am*, is an engineer. If an adjective clause is stripped of its subject and verb, the resulting modifier becomes an Adjective Phrase: He is the man ~~who is~~ *keeping my family in the poorhouse*.

Before getting into other usage considerations, one general note about the use—or over-use—of adjectives: Adjectives are frail; don't ask them to do more work than they do or

they should. Let your broad-shouldered verbs and nouns do the hard work of description. Be particularly cautious in your use of adjectives that don't have much to say in the first place: interesting, beautiful, lovely, exciting. It is your job as a writer to create beauty and excitement and interest, and when you simply insist on its presence without showing it to your reader—well, you're convincing no one.

Adjectives tell us more about a noun. They can:

Describe feelings or qualities:

He is a lonely man.
They are honest people.

Give nationality or origin:

Pierre is French.
This clock is German.
Our house is Victorian.

Tell more about a thing's characteristics:

A wooden table
The knife is sharp

Tell us about age:

He's a young man.
My coat is very old.

Tell us about size and measurement:

John is a tall man.
This is a very long film.

Tell us about colour:

Paul wore a red shirt.
The sunset was crimson and gold.

Tell us about material/what something is made of:

It was a wooden table.
She wore a cotton dress.

Tell us about shape:

A rectangular box
A square envelope

Express a judgement or a value:

A fantastic film
Grammar is boring.

Adjectives are invariable:
They do not change their form depending on the gender or number of the noun.

A hot potato	Some hot potatoes

To emphasize or strengthen the meaning of an adjective, use “very” or “really”.

A very hot potato	Some really hot potatoes

Order

Where a number of adjectives are used together, the order depends on the function of the adjective. The usual order is:
Value/opinion, Size, Age/Temperature, Shape, Colour, Origin, Material

Value/opinion	delicious, lovely, charming
Size	small, huge, tiny
Age/Temperature	old, hot, young
Shape	round, square, rectangular
Colour	red, blonde, black
Origin	Swedish, Victorian, Chinese
Material	plastic, wooden, silver

Examples:

- a lovely old red post-box
- some small round plastic tables
- some charming small silver ornaments

Position of Adjectives

Unlike Adverbs, which often seem capable of popping up almost anywhere in a sentence, adjectives nearly always appear immediately before the noun or noun phrase that they modify. Sometimes they appear in a string of adjectives, and when they do, they appear in a set order according to category. When indefinite pronouns—such as something, someone, anybody—are modified by an adjective, the adjective comes after the pronoun:

> *Anyone capable* of doing *something horrible* to *someone nice* should be punished.
> *Something wicked* this way comes.

And there are certain adjectives that, in combination with certain words, are always "postpositive" (coming after the thing they modify):

> The president *elect*, heir *apparent* to the Glitzy fortune, lives in New York *proper*.

See, also, the note on *a-adjectives*, below, for the position of such words as “ablaze, aloof, aghast.”

Degrees of Adjectives

Adjectives can express degrees of modification:

- Gladys is a rich woman, but Josie is richer than Gladys, and Sadie's the richest woman in town.

The degrees of comparison are known as the positive, the comparative, and the superlative. (Actually, only the comparative and superlative show degrees.) We use the comparative for comparing two things and the superlative for comparing three or more things. Notice that the word “than” frequently accompanies the comparative and the word “the” precedes the superlative. The inflected suffixes -er and -est suffice to form most comparatives and superlatives, although we need -ier and -iest when a two-syllable adjective ends in y (happier and happiest); otherwise we use more and most when an adjective has more than one syllable.

Comparative Adjectives

When we talk about 2 things, we can "compare" them. We can see if they are the same or different. Perhaps they are the same in some ways and different in other ways.

A B

We can use comparative adjectives to describe the differences. "A is bigger than B."

Formation of Comparative Adjectives

There are two ways to form a comparative adjective:

- short adjectives: add '-er'
- long adjectives: use 'more'

Short adjectives

• 1-syllable adjectives	old, fast
• 2-syllable adjectives ending in -y	happy, easy
Normal rule: add '-er'	old > older
Variation: if the adjective ends in -e, just add -r	late > later
Variation: if the adjective ends in consonant, vowel, consonant, double the last consonant	big > bigger
Variation: if the adjective ends in -y, change the -y to -i	happy > happier

Long adjectives

• 2-syllable adjectives not ending in -y	modern, pleasant
• all adjectives of 3 or more syllables	expensive, intellectual
	modern > more modern
Normal rule: use 'more'	expensive > more expensive

With some 2-syllable adjectives, we can use '-er' or 'more':

- quiet > quieter/more quiet
- clever > cleverer/more clever
- narrow > narrower/more narrow
- simple > simpler/more simple

Exception! The following adjectives have irregular forms:

- good > better
- well (healthy) > better
- bad > worse
- far > farther/further

Use of Comparative Adjectives

We use comparative adjectives when talking about 2 things (not 3 or 10 or 1,000,000 things, only 2 things).
Often, the comparative adjective is followed by 'than'.
Look at these examples:

- John is 1m80. He is tall. But Chris is 1m85. He is taller than John.
- America is big. But Russia is bigger.
- I want to have a more powerful computer.
- Is French more difficult than English?

If we talk about the two planets Earth and Mars, we can compare them like this:

	Earth	Mars	
Diameter (km)	12,760	6,790	Mars is smaller than Earth.
Distance from Sun (million km)	150	228	Mars is more distant from the Sun.
Length of day (hours)	24	25	A day on Mars is slightly longer than a day on Earth.
Moons	1	2	Mars has more moons than Earth.
Surface temperature (°C)	22	-23	Mars is colder than Earth.

Superlative Adjectives

Comparison is between 2 things: "A is bigger than B."
A B
But the superlative is the extreme between 3 or more things. "A is the biggest."
A B C

Formation of Superlative Adjectives

As with comparative adjectives, there are two ways to form a superlative adjective:

- short adjectives: add '-est'
- long adjectives: use 'most'

We also usually add 'the' at the beginning.

Short adjectives

1-syllable adjectives	old, fast
2-syllable adjectives ending in –y	happy, easy
Normal rule: add '-est'	old > the oldest

Variation: if the adjective ends in -e, just add -st	late > the latest
Variation: if the adjective ends in consonant, vowel, consonant, double the last consonant	big > the biggest
Variation: if the adjective ends in -y, change the -y to -i	happy > the happiest
Long adjectives	
2-syllable adjectives not ending in –y	modern, pleasant
all adjectives of 3 or more syllables	expensive, intellectual
Normal rule: use 'most'	modern > the most modern expensive > the most expensive

With some 2-syllable adjectives, we can use '-est' or 'most':

- quiet > the quietest/most quiet
- clever > the cleverest/most clever
- narrow > the narrowest/most narrow
- simple > the simplest/most simple

Exception! The following adjectives have irregular forms:

- good > the best
- bad > the worst
- far > the furthest

Use of Superlative Adjectives

We use a superlative adjective to describe 1 thing in a group of 3 or more things.
Look at these examples:

- John is 1m75. David is 1m80. Chris is 1m85. Chris is the tallest.
- America, China and Russia are big countries. But Russia is the biggest.
- Mount Everest is the highest mountain in the world.

If we talk about the three planets Earth, Mars and Jupiter, we can use superlatives like this:

	Earth	Mars	Jupiter	
Diameter (km)	12,760	6,790	142,800	Jupiter is the biggest.
Distance from Sun (million km)	150	228	778	Jupiter is the most distant from the Sun.
Length of day (hours)	24	25	10	Jupiter has the shortest day.
Moons	1	2	16	Jupiter has the most moons.
Surface temperature (°C)	22	-23	-150	Jupiter is the coldest.

When we compare one thing with itself, we do not use "the":

- England is coldest in winter. (not the coldest)
- My boss is most generous when we get a big order. (not the most generous)

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Rich	richer	Richest
Lovely	lovelier	Loveliest

beautiful	more beautiful	most beautiful

Certain adjectives have irregular forms in the comparative and superlative degrees:

Irregular Comparative and Superlative Forms		
Good	Better	Best
Bad	Worse	Worst
Little	Less	Least
much many some	More	Most
Far	Further	furthest

Be careful not to form comparatives or superlatives of adjectives which already express an extreme of comparison—unique, for instance—although it probably is possible to form comparative forms of most adjectives: something can be more perfect, and someone can have a fuller figure. People who argue that one woman cannot be more pregnant than another have never been nine-months pregnant with twins.

Be careful, also, not to use more along with a comparative adjective formed with -er nor to use most along with a superlative adjective formed with -est (e.g., do not write that something is *more heavier* or *most heaviest*).

The as—as construction is used to create a comparison expressing equality:

- He is *as foolish as* he is large.
- She is *as bright as* her mother.

Premodifiers with Degrees of Adjectives

Both adverbs and adjectives in their comparative and superlative forms can be accompanied by premodifiers, single words and phrases, that intensify the degree.

- We were *a lot more careful* this time.
- He works *a lot less carefully* than the other jeweler in town.
- We like his work *so much better*.
- You'll get your watch back *all the faster*.

The same process can be used to downplay the degree:

- The weather this week has been *somewhat better*.
- He approaches his schoolwork *a little less industriously* than his brother does.

And sometimes a set phrase, usually an informal noun phrase, is used for this purpose:

- He arrived *a whole lot sooner* than we expected.
- That's *a heck of a lot better*.

If the intensifier very accompanies the superlative, a determiner is also required:

- She is wearing *her very finest* outfit for the interview.
- They're doing *the very best* they can.

Occasionally, the comparative or superlative form appears with a determiner and the thing being modified is understood:

- Of all the wines produced in Connecticut, I like this one *the most*.

- The quicker you finish this project, *the better*.
- Of the two brothers, he is *by far the faster*.

The Order of Adjectives in a Series

It would take a linguistic philosopher to explain why we say "little brown house" and not "brown little house" or why we say "red Italian sports car" and not "Italian red sports car." The order in which adjectives in a series sort themselves out is perplexing for people learning English as a second language. Most other languages dictate a similar order, but not necessarily the same order. It takes a lot of practice with a language before this order becomes instinctive, because the order often seems quite arbitrary (if not downright capricious). There is, however, a pattern. You will find many exceptions to the pattern in the table below, but it is definitely important to learn the pattern of adjective order if it is not part of what you naturally bring to the language.

The categories in the following table can be described as follows:

I.Determiners — articles and other limiters.

II.Observation — postdeterminers and limiter adjectives (e.g., a real hero, a perfect idiot) and adjectives subject to subjective measure (e.g., beautiful, interesting)

III.Size and Shape — adjectives subject to objective measure (e.g., wealthy, large, round)

IV.Age — adjectives denoting age (e.g., young, old, new, ancient)

V.Color — adjectives denoting color (e.g., red, black, pale)

VI.Origin — denominal adjectives denoting source of noun (e.g., French, American, Canadian)

VII.Material — denominal adjectives denoting what something is made of (e.g., woolen, metallic, wooden)

VIII.Qualifier — final limiter, often regarded as part of the noun (e.g., rocking chair, hunting cabin, passenger car, book cover)

THE ROYAL ORDER OF ADJECTIVES									
Determiner	Observation	Physical Description				Origin	Material	Qualifier	Noun
		Size	Shape	Age	Color				
A	beautiful			old		Italian		touring	car
an	expensive			antique			silver		mirror
four	gorgeous		long-stemmed		red		silk		roses
her			Short		black				hair
our		big		old		English			sheepdog
those			Square				wooden	hat	boxes
that	dilapidated	little						hunting	cabin
several		enormous		young		American		basketball	players

some	delicious					Thai			food

It would be folly, of course, to run more than two or three (at the most) adjectives together. Furthermore, when adjectives belong to the same class, they become what we call coordinated adjectives, and you will want to put a comma between them: the inexpensive, comfortable shoes. The rule for inserting the comma works this way: if you could have inserted a conjunction — and or but — between the two adjectives, use a comma. We could say these are "inexpensive but comfortable shoes," so we would use a comma between them (when the "but" isn't there). When you have three coordinated adjectives, separate them all with commas, but don't insert a comma between the last adjective and the noun (in spite of the temptation to do so because you often pause there):

> a popular, respected, and good looking student

Capitalizing Proper Adjectives

When an adjective owes its origins to a proper noun, it should probably be capitalized. Thus we write about Christian music, French fries, the English Parliament, the Ming Dynasty, a Faulknerian style, Jeffersonian democracy. Some periods of time have taken on the status of proper adjectives: the Nixon era, a Renaissance/Romantic/Victorian poet (but a contemporary novelist and medieval writer). Directional and seasonal adjectives are not capitalized unless they're part of a title:

> We took the northwest route during the spring thaw. We stayed there until the town's annual Fall Festival of Small Appliances.

Collective Adjectives

When the definite article, the, is combined with an adjective describing a class or group of people, the resulting phrase can act as a noun: the poor, the rich, the oppressed, the homeless, the lonely, the unlettered, the unwashed, the gathered, the dear departed. The difference between a Collective Noun (which is usually regarded as singular but which can be plural in certain contexts) and a collective adjective is that the latter is always plural and requires a plural verb:

- The rural *poor have* been ignored by the media.
- The *rich* of Connecticut *are* responsible.
- The *elderly are* beginning to demand their rights.
- The *young at heart are* always a joy to be around.

Adjectival Opposites

The opposite or the negative aspect of an adjective can be formed in a number of ways. One way, of course, is to find an adjective to mean the opposite — an antonym. The opposite of beautiful is ugly, the opposite of tall is short. A thesaurus can help you find an appropriate opposite. Another way to form the opposite of an adjective is with a

number of prefixes. The opposite of fortunate is unfortunate, the opposite of prudent is imprudent, the opposite of considerate is inconsiderate, the opposite of honorable is dishonorable, the opposite of alcoholic is nonalcoholic, the opposite of being properly filed is misfiled. If you are not sure of the spelling of adjectives modified in this way by prefixes (or which is the appropriate prefix), you will have to consult a dictionary, as the rules for the selection of a prefix are complex and too shifty to be trusted. The meaning itself can be tricky; for instance, flammable and inflammable mean the same thing.
A third means for creating the opposite of an adjective is to combine it with less or least to create a comparison which points in the opposite direction. Interesting shades of meaning and tone become available with this usage. It is kinder to say that "This is the least beautiful city in the state." than it is to say that "This is the ugliest city in the state." (It also has a slightly different meaning.) A candidate for a job can still be worthy and yet be "less worthy of consideration" than another candidate. It's probably not a good idea to use this construction with an adjective that is already a negative: "He is less unlucky than his brother," although that is not the same thing as saying he is luckier than his brother. Use the comparative less when the comparison is between two things or people; use the superlative least when the comparison is among many things or people.

- My mother is *less patient* than my father.
- Of all the new sitcoms, this is my *least favorite* show.

Adjectival Considerations

Adjectives that are really Participles, verb forms with -ing and -ed endings, can be troublesome for some students. It is one thing to be a frightened child; it is an altogether different matter to be a frightening child. Do you want to go up to your professor after class and say that you are confused or that you are confusing? Generally, the -ed ending means that the noun so described ("you") has a passive relationship with something — something (the subject matter, the presentation) has bewildered you and you are confused. The -ing ending means that the noun described has a more active role — you are not making any sense so you are confusing (to others, including your professor).
The -ed ending modifiers are often accompanied by prepositions (these are not the only choices):

- We were amazed at all the circus animals.
- We were amused by the clowns.
- We were annoyed by the elephants.
- We were bored by the ringmaster.
- We were confused by the noise.
- We were disappointed by the motorcycle daredevils.
- We were disappointed in their performance.
- We were embarrassed by my brother.
- We were exhausted from all the excitement.

- We were excited by the lion-tamer.
- We were excited about the high-wire act, too.
- We were frightened by the lions.
- We were introduced to the ringmaster.
- We were interested in the tent.
- We were irritated by the heat.
- We were opposed to leaving early.
- We were satisfied with the circus.
- We were shocked at the level of noise under the big tent.
- We were surprised by the fans' response.
- We were surprised at their indifference.
- We were tired of all the lights after a while.
- We were worried about the traffic leaving the parking lot.

A- Adjectives

The most common of the so-called a- adjectives are ablaze, afloat, afraid, aghast, alert, alike, alive, alone, aloof, ashamed, asleep, averse, awake, aware. These adjectives will primarily show up as predicate adjectives (i.e., they come after a linking verb).

- The children *were ashamed*.
- The professor *remained aloof*.
- The trees *were ablaze*.

Occasionally, however, you will find a- adjectives before the word they modify: the alert patient, the aloof physician. Most of them, when found before the word they modify, are themselves modified: the nearly awake student, the terribly alone scholar. And a- adjectives are sometimes modified by "very much": very much afraid, very much alone, very much ashamed, etc.

Comparison of Adjectives

AS + ADJECTIVE + AS

To compare people, places, events or things, when there is no difference, use as + adjective + as:

- Peter is 24 years old. John is 24 years old. Peter is as old as John.

More examples:

- Moscow is as cold as St. Petersburg in the winter.
- Ramona is as happy as Raphael.
- Einstein is as famous as Darwin.
- A tiger is as dangerous as a lion.

NOT AS + ADJECTIVE + AS

Difference can also be shown by using not so/as ...as:

- Mont Blanc is not as high as Mount Everest
- Norway is not as sunny as Thailand
- A bicycle is not as expensive as a car
- Arthur is not as intelligent as Albert

Comparison of Quantity

To show no difference: as much as, as many as, as few as, as little as

- as many as / as few as + countable nouns
- as much as / as little as + uncountable nouns

Examples:

With countable nouns:

- They have as many children as us.
- We have as many customers as them.
- Tom has as few books as Jane.
- There are as few houses in his village as in mine.
- You know as many people as I do.
- I have visited the States as many times as he has.

With uncountable nouns:

- John eats as much food as Peter.
- Jim has as little food as Sam.
- You've heard as much news as I have.
- He's had as much success as his brother has.
- They've got as little water as we have.

Less versus Fewer
When making a comparison between quantities we often have to make a choice between the words fewer and less. Generally, when we're talking about countable things, we use the word fewer; when we're talking about measurable quantities that we cannot count, we use the word less. "She had *fewer chores*, but she also had *less energy*." The managers at our local Stop & Shop seem to have mastered this: they've changed the signs at the so-called express lanes from "Twelve Items or Less" to "Twelve Items or Fewer." Whether that's an actual improvement, we'll leave up to you. We do, however, definitely use less when referring to statistical or numerical expressions: *0It's less than twenty miles to Dallas. *1He's less than six feet tall. *2Your essay should be a thousand words or less. *3We spent less than forty dollars on our trip. *4The town spent less than four percent of its budget on snow removal.

In these situations, it's possible to regard the quantities as sums of countable measures.

Taller than I/me?
When making a comparison with "than" do we end with a subject form or object form, "taller than I/she" or "taller than me/her." The correct response is "taller than I/she." We are looking for the subject form: "He is taller than I am/she is tall." (Except we leave out the verb in the second clause, "am" or "is.") Some good writers, however, will argue that the word "than" should be allowed to function as a preposition. If we can say "He is tall like me/her," then (if "than" could be prepositional like like) we should be able to say, "He is taller than me/her." It's an interesting argument, but — for now, anyway — in formal, academic prose, use the subject form in such comparisons. We also want to be careful in a sentence such as "I like him better than she/her." The "she" would mean that you like this person better than she likes him; the "her" would mean that you like this male person better than you like that female person. (To avoid ambiguity and the slippery use of than, we could write "I like him better than she does" or "I like him better than I like her.")

More than/over?
In the United States, we usually use "more than" in countable numerical expressions meaning "in excess of" or "over." In England, there is no such distinction. For instance, in the U.S., some editors would insist on "more than 40,000 traffic deaths in one year," whereas in the UK, "over 40,000 traffic deaths" would be acceptable. Even in the U.S., however, you will commonly hear "over" in numerical expressions of age, time, or height: "His sister is over forty; she's over six feet tall. We've been waiting well over two hours for her."

Some Adjectival Problem Children

Good versus Well

In both casual speech and formal writing, we frequently have to choose between the adjective good and the adverb well. With most verbs, there is no contest: when modifying a verb, use the adverb.

He swims *well*.

He knows only too *well* who the murderer is.

However, when using a Linking Verb or a verb that has to do with the five human senses, you want to use the adjective instead.

How are you? I'm feeling *good*, thank you.

After a bath, the baby smells so good.

Even after my careful paint job, this room doesn't look *good*.

Many careful writers, however, will use well after linking verbs relating to health, and this is perfectly all right. In fact, to say that you are good or that you feel good usually implies not only that you're OK physically but also that your spirits are high.

"How are you?"

"I am *well*, thank you."

Bad versus Badly

When your cat died (assuming you loved your cat), did you feel bad or badly? Applying the same rule that applies to good versus well, use the adjective form after verbs that have to do with human feelings. You felt bad. If you said you felt badly, it would mean that something was wrong with your faculties for feeling.

Determiners

A, An or The?

When do we say "the dog" and when do we say "a dog"? (On this page we talk only about singular, countable nouns.)
The and A/An are called "articles". We divide them into "definite" and "indefinite" like this:

Articles	
Definite	Indefinite
The	A, An

We use "definite" to mean sure, certain. "Definite" is particular.
We use "indefinite" to mean not sure, not certain. "Indefinite" is general.
When we are talking about one thing in particular, we use the. When we are talking about one thing in general, we use a or an.
Think of the sky at night. In the sky there is 1 moon and millions of stars. So normally we could say:

*5I saw the moon last night.

*6I saw a star last night.

Look at these examples:

The	A, An
*7The capital of France is Paris.	*12I was born in a town.
*8I have found the book that I lost.	*13John had an omelette for lunch.
*9Have you cleaned the car?	*14James Bond ordered a drink.
*10There are six eggs in the fridge.	*15We want to buy an umbrella.
*11Please switch off the TV when you finish.	*16Have you got a pen?

Of course, often we can use The or A/An for the same word. It depends on the situation.
Look at these examples:

*17We want to buy an umbrella. (Any umbrella, not a particular umbrella.)

*18Where is the umbrella? (We already have an umbrella. We are looking for our umbrella, a particular umbrella.)

This little story should help you understand the difference between The and A, An:

*19A man and a woman were walking in University Street. The woman saw a dress that she liked in a shop. She asked the man if he could buy the dress for her. He said: "Do you think the shop will accept a cheque? I don't have a credit card."

Each, Every

Each and every have similar but not always identical meanings. Verbs with each and every are always conjugated in the singular.

Each = every one separately.

Every = each, all.

Sometimes, each and every have the same meaning:

*20Prices go up each year.

*21Prices go up every year.

But often they are not exactly the same.

Each expresses the idea of 'one by one'. It emphasizes individuality.

Every is half-way between each and all. It sees things or people as singular, but in a group or in general.

Consider the following:

*22Every artist is sensitive.

*23Each artist sees things differently.

*24Every soldier saluted as the President arrived.

*25The President gave each soldier a medal.

*26Each soldier received a medal from the President.

Each can be used in front of the verb:

*27The soldiers each received a medal.

Each can be followed by 'of':

*28The President spoke to each of the soldiers.

*29He gave a medal to each of them.

Every cannot be used for 2 things. For 2 things, each can be used:

*30He was carrying a suitcase in each hand.

Every is used to say how often something happens:

*31There is a plane to Bangkok every day.

*32The bus leaves every hour.

Some and Any

Some = a little, a few or a small number or amount
Any = one, some or all
Usually, we use some in *positive* (+) sentences and any in *negative* (-) and *question* (?) sentences.

	Some	any	example
+	I have some money.		I have $10.
-		I don't have any money.	I don't have $1 and I don't have $10 and I don't have $1,000,000. I have $0.
?		Do you have any money?	Do you have $1 or $10 or $1,000,000?

In general, we use something/anything and somebody/anybody in the same way as some/ any.
Look at these examples:

*33He needs some stamps.
*34I must go. I have some homework to do.
*35I'm thirsty. I want something to drink.
*36I can see somebody coming.
*37He doesn't need any stamps.
*38I can stay. I don't have any homework to do.
*39I'm not thirsty. I don't want anything to drink.
*40I can't see anybody coming.
*41Does he need any stamps?
*42Do you have any homework to do?
*43Do you want anything to drink?
*44Can you see anybody coming?

We use any in a positive sentence when the real sense is negative.

*45I refused to give them any money. (= I did not give them any money)
*46She finished the test without any difficulty. (= she did not have any difficulty)

Sometimes we use some in a question, when we expect a positive “Yes” answer. (We could say that it is not a real question, because we think we know the answer already.)

*47Would you like some more tea?
*48Could I have some sugar, please?

Pre-Determiners

Such, What, Rather, Quite

These words are normally placed before the indefinite article.
Such and what are often used to express surprise or other emotions:

Examples:
a. What a lovely day!
b. She's such a lovely woman!
c. What an incredible film!
d. He's such a fantastic guitarist!
Rather and quite are 'commenting' words, referring to the degree of a particular quality. They can express disappointment, pleasure, or other emotions, and are used before a/an + adjective + noun:
Examples:
a. It's rather a small car. (= I'm a bit disappointed because it's small)
b. It was quite a nice day.(= I was agreeably surprised.)
c. He's had quite a bad accident. (= I'm worried)
d. I've just met rather a nice man. (= I'm pleased)

3. Noun

Definition

A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea. Whatever exists, we assume, can be named, and that name is a noun.
It's not easy to describe a noun. In simple terms, nouns are "things" (and verbs are "actions"). Like food. Food (noun) is something you eat (verb). Or happiness. Happiness (noun) is something you want (verb). Or human being. A human being (noun) is something you are (verb).

A proper noun, which names a specific person, place, or thing (Carlos, Queen Marguerite, Middle East, Jerusalem, Malaysia, Presbyterianism, God, Spanish, Buddhism, the Republican Party), is almost always capitalized. A proper noun used as an addressed person's name is called a noun of address. Common nouns name everything else, things that usually are not capitalized.
A group of related words can act as a single noun-like entity within a sentence. A Noun Clause contains a subject and verb and can do anything that a noun can do:

What he does for this town is a blessing.

A Noun Phrase, frequently a noun accompanied by modifiers, is a group of related words acting as a noun: the oil depletion allowance; the abnormal, hideously enlarged nose. There is a separate section on word combinations that become Compound Nouns—such as daughter-in-law, half-moon, and stick-in-the-mud.

What are Nouns?

It is not easy to define a noun.
The simple definition is: "a person, place or thing". Here are some examples:

- Person: man, woman, teacher, John, Mary
- Place: home, office, town, countryside, America
- Thing: table, car, banana, money, music, love, dog, monkey

The problem with this definition is that it does not explain why "love" is a noun but can also be a verb.
Another (more complicated) way of recognizing a noun is by its:

3. Ending
4. Position
5. Function

1) Noun Ending
There are certain word endings that show that a word is a noun, for example:

- -ity > nationality
- -ment > appointment
- -ness > happiness
- -ation > relation
- -hood > childhood

But this is not is not true for the word endings of all nouns. For example, the noun "spoonful" ends in -ful, but the adjective "careful" also ends in -ful.
2) Position in Sentence
We can often recognise a noun by its position in the sentence.
Nouns often come after a determiner. (A "determiner" is a word like a, an, the, this, my, such.)

- a relief
- an afternoon
- the doctor
- this word
- my house
- such stupidity

Nouns often come after one or more adjectives.

- a great relief
- a peaceful afternoon
- the tall, Indian doctor
- this difficult word
- my brown and white house
- such crass stupidity

3) Function in a Sentence
Nouns have certain functions (jobs) in a sentence, for example:

Noun Gender

In general, there is no distinction between masculine, feminine and neuter in English nouns. However, gender is sometimes shown by different forms or different words.

Examples of different words:

Masculine	Feminine
man	woman
father	mother
uncle	aunt
boy	girl
husband	wife

Examples of different forms:

Masculine	Feminine
actor	actress
prince	princess
hero	heroine
waiter	waitress
widower	widow

Some nouns can be used for either a masculine or a feminine subject:

Examples:

cousin	teenager	teacher	doctor
cook	student	parent	friend
relation	colleague	partner	leader

- Mary is a doctor. She is a doctor
- Peter is a doctor. He is a doctor.
- Arthur is my cousin. He is my cousin.
- Jane is my cousin. She is my cousin.

It is possible to make the distinction by adding the words 'male' or 'female'.

Example: a female student; a male cousin

For professions, we can add the word 'woman'

Example: a woman doctor; a woman journalist.

In some cases nouns describing things are given gender.

Examples:

- I love my car. She (the car) is my greatest passion.
- France is popular with her (France's) neighbours at the moment.
- I travelled from England to New York on the Queen Elizabeth; she (the Queen Elizabeth) is a great ship.

Categories of Nouns

Nouns can be classified further as count nouns, which name anything that can be counted (four books, two continents, a few dishes, a dozen buildings); mass nouns (or non-count nouns), which name something that can't be counted (water, air, energy, blood); and collective nouns, which can take a singular form but are composed of more than one individual person or items (jury, team, class, committee, herd). We should note that some words can be either a count noun or a non-count noun depending on how they're being used in a sentence:

a. He got into *trouble*. (non-count)
b. He had many *troubles*. (countable)
c. *Experience* (non-count) is the best teacher.
d. We had many exciting *experiences* (countable) in college.

Whether these words are count or non-count will determine, whether, they can be used with articles and determiners or not. (We would not write "He got into ~~the~~ troubles," but we could write about "*The* troubles of Ireland.")

Types of Noun

Countable Nouns

Countable nouns are easy to recognize. They are things that we can count. For example: "pen". We can count pens. We can have one, two, three or more pens.

Count nouns refer to things that can be divided up into smaller units, which are separate and distinct from one another. They usually refer to what can individually be seen or heard:

Table, finger, bottle, word, chair, award, remark, candidate etc.
Here are some more countable nouns:

- dog, cat, animal, man, person
- bottle, box, litre
- coin, note, dollar
- cup, plate, fork
- table, chair, suitcase, bag

Countable nouns can be singular or plural:

- My dog is playing.
- My dogs are hungry.

We can use the indefinite article a/an with countable nouns:
A dog is an animal.

-

When a countable noun is singular, we must use a word like a/the/my/this with it:

- I want an orange. (not I want orange.)
- Where is my bottle? (not Where is bottle?)

When a countable noun is plural, we can use it alone:

- I like oranges.
- Bottles can break.

We can use some and any with countable nouns:

- I've got some dollars.
- Have you got any pens?

We can use a few and many with countable nouns:

- I've got a few dollars.
- I haven't got many pens.

Dr. Tips

"People" is countable. "People" is the plural of "person". We can count people. There is one person here. There are three people here.

Uncountable Nouns

Uncountable nouns are substances, concepts etc that we cannot divide into separate elements. We cannot "count" them. For example, we cannot count "milk". We can count "bottles of milk" or "litres of milk", but we cannot count "milk" itself.

The main difference between count and noncount nouns is whether or not the things they refer to can be counted.

They are regarded as a whole that can't be divided into parts. They often refer to abstraction and occasionally have a collective meaning:

Anger, education, furniture, courage, warmth, progress, leisure, weather.

