English Grammar Reference

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Contents

1 Parts of Speech

1.1. Nouns

Nouns are words that name people, places, things, ideas, or concepts. They are one of the fundamental building blocks of English grammar and are used in almost every sentence.

Types of Nouns

1. Common Nouns: general names (e.g., dog, city, teacher).

2. Proper Nouns: specific names (e.g., London, Sarah, Google). Always capitalized.

3. Countable Nouns: can be counted (e.g., apple/apples, chair/chairs).

4. Uncountable Nouns: cannot be counted (e.g., water, information, rice).

5. Concrete Nouns: refer to physical things (e.g., book, table, car).

6. Abstract Nouns: refer to ideas or qualities (e.g., love, freedom, happiness).

7. Collective Nouns: refer to groups (e.g., team, family, audience).

Plural Rules

Most nouns form the plural by adding -s (e.g., cat → cats).

Nouns ending in -s, -sh, -ch, -x, or -z add -es (e.g., box → boxes).

Nouns ending in a consonant + y change y to i and add -es (e.g., baby → babies).

Irregular plurals must be memorized (e.g., man → men, child → children, mouse → mice).

Nouns and Articles

Nouns are often preceded by articles:

- 'a' before words starting with a consonant sound (a dog).

- 'an' before words starting with a vowel sound (an apple).

- 'the' for specific nouns already known to the listener/reader.

Examples
- The dog is barking. (Common noun)
- Sarah is my friend. (Proper noun)
- I have two apples. (Countable noun)
- We need information. (Uncountable noun)
- Freedom is important. (Abstract noun)
- The team is winning. (Collective noun)

1.2. Pronouns

Pronouns are words that replace nouns to avoid repetition and simplify sentences. They help us speak and write more fluently and efficiently.

Types of Pronouns

1. Personal Pronouns: refer to people or things (e.g., I, you, he, she, it, we, they).

2. Possessive Pronouns: show ownership (e.g., mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs).

3. Reflexive Pronouns: reflect the subject (e.g., myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, themselves).

4. Relative Pronouns: introduce relative clauses (e.g., who, whom, whose, which, that).

5. Demonstrative Pronouns: point to specific things (e.g., this, that, these, those).

6. Indefinite Pronouns: refer to non-specific things or people (e.g., someone, anyone, everybody, nothing).

7. Interrogative Pronouns: used to ask questions (e.g., who, what, which, whom, whose).

Personal Pronouns Table

Subject	Object
I	me
You	you
He	him
She	her
It	it
We	us
They	them

Examples

- She is my friend. (Personal pronoun)
- This book is mine. (Possessive pronoun)
- He hurt himself. (Reflexive pronoun)
- The man who called is my uncle. (Relative pronoun)
- These are my shoes. (Demonstrative pronoun)
- Someone is at the door. (Indefinite pronoun)
- Who is your teacher? (Interrogative pronoun)

1.3. Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe or modify nouns or pronouns. They provide more information about a person, place, thing, or idea, such as size, color, quantity, or quality.

Types of Adjectives

1. Descriptive Adjectives: describe qualities (e.g., beautiful, tall, blue).

2. Quantitative Adjectives: indicate quantity (e.g., some, many, few, ten).

3. Demonstrative Adjectives: point out specific things (e.g., this, that, these, those).

4. Possessive Adjectives: show ownership (e.g., my, your, his, her, its, our, their).

5. Interrogative Adjectives: used in questions (e.g., which, what, whose).

6. Indefinite Adjectives: refer to non-specific items (e.g., any, several, few, many).

Order of Adjectives

When using multiple adjectives before a noun, they usually follow this order:
1. Quantity
2. Opinion
3. Size
4. Age
5. Shape
6. Color
7. Origin
8. Material
9. Purpose
Example: She bought three beautiful small old round red Spanish leather riding boots.

Comparatives and Superlatives

Use comparative adjectives to compare two things (e.g., taller, more expensive).

Use superlative adjectives to compare three or more things (e.g., tallest, most expensive).

Examples

- The red car is fast. (Descriptive)
- I have three dogs. (Quantitative)
- This book is interesting. (Demonstrative)
- My house is big. (Possessive)
- Which jacket is yours? (Interrogative)
- Several people arrived late. (Indefinite)
- She is taller than me. (Comparative)
- It was the most exciting trip ever. (Superlative)

1.4. Adverbs

Adverbs are words that modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. They often describe how, when, where, or to what extent something happens.

Types of Adverbs

1. Adverbs of Manner: describe how something happens (e.g., quickly, carefully, well).

2. Adverbs of Time: describe when something happens (e.g., now, yesterday, soon).

3. Adverbs of Place: describe where something happens (e.g., here, there, everywhere).

4. Adverbs of Frequency: describe how often something happens (e.g., always, sometimes, never).

5. Adverbs of Degree: describe intensity or extent (e.g., very, quite, almost).

6. Adverbs of Certainty: express how sure we are about something (e.g., definitely, probably).

Position of Adverbs

Adverbs can appear in different parts of a sentence:
- Beginning: Usually, I drink coffee in the morning.
- Middle (before the main verb): I always take the train.
- End: She sings beautifully.

