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LEARNER'S GRAMMAR

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Grammar



Finder

Reference

John Eastwood

WITH Grammar Checker Interactive CD-ROM

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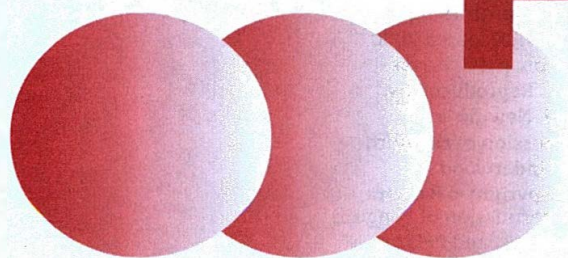
LEARNER'S
GRAMMAR

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Grammar



Finder



این مجموعه با لوگوی مرجع زبان ایرانیان
به صورت نشر بر خط و حامل به ثبت رسیده است.
کپی برداری از آن خلاف شرع، قانون و اخلاق است و شامل پیگرد خواهد شد.

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The Oxford Learner's Grammar website at www.oup.com/elt/olg contains information on the following topics:

- Numbers and time
- Punctuation
- Stress
- Word formation
- American English

Introduction

Who is *Oxford Learner's Grammar* for?

Teachers:

Oxford Learner's Grammar can be used by teachers working with classes from intermediate to advanced level, including classes preparing for examinations such as the the Cambridge First Certificate or the Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English.

- for **grammar lesson** preparation
 - providing reference information on specific grammar topics
 - to help you teach specific grammar topics by using the detailed explanations and associated practice exercises.
- for **general lesson** preparation (e.g. alongside a main coursebook with its own grammar syllabus):
 - to anticipate grammar questions and problems likely to come up in class;
 - to provide extra explanation and practice of a grammar topic covered in the class coursebook;
 - to teach extra grammar topics not included in the class coursebook, but which may be part of a national or examination grammar syllabus.
- for **general reference**
 - to deal with problems which come up in class
 - to help you answer your own and your students' grammar questions.
- for **testing** of students' existing knowledge and for revision
 - The test questions on the *Grammar Checker* CD-ROM can be used to assess your students' level of grammar and to discover their strengths and weaknesses.
 - The *Grammar Builder* consists of practice exercises only – without accompanying explanation. This means you can use it to find out what your students know (and what they don't know) about a particular topic, as well as for revision.

Students:

If you are an intermediate or advanced level student, you will find *Oxford Learner's Grammar* useful to work with on your own, in class, or alongside a coursebook, to prepare for examinations such as the the Cambridge First Certificate or the Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English.

- for **self-study**
 - you can study the explanations and examples in the *Grammar Finder* and then practise using the *Grammar Builder* exercises and the *Grammar Checker* interactive CD-ROM.
- for **class study**
 - you can look up explanations of grammar topics in the *Grammar Finder*, especially when a topic is causing you problems;
 - you can use the *Grammar Builder* for extra practice in class or for homework as directed by your teacher.

What is the *Oxford Learner's Grammar* pack?

Oxford Learner's Grammar is a resource consisting of this *Grammar Finder* reference book including the *Grammar Checker* CD-ROM, and the *Grammar Builder* practice book.

The *Grammar Finder* is a reference book containing clear explanations and examples of English grammatical structures. Particular attention is paid to areas likely to cause difficulty, such as the gerund and infinitive, conditional sentence patterns, and the difference in use between the present perfect and the past simple. The *Grammar Finder* is designed to be as accessible as possible: as well as detailed explanations, it contains tip boxes which provide the learner with useful hints and guidelines. You can use the book to study grammar in detail or to sort out particular difficulties as they arise.

The *Grammar Checker* CD-ROM is inside the back cover of this book. It has three features. **Test Yourself** contains 200 test questions which enable you to identify problems and check progress. You can then move to the **Audio** feature, which lets you hear and then practise examples which illustrate grammar points where pronunciation plays an important part. There is also an **interactive index** to the *Grammar Finder*: its word search feature gives instant access to a **Grammar Hints** window which displays answers to your questions on grammar.

The *Grammar Builder* contains exercises on the grammar points dealt with in the main chapters of the *Grammar Finder*. There is a wide variety of exercise types, including some which are similar to those used in the Cambridge examinations. As well as exercises on individual points, there are contrastive exercises and review exercises covering the content of a whole chapter.

There is also an Oxford Learner's Grammar Website at www.oup.com/elt/olg.

How do I find my way around? Routes in ...

The first route into *Oxford Learner's Grammar* is through a contents overview at the beginning of this book. A second route is via the index. You can access a specific grammar point by means of the index at the back of this book or via the interactive index on the *Grammar Checker* CD-ROM. For example, to find an explanation of the difference between the question words *what* and *which*, you can look up either of these words and find a reference to 16B. This means that in part B of section 16 in the *Grammar Finder* you will find information on *who*, *what*, and *which*.

Practice material on a specific section can be found by referring to the section numbers at the head of each exercise in the *Grammar Builder*. For example, if you have studied 16B in the *Grammar Finder* and you need related practice material, you will find the reference ► Finder 16A-C in the *Grammar Builder* at Exercise 30, which practises *who*, *what*, and *which*. Answers can be checked in the key at the end of the *Grammar Builder*. Each answer has a reference back to a specific part of the *Grammar Finder*, which you can consult again if problems remain.

The **Test Yourself** feature on the *Grammar Checker* CD-ROM also has a key which either confirms that the answer is correct or takes you to a grammar hint which explains briefly why an answer is incorrect. There is also a reference to the relevant section of the *Grammar Finder* if you would like to study the topic further.

What kind of English are we talking about?

Oxford Learner's Grammar deals with modern standard British English. The examples are mainly neutral in style: not especially formal or informal. Usages that are formal, informal, literary, or non-standard are marked as such.

The website at www.oup.com/elt/olg covers in some detail the main grammatical differences between British and American English. Differences are also mentioned throughout the book.

How will I learn to communicate effectively?

Grammar and meaning

Grammar is a vehicle for expressing meaning, so there is little point in studying formal structure for its own sake. However, a poor knowledge of grammar can seriously hinder communication. As a student, you need to know the difference between *if I have time* and *if I had time* and between *So I do* and *So do I*. *Oxford Learner's Grammar* pays a good deal of attention to meaning. It also covers the use of grammatical forms in communicative functions, such as the use of modal verbs in requests and offers and the function of imperatives and question tags.

Grammar and context

Grammar consists of more than isolated sentences. There are many aspects of grammar which cannot be properly explained within the confines of a clause or sentence. Texts and dialogues are used to take account of discourse and the wider context whenever this is relevant. How answers relate to questions, how sentences are linked in a text, how emphasis depends on context – these are all examples of grammar going beyond the sentence.

Grammar and 'real world' English

Grammatical forms and structures underlie actual use of language in real situations. The *Grammar Finder* contains numerous examples to illustrate grammatical structures and bring them to life. Most of the texts and dialogues are authentic in that they are drawn from genuine conversations or book or newspaper articles. Some of the examples have been taken from or adapted from the British National Corpus. Many of the explanations and the lists of words occurring in particular patterns are also based on an analysis of the British National Corpus. Some examples are invented, especially where this is the best means of illustrating a point in the clearest possible way, but all the examples are realistic.

Is it necessary to learn rules?

The 'rules' in this book are explanations of how English is used. They are a means to understanding how English works, not a set of formulas to be learned by heart.

Modern descriptions of English are based on what people actually say and write. Language changes all the time and even grammar rules are subject to gradual change. However, there is a belief among some English speakers that there are unalterable rules which must always be obeyed. This has caused some controversy among English speakers over a small number of grammar points. For example, some people believe you should not split an infinitive or begin a sentence with the word *and*, despite the fact that English speakers frequently do so. The *Grammar Finder* draws attention to these prescriptive 'rules' and gives advice about usage.

What are the special problems of English grammar?

Unlike words in some other languages, English words do not have lots of different endings. Nouns have -s in the plural, but they do not have endings to show if they are the subject or the object. There are a few verb endings such as -ed for the past (*started*) but just one ending for person: -s in the third person singular of the present simple (*starts*). However, a verb phrase can still have a complicated structure such as *have started*, *will be seeing*, or *must have been waiting*.

Word order is very important in English. *The man bit the dog* means something different from *The dog bit the man*. The subject-verb word order in a statement is fixed, and we can change it only if there is a special reason.

A problem for the non-native-speaker is the use of prepositions, which have many idiomatic uses in phrases such as *on Friday* or *at two o'clock*. Both prepositions and adverbs combine with verbs in an idiomatic way: *wait for someone*, *turn the radio off*. There are many such expressions that need to be learned as items of vocabulary.

Good luck

The aim of the *Oxford Learner's Grammar* resource pack is to provide clear, accessible explanations and meaningful practice in order to facilitate learning. Author and publisher hope very much that teachers and students will benefit from the pack and enjoy working with it.

Key to symbols

Phonetic symbols

These are usually inside slashes, e.g. /i:/.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--------|----|-------|----|--------|---|----------|---|-------|
| i: | tea | ʌ | cup | p | put | f | first | h | house |
| ɪ | sit | ɜ: | bird | b | best | v | van | m | must |
| i | happy | ə | away | t | tell | θ | three | n | next |
| e | ten | eɪ | pay | d | day | ð | this | ŋ | song |
| æ | had | əʊ | so | k | cat | s | sell | l | love |
| ɑ: | car | aɪ | cry | g | good | z | zoo | r | rest |
| ɒ | dog | aʊ | now | tʃ | cheese | ʃ | ship | j | you |
| ɔ: | ball | ɔɪ | boy | dʒ | just | ʒ | pleasure | w | will |
| u: | fool | ɪə | dear | | | | | | |
| ʊ | book | eə | chair | | | | | | |
| u | actual | ʊə | sure | | | | | | |

(r) four linking r, pronounced before a vowel but (in standard British English) not pronounced before a consonant:

four apples /fɔ:r 'æplz/

four bananas /fɔ: bə'nɑ:nəz/

' = Stress follows, e.g. *about* /ə'baʊt/; *a* is unstressed, and *bout* is stressed.

, = Secondary stress follows.

↘ = Falling intonation follows.

↗ = Rising intonation follows.

Other symbols

The symbol / (forward slash) between two words or phrases means that either is possible. *The shop may not/might not be open today* means that two sentences are possible: *The shop may not be open today* and *The shop might not be open today*.

We also use slashes around phonetic symbols, e.g. *tea* /ti:/.

Brackets () around a word or phrase in an example mean that it can be left out. *I've been here (for) ten minutes* means that two sentences are possible: *I've been here for ten minutes* and *I've been here ten minutes*.

The symbol → means that two things are related. *Discuss* → *discussion* means that there is a relationship between the verb *discuss* and the noun *discussion*.

The symbol ~ means that there is a change of speaker.

The symbol > is a reference to another section and/or part of a section where there is more information. For example, > 65 means 'see section 65'; > 225C means 'see part C of section 225; and > B means 'see part B of this section.'

The symbol → **Audio** is a reference to the audio feature on the *Grammar Checker* CD-ROM provided with this book.

Words and phrases

1 Word classes

Here is a piece of writing in English.

The Internet is, by far, one of the most amazing tools available to humans since the beginning of time. No, this is not an exaggeration. With some relatively inexpensive equipment (a computer, a modem and a telephone line) you can find information about practically anything, at any time, because the Internet is fast becoming a repository of the sum total of human knowledge.

No less incredible is the fact that, for people online, the world doesn't have borders. You can meet people from the most exotic corners of the earth, even develop meaningful relationships with people you'll never meet face to face. And with such global friendships comes the promise of peace and prosperity.

But enough of that pompous stuff. The truth is, the Internet is where you can find out all the latest gossip about Sandra Bullock or Kevin Costner. It's where you go shopping for hats or book airline flights. It's where you stay up all night chatting with strangers when you can't fall asleep. It's cool, fun, exciting, and, best of all, it's affordable.

(from *How to Use Microsoft Internet Explorer* by Hubert, SG/Schwerin, R, ©1996. Reprinted by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, NJ.)

There are eight word classes in English, sometimes called 'parts of speech'. Here is a list with some examples from the passage above.

| Word class | Examples |
|--------------|---|
| Verb: | <i>becoming, can, comes, develop, find, is, stay</i> |
| Noun: | <i>computer, Internet, night, people, time, world</i> |
| Adjective: | <i>amazing, cool, exotic, global, inexpensive</i> |
| Adverb: | <i>even, never, practically, relatively</i> |
| Determiner: | <i>a, any, some, such, the, that</i> |
| Pronoun: | <i>anything, it, you</i> |
| Conjunction: | <i>and, because, but</i> |
| Preposition: | <i>about, at, by, for, of, since, to, with</i> |

NOTE

Most word classes can be divided into sub-classes. For example:

| | | | |
|----------|--|--------------|---|
| Verb → | Ordinary verb: <i>find, meet</i> Auxiliary verb: <i>is, can</i> | Determiner → | Article: <i>the, a</i> Quantifier: <i>some, any</i> Demonstrative: <i>this, that</i> Possessive: <i>my, your</i> |
| Adverb → | Adverb of degree: <i>very, relatively</i> Adverb of manner: <i>carefully, fast</i> Adverb of frequency: <i>often, never</i> etc | | |

2 Words belonging to more than one word class

Some words belong to more than one word class. Here are some examples.

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|--|
| <i>promise</i> | Verb: | <i>I promise I won't forget.</i> |
| | Noun: | <i>With such friendships comes the promise of peace.</i> |
| <i>human</i> | Noun: | <i>It's the most amazing tool available to humans.</i> |
| | Adjective: | <i>All human knowledge is there.</i> |
| <i>fast</i> | Adjective: | <i>Snail mail isn't as fast as e-mail.</i> |
| | Adverb: | <i>The Internet is fast becoming essential.</i> |
| <i>that</i> | Determiner: | <i>Enough of that pompous stuff.</i> |
| | Pronoun: | <i>It's something that people can afford.</i> |
| | Conjunction: | <i>It's a fact that the Internet doesn't have borders.</i> |

In English there are lots of verbs that we can use as nouns.

Have a look at the Help menu.

Can you make a copy of this document?

I'll do a search of the web.

There are also nouns that we can use as verbs.

Now you have to name the file.

Please key in your personal number.

Another means of communication is texting by mobile phone.

3 Phrases

There are five kinds of phrase.

A Verb phrase: *is, can find, is becoming, doesn't have, comes, has been growing*

A verb phrase has an ordinary verb. There can also be one or more auxiliaries.

| (Auxiliaries) | Ordinary verb |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| | <i>is</i> |
| <i>can</i> | <i>find</i> |
| <i>is</i> | <i>becoming</i> |
| <i>doesn't</i> | <i>have</i> |
| | <i>comes</i> |
| <i>has been</i> | <i>growing</i> |

Be, have and do are both ordinary verbs and auxiliary verbs. > 64

The Internet is amazing. (*be* as an ordinary verb)

The Internet is becoming essential. (*be* as an auxiliary)

B Noun phrase: *the Internet, a computer, information, such global friendships*

A noun phrase has a noun. There is often a determiner and/or an adjective.

| (Determiner) | (Adjective) | Noun |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| <i>the</i> | | <i>Internet</i> |
| <i>a</i> | | <i>computer</i> |
| | | <i>information</i> |
| <i>such</i> | <i>global</i> | <i>friendships</i> |

NOTE

A noun phrase can be replaced by a pronoun.

The Internet is amazing. → It is amazing.

C Adjective phrase: *cool, most amazing*

An adjective phrase has an adjective, sometimes with an adverb of degree in front of it.

| (Adverb) | Adjective |
|-------------|----------------|
| | <i>cool</i> |
| <i>most</i> | <i>amazing</i> |

D Adverb phrase: *never, really quickly*

An adverb phrase has an adverb, sometimes with an adverb of degree in front of it.

| (Adverb) | Adverb |
|---------------|----------------|
| | <i>never</i> |
| <i>really</i> | <i>quickly</i> |

E Prepositional phrase: *at any time, of the earth, for hats*

A prepositional phrase is a preposition + noun phrase.

| Preposition | Noun phrase |
|-------------|------------------|
| <i>at</i> | <i>any time</i> |
| <i>of</i> | <i>the earth</i> |
| <i>for</i> | <i>hats</i> |
| <i>into</i> | <i>it</i> |

The simple sentence

4 Basic clause structure

This chapter is about sentences with just one clause. A clause which can stand alone as a sentence has a subject and a verb. It may also have other elements: an object, a complement, or an adverbial. Each element plays its part in the structure of a clause. We can put the elements together to form different kinds of clauses. Here are some examples of the different clause structures.

| | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Subject | Verb | | |
| | <i>My friend</i> | <i>is waiting.</i> | | |
| | <i>Nothing</i> | <i>happened.</i> | | |
| 2 | Subject | Verb | Object | |
| | <i>The company</i> | <i>sells</i> | <i>mobile phones.</i> | |
| | <i>The dog</i> | <i>has eaten</i> | <i>my homework.</i> | |
| 3 | Subject | Verb | Complement | |
| | <i>This colour</i> | <i>is</i> | <i>nice.</i> | |
| | <i>The old cinema</i> | <i>became</i> | <i>a nightclub.</i> | |
| 4 | Subject | Verb | Adverbial | |
| | <i>The concert</i> | <i>is</i> | <i>tomorrow.</i> | |
| | <i>The photos</i> | <i>lay</i> | <i>on the table.</i> | |
| | <i>The Olympics</i> | <i>are</i> | <i>every four years.</i> | |
| 5 | Subject | Verb | Object | Object |
| | <i>We</i> | <i>should give</i> | <i>the children</i> | <i>some money.</i> |
| | <i>Sarah</i> | <i>sent</i> | <i>me</i> | <i>a fax.</i> |
| 6 | Subject | Verb | Object | Complement |
| | <i>The project</i> | <i>kept</i> | <i>everyone</i> | <i>very busy.</i> |
| | <i>The group</i> | <i>made</i> | <i>Simon</i> | <i>their spokesman.</i> |
| 7 | Subject | Verb | Object | Adverbial |
| | <i>I</i> | <i>put</i> | <i>my credit card</i> | <i>in my wallet.</i> |
| | <i>The police</i> | <i>got</i> | <i>the car</i> | <i>out of the river.</i> |

For more information about these clause elements, > GLOSSARY.

5 More details about clause structure

- A** Each of the clause structures in 4 begins with subject + verb. This is the normal word order in a statement. For inversion in questions, > 14B.

NOTE

For structures like *The police they got the car out of the river*, > 175D.

- B** The subject of a sentence is a noun phrase (e.g. *my friend*).
The object is also a noun phrase (e.g. *mobile phones*).
A complement usually gives information about the subject of the sentence. It can be an adjective phrase (e.g. *nice*) or a noun phrase (e.g. *a nightclub*). For object complement, > D
An adverbial expresses an idea such as when, how, or why something happens. It can be an adverb phrase (e.g. *tomorrow*), a prepositional phrase (e.g. *on the table*) or a noun phrase (e.g. *every four years*).

- C** Verbs which do not have an object (Structure 1 in 4) are called intransitive verbs, e.g. *wait, happen, sleep, go*. Verbs with an object (Structure 2 in 4) are called transitive verbs, e.g. *sell, eat, see, catch*. Verbs with a complement (Structure 3 in 4) are called linking verbs, e.g. *be, become, get, look, seem*.

NOTE

Some verbs can be used in more than one structure. Many can be either intransitive or transitive.

The door opened. (intransitive) *Someone opened the door.* (transitive)

- D** There are two different kinds of complement: subject complement and object complement. These two examples have a subject complement.

Everyone was very busy. *Simon became their spokesman.*

The subject complement relates to the subject of the clause (*everyone, Simon*).

These two examples have an object complement.

The project kept everyone very busy.

The group made Simon their spokesman.

The object complement relates to the object of the clause (*everyone, Simon*).
In both pairs of examples, *very busy* relates to *everyone*, and *their spokesman* relates to *Simon*.

- E** We can add extra adverbials to any of the clause structures.

My friend is waiting outside.

Unfortunately the dog has eaten my homework.

A few months later the old cinema suddenly became a night club.

According to the paper, the concert is tomorrow at the town hall.

To my surprise, Sarah actually sent me a fax right away.

There are different places in the sentence where we can put an adverbial. For more details, > 190.

The simple sentence

- F** We can link two or more words or phrases with *and* or *or*.

The colour is nice and bright.

My friend and his brother are here.

The work went smoothly, quietly, and very efficiently.

The concert is on Wednesday or Thursday.

- G** We can use two noun phrases one after the other when they both refer to the same thing. We say that the phrases are 'in apposition'.

My friend Matthew is coming to stay.

Everyone visits the White House, the home of the President.

6 Give, send, buy, etc

Give, send, buy, reserve, and similar verbs come in two different sentence structures. They can either have two objects, or they can have an object and a prepositional phrase.

You give the attendant your ticket.

You give your ticket to the attendant.

A Two objects

When the verb has two objects, the first is the indirect object, and the second is the direct object.

| 1 | Indirect object | Direct object |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>You give</i> | <i>the attendant</i> | <i>your ticket.</i> |
| <i>We'll send</i> | <i>our teacher</i> | <i>a message.</i> |
| <i>Nigel bought</i> | <i>Celia</i> | <i>a diamond ring.</i> |
| <i>I can reserve</i> | <i>you</i> | <i>a seat.</i> |

Here the indirect object refers to the person receiving something, and the direct object refers to the thing that is given.

B Object + prepositional phrase

Instead of an indirect object, we can use a prepositional phrase with *to* or *for*.

| | Direct object | Phrase with <i>to</i> or <i>for</i> |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>You give</i> | <i>your ticket</i> | <i>to the attendant.</i> |
| <i>We'll send</i> | <i>a message</i> | <i>to our teacher.</i> |
| <i>Nigel bought</i> | <i>a diamond ring</i> | <i>for Celia.</i> |
| <i>I can reserve</i> | <i>a seat</i> | <i>for you.</i> |

The phrase with *to* or *for* comes after the direct object.

C To or for?

Some verbs go with *to* and some go with *for*. You give something *to* someone, but you buy something *for* someone.

You give your ticket to the attendant.

Nigel bought a diamond ring for Celia.

These verbs can go with *to*: *award, bring* (see Note b), *fax, feed, give, grant, hand, leave* (in a will), *lend, mail, offer, owe, pass, pay, post, promise, read, sell, send, show, take, teach, tell, throw, write*.

These verbs can go with *for*: *bring* (see Note b), *buy, cook, fetch, find, fix, get, keep, leave, make, order, pick, reserve, save*.

NOTE

- a *For* meaning 'to help someone', 'on someone's behalf' can go with very many verbs.

I posted a letter to Adam. (a letter from me to him)

I posted a letter for Adam. (a letter from Adam to someone else)

- b *Bring* goes with either *to* or *for*. We usually use *for* when we talk about giving things to people.

We've brought some flowers for our hostess.

We use *to* when we talk about transporting things to places.

Lorries regularly bring coal to the power station.

We also use *to* when *bring* has other more abstract meanings.

The news brought a smile to her face.

D Which structure to use?

In a clause with *go, send, buy*, etc, there is a choice between an indirect object and a prepositional phrase.

Indirect object: *You give the attendant your ticket.*

Prepositional phrase: *You give your ticket to the attendant.*

The choice depends on what is the new information in the clause. The new information usually goes at the end. Look at this conversation between two people on holiday who are buying postcards.

Emma: *I'm going to send this card to my brother.*

Lauren: *Yes, that's a nice one. And I like this one here with a photo of the cathedral. I might send it to Amy.*

Emma: *What about William?*

Lauren: *Oh, I'll send William this view of the harbour.*

Compare these sentences.

I'm going to send this card to my brother.

My brother is the new information and so it comes at the end. *This card* is known information in the context. (They are looking at postcards.)

I'll send William this view of the harbour.

This view of the harbour is the new information. *William* is known information. (Emma has just mentioned him.)

NOTE

For more details about information and sentence structure, > 31–32.

E Pronouns after *give*, *send*, etc

When there is a pronoun, it usually comes before a phrase with a noun.

Mark lent me his umbrella.

I might send it to Amy.

This is because the pronoun refers to known information. (*It* means the postcard just mentioned.)

When there are two pronouns after the verb, we normally use *to* or *for*.

We'll send it to you straight away.

I've got a ticket for Wimbledon. Louise bought it for me.

NOTE

In informal conversation you may hear two pronouns together.

Louise bought me it./Louise bought it me.

F Describe, explain, etc

Some verbs can occur in the structure with *to* or *for* but **not** with an indirect object.

Tim described the men to the police.

(NOT ~~*Tim described the police the men.*~~)

I'll explain everything to you.

(NOT ~~*I'll explain you everything.*~~)

My lawyer obtained a copy of the letter for me.

(NOT ~~*My lawyer obtained me a copy of the letter.*~~)

Such verbs include *announce*, *communicate*, *deliver*, *describe*, *donate*, *explain*, *obtain*, *propose*, *purchase*, *report*, and *suggest*.

TIP

It is safer to use an indirect object only with a short verb like *give* or *send* and **not** with a longer verb like *describe* or *explain*. Say *Can you give me the figures?* but *Can you explain the figures to me?*

NOTE

For structures with *say* and *tell*, > 260.

Sentence types

7 Introduction

- A** There are four sentence types: a statement, a question, an imperative, and an exclamation.

| | Example | Main use |
|-------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Statement | <i>You took a photo.</i> | giving information |
| Question | <i>Did you take a photo?</i> | asking for information |
| Imperative | <i>Take a photo.</i> | an order or a request |
| Exclamation | <i>What a nice photo!</i> | expressing a feeling |

A statement, a question and an imperative can be negative.

You didn't take a photo.

Didn't you take a photo?

Don't take photos, please.

- B** Besides the main use, some sentence types have other uses. Here are some examples.

| | Example | Possible use |
|------------|--|------------------------|
| Statement | <i>I'd like to know all the details.</i> | asking for information |
| Question | <i>Can you post this letter, please?</i> | a request |
| Imperative | <i>Have a nice time.</i> | expressing good wishes |

This chapter is mainly about the use of statements, negative statements, the imperative, and exclamations. For word order in a positive statement, > 4. For questions and answers, > 13–19.

8 The use of statements

This conversation contains a number of statements.

A PROGRAMME ABOUT WILDLIFE

Stella: *There's a programme about wildlife on TV tonight.*

Adrian: *Uh-huh. Well, I might watch it.*

Stella: *I've got to go out tonight. It's my evening class.*

Adrian: *Well, I'll video the programme for you.*

Stella: *Oh, thanks. It's at eight o'clock on BBC 2.*

Adrian: *We can watch it together when you get back.*

Stella: *OK. I should be back around ten.*

Sentence types

The main use of a statement is to give information: *There's a programme about wildlife on TV tonight.* But some statements do more than that. When Adrian says *I'll video the programme for you*, he is **offering** to video it. His statement is an offer, which Stella accepts by thanking him. And *We can watch it together* is a suggestion to which Stella agrees.

There are many different uses (or 'communicative functions') of statements.

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Expressing approval: | <i>You're doing the right thing.</i> |
| Expressing sympathy: | <i>It was bad luck you didn't pass the exam.</i> |
| Thanking someone: | <i>I'm very grateful.</i> |
| Asking for information: | <i>I want to know your plans.</i> |
| Giving orders: | <i>I want you to check these figures.</i> |

9 Performative verbs

- A** Some present-simple verbs express what the use of the statement is. For example, we can say *I promise* when we promise to do something.

| | |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| Promising: | <i>I promise to be good.</i> |
| Apologizing: | <i>It was my fault. I apologize.</i> |
| Predicting: | <i>I predict a close game.</i> |

In general, performative verbs are fairly emphatic. *I promise to be good* is a more emphatic promise than *I'll be good*. Some performative verbs are also rather formal. For example, *I apologize* is more formal than *I'm sorry*.

Examples of performative verbs are: *admit, advise, agree, apologize, disagree, guarantee, insist, object, predict, promise, protest, refuse, suggest, warn.*

NOTE

- a With a few verbs we can use the present continuous.
Don't come too close, I warn you/I'm warning you.
- b Sometimes in formal situations the passive is used.
You are requested to vacate your room by 10.00 am.

- B** Sometimes we use a modal verb or similar expression before a performative verb.

| | |
|------------|--|
| Advising: | <i>I'd advise you to see a solicitor.</i> |
| Insisting: | <i>I must insist we keep to the rules.</i> |
| Informing: | <i>I have to inform you that you have been unsuccessful.</i> |

When we are telling people to do things, the modal verb makes the statement less direct and so more polite. It is also rather more formal to say *I'd advise you to see a solicitor* than *You should see a solicitor*.

Some typical examples are: *must admit, would advise, would agree, must apologize, must disagree, can guarantee, have to inform you, must insist, must object, can promise, must protest, would suggest, must warn.*

10 Negative statements

A Use

This text contains a number of negative statements.

FRANKENSTEIN

In 1818 Mary Shelley wrote a famous book called 'Frankenstein'. But the monster wasn't called Frankenstein, as is popularly believed by people who have never read the book. Frankenstein is not the name of the monster but the name of the person who created it. People who haven't read the book sometimes talk about 'Doctor Frankenstein'. Frankenstein wasn't a doctor, and he did not study medicine. We can't be sure where Mary Shelley got the name from, but there is a place in Germany called Frankenstein, which might or might not have given her the idea.

The negative statements correct a mistaken idea, such as the idea that the monster was called Frankenstein. In general, we use negative statements to inform someone that what they might think or expect is not so.

B Not with a verb

Compare the positive and negative forms.

| Positive | Negative Full form | Negative Short form |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>was called</i> | <i>was not called</i> | <i>wasn't called</i> |
| <i>have read</i> | <i>have not read</i> | <i>haven't read</i> |
| <i>should be</i> | <i>should not be</i> | <i>shouldn't be</i> |
| <i>studied/did study</i> | <i>did not study</i> | <i>didn't study</i> |

In a negative statement, *not* or *n't* comes after the auxiliary. We write the auxiliary and *n't* together as one word.

Some people have not read the book.

The monster wasn't called Frankenstein.

If there is more than one auxiliary, *not* or *n't* comes after the first auxiliary.

That might or might not have given her the idea.

We shouldn't have stayed so long.

In simple tenses we use the auxiliary verb *do*.

I don't like horror films. (NOT ~~I like not horror films.~~)

Frankenstein did not study medicine. (NOT ~~Frankenstein studied not medicine.~~)

Sentence types

Be on its own has *not* or *n't* after it.

East London is not on most tourist maps.

These shoes aren't very comfortable.

We cannot use *no* to make a negative verb form.

The message didn't arrive. (NOT ~~*The message no arrived.*~~)

NOTE

a The negative forms of *can* are *cannot* and *can't*.

b For the negative in a sentence with two clauses, e.g. *I don't think it's safe* or *I think it isn't safe*, > 253A.

C Not in other positions

Not can come before a word or phrase when the speaker is correcting something.

I ordered tea, not coffee.

That's a nice green. ~ It's blue, not green.

Not can also come before some expressions of quantity (e.g. *many*, *much*, *a lot (of)*, *more*, *enough*, *everyone*, and *everything*) and before a phrase of distance (e.g. *far*) or time (e.g. *long*).

Not many people have their own aeroplane.

Your call will normally be answered in not more than 30 seconds.

There's an Internet Café not far from here.

The business was explained to me not long afterwards.

NOTE

a *Not* can come before a negative prefix, e.g. *un-*, *in-*, or *dis-*.

Beggars are a not unusual sight on the streets of London.

b *Not* can stand for a whole clause, e.g. *I hope not*. > 28B

D Other negative words

There are other words besides *not* which have a negative meaning.

| | <i>No, none, etc</i> | <i>Not/n't</i> |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| <i>no</i> | <i>There's no time.</i> | <i>There isn't any time.</i> |
| <i>none</i> | <i>We wanted tickets, but there were none left.</i> | <i>We wanted tickets, but there weren't any left.</i> |
| <i>no one, nobody</i> | <i>I saw no-one acting strangely.</i> | <i>I didn't see anyone acting strangely.</i> |
| <i>nothing</i> | <i>I saw nothing suspicious.</i> | <i>I didn't see anything suspicious.</i> |
| <i>nowhere</i> | <i>There was nowhere to park.</i> | <i>There wasn't anywhere to park.</i> |
| <i>few</i> | <i>Few people were interested.</i> | <i>Not many people were interested.</i> |
| <i>little</i> | <i>There was little time.</i> | <i>There wasn't much time.</i> |
| <i>never</i> | <i>I've never seen the film.</i> | <i>I haven't ever seen the film.</i> |
| <i>seldom, rarely</i> | <i>We seldom eat out.</i> | <i>We don't often eat out.</i> |

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| <i>no longer</i> | <i>Adam no longer lives here.</i> | <i>Adam doesn't live here any more.</i> |
| <i>hardly, scarcely</i> | <i>We've hardly spoken to our neighbours.</i> | <i>We haven't really spoken to our neighbours.</i> |
| <i>neither, nor</i> | <i>I can't understand this ~ Neither can I.</i> | <i>I can't either.</i> |

NOTE

In standard English we do not normally use *not/n't* or *never* with another negative word.

I didn't do anything. (NOT ~~*I didn't do nothing.*~~)

That will never happen. (NOT ~~*That won't never happen.*~~)

We've hardly started. (NOT ~~*We haven't hardly started.*~~)

But in non-standard English a double negative means the same as a single negative.

I didn't see no one. (non-standard) (= I didn't see anyone./I saw no one.)

In Standard English two negatives are sometimes used together. The two negatives make a positive. e.g. *I didn't do nothing. I did some work.* (= It isn't true that I did nothing.)

E The emphatic negative

We can stress *not* or an auxiliary with *n't*.

I did NOT take your mobile phone.

I DIDN'T take your mobile phone.

For emphatic stress, > 38B.

We can also use *at all* to emphasize a negative.

We don't like the town at all.

In no time at all, the interview was over.

At all usually goes at the end of a clause or after a negative phrase, e.g. *no time*.

Here are some other phrases which emphasize a negative.

The operation was not a success by any means.

I'm not in the least tired.

Her son's visits were far from frequent.

We can use *absolutely* before *no*, *nobody*, *nowhere*, etc.

There was absolutely nowhere to park.

We can use *whatever* or *whatsoever* after *nothing* or *none*, or after *no* + noun.

There's nothing whatever/whatsoever we can do about it.

The people seem to have no hope whatever/whatsoever.

F Inversion after a negative phrase

A negative phrase can come in front position. This can happen with phrases containing the words *no*, *never*, *neither*, *nor*, *seldom*, *rarely*, *hardly*, and the word *only*. There is inversion of subject and auxiliary.

Under no circumstances should you travel alone.

(Compare: *You should not travel alone under any circumstances.*)

Never in my life have I seen such behaviour.

(Compare: *I have never seen such behaviour in my life.*)

Sentence types

The telephone had been disconnected. Nor was there any electricity.
(Compare: *There wasn't any electricity either.*)
Only in summer is it hot enough to sit outside.
(Compare: *It is only hot enough to sit outside in summer.*)
The structure with inversion can sound formal and literary. It often adds emphasis to the negative.
Sometimes a phrase with *not* can come in front position.
Not since his childhood had the old man been back to the village.
Not until the following Monday was I able to see a doctor.
If the verb is in a simple tense, we use the auxiliary verb *do*.
Seldom do we have any time to ourselves.
(Compare: *We seldom have any time to ourselves.*)
Only once did the company break the law.
(Compare: *The company broke the law only once.*)

NOTE
No way is informal.
No way am I going to let this happen.
No way can we get over there by six o'clock.
(Compare: *There's no way we can get over there by six o'clock.*)
But *in no way* is more formal.
In no way have I failed in my duty.

11 The imperative

A Form

The imperative is the base form of the verb. The negative is *do not/don't* + base form, and for emphasis we use *do* + base form.

| Imperative form | |
|-----------------|---|
| Positive: | <i>Come here.</i> <i>Please read the instructions carefully.</i> |
| Negative: | <i>Do not remove this book from the library.</i> <i>Don't make so much fuss.</i> |
| Emphatic: | <i>Do be careful.</i> |

- NOTE
- a We can mention the subject *you* when it contrasts with another person.
I'll wait here. You go round the back.
You can also make an order emphatic or even aggressive.
You be careful what you're saying.
A few other phrases can be the subject.
All of you sit down! Everyone stop what you're doing.
 - b We can use other negative words with an imperative.
Never touch electrical equipment with wet hands. Leave no litter.
 - c In British English you may hear the emphatic *do* used as a polite form in offers and invitations.
Do have some cake. Do come in.

B Getting people to do things

There are many different ways of getting people to do things in English. Compare these sentences.

I'd be very grateful if you could translate this letter. (asking a favour)

Could you translate this letter, please? (a polite request)

Translate this letter. (an instruction on an exam paper)

The form we use for an order or request depends on the situation. It is usually necessary to use a polite formula such as *Could you ... ?* rather than an imperative.

To be very polite when asking a favour, we need to use a longer formula.

Would you be so kind as to move into the other room, please?

I wonder if you'd mind dealing with the matter for me.

In most situations we use a question form.

Could you hold the door open for me, please?

Would you mind giving me a lift?

You should always take the trouble to put your request into a question form. It would not be polite to say simply *Give me a lift*. In such a situation, the imperative would sound abrupt and even rude.

Even people in positions of authority often use a polite formula rather than a simple imperative.

Can you get out your books, please?

I want you to just keep still a moment.

You mustn't spend too long on this.

I'd like you to move a bit closer together.

Would you like to come this way?

The imperative is sometimes used to give orders.

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Teacher (to pupils): | <i>Open your books at page sixty.</i> |
| Doctor (to patient): | <i>Just keep still a moment.</i> |
| Boss (to employee): | <i>Don't spend too long on this.</i> |
| Traffic sign: | STOP |

But it is unusual to begin a conversation with an imperative. Often a polite formula is used for the first request, followed by a series of imperatives.

Can you get out your books, please? Open them at page sixty and look at the photo. Then think about your reaction to it.

An imperative can also be used informally between equals.

Give me a hand with these bags.

Hurry up, or we're going to be late.

TIP

It's better not to say *Do it*.

Say *Could you do it please?*

or *Would you mind doing it please?*

C Asking for something

When we ask someone to give us something, we use *Can I/we have...?* or *Could I/we have...?*

Can we have our bill, please?

Could I have one of those street plans, please?

We do not say ~~*Give us our bill, please.*~~

In a shop or café we can simply name what we want, but we must add *please*.

A box of matches, please.

Two cappuccinos, please.

We can also use *I'd like...* or *I'll have...*

I'd like an orange juice.

I'll have the fish, please.

D Other uses of the imperative

Slogans and advertisements:

Save the rain forests. Visit historic Bath.

Suggestions and advice:

Why not take a year out before college? Travel around and see the world.

Warnings and reminders:

Look out! There's a car coming.

Mind you don't fall.

Always switch off the electricity first.

Don't forget your key.

Instructions and directions:

Select the programme you need by turning the dial. Pull out the knob. The light will come on and the machine will start.

Go along here and turn left at the lights.

Informal offers and invitations:

Have a chocolate.

Come to lunch if you like.

Good wishes:

Have a nice holiday.

Enjoy yourselves.

E Imperative + question tag

We can use a positive tag after a positive imperative.

Get out your books, will/would/can/could you?

The tag makes the imperative less abrupt.

The tag *can't you?* after an imperative expresses annoyance or impatience.

Keep still, can't you?

Hurry up, can't you?

In warnings, reminders and good wishes, the tag is *won't you?* after a positive imperative and *will you?* after a negative.

Drive carefully, won't you?

Don't forget your key, will you?

Have a nice holiday, won't you?

F Let

Let's + verb expresses a suggestion.

It's a lovely day. Let's sit outside.

The full form is *let us*, but we normally use the short form *let's*.

We can use the tag *shall we?*

Let's have some coffee, shall we?

The negative is *let's not* or *don't let's*.

Let's not waste/Don't let's waste any time.

NOTE

- a *Let me* means that the speaker is telling him/herself what to do.

Let me think. Where did I put the letter?

Let me see what's in my diary.

Let me see means 'I'm going to see.' Compare *let* meaning 'allow'.

Oh, you've got some photos. Let me see./May I see?

- b After *let* we can refer to another person or other people.

If Lauren doesn't want to come out with us, let her stay at home.

Let them sort out their own problems.

This means that I think they should sort out their own problems.

12 Exclamations

- A** An exclamation is any phrase or sentence spoken with emphasis and feeling.

Oh no! Lovely! You idiot! Stop! Oh, my God!

In writing we use an exclamation mark (!).

- B** ~~There are structures with *how* and *what*~~ that can be used in an exclamation, although they do not always have an exclamation mark.

After *how* we can use an adjective or adverb.

How awful! How nice to see you. How brave you are.

We can also use a subject + verb.

Look at the plants – how they've grown!

After *what* there can be a noun phrase with *a/an* or without an article.

What a surprise! What a good idea.

What nonsense you talk. What nice things you've got.

- C** Some exclamations have the form of a negative question.

Aren't you lucky! (= You're lucky./How lucky you are!)

Wasn't that fun! (= That was fun./What fun that was!)

Don't you look smart! (= You look smart./How smart you look!)

Questions and answers

13 The use of questions

BUYING A TRAIN TICKET

Travel agent: *Can I help you?*

Customer: *Do you sell rail tickets?*

Travel agent: *Yes, certainly.*

Customer: *I need a return ticket from Bristol to Paddington.*

Travel agent: *When are you travelling?*

Customer: *Tomorrow, Thursday. Coming back the same day.*

Travel agent: *Are you leaving before ten o'clock?*

Customer: *It's cheaper after ten, is it?*

Travel agent: *It's cheaper if you leave after ten and return after six.*

Customer: *What time is the next train after ten o'clock?*

Travel agent: *Ten eleven.*

Customer: *Oh, fine. And how much is the cheap ticket?*

Travel agent: *Thirty-two pounds.*

Customer: *Can I have one then, please?*

The most basic use of a question is to ask for information.

What time is the next train? ~ Ten eleven.

But we can use questions in other ways, especially with modal verbs, e.g. *can*.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| A request: | <i>Can I have one then, please?</i> |
| A suggestion: | <i>Shall we take the early train?</i> |
| Offering to help: | <i>Can I help you?</i> |
| Offering something: | <i>Would you like a brochure?</i> |
| Asking permission: | <i>May I take one of these timetables?</i> |
| Complaining: | <i>Why can't you listen when I'm talking to you?</i> |

NOTE

There are also 'rhetorical questions', where an answer is not usually expected.

What do you think will happen? ~ Who knows?

You're always criticizing me, but have I ever criticized you?

14 Question forms

A Yes/no questions and wh-questions

There are two question types: a yes/no question and a wh-question.

A yes/no question can be answered by *yes* or *no*.

Do you sell rail tickets? ~ Yes, we do./Certainly.

Will I need to change? ~ No, it's a direct service.

A yes/no question begins with an auxiliary verb (*do*, *will*).

Sometimes other expressions are used instead of *yes* or *no*.

Are you leaving before ten o'clock? ~ I expect so.

A wh-question begins with a question word.

When are you travelling? ~ Tomorrow.

What shall we do? ~ I don't know.

The question words are *who*, *what*, *which*, *whose*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how*. For more details, > 15–16.

NOTE

We can use *or* in a question.

Are you coming back today or tomorrow? ~ Today.

Were you running or jogging? ~ I was running.

Or can link two clauses.

Are you coming back today, or are you staying overnight? ~ I'm coming back today.

The second clause can be the negative of the first one.

Are you coming back today, or aren't you?/or not?

This stresses the need for a yes or no answer and can sound impatient.

B Inversion in questions

In most questions there is inversion of the subject and the auxiliary.

Statement

You are leaving today.

The train has stopped.

We can sit here.

Question

Are you leaving today?

Why has the train stopped?

Where can we sit?

If there is more than one auxiliary verb, then only the first one comes before the subject.

Statement

I could have reserved a seat.

Question

Could I have reserved a seat?

(NOT ~~*Could have I reserved a seat?*~~)

In simple tenses we use the auxiliary verb *do*.

Statement

You like train journeys.

They arrived at six.

Question

Do you like train journeys?

Did they arrive at six?

Be on its own as an ordinary verb can also come before the subject.

Statement

The train was late.

My ticket is somewhere.

Question

Was the train late?

Where is my ticket?

NOTE

In simple tenses, *do* can be used for emphasis in a statement. > 38C Compare:

| Statement with emphasis | Question |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>You do like train journeys.</i> | <i>Do you like train journeys?</i> |
| <i>They did arrive at six.</i> | <i>Did they arrive at six?</i> |

C Questions without inversion

In informal conversation a question can sometimes have the same word order as in a statement.

You're leaving tomorrow? ~ Yes.
The car was blue? ~ That's right.
The car was what colour? ~ Blue.
They went which way? ~ That way.

TIP

When you ask a question, say *Are you leaving tomorrow?* and not *You're leaving tomorrow?* A question without inversion is not as usual in English as in some other languages and can sometimes sound a little strange.

15 Wh-questions

A Question words

Here are some questions with the various question words. The sentence in brackets shows how each question relates to a statement.

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>Who did Luke take to the dance?</i> | (He took someone to the dance.) |
| <i>What are you reading?</i> | (You're reading something .) |
| <i>Which film shall we see?</i> | (We'll see one of the films .) |
| <i>Whose bike is that?</i> | (It is someone's bike.) |
| <i>Where do you live?</i> | (You live somewhere .) |
| <i>When did the accident happen?</i> | (It happened at some time .) |
| <i>Why is your friend so upset?</i> | (She is upset for some reason .) |
| <i>How did you get a ticket?</i> | (You got a ticket somehow .) |

For short questions, e.g. *Why?*, > 25A.

For *whom*, > 15C.

NOTE

- a In these examples, the question word relates to something in a sub-clause.
What did Emma think I said? (Emma thought I said something.)
When would you like to leave? (You would like to leave at some time.)
- b *Why (not)* can come before a noun phrase or a verb.
Why the panic? (= What is the reason for the panic?)
Look at our prices - why pay more? (= Why should you pay more?)
Why not stay for a while? (= Why don't you stay for a while?)

TIP

Do not confuse *who's* and *whose*.

Who's is a short form of *who is* or *who has*.

Who's going to the party?

Whose party is it?

B Who, what, etc as subject and object

When *who* or *what* is the subject of a question, there is no inversion. The word order is the same as in a statement. Compare these questions.

Subject

Who invited you to the party? ~ *Laura did.*

(Someone invited you.)

What caused the accident? ~ *The driver of the lorry fell asleep.*

(Something caused the accident.)

Object

Who did you invite to the party? ~ *Oh, lots of people.*

(You invited someone.)

What did the accident cause? ~ *A 20-mile tailback.*

(The accident caused something.)



Who saw the detective?

(Someone saw him.)



Who did the detective see?

(He saw someone.)

Here are some more examples of a question word (or a question word + noun) as the subject.

Who is organizing the trip?

What happens next?

Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

Which coat looks the best on me?

Whose car has been stolen, did you say?

We can also use *how many* and *how much*.

How many people know the secret?

How much of the money goes to those who really need it?

C Whom

When *who* is the object of a question, we can use *whom* instead.

Who/Whom did you invite?

Whom is formal.

TIP

Use *who*, not *whom*. *Whom* is formal and rather old-fashioned.

Say *Who can you see?* not *Whom can you see?*

Who is more usual in everyday speech.

D Prepositions in questions

A question word can be the object of a preposition.

Where does Maria come from?

(Maria comes **from** somewhere.)

What are young people interested in these days?

(Young people are interested **in** something these days.)

Usually the preposition comes in the same place as in a statement (*come from, interested in*).

But in formal English the preposition can come before the question word.

On what evidence was it decided to make an arrest?

In which direction did the men go?

When *who/whom* is the object of a preposition, there are two possible structures.

Who were you talking to?

To whom were you talking? (formal)

When the question begins with a preposition, *whom* is used, not *who*.

(NOT ~~*To who were you talking?*~~)

NOTE

Since comes before *when* even in informal English. It often suggests disagreement.

I always help with the washing up ~ Oh yes, since when?

Since when has this area been closed to the public?

The second example might be used to challenge someone trying to bar people from a public place. The same question with *How long...?* would be more neutral.

16 More details about question words

A Question word + noun

What, which and *whose* can have a noun (or an adjective + noun) after them.

Without a noun

What will you do?

Which is best, Thursday or Friday?

Whose was this stupid idea?

With a noun

What action will you take?

Which day is best?

Whose stupid idea was this?

Which can come before *one/ones* or before an of-phrase.

We've got lots of suitcases. Which one shall we take?

Which of the bands did you like best?

We can also ask *Which one of ...?*

Which one of these boxes should I tick?

B The use of *who*, *what*, and *which*

Who always refers to a human being.

Which can refer either to humans or to something non-human.

What refers mostly to something non-human, but it can refer to humans when it comes before a noun.

| | Human | Non-human |
|--------------|---|---|
| <i>who</i> | <i>Who is your maths teacher?</i> | |
| <i>which</i> | <i>Which teacher/Which of the teachers do you have?</i> | <i>Which supermarket/Which of the supermarkets is cheapest?</i> |
| <i>what</i> | <i>What idiot wrote this?</i> | <i>What book are you reading? What do you do in the evenings?</i> |

Who cannot come before a noun or before an of-phrase.

(NOT ~~*Who teacher do you have?*~~ and NOT ~~*Who of the teachers do you have?*~~)

There is a difference in meaning between *what* and *which*.

What do you do in your spare time? *What sport do you play?*

Which is the quickest route? *Which way do we go now?*

We use *what* when there is an indefinite (and often large) number of possible answers. We use *which* when there is a definite (and often small) number of possible answers.

What sport?

Tennis, or golf, or football, or ...

Which way?

Right or left?

The choice of *what* or *which* depends on how the speaker sees the number of possible answers. In some contexts either word is possible.

What newspaper / Which newspaper do you read?

What parts / Which parts of France have you visited?

What size / Which size do you take?

NOTE

We can use *what* to deny the existence of something just mentioned.

Why don't you invite a few friends? ~ What friends? I haven't got any friends.

C Question phrases

What and *how* can combine with other words to form phrases that are often used to begin a question.

Questions and answers

What can come before a noun.

What time is the next train? ~ Ten eleven.

What colour shirt was he wearing? ~ Blue, I think.

What kind of/type of/sort of computer have you got? ~ Oh, it's a laptop.

What make is your car? ~ It's a BMW.

We use *what about* or *how about* to draw attention to something or to make a suggestion.

What about/How about this packaging? Are we going to throw it away?

What about/How about some lunch? ~ Good idea.

We use *what ... for* in questions about purpose or reason.

What are these screws for? ~ To fix the handles on.

What did you make such a fuss for? ~ Sorry, but I was annoyed.

How can come before an adjective or an adverb.

How old is this building? ~ About two hundred years old.

How far did you walk? ~ Miles.

How often does the machine need servicing? ~ Once a year.

How long can you stay? ~ Not long, I'm afraid.

It can also come before *many* or *much*.

How many people live in the building? ~ Twelve.

How much is the cheap ticket? ~ Fifteen pounds.

NOTE

How come is an informal phrase meaning 'why'. There is no inversion after *how come*.

How come all these papers are lying around? ~ I'm in the middle of sorting them out.

D How and what ... like?

We can use *how* in friendly enquiries about someone's well-being, enjoyment or progress.

How are you? ~ Fine, thanks.

How did you like the party? ~ Oh, it was great.

How are you getting on at college? ~ Fine, thanks. I'm enjoying it.

What ... like? asks about quality. Sometimes it has a very similar meaning to *How ... ?*

How was the film? / What was the film like?

But *What ... like?* does not refer to well-being.

How's your brother? ~ Oh, he's fine, thanks.

What's your brother like? ~ Well, he's much quieter than I am.

What does he look like? ~ He's taller than me, and he's got dark hair.

TIP

When you are introduced to someone, both of you say *hello*.

In a formal situation, you might say *How do you do?* (rather old-fashioned).

If someone says *How do you do?* to you, you should reply in the same way.

How do you do? is not a real question, so don't say *Very well, thank you*.

Americans say *How are you?* to each other when they are introduced.

When you meet someone you know, especially when you haven't seen them for some time, it is friendly to ask how they are.

How are you? ~ Very well, thank you. And you? ~ Oh, I'm OK, thanks.

E What exactly ... ? About how many ... ? etc

To ask for exact information we can use *exactly* or *precisely* after a question word.

What precisely do you want to know?

We can also put *exactly* or *precisely* in end position.

When are you coming back exactly?

To ask for approximate information, we can use *roughly* or *approximately*. They usually go in end position.

How many people will there be roughly?

How big is the room approximately?

They can also go before the question word or phrase.

Roughly how many people will there be?

We can also put *about* before a question phrase such as *what time*, *how many*, *how much*, or *how long*.

About what time do you think you'll be ready?

About how long would the journey take?

F Else

Else means 'other'.

What else do we need? (What other things ...?)

Who else did you invite? (What other people ...?)

G Emphasizing a question

We can emphasize a question by using *on earth*.

What on earth do you think you're doing?

Where on earth have I put that letter?

On earth expresses the speaker's feelings. In the first example I am surprised or annoyed about what you are doing. In the second I am puzzled about the whereabouts of the letter.

We can also use *ever*.

What ever/Whatever can the matter be?

How ever/However did you manage to find us?

Who ever/Whoever left that gate open?

17 Indirect questions

We can ask a question indirectly by putting it into a sub-clause beginning with a question word or with *if/whether*. This makes the question sound less abrupt.

We need to know what the rules are.

Can I ask you how much you're getting paid for the job?

Could you tell me where Queen Street is, please?

I'm trying to find out who owns this building.

Do you know when the train gets in?

I was wondering if/whether you could give me a lift.

There is no inversion in the sub-clause.

NOT ~~*We need to know what are the rules.*~~

NOTE

a If the main clause is a statement (*We need to know*), then there is no question mark.

b For question word + infinitive, > 108.
Could you tell me how to get there?

18 Negative questions

POWER CUT

Claire: *Did you see 'Big Brother' last night?*

Anna: *No, we can't watch TV. Our electricity is still off.*

Claire: *What! Haven't they got the power back on yet?*

Anna: *No. It's an awful nuisance. It's over a week now.*

Claire: *Isn't there a deadline? Don't they have to do it within a certain time?*

Anna: *I don't know.*

Claire: *Why don't you refuse to pay your bill?*

Anna: *Yes, I might just do that.*

Claire: *And come to our place tonight.*

A Use

A negative yes/no question often expresses surprise.

Haven't they got the power back on yet?

The context shows that the negative is true, because Anna has just explained that the electricity is still off. Claire is expressing her surprise at this.

A negative yes/no question or question with *why* can be a complaint.

Can't you be quiet? I'm trying to concentrate. ~ OK, sorry.

Why haven't you done what you promised? ~ I didn't promise.

We can use *Why don't/doesn't...?* or *Why not...?* for a suggestion.

Why don't you refuse to pay your bill?

Why not use your credit card? We accept all major cards.

Negative questions with *who*, *what*, or *which* usually ask for information.

Who hasn't returned this library book? ~ It must be Charlotte.

What can't you understand? ~ This sentence here.

Which of the guests doesn't eat meat? ~ Oh, that's Julia.

We can use a negative question to ask the hearer to agree that something is true.

Isn't there a deadline? Don't they have to do it within a certain time?

Haven't we met somewhere before?

The meaning is similar to *We've met somewhere before, haven't we?* > 20

B Form

We make a question negative by putting *n't* after the auxiliary.

Positive

Are we a democratic people?

Have they got the power back on?

Negative

Aren't we a democratic people?

Haven't they got the power back on?

The negative of *am I* is *aren't I*.

Why aren't I getting paid for this?

We do not use *not* after the auxiliary.

(NOT ~~*Are not we a democratic people?*~~)

In more formal English *not* can come after the subject.

Are we not a democratic people?

We can use other negative words.

Are you never going to finish?

Is there no electricity?

If the question word is the subject, *n't* or *not* comes after the auxiliary.

Positive

Who has filled in this form?

Which program works?

Negative

Who hasn't/has not filled in this form?

Which program doesn't/does not work?

We can also use other negative words in a wh-question.

Positive

*Which of us has ever
done anything dishonest?*

Negative

*Which of us has never
done anything dishonest?*

C Yes/no answers

The answer *no* agrees that the negative is true. The answer *yes* means that the positive is true.

Haven't they got the power back on yet? ~ No, not yet. It's a real nuisance.

Haven't they got the power back on yet? ~ Yes, it's back, thank goodness.

19 Answering questions

A How long should an answer be?

Some questions can be answered in a word or phrase, but for others you need one or more complete sentences. Here are some examples from real conversations.

- Didn't you hear about the bank robbery? ~ No.*
- I've got a hat. ~ What colour? ~ Brown.*
- Do you like school? ~ Yes, I do. It's OK.*
- How long do you practise? ~ About half an hour.*
- How is Lucy? ~ She's a lot better now. In fact I think she'll be back at school next week.*
- Why did you sell the car? ~ It was giving me too much trouble. I was spending more money on it than it was worth spending money on.*

It is usually enough to give the relevant piece of information without repeating all the words of the question. There is no need to say *No, I didn't hear about the bank robbery* or *The hat is brown* in answer to these questions.

NOTE
People sometimes give an indirect answer or avoid answering the question.
What time will you be back? ~ Well, these meetings sometimes go on for hours.
Are you a member of this club? ~ Why do you ask?

B Yes/no short answers

We can sometimes answer with a simple *yes* or *no*, but English speakers often use a 'short answer' like *Yes, I do* or *No, we haven't*. A short answer relates to the subject and auxiliary verb of the question. A positive answer is *yes* + pronoun + auxiliary. A negative answer is *no* + pronoun + auxiliary + *n't*.

| | Positive | Negative |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Is it raining?</i> | <i>Yes, it is.</i> | <i>No, it isn't.</i> |
| <i>Have you finished?</i> | <i>Yes, I have.</i> | <i>No, I haven't.</i> |
| <i>Can your sister swim?</i> | <i>Yes, she can.</i> | <i>No, she can't.</i> |

In simple tenses we use the auxiliary verb *do*.

| | Positive | Negative |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Do you play the piano?</i> | <i>Yes, I do.</i> | <i>No, I don't.</i> |
| <i>Did we do the right thing?</i> | <i>Yes, we did.</i> | <i>No, we didn't.</i> |

In this example, the question has *be* as an ordinary verb.

| | Positive | Negative |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Are you in a hurry?</i> | <i>Yes, I am.</i> | <i>No, I'm not.</i> |

We can sometimes use another phrase or clause instead of *yes* or *no*.

Am I in the team? ~ *Of course (you are).*

Were you late? ~ *I'm afraid I was.*

Does the jacket go with the shirt? ~ *I think it does.*

We often add information or comment after a simple *yes* or *no* or after a short answer.

Were you late? ~ *Yes, I missed the bus.*

Did Carl get the job? ~ *No, he didn't, unfortunately.*

Have you read this book? ~ *Yes, I have. I really enjoyed it.*

TIP

In some situations it can seem abrupt or unhelpful to simply answer *Yes* or *Yes, it is*. In a friendly conversation, it is better to add something relevant to keep the conversation going.

Is this CD player new. ~ *Yes, it is. I bought it last week.*

NOTE

- a The full form *not* in a short answer is formal or emphatic.

Was the scheme a success? ~ *No, it was **not**. It was a complete failure.*

- b We can use a short answer to agree or disagree with a statement.

Agreeing: *These photos are good.* ~ *Yes, they are.*

It doesn't feel very warm. ~ *No, it doesn't.*

Disagreeing: *I posted the letter.* ~ *No, you didn't. It's still on the table.*

We can't afford a car. ~ *Yes, we can, if we borrow the money.*

- c We can use a pronoun + auxiliary when we answer a *wh*-question.

Who filled this crossword in? ~ *I did.*

C Requests, offers, invitations, and suggestions

We cannot usually answer these with a short answer such as *Yes, you can* or *Yes, I would*.

Can I use your phone, please? ~ *Sure./Of course.*

Would you like a chocolate? ~ *Yes, please. Thank you.*

Would you like to come to my party? ~ *Yes, I'd love to. Thank you very much.*

Shall we have a coffee? ~ *Good idea./Yes, why not?*

A negative answer to a request, invitation or suggestion needs some explanation.

Can I use your phone, please? ~ *Sorry, someone's using it at the moment.*

Would you like to come to my party on Saturday? ~ *I'm sorry. I'd like to, but I'm going to be away this weekend.*

Shall we have a coffee? ~ *I've just had one, but you go ahead.*

20 Question tags → Audio

A The form of a negative tag

The form of a tag depends on the subject and auxiliary of the main clause:
It's ... , isn't it? The structure of a negative tag is auxiliary + *n't* + pronoun.

It's raining, isn't it?

You've finished now, haven't you?

The others can go, can't they?

In simple tenses we use the auxiliary verb *do*.

Louise works at the hospital, doesn't she?

You came home late, didn't you?

In these examples the main clause has the ordinary verb *be*.

It's colder today, isn't it?

Those sausages were nice, weren't they?

After *I am* or *I'm* ... the tag is *aren't I?*

I'm late, aren't I?

NOTE

A negative tag occasionally has the full form *not* instead of *n't*. *Not* comes after the pronoun.

Progress is being made, is it not?

This structure is used in a formal style or to add emphasis.

B The form of a positive tag

A positive tag is like a negative one, but without *n't*.

It isn't raining, is it? You haven't finished, have you?

These beans don't taste very nice, do they?

C More details about the pronoun

We can use the subject *there* in a tag.

There were lots of people at the carnival, weren't there?

But we do not use *this*, *that*, *these* or *those* in the tag. We use *it* or *they* instead.

That was lucky, wasn't it?

These plates aren't very expensive, are they?

If the subject is a word ending in *-one* or *-body* (e.g. *anyone*, *nobody*), we use *they* in a tag.

Anyone could just walk in here, couldn't they?

Nobody likes going to the dentist, do they?

If the subject is a word ending in *-thing*, we use *it* in a tag.

Something fell out of your bag, didn't it?

D Summary of structures with tags

OFF TO AUSTRALIA

James: *It's colder today, isn't it?*

Tim: *Yes, it's not very warm, is it? But I'll be off to Australia soon, as usual.*

James: *Lucky you. You go there every year, do you?*

Tim: *Yes, I always spend our winter in Sydney.*

James: *You get the best of both worlds, don't you?*

There are three main structures.

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Positive statement + negative tag: | <i>It's your birthday, isn't it? > E</i> |
| Negative statement + positive tag: | <i>It isn't your birthday, is it? > F</i> |
| Positive statement + positive tag: | <i>It's your birthday, is it? > G</i> |

NOTE

For tags with the imperative and *let's*, >11E-F.

E Positive statement + negative tag → Audio

This kind of tag asks the hearer to agree that the statement in the main clause is true. It is sometimes obvious that the statement is true. For example, in the conversation in D, both James and Tim know that it is colder today. In the sentence *It's colder today, isn't it?* the tag is not really a request for information. It is an invitation to the hearer to respond.

It's cold, isn't it? ~ It's freezing. I should have put a coat on.

You're Italian, aren't you? ~ Yes, I come from Milan. I'm staying here with some friends.

We can use a tag in a reply.

It's not so warm today. ~ No, it's freezing, isn't it?

Here the tag expresses agreement. We do not need to reply to it.

When the statement is clearly true, a falling intonation is used on the tag.

It's cold, ↘ isn't it? Coal fires are nice, ↘ aren't they?

But when the speaker is not sure if the statement is true, the voice can rise on the tag.

You'll be back in the spring, ↗ won't you?

We're going the right way, ↗ aren't we? ~ I hope so.

In the second example the speaker can choose a rising intonation in order to ask for reassurance.

NOTE

Sometimes a tag with a rising intonation can express surprise.

They have central heating, don't they? Everyone has central heating nowadays.

Compare *Don't they have central heating?*, which also expresses surprise. > 18A

F Negative statement + positive tag → Audio

This structure is used mostly in the same way as the examples in E. The tag invites the hearer to respond. Compare these sentences.

It's colder, isn't it?

It isn't so warm, is it?

With both negative and positive tags, the voice falls when it is obvious that the statement is true.

In these examples with a rising intonation, the speaker expresses suspicion or disapproval by inviting the hearer to confirm or deny something.

You didn't make a scene, did you? ~ No, of course I didn't.

You aren't staying in bed all day, are you?

The second example means 'I hope you aren't staying in bed all day.'

We can also use the structure with a rising intonation to ask a tentative question or make a tentative request.

You haven't heard the test results, have you? ~ No, sorry, I haven't.

You couldn't lend me ten pounds, could you? ~ Yes, OK.

A negative statement can have a negative word other than *not*.

There's been no news yet, has there?

You never tell me anything, do you?

G Positive statement + positive tag → Audio

This structure has a different meaning to the examples with a negative statement or a negative tag. Look at this part of the conversation in D.

James: *I'll be off to Australia soon, as usual.*

Tim: *You go there every year, do you?*

Tim realizes from James's words (*as usual*) that James goes every year. The information is new to him. He is expressing interest and inviting James to continue the conversation and give him more details. Tim's words mean 'Oh, so you go there every year.'

Here are some more examples.

I've got no time at the moment. ~ You're busy, are you?

~ Very busy, I'm afraid.

Vicky doesn't live here any more. ~ Oh, she's moved, has she?

~ She moved out about a month ago.

In the second example *she's moved, has she?* means that I realize she has moved but I would like you to confirm this and perhaps tell me more.

Compare the positive and negative tags.

We can't move this cupboard. ~ It's heavy, isn't it? I tried to lift it, but I couldn't.

Here the second speaker already knows that it is heavy. But in the following example, the information that it is heavy is new to the second speaker.

We can't move this cupboard. ~ It's heavy, is it? I was afraid it might be.

NOTE

- a In informal speech a statement tag is sometimes used after a positive statement.
You're crazy, you are. That was great, that was. It makes me mad, it does.
 The tag adds emphasis to the statement.
- b A positive statement + positive tag is not used in American English.

21 Echo questions and echo tags

A Echo questions

We can use an echo question when we do not understand what someone says, or we find it hard to believe.

I often eat bits of wood. ~ What do you eat?/You eat what?

My father knew Bill Clinton. ~ Who did he know?/He knew who?

Did you see the naked lady? ~ Did I see the what?

The second speaker is asking the first to repeat the important information.

The voice rises on the question word.

↗ *What have they done? They've done ↗ what?*

NOTE

We can use a statement with rising intonation to check that we heard correctly.

I often eat bits of wood. ~ You eat bits of wood?

B Echo tags → Audio

We form an echo tag like a question tag. A positive statement is followed by a positive tag, and a negative statement is followed by a negative tag.

We're moving house soon. ~ Oh, are you?

The team played brilliantly. ~ Did they really?

My sister isn't very well. ~ Isn't she? I'm sorry to hear that.

The children can't swim. ~ Can't they?

These tags express interest in what someone has just said. The voice rises.

Oh, ↗ are you? Did they ↗ really?

Now look at these examples.

We're moving house soon. ~ You aren't, are you?

The children can't swim. ~ They can, can't they?

Max won the prize. ~ He didn't, did he?

The last example expresses surprise or disbelief. The speaker didn't expect Max to win the prize.

We can use a negative tag in reply to a positive statement.

That was great. ~ Yes, wasn't it?

It's a lovely day. ~ It is, isn't it?

The team played brilliantly. ~ Yes, didn't they?

In the last example, both speakers saw the team and agree that they played very well.

Leaving out and replacing words

22 Avoidance of repetition

A In this conversation Mary's friends are talking about her new glasses.

MARY'S GLASSES

Sarah: *Mary's got a new pair of glasses, look. Does she look different to before?*

Tom: *No, I wouldn't say so.*

Simon: *They're very nice. I like them.*

Tom: *I rather like them, yes.*

Simon: *I think they suit you extremely well.*

Susan: *I think they're good.*

Simon: *Very nice.*

Tom: *Yes, are they a bit bigger than your previous ones?*

Mary: *Mm, quite a lot.*

Susan: *I prefer them to the last ones.*

Tom: *Yes, I think they're nice.*

Simon: *They're a different shape, definitely. Yes, they're very circular. The other ones were a bit more - were they a bit more square?*

Mary: *Yes, that's right. And these are photochromic.*

In many of these sentences, some words are left out or replaced by a pronoun. We do this to avoid repeating a word when it is not necessary to repeat it. For example, the topic of the conversation is Mary's glasses, so there is no need to keep repeating the word *glasses*.

| Sentence | Meaning |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <i>I like them.</i> | I like the glasses. |
| <i>And these are photochromic.</i> | And these glasses are photochromic. |
| <i>Very nice.</i> | The glasses are very nice. |
| <i>I wouldn't say so.</i> | I wouldn't say that she looks different. |
| <i>That's right.</i> | That the other ones were a bit more square is right. |

NOTE

Sometimes we can leave out or replace words that come later in the sentence.

If you want to, you can pay by credit card.

(= If you want to pay by credit card, ...)

After he had been given oxygen, the patient recovered.

(= After the patient had been given oxygen, ...)

Here *he* refers forwards to *the patient*, which comes later in the sentence.

- B** It is not always possible to avoid repetition. We sometimes need to repeat a word to make the meaning clear.

*I bought a book and a CD yesterday. I've got **the book** here, but I can't remember where I put **the CD**.*

We cannot use *it* instead of *the book* or *the CD* because we need to make clear which one we are talking about.

It is sometimes more helpful to repeat things because it makes the meaning easier to understand.

*After about half a mile you'll see a school on the left. Turn right just after **the school**.*

We can also repeat words for emphasis.

*This jacket is cotton, **the best cotton you can get**.*

It is possible here to say *the best you can get*, but the speaker chooses to emphasize the fact that the jacket is made of cotton.

23 Replacing and leaving out nouns

We often replace a noun phrase with a pronoun to avoid repeating the noun, as happens with *glasses* in MARY'S GLASSES in 22.

*Mary's got some new glasses. **They're** very nice.*

*Have you seen Mary? **She's** got some new glasses.*

For more details about pronouns, > 175.

We can also leave out a noun after certain words.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| A number: | <i>There's only one CD in here. ~ No, there are two, look.</i> |
| A quantifier: | <i>I've got some chocolate here. Would you like some?</i> |
| <i>This, that, these, or those:</i> | <i>My old glasses weren't photochromic, but these are.</i> |
| A superlative adjective: | <i>Which question was the most difficult?</i> |

We cannot leave out the whole noun phrase.

(NOT *I've got some chocolate here. ~~Would you like?~~*)

24 Leaving out words after the auxiliary

- A** A sentence can end with an auxiliary if the meaning is clear from the context.

I'm doing this wrong. ~ Yes, it looks as if you are.

Kate hadn't brought an umbrella. She was pleased to see that Lauren had.

I don't want to answer this letter, but perhaps I should.

Can you get cable TV? We can.

If the verb is in a simple tense, we use the auxiliary verb *do*.

I don't enjoy parties as much as my wife does.

Don't laugh. If you do, I'll kill you.

We can also end a sentence with the ordinary verb *be*.

This piece isn't long enough. ~ This one is.

We often use this kind of sentence when we are expressing a comparison or contrast.

The meeting went on longer than I thought it would.

I'm not a student, but my girlfriend is.

NOTE

The stress can be on the auxiliary or the subject, whichever is the new information.

I've made a mistake. ~ Yes, I'm afraid you HAVE. (focus on the fact)

Someone's made a mistake. ~ Yes, I'm afraid YOU have. (focus on the person)

- B** The auxiliary can be positive or negative. A positive auxiliary cannot be a short form.

Am I too late? ~ Yes, I'm afraid you are. (NOT ~~I'm afraid you're.~~)

But an auxiliary can be followed by *not* or by the short form *n't*.

Am I too late? ~ Of course you aren't/you're not.

We can use a negative auxiliary to contradict someone.

What did you have for breakfast? ~ I didn't. I never have breakfast.

- C** Usually everything after the auxiliary is left out.

Can you see now? ~ Yes, I can.

After *can* we leave out *see now*. But in some contexts we put a word or phrase after the auxiliary, for example, a tag or an adverbial.

This is a nice colour. ~ It is, isn't it?

Is there a market today? ~ I don't know. There was yesterday.

In the second example *a market* is left out of the answer, but *yesterday* is new information.

- D** Sometimes we have to use two auxiliary verbs. When the first auxiliary is a new word in the context, we cannot leave out the second.

Have the team won? ~ Everyone's smiling, so they must have.

I don't know if Tom is still waiting. He might be.

When is the fence going to be repaired? ~ It already has been.

In these examples *must*, *might*, and *has* are new in the context, so we use both verbs.

But when the two auxiliaries are both in the previous sentence, then we can leave out the second auxiliary.

The gate hasn't been repaired, but the fence has (been).

You could have hurt yourself, jumping off there. ~ I suppose I could (have).

In British English, *do* is sometimes used after an auxiliary.

I don't want to answer this letter, but perhaps I should (do).

Have we won the contract? ~ Everyone's smiling, so we must have (done).

Here *do* means 'answer the letter', and *done* means 'won the contract'.

25 Other structures where words are left out

A Short questions

A short yes/no question consists of an auxiliary + subject.

I've been to New York before. Have you? ~ No, I haven't.

I wanted Karen to pass her test. ~ And did she? ~ Yes, fortunately.

Here it is clear from the context that *And did she?* means 'And did she pass her test?'

In a short wh-question, we simply use a question word or question phrase.

I think I'm going to give up my course. ~ Really? Why?

I've got a hair appointment this afternoon. ~ What time?

When the question word is the subject, the auxiliary can come after it.

Something rather strange has happened. ~ What (has)?

A sub-clause can also end with a question word if the meaning is clear from the context.

The road is closed to traffic. No one knows why.

I put the letter somewhere, and now I can't remember where.

NOTE

For *why* in structures such as *Why the hurry?* and *Why bother?*, > 15A Note b.

B Leaving out a to-infinitive clause

When there is no need to repeat a to-infinitive clause, we can sometimes leave out the words after *to*.

Would you like to join us for lunch? ~ Yes, I'd love to.

Jane got the job, although she didn't expect to.

We need people to serve refreshments. Are you willing to?

I didn't take any notes because I didn't feel the need to.

You've switched the computer off. I told you not to, didn't I?

This happens most often when *to* follows a verb, adjective, or noun, e.g. *love to*, *willing to*, *need to*.

But we repeat an auxiliary after *to*.

Jane was chosen for the job, although she didn't expect to be.

I'm not sure if the system has crashed, but it seems to have (done).

Leaving out and replacing words

Sometimes we can leave out *to*. This happens especially after the verbs *like*, *try*, and *want*.

You can stay as long as you like.

Take one of these brochures if you want.

We often leave out *to* after an adjective or noun.

You can come through now if you're ready.

I'd love to ask that question, but I haven't got the nerve.

C Leaving out the main verb

The main verb can sometimes be left out.

The boys sat on the wall and the girls on the seat.

(... and the girls sat on the seat.)

America has won twelve medals and Australia ten.

(... and Australia has won ten medals.)

We do not need to repeat the verb when there are two clauses with the same structure and the same verb.

26 Leaving out the first word

A In conversational English certain kinds of words can be left out at the beginning of a sentence if the meaning is clear without them.

A: *Ready?*

B: *Sorry, no. Can't find my car keys.*

A: *Doesn't matter. We can go in my car. Better get going, or we'll be late.*

It is clear in this situation that *Ready?* means 'Are you ready?' and that *Doesn't matter* means 'It doesn't matter.'

B The pronoun *I* can be left out at the beginning of a statement.

Can't find my keys. (= I can't find my keys)

We can leave out *I* and a positive auxiliary.

Sorry I was late. (= I'm sorry I was late.)

Talk to you soon. (= I'll talk to you soon.)

It, it's, or there's can also be left out.

Feels colder today. (= It feels colder today.)

Colder today. (= It's colder today.)

A cold wind today. (= There's a cold wind today.)

We can sometimes leave out *alan* or *the* before a noun at the beginning of the sentence.

Cup of coffee is what I need. (A cup of coffee ...)

Television's broken down. (The television ...)

- C** We can leave out the auxiliary or the ordinary verb *be* from a yes/no question.
Your problem been sorted out? (= **Has** your problem been sorted out?)
Everything all right? (= **Is** everything all right?)

We can sometimes leave out the subject as well, especially if the subject is *you* or *there*.

Tired? (= **Are you** tired?)

Any free seats in here? (= **Are there** any free seats in here?)

Need a loan? Just give us a ring. (= **Do you** need a loan?)

The last example is from an advertisement which is written in a conversational style.

- D** We can sometimes leave out an imperative verb, especially *be* or a verb which expresses movement.

Careful. (= **Be** careful.)

This way, please. (= **Come** this way, please.)

27 Too, either, so, and neither/nor

A Too and either

After a clause there can be a short addition with *too* or *either*. It expresses the idea that what is true of one thing is also true of another. These are the patterns.

Positive: subject + auxiliary + *too*

You're yawning. ~ *You are, too.* *We're both tired.*

Negative: subject + auxiliary + *n't* + *either*

My sister can't drive, and her husband can't either.

In simple tenses we use the auxiliary verb *do*.

I like chocolate. ~ *I do, too.*

That calculator doesn't work. ~ *This one doesn't either.*

We can also use *be* on its own as an ordinary verb.

I'm tired. ~ *I am, too.*

In informal English we can say *Me too* or *Me neither*.

I'm tired. ~ *I am, too./Me too.*

I haven't got any money. ~ *I haven't either./Me neither.*

B So and neither/nor

We can also form a short addition with *so* and *neither* or *nor*. Here *so* means 'too', 'also'.

Leaving out and replacing words

Positive: *so* + auxiliary + subject

I like chocolate. ~ So do I.

You're beautiful. ~ So are you.

Children should behave themselves, and so should adults.

Negative: *neither/nor* + auxiliary + subject

My sister can't drive, and neither/nor can her husband.

We haven't got a colour printer. ~ Neither/Nor have we.

The apples don't taste very nice. ~ Neither/Nor do the oranges, I'm afraid.

So do I means the same as *I do too*, and *neither/nor do I* means the same as *I don't either*.

NOTE

For *Children should behave themselves, as should adults*, > 233D Note.

C Negative after positive; positive after negative

In these examples, a negative addition follows a positive statement, and vice versa. This kind of addition is used to express a contrast. What is true of one thing is not true of another.

I'm tired. ~ Well, I'm not.

We don't go bowling. ~ WE do.

The stress is on the subject *I* and *we*.

We can also use a short statement to contradict what someone says.

You're tired. ~ No, I'm NOT.

You don't go bowling. ~ We DO.

The stress is on *not* or on the auxiliary.

28 So and not: I think so, I hope not, etc

A So replacing a clause

The word *so* has a number of different uses. In these examples, it replaces a whole clause.

Will you be going out? ~ Yes, I expect so.

(= I expect I will be going out.)

I'm not sure if this is the right answer, but I think so.

Is your luggage insured? ~ I don't know. I hope so.

Has the committee reached a decision? ~ Well, it seems so.

We cannot leave out *so*, and we cannot use *it* in these contexts.

(NOT ~~Yes, I expect.~~) and (NOT ~~Yes, I expect it~~)

In this structure with *so* replacing a clause, we can use these verbs and expressions: *be afraid, it appears/appeared, assume, believe, expect, guess, hope, imagine, presume, say, it seems/seemed, suppose, suspect, tell (someone), think*. For *do so*, > 29A.

We do not use *know* or *be sure* in this structure.

The flight has been cancelled. ~ Yes, I know. (NOT ~~Yes, I know so.~~)

The flight has been cancelled. ~ Are you sure? (NOT ~~Are you sure so?~~)

NOTE

We can use *so* with the verb *be*.

I'm travelling around the world. ~ Is that so?

Here *Is that so?* (= Is that true?) expresses interest.

B So or not in the negative

There are two negative structures.

Negative verb + *so*: *Will you be going out?* ~ *I don't expect so.*

Positive verb + *not*: *Is this watch broken?* ~ *I hope not.*

With the verbs *expect*, *imagine*, and *think*, we usually form the negative with *n't ... so*.

Is it a public holiday on Monday? ~ *I don't think so.*

I think not is possible but rather formal.

There are some verbs and phrases which always form the negative with *not*.

It's no use waiting any longer. ~ *I guess not.*

Is this picture worth a lot of money? ~ *I'm afraid not.*

These verbs include *assume*, *guess*, *hope*, *presume*, and *suspect*. We also use *not* after *afraid*.

Some verbs can be used in either structure.

Will they give us a day off? ~ *I don't suppose so.*

We can't just leave without telling anyone. ~ *I suppose not.*

These verbs are *appear*, *believe*, *say*, *seem*, and *suppose*.

The two structures with *say* have different meanings.

Is the illness serious? ~ *I don't know. The doctor didn't say so.*

Is the illness serious? ~ *No, it isn't. The doctor said not.*

C So at the beginning

With a few verbs, *so* can come at the beginning of the clause. We use this structure to comment on the truth of a statement.

Is there going to be an extra day's holiday? ~ *Well, so I've heard.*

The exam has been postponed. Or *so I understand.*

These verbs include *assume*, *believe*, *hear*, *say*, and *understand*.

We can use *so they say* to express the idea that a piece of information may be just a rumour.

They're giving away free tickets. Or *so they say.*

So you say expresses doubt or disbelief about what someone says.

You're bound to get a nice welcome. ~ *So you say. I rather doubt it myself.*

We can also use *appear* and *seem* after *it*.

Mark and Laura are good friends. ~ *So it appears. / So it seems.*

D *If so and if not*

So and *not* can replace a clause after *if*.

Looking for a higher rate of interest? If so, you need our Super Savers account.

Have you got transport? If not, I can give you a lift.

E *Not after an adverb*

We can also use *not* after certain adverbs.

Will your friend be fit to travel? ~ No, definitely not.

These adverbs include *certainly, definitely, maybe, of course, perhaps, possibly, presumably, and probably*.

29 More patterns with *so*

A *Do so, do it, and do that*

We can use *do so* or *do it* to avoid repeating an action verb and the words that follow it. *Do so* is a little formal.

If you have not already paid this bill, please do so immediately.

She had always wanted to fly a plane, and now at last she was doing so/it.

The stress is on *do*, not on *so* or *it*.

When *do* has a different subject from the verb it replaces, we cannot use *so*.

Everyone else jumped. Why couldn't you do it?

Here the subjects *everyone else* and *you* are different.

When we use *do that*, we usually stress *that*.

We need someone to serve drinks. ~ I'll do THAT if you like.

I might tell the boss exactly what I think of her. ~ Oh, I wouldn't do THAT if I were you.

In this last example, *that* is stressed to express surprise or shock at the kind of action that is mentioned.

B *So in short answers*

A short answer with *so* can express agreement. The structure is *so* + pronoun + auxiliary or *be*.

You can't go this way. This is a one-way street. ~ Oh, so it is.

So it is means that the speaker agrees that it is a one-way street. He/She is noticing or remembering it.

Compare these two structures.

You've made a mistake. ~ So I have. (I agree that I have made a mistake.)

I've made a mistake. ~ So have I. (I have made a mistake, too.)

C So and that way

So can replace an adjective after *become* and *remain*.

The situation is not yet serious, but it may become so.

(= It may become **serious**.)

So is rather formal here. In informal English we use *get/stay that way*.

The situation isn't serious yet, but it may get that way.

We can also use *so* after *more* or *less*.

It's usually quite busy here – more so in summer, of course.

D The same

The same can replace words just mentioned, such as a complement or an object.

Monday was beautiful, and Tuesday was the same.

What are you having? ~ Steak and chips. ~ I think I'll have the same.

We can use *do the same (thing)* to refer to an action just mentioned.

The actor forgot his lines at a vital moment. The next night he did the same (thing). (= The next night he forgot his lines again.)

We can also use *say the same (thing)* or *think the same* to report words or thoughts that have just been mentioned.

The first person I asked said they disagreed with the idea, and everyone else said the same (thing). (= Everyone else said they disagreed with the idea.)

The others think we should take part, and I think the same.

(= I think we should take part.)

Note the expression *feel the same* or *feel the same way*.

The others think we should take part, and I feel the same (way).

We can use *The same is true of ...* or *The same goes for ...* to show that information about one thing also applies to another.

The Labour Party is divided on the issue, and the same is true of the Conservatives. (= The Conservatives are also divided on the issue.)

There is a shortage of cheap housing here, but the same goes for other places. (= There is also a shortage of cheap housing in other places.)

NOTE

We can use *(The) same to you* to return good wishes.

Happy New Year! ~ Thank you. (The) same to you.

30 Special styles

In some special styles of English, words are left out to save space.

A Signs and labels

A sign or label usually gives the necessary information in as few words as possible, e.g. *Office, No entry, Airmail, Sold*.

Leaving out and replacing words

B Newspaper headlines

A/an, the, and the verb be are often left out of headlines.

Stone circle discovery (= **The discovery of a stone circle**)

PM on holiday (= **The Prime Minister is on holiday.**)

The simple present is often used to refer to recent events, where normally the present perfect would be used.

Actor dies (= **An actor has died.**)

Bomb kills boy. (= **A bomb has killed a boy.**)

A passive participle on its own is often used instead of the present perfect passive.

Six arrested in raid (= **Six people have been arrested in a raid.**)

A to-infinitive is sometimes used with a future meaning.

Factory to close (= **A factory is going to close.**)

C Instructions

The is sometimes left out of instructions.

Open battery compartment cover by pushing in direction of arrow.

(= ... **the battery compartment cover ... the direction ... the arrow**)

When an instruction is on the thing it refers to, there is often no need for the verb to have an object.

Handle with care. (on a parcel)

Do not cover. (on a heater)

D Note style

English can be written in note style when information needs to be given as briefly as possible, for example on a postcard.

Arrived safely Saturday. Hotel OK, weather marvellous, sun shining. Lots to do here. Going on excursion tomorrow.

However, this style would not be polite in a letter, where there is space for full sentences.

This example is from a guidebook.

French-style café on two floors, just off Bridge St. Nice pastries and delicious coffee downstairs. Some hot food served upstairs. Trendy late-night hangout; office crowd during the day.

The words left out include *I* and *we*, *a/an* and *the*, auxiliary verbs, the verb *be* and *there is/are*.

Text messages often use note style and abbreviations.

Arrive in 30 mins. CU soon.

(= I will arrive in thirty minutes. See you soon.)

Word order and emphasis

31 Introduction

- A** Imagine you are sitting in a café with a friend drinking a cup of coffee when one of you makes this comment.

This coffee tastes awful.

This statement begins with the subject (*This coffee*) and the verb (*tastes*). This is the normal word order in a statement. Here a complement (*awful*) follows the verb. For details of what can follow the verb, > 4.

We can also look at the sentence from the point of view of the information it communicates. The first phrase (*This coffee*) is the topic, what the sentence is about. The last phrase (*awful*) is the important information about the topic. This coffee is 'old information' because it is naturally in our thoughts in the situation. *Awful* is 'new information', the point of the message. The sentence starts with old information and then tells us something new about it. This is a typical way of communicating information, although it is certainly not an absolute rule.

- B** Sometimes there are different ways of saying the same thing. Compare these pairs of sentences.

The Studio Café does better coffee than this.

A group of us went to the Studio Café last week.

I like the atmosphere in this place.

This coffee isn't as good as at the Studio Café.

Last week a group of us went to the Studio Café.

What I like about this place is the atmosphere.

Each pair of sentences orders the information in a different way. The choice of one or the other will depend on the context and what information is old or new. The rest of this chapter is about how we make such choices.

32 Linking the information in a text

ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE

Many scientists think that the universe was born in a colossal explosion called the Big Bang. In this explosion, 15,000 million years ago, all matter, energy, space and time were created. Of course no one was there to tell us what happened. But discoveries in physics and astronomy have enabled scientists to trace the Universe's history to its first fraction of a second. They believe at that time the Universe was squashed into a tiny volume, and it has been expanding ever since. The Big Bang Theory was put forward in 1933. Another idea, called the Steady State Theory, was suggested in 1948. This said

that new material was continuously being created, and so overall the Universe would not change. The Steady State Theory has now been discounted. More recently, scientists have been looking into the future of the Universe. What happens next?

(from *The Dorling Kindersley Science Encyclopedia*)

When we are writing a text we usually try to start each sentence with something known or expected in the context. Usually it relates to something just mentioned. The new information comes later in the sentence. For example, in the sentence *The Steady State Theory has now been discounted*, the theory is already in our thoughts because it has just been mentioned. The new and important information is that scientists no longer believe it.

Here are some ways in which the starting-point of a sentence can link to something mentioned in the previous sentence.

| Type of link | Just mentioned in the previous sentence | Starting-point of the new sentence |
|---|---|--|
| Repeating a word | <i>in a colossal explosion</i> | ← <i>In this explosion, ...</i> |
| Using a pronoun | <i>have enabled scientists</i> | ← <i>They believe ...</i> |
| Expressing something in different words | <i>the Universe was squashed into a tiny volume, and it has been expanding ever since</i> | ← <i>The Big Bang Theory was ...</i> |
| Making a contrast | <i>has now been discounted</i> | ← <i>More recently, scientists ...</i> |

Most of the sentences in *ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE* take as their starting-point an idea which is already familiar or which links to something earlier in the text. This helps the reader to see how one sentence follows on from another.

TIP

When writing a composition, try to link your sentences by starting each one with known information and then saying something new about it.

33 Linking the subject

We often use the subject to link with what has gone before.
The men are in prison. They raided five banks.
There was a series of robberies. Five banks were raided.
The girls did well. Celia won the first prize.
There were lots of prizes. The first prize went to Celia.
We can't get all the furniture in. The sofa is too big to go through the door.
There's a problem. The door isn't wide enough to get the sofa through.



We can often express an idea in different ways, e.g. *They raided five banks.* / *Five banks were raided.* In these examples the subject relates to the previous sentence and the new information comes at the end of the sentence.

In these examples, *the garage* and *September* would typically come after a preposition (*in*). Here they are the subject of the second clause or sentence.

The house was empty, but the garage contained some old chairs and tables.

(= There were some old chairs and tables **in the garage**.)

This has been an eventful year for the company. September saw our move to new offices. (= We moved to new offices **in September**.)

Garage links to *house* because it is next to the house, and *September* links to *year* because it is part of the year. Note that in the second example the structure *September saw ...* is rather formal.

Sometimes we can use an abstract noun to refer back to the idea in the previous sentence.

Someone threw a stone through the window. This incident upset everyone.

Lucy had finally made up her mind. But the decision had not been easy.

The people here have nothing. Their poverty is extreme.

34 Front position

The subject often comes in front position (at the beginning of a sentence). But it does not always do so. We can put another phrase in front position before the subject. We sometimes do this to emphasize a phrase or to contrast it with phrases in other sentences. Putting a phrase in front position can make it more prominent than in its normal position.

A An adverbial in front position

Most kinds of adverbial can go in front position, for example truth adverbs, comment adverbs, and linking adverbs > 200–202.

I'm not sure why we're in this traffic jam. Maybe there's been an accident.

I left the car unlocked. Luckily it was still there when I got back.

The weather wasn't very good. Despite that, we had a good day out.

Adverbials of time often go in front position. Look at these instructions.

First of all sift the flour and salt into a large, roomy bowl. Then put a grater in the bowl and coarsely grate the parsnips into the flour, then toss them around. After that, add the cubes of Parmesan and chopped sage and toss that in. Now lightly beat the eggs and milk together.

(from D. Smith *Delia's How to Cook*)

Here the position of the adverbials of time makes it easier for the reader to see the sequence of events.

Word order and emphasis

Adverbs of place and frequency can come in front position for contrast or emphasis.

It was warm and comfortable in the little cottage. Outside, it was getting dark. (*Outside* contrasts with *in the cottage*.)

