

# REVIEWING ENGLISH GRAMMAR

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2006

## INTRODUCTION

This booklet is intended to serve as a reference guide and a review of basic grammar rules for students writing in English. It is not an exhaustive study of English grammar; rather, it is a compilation of grammar definitions, explanations, and examples from several grammar books. Basic grammar points and some troublesome spots are addressed. Hopefully the booklet will be helpful to students of English as a Foreign Language as they expand their language abilities and gain confidence in communicating in English.

### **A Grammatical Song**

Running and jumping, I sing a song,  
The words are rhythmic and very strong,  
Lunging and leaping, sentences form,  
Letters spill out and begin to transform,  
Nouns and Verbs juggle around,  
Helping, linking, making a sound,  
Adverbs and Adjectives add to the beauty,  
Describing, defining, playing their duty,  
Concepts, opinions lie everywhere,  
Subjects, Predicates smash and smear,  
Creative Conjunctions connect the beliefs,  
Coordinating, subordinating, making it brief,  
The verses are mighty, yet not very long,  
Running and jumping, I sing the song.

by Christopher Stapleton

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## PARTS OF SPEECH

Words can be identified in two ways:

### 1) Term – a part of speech

Part of Speech	Use	Example
Noun	names	man, China, wealth
Pronoun	takes the place of a noun	you, we, herself, them, this, who
Verb	shows action or helps to make a statement	is, does, have, sings, jumped
Adjective	modifies a noun or pronoun	red, large, two
Adverb	modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb	quickly, well, somewhat, too
Article	makes a noun specific or general	the, a, an
Preposition	relates a noun or a pronoun to another word	to, up, below, from, for, of
Conjunction	joins words or groups of words	and, or, nor, but, so, yet
Interjection	shows strong feeling	Wow!

### 2) Usage – function in a sentence

What does the word **do** in the sentence?

The same word can be used as more than one part of speech.

**LOVE** As a verb: *He really **loves** her.*  
 As a noun: ***Love** is a beautiful thing!*  
 As an adjective: *He read the **love** letter several times.*

## NOUNS

- name a person, place, thing, or idea
- answer the questions “who” or “what”

### Classification of Nouns:

**Proper:** name a particular person, place, or thing and are capitalized

*John, Manila, Eiffel Tower*

- do not take the indefinite article **a/an**
- do not take the definite article **the** in the singular, but can take **the** in the plural

**Common:** do not name a particular person, place, or thing and are not capitalized

*child, school, desk*

**Abstract:** name a quality, characteristic, or idea

*kindness, love, poverty*

**Concrete:** name objects that can be sensed

*tomato, water, table*

**Collective:** name a group

*faculty, family, team*

- can be singular or plural, depending on the speaker or writer’s intention

**Count:** items that can be counted

- can take indefinite and definite article  
*a pen, an error, the desk, the students, the classes*
- are formed with **-s/-es**  
*chair, chairs dish, dishes*

**Noncount:** items that cannot be counted

*justice, coffee, sugar, beef, work*

- do not take the indefinite article **a/an**
- can take the definite article **the**  
*furniture, milk, the fruit, the scenery*
- have no plural form; these nouns do not take **-s/-es**
- take a singular verb  
*The food **is** on the table.*

## How can nouns be used in a sentence?

### Nouns as subjects

- tell *WHO* or *WHAT* a sentence is about  
*The **boy** studied. Who studied? the boy*
- usually identify the topic of the sentence

The subject and the verb work together to tell the reader what the sentence is about.

### Nouns as direct objects

- answer the question – *Whom* or *What* after the verb  
*He reads the **book**. He reads what? the book*

### Nouns as indirect objects

- answer the question – *to whom* or *for whom* the action of the verb is done  
*The teacher gave **Mary** the letter. The teacher gave the letter to whom? Mary*  
*The girls made **Joe** a cake. The girls made a cake for whom? Joe*

### Nouns as objects of prepositions

- answer the question - *Whom* or *What* after the preposition as it relates to the rest of the sentence  
*The students walked down the **street**. down the what? the street*

### Nouns as predicate nominatives

- follow a linking verb and rename the subject  
***Tom** is a **student**. Student renames Tom.*

### Nouns as appositives

- rename and identify the noun it is placed next to  
***Tom, a student**, attends night classes. Student renames Tom.*
- are nouns or pronouns, often with modifiers, positioned beside another noun or pronoun to explain or identify it
- usually follow the word they explain or identify, but sometimes precede it  
*My professor, **Dr. John Smith**, is teaching mathematics..*  
***Once a pagan feast**, Valentine's Day is now celebrated as a day of love.*
- can be a reflexive pronoun used to show emphasis or intensity. The position can immediately follow the noun or come at the end of the clause.  
*I **myself** handed in the assignment. I handed in the assignment **myself**.*
- can be a phrase consisting of an appositive and its modifiers  
*My brother's cat, **a beautiful black Persian with green eyes**, won first place in the show.*

## ARTICLES

- are used before a noun to indicate whether the speaker is referring to a specific person, place, or thing, or whether he is making reference in a general way

### Indefinite articles

- ‘a’ and ‘an’
- indicate general reference
- are singular in form and used with singular count nouns  
*A new student arrived at school today. An umbrella was left under the table.*
- indicate membership in a profession, nation, or religion  
*She is a teacher. He is an American. John is a Christian.*

### Definite articles

- ‘the’
- indicates specific reference
- may be used with both singular and plural nouns  
*The student is from China.  
The students met in small groups.*

### No article

- is used with names of languages, nationalities, names of sports, names of academic subjects, or proper nouns  
*John is studying Chinese and math tonight, instead of playing volleyball.*

‘A’ and ‘an’ introduce new information, while ‘the’ refers to given information in a text.