Forming Adverbs

Many adverbs are formed by adding -ly to an adjective (e.g., slow → slowly).

Some adverbs are irregular (e.g., good → well, fast → fast).

Examples

- He runs quickly. (Manner)
- We met yesterday. (Time)
- She looked everywhere. (Place)
- They often visit us. (Frequency)
- It's very cold today. (Degree)
- She will probably come later. (Certainty)

1.5. Verbs

Verbs are action or state-of-being words. They are the core of a sentence and show what the subject is doing or what state it is in.

Types of Verbs

1. Action Verbs: express physical or mental actions (e.g., run, think, write).

2. Linking Verbs: connect the subject to more information (e.g., be, seem, become).

3. Auxiliary Verbs: help form verb tenses or voice (e.g., be, have, do).

4. Modal Verbs: express ability, possibility, permission, or obligation (e.g., can, should, must).

5. Transitive Verbs: take a direct object (e.g., I read a book).

6. Intransitive Verbs: do not take a direct object (e.g., She sleeps peacefully).

Regular and Irregular Verbs

Regular verbs form the past tense by adding -ed (e.g., walk → walked).

Irregular verbs do not follow a standard pattern (e.g., go → went, eat → ate).

Basic Verb Tenses

Present: I walk to school.

Past: I walked to school.

Future: I will walk to school.

Examples

- She writes every day. (Action verb)
- He is tired. (Linking verb)
- They have finished the project. (Auxiliary verb)
- You must study harder. (Modal verb)
- I bought a car. (Transitive verb)
- He sleeps late on weekends. (Intransitive verb)

1.6. Prepositions

Prepositions are words that show relationships between nouns or pronouns and other words in a sentence. They often indicate time, place, direction, or introduce objects.

Types of Prepositions

1. Prepositions of Time: indicate when something happens (e.g., at, on, in, since, for).

2. Prepositions of Place/Location: show the position of something (e.g., at, in, on, under, next to).

3. Prepositions of Movement/Direction: show movement from one place to another (e.g., to, into, onto, out of).

4. Prepositions of Cause/Reason: explain the reason (e.g., because of, due to, thanks to).

5. Prepositional Phrases: groups of words that begin with a preposition and end with a noun/pronoun (e.g., in front of, next to, in spite of).

Use and Placement

Prepositions are usually followed by a noun or pronoun, forming a prepositional phrase:
- She sat on the chair.
- We arrived at the airport.
- The book is under the table.

Examples

- We'll meet at 5 PM. (Time)
- The keys are on the table. (Place)
- He walked into the room. (Movement)
- The match was canceled due to rain. (Cause)
- She stood in front of the mirror. (Prepositional phrase)

1.7. Conjunctions

Conjunctions are words used to connect words, phrases, or clauses. They help build more complex and coherent sentences.

Types of Conjunctions

1. Coordinating Conjunctions: connect words or groups of words that are grammatically equal. (e.g., and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet)

2. Subordinating Conjunctions: connect a dependent clause to an independent clause. (e.g., because, although, since, unless, while)

3. Correlative Conjunctions: pairs of conjunctions used together. (e.g., either...or, neither...nor, not only...but also)

Examples

- I like tea and coffee. (Coordinating)
- She was tired, but she finished the work. (Coordinating)
- I'll call you when I arrive. (Subordinating)
- Because it was raining, we stayed indoors. (Subordinating)
- Either you come with us or you stay here. (Correlative)
- Not only is he smart, but he's also kind. (Correlative)

1.8. Articles

Articles are words used before nouns to define whether the noun is specific or general. English has two types of articles: definite and indefinite.

Types of Articles

1. Definite Article: 'the' – refers to a specific item or known noun.

2. Indefinite Articles: 'a' and 'an' – refer to a non-specific or unknown noun.

Usage

- Use 'a' before words that begin with a consonant sound (e.g., a cat, a university).

- Use 'an' before words that begin with a vowel sound (e.g., an apple, an hour).

- Use 'the' when referring to something specific or previously mentioned (e.g., the book on the table).

Zero Article (No Article)

In some cases, no article is used, especially with:

- Plural or uncountable nouns when speaking in general (e.g., Books are expensive. Information is useful.)

- Proper nouns (e.g., I visited Spain. She works at Google.)

Examples

- I saw a dog in the park. (Indefinite + Definite)
- She bought an umbrella. (Indefinite: vowel sound)
- He is reading the newspaper. (Definite)
- Books can be expensive. (Zero article – general)
- She lives in Canada. (Zero article – proper noun)

1.9. Determiners

Determiners are words placed in front of nouns to clarify what the noun refers to. They help specify quantity, possession, definiteness, and more.

Types of Determiners

1. Articles: a, an, the (already covered in section 1.8).

2. Demonstratives: this, that, these, those (e.g., This car is new.)

3. Possessives: my, your, his, her, its, our, their (e.g., Her bag is blue.)

4. Quantifiers: some, any, much, many, few, little, a lot of (e.g., I have some time.)

5. Numbers: one, two, three, etc. (e.g., She has two cats.)

6. Distributives: each, every, either, neither (e.g., Every child needs love.)

7. Interrogatives: which, what, whose (e.g., Which book do you want?)

8. Indefinite Determiners: all, both, several, enough, etc. (e.g., Both answers are correct.)

Position

Determiners always come before a noun or before any adjectives describing the noun:

e.g., Her new red dress is beautiful.

