

Grammar Guide for Staff & Parents/Carers

Noun (n)

Nouns are naming words for people, places, objects and emotions.

John London table happiness anger

They can be spotted by putting an **article** in front – a car the car
an orange.

Pronoun (pr)

Pronouns are words used to replace a **noun** to avoid repetition.

he she it I

Possessive Pronoun

Possessive pronouns are words used to replace a possessive **noun**.

my hair his hair her hair its hair

Instead of: Jane's hair the Minotaur's hair

Relative Pronoun

A **relative pronoun** refers to a specific **noun** as in these examples:

The house that Jack built.

The professor, who I respect very much, is giving a lecture today.

We use who and whom for people, and which for things.

Or we can use that for either people or things.

Relative Clause

We use **relative clauses** to give additional information about something without starting another sentence. By combining sentences with a relative clause, your text becomes more fluent and you can avoid repeating certain words.

Do you know the girl, who is speaking to Tom?

Adjective (adj)

Adjectives describe a **noun**. They come before the noun.

wooden table large table brown table

Verb (v)

Verbs are either:

Action verbs that represent an action – to run, to jump, to climb etc
or **State verbs** that represent a state of being – to believe, to fear etc

They can be spotted by putting 'to' in front of the base verb

– to swim not to swam or to swum

Modal Verb

A modal verb is a type of auxiliary **verb** to indicate likelihood, ability, permission or obligation.

- Bob **would** go for a run every night. (habit/ability)
- Bob **should** go for a run every night. (advice)
- Bob **could** go for a run every night. (ability)
- Bob **has to** go for a run every night. (obligation)
- Bob **might** go for a run every night. (probability)

Preposition

Prepositions are words that come before a **noun** or a **pronoun** to show its location in time or space.

over under next to in on - position

before after later until - time

Connective

A word or **phrase** whose function is to link between and within **sentences**.

but so because however on the other hand firstly

Conjunction

A **conjunction** is a special **connective** that links two or more **clauses** or **phrases** together within a **sentence**.

They cancelled the picnic **because** it was raining.

Imperative

The imperative is used to show a command or a plea and is often punctuated with a !.

Help! Stop! Put on your coat now!

The Present Tense

The **present tense** is a grammatical tense whose principal function is to locate a situation or event in present time.

Tense Name	Example	Basic Explanation	Timeline
Simple Present	I study English every day.	A repeated action.	
Present Progressive	I am studying English now.	An action that is happening now.	
Present Perfect	I have studied English in several countries.	An action that occurred at an unspecified time before now.	
Present Perfect Progressive	I have been studying English for five years.	Something started in the past and has continued up until now.	

The Past Tense

The **past tense** is a grammatical tense whose principal function is to locate a situation or event in past time.

Tense Name	Example	Basic Explanation	Timeline
Simple Past	Two years ago, I studied English in England.	A completed action in the past.	
Past Progressive	I was studying English when you telephoned.	A longer action that in the past that was interrupted.	
Past Perfect	I had studied English a little before I arrived here.	Something occurred before another action in the past.	
Past Perfect Progressive	I had been studying English for five years before I arrived here.	Something started in the past and has continued up until another time in the past.	

The Future Tense

The **future tense** is a grammatical tense whose principal function is to locate a situation or event in future time.

Tense Name	Example	Basic Explanation	Timeline
Simple Future	I will help you study English.	A plan for the future.	
Simple Future	I am going to help you study English.	A voluntary agreement for the future.	
Future Progressive	I will be studying when you arrive tonight.	A longer action in the future will be interrupted.	
Future Progressive	I am going to be studying when you arrive tonight.	A longer action in the future will be interrupted.	
Future Perfect	I will have studied every verb tense before I finish this course.	Something will occur before another action in the future.	
Future Perfect	I am going to have studied every verb tense before I finish this course.	Something will occur before another action in the future.	
Future Perfect Progressive	I will have been studying for over two hours by the time you arrive.	Something will continue up until a particular event or time in the future.	
Future Perfect Progressive	I am going to have been studying for over two hours by the time you arrive.	Something will continue up until a particular event or time in the future.	

Singular

A term for words that show a quantity of one.

a cat an orange the Eiffel Tower one sheep

Plural

A term for words or phrases that show a quantity of more than one.

Cats oranges sheep a dozen eggs a few biscuits
a million shining stars

Phrase

Phrase (**noun**) - the big dog

Phrase (**adverbial**) – in silence

A short single piece of information without a **verb**.

Clause

Clause (**main**) - the big dog barked

Clause (**subordinate**) - although the big dog barked

More information consisting of a **phrase** and a **verb**.