*A new student arrived at school today. We all greeted the student warmly.*

The choice of ‘a’ or ‘an’

- is determined by the vowel or consonant **sound**, not the letter  
*A one hour lecture is held this afternoon.  
That was a useful idea.  
He talked for an hour.*

## PREPOSITIONS

- are used to show the relationship of a noun or pronoun to some other word in the sentence
- are usually followed by a noun or noun phrase, thus creating a prepositional phrase
- can act adjectivally or adverbially in the sentence  
*The course on academic writing is held in classroom 5.  
on academic writing describes ‘course’ and acts adjectivally.  
in classroom 5 answers the question where and acts adverbially.*

## MODIFIERS

A modifier is a word or group of words that adds information about another word in the sentence.

‘Modify’ means to limit or restrict in meaning, or to qualify or describe.

The general rule is that modifiers should be placed as close as possible to the words they modify.

### Adjective

- is a word used to modify or describe a noun or pronoun
- may answer one of the following questions:
  - What kind?                *green apples, small car, capable student*
  - Which one?              *this woman, that class*
  - How many?                *some birds, two stories*

If more than one adjective is used to describe a noun, the adjectives follow a certain order.

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Size or Shape</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Color</b>	<b>Origin</b>	
<i>I have</i>	<i>three</i>	<i>big</i>	<i>beautiful</i>	<i>green</i>	<i>African</i>	<i>turtles.</i>

### Adverb

- is a word used to modify a verb, an adjective, or another adverb
  - modifying a verb:        *Debbie studied **carefully**.*
  - modifying an adjective: *She was **extremely** happy.*
  - modifying an adverb:    *Debbie studied **very** carefully.*
- may answer one of the following questions:
  - How?                      *The teacher talked **slowly**.*
  - When?                    ***Yesterday** class was cancelled.*
  - Where?                   *She reads **everywhere**.*
- may be used for emphasis
  - very, really, actually, truly, indeed*
  - That test was **really** difficult!*

## VERBS

- express the action of the sentence  
*The boys **run** down the street.*
- express a condition or state of being  
*The flower **is** red. This flower **smells** great!*

The verb and the subject together make up the topic of the sentence.

Identifying the subject and the verb is the basis for understanding the sentence.

Find the subject by asking “Who or what the sentence is about?”

Find the verb by naming the subject and asking “Did what?” or “Does what?”

## The Tenses – How Verbs Tell Time

### Present Simple

- expresses daily habits or usual activities  
*I usually **eat** lunch in the canteen.*
- expresses general statements of fact  
*The earth **revolves** around the sun.*

To form a negative or question use the helping verb *do/does* or *don't/doesn't*

*I **don't** usually **eat** lunch in the canteen.*

*She **doesn't** usually **come** to this class.*

***Does** John often **attend** this class?*

***Do** you always **walk** to school?*

### Present Continuous (Progressive)

- basic form: to be (present) + -ing
- expresses an activity that is in progress right now  
*I **am studying** English.*  
*What language **are** those people **speaking**?*
- expresses a temporary situation  
*I **am living** in Manila while I attend school.*  
***Are** you **studying** English tonight?*
- expresses future meaning  
*What **are** you **doing** tomorrow evening?*

Contrast with present simple

*Those people **are speaking** Chinese to the teacher. I **speak** English.*

*The kettle **is boiling**. Please turn it off. Water **boils** at 100 degrees Celsius.*

### Present Perfect

- basic form: have/has + past participle
- expresses activities or situations that occurred (or did not occur) ‘before now’, at some unspecified time in the past  
*Ann **has** already **read** this book.*
- expresses activities that were repeated several or many times in the past; the exact times are unspecified  
*Ann **has read** this book many times.*
- is used with ‘for’ and ‘since’, expressing situations that began in the past and continue to the present  
*They **have lived** in Manila for 2 years. Ann **has studied** English since 1998.*

### Present Perfect Continuous (Progressive)

- basic form: have/has + been + -ing
- expresses the duration (length of time) of an activity that is in progress  
*She **has been writing** this paper for an hour and is still not finished.*  
*They **have been studying** in this school since 2004.*

### Past Simple

- expresses an activity or situation that began and ended at a particular time in the past  
*I **walked** to school in the rain.*  
*They **ate** in the canteen.*

To form a negative or question use the helping verb *did/didn't*

- Did** you **walk** to school?*
- Did** Ruth **arrive** late?*
- The teacher **did** not **discuss** that topic today.*
- They **didn't** come to the library today.*

### Past Continuous (Progressive)

- basic form: to be (past) + -ing
- expresses an activity that was in progress at a point of time in the past  
*At ten o'clock last night, I **was studying**.*
- expresses an activity that began earlier and was in progress when another action occurred  
*While I **was studying**, Tom came.*  
*We **were studying** when the phone rang.*

### Past Perfect

- basic form: had + past participle
- expresses an activity that occurred before another time in the past  
*I **had finished** my assignment before I went to the mall.*

### Future

- basic forms: *be going to* and *will + base form*  
*I **am going to study** in the library this afternoon.*  
*Sam and George **are going to come** to the meeting tonight.*  
*Sam and George **will come** to the meeting tonight.*
- contracted form of the negative *will not = won't*  
*I **will not attend** class tonight.*  
*I **won't attend** class tonight.*

## A Summary of the Verb Tenses

### Present Simple

- a habitual action or general statement

*I eat lunch every day.*

### Present Progressive

- a temporary activity that began in the past, is continuing at present, and will probably end at some point in the future

*I am eating lunch right now.*

### Present Perfect

- a description of something that happened in the past and the effect is felt in the present  
No specific time is mentioned.