Examples

- This phone is mine. (Demonstrative)
- His car is very fast. (Possessive)
- I need some help. (Quantifier)
- They invited three people. (Number)
- Each student has a textbook. (Distributive)
- Which shirt do you prefer? (Interrogative)
- All students must pass the exam. (Indefinite)

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2 Sentence Structure

2.1. Sentence Components: Subject, Verb, Object

Every English sentence has a basic structure that usually includes a subject, a verb, and sometimes an object. Understanding these components is essential for building grammatically correct sentences.

Subject

The subject is the person or thing that performs the action or is described in the sentence. It usually comes at the beginning.

Examples:

- John runs every morning.
- The cat is sleeping.

Verb

The verb shows the action or state of the subject. It is the core of the sentence.

Examples:

- She sings beautifully.

- They are tired.

Object

The object receives the action of the verb. There are two main types:
- Direct Object: receives the action directly.
- Indirect Object: receives the benefit of the action.

Examples:

- He reads a book. (Direct object)
- She gave her friend a gift. (Indirect + Direct object)

Complements and Modifiers

Complements complete the meaning of the subject or object. Modifiers add extra information about time, place, manner, etc.

Examples:

- She is a teacher. (Subject complement)
- They arrived early. (Adverb modifier)

Basic Sentence Patterns

- Subject + Verb → Birds fly.
- Subject + Verb + Object → She eats apples.
- Subject + Verb + Complement → He is a doctor.
- Subject + Verb + Indirect Object + Direct Object → I gave her a book.

2.2. Word Order in Statements and Questions

Word order in English is very important because it helps convey the correct meaning. English typically follows a Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) structure.

Word Order in Statements

In affirmative statements, the usual order is:
Subject + Verb + Object/Complement/Adverbial
Examples:

- She reads books every evening.
- They play football at the park.
- We are learning English.

Word Order in Negative Sentences

To make a sentence negative, we add an auxiliary verb and 'not':

- She does not like tea.
- They are not coming today.
- We did not go to the party.

Word Order in Yes/No Questions

Structure: Auxiliary Verb + Subject + Main Verb + ...?

- Do you like coffee?
- Is she coming to the meeting?
- Have they finished the report?

Word Order in Wh- Questions

Structure: Wh- word + Auxiliary Verb + Subject + Main Verb + ...?

- What are you doing?
- Where does he live?
- Why did she leave early?

Inverted Word Order

In some formal or literary contexts, we invert the subject and verb:
Examples:

- Never have I seen such a beautiful sunset.
- Rarely does he arrive on time.

2.3. Types of Sentences

English sentences can be classified by their structure and purpose. Understanding sentence types helps improve clarity and variety in writing and speaking.

A. According to Structure

1. Simple Sentences: Contain one independent clause.

- She works at a hospital.
- I like coffee.

2. Compound Sentences: Contain two or more independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, so, etc.).

- I wanted to go out, but it was raining.
- He works in the morning and studies at night.

3. Complex Sentences: Contain one independent clause and at least one dependent clause.

- Although it was late, she kept working.
- We'll leave when the rain stops.

4. Compound-Complex Sentences: Have at least two independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

- Although she was tired, she finished the project, and she emailed it to her boss.

- I stayed home because it was raining, but my friend went out.

B. According to Purpose

1. Declarative Sentences: Make a statement.

- Example: I enjoy reading.

2. Interrogative Sentences: Ask a question.

- Example: Do you like music?

3. Imperative Sentences: Give a command or request.

- Example: Please close the door.

4. Exclamatory Sentences: Express strong emotion.

- Example: What a beautiful view!

2.4. Negative Forms

Negative forms are used to express the opposite of an affirmative statement. In English, negatives are usually formed by adding 'not' to auxiliary verbs.

Negative Forms by Tense

1. Present Simple: use 'do/does + not + base verb'

Examples:

- I do not like broccoli.
- She does not work on Sundays.

2. Past Simple: use 'did + not + base verb'

Examples:

- We did not go to the party.
- He did not understand the lesson.

3. Present Continuous: use 'am/is/are + not + verb-ing'

Examples:

- I am not studying right now.
- They are not listening.

4. Present Perfect: use 'have/has + not + past participle'

Examples:

- She has not finished her homework.
- We have not seen that movie.

Other Negative Words and Expressions

English also uses other negative expressions:

- never – I have never been to Paris.
- nobody – Nobody was in the room.
- nothing – I said nothing.
- nowhere – They went nowhere.
- no one – No one answered the phone.
- neither – I neither smoke nor drink.

Avoiding Double Negatives

In standard English, double negatives are considered incorrect because they can confuse the meaning.
Incorrect: I don't want nothing. → Correct: I don't want anything.

2.5. Question Forms & Question Tags

Questions in English are formed using auxiliary verbs and inversion of word order. There are also short questions added at the end of a sentence called 'question tags'.

Yes/No Questions

Formed by placing the auxiliary verb before the subject.