Here are some more uncountable nouns:

- music, art, love, happiness
- advice, information, news
- furniture, luggage
- rice, sugar, butter, water
- electricity, gas, power
- money, currency

We usually treat uncountable nouns as singular. We use a singular verb. For example:

- This news is very important.
- Your luggage looks heavy.

We do not usually use the indefinite article a/an with uncountable nouns. We cannot say "an information" or "a music". But we can say a something of:

- a piece of news
- a bottle of water
- a grain of rice

We can use some and any with uncountable nouns:

- I've got some money.
- Have you got any rice?

We can use a little and much with uncountable nouns:

- I've got a little money.
- I haven't got much rice.

Illustration: Think of the batter from which a cake is made. Before putting the batter into the oven, you cannot divide it into its parts because it is a liquid mix. Once it has been baked, however, it becomes solid enough to be cut into pieces. Think of noncount nouns as the batter which forms a mass, and think of the pieces of cake as the count nouns which may be numbered and distributed.

Dr. Tips

Uncountable nouns are also called "mass nouns".

Understanding Countable and Uncountable Nouns

When we speak of nouns as being countable or uncountable, we mean that some things can be counted while others cannot. Countable nouns name individual items that can add up; there can be one or more of them. Other things cannot be counted; they are considered collective rather than individual items. In many cases, this distinction is easy to understand. We all recognize that we can count items like books, tables, eggs, or mountains. We can easily imagine one or more of such items. And most of us recognize that it is not possible to count other things like water, dust, air, or ice cream. These things cannot easily be separated into individual items.

But many nouns are uncountable for less obvious reasons. Most concepts or abstract ideas like peace, happiness, wealth and knowledge are uncountable. So are many activities such as swimming, eating, and debauchery, and some conditions such as confusion, frustration, satisfaction, and certainty. These nouns are considered uncountable because they are not easily identified as single things—the idea of happiness can consist of many different things and can be different for different people—or because they refer to general activities rather than specific instances; eating refers to the activity in general, not any particular example. The names of most disciplines are also uncountable, for example, sociology, medicine, anthropology. Nouns ending in -ism are also usually uncountable, for example, feminism, optimism, patriotism.

Some uncountable nouns like money, homework, work, and gossip are very confusing for learners of English because they seem to refer to particular items, yet they are treated as general. When we speak of work, we are not thinking of a particular job or activity--we include the idea of what anyone might do in any job that would be considered doing work. Jobs are countable items that are specific instances of the general idea of work.

In the same way, homework is not the particular assignment or assignments a student does. It is the general idea of students doing assignments. When a student says, "I have to do my homework," he or she may mean one assignment or several assignments or parts of one or more assignments, so the student knows what particular activities are involved, but they are referred to as part of a generalized activity--my homework can be something different every day.

Note: As you have perhaps noticed, individual activities like jobs and assignments--which are closely identified with uncountable nouns like work and homework--are countable. That means that although you can't say "I have lots of homeworks to do," you can say "I have lots of assignments."

Money is an interesting example of an uncountable noun because, of course, lots of people love to count their money.

Also confusing for many students are the numerous English nouns that have both a countable and an uncountable sense. Depending on the context, these nouns sometimes refer to a particular thing and at other times to a general idea. In some cases this is not difficult.

For example,

Death (in general) is inevitable.
She missed work because there was a death in her family. However, many nouns are thought of as general more by custom than for any clear reason. Many food items fall into this category, e.g., chicken, cheese, and fruit.
Thus, we see a chicken on a farm, but we eat chicken; we say that the tomato is a fruit, not a vegetable, but we like fruit on our cereal.

Note: individual servings of food items are usually countable, but not the food itself, e.g.,

pie	a piece of pie
bread	a slice of bread
gum	a stick of gum

Other nouns that can be either countable or uncountable include substances that things can be made of, like paper or glass. When you write an essay on paper, it becomes a paper. Other nouns in this category are words like wood and cloth, which refer to the material that may be made of many different varieties of tree or fabric. Thus, the material of an elm, an oak or a pine is all wood and linen, silk and cotton are all made into cloth.

Nouns that can be Countable and Uncountable

Sometimes, the same noun can be countable and uncountable, often with a change of meaning.

Countable		**Uncountable**
There are two hairs in my coffee!	hair	I don't have much hair.
There are two lights in our bedroom.	light	Close the curtain. There's too much light!
Shhhhh! I thought I heard a noise.	noise	It's difficult to work when there is too much noise.
Have you got a paper to read? (= newspaper)	paper	I want to draw a picture. Have you got some paper?
Our house has seven rooms.	room	Is there room for me to sit here?
We had a great time at the party.	time	Have you got time for a coffee?
Macbeth is one of Shakespeare's greatest works.	work	I have no money. I need work!

Dr. Tips
Drinks (coffee, water, orange juice) are usually uncountable. But if we are thinking of a cup or a glass, we can say (in a restaurant, for example):
Two teas and one coffee please.

Pluralizing

The Rules

- Count nouns can be pluralized by adding a final -s to the nouns.
- Noncount nouns cannot be not pluralized at all.

Exception: The rule needs to be slightly revised for a number of nouns. Certain nouns in English belong to both classes: they have both a noncount and a count meaning. Normally, the noncount meaning is abstract and general, and the count meaning is concrete and specific.

Compare the changes in meaning of the following nouns if they work as count or noncount nouns:

Count	Noncount
The researcher had to overcome some specific *problems* to collect the data.	The researcher had no *problem* finding studies that supported his view.
The political *arguments* took the nation to a situation of political instability.	The author's *argument* was unsupported and stereotypical.
There were bright *lights* and harsh *sounds*.	*Light* travels faster than *sound*.

Special Case: A special case is the use of the mass/count distinction for the purpose of classification. The nouns which function both ways mainly denote foods and beverages: food(s), drink(s), wine(s), bread(s), coffee(s), and fruit(s).

Examples:

Units	Mass
Several types of French wines are grown in the French Riviera.	The crops of Columbia coffee are more resistant to dry climate than are the crops of Brazilian coffee.

A Revision of the rules of the exceptions requires that the rule for pluralizing be revised: count nouns and nouns used in a count sense can be pluralized; noncount nouns and nouns used in a noncount sense cannot.

	Pluralizes with -s	Does not Pluralize
Count Noun	X	
Count Use	X	
Noncount Noun		X
Noncount Use		X

Articles

Nouns that Take Articles

Choosing which article to use with a noun is a complex matter because the range of choices depends on whether the noun in question is count or noncount, singular or plural.

The following chart shows which articles go together with which kinds of nouns. The demonstratives (this, that, these, those) have been included because they also mark the noun they modify as definite or specific.

		A/An	The	This/That	These/Those
Count	Singular	X	X	X	
	Plural		X		X
Noncount	Singular		X	X	
	Plural				

Note: Noncount Nouns are always singular.

Kinds of Noun

Proper Nouns (Names)

A proper noun is the special word (or name) that we use for a person, place or organization, like John, Marie, London, France or Sony. A name is a noun, but a very special noun—a proper noun. Proper nouns have special rules.

common noun	proper noun
man, boy	John
woman, girl	Mary
country, town	England, London
company	Ford, Sony
shop, restaurant	Maceys, McDonalds
month, day of the week	January, Sunday
book, film	War & Peace, Titanic

We normally use “the” for names made with “…of…”:

- the Tower of London
- the Gulf of Siam
- the Tropic of Cancer
- the London School of Economics
- the Bank of France
- the Statue of Liberty

Using Capital Letters with Proper Nouns

We always use a Capital Letter for the first letter of a proper noun (name). This includes names of people, places, companies, days of the week and months. For example:

- They like John. (not They like john.)
- I live in England.
- She works for Sony.
- The last day in January is a Monday.
- We saw Titanic in the Odeon Cinema.

Proper Nouns with "the"

We normally use "the" for country names that include “States”, “Kingdom”, “Republic” etc:

States	the United States of America/the USA
Kingdom	the United Kingdom/the UK
Republic	the French Republic

We normally use “the” for names of canals, rivers, seas and oceans:

canals	the Suez Canal
rivers	the River Nile, the Nile
seas	the Mediterranean Sea, the Mediterranean
oceans	the Pacific Ocean, the Pacific

We normally use “the” for plural names of people and places:

people (families, for example)	the Clintons
countries	the Philippines, the United States
island groups	the Virgin Islands, the British Isles
mountain ranges	the Himalayas, the Alps

Look at these sentences:

- I saw the Clintons today. It was Bill’s birthday.
- Trinidad is the largest island in the West Indies.
- Mount Everest is in the Himalayas.

We normally use “the” with the following sorts of names:

hotels, restaurants	the Ritz Hotel, the Peking Restaurant
banks	the National Westminster Bank
cinemas, theatres	the Royal Theatre, the ABC Cinema
museums	the British Museum, the National Gallery
buildings	the White House, the Crystal Palace
newspapers	the Daily Telegraph, the Sunday Post
organisations	the United Nations, the BBC, the European Union

Proper Nouns without "the"

We do not use “the” with names of people. For example:

first names	Bill (not the Bill)
	Hilary

surnames	Clinton
	Gates
full names	Hilary Gates

We do not normally use “the” with names of companies. For example:

- Renault, Ford, Sony, EnglishCLUB.net
- General Motors, Air France, British Airways
- Warner Brothers, Brown & Son Ltd

We do not normally use “the” for shops, banks, hotels etc named after a founder or other person (with -’s or -s). For example:

shops	Harrods, Marks & Spencer, Maceys
banks	Barclays Bank
hotels, restaurants	Steve’s Hotel, Joe’s Café, McDonalds
churches, cathedrals	St John’s Church, St Peter’s Cathedral

We do not normally use “the” with names of places. For example:

towns	Washington (not the Washington), Paris, Tokyo
states, regions	Texas, Kent, Eastern Europe
countries	England, Italy, Brazil
continents	Asia, Europe, North America
islands	Corsica
mountains	Everest

Exception! If a country name includes “States”, “Kingdom”, “Republic” etc, we use “the”:

states	the United States, the US, the United States of America, the USA
kingdom	the United Kingdom, the UK
republic	the French Republic

We do not use “the” with “President/Doctor/Mr etc + Name”:

the president, the king	President Bush (not the President Bush)
the captain, the detective	Captain Kirk, Detective Colombo
the doctor, the professor	Doctor Well, Dr Well, Professor Dolittle
my uncle, your aunt	Uncle Jack, Aunt Jill
	Mr Gates (not the Mr Gates), Mrs Clinton, Miss Black

Look at these example sentences:

- I wanted to speak to the doctor.
- I wanted to speak to Doctor Brown.
- Who was the president before President Kennedy?

We do not use “the” with “Lake/Mount + Name”:

the lake	Lake Victoria
the mount	Mount Everest

Look at this example sentence:

- We live beside Lake Victoria. We have a fantastic view across the lake.

We do not normally use “the” for roads, streets, squares, parks etc:

streets etc	Oxford Street, Trenholme Road, Fifth Avenue
squares etc	Trafalgar Square, Oundle Place, Piccadilly Circus
parks etc	Central Park, Kew Gardens

Many big, important buildings have names made of two words (for example, Kennedy Airport). If the first word is the name of a person or place, we do not normally use “the”:

people	Kennedy Airport, Alexander Palace, St Paul’s Cathedral
places	Heathrow Airport, Waterloo Station, Edinburgh Castle

The Common Noun

Recognize a common noun when you see:

Nouns name people, places, and things. Every noun can further be classified as common or proper. A common noun names general items.

Go into the kitchen. What do you see? Refrigerator, stove, microwave, window, curtain, coffee maker, wallpaper, spatula, sink, faucet, plate--all of these things are common nouns.

Leave the house. Where can you go? Mall, restaurant, school, post office, backyard, beach, Laundromat, supermarket, gas station--all of these places are common nouns.

Go to the mall. Who do you see? Teenager, grandmother, salesclerk, police officer, toddler, mother, father, manager, janitor, shoplifter--all of these people are common nouns.

The important thing to remember is that common nouns are general names. Thus, they are not capitalized unless they begin a sentence or are part of a title. Proper nouns, those that name specific things, are the class of nouns that require capitalization.

Notice the difference in the chart below:

Common Noun	**Proper Noun**
coffee shop	Starbucks
waiter	Simon
jeans	Levi's
sandwich	Big Mac
chair	Lazy Boy
arena	TD Waterhouse Center
country	Australia
fire fighter	Captain Richard Orsini

Read the following sentences. Notice the difference between the common and proper nouns.

Although there are five other *chairs* in the living room, everyone in Jim's family fights to sit in the puffy new *Lazy Boy*.

chairs = common noun; Lazy Boy = proper noun.

Harriet threw the stale cucumber *sandwich* in the trash can and fantasized about a *Big Mac* dripping with special sauce.

sandwich = common noun; Big Mac = proper noun.

Because we like an attentive *waiter*, we always ask for *Simon* when we eat at Mama Rizoni's Pizzeria.

waiter = common noun; Simon = proper noun.

We use common nouns to talk about objects or concepts:

objects	table, hill, water, atom, elephant
events	lesson, revolution
feelings	fear, hate, love
time	year, minute, millennium
concepts	warfare, brotherhood, causation

Note

We can divide common nouns into two further groups. We talk about concrete nouns when we refer to objects and we talk about abstract nouns when we refer to concepts which are mental rather than physical (i.e. we cannot see, hear, taste, smell or touch them).

The Collective Noun

Definition

A collective noun, according to Webster's II: New Riverside University Dictionary is: "A noun that denotes a collection of persons or things regarded as a unit. usage: A collective noun takes a singular verb when the reference is to a group as a whole and a plural verb when the reference is to members of a group as single individuals: The orchestra was playing. The orchestra have all gone home.".

Recognize a collective noun when you see:

Nouns name people, places, and things. Collective nouns, a special class, name groups (things) composed of members (usually people). Check out the chart below:

Collective Nouns		
army	council	minority
audience	department	navy
board	faculty	public
cabinet	family	school
class	firm	senate

committee	group	society
company	jury	team
corporation	majority	troupe

Use correct verbs and pronouns with collective nouns.

Each noun from the list above is a single thing. That thing, however, is made up of more than one person. You cannot have a committee, team, or family of one; you need at least two people who compose the unit.

Because more than one person makes up each of these collective nouns--and because people behave as both herd animals and solitary creatures--collective nouns can be either singular or plural, depending on context. In writing, this double status often causes agreement errors. How do you tell if a collective noun is singular or plural? What verbs and pronouns do you use with it?

Here is the key: Imagine a flock of pigeons pecking at birdseed on the ground. Suddenly, a cat races out of the bushes. What do the pigeons do? They fly off as a unit in an attempt to escape the predator, wheeling through the sky in the same direction.

People often behave in the same manner, doing one thing in unison with the other members of their group. When these people are part of a collective noun, that noun becomes singular. As a result, you must use singular verbs and pronouns with it. Read the following examples.

Every afternoon the baseball *team follows its* coach out to the hot field to practice.

Team = singular; follows = a singular verb; its = a singular pronoun.

Today, Dr. Ribley's *class takes its* first 100-item exam.

Class = singular; takes = a singular verb; its = a singular pronoun.

The *jury agrees* that the state prosecutors did not provide enough evidence, so *its* verdict is not guilty.

Jury = singular; agrees = a singular verb; its = a singular pronoun.

Now imagine five house cats in the living room. Do the cats do the same thing at the same time? Not this group! One cat might be sleeping on top of the warm television. Another might be grooming itself on the sofa. A third animal might be perched on the windowsill, watching the world outside. There is one group of animals, but the members of that group are all doing their own thing.

Members of collective nouns can behave in a similar fashion. When the members are acting as individuals, the collective noun is plural and requires plural verbs and pronouns. Here are some examples:

> After the three-hour practice under the brutal sun, the *team shower*, *change* into *their* street clothes, and *head* to *their* air-conditioned homes.
>
> Team = plural; shower, change, head = plural verbs; their = a plural pronoun.
>
> After the long exam, the *class finish their* research papers on famous mathematicians at home.
>
> Class = plural; finish = a plural verb; their = a plural pronoun.
>
> The *jury disagree* about the guilt of the accused and *have told* the judge that they are hopelessly deadlocked.
>
> Jury = plural; disagree, have told = plural verbs; they = a plural pronoun.

Whenever you cannot decide if a collective noun is singular or plural, exercise your options as a writer. You have two ways that you can compose the sentence without causing an agreement error: 1) insert the word members after the collective noun (jury members, committee members, board members), or 2) use an entirely different word (players instead of team, students instead of class, soldiers instead of army). Then you can use plural verbs and pronouns without worrying about making mistakes or sounding unnatural.

Plural Noun Forms

The plural form of most nouns is created simply by adding the letter s.

- more than one snake = snakes
- more than one ski = skis
- more than one Barrymore = Barrymores

Words that end in -ch, x, s or s-like sounds, however, will require an -es for the plural:

- more than one witch = witches
- more than one box = boxes
- more than one gas = gases
- more than one bus = buses
- more than one kiss = kisses
- more than one Jones = Joneses

In addition, there are several nouns that have irregular plural forms. Plurals formed in this way are sometimes called mutated (or mutating) plurals.

- more than one child = children
- more than one woman = women

- more than one man = men
- more than one person = people
- more than one goose = geese
- more than one mouse = mice
- more than one barracks = barracks
- more than one deer = deer

And, finally, there are nouns that maintain their Latin or Greek form in the plural. (See media and data and alumni, below.)

- more than one nucleus = nuclei
- more than one syllabus = syllabi
- more than one focus = foci
- more than one fungus = fungi
- more than one cactus = cacti (cactuses is acceptable)
- more than one thesis = theses
- more than one crisis = crises
- more than one phenomenon = phenomena
- more than one index = indices (indexes is acceptable)
- more than one appendix = appendices (appendixes is acceptable)
- more than one criterion = criteria

Note the pronunciation of this word, crises: the second syllable sounds like ease. More than one base in the game of baseball is bases, but more than one basis for an argument, say, is also bases, and then we pronounce the word basease.

A handful of nouns appear to be plural in form but take a singular verb:

- The news *is* bad.
- Gymnastics *is* fun to watch.
- Economics/mathematics/statistics *is* said to be difficult. ("Economics" can sometimes be a plural concept, as in "The economics of the situation *demand* that . . . .")

Numerical expressions are usually singular, but can be plural if the individuals within a numerical group are acting individually:

- Fifty thousand dollars is a lot of money.
- One-half of the faculty is retiring this summer.
- One-half of the faculty have doctorates.
- Fifty percent of the students have voted already.

And another handful of nouns might seem to be singular in nature but take a plural form and always use a plural verb:

- My pants *are* torn. (Nowadays you will sometimes see this word as a singular "pant" [meaning one pair of pants] especially in clothing ads, but most writers would regard that as an affectation.)

- Her scissors *were* stolen.
- The glasses *have* slipped down his nose again.

When a noun names the title of something or is a word being used as a word, it is singular whether the word takes a singular form or not.

- Faces *is* the name of the new restaurant downtown.
- Okies, which most people regard as a disparaging word, *was* first used to describe the residents of Oklahoma during the 1930s.
- Chelmsley Brothers *is* the best moving company in town.
- Postcards *is* my favorite novel.
- The term Okies was used to describe the residents of Oklahoma during the 1930s. (In this sentence, the word Okies is actually an appositive for the singular subject, "term.")

Abstract Nouns

Abstract nouns are frequently nouns made from verbs by the addition of word-forming suffixes such as -ation and -ance (solicitation from solicit; governance from govern, for example); overusing them can make long-winded, hard-to-follow prose. If you think your idea will be more impressive when expressed in abstract language, you probably deceive yourself. Such words cannot make an idea more important than it really is; they usually just express it less clearly: enhancement and improvement of the domiciling arrangements is not as clear as fixing up the house.

USE:

An abstract noun refers to states, events, concepts, feelings, qualities, etc., that have no physical existence.

For example, freedom; happiness; idea; music are all Abstract Nouns that have no physical existence.

An Abstract Noun can be either a countable noun or uncountable noun. Abstract nouns that refer to events are almost usually countable: a noise; a meeting.

Articles with Abstract Nouns & Abstract nouns without articles

Many nouns refer to abstract, uncountable ideas. These nouns don't usually have an article (a, an or the) before them. However, there are always exceptions (see Exceptions below).

Here are some sentences with abstract nouns. The abstract nouns are in bold type.

- It takes courage to climb the tallest mountain on the continent.
- The editor we hire needs to have enthusiasm, dedication and knowledge.
- Is love the most important emotion?
- As a child she lived in poverty, but now she has great wealth.
- Many people feel that happiness is the most important thing in life.

Exceptions

Sometimes there is a particular type of an abstract noun. When we refer to a type, amount, or specific instance of the noun and not the noun in general, we use *the*.

- Don't become a lion tamer if you don't have the courage.
- Our team has the enthusiasm and dedication to get the job done.
- They escaped the poverty of their homeland.

Nouns which are sometimes abstract and sometimes concrete

Some nouns are used as both abstract and concrete nouns. That is, they need no article in some situations but need an article in others. (Hint: the more you read and pay attention, the more of these nouns you will notice.) Here are just a few examples.

- Life (or death): We can ask what the most important thing in life is, and we can worry about death. However, we can also talk about a life or a death, the life or death of one person.
- Discipline: To succeed in life, you need discipline. When we talk about a discipline, we are referring to a career or field of study such as architecture or biology.
- Time: Time seems to move faster as we get older. Think of a time when you were young and a day seemed to last forever.

Don't confuse an abstract noun with a concrete noun. Most nouns are concrete, not abstract. Concrete nouns register on your five senses. Here is an example:

> Joseph cuddled the wet puppy under his warm jacket.

Puppy is an example of a concrete noun. You can see a puppy, stroke its fur, smell its Milk-Bone breath, and listen to it whine. You can even taste the puppy if you don't mind pulling dog hair off your tongue afterwards. Because a puppy will register on all five senses, puppy is a concrete noun.

Look over this chart contrasting abstract and concrete nouns:

Abstract Nouns	**Concrete Nouns**
deceit	the President
dedication	teacher
curiosity	cat
trust	airplane
relaxation	bubble bath

Dr. Tips

Recognize an abstract noun when you see:

Nouns name people, places, and things. One class of nouns is abstract. Your five senses cannot detect this group of nouns: you cannot see them, cannot hear them, cannot smell them, cannot taste them, and cannot feel them.

Nominalization: Don't Overuse Abstract Nouns

A "nominalized" sentence is one in which abstract nouns perform most of the work. Instead of boring your readers with a lot of abstract nouns (such as those formed by a verb root + "-tion"), revise your sentences in order to make your verbs do the work.

This paper gives an analysis of the problem and offers a solution.
(The abstract nouns "analysis" and "solution" convey most of the meaning in this sentence, while the verbs "gives" and "offers" are practically meaningless.)
This paper analyzes the problem and solves it.
(The second sentence is shorter and more direct.)

Nominalized sentences may be grammatically and factually correct, but vague. Most humans learn best when they can form specific, vivid mental images -- and verbs are more vivid than nouns.

The collection of samples was taking place at the crime scene, and an interrogation of the suspect was about to happen at police headquarters.
(The sentence above is not wrong, but it could be much more informative and powerful.)
At the scene, Deputy Harris collected blood; downtown, Detective Jones hammered away at the suspect's story.
(Revision uses fewer words, but provides many more concrete details.)

Nominalized Phrase	**Succinct Revision**
gave a report	Reported
made a decision	Decided
offered a suggestion	Suggested
issued an announcement	Announced
served as a catalyst	Catalyzed
resulted in an increase	Increased
led to the destruction of	destroyed

Material noun

The material noun describes a substance or a material which has regular form like water, air and etc.

* Materials for goods

brick, cloth, cotton, earth, glass, ivory, metal, nylon, paper, stone, timber, wood, uranium ...

* Metals or chemical element

aluminium, copper, gold, hydrogen, iron, oxygen, silver, uranium ...

* Gas and liquid

air, beer, coffee, dew, gas, ice, ink, milk, oil, smog, smoke ㅓ c
* Food
beef, bread, butter, fish, fruit, meat, pork, rice, salt, sugar, wheat ...

1. The usage of the material noun
The material noun is the uncountable noun, so that the form is always singular.
* The material noun describing a material generically has no article, and is followed by singular verb.
- Beef is more nourishing than pork. Nourishing: food that is nourishing makes you strong and healthy.
- Blood is thicker than water.
* The material noun describing a specified material has a definite article.
- The coffee we had at lunch was very good.

2. The way of describing the quantity of the material noun
* Container
- a bottle of beer
- a bucketful of water
- a cup of cocoa
- a glass of wine
- a handful of sand
- a spoonful of sugar
* The unit of quantity
- a barrel of oil
- a bushel of barley
- a gram of silver
- an once of wool
- a pound of butter
* Shape
- a cake of soap
- a loaf of bread
- a lump of sugar
- a piece of chalk
- a sheet of paper
- a slice of bread

In the case of the indefinite quantity, the material noun can take some, any, little, a little, and so on.
- There is some ink left in the bottle
- It costs much money to go abroad for sightseeing.

3. The translation from the material noun to the common noun

If the material noun describes kinds, produce, or unity, it can be also used as the common noun.

- They sell various teas and tobaccos at that store. [kinds]
- Take care not to break the glasses. [produce]
- Don't throw a stone at a dog. [unity]

an iron, glasses, a copper, a paper, a fire

Plural Compound Nouns

Compound words create special problems when we need to pluralize them. As a general rule, the element within the compound that word that is pluralized will receive the plural -s, but it's not always that simple. Daughters-in-law follows the general rule, but cupfuls does not.

Problem Children

Many careful writers insist that the words data and media are Latin plurals and must, therefore, be used as plural words. The singular Latin forms of these words, however, are seldom used: datum as a single bit of information or medium as a single means of communication. Many authorities nowadays approve sentences like My data is lost. and The media is out to get the President. Even textbooks in computer science are beginning to use "data" as a singular.

Alumni and alumnae remain problematic. The plural of masculine singular alumnus is alumni; the plural of feminine singular alumna is alumnae. In traditional Latin, the masculine plural form, alumni, could include both genders. This does not go over well with some female alums. We note, furthermore, that Vassar College, which now has both, has lists of alumni and alumnae. Hartford College for Women, we assume, has only alumnae. In its publication style manual, Wesleyan University approves of alumni/ae. The genderless graduate and the truncated and informal alum have much to commend them.

Special Cases

With words that end in a consonant and a y, you'll need to change the “y” to an “i” and add “es”.

- more than one baby = babies
- more than one gallery = galleries
  (Notice the difference between this and galleys, where the final “y” is not preceded by a consonant.)
- more than one reality = realities
  This rule does not apply to proper nouns:
- more than one Kennedy = Kennedys

Words that end in “o” create special problems.

- more than one potato = potatoes
- more than one hero = heroes

  . . . however . . .
- more than one memo = memos
- more than one cello = cellos

  . . . and for words where another vowel comes before the “o” . . .
- more than one stereo = stereos

Plurals of words that end in “f” or “fe” usually change the “f” sound to a v sound and add “s” or “es”.

- more than one knife = knives
- more than one leaf = leaves
- more than one hoof = hooves
- more than one life = lives
- more than one self = selves

There are, however, exceptions:

- more than one dwarf = dwarfs
- more than one roof = roofs

Dr. Tips

When in doubt, as always, consult a dictionary. Some dictionaries, for instance, will list both wharfs and wharves as acceptable plural forms of wharf. It makes for good arguments.

Collective Nouns, Company Names, Family Names

There are, further, so called collective nouns, which are singular when we think of them as groups and plural when we think of the individuals acting within the whole (which happens sometimes, but not often).

audience	family	kind
band	flock	lot
class	group	[the] number
committee	heap	public
crowd	herd	staff
dozen	jury	team

Thus, if we're talking about eggs, we could say "A dozen *is* probably not enough." But if we're talking partying with our friends, we could say, "A dozen *are* coming over this afternoon." The jury *delivers its* verdict. [But] The jury came in and took *their* seats. We could say the Tokyo String Quartet is one of the best string ensembles in the world, but we could say the Beatles *were* some of the most famous singers in history. Generally, band names and musical groups take singular or plural verbs depending on the form of

their names: "The Mamas and the Papas *were* one of the best groups of the 70s" and "Metallica is my favorite band."
Note that "the number" is a singular collective noun. "*The number* of applicants *is* steadily increasing." "*A* number," on the other hand, is a plural form: "There are several students in the lobby. *A number are* here to see the president."
Collective nouns are count nouns, which means, they, themselves, can be pluralized: a university has several athletic *teams* and *classes*. And the immigrant *families* kept watch over their *herds* and *flocks*.
The word following the phrase one of the (as an object of the preposition of) will always be plural.

- *One of the reasons* we do this is that it rains a lot in spring.
- *One of the students* in this room is responsible.

Notice, though, that the verb ("is") agrees with one, which is singular, and not with the object of the preposition, which is always plural.

When a family name (a proper noun) is pluralized, we almost always simply add an "s." So we go to visit the Smiths, the Kennedys, the Grays, etc. When a family name ends in s, x, ch, sh, or z, however, we form the plural by added -es, as in the Marches, the Joneses, the Maddoxes, the Bushes, the Rodriguezes. Do not form a family name plural by using an apostrophe; that device is reserved for creating possessive forms.
When a proper noun ends in an "s" with a hard "z" sound, we don't add any ending to form the plural: "The Chambers are coming to dinner" (not the Chamberses); "The Hodges used to live here" (not the Hodgeses).
The names of companies and other organizations are usually regarded as singular, regardless of their ending: "General Motors *has* announced *its* fall lineup of new vehicles." Try to avoid the inconsistency that is almost inevitable when you think of corporate entities as a group of individuals: "General Motors *has* announced *their* fall lineup of new vehicles." But note that some inconsistency is acceptable in all but the most formal writing: "Ford has announced its breakup with Firestone Tires. *Their* cars will no longer use tires built by Firestone." Some writers will use a plural verb when a plural construction such as "Associates" is part of the company's title or when the title consists of a series of names: "Upton, Vernon, and Gridley *are* moving to new law offices next week" or "Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego & Associates *have* won all *their* cases this year." Singular verbs and pronouns would be correct in those sentences, also.

The names of sports teams, on the other hand, are treated as plurals, regardless of the form of that name. We would write that "The Yankees *have* signed a new third baseman" and "The Yankees *are* a great organization" (even if we're Red Sox fans).

Plurals and Apostrophes

We use an apostrophe to create plural forms in two limited situations: for pluralized letters of the alphabet and when we are trying to create the plural form of a word that

refers to the word itself. Here we also should italicize this "word as word," but not the 's ending that belongs to it. Do not use the apostrophe + s to create the plural of acronyms (pronounceable abbreviations such as laser and IRA and URL) and other abbreviations. (A possible exception to this last rule is an acronym that ends in "S": "We filed four NOS's in that folder.")

- Jeffrey got four A's on his last report card.
- Towanda learned very quickly to mind her p's and q's.
- You have fifteen and's in that last paragraph.