Everyone shops at the big supermarket now. Quite often the little shop is completely empty. (emphasis on *quite often*)

An adverb of manner can also come in front position.

Slowly the sun sank into the Pacific.

This can be rather literary.

B Inversion after an adverbial

This sentence has the normal word order: subject + verb + adverbial.

A furniture van was outside the house.

Now look at this same information in a written context where the adverbial of place (*outside the house*) is in front position to link with the information (*number sixteen*) in the previous sentence.

Alan walked along Elmdale Avenue and found number sixteen without difficulty. Outside the house was a furniture van.

After the adverbial of place there is inversion of the subject (*a furniture van*) and the ordinary verb *be*. (NOT ~~*Outside the house a furniture van was.*~~)

A furniture van is the new information and comes at the end of the sentence.

We can do the same with other verbs of place and movement, e.g. *come*, *go*, *lie*, *sit*, *stand*.

The room contained a table and four chairs. On the table lay a newspaper.
Detectives were watching the house when out of the front door came a man in a black coat.

The important information (*a newspaper*, *a man in a black coat*) comes at the end of the clause or sentence.

There is no inversion with other verbs,

Outside the house two women were talking.

(NOT ~~*Outside the house were talking two women.*~~)

NOTE

We can also use the structure *there + be*. > 35

There was a furniture van outside the house.

C Inversion after *here* and *there*

We can use *here* and *there* in front position to draw attention to something in the situation.

Here is an announcement for passengers on flight TW513 to Miami.

(an airport announcement)

And there goes Williams! Into the lead! (a sports commentary)

In this structure we can use *be*, *come*, or *go* in the present simple. There is inversion of the subject and verb. The subject, the new information, goes at the end.

Here is an announcement.

But when the subject is a pronoun, there is no inversion.

And there goes Williams! There he goes, look!

Where are my keys? ~ Here they are.

D An object or complement in front position

We can sometimes put an object in front position, especially when it is in contrast with something else, or when it makes a link with what has gone before.

Do you prefer cats or dogs? ~ Dogs I love, but cats I can't stand.

His possessions from his previous address had been delivered to her door that same morning: two boxes of personal effects and an ancient iron bicycle. The bicycle she wheeled into the back yard. The boxes she carried upstairs.

(from R. Harris *Enigma*)

We can also sometimes put a complement in front position.

They enjoyed the holiday. Best of all was the constant sunshine.

The scheme has many good points. One advantage is the low cost.

There is inversion. The subject (*the low cost*) is the important new information and comes after the verb *be*.

35 The empty subject *there*

A The use of *there*

Imagine that two people are discussing where to eat, and one of them wants to mention a Chinese restaurant which is just round the corner. In this situation a sentence like *A Chinese restaurant is round the corner* would be possible but unusual. A phrase with *alan* is usually new information, and so would not usually come at the beginning of such a sentence. Instead we use a structure with *there* + *be*.

Where can we eat? ~ There's a Chinese restaurant round the corner.

There + *be* expresses the idea that something exists.

TIP

To point out the existence of something, use *there*.

~~A message is for you.~~ → *There's a message for you.*

~~A big parade was yesterday.~~ → *There was a big parade yesterday.*

NOTE

The subject *there* is not stressed and is normally spoken in its weak form /ðə/, like *the*. The subject *there* is not the same as the adverb *there* meaning 'in that place'. The adverb is pronounced /ðeə(r)/.

There /ðə/ *was a restaurant there* /ðeə/, almost hidden from view.

B Adverbials with *there + be*

In structures with the empty subject *there*, we often use an adverbial in end position.

There was a roof over the stadium.

There's a concert next week.

There are some letters for you.

But we can use *there + be* without an adverbial. This can happen especially with nouns expressing a situation or an event.

I'm afraid there's a problem. (= A problem exists.)

There's been an accident. (= An accident has happened.)

C Noun phrases after *there + be*

We normally use *there + be* before a noun phrase which is new information. The noun phrase has an indefinite meaning – it can have *a/an, some, any, no*, or a number, or it can be a noun on its own or with an adjective. It can also have a quantifier such as *a lot of, many, much*, or *several* or a pronoun such as *something*.

There's a calculator in the drawer.

There was no time to look round properly.

There must have been twenty people at least in the queue.

There's hot water if you'd like a bath.

There can't be much memory in this computer.

There's something I ought to tell you.

We do not usually use a noun phrase with *the, this/that* etc or *my/your* etc, except when we remind someone of the existence of something specific.

We haven't got anything we could sell.

~ *Yes, we have. There's your jewellery.*

The verb *be* agrees with the noun phrase that comes after it.

There is a letter for you. There are some letters for you.

But in informal speech you may hear *there's* before a plural.

There's some letters for you.

D Negatives, questions, and tags

We form negatives and questions with *there* in the normal way.

There wasn't/There was not a single thing to eat in the house.

Are there any letters for me?

What is there to do in this place?

We often use *no + noun* to form a negative.

There was no food in the house.

We can use *there* in a question tag.

There's a concert next week, isn't there?

E *There* + infinitive or ing-form

There can also be the subject of an infinitive (*to be*) or an ing-form (*being*).

*I didn't expect **there to be** such a big crowd.*

*The village is very isolated, **there being** no bus service.*

But this structure is rather literary. A finite clause is more usual.

*I didn't expect **there would be** such a crowd.*

*The village is very isolated because **there's** no bus service / **there isn't** a bus service.*

F *There* + *be* with relative clauses

We can put an active or a passive participle after the noun phrase.

***There's** someone **waiting** for you.*

(= Someone **is waiting** for you.)

***There was** a van **parked** outside the house.*

(= A van **was parked** outside the house.)

But we do not use a participle for a single complete action.

***There was** a noise **that woke** me up.*

(= A noise **woke** me up.)

(NOT ~~***There was** a noise **waking** me up.*~~)

In the following example the relative pronoun (*which*) is the object of the relative clause.

***There's** a small matter **which** we need to discuss.*

When the relative pronoun is not the subject, we cannot replace it with a participle.

NOT ~~***There's** a small matter **needing** to discuss.*~~

G *There* with other verbs

We use the subject *there* mostly with the verb *be*. Some other verbs are possible but only in a formal or literary style.

***On top of the hill** **there stands** an ancient tower.*

***There now follows** a party political broadcast.*

***The next day** **there occurred** a strange incident.*

Verbs in this structure include: *appear, arise, arrive, come, emerge, enter, exist, follow, lie, live, occur, remain, result, sit, stand, take place.*

We can sometimes use another verb between *there* and *be*.

***There don't seem to be** enough chairs.*

***There proved to be** no truth in the rumour.*

***There appears to have been** an accident.*

Verbs in this structure are: *appear, chance, happen, prove, seem, tend, turn out, use.*

NOTE

We can sometimes leave out *to be* after *seem*, especially before a phrase with *little* or *no*.

***There seemed** (to be) **little** difference in the prices.*

***There seems** (to be) **no** reason for alarm.*

36 The empty subject *it*

A *It* for time, distance, etc

We can use *it* to refer to the time, distance, the environment, or the weather.

It's quarter past ten.

How far is it to the beach?

It'll be getting dark soon.

It was cold yesterday.

B *It* referring to a clause

Look at these sentences. Each has a clause as its subject.

To make new friends is difficult.

That so few people came to the meeting was a pity.

How much money some people earn amazes me.

This word order is possible but not very usual. Instead, we normally use *it* as the subject, and the clause comes later in the sentence.

It's difficult to make new friends.

It was a pity so few people came to the meeting.

It amazes me how much money some people earn.

Because the clause is long, it comes more naturally at the end of the sentence than at the beginning.

With a gerund clause we use both structures.

Making new friends is difficult.

It's difficult making new friends.

We can also use *it* as the object.

| subject + verb | <i>it</i> | complement | clause |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------------|---|
| <i>I find</i> | <i>it</i> | <i>difficult</i> | <i>to make new friends.</i> |
| <i>We all thought</i> | <i>it</i> | <i>a pity</i> | <i>so few people came to the meeting.</i> |
| <i>The Board has made</i> | <i>it</i> | <i>clear</i> | <i>that no money will be available.</i> |

This structure is the most natural way of expressing the meanings in these examples. It would be a little awkward to say *I find making new friends difficult* and impossible to say ~~*We all thought that so few people came to the meeting a pity.*~~

C *It* seems, etc

It can also be an empty subject before *appear*, *happen*, *seem*, and *turn out*.

It seems the phone is out of order.

(= The phone seems to be out of order.)

It just so happened that I had my camera with me.

(= I happened to have my camera with me.)

There is also a structure with *it looks as if / as though* and *it seems as if / as though*.

It looks as if it's going to rain.

It seems as though we'll never manage to save enough money.

NOTE

For *It is said that ...*, > 92A.

37 There or it?

| <i>there</i> | <i>it</i> |
|--|--|
| <i>There + be</i> expresses the fact that something exists or happens. | <i>It + be</i> identifies or describes something. |
| We use <i>there</i> with a noun phrase of indefinite meaning, e.g. <i>a young man, any classes</i> . | <i>It</i> refers to something definite, e.g. <i>the young man, the day</i> , something known in the situation. |
| <i>There's a young man at the door.</i> (= A young man is at the door.) | <i>It's Jonathan.</i> (= The young man is Jonathan.) |
| <i>There's a strong wind today.</i> (= A strong wind is blowing.) | <i>Yes, it's windy.</i> (= The weather is windy.) |
| <i>There weren't any classes.</i> (= No classes took place.) | <i>It was Saturday.</i> (= The day was Saturday.) |
| Compare the structure with <i>there</i> and the structure with <i>have</i> . | <i>It</i> can also refer forward to a clause. |
| <i>There isn't any truth in the story.</i> | <i>It isn't true what they say.</i> |
| <i>The story has no truth in it.</i> | (=What they say isn't true.) |

38 Emphasis → Audio

A Introduction

In this conversation, emphasis is laid on a number of words and phrases.

MUSIC PRACTICE

Chloe: *Why weren't you at the music practice yesterday?*

Emma: *I didn't know there was one. How did you find out about it?*

Chloe: *It was you who told me. Don't you remember?*

Emma: *Oh, yes, I do remember now. I'd forgotten. I've got a TERRIBLE memory. Anyway, I thought it was THURSDAY, not Tuesday.*

Chloe: *What you need is your own personal secretary.*

Chloe uses structures with *it* and *what* to emphasize *you* and *your own personal secretary*. Emma emphasizes the fact that she remembers, and she emphasizes the words *terrible* and *Thursday*.

B Emphatic stress → Audio

When we put emphatic stress on a word, we speak it with greater force than usual. We do this to make it more prominent and often to contrast it with something else.

Is the practice on Tuesday? ~ No, I told you. It's on THURSDAY.

I wanted a LARGE packet, not a small one.

Here the stressed word is in capital letters to show that it is spoken emphatically. You may also see *italics*, **bold** or underlining used to emphasize a word in print.

When a word has more than one syllable, we write the whole word differently, e.g. *on 'THURSDAY*. But in speech only one syllable has extra stress, e.g. *on 'THURsday*. We stress *Thurs-* but not *-day*.

We can also use emphatic stress to give extra force to a word expressing an extreme quality or feeling.

I've got a TERRIBLE memory.

It's a HUGE building.

The talk was EXTREMELY interesting.

I'd LOVE a cup of coffee.

NOTE

Some words can be repeated for emphasis. They are *very*, *really*, and words expressing extreme feelings, quantity, or length of time.

I've been very very busy.

This has happened many many times before.

What a terrible, terrible tragedy!

We had a long, long wait.

The use of commas to separate repeated words is optional.

Sometimes we use *and*, especially with verbs and particles.

We waited and waited, but no one came.

The noise just went on and on.

C Emphasis in the verb phrase → Audio

We can stress the auxiliary or the ordinary verb *be*.

You CAN download the software. Someone told me you couldn't.

I HAVEN'T taken your calculator. I haven't touched it.

You aren't tired surely! ~ Yes, I AM. I'm exhausted.

In a simple tense we use the auxiliary *do* to emphasize the verb.

I really DO want to be a doctor. It's my ambition in life.

Oh, your garden DOES look nice.

I DID post the letter. I'm absolutely certain.

Do you want to fly in a balloon? ~ No, I DON'T. The idea terrifies me.

When a positive form of *do* is used for emphasis, we do not need to mark the emphasis in writing.

I really do want to be a doctor.

When we emphasize the auxiliary, we are usually emphasizing the positive or negative meaning of the sentence. *I did post the letter* means that yes, I posted it. But sometimes emphasis on the auxiliary contrasts with another kind of meaning.

We MIGHT go away for the weekend. We haven't decided definitely.
(It is POSSIBLE, not definite.)
I DID have a mobile phone, but it was stolen.
(in the PAST, not now)

We can stress an ordinary verb to emphasize its meaning.

I've BORROWED your calculator. I haven't stolen it.

Did you deliver the letter? ~ Well, I POSTED it.

Here *borrowed* and *posted* are emphasized in contrast to *stolen* and *delivered*.

NOTE

We can also add emphasis by using adverbs such as *really*, *indeed*, and *certainly*.

Your garden really does look nice.

You can indeed download the software.

D Emphasis with *it*

In the conversation MUSIC PRACTICE in A, Chloe wants to emphasize the identity of the person who told her about the practice.

It was you who told me.

The structure is *it* + *be* + phrase + relative clause. The phrase that we want to emphasize (*you*) comes after *be*.

Look at this statement.

Amundsen reached the South Pole in 1911.

We can emphasize the subject, object or adverbial.

It was Amundsen who reached the South Pole in 1911.

It was the South Pole that Amundsen reached in 1911.

It was in 1911 that Amundsen reached the South Pole.

For details about the use of *who*, *which*, and *that*, > 268A.

When a pronoun comes after *be*, it is usually in the object form.

It was me who told you, remember?

For *It was I*, > 175B Note.

We can also emphasize a prepositional object.

How do you like the choir? ~ It's the orchestra I'm in.

We can even emphasize a whole clause.

It's because I was in such a hurry that I forgot my ticket.

We can include a phrase with *not*.

It was Amundsen, not Scott, who reached the South Pole in 1911.

It was the South Pole, not the North Pole, that Amundsen reached in 1911.

E Emphasis with *what*

In the conversation MUSIC PRACTICE in A, Chloe wants to emphasize that Emma needs her own personal secretary (and nothing else).

What you need is your own personal secretary.

We can use a *what*-clause + *be* to emphasize a part of the sentence. The thing we need to emphasize comes after *be*.

Word order and emphasis

Look at these statements.

A technical fault caused the delay.

The guests played mini-golf after tea.

We can emphasize different parts of the sentence.

What caused the delay was a technical fault.

What the guests played after tea was mini-golf.

What the guests did after tea was (to) play mini-golf.

What happened after tea was that the guests played mini-golf.

We can sometimes emphasize a prepositional object.

What I long for is a little excitement.

We cannot use *who* in this structure. We use it only with a noun in front of it.

The people who played mini-golf were the guests.

(NOT ~~Who played mini-golf were the guests.~~)

NOTE

- a We can emphasize an action: *What the guests did was (to) play mini-golf.* Here are some examples with other verb forms.

What the guests are doing is playing mini-golf.

What I've done is sent/is (to) send a letter of complaint.

What we could do is (to) hire a car.

- b We can reverse the order of the what-clause and a noun phrase. Compare the word order in the following two examples.

The train was two hours late. What caused the delay was a technical fault.

There have been problems with new signalling equipment. A technical fault was what caused the delay.

Verb tenses

39 Introduction

These are the tenses of the English verb *play*.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Present simple: | <i>We play card games every week.</i> > 40 |
| Present continuous: | <i>We are playing now.</i> > 41 |
| Present perfect: | <i>We have played two games.</i> > 44 |
| Present perfect continuous: | <i>We have been playing cards.</i> > 48 |
| Past simple: | <i>We played tennis yesterday.</i> > 43 |
| Past continuous: | <i>We were playing with some friends.</i> > 47 |
| Past perfect: | <i>We had played the day before.</i> > 49 |
| Past perfect continuous: | <i>We had been playing for ages.</i> > 50 |

The verb phrases *play*, *are playing*, etc are the main verb of a clause. Each verb phrase is either present or past. It can also be continuous (*be* + ing-form) or perfect (*have* + past participle), or it can be both continuous and perfect (*have* + *been* + ing-form).

Some verbs are not normally used in the continuous form. These are state verbs like *know*, *belong*, and *seem*. For example, we can say *I'm playing tennis* (an action), but we say *I like tennis* (a state). For more details about state verbs and action verbs, > 51.

In this chapter we look at tenses, but they are not the only possible verb forms. A verb phrase can begin with a modal verb, > 70. It can also be passive, > 86.

NOTE

- a The forms above are usually called 'tenses'. But strictly speaking, there are only two tenses in English – present and past. The two tenses can combine with the two 'aspects' – continuous aspect and perfect aspect.
- b Another word for the continuous is the 'progressive'.
- c For ways of talking about the future, > 53.

40 The present simple

A Form

The present simple is the base form of a verb, e.g. *play*, *know*, *take*.

You know the answer. I usually take the bus.

In the third person singular we add -s or -es.

Tom knows the answer.

My sister usually takes the bus.

This colour matches my jacket.

| | Present simple | Short forms |
|------------|--|--|
| Positive: | <i>I/you/we/they play</i> <i>he/she/it plays</i> | |
| Negative: | <i>I/you/we/they do not play</i> <i>he/she/it does not play</i> | <i>I/you/we/they don't play</i> <i>he/she/it doesn't play</i> |
| Questions: | <i>do I/you/we/they play?</i> <i>does he/she/it play?</i> | |

There are some spelling rules for the s-form.

We add *-es* after a sibilant sound, e.g. *push* → *pushes*. > 276.

y changes to *ie*, e.g. *hurry* → *hurries*. > 280A.

For the pronunciation of the ending, > 276B.

Note also the forms *does* /dʌz/, *goes* /gəʊz/, *has* /hæz/, and *says* /sez/.

The verb *be* is irregular. > 65A.

I am / You are / Simon is the oldest.

In the negative we use *do not* or *don't* and the base form of a verb.

I just do not know the answer.

The neighbours don't take any notice.

In the third person singular we use *does not* or *doesn't* and the base form.

Tom does not know the answer.

The journey doesn't take long. (NOT ~~*The journey no takes long.*~~)

In questions we use *do* and the base form of a verb.

Do you know the answer?

What do we take with us?

In the third person singular we use *does* and the base form.

Does Tom know the answer?

How long does the journey take? (NOT ~~*How long takes the journey?*~~)

We do not use *do* with *be*.

Are you the oldest?

For *have*, > 66C.

B Basic uses of the present simple

We use the present simple for a present state. This might be a feeling, an opinion, or the fact that something belongs to someone.

My girlfriend likes hip-hop.

I think it's a good idea.

This bike belongs to my brother.

For the difference between a state and an action, > 51A.

We also use the present simple for facts such as what or where things are.
Silicon is a chemical element.
York lies on the River Ouse.

We use the present simple for repeated actions such as routines and habits, jobs and hobbies, things that happen again and again.
The old man walks his dog every morning.
Tom works in Oxford. He usually drives to work.
We do lots of things in our spare time. We play volleyball.
I don't often see my cousins.

Typical time expressions with the present simple are *always, often, usually, sometimes, ever/never, every day/week, etc; once/twice a week, etc; on Friday(s), etc; in the morning(s)/evening(s), at ten o'clock, etc.*

We also use the present simple for things that always happen.
Food gives you energy.
Paint dries quicker in summer.

NOTE

We can also use the present simple for future events seen as part of a timetable. > 56B
The flight gets in at eight tomorrow morning.

41 The present continuous

A Form

The present continuous is the present of *be + ing-form*.
It's raining now, look. *Is that boy throwing stones at your car?*
I'm not making a noise. *Where are you calling from?*

| Present continuous | | Short forms |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Positive: | <i>I am playing</i> <i>you/we/they are playing</i> <i>he/she/it is playing</i> | <i>I'm playing</i> <i>you're/we're/they're playing</i> <i>he's/she's/it's playing</i> |
| Negative: | <i>I am not playing</i> <i>you/we/they are not playing</i> <i>he/she/it is not playing</i> | <i>I'm not playing</i> <i>you're/we're/they're not playing</i> <i>you/we/they aren't playing</i> <i>he's/she's/it's not playing</i> <i>he/she/it isn't playing</i> |
| Questions: | <i>am I playing?</i> <i>are you/we/they playing?</i> <i>is he/she/it playing?</i> | |

There are some spelling rules for the *ing-form*.
We normally leave out *e* before *-ing*, e.g. *lose* → *losing*. > 278A
We double some consonants, e.g. *stop* → *stopping*. > 279

B Basic use of the present continuous

We use the present continuous for a present action over a period of time, something that we are in the middle of now. The action has started but it hasn't finished yet.

The train is leaving Victoria now.
Hurry up. Your friends are waiting for you.
What are you reading? ~ It's called 'White Teeth'.
I won't be long. I'm just ironing this shirt.
The earth is getting warmer, scientists tell us.

Some typical time expressions with the present continuous are *now, at the moment, at present, just, already, and still.*

The action does not need to be going on at the moment of speaking, as long as it has started but not finished.

I'm reading a really interesting novel, but I can't remember what it's called.
Is anyone sitting in this seat? ~ No, it's free.

42 Present simple or present continuous?

A The basic difference

| Present simple | Present continuous |
|---|---|
| A routine or habit: <i>We eat in the canteen most days.</i> | Something we're in the middle of: <i>We're eating lunch at the moment.</i> |
| A state or fact: <i>My dad loves cheeseburgers.</i> <i>We need a new car.</i> <i>Two and two makes four.</i> | |
| For states, > 51A. | |

These are the most basic uses of the two tenses. For more details about the use of the two tenses, > B-I.

B Routines and habits

| Present simple | Present continuous |
|---|--|
| We use the present simple for a permanent routine or habit. <i>I travel to work by car.</i> <i>My friends live in Manchester.</i> | We use the present continuous for a temporary routine. <i>My car's off the road. I'm travelling to work by bus this week.</i> <i>They're living in a rented flat until they find somewhere to buy.</i> Some typical time expressions are <i>this week, these days, nowadays, at/ for the moment, at present, and still.</i> |

NOTE

- a We use the present continuous to say that we are regularly in the middle of something.
At seven we're usually having supper.
 (= At seven we're usually in the middle of supper.)
 Compare the use of the present simple.
At six thirty we usually have supper.
 (= Six thirty is our usual time for supper.)
- b We can use the following pattern to talk about two things happening at the same time.
Whenever I see Matthew, he's wearing a tracksuit.
I usually listen to music when I'm driving.

C Always

There is a special use of *always* with the continuous.

They're always giving parties, those people next door.

I'm always losing things. I can never find anything.

In this pattern *always* means 'very often'. It sometimes expresses annoyance.

In the second example I am annoyed at losing things so often.

Compare these sentences.

Our teacher always gives us a test. (every lesson)

Our teacher is always giving us tests. (very often)

D States

We normally use the present simple for a state.

I prefer classical music to pop. *These colours look lovely.*

For states, > 51A.

There are some verbs which can be either simple or continuous when referring to a temporary state.

The weather looks/The weather is looking better today.

For more details, > 51D.

E Present actions

The present simple is sometimes used to describe actions as they happen, for example in a sports commentary or a demonstration.

Hacker passes the ball to Short, but Burley wins it back for United.

I add the onions, and then I turn down the heat.

The speaker sees these actions as completed in an instant. For actions over a period we use the continuous.

United are really playing well now. The crowd are cheering them on.

We can use the present simple with a performative verb, e.g. when we suggest something by saying *I suggest*.

I suggest we all pay a pound a week. ~ Yes, I agree.

For performative verbs, > 9.

NOTE

We can also use the present simple for actions in expressions like *Here it comes* and *There they go*. > 34C

F Past actions

We normally use the past tense to talk about things in the past. But we sometimes use present tenses for the important parts of a story. This makes the action seem more immediate and helps bring it to life.

You'll never guess what happened yesterday. I'm standing there in the street, and a man comes up to me and grabs me by the arm...

We use the present continuous to set the scene (*I'm standing there*) and the present simple for actions (*a man comes up to me*).

We also use the present tenses to talk about what happens in a novel, play or film.

The film is about a waitress who wins the lottery.

Macbeth murders the King of Scotland, who is staying at his castle.

NOTE

The present simple is used in headlines for a recent event.

England win 5-1 in Germany

G The written word

We can report the written word with a present-simple verb. We see the written statement as existing in the present.

It says in the paper that the factory will close.

The notice warns passengers to take care.

The letter explains everything.

We can also do this with what people have said recently.

Laura says she doesn't feel very well.

H Instructions

We can use the present simple to give instructions or to say what is the right way to do something.

You put your money in here.

You pull down the File menu and choose Print.

I The future

We can use the present simple for future events which are seen as part of a timetable. > 56B.

The flight leaves Los Angeles at six tomorrow morning.

We can also use the present simple in some sub-clauses of future time. > 59.

If you need any help tomorrow, let me know.

We can use the present continuous to talk about what someone has arranged to do in the future. > 56A.

A friend of ours is coming to stay with us next week.

43 The past simple

A Form

With most verbs, we add *-ed* to form the past simple.

We walked back to the hotel.

I just stayed in and watched television.

The form is the same in all persons.

| | Past simple | Short forms |
|------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Positive: | <i>someone played</i> | |
| Negative: | <i>someone did not play</i> | <i>someone didn't play</i> |
| Questions: | <i>did someone play?</i> | |

There are some spelling rules for the *ed*-form.

We just add *d* after *e*, e.g. *close* → *closed*. > 277A

We double some consonants, e.g. *stop* → *stopped*. > 279

y changes to *ie*, e.g. *hurry* → *hurried*. > 280

For the pronunciation of the *-ed* ending, > 277B.

But some past forms are irregular.

The campers left at six in the morning.

Someone saw the smoke and rang the fire brigade.

Many common verbs have an irregular past form. For a list, > 286.

The past form is the same in all persons (*she left, we left*, etc). The only exception is the verb *be*. > 65A.

I was/You were late this morning.

In the negative we use *did not* or *didn't* and the base form of a verb.

The old people did not walk all the way.

I didn't see any smoke. (NOT ~~*I no saw any smoke.*~~)

In questions we use *did* and the base form of a verb.

Did you see any smoke?

How far did the old people walk? (NOT ~~*How far walked the old people?*~~)

We do not use *did* with *was* or *were*. > 65A.

Were you late this morning?

irlanguage

B Basic use of the past simple

We use the past simple for an action in the past.

I bought this jacket yesterday.

The earthquake happened in 1905.

I saw the film three weeks ago.

When did the first Winter Olympics take place?

The time of the action (e.g. *yesterday, in 1905*) is over.

Verb tenses

The verb can refer to a number of actions in the past.

We went to clubs every weekend when we were at college.

I saw my career advisor several times.

We can also use the past simple for states.

I was a beautiful baby.

The Romans had a huge Empire.

I believed everything my teachers told me.

For states and actions, > 51A.

The past is the normal tense in stories.

Once upon a time a Princess went into a wood and sat down by a stream.

Some typical time expressions with the past simple are *yesterday, this morning/evening, last week/year, a week/month ago, that day/afternoon, the other day/week, at eleven o'clock, on Tuesday, in 1990, just, recently, once, earlier, then, next, after that.*

NOTE

- a With the past simple we often say when the action happened. But the information about the time does not need to be in the same sentence.
I went to town yesterday and had a look round the shops. I bought this jacket.
Here it is clear from the context that I bought the jacket yesterday.
Sometimes there is no phrase of time, but we understand a definite time in the past.
My sister took this photo. I didn't eat any breakfast.
- b Besides the past simple, there are other ways of expressing repeated actions or states in the past. > 82A
We used to go to clubs every weekend when we were at college.
- c The past tense refers to things which are distant from us. These are usually things that happened in the past. But we can also use the past tense to make something in the present sound less direct.
I wanted to ask you something.
This is a more tentative request than *I want to ask you something.*
- d We can also use the past for something unreal. > 232B, 246
I wish I was rich. If I had some money, I could buy a nice house.
Here the past expresses the idea that being rich and having money is distant from our experience.

44 The present perfect

A Form

The present perfect is the present tense of *have* + past participle.

I've finished with the computer now.

The train is late. It hasn't even reached Swindon yet.

Has Sarah passed her exams?

How long have you worked here?

Most verbs have a past participle ending in *-ed*.

| Present perfect | | Short forms |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Positive: | <i>If/you/we/they have played he/she/it has played</i> | <i>I've/you've/we've/they've played he's/she's/it's played</i> |
| Negative: | <i>If/you/we/they have not played he/she/it has not played</i> | <i>If/you/we/they haven't played he/she/it hasn't played</i> |
| Questions: | <i>have If/you/we/they played? has he/she/it played?</i> | |

There are some spelling rules for the *ed*-form.

We just add *d* after *e*, e.g. *close* → *closed*. > 277A

We double some consonants, e.g. *stop* → *stopped*. > 279

y changes to *ie*, e.g. *hurry* → *hurried*. > 280

For the pronunciation of the *-ed* ending, > 277B.

But some past participles are irregular.

I haven't seen this programme before.

The children have spent all their money.

Many common verbs have an irregular past participle. For a list of these verbs, > 286.

We always use *have* in the present perfect, not *be*.

The bus has already left. (NOT ~~*The bus is already left.*~~)

NOTE

For *gone to* and *been to*, > 65D.

B The use of the present perfect

The present perfect tells us about the past and about the present. When we use the present perfect, we look back from the present. For example, we can use the present perfect for an action in a period leading up to the present.

The café has just opened. (The café is open now.)

The visitors have arrived. (The visitors are here now.)

The period of time referred to by the present perfect can be very long. It can cover the whole of history or the whole of someone's life up to the present.

I wonder if anyone has ever said that before.

Have you ever ridden a horse? ~ Yes, but not since I was about twelve.

We can also use the present perfect for repeated actions before now.

I've ridden horses lots of times.

We've often talked about emigrating to Australia.

We can also use the present perfect for a state lasting up to the present.

*The café **has been open** for about ten minutes.*

*I've **had** these skis for years.*

Some typical time expressions with the present perfect are *just, recently, lately, already, before, so far, still, ever/never, today, this morning/evening, for weeks/years, since 1998*.

NOTE

Americans can use either the present perfect or the past simple for a recent action.

I've just met an old friend. / I just met an old friend.

45 Past simple or present perfect?

A Actions

| Past simple – in the past | Present perfect – linked to the present |
|--|---|
| <i>The new bridge opened last week.</i> | <i>The new bridge has just opened. (So it is open now.)</i> |
| <i>The car broke down yesterday.</i> | <i>The car has broken down. (So it is out of action now.)</i> |

The choice of tense depends on whether the speaker sees something as in the past or as linked to the present. The past simple means a finished time and does not tell us about the present.

*The car **broke down** yesterday. It's still off the road.*

*The car **broke down** yesterday. But luckily we got it going again.*

The car broke down does not tell us whether it is all right now. But *The car **has broken down*** tells us that the car is out of action now.

When we refer to a specific time in the past (e.g. *last week, yesterday*), we use the past simple rather than the present perfect.

B States

| Past simple | Present perfect |
|---|---|
| If a state is over, we use the past. <i>I had those skis for years. (Then I sold them.)</i> <i>I was there from three o'clock to five. (Then I left.)</i> | If the state still exists now, we use the present perfect. <i>I've had these skis for years.</i> <i>I've been here since three o'clock.</i> |

C Repeated actions**Past simple**

When we use the past simple for repeated actions, it means that the series of actions is over.

Gayle acted in more than fifty films. (Her career is over.)

Present perfect

When we use the present perfect for repeated actions, it means that the action may happen again.

Gayle has acted in more than fifty films. (Her career has continued up to the present and may or may not go on in the future.)

D Reporting news

We often use the present perfect when we first give some news, and then we use the past simple for the details such as when and how it happened.

There has been a serious accident on the M6. It happened at ten o'clock this morning when a lorry went out of control and collided with a car.

The same thing happens in conversation.

I've just been on a skiing holiday. ~ Oh, where did you go?

The new furniture has arrived. It came yesterday.

46 Adverbials of time with the past simple and present perfect

Some adverbials of time can be used with either tense.

A Just, recently, and already

With *just* and *recently* there is little difference in meaning between the tenses.

I've just heard the news. / I just heard the news.

We've recently moved house. / We recently moved house.

Compare these examples with *already*.

I've already heard the news. (before now)

I already knew before you told me. (before then)

B Once, twice, etc and ever, never

Once, twice, etc with the present perfect means the number of times the action has happened up to now.

We've been to Scotland once. ~ Oh, we've been there lots of times.

I've rung about five times, but no one is answering.

With the past simple *once* usually means 'on one occasion in the past'.

We went to Scotland once. I think it was about five years ago.

Ever or *never* with the present perfect means 'in all the time up to now'.

I've never done white water rafting.

Have you ever visited our showroom?

With the past simple it refers to a finished period.

Did you ever visit our old showroom?

C *This morning, today, etc*

We can use *this morning*, *this afternoon*, and *today* with the present perfect when *this morning* etc includes the present time.

It has been windy this morning. (The morning is not yet over.)

When *this morning* etc is over, we use the past.

It was windy this morning. (It is now afternoon or evening.)

With *today* there is little difference in meaning.

It has been windy today. *It was windy today.*

Both sentences are spoken late in the day.

We usually use the present perfect with *this week/month/year* when we mean the period from its beginning up to now.

I've watched a lot of television this week.

The past simple is also possible if the period is almost over.

I watched a lot of television this week.

We use the past simple for one time during the period.

I watched an interesting programme this week.

We might say this on Friday about something two or three days earlier.

We use the past simple with *last week/month/year*.

I watched a lot of television last week.

We often use the negative with phrases referring to an unfinished time.

It hasn't been/It wasn't very warm today.

I haven't watched /I didn't watch much television this week.

D *For and since*

We often use *for* or *since* with the present perfect to talk about a state.

My sister has been ill for three days/since Tuesday.

We also use *for* with the past simple to say how long something went on in the past.

The man stood there for a moment.

We skied for hours that day.

Compare these sentences.

I've been here for a month now. (I arrived a month ago.)

I'm here for a month. (I'm staying here for a month in total.)

We also use *for* and *since* with the negative present perfect to talk about the last time when an action happened.

I haven't skied for years. / I haven't skied since about 1998.

We can also use *since* with a clause.

I haven't skied since I was twelve.

Compare the positive past simple.

I last skied years ago/in 1998/when I was twelve.

It was in about 1998 that I last skied.

E Since I did it / I've done it

We can use *since* in the pattern *it + be + length of time + since + clause*. We can use either the past simple or the present perfect.

It's years since I (last) skied.

It's years since I've skied.

It's a month since the President (last) appeared in public.

It's a month since the President has appeared in public.

47 The past continuous

A Form

The past continuous is the past of *be + ing-form*.

It was getting dark.

People were going home from work.

The coffee machine wasn't working.

What were you thinking about?

| | Past continuous | Short forms |
|------------|--|---|
| Positive: | <i>I/he/she/it was playing</i> <i>you/we/they were playing</i> | |
| Negative: | <i>I/he/she/it was not playing.</i> <i>you/we/they were not playing</i> | <i>he/she/it wasn't playing</i> <i>you/we/they weren't playing</i> |
| Questions: | <i>was I/he/she/it playing?</i> <i>were you/we/they playing?</i> | |

B Basic uses of the past continuous

We use the past continuous for an action over a period of past time. It expresses the idea that at a time in the past we were in the middle of something.

At three o'clock in the morning I was lying there wide awake.

The room was full of old people who were all watching television.

We stood there horrified. Water was pouring through a hole in the ceiling.

Compare the present continuous and past continuous.

Present: *I'm travelling around the world.*

(I **am** in the middle of my journey.)

Past: *I was travelling around the world.*

(I **was** in the middle of my journey.)

But remember that for a complete action in the past we use the past simple.

I travelled round the world last year. It was a marvellous experience.

We sometimes use the past continuous to talk about an action going on over a whole period.

I was travelling from February to December.

The rescue services were working all night.

The phrases of time show the length of the period. We could also use the past simple here.

The rescue services worked all night.

C Past continuous and past simple

An action in the past continuous can happen around a specific time, such as the time of day.

It was raining at ten o'clock.

The past continuous can also happen around another action.

It was raining when I left the house.

The past continuous is the longer action (the rain falling), and the past simple is the shorter, complete action (my leaving the house). The shorter action can 'interrupt' the longer one.

Debbie was washing her hair when the doorbell rang.

When/While/As we were waiting in a traffic queue, a man ran to our car and tried to pull the door open.

We use the past simple for the main action and past continuous to describe things in the background.

We walked along the beach. People were lying in the sun. Children were playing football.

The sun was shining when the campers woke.

When we mention two actions that went on at the same time, we can use the past continuous in both clauses.

Debbie was washing her hair while Tim was tidying up the flat.

We can also use the past simple for either or both of the actions.

Debbie washed her hair while Tim was tidying up the flat.

Debbie was washing her hair while Tim tidied up the flat.

Debbie washed her hair while Tim tidied up the flat.

When one complete action followed another, we use the past simple for both.

When the doorbell rang, Tim went to the door.

(The doorbell rang and then Tim went to the door.)

D Past states

For a past state we normally use the past simple.

My grandmother loved this house.

(NOT *My grandmother was loving this house.*)

The woman had long dark hair.

I didn't know what to do next.

There are some verbs which can be either simple or continuous when referring to a temporary state.

The men were wearing masks. / The men wore masks.

For more details, > 51D.

E Other uses of the past continuous

Just as we can use the present continuous for a temporary routine in the present, so we can use the past continuous for a temporary routine in the past.

Present continuous: *I'm using the manager's office while she's away.*

Past continuous: *I was using the manager's office while she was away.*

Just as we can use the present continuous for a present arrangement, so we can use the past continuous for a past arrangement.

Present continuous: *I'm on my way to the club. I'm meeting someone there.*

Past continuous: *I was on my way to the club. I was meeting someone there.*

With the continuous, *always* means 'very often'.

Present continuous: *Those children are always getting into trouble.*

Past continuous: *When I was younger, I was always getting into trouble.*

NOTE

The past continuous is sometimes used to report what someone said. > 262A Note
Fiona was saying she really likes her new job.

48 The present perfect continuous

A Form

The present perfect continuous is the present of *have + been + ing-form*.

The war has been going on for two years now.

You haven't been doing enough revision.

How long have you been using a wheelchair?

| Present perfect continuous | | Short forms |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Positive: | <i>I/you/we/they have been playing he/she/it has been playing</i> | <i>I've/you've/we've/they've been playing he's/she's/it's been playing</i> |

| | | |
|------------|---|---|
| Negative: | <i>I/you/we/they have not been playing</i> <i>he/she/it has not been playing</i> | <i>I/you/we/they haven't been playing</i> <i>he/she/it hasn't been playing</i> |
| Questions: | <i>have I/you/we/they been playing?</i> <i>has he/she/it been playing?</i> | |

B Use of the present perfect continuous

We use the present perfect continuous for an action over the period of time leading up to the present.

Where have you been? I've been waiting here for half an hour.

Opposition to the regime has been growing recently.

The carpet's wet. The roof has been leaking.

We do not use the present simple or the present continuous.

(NOT *I wait here for half an hour.*)

(NOT *I'm waiting here for half an hour.*)

The action can be continuing in the present.

Where is he? I've been waiting half an hour. (I am still waiting.)

Or the action may have ended recently.

I'm hot because I've been running. (I stopped running a short time ago.)

We often use *for* and *since*. > 213B.

We've been living here for six months/since April.

We can also use the present perfect continuous for a series of repeated actions in the period leading up to the present.

I've been going to evening classes in Arabic.

My brother has been writing letters of protest.

C Present perfect or present perfect continuous?

Present perfect

This tense focuses on the result of the action.

I've washed the car, so it looks a lot cleaner now.

When we say how much or how many, we do not use the continuous.

Tina has written twelve pages of her report.

Present perfect continuous

This tense focuses on an action that has been going on up to the present.

I've been washing the car, so I'm rather wet.

When we say how long, we normally use the continuous form.

Tina has been writing her report since two o'clock.

When we say how many actions, we do not use the continuous.

I've tried to phone the hotline at least twenty times.

We use the present perfect for a state up to the present.

*My friend has been in a wheelchair for two years now.
I've always hated hospitals.*

We can use the continuous for repeated actions.

I've been trying to phone the hotline all day.

We do not use the continuous for a state.

(NOT ~~*I've always been hating hospitals.*~~)

Now look at these examples.

We've been living here since May. / We've lived here since May.

I've been working there for six weeks. / I've worked there for six weeks.

With *live* and *work*, either form is possible, but the continuous is more usual.

49 The past perfect

A Form

The past perfect is *had* + past participle.

James apologized for the trouble he had caused.

I didn't travel to the match because I hadn't bought a ticket.

How long had the animals been without food or water?

We use *had* in all persons.

| | Past perfect | Short forms |
|------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Positive: | <i>someone had played.</i> | <i>they'd played.</i> |
| Negative: | <i>someone had not played.</i> | <i>they hadn't played.</i> |
| Questions: | <i>had someone played?</i> | |

B Use of the past perfect

We use the past perfect for an action or a state before a past time.

Miranda lay on her bed and stared at the ceiling. She was depressed. Her boyfriend Max had gone on holiday with his brother the day before. He hadn't invited Miranda to go with him. He hadn't even said goodbye properly. They had been friends for six months, and everything had seemed fine. What had she done wrong?

This paragraph begins in the past simple. The situation is that Miranda *lay* on her bed. The writer looks back from this situation to a time before.

Compare the present perfect and past perfect.

Present perfect: *The floor is clean. I have just washed it.*

Past perfect: *The floor was clean. I had just washed it.*

Verb tenses

NOTE

For the past perfect in if-clauses, > 247.

C Past simple and past perfect

To talk about a single action in the past we use the past simple.

*This lamp is new. I **bought** it last week.*

(NOT ~~I **had bought** it last week.~~)

We also use the past simple when one action comes immediately after another.

*When the shot **rang** out, everyone **threw** themselves to the floor.*

To say that someone finished one action and then did something else, we use either *when ... **had done*** or *after ... **did/had done***.

*When Miranda **had typed** the message, she **mailed** it to Max.*

*After Miranda **typed/had typed** the message, she **mailed** it to Max.*

(NOT ~~When Miranda **typed** the message, she **mailed** it to Max.~~)

Sometimes the choice of past simple or past perfect makes a difference to the meaning.

*When the boss **arrived**, the meeting **began**.*

(= The boss arrived and then the meeting began.)

*When the boss **arrived**, the meeting **had begun**.*

(= The meeting began before the boss arrived.)

*When Max **spoke**, Miranda **put** the phone down.*

(= When Max started speaking, ...)

*When Max **had spoken**, Miranda **put** the phone down.*

(= When Max finished speaking, ...)

We can use the past perfect after *before* or *until*.

*The printer went wrong **before** it **printed** / it **had printed** a single sheet.*

*We **didn't** want to stop **until** we **finished** / we **had finished** the job.*

50 The past perfect continuous

A Form

The past perfect continuous is *had been + ing-form*.

*Someone **had been using** my office.*

*Things **hadn't been going** very well for some time.*

***Had** the police **already been investigating** the matter?*

We use *had* in all persons.

| Past perfect continuous | | Short forms |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Positive: | <i>someone had been playing</i> | <i>they'd been playing</i> |
| Negative: | <i>someone had not been playing</i> | <i>they hadn't been playing</i> |
| Questions: | <i>had someone been playing?</i> | |

B Use of the past perfect continuous

We use the past perfect continuous for an action that went on over a period before a past time.

I was delighted when I found a second-hand copy of the book. I'd been looking for one for some time.

The driver who died in the accident had been drinking.

In the second example, the action (*drinking*) went on over a period before the driver's death.

C The past perfect continuous and other tenses

Compare the present and past perfect continuous.

Present perfect continuous: *My hands are wet. I have been washing the floor.*

Past perfect continuous: *My hands were wet. I had been washing the floor.*

Compare the past perfect and past perfect continuous.

Past perfect: *The volunteers had collected hundreds of pounds.*

Past perfect continuous: *The volunteers had been collecting money all morning.*

The past perfect focuses on the result of the action. The continuous form focuses on the action going on.

Compare the past continuous and past perfect continuous.

Past continuous: *When I saw Alice, she was playing golf.*
(I saw her in the middle of the game.)

Past perfect continuous: *When I saw Alice, she'd been playing golf.*
(I saw her after the game.)

51 Action verbs and state verbs

A Actions and states

| Actions | States |
|--|---|
| <i>Jane went to bed.</i> <i>I'm buying a new briefcase.</i> <i>I lent Jeremy ten pounds.</i> | <i>Jane was tired.</i> <i>I need a new briefcase.</i> <i>Jeremy owes me ten pounds.</i> |
| <p>An action is something happening. Action verbs are verbs like <i>do, go, buy, play, stop, take, decorate, tell, ask, realize</i>, etc. Most refer to physical actions, but some are verbs of reporting (e.g. <i>say</i>) or verbs of thinking (e.g. <i>decide</i>).</p> | <p>A state is something that stays the same. State verbs are verbs like <i>be, exist, seem, depend, consist, include, contain, belong, own, need, matter, intend, cost, owe, know, understand, believe, love, like, hate, want</i>, etc. They express meanings such as existing, having an opinion, and thinking.</p> |

Verb tenses

We can use action verbs in the continuous, but state verbs are not usually continuous.

We are decorating the flat. (NOT ~~*We are owning the flat.*~~)

They were guessing the answers. (NOT ~~*They were knowing the answers.*~~)

B Verbs with more than one meaning

Some verbs have more than one meaning. One meaning can be an action, and another meaning can be a state.

| Actions (can be continuous) | States (cannot be continuous) |
|---|--|
| <i>We're having lunch now.</i> (action – 'eating') | <i>We have a big kitchen.</i> (state – 'own') |
| <i>We're thinking about the offer.</i> (action – 'deciding') | <i>I think we should accept it.</i> (state – 'believe') |
| <i>They're expecting trouble.</i> (action – 'waiting for it') | <i>I expect so.</i> (state – 'believe') |
| <i>Can you imagine the result?</i> (action – 'picture in your head') | <i>I imagine so.</i> (state – 'believe') |
| <i>Nurses care for the sick.</i> (action – 'look after') | <i>I don't care what happens.</i> (state – 'have no feelings about it') |
| <i>We stopped to admire the view.</i> (action – 'look at with pleasure') | <i>I admire your courage.</i> (state – 'approve of') |
| <i>He was looking at a picture.</i> (action – 'directing his eyes at') | <i>It looks lovely.</i> (state – 'has a lovely appearance') |
| <i>Would you like to taste the soup?</i> (action – 'eat a little') | <i>It tasted like water.</i> (state – 'had a flavour') |
| <i>Smell these flowers!</i> (action – 'sniff', 'use your nose') | <i>It smells very strange.</i> (state – 'has a strange smell') |
| <i>She's appearing in a film.</i> (action – 'playing a part') | <i>He appeared perfectly calm.</i> (state – 'seemed') |
| <i>He needs to measure the door.</i> (action – 'find out the size') | <i>It measured two metres.</i> (state – 'was two metres long') |
| <i>We must weigh the luggage.</i> (action – 'find out the weight') | <i>It weighed ten kilos.</i> (state – 'was ten kilos in weight') |
| <i>Someone has to cost the project.</i> (action – 'find out the cost') | <i>A ticket costs ten pounds.</i> (state – 'has a price of ten pounds') |
| <i>I was fitting a new switch.</i> (action – 'putting in place') | <i>The jacket fits perfectly.</i> (state – 'is the right size') |

C State verbs in the continuous

With some state verbs, we can use the continuous when we are talking about feelings at a particular time, rather than a permanent attitude.

I love holidays. (permanent attitude)

I'm loving every minute of this holiday. (around the present time)

Here are some more examples of continuous verb forms referring to a particular time.

How are you liking the play? ~ Well, it's all right so far.

This trip is costing me a lot of money.

Enjoy is an action verb.

I'm enjoying this party. I always enjoy parties.

(NOT ~~I enjoy this party.~~)

NOTE

a *Be* can be an action verb meaning 'behave', > 65C.

The dog was being a nuisance, so we shut him out.

b *Know* is a state verb, but *get to know* expresses an action.

I know the town quite well now.

I'm getting to know the town quite well.

D Verbs which can be simple or continuous

There are some verbs which can be either simple or continuous when referring to a temporary state. There is almost no difference in meaning.

I feel depressed. / I'm feeling depressed.

She hopes to get a job. / She's hoping to get a job.

My arm hurt. / My arm was hurting.

These verbs include *feel*, *hope*, *hurt*, *lie*, *look* (= appear), *stand*, *wear*, and *wonder*.

But *feel* meaning 'believe' is a state verb.

I feel it's the right thing to do.

And for other meanings of *feel*, > E.

E Verbs of perception

When we are talking about perception (seeing, hearing, etc), we often use *can* (present) and *could* (past) rather than a present or past tense.

I can see something under the sofa.

We could hear music.

I can smell something burning.

Sam could feel the weight of the rucksack.

We do not normally use the continuous.

We can use the past simple when what we saw, heard, or felt was a complete action.

We saw a magnificent sunset.

Tom heard the whole story.

They felt the building shake.

See (= meet) is an action verb.

I'm seeing the doctor this afternoon.

See (= understand) is a state verb.

You put the CD in here, like this. ~ Oh, I see. Thank you.

Look (at something), *watch*, and *listen* are action verbs.

We looked at / We were looking at the sunset.

Smell, *taste*, and *feel* as action verbs mean a deliberate action, > B.

I picked up the carton and smelled the milk.

When we arrived, people were already tasting the wine.

Judy was feeling her way in the dark.

52 Overview: the main uses of the tenses

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Present simple: > 40 | A present state or fact | <i>I like old films.</i> |
| | A permanent routine | <i>Atlanta is in Georgia.</i> <i>I work late most days.</i> |
| Present continuous: > 41 | In the middle of an action | <i>I'm watching this film.</i> |
| | A temporary routine | <i>I'm working late this week.</i> |
| Past simple: > 43 | An action in the past | <i>I wrote the letter yesterday.</i> |
| | A series of past actions | <i>I played basketball regularly at one time.</i> |
| | A past state | <i>I was there for a week.</i> |
| Present perfect: > 44 | An action in the period up to the present | <i>I've written the letter.</i> |
| | A series of actions up to the present | <i>I've played basketball a few times.</i> |
| | A state up to the present | <i>I've been here for a week.</i> |
| Past continuous: > 47 | An action over a period of past time | <i>It was raining when I got up.</i> |
| Present perfect continuous: > 48 | An action over a period up to the present | <i>It has been raining all day.</i> |
| Past perfect: > 49 | An action before a past time | <i>By that time the rain had stopped.</i> |
| | A state before a past time | <i>The weather had been awful for days.</i> |
| Past perfect continuous: > 50 | An action over a period up to a past time | <i>By that time it had been raining for hours.</i> |

The future

53 Introduction

- A** This news item is about a teacher who is going to run the length of Britain.

BOB'S RECORD CHALLENGE

32-year-old Bob Brown, a teacher from Cornwall, is **about to set off** on a run of more than 800 miles. Tomorrow morning at four o'clock he **leaves** John O'Groats, the most northerly point in Scotland, on a journey to Land's End, the south-western tip of England. He is **hoping to beat** the record of ten days and two hours. It **won't be easy**. Each day he **will run** 84 miles – 28 miles before breakfast, 28 miles before lunch and 28 miles before dinner.

But Mr Brown has had lots of practice; he once ran 3,000 miles across Australia in 60 days. His personal chef **is travelling** with him in a camper van and **will be cooking** lots of pasta, rice and potatoes. In spite of a large intake of high-energy foods, Mr Brown **will probably have lost** ten kilos by the end of the run. 'I've put on a few kilos in preparation,' he says, 'but I'm **going to burn** it off pretty quickly.' Mr Brown also expects to wear out four pairs of running shoes.

In the last chapter we looked at verb forms referring to the present and the past. For example we use the past simple for an action in the past.

Mr Brown once **ran** across Australia.

But we cannot be as definite about the future as we can about the present or the past. There are different ways of talking about the future depending on how we see a future event. We may see something as certain to happen, or it may be a plan or an intention, or it may be something we think will happen but can't be sure about.

- B** There is no single 'future tense' in English. Here are some examples of the different ways of talking about the future.

| Form | Example |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>will:</i> | <i>Each day he will run 84 miles.</i> |
| <i>be going to:</i> | <i>He is going to burn off the extra weight.</i> |
| Present continuous: | <i>His personal chef is travelling with him.</i> |
| Present simple: | <i>He leaves John O'Groats at four tomorrow morning.</i> |
| <i>be to:</i> | <i>Mr Brown is to appear on a chat show next Saturday.</i> |
| <i>be about to:</i> | <i>He is about to set off on his run.</i> |
| <i>will be doing:</i> | <i>His chef will be cooking lots of pasta, rice, and potatoes.</i> |
| <i>will have done:</i> | <i>Mr Brown will have lost ten kilos by the end of the run.</i> |
| <i>may, might, could:</i> | <i>It all might go horribly wrong. He could get injured.</i> |

The future

To-infinitive after
aim, expect, hope,
intend, or plan:

Mr Brown is hoping to beat the record.
Each day he plans to run 84 miles.

Often there is more than one possible form in a particular context.

Each day he will run 84 miles.

Each day he's going to run 84 miles.

Each day he will be running 84 miles.

- C** To show how sure or unsure we are about the future, we can use an adverb like *definitely, certainly, probably, perhaps, maybe, or possibly.*

He'll probably lose about ten kilos.

Or we can use *I know, I'm sure, I think, I expect, or I suppose.*

I think he's going to break the record.

54 Will and shall

A Form

After *will* we put an infinitive without *to*. *Will* has a short form *'ll*, and *will not* has a short form *won't* /wəʊnt/.

This book will change your life.

We will not get another chance.

I'll know soon if I've got the job.

We won't get another chance.

Will you still love me tomorrow?

We use *will* in all persons. In the first person we can use either *will* or *shall*. The meaning is the same, but *shall* is a little formal.

I will be/shall be at home tomorrow.

We will have/shall have lots of fun.

NOTE

- a *Shall not* has a short form *shan't* /ʃɑ:nt/.

I shan't be here tomorrow.

Shan't is old-fashioned. *Won't* is more usual.

- b In the US *shall* is less usual than *will*, and *shan't* is not used.

B Will for the future

Will is often used to talk about things in the future that we can be fairly certain about. The future is seen as fact, something we cannot control.

Southern England will stay dry and sunny over the weekend.

My father will definitely be in hospital for at least two weeks.

I'll be twenty-five next year.

Here there is no sense of a wish or intention.

We can also use *will* for a prediction.

I think United will win.

We can use *will* with *have to*, *be allowed to*, and *be able to*.

It's getting late. We'll have to hurry. > 71A

Competitors will not be allowed to use mobile phones. > 75C

Now you've got some funding, you'll be able to continue your studies. > 80B

C An instant decision

We can sometimes use *I'll/we'll* for an instant decision.

It's raining. I'll take an umbrella.

I think I'll just sit down for a minute.

Will expresses the idea that we decide at the moment of speaking. Compare *be going to*.

What else do I need? Oh, I know. I'll buy some postcards.

(I'm deciding now to buy some.)

I'm going to buy some postcards, so let's walk past the shops, shall we?

(I've already decided to buy some.)

We also use *I'll/we'll* when ordering food or drink.

I'll have the soup, please.

Do not confuse *will* and *want*.

Action: *I think I'll buy some postcards. ~ OK, I'll wait for you.*

Wish: *I want to buy some postcards, but I haven't got any money.*

D Willingness

Will sometimes expresses willingness.

I expect my friend will translate it for you. She speaks Italian.

I'll sit/I'm willing to sit on the floor. I don't mind.

I'll sit on the floor means that I am willing to sit on the floor.

Won't or *will not* can express unwillingness or an emphatic refusal.

The doctor won't come out at this time of night.

I won't put up with this nonsense.

The minister will not agree to the plan.

The subject can be a thing rather than a person.

I'm late already, and now the car won't start.

E Other uses of *will* and *shall*

In an offer we can use *I'll/we'll* and *shall I/we*.

I'll hold the door open for you. ~ Oh, thanks.

Shall I hold the door open for you? ~ Oh, thanks.

We do not use *be going to* to make an offer.

In a promise we can use *I'll/we'll*.

(I promise) I'll do my best to help you.

In an invitation we can use *won't you*, but *would you like to* is more usual.

Won't you sit down? / Would you like to sit down?

The future

When we can't decide, we use *shall I/we* to ask for advice or a suggestion.

Where shall I put these flowers? ~ I'll get a vase.

What shall we do this weekend?

We can use *shall we* to make a suggestion.

Shall we go to the seaside this weekend?

This means the same as *Let's go ...*, > 11F.

NOTE

- a *Will* can express an assumption, > 76.
James left this morning. He'll be in London now.
- b When *will* is stressed, it can express determination.
I WILL succeed. (= I am determined to succeed.)
- c *Will* is sometimes used in formal orders. It emphasizes the authority of the speaker.
You will leave the building immediately.
- d We generally use *shall* only with *I* or *we*, but we can use *you shall* in a promise.
You shall be the first to know, (I promise).
- e *Shall* is also sometimes used for formal rules.
The employee shall give two weeks' notice in writing.

55 Be going to

A Form

The form is *be going* + to-infinitive.

I'm going to watch television.

It isn't going to rain, is it?

Are you going to buy a newspaper?

NOTE

In informal speech *going to* is often pronounced /'gʌnə/.

B Be going to for the future

We can use *be going to* for something in the future.

It's going to stay dry and sunny over the weekend.

My father is definitely going to be in the hospital for at least two weeks.

We can use *be going to* to make a prediction.

I think United are going to win.

Will is also possible in the three examples above, > 54B.

For a comparison of *will* and *be going to*, > 57.

When we use *be going to*, there is a sense of something in the present pointing to the future.

It's ten already. We're going to be late.

This fence is going to fall down soon.

These predictions are based on something we can see in the present. We can see from the time now that we are going to be late, and we can see from the condition of the fence that it is going to fall down. The present evidence points to the future.

C Intentions

We can also use *be going to* for a plan or an intention.

I'm going to start my own business.

They're going to build some new flats here.

In the first example, *I'm going to start* means that I intend to start/I have decided to start.

With verbs of movement, especially *go* and *come*, we often use the present continuous rather than *be going to*.

I'm going out in a minute. I've got some shopping to do.

I'll pop in and see you. I'm coming past your place in any case.

NOTE

Going to go and *going to come* can sound awkward and are often avoided.

56 Present tense forms for the future

A The present continuous

We use the present continuous for what someone has arranged to do.

I'm meeting Kate at the club tonight.

What are you doing tomorrow?

Julie is going to Florida next month.

I'm doing some shopping this afternoon.

Julie is going to Florida suggests that Julie has made arrangements such as buying her ticket. *I'm doing some shopping* means that I have planned my day so that I can do the shopping.

The meaning is similar to *be going to* for an intention, and in many contexts we can use either form.

We're visiting/We're going to visit friends at the weekend.

B The present simple

We can sometimes use the present simple for the future, but only for what we see as part of a timetable.

The meeting is on May 13.

We change at Birmingham.

The train leaves in five minutes.

What time do you arrive in Chicago?

We do not use the present simple for decisions or intentions.

(NOT ~~*I carry that bag for you.*~~)

(NOT ~~*They build some new flats here soon.*~~)

For the present simple in a sub-clause, > 59A.

For *be due to* + to-infinitive referring to a timetable, > 58D.

57 Will, be going to, or the present continuous?

- A** We use both *will* and *be going to* to talk about the future.

It'll probably rain. It usually rains at weekends.

It's going to rain. Look at those clouds.

The prediction with *going to* is based on the present situation.

We use *be going to* (not *will*) when the future action seems certain to happen and is very close.

Help! I'm going to fall! I'm going to be sick!

Sometimes we can use either form with little difference in meaning.

One day the sun will cool down/is going to cool down.

City won't beat/aren't going to beat United.

When we talk about intentions, plans and arrangements, we use *be going to* or the present continuous, but not *will*.

We're going to eat out tonight. (= We intend to eat out.)

We're eating out tonight. (= We have arranged to eat out.)

We use *will* for an instant decision.

I'm too tired to cook. I think I'll get a take-away.

We do not use the ordinary verb *be* in the present continuous.

We'll be in South Africa for a month.

(NOT ~~*We're being in South Africa for a month.*~~)

- B** This conversation takes place at the end of work on Friday afternoon.

A FEW DAYS OFF

Emma: *I'll see you on Monday then.*

Polly: *Oh, I won't be here. Didn't I tell you? I'm taking a few days off. I'm going on holiday. I'll be away for a week.*

Emma: *No, you didn't say. Where are you going?*

Polly: *The Lake District. I'm going to do some walking.*

Emma: *Oh, that'll be nice. Well, I hope you have a good time.*

Polly: *Thanks. I'll see you the week after.*

Polly gives the news of her plans by using the present continuous and *be going to*.

I'm taking a few days off. I'm going to do some walking.

We cannot use *will* in this context. But after first mentioning a plan or intention, we often use *will* for further details and comments.

I'm going on holiday. I'll be away for a week.

I'm going to do some walking. ~ Oh, that'll be nice.

They're going to build some new flats. The work will take about six months.

TIPS

When you're talking about the future...

- 1 Remember that *be going to* can be used for both predictions and intentions, so it is often the safest choice, especially in conversation.
It's going to be a nice day. We're going to have a picnic.
- 2 Use *will* for instant decisions.
I'll go and switch the computer off.
- 3 Use the present continuous for arrangements.
I'm acting in a play next week.
- 4 Do not use the present simple for plans or intentions.
(NOT ~~*I act in a play next week.*~~)

58 Be to, be about to, etc

A Be to for an arrangement

We can use *be + to-infinitive* for an official arrangement.

The Prime Minister is to visit Budapest.

The two companies are to merge at the beginning of next year.

Be is often left out of *be to* in news headlines.

Prime Minister to visit Budapest.

B Be to for an order

Be to can also express a rule or an order by a person in authority.

The teacher says we are to wait here.

You're not to stay up late.

No one is to leave this building.

This trolley is not to be removed from the station.

C Be about to and be on the point of

We can use *be about + to-infinitive* for an action in the near future.

The audience are in their seats, and the performance is about to start.

Hurry up. The bus is about to leave.

We do not usually give a time with *about to*. We say *The bus leaves in ten minutes* but NOT ~~*The bus is about to leave in ten minutes.*~~

We can use *just* with *be about to* and *be going to*.

The bus is just about to leave/is just going to leave.

This means that the bus is leaving in the very near future.

Be on the point of means the same as *be about to*. It is followed by an ing-form.

The government is on the point of announcing a decision.

The future

D Be due to

We can sometimes use *be due* + to-infinitive when we are talking about a timetable.

The meeting is due to take place on May 13.

The train is due to leave in five minutes.

E Be set to

Be set + to-infinitive is used in news reports about things that are expected to happen soon.

The player is set to move to an Italian club.

The oil companies are set to raise prices once more.

F Be bound to and be sure/certain to

We use these forms to say that something will definitely happen in the future.

There's bound to be trouble.

The President is sure/certain to resign.

59 The present tense in a sub-clause

- A** We often use the present simple for future time in a clause with *if, when, as, while, before, after, until, by the time*, or *as soon as*. This happens when both clauses are about the future.

If we meet at seven, we'll have plenty of time.

My parents are going to move to the seaside when they retire.

Let's wait until the rain stops.

Call me as soon as you have any news.

(NOT ~~*Call me as soon as you'll have any news.*~~)

The same thing happens in other kinds of sub-clauses, such as a relative clause or a noun clause.

There will be a prize for the person who scores the most points.

Can you make sure that the place is left tidy?

- B** In a sub-clause we also use the present continuous or present perfect for future time, rather than the future continuous or future perfect.

I'll think of you here when I'm lying on the beach next week.

(NOT ~~*I'll think of you here when I'll be lying on the beach next week.*~~)

Let's carry on until we've finished.

(NOT ~~*Let's carry on until we'll have finished.*~~)

- C** But if the main clause has a present-tense verb (e.g. *I expect*), then we do not use another present-tense verb for the future.

I expect the rain will stop soon.

I keep reminding myself that I'll be lying on the beach next week.

NOTE

After *hope* we can use either a present or a future form.

I hope you have you'll have a lovely time.

60 The future continuous: *will be doing*

A Form

The future continuous is *will be* + ing-form.

The committee will be discussing the matter next month.

We won't be doing much at the weekend.

Will you be staying here long?

NOTE

a In the first person we can also use *shall*.

I will/shall be visiting customers all day.

b We can use *be going to* as well as *will*.

We aren't going to be doing much at the weekend.

B Action over a future period

We can use the future continuous for an action over a period of future time. It means that we will be in the middle of an action.

Mike can't come tonight. He'll be working.

How will I recognize you?

~ I'm fair, quite tall, and I'll be wearing a blue coat.

Compare the past, present, and future.

Past: *I've just had a holiday. This time last week I was lying in the sun.*

Present: *I'm phoning from Crete. I'm on the beach. I'm lying in the sun.*

Future: *I'm going on holiday. This time next week I'll be lying in the sun.*

Compare these sentences:

The crowd will cheer when the Queen arrives.

(She will arrive and then the crowd will cheer.)

The crowd will be cheering when the Queen arrives.

(The crowd will start cheering and then she will arrive.)

We sometimes use the future continuous with a phrase of time to talk about an action going on over a whole period.

I'll be working all day tomorrow.

NOTE

We can also use the future continuous for an assumption about what is happening now.

I expect Lisa is busy. She'll be revising for her exam.

C A routine or arrangement

We can also use the future continuous for an action which will result from a routine or arrangement.

The future

I'll be phoning my mother tonight. I always phone her on Fridays.

(The phone call will be the result of my regular routine.)

The Queen will be arriving in ten minutes' time.

(Her arrival in ten minutes is part of her schedule.)

We are centralizing our operations, so this office will be closing next month.

(The closure will be a result of the centralization.)

Other forms are also possible in the above contexts.

I'm going to phone my mother tonight. > 55

I'm phoning my mother tonight. > 56A

We can use the future continuous to ask about someone's plans to see if they fit in with our wishes.

Will you be going past the post office this morning? ~ Yes, why? ~ Could you post this for me, please?

How long will you be using the tennis court? ~ We've booked it until three.

When will you be marking our test papers? ~ Next week, probably.

We could use the present continuous in these examples. > 56A

61 The future perfect and future perfect continuous

A The future perfect

The future perfect is *will have* + past participle.

When we get to York, we'll have done half the journey.

Seven is too early. I won't have got home from work by then.

How long will the spaceship have been in orbit?

We can use the future perfect to talk about something being over at a time in the future.

I'll have finished this book soon. I'm nearly at the end.

We don't need all day for the museum. I expect we'll have seen enough by lunch time.

Sarah won't have completed her studies until she's twenty-five.

NOTE

- a In the first person we can also use *shall*.

When we get to York, we will/shall have done half the journey.

- b We can sometimes use *be going to* as well as *will*.

They aren't going to have finished the repairs until next week.

- c The future perfect can express an assumption about the past. > 76C

You'll have met my boss – he was at the meeting you went to.

B The future perfect continuous

The future perfect continuous is *will have been* + ing-form.

It's Mike's party in October. He'll have been working here for ten years.

We use this form when we imagine ourselves looking back from a time in the future, e.g. October. We look back at an action that will continue up to that time, e.g. Mike working.

Here are some more examples.

If I manage to finish this book by Friday, I'll have been reading it for eight weeks.

Our neighbours are moving soon. They'll have only been living here a year.

How long will the spaceship have been orbiting the earth?

C Future perfect or future perfect continuous?

Future perfect

This tense focuses on the result of the action.

I'll have written the report by six, so it'll be on your desk tomorrow morning.

Future perfect continuous

This tense focuses on the action going on.

This report is taking ages. I'll have been writing it for a week by the time I finish.

62 Was going to, would, was to, etc

We use these forms when we are talking about a past situation, for example when we are telling a story. We use the forms to refer forward to later events.

A Was/were going to

We can use *was/were going to* for a prediction in the past.

Alice felt so relieved. Everything was going to be all right after all.

We can also use *was/were going to* for an intention in the past.

I was going to buy some presents, so I took my credit card with me.

I was going to buy some presents means that I intended to buy some presents.

Sometimes the intended action does not actually happen.

The bus pulled away just as we were going to get on it.

We did not get on the bus because it pulled away too soon.

Compare the past continuous referring to a past arrangement. > 47E

We were on our way to the gym. We were playing basketball at three.

B Would

We can use *would* as a past form of *will*. This use can be rather literary.

George Washington was the first President of a nation that would become the richest and most powerful on earth.

They set off at daybreak. They would reach the camp before nightfall.

Here a past action (reaching the camp) is seen from a time when it had not yet happened.

For *would* as a past form of *will* in indirect speech, > 262E.

They thought they would reach the camp before nightfall.

The future

We can use *would not* for unwillingness or a refusal in the past.
The spokesperson wouldn't answer any questions.
The car wouldn't start this morning.
Compare *won't* for a refusal in the present. > 54D

C Was to, was about to, and was on the point of

We can also use *be to*, *be about to*, and *be on the point of* in the past tense.
The workers were arriving for their last shift. The factory was to close the next day. (There was an arrangement for the factory to close.)
We had to hurry. The bus was about to leave.
Max was on the point of saying goodbye to everyone when he suddenly noticed an attractive girl looking across the room at him.

NOTE

- a We can use *was to* with the perfect.
The factory was to have closed the next day, but it was decided to keep it going for another few weeks.
This means that the arrangement was changed. The factory did not close the next day.
- b Sometimes *was to* has the same meaning as *would*.
George Washington was the first President of a nation that was to become the richest and most powerful on earth.
This means that the nation later became the richest and most powerful on earth.

63 Overview: the future

These are some of the main ways of talking about the future.

| Use | Form |
|---|---|
| The future: | <i>The problem will get worse.</i> > 54B <i>The problem is going to get worse.</i> > 55B |
| The near future: | <i>The shop is about to close.</i> > 58C |
| An instant decision: | <i>I'll just put the kettle on.</i> > 54C |
| A plan or intention: | <i>We're going to move house soon.</i> > 55C <i>We're moving house soon.</i> > 56A |
| A timetable: | <i>We land at 10.25.</i> > 56B |
| An official arrangement: | <i>The conference is to take place in November.</i> > 58A |
| A future action which is part of a routine: | <i>I'll be seeing my boss tomorrow morning.</i> > 60C |
| A future action over a period: | <i>We'll be driving all through the night.</i> > 60B |
| Looking back from the future: | <i>You'll have eaten all those chocolates by tea time.</i> > 61A |
| Looking forward from the past: | <i>I was going to wash up, but I forgot to.</i> > 62A |

Be, have, and do

64 Auxiliary verbs and ordinary verbs

- A** In these sentences, *be* and *have* are auxiliary verbs. They combine with ordinary verbs.

I'm surfing the Net.

The information is updated daily.

The computer has crashed.

Here *be* is used to form the continuous (*am surfing*) and the passive (*is updated*). *Has* is used to form the perfect (*has crashed*).

We use the auxiliary verb *do* in simple-tense negatives and questions.

How often do you surf the Net?

But in a simple-tense positive statement we do not normally use an auxiliary.

I often surf the Net.

We also use auxiliaries in short answers, in short additions, and for emphasis.

Are you using the computer? ~ Yes, I am.

Sarah has done a computer course, and so have I.

Yes, I did download the file. I'm quite sure of that.

We sometimes use two auxiliary verbs together.

I've been surfing the Net. (present perfect continuous)

Petrol had been leaking from the tank. (past perfect continuous)

- B** *Be*, *have*, and *do* can also be ordinary verbs. We can use them on their own as the main verb of a sentence.

The weather was beautiful.

We had some sandwiches. (*had* = ate)

I did the crossword this morning. (*did* = completed)

Like other ordinary verbs, *be*, *have*, and *do* can be perfect or continuous.

The weather has been beautiful.

We were having some sandwiches. (*were having* = were eating)

I've done the crossword. (*have done* = have completed)

Sometimes we use the same auxiliary and ordinary verb together.

I was being lazy. (continuous of *be*)

I've had a sandwich. (perfect of *have*)

I did do the crossword. (emphatic form of *do*)

We can also use *be*, *have*, or *do* after a modal verb such as *might* or *can*.

I might be a bit late tomorrow.

You can do this crossword if you like.

65 The ordinary verb *be*

A Form

Present simple

Short forms

I am

you/we/they are

he/she/it is

I'm

you're/we're/they're

he's/she's/it's

Present continuous

Short forms

I am being

you/we/they are being

he/she/it is being

I'm being

you're/we're/they're being

he's/she's/it's being

Past simple

I/he/she/it was

you/we/they were

Past continuous

I/he/she/it was being

you/we/they were being

Present perfect

Short forms

I/you/we/they have been

he/she/it has been

I've/you've/we've/they've been

he's/she's/it's been

Past perfect

Short forms

someone had been

I'd/you'd/he'd/we'd/they'd been

We do not use the auxiliary verb *do* in simple tenses.

This pizza isn't very nice. (NOT ~~*This pizza doesn't be very nice.*~~)

Were your friends there? (NOT ~~*Did your friends be there?*~~)

In the other tenses, we form negatives and questions with the auxiliary in the normal way.

The weather has been nice.

The weather hasn't been very nice.

How has the weather been?

B Uses of *be*

Here are some contexts where we use the ordinary verb *be*.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Identity: | <i>Those girls are my cousins.</i> |
| Nationality: | <i>We're Swedish. We're from/We come from Sweden.</i> |
| Job: | <i>My sister is a doctor.</i> |
| Interests: | <i>I'm a keen cyclist.</i> |
| Place: | <i>The Science Museum is in South Kensington.</i> |
| Time: | <i>The match was last Saturday.</i> |
| Early/late: | <i>We were late for the show.</i> |
| Age: | <i>I'll be eighteen in November.</i> |
| Qualities: | <i>That building is really ugly.</i> |
| Feelings: | <i>How are you? ~ I'm fine, thanks.</i> <i>We're cold and we're hungry.</i> |
| Behaviour: | <i>Please be careful.</i> |
| Right/wrong: | <i>That isn't right. I think you're mistaken.</i> |
| Possession: | <i>Are these bags yours?</i> |
| Cost: | <i>How much is this CD/does this CD cost?</i> |

NOTE

When we say where something is, we can sometimes use *lie* or *stand* instead of *be*.

The island is/lies off the coast of Scotland.

The church was/stood at a busy crossroads.

In these contexts *lie* and *stand* are more formal and literary than *be*.

We can also use *be located* or *be situated*.

Our head office is located on the outskirts of Northampton.

The hotel is situated in lovely gardens with magnificent views.

C *Be* in the continuous

We can use *be* in the continuous for temporary behaviour.

The neighbours are being very noisy today.

I told the children off because they were being silly.

Compare these two sentences.

You're being stupid. (= At present you are behaving stupidly.)

You're stupid. (= You are always stupid. / You are a stupid person.)

D Gone or been?

Compare these two sentences.

Tom has gone to town, but he'll be back soon.

Tom has been to town. He got back half an hour ago.

Here *gone* means 'gone and still away'. *Been* means 'gone and come back'.

Sometimes we use an ing-form after *gone* or *been*.

The girls have gone swimming. They're at the pool.

The girls have been swimming. They've just got back.

In questions about what places people have visited, we use *been*.

Have you (ever) been to Egypt?

66 Have and have got

A Use

The basic use of *have* and *have got* is to express possession.

Our friends had a dog. We've got a balcony.

This includes temporary possession.

I think you've got a book that belongs to me.

In the above examples, *have* and *have got* cannot be used in the continuous.

For *have* as an action verb with a continuous form, > 67.

We're having a picnic.

For some other related meanings of *have* and *have got*, > F.

B Form

| <i>have</i> | <i>have got</i> |
|--|---|
| Present simple <i>I/you/we/they have</i> <i>he/she/it has</i> | <i>I/you/we/they have got</i> <i>he/she/it has got</i> |
| Past simple <i>someone had</i> | <i>someone had got</i> |
| Present perfect <i>I/you/we/they have had</i> <i>he/she/it has had</i> | |
| Past perfect <i>someone had had</i> | |

The word *got* is informal and typical of everyday conversation. We can use it in simple tenses, but it is more common in the present than in the past. And it is more common in Britain than in the US.

C Short forms of *have* and *have got*

| <i>have</i> | <i>have got</i> |
|---|--|
| With <i>have</i> on its own, we prefer full forms to short forms. | Before <i>got</i> we can use the short forms 've, 's, or 'd. |
| Present simple <i>I have the key.</i> <i>I've the key. (infrequent)</i> | <i>I have got the key.</i> <i>I've got the key.</i> |
| Past simple <i>I had the key.</i> <i>I'd the key. (infrequent)</i> | <i>I had got the key.</i> <i>I'd got the key.</i> |

NOTE

In very informal speech, you may hear *got* without *have*.

I got lots of time. (= I've got lots of time.)

You got any money? (= Have you got any money?)

TIP

Say *I've got* ... for the present.

Say *I had* ... for the past.

D Negatives and questions

In negatives and questions we can use *do* or *have* as the auxiliary.

| <i>have</i> | <i>have got</i> |
|--|------------------------------|
| Present simple | |
| <i>I don't have a key.</i> | <i>I haven't got a key.</i> |
| <i>Do you have a key?</i> | <i>Have you got a key?</i> |
| <i>I haven't a key.</i> (less frequent) | |
| <i>Have you a key?</i> (less frequent) | |
| <i>Amy doesn't have a key.</i> | <i>Amy hasn't got a key.</i> |
| <i>Does Amy have a key?</i> | <i>Has Amy got a key?</i> |
| <i>Amy hasn't a key.</i> (less frequent) | |
| <i>Has Amy a key?</i> (less frequent) | |
| Past simple | |
| <i>I didn't have a key.</i> | <i>I hadn't got a key.</i> |
| <i>Did you have a key?</i> | <i>Had you got a key?</i> |
| <i>I hadn't a key.</i> (less frequent) | |
| <i>Had you a key?</i> (less frequent) | |

In the present *I don't have* and *I haven't got* are both possible, although Americans prefer *I don't have*. In the past we usually use *did* in negatives and questions.

In perfect tenses we form negatives and questions in the usual way.

I haven't had a chance to talk to you.

Had you had any symptoms before yesterday?

TIP

Ask *Do you have* ...? or *Have you got* ...? for the present.

Ask *Did you have* ...? for the past.

E More details about *got*

There are some structures where we do not normally use *got*.

Perfect:

I've had these shoes for years.

(NOT *I've had got*)

Be, have, and do

- Short answer: *Have you got your ticket? ~ Yes, I have.*
(NOT ~~Yes, I have got.~~)
- Infinitive: *It would be nice to have more time together.*
(NOT ~~to have got~~)
- Ing-form: *It's pretty depressing having no job.*
(NOT ~~having got~~)
- After a modal verb: *You can have these books if you like.*
(NOT ~~You can have got~~)

Have got can sometimes be the present perfect of *get*.

I left my books outside. They've got wet. (= They have become wet.)

Compare these examples.

I've got this newspaper from one of the neighbours. (= I have obtained/borrowed it.)

I've got a newspaper somewhere. I just can't find it. (= I have one.)

When *have got* expresses an action, we can use it in these structures.

Infinitive: *We're grateful to have got somewhere to live.*
(= to have found)

Ing-form: *I can't help having got a cold.*
(= having caught)

After a modal verb: *They must have got our letter by now.*
(= must have received)

We can leave out *got* from the above examples.

We're grateful to have somewhere to live.

Here *have* expresses possession.

But when *have got* means 'have become', we cannot leave out *got*.

They must have got wet in all this rain.

F Other uses of *have* and *have got*

As well as possession, *have* and *have got* can express other related meanings.

- Qualities: *Those soldiers certainly had courage.*
- Features: *Kate has got blue eyes.*
- Parts: *The house has five bedrooms.*
- Relationships: *Have you got any brothers or sisters?*
- Position: *He had both his hands in his pockets.*
- Thoughts: *I've got an idea.*
- Availability: *We don't have time to hang around.*
- Necessity: *I've got a lot of work at the moment.*
- Illness: *I've got a terrible headache.*

G With and there

We can also use *with* to express possession.

We saw a man with a gun. (= a man who had a gun)

(BUT NOT ~~The man was with a gun.~~)

There is a structure with *have* or *have got* which means the same as one with *there + be*.

The T-shirt had a slogan on it.

(= *There was a slogan on the T-shirt.*)

Their house has got a filling-station right next to it.

(= *There is a filling-station right next to their house.*)

67 The ordinary verb *have*

Have can be an ordinary verb with all the usual tenses, including the continuous. It has a number of different meanings.

The children are having a wonderful time. (= are experiencing)

I've had a letter. (= have received)

We'll be having a late lunch. (= will be eating)

I always have orange juice at breakfast. (= drink)

My father has a sleep after lunch. (has a sleep = sleeps, > 69)

Here *have* is an action verb.

We use the auxiliary verb *do* in simple-tense negatives and questions.

We don't have breakfast on Sundays.

Did you have a good journey?

We cannot use *got* with the ordinary verb *have*.

(NOT ~~*The children have got a wonderful time.*~~)

68 The ordinary verb *do*

A Form

Present simple

I/you/we/they do
he/she/it does

Present continuous

I am doing
you/we/they are doing
he/she/it is doing

Past simple

someone did

Past continuous

I/he/she/it was doing
you/we/they were doing

Present perfect

I/you/we/they have done
he/she/it has done

Present perfect continuous

I/you/we/they have been doing
he/she/it has been doing

Past perfect

someone had done

Past perfect continuous

someone had been doing

We form negatives and questions in the same way as with other verbs.

I haven't done anything wrong.

What subjects are you doing?

Be, have, and do

In simple tenses we use the auxiliary verb *do*.

I don't do a Saturday job any more.

How many miles did you do on your run?

We can also use the negative imperative and the emphatic form with the ordinary verb *do*.

Don't do anything dangerous, will you?

Your sister did do well in the competition!

B Uses of do

The ordinary verb *do* has a number of uses.

We use *do* for an action when we do not say what the action is.

What are you doing? ~ I'm drawing a plan of the garden.

You can do lots of exciting things at Adventure World!

Guess what we did yesterday.

We may not know what the action is, or we may not want to be specific.

We also use *do* to mean 'carry out' or 'complete'.

Have you done your exercises?

They're doing some repairs to the roof.

We did the job in less than an hour.

Do can replace another verb in the context of a task or a service.

There's something wrong with the car. They're doing it today. (= repairing)

I've done the report. (= written)

The restaurant does Sunday lunches. (= serves)

We can also use *do* with an ing-form. > 124B

What course have you chosen? ~ I'm going to do marketing.

Someone ought to do some cleaning in here.

I did a lot of skiing last year.

C Do and make

We use the ordinary verb *do* to stand for any action, or when we talk about doing a task.

I'm afraid I've done something silly.

We're just doing the washing-up.

The basic meaning of *make* is 'produce' or 'create'.

I was just making a cup of tea.

They've made a new Harry Potter film.

The company makes a small profit.

We use *make* in these structures.

Tom made this table. (made = created)

Tom made me this table. (made = created)

Tom made this table for me. (made = created)

A week in Portugal would make a nice break. (make = be)

The music made me sad. (made me sad = caused me to become sad)

The music made me cry. (made me cry = caused me to cry)

There are many idiomatic uses of *do* and *make*. For example, you **do** your homework, you **do** a course or a subject, you **do** your best, and you **make** sure you don't make a mistake.

A common idiom is the phrase *to do with* meaning 'connected with'.

The boss wants to see you. It's something to do with an e-mail.

69 Have a look, make a start, etc

A Compare these sentences.

We often swim in the pool.

We often have a swim in the pool.

The two sentences have a very similar meaning. We can express some actions as a verb (*swim*) or as an idiom consisting of a verb + object (*have a swim*).

Have is often used in these idioms, but with some we use a different verb such as *make*.

One of the guests complained.

One of the guests made a complaint.

The verb in the idiom is an ordinary verb and can be continuous.

Someone is having a swim.

One of the guests was making a complaint.

NOTE

Compare these sentences.

Chloe jumped in the water and swam a few strokes.

Chloe went to the pool and had a swim.

We missed the bus, so we walked.

It was a lovely day, so we went for a walk.

With some physical actions, the noun suggests a leisure activity going on for a period of time. A *swim* is a period of swimming from start to finish. A *walk* is a complete journey on foot.

B Here are some *verb + object* idioms of this kind.

| Verb | Idiom |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>act</i> | <i>take action</i> |
| <i>affect</i> | <i>have an effect on</i> |
| <i>announce sth</i> | <i>make an announcement</i> |
| <i>argue</i> | <i>have an argument</i> |
| <i>choose</i> | <i>make a choice</i> |
| <i>comment</i> | <i>make a comment</i> |
| <i>complain</i> | <i>make a complaint</i> |
| <i>contact</i> | <i>make contact with</i> |
| <i>contribute</i> | <i>make a contribution</i> |
| <i>control</i> | <i>have/take control of</i> |

Be, have, and do

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>decide</i> | <i>take/make a decision</i> |
| <i>describe</i> | <i>give a description of</i> |
| <i>discuss</i> | <i>have a discussion about</i> |
| <i>drink</i> | <i>have a drink</i> |
| | <i>have something to drink</i> |
| <i>eat</i> | <i>have a meal</i> |
| | <i>have something to eat</i> |
| <i>feel</i> | <i>have a feeling</i> |
| <i>guess</i> | <i>have a guess</i> |
| <i>hold</i> | <i>take/have/keep hold of</i> |
| <i>indicate</i> | <i>give an indication of</i> |
| <i>look</i> | <i>have/take a look</i> |
| <i>move</i> | <i>make a move</i> |
| <i>predict sth</i> | <i>make a prediction (of/about)</i> |
| <i>rest</i> | <i>have a rest</i> |
| <i>revise</i> | <i>do some revision</i> |
| <i>ride</i> | <i>have a ride</i> |
| | <i>go for a ride</i> |
| <i>sleep</i> | <i>have a sleep</i> |
| <i>start</i> | <i>make a start</i> |
| <i>suggest sth</i> | <i>make a suggestion</i> |
| <i>suspect sth</i> | <i>have a suspicion</i> |
| <i>swim</i> | <i>have a swim</i> |
| | <i>go for a swim</i> |
| <i>talk to</i> | <i>have a talk with</i> |
| <i>think</i> | <i>have a think</i> |
| <i>try</i> | <i>have a try/have a go</i> |
| | <i>make an effort</i> |
| <i>use</i> | <i>make use of</i> |
| <i>walk</i> | <i>have/take a walk</i> |
| | <i>go for a walk</i> |
| <i>wash</i> | <i>have a wash</i> |
| <i>work</i> | <i>do some work</i> |

C Compare the use of the adverb and the adjective in these sentences.

| Adverb | Adjective |
|---|---|
| <i>I washed quickly.</i> | <i>I had a quick wash.</i> |
| <i>They argued passionately.</i> | <i>They had a passionate argument.</i> |

TIP

The structure with the adjective is usually neater. For example, *James made **good** use of the computer* sounds much better than *James used the computer well*.

Modal verbs

70 Introduction

- A** The modal verbs are *can, could, must, should, ought, may, might, will, would, and shall*. A modal verb always has the same form and never has an ending such as *-s, -ing, or -ed*. Modal verbs express meanings such as necessity and possibility. We can use them to tell or allow people to do things; or we can use them to say how certain or uncertain we are. There is an overview of meanings in G.

There are two verbs which we use either as a modal verb or as an ordinary verb. They are *need* (> 73) and *dare* (> 83).

- B** After a modal verb we put an infinitive without *to*.
We can park here. It's getting late. I must go.
The government should do more to help. It will be windy tomorrow.
The only exception to this is *ought*, which has a *to*-infinitive.
The government ought to do more to help.

NOTE

When there is an adverb, it usually comes between the modal verb and the infinitive.

We can probably park here.

- C** To form the negative we use *not* or *n't* with the modal verb.
The plan might not work. (NOT ~~*The plan doesn't might work.*~~)
You shouldn't be so untidy. (NOT ~~*You don't should be so untidy.*~~)

But note the spelling and pronunciation of *won't* (> 54A), *shan't*, (> 54A), *mustn't* > (73D), and *can't/cannot* > (80A).

To form questions we put the modal verb before the subject.

Can we park here? (NOT ~~*Do we can park here?*~~)

How should I organize my work? (NOT ~~*How do I should organize my work?*~~)

We also use modal verbs in short answers and in question tags.

Can we park here? ~ Yes, we can.

We can park here, can't we?

- D** The same modal verb form can refer to the present or the future.
Present: *I'm looking for the letter. It might be somewhere in this pile of papers.*

Future: *I posted the letter today. It might get there tomorrow.*

The context shows whether the present or the future is meant. For example, *tomorrow* is in the future.

Modal verbs

To talk about the past we can use a modal verb + *have* + past participle.

I posted the letter two days ago. It might have arrived yesterday.

We can also use a phrase like *had to*, *was able to*, or *was allowed to*.

We all had to work late yesterday.

Could sometimes expresses ability in the past.

I can't remember names very well. When I saw Simon's sister on Friday, I couldn't remember her name at all. It was quite embarrassing.

- E** A modal verb is followed by an infinitive without *to*. The infinitive can be simple, perfect, continuous, or passive.

| Form | Example |
|----------------------|---|
| Simple | <i>They may show us their holiday photos.</i> |
| Perfect | <i>I may have shown you this before.</i> |
| Continuous | <i>They may be showing the film on television soon.</i> |
| Passive | <i>We may be shown the results later.</i> |
| Perfect + continuous | <i>You must have been dreaming.</i> |
| Perfect + passive | <i>The car must have been stolen.</i> |

- F** There are some phrases like *have to*, *be allowed to*, or *be able to* which have the same meanings as modal verbs.

| Modal verb | Phrase |
|--|--|
| <i>You must fill in this form.</i> | <i>You have to fill in this form. > 71C</i> |
| <i>The man couldn't board the plane.</i> | <i>The man wasn't allowed to board the plane. > 75C</i> |
| <i>We can cancel the order.</i> | <i>We are able to cancel the order. > 80B–C</i> |

But there are differences in use between the phrases and the modal verbs.

- G** Here is an overview of the kind of meanings expressed by modal verbs and phrases.

| Use | Example |
|------------------------------|---|
| Necessity | <i>I must clean my shoes. > 71B</i> <i>We have to wait here. > 71B.</i> <i>We've got to turn left here. > 72</i> |
| No necessity | <i>You needn't wear a tie. > 73A</i> <i>You don't have to wear a tie. > 73A</i> |
| Necessity to avoid something | <i>You mustn't break anything. > 73D</i> |

| Use | Example |
|-----------------------|---|
| The right thing to do | <i>You should complain.</i> > 74A <i>You ought to complain.</i> > 74A <i>We'd better get ready now.</i> > 74B <i>You're supposed to make your own bed.</i> > 74C |
| Permission | <i>Can I go/May I go now?</i> > 75A <i>We're allowed to walk on the grass.</i> > 75C |
| Certainty | <i>The game will be over now.</i> > 76A <i>This place must be crowded in summer.</i> > 76B |
| Impossibility | <i>This can't be real gold.</i> > 76B |
| Probability | <i>Things should start to get better.</i> > 77 |
| Possibility | <i>We may go/might go out later.</i> > 78A <i>We could go out later.</i> > 79A |
| Ability | <i>I can ski.</i> > 80A <i>I could ski when I was a child.</i> > 80A <i>We were able to ski all afternoon.</i> > 80B,C |
| Hypothesis | <i>A million pounds would be very useful.</i> > 81B |
| Past habits | <i>My friend would always call on me after school.</i> > 82A <i>We used to play together every day.</i> > 82B |
| Having courage | <i>No one dare speak openly.</i> > 83 |

71 Must and have to

A Form

Must has just one form, and it is followed by an infinitive without *to*.
*You **must** wear something smart.*

We often use *have to* in the present simple or past simple.