Examples:

- Do you like pizza?
- Is she coming today?
- Have they arrived?
- Did he call you?

Wh- Questions

Start with a question word: who, what, where, when, why, how.

Examples:

- What time is it?
- Where do you live?
- Why are you late?
- How does it work?

Indirect Questions

Used to be more polite or formal. The word order changes to a statement form.

Examples:

- Can you tell me where the bank is?
- Do you know what time it starts?
- I wonder if he will come.

Question Tags

Short questions added at the end of a statement to confirm information. If the sentence is positive, the tag is negative, and vice versa.

Examples:

- You're coming to the party, aren't you?
- She isn't home, is she?
- They have finished, haven't they?
- It's cold today, isn't it?

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3 Verb Tenses

3.1. Present Tenses

The present tenses in English are used to describe actions or situations that are happening now, habits, general truths, or actions that have relevance to the present.

3.1.1 Present Simple

Used for routines, habits, and general truths.

Structure: Subject + base verb (add -s/es for he/she/it)

Examples:

- She works in a bank.

- They play football every weekend.
- Water boils at 100°C.

3.1.2 Present Continuous
Used for actions happening now or temporary situations.

Structure: Subject + am/is/are + verb-ing

Examples:

- I am reading a book.
- She is studying for her exam.
- They are working on a new project.

3.1.3 Present Perfect
Used for actions that happened at an unspecified time in the past with relevance to the present.

Structure: Subject + have/has + past participle

Examples:

- I have visited London.
- She has finished her homework.
- We have seen that movie before.

3.1.4 Present Perfect Continuous
Used to show that an action started in the past and is still continuing or was recently completed.

Structure: Subject + have/has been + verb-ing

Examples:

- I have been studying all morning.
- She has been working there for five years.
- They have been waiting for over an hour.

3.2. Past Tenses
Past tenses in English are used to describe actions or situations that occurred in the past. There are four main past tenses, each with specific uses and structures.

3.2.1 Past Simple
Used for completed actions at a specific time in the past.

Structure: Subject + past form of the verb

Examples:

- I visited my grandmother yesterday.
- She cooked dinner last night.
- They went to Paris in 2020.

3.2.2 Past Continuous

Used for actions in progress at a specific moment in the past or to describe background actions.

Structure: Subject + was/were + verb-ing

Examples:

- I was watching TV at 9 PM.
- They were studying when I arrived.
- She was talking on the phone.

3.2.3 Past Perfect

Used to show that one action happened before another in the past.

Structure: Subject + had + past participle

Examples:

- I had finished my work before lunch.
- She had already left when we arrived.
- They had seen the movie before.

3.2.4 Past Perfect Continuous

Used to emphasize the duration of an action that was ongoing in the past before another past action.

Structure: Subject + had been + verb-ing

Examples:

- I had been studying for hours when she called.
- They had been living in London before moving to Madrid.
- He had been waiting for 30 minutes before the bus arrived.

3.3. Future Forms

English uses different forms to talk about the future. Each form has a specific use depending on intention, plan, or prediction.

3.3.1 Will (Future Simple)

Used for spontaneous decisions, promises, predictions, and offers.

Structure: Subject + will + base verb

Examples:

- I will help you with that.
- She will be here soon.
- It will rain tomorrow.

3.3.2 Going to
Used for planned actions or intentions and predictions based on evidence.

Structure: Subject + am/is/are + going to + base verb

Examples:

- I am going to start a new course.
- They are going to travel next week.
- Look at those clouds! It's going to rain.

3.3.3 Present Continuous for Future
Used for scheduled future arrangements.

Structure: Subject + am/is/are + verb-ing

Examples:

- I am meeting John tomorrow.
- She is flying to Berlin next Monday.
- We are having dinner with them tonight.

3.3.4 Future Perfect and Future Continuous
Future Perfect: Used to describe an action that will be completed before a specific time in the future.

Structure: Subject + will have + past participle

- Example: She will have finished by 5 PM.

Future Continuous: Used to describe an action that will be in progress at a certain time in the future.

Structure: Subject + will be + verb-ing

- Example: This time tomorrow, I will be flying to New York.

3.4. Summary Table of Tenses

This table provides a summary of the main English verb tenses, including their use, structure, and examples.

Tense	Use	Structure	Example
Present Simple	Habits, general truths	Subject + base verb	She works at a hospital.
Present Continuous	Actions happening now	Subject + am/is/are + verb-ing	He is reading a book.
Present Perfect	Past actions with present result	Subject + have/has + past participle	They have finished the project.
Present Perfect Continuous	Duration of actions until now	Subject + have/has been + verb-ing	I have been studying all day.
Past Simple	Completed actions in the past	Subject + past verb	We visited London last year.
Past Continuous	Actions in progress in the past	Subject + was/were + verb-ing	She was cooking when I arrived.
Past Perfect	Action before another past action	Subject + had + past participle	He had left before we arrived.
Past Perfect Continuous	Duration before a past moment	Subject + had been + verb-ing	They had been waiting for an hour.
Future Simple (will)	Decisions, promises, predictions	Subject + will + base verb	I will help you.
Be going to	Planned actions, evidence-based	Subject + am/is/are + going to + verb	It's going to rain.
Future Continuous	Action in progress in future	Subject + will be + verb-ing	I will be working at 10 AM.
Future Perfect	Action completed before a future time	Subject + will have + past participle	She will have finished by 5.

