A COMMUNICATIVE GRAMMAR OF ENGLISH

GEOFFREY LEECH
AND JAN SVARTVIK

THIRD EDITION
A Communicative Grammar of English

Geoffrey Leech
Jan Svartvik
PREFACE
To the student 4. To the teacher 5. Note on phonetic symbols 8

Part One Varieties of English 9

Part Two Intonation 21

Part Three Grammar in use

SECTION A: CONCEPTS

SECTION B: INFORMATION, REALITY AND BELIEF

SECTION C: MOOD, EMOTION AND ATTITUDE

SECTION D: MEANING IN CONNECTED DISCOURSE
Linking signals 139. Linking constructions 141. 'General purpose' links 143. Substitution and omission 145. Presenting and focusing information 152. Order and emphasis 158

Part Four Grammatical Compendium

Index 289
Preface

To the student

A Communicative Grammar of English is a new kind of grammar. In writing it, we have assumed that studying grammar, for the overseas student, makes most sense if one starts with the question 'How can I use grammar to communicate?'. Thus the main part of the book is devoted to the uses of grammar, rather than to grammatical structure.

The book is intended primarily for the fairly advanced student, for example the first-year university student. If you are such a student you will have studied English grammar in one form or another already, but here we offer you a new perspective on the subject, which relates grammatical structure systematically to meanings, uses and situations. In this way we hope you will improve and extend the range of your communicative skill in the language. The book also supplies the essential information about grammatical forms and structures which you will need, and can therefore be used as a general reference book or sourcebook on English grammar.

The plan of the whole book is as follows:

Part One  Varieties of English
Here we explain briefly different kinds or varieties of English, such as ⟨informal English⟩, ⟨written English⟩ and ⟨American English⟩. We make extensive use of such labels in the other parts of the book, because it is important, for communication, to know in what contexts a particular form of language will be used. Part One ends with a list of references to variety labels, which enables you to follow up the range of grammatical constructions and uses associated with a given variety, such as ⟨informal English⟩.

Part Two  Intonation
Much of the book deals with spoken English, and effective communication in speech depends to a great extent on intonation. So in this part, we introduce the most important features of English intonation, together with the intonation symbols which are used in Part Three.

Part Three  Grammar in use
This is the central part of the book which you will want to use most. In it the different types of meaning and different ways of organising meaning are discussed in systematic order.
Part Four  Grammatical compendium

This part is a reference guide to English grammatical forms and structures, arranged in alphabetical order. It is a necessary complement to Part Three, in that it explains the grammatical terms used there.

There is a comprehensive index at the end of the book which will give you convenient access to the information contained in the various parts.

To the teacher

A Communicative Grammar of English is a fresh departure in grammar writing in that it employs a communicative rather than a structural approach. There are several reasons for emphasising the communication aspects of learning English grammar. Here, let us consider just two.

The type of student we have had in mind when writing this book is fairly advanced, for example a first-year student at a university or training college. Usually, he already has grounding in the grammar of the language after several years of school English. Yet his proficiency in actually using the language may be disappointing. This, we believe, may be partly attributed to 'grammar fatigue'. The student may therefore benefit from looking at grammar from another angle, where grammatical structures are systematically related to meanings, uses and situations.

The conventional method of presenting English grammar in terms of structure also has a certain drawback in itself. For example, in such a grammar notions of time may be dealt with in as many as four different places: under the tense of the verb, under time adverbs, under prepositional phrases denoting time and under temporal conjunctions and clauses. The student who is primarily interested in making use of the language rather than in learning about its structure (and this is true for the majority of foreign students) is not likely to find such an arrangement particularly helpful. The organisation of A Communicative Grammar of English, the central part of which deals with grammar in use, makes it possible to bring similar notions, such as those involving time, together in one place.

The book consists of four parts:

Part One  Varieties of English

Where English gives us a choice of grammatical structures for a particular purpose, the different grammatical structures available are often not equivalent, since they belong to different 'styles' or 'varieties'. We believe that the appropriate choice is as important as it is difficult for the type of student we have in mind. Throughout the book, therefore, we make use of 'variety labels' such as ⟨formal⟩, ⟨informal⟩, ⟨written⟩, ⟨spoken⟩. Part One describes what these variety labels mean, and supplies in 22–30 a detailed list of their uses in the rest of the book.

Part Two  Intonation

Intonation is clearly important in a communicative treatment stressing spoken English. In Part Two our object is to provide the student with the basic informa-
tion about English intonation that he needs in order to understand the intonation marking used in Part Three.

**Part Three  Grammar in use**

Communication is not a simple process. It is helpful, for our purpose, to think of four circles, each including the other, representing the different types of meaning and different ways of organising meaning. The four circles in the figure correspond to Sections A–D in Part Three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of meaning or meaning organisation</th>
<th>Type of formal unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section A: ‘Concepts’</td>
<td>Word, phrase, or clause (pp. 26–93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section B: ‘Information, reality and belief’</td>
<td>Sentence (pp. 93–116)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section C: ‘Mood, emotion and attitude’</td>
<td>Utterance (pp. 117–138)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section D: ‘Meanings in connected discourse’</td>
<td>Discourse or text (pp. 139–168)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The right-hand column, stating the 'types of formal unit' associated with each section, should not be interpreted too strictly: it is useful to see the relation between the different layers of meaning and a hierarchy of grammatical units, but there is much overlap of categories, and other factors must be allowed for. For example, intonation has an important role in the expression of meaning in Sections B, C and D.

**Section A: Concepts**
The first circle is that of notional or conceptual meaning. Here we find the basic meaning categories of grammar: categories like ‘number’, ‘definite meaning’, ‘amount’, ‘time’, ‘manner’, ‘degree’. Such categories identify aspects of our experience of the world. The structural units dealt with here are smaller than the sentence: ie words, phrases or clauses.

**Section B: Information, reality and belief**
The second circle represents logical communication. Here we make use of the categories of Section A to make judgements about truth and falsehood, and to give and elicit information about the world. Such categories as ‘statements, questions and responses’, ‘affirmation and denial’, ‘possibility’ and ‘certainty’ belong here. The formal unit we are chiefly concerned with is the sentence.

**Section C: Mood, emotion and attitude**
The third circle involves yet another dimension of communication: the attitudes and behaviour of speaker and hearer. At the speaker’s end, language can express attitudes and emotions; at the receiving end, language can control or influence the actions and attitudes of the hearer. This ‘controlling’ aspect of communication
is performed through such speech acts as commanding, suggesting, advising, threatening, promising. Speech acts like these belong to what is often called the 'pragmatic' or 'interactional' aspect of communication. The logical meaning of sentences (Section B) is made use of, but is extended, or perhaps even 'distorted' to perform a different type of function. A question, for example, is logically designed to elicit information on a particular point; but it can be adapted 'pragmatically' for the purpose of making an offer:

Would you like some cake?

or making a suggestion:

Why don't you come with me?

or expressing a strong feeling:

Wasn't it a marvellous play?

The unit of language we are dealing with here is the utterance, which may or may not correspond to a sentence in length.

Section D: Meanings in connected discourse

The fourth circle comprises the organisational aspect of communication. The question here is 'How shall we arrange our thoughts', i.e. in what order shall we put them, and how shall we bind them together, in order to communicate them in the most appropriate way? Grammar is flexible enough to offer a considerable choice in such matters. This may be called the 'textual' or 'discourse' aspect of communication, because it concerns the composition of a whole text or discourse, not just the way we construct a single sentence.

The four circles of the diagram represent a rational progression from the most limited and detailed sphere of meaning to the most inclusive. This design underlies Part Three, but we have not stuck to it too rigidly. To have done so would often have meant inconvenient repetitions of material in different chapters. In dealing with emotive meaning (Section C), for example, we have moved directly from the expression of emotion to the description of emotion, since the two are often interrelated, even though it might be argued that the description of emotion belongs more properly to notional meaning (Section A). The overriding consideration, in arranging the material in sections, is that of dealing with related communicative choices together.

Part Four Grammatical compendium

Of the two main parts of the book, Part Three 'Grammar in use' is central and Part Four 'Grammatical compendium' is complementary to it: we need to know both the communicative choices offered by grammar (Part Three), and also the structural grammatical choices through which communication must be channelled (Part Four). The two sets of choices are, however, largely independent, and so are best dealt with separately. The entries in Part Four are arranged alphabetically.

Index

With a new arrangement, as in this grammar, it is essential to have numerous cross-references and a comprehensive index. We have aimed to provide both.
Note on phonetic symbols

Phonetic symbols are used only occasionally in this text, mainly where they are needed to illustrate a grammatical distinction or rule. We have tried to use a system of transcription which is not biased towards a particular kind of speech, but this is not easy since British and American English (the two national varieties with which we are chiefly concerned) differ more obviously in pronunciation than in any other respect. To simplify matters, we consider only one accent from each national variety: Received Pronunciation, or RP, which is common among educated speakers in England (though not elsewhere in Britain); and General American pronunciation, or GA, which is used in the central and northern areas of the United States and in parts of Canada. The differences between these accents may be summarised under the following headings:

a Different sounds are used for the same phoneme. In other words, a phoneme (or 'distinctive sound', enclosed within slants / /) that is linguistically the same may be phonetically different in RP and GA. Very many differences fall into this category. For example:

/ɪ/, as in bid, is often more central in GA than in RP.
/eɪ/, as in bed, is usually more open in GA than in RP.
/æ/, as in bad, is usually longer and more close in GA than in RP.
/oʊ/, as in cause, is usually more open in GA than in RP.
/ʊ/, as in go, has a more central and unrounded first element in RP than in GA (which is why many British books show the vowel as /ɒ/; in GA the first element is closer to /o/).
/ɪ/ and /ɒ/ between vowels, as in latter and ladder, are often the same in GA (with the tongue flapped against the roof of the mouth).
/r/ is retroflex in GA but not in RP.

There are many other differences of this type, which for our present purposes we ignore.

b RP and GA have a different number of phonemes. Where RP has the four phonemes /æ/, /ɔ:/, /ɒ/ and /ʊ/, GA has only three, /æ/, /ɒ/ and /ʊ/. There is considerable variation in words with these vowels. For example:

RP has /æ/ in hat, man; /ɒ:/ in path, laugh, calm, father; /ɒ/ in got, log, cross, long; /ʊ/ in law, cause.

GA has /æ/ in hat, man, path, laugh; /ɑ/ in calm, father, got, log; /ɒ:/ in cross, long, law, cause.

In this text, we use the double bar || to separate RP and GA pronunciations where necessary: the form before the double bar is RP, while that following is GA. For example:

got /ɡɒt/ || got /ɡɒt/, long /lɒŋ||lɒŋ/

In other cases we represent RP and GA by a single transcription:

hat /hæt/, law /lɔːt/.

A sound used in one accent may be omitted in the other. For example, RP does not pronounce a written r before a consonant:

farm /fa:m/ || farm/, cord /kɔrd/ || kɔrd/, burn /ba:n/ || bɔrn/.

At the end of a word, /r/ is pronounced in RP if the next word begins with a vowel but not otherwise, whereas it is always pronounced in GA. To show this, a small raised /r/ is used:

food /fuːt/, store /stoːt/, sir /sɜːr/
Part One
Varieties of English

Variety labels

1
To use a language properly, we of course have to know the grammatical structures of the language and their meanings. (These are the subjects of Parts Three and Four of this book.) But we also have to know what forms of language are appropriate for given situations, and for this purpose, you will find in both those parts (as in many dictionaries) instances of 'variety labels' such as ⟨AmE⟩ (for American English), ⟨BrE⟩ (for British English), ⟨RP⟩ (for Received Pronunciation), ⟨GA⟩ (for General American), ⟨formal⟩, ⟨informal⟩, ⟨polite⟩, ⟨familiar⟩. These labels are reminders that the English language is, in a sense, not a single language, but many languages, each of which belongs to a particular geographical area or to a particular kind of situation. The English used in the United States is somewhat different from the English used in Great Britain; the English used in formal written communications is in some ways different from the English used in informal conversation. Obviously, in a general book of this kind we must ignore many of the less important differences. The purpose of Part One is to explain briefly what is meant by the variety labels that you will meet, and to illustrate the varieties of English they refer to. If you wish to follow up a particular variety in detail you may do so by means of the entries for variety labels in the list at the end of this Part (see 23–30).

The 'common core'

2
Luckily for the learner, many of the features of English are found in all, or nearly all varieties. We say that general features of this kind belong to the 'common core' of the language. Take, for instance, the three words children, offspring, and kids. Children is a 'common core' term; offspring is rather formal (and used of animals as well as human beings); kids is informal and familiar. It is safest, when in doubt, to use the 'common core' term; thus children is the word you would want to use most often. But part of 'knowing English' is knowing in what circumstances it would be possible to use offspring or kids instead of children. Let us take another illustration, this time from grammar:

Feeling tired, John went to bed early.  [1]
John went to bed early because he felt tired.  [2]
John felt tired, so he went to bed early.  [3]
Sentence [2] is a 'common core' construction. It could (for example) be used in
both speech and writing. [1] is rather formal in construction, typical of written
exposition; [3] is informal, and is likely to occur in a relaxed conversation.

In this book you can assume that features of English which are given no
variety label belong to the 'common core'.

Geographical and national varieties <BrE> <AmE> (see 29–30)

3

English is spoken as a native language by nearly three hundred million people:
in the United States of America, Canada, Britain, Ireland, Australia, the Carib-
bean, and many other places. But since the varieties of English used in the
United States and in Britain are the most important in terms of population and
influence, the only national varieties we shall distinguish in this book are American
English <AmE> and British English <BrE>. In general, what we say in this book
applies equally to <AmE> and <BrE>. The grammatical differences between the
two varieties (in comparison with differences of pronunciation and vocabulary)
are not very great.

Here are some brief examples of how <AmE> and <BrE> can differ.

4

(A) <AmE> has two past participle forms of get: gotten and got, whereas <BrE>
has only one: got (see 604). (The past tense form is got in both varieties.)

For example:

<AmE>: Have you gotten/got the tickets for the match?
<BrE>: Have you got the tickets for the match?

5

(B) There is also a difference in the repeated subject after one (see 692). In
<AmE> we can say:

One cannot succeed unless he tries hard.

In <BrE> we have to say:

One cannot succeed unless one tries hard.

6

(C) The normal complement after different is than in <AmE> but from (or
sometimes to) in <BrE>.

<AmE>: Their house is different than ours.
<BrE>: Their house is different from ours.

7

(D) The use of the subjunctive after verbs like demand, require, insist, suggest,
etc, is more common in <AmE> than <BrE>, where the construction is
restricted to rather formal contexts (see 823):

They suggested that Smith be dropped from the team.

<chiefly AmE>

They suggested that Smith should be dropped from the team.

<AmE> and <BrE>

Within each English-speaking country there are many differences of regional
dialect (for example, between the English spoken in New England and in the
Southern States of the U.S.A.). These differences rarely affect grammatical usage in written English or in educated spoken English, so we shall ignore them in this text.

In representing pronunciation, we shall distinguish where necessary between General American <GA> and Received Pronunciation <RP>, two varieties of pronunciation associated with <AmE> and <BrE> respectively. See the Note on phonetic symbols.

Written and spoken English <written> <spoken> (see 23–24)

8

The English of speech tends to be different from the English of writing in some fairly obvious ways. For example, in writing we usually have time to plan our message, to think about it carefully while writing, and to revise it afterwards if necessary. In speech (unless it is, say, a lecture prepared in advance), we have no time to do this, but must shape our message as we go:

Well I’ve just come back from New York where it was pretty clear that this was a general trend with young people there. and er I um I’m worried though because you see, it seems that you’re kind of putting the whole blame on the family instead of on the conditions a family’s being forced to live in these days. look. if you took er I mean monkeys are very good parents aren’t they. rhesus monkeys and so on. they look after their young marvellously—now you put them together you crowd them. and they’re extremely bad parents . . .

Often we use in speech words and phrases like well, you see, and kind of which add little information, but tell us something of the speaker’s attitude to his audience and to what he is saying. We also often hesitate, or fill in gaps with ‘hesitation fillers’ like er /ər/ and um /əm/ while we think of what next to say. We may fail to complete a sentence, or lose track of our sentence and mix up one grammatical construction with another. All these features do not normally occur in writing.

9

In general, the grammar of spoken sentences is simpler and less strictly constructed than the grammar of written sentences. It is difficult to divide a spoken conversation into separate sentences, and the connections between one clause and another are less clear because the speaker relies more on the hearer’s understanding of context (see 259–63) and on his ability to interrupt if he fails to understand. But in ‘getting across’ his message, the speaker is able to rely on features of intonation which tell us a great deal that cannot be given in written punctuation.

In this book we treat written and spoken English as of equal importance. But sometimes, when we give intonation marks (see 31–43) or present examples of dialogue, it will be clear that we are thinking of spoken English.

Formal and informal English <formal> <informal> (see 25–26)

10

Formal language is the type of language we use publicly for some serious purpose, for example, in official reports, business letters and regulations. Formal
English is nearly always written. Exceptionally it is used in speech, for example in formal public speeches.

Informal language (i.e. colloquial language) is the language of private conversation, of personal letters, etc. It is the first type of language that a native-speaking child becomes familiar with. Because it is generally easier to understand than formal English, it is often used nowadays in public communication of a popular kind: for example, advertisements and popular newspapers mainly employ a colloquial or informal style.

11

There are various degrees of formality, as these examples show:

When his dad died, Pete had to get another job. [4]
After his father's death, Peter had to change his job. [5]
On the decease of his father, Mr Brown was obliged to seek alternative employment. [6]

These sentences mean roughly the same thing, but would occur in different situations. Sentence [4] could be part of a casual conversation between friends of Peter Brown. [5] is of fairly neutral ('common core') style. [6] is very formal, in fact stilted, and would only occur in a written report.

12

In English there are many differences of vocabulary between formal and informal language. Much of the vocabulary of formal English is of French, Latin, and Greek origin; and we can often 'translate' these terms into informal language by replacing them by words or phrases of Anglo-Saxon origin: compare commence, continue, conclude <formal> with begin, keep (up), end:

The meeting will {commence at 4 p.m. <formal> begin at 4 o'clock.
continuing its struggle against inflation. <formal>

The government is {keeping up its fight against inflation. <rather informal>

The concert concluded with a performance of Beethoven's 5th symphony. <formal>

They ended the concert with Beethoven's 5th. <informal>

Many phrasal and prepositional verbs (see 696–703) are characteristic of informal style:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORMAL</th>
<th>EQUIVALENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>discover</td>
<td>find out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explode</td>
<td>blow up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encounter</td>
<td>come across</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>invent</td>
<td>make up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enter</td>
<td>go in (to)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tolerate</td>
<td>put up with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>investigate</td>
<td>look into</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surrender</td>
<td>give in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
But there is not always a direct 'translation' between formal and informal English. This may be because an informal term has emotive qualities not present in formal language, or because formal language often insists on greater preciseness. The informal word job, for instance, has no formal equivalent: instead, we have to choose a more precise and restricted term, according to the context: employment, post (esp <BrE>), position, appointment, profession, vocation, etc.

There are also some grammatical differences between formal and informal English: for example, the use of who and whom, and the placing of a preposition at the beginning or at the end of a clause (see 579, 791):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{She longed for a friend in whom she could confide.} & \quad \text{〈formal〉} \\
\text{She longed for a friend (who) she could confide in.} & \quad \text{〈informal〉}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{In what country was he born?} & \quad \text{〈formal〉} \\
\text{What country was he born in?} & \quad \text{〈informal〉}
\end{align*}
\]

**Impersonal style** 〈impersonal〉

Formal written language often goes with an impersonal style; ie one in which the speaker does not refer directly to himself or his readers, but avoids the pronouns I, you, we. Some of the common features of impersonal language are passives (see 676–82), sentences beginning with introductory it (see 584–7), and abstract nouns (see 54–6). Each of these features is illustrated in:

**Announcement from the librarian**

It has been noted with concern that the stock of books in the library has been declining alarmingly. Students are asked to remind themselves of the rules for the borrowing and return of books, and to bear in mind the needs of other students. Penalties for overdue books will in the future be strictly enforced.

The author of this notice could have written a more informal and less impersonal message on these lines:

The number of books in the library has been going down. Please make sure you know the rules for borrowing, and don’t forget that the library is for everyone’s convenience. So from now on, we’re going to enforce the rules strictly. You have been warned!

**Polite and familiar language** 〈polite〉 〈familiar〉 〈see 27–28〉

Our language tends to be more polite when we are talking to a person we do not know well, or a person senior to ourselves in terms of age or social position.

The opposite of 'polite' is 'familiar'. When we know someone well or intimately, we tend to drop polite forms of language. For example, instead of using the polite vocative Mr Brown, we use a first name (Peter) or a short name (Pete) or even a nickname (Shortie). English has no special familiar pronouns, like some languages (e.g French tu, German du), but familiarity can be shown in other ways. Compare, for example, these requests (〈see 347 Note〉):

Shut the door, will you? 〈familiar〉
Would you please shut the door? \(\text{<polite>}\)

I wonder if you would mind shutting the door? \(\text{<more polite>}\)

Words like please and kindly have the sole function of indicating politeness. One can also be familiar in referring to a third person:

Pete’s old woman hit the roof when he came home with that doll from the disco. \(\text{<very familiar>}\) \[7\]

Peter’s wife was very angry when he came home with the girl from the discotheque. \(\text{<common core>}\) \[8\]

We might judge \[7\] to be \(\text{<impolite>}\) in that it fails to show proper respect to Peter’s wife and the girl. In other words, impoliteness is normally a question of being familiar in the wrong circumstances.

16

Sentence \[7\] is also an example of slang. Slang is language which is very familiar in style, and is usually restricted to the members of a particular social group, for example ‘teenage slang’, ‘army slang’, ‘theatre slang’. Slang is not usually fully understood by people outside a particular social group, and so has a value of showing the intimacy and solidarity of its members. Because of its restricted use, and short life, we shall not be concerned with slang in this book.

Tactful and tentative language \(\text{<tactful>}\) \(\text{<tentative>}\)

17

Politeness is connected with tact or diplomacy. To be tactful is to avoid causing offence or distress to someone. Sometimes tact means disguising or covering up the truth. In the following sentences, gone and passed away are ways of avoiding mentioning the unpleasant fact of Peter’s father’s death:

- Peter’s father has gone at last.
- Peter’s father has passed away at last.

Here is a tactful imperative, said by Mr Brown to his new typist, Miss Smith:

Would you like to type this letter for me?

It may be Miss Smith’s job to do what Mr Brown tells her to do. But by disguising his order in the form of a question about Miss Smith’s wishes, he may win her co-operation more readily.

18

A request, suggestion, etc can be made more tactful by making it more tentative. Compare:

- I suggest that we postpone the meeting until tomorrow.
- May I suggest that we postpone the meeting until tomorrow? \(\text{<tactful>}\)
- Could I suggest that we postpone the meeting until tomorrow? \(\text{<tentative, more tactful>}\)

In other cases tentativeness is not connected with tact, but is simply an indication of the speaker’s reluctance to commit himself on a given question. For example, might is a more tentative way of expressing possibility than may:

- Someone may have made a mistake.
- Someone might have made a mistake. \(\text{<tentative>}\)
Literary, elevated or rhetorical language 〈literary〉 〈elevated〉 〈rhetorical〉

19
Some features of English of limited use have a 'literary' or 'elevated' tone; they belong mainly to the literary language of the past, but can still be used by a writer or public speaker of today if he wants to impress us or move us by the solemnity or seriousness of what he has to say. An example of such elevated language comes from the Inaugural Speech of President Kennedy (1961):

Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has passed to a new generation of Americans...

This contains the old-fashioned (archaic) words forth and foe, and also begins with an elevated let-construction (see 521).

In addition to the variety labels 〈literary〉 and 〈elevated〉, we sometimes use the related label 〈rhetorical〉. This signifies a stylised use of language, whether in speech or writing, which is consciously chosen for an emphatic or emotive effect. A good example of this is the so-called 'rhetorical question', which is meant to be interpreted as an emphatic statement:

Is it any wonder that politicians are mistrusted? (= 'It is no wonder that...')

Although we often meet them in the literature of earlier periods, literary, elevated and rhetorical forms of language are not particularly common in the everyday language of today, and we shall only need to refer to them occasionally in this book.

Levels of usage

20
Apart from the national varieties 〈AmE〉 and 〈BrE〉, the different types of English we have discussed belong to different 'levels of usage'. We might attempt to place them on a scale running from 'elevated English' at one extreme to 'slang' at the other extreme. But it is probably better, in the main, to think of three pairs of contrasting levels:

〈written〉 〈formal〉 〈polite〉

〈spoken〉 〈informal〉 〈familiar〉

This diagram represents only the most important levels of usage, and ignores the more restricted variety labels, such as 〈impersonal〉 and 〈elevated〉. The features at the top of the diagram tend to go together, and likewise those at the bottom. But this need not be the case. For example, it is possible to express oneself politely in spoken English, and it is possible to express oneself informally in written English.

21
In Parts Three and Four, we make liberal use of labels for levels of usage, because we feel it is important to give you as full guidance as possible on the 'appropriate use' of English grammatical forms and structures. Some other speakers of English might disagree with some of our uses of these labels. This is because the
feeling for 'levels of usage' is very much a subjective matter, depending on the intuitions of individuals who use the language. For example, an older English speaker might regard as 'familiar' a form of language which might not seem so to a younger English speaker. We would like you to use these labels for guidance in your own use of the language, rather than to consider them as descriptive of general standards of 'appropriateness'.

Again, we emphasise that examples and constructions which are not marked by variety labels may be considered to belong to the common core of English.

Selective list of variety references

22
For those who wish to explore the characteristics of different varieties of English in more detail, we now give a list of references to variety labels in the rest of this book. For this purpose, we limit ourselves to the eight most important variety labels, and to a selection of the more important references to these labels. References are to sections.

23
〈Written〉
Listing and adding: firstly, to conclude, etc 370
Explanation: ie, eg, viz 373
Participial and verbless clauses: Cleared, the site will be very valuable 388, 407–9
Pieces of information set off by punctuation 411
Main and subsidiary information: focus, weight, topic, etc 422–4, 427
Cleft sentences: It's more time that we need 434–7
Concord: Neither of them has . . . 540
Genitive 570–2
A personal pronoun substituting for a following noun phrase 686
Spelling changes: lady/ladies, etc 808–21

24
〈Spoken〉
Pieces of information set off by tone units 36, 411–13, 479 (sentence adverbials), 490 (apposition), 522 (comment clauses)
Rising intonation in questions 41, 249, 800
Making a new start: Now, what was the other thing . . . ? 368
Use of coordination 377
Unlinked clauses 389
Subject-verb inversion: Here's the milkman 431
Auxiliary verbs: contracted forms 497, 630
Comment clauses in end-position: He's a pacifist, you see 522
Genitive 570–2

25
〈Formal〉
Amount words: many people 58, 60, a majority (minority) of 58
First person pronouns, we (for I): As we showed . . . 85
Pronouns with indefinite reference: One never knows what may happen 86
Choice of this and that 89
Time and place: within a week (the walls) 146, 168
Time-when: subsequently, etc 149
Frequency: once per day 157, 560, on several occasions 159
Manner, means and instrument: With what did he write it? 192, She cooks turkey
in the way my mother did 193-4
Cause: on account of 199
Purpose: so as to, in order that 203
Reason and consequence: consequently 204, The weather having improved, . . .
205, thus, hence 207
Conditions: In case of difficulty call the operator 209
Contrast: whereas 212, despite, notwithstanding, nevertheless 214
Condition + contrast: even though 215
Degree: To what degree (extent)? 217
Proportion: As time went on, so . . . 237
Addition: in addition 238
Short questions: With whom? 255, 579
Hypothetical meaning: If it were to rain . . . 286
The subjunctive: So be it then! 291, 823-5
Certainty: indubitably, unquestionably, etc 303
Wish: The manager wishes to thank you . . . 336
Permission: May we (Are we permitted to) smoke? 340
Obligation: require 341, shall 343
Invitations: May I invite you to . . . ? 351
Reported commands, etc: They were forbidden to smoke (prohibited from
smoking) 354
Promises: Our firm will undertake to . . . 355
Greetings on introduction: How do you do? 358
Beginning and ending letters: Dear Sir, Yours faithfully, 360
Regrets: I regret that . . . 361
Good wishes, toasts, etc: Your health! 362
Vocatives: Ladies and gentlemen! 364-5
Listing and adding: firstly, lastly, etc 370
Explanation: ie, eg, viz 373
Contrast: however, although . . . yet 376
Participial and verbless clauses: Being a farmer, he has . . . 388, 407-9
Substitutes: Everybody looked after himself 393, 397 (that, those), 540, 686
'Given' topic: Most of these problems a computer could solve easily 429
Subject-verb inversion: Slowly out of its hangar rolled . . . 431
Subject-operator inversion: Under no circumstances must the door . . . 432
Commands: Let somebody else . . . 521
Comparison: . . . more than I 528
Concord: Neither of them has . . . 540
Demonstratives: The butter we import is less expensive than that we produce
ourselves 549
Interrogatives: Whom is he marrying? 579, 581, He could not remember on which
shelf . . . 642, 741
Introductory there: *There are two patients...* 591
Uncontracted forms: *He is not...* 630
Nominal -ing clauses: *I am surprised at John's/his making that mistake* 650
Relative pronouns: *the girl to whom he spoke* 791–4
Subordination signalled by inversion: *Had I known,...* 828

26
*<Informal>*
Species nouns: *most kinds of cats, these kind of dogs* 52
Amount words: *a lot of (lots of) people* 58, 60, 566
Pronouns with indefinite reference: *You never know..., They say...* 86
Time-when, omitting the preposition: *I saw her the day after her birthday* 144
Duration: *for ages 156*
Place: *Over here is where I put the books* 161, *You don't see many trams about* 180, 190
Manner, means and instrument: *What did he write it with?* 192, *She cooks turkey the way I like* 193–4
Result: *I took no notice of him so he...* 202, 380
Negative purpose: *He left early in case he...* 203
Contrast: *though* 212
Condition, contrast: *all the same 214, anyway 216*
Degree: *a lot, a bit, etc* 219–21
Comparison: *Is he that tall?* 232
Addition: *too, as well* 238
Wh-questions: *Who did you send books to, and why?* 252
Short questions: *Who with?* 255
Hypothetical meaning: *If I was younger..., I wish I was dead* 285–6, 825
Appearance: *He looks as if he's ill* 305
Negative intensifiers: *a bit* 317
Permission: *Is it all right if...?* 340
Obligation: *I've got to 341–2, You'd better* 343
Greetings of introduction: *Hello 358*
Beginning and ending letters: *Dear George, Love from Janet, 360*
Regrets: *I'm sorry I was unable...* 361
Changing the subject: *by the way* 369
Reinforcement: *in any case, anyway* 371
Positive condition: *You'll feel better, then* 381
Negative condition: *Put your overcoat on, or...* 382
Alternatives: *or else* 385
Unlinked clauses 389
Substitutes: *—'Who wants to play?'—'Me'* 398, *do that (instead of do so)* 400,
*You can borrow my pen, if you want* 403
Emphatic topic: *Joe his name is 427*
Subject-verb inversion: *Here comes the bus 431*
Demonstrative + wh-clause: *This is how you start the engine* 438
Adverbs with adjective form: *He was dead drunk 461, He spoke loud and clear* 463
Commands: *Somebody let me out* 521
Comment clauses: He's a pacifist, you see 522
Comparison: taller than me 528, 687
Concord: Neither of them have . . . Has anybody brought their camera? 540
Interrogative and relative pronouns: Who is he marrying?, He couldn't remember which shelf he kept it on 581, 642, 791–4
Introductory there: There's two patients . . . 591
Nominal that-clauses with that omitted: I knew he was wrong 640
Nominal -ing clauses: I'm surprised at John/him making that mistake 650
Passives: the get-passive (he got hurt) 680
Phrasal verbs: catch on, etc 696–8
Finite clause as postmodifier: I like the way she does her hair 728

27

(Polite)

Intonation: rising tone 42
Future: When will you be visiting us again? 134
Questions: Please could I . . . ? 253, 255
Permission: May we smoke in here? 340
Politer commands: This way, please 347
Polite requests: Would you be so kind as to . . . ? 349
Refusing invitations: That's very kind of you but . . . 351
Beginning and ending conversations: Good evening 358
Accepting offers: Yes, please 363

28

(Familiar)

Pointer words: . . . when this girl came up to me . . . 90
Short questions: Where to? 255
Echo questions: Sorry, what was his job? 257
Omission of information: See you later 261
Emotive emphasis in speech: Do be quiet!, He's an absolute saint, Has she grown!, etc 308–20
Answers to requests: OK 348
Invitations: Come in and sit down 351
Beginning and ending conversations, greetings, etc: See you, Hi, How's things? 358–9
Good wishes, etc: Cheers! 362
Offers: Have some more coffee 363
Vocatives: daddy, you guys, etc 364
Omission of the definite article: Dad will soon be home 756
Quantifiers: That's some car you have there 768

29

(AmE)

Pronouns with indefinite reference: One should always look after one's/his/your money 86
The past for the present perfect: Did you eat yet? 115
Time-when: on the weekend 143, I'll see you Saturday 144
Duration: from June through December 153
The use of about and around 180
Requests for repetition: *Excuse me?* 258
The subjunctive: *Congress decided that the present law continue...* 291, 823
Certainty or logical necessity: *You have to be joking!* 297
Ending letters: *Sincerely yours,* 360
Getting attention: *I beg your pardon!* 365
Restrictive apposition with omitted determiner: *Art critic Paul Jones* 490
Articles: *go to the university* 495
Auxiliary verbs: *I don't have any books* 499, *ain't* 500
Concord with group nouns: *The audience was...* 536
Irregular verbs: *learned* 597, *dreamed* 600, *gotten, shined* 604, *spit* 607, *dove, ate* 616
Times and dates: *at a quarter of six, at ten minutes after six* 668, *on May 5th* 669
Spelling: *travel/travelling* 819

**<BrE>**

Pronouns with indefinite reference: *One should always look after one's money* 86
Time-when: *at the weekend* 143
Negative purpose: *in case he should...* 203
Requests for repetition: *Sorry?* 258
Certainty or logical necessity: *Need there be...?* 298, 342
Describing emotions: *I was furious with John* 321
Insistence: *I shan't give in!* 339
Prohibition: *You oughtn't to waste...* 344
Farewells: *Cheerio!* 358
Ending letters: *Yours sincerely,* 360
Apologies: *Excuse me* 361

*Do as a substitute* 399
Articles: *go to university* 495
Auxiliary verbs: *I haven't any books* 499, 672, *Aren't I?* 500, *shan't, mayn't* 501,
  *Used he to smoke?* 502, *daren't, needn't* 503
Concord: group nouns (*The audience were...*) 536
Irregular verbs: *learnt* 597, *dreamt* 600, *got* 604, *ate* 616
Dates: *on 5 May* 669
Spelling: *travel/travelling* 819
Subordinating conjunctions: *whilst* 830
Part Two

Intonation

31
You will need some knowledge of English intonation patterns if you are to understand English grammar. This is because features of intonation are important for signalling grammatical distinctions such as that between statements and questions. Here we concentrate on explaining those features of stress and intonation which play a significant role in grammar, and which therefore need to be discussed and symbolised in Part Three. The features we have to explain are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stress</th>
<th>(symbolised by: ')</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nucleus</td>
<td>(symbolised by underlining)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone unit</td>
<td>(tone unit boundaries are marked by</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Tones             | a falling tone (symbolised ')
|                   | b rising tone (symbolised ')
|                   | c fall-rise tone (symbolised v or \')

Stress

32
The rhythm of English is based on stress. In connected speech, we feel the rhythm of the language in the sequence of stressed syllables. Between one stressed syllable and another there may occur one or more unstressed syllables. The stressed syllables in these examples are preceded by ', and the unstressed syllables are unmarked:

We've de'cided to 'go to the in'dustrial exh'il'bia'tion.
Can you 'tell me the ex'act 'time it 'opens?

This means that the syllables in capitals below are stressed:

We've decided to go to the industrial exhibition.
Can you tell me the exact time it opens?

33
The normal rules for placing stress are as follows:

(A) The syllables which are stressed are:
    a one-syllable words of major word-classes (see 884–6), ie nouns (time), verbs (go), adjectives (black), adverbs (well).
    b the accented syllables of words of more than one syllable of major word classes, eg de'cided, ex'act, 'opens.

(B) The syllables which are unstressed are:
a words of minor word-classes (see 884–6), eg prepositions (to), pronouns (it), articles (the).

b the unaccented syllables of words of more than one syllable, eg de'cided, ex'act, 'opens.

There is no easily-learned rule as to which syllable of a word of more than one syllable is accented. As we see above, accent varies from word to word, so that the first syllable of 'opens is accented, but the second syllable of ex'act; the second syllable of in'dustrial, but the third syllable of exhi'bition. The placing of stress is also variable according to sentence context, emphasis, speed of utterance, etc, and so the rules above are not without exceptions.

34

One point to notice is that a prepositional adverb (see 746) belongs to a major word-class, and is therefore stressed, whereas a one-syllable preposition (see 744) is usually unstressed. Contrast:

This 'bed has 'not been 'slept in. *(in = preposition)*
The 'injured 'man was 'carried 'in. *(in = prepositional adverb)*

The same contrast is sometimes seen between the particle of a prepositional verb (see 699) and the particle of a phrasal verb (see 696–8):

He's re'lying on our 'help. *(rely on = prepositional verb)*
He's 'putting 'on a 'new 'play. *(put on = phrasal verb)*

But the particle may also be unstressed:

'Make up your 'mind!

In the examples in this book, stress will be marked only where it is necessary for the point illustrated.

Nucleus

35

Not all stressed syllables are of equal importance. Some stressed syllables have greater prominence than others, and form the nucleus, or focal point, of an intonation pattern. For normal purposes, we may describe a nucleus as a strongly stressed syllable which marks a major change of pitch direction, ie where the pitch goes up or down. The change of pitch on the nucleus is indicated by an arrow in these and other examples:

![Labeled Diagram](image)

In both these examples, the nucleus marks a decisive fall in pitch towards the end of the sentence. (The step-up in pitch on the first stress [-/ly- and bed] is something which will not concern us in our analysis.) As a nucleus is always stressed, there is no need to put a stress mark before it. Often in our examples, we simply indicate the nucleus without indicating the other stressed syllables:

He's relying on our **help**.
This bed has not been **slept** in.
Tone unit
36
The basic unit of intonation in English is the tone unit. A tone unit, for our purposes, will be considered as a stretch of speech which contains one nucleus, and which may contain other stressed syllables, normally preceding the nucleus. The boundaries of a tone unit are marked by the symbol /:

| He's relying on our help. |
| This bed has not been slept in. |

In these examples, the tone unit has the length of a whole sentence. But a sentence often contains more than one tone unit. The number of tone units depends on the length of the sentence, and the degree of emphasis given to various parts of it. The second example above could be pronounced with two tone units:

| This bed / has not been slept in. |

The additional nucleus on this here expresses an emphasis on 'this bed' in contrast to other beds. The following sentence might be pronounced with either two or three tone units, as indicated:

| Last August / we went to stay with our cousins in Mexico. |
| Last August / we went to stay with our cousins / in Mexico. |

In general, we include tone unit boundaries in our examples only where they serve an illustrative purpose; more usually, we omit them.

Tones
37
By tone, we mean the type of pitch-change which takes place on the nucleus. The three most important tones in English, and the only ones we need distinguish here, are the falling tone ('), the rising tone (''), and the fall-rise tone (' or '):

| Here's a cup of tea for you. |
| Can you tell me the exact time it opens? |
| I can't allow you to do that. |
| The Johnsons are buying a freezer so they tell me. |

These can be more precisely represented:

| Here's a cup of tea for you |
| Can you tell me the exact time it opens |
| I can't allow you to do that |
| The Johnsons are buying a freezer so they tell me |

23
The tone of a nucleus determines the pitch of the rest of the tone unit following it. Thus after a falling tone, the rest of the tone unit is at a low pitch. After a rising tone, the rest of the tone unit moves in an upward pitch direction. Compare:

(He studies chemistry,) | but he's not really interested in it |
| not really interested in it |
| but he's |

(So you study chemistry.) | Are you really interested in it? |
| Are you really interested in it? |
| Are you really interested in it ? |

The fall-rise tone, as its name suggests, consists of a fall in pitch followed by a rise. If the nucleus is the last syllable of the tone unit, the fall and rise both take place on one syllable—the nuclear syllable. Otherwise, the rise occurs in the remainder of the tone unit. Compare:

1 \begin{align*}
\text{now} & \quad \text{he made a mistake} \\
\text{I} & \\
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{but it wasn't his fault} \\
\text{but he said he was sorry} \\
\text{but he didn't mean to do it} \\
\end{align*}

We symbolise these three as follows:

| It wasn't his fault. |
| He said he was sorry. |
| He didn't mean to do it. |

Where the rise of the fall-rise extends to a stressed syllable after the nucleus, as in the last example, we signal the fall-rise tone by placing a fall on the nucleus and a rise on the later stressed syllable. This will make it easier for you to follow the intonation contour when you read the examples.

The meanings of tones

The meanings of the tones are difficult to specify in general terms. Roughly speaking, the falling tone expresses ‘certainty’, ‘completeness’, ‘independence’. Thus a straightforward statement normally ends with a falling tone, since it asserts a fact of which the speaker is certain. It has an air of finality:

| It's five o'clock. |
| Here is the news. |
A rising tone, on the other hand, expresses ‘uncertainty’ or ‘incompleteness’ or ‘dependence’. A yes-no question (see 778) usually has a rising tone, as the speaker is uncertain of the truth of what he is asking about:

[Are you leaving?]  [Can I help you?]

Parenthetical and subsidiary information in a statement is also often spoken with a rising tone, because this information is incomplete, being dependent for its full understanding on the main assertion:

[If you like, we can go for a picnic later.]

42

Encouraging or <polite> denials, commands, invitations, greetings, farewells, etc are generally spoken with a rising tone:

(A)  [Are you busy?]

(B)  [No.] (‘Please interrupt me if you wish’)

[‘Do sit down.’

Here the finality of the falling tone would sound <impolite>.

The type of rising tone heard in a yes-no question is normally higher than in other cases, and so we may distinguish it by the special term QUESTION INTONATION. We do not distinguish it, however, from other rising tones in our notation.

43

A fall-rise tone, as we might expect, combines the falling tone’s meaning of ‘assertion, certainty’ with the rising tone’s meaning ‘dependence, incompleteness’. At the end of a sentence, it often conveys a feeling of reservation; that is, it asserts something, and at the same time suggests that there is something else to be said:

[That’s not my signature.]  (‘it must be somebody else’s’)

(A)  [Do you like pop-music?]

(B)  [Sometimes.]  (‘but not in general’)

(A)  [Are you busy?]

(B)  [Not really.]  (‘Well, I am, but not so busy that I can’t talk to you’)

At the beginning or in the middle of a sentence, it is a more forceful alternative to the rising tone, expressing the assertion of one point, together with the implication that another point is to follow:

[Most of the time we stayed on the beach.]

[People who work in offices ought to take plenty of exercise.]
Part Three
Grammar in use

Section A: Concepts

Referring to objects, substances and materials

44
It is through nouns and noun phrases that grammar organises the way we refer to objects. We begin with concrete nouns, or nouns referring to objects and substances with physical existence. (We shall use the word ‘object’ to refer generally to things, animals, people, etc.) Our first topic will be count and mass concrete nouns, and the various constructions in which they are linked by of.

Singular and plural: one and many

45
Count nouns refer in the singular to one object, and in the plural to more than one object:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a star</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one star</td>
<td>two stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a single star</td>
<td>three stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>seven stars etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Groups of objects

46
We may refer to objects as belonging to a group or set:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Stars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a group of stars</td>
<td>number</td>
<td>a small group of stars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group nouns

47

Nouns like group, which refer to a set of objects, are called group nouns. Group nouns, like other nouns, may be singular or plural: one group of stars, three groups of stars etc.

Often a special group noun is used with certain kinds of objects:

- an army (of soldiers)  
- a crowd (of people)  
- a herd (of cattle)  
- a flock (of sheep)

- a crew (of sailors)  
- a gang (of thieves, bandits, etc)  
- a pack (of cards)  
- a constellation (of stars)

Many group nouns refer to a group of people having a special relationship with one another, or brought together for a particular reason: tribe, family, committee, club, audience, government, administration, team, etc. With these nouns, there is a choice of whether to use a singular or plural verb, depending on whether you mean the group as a unit, or the sum of its members (see 537):

The audience is/are enjoying the show. [1]

The government never makes up its mind in a hurry. [2]

Notice also the difference here between its mind (singular) and their minds (plural).

Note
People is normally not a group noun, but the plural of person (see 657).

Partition: part and whole

48

Parts of objects can be referred to by part nouns like part (contrasted with whole), half, a quarter, two-thirds, etc; also by unit nouns like piece, slice:

- the (whole) cake
- a slice of the cake
- half (of) the cake
- (a) quarter of the cake
- part of the cake

Mass nouns

49

Mass nouns (sometimes called ‘non-count’ nouns) typically refer to substances, whether liquid or solid: oil, water, butter, wood, leather, iron, rock, glass, etc (see 654). Mass nouns are always singular: it makes no sense to ‘count’ the quantity of a mass substance which is not naturally divisible into separate objects. You can say:

{There's some milk in the refrigerator.}
{There are two bottles of milk in the refrigerator.}

but not:

{*There are some milks in the refrigerator.}
{*There are two milks in the refrigerator. (see 53)
Some mass nouns, we might argue, should 'really' be count, because the 'substance' is divisible into separate things: furniture consists of pieces of furniture, grass of separate blades of grass, hair of separate strands of hair (or hairs), wheat of separate grains of wheat. But psychologically we think of such things as indivisible when we use a mass noun.

On mass nouns 'becoming' count nouns (two sugars, several martinis, etc), see 53.

Division of objects and substances

Unit nouns

50

As with single objects, masses can be subdivided by the use of nouns like part:

Part of the butter has melted.