Notice that we do not use an apostrophe -s to create the plural of a word-in-itself. For instance, we would refer to the "ins and outs" of a mystery, the "yeses and nos" of a vote (NYPL Writer's Guide to Style and Usage), and we assume that Theodore Bernstein knew what he was talking about in his book Dos, Don'ts & Maybes of English Usage. We would also write "The shortstop made two spectacular outs in that inning." But when we *refer to* a word-as-a-word, we first italicize it—I pointed out the use of the word out in that sentence—and if necessary, we pluralize it by adding the unitalicized apostrophe -s —"In his essay on prepositions, Jose used an astonishing three dozen out's." This practice is not universally followed, and in newspapers, you would find our example sentence written without italics or apostrophe: "You have fifteen ands in that last paragraph."

Some abbreviations have embedded plural forms, and there are often inconsistencies in creating the plurals of these words. The speed of an internal combustion engine is measured in "revolutions per minute" or rpm (lower case) and the efficiency of an automobile is reported in "miles per gallon" or mpg (no "-s" endings).

Notice, furthermore, that we do not use an apostrophe to create plurals in the following:

- The 1890s in Europe are widely regarded as years of social decadence.
- I have prepared 1099s for the entire staff.
- Rosa and her brother have identical IQs, and they both have PhDs from Harvard.
- She has over 400 URLs in her bookmark file.

Singular Subjects, Plural Predicates, etc.

We frequently run into a situation in which a singular subject is linked to a plural predicate:

- My favorite *breakfast* is *cereal with fruit, milk, orange juice, and toast*.

Sometimes, too, a plural subject can be linked to singular predicate:

- Mistakes in parallelism are the only *problem* here.

In such situations, remember that the number (singular or plural) of the subject, not the predicate, determines the number of the verb.

A special situation exists when a subject seems not to agree with its predicate. For instance, when we want each student to see his or her counselor (and each student is assigned to only one counselor), but we want to avoid that "his or her" construction by

pluralizing, do we say "Students must see their *counselors*" or "Students must see their *counselor*"? The singular counselor is necessary to avoid the implication that students have more than one counselor apiece. Do we say "Many sons dislike their father or fathers"? We don't mean to suggest that the sons have more than one father, so we use the singular father. Theodore Bernstein, in Dos, Don'ts and Maybes of English Usage, says that "Idiomatically the noun applying to more than one person remains in the singular when (a) it represents a quality or thing possessed in common ("The audience's *curiosity* was aroused"); or (b) it is an abstraction ("The judges applied their *reason* to the problem"), or (c) it is a figurative word ("All ten children had *a sweet tooth*") (203). Sometimes good sense will have to guide you. We might want to say "Puzzled, the children scratched their head" to avoid the image of multi-headed children, but "The audience rose to their foot" is plainly ridiculous and about to tip over.

In "The boys moved their car/cars," the plural would indicate that each boy owned a car, the singular that the boys (together) owned one car (which is quite possible). It is also possible that each boy owned more than one car. Be prepared for such situations, and consider carefully the implications of using either the singular or the plural. You might have to avoid the problem by going the opposite direction of pluralizing: moving things to the singular and talking about what each boy did.

Compound nouns

Definition

In English, words, particularly adjectives and nouns, are combined into compound structures in a variety of ways. And once they are formed, they sometimes metamorphose over time. A common pattern is that two words—fire fly, say—will be joined by a hyphen for a time— ire-fly—and then be joined into one word—firefly. In this respect, a language like German, in which words are happily and immediately linked one to the other, might seem to have an advantage. There is only one sure way to know how to spell compounds in English: use an authoritative dictionary.

Formation

Words can be combined to form compound nouns. These are very common, and new combinations are invented almost daily. They normally have two parts. The second part identifies the object or person in question (man, friend, tank, table, room). The first part tells us what kind of object or person it is, or what its purpose is (police, boy, water, dining, bed):

What Type/what Purpose	What or Who
Police	Man
Boy	Friend

Water	Tank
Dining	Table
Bed	Room

The two parts may be written in a number of ways:

1. as one word.
Example: policeman, boyfriend

2. as two words joined with a hyphen.
Example: dining-table

3. as two separate words.
Example: fish tank.

There are three forms of compound words:

The closed form, in which the words are melded together, such as firefly, secondhand, softball, childlike, crosstown, redhead, keyboard, makeup, notebook;

the hyphenated form, such as daughter-in-law, master-at-arms, over-the-counter, six-pack, six-year-old, mass-produced;

and the open form, such as post office, real estate, middle class, full moon, half sister, attorney general.

How a word modified by an adjective—"a *little school*," "the *yellow butter*"—is different from a compound word—" a *high school*," "the *peanut butter*"—is a nice and philosophical question. It clearly has something to do with the degree to which the preceding word changes the essential character of the noun, the degree to which the modifier and the noun are inseparable. If you were diagramming a sentence with a compound word, you would probably keep the words together, on the same horizontal line.

Modifying compounds are often hyphenated to avoid confusion. The New York Public Library's Writer's Guide points out that an old-furniture salesman clearly deals in old furniture, but an old furniture salesman would be an old man. We probably would not have the same ambiguity, however, about a used car dealer. When compounded modifiers precede a noun, they are often hyphenated: part-time teacher, fifty-yard-wide field, fire-resistant curtains, high-speed chase. When those same modifying words come after the noun, however, they are not hyphenated: a field fifty yards wide, curtains that are fire resistant, etc. The second-rate opera company gave a performance that was first rate.

Comparative and superlative forms of adjectives are hyphenated when compounded with other modifiers: the highest-priced car, the shorter-term loan. But this is not always the case: the most talented youngster. Adverbs, words ending in -ly, are not hyphenated when

compounded with other modifiers: a highly rated bank, a partially refunded ticket, publicly held securities.
Sometimes hyphenated modifiers lose their hyphens when they become compound nouns: A clear decision-making process was evident in their decision making. The bluish grey was slowly disappearing from the bluish-grey sky. This is not always so, however: your high-rise apartment building is also known as a high-rise.

When modifying a person with his or her age, the compounded phrase is hyphenated: my six-year-old son. However, when the age comes after the person, we don't use a hyphen. My son is six years old. He is, however, a six-year-old.

Plurals and Possessives

Most dictionaries will give variant spellings of compound plurals. When you have more than one truck filled with sand, do you have several truckfuls or trucksful? The dictionary will give you both, with the first spelling usually preferred. (And the same is true of teaspoonfuls, cupfuls, etc.) The dictionary will help you discover that only one spelling is acceptable for some compounds — like passersby.
For hyphenated forms, the pluralizing -s is usually attached to the element that is actually being pluralized: daughters-in-law, half-moons, mayors-elect. The Chicago Manual of Style says that "hyphenated and open compounds are regularly made plural by the addition of the plural inflection to the element that is subject to the change in number" and gives as examples "fathers-in-law," "sergeants-in-arms," "doctors of philosophy," "and courts-martial" (196). The NYPL Writer's Guide puts it this way: "the most significant word — generally the noun — takes the plural form. The significant word may be at the beginning, middle, or end of the term" (396). And then we get examples such as "attorneys at law," "bills of fare," chiefs of staff," notaries public," assistant attorneys general," "higher-ups," "also-rans," and "go-betweens."
Note: some dictionaries will list "attorney generals" along with "attorneys general" as acceptable plurals of that office. Whether that's a matter of caving in to popular usage or an inability to determine the "significant word" is unknown.

As a general rule, then, the plural form of an element in a hierarchical term belongs to the base element in the term, regardless of the base element's placement:

- first *sergeants*
- *sergeants* major
- *sergeants* first class
- colonel *generals* [Russian]
- lieutenant *generals*
- lieutenant *colonels*
- apprentice, journeyman, and master *mechanics*
- deputy *librarians*
- deputy assistant *secretaries* of state

The possessive of a hyphenated compound is created by attaching an apostrophe -s to the end of the compound itself: my daughter-in-law's car, a friend of mine's car. To create the possessive of pluralized and compounded forms, a writer is wise to avoid the apostrophe -s form and use an "of" phrase (the "post genitive") instead: the meeting of the daughters-in-law, the schedule of half-moons. Otherwise, the possessive form becomes downright weird: the daughters-in-law's meeting, friends of mine's cars.

One of the most difficult decisions to make about possessives and plurals of compound words occurs when you can't decide whether the first noun in a compound structure is acting as a noun that ought to be showing possession or as what is called an attributive noun, essentially an adjective. In other words, do we write that I am going to a writers conference or to a writers' conference? The Chicago Style Manual suggests that if singular nouns can act as attributive nouns—city government, tax relief—then plural nouns should be able to act as attributive nouns: consumers group, teachers union. This principle is not universally endorsed, however, and writers must remember to be consistent within a document.

This section does not speak to the matter of compounded nouns such as "Professor Villa's and Professor Darling's classes have been filled."

Compounds with Prefixes

With a handful of exceptions, compounds created by the addition of a prefix are not hyphenated:

> anteroom, antisocial, binomial, biochemistry, coordinate, counterclockwise, extraordinary, infrastructure, interrelated, intramural, macroeconomics, metaphysical, microeconomics, midtown, minibike, multicultural, neoromantic, nonviolent, overanxious, postwar, preconference, pseudointellectual, reunify, semiconductor, socioeconomic, subpar, supertanker, transatlantic, unnatural, underdeveloped

Exceptions Include

compounds in which the second element is capitalized or a number:

> anti-Semitic, pre-1998, post-Freudian

compounds which need hyphens to avoid confusion

> un-ionized (as distinguished from unionized), co-op

compounds in which a vowel would be repeated (especially to avoid confusion)

> co-op, semi-independent, anti-intellectual (but reestablish, reedit)

compounds consisting of more than one word

> non-English-speaking, pre-Civil War

compounds that would be difficult to read without a hyphen

pro-life, pro-choice, co-edited

Also, when we combine compound nouns, we would use a hyphen with the first, but not the last: when under- and overdeveloped nations get together. . . .

Spelling

The following table presents a mini-dictionary of compound modifiers and nouns. Perhaps the best use of a very partial inventory like this is to suggest the kinds of words that a writer would be wise either to memorize or to be at least wary of. It is sometimes enough to know when we should get the dictionary off the shelf.

2-year education	half sister
one-week vacation	high-level officials
A-frame	I-beam
African American	Italian-American
Air Force	Italian-American club
all-city tournament	jack-in-the-box
attorney general	lifelike
blood pressure	light year
blue-green dress	mayor-elect
bull's-eye	salesperson
database	secretary-treasurer
daughter-in-law	stockbroker
English-speaking person	T-square
ex-wife	threefold
first-rate accommodations	up-to-the-minute
football	V-formation
grandmother	vice president
grant-in-aid	well-made clothes
great-aunt	worldwide inflation
	X-ray

Notice that African American contains no hyphen, but Italian-American does. There are no hard and fast rules about this, and social conventions change. (There is no hyphen in French Canadian.) Some groups have insisted that they do not want to be known as "hyphenated Americans" and resist, therefore, the use of a hyphen, preferring that the word "American" be used as an adjective.

Suspended Compounds

With a series of nearly identical compounds, we sometimes delay the final term of the final term until the last instance, allowing the hyphen to act as a kind of place holder, as in

- The third- and fourth-grade teachers met with the parents.

- Both full- and part-time employees will get raises this year.
- We don't see many 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children around here.

Be careful not to overuse this feature of the hyphen; readers have to wait until that final instance to know what you're talking about, and that can be annoying.

Possessive Forms

Forming Possessives

Showing possession in English is a relatively easy matter (believe it or not). By adding an apostrophe and an s we can manage to transform most singular nouns into their possessive form:

- the car's front seat
- Charles's car
- Bartkowski's book
- a hard day's work

Some writers will say that the -s after Charles' is not necessary and that adding only the apostrophe (Charles' car) will suffice to show possession. Consistency is the key here: if you choose not to add the -s after a noun that already ends in s, do so consistently throughout your text. William Strunk's Elements of Style recommends adding the 's.

You will find that some nouns, especially proper nouns, especially when there are other -s and -z sounds involved, turn into clumsy beasts when you add another s: "That's old Mrs. Chambers's estate." In that case, you're better off with "Mrs. Chambers' estate."

There is another way around this problem of klunky possessives: using the "of phrase" to show possession.

You should know that most words that end in an unpronounced "s" form their possessive by adding an apostrophe + s.

However, many non-English words that end with a silent "s" or "x" will form their possessives with only an apostrophe.

There are "certain expressions that end in s or the s sound that traditionally require an apostrophe only: for appearance' sake, for conscience' sake, for goodness' sake"

When a word ends in a double s, we're better off writing its possessive with only an apostrophe: the boss' memo, the witness' statement.

Many writers consider it bad form to use apostrophe -s possessives with pieces of furniture and buildings or inanimate objects in general. Instead of "the desk's edge" (according to many authorities), we should write "the edge of the desk" and instead of "the hotel's windows" we should write "the windows of the hotel." In fact, we would probably avoid the possessive altogether and use the noun as an attributive: "the hotel windows." This rule (if, in fact, it is one) is no longer universally endorsed. We would not say "the radio of that car" instead of "that car's radio" (or the "car radio") and we would not write "the desire of my heart" instead of "my heart's desire." Writing "the edge

of the ski" would probably be an improvement over "the ski's edge," however. For expressions of time and measurement, the possessive is shown with an apostrophe -s: "one dollar's worth," "two dollars' worth," "a hard day's night," "two years' experience," "an evening's entertainment."

THE POSSESSIVES

Possessive pronouns and possessive adjectives show who the thing belongs to.

PERSON		**ADJECTIVES**	**PRONOUNS**
1st	(I)	my	mine
2nd	(you)	your	yours
3rd	(he)	his	his
	(she)	her	hers
	(it)	it	its
Plural			
1st	(we)	our	ours
2nd	(you)	your	yours
3rd	(they)	their	theirs

NOTE: In English, possessive adjectives and pronouns refer to the possessor, not the object or person that is possessed.

Example:

Jane's brother is married to John's sister.
Her brother is married to his sister.

Examples:

a. Peter and *his sister*.
b. Jane and *her father*.
c. Do you know where *your books* are?
d. Is this *their picnic*? No, it is *ours*.
e. I think this is *your* passport. Yes, it is *mine*.

Possessives & Gerunds

Possessive forms are frequently modifiers for verb forms used as nouns, or gerunds. Using the possessive will affect how we read the sentence. For instance, "I'm worried about Joe running in the park after dark" means that I'm worried about Joe and the fact that he runs in the park after dark (the word "running" is a present participle modifying Joe). On the other hand, "I'm worried about Joe's running in the park after dark" puts the emphasis on the running that Joe is doing ("running" is a gerund, and "Joe's" modifies that verbal). Usually, almost always in fact, we use the possessive form of a noun or pronoun to modify a gerund. More is involved, however.

Possessives of Plurals & Irregular Plurals

Most plural nouns already end in s. To create their possessive, simply add an apostrophe after the s:

- The Pepins' house is the big blue one on the corner.
- The lions' usual source of water has dried up.
- The gases' odors mixed and became nauseating.
- The witches' brooms were hidden in the corner.
- The babies' beds were all in a row.

With nouns whose plurals are irregular, however, you will need to add an apostrophe followed by an s to create the possessive form.

- She plans on opening a women's clothing boutique.
- Children's programming is not a high priority.
- The geese's food supply was endangered.

(But with words that do not change their form when pluralized, you will have to add an -s or -es.)

- The seaweed was destroyed by the fishes' overfeeding.

Compound Possessives

Compound Possessives have been expressed in Compound section behind. Please see that section.

Double Possessives

Do we say "a friend of my uncle" or "a friend of my uncle's"? In spite of the fact that "a friend of my uncle's" seems to overwork the notion of possessiveness, that is usually what we say and write. The double possessive construction is sometimes called the "post-genitive" or "of followed by a possessive case or an absolute possessive pronoun"
(from the Oxford English Dictionary, which likes to show off). The double possessive has been around since the fifteenth century, and is widely accepted. It's extremely helpful, for instance, in distinguishing between "a picture of my father" (in which we see the old man) and "a picture of my father's" (which he owns). Native speakers will note how much more natural it is to say "He's a fan of hers" than "he's a fan of her."

Generally, what follows the "of" in a double possessive will be definite and human, not otherwise, so we would say "a friend of my uncle's" but not "a friend of the museum's [museum, instead]." What precedes the "of" is usually indefinite (*a* friend, not *the best* friend), unless it's preceded by the demonstratives this or that, as in "this friend of my father's."

4. Adverb.

Definition

Adverbs are words that modify

- a verb (He drove slowly.—How did he drive?)
- an adjective (He drove a very fast car.—How fast was his car?)
- another adverb (She moved quite slowly down the aisle.—How slowly did she move?)

As we will see, adverbs often tell when, where, why, or under what conditions something happens or happened. Adverbs frequently end in -ly; however, many words and phrases not ending in -ly serve an adverbial function and an -ly ending is not a guarantee that a word is an adverb. The words lovely, lonely, motherly, friendly, neighborly, for instance, are adjectives:

- That *lovely* woman lives in a *friendly* neighborhood.

If a group of words containing a subject and verb acts as an adverb (modifying the verb of a sentence), it is called an adverb clause:

- *When this class is over*, we're going to the movies.

When a group of words *not* containing a subject and verb acts as an adverb, it is called an adverbial *phrase*. Prepositional phrases frequently have adverbial functions (telling place and time, modifying the verb):

- He went *to the movies*.
- She works *in the holidays*.
- They lived in Canada *during the war*.

And infinitive phrases can act as adverbs (usually telling why):

- She hurried to the mainland *to see her brother*.
- The senator ran *to catch the bus*.

But there are other kinds of adverbial phrases:

- He calls his mother *as often as possible*.

Adverbs can modify adjectives, but an adjective cannot modify an adverb. Thus we would say that "the students showed a *really* wonderful attitude" and that "the students showed a *wonderfully* casual attitude" and that "my professor is *really* tall, but *not* "He ran real fast."

Like adjectives, adverbs can have comparative and superlative forms to show degree.

- Walk *faster* if you want to keep up with me.
- The student who reads *fastest* will finish first.

We often use more and most, less and least to show degree with adverbs:

- With sneakers on, she could move *more quickly* among the patients.
- The flowers were the *most beautifully* arranged creations I've ever seen.
- She worked *less confidently* after her accident.
- That was the *least skillfully* done performance I've seen in years.

The *as—as* construction can be used to create adverbs that express sameness or equality: "He can't run *as fast as* his sister."
A handful of adverbs have two forms, one that ends in -ly and one that doesn't. In certain cases, the two forms have different meanings:

- He arrived *late*.
- *Lately*, he couldn't seem to be on time for anything.

In most cases, however, the form without the -ly ending should be reserved for casual situations:

- She certainly drives *slow* in that old Buick of hers.
- He did *wrong* by her.
- He spoke *sharp, quick*, and to the point.

Adverbs often function as intensifiers, conveying a greater or lesser emphasis to something. Intensifiers are said to have three different functions: they can emphasize, amplify, or downtone. Here are some examples:

- Emphasizers:
    - I *really* don't believe him.
    - He *literally* wrecked his mother's car.
    - She *simply* ignored me.
    - They're going to be late, *for sure*.
- Amplifiers:
    - The teacher *completely* rejected her proposal.
    - I *absolutely* refuse to attend any more faculty meetings.
    - They *heartily* endorsed the new restaurant.
    - I *so* wanted to go with them.
    - We know this city *well*.
- Downtoners:
    - I *kind of* like this college.
    - Joe *sort of* felt betrayed by his sister.
    - His mother *mildly* disapproved his actions.
    - We can improve on this *to some extent*.
    - The boss *almost* quit after that.
    - The school was *all but* ruined by the storm.

Adverbs (as well as adjectives) in their various degrees can be accompanied by premodifiers:

- She runs *very* fast.
- We're going to run out of material *all the* faster [4]

[4] This issue has been addressed in the section on degrees in adjectives. For this section on intensifiers, we are indebted to A Grammar of Contemporary English by Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, and Jan Svartvik. Longman Group: London. 1978. pages 438 to 457. Examples our own.

Using Adverbs in a Numbered List

Within the normal flow of text, it's nearly always a bad idea to number items beyond three or four, at the most. Anything beyond that, you're better off with a *vertical list* that uses numbers (1, 2, 3, etc.). Also, in such a list, don't use adverbs (with an -ly ending); use instead the uninflected ordinal number (first, second, third, fourth, fifth, etc.). *First* (not firstly), it's unclear what the adverb is modifying. *Second* (not secondly), it's unnecessary. *Third* (not thirdly), after you get beyond "secondly," it starts to sound silly. Adverbs that number in this manner are treated as disjuncts.

Adverbs We Can Do Without

Review the section on “Being Concise” for some advice on adverbs that we can eliminate to the benefit of our prose: intensifiers such as very, extremely, and really that don't intensify anything and expletive constructions ("There are several books that address this issue.")

Kinds of Adverbs

Adverbs of Manner
She moved *slowly* and spoke *quietly*.

Adverbs of Place
She has lived *on the island* all her life.
She still lives *there* now.

Adverbs of Frequency
She takes the boat to the mainland *every day*.
She *often* goes by herself.

Adverbs of Time
She tries to get back *before dark*.
It's starting to get dark *now*.
She finished her tea *first*.
She left *early*.

Adverbs of Purpose
She drives her boat slowly *to avoid hitting the rocks*.
She shops in several stores *to get the best buys*.

Positions of Adverbs

One of the hallmarks of adverbs is their ability to move around in a sentence. Adverbs of manner are particularly flexible in this regard.

- *Solemnly* the minister addressed her congregation.

- The minister *solemnly* addressed her congregation.
- The minister addressed her congregation *solemnly*.

The following adverbs of frequency appear in various points in these sentences:

- Before the main verb: I *never* get up before nine o'clock.
- Between the auxiliary verb and the main verb: I have *rarely* written to my brother without a good reason.
- Before the verb used to: I always used to see him at his summer home.

Indefinite adverbs of time can appear either before the verb or between the auxiliary and the main verb:

- He *finally* showed up for batting practice.
- She has *recently* retired.

Order of Adverbs

There is a basic order in which adverbs will appear when there is more than one. It is similar to "The Royal Order of Adjectives", but it is even more flexible.

THE ROYAL ORDER OF ADVERBS					
Verb	Manner	Place	Frequency	Time	Purpose
Dad walks	Impatiently	Into town	Every afternoon	Before supper	To get a newspaper.
Asif swims	Enthusiastically	In the pool	Every morning	Before dawn	To keep in shape.
Rubab napes		In her room	Every morning	Before lunch.	
In actual practice, of course, it would be highly unusual to have a string of adverbial modifiers beyond two or three (at the most). Because the placement of adverbs is so flexible, one or two of the modifiers would probably move to the beginning of the sentence: "Every afternoon before supper, Dad impatiently walks into town to get a newspaper." When that happens, the introductory adverbial modifiers are usually set off with a comma.					

More Notes on Adverb Order

As a general principle, shorter adverbial phrases precede longer adverbial phrases, regardless of content. In the following sentence, an adverb of time precedes an adverb of frequency because it is shorter (and simpler):

- Dad takes a brisk walk *before breakfast every day of his life*.

A second principle: among similar adverbial phrases of kind (manner, place, frequency, etc.), the more specific adverbial phrase comes first:

- My grandmother was born *in a sod house on the plains* of northern Nebraska.
- She promised to meet him *for lunch next Tuesday*.

Bringing an adverbial modifier to the beginning of the sentence can place special emphasis on that modifier. This is particularly useful with adverbs of manner:

- *Slowly, ever so carefully*, Jesse filled the coffee cup up to the brim, even above the brim.
- *Occasionally*, but only occasionally, one of these lemons will get by the inspectors.

Inappropriate Adverb Order

Review the section on Misplaced Modifiers for some additional ideas on placement. Modifiers can sometimes attach themselves to and thus modify words that they ought not to modify.

- They reported that Giuseppe Balle, a European rock star, had died *on the six o'clock news*.

Clearly, it would be better to move the underlined modifier to a position immediately after "they reported" or even to the beginning of the sentence — so the poor man doesn't die on television. Misplacement can also occur with very simple modifiers, such as only and barely:

- She *only grew* to be four feet tall.

It would be better if "She grew to be *only four feet tall*."

Adjuncts, Disjuncts, and Conjuncts

Regardless of its position, an adverb is *often neatly* integrated into the flow of a sentence. When this is true, as it *almost always* is, the adverb is called an adjunct. (Notice the underlined adjuncts or adjunctive adverbs in the first two sentences of this paragraph.) When the adverb does not fit into the flow of the clause, it is called a disjunct or a conjunct and is often set off by a comma or set of commas. A disjunct frequently acts as a kind of evaluation of the rest of the sentence. Although it usually modifies the verb, we could say that it modifies the entire clause, too. Notice how "too" is a disjunct in the sentence immediately before this one; that same word can also serve as an adjunct adverbial modifier: It's *too hot* to play outside. Here are two more disjunctive adverbs:

- *Frankly*, Martha, I don't give a hoot.
- *Fortunately*, no one was hurt.

Conjuncts, on the other hand, serve a connector function within the flow of the text, signaling a transition between ideas.

- If they start smoking those awful cigars, *then* I'm not staying.
- We've told the landlord about this ceiling again and again, and *yet* he's done nothing to fix it.

At the extreme edge of this category, we have the purely conjunctive device known as the conjunctive adverb (often called the adverbial conjunction):

- Jose has spent years preparing for this event; *nevertheless*, he's the most nervous person here.
- I love this school; *however*, I don't think I can afford the tuition.[5]

Some Special Cases

The adverbs enough and not enough usually take a postmodifier position:

- Is that music *loud enough*?
- These shoes are *not big enough*.
- In a roomful of elderly people, you must remember to speak *loudly enough*.

(Notice, though, that when enough functions as an adjective, it can come before the noun:

- Did she give us *enough time*?

The adverb enough is often followed by an infinitive:

- She didn't run fast *enough to win*.

The adverb too comes before adjectives and other adverbs:

- She ran *too fast*.
- She works *too quickly*.

If too comes after the adverb it is probably a disjunct (meaning also) and is usually set off with a comma:

- Jasmine works hard. She works *quickly, too*.

The adverb too is often followed by an infinitive:

- She runs *too slowly to enter* this race.

Another common construction with the adverb too is too followed by a prepositional phrase — for + the object of the preposition — followed by an infinitive:

- This milk is *too hot for a baby to drink*.

Relative Adverbs

Adjectival clauses are sometimes introduced by what are called the relative adverbs: where, when, and why. Although the entire clause is adjectival and will modify a noun, the relative word itself fulfills an adverbial function (modifying a verb within its own clause).

The relative adverb where will begin a clause that modifies a noun of place:

> My entire family now worships in the *church* where my great grandfather used to be minister.

The relative pronoun "where" modifies the verb "used to be" (which makes it adverbial), but the entire clause ("where my great grandfather used to be minister") modifies the word "church."

A when clause will modify nouns of time:

[5] For further study on this section: A University Grammar of English by Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum. Longman Group: Essex, England. 1993. 126. Examples mine!

My favorite month is always *February*, when we celebrate Valentine's Day and Presidents' Day.

And a why clause will modify the noun reason:

Do you know the *reason* why Isabel isn't in class today?

We sometimes leave out the relative adverb in such clauses, and many writers prefer "that" to "why" in a clause referring to "reason":

- Do you know the reason ~~why~~ Isabel isn't in class today?
- I always look forward to the day ~~when~~ we begin our summer vacation.
- I know the reason *that* men like motorcycles.[6]

Viewpoint, Focus, and Negative Adverbs

A viewpoint adverb generally comes after a noun and is related to an adjective that precedes that noun:

- A successful athletic team is often a *good team* *scholastically*.
- Investing all our money in snowmobiles was probably not a *sound idea* *financially*.

You will sometimes hear a phrase like "scholastically speaking" or "financially speaking" in these circumstances, but the word "speaking" is seldom necessary.

A focus adverb indicates that what is being communicated is limited to the part that is focused; a focus adverb will tend either to *limit* the sense of the sentence ("He got an A *just* for attending the class.") or to act as an *additive* ("He got an A *in addition* to being published."

Although negative constructions like the words "not" and "never" are usually found embedded within a verb string—"He has *never* been much help to his mother."—they are technically not part of the verb; they are, indeed, adverbs. However, a so-called negative adverb creates a negative meaning in a sentence without the use of the usual no/not/neither/nor/never constructions:

- He *seldom* visits.
- She *hardly* eats anything since the accident.
- After her long and tedious lectures, *rarely* was anyone awake.

Adverb-Form

1. In most cases, an adverb is formed by adding '-ly' to an adjective:

Adjective	**Adverb**
Cheap	Cheaply
Quick	Quickly
Slow	Slowly

[6] For further study on this section: Understanding English Grammar by Martha Kolln. 4th Edition, MacMillan Publishing Company: New York. 1994

Examples:

- Time goes *quickly*.
- He walked *slowly* to the door.
- She *certainly* had an interesting life.
- He *carefully* picked up the sleeping child.

If the adjective ends in '-y', replace the 'y' with 'i' and add '-ly':

Adjective	**Adverb**
Easy	Easily
Angry	Angrily
Happy	Happily
Lucky	Luckily

If the adjective ends in -'able', '-ible', or '-le', replace the '-e' with '-y':

Adjective	**Adverb**
Probable	Probably
Terrible	Terribly
Gentle	Gently

If the adjective ends in '-ic', add '-ally':[7]

Adjective	**Adverb**
Basic	Basically
Economic	Economically
Tragic	Tragically

1. Some adverbs have the same form as the adjective:

Adjective/Adverb
Early, fast, hard, high, late, near, straight, wrong

Compare:

- It is a *fast* car.
- He drives very *fast*.
- This is a *hard* exercise.
- He works *hard*.
- We saw many *high* buildings.
- The bird flew *high* in the sky.

3. 'Well' and 'good'

'Well' is the adverb that corresponds to the adjective 'good'.

Examples:

- He is a *good* student.
- He studies *well*.
- She is a *good* pianist.

[7] The exception in this case is “public-publicly”.

- She plays the piano *well*.
- They are *good* swimmers.
- They swim *well*.

Adverbs of Certainty

These adverbs express how certain or sure we feel about an action or event.
Common adverbs of certainty:
Certainly, definitely, probably, undoubtedly, surely
Adverbs of certainty go before the main verb but after the verb 'to be':

- He definitely left the house this morning.
- He is probably in the park.

With other auxiliary verb, these adverbs go between the auxiliary and the main verb:

- He has certainly forgotten the meeting.
- He will probably remember tomorrow.

Sometimes these adverbs can be placed at the beginning of the sentence:

- Undoubtedly, Winston Churchill was a great politician.

BE CAREFUL with “surely”. When it is placed at the beginning of the sentence, it means the speaker thinks something is true, but is looking for confirmation:
Example:

- Surely you've got a bicycle?

Adverbs of Degree

Adverbs of degree tell us about the intensity or degree of an action, an adjective or another adverb.

Common adverbs of degree:

Almost, nearly, quite, just, too, enough, hardly, scarcely, completely, very, extremely.

Adverbs of degree are usually placed:

6. Before the adjective or adverb they are modifying:
   e.g. The water was *extremely* cold.
7. Before the main verb:
   e.g. He was *just* leaving. She has *almost* finished.