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4. Verb Patterns & Structures

4.1. Verb + -ing / to + infinitive

Some English verbs are followed by another verb in either the -ing form (gerund) or the to + infinitive form. The choice depends on the main verb.

Verb + -ing

Certain verbs are followed by a verb in the -ing form. These include verbs of likes/dislikes, mental processes, and activities.

Common verbs: enjoy, avoid, consider, suggest, finish, admit, deny, mind

Examples:

- I enjoy reading.
- She avoided talking to him.
- They finished cleaning the house.

Verb + to + infinitive

Other verbs are followed by to + base form of a verb. These include verbs of intention, promise, or decision.

Common verbs: want, decide, hope, agree, plan, need, promise, learn

Examples:

- I want to go home.
- They decided to travel abroad.
- He promised to help.

Verbs with Both Forms (Change in Meaning)

Some verbs can be followed by both forms, but the meaning changes.

Examples:

- Remember to call him. (You haven't called yet, don't forget.)
- I remember calling him. (You called him and now recall it.)
- She stopped to drink water. (She paused another activity to drink.)
- She stopped drinking coffee. (She no longer drinks coffee.)

4.2. Gerunds vs Infinitives

Gerunds and infinitives are two verb forms that often follow other verbs. Choosing the correct form depends on the verb, expression, or context.

What is a Gerund?

A gerund is the -ing form of a verb used as a noun. It can be the subject or object of a sentence.

Examples:

- Swimming is good exercise.
- He enjoys playing the guitar.

What is an Infinitive?

An infinitive is the base form of a verb, usually preceded by 'to'. It can also act as a noun, adjective, or adverb.

Examples:

- I want to leave now.
- She hopes to visit Italy.

Verbs Followed by Gerunds

Examples: avoid, enjoy, consider, finish, suggest

Example sentences:

- They suggested going to the cinema.
- He avoids eating late at night.

Verbs Followed by Infinitives

Examples: agree, decide, hope, learn, want

Example sentences:

- She decided to stay home.
- We want to improve our English.

Verbs Followed by Both (Different Meaning)

Examples:

- He stopped smoking. (He quit smoking.)
- He stopped to smoke. (He paused to have a cigarette.)
- Remember to lock the door. (Don't forget to do it.)
- I remember locking the door. (I did it and recall it.)

4.3. Verb + Preposition

In English, certain verbs are commonly followed by specific prepositions. These combinations are often idiomatic and must be learned as fixed expressions.

Common Verb + Preposition Combinations

These combinations can be followed by a noun, pronoun, or gerund (-ing form).

Examples:

- Depend on – It depends on the weather.
- Apologize for – She apologized for being late.
- Believe in – I believe in hard work.
- Think about – He is thinking about moving abroad.
- Talk to – Can I talk to you for a minute?
- Look at – She looked at the painting for a long time.
- Focus on – Please focus on your work.
- Wait for – We're waiting for the bus.
- Agree with – I agree with your opinion.
- Dream about – I dream about traveling the world.

Important Notes

• These combinations are not always logical; they must be memorized.
• The meaning of the verb can change depending on the preposition.
• Some verbs can be followed by different prepositions with different meanings (e.g., talk to vs. talk about).

4.4. Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are combinations of a verb and one or more particles (prepositions or adverbs) that create a meaning different from the original verb.

Types of Phrasal Verbs

1. Transitive Phrasal Verbs: require a direct object.

- Example: She looked up the word in the dictionary.

2. Intransitive Phrasal Verbs: do not require an object.

- Example: The plane took off on time.

3. Separable Phrasal Verbs: the object can go between the verb and particle.

- Example: He turned off the light / He turned the light off.

4. Inseparable Phrasal Verbs: the object must follow the phrasal verb.

- Example: We ran into an old friend.

Common Phrasal Verbs

- Give up – to stop doing something: I gave up smoking.
- Look after – to take care of: She looks after her little brother.

- Run into – to meet unexpectedly: I ran into my teacher yesterday.
- Take off – to leave the ground (a plane): The plane took off at 8 PM.
- Turn on – to activate: Can you turn on the lights?
- Turn off – to deactivate: Don't forget to turn off the oven.
- Look for – to search: He's looking for his keys.
- Get along – to have a good relationship: They get along very well.
- Find out – to discover: I found out the truth.
- Break down – to stop working: My car broke down on the highway.

Tips for Learning Phrasal Verbs

• Learn them by topic (e.g., travel, emotions, daily activities).

• Practice them in context with real-life examples.

• Keep a personal list of phrasal verbs you encounter.

4.5. Modal Verbs

Modal verbs are auxiliary verbs used to express ability, possibility, necessity, permission, and other related concepts. They are followed by the base form of a verb.

Common Modal Verbs

can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, must, ought to, need, dare

Main Uses of Modal Verbs

1. Ability:

- She can speak three languages.
- He could run very fast when he was younger.