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Present simple: | <i>We have to wear smart clothes.</i> <i>David has to work on Sundays.</i> |
| Past simple: | <i>I had to get up early today.</i> |

We form negatives and questions with *do*.

*We **don't have to** wear smart clothes.*

*Does David **have to** work on Sundays?*

*What time did you **have to** get up?*

*We **didn't have to** get up early.*

The short forms *'ve*, *'s*, and *'d* are used much less often than the long forms *have*, *has*, and *had*. Sentences like *We've to wear smart clothes* and *I'd to get up early* are unusual. But we can say *We've got to wear smart clothes.* > 72A

Modal verbs

Must has no past tense, perfect, or continuous form. We use *have to* instead.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Past simple: | <i>I had to queue for hours for these tickets.</i> |
| Present perfect: | <i>We've had to make a few changes.</i> |
| Present continuous: | <i>I'm having to spend a lot of time travelling.</i> |
| Past continuous: | <i>At that time we were having to survive on very little money.</i> |

We also use *have to* (not *must*) in the infinitive or ing-form and after *will*.

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| To-infinitive: | <i>I wasn't expecting to have to look after the children.</i> |
| ing-form: | <i>It's no fun having to stand the whole journey.</i> |
| Future with <i>will</i> : | <i>You will have to pay the full standard fare.</i> |

B Basic use

We use *must* and *have to* to talk about what is necessary now or in the near future.

I'm really sweaty. I must have a shower.

We must make the arrangements soon.

We have to turn left here. It's one-way.

Mark has to take an exam at the end of his course.

When we talk about things we have to do in the near future, we can use *have to* either in the present or with *will*.

I have to go out soon. / I'll have to go out soon.

NOTE

Here are some other ways of expressing necessity. They are more formal than *must* or *have to* and more likely to be used in writing than in speech.

It's essential/vital you keep me informed. (= You must keep me informed.)

You are obliged to/required to return the form within thirty days.

It was necessary to change the arrangements. (= The arrangements had to be changed).

C Must or have to?

There is a difference in meaning between *must* and *have to*. Look at this information for rail passengers.

You must buy your ticket before starting your journey, unless you join the train at a station where ticket purchase facilities are not available.

Now look at this conversation.

Emily: *There isn't much time to spare. You'd better buy your ticket on the train.*

Steve: *I can't do that. I have to buy the ticket before I get on.*

We normally use *must* when the speaker or writer decides what is necessary, and we use *have to* when the necessity comes from the situation.

You must ... is a way of telling someone to do something. *You have to ...* is a way of explaining what is necessary in the situation.

You must fill in a form. (I'm telling you.)

You have to fill in a form. (That's the rule.)

I must go on a diet. I'm getting overweight.

I have to go on a diet. Doctor's orders.

TIP

In general it is safer to use *have to* than to use *must*. *Have to* is much more common in speech. Sometimes *must* can sound strange if you use it in the wrong way.

D Must to recommend things

We sometimes use *must* to recommend something enjoyable.

You really must watch this new soap opera. It's fascinating.

We must have lunch together some time. ~ Yes, that would be nice.

Have to is less usual in this context.

72 Have got to

A Both *have to* and *have got to* express necessity.

I have to take an exam in June.

I have got to take / I've got to take an exam in June.

Lucy has to do some work.

Lucy has got to do / Lucy's got to do some work.

Have to is used in both formal and informal English. *Have got to* is informal.

B We use *have got to* mostly in the present simple. In the past simple *had to* is more usual than *had got to*.

I couldn't go to the party. I had to finish my project.

We cannot use *have got to* with perfect or continuous forms or in the infinitive or ing-form.

Day after day Karen was having to do the work of two people.

(NOT ~~*Karen was having got to do ...*~~...)

It's a nuisance to have to wait so long.

(NOT ~~*It's a nuisance to have got to wait so ...*~~...)

TIP

It is generally safer to use *have to* than to use *have got to*.

- C** We form negatives and questions like this.

| | <i>have to</i> | <i>have got to</i> |
|-----------|--|---|
| Negative: | <i>We don't have to pay. Tom doesn't have to wait.</i> | <i>We haven't got to pay. Tom hasn't got to wait.</i> |
| Question: | <i>Do we have to pay? Does Tom have to wait?</i> | <i>Have we got to pay? Has Tom got to wait?</i> |

In the past simple we form negatives and questions with *did*.

We didn't have to pay. Did Tom have to wait?

73 *Needn't, don't have to, and mustn't*

A *Needn't and don't have to*

We use *needn't* and *don't have to* to say that something is not necessary.

You needn't apologize. It's not your fault.

You don't have to apologize. It's not your fault.

The modal verb *needn't* is normally used only in the negative.

TIP

There is little difference in meaning between *needn't* and *don't have to*, but it is usually safer to use *don't have to*.

B *Need to*

There is an ordinary verb *need*, which we can use in positive and negative sentences and in questions. *Need to* means the same as *have to*. To form negatives and questions we use *do*.

| <i>have to</i> | <i>need to</i> (ordinary verb) | <i>needn't</i> (modal verb) |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <i>The colours have to match.</i> | <i>The colours need to match.</i> | |
| <i>The figure doesn't have to be exact.</i> | <i>The figure doesn't need to be exact.</i> | <i>The figure needn't be exact.</i> |
| <i>Do we have to book in advance?</i> | <i>Do we need to book in advance?</i> | |

NOTE

- The verb *need* can have an object.
I really need a calculator.
- We can also use an object + to-infinitive after *need*.
We need you to fax us a copy.
- For *need* + gerund, e.g. *This carpet needs cleaning*, > 96A.
- We can also use *need* as a noun, for example in the phrase *no need*.
There's no need to book in advance.

C Needn't have done and didn't need to do

We use these forms to talk about an unnecessary past action. If someone didn't do something because it wasn't necessary, we use *didn't need to*.

*We didn't need to make any sandwiches. We knew no one would be hungry.
There wasn't a queue, so I didn't need to wait.*

If someone did something which we now know was unnecessary, we can use either *needn't have done* or *didn't need to*.

We needn't have made / didn't need to make these sandwiches.

No one's eaten any.

It's a beautiful day. I needn't have brought / didn't need to bring this umbrella.

NOTE

Didn't have to means the same as *didn't need to*.

Fortunately we didn't have to pay/didn't need to pay for the repairs.

D Mustn't

We use *mustn't* to tell someone not to do something, or to say that it is necessary to avoid something.

You mustn't forget your keys or you'll be locked out.

We mustn't lose this game. It's really important that we win.

Mustn't is pronounced /'mʌsnt/.

Mustn't or *may not* can be used to forbid something.

Students must not use/may not use dictionaries in the examination.

Mustn't has a different meaning from *needn't* or *don't have to*. Compare these examples.

I needn't run. / I don't have to run. I've got plenty of time.

I mustn't run. I've got a weak heart.

74 Should, ought to, had better, and be supposed to

A Should and ought to

Should and *ought to* mean the same thing. We use them to say what is the right thing or the best thing to do.

There aren't enough hospitals. They should build / They ought to build more of them.

You should go/ought to go to York. It's an interesting place.

In negatives, questions, and short answers we normally use *should*.

People shouldn't leave litter all over the place, should they?

Who should we invite to the wedding?

Should I apologize, do you think? ~ Yes, you should.

We can use the continuous or perfect after *should* and *ought to*.

Continuous: *I should be doing some work instead of drinking coffee.*

We ought to be going soon or we'll be late.

Perfect: *You should have planted these potatoes last month.
After all the help you've given Guy, he ought to have thanked you.*

B Had better

We also use *had better* to say what is the best thing to do in a particular situation. It is used more in speech than in writing.

These letters had better go today. They're quite urgent.

You're ill. You'd better see a doctor.

This room is in a mess. I'd better tidy up, hadn't I?

Had better is stronger than *should* or *ought to*. *I'd better tidy up* means that I am going to tidy up because it is the best way to deal with the problem.

We sometimes use *had better* to suggest unpleasant consequences if the action is not taken.

That car's in the way. Someone had better move it or I won't be able to get out.

You'd better do what you're told or you'll be in trouble.

The negative is *had better not*.

Come on. We'd better not waste any time.

NOTE

You may hear *best* instead of *better*.

You're ill. You'd best see a doctor.

C Be supposed to

Be supposed to has a number of different meanings.

We use it when we say what **should** happen because it is the rule, or it is the normal way of doing things, what people are expected to do.

When you've paid, you're supposed to take your receipt to the counter over there and collect what you've bought. ~ Oh, I see.

You're supposed to be working, not sitting around chatting.

We also use *be supposed to* for something that is arranged or intended.

I'm not going to phone the office. I'm supposed to be on holiday, aren't I?

How is this bottle-opener supposed to work?

We can also use it when we talk about what people in general say or believe.

Too much sugar is supposed to be bad for you.

(= People say too much sugar is bad for you.)

We also use *be supposed to* in the negative when something isn't allowed.

We're not supposed to / We aren't supposed to keep pets in the flat.

We can use *wasn't supposed to* for something that happened without permission.

You weren't supposed to mention my secret, you know.

75 Can, could, may, and be allowed to

A Asking permission

We use *can*, *could*, or *may* to ask permission.

Can I take your umbrella? ~ Of course you can.

Could I borrow this calculator, please? ~ Well, I need it actually.

May we come in? ~ Yes, of course.

Here *could* is less direct than *can* and so often sounds more polite. *May* is rather formal.

NOTE

For *can* and *could* in requests, > 79B.

B Giving and refusing permission

We use *can* or *may* to give permission. *May* is more formal.

You can use my phone if you like.

May I read the letter? ~ Yes, of course you may.

We use *cannot/can't* to refuse permission.

These rooms are private. I'm afraid you can't just walk in here.

NOTE

a *May* is sometimes used in formal written rules.

Any person over the age of 18 may apply to join the club.

You may not vote for more than one candidate.

b Here are some other ways of refusing permission.

Outdoor shoes must not be worn on this floor. > 73D

The use of mobile phones is not allowed/permitted in the library.

Smoking is prohibited on school premises.

No picnics. (mainly written)

C Talking about permission

We sometimes talk about permission when we are not giving it or asking for it. To do this, we can use *can* referring to the present or the future and *could* referring to the past.

I can stay up as late as I like. My parents don't mind.

These yellow lines mean that you can't park here.

At one time anyone could go and live in the US.

We do not normally use *may* here. A sentence such as *I may stay up late* is less usual.

We can also use *be allowed to*.

I'm allowed to stay up as late as I like. My parents don't mind.

Did Tina get permission from her boss? Was she allowed to leave work early?

You won't be allowed to take photos in the museum.

Modal verbs

Compare these two sentences.

May we leave early, please? (Will you allow it?/I'm asking for permission.)

Are we allowed to leave early? (What is the rule?/I'm asking about permission.)

We use *be allowed to* (not *can* or *may*) in these forms.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Future: | <i>No one will be allowed to leave the building until they have been questioned by the police.</i> |
| Present perfect: | <i>Since the beginning of the conflict, the media have not been allowed to report what is going on.</i> |
| Present continuous: | <i>No one without a ticket is being allowed to go near the stadium.</i> |
| To-infinitive: | <i>I didn't expect to be allowed to look round the factory.</i> |
| Ing-form: | <i>It's great being allowed to do whatever I like.</i> |

To talk about general permission in the past, we use *could* or *was/were allowed to*.

Years ago visitors to Stonehenge could go/were allowed to go right up to the stones.

But for a specific action done with permission, we use *was/were allowed to*.

The five students were allowed to go right up to the stones.

76 Will, must, and can't expressing certainty

A We can use *will* for an assumption.

It's no good ringing Luke now. He'll be at work.

There's someone at the door. It'll be the postman.

In the last example, the speaker assumes that the postman is at the door because this is the time when he normally calls. *It'll be the postman* is a kind of prediction about the present.

B *Must* can express certainty.

You saw the film last week, so you must know what it's about.

Jane got up at four o'clock! Well, she must be tired then.

The speaker sees it as necessarily and logically true that Jane is tired.

We use *can't* for something we see as impossible.

This can't be Roland's textbook. He doesn't do physics.

Must and *can't* are opposites.

The bill can't be so much. There must be a mistake.

(= There is certainly a mistake.)

NOTE

a We also use *have (got) to* with the same meaning as *must*.

There has to be a mistake.

b We can also use *be sure to* or *be bound to*.

My brother is sure to be late. / My brother is bound to be late.

- c In questions about what is possible we normally use *can*.
Who can that be at the door? Can it really be true?
- d Americans say *That must not be Roland's textbook*.

C After *will*, *must*, and *can't* expressing an assumption or certainty, we can use the continuous, the perfect, and the passive.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Continuous: | <i>Where's Carl? ~ He'll be sitting in a café somewhere, I expect.</i> |
| | <i>The bus is late. It must be coming soon.</i> |
| Perfect: | <i>This glass is cracked. Someone must have dropped it.</i> |
| | <i>I can't have gone to the wrong house. I checked the address.</i> |
| Perfect passive: | <i>The best seats will have been sold by now.</i> |
| | <i>The bike must have been stolen while we were having lunch.</i> |

NOTE

- a Compare *must have done* and *had to*.
The washing-machine is working again. Paul must have repaired it.
The washing-machine broke down. Paul had to repair it.
 Here *must have repaired* expresses certainty about the past and *had to repair* expresses a past necessity.
- b Compare *must do* and *must be doing*.
You've got exams soon. You must work. (I'm telling you to work.)
Paul isn't at home. He must be working. (So I'm sure he's working.)

D We can use *had to* and *couldn't* when something seemed certain in the past.
The fingerprints were the husband's, so he had to be the murderer.
Harold stared in amazement. It couldn't be true!

77 Should expressing probability

We can use *should* to say what is the right thing to do. > 74A
You broke Vicky's camera, so you should buy her a new one.

We can also use *should* to say that something is probable, either in the present or the future.

I posted the letter ages ago. They should have it by now.
The journey normally takes four hours, so we should get there about six.

In the negative we use *shouldn't*.

We're nearly at the front of the queue. We shouldn't have to wait much longer.

Should has the additional meaning of 'if all goes well'.

There are no reports of delays. The train should be on time.

But we cannot use it to predict that something will go wrong.

There are reports of delays. The train will probably be late.

(NOT ~~*The train should be late.*~~)

Modal verbs

NOTE

- a *Ought to* has the same meaning as *should*.
The journey normally takes four hours, so we ought to get there about six.
- b We can also use *be (un)likely to* to express probability.
I'm afraid the train is likely to be late.
Don't worry. There are unlikely to be any problems.

78 May and might

- A** We use *may* and *might* to say that something is possibly true.

This old picture may/might be valuable.

The shop may not/might not be open today.

It may not be open means that possibly it isn't open.

We can also use *may* and *might* for an uncertain prediction or intention.

You may/might get stuck in traffic if you don't leave early.

I'm not sure, but I may/might go away somewhere next weekend.

We do not often use *may* or *might* in questions. Instead we can use a phrase like *Do you think ...?*

Do you think you'll get the job?

NOTE

- a *Might not* has a short form *mightn't*.
I mightn't be at home tomorrow. (= Possibly I won't be at home tomorrow.)
- b We can use *may well/might well* to express a strong possibility.
This picture may well / might well be valuable.
(= It is very possible that this picture is valuable.)
- c We can also use *could* to express possibility.
This picture could be valuable. > 79
- d There are other ways of being less than certain in English.
Perhaps/Maybe the picture is valuable.
It's possible/There's a possibility (that) the picture is valuable.
I think this is the right answer, but I'd better check.

- B** We can use the continuous after *may* and *might*.

Tina hasn't come home yet. She may be working late.

I might be playing badminton tomorrow if I can book a court.

We can also use the perfect.

I don't know where the letter is. I may have thrown it away.

I'm not very good at typing, so I might have made some mistakes.

I suppose the flight might have been delayed.

- C** We can use a statement with *might* to make a suggestion.

If you're going to the post office, you might get some stamps.

Might can also express criticism that something is not done.

You never do anything to help. You might wash up occasionally.

Someone might have thanked me for all my trouble.

We can also use *could* here.

Modal verbs

We can also use this structure for a possible action when we know that the action did not happen.

You were mad to drive here on these icy roads. You could have had an accident.

NOTE

a For *could have done* meaning a chance not taken, > 80C.

b We can use *could have* + perfect to express criticism.

You could have done a bit more to help instead of leaving everything to me.

We can also use *might* here. > 78C

D We sometimes use *can* to say that something is generally possible.

You can make wine from bananas.

Smoking can damage your health.

In these sentences *can* means 'sometimes'.

The motorway can get busy. (= It sometimes gets busy.)

This computer can drive me mad. (= It sometimes drives me mad.)

Here *can* refers to a possible situation, one that we know sometimes happens.

E *Can't* expresses logical impossibility. > 76B,C

She can't be very nice if no one likes her.

You can't have switched the TV off. It's still on.

Compare *can't* with *may not/might not*.

This answer can't be right. It must be wrong.

(= It is impossible for this answer to be right.)

This answer may not/might not be right.

(= It is possible that this answer isn't right.)

80 Can, could, and be able to

A Can and could

We use *can* to express ability.

Nicola can play chess. I taught her.

Can you draw a perfect circle?

We can't move this piano. It's too heavy for us.

The negative of *can* is *cannot* /'kænɒt/, written as one word. It has a short form *can't* /kɑːnt/.

We use *could* for ability in the past.

Nicola could play chess when she was six.

My grandfather could walk on his hands.

As well as physical or mental ability, we also use *can* and *could* for an opportunity to do something.

We can sit in the garden when it's sunny.

When we lived in a flat, we had so little space we couldn't keep a dog.

- D** We use *may as well* or *might as well* to say that something is the best thing to do because there is no better alternative.

You're not going to finish that crossword. You may as well give up.

This lamp is no good. I might as well throw it away.

Do you want to go to this party? ~ Well, I suppose we might as well.

79 Can and could expressing possibility

- A** We use *could* to suggest possible future actions.

We could go for a walk this afternoon.

As we're short of money, I could sell my jewellery.

Compare the use of *may* or *might* for an uncertain intention.

Suggestion: *We could have a party. ~ Yes, why not?*

Uncertain intention: *We may/might have a party. ~ Oh, really? When? > 78*

- B** We use *can* and *could* in requests.

Can/Could I have one of those leaflets, please?

Can/Could you wait a moment, please?

We can use the imperative: *Wait a moment, please*, but this is less polite. By using *can* or *could*, we ask if it is possible for someone to wait a moment.

We also use *can* in an offer of help.

Can I give you a lift? ~ Yes, please.

The upstairs lights aren't working. ~ Oh, I can fix them for you.

TIP

Ask people to do things – don't tell them. Say *Could you carry this for me, please?* not *Carry this for me*. In general it is safer to use *could* in requests because it is less direct than *can* and usually more polite.

- C** We can use *could* for something that is possibly true, or for an uncertain prediction.

I'm not sure where the timetable is. It could be in the drawer.

The asteroid could hit the earth. It's not impossible.

We can also use *may* or *might* here > 78A. But we do not use *can*.

We can use the continuous after *could*.

Tina isn't home yet. She could be working late.

We can also use the perfect to talk about possible actions in the past.

You could have forgotten to post the letter.

(= It is possible you forgot.)

The flight could have been delayed.

(= It is possible the flight has been/was delayed.)

He could have been having a shower.

(= It is possible he was having a shower.)

NOTE

- a We do not use *can* + object. We always use a verb.
He can speak Italian. (NOT ~~*He can Italian.*~~)
- b For *can/could* with verbs of perception, e.g. *I can see a light*, >51E.

B Be able to

Be able to in the present tense means the same as *can* for ability or opportunity.

The pupils can already read./The pupils are already able to read.
Can you drive with that injured knee?/Are you able to drive with that injured knee?

To form the negative of *be able to*, we can use either *not able to* or *unable to*.
The company cannot supply / is not able to supply / is unable to supply the information.

We use *be able to* (not *can*) in the following forms.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Present perfect: | <i>Mr Fry has been ill. He hasn't been able to work for some time.</i> |
| Past perfect: | <i>I arrived late because I hadn't been able to find a taxi.</i> |
| To-infinitive: | <i>I'm having a wonderful holiday. It's nice to be able to relax.</i> |
| Ing-form: | <i>Being able to speak the language is a great advantage.</i> |
| After will: | <i>Take this course and you will be able to impress others with your sparkling conversation.</i> |
| After would: | <i>I wouldn't be able to do your job. I'd be hopeless at it.</i> |

C Could and was/were able to

We can use these forms to talk about a general ability in the past.
Andrew could walk when he was only eleven months old.
Andrew was able to walk when he was only eleven months old.

But we use *was/were able to* (and not *could*) for an action in a particular situation.

Firemen were able to bring the blaze under control.
The injured man was able to walk to a phone box.
 (NOT ~~*The injured man could walk to a phone box.*~~)

He was able to walk there means that he had the ability to walk there, and he did actually walk there.

The phrases *succeeded in doing* and *managed to do* mean the same as *was/were able to do*.

Detectives managed to identify / succeeded in identifying the murderer.

In negatives and questions we can use either form.

Detectives couldn't identify / weren't able to identify the murderer.
Could you get / Were you able to get tickets for the show?

Modal verbs

We normally use *could* (not *was/were able to*) with verbs of perception and verbs of thinking.

I could see smoke on the horizon.

We could understand that Emily was feeling upset.

To say that someone had the ability or the chance to do something but didn't do it, we use *could have done*.

He could have walked there, but he was too lazy.

I could have got tickets, but there were only very expensive ones left.

For an action that possibly happened in the past, e.g. *She could have missed the flight*, > 79C.

Could can also mean 'would be able to'. > B

The factory could produce a lot more if it was modernized.

I couldn't do your job. I'd be hopeless at it.

81 Would

A Form

The modal verb *would* has a short form 'd.

Anyone would look silly in a shirt like that.

I'd look ridiculous wearing that.

We form negatives, questions, and short answers in the usual way.

This colour wouldn't suit me, would it?

When would I wear it?

Would you buy it? ~ No, I wouldn't.

B Use

Compare these two replies.

We're going to have a barbecue. ~ Oh, that'll be nice. ('ll = will)

We're thinking of having a barbecue. ~ Oh, that'd be nice. ('d = would)

Here *will* refers to a future situation, a barbecue which will definitely take place. *Would* refers to a possible situation, a barbecue which may or may not take place.

With *would*, there is often a phrase or clause explaining the situation that the speaker is imagining.

It would be nice to have a barbecue.

You wouldn't be much use in a crisis.

No one would pay taxes if they didn't have to. > 246

We often use *would* in combinations such as *would like*, *would mind*, and *would rather*. > C-E

NOTE

For *would* looking forward from the past, > 62B.

C Would like

Would like means the same as *want*.

Fiona would like to work in television. (= Fiona wants to work in television.)
We'd like a place of our own. (= We want a place of our own.)

When we ask for something, we use *would like*, not *want*.

I'd like a drink, please.

As a request, *I want a drink* is impolite.

We also use *Would ... like ...?* in offers and invitations.

Would anyone like a drink?

Would you like to join us for lunch?

Compare *like* and *would like*.

I'm a great clubber. I like going/I like to go to clubs.

(= I go to clubs and enjoy it.)

Let's go out somewhere. I'd like to go to a club.

(= I want to go to a club.)

We can also use *would* with verbs such as *love*, *hate*, and *enjoy* when we are talking about things we want (or don't want) to do.

My sister would love to do deep-sea diving.

I'd hate to live out in the country where nothing ever happens.

We'd enjoy a trip to Las Vegas. We've never been there before.

D *Would mind*

We use *would mind* in negatives and questions.

I wouldn't mind watching this film. (= I want to watch this film.)

Would you mind changing places with me? ~ OK.

(a polite request to change places)

E *Would rather*

Would rather means 'prefer' or 'would prefer'.

I'd rather walk than hang around for a bus.

The guide would rather we kept together.

Would you rather eat now or later?

Would rather is followed by an infinitive without *to* (*walk*) or by a clause (*we kept together*).

The negative is *would rather not*.

I'm a cautious person. I'd rather not take any risks.

NOTE

We can also use *would sooner*.

I'd sooner walk than hang around for a bus.

82 *Would and used to* for past habits

A *Would*

In rather formal or written English, *would* is sometimes used to talk about past habits.

Modal verbs

*Before we had television, people would make their own entertainment.
Every morning my father would leave the house before I woke.*

In general it is safer to say *used to*. > B

B *Used to*

Used to expresses the idea that something happened regularly or continued over a period of time in the past.

I used to come here when I was a child.

Emma used to have a bicycle, but then she sold it.

Before we had television, people used to make their own entertainment.

I used to come here means that at one period I came here regularly, but then I stopped. *Used to* is pronounced /'ju:st tə/.

There is no present-tense form.

(NOT ~~*I use to come here now.*~~)

We use *did* in negatives and questions.

There didn't use to be so much crime as there is today.

What kind of books did you use to read as a child?

NOTE

We can use *never* in the negative.

There never used to be so much crime.

Used not to is rather formal.

There used not to be so much crime.

C *Used to and be / get used to*

Compare *used to do* and *be used to doing*.

We used to live in the country. But then we moved to London.

(= At one time we lived in the country.)

We're used to living in London now. But at first it was quite a shock, after life in the country.

(= Living in London no longer feels strange to us.)

We can also say *get used to* to talk about becoming more familiar with something.

I still find driving in Britain quite difficult. I'll never get used to driving on the left.

Sarah had never seen herself as a manager, but she soon got used to being in charge.

83 Dare

Dare is a mixture of forms. We sometimes use it as an ordinary verb and sometimes as a modal verb. It takes an infinitive with or without *to*.

Not many people dare (to) walk along here at night.

No one dares (to) protest/dare protest.

Only four of us had dared (to) accept the challenge.

If you *dare* to do something, you are brave enough to do it. If you *daren't*, then you are too afraid to do it.

Dare is more common in negatives and questions than in positive statements. The negative forms are *don't/doesn't/didn't dare* or *daren't/dare not* (present) and *dared not* (past).

*This place is so expensive. I don't dare (to) look/I daren't look at the bill.
The police didn't dare (to) approach/dared not approach the building with the gunman inside.*

In questions we can use *do*, or we can use *dare* as a modal verb.

Do you dare (to) say/Dare you say what you're thinking?

We can also use *would* with *dare*.

I wouldn't dare (to) take the risk.

Would enough people really dare (to) resist armed troops?

We use *How dare ... ?* for an angry protest.

Just get lost, will you? ~ What! How dare you speak to me like that?

NOTE

Americans normally use a to-infinitive with *dare*.

84 Modal verb + phrase

We cannot use two modal verbs together.

(NOT ~~*I might can get the day off.*~~)

Instead we use a phrase like *be able to*, *be allowed to*, or *have to* after a modal verb.

I might be able to get the day off. I'll have to ask my boss.

We aren't children, are we? We ought to be allowed to decide for ourselves.

It won't be busy, so we shouldn't have to queue.

In the old days people used to have to wash clothes by hand.

Will you be able to find your way without a map?

85 Overview: the use of modal verbs

| Verb | Use | Example |
|------------|---------------------------|---|
| <i>can</i> | Ability > 80A | <i>I can play the piano.</i> |
| | Opportunity > 80A | <i>We can watch TV in the evenings.</i> |
| | Request > 79B | <i>Can you help me, please?</i> |
| | Offer of help > 79B | <i>Can I help you?</i> |
| | Permission > 75 | <i>You can go now.</i> |
| | Asking permission > 75A | <i>Can I ask a question?</i> |
| | General possibility > 79D | <i>Maths can be fun.</i> |
| | Impossibility > 76B | <i>The story can't be true.</i> |

Modal verbs

| Verb | Use | Example |
|---------------|--|---|
| <i>could</i> | Past ability > 80 Possible ability > 80C Suggestion > 79A Request > 79B Asking permission > 75A Past permission > 75C Possibility > 79 | <i>I could play the piano when I was five</i> <i>If I had a camera, I could take a photo.</i> <i>We could meet later.</i> <i>Could you help me please?</i> <i>Could I ask a question?</i> <i>You could park here years ago.</i> <i>The plan could go wrong.</i> |
| <i>must</i> | Necessity > 71 Logical certainty > 76B,C | <i>You must be careful.</i> <i>You must be tired.</i> |
| <i>need</i> | When something is not necessary > 73 | <i>We needn't hurry.</i> |
| <i>should</i> | The right thing to do > 74 Probability > 77 | <i>You should revise before the exam.</i> <i>It should be fine tomorrow.</i> |
| <i>ought</i> | The right thing to do > 74 | <i>You ought to revise before the exam.</i> |
| <i>may</i> | Possibility > 78 Uncertain intention > 78A Permission > 75 | <i>The plan may go wrong.</i> <i>We may move house.</i> <i>May I ask a question?</i> |
| <i>might</i> | Possibility > 78 Uncertain intention > 78A Request/criticism > 78C | <i>The plan might go wrong.</i> <i>We might move house.</i> <i>You might help me.</i> |
| <i>will</i> | The future > 54 Assumption > 76A | <i>The post will be here soon.</i> <i>The letter will be somewhere in this file.</i> |
| <i>would</i> | A possible situation > 81 A past refusal > 62B Looking forward from the past > 62B Past habits > 82A | <i>A holiday would be great.</i> <i>The doorman wouldn't let us in.</i> <i>No one knew what would happen next.</i> <i>Every weekend we would go to the cinema.</i> |
| <i>shall</i> | Asking what to do > 54E The future > 54A | <i>What shall we do?</i> <i>I shall be away next week.</i> |
| <i>dare</i> | Being brave enough > 83 | <i>I didn't dare climb up.</i> |

The passive

86 Introduction

Compare the active and passive sentences.

Active: *My brother faxed the document.*

Passive: *The document was faxed by my brother.*

We can choose to talk about *my brother* and what he did, or about *the document* and what happened to it. The two structures have the same meaning but the focus is different. The choice between active and passive often depends on what is old or new information in the context. > 88A
And the passive is sometimes more impersonal in style. > 88B

In the active sentence, the person doing the action (*my brother*) is the subject, and we use an active verb. In the passive sentence, the subject is what the action is directed at (*the document*), and we use a passive verb. A passive verb has a form of the auxiliary verb *be* (*was*) and a passive participle (*faxed*). Note that *the document* is the object of the active sentence and the subject of the passive sentence.

The person doing the action is called the agent. In a passive sentence, the agent can be added in a phrase with *by*.

The document was faxed by my brother.

We can end a sentence with the passive verb and not mention the agent.

The document was faxed.

The important information here is the method of sending the document. It was faxed, not sent through the post.

Although the passive is more typical of an impersonal style, it can also occur in conversation.

This house must be really old. ~ Yes, it was built in 1720.

87 Passive verb forms

A Tenses

A passive verb has a form of *be* and a passive participle, e.g. *killed*, *cut*.

Lots of people are killed on the roads.

The budget for the project has been cut.

The drugs will be destroyed.

Be is in the same tense as the equivalent active form.

Active: *Accidents kill lots of people.* (present simple)

Passive: *Lots of people are killed.* (present simple of *be* + participle)

Active: *They've cut the budget.* (present perfect)

Passive: *The budget has been cut.* (present perfect of *be* + participle)

The passive

The following verb tenses and future forms can be passive.

| Active | Passive |
|---|--|
| Present simple <i>They play the game.</i> | <i>The game is played.</i> |
| Present continuous <i>They are playing the game.</i> | <i>The game is being played.</i> |
| Present perfect <i>They have played the game.</i> | <i>The game has been played.</i> |
| Past simple <i>They played the game.</i> | <i>The game was played.</i> |
| Past continuous <i>They were playing the game.</i> | <i>The game was being played.</i> |
| Past perfect <i>They had played the game.</i> | <i>The game had been played.</i> |
| Future <i>They will play the game.</i> | <i>The game will be played.</i> |
| <i>They are going to play the game.</i> | <i>The game is going to be played.</i> |

We can use short forms.

Football is a very popular game. It's played all over the world.

The prisoners are free. They've been released.

B Negatives and questions

We use the auxiliary verb in the same way as we do in active sentences.

In the negative *not* comes after the first auxiliary.

Motorists are not killed by cyclists.

The money still hasn't been found.

In a question there is inversion of the subject and the (first) auxiliary.

Has the money been found?

When was the fax sent?

C Modal verbs in the passive

We can use the passive with a modal verb (or a phrase like *used to* or *have to*).

The pattern is modal verb + *be* + passive participle.

Stamps can be bought at any post office.

Animals should really be seen in their natural habitat.

Many things that used to be done by hand are now done by machine.

Negatives and questions are formed in the usual way.

Animals shouldn't be kept in cages.

Must everything always be done at the last minute?

Do meals have to be prepared every day?

A modal verb can also go with the perfect and the passive together. The pattern is modal verb + *have been* + passive participle.

I can't find that leaflet. It must have been thrown away.

They've found a play that might have been written by Shakespeare.

This bill ought to have been paid weeks ago.

For modal verbs, > 70.

D Phrasal and prepositional verbs in the passive

Some phrasal verbs and prepositional verbs can be used in the passive.

The building was knocked down last year.

Has the doctor been sent for?

The adverb or preposition (e.g. *down*, *for*) comes after the participle.

Note also verb + adverb + preposition, and verbal idioms with prepositions.

Such out-of-date practices should be done away with.

The poor child is always being made fun of.

E Was broken: action or state?

Was broken can be a passive verb form.

The vase was broken by a guest. He knocked it over.

Here *the vase was broken* expresses an action. It is equivalent to *Someone broke the vase*.

We can sometimes use a participle such as *broken* before a noun, like an adjective.

There was a broken vase on the floor.

We can also put the participle after *be*.

The vase was broken. It lay in pieces on the floor.

Here *the vase was broken* expresses a state, not an action.

Compare these two examples.

The drugs were hidden in containers and then loaded onto the ship.

(passive verb expressing an action: someone hid the drugs)

The drugs were hidden in the ship, but the police didn't know where.

(*be* + participle expressing a state: the drugs were in a secret place)

88 The use of the passive

A Ordering information

One of these paragraphs is about the scientist J.J. Thomson, and the other is about the electron.

THOMSON, SIR JOSEPH JOHN
(1846-1940)

British physicist and mathematician and head of a group of researchers at the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge. Thomson discovered the electron. He is regarded as the founder of modern physics.

ELECTRON

A subatomic particle and one of the basic constituents of matter. The electron was discovered by J.J. Thomson. It is found in all atoms and contains the smallest known negative electrical charge.

Compare these two sentences, one from each paragraph.

Thomson discovered the electron.

The electron was discovered by Thomson.

The sentences have the same meaning, but they are about different things. The topic of the first sentence is *Thomson*, and the new information is that he discovered the electron. The topic of the second sentence is *the electron*, and the new information is that its discoverer was Thomson.

Here the choice of active or passive verb depends on the context. We usually structure the sentence in a way that enables us to start with old information and end with new. > 31-32 In the second sentence, we need to start with *the electron*, and so we use the passive.

B Typical contexts for the passive

We sometimes use the passive in speech, but it is more common in writing, especially in the impersonal style of textbooks and factual information.

The paint is then pumped into a large tank, where it is thinned.

Large numbers of slaves were transported to the New World.

If sulphur is heated, a number of changes can be seen.

Thousands of new jobs have been created.

Here we focus on the process of paint-thinning, the destination of the slaves, and so on, rather than on the people carrying out the actions.

The passive is also sometimes used in rules and to describe procedures.

The service is provided under a contract.

Your prize must be claimed by 31 December.

Application should be made in writing.

The active equivalent *We provide the service ... , You must claim your prize ... , You should apply ...* is more friendly and less impersonal.

The passive also occurs in news reports.

A new health tax will be introduced next year.

Two people were killed in the accident.

TIP

Do not overuse the passive. Use it only when it fits the context and the style. Remember that even in formal writing most clauses are active, not passive.

C Verbs which cannot be passive

An intransitive verb (a verb without an object) cannot be passive. These sentences have no passive equivalent.

Something happened.

The problem will become more urgent.

We stayed at home.

The streets seemed empty.

There are also some transitive verbs which cannot be passive, e.g. *have* (= own), *lack*, *resemble*, and *suit* (= be right for). These are all state verbs.

My friend had a sports car. (NOT ~~*A sports car was had by my friend.*~~)

The player lacks ability. (NOT ~~*Ability is lacked by the player.*~~)

That colour suits you. (NOT ~~*You're suited by that colour.*~~)

But other state verbs can be passive, e.g. *believe*, *contain*, *include*, *intend*, *know*, *like*, *love*, *mean*, *need*, *owe*, *own*, *understand*, *want*.

The business is owned by an American company.

These old postcards are wanted by collectors.

Some verbs can be either action verbs or state verbs, e.g. *cost*, *fit*, *measure*, *weigh*, > 51B. They can be passive only when they are action verbs.

Action & active: *The decorator measured the wall.*

Action & passive: *The wall was measured by the decorator.*

State: *The wall measured three metres.*

(BUT NOT ~~*Three metres was measured by the wall.*~~)

D The passive and *you, we, they*, etc

The passive is used less in informal English than in formal or written contexts. In informal English we often use an active sentence with a vague subject like *you, we, they, people*, or *someone*.

Active: *You can't do anything about it.* (*you* = people in general > 176)

Passive: *Nothing can be done about it.*

Active: *We/People use electricity for all kinds of purposes.*

Passive: *Electricity is used for all kinds of purposes.*

Active: *They're building some new houses.*

Passive: *Some new houses are being built.*

Active: *Someone has taken down the poster.*

Passive: *The poster has been taken down.*

In the passive sentences we do not need to mention *you, we*, etc when they have this vague meaning.

NOTE

We can also use *one*, although its use is limited. > 176A

One can't do anything about it.

89 The agent in passive sentences

- A** When we need to mention the agent in a passive sentence, we use a phrase with *by*.

Hercule Poirot was created by Agatha Christie.

The land has been bought by a property developer.

The submarine is powered by nuclear energy.

Here the agents – *Agatha Christie, a property developer* and *nuclear energy* – are the new information we are focussing on.

- B** But often we do not need to include the agent in a passive sentence. Other kinds of information can come at the end of the sentence.

The dark side of the moon was first seen in 1959.

The reception will be held at the Manor Hotel.

Plugs should be wired correctly.

We mention the agent only if we need to mention it. We do not mention it if it is not relevant.

A large number of Sherlock Holmes films have been made.

The atom was regarded as solid until the electron was discovered in 1897.

The drugs were destroyed.

The people who made the films, discovered the electron and destroyed the drugs are not relevant to the message. The first two examples are about the **number** of films and the **time** of the discovery. The last example is about what happened to the drugs, not when or where it happened or who did it.

Sometimes we do not know the identity of the agent.

My car was stolen.

The phrase *by a thief* would add no information.

Sometimes we do not need to mention the agent because it is obvious.

A new government has been elected.

The phrase *by the voters* would add no information because we know that governments are elected by voters.

Sometimes we do not mention the agent because we do not want to.

Mistakes have been made.

This use of the passive without an agent is a way of not saying who is responsible. Compare the active *I/We have made mistakes*.

90 The passive with get

A We sometimes form the passive with *get* rather than with *be*.

We get paid monthly.

The booklet got thrown out with the rubbish.

The leaves were getting blown about by the wind.

We use the passive with *get* mainly in informal English, and it has a more limited use than *be*. We can use it to talk about good or bad things happening to someone or something.

Luckily I got accepted at art school.

The flower display got vandalized.

'Bad things' can be accidents.

Lots of people get killed on the roads, unfortunately.

The vase got broken when we moved house.

This pattern with *get* can also refer to something happening incidentally, as part of a larger operation.

The dustbin gets emptied once a week.

Everyone got moved to a new office during the reorganization.

But we do not use *get* for a major, planned action.

The railways were privatized 20 years ago.

(NOT ~~*The railways got privatized 20 years ago.*~~)

In simple tenses we use *do* in negatives and questions.

I forgot to leave the dustbin out, so it didn't get emptied.

How often do people get injured playing rugby?

B We also use *get* + passive participle in some idiomatic expressions.

We didn't even have time to get washed. (= wash ourselves)

Simon got married last year. (= married someone)

Such expressions include *get washed*, *get shaved*, *get (un)dressed*, *get changed* (= change your clothes); *get engaged*, *get married*, *get divorced*; *get started* (= start); and *get lost* (= lose your way).

We can also use some of these verbs in the active without an object.

There wasn't much time to wash and change.

Here *wash* means the same as *get washed*. Verbs that occur in both patterns are *wash*, *shave*, *(un)dress*, *change*; *marry*, *divorce*; and *start*.

The passive

NOTE

- a *Get* can be followed by a participle used as an adjective.

After a while I got interested in the film, but then the doorbell rang.
(= After a while I became interested in the film.)

Other words in this pattern are *bored, confused, fed up, involved, stuck, and tired*.

- b With *engaged*, we can use either *get* or *become*.

We've just got/become engaged.

91 The passive with *give, send, etc*

- A** In the active, *give* can have two objects. > 6

The nurse gives the patient a sleeping pill.

Either of these objects can be the subject of a passive sentence.

A sleeping pill is given to the patient.

The patient is given a sleeping pill.

We can use other verbs in these patterns, e.g. *send, offer, award*. > C

- B** Compare these two sentences.

£5 million damages were awarded to a recent accident victim.

A recent accident victim was awarded £5 million damages.

The choice of structure depends on the context – for example, whether we are talking about a sum of damages and who received it, or about an accident victim and how he/she was compensated. > 88A

- C** It is quite usual in English for the person receiving something to be the subject. Here are some more examples.

The chairman was handed a note. *I've been offered a job.*

We were told all the details. *The residents will be found new homes.*

Here are some verbs that we can use in this pattern.

| | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| <i>allow</i> | <i>feed</i> | <i>leave</i> | <i>pay</i> | <i>show</i> |
| <i>ask</i> | <i>find</i> | (in a will) | <i>promise</i> | <i>teach</i> |
| <i>award</i> | <i>give</i> | <i>lend</i> | <i>refuse</i> | <i>tell</i> |
| <i>charge</i> | <i>grant</i> | <i>offer</i> | <i>sell</i> | |
| <i>deny</i> | <i>hand</i> | <i>owe</i> | <i>send</i> | |

92 The passive with verbs of reporting

With verbs of reporting there are two special passive patterns.

Active: *People say / They say that elephants have good memories.*

Passive with *it*: *It is said that elephants have good memories.*

Passive with
to-infinitive: *Elephants are said to have good memories.*

A It is said ...

Some verbs can occur in the pattern *it* + passive verb + *that*-clause.

It is thought that the stone houses are 5,000 years old.

It was reported that the army was crossing the frontier.

It has been shown that the theory is correct.

It is proposed that the industry should be privatized.

We often use these verbs:

| | | | | | |
|------------|----------|----------|---------|-----------|------------|
| accept | believe | estimate | imply | propose | say |
| agree | claim | expect | intend | realize | see |
| allege | conclude | feel | know | recognize | show |
| announce | consider | fear | note | recommend | state |
| anticipate | decide | find | notice | report | suggest |
| argue | discover | hold | observe | reveal | think |
| assume | envisage | hope | predict | rumour | understand |

B ... said to be ...

We can also use the pattern: subject + passive verb + *to*-infinitive.

The stone houses are thought to be 5,000 years old.

United were expected to win easily, but they lost.

The film was felt to lack excitement.

We can use these verbs:

| | | | | | |
|----------|----------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| allege | declare | find | presume | say | think |
| assume | discover | intend | prove | see | understand |
| believe | estimate | know | report | show | |
| claim | expect | mean | reveal | state | |
| consider | feel | observe | rumour | suppose | |

The *to*-infinitive can also be continuous, perfect, or passive.

The army was reported to be crossing the frontier.

The prisoner is known to have behaved violently in the past.

The disease was thought to be spread by mosquitoes.

It can be both perfect and passive.

Twelve people are believed to have been killed in the accident.

We can use the subject *there* with *to be*.

There is considered to be no chance of the bill becoming law.

The passive verb can have a modal verb, e.g. *can*, *must*.

The company can hardly be said to be prospering.

The rumour must be assumed to be false.

NOTE

Agree, *decide*, and *propose* can come in pattern A with *it* and a *that*-clause.

It was agreed that the committee should appoint a press secretary.

A typical use is to report what was said in a meeting.

We can also use the same three verbs in the pattern *it* + passive verb + *to*-infinitive.

It was agreed to appoint a press secretary.

We can use this pattern only with *agree*, *decide*, and *propose*.

C The agent with verbs of reporting

In both the patterns A and B, we can include the agent in a phrase with *by*.

It was reported by CNN that the army was crossing the frontier.

The film was felt by audiences to lack excitement.

Here the agent comes next to the verb it relates to (*reported by CNN, felt by audiences*).

93 Passive verb + to-infinitive or active participle

A Infinitive

Some patterns with a verb + object + to-infinitive have a passive equivalent.

Active: *Police advise drivers to use an alternative route.*

Passive: *Drivers are advised to use an alternative route.*

We can use this passive pattern with verbs like *tell, ask, persuade, warn*, and *advise*, > 105B; and verbs like *force* and *allow*, > 105C.

Now look at this pair of sentences.

Active: *The terrorists made the hostages lie down.*

Passive: *The hostages were made to lie down.*

In the passive we always use a to-infinitive (*to lie*) even if in the active the infinitive is without *to*. This happens after *make* and after verbs of perception such as *see*.

Active: *The detective saw the woman put the jewellery in her bag.*

Passive: *The woman was seen to put the jewellery in her bag.*

We can use *let* in the active pattern but not in the passive, where we use *allow* instead.

Active: *They let the hostages rest./They allowed the hostages to rest.*

Passive: *The hostages were allowed to rest.*

We can also use a finite clause after *is told, was asked*, etc, but not after *make* or after verbs like *force* or *allow*.

Drivers are advised that an alternative route should be used.

BUT *Drivers are forced to use an alternative route.*

(NOT ~~*Drivers are forced that an alternative route should be used.*~~)

NOTE

For the passive to-infinitive, > 95.

There is an alternative route to be used by goods vehicles.

B Participle

Some patterns with a verb + object + active participle have a passive equivalent.

Active: *The detective saw the woman putting the jewellery in her bag.*

Passive: *The woman was seen putting the jewellery in her bag.*

Active: *The officials kept us waiting for half an hour.*

Passive: *We were kept waiting for half an hour.*

Active: *We spend too much time arguing over little details.*

Passive: *Too much time is spent arguing over little details.*

We can use the passive pattern with verbs of perception (e.g. *see*) and with *catch*, *discover*, *find*, *keep*, *leave*, *lose*, *spend*, and *waste*.

NOTE

For *I saw the jewellery being put in the bag*, > 125C.

94 Some patterns with *have* and *get***A The active: *have/get* + object + infinitive**

This pattern means 'cause someone to do something'.

I had the garage service my car.

I got the garage to service my car.

After *have* we use an infinitive without *to*, and after *get* we use a *to*-infinitive. This active pattern with *have* is more common in the US than in Britain, where it is rather formal. *Get* is informal.

B The passive: *have/get* something done

This pattern means 'cause something to be done'.

I had my car serviced.

I got my car serviced.

This means that I arranged for someone, for example a garage, to service my car; I did not service it myself. We use this pattern mainly to talk about professional services to a customer. Both forms are used in Britain and in the US. *Have* is neutral, and *get* is a little informal.

You should have/get the job done professionally.

I had/got the machine repaired only last week.

We're having/We're getting a new kitchen fitted.

Where did you have/get your hair cut?

Both *have* and *get* are ordinary verbs which can be continuous (*are having/are getting*). In simple-tense negatives and questions we use *do* (*did ... have/get ... ?*).

Compare the two patterns with *had*.

Have something done: *We had a burglar alarm fitted (by a security company) last year.*

Past perfect: *We had fitted a burglar alarm (ourselves) some time previously.*

The passive

We can also use *get* informally when we are talking about a job we do ourselves.

I must get my homework done. (= I must do my homework.)

We finally got everything packed into suitcases. (= We packed the suitcases.)

C Have something happen

This pattern has the same form as *have something done* in B. We use it to say that we experience something, often something unpleasant.

We had a window broken in the storm.

My sister has had some money stolen.

95 The passive to-infinitive and gerund

Look at these forms of the verb *play*.

| | Active | Passive |
|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| To-infinitive: | <i>to play</i> | <i>to be played</i> |
| Perfect to-infinitive: | <i>to have played</i> | <i>to have been played</i> |
| Gerund: | <i>playing</i> | <i>being played</i> |
| Perfect gerund: | <i>having played</i> | <i>having been played</i> |

Each passive form ends with a passive participle (*played*).

Here are some examples of the passive forms.

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| To-infinitive: | <i>I expect to be invited to the wedding.</i> <i>It's awful to be criticized in public.</i> <i>I want this place to be tidied up by the time I get back.</i> |
| Perfect to-infinitive: | <i>The fire seems to have been caused by an electrical fault.</i> <i>I want this place to have been tidied up by the time I get back.</i> |
| Gerund: | <i>Being searched by customs officers is unpleasant.</i> <i>Let's not risk being arrested for spying.</i> |
| Perfect gerund: | <i>I'm annoyed at having been made a fool of.</i> <i>There is no record of any message having been sent.</i> |

After a preposition we can use a gerund but not an infinitive. > 114

NOTE

We can sometimes use *get* instead of *be* with the passive forms.

I don't expect to get invited to the wedding.

Let's not risk getting arrested for spying.

96 Active forms with a passive meaning

A Gerund

The active gerund can sometimes have a passive meaning. This happens after *need* or *want* (= need).

The room needed decorating. (= The room needed to be decorated.)

This bike wants cleaning. (= This bike needs to be cleaned.)

Want in this sense of 'need' is informal.

We cannot use the passive gerund here.

(NOT ~~*The room needed being decorated.*~~)

B To-infinitive

We sometimes use an active to-infinitive when we are talking about jobs we have to do.

We had the living-room to decorate.

I've got some homework to do.

When the subject of the sentence (*We*, *I*) is the agent (the person doing the job), then we use the active infinitive, not the passive.

If the subject of the sentence is NOT the agent, we use the passive infinitive.

The living-room had to be decorated.

The homework is to be done by tomorrow.

After the subject *there*, we can use either an active or a passive infinitive.

There were several rooms to decorate / to be decorated.

There's quite a lot of homework to do / to be done.

But when we talk about leisure activities, we normally use the active.

There are lots of exciting things to do here.

After an adjective, the infinitive is usually active.

This machine isn't safe to use.

The piano is too heavy to move.

That box isn't strong enough to sit on.

If we use a phrase with *by* and the agent, then the infinitive is passive.

The piano is too heavy to be moved by one person.

(=The piano is too heavy for one person to move.)

C Main verbs

A few verbs can be used in the active form with a passive meaning.

Her latest record is selling in huge numbers. (= It is being sold ...)

This sentence doesn't read quite right. (= When it is read, it isn't right.)

This sweater washes all right in warm water. (= It can be washed ...)

The infinitive

97 Introduction

- A** There are two kinds of infinitive – with *to* and without *to*.

Infinitive with *to*: *I'd prefer to sit at the back.*

Infinitive without *to*: *I'd rather sit at the back.*

Whether we use *to* or not depends on the grammatical structure. For example, we use *to* after *prefer* but not after *would rather*.

The most common use of an infinitive without *to* is after a modal verb, e.g. *can*. > 70B

I can sit at the back.

For more on the infinitive without *to*, > 110. The rest of this chapter is about infinitives with *to*, often referred to as to-infinitives.

- B** A to-infinitive can have a perfect or continuous form.

Simple: *to play*

Perfect: *to have played*

Continuous: *to be playing*

Perfect and continuous: *to have been playing*

We use a perfect infinitive for something that happened (or possibly happened) earlier.

I seem to have left my umbrella behind.

The man was relieved to have survived the accident.

In this last example the man's survival happened before his feeling of relief.

We cannot use a past form.

(NOT ~~*I seem to left it behind.*~~)

We use a continuous infinitive for something happening over a period.

You're lucky to be living in such a nice place.

We were happy to be starting on a new adventure.

The man was unsteady on his feet. He appeared to have been drinking.

In the negative, *not* comes before the infinitive.

I'd prefer not to sit at the front.

The two lovers pretended not to have met before.

NOTE

- a In some contexts we can use a simple to-infinitive as well as a perfect or continuous form.

We expect to complete/to have completed the work by the summer.

We hope to make/to be making a start soon.

- b With some expressions such as *would like*, *would hate*, and *would be nice/awful*, we can also use the perfect in either or both clauses when talking about the past.

I'd like to have seen the show last week.

I'd have liked to see the show last week.

I'd have liked to have seen the show last week.

- c For the passive infinitive, e.g. *to be played*, > 95.

98 Infinitive clauses

- A** An infinitive can be followed by an object or complement and/or by one or more adverbials. The infinitive together with such phrases is called an infinitive clause.

A sightseeing tour is the best way to see the city. (infinitive + object)

I'd prefer to sit at the back. (infinitive + adverbial)

An infinitive clause can be just an infinitive without an object or adverbial.

We decided to leave.

NOTE

An adverbial usually goes after the infinitive or after the object if there is one.

I didn't expect you to change your mind suddenly.

Often a one-word adverb can also go before the to-infinitive or between *to* and the verb.

I didn't expect you suddenly to change your mind.

I didn't expect you to suddenly change your mind.

This last example is sometimes called a 'split infinitive' because the infinitive *to change* is split by the word *suddenly*. A few people think this is incorrect, but in fact it has become common usage, and there is no need to avoid it.

At last we've got a chance to really relax.

Remember to always keep your design simple.

- B** In an infinitive clause, a preposition comes in its normal place, often after a verb or adjective.

It isn't enough money to live on.

There's nothing to get excited about.

I need a vase to put these flowers in.

NOTE

In more formal English we can sometimes begin a clause with a preposition and relative pronoun.

It is hardly enough money on which to live.

99 The to-infinitive with *it*, as subject, and as complement

- A** We often use a pattern with *it* as the subject and an infinitive clause at or near the end of the sentence.

It seems rude to turn down the invitation.

It is a great mistake not to take a holiday now and then.

It takes ages to defrost this fridge.

We can sometimes use a to-infinitive clause as a subject, but this is less frequent than the pattern with *it*.

To turn down the invitation seems rude.

Not to take a holiday now and then is a great mistake.

NOTE

A gerund as subject is more usual than an infinitive.

Defrosting this fridge takes ages.

The infinitive

- B** A to-infinitive clause can be a complement after *be*.
My great ambition is to emigrate to Australia.
The important thing is not to panic.
The idea was to give everyone a nice surprise.

100 The to-infinitive used as an adverbial

A to-infinitive clause can function as an adverbial. It can express ideas such as purpose or outcome.

A Purpose

A to-infinitive clause can express purpose.

My friend has gone to town to do some shopping.
I am writing to enquire about activity holidays.
To get a good seat you need to arrive early.

For other ways of expressing purpose, > 240.

In the negative we cannot use a simple to-infinitive.

(NOT ~~We came in quietly not to disturb you.~~)

Instead we use *so as* or *so that*.

We came in quietly so as not to disturb you
We came in quietly so that we wouldn't disturb you.

After *so that* we use a finite clause.

NOTE

In informal British English we use *go and/come and* rather than *go to/come to* before a verb.

Let's go and have a cup of coffee.

Come and take a look at this.

Americans say *Let's go have a cup of coffee.*

B Outcome

We can sometimes use a to-infinitive clause to express the outcome of an action or process.

Laura came home to find her house on fire.
The prince grew up to be a handsome young man.

We can put *only* before the to-infinitive to express the idea that effort has been wasted.

We all arrived for the concert only to find it had been cancelled.
Smith beat the goalkeeper only to see his shot hit the post.

C Comment

An infinitive clause can also express a comment on the speaker's honesty.

To be frank, you didn't make a very good impression.
I'm a bit tired of sightseeing, to tell you the truth.

We can also use *to be* (perfectly) *honest* and *to put it bluntly*.

D To hear ... / To see ...

We can use a clause with *to hear* or *to see* to explain why something could give you the wrong idea.

To hear him talk, you'd think he was God's gift to women.

To see her walking around in her old clothes, you'd never guess she owned a multi-million pound business.

101 Verb + to-infinitive or verb + gerund?

A We can use a to-infinitive after certain verbs.

I decided to take a bus.

People will refuse to pay the new tax.

I'm planning to visit India next year.

We hope to be moving into our new flat soon.

We expect to have completed the work by the summer.

Other verbs take a gerund,

I suggested taking a bus.

People will resent paying the new tax.

I'm considering visiting India next year.

There are some verbs which take both forms: they can be followed by either a to-infinitive or a gerund, > 103. But many verbs can be followed by only one of the forms. It is difficult or impossible to give rules about which verbs take a to-infinitive and which take a gerund; they all have to be learned individually.

B We can use more than one to-infinitive or gerund together, or a combination of the two.

You need to prepare to answer some awkward questions.

I refuse to risk losing so much money.

Jane was considering offering to help the refugees.

For more information about infinitives and gerunds with other clauses, > 229.

C Here is a list of some common verbs + to-infinitive.

afford > 102G

agree > 102E

aim

appear > 102A

arrange

ask > 102F

attempt (= try)

be > 58A–B

beg

care (= like) > 102H

choose

claim

come > 102A

consent (= agree)

dare > 83

decide

decline (= refuse)

demand

desire > 102B

be dying > 102B

expect

fail

be going > 55

happen > 102A

have > 71

help > 102D

hesitate

hope

learn

long > 102B

look > 102C

manage

need > 104I

offer

ought > 74A

plan

prepare

pretend

promise

prove > 102A

refuse

seek (= try)

seem > 102A

tend > 102A

threaten

turn out > 102A

used > 82

volunteer

vote

can't wait

want > 102B

wish > 102B

The infinitive

Here is a list of some common verbs + gerund.

| | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| <i>admit</i> | <i>enjoy</i> | <i>justify</i> | <i>resist</i> |
| <i>allow</i> > 102I | <i>can't face</i> | <i>keep</i> | <i>report</i> > 102F |
| <i>avoid</i> | <i>fancy</i> > 102B | <i>keep on</i> | <i>resent</i> |
| <i>consider</i> | <i>finish</i> | <i>mind</i> > 102H | <i>resume</i> |
| <i>delay</i> | <i>give up</i> | <i>miss</i> | <i>risk</i> |
| <i>deny</i> | <i>can't help</i> | <i>postpone</i> | <i>suggest</i> |
| <i>detest</i> (= hate) | <i>imagine</i> | <i>practise</i> | |
| <i>dislike</i> | <i>involve</i> | <i>quit</i> | |

NOTE

Sometimes a to-infinitive comes after a passive verb.

You were warned to take care.

The equivalent active pattern is verb + object + to-infinitive.

I warned you to take care.

For more details about these patterns, > 105.

102 Verb + to-infinitive or gerund: more details

- A** A special group of verbs which take a to-infinitive are *appear*, *come*, *happen*, *prove*, *seem*, *tend*, and *turn out*.

The plane seemed to be losing height.

(The plane was **apparently** losing height.)

We happened to meet in the street.

(We met **by chance** in the street.)

The couple came to accept the death of their son.

(The couple **finally** accepted the death of their son.)

Rich people tend to live longer.

(Rich people **usually** live longer.)

Here the to-infinitive expresses what happened, and the verb before it says something about the truth of the statement (e.g. how sure we are that the plane is losing height) or about the manner or time of the action (e.g. how quickly the couple accepted the death of their son).

The object of the to-infinitive can be the subject of a passive sentence.

Active: *Someone seems to have stolen my computer.*

Passive: *My computer seems to have been stolen.*

We can use an empty subject *it* before *appear*, *happen*, *seem*, *turn out*. > 36C

It seemed that the plane was losing height.

We use a that-clause after *it* + verb.

- B** *Want* + to-infinitive is a common pattern. *Wish* and *desire* are more formal.
Does anyone want to say anything?
Does anyone wish to make a comment?
Be dying to and *long to* are more emphatic.
I'm dying to open this parcel. I can't wait.
Fancy + gerund is informal.
Do you fancy going out somewhere?
- C** *Look* + to-infinitive can mean the same as 'seem' or 'appear'.
With profits sharply down, the company looks to be in trouble.
 In the continuous form it can mean 'aim to'.
United are looking to return to the top of the table.
- D** After *help* we can leave out *to*.
We all helped (to) put up the tent.
- E** We can use *agree* with a to-infinitive but not *accept*.
My friend agreed to pay half the cost.
My friend accepted that he should pay half the cost.
 (NOT *My friend accepted to pay half the cost.*)
- F** We can use a to-infinitive after *ask*.
The customer asked to see the manager.
 Usually there is an object between *ask* and the to-infinitive. > 105B
The customer asked the manager to sort the problem out.
 We use a gerund after *report*.
Witnesses reported seeing the aircraft burst into flames.
- G** We use *afford* (= have enough money or time for) after *can/could* or *be able to*, often in a negative sentence or a question.
I can't afford to buy a house. Will we be able to afford to go to Peru?
- H** We use *mind* + gerund and *care* + to-infinitive mainly in a negative sentence or a question.
I don't mind walking if it's fine.
Would you care to come along with us?
Would you care to ... ? is a formal way of saying *Would you like to ... ?*
- I** *Allow* takes a gerund.
They don't allow sunbathing here.
 But when it has an object, *allow* takes a to-infinitive.
They don't allow you to sunbathe here.
 And *be allowed* takes a to-infinitive.
You aren't allowed to sunbathe here.

103 Verbs taking either a to-infinitive or a gerund

- A** Sometimes the choice of to-infinitive or gerund after a verb depends on the meaning, > 104. But some verbs can take either a to-infinitive or a gerund with almost no difference in meaning.

I hate to leave/hate leaving everything to the last minute.

We intend to take/intend taking immediate action.

It suddenly started to rain/started raining.

These verbs are: *begin, bother, can't bear, cease, commence, continue, hate, intend, like, love, prefer, propose, can't stand, and start.*

But with these verbs we normally avoid using two ing-forms together.

The spectators were already beginning to arrive.

(NOT ~~*The spectators were already beginning arriving.*~~)

After *begin, continue, and start*, a state verb usually has the to-infinitive form.

I soon began to understand what the problems were.

NOTE

- a *Cease* (= stop) and *commence* (= begin) are formal.
- b We normally use *bother* in a negative sentence or a question.
Don't bother to wash up. / Don't bother washing up.
Why should we bother to call / bother calling a meeting if no one will come to it?

- B** *Like, love, and hate* take either a to-infinitive or a gerund.

I like to cook. / I like cooking.

Kate hates to travel / hates travelling on buses.

The gerund is more usual when we are talking about the pleasure or displeasure we feel when doing something.

Like takes a to-infinitive when it means that we do something because it is a good idea rather than a pleasure.

I like to keep all these papers in order.

Would like, would love, and would hate normally take a to-infinitive.

Our guest would like to say a few words to you.

We'd love to go on a cruise.

TIP

Use *like* + gerund to talk about the things people enjoy.

Do you like playing tennis? ~ Yes, I do. I really enjoy it.

Use *would like* + to-infinitive to say what you want to do or to make suggestions or invitations.

Would you like to play tennis? ~ Yes, OK. Let's have a game.

104 Verb + to-infinitive/gerund with a change in meaning

The to-infinitive and gerund have different meanings after these verbs: *remember*, *forget* (> A), *regret* (> B), *dread* (> C), *try* (> D), *stop* (> E), *mean* (> F), *get* (> G), *go on* (> H), *need*, *want*, and *deserve* (> I).

- A** We use *remember* and *forget* with a to-infinitive to talk about necessary actions and whether we do them or not.

Did you remember to turn off the computer?

You forgot to sign the cheque. ~ Oh, sorry.

We use a gerund with *remember* and *forget* to talk about memories.

I can remember waking up in the middle of the night.

I'll never forget breaking down on the motorway. It was awful.

- B** We use *regret* + to-infinitive when we are giving bad news.

We regret to inform you that your application has been unsuccessful.

We use a gerund to express regret about the past.

I regret wasting / I regret having wasted so much time last year.

- C** We use *dread* + to-infinitive mainly in *I dread to think / I dread to imagine*.

I dread to think what might happen to you all alone in the big city.

We use a gerund for something that makes us afraid.

I always dreaded being kissed by my aunts.

- D** *Try* + to-infinitive means to do your best to achieve something.

I'm trying to light a fire, but the wood won't burn.

Try + gerund means to do something to see if it will solve the problem.

You could try pouring some petrol on to make it burn.

NOTE

In informal English we can use *try and* instead of *try to*.

Let's try and move the cupboard away from the wall.

- E** After *stop* we can use a to-infinitive of purpose. > 100A

At the services the driver stopped to buy a newspaper.

Stop + gerund means to end an action.

You'd better stop dreaming and get on with some work.

- F** *Mean* + to-infinitive has the sense of 'intend' or 'plan'.

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to step on your foot.

Here *mean* has a personal subject (*I*).

Mean + gerund means 'involve'. It expresses the idea that a situation creates the need for a particular action.

I have to be at the airport by eight o'clock. It means getting up early.

Here *mean* has an impersonal subject (*it*).

The infinitive

- G** *Get* + to-infinitive means to get an opportunity to do something or to succeed in doing it.

I hope I can get to speak to the President.

The kids got to ride on a steam engine.

But *get* + gerund means 'start'.

It's half past seven. We'd better get going.

Once you two get talking, no one else can get a word in.

Get is rather informal.

- H** *Go on* + to-infinitive means to do something different, to do the next thing.

After receiving the award, the actor went on to thank all the people who had helped him in his career.

Go on + gerund means to continue doing something.

The band went on playing even after everyone had left.

We can also say *The band kept on playing.*

- I** We can use *need*, *want*, and *deserve* with a to-infinitive.

We need to leave at eight.

Amy wants to use the computer.

After all your hard work you deserve to succeed.

A gerund after these verbs has a passive meaning. > 96A

All these figures need/want checking.

105 Verb + object + to-infinitive

A Introduction

Some verbs can take an object and a to-infinitive.

Simon wants you to ring him on his mobile.

We asked the teacher not to give us any homework.

I expected Tim to meet me at the airport.

The object of the verb (*you*, *the teacher*, *Tim*) also functions as the subject of the to-infinitive. For example, *Tim* is the subject of *to meet*.

NOTE

Compare the infinitive with and without a subject.

I expected Tim to meet me. (= I expected that Tim would meet me.)

I expected to meet Tim. (= I expected that I would meet Tim.)

In the sentence *I expected to meet Tim*, the subject of the to-infinitive is understood to be the same as the subject of the sentence (*I*).

B Verbs meaning 'order', 'request', etc

The doctor told Julie to stay in bed.

We persuaded our neighbours to turn the music down.

Why did you all leave me to clear up on my own?

These verbs include: *advise, ask, beg, challenge, command, encourage, instruct, invite, leave, order, persuade, remind, request, tell, trust, urge, warn.*

We cannot use *suggest* in this pattern. We have to use a finite clause.

We suggested (to our neighbours) that they should turn the music down.

With verbs meaning 'order', 'request', etc, the main clause can be passive.

Our neighbours were persuaded to turn the music down.

C Verbs meaning 'cause', 'help', etc

The crisis has forced the government to act.

My laptop enables me to work on the train.

We can use these verbs: *allow, assist, authorize, cause, compel, drive, enable, entitle, forbid, force, get, help, inspire, intend, lead, mean, oblige, pay, permit, provoke, require, teach, tempt, train.*

The main clause can be passive.

The government has been forced to act.

But *cause* and *get* cannot be passive before an infinitive.

After most verbs we can use *there* as the subject of the to-infinitive clause. It is rather formal.

The regulations permit there to be no more than 200 people in the hall.

For *get* in this pattern, > 94A.

I got someone to lend me an electric drill.

After *help* we can leave out *to*.

I'm helping my friend (to) find a flat.

D Verbs meaning 'say', 'think', 'show', etc

A brief examination revealed the picture to be a fake.

The police believed a rival drugs gang to have committed the crime.

We can use these verbs: *announce, assume, believe, consider, declare, discover, estimate, expect, feel, find, imagine, judge, know, presume, prove, reveal, show, suppose, suspect, take (= assume), understand.*

This pattern is rather formal. A finite clause is more usual.

The police believed that a rival drugs gang had committed the crime.

If we use a to-infinitive, the passive pattern is more common.

A rival drugs gang was believed to have committed the crime.

The theory has been proved to be incorrect.

The verb *say* is used only in the passive pattern.

The party is said to be split on the issue.

For more details about verbs of reporting in this pattern, > 92B.

The infinitive

We can sometimes leave out *to be*, especially after *believe*, *consider*, *declare*, and *find*.

The country declared itself (to be) independent.

We can use *consider* but not *regard*.

We consider ourselves (to be) a separate nation.

We regard ourselves as a separate nation.

We can use *there* as the subject of the to-infinitive clause. It is rather formal.

We understood there to be money available for the project.

E Verbs meaning 'want', '(dis)like', 'need', etc

We want everyone to enjoy themselves.

I'd like you to tell me the whole story.

We can use these verbs: *can't bear*, *(would) hate*, *(would) like*, *(would) love*, *need*, *(would) prefer*, *want*, *wish*.

We cannot use a finite clause after *hate*, *like*, *love*, or *want*.

(NOT ~~*We want that everyone enjoys themselves.*~~)

But after *can't bear*, *hate*, *like*, *love*, and *prefer*, we can use *it when* or *it if* and a finite clause.

I hate it when you ignore me.

My aunt would love it if we took her out for a drive.

Some of these verbs can take an object + gerund. > 113E

I hate you looking at me like that.

The main clause cannot be passive.

(NOT ~~*Everyone is wanted to enjoy themselves.*~~)

We can use *there* as the subject of the to-infinitive clause. It is rather formal.

We'd prefer there to be an adult in charge.

106 Adjective + to-infinitive

A The pattern *It is easy to answer the question*

A common pattern is *it* + linking verb + adjective + to-infinitive clause.

It was good to see you again.

It is difficult to describe colours precisely.

It felt strange to be watched by so many people.

It'll be safer to copy the data to disk.

There are many different adjectives that we can use in this pattern. They include: *convenient*, *correct*, *dangerous*, *difficult*, *easy*, *exciting*, *expensive*, *foolish*, *good*, *great*, *hard*, *important*, *impossible*, *interesting*, *necessary*, *nice*, *possible*, *right*, *safe*, *silly*, *simple*, *strange*, and *wrong*.

B The pattern *The question is easy to answer*

Here we understand *the question* as the object of *to answer*.

Colours are difficult to describe precisely.

Is gas cheaper to cook with than electricity?

The adjectives that we can use in this pattern are fewer than those in pattern A. They include *cheap, dangerous, difficult, easy, expensive, hard, impossible, and safe*.

We can use *impossible* but not *possible*.

It is impossible to solve the puzzle. / The puzzle is impossible to solve.

It is possible to solve the puzzle.

(BUT NOT ~~*The puzzle is possible to solve*~~).

We do not use an object in the to-infinitive clause.

(NOT ~~*Colours are difficult to describe them*~~.)

(NOT ~~*Is gas cheaper to cook with it than electricity?*~~)

C The pattern *It is an easy question to answer*

In this pattern the to-infinitive comes after an adjective + noun.

It's a difficult colour to describe.

That was a silly thing to do, wasn't it?

We can use most of the adjectives listed in A.

D Too and enough

We can use *too* or *enough* in patterns A and B.

It would be too expensive to stay in a hotel.

The streets aren't safe enough to walk along at night.

Too comes before the adjective, and *enough* comes after it.

There are many other adjectives we can use with *too* and *enough*, besides those listed in A and B.

The coffee was too hot to drink.

This rucksack isn't big enough to get everything in.

When we use *too* in pattern C, we put *a* after the adjective.

It was simply too good an opportunity to miss.

But when we use *enough*, we put *a* in its usual place, before the adjective.

It's a big enough vehicle to get a whole volleyball team in.

E The pattern *I am happy to answer the question*

Here the subject of the main clause is often a person, e.g. *we, the boss*.

We were sorry to hear your bad news.

The boss seems reluctant to make a decision.

You were lucky to win that game.

The goods are ready to be collected.

The infinitive

The adjectives that we can use in this pattern include: *able, afraid, anxious, ashamed, content, delighted, desperate, determined, eager, foolish, fortunate, free, glad, happy, horrified, impatient, interested, keen, lucky, pleased, prepared, proud, quick, ready, reluctant, slow, sorry, surprised, unable, unwilling, willing, and wise.*

Quick and *slow* express the manner in which an action is carried out.

The government has been quick to act.

(= The government has acted quickly.)

F The pattern *He is unlikely to answer the question*

In this pattern the adjective expresses a degree of probability or makes a comment on the truth of what is said.

The peace talks are likely to last several weeks.

Adrian is liable to lose his temper if you say the wrong thing.

The party is sure to be a great success.

We can use the adjectives *bound, certain, due, liable, likely, sure, and unlikely.*

With *certain, likely, and unlikely*, we can use this pattern with the subject *it* and a finite clause.

It is likely that the peace talks will last several weeks.

107 Noun phrase + to-infinitive

A The pattern *the need to answer*

We can use a to-infinitive clause after certain verbs and adjectives.

I need to answer these e-mails. > 101

Laura is determined to succeed in her career. > 106E

We can also use a to-infinitive after nouns which are related to such verbs and adjectives. As well as *I need to answer*, we can say *the need to answer*; as well as *determined to succeed*, we can say *her determination to succeed*.

Is there really any need to answer every single e-mail?

You have to admire Laura's determination to succeed.

The decision to raise taxes has proved unpopular.

Everyone laughed at Mark's attempt to impress the girls.

Here are some nouns that we can use in this pattern.

| | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <i>ability</i> | <i>deal</i> | <i>move</i> | <i>proposal</i> |
| <i>agreement</i> | <i>decision</i> | <i>need</i> | <i>refusal</i> |
| <i>aim</i> | <i>demand</i> | <i>obligation</i> | <i>reluctance</i> |
| <i>anxiety</i> | <i>desire</i> | <i>offer</i> | <i>request</i> |
| <i>arrangement</i> | <i>determination</i> | <i>permission</i> | <i>tendency</i> |
| <i>attempt</i> | <i>eagerness</i> | <i>plan</i> | <i>threat</i> |
| <i>choice</i> | <i>failure</i> | <i>preparations</i> | <i>willingness</i> |
| <i>confidence</i> | <i>intention</i> | <i>promise</i> | <i>wish</i> |

There are a number of other nouns which can take a to-infinitive. They include: *ambition, chance, effort, idea, opportunity, power, race, reason, right, scheme, time, and way.*

There will be an opportunity to ask questions.

NOTE

Some nouns take a preposition + gerund, not a to-infinitive. > 117

There's no hope of getting there in time.

B The pattern a question to answer

In this pattern the to-infinitive expresses necessity or possibility.

You've got some questions to answer. (= questions that you **have to** answer)

Take something to read on the train. (= something that you **can** read)

The to-infinitive clause here is neater than the finite clause with *have to* or *can*.

Compare these sentences.

I have some work to do. (= I have/There is some work that I need to do.)

I have to do some work. (= I must do/I need to do some work.)

NOTE

For *questions to answer/to be answered*, > 96B.

For *an easy question to answer*, > 106C.

For patterns with *for* and *of*, e.g. *It's time for people to choose*, > 109.

For *the first person to leave*, > 275A.

108 Question word + to-infinitive

A We can use a question word or phrase before a to-infinitive.

I just don't know what to say. (= what I **should** say)

We weren't sure how much to add to the bill. (= how much we **should** add)

No one told Tom where to meet us. (= where he **should** meet us)

Can you give me any tips on what to wear? (= what I **should** wear)

The pattern expresses an indirect question about what the best action is.

We can also use a to-infinitive after *whether*.

I was wondering whether to ring you.

We'll have to decide whether to go or not.

We cannot use *if* here.

(NOT ~~*I was wondering if to ring you.*~~)

After *what, which, whose, how many, and how much*, we can use a noun.

I didn't know what size to buy.

The driver wasn't sure which way to go.

- B** Here are some of the words and expressions that can come before the question word.

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Verb: | <i>choose, decide, explain, find out, know, learn, remember, say, see, understand, wonder, work out</i> |
| Verb + indirect object: | <i>advise someone, show someone, teach someone, tell someone</i> |
| Verb + preposition: | <i>think about, worry about</i> |
| Noun + preposition: | <i>decision on, guidance on/about, information about, instructions on, problem of, tips on</i> |
| Adjective: | <i>obvious, not sure</i> |
| Idioms: | <i>have an idea, not have a clue</i> |

When we talk about teaching and learning, we can use *learn (how) to*, *tell/show someone how to* and *teach someone (how) to*.

Students need to learn (how) to plan and organize their work.

The instructor showed us how to give the kiss of life.

Compare these examples with *tell*.

Lucy told me how to turn on the heating. You just turn this switch.

Lucy told me to turn on the heating. She felt cold.

109 For and of with a to-infinitive

- A** Here are some examples of the pattern *for* + noun phrase + to-infinitive clause.

I'll wait for you to finish your breakfast.

It's important for the company to expand into new markets.

Here's a printout for us to have a look at.

The noun phrase (e.g. *you*) is the object of the preposition *for*. It also functions as the subject of the to-infinitive.

- B** The pattern with *for* can be the subject of a sentence.

For a newspaper to publish such lies is disgraceful.

But more often we use *it* as the subject.

It is disgraceful for a newspaper to publish such lies.

The pattern with *for* can also be the complement of the sentence.

My dream is for the world to be at peace.

It can also express purpose.

There are telephones for drivers to call for help if they break down.

For plants to grow properly, you have to water them regularly.

- C** We can use the pattern after a verb which combines with *for*.

We've arranged for a photographer to take some photos.

It took ages for everyone to check in.

Such verbs are *arrange for*, *ask for*, *call for*, *look for*, *pay for*, *send for*, *take (time) for*, and *wait for*.

NOTE

The verb *hate* can take the pattern with *for* in American English but not in British English.
I'd hate for everyone to be disappointed.

- D** Many adjectives and nouns which take a to-infinitive can also take the pattern with *for*. For example, we can say that something is *easy to do* and that it is *easy for someone to do*.

It's easy for people to criticize.

It's dangerous for someone with a heart condition to sky-dive.

There's no need for you to leave so early.

I've brought some photos for everyone to look at.

- E** We use the pattern with *of* after adjectives that say what people are like or how they behave.

It's kind of you to help me.

It was rude of your friend not to shake hands.

The adjectives include *arrogant*, *brave*, *careless*, *clever*, *foolish*, *generous*, *good*, *kind*, *mean*, *nice*, *rude*, *selfish*, *silly*, *stupid*, *thoughtless*, *typical*, *unfair*, *unreasonable*, *unwise*, and *wrong*.

Some of these adjectives can take the pattern with *for*. They include *good*, *nice*, *silly*, *unfair*, *unreasonable*, and *wrong*. Compare these sentences.

It was nice of Tom to take the dog for a walk.

(It was a kind action by Tom.)

It was nice for Tom to take the dog for a walk.

(It was a pleasant experience for Tom.)

110 The infinitive without to

An infinitive without *to* is the simple form of the verb, e.g. *play*. It can also have a perfect or continuous form.

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Simple: | <i>play</i> |
| Perfect: | <i>have played</i> |
| Continuous: | <i>be playing</i> |
| Perfect and continuous: | <i>have been playing</i> |

We use an infinitive without *to* in the following patterns.

- A** After a modal verb > 70B

Nothing will go wrong.

You could have phoned me.

They must be having a party next door.

I should have been working, not playing computer games.

The infinitive

But note *be able to*, *be allowed to*, *be going to*, *have to*, and *ought to*.
You ought to be more careful.

B After *had better*, *would rather/would sooner*, and *rather than*

We'd better not be late. > 74B

I didn't enjoy the show. I'd rather have stayed at home. > 81E

They decided to accept the offer rather than take/taking their case to court.

C *Make/let/have* + object + infinitive without *to*

Make, *let*, and *have* can take an object and an infinitive without *to*.

The official made me fill out a form.

The head teacher let the pupils go home early.

I'll have the porter bring up your bags. > 94A

Here are some more examples with *let*.

I can let you have a copy. (= give you)

I'll let everyone know my new address. (= tell everyone)

Let me go or I'll scream. (= release me)

Compare *force*, *allow*, and *get*, which all take a *to*-infinitive.

The gunman forced the pilot to land at Miami.

The head teacher allowed the pupils to go home early.

I'll get the porter to bring up your bags. > 94A

NOTE

In the passive pattern with *make*, we use a *to*-infinitive. > 93A

I was made to fill out a form.

D *See/hear*, etc + object + infinitive without *to*

Verbs of perception can take an object and an infinitive without *to*. > 125B

Someone saw the men leave the building.

I thought I heard someone knock on the door.

E After *except* and *but* (= except), we normally use an infinitive without *to*.

As for the housework, I do everything except cook.

You've done nothing but grumble all day.

F We sometimes put an infinitive after *be* when we are explaining what kind of action we mean.

The only thing I can do is (to) apologize.

What the police did was (to) charge into the crowd.

The infinitive can be with or without *to*.

The gerund

111 Introduction

- A** A simple gerund is a verb with the ending *-ing*, e.g. *meeting*, *buying*.
It was nice meeting you.
Save money by buying online.

There are some spelling rules for the ing-form.

We normally leave out *e* before *ing*, e.g. *lose* → *losing*. > 278A

We double some consonants, e.g. *stop* → *stopping*. > 279

NOTE

- a** A gerund is sometimes referred to as an *ing-form*. But not all *ing-forms* are gerunds. An *ing-form* can also be an active participle.
Gerund: *Jogging isn't my idea of fun.*
Participle: *A man was jogging along the street.*
The gerund and participle both end in *-ing*, but a gerund is used like a noun. There are some contexts where it is difficult to say whether an *ing-form* is a gerund or a participle. But it is more important to use the form correctly than to name it.
- b** In some contexts we can use either a gerund or a to-infinitive.
It was nice meeting you./It was nice to meet you.
But there are also patterns where only one of the forms is possible.
Save money by buying online.

- B** These are the forms of the gerund.

| | Active | Passive |
|----------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Simple: | <i>playing</i> | <i>being played</i> |
| Perfect: | <i>having played</i> | <i>having been played</i> |

A perfect gerund refers to something before the time of the main clause.

The man gave no sign of having understood.

It is often possible to use a simple gerund instead of a perfect gerund.

We remembered having visited the place before.

We remembered visiting the place before.

The prisoners were compensated for having been interned without trial.

The prisoners were compensated for being interned without trial.

For more examples of the passive gerund, > 95.

- C** In the negative, *not* comes before the gerund.
It was frustrating not hearing any news for so long.
I regret not having learned the language.

112 Gerund clauses

- A** A gerund can have an object or complement, and it can have one or more adverbials. The gerund together with such phrases is called a gerund clause.

*No one likes **cleaning shoes**.*

***Being a doctor** means you're always busy.*

***Going on holiday** always makes me feel nervous.*

A gerund clause can be just a gerund on its own.

*Do you like **dancing**?*

- B** A gerund clause can have a subject. It comes before the gerund.

*We rely on **our friend watering the plants while we're away**.*

*I dislike **people asking me personal questions**.*

The subject can be possessive, especially *my*, *your*, etc or a name with *'s*.

*It's a bit inconvenient **you/your coming in late**.*

*Do you mind **me/my sitting here**?*

*I'm fed up with **Sarah/Sarah's laughing at my accent**.*

Both forms have the same meaning here. But the possessive is more formal, and it is less usual in everyday speech.

A possessive is more likely at the beginning of a sentence.

***Your coming in late** is a bit inconvenient.*

***Sarah's laughing at my accent** is getting on my nerves.*

113 Some patterns with the gerund

- A** Gerund clause as subject

The gerund clause can be the subject of a sentence.

***Digging** is hard work.*

***Keeping a copy of your letters** is a good idea.*

***Choosing the colour** won't be easy.*

In subject position, the gerund is much more usual than the to-infinitive. *To choose the colour ...* is possible but less likely.

We can also use *it* as the subject and put the gerund clause at or near the end of the sentence.

It won't be easy choosing the colour.

But the to-infinitive is more usual after *it*.

It won't be easy to choose the colour.

It's a good idea to keep a copy of your letters.

TIP

Say ***Booking in advance** was a good idea.* or
It was a good idea to book in advance.

B *It, there, and have*

After the subject *it* we generally use a to-infinitive rather than a gerund, > A.
But there are certain expressions where a gerund is commonly used.

It's no good arguing. I've made up my mind.

It might be worth taking the guided tour.

It wouldn't be much use trying to stick the pieces together again.

It was quite an experience working abroad.

It's a nuisance being without electricity.

It's fun skiing down a mountain.

After *experience, fun, and use* we can sometimes use a to-infinitive.

It was quite an experience to work abroad.

It's fun to ski down a mountain.

We can use a gerund after *there ... problem/difficulty* and *there ... point*.

There won't be any problem parking.

There's no point starting something we aren't going to finish.

We can also say *There's no point in starting*.

There is also a pattern with *have* = 'experience' where we can use a gerund.

You won't have any problem parking. We had fun skiing.

C Gerund clause as complement

The gerund clause can be a complement after *be*.

A more recent crime is hacking into computer systems.

What I suffer from is not being able to sleep.

D Verb + gerund

There are certain verbs which take a gerund (rather than a to-infinitive).

These people keep sending me e-mails.

Would you mind waiting a moment?

For a list of verbs taking a gerund or to-infinitive, > 101C.

Some verbs take either form. > 103

The band began playing/began to play.

E Verb + object + gerund

We can use a gerund after a verb + object.

I can't imagine anyone buying a thing like that.

How can they justify lives being put at risk?

The arrangements involve you giving two other people a lift.

In the last example, *you* is the object of the verb *involved*. It also functions as the subject of *giving*.

We can use a possessive form. > 112B

The arrangements involve your giving two other people a lift.

The gerund

These are some of the verbs that we can use before an object + gerund.

| | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <i>avoid</i> | <i>enjoy</i> | <i>involve</i> | <i>resent</i> |
| <i>celebrate</i> | <i>excuse</i> | <i>justify</i> | <i>risk</i> |
| <i>defend</i> | <i>experience</i> | <i>mention</i> | <i>save</i> |
| <i>delay</i> | <i>fancy</i> | <i>mind</i> | <i>can't stand</i> |
| <i>detest</i> | <i>forget</i> | <i>miss</i> | <i>stop</i> |
| <i>discuss</i> | <i>forgive</i> | <i>necessitate</i> | <i>tolerate</i> |
| <i>dislike</i> | <i>can't help</i> | <i>prevent</i> | <i>understand</i> |
| <i>dread</i> | <i>imagine</i> | <i>remember</i> | |

Some verbs can take either an object + gerund or an object + to-infinitive. They are *hate*, *like*, *love*, *prefer*, and *can't bear*. > 105E

We use *imagine* and *understand* with a gerund.

I just couldn't imagine Chloe dancing in a club at two in the morning.

I can understand people feeling upset.

We use them in a to-infinitive pattern when they mean 'believe'. > 105D

I imagined Chloe to be a quiet, reserved person.

We understand the decision to be final.

114 Preposition + gerund

A We sometimes use a gerund after a preposition.

I drove all the way without stopping.

We cannot use a to-infinitive after a preposition.

(NOT ~~*I drove all the way without to stop.*~~)

And we cannot use a that-clause.

(NOT ~~*I drove all the way without I stopped.*~~)

Here are some more examples.

Instead of landing at Heathrow, we had to go to Manchester.

She succeeded by being completely single-minded.

How about coming round this evening?

I feel tired in spite of having slept eight hours.

Far from being the end of the story, it was only the beginning.

Please switch off the lights before leaving.

The drug was approved after being tested.

We can use a gerund after these prepositions.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>after</i> | <i>by</i> | <i>in addition to</i> | <i>since</i> |
| <i>against</i> | <i>by means of</i> | <i>in favour of</i> | <i>through</i> |
| <i>as a result of</i> | <i>despite</i> | <i>in spite of</i> | <i>what about</i> |
| <i>as for</i> | <i>far from</i> | <i>in the process of</i> | <i>with</i> |
| <i>as well as</i> | <i>for</i> | <i>instead of</i> | <i>without</i> |
| <i>because of</i> | <i>from</i> | <i>on</i> | |
| <i>before</i> | <i>how about</i> | <i>on account of</i> | |
| <i>besides</i> | <i>in</i> | <i>on the point of</i> | |

NOTE

We can use the conjunctions *before*, *after*, and *since* in a finite clause.

Please switch off the lights before you leave.

The new drug was put on the market after it was approved by the government.

- B** With most of these prepositions, the gerund can have a subject.

The picture was hung upside down without anyone noticing.

Despite you/your reminding me, I completely forgot.

- C** *On* and *in* have special meanings in this pattern.

On turning the corner, I saw a most unexpected sight.

(= As soon as I had turned the corner, ...)

In building a new motorway, they attracted new industry to the town.

(= As a result of building a new motorway, ...)

This use of *on* and *in* is a little formal.

For often expresses purpose.

These pages are for making notes on.

We can also use a to-infinitive of purpose.

These pages are to make notes on.

- D** We can also use a gerund after *than*, *as*, and *like* expressing comparison.

A holiday is nicer than sitting at a desk.

Walking isn't as good for you as swimming.

Getting information from the company is like getting blood out of a stone.

NOTE

We usually use an infinitive after *than* in this pattern with *it*.

It is better to discuss your worries than (to) keep them to yourself.

115 Verb + preposition + gerund

- A** We can use a gerund after a prepositional verb such as *think of* or *insist on*.

My friend is thinking of selling his motor-bike.

Paul insists on getting there early.

I apologized for making a mess.

The gerund can sometimes have a subject. It comes after the preposition and before the gerund.

Paul insists on everyone getting there early.

You were talking about your cousin going to South America.

The gerund

The prepositional verbs that we can use in this pattern include the following.

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>admit to</i> | <i>complain about</i> | <i>forget about</i> | <i>resort to</i> |
| <i>aim at</i> | <i>concentrate on</i> | <i>get on with</i> | <i>settle for</i> |
| <i>(dis)agree with</i> | <i>confess to</i> | <i>guard against</i> | <i>succeed in</i> |
| <i>apologize for</i> | <i>cope with</i> | <i>insist on</i> | <i>talk about</i> |
| <i>(dis)approve of</i> | <i>count on</i> | <i>look forward to</i> | <i>think about/of</i> |
| <i>assist in</i> | <i>deal with</i> | <i>object to</i> | <i>vote for</i> |
| <i>believe in</i> | <i>depend on</i> | <i>protest at/about</i> | <i>worry about</i> |
| <i>benefit from</i> | <i>dream about/of</i> | <i>put up with</i> | |
| <i>boast of</i> | <i>escape from</i> | <i>refrain from</i> | |
| <i>care for</i> | <i>feel like</i> | <i>rely on</i> | |

For more details about prepositional verbs, > 222.

- B** A gerund can also follow a verb + object + preposition.
I'd like to congratulate you on breaking the world record.
Please forgive me for interrupting.

The verbs that we can use include the following.

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>accuse ... of</i> | <i>discourage ... from</i> | <i>save ... from</i> |
| <i>admire ... for</i> | <i>forgive ... for</i> | <i>stop ... from</i> |
| <i>arrest ... for</i> | <i>inform ... about</i> | <i>suspect ... of</i> |
| <i>assist ... in</i> | <i>involve ... in</i> | <i>tell ... about</i> |
| <i>blame ... for</i> | <i>keep ... from</i> | <i>thank ... for</i> |
| <i>charge ... with</i> | <i>praise ... for</i> | <i>use ... for</i> |
| <i>congratulate ... on</i> | <i>prevent ... from</i> | <i>warn ... about</i> |
| <i>criticize ... for</i> | <i>punish ... for</i> | |
| <i>deter ... from</i> | <i>remind ... of</i> | |

In the passive, the preposition comes directly after the verb.