Examples:

- She doesn't *quite* know what she'll do after university.
- They are *completely* exhausted from the trip.
- I am *too* tired to go out tonight.
- He *hardly* noticed what she was saying.

Enough, very, too

Enough as an adverb meaning 'to the necessary degree' goes after adjectives and adverbs.

Example:

- Is your coffee ***hot enough***? (adjective)
- He didn't work ***hard enough***. (adverb)

It also goes before nouns, and means 'as much as is necessary'. In this case it is not an adverb, but a 'determiner'.

Example:

- We have *enough* bread.
- They don't have *enough* food.

Too as an adverb meaning 'more than is necessary or useful' goes before adjectives and adverbs, e.g.

- This coffee is *too* hot. (adjective)
- He works *too* hard. (adverb)

Enough and too with adjectives can be followed by 'for someone/something'.

Example:

- The dress was big *enough* for me.
- She's not experienced *enough* for this job.
- The coffee was *too* hot for me.
- The dress was *too* small for her.

We can also use 'to + infinitive' after enough and too with adjectives/adverb.

Example:

- The coffee was *too* hot to drink.
- He didn't work hard *enough* to pass the exam.
- She's not old *enough* to get married.
- You're *too* young to have grandchildren!

Very goes before an adverb or adjective to make it stronger.

Example:

- The girl was *very* beautiful. (adjective)
- He worked *very* quickly. (adverb)

If we want to make a negative form of an adjective or adverb, we can use a word of opposite meaning, or not very.

Example:

- The girl was ugly OR The girl was *not very* beautiful
- He worked slowly OR He didn't *work very* quickly.

BE CAREFUL about the correct usage because there is a big difference between too and very.

- Very expresses a fact:
  He speaks *very* quickly.
- Too suggests there is a problem:
  He speaks *too* quickly (for me to understand).

Other Adverbs like "Very"

These common adverbs are used like very and not very, and are listed in order of strength, from positive to negative:

extremely, especially, particularly, pretty, rather, quite, fairly, rather, not especially, not particularly.

Note: rather can be positive or negative, depending on the adjective or adverb that follows:

Positive: The teacher was *rather* nice.
Negative: The film was *rather* disappointing.

Inversion with Negative Adverbs

Normally the subject goes before the verb:

Subject	**Verb**
I	Left
She	Goes

However, some negative adverbs can cause an inversion - the order is reversed and the verb goes before the subject

Example:

I have *never* seen such courage. *Never* have I seen such courage.
She *rarely* left the house. *Rarely* did she leave the house.

Negative inversion is used in writing, not in speaking.

Other adverbs and adverbial expressions that can be used in an identical way:

seldom, scarcely, hardly, not only .....
but also, no sooner .....
than, not until, under no circumstances.

Adverbs of Manner

Adverbs of manner tell us how something happens. They are usually placed after the main verb or after the object.

Examples:

- He swims *well*, (after the main verb)
- He ran... *rapidly, slowly, quickly*..
- She spoke... *softly, loudly, aggressively*..
- James coughed *loudly* to attract her attention.
- He plays the flute *beautifully*. (after the object)
- He ate the chocolate cake *greedily*.

BE CAREFUL! The adverb should not be put between the verb and the object:

- He ate greedily the chocolate cake [incorrect]
- He ate the chocolate cake greedily [correct]

If there is a preposition before the object, e.g. at, towards, we can place the adverb either before the preposition or after the object.

Example:

- The child ran *happily* towards his mother.
- The child ran towards his mother *happily*.

Sometimes an adverb of manner is placed before a verb + object to add emphasis:

- He *gently* woke the sleeping woman.

Some writers put an adverb of manner at the beginning of the sentence to catch our attention and make us curious:

- *Slowly* she picked up the knife.

(We want to know what happened slowly, who did it slowly, why they did it slowly)

However, adverbs should always come *after* intransitive verbs (=verbs which have no object).

Example:

- The town grew *quickly*.
- He waited *patiently*.

Also, these common adverbs are almost always placed *after* the verb:

- well
- badly
- hard
- fast

The position of the adverb is important when there is more than one verb in a sentence. If the adverb is placed after a clause, then it modifies the whole action described by the clause.
Notice the difference in meaning between the following pairs of sentences:

- She *quickly* agreed to re-type the letter. (= her agreement was quick)
- She agreed to re-type the letter *quickly*. (= the re-typing was quick)
- He *quietly* asked me to leave the house. (= his request was quiet)
- He asked me to leave the house *quietly*. (= the leaving was quiet)

Adverbs of Place
Adverbs of place tell us where something happens.
They are usually placed after the main verb or after the object:
Example:

After the main verb:

- I looked *everywhere*.
- John looked *away, up, down, around*...
- I'm going *home, out, back*...
- Come *in*.

After the object:

- They built a house *nearby*.
- She took the child *outside*.

'Here' and 'There'
With verbs of movement, here means towards or with the speaker:

- Come *here* (= towards me)
- It's in *here* (= come with me to see it)

There means away from, or not with the speaker:

- Put it *there* (= away from me)
- It's in *there* (= go by yourself to see it)

Here and there are combined with prepositions to make many common adverbial phrases:

down here, down there;
over here, over there;
under here, under there;
up here, up there

Here and there are placed at the beginning of the sentence in exclamations or when emphasis is needed.
They are followed by the verb if the subject is a noun:

- *Here* comes the bus. (followed by the verb)

Or by a pronoun if this is the subject (it, she, he etc.):

- *Here* it is! (followed by the pronoun)
- *There* she goes! (followed by the pronoun)

NOTE: most common adverbs of place also function as prepositions.
Examples:
about, across, along, around, behind, by, down, in, off, on, over, round, through, under, up.

Go to Prepositions or Phrasal Verbs

Other adverbs of place: ending in '-wards', expressing movement in a particular direction:

backwards	northwards
forwards	southwards
downwards	eastwards
upwards	westwards
inwards	homewards
outwards	onwards

Example:

- Cats don't usually walk *backwards*.
- The ship sailed *westwards*.

BE CAREFUL! 'Towards' is a preposition, not an adverb, so it is always followed by a noun or a pronoun:

- He walked towards the car.
- She ran towards me.

Expressing both movement and location:
ahead, abroad, overseas, uphill, downhill, sideways, indoors, outdoors
Example:

- The child went *indoors*.
- He lived and worked *abroad*.

ADVERBS OF TIME

Adverbs of time tell us when an action happened, but also for how long, and how often.
Examples:

- When: today, yesterday, later, now, last year
- For how long: all day, not long, for a while, since last year
- How often: sometimes, frequently, never, often, yearly

"When" adverbs are usually placed at the end of the sentence:

- Goldilocks went to the Bears' house *yesterday*.
- I'm going to tidy my room *tomorrow*.

This is a "neutral" position, but some "when" adverbs can be put in other positions to give a different emphasis
Compare:

- *Later* Goldilocks ate some porridge. (the time is more important)
- Goldilocks *later* ate some porridge. (this is more formal, like a policeman's report)

- Goldilocks ate some porridge *later*. (this is neutral, no particular emphasis)

"For how long" adverbs are usually placed at the end of the sentence:

- She stayed in the Bears' house *all day*.
- My mother lived in France for *a year*.

Notice: 'for' is always followed by an expression of duration:

- for three days,
- for a week,
- for several years,
- for two centuries.

'Since' is always followed by an expression of a point in time:

- since Monday,
- since 1997,
- since the last war.

"How often" adverbs expressing the frequency of an action are usually placed before the main verb but after auxiliary verbs (such as be, have, may, must):

- I *often* eat vegetarian food. (before the main verb)
- He *never* drinks milk. (before the main verb)
- You must *always* fasten your seat belt. (after the auxiliary must)
- She is *never* sea-sick.(after the auxiliary is)
- I have *never* forgotten my first kiss. (after the auxiliary have and before the main verb forgotten)

Some other "how often" adverbs express the exact number of times an action happens and are usually placed at the end of the sentence:

- This magazine is published *monthly*.
- He visits his mother *once a week*.

When a frequency adverb is placed at the end of a sentence it is much stronger.
Compare:

- She *regularly* visits France.
- She visits France *regularly*.

Adverbs that can be used in these two positions:

- frequently,
- generally,
- normally,
- occasionally,
- often,
- regularly,
- sometimes,
- usually

'Yet' and 'Still'

Yet is used in questions and in negative sentences, and is placed at the end of the sentence or after not.

- Have you finished your work *yet*? (= a simple request for information) No, *not yet*. (= simple negative answer)
- They haven't met him *yet*. (= simple negative statement)
- Haven't you finished *yet*? (= expressing slight surprise)

Still expresses continuity; it is used in positive sentences and questions, and is placed before the main verb and after auxiliary verbs (such as be, have, might, will)

- I am *still* hungry.
- She is *still* waiting for you
- Are you *still* here?
- Do you *still* work for the BBC?

Order of Adverbs of Time

If you need to use more than one adverb of time at the end of a sentence, use them in this order:

1: 'how long'
2: 'how often'
3: 'when' (think of 'low')

Example:

- 1 + 2 : I work (1) for five hours (2) every day
- 2 + 3 : The magazine was published (2) weekly (3) last year.
- 1 + 3 : I was abroad (1) for two months (3) last year.
- 1 + 2 + 3 : She worked in a hospital (1) for two days (2) every week (3) last year.

Viewpoint and Commenting Adverbs

There are some adverbs and adverbial expressions which tell us about the speaker's viewpoint or opinion about an action, or make some comment on the action.

Viewpoint

Frankly, I think he is a liar. (= this is my frank, honest opinion)

Theoretically, you should pay a fine. (= from a theoretical point of view but there may be another way of looking at the situation)

These adverbs are placed at the beginning of the sentence and are separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma.

Some common Viewpoint adverbs:

honestly, seriously, confidentially, personally, surprisingly, ideally, economically, officially, obviously, clearly, surely, undoubtedly.

Examples:

- *Personally*, I'd rather go by train.
- *Surprisingly*, this car is cheaper than the smaller model.
- *Geographically*, Britain is rather cut off from the rest of Europe.

Commenting

- She is *certainly* the best person for the job.
- You *obviously* enjoyed your meal.

These are very similar to viewpoint adverbs, and often the same words, but they go in a different position - after the verb to be and before the main verb.
Some common Commenting adverbs:
definitely, certainly, obviously, simply.

Interrogative Adverbs
These are:
why, where, how, when
They are usually placed at the beginning of a question.
Examples:

- *Why* are you so late?
- *Where* is my passport?
- *How* are you?
- *How* much is that coat?
- *When* does the train arrive?

Notice that how can be used in four different ways:
1. meaning 'in what way?':
How did you make this sauce?
How do you start the car?
2. with adjectives:
How tall are you?
How old is your house?
3. with much and many:
How much are these tomatoes?
How many people are coming to the party?
4. with other adverbs:
How quickly can you read this?
How often do you go to London?

Adverbs of Frequency
Adverbs of Frequency answer the question "How often?" or "How frequently?" They tell us how often somebody does something.
Adverbs of frequency come before the main verb (except the main verb "to be"):

*0We *usually* go shopping on Saturday.
*1I have *often* done that.
*2She is *always* late.

Occasionally, sometimes, often, frequently and usually can also go at the beginning or end of a sentence:

*3*Sometimes* they come and stay with us.

*4I play tennis *occasionally*.

Rarely and seldom can also go at the end of a sentence (often with "very"):

*5We see them *rarely*.

John eats meat very *seldom*.

Comparative Forms of Adverbs

In general, comparative and superlative forms of adverbs are the same as for adjectives:

- add -er or -est to short adverbs:

Adverb	Comparative	Superlative
hard	harder	the hardest
late	later	the latest
fast	faster	the fastest

Example:

- Jim works *harder* than his brother.
- Everyone in the race ran *fast*, but John ran the *fastest* of all.

With adverbs ending in -ly, use “more” for the comparative and “most” for the superlative:

Adverb	Comparative	Superlative
quietly slowly seriously	*more* quietly *more* slowly *more* seriously	*most* quietly *most* slowly *most* seriously

Example:

- The teacher spoke ***more slowly*** to help us to understand.
- Could you sing ***more quietly*** please?

Some adverbs have irregular comparative forms:

Adverb	Comparative	Superlative
badly	worse	worst
far	farther/further	farthest/furthest
little	less	least
well	better	best

Example:

- The little boy ran *further* than his friends.
- You're driving *worse* today than yesterday!

BE CAREFUL! Sometimes 'most' can mean 'very':

- We were *most* grateful for your help
- I am *most* impressed by this application.

Linking Adverbs

Linking adverbs are adverbs that are used to link ideas or clauses in spoken discourse or written text. They could also be called conjunctive adverbs in so far as they perform the same sort of function as conjunctions.
We use a very wide variety of linking adverbs. Some are more commonly used in formal written English, whilst others are more characteristic of informal, spoken language. Here are some of the most common.

As well / too
As well and too are linking adverbs, meaning also or in addition, which would be a more formal equivalent. Again, note the difference in meaning and usage when they are employed as adverbs modifying the adjective or adding information to the verb, and as linking adverbs, meaning in addition:
This T-shirt is too small for me. I need a larger size.

- I certainly can't play the piano as well as she does. Katrina is good enough to be a concert pianist. I play quite well, but not as well.

- My birthday's on the sixth of June. ~ That's funny. My birthday's on the sixth of June too / as well.

*6We're all going to Cornwall for our holidays this year. Oh, and Jeremy's coming as well / too.

Note that too and as well as linking adverbs are normally placed in end position in the clause, although in a more formal style too can be placed immediately after the subject:
You like Beethoven. I too am fond of Beethoven's music.

1PRONOUN

Definition

Generally (but not always) pronouns stand for (pro + noun) or refer to a noun, an individual or individuals or thing or things (the pronoun’s antecedent) whose identity is made clear earlier in the text. For example, we are bewildered by writers who claim something like;

- They say that eating beef is bad for you.

They is a pronoun referring to someone, but who are they? Cows? Whom do they represent? Sloppy use of pronouns is unfair.

Not all pronouns will refer to an antecedent, however.

- Everyone here earns over a thousand dollars a day.

The word “everyone” has no antecedent.

The problem of agreement between a pronoun and its antecedent and between a pronoun and its verb is treated in another section on “Pronoun-Antecedent Consistency”.

Personal Pronouns

Unlike English nouns, which usually do not change form except for the addition of an -s ending to create the plural or the apostrophe + s to create the possessive, personal pronouns (which stand for persons or things) change form according to their various uses within a sentence. Thus I is used as the subject of a sentence (I am happy.), me is used as an object in various ways (He hit me. He gave me a book. Do this for me.), and my is used as the possessive form (That's my car.) The same is true of the other personal pronouns: the singular you and he/she/it and the plural we, you, and they. These forms are called cases.

Personal pronouns can also be characterized or distinguished by person. “First person” refers to the speaker(s) or writer(s) ("I" for singular, "we" for plural). “Second person” refers to the person or people being spoken or written to ("you" for both singular and plural). “Third person” refers to the person or people being spoken or written about ("he," "she," and "it" for singular, "they" for plural). As you will see, each person can change form, reflecting its use within a sentence. Thus, "I" becomes "me" when used as an object ("She left me") and "my" when used in its possessive role (That's my car"); "they" becomes "them" in object form ("I like them") and "their" in possessive ("That's just their way").

When a personal pronoun is connected by a conjunction to another noun or pronoun, its case does not change. We would write "I am taking a course in Asian history"; if Tahira is also taking that course, we would write "*Tahira and I* are taking a course in Asian history." (Notice that Tahira gets listed before "I" does. This is one of the few ways in which English is a "polite" language.) The same is true when the object form is called for: "Professor Vendetti gave all her books to *me*"; if Tahira also received some books, we'd write "Professor Zaheer gave all his books to *Tahira and me*."[8]

[8] For more on this, see Cases of Pronoun

Cases of Pronoun

When a pronoun and a noun are combined (which will happen with the plural first- and second-person pronouns), choose the case of the pronoun that would be appropriate if the noun were not there.

- *We students* are demanding that the administration give us two hours for lunch.
- The administration has managed to put *us students* in a bad situation.

With the second person, we don't really have a problem because the subject form is the same as the object form, "you":

- *You students* are demanding too much.
- We expect *you students* to behave like adults.

Among the possessive pronoun forms, there is also what is called the nominative possessive: mine, yours, ours, theirs.

- Look at those cars. *Theirs* is really ugly; *ours* is beautiful.
- This new car is *mine*.
- *Mine* is newer than *yours*.

Demonstrative Pronouns

The family of demonstratives (this/that/these/those/such) can behave either as pronouns or as “determiner”.

As pronouns, they identify or point to nouns.

- That is incredible! (referring to something you just saw)
- I will never forget this. (referring to a recent experience)
- Such is my belief. (referring to an explanation just made)

As determiners, the demonstratives adjectivally modify a noun that follows. A sense of relative distance (in time and space) can be conveyed through the choice of these pronouns/determiners:

- These [pancakes sitting here now on my plate] are delicious.
- Those [pancakes that I had yesterday morning] were even better.
- This [book in my hand] is well written;
- That [book that I'm pointing to, over there, on the table] is trash.

A sense of emotional distance or even disdain can be conveyed with the demonstrative pronouns:

- You're going to wear *these*?

Pronouns used in this way would receive special stress in a spoken sentence.

When used as subjects, the demonstratives, in either singular or plural form, can be used to refer to objects as well as persons.

- *This* is my father.
- *That* is my book.

In other roles, however, the reference of demonstratives is non-personal. In other words, when referring to students, say, we could write "Those were loitering near the entrance during the fire drill" (as long as it is perfectly clear in context what "those" refers to). But we would not write "The principal suspended those for two days"; instead, we would have to use "those" as a determiner and write "The principal suspended *those students* for two days."

Relative Pronouns

The relative pronouns (who/whoever/which/that) relate groups of words to nouns or other pronouns (The student who studies hardest usually does the best.). The word who connects or relates the subject, student, to the verb within the dependent clause (studies). Choosing correctly between which and that and between who and whom leads to what are probably the most Frequently Asked Questions about English grammar. Generally, we use "which" to introduce clauses that are parenthetical in nature (i.e., that can be removed from the sentence without changing the essential meaning of the sentence). For that reason, a "which clause" is often set off with a comma or a pair of commas. "That clauses," on the other hand, are usually deemed indispensable for the meaning of a sentence and are not set off with commas. The pronoun which refers to things; who (and its forms) refers to people; that usually refers to things, but it can also refer to people in a general kind of way.

The expanded form of the relative pronouns — whoever, whomever, whatever — are known as indefinite relative pronouns. A couple of sample sentences should suffice to demonstrate why they are called "indefinite":

- The coach will select *whomever* he pleases.
- He seemed to say *whatever* came to mind.
- *Whoever* crosses this line first will win the race.

What is often an indefinite relative pronoun:

- She will tell you *what* you need to know.

Indefinite Pronouns

The indefinite pronouns[9] do not substitute for specific nouns but function themselves as nouns (Everyone is wondering if any is left.)

One of the chief difficulties we have with the indefinite pronouns lies in the fact that "everybody" feels as though it refers to more than one person, but it takes a singular verb. (Everybody *is* accounted for.) If you think of this word as meaning "every single body," the confusion usually disappears. The indefinite pronoun “none” can be either singular or

[9] everybody/anybody/somebody/all/each/every/some/none/one

plural, depending on its context. “None” is nearly always plural (meaning "not any") except when something else in the sentence makes us regard it as a singular (meaning "not one"), as in "None of the food is fresh." “Some” can be singular or plural depending on whether it refers to something countable or noncountable. Refer to the section on “Pronoun Consistency” for help on determining the number of the indefinite pronouns (and the number [singular/plural] of the verbs that accompany them). There is a separate section on the uses of the pronoun “one”.

There are other indefinite pronouns, words that double as “determiners”:

> enough, few, fewer, less, little, many, much, several, more, most, all, both, every, each, any, either, neither, none, some

- Few will be chosen; fewer will finish.
- Little is expected.[10]

Intensive Pronouns

The intensive pronouns (such as myself, yourself, herself, ourselves, themselves) consist of a personal pronoun plus “self” or “selves” and emphasize a noun. (I myself don't know the answer.) It is possible—but rather unusual—for an intensive pronoun to precede the noun it refers to. (Myself, I don't believe a word he says.)

Reflexive Pronouns

The reflexive pronouns (which have the same forms as the intensive pronouns) indicate that the sentence subject also receives the action of the verb. (Students who cheat on this quiz are only hurting *themselves*. You paid *yourself* a million dollars? She encouraged *herself* to do well.) What this means is that whenever there is a reflexive pronoun in a sentence there must be a person to whom that pronoun can "reflect." In other words, the sentence "Please hand that book to myself" would be incorrect because there is no "I" in that sentence for the "myself" to reflect to (and we would use "me" instead of "myself"). A sentence such as "I gave that book to myself for Christmas" might be silly, but it would be correct.[11]

When pronouns are combined, the reflexive will take either the first person:

- John, Carlos, and I have deceived *ourselves* into believing in my uncle.

Or, when there is no first person, the second person:

- You and Carlos have deceived *yourselves*.

The indefinite pronoun (see above) one has its own reflexive form ("One must have faith in *oneself*."), but the other indefinite pronouns use either himself or themselves as

[10] See the section on “Pronoun Consistency” for help in determining the number (singular/plural) characteristics of these pronouns.

[11] Be alert to a tendency to use reflexive and intensive forms (ending in -self) where they are neither appropriate nor necessary:

1. Bob and ~~myself~~ I are responsible for this decision. 2. These decisions will be made by ~~myself~~ me.

reflexives. It is probably better to pluralize and avoid the clumsy *himself* or *herself* construction.

- No one here can blame himself or herself.
- The people here cannot blame themselves.

Interrogative Pronouns

The interrogative pronouns (who/which/what) introduce questions. (What is that? Who will help me? Which do you prefer?) Which is generally used with more specific reference than what. If we're taking a quiz and I ask, "*Which* questions give you the most trouble?", I am referring to specific questions on that quiz. If I ask, "*What* questions give you most trouble"? I could be asking what *kind of* questions on that quiz (or what kind of question, generically, in general) gives you trouble. The interrogative pronouns also act as determiners: It doesn't matter *which beer* you buy. He doesn't know *whose car* he hit. In this determiner role, they are sometimes called interrogative adjectives.
Like the “relative pronouns”, the interrogative pronouns introduce “noun clauses”, and like the relative pronouns, the interrogative pronouns play a subject role in the clauses they introduce:

- We know *who is guilty of this crime.*
- I already told the detective *what I know about it.*

Reciprocal Pronouns

The reciprocal pronouns are each other and one another. They are convenient forms for combining ideas. If Bob gave Alicia a book for Christmas and Alicia gave Bob a book for Christmas, we can say that they gave *each other* books (or that they gave books to each other).

- My mother and I give *each other* a hard time.

If more than two people are involved (let's say a whole book club), we would say that they gave *one another* books. This rule (if it is one) should be applied circumspectly. It's quite possible for the exchange of books within this book club, for example, to be between individuals, making "each other" just as appropriate as "one another."
Reciprocal pronouns can also take possessive forms:

- They borrowed *each other's* ideas.
- The scientists in this lab often use *one another's* equipment.

Pronoun Further Elaborated

Using Pronouns Clearly

Because a pronoun “refers back” to a noun or “takes the place of” that noun, you have to use the correct pronoun so that your reader clearly understands which noun your pronoun is referring to.

Therefore, pronouns should:

1. Agree in NUMBER

If the pronoun takes the place of a singular noun, you have to use a singular pronoun:
If a student parks a car on campus, *he* or *she* has to buy a parking sticker.
Remember that the words everybody, anybody, anyone, each, neither, nobody, someone, a person, etc. are singular and take singular pronouns.
Everybody ought to do *his* or *her* best. (Not: their best)
Neither of the girls brought *her* umbrella. (Not: their umbrellas)

It should be noted that many people find the construction "his or her" wordy, so if it is possible to use a plural noun as your antecedent so that you can use "they" as your pronoun, it may be wise to do so. If you do use a singular noun and the context makes the gender clear, then it is permissible to use just "his" or "her" rather than "his or her."

2. Agree in PERSON

If you are writing in the "first person" (I), don't confuse your reader by switching to the "second person" (you) or "third person" (he, she, they, it, etc.). Similarly, if you are using the "second person," don't switch to "first" or "third."
When a person comes to class, he or she should have his or her homework ready.
(Not: When a person comes to class, you should have your homework ready.)

3. Refer Clearly to a Specific Noun

Don't be vague or ambiguous.
Don’t say: Although the motorcycle hit the tree, it was not damaged. (Is "it" the motorcycle or the tree?)
Don’t say: I don't think they should show violence on TV. (Who are "they"?)
Don’t say: Vacation is coming soon, which is nice. (What is nice, the vacation or the fact that it is coming soon?)
Don’t say: George worked in a national forest last summer. This may be his life's work. (What word does "this" refer to?)
Don’t say: If you put this sheet in your notebook, you can refer to it. (What does "it" refer to, the sheet or your notebook?)

Pronoun Case

Pronoun Case is really a very simple matter. There are three cases.
1. Subjective case: pronouns used as subject.
2. Objective case: pronouns used as objects of verbs or prepositions.
3. Possessive case: pronouns which express ownership.

Pronouns as Subjects	Pronouns as Objects	Pronouns that Show Possession
I	Me	My (Mine)
You	You	Your (Yours)

He, She, It	Him, Her, It	His, Her, (Hers), It (Its)
We	Us	Our (Ours)
They	Them	Their (Theirs)
Who	Whom	Whose

The pronouns “this, that, these, those, and which” do not change form.

Some Problems of Case

1. In compound structures, where there are two pronouns or a noun and a pronoun, drop the other noun for a moment. Then you can see which case you want.

Not: Bob and me travel a good deal.
(Would you say, "me travel"?)
Not: He gave the flowers to Jane and I.
(Would you say, "he gave the flowers to I"?)
Not: Us men like the coach.
(Would you say, "us like the coach"?)

2. In comparisons, the comparisons usually follow than or as:

He is taller than I (am tall).
This helps you as much as (it helps) me.
She is as noisy as I (am).

Comparisons are really shorthand sentences, which usually omit words, such as those in the parentheses in the sentences above. If you complete the comparison in your head, you can choose the correct case for the pronoun.

Not: He is taller than me.
(Would you say, "than me am tall"?)

3. In formal and semiformal writing:

Use the subjective form after a form of the verb to be.
Formal: It is I.
Informal: It is me.
Use whom in the objective case.
Formal: To whom am I talking?
Informal: Who am I talking to?

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

Let us again see the function of pronoun:

Pronoun

A pronoun is a substitute for a noun. It refers to a person, place, thing, feeling, or quality but does not refer to it by its name. The pronoun in the following sample sentence is bolded.

The critique of Plato's Republic was written from a contemporary point of view. It was an in-depth analysis of Plato's opinions about possible governmental forms.

Antecedent

An antecedent is the word, phrase, or clause to which a pronoun refers, understood by the context. The antecedent in the following sample sentence is bolded.

The critique of Plato's Republic was written from a contemporary point of view. It was an in-depth analysis of Plato's opinions about possible governmental forms.

While the pronouns I and you can be replaced by nouns, the context of a sentence does not always require the nouns to make clear to which persons I and you refer. However, the third person pronouns (he, she, it, they) almost always derive their meaning from their antecedents or the words for which they stand. Remember that pronouns in the third person communicate nothing unless the reader knows what they mean:

It is the best source available. What source is that?

Agreement

A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in three ways:

- *Person* refers to the quality of being.
- *Numbers* is the quality that distinguishes between singular (one entity) and plural (numerous entities).
- *Gender* is the quality that distinguishes the entities as masculine or feminine.

Grammar Conflicts

The following are some incorrect sentences. Explanations of the conflicts that some sentences may present in person, number, and gender and some possible solutions to the errors are given.

Person

Incorrect Sentence

“If a person wants to succeed in corporate life, you have to know the rules of the game.”

Explanation

Antecedent	a person (third person)
Pronoun	you (second person)
Conclusion	no person agreement

Solution

Although the antecedent and the pronoun agree in number, they do not agree in person. This problem can be remedied in two ways.

Solution	Example
Change the second person singular, you, to a third person singular pronoun.	If a person wants to succeed in corporate life, he or she has to know the rules of the game.
Change the third person singular antecedent, a person, to a second person singular antecedent.	If you want to succeed in corporate life, you have to know the rules of the game.

Number

Incorrect Sentence

"If anybody wants to succeed in corporate life, they have to know the rules of the game."

Explanation

Antecedent	anybody (third person singular)
Pronoun	they (third person plural)
Conclusion	no number agreement

Solution

Although the antecedent and pronoun agree in person, they do not agree in number. This problem can be remedied in two ways.

Solution	Example
Make the antecedent plural.	If people want to succeed in corporate life, they have to know the rules of the game.
Make the pronoun singular.	If anybody wants to succeed in corporate life, he or she has to know the rules of the game.

Gender

Incorrect Sentence

"If a person wants to succeed in corporate life, he has to know the rules of the game."

Explanation

Antecedent	a person (third person neutral singular)
Pronoun	he (third person masculine singular)
Conclusion	no gender agreement

Solution

Even though there is person and number agreement between the antecedent, a person, and the pronoun, he, there is no gender agreement; in other words, the language appears to favor one sex over the other. This problem can be remedied in two ways.

Solution	Example
Replace the pronoun he with he or she.	If a person wants to succeed in corporate life, he or she has to know the rules of the game.
Make the entire sentence plural.	If people want to succeed in corporate life, they have to know the rules of the game.

6. CONJUNCTION

Definition

Some words are satisfied spending an evening at home, alone, eating ice-cream right out of the box, watching Geo News on TV, or reading a good book. Others aren't happy unless they're out on the town, mixing it up with other words; they're joiners and they just can't help themselves. “A conjunction is a joiner; a word that connects (conjoins) parts of a sentence.”

What are Conjunctions?
Conjunctions are words that "join". Conjunctions join two parts of a sentence.
1. Form
Conjunctions have three basic forms:
• Single Word for example: and, but, because, although)
• Compound (often ending with ‘as’ or ‘that’) (for example: provided that, as long as, in order that)
• Correlative (which surround an adverb or adjective) (for example: so...that, such…as)
2. Function (Job)
Conjunctions are divided into two basic types.
• Coordinating Conjunctions are used to join two parts of a sentence that are grammatically equal. The two parts may be single words or clauses, for example: - Jack and Jill went up the hill. - The water was warm but I didn't go swimming.
• Subordinating Conjunctions are used to join a subordinate dependent clause to a main clause, for example: - I went swimming, although it was cold.
3. Position

Coordinating Conjunctions always come between the words or clauses that they join.
Subordinating Conjunctions usually come at the beginning of the subordinate clause.

Coordinating Conjunctions

The simple, little conjunctions are called coordinating.