*I have eaten lunch here many times.*

### Past Simple

- a completed action in the past

*I ate lunch.*

### Past Progressive

- an activity that was in progress at a point in time in the past

*I was eating lunch when you called.*

### Past Perfect

- an activity that occurred before another time in the past

*I had already eaten when you called.*

Complete these sentences with the correct tense using the words in the parentheses.

- When I left for school this morning, it \_\_\_\_\_ (rain), so I used my umbrella.
- By the time class was over, the rain \_\_\_\_\_ (stop), so I didn't need my umbrella.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (you, enjoy) the lecture last night?  
Yes, I did. I \_\_\_\_\_ (go, not) to a lecture for a long time.
- I was late. The class \_\_\_\_\_ (already, start) by the time I arrived.
- I \_\_\_\_\_ (read) that book many times.
- While John \_\_\_\_\_ (write) his paper, Mary \_\_\_\_\_ (call).
- I \_\_\_\_\_ (meet) many people since I \_\_\_\_\_ (come) here in June.
- Usually I \_\_\_\_\_ (sleep) until 6 a.m.
- This lecture \_\_\_\_\_ (be) so interesting, that I \_\_\_\_\_ (take) notes.

(answers: was raining, had stopped, Did you enjoy, had not gone, had already started, have read, was writing, called, have met, came, sleep, is, am taking)

## SUBJECT AND VERB AGREEMENT

A verb agrees with its subject in number and person.

Number = singular or plural

Person = 1<sup>st</sup> is *speaker*, 2<sup>nd</sup> is *person spoken to*, 3<sup>rd</sup> is *person or thing spoken about*

Singular subjects take singular verbs.

*The teacher lectures on Mondays.*

Plural subjects take plural verbs.

*The teachers meet for meetings on Wednesdays.*

### Three major problems to be aware of in subject-verb agreement

- forming the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular in the present and present perfect tenses
- identifying intervening expressions
- knowing whether the subject noun takes a singular or plural verb

#### 1) Forming the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular

The 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular in the present tense of verbs is formed with an –s or -es

<b>WALK</b>		<b>WATCH</b>	
<i>I walk</i>	<i>we walk</i>	<i>I watch</i>	<i>we watch</i>
<i>you walk</i>	<i>you walk</i>	<i>you watch</i>	<i>you watch</i>
<i>he/she/it <b>walks</b></i>	<i>they walk</i>	<i>he/she/it <b>watches</b></i>	<i>they watch</i>

**Beware!** This may look like a plural, but it is the singular form for 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular verbs.

*He **walks** down the street. She **watches** a movie. John **studies** for the exam.*

The 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular in the present perfect tense is formed with the auxiliary verb **has**.

<b>WALK</b>	
<i>I have walked</i>	<i>we have walked</i>
<i>you have walked</i>	<i>you have walked</i>
<i>he/she/it <b>has</b> walked</i>	<i>they have walked</i>

The verb To Be is irregular in the singular present tense.

<b>BE</b>	
<i>I <b>am</b></i>	<i>we are</i>
<i>you <b>are</b></i>	<i>you are</i>
<i>he/she/it <b>is</b></i>	<i>they are</i>

#### 2) Identifying intervening expressions

Sometimes a phrase comes between the subject and the verb.

**Beware!** The verb must agree with the subject, not the noun in the phrase!

Prepositional phrases: *The **box of books is** very heavy.*

Modifying phrases: *The **girl, as well as the boy, was** late for class.*

Relative clauses: *The **students who were with me at lunch are** always cheerful.*

### 3) Knowing whether the subject noun takes a singular or plural verb

#### Compound subjects

- take plural verbs  
*Pizza and ice cream are her favorite foods.*  
*John, Hannah, and Peter were late.*

#### Questions

- To identify the subject, turn the question into a statement.  
*Where are Bob and Jane going?   **Bob and Jane** are going where.*  
*What are they doing?       **They** are doing what.*

#### There is/ There are

- The subject follows the 'there is/there are' expression.  
*There is a meeting in room 5.*  
*There are many students attending the lecture.*
- To identify the subject, restate the sentence omitting the 'there'.  
*There is a meeting in room 5.*  
*A **meeting** is in room 5.*  
*There are many students attending the lecture.*  
*Many **students** are attending the lecture.*

#### Proximity Rule

- Singular subjects joined by 'or' or 'nor' take a singular verb.  
*Either the syllabus or the calendar **was** wrong.*
- If one subject is singular and one is plural, the verb agrees with the nearer one.  
*Either the teacher or the **students** **were** mistaken.*  
*Either the students or the **teacher** **was** mistaken.*  
*Neither the book nor the **papers** **were** left on the table.*

