

Basics of Grammar Study Guide

Four Types of Sentences

1. Declarative: makes a statement and ends in a period
2. Imperative: makes a command and ends in a period
3. Interrogative: asks a question and ends in a question mark
4. Exclamatory: makes an exclamation and ends with an exclamation mark

A **clause** is a group of words that has a subject and a verb.

An **independent clause** can stand on its own because it forms a complete thought, but a **dependent clause** needs to be attached to an independent clause in order to make sense. On its own, a dependent clause is a fragment sentence or phrase.

Four Sentence Structures

1. Simple: one independent clause made of a subject and predicate
 - a. The dog chased the ball.
 - b. Frank ate a sandwich.
 - c. Sarah read a book.
2. Compound: two independent clauses joined by a conjunction
 - a. The dog chased the ball and the cat took a nap.
 - b. Frank ate a sandwich, but Joan had soup.
 - c. Sarah read a book so she could relax.
3. Complex: one independent clause plus a dependent clause
 - a. The dog chased the ball that he found by a tree.
 - b. Frank ate a sandwich, which was made with leftover turkey.
 - c. Sarah, who loved fiction, read a book.
4. Compound-Complex: two independence clauses plus a dependent clause
 - a. The dog chased the ball, which he found by a tree, and he took it back to the porch.
 - b. Since he had leftover turkey, Frank made a sandwich and he ate it for lunch.
 - c. Sarah read a book, and since she loved fiction, she read it all day.

Parts of Speech and Punctuation

1. **Nouns** represent people, places, things, and ideas. They can be singular (one) or plural (more than one).
 - a. **Proper nouns** are specific people, places, and things with a name and must be capitalized: Bugs Bunny, Atlanta, Veterans Day, America
 - b. **Common nouns** are generic and do not need to be capitalized: rabbit, city, holiday, country
 - c. **Concrete nouns** can be recognized by the senses (touch, taste, smell, sight, etc): building, flower, chair, house, book, perfume

- d. **Abstract nouns** are ideas, qualities, and characteristics: peace, strength, contentment, beauty, courage, loyalty
 - e. **Collective nouns** name a group (which can be singular or plural): bunch, crowd, army, swarm, staff, pack, band
 - f. **Compound nouns** are combined words for one thing, some with hyphens: mother-in-law, tennis shoes, fire drill, lawn mower, hand-me-down
 - g. **Possessive nouns** show ownership and require an apostrophe (‘ or ‘s): the dog’s leash, the girls’ rooms, a bird’s nest
 - h. **Appositives** are extra nouns placed next to the main noun to give more information: Her mother, Susan, works at a library.
2. **Pronouns** are words that take the place of a noun or group of words that function as a noun. The **antecedent** is the noun the pronoun refers to.
- a. **Subject pronouns** take the place of the subject noun: I, you, he, she, we, you, they, it
 - b. **Object pronouns** receive the action of the verb: me, you, him, her, it, us, them
 - c. **Possessive pronouns** show ownership and can be singular or plural: my, your, his, mind, its, our, theirs
 - d. **Indefinite pronouns** do not refer to anything specific and can be singular or plural: another, everybody, no one, somebody, each, something, both, few, several, many
 - e. **Reflexive pronouns** reference themselves and are necessary for the sentence to make sense: I helped myself to another cup of coffee.
 - f. **Intensive pronouns** add emphasis to a noun already named and are not necessary for the sentence to make sense: She herself wanted another cup of coffee.
 - g. **Interrogative pronouns** introduce an interrogative sentence: who, which, whom, what
 - h. **Demonstrative pronouns** point to something specific: this, those, these, that
3. **Verbs** show physical or mental actions. **Linking verbs** do not show action but express state of being and connect subjects to predicates. **Helping verbs** come before the main verb to “help” show time or meaning.
- a. Examples of action verbs: run, toss, fight, hug, drive, teach, make, etc.
 - b. Examples of linking verbs: am, is, are, was, were, seems, becomes, appears, feels
 - i. The words that follow linking verbs are called **subject complements**.
 - ii. They are either **predicate nouns** or **predicate adjectives**.
 - c. Examples of helping verbs: was running, is making, will go, have been going, should go, would have, might be, did know
 - d. **Transitive verbs** have a **direct object** that answers the question what? or whom?: The pilot flew the airplane. (What did the pilot fly? He flew the airplane. Flew is the verb and airplane is the direct object.)
 - e. **Intransitive verbs** do not have a direct object: The pilot flew carefully.