The government is accused of concealing important information.
The man was charged with resisting arrest.

116 Adjective + preposition + gerund

A gerund can follow an adjective + preposition.

She's keen on riding.
I'm nervous of saying the wrong thing.
What's wrong with borrowing a little money?

The adjectives that we can use include the following.

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>accustomed to</i> | <i>content with</i> | <i>intent on</i> | <i>satisfied with</i> |
| <i>afraid of</i> | <i>different from</i> | <i>interested in</i> | <i>sorry for</i> |
| <i>angry at</i> | <i>engaged in</i> | <i>involved in/with</i> | <i>successful at/in</i> |
| <i>annoyed at</i> | <i>excited at</i> | <i>keen on</i> | <i>surprised at/by</i> |
| <i>anxious about</i> | <i>famous for</i> | <i>known for</i> | <i>tired of</i> |
| <i>ashamed of</i> | <i>fed up of/with</i> | <i>nervous about/of</i> | <i>unhappy about/at</i> |
| <i>aware of</i> | <i>fond of</i> | <i>opposed to</i> | <i>used to > 82B</i> |
| <i>bad at</i> | <i>good at</i> | <i>pleased about</i> | <i>worried about</i> |
| <i>bored with</i> | <i>grateful for</i> | <i>ready for</i> | <i>wrong with</i> |
| <i>capable of</i> | <i>guilty of</i> | <i>resigned to</i> | |
| <i>close to</i> | <i>happy about/at</i> | <i>responsible for</i> | |

In this pattern the gerund can sometimes have a subject. It comes after the preposition and before the gerund.

I was aware of people staring at me.

I'm surprised at Anna failing her exam.

117 Noun + preposition + gerund

A gerund can follow a noun + preposition.

We're looking into the possibility of renting a flat.

I had no sense of being in danger.

It's just a question of getting yourself organised.

What's your excuse for being late?

Of is the most common preposition in this pattern.

The nouns that we can use include the following.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>advantage in/of</i> | <i>effect of</i> | <i>intention of</i> | <i>purpose in/of</i> |
| <i>aim of</i> | <i>excuse for</i> | <i>interest in</i> | <i>question of</i> |
| <i>anger at</i> | <i>experience of</i> | <i>job of</i> | <i>reason for</i> |
| <i>appearance of</i> | <i>fact of</i> | <i>matter of</i> | <i>reputation for</i> |
| <i>awareness of</i> | <i>fear of</i> | <i>objection to</i> | <i>risk of</i> |
| <i>benefit of</i> | <i>feeling of</i> | <i>opportunity for/of</i> | <i>sense of</i> |
| <i>business of</i> | <i>habit of</i> | <i>part of</i> | <i>success in</i> |
| <i>case of</i> | <i>honour of</i> | <i>pleasure in/of</i> | <i>task of</i> |
| <i>chance of</i> | <i>hope of</i> | <i>point in/of</i> | <i>way of</i> |
| <i>danger of</i> | <i>idea of</i> | <i>possibility of</i> | |
| <i>difference between</i> | <i>importance of</i> | <i>problem of</i> | |
| <i>difficulty in</i> | <i>insistence on</i> | <i>prospect of</i> | |

In this pattern the gerund can sometimes have a subject. It comes after the preposition and before the gerund.

I don't like the idea of someone looking over my shoulder all the time.

What's the point of you/your waiting around here all afternoon?

For the choice between *you* and *your*, > 112B.

118 For joining and to join

- A** After some verbs and adjectives we can use either a preposition + gerund or a to-infinitive with no difference in meaning.

The people voted for joining/to join the European Union.

I was annoyed at finding/to find the office closed.

These are some of the words we can use in both patterns.

aim at doing / to do

annoyed at finding / to find

content with being / to be

excited at seeing / to see

grateful for having / to have

ready for printing / to print

satisfied with being / to be

surprised at finding / to find

vote for joining / to join

- B** Sometimes the two patterns have a different meaning, or their uses are partly the same and partly different. Compare the examples.

agree

I don't agree with dumping waste in the sea.

(= I don't think it is right.)

We all agreed to meet the next day
(= We decided to meet)

tell

I told you about losing my credit card, didn't I?

(told = informed)

I told you to keep that card safe.
(told = advised/requested)

remind

This reminds me of skiing in the Alps years ago.

(an impersonal subject)

Why didn't you remind me to listen to the weather forecast.

(a personal subject)

interested

Simon is interested in gardening.

(= He likes gardening.)

Simon would be interested to see/interested in seeing your garden.

(= He would like to see your garden,)

Simon was interested to see your garden.

(= He found your garden interesting.)

pleased

Karen was pleased about winning/pleased to win a prize.

(pleased about something in the past)

I'm pleased to meet you. (pleased about something in the present)

afraid

He's afraid of being hit by a car.
(= He is afraid because he might be hit.)

The old man is afraid to cross/ afraid of crossing the road.
(= He won't cross because he is afraid.)

ashamed

I'm ashamed of making mistakes in my English.
(= I'm ashamed because I make mistakes.)

I'm ashamed to open my mouth.
(= I won't open my mouth because it makes me feel ashamed.)

anxious

Jane was anxious about making a mistake.
(= She was worried.)

Jane was anxious to get home as soon as possible.
(= She wanted to get home.)

sorry

I'm sorry for making / sorry to have made such a fuss.
(an apology for a past action)

Sorry to disturb you / Sorry for disturbing you, but can I have a word?
(an apology for a present action)
I'm sorry to tell you this, but your work is not of the required standard.
(regret when you say something unwelcome)
I was sorry to hear about your mother. (regret about bad news)

119 To + gerund and the to-infinitive

To can be a preposition, or it can be part of a to-infinitive.

I'm looking forward to seeing you soon. (*look forward to* + gerund)

I hope to see you soon. (*hope* + to-infinitive)

After the preposition *to*, we can put a noun phrase instead of a gerund clause.

I'm looking forward to next weekend.

We cannot do this with a to-infinitive.

We can use a gerund (but not an infinitive) after these combinations with *to*: *admit to*, *close to*, *confess to*, *look forward to*, *object to*, *objection to*, *opposed to*, *resigned to*, *resort to*.

For *be used to doing* and *used to do*, > 82C.

120 Determiner + gerund

- A** We can sometimes put a determiner such as *the* before a gerund.
*Nancy likes her new job, but **the driving** makes her tired.*

Compare the two sentences.

***Driving** makes her tired.* (= all driving, driving in general)

***The driving** makes her tired.* (= the driving she does in her job)

The + gerund is specific rather than general.

We can also use *this, that, some, no, a lot of, a little, a bit of*, and *much*.

***This constant arguing** gets on my nerves.*

*I'd like to find time for **some fishing** at the weekend.*

No parking. (= Parking is not allowed.)

*I'd better do **a bit of tidying up**.*

We can also use a possessive.

***Your driving** always terrifies me.*

NOTE

- a Compare these examples.

***Your driving** always terrifies me. You go so fast.*

(= the way you drive)

***Your driving the car** wouldn't be sensible. You're too tired.*

(= the idea of you driving)

- b For the pattern *do the washing*, > 124B.

- c There are some words formed from verb + -ing which are used as ordinary nouns and can be plural.

*There's another **meeting** next week.*

*The square is surrounded by tall **buildings**.*

- B** A gerund clause can have an object. > 112A

*An important part of our work is **keeping records**.*

***Playing ball games** is prohibited.*

Sometimes we can use the pattern *the* + gerund + *of* + object.

*An important part of our work is **the keeping of records**.*

***The playing of ball games** is prohibited.*

The pattern with *of* can be rather formal and is typical of an official, written style.

NOTE

- a Sometimes the noun phrase after *of* is the understood subject.

*I was disturbed by **the ringing of the telephone**.*

(The telephone was ringing.)

- b Instead of a gerund, we often use other abstract nouns in this pattern. > 257

***the management of the economy** (more usual than *the managing of the economy*)*

***the education of young children** (more usual than *the educating of young children*)*

Participles

121 Introduction

- A** The most common kinds of participle are the active participle, the past participle, and the passive participle.

| Form | Example |
|---------------------|--|
| Active participle: | <i>I fell asleep watching television. We're taking a short break now.</i> |
| Past participle: | <i>I've watched all these videos. The job had taken a long time.</i> |
| Passive participle: | <i>The game was watched by a handful of spectators. Taken by surprise, he didn't know what to say.</i> |

An active participle is a verb with the ending *-ing*, e.g. *watching*, *taking*, sometimes called the 'present participle'. It is the same form as a gerund. For spelling rules for the *ing*-form, > 111A. For information about the difference between a gerund and a participle, > 111A Note a.

The past participle and the passive participle have the same form. A regular verb has a past/passive participle ending in *-ed*, e.g. *watched*, *played*. For spelling rules for the *ed*-form, > 44A. For irregular participles, e.g. *taken*, *caught*, > 286.

We can put *not* before a participle.
I sat there not listening to a word.

NOTE

Most verbs have the same past/passive participle and past tense form.

Past participle: *We've walked all the way.*

Past tense: *We walked all the way.*

But some irregular verbs have different forms. > 286

Past participle: *We've run all the way.*

Past tense: *We ran all the way.*

- B** An active or passive participle can combine with *be*, and a past participle can combine with *have* in the following verb forms.

Continuous tenses

(*be* + active participle): *The train was stopping.*

The passive

(*be* + passive participle): *We were stopped by a policeman.*

Perfect tenses

(*have* + past participle): *My watch has stopped.*

Participles

This chapter deals with other uses of the participles.
We heard you creeping up the stairs.
Abandoned by its owners, the house fell into disrepair.
In these examples the participle is not a main verb.

C As well as the main participles, there are three more complex forms.

| Form | Example |
|---|--|
| Perfect participle: (<i>having</i> + past participle) | <i>Having cleared the snow, they were able to drive on.</i> |
| Perfect passive participle: (<i>having been</i> + passive participle) | <i>The snow having been cleared, they were able to drive on.</i> |
| Continuous passive participle: (<i>being</i> + passive participle) | <i>They watched the snow being cleared away.</i> |

In the negative *not* usually goes before the whole participle.
The snow not having been cleared, they were unable to drive on.

NOTE
Compare the passive participle and the continuous passive participle.
Passive: *They wanted the snow cleared away.*
Continuous passive: *They watched the snow being cleared away.*

122 Participle clauses

A A participle can have an object or complement, and it can have one or more adverbials. The participle together with such phrases is called a participle clause.

We saw a policeman chasing someone.
My sister is good at arguing, being a lawyer.
Cut above the right eye, the boxer was unable to continue.

The object comes after the participle.
(NOT ~~*We saw a policeman someone chasing.*~~)

A participle clause can be just a participle on its own.
I just lay there thinking.

For expressions such as *heat-seeking missile* and *rapidly-rising inflation*, > 123C.

B A participle can sometimes have a subject.
The lights having gone out, we couldn't see a thing.
Everything being in a complete mess, it took me an hour to tidy up.

If there is no subject, then it is normally understood to be the same as in the main clause.
The men sat round the table playing cards.
(The men were playing cards.)

NOTE

Try to avoid writing sentences like this one.

(NOT ~~*Walking along the street, a fire-engine raced past.*~~)

This 'hanging participle' makes it sound as if the fire engine was walking, which doesn't make sense. The subject of the main clause should be the people who were walking.

Walking along the street, we saw a fire-engine race past.

Here the subject of the main clause is the same as the understood subject of the participle. But this doesn't always have to be so. The main thing is that there should be a clear connection between the two clauses.

Knowing how little time she had, this new delay infuriated her.

(= Because she knew how little time she had, she was infuriated by this new delay.)

When adjusting the machine, the electricity should be switched off.

(= When you adjust the machine, you should switch off the electricity.)

123 Participle + noun

A We can use an active or passive participle before a noun.

The team was welcomed by cheering crowds.

(= crowds who were cheering)

Boiling water turns to steam.

(= water which is boiling)

The experiment must be done under controlled conditions.

(= conditions which are controlled)

The terrorists used a stolen car.

(= a car which had been stolen)

In these examples the participle functions rather like an adjective. Compare *cheering crowds/noisy crowds*, *boiling water/hot water*. See also Note a.

It is often neater to use a participle + noun than to use a clause such as *crowds who were cheering*. But we cannot always use a participle before a noun. For example, we can talk about *a barking dog* but NOT ~~*an eating dog*~~.

Sometimes we use a participle with a prefix.

a rewritten version

underfed children

an overflowing drain

a misspent youth

an unsmiling face

a disconnected telephone

TIP

Use only those participle + noun combinations that you have already heard or seen, like *cheering crowds* or *controlled conditions*. There are no rules about which verbs can be used in this way and which cannot.

NOTE

a Some words with the form of a participle are regarded as adjectives, e.g. *interesting*, *confused*. > 187

b For *be* + passive participle expressing a state or an action, > 87E.

The terrorists' car was stolen – it didn't belong to them.

The car was stolen two days before the incident.

Participles

- B** There are a few past participles that we can use before a noun.
The road is blocked by a fallen tree.
 (= a tree which **has fallen**)
The leaders of the failed uprising attempted to flee the country.
 (= the uprising which **had failed**)

Compare the past and passive participles.

- Past: *The escaped prisoner was soon recaptured.*
 (=the prisoner who **had escaped**)
 Passive: *The injured prisoner was treated in hospital.*
 (=the prisoner who **had been injured**)

- C** Sometimes we put an adverb before the participle.
fanatically cheering crowds (= crowds who are cheering fanatically)
properly trained staff (= staff who have been properly trained)

We can also form a compound by combining another element with the participle.

- a fast-growing economy*
 (= an economy which is **growing fast** – verb + adverbial)
earth-moving equipment
 (= equipment which **moves earth** – verb + object)
a nice-looking jacket
 (= a jacket which **looks nice** – verb + complement)
an oil-fired central heating system
 (= a central heating system which is **fired by oil** – verb + by-agent)
a newly-married couple
 (= a couple who **have recently married** – verb + adverbial)

We do not use longer phrases before the participle.

- (NOT ~~written in pencil notes~~)
 (NOT ~~at the tops of their voices cheering crowds~~)

But we can say *notes written in pencil.* > 274

- D** We can add *-ed* to some nouns.
a walled city (= a city with a wall)
 This happens mostly with compounds.
a dark-haired man (= a man with dark hair)
a short-sleeved shirt (= a shirt with short sleeves)

124 Verb + participle

- A** The pattern *They stood watching*

We can use a participle after *go*, *lie*, *run*, *sit*, and *stand* to refer to two actions happening at the same time.

*Everyone stood watching the aircraft.
The girl lay trapped under the wreckage for three days.
People ran screaming for help.*

We can put an adverbial between the verb and participle.

*Everyone stood there watching the aircraft.
Karen sat at the table reading a newspaper.*

B Go swimming, do the washing, etc

We use *go* + active participle to talk about activities that we go out to do, especially leisure activities.

*I'd love to go swimming.
We went riding yesterday.
Simon has gone fishing.*

We use *do the* + gerund for some types of work, especially routine housework.

*I usually do the washing at the weekend.
Someone comes in to do the cleaning for us.*

We can use *do some ...*, *do a bit of/a lot of ...*, etc for both leisure and work activities.

*I once did some surfing in California.
James does a lot of cooking, doesn't he?
Luckily I haven't got much ironing to do.*

We can also use *do* + gerund.

*I can't do sewing. I always make a mess of it.
We did trampolining every day on holiday.*

NOTE

- a With verbs of movement we can also use the pattern *go for a swim/ride*, etc.
I'd love to go for a swim.
- b The expression *go clubbing* is formed from the noun *club*.
They spend all their spare time going clubbing.

125 Verb + object + participle

A The pattern *I saw you doing it*

We can use an object + active participle after certain verbs.

*I saw two men cutting down a tree.
We heard you arguing with your brother.
Can you smell something burning?*

We can use verbs of perception, including: *feel*, *hear*, *listen to*, *notice*, *observe*, *see*, *smell*, *watch*.

Participles

B *I saw you doing it or I saw you do it?*

After a verb of perception there is also a pattern with an object + infinitive without *to*.

I saw two men cut down a tree.
We didn't notice anyone leave the building.

An infinitive without *to* means the complete action.

I saw them cut the tree down. It didn't take long.
(I saw them. They cut it down.)

The participle means that the action goes on over a period of time.

I saw them cutting the tree down as I went past.
(I saw them. They were cutting it down.)

When we talk about a short action, we can use either form.

They watched the horse jump/jumping the fence.
We didn't notice anyone leave/leaving the building.

C *I saw it being done and I saw it done*

The patterns in B can be used with a participle clause in the passive.

| | Complete action | Action over a period |
|----------|--|--|
| Active: | <i>I saw them cut down the tree.</i> <i>We heard someone fire a shot.</i> | <i>I saw them cutting down the tree.</i> <i>We heard people firing shots.</i> |
| Passive: | <i>I saw the tree cut down.</i> <i>We heard a shot fired.</i> | <i>I saw the tree being cut down.</i> <i>We heard shots being fired.</i> |

D The pattern *I kept you waiting*

We can use an object + participle after certain verbs. The participle means action over a period of time.

The doctor is very slow. He often keeps his patients waiting.
They caught a student cheating in the exam.
We soon got the machine working again.

The verbs we can use include: *catch, find, get, have, keep, leave, need, start*.

In the following pattern *have* can mean 'cause someone to be doing something'.

The trainer had the players running round the field.
Not have can also mean 'refuse to accept'.
I won't have people treating this house like a hotel.
(= I won't allow people to treat this house like a hotel.)

NOTE

For other patterns with *have* and *get*, e.g. *He had the players run round the field* and *We soon got the machine to work again*, > 94A.

E The pattern *I spent some time waiting*

We can use an active participle after *spend*, *waste*, or *lose* and an expression of time or money.

I've spent half an hour looking for that letter.

The company wasted millions of pounds investing in out-of-date technology.

F The pattern *You were seen doing it*

We can sometimes use the passive before an active participle.

The men were seen cutting down a tree.

A student was caught cheating in the exam.

We can use some of the verbs in pattern A (*hear*, *observe*, *see*) and some of the verbs in pattern C (*catch*, *find*, *keep*, *leave*).

G The pattern *I want it done*

We can use an object + passive participle (or passive to-infinitive) after certain verbs.

Polly wanted the carpet (to be) cleaned.

I'd like this map (to be) photocopied, please.

We prefer the lights (to be) turned down.

We can use these verbs: (*would*) *hate*, (*would*) *like*, (*would*) *love*, *need*, (*would*) *prefer*, *want*.

In informal English we can also use an ing-form.

Polly wanted the carpet cleaning.

I'd like this map photocopying, please.

We can also use an object + passive participle with *find*, *get*, *have*, and *leave*.

The police found a body buried in the garden.

We decided to have the tree cut down.

For *have/get something done*, > 94B.

126 Conjunction + participle

We can use an active or passive participle after some conjunctions.

You should wear gloves when using an electric saw.

(= ... when you use an electric saw.)

Once opened, the contents should be consumed within three days.

Although expecting the news, I was greatly shocked by it.

If not claimed within one month, the prize will be donated to charity.

The pattern is used mainly in writing and is common in instructions.

We can use these conjunctions: *although*, *if*, *once*, *unless*, *until*, *when*, *whenever*, *while*.

Conjunction + participle is a similar pattern to preposition + gerund. > 114A
Despite expecting the news, I was greatly shocked by it.
I always have a shower after working out in the gym.

127 Participle clauses of time

- A** We can use a clause of time with an active participle.

Mike hurt his hand playing volleyball.

We were rushing about serving tea to everyone.

The two actions take place at the same time.

Sometimes the participle clause can come first.

Coming up the steps, I fell over.

This is used more in writing than in speech. It is more neutral to say *I fell over (when I was) coming up the steps.*

- B** We can also use a participle clause to talk about two short, connected actions which happen one after the other.

Taking a note from her purse, she slammed it down on the counter.

Opening the file, the detective took out a newspaper cutting.

This pattern is rather literary. It is more neutral to use *and*.

She took a note from her purse and slammed it down on the counter.

With two short actions, we mention the actions in the order they happen. The participle usually comes in the first clause, but it can sometimes come in the second.

She took a note from her purse, slamming it down on the counter.

- C** When a short action comes before another connected one, we can use a perfect participle for the first action.

Having sealed the envelope/Sealing the envelope, the lawyer locked it in the safe.

But when the first action is not short, we must use the perfect.

Having read the document, the lawyer locked it in the safe.

Having dug a hole in the road, the men just drove away.

(NOT ~~*Digging a hole in the road, the men just drove away.*~~)

The clause with the perfect participle can come after the main clause.

They left the restaurant, having spent two hours over lunch.

- D** A passive participle can be simple, continuous or perfect.

The old woman walked slowly to the lift, assisted by the porter.

I don't want to stay out here being bitten by insects.

A hole having been dug, the men just disappeared.

E Compare these ways of saying that one thing happened after another.

- 1 *The man left the building and (then) hailed a taxi.*
- 2 *After he had left the building, the man hailed a taxi.*
- 3 *After leaving the building, the man hailed a taxi.*
- 4 *After having left the building, the man hailed a taxi.*
- 5 *Having left the building, the man hailed a taxi.*
- 6 *Leaving the building, the man hailed a taxi.*

Sentence (1) is the simplest way of expressing the idea. (2) makes more explicit the order in which the two things happened. (3) is shorter and neater and a little formal. (4) is less usual because there is no need to use both *after* and *having* to express the same idea. (5) and (6) are both rather formal. (6) means that the two actions happened close together.

128 Participle clauses of reason

A A participle clause can express reason.

Crowds were waiting at the airport, hoping to see Madonna arrive.

(= ... because they hoped/they were hoping to see Madonna arrive.)

Being rather busy, I completely forgot the time.

(= Because I was rather busy, ...)

Not feeling very well, Emma decided to lie down.

Having lost my passport, I have to apply for a new one.

The restaurant having closed, there was nowhere to eat.

This type of participle clause can be rather formal.

NOTE

For other ways of expressing reason, > 239.

B We can use *with* before a participle clause with a subject.

With the restaurant having closed, there was nowhere to eat.

(= Because the restaurant had closed, ...)

With prices going up so fast, there's no point in trying to save money.

I can't concentrate with you talking all the time.

This pattern is neutral in style. *With the restaurant having closed, ...* is less formal than *The restaurant having closed, ...*

C A passive participle in a clause of reason can be simple, continuous, or perfect.

He died at thirty, struck down by a rare disease.

In summer the ducks have it easy, always being fed by tourists.

Having been renovated at great expense, the building looks magnificent.

129 Other participle clauses

A Result

An active participle after the main clause can express result, whether this happens by accident or deliberately.

*They pumped waste into the river, **killing all the fish.***

(= ... and killed all the fish.)

*The film star made a dramatic entrance, **attracting everyone's attention.***

(= ... and attracted everyone's attention.)

B Conditions

A participle clause can express a condition.

*We plan to eat outside, **weather permitting.***

(= ... if the weather permits it.)

***Taken daily,** vitamin pills can improve your health.*

(= If they are taken daily, ...)

C With in a participle clause

These examples have *with* and a subject at the beginning of the clause.

*There were scenes of celebration, **with people dancing in the streets.***

*It was a large room, **with bookshelves covering most of the walls.***

A typical use of this pattern is to add details to a description. Compare the use of *with* to express reason. > 128B

D Following, considering, etc

There are some participle forms which function rather like a preposition.

***Following the reception,** there will be a talk by the professor.*

(= After the reception, ...)

***Considering/Given the awful weather,** our Open Day was a great success.*

(= In view of the awful weather, ...)

***No action has been taken regarding** your complaint.*

(= ... about your complaint.)

***Judging by all the noise,** it must have been a pretty good party.*

(= All the noise makes me think that ...)

E Idioms

We use a participle clause in some idiomatic phrases which comment on a statement or relate it to a previous one.

***Strictly speaking,** you can't come in here unless you're a club member.*

*Things don't look good. But **having said that,** I'm still optimistic.*

*I'm going on a computer course. ~ **Talking of computers,** ours are all down.*

***All being well,** we should get there about six.*

Nouns

130 Introduction

A This news report contains a number of nouns.

JOY RIDERS TREATED TO SCARE TACTICS

Ten teenagers on a youth project outing stumbled from their minibus to be confronted by the sight of a horrific car accident. Debris from the head-on crash was strewn across the road. Injured people, covered in blood and trapped inside the wrecked vehicles, were pleading for help from the police, fire-fighters, and ambulance crews struggling to free them.

But the 'crash' was an elaborate stunt set up by the South Wales Police and youth workers to give potential joyriders an idea of the consequences of their actions. The 'crash' was so realistic that several of the youngsters, aged between 14 and 17, broke down in tears. Yesterday the shock tactic was being hailed an unqualified success after several of the youngsters swore never to travel in stolen vehicles again.

(from *The Times*)

Nouns have many different kinds of meaning. There are concrete nouns like *minibus* and *blood* and abstract nouns like *consequences* and *success*. Nouns can also refer to events like *accident* and to roles like *worker*. A noun can also be a name like *Wales*.

Some nouns can have a plural ending, e.g. *youngsters*, *tears*. > 131

The only other ending that we put on a noun is the possessive form with 's or s', e.g. *the ambulance crew's task*. > 132

NOTE

We can sometimes add *-ed* to a noun, e.g. *a left-handed golf club*. > 123D

B A noun phrase is sometimes a noun on its own.

Debris was strewn across the road.

The injured people were covered in blood.

But more often a noun combines with other words to form a noun phrase.

an idea the road their actions several of the youngsters

A noun phrase can be the subject, object, or complement of a sentence, or it can come after a preposition.

The stunt was a great success.

It gave them an idea of the consequences of their actions.

Nouns

C These kinds of word can combine with a noun to form a noun phrase.

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| Articles: | <i>a road accident</i> | <i>the police</i> > 150 |
| Possessives: | <i>his first reaction</i> | <i>their minibus</i> > 164 |
| Demonstratives: | <i>this project</i> | <i>those shock tactics</i> > 165 |
| Quantifiers: | <i>a lot of accidents</i> | <i>several of the youngsters</i> > 166–173 |
| Adjectives: | <i>a horrific accident</i> | <i>a clever, very elaborate stunt</i> > 181 |
| Other nouns: | <i>a car accident</i> | <i>a youth project outing</i> > 141 |

A phrase or clause can come after the noun and modify it.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Prepositional phrase: | <i>Debris from the head-on crash was strewn across the road.</i> > 143 |
| To-infinitive clause: | <i>It was a plan to shock the teenagers.</i> > 107A |
| Participle clause: | <i>It was a stunt set up by the police.</i> > 274 |
| Relative clause: | <i>The people who were pleading for help weren't really injured.</i> > 266 |

131 The plural of nouns

A Form

A countable noun has both a singular and a plural form. To form the plural we usually add *-s* or *-es*.

| Singular | Plural |
|------------------|----------------------|
| <i>the road</i> | <i>the roads</i> |
| <i>a minibus</i> | <i>two minibuses</i> |

There are some spelling rules for the plural with *-s/-es*.

We add *es* after a sibilant sound, e.g. *dish* → *dishes*. > 276A

Y changes to *ie*, e.g. *baby* → *babies*. > 280A

For the pronunciation of the *s/es* ending, > 276B.

But some nouns have an irregular plural, e.g. *man* → *men*. > 281–284

B The plural of compound nouns

To form the plural of a compound noun or of two nouns together, we add *-s/-es* to the end.

weekends *motorways* *fire-fighters* *car crashes* *shock tactics*

We do the same with a noun formed from a verb + adverb.

pile-ups *breakdowns* *handouts*

When a prepositional phrase comes after the noun, we add *-s / -es* to the first noun.

Doctors of Philosophy *mothers-in-law*

And when an adverb comes after a noun in *-er*, we add *-s* / *-es* to the noun.

passers-by *runners-up*

In expressions with *man/woman* + noun, both parts change to the plural.

women jockeys (women who are jockeys)

C The use of plural nouns

We use the singular to talk about one thing.

The door was closed. We waited for an hour.

There was only one passenger. I've lost my job.

We use the plural to talk about more than one.

The doors were all closed. We waited for one and a quarter hours.

There were hundreds of passengers. I've got one or two jobs to do.

For a negative or unknown quantity, we normally use the plural.

There were no passengers on the bus.

Have you read any good books lately?

We can use the singular after *no* meaning 'not a single ...'.

No passenger(s) came to the driver's help when he was attacked.

(= Not a single passenger ...)

NOTE

We can also use an uncountable noun with *no* or *any*. > 172

There's no milk in the fridge. Have you got any money?

132 The possessive form

A Form

This is how we form the possessive.

Singular noun + 's *my friend's name*

S-plural + ' *my friends' names*

Other plurals + 's *the children's names*

We add an apostrophe + *s* to a singular noun (*friend's*); we add an apostrophe to a plural noun ending in *-s* (*friends'*); and we add an apostrophe + *s* to a plural NOT ending in *-s* (*children's*).

Pronouns ending in *-one/-body* and the pronouns *one*, *each other*, and *one another* can be possessive.

I found someone's coat here.

They looked into each other's eyes.

For pronunciation of the possessive ending, > 276B.

NOTE

a After a surname ending in *s*, we can add 's or we can just add an apostrophe.

Mr Perkins's room/Mr Perkins' room Yeats's poetry/Yeats' poetry

When we just add an apostrophe, we do not need to pronounce an extra syllable. We can pronounce *Yeats'/jeits/* or *'jeitsiz/*.

Nouns

- b If there is a short phrase before the noun, then the possessive ending comes after the phrase.

the people next door's cat

You may hear this in informal speech, but it is rather awkward. More neutral is *the cat belonging to the people next door*.

- c We can add an apostrophe + s to a phrase with *and*.

Did you go to Tom and Julie's party? (= the party given by Tom and Julie)

This is much more usual than *Tom's and Julie's party*.

B Use

We use the possessive form to express a connection, often the fact that someone has something or that something belongs to someone.

Sam's coat Lucy's idea my brother's friend people's jobs

The possessive usually has a definite meaning. *Sam's coat* means 'the coat that belongs to Sam'. So we do not put *the* before a singular name.

(NOT ~~*the Sam's coat*~~)

But we can say *a coat of Sam's*. > 164D

We can leave out the noun after the possessive if the meaning is clear.

Is this your umbrella? ~ No, I think it's Peter's.

We can sometimes use two possessive forms together.

Anita is my cousin – my mother's brother's daughter.

133 Possessive form or of?

- A These two structures have the same meaning.

Possessive form: *my friend's name*

Of-structure: *the name of my friend*

Sometimes we can use either form. But often only one form is possible.

your father's car (NOT ~~*the car of your father*~~)

the beginning of the term (NOT ~~*the term's beginning*~~)

- B We normally use the possessive with people and animals.

my uncle's address the dog's bed the Atkinsons' car

The of-structure is sometimes possible for relations between people.

the young man's mother/the mother of the young man

When there is a long phrase or clause describing the person, we use the of-structure.

It's the house of a wealthy businessman from Saudi Arabia.

I was looking after the coats of all the people attending the reception.

- C We generally use the of-structure with things.

the middle of the night the colour of the walls

the results of the inquiry the size of the problem

But we can use both structures with nouns that do not refer directly to people but suggest human activity or organization, for example nouns referring to places, companies or newspapers.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Scotland's rivers</i> | <i>the rivers of Scotland</i> |
| <i>the company's head office</i> | <i>the head office of the company</i> |
| <i>the magazine's political views</i> | <i>the political views of the magazine</i> |

But there are no absolute rules about when to use which pattern. We can sometimes use the possessive form with things even when there is no human connection.

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>the water's temperature</i> | <i>the temperature of the water</i> |
| <i>the meteor's speed</i> | <i>the speed of the meteor</i> |

TIP

Use the possessive form with people and the of-structure with things. Say *my friend's address* but *the address of the website*.

134 Some other uses of the possessive

We often use the possessive form to express the idea that something belongs to someone > 132B. Here are some other uses of the possessive form. Sometimes the of-structure is also possible.

A Who something is intended for

You can use the customers' car park. (= the car park for customers)

There's a children's playground in the park. (= a playground for children)

B Classifying

We found a bird's nest in the hedge. (= the kind of nest made by a bird)

It was a man's voice that I heard. (= a male voice)

C The person doing the action

The man's reply surprised us.

(The man replied.)

The teacher's actions / The actions of the teacher were criticized.

(The teacher acted.)

D The person who the action is directed at

Emma's promotion is certainly well deserved.

(They are promoting Emma.)

The prisoner's release / The release of the prisoner has been welcomed.

(They have released the prisoner.)

Nouns

NOTE

With things we generally use the of-structure.

The release of the information has caused a sensation.

(NOT ~~the information's release~~)

E Qualities

The man's stupidity / The stupidity of the man is unbelievable.

(The man is stupid.)

There are doubts about the player's fitness.

(Is the player fit?)

NOTE

For more examples like those in C-E, where a noun phrase has a similar meaning to a clause, > 257.

135 Today's weather, an hour's journey, etc

A The possessive form can express time.

Have we still got yesterday's newspaper?

Next month's figures are expected to show an improvement.

Next month's figures means 'the figures for next month', 'the figures relating to next month'.

We cannot use a time of day.

the three o'clock race (NOT ~~three o'clock's race~~)

NOTE

Sunday's newspaper is a newspaper on one specific Sunday, such as last Sunday. A *Sunday newspaper* (without an apostrophe) is a type of newspaper, one that appears on Sundays.

B The possessive form can also express length of time.

The coast is half an hour's drive away.

There's a whole year's work on this disk.

We sometimes use a plural noun in the possessive form.

I would like a few minutes' rest.

We get just three weeks' holiday a year.

NOTE

a People whose first language is English sometimes leave out the apostrophe, especially with plural nouns, e.g. *a few minutes rest, three weeks holiday*. But some people regard this as a mistake, so it is safer to write the apostrophe.

b We can also say *a four-hour journey*.

136 At Sophie's, to the doctor's, etc

We can use the possessive form without a following noun when we talk about someone's home or about a particular kind of shop or office.

We're all meeting at Dave's (house/flat).

There's a police car outside the Hardings' (house/flat).

Is there a baker's (shop) near here?

I was sitting in the waiting-room at the dentist's.

We can also use company names.

I'm just going into Tesco's to buy some milk.

But many companies leave out the apostrophe from their names.

There's a Barclays Bank on the university campus.

137 Countable and uncountable nouns

- A** Countable nouns can be singular or plural: *boat(s), book(s), bus(es), day(s), friend(s), man/men, photo(s), problem(s), team(s), town(s)*. We use countable nouns for separate, individual things that we can count: *a boat, some books, three buses*, etc. Many countable nouns are concrete, e.g. *car(s), chair(s), shop(s)*. But some are abstract, e.g. *idea(s), situation(s)*.

Uncountable nouns are neither singular nor plural: *air, butter, electricity, health, money, music, peace, water*. We use uncountable nouns for things that do not naturally divide into separate units. Many uncountable nouns are abstract, e.g. *violence, happiness, security*. But some are concrete, e.g. *sand, glue*.

An uncountable noun takes a singular verb, and we use *this/that* and *it*, not *theses/those* or *they*.

This milk is off. I'll pour it down the sink.

Many nouns can be either countable or uncountable, depending on how they are used, e.g. *Is ice-dancing a sport?/I like sport.* > 140

- B** There are grammatical differences between countable and uncountable nouns. For example, we can use an uncountable noun on its own, but a singular noun has to have a word like *a* or *the*.

Uncountable: *Water is essential for life.*

Countable: *The boat leaves at ten o'clock.*

(NOT ~~Boat leaves at ten o'clock.~~)

Some words go with both countable and uncountable nouns: *the boat* or *the water*. But some words go with only one kind of noun: *a boat* but NOT ~~a water~~, *how many boats*, but *how much water*.

Nouns

These are the possible combinations.

| | Countable | | Uncountable |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| | Singular | Plural | |
| <i>the</i> | <i>the boat</i> | <i>the boats</i> | <i>the water</i> |
| <i>no</i> | <i>no boat</i> | <i>no boats</i> | <i>no water</i> |
| Possessives | <i>our boat</i> | <i>our boats</i> | <i>our water</i> |
| <i>a/an</i> | <i>a boat</i> | | |
| <i>one</i> | <i>one boat</i> | | |
| <i>each/every</i> | <i>each/every boat</i> | | |
| <i>these/those</i> | | <i>these/those boats</i> | |
| <i>few</i> | | <i>few boats</i> | |
| <i>many</i> | | <i>many boats</i> | |
| Plural numbers | | <i>two/three boats</i> | |
| <i>much</i> | | | <i>much water</i> |
| <i>little</i> | | | <i>little water</i> |
| <i>some</i> | (> 172F) | <i>some boats</i> | <i>some water</i> |
| <i>any</i> | (> 172E) | <i>any boats</i> | <i>any water</i> |
| <i>a lot of</i> | | <i>a lot of boats</i> | <i>a lot of water</i> |
| <i>all</i> | | <i>all boats</i> | <i>all water</i> |
| <i>this/that</i> | <i>this/that boat</i> | | <i>this/that water</i> |

NOTE

- a We can use a plural or uncountable noun on its own without a determiner.

Boats are supposed to float on water.

But we do not use a singular noun on its own except in special cases such as news headlines.

Boat sinks in storm.

For other contexts where we use a singular noun on its own, > 159.

- b We often use *all* with another determiner such as *the*, e.g. *all the boats*, > 169.

138 The of-structure expressing quantity

- A** Here are some examples of the of-structure.

a packet of flour two pieces of wood

a box of matches a kilo of tomatoes

We use this pattern to say how much flour or wood or how many matches or tomatoes. We cannot leave out *of* (NOT ~~*a packet flour*~~).

We use the of-structure with uncountable nouns (*flour*, *wood*) because we cannot say ~~*a flour*~~ or ~~*two woods*~~. We use it with plural nouns (*matches*, *tomatoes*) because it is more convenient to express the quantity in boxes or kilos.

NOTE

A box of matches means something different from *a matchbox*. > 142B

B Before *of* + uncountable/plural noun we can use these types of noun.

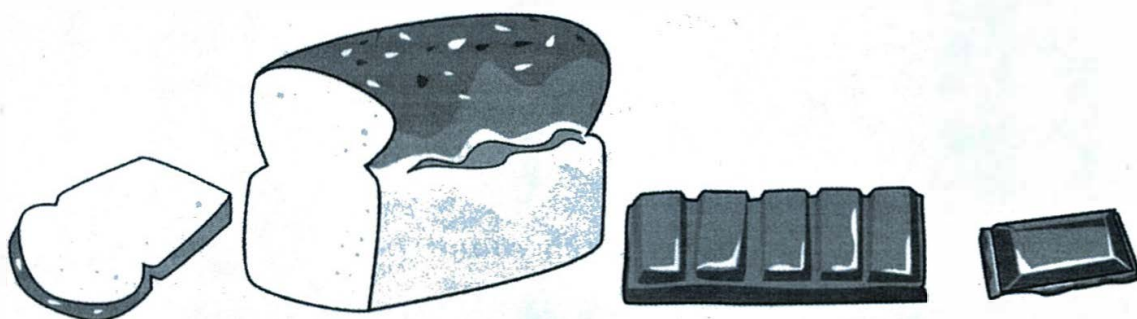
Containers: *a cup of coffee, a carton of milk, a bottle of wine,
a jar of honey, a tin of biscuits, a bag of potatoes*

Measurements: *three metres of material, thousands of litres of water,
a pint of beer, two kilos of apples*

C Before *of* + uncountable noun we can also use *piece* and nouns of similar meaning.

*a piece of land a sheet/piece/bit of paper a lump/piece of earth/coal
a drop of water/milk/oil no trace of blood*

For more examples with *piece*, *bit*, and *item*, > 139.



*a piece/slice
of bread*

a loaf (of bread)

a bar of chocolate

*a piece of
chocolate*

NOTE

For *a bit of*, > 167C, and for *an amount of*, > 166.

D There are a number of nouns we can use with *of* + plural noun but not with *of* + uncountable noun.

*a crowd of people
a bunch of flowers*

*a group of tourists
a series of concerts*

139 Information, news, etc

A It is not always clear from the meaning whether a noun is countable or uncountable. For example, *information*, *news*, and *furniture* are uncountable.

I've found out some information for you. (NOT ~~an information~~)

There was no news of the missing child. (NOT ~~There were no news~~)

They had very little furniture. (NOT ~~very few furnitures~~)

Nouns

But we can often use *pieces(s) of*, *bit(s) of*, and *item(s) of* with such nouns.
I've found out a piece of information for you.
They had very few items of furniture.

- B** Here are some uncountable nouns whose equivalents may be countable in other languages. Sometimes there is an alternative countable expression.

| | Uncountable | Countable |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| <i>accommodation</i> | <i>looking for accommodation</i> | <i>looking for a place to stay/live</i> |
| <i>advice</i> | <i>I got some advice</i> | <i>I got a piece of advice</i> |
| <i>baggage/luggage</i> | <i>we lost some baggage/luggage</i> | <i>we lost some bags/cases</i> <i>we lost some items of baggage/luggage</i> |
| <i>cash/money</i> | <i>I had some cash/money</i> | <i>I had some notes/coins</i> |
| <i>clothing</i> | <i>take some warm clothing</i> | <i>take some warm clothes</i> > Note a |
| <i>country/countryside/scenery</i> | <i>through lovely country/countryside/scenery</i> > Note b | <i>through a lovely bit of country/countryside/scenery</i> |
| <i>damage/harm</i> | <i>it did some damage/harm</i> > Note c | |
| <i>equipment</i> | <i>we needed some equipment</i> | <i>we needed a piece of equipment</i> |
| <i>English</i> | <i>he speaks good English (the language)</i> | |
| <i>evidence</i> | <i>they found some evidence</i> | <i>they found a piece of evidence</i> |
| <i>fun</i> | <i>have some fun</i> | <i>have a good time</i> |
| <i>furniture</i> | <i>we bought some furniture</i> | <i>we bought some pieces/items of furniture</i> |
| <i>health</i> | <i>I enjoy good health</i> | |
| <i>homework</i> | <i>students with homework to do</i> | <i>students with a task/a project to do</i> |
| <i>housework</i> | <i>doing housework all day long</i> | <i>doing chores all day long</i> |
| <i>jewellery</i> | <i>I bought some jewellery</i> | <i>I bought some pieces of jewellery</i> |
| <i>land</i> | <i>we own some land</i> > Note d | <i>we own a piece/bit of land</i> |
| <i>leisure</i> | <i>I have little leisure</i> | |

| | Uncountable | Countable |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| <i>litter/rubbish</i> | <i>he dropped some litter/rubbish</i> | <i>he dropped a bit/piece of litter/rubbish</i> |
| <i>lightning</i> | <i>there was lightning</i> | <i>There was a flash of lightning</i> |
| <i>luck</i> | <i>I had some good luck</i> | <i>I had a piece/bit/stroke of luck</i> |
| <i>machinery</i> | <i>installing some machinery</i> | <i>installing a machine/a piece of machinery</i> |
| <i>news</i> | <i>I heard some news</i> | <i>I heard one piece/bit/item of news</i> |
| <i>permission</i> | <i>they left without permission</i> | |
| <i>pollution</i> | <i>increasing pollution</i> | |
| <i>progress</i> | <i>I've made some progress</i> | |
| <i>publicity</i> | <i>receiving lots of publicity</i> | <i>seeing lots of adverts</i> |
| <i>rain</i> | <i>we've had some rain</i> | <i>we've had a shower (of rain)</i> |
| <i>research</i> | <i>doing research</i> | <i>doing a piece of research</i> |
| <i>stuff</i> | <i>my stuff is in the car</i> | <i>my things are in the car</i> |
| <i>thunder</i> | <i>there was thunder</i> | <i>there was a clap of thunder</i> |
| <i>traffic</i> | <i>a queue of traffic</i> | <i>a queue of cars/vehicles</i> |
| <i>travel</i> | <i>work involving travel around the country</i> | <i>work involving journeys/trips around the country</i> |
| <i>weather</i> | <i>we had nice weather</i> | |
| <i>work</i> | <i>do some work</i> > Note e | <i>do a job</i> |

NOTE

- a We cannot use *clothes* in the singular or with a number. We can say *some clothes* but NOT ~~*four clothes*~~. We say *four items of clothing* or *four garments*.
- b *Country* is countable when it means 'nation', e.g. *all the countries of the world*.
- c *Damages* in the plural means 'money paid in compensation'.
He received damages of £500,000 for his injuries.
- d *Land* can be used as a countable noun meaning a country or region.
For the immigrants, America was a land of opportunity.
This use is rather literary.
- e *Work* can be countable in certain meanings, e.g. *a work of art, the works of Shakespeare*. *Works* can also mean 'factory', e.g. *a steel works*. > 147C

140 Nouns that can be either countable or uncountable

- A** Some nouns are countable when they mean something separate and individual, but they are uncountable when they mean a kind of material or substance.

| Countable | Uncountable |
|---|---|
| <i>They had a nice carpet in the living-room.</i> | <i>We bought ten square metres of carpet.</i> |
| <i>The mob threw stones at the police.</i> | <i>The church was rebuilt in stone.</i> |

- B** Animals, vegetables, and fruit are uncountable when we cut or divide them.

| Countable | Uncountable |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>buy a (whole) chicken</i> | <i>put some chicken in the sandwiches</i> |
| <i>pick three tomatoes</i> | <i>a pizza with tomato</i> |

- C** The following nouns can be countable or uncountable depending on the meaning. The countable noun often means a specific example, but the uncountable noun has a more general meaning.

| Countable | Uncountable |
|---|--|
| <i>a small business</i> (= a company) | <i>Business is booming.</i> (= economic activity) |
| <i>having an interesting conversation</i> | <i>the art of conversation</i> |
| <i>The US is a democracy.</i> | <i>the idea of democracy</i> |
| <i>a drawing/painting</i> (= a picture) | <i>good at drawing/painting</i> (the activity) |
| <i>a girl in a red dress</i> | <i>wearing evening dress</i> |
| <i>an interesting experience</i> (= something that happens to you) | <i>having some experience in the job</i> (= having done the job for a time) |
| <i>a glass/some glasses of water</i> | <i>some glass for the window.</i> |
| <i>glasses for reading</i> > 148 | |
| <i>a hair/some hairs on your sweater</i> | <i>comb your hair</i> |
| <i>an iron</i> (for pressing clothes) | <i>tablets containing iron</i> (a metal) |
| <i>He led a good life</i> | <i>Life just isn't fair, is it?</i> |
| <i>a bedside light</i> (= a lamp) | <i>at the speed of light</i> |
| <i>I just heard a noise.</i> | <i>Noise can cause stress.</i> |

| Countable | Uncountable |
|---|---|
| <i>a daily paper</i> (= a newspaper) <i>my papers</i> (= documents) | <i>some writing paper</i> |
| <i>a property</i> (= a building) <i>Chess is a game, not a sport.</i> <i>The meeting was a success.</i> | <i>some property</i> (= what you own) <i>There's always sport on television.</i> <i>I'm longing for fame and success.</i> |
| <i>a tin of beans</i> <i>I've been here lots of times before.</i> <i>It was a long and bloody war.</i> | <i>where tin was mined</i> (a metal) <i>I'm busy. I haven't got much time.</i> <i>I've always been against war.</i> |

NOTE

We can use *a/an* with *knowledge* and *education* when the meaning is specific.

Specific: *A knowledge of computers would be useful. I had an excellent education.*

General: *Knowledge is power. The government should spend more on education.*

But *knowledge* and *education* cannot be plural.

D Nouns for feelings are usually uncountable.

The animal was trembling with fear.

Where there's life, there's hope.

But some can be countable, especially when the feeling is about something specific.

*a fear of dogs our hopes for the future having doubts about the decision
an intense dislike of quiz shows a longing to get away*

Some nouns for feelings are singular as complement.

Thanks very much. ~ It's a pleasure.

It seemed a pity to break up the party.

These nouns are *delight, pity, pleasure, relief, shame, and wonder*.

E Some abstract nouns can be used after *a/an* or in the plural, but they can also be used as uncountable nouns after *some, any, a lot of, much, or little*.

We should have a choice / some choice in the matter.

I haven't noticed any changes / any change in the situation.

There have been some criticisms. / There's been some criticism of the behaviour of the officials.

We didn't get many responses / much response to the questionnaire.

The story failed to make an impact / made little impact on public opinion.

Such nouns include: *advantage, benefit, chance, choice, change, comment, criticism, detail, difference, difficulty, effect, effort, idea, impact, point, reason, response*.

F When we order food or drink or talk about portions, we can use phrases like *a juice* and *three coffees*.

*I'll have **an orange juice**.* (= a glass of orange juice)

***Three coffees**, please.* (= three cups of coffee)

***Two sugars** for me.* (= two spoonfuls of sugar)

Some nouns can be countable with the meaning 'kind(s) of'.

*This is **a cheese** I really like.* (= a kind of cheese)

*There are lots of different **grasses**.* (= kinds of grass)

141 Two nouns together

A We often use one noun before another.

a tennis club money problems a microwave oven

The first noun modifies the second. It tells us something about it – what kind it is or what it is for.

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>a tennis club</i> | a club where you can play tennis |
| <i>vitamin pills</i> | pills containing vitamins |
| <i>a phone bill</i> | a bill for using the phone |
| <i>a train journey</i> | a journey by train |

For more details about meanings, > 142.

For combinations with the possessive form, e.g. *the train's speed*, > 133–134.

B When two nouns come together, there are three different ways of writing them.

As two separate words: *address book, television programme*

With a hyphen: *waste-bin, water-bottle*

As one word: *armchair, website*

There are no exact rules about whether we join the words or not or whether we put a hyphen.

C The stress is usually on the first noun. → **Audio**

the 'tennis club a ma'chine gun the 'car park the 'fire alarm

But there are also combinations where the stress is on the second noun.

a cardboard 'box the town 'hall

There are no exact rules about stress, but for more details, > 142.

D The first noun is usually singular, even if it refers to more than one.

a vegetable garden a picture gallery an eye test a bookcase

A vegetable garden is a garden where **vegetables** are grown.

But there are exceptions.

careers information the sales office a sports shop

These include nouns with a plural-only form. > 147A

an arms dealer a clothes-brush customs regulations a goods train

E There are more complex structures with nouns. For example we can use more than two nouns.

credit card charges

a motorway service station

the Customer Helpline number

We can build up phrases like this.

an air accident (= an accident in the air)

an investigation team (= a team that investigates)

an air accident investigation team (= a team that investigates accidents in the air)

Here *air accident* modifies *investigation team*.

We can use adjectives in complex noun structures.

a comprehensive road atlas handy keyboard shortcuts

a 'Sunuser' solar heating system domestic violence statistics

142 More details about two nouns together

A Here are some examples of different kinds of meaning with noun + noun combinations.

Purpose: *a milk bottle* (= a bottle for putting milk in)

a car park a coffee table security cameras hand cream

Means: *a car journey* (= a journey by car)

a petrol engine (= an engine that uses petrol)

a fax message an oil lamp a coal fire a phone link

Topic: *a war film* (= a film about war)

a crime story peace talks a computer magazine science fiction

Object: *a chess player* (= someone who plays chess)

a taxi driver music lovers a professional dog walker

a food mixer (= a machine that mixes food)

a lawnmower a bottle opener a bread maker

car theft (= the stealing of cars)

steel production home contents insurance

With these kinds of meaning the stress is usually on the first noun:

a 'milk bottle. → Audio

NOTE

a We can use a gerund before a noun to express purpose.

a sleeping bag washing powder

b Compare these two phrases.

Noun + noun: *an 'English teacher* (=someone who teaches English)

Adjective + noun: *an English 'teacher* (=a teacher who is English)

- B** There is a difference in meaning between *a milk bottle* and *a bottle of milk*.



a milk bottle

A *milk bottle* is a bottle for putting milk in.



a bottle of milk

A *bottle of milk* is a bottle full of milk.

Here are some more examples.

an empty wine glass

an old jam jar

a teapot

a nice glass of wine

a jar of strawberry jam

a pot of tea

- C** Here are some more noun + noun combinations.

Time: *a summer holiday* (= a holiday in summer)

the morning rush *a future date*

breakfast television *an evening paper*

Place: *a country cottage* (= a cottage in the country)

a motorway bridge *Swindon station* *a world recession*

Material: *a plastic bag* (= a bag made of plastic)

a paper cup *a brick wall* *a glass vase* *a cardboard box*

With these kinds of meaning the stress is usually on the second noun: *a summer 'holiday* → Audio But there are many exceptions.

'evening classes

a 'Glasgow woman

We stress the first noun when it is more important in the context. For example, we talk about an evening class to distinguish it from a class in the daytime.

- D** We also use the noun + noun pattern to refer to something which is part of something else.

the car door (= the door of the car)

a bicycle wheel *the TV screen* *the town centre* *the river bank*

The stress is often on the second noun: *the car 'door*. But sometimes we stress the first noun: *a 'bicycle wheel*. We can talk about *the river 'bank* or *the 'river bank*. It depends which word is more important in the context.

With *top*, *bottom*, *side*, *back*, and *end* we normally use the of-structure.
the end of the motorway (NOT ~~the motorway end~~)
the side of the house (NOT ~~the house side~~)

NOTE

There are some combinations with noun + *top*, noun + *bottom*, etc.

They stood by the roadside/the side of the road.

These combinations include: *a cigarette end*, *along the cliff top*, *on a hillside*, *by the roadside*, *over the rooftops*, *the valley bottom*, *at the waterside*, *profits at the year end*.

143 Phrases after a noun

- A** We can use a phrase after a noun to modify it.
all these papers here every day of the week a meal for two

We can use these kinds of phrase.

Prepositional phrase: *When will I meet the girl of my dreams?*

Adverb phrase: *We don't talk to the people upstairs.*

Adjective phrase: *The police found parcels full of cocaine.*

Noun phrase: *The weather that day was awful.*

The prepositional phrase is the most common.

The period just after lunch is always quiet.

I'd love an apartment on Fifth Avenue.

The idea of space travel has always fascinated me.

What are the prospects for a peaceful solution?

For noun + preposition, e.g. *prospects for*, > 226.

- B** We can sometimes use two or more phrases together after a noun. Here are some examples from newspapers.

Passengers on some services from King's Cross, Euston, and Paddington will need a boarding pass.

They meet the Turkish champions Galatasary, having drawn three-all in the first leg of their second round tie at Old Trafford.

The ideas for changing the lifestyle of the British soldier were developed at a brain-storming conference between an army team and experts from the Henley Centre think-tank in Berkshire.

We can also use a mixture of phrases and clauses.

The baffling case of a teenage girl who vanished exactly twenty years ago has been re-opened by police.

Agreement

144 Introduction

- A** It is sometimes said that there is no subject-verb agreement in English. Although English has fewer verb endings than many other languages, there are times when the verb has to agree with the subject. Here is an example.

The house is empty.

The houses are empty.

Here we use the verb *is* with a singular subject (*house*) and the verb *are* with a plural subject (*houses*). The verb 'agrees with' the subject. Agreement is sometimes called 'concord'.

An uncountable noun takes a singular verb.

The grass is growing.

- B** There is agreement when we use a present-tense verb in the third person.

The window is broken.

The windows are broken.

The house has a garden.

The houses have gardens.

This jacket looks nice.

These jackets look nice.

The singular verb ends in *-s*.

But a modal verb does not have singular and plural forms. > 70

The house must have a garden. The houses must have gardens.

NOTE

In the present tense of *be*, the first-person singular form is *am*, e.g. *I am ready*. > 65A

- C** With a past-tense verb, there is agreement only with *be*.

The window was broken.

The windows were broken.

Other verbs do not have singular and plural forms.

The house had a garden.

The houses had gardens.

The room looked nice.

The rooms looked nice.

NOTE

In the past tense of *be*, *was* is both the first-person singular (*I was ready*) and the third-person singular form (*He was ready*). > 65A

145 Singular and plural subjects

It is usually easy to decide if a subject is singular or plural. But there are some problem areas, and these are dealt with in 146–149. Here are some basic points about singular and plural subjects.

- A** Two or more phrases linked by *and* take a plural verb.

Simon and Chloe go sailing at weekends.

Both the kitchen and the dining-room face due south.

Wheat and maize are exported.

But when the two together are seen as a single idea, then we use a singular verb.

Bread and butter was all we had.

(= bread with butter on it)

A phrase in apposition (see GLOSSARY) does not make the subject plural.

Simon, my neighbour, goes sailing at weekends.

- B** When two phrases are linked by *or*, the verb usually agrees with the nearest.

Either Thursday or Friday is OK by me.

Either the Internet or these books are where you'll find the information.

- C** A phrase of measurement usually takes a singular verb.

Ten miles is too far to walk.

Thirty pounds seems a reasonable price.

Here we are talking about a **distance** of ten miles and a **sum** of thirty pounds, not the individual miles or pounds.

- D** Titles and names take a singular verb when they refer to one thing.

'Star Wars' was a very successful film.

The Rose and Crown is that old pub by the river.

Plural place names referring to a single country usually take a singular verb.

The United States wants to increase the permitted pollution levels.

The Netherlands is a member of the European Union.

NOTE

The name of an island group usually takes a plural verb.

The Seychelles lie in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

But we can use a singular or plural verb when talking about the group as a political unit.

The Solomon Islands is/are a nation-state.

- E** A phrase with *as well as* or *with* does not make the subject plural.

The kitchen, as well as the dining-room, faces due south.

Paul, together with some of his friends, is buying a racehorse.

A phrase with *and* in brackets does not usually make the subject plural.

The kitchen (and of course the dining-room) faces due south.

After *not only ... but also*, the verb agrees with the nearest phrase.

Not only Paul but also some of his friends are buying the horse.

Not only his friends but also Paul himself has a share in the horse.

- F** If a phrase comes after the noun and modifies it, the verb agrees with the first noun.

The house between the two bungalows is empty.

- G** A phrase or clause as subject takes a singular verb.

Through the trees is the quickest way.

Opening our presents was exciting.

146 One of, a number of, every, etc

- A** After a subject with *one of*, we use a singular verb.

One of these letters is for you.

- B** When a plural noun follows *a lot of*, *number of*, or *majority of*, we normally use a plural verb.

A lot of people have complained.

A large number of letters were received.

The majority of nurses are women.

But after *The number of ...*, we use a singular verb.

The number of letters we receive is increasing.

Amount agrees with the verb.

A large amount of money was collected.

Large amounts of money were collected.

After a fraction or percentage, the verb agrees with the noun.

Three quarters (of a potato) is water.

Almost half (the plants) were killed.

Sixty per cent of the country was held by the rebels.

- C** We use a singular verb after a subject with *every* or *each*.

Every pupil has to take the test.

Each day was the same as the one before.

We also use a singular verb after compounds with *every*, *some*, *any*, and *no*.

Everyone has to take the test.

Someone was waiting at the door.

Nothing ever happens in this place.

But *all* and *some* with a plural noun take a plural verb.

All (the) pupils have to take the test.

Some people were waiting at the door.

NOTE

When *each* follows a plural subject, the verb is plural.

The pupils each have to take the test.

D We use a singular verb after *who* or *what* as subject.

Who wants coffee? ~ We all do, please.

What's happened? ~ Several things have happened.

After *what/which* + noun, the verb agrees with the noun.

What/Which day is convenient?

What/Which days are convenient?

When there is no noun after *which*, the verb can be singular or plural.

Which of you is willing to take part? (Which one?)

Which of you are willing to take part? (Which ones?)

E Look at these sentences.

None (of the pupils) has/have failed the test.

Neither of us was/were very impressed by the place.

I don't know if either (of these batteries) is/are any good.

If any of you gets/get into difficulty, just call for help.

After a subject with *none*, *neither*, *either*, or *any* and a plural noun phrase, we can use either a singular or a plural verb. Both are used in writing, but a plural verb is more common in speech.

After *no*, the verb agrees with the noun.

No pupil has failed.

No pupils have failed.

F After *there*, the verb agrees with its complement.

There was a party at the office.

There were parties all over town.

NOTE

In informal speech you may hear *there's* before a plural.

There's some friends of yours outside.

147 Nouns with a plural form

A Plural noun and plural verb

Some nouns are always plural.

The goods were found to be defective.

(NOT ~~*The good was found to be defective.*~~)

My belongings have been destroyed in a fire.

(NOT ~~*My belonging has been destroyed in a fire.*~~)

Some nouns of this kind are: *belongings*, *clothes*, *congratulations*, *earnings*, *goods*, *odds* (= probability), *outskirts* (= outer parts of a town), *particulars* (= details), *premises* (= building), *remains* (= what is left), *surroundings* (= what is around you), *thanks*, and *troops* (= soldiers).

Some nouns have a plural-only form which has a different meaning from the singular or uncountable form.

| | Plural only |
|--|---|
| <i>my arm(s) and leg(s)</i> (parts of the body) | <i>to carry arms</i> (= weapons) |
| <i>the content of the message</i> (= what it says) | <i>the contents of the briefcase</i> (= what is inside it) |
| <i>an old custom</i> (= traditional activity) | <i>go through customs at the airport</i> (where goods are checked) |
| <i>did some damage to the car</i> (e.g. in an accident) | <i>pay damages of £10,000</i> (= compensation) |
| <i>he gave me a look</i> (= he looked at me) | <i>his good looks</i> (= appearance) |
| <i>have a high regard for her</i> (= a good opinion) | <i>regards to your parents</i> (= good wishes) |
| <i>a saving of £10 on the normal price</i> (paying less than usual) | <i>robbed of his life savings</i> (= money saved, e.g. in a bank) |

B Plural noun form but singular verb

There are some nouns ending in -s which normally take a singular verb.

The news isn't very good, I'm afraid.

Gymnastics looks difficult, and it is difficult.

Maths was my best subject at school.

Draughts is a board game.

Nouns of this kind include *news*; some words for sports and games, e.g. *athletics, billiards, bowls, darts, draughts, gymnastics*; some subjects of study, e.g. *economics, maths, physics, politics, statistics*; and some illnesses, e.g. *measles, diabetes*.

Some of these nouns can take a plural verb when they have a more concrete or specific meaning.

These darts are quite heavy. (the objects, not the game)

His politics are very left-wing. (= his political views)

The statistics are available on the Internet. (some specific figures)

C Nouns ending in -s in both singular and plural

There are a few words which end in -s and can be either singular or plural.

The new comedy series has been a flop with viewers.

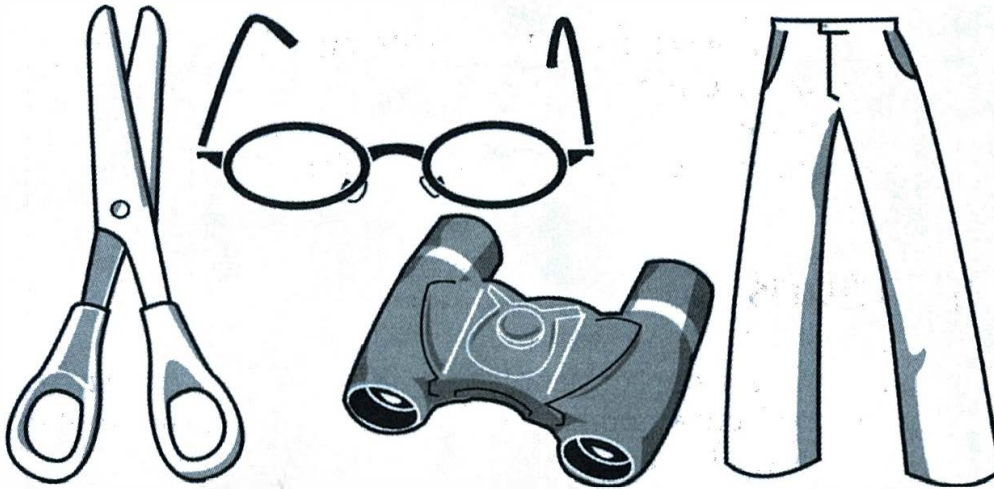
Bird species are numerous in the area.

Some nouns of this kind are *barracks* (= a building where soldiers live), *crossroads, headquarters, means, series, species, and works* (= a factory).

Barracks, headquarters, and works can take a plural verb even when they refer to a single building or a single group of buildings.

The company's headquarters wash/were easy to find.

148 Pair nouns



scissors

glasses/spectacles

binoculars

trousers

A We use a pair noun for certain things consisting of two similar parts. Most pair nouns refer to tools or other devices (e.g. *scissors*, *glasses*) or to clothes that cover your legs (e.g. *trousers*, *jeans*).

B A pair noun is plural and takes a plural verb.

These trousers need cleaning.

I'm looking for my glasses. I've put them down somewhere.

There are some scissors in the drawer.

We cannot use *a* or numbers.

NOT ~~a trouser~~ and NOT ~~two trousers~~

NOTE

Some pair nouns have no -s when they come before another noun.

I've spilt some coffee down my trouser leg.

C We can use *pair of* or *pairs of*.

This pair of trousers needs cleaning.

Have you got a pair of binoculars?

Somehow I've managed to lose three pairs of scissors.

We have to use *pair(s) of* if we want to say how many.

We can also use *pair* with two separate items, e.g. *socks*, *shoes*, *boots*, *trainers*.

I've packed six pairs of socks.

But these nouns can be singular as well as plural.

I've lost a sock. It must be still in the washing-machine.

Agreement

- D** Some pair nouns are *binoculars, glasses, jeans, knickers, pants, pyjamas* (US *pajamas*), *scales* (for weighing), *scissors, shorts, spectacles* (= glasses), *tights*, and *trousers*.

Glass, scale, and spectacle can be singular with a different meaning.

Can I have a glass of water, please?

The map has a scale of five kilometres to the centimetre.

The fireworks were an amazing spectacle. (= sight)

149 Group nouns

- A** Group nouns refer to a group of people, e.g. *family, team, crowd*. They are sometimes called 'collective nouns'. After a singular group noun, the verb is usually singular, but it can be plural.

The crowd was/were in a cheerful mood.

NOTE

a In the US a singular group noun is normally followed by a singular verb.

b A group noun can be plural.

The two families get on well together.

TIP

The safest choice is the singular verb because this is much more common than the use of the plural.

Say *The crowd was* ... rather than *The crowd were*

- B** We always use the singular to talk about the whole group. For example, we might refer to the group's size or make-up or how it compares with others.

The class consists of twelve girls and fourteen boys.

The union is the biggest in the country.

A plural verb is more likely when we see the group as individuals, especially when we talk about people's thoughts or feelings.

The class don't/doesn't understand what the teacher is saying.

The union are/is delighted with the pay increase.

- C** With a singular verb we normally use *it, its*, and *which/that*.

The government wants to improve its image.

The crowd which has gathered here is in a cheerful mood.

With a plural verb we normally use *they, their*, and *who/that*.

The government want to improve their image.

The crowd who have gathered here are in a cheerful mood.

D Group nouns include the following.

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------|------------|-------------------|
| army | community | government | (political) party |
| association | company | group | population |
| audience | council | jury | press |
| band | crew | majority | public |
| board | crowd | management | school |
| choir | enemy | military | society (= club) |
| class | family | minority | team |
| club | firm | navy | (trade) union |
| college | gang | orchestra | university |
| committee | | | |

NOTE

Military, press (= newspapers), and public do not have a plural form.

The public has/have shown no interest.

(NOT ~~The publics have shown no interest.~~)

E The names of institutions and companies are also group nouns.

The United Nations is/are unable to act.

Tesco sells/sell organic milk.

Sports teams can take a singular or plural verb.

England is/are through to the World Cup finals.

F Some nouns have a plural meaning and take a plural verb, even though they do not end in -s.

Some cattle have got out into the road.

The police are questioning a man.

These words are *cattle* (= cows), *livestock* (= farm animals), *people*, *police*, and *staff* (= the people working in a business).

NOTE

For irregular noun plurals, e.g. *foot* → *feet*, *child* → *children*, > 282–284.

The articles: *a/an* and *the*

150 Introduction

Look at the articles in this paragraph.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents held an exhibition at Harrogate in the north of England. Some shelves were put up to display the exhibits. During the exhibition, the shelves fell down, injuring a visitor. It was an unfortunate incident.

We use *a/an* only with a singular noun (*a visitor, an exhibition*) ; the plural or uncountable equivalent is *some* (*some shelves*), or no article (*accidents*). We can use *the* with all types of noun.

A/an is the indefinite article, and *the* is the definite article. We use *the* when it is clear which one we mean. We say *the north of England* because there is only one north of England. We say *an exhibition* when we mention it for the first time, but after that we say *the exhibition*, meaning 'the exhibition already mentioned'. We also use *a/an* as complement when we are describing something: *It was an unfortunate incident.*

151 The form of the articles → Audio

A Before a consonant sound, the articles are *a* /ə/ and *the* /ðə/.

→ Audio

a shelf /ə/ + /ʃ/
a visitor /ə/ + /v/
a big exhibition /ə/ + /b/
the shelf /ðə/ + /ʃ/
the visitor /ðə/ + /v/
the big exhibition /ðə/ + /b/

Before a vowel sound the articles are *an* /ən/ and *the* /ði/.

→ Audio

an accident /ən/ + /æ/
an exhibition /ən/ + /e/
an interesting display /ən/ + /ɪ/
the accident /ði/ + /æ/
the exhibition /ði/ + /e/
the interesting display /ði/ + /ɪ/

B It is the pronunciation which matters, not the spelling of the word after the article. Note especially words beginning with *o*, *u*, or *h*, or abbreviations.

→ Audio

a one-day event /ə/ + /w/
a university/uniform/union /ə/ + /j/
a European country /ə/ + /j/
a holiday /ə/ + /h/
a U-turn /ə/ + /j/

an only child /ən/ + /əʊ/
an umbrella /ən/ + /ʌ/
an error /ən/ + /e/
an hour /ən/ + /aʊ/
an M15 agent /ən/ + /e/

NOTE

- a Other words besides *hour* with a silent *h* are *heir*, *honour* and *honest*, e.g. *an honest person*.
- b With *hotel* we can pronounce *h* or leave it out.
a hotel /ə/ + /h/ *an hotel* /ən/ + /əʊ/
An hotel is rather formal and old-fashioned.
There are also a few adjectives where we can use either *a* or *an*. They include *habitual*, *heroic*, and *historical*, e.g. *alan historical fact*. If we use *an*, then the *h* is silent.
- c When *the* is stressed, it can mean 'the only' or 'the most important'.
Notting Hill is THE /ði:/ place to be on carnival weekend.
For *THE Joan Collins*, > 162B.

152 The main uses of the articles

Look at how articles are used in this news report.

HOVERCRAFT STOWAWAY

A hovercraft flying at 40 mph was halted in rough seas when a stowaway was discovered – on the outside. He was seen hiding behind a liferaft to avoid paying the £5 fare from Ryde, Isle of Wight to Southsea. The captain was tipped off by radio. He stopped the craft and a crewman brought the stowaway inside. A Hovertravel spokesman said: 'It was a very dangerous thing to do. The ride can be bumpy, and it would be easy to fall off.'

(from *The Mail on Sunday*)

A First mention or mentioned before?

When something is first mentioned, the noun usually has *a/an*, e.g. *a hovercraft* and *a stowaway* in the first sentence of the report. When the same thing is mentioned again, the writer uses *the*.

He stopped the craft and a crewman brought the stowaway inside.

It should be clear to the reader which craft and which stowaway is meant – the one we are already talking about.

Now look at this sentence from the report.

The ride can be bumpy, and it would be easy to fall off.

Although the word *ride* has not been used before, the idea of a hovercraft ride from the Isle of Wight to Southsea is expressed in the first two sentences of the report. It is clear which ride is meant.

The relationship between *a/an* and *the* is like the relationship between *someone/something* and a personal pronoun (e.g. *he, it*).

Police are questioning a man/someone about the incident. The man/He was arrested when he arrived at Southsea.

A man/someone is indefinite; *the man/he* is definite.

NOTE

We sometimes see a special use of *the* at the beginning of a story. This is the first sentence of a short story by Ruth Rendell.

The articles: *a/an* and *the*

A murderer had lived in the house, the estate agent told Norman.

This puts the reader in the middle of the action, as if we already know what house and what estate agent.

B *The* for something unique

When something is unique in the context, we use *the*.

The captain was tipped off by radio.

We use *the* because in the context of the hovercraft ride, there is only one captain.

Now look at these examples.

A car stopped and the driver got out. (A car has only one driver.)

Where's the volume on this radio? (It has only one volume control.)

I'm just going to the post office. (There is only one post office in the area.)

We were sitting on the patio. (The garden has only one patio.)

We crossed the English Channel? (There is only one English Channel.)

The Prime Minister is very popular. (The country has only one PM.)

The sun was shining. (There is only one sun in our solar system.)

C *The* with noun + phrase

We often use *the* when a phrase or clause comes after the noun and shows which one is meant.

Ours is the house on the corner.

I'd like to get hold of the idiot who left this broken glass here.

But if the phrase or clause does not give enough information to show which one is meant, we use *a/an*.

We live in a house overlooking the park.

We cannot use *the* if there are other houses also overlooking the park.

We often use *the* when an of-phrase follows the noun.

We came to the edge of a lake.

The roof of a house was blown off in the storm.

They heard the sound of an aircraft overhead.

But we can use *a/an* in an of-structure expressing quantity.

Would you like a piece of cake?

D *The* with superlatives and with *last*, *next*, etc

We normally use *the* rather than *a/an* with superlative adjectives.

The Sears Tower is the tallest building in the US.

The is also much more common than *a/an* in noun phrases with *first*, *last*, *next*, *only*, *right*, *same*, and *wrong*.

Is this the first time you've been to Britain?

Let's stop at the next services.

Who else can I talk to? You're the only friend I've got.

I think you went the wrong way at the lights.

NOTE

- a *An only child* is a child without brothers or sisters.
 b For *last week, next year*, etc without article, > 161H.

E *A/an*: specific or not?

A/an can mean either a specific one or any one.

I'm looking for a pen. It's a blue one. I was using it a few minutes ago.
 (a specific pen)

I'm looking for a pen. I can't find one anywhere. Could you lend me one?
 (any pen)

F *A/an* for describing

We can use a singular noun phrase as complement to describe something, especially a phrase with an adjective e.g. *big, beautiful*.

This is a big house, isn't it?

Yesterday was a beautiful day.

Riding on the outside of a hovercraft is a very dangerous thing to do.

We use *a/an* before the noun, even though it is clear which one is meant.

We can sometimes do this in a phrase without an adjective.

Tim talks about nothing but football. He's a fanatic.

The lack of a proper bus service is a disgrace.

G *A/an* for classifying

We can use *a/an* in a noun phrase to classify something.

What kind of bird is that? ~ A blackbird, isn't it?

Anglesey is an island off the north coast of Wales.

Now look at these examples.

The gold medal winner was an Irishman.

I'm proud to say that I'm a socialist.

The victim, a Catholic, was taken to hospital.

Here the phrases refer to someone's nationality or beliefs.

We use the same pattern to talk about a person's job.

My sister is a doctor. (NOT ~~*My sister is doctor.*~~)

I'd love to be a racing driver. (NOT ~~*I'd love to be racing driver.*~~)

153 The articles in generalizations

- A** This paragraph contains some generalizations about animals.

ANIMALS AND THEIR NOSES

As with other parts of its equipment, an animal evolves the kind of nose it needs. The hippo has grown its ears and eyes on the top of its head, and its

The articles: *a/an* and *the*

nostrils on top of its nose, for lying in water. Camels and seals can close their noses; they do it in the same way but for different reasons. The camel closes its nose against the blowing sand of the desert, and the seal against the water in which it spends most of its time.

(from F.E. Newing and R. Bowood *Animals And How They Live*)

The paragraph is about hippos, camels, and seals in general and not about specific animals. For generalizations like this, we can use a plural or uncountable noun on its own, or a singular noun with *a/an* or *the*.

Camels can close their noses. > B

A camel can close its nose. > C

The camel can close its nose. > D

But a sentence such as *The camels were carrying a heavy load* refers to a specific group of camels. We cannot use *the camels* for a generalization.

- B** The most common way of making a generalization is to use a plural or uncountable noun on its own without an article.

Blackbirds have a lovely song.

People should think twice.

I hate waiting around at airports.

Time costs money, you know.

In the first example, *blackbirds* means 'all blackbirds'.

- C** We can use *a/an* in a generalization.

A blackbird has a lovely song.

A computer will only do what it's told to do.

In the first example, *a blackbird* means 'any blackbird' or 'a typical blackbird'.

We normally use *a/an* when explaining the meaning of a singular word.

A refrigerator is where you put food to keep it cool.

An oar is a thing you row a boat with.

- D** We can sometimes use *the* with a singular noun to make a generalization. For example, we can do this with animals and plants.

The blackbird has a lovely song.

The redwood tree grows to an enormous height.

We use *the* with some kinds of people described in economic terms.

The customer is always right.

It's the taxpayer who has to pay for all this.

We also use *the* with inventions.

Nobody knows who invented the wheel.

NOTE

For some groups of people (e.g. *the blind*), > 188.

154 The articles: some special uses

- A** We go *to the cinema/theatre* even if we do not mean a specific one.
We haven't been to the cinema for ages.

- B** If we are talking about television or radio in a general sense as a medium or a business, then we use the noun on its own.

Radio leaves more to the imagination than television does.

My friend has got a job in television.

Compare these examples about watching and listening.

We watch television in the evenings.

What's on TV?

We sometimes listen to the radio.

What's on the radio?

On the TV/on the television is also possible.

When we are talking about the physical objects, we use *a/an* or *the* in the usual way.

There was a television/a radio on the shelf.

Alice turned on the television/the radio.

We say *the press* (= newspapers) and *the media* (= television, radio, and newspapers).

The media love a nice scandal.

- C** When we are talking about playing musical instruments, we use *the*.

Can you play the piano?

We normally mean a general ability to play any piano, not just a specific one.

But *the* is often left out in *play guitar*.

I play guitar in a band.

Sports and games are uncountable, so we use the noun on its own after *play* or *do*.

Do you play tennis at school?

We do judo on Saturdays.

- D** We use *the bus* and *the train* in a general sense as a means of transport.

I usually go to work on the bus.

But we say *by bus* and *by train* without *the*. > 215E

When we talk about a specific vehicle, we use *a/an* or *the* in the usual way.

Our cat was run over by a bus last month.

- E** We say *the police*.

The police arrived within five minutes.

With *policeman*, *policewoman*, and *police officer*, we can use *a/an* or *the* in the usual way.

A police officer arrived within five minutes.

The articles: *a/an* and *the*

- F** Some words for kinds of surroundings usually have *the* when they have a general meaning. They are *town*, *country*, *countryside*, *sea*, and *seaside*.

Would you rather live in the town or the country?

I'd love a day at the seaside.

Here we do not mean a specific town, a specific country area, or a specific seaside place.

When we talk about a specific town, we use *a/an* or *the* in the usual way.

Below us in the valley lay a small town.

Next morning we set off to view the sights of the town.

But for *in town* and *to town*, > 160D

When we talk about a specific country area, we use *the* in the usual way.

The countryside around here is beautiful.

155 *Twice a day, by the hour, etc*

- A** We can use *a/an* in expressions of frequency, price, and speed.

My brother shaves twice a day.

These potatoes cost one pound twenty a kilo.

The speed limit on motorways is seventy miles an hour.

NOTE

We can also use *per* in expressions of price and speed, e.g. *seventy miles per hour* / 70 mph.

- B** We can say *by the* to say how something is measured.

Boats can be hired by the hour or by the day.

Carpets are sold by the square metre.

156 *A/an* or *one*?

- A** *A/an* and *one* both refer to a single thing, but *one* puts more emphasis on the number.

The family have a car. (They can travel by road.)

The family have one car. (They don't have two cars.)

- B** We use *one* when we mean a single one among a larger number. *One* often contrasts with *other*.

One shop was open, but the others were closed.

One expert says one thing, and another says something different.

In the of-structure, we use *one*, not *a/an*.

One of the shops was open.

- C** We use *one* in phrases of time with nouns such as *morning, afternoon, evening, night, day, and weekend*.

One morning something very strange happened.

One day my genius will be recognized.

(At) *one time* usually means 'at a time in the past' or 'on one occasion in the past'.

At one time / Once I lived in a caravan.

One time / Once we saw a strange light in the sky.

At alone time can mean 'at the same time'.

A team can have only six players on the court at a time/at one time.

NOTE

For *a few, a little, a lot of, and a number of*, > 166.

157 *A/an, some, and a noun on its own*

- A** We use *a/an* only with a singular noun. *Some* with a plural or uncountable noun is equivalent to *a/an* with a singular noun.

Singular: *There's a rat under the floorboards.*

Plural: *There are some rats under the floorboards.*

Uncountable: *There's some milk in the fridge.*

Here *a/an* and *some* express quantity. *A rat* means one rat, *some rats* means a number of rats, and *some milk* means an amount of milk.

We can sometimes use a plural or uncountable noun on its own, without *some*.

There are rats under the floorboards.

There's milk in the fridge.

Leaving out *some* here makes little difference to the meaning.

- B** Now look at these ways of classifying things, describing them, and generalizing about them.

| | Classifying > 152G | Describing > 152F | Generalizing > 153 |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Singular: | <i>That's a rat, not a mouse.</i> | <i>It's a huge rat.</i> | <i>A rat will eat anything.</i> |
| Plural: | <i>Those are rats, not mice.</i> | <i>They're huge rats.</i> | <i>Rats will eat anything.</i> |
| Uncountable: | <i>Is this milk or cream?</i> | <i>It's fresh milk.</i> | <i>Milk is good for you.</i> |

For these meanings we use *a/an* with a singular noun, or we use a plural or uncountable noun on its own. We do not use *some*.

158 Sugar or the sugar, oil or the oil, etc

- A** We can use an uncountable or plural noun on its own to make a generalization.

Sugar is bad for your teeth. (= all sugar)

Adults have rights, so children should have them too. (= all children)

Without oil, modern life would come to a halt. (= oil in general)

Life just isn't fair, is it? (= life in general)

We use *the* when the meaning is more specific.

Could you pass the sugar, please? (the sugar on the table here)

My sister is looking after the children for us. (our children)

The oil I got on my trousers won't wash out. (a specific drop of oil)

The life of a Victorian factory worker wasn't easy. (a specific kind of life)

We often use *the* when there is a phrase after the noun which makes the meaning more specific. We say *Life ...* (in general) but *The life of ...* (a specific person or group of people).

- B** Compare these two patterns, which have the same meaning.

I'm not an expert on Irish history.

I'm not an expert on the history of Ireland.

Here we can use an adjective + noun without *the*, or we use *the* + noun with an of-phrase.

Here are some more examples.

European architecture *the architecture of Europe*

American literature *the literature of America*

The same thing happens with a noun modifier or a possessive form.

town planning *the planning of towns*

Mozart's music *the music of Mozart*

- C** When an of-phrase follows a noun, we usually put *the* before the first noun.

The safety of passengers should be a priority.

But when a phrase with a different preposition follows the noun, we use it without *the* if the meaning is fairly general.

Safety on the railways should be a priority.

Life in those days wasn't easy.

Silk from Japan was used to make the wedding dress.

159 A singular noun on its own

Before a singular noun we normally put a word like *a*, *the*, *my*, *this*, *every*, etc. But there are some exceptions. We can use a singular noun on its own in the following cases.

- A** Before some nouns for institutions. > 160

How are you getting on at college?

- B** In some phrases of time. > 161

The concert is on Thursday.

- C** In some fixed expressions where the noun is repeated or there is a contrast between the two nouns.

I lie awake night after night.

It was a fiasco from start to finish.

- D** In a phrase with *by* expressing means. > 215E

It would be quicker by train.

- E** In many idiomatic phrases, especially after a preposition. > 216

for example in fact on holiday at risk

But there are also idiomatic phrases with an article.

for a change in a hurry at the moment on the whole

- F** We do not normally use *the* in these examples.

The President's cousin was appointed Minister of Information.

Tony Blair was elected party leader.

Minister of Information and *party leader* both express a unique role. (There is only one.) We can use this pattern with verbs such as *appoint*, *elect*, *make*, and *proclaim*.

We can also leave out *the* when the unique role follows *be* or *become*.

Tony Blair became (the) party leader.

We can do the same when the unique role follows *as*.

As (the) chairman, I have to keep order in the meeting.

But when the role is not unique, we use *a/an*.

As a member of this club, I have a right to come in.

- G** Names of people and most place names have no article. > 162

for Mr Mackintosh in New York

- H** We can sometimes leave out an article to avoid repeating it.

Put the knife and fork on the tray.

We can do this when two things are seen as closely linked, like a knife and fork. But when there is no link between them, we repeat the article.

I bought a sweater and a book.

- I** We can leave out articles in some special styles such as news headlines and written instructions. > 30

Insert plug in hole in side panel.

160 Articles with *school*, *prison*, etc

- A** There are some nouns that we can use without *the* when we are talking about the normal purpose of an institution.

School starts at nine o'clock. The guilty men were sent to prison.

Here *school* means 'school activities', and people are *sent to prison* for committing a crime.

But when we talk about a specific building, we use *the*.

The school is in the centre of the village.

Mail is delivered to the prison every morning.

Here *the school* means 'the school building', and *the prison* means 'the prison building'.

- B** Apart from words for institutions, there are a number of other nouns used in a similar way.

I'm usually in bed by eleven. The bed felt very uncomfortable.

In bed means 'sleeping/resting in a bed', but *the bed* means a specific bed.

- C** We use an article if there is a word or phrase modifying the noun.

The guilty men were sent to a high-security prison.

I'm doing a course at the new college.

When the noun is part of a name, there is usually no article. > 163

The guilty men were sent to Parkhurst Prison.

- D** Here are some expressions with nouns of this type.

| | Without article | With article |
|----------------|---|---|
| <i>bed</i> | <i>stay in bed, go to bed (to sleep), put a child to bed, get out of bed</i> | <i>lie on the bed, sit by the bed/ next to the bed</i> |
| <i>church</i> | <i>be in/at church, go to church (to a service)</i> | <i>visit the church, the Church of England, the Catholic Church Compare: at the mosque/the temple</i> |
| <i>class</i> | <i>be in class (= in a lesson)</i> | <i>stand at the front of the class, at/the class (of pupils) Compare: talk in the lesson/ leave the classroom</i> |
| <i>college</i> | <i>be at/in college (as a student), go to college, leave college, drop out of college</i> | |
| <i>court</i> | <i>appear in court, go to court, take someone to court</i> | <i>tell the court what happened</i> |

| | Without article | With article |
|-------------------|---|---|
| <i>home</i> | <i>stay at home</i> As an adverb: <i>go/come/drive/ walk home</i> | <i>the home of a famous film star, at the home for old people</i> Compare: <i>stay in the house</i> |
| <i>hospital</i> | <i>in hospital</i> (as a patient), <i>taken to hospital</i> , <i>go into hospital, leave hospital</i> | <i>in the hospital</i> (as a visitor), <i>work at the hospital</i> In US English: <i>in the hospital</i> (as a patient), <i>taken to the hospital</i> , etc. |
| <i>jail</i> | <i>be in jail</i> (as a prisoner), <i>go to jail, come out of jail</i> | <i>go to the jail</i> (as a visitor) |
| <i>prison</i> | <i>be in prison</i> (as a prisoner), <i>go to prison, come out of prison</i> | <i>go to the prison</i> (as a visitor) |
| <i>school</i> | <i>be in/at school</i> (as a pupil), <i>go to school, start/leave school, ready for school</i> | <i>go to the school</i> (as a visitor), <i>work at the school</i> |
| <i>sea</i> | <i>be at sea</i> (sailing), <i>go to sea</i> (as a sailor), <i>go/travel by sea</i> | <i>the fish in the sea, sail on the sea, under the sea, by/near the sea.</i> Compare: <i>at the seaside</i> |
| <i>town</i> | <i>meet in town, go to town</i> | <i>visit the town, in the town centre</i> Compare: <i>in the village, in the city</i> |
| <i>university</i> | <i>be at university</i> (as a student), <i>go to university</i> | Also possible in GB and normal in US English: <i>be at the university, go to the university</i> |
| <i>work</i> | <i>be at work, go to work, stop work, your place of work, out of work, looking for work</i> | Compare: <i>go to the office / go to the factory</i> |

161 Articles in phrases of time

A Introduction

In a phrase of time we often use
a singular noun without an article

in winter on Monday

But we put *a/an* or *the* before an
adjective + noun.

a very cold winter

We also use an article if there is a
phrase or clause after the noun.

the Monday before the holiday

*the winter when we had all
that snow*

In B–H there are some examples with various kinds of time phrase.

B Years

The company was formed in 1981.

in the year 1981

The war lasted from 1812 to 1815.

C Seasons and months

*If winter comes, can spring be
far behind?*

It's nice here in (the) summer.

June is my favourite month.

The elections are in March.

the winter of 2002

a marvellous summer

D Special times of the year

I don't enjoy Christmas much.

Americans eat turkey at Thanksgiving.

It was a Christmas I'll never forget.

E Days of the week

I must finish this report by Monday.
(Monday of next week)

Our visitors are coming on Friday.
(Friday of this week)

*I'm leaving on the Wednesday before
Easter. That's the second Wednesday
in April.*

This happened on a Friday in July.

We usually go out on Saturday / on Saturdays. (= every Saturday)

We usually go out on a Saturday. Friday 12 May would be OK, but I'm busy on the Thursday. (= the Thursday of that week)

I'll see you at the weekend.

F Parts of the day and night

At midday it was very hot.

They reached the camp at sunset.

We'll be home before dark.

at night, by day/night

It was a wonderful sunset.

I couldn't see in the dark.

*in/during the day/the night/
the morning/the afternoon/the evening*

In phrases of time we normally use these nouns on their own: *dawn, daybreak, sunrise, midday, noon, dusk, sunset, twilight, dark, nightfall, midnight*. But we use *a/an* or *the* when we talk about the physical aspect, e.g. not being able to see *in the dark*, rather than about the time.

G Meals

Breakfast is from seven o'clock.

I had a sandwich for lunch.

The breakfast we had at the hotel wasn't very nice.

They all had a delicious lunch. The meal was perfect.

H Phrases with *last* and *next*

These flats were built last year.

We're having a party next Saturday.

The flats had been built the previous year/the year before.

They were having a party the following Saturday.

Compare these phrases.

Seen from the present

I'm leaving tomorrow.

The match is next week.

Seen from the past

I was leaving (the) next day.

The match was the following week.

162 Names

- A** Most names of people and places are without *the*.

Daniel Mrs Parsons Texas South Australia

Some place names have *the*, especially names consisting of more than one word, but there are others which do not have *the*. For example, we say *the Black Sea* but *Lake Superior*. Two things affect whether a name has *the* or not. They are the kind of place it is (e.g. a sea or a lake), and the grammatical structure of the name. We often use *the* in these structures.

Of-phrase: *the Duke of Edinburgh*

the Isle of Wight

Adjective: *the American School*

the Royal Opera House

Plural form: *the Johnsons/ the Johnson family*

the West Indies

We do not usually use *the* before a possessive.

Possessive: *Cleopatra's Needle*

For more details about place names and *the*, > 163.

NOTE

A noun such as *doctor*, *professor*, or *president* can be part of a person's name.

I saw Doctor Fry.

But when the noun is not part of a name, we use an article in the usual way.

I saw the doctor.

- B** We can sometimes use an article with a person's name.

There's a Laura who works in our office. (= a person called Laura)

A Mr Wilson called to see you. (= someone called Mr Wilson)

The Laura I know has dark hair. (= the person called Laura)

That's a Hockney, isn't it? (= a picture by Hockney)

Here are some examples of *a/an* and *the* with place names which normally have no article.