#### Nouns plural in form

- Some take singular verbs.  
*The **news** **is** reported at eleven o'clock.*
  - nouns such as academic subjects that end in -ics and certain illnesses  
***Physics** **meets** at 9a.m.   **Diabetes** **is** an illness.*
- Some take plural verbs.  
*The **scissors** **are** sharp.*
  - nouns such as trousers, pants, eyeglasses, tweezers, tongs, jeans, shears
- Plural nouns denoting a quantity take a singular verb.  
***Twenty dollars** **is** too much to spend on that book.*

#### Indefinite pronouns as subjects

- The following words are singular: each, either, neither, one, no one, every one, anyone, someone, everyone, anybody, somebody, everybody.  
***Everybody** **is** attending the meeting.*
- The following words are plural: several, few, both, many.  
***Several** of the classes **are** cancelled.*
- The following words may be singular or plural: some, any, none, all, most
  - When the pronoun refers to a singular word, it is singular.  
***Some** of the **assignment** **was** difficult.*
  - When the pronoun refers to a plural word, it is plural.  
***Some** of the **students** **were** studying in the library.*

## MODAL AUXILIARIES

- generally express the speakers' attitudes.
- act as auxiliary or helping verbs.
- do not change in form to agree with the subject and are followed by the base form of the verb.  
Correct: *She **might** go to the library.*  
Incorrect: *She mights go to the library. She might goes to the library.*
- can be single word modals.  
*can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would*
- can be phrasal expressions and used with the infinitive.  
*be able to, be going to, be supposed to, have to, have got to, ought to, used to*
- can express degrees of politeness or formality.

## FUNCTIONS OF MODAL AUXILIARIES

### Expressing ability: **can, could, be able to**

**Can** expresses *ability* in the present or future.

*Bob **can** play the piano.*

The past form of **can** is **could**.

*Our son **could** play the piano when he was 6.*

### Expressing possibility: **may, might, could**

*It **may** rain tomorrow. It **might** rain tomorrow. It **could** rain tomorrow.*

**Beware!** **May be** (spelled as two words) is a verb form, modal + verb to be.

*John **may be** sick.*

**Maybe** (spelled as one word) is an adverb meaning "perhaps".

***Maybe** it will rain tomorrow.*

### Giving permission: **may, can.**

Though the meaning is the same, **may** is more formal than **can**.

*You **may** have a cookie later. Kids, you **can** have a cookie later.*

**May not** and **cannot** are used *deny permission*

*You **may not** have a cookie. You **can't (cannot)** have a cookie.*

### Asking for permission: **may I, can I, could I**

**May** is more polite and formal than **could** and **can**.

***May I** please borrow your pen?*

***Could I** please borrow your pen?*

***Can I** please borrow your pen?*

### Asking for assistance: **would you, could you, will you, can you**

These expressions ask for someone's help or cooperation.

***Would you** please open the door? **Could you** please open the door?*

***Will you** please open the door? **Can you** please open the door?*

**Beware!** **May** is not used when **you** is the subject of a question.

Incorrect: *May you please open the door?*

**Expressing necessity: should, ought to, had better, have to, have got to, must**

These expressions have basically the same meaning:

“This is a good idea. This is good advice”.

*My books are due at the library. I **should** return them.*

Note: Usually **had** is the past form of **have**. However, in the expression **had better**, **had** is used as part of a modal and the meaning is not past. The meaning is present or future.

*I **had better** study for the test tomorrow.*

The past form of **have to** is **had to**.

*I **had to** study last night.*

**Expressing degrees of certainty:**

100%                **will, be going to**

95 %                **must**

90%                **should, ought to**

less than 50%    **may, might, could**

*I **am going to** attend class tonight.*

*I **might** go to class tonight.*

**Expressing degrees of politeness in making requests:**

Least formal

**Can ...**

**Could ...**

**Is it ok ...**

**May ...**

**Do you mind ...**

**Would you mind ...**

**I wonder if ...**

Most formal

**I was wondering if you would mind ...**

***Can** I borrow your book?*

*I **was wondering if you would mind** lending me your book.*

## PRONOUNS

- are words that take the place of a noun or another pronoun.
- save a noun from being repeated too often.
- serve when a more exact time or noun is unknown.

An antecedent is the noun to which the pronoun refers.

## TYPES OF PRONOUNS

### Personal Pronouns

- change form and reinforce how they are used in a sentence
- are categorized by person (first, second, third)
- have a singular and plural form
- have gender in the third person singular

1<sup>st</sup> person: the person speaking      **I /We** am/are working.  
 2<sup>nd</sup> person: the person spoken to      **You** are working.  
 3<sup>rd</sup> person: someone or something else      **He/She/It /They** is/are working.

- have case or forms that show what function the pronoun is performing  
 The case indicates the relation of the pronoun to other words in the sentence.

Nominative case:      pronoun as subject      ***I** am working.*

Objective case:      pronoun as object      *John sees **her**.*

Possessive case:      pronoun showing ownership  
 This pronoun stands alone.

*The book is **hers**. The pen is **mine**.*

adjective showing ownership

It is only used with a noun following.