- f. **Verbs with indirect objects** tell to whom or for whom the verb's action is being done: Joe tossed Greg the ball.
(Tossed is the verb, Greg is the indirect object, ball is the direct object.)
- i. They are only found in sentences with direct objects.
 - ii. The indirect object always comes before the direct object.
 - iii. You can insert prepositions to or for and the sentence still makes sense.
- g. **Verbals** are verbs used as other parts of speech.
- i. **Participles** are verbs used as **adjectives**: The winning team enjoyed a party.
 1. **Present participles** often end in -ing: The flowering plants are pretty.
 2. **Past participles** often end irregularly: The buried treasure was hard to find.
 3. A **Participial Phrase** includes a participle and other words to describe the main noun: The instructions, written in French, were hard to read.
 - ii. **Gerunds**, like participles, often end in -ing, but instead of acting like an adjective, they act like **nouns**: Running is her favorite hobby.
 1. A **gerund phrase** connects a gerund with another noun: Reading books is her other favorite hobby.
 2. **Gerunds** can also be **appositives**: Her favorite hobby, running, keeps her in shape.
 - iii. **Infinitives** are "to" plus a verb that act as **nouns, adjectives, and adverbs**:
Everyone should learn to cook.
This engine will be difficult to repair.
I want to go to the fair.
- h. **Adjectives** modify (or describe) nouns and pronouns. They show size, shape, color, feeling, sound, or condition. Some adjectives come before the noun or pronoun they modify, but they can also show up in the predicate part of the sentence. (Remember, participles are verbs that act as adjectives.)
- i. Adjectives can be before the noun it modifies: The red truck broke down.
 - ii. Adjectives can be in the predicate (known as a subject complement): The truck was red.
 - iii. **Articles** fall under the umbrella of adjectives.
 1. Definite article: The
 2. Indefinite article: A/An
 - iv. **Proper adjectives** are derived from proper nouns: Swiss watch, Mexican food
 - v. **Compound adjectives** require a hyphen: first-class mail, rain-soaked shoes
 - vi. **Comparative and Superlative adjectives** show levels of comparison: The front garden is pretty. (adjective)

The side garden is prettier. (comparative adjective)

The back garden is prettiest. (superlative adjective)

- vii. **Demonstrative adjectives** point to nouns and answers which one? Or which ones?: This, that, these, those ***Do not confuse with demonstrative pronouns***

1. Demonstrative adj: This coffee is delicious. (*points* to the noun)
2. Demonstrative pronoun: This is delicious. (*replaces* the noun)

- i. **Adverbs** modify or describe a verb, adjective, or other adverbs. When modifying a verb, the adverb can show up before or after it. When modifying an adjective or adverb, the adverb shows up before them. Adverbs tell when, where, how, to what extent, and to what intensity.

- i. The dog ran quickly. (How did the dog run? He ran quickly.)
- ii. The dog ran everywhere. (Where did the dog run? He ran everywhere.)
- iii. The dog ran very quickly everywhere. (To what intensity did he run? Very quickly everywhere.)
- iv. Comparative and Superlative adverbs show comparison.
 1. He spoke slower than her.
 2. She spoke the clearest of all.

4. **Prepositions** show spatial placement, cause and effect, chronological order, and other relationships between nouns, pronouns, and other words.

- a. **Basic prepositions** include above, across, over, upon, at, as, of, beyond, toward, to, etc.
- b. **Compound prepositions** include according to, because of, on account of, instead of, prior to, etc.
- c. A **prepositional phrase** includes the preposition and the object of the preposition.
 - i. I gave my old sweater to Angie. (“to” is the preposition, while “to Angie” is the prepositional phrase.)
 - ii. She put the sweater in the drawer. (“in” is the preposition, while “in the drawer” is the prepositional phrase)
 - iii. According to Angie, the sweater fits perfectly. (“According to” is the compound preposition, while “According to Angie” is the prepositional phrase.)