There's a Plymouth in the US. (= a place called Plymouth)

The Plymouth of today is very different from the Plymouth I once knew.
(Plymouth at different times)

Amsterdam is the Venice of the north. (= the place like Venice)

Stressed *the* /ði:/ before a name can mean 'the famous ...'.

I know a Joan Collins, but she isn't THE Joan Collins.

We can also stress *a* /eɪ/ to contrast with *the*.

I know A Joan Collins, but she isn't THE Joan Collins.

163 Place names and *the*

For some general points about place names and *the*, > 162A. Here the different types of place name are dealt with in more detail.

A Continents, countries, and states

Most continents, islands, countries, states, and counties are without *the*.

a trip to Europe
on Bermuda
a holiday in France
through Ohio
in Hampshire
New South Wales

Exceptions are names ending with *republic* or *kingdom*.

the Dominican Republic
the UK

Plural names also have *the*.

the Netherlands
the US

B Regions

When the name of a continent or country (e.g. *America*) is modified by another word (e.g. *Central*), we do not use *the*.

Most other regions have *the*.

Central America *to North Wales*
South-East Asia *in New England*

the South *the Mid-West*
the Midlands *the Riviera*

C Mountains

Most mountains and hills are without *the*.

climbing (Mount) Kilimanjaro
up (Mount) Everest

A very few mountains have *the*.

the Matterhorn *the Eiger*
 Mountain ranges and hill ranges have *the*.
across the Alps
in the Cotswolds

D Lakes, rivers, and seas

Lakes are without *the*.

beside Lake Ontario

Rivers, canals, and seas have *the*.

on the (River) Avon
the Missouri (River)
building the Panama Canal
the North Sea
in the Pacific (Ocean)

E Cities and towns

Most cities, towns, suburbs, and villages are without *the*.

in Sydney
Kingswood, a suburb of Bristol
at Nether Wallop

Exceptions are *The Hague* and *The Bronx*.

F Roads and streets

Most roads, streets, and parks are without *the*.

off Station Road
in Baker Street
Madison Avenue
along Broadway
in Central Park
Kew Gardens

Some names with adjectives have *the*.

the High Street
the Botanical Gardens

We use *the* in this structure.

the Bath Road (= the road to Bath)

We can also use *the* with some main roads in cities.

along the Edgware Road

We use *the* with by-passes and motorways.

the York by-pass
the M6 (motorway)

Other exceptions to the general rule are *The Avenue*, *The Mall*, and *The Strand*.

G Bridges

Some bridges are without *the*.

across Magdalen Bridge
Westminster Bridge
near Tower Bridge
This includes the major London bridges.

But there are also bridges with *the*.

the Sydney Harbour Bridge
the Humber Bridge (= the bridge over the Humber)
The is used in American English.
the Queensboro Bridge

H Stations, churches, schools, etc

Most transport facilities, churches, schools, and other important buildings, as well as palaces and houses are without *the*.

We use *the* when there is an of-phrase.

to Euston (Station)
Heathrow (Airport)
St Paul's (Cathedral)
Rugby (School)
at Essex (University)
in Slough General Hospital
Leeds Town Hall
behind Buckingham Palace
at Clarence House

the Church of the Holy Trinity
the University of Essex
 We generally use *the* when there is an adjective or noun modifier.

the Royal High School
the Old Town Hall
the White House

I Theatres, hotels, etc

With theatres, cinemas, hotels, museums, galleries, and centres, we usually use *the* except with a possessive form.

Normally we use *the*.

St Martin's (Theatre)
Claridge's (Hotel)

When the first word of the phrase is a place name (e.g. *York*), we can sometimes use the phrase without *the*.

in York Museum

Some US names with *center* are without *the*.

near Rockefeller Center

the Prince Edward (Theatre)
I saw it at the Odeon (Cinema)
the Dorset (Hotel)
the Science Museum
the National Gallery
shopping in the Metro Centre

We use *the* with *building*.
the Chrysler Building

J Shops and restaurants

Most shops are without *the*.

We use *the* with shops and restaurants when there is an adjective or noun modifier.

shopping at Harrod's
in Next

A restaurant can be without *the* if it has a possessive form.

at Charley's (Restaurant)

the Kitchen Shop
at the Old Bakehouse (Restaurant)
 Most pub names have *the*.
at the Red Lion (Inn)

Possessives and demonstratives

164 Possessives

A Introduction

In this conversation four people are discussing a date for a meeting.

Emma: *What about Friday?*

Luke: *I'll just look in **my** diary.*

Emma: *Have you got **your** diary, Tina?*

Tina: *I think so.*

Jason: *I haven't got **mine** with me.*

Luke: *I can't come on Friday. We're giving a party for one of **our** neighbours. It's **her** birthday.*

We use possessives to express a connection, often the fact that someone has something or that something belongs to someone. *My diary* is the diary that belongs to me. The possessive form of a noun has the same meaning. > 132B

Luke's diary our neighbour's birthday

There are possessive determiners (*my, your*, etc) and possessive pronouns (*mine, yours*, etc). Possessive determiners come before a noun.

our neighbour her birthday some of your friends

my diary (NOT ~~*the diary of me*~~ OR ~~*the my diary*~~)

Possessive determiners are sometimes called 'possessive adjectives'.

We leave out the noun when it is clear from the context what we mean, for example when the noun has just been mentioned. We use a possessive pronoun (e.g. *mine*) instead of a possessive determiner + noun (e.g. *my diary*).

I'll just look in my diary. ~ I haven't got mine with me.

I took Lisa in my car because hers had broken down.

I've got my opinion, and I'm sure you've got yours.

A possessive pronoun can be a complement.

Is this diary yours? ~ No, I think it's Luke's.

(NOT ~~*Is this diary to you?*~~ OR ~~*Is this diary of you?*~~)

NOTE

For *my one, your one*, etc, > 179C Note.

B Form

| | Determiners Singular | Plural | Pronouns Singular | Plural |
|---------------|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| First person | <i>my pen</i> | <i>our house</i> | <i>mine</i> | <i>ours</i> |
| Second person | <i>your number</i> | <i>your coats</i> | <i>yours</i> | <i>yours</i> |
| Third person | <i>his father</i> <i>her decision</i> <i>its location</i> | <i>their attitude</i> | <i>his</i> <i>hers</i> | <i>theirs</i> |

His is male, and *her* is female.

Luke's father → *his father*

Emma's father → *her father*

Its refers to something not human or to a place or an organization.

the roof of the car → *its roof*

the country's exports → *its exports*

Their is the plural of *his*, *her*, and *its*.

Luke and Emma's father → *their father*

the interests of the two countries → *their interests*

His can be either a determiner or a pronoun.

Has James got his mobile?

I've got my mobile, but James hasn't got his.

Its is a determiner but not a pronoun.

The restaurant is famous for its good food.

We avoid using *its* without a following noun.

The east-coast route has its advantages, and the west-coast route has its advantages too. (NOT ~~*the west-coast route has its too.*~~)

We do not use an apostrophe with a possessive. (NOT *your's*).

Note that *it's* is a short form of *it is* or *it has*, > 290C.

C Possessives with parts of the body

We normally use a possessive with people's heads, arms, legs, etc, and their clothes, even if it is clear whose we mean.

What's the matter? ~ I've hurt my back. (NOT ~~*I've hurt the back.*~~)

We all got out of the car to stretch our legs.

He just stood there with his hands in his pockets.

But we usually use *the* in this pattern where a person is the object.

| | Verb | Person | Prepositional phrase |
|------------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>The stone</i> | <i>hit</i> | <i>the policeman</i> | <i>on the head.</i> |
| <i>Someone</i> | <i>pushed</i> | <i>me</i> | <i>in the back.</i> |
| <i>Tom</i> | <i>took</i> | <i>Karen</i> | <i>by the arm.</i> |

Possessives and demonstratives

We use *the* in the equivalent passive sentences.

A policeman was hit on the head.

Compare these examples.

The stone hit him on the head.

He had a bandage round his head.

A person is the object (*him*) only in the first example.

D A friend of mine

My friend means a definite person, the person I am friends with. To talk about a person I am friends with, we say *one of my friends* or *a friend of mine*.

| | Definite | Indefinite |
|----------|-------------------|--|
| Singular | <i>my friend</i> | <i>one of my friends / a friend of mine</i> |
| Plural | <i>my friends</i> | <i>some of my friends / some friends of mine</i> |

Here are some examples of this of-structure.

I like The Strokes. I'm a fan of theirs.

My brother has just seen an old girlfriend of his.

Didn't you borrow some CDs of mine?

I don't think my private life is any business of yours.

We can also use the possessive form of names and other nouns in the of-structure.

We met a cousin of Nicola's.

These are just some papers of my flatmate's.

NOTE

In informal speech we can use *this*, *that*, *these*, or *those*.

I've been thinking about that suggestion of yours.

E Own

We can use *own* after a possessive determiner.

I'd love to have my own flat.

Students are expected to contribute their own ideas.

My own means 'belonging to me and not to anyone else'.

There is also a structure with *of*.

I'd love a flat of my own.

(NOT ~~an own flat~~)

Sometimes *own* expresses the idea of doing something yourself without help.

You'll have to make your own bed.

(= You'll have to make your bed yourself.)

We can miss out the noun if the meaning is clear without it.

The ideas should be your own.

On your own and *by yourself* mean 'alone'.

I don't want to walk home on my own/by myself.

NOTE

Very own is more emphatic.

I never expected a little village to have its very own zoo.

Hannah's dream was to have a pony of her very own.

165 Demonstratives

- A** In this conversation Debbie is choosing a birthday gift for her mother.
- Debbie: *I just want to look at **these** jugs. I might buy one for my mother.*
- Lauren: ***Those** glass ones are nice.*
- Debbie: *Yes, **this** one looks the sort of thing she might like.*
- Lauren: *What about **this**?*
- Debbie: *I don't like **that** so much.*



We use demonstratives to 'point to' something in the situation. *This* and *these* refer to something near the speaker. *That* and *those* refer to things further away. *This* and *that* are singular. *These* and *those* are plural.

| | Near | Further away |
|----------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Singular | <i>this colour</i> | <i>that car</i> |
| Plural | <i>these flowers</i> | <i>those hills</i> |

We also use *this* and *that* with uncountable nouns as well as singular ones.

***this** coffee* ***that** music*

For uncountable nouns, > 137.

We leave out the noun when it is clear from the context what we mean. When we do this we use a pronoun.

- Determiner: *What about **this** jug?* *I like **those** pictures.*
- Pronoun: *What about **this**?* *I like **those**.*



We can use *one* or *ones* instead of the noun.

What about this one?

These ones are nice.

- B** The basic meanings of ‘near the speaker’ and ‘further away from the speaker’ apply to both place and time.

| | Place | Time |
|---------------|---|---|
| Near: | <i>this book (here)</i> <i>these papers (here)</i> | <i>at this moment (= now)</i> <i>these days (= now)</i> |
| Further away: | <i>that shop (there)</i> <i>those people (there)</i> | <i>at that time (= then)</i> <i>in those days (= then)</i> |

When we are in a place or situation or at an event, we use *this* (not *that*) to refer to it.

This town has absolutely no night life.

How long is this weather going to last?

This is a great party, isn't it?

We can use *that/those* with something already seen or talked about but no longer present in the situation.

That dress Tanya was wearing looked very smart.

Those things I bought in the market were really cheap.

This usage is rather informal.

We use *this* when we are talking about something that is about to happen.

I'm going to enjoy this meal.

We use *that* for something that is over.

That was delicious.

We use *this* or *these* for the present time.

My mother is staying with us this week.

Things are different these days.

We use *that* or *those* for the past.

I remember that terrible storm. My mother was staying with us that week.

Things were different in those days. We didn't even have computers then.

NOTE

In informal English, *this* (instead of *a/an*) can introduce the topic of a story or joke.

This girl knocked on our door one day and ...

The scene is more immediate, as if we can see the girl in front of us.

- C** Look at these examples.

This is a great party, isn't it? I'm really enjoying it.

These shoes are wet. I left them outside in the rain.

When we mention something a second time, we use *it* or *they/them*. We do not usually use a demonstrative again.

- D** We can use a demonstrative with words for people.

that waiter (over there) these people (in here)

We can also use the pronouns *this* and *that* when we identify someone.

Mum, this is my friend Leanne. ~ Hello, Leanne.

That was Simon at the door. ~ Oh? What did he want?

On the phone we use *this* when we identify ourselves.

Hello. This is Steve. Is Claire there, please?

We usually use *that* when we ask who the other person is.

Is that you, Mark?

Who is that? / Who is this? (US: Who is this?)

But we do not use these expressions when speaking face to face.

NOTE

We sometimes leave out *people* after *those*.

Those (people) who ordered lunch should go to the dining-room.

- E** We can use *that* to refer to a statement or idea mentioned before.

I haven't got an appointment. ~ Oh, that doesn't matter.

Here *that* means 'the fact that I haven't got an appointment'.

Here are two more examples from real conversations.

The rooms are so big. That's why it's cold.

Well, if you haven't got television, you can't watch it. ~ That's true.

Sometimes we can use *this*, although *that* is more usual.

I simply haven't got the money. This is / That's the problem.

We use *this* and *that* in a number of idiomatic statements to express agreement or to say that someone has made a relevant point.

That's right. That's the thing. That's (just) it. This is it.

In these expressions we stress the word at the end (*right, thing, it*).

When we refer forward to what we are going to say, we use *this*.

What I'd like to say is this. The government has done a great deal to ...

- F** We can use *that* or *those* in this pattern.

She recognized the handwriting as that of her husband.

(= the handwriting of her husband/her husband's handwriting)

The best advice I've ever had is that which my old teacher gave me.

(= the advice which my old teacher gave me)

Some leaves are poisonous, especially those of evergreen shrubs.

(= the leaves of evergreen shrubs)

There's a big difference between studies which are scientific and those which are not.

(= studies which are not)

This use of *that* and *those* is rather formal.

Quantifiers

166 Large and small quantities

A What is a quantifier?

A quantifier is a word like *many*, *no*, or *some*. It usually comes before a noun.

many times no tickets some water

A quantifier says how many or how much. For example, *many* expresses a large quantity, and *no* expresses zero quantity. Which quantifier we use can also depend on whether a noun is countable or uncountable. For example, we say *many bills* but *much money*. For details about the possible combinations, > 137B.

A quantifier can consist of more than one word, e.g. *lots of*, *a few*.

lots of fun a few people

We can also use a phrase with *number* or *amount*.

a number of problems no amount of effort

We often use an adjective with *number* or *amount*, e.g. *small*, *enormous*.

a small number of cases an enormous amount of work

Sometimes we can use an adverb of degree (e.g. *too*, *quite*) with a quantifier.

too many e-mails quite a lot of money

For the possible combinations, > 196F.

We can use a quantifier without a noun when the meaning is clear from the context. > 174

I expected to see lots of people, but there were only a few.

In B–E there are some examples of how to express large and small quantities. Some of these forms are dealt with in more detail in 167–174.

B A large quantity

With either a plural or an uncountable noun.

There are a lot of/lots of letters for you. > 167A,B

There's masses/heaps/loads of time. (informal)

Only with a plural noun.

Many questions remain unanswered. > 167A,B

A large/considerable number of languages have died out completely.

Numerous difficulties were put in my way.

Only with an uncountable noun.

We haven't had much rain lately. > 167A,B

A dishwasher uses a great deal of electricity.

A large/considerable amount of data has been gathered.

Adjectives we can use before *number* or *amount* include *considerable*, *enormous*, *fair*, *large*, *substantial*, and *tremendous*.

NOTE

The verb agrees with the noun. > 146B

A large number of languages have died out.

C A quantity

With either a plural or an uncountable noun.

I need to earn some money. > 172A

Only with a plural noun

A number of problems have arisen.

Only with an uncountable noun

The machine makes a certain amount of noise.

D A small quantity

Only with a plural noun

I'm having a few days off work. > 176C-D

A small number of houses will be built.

The group has only a handful of members.

Several people were injured in the incident. (perhaps four or five people)

Only with an uncountable noun

I'll just have a little water/a bit of water. > 167C-D

A computer uses only a small amount of electricity.

E Zero quantity

There's no milk in the fridge. > 172C

I haven't sent any e-mails today. > 172A

167 A lot of, many, much, a few, a little, and a bit of

A A lot of, lots of, many, and much

These words express a large quantity. We use *a lot of* and *lots of* with both plural and uncountable nouns.

Plural: *The town gets a lot of visitors/lots of visitors in summer.*

Uncountable: *You'll have a lot of fun/lots of fun at our Holiday Centre.*

Many goes before a plural noun and *much* before an uncountable noun.

Plural: *There aren't many trains on a Sunday.*

Uncountable: *There isn't much traffic on a Sunday.*

We can use *quite* and *rather* before *a lot of* (but not before *lots of*, *many*, or *much*).

We get quite a lot of visitors.

B A lot of, lots of, many, and much in statements and questions

As a very general rule, we use *a lot of/lots of* in positive statements and *many* or *much* in negatives and questions.

Positive: *We get a lot of visitors/lots of visitors.*

Negative: *We don't get many visitors.*

Question: *Do you get many visitors? How many visitors do you get?*

However, there are exceptions to this general rule. In positive statements we use *many* or *much* (but not *a lot of/lots of*) after *very*, *so*, *too*, *as*, and *how*.

Very many crimes go unreported.

I've got so many books there's no room for any more.

There's too much concrete around here and not enough grass.

I haven't taken as many photos this year.

I know how much work you've put into the project.

A lot of and *lots of* are rather more informal than *many/much*. In informal English we can use *a lot of* in negatives and questions as well as in positive statements.

We don't get a lot of visitors / many visitors.

Have you done a lot of work / much work on the project?

Mainly in more formal English, we can use *many* and *much* in positive statements as well as in negatives and questions.

Many voices spoke out in protest.

There has been much criticism of the government's policy.

NOTE

We can use *not many / not much / not a lot of* + noun as subject or after a preposition. > 10C

Not many shops were open.

We arrived with not a lot of time to spare.

C A few, a little, and a bit of

These words mean a small quantity. We use them mainly in positive statements. *A few* goes before a plural noun; *a little* and *a bit of* go before an uncountable noun.

Plural: *I took a few photos of the animals.*

Uncountable: *I've still got a little money/a bit of money left, fortunately.*

We often use *a few* in expressions of time.

I saw Lucy a few days ago.

A (little) bit of means the same as *a little* but is more informal.

I'm just going to add a (little) bit of salt.

We can use *quite* before *a few* and *a bit of*.

I took quite a few photos. We've had quite a bit of rain.

This means a fairly large quantity, similar to *quite a lot of photos/rain*.

Only emphasizes the smallness of the number.

I only took a few photos.

This means a smaller number than we might expect.

NOTE

Little can also be an adjective meaning 'small in size', e.g. *a little flat / a small flat*.

D Few and little

Few and *little* without *a* have a negative meaning. Compare these examples.

Do people come here on holiday? ~ Yes, there are a few tourists.

(= some tourists/a small number of tourists)

Do people come here on holiday? ~ No, there are few tourists.

(= not many tourists)

Even at three in the morning there was a little traffic.

(= some traffic/a small amount of traffic)

It was three in the morning, so there was little traffic.

(= not much traffic)

Few and *little* used alone without *a* are rather formal. In conversation *not many* and *not much* are more usual.

We can use *very* before *few* or *little*.

There are very few tourists here.

(= a very small number of tourists)

E Special patterns with *many*, *few*, and *little*

Many, *few*, and *little* sometimes come after a determiner, e.g. *his*, *the*, *these*.

Tim introduced us to one of his many girlfriends.

The few hotels in the area are always full.

Only these few survivors are left to tell the story.

I didn't want to waste the little money I had left.

A great many is a little formal.

A great many crimes go unreported.

NOTE

- a This pattern with *many a* is rather literary.

Many a ship has come to grief off the coast here.

Many a time I have dreamed of starting a new life.

In informal speech *many times* or *lots of times* would be more usual.

- b *Many* and *few* can be a complement.

The disadvantages of the scheme are many.

This is rather literary. *Many* before the noun would be more usual.

The scheme has many disadvantages.

168 Whole and part quantities

A Introduction

To talk about whole and part quantities, we can use words like *all* and *most*.

The story is in all (of) the newspapers. (the whole group)

The bed takes up most of the space in here. (the greater part)

We often use *of* with whole and part quantities.

Some quantifiers can express either large/small quantities or whole/part quantities. They include *a lot of*, *much*, *many*, *a few*, and *a little*.

| Large/small > 166–167 | Whole/part > B–H |
|---|--|
| <i>I found a lot of information on the Internet.</i> (a large amount) | <i>But a lot of the information I found wasn't very helpful.</i> (a large part) |
| <i>We didn't see many protesters on the streets.</i> (a large number) | <i>Many of the protesters were wearing masks.</i> (a large part of the group) |
| <i>The artist sold a few paintings.</i> (a small number) | <i>The artist sold a few of his paintings.</i> (a small part of the total) |
| <i>Some pages were missing.</i> (a number) | <i>Some of the pages were missing.</i> (a part of the total) |
| | <i>Some of the book was missing.</i> (a part) |
| We can use an uncountable noun (<i>information</i>) or a plural noun (<i>protesters, paintings, pages</i>) when expressing large or small quantities. | We often use <i>of</i> + determiner (<i>the, his</i>) + noun. As well as an uncountable or a plural noun, we can also use a singular noun (<i>book</i>). |

In B–H there are some examples of how to express whole and part quantities. Some of these forms are dealt with in more detail in 169–174.

B The whole

All (of) the tickets have been sold. > 169B

The whole (of the) show will be televised live. > 169D

Every seat will be occupied. > 171

C The greater part

I slept through most of the film. > 169A–B

D A large part

A lot of the passengers on the plane were backpackers.

Many of the spectators left before the end.

I spend much of my time playing golf.

E A part

I answered some of the exam questions. > 172D

I did part of the exam. > 172C

F Numbers

About a hundred of the spectators left before the end.

I answered six of the exam questions.

Two of the apples have gone bad.

G A small part

A few of the apples have gone bad.

Can you eat a little of this cake?

We'll only miss a bit of our holiday.

Not many of the motorists were carrying passengers.

You haven't read much of that book yet.

H No part

None of my friends went to the party. > 169B

I don't like any of these colours.

169 All, most, half, none, and whole

A We can use *all/most* before a plural or uncountable noun to make a generalization.

All rabbits love green food.

Most banks have cash machines.

Most pollution could be avoided.

These sentences are about rabbits, banks, and pollution in general.

Compare these examples.

Most people just want a quiet life. (people in general)

Most of the people here are strangers to me. (a specific group of people)

As well as *most*, we can also use *a/the majority of* and *more than half*.

A/The majority of banks have cash machines.

More than half (of) the pollution in the world could be avoided.

The opposite is *a minority of* or *less than half*.

A minority of banks have no cash machine.

NOTE

a *All* + noun is sometimes used on written instructions about what people have to do.

All tickets must be shown. All visitors report to Reception.

b For a generalization with a plural noun on its own, e.g. *Rabbits love green food*, > 153.

B When we are talking about something more specific, we use:

all/most/half/none + *of* + determiner + noun.

All (of) our rabbits died from some disease.

Most of the pubs around here serve food. (NOT ~~the most of the pubs~~)

I got the photocopying done at half (of) the normal price.

None of these jackets fit me any more.

In this pattern we cannot leave out *of* after *most* or *none*.

We can leave out *of* after *all* and *half*. But before a pronoun such as *it* or *them*, we always use *of*.

We had some rabbits, but all of them died.

I read the book, but I couldn't understand half of it.

We can use *a / an* with *half*.

We waited half an hour. I ate half a slice of toast.
Some nouns can follow *a half*, e.g. *a half hour, a half day*.

I work a half day on Thursdays.

But this pattern has a more limited use than *half an hour* or *half a day*.

We can use *all* after an object pronoun.

The rabbits died. We lost them all / all of them.

It can also come in mid position or after the subject.

These pictures are all quite valuable.

The rabbits all died. / They all died.

We cannot use *most* in mid position, but we can use *mostly*.

The pubs around here mostly serve food.

(= Most of the pubs around here serve food.)

NOTE

For *all* without a noun or pronoun, > 174B.

C *None* means 'not any of the group'. We use it with the of-structure.

None of the rabbits survived. I'm afraid they all died.

(NOT ~~*All of the rabbits didn't survive.*~~)

Not all means 'fewer/less than all'.

Not all (of) the rabbits died. Some of them survived.

NOTE

For *no* and *none*, > 174C.

D We can use *whole* as an adjective before a singular noun.

Did you listen to the whole tape? (NOT ~~*the all tape*~~)

This whole idea is completely crazy. (NOT ~~*this all idea*~~)

You didn't eat a whole chicken!

We can also use *whole* as a noun.

Did you listen to the whole of the tape?

Compare these examples.

We spent all day / the whole day on the beach.

(We were there from morning till evening.)

We spent every day on the beach. (every day of our holiday)

170 Both, either, and neither

A We use these words for two things.

The police set up barriers at both ends of the street. (the one and the other)

If you're ambidextrous, you can write with either hand.

(the one or the other)

Neither of the twins is an especially attractive child.

(not the one and not the other)

B Compare the meaning of *both/neither* and *all/none*.

| | Positive | Negative |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Two: | <i>Both prisoners escaped.</i> | <i>Neither of the prisoners escaped.</i> |
| Three or more: | <i>All the prisoners escaped.</i> | <i>None of the prisoners escaped.</i> |

C We use *both* before a plural noun.

Both houses are for sale.

We can also use it before a determiner or with the *of*-structure.

Both (of) the houses are for sale.

Both (of) these letters have been incorrectly addressed.

Both (of) her parents are alcoholics.

But we do NOT say ~~the both houses~~.

We can use *both* after an object pronoun.

Two prisoners escaped, but the police caught them both / both of them.

It can also come in mid position or after the subject.

The teams are both confident of victory.

The girls both enjoyed themselves./They both enjoyed themselves.

NOTE

For the pattern *both her mother and her father*, > 233E.

D We use *either* and *neither* before a singular noun.

Either way is as good as the other.

Neither car is very economical to run.

We can also use them in the *of*-structure with a plural noun.

Is/Are either of your sisters married?

Neither of our cars is/are very economical to run.

In positions other than the subject, we usually use *either* rather than *neither*.

I don't like either of those pictures.

This is more usual than *I like neither of those pictures*. But we use *neither* in the subject of a negative sentence.

Neither of those pictures appeals to me.

(NOT ~~*Either/Both of those pictures don't appeal to me.*~~)

171 Every and each

A We use *every* and *each* before a singular noun to mean all the members of a group.

There were flags flying from every/each building.

Mike grew more nervous with every/each minute that passed.

A subject with *every* and *each* has a singular verb.

Every/Each customer is greeted at the door.

Quantifiers

- B** In many contexts either *every* or *each* is possible, but there is a difference in meaning. *Every customer* means 'all the customers' and implies a large number. *Each customer is greeted at the door* means all the customers seen as individuals, as if we are thinking of greeting them one by one.

The following examples show the difference in meaning between *every* and *each*, although either word is possible in these contexts.

On the tape I could hear every word clearly.

(all the words, everything that was said)

The student had to look up each word in a dictionary.

(all the words one by one)

Every child is conditioned by its environment.

(all children in general)

Each child was given a medal with his or her name on.

(all the children individually)

Every usually suggests a larger number than *each*. *Each* refers to two or more things, but *every* refers to three or more.

United scored a goal in each half/both halves.

Missiles were being thrown from every direction/all directions.

We often use *every* to talk about things happening at regular intervals.

The noise wakes me up every morning.

I go to the gym every Thursday.

Each is possible here but less usual.

In these examples expressing frequency, we use *every* but not *each*.

The meetings are every four weeks. (= at intervals of four weeks)

We visit my mother every other weekend. (= every second weekend/on alternate weekends)

- C** We can use *almost* or *nearly* with *every* but not with *each*.

There were flags flying from almost every building.

Every single means 'every one without exception'.

No one was left out. Every single child was given a medal.

- D** We can use *each* (but not *every*) in these patterns.

Each of the students has a personal tutor.

Before the visitors left, we gave them each/each of them a souvenir.

The winners each received a prize.

But we can use *every one of* + noun phrase. This emphasizes the fact that there are no exceptions.

Every one of the students has a personal tutor.

We gave every one of them a souvenir.

For the difference between *every one* (two words) and *everyone* (one word), > 180B Note a.

Each as an adverb can come after a noun.

The tickets are £10 each.

- E** We cannot use a negative verb after *every* or *each*. Instead we use *none* and a positive verb.

None of the doors was/were locked. (NOT ~~*Every/Each door wasn't locked.*~~)

But *not every* means 'fewer than all'.

Not every door was locked. Some of them were open.

(NOT ~~*Not each door was locked.*~~)

172 *Some, any, and no*

A *Some/any* expressing a quantity

Some with a plural or uncountable noun is equivalent to *a/an* with a singular noun. > 157

You'll need some wood, a hammer, and some nails.

Here *some* is usually pronounced /səm/ or /sm/.

Some expresses a positive quantity. *Some nails* means 'a number of nails'. But *any* does not have this positive meaning. We use *any* mainly in negatives and questions.

Positive: *I've got some nails.*

Negative: *I haven't got any nails.*

Question: *Have you got any/some nails?*

In a negative sentence we use *any* rather than *some*. This includes sentences with negative words like *never* and *hardly*.

I never seem to have any spare time.

We've won hardly any games this season.

Any is more usual in questions.

Have you got any nails? ~ Yes. / No. / I don't know.

Did you catch any fish? ~ Yes, lots. / Yes, a few. / No, we didn't.

But we use *some* to give the question a more positive tone, especially when making an offer or request. It may suggest that we expect the answer yes.

Did you catch some fish? (= I expect you caught some fish.)

Would you like some cornflakes? (= Have some cornflakes.)

Could you lend me some money? (= Please lend me some money.)

In an if-clause we can use either *some* or *any*.

If you need some/any help, please let me know.

We can use *any* in a main clause to express a condition.

Any problems will be dealt with by our agent.

(= If there are any problems, they will be dealt with by our agent.)

NOTE

In a negative sentence or a question we can sometimes use *any* with a singular noun.

I wrote to the company, but I didn't get a reply / any reply.

Do you have a view/any view on the matter?

Any is rather more emphatic than *a* here. In the first example we can use *any* to emphasize the fact that there was no reply. But in general *a/an* is more usual. We say *I haven't got a*

Quantifiers

mobile rather than *I haven't got any mobile*. For *any* with a singular noun meaning 'it doesn't matter which', > E.

B Someone or anyone, something or anything, etc

We choose between *someone/anyone*, etc in the same way as we choose between *some* and *any*.

Someone has been trying to kill me.

Polite complaints weren't getting me *anywhere*.

Have you got *anything/something* suitable to wear?

Could you do *something* for me?

For more details about *someone* etc, > 180.

C No

No is a negative word. We can use it with singular, plural, and uncountable nouns.

I'm afraid there is simply no alternative.

There are *no rivers* in Saudi Arabia.

We had *no coffee*, so we drank tea.

A sentence like *There is no alternative* is more emphatic than *There isn't an alternative* or *There isn't any alternative*. (For *any* + singular noun, > A Note .)

Compare these two sentences.

No warning was given. *A warning* was not given.

We cannot use a subject with *any* to express this idea.

(NOT ~~*Any warning was not given.*~~)

NOTE

For *no* and *none*, > 174C.

D Some expressing part of a quantity

Compare these two meanings of *some*.

Quantity: *There were some people in the studio.*

/sm/ 'a number of people'

Part: *Some people enjoy quiz shows.*

/səm/ 'some but not all'

Here are some more examples where *some* means 'some but not all'.

Some trains have a restaurant car.

Some fish can change their sex.

Some of the trains from this station go direct to Edinburgh.

Some of the fish in the tank were a beautiful blue colour.

Here *some fish* has a general meaning, and *some of the fish* has a more specific meaning.

When *some* means 'some but not all', we can use it in a negative sentence.

Some people don't enjoy quiz shows.

As well as a plural noun, we can also use *some* with a singular or an uncountable noun.

I only watched some of the programme.

I like some jazz but not all of it.

We can use *part of* instead of *some of* but only with a singular noun.

I only watched part of the programme. (= a part of the programme).

(BUT NOT *Part of the trains go to Edinburgh*)

We can also use *any of*.

I was out, so I didn't see any of the programme.

E Any meaning 'it doesn't matter which'

When *any* has this meaning, we can use it in positive sentences.

You can choose any colour you like.

You can call on me any time. I'm always here.

Any passer-by will be able to direct you to the town hall.

All passers-by know where the town hall is, so it doesn't matter which one you ask. They are all a possible source of information.

At any minute/moment means 'very soon'.

The bus should be here at any minute.

Compare the meaning of *either* and *any*.

Two: *There are two colours. You can have either of them.*

Three or more: *There are several colours. You can have any of them.*

We can use compounds of *any* in the same way.

The door isn't locked. Anyone could just walk in.

What would you like for lunch? ~ Oh, anything. I don't mind.

F Other uses of *some*

Some with a singular noun can mean a person or thing whose identity is unknown.

Some idiot dropped a bottle.

The flight was delayed for some reason (or other).

This suggests that it is not especially important who the idiot was or what the reason was.

Some day/time means an indefinite time in the future.

I'll be famous some day/one day, you'll see.

You must come and see me some time.

NOTE

- a *Some* before a number means 'about'.

Some twenty people attended the meeting.

- b Stressed *some* /sʌm/ can express a strong and positive feeling about something.

That was SOME parade, wasn't it?

This means that the parade was an especially impressive one.

173 *Enough, plenty of, too many/much, another, some more, and other*

A *Enough*

We can use *enough* with a plural or an uncountable noun.

We had enough chances to win the game.

Is there enough room for three people on the back seat?

There aren't enough bricks here to build a wall.

We can also use the *of*-structure for a part quantity.

I saw enough of the film to know I wasn't going to like it.

NOTE

For *enough* as an adverb, > 196G.

B *Plenty of and too many / too much*

Plenty of means 'enough' or 'more than enough'. We use it with a plural or an uncountable noun.

There are plenty of jobs for qualified people.

There's no need to hurry. We've got plenty of time.

To express 'more than enough' when this is a bad thing, we use *too many* or *too much*.

I always take too many clothes on holiday. I really don't need so many.

I spend too much time on my work. I never have time for anything else.

C *Another and some more*

These express an extra quantity. We use *another* with a singular noun and *some more* with a plural or uncountable noun.

Singular: *Would you like another sausage? ~ No, thank you. I've had enough.*

Plural: *Have some more beans. ~ Thank you.*

Uncountable: *Have we got some more orange juice? We've finished this carton.*

We always write *another* as one word.

Another can mean either 'an extra one' or 'a different one'.

We really need another computer. I hate sharing one. (an extra one)

I think I'll buy another computer and scrap this one. (a different one)

In some contexts we use *any more* rather than *some more*.

There isn't any more orange juice, I'm afraid.

For the choice of *some* and *any*, > 172A.

Before *more* we can also use *a lot*, *lots*, *many*, *much*, *a few*, *a little*, and *a bit*.

I'll need a few more lessons before I can ski properly.

Since the economic reforms there has been a lot more food in the shops.

Can't you put a little more effort into it?

D Other

Other is an adjective meaning 'different' or 'not the one just mentioned'.

We crossed to the other side of the road.

Sarah was at the dinner, but I didn't know any of the other guests.

Compare the use of *another*. > C

We can use *other* without a noun to refer to a thing or a person.

You take one bag and I'll take the other (one).

One of the twins is fairer than the other (one).

We can use *others* without a noun to refer to more than one.

Some pubs serve food, but others don't.

I came on ahead. The others will be here soon. (= the other people)

NOTE

The other day/week means 'recently'.

I saw that friend of yours the other day.

E Another and other with numbers

We can use *another* before a plural number.

We were having such a good time we decided to stay on for another three days/for three more days. (= an additional three days / an extra period of three days)

We can use *other* after a number.

This is the main bedroom, and there are two other bedrooms / two more bedrooms / another two bedrooms on the next floor.

174 Quantifiers without a noun**A** We can use a quantifier without a noun.

There are several large stores in London where you can buy practically anything; others are more specialized but still offer a wide choice of goods. Most have coffee shops and restaurants serving good, reasonably priced lunches and teas; many also have hairdressing salons.

(from R. Nicholson *The London Guide*)

It is clear from the context that *most* means 'most large stores' and *many* means 'many large stores'. Here are some more examples that we might use in the same context.

Some sell food.

Two have car parks.

A few do not open until ten o'clock.

None close for lunch.

Here a word that we normally use as a quantifier is used on its own, like a pronoun.

Quantifiers

We can also use the of-structure.

Many of them also have hairdressing salons.

None of them close for lunch.

Some quantifiers usually occur with *of*, e.g. *a bit of*, *a great deal of*, *a lot of*, *a number of*, *plenty of*. When we use *a lot*, *plenty*, etc without a noun, we drop the *of*.

Not all the stores have late-night shopping, but a lot do.

If you want to climb a mountain there are plenty to choose from.

The area has millions of visitors, a large number arriving by car.

Of must have a noun phrase or *it/them* after it.

A lot (of the stores/of them) have late-night shopping.

After some quantifiers we can use *one* instead of a singular noun. > 179B

I tried three doors, and each (one) was locked.

The first bus was full, but another (one) soon arrived.

B *All* on its own has a limited use. These patterns are more usual.

There are a number of large stores, and all of them open on Saturday.

There are a number of large stores, and they all open on Saturday.

We do not usually say *All open on Saturday*.

But we can use *all* before a clause meaning 'everything' or 'the only thing'.

I'm not hiding anything from you. I've told you all (that) I know.

All you need is love.

C We can use *each* on its own but not *every*.

The states are represented in the Senate. Each (of them) sends two representatives. (NOT ~~*Every sends two representatives.*~~)

We cannot use *no* on its own. We use *none* instead.

There are several routes up the mountain, but none (of them) are easy.

(NOT ..., ~~*but no are easy.*~~)

Pronouns

175 Personal pronouns

A Introduction

Personal pronouns are words like *I*, *me*, *you*, or *he*. There are some examples in this real conversation. Avril and Lucy are talking about Lucy's brother.

WHAT DOES MATTHEW LOOK LIKE?

Avril: *If we said to you now, 'What does Matthew look like?' you probably wouldn't be able to give as good a description as we could.*

Lucy: *Oh yes, I could.*

Avril: *All right then. What does he look like?*

Lucy: *No, you describe him to me and I'll tell you if you're right.*

Avril: *Well, he's quite tall, over six foot. And he's thin.*

Lucy: *Well, yes, I suppose so.*

Avril: *Well, in proportion with his height, and he's got fairly short black hair.*

Lucy: *Not very short.*

Avril: *Well, perhaps it's grown since I saw him.*

Lucy: *It's short as opposed to long.*

Avril: *I couldn't tell you what colour his eyes were.*

'Personal pronouns' do not always refer to people, although they often do. 'Personal' means first person (*I*, *me*, *we*, *us*), second person (*you*), and third person (*he*, *him*, *she*, *her*, *it*, *they*, *them*).

We cannot normally leave out a pronoun.

Well, he's quite tall. (NOT ~~*Well, is quite tall.*~~)

You describe him to me. (NOT ~~*You describe to me.*~~)

But we can leave out some subject pronouns in informal speech. > 26A
(I) suppose so.

NOTE

a Pronouns often have a weak spoken form, > 289.

b We can leave out a pronoun to avoid repeating it.
Matthew has got short black hair and is quite tall / and he's quite tall.

Pronouns

B Subject and object forms

These are the forms of the personal pronouns.

| | Singular | | Plural | |
|---------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Subject | Object | Subject | Object |
| First person | <i>I</i> | <i>me</i> | <i>we</i> | <i>us</i> |
| Second person | <i>you</i> | <i>you</i> | <i>you</i> | <i>you</i> |
| Third person | <i>he</i> | <i>him</i> | <i>they</i> | <i>them</i> |
| | <i>she</i> | <i>her</i> | | |
| | <i>it</i> | <i>it</i> | | |

We use the subject form when the pronoun is the subject of a finite clause.

I couldn't tell you.

Well, he's quite tall.

We use the object form when the pronoun is the object of a verb or preposition.

If you know what Matthew looks like, describe him to me.

Avril isn't on holiday. I saw her yesterday.

We also use the object form when the pronoun is on its own. Compare these two answers.

Who invited Matthew? ~ Me.

Who invited Matthew? ~ I did.

After *be* we normally use the object form.

The young man looked rather like Matthew, but it wasn't him.

It wasn't us who caused all the trouble.

NOTE

The subject pronoun is sometimes used after *be*.

The young man looked rather like Matthew, but it wasn't he.

The subject pronoun here (*he*) is old-fashioned and formal. The object pronoun (*him*) is more usual.

TIP

Say *It's me* and not *It is I*.

C And or or with pronouns

We can use *and* or *or* to combine a pronoun with a noun phrase or with another pronoun. We do this especially with *I/me* and *you*.

Matthew and I are good friends.

Lucy didn't know whether to ring you or me.

Would you and your sisters like to come with us?

It's a present from Matthew and me.

We normally put *I/me* after *and* rather than before it.

(NOT ~~*I and Matthew are good friends.*~~)

NOTE

Pronoun usage with *and* or *or* is complicated. In informal English *me* is sometimes used in subject position, although it is not generally regarded as good English.

Matthew and me are good friends.

You or him can have a turn now.

There is a feeling among some English speakers that *I* is more correct than *me* in these patterns. So *and I* is sometimes used in positions where we would expect *and me*.

It's a present from Matthew and I.

TIP

After *and*, choose the pronoun form as if it was on its own.

On its own

After *and*

I'm going out.

Lucy and I are going out.

Tom was with me.

Tom was with Lucy and me.

D Nouns and pronouns

We do not usually use a pronoun together with a noun.

Matthew is quite tall.

(NOT ~~*Matthew he's quite tall.*~~)

The two girls were talking about Matthew.

(NOT ~~*The two girls they were talking about Matthew.*~~)

But in informal speech we sometimes mention the topic of a sentence and then use a pronoun to refer to it.

Matthew, he's quite tall.

Those new people, I saw them yesterday.

We make clear what the topic is before we continue with the message.

In informal speech we can also use the following pattern to emphasize a topic.

He's quite tall, Matthew.

I saw them yesterday, those new people.

When the topic is the subject of the sentence, we can use an auxiliary verb.

He's quite tall, is Matthew.

He's quite tall, Matthew is.

It looks awful, does that colour.

It looks awful, that colour does.

NOTE

We sometimes use a phrase after a pronoun to make it clear who we mean.

We left-handed people should stick together.

You kids had better go inside.

Look at her over there.

E Noun or pronoun?

We use a third-person pronoun instead of a full noun phrase when it is clear what we mean. In the conversation in A, Matthew is mentioned only once.

What does Matthew look like?

After that Avril and Lucy refer to him using pronouns because they know who they are talking about.

What does he look like?

You describe him.

Well, he's quite tall.

But we sometimes need to use a noun rather than a pronoun, even for someone who has been mentioned before. Look at this paragraph from a novel.

When I first saw Tilly, she was twelve and fat. I was seven. She was tall even then, nearly as tall as Mum, and putting on too much weight. Mum used to encourage her to eat all the wrong things, chocolate bars and chips, crisps and cakes. Most days there'd be a dairy-cream sponge or a black forest cake defrosting on the kitchen counter. I believe Mum encouraged Tilly to eat because she wanted her to get fat and be unattractive to men. Women get like that with teenage girls, they can't face the competition. By the time Tilly was a teenager she was huge, all of fourteen stone.

(from B. Vine Gallowglass)

Because the paragraph is about two females, it is sometimes necessary to specify *Mum* or *Tilly*.

Mum used to encourage her to eat all the wrong things.

The writer says *Mum* here to make it clear which person is meant. But *her* is possible later in the same sentence because it is clear from the context that *her* is Tilly.

For more examples of repeated nouns, > 22B.

NOTE

A third-person pronoun usually refers back to something already mentioned, but it can sometimes refer forwards.

When he got home, Matthew rang to thank us.

F He, she, it, and they

He/him, she/her, and *it* are singular. *He* means a male person, *she* means a female person, and *it* means something not human such as a thing, an action or an idea.

Let's invite Mark. He's great fun. I like him.

Let's invite Anna. She's great fun. I like her.

Let's play that game. It's great fun. I like it.

Here are some contexts where we use *it*.

A thing: *I've lost my wallet. I can't find it anywhere.*

A substance: *Look at this water. It's a funny colour.*

An animal: *What's that? Is it a beetle?* > Note a

- An action: *I've been working out in the gym. It was exhausting.*
 A situation: *We were left without any money. It was awful.*
 A feeling: *Love makes the world go round, doesn't it?*
 A statement or idea: *Everyone knows we cheated. It was obvious.*
 As an empty subject: *It's raining.* > 36
 To give emphasis: *It was Matthew the girls were talking about.* > 38D

We also use *it* to mean 'the unknown person' when we are talking about someone's identity.

There's someone at the door. It's probably the postman.

Compare these sentences.

Don't you remember Celia? She was a great friend of mine.

Don't you remember who first introduced us? It was Celia.

They/them is plural and can refer to both people and things.

I like your cousins. They're great fun.

I like these pictures. They're great.

NOTE

- a We can use *he* or *she* for an animal if we know the animal's sex and we feel sympathy or interest. Compare these sentences.
He's a lovely little dog.
It's a really vicious dog.
- b We sometimes use *it* for a human baby of unknown sex.
Look at that baby. It's been sick.
- c We do not normally stress *it*, but we can stress *this/that*.
Good heavens! Half past ten! Is THAT the right time?
 (NOT ~~Is it the right time?~~)

G Referring to a person of unknown sex

There is a problem in English when we want to talk about a single person whose sex is not known. Here are three possible ways.

- 1 *When the millionth visitor arrives, he will be given a free ticket. His photo will be taken by a press photographer.*
- 2 *When the millionth visitor arrives, he or she will be given a free ticket. His or her photo will be taken by a press photographer.*
- 3 *When the millionth visitor arrives, they will be given a free ticket. Their photo will be taken by a press photographer.*

The use of *he* in (1) is widely seen as sexist and is less common than it used to be. But (2) can be clumsy and is often avoided, especially in speech. In (3) *they* is used with a singular meaning. Some people see this as incorrect, but it is very common, especially in informal English.

The problem disappears if we can use a plural noun. Compare these sentences.

A student may resit the exam if he or she fails at the first attempt.

Students may resit the exam if they fail at the first attempt.

TIP

When you're talking about a person and you don't know if it's a man or a woman, ...

say *They'll win a million pounds*

but write *He or she will win a million pounds*.

H We/us

We/us means the speaker and one or more other people. It can include or exclude the person spoken to.

We're late. ~ Yes, we'd better hurry, hadn't we? (we = you and I)

We're late. ~ You'd better hurry then, hadn't you? (we = he/she and I)

176 *You, one, we, and they* referring to people in general

A You and one

We can use *you* to mean 'people in general'.

You can wear anything you like to the theatre these days.

How do you train a police dog?

You don't like to complain, do you?

We can also use the third-person pronoun *one* with the same meaning.

One can wear anything one likes to the theatre these days.

How does one train a police dog?

One doesn't like to complain, does one?

One is more formal than *you* in these sentences. It is much less common than the equivalent pronoun in some other languages.

One can be an object.

Ice-cream is full of calories. It makes one hotter, not cooler.

It also has a possessive form *one's* and a reflexive/emphatic form *oneself*.

One should look after one's health.

One should look after oneself.

TIP

Avoid using *one* as a third-person pronoun

Say *I hope so*, not ~~*One hopes so*~~.

NOTE

In Britain *one* is typical of upper-class speech, especially *one* used instead of *I*.

I hope/One hopes things will improve.

The pronoun *one* is not often used in American English.

B We/us

We can also mean 'people in general', 'all of us', especially when we talk about shared knowledge and behaviour.

We know that nuclear power has its dangers.

Language enables us to communicate.

We are 93 million miles from the sun.

C They

We can use *they* to mean 'other people in general', for example when we are talking about general beliefs.

They say / People say you can book cheaper flights on the Internet.

They say / Experts say the earth is getting warmer.

We can also use *they* to mean the relevant authorities.

They're going to increase taxes.

They should put a speed limit on this road.

They always show old films on TV on holiday weekends.

We cannot use *one* in these contexts.

NOT ~~*One says the earth is getting warmer.*~~

NOT ~~*One is going to increase taxes.*~~

For a comparison with the passive, e.g. *Taxes are going to be increased*, > 88D.

177 Reflexive pronouns, emphatic pronouns, and each other

A Form

We form reflexive and emphatic pronouns with *self/selves*.

| | Singular | Plural |
|---------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| First person | <i>myself</i> | <i>ourselves</i> |
| Second person | <i>yourself</i> | <i>yourselves</i> |
| Third person | <i>himself, herself, itself</i> | <i>themselves</i> |

For *oneself*, > 176A.

B The use of reflexive pronouns

We use a reflexive pronoun as an object when it refers to the same thing as the subject.

I fell over and hurt myself.

You'd better prepare yourself for a shock.

The country declared itself independent.

If we're attacked, we will defend ourselves.

The company's directors have given themselves a big pay rise.

Compare the reflexive pronoun and the personal pronoun.

Luke is going to Italy, so he's teaching himself Italian.

Luke is going to Italy, so I'm teaching him Italian.

Debbie found herself a seat at the back and sat down.

Nicola arrived late, but Debbie found her a seat at the back.

NOTE

We can use a reflexive pronoun in a sub-clause.

We saw a man fall and hurt himself.

Giving themselves a pay rise wasn't very diplomatic of the directors.

C Preposition + pronoun

After a preposition we sometimes use a personal pronoun (*me, you*, etc) to refer back to the subject, and we sometimes use a reflexive pronoun (*myself, yourself*, etc).

We use a personal pronoun after a preposition of place when it is clear that the pronoun must refer to the subject.

I didn't have my driving licence with me.

My mother likes to have the family all around her.

We sometimes use a reflexive pronoun to make the meaning clear or to emphasize it.

Tom read an article about himself in the newspaper.

(The article was about Tom and not about someone else.)

I bought these chocolates for myself.

(The chocolates are for me and not for anyone else.)

We use a reflexive pronoun to refer to the subject after combinations such as verb + preposition, adjective + preposition, or noun + preposition.

The man next to me kept talking to himself.

I was annoyed with myself for making a mistake.

If you're going to succeed, you must have confidence in yourself.

NOTE

When a reflexive pronoun comes after a preposition, it can refer back to the object rather than the subject.

I showed Tom the article about himself in the newspaper.

D Idioms with reflexive pronouns

There are some idiomatic uses of a verb + reflexive pronoun.

I hope you enjoy yourself. (= have a good time)

Did the children behave (themselves)? (= behave well)

Can we just help ourselves? (= take e.g. food)

In the idiom with *help*, we stress *self/selves*.

By yourself means 'alone'.

Lauren was sitting in the corner by herself / on her own.

Some verbs taking a reflexive pronoun in other languages do not do so in English.

We'll have to get up early.

Won't you sit down?

I feel so helpless.

Can you remember what the man looked like?

These verbs include: *afford, approach, complain, concentrate, feel + adjective, get up, hurry (up), lie down, relax, remember, rest, sit down, stand up, wake up, wonder, worry.*

These verbs do not usually take a reflexive pronoun: *bath, change* (your clothes), *dress, shave, undress, wash.*

Tom dressed quickly and went down to breakfast.

We can also say *Tom got dressed quickly.* > 90B

But we can use a reflexive pronoun with an action needing skill or effort.

The old man was unable to dress himself.

Dry in this context always has an object.

Tom dried himself/dried his hair on a large yellow bath towel.

NOTE

We can use a reflexive pronoun after *be, feel, look, or seem.*

Claire didn't look herself/her usual self yesterday.

(Perhaps she looked unwell.)

E Emphatic pronouns

The emphatic pronouns (*myself, yourself*, etc) have the same form as reflexive pronouns. (> A) We use an emphatic pronoun to emphasize a noun phrase. *Self/selves* is stressed.

Walt Disney himself was the voice of Mickey Mouse.

(Walt Disney and not someone else)

The town itself is very ordinary, but it is set in lovely countryside.

(the town and not its surroundings)

An emphatic pronoun can also mean 'without help'.

We built the garage ourselves.

Did you do all this electrical wiring yourself?

In this meaning, the pronoun usually comes at the end of the sentence.

By + reflexive pronoun has a similar meaning. > D

Did you do all this electrical wiring by yourself/on your own?

F A special use of *myself* and *yourself*

Myself and *yourself* are sometimes used instead of *I/me* and *you* even when there is no reflexive or emphatic meaning. This can happen after *and* or *or*.

The Sales Manager and myself will be attending the meeting.

Enquiries should be answered either by Alice or yourself.

This usage is rather formal.

Myself sometimes means 'as for me', 'as far as I am concerned'.

You can deal with the matter. Myself, I'll be on holiday.

I can't stand football, myself.

When used in this way, *myself* is usually separated off by a comma.

G Each other / one another

Look at this example.

Jane and Amy mailed each other.

Jane and Amy mailed one another.

These sentences both mean that Jane mailed Amy and Amy mailed Jane. The mail went in both directions.

Here are some more examples.

The students help each other/one another with their homework.

We pass each other/one another in the corridor sometimes.

Nigel and Chloe had their arms around each other/one another.

The drivers blamed each other/one another for the accident.

There is a possessive form *each other's/one another's*.

Nigel and Chloe were looking into each other's/one another's eyes.

Compare *each other* and the reflexive pronoun.



They're looking at each other. *They're looking at themselves.*

NOTE

There is also a pattern with *Each ... the other*.

Each driver blamed the other for the accident.

Each of them was looking into the other's eyes.

Compare *one ... the other*, where the action goes one way but is not returned.

An airline once employed two psychiatrists to watch the passengers and arrest anyone they thought might be a terrorist. On their first flight one of the psychiatrists arrested the other.

178 Overview: personal pronouns, possessives, and reflexives

| | Personal pronouns > 175 | | Possessives > 164 | | Reflexive pronouns > 177 |
|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| | Subject | Object | Det | Pron | |
| Singular | | | | | |
| First person | <i>I</i> | <i>me</i> | <i>my</i> | <i>mine</i> | <i>myself</i> |
| Second person | <i>you</i> | <i>you</i> | <i>your</i> | <i>yours</i> | <i>yourself</i> |
| Third person | <i>he</i> | <i>him</i> | <i>his</i> | <i>his</i> | <i>himself</i> |
| | <i>she</i> | <i>her</i> | <i>her</i> | <i>hers</i> | <i>herself</i> |
| | <i>it</i> | <i>it</i> | <i>its</i> | | <i>itself</i> |
| Plural | | | | | |
| First person | <i>we</i> | <i>us</i> | <i>our</i> | <i>ours</i> | <i>ourselves</i> |
| Second person | <i>you</i> | <i>you</i> | <i>your</i> | <i>yours</i> | <i>yourselves</i> |
| Third person | <i>they</i> | <i>them</i> | <i>their</i> | <i>theirs</i> | <i>themselves</i> |

179 One and ones

- A** We sometimes use *one* or *ones* instead of a noun. Here are some examples from real conversations.

I felt I could afford a bigger car, and the one I'd got was on its last legs, really. (the one = the car)

Now I will think everywhere I go on an aeroplane, 'Is this one going to come down?' (this one = this aeroplane)

And what other stamps do you like besides Polish ones? ~ English ones.

We've got a lot of those. (English ones = English stamps)

One is singular and *ones* is plural. We use *one/ones* to avoid repeating a noun when it is clear from the context what we mean.

We cannot replace an uncountable noun with *one/ones*, but we can leave out the noun.

Do you prefer pop music or classical?

- B** There are some patterns where we can either replace the noun with *one/ones* or simply leave out the noun.

After a demonstrative

These rings are expensive. This (one) costs £5,000.

After *each*, *any*, *another*, *either* and *neither*

The houses all look the same, but each (one) is slightly different.

Don't lose that key because I haven't got another (one).

After *which*

I couldn't answer some of the questions.

~ *Which (ones) did you find difficult?*

After a superlative

These photos are the nicest (ones).

- C** Sometimes when we leave out the noun, we have to use *one/ones* in its place. We cannot leave out *one/ones* in these structures.

After an adjective

I had an accident but not a serious one.

We've still got a few games to play, but there aren't any easy ones.

After *the*

This car is much better than the one we had before.

These sweets are the ones I like.

After *every*

We've been on lots of day trips, and every one was enjoyable.

There are some exceptions to the rule that we must use *one/ones* after an adjective. We can sometimes leave it out when we use two adjectives.

Is this the old price or the new (one)?

We've got French books and German (ones).

We can also leave out *one/ones* after *the* + adjective of colour.

My toothbrush is the blue (one).

NOTE

In informal speech you may hear *my one* instead of *mine*, *your one* instead of *yours*, etc.

This is your room key, but where's mine?/where's my one? (BUT NOT ~~Where's my?~~)

For *mine*, *yours*, etc > 164A,B.

- D** We can replace *a/an* + noun with *one*.

I've got a map here if you need one. (= a map)

I'm not used to weddings. I haven't been to one for ages. (= a wedding)

Compare *one/some* and *it/they*.

I haven't got a backpack. I'll have to buy one. (= a backpack)

I haven't got any boots. I'll have to buy some. (= some boots)

I've got a backpack. You can borrow it. (= the backpack)

I've got some boots, but they might not fit you. (= the boots)

One and *some* are indefinite, like *a*. *It* and *they* are definite, like *the*.

180 Everyone, something, etc

- A** *Every, some, any, and no* form compounds ending in *-one/-body* and *-thing*. They also form compound adverbs ending in *-where*.

| | <i>every-</i> | <i>some-</i> | <i>any-</i> | <i>no-</i> |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>-one</i> | <i>everyone</i> | <i>someone</i> | <i>anyone</i> | <i>no one</i> |
| <i>-body</i> | <i>everybody</i> | <i>somebody</i> | <i>anybody</i> | <i>nobody</i> |
| <i>-thing</i> | <i>everything</i> | <i>something</i> | <i>anything</i> | <i>nothing</i> |
| <i>-where</i> | <i>everywhere</i> | <i>somewhere</i> | <i>anywhere</i> | <i>nowhere</i> |

- B** *Everyone/everybody* means 'all the people'.

Everyone knows that red means danger.

Someone/somebody means 'a person'.

Someone in the next street is having a party.

No one/nobody means 'no people'.

Nobody will believe such a ridiculous story.

Here *-one* and *-body* have the same meaning.

NOTE

- a *Every one* (two words) has a different meaning from *everyone* (one word).
The comedian told several jokes. Everyone laughed loudly.
 (*everyone* = all the people; the stress is on *every-*.)
The comedian told several jokes. Every one of them I had heard before.
 (*every one* = every joke; the stress is on *one*.)
- b *All* and *none* do not normally mean 'everyone' and 'nobody'. But we can say *all of / none of the people*.
- c Compare *someone* and *one*.
Someone knows what happened. (= a person)
One knows what happened. (= people in general > 176A)

- C** We use *-thing* for things, actions, messages, etc.

I've got everything I need, thank you.

Something was happening at last.

It's best to keep quiet and say nothing.

NOTE

In speech *or something* can be used to show that the speaker is being vague.
I can grab a sandwich or something for lunch. (= or something similar)

- D** *Everywhere* means '(in) all places'.

I've been looking everywhere for you.

Somewhere means '(in) a place'.

Have you put my bag somewhere?

Nowhere means '(in) no places'.

There's nowhere to sit down, I'm afraid.

Pronouns

NOTE

in informal American English, *everyplace*, *someplace*, *anyplace*, *noplace* are also used.

- E** The difference between *some-* and *any-* in compounds is like the difference between *some* and *any* on their own. > 172

There's someone at the door.

I'm not expecting anyone.

Park somewhere along here. Anywhere will do.

- F** Pronouns in *-one/-body* have a possessive form.

The guide collected everyone's passports.

I can get a lift in somebody's car.

- G** We can use an adjective after *everyone*, etc.

I heard something interesting today.

Let's go out somewhere nice.

Have you got anything cheaper?

We can also use a phrase or clause.

Nobody in our group is interested in sightseeing.

I've told you everything I know.

Before *every-*, *any-*, and *no-*, we can use adverbs such as *absolutely*, *almost*, *hardly*, *nearly*, and *practically*.

I've done absolutely nothing with my life!

This plant will grow almost anywhere.

We can use *else* after *everyone*, etc.

Is there anything else you want? (= any other thing)

I don't like it here. Let's go somewhere else. (= to another place)

NOTE

- a A phrase with *-one/-body + else* can be possessive.

But everyone else's parents let them stay out late.

- b We cannot use *than* after *else*. We say *other than*.

How do you get kids to eat something other than fast food?

- H** *Everyone*, *something*, etc take a singular verb.

Is everything all right? Someone has left a message.

After *-one/-body* we normally use *they/their*, even though the verb is singular.

Everyone was asked what they thought.

Somebody has left their mobile here. ~ I think it's Paul's.

NOTE

Someone and *something* usually have a singular meaning.

Someone was injured in the accident. (= one person)

Some people were injured in the accident. (= more than one person)

Something was stolen. (= one thing)

Some things were stolen. (= more than one thing)

Adjectives

181 Introduction

- A** This paragraph contains a number of adjectives.

Paradise Apartments are an excellent choice for an independent summer holiday. These large, comfortable apartments are along an inland waterway in a quiet residential area. The friendly resort of Gulftown with its beautiful white sandy beach is only a short walk away. The situation is perfect, and our charges are very reasonable.

An adjective modifies a noun. The adjectives here express physical qualities (*large, sandy*) or an opinion (*excellent, beautiful*), or they classify something (*residential* so not *industrial* or *rural*).

- B** An adjective always has the same form. There are no endings for number or gender.

an old man an old woman old people

But some adjectives can have comparative and superlative endings. > 203

My wife is older than I am. This is the oldest building in the town.

Most adjectives have no special form to show that they are adjectives. But there are some endings that we use when we form adjectives from other words.

a beautiful view a sandy beach a residential area

Some adjectives have the same form as adverbs, e.g. *fast, hard*. > 192C

- C** We can use two or more adjectives together.

a large, comfortable apartment

a beautiful white sandy beach

For details about the order of adjectives, > 185.

For the use of a comma between adjectives, > 185E.

We can put an adverb of degree (e.g. *very, really*) in front of most adjectives.

a very large apartment

a really beautiful beach

But we do not normally use an adverb of degree with a classifying adjective such as *residential* or *inland*.

(NOT ~~a very inland waterway~~)

182 The position of adjectives

- A** There are two main positions where an adjective can go. It can go before a noun, or it can go after a linking verb such as *be*.

Adjectives

The position before a noun is called 'attributive'.

It is a large apartment.

Canterbury is a lovely city.

A noisy party kept us awake.

We face a difficult problem.

The position after a linking verb such as *be* is called 'predicative'.

The apartment is large.

Canterbury is lovely.

The party seemed very noisy.

Things are getting difficult.

We can also sometimes put an adjective after a noun. > 184

I've got a friend keen on fishing.

NOTE

- a An adjective can also be an object complement.

Why must you make things difficult?

A noisy party kept us awake.

- b We can use some adjectives in a one-word reply or in an exclamation.

I've got enough money. ~ Oh, good.

How cold your hands are!

- B** We can use some adjectives after *as* or *than*.

Could you let me know as soon as possible, please?

Everything was the same as usual.

Customers don't want to spend any more money than necessary.

I went to bed later than usual.

- C** We can sometimes use an adjective immediately after a conjunction.

Pick the fruit when ripe. (= when it is ripe)

Roast the potatoes until crisp. (= until they are crisp)

If possible, I'd like some time to think it over. (= if it is possible)

Although confident of victory, we knew it would not be easy. (= although we were confident)

This pattern is used mainly in written English and especially in instructions telling you how to do something.

- D** In literary English, an adjective can go before or after a noun phrase, separated from it by a comma.

Uncertain, the woman hesitated and looked around.

The weather, bright and sunny, had brought everyone out of doors.

183 Adjectives used in one position only

- A** Attributive only

Some adjectives can go in attributive position (before a noun) but not in predicative position.

*The house is right on a **main** road.* (BUT NOT ~~*The road is main.*~~)

I woke in utter darkness.

The outer door is only locked at night.

These adjectives are attributive only: *chief, elder* (= older), *eldest* (= oldest), *eventual, former* (= earlier), *indoor, inner, lone, main, mere* (a mere child = only a child), *only, outdoor, outer, own, premier, principal* (= main), *sheer* (= complete), *sole* (= only), *upper, utter* (= complete).

NOTE

- a Same cannot be predicative except with *the*.

Yes, I had the same experience.

Yes, my experience was the same.

- b In general, a noun as modifier is attributive.

a water pipe a tennis club afternoon tea

But a noun saying what something is made of can go in either position.

It's a plastic pipe. / The pipe is plastic.

B Predicative only

Some adjectives can go in predicative position (after a linking verb such as *be*) but not in attributive position.

The children were soon asleep. (BUT NOT ~~*the asleep children*~~)

I was pleased to see my friends again.

One person was ill and couldn't come.

These groups of words are predicative only.

Some words with the prefix *a-*: *afraid, alike, alive, alone, asleep, awake*

Some words expressing feelings: *ashamed, content, glad, pleased, upset*

Some words to do with health: *fine, ill, unwell, well*, > Note.

There is sometimes another word of similar meaning that we can use before a noun.

a sleeping child or *being asleep* (BUT NOT ~~*an asleep child*~~)

a living person or *being alive* (BUT NOT ~~*an alive person*~~)

the frightened dog or *being frightened/afraid* (BUT NOT ~~*the afraid dog*~~)

a satisfied customer or *feeling satisfied/pleased* (BUT NOT ~~*a pleased customer*~~)

a lonely feeling or *feeling lonely/alone* (BUT NOT ~~*an alone feeling*~~)

Ashamed, glad, pleased, and *upset* can come before a noun when they do not refer directly to a person.

an ashamed look the glad news a pleased expression an upset stomach

NOTE

Ill and *well* referring to health can sometimes come before a noun. *Ill* can do this when it is modified by an adverb.

The doctor had been called out to a severely ill patient.

Well can come before a noun in a negative sentence.

My father is not a well man.

For more about *good* and *well*, > 192G.

184 Adjectives after nouns and pronouns

- A** Some adjectives can have a prepositional phrase after them.

*People were **anxious for** news.*

*The suitcase was **full of** old clothes.*

For more examples of adjectives with a preposition, > 225.

The adjective + prepositional phrase can go directly after the noun.

*People **anxious for** news kept ringing the emergency number.*

*I found **a suitcase full of** old clothes.*

But we cannot put it before the noun.

NOT ~~*A full of old clothes suitcase was found.*~~

NOTE

- a When an adjective is the object complement, it follows a noun or pronoun.
*The uncertainty was making people **anxious**.*
- b The adjective *available* can come before or after a noun
*None of the **available** dates are convenient.*
*None of the **dates available** (for travel) are convenient.*
Possible and *imaginable* can come after the noun when we use *every*, *all*, or a superlative adjective.
*We took the **shortest possible** route/the **shortest route possible**.*
*There were designs in **every imaginable** colour/every colour **imaginable**.*
- c The adjective also comes after the noun in a few titles and idiomatic phrases.
*the **Director General** the **Princess Royal** the **sum total***

- B** Sometimes the position of the adjective depends on the meaning.

*The amount of money **involved** is quite small. (= relevant)*

*It's a rather **involved** story. (= complicated)*

*The person **concerned** is out today, I'm afraid. (= relevant)*

*A number of **concerned** people have joined the protest. (= worried)*

*There were twenty people **present** at the meeting. (= there)*

*The **present** situation is extremely dangerous. (= now)*

*What would be the **responsible** course of action? (= sensible)*

*The person **responsible** for the mistake has been fired. (= whose fault it is)*

- C** Adjectives come after a compound with *every-*, *some-*, *any-*, and *no-*.

*Let's find **somewhere quiet**.*

*You mustn't do **anything silly**.*

185 The order of adjectives

- A** When two or more adjectives come before a noun, there is often a fixed order.

a beautiful sandy beach (NOT ~~*a sandy beautiful beach*~~)

a nice long blue skirt (NOT ~~*a blue long nice skirt*~~)

a new electronic device (NOT ~~*an electronic new device*~~)

The order of adjectives and noun modifiers depends mainly on the kind of meaning they express. Words like *beautiful* or *nice*, which express the

speaker's opinion, come first. Words expressing purpose or type, such as *electronic*, come later.

B We sometimes use two nouns together.

the town wall the Finance Minister winter evenings

Here we use the nouns *town* and *finance* like adjectives, to modify *wall* and *minister*. When we use both adjective and noun modifiers, then the adjectives come first.

the old town wall the former Finance Minister dark winter evenings

C The different kinds of modifier usually go in the following order. An adjective in Group 1 comes first, and a word from Group 11 goes closest to the noun.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1 Opinion: | <i>beautiful, nice, wonderful, excellent, awful, etc</i> |
| 2 Size: | <i>long, large, small, short, tall, etc</i> |
| 3 Most other qualities: | <i>clear, busy, famous, friendly, soft, quiet, etc</i> |
| 4 Age: | <i>new, old</i> |
| 5 Shape: | <i>round, square, fat, thin, wide, narrow, etc</i> |
| 6 Colour: | <i>blue, red, white, black, etc</i> |
| 7 Participle forms: | <i>running, missing, covered, broken, etc</i> |
| 8 Origin: | <i>British, Italian, American, Chinese, etc</i> |
| 9 Material: | <i>sandy, wooden, brick, paper, plastic, etc</i> |
| 10 Type: | <i>electronic, human, chemical, domestic, urban, money (problems), etc</i> |
| 11 Purpose: | <i>alarm (clock), tennis (court), walking (boots), etc</i> |

Here are some examples.

an old cardboard box (age + material)

a German industrial company (origin + type)

a large black pocket handkerchief (size + colour + type)

plastic packaging materials (material + purpose)

a small square room (size + shape)

a new improved formula (age + participle form)

a nice, friendly person (opinion + quality)

two excellent public tennis courts (opinion + type + purpose)

In general, the modifier closest to the noun has the closest association with the noun. For example, in the phrase *two excellent public tennis courts*, the word *tennis* is closely associated with *courts*, whereas *excellent* does not have such a clear connection with *courts*.

The rules are not absolute, and the order can sometimes be different. For example, we sometimes prefer to put a short adjective before a long one.

a big horrible building

NOTE

Old and *young* referring to people often come next to the noun.

a dignified old lady a pale young man

Here *old* and *young* are not strongly stressed.

- D** A modifier can consist of a two-word compound.

*a powerful **high-speed** electric drill*

*an **18-carat** gold chain*

*an old **pale blue** football shirt*

- E** Sometimes we use two adjectives of similar meaning, for example two from Group 3 in C. When this happens, the shorter one often comes first.

*a **bright, cheerful** smile a **soft, comfortable** chair*

Sometimes two different orders are both possible.

*a **peaceful, happy** place / a **happy, peaceful** place*

We often put a comma (or a short pause in speech) between two adjectives of similar meaning.

- F** We sometimes put *and* between two attributive adjectives.

*a **soft, comfortable** chair / a **soft and comfortable** chair*

We can do this when the adjectives have a similar meaning. But we do not normally use *and* between adjectives with different kinds of meanings.

*a **beautiful sandy** beach* (opinion + material)

We use *and* when the adjectives refer to different parts of something.

*a **black and white** sweater* (partly black and partly white)

We use *but* when the adjectives refer to two qualities in contrast.

*a **cheap but effective** solution*

- G** The order of predicative adjectives is less fixed than the order before a noun. We normally use *and* before the last adjective.

*The chair was **soft and comfortable**.*

*We were all **cold, wet, and hungry**.*

An adjective expressing an opinion often comes last.

*The city is **old and beautiful**.*

We can use *but* when the two qualities are in contrast.

*The solution is **cheap but effective** / **cheap and effective**.*

NOTE

In informal English we can use *nice and / lovely and* before an adjective expressing a desirable quality.

*The room was **nice and warm**.* (= nicely warm)

186 Gradable and ungradable adjectives

Most adjectives are gradable – they express qualities which can exist in different grades or degrees. For example, we can talk about different degrees

of warmth, difficulty, or tiredness.

It's very/extremely warm today.

I thought the test questions were fairly difficult.

I feel a bit tired now.

Some adjectives are ungradable. Many of them express qualities such as magnificence or perfection, which cannot exist in different degrees. We do not normally use words like *very*, *extremely*, *fairly*, or *a bit* with an ungradable adjective, but we can use *absolutely*.

It's absolutely boiling today. I feel absolutely exhausted now.

With some ungradable adjectives we can also use *completely* or *totally*.

You're asking something that's completely impossible, I'm afraid.

It's a totally incredible story.

Here are some examples of ungradable adjectives.

| | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>absurd</i> | <i>delicious</i> | <i>exhausting</i> | <i>ideal</i> | <i>stunning</i> |
| <i>amazed</i> | <i>delighted</i> | <i>extraordinary</i> | <i>impossible</i> | <i>terrible</i> |
| <i>amazing</i> | <i>determined</i> | <i>false</i> | <i>incomprehensible</i> | <i>terrific</i> |
| <i>appalled</i> | <i>devastated</i> | <i>fascinated</i> | <i>incredible</i> | <i>terrified</i> |
| <i>appalling</i> | <i>devastating</i> | <i>fascinating</i> | <i>ludicrous</i> | <i>terrifying</i> |
| <i>awful</i> | <i>dreadful</i> | <i>ghastly</i> | <i>magnificent</i> | <i>thrilled</i> |
| <i>brilliant</i> | <i>enormous</i> | <i>gorgeous</i> | <i>marvellous</i> | <i>thrilling</i> |
| <i>certain</i> | <i>essential</i> | <i>horrible</i> | <i>perfect</i> | <i>useless</i> |
| <i>complete</i> | <i>exhausted</i> | <i>huge</i> | <i>ridiculous</i> | <i>vast</i> |

We can use *really* and *so* with both gradable and ungradable adjectives.

The food was really good/so good.

The food was really delicious/so delicious.

TIP

Don't use *very* with an ungradable adjective like *freezing* or *excellent*.

Say *It's freezing* or *It's very cold* but NOT *It's very freezing*.

Say *It's excellent* or *It's very good* but NOT *It's very excellent*.

NOTE

- a Sometimes in informal speech, *rather*, *fairly*, or *pretty* is used with an ungradable adjective.

The task is fairly impossible. I feel pretty exhausted now.

- b For the meaning of *quite* with a gradable/ungradable adjective, > 197.

187 Amusing and amused, interesting and interested

Compare the adjectives ending in *-ing* and *-ed*.

*The film made us laugh a lot. It was very **amusing**.*

*I talked to an **interesting** man.*

*I find these statistics **confusing**.*

*This weather is **depressing**, isn't it?*

Adjectives ending in *-ing* express the idea that something affects us. A film is *amusing* because it makes us laugh. It can also be *interesting*, *exciting*, or *boring*.

*The audience laughed a lot. They were very **amused**.*

*I was **interested** in what he was telling me.*

*I'm **confused** by these statistics.*

*Don't you feel **depressed** when it rains so much?*

Adjectives ending in *-ed* express the feelings we have about something. We are *amused* when we see something funny. We can also be *interested*, *excited*, or *bored*.

Some pairs of adjectives like this are:

alarming, amazing, amusing, annoying, boring, confusing, depressing, disappointing, exciting, exhausting, fascinating, frightening, interesting, pleasing, puzzling, relaxing, shocking, surprising, thrilling, tiring, worrying

alarmed, amazed, amused, annoyed, bored, confused, depressed, disappointed, excited, exhausted, fascinated, frightened, interested, pleased, puzzled, relaxed, shocked, surprised, thrilled, tired, worried

188 The + adjective

A The poor, the disabled, etc

We can use *the* + adjective to refer to some groups of people in society.

*In those days **the poor** had a miserable time.*

(= poor people in general)

*There are more churchgoers among **the old** than among **the young**.*

(= old/young people in general)

We can also say *poor people*, *old people*, etc with the same general meaning.

*In those days **poor people** had a miserable time.*

When we want to talk about a specific person or group of people, we use *a young man*, *the old people*, etc.

*A **young man** has been arrested.* (NOT ~~A young has~~...)

***The old people** have gone on a coach trip.* (NOT ~~The old have gone~~...)

The + adjective takes a plural verb.

***The old** are more frequently ill than the rest of the population.*

But we do not add an *-s* to the adjective. (NOT ~~the olds~~)

Some adjectives and participle forms used in this way are: *blind*, *dead*, *deaf*, *disabled*, *disadvantaged*, *elderly*, *handicapped*, *homeless*, *hungry*, *living*, *middle-aged*, *old*, *poor*, *privileged*, *rich*, *sick*, *sighted*, *strong*, *underprivileged*, *unemployed*, *weak*, *young*.

The adjective can have an adverb in front of it.

the very rich the severely disabled the partially sighted

Some adjectives normally have an adverb.

the more/less fortunate the mentally ill

NOTE

- a In a few contexts, *the* + participle can mean a specific group of people rather than people in general.
The injured were taken to hospital.
It can also mean one specific person.
The accused was found not guilty.
- b There are a few words that can come after *a/an* referring to a specific person.
Now a superstar, she was an unknown only two years ago.
- c There are a few adjectives that we can use as nouns, such as colour words. They can form a plural with *-s*.
a black (= a black person) *the Greens* (= supporters of the green movement)
- d Some adjectives of nationality can be used with *the* to mean a whole people, e.g. *the French, the Swiss*.

B *The supernatural, the absurd, etc*

There are some adjectives and participle forms that we can use after *the* to refer to things in general which have a particular quality.

Lots of people believe in the supernatural.

It was a journey into the unknown.

The supernatural means 'supernatural happenings in general'.

Here *the* + adjective/participle takes a singular verb.

The new takes over from the old.

Some words used in this way are *absurd, mysterious, new, old, ordinary, supernatural, unexplained, unknown*.

C *The unexpected, the good thing, etc*

There are a few words that we can use after *the* with a more specific meaning.

And then, suddenly, the unexpected happened. (= something that was unexpected)

Have you heard the latest? (= the latest news)

We fear the worst, but we must hope for the best.

At this time of year I leave home in the dark.

I'm sorry, but you're asking the impossible.

We use *the* + adjective/participle + *thing* to talk about a particular aspect of a situation. This pattern is rather informal.

The good thing about friends is that you can choose them, unlike relatives.

The annoying thing (about it) was that there were empty seats in the stadium, but they still wouldn't let us in.

We cannot leave out *thing* here.

In this pattern with *thing* we can use many different words. Some of these are: *amazing, annoying, awful, best, funny, good, great, interesting, nice, odd, remarkable, sad, strange, worst*.

Adverbials

189 Introduction

- A** Each of these sentences contains one or more adverbials.

Slowly we were moving forwards.

The queue stretched around the block.

We have now been waiting forty minutes.

Eventually we reached the entrance.

Very often an adverbial is an extra element which could be left out. For example, we could say *We reached the entrance* without an adverbial. Putting in an adverbial adds something to the meaning. It tells us how, when, or where something happened.

- B** An adverbial can be a single word or a phrase. A common kind of adverbial is a prepositional phrase.

The queue stretched around the block.

I wish I'd stayed at home.

An adverbial can also be a simple adverb, e.g. *forwards*, *patiently*. There can be an adverb of degree (e.g. *very*) in front of the adverb.

The queue was moving forwards.

Everyone waited very patiently.

An adverbial can also be a noun phrase, although this is less frequent.

We have been waiting forty minutes.

I heard the news last week.

TIP

Try not to confuse the words *adverb* and *adverbial*.

An **adverb** is a word class, like a noun or adjective. An adverb is a word like *softly*, *carefully*, *now*, *today*, *there*, *certainly*.

An **adverbial** is a sentence element, like a subject or object. It can be a single-word adverb, or it can be a phrase. Examples are *badly*, *maybe*, *in a strange way*, *at the moment*, *outside the college*, *this morning*.

- C** Sometimes an adverbial is necessary to complete a sentence. > 4

The queue stretched around the block.

The first performance is tomorrow.

I put the tickets in my wallet.

Here the sentence would not make sense without the adverbial.

- D** Some adverbials can also be used to modify other parts of the sentence. For example, an adverbial can come after a noun. > 143

The performance yesterday was brilliant.

The car in front of us was going very slowly.

The announcement last week came as a shock to all of us.

An adverb of degree can modify an adjective or an adverb. > 196

*The performance was **quite** good.*

*Everyone waited **very** patiently.*

190 The position of adverbials

A Introduction

The position of adverbials is a complicated area of grammar. There is usually more than one possible place in a sentence where an adverbial can go. Basically, it can go at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a sentence.

Front position: ***Naturally**, we were hoping for good news.*

Mid position: *We were **naturally** hoping for good news.*

End position: *We were hoping for good news, **naturally**.*

For more details about each of these positions, > B–F.

Where we put an adverbial depends on a number of factors, such as what type of adverbial it is – manner, or time, or frequency, and so on. For details about the position of the different types of adverbial, > 193–202.

The best position may also depend on how long the adverbial is – whether it is a single word or a longer phrase. The choice is often a matter of style: for example, a long phrase goes better at the beginning or end of a sentence rather than in the middle.

*I can't answer that question **in a satisfactory way**.*

(NOT ~~*I can't in a satisfactory way answer that question.*~~)

Another factor is the information structure of the sentence. We sometimes choose to put an adverbial in front position to link with the previous sentence or to give greater emphasis to the adverbial. > 34A

*The man was taken to a police station. **There** he was searched and found to be carrying a quantity of heroin.*

*I had a long wait. **In the end** I got to see a doctor.*

Sometimes the choice of position can affect the meaning of a sentence.

***Clearly**, he didn't explain things.* (= It is clear that he didn't explain things.)

*He didn't explain things **clearly**.* (= He didn't explain things in a clear way.)

NOTE

We sometimes use commas with adverbials. Commas are more likely with longer phrases and with certain types of adverbial, such as a truth adverbial.

B Front position

Front position is at the beginning of a clause.

***Sure enough**, there was an enormous queue.*

***Just wait a moment**, could you?*

***After a while** I got used to the noise of the traffic.*

Most types of adverbial can go here.

Adverbials

If there is a conjunction (e.g. *but, because*), it comes before the adverbial in front position.

The noise of the traffic was terrible. But after a while I got used to it.
We invest in shares because in the long run their value will increase.

We often put an adverbial in front position when it relates to what has gone before.

We stopped to get some petrol. And then the car wouldn't start.
I've got a busy week. On Tuesday I have to go to London.

For more examples, > 34A.

C Mid position

Mid position is close to the verb. If there is an auxiliary verb, the adverbial usually comes immediately after it.

Those kids are always hanging around the streets.

The adverbial also comes immediately after the ordinary verb *be*.

This camera is definitely faulty.

If there is a simple-tense verb, the adverbial comes before it.

We usually deal with the mail first.

Here are some more examples of adverbials in mid position.

| Subject | (Auxiliary) (Ordinary verb <i>be</i>) | Adverbial | (Verb) | |
|------------------|--|------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| <i>It</i> | <i>doesn't</i> | <i>often</i> | <i>rain</i> | <i>in the Sahara.</i> |
| <i>I</i> | <i>'ve</i> | <i>just</i> | <i>had</i> | <i>a chat with Jill.</i> |
| <i>Things</i> | <i>will</i> | <i>very soon</i> | <i>start</i> | <i>to improve.</i> |
| <i>The story</i> | <i>is</i> | <i>probably</i> | | <i>untrue.</i> |
| <i>Someone</i> | | <i>probably</i> | <i>made</i> | <i>the story up.</i> |
| <i>You</i> | | <i>always</i> | <i>look</i> | <i>smart.</i> |

If there are two auxiliaries, then mid position is usually after the first one.

I've just been chatting to Jill.
Things will soon be looking up.

But adverbs of manner and some adverbs of degree go after the second auxiliary in mid position.

We've been patiently queuing for tickets.
You could have completely spoiled everything.

NOTE

In a question there is inversion of subject and auxiliary before an adverbial in mid position.

Have you just had a chat with Jill?
How does Matthew always look so smart?

Here the adverbial follows the subject.

D Phrases in mid position

Most types of adverbial can go in mid position. Adverbials in mid position are usually single-word adverbs, but a short phrase with an adverb of degree such as *very*, *quite*, or *hardly* is also possible.

I would very much like to visit your country.

We hardly ever go out in the evenings.

Most other kinds of phrase cannot go in mid position. Compare these sentences.

You always look smart. (adverb in mid position)

You look smart all the time. (phrase in end position)

(NOT ~~*You all the time look smart.*~~)

But phrases which are truth adverbials, comment adverbials, or linking adverbials can sometimes go in mid position.

The experiment has on the whole proved unsuccessful.

This pattern is rather formal.

E Mid position before an auxiliary

When there is an auxiliary verb, a mid-position adverb usually comes after the auxiliary. > C

I've always liked the Beatles.

You're obviously dying to make a start.

But we sometimes put an adverb after the subject and before an auxiliary or before the ordinary verb *be*.

I always did like the Beatles.

You obviously ARE in a bit of trouble.

This happens with emphatic *do*, or when the verb is stressed (*obviously ARE*).

Some adverbs such as truth adverbs usually come before a negative auxiliary.

You obviously haven't been listening to me.

It probably doesn't matter very much.

Some adverbs can come before or after the negative auxiliary. Look at these examples with *really* and *deliberately*.

I really don't know the answer. (I don't know at all.)

I don't really know the answer. (I am unsure.)

I deliberately didn't leave the computer on. (I left it off on purpose.)

I didn't deliberately leave the computer on. (I left it on by mistake.)

Look at these examples where words are left out after the auxiliary (*will*, *do*).

Will you be going to the party? ~ Yes, I probably will.

My husband usually gets up early, but I never do.

Here the adverb comes after the subject and before the auxiliary.

An adverb also goes before *have to*, *used to*, and *ought to*.

I never have to wait long for a bus.

There definitely used to be a footpath through the woods.

NOTE

With *used to* we can put the adverb after *used*, but this is rather formal.

There used definitely to be a footpath through the woods.

F End position

Sometimes an adverbial comes at the end of a clause.

It doesn't often rain in the Sahara.

Everyone waited very patiently.

I wish I'd stayed at home.

Almost all types of adverbial can go in end position. For details about more than one adverbial in end position, > 191.

If there is an object, then the adverbial usually goes after it.

I wrapped the parcel carefully. (NOT ~~*I wrapped carefully the parcel.*~~)

We'll finish the job next week. (NOT ~~*We'll finish next week the job.*~~)

But a short adverbial can go before a long object.

I wrapped carefully all the glasses and ornaments.

Here the adverb of manner can also go in mid position.

I carefully wrapped all the glasses and ornaments.

When there are two clauses, the position of the adverbial can affect the meaning.

They agreed immediately that the goods would be replaced.

(an immediate agreement)

They agreed that the goods would be replaced immediately.

(an immediate replacement)

TIP

Don't put an adverb in front of a short object.

Say *We finished the job quickly*, NOT ~~*We finished quickly the job.*~~

191 Order of adverbials in end position

- A** Sometimes there is more than one adverbial in end position. Usually a shorter adverbial goes before a longer one.

Sam waited impatiently outside the post office.

We sat indoors most of the afternoon.

A policeman inspected the car thoroughly in a very officious manner.

- B** When there is a close link in meaning between a verb and an adverbial, then the adverbial goes directly after the verb. For example, we usually put an adverbial of place next to *go*, *come*, etc.

I don't want to go to school today.

Why did you come home late?

- C** Phrases of time and place can go in either order.

There was an accident last night on the by-pass.

There was an accident on the by-pass last night.

- D** Manner, time, and place usually come before frequency.

Sarah gets up early occasionally.

I can find my way around quite easily, usually.

The adverb of frequency can also go in front or mid position.

Usually I can find my way around quite easily.

I can usually find my way around quite easily.

- E** When certain types of adverbial come in end position, we usually put them last, as a kind of afterthought.

Simon has been delayed by the traffic, perhaps. (truth adverbial)

Someone handed the money in at the police station, incredibly.

(comment adverbial)

I've got a bicycle. I don't ride it very often, however. (linking adverbial)

This happens more often in speech than in writing.

192 Adverb forms

- A** Look at these two examples.

I'm going on holiday soon.

I'm going on holiday shortly.

Some adverbs, like *soon*, have a form which is unrelated to other words.

Adverbs of this kind include *always, just, often, never, perhaps, quite, rather, seldom, soon, very*.

Many adverbs are formed from an adjective and *-ly*, like *shortly*, which is related to the adjective *short*.

There are some spelling rules for adverbs ending in *-ly*.

After a consonant, final *y* changes to *i*, e.g. *easy* → *easily*. > 280A

With a consonant + *le*, *le* changes to *-ly*, e.g. *probable* → *probably*. > 278D

The ending *-ic* changes to *ically*, e.g. *magic* → *magically*. > 278D

After *ll* we add *-y*, e.g. *full* → *fully*. > 279B Note

- B** There are some adjectives which end in *-ly*, e.g. *friendly*. We cannot add another *-ly* to such an adjective. Instead we can use a phrase with *manner, way, or fashion*.

Adjective: *We received a friendly greeting.*

Adverbial: *They greeted us in a friendly manner.* (NOT *friendtily*)

Sometimes we can use another adverb formed from an adjective of similar meaning.

Adjective: *That's not very likely.*

Adverbial: *That probably won't happen.*

Some adjectives ending in *-ly* are *costly, cowardly, friendly, likely, lively, lonely, lovely, silly, and ugly*.

Participle forms such as *annoying* and *surprising* form adverbs in *-ly*.
It was surprisingly cold for the time of year.
But we cannot usually form adverbs from participles ending in *-ed*.
Everyone stared in astonishment.
(NOT ~~*Everyone stared astonishedly.*~~)
The only exceptions are a few participles ending in *-ted*,
e.g. *excited*, *exhausted*.
The crowd shouted excitedly.

C Some adverbs have the same form as adjectives.

| Adjective | Adverb |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Louise caught the fast train.</i> | <i>The train was going quite fast.</i> |
| <i>We didn't have a long wait.</i> | <i>We didn't have to wait long.</i> |
| <i>I had an early night.</i> | <i>I went to bed early.</i> |

Here are some more adverbs of the same kind.
The man pointed the gun straight at me.
Can't you sit still just for a minute?
The aircraft flew low over the town.
He threw the ball high in the air.
We were all trying hard not to laugh.

For pairs of adverbs such as *hard* and *hardly*, > E.

D Sometimes the adverb can be with or without *-ly*. In these examples there is no difference in meaning, but it is more informal to leave out *-ly*.
If you buy goods in bulk, you can sell them cheap/cheaply.
Do you have to talk so loud/loudly?
Get there as quick/quickly as you can.
Go slow/slowly round this corner.

Others are *direct(ly)*, *fair(ly)*, and *tight(ly)*.

We use the form without *-ly* only in frequent combinations like *talk loud*, *go slow*, *fly direct*, or *play fair*. With longer or less common expressions, we use *-ly*.
The chairman cleared his throat rather loudly.
We need to act quickly.

NOTE

- a *Right* and *wrong* are both adjectives and adverbs of manner.
I'll try to do it right this time.
Rightly and *wrongly* express a comment.
The caretaker decided rightly to call the police.
- b *First* and *last* are both adjectives and adverbs.
Karen took first place/came first in the race.
Firstly and *lastly* are linking adverbs.
First/Firstly, I'd like to thank you all for coming.

- E** There are some pairs such as *hard* and *hardly* which are both adverbs but which have different meanings.

You deserve a rest because you've worked hard.

It'll take hardly any time at all. (hardly any = almost no)

I often see my parents. They live quite near.