*That is **her** book. That is **my** book.*

	nominative	objective	possessive pronoun	possessive adjective
<b>singular</b>				
1 <sup>st</sup> person	I	me	mine	my
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	you	you	yours	your
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	he/she/it	him/her/it	his/hers	his/her/its
<b>plural</b>				
1 <sup>st</sup> person	we	us	ours	our
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	you	you	yours	your
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	they	them	theirs	their

### Beware!

‘**Its**’ is a possessive adjective.

*The dog ate **its** bone.*

‘**It’s**’ is the contraction **it + is**, or **it + has**

***It’s** time for lunch! **It is** time for lunch!*

***It’s been** a long day! **It has been** a long day!*

### Choosing the correct form of the personal pronoun

As the subject of a verb, the pronoun takes the **nominative form**.

As the object of a verb, the pronoun takes the **objective form**.

- as part of compound subjects or compound objects
  - Try each subject (or object) separately with the verb.
  - The teacher chose Tom and **him**.*
  - The teacher chose Tom.    The teacher chose **him**.*
  - George and **he** are writing a report.*
  - He** is writing a report.*
  - Did you see Andy and **them** today?    Did you see **them** today?*
- used with a noun for emphasis
  - Read the sentence without the noun.
  - We** students are willing to come and help.*
  - We** are willing to come and help.*
  - The noise annoys **us** students.*
  - The noise annoys **us**.*
- used as an object of a preposition
  - Use the objective case.
  - The teacher gave the book to **her**.*
  - John sat behind Sue and **me**.*
- used in incomplete constructions.
  - This is most common after the words “than” and “as”.
  - Use the form of the pronoun you would use if the construction were completed.
  - Mary has been studying as long as **they**.* (as they have been studying)
  - Arnold is taller than **I**.* (than I am tall)

### Reflexive pronouns

- end in –self/selves
- are used when the subject and the object are the same person.
  - The action of the verb is pointed back to the subject of the sentence.
  - I saw **myself** in the mirror.    She can do it **herself**.*
  - They went there by **themselves**.*

	singular	plural
1 <sup>st</sup> person	myself	ourselves
2 <sup>nd</sup> person	yourself	yourselves
3 <sup>rd</sup> person	himself, herself, itself	themselves

### Indefinite pronouns

- do not relate to a person as clearly as personal pronouns do
  - usually do not refer to a specific antecedent
  - usually express the idea of quantity
- Some common indefinite pronouns are: *each, everyone, somebody, something, anyone, no one, nothing, both, all, few, many, several, some, most*
- Somebody** left a book on the table.*
- Most** of the students came to the lecture.*

## Demonstrative pronouns

- point out persons or things *this that these those*  
*That is an excellent question. Those apples look delicious.*

## Interrogative pronouns

- are used in questions *who whose whom which what*  
*What did you say?*

**Beware!** ‘Whose’ is a possessive pronoun or adjective

*Whose is that?*

*Whose book is on the table?*

‘Who’s’ is the contraction **who + is**

*Who’s coming to dinner?*

## AGREEMENT OF PRONOUN AND ANTECEDENT

A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in person, number, and gender.

*John handed in **his** paper.*

*Mary should have come **herself**.*

*The **school** advertises **its** courses online.*

*The **mother** told **her children** that **they** needed to go to bed.*

Most rules are the same as the rules for subject-verb agreement.

Antecedents joined by ‘and’ are compound and require a plural pronoun.

*John and his brother are hoping **they** will pass the course.*

Nouns plural in form:

*The **scissors** are sharp. Put **them** down.*

*The **news** is on at 6 p.m. My father watches **it** every evening.*

Use the possessive case with a gerund. (A gerund is a verb used as a noun. Base form + -ing)

*I think you need to improve **your** singing.*

***Your** writing a recommendation for me is most helpful.*

## Ambiguous reference

The reference of a pronoun is ambiguous if the pronoun may refer to more than one antecedent, and the reader does not know which antecedent is meant.

Ambiguous: *If you put this page in your notebook, you can refer to **it**.*

(What does ‘it’ refer to?)

Better: *You can refer to this **page** easily if you put **it** in your notebook.*

Ambiguous: *John told his brother that **he** is going to be a great ball player.*

(Who is ‘he’?)

Better: ***John** told his brother, “**I’m** going to be a great ball player.”*

Ambiguous: *I just used my pen to write a check, but now I can’t find **it**.*

(Can’t find what?)

Better: *I just used my pen to write a check, but now I can’t find the pen.*

Or: *The pen I just used to write a check is missing.*

(In order to maintain clarity in this sentence, do not substitute the nouns with pronouns.)

Cited from “How Grammar Works”. 1999.

In your writing, make sure you don’t confuse your reader about what noun a pronoun stands for. In your reading, always know what noun a pronoun is replacing. Identify the antecedent!

## TRANSITIONAL SIGNALS

- are words or phrases that make a specific, logical connection between ideas
- tie ideas together, show the relative importance, and generally help the reader to follow the writer's thought
- keep the thought of a paragraph flowing smoothly from sentence to sentence
- act as a traffic signal or guide for the reader as he proceeds through what is written

Transitional expressions may be grouped according to the kinds of ideas they express.