In addition, there are many countable unit nouns, as we shall call them, which can be used to subdivide notionally a mass into separate 'pieces'. Piece and bit (informal) are general-purpose unit nouns, which can be combined with most mass nouns:

a piece of bread  a piece of paper  a piece of land

There are also unit nouns which typically go with a particular mass noun:

a blade of grass  a sheet of paper
a block of ice  a speck of dust
a pile of rubbish  a bar of chocolate
a lump of sugar  a load of hay

As with part nouns, unit nouns are linked to the other noun by of.

Nouns of measure

51

One way to divide a mass into separate 'pieces' is to measure it off into length, weight, etc:

DEPTH          a foot of water
LENGTH         a yard of cloth
WEIGHT         an ounce of tobacco
               a pound of butter
               a ton of coal

AREA          an acre of land
VOLUME        a pint of beer
               a quart of milk
               a gallon of oil

Species nouns

52

Here is another type of division: nouns like type, kind, sort, species, class, variety can divide a mass or a set of objects into 'types' or 'species':

Teak is a type of wood.
A Ford is a make of car.
A tiger is a species of mammal.

You can use either the singular or plural of a count noun following a plural species noun:

I like most kinds of cat.

We usually premodify the species noun rather than the noun which follows:
a Japanese make of car (not *a make of Japanese car)
a delicious kind of bread
a strange species of mammal

Notice that the second noun, when count, usually has no indefinite article: a strange kind of mammal rather than a strange kind of a mammal.

In (informal) English, there is a mixed construction in which the determiner (if any) and the verb are plural, although the species noun is singular:

These kind of dogs are easy to train. (informal)
This kind of dog is easy to train. (more formal)

Nouns which can be both count and mass

53

Quite a number of nouns can be both count and mass (see 654). Wood, for instance, is count when it refers to a collection of trees (= a forest), and mass when it refers to the material of which trees are composed:

We went for a walk in the woods.

In America many of the houses are made of wood.

Many food nouns are count when they refer to the article in its ‘whole’ state, but are mass when they refer to the food in the mass, eg as eaten at table:

She baked a cake. Would you like (some) cake?
We grow our own carrots. A good stew must contain carrot.
I bought a dozen eggs. There’s some egg left on the plate.

So also a cheese/cheese, a potato/potato, etc.

On the other hand, in many cases English has a separate count noun and a separate mass noun referring to the same area of meaning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th>MASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a pig</td>
<td>pork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a leaf</td>
<td>foliage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a loaf</td>
<td>bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a meal</td>
<td>food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a job (informal)</td>
<td>work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a vehicle</td>
<td>traffic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sometimes words which are usually mass nouns are ‘converted’ into count unit nouns or count species nouns:

May I have two sugars in my coffee? (= two lumps of sugar)
Some of the best tobaccos are grown in Turkey. (= kinds of tobacco)

Occasionally the opposite happens: count nouns are ‘converted’ into mass nouns after a noun of measure: a few square feet of floor; an inch of cigarette.

Abstractions

54

Abstract nouns are nouns which refer to states, events, feelings, etc. Just like concrete nouns, they combine with part nouns, unit nouns, species nouns, and measure nouns, and can be either count or mass, even though these notions cannot be understood in a physical sense.
concrete nouns.

Nouns referring to events and occasions (talk, knock, shot, meeting, etc) are usually count:

- I had a talk with Jim.
- There was a loud knock at the door.
- The committee had three meetings.

But talk (with other nouns like sound, thought) can also be a mass noun:

- I dislike idle talk.
- Modern planes fly faster than sound.
- He was deep in thought.

Other abstract nouns tend to be mass nouns: honesty, happiness, information, progress, etc:

- Happiness is often a product of honesty and hard work.
- His speech was followed by loud applause.
- I have some homework to finish.
- He is engaged in scientific research.

55

Notice that the following nouns are mass nouns in English, but not in some other languages: advice, anger, behaviour, chess, conduct, courage, dancing, harm, moonlight, news, parking, poetry, safety, shopping, smoking, sunshine, violence.

But again, many such nouns (eg experience, difficulty, trouble) can be either count or mass (with some difference of meaning):

- We had little difficulty convincing him.
- but: He is having financial difficulties.
- He is a policeman of many years' experience.
- but: Tell me about your experiences abroad.
- I have some work to do this evening.
- but: They played two works by an unknown French composer.

Some abstract nouns which are normally mass can become singular count nouns when their meaning is limited by specific reference to a person, etc:

He has had a good education.

She plays Mozart with a rare grace and delicacy of touch. (rather formal)

56

Partition of abstract nouns is illustrated by:

- Part of his education was at Cambridge.

Division is illustrated in these phrases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIT NOUNS</th>
<th>MEASURE NOUNS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a (good) game of chess</td>
<td>three months of hard work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a (sudden) burst of applause</td>
<td>(also three months' hard work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an (excellent) piece of research</td>
<td>(see 96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a (long) spell of hard work</td>
<td>(informal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an (interesting) item of news</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a (useful) bit of advice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30
Amount or quantity

Amount words (or quantifiers) (see 765–76)

57

Amount words like all, some and none can be applied to both count and mass nouns:

(A) APPLIED TO SINGULAR COUNT NOUNS, they are equivalent to part nouns

- all of the cake
- some of the cake
- none of the cake

(= the whole of the cake)

(= part of the cake)

(B) APPLIED TO PLURAL NOUNS

- all (of) the stars
- some of the stars
- none of the stars

(C) APPLIED TO MASS NOUNS

- all of the land
- some of the land
- none of the land

Note these relations of meaning between all, some and none:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Some} & \text{ of the stars were invisible.} \\
\text{Not all (of)} & \text{ the stars were visible.} \\
\text{None} & \text{ of the stars were visible.} \\
\text{All (of)} & \text{ the stars were invisible.}
\end{align*}
\]

58

Other amount words specify more precisely the meaning 'some':

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WITH COUNT NOUNS</th>
<th>WITH MASS NOUNS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A LARGE AMOUNT</td>
<td>many (formal)</td>
<td>much (formal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(But see 60)</td>
<td>(But see 60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a lot (informal)</td>
<td>a lot (informal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a large number</td>
<td>a great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A SMALL AMOUNT</td>
<td>a few</td>
<td>a little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a small number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT A LARGE AMOUNT</td>
<td>not many</td>
<td>not much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>few</td>
<td>little</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice that few and little without a have a negative bias. Compare:

A few (= a small number) of the students passed the examination.

Few (= not many) of the students passed the examination.
The numbers one, two, three, etc and the fraction words half, third, etc are also amount words (where a definite total is being talked of): Half of the milk was sour. Several, another amount word, means 'slightly more than a few'. The comparative words more, less, and the superlative words most, least, are both count and mass (but fewer is generally preferred to less with count nouns).

A/the majority of and a minority of (both <formal>), can be used with plural and group nouns:

The majority of the crew/passengers were rescued. (= Most of the crew . . .)

A minority of the committee/members were opposed to the motion.

(On concord with the verb in these and similar cases, see 535.)

Many and much

59

Many and much can be neutral words of amount, used, for example, in comparisons (as many/much as) and in questions (how many/much?). Compare the count and mass words in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th>MASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many of the rolls have you eaten?</td>
<td>How much of the bread have you eaten?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of them</td>
<td>All of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of them</td>
<td>Most of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot of them</td>
<td>A lot of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half of them</td>
<td>Half of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several of them</td>
<td>A little of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few of them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three of them</td>
<td>None of it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indefinite use of amount words

60

Amount words have been illustrated above only where there is a definite 'total' or 'sphere' (represented by the circles in the diagrams) within which amounts are to be measured. Now we look at the general (indefinite) use of amount words, where the 'sphere' is unlimited. Here the amount word is used as a determiner (see 550), and of and the are omitted (except with a lot of, a great deal of, a number of etc):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th>MASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All crimes are avoidable. (ie all of the crimes in the world)</td>
<td>All violence is avoidable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We didn't buy many things.</td>
<td>We didn't buy much food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She knows several poets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May I borrow a few dollars? Most people enjoy parties.</td>
<td>May I borrow a little money? Most advice is ignored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There were fewer cars in those days.</td>
<td>There was less traffic in those days.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No \( \begin{align*} & \text{problem is} \nonumber \ \ \text{problems are} \end{align*} \) insoluble. No work has been done today.

In ⟨informal⟩ style, a lot of (or lots of) is preferred to many or much in positive statements:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Many people derive much pleasure from attending music festivals.
  \item ⟨formal⟩
  \item Music festivals give a lot of fun to lots of people. ⟨informal⟩
\end{itemize}

But in questions and after negatives, (very) many and much are not restricted to ⟨formal⟩ English:

He doesn’t smoke very much.
Do many people attend the meetings?

Words of general or inclusive meaning

61 All, both, every, each, and (sometimes) any are amount words of inclusive meaning.

With count nouns, all is used for quantities of more than two, and both for quantities of two only:

The club is open to people of both sexes and all nationalities.

Every, each

62 Words like every and each can be called distributive, because they pick out the members of a set or group singly, rather than look at them all together. Apart from this difference, every has the same meaning as all:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \{All good teachers study their subject(s) carefully. \[1]\}
  \item \{Every good teacher studies his subject carefully. \[2]\}
\end{itemize}

The ‘distributive’ meaning of every shows in the use of singular forms teacher, studies, his in \[2\].

63 Each is like every except that it can be used when the set has only two members. Thus each (unlike all and every) can sometimes replace both:

She kissed each/both of her parents.

Note also the difference between:

He gave a box of chocolates to all the girls. \[3\]

He gave a box of chocolates to \( \begin{align*} & \text{each} \nonumber \ \ \text{every one} \end{align*} \) of the girls. \[4\]

\[3\] may mean that the girls shared one box of chocolates; \[4\] must mean that there were as many boxes of chocolates as girls. Like every in meaning are everyone, everybody, everything, and everywhere.

Any, either

64 The most common use of the determiners any and either is in negative sentences and questions (see 803–7), but here we consider them as distributive words.

Any can sometimes replace all and every in positive sentences:

Any good teacher studies his subject carefully. \[5\]
Here *any* has the same inclusive meaning as *all* and *every*, in [1] and [2]. But *any* means something different in:

You can paint the wall *any* colour you like. *Any* colour means ‘red or green or blue or . . .’, while *every colour* means ‘red and green and blue and . . .’. *Any* means ‘it doesn’t matter who/which/what . . .’.

When there are only two objects, *either* is used instead of *any*:

You could ask either of my parents.

(= either my father or my mother)

*Any* can also be used with mass nouns and plural count nouns:

*Any* land is valuable these days.

You’re lucky to find *any* shops open on *Sunday*.

As marked here, *any* often takes nuclear stress (see 35). Like *any* are *anyone, anybody, anything, anywhere, anyhow, anyway* and *(informal AmE)* *anyplace*.

Anyone will tell you the way. (= Whoever you ask, he will . . .)

He will eat *anything*. (= He will eat whatever you give him)

**Scale of amount**

*We can order amount words roughly on a scale, moving from the inclusive words at the top, to the negative words at the bottom *(any* we place separately, because its main use, in negative and interrogative contexts, does not fit into the scale):*
Positions on a scale of amount can be expressed not only through the words already discussed (which are determiners or pronouns) but by pronouns like everybody, everything, and by adverbs of frequency, duration, etc. We show some of the correspondences between different areas of meaning in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MASS</th>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th>PERSONAL</th>
<th>NON-PERSONAL</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>DURATION</th>
<th>DEGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(see 765–73)</td>
<td>(see 765–73)</td>
<td>(see 774–5)</td>
<td>(see 774–5)</td>
<td>(see 157)</td>
<td>(see 151–6)</td>
<td>(see 217–26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all</td>
<td>all, every, each</td>
<td>everyone, everybody</td>
<td>everything</td>
<td>always</td>
<td>always, for ever</td>
<td>absolutely, entirely, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much, a lot</td>
<td>many, a lot</td>
<td>(many people)</td>
<td>(many things)</td>
<td>often, frequently</td>
<td>(for) a long time</td>
<td>very, (very) much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>someone, somebody</td>
<td>something</td>
<td>sometime</td>
<td>(for) some time</td>
<td>rather, somewhat, quite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a little</td>
<td>a few</td>
<td>(a few people)</td>
<td>(a few things)</td>
<td>occasionally</td>
<td>(for) a while</td>
<td>a little, a bit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>few</td>
<td>(few people)</td>
<td>(few things)</td>
<td>rarely, seldom</td>
<td>not . . . (for) long</td>
<td>scarcely, hardly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no(ne)</td>
<td>no(ne)</td>
<td>no one, nobody</td>
<td>nothing</td>
<td>never</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>not . . . at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>any</td>
<td>any</td>
<td>anyone, anybody</td>
<td>anything</td>
<td>ever</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>at all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definite and indefinite meaning**

**Uses of the definite article**

When we use the definite article *the* we presume that both we and the hearer know what is being talked about. This is not the case when we use the indefinite article. Most of the words we have considered so far are indefinite; but if we want to express indefinite meaning without any added meaning of amount, etc, we use the indefinite article *a(n)* (with singular count nouns), or the zero indefinite article with mass nouns or plural count nouns (see 654): *Would you like a drink? Do you like chocolate?*

There are four circumstances in which definite meaning arises.

**We use the definite article:**

(A) When identity has been established by an earlier mention (often with an indefinite article):
John bought a TV and \textit{a radio}, but he returned \textit{the radio}.\footnote{FIRST MENTION} \footnote{SECOND MENTION}

We call this the \textbf{back-pointing use of \textit{the}}.

71

\textbf{(B)} When identity is established by the postmodification (\textit{see} 719) that follows the noun:

John returned the radio \textit{he bought yesterday}.

The wines \textit{of France which France produces} are the best in the world.

The discovery of radium marked the beginning of \textit{a new era of medicine}.

This is the \textbf{forward-pointing use of \textit{the}}.

72

\textbf{(C)} When the object or group of objects is the only one that exists or has existed: \textit{the stars, the earth, the world, the sea, the North Pole, the equator, the Reformation, the human race}:

The North Pole and the South Pole are equally distant from the equator.

This is the \textbf{unique use of \textit{the}}, and it also arises where what is referred to is ‘understood’ to be unique in the context: \textit{the sun, the moon, the kitchen, the town-hall, the Queen, the President, etc}. We could, if we wanted, make the definite meaning clear by postmodification (\textit{the moon belonging to this earth, the kitchen of this house, the Queen of this country, etc}), but this would normally be unnecessary and laborious.

73

\textbf{(D)} When reference is made to an institution shared by the community: \textit{the radio, the television, the telephone, the paper(s) (\textit{ie newspaper(s))}, the train, etc.}

What’s in the paper(s) today?

He went to London on the train / by train.

Sometimes (\textit{see} 495) the article may be omitted with this \textbf{institutional use}:

What’s on (the) television tonight?

\textbf{Generic}

74

The definite article also has a \textbf{generic use}, referring to what is general or typical for a whole class of objects. This is found with count nouns:

The tiger is a beautiful animal.\footnote{1}

Here \textit{the} indicates the class of tigers, not one individual member of the class. Thus \footnote{1} expresses essentially the same meaning as \footnote{2} and \footnote{3}:

Tigers are beautiful animals.\footnote{2}

A tiger is a beautiful animal.\footnote{3}
[2] is the general use of the plural indefinite form; [3] is the generic use of the indefinite singular. Thus when we are dealing with a whole class of objects, the differences between definite and indefinite, singular and plural, tend to lose their significance. There is, however, a slight difference in the fact that the tiger (generic) refers to the species as a whole, while a tiger (generic) refers to any member of the species. We can say:

The tiger is in danger of becoming extinct.

*but not: *A tiger is in danger of becoming extinct.

75
Notice that the unstressed use of some /səm/ (see 553) cannot be used with nouns in the generic sense:

I fried (some) eggs and bacon for breakfast.

*but: Eggs and bacon are good for you.

Specific versus generic meaning
76
In contrast to the GENERIC use of the definite article, all the other four uses (see 70–3) may be called SPECIFIC. For mass nouns, there is only one generic form, that with the zero article:

Water is composed of hydrogen and oxygen.

The ways of expressing generic meaning can be summarised in the table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERIC MEANING</th>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th>MASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the tiger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a tiger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tigers</td>
<td></td>
<td>water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table shows, the definite article with mass nouns, and also with plural nouns (with the exception of some nationality words, see 627–8) is always specific. The following examples illustrate generic meaning with a concrete mass nouns, b abstract mass nouns, and c plural nouns:

a I like wine, Venetian glass, Scandinavian wood, ...

b I like music, English literature, contemporary art, ...

c I like dogs, horses, classical languages, ...

In specific use, these nouns take the definite article:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIFIC USE</th>
<th>GENERIC USE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Pass the butter, please.</td>
<td>Butter is expensive nowadays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b The acting was poor, but we enjoyed the music.</td>
<td>I simply love music and dancing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before you visit Spain, you ought to learn the language.</td>
<td>The scientific study of language is called linguistics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Come and look at the horses!</td>
<td>Horses are my favourite animals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

77
Notice that English tends to treat mass nouns and plural nouns as generic when they are premodified. But when they are postmodified, especially by an of-phrase,
the definite article normally has to be present. This is especially the case with abstract mass nouns. Compare:

Chinese history  the history of China
American society  the society of the United States
of America
early medieval architecture  the architecture of the early
middle ages
animal behaviour  the behaviour of animals

The tendency is less marked with concrete mass nouns and plural nouns. We can omit the in

eighteenth-century furniture  (the) furniture of the eighteenth
century

tropical birds  (the) birds of the tropics

Generic use of adjectives and group nouns

78
Adjectives are used with generic the to denote a class of people (the poor, the unemployed, the young, the handicapped), or to denote an abstract quality (the absurd, the beautiful, the sublime) (see 465–6). Some nationality adjectives (mostly those ending in -ch or -sh) are used in the same way to refer to a people collectively: the Dutch, the English, the French, the Irish, the Welsh (see 627–8). For generic meaning, we do not generally use the with a nationality word like Welshman. Note the difference between:

The Welsh are well known for their singing.
Welshmen are well known for their singing.

(GENERIC)

The Welshmen I know sing well.

(SPECIFIC)

Note also group nouns like the aristocracy, the public, the clergy, the administration, the Government, which can be used with either a singular or a plural verb (see 47).

Other words of definite meaning

79
Apart from common nouns (ie count and mass nouns) with the, the following words always or usually signal definite meaning:

PROPER NOUNS (see 755): Susan, Chicago, Tuesday, Africa, etc.
PERSONAL PRONOUNS (see 685): he, she, it, they, you, etc.
指位词或表示词 (see 548–9): this, that, these, those, etc.

We shall deal with these in turn, bearing in mind the types of definiteness already discussed (see 69–73).

Proper nouns

80
Proper nouns are understood to have unique reference, or at least unique reference in context: Africa refers to one particular continent, and Susan (in a given conversation) refers to one particular person. Usually no definite article comes before the singular proper noun (see 755–9).
But sometimes proper nouns change into common nouns. This happens, for example, when there is a possible confusion between two things of the same name, and in such a case the is used:

the Susan next door (not the Susan who works in your office) [4]
the New York of story books (not the New York of reality) [5]

In [5], as in many cases of proper nouns acting as common nouns, we distinguish not so much two things of the same name, but two aspects of the same thing. The is also sometimes used with premodifiers (the young Shakespeare, the real Mr. Kennedy), but with place-names it is generally left out: Ancient Greece, eighteenth-century London, upstate New York.

In the same way proper nouns sometimes change to plural:

I know several Mr Wilsons (= ‘people called “Mr Wilson”’).
He was a friend of the Kennedys (= ‘the family named “Kennedy”’).

A proper noun may also sometimes follow the indefinite article:

The prize was given by a Dr Robertson.
This means ‘a certain Dr Robertson’ (a person you won’t have heard of).

Third person pronouns

82

Third person pronouns (he, she, it, they) are usually definite because they point back to a previous mention. In a sense, they ‘replace’ an earlier noun phrase:

I phoned the police and asked them (ie the police) what to do.

Concrete nouns are replaced by he, she, it, or they as follows:

he (him, his, etc) refers to a male person (or animal)
she (her, etc) refers to a female person (or animal)
it (its, etc) refers to an inanimate thing (or an animal)
they (them, etc) refers to anything plural.

83

He and she are used for animals when we think of them as having the personal qualities of human beings (eg family pets):

Have you given Rover his dog-biscuits?

It is otherwise used for animals, and sometimes for babies and very young children, especially when their sex is unknown or unimportant:

The dog was barking in its kennel.
The baby was crying in its

cot. <BrE>
crib. <AmE>

She is sometimes used for inanimate objects (especially ships) where we think of them as having animate qualities:

What a lovely ship! What is she called?
She can also be used of countries seen as political or cultural units, rather than as geographical units:

Last year France increased her exports by 10 per cent.
When a human noun is replaced by a pronoun and the sex is not known or specified, *he* is used rather than *she*:

A martyr is someone who gives up *his* life for *his* beliefs.

Mass nouns and singular abstract nouns are replaced by *it*:

I've washed my hair, and *it* won't keep tidy.

Virtue is *its* own reward.

First and second person pronouns

The first and second person pronouns have reference to the situation as follows:

- *I* (*me, my etc)*
  - 'the speaker'

- *we* (*us, our, etc)*
  - 'a group of people, including the speaker'
  - 'the hearer' (singular)
  - 'a group of people, including the hearer but excluding the speaker' (plural)

- *you* (*your, etc)*

Sometimes a distinction is made between 'inclusive *we*', where *we* includes the hearer (='you and I'), and 'exclusive *we*', where it excludes the hearer:

Let's go to the dance tonight, shall *we*? (INCLUSIVE)

*We*'ve enjoyed meeting you. (EXCLUSIVE)

(said by Mr and Mrs Robertson to their guests)

Inclusive *we* (*us*) is often used by writers of books:

*We* noticed earlier, on page 200, that . . .

Let *us* now turn to another topic . . .

Note

[a] *We* is sometimes used to refer to the writer in *<formal>* writing, where *I* would be strictly appropriate: *As we showed in Chapter 2 . . .*

[b] There is a playful, condescending use of *we* referring to the hearer; eg a doctor talking to a child patient: *How are we (= 'you') feeling today then?*

Indefinite use of pronouns: *one, you, they*

This is a convenient point to mention three pronouns with indefinite, generic reference to people.

*One* (singular) is a rather *<formal and impersonal>* pronoun, meaning 'people in general, including you and me'. *You* is its *<informal>* equivalent:

*One* never knows what may happen. *<formal>*

*You* never know what may happen. *<informal>*

*They* can also be used indefinitely in *<informal>* English, but with a different meaning from *one* and *you*. It means roughly 'people (excluding you and me)':

*They* say it's going to rain tomorrow. (= 'People say . . . .')

Note

In *<BRE>* and *<formal AmE>*., *one* is used to point back to a previous use of *one*; in *<formal AmE>*., *he* can also be used instead. In *<informal AmE>* *you* is used:
One should always look after \{ one's \langle BrE and formal AmE \rangle \\ his \langle formal AmE \rangle \\ your \langle informal AmE \rangle \} money.

Pointer words

87

We use the term pointer words for words like the demonstratives this and that, which refer by pointing to something in the context. They can have three different uses.

88

(A) Pointer words can be BACK-POINTING (ie they can point to something mentioned earlier):

I then tried to force the door open, but this/that was a mistake.

(B) Pointer words can be FORWARD-POINTING (ie they can point to something to be mentioned later):

This is how you start a car: you make sure the gears are in neutral and that the handbrake is on, then turn the ignition key . . .

(C) Pointer words can be OUTWARD-POINTING (ie they can point to something in the context outside language):

Would you like to sit in this chair (= 'the one by me') or in that one? (= 'the one away from me, over there')

This in such cases identifies something near the speaker (either physically, in terms of space or time, or psychologically). That identifies something not so near the speaker.

89

On this basis, we may separate two classes of pointer-words, those related to this (and having the 'near' meaning) and those related to that (and having the 'distant' meaning). Main members of each class are:

The this type: this (singular) here (= at this place) these (plural) now (= at this time)

The that type: that (singular) there (= at that place) those (plural) then (= at that time)

(usually in the past)

This contrast of meaning is less clear in back-pointing and forward-pointing uses. This and that can replace each other with no difference of meaning in back-pointing, but this is commoner in \langle formal \rangle English. For forward-pointing, only this, and the this-type words these, here, and thus can be used (but see 90):

This is what I thought. (FORWARD- or BACK-POINTING)

That is what I thought. (BACK-POINTING only)

Notice the opening and close of a radio news bulletin:

Here is the news . . . (FORWARD-POINTING)

. . . And that's the end of the news. (BACK-POINTING)

90

Those is forward-pointing when its meaning is defined by a postmodifier: those who are lazy (= 'people who are lazy') (see 549).
This and that in (familiar) use can ‘point back’ in a vague way to some shared knowledge of the speaker and hearer: Have you seen this report about smoking? (=‘a report I know about’), It gives you that great feeling of clean air and open spaces (=‘the feeling we all know about’). This can also be used (familiarly) to introduce something new in a narrative: I was walking along the street when this girl came up to me . . . (=‘a girl I’m going to tell you about’).

Relations between ideas expressed by nouns

Relations expressed by of

91

We have talked of of used in phrases of partition, division, and amount:

(a) part of the house

(a kind of tree

a group of stars

a lot of difficulty

Of is also used more generally as a means of indicating various relations between the meanings of two nouns:

the roof of the house (the house has a roof; the roof is part of the house)

a friend of my father’s (see 577) (my father has a friend)

the courage of the firemen (the firemen have courage; the firemen are courageous)

the envy of the world (the world envies . . .)

the trial of the conspirators (someone tries the conspirators)

the virtue of thrift (thrift is a virtue)

a glass of water (the glass has water in it; the glass contains water)

people of the Middle Ages (people who lived in the Middle Ages)

the house of my dreams (the house which I see in my dreams)

the College of Surgeons (the College to which surgeons belong)

The ‘have’ relation

92

Both of and with can indicate a relation of ‘having’. From the sentence ‘NOUN1 has NOUN2’ we can get:

NOUN2 of NOUN1: the roof of the house, the courage of the men

NOUN1 of NOUN2: men of (great) courage

NOUN1 with NOUN2: a house with a roof

In the ‘NOUN1 prep. NOUN2’ construction, of is used where NOUN2 is abstract (a performance of distinction, a man of wealth) and with is used where NOUN2 is concrete (a woman with a large family, a man with money).
The uses of the genitive

93

A genitive (ending ‘s or apostrophe only, see 570–2) can often be used with the same meaning as an of-phrase:

THE ‘HAVE’ RELATION (‘Dr Brown has a son’)

Dr Brown’s son (definite) \{ the son of Dr Brown

of a son of Dr Brown’s (see 577)

(indefinite)

the earth’s gravity \{ the gravity of the earth (more usual)

THE SUBJECT-VERB RELATION (‘His parents consented’)

his parents’ consent \{ the consent of his parents

the train’s departure \{ the departure of the train (more usual)

THE VERB-OBJECT RELATION (‘They released the prisoner’)

the prisoner’s release \{ the release of the prisoner

a city’s destruction \{ the destruction of a city (more usual)

THE SUBJECT-COMPLEMENT RELATION (‘Everyone is happy’)

everyone’s happiness \{ the happiness of everyone

the country’s beauty \{ the beauty of the country

94

In the following cases, the of-phrase is not used:

THE ORIGIN RELATION (The girl told a story, etc)

the girl’s story (= a story that the girl told)

John’s telegram (= a telegram from John, a telegram that John sent)

VARIOUS DESCRIPTIVE RELATIONS

a women’s college (= a college for women)

a doctor’s degree (= a doctoral degree)

Choice between an of-construction and the genitive

95

In general, the genitive is preferred for human nouns (the girl’s arrival) and to a lesser extent for animal nouns (horses’ hooves) and human group nouns (the government’s policy). Of is used for mass nouns and abstract nouns (a discovery of oil, the progress of science). In general also, the genitive is preferred for the subject-verb relation, and of for the verb-object relation:

Livingstone’s discovery (= ‘Livingstone discovered something’)

the discovery of Livingstone (= usually ‘Somebody discovered Livingstone’)

The subject function can also be indicated by a by-phrase. Hence the notion ‘The army defeated the rebels’ might be expressed in three ways:

the army’s defeat of the rebels

the defeat of the rebels by the army

the rebels’ defeat by the army

(But the rebels’ defeat of the army has to mean that the rebels defeated the army!)
The of-construction is also preferred (especially in formal English) to the genitive when the modifying noun phrase is long. We can easily say:

the departure of the 4.30 train for Edinburgh

but not: *the 4.30 train for Edinburgh's departure (see 575)

Note two special cases of the genitive. Time nouns are frequently used in the genitive, and also place nouns, when followed by a superlative:

this year's crop the town's oldest pub (or the oldest pub in the town)
two weeks' holiday Norway's greatest composer
a moment's thought today's menu (or the menu for today)
the world's best chocolate (or the best chocolate in the world)

Relations between people: with, for, against

With often means 'together with' or 'in company with':

I'm so glad you're coming with us. [1]
Sheila was at the theatre with her friends. [2]

Sentence [2] is not very different in meaning from
Sheila and her friends were at the theatre.

Without is the negative of with in this sense:

Sheila was ill, so we went to the theatre without her.

For conveys the idea of support (=in favour of), and like with, contrasts with against:

Are you for or against the motion?

With, in a situation of conflict or competition, means 'on the same side as':
Remember that every one of us is with you (= 'on your side')

Here with contrasts with against (= 'on the opposite side').

Are you with us or against us?

So also: the fight against pollution, the campaign against inflation, etc. However, with conveys the idea of opposition between two people or groups in fight with, argue with, etc: He's always arguing with his sister.

Ingredient, material: with, of, out of, from

With verbs of 'making', with indicates an ingredient, whereas out of or of indicates the material of the whole thing:

A fruit cake is made with fruit, but a glass jug is made (out) of glass.

Made from indicates a substance from which something is derived:

Beer is made from hops.
Paper is made from wood-pulp.

Of alone is used in postmodifying phrases: a ring of solid gold (ie . . . made out of solid gold), a table of polished oak (ie . . . consisting of polished oak). So also a solid-gold ring, a polished-oak table.
Restrictive and non-restrictive meaning

Modifiers of a noun usually add meaning to the noun by helping to specify its meaning more exactly:

(A) the children
(B) the children who live next door

(A) a king
(B) a king of Denmark

(A) buttered toast
(B) hot buttered toast

(A) the books
(B) the history books

In each case, phrase (B) tells us more precisely than phrase (A) what the noun refers to. It narrows down or restricts the meaning of the noun, by saying what kind of children, king, etc the speaker is talking of. This type of modifier may be called restrictive.

100

There is also a non-restrictive type of modifier which does not limit the noun in this way. Compare:

Children who learn very easily should start school as early as possible.
\[\text{(Restrictive)}\]

Children, who learn very easily, should start school as early as possible.
\[\text{(Non-restrictive)}\]

In [1], the relative clause is restrictive and tells us what kind of children ought to start school early. In [2], where the relative clause is non-restrictive, the speaker is talking about all children in general. This is signalled by a tone unit boundary (see 36) in (speech), or a comma in (writing), separating it from the preceding noun. The clause does not in any way limit the reference of children. The speaker tells us a that all children learn easily, and b that all children should start school early.

Non-restrictive adjectives

101

Adjectives, as well as relative clauses, can be non-restrictive. The clearest cases are adjectives modifying proper nouns: since a proper noun already has unique reference, it cannot be limited any further by the adjective (but see 81): poor Bill, old Mrs Brown, the beautiful Highlands of Scotland.

Non-restrictive adjectives are not necessarily marked, like non-restrictive relative clauses, by punctuation or intonation, and so ambiguities can occur:

The patriotic Americans have great respect for their country's constitution.

The hungry workers attacked the houses of their rich employers.

We might ask: Does [3] mean that 'all Americans have great respect' (non-restrictive)? Or does it mean that 'only some Americans (those who are patriotic, as opposed to those who are not) have great respect'? Does [4] refer to all the workers and all the employers, or just to the hungry workers (as opposed to those...
with enough to eat), and to the rich employers (as opposed to the poor ones)? These sentences could have either meaning.

Note
The ambiguity of [3] exists because the Americans can be either generic or not (see 627). We do not find the same ambiguity with (say) the patriotic Irish, because the noun Irish (as contrasted with Irishmen) must be generic.

102
Non-restrictive adjectives usually precede restrictive modifiers, and so the ordering of modifiers can make a difference to meaning:

his last great novel [5]
his great last novel [6]

In [5] great is restrictive, while in [6] great is non-restrictive. The meaning of [5] is therefore ‘the last of his great novels’, and the meaning of [6] is ‘his last novel, which was great’.

Time, tense and aspect

103
We turn now to features of tense and aspect expressed by the verb phrase. Tense and aspect (see 880-3) relate the happening described by the verb to time in the past, present, or future.

States and events

104
Since tense relates the meaning of the verb to a time scale, we must first give some attention to the different kinds of meaning a verb may have. Broadly, verbs may refer either to an event (ie a happening thought of as a single occurrence, with a definite beginning and end), or to a state (ie a state of affairs which continues over a period, and need not have a well-defined beginning and end).

Thus be, live, stay, know, etc may be considered state verbs, and get, come, leave, hit, etc event verbs. This distinction is similar to the distinction between count and mass nouns, and (as we saw in 49 for count and mass), it is to some extent a conceptual rather than a real distinction. The same verb can change from one category to another, and the distinction is not always clear: Did you remember his name? could refer either to a state or to an event.

To be more accurate, then, we should talk of ‘state uses of verbs’ and ‘event uses of verbs’; but it is convenient to keep to the simpler terms ‘state verb’ and ‘event verb’.

105
The distinction between ‘state’ and ‘event’ gives rise to the following three basic kinds of verb meaning (illustrated in the past tense):

(1) State
Napoleon was a Corsican.

(2) Single event
Columbus discovered America.

(3) Set of repeated events (habit)
Paganini played the violin brilliantly.
The 'habit' meaning combines 'event' meaning with 'state' meaning: a habit is, in a sense, a state consisting of a series of events. We often specify 'state' meaning by adding an adverbial of duration: *Queen Victoria reigned for sixty-four years.* We specify 'habit' more precisely by adding an adverbial of frequency or an adverbial of duration: *He played the violin every day from the age of five.* (All three types of meaning can be clarified by an adverbial of time-when, *see* 140–50.)

To these three a further type of verbal meaning can be added, the temporary meaning expressed by the progressive aspect (*see* 122, 881–2): *She was cooking the dinner.*

**Present time**

**106**

The following are the main ways of referring to something which occurs at the present moment:

(A) **Present State** (the Simple Present Tense)

I'm hungry.

Do you like coffee?

The state may stretch indefinitely into the past and future, and so this use of the simple present tense applies also to general truths such as *The sun rises in the east.*

**107**

(B) **Present Event** (The Simple Present Tense)

I declare the meeting closed.

Bremner passes the ball to Lorimer.

This use is rather specialised, being limited to formal declarations, sports commentaries, demonstrations, etc. In most contexts, one rarely has the occasion to refer to an event begun and ended at the very moment of speech.

**108**

(C) **Present 'Habit'** (The Simple Present Tense)

He works in London (every day).

I (often) travel abroad for my {holidays. *BrE*\}

{vacation. *AmE*}

It rains a lot in this part of the world.

By 'habit' here, we mean a sequence of events.

**109**

(D) **Temporary Present** (The Present Progressive)

Look, it's raining!

The children are sleeping now.

They are living in a rented house at the moment.

The meaning of the progressive aspect is 'limited duration'. Compare the meaning of the simple present in the parallel examples:

It rains a lot in the Hebrides. (habit)

Children usually sleep very soundly. (habit)

They live in a large house. (permanently)

For single events, which in any case involve a limited time-span, the effect of the progressive is to emphasise the durational aspect of the event:
Nastase serves! (at this very moment)
Nastase is serving. (the service is a continuing activity)

With states the effect of the progressive is to put emphasis on the limited duration of the state of affairs:

They live in a rented house. (permanently)

They are living in a rented house. (temporarily)

(E) Temporary habit (The Present Progressive)

I’m taking dancing lessons this winter.

He’s walking to work while his car is being repaired.

This use combines the ‘temporary’ meaning of the progressive with the repetitive meaning of the habitual present.

Three rather less important ways of referring to the present may be added:

(F) We can use the progressive aspect, when accompanied by always or a similar adverb, to convey not temporariness, but continuousness:

My children are always (=continually) misbehaving.

This use carries with it some feeling of disapproval.

(G) Temporary and habitual meaning can be combined, in a different way from (E), to indicate a repetition of temporary happenings:

He’s mowing his lawn whenever I see him.

(H) In special circumstances, the past tense can be used to refer to the present:

Did you want to speak to me? (= Do you want . . .)  

I wondered whether you would help me. (= I wonder . . .)

Here the past tense is an indirect and more (tactful) substitute for the simple present tense (see 124(B)).

Past time

The present-time meanings (A) to (G) above are paralleled by similar past-time meanings: we have already illustrated some of these (see 105).

But there is a special problem of past-time reference in English: the question of how to choose between the use of the past tense and the use of the perfect aspect.

By a past-time happening, we mean a happening taking place in the past but not necessarily in the present time. The past tense is used when the past happening is related to a definite time in the past, which we may call ‘then’.

In contrast, the perfect aspect is used for a past happening which is seen in relation to a later event or time. Thus the present perfect means ‘past-time-related-to-present-time’. For example:

He was in prison for ten years. (= ‘Now he’s out’)

He has been in prison for ten years. (= ‘He’s still there’)

The past tense

The past tense refers to a definite time in the past, which may be identified by a past time adverbial in the same sentence,
b the preceding language context, or
c the context outside language.
(On these aspects of definiteness, see 70–2.) Examples of the three types are:

a Haydn was born in 1732.
b Joan has become engaged; it took us completely by surprise. (Here the past tense took is used, because the event has already been identified in the first clause.)
c Did the postman bring any letters? (Here we can use the past tense without language context, because it is understood that the postman calls at a given time in the day.)

Note
[a] A proper noun can, because of its definite meaning, provide the conditions for the past tense: Caruso was a great singer. (Here it is implied that Caruso is dead, or at least is no longer a practising singer.)
[b] The past tense can sometimes be used when no definite time ‘then’ is easily apparent: They told me you were ill. Perhaps this is like c above, in that the speaker ‘in his own mind’ is thinking of a definite time.

114
The past tense also implies a gap between the time referred to and the present moment:

His sister was an invalid all her life (ie she’s now dead).
His sister has been an invalid all her life (ie she’s still alive).

Adverbials referring to a past point or period of time normally go with the past tense:

The discovery was made in the sixteenth century, etc (see 119).

The present perfect

115
Four related uses of the present perfect may be noted:

(A) STATE LEADING UP TO THE PRESENT TIME

That house has been empty for ages. [i]

(B) INDEFINITE EVENT(S) IN A PERIOD LEADING UP TO THE PRESENT TIME

Have you (ever) been to Florence?
All my family have had measles (in the last year).

(C) HABIT IN A PERIOD LEADING UP TO THE PRESENT TIME

He has attended lectures regularly (this term).

(D) PAST EVENT WITH RESULTS IN THE PRESENT TIME

The taxi has arrived. (ie ‘it’s now here’)
Her doll has been broken. (ie ‘it’s still not mended’)

(Compare: Her doll was broken, but now it’s mended.)

In these instances (except for (B)) the states, habits, or events may be understood to continue at the present time; for example, to sentence [1] we could add ‘... and it’s still empty’.

Note
[a] In sense (B), the present perfect often refers to the recent indefinite past: Have you eaten (yet)? I’ve studied your report (already). For such sentences, there is a tendency for <AmE> to prefer the past tense: Did you eat yet?
There is an idiomatic use of the past tense with *always, ever and never* to refer to a state or habit leading up to the present: *I always said* (= have said) *that he would end up in jail.*

**The perfect progressive**

116

The present perfect progressive (*have been V-ing*) has the same sort of meaning as the simple present perfect, except that the period leading up to the present has **limited duration**:

I've been writing a letter to my nephew.

He has been attending lectures regularly.

The perfect progressive, like the simple perfect, can suggest that the results of the activity remain in the present: *You've been fighting!* (ie I can see that you have been fighting, because you have a black eye, torn clothes, etc). In such cases the activity has continued up to the **recent past**, not up to the present. Unlike the present perfect, the present perfect progressive with event verbs usually suggests an action continuing into the present:

I've read your book (= 'I've finished it').

I've been reading your book (normally = 'I'm still reading it').

**The past perfect**

117

The past perfect (simple or progressive) indicates 'past in the past'; that is, a time further in the past as seen from a definite viewpoint in the past:

The house had been empty for several months (when I bought it).

The goalkeeper had injured his leg, and couldn't play.

It had been raining, and the streets were still wet.

In meaning, the past perfect is neutral as regards the differences expressed by the past tense and present perfect. This means that if we put the events described in [2] and [3] further into the past, they both end up in the past perfect:

They tell me that

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{the parcel} & \text{ arrived on April 15th. } \\
\text{the parcel} & \text{ has already arrived. }
\end{align*}
\]

[2]

They told me that

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{the parcel} & \text{ had arrived on April 15th. } \\
\text{the parcel} & \text{ had already arrived. }
\end{align*}
\]

[3a]

When describing one event following another in the past, we can show their relation by using the past perfect for the earlier event, or else we can use the past tense for both, and rely on the conjunction (*eg after, when*) to show which event took place earlier:

\[
\begin{align*}
\{\text{After} \} & \text{ the teacher left the room, the children started talking. } \\
\{\text{When} \} & \text{ the teacher had left the room, the children started talking. }
\end{align*}
\]

All four of these sentences mean roughly the same, and indicate that the teacher left before the children started talking.

**Perfect aspect in non-finite verbs**

118

Non-finite verbs (*see 877*) have no tense, and so cannot express the difference between past tense and perfect aspect. Instead, the perfect aspect expresses *general*
past meaning. In the three sentences below, each of the as-clauses can be replaced by the non-finite clause Having written three chapters:

As he wrote three chapters last month, he’s now taking a holiday.

As he has written three chapters already, he’s taking a holiday.

As he had written three chapters, he decided to take a holiday.

The same is true for the perfect infinitive following a modal auxiliary:

He may have left yesterday (ie Perhaps he left yesterday).

He may have left already (ie Perhaps he has left already).

Adverbials in relation to the past and the present perfect

119

Some adverbials go with the past and others with the present perfect, for example:

THE PAST (point or period of time [which finished] in the past)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yesterday (evening).} \\
\text{last night / last Monday.} \\
\text{a week/month ago,} \\
\text{in the morning.} \\
\text{on Wednesday / in June / in 1974.} \\
\text{at four o’clock.} \\
\text{the other day.}
\end{align*}
\]

THE PRESENT PERFECT (period leading up to present, or recent past time)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I haven’t seen him} \\
\text{since Tuesday/last week.} \\
\text{since I met you.} \\
\text{so far / up to now.} \\
\text{lately.}
\end{align*}
\]

EITHER THE PAST OR THE PRESENT PERFECT

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I \{saw \} him} \\
\text{today.} \\
\text{this week/month/year.} \\
\text{recently.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{He always/never forgot} \\
\text{my wife’s birthday.}
\end{align*}
\]

State or habit in the past (used to and would)

120

Used to (see 502) expresses a state or habit in the past, as contrasted with the present:

He used to eat out every day, but now he can’t afford it.

Iceland used to belong to Denmark (ie Iceland once belonged to Denmark).

Would (see 300) can also express a past habit, with the particular sense of ‘characteristic, predictable behaviour’:

He would wait for her outside the office (every day).

Would is typical of narrative style, but used to is more characteristic of (spoken) English.
The simple present tense with past meaning

121
There are two special circumstances in which the simple present tense is used with past meaning:

(A) The ‘historic present’ is sometimes used in narrative, when we want to describe events vividly as if they are happening in our presence:
   Then in *comes* the barman and *tries* to stop the fight.

(B) The present is used with verbs of communication, where more strictly the present perfect would be appropriate:
   I *hear* you have changed your job.
   They *tell* me you have changed your job. 〈informal〉
   I *am informed* that your appointment has been terminated.
   〈formal〉

The progressive aspect

122
The progressive aspect (see 109, 878–82) refers to activity in progress, and therefore suggests not only that the activity is temporary (i.e., of limited duration), but that it need not be complete. This element of meaning is most evident in the past tense or in the present perfect:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{He wrote} & \text{ a novel several years ago (i.e., he finished it).} \\
\text{He was writing} & \text{ a novel several years ago (but I don’t know whether he finished it).} \\
\text{I have mended} & \text{ the car this morning (i.e., the job’s finished).} \\
\text{I have been mending} & \text{ the car this morning (but the job may not be finished).}
\end{align*}
\]

Similarly, with verbs referring to a change of state, the progressive aspect indicates movement towards the change, rather than completion of the change itself:

The girl *was drowning* (but at the last moment I rescued her).

When linked to a non-progressive event verb, or to a point of time, the progressive normally indicates that at that point the activity or situation denoted by the verb is still in progress, *i.e.* has started but has not yet finished:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{At eight o’clock} & \text{ they were (already) eating breakfast.} \\
\text{When I went downstairs} & \text{ they were (already) eating breakfast.}
\end{align*}
\]

This means that the breakfast had started before 8 o’clock or the time that I went downstairs, and that it continued after that time.

Verbs taking and not taking the progressive

123
The verbs which most typically take the progressive aspect are verbs denoting activities (*walk, read, drink, write, work, etc.*) or processes (*change, grow, widen, improve, etc.*). Verbs denoting momentary events (*knock, jump, nod, kick, etc.*), if used with the progressive, suggest repetition:

He *nodded* (one movement of the head).