Beckham nearly scored, but his shot went just wide. (= almost)

I had to stay up late to finish my homework.

I used to see a lot of Donna, but she hasn't been around lately. (= recently)

The men raised their hands high in the air.

The theory is highly controversial. (= very)

How deep can a submarine go?

The new tax is deeply unpopular. (= very, intensely)

Employees of the airline travel free.

The prisoners can move around freely. (= without being controlled)

The thing that annoys me most is that no one has apologized to me.

There may be a few showers, but it will be mostly dry. (= mainly)

For *hardly* expressing time, e.g. *we had hardly arrived when ...*, > 238D.

- F** *Hourly, daily, weekly, and monthly* are formed from *hour, day*, etc. They can be either adjectives or adverbs.

Adjective: *The company publishes a monthly newsletter.*

Adverb: *The newsletter is published monthly.*

- G** *Good* is an adjective.

I think it's a good design.

Well is the equivalent adverb.

I think the design works well.

Well can also be an adjective meaning 'in good health'.

Unfortunately my sister wasn't well enough to travel.

How are you? ~ Very well, thank you. / Fine, thank you.

We often use *well* with a participle.

The event was well organized.

A well-built man in his thirties came into the room.

Other examples are: *well-behaved, well-dressed, well-established, well-fed, well-informed, well-meaning, well-preserved, well-timed.*

Sometimes we use *good* with a participle.

Andrew is basically a good-natured person. (He has a good nature.)

We do this with participles formed from nouns, e.g. *good-hearted, good-humoured, good-tempered.* Note also *good-looking.*

NOTE

The phrase *all being well / if all goes well* means 'if everything is all right'.

We should arrive at about five o'clock, all being well.

193 Adverbials of manner

A Adjectives and adverbs

Look at these examples.

| Adjective | Adverb |
|---|---|
| <i>We're looking for a quick solution to the problem.</i> | <i>We want to solve the problem quickly.</i> |
| <i>Kate is fluent in Russian.</i> | <i>She speaks Russian fluently.</i> |
| <i>Try to make a sensible choice.</i> | <i>Try to choose sensibly.</i> |
| An adjective comes before a noun (e.g. <i>solution</i>), or it is a complement of <i>be</i> (is <i>fluent</i>). | An adverb of manner comes after a verb (e.g. <i>choose</i>) or after a verb + object (e.g. <i>solve the problem</i>). Most adverbs of manner are formed from an adjective + <i>-ly</i> . |

Compare these different types of verb.

| Linking verb + adjective | Action verb + adverb |
|---|--|
| <i>The official was very polite.</i> | <i>He listened politely.</i> (NOT <i>He listened polite.</i>) |
| A linking verb is a verb like <i>be</i> , <i>seem</i> , <i>become</i> , <i>feel</i> , <i>look</i> . | An action verb is a verb like <i>listen</i> , <i>drive</i> , <i>work</i> , <i>argue</i> , <i>meet</i> . > 51 |

Some verbs can be either a linking verb or an action verb.

| Linking verb + adjective | Action verb + adverb |
|--|--|
| <i>The speaker looked nervous.</i> (<i>looked</i> = seemed/appeared) | <i>He looked nervously around.</i> (<i>looked</i> = directed his eyes) |
| <i>The atmosphere grew tense.</i> (<i>grew</i> = became) | <i>The plants grew rapidly.</i> (<i>grew</i> = increased in size) |
| <i>The milk smelled funny.</i> (<i>smelled funny</i> = had a funny smell) | <i>Steve smelled the milk suspiciously.</i> (<i>smelled</i> = sniffed, used his nose) |

B Prepositional phrases of manner

We can often use a prepositional phrase to express manner.

*I had to choose my words **carefully** / **with care**.*

*The policeman inspected the car **officially** / **in an official manner**.*

*Can't we discuss this **sensibly** / **in a sensible way**?*

*The winning numbers are randomly chosen / **are chosen at random**.*

We can often use an adjective or adverb to intensify the meaning.

I had to choose my words with great/considerable care.

The policeman inspected the car in a very/an extremely officious manner.

C Position of adverbials of manner

We put an adverbial of manner mostly in end position. Here are some real examples from stories.

'I didn't know whether to tell you or not,' she said anxiously.

The sun still shone brightly on the quiet street.

We continued our labours in silence.

A one-word adverb can sometimes come in mid position.

I quickly ran and got my coat.

The adverbial can sometimes come in front position for emphasis.

Gently fry the banana pieces.

This is more common in writing than in speech. The last two examples are from a novel and a cookbook.

194 Adverbials of place and time

A Position

Adverbials of place and time often go in end position.

There has been another shooting incident at a US high school.

It's my brother's birthday tomorrow.

A ferry was being repaired last night after running aground in the Thames.

The office is closed for two weeks.

For more than one adverbial in end position, > 191.

Adverbials of place and time can also go in front position. > 34A

We've got friends staying till Friday. And on Saturday my parents arrive.

Here *Saturday* contrasts with *Friday*.

Some short adverbials of time can go in mid position.

I've just remembered something. We'll soon be home.

These include: *already, at once, finally, immediately, just* (= a short time ago), *no longer, now, recently, since, soon, still, then, yesterday*.

Phrases of time and place can also come after a noun.

The tennis courts in the park aren't used very much.

Exports last year broke all records.

B Yet

We use *yet* to talk about something that is expected.

Have you found a job yet? ~ No, not yet.

I got up late. I haven't had breakfast yet.

Yet comes at the end of a question or negative statement.

Adverbials

We can use *yet* in mid position, but it is a little formal.

We have not yet reached a decision on the matter.

NOTE

For *yet* meaning 'but', > 235A.

C Still

We use *still* to talk about something going on longer than expected.

I got up late. I'm still having breakfast.

Is your grandfather still working?

In positive statements and questions, *still* goes in mid position.

In negative statements, *still* goes before the auxiliary.

The child still hasn't learned to read.

This is more emphatic than *The child hasn't learned to read yet.*

NOTE

- a *Still* can go after a negative auxiliary when we express surprise.

You don't still use this old software, do you?

This pattern is often followed by a question tag.

- b We can use *still* in front or end position to give it extra emphasis.

You mean he's 84 and still he hasn't retired!

You mean he's 84 and he's working still!

D Already

We use *already* to talk about something happening sooner than expected.

I got up early. I've already had breakfast.

Have you already replied to the letter? ~ Yes, I answered it straight away.

We use *already* mainly in mid position in positive statements and questions.

Already in front or end position has more emphasis.

Already our new boss has made big changes.

Is it lunch time already? How time flies.

Already can also go before a stressed auxiliary.

When are you going to reply to the letter? ~ I already HAVE replied to it.

E No longer, any more, and any longer

We use *no longer* to talk about something coming to an end. It goes in mid position.

I'm afraid the person concerned no longer works here.

These products are no longer manufactured.

No longer is a little formal.

We can also use a negative sentence with *any more* or *any longer* in end position.

They don't make these products any more.

I'm not going to wait here any longer.

F Long and far

We normally use the adverbs *long* and *far* only in questions and negative statements.

Have you been waiting long?

It's not far from here to the motorway.

In positive statements we use *a long time/a long way*.

I had to wait a long time. / I had to wait ages.

It's a long way from here to Vladivostock.

But we use *long* and *far* after *too*, *so*, and *as*, and before *enough*.

The speech went on too long.

I'm annoyed because I've had to wait so long/wait such a long time.

I don't live as far from the office as you do.

Let's go back now. We've walked far enough.

NOTE

We can also use the comparative and superlative forms of *long* and *far* in positive statements.

The journey takes longer in the rush hour.

I live furthest from the office. You all live nearer than I do.

G After and afterwards

We do not often use *after* as an adverb. We use *afterwards* or *after that*.

I'll video the talk, so we can play it back afterwards.

It's extra time now, and after that it'll be penalties.

But we can say *the day after* and *the week after*.

I ordered a CD, and it arrived the day after / the next day / a day later.

I'm on holiday next week, so I'll see you the week after.

Soon after and *soon afterwards* are both possible.

The man was taken to hospital and died soon after / soon afterwards.

195 Adverbials of frequency

A An adverbial of frequency says how often something happens.

I sometimes go out and get a take-away meal.

The computer crashes occasionally.

Generally there'll be a party somewhere on a Saturday.

Here are some common adverbs of frequency.

Full frequency: *always*

Almost full frequency: *normally, usually, generally*

High frequency: *often, frequently*

Medium frequency: *sometimes, occasionally*

Low frequency: *seldom, rarely, not ... often*

Zero frequency: *never, not ... ever*

Seldom and *rarely* are a little formal.

We seldom/rarely travel abroad.

Often with the negative is neutral in style.

We don't often travel abroad.

- B** An adverb of frequency usually goes in mid position.

The bus doesn't usually stop here.

I can never open these packets.

It's always busy on a Friday.

I often wonder who buys these things.

- C** In a negative sentence, *sometimes*, *occasionally*, and *frequently* go before the auxiliary in mid position.

It's often crowded in here. You sometimes can't get a table.

Always and *ever* go after the negative auxiliary.

I haven't always done this for a living, you know.

As a general rule, *often*, *normally*, *usually*, and *generally* go after the negative auxiliary.

I don't often ride my bike to college.

NOTE

Often, *normally*, *usually*, and *generally* can sometimes come before the negative auxiliary. There is little difference in meaning between these two examples.

The photocopier isn't often working. (= The photocopier is seldom working.)

The photocopier often isn't working. (= The photocopier is often out of order.)

- D** Some adverbs of frequency can go in front or end position.

Normally I tip taxi drivers.

We all make mistakes sometimes.

These adverbs are *normally*, *usually*, *generally*, *frequently*, *sometimes*, and *occasionally*.

Often can go in end position.

Doctors get called out at night quite often.

This happens especially with *very* or *quite*.

A lot meaning 'often' goes in end position (and not mid position).

I missed half my schooling. I was ill a lot.

The adverbs *daily*, *weekly*, etc go in end position.

Are you paid weekly or monthly?

In instructions, *always* and *never* go in front position.

Never try to adjust the machine while it is switched on.

NOTE

For *never*, *seldom*, and *rarely* in front position with inversion of subject and auxiliary, > 10F.

Never have I felt better.

- E** *Never* is a negative word meaning 'not ever'.

I would never do a thing like that. (= I **wouldn't ever** do it.)

We never ask for your password. (= We **don't ever** ask for your password.)

We use *ever* mainly in questions.

Have you ever done any ballroom dancing? ~ No, never.

But we can also use *ever* with negative words such as *not* or *hardly*.

I wouldn't ever do a thing like that.

You hardly ever buy me flowers.

We do not normally use *ever* in positive statements.

I always buy a lottery ticket. (NOT ~~I ever buy a lottery ticket.~~)

Ever can add emphasis to a negative.

No one ever said that to me before.

Nothing ever happens in this place.

I never ever want to see that awful man again.

We can also use *ever* in a condition or a comparison.

If you ever feel like a chat, just drop in.

The river was higher than I'd ever seen it.

NOTE

If ever can go before the subject.

If ever you feel like a chat, just drop in.

F We can also use a phrase with *every*, *most*, or *some* to express frequency.

Every summer we all go sailing together.

The postman calls most days.

Some evenings we don't have the television on at all.

These phrases can go in front or end position.

We can also use *once*, *twice*, *three times*, etc.

The committee meets once a month.

Two tablets to be taken three times a day.

The car has already been repaired several times.

These phrases usually go in end position, but they can go in front position for emphasis.

Seven days a week we get lorries thundering past the building.

NOTE

Other phrases expressing frequency include *as a rule* (= normally), *from time to time* (= occasionally), and *now and then* (= occasionally).

As a rule, Monday isn't a very busy day.

Interest rates may be changed from time to time.

196 Adverbs of degree

A Modifying an adjective or adverb

We can use an adverb of degree before an adjective.

It's a very simple idea.

I get so bored with nothing to do.

I think so, but I'm not absolutely certain.

It's getting a bit hot in here.

For the use of these adverbs with gradable and ungradable adjectives, > 186.

We can also use an adverb of degree before another adverb.

*You could improve your performance **quite** easily.*

*I'll have to decide **fairly** soon.*

*I **hardly** ever see Kate nowadays.*

Here are some adverbs of degree.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Full degree: | <i>absolutely, completely, entirely, quite</i> (= completely > 197), <i>totally</i> |
| High degree: | <i>awfully</i> (informal), <i>extremely, real</i> (informal), <i>really, terribly</i> (informal), <i>too, very</i> |
| Medium degree: | <i>fairly, pretty</i> (informal), <i>quite</i> (= fairly > 197), <i>rather, somewhat</i> |
| Low degree: | <i>a bit</i> (informal), <i>a little, slightly</i> |
| Very low degree: | <i>hardly, scarcely</i> |
| Zero degree: | <i>not ... at all</i> |
| Comparison: | <i>as, less, least, more, most, so</i> |

We can use a fraction or percentage.

*I still feel **half** asleep.*

*The forecast was **ninety per cent** accurate.*

B More details about adverbs of degree

After a phrase with *very*, we can add *indeed* for emphasis.

*The customer was red in the face. He was very angry **indeed**.*

Awfully can go with desirable qualities as well as undesirable ones.

*Thank you very much. That's **awfully** kind of you.*

*You must think me **awfully** stupid.*

Somewhat, a little, a bit, and slightly do not usually go with desirable qualities. We tend to use them to refer to undesirable aspects.

*These diagrams are **a bit confusing**.*

(BUT NOT ~~*These diagrams are a bit clear.*~~)

*The journey was **somewhat stressful**.*

(BUT NOT ~~*The journey was somewhat enjoyable.*~~)

But we can use an adjective expressing something desirable if it is in the comparative form.

*The rest of the journey was **somewhat more enjoyable**.*

We can also use *not ... very* to express a low degree.

*These diagrams **aren't very clear**.*

*The journey **wasn't very enjoyable**.*

We often use *not very* in a negative judgement.

*The photos **aren't very good**.*

This is more usual than *The photos aren't good.* or *The photos are bad.*

At *all* can go in end position, or it can go before the word it modifies.

I didn't feel nervous at all. / I didn't feel at all nervous.

NOTE

- a *Real* can be used instead of *really*, especially in informal American English.
It felt real good to have a shower.
- b In informal English we can use *that* instead of *so* when we are making a comparison.
Maybe the idea isn't so silly / that silly after all. (= not as silly as I thought)

C Modifying a comparative or a superlative

Some adverbs of degree can come before a comparative adjective or adverb.

This gadget makes the job much easier.

We'll have to move a bit quicker if we're going to get there on time.

Our pay rise is so small that we're no better off/we aren't any better off.

We can use *a bit*, *a little*, *a lot*, *any*, *much*, *no*, *rather*, *slightly*, *somewhat*, and *very much*.

With a superlative we can use *easily* or *by far*.

This is easily the most popular style.

We offer by far the best value.

By far can go in end position.

We offer the best value by far.

NOTE

Before *as* we can use *twice*, *three times*, *four times*, etc.

The winner got twice as many votes as the runner-up.

The new mall will be five times as big as the old one.

We can also use *three times*, *four times*, etc before a comparative.

The new mall will be five times bigger than the old one.

D Modifying a verb

We can use an adverb of degree to modify a verb.

Do you really want to be successful in life?

We were rather hoping to have a look around.

The doorman absolutely refused to let us in.

The suitcase was so heavy I could hardly lift it.

In mid position we can use *absolutely*, *almost*, *completely*, *hardly*, *just*, *nearly*, *quite*, *rather*, *really*, *scarcely*, *slightly*, and *totally*.

We often use an adverb of degree before a passive participle.

The car was badly damaged in the accident.

Our schedule has been completely disrupted by the delays.

Almost, *just*, and *nearly* go before a negative auxiliary.

I just don't see what the problem is.

Really can also go here. >190E

Absolutely, *completely*, *rather*, and *totally* can go in either end position or mid position.

I absolutely agree. / I agree absolutely.

I completely forgot the time. / I forgot the time completely.

Adverbials

Some adverbs go only in end position.

First impressions matter a lot.

I miss you terribly.

These are *a bit, a little, a lot, awfully, more, (the) most, somewhat, and terribly.*

We can use *much* or *very much* in a negative sentence or a question.

I didn't enjoy the meal much / very much.

But in a positive sentence we use *very much* and not *much* on its own.

I enjoyed the meal very much.

(NOT ~~*I enjoyed the meal much.*~~)

NOTE

- a *Very much* usually goes in end position. In rather formal English it can go in mid position.

I would very much like to accept your offer.

- b Before a passive participle we can use either *much* or *very much*.

Politicians are generally (very) much distrusted by the public.

E Modifying a preposition

Some adverbs of degree can modify a preposition.

The offices are right in the centre of town.

The way Polly was behaving seemed very out of character.

I walked straight into a lamp-post.

For more examples, > 208D.

F Modifying a quantifier

We can use these combinations of adverb and quantifier.

very/so/too + many/much/few/little

Very few people have legs exactly the same length.

There are so many different products on the market.

I've got too much work to do.

such/rather/quite + a lot (of)

I've made such a lot of mistakes.

There are rather a lot of dishes to wash up.

quite + a few/a bit (of)

There are quite a few dishes to wash up.

I lost quite a bit of money.

almost/nearly + all/every

Almost all the chairs were occupied.

There seems to be a plane crash nearly every week.

hardly any

There's hardly any difference between the two designs.

a lot/much/a bit/a little/any/no + more/less
 You'd get *a lot less* money without a qualification.
 There's sun, sand and sea and *much more* besides.
 I'd like *a bit more* time to decide.

G Too and enough

Too comes before an adjective or adverb.

The water is too cold to swim in.

Hang on. You're going too fast.

Much, far, or rather can come before *too*.

This coat is much too big for me.

A game of chess would take far too long.

Enough comes after an adjective or adverb.

Are you old enough to drive a car?

I didn't react quickly enough.

Compare *too* and *enough*.

The water is too cold.

The water isn't warm enough.

NOTE

For *enough* as a quantifier, > 173A.

There isn't enough time.

H Adverbs of degree and a/an

We can use most adverbs of degree between *a/an* and an adjective.

a very warm welcome a fairly important meeting a rather nice restaurant

But not all adverbs of degree can go in phrases like these. We do not normally use *so* in this position.

We received such a warm welcome. (NOT ~~*a so warm welcome*~~)

It was such a good opportunity. (NOT ~~*a so good opportunity*~~)

We use the same pattern with *quite*.

I had quite an important meeting.

It was quite a painful blow to the head.

This is more usual than *a quite important meeting* or *a quite painful blow*, although *a quite ...* is also possible.

With *rather*, both patterns are possible.

I had rather an important meeting.

I had a rather important meeting.

Too or *as* + adjective go before *a/an*.

You've cut too short a piece. (NOT ~~*a too short piece*~~)

You don't get as nice a view on this side. (NOT ~~*an as nice view*~~)

We can also use *so* and an adjective before *a/an*, although the pattern with *such* is more usual.

You don't get so nice a view/such a nice view.

We can use *such*, *quite*, and *rather* + *a/an* + noun without an adjective.

Why are you making such a fuss?

We had to wait quite a while.

It's rather a pity we can't go out.

We can also use *a bit of*.

Sorry. The flat's in a bit of a mess.

We sometimes use *quite* in this pattern to express a positive feeling about something impressive.

That was quite a party.

The meaning is similar to *That was some party.* > 172F Note b

197 More details about *quite* and *rather*

A In British English, *quite* has two meanings.

Medium degree: 'fairly'

The task is quite difficult.

The film was quite good.

I feel quite tired.

Quite means 'fairly' when it comes before a gradable adjective.

Quite + *like/enjoy*

I quite enjoyed the film. It was quite good.

(*quite* = to some extent)

This expresses a positive opinion but not as positive as *I really enjoyed the film* or *It was very good*.

Full degree: 'completely'

The task is quite impossible.

The film was quite brilliant.

I feel quite exhausted.

Quite means 'completely' when the adjective is ungradable.

Quite + *agree/understand*

I quite agree.

You're quite right.

(*quite* = completely)

Not quite means 'not completely'.

What you said is not quite true.

Can I correct just one thing?

B *Quite* is not usually stressed before an adjective or adverb.

It's quite WARM today. (focus on the warmth)

We were home quite LATE. (focus on the lateness)

Sometimes we can stress *quite* before a gradable adjective. We do this to limit the force of the adjective or adverb.

It's QUITE warm, but not as warm as it was. (focus on the medium degree)

We were home QUITE late but not very late. (focus on the medium degree)

- C** *Quite* and *rather* have a similar meaning, but there are some differences in use. When we make a favourable comment about something, we usually prefer *quite* to *rather*.

It's quite nice here.

It was quite a good party, wasn't it?

If we are being positive, then *quite* is unstressed.

In unfavourable comments, we usually prefer *rather*.

It's rather depressing/quite depressing here.

It was rather a dull party/quite a dull party, wasn't it?

The new timetable is rather confusing/quite confusing.

Rather in a favourable comment often means 'to a surprising or unusual degree'.

I expected the party to be dull, but actually it was rather good.

The test paper is usually difficult, but this one was rather easy.

198 *Only and even*

- A** We use *only* and *even* to focus on a particular word or phrase. To make clear what we are focusing on, we put *only* before the relevant word or phrase.

Most of the guests were strangers to me. I knew only one other person there.

I speak only a little French, I'm afraid.

Only can also be in mid position.

Most of the guests were strangers to me. I only knew one other person there.

I only speak a little French, I'm afraid.

We stress the word we want to focus on, e.g. *one*, *little*.

In official written English, e.g. on notices, *only* comes after the word or phrase it is focusing on.

Waiting limited to 30 minutes only.

Even goes in mid position or before the word or phrase we are focusing on.

Emma has been everywhere. She's even been to the North Pole.

My brother always wears shorts, even in winter.

Both these examples express surprise.

NOTE

Compare *even* and *also*.

Everyone laughed, even the teacher.

(It is surprising that the teacher laughed.)

We've invited the whole class, and also the teacher.

(We have added the teacher to the invitation list.)

- B** When we focus on the subject, we put *only* or *even* before it.

Only you would do a silly thing like that.

Even the experts don't know the answer.

Adverbials

- C** There are a number of other uses of *only*. For example, we can use it when we talk about something happening a surprisingly short time ago.

I tidied this room up only yesterday, and now it's in a mess again.

Only just can mean 'a very short time ago'.

I'm new here. I've only just moved to the area.

It can also mean 'with little to spare'.

I only just caught the train. It left as soon as I got on.

NOTE

- a For inversion after a phrase with *only*, > 10F.

Only at weekends do we get a chance to meet.

- b *Only* can also be an adjective.

The only thing in the fridge was a small piece of cheese.

- D** We can use *even* in negative sentences.

I'm not interested in politics. I don't even know who the Prime Minister is.

I know nothing about cricket. I've never even seen a game.

Here *even* goes in mid position.

We can also use *even* before a comparative adjective.

It was pretty warm yesterday, but it's even warmer today.

199 Viewpoint adverbials

These express the idea that we are looking at a situation from a particular aspect or point of view.

Financially, we've had a difficult year.

Can you manage transport-wise, or do you need a lift?

The building is magnificent from an architectural point of view, but it's hell to work in.

As far as insurance is concerned, we can fix that up for you.

The scheme is economically beneficial but environmentally disastrous.

These adverbials usually go in front or end position, or they can modify an adjective (*economically beneficial*).

200 Truth adverbials

- A** A truth adverbial expresses what the speaker knows about the truth of a statement: how likely it is to be true, or to what degree it is true. Here are some examples with adverbs.

Perhaps/Maybe there's a problem with the software.

We've certainly/definitely/undoubtedly made a good start.

Basically, I just want a car that will get me from A to B.

The website hasn't been updated, presumably.

Clearly, the matter is extremely urgent.

A businessman allegedly had two of his rivals killed.

Most of these adverbs can go in front, mid or end position. *Certainly*, *definitely*, and *probably* usually go in mid position. But we put a truth adverb before a negative auxiliary.

You certainly haven't wasted any time.

The website presumably hasn't been updated.

- B** We can also use a prepositional phrase.

It's a great idea in my opinion.

I'm not sure. In fact I've no idea.

The results are pretty good on the whole.

A phrase usually goes in front or end position. Mid position is rather formal.

I will of course keep you informed.

- C** We can also use *I think*, *I expect*, etc, with the same kind of meaning as a truth adverbial.

I think it's a great idea. (= In my opinion it's a great idea.)

There's been a power cut, I expect. (= There's **probably** been a power cut.)

I'm sure we've gone wrong. (= We've **definitely** gone wrong.)

201 Comment adverbials

- A** We can use an adverb to make a comment on the message expressed in the rest of the sentence.

Luckily no one was killed.

(= It was lucky that no one was killed.)

The newspapers weren't interested in the story, surprisingly.

Unfortunately, we didn't win anything.

These adverbs usually go in front or end position.

We can also use *I'm afraid*, *I'm surprised*, etc, with the same kind of meaning.

I'm surprised the newspapers weren't interested in the story.

I'm afraid we didn't win anything.

- B** We can also use an adverb to comment on someone's behaviour.

Wisely the cashier didn't argue with the gunman.

As well as in front position, the adverb can go in mid position, or in end position as an afterthought.

The cashier wisely didn't argue with the gunman.

The cashier didn't argue with the gunman, wisely.

Compare the adverbs of comment and manner.

I stupidly left the car unlocked.

(= It was stupid of me to leave the car unlocked.)

The man stared stupidly at us.

(= The man stared at us in a stupid manner.)

Adverbials

- C** We can use a phrase with *to* for someone's feelings about something.

To my surprise, the newspaper wasn't interested in the story.

Chloe was invited to the show to her great delight.

- D** We can point out that we are being honest.

Frankly, I'm not very interested in old cars.

I don't see what else we can do, to be honest.

For more examples with a *to*-infinitive, > 100C.

- E** Most comment adverbials usually go in front or end position, especially a phrase or clause. A phrase or clause can sometimes go in mid position, but this is rather formal.

The spectators, to their horror, saw the whole tragedy unfolding.

I am, to be perfectly frank, feeling rather annoyed with you.

202 Linking adverbials

- A** A linking adverb relates to the previous clause or sentence. Here are some real examples.

When Beethoven was fourteen, he was forced to give lessons to support his parents. However, he still found time to take a few violin lessons, and he went on composing.

If you pay the bill in full within 25 days, you won't be charged interest. Otherwise you are charged interest on any balance outstanding.

But the baby does not just grow bigger and heavier. Its shape and body proportions also change as it grows up.

In an emergency, medical treatment is available at the big hospitals. If you have travel insurance, you may need to contact the company's emergency number as well.

A linking adverbial most often goes in front position, but it can go in mid or end position.

- B** Here are some ways of relating one clause or sentence to another.

Adding something: *Ministers have to run the government, and in addition, they have to look after their constituents.* > 233C

Expressing a contrast: *I know you don't believe these stories. Nevertheless, they're all perfectly true.* > 235B

Contradicting: *I expect you're tired now. ~ On the contrary, I feel fighting fit.*

Correcting: *I'll see you tomorrow then. Or rather on Monday.*

Rephrasing: *The matter is under consideration. In other words, they're thinking about it.*

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Expressing a result: | <i>It will take a long time for the changes to become effective, and the old system will consequently continue for some time. > 236B</i> |
| Comparing: | <i>The government sold the telephone service to private investors. Gas and electricity were privatized in the same way.</i> |
| Ordering: | <i>Of course the man is guilty. Firstly, he had a motive, and secondly, his fingerprints were on the gun.</i> |
| Summing up: | <i>In conclusion, I'd like to say a few words about future prospects.</i> |
| Giving examples: | <i>Colours are associated with feelings. Blues and greens, for example, are considered to be cool and restful.</i> |
| Picking up a topic: | <i>I think I'll have the sausages. ~ Talking of sausages, did you know there's a barbecue on Saturday?</i> |
| Changing the subject: | <i>It would be nice if you could tell me something about your background. And this conversation is being recorded, by the way.</i> |
| Supporting a statement: | <i>I think I'd better be going. It's past midnight, after all.</i> |
| Dismissing something: | <i>I don't know whether we did the right thing. Anyway, it doesn't matter now.</i> |

Comparison

203 The comparison of adjectives

A Introduction

These sentences make comparisons between different things.

Comparative: *It's warmer in here than outside.*
Driving is more convenient than taking a bus.

Superlative: *This is the oldest building in the town.*
She's the most irritating person I've ever met.

For the two ways of forming the comparative and superlative (*warmer*, *warmest* or *more/most convenient*), > B.

For irregular forms, e.g. *good* → *better*, *best*, > F.

We often use *than* after a comparative (*more convenient than ...*). For more details about patterns with the comparative and superlative, > 206.

NOTE

Some people believe that we should use a comparative for two items and the superlative for more than two. But in informal English the superlative is often used to refer to one of only two items.

Which of these two photos is better/best?

B Regular comparison

These are the regular forms.

| | | Comparative | Superlative |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Short adjective: | <i>warm</i> | <i>warmer</i> | <i>warmest</i> |
| Long adjective: | <i>convenient</i> | <i>more convenient</i> | <i>most convenient</i> |

Short adjectives end in *-er* and *-est*. Long adjectives have *more* and *most*. For more details, > C–E.

There are some spelling rules for *-er/-est*.

There is no doubling of *e*: *fine* → *finer* > 278A

There is doubling of some consonants: *hot* → *hottest* > 279

y changes to *i*: *heavy* → *heavier* > 280.

Adjectives ending in *-ng* are pronounced with /g/ before *-er/-est*, e.g. *younger* /'jʌŋgə/, *longest* /'lɒŋgɪst/

NOTE

In formal English *a most* ... can mean 'a very ...'. Compare these sentences.

Superlative: *The train is the most convenient way to get from here to London.*

High degree: *The train is a most convenient means of transport.*
(= a very convenient means of transport)

C One-syllable adjectives (e.g. *nice, sure*)

Most of these end in *-er/-est*.

This coat is the nicest.

Some one-syllable adjectives can either have *-er/-est* or *more/most*.

I wish I felt surer/more sure about what I'm doing.

Such adjectives include: *clear, fair, free, keen, proud, rude, safe, sure, true, wise*. But we do not normally use *more* with adjectives of concrete meaning such as *big, cold, fast, or short*.

(NOT ~~*Our new flat is more big.*~~)

We use *more/most* (and not *-er/-est*) with *real* and with adjectives ending in *ed*, e.g. *bored, pleased*.

The film made the story seem more real.

Those most pleased by the decision were the local residents.

Note also *more right* and *more wrong*.

The theory is nonsense. It just couldn't be more wrong.

D Two-syllable adjectives (e.g. *useful, stupid*)

Many of these have *more/most*.

Can't you do something more useful?

These adjectives have *more/most*.

Ending in *ful*: *careful, helpful, hopeful, peaceful, useful*, etc

Ending in *less*: *helpless, useless*, etc

Ending in *ing*: *boring, pleasing, tiring, willing*, etc

Ending in *ed*: *amused, annoyed, ashamed, confused, surprised*, etc

Some others: *afraid, cautious, central, certain, complex, correct, eager, exact, famous, foolish, formal, frequent, mature, modern, normal, recent*.

Some two-syllable adjectives can either have *-er/-est* or *more/most*.

That's the stupidest/the most stupid idea I've ever heard.

Such adjectives include: *able, clever, common, cruel, feeble, gentle, handsome, likely, narrow, pleasant, polite, quiet, secure, simple, sincere, stupid, tired*.

Most two-syllable adjectives ending in *y* have *-er/-est*, although *more/most* is also possible.

Life would be easier if I had a job.

Such adjectives include: *angry, busy, crazy, dirty, easy, empty, friendly, funny, happy, healthy, heavy, hungry, lively, lonely, lovely, lucky, nasty, pretty, silly, thirsty, tidy, ugly, wealthy*.

TIP

If you are not sure how to form the comparative or superlative of a two-syllable adjective, it is generally safer to use *more* / *most*.

E Three-syllable adjectives (e.g. *difficult*)

Adjectives of three or more syllables have *more/most*.

Skiing is more difficult than it looks.

Making money isn't the most important thing in the world.

But we can use *un-* before certain two-syllable adjectives with *-er/-est* added to them, e.g. *unhappier, untidiest, unpleasantest*.

F Irregular comparison

There are a few irregular forms.

There must be a better way of doing this.

That's the best game I've ever seen.

The weather is getting worse.

What's the worst thing that could happen?

| Adjective | Comparative | Superlative |
|-------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>good</i> | <i>better</i> | <i>best</i> |
| <i>bad</i> | <i>worse</i> | <i>worst</i> |
| <i>far</i> | <i>farther/further</i> | <i>farthest/furthest</i> > G |

NOTE

- a The adjectives *well* (= in good health) and *ill* have the same irregular forms as *good* and *bad*.

I feel better now. She looks worse today.

- b For *elder*, > G.

G Some special forms

Farther/further and *farthest/furthest* express distance. We use them as adjectives and adverbs.

The farthest/furthest moon is 13 million kilometres from Saturn.

I can't walk any farther/further.

Further (but not *farther*) can mean 'more' or 'additional'.

Let's hope there are no further problems.

Elder and *eldest* mean the same as *older* and *oldest*. We use them mainly to talk about ages in a family.

Have you got an older/elder brother?

The oldest/eldest daughter married a pop singer.

Elder and *eldest* go before the noun.

(NOT ~~*My brother is elder than me.*~~)

Latest and *last* mean different things. *Latest* means 'furthest ahead in time' or 'newest'.

What's the latest time we can leave and still get there on time?

This jacket is the latest fashion.

(NOT ~~*This jacket is the last fashion.*~~)

Last means 'previous' or 'final'.

I had my hair cut last week. (= the week before this one)

The last bus goes at midnight. (= the final bus of the day)

Nearest and *next* mean different things. *Nearest* means the shortest distance away.

Where's the nearest phone box? (= closest, least far)

Next means 'following in a series'.

I'm having my hair cut next week. (= the week after this one)

We have to get out at the next stop. (= the stop after this one)

There's a newsagent's in the next street. (= the street beside this one)

204 The comparative and superlative of adverbs

A Some adverbs have the same form as adjectives, e.g. *hard*, *straight*, *early*.

> 192C. They have *-er/-est* in the comparative and superlative.

You'll have to work harder if you want to pass the exam.

Let's see who can shoot the straightest.

Tim got to work a few minutes earlier than usual.

B There are a few irregular forms.

I find these pills work best. They're really good.

My tooth was aching worse than ever.

How much farther/further is it?

| Adverb | Comparative | Superlative |
|--------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>well</i> | <i>better</i> | <i>best</i> |
| <i>badly</i> | <i>worse</i> | <i>worst</i> |
| <i>far</i> | <i>farther/further</i> | <i>farthest/furthest</i> > 203G |

C Adverbs with *-ly* have *more/most*.

You'll have to draw the graph more accurately than that.

The first speaker presented his case the most convincingly.

But *early* is an exception. > A

Adverbs not formed from adjectives (e.g. *often*) also have *more/most*.

I wish we could meet more often. I hardly ever see you.

But *soon* is an exception.

If we all help, we'll get the job finished sooner.

Comparison

D Some adverbs can be with or without *-ly*. > 192D

I got the bike fairly cheap/cheaply.

These adverbs have two different comparative and superlative forms. The forms with *-er/-est* are more informal.

You could get one cheaper/more cheaply secondhand.

It's the newcomers who protest the loudest/the most loudly against new building here.

205 More, most, less, least, fewer, and fewest

We can use these words to compare quantities.

| Plural | Uncountable |
|--|--|
| <i>more</i> (= a larger number) <i>There are more cars in Los Angeles than people.</i> | <i>more</i> (= a larger amount) <i>You've got more money than I have.</i> |
| <i>most</i> (= the largest number) <i>Of all the countries in the world, Britain has the most ghosts.</i> | <i>most</i> (= the largest amount) <i>Claire is always studying. She does the most work.</i> |
| <i>fewer/less</i> (= a smaller number) <i>I buy fewer/less CDs these days than I used to.</i> | <i>less</i> (= a smaller amount) <i>If you want to be healthy, you should eat less fat.</i> |
| <i>fewest/least</i> (= the smallest number) <i>We're bottom of the league.</i> <i>We've got the fewest/least points.</i> | <i>least</i> (= the smallest amount) <i>I'm the busiest person here. I have the least spare time.</i> |

TIP
Use *fewer* or *fewest* with plural nouns, e.g. *fewer accidents, the fewest cars*. Some people think that *less accidents* and the *least cars* are incorrect, although they are commonly used.

206 Patterns expressing a comparison

A Than

After a comparative we often use *than* with a phrase or clause.

*Glasgow is bigger **than** Edinburgh.*

*Going out alone is more difficult for women **than** for men.*

*The hotel was more expensive **than** I had expected.*

*Flying is a lot quicker **than** going by train.*

*There were a lot more people in town **than** usual.*

For *than* + pronoun, > D.

B Less and least

Less and *least* are the opposites of *more* and *most*.

*The theory is **less** complex/more simple **than** you might think.*

*It's the **least** complex/the **most** simple explanation of the facts.*

We use *less* with both long and short adjectives.

*It's cheaper. It's **less** expensive.*

*It's more expensive. It's **less** cheap.*

Here are some more examples with *less* and *least*.

*My back hurts **less** if I lie down.*

*I see Vicky **less** often now that we don't work together.*

*The subway is the **least** expensive way to get around New York.*

C As and so

We use a positive statement with *as ... as ...* to say that things are equal.

*Many motels are **as** comfortable **as** hotels.*

*My sister is **as** tall **as** you.*

We can use *as ... as ...* in idiomatic phrases like these.

as hard as iron (= very hard) *as light as a feather* (= very light)

In a negative statement we can use either *as ... as ...* or *so ... as ...*

*I don't drink **as/so** much coffee **as** you do.*

(= I drink less coffee than you do.)

*These new chairs **aren't as/so** comfortable **as** the old ones.*

(= They are less comfortable than the old ones.)

We use *as* (not *so*) with the second part of the comparison. After *as* we can use a phrase or clause.

*The film **isn't as** good **as** the book.*

*I'll do the job **as** quickly **as** (is) humanly possible.*

*The profits **weren't as** great **as** we had hoped.*

NOTE

- a We can use the pattern *as* + adjective + *a/an* + noun. > 196H

*This **isn't as** interesting **an** article **as** the last one I read.*

(= This article isn't as interesting as the last one I read.)

(BUT NOT ~~*This isn't an as interesting article as the last one I read.*~~)

Comparison

We can also use this pattern with *such*.

*This isn't **such an** interesting article as the last one I read.*

- b Note this use with numbers and measurements.

The temperature is often as high as 40 degrees.

(= The temperature is often 40 degrees, which is very high.)

D Pronouns after *as* and *than*

A pronoun directly after *as* or *than* has the object form.

*Phil is very tall. I'm not as tall as **him**.*

*The other team played better than **us**.*

But if there is a verb after the pronoun, then the pronoun has the subject form.

*Phil is very tall. I'm not as tall as **he** is.*

*The other team played better than **we** did.*

NOTE

You may hear a sentence like *I'm not as tall as he* with a subject pronoun at the end. This is formal and old-fashioned. It is more usual to say *I'm not as tall as **him/as he** is*.

E Leaving out *as* or *than*

We can leave out *as* or *than* and the following phrase or clause if the meaning is clear without it.

I liked the old chairs. These new ones aren't as/so comfortable.

The film is OK, but the book is much better.

It's more difficult to find your way in the dark.

F Patterns with the superlative

After a superlative we often use a phrase of time or place, an of-phrase, or a relative clause.

*It's going to be the most exciting pop festival **ever**.*

*Which is the oldest city **in the world**?*

*The Trans-Siberian railway is the longest journey **of all**.*

*It's the most marvellous film **I've ever seen**.*

*Peter is the least aggressive person **I know**.*

We sometimes use a pattern with *one of/some of*.

*The elephant is **one of the** largest animals **in the world**.*

*This area has **some of the** worst housing **in the country**.*

G *Much bigger, easily the biggest, etc*

We can use an adverb of degree before a comparative or before *as*.

*France is **much** bigger than Switzerland.*

*Yes, I think I understand. I'm feeling **a little less** confused now.*

*I'll need **a lot** more paper.*

*The simulation is **just as** exciting as the real thing.*

*I've got **nowhere near as much** time as I need for the job.*

We can use *even* before a comparative.

The new stadium will be even bigger than the present one, which holds 75,000 spectators.

We can use *easily* and *by far* before a superlative.

This is easily the nicest place in town.

I'm using by far the most effective method.

The stays next to the superlative (e.g. *the nicest*).

For more examples of adverbs of degree modifying a comparative or superlative, > 196C.

NOTE

a For e.g. *ever more confused*, > 207A Note.

b For e.g. *twice as quick*, *ten times better*, >196C Note.

H Same, like, etc

We can also make comparisons with *same*, *like*, *similar*, and *different*.

You look the same as ever.

I've got a computer like yours.

The system here is similar to how we do it in Italy.

Volleyball is quite different from basketball.

207 Special patterns with the comparative

A Comparatives with and

We use this pattern with *and* to express a continuing change.

The plant grew taller and taller.

The problem is becoming worse and worse.

The air is getting more and more polluted.

The roads are very congested. There's more and more traffic all the time.

With *more*, we do not repeat the adjective.

(NOT ~~*The air is getting more polluted and more polluted.*~~)

We can also use *less*.

I was feeling less and less enthusiastic about the whole plan.

NOTE

The pattern *ever* + comparative also expresses a continuing change.

The plant grew ever taller.

The air is getting ever more polluted.

B Comparatives with the ... the ...

We use this pattern with *the ... the ...* to say that a change in one thing is linked to a change in another.

The longer the journey (is), the more expensive the ticket (is).

The further you travel, the more you pay.

The older you get, the harder it becomes to find a job.

The less care you take, the more mistakes you'll make.

Prepositions

208 Introduction

- A** A preposition is a word like *in*, *to*, or *for*. It can also be more than one word: *out of*, *in front of*. A preposition usually comes before a noun phrase.

into the building at two o'clock without a coat

Some prepositions can also come before an adverb.

until tomorrow through there

- B** A phrase like *on my desk* or *at the office* is called a prepositional phrase. A prepositional phrase often functions as an adverbial. > 189B
Everything was quiet at the office.

A prepositional phrase can sometimes come after a noun. > 143

The panic at the office meant that I got home late.

There are many idiomatic combinations where a particular preposition follows a verb, adjective, or noun. > 222–226

wait for a bus afraid of the dark an interest in music

- C** We can use certain prepositions before a gerund. > 114–117
We succeeded in reaching an agreement.

But an infinitive cannot be the object of a preposition.

NOT ~~*We succeeded in to reach an agreement.*~~

We cannot use a preposition before a that-clause.

NOT ~~*We're hoping for that it stays fine.*~~

We use one of these patterns.

We're hoping for fine weather. We're hoping (that) it stays fine.

But we can use a preposition before a wh-clause. > 255

I'd better make a list of what we need.

- D** We can modify a preposition.

almost at the end right in front of me halfway up the hill
all over the floor just off the motorway directly after your lesson

- E** Some words can be either a preposition or an adverb.

Preposition: *I waited for my friend outside the bank.*

We haven't seen Julia since last summer.

There was no lift, so we had to walk up the stairs.

Adverb: *My friend went into the bank, and I waited outside.*

We saw Julia last summer, but we haven't seen her since.

There was no lift, so we had to walk up.

Some words can be either a preposition of time or a conjunction. > 238A

Preposition: *We must have everything ready before their arrival.*

Conjunction: *We must have everything ready before they arrive.*

F In some patterns a preposition goes at the end of a clause.

Wh-question: *Who did you go to the party with?* > 15D

Infinitive clause: *I've got a CD for you to listen to.* > 98D

Passive: *War reporters sometimes get shot at.* > 87D

Relative clause: *That's the shop I was telling you about.* > 268D

209 Prepositions of place

A Basic meanings



There are some people in/inside the café. The man is waiting outside the café.



There's a TV on the table. There's a photo on top of the TV. There's a dog under(neath) the table.



There's a picture over/above the fireplace.



She's going up the steps, and he's coming down the steps.



The road goes through a tunnel. The car is going in/into the tunnel. The lorry is coming out of the tunnel.



She's taking the food off the trolley and putting it on/onto the shelves.



The bus is at the bus stop. It is alongside the kerb. It is going from the city centre to the university.



The lorry is going away from York and travelling towards Hull.



The man is sitting next to/by/beside the woman. Their table is close to/near the door.



The bus is in front of/ ahead of the car. The lorry is behind the car. The car is between the bus and the lorry.

The woman is walking along the pavement past the supermarket.

The man is on the pavement opposite the bank. The bank is across the road.



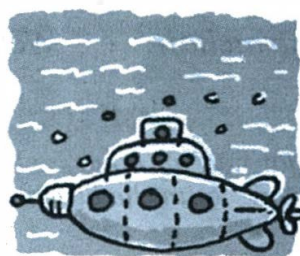
There are security guards among the crowds. They are present throughout the area.
(= in all parts of the area)

They're running around/round the track.

Your foot must stay within/inside the circle.



The man is leaning against the wall.



The submarine is 500 metres below/beneath the surface.



Would they find the promised land beyond the mountains?
 (= on the other side of the mountains)

NOTE

We use *of* with some prepositions of place: *ahead of*, *in front of*, *on top of*, *out of*. *Outside of* is also possible.

You should have a life outside (of) work.

You may also hear *inside of*, *off of*, or *alongside of*, especially in American English, but they are regarded as non-standard in British English.

Americans sometimes use *out* without *of*.

I was looking out the window.

B Position and movement

Most prepositions of place can say where something is or where it is going.

Position: *There was a barrier across the road.*

Movement: *A dog ran across the road in front of us.*

At usually expresses position, and *to* expresses movement.

Position: *Everyone was at the café.*

Movement: *Everyone went to the café.*

As a general rule, *in* and *on* express position, and *into* and *onto* express movement.

Position: *We were sitting in the café.*

She stood on the balcony.

Movement: *We went into the café.*

She walked onto the balcony.

But we also use *in* and *on* for movement, especially in informal English.

We went in the café.

Someone pushed me in the swimming-pool.

Babies often throw things on the floor.

After *lay*, *place*, and *put* we usually use *in* or *on* rather than *into* or *onto*.

They laid the body on a blanket.

A number of advertisements were placed in the newspapers.

I put a clean sheet on the bed.

Prepositions

After *sit* we use *in* or *on*.

Tom sat down in the armchair.

We could go and sit on that seat.

NOTE

Compare these examples.

We walked on the beach (for half an hour).

We walked (from the car park) onto the beach.

C Other meanings

Prepositions of place can also have more abstract meanings.

No one is above/beyond criticism. (= too good to be criticized)

Our next game is against Arsenal. (The opposing team is Arsenal.)

The band is among the most successful ever. (= one of the most successful)

The party is right behind its leader. (= supporting its leader)

She's really into yoga and that kind of thing. (= interested in yoga)

I went to a lecture on Einstein. (= about Einstein)

We are working towards a common goal. (= working to bring closer)

For more prepositions with abstract meanings, > 215.

For prepositions of time, > 211.

Prepositions are often used in idiomatic combinations.

Above all, we must keep our nerve. > 216

The police are looking into the matter. > 222

210 At, on, and in expressing place

A We use *at* to give the position where something is.

The car was waiting at the lights. *There's someone at the door.*

Here we see *the lights* and *the door* as a point in space. Compare *There's someone in the phone box* (> C), where we see the phone box as all around the person.

We use *at* with a building or institution when we mean the normal purpose the building is used for.

My friends are at the theatre. (= watching a play)

My sister is fifteen. She's still at school. (= attending school)

We use *at* for someone's home.

I had a cup of coffee at Alice's (house/flat).

We also use *at* with a social event.

We met at Adam's party, didn't we?

Jo spent the afternoon at the races.

B *On* is two-dimensional. We use it for a surface.

Don't leave your glass on the floor.

There were lots of pictures on the walls.

We use *on* for position on a line such as a river, road, or frontier.

Paris is on the Seine.

The house is right on the main road, so it's a bit noisy.

For *in Bond Street/on Fifth Avenue*, > E.

NOTE

We use *on* to say that we are carrying something with us.

I'm afraid I haven't got any money on/with me.

C *In* is three-dimensional.

I had five pounds in my pocket.

Who's that girl in the green dress?

There were three people in the waiting room.

Compare *in* and *at* with buildings.

It was cold in the library. (= inside the building)

We were at the library. (= using the library)

D In general we use *in* for a country or town.

Tom is in Canada at the moment. *My sister works in Birmingham.*

With a small place we can use *at* or *in*.

We used to live at/in a place called Menston.

We can use *at* with a town or city if we see it as a point on a journey.

I had to change trains at Birmingham.

We use *on* with a small island and *in* with a large island.

We spent a week on Corfu. *The company has a factory in Ireland.*

E Compare the use of *at*, *on*, and *in* in these phrases.

| <i>at</i> | <i>on</i> | <i>in</i> |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>at 52 Grove Road</i> | <i>on 42nd Street (US)</i> | <i>in Spain/Bristol</i> |
| <i>at your house</i> | <i>on the third floor</i> | <i>in Grove Road</i> |
| <i>at the station</i> | <i>on the platform</i> | |
| <i>at home/work/school</i> | | <i>in the room/lesson</i> |
| | <i>on the page</i> | <i>in a book/newspaper</i> |
| | <i>on the screen</i> | <i>in the photo/picture</i> |
| | <i>on the island</i> | <i>in the country</i> |
| <i>at the seaside</i> | <i>on the beach/coast</i> | |
| | <i>on the right/left</i> | <i>in the middle</i> |
| | | <i>in the distance</i> |
| | <i>on the back of an envelope</i> | <i>in the back of the car</i> |
| <i>at the back/end/front of the queue</i> | | <i>in a queue/line/row</i> |

211 More details about prepositions of place

A Above, over, below, and under

Above and *over* have similar meanings.

There was a clock above/over the entrance.

My bedroom is above/over the kitchen, so I get all the cooking smells.

When something covers an area, we prefer *over*.

Thick black smoke hangs over the town.

When the two things are in contact, we use *over* and not *above*.

Someone had spread a sheet over the body.

We also use *over* for movement to the other side.

The horse jumped over the wall.

Did the ball go over the goal line?

Somehow we had to get over/across the river.

We prefer *over* before a number.

There are well over fifty thousand people in the stadium.

But we use *above* for a measurement that we think of as vertical.

Temperatures will rise above thirty degrees.

The land here is only a couple of metres above sea level.

Below is the opposite of *above*.

The treasure was buried two metres below ground.

Temperatures will fall below freezing.

The opposite of *over* is *under*.

Come under the umbrella, or you'll get wet.

The town lies under a thick black cloud of smoke.

We use *under* rather than *below* with ages and with sums of money.

You have to be under 15 to buy a half-price ticket.

The winner will collect just under £2 million.

With most other kinds of measurement, either *below* or *under* is possible.

The party's support has fallen to below/under 20 per cent.

B Top and bottom

On top of is a preposition.

There's a monument on top of the hill.

We can also use *top* and *bottom* in patterns like these.

When you get to the top of the hill, you turn left.

Sign your name at the bottom of the page.

C *Through, across, and along**through the gate**across the road**along the path*

When you go *through*, you go in at one end and out at the other. We talk about going *through* a gate, a tunnel, a forest, a hole, and so on.

The water is pumped through pipes.

The burglar got in through the window.

When you go *across*, you go from one side to the other. We talk about going *across* a road, a river, a bridge, a frontier, and so on.

You can get across the Channel by ferry.

We use *along* when we follow something that goes in a line. We talk about going *along* a path, a road, a coast, a corridor, and so on.

We were walking along the line of the old Iron Curtain.

Compare *along* and *across* in these examples.

We cruised along the canal for a few miles.

We walked across the canal by a footbridge.

D *To, towards, and up to*

We use *to* for a destination and *towards* for a direction.

We're going to Oxford. We're going to look around the colleges.

We're going towards Oxford. I think we're going the wrong way.

Up to means moving to a position right in front of someone or something.

A man came up to me in the street and asked for money.

Lisa walked boldly up to the front door and rang the bell.

It can also mean movement to a higher level.

I filled the bottle up to the top.

NOTE

We also use *up to* to talk about a maximum number.

Up to thirty people are believed to have been killed in the explosion.

E Near, close, by, and next to

Near, near to, and close to mean 'not far from'.

Motherwell is near Glasgow.

There's a taxi rank quite near (to) the hotel.

You shouldn't put a heater close to curtains.

Here *close* is pronounced /kləʊs/.

Near (to) and close to have comparative and superlative forms.

We were gradually getting nearer (to) our destination.

I was sitting closest to the door.

Nearby and close by mean 'not far away'.

We don't serve dinner, but there is an excellent restaurant nearby / close by.

By means 'at the side of' or 'very near'.

We live right by the hospital.

Come and sit by me.

Next to means 'directly at the side of'.

The woman sitting next to me was smoking the whole time.

There's a newsagent's next to the post office.

NOTE

Nowhere near means 'a long way from'.

Birmingham is nowhere near Glasgow.

F In front of, before, behind, after, and opposite

When we are talking about position, we prefer *in front of* to *before*.

There's a statue in front of the museum.

Tina spends hours in front of the mirror.

We prefer *behind* to *after*.

The car behind us ran into the back of us.

Before usually means 'earlier in time', and *after* means 'later in time'. But we also use *before* and *after* to talk about what order things come in.

J comes before K.

K comes after J.

Opposite means 'on the other side from'. Compare *in front of* and *opposite*.

Simon was sitting in front of me in the cinema.

Simon was sitting opposite me at lunch.

G Between and among

We use *between* with a small number of things, especially with two things.

The bungalow is between two houses.

(= There is a house on both sides of the bungalow.)

The ball went between the player's legs.

It's an area of countryside between three quite large towns.

For expressions such as *a conflict between* and *a link between*, > 226D.

Among suggests a larger number.

I thought I caught sight of someone among the trees.

H (A)round and about

Around or *round* means movement in a circle > 209A. We can also use it to mean 'in different directions' or 'in different places'.

We just like driving around/round the country visiting different places.

There were piles of old magazines lying around/round the flat.

Americans use *around* rather than *round*.

We can use *about* in the same way.

Everyone was rushing around/about the place in a panic.

212 At, on, and in expressing time

A We use *at* with a particular time such as a clock time or a meal time.

The performance starts at eight o'clock.

I'll see you at breakfast.

At that time there were no mobile phones.

We're very busy at the moment.

We also use *at* with short holiday periods.

The family is always together at Christmas/at Thanksgiving.

Are you doing anything at the weekend? (US: on the weekend)

We also use *at* with ages.

A sporting career can be over at thirty.

B We use *on* with a day.

The meeting is on Tuesday/on 7 August.

I have to go to an interview on that day.

Do they play football games on Christmas Day/on Easter Sunday?

On can mean 'immediately after'.

On his arrival, the President held a press conference.

C We use *in* with longer periods.

I'll have to make my mind up in the next few days.

We'll have lots of time in the summer holidays.

The term starts in September.

The company was set up in 1997.

In the 16th century only about 5 million people spoke English.

We also use *in* with a part of a day.

Why don't you come over in the afternoon?

I always work better in the mornings.

Prepositions

But we use *on* if we say which day.

Why don't you come over on Friday afternoon?

The incident occurred on the evening of 12 May.

NOTE

We say *in the night* but *at night* without *the*.

I heard a noise in the night. (= in the middle of the night)

The windows are shut at night. (= when it is night)

D We can use *in* to say how long something takes.

Have you read 'Around the World in Eighty Days'?

Lots of athletes can run a mile in four minutes.

We can also use *in* for a time in the future measured from the present.

We take our exams in three weeks.

(= three weeks from now/in three weeks' time)

Compare these examples.

You can walk there in half an hour. (It takes half an hour.)

I'm going out in half an hour. (= half an hour from now)

E Sometimes we can use an expression of time without a preposition.

I received the letter last Thursday.

I'm starting a new course next year.

We've got visitors this week.

The same thing happens every time.

You aren't going to lie in bed all day, are you?

Don't be late tomorrow morning.

A week later I got a reply.

We do not normally use *at*, *on*, or *in* with *last*, *next*, or *this*, with *every* or *all*, with *yesterday* or *tomorrow*, or with the adverb *later*.

In some contexts we can either use the preposition or leave it out.

Something unusual happened (on) that day.

Profits were £50 million, compared with £35 million (in) the previous year.

They agreed to play the match (on) the following Sunday.

In informal English, and especially in American English, we can sometimes leave out *on* before a day.

I'll see you (on) Monday.

NOTE

a We can use other prepositions with *last*, *every*, etc.

After this week, I'll need a holiday. *I feel nervous during every flight.*

b We do not use a preposition with *these days* (= nowadays).

It's all done by computers these days.

213 For, since, and ago

- A** We use *for* with a period of time to say how long something continues.
The kids play computer games for hours on end.
I once stayed at that hotel for a week.
I just want to sit down for five minutes.

We do not use *for* before a phrase with *all*.

It rained all day. (NOT ~~*It rained for all day.*~~)

And we do not usually use *for* before a phrase with *whole*.

It rained the whole day.

This is more usual than *It rained for the whole day.*

- B** We often use *for* and *since* with the perfect.

| <i>for</i> | <i>since</i> |
|--|--|
| <i>Rachel has worked for the company for five years now.</i> | <i>Rachel has worked for the company since 1999.</i> |
| <i>We haven't been to the theatre for months.</i> | <i>We haven't been to the theatre since April.</i> |
| <i>I've been waiting here for twenty minutes.</i> | <i>I've been waiting here since twelve o'clock.</i> |
| We use <i>for</i> + length of time. <i>for two years for a week</i> <i>for four days for a few minutes</i> | We use <i>since</i> + time when. <i>since 2003 since last week</i> <i>since Monday since half past two</i> |
| We can sometimes leave out <i>for</i> in informal English. <i>I've been waiting twenty minutes.</i> | We sometimes also use <i>since</i> with an event. <i>I haven't been anywhere since the concert.</i> |

NOTE

For more examples with *for* and *since*, > 46D.

We can also use *since* as a conjunction. > 238A

For the pattern *It's months since we last went to the theatre*, > 46E.

- C** We use the adverb *ago* for something that happened in the past at a time measured from the present.

Rachel joined the company five years ago. (= five years before now)

We last went to the theatre months ago. (= months before now)

An hour ago I was still in bed. (= an hour before now)

Ago comes after the length of time (*five years, months, an hour*).

When we look back from the past to an even earlier time, we usually use the adverb *before*.

Rachel left the company last year. She'd joined them five years before.
 (= five years before last year)

This is more usual than *She'd joined them five years ago.*

- D** Compare these examples referring to the past and the future.

Looking into the past

I've been here (for) ten minutes.
I've been here since twenty to four.
I arrived ten minutes ago.

Looking into the future

I'll stay (for) ten minutes.
I'll stay until four o'clock. > 214C
I'm leaving in ten minutes.

214 More prepositions of time

A Place and time

Some prepositions of place can also be used as a preposition of time.

I'll be with you between three and half past.
It must have been close to ten when I finally got home.
Lots of people work from nine o'clock to five. > D
You can do the journey inside an hour.
I had a stream of visitors throughout the day.
Towards midnight people were starting to leave.
We can park here up to six o'clock. > C

At, on, and in can also express either place (> 210) or time (> 212).

B During and over

Look at these examples.

Nobody does any work during the festival.
The office will be closed during August.

We use *during* with an event (*the festival*) or a specific period (*August*).
 It means the whole period.

We cannot use *during* + length of time.

The office will be closed for a month. (NOT ~~during a month~~)
The festival went on for five days. (NOT ~~during five days~~)

But we can use *during* with a specific period of time.

No one does any work during the five days of the festival.
I've been extremely busy during the last few weeks.

We can also use *during* for a period in which a shorter action takes place.

The e-mail arrived during the meeting.
I have to make several trips abroad during the next few weeks.

During is a preposition; *while* is a conjunction.

My phone rang during lunch.
My phone rang while I was having lunch.

We can also use *over* for a whole period of time.

Over/During the past year, 25,000 refugees have entered the country.

Free meals will be served to the poor over/during the Christmas period.

NOTE

- a When something continues for a complete period, we can also use *throughout* or *all through*.

The population grew rapidly during/throughout the 19th century.

The man at the end of the table kept staring at me during/all through lunch.

- b The adverb *over* can mean 'finished'.

The meeting was soon over.

C Till/until and by

We use *till/until* to say when something comes to an end.

We sat there till/until the end of the show.

I'll be working here till/until next April.

Till is more informal than *until*.

We can also use *up to*.

I'll be working here up to next April.

Not ... till/until means that something happens later than expected.

We didn't get home till/until half past two in the morning

On Sundays I sometimes don't get up till/until lunchtime.

The new law will not come into force until next year.

By means 'not later than'.

I have to be at work by nine. (= at nine or earlier)

They should have replied to my letter by now. (= now or earlier)

Debbie is going to pay me back by Friday. (= on Friday or earlier)

Compare the use of *before*.

Debbie is going to pay me back before Friday. (= earlier than Friday)

NOTE

- a *Till/until* does not express place.

We walked to the bridge / as far as the bridge. (NOT ~~*till/until the bridge*~~)

- b We can use *till/until* as a conjunction.

We walked on till/until we got to the bridge.

We cannot use *by* on its own as a conjunction, but we can use *by the time*.

It was raining by the time we got to the bridge.

D From ... to/till/until

We use *from* for the time when something starts.

Tickets will be on sale from next Wednesday.

From seven in the morning there's constant traffic noise.

We can use *from ... to* or *from ... till/until* for the times when something starts and finishes.

The cricket season lasts from April to September.

The road will be closed from Friday evening till/until Monday morning.

Americans use *through*, e.g. *from Friday through Monday.*

E Before and after

Look at these examples.

I usually go jogging before breakfast.

Everyone will need to study the proposals prior to our discussions.

People felt nervous after the attack on the World Trade Center.

Following a change of sponsor, the competition now has a new name.

Prior to (formal) means 'before'. *Following* means 'after' or 'as a result of'.

215 Prepositions: other meanings

- A** Prepositions can have meanings other than place or time. Here are some examples.

We were arguing about politics.

According to the opinion polls, the government is very popular.

The resort was very crowded. And as for the accommodation, it was awful.

We need some advice as to what we should do next.

I'm reading a book by Thomas Keneally.

Contrary to popular belief, prisons are not holiday camps.

The couple want to stay together for the sake of the children.

The product should be assembled in accordance with the instructions.

Who's in charge of this department?

Almost all the voters were in favour of independence.

Profits have fallen ten per cent, in line with forecasts.

The furniture has to be the right size in relation to the size of the room.

Can I use a pencil instead of a pen?

How effective are speed cameras in terms of road safety?

On behalf of the company, I would like to express my thanks.

No action has been taken regarding / with regard to my complaint.

The book is better than the film. > 206A

Brazil won the game thanks to a late goal from Ronaldo.

It's up to you what you do next. You decide.

This train goes to Birmingham via Oxford.

- B** *For* has a number of different meanings. Here are some of them.

Could you do something for me, please? (= to help me)

I've called in for a chat. (purpose, > 240C)

She's a very clever child for her age. (= considering her age)

Are people for the scheme or against it? (= in favour of/supporting)

When *for* means 'in favour of', it is normally stressed.

- C** *With* has these meanings.

I went to the concert with a friend. (We were together.)

Matthew is the man with long hair. (He has long hair.)

I cut the wood with an electric saw. (I used an electric saw. > D)

We all set to work with enthusiasm. (= enthusiastically)

With people watching I felt embarrassed.

(= Because people were watching, ... > 128B)

Without is the opposite of *with*.

Who's the man without any shoes on?

We all set to work, but without enthusiasm.

NOTE

We can use *with* + noun to form an adverbial expressing manner or feeling.

I listened to the discussion with interest.

With certain nouns we use *in*.

The losers sank to the ground in despair.

For *to* in a comment adverbial such as *to my horror*, > 201C.

- D** We use *with* and *by* to express means. We use *with* to talk about an instrument, something we use to help us do something.

The thieves broke the door down with a hammer.

Just stir this with a wooden spoon, could you?

We can also use *by means of* to explain how something is done.

The site was made secure by means of a sophisticated alarm system.

We use *by* before an ing-form.

The thieves got in by breaking the door down.

By stirring the mixture, you stop it sticking to the pan.

In a passive sentence we use *by* before the agent. > 89A

The door was broken down by the thieves/with a hammer.

The motor is powered by electricity.

NOTE

Sometimes we can use either *with* or *by*.

I paid with a credit card/by credit card.

After *by* expressing means we do not use *a/an* or *the*.

- E** We use *by* + noun for a means of transport.

I usually prefer to travel by train.

We do not use *a/an* or *the*.

(NOT ~~*I usually prefer to travel by a train.*~~)

Such phrases with *by* include: *by aeroplane, by air, by bicycle, by bike, by boat, by bus, by car, by coach, by ferry, by hovercraft, by hydrofoil, by plane, by rail, by road, by sea, by ship, by taxi, by train, by tube, by underground.*

We do not normally use *by* to mean a specific bicycle, car, etc.

I'll go on my bike. (NOT ~~*I'll go by my bike.*~~)

We can use phrases like *in the/my car, in a taxi, on the/our boat, on the bus/coach/ferry/train*, etc.

We say *on foot* and *on horseback*.

I came here on foot. (= I walked here.)

On foot is more usual than *by foot*.

We can also use *by* for means of communication, e.g. *by e-mail, by fax, by letter, by phone, by post, by radio.*

I sent the information by post.

I spoke to Tim by phone / on the phone.

Prepositions

NOTE

We can use other prepositions with *bike*, *car*, etc. These examples express movement.

The passengers got into/out of the car/taxi.

Emma got on/off her bike/the bus/the train.

We went on board the ship.

F *Of* has a number of different meanings.

a tin of soup > 138A

some of my friends > 168

the end of the game > 133C

our first sight of land > 257

We can also use *of* in this pattern.

These souvenirs are of no value. (They have no value.)

She's an actress of great ability. (She has great ability.)

G We can use *as* to express a role or function.

Maria has come along as our guide. (She is our guide.)

I'm having to use the sofa as a bed. (It is a bed.)

After *as* we normally use a determiner (e.g. *our*, *a*), but for a phrase like *as Queen* without *the*, > 159F.

We use *like* to make a comparison.

A hang-glider can soar through the air like a bird.

I think Louise looks a bit like Kylie Minogue.

Like everyone else, I have to pay my taxes.

Compare *as* and *like*.

He speaks as an expert. He is after all a professor.

He talks like an expert, but really he knows very little.

NOTE

a We can use *anything* or *nothing* to modify *like*.

Of course it isn't my coat. It's nothing like mine, is it?

b *Unlike* is the opposite of *like*.

It's unlike Sarah to be late. She's usually very punctual.

H We use *except (for)*, *apart from*, *with the exception of*, and *but (for)* to talk about an exception.

Everyone was there except (for)/but (for)/apart from James, who was ill.

Everyone was there with the exception of James.

I hate fish. I can eat anything except/but fish.

I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

I Some prepositions have a similar meaning to a conjunction.

I studied physics as well as chemistry. (= and I studied chemistry)

The barbecue was cancelled due to the weather.

(= because the weather was bad)

Such prepositions include the following:

as well as, *besides*, *in addition to*, *along with*, *together with* > 233D

in spite of, *despite* > 235D

as a result of > 236B

because of, *due to*, *owing to*, *in view of*, *on account of*, *considering* > 239C

216 Idiomatic phrases with prepositions

- A** There are many idiomatic phrases beginning with a preposition. Most of them are without *a/an* or *the*. Here are some examples.

Above all we don't want any accidents.

At first I couldn't see a thing, but then my eyes adjusted to the dark.

I've managed to finish this crossword at last.

Of course I know you. I recognized you at once.

I'd like to buy this picture if it's for sale.

Try to see it from my point of view.

You have to pay half the cost of the holiday in advance.

Yes, I am thinking of leaving. In fact I've resigned.

Of course you can't trust the weather in Britain.

I drive about ten thousand miles a year on average.

I'll be on holiday next week.

I heard the news either on television or on the radio.

There are so many different computers on the market.

There were one or two problems, but on the whole things went smoothly.

I've been out of work, but I'm starting a new job soon.

The government is under pressure to do something about the problem.

- B** *In time* (for/to) means 'early enough', but *on time* means 'punctual(ly)'.

Oh, good. You're back in time for tea.

The train left on time at 11.23.

Note also *in good time* and *just in time*.

We got back in good time for tea. (= with plenty of time to spare)

We got back just in time for tea. (= with little time to spare)

- C** *In the beginning* means 'at first', and *at the beginning of* + noun phrase refers to the time when something starts.

In the beginning / At first the company struggled to survive, but now it is very successful.

The students return to Oxford at the beginning of the academic year.

In the end means 'finally', and *at the end of* + noun phrase refers to the time when something finishes.

There were arguments, but in the end / finally we managed to reach an agreement.

Most students have jobs to go to at the end of the course.

- D** *In the way* means 'blocking the way', and *on the way* means 'on a journey'.

Don't leave your bike there. It'll be in the way.

It's a long journey. We can stop for a meal on the way.

Phrasal verbs and prepositional idioms

217 Verbs with adverbs and prepositions → Audio

A Verb + adverb

A verb + adverb is called a 'phrasal verb'.

Come in and sit down.

What time did you get up?

You'd better take off your shoes.

I threw away my old briefcase.

The adverbs (e.g. *in, down, up*) are sometimes called 'adverb particles'. They combine with verbs to form phrasal verbs (e.g. *come in, take off*).

B Verb + preposition

A verb + preposition is called a 'prepositional verb'.

I was looking at the photo.

We didn't go into all the details.

What did you think of the film?

Prepositions (e.g. *at, into, of*) combine with verbs to form prepositional verbs (e.g. *look at, go into, think of*). The preposition has an object (e.g. *the photo, all the details, the film*). For more examples of prepositional verbs, > 222.

NOTE

Not everyone agrees about what to call these verbs. Sometimes 'phrasal verb' is used to mean both verb + adverb and verb + preposition. It is of course more important to use the words correctly than to worry about what to call them. But remember that there are differences between the use of adverbs and the use of prepositions. > 219

218 The grammar of phrasal verbs

A Word order

Some phrasal verbs are intransitive, but others have an object.

Intransitive: *Suddenly the lights went out.*

A chair had fallen over.

Transitive: *Someone turned out the lights.*

Someone had knocked over a chair.

When a phrasal verb has an object, the adverb can usually go either before or after the object.

Before the object: *I threw away my old briefcase.*

We woke up the neighbours.

After the object: *I threw my old briefcase away.*

We woke the neighbours up.

When the object is a pronoun, the adverb goes after it.

My old briefcase was falling to pieces, so I threw it away.

The neighbours weren't very pleased. We woke them up.

Paul borrowed some money from Sarah and never paid her back.

When the object is a long phrase, the adverb usually goes before it.

I threw away that rather battered old briefcase.

We woke up just about everyone in the street.

Paul never paid back all that money he borrowed.

B Adverb in front position

To give the adverb extra emphasis, we can sometimes put it in front position, especially when it expresses movement.

The door opened, and out ran the children.

Five minutes later, along came another bus.

There is usually inversion of subject and verb: in the first example *ran* comes before *the children*. But when the subject is a pronoun, there is no inversion.

The door opened, and out they ran.

C Nouns formed from phrasal verbs

Some verb + adverb combinations can be used as a noun.

a walkout by key workers

information on the handout

a hold-up at the bank

a take-away meal

a takeover bid for the company

a stand-in for the leading actor

an hour before take-off

a car breakdown

The stress is usually on the first syllable: 'take-off.

NOTE

- a Some nouns have the adverb before the verb.

an outbreak of rioting the amused onlookers

- b We can also sometimes use a passive participle + adverb before a noun.

a rolled-up newspaper a broken-down car

219 Differences between phrasal and prepositional verbs

A Adverbs and prepositions

A phrasal verb is a verb + adverb, e.g. *give away* > 218. Adverbs include *away*, *back*, and *out*.

A prepositional verb is a verb + preposition, e.g. *pay for* > 222. Prepositions include *at*, *for*, *from*, *into*, *of*, and *with*.

Some words can be either an adverb or a preposition. They include *about*, *along*, *around*, *down*, *in*, *off*, *on*, *over*, *round*, *through*, and *up*.

When I heard the voice, I looked round. (adverb)

We were looking round the museum. (preposition)

Phrasal verbs and prepositional idioms

B Word order with an object

Look at the difference between the possible word orders with the adverb *away* and the preposition *for*.

| Phrasal verb | Prepositional verb |
|---|---|
| <i>Lisa gave away her jewellery.</i> <i>Lisa gave her jewellery away.</i> The adverb can go before or after the object. A pronoun always goes before the adverb. <i>She gave it away.</i> | <i>Lisa paid for the meal.</i> (NOT <i>Lisa paid the meal for.</i>) The preposition goes before its object. A pronoun goes after the preposition. <i>She paid for it.</i> But the preposition comes at the end in some patterns. > 208F <i>What did Lisa pay for?</i> |

C Stress

| | |
|--|---|
| With a phrasal verb, the stress usually falls on the adverb, especially when it comes at the end of a clause. → Audio <i>Lisa gave her jewellery a'way.</i> <i>Let's go. Come 'on.</i> | With a prepositional verb, the stress usually falls on the verb and not the preposition. → Audio <i>Lisa 'paid for the meal.</i> <i>It de'pends on the weather.</i> |
|--|---|

D The passive

Many phrasal and prepositional verbs can be passive.

| Phrasal verb | Prepositional verb |
|---|--|
| <i>The alarm has been switched off.</i> <i>The building was pulled down last year.</i> We usually stress the adverb: <i>pulled 'down.</i> | <i>The matter will be dealt with.</i> <i>The children are being looked after by a neighbour.</i> We do not usually stress the preposition: <i>'looked after.</i> |

E Word order with adverbials

| Phrasal verb | Prepositional verb |
|---|---|
| An adverbial usually goes after the phrasal verb. <i>The plane took off on time.</i> <i>The candidate stood up nervously.</i> | An adverbial can often go between the verb and preposition. <i>I can't concentrate properly on my work.</i> <i>I looked carefully at the photo.</i> |
| It does not go between the verb and its adverb. NOT <i>He stood nervously up.</i> | It does not go between the preposition and its object. NOT <i>I looked at carefully the photo.</i> |

F Verb + clause

A phrasal verb can sometimes be followed by a gerund clause, a wh-clause, or a that-clause.

I've given up skiing.

Read through what you've written.

We found out (that) the story was untrue.

A prepositional verb can sometimes be followed by a gerund clause or a wh-clause.

I don't believe in paying taxes. > 115

The answer you get depends on who you ask. > 255

We cannot use a that-clause after a prepositional verb.

NOT ~~*I don't believe in that I should pay taxes.*~~

220 Phrasal verb meanings

- A** Some phrasal verbs are easy to understand if you know the meaning of each word.

You'll have to turn round here and go back.

The man stopped and put down his suitcase.

These verbs express movement.

But often the phrasal verb has an idiomatic meaning.

I've given up smoking. (= stopped)

The idea has caught on in a big way. (= become popular)

- B** Sometimes there is a one-word verb with the same meaning as the phrasal verb. The phrasal verb is usually more informal.

Are you going to carry on/continue your studies?

Experts are trying to find out/discover the cause of the accident.

We must fix up/arrange a meeting.

Phrasal verbs and prepositional idioms

The problem won't just go away/disappear.
You have failed to keep up/maintain your monthly payments.
You've left out/omitted two names from the list.
I'd like to put off/postpone a decision as long as possible.
They've put up/raised prices by 20 per cent.
I got someone to take away/remove all the rubbish.

C Some verbs combine with a number of different adverbs.

The child took two steps and fell down.
Enthusiasm for the sport has fallen off. (= become less)
Simon and Chloe have fallen out. (= quarrelled)
I'm afraid the deal fell through. (= didn't happen)

And the most common adverbs can combine with many different verbs.

The cat got up a tree and couldn't climb down.
These trousers are so tight I can't bend down.
A pedestrian was knocked down by a car.
Interest rates may come down soon.

D A phrasal verb can have more than one meaning.

There was a parked car blocking the lane, and we couldn't get by. (= pass it)
Tom has very little income, but he gets by. (= manages to live)

E We can use an adverb with the verb *be*.

We'll be away on holiday next week. (= in another place)
Will you be in tomorrow? (= at home/work)
Long skirts are in at the moment. (= in fashion)
The barbecue is off because of the weather. (= not taking place)
Is there anything on at the cinema? (= showing, happening)
I rang but you were out. (= not at home/work)
The party's over. It's time to go. (= at an end)
What's up? (= What's the matter?/What's happening?)

221 Some common adverbs in phrasal verbs

TIP

Many phrasal verbs have idiomatic meanings, but the verbs do not necessarily have to be learned separately. For example, if you learn that *calling someone back* means returning a phone call, then you can guess that *phone back* and *ring back* mean the same thing. It may help to make lists of phrasal verbs that you come across. Where possible, try to group them according to the meaning of the adverb.

Here are some adverbs often used in phrasal verbs.

down = to the ground

knocked down/pulled down the old hospital, burn down, cut down a tree

down = on paper

write down the number, copy down, note down, take down

down = becoming less

turn down the volume, slow down, a fire dying down

down = stopping completely

a car that broke down, a factory closing down

off = away

set off on a journey, a plane taking off, see someone off at the airport,

take a day off, sell goods off cheaply

off = disconnected

turn off/switch off the television, cut off the electricity, ring off

off = succeeding

the plan didn't come off, we managed to pull it off

on = wearing

had a jumper on, put my shoes on, trying a coat on

on = connected

turn on/switch on the light, leave the radio on

on = continuing

carry on/go on a bit longer, keep on doing something, work on late,

hang on / hold on (= wait)

out = away, disappearing

put out a fire, blow out a candle, wipe out all the data, cross out the word

out = completely, to an end

clean out a cupboard, fill out a form, work out the answer, write out

in full, wear out the motor, sort out the mess, it turned out OK in the end

out = to different people

give out/hand out copies of the worksheet, share out the food between us

out = aloud

read out all the names, shout out, cry out, speak out (= say sth publicly)

out = clearly seen

can't make out the words, point out a mistake, pick out the best

over = from start to finish

read over/check over what I've written, think over / talk over a problem,

go over the details

up = growing, increasing

step up production, turn up the volume, blow up / pump up a tyre

up = completely

eat/drink it all up, use up all the paper, clear up/tidy up the mess,

pack up my things, lock up before leaving, cut up into pieces, sum up

(= summarize)

222 Prepositional verbs

- A** A prepositional verb is a verb + preposition.

I don't believe in eating meat.

Who does this bag belong to?

I can't concentrate on this book.

The flat consists of four rooms.

The fare depends on when you travel.

I was listening to the weather forecast.

An idea has just occurred to me.

What does this number refer to?

We'll have to wait for a taxi.

Which preposition goes after the verb is mainly a matter of idiom.

NOTE

For more examples with verb + preposition + gerund (e.g. *believe in eating*), > 115A.

- B** Some verbs can take a number of different prepositions. Each combination has a different meaning. Here are some examples with *look*.

I had to stay at home and look after my little brother.

Come and look at the view.

Can you help me look for my mobile?

The police are looking into the incident.

People look on this neighbourhood as very desirable.

We spent a couple of hours looking round the shops.

Here are some other verbs which combine with different prepositions.

The doctor will be calling on a number of patients. (= visiting)

I'll call for you at about seven.

(I'll come to your home so that we can go somewhere together.)

The United Nations has called for a cease-fire. (= demanded)

I don't care about the exam. (I am not worried about or interested in it.)

My parents don't care for modern art. (They don't like it.)

Someone has to care for the sick. (= look after)

I will deal with the matter immediately. (= do something about)

The company deals in commercial properties. (= buys and sells)

People are dying of hunger. (They are dying because they are hungry.)

I was dying for some fresh air. (= wanting very much)

Compare these two examples.

Poor management resulted in huge losses.

The huge losses resulted from poor management.

- C** We can use *about* after many different verbs expressing speech or thought.

We were talking about renting a flat.

Our neighbours complained about the noise.

We'll have to decide about our holiday.

Compare *ask about* and *ask for*.

We asked about cheap tickets. ('Please tell us about cheap tickets.')

We asked for cheap tickets. ('Please give us cheap tickets.')

For more about patterns with *ask*, > 264D.

We can sometimes use *of* meaning 'about', but it is rather formal.

The Prime Minister spoke of/about his vision of the country's future.

With some verbs, *about* and *of* have different meanings.

I was thinking about my work. (= turning over in my mind)

I couldn't think of the man's name. (It wouldn't come into my mind.)

What did you think of the hotel? (What was your opinion?)

We're thinking of/about starting our own business. (= deciding about)

I heard about your recent success. (Someone told me about it.)

I've never heard of Bagley. Where is it? (The name is unfamiliar to me.)

Last night I dreamed about something that happened years ago.

(= imagined in my sleep)

I used to dream about/of making a number one hit.

(= think how much I would like)

I wouldn't dream of criticizing you. (It wouldn't enter my mind.)

D We usually use *to* before the person our words are directed at.

We were talking to/with our friends.

They complained to their neighbours about the noise.

But we say *laugh at*, *smile at*, and *argue with*.

Everyone laughed at the clown. *Are you arguing with me?*

Shout at can suggest anger.

The farmer shouted at us to keep out.

Matthew shouted to his friends across the street.

We *communicate with* someone.

The government even made it an offence to communicate with foreigners.

But we *communicate something to* someone. > 223C

When we use the telephone, we *ring*, (*tele*)*phone*, or *call* a person.

We do not use *to*.

I had to phone my boss.

E Some verbs have a similar meaning to a prepositional verb, but they take a direct object and not a preposition.

The troops have entered the city. (NOT ~~*The troops have entered into the city.*~~)

We were discussing politics. (NOT ~~*We were discussing about politics.*~~)

We reached our destination. (NOT ~~*We reached to our destination.*~~)

Such verbs include: *accompany*, *answer* (> Note), *approach*, *control*, *demand*, *desire*, *discuss*, *enter* (> Note), *expect*, *influence*, *lack*, *marry*, *obey*, *reach*, *remember*, *request*, *resemble*, *seek*, *suit*.

The equivalent noun takes a preposition.

their entry into the city *a discussion about politics*

our demand for justice

Phrasal verbs and prepositional idioms

Some verbs can take either a direct object or a preposition, depending on the meaning.

- I paid the taxi-driver / paid the bill.*
- I paid for the taxi / paid for the meal.*
- The police searched the whole house.*
- They were searching for drugs / looking for drugs.*
- The committee approved the plans.* (= accepted, allowed)
- I don't approve of cruelty to animals.* (I don't think it is right.)
- The train leaves Exeter at ten fifteen.* (= goes from Exeter)
- The train leaves for Exeter at ten fifteen.* (= leaves on its journey to Exeter)

NOTE

- a We use *answer to* and *enter into* only with special meanings.
Don't forget the company has to answer to its shareholders. (= explain its actions to)
The two sides have entered into negotiations. (= begun)
- b *Meet* and *visit* often take a direct object, but you may hear *meet with* and *visit with*, especially in American English.

223 Verb + object + preposition

A Some prepositional verbs have an object between the verb and preposition.

| | Verb | Object | Preposition | |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <i>We have to</i> | <i>translate</i> | <i>the article</i> | <i>into</i> | <i>English.</i> |
| <i>You can</i> | <i>insure</i> | <i>your belongings</i> | <i>against</i> | <i>theft</i> |
| <i>The company</i> | <i>spends</i> | <i>a lot of money</i> | <i>on</i> | <i>advertising.</i> |

In the passive, the preposition comes directly after the verb.

- The article has to be translated into English.*
- Your belongings can be insured against theft.*
- A lot of money is spent on advertising.*

Here are some more examples of this type of prepositional verb.

- Just compare these figures with those for last year.*
- I'd like to congratulate you on your success.*
- The press criticized the government for doing nothing.*
- Most people prefer the new system to the old one.*
- The old cinema has been turned into a night club.*
- Did you thank Daniel for helping us?*

NOTE

For more examples with verb + object + preposition + gerund (e.g. *thank Daniel for helping*), > 115B.

B Compare these pairs of sentences.

- You can't blame the government for everything.*
- You can't blame everything on the government.*
- The artist presented the President with a portrait of the White House.*

The artist presented a portrait of the White House to the President.
The company provides its customers with a first-class service.
The company provides a first-class service to/for its customers.

C We can use *about* after *tell/ask* + object.

Has anyone told you about the new timetable?

I've been asking people about their plans for next year.

We can also *ask* someone for something.

We asked our friends for some help.

This means that we asked them to give us some help.

After *inform* and *warn* we can use *about* or *of*.

We will inform customers about/of any changes to the arrangements.

I should warn you about/of the difficulties you may face.

When warning someone not to do something, we can use *against*.

My friends warned me against deciding in a hurry.

After *communicate*, *describe*, *explain*, and *write*, we use *to* before the person receiving the message.

Paul was eager to communicate the news to his neighbours.

Can you describe the man to me?

I explained our problem to the tour guide.

Lots of people write letters to the Queen.

For more details about this pattern with *communicate*, *describe*, etc., > 6F.

D Sometimes the verb + object + preposition has an idiomatic meaning.

It's the nurse's job to take care of the patients. (= look after)

We ought to make the most of this lovely weather.

(= get the maximum benefit from)

The speaker took no notice of the interruption. (= ignored)

Perhaps I should put my faith in alternative medicine. (= fully believe in)

Sometimes the verb and prepositional phrase have an idiomatic meaning.

We have to take a number of factors into consideration. (= consider)

The latest crisis has thrown everyone into a panic. (= made everyone panic)

The constant noise drives me to distraction. (= makes me very annoyed)

He has been put out of action by a back injury. (= stopped from working)

224 Verb + adverb + preposition

A A verb can have both an adverb and a preposition after it.

| | Verb | Adverb | Preposition | |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| My sister | <i>fell</i> | <i>down</i> | <i>on</i> | <i>the ice.</i> |
| The room | <i>looked</i> | <i>out</i> | <i>over</i> | <i>farmland.</i> |
| The astronomer | <i>gazed</i> | <i>up</i> | <i>at</i> | <i>the stars.</i> |

Phrasal verbs and prepositional idioms

Combinations like these are called 'phrasal-prepositional verbs'.

Sometimes the meaning is idiomatic. Here are some examples.

The others left half an hour ago. I'll never catch up with them now.

(= go faster and reach)

I'm trying to cut down on my calorie intake. (= reduce)

You've got to face up to the situation. (= not avoid)

I don't have that information right now. Can I get back to you?

(= answer at a later time)

I'll get round to filling that form in some time. (= find time)

My cousin has decided to go in for teaching. (= begin a career)

Are you looking forward to your holiday?

(= thinking with pleasure about a future event)

Why should we have to put up with poor service? (= tolerate)

B There can be an object between the verb and adverb.

| | Verb | Object | Adverb | Preposition | |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------|----------------|------------------------|
| <i>Are we going to</i> | <i>let</i> | <i>anyone else</i> | <i>in</i> | <i>on</i> | <i>the secret?</i> |
| <i>Laura has</i> | <i>taken</i> | <i>us</i> | <i>up</i> | <i>on</i> | <i>our invitation.</i> |
| <i>Each enquiry</i> | <i>brought</i> | <i>the police</i> | <i>up</i> | <i>against</i> | <i>a blank wall.</i> |

225 Adjective + preposition

A Some adjectives can be followed by a preposition.

The place was crowded with tourists.

The town is famous for its huge market.

The man was found guilty of burglary.

You'll be late for work.

We're ready for action.

We're rather short of time.

The job is similar to the one I did before.

That kind of remark is typical of a man.

Many of these adjectives express feelings.

afraid of the dark confident of victory crazy about country music

eager for news fed up with housework fond of seafood

impressed by/with your performance interested in ballet

jealous of other people's success keen on fishing

pleased with/about my exam results proud of her achievements

satisfied with my score surprised at/by what happened

thrilled at/by the prospect tired of walking

worried about/by this setback

NOTE

For adjective + preposition + gerund, > 116.

B Some adjectives can take different prepositions, depending on the meaning.

We are *angry with someone about something*.

The tourists were angry about the mix-up over tickets.

Why are you angry with me? It's not my fault.

We are *anxious about* a problem.

Everyone was anxious about terrorist attacks.

Anxious for means 'wanting'.

The whole family were anxious for news about the missing boy.

We are *concerned about* or *concerned at* a problem.

The government is concerned about/at the rise in crime.

Concerned for means 'wanting'.

We are concerned for the child's welfare.

Concerned with means 'about' or 'involved in'.

My research is concerned with social trends.

We can be *sorry about something* or *sorry for doing something*.

I've kept you waiting. Sorry about that.

I'm sorry for keeping/to keep you waiting.

We also feel *sorry for* people.

I feel sorry for Kate living in that awful place.

C We use *good at*, *bad at*, etc to talk about ability.

Mike is good at skating. (He can skate well.)

I was always bad at any kind of sport. (I couldn't do sport very well.)

You're brilliant at maths, you know. (*brilliant* = very good)

They say the English are hopeless at learning foreign languages.

(*hopeless* = very bad)

We use *at* with an activity and *with* to talk about other things.

I'm no good at budgeting.

I'm no good with money.

We use *good for* and *bad for* to say if something benefits you or not.

Regular exercise is good for you.

Eating too much fatty food is bad for anyone.

To say how we behave towards someone, we can use *good to*, *rude to*, etc.

Thank you. You've been very good to me/kind to me.

I thought you were a bit rude to your teacher.

The waiter was barely polite to us.

226 Noun + preposition

- A** Some nouns can combine with a preposition.
- I think there's a good **chance of** fine weather.*
 - Here's an **example of** what I mean.*
 - This is the **key to** the whole problem.*
 - My main problem is a **lack of** money.*
 - What's the **reason for** this sudden change of mind?*
 - There's plenty of **room for** all our luggage.*
 - They put a **tax on** tobacco.*
 - I'm having **trouble with** the computer.*
 - I've found a way **of/method of** getting round the problem.*

Some nouns can take different prepositions.

- I was listening to a **discussion of/about/on** the political situation.*
- The Beatles had a great **influence on/over** their generation.*
- The staff have a rather aggressive **attitude to/towards** customers.*

- B** Look at these examples.

| Verb/Adjective + preposition | Noun + preposition |
|--|--|
| <i>I used to be afraid of flying.</i> | <i>I conquered my fear of flying.</i> |
| <i>He's interested in art.</i> | <i>He talked about his interest in art.</i> |
| <i>We were invited to the party.</i> | <i>We had an invitation to the party.</i> |
| <i>No one objected to the idea.</i> | <i>There was no objection to the idea.</i> |
| <i>It protects you from/against the wind.</i> | <i>It gives protection from/against the wind.</i> |
| <i>I'm researching into GM food.</i> | <i>I'm doing research into GM food.</i> |

Here we use the same preposition after the noun as we do after a related verb or adjective.

Now compare these examples.

| Adjective + preposition | Noun + preposition |
|--|--|
| <i>The athlete was proud of his performance.</i> | <i>His pride in his performance was obvious.</i> |
| <i>You're very fond of chocolate, aren't you?</i> | <i>We've noticed your fondness for chocolate.</i> |

Here we use a different preposition after the noun.