### Linking similar ideas or adding an idea to one already stated:

again	for example	likewise
also	for instance	moreover
and	further	nor
another	furthermore	of course
besides	in addition	similarly
equally important	in a like manner	too

### Linking ideas that are dissimilar or apparently contradictory:

although	however	on the other hand
and yet	in spite of	otherwise
as it	instead	provided that
but	nevertheless	still
conversely	on the contrary	yet
even if		

### Indicating cause, purpose, or result:

as	for	so
as a result	for this reason	then
because	hence	therefore
consequently	since	thus

### Indicating time or position:

above	before	meanwhile
across	beyond	next
afterward	eventually	presently
around	finally	second, etc
at once	first	soon
at the present time	here	thereafter

### Indicating an example or a summary of ideas:

as a result	in any event	in other words
as I have said	in brief	in short
for example	in conclusion	on the whole
for instance	in fact	to sum up
in any case		

Cited from "Warriner's English Grammar and Composition". 1986.

## CONJUNCTIONS

- are words that join other words, phrases, or clauses

### Coordinating conjunctions

- connect words or phrases that have the same grammatical function in a sentence using a parallel structure

- connecting two subjects

*John **and** Mary read English every day.*

- connecting two verbs

*John reads **and** studies every day.*

- connecting two direct objects

*Is John studying **English or** Chinese?*

- connecting two prepositional phrases

*John studies **at school but** not at home.*

The most common conjunctions using this pattern are **and, but, or, nor**.

### Correlative conjunctions or paired conjunctions

- have a partner to signal what is coming and to emphasize their meaning

**both/and not only/but also either/or neither/nor whether/or**

*John studies **not only** English **but also** Chinese.*

***Whether** John calls tonight **or** tomorrow is not important.*

The first word of a paired conjunction should come just before what is being joined.

Incorrect: *The student **both** seemed confused **and** upset.*

Correct: *The student seemed **both** confused **and** upset.*

### Subordinating conjunctions

- do not join two parallel clauses
- change the way the clauses work together and make them complex sentences
- show how two clauses are related and how one affects the other's meaning
- place the clause in a position under, or subordinate to, a main clause
- introduce dependent clauses: adverb, adjective, or noun clauses

Adverb clause: *She left **because it was raining**.*

Adjective clause: *The girl, **who sat behind us**, is in my night class.*

Noun clause: *I know **that this class will be taught next semester**.*

Common subordinators:

after	before	that	when	which
although	even though	though	whenever	while
as	how	unless	where	who
as if	if	until	wherever	whom
as soon as	since	what	whether	whose
because	so that			

## PUTTING GRAMMAR TO WORK

### PHRASES

- are a group of words acting as a single part of speech
- do **not** contain a verb and its subject
- do **not** express a complete thought
- need to be connected to the sentence to which it belongs
- are called fragments when they are incorrectly allowed to stand alone

There are three types of phrases:

Prepositional: *to class with his friends*

*John is going **to class with his friends***

Verbal: *riding the bus to sing a song*

***Riding the bus** is the fastest way to school.*

*John wants **to sing a song** in the concert.*

Appositive: *the new English teacher*

*Lynn, **the new English teacher**, is from Australia.*

### CLAUSES

- contain a subject and verb

There are two types of clauses:

Dependent: *Because it is raining*

- contains a subject and verb

- does **not** express a complete thought

Independent: *It is raining.*

- contains a subject and verb

- expresses a complete thought

## Sentences

- are independent clauses
- contain a subject and verb
- are a group of words that expresses a complete thought

*I am going to the class.*

*John is riding the bus with his friends to school.*

*That classroom is used by the other students during lunch.*

**A sentence must contain at least one main or independent clause (S-V) and express a complete thought.**

A sentence

- is called a fragment when it does not express a complete thought
- is called a fragment when it does contain a verb and its subject
- is called a fragment when it is a dependent clause that is **not** connected to a main idea or an independent thought.
- is called a fragment when it is an incomplete sentence or part of a sentence.

*When the movie is over*

*Because the class is cancelled*

*Even though we studied very hard and read the book three times*

## FOUR TYPES OF SENTENCES

**Simple**            *Mr. Lee is from Korea.*

**Compound**     *Mr. Lee is from Korea; however, he lives in Japan.*

**Complex**        *Mr. Lee lives in Japan because he has business interests there.*

**Compound-complex** *Mr. Lee, who is from Korea, lives in Japan and his children attend a Japanese school.*

## Simple sentence

- is **one** independent clause, even if there are compound subjects or compound verbs
- |                          |      |  |
|--------------------------|------|--|
| one subject + one verb   | SV   | <i>John reads every day.</i>                           |
| one subject + two verbs  | SVV  | <i>John reads and studies every day.</i>               |
| two subjects + one verb  | SSV  | <i>John and Mary read English every day.</i>           |
| two subjects + two verbs | SSVV | <i>John and Mary read and study English every day.</i> |

## Compound sentence

- has **two or more** independent clauses

Subject-verb + subject-verb    SV+SV

*John reads the newspaper, and Mary studies English.*

There are three ways to form compound sentences:

Coordinating conjunctions

*John studies English, **but** Mary studies Chinese.*

Conjunctive adverbs

*John studies English; **however**, Mary studies Chinese.*

Semi-colon

*John studies English; Mary studies Chinese.*

### 1) Coordinating conjunctions

- combine two independent clauses

There are 7 coordinating conjunctions:

#### FANBOYS

**FOR** To add a reason

*Japanese people live longer than most other nationalities, **for** they eat healthful diets.*

**AND** To add a similar, equal idea

*They eat a lot of fish and vegetables, **and** they eat lightly.*

**NOR** To add a negative equal idea.

*They do not eat a lot of red meat, **nor** do they eat many dairy products.*

Note: *Nor* means “and not.” It joins two negative independent clauses. Notice that question word order is used after *nor*.