Coordinating Conjunctions

And	But	Or	Yet	For	Nor	So

Dr. Tips

It may help you remember these conjunctions by recalling that they all have fewer than four letters. Also, remember the acronym FANBOYS: For-And-Nor-But-Or-Yet-So. Be careful of the words then and now; neither is a coordinating conjunction, so what we say about coordinating conjunctions' roles in a sentence and punctuation does not apply to those two words.

When a coordinating conjunction connects two *independent clauses*, it is often (but not always) accompanied by a comma:

- James wants to play for UConn, *but* he has had trouble meeting the academic requirements.

When the two independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction are nicely balanced or brief, many writers will omit the comma:

- James has a great jump shot *but* he isn't quick on his feet.

The comma is always correct when used to separate two independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction.

A comma is also correct when 'and' is used to attach the last item of a serial list, although many writers (especially in newspapers) will omit that final comma:

- Zaheer spent his summer studying basic math, writing, *and* reading comprehension.

When a coordinating conjunction is used to connect all the elements in a series, a comma is not used:

- Presbyterians *and* Methodists *and* Baptists are the prevalent Protestant congregations in Oklahoma.

A comma is also used with but when expressing a contrast:

- This is a useful rule, *but* difficult to remember.

In most of their other roles as joiners (other than joining independent clauses, that is), coordinating conjunctions can join two sentence elements without the help of a comma.

- Hemingway *and* Fitzgerald are among the American expatriates of the between-the-wars era.
- Hemingway was renowned for his clear style *and* his insights into American notions of male identity.

- It is hard to say whether Hemingway *or* Fitzgerald is the more interesting cultural icon of his day.
- Although Hemingway is sometimes disparaged for his unpleasant portrayal of women *and* for his glorification of machismo, we nonetheless find some sympathetic, even heroic, female figures in his novels *and* short stories.

Beginning a Sentence with And, Or, and But

A frequently asked question about conjunctions is whether and or but can be used at the beginning of a sentence. This is what R.W. Burchfield has to say about this use of and:

> There is a persistent belief that it is improper to begin a sentence with “And”, but this prohibition has been cheerfully ignored by standard authors from Anglo-Saxon times onwards. An initial “And” is a useful aid to writers as the narrative continues.

The same is true with the conjunction but. A sentence beginning with ‘and’ or ‘but’ will tend to draw attention to itself and its transitional function. Writers should examine such sentences with two questions in mind: (1) would the sentence and paragraph function just as well without the initial conjunction? (2) should the sentence in question be connected to the previous sentence? If the initial conjunction still seems appropriate, use it.

Among the coordinating conjunctions, the most common, of course, are and, but, and or. It might be helpful to explore the uses of these three little words. The examples below by no means exhaust the possible meanings of these conjunctions.

AND

a. To suggest that one idea is chronologically sequential to another: "Tahira sent in her applications *and* waited by the phone for a response."

b. To suggest that one idea is the result of another: "Wesley heard the weather report *and* promptly boarded up his house."

c. To suggest that one idea is in contrast to another (frequently replaced by but in this usage): "Juanita is brilliant *and* Shalimar has a pleasant personality.

d. To suggest an element of surprise (sometimes replaced by yet in this usage): "Hartford is a rich city *and* suffers from many symptoms of urban blight."

To suggest that one clause is dependent upon another, conditionally (usually the first clause is an imperative): "Use your credit cards frequently *and* you'll soon find yourself deep in debt."

e. To suggest a kind of "comment" on the first clause: "Charlie became addicted to gambling—*and* that surprised no one who knew him."

BUT

a. To suggest a contrast that is unexpected in light of the first clause: "Joey lost a fortune in the stock market, *but* he still seems able to live quite comfortably."

b. To suggest in an affirmative sense what the first part of the sentence implied in a negative way (sometimes replaced by on the contrary): "The club never invested foolishly, *but* used the services of a sage investment counselor."

c. To connect two ideas with the meaning of "with the exception of" (and then the second word takes over as subject): "Everybody *but* Goldenbreath is trying out for the team."

OR

a. To suggest that only one possibility can be realized, excluding one or the other: "You can study hard for this exam *or* you can fail."

b. To suggest the inclusive combination of alternatives: "We can broil chicken on the grill tonight, *or* we can just eat leftovers.

c. To suggest a refinement of the first clause: "Smith College is the premier all-women's college in the country, *or* so it seems to most Smith College alumnae."

d. To suggest a restatement or "correction" of the first part of the sentence: "There are no rattlesnakes in this canyon, *or* so our guide tells us."

e. To suggest a negative condition: "The New Hampshire state motto is the rather grim "Live free *or* die."

f. To suggest a negative alternative without the use of an imperative: "They must approve his political style *or* they wouldn't keep electing him mayor."[12]

The Others . . .

The conjunction NOR is not extinct, but it is not used nearly as often as the other conjunctions, so it might feel a bit odd when nor does come up in conversation or writing. Its most common use is as the little brother in the correlative pair, neither-nor:

- He is neither sane *nor* brilliant.
- That is neither what I said *nor* what I meant.

It can be used with other negative expressions:

- That is not what I meant to say, *nor* should you interpret my statement as an admission of guilt.

It is possible to use nor without a preceding negative element, but it is unusual and, to an extent, rather stuffy:

- George's handshake is as good as any written contract, nor has he ever proven untrustworthy.

The word “Yet” functions sometimes as an adverb and has several meanings: in addition ("yet another cause of trouble" or "a simple yet noble woman"), even ("yet more expensive"), still ("he is yet a novice"), eventually ("they may yet win"), and so soon as now ("he's not here yet"). It also functions as a coordinating conjunction meaning

[12] Authoritative work consulted for this section on the uses: A University Grammar of English by Randolph Quirk and Sidney Greenbaum. Longman Group: Essex England. 1993

something like "nevertheless" or "but." The word yet seems to carry an element of distinctiveness that but can seldom register.

- John plays basketball well, *yet* his favorite sport is badminton.
- The visitors complained loudly about the heat, *yet* they continued to play golf every day.

In sentences such as the second one, above, the pronoun subject of the second clause ("they," in this case) is often left out. When that happens, the comma preceding the conjunction might also disappear: "The visitors complained loudly yet continued to play golf every day."

Yet is sometimes combined with other conjunctions, but or and. It would not be unusual to see *and yet* in sentences like the ones above. This usage is acceptable.

The word “For” is most often used as a preposition, of course, but it does serve, on rare occasions, as a coordinating conjunction. Some people regard the conjunction *for* as rather highfalutin and literary, and it does tend to add a bit of weightiness to the text. Beginning a sentence with the conjunction "for" is probably not a good idea, except when you're singing "For he's a jolly good fellow."For" has serious sequential implications and in its use the order of thoughts is more important than it is, say, with because or since. Its function is to introduce the reason for the preceding clause:

- John thought he had a good chance to get the job, *for* his father was on the company's board of trustees.
- Most of the visitors were happy just sitting around in the shade, *for* it had been a long, dusty journey on the train.

Be careful of the conjunction “So”. Sometimes it can connect two independent clauses along with a comma, but sometimes it can't. For instance, in this sentence,

- Soto is not the only Olympic athlete in his family, so are his brother, sister, and his Uncle Chet.

Where the word “so” means "as well" or "in addition"; most careful writers would use a semicolon between the two independent clauses. In the following sentence, where “so” is acting like a minor-league "therefore," the conjunction and the comma are adequate to the task:

- Soto has always been nervous in large gatherings, so it is no surprise that he avoids crowds of his adoring fans.

Sometimes, at the beginning of a sentence, “so” will act as a kind of summing up device or transition, and when it does, it is often set off from the rest of the sentence with a comma:

- So, the sheriff peremptorily removed the child from the custody of his parents.

The Case of Then and Than

In some parts of the United States, we are told, “then and than” not only look alike, they sound alike. Like a teacher with twins in his classroom, you need to be able to distinguish

between these two words; otherwise, they'll become mischievous and confounding. They are often used and they should be used for the right purposes.

“Than” is used to make comparisons. In the sentence "Asif would rather be rescued *then* stay on the island," we have employed the wrong word because a comparison is being made between Asif's two choices; we need *than* instead. In the sentence, "Other *than* Pincher Martin, Golding did not write another popular novel," the adverbial construction "other than" helps us make an implied comparison; this usage is perfectly acceptable in the United States but careful writers in the UK try to avoid it.

Generally, the only question about “than” arises when we have to decide whether the word is being used as a conjunction or as a preposition. If it's a preposition (and Merriam-Webster's dictionary provides for this usage), then the word that follows it should be in the object form.

- He's taller and somewhat more handsome *than me*.
- Just because you look like him doesn't mean you can play better *than him*.

Most careful writers, however, will insist that than be used as a conjunction; it's as if part of the clause introduced by “than” has been left out:

- He's taller and somewhat more handsome *than I* [am handsome].
- You can play better *than he* [can play].

In formal, academic text, you should probably use “than” as a conjunction and follow it with the subject form of a pronoun (where a pronoun is appropriate).

“Then” is a conjunction, but it is not one of the little conjunctions discussed in the previous pages. We can use these conjunctions to connect two independent clauses; usually, they will be accompanied (preceded) by a comma. Too many students think that “then” works the same way: "Caesar invaded Gaul, *then* he turned his attention to England." You can tell the difference between “then” and a coordinating conjunction by trying to move the word around in the sentence. We can write "he *then* turned his attention to England"; "he turned his attention, *then*, to England"; “he turned his attention to England *then*." The word can move around within the clause. Try that with a conjunction, and you will quickly see that the conjunction cannot move around. "Caesar invaded Gaul, *and* then he turned his attention to England." The word “and” is stuck exactly there and cannot move like “then”, which is more like an adverbial conjunction (or conjunctive adverb) than a coordinating conjunction. Our original sentence in this paragraph — "Caesar invaded Gaul, then he turned his attention to England" — is a “comma splice”, a faulty sentence construction in which a comma tries to hold together two independent clauses all by itself: the comma needs a coordinating conjunction to help out, and the word “then” simply doesn't work that way.

Subordinating Conjunctions

A Subordinating Conjunction (sometimes called a “dependent word” or “subordinator”) comes at the beginning of a “subordinate or dependent clause” and establishes the

relationship between the dependent clause and the rest of the sentence. It also turns the clause into something that depends on the rest of the sentence for its meaning.

- He took to the stage *as though* he had been preparing for this moment all his life.
- *Because* he loved acting, he refused to give up his dream of being in the movies.
- *Unless* we act now, all is lost.

Notice that some of the subordinating conjunctions in the table below—after, before, since—are also prepositions, but as subordinators they are being used to introduce a clause and to subordinate the following clause to the independent element in the sentence.

Dr. Tips

A subordinate or dependent clause "depends" on a main or independent clause. It cannot exist alone. Imagine that somebody says to you: "Hello! Although it was raining." What do you understand? Nothing! But a main or independent clause can exist alone. You will understand very well if somebody says to you: "Hello! Zaheer went swimming."

Common Subordinating Conjunctions		
after	if	though
although	if only	till
as	in order that	unless
as if	now that	until
as long as	once	when
as though	rather than	whenever
because	since	where
before	so that	whereas
even if	than	wherever
even though	that	while

The Case of *Like* and *As*

Strictly speaking, the word like is a preposition, not a conjunction. It can, therefore, be used to introduce a prepositional phrase ("My brother is tall *like my father*"), but it should not be used to introduce a clause ("My brother can't play the piano ~~like~~ *as he did before the accident*" or "It looks ~~like~~ *as if* basketball is quickly overtaking baseball as America's national sport."). To introduce a clause, it's a good idea to use as, as though, or as if, instead.

*0~~Like~~ *As* I told you earlier, the lecture has been postponed.

*1It looks ~~like~~ *as if* it's going to snow this afternoon.

*2Zaheer kept looking out the window ~~like~~ *as though* he had someone waiting for him.

In formal, academic text, it's a good idea to reserve the use of like for situations in which similarities are being pointed out:

*3The National College of Arts is *like* a two-year liberal arts college.

However, when you are listing things that have similarities, such as is probably more

suitable:
The college has several highly regarded neighbors, ~~like~~ *such as* the Lahore Museum, Punjab University, Punjab Public Library, and the famous Anarkali Food Street.

Omitting *That*

The word “that” is used as a conjunction to connect a subordinate clause to a preceding verb. In this construction that is sometimes called the "expletive that." Indeed, the word is often omitted to good effect, but the very fact of easy omission causes some editors to take out the red pen and strike out the conjunction that wherever it appears. In the following sentences, we can happily omit the that (or keep it, depending on how the sentence sounds to us):

*0Isabel knew [that] she was about to be fired.

*1She definitely felt [that] her fellow employees hadn't supported her.

*2I hope [that] she doesn't blame me.

Sometimes omitting the that creates a break in the flow of a sentence, a break that can be adequately bridged with the use of a comma:

*3The problem is, ~~that~~ production in her department has dropped.

*4Remember, ~~that~~ we didn't have these problems before she started working here.

As a general rule, if the sentence feels just as good without the “that”, if no ambiguity results from its omission, if the sentence is more efficient or elegant without it, then we can safely omit the “that”. Theodore Bernstein lists *three conditions* in which we should maintain the conjunction that:

*5When a time element intervenes between the verb and the clause: "The boss said yesterday *that* production in this department was down fifty percent." (Notice the position of "yesterday.")

*6When the verb of the clause is long delayed: "Our annual report revealed *that* some losses sustained by this department in the third quarter of last year were worse than previously thought." (Notice the distance between the subject "losses" and its verb, "were.")

*7When a second that can clear up who said or did what: "The CEO said that Isabel's department was slacking off and *that* production dropped precipitously in the fourth quarter." (Did the CEO say that production dropped or was the drop a result of what he said about Isabel's department? The second that makes the sentence clear.)[13]

Beginning a Sentence with *Because*

Somehow, the notion that one should not begin a sentence with the subordinating conjunction “because” retains a mysterious grip on people's sense of writing proprieties. This might come about because a sentence that begins with “because” could well end up a fragment if one is not careful to follow up the "because clause" with an independent

[13] For an authoritative study on this section, see, Dos, Don'ts & Maybes of English Usage by Theodore Bernstein. Gramercy Books: New York. 1999. p. 217

clause.

*0*Because* e-mail now plays such a huge role in our communications industry.

When the "because clause" is properly subordinated to another idea (regardless of the position of the clause in the sentence), there is absolutely nothing wrong with it:

Because e-mail now plays such a huge role in our communications industry, the postal service would very much like to see it taxed in some manner.

Correlative Conjunctions

Some conjunctions combine with other words to form what are called “correlative conjunctions”. They always travel in pairs, joining various sentence elements that should be treated as grammatically equal.

*1She led the team *not only* in statistics *but also* by virtue of her enthusiasm.

*2Polonius said, "*Neither* a borrower *nor* a lender be."

*3*Whether* you win this race *or* lose it doesn't matter as long as you do your best.

Correlative conjunctions sometimes create problems in parallel form. Here is a brief list of common correlative conjunctions.

both . . . and	neither . . . nor
not only . . . but also	whether . . . or
not . . . but	as . . . as
either . . . or	

Conjunctive Adverbs

The conjunctive adverbs such as “however, moreover, nevertheless, consequently”, as a result are used to create complex relationships between ideas. Refer to the section on Coherence: Transitions between Ideas for an extensive list of conjunctive adverbs categorized according to their various uses and for some advice on their application within sentences (including punctuation issues).

Rules of “Comma” Using

Use a comma to separate the elements in a series (three or more things), including the last two. "He hit the ball, dropped the bat, and ran to first base." You may have learned that the comma before the "and" is unnecessary, which is fine if you're in control of things. However, there are situations in which, if you don't use this comma (especially when the list is complex or lengthy), these last two items in the list will try to glom together (like macaroni and cheese). Using a comma between all the items in a series, including the last two, avoids this problem. This last comma—the one between the word "and" and the preceding word—is often called the serial comma or the Oxford comma. In newspaper writing, incidentally, you will seldom find a serial comma, but that is not necessarily a sign that it should be omitted in academic prose.

Use a comma + a little conjunction (and, but, for, nor, yet, or, so) to connect two independent clauses, as in "He hit the ball well, but he was caught near the boundary."

Contending that the coordinating conjunction is adequate separation, some writers will leave out the comma in a sentence with short, balanced independent clauses (such as we see in the example just given). If there is ever any doubt, however, use the comma, as it is always correct in this situation.

One of the most frequent errors in comma usage is the placement of a comma after a coordinating conjunction. We cannot say that the comma will always come before the conjunction and never after, but it would be a rare event, indeed, that we need to follow a coordinating conjunction with a comma. When speaking, we do sometimes pause after the little conjunction, but there is seldom a good reason to put a comma there.

Use a comma to set off introductory elements, as in "Running despite being caught, he suddenly realized how stupid he looked."
It is permissible to omit the comma after a brief introductory element if the omission does not result in confusion or hesitancy in reading. If there is ever any doubt, use the comma, as it is always correct

Use a comma to set off parenthetical elements, as in "The Founders Bridge, which spans the Connecticut River, is falling down." By "parenthetical element," we mean a part of a sentence that can be removed without changing the essential meaning of that sentence. The parenthetical element is sometimes called "added information." This is the most difficult rule in punctuation because it is sometimes unclear what is "added" or "parenthetical" and what is essential to the meaning of a sentence.
Appositives are almost always treated as parenthetical elements.

*4Calhoun's ambition, *to become a goalie in professional soccer*, is within his reach.

*5Eleanor, *his wife of thirty years*, suddenly decided to open her own business.

Sometimes the appositive and the word it identifies are so closely related that the comma can be omitted, as in "His wife Eleanor suddenly decided to open her own business." We could argue that the name "Eleanor" is not essential to the meaning of the sentence (assuming he has only one wife), and that would suggest that we can put commas both before and after the name (and that would, indeed, be correct). But "his wife" and "Eleanor" are so close that we can regard the entire phrase as one unit and leave out the commas. With the phrase turned around, however, we have a more definite parenthetical element and the commas are necessary: "Eleanor, his wife, suddenly decided to open her own business." Consider, also, the difference between "College President Ira Rubenzahl voted to rescind the withdrawal policy" (in which we need the name "Ira Rubenzahl" or the sentence doesn't make sense) and "Ira Rubenzahl, the college president, voted to rescind the withdrawal policy" (in which the sentence makes sense without his title, the appositive, and we treat the appositive as a parenthetical element, with a pair of commas).

As pointed out above, an adverbial clause that begins a sentence is set off with a comma:

*0Although Zaheer had spent several years in Karachi, he still bundled up warmly in

the brisk autumns of Punjab.

*1Because Tahira had learned to study by herself, she was able to pass the entrance exam.

When an adverbial clause comes later on in the sentence, however, the writer must determine if the clause is essential to the meaning of the sentence or not. A "because clause" can be particularly troublesome in this regard. In most sentences, a "because clause" is essential to the meaning of the sentence, and it will not be set off with a comma:

*2The Gondals had to leave their farms in the Gondal Bar because the drought conditions had ruined their farms.

Sometimes, though, the "because clause" must be set off with a comma to avoid misreading:

*3I knew that President Musharraf would resign that morning, because my sister-in-law worked in the Presidency and she called me with the news.

Without that comma, the sentence says that Musharraf's resignation was the fault of my sister-in-law. Musharraf did not resign *because* my sister-in-law worked in the Presidency, so we set off that clause to make the meaning clearly parenthetical.

When a parenthetical element—an interjection, adverbial modifier, or even an adverbial clause—follows a coordinating conjunction used to connect two independent clauses, we do not put a comma in front of the parenthetical element.

*4The Red Sox were leading the league at the end of May, but of course, they always do well in the spring. [no comma after "but"]

*5The Yankees didn't do so well in the early going, but frankly, everyone expects them to win the season. [no comma after "but"]

*6The Tigers spent much of the season at the bottom of the league, and even though they picked up several promising rookies, they expect to be there again next year. [no comma after "and"]

When both a city's name and that city's state or country's name are mentioned together, the state or country's name is treated as a parenthetical element.

*7We visited Hartford, Connecticut, last summer.

*8Paris, France, is sometimes called "The City of Lights."

When the state becomes a possessive form, this rule is no longer followed:

*9Hartford, Connecticut's investment in the insurance industry is well known.

Also, when the state or country's name becomes part of a compound structure, the second comma is dropped:

*10Heublein, a Hartford, Connecticut-based company, is moving to another state.

An "absolute phrase" is always treated as a parenthetical element, as is an interjection. An addressed person's name is also always parenthetical. Be sure, however, that the name is that of someone actually being spoken to.

*11*Their years of training now forgotten*, the soldiers broke ranks.

*12*Yes*, it is always a matter, *of course*, of preparation and attitude.

*13I'm telling you, *Juanita*, I couldn't be more surprised. (I told Juanita I couldn't be more surprised. [no commas])

Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives. You could think of this as "That tall, distinguished, good looking fellow" rule (as opposed to "the little old lady"). If you can put an “and” or a “but” between the adjectives, a comma will probably belong there. For instance, you could say, "He is a tall and distinguished fellow" or "I live in a very old and run-down house." So you would write, "He is a tall, distinguished man" and "I live in a very old, run-down house." But you would probably not say, "She is a little and old lady," or "I live in a little and purple house," so commas would not appear between little and old or between little and purple.

Use a comma to set off quoted elements. Because we don't use quoted material all the time, even when writing, this is probably the most difficult rule to remember in comma usage. It is a good idea to find a page from an article that uses several quotations, photocopy that page, and keep it in front of you as a model when you're writing. Generally, use a comma to separate quoted material from the rest of the sentence that explains or introduces the quotation:

*14Summing up this argument, Peter Coveney writes, "The purpose and strength of the romantic image of the child had been above all to establish a relation between childhood and adult consciousness."

If an attribution of a quoted element comes in the middle of the quotation, two commas will be required. But be careful not to create a comma splice in so doing.

*15"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many things."

*16"I should like to buy an egg, please," she said timidly. "How do you sell them?"

Be careful not to use commas to set off quoted elements introduced by the word that or quoted elements that are embedded in a larger structure:

*17Peter Coveney writes that "[t]he purpose and strength of..."

*18We often say "Sorry" when we don't really mean it.

And, instead of a comma, use a colon to set off explanatory or introductory language from a quoted element that is either very formal or long (especially if it's longer than one sentence):

*19Peter Coveney had this to say about the nineteenth-century's use of children in fiction: "The purpose and strength of... "

Use commas to set off phrases that express contrast.

*20Some say the world will end in ice, not fire.

*21It was her money, not her charm or personality, that first attracted him.

*22The puppies were cute, but very messy.

Some writers will leave out the comma that sets off a contrasting phrase beginning with "but".

Use a comma to avoid confusion. This is often a matter of consistently applying the rule to balance a sentence.

*23For most the year is already finished.

*24For most, the year is already finished.

*25Outside the lawn was cluttered with hundreds of broken branches.

*26Outside, the lawn was cluttered with hundreds of broken branches.

"I have spent most of the day putting in a comma and the rest of the day taking it out." (Oscar Wilde)

English's Famous Rule of Punctuation: Never use only one comma between a subject and its verb. "Believing completely and positively in oneself is essential for success." [Although readers might pause after the word "oneself," there is no reason to put a comma there.]

Typographical Reasons: Between a city and a state/province [Lahore, Punjab or Hartford, Connecticut], a date and the year [June 15, 1997], a name and a title when the title comes after the name [Zaheer Ahmad, Professor of English], in long numbers [5,456,783 and $14,682], etc. Although you will often see a comma between a name and suffix—Bob Downey, Jr., Richard Harrison, III—this comma is no longer regarded as necessary by most copy editors, and some individuals—such as Martin Luther King Jr.—never used a comma there at all.

Note that we use a comma or a set of commas to make the year parenthetical when the date of the month is included:

*27July 4, 1776, is regarded as the birth date of American liberty.

Without the date itself, however, the comma disappears:

*28July 1776 was one of the most eventful months in our history.

In international or military format, no commas are used:

*29The Declaration of Independence was signed on 4 July 1776.

Use Commas with Caution

As you can see, there are many reasons for using commas, and we haven't listed them all. Yet the biggest problem that most students have with commas is their overuse. Some essays look as though the student loaded a shotgun with commas and blasted away. Remember, too, that a pause in reading is not always a reliable reason to use a comma. Try not to use a comma unless you can apply a specific rule from this page to do so.

Concentrating on the proper use of commas is not mere form for form's sake. Indeed, it causes writers to review their understanding of structure and to consider carefully how their sentences are crafted.

Try this experiment:
Give your instructor five rupees for each comma you use in an essay. Your

instructor will return five rupees for each comma used correctly. You should come out even. This technique for cutting down on unwanted commas has been heartily endorsed by every English instructor who has tried it.

7. PREPOSITION

A preposition is a word governing, and usually coming in front of, a noun or pronoun and expressing a relation to another word or element, as in:

*0She left before breakfast

What did you come for?

English Preposition Rule

There is one very simple rule about prepositions. And, unlike most rules, this rule has no exceptions. The rule is:

A preposition is followed by a "noun". It is never followed by a verb.

By "noun" we include:

*0noun (dog, money, love)

*1proper noun (name) (Bangkok, Mary)

*2pronoun (you, him, us)

*3noun group (my first job)

*4gerund (swimming)

A preposition cannot be followed by a verb. If we want to follow a preposition by a verb, we must use the "-ing" form, which is really a gerund or verb in noun form.

Here are some examples:

Subject + verb	preposition	"noun"
The food is	on	the table.
She lives	in	Japan.
Tara is looking	for	you.
The letter is	under	your blue book.
Pascal is used	to	English people.
She isn't used	to	working.
I ate	before	coming.

Here comes a question that, in the following sentences, why is "to" followed by a verb? That should be impossible, according to the rule:

- I would like to go now.
- She used to smoke.

In these sentences, "to" is not a preposition. It is part of the infinitive ("to go", "to smoke").

English Prepositions

There are more than 100 prepositions in English. Yet this is a very small number when you think of the thousands of other words (nouns, verbs etc). Prepositions are important words. We use individual prepositions more frequently than other individual words. In fact, the prepositions of, to and in are among the ten most frequent words in English. Here is a short list of 70 of the more common one-word prepositions. Many of these prepositions have more than one meaning. Please check the dictionary for precise meaning and usage.

A

*0aboard
*1about
*2above
*3across
*4after
*5against
*6along
*7amid
*8among
*9anti
*10around
*11as
*12at

B

*13before
*14behind
*15below
*16beneath
*17beside
*18besides
*19between
*20beyond
*21but
*22by

C

*23concerning
*24considering

D

*25despite
*26down
*27during

E

*28except
*29excepting
*30excluding

F

*31following
*32for
*33from

I

*34in
*35inside
*36into

L

*37like

M

*38minus

N

*39near

O

*40of
*41off
*42on
*43onto
*44opposite
*45outside
*46over

P

*47past
*48per
*49plus

R

*50regarding
*51round

S

*52save
*53since

T

*54than
*55through
*56to
*57toward

*58towards

U

*59under
*60underneath
*61unlike
*62until
*63up
*64upon

V

*65versus
*66via

W

*67with
*68within
*69without

Prepositions of Time, of Place, and to Introduce Objects

When talking of one single point in time, we use the following prepositions:

“On” is used with days:

*70I will see you on Monday.
*71The week begins on Sunday.

“At” is used with noon, night, midnight, and with the time of day:

*72My plane leaves at noon.
*73The movie starts at 6 p.m.

“In” is used with other parts of the day, with months, with years, with seasons:

*74He likes to read in the afternoon.
*75The days are long in August.
*76The book was published in 1999.
*77The flowers will bloom in spring.

Extended Time

To express extended time, English uses the following prepositions: since, for, by, from-to, from-until, during,(with)in

*78She has been gone since yesterday. (She left yesterday and has not returned.)
*79I'm going to Paris for two weeks. (I will spend two weeks there.)
*80The movie showed from August to October. (Beginning in August and ending in October.)
*81The decorations were up from spring until fall. (Beginning in spring and ending in fall.)
*82I watch TV during the evening. (For some period of time in the evening.)

*83We must finish the project within a year. (No longer than a year.)

Place

To express notions of place, English uses the following prepositions: to talk about the point itself: in, to express something contained: inside, to talk about the surface: on, to talk about a general vicinity, at.

*84There is a wasp in the room.

*85Put the present inside the box.

*86I left your keys on the table.

*87She was waiting at the corner.

Higher than a Point

To express notions of an object being higher than a point, English uses the following prepositions: over, above.

*88He threw the ball over the roof.

*89Hang that picture above the couch.

Lower than a Point

To express notions of an object being lower than a point, English uses the following prepositions: under, underneath, beneath, below.

*90The child hid underneath the blanket.

*91We relaxed in the shade beneath the branches.

*92The valley is below sea-level.

*93The rabbit burrowed under the ground.

Close to a Point

To express notions of an object being close to a point, English uses the following prepositions: near, by, next to, between, among, opposite. For more detail, see our handout on Prepositions of Spatial Relationship.

*94She lives near the school.

*95There is an ice cream shop by the store.

*96An oak tree grows next to my house

*97The house is between Elm Street and Maple Street.

*98I found my pen lying among the books.

*99The bathroom is opposite that room.

To Introduce Objects of Verbs

English uses the following prepositions to introduce objects of the following verbs.

At: glance, laugh, look, rejoice, smile, stare

*100She took a quick glance at her reflection.

(Exception with mirror: She took a quick glance in the mirror.)

*101You didn't laugh at his joke.
*102I'm looking at the computer monitor.
*103We rejoiced at his safe rescue.
*104That pretty girl smiled at you.
*105Stop staring at me.

Of: approve, consist, smell

*106I don't approve of his speech.
*107My contribution to the article consists of many pages.
*108He came home smelling of alcohol.

Of (or about): dream, think

*109I dream of finishing college in four years.
*110Can you think of a number between one and ten?
*111I am thinking about this problem.

For: call, hope, look, wait, watch, wish

*112Did someone call for a taxi?
*113He hopes for a raise in salary next year.
*114I'm looking for my keys.
*115We'll wait for her here.
*116You go buy the tickets and I'll watch for the train.
*117If you wish for an "A" in this class, you must work hard.

Prepositions of Location: At, In, On

Prepositions expressing spatial relations are of two kinds: prepositions of location and prepositions of direction. Both kinds may be either positive or negative. Prepositions of location appear with verbs describing states or conditions, especially be; prepositions of direction appear with verbs of motion. This handout deals with positive prepositions of location that sometimes cause difficulty: at, on, and in.

The handout is divided into two sections. The first explains the spatial relationships expressed by the three prepositions. The second examines more closely the uses of in and on.

Dimensions and Prepositions

Prepositions differ according to the number of dimensions they refer to. We can group them into three classes using concepts from geometry: point, surface, and area or volume.

Point

Prepositions in this group indicate that the noun that follows them is treated as a point in relation to which another object is positioned.

Surface

Prepositions in this group indicate that the position of an object is defined with respect to a surface on which it rests.

Area/Volume

Prepositions in this group indicate that an object lies within the boundaries of an area or within the confines of a volume.

Notice that although in geometry surface and area go together because both are two-dimensional, in grammar area and volume go together because the same prepositions are used for both.