2. Possibility:

- It may rain later.
- This might be true.

3. Permission:

- May I come in?
- You can leave early today.

4. Advice or Suggestion:

- You should see a doctor.
- You ought to apologize.

5. Obligation or Necessity:

- You must wear a seatbelt.
- Students have to do their homework.

6. Offers and Promises:

- Shall I help you?
- I will call you tonight.

Important Notes

• Modal verbs do not take -s in the third person singular.

• They are followed by the base form of the main verb (without 'to').

• Modal verbs do not use 'do/does/did' for questions or negatives.

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5. Complex Structures

5.1. Passive Voice

The passive voice is used when the focus is on the action or the receiver of the action, rather than the doer. It is commonly used in formal writing, scientific texts, and when the subject is unknown or unimportant.

Structure

Passive Voice: Subject + form of 'to be' + past participle [+ by agent (optional)]

Examples:

- The book was written by Orwell.
- The house is cleaned every day.
- A new law has been passed.

Passive Voice in Different Tenses

- Present Simple: The car is washed every week.
- Past Simple: The letter was sent yesterday.
- Future Simple: The documents will be delivered tomorrow.
- Present Perfect: The work has been finished.
- Past Continuous: The house was being painted.
- Modal + Passive: The rules must be followed.

When to Use the Passive Voice

• When the doer is unknown: My bike was stolen.

• When the doer is unimportant or obvious: English is spoken worldwide.

• To emphasize the action or result: The project was completed on time.

• In formal or academic writing.

Active vs Passive Voice

Active: The chef cooked the meal.

Passive: The meal was cooked by the chef.

5.2. Reported Speech

Reported speech (or indirect speech) is used to report what someone else said, without quoting them directly. It often involves changes in verb tense, pronouns, and time expressions.

Structure

Direct speech: "I am tired," she said.

Reported speech: She said (that) she was tired.

Tense Changes in Reported Speech

If the reporting verb is in the past, verb tenses usually shift back one step:

- Present Simple → Past Simple: "I go" → He said he went.
- Present Continuous → Past Continuous: "I am going" → She said she was going.
- Present Perfect → Past Perfect: "I have eaten" → He said he had eaten.
- Past Simple → Past Perfect: "I saw her" → She said she had seen her.
- Will → Would: "I will call" → He said he would call.

Pronoun and Time Expression Changes

Pronouns and time expressions often change to reflect the shift in perspective.

- I → he/she
- my → his/her

- today → that day
- tomorrow → the next day / following day
- yesterday → the day before
- now → then
- this → that
- here → there

Reported Questions

Change the question into a statement word order and remove the auxiliary verb.

- Direct: "Where are you going?" → Reported: He asked where I was going.
- Direct: "Do you like coffee?" → Reported: She asked if I liked coffee.

Reported Commands and Requests

Use 'to + verb' for commands, and 'not to + verb' for negative commands.

- Direct: "Sit down!" → Reported: He told me to sit down.
- Direct: "Don't be late!" → Reported: She told him not to be late.
- Direct: "Please help me." → Reported: He asked me to help him.

5.3. Conditionals

Conditionals are sentences with 'if' that describe a condition and its possible result. There are different types depending on the time and reality of the situation.

Zero Conditional

Used for general truths and facts.

Structure: If + present simple, present simple

- Example: If you heat water, it boils.

First Conditional

Used for real and possible future situations.

Structure: If + present simple, will + base verb

- Example: If it rains, we'll cancel the picnic.

Second Conditional

Used for hypothetical or unlikely situations in the present or future.

Structure: If + past simple, would + base verb

- Example: If I had more money, I would travel the world.

Third Conditional

Used for unreal past situations and their imaginary results.

Structure: If + past perfect, would have + past participle

- Example: If she had studied, she would have passed the exam.

Mixed Conditionals

Used when the time in the 'if' clause and the result clause are different.

- If I had gone to bed earlier, I wouldn't be so tired now. (past condition, present result)
- If he were more organized, he would have finished on time. (present condition, past result)

Additional Notes

• 'Unless' can be used instead of 'if... not': Unless you hurry, you'll miss the bus.

• Modals other than 'will' can be used in the main clause: If you study, you might pass.

5.4. Wishes & Hypothetical Structures

Expressions with 'wish' and other hypothetical structures are used to talk about unreal, imaginary, or regrettable situations in the present, past, or future.

Wishes about the Present

Used to express regret or desire for something that is not true now.

Structure: wish + past simple

- Example: I wish I knew the answer.

Wishes about the Past

Used to express regret about a past situation.

Structure: wish + past perfect

- Example: She wishes she had studied harder.

Wishes about the Future

Used to express hope or desire for a future situation, often with 'could' or 'would'.

Structure: wish + would/could + base verb

Examples:

- I wish it would stop raining.
- He wishes he could come to the party.

If Only...

Used for emphasis and works like 'wish'.

Examples:

- If only I had more time!
- If only she had listened to me!

Hypothetical Situations

Used with 'if' clauses, 'I'd rather', 'it's time', etc.

Examples:

- If I were you, I'd talk to her.
- It's time you went to bed.
- I'd rather you didn't smoke here.