**BUT** To add an opposite idea

*Diet is one factor in how long people live, **but** it is not the only factor.*

**OR** To add an alternative possibility

*However, people should limit the amount of animal fat in their diets, **or** they risk getting heart disease.*

**YET** To add an unexpected or surprising continuation

*Cigarette smoking is a factor in longevity, **yet** Japanese and other long-lived Asians have a very high rate of tobacco use..*

**SO** To add an expected result

*Doctors say that stress is another longevity factor, **so** try to avoid stress if you wish to live a longer life.*

Cited from “Writing Academic English”. 2006.

#### Beware!

*but, for* and *yet* are frequently used as prepositions or adverbs, as in the following examples:

*Everyone **but** Claire has sent an answer. (preposition meaning except)*

*I left a message **for** you on your desk. (preposition)*

*She hasn't called **yet**. (adverb)*

### 2) Conjunctive adverbs

A semi-colon precedes the conjunctive adverb and a comma follows it.

*I have finished all the assignments; **moreover**, I began to prepare for the final exam.*

Common conjunctive adverbs:

accordingly	furthermore	in contrast	meanwhile	on the other hand
besides	hence	indeed	moreover	otherwise
consequently	however	instead	nevertheless	therefore
for example	in addition	likewise	nonetheless	thus

### 3) Compound sentences can be connected with a semi-colon.

*John read the assignment; Hannah did not.*

## Complex sentence

- one independent clause + one or more dependent clauses
- A subordinating conjunction introduces the dependent clause.
- There are three types of dependent clauses: noun, adverb, and adjective (relative).

### 1) Noun clause

- is a dependent clause that functions as a noun.
- must be connected to an independent clause to form a complex sentence.
- can be a subject, object, predicate nominative, or appositive.
  - As a subject: ***That Paris is a beautiful city is a known fact.***
  - As a direct object: ***I know where the school is located.***
  - As a predicate nominative: ***This is what we have been looking for.***
  - As an appositive: ***I will tell you the truth, that we are broke.***
- is usually used as an object or complement.
  - I know that you are a student at the school.***
  - I hear that it will rain tomorrow.***

### 2) Adverbial clause

- is a dependent clause that acts like an adverb
- modifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb
- is most common as a modifier of a verb and answers the questions:  
*how, when, where, why, to what extent, in what manner, or under what conditions*
  - After the class was over, we went out for coffee.***
  - Sam studied while he listened to the radio.***
  - I went to a place where I could be quiet.***

### Common Subordinators

<i><b>When?</b></i>	<i><b>Why?</b></i>	<i><b>How?</b></i>	<i><b>Where?</b></i>
after	because	as if	where
as	if	as + adverb + as	wherever
as soon as	in case	provided that	
before	so that		
since	unless		
until	although*		
when	though*		
while			

(\*conveys a negative sense)

Don't forget that many of these words can also work in other ways in a sentence. You must see the in action to be sure.

Cited from "How Grammar Works". 1999.

*I am going to class **after** I finish my lunch.*  
*I am going to class **so that** I can learn English.*  
*I am going to study English **as carefully as** I can.*  
*I am going to class **where** I will learn English.*

### **Beware!** Danger words!

Always check your writing for sentence fragments!

Make sure clauses that begin with words such as *although, since, because, if, before* are attached to an independent clause.

### 3) Adjective or Relative clause

- is a dependent clause that acts like an adjective
- usually begins with a relative pronoun or relative adverb
 

Relative pronouns: <i>who, whom, whose, that</i>	refer to people
<i>which, whose, that</i>	refer to animals, inanimate objects

*I know the teacher **who** teaches English.*

*I know the class **that** you are taking.*

Relative adverbs: *when, where* refer to a time or a place

*I know the school **where** you are studying.*

- modifies a noun or pronoun
 

*The first exam, **which took place at 9 a.m.**, lasted 2 hours.*  
     'which' modifies 'exam'

*Everyone **who studied for the exam** passed it easily.*  
     'who' modifies 'everyone'

*Mr. Kim plans on returning to Seoul **where he was born**.*  
     'where' modifies 'Seoul'
- is placed after its antecedent (the noun or pronoun it modifies) and as close to it as possible in order to avoid confusion

Confusing: *David left the book in his cousin's car **that he had just bought**.*

Who is he? David or his cousin?

What was just bought? The book or the car?

Better: *David left the book **that he had just bought** in his cousin's car.*

#### Agreement

The verb in a relative clause agrees in number with its antecedent.

*A student **who works diligently** usually receives good grades.*

*Students **who work diligently** usually receive good grades.*

### Complex-compound sentence

- two or more independent clauses + one or more dependent clauses.

*I am going to the mall, and John is going to school where he will study physics.*

*There was a movie on Monday that was supposed to be excellent, but I didn't see it.*

## VERBALS

- are verbs acting as other parts of speech, nouns, adjectives, or adverbs
- are called verbals because they are formed from verbs and in some ways act as verbs
- do not function as verbs in the sentence – only as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs

There are three types of verbals: gerunds, infinitives, and participles.