He *was nodding* (repeated movements of the head).
State verbs often cannot be used with the progressive at all, because the notion of ‘something in progress’ cannot be easily applied to them. The verbs which normally do not take the progressive include:

(A) **VERBS OF PERCEIVING feel, hear, see, smell, taste.** To express continuing perception, we often use these verbs with can or could:

I can see someone through the window, but I can’t hear what they’re saying. (not *I am seeing . . . )

Verbs which have as their subject the thing perceived, such as **sound** and **look**, can also be included here:

He looks/sounds as if he’s enjoying himself. (not *He is looking . . . )

(B) **VERBS REFERRING TO A STATE OF MIND OR FEELING** believe, adore, desire, detest, dislike, doubt, forget, hate, hope, imagine, know, like, love, mean, prefer, remember, suppose, understand, want, wish, etc.

I forget his name. (not *I am forgetting . . . )

The verbs **seem** and **appear** may also be included here:

He seems/appears to be enjoying himself.

(C) **VERBS REFERRING TO A RELATIONSHIP OR A STATE OF BEING** be, belong to, concern, consist of, contain, cost, depend on, deserve, equal, fit, have, involve, matter, owe, own, possess, remain, require, resemble, suffice, etc.

This carpet belongs to me. (not * . . . is belonging to me).

Notice that all these verbs are used without the progressive even when they refer to a temporary state:

I’m hungry.

I forget his name for the moment.

**Note**

The verb **have**, when it is a state verb, does not go with the progressive: *He has a good job* (not *He is having a good job*). But have can go with the progressive when it denotes a process or activity: *They were having dinner.*

**125**

Verbs of a fourth group, those referring to internal sensation (*hurt, feel, ache, etc*), can be used either with the progressive or the non-progressive with little difference of effect:

My back  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{hurts}. & \\
\text{is hurting}. & \\
\end{align*}
\]

I  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{felt} & \\
\text{was feeling} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

**Exceptions**

**126**

Although the types of verb (A), (B), and (C) above may be labelled ‘non-progressive’, there are special circumstances in which **you** hear them used with the progressive. In many circumstances, one may say that the state verb has been changed into an ‘activity verb’ (referring to an active form of behaviour). In place of **see** and **hear**, we have the equivalent activity verbs **look (at)** and **listen (to)**:

I’m looking at your drawings.

He was listening to the news when I entered.

*But for smell, feel, and taste, there is no special corresponding activity verb, so these verbs have to do duty for the state meaning and the activity meaning:*
The doctor is feeling her pulse. He says it feels normal.
We've been tasting the soup. It tastes delicious.

In the same way, think, imagine, remember, etc can sometimes be used as ‘mental activity’ verbs:

I’m thinking about what you said.

The verb be can go with the progressive when the adjective or noun which follows it refers to a type of behaviour, or to the role a person is adopting: He’s (just) being awkward (= ‘causing difficulty’); John is being a martyr (= ‘acting like a martyr’).

Another exceptional case is the use of the progressive with hope, want, etc to express greater <tentativeness> and <tact>. Were you wanting to see me? We are hoping you will support us.

Future time

There are five chief ways of expressing future time in the English verb phrase. The most important future constructions are those which use will (shall) and be going to (A and B below).

(A) Will/shall (see 501)
Will (often reduced to ’ll), or shall (with a first person subject) can express the neutral future of prediction:

Tomorrow’s weather will be cold and cloudy.

It is particularly common in the main clause of a sentence with an if-clause, or another conditional adverbial (see 208–16):

If you press this button, the door will slide back.
Wherever you go, you will find the local people friendly.
In that case, I’ll have to change my plan.

But with personal subjects, will/shall can also suggest an element of intention:

I’ll meet you at the station.
She’ll make a cup of coffee if you ask her.

(B) Be going to
Be going to + INFINITIVE tends to indicate the future as a fulfilment of the present. This construction may refer to a future resulting from a present intention:

What are you going to do today? I’m going to stay at home and write letters.

He’s going to be a doctor when he grows up.

It may also refer to the future resulting from other causative factors in the present:

I think I’m going to faint (ie I already feel ill).

It’s going to rain (ie I can already see black clouds gathering).
In sentences like these last two, *be going to* also carries the expectation that the event will happen soon.

131

(C) **PROGRESSIVE ASPECT**
The present progressive is used for future events resulting from a present plan, programme, or arrangement:

- *We're inviting* several people to a party.
- *Next they're playing* a piece by Schubert.
- *We're having* fish for dinner.

Like *be going to*, this construction (especially when there is no time adverbial) often suggests the near future: *The Smiths are leaving (= soon).*

132

(D) **SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE**
The simple present tense is used for the future in certain types of subordinate clause, especially adverbial time clauses and conditional clauses:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{When} & \quad \text{he arrives, the band will play the National Anthem.} \\
\text{Before} & \quad \text{If} \\
\text{If} & \quad
\end{align*}
\]

Notice, however, that the verb in the main clause has *will*. Some of the conjunctions which go with the present tense in this way are *after, as, before, once, until, when, as soon as, if, even if, unless, as long as.*

*That*-clauses following *hope, assume, suppose, etc* can also contain a verb in the present tense referring to the future:

- *I hope the train* \( \{ \text{isn't, won't be} \} \) *late.*

133

Apart from these cases, the simple present is used (but not too often) to refer to future events which are seen as absolutely certain, either *a* because they are determined in advance by calendar or timetable, or *b* because they are part of an unalterable plan:

- *Tomorrow is a Saturday.*
- *The term starts* at the beginning of October.
- *The match takes place* on Thursday.
- *He retires* next month.

In these sentences, we may say that the speaker treats the event as a fact, and puts aside the doubt one normally feels about the future. Compare:

- *When \( \{ \text{do we, will we} \} \) get there?*

134

(E) **Will/shall + PROGRESSIVE ASPECT**

*Will* (or *shall* or *'ll*) followed by the progressive can be used in a regular way to add the temporary meaning of the progressive to the future meaning of the *will* construction (see 129):

Don't call her at seven o'clock—she'll be eating dinner.

But in addition, we can use the *will* + Progressive construction in a special way to refer to a future event which will take place 'as a matter of course':

55
When will you be moving?
The train will be arriving soon.
The construction is particularly useful for avoiding the suggestion of intention in the simple will-construction, and can therefore be more (polite).

When will you visit us again? [4]
When will you be visiting us again? [5]
Sentence [4] is most likely to be a question about the listener’s intentions, while sentence [5] simply asks him to predict the time of his next visit.

Be to, be about to, be on the point/verge of
135
Some other ways of expressing future meaning are illustrated here:
The West German Chancellor is to visit France.
The chairman is about to resign.
He was on the point/verge of leaving the country when the telegram arrived.

Be + to-infinitive signifies an arrangement for the future (especially an official arrangement), while both be about to and on the point/verge of emphasise the nearness of a future event.

The future in the past
136
If we put the future constructions already mentioned (except the simple present) into the past tense, we arrive at a kind of ‘future in the past’ meaning (ie future seen from a viewpoint in the past). But such a meaning, as illustrated by was going to and was about to, usually carries the knowledge that the anticipated happening did not take place:

They were just going to punish him, when he escaped.
The priceless tapestry was about to catch fire, but the firemen saved it.

Was/were to and would are the only examples of constructions which refer to the fulfilled future in the past, but in this sense they are rare and rather (literary) in style:

After defeating Pompey’s supporters, Caesar returned to Italy and proclaimed himself the permanent ‘dictator’ of Rome. He was to pay dearly for his ambition in due course: a year later one of his best friends, Marcus Brutus, would lead a successful plot to assassinate him.

However, for a series of events like this, the ordinary past tense can be used throughout: returned, . . . paid, . . . led, etc.

The past in the future
137
The past in the future is expressed by will + Perfect Infinitive:

Tomorrow Jean and Ken will have been married twenty years.

Summary
138
In conclusion, here is a table summarising some of the commonest meanings expressed through tense and aspect. The symbols used are explained on page 59.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Present Time</th>
<th>'Then'</th>
<th>'Now'</th>
<th>'Then'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past time</td>
<td>Present time</td>
<td>Future time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 State (see 106)</td>
<td>I like Mary.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Single event (see 107)</td>
<td>I resign.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Habitual (see 108)</td>
<td>She gets up early.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Temporary (see 109)</td>
<td>He's drinking Scotch.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Temporary habit (see 110)</td>
<td>She's getting up early (nowadays).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B Past Time</th>
<th>'Then'</th>
<th>'Now'</th>
<th>'Then'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present time</td>
<td>Present time</td>
<td>Future time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 State up to present time (see 115)</td>
<td>I've known her for years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Indefinite event(s) (see 115)</td>
<td>I've seen better plays.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Habit up to present time (see 115)</td>
<td>He's conducted that orchestra for 15 years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 With present result (see 115)</td>
<td>You've ruined my dress!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Temporary state up to present time (see 116)</td>
<td>I've been waiting for an hour.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Temporary habit up to present time</td>
<td>He's been walking since he was 8 months old.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Temporary, with present result (see 116)</td>
<td>You've been smoking!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Definite state (see 105, 120)
   I lived in Africa when I was young.
9. Definite event (see 105)
   I saw him yesterday.
10. Definite habit (see 105, 120)
     I got up.
11. Definite temporary (see 122)
     I used to get up early in those days.
12. Past before past time (event) (see 117)
     We were watching TV.
13. State up to past time (see 117)
     I had visited the island before.
14. Temporary state up to past time (see 117)
     I had known him since birth.
     They had been lying in wait for him.

C. FUTURE TIME

15. Future time (neutral) (see 129)
     The letter will arrive tomorrow.
16. Future time (arising from present time) (see 130)
     Prices are going to rise.
17. Future time (plan or arrangement) (see 131)
     We’re moving next week.
18. Future time (as fact) (see 133)
     The match starts at 2.00 p.m.
19. Future time (as matter of course) (see 134)
     I’ll be seeing you soon.
20. Future time (temporary) (see 134)
     The astronauts will be sleeping at 4.00 a.m.
21. Past in Future time (see 137)
     The plane will have landed by then.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>single event</th>
<th>state</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>habit or series of events</td>
<td>temporary state or event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporary habit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The time dimension is expressed by a left-to-right arrow chain:

\[ \Rightarrow \Rightarrow \Rightarrow \Rightarrow \Rightarrow \]

A definite point of time ('NOW' or 'THEN') is expressed by a dotted vertical line (\( \uparrow \)). The broken arrow (\(--\rightarrow\)) indicates anticipation of something happening at a later time.

**Time-when**

140

Notions of time-when are expressed either by tense, aspect, and auxiliaries in the verb phrase, or by adverbials. The adverbials can be of a number of types:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yesterday.} & \quad \text{(ADVERB)} \\
\text{on Saturday.} & \quad \text{(PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE)} \\
\text{last week.} & \quad \text{(NOUN PHRASE)} \\
\text{three weeks ago.} & \quad \text{(NOUN PHRASE + ago, back, etc)} \\
\text{whenever they} & \quad \text{(ADVERBIAL CLAUSE)} \\
\text{needed money.} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

Such time expressions normally have an adverbial position in the sentence (see 474), but occasionally they can act as the subject or complement or postmodifier of a noun phrase.

*The day after tomorrow will be Friday.*

Time-when adverbials answer the question 'When?'. Thus all the adverbials listed above could answer the question *When did the boys visit you?*

It is most useful to begin the study of time-when with prepositional phrases.

**At, on, in and during**

141

*At* is used for points of time, and *on* and *in* for periods of time. In general, *on* is used for days, and *in* (or *during*) for periods longer or shorter than a day:

- **CLOCK TIME** at 10 o'clock, at 6.30 p.m., at noon
- **DAYS** on Sunday, (on) the following day
- **OTHER PERIODS** in/during the morning/April/spring/1973/the nineteenth century

For periods identified by their beginning and ending points, *between* is used:

*Between 1918 and 1939 . . . *

**In and during**

142

*In* and *during* are more or less equivalent, but *during* tends to be used where the verb phrase denotes a state or habit, and so implies duration:
He was injured in the war.
Many people suffered hardship during the war.
Only during can be used to mean 'in the course of' before nouns like stay, visit, meal, etc, referring to an event lasting some time:
We went to the zoo during our stay in Washington.
During the meal we talked about our plans.

Exceptions
143
At can be used for periods identified vaguely, as in at that time, at breakfast time, at night; also for short holiday periods (at Christmas, at Easter). In <BrE>, at the weekend is used, but in <AmE> on the weekend. On is used before morning, afternoon, evening, and night when these periods are identified by the day of which they are a part: on Monday evening, on the following evening, but in the evening. (On the omission of the definite article in time expressions see 495.)

Note
By day and by night are idioms which can replace during the day/night with some activities such as travelling: We travelled by night.

Omitting the preposition
144
We almost always leave out the preposition before phrases beginning last, next; this, that; also before today, yesterday, tomorrow:
Did you go to the meeting last Thursday?
I'll mention it next time I see him.
Plums are more plentiful this year.
That day I had nothing important to do.
(The phrases at this/that time, on this/that occasion are however normal.) In <informal> English, we also usually leave out the preposition in phrases pointing to a time related indirectly to the present moment, or to a time before or after a definite time in the past or future:
I saw her \{the January before last. the day after her birthday.\}
The festival will be held \{the day after tomorrow. (in) the following spring.\}
The preposition is also sometimes omitted directly before days of the week:
I'll see you Saturday.
Sundays we go into the country.
This is especially common in <informal AmE>.

Time relationships
145
Before and after (as prepositions, adverbs, and conjunctions) indicate relations between two times or events, as in
They were married before the war.
We ate after I arrived.
They have opposite meanings:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{He arrived after the play started.} \\
\text{The play started before he arrived.}
\end{align*}
\]

By refers to the time at which the result of an event is in existence:

- By Friday I was exhausted (ie I became exhausted before Friday, and I was still exhausted on Friday).
- Please send me the tickets by next week (ie I want to have the tickets not later than next week).

Already, still, yet, and any more are related in meaning to by-phrases. Already and yet require the perfect aspect when occurring with an event verb: They have already left; They haven’t left yet. With state verbs and with the progressive aspect, they can occur with the present tense: I know that already; He’s not yet working.

Note the negative relation of these adverbs to still and any more:

- He still works here. = He hasn’t stopped working here yet.
- He’s already stopped working. = He isn’t working any more.

We use by now often when we are not certain that the event has happened:

- He should have arrived by now (‘... but I’m not sure’).

Otherwise we prefer to use already:

- He has arrived already.

146

The preposition in (or within (formal)) can have the meaning ‘before the end of’:

- He travelled round the world in eighty days.
- Phone me again within a week.

147

Here, for comparison, are some examples of time phrases with a particular noun, night:

- I woke up in the (middle of the) night. (see 141)
- (On) Sunday night we’ll have a party. (see 141)
- Snow fell during the night. (see 142)
- Sometimes I can’t sleep at night. (see 143)
- Sometimes I can’t sleep at nights.

* We’ll do Paris by night. (see 143 Note)
- We travelled by night. (see 143)
- I’ll be there by Friday night. (see 145)
- For several nights he had no sleep at all. (see 151)
- We stayed up all night. (see 152)
- Will you stay overnight? (see 153)

Measuring time

148

Ago following a noun phrase of time measure refers to a point of time in the past as measured from the present moment: We met a year ago. For a similar measurement into the future, we use a measure phrase followed by from now, or in + measure phrase, or in + genitive measure phrase + time:

- I’ll see you in three months’ time.
- I’ll see you in three months from now.
In measuring forwards from a point of time in the past, only the first alternative is available:

He finished the job in three months. (ie from when he started it)

Before and after, and the adverbs beforehand and afterwards, earlier and later, can also follow a measure phrase:

I had met them three months before (hand).

Ten years after his death, he suddenly became famous.

**Time-when adverbs**

149

There are two main groups of time-when adverbs (see 474):

(A) again, just (= ‘at this very moment’), now, nowadays, then (= ‘at that time’),
    today, etc.

(B) afterwards, beforehand, first, formerly, just (= ‘a very short time ago’
    before’) lately, next, previously, recently, since, soon, subsequently
    <formal>, then (= ‘after that’), ultimately <formal>, etc.

Group (A) identifies a point or period of time directly; Group (B) identifies a time indirectly, by reference to another point of time understood in the context.

**Examples:**

(A) Nowadays people are difficult to please.
    We’re just leaving.

(B) The guests have/had just left.
    Have you been to the theatre recently?
    He wrote last Christmas, but I haven’t heard from him since (= ‘since
    that time’).

**Time-when conjunctions**

150

The main time-when conjunctions are when, as, before, after (see 145), while (see
154), as soon as, once, now (that):

When I last heard from him, he was living in Buenos Aires.

Buy your tickets as soon as you can.

Once you have taken the examination, you’ll be able to relax.

**Duration**

151

Phrases of duration answer the question ‘How long?’ Compare:

(A) When did you stop there?     (B) In the summer.

(A) How long did you stop there?  (B) For the summer.

The time-when phrase in the summer here indicates that the stop was included in the summer period; the duration phrase for the summer indicates that the stop lasted as long as the summer period.

For with this meaning can also precede phrases of time measurement, eg for a

62 month, for several days, for two years.
The preposition *for* is often left out, particularly before *all*:

I studied (*for*) three years in London.
The snowy weather lasted (*for*) the whole winter.
He's been gardening *all day* (*not* *for* all day).

**Note**

*For* is generally not omitted when it comes first in the sentence: *For several years they lived in poverty*; or when it follows a negative: *I haven't seen him for eight years*.

**153**

*Over* can be used instead of *for* for short periods such as holidays:

- We stayed with my parents *over* Christmas.
- We stayed with my parents *over* the holiday.
- We stayed with my parents *over* the weekend.

*From . . . to* are used to identify a period by its beginning and end: *from nine to five*; *from June to December*. In *AmE*, *from . . . through* are used to make clear that the whole period includes the second period named; thus *from June through December* means ‘. . . up to and including December’. *Up to* normally specifies that the longer period does *not* include the period named:

- He worked *up to Christmas* (*ie* but not over Christmas).
- He worked *up to Christmas* (*ie* but not over Christmas).

*Until or till* (see 155) can replace *to* in the construction *from . . . to . . . *: *from Monday till Friday*. But, with *from* absent, only: *We stayed until/till five*.

**While, since and until**

**154**

The conjunction *while* can mean either (a) ‘duration’ or (b) ‘time-when’, depending on the kind of verb meaning (see 104–5).

- I stayed *while the meeting lasted* (*ie* for the duration of the meeting). *(STATE VERB)*
- I arrived *while the meeting was in progress* (*ie* in the course of the meeting). *(EVENT VERB)*

*Since* also has these two functions:

- He’s lived here (*ever*) *since he was born* (*ie* for his whole life, from his birth up to now). *(STATE VERB)*
- They’ve changed their car twice *since 1970* (*ie* between 1970 and now). *(EVENT VERB)*

It is important to notice that *since* normally requires the perfective aspect in the verb of the main clause:

- Since 1971, Britain *has had* decimal currency (*not* *Britain has* decimal currency).

**155**

*Until* (*or till*) as preposition and conjunction has a meaning comparable to example *a* of *since* (*the STATE VERB sense*), except that it names the end-point rather than the beginning point of a period:

- You’re to stay in bed *until next Monday* (*ie* from now to *next Monday*).
In the negative, until can occur with event verbs, and is in practice equivalent to before:

- He didn’t start to read until he was ten.
- He didn’t start to read before he was ten.

**Adverbs and idioms of duration**

156

The following adverbs and idiomatic phrases indicate duration:

- always, for ever (both meaning ‘for all time’)
- since (‘since then’), also recently, lately (both meaning ‘since a short time ago’)
- temporarily, for the moment, for a while (all meaning ‘for a short time’)
- for ages (informal) (‘For a long time’).

**Since**, lately, and recently indicate either time—when or duration according to the type of verb meaning:

- They got married only recently (= ‘a short time ago’).
- He’s recently been working at night (= ‘since a short time ago’).

**Frequency**

157

Expressions of frequency answer the question ‘How many times?’ or ‘How often?’.

The upper and lower limits of frequency are expressed by always (‘on every occasion’) and never (‘on no occasion’). Between these extremes, a rough indication of frequency (indefinite frequency) can be given by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>most frequent</th>
<th>nearly always, almost always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>usually, normally, generally, regularly (= ‘on most occasions’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>often, frequently (= ‘on many occasions’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sometimes (= ‘on some occasions’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>occasionally, now and then (informal) (= ‘on a few occasions’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rarely, seldom (= ‘on few occasions’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>least frequent</td>
<td>hardly ever, scarcely ever (= ‘almost never’)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Compare 67–8.)

A more exact measurement of frequency (definite frequency) can be expressed in one of the following three ways:

(A) once a day, three times an hour, several times a week (sometimes per (formal, official) is used instead of a(n) here: once per day)

(B) every day (= ‘once a day’), every morning, every two years

(C) daily (= ‘once a day’), hourly, weekly, monthly, yearly.

Daily, weekly etc can act as adjectives as well as adverbs:

He visits me \{ once a week. \} every week. weekly. = He pays me a **weekly** visit.
We can also say *once every day, twice weekly, etc. Every other day/week, etc means 'every two days/weeks'.*

158

A further type of frequency expression involves the use of quantifiers like *some, any, most, many:*

Some days I feel like giving up the job altogether.
Come and see me any time you like.
We play tennis most weekends.
He's been to Russia many times as a reporter.

159

Frequency phrases generally have no preposition. One exception is phrases with the word *occasion(s) (rather formal):*

*On several occasions* the President has refused to bow to the will of Congress.

160

Frequency phrases sometimes lose much of their time meaning, and get a more abstract meaning, referring to *instances* rather than *times. Always and sometimes* (for example) can be interpreted 'in every case', 'in some cases', rather than 'on every occasion', 'on some occasions':

Children often ('in many cases') dislike tomatoes.
(roughly = 'Many children dislike tomatoes')
Students rarely ('in few cases') used to fail the course.
(roughly = 'Few students used to fail the course')

**Place, direction and distance**

161

Expressions of place and direction are chiefly adverbials and postmodifiers. They answer the question *Where?*, so that all of the following could be answers to the question *Where did you leave the bicycle?:*

\[
\begin{align*}
(over) & \text{there.} & \text{ADVERB see 472, 480} \\
\text{in} & \text{the street.} & \text{PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE see 739, 743} \\
\text{two miles away.} & \text{ NOUN PHRASE + away, back, etc, see 651–3} \\
\text{where I found it.} & \text{ADVERBIAL CLAUSE see 517}
\end{align*}
\]

Place expressions can also on occasion act as subject or complement of a sentence:

*Over here is where I put the books.* (informal)

You will see that the range of grammatical structures and functions for expressing place is similar to that for expressing time (see 140). You will also notice that some forms (eg the prepositions *at, from, and between*) have related meanings in the two fields.

**Prepositions of place**

162

Apart from the general adverbs *here, there, somewhere, anywhere, everywhere, 65*
and nowhere, by far the most important words for indicating place are prepositions. The choice of preposition is often governed by the way we see an object, whether we see it

(A) as a point in space
(B) as a line
(C) as a surface
(D) as an area
(E) as a volume

\{(see 164–5)\} \{(see 166–7)\}

The difference between ‘surface’ and ‘area’ will be explained below (see 165–6, 175).

We may distinguish ‘at-type’ prepositions, which indicate a point (A); ‘on-type’ prepositions, which indicate a line or a surface (B or C), and ‘in-type’ prepositions, which indicate an area or a volume (D or E). Some prepositions (such as across) belong to more than one of these types.

**At-type prepositions**

163

(A) The place is seen as a point (ie a place which is identified quite generally, without being thought of in terms of length, width, or height):

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\rightarrow \text{x} & \times & (\text{away}) \text{from} & \times \\
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\
\end{array}
\]

1 We went \{to Stratford. to the hotel. to the door.\} 3 We came (away) \{from the theatre. from the house. from the bus- stop.\}

2 We stayed \{at home. at an inn. at the entrance.\} 4 We stayed \{away from home. away from England. away from the village.\}

**On-type prepositions**

164

(B) The place is seen as a line, ie is a place thought of in terms of length, but not breadth or height (depth):

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{on (to)} & \text{on} & \text{off} & \text{off} & \text{across, over} & \text{along} \\
\diagdown & \diagup & \diagup & \bullet & \diagup & \uparrow \\
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 \\
\end{array}
\]

1 The ball rolled on to the goal-line.
2 Memphis is a town on the Mississippi.
3 We turned off the main road.
4 Zanzibar is an island off the coast of Africa.
5 They drove across the frontier.
6 We walked along the river bank.
(C) The place is seen as a surface, *ie* is thought of in terms of length and width, but not height (or depth). (The surface need not be flat or horizontal.)

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{on (to)} & \text{on} & \text{off} & \text{off} & \text{over} & \text{through} \\
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 \\
\end{array}
\]

1. He fell *on (to)* the floor.
2. There's a green label *on* the bottle.
3. He took the picture *off* the wall.
4. That's a place *off* the map.
5. He took a walk *across* the fields.
6. He looked *through* the window.

The surface is often the *top* of some object (*on = on top of*): *He was lying on the bed*; *It fell off the table.*

**Note**

[a] *On* etc is also used for public transport:

There were lots of passengers *on the bus/train/ship.*

We can also say *He travelled by bus. etc* (see 195–6)

[b] Notice also *an apple on a tree, the ring on her finger* (where *on* = ‘attached to’).

**In-type prepositions**

166

(D) The place is seen as an *area* (usually an area of ground or territory enclosed by boundaries).

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{in (to)} & \text{in} & \text{out of} & \text{out of} & \text{through} \\
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 \\
\end{array}
\]

1. They crowded *into the streets.*
2. I have a house *in the city.*
3. They flew *out of the country.*
4. He stayed *out of the district.*
5. We went for a walk *through the park.*

167

(E) The place is seen as a *volume*, *ie* is thought of in terms of length, width, and height (or depth):

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{in (to)} & \text{in} & \text{out of} & \text{out of} & \text{through} \\
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 \\
\end{array}
\]
1  He ran into the house.
2  The food in the cupboard.
3  He climbed out of the water.
4  He was out of the room.
5  The wind blew through the trees.

Inside and outside are sometimes used instead of in (to) and out of:

We went/stayed inside the building.
He was listening outside the room.

Within is a slightly more formal word than in, and often indicates a location bounded by limits, or by a given distance (within 3 miles, etc):

Many prisoners died within the walls of the castle. (= inside)
He lives within a stone's throw of the office. (= not beyond)

169

Some common transitive verbs such as put, place, lay, stand are followed by on and in rather than on to and into:

He put the cup on the shelf.
He placed the jewels in a box.

Also, arrive goes with at, on, or in: The train arrives at/in Brussels at 7.15.

Overlap between types of preposition

170

We can often use different prepositions with the same noun. But in such cases, the meaning will be slightly different.

My car is at the cottage.  (POINT, ie the cottage as a general location)

There is a new roof on the cottage. (SURFACE)

There are two beds in the cottage.  (VOLUME)

Overlap between at-type and in-type prepositions

171

For towns and villages, either at or in is used, depending on point of view. At Stratford means we are seeing Stratford simply as a place on the map; in Stratford means we have a 'close up' view of the place as a town covering an area and containing streets, houses, etc. A very large town or city is generally treated as an area: in New York. At New York would only be used in a context of world-wide travel:

We stopped to refuel at New York on our way to Tokyo.

Parts of cities also require in: in Chelsea (part of London); in Brooklyn (part of New York).

172

For continents, countries, states, and other large areas we use in: in Asia, in Ghana, in Virginia. However, the directional words to and from are preferred even for large territories, except where the territories border one another:

He sailed from Europe to Canada.

but: He drove from out of France into Belgium.
For buildings or groups of buildings either at or in can be used, but at is preferred when the building is thought of as an institution rather than in physical terms. (Many such nouns with at take no definite article: at school, see 495.)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{He works at the post office.} \\
\text{but: I left my purse at/in the post office.} \\
\text{He studies at Oxford (= the university).} \\
\text{but: He lives at/in Oxford (= the city).}
\end{align*}
\]

At and to

174

At is used instead of to when what the following noun refers to is being treated as a target:

- He threw the ball at me (ie ‘He tried to hit me’).
- He threw the ball to me (ie ‘for me to catch’).

Note also a similar contrast between:

- Peter shouted at me (suggests that Peter was angry with me).
- Peter shouted to me (suggests that Peter was trying to communicate with me at a distance).

Other contrasts of the same general kind are seen in:

- He pointed at/to me.
- He passed/handed a note to me.
- He \{aimed the gun\} at me.

Overlap between on-type and in-type prepositions

175

There is a difference between ‘surface’ and ‘volume’ in:

- We sat on the grass. (SURFACE: ie the grass is short)
- We sat in the grass. (VOLUME: ie the grass is long)

Another difference (between ‘surface’ and ‘area’) is seen in:

- Robinson Crusoe was marooned on a desert island (SURFACE: ie the island is small).
- He was born in Cuba (AREA: ie Cuba is a large island, and a political unit with boundaries).

Position

176

Position as a relation between two objects can best be explained by a picture. Imagine that a car is standing on a bridge:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{above} & \quad \text{over} \\
\text{by, beside} & \quad \text{on top of} \\
\text{in front of} & \quad \text{behind} \\
\text{under, beneath} & \quad \text{underneath} \\
\text{below}
\end{align*}
\]
The river is below the car. A bird hovered over us.
There are clouds above the car. A man is standing by/beside the car.
The road is underneath the car. The road stretches in front of and behind the car.
The roof rack is on top of the car.

177

The main difference between over/under and above/below is that over and under tend to indicate a direct vertical relationship, or nearness: 'The man had a bad cut over his left eye'; 'He was leaning over the injured man'. Above and below may mean simply that one object is on a higher or lower level than the other. Underneath often means that one object is actually touching the other. In this respect it is the opposite of on top of.

178

By and beside mean 'at the side of', but can also be used more generally to indicate the nearness of one object to another:

She sat in a chair by (= 'near') the door.

179

The following prepositional adverbs (see 746) or fixed phrases correspond to the prepositions of position we have just dealt with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>overhead</th>
<th>underneath</th>
<th>in front</th>
<th>on top</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(over)</td>
<td>above</td>
<td>below</td>
<td>behind</td>
<td>beneath</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

He tumbled off the bridge into the water below. (= 'below the bridge')

An airliner flew overhead. (= 'over us', etc)

Would you like to sit in front? (= 'in the front seat of the car')

Some other positions

180

Between, among and amid: Between normally relates an object to two other objects, and among to more than two:

The house stands between two trees.

The house stands among trees.

But between can relate more than two objects, if we have a definite number in mind:

Switzerland lies between France, Germany, Italy and Austria.

Amid (formal) means 'in the midst of', and like among, can apply to an indefinite number of objects: 'The house stands, amid trees'. Unlike among, it can also be followed by a mass noun:

A child's doll was found amid the wreckage of the plane.
Opposite means ‘facing’:
His house is opposite mine (ie ‘facing mine, on the other side of the street’).

(A)round refers to surrounding position or motion:
The police were standing on guard around the building.

About and around in ⟨informal⟩ English often have a vaguer meaning of ‘in the area of’ or ‘in various positions in’:
The guests were standing about/around the room.
There aren’t many shops about/around here.

In ⟨AmE⟩, about is rarer and more ⟨formal⟩ in this sense than around.

Motion
181
In 164–7, those meanings illustrated by diagrams 1, 3, 5, and 6 involve motion. The prepositions in the other diagrams (2 and 4) indicate state.

Different aspects of motion can be pictured as follows:

```
  towards  ────────->  through  ──── ----------→  away from
                       ↓                         ↓
  into                 ↓                         ↓
                        ↓                         ↓
  along  ────────->  out of
```

The train sped towards/into/etc the tunnel.

But the prepositions used to indicate position in 176–80 can also signify motion to the position concerned:

1 The bush was a good hiding-place, so I dashed behind it. 
2 When it started to rain, we all ran underneath the trees.

Passage
182
The same prepositions can also be used, like through and across, to indicate motion towards, then away from a place (ie passage):

1 The photographers ran behind the goal-posts.
2 I crawled underneath the fence.

Other prepositions can be used similarly:

1 We drove by/past the town hall.
2 We passed over/across the bridge.
3 We turned (a)round the corner.

(A)round can also refer more generally to circular motion:
The earth moves (a)round the sun.

Direction
183
Up, down, along and across/over represent motion with reference to a direction or axis.

```
  ▲       ▲
  up     down
  ◀◀ ◀◀ ◀◀ ◀◀
  across       over
  ◀◀ ◀◀ ◀◀ ◀◀
  along
```

HORIZONTAL AXIS VERTICAL AXIS
He walked along/across the street.  [1]
He ran up/down the hill.  [2]
He drove up/down the street.  [3]

Sentence [3] does not necessarily mean that the street was on a hill: (informally), we use up and down with practically the same meaning as along. (Downtown (AmE) means simply the central or business part of a town.)

Repeated motion

184

We can express repeated motion by joining two prepositions with and:

He walked up and down the room (in one direction and then in another).
The oars splashed in and out of the water.
They danced round and round the room.

Orientation (or viewpoint)

185

The preposition beyond makes reference not only to two objects, but to a third factor, the ‘viewpoint’ at which the speaker is standing (or imagines he is standing):

I could see the town beyond the lake (ie ‘on the other side of the lake [from me]’).

We can also express a similar meaning by using across, over, through, past, etc in a sense related to their ‘passage’ or ‘direction’ sense (see 182–3):

the people over the road  the cafe round the corner
<esp BrE> friends across the sea  the garage past the supermarket
the house through the trees  the hotel down the road
the man up a ladder

We can, if we like, specify the viewpoint by using a from-phrase:

He lives up/down/along/across the road from me.

Resulting meaning

186

Prepositions which have the meaning of ‘motion’ can also have a ‘state’ meaning, indicating the state of having reached a particular destination:

The horses are over the fence (ie ‘have jumped the fence’).
The divers are out of the water already.

Pervasive meaning

187

Over and through can have ‘pervasive’ meaning, especially when preceded by all:

He painted (all) over the walls (ie ‘he covered the walls with paint’).
The noise could be heard all over/through the building.

Through is restricted to areas and volumes (see 166–7). Throughout can be used instead of all through:

The epidemic has spread throughout the country.
Abstract place meaning

188
Many place prepositions are used in more abstract senses, which have a metaphorical relation to their basic sense. Some examples are:

IN, OUT OF (condition or inclusion): in danger, out of danger; in practice, out of practice; in a race, in plays, in a group.

People never behave in real life as they do in plays.

ABOVE, BELOW, BENEATH (level):

His grades are above the average. Such behaviour is beneath (= not worthy of) him.

OVER, UNDER (power, surveillance): under suspicion, under orders:
The King had absolute power over his subjects.

UP, DOWN (movement on a scale): up the scale, down the social ladder.

FROM, TO (giving and receiving):

I got a letter from Jill.

He lent some money to his son.

BETWEEN, AMONG (relations between two or more people):

There was a fight between two boys.

They agree among themselves.

PAST, BEYOND (excess):

He’s beyond (= too ill for) recovery.

I’m past (= too old for) falling in love.

Place adverbs

189
Most place prepositions (except the at-type prepositions) correspond in form to prepositional adverbs (see 746), and in general their meanings correspond as well. Here are some examples:

We stopped the bus and got off (ie ‘off the bus’).

Have you put the cat out (ie ‘out of the house’)?

The child ran across in front of the car (ie ‘across the road’).

When they reached the bridge, they crossed over, looking down at the water beneath.

190
But some prepositional adverbs have special uses:

They travelled on (ie ‘they continued their journey’).

The thieves snatched her handbag and ran off (= ‘away’).

A man came up (ie ‘approached’) and introduced himself.

You don’t see many trams about nowadays (informal BrE) (ie ‘about the place’).

In this last example, about is so vague as to be almost meaningless.

In addition to up and down, the following adverbs of direction can be noted:

toward(s), downward(s); forward(s), backward(s); inward(s), outward(s); homeward(s).
Distance

191

Distance can be expressed by noun phrases of measure such as a \textit{foot}, a \textit{few yards}, \textit{ten miles}, a \textit{long way}, etc. These phrases can modify a verb of motion:

He ran \textit{several miles}.

They can also precede and modify an adverbial of place:

They live \textit{a long way away}.

The valley lay \textit{two thousand feet below them}.

Here the reference is to static location. Notice the corresponding question forms:

\textit{How far} did he \textit{run}?

\textit{but}: \textit{How far away} do they \textit{live}?

Manner, means and instrument

Answering the question \textit{‘how’}

192

If you want to specify \textit{how} an action is performed or \textit{how} an event takes place, you can use an adverbial of MANNER, MEANS, or INSTRUMENT:

(A) How did he write the letter?

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{hurriedly}. (MANNER)
  \item \textit{by hand}. (MEANS)
  \item \textit{with a ball-point pen}. (INSTRUMENT)
\end{itemize}

You can ask a more specific question about the instrument with which an action is performed as follows:

\textit{What} did he write it \textit{with}? \textit{(informal)}

\textit{With what} did he write it? \textit{(formal)}

Manner

193

The three chief ways of expressing manner are (A) adverb (usually ending in \textit{-ly}), (B) \textit{in... manner} (or \textit{way}), (C) \textit{with} + abstract noun phrase. Most adjectives have matching \textit{-ly} adverbs, and many adjectives have matching abstract nouns. Thus there may be three ways of expressing the same idea:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{confidently}.
  \item \textit{in a confident manner}/\textit{way}.
  \item \textit{with confidence}.
\end{itemize}

When a manner adverb is available, use the adverb, as it has the advantage of being shorter and \textit{(less formal)} than the other constructions. Further examples of manner phrases are:

We’ll let you know \textit{in the usual manner}/\textit{way}.

The task was done \textit{in a workmanlike manner}/\textit{way}.

She greeted us \textit{with great courtesy} (ie ‘very courteously’).

I answered \textit{without hesitation} (ie ‘unhesitatingly’).

He rides \textit{cowboy-style} (or \textit{in the style of a cowboy}).
Like this, like that (or this way, that way) are phrases with the meaning 'in this/that manner':

You don't spell 'hysteria' like that; you spell it like this (informal).

Notice that in can be omitted before way in certain (informal) constructions:

She cooks turkey

\[
\begin{cases}
\text{the way I like.} \\
\text{the same way as I do / as me.} \\
\text{a number of different ways.}
\end{cases}
\]

194

A manner phrase sometimes expresses a comparison:

She sings like a professional (ie 'in the manner of a professional, as well as a professional').

Manner clauses introduced by as can be used in a similar way:

She cooks turkey

\[
\begin{cases}
\text{like my mother.} \\
\text{as my mother did.} \\
\text{in the way my mother did. (formal)} \\
\text{the way my mother did. (informal)}
\end{cases}
\]

They hunted him as a tiger stalks its prey. (formal)

Comparisons with unreal situations can be expressed by a clause beginning as if or as though:

She treats me \(\begin{cases} \text{as if} \\ \text{as though} \end{cases}\) I were a stranger.

(On the verb form were here, see 286.)

Means and instrument: by and with

195

Means is expressed by a prepositional phrase introduced by by:

I usually go to work by bus.

The thief must have entered by the back door.

We managed to sell the house by advertising it in the paper.

Instrument is expressed by a prepositional phrase introduced by with:

He caught the ball with his left hand.

Someone killed him with an arrow.

The verb use and its object also convey the idea of instrument:

He always opens his letters with a knife.

\(=\) He always uses a knife to open his letters.

The non-use of an instrument can be expressed by without:

He drew the lines without a ruler.

\(=\) He didn't use a ruler to draw the lines.

196

We sometimes prefer to replace a phrase of means by a different type of prepositional phrase, eg one of place:

(A) How did he get in?  
(B) He came in through the window.  

(more usual than by the window)
(A) How did you hear the news? (B) I heard it on the radio. (Compare: They sent the message by radio.)

The article is omitted in by-phrases denoting communication: by car, by train, by letter, by post, by radio (see 495).

Cause, reason and purpose

Direct cause

197

There are many different answers to the question ‘What caused such-and-such an event’. The means and instrument, just discussed, may be said to be kinds of direct cause. More important, though, is the person who causes an event, i.e. the actor in an action. The actor is usually specified by the subject of a clause, or by the agent in the passive (see 676–9):

(A) How did the fire start?

(B) Some children started it (i.e. ‘caused it to start’).

It was started by some children.

Start in the second sentence here may be called a causative verb, and some children names the actor.

Many adjectives and intransitive verbs in English have a corresponding causative verb. The causative verb may match them in form (open, grow, blow up, narrow (adj) and narrow (verb)), or may be different in form (fall, fell; die, kill; come, bring):

- The dam blew up.
- The road became narrower.
- The tree has fallen.
- The supplies came yesterday.
- The terrorists blew up the dam.
- They narrowed the road.
- Someone has felled the tree.
- They brought the supplies yesterday.

198

Sometimes, when the actor is not mentioned, the instrument or means takes the position of subject, i.e. the role of the ‘causer’ of the action:

They killed him with a bullet. A bullet killed him.

They brought the supplies by train. A train brought the supplies.

In the passive, the actor can be expressed by an agent by-phrase (see 676–9):

The dam was blown up by terrorists.

The same is true of instrument:

He was killed by a bullet.

Cause and result: because, etc

199

More generally, you may indicate cause (whether direct or indirect) by an adverbial because-clause, or by a prepositional phrase beginning because of, on account of, from, out of:
Because: The car crashed because the driver was careless. [1]
Because of: He lost his job because of his age. [2]
On account of (formal): Many fatal accidents occurred on account of icy road conditions. [3]

From, out of (mainly to express motive, ie psychological cause):
Some support charities out of duty, others from a sense of guilt.

200

Other prepositions of cause are for (mainly with nouns of feeling) and through:
He jumped for joy.
The car crashed through the driver's carelessness. [1a]

Cause as subject

201

The above sentences answer the question Why? rather than the question How?
But 'cause' in these sentences is not very different from 'actor', 'instrument' and 'means' (see 195-7): we can often make the 'cause' the subject of the sentence.

Compare [1], [1a] and [2] in 199-200 with [1b] and [2b] below:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{The driver's carelessness} & \quad \begin{cases} 
\text{caused the car to crash}.
\end{cases} \\
\text{made the car crash.}
\end{align*}
\]

[(Cause and make are general causative verbs.)]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{His age} & \quad \begin{cases} 
\text{lost him (= caused him to lose) his job.}
\end{cases} \\
\text{caused the crash.}
\end{align*}
\]

[2b]

Other verbal constructions expressing cause are these:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{He argues that higher wages inevitably} & \quad \begin{cases} 
\text{lead to}
\end{cases} \\
\text{result in}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{give rise to} & \quad \begin{cases} 
\text{higher prices.}
\end{cases} \\
\text{bring about}
\end{align*}
\]

We can also say:

The effect of higher wages is to raise prices.

Result

202

Result is the opposite of cause (cf [3] in 199):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{The icy conditions} & \quad \begin{cases} 
\text{caused many accidents.}
\end{cases} \\
\text{Many accidents resulted from the icy conditions.}
\end{align*}
\]

[3a]

Result can be expressed by a clause beginning with so (that):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I took no notice of him, so (that) he flew into a rage.}
\end{align*}
\]

[4]

This is equivalent to:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{He flew into a rage because I took no notice of him.}
\end{align*}
\]

[4a]

In this context, so is more (informal) than so that.

Purpose

203

The intended result (see 338) of purpose of an action is described by an adverbial of purpose, which is usually a to-infinitive clause, but may also be a finite verb clause beginning so that. (The so that-clause often contains would or should, see 289.)
He left early to catch the last train.

To improve the railway service, they are electrifying the main lines.

They advertised the concert so that everyone should know about it.

In order (more formal) and so as can precede to in the infinitive clause: in order to catch the last train; so as to improve the railway service. Also in order that is a (more formal) alternative for so that: in order that everyone should know about it. In (informal BrE), in case can introduce the idea of negative purpose (compare 209):

He left early in case he should miss the last train (ie '... so that he should not miss it').

Reason and consequence

204

Because, because of, and on account of can express reason as well as cause. Cause and reason are overlapping notions (both answering the question Why?), but we can see a difference between them in that reason concerns not the events themselves, but the way a person interprets the events, and acts upon his interpretation:

\[
\begin{align*}
& I \text{ lent him the money } \{ \text{because he needed it.} \\
& \text{because of his children.}
\end{align*}
\]

Reason can also be expressed by as-clauses and since-clauses:

As Jane was the eldest, she looked after the others.

Since we live near the sea, we can often go swimming.

We can say that the main clause indicates the consequence of the reason clause. Another way to express the same idea would be:

The city is situated near the sea and consequently enjoys a healthy climate. (rather formal)

205

Now that and seeing that are conjunctions which have a meaning very close to as and since, except that now that has also an element of time meaning:

Now that the weather has improved, we'll be able to enjoy the game.

Seeing that he could not persuade the other members of the committee, he gave in.

Another (more formal) way to express the same idea is a participle clause (see 515):

The weather having improved, the game was enjoyed by players and spectators alike. (formal)

Being a man of fixed views, he refused to listen to our arguments. (formal)

206

Yet another construction expressing reason is a for-phrase, which accompanies certain adjectives and verbs conveying emotion and attitude:

I was angry with him for being late (= 'because he was late').

He was punished/commended/praised for his outspoken defence of free speech.
The following are linking adverbials of cause or reason (see 380) meaning 'because of that' or 'for that reason': therefore, thus (rather formal), so (informal), accordingly (formal), hence (formal), consequently. A linking adverbial corresponding to seeing that is in that case:

(A) The weather has improved. (B) In that case, we can enjoy our game.

Condition and contrast

Open and hypothetical conditions

208

Conditional clauses are related to reason clauses, but they discuss the consequence of something which may or may not be a real event. Notice the difference between:

I'll lend Peter the money because he needs it. [1]
I'll lend Peter the money if he needs it. [2]

The speaker of sentence [2] does not know whether Peter needs the money, while the speaker of [1] knows that he does. A sentence like [2] expresses what we call an open condition, because the truth or falsehood of what the sentence describes is 'open', i.e. unknown. The conditional clause often precedes the main clause:

If you feel seasick, take one of these pills.