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6. Agreement & Quantifiers

6.1. Subject-Verb Agreement

Subject-verb agreement means that the subject and verb in a sentence must agree in number: singular subjects take singular verbs, and plural subjects take plural verbs.

Basic Rules
- A singular subject takes a singular verb: She walks to work.
- A plural subject takes a plural verb: They walk to work.

Special Cases

Compound Subjects:

- Jack and Jill are coming.

- The dog and the cat are playing.

Subjects Joined by 'or' / 'nor':

- Neither the manager nor the employees were aware.
- Either the teacher or the student has the key.

Indefinite Pronouns:

Most are singular: everyone, someone, nobody, each

- Everyone is welcome.
- Each of the boys has a toy.

Collective Nouns:

Can be singular or plural depending on context.

- The team is winning. (as a single unit)
- The team are arguing. (individuals in the group)

Titles and Names:

- The United States is a large country.
- Mathematics is my favorite subject.

6.2. Countable / Uncountable Nouns

Nouns in English can be classified as countable or uncountable. This affects how we use articles, quantifiers, and verbs with them.

Countable Nouns

Countable nouns are things that can be counted individually. They have singular and plural forms.

Examples:

- apple → apples
- car → cars
- book → books

We can use 'a', 'an', 'many', 'few', and numbers with countable nouns.

Examples:

- I have a car.
- There are three books on the table.
- She has many friends.

Uncountable Nouns

Uncountable nouns are substances, concepts, or masses that cannot be counted. They do not have a plural form.

Examples:

- water, information, rice, advice, furniture, money

We use 'some', 'much', 'little', and other quantifiers with uncountable nouns.

Examples:

- There is some water in the bottle.
- She gave me some advice.
- We don't have much time.

Important Notes

Some nouns can be both countable and uncountable, depending on context.

Example:

- I'll have a coffee. (a cup of coffee – countable)
- Do you drink coffee? (the substance – uncountable)

6.3. Quantifiers

Quantifiers are words used before nouns to indicate amount or quantity. The choice of quantifier depends on whether the noun is countable or uncountable.

Used with Countable Nouns

Examples:

- many
- few
- a few
- several
- a number of
- a couple of

Used with Uncountable Nouns

Examples:

- much
- little
- a little
- an amount of
- a bit of

Used with Both Countable and Uncountable Nouns
Examples:

- some
- any
- a lot of
- lots of
- plenty of
- enough
- no

Examples in Context
- She has many books. (countable)
- There is little milk left. (uncountable)
- I have some information for you. (uncountable)
- We don't have enough chairs. (countable)
- Do you have any questions? (countable)

6.4. Collective Nouns

Collective nouns refer to a group of people, animals, or things considered as a single unit. They can take either a singular or plural verb depending on whether the group is seen as a whole or as individuals.

Common Collective Nouns
- a team of players
- a family of four
- a flock of birds
- a herd of cows
- a bunch of grapes
- a group of students
- a class of children
- a committee of experts
- an army of soldiers

Singular or Plural Verb?
In British English, collective nouns can be followed by either a singular or plural verb depending on whether the group is acting as one unit or as individuals. In American English, singular verbs are usually preferred.

Examples (British English):

- The team is winning. (as a unit)
- The team are arguing among themselves. (individuals)

Examples (American English):

- The team is winning.
- The family is planning a vacation.

Additional Notes

Be consistent in the use of singular or plural verbs within the same context.

Some collective nouns can be countable: several families, different groups, multiple teams.

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7. Functional Grammar

7.1. Comparatives and Superlatives

Comparatives and superlatives are used to compare people, things, or actions. Comparatives compare two things, while superlatives show the highest or lowest degree among three or more.

Comparatives

Structure: adjective + -er / more + adjective + than

Use to compare two things or people.

Examples:

- She is taller than her brother.
- This book is more interesting than the last one.
- My car is faster than yours.

Superlatives

Structure: the + adjective + -est / the most + adjective

Use to compare three or more things.

Examples:

- He is the tallest student in the class.
- That was the most exciting movie I've seen.
- This is the best pizza in town.

Spelling Rules

- For one-syllable adjectives, add -er/-est: small → smaller → smallest.
- For adjectives ending in -e, add -r/-st: nice → nicer → nicest.
- For one-syllable adjectives ending in consonant-vowel-consonant, double the last consonant: big → bigger → biggest.
- For adjectives with two or more syllables, use more/most: more beautiful, most intelligent.

Irregular Forms

- good → better → best
- bad → worse → worst
- far → farther/further → farthest/furthest

7.2. Enough / Too / So / Such

These words are used to intensify adjectives, adverbs, or nouns, and express quantity, degree, or result.

Enough

Used to express sufficiency.

Structure:

- • adjective/adverb + enough
- • enough + noun

Examples:

- She is old enough to drive.
- We have enough time to finish.

Too

Used to express excess or more than is needed.

Structure: too + adjective/adverb

Examples:

- It's too cold to swim.
- He talks too quickly.

So

Used for strong emphasis before adjectives or adverbs.

Structure: so + adjective/adverb

Examples:

- The test was so difficult!
- She speaks so clearly.

Such

Used for strong emphasis before a noun or noun phrase.