**Gerunds** are verbs acting as nouns in a sentence.

*Reading is my favorite hobby.*

**Infinitives** are verbs acting as a noun, adjective or adverb.

*To read this book is a delightful experience.*

*The library is the place to read!*

*I can't wait to read that book.*

**Participles** are verbs acting as adjectives in a sentence.

*The students reading in the library are in my class*

*The passing grade is a C.*

*The damaged book was not easily repaired.*

### 1) Gerund

- is a verb form ending in –ing that is used as a noun
  - Walking is healthy exercise.*
  - Walking* is formed from the verb *walk* and, as subject of the sentence, is used as a noun.
- is a verbal noun and can be used in any way a noun is used.
  - Subject: *Good writing comes from much practice.*
  - Direct object: *She has developed beautiful writing.*
  - Object of preposition: *She is very good at writing topic sentences.*
  - Indirect object: *She gave her writing her full attention.*
  - Appositive: *Yesterday's assignment, writing a paragraph, took me an hour to do.*

### 2) Infinitive

- is the base form of a verb preceded by *to*
- can be used as a noun, adjective, or adverb
  - Noun as a subject: *To read was her goal.*
  - Noun as a direct object: *She tried to study.*
  - Noun as a predicate nominative: *Her plan was to concentrate.*
  - Adverb modifying a verb: *She went to the library to find help.*
  - Adverb modifying an adjective: *It was hard to concentrate.*
  - Adjective modifying a noun: *She borrowed a book to read.*

### Beware!

Don't confuse the infinitive with the preposition "to".

**TO + NOUN = preposition**

**TO + VERB = infinitive**

### 3) Participles

- are verbs acting as adjectives
- have two forms:

Present *-ing*

*The **writing** materials are on the table. The **passing** grade is a C.*

Past the past participle of the verb

walk, walked, **walked**    speak, spoke, **spoken**

*The **spoken** word is powerful.*

#### **Beware!** The Dangers of Dangling Participles!

The participial phrase modifies the **closest** noun.

Look what happens when the participle or the noun is misplaced.

Incorrect: ***Falling asleep**, the car Jan was driving ran off the road.*

Who is asleep? The car?

The closest noun to the participle is car.

Correct: ***Falling asleep**, Jan drove the car off the road.*

Incorrect: ***Left alone in the house**, the thunderstorm terrified him.*

Correct: ***Left alone in the house**, he was terrified of the storm.*

Incorrect: ***Coming up the front walk**, the bouquet of flowers looked beautiful*

Correct: ***Coming up the front walk**, she noticed that the flowers looked beautiful.*

Incorrect: ***Carrying a pile of books**, her foot caught on the step.*

Correct: ***Carrying a pile of books**, she caught her foot on the step.*

Cited from "Warriner's English Grammar and Composition". 1986.

## PARALLELISM

- adds clarity and smoothness to writing
- is the writer's method of expressing similar ideas in similar grammatical forms
- is the writer's technique of balancing 'like with like'  
nouns with nouns, verb with verbs, gerunds with gerunds, etc.
- can be used with any kind of sentence element

Single words:

Nouns            *I like **pizza, salad, and spaghetti.***  
 Verbs            *Today I **studied, ate, and slept.***  
 Adjectives      *The girl was **pretty, charming, and happy.***  
 Gerunds         ***Swimming and jogging** are his hobbies.*

Incorrect: *Today I study, ate and slept.*

*The girl was pretty, charmingly, and happy.*

*Swimming and to jog are his hobbies.*

Phrases:

Prepositional phrases

*They found the books **in the library, the classroom and the office.***

Infinitive phrases

***To finish school and get a good job** are my goals.*

Participial phrases

*I spent my time **reading a book and eating with friends.***

Gerund phrases

***Writing papers and reading books** are part of our education.*

Clauses:

Adjective clauses    *Mary is a girl **who is happy and who loves to sing.***

Adverb clauses      ***If you leave a note or if you text,** I will receive your message.*

### Remember!

Elements must be similar in idea.

Elements must be kept similar in structure.

Incorrect: *She likes **to study, read, and eating.***

Correct: *She likes **to study, read, and eat.***

Incorrect: *The doctor suggested **plenty of food, rest, and exercising.***

Correct: *The doctor suggested **plenty of food, rest, and exercise.***

Incorrect: *Come to class prepared **to take notes and with some questions to ask.***

Correct: *Come to class prepared **to take notes and to ask some questions.***

## PASSIVE VOICE

- is used when the main interest and focus is on the object of the sentence not the subject.
- is used when it is not known or not important to know exactly who performs an action.
- uses the object of an active verb as the subject of a passive verb.
- is formed with the verb To Be + Past Participle.
- can be formed in all tenses, but is more common:
  - in the present            *English **is spoken** all over the world.*
  - in the past                *English **was taught** in my primary school.*
  - in the present perfect    ***I have been taught** English by several different teachers.*
  - with will                  *English **will be taught** as a required course next semester.*
- is not another way of expressing the same sentence in the active.
  - The active or passive voice is chosen depending on what the writer or speaker is more interested in.
  - Active voice: *The teacher assigned a paper.*  
The emphasis is on 'the teacher'.
  - Passive voice: *A paper was assigned by the teacher.*  
The emphasis is on 'a paper'.

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