There is another type of conditional sentence, which expresses an unreal or hypothetical condition; i.e. for this type of sentence the speaker assumes the falsehood or unlikelihood of what he is talking about:

I'd lend Peter the money if he needed it.

The speaker's assumption here is 'but he doesn't need the money'. As this example shows, the hypothetical meaning is signalled by the use of the hypothetical past tense (see 284).

209

Less common indicators of condition are the conjunctions in case, on condition that, provided that, and the preposition in case of (formal):

Take these pills, in case you feel ill on the boat.
I'll lend you the money on condition that you return it within six months.

Provided that they had plenty to eat and drink, the men were happy.

So long as

In case of difficulty call the operator. (formal)

In case specifies a future condition that may or may not arise. On condition that stipulates or lays down a condition to which a person must agree. Provided that and so long as resemble on condition that in having the restrictive implication of 'if and only if...'. In that case and then (informal) are sentence adverbials of condition:

(A) He may have missed the train.

(B) In that case, he would have taken a taxi.

He would have taken a taxi, then.
Negative condition

210

Unless expresses a negative condition. Thus we could change the emphasis of [2] by saying:

I won’t lend Peter the money unless he needs it.

Note the equivalence of:

\[
\begin{cases}
\text{Unless Peter improves his work, he’ll fail the exam.} \\
\text{If Peter doesn’t improve his work, he’ll fail the exam.}
\end{cases}
\]

Negative hypothetical conditions can be expressed by but for + noun phrase:

But for John, we would have lost the match (ie ‘If it hadn’t been for John’; ‘If John hadn’t played well’, etc).

Otherwise is a sentence adverb expressing negative condition (see 382).

Use of any, ever, etc

211

Because they indicate uncertainty, conditional clauses usually contain any-words like any, ever, yet, etc instead of some-words like some, always, already (see 803–7):

Unless anyone has any questions, the meeting is adjourned.

If you ever have any problems, let me know.

But to express special positive bias (see 248), conditional clauses can contain some-words:

Help yourself if you want something to eat.

Clauses of contrast: although, etc

212

A type of adverbial meaning that overlaps with conditional meaning is that of contrast (often called concession). If two circumstances are in contrast, it means that the one is surprising or unexpected in view of the other:

\[
\begin{cases}
a \quad \text{The weather is bad.} \\
b \quad \text{We are enjoying ourselves.}
\end{cases}
\begin{cases}
a \quad \text{He looked strong and healthy.} \\
b \quad \text{He hadn’t eaten for days.}
\end{cases}
\]

We can put the two contrasting statements \(a\) and \(b\) together by making one of them into a subclause beginning although or though (in informal):

We are enjoying ourselves, although/though the weather is bad.

(Even) though he hadn’t eaten for days, he looked strong and healthy.

(Even though is slightly more emphatic than though.) We can link the contrasting ideas \(a\) and \(b\) in another way, by using the coordinating conjunction but:

He hadn’t eaten for days, but he looked strong and healthy.

The conjunctions while and whereas (more formal) can express contrast between two equivalent ideas:

Elizabeth was lively and talkative, whereas her sister was quiet and reserved.

213

The following are special constructions for expressing the meaning of ‘even though’:
Much as I would like to help, I have other work I must do. (‘Even though I would like to help very much . . .’)

Strange as it may seem, nobody was injured in the fire. (‘Even though it may seem strange . . .’)

In sentences like these, the conjunction as occurs in the middle of the subclause, after a subject complement (strange) or an adverbial (much). Sometimes though is used instead of as: Strange though it may seem . . . These constructions can sound rather <elevated> and <rhetorical>:

Unarmed as|though he was, he bravely went forward to meet his enemies.

Phrases and adverbs of contrast: in spite of, etc

214

In spite of, despite <formal>, notwithstanding <very formal>, for (all) are prepositions of contrast:

We are enjoying ourselves in spite of the weather.

Despite a shortage of steel, industrial output has increased by five per cent. <formal>

Notwithstanding the rise in prices, luxury goods are still much in demand. <formal>

For all his skill, he has accomplished very little. (= ‘Despite his great skill . . .’)

There are also a number of sentence adverbials (see 479) expressing the meaning ‘in spite of this/that’: yet, however, nevertheless <formal>, all the same <informal>, still, even so:

The weather was absolutely dreadful; however, the children enjoyed themselves.

Yet can be used in the main clause to reinforce the contrast made by the subclause:

Although he hadn’t eaten for days, yet he looked strong and healthy.

The adverb even is used to imply a contrast with what we might usually expect:

My father won’t give me the money—he won’t even lend it to me.

The contrast here is with the usual expectation that fathers are willing to lend money to their children.

Condition + contrast

215

The ideas of condition (if) and implied contrast (even) are combined in the conjunction even if:

I always enjoy sailing, even if the weather is rough. (‘You wouldn’t expect me to enjoy sailing in rough weather, but I do.’)

The meaning of even if is sometimes conveyed by if . . . (at least):

If he’s poor, at least he’s honest.

The same contrastive meaning is expressed in hypothetical conditions by both even if and even though <more formal>:

He wouldn’t give me the money, even if I begged him for it.
Alternative conditions: whether ... or, whatever, etc

216

Condition is combined with the meaning of either ... or in the parallel conjunctions whether ... or, which specify two contrasting conditions:

*Whether we beat them or they beat us,* the match will be enjoyable
(‘If we beat them, or even if they beat us ...’).

You’ll have to pay, *whether you like it or not* (‘... if you like it, or even if you do not’).

The meaning of ‘contrary to expectation’ is also present here, as the examples show.

A similar meaning is present in the conjunctions whatever, whoever, wherever, etc:

She looks pretty, *whatever she wears.* [3]

*Wherever he goes,* he makes friends. [4]

The meaning is that the statement in the main clause is true in any of the conditions covered by the subclause. Again, contrasting meaning is present, in that [3] implies, for example, ‘She looks pretty even if she wears ugly clothes.’ The same meaning can be expressed by an adverbial clause beginning *no matter what*:

She looks pretty, *no matter what she wears.*

Two general adverbials with this type of meaning are *anyway* and *in any case* (= ‘whatever the circumstances’):

She looks pretty *anyway.* [informal]

Degree

217

We come now to a class of expressions, *degree* expressions, which usually modify the meaning of a particular word in the clause. Degree is largely expressed by adverbs, which either act (A) as premodifiers of adjectives, adverbs, etc (see 480-8), or else act (B) as adverbials in clause structure.

(A) PREMODIFYING DEGREE ADVERBS (see 583)

*a* How hungry are you?  
*b* (I’m) very hungry.

*a* How soon are they leaving?  
*b* (They’re leaving) quite soon.

(B) DEGREE ADVERBS AS ADVERBIALS (see 477, 583). Here the degree adverbs usually modify the meaning of the verb:

*a* How much does she love him?  
*b* (She loves him) passionately.

Applied to nouns, degree is expressed by quantifiers (see 772-3):

*a* How much of a scholar is he?  
*b* (He’s) not much of one. [rather informal]

Degree expressions can answer the questions *How*? (for adjectives and adverbs); *How much*? (for verbs); and *How much of*? (for nouns). More [formal] questions of degree are *To what degree*? and *To what extent*? Applied to verbs, degree adverbials sometimes answer the question *How far*? rather than *How much*?

*a* How far do you agree with me?  
*b* (I agree with you) absolutely.
Gradable words and degree

Not all verbs, adjectives, etc can be modified by a degree adverbial. Degree can only apply to gradable words, i.e. words whose meaning can be thought of in terms of a scale. Most pairs of words of opposite meaning, like old and young, aregradable:

(A) How old is that dog?  (B) It's very old / quite young.

If you want to make the degree more exact, you can use a measure phrase (five years, six foot, etc) as a degree adverbial: He's five years old. He's six foot tall.

There are two main kinds of gradable words: scale words indicate a relative position on a scale (e.g. large, small) and limit words indicate the end-point of a scale (e.g. black, white):

(For the idea of darkness, we also have the scale words dark and light.)

Degree adverbs and degree phrases can sometimes act either as premodifiers or as adverbials:

The performance of Hamlet was absolutely magnificent.  (premodifier)
I agree with you absolutely.  (adverbial)

In other cases a different adverb has to be used in the different functions: for example, very and too are limited to the modifying function. The most important differences concern scale words and are given in this table, which also shows the differences between types of adverbs modifying scale words:

Degree with scale words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WITH ADJECTIVE SCALE WORDS</th>
<th>WITH VERB SCALE WORDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) Indicating extreme position on the scale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

very (see 222):
He's very friendly.

(very) much (see 222) a lot <informal>,
a great deal:
I like him very much.
(B) Intensifying the meaning slightly

| quite, rather, fairly; pretty <informal>: |
| considerately, rather; quite a lot <informal>: |
| It's quite expensive. |
| Prices have increased considerably. |
| He was rather annoyed. |
| I rather like him. |

(C) Toning down or decreasing the effect of the scale word

| a bit <informal>, a little, slightly: |
| Prices have fallen slightly. |
| It's slightly uncomfortable. |
| I know him a little. |

Degree with limit words

220

With limit words (see 218) the same adverbs can function as modifiers and as adverbials. The two main classes of such adverbs are:

(A) Those indicating that the limit word's meaning is used to its fullest extent: absolutely, altogether, completely, entirely, quite, totally, utterly:

The story is totally false.
I completely disagree with you.

(B) Those indicating a position near the limit of the scale: almost, nearly, practically <informal>, virtually:

The bottle is almost empty.
I've nearly finished my work.

Note

Notice that quite has two uses: quite (= 'considerably') goes with scale words, and quite (= 'absolutely') goes with limit words.

221

The same degree words which modify adjectives can also modify adverbs. But comparative adjectives and adverbs are modified by the degree words which function elsewhere as adverbials:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{much} \\
\text{a great deal} \\
\text{a lot <informal>}
\end{align*}
\]

more healthy than I was.

(not *I am feeling very more healthy . . .)

Superlatives can be intensified by degree adverbs which apply to limit words:

It is quite<esp BrE>/altogether/absolutely the best show in town.

But very can also have an intensifying effect if placed directly before the superlative word (but not before most):

This is my very best suit.

Very and much

222

84 We have noted (see 219) that very acts as a premodifier, whereas much acts as an
adverbial. However, *much* on its own is limited to mid-position in the clause (see 477). In end-position, it has to be preceded by *very*:

The party was *very* enjoyable. \((\text{PREMODIFIER})\)
I (*very*) *much* enjoyed the party. \((\text{MID-POSITION ADVERBIAL})\)
I enjoyed the party *very* *much*. \((\text{END-POSITION ADVERBIAL})\)

Some verbs cannot go with *much* alone: we can say (for example) *I much prefer . . .*, but not *I much like . . .*; *I very much like . . .*, however, is acceptable.

**Positive and negative attitude**

223

Some degree adverbs, although they have the same meaning with respect to 'scale' and 'limit', tend to be distinguished in terms of positive and negative attitude:

**POSITIVE ATTITUDE**  
- It's *quite* warm today.
- She's *entirely* satisfied.

**NEGATIVE ATTITUDE**  
- It's *rather* cold today.
- She's *completely/utterly* dissatisfied.

*Fairly* (= 'considerably') and *entirely* sometimes suggest a positive or 'good' meaning, whereas *rather*, *completely*, and *utterly* sometimes suggest a negative or 'bad' meaning. Thus *fairly warm* implies that warmth is a good thing; if someone said *It's rather warm today*, on the other hand, he would probably be thinking that the weather was a little too warm. The expressions *a bit* and *a little* also tend to go with negative meanings:

These boxes are *a bit/little* heavy.

**Other aspects of degree adverbs**

224

Some words, like the adjectives *new*, *full*, and *empty*, can be used both as scale words and as limit words:

The furniture is \{*very* new.  
\text{absolutely} new.\}

The glass is \{*very* full.  
\text{absolutely} full.\}

In other cases, we can have a scale word and a different limit word dealing with the same area of meaning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>LIMIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>very</strong> {</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) tired</td>
<td>(1) exhausted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) rare</td>
<td>(2) unique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) unlikely</td>
<td>(3) impossible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>somewhat</strong></td>
<td><strong>absolutely</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><strong>nearly</strong></em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A scale word very often corresponds to one or more limit words, which intensify its meaning, and add emotive emphasis; for example, *terrible* intensifies the meaning of *bad*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORDINARY</th>
<th>INTENSIFIED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) <em>good</em></td>
<td>(1) <em>perfect/marvellous</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) <em>bad</em></td>
<td>(2) <em>terrible/awful</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) <em>large</em></td>
<td>(3) <em>massive/colossal</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) <em>annoyed</em></td>
<td>(4) <em>infuriated</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note

[a] You can also intensify meaning by repeating the word very, or by adding
very . . . indeed: very very large; very quickly indeed.

[b] Scale words and limit words are sometimes difficult to separate because there is a tendency to ‘convert’ limit words to scale words in everyday language. Hence combinations like too perfect and rather unique are sometimes heard. Some speakers regard such expressions as slovenly and ‘bad English’.

225

In addition there are negative degree adverbs (barely, hardly, and scarcely), and the any-type (see 806) degree adverbial at all:

I scarcely noticed him (= ‘I almost didn’t notice him’).
I didn’t notice him at all (= ‘I totally failed to notice him’).
Was it at all enjoyable?

226

Apart from the degree adverbs listed so far, there are many degree adverbs which are more restricted in their use, and tend to go with a particular set of gradable words, eg badly goes with the verbs need, want; thoroughly goes with the verbs enjoy, disapprove, dislike, etc; hard goes with the verbs work, try, etc:

We thoroughly enjoyed the show (= ‘very much enjoyed’).
He badly needs a haircut (= ‘needs . . . very much’).

Such adverbs usually intensify the meaning of the gradable word.

Role, standard and viewpoint

227

Degree is not the only type of meaning which specifies more exactly the scope of a gradable word. By at or as you can also specify the role which the gradable word implies; by for you can specify the standard by which the speaker is judging its use:

John is CLEVER.
John is very CLEVER.
John is CLEVER at swimming.
As a swimmer, he’s OUTSTANDING.
John is a GOOD swimmer for a youngster.
For a learner, he swims well.

(Here the gradable words are in spaced capitals.)

228

Further, you can specify the viewpoint or respect in terms of which a word or phrase is used:

Morally, it was not an easy problem (ie ‘From a moral point of view . . . ’).

In a way, I was surprised at his behaviour (ie ‘In one respect/from one point of view . . . ’).
He is a good swimmer in a technical sense (i.e. 'from a technical point of view').
He is a good writer in that he has an elegant style. <formal>
You can also name the person(s) whose point of view is in question:
To his parents, his behaviour was astonishing.

Comparison
229
If you want to compare two things with respect to their position on a scale of degree or amount, use comparative words taller, happier, etc or comparative phrases more careful, less careful, etc (see 523-4). A postmodifying phrase or clause introduced by than can indicate the 'standard' against which the comparison is made.

To describe the picture, you may say:
- Jack is taller than Jill (is).
- Jill is shorter than Jack (is).
- Jill is less tall than Jack (is).
- Jack is less short than Jill (is).

Sentences [1]–[4] have the same meaning, but are listed in order of their commonness. A sentence like [4] is very unusual, and would only be said if both Jack and Jill were short.

Equal comparisons
230
For an equal comparison, e.g. when Jack and Jill are the same height, we use as . . . as instead of more . . . than:
- Jack is as tall as Jill (is).
- Jill is as tall as Jack (is).

To negate equal comparison, we say not as . . . as, or not so . . . as:
- Jill is not as tall as Jack (is).
- Jack is not so short as Jill (is).

Sentences [5] and [6] have the same meaning as [1]–[4].

Comparative and superlative
231
When comparing only two things, we use the comparative forms:
- Jill is the shorter of the two children.
- Jack is the taller of the two children.

When comparing more than two objects we use superlative forms tallest, most useful, least tall, etc:
- Susan is the tallest of the three.
- Jill is the shortest of the three.

To name the objects, you use of, as above, followed by a plural noun phrase:
Luxembourg is the smallest of the Common Market countries. The of-phrase is sometimes placed for emphasis at the beginning of the clause: Of the (two) boys, John behaves the more politely. Of all the capital cities in the world, Bangkok is the one I would most like to visit.

To name the group or sphere within which the comparison is made, use in with a singular noun phrase:

Susan is the oldest girl in the class.
It was the worst moment in/of my life.

Other constructions which can specify the range of comparison with superlatives are possessive pronouns, genitives, adjectives and relative clauses:

my best friend
the world's highest mountain
the greatest living composer
the most enjoyable book I have ever read

Comparison with a definite norm 232

Sometimes a comparison is made between an object and a definite standard or 'norm' understood in context (often through back-pointing). In such cases, use than that or as that, or simply omit the comparative phrase or clause altogether:

(A) Jack must be six foot tall. (B) \{No, he's taller \textit{than that}. [7] \textit{Is he as tall \textit{as that}?} [8] \}

For [8], you can also say: \textit{Is he that tall? \textit{(informal)}}.

The than-phrase is usually omitted when we are comparing not two different things, but the same thing at an earlier and at a later time:

Nowadays food is more expensive (ie 'more expensive than it was').
Foreign cars are becoming more popular (than they were).

233

To indicate continuing change, repeat the comparative word with and:

Jill is getting taller and taller.
The world is changing more and more quickly.
Fewer and fewer people are attending church these days.

In these sentences, we cannot use a than-construction.

\textbf{Enough and too} 234

\textit{Enough} and \textit{too} are words indicating 'sufficiency' and 'excess'. The norm to which these words refer can be indicated by a to-infinitive clause (see 515):

He's rich enough \textit{to own a car}. [9]
The grass is too long \textit{for me to cut}. [10]

Notice that [9] and [10] mean the same as:

He's not too poor \textit{to own a car}. [9a]
The grass isn't short enough \textit{for me to cut}. [10a]
The viewpoint or standard from which the sufficiency or excess is judged may be expressed by a for-phrase:

The room is too noisy for us.
It's too cold for tennis today.

Often, where the meaning is obvious, reference to norm and viewpoint is omitted:

Is the coffee sweet enough? (ie 'sweet enough for you to drink')?
The butter is too expensive (ie 'too expensive for me to buy').

So ... (that) and such ... (that)

Degree or amount constructions with so ... (that) and such ... (that) (see 831) express a meaning similar to enough and too:

Donkey Queen is so fit that she may well win the race. (meaning roughly 'She is fit enough to win the race')
It's such a good chance (that) we mustn't miss it. (meaning roughly 'It's too good a chance to miss')

But the so ... (that)/such ... (that) construction also adds a meaning of result (see 202), expressed by a that-clause:

She polished the floor so hard that you could see your face in it.
The animal was such a nuisance that we let it escape.
He earns so much money that he doesn't know what to do with it.

So and such in these sentences add emotive emphasis, and this emphasis can also be expressed without the that-clause:

The animal was 'such a nuisance!
I'm 'so hungry! (see 311)

Comparison with nouns: more of a, etc

The various constructions just illustrated can be applied to gradable nouns (like success, fool, coward) by the use of more of a, as much of a, less of a, etc:

He's more of a sportsman than his brother.
It was as much of a success as I expected (it would be).
You're less of a fool than I thought (you were).
He's enough of a man to tell the truth.
He's too much of a coward to tell the truth.

Proportion

To compare circumstances in terms of equivalent tendencies, you can use a clause of proportion introduced by as:

As time went on, things got worse and worse.

There is a more (formal) construction in which so is added to the main clause:

As you go farther north, so the winters become longer and more severe.

Yet another construction expressing proportion consists of two clauses beginning with the + a comparative word:
The farther north you go, the more severe the winters are.
The more you argue with him, the less notice he takes.

Notice that the here is a conjunction, and not the definite article. This construction involves placing the comparative element of the clause first, and so often requires a change from normal word order:

He takes less notice but . . . the less notice he takes.

The subject and verb of the second clause, or of both clauses, may be omitted if their meaning is obvious:
The more tickets you can sell, the better. (i.e., . . . the better it will be)
The more the merrier. (proverb)
We'll have to begin our journey early tomorrow; in fact, the earlier, the better.

Addition, exception and restriction

Addition

238

To express addition we can use the prepositions in addition to, as well as, and besides:

They stole three valuable paintings, in addition to the money. [1]

As well as eating a seven-course meal, they drank three bottles of wine. [2]

Besides

In a coordinate construction, the idea of addition can be simply conveyed by and, or (with more emphasis) by not only . . . but (also) (see 547). Thus [1] is equivalent to:

The money (was stolen) and three valuable paintings were stolen. [1a]

Not only the money, but (also) three valuable paintings were stolen. [1b]

The adverbials also, too (informal), as well (informal), and in addition (rather formal) have the meaning 'in addition to that' (where that points back to something mentioned earlier):

They ate a seven-course meal; they also drank three bottles of wine.

(i.e. 'in addition to eating a seven-course meal')

. . . They drank three bottles of wine, too/as well.

. . . In addition, they drank three bottles of wine.

The preferred positions of these adverbials are different: also prefers mid-position (see 470), too and as well end-position, and in addition front-position (but see 242).

239

So (when placed first in the sentence and followed by inversion of subject and operator) combines the meaning of also or too with the function of a substitute form (see 433):

John plays tennis, and so does his sister (= 'and his sister does, too').

While so, too, etc have a positive meaning, neither and nor have the corresponding negative meaning. For negative clauses, there is also the corresponding any-word
(see 803) and the adverb either (informal), which occurs at the end of a clause. Note that so, neither, and nor cause inversion (see 432-3):

(A) I'm hungry. \[ \{ \begin{align} (B) & \text{ I am, too.} \\ (B) & \text{ So am I.} \end{align} \} \text{ POSITIVE} \]

(A) I'm not hungry. \[ \{ \begin{align} (B) & \text{ Nor am I.} \\ (B) & \text{ I'm not, either.} \end{align} \} \text{ NEGATIVE} \]

**Exception**

**240**

*Exception* is the opposite of addition, in that it indicates 'subtraction' from a total. This meaning may be expressed by a number of prepositions: except, except for, apart from, bar, but (*but* occurs only in postmodification):

None of us had any money except (for) James.

We had a pleasant time, apart from the weather.

They stole everything \( \{ \begin{align} \text{but the typewriter.} \\ \text{bar the typewriter. (less common)} \end{align} \)\)

An adverbial clause beginning with the conjunction except that can also be used:

We had a pleasant time, except that the weather was cold.

*Otherwise* and *else* are adverbs of exception:

The weather was appalling, but otherwise (= 'apart from that') we had a pleasant time.

The typewriter was too large, but we carried everything else (= 'apart from that').

In this sense, *otherwise* occurs only as a sentence adverb, and *else* only as a postmodifier.

The adverb *even* expresses the negation of exception, normally with an effect of surprise and emphasis (see 214):

They stole everything—*even* the clothes in the cupboard ('not excepting the clothes in the cupboard').

*Even* is also closely related to the notion of addition:

He knows several languages; he even claims to speak Chinese ('that as well as all the others').

**Restriction: only, etc**

**241**

The word *only* is RESTRICTIVE, in that it combines negative meaning with the idea of exception:

He was wearing *only* his pyjamas (= 'he was wearing nothing but his pyjamas').

*Only James* had any money (= 'no one except James . . .').

With expressions of amount (see 57-68) and degree *etc*, *only* means 'no more than . . .':

*Only a few people* attended the meeting (= 'no more than a few . . .').
I didn't give him the book; I only lent it to him. (= '... I did no more than lend it to him')
I know her only slightly (= '... no more than slightly').
Other words with a meaning similar to only are just, merely, simply. The restrictive meaning of only can be applied, in a slightly different way, to time:
I saw him only last week (= 'no earlier than', 'as late as').
Notice the contrast between only and even:
Only my coat was wet (‘that and nothing else’).
Even my underclothes were soaked (‘that as well as everything else’).

Ambiguity with also, only, etc

Adverbs of addition, exception and restriction (like also, even, only) often ‘focus’ their meaning on a particular part of the sentence, such as a noun phrase or a verb or the whole of the sentence following the subject. A sentence can be ambiguous, depending on the element that is ‘focused’: I only lent him the books.
But contrastive intonation (see 415) can help to clarify the meaning:
(I didn’t give him anything—) I only lent him the books. [3]
(I didn’t lend him the typewriter—) I only lent him the books. [4]
An example with also is:
(He’s not only a good actor—) He’s also a successful actor.
(He’s not only a successful businessman—) He’s also a successful actor.
(He’s not only a writer—) He’s also a successful actor.
(The parts in italics are those which are ‘focused’.) In writing, it is best to put the focusing adverb as near to the focused element as possible, only and even before it, and also and too after it. Thus you could pick out the meaning of [4] by writing I lent him only the books, instead of I only lent him the books.

Only and even in front-position focus on the next element of the sentence—usually the subject:
Only one of us had a sleeping bag.
Even the BBC makes mistakes sometimes.

Compare:
His wife also has a degree.
I too thought he looked ill.

Subject matter: about and on

About and on can both indicate the subject of a communication or discussion:

He told me about his adventures.
She gave a lecture on European history. Have you any books on/about stamp-collecting?

Some verbs and nouns go with about or on, others go with about only:

- speak about/on
- lecture about/on
- argue about/on
- write about/on
- a book about/on
- a discussion about/on
- teach (someone) about
- learn about
- read about
- quarrel about
- a story about
- ignorance about

On, unlike about, tends to be limited to deliberate, formal acts of ⟨speaking⟩ and ⟨writing⟩, and also suggests a more definite focusing on the subject. About can also be used of mental states: think about, know about, etc.

Note

Of is sometimes used instead of about: I wouldn’t dream of asking him; All you think of is money. But notice the difference between He thought about the problem (= ‘He considered the problem’) and He thought of the problem (= ‘He brought the problem to his mind’).

Section B: Information, reality and belief

Statements, questions and responses

244

Why do we need to use language? Probably the most important reason (but not the only one) is that we wish to give someone some piece of information which we think he doesn’t know about. Statements (see 799) are typically sentences which give information. Questions (see 777-81, 800) are typically sentences by which someone asks his hearer to give information. In this section, we shall discuss the ways in which information is given and received and we shall also consider people’s attitudes to information, and the reality it deals with. This means considering such notions as truth, hypothesis, belief, probability, etc.

Questions and answers

245

In conversation, both statements and questions often provoke a response. For questions, the most natural response is an answer to the question, giving the speaker the information he needs:

Yes-No Question (see 778)

(A) Is the dinner nearly ready?

(B) Yes, it’s already cooked.  
(Please ANSWER)  
[1]

(B) No, it’s not cooked yet.  
(NEGATIVE ANSWER)  
[2]

You can generally shorten the answer by omitting some or all of the informa-
tion already contained in the statement. Thus a shorter version of [1] is: Yes, it is
or simply Yes. Shorter versions of [2] are:

No, it isn’t.
No, not yet.
Not yet.
No.

Wh-question (see 779-80)

(A) Where are you going?    (B) (I’m going) to the office.

Here again, part of the answer (the part in brackets) can be omitted.

Questions about alternatives

246

Yes-no questions are limited: only one of two answers (positive or negative) is
possible. Wh-questions are unlimited, because any number of answers can be
given, so long as they give information required by the wh-word (who, what,
when, where, how, etc. see 578-83).

Another type of limited question is one which expects as an answer one of two
or more alternatives mentioned in the question:

(A) Shall we go by train or by
     bus?
     (B) By bus.

(A) Would you like coffee, tea,
     or cocoa?
     (B) Coffee, please.

Notice that the intonation rises on each alternative except the last, on which it
falls.

There is a type of alternative question which is like a yes-no question in ex-
pecting a positive or negative answer:

yes-no

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Are you coming?} \\
\text{Are you coming or not?} \\
\text{Are you coming or aren’t you (coming)?}
\end{align*}
\]

Such alternative questions have a rather impatient tone.

247

Another type of alternative question is more like a wh-question in form:

How shall we go? By bus or by train?

What would you like to drink? Coffee, tea, or cocoa?

Questions with positive or negative bias

Questions with some, always, already, etc

248

Most yes-no questions are neutral as between positive and negative replies, and
have any-words like any, ever, yet, etc (see 803–7). You can, however, use forms
like *some*, *always*, *already*, etc, and this indicates that you expect a positive answer to your question:

Did *someone* call last night? (*Is it true that someone called last night?)

(*Compare: Did *anyone* call last night? (neutral))

Has she gone to bed *already*? (*Am I right in thinking that she’s gone to bed already?)

(*Compare: Has she gone to bed *yet*? (neutral))

For <politeness>, it is customary to use *some*-forms in making an offer:

Would you like *something* to *eat*? (*I expect you would!’)

Do you need *some* money for the *phone*?

*Questions in statement form*

249

You can strengthen the positive bias of a question by putting it in the form of a statement (using, however, the rising tone of a question):

You got home *safely* then?

The guests have had *something* to *eat*?

These questions are rather casual in tone. It is as if you are assuming in advance that the answer is ‘Yes’. With a negative, such questions assume the answer ‘No’: *The shops weren’t open*? (You might say this on seeing someone come home with an empty shopping basket.)

*Tag questions: requests for confirmation*

250

Tag questions (*see 781*) added to the end of a statement ask for confirmation of the truth of the statement. The answer expected is ‘Yes’ if the statement is positive, and ‘No’ if the statement is negative. (If the statement is positive, the tag-question is negative, and vice versa.)

He likes his *job*, *doesn’t* he? (*I assume he likes his job. Am I right?)

Nobody was *watching* me, were they? (*I assume nobody was watching me. Am I right?)

If the tag question has a falling tone, the positive or negative bias is stronger, and the tag question merely asks for routine confirmation of what the speaker already believes. The sentence is more like a statement than a question.

It’s beautiful *weather*, *isn’t* it?

You have *met* my wife, *haven’t* you?

(*said by a man introducing his wife to an acquaintance)*

(*See 251 on how negative questions are answered in English.*)

*Note*

There is a less common type of tag question for which both statement and question are positive: *You’ve had an accident, haven’t you?* Here the statement expresses
a conclusion which the speaker has arrived at from the situation. The tone is
sometimes sarcastic:

So you call that hard work, do you?

Negative questions

251

One might expect yes-no questions which contain a negative form to assume a
negative answer. In fact, such questions have a mixture of positive and negative
bias:

Haven't you had breakfast yet, Mary? ('Is it really true that
you haven't had breakfast? You ought to have had it by
now!')

Can't you drive straight? ('I thought you could, but
apparently you can't!')

Will nobody help us to clear up?

As the examples suggest, this construction usually expresses some degree of
surprise (or even disappointment or annoyance). The speaker would normally
assume the positive meaning, but now expects the negative. Thus a situation in
which you would say [3] might be: you visit Mary at 10.30 a.m. and find that she
is still cooking bacon and eggs. Your earlier (and normal) assumption is that she
has had breakfast; your later assumption (when you see her cooking) is that she
hasn't.

Note

Some languages answer negative questions in a different way to English. To the
question Isn't he here yet?, the English answer No means 'He is not here', while
Yes means 'He is here': the answer is given to the underlying meaning rather than
to the grammatical form of the question.

Questions with more than one wh-word

252

It is possible (though unusual) to have more than one wh-word in the same
wh-question. In this case, only one of the wh-elements is moved to the front of
the sentence (unless the two wh-elements are coordinated):

(A) Who's bringing what?
(B) I'm bringing the drinks, and John's bringing the sandwiches.

(A) How and when did you arrive?
(B) I arrived by train, on Friday.

(A) Who did you send those books to, and why? (informal)
(B) I sent them to Frank, because he asked me for them.

Polite questions

253

You can make a question more <polite> (eg when addressing a stranger) by
adding please, or by using an introductory formula like Could you tell me:

What's your name, please?
Would you mind telling me your name?
Please could I have your address and telephone number?
May/could I ask you if you are driving to the station?
(On can, may, and could here, see 340.)

Responses to statements

254
Unlike a question, a statement does not demand a response. But in conversation, we often make a response to a statement in order to express interest, surprise, pleasure, regret, etc, or simply to show the speaker that we are still attending:

(A) I've just had a phone call from the travel agent... (B) Yes?
(A)... you know those plane tickets to Sydney that you ordered for next Tuesday... (B) Mm? (A) well, he says they are now ready to be collected... (B) Good. (A)... but unfortunately, he says there's been a mistake... (B) Oh dear. (A) Yes, apparently the plane doesn't arrive in Australia until 9.00 a.m. on Wednesday.
(B) I see.

(Mm [m], Mhm [mhm], Uh-huh [uhh] and Yeah [yea] are casual alternatives to Yes.) These 'attention signals' are particularly important in telephone conversations. Other signals of this kind are Oh? and Really?, to express surprise and interest:

(A) I hear Paula's getting married. (B) Really?
Other attention signals of more limited use are: Well! Fancy that! etc.

Short questions

255
Questions can be used as responses to statements, when the hearer wants more information than has been given. Like other responses, these questions are often shortened by omitting repeated matter. They can often be shortened to the question word alone:

(A) The old lady's buying a house.

There are also two-word questions with an end-placed preposition:

(A) I'm going to write an adventure story.
(B) What for? / Who for? / What about?

Likewise Who with?, Where to?, etc. (These questions with end-placed prepositions are <informal> in style: in <formal> English we would say With whom? etc, see 579.)

All these shortened questions are rather <familiar> and abrupt. For greater <politeness>, use a fuller question: When is she going to buy it? etc.

Such questions can also be used when what the speaker says isn't clear in some respect, eg where the meaning of definite words like this is not specified:

(A) Take a look at this. (B) (Take a look at) what?
Note
For a negative statement, use Why not? rather than Why?:
(A) Joan is very upset. (B) Why?
(A) She hasn’t been invited. (B) Why not?

Echo questions: requests for repetition
256
Another type of response question is an echo question, in which we ask the speaker to repeat some information (usually because we failed to hear it, but sometimes also because we can’t believe our ears):
(A) I didn’t enjoy that meal. (B) Did you say you didn’t enjoy it?
Here the request is explicit, but you may leave out Did you say, and simply ‘echo’ part or all of what has been said, using a (sharply rising) question intonation:
You didn’t enjoy it? In these examples, brackets show how some repeated elements may be omitted:
(A) The Browns are emigrating. (B) (They’re) emigrating?
(A) Switch the light off, please. (B) (Switch) the light (off)?
You can also use a wh-echo question, indicating by the wh-word the part of the sentence that you didn’t hear:
(A) It cost five dollars. (B) How much did (you say) it cost? [6]
(A) He’s a dermatologist. (B) What is he? [7]
Note that the nucleus occurs on the wh-word in these questions.
257
The wh-word can also be placed later in the sentence, in its statement position.
Thus instead of [6] and [7], you could say: It cost how much? He’s (a) what?
But such questions, again, are (familiar) and often (impolite), unless preceded by an apology or mark of politeness:
Sorry, what was his job?
I’m sorry, I didn’t quite hear: what does he do?

Note
Echo questions sometimes refer back to other questions:
(A) Have you ever been to Valladolid? (B) (Sorry), have I ever been there?
258
General requests for repetition are very commonly used:
(B) ((I beg your) pardon?
(B) Excuse me? (AmE)
(B) Sorry? (BrE)
(B) What? (familiar, often impolite)
(A) I'll make some coffee.

(B) Oh, thank you very much.

A more explicit general request for repetition (e.g., where you have heard most, but not all, of what was said) can take one of the following forms:

I'm sorry, I didn't quite hear/follow what you said.

Sorry, I didn't quite get that. <informal>

I'm very sorry, would you mind repeating that? saying that again?

Omission of information

259

The last section has already amply illustrated the general rule that we omit information which is already obvious from the preceding context. The rule is further illustrated by the following statement and six possible replies:

(A) This country must economise if it's going to increase its prosperity.

(B) I agree.

(B) Absolutely.

(B) Certainly not.

(B) Nonsense!

(B) True enough, but the problem is how to economise.

(B) And the only way to do it is by greater taxation.

All these responses in some way lack the structure of a 'complete sentence' (see 797), but are acceptable in communication, because the structure omitted contains information already understood.

260

In other circumstances, it is the situation outside language which makes certain information (and therefore certain linguistic elements) unnecessary. Examples are the brief 'incomplete' or formulaic utterances you may hear in various situations:

**COMMANDS**

Off with the lid! Out with it! Faster! Not so fast!

**QUESTIONS**

More coffee? How about joining us?

**SLOGANS**

Republicans out; Republicans for ever.

**EXCLAMATIONS**

Goal! Good! Excellent! You lucky boy; (What a) pity! Shame! Poor John; Silly boy! Oh for a drink! Now for some fun! You and your jokes!

**ALARM CALLS**

Help! Fire!
Sometimes, in casual ⟨familiar⟩ speech, you will notice that words are omitted from the beginning of a sentence. These are usually words which carry little information, such as a pronoun subject and/or an auxiliary verb. They are bracketed in the following examples:

'Beg your pardon. (I . . .)  
Want a drink? (Do you . . .)  
Serves you right. (It . . .)  
Sorry I missed you. (I am . . .)  
No wonder he's late. (It is . . .)  
See you later. (I will . . .)

In public notices, headings etc, a noun phrase, nominal clause, or adjective phrase often stands on its own:

EXIT  
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
WHERE TO EAT IN LONDON  
FRESH TODAY

Prohibition notices are often put in the form of a nominal phrase: NO SMOKING, NO ENTRY, NO PARKING, etc.

Also in some broadcasting situations, such as sports commentaries, a great deal of grammatical structure is omitted. This extract could be from a television football commentary:

Cruyff to Neeskens; a brilliant pass, that. And the score still: Holland 1, West Germany 0. The ball in-field to - oh, but beautifully cut off, and . . .

Reported statements and questions

Reported statements

To report what somebody has stated, you can either use quotation marks (DIRECT SPEECH) or a that-clause (see 638–40) (INDIRECT SPEECH):

He said: 'I need more money'.  
He said that he needed more money.

He said (in this example) can be called the REPORTING CLAUSE, and the rest of the sentence can be called the REPORTED CLAUSE. In direct speech, the reporting clause can also be placed after (or in the middle of) the reported clause, and the subject (if it is not a pronoun) can be placed after the verb of saying:

'I need more money,' exclaimed John.  
he exclaimed.

but not *exclaimed he.

Indirect speech

In narrative, the reporting verb is usually in the past tense. In this case, certain changes are normally made in converting from direct speech to indirect speech:
a Change present tense verbs into the past tense (to match the reporting verb).

b Change 1st and 2nd person pronouns into the 3rd person.

c (Sometimes) change pointer words (see 87–90) like this, now, here, tomorrow into that, then, there, the next day, etc.

Examples:

DIRECT SPEECH (ie what the speaker actually said)

'I moved here two years ago.'

‘Our team has won.’

‘I will marry you tomorrow.’

‘They can sleep in this room.’

INDIRECT SPEECH

He explained that he had moved there two years before.

They claimed that their team had won.

She promised that she would marry him the next day.

She suggested that they could sleep in that room.

Notice that the change to the past tense applies not only to ordinary present tense verbs, but to the present perfect (has won → had won) (see 882), and to modal auxiliaries (will → would, can → could, etc) (see 501).

The shifting of a verb to an earlier time reference generally applies also to past tense verbs, which are shifted to the past perfect (the pluperfect) in indirect speech. Thus

'I saw them yesterday.'

→ He told me that he had seen them the day before.

But sometimes the shift does not take place see 266 (3).

Exceptions

266

There are four exceptions to the shifting of tense in indirect speech.

(1) Past perfect verbs in direct speech are not changed in indirect speech:

'I had left before they arrived.'

→ He said (that) he had left before they (had) arrived.

(2) Modal auxiliaries like must, ought to, and should do not normally change. But must can also be reported as had to:

'You must go.'

→ She said that they had to go.

Should (after I or we) is changed to would:

'I should be grateful.'

→ He said he would be grateful if...'

But the should of obligation remains unchanged, eg You should be more careful → I told him he should be more careful.

(3) When the idea expressed in the reported statement can also be applied to the time of reporting, there is no need to change the tense or other forms:
‘The world is flat.’ → Ancient philosophers argued that the world is/was flat.

This is because the question of whether the world is flat or round can apply as much to the present time as to the time of the ancients. Similarly, example [1] could be reported: He said that he moved here two years ago if the person were reporting this statement near the time and place of the original statement.

(4) Some verbs of saying used in direct speech narrative cannot be easily used in indirect speech. For example:

‘The game is up,’ growled Trent.

*Trent growled that the game was up.

These verbs include verbs which emphasise vocal effect (like cry, gasp, grunt, laugh, shout). Other verbs like answer, declare, reply, say can be readily used for both direct and indirect speech, while verbs of assertion like assert, confirm, state occur mainly in indirect speech.

**Indirect questions**

267

The rules for indirect speech apply to indirect questions as well as to indirect statements. The only difference is that for indirect questions, a wh-clause (see 641-3) is used instead of a that-clause:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIRECT SPEECH</th>
<th>INDIRECT SPEECH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Do you live here?’</td>
<td>She asked him if (or whether) he lived there. [5]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Did our team win?’</td>
<td>They asked if (or whether) their team had won. [6]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Why won’t you marry me?’</td>
<td>He asked her why she wouldn’t marry him. [7]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Which chair shall I sit in?’</td>
<td>He wondered which chair he should sit in. [8]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indirect yes-no questions ([5], [6]) are introduced by if or whether (see 644). Indirect wh-questions are introduced by the wh-word which begins the question in direct speech.

268

Questions about alternatives (see 246-7) behave in the same way. The yes-no type of alternative question is generally introduced by whether in indirect speech:

‘Is it your turn or Susan’s?’ → She asked him whether it was his turn or Susan’s.

There is also a type of indirect question in which the reported clause is a to-infinitive clause beginning with a wh-word:

I asked him what to do (= ‘I asked him what I ought to do’).
He wondered whether to leave (= 'He wondered whether he ought to leave').

(Reported commands: see 352.)

Denial and affirmation

Negative sentences

269
When a speaker wishes to deny the truth of something, he uses a negative sentence containing one of the negative items not (or n't), no, nothing, nowhere, etc (see 632–3). A part of a sentence or clause which follows the negative word is called the scope of negation, and it is this part of the sentence that is negated.

The scope of negation is here signalled by bold type:

- He definitely hasn't taken the job. (‘It's definite that he hasn’t’)  [1]
- He hasn't definitely taken the job. (‘It’s not definite that he has’)  [2]

In these examples, the meaning is different because in [1] definitely is outside the scope of negation, while in [2] it is within the scope of negation. A final adverbial may or may not be in the scope of negation:

- They weren't at home for the whole day. (‘For the whole day, they weren't at home’.)
- They weren't at home for the whole day. (‘It’s not true that they were at home for the whole day’.)

(On the intonation here, see 35–43, 412.) Notice the difference in meaning between the first and second sentence in the following pairs:

- Crime necessarily doesn't pay. (= 'Crime never pays')
- Crime doesn't necessarily pay. (= 'It doesn't always pay')
- I really don't mind waiting. (= 'I don’t mind at all')
- I don't really mind waiting. (= 'I do mind, but not too much')

270
In the scope of negation, any-words like any, yet, ever (see 803–7) are used:

- I didn't attend any of the lectures (‘I attended none of the lectures’).  [3]
- We haven't had dinner yet.  [4]

But we can also use some-words like some, already, sometimes after the negative word, and these words lie outside the scope of negation. Therefore the meaning of [3] is different from that of [5]:

- I didn't attend some of the lectures (‘There were some lectures that I didn’t attend’).  [5]

271
Occasionally a negative word applies not to the verb at all, but to a phrase or part of a phrase elsewhere in the sentence:

- No food at all is better than unwholesome food (ie 'Eating nothing at all is better than eating . . . ').
- We not infrequently go abroad (ie 'We quite often go abroad').  103
They stayed at a not very attractive hotel (ie '... at a rather un-attractive hotel').

Affirmation

272

To place emphasis on the positive meaning of a sentence, we put the intonation nucleus on the operator (or first auxiliary in the verb phrase see 672-5). This is done especially for contrast, when someone has suggested or assumed the negative:

(A) Why haven't you had a bath?  
(B) (But) I have had a bath.

(A) What a pity Mary isn't here!  
(B) (But) she is here.

If the response is not a straightforward denial, but contains new positive information, the new information is stressed by a fall-rise tone (see 43):

(A) Surely he can't drive a bus?  
(B) No, but he can drive a car.

If there is no other operator, do is used as dummy operator (see 674-5):

So you did go to the concert this evening. ('I thought you might not')

(A) So you don't enjoy Julie's  
(B) No, but I do think she's a good cook.

Denial

273

To deny what someone has suggested or supposed, you can again place the nucleus on the operator, but this time on the negative operator (can't, didn't, etc):

So you haven't lost your keys. ('I thought you had')

(A) When did he pass his exam?  
(B) Well actually he didn't pass it.

When the negative is not contracted, the nucleus falls on not:

... he did not pass it.

Short affirmations

274

There is a shortened type of affirmation in which everything is omitted after the operator. This is usual when you are simply affirming a question or statement, and do not need to repeat what has already been said:

(A) This book is interesting.  
(B) Yes, it is. (ie 'It is interesting')

(A) I assume John will be late.  
(B) Yes, he will.

(A) Your mother looks well.  
(B) Yes, she does.
(A) Can you speak German?  (B) Yes, I can.

(A) Have I missed the bus?  (B) Yes, I'm afraid you have.

To agree with a negative statement, use a negative operator:
(A) Your mother doesn't look  (B) No, she doesn't.
    well.

Short denials

275

Similar shortened statements (in the negative) are used to deny a statement, or to answer a question in the negative:

(A) You worry too much.  (B) No, I don't.  [6]

(A) I'll probably fail my driving test.  (B) No, you won't.  [7]

(A) Can you speak German?  (B) No, I'm afraid I can't.  [8]

Notice that when we deny or contradict a statement, as in [6] and [7], we use a rise or fall-rise tone. More (formal) or emphatic sentences contain operator + not.

In these cases the nucleus is on not: No, he did not.