5. **Conjunctions** connect words or groups of words. Examples include and, nor, but, so, or, yet, etc. They can occur singly or in pairs.

- a. **Coordinating conjunctions** connect words, phrases, and clauses.
 - i. A pen or pencil will do. (or connects two nouns)
 - ii. Let’s sit and rest a while. (and connects two verbs)
 - iii. The road was icy and curvy. (and connects two adjectives)
 - iv. I remember the day, but I forget the date. (but connects two sentences)

- b. **Correlative conjunctions** come in pairs.
 - i. **Both** Joan **and** Frank wanted to come with us. (both/and work as a pair)
 - ii. **Neither** Joan **nor** Frank wanted to come with us. (Neither/nor work as a pair)
 - iii. **Either** Joan **or** Frank wants to come with us. (Either/or work as a pair)
 - c. **Conjunctive adverbs** show sequence or compare/contrast. Examples include also, besides, furthermore, moreover, equally, likewise, etc.)
 - i. Use conjunctive adverbs to replace “and” and “but” at the beginning of sentences in proper academic writing.
6. **Interjections** express strong emotion, such as surprise, disbelief, joy, disappointment, etc. Examples include **Ouch! Oh! Great! Wow! Stop! Wait!**
7. **Commas** separate and enclose words, phrases, and clauses.
- a. **Commas that separate** keep words from running into each other, as well as to prevent confusion and misunderstanding.
 - i. Separate words in a series: She went to school with Beth, Sam, and George.
 - 1. Use the Oxford comma in a series of three or more to prevent confusion. (The Oxford comma comes before the conjunction.)
 - ii. Separate introductory elements: Because it was cold, she wore a coat.
 - iii. Separate adjectives before a noun: The cold, windy day was in November.
 - iv. Separate elements in dates and addresses:
 - 1. Sunday, November 11, 2018
 - 2. Knoxville, Tennessee
 - 3. December 25, 2018
 - b. **Commas that enclose** set apart extra information, such as appositives, that isn’t necessary to complete the main idea of a sentence.
 - i. Major, the bluetick hound, is a lazy dog.
 - ii. The black cat, Salem, is fat and grouchy.
 - iii. The house around the corner, which was recently remodeled, is for sale.
8. **Quotation marks** come in pairs and flank dialogue, titles of poems, articles in newspapers and magazines, and songs. Note when end marks occur inside the quotes versus outside the quotes.
- a. “She was exhausted,” I said.
 - b. “This is exciting!” she said.
 - c. “Is she ready?” I asked.
 - d. “Isn’t it Bugs Bunny who said, ‘What’s up Doc?’” she asked.
 - e. Song: “Star Spangled Banner”
9. **Apostrophes** show possession, but they are sometimes used to form the plural form of numbers, letters, and symbols.

- a. I love Mom's cooking.
- b. The Jones' garden looks beautiful in the spring.
- c. The boy's clothes didn't fit him anymore.
- d. Your k's and h's look the same.
- e. There are too many and's and or's in your paper.

10. **Hyphens** are used in writing numbers twenty-one through ninety-nine, fractions, and compound nouns and adjectives. They are also used with certain prefixes and suffixes.

- a. There are fifty-two kids on my roster.
- b. One-third of them are in high school.
- c. My father-in-law was a funny man.
- d. We traveled to a far-off land for vacation.
- e. The president-elect met with Congresspeople.
- f. Finishing the race boosted my self-esteem.
- g. I went on vacation in mid-October.

11. **Dashes** set off abrupt changes in thought, lists separated by commas, phrases, and appositives coordinated with words such as "for example" or "for instance".

- a. She went to the train station - the one across town - to catch her train.
- b. My favorite colors - red, white, and blue - show up in many flags.
- c. Animals at the zoo - lions, for example - are allowed to breed in captivity.