In light of these descriptions, at, on, and in can be classified as follows:

At ..... point
On ..... surface
In ..... area/volume

The meanings of the three prepositions can be illustrated with some sample sentences:

1) My car is at the house.
2) There is a new roof on the house.
3) The house is in Tippecanoe county.
4) There are five rooms in the house, which has a lovely fireplace in the living room.

All of these sentences answer a question of the form, "Where is _____?"-but each gives different information. Before going on, explain to yourself the spatial relations shown in each sentence.

Sentence (1) locates a car in relation to a house, understood as a fixed point.(2) treats the house as a surface upon which another object, the roof, is placed. (3) locates the house within a geographical area.(4) treats the house as a three-dimensional structure that can be divided into smaller volumes, namely, rooms, inside one of which is an object, the fireplace.

Using "At"

“At” calls for further comment. Because it is the least specific of the prepositions in its spatial orientation, it has a great variety of uses. Here are some of them:

5a) Tom is waiting for his sister at the bank.	Location
5b) Sue spent the whole afternoon at the fair.	Location
6a) We arrived at the house.	Destination

6b) The waiter was at our table immediately.	Destination
7a) The policeman leaped at the assailant.	Direction
7b) The dog jumped at my face and really scared me.	Direction

In (5a), the bank can be understood as a point defining Tom's location, much as in (1) above. It makes less sense to think of a fair as a point in (5b) since fairs are usually spread out over a fairly large area. Probably at is used in this case just because it is the least specific preposition; it defines Sue's location with respect to the fair rather than some other place. In (6a), at exhibits its cause/effect relationship with to, which cannot be used here: arrival at a place is the result of going to it. For more on this relationship, see the Prepositions of Direction: To, (On)to, (In)to. (7a) and (7b) show that with certain verbs of motion at may be used with the same meaning as its directional counterpart to, that is, direction toward something.

In the remainder of the handout, we will look at special problems that arise in choosing between “in and on”.

"In" and "On"

1. Nouns denoting enclosed spaces, such as a field or a window, take both “on and in”. The prepositions have their normal meanings with these nouns: on is used when the space is considered as a surface, in when the space is presented as an area:

Three players are practicing on the field.	Surface
Three cows are grazing in the field.	Area
The frost made patterns on the window.	Surface
A face appeared in the window.	Area

Notice that “in” implies that the field is enclosed, whereas “on” implies only that the following noun denotes a surface and not necessarily an enclosed area:

The sheep are grazing in the pasture.	Enclosed by a fence
The cattle are grazing on the open range.	Not enclosed by a fence
Three players are on the basketball court.	Not enclosed
Three players are on the soccer field.	Not enclosed
Two boxers are in the ring.	Enclosed by ropes

2. When the area has metaphorical instead of actual boundaries, such as when field means ‘academic discipline’, “in” is used:

She is a leading researcher in the bioengineering field.

3. Several common uses of “in and on” occur with street. The first two follow the general pattern of in and on usage. The third is an idiom that must be learned as a unit.

a) The children are playing in the street.	
b) Our house is on Third Street.	
c) He declared bankruptcy last week, and now he's out on the street.	This is an idiom meaning that he's poor.

In (a) the street is understood as an area enclosed by the sidewalks on either side. Compare (b) with the discussion of sentence (3) in the first section. Here on locates the house on either side of Third Street: it doesn't mean that the street is a surface on which the house sits. Because the street is understood as a line next to which the house is situated, on functions much like at in its normal use: it locates the house in relation to the street but does not specify the exact address. For that purpose, at is used because the address is like a particular point on the line. Compare: "Our house is at 323 Third Street."
In c) out on the street is an idiom meaning "poor" or "destitute."
4. In and on are also used with means of transportation: in is used with a car, on with public or commercial means of transportation:

in the car
on the bus
on the plane
on the train
on the ship

Some speakers of English make a further distinction for public modes of transportation, using in when the carrier is stationary and on when it is in motion.

My wife stayed in/on the bus while I got out at the rest stop.
The passengers sat in/on the plane awaiting takeoff.

Prepositions of Direction: To, On (to), In (to)

This handout explains prepositions that express movement toward something: to, onto, and into. First, the prepositions will be introduced as a group. Then, the special uses of each one will be discussed.
To, into, and onto correspond respectively to the prepositions of location at, in, and on. Each pair can be defined by the same spatial relations of point, line/surface, or area/volume. To learn more about the spatial relationships expressed by these pairs of prepositions, read the first section of "Prepositions of Location: At, On, and In" before you start reading this handout.

1. The Basic Preposition of a Direction is "to".

TO: signifies orientation toward a goal
When the goal is physical, such as a destination, "to" implies movement in the direction of the goal.
(a) Saeed returned to his apartment.

When the goal is not a physical place, for instance, an action, "to" marks a verb; it is attached as an infinitive and expresses purpose. The preposition may occur alone or in the phrase in order.

(b) Zaheer washed his dog (in order) to rid it of fleas.

The two uses can also occur together in a single sentence:

2. The other two prepositions of direction are compounds formed by adding "to" to the corresponding prepositions of location.

The preposition of location determines the meaning of the preposition of direction.

ON + TO = onto: signifies movement toward a surface
IN + TO = into: signifies movement toward the interior of a volume

"To" is part of the directional preposition toward, and the two mean about the same thing.

3. With many verbs of motion, "on" and "in" have a directional meaning and can be used along with "onto" and "into".

(See the sections below for some exceptions to this rule.) This is why "to" is inside parentheses in the title of the handout, showing that it is somewhat optional with the compound prepositions. Thus, the following sentences are roughly synonymous:

(a) Tahir jumped in/into the pool.
(b) Paul fell on/onto the floor.
(c) The crab washed up on/onto the shore.

To the extent that these pairs do differ, the compound preposition conveys the completion of an action, while the simple preposition points to the position of the subject as a result of that action. This distinction helps us understand how directional and locational prepositions are related: they stand in the relationship of cause and effect.

Completion of an Action	Position of Subject
(a) Jean fell on(to) the floor.	Jean is on the floor.
(b) Susumu dived in(to) the water.	Susumu is in the water.

Uses of "to"

To occurs with several classes of verbs.

1. verb + to + infinitive

Verbs in this group express willingness, desire, intention, or obligation.

- willingness: be willing, consent, refuse
- desire: desire, want, wish, like, ask, request, prefer
- intention: intend, plan, prepare

- obligation: be obligated, have, need

Examples:

(i) I refuse to allow you to intimidate me with your threats.
(ii) I'd like to ask her how long she's been skiing.
(iii) I plan to graduate this summer.
(iv) Henry had to pay his tuition at the Bursar's office.

2. In other cases "to" is used as an ordinary preposition.

- verbs of communication: listen, speak (but not tell), relate, appeal (in the sense of 'plead,' not 'be attractive')
- verbs of movement: move, go, transfer, walk/run/swim/ride/drive/ fly, travel

Except for transfer, all the verbs in (2b) can take toward as well as to. However, "to" suggests movement toward a specific destination, while "toward" suggests movement in a general direction, without necessarily arriving at a destination:

(i) Drive toward the city limits and turn north.	Drive in the direction of the city limits; turnoff may be before arriving there.
(ii) The plane was headed toward a mountain.	It was headed in the direction of a mountain; it may not have reached or hit the mountain.
(iii) Take me to the airport, please.	I actually want to arrive at the airport.

Uses of "onto"

1. "Onto" can generally be replaced by "on" with verbs of motion.

(i) Dietrich jumped on(to) the mat.
(ii) Qamar fell on(to) the floor.
(iii) Athena climbed on(to) the back of the truck.

2. Some verbs of motion express the idea that the subject causes itself or some physical object to be situated in a certain place.

Of these verbs, some take only "on". Others take both on and onto, with the latter being preferred by some speakers.

(i) The plane landed *on* the runway. (not onto the runway)
(ii) Sam hung the decoration *on* the Christmas tree. (not onto the tree)
(iii) He placed the package *on* the table. (not onto the table)
(iv) Junaid spilled his Coke *on* the rug. (not onto the rug)
(v) Sumaira moved the chair on(to) the deck.
(vi) The crane lowered the roof on(to) the house.
(vii) The baby threw the pot on(to) the floor.

Verbs taking only "on" are rare: set may be another one, and so perhaps is put. Other verbs taking both prepositions are raise, scatter (when it takes a direct object), pour, and add.

(a) The farmer scattered seed on(to) the fertile ground.
(b) We're adding *on* a wing at the back of the building.
(c) We're adding a porch *onto* the house.

In (b) above, “on” is really part of the verb, while in (c) “onto” is a simple preposition. This contrast points to a fairly important and general rule:

Simple prepositions can combine with verbs, but compound prepositions cannot.

Note also that in (b), the word "on" has its ordinary meaning of a position on a surface, but in this case the surface is vertical rather than horizontal—the side of a building. The use of "onto" in (c) is like its use in (v) and (vi) above.

3. There are a number of verb-preposition combinations which are formally like "add on" but have the meaning "of continuing or resuming an action" when used in the imperative mood.

(Not all of them have the force of a command.) Except for hang, which takes both on and onto, they all occur only with on. The meanings of these combinations, some of which are idiomatic, are given in parentheses.

Hang on(to the rope)! ('continue to grasp tightly')

Carry on ('resume what you were doing')

Sail on ('resume or continue sailing')

Dream on ('continue dreaming'; a humorous way of saying 'that is an unattainable goal')

Lead on ('resume or continue leading us')

Rock on ('continue playing rock music')

Uses of "into"

1. With verbs of motion, "into" and "in" are interchangeable except when the preposition is the last word or occurs directly before an adverbial of time, manner, or frequency.

In this case only in (or inside) can be used.

(i) The patient went into the doctor's office.
(ii) The patient went in. (not into)
(iii) Our new neighbors moved into the house next door yesterday. ('to take up residence in a new home')
(vi) Our new neighbors moved in yesterday.

In (vi), the last word is the time adverbial yesterday, so the object of the preposition in (vi) can be omitted. Of course, in an information question, "into" also can be last word except for an adverbial when its object is questioned by a wh- word:

(v) Now what kind of trouble has she gotten herself into?
(vi) Now what sort of trouble is she in?

2. Verbs expressing stationary position take only "on" or "in" with the ordinary meanings of those prepositions.

If a verb allows the object of the preposition to be omitted, the construction may have an idiomatic meaning.

(a) The cat sat on the mat.
(b) The doctor is in his office.
(c) The doctor is in. ('available for consultation')

Note that “In(to)” has two special uses with move.

3. When "move in" is followed by a purpose clause, it has the sense of "approach".

(i) The lion moved in for the kill.
(ii) The police moved in to rescue the hostages inside the building.

In (i) and (ii) "in" is part of the verb, so "into" cannot be used; We cannot say: "The lion moved into for the kill."

4. When "into" is used with move, it functions as an ordinary preposition to convey the idea of moving something from one place to another.

(a) We'll move your brother's old bed into your room.

Prepositions of Spatial Relationship

Above: Write your name above the line.
Across: Draw a line across the page.
Against: She leans against the tree.
Ahead of: The girl is ahead of the boy.
Along: There is lace along the edge of the cloth.
Among: He is among the trees.
Around: Draw a circle around the answer.
Behind: The boy is behind the girl.
Below: Write your name below the line.
Beneath: He sat beneath the tree.
Beside: The girl is standing beside the boy.
Between: She is between two trees.
From: He came from the house.

In front of: The girl is in front of the boy.
Inside: He is inside the house.
Nearby: There is a tree nearby the house.
Off: His hat is off.
Out of: He came out of the house.
Through: She went through the door.
Toward: She is walking toward the house.
Under: He is hiding under the table.
Within: Please mark only within the circle.

8. INTERJECTION

Hi! That's an interjection.

Interjection is a big name for a little word. Interjections are short exclamations like Oh!, Um or Ah! They have no real grammatical value but we use them quite often, usually more in speaking than in writing. When interjections are inserted into a sentence, they have no grammatical connection to the sentence. An interjection is sometimes followed by an exclamation mark (!) when written.

Definition

“Interjections are words or phrases used to exclaim or protest or command.” They sometimes stand by themselves, but they are often contained within larger structures.

- Wow! I won the lottery!
- Oh, I don't know about that.
- I don't know what the heck you're talking about.
- No, you shouldn't have done that.

Most mild interjections are treated as parenthetical elements and set off from the rest of the sentence with a comma or set of commas. If the interjection is more forceful, however, it is followed with an exclamation mark. Interjections are rarely used in formal or academic writing.

Symbol uh-huh mhm mm uh-uh Definition

Expressions of surprise ('oh'), affirmation, negation and discourse particles (such as 'well,' 'anyway') are examples of interjections. Four of them utilized by speakers engaging in spontaneous speech will now be described in greater detail: two of them fall into the category "affirmation" and the other two belong to the category "negation".

Affirmation

Symbol “uh-huh mhm”

Definition

These two variations of the affirmation are used by speakers engaging in spontaneous speech to indicate agreement with, certainty about, or understanding of something that has just been said.
In transcription, the two are treated in the same manner as a word and may serve as turns by themselves. They are written as they sound.

Negation
Symbol “mm uh-uh”

Definition
These two sounds have the opposite meaning when utilized in speech as that of the affirmation. The 'mm' and 'uh-uh' are used to represent disagreement, and are virtually synonymous in meaning with the word 'no.'
The sound 'mm' is produced nasally with the lips closed. It is a two-syllabic vocalization with a glottal stop in the middle, and is generally accompanied with a shake of the head carrying the meaning 'no.'
The sound 'uh-uh' is also a two-syllabic vocalization produced at the back of the throat characterized by a vowel sound and glottal stop in the middle. It also carries the meaning 'no.'
When transcribing, you must be careful not to confuse these negations with filled pauses. They are responses or reactions, not filled pauses.
There are two functions for 'hm:' the filled pause and the articulated 'hm.' The articulated version carries meaning, either as an inquiry, 'hm?' or as surprise.

Some Main Interjections with Examples

Interjection, meaning and example
“Ah” expressing pleasure "Ah! that feels good."
“Ah” expressing realization "Ah, now I understand."
“Ah” expressing resignation "Ah well, it can't be hoped."
“Ah” expressing surprise "Ah! I've won!"
“Alas” expressing grief or pity "Alas, she's dead now."
“Dear” expressing pity "Oh dear! Does it hurt?"
“Dear” expressing surprise "Dear me! That's a surprise!"
“Eh” asking for repetition "It's hot today." "Eh?" "I said it's hot today."
“Eh” expressing enquiry "What do you think of that, eh?"
“Eh” expressing surprise "Eh! Really?"
“Eh” inviting agreement "Let's go, eh?"
“Er” expressing hesitation "Lima is the capital of...er...Peru."
“Hello/hullo” expressing greeting "Hello John. How are you today?"
“Hello” expressing surprise "Hello! My car's gone!"
“Hey” calling attention "Hey! Look at that!"
“Hey” expressing surprise, joy etc "Hey! What a good idea!"

“Hi” expressing greeting "Hi! What's new?"
“Hmm” expressing hesitation, doubt or disagreement "Hmm. I'm not so sure."
“Oh/o” expressing surprise "Oh! You're here!"
“Oh” expressing pain "Oh! I've got a toothache."
“Oh” expressing pleading "Oh, please say 'yes'!"
“Ouch” expressing pain "Ouch! That hurts!"
“Uh” expressing hesitation "Uh...I don't know the answer to that."
“Uh-huh” expressing agreement "Shall we go?" "Uh-huh."
“Um/umm” expressing hesitation "85 divided by 5 is...um...17."
“Well” expressing surprise "Well I never!"
“Well” introducing a remark "Well, what did he say?"

More Help on the Correct Use of Language, Sentence Structure, and Other Grammatical Construction

PUNCTUATION

Period/Full Stop	(.)	Dash	(—)
Comma	(,)	Parentheses	()
Exclamation Mark	(!)	Brackets	([])
Question Mark	(?)	Ellipsis	(…)
Colon	(:)	Quotation Marks	(“ ”)
Semicolon	(;)	Slash or Virgule	(/)
Hyphen	(-)		

The Bracket

The brackets ([ ]) are used in the following situations:
You can use them to include explanatory words or phrases within quoted language:

> Lew Perkins, the Director of Athletic Programs, said that Pumita Espinoza, the new soccer coach [at Notre Dame Academy] is going to be a real winner.

If you are quoting material and you've had to change the capitalization of a word or change a pronoun to make the material fit into your sentence, enclose that changed letter or word(s) within brackets:

> Espinoza charged her former employer with "falsification of [her] coaching record."

See the description of the “ellipsis” for information on using brackets to set off an ellipsis that you have used to indicate omitted language in a quotation.

Also within quotations, you could enclose [sic] within brackets (we italicize but never underline the word sic and we do not italicize the brackets themselves) to show that misspelled words or inappropriately used words are not your own typos or blunders but are part of an accurately rendered quotation:

> Reporters found three misspellings [sic] in the report.

(It is bad manners, however, to use this device to show that another writer is a lousy speller or otherwise unlettered. Also, use it only when it is important to maintain the original spelling for some reason. If you can edit (remove) the error without violating some scholarly or ethical principle, do so.) Note, also, that the word “sic” means "thus" or "that's how it was" and is not an abbreviation; thus, no period.

If you have italicized or underlined words within quoted language that was not italicized or underlined in the original, you can note that change in brackets included within the sentence or paragraph:

> It was the atmosphere of the gym that thrilled Jacobs, not the eight championship banners hanging from the beams [italics added].

("Italics mine" or "emphasis added" would be other acceptable phrases.)

You can use brackets to include parenthetical material inside parenthetical material:

> Chernwell was poet laureate of Bermuda (a largely honorary position [unpaid]) for ten years.

Be kind to your reader, however, and use this device sparingly.

The Colon

A colon [:] is used before a list or an explanation that is preceded by a clause that can stand by itself. Think of the colon as a gate, inviting one to go on:

> There is only one thing left to do now: confess while you still have time.

The charter review committee now includes the following people:

> the mayor
>
> the chief of police
>
> the fire chief
>
> the chair of the town council

You nearly always have a sense of what is going to follow or be on the other side of the colon. (Compare the function of a “semicolon” in this regard.) You will find differing advice on the use of a colon to introduce a vertical or display list.

We will often use a colon to separate an independent clause from a quotation (often of a rather formal nature) that the clause introduces:

> The acting director often used her favorite quotation from Shakespeare's Tempest: "We are such stuff as dreams are made on; and our little life is rounded with a sleep."

With today's sophisticated word-processing programs (which know how much space to put after punctuation marks), we insert only one space (hit the space-bar only once) after a colon. It might be useful to say, also, when we don't use a colon. Remember that the clause that precedes the mark (where you're considering a colon) ought to be able to stand on its own as an independent clause. Its purpose might be strictly to introduce the clause that follows, so it might feel rather incomplete by itself, but grammatically it will have both a subject and a predicate. In other words, we would not use a colon in situations like the following:

- Her recipe for gunpowder included saltpeter, dry oatmeal, and ground-up charcoal briquets. (no colon after "included")
- His favorite breakfast cereals were Rice Krispies, Cheerios, and Wheaties. (no colon after "were")
- Her usual advice, I remember, was "Keep your head up as you push the ball up the court." (no colon after "was")

One of the most frequently asked questions about colons is whether we should begin an independent clause that comes after a colon with a capital letter. If the independent clause coming after the colon is a formal quote, begin that quoted language with a capital letter.

> Whitehead had this to say about writing style: "Style is the ultimate morality of mind."

If the explanatory statement coming after a colon consists of more than one sentence, begin the independent clause immediately after the colon with a capital letter:

> There were two reasons for a drop in attendance at NBA games this season: First, there was no superstar to take the place of Michael Jordan. Second, fans were disillusioned about the misbehavior of several prominent players.

If the introductory phrase preceding the colon is very brief and the clause following the colon represents the real business of the sentence, begin the clause after the colon with a capital letter:

> Remember: Many of the prominent families of this New England state were slaveholders prior to 1850.

If the function of the introductory clause is simply to introduce, and the function of the second clause (following the colon) is to express a rule, begin that second clause with a capital:

> Let us not forget this point: Appositive phrases have an entirely different function than participial phrases and must not be regarded as dangling modifiers.

There is some disagreement among writing reference manuals about when you should capitalize an independent clause following a colon. Most of the manuals advise that when you have more than one sentence in your explanation or when your sentence(s) is a formal quotation, a capital is a good idea. The NYPL Writer's Guide urges consistency within a document; the Chicago Manual of Style says you may begin an independent clause with a lowercase letter unless it's one of those two things (a quotation or more than one sentence). The APA Publication Manual is the most extreme: it advises us to always capitalize an independent clause following a colon. The advice given above is consistent with the Gregg Reference Manual.

We also use a colon after a salutation in a business letter . . .

> Dear Senator Dodd:
> It has come to our attention that . . . . .

. . . and when we designate the speaker within a play or in court testimony:

> BIFF: He had the wrong dreams. All, all, wrong.
> HAPPY (almost ready to fight Biff): Don't say that!
> BIFF: He never knew who he was.

The Dash

The dash is a handy device, informal and essentially playful, telling you that you're about to take off on a different tack but still in some way connected with the present course — only you have to remember that the dash is there, and either put a second dash at the end of the notion to let the reader know that he's back on course, or else end the sentence, as here, with a period.

Use a dash [—] (or two hyphens [--] on old-fashioned typewriters) or dashes as a super-comma or set of super-commas to set off parenthetical elements, especially when those elements contain internal forms of punctuation:

> All four of them—Bob, Jeffrey, Jason, and Brett—did well in college.

In most word-processors, the dash is created by holding down the option key and hitting the key that has the underline mark above the hyphen. This can vary, though, from program to program. Usually, you get an en dash (see below) with the option + hyphen key, and you get the larger em dash (used more frequently) with option + shift + hyphen keys.

Do not use dashes to set apart material when commas would do the work for you. Usually, there are no spaces between the dash and the letters on either side of a dash, although the dash is frequently shown that way in documents prepared for the World Wide Web and e-mail for typographical and aesthetic reasons (because the WWW authoring and e-mail clients have little control over line-breaks).

In writing dialogue, the dash is used to show breaks in thought and shifts in tone:

"How many times have I asked you not to—" Jason suddenly stopped talking and looked out the window.

"Not to do what?" I prompted.

"Not to — Oh heck, I forget!"

A dash is sometimes used to set off concluding lists and explanations in a more informal and abrupt manner than the colon. We seldom see the dash used this way in formal, academic prose.

Modern word processors provide for two kinds of dashes: the regular dash or em dash (which is the same width as the letter "M," —) and the en dash (which is about half the width, the same as the letter "N," –). We use the em dash for most purposes and keep its smaller brother, the en dash, for marking the space between dates in a chronological range: "Kennedy's presidency (1961–1963) marked an extraordinary era. . . ."; in time: 6:30–8:45 p.m.; and between numbers and letters in an indexing scheme: table 13–C, CT Statute 144–A.

The en dash is also used to join compound modifiers made up of elements that are themselves either open compounds (frequently two-word proper nouns) or already hyphenated compounds: the Puerto Rican–United States collaboration, the New York–New Jersey border, post-Darwinian–pre-Freudian theorems. The Gregg Reference Manual and the Chicago Manual of Style both recommend using the en dash whenever a compound modifier is combined with a participle as in "a Frank Lloyd Wright–designed building," "a White House–backed proposal," and "a foreign exchanged–related issue." A string of modifiers in a single compound, though, is joined with hyphens: hilarious, never-to-be-forgotten moments. If you are using an old-fashioned typewriter that cannot create an en dash, you can denote to your typesetter or editor that a hyphen is to be converted to an en dash by using a hyphen and hand-writing the letter "n" above it.

Some reference manuals are urging editors and publishers to get rid of the en dash altogether and to use the em dash exclusively, but en and em are still handy words to know when you're trying to get rid of those extra e's at the end of a Scrabble game. Finally, we use what is called a 3-em dash (or six typewriter hyphens) when we're showing that someone's name or a word has been omitted (perhaps for legal reasons or issues of taste):

Professors —— and —— were suspended without pay for their refusal to grade papers.

The Ellipsis

An ellipsis […] proves to be a handy device when you're quoting material and you want to omit some words. The ellipsis consists of three evenly spaced dots (periods) with spaces between the ellipsis and surrounding letters or other marks. Let's take the sentence, "The ceremony honored twelve brilliant athletes from the Caribbean who were visiting the U.S." and leave out "from the Caribbean who were":

> The ceremony honored twelve brilliant athletes … visiting the U.S.

If the omission comes after the end of a sentence, the ellipsis will be placed after the period, making a total of four dots. … See how that works? Notice that there is no space between the period and the last character of the sentence.
The ellipsis can also be used to indicate a pause in the flow of a sentence and is especially useful in quoted speech:

> Juan thought and thought … and then thought some more.
> "I'm wondering …" Juan said, bemused.

Note carefully the spacing of the ellipsis marks and the surrounding characters in the examples above. In mid-sentence, a space should appear between the first and last ellipsis marks and the surrounding letters. If a quotation is meant to trail off (as in Juan's bemused thought), leave a space between the last letter and the first ellipsis mark but do not include a period with the ellipsis marks.
If words are left off at the end of a sentence, and that is all that is omitted, indicate the omission with ellipsis marks (preceded and followed by a space) and then indicate the end of the sentence with a period … . If one or more sentences are omitted, end the sentence before the ellipsis with a period and then insert your ellipsis marks with a space on both sides. … As in this example. A coded ellipsis (used in the construction of this page) will appear tighter (with less of a space between the dots) than the use of period-space-period-space-period.
When words at the beginning of a quoted sentence are omitted, it is not necessary to use an ellipsis to indicate that words have been left out when that fragment can fit into the flow of your text. An exception: in a block quoted fragment, use an ellipsis to indicate an omission:

> According to Quirk and Greenbaum, the distinctions are unimportant … for count nouns with specific reference to definite and indefinite pronouns.

However, if the material quoted can be read as a complete sentence, simply capitalize the first word of the material and leave out the ellipsis marks:

> This principle is described by Quirk and Greenbaum:
> The distinctions for count nouns with specific reference to definite and indefinite pronouns remain unimportant.

When a lengthy quotation begins with a complete sentence and ends with a complete sentence, do not use an ellipsis at either the end or the beginning of the quotation unless it is, for some reason, important to emphasize that some language has been omitted.
The ellipsis should be regarded as one unit and should not be broken at the end of a line. Toward that end, it is useful to know the code that will create an unbroken and unbreakable ellipsis for you on the word-processing program you are using. On most machines, it's a simple matter of holding down the option key and hitting the semicolon, but this varies from program to program. To avoid problems when you reformat a paper

(change margins, font sizes, etc.), the spaces that surround the ellipsis should also be created as "non-breaking spaces."

The MLA Handbook recommends using square brackets on either side of the ellipsis points to distinguish between an ellipsis that you've added and the ellipses that might have been in the original text. Such a bracketed ellipsis in a quotation would look like this:

"Bohr […] used the analogy of parallel stairways […]".[14]

The plural of ellipsis is ellipses (handy to remember when you're playing Scrabble), but the points themselves (the dots that make up the ellipsis) are called ellipsis points or ellipsis marks.

The Exclamation Mark

Use an exclamation point [!] at the end of an emphatic declaration, interjection, or command.

"No!" he yelled. "Do it now!"

An exclamation mark may be used to close questions that are meant to convey extreme emotion, as in

What on earth are you doing! Stop!

An exclamation mark can be inserted within parentheses to emphasize a word within a sentence.

We have some really(!) low-priced rugs on sale this week.

Note that there is no space between the last letter of the word so emphasized and the parentheses. This device should be used rarely, if ever, in formal text.
An exclamation mark will often accompany mimetically produced sounds, as in:

"All night long, the dogs woof! in my neighbor's yard" and
"The bear went Grr!, and I went left."

If an exclamation mark is part of an italicized or underlined title, make sure that the exclamation mark is also italicized or underlined:

My favorite book is *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*

(Do not add a period after such a sentence that ends with the title's exclamation mark. The exclamation mark will also suffice to end the sentence.) If the exclamation mark is not part of a sentence-ending title, don't italicize the exclamation mark:

I've asked you not to sing la Marseillaise!

[14] Other research manuals — the APA Publication Manual and the Chicago Manual of Style — do not address this use of bracketed ellipses.

In academic prose, an exclamation point is used rarely, if at all, and in newspaper writing the exclamation point is virtually nonexistent.

The Hyphen

Web-CT and Web-Board Users: A hyphen "icon" embedded in your text — - — indicates either that a hyphen is called for at that point, or (if you have a hyphen there already) that the hyphen is not appropriate. We hope that this page will explain why.

Although smart word-processors seem to have taken over the job of hyphenating broken words at the right-hand end of our lines and spellcheckers can review our use of hyphens in other places, these technological marvels are by no means infallible. Microsoft Word, for example, flags as misspelled almost any word with an unhyphenated prefix: antidiscrimination and cogeneration, for example, are marked as misspelled words and re-sign, co-bra, ever-green, and be-loved are marked as correctly hyphenated words by that software. Generally, it is a good idea not to use justified text in academic papers; that will cut down on a lot of decisions about hyphenating. The APA Publication Manual, in fact, insists that you not break words at line-endings in any case, but that can lead to lines that are too brief and aesthetically unbalanced.

The rules for hyphenating at line endings are so complicated that no one can be expected to keep track of them. If you're ever in a situation where you have to hyphenate at line-breaks, go to a dictionary—unless you can explain why you would break experience between the e and the r, that is, and then you can do whatever you want. Remember that if you adjust one line-break, that may well affect subsequent line-breaks in the text.[15]

Hyphens Have Other Uses

a. creating compound words, particularly modifiers before nouns (the well-known actor, my six-year-old daughter, the out-of-date curriculum

b. writing numbers twenty-one to ninety-nine and fractions (five-eighths, one-fourth)

c. creating compounds on-the-fly for fly-by-night organizations

d. adding certain prefixes to words: When a prefix comes before a capitalized word or the prefix is capitalized, use a hyphen (non-English, A-frame, I-formation). The prefixes self-, all-, and ex- nearly always require a hyphen (ex-husband, all-inclusive, self-control), and when the prefix ends with the same letter that begins the word, you will often use a hyphen (anti-intellectual, de-emphasize), but not always (unnatural, coordinate, cooperate).[16]

There is no space between a hyphen and the character on either side of it.

[15] Probably the best reference text for these decisions (next to looking up everything in a dictionary, i.e.) is The Chicago Manual of Style.

[16] For further information about compound nouns and compound modifiers, see “Compound Words”.

Suspended Compounds

With a series of nearly identical compounds, we sometimes delay the final term of the final term until the last instance, allowing the hyphen to act as a kind of place holder, as in:

- The third- and fourth-grade teachers met with the parents.
- Both full- and part-time employees will get raises this year.
- We don't see many 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children around here.

Be careful not to overuse this feature of the hyphen; readers have to wait until that final instance to know what you're talking about, and that can be annoying.