To deny a negative statement, use the positive operator with a rising or fall-rise tone:

(A) I understand most people didn't agree with me.  (B) Yes, they did.

(A) I won't pass the exam.  (B) I bet you will.

276

A denial can seem blunt and (impolite) unless we tone it down in some way. We can make a denial more (tactful) by only (tentatively) expressing the contrary view:

(B) Actually, I don't think he is.

(B) Is he? I thought he was a bachelor.

(B) Are you sure? I had the impression that he was still single.

(A) He's married, isn't he?

Denial combined with affirmation

277

The construction not (or n't) . . . but is used to deny one idea and to affirm another, contrasting, idea:

I don't agree with his principles, but at least he's sincere.

The land doesn't belong to me, but to the government.

We can also say:

= The land belongs not to me, but to the government.
  The land belongs to the government, not to me.
Notice a nucleus can be on the operator in both the positive and negative clause:

I don’t like mathematics, but I do enjoy biology.

**Agreement and disagreement**

278

Agreement and disagreement are types of affirmation and denial in which the expression of **judgement** or **opinion** rather than the assertion of **fact** is involved. It is all the more necessary not to offend standards of politeness when the other person’s judgement is in question.

**Agreement**  
279

In agreeing with an unfavourable opinion, you may wish to qualify your agreement with an expression of regret, *etc*:

(A) His speech was boring.

(B) Yes, I’m afraid it was.

(B) I have to agree that it was.

(B) I must say I found it so.

In other cases, you can be as enthusiastic as you like in emphasising your agreement:

(A) It was an interesting exhibition, wasn’t it?

(B) (Yes,) it was *superb* / absolutely *splendid*, *etc*.

(A) A referendum will satisfy everybody.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{definitely.} \\
\text{quite.} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(B) (Yes,) absolutely.

I quite/absolutely agree.

I couldn’t agree more.

(A) A referendum won’t satisfy everybody.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Definitely not.} \\
\text{It certainly won’t.} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(B) You’re absolutely right, it won’t.

I agree (that it won’t).

**Tactful disagreement**

280

When you deny or contradict what someone else has stated, the effect is often *impolite*, unless the denial is qualified in some way. You can qualify it by an apology or by adjusting to the speaker’s point of view:

(A) English is a difficult language to learn.
(B) I'm afraid I disagree with you: some languages are even more difficult, I think.

(B) True, but the grammar is quite easy.

(B) Yes, but it's not so difficult as Russian.

(B) Do you think so? Actually, I find it quite easy.

(A) The book is tremendously well written.

(B) Yes, (well written) as a whole—but there are some rather boring patches, don't you think?

Partial or qualified agreement

In discussion and argument, there is often a need to agree with one aspect of a speaker's view, and to disagree with another. Here are some of the methods you might use to express this sort of qualified agreement (x and y here stand for statements, and x and y for noun phrases).

Certainly it's true that x, but on the other hand y.

I can see that x, but surely y.

I'm in total agreement with you/Jones/etc about x, but we also have to consider y.

Agreed, but if we accept x, then it must (also) be true that y.

Corroboration

We can also agree, and add a further point to corroborate or confirm the argument:

Yes, and in fact x.

Yes, and what is more, x.

I agree, and in fact one might go so far as to say x.

Absolutely. Actually, I would go further, and say x.

Fact, hypothesis and neutrality

We have considered the truth and falsehood of statements in terms of affirmation, denial, negation, etc. But there are many circumstances in which the issue of truth or falsehood is assumed rather than directly stated. Compare:

I'm glad that John has agreed. (FACT) [1]

I wish that John had agreed. (HYPOTHESIS) [2]

In [1], the speaker assumes the truth of the statement John has agreed, while in [2], he assumes its falsehood. We will call something assumed to be false HYPOTHETICAL.

Hypothetical meaning

A fact (or factual meaning) is usually expressed by a finite verb clause, as in [1], or by an -ing clause (see 515):
I'm surprised \{that he made\} that mistake.

A HYPOTHESIS (or hypothetical meaning) is usually expressed by the past tense in dependent clauses, as in [2], and by would (or 'd) + infinitive in main clauses. These two constructions can be seen respectively in the conditional subclause and in the main clause of hypothetical conditions (see 208):

\[\text{SUBCLAUSE}\]

\[\text{If we had enough money, I would buy a radio today/tomorrow.}\]

Notice that the past tense (had, would) here has nothing to do with past time: reference is to present or future time.

PAST time when combined with hypothesis is expressed by the perfective construction have + -ed participle:

\[\text{If we had had enough money, I would have bought a tape-recorder last year.}\]

Would in the verb of the main clause can be replaced by another past tense modal auxiliary:

\[\text{If we had enough money, I could (= 'would be able to') buy a tape-recorder today.}\]

Other constructions containing hypothetical clauses

Apart from conditional clauses, hypothetical meaning may occur in a few other special constructions. The main ones are illustrated here:

\[\text{It's time you were in bed.} \quad \text{('but you're not in bed')}\]
\[\text{He behaves as if he owned the place.} \quad \text{('but he doesn't own...')}\]
\[\text{were poor.}\]
\[\text{It's not as though he \{ was poor.} \quad \text{('he's not poor')} \quad \langle\text{informal}\rangle\]
\[\text{Just suppose someone had seen us.} \quad \text{('but they didn't see us')}\]
\[\text{If only I hadn't listened to my parents!} \quad \text{('but I did listen...')}\]
\[\text{In that case,}\]
\[\text{Then,}\]
\[\text{Otherwise,}\]
\[\text{he would have taken a taxi.} \quad \text{(see 209-10)}\]
\[\text{In your place, I would have taken a taxi.}\]

(On the special hypothetical use of modal auxiliaries for tentative meaning, see 295, 337, 340.)

Other ways of expressing hypothetical meaning

286

In addition to the past tense, there are three less common ways of expressing hypothetical meaning in subclauses:

(A) THE WERE-SUBJUNCTIVE (see 825):

\[\text{I'd play football with you if I were younger.}\]

(The ordinary past tense was can replace were in \langle\text{informal}\rangle style.)
(B) *Were to (or was to) <informal>>+ INFINITIVE:

If it *were to rain* tomorrow, the match would be postponed.

(This construction expresses hypothetical future.)

(C) *Should*+ INFINITIVE:

If a serious crisis *should arise*, the government would take immediate action.

Constructions (B) and (C) are also slightly <formal or literary>, and suggest <tentative> conditions. These last two constructions are in general limited to conditional clauses (and constructions related to conditions, like *Suppose he were to see us*!).

287

Another type of hypothetical conditional clause has no subordinating conjunction *if*, but instead begins with an operator placed before the subject (inversion). The three operators which occur in this construction are *had*, subjunctive *were*, and putative *should* (see (C) above):

*Had I known*, I would have written before. (‘If I had known . . . ’)

*Were a serious crisis to arise*, the government would have to act swiftly. (‘If a serious crisis were . . . ’)

*Should you change your mind*, no one would blame you. (‘If you should . . . ’)

The constructions with *were* and *should* are rather <literary> in tone, and can always be replaced by an *if*-construction.

Note

In the negative of clauses beginning *had*, *were* and *should*, there is no contracted form: instead of *Hadn’t I known, etc*, we must say *Had I not known, etc*.

Neutrality

288

In addition to fact and hypothesis, there is a third type of situation, in which the speaker assumes neither the truth nor the falsehood of a statement. We will call this situation NEUTRALITY. (We have already met a type of neutrality with respect to the existence of something that a phrase refers to: this is the neutrality expressed by such forms as *any, ever, yet*.) For example:

a  It's best for Sarah to be patient.

b  I want John to agree.

In these sentences, we do not know *a* whether Sarah will be patient or not; *b* whether John will agree or not. In this sense, the assumptions are neutral.

Infinitive clauses often express neutrality; also *wh*-clauses, which in this respect sometimes contrast with *that*-clauses:

Did you know *that* John has agreed? (‘John has agreed’)

Do you know *whether* John has agreed? (‘Please tell me’)

There is the same contrast between:

He told me *that* they had passed the exam.

He told me *whether* he had passed the exam.

To the second sentence, a listener would be inclined to reply with a question: *Well, and did he pass it?*
Doubt is another verb that can be followed by either a that-clause or a wh-clause. Not + doubt expresses certainty, and so takes a that-clause:

I doubt whether
I don't doubt that

James will co-operate with us.

Putative should

289

We have already said that should expresses a tentative condition in if-clauses. This is true not only for hypothetical conditions, but for open conditions (see 208):

If you hear the news, Jane, please let me know. [3]

Open conditions are, in fact, another case of a construction which is neutral with regard to truth and falsehood. We do not know from [3] whether or not Jane will hear the news and let me know.

In other dependent clauses, too, should is used neutrally, to represent something as a neutral 'idea' rather than as a 'fact'. We call this use of should putative. Contrast these two sentences:

FACT

\{The fact is\} that the railways will be improved.

IDEA

\{We know\} that the railways should be improved.

\{The idea is\} that the railways should be improved.

\{Someone is suggesting\} improved.

('... but whether they will be improved is another matter')

290

Putative should occurs quite widely in that-clauses (see 828):

It's a pity that you should have to leave. [4]

I'm surprised that your wife should object. [5]

It's unthinkable that he should resign. [6]

What worries me is that men should be able to threaten ordinary peaceful citizens with bombs and bullets. [7]

In some of these sentences, there is no neutrality: for example, the speaker of [5] assumes that 'your wife objects'. Even so, there is a difference between [5] and the factual sentence I'm surprised that your wife objects, because in [5] it is the 'very idea' of the objection that surprises me, not the objection as a fact.

Note

[a] Putative should is also found in some questions and exclamations:

How should I know? Why should he resign? Who should come in but the mayor himself!

[b] In some sentences, putative should is difficult to distinguish from should in the sense of 'ought to': He has urged that private firearms should be banned.

The subjunctive

291

The subjunctive (see 823-5) also has neutral meaning. It can be used:

a In some that-clauses, where the clause expresses an intention:
Congress has voted decid ed / decreed / insisted that the present law continue to operate.

Here should + infinitive can also be used. This use of the subjunctive is quite common in (AmE), eg in newspaper language.

b In some conditional and contrast clauses (see 208–16):

Whatever be the reasons for it, we cannot tolerate disloyalty. (= ‘Whatever the reasons for it may be . . . ’)

c In certain idioms, usually in main clauses:

So be it then;
Heaven forbid!

These constructions are all <formal> and rather <elevated or archaic>.

Degrees of likelihood

292

Instead of thinking of truth and falsehood in black-and-white terms, we can think in terms of a scale of likelihood. The extremes of the scale are impossibility and certainty (or logical necessity); other, intermediate concepts to be considered are possibility, probability, improbability, etc. These notions are expressed in various ways:

a most importantly, by modal auxiliaries (can, may, must, etc, see 501):

You may be right.

b more <formally>, by a sentence with introductory it and a that-clause:

It is possible that you are right (see 584–7).

c by an adverbial such as necessarily, perhaps, probably (see 479):

Perhaps you’re right.

These various constructions will now be illustrated in 293–301. We shall give special attention, where necessary, to the use of auxiliaries in negative sentences, in questions, in reference to past time, and in hypothetical clauses.

Auxiliaries such as can, may, and must can refer to the future as well as to the present: You may feel better tomorrow ( = ‘It’s possible that you will feel better’).

Possibility

Can, may, could, might

293

(A) POSSIBILITY OF THE FACT (factual)

\[
\begin{aligned}
\text{The railways may be improved.} & \quad \text{[1]} \\
\text{It is possible that the railways will be improved.} & \quad \text{[2]} \\
\text{Perhaps / possibly / maybe the railways will be improved.} & \quad \text{[3]}
\end{aligned}
\]

(B) POSSIBILITY OF THE IDEA (theoretical)

\[
\begin{aligned}
\text{The railways can be improved.} & \quad \text{[4]} \\
\text{It is possible for the railways to be improved.} & \quad \text{[5]}
\end{aligned}
\]

Theoretical possibility (can) is ‘weaker’ than factual possibility (may). Sentence [4], for example, says merely that in theory the railways are improvable, ie that
they are not perfect. Sentence [1], on the other hand, could suggest that there are definite plans for improvement.

Note

Can in general statements of possibility has roughly the same meaning as sometimes:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Lightning can be dangerous.} \\
\text{Lightning is sometimes dangerous.}
\end{align*}
\]

294

Negation: For impossibility, use cannot or can’t (informal) (but not may not):

He can’t be working at this time! (‘It is impossible that he is working . . . ’)

He may not be working, on the other hand, means ‘It is possible that he is not working’.

Questions: Use can (not may): Can he be working? (= ‘Is it possible that he is working?’)

Past time: For something which was possible in the past, use could:

In those days, a man could be sentenced to death for a small crime.

For the (present) possibility of a past happening, use may + the perfect:

We may have made a mistake. (‘It is possible that we (have) made a mistake’)

Hypothetical: For hypothetical possibility, use could or might:

If someone were to make a mistake, the whole plan could/might be ruined.

Tentative possibility (could, might)

295

Could and might in their hypothetical sense are often used to express (tentative) possibility, i.e. to talk of something which is possible, but unlikely:

He could/might be telling lies. (‘It is just possible that he is telling lies’.)

Could you have left your purse on the bus? (‘Is it just possible . . . ?’)

Ability (can, be able to, etc)

296

The notion of ‘ability’, also expressed by can, is closely related to that of ‘theoretical possibility’:

He can speak English fluently.

Will you be able to meet us in London tomorrow?

He is capable of keeping a secret when he wants to.

She knows how to type and take shorthand.

Negation: For inability, use can’t (or be unable to, or be incapable of):

He can’t speak German very well.

Questions: Can you drive a car?

Past time: Could usually means ‘knew how to’; it refers to a permanent or habitual ability:

He could play the piano when he was five.
Was/were able to often combines the ideas of 'ability' and 'achievement':
By acting quickly, we were able to save him from drowning. (i.e. 'We could, and did save him').

HYPOTHETICAL: I'm so hungry, I could eat a horse!
Certainty or logical necessity (must, have to, etc)

297
Must + infinitive and have + to-infinitive (or, <esp in BrE>, have got to) can express certainty or logical necessity:
There must be some mistake.
You have to be joking! <esp AmE>
The bombing's got to stop sometime. <esp BrE>
It is certain that the bombing will stop soon.

= {Many people will certainly/necessarily lose their jobs.
   Many people are certain/sure to lose their jobs.
   Inevitably, some changes will take place.

The contrasting relation between possibility and certainty can be seen in:

= {His father can't still be alive.
   His father must be dead.
   
   = {It is impossible that his father is still alive.
   It is certain that his father is dead.

' All four sentences have in effect the same meaning.

Negatives and questions

298

= {Does there have to be a motive for the crime?
   Is there necessarily a motive for the crime?
   Need there be a motive for the crime? <esp BrE>
   
   Strikes don't have to be caused by bad pay (they can also be caused by bad conditions, etc).
   Strikes are not necessarily caused by bad pay.
   Strikes need not be caused by bad pay. <esp BrE>

The auxiliary need is used <esp in BrE>, in place of must in questions and negatives.

299

PAST TIME: We have to distinguish a past certainty (had to) from a certainty about the past (usually expressed by must + the perfect):
Someone had to lose the game. ('It was necessary, by the rules of the game, for someone to lose')
John must have missed his train ('It is (almost) certain that John missed his train').

HYPOTHETICAL: Use have to:
If God did not exist, someone would have to invent him. (i.e. 'it would be necessary for someone . . . ')
Prediction and predictability (will, must)

300

As illustrated above (see 297), must often expresses a certainty about an event which we do not observe, but about which we draw a conclusion from evidence. On hearing the phone ring, you might say 'That must be my wife' ('I know that she is due to phone at about this time, and I therefore conclude that she is phoning now'). In a similar way, you can use will to express a 'prediction' about the present, just as you can use will to make a prediction about the future: That will be my wife. There is little difference here between must and will:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{John must have arrived by now.} & \quad \text{(also: John will have arrived by tomorrow)} \\
\text{John will have arrived by now.} & \quad \text{(but not: *They must have arrived by tomorrow.)}
\end{align*}
\]

This sort of prediction with will often occurs with conditional sentences:

If litmus paper is dipped in acid, it will turn red.

Will can also be used in a habitual sense, to express the idea of 'predictability' or 'characteristic behaviour':

Accidents will happen.

A lion will only attack a human being when it is hungry.

We have noted (see 120) the equivalent use of would to express habitual or characteristic ('predictable') behaviour in the past:

He would often go all day without eating.

Probability (ought to, should, etc)

301

The auxiliaries ought to and should (see 501) can express 'probability', and can be regarded as weaker equivalents of must (= 'certainty'). Compare:

Our guests must be home by now. ('I am certain')

Our guests \(\{\text{ought to} \}\) be home by now. ('They probably are, but I'm not certain')

Should is more frequent than ought to. Other ways of expressing probability are:

It is quite probable/likely that they didn't receive the letter.

He is probably the best chess-player in the country.

They have very likely lost the way home.

The concert is likely to finish late.

NEGATION: Improbability can be expressed by shouldn't, oughtn't to, or it is improbable/unlikely that:

There \(\{\text{shouldn't} \}\) be any difficulties.

It is unlikely that there will be any difficulties.

QUESTIONS (rare): Should there be any difficulty in getting tickets?

Note

People have a natural tendency to overstate their convictions. Therefore must and will (see 300) are sometimes used in a weakened sense that one feels is nearer to 'probability' than to 'certainty': You'll be feeling hungry after all that work. They must have spent years and years building this cathedral.
Attitudes to truth

302
We now consider the ways in which people may be committed or uncommitted to the truth or reality of something. The people concerned may be the speaker ('I') or another person, or a group of people. We often use, to express such attitudes, a that-clause or a wh-clause (the latter to express a 'neutral' attitude, see 288), but adverbials and other constructions are also sometimes available, as well as the type of parenthetical clauses we call comment clauses (see 522). In <impersonal> style, people prefer to use the methods of expressing certainty, probability, etc discussed in 297–301, rather than those which involve a 1st person pronoun. Thus It is certain . . . and It is unlikely . . . can be impersonal alternatives to I am certain: . . . or I doubt . . . .

Certainty
303
I know that his answer will be 'No'.
I know what his answer will be.

= {I am certain/sure (that) the party will be a success.
The party will be a success, I'm sure.

They were convinced {of their success.

= {It is obvious/clear/plain (to us all) that he has suffered a great deal.
He has clearly/obviously/plainly suffered a great deal.

= {We do not doubt that he is honest.
We have no doubt of his honesty.

Without doubt, she is one of the best teachers in the school

Other adverbials which can replace without doubt in more <formal> contexts: doubtless, indubitably, undeniably, unquestionably.

Doubt or uncertainty
304

= {I am not certain/sure/convincd that he deserves promotion.
I am not certain/sure whether he deserves promotion.

They were uncertain/unsure (of) who was to blame.

= {I doubt if many people will come to the meeting.
I don't think many people will come to the meeting. (see 636)

There were some doubts {about his honesty.
We have doubts

They were uncertain of/about the best course to take.

Belief, opinion, etc
305

(A) BELIEF, OPINION

= {I believe (that) the lecture was well attended.
The lecture was well attended, I believe.
He thinks (that) he can dictate to everybody.
It was everybody's opinion that the conference was a success.
It's my belief that cars will disappear from our roads by 1990.
In my opinion, he was driving the car too fast.
You may consider yourselves lucky.
He was thought/believed/considered to be the richest man in Europe.

There is a slight difference between 'opinion' and 'belief' in that an opinion is usually something that someone arrives at on the basis of observation and judgement:

It's my belief that he drinks too much.
('I don't know how much he drinks, but ...')
It's my opinion that he drinks too much.
('I know how much he drinks, and in my judgement; it's too much.')

Further, tag questions with a falling tone can sometimes be used to express an opinion:
He was driving too fast, wasn't he?

(B) ASSUMPTION

We assume/suppose that you have received the package.

= { All the passengers, I presume, have been warned about the delay.
   All the passengers have presumably been warned about the delay.

Will in the sense of 'present prediction' (see 300) can be used here:

I assume you will all have heard the news.

(C) APPEARANCE

= { It seems/appears (to me) that no one noticed his escape.
   No one seems/appears to have noticed his escape.
   Apparently, no one noticed his escape.

It looks/seems as if you're right.
He looks as if he's ill. (rather informal) (Here looks refers to visual appearance only.)

306

In that-clauses in categories (A) and (B), transferred negation (see 636) is common. Thus instead of I think he hasn't arrived, we prefer to say I don't think he has arrived.

Notice that in shortened reply statements in these three categories, the clause which is the object of belief, etc, can usually be replaced by so (see 401):

(A) Has the race been postponed?  (B) It seems so.
   I think so.
   I suppose so.
   Apparently so.
   I don't think so.

116 (Here so replaces '(that) the race has been postponed'.)
Section C: Mood, emotion and attitude

307
In section B, we looked at the English language as a means of giving and receiving information. But language is more than this: it is communication between people. It often expresses the emotions and attitudes of the speaker and he often uses it to influence the attitudes and behaviour of the hearer. These are the aspects of English we consider in this section.

Emotive emphasis in speech

308
In this part of the section, we shall be dealing mainly with (familiar) forms of English.

Interjections

309
Interjections are words whose only function is to express emotion. Common English interjections are: Oh /ou/ (surprise); Ah /aː/ (satisfaction, recognition, etc); Aha /ə'haː/ (jubilant satisfaction, recognition); Wow /waʊ/ (great surprise); Yippee /'jipiː/ (excitement, delight); Ouch /aʊtʃ/, Ow /au/ (pain); Ugh /ʌɡ/ (disgust); Ooh /uː/ (pleasure, pain).

Oh, what a beautiful present!
Ah, that's just what I wanted.
Aha, these books are exactly what I was looking for.
Wow, what a fantastic goal!
Yippee, this is fun!
Ouch, my foot!
Ugh, what a mess.
Ooh, this cream cake's delicious.

Other ways of giving emotion emphasis

310
EXCLAMATIONS (see 568)

What a wonderful time we've had!
How delightful her manners are!

Exclamations are often shortened to a noun phrase or an adjectival phrase: What a girl! ('What a girl she is!'); How funny! ('How funny it is!).

311
EMPHATIC so AND such (see 482, 562)

He's such a nice man!
I'm 'so afraid they'll get lost.
Why is he 'such a baby!
Don't upset yourself 'so!
These have an emotive emphasis similar to that of exclamations, but their tone is rather ‘gushy’. The words so and such are stressed, and for extra emphasis, may receive nuclear stress.

312
REPETITION (which also denotes degree = extremely)

It’s far, far too expensive.
I agree with every word you’ve said—every single word.
It’s very very awkward.
You bad, bad boy!

313
STRESS ON THE OPERATOR (see 672-5)

That will be nice!

What are you doing?

We have enjoyed ourselves!

The operator often has nuclear stress. Do can be used as a dummy auxiliary to express emphasis (see 675):

You do look pretty.
You did give me a fright.

There is a similar use of do to give persuasive emphasis to a command:

'Do be quiet!

Do come if you can!

314
NUCLEAR STRESS ON OTHER WORDS

I wish you’d listen!

I’m terribly sorry!

Intensifying adverbs and modifiers

315

As we noted in 219–20, many degree adverbs and other degree expressions intensify the meaning of the word they modify:

We are very happy indeed.
I was utterly dismayed.
He’s an absolute saint.

In <familiar> speech, some adjectives and adverbs (such as terrific, tremendous, awfully, terribly) have little meaning apart from their emotive force. Thus terrific, great, grand, fantastic are simply emphatic equivalents of good or nice: The weather was terrific; It was a great show; etc. Notice that awfully and terribly can be used in a ‘good’ sense, as well as in a ‘bad’ sense:

She’s terribly kind to us.

In addition to degree adverbs, certain adverbs like really and definitely have an emphatic effect:

We really have enjoyed ourselves.
He definitely impressed us.
It was truly a memorable occasion.
She literally collapsed with laughter. <familiar>

Intensification of questions and negatives

316
You can intensify the emotive force of a wh-question by adding ever, on earth, etc, to the wh-word:

How ever did he escape? (‘I just can’t imagine’)
Why on earth didn’t you tell me? (‘How silly of you!’)
What in heaven’s name does he think he’s doing? (‘The idiot!’)

In <writing>, sometimes ever is spelled as part of the wh-word: whoever, wherever, etc, but so spelled, these words have other uses apart from intensifying (see 216). Why ever is always spelled as two words.

317
You can intensify a negative sentence by adding at all either directly after the negative word, or in a later position in the sentence:

I found nothing at all the matter with him.
She didn’t speak to us at all.

Other negative intensifiers are a bit <informal> and by any means (both adverbials of degree); and whatever (postmodifier of a negative noun phrase):

They weren’t a bit apologetic.
You have no excuse whatever.

Further examples of negative intensifiers are:

I didn’t sleep a wink. <informal>
He didn’t give me a thing (= ‘anything at all’). <informal>

A negative noun phrase beginning not a can be used for emphasis:

We arrived not a moment too soon (= We didn’t arrive a moment too soon).

318
Another rather <rhetorical> form of negative emphasis is often combined with the forms already mentioned. This is to place the negative element at the beginning of the clause:

Not a penny of the money did he spend.
Never have I seen such a crowd of people.

As the examples show, the operator is placed before the subject in this construction (unless the negative element is itself the subject: Not a single word passed his lips) (see 432).

For can’t or couldn’t, possibly is used as an intensifier: It can’t possibly succeed.

Exclamatory and rhetorical questions

319
An exclamatory question is a yes-no question spoken with an emphatic falling tone, instead of the usual rising tone. The most common type has a negative form:

Hasn’t she grown! (‘She’s grown very very much!’)
Wasn’t it a marvellous concert!
Here the speaker vigorously invites the hearer's agreement; the effect is similar to:

It was a marvellous concert, wasn't it? (see 250)

Another type of exclamationary question is positive in form, with stress on the operator and subject:

'I am 'I hungry! ('I'm very very hungry'.)

'Did 'he look annoyed!

'Has 'she grown!

320

A Rhetorical question is more like a forceful statement than an exclamation. A positive rhetorical question is like a strong negative statement; a negative rhetorical question is like a strong positive statement.

POSITIVE

Is that a reason for despair? ('Surely that is not a reason . . . ')

NEGATIVE

Didn't I tell you he would forget? ('You know I told you . . . ')

There are also rhetorical wh-questions:

What difference does it make? ('It makes no difference')

Who doesn't know that? ('Everyone knows that')

As the name suggests, rhetorical questions are often rather rhetorical in tone.

Describing emotions

321

We come now to the description or reporting of emotive behaviour. An emotive reaction to something can be expressed by the preposition at:

I was alarmed at his behaviour. [1]

An audience will always laugh at a good joke. [2]

She was very surprised at your resignation from the club. [3]

In <BrE>, with is often used instead of at when what causes the reaction is a person or object rather than an event:

I was furious with John.

Is he pleased with his present?

Other prepositions used are about and of: worried about, annoyed about, resentful of, etc (see 243).

- The cause of the emotion is often expressed by a to-infinitive clause or a that-clause (with or without should, see 289–90), and in these cases the preposition is omitted:

They were alarmed to find the house empty.

She is sorry to have missed the show.

I was delighted that you came.

We're anxious that everything should go smoothly.
The **cause** of emotion may also be expressed by the subject (or, in the passive, by the agent). *Compare [3] above with:*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Your resignation from the club} & \text{ surprised her very much.} \\
\text{She was very surprised by your resignation from the club.}
\end{align*}
\]

Other constructions for describing emotions do not specify the person affected, and are therefore more **impersonal**:  

- The accommodation was *satisfactory/delightful, etc.* [4]  
- The news from the front is *very disturbing.* [5]  
- *It's amazing* that so many passengers were unhurt. *(see 454, 584)* [6]  
- *It's a pity* that you should have missed her. [7]  
- *It's a pity* to have missed her. [8]  

In most of these cases, the person affected is likely to be 'me' (the speaker). The person affected can sometimes be made clear by a phrase introduced by *to* or *for:*  

*For satisfactory for most people, disturbing to me, etc.* Thus [6] can be expanded:  

*To me, it's amazing that so many passengers were unhurt.*

**Sentence adverbials**

Some sentence adverbials (including comment clauses, see 522) can express an emotional reaction or judgement:  

- *To my regret,* he did not accept our offer.  
  *(ie 'I regretted that he did not accept the offer')*
- *Surprisingly,* no one has objected to the plan.  
  *(ie 'It is surprising that . . . ')*
- He is *wisely* staying at home today.  
- The children were rather noisy, *I'm afraid.*

Other sentence adverbs similar to *surprisingly* and *wisely* are *amazingly,* *strangely,* *annoyingly,* *regrettably,* *fortunately,* *luckily,* *hopefully,* *preferably,* *foolishly,* *sensibly.*

**Liking and disliking**

Verbs such as *like, love, hate,* and *prefer* can be followed either by a *to*-infinitive clause or by an *-ing* clause (see 515), as well as by a noun phrase object:  

\[
\text{She likes/loves/hates} \begin{align*}
\text{parties.} \quad & \text{[9]} \\
\text{to give parties.} \quad & \text{(ie 'She likes the idea of it,' etc)} \quad \text{[10]} \\
\text{giving parties.} \quad & \text{(ie 'She likes it when she does it', etc)} \quad \text{[11]}
\end{align*}
\]

Some English speakers discern a slight difference between [10] and [11]: the infinitive clause expresses an 'idea', while the *-ing* clause expresses a 'fact' (see 290). Thus in some contexts (but not in [10]), the infinitive clause may have neutral meaning (see 288):

- He likes me **to work** late. *(‘. . . and that’s why I do it.’)*  
- He likes me **working** late. *(‘. . . and that’s why I do it’)*
Usually only the infinitive clause can be used when the main verb is hypothetical:

(A) Would you like to have dinner now?
(B) No, I'd prefer to eat later.

Note

Enjoy, dislike, and loathe only take -ing clauses:
He enjoys/dislikes/loathes working.

Preference

325

Prefer means 'like more' or 'like better'. The rejected alternative is introduced by a to-phrase, or by a clause introduced by rather than, which may be followed by an infinitive (with or without to) or by an -ing participle:
Most people prefer trains to buses.
He prefers renting a car to having one of his own.
He prefers to rent a car rather than to have one of his own.
Rather than buy a car of his own, he prefers to rent one.

She has always preferred making her own clothes {rather than} buying them in the shops.

Would prefer + to-infinitive (hypothetical preference) can be replaced by would rather + bare infinitive, which may be followed by a than-construction (see 528):

\[
= \begin{cases} 
\text{I'd prefer to stay in a house rather than in a hotel.} \\
\text{I'd rather stay in a house than in a hotel.} 
\end{cases}
\]

Some other emotions

326

Here are some of the ways of expressing other emotions. Many of the constructions illustrated here have already been discussed and exemplified. Notice that adverbs of degree (see 217–26) can be used to indicate the 'strength' of the emotion. Many of the sentences are ⟨informal⟩ and ⟨familiar⟩.

327

HOPE

I (very much) hope (that) he \{will arrive\} on time.
I am (rather) hoping that . . . \langle\text{tentative}\rangle (see 127)
I hoped that . . . \langle\text{tentative}\rangle (see 111)
I was hoping that . . . \langle\text{more tentative}\rangle (see 127)
I hope to see you soon.
Hopefuly, next spring will bring an improvement in the economic situation. \langle\text{esp AmE}\rangle

328

ANTICIPATION OF PLEASURE

I am looking forward to receiving your reply.
I know I will enjoy meeting you again.
DISAPPOINTMENT OR REGRET

I'm (rather/very) disappointed that . . .
It is (a little bit) disappointing that . . .
It's a (great) shame/pity that . . .
I'm sorry to hear that . . .
I \{ \text{would have had} \} hoped that . . . (unfulfilled hope) (see 284)
I wish (that) someone had let me know. (unfulfilled wish) (see 336–7)
If only I had known! (see 337)
Unfortunately, . . .

330

APPROVAL

I (very much) approve of \{ \text{the plan.} \}
I (very much) approve of \{ \text{your asking for his opinion.} \}
It wasn't a bad \text{movie, was it?} \text{(familiar) (mild)}
I (rather) like the new boss.
I \{ \text{'do love} \} your dress. (enthusiastic)
What a(n) great/excellent/marvellous/. . . play! (enthusiastic)

331

DISAPPROVAL

I don't like the way she dresses (very much).
I don't (much) care for sweets, actually.
I didn't think \{ \text{much of the orchestra.} \}
I didn't think \{ \text{the orchestra was much/very good.} \}
I thought the novel was \text{poor/dreadful/appalling, didn't you?}
It would have been better, I think, if you hadn't mentioned it.
You shouldn't have bought such an expensive present. (see 343)
I don't think you should have told the children.
I had hoped you would have done more than this.
Disapproval can often be expressed more \text{<tactfully>} by means of a question:
Did you have/need to work so late?
Why did you do a thing like that?
Was it really necessary to be so rude to the waiter?
Don't you think it would have been better if you had told me in advance?

332

SURPRISE

It's (rather) surprising/amazing/astonishing that so many people come to these meetings.
I am/was (very) surprised that so many turned up.
What a surprise!
How strange/odd/astonishing/amazing that . . . !
Wasn't it extraordinary that . . . ? (see 319)
Surprisingly/strangely/incredibly, . . .
CONCERN, WORRY
I am (a bit) concerned/worried that...
I am (rather) worried/concerned about...
It's (very) disturbing/worrying that...
I find his behaviour very disturbing/worrying.
His health gives (some) cause for anxiety. <formal, impersonal>

Volition

334
We distinguish four types of volition: WILLINGNESS, WISH, INTENTION, INSISTENCE. These are listed in order of increasing 'strength': volition becomes 'stronger' to the extent that a person asserts his will, or imposes it on others.

Willingness

335
Willingness can be expressed by the auxiliary will (or 'll <informal>):

(A) Who will lend me a cigarette?      (B)  I will.

('Who is willing to lend me . . .')
The porter will help if you ask him.

Here the future meaning of will is mixed with that of volition (see 129). For past or hypothetical willingness, use would:

PAST TIME       When he was young, he was so poor (that) he would do anything for money.

HYPOTHETICAL    John is so greedy, he would do anything for money (if you asked him).

Won't and wouldn't express the negative of willingness, ie REFUSAL:

He won't take any notice.       (= 'He refuses/declines to take any notice.')

They wouldn't listen to me.     (= 'They refused . . . ')

Note
The adverbs willingly and readily combine the ideas of 'willingness' and 'performance': He willingly/readily gave me the money (ie 'He was willing to do it, and did so').

Wish

336
For neutral volition, wish is a more <formal> verb than want:
The manager wishes (me) to thank you for your co-operation.
I want (you) to read this newspaper report.
Do you want me to sign this letter?

For a hypothetical circumstance, use only wish:
I wish (that) you would listen to me! (' . . . but you won't')
The exclamatory construction *If only* ... can also be used for hypothetical meaning:

= \{ \text{If only I could remember his name!} \\
\text{I 'do wish I could remember his name!} \}

When expressing your own wishes, or inviting the wishes of others, you can make the wish more *<tentative>* and *<tactful>* by using *would like*, *would prefer*, or *would rather* (see 324–5):

*Would you like* me to open these letters?

*I would/should like* to stay in an inexpensive hotel.

(*Should* can replace *would in* the 1st person.)

Another way to consult someone's wishes is to use a question with *shall*, or more *<tentatively>* , with *should*:

*Shall* I make you a cup of coffee? (*'Would you like me to ... '*)

*What shall* we do this evening? *Shall* we listen to some music?

*Should* we tell him that he's not wanted?

**Note**

[a] For other uses of *shall* connected with volition, see 340, 343.

[b] 1st and 3rd person commands with *let* (see 521) also express a kind of wish: *Let's listen to some music (, shall we?)*. *Let everyone do what they can.*

**Intention**

338

The verbs *intend*, *mean*, and *aim* (*+ infinitive clause*) express intention:

*He intends/means/aims to catch the last train.*

[1]

*That remark was meant/intended to hurt her.*

[2]

Intention can also be expressed by *be going to* (see 130), or, in the 1st person, by *will/shall* (see 129):

*Are you going to* catch the last train?

*I will/shall* write as soon as I can.

*We won't* stay longer than two hours.

These forms also have an element of prediction, and so are more definite about the fulfilment of the intention than [1] and [2].

(On clauses and phrases of purpose, or 'intended result', see 203.)

**Insistence**

339

*He insists* on doing everything himself.

*We are determined* to overcome the problem.

Insistence is occasionally expressed by *will/shall* with strong stress:

*He 'will try to mend it himself. ('He insists on trying . . . ')*

*I won't / shan't* 〈BrE〉 give in! (*'I am determined not to . . . '*)

*Why 'will you make things difficult for yourself?"*
Permission and obligation

Permission: *can, may, etc*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Can we smoke in here?} & \quad \text{Yes, you} \quad \text{can.} \\
\text{May we smoke in here?} & \quad \langle \text{more formal, polite} \rangle \\
\text{Are we allowed to smoke in here?} \\
\text{Are we permitted to smoke in here?} & \quad \langle \text{formal} \rangle \\
\text{Is it all right if we smoke in here?} & \quad \langle \text{informal} \rangle
\end{align*}
\]

We have *allowed/permitted* him to take the examination late. They let him do what he wants.

*Could* can express permission in the past, or hypothetical permission:
- When I was a student, I *could* travel at half-price.
  - (‘... was allowed to ...’)
- If you were a student, you *could* travel at half-price.
  - (‘... would be allowed to ...’)

You can also use hypothetical *could* (and sometimes *might*) in ⟨tactful⟩ requests for permission:

*Could/Might* we ask you what your opinion is?
- I wonder if I *could/might* borrow your pen?

Another construction for asking and giving permission involves the verb *mind*:

(A) Would you mind \{if I opened a window? \}my opening a window? 
(B) No, \{I don’t mind at all. \} (= ‘certainly you may’).

Again, the hypothetical form is more ⟨tactful⟩.

Note

*Shall* is occasionally used in the 2nd and 3rd person to express permission given by the speaker:
- You *shall* do exactly as you wish.
- He *shall* get his money.

Perhaps this meaning is rather one of willingness: ‘I am willing to see that he gets his money’ *etc.*

Obligation or compulsion

*Must, have, to, etc*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{You \textit{must}} & \quad \text{be back by 2 o’clock (‘I want you to do some}} \\
\text{You’ll have to} & \quad \text{cleaning’). [1]} \\
\text{You have \textit{to} sign your name here (otherwise the document isn’t}} \\
\text{valid). [2]} \\
\text{I’ve \textit{got to} finish this essay by tomorrow. \langle \text{informal} \rangle} \\
\text{The university \textit{requires} all students to submit their work by a}} \\
\text{given date. \langle \text{formal} \rangle} [4]
\end{align*}
\]

*Must* and *have (got) to + infinitive* (see 297, 501) both express obligation, but some English speakers feel a difference between them. For such speakers, *must*
involves the speaker’s authority (see [1]), while have (got) to involves some other authority than the speaker; eg official regulations (see [2], [4]). With a 1st person subject, must expresses the speaker’s authority over himself (ie his sense of duty, social responsibility etc):

I must phone my parents tonight. (‘They’ll be worrying about me’)  
We must invite the Stewarts to dinner. (‘It’s months since we saw them’)

In the past tense and in hypothetical clauses, had to and would have to express obligation:

They had to work fifty hours a week in those days (‘were obliged to . . . ’)  
If you went abroad, you would have to earn your own living.  
(‘. . . would be obliged to . . . ’)

Need, etc

342

In questions and negatives, the auxiliary need (esp BrE) is a replacement for must; otherwise forms of have (got) to or need to can be used (see 298):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Need you work so hard? (esp BrE)} & = \\
\text{Have you got to work so hard?} & \\
\text{Do you have to work so hard?} & \\
\text{Do you need to work so hard?} & \\
\text{We needn’t hurry. (esp BrE)} & = \\
\text{We don’t have to hurry.} & \\
\text{We don’t need to hurry.} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

(A) Has he got to start school tomorrow?  
(B) No, he hasn’t got to be there before Friday.  

There’s no need to buy the tickets yet.

Note

Must sometimes occurs in questions expecting a negative answer:  
Must you leave already? (‘Surely you don’t have to!’)

Other ways of expressing obligation

343

(A) Ought to and should (see 301) express an obligation which may not be fulfilled. Compare [3] and [4] above with  
I ought to phone my parents tonight (‘but I probably won’t have time’).  
All students should submit their work by a given date (‘. . . but some of them don’t!’).

(B) Need to + infinitive (where need is a main verb, not an auxiliary, see 503) indicates ‘internal obligation’ caused by the state of the person referred to:  
He needs to practise more if he is to improve his playing.

We can also use need with a direct object:  
He needs more practice.
(C) *Had better* (<informal> + infinitive (without to) has the meaning of 'strong recommendation or advisability':

You'd better be quick, [or you'll] miss the train.

He'd better not make another mistake.

I suppose I'd better lock the door.

(D) *Shall* in the sense of 'obligation' or 'insistence' is normally limited to official regulations and other formal documents:

The Society's nominating committee shall nominate one person for the office of President. (<very formal>)

Prohibition

344

Prohibition can be thought of as the negation of permission ('He is not allowed to do something') or, in a different sense, as the negation of obligation ('He is obliged *not* to do something'). *Can* and *may* (= 'permission') and *must* (= 'obligation') can all have the meaning of 'prohibition' with a negative:

(A) *Can* the children play here?  (B) No, I'm afraid they *can't*.

You *may not* go swimming.  ("You're not allowed to...")

You *mustn't* keep us all waiting.

A weakened prohibition (more like negative advice) can be indicated by *oughtn't* to <esp BrE>, *shouldn't*, *had better not*, etc:

You *oughtn't* to waste money on smoking.

He *shouldn't* be so impatient.

I'd better not wake them up.

Influencing people

Commands

345

With the aim of getting someone to do something, a direct command can be used: *Shut the door; Follow me; Just look at this mess;* etc (see 520). A negative command has the effect of forbidding an action: *Don't be a fool; Don't worry about me.*

In addition, with a 2nd person subject, the verb forms expressing obligation and prohibition (see 341, 344) can have almost the same effect as a command:

*You must be careful; You mustn't smoke.*

The construction *be to* + infinitive can refer to a command given either by the speaker, or (more usually) by some official authority:

He *is to return* to Germany tomorrow ("He has been given orders to return to Germany").

You *are to stay* here until I return ('I tell you to').

Note

[a] Some abbreviated sentences which do not contain an imperative verb have the effect of brusque commands: *Out with it! This way! Here!*
Another type is especially used in addressing children and pets: **Off you go! Down you get! Up you come!** (familiar).

Will in its future sense can sometimes be used (eg in military contexts) with the force of a severe command:

> Officers **will** report for duty at 0600 hours. 

You **will** do exactly as I say.

---

You can specify the people who have to obey the command by putting a 2nd or 3rd person subject in front of the imperative verb (see 520), or else by using a vocative:

> 'You take this tray, and 'you take that one. (pointing to the people concerned; note that you is stressed)

> Jack and Susan stand over there.

> Somebody open this door.

> Come here, Michael.

Elsewhere, a command with you has a tone of impatience:

> You mind your own business!

Another form of impatient command begins with will:

> Will you be quiet!

Although this has the grammatical form of a question, its falling intonation gives it the force of a command.

In many circumstances, commands are (impolite), and therefore we shall consider in 347-51 various ways of toning down the effect of a command.

**Note**

It is not impolite to use a command when you are telling someone to do something for his own good: **Have another chocolate; Make yourself at home; Just leave everything to me; Do come in.** These are in effect offers or invitations, rather than commands.

**Politer** commands

One way to tone down or weaken the imperative force of a command is to use a rising or fall-rise tone, instead of the usual falling tone:

> Be careful.

> 'Don't forget your wallet.

Another way is to add please, or the tag question won't you:

> Please hurry up.

> Look after the children, won’t you.

> This way, please.

**Note**

Two other tags, why don’t you and will you (after a negative command), can tone down a command:

> Have a drink, why don’t you.

> Don’t be late, will you.
But after a positive command, _will you_ has rising intonation, and usually expresses impatience (see 346).

_Sit down, will you._

Requests

348

It is often more _tactful_ to use a request rather than a command: _i.e._ to ask your hearer whether he is willing or able to do something. The auxiliaries _will/would_ (= willingness) and _can/could_ (= ability) can be used:

(A) _Will you pass the salt, please?_

(B) _Yes, certainly._

(A) _Could you possibly give me a lift?_

(B) _No, I'm afraid not, because..._

(A) _Could you lend me your pen?_

(B) _O.K. <familiar> Here it is._

(These examples also show typical replies.) _Would_ and _could_ are more _tactful_ than _will_ and _can_. You can also use a negative question, which expects a positive answer (see 251), and is to that extent less _tentative_ and more persuasive:

_Won't you come in and sit down?_

_Couldn't you possibly come another day?_

Other _polite_ forms of request

349

There are many more indirect ways of making a _polite_ request: _e.g._ you can make a statement about your own wishes. The following are listed roughly in order of least to most _polite_:

_I wouldn't mind a drink, if you have one._

_Would you mind typing this letter?_

_I wonder if you'd mind giving me his address?_

_Would you be [so kind as] [kind enough] to switch the light on?_

_I would be extremely grateful if you would write a reference for me._

_I wonder if you would kindly send us some information about your English courses?_

These sentences are typical of _spoken_ English. In _formal_ letters, useful formulae are: _I would be very grateful if...; I would appreciate it if...; Would you kindly..._

Advice, suggestions and invitations

350

As ways of influencing other people, advice, suggestions and invitations are
milder than commands. Strictly, these leave the decision about what to do in the hands of the hearer. But in practice, as the examples show, they are often <tactful> ways of giving commands or instructions.

ADVICE

You ought to read this book (see 343).
You should stay in bed.
You'd better take your medicine.
I'd advise you to see a doctor.
If I were you, I'd sell this car.