Sometimes the verb has a direct object, but the noun takes a preposition.

| Verb | Noun + preposition |
|---|--|
| <i>I can't answer the question.</i> | <i>What's the answer to the question?</i> |
| <i>They attacked the government.</i> | <i>Their attack on the government made headlines.</i> |
| <i>I've damaged my car.</i> | <i>There's some damage to my car.</i> |

| Verb | Noun + preposition |
|--|--|
| <i>The opposition parties demanded an inquiry.</i> | <i>Their demands for an inquiry were ignored.</i> |
| <i>We should respect our environment.</i> | <i>We should have respect for our environment.</i> |

- C** A number of nouns to do with needs and desires are followed by *for*.
There is a great need for low-cost housing.
World leaders expressed their desire for a lasting peace.
 Such nouns include: *appetite, application, demand, desire, need, preference, request, taste, wish.*

- D** Compare the use of *with* and *between* in these examples.
Police say there is a link with/connection with another murder.
Police say there is a link between/connection between the two murders.
The psychiatrist's relationship with the patient is very important.
The relationship between the psychiatrist and the patient is very important.
There is a sharp contrast with the other side of town.
There is a sharp contrast between the two sides of town.

Note also these combinations.

What's the difference between American football and soccer?
This treatment is an alternative to conventional medicine.
The material can be used as a substitute for wood.

Compare the use of *in* and *of* in these examples.

There has been a rise of 20 points in the Financial Times Share Index.
Figures show a reduction of three per cent in the price of raw materials.

Sentences with more than one clause

227 Types of clause

Here is a paragraph from a book of strange but true stories.

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

A New York painter decided to end it all by throwing himself off the Empire State Building. He took the lift up to the 86th floor, found a convenient window and jumped. A gust of wind caught him as he fell and blew him into the studios of NBC Television on the 83rd floor. There was a live show going out, so the interviewer decided to ask the would-be suicide a few questions. He admitted that he'd changed his mind as soon as he'd jumped.

(from J. Reid *It Can't Be True!*)

A Main clauses

A main clause is one that could stand alone as a sentence.

He took the lift up to the 86th floor. A gust of wind caught him.

For the structure of a main clause, > 4.

We can use *and*, *or*, *but*, and *so* to join two or more main clauses.

He took the lift up to the 86th floor, and he jumped.

He could go through with it, or he could go back down again

He jumped from the 86th floor, but he survived.

It was a live show, so the host invited him on.

Two main clauses linked together like this are called 'co-ordinate clauses'.

When the subject of the two clauses is the same, we can often leave it out, especially after *and* and *or*.

He took the lift up to the 86th floor and (he) jumped.

We can also leave out the auxiliary verb to avoid repeating it.

He could go through with it or (he could) go back down again.

We can link more than two clauses. Usually *and* comes only before the last one.

He took the lift ..., found a convenient window and jumped.

NOTE

We can begin a sentence with *and*, *or*, *but*, or *so* to link to the previous sentence.

A gust of wind caught him as he fell and blew him into the studios of NBC Television on the 83rd floor. And it happened that there was a live show going out at the time.

At one time some people believed that it was incorrect to begin a sentence with *and*, *or*, *but*, or *so*. This attitude is now less common, and you will often see such sentences.

B Sub-clauses

A sub-clause cannot stand alone as a complete sentence.

A gust of wind caught him as he fell.

He admitted that he'd changed his mind.

Here *as he fell* and *that he'd changed his mind* are 'subordinate clauses' or sub-clauses. In a sub-clause we often use a linking-word like *as*, *that*, *when*, *if*, or *because*. And sometimes we use a relative pronoun such as *who* or *which*. > 266.

A man who jumped off the Empire State Building was miraculously saved.

The word order in a sub-clause is the same as in a main clause.

He admitted that he'd changed his mind.

(NOT ~~*He admitted that he his mind had changed.*~~)

NOTE

When we leave out *that*, the sub-clause has the same form as a main clause.

He admitted he'd changed his mind.

The clause is a sub-clause and not a main clause because it is the object of *admitted* and does not stand alone.

C Finite and non-finite clauses

A non-finite clause has an infinitive, a gerund, or a participle.

The interviewer decided to ask him a few questions.

He regrets now having jumped.

Finding a convenient window, he threw himself out of it.

These non-finite verb forms often have no subject, but they can sometimes have one.

The show having ended, the man left the studio.

Some patterns with participles (*Finding ...*, *The show having ended, ...*) can be formal or literary in style. > 127–128

Compare the verbs in these finite clauses.

The interviewer decided that he would ask him a few questions.

He regrets now that he jumped.

When he found a convenient window, he threw himself out of it.

A finite clause can be a main clause or a sub-clause. A finite verb has a subject, e.g. (*he found, he threw*), although it is sometimes left out after *and* and *or*. > A

228 What comes after the verb?

When we add a sub-clause to a main clause, the type of sub-clause we can use often depends on the verb in the main clause. For example, after the verb *accept* we can use a *that*-clause but not a *to*-infinitive.

The company accepted that they would pay damages.

(NOT ~~*The company accepted to pay damages.*~~)

Sentences with more than one clause

But with *agree* we can use either a that-clause or a to-infinitive.

The company agreed that they would pay damages.

The company agreed to pay damages.

Here are some possible patterns that come after a verb.

| Pattern after a verb | Example |
|---|---|
| That-clause > 253A | <i>I know (that) you're busy.</i> |
| Object + that-clause > 253B | <i>He promised me (that) he would be here.</i> |
| Wh-clause > 253A | <i>I wonder what's happened.</i> |
| Object + wh-clause > 253B | <i>Remind me what the password is.</i> |
| Question word + to-infinitive > 108 | <i>Have you decided where to go?</i> |
| Object + question word + to-infinitive > 108B | <i>No one has ever taught me how to cook properly.</i> |
| To-infinitive > 101 | <i>We're aiming to be back by five.</i> |
| Object + to-infinitive > 105 | <i>We persuaded Sarah to come with us.</i> |
| For + object + to-infinitive > 109 | <i>I've arranged for my mail to be sent on.</i> |
| Object + infinitive without <i>to</i> > 110C | <i>This show always makes me laugh.</i> |
| Gerund > 101 | <i>I suggested waiting a bit longer.</i> |
| Object + gerund > 113E | <i>They've stopped us using the pool.</i> |
| Preposition + gerund > 115A | <i>I used to dream of going on the stage.</i> |
| Object + preposition + gerund > 115B | <i>I must warn you against wearing expensive jewellery.</i> |

Here are some details of verbs and the patterns that come after them. With some verbs there is more than one possibility. The most common uses are shown here, but for more details, see the sections referred to above.

| Verb | Common patterns with a sub-clause |
|------------------|--|
| <i>accept</i> | <i>accept (that) something is so</i> |
| <i>accuse</i> | <i>accuse someone of doing something</i> |
| <i>admit</i> | <i>admit (that) you did something, admit doing something</i> |
| <i>advise</i> | <i>advise someone to do something, advise (someone) what to do, advise (someone) against doing something</i> |
| <i>agree</i> | <i>agree (that) something is so, agree to do something</i> |
| <i>aim</i> | <i>aim to do something</i> |
| <i>allow</i> | <i>allow someone to do something</i> |
| <i>apologize</i> | <i>apologize (to someone) for doing something</i> |
| <i>arrange</i> | <i>arrange that something will happen, arrange to do something, arrange for someone to do something</i> |
| <i>assume</i> | <i>assume (that) something is so</i> |
| <i>avoid</i> | <i>avoid doing something</i> |

| Verb | Common patterns with a sub-clause |
|-----------------|---|
| <i>believe</i> | <i>believe (that) something is so, believe in doing something</i> |
| <i>cause</i> | <i>cause something to happen</i> |
| <i>choose</i> | <i>choose to do something</i> |
| <i>consider</i> | <i>consider (that) something is so, consider what is happening, consider something to be so, consider doing something</i> |
| <i>decide</i> | <i>decide (that) something should happen, decide what you're going to do, decide to do something, decide what to do</i> |
| <i>demand</i> | <i>demand (that) someone does something, demand to do something</i> |
| <i>deny</i> | <i>deny (that) something is so, deny doing something, deny having done something</i> |
| <i>doubt</i> | <i>doubt (that) something is so, doubt if/whether something is so</i> |
| <i>dream</i> | <i>dream (that) something will happen, dream of doing something</i> |
| <i>expect</i> | <i>expect (that) something will happen, expect to do something, expect someone to do something</i> |
| <i>explain</i> | <i>explain (that) it was a mistake, explain what happened</i> |
| <i>force</i> | <i>force someone to do something</i> |
| <i>help</i> | <i>help (to) do something, help someone (to) do something</i> |
| <i>hope</i> | <i>hope (that) something will happen, hope to do something</i> |
| <i>insist</i> | <i>insist (that) something should happen, insist on doing something</i> |
| <i>intend</i> | <i>intend to do something, intend doing something</i> |
| <i>invite</i> | <i>invite someone to do something</i> |
| <i>involve</i> | <i>involve doing something</i> |
| <i>know</i> | <i>know (that) something is so, know what is happening</i> |
| <i>learn</i> | <i>learn to do something, learn how to do something</i> |
| <i>let</i> | <i>let someone do something</i> |
| <i>like</i> | <i>like doing something, like to do something, like someone doing something, like someone to do something, like it when something happens</i> |
| <i>make</i> | <i>make something do something</i> |
| <i>mind</i> | <i>don't mind what happens, don't mind doing something, don't mind someone doing something, don't mind if I do something</i> |
| <i>need</i> | <i>need to do something</i> |
| <i>object</i> | <i>object (that) something is so, object to doing something, object to someone doing something</i> |
| <i>offer</i> | <i>offer to do something</i> |
| <i>permit</i> | <i>permit someone to do something</i> |
| <i>persuade</i> | <i>persuade someone to do something</i> |
| <i>predict</i> | <i>predict (that) something will happen, predict what will happen</i> |
| <i>prefer</i> | <i>prefer to do something</i> |
| <i>pretend</i> | <i>pretend (that) something is so, pretend to do something</i> |
| <i>prevent</i> | <i>prevent someone (from) doing something</i> |
| <i>promise</i> | <i>promise (that) something will happen, promise someone (that) something will happen, promise to do something</i> |

| Verb | Common patterns with a sub-clause |
|------------|--|
| propose | propose <i>(that)</i> something should happen, propose <i>doing</i> something, propose <i>to do</i> something |
| refuse | refuse <i>to do</i> something |
| remind | remind someone <i>(that)</i> something is so, remind someone <i>what</i> is happening, remind someone <i>to do</i> something |
| require | require someone <i>to do</i> something |
| show | show someone <i>(that)</i> something is so, show <i>(that)</i> something is so, show (someone) <i>what</i> happens, show something <i>to be</i> so |
| stop | stop <i>doing</i> something, stop someone <i>(from)</i> <i>doing</i> something |
| succeed | succeed <i>in doing</i> something |
| suggest | suggest <i>(that)</i> something should happen, suggest <i>doing</i> something |
| suppose | suppose <i>(that)</i> something is true, suppose something <i>to be</i> true |
| teach | teach someone <i>to do</i> something, teach someone <i>how to do</i> something |
| understand | understand <i>(that)</i> something is so, understand <i>what</i> is happening |
| want | want <i>to do</i> something, want someone <i>to do</i> something |
| warn | warn <i>(that)</i> something might happen, warn someone <i>(that)</i> something might happen, warn someone <i>not to do</i> something, warn someone <i>against doing</i> something |
| wish | wish <i>(that)</i> something would happen, wish <i>to do</i> something |
| wonder | wonder <i>why</i> something is so, wonder <i>if/whether</i> something will happen |

But remember that these verbs are not always followed by a sub-clause. Many of them can also be followed simply by a noun phrase as object or by a prepositional phrase.

The teacher accepted our apology.

They've agreed to the proposal.

229 Clause combinations

We can link a number of clauses together. In speech you sometimes hear a number of main clauses linked by *and*.

So I went to bed and I had to get up and get dressed and go and pick him up.

For more about linking main clauses, > 233–236.

But speech does not consist only of main clauses. Sub-clauses are also used. Look at the structure of these sentences spoken in conversation.

Main clause – Adverbial clause – Main clause – Adverbial clause

I became a policeman when I was twenty-nine, and I've enjoyed it because every day is interesting.

Main clause – To-infinitive clause – Main clause – To-infinitive clause –
Adverbial clause

It takes me an hour and a quarter to get to Bangor, and it takes Jane about an hour and a half to get to Stafford because they're such bad roads.

This sentence from a conversation contains a number of main clauses and sub-clauses.

Well, we hung about waiting for a representative to come and tell us what to do, and after an hour and a half nobody came, so we took a taxi and went into Basle, and because we'd missed the train we decided to stay the night there.

Here are some real examples of clause combinations in written English.

Adverbial clause – Main clause – Main clause

When I was about ten years old I used to go and watch Brighton and Hove Albion football club with my father and we would stand on the East Terrace at every home game.

Main clause – Adverbial clause – Gerund clause

Many cities have drive-in movies, where you can watch a film without leaving your car.

Main clause – To-infinitive clause – Gerund clause

Most Inuit people use refrigerators to stop their food from getting cold.

If-clause – That-clause – Main clause

If you've always thought that a swimming-pool would be far too expensive, then this is the one for you.

Main clause with a relative clause – To-infinitive clause – Adverbial clause
– That-clause – To-infinitive clause

Japan, which has no fossil fuel reserves of its own, wants to stockpile plutonium because it believes that it can develop the technology to transform it into plentiful and cheap electricity.

230 The unreal present and past

- A** In some kinds of sub-clause, tenses are used differently from how they are used in a main clause. This happens after expressions like *as if*, *as though*, *if* (> 243), *imagine*, *suppose*, *supposing*, *it's time*, and *would rather* (> 81E).

Look at these clauses with a past-tense verb.

*Imagine you **wanted** to murder someone. How would you go about it?*

*Suppose we **won** the lottery. What would we do with the money?*

In the first example, the past tense expresses something unreal in the present, something that is not so. (You don't want to murder anyone.) In the second example it expresses a future event as a theoretical possibility. (It is unlikely that we will really win the lottery.)

NOTE

Some of the expressions above can be followed by the subjunctive *were*. > 231C

Sentences with more than one clause

- B** We can also use the present tense with most of the expressions in A. This makes the situation sound less theoretical and more real.

*Imagine you **want** to murder someone.*

This wall looks as if it's about to fall down.

*Suppose we all give a few pounds and then **buy** one big present?*

We use the past tense in a clause after *it's time (that)*...

*Your hair's getting rather long. It's time you **had** it cut.*

*It's late. It's time we **were** going.*

In the second example the meaning is the same as *It's time (for us) to go*. We cannot use the present tense here. (NOT ~~*It's time we're going*~~).

We generally use the past tense (rather than the present) in a sub-clause after *would rather*.

*I'd rather we **went** out somewhere. I'm fed up with staying in.*

But for *I'd rather go out somewhere*, > 81E.

- C** The following examples are about a past situation. There is a sub-clause with a past-perfect verb.

*The speaker ignored the interruption. He continued as if no one **had spoken**.*

*You don't need insurance. I travelled round the world last year without any. ~ But supposing you'd **had** an accident. What then?*

An expression like *as if* or *supposing* with the past perfect expresses something unreal in the past, something that was not so. (Someone did speak. You didn't have an accident.)

231 The subjunctive

- A** The subjunctive is the base form of a verb. There is no-s in the third person singular.

*The committee recommended that the scheme **go** ahead.*

*The Opposition is insisting that the Minister **resign**.*

*It is important that an exact record **be** kept.*

*They agreed to our proposal that an advertisement **be** placed in the newspaper.*

We can use the subjunctive in a *that*-clause when expressing the idea that something is necessary. It comes after a clause with a word such as *advisable, anxious, ask, demand, essential, important, insist, necessary, proposal, propose, recommend, recommendation, request, suggest, suggestion, or vital*.

Only in the third person singular is the subjunctive different from the normal verb form. In the plural there is no difference except in the verb *be*.

*The committee recommended that both schemes **go** ahead.*

*The committee recommended that both schemes **be** approved.*

- B** The subjunctive is rather formal. It is used more in American English than in British English, where *should* or other forms of the verb are often used.

The committee recommended that the scheme should go ahead.

The Opposition is insisting that the Minister resigns.

- C** There is a past subjunctive form *were*, which we can use instead of *was* in the first and third person singular.

If I was/were a bit taller, I could reach.

Suppose the story was/were true.

We can use the subjunctive *were* after *as if*, *as though*, *if*, *suppose*, *supposing*, and *wish*.

The subjunctive *were* is a little formal, but it is often used in the idiom *if I were you* meaning 'in your place'.

It's a good offer. If I were you, I'd accept it.

232 Verbs after *wish* and *if only*

A *Wish ... would*

This pattern expresses a wish for a future change in the situation.

I wish Simon would reply to my e-mails. (I want him to reply to them.)

I wish people wouldn't leave litter. (I want them to stop leaving litter.)

Wish ... would can express a rather abrupt request or a complaint.

I wish you wouldn't smoke. It makes the place smell awful.

B *Wish ... past tense / could*

This pattern expresses a wish that the present situation should be different.

I wish I had more spare time.

We all wish we knew the answers to these questions.

I wish I could help you, but I'm afraid I can't.

I wish I could help implies that I can't help.

We cannot use *would* here.

(NOT ~~*I wish I would have more spare time.*~~)

C *Wish ... past perfect / could + perfect*

This pattern expresses a wish about the past.

I wish I had never bought this car. It's been nothing but trouble.

I wish you'd told me you had a spare ticket for the show.

I bet your parents were surprised when you told them the news. I wish I could have seen their faces.

We cannot use *would*.

(NOT ~~*I wish I would never have bought this car.*~~)

D *If only*

If only has a similar meaning to *I wish*, and we use it in the same patterns.

*If only Simon **would** reply to my e-mails.* > A

*If only I **had** more spare time.* > B

*If only I **could have seen** their faces.* > C

If only is more emphatic than *wish*. It often expresses regret about the past.

*If only you'd **told** me you had tickets for the show. I'd have loved to go.*

Only can sometimes be in mid position.

*If I'd **only** stopped to think, I would never have done anything so stupid.*

And, or, but, so, etc

233 Words meaning 'and'

A We can use *and* to link two clauses.

I've seen the film, and I've read the book.

Shakespeare wrote plays, and he was an actor.

The adverbs *too* and *as well* are more emphatic than *and*.

I've seen the film. I've read the book too.

Shakespeare wrote plays, and he was an actor as well.

These adverbs usually come in end position.

Also goes in mid position.

The town is an important rail junction, and it also has an airport.

Plus as a conjunction is informal.

I've had a terrible day at work, plus my train was cancelled.

B In a negative sentence we use *either* rather than *too* or *as well*.

I haven't seen the film, and I haven't read the book either.

(NOT ~~*I haven't read the book too.*~~)

For *or* with the negative, > 234B.

I haven't seen the film or read the book.

C We can also use *besides* and *what's more* to link two clauses.

I'm too tired to go for a walk. Besides, it looks like rain.

It's dangerous to ride a motor-bike without a helmet. What's more, it's against the law.

We use these expressions to make an extra point, for example to back up our argument.

And then and *on top of (all) this/that* are informal.

I have to pay the rent. And then there's the electricity.

We've got workmen in the house. On top of that, my sister is staying with us.

Furthermore, *moreover*, and *in addition* are a little formal and more typical of written English.

Some people in rural areas have no car. Furthermore, there is little public transport, and so they find it difficult to get about.

The country was hit hard by the oil crisis. Moreover, its economy was already extremely weak.

Police have been making house-to-house inquiries, and in addition the murdered man's family have appealed to the public for information.

And, or, but, so, etc

- D** We can use the prepositions *as well as*, *in addition to*, and *besides* with a noun phrase or an ing-form.

Shakespeare was an actor as well as a writer.

In addition to doing all my usual work, I have to write a report.

Besides the rent, I have to pay for the electricity.

We can also use *along with* and *together with*.

The city has several golf courses, along with swimming-pools and tennis courts.

Together with a film crew, the team are walking towards the South Pole.

These prepositions are usually followed by a noun phrase.

NOTE

In rather formal English we can also use the pattern *as + be* or auxiliary verb + subject. It expresses the idea that what is true of one thing is also true of another.

The children's motivation is excellent, as is their concentration.

Shakespeare wrote plays, as did Marlowe.

For *and so is their concentration*, > 27B.

- E** When talking about two things, we can use *both ... and ...* or *not only ... but (also) ...* to give extra emphasis.

Shakespeare was both a writer and an actor.

It's not only dangerous to ride without a helmet, but it's (also) illegal.

We can put *not only* in front position.

Not only is it dangerous to ride without a helmet, but it's (also) illegal.

In this position, *not only* is followed by inversion. > 10F

234 Words meaning 'or'

- A** We use *or* to express an alternative.

I'd like to study at Oxford or Cambridge.

We can take a bus, or we can walk.

We can also use *alternatively*.

We can cancel the meeting. (Or) alternatively, we can find another venue.

Either ... or is more emphatic than *or* on its own.

You'll have to go either right or left.

I've either left my bag on the bus or at the office.

Either we pay someone to do the job, or we do it ourselves.

Or can mean 'if not'. We can also use *or else* or *otherwise*.

We'd better go now, or (else) we'll be late.

Put the receipt somewhere safe, otherwise you'll lose it.

- B** We often use *or* in a negative sentence.

We were stuck. We couldn't go forwards or backwards.

I didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

Neither ... nor is more emphatic and can be a little more formal.

We were stuck. We could go neither forwards nor backwards.

An illiterate person is someone who can neither read nor write.

Neither the post office nor the bank was/were open.

We use a positive verb form, e.g. *could go*.

235 Words meaning 'but'

- A** We use *but* to express a contrast.

Julie is twenty but (she) looks younger.

Canberra is the capital of Australia, but it isn't the biggest city.

We can also use the adverb *though*. In informal English it usually comes in end position.

Julie is twenty. She looks younger, though.

In more formal English, *though* often comes after the first phrase of the sentence.

Mass tourism can bring economic benefits. On the whole though, its long-term impact is negative.

We sometimes use *yet* at the beginning of a clause.

Many of Britain's royal 'traditions' seem centuries old, (and) yet they are in fact relatively new.

NOTE

There is a special use of *may* in a clause followed by *but*.

These pens are cheap / These pens may be cheap, but they're useless.

- B** The adverbs *however* and *nevertheless* are both a little formal.

The fire destroyed thousands of homes. However, only six people lost their lives.

At first sight the figures appear random. Nevertheless, a pattern can be observed.

These words can also go in other positions.

Only six people, however, lost their lives.

Only six people lost their lives, however.

A pattern can nevertheless be observed.

A pattern can be observed nevertheless.

We can also use *even so* and *all the same*.

She had lots of friends. Even so, she often felt lonely.

I didn't want a present, but all the same I was grateful / I was grateful all the same.

And, or, but, so, etc

NOTE

The adverb *still* can have the same meaning as *however* or *nevertheless*.

I'm sleeping on a friend's sofa. Still, it won't be for long.

- C** We can use a sub-clause with the conjunction *although*, which is sometimes shortened to *though*.

I was furious, though I tried not to show it.

Although Canberra is the capital of Australia, it isn't the biggest city.

Compare the use of *but*.

Canberra is the capital of Australia, but it isn't the biggest city.

Even though is more emphatic than *although*.

They allowed me to continue the course even though I failed the first-year exams. (NOT ~~even although I failed~~)

In the following pattern with *though*, an adjective or adverb goes in front position.

Important though it is, this issue is not relevant to our discussion.

Well though the team played, they never really looked like winning.

NOTE

We can use *as* with an adjective or adverb in front position.

Strange as it may seem, I've never been to Paris.

- D** We can use the prepositions *despite* and *in spite of* with a noun phrase or an ing-form.

The parade went ahead despite the heavy rain.

In spite of being the capital of Australia, Canberra isn't the biggest city.

We cannot use *despite* or *in spite of* before a finite clause.

(NOT ~~In spite of it is the capital...~~)

But we sometimes use *despite the fact that* or *in spite of the fact that*, especially if the two clauses have different subjects.

No new safety measures have been introduced, despite the fact that a serious accident happened three months ago.

But *although* is usually neater.

No new safety measures have been introduced, although a serious accident happened three months ago.

- E** Sometimes we can use *whereas* meaning 'but'.

Red is a warm colour, but/whereas blue is cold.

We can use *whereas* when we are talking about a comparison rather than a conflict between two ideas.

We can use *while* with the same meaning.

I'm right-handed whereas/while my brother is left-handed.

We can also use *on the other hand* to link two sentences.

Birmingham is a big city. Warwick, on the other hand, is quite small.

NOTE

We use *on the contrary* when we mean that the opposite is true.

Warwick isn't a big city. On the contrary, it's quite small.

236 Words meaning 'so'

A We use *so* to express a result.

I was tired, so I went to bed.

It hasn't rained for ages, (and) so the ground is very dry.

So comes at the beginning of a clause.

We can sometimes use *so that* to express result.

I hope it stays fine so that we can have a picnic.

But *so that* is more commonly used to express purpose. > 240B

B We can also use *as a result* and *consequently*.

More women are needed in employment. As a result, they are having fewer children.

The computer was incorrectly programmed, and consequently the rocket crashed.

We can use the preposition *as a result of* before a noun phrase or ing-form.

The rocket crashed as a result of a computer error.

As a result of lying in the sun too long, we got sunburnt.

The adverb *therefore* is a little formal.

There has been no rainfall for some time. The ground is therefore very dry.

The scheme has been a failure. Therefore it should be scrapped.

Thus is also formal and used mainly in written English.

Passengers would be able to travel direct from Cardiff through the Channel Tunnel, thus avoiding the need to cross London by tube.

C This pattern with *so* or *such* and a *that*-clause expresses a result.

The ground is so dry (that) the plants are dying.

(= The plants are dying as a result of the ground being so dry.)

There was so much steam (that) we couldn't see a thing.

The place looked such a mess (that) I couldn't invite anyone in.

We cannot use *very* or *too* in these sentences.

(NOT ~~*The ground is very dry that the plants are dying.*~~)

NOTE

The following pattern with inversion is emphatic and rather formal.

So dry is the ground that the plants are dying.

Adverbial clauses

237 Introduction

A Compare these sentences.

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Adverb: | <i>We could play cards afterwards.</i> |
| Prepositional phrase: | <i>We could play cards after the meal.</i> |
| Clause: | <i>We could play cards after we've eaten.</i> |

An adverbial clause functions in the same way as an adverb or a prepositional phrase. It often begins with a conjunction such as *after*, *because*, or *so that*.

This chapter is mainly about clauses of time, reason, and purpose.

Conditional clauses are dealt with in the next chapter (sections 243–251). For clauses with *although* and *despite*, > 235C–D.

B An adverbial clause usually goes in front position or end position.

If you like, we could play cards.

We could play cards if you like.

NOTE

It is sometimes possible for the adverbial clause to go in mid position, but this is less usual.

We could, if you like, play cards.

C An adverbial clause can be non-finite. For example, we can use a clause with a to-infinitive or a participle.

Just check it again to make sure.

I was sitting in the park eating my sandwiches.

We can also use a preposition + gerund or a conjunction + participle.

You can't work all day without taking a break now and then.

I often listen to music while driving.

NOTE

After some conjunctions, we can leave out the subject and the verb *be* when the meaning is clear without them.

A car must be taxed when (it is) on the road.

Although (we were) shocked, we were also very relieved.

Leaving out the subject and verb here is more typical of written English. For more examples with a conjunction + adjective, > 182C.

238 Clauses of time

A Conjunctions of time

An adverbial clause of time often begins with a conjunction.

After we'd finished work, we all went to the pub.

Think carefully before you make a decision.

Once you've done the basic course, you can go on to the more advanced one.

A lot has happened since I last saw you.

I can't discuss the report until I've read it.

Mozart could write music when he was only five.

Conjunctions of time include: *after, as, as soon as, before, once, since, till/until, when, whenever, while.*

After, before, since, and till/until can also be prepositions.

After work, we all went to the pub.

A lot has happened since last summer.

B Non-finite clauses of time

A non-finite clause can have a gerund with *after, before, on, and since.*

> 114

I felt guilty after eating all those chocolates.

We can also use a participle after *once, until, when, whenever, and while.*

> 126

Take care when crossing the road.

Please wait until told to proceed.

We can also use a participle without a conjunction. > 127

Take care crossing the road.

Having glanced at the letter, Jack pushed it aside.

C When, while, and as

These conjunctions have similar uses but also some important differences.

We use all three words to talk about more than one thing happening at the same time.

I almost fell when/while/as I was coming down the stairs.

While and as suggest something continuing for a period of time.

The model had to sit still while we drew her.

As we were cycling along, we saw a fox.

But to talk about a certain time in your life, use *when.*

I wonder what I'll be doing when I'm thirty.

When the clause of time refers to a short action 'interrupting' a longer one, we use *when* with the short action.

We were cycling along when we saw a fox.

When I arrived, the party was in full swing.

We can also use *when* to talk about two short actions which happen one after the other.

When I clicked on the icon, the screen went blank.

For more examples of *when* with the past continuous and past simple, > 47C.

When can also mean 'every time'.

I cycle to work when it's fine.

When something goes wrong, people look for someone to blame.

Whenever and *every time/each time* are more emphatic.

I cycle to work whenever it's fine.

Every time I see a record shop I just have to go in.

For more about words ending in *-ever*, > 242A.

We can use *as* (but not *while*) to express the idea that a change in one thing goes with a change in another.

The mixture hardens as it cools.

As we drove further north, the weather got worse.

Compare *The further north we drove, ...*, > 207B.

Just as means 'at that exact moment'.

Just as we came out of the club, the rain started.

D *As soon as, no sooner, hardly, etc*

We use *as soon as* to emphasize the idea of one thing coming immediately after another.

As soon as the gates were open, the crowds rushed in.

We can also use *immediately* or *the moment*.

Immediately you hear any news, let me know.

The moment you hear any news, let me know.

But Americans do not use *immediately* as a conjunction.

We can also use these patterns with *no sooner* and *hardly*.

Jeremy was no sooner in bed than the doorbell rang.

I had hardly started work when/before I felt a pain in my back.

In both patterns we can use inversion.

No sooner was Jeremy in bed than the doorbell rang.

Hardly had I started work when/before I felt a pain in my back.

E *By, before, and until*

By is a preposition and not a conjunction.

By ten o'clock there were hundreds of people in the queue.

We use *by the time* to introduce a clause.

By the time the ticket office opened, there were hundreds of people in the queue. (NOT ~~*By the ticket office opened, there were...*~~)

We can use *by the time* or *before* to express the idea of something happening later than expected.

It was midday by the time I got to the office.

It was midday before I got to the office.

These patterns with *not ... till/until* and *not ... before* express the same idea.

I didn't get to the office until midday / until it was almost lunch time.

I didn't get to the office before midday / before it was almost lunch time.

We can also use *before* after a phrase expressing length of time.

It was months before James dared to ask Laura out.

(= It was months later that James dared to ask Laura out.)

239 Clauses of reason

A We form an adverbial clause of reason with a conjunction such as *because*.

I made a mistake because I was tired.

People use cars because they're convenient.

Why don't you buy that coat? ~ (Because) it's too expensive.

A clause with *because* usually comes after the main clause, but it can come first.

Because I was tired, I made a mistake.

We can also use *as*, *since*, *seeing (that)*, and *now (that)*.

As the weather is usually warm, many of the homes have swimming-pools.

Since the pay was so poor, I didn't apply for the job.

Seeing (that) it's so late, why don't you stay the night?

I can get here much more easily now (that) I've got a car.

These conjunctions can go before or after the main clause.

For meaning 'because' is rather literary.

The cause of the accident is unclear, for there are many factors involved.

For with this meaning always comes after the main clause.

NOTE

Compare these two negative sentences, both with *because*.

I didn't go to the exhibition because I was too busy. I'm sorry I missed it.

(= The reason why I didn't go to the exhibition is that I was too busy.)

I didn't go to the exhibition because I was interested. I went there to meet my friends.

(= It is not true that I went to the exhibition out of interest.)

The first example is an explanation of why you didn't go. The second corrects a mistaken belief about your reason for going.

B We can also use a participle clause to express reason. > 128

Being tired, I made a mistake.

Having spent all my money, I couldn't pay the hotel bill.

With water flooding into the building, people were moving things upstairs.

- C** We can also use the prepositions *because of*, *due to*, *in view of*, *on account of*, and *owing to*.

The project was abandoned because of the cost.

The singer's latest tour has been cancelled due to illness.

I would advise you not to invest in the scheme in view of the risks involved.

No one goes out at midday on account of the heat.

Owing to circumstances beyond our control, the event has been cancelled.

We sometimes use *due to the fact that* or *in view of the fact that* as conjunctions.

The applicant's failure to get the job was solely due to the fact that he lacked the necessary qualifications.

Out of can express a motive for an action.

I had a look just out of curiosity.

240 Clauses of purpose

- A** We can use a to-infinitive to express purpose.

I went out to buy a newspaper. > 100A

In order to and *so as to* are more emphatic. They are also a little formal.

You need to know the length and width in order to calculate the area.

Why not pay in instalments so as to spread the cost?

The negative is *in order not to* or *so as not to*.

We should allow plenty of time in order not to be late.

Young people like to wear what their friends do so as not to be different.

But we cannot use *not to* on its own.

(NOT ~~*We should allow plenty of time not to be late.*~~)

NOTE

We can use *for* + noun phrase + to-infinitive to express purpose. > 109B

There was a book for visitors to write their comments in.

- B** We can also use a finite clause with *so that*.

You should keep milk in a refrigerator so that it stays fresh.

I wrote it in my diary so that I wouldn't forget.

Students learn to analyse situations so that problems can be solved.

So that is often followed by the present simple or by *will*, *would*, *can*, or *could*.

We can sometimes use *to avoid* or *to prevent* instead of a negative clause with *so that*.

I always use sunscreen so that I don't get burned.

I always use sunscreen to avoid getting burned.

In informal English, and especially in American English, *so* can be used on its own without *that*.

You should keep milk in a refrigerator so it stays fresh.

In order that is more formal and less common than *so that*.

*You will be given full details shortly **in order that** you may make your arrangements.*

- C** We can use *for* with a noun phrase to express the purpose of an action.

*We went out **for** some fresh air.*

*Why not come over **for** a cup of coffee?*

To express the general purpose or use of something, we normally use *for* with an ing-form.

*This paper is **for printing** photos on.*

*A saw is a tool **for cutting** wood.*

But we use a to-infinitive to talk about a specific need or a specific action.

*We must buy some paper **to print** those photos on.*

*I used an electric drill **to make** the holes.*

*I need a saw **to cut** this wood. (NOT ~~I need a saw **for cutting** this wood.~~)*

After *use* there can be either *for* + ing-form or a to-infinitive.

*We use a ruler **for measuring** / **to measure** things.*

241 *As and like*

- A** We can use *as* and *like* as conjunctions.

*I entered the data into the computer, **as/like** I'd been told to do.*

*My brother behaved **as/like** he usually does – badly.*

Like as a conjunction is informal. In more formal English, and especially in British English, *as* is preferred to *like*.

*The event passed off peacefully, **as** it had done the previous year.*

*Doctors need time off, **as** everyone else does.*

But the equivalent preposition is *like* rather than *as*.

*Doctors need time off **like** everyone else.*

*Doctors, **like** everyone else, need time off.*

- B** We can use a clause with *as* to express the idea that what you are saying is already known or expected.

***As you know**, I'm short of cash at the moment.*

***As the report shows**, the problems are much worse than we thought.*

***I was absolutely terrified**, as you can imagine.*

We do not normally use *like* in this kind of clause, except informally with *say*.

***As/Like I said**, you're welcome to stay here.*

- C** We can use *as if* and *as though* to say how something seems.

It was as if / as though I was dreaming the whole thing.

Chloe looked as if / as though she was asleep.

I feel as if / as though everyone is laughing behind my back.

People are behaving as if / as though nothing had changed.

The verbs *be*, *look*, *feel*, and *seem* are often used in this pattern. For verb tenses with *as if / as though*, > 230.

We can also use this pattern for what we can see is probably going to happen.

It looks as if / as though it's going to be a nice day.

We can use *like* instead of *as if / as though*.

Chloe looked like she was asleep.

Now it seems like we're getting somewhere.

It looks like it's going to be a nice day.

Like is informal here.

We can also use *like* + ing-form.

It looks like being a nice day.

Do you feel like going to the cinema?

242 *Whoever, whatever, etc and no matter*

- A** We can use *whoever*, *whatever*, *whichever*, *whenever*, *wherever*, and *however* with the meaning 'it doesn't matter who', 'it doesn't matter what', etc.

Whoever runs the country, we're always in a mess.

I won't change my mind, whatever you say.

The journey takes ages, whichever route you take.

I can't draw faces, however hard I try.

We can also use *no matter*.

I won't change my mind, no matter what you say.

No matter where we go on holiday, you never enjoy it.

NOTE

We can use *whoever*, *whatever*, etc in questions and in relative clauses.

Whatever are you going to do? > 16G

Whatever you say won't change my mind. > 273

- B** *Whether ... or ...* means 'it doesn't matter if ... or ...'.

Whether the Conservatives or Labour get in, it makes no difference.

Whether you walk along the road or cut across the fields, it still takes twenty minutes.

You have to pay a month's rent in advance, whether you like it or not.

Conditional sentences

243 Introduction

- A** Most conditional sentences have a sub-clause starting with the word *if*. We can use many different verb forms in conditional sentences. Here are some real examples.

If you haven't got television, you can't watch it.

If you go to one of the agencies, they have a lot of temporary jobs.

If someone else has requested the book, you would have to give it back.

If you lived on the planet Mercury, you would have four birthdays in a single Earth year.

In general we use verb forms in conditional sentences in the same way as in other kinds of sentences.

If you've finished work for today, you can go home.

Compare: *You've finished work for today, so you can go home.*

In an open condition (when something may or may not happen), we use the present tense: *if you go to one of the agencies*. When we talk about something unreal, we often use the past tense: *if you lived on the planet Mercury*. After an unreal condition, we use *would* in the main clause: *you would have four birthdays*.

- B** There are some verb forms which often go together. These patterns are usually called Types 1, 2, and 3.

Type 1: *If the company fails, we will lose our money.* > 245

Type 2: *If the company failed, we would lose our money.* > 246

Type 3: *If the company had failed, we would have lost our money.* > 247

There is another pattern which we can call Type 0.

Type 0: *If the company fails, we lose our money.* > 244

- C** The *if*-clause usually comes before the main clause, but it can come after it.

If you're in a hurry, you needn't wait for me.

You needn't wait for me if you're in a hurry.

A comma between the clauses is more likely when the *if*-clause comes first and less likely when it comes at the end.

Conditional sentences

D We can use conditional sentences in a number of different ways: not only to give information but also, for example, when we request, advise, criticize, and so on.

| Use | Example |
|--------------|--|
| Requesting: | <i>If you're going into town, could you post this letter for me, please?</i> |
| Advising: | <i>If your headache persists, you should see a doctor.</i> |
| Criticizing: | <i>If you'd remembered your passport, we wouldn't be in such a rush.</i> |
| Suggesting: | <i>We can go for a walk if you like.</i> |
| Offering: | <i>If you'd like a sandwich, just help yourself.</i> |
| Warning: | <i>If you don't save the information to disk, you risk losing it.</i> |
| Threatening: | <i>If you don't leave immediately, I'll call the police.</i> |

244 Type 0 conditionals

A The pattern is *if ... + present ... + present*.
If the doorbell rings, the dog barks.
If you add twelve and fifteen, what do you get?
The batteries take over if the mains supply fails.
This pattern means that one thing always follows automatically from another.
We can use *when* instead of *if* when the meaning is 'each time'.
If/When I reverse the car, it makes a funny noise.
(= Each time I reverse the car, ...)
For more about *if* and *when*, > 249A.

B We can also use Type 0 for the automatic result of a possible future action.
If the team win tomorrow, they get promotion to a higher league.
We could also use a Type 1 conditional with *they will get*.

245 Type 1 conditionals

A This is a very common type. The basic pattern is *if ... + present ... + will*.
If it rains, the reception will take place indoors.
If we don't hurry, we won't get there in time.
If we want to ask questions, will we be allowed to?
The milk will go off if you leave it by the radiator.
The *if*-clause expresses an open condition. In the first example, *if it rains* leaves open the question of whether it will rain or not. The present simple (*rains*) expresses future time. For more examples of the present used in this way, e.g. *Let's wait until everyone arrives*, > 59.

We do not normally use *will* in the if-clause.

(NOT *If it will rain, ...*)

But we can use *will* in the if-clause to talk about something that is further in the future than the action of the main clause.

If this medicine does me/will do me good, I'll take it.

For *will* in the if-clause expressing willingness, > 245D.

NOTE

We can use *shall* instead of *will* after *I/we*. > 54A

If we don't hurry, we will/shall miss the train.

- B** As well as the present simple, we can use the present continuous or perfect.

If we're having a party, we'll have to invite the neighbours.

If I've finished my work by ten, I'll probably watch a film on TV.

As well as *will*, we can use other modal verbs and similar expressions in the main clause.

If someone sees me, how can I explain what I'm doing?

If you change the time of your flight, you may be charged a fee.

I'm going to look silly if I can't answer any of the questions.

We can also use the imperative in the main clause.

If you've got a problem, ring our Helpline.

If you make a mistake, don't panic.

- C** A present tense in the if-clause can refer to the present.

If you think modelling is glamorous, think again.

If it's raining already, I'm definitely not going out.

- D** We can use *will* in the if-clause for willingness and *won't* for a refusal.

If all of you will lend a hand, we'll soon get the job done.

If the car won't start, I'll have to ring the garage.

For more about this meaning of *will* and *won't*, > 54D.

We can use *will* in the if-clause for a request.

If you'll take a seat, someone will be with you in a moment.

If you'll just sign here, please. Thank you.

- E** Instead of a Type 1 conditional with *If you* + simple present, we can use this pattern with *and* and *or* in informal speech.

Touch me and I'll scream.

(= If you touch me, I'll scream.)

Go away or I'll scream.

(= If you don't go away, I'll scream.)

246 Type 2 conditionals

- A** The basic pattern is *if ... + past ... + would*.

If I had lots of money, I would travel round the world.

I'd tell you the answer if I knew what it was.

If we didn't think the plane was safe, we wouldn't fly it.

Here the past tense expresses an unreal condition. In the first example, *if I had lots of money* means that really I haven't got lots of money; I am only imagining a situation where I have. For more examples of the past used in this way, > 230.

We do not normally use *would* in the if-clause.

(NOT ~~*If I would have lots of money, ...*~~)

NOTE

- a We can use *should* instead of *would* after *I/we*.

If I had lots of money, I would/should travel round the world.

Would is more usual. *Should* is rather literary here.

- b In informal American speech *would* is sometimes used to express an unreal condition.

If those people would get a nuclear bomb, it would be a great threat to us.

But this is not acceptable in writing, so you should avoid it.

- c We sometimes use *were* instead of *was* in an if-clause. > 231C

If I was/were a billionaire, I would travel round the world.

- B** We also use the Type 2 pattern for a theoretical possibility in the future.

If we caught the early train tomorrow, we'd be in York by lunch time.

If you lost the video, you would have to pay for a new one.

Here the past tense refers to a possible future action such as catching the early train tomorrow.

Compare Types 1 and 2.

Type 1: *If we stay in a hotel, it will be expensive.*

Type 2: *If we stayed in a hotel, it would be expensive.*

Type 1 expresses the action as an open possibility – we may or may not stay in a hotel. Type 2 expresses the action as a theoretical possibility only, something more distant from reality.

Sometimes it can be more polite to use Type 2 rather than Type 1, for example when making a request.

Would it be all right if I brought a friend? ~ Yes, of course.

Here Type 1 would be more direct and less tentative.

- C** You might occasionally see a mixture of Types 1 and 2.

If England win against Germany tonight, it would be a miracle.

However, this is unusual. Normally we do not mix Types 1 and 2.

(NOT ~~*If I've got lots of money, I would travel round the world.*~~))

TIP

Do not mix Types 1 and 2.

Say *If you break it, you will have to pay for it.*

OR *If you broke it, you would have to pay for it.*

NOT ~~*If you break it, you would have to pay for it.*~~

and NOT ~~*If you broke it, you will have to pay for it.*~~

NOTE

- a We can use a mixture of the past tense and *will* when we combine a past condition with a future result.

If they posted the parcel yesterday, it won't get here before Friday.

- b A Type 2 pattern can be the past of a Type 1, for example in reported speech.

Type 1: *Don't go. If you accept the invitation, you will regret it.*

Type 2: *I told you that if you accepted the invitation, you would regret it.*

- D** As well as the past simple, we can use the past continuous or *could* in the if-clause.

If the sun was shining, everything would be perfect.

If I could have my child looked after, I would go out to work.

As well as *would*, we can use other modal verbs such as *could* or *might* in the main clause.

If I had a light, I could see what I'm doing.

If we could re-start the computer, that might solve the problem.

We can also use continuous forms.

If Shakespeare was alive today, he would be writing for television.

- E** We can use *would* in the if-clause for a request.

If you wouldn't mind holding the line, I'll try to put you through.

If you'd just sign here. please. Thank you.

We can also use *would like*.

If you'd like to see the exhibition, it would be nice to go together.

247 Type 3 conditionals

- A** The basic pattern is *if ... + past perfect ... + would + perfect*.

If you had taken a taxi, you would have got here in time.

I would have bought that guitar yesterday if I'd had enough money.

My brother would have been promoted if he'd stayed in his job.

We'd have gone to the talk if we'd known about it.

(= We would have gone if we had known.)

Here the verb forms refer to something unreal, to an imaginary past action. In the first example, *if you had taken a taxi* means that really you didn't take a taxi; I am only imagining a situation where you did. For more examples of the past perfect used in this way, > 230C.

Conditional sentences

We cannot use the past simple or the past perfect in the main clause.

(NOT *If you had taken a taxi, you had got here in time.*)

And we do not normally use *would* in the if-clause.

(NOT *If you would have taken a taxi, you would have got here in time.*)

NOTE

You may occasionally hear a form such as *would have taken* (OR *had have taken*) in an if-clause in informal speech. But many people regard it as incorrect, and it is not acceptable in writing, so you should avoid it.

B We can use *could* + perfect in the if-clause.

If I could have warned you in time, I would have done.

As well as *would*, we can use other modal verbs such as *could* or *might* in the main clause.

If I'd written the address down, I could have saved myself some trouble.

The plan might not have worked if we hadn't had a piece of luck.

We can also use continuous forms.

If he hadn't been evicted by his landlord, he wouldn't have been sleeping on the streets.

C We can mix Types 2 and 3.

If Tom was ambitious, he would have found himself a better job years ago.

If you hadn't woken me up in the night, I wouldn't feel so tired now.

We can also use a Type 1 condition with a Type 3 main clause.

If you know London so well, you shouldn't have got so hopelessly lost.

248 *Should, were, had, and inversion*

The following types of clause are rather formal.

A We can use *should* in an if-clause to talk about something that might possibly happen.

If you should fall ill, the company will pay your hospital expenses.

If I should be chosen as your representative, I would do my best for you.

More neutral would be *If you fall ill, ...* and *If I was chosen ...*

We can also use *happen to*.

If you (should) happen to fall ill, the company will pay your hospital expenses.

B Sometimes we use *were* instead of *was*. > 231C

If the picture was/were genuine, it would be worth a million pounds.

We can also use *were to* for a theoretical possibility.

If the decision were to go against us, we would appeal.

- C** In a condition with *should* or *were*, we can invert the subject and verb and leave out *if*.

Should you fall ill, the company will pay your hospital expenses.

Should we not succeed, the consequences would be disastrous.

Were the picture genuine, it would be worth a million pounds.

Were the decision to go against us, we would appeal.

We cannot do this with *was*.

If the picture was genuine, it would be worth a million pounds.

(NOT ~~*Was the picture genuine, it would be worth a million pounds.*~~)

We can also use inversion with the past perfect (Type 3, > 247).

Had you taken a taxi, you would have got here on time.

Had I not carried out the order, I would have been sacked.

But an *if*-clause (*If you had taken a taxi*) is more common, especially in informal English.

- D** Look at these examples with *if ... not for*.

You saved my life. If it hadn't been for you, I'd have drowned.

(= Without you, I'd have drowned.)

I'd give up teaching if it wasn't/weren't for the holidays.

We can also use *but for*. > 251B

But for you, I'd have drowned.

249 More details about *if*

A When and *if*

When we talk about the future, we use *when* for something that will happen and *if* for something that might happen.

When the doctor comes, can you let her in? (The doctor **will** come.)

If the doctor comes, can you let her in? (The doctor **might** come.)

We use *if* (not *when*) for an unreal condition.

If I had a credit card, I would spend even more money.

(I don't have a credit card.)

In some contexts either *when* or *if* is possible. > 244A

I always feel guilty when/if I use my credit card.

B Then

After an *if*-clause we can use *then* in the main clause.

If the figures don't add up, then you must have made a mistake.

If no one else has requested the book, then you can keep it for another three weeks.

Conditional sentences

Here *then* is not an adverb of time. It emphasizes the link between the condition (e.g. *no one else has requested the book*) and the result of the condition being met (e.g. *you can keep it*). We cannot use *so* in this way.

(NOT ~~*If the figures don't add up, so you must have made a mistake.*~~)

C Short clauses

We can sometimes use a short clause with *if* leaving out the subject and the verb.

I'd like a room with a view of the sea if (that is) possible.

If (you are) in difficulty, ring this number.

We can do this when the meaning is still clear without the missing words.

For *if so* and *if not*, > 28D.

D What if

We can use *what if* to ask someone to imagine a situation.

What if the tickets don't arrive in time?

What if you'd had an accident?

We can also use it to make a suggestion.

What if we all meet in London at the weekend?

Suppose and *supposing* are used in the same way as *what if*. > 230

Supposing the tickets don't arrive in time?

E Even if

We use *even if* to express both a condition and a contrast.

I'm going to finish this report even if it takes all night.

(This report may or may not take all night, but I'm going to finish it.)

We cannot use *even* on its own as a conjunction.

NOT ~~*I'm going to finish this report even it takes all night.*~~

Compare *even if* and *even though*.

Even if the rumour is untrue, people will still believe it.

(The rumour may or may not be untrue.)

Even though the rumour is untrue, people will still believe it.

(The rumour is untrue.)

250 Unless

- A** Unless with a positive verb is equivalent to *if* with a negative verb.

The club will go bankrupt unless it finds a new backer soon.

(= ... *if* it doesn't find a new backer soon.)

Unless I get up when I wake, I feel tired all day.

(= *If* I don't get up when I wake, ...)

We're going to have a picnic – unless it rains, of course.

(= *if* it doesn't rain, of course.)

In these examples, the main clause is negative.

You can't get your money back unless you've got a receipt.

(= You can get your money back **only if** you've got a receipt.)

Won't you join us? ~ Not unless you apologize first.

(= I'll join you **only if** you apologize first.)

- B** We do not normally use *unless* meaning *if ... not* to express an unreal condition.

If you didn't talk so much, you'd get more work done.

If the horse hadn't fallen, it would have won the race.

(NOT ~~*Unless the horse had fallen, it would have won the race.*~~)

We do not use *unless* to talk about a feeling which would result from something not happening.

Laura will be upset if you don't come to her party.

I'll be very surprised if you don't get the job.

(NOT ~~*I'll be very surprised unless you get the job.*~~)

251 Other ways of expressing a condition

- A** *As long as*, *provided*, etc

As well as *if*, we can use *as long as* or *so long as* to express a condition.

You can smoke as long as you do it outside the building.

I don't care what a car looks like so long as it gets me from A to B.

We can also use *provided (that)*, *providing (that)*, and *on condition that*.

The machine will go on working for years provided (that) it is looked after properly.

We are willing to accept your offer providing (that) payment is made within seven days.

The country was given aid on condition that it signed a trade agreement.

These conjunctions are more formal.

B *In case of, with, etc*

We can use the prepositions *in case of* and *in the event of*.

In case of fire, break glass. (on a sign)

(= If there is a fire, ...)

In the event of a major emergency, local hospitals would be alerted.

(= If there was a major emergency, ...)

The prepositions *with*, *without*, and *but for* can also express a condition.

With a bit more time, we could do a proper job.

(= If we had a bit more time, ...)

Without my mobile, I would have been in big trouble.

(= If I hadn't had my mobile, ...)

But for the climate, Edinburgh would be a perfect place to live.

(= If it wasn't for the climate, ...)

In that case means 'if that is so'.

I've lost my ticket. ~ In that case you'll have to buy another one.

We can also use *otherwise* to express a condition. It means 'if that is not so'.

I'd better write the address down, otherwise I'll forget it.

C *In case*

Compare *if* and *in case*.

I'll get some money from the cashpoint if I need some.

(I'll wait until I need some and then get it.)

I'll get some money from the cashpoint in case I need some.

(I'll get it now because I might need it later.)

Here are some more examples with *in case*.

You should insure your belongings in case they get stolen.

(= ... because they might get stolen.)

I left a glass of water by my bed in case I woke up thirsty in the night.

(= ... because I might wake up thirsty in the night.)

We can also use *should* or *might* in a clause with *in case*.

I'll take my mobile in case you should/might need to contact me.

We can use *in case* as an adverbial.

I'll get some money from the cashpoint (just) in case.

But for *in case of*, > B.

NOTE

In American English *in case* can mean the same as *if*.

If you need / In case you need any help, let me know.

Noun clauses

252 Introduction

- A** A noun clause begins with *that*, a question word, or *if/whether*.

I expected that there would be difficulties.

The price depends on where you want to sit.

We'll have to decide if/whether we can afford it.

A *that*-clause relates to a statement.

There would be difficulties. → ... *that there would be difficulties*

A *wh*-clause relates to a *wh*-question.

Where do you want to sit? → ... *where you want to sit*

A clause with *if* or *whether* relates to a yes/no question.

Can we afford it? → ... *if/whether we can afford it*

- B** In informal English we can often leave out *that*.

I knew (that) you weren't listening to me.

In a clause relating to a question, we normally use the same word order as in a statement.

We'll have to decide if/whether we can afford it.

(NOT ~~*We'll have to decide if/whether can we afford it.*~~)

We can sometimes use a *to*-infinitive with a question word or *whether*.

> 108

The problem was where to plug in all the electrical equipment.

- C** We use the term 'noun clause' because these clauses generally function in the same way as noun phrases: they can be the subject, the object, or the complement, or they can come after a preposition.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| As subject: | <i>That he could be mistaken wasn't possible.</i> |
|-------------|---|

> 254A

| | |
|------------|--|
| As object: | <i>I noticed that the door was open.</i> |
|------------|--|

> 253

| | |
|----------------|--|
| As complement: | <i>The result is that no one knows what to do.</i> |
|----------------|--|

> 254C

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| After a preposition: | <i>We had a talk about who should be invited.</i> |
|----------------------|---|

> 255

We can also use noun clauses in other patterns.

| | |
|----------|--|
| With it: | <i>It wasn't possible that he could be mistaken.</i> |
|----------|--|

> 254B.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| After an adjective: | <i>I'm disappointed that I didn't get the job.</i> |
|---------------------|--|

> 256A

| | |
|---------------|--|
| After a noun: | <i>I heard a rumour that the professor has been kidnapped.</i> |
|---------------|--|

> 256B

Noun clauses are used in indirect speech after verbs like *say* and *ask*. > 259

You said you wanted to come with us.

Someone asked what the matter was.

253 Noun clause as object

A A noun clause can be the object of a verb.

We regret that you did not find our product satisfactory.

I can't believe anyone would be so stupid.

The figures show how much the population has increased.

I wonder whether that's a good idea.

There are many different verbs that we can use before a noun clause. Here are some of the most common ones.

| | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| <i>agree</i> | <i>consider</i> | <i>mean</i> | <i>see</i> | <i>suspect</i> |
| <i>ask</i> | <i>feel</i> | <i>point out</i> | <i>show</i> | <i>think</i> |
| <i>assume</i> | <i>find</i> | <i>realize</i> | <i>suggest</i> | <i>understand</i> |
| <i>believe</i> | <i>know</i> | <i>say</i> | <i>suppose</i> | <i>wonder</i> |

NOTE

Sometimes we put *not* in the main clause when you might expect it in the noun clause.

I don't think we've got time. *I don't expect it'll take very long.*

This is more usual than *I think we haven't got time* or *I expect it won't take very long*.

We prefer to put *not* in the main clause with *believe, expect, imagine, suppose, and think*.

B Sometimes there is an indirect object.

We told the driver we were in a hurry.

I persuaded Laura that she ought to give up smoking.

The woman asked the policeman what was happening.

The indirect object is usually a person. > 6A

The verbs we can use in this pattern include the following.

| | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------|
| <i>advise</i> | <i>convince</i> | <i>persuade</i> | <i>remind</i> | <i>tell</i> |
| <i>ask</i> | <i>inform</i> | <i>promise</i> | <i>show</i> | <i>warn</i> |
| <i>assure</i> | <i>notify</i> | <i>reassure</i> | <i>teach</i> | <i>write</i> > Note |
| <i>bet</i> | | | | |

With some of these verbs we cannot leave out the indirect object. > 259C

NOTE

An indirect object with *write* in this pattern is used mainly in American English.

He wrote me that he couldn't come.

In British English *wrote to me* is more usual.

C With certain verbs we can use a phrase with *to*.

We explained to the driver that we were in a hurry.

I mentioned to Karen that you would be here.

The verbs that we can use in this pattern include the following.

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <i>admit</i> | <i>declare</i> | <i>mention</i> | <i>recommend</i> | <i>say</i> |
| <i>announce</i> | <i>explain</i> | <i>point out</i> | <i>remark</i> | <i>suggest</i> |
| <i>complain</i> | <i>indicate</i> | <i>propose</i> | <i>report</i> | <i>write</i> |

We can always leave out the phrase with *to*.

- D** We can use a noun clause after a passive verb.

It was assumed that the stock market would continue to rise.

For more details, > 92A.

254 Noun clause as subject and as complement

- A** We sometimes use a noun clause as the subject of a sentence.

That you want to be independent is only natural.

How they're going to enforce the law isn't clear.

But it is more usual to put the noun clause later in the sentence. > B

We cannot leave out *that* when the clause is the subject.

(NOT ~~*You want to be independent is only natural.*~~)

We can use *whether* (but not *if*) when the clause is the subject.

Whether I'll be able to come depends on a number of things.

- B** We often use *it* and put the noun clause at the end of the sentence.

It's only natural that you want to be independent.

It isn't clear how they're going to enforce the law.

It's hard to say if/whether it's going to rain or not.

It was easy to see how it could have happened.

We do this because the clause is long and comes more naturally at the end.

NOTE

- a For *it* with *seem*, *happen* etc, > 36C.

It seems that I've made a mistake.

- b For *it* with a passive verb, > 92A.

It is feared that many lives have been lost in the earthquake.

- c We can use the following pattern with *it* as the object. > 36B

They haven't made it clear how they're going to enforce the law.

- C** A noun clause can be a complement of *be*.

The truth is that I don't get on with my flat-mate.

The advantage of DVD is that it gives you much better picture quality.

Before *be* we often use nouns like these: *advantage*, *answer*, *effect*, *explanation*, *fear*, *idea*, *point*, *problem*, *reason*, *result*, *situation*, *truth*.

255 Noun clause after a preposition

- A** A *wh*-clause or *whether* can come after a preposition.

The government is looking into what needs to be done.

Then there's the question of who pays for all this.

The singer made no comment on whether he had sold his story to a newspaper.

We cannot use *if* in this pattern.

We cannot use a *that*-clause after a preposition. Compare these examples.

No one told me that Nicola was ill.

No one told me about Nicola's illness.

No one told me about Nicola being ill. > 115B.

(BUT NOT ~~*No one told me about Nicola was ill*~~)

- B** Many verbs, nouns, and adjectives can be followed by a particular preposition: *wonder about*, *an effect on*, *surprised at*, *interested in*. Some combinations of this kind can be followed by a *wh*-clause or *whether*.

The elections will have an effect on whether the President can push ahead with reforms.

I'm interested in how business decisions are made.

Sometimes we can leave out the preposition.

I was wondering (about) who's going to be in this band.

We were all surprised (at) how cold it was.

Here are some expressions with verbs and adjectives where we can leave out the preposition before a *wh*-clause.

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>to agree (about/as to/on)</i> | <i>certain (about/as to/of)</i> | <i>surprised (at)</i> |
| <i>to ask (about)</i> | <i>to decide (about/on)</i> | <i>to think (about/of)</i> |
| <i>aware (of)</i> | <i>to report (about/on)</i> | <i>to wonder (about)</i> |
| <i>to care (about)</i> | <i>sure (about/as to/of)</i> | <i>to worry (about)</i> |

But in these expressions we do not leave out the preposition.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>anxious about</i> | <i>an effect on</i> |
| <i>a belief about/as to</i> | <i>an inquiry about/as to/into</i> |
| <i>confused about/as to</i> | <i>interested in</i> |
| <i>a difficulty about/as to/over</i> | <i>a report about/on</i> |
| <i>a discussion about/of/on</i> | <i>some research into/on</i> |

256 Noun clause after an adjective or noun

- A** We can use a *that*-clause after some adjectives.

It's essential that you fit smoke alarms.

I'm hopeful we can reach an agreement.

The girl was sure she would be able to recognize her attacker.

I was as certain as I could be that my calculations were correct.

The adjectives that we can use in this pattern include the following.

| | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <i>afraid</i> | <i>certain</i> | <i>convinced</i> | <i>hopeful</i> | <i>sorry</i> |
| <i>amazed</i> | <i>clear</i> | <i>disappointed</i> | <i>nice</i> | <i>sure</i> |
| <i>annoyed</i> | <i>concerned</i> | <i>glad</i> | <i>pleased</i> | <i>surprised</i> |
| <i>aware</i> | <i>confident</i> | <i>grateful</i> | <i>satisfied</i> | <i>worried</i> |

We can also use a wh-clause after some adjectives.

- I wasn't sure what the time was.*
- Are you aware who is causing all this trouble?*

For details about the use of a preposition before the wh-clause, > 255B.

B We can use a that-clause after some nouns.

- The news that the plane had crashed came as a terrible shock.*
- You can't get around the fact that his fingerprints were on the gun.*
- Whatever gave you the idea that I can sing?*
- There's a rumour going round that the exam papers have been stolen.*

We do not normally leave out *that* except occasionally in informal speech.

The nouns that we can use in this pattern are mainly to do with thoughts or speech. They include the following.

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <i>assumption</i> | <i>concern</i> | <i>fact</i> | <i>news</i> | <i>statement</i> |
| <i>belief</i> | <i>danger</i> | <i>hope</i> | <i>report</i> | <i>suggestion</i> |
| <i>claim</i> | <i>evidence</i> | <i>idea</i> | <i>rumour</i> | <i>view</i> |

257 Nominalization

A Compare these three examples.

- Main clause: *The campaign succeeded, and this meant that lives were saved.*
- Noun clause: *The fact that the campaign succeeded meant that lives were saved.*
- Noun phrase: *The success of the campaign meant that lives were saved.*

A statement like *The campaign succeeded* can be a main clause, or we can turn it into a that-clause and use it as part of a larger sentence. Sometimes we can also turn a clause into a noun phrase such as *the success of the campaign*. Here this involves changing a verb (*succeeded*) into a noun (*success*). Using a noun phrase rather than a clause is called 'nominalization'. Especially in written English, it is often neater to use a phrase.

Here are some more examples.

| Clause | Phrase |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <i>The residents protested.</i> | <i>The residents' protests were ignored.</i> |
| <i>The document was published.</i> | <i>The publication of the document was delayed.</i> |
| <i>The landscape is beautiful.</i> | <i>We were attracted by the beauty of the landscape.</i> |

The last example involves changing an adjective (*beautiful*) into a noun (*beauty*).

Noun clauses

B When we change a clause into a noun phrase, the subject of a clause either has the possessive form or comes in an of-phrase.

| Clause | Phrase |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>I was happy.</i> | <i>Nothing could spoil my happiness.</i> |
| <i>Our visitor departed.</i> | <i>Our visitor's departure / The departure of our visitor was a great relief.</i> |
| <i>The film ended.</i> | <i>I missed the end of the film.</i> |

With people we use a possessive form, and sometimes we can use the of-structure. With things we use of. For more details about the choice of the possessive form or of, > 133.

C A verb + object becomes a noun + preposition + object.

| Clause | Phrase |
|--|---|
| <i>They will open the new skateboard park.</i> | <i>The opening of the new skateboard park is eagerly awaited.</i> |
| <i>Someone attacked the army post.</i> | <i>The attack on the army post took place yesterday.</i> |
| <i>They've changed the law.</i> | <i>There's been a change in the law.</i> |
| <i>I've requested a transfer.</i> | <i>I've made several requests for a transfer.</i> |

The most common preposition after a noun is of. For more details, > 226.

D An adverb in a clause is equivalent to an adjective in a noun phrase.

| Adverb | Adjective |
|--|--|
| <i>The residents protested angrily.</i> | <i>The residents' angry protests were ignored.</i> |
| <i>The landscape is amazingly beautiful.</i> | <i>Discover the amazing beauty of the landscape.</i> |

Indirect speech

258 Introduction

- A** We use direct speech when we report someone's words by quoting them.
'I'll go and heat some milk,' said Agnes. (from a story)
Gould was the first to admit, 'We were simply beaten by a better side.'
 (from a newspaper report)
'Made me laugh more than any comedy I have seen in the West End this year' – Evening Standard (from an advertisement for a play)

- B** Instead of quoting the exact words we can report the meaning in our own words and from our own point of view. This is called 'indirect speech' or 'reported speech'.

Agnes said she would go and heat some milk.

Gould admitted that his team were beaten by a better side.

One of the critics claims it's the funniest play in the West End.

Here the indirect speech is the object of *said*, *admitted*, or *claims*. These are verbs of reporting. > 259

NOTE

- a When we use indirect speech, we normally express the meaning of what was said rather than the exact words that were spoken.

'I had a really great time.' → *She said she had enjoyed herself.*

- b We can report thoughts as well as speech or writing.

I thought I had plenty of time, but in fact I only just made it.

The speaker thought 'I've got plenty of time', but the thoughts were not necessarily expressed in speech.

Often *think* is used to report expressions of opinion.

My careers advisor thinks I should do business studies.

In the context of a discussion between the careers advisor and the student, it is clear that the opinion was expressed in speech.

- C** We often use *that* in indirect speech, but in informal English we can leave it out, especially after a common verb like *say*.

Tom says (that) he'll only be five minutes.

We can sometimes use a gerund clause or a to-infinitive clause.

Gould admitted having lost to a better side. > 265E

I warned you to take care. > 265D

NOTE

- a Sometimes the indirect speech comes first (in a finite clause), and the information about who said it comes at the end, as a kind of afterthought.

His team were beaten by a better side, Gould admitted.

There will be no trains on New Year's Day, the rail companies announced yesterday.

We do not begin with *That* ... when the indirect speech comes first.

- b We can use a phrase with *according to* to show who said something.

According to Gould, his team were beaten by a better side.

Indirect speech

- D** With direct speech, we can sometimes invert the verb of reporting and the subject. This happens mainly in literary English, for example in stories.

'I'll see you later,' said Sam.

'But that's not true,' replied the man.

We can do this with most verbs of reporting, but not with a verb like *tell* which has an indirect object.

We do not usually put a personal pronoun after the verb.

'Nice to meet you,' he said.

- E** You may see a mixture of direct and indirect speech. This is from a newspaper report about a man staying at home to look after his children.

But Brian believes watching the kids grow up and learn new things is the biggest joy a dad can experience. 'Some people think it's a woman's job, but I don't think that's relevant any more.'

- F** When someone says something that goes on for more than a single sentence, we do not need to use a verb of reporting in every sentence. This is from a newspaper report about a court case.

Prosecutor David Andrews said Wilson had stolen a gold wedding ring and credit card and had used the card to attempt to withdraw money from a bank. In the second offence Wilson had burgled premises and taken a briefcase containing takings from a shop. Police had later recovered the bank notes from his home.

It is clear that the whole paragraph is reporting what the prosecutor said. It is not necessary to say, for example, that *Mr Andrews added that police had later recovered the bank notes from his home.*

259 Verbs of reporting

- A** We can use a verb of reporting with a *that*-clause or a *wh*-clause.

Polly says (that) she isn't feeling very well.

He wondered why everyone was smiling.

Most verbs of reporting can also be used with direct speech.

Polly says, 'I'm not feeling very well.'

'Why is everyone smiling?' he wondered.

We also use verbs of reporting with other patterns such as a *to*-infinitive clause or a gerund clause. > 265

We asked the waiter to bring another bottle.

I've apologized for keeping everyone waiting.

NOTE

Some verbs express how a sentence is spoken.

'Oh, not again,' she groaned.

Such verbs include *groan*, *laugh*, *murmur*, *mutter*, *scream*, *shout*, *sigh*, *sob*, and *whisper*. They are typically used with direct speech in stories and novels.

- B** There are many different verbs of reporting. Here are some that we can use before a *that*-clause or a *wh*-clause.

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <i>admit</i> | <i>ask</i> | <i>hear</i> | <i>point out</i> | <i>suppose</i> |
| <i>agree</i> | <i>believe</i> | <i>inquire</i> | <i>read</i> | <i>think</i> |
| <i>announce</i> | <i>consider</i> | <i>insist</i> | <i>say</i> | <i>understand</i> |
| <i>argue</i> | <i>feel</i> | <i>know</i> | <i>suggest</i> | <i>wonder</i> |

With many of these verbs we can use a passive pattern with *it*. > 92A
At that time it was already known that the earth orbited the sun.

NOTE

In informal speech *be like* is sometimes used, especially by younger speakers, when quoting someone's words.

We were making a bit of a noise, and my dad was like, 'What's going on here?'

- C** Sometimes there is an indirect object after the verb of reporting.
No one told me you were leaving.
The police have warned the public that the man is dangerous.

The verbs we can use in this pattern include the following.

| | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|
| <i>advise</i> | <i>inform</i> | <i>promise</i> | <i>remind</i> | <i>warn</i> |
| <i>assure</i> | <i>notify</i> | <i>reassure</i> | <i>tell</i> | |

With some of these verbs we cannot leave out the indirect object.

We informed everyone that the time had been changed.

(NOT ~~*We informed that the time had been changed.*~~)

These verbs are *assure*, *inform*, *notify*, *reassure*, *remind*, and *tell* (> 260).

We can use the verb of reporting in the passive.

Everyone was informed that the time had been changed.

NOTE

For *write* with an indirect object, > 253B Note.

- D** Sometimes we use a phrase with *to* after a verb of reporting.
Can someone explain to me what's happening?
I suggested to the others that we should meet them here.

The verbs that we can use in this pattern include the following.

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <i>admit</i> | <i>declare</i> | <i>mention</i> | <i>recommend</i> | <i>say</i> |
| <i>announce</i> | <i>explain</i> | <i>point out</i> | <i>remark</i> | <i>suggest</i> |
| <i>complain</i> | <i>indicate</i> | <i>propose</i> | <i>report</i> | <i>write</i> |

We can always leave out the phrase with *to*.

Indirect speech

- E** As well as verbs of reporting, we can also use an adjective such as *sure* or *certain*.

I'm sure someone's been looking through my papers.

260 Tell, say, and ask

- A** We normally use an indirect object after *tell*.

You told me you didn't like Chinese food.

Simon told us he was going to Australia.

(NOT ~~*Simon told he was going to Australia.*~~)

But after *say* we do not use an indirect object.

You said you didn't like Chinese food.

Simon said he was going to Australia.

(NOT ~~*Simon said us he was going to Australia.*~~)

- B** We can use either a *that*-clause or a *wh*-clause after *say* or *tell*.

Kate told me (that) she's fed up.

Kate said (that) she's fed up.

Kate told me what the matter was.

Say + *wh*-clause is used in a negative statement or a question where the information is not actually reported.

Kate didn't say what the matter was.

Did your brother say how long he would be?

Say + *wh*-clause is less usual in a positive statement.

NOTE

We can use *tell* + indirect object + *about*.

Kate told us about the fight she had with her boyfriend.

We use *say* with *about* only if the information is not actually reported.

What did Kate say about her boyfriend?

The company won't say anything about its plans.

- C** There are a few expressions where we can use *tell* without an indirect object.

I'm not very good at telling stories.

Paul told a very funny joke.

You mustn't tell lies. You should always tell the truth.

The pupils have learned to tell the time.

Can you tell the difference between tap water and bottled water?

(= distinguish)

NOTE

You may sometimes see *tell* without an indirect object before *how* or *of*.

The couple told how they had been held hostage.

I remember crying when the radio told of the death of the King.

- D** After *say* we can use a phrase with *to*.

I said to him, 'I've been mugged.'

But this is less usual in indirect speech.

I said I'd been mugged.
I told him I'd been mugged.

We prefer either of these to *I said to him I'd been mugged.*

But we can use a phrase with *to* if the information is not reported.

The mayor will say a few words to the guests.
What did the boss say to you?

E We use *talk* and *speak* to say who was speaking, to whom, for how long, or what about.

Daniel was talking to a very attractive young woman.
The President spoke for an hour.
We don't talk about politics.

We do not use them as verbs of reporting.

The announcer said that he had a surprise for us.
(NOT ~~*The announcer talked/spoke that he had a surprise for us.*~~)

F We can use *ask* with or without an indirect object.

Kate looked a bit upset, so I asked (her) if there was anything wrong.
For *tell* and *ask* in indirect orders and requests, > 264.
We told/asked Kate to hurry up.

Compare *ask* and *say* in direct and indirect speech.

| Direct speech | Indirect speech |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <i>'What time is it?' he asked/said. →</i> | <i>He asked what time it was.</i> |
| <i>'The time is ...,' he said. →</i> | <i>He said what time it was.</i> |

261 Changes in indirect speech

A People, place, and time

Imagine a situation where Andrew and Tina are at home one afternoon. Tina wants to go out in the car, but it refuses to start. She rings the garage and asks a mechanic if he can come and see to it. He is too busy to come right away, but he agrees to come the next morning.

Mechanic: *I'll be at your house at eight tomorrow morning.*

A moment later Tina reports this to Martin.

Tina: *The mechanic says he'll be here at eight tomorrow morning.*
Now a different speaker is giving the message, so where the mechanic said *I'll be ...*, Tina says *he'll be ...*. And the speaker is in a different place, so *at your house* for the mechanic becomes *here* for Tina.

Next day the mechanic has not arrived even by nine o'clock, so Tina rings him again.

Indirect speech

Tina: *You said you would be here at eight this morning.*
Now the time has changed. It is a day later, so instead of *tomorrow morning*, Tina says *this morning*. And the promise is now out of date, so *will* becomes *would*. For changes to verb forms, > 262.

When we report something, we have to take account of changes in the situation – a different speaker, a different place, or a different time.

B Pronouns and possessives

When you report what someone else has said, both pronouns and possessives can change.

'I'm really enjoying myself.' → *Kate said she was enjoying herself.*
'I like your new hairstyle.' → *Martin said he liked my new hairstyle.*

C Adverbials of time

Here are some typical changes from direct to indirect speech.

| Direct speech | Indirect speech |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>now</i> | <i>then/at that time/immediately</i> |
| <i>today</i> | <i>yesterday/that day/on Tuesday, etc</i> |
| <i>yesterday</i> | <i>the day before/the previous day/on Monday, etc</i> |
| <i>tomorrow</i> | <i>the next day/the following day/on Thursday, etc</i> |
| <i>this week</i> | <i>last week/that week</i> |
| <i>last year</i> | <i>the year before/the previous year/in 1990, etc</i> |
| <i>next month</i> | <i>the month after/the following month/in August, etc</i> |
| <i>an hour ago</i> | <i>an hour before/an hour earlier/at two o'clock, etc</i> |

D Reporting *this* and *that*

When we are talking about things other than time, *this* or *that* usually changes to *the* in indirect speech, or the phrase is replaced by *it*.

'This steak is nice.' → *Kirsty said the steak was nice.*
'I'd like to buy that guitar.' → *Tom saw a guitar. He said he wanted to buy it.*

262 Verb tenses in indirect speech

A Verbs of reporting

A verb of reporting can be in a present tense.
The forecast says it's going to rain.

I've heard they might close this place down.
Here the present simple or present perfect tense suggests that the reported statements were made not long ago and that they are still relevant. For written statements such as *The article says fast food is bad for you*, > 42G.

After a present-tense verb of reporting, we do not change the tense in indirect speech.

'I'm hungry.' → *Robert says he's hungry.*

'I took drugs when I was younger.' → *The singer says he took drugs when he was younger.*

A verb of reporting is often in a past tense.

The forecast said it was going to rain.

Robert said he's hungry.

We can always use the past tense, even if the words were spoken a very short time ago. After a past-tense verb of reporting we often change the tense in indirect speech.

It's going to rain. → *The forecast said it was going to rain.*

For details > B–C.

NOTE

Continuous forms are sometimes used informally to report what was said, especially when summarizing the main point of a message.

The authorities are saying that the school will have to close.

This politician on TV last night was saying there's hardly any rainforest left.

B The tense change and when we use it

When the verb of reporting is in a past tense, we often change the tense in indirect speech from present to past. In general we are more likely to change the tense if we are unsure whether the statement is still true and still relevant.

When a statement is untrue or out of date, then we change the tense.

Oh, they live in Bristol, do they? I thought they lived in Bath.

(They don't live in Bath.)

The forecast said it was going to rain and it did.

(The forecast is now out of date.)

We also use the past tense when we are reporting in a neutral way and we do not want to suggest that the statement is necessarily true.

'Our policies are the right ones.' → *The Minister said that the party's policies were the right ones.*

This use of the past tense gives an objective tone to the reporting of people's views in the news media.

Sometimes we can use the same tense in reported speech as in direct speech. This happens when the statement is still relevant.

'I know the way.' → *Karen told me she knows/knew the way, so there's no need to take a map.*

'It's going to rain.' → *The forecast said it's going to rain / it was going to rain today.*

Using the present tense makes the speaker sound more confident that Karen really does know the way and that it really is going to rain. However, it is always possible to change the tense, even when the statement is still relevant.

TIP

After *said* and *told* it is safest to change the tense from present to past.
'I'm tired.' → *She said she was tired.*

C The form of the tense change

The tense change in indirect speech is a change from present to past.

'I feel awful.' → *Louise said she felt awful.*

'You're crazy.' → *Simon thought I was crazy.*

'I've got a headache.' → *I told them I had a headache.*

If the verb phrase is more than one word, then the first word of the verb phrase changes from present to past.

'We're going the wrong way.' → *I knew we were going the wrong way.*

'I haven't finished.' → *Laura said she hadn't finished.*

'The kids have been swimming.' → *Steve said the kids had been swimming.*

'The matter is being investigated.' → *They told me the matter was being investigated.*

So the present continuous changes to the past continuous, the present perfect to the past perfect, and so on.

D Past and past perfect in indirect speech

If the verb in direct speech is past, then it usually changes to the past perfect.

'I passed my driving test yesterday.' → *Paul told me he'd passed his driving test.*

'We were sailing on the lake last weekend.' → *They told me they'd been sailing on the lake.*

The use of the past perfect makes it clear that the sailing is further in the past than when they told me about it. If we don't change the tense – *They told me they were sailing* – this could mean that the sailing holiday was not yet over.

Look at these examples.

'I feel very stressed.' → *Lucy said she felt very stressed. She certainly didn't look well.*

'I felt very stressed.' → *Lucy said she'd felt very stressed, but she seems to have got over it now.*

Here we have to use the past perfect in indirect speech to show that the feeling was in the past when it was reported.

But when it is clear that something happened long before it was reported, we do not need to use the past perfect.

'I once lived in a palace.' → *Joshua told me that he once lived in a palace.*

'Rome wasn't built in a day, you know.' → *The teacher reminded us that Rome wasn't built in a day.*

We do not change a past-tense verb when it refers to something unreal.

'I wish I had a dog.' → *My sister used to say she wished she had a dog.*

'If I knew, I'd tell you.' → *Amy said that if she knew, she would tell us.*

If the verb in direct speech is in the past perfect, then it does not change.

'I was annoyed because I'd left my coat on the train.' → *Jack said he'd been annoyed because he'd left his coat on the train.*

NOTE

The past perfect in indirect speech can relate to three different verb forms.

'I've seen the film.' → *She said she'd seen the film.*

'I saw the film last week.' → *She said she'd seen the film the week before.*

'I didn't watch it because I'd seen it before.' → *She said she'd seen it before.*

E Modal verbs in indirect speech

Some modal verbs change in indirect speech.

'You'll regret it.' → *I told them they'd regret it.*

'I can drive.' → *I said I could drive.*

'It may snow.' → *They thought it might snow.*

The changes are *will* → *would*, *can* → *could*, and *may* → *might*.

Other modal verbs do not change.

'A walk would be nice.' → *We thought a walk would be nice.*

'You should come back tomorrow.' → *They told me I should go back the next day.*

There is no change with *would*, *could*, *should*, *might*, *ought to*, *had better*, and *used to*.

Must can stay the same or change to *had to*.

'I must go now.' → *Sarah said she must go / she had to go.*

When it refers to the future, it can change to *would have to*.

'I must go soon.' → *Sarah said she must go / she had to go / she would have to go soon.*

But when *must* expresses certainty, it usually stays the same, but it can change to *had to*.

'There must be some mistake.' → *I thought there must be / there had to be some mistake.*

Mustn't and *needn't* can stay the same, or they can change.

'You mustn't lose the key.' → *I told Matthew he mustn't lose / he wasn't to lose the key.*

'You needn't wait for us.' → *We said they needn't wait / didn't need to wait / didn't have to wait for us.*

NOTE

- a *Shall* for the future changes to *would*.

'I shall be making a complaint.' → *He said he would be making a complaint.*

Shall meaning 'ought to' changes to *should*.

'What shall I write about?' → *She wondered what she should write about.*

For *She wondered what to write about*, > 108.

- b There are sometimes other ways we can report a sentence with a modal verb. > 265

'Would you like to come for tea?' → *They invited me for tea.*

263 Reporting questions

- A** When we report a question, we use verbs such as *ask*, *enquire*, *want to know*, or *wonder*.

Here are some examples of how we report a *wh*-question.

'Where did you have lunch?' → I asked Elaine where she'd had lunch.

'What time does the flight get in?' → I'll enquire what time the flight gets in.

'Who have you invited?' → Peter is wondering who we've invited.

'When is the lecture?' → Someone wants to know when the lecture is.

When we report a *yes/no* question, we use *if* or *whether*.

'Is there a café in the museum?' → Tom was asking if/whether there was a café in the museum.

'Has the drug been properly tested?' → People want to know if/whether the drug has been properly tested.

NOTE

After *if/whether* we can use *or not* to stress the need for a *yes/no* answer.

They want to know if/whether it's safe or not.

They want to know whether or not it's safe.

(BUT NOT ~~*They want to know if or not it's safe.*~~)

- B** In an indirect question the word order is usually *subject + verb*, as in a statement

I asked Elaine where she'd had lunch.

Compare: *She'd had lunch in the canteen.*

I'll enquire what time the flight gets in.

Compare: *The flight gets in at three o'clock.*

(NOT ~~*I'll enquire what time does the flight get in.*~~)

NOTE

We use inversion in the indirect question in sentences like this.

Where did Elaine have lunch, I was wondering.

Here the reporting verb comes at the end of the sentence, as a kind of afterthought.

- C** In an indirect question the tense can change from present to past in the same way as in a statement. > 262

'What do you want?' → The man asked what we wanted.

'Can we take photos?' → Anna wondered if we could take photos.

- D** We can use an indirect question form after *say*, *tell*, etc when we are talking about the answer to a question.

Did your friend say when she would be calling?

I wish you'd tell me whether you agree.

I haven't been informed what time the flight gets in.

- E** We can use an indirect question to ask for information. > 17
- Could you tell me what time it is, please?*

264 Reporting orders and requests

- A** To report an order or request, we usually use *tell/ask* + object + to-infinitive.
'Please wait outside.' → *The teacher told us to wait outside.*

'I want you to relax.' → *My therapist is always telling me to relax.*

'Could you help us, please?' → *We asked someone to help us.*

'Would you mind not smoking?' → *A nurse asked Tim not to smoke.*

As well as *tell* and *ask*, there are a number of other verbs we can use such as *command*, *request*, and *urge*. For more details about this pattern, > 105B.

- B** There are other ways of reporting orders and requests. We can also use *must*, *should*, *have to*, or *be to*.

My therapist is always telling me I must / I should relax.

The teacher said we had to wait / we were to wait outside.

Sometimes we can report the order or request in the form of an indirect statement or question.

My therapist is always telling me she wants me to relax.

A nurse asked Tim if he would mind not smoking.

- C** We can use the passive before the to-infinitive.

I'm always being told to relax.

We were asked to form a queue.

- D** We can use *ask* with or without an indirect object. Compare these examples.

'May I sit down?' → *Mark asked to sit down.*

'Please sit down, Mark.' → *The boss asked Mark to sit down.*

We use *ask for* with a noun phrase to report a request to have something.

'Can I have a receipt, please?' → *I asked (the assistant) for a receipt.*

We can also use the following pattern with *ask for* and a passive to-infinitive.

The villagers are asking for a speed limit to be introduced.

To report a request for permission, we use *ask if/whether*.

'Do you mind if I smoke?' → *Tim asked if/whether he could smoke.*

265 Reporting offers, warnings, apologies, etc

A Introduction

Besides statements, questions, and requests, there are many other kinds of sentence that we can report, such as an offer or an objection. We can often do this by reporting them in the form of an indirect statement or question.

'I can lend you some money.' → *Stella said she could lend me some money.*

'Why should I have the smallest room?' → *Emma wondered why she should have the smallest room.*

Indirect speech

But it is often neater to use a verb like *offer* or *object* which makes clear the purpose of what was said.

'I can lend you some money.' → *Stella offered to lend me some money.*

'Why should I have the smallest room?' → *Emma objected to having the smallest room.*

Sometimes we can use a *that*-clause with verbs of this kind (> H-I). But after most of these verbs we use a different pattern. Here are some examples.

B A single clause

'I'm sorry.' → *The man apologized.*

'Thank you very much.' → *I thanked the driver.*

'We really must have a sea view.' → *The guests insisted on a sea view.*

'Be careful. The path is slippery.' → *He warned us about the path.*

C Verb + to-infinitive

'I'm not going to walk all that way.' → *I refused to walk.*

'I'll see to the computer for you.' → *Paul promised to see to the computer.*

Verbs we can use in this pattern include *agree*, *offer*, *promise*, *refuse*, *threaten*, and *volunteer*.

D Verb + object + to-infinitive

'You really ought to call in the experts.' → *Jane advised us to call in the experts.*

'Would you like to stay at our house?' → *Some friends have invited me to stay.*

Verbs we can use include *advise*, *invite*, *remind*, and *warn*.

E Verb + gerund

'I'm afraid I've lost the photo.' → *Luke admitted losing the photo.*

'Let's move on to a night club.' → *Someone suggested moving on to a club.*

Verbs we can use include *admit*, *deny*, and *suggest*.

F Verb + preposition + gerund

'I'm sorry I was in such a bad mood.' → *Sarah apologized for being in such a bad mood.*

'Why do I have to tidy up after everyone?' → *Lucy was complaining about having to tidy up after everyone.*

Prepositional verbs we can use in this pattern include *apologize for*, *complain about*, *confess to*, *insist on*, and *object to*.

G Verb + object + preposition + gerund

'Well done for speaking up like that.' → *We congratulated Chloe on speaking up.*

'Why didn't you take your opportunity?' → *Carl's friend criticized him for not taking his opportunity.*

Prepositional verbs we can use in this pattern include *accuse ... of*, *blame ... for*, *congratulate ... on*, *criticize ... for*, *praise ... for*, *thank ... for*, and *warn ... about*.

NOTE

We can also use the phrasal verb *tell off*.

'You really can't spend so much time phoning your friends.' → *The boss told me off for phoning my friends.*

H Verb + that-clause

'Club officials are to wear suits.' → *The club insists (that) the officials wear suits.*

'I'm afraid I've lost the photo.' → *Luke admitted (that) he had lost the photo.*

Verbs we can use include *admit*, *advise*, *agree*, *complain*, *confess*, *deny*, *forecast*, *insist*, *object*, *predict*, *promise*, *recommend*, *remind*, *suggest*, *threaten*, and *warn*.

I Verb + object + that-clause

'Be careful. The path is very slippery.' → *He warned us (that) the path was very slippery.*

'Don't worry. There'll be a seat for you.' → *They assured me (that) I would get a seat.*

Verbs we can use in this pattern include *assure*, *promise*, *reassure*, *remind*, and *warn*.

Relative clauses

266 Introduction

A This sentence is from a newspaper.

A body recovered from the River Severn at Tewkesbury at the weekend is thought to be a man who disappeared from the Midlands in January, police said yesterday.

The sentence contains a noun phrase (*a man*) + a relative clause (*who disappeared from the Midlands in January*). The relative clause begins with a pronoun (*who*). Compare the use of a personal pronoun and a relative pronoun.

The body is that of a man. He disappeared in January.

The body is that of a man who disappeared in January.

A relative clause can also follow a compound pronoun beginning *every-*, *some-*, *any-*, or *no-*.

The body is that of someone who disappeared in January.

These sentences also contain relative clauses.

We can't ignore the difficulties which lie ahead.

The tension that has gripped the city began to ease yesterday.

There are a lot of pupils here whose parents have divorced.

Here the relative clauses begin with *which*, *that*, and *whose*.

Sometimes we can use a clause without a relative pronoun. > 268E

They've charged me for a phone call I didn't make.

The bus we were waiting for never came.

We do not use the personal pronoun that we would need in a main clause.

a man who disappeared in January

(NOT ~~*a man who he disappeared in January*~~)

the difficulties which lie ahead

(NOT ~~*the difficulties which they lie ahead*~~)

The relative pronoun (*who*, *which*) replaces the personal pronoun (*he*, *they*) as the subject of the clause. The same thing happens when the relative pronoun is the object of the clause.

a body that they found in the river

(NOT ~~*a body that they found it in the river*~~)

The relative pronoun (*that*) replaces the personal pronoun (*it*). But here we still need the personal pronoun *they* as subject. For more about relative pronouns as subject and object, > 268B.

NOTE

We sometimes use another clause inside a relative clause.

It is the body of a man who the police think was murdered.

We can't ignore the difficulties which we know lie ahead.

In the second example we put the clause *we know* inside the relative clause *which lie ahead*.

B Compare a relative clause with other ways of modifying a noun.

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| An adjective or noun: | <i>a dead body</i> <i>a Midlands man</i> |
| A phrase: | <i>a body in the river</i> <i>a man from the Midlands</i> |
| A participle clause: | <i>a body recovered from the river</i> > 274 <i>a man missing since January</i> > 274 |
| A full relative clause: | <i>a body which police recovered from the river</i> <i>a man who disappeared from the Midlands</i> |

We usually choose a pattern that enables us to express all the relevant information in the shortest way. For example, *a Midlands man* or *a man from the Midlands* would be more usual than *a man who comes from the Midlands*.

C A relative clause usually comes directly after the noun it relates to, but it can come later in the sentence. These two examples are from real conversations.

I can't think of any good films at the moment that I'd like to see.

The train was just pulling out of the station that we were supposed to connect with.

But it is usually best to put the relative clause directly after the noun so that it is clear what the clause relates to.

At the moment I can't think of any good films that I'd like to see.

The train that we were supposed to connect with was just pulling out of the station.

D The use of commas with relative clauses

Relative clauses can be divided into those without commas and those which are separated off from the rest of the sentence by one or two commas.

Whether we use commas or not (or whether we pause when speaking) makes a difference to the meaning. Look at these two paragraphs.

Without commas

Two cars had to swerve to avoid each other. One car left the road and hit a tree, and the other ended up on its roof. The driver of the car which hit a tree was killed.

In speech we do not pause before the clause without commas. The clause tells us which of the two cars is meant. The sentence would be incomplete without the relative clause.

With commas

A car had to swerve to avoid a horse and left the road. The driver of the car, which hit a tree, was killed.