The Period

Use a period [.] at the end of a sentence that makes a statement. There is no space between the last letter and the period. Use one space between the period and the first letter of the next sentence. This goes against the grain for people using the typography instilled by generations of old-fashioned typewriter users, but modern word-processors nicely accommodate the spacing after a period, and double-spacing after a period can only serve to discombobulate the good intentions of one's software. If one is using a mono-space font (like Courier) to reproduce the effect of an old-fashioned typewriter, then using a double-space after a period would, indeed, be a good idea. This might be useful to remember if one's e-mail client uses Courier, but usually e-mail fonts are determined by the receiver's e-mail program, so Courier is apt to be translated into another font like Times New Roman or Geneva anyway.[17]

Use a period at the end of a command.

- Hand in the poster essays no later than noon on Friday.
- In case of tremors, leave the building immediately.

Use a period at the end of an indirect question.

- The teacher asked why Maria had left out the easy exercises.
- My father used to wonder why Egbert's ears were so big.

Use a period with abbreviations:

Dr. Espinoza arrived from Washington, D.C., at 6 p.m.

Notice that when the period ending the abbreviation comes at the end of a sentence, it will also suffice to end the sentence. On the other hand, when an abbreviation ends a question or exclamation, it is appropriate to add a question mark or exclamation mark after the abbreviation-ending period:

Did you enjoy living in Washington, D.C.?

Occasionally, a statement will end with a question. When that happens, it is appropriate to end the sentence with a question mark.

- We can get to Boston quicker, can't we, if we take the interstate?

[17] See Quotation Marks and Parentheses for special placement considerations with those marks.

- His question was, can we end this statement with a question mark?
- She ended her remarks with a resounding why not?

Acronyms (abbreviations [usually made up of the first letter from a series of words] which we pronounce as words, not a series of letters) usually do not require periods: NATO, NOW, VISTA, LASER, SCUBA, RADAR. Abbreviations we pronounce by spelling out the letters may or may not use periods and you will have to use a dictionary to be sure: FBI, NAACP, NCAA, U.S.A., U.N.I.C.E.F., etc.

The Semicolon

I have grown fond of semicolons in recent years.... It is almost always a greater pleasure to come across a semicolon than a period. The period tells you that that is that; if you didn't get all the meaning you wanted or expected, anyway you got all the writers intended to parcel out and now you have to move along. But with a semicolon there you get a pleasant little feeling of expectancy; there is more to come; read on; it will get clearer.

The Use of Semicolon [;]

- to help sort out a monster list:

There were citizens from Bangor, Maine; Hartford, Connecticut; Boston, Massachusetts; and Newport, Rhode Island.

OR

We had four professors on our committee: Peter Wursthorn, Professor of Mathematics; Ronald Pepin, Professor of English; Cynthia Greenblatt, Professor of Education; and Nada Light, Professor of Nursing.

To separate closely related independent clauses:

My grandmother seldom goes to bed this early; she's afraid she'll miss out on something.

The semicolon allows the writer to imply a relationship between nicely balanced ideas without actually stating that relationship. (Instead of saying because my grandmother is afraid she'll miss out on something, we have implied the semicolon. Thus the reader is involved in the development of an idea—a clever, subliminal way of engaging the reader's attention.)

It is rare, but certainly possible, that you will want a semicolon to separate two independent clauses even when those two independent clauses are connected by a coordinating conjunction. This is especially true when the independent clauses are complex or lengthy and when there are commas within those independent clauses. You might consider breaking those two independent clauses into separate sentences when this happens.

- Coach Geoff Lassen realized that his next recruiting class contained two superb openers, a fine all-rounder, and a power hitter; but as of the end of the spring recruiting season, he was still pushing to discover better first-year players for the interior positions.

The Slash or Virgule

A slash or slant or solidus or virgule [/] (take your pick of names) is used to indicate a choice between the words it separates.

- Using the pass/fail option backfired on her; she could've gotten an A.

The slash can be translated as or and should not be used where the word or could not be used in its place. To avoid gender problems with pronouns, some writers use he/she, his/her, and him/her. Many authorities despise that construction and urge writers either to pluralize when possible and appropriate (to they, their, them) or to use he or she, etc. instead. Notice there is no space between the slash and the letters on either side of it.

There is, however, a space when the slash is used to indicate a line-break in quoted poetry: "The woods are lovely, dark, and deep / but I have promises to keep." (This way of quoting poetry is limited to four or five lines of verse, within the normal flow of text.)

When using slashes in a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for a World Wide Web address (http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/), be especially sure not to include spaces and not to confuse the slash with its backward cousin, \, used as a path separator in Windows (for example, c:\program files\Adobe).

Parentheses

Use parentheses [( )] to include material that you want to de-emphasize or that wouldn't normally fit into the flow of your text but you want to include nonetheless. If the material within parentheses appears within a sentence, do not use a capital letter or period to punctuate that material, even if the material is itself a complete sentence. (A question mark or exclamation mark, however, might be appropriate and necessary.) If the material within your parentheses is written as a separate sentence (not included within another sentence), punctuate it as if it were a separate sentence.

- Thirty-five years after his death, Robert Frost (we remember him at Kennedy's inauguration) remains America's favorite poet.
- Thirty-five years after his death, Robert Frost (do you remember him?) remains America's favorite poet.
- Thirty-five years after his death, Robert Frost remains America's favorite poet. (We remember him at Kennedy's inauguration.)

If the material is important enough, use some other means of including it within your text —even if it means writing another sentence. Note that parentheses tend to de-emphasize text whereas dashes tend to make material seem even more important.

The Question Mark

Use a question mark [?] at the end of a direct question. It is considered bad form to use a question mark in combination with other marks, although that is often done in informal prose in an attempt to convey complex tones: He told you what!? That combination (or

similar combination) of punctuation marks is sometimes called an interrobang, but the interrobang currently has no role in academic prose.

A tag question is a device used to turn a statement into a question. It nearly always consists of a pronoun, a helping verb, and sometimes the word not. Although it begins as a statement, the tag question prevails when it comes to the end-mark: use a question mark. Notice that when the statement is positive, the tag question is expressed in the negative; when the statement is negative, the tag question is positive. (There are a few exceptions to this, frequently expressing an element of surprise or sarcasm: "So you've made your first million, have you?" "Oh, that's your plan, is it?") The following are more typical tag questions:

- He should quit smoking, shouldn't he?
- He shouldn't have quit his diet, should he?
- They're not doing very well, are they?
- He finished on time, didn't he?
- She does a beautiful job, doesn't she?
- Harold may come along, mightn't he?
- There were too many people on the dock, weren't there?
  (Be careful of this last one; it's not "weren't they?")

Be careful not to put a question mark at the end of an indirect question.

- The instructor asked the students what they were doing.
- I asked my sister if she had a date.
- I wonder if Cheney will run for vice president again.
- I wonder whether Cheney will run again.

Be careful to distinguish between an indirect question (above), and a question that is embedded within a statement which we do want to end with a question mark.

- We can get to Boston quicker, can't we, if we take the interstate?
- His question was, can we end this statement with a question mark?
- She ended her remarks with a resounding why not?
- I wonder: will Cheney run for office again?

Put a question mark at the end of a sentence that is, in fact, a direct question. (Sometimes writers will simply forget.) Rhetorical questions (asked when an answer is not really expected), by the way, are questions and deserve to end with a question mark:

- How else should we end them, after all?
- What if I said to you, "You've got a real problem here"? (Notice that the question mark here comes after the quotation mark and there is no period at the end of the statement.)

Sometimes a question will actually end with a series of brief questions. When that happens, especially when the brief questions are more or less follow-up questions to the

main question, each of the little questions can begin with a lowercase letter and end with a question mark.

- Who is responsible for executing the plan? the coach? the coaching staff? the players?

If a question mark is part of an italicized or underlined title, make sure that the question mark is also italicized:

- My favorite book is Where Did He Go?

(Do not add a period after such a sentence that ends with the title's question mark. The question mark will also suffice to end the sentence.) If the question mark is not part of a sentence-ending title, don't italicize the question mark:

- Did he sing the French national anthem, la Marseillaise?

When a question ends with an abbreviation, end the abbreviation with a period and then add the question mark.

- Didn't he used to live in Washington, D.C.?

When a question constitutes a polite request, it is usually not followed by a question mark. This becomes more true as the request becomes longer and more complex:

- Would everyone in the room who hasn't received an ID card please move to the front of the line.

Quotation Marks

Use quotation marks [“ ”] to set off material that represents quoted or spoken language. Quotation marks also set off the titles of things that do not normally stand by themselves: short stories, poems, and articles. Usually, a quotation is set off from the rest of the sentence by a comma; however, the typography of quoted material can become quite complicated. Here is one simple rule to remember:

> In the United States, periods and commas go inside quotation marks regardless of logic.

In the United Kingdom, Canada, and islands under the influence of British education, punctuation around quotation marks is more apt to follow logic. In American style, then, you would write: My favorite poem is Robert Frost's "Design." But in England you would write: My favorite poem is Robert Frost's "Design". The placement of marks other than periods and commas follows the logic that quotation marks should accompany (be right next to) the text being quoted or set apart as a title. Thus, you would write (on either side of the Atlantic):

- What do you think of Robert Frost's "Design"? and
- I love "Design"; however, my favorite poem was written by Emily Dickinson.

Further, punctuation around quoted speech or phrases depends on how it fits into the rest of your text. If a quoted word or phrase fits into the flow of your sentence without a break or pause, then a comma may not be necessary:

- The phrase "lovely, dark and deep" begins to suggest ominous overtones.

Following a form of to say, however, you'll almost always need a comma:

- My father always said, "Be careful what you wish for."

If the quoted speech follows an independent clause yet could be part of the same sentence, use a colon to set off the quoted language:

- My mother's favorite quote was from Shakespeare: "This above all, to thine own self be true."

When an attribution of speech comes in the middle of quoted language, set it apart as you would any parenthetical element:

- "I don't care," she said, "what you think about it."

Be careful, though, to begin a new sentence after the attribution if sense calls for it:

- "I don't care," she said. "What do you think?"

Convention normally insists that a new paragraph begins with each change of speaker:

> "I don't care what you think anymore," she said, jauntily tossing back her hair and looking askance at Edward.
> "What do you mean?" he replied.
> "What do you mean, 'What do I mean?'" Alberta sniffed. She was becoming impatient and wished that she were elsewhere.
> "You know darn well what I mean!" Edward huffed.
> "Have it your way," Alberta added, "if that's how you feel."

In proofreading and editing your writing, remember that quotation marks always travel in pairs! Well, almost always. When quoted dialogue carries from one paragraph to another (and to another and another), the closing quotation mark does not appear until the quoted language finally ends (although there is a beginning quotation mark at the start of each new quoted paragraph to remind the reader that this is quoted language). Also, in parenthetical documentation, the period comes after the parenthetical citation which comes after the quotation mark".

In reporting "silent speech"—noting that language is "said," but internally and not spoken out loud—writers are on their own. Writers can put quotation marks around it or not:

- Oh, what a beautiful morning, Curly said to himself.
- "Oh, what a beautiful morning!" Curly said to himself.

Some writers will set such unspoken language in italics or indent it in order to set it off from other "regular" language. That's probably not a good idea if there is a lot of it because the indents can be confusing and italics can become tiresome to read after a while. The decision will probably depend on the amount of silent speech within the text. Probably the best way to handle silent speech is to find an author whom you like who does a lot of this—Graham Swift in his novel Last Orders, for instance—and copy that author's style. Consistency, of course, is very important.

Some interesting things can happen with verb tenses when we report action in indirect or reported speech ("The president said that he *was* going to Egypt tomorrow").

Be careful not to use quotation marks in an attempt to emphasize a word (the kind of thing you see in grocery store windows—Big "Sale" Today!). Underline or italicize that word instead. (The quotation marks will suggest to some people that you are using that word in a special or peculiar way and that you really mean something else—or that your sale is entirely bogus.)

The American Medical Association Manual of Style (9th ed., 1998) calls misused quotation marks like this Apologetic Quotation Marks and says:

> Quotation marks used around words to give special effect or to indicate irony are usually unnecessary. When irony or special effect is intended, skillful preparation can take the place of using these quotes. Resort to apologetic quotation marks or quotation marks used to express irony only after such attempts have failed, keeping in mind that the best writing does not rely on apologetic quotation marks. (p 220)

We do not enclose indirect quotations in quotation marks. An indirect quotation reports what someone says but not in the exact, original language. Indirect quotations are not heard in the same way that quoted language is heard.

- The President said that NAFTA would eventually be a boon to small businesses in both countries.
- Professor Villa told her students the textbooks were not yet in the bookstore.

Double Punctuation with Quotations

Occasionally — very occasionally, we hope — we come across a sentence that seems to demand one kind of punctuation mark within quotation marks and another kind of punctuation mark outside the quotation marks. A kind of pecking order of punctuation marks takes over: other marks are stronger than a period and an exclamation mark is usually stronger than a question mark. If a statement ends in a quoted question, allow the question mark within the quotation marks suffice to end the sentence.

- Malcolm X had the courage to ask the younger generation of American blacks, "What did we do, who preceded you?"

On the other hand, if a question ends with a quoted statement that is not a question, the question mark will go outside the closing quotation mark.

- Who said, "Fame means when your computer modem is broken, the repair guy comes out to your house a little faster"?

If a question ends with a quotation containing an exclamation mark, the exclamation mark will supersede the question and suffice to end the sentence.

- Wasn't it Malcolm X who declared, "Why, that's the most hypocritical government since the world began!"

A single question mark will suffice to end a quoted question within a question:[18]

[18] For further comprehensive reading on this section, see, New York Public Library Writer's Guide to Style and Usage HarperCollins: New York. 1994. 277

- "Didn't he ask, 'What did we do, who preceded you?'" queried Johnson.

Single Quotation Marks

In the United States English, we use single quotation marks [‘ ’] to enclose quoted material (or the titles of poems, stories, articles) within other quoted material:

- "'Design' is my favorite poem," he said.
- "Did she ask, 'What's going on?'"
- Ralph Ellison recalls the Golden Age of Jazz this way: "It was itself a texture of fragments, repetitive, nervous, not fully formed; its melodic lines underground, secret and taunting; its riffs jeering—'Salt peanuts! Salt peanuts!'"

British practice, again, is quite different. In fact, single-quote marks and double-quote marks are apt to be reversed in usage. Instructors in the U.S. should probably take this into account when reading papers submitted by students who have gone to school in other parts of the globe.

In newspapers, single quotation marks are used in headlines where double quotation marks would otherwise appear.

- Congress Cries 'Shame!'

One further use, according to the Chicago Manual of Style: in philosophical discourse, key concepts may be set apart with single-quote marks. When such concepts are set off in this way, periods and commas go outside the single-quote marks:

- Sartre's treatment of 'being', as opposed to his treatment of 'non-being', has been thoroughly described in Kaufmann's book.

Commas & Modifiers

Using Commas: Do these sentences need commas?

8. My father went to the store for some dessert and bought ice cream.

No: Two verb phrases describing the action of the same subject does not need a comma if the conjunction separating them is "and."

2. My father went to the store for some dessert, bought ice cream, and came home in time to see his favorite TV show.

Yes: Three or more verb phrases describing the action of the same subject need commas to separate them.

3. The text Who Built America? describes Reconstruction as a noble failure.

No: If Who Built America? was taken out of the sentence, when a reader reads "text," they would not know which text the writer means, so commas are not used when the title is in the sentence. (This is called a restrictive appositive.)

Practice Using Commas

Insert commas where needed in the following sentences; then read the explanations below.

1. The restaurant dessert tray featured carrot cake coconut cream pie and something called death-by-chocolate.
2. Because I was three hours short of graduation requirements I had to take a course during the summer.
3. The weather according to last night's forecast will improve by Saturday.
4. Students hurried to the campus store to buy their fall textbooks but several of the books were already out of stock.
5. My sister asked "Are you going to be on the phone much longer?"

Commas Added

1. The restaurant dessert tray featured carrot cake, coconut cream pie, and something called death-by-chocolate.
   The comma separates the items in a series.
2. Because I was three hours short of graduation requirements, I had to take a course during the summer.
   The comma separates an introductory phrase or dependent clause from the rest of the sentence.
3. The weather, according to last night's forecast, will improve by Saturday.
   The phrase "according to last night's forecast" interrupts the main clause, so it is set off by commas.
4. Students hurried to the campus store to buy their fall textbooks, but several of the books were already out of stock.
   The comma separates an independent clause from a dependent clause.
5. My sister asked, "Are you going to be on the phone much longer?"
   The comma separates a direct quotation from the rest of the sentence.

Misplaced/Dangling Modifiers

"A modifier is a word or group of words that describes another word and makes its meaning more specific." Often modifying phrases add information about "where", "when", or "how" something is done. A modifier works best when it is right next to the word it modifies. For example, consider the modifiers in the following sentence (they are underlined for you):

The *awesome* dude rode a wave *breaking on the shore*.

> The word "awesome" is an adjective (or, a one-word modifier). It sits right next to the word "dude" it modifies. The phrase "breaking on the shore" tells us where he rode the wave; thus, "breaking on the shore" is a modifying phrase that must be placed next to the "wave" it modifies.

Here below are some examples of poorly placed modifiers. See if you can identify the problems:

1. Roger looked at twenty-five sofas shopping on Saturday.

Obviously twenty-five sofas were not shopping on Saturday. Because "shopping on Saturday" is meant to modify Roger, it should be right next to Roger, as follows:

Shopping on Saturday, Roger looked at twenty-five sofas.

2. The woman tore open the package she had just received with her fingernails.

Had the woman really received the package with her fingernails? The writer meant that she tore open the package with her fingernails.

With her fingernails, the woman tore open the package she had just received.

3. The waiter brought the pancakes to the table drenched in blueberry syrup.

What's drenched according to the sentence? The waiter, the table, or the pancakes? Actually, the pancakes were drenched:

The waiter brought the pancakes, drenched in blueberry syrup, to the table.

4. Lying in a heap on the closet floor, Jean found her son's dirty laundry.

It sounds as if Jean was lying on the closet floor when she found her son's laundry!

Jean found her son's dirty laundry lying in a heap on the closet floor.

Capitalization and Punctuation: Capital Letters

Every sentence begins with a capital letter.

A penny saved is a penny earned.
People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

A proper noun begins with a capital letter.

A proper noun names a specific person, place, or thing. Proper nouns include people's names, titles, brand names, languages and nationalities, and the names of days and months (but not seasons). For example:

Common Nouns	**Proper Nouns**
woman	Damaris
Son	Julius Caesar
my uncle	Uncle Qamar
college president	President Musharraf
a new detergent	Puff Cloud

my accounting class	Eid
studying a language	Spanish
holiday	June
month	Thanksgiving

The pronoun “I” is always spelled as a capital letter.

> When I think of traveling, I always wish I could go to Borneo.

A capital letter begins the first, last, and any important word in the title of a book, magazine article, story, poem, movie, or other work.

> Have you read Paul Hoch's analysis of football, Rip Off the Big Game?

Dr. Tips: Note that you should use capital letters only when you have a good reason to do so.

Articles, Determiners, and Quantifiers

Definition

Articles, determiners, and quantifiers are those little words that precede and modify nouns:

> the teacher, a college, a bit of honey, that person, those people, whatever purpose, either way, your choice

Sometimes these words will tell the reader or listener whether we're referring to a specific or general thing (the garage out back; A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!); sometimes they tell how much or how many (lots of trees, several books, a great deal of confusion). The choice of the proper article or determiner to precede a noun or noun phrase is usually not a problem for writers who have grown up speaking English, nor is it a serious problem for non-native writers whose first language is a romance language such as Spanish. For other writers, though, this can be a considerable obstacle on the way to their mastery of English. In fact, some students from eastern European countries—where their native language has either no articles or an altogether different system of choosing articles and determiners—find that these "little words" can create problems long after every other aspect of English has been mastered.

Determiners are said to "mark" nouns. That is to say, you know a determiner will be followed by a noun. Some categories of determiners are limited (there are only three articles, a handful of possessive pronouns, etc.), but the possessive nouns are as limitless as nouns themselves. This limited nature of most determiner categories, however, explains why determiners are grouped apart from adjectives even though both serve a

modifying function. We can imagine that the language will never tire of inventing new adjectives; the determiners (except for those possessive nouns), on the other hand, are well established, and this class of words is not going to grow in number. These categories of determiners are as follows: the articles (an, a, the —; possessive nouns (Joe's, the priest's, my mother's); possessive pronouns, (his, your, their, whose, etc.); numbers (one, two, etc.); indefinite pronouns (few, more, each, every, either, all, both, some, any, etc.); and demonstrative pronouns. The demonstratives (this, that, these, those, such) are discussed in the section on Demonstrative Pronouns. Notice that the possessive nouns differ from the other determiners in that they, themselves, are often accompanied by other determiners: "*my* mother's rug," "*the* priest's collar," "*a* dog's life."[19]

Some Notes on Quantifiers

Like articles, quantifiers are words that precede and modify nouns. They tell us how many or how much. Selecting the correct quantifier depends on your understanding the distinction between Count and Non-Count Nouns. For our purposes, we will choose the count noun *trees* and the non-count noun *dancing*:
The following quantifiers will work with count nouns:
many trees
a few trees
few trees
several trees
a couple of trees
none of the trees

The following quantifiers will work with non-count nouns:
not much dancing
a little dancing
little dancing
a bit of dancing
a good deal of dancing
a great deal of dancing
no dancing

The following quantifiers will work with both count and non-count nouns:
all of the trees/dancing
some trees/dancing
most of the trees/dancing
enough trees/dancing
a lot of trees/dancing
lots of trees/dancing

[19] This categorization of determiners is based on Understanding English Grammar by Martha Kolln. 4th Ed. MacMillan Publishing Company: New York. 1994.

plenty of trees/dancing
a lack of trees/dancing
In formal academic writing, it is usually better to use many and much rather than phrases such as a lot of, lots of and plenty of.

There is an important difference between "a little" and "little" (used with non-count words) and between "a few" and "few" (used with count words). If I say that Tashonda has *a little experience* in management that means that although Tashonda is no great expert she does have some experience and that experience might well be enough for our purposes. If I say that Tashonda has *little experience* in management that means that she doesn't have enough experience. If I say that Charlie owns *a few books* on Latin American literature that means that he has some some books—not a lot of books, but probably enough for our purposes. If I say that Charlie owns *few books* on Latin American literature, that means he doesn't have enough for our purposes and we'd better go to the library.
Unless it is combined with of, the quantifier "much" is reserved for questions and negative statements:

- *Much of* the snow has already melted.
- *How much* snow fell yesterday?
- *Not much.*

Note that the quantifier "most of the" must include the definite article the when it modifies a specific noun, whether it's a count or a non-count noun: "most of *the* instructors at this college have a doctorate"; "most of *the* water has evaporated." With a general plural noun, however (when you are not referring to a specific entity), the "of the" is dropped:[20]

- *Most colleges* have their own admissions policy.
- *Most students* apply to several colleges.

An indefinite article is sometimes used in conjunction with the quantifier many, thus joining a plural quantifier with a singular noun (which then takes a singular verb):

- *Many a young man* has fallen in love with her golden hair.
- *Many an apple* has fallen by October.

This construction lends itself to a somewhat literary effect (some would say a stuffy or archaic effect) and is best used sparingly, if at all.

Predeterminers

The predeterminers occur prior to other determiners (as you would probably guess from their name). This class of words includes multipliers (double, twice, four/five times . . . .); fractional expressions (one-third, three-quarters, etc.); the words both, half, and all; and intensifiers such as quite, rather, and such.

[20] Authority for this last paragraph: The Scott, Foresman Handbook for Writers by Maxine Hairston and John J. Ruszkiewicz. 4th ed. HarperCollins: New York

The multipliers precede plural count and mass nouns and occur with singular count nouns denoting number or amount:

- This van holds *three times the* passengers as that sports car.
- My wife is making *double my / twice my* salary.
- This time we added *five times the* amount of water.

In fractional expressions, we have a similar construction, but here it can be replaced with "of" construction.

- Charlie finished in *one-fourth [of] the* time his brother took.
- *Two-fifths of the* respondents reported that *half the* medication was sufficient.

The intensifiers occur in this construction primarily in casual speech and writing and are more common in British English than they are in American English. The intensifier "what" is often found in stylistic fragments: "We visited my brother in his dorm room. What a mess!"

- This room is *rather a* mess, isn't it?
- The ticket-holders made *quite a* fuss when they couldn't get in.
- *What an* idiot he turned out to be.
- Our vacation was *such a* grand experience.

Half, both, and all can occur with singular and plural count nouns; half and all can occur with mass nouns. There are also "of constructions" with these words ("all [of] the grain," "half [of] his salary"); the "of construction" is required with personal pronouns ("both of them," "all of it"). The following chart (from Quirk and Greenbaum) nicely describes the uses of these three predeterminers:

The Articles

The three articles—a, an, the—are a kind of adjective. “The” is called the “definite article” because it usually precedes a specific or previously mentioned noun; “a and an” are called “indefinite articles” because they are used to refer to something in a less specific manner (an unspecified count noun). These words are also listed among the noun markers or determiners because they are almost invariably followed by a noun (or something else acting as a noun).

CAUTION! Even after you learn all the principles behind the use of these articles, you will find an abundance of situations where choosing the correct article or choosing whether to use one or not will prove chancy. Icy highways are dangerous. The icy highways are dangerous. And both are correct.

“The” is used with specific nouns. “The” is required when the noun it refers to represents something that is one of a kind:

> *The moon* circles *the earth*.

“The” is required when the noun it refers to represents something in the abstract:

> The United States has encouraged *the* use of *the* private automobile as opposed to *the* use of public transit.

“The” is required when the noun it refers to represents something named earlier in the text.

We use a before singular count-nouns that begin with consonants (a cow, a barn, a sheep); we use an before singular count-nouns that begin with vowels or vowel-like sounds (an apple, an urban blight, an open door). Words that begin with an h sound often require an a (as in a horse, a history book, a hotel), but if an h-word begins with an actual vowel sound, use an an (as in *an* hour, *an* honor). We would say *a* useful device and *a* union matter because the u of those words actually sounds like yoo (as opposed, say, to the u of *an* ugly incident). The same is true of a European and *a* Euro (because of that consonantal "Yoo" sound). We would say a once-in-a-lifetime experience or *a* one-time hero because the words once and one begin with a w sound (as if they were spelled wuntz and won).
Merriam-Webster's Dictionary says that we can use an before an h- word that begins with an unstressed syllable. Thus, we might say *an* hisTORical moment, but we would say *a* HIStory book. Many writers would call that an affectation and prefer that we say *a* historical, but apparently, this choice is a matter of personal taste.

First and subsequent reference: When we first refer to something in written text, we often use an indefinite article to modify it.

> *A* newspaper has an obligation to seek out and tell the truth.

In a subsequent reference to this newspaper, however, we will use the definite article:

> There are situations, however, when *the* newspaper must determine whether the public's safety is jeopardized by knowing the truth.

Another example:
"I'd like *a* glass of orange juice, please," John said.
"I put *the* glass of juice on the counter already," Sheila replied.
Exception:
When a modifier appears between the article and the noun, the subsequent article will continue to be indefinite:
"I'd like *a big* glass of orange juice, please," John said.
"I put *a big* glass of juice on the counter already," Sheila replied.
Generic reference: We can refer to something in a generic way by using any of the three articles. We can do the same thing by omitting the article altogether.

- A beagle makes a great hunting dog and family companion.
- An airedale is sometimes a rather skittish animal.
- The golden retriever is a marvelous pet for children.
- Irish setters are not the highly intelligent animals they used to be.

The difference between the generic indefinite pronoun and the normal indefinite pronoun is that the latter refers to any of that class ("I want to buy a beagle, and any old beagle will do.") whereas the former (see beagle sentence) refers to all members of that class.
Proper nouns: We use the definite article with certain kinds of proper nouns:

- Geographical places: the Sound, the Sea of Japan, the Mississippi, the West, the Smokies, the Sahara (but often not when the main part of the proper noun seems to be modified by an earlier attributive noun or adjective: We went swimming at ~~the~~ Ocean Park)
- Pluralized names (geographic, family, teams): the Netherlands, the Bahamas, the Hamptons, the Johnsons, the New England Patriots
- Public institutions/facilities/groups: the Wadsworth Atheneum, the Sheraton, the House, the Presbyterian Church
- Newspapers: the Hartford Courant, the Times
- Nouns followed by a prepositional phrase beginning with "of": the leader of the gang, the president of our club

Abstract nouns: Abstract nouns—the names of things that are not tangible—are sometimes used with articles, sometimes not:

- The storm upset *my* peace of mind. He was missing just one thing: peace of mind.
- Injustice was widespread within the judicial system itself. He implored the judge to correct *the* injustice.
- Her body was racked with grief. It was *a* grief he had never felt before.

Zero articles: Several kinds of nouns never use articles. We do not use articles with the names of languages ("He was learning Chinese." [But when the word Chinese refers to the people, the definite article might come into play: "The Chinese are hoping to get the next Olympics."]), the names of sports ("She plays badminton and basketball."), and academic subjects ("She's taking economics and math. Her major is Religious Studies.")
When they are generic, non-count nouns and sometimes plural count-nouns are used without articles. "We like wine with our dinner. We adore Baroque music. We use roses for many purposes." But if an "of phrase" comes after the noun, we use an article: "We adore *the* music *of* the Baroque." Also, when a generic noun is used without an article and then referred to in a subsequent reference, it will have become specific and will require a definite article: "The Data Center installed computers in the Learning Center this summer. *The* computers, unfortunately, don't work."
Common count nouns are used without articles in certain special situations:

idiomatic expressions using be and go	We'll go by train. (as opposed to "We'll take *the* train.) He must be in school.
with seasons	In spring, we like to clean the house.
with institutions	He's in church/college/jail/class.
with meals	Breakfast was delicious. He's preparing dinner by himself.

with diseases	He's dying of pneumonia. Appendicitis nearly killed him. She has cancer (You will sometimes hear "the measles," "the mumps," but these, too, can go without articles.)
with diseases	He's dying of pneumonia. Appendicitis nearly killed him. She has cancer. (You will sometimes hear "the measles," "the mumps," but these, too, can go without articles.)

Principles of Choosing an Article

Choosing articles and determiners: Briefly defined, a determiner is a noun-marker: when you see one, you know that what follows is a noun or noun phrase. There is a list of such words in the table below. When you place your mouse-cursor over a word or pair of related words (such as either/neither), you will see in the right-hand frame an image describing the kinds of words that word can modify.
Zero article (see table below) means either that no article would be appropriate with that kind of noun or that that kind of noun can be used (in that context) without an article.
Notice that there is a difference between a "stressed" some or any and an "unstressed" some or any. Consider the words in ALL CAPS as shouted words and you will hear the difference between these two:

- That is SOME car you've got there!
- I don't want to hear ANY excuse!

As opposed to…

- We have some cars left in the lot.
- Isn't there any furniture in the living room?

In terms of the words they usually modify, the unstressed some and any do not modify singular count nouns.

The Diagramming

A Brief Introduction

Diagramming sentences has not been much in vogue as a pedagogical device for the past thirty years or so. There are, however, many grammarians and English instructors who hold that analyzing a sentence and portraying its structure with a consistent visual scheme can be helpful—both for language beginners and for those trying to make sense of the language at any level, especially for language learners who tend to be visual-learning types. Watching a sentence take root and ramify in space can even be fun.