SUGGESTIONS

I suggest we take the night train.
You can read these two chapters before tomorrow (if you like).
You could be cleaning the office while I'm away.
You might have a look at this book.
Why don't you call on me tomorrow?

Could and might indicate <tentative> suggestions.

SUGGESTIONS INVOLVING THE SPEAKER

I suggest we go to bed.
Shall we listen to some music?
Let's enjoy ourselves! (see 521)
Let's not waste time.
Why don't we have a party? <informal, familiar>
How about a game of football?
What about (having) a drink?

351

INVITATIONS

Come in and sit down. <familiar>
Would you like to come with me?
How would you like to come and spend a week with us next year?
May I have the pleasure of this dance? <formal, polite>
May I invite you to dinner next Saturday? <formal, polite>

Here is a typical sequence:

(A) Are you doing anything tomorrow evening?
(B) No.
(A) Then perhaps you'd be interested in joining us for a meal at a restaurant in town.
(B) Thank you very much. <That is kind of you.>
          {I'd love to.}
In <polite> refusing the invitation, (B) might say:

Well, that’s very kind of you—but I’m afraid I have already arranged/promised to ... What a pity, I would have loved to come.

**Reported commands, etc**

352

Commands, like statements and questions (see 264–8), can be reported either in direct speech or in indirect speech:

**DIRECT SPEECH**  'Put on your space-suits,' he said.

**INDIRECT SPEECH**  He told/ordered/commanded/instructed them to put on their space-suits.

In indirect speech, put the command in the form of a to-infinitive clause. The hearer can be indicated by an indirect object (them in the above example). Note the passive construction:

They were told to put on their space-suits.

The same construction can be used for advice, requests, permission, obligation, persuasion, invitations, etc:

- He advised me to read this book.  [1]
- He asked/begged me to help him with his homework.  [2]
- She allowed him to kiss her.  [3]
- They compelled him to answer their questions.  [4]
- Mary has persuaded me to resign.  [5]
- We were invited to attend the performance.  [6]
- They recommended us to stay at this hotel.  [7]

Notice also direct object constructions:

- The doctor advised a rest.
- He begged our forgiveness.
- I (can) recommend the Lobster Newburg.

353

Not all verbs for ‘influencing people’ take an infinitive. Suggest takes a that-clause (often with putative should, see 289–90):

He suggested that they should play cards.

This construction may also follow other verbs, such as recommend:

The doctor recommends that you do/should not tire yourself.

Requests, acts of permission, etc can also be put in the form of indirect statements and questions. Thus instead of [2] and [3] you could say:

- He asked me if I would help him with his homework.  [2a]
  (DIRECT: ‘Will you help me with my homework?’)
- She said he might kiss her.  [3a]
  (DIRECT: ‘You may kiss me.’)

The rules for change into the past tense, etc (see 265) for indirect statements and questions apply also to indirect commands, requests, etc (except that there is no tense-change in the infinitive clauses). After a past-tense reporting verb, will,
shall, can, may, and have to change to their past tense forms would, should, could, might, and had to (see [2a], [3a]) but must, ought to, should, and had better do not change:

'You must be careful.' → I told them they must be careful.
'You ought to stay in bed.' → I said that he ought to stay in bed.

354

The verbs forbid ⟨formal⟩, prohibit ⟨formal⟩, dissuade, refuse, decline, deny and prevent already contain a negative meaning, so the clauses which follow them are normally positive:

They were forbidden to smoke. ('They were ordered not to smoke')
They were prohibited from smoking. ('She persuaded him not to . . . ')
She dissuaded him from leaving the country. ('She persuaded him not to . . . ')
The minister refused/declined to comment on the press report.
He denied that the allegations were true.
They were prevented from taking part.

Warnings, promises and threats

355

Finally, we turn to three types of utterance involving future time:

WARNINGS

Mind (your head)!
Look out!
Be careful (of your clothes).
I warn you it's going to be foggy.
If you're not careful, that pan will catch fire.

Short warnings are often spoken with a fall-rise intonation: **Mind!**

PROMISES

I'll let you know tomorrow.
I promise (you) I'll be quick.
You won't lose money, I promise (you).
You shall have the money tomorrow. (On shall here, see 340 Note)
Assuming that the order reaches our office by tomorrow, our firm will undertake to let you have the goods by the week-end. ⟨formal⟩

THREATS

I'll report you if you do that.
Don't you dare tell lies.
You dare touch me!
Do that, and I'll tell your mother (see 381).
Stop eating those sweets, or I'll take them away (see 382).

Warnings, promises and threats in reported speech

356

REPORTED WARNINGS

He warned us to be careful.
They warned us of/about the strike. We were warned that the journey might be dangerous.

REPORTED PROMISES
He promised/undertook to let me know. He promised that he wouldn’t bet on horses. They promised him that he would not lose his job. Her boss <familiar> has promised her a rise. She has been promised a rise.

THREATS
He threatened to report me to the police. He threatened that they would lose their jobs. He threatened them with dismissal.

Friendly communications

357
Let us now look at some of the simple acts of communication whereby people establish and maintain friendly relations with one another. Common intonations are given where they are important (see 31-43).

Beginning and ending conversation

358
GREETINGS
Good morning/afternoon/evening. <polite>
Hello.
Hi. <very familiar>
Hello (with a rising tone) is also used in answering the phone.
FAREWELLS (temporary)
'Goodbye; Cheers. <very familiar, BrE> 'Cheerio. <familiar BrE>
(Bye)-bye, <very familiar>
See you. <very familiar>
See you at six o’clock. <familiar>
So long. <very familiar>
See you later. <very familiar>
See you tomorrow. <familiar>
1Good-night (final word before parting for the night or before going to bed).
FAREWELLS (more permanent): 'Goodbye.
Other remarks may be added for politeness:
It’s been nice knowing you. (I hope you) have a good journey.

INTRODUCTIONS
May I introduce (you to) Miss Brown? <formal>
This is John Smith.

Meet my wife. <familiar>

I don’t think you’ve met our neighbour, Mr Quirk.

GREETINGS ON INTRODUCTION

How do you do? <formal> How are you?
Glad to meet you. Hello <informal>.

359

After a greeting, a conversation may continue with a polite inquiry about health, etc:

How are you?
How are you getting on? <familiar>
How’s things? <very familiar>

Common replies to such questions are:

(I’m) fine. How are you?
Very well, thank you. And you?

If someone is liable to poor health, you might begin: How are you feeling today/these days? or I hope you’re well.

Especially in Britain, opening remarks about the weather are common:

(A) (It’s a) lovely day, isn’t it? (see 250)
(B) Yes, isn’t it beautiful. (see 319)

(A) What miserable weather! (see 310)
(B) Dreadful!

Beginning and ending letters

360

Example of a <formal> official letter

Dear Sir, / Dear Madam,

With reference to your letter of ................................................

.................................................................

Yours faithfully,

A R Smith
(Manager)

Example of a <less formal> letter

Dear Dr Smith, / Miss Brown, / George.

Thank you for your letter of ................................................

.................................................................

(With best wishes)

Yours sincerely, <BrE>
|Sincerely (yours), <AmE>

James Robertson
Example of an <informal> letter between acquaintances

Dear George,

(Best wishes)
Yours (ever),
Janet

More intimate letters may begin and end with endearments: *My dear George, Dearest George, . . . Love from Janet, etc.*

**Thanks, apologies, regrets**

361

THANKS

Thank you; Thanks very much.
Many thanks. Ta. <BrE slang>

RESPONSES TO THANKS

Not at all. You’re welcome.
That’s all right.

Note that in English such responses are not so common as in some other languages. Often the ‘giver’ makes no reply. In shops etc the customer will say *Thank you* for the article he has bought, and the shopkeeper will often likewise say *Thank you* in return, on receiving the money.

APOLOGIES

(I’m) sorry. (I beg your) pardon. Excuse me.

*Excuse me* in <BrE> is limited to mild apologies for routine impolite behaviour; eg, for interrupting, for sneezing, for pushing in front of somebody. One would say *I beg your pardon* for mishaps such as treading on someone’s toe. More lengthy apologies are:

I’m extremely sorry {about that letter}.
{for forgetting to send that letter}.
{Will you forgive/excuse me if I have to leave early?}
{I hope you will forgive/excuse me if I have to leave early.}

RESPONSES TO APOLOGIES

That’s all right. Please don’t worry.

REGRETS

I’m sorry I was unable to come to the meeting. <informal>
I regret that I was unable . . . <formal, written>

**Good wishes, congratulations, condolences**

362

(These are normally spoken with a falling tone.)

GOOD WISHES

Good luck!

136

Best wishes for your vacation <AmE>/holiday. <BrE>
Have a good time at the theatre.
I wish you every success in your new career. (more formal)

GOOD WISHES SENT TO A THIRD PERSON
Please give my best wishes to Sally.
Please remember me to your father.
Please give my kindest regards to your wife. (formal)
Give my love to the children. (informal)
Say hello to Joe. (AmE)

SEASONAL GREETINGS
Merry Christmas. Happy New Year.
Happy birthday (to you). Many happy returns (of your birthday).

TOASTS
Good health. (formal) Your health. (formal)
Cheers! (familiar) Here's to your job. (familiar)
Here's to the future. (familiar)

CONGRATULATIONS
Well done! (familiar) (for a success or achievement).
Congratulations on your engagement.
I was delighted to hear about . . . / that . . .
May we congratulate you on your recent appointment. (formal)

CONDOLENCES
Please accept my deepest sympathy on the death of your father.
(formal)
I was extremely sorry to hear about . . . / that . . . (informal)

Offers
363
In making an offer, you can make use of questions about the wishes of the hearer (see 334–7):

  Would you like another helping of turkey? [1]
  Would you like me to mail these letters? [2]
  Shall I get you a chair? [3]
  Can I open the door for you? [4]

In accepting an offer in the form of a question, we say

  either  Yes, please. (acceptance)
  or    No, thank you. (refusal)

More (polite) acceptances:

  Yes, please. That's very kind of you.
  Yes, thank you, I'd love some more.

(Note that thank you can be used in accepting, as well as refusing.)
More polite refusals include an explanation of the refusal:

That's very kind of you, but I couldn't possibly manage any more.

No, thank you very much. I'm just leaving. [answer to 3]

No, please don't bother. I can manage, thank you. [answer to 4]

In familiar English, commands are often used in making offers:

Have some more coffee.

Do sit down.

Let me get a chair for you.

After the offer has been accepted, the other person need not say anything when he/she performs the service. Quite often people just smile, or say Here you are (eg on bringing some food), or There you are (eg on opening a window, bringing a chair, etc).

Vocatives

364

To get someone's attention, you can use a vocative such as John, Mrs Johnson, Dr Smith:

John, I want you.

Have you got a minute, Mr Johnson?

Dr Smith, have you seen this report?

Vocatives can be used more generally to mark the speaker's relation to the hearer. Sir and madam are vocatives which mark respect to a stranger:

Did you order a taxi, madam? <formal>

(After a rising tone, the intonation continues to rise through the vocative.) Other titles of respect, and some professional titles, can be used as vocatives: Ladies and gentlemen! <formal> opening of a speech; My Lord (to a peer, a bishop, a British judge, etc); Your Honor (to an American judge); Your Excellency (to an ambassador); Mr President; Prime Minister; Father (to a priest); Doctor (to a medical doctor); etc.

In contrast, the following are some of the many examples of the familiar use of vocatives: dad(dy); old man; you guys <familiar AmE>; my dear; darling.

365

English is restricted in forms of address to strangers. Sir and (especially) madam are too <formal> to be used in most situations. Miss as a vocative is by many considered <impolite>. Some people even feel that occupational vocatives like waiter or driver are <rather impolite>, although others, like nurse (=nursing sister') or operator (telephone) are acceptable:

Operator, could you put through a call to Copenhagen, please?

Thus to get the attention of a stranger, you may often have to rely on Excuse me! or (in <AmE>) I beg your pardon!
Section D: Meanings in connected discourse

366
In Sections A, B and C we have been considering aspects of meaning in isolation, but in this final section we shall be thinking about how meanings may be put together and presented in a spoken or written discourse. That is, we shall be discussing style and presentation of ideas. We start with the organisation of connections within and between sentences.

Linking signals

367
Whether in speech or in writing, you help people to understand your message by signalling how one idea leads on from another. The words and phrases which have this connecting function are like 'signposts' on a journey. Most of them in English are sentence adverbials, and they generally come at the beginning of a sentence. Their most important functions are as follows.

Making a new start

368
Well and now, placed at the front of a sentence in (speech), signal a new start in the train of thought:
(A) You remember that puppy we found?
(B) Yes.

(A) Well, we adopted it, and now it has some puppies of its own.

Well here means roughly 'I am now going to tell you something new'. It is particularly common when a person is asked for an opinion:
(A) What do you think of the oil crisis?
(B) Well, I don't think it's quite as serious as it seems.

Now often signals a return to an earlier train of thought:
Well, that's settled at last. Now, what was the other thing we wanted to discuss?

Changing the subject

369
Incidentally or by the way (informal) can be used to change the subject:

The airlines charge half-price for students. \[\text{By the way, have you bought your ticket for New York yet?}\]

Listing and adding

370
In (writing) and (formal speech) you can list a series of points by such adverbs as firstly (or first), second(ly), next, last(ly) (or finally). Phrases such as to begin...
with, in the second place, and to conclude can also be used. Similar to these adverbials are also, moreover, furthermore, what is more, etc which indicate that an additional point is being made (see 238):

Several reasons can be given for the change in the attitude of many students. To begin with, they fear the outbreak of nuclear war. Secondly, they are concerned over the continuing pollution of the environment. Not enough progress, moreover, has been made in reducing poverty or racial strife... And to conclude, they feel frustrated in their attempts to influence political decisions.

Reinforcement

371

Besides, in any case (informal) and anyway (informal) are other sentence adverbials indicating an additional point in an argument, but with a slightly different meaning. They are used to reinforce an argument in a situation where a preceding argument might not seem sufficient:

I won’t be coming to the football game this afternoon. I have some work to do in the garden. Besides, if they play as badly this time as they did last week, it won’t be worth watching.

Furthermore (more formal) and what is more can be used in a similar way.

Summary and generalisation

372

To lead into a summary of points already made, you can write in a word, in short, or to sum up. The following passage from a book review illustrates their use:

The techniques discussed are valuable. Sensible stress is laid on preparatory and follow-up work. Each chapter is supported by a well-selected bibliography. In short, this is a clearly-written textbook that should prove extremely valuable to teachers.

Other linking phrases serve to indicate a generalisation from points already made: in all, altogether, more generally, etc. These are used in a similar way to the summary signals. Thus in all could replace in short in the quotation above.

Explanation

373

A point already made can be explained in three ways:

(A) by expanding and clarifying its meaning: that is, that is to say, ie
(B) by giving a more precise description: namely, viz
(C) by giving an illustration: for example, for instance, eg

(The Latin abbreviations ie, viz and eg are mainly found in formal written texts. They are normally read aloud as ‘that is’, ‘namely’, and ‘for example’, respectively.)

It is important that young children should see things, and not merely read about them. For example, it is valuable experience to take them on a trip to a farm.
These forms can also link two structures in apposition (see 489–91) in the middle of a sentence:

At least one person, namely the President himself, supports the proposal for disarmament.

Reformulation

374

Sometimes, to make our ideas clearer, we explain or modify them by putting them in other words. Such reformulations can be introduced by adverbials like in other words, rather, better:

They are enjoying themselves, or rather, they appear to be (enjoying themselves).

He admits that he took the book without permission. In other words, he stole it.

Linking constructions

375

We can think of a clause—the unit which may contain a statement—as the basic unit of meaning in a discourse. Grammar provides three main ways of putting such units together:

(A) **COORDINATION**: You can coordinate them by the conjunctions and, or, but, both . . . and, etc (see 542, 547).

(B) **SUBORDINATION**: You can subordinate one clause to another (ie make it into a subclause, see 826–34), using such conjunctions as when, if, and because.

(C) **ADVERBIAL LINK**: You can connect the two ideas by using a linking sentence adverbial (see 479), such as yet, moreover, and meanwhile.

Contrast

376

The three methods (coordination, subordination, and adverbial link) are illustrated below for the relation of CONTRAST (see 212–14):

(A) He was extremely tired, but the noise kept him awake.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(A)though} & \quad \text{he was very tired, the noise kept him awake until after} \\
\text{B) & \quad \text{midnight.} \\
\text{C) & \quad \text{The noise kept him awake, (al)though he was very tired.} \\
\text{C) & \quad \text{He had travelled many miles, and was extremely tired. However,} \\
\text{ hours of the morning.} & \quad \text{more formal}\rangle
\end{align*}
\]

For a stronger and more emphatic connection, you can combine a sentence adverbial with coordination or subordination:

(A) + (C) He was extremely tired, but he was nevertheless unable to sleep until after midnight.
(B) + (C) Although he was suffering from fatigue as a result of the long journey, yet because of the noise, he lay awake in his bed, thinking over the events of the day until the early hours of the morning. <formal, rather rhetorical>

Choice between coordination, subordination and linking adverbial

377

(A) Coordination is often a 'looser' connection than the others, because it is more vague (see 386) and less emphatic. It is more characteristic of <speech> than of <writing>.

(B) Subordination tends to give a clause a less important part in the information given by a sentence. Thus an adverbial subordinate clause is often used when the information in the clause is already wholly or partly known or expected by the hearer (see 420):
   John went fishing in the afternoon. When he returned, the dinner was on the table.

(C) An adverbial link is often used to connect longer stretches of language, perhaps whole sentences which themselves contain coordinate or subordinate clauses.

Other relations of meaning

378

We now give, for illustration, some other examples of relations of meaning to show how English offers a choice between coordination, subordination, and adverbial links. In the case of coordination (and sometimes of subordination), we place an adverbial in brackets where it can be added to make the relation more specific. Most of the types of meaning relation illustrated have been discussed in Section A, and so no further explanation is needed at this point.

379

Time-when (see 140–50)

(A) He loaded the pistol carefully, and <then> took aim.

(B) After loading the pistol carefully, he aimed it at the marshal.

(C) He drew the pistol from his holster, and loaded it carefully. Then he aimed it at the unsuspecting figure of the marshal.

380

Cause, reason, result (see 197–207)

(A) He ran out of money, and <therefore> had to look for a job.

(B) 
   Because he had run out of money, he had to look for a job.
   
   He ran out of money, so <that> he had to look for a job.

(C) After six months abroad, he ran out of money. He <therefore> had to look for a job.

381

Positive condition (see 208–9)

The conjunction and can indicate condition, but only in limited contexts such as commanding, advising, etc:

142

(A) Take this medicine, and <then> you'll feel better. <informal>
(B) *If* you take this medicine, you’ll feel *better*.
(C) *You* ought to take *your* medicine regularly, as the doctor ordered.
   You’ll feel better, *then*. <informal>

*Then* here has roughly the meaning ‘on that condition’, or ‘in that event’.

382

**Negative condition (see 210)**

*Or* can be used to indicate negative condition in limited contexts:
(A) You’d better put your overcoat on, or *(else)* you’ll catch a cold.
   <informal>
(B) *Unless* you put on your overcoat, you’ll catch a cold.
(C) I should wear an overcoat if I were you; *otherwise*, you’ll catch a cold.

383

**Condition + contrast (see 215–6)**

Coordination alone cannot indicate this meaning:
(B) *However* much advice we give him, he *(still)* does exactly what he
   wants.
(C) It doesn’t matter how much advice we give him: he *still* does
   exactly what he wants.

384

**Addition (see 238)**

(A) *(She’s)* *(both)* a professional artist and a first-rate teacher *(see 547)*.
(B) *She’s not only* a professional artist, *but (also)* a first-rate teacher.
(C) *She’s well known* all over the country as a professional artist.
   Incidentally, she’s *(also)* a first-rate teacher.

385

**Alternatives**

This meaning cannot be indicated by subordination:
(A) We can *(either)* meet this afternoon, or we can discuss the matter at
   dinner *(see 547)*.
(C) Would you like us to have a meeting about the matter this after-
   noon? *Alternatively* we could discuss it at dinner.

Other adverbs: *otherwise*, *(or)* *else*. <informal>

‘General purpose’ links

386

As you can see from 379–81, 384, *and* is a ‘general purpose’ linking word, which
can adapt its meaning according to context. Any positive link between two ideas
can be expressed by *and*. English has three other methods of vague or ‘general
purpose’ connection of this kind. They are: (A) *relative clauses* *(see 783–96)*,
(B) *participle and verbless clauses* *(see 515–16)* and (C) grammatically un-
linked clauses.
Relative clauses

387

Notice the equivalence between a coordinate clause with *and*, and a non-restrictive relative clause (see 100, 795):

\[
\begin{align*}
&= \{ \text{We have arrived at the hotel, and find it very comfortable.} \\
&\quad \{ \text{We have arrived at the hotel, which we find very comfortable}. \}
\end{align*}
\]

The same equivalence is seen in sentence relative clauses (see 796), in which the relative pronoun points back to a whole clause or sentence:

\[
\begin{align*}
&= \{ \text{He's spending too much time on girls, and that's not good for his} \\
&\quad \{ \text{He's spending too much time on girls, which is not good for his school work.} \}
\end{align*}
\]

Restrictive clauses also have a flexible connecting function; in the sentences below, the implied links are reason, time-when, and condition:

**REASON**

I don’t like people *who drive fast cars.*

(‘Because they drive fast cars, I don’t like them’)

**TIME-WHEN**

The man *I saw* was wearing a hat.

(‘When I saw him, he was wearing a hat’)

**CONDITION**

Anyone *who bets on horses* deserves to lose money.

(‘If anyone bets on horses, he deserves to lose money’)

Participle and verbless clauses

388

These clauses (see 515–16), characteristic of <formal written> English, also have a broad ‘general purpose’ linking function, as these examples show:

**REASON**

*Being a farmer*, he has to get up early.

(‘As he is a farmer . . . ’)

**TIME-WHEN**

*Cleared*, the site will be very valuable.

(‘When it is cleared . . . ’)

**CONDITION**

*Cleared*, the site would be very valuable.

(‘If it were cleared . . . ’)

**MEANS**

*Using a sharp axe*, he broke down the door.

(‘By using a sharp axe . . . ’)

**REASON**

He stared at the floor, *too nervous to reply.*

(‘. . . because he was too nervous . . . ’)
Unlinked clauses

Two neighbouring clauses may be grammatically unlinked; for example, they may be separated in writing by a period (.) or a semi-colon (;) or a colon (:). But this does not mean there is no connection of meaning between them; it means, rather, that the connection is implicit, and has to be inferred by the reader.

In (informal speech), a speaker frequently relies on such implied connections, whereas in (writing), he would make the connection clear by sentence adverbials or coordination. These examples may be compared with the (C) sentences of 379–81 (the ‘missing link’ is indicated in [square brackets]):

He loaded the pistol carefully; [then] he took aim . . . a shot rang out.  (TIME)

He had to look for a job—[because] he had run out of money.  (REASON)

Take this medicine: [if you do,] it’ll make you feel better.  (CONDITION)

Substitution and omission

390

Clauses are often connected not only because of a meaning-link of the kinds we have considered, but because they SHARE some content, eg they may be talking about the same person:

My brother was wearing a raincoat. My brother didn’t get wet.

We can, if we like, link these two sentences into one sentence without changing them: My brother was wearing a raincoat and my brother didn’t get wet. But generally, we avoid repeating the shared words and content (1) by SUBSTITUTEING a pronoun (or other substitute form) such as he; (2) by OMITTING the repeated element(s):

\{
My brother was wearing a raincoat, and (he) didn’t get wet.
My brother, who was wearing a raincoat, didn’t get wet.
\}

Obviously, substitution and omission are very useful and important, in that (A) they shorten the message, and (B) they can make the connections of meaning more easy to grasp. We may say that they make the structure of the sentence ‘tighter’. The general rule is: substitute and omit wherever you can, except where this leads to ambiguity. We shall now consider some of the ways in which the English language allows you to do these things. We shall consider substitution and omission together, and see how the repetition of various grammatical units can be avoided by these methods. Sometimes one method is available, sometimes the other, and sometimes both.

Substitutes for noun phrases

3rd-person pronouns

391

The personal pronouns he, she, it, they, etc (see 683–7) substitute for noun phrases, and agree with them in number and gender (see 569, 654–9). In these examples, the noun phrase and its substitute are in italics:


Elizabeth has cut her finger. (‘Elizabeth’s finger’)  
The electrician is here. Shall I ask him in?  
Could you mend this table? I broke it yesterday.

\{John and Mary  
The children next door\} stole a toy from my son. Their mother told them to return the toy, but they said it was theirs.

Notice that in the last sentence the plural pronouns they, them, etc. substitute not only for plural noun phrases, but for coordinated singular noun phrases such as John and Mary.

Reflexive pronouns (himself, themselves, etc) and relative pronouns (who, which, etc) behave in the same way (see 691–4, 785–95):

He hurt himself. / She hurt herself. / They hurt themselves.

The man who was injured. / The house that was destroyed.

1st and 2nd person pronouns

392

Occasionally, 1st and 2nd person pronouns substitute for coordinate noun phrases. If a 1st person pronoun is present in the noun phrase, agreement is with the 1st person:

You and I ought to share our ideas.

My wife and I are going to Argentina. We hope to stay with some friends.

If a 2nd person pronoun is present without a 1st person pronoun, agreement is with the 2nd person pronoun:

You and John can stop work now. You can both eat your lunch in the kitchen.

Special cases

393

(1) Quantifiers (see 765–76). Sometimes a plural pronoun substitutes for quantifier pronouns like everybody, somebody, no one, and anyone:

\[\text{\{Everybody looked after themselves.} \quad \text{\{Everybody looked after himself.  \langle\text{more formal}\rangle \}} \text{(see 540)}\]

(2) Group Nouns. For substitution, a singular noun referring to a group of people is treated either as a singular inanimate noun (when we are thinking of the group as a unit), or as a plural human noun (when we are thinking of the members of the group):

a family who quarrel among themselves  
but: a family which traces its history from the Norman Conquest (see 537).

Quantifier pronouns

394

Other pronouns such as one, some, each, none (see 765–76) can act as substitutes for a noun phrase. As the examples show, we could alternatively treat most of these cases as omissions of some part of the phrase:

Substitution for singular count noun phrases

Have you seen my cigarettes? I want to smoke one. (ie ‘smoke a cigarette’)

146
SUBSTITUTION FOR PLURAL COUNT NOUN PHRASES

Can you give me a few nails? I need some. (ie ‘some nails’)
When the children entered, each was given a small present. (ie ‘each of the children’, ‘each child’)
We lost most of the games, but not quite all. (‘all of them’)
Proust and James are great novelists, but I like Tolstoy better than either.
Proust and James are great novelists, but neither is easy to read.
These books are heavy. You carry one half, and I’ll carry the other. (ie ‘You carry half of them, and I’ll carry the other half of them’)
John and I went looking for mushrooms. He found a few, I found several more, and we soon had enough for breakfast.

SUBSTITUTION FOR MASS NOUN PHRASES

Some of the equipment has been damaged, but none has been lost.
I’d like some paper, if you have any.

Substitutes for nouns and parts of noun phrases

395

The pronoun one can substitute for a noun, as well as for a whole noun phrase:
Have you seen any knives? I need a sharp one. (‘a sharp knife’)
I like this coat better than the one (=‘the coat’) you showed me before.
The plural of one in this sense is ones:
I can get you several sharp ones, but this is the best one I have.
Notice that one cannot replace mass nouns; instead, they are omitted: Which wine would you like? The red or the white? (‘the red wine or the white wine?’)
Both count and mass nouns can be omitted, but count nouns cannot be omitted after the indefinite article a(n). The choice between one and omission is shown in these examples:

COUNT SINGULAR
I’d prefer the large bottle to the small (one).
I’d prefer a large bottle to a small one.
(not *... to a small)

COUNT PLURAL
I’d prefer the large bottles to the small (ones).
I’d prefer large bottles to small (ones).

MASS
I’d prefer (the) red wine to (the) white.

396

Other examples of the choice between one and omission:
This house is bigger than my last (one).
I broke the coffee-pot, so we have to buy another (one).
The first runner finished a few yards in front of the next (one).
I know her two older children, but I don’t know the youngest (one).

397

With postmodifiers, the pronouns that and those can act as substitutes with definite meaning (= ‘the one’, ‘the ones’). That always has non-personal reference:
Towards the end of his life, Schubert wrote two remarkable trios: that (= ‘the one’) in B flat, and that in E flat. <rather formal>
The paintings of Gauguin’s Tahiti period are more famous than those (= ‘the ones’) he painted in France. *That* can also be used as a substitute with a mass noun:

The plumage of the male pheasant is far more colourful than *that* (= ‘the plumage’) of the female.

These uses of *that* and *those* are rather ⟨formal⟩, and are largely restricted to ⟨written⟩ English. The relative pronoun *which* cannot normally be omitted after *that*:

The problem confronting us today is not dissimilar from *that which* Britain faced in the 1930s. (*Compare: ‘... the one Britain faced in the 1930s.’*)

Substitutes for structures containing a verb

THE AUXILIARY VERB DO

398

The dummy auxiliary verb *do* (or its negative forms) can act as a substitute for the whole of a clause apart from the subject:

He can *cook* as well as she _does_. (‘as she cooks’)

(A) _Who wants to play tennis this afternoon?_  
(B)  
   \[
   \begin{cases}
   \text{I do.} \\
   \text{I don’t.}
   \end{cases}
   \]

You can also omit the whole clause following the subject:

He can *cook* as well as _her_ ⟨informal⟩

(A) _Who wants to play tennis?_  
(B)  
   \[
   \begin{cases}
   \text{Me.} \\
   \text{Not me.}
   \end{cases}
   \]

Notice that in ⟨informal⟩ English, the pronoun subject is changed to its objective form (*me*, etc) when the rest of the sentence is omitted.

*Do* can also substitute for the part of a clause excluding subject and adverbials:

(A) _Have you written to your father yet?_  
(B) _Yes, I *did* last week. (‘I wrote to my father ... ’)_

Occasionally *do* acts as a substitute for a verb phrase alone:

She plays the piano better than he _does_ the guitar. (‘plays’)

399

In all such cases, you can use other auxiliaries in a parallel position to *do*; that is, you can omit the whole or part of the sentence following an auxiliary:

I’ll *open a bank account* if you _will_ (= ‘... if you will do so’).

He can *cook* as well as she _can._

(A) _He is working late this week._  
(B) _Yes, he was _last week, too._

You can *play* in the garden, but you _mustn’t* in the garage.

*Do* and the other auxiliaries are unstressed, except in cases of affirmation and denial (see 272–3), or where they have some sort of contrastive meaning:

(A) _Are you going to clean the car?_

(B) _I _could_, and I _ought to_, but I don’t think I _will_._
The omission also occurs after two or three auxiliaries:

He was working harder than he ought to have been.

(A) Is the kettle boiling?  (B) It may be.

(A) Did you lock the door?  (B) No, I should have, but I forgot.

Note

[a] Be as a main verb (see 500) cannot be omitted after an auxiliary:

\[ \text{If they're not asleep, they should be.} \]

[b] In \(<\text{BrE}>\), do or done is sometimes added after another auxiliary:

He can't promise to come tonight, but he may do.

(A) Would you please unlock the door?  (B) I have done.

THE MAIN VERB do

400

The main verb do (see 498) acts as a substitute for a main verb, normally a verb denoting some action or activity. Since this do is transitive, it requires an object, which may be one of the substitute words it, that, or so:

He got her home, but I don't know how he managed to do it.

('... managed to get her home')

They have promised to increase pensions by 20 per cent. If they do so, it will make a big difference to old people.

Do that is generally more emphatic and \(<\text{informal}>\):

They say he sleeps in his shoes and socks. Why ever does he do that?

Do it and do so cannot always replace one another. Notice the difference between:

Bob's getting his house painted, and moreover, he wants me to do it.

('He wants me to paint his house')

Bob's getting his house painted, and moreover, he wants me to do so.

('He wants me to get my house painted')

Note

There is a similar use of do in wh-questions and in wh-subclauses:

(A) What is he doing?  (B) He's painting.

What he did was lose the game.

Substitutes for that-clauses

401

So is a substitute for that-clauses representing reported statements, beliefs, assumptions, emotions, etc:

Oxford will win the next boat race. All my friends say so.

('... say that Oxford will win the next boat race')

John hasn't found a job yet. He told me so yesterday.

('... that he hasn't found a job yet')

(A) Are the Browns coming to dinner?

(B) I think so./I suppose so./ I hope so./ I'm afraid so.

Not replaces so in negative clauses: I hope not, I'm afraid not, etc. But, with verbs taking transferred negation (see 636), it is more natural to say: I don't think so;
I don't suppose so; etc. In sentences expressing certainty and doubt (see 303-4) we cannot use so, but have to say: I’m sure they are; I’m sure of it; I doubt if they are; I doubt it; etc.

In comparative clauses, the whole of a that-clause can be omitted:

He’s older than I thought ('... than I thought he was').

Also, after the verbs know, ask, and tell, a whole that-clause is frequently omitted in conversation:

(A) She’s having a baby. (B) I know.

(A) How do you know? (B) She told me (so). Why do you ask?

So cannot be used after know and ask.

Substitutes for wh-clauses

402

The whole of a wh-clause following the wh-word can be omitted:

Someone has hidden my notebook, but I don’t know who/where/why.

(= ‘I don’t know who has hidden my notebook’, etc)

This cannot be done with whether and if.

Substitutes for to-infinitive clauses

403

With infinitive clauses, you can omit the whole of the clause following to:

(A) Why don’t you come and stay with us?

(B) I’d love to (do so).

You can borrow my pen, if you want to (do so).

He borrowed my pen, although I told him not to (do it).

Somebody ought to help you. Shall I ask Peter to (do so)?

With some verbs, such as want and ask, the whole of the infinitive clause, including to, can be omitted in (informal) English:

You can borrow my pen, if you want.

Shall I ask Peter?

It, that, this

404

The definite pronouns it, that, and this, are widely used as substitutes for clauses as well as for noun phrases (see 87-90, 391):

If you don't take the examination, you'll regret it.

('regret not taking the examination')

(A) She's having a baby. (B) How do you know that?

('ie ‘... know that she's having a baby'; it cannot replace that here.)

After many weeks of rain, the dam burst. This resulted in widespread flooding and much loss of livestock and property. ('The bursting of the dam resulted in...')

In such cases, the pronoun replaces a that-clause (with factual meaning, see 283-90) or an -ing clause.
Other structures with omission

405

Other structures which allow us to shorten a sentence by omitting repeated matter are coordinated structures, non-finite clauses, and verbless clauses. All these structures will be discussed in Part Four, so here we merely give a few examples of the varied types of omission that occur in them, showing how these provide briefer alternatives to substitution and repetition.

Omission through coordination

406

(The elements which are or can be omitted in coordination are in italics.)

Peter ate the food but left the drink.

(= ‘Peter ate the food, but he left the drink.’)

We are flying to Madrid tonight, and to Athens next week.

(= ‘Tonight we are flying to Madrid; next week we are flying to Athens.’)

Peter cut himself a slice of bread and some ham.

(= ‘Peter cut himself a slice of bread; he (also) cut himself some ham.’)

Not only classical, but popular art is being seriously studied these days.

(= ‘Classical art is being seriously studied these days; popular art is, (too).’)

Either West Germany or Holland will win the World Cup.

(= ‘West Germany will win the World Cup; or (else) Holland will do so.’)

John washes and irons his own shirts.

(= ‘John washes his own shirts; he irons them, (too).’)

In general, the same omissions cannot be made when one of the clauses is subordinate to the others. Compare:

He was exhausted and went to sleep.

but not: *He was so exhausted that went to sleep.

But there are a few cases where subclauses follow the coordinate clause pattern:

He ate the fruit, though not the nuts.

Omission in non-finite clauses

407

Non-finite clauses (see 515) have no operator, and most of them have no conjunction or subject. Thus in comparison with finite subclauses they are more economical and avoid repetition; ing-clauses and -ed clauses, probably for this reason, are particularly favoured in (formal or written) styles of English. We shall illustrate these points with equivalent finite clauses.

10-INFINITIVE CLAUSE: I hope to be present.

(= ‘I hope that I shall be present.’)

-ing CLAUSE: Living in the country, we had few social visits.

(= ‘Since we lived in the country, . . . ’) 151
The man injured by the bullet was taken to hospital. (= 'The man who was injured by the bullet ...')

The same applies to non-finite clauses introduced by a subordinator:

-ing clause: He wrote his greatest novel while working as an ordinary seaman.
(= '... while he was working as an ordinary seaman')

-ed clause: Though defeated, he remained a popular leader.
(= 'Though he had been defeated ...')

Omission in verbless clauses

Verbless clauses (see 516) have no verb and usually no subject:

Whether right or wrong, he usually wins the argument.
(= 'Whether he is right or wrong ...')

A man of few words, Uncle George declined to express an opinion.
(= 'Being a man of few words / As he was a man of few words ...')

Verbless clauses, like participial clauses, often belong to a more <formal> style.

Note

Not all subordinators can introduce participial and verbless clauses. For example, because, as, and since (as conjunctions of reason) cannot. Notice the difference, in this connection, between since denoting time and since denoting reason:

TIME

Since he left school, he's had several different jobs.
Since leaving school, he's had several different jobs.

REASON

Since you know the answer, why didn't you speak up?
*Since knowing the answer, why didn't you speak up?

Presenting and focusing information

We now deal with the various ways in which meanings can be presented and arranged for effective communication. For a message to be properly understood,

a the message has to be cut up into individual pieces of information (see 411–13)

b the ideas have to be given the right emphasis (see 414–24)

c the ideas have to be put in the right order (see 425–49)

Pieces of information

In <written> English, a PIECE OF INFORMATION can be defined as a piece of
language which is separated from what goes before and from what follows by punctuation marks (., ; : — ? !), and which does not itself contain any punctuation marks. In ⟨spoken⟩ English, a piece of information can be defined as a tone unit (see 36), ie a unit of intonation containing a nucleus. Notice the difference, in ⟨written⟩ English, between:

Peter has a charming wife and two children.  
[1]

Peter has a charming wife; he also has two children.  
[2]

In a sense, as we show in 375–85, [1] and [2] 'mean the same', but [1] presents the message as one piece of information, while [2] presents it as two pieces of information, separated by a punctuation mark (;). In ⟨speech⟩, the same contrast is seen in:

|Peter has a charming wife and two children|  
(ONE TONE UNIT)  
[1a]

|Peter has a charming wife | he also has two children|  
(TWO TONE UNITS)  
[2a]

Dividing the message into tone units

412

There is no exact match between punctuation in ⟨writing⟩ and tone units in ⟨speech⟩. Speech is more variable in its structuring of information than writing. Cutting up speech into tone units depends on such things as the speed at which you are speaking, what emphasis you want to give to parts of the message, and the length of grammatical units. A single sentence may have just one tone unit, like [1a]; but when the length of a sentence goes beyond a certain point (say roughly ten words), it is difficult not to split it into two or more separate pieces of information:

|The man told us we could park it here.|  
|The man told us | we could park it at the railway station.|  
|The man told us | we could park it | in the street over there.|

413

For guidance, the following general rules are useful:

(A) Use a single tone unit for each sentence, except in the circumstances (B)–(G) below.

(B) If a sentence begins with a clause or adverbial phrase, give the clause or adverbial element a separate tone unit:

The year before last, | we spent two weeks in Wales.|

(This does not usually apply when the adverbial is a fronted topic, see 426–9.)

(C) If a sentence contains a non-restrictive postmodifier (see 100), eg a non-restrictive relative clause (see 795), give the postmodifier a separate tone unit:

|The blue whale | which is the world’s largest animal | has been hunted almost to extinction.|
(D) Similarly, give any medial phrase or clause a separate tone unit:

| And that | in short | is why I refused. |

(E) A vocative or linking adverb usually has its own tone unit (or at least ends a tone unit):

| Mary | are you coming? |

| The police | however | thought he was guilty. |

(F) Give a separate tone unit to a clause or long noun phrase acting as subject:

| What we need | is plenty of time. |

(G) If two or more clauses are coordinated, give them each a separate tone unit:

| He opened the door | and walked straight in. |

End-focus and contrastive focus

414

The nucleus is the most important part of a tone unit; it marks the focus of information, or the part of the unit to which the speaker especially draws the hearer's attention. Normally, the nucleus is at the end of the tone unit; or, to be more precise, on the last major-class word (noun, main verb, adjective, or adverb, see 884) in the tone unit. Which syllable of the word is stressed, if it has more than one syllable, is determined by ordinary conventions of word stress: to\(^{\text{day}}\), work\(^{\text{ing}}\), photograph, conversation, etc. This neutral position of the nucleus, which you see in all the examples in 413, we call END-FOCUS.

Note

Constructions consisting of two or more nouns together often behave, for stress purposes, like a single word (ie like a noun compound), with the main stress on the first noun: export records, building plan, traffic problem. (But contrast town hall, country house, lawn tennis etc.)

415

But in other cases you may shift the nucleus to an earlier part of the tone unit. You may do this when you want to draw attention to an earlier part of the tone unit, usually to contrast it with something already mentioned, or understood in the context. For this reason, we call earlier placing of the nucleus CONTRASTIVE FOCUS. Here are some examples:

| One of the parcels has arrived. | (but the other one hasn't) |

(Was Dylan Thomas married in Swansea?) | No, but he was born in Swansea. |

| I hear you're painting the kitchen blue. | No, I'm painting the children's bedroom blue. |

(Have you ever driven a sports car?) | Yes, I've often driven one. |

In cases like [3] and [4], contrastive meaning is signalled by a fall-rise tone (see 154-137), with a fall on the nucleus and a rise on the last stressed syllable in the tone
unit. In other sentences, there may be a double contrast, each contrast indicated by its own nucleus:

\[
\text{[Her father | is Austrian, | but her mother | is French.]}\]

416

Sometimes contrastive focus draws attention to a whole phrase (eg the children's bedroom in [5]); at other times, it is a single word that receives the focus (eg often in [6]). Even words like personal pronouns, prepositions, and auxiliaries, which are not normally stressed at all, can receive nuclear stress for special contrastive purposes:

(I've never been to Paris) | but I will go there | some day.) \text{[7]}

(A) \text{(What did John say to Mary?)}

(B) \text{[He was speaking to me] (not to Mary).} \text{[8]}

(I know she works with John) | but who does she work for? | \text{[9]}

(I don't know if you mean to see Peter.) | but if you see him| (please give him my good wishes). \text{[10]}

In some cases, eg [8] and [9], contrastive focus comes later rather than earlier than normal end-focus. Thus the normal way to say Who does he work for? [9] would be with focus on the verb, not the preposition:

Who does he work for?

In exceptional cases, contrastive stress in a word of more than one syllable may shift to a syllable which does not normally have word stress. For example, if you want to make a contrast between the two words normally pronounced bureaucracy and autocracy-you may do so as follows:

[I'm afraid that bureaucracy can be worse than autocracy.]

**Given and new information**

417

We can roughly divide the information in a message into **given information** (something which the speaker assumes the hearer knows about already) and **new information** (which the speaker does not assume the hearer knows about already). In [8] above, 'He was speaking' is given information: it is already given by the preceding clause; in [10], 'you see him' is given information for the same reason:

\[
\text{[He was speaking to me | \text{given} | If you see him ... | \text{new} | \text{given}}\]

As new information is obviously what is most important in a message, it receives the information focus (ie nucleus), whereas old information does not. Naturally, personal pronouns and other substitute words, because they refer to something already mentioned or understood, normally count as old information.

**Note**

Notice that given information and new information are what the speaker presents as given and new respectively. What in fact the hearer knows or assumes may be a different thing. For example, a speaker might say:

(Margaret likes Picasso,) but Jane hates modern painting.)
The position of the nucleus here means that the speaker assumes that the hearer knows that Picasso is a modern painter. But of course, the hearer might not have heard of Picasso, or might not regard him as a modern painter.

**Information given by situation**

418

‘Given information’ suggests information which has already been mentioned or alluded to. But we may extend this notion to include information which is ‘given’ by the situation outside language. In this respect ‘given’ information is like definite meaning and there is indeed a strong connection between given information and definiteness (see 69–90).

In the following examples, for which we give the most natural intonation, the definite items *today, here, and mine* in [11, 12, 13] do not have a nuclear stress because their meaning is given by the situation. In contrast, the items *Saturday, factory, and father’s* in [11a, 12a, 13a] are most likely to be new information, and therefore receive nuclear stress:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{What are you doing today?} \quad [11] \\
&\text{What are you doing on Saturday?} \quad [11a] \\
&\text{I work here.} \quad [12] \\
&\text{I work in a factory.} \quad [12a] \\
&\text{Mr Smith is a friend of mine.} \quad [13] \\
&\text{Mr Smith is a friend of my father’s.} \quad [13a]
\end{align*}
\]

But the definite items *today etc, could have nuclear stress if some contrast were implied:*

\[
\begin{align*}
&(\text{I know what you did yesterday,}) \text{ but what are you doing today?} \quad [11b] \\
&(\text{I used to work in a factory,}) \text{ but now I work here.} \quad [12b]
\end{align*}
\]

419

In other examples, the information given by the situation outside language is more a matter of what is expected in a given context:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{The kettle’s boiling.} \quad \text{The doctor has called.} \\
&\text{Is your father at home?} \quad \text{Dinner’s ready.}
\end{align*}
\]

In a natural context, the final part of each of these sentences conveys little information, and therefore does not receive the nucleus. In a home, the one thing to announce about kettles is that they are ‘boiling’; and the one thing you expect the doctor to do is to ‘call’ etc. Therefore the nucleus occurs, contrary to end-focus, on the earlier and more informative part of the sentence.