In speech there is a short pause before the clause with commas. The clause adds extra information about the car. It does not identify the car because in this context there is only one. The sentence would still make sense without the relative clause.

Here is another example.

| Without commas | With commas |
|--|---|
| <i>Cars which cause pollution should be banned.</i> (Some cars cause pollution and should be banned.) | <i>Cars, which cause pollution, should be banned.</i> (All cars cause pollution and should be banned.) |
| The clause without commas tells us what kind of cars are meant. | The clause with commas adds information about cars in general. |

267 Types of relative clause

Some relative clauses are without commas, and some have commas. > 266D Both these basic kinds of clause have different uses, as shown below. There are three types of relative clause without commas (> A–C) and two types with commas (> D–E)

A Identifying clauses

A relative clause without commas can identify which one we mean.

Who was that man who said hello to you?

I can't find the book that I was reading.

The clause *that I was reading* identifies which book we are talking about.

An identifying clause often comes after a noun phrase with *the*.

I like the course that I'm doing now.

We do not normally use *my*, *your*, etc.

(NOT ~~*I like my course that I'm doing now.*~~)

Both *my* and the relative clause identify the course, but we do not need to use more than one of them. But we can use *this*, *that*, *these*, or *those*.

Have you got those photos you took at the weekend?

B Classifying clauses

A relative clause without commas can say what kind of thing we are talking about.

We're looking for a pub that serves food.

I hate people who laugh at their own jokes.

The clause *that serves food* describes the kind of pub we mean. A classifying clause often comes after a noun phrase with *a/an* (*a pub*) or a plural noun (*people*).

C Clauses used for emphasis

We can use a relative clause without commas in a pattern with *it + be*. > 38D

It's my husband who does the cooking, not me.

Here the pattern emphasizes the phrase *my husband*.

D Adding clauses

We can use a relative clause with a comma to add more information about a noun. > 269

I'll be away on 10 June, which is a Thursday.

Aristotle was taught by Plato, who founded the Academy at Athens.

The clause *who founded the Academy at Athens* adds extra information about Plato. We can leave out the adding clause and the sentence still makes sense.

NOTE

After a phrase with *a/an*, the question of whether a comma should be used is less clear.

My brother had a teddy bear which he used to carry around everywhere.

This could be written with or without a comma and spoken with or without a pause before *which*.

E Connective clauses

A relative clause with a comma can tell us what happened next.

I shouted to the man, who ran off.

Jack put a match to the paper, which instantly caught alight.

We use a connective clause to link two actions. In spoken English we often prefer to use two main clauses.

I shouted to the man, and he ran off.

268 More details about relative clauses without commas

Here we look at *who*, *which*, *that*, and *whom* in relative clauses without commas. (For the use of commas, > 266D.) We also look at relative clauses without a pronoun.

A Who, which, and that

We use *who* for a person and *which* for something not human such as a thing, an action, or an idea.

The hairdresser who usually does my hair was ill.

It was a dream which came true.

The difference between *who* and *which* is like that between *he/she* and *it*. But *who* and *which* can go with a plural noun as well as a singular one.

People who haven't got cars can't shop at these out-of-town stores.

Why import things which we could produce ourselves?

Relative clauses

We can use *that* with any noun.

The hairdresser that usually does my hair was ill.

It was a dream that came true.

Why import things that we could produce ourselves?

With people, *who* is more usual than *that* in writing, but both are used in conversation. After other nouns, both *which* and *that* are possible, but *which* can be a little formal.

That is more usual than *which* after a quantifier or pronoun.

There was little that could be done to help the victims.

I've thought of something that I'd like for my birthday.

In this last example we can leave out *that*:

something I'd like for my birthday. > E

TIP

As a general rule, in informal or neutral English use *who* with people and *that* with other nouns. Say *the man who phoned* but *the bus that came*.

B Relative pronoun as subject and object

The relative pronoun can be the subject or the object of the clause.

| Subject | Object |
|---|--|
| <i>Never buy from people who sell out of suitcases.</i> (They sell out of suitcases.) <i>I've got a computer program that does the job for me.</i> (It does the job for me.) | <i>They're the same actors that we saw at the theatre.</i> (We saw them at the theatre.) <i>It's a job which you could do yourself quite easily.</i> (You could do it.) |
| | We often leave out an object relative pronoun. > E <i>They're the same actors we saw at the theatre.</i> <i>It's a job you could do yourself quite easily.</i> |

C Whom

We mostly use *who* as a subject relative pronoun, but it can be an object.

I met an old friend who I hadn't seen for years.

We can also use *whom* as an object pronoun.

I met an old friend whom I hadn't seen for years.

But *whom* is formal and rather old-fashioned. In everyday speech we usually use *that*, or we leave out the pronoun.

I met an old friend that I hadn't seen for years.

I met an old friend I hadn't seen for years.

We can use *whom* as the object of a preposition (> D). It is also used in adding clauses (> 269).

D Prepositions in a relative clause without commas

Who, which, or that can be the object of a preposition.

I'll introduce you to the man who I share a flat with.

(I share a flat with him.)

There are a number of factors which we have no control over.

(We have no control over them.)

That's the reality of the world that we live in.

(We live in it.)

In informal English the preposition comes in the same place as in a main clause. In the first example, compare the relative clause *who I share a flat with* and the main clause *I share a flat with him*. In both clauses *with* follows *share* + object.

We can leave out the relative pronoun. > E

I'll introduce you to the man I share a flat with.

There are a number of factors we have no control over.

In more formal English, we can put the preposition before *whom* or *which*.

The person with whom I share a flat seems to have disappeared.

Politics is a topic in which I have absolutely no interest.

We cannot leave out *whom* or *which* here, and we cannot use *who* or *that*.

NOTE

For prepositions in a relative clause with commas, > 269C.

E Leaving out the relative pronoun

We can leave out the pronoun from a relative clause without commas when it is **not** the subject of the clause. This happens especially in informal English.

I need to talk to someone I can really trust.

That man you were sitting next to never said a word.

This has been the wettest summer anyone can remember.

He certainly could not have committed the crime he was accused of.

Here the relative clauses begin with the pronouns *I*, *you*, *anyone*, and *he*. But when the relative clause has a noun subject, it is more usual to use a relative pronoun such as *that*.

Nearby was a rope ladder that two girls were climbing up.

We do not leave out a subject relative pronoun.

The architect who designed this building won an award.

(NOT ~~The architect designed this building won an award.~~)

269 More details about relative clauses with commas

Here in A–E we look at adding clauses. These are relative clauses which add extra information. (For the use of commas, > 266D.)

- A** This news item contains a sentence with an adding clause.

Darren Curry, who studied at both Brooklands School and Walton College in Chedworthy, has reason for double celebrations. He was recently awarded a degree in history at Nottingham University and has had his first book published.

The clause adds information that the reader may not know, although the sentence still makes sense without the adding clause. This kind of clause is rather formal and typical of a written style.

- B** We separate the adding clause from the main clause, usually with commas.

Einstein, who failed his university entrance exam, went on to discover relativity.

Police seized the drugs, which have a street value of £20 million.

We can also use dashes or brackets.

The new manager is nicer than the old one – whom the staff disliked.

The cat (whose name was Molly) was sitting on the window-sill.

In an adding clause we use *who*, *whom*, *whose*, or *which* but we do not normally use *that*. And we cannot leave out the relative pronoun from an adding clause.

- C** A preposition can go before the relative pronoun, or it can stay in the same place as in a main clause.

Tim's hobby is photography, on which he spends most of his spare cash.

Tim's hobby is photography, which he spends most of his spare cash on.

It is more informal to leave the preposition at the end.

Here are some more examples.

I lived in a flat in London, which I paid a high rent for.

(I paid a high rent for it.)

There was a bomb scare, as a result of which the area was evacuated.

(As a result of that the area was evacuated.)

We can also begin an adding relative clause with a preposition + *which* + noun.

We didn't get home until half past midnight, by which time everyone else had gone to bed.

(By that time everyone else had gone to bed.)

The company may be obliged to lay off staff, in which case the unions are sure to object.

(In that case the unions are sure to object.)

Here we use *which* as a determiner before a noun (*which time*, *which case*).

NOTE

For prepositions in a relative clause without commas, > 268D.

- D** We can use a quantifier such as *all*, *one*, or *some* with *of whom/of which* to express a whole or part quantity.

The police received a number of bomb warnings, all of which turned out to be false alarms.

(All of them turned out to be false alarms.)

At the time of the accident there were two people in the chair lift, one of whom was slightly injured.

There are hundreds of TV channels, some of which operate 24 hours a day.

NOTE

In formal English the quantifier sometimes comes after *of whom* or *of which*.

The company plans to open twelve new outlets, of which five will be in the UK.

- E** *Which* can relate to a whole clause, not just to a noun.

The team has lost again, which doesn't surprise me.

(The fact that the team has lost again doesn't surprise me.)

Anna and Matthew spent the whole time arguing, which annoyed me.

I get paid a bit more now, which means I can afford to run a car.

The men helped carry the furniture indoors, for which I was very grateful.

We cannot use *what* here.

(NOT ~~The team has lost again, what doesn't surprise me.~~)

For *what* as a relative pronoun, > 272.

- F** The patterns that we use in adding clauses can also be used in connective clauses to say what happened next.

Joshua presented the flowers to Susan, who burst into tears.

I dropped a box of eggs, all of which broke.

270 Whose

- A** *Whose* has a possessive meaning.

We stopped to help some people whose car had broken down.

(Their car had broken down.)

In a relative clause we use *whose* as a determiner before a noun (*whose car*).

(NOT ~~some people whose the car had broken down~~)

- B** *Whose* + noun can be the subject or object of the relative clause.

Doctors are people whose work is obviously useful.

The prize goes to the contestant whose performance TV viewers like best.

Relative clauses

It can also be the object of a preposition.

*I wish to thank all those people **without whose** help I would never have got this far.*

*My best friend was Martin, **at whose** wedding I had first met my future wife.*

*The neighbour **whose** dog I'm looking **after** is in Australia.*

We can use *whose* in a clause with commas.

*The ball fell to Collins, **whose** shot hit the post.*

- C** *Whose* usually relates to a person: *some people **whose** car had broken down.* But it can relate to other nouns which do not refer directly to people, especially nouns which suggest human activity or organization.

*It's the poorer **countries** **whose** exports are earning less money.*

*I wouldn't fly with an **airline** **whose** safety record is so bad.*

*She sang a beautiful song, **whose** sentiments moved the audience.*

Instead of *whose* relating to a thing, we can use the following pattern with *the + noun + of which*.

*She sang a beautiful song, **the sentiments of which** moved the audience.*

*We are introducing a new system, **the aim of which** is to cut costs.*

*You should look up any word **the meaning of which** is unclear.*

NOTE

The + noun can sometimes come after *of which*.

*You should look up any word **of which the meaning** is unclear.*

271 Relative adverbs

- A** There are relative adverbs *where*, *when*, and *why*.

*The house **where** I used to live has been knocked down.*

*Do you remember the time **when** we all went to a night club?*

*The reason **why** we can sell so cheaply is because we buy in bulk.*

We use *where* after nouns like *place*, *area*, *country*, *house*, *situation*. We use *when* after nouns like *time*, *day*, *moment*, *period*. We use *why* after *reason*.

NOTE

We can use *where* and *when* without a noun.

***Where** I used to live has been knocked down.*

(= **The place where** I used to live ...)

*Do you remember **when** we all went to a nightclub?*

(= ... **the time when** we all went to a nightclub?)

- B** Instead of a clause with *where*, we can use one of these patterns.

*The house **in which** I used to live has been knocked down.*

*The house (**that**) I used to live **in** has been knocked down.*

The pattern with *in which* is rather formal. In informal English *the house I used to live in* is more usual.

Instead of *when* or *why*, we can use this pattern.

Do you remember the time (that) we all went to a night club?

The reason (that) we can sell so cheaply is because we buy in bulk.

NOTE

After a pronoun ending in *-where*, we can drop the preposition from the end of the clause.

This place reminds me of somewhere I used to live.

When you're famous, people follow you everywhere you go.

- C** Clauses with *where* or *when* can be separated off by commas.

We walked up to the top of the hill, where we got a marvellous view.

I'd rather go next week, when I won't be so busy.

We cannot leave out *where* or *when* here, and we cannot use *that*.

- D** With the noun *way*, we can use these patterns.

I hate the way in which these adverts keep popping up on the screen.

I hate the way that these adverts keep popping up on the screen.

I hate the way these adverts keep popping up on the screen.

The way in which is more formal.

NOTE

We can also use *how*.

I hate how these adverts keep popping up on the screen.

272 The relative pronoun *what*

We can use *what* in this pattern.

We'd better write a list of what we need to pack.

(= the things that we need to pack)

I was going to buy a coat, but I couldn't find what I wanted.

(= the thing that I wanted)

But *what* cannot relate to a noun.

(NOT ~~the coat what I wanted~~)

NOTE

We can use *what* in indirect speech. > 263

You haven't told me what we need to pack.

We can also use *what* to emphasize part of the sentence. > 38E

What I wanted was a coat.

273 Whoever, whatever, etc

We can form relative clauses with *whoever*, *whatever*, *whichever*, *wherever*, and *whenever*.

Whoever painted this graffiti ought to clear it up.

(= **the person who** painted this graffiti – no matter who it is)

I'll spend my money on whatever I like.

(= **the thing that** I like – no matter what it is)

Wherever I choose for a picnic always turns out to be unsuitable.

(= **the place that** I choose - no matter where it is)

We cannot use *who* in this pattern.

(NOT ~~*Who designed this building ought to be shot.*~~)

We have to use a noun before the relative pronoun *who*.

The person who designed this building ought to be shot.

But we can use *what*. > 272

I'll spend my money on what I like.

274 Participle relative clauses

A Active participles

We can use an active participle in a shortened relative clause.

Who are those people taking photos over there?

(= those people **who are taking** photos)

The official took no notice of the telephone ringing on his desk.

(= the telephone **that was ringing** on his desk)

The participle can refer to the present (*are taking*) or the past (*was ringing*).

The active participle can refer to a state as well as an action.

All the equipment belonging to the club was stolen.

(= all the equipment **that belongs** to the club)

Fans wanting to buy tickets started queuing early.

(= fans **who wanted** to buy tickets)

We can also use it to report a message.

We received a letter telling us about the arrangements.

They've put up a sign warning of the danger.

We can sometimes use the active participle for a repeated action.

People travelling into London every day are used to the hold-ups.

(= people **who travel** into London every day)

But we do not normally use the active participle for a single complete action.

The man who escaped from prison is said to be dangerous.

(NOT ~~*The man escaping from prison is said to be dangerous.*~~)

NOTE

We can use this kind of relative clause in a sentence with *there + be*. > 35F

There were some people taking photos.

B Passive participles

We can use a passive participle in a shortened relative clause.

Applications received after the deadline cannot be considered.

(= applications **which are received** after the deadline)

The first British TV commercial, broadcast in 1955, was for toothpaste.

(= **which was broadcast** in 1955)

Police are trying to identify a body recovered from the river.

(= a body **which has been recovered** from the river)

We can use the passive participle for both single and repeated actions.

NOTE

We can also use a continuous form of the passive participle.

Transport policy is the subject being discussed in Parliament this afternoon.

C Word order with participles

We can sometimes put a participle before a noun, like an adjective. > 123

We could hear the sound of running water.

We can also put it after the noun in a shortened relative clause.

We could hear the sound of water running through the pipes.

When the participle has a phrase of more than one word with it, then it cannot come before the noun.

(NOT ~~*We could hear the sound of through the pipes running water.*~~)

275 Infinitive relative clauses

A Look at this pattern with an adjective and a to-infinitive.

Which was the first country to win the Rugby World Cup?

(= the first country **that won** the Rugby World Cup)

The last person to leave will have to turn out the lights.

(= the last person **who leaves**)

You're the only student to sign up for the course.

(= the only student **who has signed up** for the course)

Ronald Reagan was the oldest man to become US President.

(= the oldest man **who became** US President)

We can use a to-infinitive after an ordinal number (*first, second, etc*); after *next* and *last*; after *only*; and after a superlative adjective (e.g. *oldest*).

We can use a passive to-infinitive.

The first British monarch to be filmed was Queen Victoria.

B We can use a to-infinitive in this pattern with a preposition + *which*.

This is an ideal location from which to explore the Lake District.

I need a piano of my own on which to practise.

This pattern is rather formal. In informal English we can leave out *which* and put the preposition at the end.

I need a piano of my own to practise on.

Spelling and pronunciation of word endings

276 The -s/-es ending

A Spelling

To form the regular plural of a noun or the third-person singular of a simple-present verb, we usually add -s.

rooms games words looks opens

After a sibilant sound we add -es.

kisses watches bushes taxes

But if the word ends in *e*, we just add -s.

places supposes prizes

A few nouns ending in *o* add -es.

potatoes tomatoes heroes echoes

But most just add -s.

radios pianos photos studios discos kilos zoos

NOTE

Sometimes *y* changes to *i*, e.g. *carry* → *carries*. > 280

B Pronunciation

The -s/-es ending is pronounced /s/ after a voiceless sound, /z/ after a voiced sound, and /ɪz/ or /əz/ after a sibilant.

Voiceless: *hopes* /ps/, *fits* /ts/, *clocks* /ks/

Voiced: *cabs* /bz/, *rides* /dz/, *days* /eɪz/, *throws* /əʊz/

Sibilant: *loses* /zɪz/ or /zəz/, *bridges* /dʒɪz/ or /dʒəz/, *washes*, /ʃɪz/ or /ʃəz/

The possessive form of a noun is pronounced in the same way.

Mike's /ks/ *my teacher's* /əz/ *the boss's* /sɪz/ or /səz/

277 The -ed/-d ending

A Spelling

The ed-form of most regular verbs is simply verb + *-ed*.

played walked seemed offered filled

If the verb ends in *e*, we just add *-d*.

moved continued pleased smiled

NOTE

Sometimes we double a consonant before *-ed*, e.g. *stop* → *stopped*. > 279

Sometimes *y* changes to *i*, e.g. *carry* → *carried*. > 280

B Pronunciation

The *-ed/-d* ending is pronounced /t/ after a voiceless sound, /d/ after a voiced sound, and /ɪd/ after /t/ or /d/.

Voiceless: *jumped* /pt/, *liked* /kt/, *wished* /ʃt/

Voiced: *robbed* /bd/, *closed* /zd/, *enjoyed* /ɔɪd/, *allowed* /aʊd/

/t/ or /d/: *waited* /tɪd/, *expected* /ɪd/, *landed* /lɪd/, *guided* /ɡɪd/

278 Leaving out e

A We often leave out *e* before an ending with another vowel. For example, we normally leave it out before an *ing*-form.

make → *making* *shine* → *shining* *use* → *using*

But we keep a double *e* before *ing*.

see → *seeing* *agree* → *agreeing*

When we add *-ed*, *-er*, or *-est* to a word ending in *e*, we do not write a double *e*.

type → *typed* *late* → *later* *nice* → *nicest*

B We usually leave out *e* before other endings that start with a vowel, e.g. *-able*, *-ize*, *-al*.

advise → *advisable* *mobile* → *mobilize* *culture* → *cultural*

But there are exceptions.

notice → *noticeable* *courage* → *courageous*

Some words ending in *ce* or *ge* keep the *e* before *a* or *o*.

Some words with *-able* can be spelled either with or without the *e*.

like → *likeable/likable* *size* → *sizeable/sizable*

C We do **not** usually leave out *e* before a consonant.

move → *moves* *nice* → *nicely* *care* → *careful*

Exceptions are words ending in *ue*.

argue → *argument* *true* → *truly* *due* → *duly*

Spelling and pronunciation of word endings

NOTE

- a We can keep the *e* in *judgement/judgment* and *acknowledgement/acknowledgment*.
- b We leave out the *e* when we form the adverb from *whole* → *wholly*.

- D** To form an adverb from an adjective, we normally add *-ly*, e.g. *quick* → *quickly*. But when an adjective ends in a consonant + *le*, we just change the *e* to *y*.

simple → *simply* *possible* → *possibly*

Note also that when an adjective ends in *-ic*, we add *-ally* to form the adverb. *-ically* is pronounced /ɪkli/.

dramatic → *dramatically* *idiotic* → *idiotically*

An exception is *public* → *publicly*.

279 The doubling of consonants

- A** Doubling happens in a one-syllable word that ends with a single vowel and a single consonant, such as *win*, *put*, *sad*, *plan*.

win → *winner* *put* → *putting* *sad* → *saddest* *plan* → *planned*

We double the consonant letter before a vowel.

We also double the consonant before *-y*.

fog → *foggy* *Tom* → *Tommy*

Compare these two verbs.

tap /tæp/ → *tapping*

tape /teɪp/ → *taping*

- B** We do not double *y*, *w*, or *x*.

stay → *staying* *slow* → *slower* *fix* → *fixed*

We do not double when there are two consonants at the end of the word.

work → *working* *hard* → *harder*

We do not double when there are two vowels.

keep → *keeping* *broad* → *broadest*

NOTE

If an adjective ends in *ll*, we just add *y* to form the adverb. We do not add a third *l*.

full → *fully* *dull* → *dully* *shrill* → *shrilly*

- C** When the word has more than one syllable, then we double the consonant only if the last syllable is stressed.

for'get → *for'getting* *pre'fer* → *pre'ferred*

We do not usually double a consonant in an unstressed syllable.

'open → *'opening* *'enter* → *'entered*

But we double the letter *l* in an unstressed syllable.

travel → *travelled* *marvel* → *marvellous* *jewel* → *jeweller*

We also double the letter *p* in some verbs.

handicap → *handicapped* *worship* → *worshipping*

NOTE

Americans usually write a single *l* in an unstressed syllable.

traveled *marvelous* *jeweler*

280 Consonant + y

A When a word ends in a consonant + *y*, we cannot simply add *-s*.

study → *studies* *country* → *countries*

The *y* changes to *ie* before *s*.

Before most other endings, the *y* changes to *i*.

study → *studied* *silly* → *sillier* *lucky* → *luckily* *happy* → *happiness*

We do not change *y* after a vowel.

day → *days* *buy* → *buyer*

But *pay*, *lay*, and *say* have irregular forms *paid*, *laid*, and *said* /sed/. Note also *day* → *daily*.

NOTE

a There are a few exceptions where *y* does not change after a consonant.

shy → *shyly* *sly* → *slyness* *dry* → *dryer/drier*

But *dry* → *dried*.

b We form the possessive in the usual way.

Singular: *the lady's name*

Plural: *the ladies' names*

c We do not change *y* when it is part of someone's name.

Mr and Mrs Grundy → *the Grundys*

B We keep *y* before *i*.

copy → *copying* *hurry* → *hurrying* *lobby* → *lobbyist*

We change *ie* to *y* before *-ing*.

die → *dying* *lie* → *lying*

Irregular noun plurals

281 Introduction

Most countable nouns have a regular plural in *-s/-es*.

hand → *hands* *date* → *dates* *bus* → *buses*

For details of spelling and pronunciation, > 276.

For the plural of compound nouns, > 131B.

For the use of plural nouns, > 131C.

Some nouns have an irregular plural.

man → *men* *life* → *lives* *stimulus* → *stimuli*

Irregular plurals are formed in a number of different ways, for example by changing a vowel or consonant sound or by adding an unusual ending.

282 Vowel and consonant changes

A Vowel changes

Some plurals are formed by changing the vowel sound.

foot → *feet* *goose* → *geese* *man* → *men* *mouse* → *mice*
tooth → *teeth* *woman* /'wʊmən/ → *women* /'wɪmɪn/

NOTE

We also use *men* and *women* in words like *Frenchmen* and *sportswomen*.

B The ending *-en*

There is an old plural form *-en* which has survived in these two nouns.

child /tʃaɪld/ → *children* /'tʃɪldrən/ *ox* → *oxen*

C Consonant changes

With some nouns we change *f* to *v* and add *-s/-es*.

calf → *calves* *half* → *halves* *knife* → *knives* *leaf* → *leaves*
life → *lives* *loaf* → *loaves* *shelf* → *shelves* *thief* → *thieves*
wife → *wives* *wolf* → *wolves*

Some nouns ending in *f* or *fe* are regular, e.g. *beliefs*, *chiefs*, *cliffs*, *safes*. A few can have either form, e.g. *scarf* → *scarfs/scarves*.

D Voicing

Some nouns ending in *th* have a regular written plural, but there are two possible pronunciations.

path /pɑːθ/ → *paths* /pɑːθs/ or /pɑːðz/

The last two sounds of *paths* are often voiced. Other examples are *baths*, *mouths*, *truths*, and *youths* (= young people).

Some plurals in *ths* are regular, e.g. *births*, *deaths*, *months*. These are pronounced with /θs/.

There is also voicing in the last syllable of *houses*.

house /haus/ → *houses* /'haʊzɪz/

E Penny, pence, and pennies

When we are talking about an amount of money, we use *pence* as the plural of *penny*.

Seventy-five pence, please.

Pennies are individual penny coins.

I found an old tin with a lot of pennies in it.

F Person, persons, and people

Person has two plurals: *persons* and *people*.

Authorized persons only may enter.

There were lots of people on the streets.

People is more usual and less formal.

A *people* is a large group such as a nation.

The Celts were a tall, fair-skinned people.

One day the peoples of this world will live in peace.

283 Nouns which do not change in the plural

Some nouns have the same form in the singular and the plural.

Singular: *I heard an aircraft passing low overhead.*

Plural: *I kept hearing aircraft passing low overhead.*

These nouns are *aircraft*, *hovercraft*, *spacecraft*, etc; some animals, e.g. *sheep*, *deer*; and some kinds of fish, e.g. *cod*, *salmon*.

For nouns ending in *-s* in both singular and plural, e.g. *one means* / *various means of transport*, > 147C.

Some nationality words ending in *-ese* can be singular or plural, e.g. *one Chinese* / *several Chinese*.

284 Irregular plural endings

There are a number of foreign words which have come into English, mainly from Latin and Greek, and these have plural endings which are less common in English.

- a /ə/ *criterion* → *criteria* *curriculum* → *curricula*
 medium → *media* *phenomenon* → *phenomena*
- ae /i:/ *formula* → *formulas/formulae*
- is → -es /i:z/ *analysis* → *analyses* *crisis* → *crises* *hypothesis* → *hypotheses*
 oasis → *oases* *synthesis* → *syntheses*
- us → -i /aɪ/ *cactus* → *cacti* *nucleus* → *nuclei* *stimulus* → *stimuli*
 The plural *cactuses* is also possible.

NOTE

- a Not every noun ending in *on*, *um*, or *us* has an irregular ending.
 electron → *electrons* *museum* → *museums* *bonus* → *bonuses*
- b In informal speech, words with the plural ending *-a* are sometimes used as if they were singular.
 I don't believe what the media is telling us.
 Many people would consider this to be incorrect.
- c The word *data* is the plural of *datum*, which is little used. *Data* is also often used as an uncountable noun.
 Not enough data is/are available.
 Users can control how much data is sent over the network.

Irregular verbs

285 Introduction

A

| Regular verbs | Irregular verbs |
|---|---|
| A regular verb can have these endings: <i>-s</i> , <i>-ing</i> , and <i>-ed</i> . | An irregular verb can also have <i>-s</i> and <i>-ing</i> , but we do not simply add <i>-ed</i> . |
| Base form: <i>look play</i> | Base form: <i>steal find</i> |
| s-form: <i>looks plays</i> | s-form: <i>steals finds</i> |
| ing-form: <i>looking playing</i> | ing-form: <i>stealing finding</i> |
| Past tense: <i>looked played</i> | Past tense: <i>stole found</i> |
| Past participle: <i>looked played</i> | Past participle: <i>stolen found</i> |
| | The past tense and the past/passive participle are irregular. |
| | Past tense: <i>Someone stole the card.</i> |
| | Past participle: <i>Who has stolen the card?</i> |

B Look at these examples.

| | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Regular verb: | <i>I've painted the wall.</i> | <i>I've repainted the wall.</i> |
| Irregular verb: | <i>I've written the report.</i> | <i>I've rewritten <u>the report</u>.</i> |

A verb form such as *painted* (regular) or *written* (irregular) is not changed by a prefix such as *re-*, *fore-*, or *mis-*. For example, if *tell* is irregular, then so is *foretell*.

286 List of irregular verbs

The more common verbs are in bold type.

| Base form | Past tense | Past/passive participle |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| A | | |
| arise /ə'raɪz/ | arose /ə'rəʊz/ | arisen /ər'ɪzn/ |
| awake /ə'weɪk/ | awoke /ə'wəʊk/ | awoken /ə'wəʊkən/ |
| B | | |
| be /bi:/ > 65 | was /wɒz/, were /wɜ:(r)/ | been /bi:n/ |
| bear /beə(r)/ | bore /bɔ:(r)/ | borne /bɔ:n/ |
| beat /bi:t/ | beat /bi:t/ | beaten /'bi:tn/ |
| become /br'kʌm/ | became /br'keɪm/ | become /br'kʌm/ |

Irregular verbs

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| begin /brɪ'ɡɪn/ | began /brɪ'ɡæən/ | begun /brɪ'ɡʌn/ |
| bend /bend/ | bent /bent/ | bent /bent/ |
| bet /bet/ | bet /bet/ | bet /bet/ |
| bid /bɪd/ (= offer money) | bid /bɪd/ | bid /bɪd/ |
| bid (= order) /bɪd/ | bade /beɪd/ | bidden /'bɪdn/ |
| bind /baɪnd/ | bound /baʊnd/ | bound /baʊnd/ |
| bite /baɪt/ | bite /baɪt/ | bitten /'bɪtn/ |
| bleed /bli:d/ | bled /bled/ | bled /bled/ |
| blow /bləʊ/ | blew /blu:/ | blown /bləʊn/ |
| break /breɪk/ | broke /brəʊk/ | broken /'brəʊkən/ |
| breed /bri:d/ | bred /bred/ | bred /bred/ |
| bring /brɪŋ/ | brought /brɔ:t/ | brought /brɔ:t/ |
| broadcast /'brɔ:dkɑ:st/ | broadcast /'brɔ:dkɑ:st/ | broadcast /'brɔ:dkɑ:st/ |
| build /bɪld/ | built /bɪlt/ | built /bɪlt/ |
| burn /bɜ:n/ | burnt /bɜ:nt/ | burnt /bɜ:nt/ |
| | burned /bɜ:nd/ | burned /bɜ:nd/ |
| burst /bɜ:st/ | burst /bɜ:st/ | burst /bɜ:st/ |
| bust /bʌst/ | bust /bʌst/ | bust /bʌst/ |
| | busted /'bʌstɪd/ | busted /'bʌstɪd/ |
| buy /baɪ/ | bought /bɔ:t/ | bought /bɔ:t/ |
| C | | |
| cast /kɑ:st/ | cast /kɑ:st/ | cast /kɑ:st/ |
| catch /kætʃ/ | caught /kɔ:t/ | caught /kɔ:t/ |
| choose /tʃu:z/ | chose /tʃəʊz/ | chosen /'tʃəʊzn/ |
| cling /klɪŋ/ | clung /klʌŋ/ | clung /klʌŋ/ |
| come /kʌm/ | came /keɪm/ | come /kʌm/ |
| cost /kɒst/ > Note a | cost /kɒst/ | cost /kɒst/ |
| creep /kri:p/ | crept /krept/ | crept /krept/ |
| cut /kʌt/ | cut /kʌt/ | cut /kʌt/ |
| D | | |
| deal /di:l/ | dealt /delt/ | dealt /delt/ |
| dig /dɪg/ | dug /dʌg/ | dug /dʌg/ |
| dive /daɪv/ | dived /daɪvd/ | dived /daɪvd/ |
| | dove /dəʊv/ | |
| do /du:/ > Note b | did /dɪd/ | done /dʌn/ |
| draw /drɔ:/ | drew /dru:/ | drawn /drɔ:n/ |
| dream /dri:m/ | dreamt /dremt/ | dreamt /dremt/ |
| | dreamed /dri:md/ | dreamed /dri:md/ |
| drink /drɪŋk/ | drank /dræŋk/ | drunk /drʌŋk/ |
| drive /draɪv/ | drove /drəʊv/ | driven /'drɪvn/ |
| dwell /dwel/ | dwelt /dwelt/ | dwelt /dwelt/ |
| E | | |
| eat /i:t/ | ate /et/ | eaten /'i:tn/ |
| F | | |
| fall /fɔ:l/ | fell /fel/ | fallen /'fɔ:lən/ |
| feed /fi:d/ | fed /fed/ | fed /fed/ |
| feel /fi:l/ | felt /felt/ | felt /felt/ |
| fight /faɪt/ | fought /fɔ:t/ | fought /fɔ:t/ |

find /faɪnd/
fit /fɪt/ > Note c

flee /fli:/
fling /flɪŋ/
fly /flaɪ/
forbid /fə'brɪd/
forecast /'fɔ:kɑ:st/
forget /fə'get/
forgive /fə'gɪv/
forsake /fə'seɪk/
freeze /fri:z/

G

get /get/

give /gɪv/
go /gəʊ/ > Note e
grind /graɪnd/
grow /grəʊ/

H

hang /hæŋ/

have /hæv/ > Note h
hear /hi:ə(r)/
hide /haɪd/
hit /hɪt/
hold /həʊld/
hurt /hɜ:t/

K

keep /ki:p/
kneel /ni:l/

knit /nɪt/

know /nəʊ/

L

lay /leɪ/ > Note i
lead /li:d/
lean /li:n/

leap /li:p/

learn /lɜ:n/

leave /li:v/
lend /lend/
let /let/
lie /laɪ/ > Note i

found /faʊnd/
fitted /'fɪtɪd/
fit /fɪt/
fled /fled/
flung /flʌŋ/
flew /flu:/
forbade /fə'beɪd/
forecast /'fɔ:kɑ:st/
forgot /fə'gɒt/
forgave /fə'geɪv/
forsook /fə'sʊk/
froze /frəʊz/

got /gɒt/

gave /geɪv/
went /went/
ground /graʊnd/
grew /gru:/

hung /hʌŋ/
hanged /hæŋd/
had /hæd/
heard /hɜ:d/
hid /hɪd/
hit /hɪt/
held /held/
hurt /hɜ:t/

kept /kept/
knelt /nelt/
kneeled /ni:ld/
knit /nɪt/
knitted /'nɪtɪd/
knew /nju:/

laid /leɪd/
led /led/
leant /lent/
leaned /li:nd/
leapt /lept/
leaped /lept/
learnt /lɜ:nt/
learned /lɜ:nd/
left /left/
lent /lent/
let /let/
lay /leɪ/

found /faʊnd/
fitted /'fɪtɪd/
fit /fɪt/
fled /fled/
flung /flʌŋ/
flown /fləʊn/
forbidden /fə'brɪdn/
forecast /'fɔ:kɑ:st/
forgotten /fə'gɒtn/
forgiven /fə'gɪvn/
forsaken /fə'seɪkən/
frozen /'frəʊzn/

got /gɒt/
gotten /'gɒtn/ > Note d
given /'gɪvn/
gone /gɒn/ > Note f
ground /graʊnd/
grown /grəʊn/

hung /hʌŋ/
hanged /hæŋd/ > Note g
had /hæd/
heard /hɜ:d/
hidden /'hɪdn/
hit /hɪt/
held /held/
hurt /hɜ:t/

kept /kept/
knelt /nelt/
kneeled /ni:ld/
knit /nɪt/
knitted /'nɪtɪd/
known /nəʊn/

laid /leɪd/
led /led/
leant /lent/
leaned /li:nd/
leapt /lept/
leaped /lept/
learnt /lɜ:nt/
learned /lɜ:nd/
left /left/
lent /lent/
let /let/
lain /leɪn/

Irregular verbs

light /laɪt/

lose /luːz/

M

make /merk/

mean /miːn/

meet /mi:t/

mistake /mɪs'teɪk/

mow /məʊ/

P

pay /peɪ/

put /pʊt/

Q

quit /kwɪt/

R

read /riːd/

rid /rɪd/

ride /raɪd/

ring /rɪŋ/

rise /raɪz/

run /rʌn/

S

saw /sɔː/

say /seɪ/ > Note j

see /siː/

seek /siːk/

sell /sel/

send /send/

set /set/

sew /səʊ/

shake /ʃeɪk/

shed /ʃed/

shine /ʃaɪn/

shoot /ʃuːt/

show /ʃəʊ/

shrink /frɪŋk/

shut /ʃʌt/

sing /sɪŋ/

sink /sɪŋk/

sit /sɪt/

slay /sleɪ/

lit /lɪt/

lighted /'laɪtɪd/

lost /lɒst/

made /meɪd/

meant /ment/

met /met/

mistook /mɪs'tʊk/

mowed /məʊd/

paid /peɪd/

put /pʊt/

quit /kwɪt/

quitted /'kwɪtɪd/

read /red/

rid /rɪd/

rode /rəʊd/

rang /ræŋ/

rose /rəʊz/

ran /ræn/

sawed /sɔːd/

said /sed/

saw /sɔː/

sought /sɔːt/

sold /səʊld/

sent /sent/

set /set/

sewed /səʊd/

shook /ʃʊk/

shed /ʃed/

shone /ʃɒn/

shined /ʃaɪnd/

shot /ʃɒt/

showed /ʃəʊd/

shrank /fræŋk/

shrunk /frʌŋk/

shut /ʃʌt/

sang /sæŋ/

sank /sæŋk/

sat /sæt/

slew /sluː/

lit /lɪt/

lighted /'laɪtɪd/

lost /lɒst/

made /meɪd/

meant /ment/

met /met/

mistaken /mɪs'teɪkən/

mown /məʊn/

mowed /məʊd/

paid /peɪd/

put /pʊt/

quit /kwɪt/

quitted /'kwɪtɪd/

read /red/

rid /rɪd/

ridden /'rɪdn/

rung /rʌŋ/

risen /'rɪzn/

run /rʌn/

sawn /sɔːn/

sawed /sɔːd/

said /sed/

seen /siːn/

sought /sɔːt/

sold /səʊld/

sent /sent/

set /set/

sewn /səʊn/

sewed /səʊd/

shaken /'ʃeɪkən/

shed /ʃed/

shone /ʃɒn/

shined /ʃaɪnd/ > Note k

shot /ʃɒt/

shown /ʃəʊn/

showed /ʃəʊd/

shrunk /frʌŋk/

shut /ʃʌt/

sung /sʌŋ/

sunk /sʌŋk/

sat /sæt/

slain /sleɪn/

sleep /sli:p/
slide /slaid/
sling /slɪŋ/
slink /slɪŋk/
slit /slɪt/
smell /smel/

sow /səʊ/

speak /spi:k/
speed /spi:d/ > Note 1

spell /spel/

spend /spend/
spill /spɪl/

spin /spɪn/
spit /spɪt/
split /splɪt/
spoil /spɔɪl/

spread /spred/
spring /sprɪŋ/
stand /stænd/
steal /sti:l/
stick /stɪk/
sting /stɪŋ/
stink /stɪŋk/
stride /straɪd/
strike /straɪk/
string /strɪŋ/
strive /straɪv/
swear /sweə(r)/
sweep /swi:p/
swell /swel/

swim /swɪm/
swing /swɪŋ/

T

take /teɪk/
teach /ti:tʃ/
tear /teə(r)/
tell /tel/
think /θɪŋk/
thrive /θraɪv/

throw /θrəʊ/

slept /slept/
slid /slɪd/
slung /slʌŋ/
slunk /slʌŋk/
slit /slɪt/
smelt /smelt/
smelled /smeld/
sowed /səʊd/

spoke /spəʊk/
sped /sped/
speeded /'spi:dɪd/
spelt /spelt/
spelled /speld/
spent /spent/
spilt /spɪlt/
spilled /spɪld/
spun /spʌn/
spat /spæt/
split /splɪt/
spoilt /spɔɪlt/
spoiled /spɔɪld/
spread /spred/
sprang /spræŋ/
stood /stʊd/
stole /stəʊl/
stuck /stʌk/
stung /stʌŋ/
stank /stæŋk/
strode /strəʊd/
struck /strʌk/
strung /strʌŋ/
strove /strəʊv/
swore /swɔ:(r)/
swept /swept/
swelled /sweld/

swam /swæm/
swung /swʌŋ/

took /tʊk/
taught /tɔ:t/
tore /tɔ:(r)/
told /təʊld/
thought /θɔ:t/
thrived /θraɪvd/
throve /θrəʊv/
threw /θru:/

slept /slept/
slid /slɪd/
slung /slʌŋ/
slunk /slʌŋk/
slit /slɪt/
smelt /smelt/
smelled /smeld/
sown /səʊn/
sowed /səʊd/
spoken /'spəʊkən/
sped /sped/
speeded /'spi:dɪd/
spelt /spelt/
spelled /speld/
spent /spent/
spilt /spɪlt/
spilled /spɪld/
spun /spʌn/
spat /spæt/
split /splɪt/
spoilt /spɔɪlt/
spoiled /spɔɪld/
spread /spred/
sprung /sprʌŋ/
stood /stʊd/
stolen /'stəʊlən/
stuck /stʌk/
stung /stʌŋ/
stunk /stʌŋk/
stridden /'strɪdn/
struck /strʌk/
strung /strʌŋ/
striven /'strɪvən/
sworn /swɔ:n/
swept /swept/
swelled /sweld/
swollen /'swəʊlən/
swum /swʌm/
swung /swʌŋ/

taken /'teɪkən/
taught /tɔ:t/
torn /tɔ:n/
told /təʊld/
thought /θɔ:t/
thrived /θraɪvd/
thriven /'θrɪvn/
thrown /θrəʊn/

Irregular verbs

| | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| thrust /θrʌst/ | thrust /θrʌst/ | thrust /θrʌst/ |
| tread /tred/ | trod /trɒd/ | trodden /'trɒdn/ |
| U | | |
| understand /ʌndə'stænd/ | understood /ʌndə'stʊd/ | understood /ʌndə'stʊd/ |
| upset /ʌp'set/ | upset /ʌp'set/ | upset /ʌp'set/ |
| W | | |
| wake /weɪk/ | woke /wəʊk/ | woken /'wəʊkən/ |
| wear /weə:(r)/ | wore /wɔ:(r)/ | worn /wɔ:n/ |
| weave /wi:v/ | wove /wəʊv/ | woven /'wəʊvn/ |
| weep /wi:p/ | wept /wept/ | wept /wept/ |
| wet /wet/ | wet /wet/ | wet /wet/ |
| | wetted /'wetɪd/ | wetted /'wetɪd/ |
| win /wɪn/ | won /wʌn/ | won /wʌn/ |
| wind /waɪnd/ | wound /waʊnd/ | wound /waʊnd/ |
| withdraw /wɪð'drɔ:/ | withdrew /wɪð'dru:/ | withdrawn /wɪð'drɔ:n/ |
| wring /rɪŋ/ | wrung /rʌŋ/ | wrung /rʌŋ/ |
| write /raɪt/ | wrote /rəʊt/ | written /'rɪtn/ |

NOTE

- a *Cost* is regular when it means 'estimate the cost'.
We've costed the project.
- b The third person singular of the simple present of *do* is *does* /dʌz/.
- c *Fit* is usually regular in Britain but irregular in the US.
- d *Gotten* is used in some contexts in American English. *Have gotten* means 'have become'.
The pain's gotten a lot worse.
- e The third person singular of the simple present of *go* is *goes* /gəʊz/.
- f For *gone to* and *been to*, > 65D.
- g We use *hanged* only to talk about hanging a person.
- h The third person singular of the present tense of *have* is *has* /hæz/.
- i *Lay* (past tense *laid*) means 'put something somewhere'.
They laid the plans on the dining-room table.
Lie (past tense *lay*) means 'be horizontal' or 'be in a certain place'.
They lay in bed half the morning.
Lie meaning 'tell an untruth' is regular.
He lied to the police about his movements.
- j The third person singular of the present tense of *say* is *says* /sez/.
- k *Shined* usually means 'polished'. We say *I've shined my shoes*, but *The sun shone*.
- l *Sped* usually expresses movement.
The driver jumped in the car and sped off.
But we say *speeded up* (= went faster).
Once on the motorway, we soon speeded up.
- m Alternative forms such as *burned/burnt* and *learned/learnt* are both possible in British English. But the irregular forms such as *burnt* and *learnt* are less usual in America.

287 Special participle forms

Compare these sentences.

Have + participle: *A ship had sunk off the coast a century before.*

Participle + noun: *We heard stories of sunken ships and hidden treasure.*

Sink has a past participle *sunk*, which is used to form perfect tenses (*had sunk*). It also has a special form *sunken* that is mostly used before a noun (*a sunken ship, a sunken garden*) or to talk about a person's appearance.

He had sunken eyes. / His eyes were sunken.

Here are some more examples of verbs which have two different participle forms.

bless *Fortunately the event was blessed with good weather. /blest/*
 When the rain came, it was a blessed relief. /'blesɪd/

drink *The men had drunk too much.*
 There was a drunken argument.

learn *I've learned something useful from the lecture. /lɜːnd/*
 The king loved the company of wise and learned men. /'lɜːnɪd/

melt *The ice had melted.*
 The molten metal is poured into a mould.

prove *The technology has proved to be reliable.*
 We are using proven technology. /'prəʊvən/ or /'pruːvən/

Weak forms and short forms

288 Introduction

When we are speaking slowly and deliberately, or when we give extra emphasis to a word, then we use the strong form of the word.

I AM sorry.

AM = /æm/

In writing we use the full form *am* to represent this pronunciation.

In speech we often join *I* and *am* together and use the weak form.

I'm sorry.

'm = /m/

In writing we can use the short form *'m* to represent this pronunciation.

| | Strong | Weak |
|---------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Spoken | /æm/ | /m/ |
| Written | Full <i>am</i> | Short <i>'m</i> |

A number of grammatical words have weak forms, such as auxiliary verbs, pronouns, and prepositions, e.g. *have*, *you*, *of*. Words with short forms are auxiliary verbs and *not*. For lists of the forms, > 289–290.

289 Weak forms → Audio

- A** Some grammatical words have weak forms in unstressed syllables.

We've finished for the moment.

Here *'ve* = /v/ and *for* = /fə(r)/.

But when such words are stressed, we use strong forms.

Have you finished? ~ Yes, we have.

Here *have* = /hæv/. A verb in a short answer is stressed.

In this example *for* is stressed.

What are you looking for?

Here *for* = /fɔː/. A preposition at the end of a question is often stressed.

We also use strong forms when speaking slowly, deliberately, or emphatically. > 288

B These are the main weak forms and their pronunciation.

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>a</i> /ə/ | <i>me</i> /mi/ |
| <i>am</i> /əm/ or /m/ | <i>must</i> /məst/ or /məs/ |
| <i>an</i> /ən/ | <i>not</i> /nt/ |
| <i>and</i> /ənd/, /ən/, or /n/ | <i>of</i> /əv/ or /v/ |
| <i>are</i> /ə(r)/ | <i>shall</i> /ʃəl/ or /ʃl/ |
| <i>as</i> /əz/ | <i>she</i> /ʃi/ |
| <i>at</i> /ət/ | <i>should</i> /ʃəd/ or /ʃd/ |
| <i>be</i> /bi/ | <i>some</i> /səm/ or /sm/ > 172D |
| <i>been</i> /bin/ | <i>than</i> /ðən/ |
| <i>can</i> /kən/ or /kn/ | <i>that</i> /ðæt/ > Note |
| <i>could</i> /kəd/ | <i>the</i> /ðə/ or /ði/ > 151 |
| <i>do</i> /du/ or /də/ | <i>them</i> /ðəm/ or /əm/ |
| <i>for</i> /fə(r)/ | <i>there</i> /ðə(r)/ > 35A Note |
| <i>from</i> /frəm/ | <i>to</i> /tu/ or /tə/ |
| <i>had</i> /həd/, /əd/, or /d/ | <i>was</i> /wəz/ |
| <i>has</i> /həz/, /əz/, or /z/ | <i>we</i> /wi/ |
| <i>have</i> /həv/, /əv/, or /v/ | <i>were</i> /wə(r)/ |
| <i>he</i> /hi/ or /i/ | <i>will</i> /l/ |
| <i>her</i> /hə(r)/ or /ə(r)/ | <i>would</i> /wəd/, /əd/, or /d/ |
| <i>him</i> /ɪm/ | <i>you</i> /ju/ or /jə(r)/ |
| <i>his</i> /ɪz/ | <i>your</i> /jə(r)/ |
| <i>is</i> /z/ | |

NOTE

That can have a weak form when it is a conjunction or relative pronoun.

*I know **that** / ðæt / it's true.*

As a demonstrative, it does not have a weak form.

*I've read **that** / ðæt / book.*

290 Short forms

A We often use short forms in informal writing, such as in this advertisement.

*Fit a gas wall heater and you'll stop shivering. It'll warm up your bathroom so quickly you **won't** need a towel. It fits snugly and safely on the wall. And, because it's gas, it's easy to control and very economical.*

When writing a short form, we miss out part of a word and use an apostrophe instead. We say *it's* instead of *it is*. We do not leave a space before the apostrophe.

The short form corresponds to the spoken weak form: /ɪtʒ/ instead of /ɪt ɪz/. We use short forms in informal writing and to represent speech – in a film script or play, for example. Full forms are used in more formal writing.

Weak forms and short forms

We cannot use a short form of a verb when it would be stressed in speech.

Is gas easy to use? ~ Of course it is.

But we can use unstressed *n't* at the end of a sentence.

Is gas expensive? ~ No, it isn't.

B These are the main short forms.

| Short form | Long form | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>aren't</i> | are not | <i>she's</i> | she is/she has |
| <i>can't</i> | cannot | <i>shouldn't</i> | should not |
| <i>couldn't</i> | could not | <i>that's</i> | that is/that has |
| <i>daren't</i> | dare not > 83 | <i>there'd</i> | there had/there would > 35 |
| <i>didn't</i> | did not | <i>there'll</i> | there will > 35 |
| <i>doesn't</i> | does not | <i>there's</i> | there is/there has > 35 |
| <i>don't</i> | do not | <i>they'd</i> | they had/they would |
| <i>hadn't</i> | had not | <i>they'll</i> | they will |
| <i>hasn't</i> | has not | <i>they're</i> | they are |
| <i>haven't</i> | have not | <i>they've</i> | they have |
| <i>he'd</i> | he had/he would | <i>wasn't</i> | was not |
| <i>he'll</i> | he will | <i>we'd</i> | we had/we would |
| <i>he's</i> | he is/he has | <i>we'll</i> | we will/we shall |
| <i>here's</i> | here is > 34C | <i>we're</i> | we are |
| <i>how's</i> | how is/how has | <i>we've</i> | we have |
| <i>I'd</i> | I had/I would | <i>weren't</i> | were not |
| <i>I'll</i> | I will/I shall | <i>what'll</i> | what will |
| <i>I'm</i> | I am | <i>what's</i> | what is/what has |
| <i>I've</i> | I have | <i>when's</i> | when is |
| <i>isn't</i> | is not | <i>where's</i> | where is/where has |
| <i>it'll</i> | it will | <i>who'd</i> | who had/who would |
| <i>it's</i> | it is/it has | <i>who'll</i> | who will |
| <i>let's</i> | let us > 11F | <i>who's</i> | who is/who has |
| <i>mightn't</i> | might not | <i>won't</i> | will not |
| <i>mustn't</i> | must not | <i>wouldn't</i> | would not |
| <i>needn't</i> | need not | <i>you'd</i> | you had/you would |
| <i>oughtn't</i> | ought not | <i>you'll</i> | you will |
| <i>shan't</i> | shall not | <i>you're</i> | you are |
| <i>she'd</i> | she had/she would | <i>you've</i> | you have |
| <i>she'll</i> | she will | | |

We can also use a short form with a noun.

If your bathroom's cold, a gas heater'll soon warm it up.

But this is less common than with a pronoun.

TIP

Do not confuse the short form *it's* with the possessive *its*. > 164B

It's now that the tree starts to lose its leaves.

NOTE

There is a non-standard short form *ain't*.

That ain't right. (= That isn't right.)

Ain't can mean 'am not', 'is not', 'are not', 'has not', or 'have not'.

C The form *'s* can mean *is* or *has*.

It's a big house. It's got five bedrooms.

(= It is a big house. It has got five bedrooms.)

And the form *'d* can mean *had* or *would*.

If you'd thought about it, you'd have realized.

(= If you **had** thought about it, you **would** have realized.)

There are two different ways we can shorten *is not* and *are not*.

It is not working. = *It isn't working.* / *It's not working.*

We are not ready. = *We aren't ready.* / *We're not ready.*

Both short forms are possible, although *it's not* and *we're not* are more frequent.

There are also two possibilities with *will*, *have*, *has*, and *had*.

It will not take long. = *It won't take long.* / *It'll not take long.*

You have not signed it. = *You haven't signed it.* / *You've not signed it.*

Won't, *haven't*, *hasn't*, and *hadn't* are more usual than *'ll not*, *'ve not*, etc.

NOTE

In Standard English *I am not* has only one short form: *I'm not*.

Glossary

- abstract noun** An abstract noun refers to an idea or a quality, something that we cannot see or touch, e.g. *science, excitement, strength*. The opposite is a concrete noun.
- action verb** a verb that refers to something happening, e.g. *do, walk, eat, speak*. ▶ 51A
The opposite is a state verb.
- active** An active sentence has a verb like *stole* or *are cleaning*. *Someone stole my coat* and *We're cleaning the windows* are active, but *My coat was stolen* and *The windows are being cleaned* are passive. ▶ 86
- active participle** (or **present participle**) the ing-form of a verb used after *be* in the continuous, e.g. *I was working*, and in other structures, e.g. *He lay on the bed reading*. ▶ 121
- adding relative clause** (or **non-defining/non-identifying relative clause**) a relative clause with commas around it that adds extra information, e.g. *Bernard, who was feeling unwell, left early*, but which does not identify which one is meant. ▶ 269
- adjective** An adjective is a word like *big, new, special*, or *famous*, often used to describe something. ▶ 181 It can come before a noun, e.g. *a nice day*, or after *be*, e.g. *That's nice*. ▶ 182
- adjective phrase** An adjective phrase is either an adjective on its own, e.g. *tall, hopeful*, or an adjective with an adverb of degree, e.g. *quite tall, very hopeful*.
- adverb** In the sentence *The time passed slowly*, the word *slowly* is an adverb. Adverbs are words like *easily, there, sometimes, quite*, and *possibly*. They express ideas such as how, when or where something happens, or how true something is.
- adverbial** The adverb *late*, the phrase *in a hurry*, and the clause *because I was cold* all function as adverbials in these sentences: *The show started late*; *We did everything in a hurry*; *I put a coat on because I was cold*. Adverbials express ideas such as when, how, or why something happens. ▶ 189
- adverbial clause** In the sentence *I'll phone you when I get home*, the clause *when I get home* functions as an adverbial. ▶ 237 Compare *I'll phone you later*.
- adverb particle** see particle
- adverb phrase** An adverb phrase is either an adverb on its own, e.g. *carefully, often*, or an adverb which is modified by an adverb of degree, e.g. *very carefully, more often*.
- affirmative** see positive
- agent** The agent is who or what is doing the action. In an active sentence it is usually the subject, e.g. *Tom won the game*. In a passive sentence there is sometimes an agent in a phrase with *by*, e.g. *The game was won by Tom*.
- agreement** (or **concord**) the choice of the correct singular or plural verb form after a subject, e.g. *My ear hurts*, but *My ears hurt*.
- apostrophe** In the phrase *my friend's flat*, there is an apostrophe between *friend* and *-s*. *Friend's* is the possessive form of the noun *friend*. ▶ 132 We also use an apostrophe in a short form, e.g. *I'm, you're*.
- apposition** In sentences such as *The next day, Thursday, was fine and dry* and *My cousin Maria gave it to me*, the two noun phrases are in apposition; they both have the same grammatical function and both mean the same thing.
- article** *A/an* and *the*. *A/an* is the indefinite article, and *the* is the definite article. ▶ 150
- aspect** Aspects are elements in the tense system which can combine with the present or the past. A verb can have continuous aspect (e.g. *is walking, was looking*), perfect aspect (e.g. *has walked, had looked*) or both (e.g. *have been waiting*).
- attributive** An adjective in attributive position is before a noun, e.g. *a cold day*. But in the sentence *The day was cold*, the adjective is in **predicative** position.

auxiliary verb The auxiliary verbs are *be*, *have*, and *do* (► 64) and the modal verbs, also called 'modal auxiliary verbs', such as *can*, *may* and *should* (► 70). An auxiliary verb can combine with an ordinary verb, e.g. *I am trying*, *we have finished*, *did you remember?*, *he can swim*, *we must hurry*.

bare infinitive an infinitive without *to*, e.g. *I might go out*, *they made us wait*. ► 110

base form The base form of a verb is the form without an ending. We use it in the imperative, e.g. *Please stop it*, in the present simple, e.g. *I get off here*, or as a bare infinitive, e.g. *I heard you come in*.

capital letter A capital letter is a big letter, e.g. A, B, C, used at the beginning of a sentence or a name.

cardinal number a number such as *one*, *two*, *three*; compare ordinal number

causative The sentence *I had my hair cut* shows the causative use of *have* because it means 'I caused someone to cut my hair.'

classify When we classify something, we say what kind it is, e.g. *a sports car* (a kind of car), *a machine that washes bottles* (a kind of machine).

classifying relative clause a relative clause that tells us what kind is meant, e.g. *software that protects your computer against viruses*. ► 267B

clause A clause usually has a subject and a verb. The sentence *We stayed at home* is a single main clause. The sentence *We stayed at home because it rained* has two clauses. *We stayed at home* is the main clause, and *because it rained* is the sub-clause. A sub-clause with an infinitive or ing-form often has no subject, e.g. *I went out to get some fresh air*; *I can't help worrying*. ► 227

cleft sentence a structure with *it* or *what* used to emphasize part of the sentence, e.g. *It was yesterday I phoned you*; *What I saw was definitely a ghost*. ► 38D–E

collective noun see group noun

colon We can use a colon before an explanation, e.g. *I came by coach: it's much cheaper than the train*.

comma We use commas in a list, e.g. *tall, dark, and handsome*, or to separate off a clause or phrase, e.g. *The following weekend, something strange happened*.

comment adverbial an adverbial that makes a comment on what we say, e.g. *Incredibly, we slept through the noise*. ► 201

common noun see proper noun

comparative a form with *-er* or *more* used to make a comparison, e.g. *older*, *more famous*, *more efficiently*. ► 203–204

comparison Comparison involves forms used to compare one thing with another, e.g. *older*, *more useful*, *longest*, *most easily*, *as safe as*. ► 203–207

complement A complement is a noun phrase, e.g. *the boss*, or an adjective phrase, e.g. *unhappy*, in a sentence such as *You're the boss* or *He looked unhappy*. These are 'subject complements'; they follow a linking verb such as *be* and they relate to the subject of the sentence (*you*, *he*). See also object complement.

compound a word made up of other words, e.g. *bookshop* (book + shop), *good-looking* (good + looking), *something* (some + thing).

concession A clause of concession (or **concessive clause**) has a conjunction, e.g. *although*, *despite*, or *even though*: *Although it was warm, I was shivering*.

concord see agreement

concrete noun A concrete noun refers to something we can see or touch, e.g. *bottle*, *grass*, *man*, *shop*. The opposite is an **abstract noun**.

conditional clause a clause expressing a condition, e.g. *If you need a lift, I can give you one*. *We'd have won if we'd kept our cool*. ► 243; see also type 1/2/3 conditional

conditional form/tense A verb form with *would* such as *would go* or *would take* is sometimes called a conditional form or conditional tense.

- conditional sentence** a sentence with a conditional clause, usually a clause with *if*, e.g. *If we're late, we'll be in trouble.* ► 243
- conjunction** a word such as *and*, *but*, *because*, *when*, or *that*, which links two clauses, e.g. *I believe that it's true.*
- connective clause** a type of relative clause that says what happens next, e.g. *I bumped into a young woman, who swore at me.* ► 267E
- connector** A connector is a word used to link two clauses or sentences. It can be a conjunction, e.g. *You're crazy, but I like you*, or a linking adverbial, e.g. *I can't find the map. Anyway, I know the way.*
- consonant** see vowel
- context** The context of a sentence is the words that come before it or the situation in which it occurs.
- continuous (or progressive)** a verb form with *be* and an active participle, e.g. *The film is starting now; We've been waiting for you; I expect to be working.*
- continuous infinitive** A continuous to-infinitive is *to be* + ing-form, e.g. *I'm supposed to be relaxing.* The infinitive is sometimes without *to*, e.g. *I should be relaxing.*
- contraction** see short form
- co-ordinate clause** Two clauses linked by a conjunction such as *and*, *but*, or *or* are co-ordinate clauses, e.g. *It was ten past nine and I was late.* ► 227A
A co-ordinate clause is not part of another clause. See also main clause.
- copular verb** see linking verb
- countable noun** A countable noun can be either singular or plural and can be used with *a/an*, e.g. *a bag, three hours, some trees.* ► 137 See also uncountable noun.
- dangling participle** see hanging participle
- dash** We can use a dash to separate off part of a sentence, e.g. *I almost decided to quit – but I didn't.*
- declarative** A declarative sentence has the form of a statement, with the subject before the verb.
- defining relative clause** see identifying relative clause
- definite** *My friend Jack* is a definite person: I know exactly who I mean. *Someone* is indefinite because it doesn't say which person is meant.
- definite article** the word *the* ► 150
- degree** An adverb of degree is a word like *very*, *quite*, or *hardly*. ► 196
- demonstrative** *This*, *that*, *these*, and *those* are demonstrative determiners or pronouns. ► 165
- dependent clause** same as **sub-clause**; see main clause
- determiner** a word that can come before a noun to form a noun phrase, e.g. *a photo, the result, my old friend, this week.*
- direct object** see object
- direct speech** We use direct speech when we report someone's words by quoting them, e.g. *She said, 'I never want to see you again.'* ► 258 See also indirect speech.
- echo question** a question which asks for information to be repeated, e.g. *She's gone to Vladivostok. ~ Where has she gone?* ► 21A
- echo tag (or reply question)** a short question form expressing interest, e.g. *I play chess. ~ Oh, do you?* ► 21B
- ellipsis** leaving out words when the meaning is clear without them, e.g. *I haven't seen the film, but Kate has*, meaning *but Kate has seen the film.*
- emphasis/emphasize/emphatic** Emphasis is drawing special attention to a word or phrase and making it more important. ► 38 We can use extra stress, special word order, or a special structure, e.g. *What he did was run away.*
- emphatic form** We use the emphatic form of a verb to emphasize a positive or a negative, e.g. *I DID remind you. We CAN'T go back now.* ► 38C

- emphatic pronoun** a pronoun such as *myself* or *themselves* used to emphasize a noun phrase, e.g. *The Queen herself visited the scene.* ► 177E
- emphatic stress** speaking a word with extra force in order to draw attention to it, e.g. *I said LEFT, not right.* ► 38B
- empty subject** In the sentence *It was raining*, *it* is an empty subject. In the sentence *There was an argument*, *there* is an empty subject. It has no real meaning, but we use it because the sentence needs a subject. ► 35–36
- ending** The word *dogs* has the plural ending *-s*; the word *walking* has the ending *-ing*.
- end position** When an adverbial comes at the end of a clause, after a verb or a verb + object, it is in end position, e.g. *He repeated the words slowly.* ► 190F
- exception** see rule
- exclamation** a special structure with *how* or *what*, e.g. *What a waste!* or any sentence spoken with emphasis and feeling, e.g. *Quick!* ► 12
- exclamation mark** We write an exclamation mark at the end of an exclamation, e.g. *How awful! Look out!*
- finite** A finite verb is one that is in the present or past tense, e.g. *goes*, *waited*, *was coming*, *have seen*, or one that has a modal verb, e.g. *will be*, *can carry*. It can be the verb in a simple one-clause sentence, e.g. *She goes to college*, called a finite clause. A non-finite verb is an infinitive, gerund or participle, e.g. *She wants to go to college*. *I saw her going to college*; The clauses *to go to college* and *going to college* are non-finite clauses.
- first conditional** see type 1 conditional
- first person** see person
- formal** We speak in a more formal style to strangers than we do to our friends. We use formal language to be polite, or on official occasions. A business letter is more formal than a letter to a friend. *I am afraid I have no information* is more formal than *Sorry, I don't know*.
- frequency** An adverbial of frequency tells us how often, e.g. *always*, *usually*, *sometimes*. ► 195
- fronting** putting a word or phrase at the beginning of a clause to make it more prominent, e.g. *Very carefully they laid the patient on a stretcher.* ► 34
- front position** When an adverbial comes at the beginning of a clause, it is in front position, e.g. *Luckily we were just in time.* ► 190B
- full form** see short form
- full stop** We put a full stop at the end of a written sentence.
- future continuous** a verb form with *will be* + ing-form, e.g. *I will be leaving soon.* ► 60
- future perfect** a verb form with *will have* + past participle, e.g. *We will have saved enough money soon.* ► 61A
- future perfect continuous** a verb form with *will have been* + ing-form, e.g. *He will have been working here for twenty years.* ► 61B
- future tense** The use of *will* + verb in a sentence such as *Tomorrow will be wet and windy* is sometimes called the future tense.
- gender** Some words show differences between male/masculine, female/feminine, and non-personal/neuter, e.g. *he*, *she*, and *it*. *Waiter* is masculine, and *waitress* is feminine.
- generalization** The statement *Cats are nice* is a generalization; it is about all cats and not a specific one.
- genitive** see possessive form
- gerund** the ing-form of a verb used like a noun, e.g. *Sailing is fun; I've given up smoking.* ► 111

gerund clause a clause with a gerund as its verb, e.g. *Running a business isn't easy; I like sitting outside.* ► 112

gradable A gradable adjective expresses a quality which can exist in different degrees. *Busy, soft, and dirty* are gradable because something can be *a bit dirty, rather dirty, very dirty*, and so on. An ungradable adjective such as *brilliant, impossible, or enormous* does not go with *a bit, rather, or very.* ► 186

group noun (or collective noun) a noun referring to a group, e.g. *audience, class, gang, team.* ► 149

hanging participle (or dangling participle) In the sentence *Looking out of the window, my friend was cycling past*, the verb *looking* is a hanging participle. The understood subject of looking (*myself*) is not the same as the subject of the main clause (*my friend*). ► 122B Note

hyphen In the number *twenty-five* there is a hyphen between *twenty* and *five*. A hyphen joins two words.

identifying relative clause (or defining relative clause) a relative clause that says which one is meant, e.g. *That's the man who lives next door*, where *who lives next door* tells us which man is meant. ► 267A

idiom/idiomatic An idiom is a group of words which together have a meaning that is different from the meanings of the individual words, e.g. *come off* (= succeed), *make up your mind* (= decide).

imperative the base form of the verb used to give orders, express good wishes, and so on, e.g. *Wait there. Have a good time.* ► 11

indefinite see definite

indefinite article the word *a* or *an* ► 150

indirect object see object

indirect question *How much does this cost?* is a direct question. In an indirect question we put the question in a sub-clause, e.g. *Could you tell me how much this costs?* ► 17

indirect speech (or reported speech) We use indirect speech when we report in our own words what someone said, e.g. *She told me she never wanted to see me again*, rather than quoting the words '*I never want to see you again.*' ► 258B

infinitive The infinitive is the base form of the verb, e.g. *They let us stay the night*. We often use it with *to*, e.g. *They invited us to stay the night.* ► 97 We often use a to-infinitive after a verb or adjective, e.g. *I hope to get a job; It's good to talk.* A to-infinitive can also express purpose, e.g. *I came here to see you.*

infinitive clause a clause with an infinitive as its verb, e.g. *They asked me to open both my suitcases; You'll need to work hard.* ► 98

informal We use an informal style in everyday conversation and when we e-mail or text a friend. *Can you do it right away?* is more informal than *I would be grateful if you could attend to the matter immediately.* See also formal.

ing-form An ing-form is the form of a verb ending in *-ing*, e.g. *seeing, making, flying*. It can be a gerund, e.g. *Moving house is quite stressful*, or an active participle, e.g. *I'll be moving house on that day.*

intensifier a word that strengthens the meaning of another, e.g. *so stupid, very cold* ► 196

interrogative An interrogative sentence has the form of a question, e.g. *Have you finished?* Interrogative words are question words, e.g. *what, how.*

intonation the rise and fall of the voice in speech

intransitive verb An intransitive verb cannot have an object, e.g. *The parcel has arrived.* It can have an adverbial after it, e.g. *Let's go to the park; The police appeared eventually.*

inversion/invert Inversion means changing the order of two things. To form the question *Has the play started?* from the statement *The play has started*, we invert the subject (*the play*) and the auxiliary verb (*has*).

inverted commas see quotes

irregular see regular

linking adverbial an adverbial such as *also*, *otherwise*, or *nevertheless* that relates to the previous clause or sentence, e.g. *She felt furious. Nevertheless, she managed not to show it.* ► 202

linking verb (or **copular verb**) a verb such as *be*, *seem*, *become*, or *look* that can have a complement, e.g. *It was a great party; Everything seems fine.*

literary A literary style is a formal written style typical of literature. It may contain some unusual or old-fashioned words and structures.

main clause A main clause has a subject and a verb, e.g. *I phoned yesterday*. A sentence has at least one main clause. It can also have more than one, e.g. *I phoned yesterday, but you didn't answer*. A main clause can also have a sub-clause. In the sentence *I woke up when the alarm went off*, the main clause is *I woke up*, and the sub-clause is *when the alarm went off*. In the sentence *To be on time, I had to get up early*, the main clause is *I had to get up early*, and *to be on time* is a sub-clause. A main clause can stand on its own, but a sub-clause cannot. A sub-clause functions as part of the main clause. For example, it can be the object of the main clause, e.g. *I knew that you were away*, or it can be an adverbial, e.g. *I phoned you yesterday because I wanted a chat.* ► 227A–B

main verb The main verb is the verb which follows the subject in a main clause, e.g. *I like classical music; Hearing a knock, he jumped up; They will expect us to be on time*. The main verb is in the present or past tense or has a modal verb.

manner An adverbial of manner says how something happens, e.g. *He looked at me sadly.* ► 193

mid position An adverbial is in mid position when it comes in the middle of a sentence, usually after an auxiliary verb, e.g. *I was just writing a note*, but before an ordinary verb, e.g. *I just wrote everything down.* ► 190C–E

mixed conditional a conditional sentence which is a combination of two different types, e.g. *If you hadn't lost the map, we would know where we are.* (type 3 condition and type 2 main clause) ► 247C

modal verb (or **modal auxiliary verb**) The modal verbs are *can*, *could*, *must*, *need*, *should*, *ought*, *may*, *might*, *will*, *would*, and *shall*, e.g. *I can drive; We should support the idea*. A modal verb always has the same form. ► 70

modifier/modify In the phrase *a narrow street*, the adjective *narrow* is a modifier. It modifies the noun *street*. It changes our idea of the street by giving more information about it. Other kinds of modifiers are nouns, e.g. *a golf ball*, adverbials, e.g. *They stopped suddenly*, and prepositional phrases, e.g. *a man in uniform*.

nationality word a word formed from the name of a country which can be used as an adjective, e.g. *the German economy*, or to refer to people, e.g. *the Americans in our group*.

negative A negative sentence has *not* or *n't*, e.g. *I'm not ready*, or a negative word such as *never* or *nothing*. ► 10

neutral A neutral style is neither formal nor informal; it is between the two extremes.

nominalization expressing the meaning of a clause in a noun phrase, e.g. *they are enthusiastic* → *their enthusiasm* ► 257

nominal relative clause a relative clause beginning with *what*, e.g. *This is what I bought* ► 272, or with *whoever*, *whatever*, etc, e.g. *I'll eat whatever there is in the fridge.* ► 273 and functioning like a noun phrase

non-finite see finite

non-defining relative clause see adding relative clause

non-identifying relative clause see adding relative clause

noun a word such as *desk*, *apple*, or *information* which can follow the word *the*. ► 130

noun clause A noun clause is a clause that functions like a noun phrase. It can be the subject, e.g. *What actually happened came as a complete surprise*, the object, e.g. *We suspected that it was a trick*, the complement, e.g. *The problem is we're lost*, or the object of a preposition, e.g. *I'm worried about whether I made a good impression*.
► 252

noun phrase A noun phrase can be the subject, object or complement of a sentence, e.g. *The bus is late*; *I could hear music*; *It was a lovely holiday*. It can also come after a preposition, e.g. *It was in my pocket*. It can be a noun on its own (*music*), but it usually has a determiner (*the*, *a*, *my*), and it can have an adjective (*lovely*). A noun phrase can also be a pronoun, e.g. *I've been looking for you*.

object In the sentence *He was wearing a sweater*, the noun phrase *the sweater* is the object or direct object. The object usually comes after the verb. In the sentence *They gave the children presents*, the noun phrase *presents* is the direct object, and *the children* is the indirect object. The indirect object typically refers to the person receiving something. ► 6A See also prepositional object.

object complement In a sentence such as *They voted her their leader* or *The quarrel made Tom miserable*, the object complement is a noun phrase, e.g. *their leader*, or an adjective phrase, e.g. *miserable*. These complements relate to the object of the sentence (*her*, *Tom*). ► 5D

object pronoun *I* and *she* are subject pronouns; *me* and *her* are object pronouns.
► 175B

ordinal number a number such as *first*, *second*, *third*.

ordinary verb (or **full verb** or **lexical verb**) a verb such as *bring*, *offer*, *remember*, or *stay*, any verb which is not an auxiliary verb

pair noun a plural noun which refers to something made of two parts, e.g. *jeans*, *scissors*, *trousers* ► 148

participle A participle is a verb form such as *turning*, *turned*, or *having turned* ► 121
See also active participle, passive participle, past participle, perfect participle.

participle clause a clause with a participle as its verb, e.g. *Arriving home, I found the front door open*; *We saw a ship launched by the Queen*. ► 122

particle (or **adverb particle**) an adverb which is part of a phrasal verb, e.g. *look up*, *turn down*, *run away*, ► 217A

passive A passive sentence has a verb form with *be* and a passive participle, e.g. *My coat was stolen*. *The windows are being cleaned*. ► 86 Compare the active sentences *Someone stole my coat* and *We're cleaning the windows*.

passive gerund a verb form with *being* + passive participle, e.g. *I hate being stared at*.
► 95

passive infinitive A passive to-infinitive is a verb form with *to be* + passive participle, e.g. *Something needs to be done*. ► 95 The infinitive is sometimes without *to*, e.g. *Nothing can be done*.

passive ing-form A passive ing-form is a verb form with *being* + passive participle. It can be a passive gerund, e.g. *No one likes being made to look foolish*. ► 95 It can also be a continuous passive participle, e.g. *We watched the building being knocked down*.

passive participle A passive participle is a verb form such as *cleaned* or *broken*, the same form as the past participle. It is used after *be* in the passive, e.g. *The room was cleaned*, and in other structures, e.g. *I stepped on a broken bottle*. ► 121

- passive to-infinitive** a verb form with *to be* + passive participle, e.g. *I asked to be excused.* ► 95
- past continuous** (or **past progressive**) a verb form with the past of *be* and an ing-form, e.g. *It was raining at the time.* ► 47
- past participle** A past participle is a verb form such as *arrived* or *known*, the same form as the passive participle. It is used after *have* in the perfect, e.g. *They have arrived; How long has he known?* ► 121
- past perfect** a verb form with *had* and a past participle, e.g. *I had seen the film before.* ► 49
- past perfect continuous** (or **past perfect progressive**) a verb form with *had been* and an ing-form, e.g. *I saw that it had been raining.* ► 50
- past progressive** see past continuous
- past simple** (or **simple past**) the past tense without an auxiliary, e.g. *The train stopped; I wrote a letter.* ► 43
- perception** see verb of perception
- perfect** a verb form with *have* + past participle, e.g. *The game has started; If only I had known; I regret having opened my mouth.*
- perfect conditional** A verb form such as *would have left* or *would have seen* is sometimes called a perfect conditional.
- perfect gerund** a verb form with *having* + past participle, e.g. *He denied having taken the money.* ► 111B
- perfect infinitive** A perfect to-infinitive is a verb form with *to have* + past participle, e.g. *I hope to have finished by then.* ► 97B The infinitive is sometimes without *to*, e.g. *We might have finished by then.*
- perfect participle** a verb form with *having* + past participle, e.g. *Having paid the bill, we left.* ► 121B
- perfect to-infinitive** a verb form with *to have* + past participle, e.g. *It would be good to have done all these jobs by the weekend.* ► 97B
- performative verb** When we say *I agree* to express agreement, we are using a performative verb. Others are *apologize*, *promise*, *refuse*, and *suggest*. ► 9
- person** First person relates to the speaker (*I*, *we*). Second person relates to the person spoken to (*you*). Third person relates to other people and things (*he*, *she*, *it*, *they*).
- personal pronoun** words such as *I*, *me*, *you*, and *she* ► 175
- phrasal verb** a verb + adverb combination, e.g. *I got up early; Did you turn off the heating?* ► 217A
- phrase** A phrase is a word or group of words that functions as part of a clause. In the sentence *My friend is leaving on Friday*, the noun phrase *my friend* functions as the subject, and the prepositional phrase *on Friday* functions as an adverbial. ► 3–5
- plural** A plural form means more than one. Compare the singular *That tree is very old* (one tree) and the plural *Those trees are very old* (more than one tree).
- positive** (or **affirmative**) *I'm ready* is a positive sentence, and *I'm not ready* is negative.
- possessive** a form expressing the idea of something belonging to someone, or a similar connection, e.g. *That's my chair; Whose idea was it?; I'd love Diana's job.*
- possessive determiner** (or **possessive adjective**) the words *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, and *their* used before a noun, e.g. *my flat, her name* ► 164
- possessive form** (or **genitive**) The possessive form of a noun is a noun with an apostrophe such as *Adam's room* or *a dogs' home*, often used to express the idea that something belongs to someone. ► 132
- possessive pronoun** the words *mine*, *yours*, *his*, *hers*, *ours*, and *theirs*, e.g. *These photos are mine.* ► 164
- postmodifier** a word, phrase, or clause that modifies the word it follows, e.g. *the people outside, the shop on the corner, a game you play on the beach*

- predicative** An adjective in predicative position comes after a linking verb such as *be*, e.g. *The room was small*. But in the sentence *It was a small room*, the adjective is before the noun in **attributive** position.
- prefix** A prefix is something we put at the beginning of a word to change the meaning. The word *subway* has the prefix *sub-* before *way*. The word *unhappy* has the prefix *un-* before *happy*.
- premodifier** a word or phrase that modifies the word that comes after it, e.g. *a red dress*, *a carefully prepared speech*
- preposition** A preposition is a word like *on*, *to*, *by*, or *with*. It is usually followed by a noun phrase, e.g. *on the water*, *to the left*. ► 208
- prepositional object** the object of a preposition, e.g. *behind the sofa*, *on your bike*
- prepositional phrase** A prepositional phrase is a preposition + noun phrase, e.g. *in the studio*, *from Australia*, or a preposition + adverb, e.g. *since then*. It often functions as an adverbial, e.g. *I've got an interview on Thursday*.
- prepositional verb** a verb + preposition combination, e.g. *Look at this photo*; *Did you pay for your drink?* ► 217B
- present continuous** (or **present progressive**) a verb form with the present of *be* and an ing-form, e.g. *Everyone is waiting for you*. ► 41
- present participle** see active participle
- present perfect** a verb form with the present of *have* and a past participle, e.g. *Nothing has changed*. ► 44
- present perfect continuous** (or **present perfect progressive**) a verb form with the present of *have* + *been* + ing-form, e.g. *She has been working all day*. ► 48
- present perfect simple** the present perfect, e.g. *I have written it*, as distinct from the present perfect continuous, e.g. *I have been writing it*.
- present progressive** see present continuous
- present simple** (or **simple present**) the present tense without an auxiliary, e.g. *I like this song*; *He sells computers*. ► 40
- progressive** see continuous
- pronoun** A pronoun is a word that functions like a noun phrase, e.g. *you* (personal pronoun), *ourselves* (reflexive/emphatic pronoun), *theirs* (possessive pronoun), *which* (relative pronoun).
- pronounce/pronunciation** Correct pronunciation is speaking something with the correct sounds.
- proper noun** A proper noun is a name, e.g. *Jessica*, *New York*. It begins with a capital letter and does not normally have a determiner such as *a* or *the*. Other nouns are **common nouns**, e.g. *table*, *business*, *mistake*, *treatment*.
- punctuation** marks such as a full stop or comma used to divide sentences, clauses or phrases.
- quantifier** A quantifier is a word that says how many or how much, e.g. *all the books*, *some milk*, *half of the students*, *enough money*. It usually comes before a noun.
- question** A question is a request for information which usually involves inversion of subject and auxiliary, e.g. *Have you bought a ticket?* *Where are we going?* ► 13–15
- question mark** We write a question mark at the end of a question, e.g. *Are you sure?*
- question phrase** a phrase with *what* or *how* at the beginning of a question, e.g. *What time is it?* *How long will you be?* ► 16C
- question tag** a short question added to the end of a statement, e.g. *That was nice, wasn't it?* ► 20
- question word** the words *who*, *what*, *which*, *whose*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* ► 15
- quotes/quotation marks** (or **inverted commas**) When we report the words someone said, we put quotes before and after the words, e.g. *'It's not my fault,' she said*.

- reflexive pronoun** a pronoun such as *myself* or *themselves* which refers to the subject, e.g. *He blamed himself for the accident.* ► 177
- regular** A regular form is the same as most others; it follows the normal pattern. The verb *call* has a regular past tense *called*, but the verb *sing* has an irregular past tense *sang*. ► 285 Regular noun plurals end in *-s/-es*, but *men*, *women*, and *children* are irregular plurals. ► 281
- relative adverb** the words *where*, *when*, and *why* in a relative clause, e.g. *the hotel where we stayed* ► 271
- relative clause** a clause that comes after a noun and identifies what is meant or adds information, e.g. *the woman who called yesterday.* ► 266
- relative pronoun** a word such as *who*, *which*, or *that* in a relative clause, e.g. *the person who started the argument, a job that I have to do.* ► 266
- reply question** see echo tag
- reported speech** see indirect speech
- reporting verb** see verb of reporting
- rule** A grammatical rule is a statement of how a language works. For example, there is a rule that in English we form a noun plural by adding *-s* or *-es* to the singular, e.g. *car* → *cars*, *bus* → *buses*. This rule applies to almost all countable nouns in English, but there are a few exceptions, words which do not follow the rule, e.g. *man* → *men*.
- s-form** the form of a verb with *-s* or *-es* added in the simple present third person singular, e.g. *The office opens at nine.*
- second conditional** see type 2 conditional
- second person** see person
- semi-colon** In this sentence there is a semi-colon between the two clauses: *It was very late; I was ready for bed.*
- sentence** A sentence can be a statement, e.g. *I waited for you*, a question, e.g. *Did you wait for me?*, an imperative, e.g. *Wait for me*, or an exclamation, e.g. *How silly!* ► 7 It consists of one or more clauses, e.g. *I waited for you*, or *I waited for you, but you didn't come*. A written sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop (.), a question mark (?), or an exclamation mark (!).
- short answer** an answer where the words after the auxiliary are left out because they are understood in the context, e.g. *Have you heard the news?* ~ *Yes, I have*, meaning *Yes, I have heard the news*.
- short form (or contraction)** Some words can be written in a full form or a short form, e.g. *We have* or *we've*. In the short form we miss out part of the word and write an apostrophe instead.
- short question** a question where the words after the auxiliary or after the question word are left out because they are understood in the context, e.g. *My tutor told me to rewrite the essay.* ~ *And have you?* ~ *No, but I'm going to.* ~ *Well, when?*
- sibilant** Sibilant sounds are /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, and /dʒ/, as in the words *see*, *zoo*, *show*, *vision*, *chair*, and *just*.
- simple** The simple tenses are the present simple, e.g. *It arrives*, and the past simple, e.g. *It arrived*. Sometimes a perfect tense is called 'simple' meaning 'non-continuous'; *I have done it* is present perfect simple, and *I have been doing it* is present perfect continuous.
- simple future** The use of *will* + verb in a sentence such as *Tomorrow will be wet and windy* is sometimes called the simple future.
- simple past** see past simple
- simple present** see present simple
- singular** A singular form means one only. Compare the singular *That tree is very old* (one tree) and the plural *Those trees are very old* (more than one tree).
- specific** We are being specific when we mean a particular one. *The First World War* is a specific war, but if we say *War is a terrible thing*, we are talking about war in general.

- spelling** If you spell a word correctly, you write it with the correct letters.
- split infinitive** a to-infinitive with an adverb between *to* and the verb, e.g. *I want to completely forget about it.* ► 98A Note
- standard** Standard English is the kind of English used in education and in serious newspapers and generally considered correct. *I'm not telling you* is standard; *I ain't telling you* is non-standard.
- state verb** (or **stative verb**) a verb that expresses a meaning such as being, having an opinion, or thinking rather than doing, e.g. *exist, believe, know, include.* ► 51A The opposite is an action verb.
- statement** A statement is a sentence which gives information. *I like it here* is a statement, but *Do you like it here?* is a question. ► 7
- stative verb** see state verb
- stress** When we stress a word or syllable, we make it sound more prominent. The word *apple* /'æpl/ is stressed on the first syllable, and *again* /ə'gen/ is stressed on the second syllable.
- strong form** see weak form
- structure** The structure of a sentence is the way the different parts are arranged to form the whole. The sentence *My friend has won the lottery* has this structure: subject (*my friend*) + verb (*has won*) + object (*the lottery*). The phrase *my friend* has this structure: determiner (*my*) + noun (*friend*).
- sub-clause** (or **subordinate clause**) see main clause
- subject** In the sentence *The ship sails in an hour*, the noun phrase *the ship* is the subject. In a statement the subject comes before the verb. ► 4
- subject complement** see complement
- subject pronoun** *I* and *she* are subject pronouns; *me* and *her* are object pronouns. ► 175B
- subjunctive** The subjunctive is the base form of a verb. We can use it in rather formal English in some contexts, e.g. *We propose that the money be made available.* ► 231
- subordinate clause** (or **sub-clause**) see main clause
- suffix** A suffix is something we put on the end of a word. If we add the suffix *-ly* to the adjective *calm*, we form the adverb *calmly*; if we add the suffix *-ment* to the verb *move*, we form the noun *movement*.
- superlative** a form with *-est* or *most* used to make a comparison, e.g. *oldest, most famous, most efficiently.* ► 203–204
- syllable** The word *important* has three syllables: *im por tant*.
- tag** see question tag
- tag question** a sentence with a question tag, e.g. *It's true, isn't it?*
- tense** a form of the verb which shows whether we are talking about the present, e.g. *I play, he knows, we are*, or the past, e.g. *I played, he knew, we were*. The various combinations of tense and aspect can also be called tenses, e.g. *I have played* is the present perfect tense. ► 39
- third conditional** see type 3 conditional
- third person** see person
- to-infinitive** a form like *to go, to miss* or *to open*; see also infinitive
- to-infinitive clause** see infinitive clause
- transitive verb** a verb that has an object, e.g. *We enjoyed the meal; The postman brings the letters.*
- truth adverbial** a word or phrase which expresses the speaker's view of the truth of a statement, e.g. *There's certainly a problem; It went OK on the whole.* ► 200
- type 0 conditional** a conditional sentence with the present simple in both clauses expressing the idea that one thing follows automatically from another, e.g. *If you click on the icon, the file opens.* ► 244

- type 1 conditional** a conditional sentence with *if ... + present ... + will/can* etc, expressing an open condition, e.g. *If you drop that, it'll break.* ► 245
- type 2 conditional** a conditional sentence with *if ... + past ... + would/could* etc, expressing an unreal or theoretical condition, e.g. *If I had a car, the journey would be a lot easier.* ► 246
- type 3 conditional** a conditional sentence with *if ... + past perfect ... + would/could* etc + perfect, expressing an unreal condition in the past, e.g. *If I had left two minutes earlier, I would have caught the bus.* ► 247
- uncountable noun** An uncountable noun cannot have *a/an* in front of it and has no plural form, e.g. *gold, petrol, music.* ► 137
- ungradable** see gradable
- verb** In the sentence *The parcel arrived yesterday*, the word *arrived* is a verb. Verbs are words like *make, talk, expect, carry, discover*. There are also the auxiliary verbs *be, have, and do* and modal verbs, e.g. *can, should*.
- verb of perception** a verb whose meaning is to do with how we are aware of things around us, e.g. *see, hear, feel, smell*.
- verb of reporting** (or **reporting verb**) a verb used to report what someone says or thinks, e.g. *say, tell, think, answer, promise.* ► 259
- verb phrase** A verb phrase is a word or group of words that functions as a verb, e.g. *You look tired; We watched the game; Someone is coming; Lucy did fail her exam; I can play the piano; You must have known.* There is always an ordinary verb, e.g. *look, watched, coming, fail, play*, and there may also be an auxiliary verb, e.g. *is, did, have*, or a modal verb, e.g. *can, must*.
- viewpoint adverbial** An adverbial which expresses the aspect or point of view from which we are looking at a situation is a viewpoint adverbial, e.g. *Things don't look too good weather-wise.* ► 199
- voiced/voiceless** The difference in pronunciation between *came* and *game* is that *came* begins with voiceless /k/, and *game* begins with voiced /g/. The consonant sounds in these words are voiceless: *play, take, call, sea, shop, cheese, four, thin*. These consonant sounds are voiced: *bag, down, good, zoo, jam, very, this, long, right, many, now, sang*. All vowel sounds are voiced, e.g. *dog, seem, boat*.
- vowel** The letters *a, e, i, o, and u* are vowels. The other letters are consonants.
- weak form** Some words can be spoken in two different ways: we use a strong form when they are stressed and a weak form when they are unstressed. The modal verb *can* has a strong form /kæn/ and a weak form /kən/ or /kn/.
- wh-clause** a noun clause beginning with a question word, e.g. *I know what you did*, or with *if* or *whether*, e.g. *No one cares whether it's true or not.* ► 252
- wh-question** a question that begins with a question word, e.g. *What did you say?; Where can we park?* ► 15
- word class** a type of word such as a noun, adjective or preposition ► 1
- yes/no question** a question that begins with an auxiliary verb and can be answered yes or no, e.g. *Am I late? ~ No, not very; Did you enjoy the show? ~ Yes, it was great.* ► 14A
- yes/no short answer** an answer such as *Yes, it is* or *No, they didn't* ► 19B
- zero conditional** see type 0 conditional

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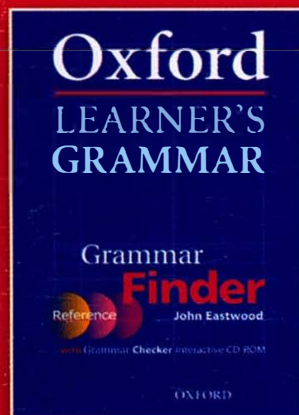
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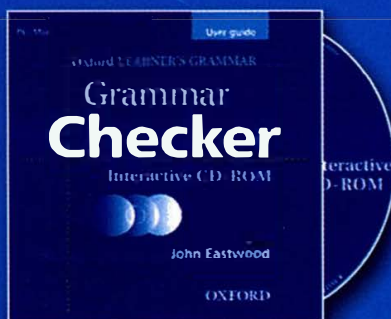
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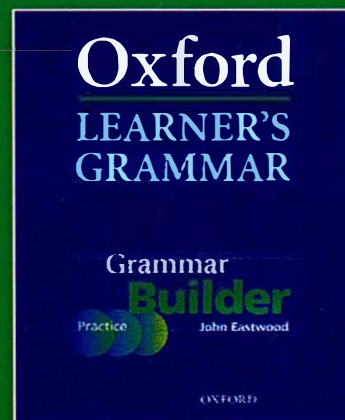
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