> I really do not know that anything has ever been more exciting than diagramming sentences.
> — Gertrude Stein

There are other ways to represent graphically the structure of a sentence, but the most popular method is based on schemes developed by Alonzo Reed and Brainerd Kellogg over a hundred years ago. The diagrams in this section are Reed-Kellogg diagrams; in a few cases, an optional method is suggested. In these days of three-dimensional computer graphics, it won't be long before we will see colorful, three-dimensional, nonlinear representations of how sentences work, something like the Visual Thesaurus, by Plumb Design, Inc. (If you go there, please don't get lost. And come back soon!)[21]

What Diagramming Teaches Us

When Javed Massih bumps up against a complex problem, he thinks back to a lesson he learned in high school from the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.
The Lahore-area school's Catholic nuns taught him the art of diagramming a sentence. Once all the parts of speech lined up, Javed pulled clarity from the chaos. It's a process he uses today to tackle tough issues as chief executive and chairman of a firm.

"Sit down quietly. Take (the issue) apart into its component parts. Make sure all the components fit together well. They've got to be well chosen, fit together and make sense. There are few (business) problems that can't be solved that way, as dire as it might seem," Javed said. "Sentence diagramming is one of the best analytical techniques I ever learned."

Numbers

Using Numbers, Writing Lists

The advice proffered here is meant primarily for standard academic prose. Business and technical writing sometimes goes by a different set of standards, and writers of those kinds of text should consult a manual dedicated to those standards.[22]

- Write out numbers that require no more than two words, remembering that a hyphenated number between *twenty-one* and *ninety-nine* counts as one word. Some writing manuals will suggest that whole numbers from zero through nine should be written as words, and numbers from ten on up should be written as numerals, especially when the word modifies a noun as in five students or two professors.

[21] For further information about diagramming, see Martha Kolln's Understanding English Grammar (4th Edition. MacMillan Publishing Company: New York. 1994

[22] The APA Publication Manual has an extensive section devoted to the use of numbers in technical papers. The Chicago Manual of Style [chapter 13] addresses just about every issue that might come up in a technical or mathematical text.

- Use numerals, however, when the number modifies a unit of measure, time, proportion, etc.: 2 inches, 5-minute delay, 65 mph, 23 years old, page 23, 2 percent.
- Use numerals for decimals and fractions: 0.75, 3.45, 1/4 oz, 7/8 in. (Notice that abbreviations are always written in the singular form whether they would be expressed as plurals or not: 14 oz, 12 in. The period can be omitted from such abbreviated measurements unless confusion would result [after in., for example]).
- Use numerals for any number greater than nine: 237 lb, 32 players. (But this may be determined by context and how exact the numbers are. In business and technical writing, yes, all such numbers would be written as numerals; in other kinds of text, you might see something like six million victims, four thousand volunteers.
- Approximate figures — fractional or otherwise — may be written out as words: one half the students, a quarter cup of sugar, a third of the time, four times as often.
- Place a hyphen after a unit of measure when the unit modifies a noun: 10-foot pole, 6-inch rule, 3-year-old horse. (The unit of measure in such expressions is, for some reason, always singular.)
- When many numbers are involved, use all numerals unless all the numbers are whole numbers less than nine.
- When fractional or decimal expressions are 1 or less, the word they modify should be singular: 0.7 meter, 0.22 cubic foot, 0.78 kilometer. Precede decimal fractions with a value less than one with a leading zero before the decimal point.
- Percentage expressions should be written out as words: Last semester, 78 percent of the first-year students passed English Composition. (as opposed to 78%)
- Avoid using ordinals when writing dates: February 14, not 14th.

- There are twenty-six students in my wife's third-grade class.
- Juan is over 183 centimeters tall.
- Hartford has over ninety-three thousand citizens.
  (Some people would argue that all such statistical information should be expressed in numerals; when rounded off, however, spelled-out words are appropriate.)
- Hartford has 97,500 citizens.

Consistency is important here!

- Juan is about 183 centimeters tall, which means that he is just over 6 feet tall.

To avoid confusion by running numbers together, combine words and numerals when one number follows another. Generally, write out the shorter number.

- My wife teaches 26 third-grade students.
- There were 10 four-foot boards on the trucks.
- The lab has 24 seventeen-inch monitors.
- We need six 50-watt bulbs for this apartment.

Avoid beginning a sentence with a number that is not written out.

- Seventy-two inches equals approximately 1.83 meters.
  An exception: you can begin a sentence with a date:
- 1997 was a very good year for owls.

Use figures instead of words for

- Dates and years: December 18, 1997. Avoid using ordinals when writing dates: Her birthday is on April 4th.
- Decimals, percentages, and fractions: 235.485, 55%, 14 1/4
- Scores: The Bulls won the final game by a score of 114 to 106.
- Addresses: 1032 Maple Avenue. Sometimes, though, an address is part of a building's name, and then you'll want to spell it out: One Corporate Plaza. Unless space is at a premium, write out numerical street names (of one hundred or less): 1032 Fifth Avenue. For proper envelope addressing form (U.S. Post Office recommendations).
- Political and military units (for numbers of one hundred or less): Seventh Precinct, Fourteenth Congressional District, Fifty-third Regiment, Third Batallion, 112d Artillery
- Finances: Tickets cost $35.50 apiece. The city spent $1.1 million for snow removal last year. (Or use $1,100,000.) You can leave the comma out of figures in the thousands: They spent $7500 on that car before junking it. Also, leave the comma out of addresses and year-dates: In 1998, they moved to NE 12887 53rd Avenue.
- Ranges: Between 18 and 25 bald eagles have been counted near the Connecticut River this spring.
- Time: 9:15 a.m. If you use the word o'clock, however, for rounded off times, spell out the number in words: We left at seven o'clock. Use a.m. and p.m., not AM and PM.

Numbered, Vertical ("Display"), and Bulleted Lists

Writing and reference manuals offer different advice for creating lists. It seems that as long as you're consistent within your document, you can devise just about any means you want for creating your lists, whether you want them as run-in lists (built into the flow of your text) or as vertical lists (indented and stacked up). Technical writing may have its own requirements in this regard, and you should consult a technical writing manual for specific rules. Use parentheses around the numbers (no periods after the number, though) when using a run-in list:

I have three items to discuss: (1) the first item; (2) the second item; and (3) the third item. Use semicolons to separate the items, whether they're expressed as fragments or full sentences.

For a vertical list (sometimes called a display list), you may choose to capitalize the items or not, and you may choose to put a comma after each item or not. (If you use commas, put a period after the last item.)

We will now review the following three principles:

9. fairness in recruiting
10. academic eligibility
11. scholarly integrity

Your choice to capitalize or not may depend on how elaborate your lists are and how many of them you have in your text. If a vertical list contains complete sentences or lengthy and complex items, you may prefer to end each element in the list with a semicolon, except for the last element, which you will end with a period.

Most coaches conform to three basic principles in recruiting new players:

1.Look for players first who can fill those positions you will need the subsequent year;
2.Look for players who are "court smart" as opposed to being merely athletic;
3.Look for players who are academically eligible and who have an academic purpose in going to college.

Although the elements in the list above begin with capital letters, that is not absolutely necessary. Notice that there is no "and" at the end of the next-to-last element (although some reference manuals allow for or recommend its use). Although we have used numbers for this list, bullets would work equally well if numbering seems inappropriate or irrelevant. The list below is based on a format suggested by the New York Public Library's Writer's Guide to Style and Usage:

Most coaches conform to three basic principles in recruiting new players—

1Look for players first who can fill those positions you will need the subsequent year.
2 Look for players who are "court-smart" as opposed to being merely athletic.
3 Look for players who are academically eligible and who have an academic purpose in going to college.

Note that this format does not include a period even at the end of the last element. Most writers, however, want to use some kind of punctuation in their listed items. When the introductory statement is a complete sentence, you can end it with either a period or a colon. Use a colon if the sentence is clearly anticipatory of the list, especially if it contains phrasing such as the following or as follows. A colon is also appropriate if the list that follows will be numbered or will establish a priority order. If the introductory statement is not a complete statement, however, neither a period nor a colon would be appropriate since that would interrupt the grammatical structure of the statement; use either no punctuation or try the dash technique noted above.

Listing Names in Alphabetical Order

Putting people's names in alphabetical order is done on a letter-by-letter basis, taking into consideration all the letters before the comma that separates the last from the first name. Omit titles (such as Lady, Sir, Sister), degrees (M.D., Ph.D.), etc., that precede or follow names. A suffix that is an essential part of the name — such as Jr., Sr., or a roman numeral — appears after the given name, preceded by a comma. (Ford, Henry J., III or Pepin, Theophilus, Jr.)

Beethoven, Ludwig van (The van or von in Dutch or German names, if not capitalized by family usage,appears after the first name; if capitalized, it appears before the last name and determines the alphabetical order.)

D'Annunzio, Gabriele

Deere-Brown, Juan (Ignore the hyphen.)

Deere-Brown, Juan-Poivre

Dante Alighieri (Some Italian names of the 15th century or before are alphabetized by first name)

D'Arcy, Pierre

de Gaulle, Charles (With French names, the de goes before the last name when the last name contains only one syllable. See de Maupassant, below.)

Dilavar

Ford, Henry E., III

Garcia Lorca, Federico (Use full surnames for Spanish names.)

López y Quintana, María

Muhammad

Maupassant, Guy de

M'Cauley, Josephine

McCullers, Carson

Morris, Robert

Morris, William

Morrison, Toni

O'Keeffe, Georgia (Ignore the apostrophe.)

Pepin, R. E.

Pepin, Theophilus, Jr.

Pepino, D.

Rueda, Lope de (For Spanish names, de comes after the first name)

Syed (A Muslim family name)

San Marco, Josefina

St. Denis, Ruth

Von Braun, Werner

Zaheer Ahmed

The Uses of One

As a determiner, the word one is sometimes used before a proper noun to designate, particularly, this person: "He delivered the package to *one* Ronald Pepin of Colchester." The article "a" will also function in that position for the same purpose.

Sometimes we use the word one as an adjective, as in "I'll have just *one* scoop of ice-cream," and we seldom have trouble with that usage. But we also use one as a pronoun, and this is where one becomes surprisingly complex.

Sometimes the pronoun one functions as a numerical expression:

- Those are lovely scarves. I think I'll buy *one*.
- *One* is hardly enough.
- *One* is purple, the other green.
- The three brothers get along quite well; in fact they adore *one* another.
- *One* of the senators will lead the group to the front of the capitol.
- The yellow car is fast, but I think the blue *one* will win.

As a pronoun, one can also function in an impersonal, objective manner, standing for the writer or for all people who are like the writer or for the average person or for all people who belong to a class. In the United States, one sometimes has a literary or highfalutin feel to it; the more it is used, the more pretentious it feels. In British English, the use of the impersonal or generic one is more commonplace and has no such stigma. In the U.S., one is often replaced by you.

- *One* would think the airlines would have to close down.
- *One* would [*You*'d] think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.
- The young comedian was awful; *one* felt embarrassed for him.
- If *one* fails, then *one* must try harder next time.

When the pronoun one is used in the numerical sense, a different pronoun can be used in a subsequent reference.

- We watched as one [of the ospreys] dried *its* feathers in the sun.
- One [driver] pulled *her* car over to the side.

However, it is generally regarded as a bad idea to mix the impersonal or generic pronoun one with another pronoun, especially in the same sentence, as in "If one fails, then *he/you* must simply try harder."

One's Reflexive and Possessive Forms

In the United States, the possessive and reflexive forms of one — *one's* and *oneself*—are often replaced by other pronoun forms. In British English, they are commonplace:

- One must be conscientious about *one's* dental hygiene.

In the U.S. that one's is apt to be replaced by a third-person "his" or (more informally) a second-person "your":

- One must learn from *one's* [or *his*] mistakes.
- One must be conscientious about *one's* [or *his*] dental hygiene.

- One must be conscientious about *your* dental hygiene.

In formal writing, the use of your in that last sentence—in either American or British English—would be regarded as too casual or even sub-standard. On the other hand, the problem with using "his" is obvious: it runs counter to the tendency to remove gender bias from one's language as much as possible. Thus, even in American English, this mixture of "one" with "he/his/him" is slowly disappearing.

“Oneself” is used in formal writing and speech as the proper reflexive form of one:

- If one slipped on this icy walk, one could hurt *oneself* badly.

Notice there is usually no apostrophe used in the spelling of oneself. The construction *one's self* is used to refer to the concept of self (in psychology, for instance): "One's self, according to Freud, is defined by the interactions of the id, the ego, and the super-ego."

The Plural of One

As a singular numerical pronoun, we don't have trouble with one: "Those donuts look delicious; I think I'll pick this *one*." But what if I want two donuts? It is possible, sometimes, to pluralize one:

- I really like the chocolate *ones*.
- The *ones* with chocolate frosting have cream fillings.
- Are these the *ones* you want?
- Do you want these *ones*?

When the word ones is preceded by a plural determiner (like these), we usually drop the ones and the determiner turns into a demonstrative pronoun: "Do you want *these*?"

The phrases "one in [plural number]" and "more than one" always take a singular verb:

- One in four dentists *recommends* this toothpaste.
- One out of every five instructors *gets* this question wrong.
- There is more than one reason for this.
- More than one lad *has* lost his heart to this lass.

The "one" in the phrase "more than one" apparently controls the number of the verb. It is probably wise not to attempt to divine some of the mysteries of the English language.

One of those [Plural Noun] that is/are …

"One is one and all alone and ever more shall be so," goes the old Christmas song, but the fact that the singular one needs a singular verb can lead to confusion. In a recently published collection of language columns by William Safire, No Uncertain Terms, he wrote the following sentence (page 336):

> "Conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman" is one of those phrases that sounds as if it comes out of Kipling.

The sentence caused considerable stir (as such things go), for the verb "sounds" should really relate to the plural "phrases," not the singular "one." The sentence should probably read (underlining things for our purpose):

> "Conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman" is one of those *phrases* that *sound* as if *they* came out of Kipling.

The rare device for figuring out which verb to use in this construction is as follows: turn the sentence inside out:

> Of those phrases that sound as if they came out of Kipling, "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman" is one.

In this situation, the subject of the subordinate clause—usually a who or a that—will refer to the plural noun in the preceding prepositional phrase (not the one before it) and require a plural verb to follow.

There is a possible exception, however. In Burchfield's New Fowlers, we find this example:

> "Don't you think," said Bernard, "that Hawaii is one of those places that *was* always better in the past."

Burchfield adds, "A plural verb in the subordinate clause is recommended unless particular attention is being drawn to the uniqueness, individuality, etc., of the one in the opening clause." In an earlier note, Burchfield writes: "Exceptions [to the rule that we use the plural verb] occur when the writer or speaker presumably regards one as governing the verb in the subordinate clause," and he gives another two or three examples, including "I am one of those people who *wants* others to do what I think they should."

The indefinite "one" is another source of trouble and is frequently the cause of disagreeable scenes. Such a sentence as "One loves one's friends" is considered by some persons to be stilted and over-formalized, and such persons insist that "One loves his friends" is permissible. It is not permissible, however, because "one" is indefinite and "his" is definite and the combination is rhetorically impossible. This is known as hendiadys and was a common thing in Latin. Rare examples of it still exist and are extremely valuable as antiques, although it is usually unsafe to sit or lie down on one.

Use of Once, Twice, Thrice

We'll take this opportunity to look at a number of complications with the expression of numbers and frequency in English.

once, twice, thrice

The norm here is to say once (rather than one time) to say three times (rather than thrice) in current usage. Thrice is definitely old-fashioned, although you may still come across it in certain contexts:

This vehicle travels at thrice the speed of sound.

They play football thrice weekly.

Better to say:

This vehicle travels at three times the speed of sound.

They play football three times a week and train every night.

When it comes to twice, this is more often used than two times, although two times is also quite common in informal usage. Compare the following:
I've visited her twice already this autumn and she's visited me once.
I've visited her two times already this autumn and she's visited me once.
Unemployment in the north of England is twice the national average.
Teachers say they would be twice as effective if they had no administrative tasks.
One time is occasionally possible as an alternative to once. Compare the following:
He had only ever seen his great-aunt once before.
He had only ever seen his great-aunt one time before.
We go out with our colleagues for a drink once a week or once a fortnight and have a staff party once a year.
You will hear the recording only once.
I'm only going to say this once.
Once, (not one time) can also mean at some time in the past:
I once ran a fish-and-chip shop in Brighton. ~ When was that? ~ Before I bought this business.
Our house in the village was once the train station. ~ When was that? ~ When the trains used to run here.
Do you know the different references to these numbers?
nought / zero / nil / o / love (0)
half a dozen (6 or approximately 6)
a dozen (12 or approximately 12)
a score (20 or approximately 20)
a billion (1,000,000,000 or a very large number)

Note how they are used:
House prices rose by nought point two per cent last month.
Visibility was almost zero at the City Airport last night because of the fog.
England won their recent match against Liechtenstein by two goals to nil.
My phone number is o two o, eight seven o seven, nine nine o three.
Roddick was leading by two sets to love and forty love in the first game of the third set when rain stopped the match.
Can you set out the arguments for and against capital punishment in half a dozen paragraphs?
I bought two dozen eggs but we've only used four. ~ Why didn't you buy half a doxen?
Scores of volunteers offered to help in the search for the missing child.
How many zeros do I write down for a billion? Is it six or nine?
Billions of dollars need to be invested to re-build this country.
I've told you billions of times to lock the door before you go to bed.

Maximum / Minimum; Maximal / Minimal

To express the idea of the largest amount possible, we would normally use maximum as both adjective and noun. Maximal as adjective or maximally as adverb are more rarely used. Compare the following:
Arsenal now head the Premiership table with maximum points from five games.
The maximum sentence for armed robbery is twenty years.
How long are the shifts for this type of work? ~ Four hours is the minimum and twelve hours is the maximum.
How long should I sit in front of the computer screen? ~ Maximally three hours.
Minimal, however, meaning very small in quantity, is much more often used as an adjective. Note the slight difference in meaning. Mimimum describes the smallest amount possible. Compare the following:
He managed to pass all his exams with minimal effort.
There may be one or two delays on this service but they are expected to be minimal.
The minimum wage in Britain is now four pounds fifty an hour.
The minimum height for a policeman used to be five foot ten.

How to Pronounce –ed in English

The past simple tense and past participle of all regular verbs end in -ed. For example:

Base Verb (v1)	Past Simple (v2)	Past Participle (v3)
Work	Worked	Worked

In addition, many adjectives are made from the past participle and so end in -ed. For example:

*0I like *painted* furniture.

The question is: How do we pronounce the -ed?
The answer is: In 3 ways - /Id/ or /t/ or /d/

If the base verb ends in one of these sounds:		**Example Base Verb:**	**Example with -ed:**	**Pronounce the -ed:**	**Extra Syllable?**
Unvoiced	/t/	want	wanted	/Id/	Yes
Voiced	/d/	end	ended		
	/p/	hope	hoped		
	/f/	laugh	laughed		
Unvoiced	/s/	fax	faxed	/t/	
	/S/	wash	washed		
	/tS/	watch	watched		no
	/k/	like	liked		
	all other	play	played		
Voiced	sounds,	allow	allowed	/d/	
	for example...	beg	begged		

Note that it is the sound that is important, not the letter or spelling. For example, "fax" ends in the letter "x" but the sound /s/; "like" ends in the letter "e" but the sound /k/.
Exceptions

The following adjectives ending in -ed are always pronounced with /Id/:

*0aged
*1blessed
*2crooked
*3dogged
*4learned
*5naked
*6ragged
*7wicked
*8wretched

How to use Quotations

1. There are in general two instances when you may wish to use quotations from other writers' work:

*9Evidence - when quoting from other sources to support your own argument(s)

*10Reference - when a text is itself the subject of your essay and you need to refer to it in your discussion.

2. The conventions of accurate quotation and referencing are relatively simple, and they are based on the need for accuracy, consistency, and clarity. There are a number of slightly different systems of notation. The two most widely used are:

*11the traditional combination of numbered quotation, plus an endnote giving the source

*12the Harvard system (described separately)

3. The whole purpose of both systems is that tutors marking your work should be able, if they wish, to check the accuracy of the quotations you use.

4. Evidence

In a discussion of the development of Marx's philosophy for example, you might argue that his work was a natural development of his predecessors, supporting your assertion by quoting David McLellan. He points out that:

> Marx began by paying tribute to the achievements of Feuerbach, particularly in having shown that Hegel's philosophy was no more than a rationalised theology. (1)

5. A bracketed number is added immediately after the quotation, and the source of your quotation is given as an endnote on a separate sheet at the end of your essay. (You might wish to place the information as a footnote at the bottom of the page, though this system can become rather complicated.)

6. Note that this information is given in the following order, and you should remember to indicate the titles of books by using italics.

Author - Title - Publisher - Date - Page

7. The material you quote is placed between two single quotation marks if it is run in as part of your text:

> This is what David McLellan calls a 'rationalised theology' (1) in his discussion of the relationship between Marx and Hegel

8. If the length of the quote amounts to more than three lines of your own text however, it should be indented separately, and no quote marks are necessary:

> Marx began by paying tribute to the achievements of Feuerbach, particularly in having shown that Hegel's philosophy was no more than a rationalised theology, and having discovered the true materialist approach by starting from the social relationship of man to man. (1)

9. Your own argument should normally be offered first, and you then reinforce it with quotation from an authoritative source. You are using this secondary evidence from acknowledged specialists to support your own views. Do not offer the quotation first, otherwise what should be your own argument will tend to be come more a 'commentary' upon it.

10. The quotations you offer should be as brief as possible to make their point. Don't be tempted to offer long quotations from other people's work in the hope that this will act as a substitute for your own argument. Nor should you stitch together a patchwork of quotations from a variety of sources with a few words of your own. This creates the impression that you are relying too heavily on other people's work.

11. Sometimes in more advanced essays it might be necessary to quote longer passages. You would do this if you were going to analyze the author's arguments in detail and at quite some length. This should only be done occasionally.

12. Each main point of your argument should be made and discussed in its own separate paragraph. This should not normally need more than one quotation to support it. Too many quotations can create the impression that you are relying too heavily on secondary sources.

13. Reference

When the subject of your essay is the discussion of a text (say, criticism of a novel or an article) you should follow the same system of notation. Directly after the first quotation you should give a full bibliographic description of the text you are discussing.

14. This information could be given within brackets in the body of your essay, but you will be developing good academic habits if you place the information as a note at the end of the essay.

15. If your essay is predominantly concerned with just one text, all subsequent quotations from it may simply be followed by page references. Simply add an explanation to the first endnote, saying - all subsequent page references are to this edition.

16. If you will be quoting from a variety of other sources in the same essay, you should number the quotations and give the sources accurately as a series of endnotes.

17. It is also possible to mix these two forms of referencing, so long as the distinctions are made clear. If your piece of work was a long essay on Bleak House for instance, it would be acceptable to identify all your quotations from the novel with page references.

Quotations from other critics or sources would numbered and their sources identified as separate endnotes.

18. There must be grammatical continuity and sense maintained between any quotation and your own argument. To arrange this, it might be necessary to add or delete words from the material quoted, or to change the tense of the original. Whenever you do this, any changes should be very small. They must also be properly acknowledged.

> [It was] as if she were truly loved by him, but notwithstanding this impression she regarded the man as no more than a casual acquaintance who occasionally made her laugh. (p.7)

19. Square brackets are used to indicate any words which you have added in order to make the quotation fit grammatically or otherwise within your own argument.

20. If you wish to draw attention to a particular word or some part of the quotation, you should provide the emphasis by using italics (or underlining). You should then immediately admit the fact 'as if she were loved by him' [p.7 - my emphasis] and then carry on with what you wish to say in the remainder of your argument.

21. In order to shorten a quotation or to remove some part of it which is not relevant to your argument, you may wish to omit a number of words. To denote this omission (which is called an ellipsis) you should use the convention of the three dots '...' in the space which is left:

> He had even a kind of assurance on his face ... the assurance of a common man filled with pride. (p.7)

22. This device should not be used to change the sense of the original in any way, or to misrepresent its spirit: such practices are regarded as academically fraudulent.

23. The three dots denoting an ellipsis do not need to be placed at the beginning or the end of your quotation, even if you are quoting a few words from within a sentence.

24. The general convention for indicating quotation is to use single quote marks ('unmitigated') and to reserve double quotes marks for indicating speech ("Good gracious!" cried the duchess.)

25. When quoting conversation, follow these rules, but if it makes things easier put the words spoken within double quote marks even if they were in single quote marks in the original:

> Kayerts is being even more hypocritical and self-deceiving when he 'observe[s] with a sigh: "It had to be done"' (p.39)

26. If you are quoting more than once from a number of works in an essay, you can avoid confusion and save yourself the trouble of giving a full reference each time. Use either the op. cit. and ibid. or the short title convention.

27. Different subjects have their own conventions in this respect - but the short title system is becoming more widely used and is easier to follow. However, an enormous number of academic books have been produced using the older system, so it is worth understanding how it operates, even if you decide not to use it.

28. Using the system of Latin abbreviations, the first quotation from a text is referenced fully with an endnote. In the case of any references which follow, just give the author's name followed by op. cit. (which means 'in the work already quoted') and then the page number - as follows:

11. J.D. Bryant, The Origins of Mythology, London: Carfax Press, 1971, p.234.
12. History Today, Vol XXXIV, No 18, p.123.
13. Bryant, op. cit., p. 387.

29. If the very next quotation is again from the same work, the abbreviation ibid. (which means 'in the same place') is followed by a page reference. You do not need to give the author's name. The sequence just given would therefore be extended:

11. J.D. Bryant, The Origins of Mythology, London: Carfax Press, 1971, p.234.
12. History Today, Vol XXXIV, No 18, p.123.
13. Bryant, op. cit., p. 387.

30. The short title system is particularly useful for longer essays which might deal with a number of texts or different books by the same author. Second and third year undergraduate studies often require a lengthy piece of work such as this. The principle is the same one of giving full bibliographical details in the first reference. Subsequent quotations are given a reference which is composed of the author's surname, a shortened form of the book title, and the page number. The examples shown above would therefore appear as follows:

11. J.D. Bryant, The Origins of Mythology, London: Carfax Press, 1971, p.234.
12. History Today, Vol XXXIV, No 18, p.123.
13. Bryant, Mythology, p. 387.

31. The conventions of quoting from poetry and plays are exactly the same, but for the convenience of the reader, line numbers are given.

32. There are a number of widespread misunderstandings about the use of quotation and systems of referencing. It is worth taking the trouble to follow the conventions outlined above (or use the Harvard system). Once you have brought simplicity and clarity to the presentation of your quotations it will help to improve the appearance and credibility of your work.

*13You should not put page references in margins: they are placed immediately after the quotation, within your text.

*14You should not locate references as part of your own argument with expression such as 'and we see this on page 27 where he collapses slowly ... then later in the paragraph where he recovers'.

*15Ellipses are shown by three dots only [...] not a random number scattered across the page.

*16References and note numbers should form part of the text of your argument. They should not be added to the essay at a later stage and written into the margins or squeezed above the text as superscripts.

33. You should avoid using too many quotations and references to secondary material. In some subjects this can sometimes be required (as in a 'review of the literature') but in most it is not. Packing your essay with references to other people's ideas creates the impression that you are unable to create an argument of your own. Remember that your own evidence or points should come first. Quotation should normally be offered after you have established your own argument.
34. Some people use quotations as a means of starting an introduction or rounding off the conclusion to an essay. This can give your work a touch of sparkle if the quote is well chosen. However, you should minimize the use of this strategy in the body of the essay itself. Paragraphs which begin with a quotation can weaken your argument - for two reasons.

*17First, you are not leading with your own ideas in the form of a topic sentence directly related to the question.

*18Second, the substance of your argument in what follows might give the impression of being a commentary on the secondary source quoted, rather than an answer to the original question.

What is English Word Stress?

In English, we do not say each syllable with the same force or strength. In one word, we accentuate ONE syllable. We say *one* syllable very loudly (big, strong, important) and *all the other syllables* very quietly.

Let's take 3 words: photograph, photographer and photographic. Do they sound the same when spoken? No. Because we accentuate (stress) ONE syllable in each word. And it is not always the same syllable. So the shape of each word is different.

The word	Total syllables	Stressed syllables
PHOTOGRAPH	3	#1
PHOTOGRAPHER	4	#2
PHOTOGRAPHIC	4	#3

This happens in ALL words with 2 or more syllables: TEACHer, JaPAN, CHINa, aBOVE, converSAtion, INteresting, imPORtant, deMAND, etCETera, etCETera, etCETera
The syllables that are not stressed are ‘weak’ or ‘small’ or ‘quiet’. Native speakers of English listen for the STRESSED syllables, not the weak syllables. If you use word stress in your speech, you will instantly and automatically improve your pronunciation and your comprehension.

Try to hear the stress in individual words each time you listen to English - on the radio, or in films for example. Your first step is to HEAR and recognise it. After that, you can USE it!

There are two very important rules about word stress:

12. One word, one stress. (One word cannot have two stresses. So if you hear two stresses, you have heard two words, not one word.)
13. The stress is always on a vowel.

Why is Word Stress Important in English?

Word stress is not used in all languages. Some languages, Japanese or French for example, pronounce each syllable with eq-ual em-pha-sis.

Other languages, English for example, use word stress.

Word stress is not an optional extra that you can add to the English language if you want. It is part of the language! English speakers use word stress to communicate rapidly and accurately, even in difficult conditions. If, for example, you do not hear a word clearly, you can still understand the word because of the position of the stress.

Think again about the two words photograph and photographer. Now imagine that you are speaking to somebody by telephone over a very bad line. You cannot hear clearly. In fact, you hear only the first two syllables of one of these words, photo... Which word is it, photograph or photographer? Of course, with word stress you will know immediately which word it is because in reality you will hear either PHOto... or phoTO... So without hearing the whole word, you probably know what the word is (PHOto...graph or phoTO...grapher). It's magic! (Of course, you also have the 'context' of your conversation to help you.)

This is a simple example of how word stress helps us understand English. There are many, many other examples, because we use word stress all the time, without thinking about it.

How do I Know where to Put the Word Stress in English?

There are some *rules* about which syllable to stress. But...the rules are rather complicated! Probably the best way to learn is from experience. Listen carefully to spoken English and try to develop a feeling for the "music" of the language.

When you learn a new word, you should also learn its stress pattern. If you keep a vocabulary book, make a note to show which syllable is stressed. If you do not know, you can look in a dictionary. All dictionaries give the phonetic spelling of a word. This is where they show which syllable is stressed, usually with an apostrophe (') just *before* or just *after* the stressed syllable. (The notes at the front of the dictionary will explain the system used.) Look at (and listen to) this example for the word plastic. There are 2 syllables. Syllable #1 is stressed.

Example Phonetic Spelling: Dictionary A Phonetic Spelling: Dictionary B <u>PLAS</u>TIC /plæs'tIk/ /'plæs tIk/		