**Main and subsidiary information**

420

Degrees of ‘informativeness’ are also relevant to the choice of tone (see 37–43) on the nucleus. We tend to use a falling tone to give emphasis to the main
information in a sentence, and a rising tone (or, with more emphasis, a fall-rise tone) to give subsidiary or less important information, *i.e.* information which is more predictable from the context. Subordinate clauses and adverbials often give information which is subsidiary to the idea in the rest of the main clause:

(A)  
\[ \text{I saw your } \underline{\text{brother}} \text{ at the game } \underline{\text{yesterday}}. \]

(B)  
\[ \text{Yes, his } \underline{\text{favourite}} \text{ pastime.} \]

Subsidiary information may either precede or follow the main information. Speaker (B) could also say here:

\[ \text{Yes, his } \underline{\text{favourite}} \text{ pastime is watching } \underline{\text{football}}. \]

But if there had been no allusion to the subject of football, the speaker would normally put the main focus on *football*:

(A)  
\[ \text{What does he like to do in his spare time?} \]

(B)  
\[ \text{His main pastime is watching } \underline{\text{football}}. \]

or, on the pattern of the first example:

(B)  
\[ \text{Watching } \underline{\text{football}} \text{ is his favourite pastime.} \]

**Adverbials as main and subsidiary information**

421

Adverbials following the main clause often have a rising tone to indicate subsidiary information added as an afterthought:

\[ \text{It was snowing when we arrived.} \]

\[ \text{She'll do anything if you ask her nicely.} \]

But a final adverbial clause can also occasionally contain the main information:

\[ \text{She had just finished dressing when her guests arrived.} \]

Shorter final adverbials are often included in the same tone unit as the rest of the clause, and may bear the main focus:

\[ \text{She plays the piano beautifully.} \]

**Main and subsidiary information in writing**

422

In *writing*, you cannot point to important information by using intonation, so you have to rely on ordering and subordination of clauses instead. The general rule is that the most important information is saved up to the end, so that the sentence finishes with a sort of climax (here indicated by *italics*):

Arguments in favour of a new building plan, said the mayor, included suggestions that if a new shopping centre were not built, the city's traffic problems would soon become unmanageable.
In reading this sentence aloud, it is natural to put a rising or fall-rise tone on all points of information except the last, which receives a falling tone.

| ... building plan | ... mayor | ... suggestions | ... built | ... traffic problems | ... unmanageable |

End-focus and end-weight

423

When you are deciding in which order to place the ideas in a sentence, there are two principles to remember:

(A) END-FOCUS (see 414): the new or most important idea in a piece of information should be placed towards the end, where in speech the nucleus of the tone unit normally falls. As we saw in 422, this principle may be extended to apply not just to a single piece of information, but to a whole sentence containing many pieces of information. This is because a sentence is generally more effective (especially in writing) if the main point is saved up to the end.

(B) END-WEIGHT: The more ‘weighty’ part(s) of a sentence should be placed towards the end. Otherwise the sentence may sound awkward and unbalanced. The ‘weight’ of an element can be defined in terms of length (eg number of syllables) or in terms of grammatical complexity (number of modifiers, etc).

424

Both end-focus and end-weight are useful guiding principles, not invariable rules. As we have said, although end-focus is normal, you are allowed in speech to shift the nucleus to an earlier position in the tone unit, for CONTRASTIVE FOCUS. Similarly, there are exceptions to end-weight:

My father owns the largest betting-shop in London. [14]

The largest betting shop in London belongs to my father. [15]

In [14], a long object phrase (the largest betting-shop in London) follows a short subject (my father) and a short verb (owns). This sentence keeps to the principle of end-weight. But in [15], the long noun phrase comes first. This sentence breaks the end-weight principle, and is less natural than [14]; but it could easily be said by someone wanting to place the focus of information on father. In such a case the two principles of end-weight and end-focus conflict. Generally, however, the two principles work together: it is usual for a short element in a sentence (eg a pronoun) to have less information than a longer element.

Order and emphasis

Topic

425

In the rest of this chapter, we shall show that English grammar has quite a number of sentence processes which help to arrange the message for the right order and the right emphasis. Because of the principles of end-focus and
end-weight, the final position in a sentence or clause is, in neutral circumstances, the most important.

But the first position is also important for communication, because it is the starting-point for what the speaker wants to say: it is (so to speak) the part of the sentence which is familiar territory in which the hearer gets his bearings. Therefore we call the first element in a clause (leaving aside conjunctions and many adverbials, see 429 Note) the topic. In most statements, the topic is the subject of the sentence. If the statement has only one tone unit, usually the topic does not receive focus, because it often contains old information, and links the statement in meaning to what was said before:

(Have you seen Bill?) | He owes me five dollars. |
| TOPIC | INFORMATION FOCUS |

But sometimes topic and information focus coincide, and in this case, the topic is doubly prominent:

(Who gave you that magazine?) | Bill gave it to me. |
| TOPIC AND FOCUS |

Fronted topic
426

Instead of the subject, you may make another element the topic, by moving it to the front of the sentence. This shift gives the element a kind of psychological prominence, and has three different effects:

(A) EMPIATIC TOPIC
427

In (informal) conversation, it is quite common for a speaker to front an element (particularly a complement) and to give it nuclear stress, thus giving it double emphasis:

| Joe his name is. | [1] |
| An utter fool I felt too. | [2] |
| Relaxation you call it. | [3] |
| Excellent food they serve here. | [4] (TOPIC = OBJECT) |

It is as if the speaker says the most important thing in his mind first, adding the rest of the sentence as an afterthought. The ordering of the elements here is CSV (in [1] and [2]), CSVO (in [3]), and OSVA (in [4]), instead of the normal order SVC, SVOC, SVO (see 506–8).

(B) CONTRASTIVE TOPIC
428

Here the fronting helps to point dramatically to a contrast between two things mentioned in neighbouring sentences or clauses, which often have parallel structure:
| His face | I’m not fond of | (TOPIC = PREPOSITIONAL COMPLEMENT)
| but his character | I despise. | (TOPIC = OBJECT)

| Bloggs | my name is | (TOPIC = COMPLEMENT)
| so Bloggs | you might as well call me. | (TOPIC = OBJECT)

| Willingly | he’ll never do it | (TOPIC = ADVERBIAL)
| (he’ll have to be forced.) | (TOPIC = COMPLEMENT)

| Rich | I may be | (TOPIC = COMPLEMENT)
| (but that doesn’t mean I’m happy.) |

This construction is not very common, and is mainly confined to (rhetorical) speech.

(C) ‘GIVEN’ TOPIC

429

Another type of fronting is found in more (formal), especially (written) English:

Most of these problems a computer (TOPIC = OBJECT) could solve easily.

This subject we have examined in an earlier chapter, and need not reconsider.

Everything that can be done the administration has attended to already.

The fronting here is more negative: a less important idea is shifted to the front so that end-focus can fall on another, more important idea. The word this or these is often present in the fronted topic, showing that it contains given information. Nevertheless, the topic receives a kind of emphasis as the starting-point of the sentence.

Note

We shall not normally consider an initial adverbial to be a ‘fronted topic’, because most adverbials can occur fairly freely in front of the subject (see 470):

Yesterday John was late for school.

But some adverbials which are closely connected with the verb, such as those of manner and direction, do not usually occur in front position. These may be said to be ‘fronted’ for special prominence in clauses like

Willingly he’ll never do it.
Into the smoke we plunged.

Inversion

430

Fronting is often accompanied by INVERSION; that is, not only the topic element, but the verb phrase, or part of it, is moved before the subject. There are two types of inversion:
Subject-Verb Inversion

Subject Verb $x \quad \rightarrow \quad x$ Verb Subject $\ldots$

The rain came down (in torrents).

Down came the rain (in torrents).

Subject-Operator Inversion

Subject Operator $x \quad \rightarrow \quad x$ Operator Subject $\ldots$

\[
\begin{align*}
1 & \quad \text{have} & \quad \text{never} & \quad \text{seen him} & \quad \text{Never have I seen him} \\
1 & \quad \text{so angry.} & \quad \text{so angry.} & \quad \text{so angry.}
\end{align*}
\]

Never did I see him

\[
\begin{align*}
1 & \quad \text{never} & \quad \text{saw him} & \quad \text{Never did I see him} \\
1 & \quad \text{so angry.} & \quad \text{so angry.}
\end{align*}
\]

Subject-verb inversion

Subject-verb inversion is normally limited as follows:

a The verb phrase consists of a single verb word.

b The verb is an intransitive verb of position (be, stand, lie, etc) or a verb of motion (come, go, fall, etc).

c The topic element ($x$ in the diagram above) is an adverbial of place or direction:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Here's the milkman.} \\
\text{Here comes the bus.} & \quad \text{〈informal speech〉} \\
\text{There are our friends.}
\end{align*}
\]

There, at the summit, stood the castle in its medieval splendour.

Away went the car like a whirlwind.  

Slowly out of its hangar rolled the gigantic aircraft.

The examples from 〈informal speech〉 give end-focus to the subject. In 〈literary〉 style, the fronted topic is more useful in giving end-weight to a long subject.

Subject-verb inversion does not take place with a fronted topic when the subject is a personal pronoun: Here it is (not *Here is it); Away they go! (not *Away go they).

Note

[a] The adverb there is stressed in the examples above; this stress distinguishes it from the introductory subject there (see 590–4).

Contrast:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{1There are our friends.} \\
\text{There are 1 too many people here.}
\end{align*}
\]

[b] The introductory subject there can bring about subject-verb inversion with some verbs:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{There rose in his imagination visions of a world empire.} \\
\text{There may come a time when we are less fortunate.} \\
\text{On the following day, there was held a splendid banquet.}
\end{align*}
\]

〈literary〉

rather
But in a sense, there itself is the subject here, as we see from its inversion with the operator in questions: Will there come a time . . . ?

[c] Occasionally subject-verb inversion occurs with a complement as topic when the complement expresses a comparison:

For a long time, he refused to talk to his wife, and kept her in ignorance of his troubles. Equally strange was his behaviour to his son. <literary>

432

Subject-operator inversion

The inversion of subject and operator is of course obligatory in most questions (see 777–81); more relevant here is the obligatory subject-operator inversion when a negative element is fronted for emphasis (especially in <rhetorical> style) (see 318):

Not a word did he say. (= 'He didn't say a word')

Under no circumstances must the door be left unlocked. <formal>

Inversion is also obligatory after fronting of words of negative meaning such as never, hardly, scarcely, few, little, seldom, rarely, (not) only (see 633–4):

Hardly had I left before the trouble started.

(= 'I had hardly left before . . .')

Only later did they realise what a terrible thing had happened.

(= 'They didn't realise until later . . .')

Little does he know how much suffering he has caused.

(= 'He little knows . . .')

Notice that the dummy operator do is used for the inversion where there is no other operator in the normal-order sentence:

They realised only later . . . • Only later did they realise . . .

In journalistic English, subject-operator inversion with be sometimes serves the purpose of end-weight, where the subject is long and complex:

Throwing the hammer here is champion William Anderson, who, when he's not winning prizes, is a hard-working shepherd in the Highlands of Scotland.

Note

Be as a main verb can count as an operator for subject-operator inversion: Seldom is he sober. But it also counts as a verb for subject-verb inversion of the kind discussed in 431: Here is the milkman.

Fronting with so

433

Notice the following constructions in which so is placed first:

(A) So as a substitute form with the meaning of 'addition' (see 238) has subject-operator inversion (for end-focus) in sentences like:

(A) (I've seen the play.) • (B) [So have I.] (= 'and I have, too')

(I enjoyed the play) • and so did my friends.

(B) But so as a substitute form does nor have inversion when it is fronted to express emphatic affirmation:

(A) (You've spilled coffee on your dress.) • (B) [Oh dear, I so have.]
(A) (It's raining hard outside.) (B) [So it is.]

The so-construction here expresses the hearer's surprise at discovering that what the speaker says is true. As with affirmation in general (see 272), the nucleus comes on the operator, not on the subject.

(C) So introducing a clause of degree or amount (see 235) can be fronted for emphasis, with subject-operator inversion: So absurd did he look that everyone stared at him (= 'He looked so absurd that . . .').

Other constructions affecting the topic

CLEFT SENTENCE (it-type)

434

The cleft sentence construction with introductory it (see 518–19) is useful for fronting an element as topic, and also for putting focus (usually for contrast) on the topic element. It does this by splitting the sentence into two halves, 'highlighting' the topic by making it the complement of it be:

(A) (Would you like to borrow this book?)

(B) *No, it's the other book that I want to read.*

(topic = object; cf I want to read the other book.)

(For centuries London had been growing as a commercial port of world importance.) But it was in the north of England that industrial power brought new prosperity to the country. [2]

(topic = adverbial)

The constrastive meaning of the topic can be seen if we make clear the implied negative in [1] and [2]:

It's the other book, not that book, that I want to read.

But it was in the north of England, not in London, that . . .

The cleft sentence is particularly useful in <written> English, where we cannot mark contrastive emphasis by intonation.

CLEFT SENTENCE (wh-type)

435

A nominal relative clause (see 645-6), like an it-cleft sentence, can be used to highlight one element for contrast. It can be either subject or complement of the verb be (the subject position is more common):

Normal pattern

CLEFT SENTENCE

We need more time. →

\[ \text{It's more time that we need.} \] (it-type)

\[ \text{What we need is more time.} \] (wh-type)

\[ \text{More time is what we need.} \] (wh-type)

The wh-type cleft sentence, like the it-type, usually implies a contrast; eg

We don’t need more money—what we need is more time.
Comparison of *it*-type and *wh*-type cleft sentences

436

The *it*-type and the *wh*-type cleft sentences cannot always be used in the same circumstances. For example, the *it*-type is more flexible in certain ways:

a  The focus of the *wh*-type sentence normally has to be in the form of a noun phrase or nominal clause. An adverbial clause or prepositional phrase can sometimes be the focus of the *wh*-type sentence, but it sounds less natural in this construction than in the *it*-type sentence:
   
   **It was by train that we reached Istanbul.**
   
   *(but not: *How we reached Istanbul was by train.)*
   
   **It was in 1950 that he first achieved fame as a writer.**
   
   *(better than: When he first achieved fame as a writer was in 1950.)*
   
   **It was on this very spot that I first met my wife.**
   
   *(better than: Where I first met my wife was on this very spot.)*

The *wh*-type sentence sounds somewhat better when the *wh*-clause comes last:

   **On this very spot is where I first met my wife.**

b  But if an adverbial can be put in the form of a noun phrase, it can be the focus of a *wh*-type sentence with a final *when*—or *where*-clause:

   -- { It is in autumn that the countryside is most beautiful. }
   
   -- { Autumn is (the time) when the countryside is most beautiful. }
   
   -- { It was at Waterloo that Napoleon was finally defeated. }
   
   -- { Waterloo was (the place) where Napoleon was finally defeated. }

c  A *wh*-type sentence using the *wh*-words *who, whom,* or *whose* is usually awkward or impossible:

   **It was the ambassador that met us.**

   *(but not: *Who met us was the ambassador.)*

   **We can, however, say:**

   **The one/person who met us was the ambassador.**

437

The *wh*-type cleft sentence is more flexible than the *it*-type in these ways:

   a  The *wh*-type can focus on the complement of a clause, whereas the *it*-type normally cannot:

   **He is a genius. → { What he is is a genius. }
   
   *(but not: *It’s a genius that he is.)*

b  The *wh*-type can focus on the verb, by using the substitute verb *do:*

   **He’s spoilt the whole thing. → { What he’s done is spoil the whole thing. }
   
   *(but not: *It’s spoil the whole thing that he’s done.)*

Notice that the complement of the *wh*-type sentence here takes the form of a non-finite clause (*spoil the whole thing*). The non-finite verb may be *a a bare
infinite, b a to-infinitive, c an -ed participle, d an -ing participle:

What he'll do is spoil the whole thing.

What he's done is to spoil the whole thing.

What he's doing is spoiling the whole thing.

The bare infinitive is the most usual construction, except after done (where the -ed participle is just as acceptable), and after doing, where the -ing participle has to be used.

Sentences with wh-clauses and demonstratives

A common type of sentence in (informal) English is one in which a wh-clause is linked by the verb be to a demonstrative pronoun (this or that). These sentences are similar to wh-cleft sentences both in structure and in their focusing effect:

This is where I first met my wife.

This is how you start the engine.

(A) (He was psycho-analysed by a pupil of Freud's.)

(B) So that's why he's always talking about his mother fixation!

(I had difficulty in starting the car today.) That's what always happens when I leave it out in cold weather.

Postponement

INTRODUCTORY-it CONSTRUCTION

The introductory-it construction (see 584–9) (not to be confused with the it-type cleft sentence) is a means of postponing a subject clause to a later position in the sentence, either for end-weight or for end-focus:

That income tax will be reduced is unlikely.

\[ \rightarrow \text{It is unlikely that income tax will be reduced.} \]

The it-construction is, in fact, more usual than the construction without postponement. If you keep the clause in front position, this is exceptional, and suggests that you want to put special contrastive emphasis (see 428) on the rest of the main clause:

That income tax will be reduced is unlikely; that it will be abolished is out of the question.

In some instances, such as the passive construction (see 585, 676–82), it is impossible to keep the clause in subject position:

It is said that she slipped arsenic in his tea.

(but not: *That she slipped arsenic in his tea is said.)

For other examples of it replacing a postponed clause as subject, see 584.

Main focus often occurs in the postponed clause:

It is likely that they will hold an election.
But when an -ing clause is the postponed subject, the main focus normally falls on the rest of the main clause, and the -ing clause is treated as an afterthought:

It's fun being a hostess.

Occasionally introductory it displaces a clause in object position:

You must find it enjoyable working here.

(= 'You must find working here enjoyable';

Compare: It is enjoyable working here.)

I owe it to you that the jury acquitted me.

(Compare: I owe my acquittal to you.)

Something put it into his head that she was a spy.

(Compare: It came into his head that she was a spy.)

This displacement must occur when the object clause is a that-clause or an infinitive clause. Thus we can have:

I'll leave it to you to lock the door.

But not: *I'll leave to lock the door to you.

POSTPONING PARTS OF SENTENCE ELEMENTS

The it-construction postpones a whole sentence element, whether a subject or object. You may also wish to postpone a part of a sentence element, for example by splitting an adjective from its postmodifiers:

How ready are they to make peace with their enemies?

This can avoid the awkwardness of a long or emphatic element coming in non-final position, as in How ready to make peace with their enemies are they? The most important cases of such postponement are discussed in 443–6.

POSTPONING THE POSTMODIFICATION OF A NOUN PHRASE

The time had come to decorate the house for Christmas.

(Better than: The time to decorate the house for Christmas had come.)

The problem arose of what to do with the money.

(Better than: The problem of what to do with the money arose.)

What business is it of yours?

(More idiomatic than: What business of yours is it?)

We heard the story from his own lips of how he was stranded for days without food.

This avoids awkwardness particularly when the rest of the sentence is short in comparison with the subject. In contrast to [4], the following is normal:

The problem of what to do with the money was discussed by all the members of the family.

POSTPONING THE EMPHATIC REFLEXIVE PRONOUN

When the reflexive pronouns myself, himself, themselves, etc are used for emphasis, they normally have nuclear stress. If such a pronoun is in apposition as part of the subject, it is common to postpone it for end-focus:
John himself told me. \(\rightarrow\) John told me himself.
\(\text{ (= 'It was John, and no one else, who told me')}\)

**POSTPONING COMPARATIVE CLAUSES, etc**

445

A comparative clause or phrase is often separated, by postponement, from the word it postmodifies. In some cases, the same sentence without postponement would be extremely awkward:

*More people own houses these days than used to years ago.*

\(\text{not: *More people than used to years ago own houses these days.}\)

He showed *less pity to his victims than any other tyrant in history.*

\(\text{not: *He showed less pity than any other tyrant in history to his victims.}\)

446

Other constructions which, like comparative clauses, are often postponed are postmodifying phrases of exception (see 239–40), and clauses of amount or degree following *too, enough,* and so (see 234–5):

*All of them were captured except the leader of the gang.*

*Too many people were there for the thief to escape unseen.*

I was so excited by the present that I forgot to thank you.

**Other choices of position**

**The passive**

447

Another example of a grammatical process which changes the positions of elements in the sentence is the rule for forming passive sentences (see 676 \#2).

(A) (Who makes these chairs?) (B) They’re made by \(\text{Ercol}.\)

The President was mistrusted by most of the radical politicians in the country.

In [7], the passive gives the sentence end-focus, where the active (\(\text{Ercol makes them}\)) would not. In [8], the passive gives end-weight, where the active sentence (Most of the radical . . . mistrusted the President) would be awkward.

You can readily use the passive for end-weight where the subject of the sentence is a clause;

I was astounded that he was prepared to give me a job.

\(\text{(Better than: That he was prepared to give me a job astounded me.)}\)

The preposition *by* is omitted here because a that-clause cannot be complement of a preposition see 740.

**Position of direct object**

448

In normal order, a direct object precedes an object complement or a final-position adverbial (see 470, 508–9). But if the object is long, it can be postponed to the end for end-weight:

\(\begin{cases}
\text{NORMAL ORDER} & \text{He has proved them wrong.} \\
\text{FINAL OBJECT} & \text{He has proved wrong the forecasts made by the country’s leading economic experts.}
\end{cases}\)
He condemned them to death.

He condemned to death most of the peasants who had taken part in the rebellion.

The same choice can be made when a noun phrase object comes before a particle (e.g., the second part of a phrasal verb such as make up, give away, let down):

He gave all his books away.  She made the story up.

He gave away all his books.  She made up a story.

The choice may be made either for end-weight, or, as in these examples, for end-focus. Notice that personal pronoun objects cannot be moved to the end in this way: He gave them away, but not *He gave away them.

Position of indirect object

449

In a similar way, an indirect object can in effect be postponed, by converting it into a prepositional phrase:

The twins told their mother all their secrets.  [9]

The twins told all their secrets to their mother.  [10]

This change, like the others, can be used for a different end-focus. For example, [9] answers the implied question ‘What did the twins tell their mother?’, but [10] answers the implied question ‘Who did they tell their secrets to?’.

Avoiding intransitive verbs

450

Connected with the principle of end-weight in English is the feeling that the predicate of a clause should be longer or grammatically more complex than the subject. This helps to explain why we tend to avoid predicates consisting of just a single intransitive verb. Instead of saying Mary sang, we would probably prefer to say Mary sang a song, filling the object position with a noun phrase which adds little information but helps to give more weight to the predicate.

451

For such a purpose English often uses a general verb (such as have, take, give, and do) followed by an abstract noun phrase:

He’s having a swim.  (Compare: He’s swimming)

He took a rest.  (Compare: He rested)

The man gave a shout.  (Compare: The man shouted)

He does little work.  (Compare: He works little)

The sentences on the left are more idiomatic than those on the right.

In a similar way a transitive verb can be replaced by an indirect object construction with the verb give, etc:

I gave the door a kick.  (= ‘I kicked the door’)

I paid her a visit.  (= ‘I visited her’)

(£)
Part Four
Grammatical Compendium

How to use the Compendium

This Grammatical Compendium covers all the important areas of English grammatical form and structure, and is arranged alphabetically under topic headings. The arrangement is alphabetical because the Compendium is primarily meant to be used for reference, especially as an explanation of grammatical terms and categories referred to in Part Three.

Even so, some students may wish to study the structures of English grammar systematically, and many others may find it generally helpful to see how the topics relate to one another in an overall logical plan. For this reason, we present a visual guide to the Compendium (see p 170), showing related topics grouped in boxes, and dependences of one topic on another by arrows. You can, if you wish, see the diagram as a suggested plan for reading the Compendium in a logical order. If you do, notice that the diagram offers you a choice of orders, since often two or more topics lead equally naturally to or from another topic. For example, after reading 'Sentences' and 'Clauses', you could go to any of the groups containing 'Subordination' and 'Coordination'; 'Negation', 'Questions', etc; 'Verb Phrases', 'Subjects', etc. There is no single 'best way' of putting the topics in a natural sequence.

Another thing to bear in mind is that the diagram attempts to show only the more important relations between topics. Some connections have not been indicated; others, it could be argued, might be just as well shown by arrows pointing in the opposite direction. We have simplified the 'map' in order to make it reasonably easy to follow. Each entry in the Compendium has a reference to the most relevant sections of R Quirk et al, A Grammar of Contemporary English (Longman 1972), so that, if required, a more detailed treatment of the topic can be consulted in that book.

Adjective patterns (see GCE 12.31-43)

452
Adjectives can have three types of complement: (A) prepositional phrase, (B) that-clause, and (C) to-infinitive.
(A) Adjectives with a prepositional phrase

Adjectives can have different prepositional complements: good at, afraid of, ready for, keen on, etc. Usually, a particular adjective requires a particular preposition. Here are some examples:

- They were terribly worried about you.
- She was awfully bad at mathematics.
- We were all annoyed at his behaviour.
- She was successful in her last attempt.
- You are interested in languages, aren’t you?
- Were they conscious of the difficulties?
- She was convinced of his brilliance.
- His plan is based on co-operation.
- She is dependent on your assistance.
- Not all income is subject to taxation.
- This plan is not compatible with our principles.
- He is disappointed with her behaviour.

(B) Adjectives with a that-clause

454

a Personal subjects

Some adjectives and adjectival participles have a finite that-clause as complement (where that can usually be omitted):

- I’m sure (that) he’ll be late.
- We’re glad (that) you can come.

When the that-clause expresses a ‘putative’ idea, it contains should (see 289–90):

- We’re surprised that he should resign.
- I’m amazed that he should get the post.

Other adjectives and participles with that-clauses: certain, confident, proud, sad; alarmed, annoyed, astonished, disappointed, pleased, shocked, etc. Such adjectives elsewhere have a prepositional phrase as complement: certain of, annoyed at, pleased with, etc.

b Introductory it as subject

Adjectives with that-clauses frequently have introductory it as subject (see 584–9):

- It’s true that she never turned up.
- It’s possible that we’ll be a bit late.

Other such adjectives include: certain, evident, likely, obvious, probable.

The that-clause often contains putative should:

- It’s odd that he should be late.
- It’s appropriate that he should get the post.

Similarly: curious, extraordinary, fortunate, important, odd, sad; alarming, disconcerting, embarrassing, fitting, frightening, irritating, shocking, surprising, etc. Notice that many of these adjectives have the form of an -ing participle.

In <formal> style, the verb in the that-clause can sometimes be subjunctive (see 823):

- It’s essential that he be here by tomorrow.
- It’s essential that he should be here by tomorrow.

(C) Adjectives with a to-infinitive

455

There are different types of adjectives with to-infinitive constructions, for example:

- He was splendid to wait.
- He is hard to convince.
He was furious to hear about it. [3]
He was slow to react. [4]
The meanings of the four constructions are different, as can be seen from these paraphrases:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{It was splendid of him to wait. [1a]} \\
&\text{To convince him is hard. [2a]} \\
&\text{It is hard to convince him. [2b]} \\
&\text{To hear about it made him furious. [3a]} \\
&\text{It made him furious to hear about it. [3b]} \\
&\text{He reacted slowly. [4a]}
\end{align*}
\]

a Other examples of adjectives like splendid in [1] (note the position of not, never and other ‘mid-position’ adverbs):

They were stupid not to follow your advice.
She was careful never to repeat her mistake.
He was wrong to go ahead with the plan.
Also: clever, cruel, good, kind, naughty, nice, rude, silly.

b Other examples of adjectives like hard in [2]:

He is difficult to please.
It’s good to eat.
He’s impossible to teach.
He’s easy to deal with.
Also: convenient, enjoyable, fun (informal), pleasant.

c Other examples of adjectives like furious in [3]:

I’ll be glad to drive you home.
They were delighted to hear about your results in the exam.
Also: amazed, angry, annoyed, disappointed, pleased, sorry, surprised, worried.

d Other examples of adjectives like slow in [4]:

He was quick to answer my letter. (= ‘He answered . . . quickly.’)
They were prompt to act. (= ‘They acted promptly.’)
He is willing to give us his support. (= ‘He’ll willingly give . . .’)

e Other adjectives having an infinitive clause as complement do not fit into the other four categories. They are if anything related to d in their meaning, but cannot be paraphrased by the use of an adverb:

I am unable to answer your question.
They are bound to be late.
We’re all anxious to meet your family.

f There is also a class of adjectives with an infinitive clause after introductory it:

It’s important to have warm clothing.
It will be necessary to pay in advance.
Will it be convenient to see you this afternoon?
Also: possible, impossible, nice (informal), right, wise, wrong. With these, and some other adjectives, the infinitive clause can have a subject introduced by for:

It’s impossible for us all to go by car.
They were anxious for him to succeed.

Adjectives (see GCE 5.2–5, 5.12–41)

456

(A) Most adjectives can be both attributive (acting as premodifiers of nouns, see 732) and predicative (acting as complements of verbs, see 841):
She's a pretty girl. All the girls here are pretty.

(B) Most adjectives can be modified by degree adverbs like very, quite, rather, etc (see 217–19):

She looks quite young for her age.

(C) Most adjectives can take comparative and superlative forms (see 524). Regular comparison may be expressed a by adding the endings -er and -est to the adjective:

The Browns seem a lot happier now than they used to.
They are the kindest people I know, too.
or b by placing more and most before the adjective:

I think she's more intelligent than her husband.
These are the most beautiful paintings I've ever seen.

Attributive adjectives

457

Although most adjectives can be either attributive or predicative, some can only be used in attributive position. One group of them can be related to adverbials (see 468):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADJECTIVES</th>
<th>ADVERBIALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>my former friend</td>
<td>He was formerly my friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an occasional visitor</td>
<td>She was occasionally a visitor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the late president</td>
<td>He was till lately the president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(now dead).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a hard worker</td>
<td>a worker who works hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a big eater</td>
<td>someone who eats a lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other attributive adjectives are derived from nouns, for example:

criminal law = 'law concerning crime'
an atomic scientist = 'a scientist specialising in atomic science'
a medical school = 'a school for students of medicine'

Predicative adjectives

458

Adjectives can be used predicatively as subject complement after linking verbs like be, seem, look, feel (see 510, 838):

I feel awful this morning.
or as object complement after verbs like consider, believe, find (see 865, 867):

We found the place absolutely delightful. (= ‘We found that the place was absolutely delightful.’)

Adjectives can be complement to a subject which is a finite clause (see 514):

Whether the minister will resign is still uncertain.
or a non-finite clause (see 515):

Driving a bus isn't so easy as you may think.

Similarly, adjectives can be object complement to clauses:

They considered {what he did (working so hard)} foolish.

Whereas the adjectives like awful, delightful, uncertain, easy and foolish can be used both attributively (see 457) and predicatively, some groups of adjectives are usually restricted to predicative position. One such group is 'health adjectives':

She felt faint.
You look well.

He's seriously ill (sick <esp AmE>).

In attributive use, however, sick is common in both <BrE> and <AmE>:

He's a very sick man.
Another group of predicative adjectives includes the following, many of which are regularly followed by phrases or clauses (see 452-5):

We are very fond of her. (= 'We like her very much.')
He is ready to do it. (= 'He is prepared to do it.')
I'm afraid that you're mistaken. (= 'I fear that you're mistaken.')
Most of the committee members were present at the meeting.

Notice that many of these adjectives can precede a noun, but in a different sense: a ready answer (= 'an answer which was given readily'), the present situation (= 'the situation at the present time').

Postmodifying adjectives
459
Adjectives (especially predicative adjectives) are sometimes postmodifiers, i.e. they follow the noun they modify (see 719). Such an adjective can usually be regarded as a reduced relative clause (see 783):

The people (who were) involved were reported to the police.
The men (who were) present were his supporters.
Is there anything (which is) interesting in the papers?

Quantifiers ending in -body, -one, -thing, -where can only have postmodification:
something nice. In other cases, the postmodifying adjective is one that cannot be attributive: we cannot say *the involved people or *the present men in the above sentences.

A few adjectives have special meanings when they occur after the noun:
the president elect (soon to take office)
the City of London proper (as strictly defined)

The adjective is a postmodifier in several compounds (see 705):
attorney general court martial
notary public postmaster general

An adjective combined with its complement cannot come before the noun:
*The easiest to teach boys were in my class.

Such adjective phrases can usually be postmodifiers:
The boys easiest to teach were in my class.

Our neighbours have a house much larger than ours.

It is however more usual to separate the adjective and its complement:
The easiest boys to teach were in my class.

Our neighbours have a much larger house than ours.

But if the adjective is itself modified by the adverb so or too, it cannot normally be separated from its complement:

These boxes are too heavy to carry.
but not: *These are too heavy boxes to carry.
The box is so heavy that I can't carry it.
but not: *This is a so heavy box that I can't carry it.

An exception is where the indefinite article is placed between the adjective and the noun head:
This is too heavy a box for me to carry.
He was so eloquent a speaker that even his enemies listened with respect. formal

In informal use, it is more natural to use such rather than so:
This is such a heavy box that I can't carry it.

Adjectives and participles
460
There are many adjectives that have the same form as -ing or -ed participles (see 621-2):

His views on politics were rather surprising.
He seems quite satisfied with his new job.
These adjectives can also be attributive: his surprising views. The -ed participle of intransitive verbs can also be used attributively: the escaped prisoner (= 'the prisoner who has (had) escaped').
Sometimes a verb corresponding to the adjective has a different meaning. We can therefore have ambiguous sentences like They were relieved, where we cannot tell whether relieved is a participle or an adjective. The ambiguity disappears with more context:

**Adjective** They were very relieved to find her at home.
**Participle** They were soon relieved by the next group of sentries.

The difference between the adjective and the participle is not always obvious. It is clear that an -ing form is a present participle and not an adjective when a direct object is present:
He was entertaining the guests with his stories.
Similarly, the verbal force is explicit for the -ed form when a personal by-agent is present (see 677):
The man was offended by the policeman.
For both -ed and -ing participles, modification by the adverb very clearly indicates that the forms are adjectives:
His views were very alarming.
The man was very offended.
But sometimes we find a construction with both very and a by-agent:
I was very irritated by the man in the blue suit.
She was very shaken by the news.
In these 'mixed' constructions, we cannot say whether the -ed form is a participle or an adjective.

**Adjective or adverb?** *(see GCE 5.7–9, 5.17, 5.65–7)*

461
Many adverbs in English are derived from adjectives by the addition of -ly: quick—quickly, careful—carefully, etc. Some adverbs, however, do not end in -ly, but have exactly the same form as adjectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADJECTIVE</th>
<th>ADVERB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>an early train</td>
<td>The train arrived early.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a late dinner</td>
<td>I've been working late.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a straight line</td>
<td>He went straight to the door.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a hard task</td>
<td>We tried hard to convince them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a direct hit</td>
<td>We flew direct to Stuttgart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a wrong answer</td>
<td>You've got it all wrong. <em>(informal)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a short distance</td>
<td>The arrow fell short of the target.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a long rest</td>
<td>You mustn't stay too long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a high wall</td>
<td>Don't aim too high.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These adverbs are mostly connected with time, position and direction. In some cases, there is also an adverb in -ly (lately, hardly, directly, shortly, etc), but with a different meaning:
He drove home directly after arriving (= 'immediately').
I haven't seen him lately (= 'recently').

A few *(informal)* adverbs with adjective form have a premodifying function:
He's pretty (= 'quite') tall.
He was dead (= 'absolutely') drunk.
There are also cases in which an adjective is used after the verb or object where we might expect an adverb. Notice that here we consider the adjective to be a complement (subject complement or object complement, see 529), not an adverbial at all:

The food tasted **good**. (= 'The food was good to taste.')
The flowers smell **sweet**.
We live quite **close** to you.
Keep **still**!
The moon shone **clear** and **bright**.

Both **good** and **well** are adjectives (but with different meanings) in:
Those cakes look **good** (= '... look as if they taste good').
Your mother looks **well** (= '... in good health').

There is a contrast between **strong** (adjective) and **strongly** (adverb) in:
He felt **strong** enough to win the contest.
He felt **strongly** enough about it to object.

The difference between an adverb form and an adjective form does not always involve a difference of meaning. In these examples, the two are more or less equivalent, although the adjective form tends to be more <informal>:

He spoke **loud** and **clear**.
She buys her clothes **cheap**/**cheaply**.
We had to drive **slow**/**slowly** all the way.
We had to lie **quiet**/**quietly** until the danger was over.
I saw him as **clear** <informal>/**clearly** as if he was standing here.
It all happened so **quick** <informal>/**quickly** that I could do nothing.

The form without **-ly** is especially common in comparative and superlative constructions:
Let's see who can run **quickest**.
Would you mind walking **slower**?
We must look **closer** at the problems.
That is **easier** said than done.

In these examples, the normal adverb form would have **-ly**:
We must look **closely** at the problems (**not** ... close ... ).

---

**Adjectives as heads** (see GCE 5.20–3)

Adjectives can function as heads of noun phrases. Such adjectives normally take a definite determiner, usually the definite article, and they have no plural inflection. There are two kinds of such adjectives, both with generic reference (see 74), those denoting a class of people, and those denoting an abstract quality.

**465**

(A) **A class of people (plural):** **the rich** = 'those who are rich'.
There is often a lack of communication between **the young** and **the old**.

*The unemployed* cannot be expected to live on their savings.

*The English* have been called 'a nation of shopkeepers'.

For the difference between **the English** and **Englishmen**, see 627–8.
466
(B) AN ABSTRACT QUALITY (SINGULAR): the absurd = 'that which is absurd'.
Some people enjoy the mystical and the supernatural in literature.
He went from the sublime to the ridiculous.

467
But the article is sometimes omitted before adjective heads in parallel phrases
(see 495) where the adjectives are linked by a conjunction or a preposition:
Education should be for both young and old.
Things went from bad to worse.

Adverbials (see GCE Chapter 8)

468
Adverbials can have a number of different structures. They can be
(A) ADVERBS (see 480):
Peter was playing well.

(B) PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES (see 743):
Peter was playing with great skill.

(C) FINITE CLAUSES (see 514):
Peter was playing well, although he was very tired.

(D) NON-FINITE CLAUSES (see 515), in which the verb is
a an infinitive:
Peter was playing to win.
b an -ing participle:
Being captain of the team, Peter played to win.
c an -ed participle:
When urged by his friends, he agreed to play again.

(E) VERBLESS CLAUSES (see 516):
Peter was playing, unaware of the danger.

(F) NOUN PHRASES (less common) (see 651–3):
Peter was playing last week.

(G) NOUN PHRASES FOLLOWED BY ago, long, etc:
Three years ago, Peter was playing football regularly.

469
Adverbials usually tell something extra about the action, happening, or state
described by the rest of the sentence. For example, the time when it happened,
the place where it happened, or the manner in which it happened:

TIME My father is working today.
PLACE My father is working in the kitchen.
MANNER My father is working hard.

A sentence can have more than one adverbial:
My father is working hard in the kitchen today.

The meanings of adverbials are dealt with in Part Three (see 140–243). Here we are
concerned with the positions of adverbials in relation to other sentence elements,
including other adverbials.

Adverbial positions

470
Although some adverbials can only occur in fixed positions, most adverbials are
mobile, i.e. they can come at different places in the sentence. We need to distinguish
three main positions:

FRONT-POSITION Now Susan is very happy.
MID-POSITION Susan is now very happy.
END-POSITION Susan is very happy now.
FRONT-POSITION is before the subject:

*Every Sunday he went to church.*

MID-POSITION is

a. immediately before the main verb if no auxiliaries are present:

Bill *never goes* abroad.

b. after the operator, *ie* the first auxiliary (see 672–5), if there is more than one verb present:

Bill has *never gone* abroad.

Bill might *never have gone* abroad if you hadn’t invited him.

c. after forms of *be* when *be* is a main verb (see 500):

Bill is *never* at home these days.

Occasionally a mid-position adverbial comes before the operator (see 269, 477).

END-POSITION is

a. after an object or complement if there is one present:

Bill took his car to the garage.

b. otherwise after the verb:

Bill drove very carefully.

The placing of an adverbial depends partly on its structure (adverb, prepositional phrase, clause, etc.), partly on its meaning (time, place, manner, etc). Order and emphasis also play a part (see 425–51). Long adverbials (clauses, prepositional and noun phrases) normally occur in end-position, though front-position is not uncommon, particularly for emphasis or contrast.

\[
\begin{align*}
\{ & \text{We went to Chicago on Monday.} \\
& \text{On Monday we went to Chicago.} \\
& \text{As far as mathematics is concerned, he was a complete failure.} \\
& \text{As far as mathematics is concerned, he was a complete failure.}
\end{align*}
\]

Long adverbials rarely occur in mid-position, which is usually restricted to certain short adverbs such as *almost, hardly, just, never*:

The chairman *almost* resigned.

We’ve *just* returned from Italy.

The main problem, then, in placing adverbials is with *adverbs*. We shall therefore concentrate on these in the following discussion.

Adverbials denoting manner, means, and instrument (see 192–6)

471

Manner, means, and instrument adverbials usually have end-position:

They live *frugally*.

The children go to school *by bus*.

They examined the specimen *microscopically*.

In the passive, however, mid-position is common:

Discussions were *formally* opened here today on the question of international disarmament.

Contrast the position of *well* in the following active and passive sentences:

He put the point *well*. \hspace{1cm} \text{The point was put *well*.}

*He well* put the point. \hspace{1cm} \text{The point was *well* put.}

Place adverbials (see 161–91)

472

Place adverbials, both those denoting location and those denoting direction, usually have end-position:

The meeting will be *upstairs*.

He managed to kick the ball *into the goal*.

Some location adverbials, particularly prepositional phrases and clauses, can easily appear in front-position:
Outside, the boys were jumping and skipping.
The boys were jumping and skipping outside.
In the nursery the children were playing happily but noisily.
The children were playing happily but noisily in the nursery.

Two place adverbials can occur together in end-position, usually with the smaller unit before the larger unit:
Many people eat in Chinese restaurants in London.
Only the larger unit can be moved to front-position:
In London many people eat in Chinese restaurants.
*In Chinese restaurants many people eat in London.

If one of the adverbials is an adverb, it normally comes before a prepositional phrase:
They drove downhill to the college.

Time adverbials
473
Time adverbials can be divided into three classes according to their meaning: adverbials denoting time-when, duration and frequency (see 140–60).

Time-when adverbials
474
We may distinguish two groups of time-when adverbials.

Group A adverbials denote a point or period of time:
Do come and see us again.
We lived in Baltimore last year.
The meeting starts tomorrow at 8 o'clock.

As these examples show, Group A adverbials normally have end-position. But there are exceptions. For example, just always has mid-position:
I'm just finishing my homework.
Now and then can occur in front-, mid-, or end-position:
Now he's living in New York.
He's now living in New York.
He's living in New York now.

Group B adverbials denote a point of time but also imply the point from which that time is measured. Most of these adverbials occur either in front-, mid-, or end-position:
[Recently | they had an accident.]
[They recently had an accident.]
[They had an accident | recently.]
[Once we owned an Alsatian dog.]
[We once owned an Alsatian dog.]
[We owned an Alsatian dog | once.]

As indicated, in end-position these adverbs usually have a rising-tone nucleus (see 421).

Time duration adverbials (see 151–6)
475
Time duration adverbials denote (A) length of time or (B) duration from some preceding point of time. Both groups normally have end-position:
(A) I'll be in California for the summer.
They were on duty all night long.
(B) Britain has had decimal currency since 1971. I've been staying here since last Saturday. 
(Note that the second group requires the perfective aspect, see 119, 881.) Single-word duration adverbs, however, usually take mid-position: They have always tried to be friendly. He is temporarily out of work.

Time frequency adverbials (see 157–60)

476

There are two groups: (A) those denoting definite frequency and (B) those denoting indefinite frequency.

(A) Definite frequency adverbials usually have end-position:
Committee meetings take place weekly.
This week I'll be in the office every day.
I go to Japan twice a year on business.

(B) Indefinite frequency adverbs normally have mid-position:
He generally leaves home at seven in the morning.
We don't normally go to bed before midnight.
Does she always dress well?
They regularly take their dog for a walk in the evening.
I sometimes think she doesn't know what she's talking about.
I'm rarely in my office after five.

Other examples of adverbs denoting indefinite frequency: ever, frequently, never, occasionally, often, seldom, usually.

However, prepositional phrases of indefinite frequency have front- or end-position:
As a rule it's very quiet here during the day.
We've been to see our in-laws on several occasions.

Degree adverbs (see 217–26)

477

Degree adverbs have a heightening or lowering effect on some part of the sentence. Many of them occur in mid-position:
He's definitely going to emigrate.
So they really want him to be elected?
We thoroughly disapprove of their methods.
I entirely agree with her.
I much prefer the old methods.
They can scarcely/hardly ignore our views.
We nearly missed the plane.
She all but kissed me.
I rather like him.

End-position is also possible for many of these adverbs:
He completely ignored my request.
He ignored my request completely.

Note that degree adverbs in mid-position can come, for positive or negative emphasis, before the operator:
I simply don't believe what she said.
You really will have to be more careful.

Two or more adverbials

478

Time adverbials in end-position tend to occur in the order duration + frequency + time-when:

I used to swim for an hour or so every day during my childhood.
I'm paying my rent monthly this year.
Our electricity was cut off briefly today.

When more than one of the main classes of adverbials occur in end-position, the normal order is MANNER/MEANS/INSTRUMENT + PLACE + TIME:

He was working with his lawn-mower in the garden the whole morning.

They go by bus to the opera every month.

A clause normally comes after other adverbial structures (adverbs, prepositional phrases, etc):

We plan to stop for a few days wherever we can find accommoda-
tion.

Adverbials which normally occur in end-position are often put in front-position to avoid having too many adverbials in end-position:

The whole morning he was working with his lawn-mower in the garden.

It is not usual for more than one adverbial to be in front-position or mid-position.

Sentence adverbials

479

The adverbials we have discussed so far are integrated to some extent in the structure of the sentence. For example, they can modify the verb, and be affected by negation.

I always drive carefully.
I don't always drive carefully.

(Here both always and carefully are in the scope of the negative, see 269.)