Structure: such + (adjective) + noun

Examples:

- It was such a great concert!
- He's such a kind person.

Comparison and Contrast

• 'So' is used before adjectives/adverbs: so fast, so interesting.

• 'Such' is used before a noun or adjective + noun: such a nice day, such people.

• 'Too' implies a negative result; 'enough' implies a positive sufficiency.

7.3. Relative Clauses

Relative clauses give additional information about a noun in the main clause. They begin with a relative pronoun such as who, which, that, whose, whom, or where.

Types of Relative Clauses

1. Defining Relative Clauses (essential information):

No commas are used. The clause is necessary to identify the noun.

Examples:

- The woman who lives next door is a doctor.
- This is the book that I told you about.

2. Non-defining Relative Clauses (extra information):

Use commas. The clause adds extra information, not essential.

Examples:

- My brother, who lives in Canada, is coming to visit.

- Paris, which is the capital of France, is very beautiful.

Common Relative Pronouns

- who – for people (subject): The man who called is my friend.
- whom – for people (object, formal): The person whom you met is my boss.
- whose – possession: She's the girl whose phone was stolen.
- which – for animals/things: The cake which he made was delicious.
- that – for people/things (in defining clauses): The movie that we watched was great.
- where – for places: This is the restaurant where we met.

Omission of Relative Pronouns

In defining clauses, the pronoun can be omitted when it is the object.

Example:

- The book (that) I borrowed was excellent.

7.4. Linking Words and Discourse Markers

Linking words and discourse markers help organize ideas and show relationships between sentences and paragraphs. They are essential for clear and coherent communication.

Types of Linking Words

1. Addition – to add information:

- and
- also
- in addition
- furthermore
- moreover

2. Contrast – to show difference or contrast:

- but
- however
- although
- even though
- on the other hand
- whereas

3. Cause and Effect – to show reasons and results:

- because
- so
- therefore
- as a result

- due to

4. Sequence – to show order of ideas:

- first
- then
- next
- after that
- finally
- in conclusion

5. Examples – to introduce examples:

- for example
- for instance
- such as
- like

6. Rephrasing – to express the same idea differently:

- in other words
- that is to say
- to put it another way

Examples in Context
- She is kind and also very helpful.
- I was tired; however, I finished the project.
- He didn't come because he was sick.
- First, we need to gather the data. Then, we can analyze it.
- There are many fruits, such as apples and oranges.
- He failed the test. In other words, he didn't study.

7.5. Adjective Order
When using multiple adjectives to describe a noun, English follows a specific order. While native speakers follow this naturally, it's useful for learners to remember the common sequence.

Standard Adjective Order
The typical order is:
1. Quantity or number
2. Opinion
3. Size
4. Age
5. Shape

6. Color
7. Origin
8. Material
9. Purpose

Example:
She bought two beautiful small old round red Spanish leather riding boots.

More Examples

- I have a big black dog.
- They live in a lovely old wooden house.
- He gave me three amazing long French silk scarves.

Tips

- You don't need to use all categories every time.
- Use commas if listing unrelated adjectives: a smart, ambitious, creative student.
- Purpose adjectives often end in -ing (e.g., sleeping bag, walking stick).

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8. Time Expressions & Spoken Grammar

8.1. Time Expressions

Time expressions are words or phrases that indicate when something happens. They help give context to actions and are often linked to specific tenses.

Common Time Expressions

• Since – indicates a starting point (used with the present perfect).

  Example: I've lived here since 2010.

• For – indicates a duration of time.

Example: She has worked here for five years.

• Ago – indicates how long before the present something happened (used with past simple).

Example: He left two hours ago.

• In – used for periods of time in the past or future.

Examples:
 - I was born in 1990.
 - I'll call you in an hour.

• On / At / By / Until – used with specific points in time.

We met on Monday.
The train arrives at 9 AM.
Please finish this by Friday.
He'll be here until noon.

Present Perfect Time Expressions
• just – She has just arrived.
• already – I have already eaten.
• yet – Have you finished yet?
• still – He still hasn't called.

Routine and Sequence Time Expressions
• every day/week/month
• next Monday/year/summer
• last night/weekend
• this morning/afternoon/week

8.2. Spoken Grammar
Spoken grammar refers to the informal structures and patterns commonly used in everyday conversation. It often differs from written grammar in terms of flexibility, omissions, and repetition.

Key Features of Spoken Grammar
1. Ellipsis – omission of words when meaning is clear.

• You coming? (= Are you coming?)
• Seen John? (= Have you seen John?)

2. Heads and Tails – placing topic or emphasis at the start or end.

• That book, it's amazing. (head)
• It's amazing, that book. (tail)

3. Discourse Markers – used to organize and manage conversation.

- well, you know, actually, I mean, like, so

4. Tag Questions – used to confirm or seek agreement.

- Nice weather, isn't it?
- You're coming, aren't you?

5. Contractions – common in speech to sound more natural.

- I'm, you're, she's, we've, they'd, wouldn't, doesn't

Examples in Context
- Gonna grab a coffee. Want one?
- So, what do you think?
- He's kinda tired today.
- You know, I'm not sure about that.
- She's been working loads, hasn't she?

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