Sentences

Simple sentence – The big dog barked.

A single **main clause** – a **subject** and a **verb** with a capital letter and a
. or ? or !

‘Look out!’ ‘What are you doing?’

Compound sentence – The big dog barked, so he ran away.

Two or more **main clauses** joined by coordinating **conjunctions**: and, so, but. Each main clause on its own makes sense:

the big dog barked

he ran away

Complex sentence -

Although the big dog barked, he stood his ground.

He stood his ground although the big dog barked.

A **main clause** with one or more **subordinate clauses**. Often introduced by subordinating **conjunctions**: if, when, although. The main clause may come before or after the subordinate clause.

Only the main clause makes sentence on its own.

he stood his ground

The subordinate clause does not make sense on its own.

although the big dog barked

Can contain an embedded clause.

The big dog, which was lonely, barked

Subject of a sentence

The **subject** of a sentence is the person, place, thing, or idea that is doing or being something. You can find the **subject** of a sentence if you can find the **verb**.

The boy cut the chocolate cake.

Object of a sentence

The **object** in a sentence is the entity that is acted upon by the subject.

The boy cut the chocolate cake.

Active Voice

The boy cut the chocolate cake.

In this example the boy is the doer and the cake is having something done to it. Because the doer of the action (the boy) comes first it is called an **active sentence**.

The hairdresser cut the queen's hair.

The frog sat on the lily pad.

The fox caught the rabbit.

Passive Voice

The chocolate cake was cut by the boy.

In this example the boy is the doer and the cake is having something done to it. Because the receiver of the action (the cake) comes first it is called a **passive sentence**.

The Queen's hair was cut by the hairdresser.

The lily pad was sat on by the frog.

The rabbit was caught by the fox.

Notice that the passive will include the word 'by' to indicate the doer.

Prefix

A **prefix** is an affix which is placed before the stem of a word (root word). Adding it to the beginning of one word changes it into another word.

Un + happy = unhappy

Happy is the stem of the word (root word)

Un- is the **prefix**

Unhappy is the new word with the different meaning.

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
un-	not	unacceptable, unreal, unhappy, unmanned
	reversal or cancellation of action or state	unplug, unmask
re-	again	repaint, reappraise, reawaken
semi-	half, partly	semicircle, semi-conscious

Suffix

A **suffix** is an affix which is placed after the stem of a word (root word). Adding it to the end of one word changes it into another word.

Happy + ly = Happily (drop the 'y' add the 'ly')

Happy (**adjective**) is the stem of the word (root word)

-ly is the **suffix**

Happily (**adverb**) is the new word with the different meaning

suffix	grammatical change	example original word	example suffixed word
-s	plural	dog	dogs
-s	3rd person singular present	like	he likes
-ed	past tense past participle	work	he worked he has worked
-en	past participle (irregular)	eat	he has eaten
-ing	continuous/progressive	sleep	he is sleeping
-er	comparative	big	bigger
-est	superlative	big	the biggest

Paragraph

A **paragraph** is a distinct division of written or printed text that begins on a new, usually indented line, consists of one or more sentences, and typically deals with a single thought or topic or quotes one speaker's continuous words. Use a new paragraph when the location, action, character or idea changes to a different one.

Cohesion

Cohesion is the grammatical and lexical (word) linking within a text or sentence that holds a text together and gives it meaning. It is related to the broader concept of coherence.

Verb tense agreement. If the sentence or paragraph took place in the past the verbs must be consistently in the correct tense.

“I **went** to the supermarket this morning and **bought** a Coke; then, I **went** back to the shop a few hours later and **purchased** another fizzy drink”.

All the **verbs** are in the same tense. This is one form of cohesion.

“I went to the **supermarket** this morning and bought a **Coke**; then, I went to the **shop** a few hours later and purchased another **fizzy drink**”.

Substitution to avoid repetition. Here **supermarket** is replaced by **shop** and **coke** replaced by **fizzy drink**.

It could also be through use of **pronouns** to avoid repetition of the **noun**.

Tom went to the supermarket where he bought a Coke.

Subjunctive

The **subjunctive** is a grammatical mood found in many languages. **Subjunctive** forms of **verbs** are typically used to express various states of unreality such as wish, emotion, possibility, judgment, opinion, necessity, or action that has not yet occurred.

Subjunctives occur most often, although not exclusively, in **subordinate clauses**, particularly that-clauses.

"I suggest that you **be** careful" and "It is important that he **stay** by your side."

(The corresponding indicative forms of the bolded verbs would be *are* and *stays*.)

I wish that grammar had been taught to me as a child!