There is also another class called sentence adverbials, which are peripheral to the sentence structure. The difference between the two classes appears clearly with adverbs that can have both functions:

_Naturally_, the children are behaving well while you are here. [1]

The children behave naturally. [2]

In [1] _naturally_ is a sentence adverbial (="of course"), in [2] it is a manner adverbial (="in a natural manner"). Similarly, _yet_ is a sentence adverbial in [3]:

I've been waiting outside his door the whole day, _yet_ (= 'never-
theless') I haven't seen him. [3]

and a time adverbial in [4]:

I've been waiting outside his door the whole day, but I haven't
seen him _yet_ (= 'so far'). [4]

Sentence adverbials have a wide range of possible structures. For example, instead of _frankly_ in this sentence

_Frankly_, he hasn't got a chance.

we could put

A PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE * in all frankness
AN INFINITIVE CLAUSE to be frank, to speak frankly, to
put it frankly
AN -ing PARTICIPLE CLAUSE frankly speaking, putting it
frankly
AN -ed PARTICIPLE CLAUSE put frankly (less common)
A FINITE VERB CLAUSE if I may be frank, if I can speak
frankly, if I can put it frankly

Sentence adverbials often convey the speaker's comment on the content of what he is saying:

_Of course_, nobody imagines that he will repay the loan.
_To be sure_, we have heard many such promises before.

Other examples of such adverbials are: _admittedly, certainly, definitely, indeed, surely; perhaps, possibly; in fact, actually, really; officially, superficially, tech-

181
nically, theoretically; fortunately, hopefully, luckily, naturally, preferably, strangely, surprisingly. Many other sentence adverbials (e.g., however, therefore, moreover) have a connective role (see 367–85).

The normal position for most sentence adverbials is front-position. They are usually separated from what follows by a tone unit boundary in speech or a comma in writing:

〈Written〉 Obviously, they expected us to be on time.

〈Spoken〉 Obviously | they expected us to be on time |

Adverbs (see GCE 5.42–64)

480

Most adverbs are formed from adjectives (see 461) with the suffix -ly: frank/ frankly, happy/happily, etc. (For the change in spelling from y to i in happy/ happily, etc., see 809.)

Adverbs have two typical functions:

(A) as adverbial (see’468): He always drives carefully.

(B) as modifier of a adjectives, b adverbs, or c a number of other constructions (see 484–7):

a He is an extremely careful driver.

b He drives extremely carefully.

c He lives in a house just outside the town.

A less common function is

(C) as a complement of a preposition: I haven’t been here before now.

The adverb used as a modifier

481

Most modifying adverbs fall into the semantic category of degree adverbs (see 217–26, 477).

482

a The adverb modifies an adjective

The adverb in general precedes the adjective:

He’s rather tall for a ten-year-old.

I thought it was an absolutely awful show myself. <familiar>

It’s extremely good of you to do this for me.

One adverb, enough, is placed after its adjective:

This just isn’t good enough!

The adverbs too, and how (i.e., how in interrogative and exclamatory sentences) are exceptional. When they modify an adjective in a noun phrase, the indefinite article is placed after the adjective (see 459):

He’s too good an actor to forget his lines.

How tall a man is he?

How strange a feeling it was! <formal>

But with mass and plural nouns, where no indefinite article is present, these adverbs cannot premodify the adjective. Instead, how (in exclamations) is replaced by what:

What strange ideas you have!

(not *How strange ideas . . .)

483

b The adverb modifies an adverb

An adverb may premodify another adverb:

You seem to be smoking rather heavily these days.
As with adjectives, the only postmodifying adverb is **enough**:
Oddly **enough**, nothing valuable was stolen.

484

c **The adverb modifies a prepositional phrase**
The nail went **right** through the wall.
His parents are **dead** against his hitch-hiking. <familiar>

485
d **The adverb modifies a determiner, pronoun or numeral** (see 550, 747, 660–1)
He has **hardly** any friends.
**Nearly** everybody came to the housewarming party.
**Over** two hundred deaths were reported **after** the disaster.
The indefinite article can be premodified when *a = one*:
My parents will stay for **about** a week.
The quantifiers **much** and **little** and those ending in **-body**, **-one**, **-thing** and **-where**, and the interrogatives **who**, **what** and **where** are postmodified by **else**: **somebody else**, **all else**, **who else**, **what else**, **somewhere else**, **nowhere else**, etc.
With determiners, the equivalent word is the postdeterminer **other**:

\[
\text{Someone else} \quad \text{Some other person} \quad \text{will have to take my place.}
\]

Again, **enough** is a postmodifier:
He gave us little **enough** encouragement.

486
e **The adverb modifies a noun phrase**
A few degree words can modify noun phrases. They include **quite**, **rather**, **such**, and **what** (in exclamations). The noun phrase is normally indefinite, and the adverb precedes any determiners (see 562):
The place was in **rather** a mess. <informal>
He told **such** **funny** stories.
**What a fool he is!**

487
f **The adverb modifies a noun**
Some adverbs denoting place or time postmodify nouns (see 729):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{his journey} \quad \text{home} & \quad \text{the meeting} \quad \text{yesterday} \\
\text{the sentence} \quad \text{below} & \quad \text{the day} \quad \text{before} \\
\text{the years} & \quad \text{ahead}
\end{align*}
\]

In some phrases the adverb can also be used as a premodifier:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{the above} \quad \text{statement} & \quad \text{our upstairs} \quad \text{neighbour} \\
\text{the statement} \quad \text{above} & \quad \text{our neighbour} \quad \text{upstairs}
\end{align*}
\]

The adverb is a complement of a preposition

488

Some place and time adverbs act as complements of prepositions. Of the place adverbs, **here** and **there** occur for example with: **along**, **around**, **down**, **from**, **in**, **near**, **out** (of), **over**, **round**, **through**, **up**. **Home** can occur after **at**, **from**, **near**, **toward(s)**. Others are restricted to follow from: **above**, **abroad**, **below**, **downstairs**, **indoors**, **inside**, **outside**, **within**, **without**.

I don't know anybody **around here**. <informal>
Is anybody **at home**?
He shouted at me from **downstairs**.

Time adverbs which most commonly function as complement of prepositions are, for example:

I haven't eaten **since yesterday**.
They didn't mention their engagement till (a long time) afterwards. *After today,* there will be no more concerts until October. I'm saving the chocolates you gave me for later.

**Apposition** *(see GCE 9.130–180)*

489

Two or more noun phrases which occur next to each other and refer to the same person or thing are said to be in **apposition**:

*A neighbour of yours, Fred Long,* will be visiting us this evening. [1a]

The elements in apposition can also occur in a different order:

*Fred Long, a neighbour of yours,* will . . . [1b]

The relationship expressed by apposition is the same as that expressed by a subject and its complement:

*Fred Long is a neighbour of yours.*

We can regard the second appositional element in cases like [1b] as a reduced non-restrictive relative clause *(see 795):*

*Fred Long, (who is) a neighbour of yours,* will . . .

**Restrictive and non-restrictive apposition**

490

A distinction similar to that between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses can be applied to apposition:

*(Which Mr Smith do you mean?) [Mr Smith the architect]*

or [Mr Smith the electrician? (RESTRICTIVE)]

[I want to speak to Mr Smith, the electrician.] (NON-RESTRICTIVE)

The elements in non-restrictive apposition are here separated by a comma *(writing)* or by separate tone units *(speech)*, as in the case of non-restrictive relative clauses *(see 413).*

Restrictive apposition is common especially when the first element defines the meaning of the second element:

- the famous critic Paul Jones
- the number three
- the novel *Les Misérables*

Sometimes the determiner is omitted *(esp written AmE)*:

- Art critic Paul Jones
- Democratic Leader Robinson

In this case, the first element is almost like a title *(as in Professor Brown, see 756).*

**Explicit apposition**

491

Sometimes the appositional relation is made explicit by an adverbial *(see 479):*

*the passenger plane of the 1980s, namely* the supersonic jet

We may also include under apposition cases where the second element exemplifies the first, or is in inclusive relation to it. In such cases a connecting adverbial, such as *for example, for instance, especially, particularly, in particular, notably, chiefly, mainly,* is normally present:

Many famous men, *for example* de Gaulle, Churchill and Roosevelt, have visited this university.

The children enjoyed watching the animals, *particularly* the monkeys.

184 For appositive clauses, see 725–7.
Articles (see GCE 4.13–16, 4.28–47)

492
The articles are a subclass of the determiners (see 550). There are two articles in English, the definite and the indefinite. Sometimes nouns require no article at all.

The forms of the articles

493
The spelling of the indefinite article and the pronunciation of both the definite and indefinite articles depend on the initial sound of the following word. Articles are normally unstressed, but may be stressed for special emphasis.

The unstressed definite article is always written *the* but is pronounced /ðə/ before consonants and /ði:/ before vowels. The indefinite article is *a* /ə/ before consonants and *an* /æn/ before vowels:

the /ðə/

a /ə/

the /ði: /

an /æn/

boy, car, pilot, ...

Note that it is the pronunciation, not the spelling, of the following word that determines their form:

a European /ə jʊərəpiən/ car

a UN /ə 'juː en/ spokesman

an X-ray /æn 'eksəri/.

an FBI /æn 'feɪ bɪt 'æ/t/ agent

Note words beginning with silent *h*: an hour, an heir. In one or two words that are written with initial *h*, usage varies: a(n) hotel, a(n) historical novel.

The stressed forms of articles are often printed in *italics*. Here the distinction in the pronunciation of the definite article disappears:

*the* /ði: /

*a* /ə/

*the* /ði: /

*an* /æn/

boy, car, pilot, ...

aunt, egg, octopus, ...

The stressed definite article is often used to indicate excellence or superiority in some respect, as in

(A) *Is he* the /ði:/ Mr Johnson?*

(B) No. *He's a /ə/: Mr Johnson, but not the famous one.*

The demonstration will be *the* event this week.

Article usage

494
The general grammatical rules are as follows:

The definite article can be used with all kinds of noun except most proper nouns:

**SINGULAR COUNT NOUNS**

*the* ball/child/exam

**PLURAL COUNT NOUNS**

*the* balls/children/exams

**SINGULAR MASS NOUNS**

*the* gold/milk/knowledge

The indefinite article, on the other hand, can normally only be used with singular count nouns; for other nouns the *ZERO ARTICLE* (or unstressed *some* /sʌm/) is used for indefinite meaning:

**SINGULAR COUNT NOUNS**

*a* ball/child, *an* exam

**PLURAL COUNT NOUNS**

*(some)* balls/children/exams

**SINGULAR MASS NOUNS**

*(some)* gold/milk/knowledge

185
The general rules of meaning for the use of articles with common nouns are discussed in Part Three (see 69–78). Here we shall add to that information by discussing some groups of common nouns, and the use of count nouns as complements. (For proper nouns, see 755–64.)

Common nouns without article

Below are some groups of common nouns without article, chiefly occurring in idiomatic expressions. They appear in the left-hand column. For contrast, parallel examples with regular uses of the article are given in the right-hand column.

Without article

(A) 'institutions', etc

be in

bed
church
prison
hospital (esp BrE)
school
college
sea
(the) university (BrE)

be at

go to

be at home, go home

be in town, leave town

(B) Means of transport (with by)

travel
leave

come

by bicycle (bike (familiar))
by bus
by car
by boat/ship
by train
by plane (informal)

With article

lie down on the bed
walk towards the church
drive past the prison
look for the hospital
go into the school
The college is a new building.
look out towards the sea
play against the university
A university is the home of learning.
approach the town

ride on the bicycle
sit in the bus
sleep in the car
disembark from the ship
catch the train
board the plane (informal)

(C) Times of the day and night

at dawn, at daybreak
at sunrise, at sunset
at noon, at midnight
at dusk, at twilight
at night, by night

during the day
admire the sunrise/sunset
in the afternoon
invisible in the dusk
wake up in the night (see 147)

(D) Meals

We'll

have

breakfast
lunch

tea (esp BrE)

before

dinner
supper

stay for

What will you have and for how long?

Were you at the lunch for the chairman?

We’ll have lunched.

Have you made (the) tea?

What time did you have tea?

She arrived

She was preparing (the) dinner.

What did you do after dinner?

The supper was cold.

before

at

after

Dinner will be served at 6 o’clock.

The dinner was well cooked.
(E) PARALLEL PHRASES

They walked arm in arm.
\{ hand in hand. \\
They are husband and wife.
We met face to face.

He took her by the arm.
What have you got in your hand?
She’s the wife of a famous artist.
He punched me right in the face.

Count nouns as complements

Unlike many other languages, English requires an article with singular count nouns as complements (see 529, 839). With indefinite reference, the indefinite article is used:

Bill became a successful businessman.
Mary always wanted to be a scientist.
Mr Heyman was considered (to be) an excellent music teacher.

But no article is required after turn:

He has turned traitor.

With definite reference, the definite article is normally used:

Mr Fillmore was regarded as the best mason in the village.

However, the definite article can be omitted when the noun designates a unique role, office or task:

Who’s (the) captain of the team?
We’ve elected Mr Crook (the) chairman of the committee.

The definite article can be similarly omitted with a noun phrase in apposition (see 489):

Mrs Twentyman, wife of a leading local businessman, was fined £50 for reckless driving last Thursday.

Auxiliary verbs (see GCE 3.5–8, 3.17–22, 3.43–53)

497

Auxiliary verbs are, as their name suggests, ‘helping verbs’. They do not make up a verb phrase on their own, but must usually be accompanied by a following main verb. Auxiliary verbs are a small class of words, made up of primary auxiliaries like be and modal auxiliaries like can (see 874).

Auxiliary verbs are structurally necessary for certain constructions (especially negative and question clauses), and these constructions enable us to distinguish them from main verbs:

(A) Auxiliary verbs can be placed before the negative word not:

I am not working today.

(B) Auxiliary verbs can be placed before the subject in questions:

Can I help?

An auxiliary verb can occur without a main verb, but only where the main verb is omitted because it is supplied by earlier context (see 399):

I can speak French as well as she can.

Some auxiliary verbs have contracted positive forms which can be used after a pronoun (He’s leaving tomorrow, What’ll you have? etc), a short noun (The dog’s barking, The soup’ll be cold), or the words here, there and now (There’s going to be trouble, Now’s the time). In addition, most auxiliary verbs have contracted negative forms, isn’t, can’t, etc (see 630). Contracted forms frequently occur in (spoken) and (informal) English.
The auxiliary verbs (do, have, be)

Do

498

The auxiliary do has the following forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Non-negative</th>
<th>Uncontracted Negative</th>
<th>Contracted Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td>does</td>
<td>does not</td>
<td>doesn't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do not</td>
<td>don't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did</td>
<td>did not</td>
<td>didn't</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note Do is also a main verb (= ‘perform’, etc) and b a substitute verb (see 398–9) with the full range of forms like other main verbs, including the present participle doing and the past participle done:

a What have you been doing today?

b (A) You said you would finish it.

(B) I have done. (I have done so.)

Have

499

Like do, have is both a main verb and an auxiliary. It has the following forms (see 619):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Uncontracted Non-negative</th>
<th>Contracted Non-negative</th>
<th>Uncontracted Negative</th>
<th>Contracted Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-s form</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>'ve</td>
<td>have not, 've not</td>
<td>haven't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>has</td>
<td>'s</td>
<td>has not, 's not</td>
<td>hasn't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ing form</td>
<td>having</td>
<td>'d</td>
<td>had not, 'd not</td>
<td>hadn't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ed participle</td>
<td>had</td>
<td>not having</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a main verb (= ‘possess’), have is sometimes constructed as an auxiliary <esp BrE>. <AmE> prefers the do-construction:

I haven't any books. <esp BrE>

I don't have any books. <AmE> and <BrE>

When used as an event verb (see 104–5) in the sense of ‘receive, take, experience’, etc, the main verb have normally has the do-construction in both <AmE> and <BrE>:

Does he have coffee with his breakfast?

Did you have any difficulty getting here?

The do-construction is also required in such expressions as

Did you have a good time?

There is also the <informal> have got ‘possess’, where have is constructed as an auxiliary. It is particularly common in negative and interrogative sentences:

I haven't got any books.

Have you got the tickets?

The normal negative of You'd better stay is You'd better not stay.

Be

500

Be is constructed as an auxiliary even when it functions as a main verb. For example, it normally has no do-construction (but see Note b). It has eight different forms:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-negative</th>
<th>Uncontracted Negative</th>
<th>Contracted Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>base</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st person</td>
<td><strong>be</strong></td>
<td><strong>am, 'm</strong></td>
<td><strong>aren't, ain't</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>am not, 'm not</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>is, 's</strong></td>
<td><strong>isn't</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>is not, 's not</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person,</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>are, 're</strong></td>
<td><strong>aren't</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st and 3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>are not, 're not</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st and 3rd</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>was</strong></td>
<td><strong>wasn't</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>was not</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd person,</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>were</strong></td>
<td><strong>weren't</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st and 3rd</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>were not</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>plural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>-ing form</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>being</strong></td>
<td><strong>not being</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>-ed participle</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>been</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note**

[a] *Aren’t I* is widely used in questions in ⟨BrE⟩, but there is no generally acceptable contracted form for *am not* in declarative sentences. *Ain’t* is ⟨sub-standard BrE⟩ and is so considered by many in ⟨AmE⟩. As well as serving as a contracted *am not*, it is used also for *isn’t*, *aren’t*, *hasn’t* and *haven’t*.

[b] The main verb *be* may have the *do*-construction in persuasive imperative sentences and regularly has it with negative imperatives (see 520):

Do be quiet!

Don’t be awkward!

[c] In the construction *be* + *to*-infinitive only the finite (present and past) forms of *be* can be used:

The Prime Minister *is* to make a statement tomorrow.

*but not* The Prime Minister \( \{ \text{will be} \} \) *to ...*

The modal auxiliaries

**501**

The modal auxiliaries do not have -s forms, -ing forms, or -ed participles. *Can, may, shall, will* have special past forms (*could, etc*), but the remainder (such as *must*) do not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-negative</th>
<th>Uncontracted Negative</th>
<th>Contracted Negative(^a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>can</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>cannot, can not</strong></td>
<td><strong>can’t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>could</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>could not</strong></td>
<td><strong>couldn’t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>may</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>may not</strong></td>
<td>(mayn’t)(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>might</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>might not</strong></td>
<td><strong>mightn’t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>shall</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>shall not</strong></td>
<td><strong>shan’t</strong>(^c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>should</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>should not</strong></td>
<td><strong>shouldn’t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>will, <em>'ll</em></strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>will not, <em>'ll not</em></strong></td>
<td><strong>won’t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>would, <em>'d</em></strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>would not, <em>'d not</em></strong></td>
<td><strong>wouldn’t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>must</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>must not</strong></td>
<td><strong>mustn’t</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ought to</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ought not to</strong></td>
<td><strong>oughtn’t to</strong>(^d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-negative</td>
<td>Uncontracted Negative</td>
<td>Contracted Negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>used to</td>
<td>used not to</td>
<td>didn't use(d) to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>need</td>
<td>need not</td>
<td>usedn't to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dare</td>
<td>dare not</td>
<td>needn't</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note

[a] Sometimes there is a choice between two contracted forms, eg won’t and 'll not.
[b] Mayn’t is restricted to <BrE>, where it is rare.
[c] Shan't is rare in <AmE>.
[d] Ought regularly has the to-infinitive, but occasionally in <AmE> the bare infinitive is used in negative sentences and in questions (although should is commoner in both cases):
   You oughtn't smoke so much.
   Ought you smoke so much?

**Used to**

502

*Used* always takes the to-infinitive and occurs only in the past tense. It may take the do-construction, in which case the spellings *use* and *used* /just/ both occur:

He didn’t use to smoke.

The interrogative construction *Used he to smoke?* is <esp BrE>. *Did he use(d) to smoke?* is preferred in both <AmE> and <BrE>. However, a different construction is often a more natural choice, for example:

Did he smoke when you first knew him?

**Dare and need**

503

*Dare* and *need* can be constructed (A) as modal auxiliaries (with bare infinitive and without the inflected forms dares/needs, dared/needed) or (B) as main verbs (with to-infinitive, -s inflection and past forms). The modal auxiliary construction is mainly restricted to negative and interrogative sentences, whereas the main verb construction can always be used and is in fact the more common. *Dare* and *need* as auxiliaries are probably rarer in <AmE> than in <BrE>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Modal Auxiliary Construction</th>
<th>Main Verb Construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>He needs to go now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He needn't go now.</td>
<td>He doesn't need to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogative</td>
<td>Need he go now?</td>
<td>Does he need to go now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative-interrogative</td>
<td>Needn't he go yet?</td>
<td>Doesn't he need to go yet?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note

[a] The modal auxiliary construction is not confined to negative and/or interrogative sentences but can also occur in other contexts with similar meanings, for example,

He need do it only under these circumstances.
He need do it but once.
He need have no fear.
No soldier dare disobey.
Nobody would dare predict...
All you need do is... ("You need do no more than...")

[b] A mixture of the two constructions is sometimes found in the case of dare, which may have the do-construction with a bare infinitive:
We did not dare speak.

Case (see GCE 4.93)

504
In English, the personal pronouns I, he, she, we, they have three case forms, subjective, objective, and genitive (see 684, 687). But nouns and other pronouns (except who, see 579, 788) have only two cases: the common case (the boy) and the genitive case (the boy’s). The common case, which has no special ending, is the case which is found in all circumstances except where the genitive is required (see 570–2).

Clauses (see GCE 7.1–12, 11.4–7)

505
Clauses are the principal structures of which sentences are composed. A sentence may consist of one, or more than one clause (see 797). There are three important ways in which clauses may be described and classified:

(A) In terms of the clause elements (subject, verb, etc) from which they are constructed, and the verb patterns which are formed from these elements (see 835–72).

(B) In terms of the amount of use which a clause makes of verb phrase structure (see 873–79). On this ground, we distinguish between finite clauses, non-finite clauses, and verbless clauses (see 513–16).

(C) In terms of clause function, ie the function a clause performs in a sentence; eg whether it is a nominal clause (acting as a noun phrase), an adverbial clause (acting as an adverbial element), etc (see 517).

We shall deal with each of these in turn.

Clause elements

506
A clause can be analysed into five different types of clause elements: subject (S, see 822), verb (or rather verb phrase, V, see 873), complement (C, see 529), object (O, see 670–1), and adverbial (A, see 468–79), for example

```
clause

A  S  V  C

Suddenly  I  felt  tired.
```

```
clause

S  A  V  O

I  quickly  shut  the  door.
```

507
We may broadly distinguish the 'main' elements of clause structure (subject, verb, complement, object) and the 'modifying' elements (adverbials). Adverbials differ from the other types of clause elements in at least three respects:

1) Adverbials are usually optional, ie they may be omitted without making the clause unacceptable (optional elements are placed in brackets):

   (Suddenly) I felt tired.

   I (quickly) shut the door.
But not
*I felt.
*I shut.

(2) Adverbials are not restricted in number. Whereas a clause can only have one subject, one finite verb, one complement, and one or two objects, there may be, in theory at least, any number of adverbials (but there are rarely more than three or four adverbials in one clause). (Compare, however, coordinated clause elements, see 544.)

SV: The children played.
SV(A): The children played (by the lake).
SV(A)(A): The children played (all day) (by the lake).
(A)SV(A)(A): (Sometimes) the children played (all day) (by the lake).

(3) Adverbials are often mobile, i.e., they can occur at different places in the clause:

S(A)V(A): The children (sometimes) played (by the lake).
SV(A)(A): The children played (by the lake) (sometimes).

(On the position of adverbials, see 470–8.)

The basic verb patterns (for more details see 835–72)

508

If we concentrate on the main elements in the clause, we can distinguish six basic verb patterns. (We call them ‘verb patterns’ rather than ‘clause patterns’, since it is the verb that determines the type of clause structure.)

Verb pattern [L]: LINKING VERBS (SVC)

Mary is a nurse/pretty.
Mary is here.

Verb pattern [T]: VERBS WITH ONE OBJECT (transitive verbs) (SVO)

Everybody admired her new car.

Verb pattern [V]: VERBS WITH OBJECT + VERB (+ . . .) (SVOV . . .)

They told me to stay.

Verb pattern [D]: VERBS WITH TWO OBJECTS (ditransitive verbs) (SVOO)

She gave all the children presents.

Verb pattern [X]: VERBS WITH OBJECT AND OBJECT COMPLEMENT (SVOC)

They considered the car too expensive.

Verb pattern [I]: VERBS WITHOUT OBJECT OR COMPLEMENT (intransitive verbs) (SV)

The children laughed.

The active-passive relation (see 676–82)

509

There are certain relations between clause elements: one is the relation which makes it possible to change an active clause into a passive clause. Of the active verb patterns in 508, the following can normally occur in the passive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PATTERN</th>
<th>ACTIVE</th>
<th>PASSIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[T] (SVO)</td>
<td>Everybody admired her new car.</td>
<td>Her new car was admired by everybody.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[V] (SVOV . . .)</td>
<td>They told me to stay.</td>
<td>I was told to stay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[D] (SVOO)</td>
<td>She gave all the children presents.</td>
<td>All the children were given presents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[X] (SVOC)</td>
<td>They considered the car (to be) too expensive.</td>
<td>The car was considered (to be) too expensive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the object of the active clause is converted into the subject of the passive clause, we find here that only four of the six basic verb patterns can occur in the passive, namely, those patterns which contain an object. Pattern [D] usually has two passive forms, because it has two objects, either of which can usually become subject in the passive.

The complements of subjects and objects (Patterns [L] and [X])

510 The commonest verb in verb pattern [L] is be. Here be is not an auxiliary, as in He is coming (see 872), but a main verb (see 500). Since be links together the subject and the complement, we call it a linking verb. There are also other linking verbs (see 838):

- You look a lot better today, Ann. verbs of ‘appearance’
  We felt terribly annoyed at their behaviour. verbs of ‘sensation’
- They became very good friends. verbs of ‘becoming’
  She soon got tired of waiting.

511 An adjective complement can usually become a premodifier of a noun (see 732):

- The nurse was pretty.
  (She was) a pretty nurse.

If the complement is a noun, as in

- My daughter is a nurse.

the subject and its complement refer to the same person or thing.

512 Verb pattern [X] SVOC can often be expanded by a to be infinitive or paraphrased by a that-clause (see 848, 868):

They considered the car to be too expensive.
They thought that the car was too expensive.

This shows that the object and the complement of the SVOC verb pattern have the same relation of meaning as the subject and complement of an SVC pattern [L]: The car was too expensive.

Finite, non-finite, and verbless clauses

513 A second way of classifying a clause is on the basis of what kind of verb phrase (if any) acts as its V element. The three types of clause that have to be distinguished are: (A) finite clauses, (B) non-finite clauses, and (C) verbless clauses.

514 (A) **Finite Clauses** are clauses whose verb element is a finite verb phrase (see 875–6), ie where the first word of the verb phrase is finite, and (in general) alters its form for past tense:

Bill has/had gone to the office.
He won’t be back until ten, because he’s working late.
He loves hard work.

All the clauses which have illustrated the verb patterns above (see 508) have been finite clauses. The finite clause is the most important of the three types because a complete sentence has at least one independent finite clause.

515 (B) **Non-finite Clauses** are clauses whose verb element is a non-finite verb phrase, ie consists of non-finite elements such as a an -ing participle (see 621), b an -ed participle (see 622), or c an infinitive (see 624). Non-finite clauses can be constructed without a subject, and they usually are. Apart from the frequent omission of the subject, the verb patterns described earlier apply to non-finite as well as to finite clauses.
a -ing PARTICIPLE CLAUSES (or -ing CLAUSES)
without a subject: Entering the house, he tripped over the welcome mat. (VO).
with a subject: The matter having been settled so amicably, I felt quite satisfied with the results. (SVA)

b -ed PARTICIPLE CLAUSES (or -ed CLAUSES)
without a subject: Covered with confusion, she hurriedly left the room. (VA)
with a subject: The job finished, we went home straight away. (SV)

c to-INFINITIVE CLAUSES
without a subject: The best thing would be to tell everybody. (VO)
with a subject: The best thing would be for you to tell everybody. (SVO)

The subject of an infinitive clause is often introduced by the preposition for.

d BARE INFINITIVE CLAUSES (ie containing an infinitive without to)
These are much less common than to-infinitive clauses.
without a subject: All I did was hit him on the head.
with a subject: Rather than John do it, I’d prefer to do the job myself.

516

VERBLESs CLAUSES are clauses which contain no verb element, and often also no subject. They are regarded as clauses because they function in ways which make them equivalent to finite and non-finite clauses, and because they can be analysed in terms of one or more clause elements. We can usually assume that a form of the verb be has been omitted:

Dozens of tourists were stranded, many of them children (ie ‘many of the tourists were children’). [1]

A sleeping bag under each arm, Mr Johnson tramped off on his vacation (ie ‘there was a sleeping bag under each of his arms’). [2]

The verbless clause in [1] has the structure SC (subject + complement); the verbless clause in [2] has the structure SA (subject + adverbial).

The subject, when omitted, can usually be understood as equivalent to the subject of the main clause:

The oranges, when ripe, are picked and sorted (= ‘when they are ripe’).

Whether right or wrong, Michael always comes off worst in an argument (= ‘whether he is right or wrong’).

An adjective (alone or as head of the adjective phrase) can function as a verbless clause. The clause is mobile, though it usually precedes or follows the subject of the main clause:

\{
By then nervous, the man opened the letter.
The man, by then nervous, opened the letter.
Long and untidy, his hair waved in the breeze.
Anxious for a quick decision, the chairman called for a vote.
\}

An adverb may sometimes replace, with little difference in meaning, an adjective functioning as a verbless clause:

Nervously, Nervous, the man opened the letter.
Clause functions

517
In terms of function, *ie* what role they have in a sentence, clauses can be divided into main clauses and subclauses (subordinate clauses) (see 826–7). Subclauses are those which are part of another clause: we can further divide them into categories such as nominal clauses, adverbial clauses, *etc*. The various functions of clauses are treated elsewhere under the following entries:

(A) **Nominal clauses** (see 637–50), *ie* that-clauses, interrogative clauses, *-ing* clauses, and infinitive clauses as subject, object, complement, prepositional complement, *etc*. For example, in

*That he gave a false name shows that he was doing something dishonest.*

both the subject and the object are that-clauses.

(B) **Relative clauses** (see 783–96), *ie* clauses introduced by *wh*-pronouns or *that* (including ‘zero-that’), for example

*The family who live opposite our house are French.*

Relative clauses are usually postmodifiers in noun phrases.

(C) **Comment clauses** (see 522), for example

*To be honest, I’m not sure what to do.*

Comment clauses function as sentence adverbials.

(D) **Comparative clauses** (see 527), for example

*This road is less crowded than the other one was.*

(E) **Adverbial clauses** (see 468), which have a large number of different meanings, are discussed in Part Three: clauses denoting time (see 140–60), place (see 161), contrast (see 212–15), cause or reason (see 199, 204), purpose (see 203), result (see 202), and conditional clauses (see 208–10).

Cleft sentences (see *GCE* 14.18–23)

(A) The *it*-type cleft sentence

518
A single clause, for example,

*John bought an old car last week.*

[1]

can be divided into two separate parts, each with its own verb:

*It was John who bought an old car last week.* [1a]

A construction like [1a] is called a cleft sentence (see 434). Sentence [1] can be changed into different cleft sentences depending on what element is considered the most important in the sentence (focus, see 414–15):

**[1b]**

*It was an old car that John bought last week.*

*OBJECT IS FOCUS*

**[1c]**

*It was last week that John bought an old car.*

*ADVERBIAL IS FOCUS*

The second part of a cleft sentence is very similar to a restrictive relative clause (see 794): the relative pronouns are also used in cleft sentences.

(B) The *wh*-type cleft sentence

519
Besides the *it*-type, there is also a *wh*-type of cleft sentence [2b] (see 435). Compare [1b] with

**[2b]**

*What John bought last week was an old car.*

Cleft sentences are to be contrasted with sentences with introductory *there* (see 590–4) and introductory *it* (see 584–9). In introductory *it*-sentences, *it* introduces a clause, and there is no emphasised clause element to act as focus:

*It’s no use trying to wake him up.*
Commands (see GCE 7.72–77)

2nd person commands

520
A command is usually a sentence with an imperative verb, *ie* the base form of the verb, without endings for number or tense.

*Come* here.

Commands are apt to sound abrupt unless they are toned down by signals of politeness such as *please* (see 347):

*Please eat* up your dinner.

*Shut* the door, please.

There are no auxiliary verbs in commands except *do* (see 675), which must occur in negative commands, and may also occur in positive commands:

*Don’t stay* too late, John.  (NEGATIVE COMMAND)

*Do sit* down.  (EMPHATIC OR PERSUASIVE COMMAND)

Notice that in commands, but not elsewhere, *do* can be followed by *be*:

*Don’t be* noisy.  

*Do be* careful.  

*but*: They *weren’t* noisy.  

*but*: They *are* careful.

Although commands usually have no subject, we can say that, when the subject is missing, there is an implied subject *you*. This is evident when a reflexive pronoun (see 691–5) or a tag (see 781) is used:

*Be quiet, will you!*

*Behave yourself.*

However, a subject *you* does sometimes occur in commands:

*You just listen to me.*

*You go ahead.*

Here *you* is always stressed, whereas in statements it is not stressed:

*You ‘put it down.*  (COMMAND)

*You ‘put it down.*  (STATEMENT)

1st and 3rd person commands

521
1st person and 3rd person commands also occur, but less frequently than 2nd person commands.

A 1st person command begins with *let* followed by *me* in the singular, or *us* (normally abbreviated to *’s*) in the plural:

*Let me* have a look at your essay.

*Let’s* have dinner.  *(informal)*

A 3rd person command has a 3rd person subject, which is preceded by *let* in *(formal)*, often *(elevated)* style:

*Somebody let* me out.  *(informal)*

*Let somebody* else attempt this task.  *(formal)*

Comment clauses (see GCE 11.65–66)

522
Comment clauses are so called because they do not so much add to the information in a sentence as comment on its truth, the manner of saying it, or the attitude of the speaker. They are only loosely related to the rest of the main clause they belong to, and function as sentence adverbials (see 479). They are usually marked off from the other clause, in *(written)*-English by commas, and in *(speech)* by
having a separate tone unit. Comment clauses can freely occur in front-, mid-
and end-positions in the clause, but the end-position is mainly restricted to
\langle informal speech \rangle. 

At that time, \textit{I believe}, Bill worked as a mechanic.
\textit{What's more}, we lost all our belongings.
\textit{Stated bluntly}, he has no chance of recovery.

\textit{\{The Smiths \mid as you probably know \mid are going to \textit{America}\}}
\textit{\mid He's a pacifist \mid you see}\}
\textit{\mid I'm not sure what to do \mid to be honest}\}

Other examples of comment clauses (chiefly in \langle informal speech \rangle) are:

\begin{itemize}
  \item you know
  \item I know
  \item I think
  \item I'm afraid
  \item as I said
  \item so to say
  \item put frankly
\end{itemize}

\item you bet \langle familiar \rangle
\item I see
\item I suppose
\item as you see
\item to be frank
\item so to speak
\item what's more likely

Comment clauses are of varied types, as these examples show. The most frequent
type is probably that of finite clauses without any introductory word: \textit{you see,}
\textit{you know, I think, etc.} These are closely parallel to main clauses introducing a
\textit{that}-clause (see 848). Compare:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{I see} that the Joneses have a new pet.
  \item The Joneses have a new pet, \textit{I see}.
\end{itemize}

\textbf{Comparison} (see 229–37, see \textit{GCE} 5.68–77, 11.53–64)

\section*{523}

Gradable adjectives and adverbs (see 218, 456) have degrees of comparison.
Comparison is expressed either by the endings \textit{-er} and \textit{-est} or by the words \textit{more}
and \textit{most}:

\begin{tabular}{lll}
  \textbf{ADJECTIVES} & \textbf{COMPARATIVE} & \textbf{SUPERLATIVE} \\
  tall & taller & tallest \\
  beautiful & more beautiful & most beautiful \\
  \textbf{ADVERBS} & sooner & soonest \\
  soon & more easily & most easily
\end{tabular}

\textbf{Comparison of adjectives}

\section*{524}

The endings are generally used with

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{a} Adjectives consisting of one syllable:
    \begin{itemize}
      \item great
      \item greater
      \item greatest
    \end{itemize}
  \item \textit{b} Adjectives consisting of two syllables and ending in \textit{-y, -ow, -le, -er}, and \textit{-ure}:
    \begin{itemize}
      \item funny (funnier, funniest), friendly, lively, \textit{etc}
      \item hollow (hollower, hollowest), narrow, shallow, \textit{etc}
      \item feeble (feebler, feeblest), gentle, noble, \textit{etc}
      \item clever (cleverer, cleverest), mature, obscure, \textit{etc}
    \end{itemize}
  \item \textit{c} Some common two-syllable adjectives, for example \textit{common, handsome, polite, quiet}, which can have either type of comparison:
    \begin{itemize}
      \item common
      \item more common
      \item commonest
    \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}
The endings sometimes involve changes in spelling or pronunciation (see 809, 817, 820), for example:

Pretty prettier prettiest
Big bigger biggest

Other adjectives than those mentioned in a, b, or c can form comparison only with more and most, for example:

Interesting more interesting most interesting
A small group of highly frequent adjectives have irregular comparison:
Bad worse worst
Good better best
Far further/farther furthest/farthest

Old is regularly inflected older, oldest, but in a specialised use, restricted to family relations, the irregular forms elder, eldest are normally substituted in attributive and head position:

My elder brother is an artist.
John is the elder of the two brothers.

Note that before a than-construction, we always use older:
My brother is older than I am.

Comparison of adverbs
525
Adverbs have the same general rules of comparison as adjectives. (This is of course true also for adverbs that are identical in form with adjectives, early, etc):
Early earlier earliest

Note that adverbs of two syllables ending in -ly do not follow the rule of adjectives ending in -y (eg funny, see 524):
Quickly more quickly most quickly

As with adjectives, there is a small group of adverbs with irregular comparison:
Well better best
Badly worse worst
Little less least
Much more most
Far further/farther furthest/farthest

Comparison of quantifiers
526
The quantifiers much, many, little and few (see 766, 773) also have special comparative and superlative forms, as follows:
Much more most
Many more most
Little less least
Few fewer/less fewest/least

Comparative clauses
527
The comparative form of adjectives and adverbs is used when we want to compare one thing with another in order to point out some difference (see 229, 231). For this purpose, a subclause beginning with than can be added after the comparative word:

His most recent book is more interesting than his previous ones.

She can knit better than she can sew.

Bill speaks French worse (less well) than he writes it.

The part of the sentences in italics may be called the ‘hinge’ element of the comparison. The hinge element is the phrase which contains the comparative
word, and which the than-clause postmodifies. This element may be a noun phrase, an adjective phrase, or an adverbial phrase. It is called a ‘hinge’ because it belongs, in terms of meaning, both to the main clause and to the comparative subclause. Thus in terms of meaning, the hinge element more interesting in [1] acts as the complement of is in the main clause and of were in the subclause. In terms of structure, however, the subclause in [1] does not contain a complement. In general, a comparative clause lacks at least one element of clause structure: namely, the element corresponding to the ‘hinge’ element.

Comparative phrases

528

In addition, other elements of a subclause can be omitted if they repeat the information in the main clause. If these elements are omitted, however, we are left with a COMPARATIVE PHRASE rather than a comparative clause. That is, than is more like a preposition than a conjunction:

There are more pubs than shops in this village.

Jack is five years older than his sister (= than his sister is).

Bill can speak French more fluently than

\[
\begin{align*}
&\{ I. \text{ form} \} \\
&\{ me. \text{ informal} \}
\end{align*}
\]

We scored three more goals than

\[
\begin{align*}
&\{ they. \text{ formal} \} \\
&\{ them. \text{ informal} \}
\end{align*}
\]

(= ‘. . . than they scored’)

Notice that in (informal) English, the than-phrase behaves like a prepositional phrase, in that the following pronoun is in the objective case (see 504). In (formal) English, on the other hand, the subjective pronoun is used if the pronoun is notionally the subject of the omitted verb.

In (informal) English such clauses can be ambiguous:

Mr Pettigrew is fonder of his secretary than his wife.

The most likely meaning is:

Mr Pettigrew is fonder of his secretary than he is (fond) of his wife.

But another possible meaning is:

Mr Pettigrew is fonder of his secretary than his wife is.

Adverbials (such as ever, usual, in the water) can follow than in comparative phrases:

There were more people on the beach than

\[
\begin{align*}
&\{ ever. \} \\
&\{ usual. \} \\
&\{ in the water. \}
\end{align*}
\]

Some other types of comparative phrase cannot be related to comparative clauses. One type is illustrated in:

There were fewer than twenty people at the meeting.

I have better things to do than watching television.

The plane flies faster than 1,000 miles per hour.

Another type of construction is not so much concerned with comparison of degree and amount as with comparison of descriptions:

They pulled him out of the water more dead than alive.

The meaning here is roughly: ‘he might have been better described as dead rather than alive’. Comparison with -er cannot be used in this construction (*deader than alive). Instead, more and less are used even where in ordinary comparison they would not be acceptable. For example:

The performance was more good than bad.

(not . . . better than bad)

The constructions we have discussed here are found not only with unequal comparisons (more, less), but with ‘equal’ comparisons (as much as, etc) (see 230).
Complements (see GCE 6.1–3, 7.2–3, 7.11, 12.29–70)

529
The term complement, in a general sense, means something that is necessary to complete a grammatical construction. We distinguish three types of complement: (A) clause complements, (B) adjective complements, and (C) prepositional complements.

(A) Clause complements (see 510–12)
The complement of a clause can be
    a a noun phrase (see 839–40): Mary is a capable girl.
    b an adjective (see 841): Mary is capable.
    c a nominal clause (see 637):

        The trouble with Mary is that she never does any homework.

The complement can be distinguished from the subject of a clause in that it normally comes after the verb. If there is both an object and a complement in the sentence, the complement normally comes after the object:

    Bad jokes make John angry.

Unlike the object, the complement does not become subject if an active sentence is turned into a passive sentence (see 677).

A complement often expresses a quality or attribute of the subject or object (John was absolutely furious). In other cases (My best friend is John), it tells us the identity of the subject or object.

The complement cannot, normally, be omitted. If we take away the complement, the remaining part does not make a good English sentence:

    Bad jokes make John angry.

*Bad jokes make John.

(B) Adjective complements
530
Adjectives and adjectival participles may take different complements (see 452–5):

    She’ll be glad (that) you are coming. (that-clause)
    glad to hear the good news. (to-infinitive)
    glad of your success. (prepositional phrase)

(C) Prepositional complements
531
A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition and its complement, which is usually a noun phrase, a wh-clause, or an -ing clause (see 739–43):

    They argued about the change.
    what was to be changed.
    changing the agreement.

Concord (see GCE 7.23–36)

532
Concord (also called agreement) means that certain grammatical items agree with each other in (A) number (see 654–9) or (B) person (see 683).

(A) Concord of number
    a Subject-verb concord
533
In English, the question of number concord arises only with present tense verbs, and with the past tense of he: He knows / They know; He was / They were.

A clause acting as subject counts as singular:

    To treat them as hostages is criminal.
Plural words and phrases count as singular if they are used as names, titles, quotations, etc:

The Brothers Karamazov is undoubtedly Dostoyevsky's masterpiece.

b Pronoun concord

A pronoun which refers back to a singular noun phrase is in the singular, and a pronoun which refers back to a plural noun phrase is in the plural:

The boy likes his toys.
The boys like their toys.

Notional concord

There are two factors which interfere with the number concord rule as stated in 532-4: notional concord and proximity. We find, for example, that the singular form of a group noun like government (see 47) can be treated as plural in

The government \{have\} broken all \{their\} promises.

This is called notional concord, since the verb agrees with the idea of plural in the group noun rather than the actual singular form of the noun.

Concord with group nouns

Group nouns occur with either grammatical or notional concord in examples such as:

The public is/are tired of demonstrations.
The audience was/were enjoying every minute of the show.
Our Planning Committee has/have considered your request.
The vast majority of the students needs/need increased financial support.

When the group is being considered as a single undivided body, the singular is used:

The public consists of you and me.
The audience was enormous.
My company is opening a new factory.

The plural verb after a group noun is more characteristic of \textit{BrE} than of \textit{AmE}.

Proximity

Another factor which sometimes upsets the concord rule in \textit{informal} English is the principle of proximity. This means that the verb tends to agree with whatever noun or pronoun closely precedes it, instead of the headword of the subject:

A large number of people have applied for the job.

Here the head of the noun phrase is number (singular), and one would expect the verb form \textit{has}. Instead the plural noun people in the postmodifying \textit{of}-phrase influences the form of the nearby verb. (This can also be considered a case of notional concord.)

Concord with coordinated subjects

When a subject consists of two or more noun phrases coordinated by \textit{and}, the verb is usually in the plural if the coordination is taken to be a reduction of two clauses (see 542-3):

\textit{Tom and Mary are ready.}

(= 'Tom is ready and Mary is ready.')
But a singular verb is used
   a with coordinated elements which represent a single entity:
      *The hammer and sickle was flying from a tall flagpole.*
   b when the noun phrases refer to the same thing:
      *His lawyer and former college friend, Max Fairford, was with him at his death.*

It is also possible to have a plural verb following a singular noun phrase where that noun phrase has a mass noun as head, and refers to two or more coordinated ideas:

      *Dutch and American beer are lighter than British (="Dutch beer and American beer . . . ").*

539

When two noun phrases are joined by or or either . . . or, the general rule is that the number of the verb is determined by the number of the last noun phrase (proximity):

   Either *your brakes or your eyesight* is at fault.          [1]
   Either *your eyesight or your brakes* are at fault.       [2]

In [1] the proximity rule applies, but is felt to be awkward by some people. To avoid the awkwardness, it is usually possible to use an auxiliary verb which has the same form in the singular and the plural, for example:

   Either *your brakes* or *your eyesight* must be at fault.

Concord with indefinite expressions of amount

540

Indefinite expressions of amount, especially *no, none* and *any*, often cause concord problems:

   So far *no money* has been spent on repairs. (mass)
   *No person* of that name lives here. (singular count)
   *No people* of that name live here. (plural count)
   I’ve ordered the cement, but *none (of it)* has yet arrived. (mass)
   I’ve ordered the shrubs, but *none (of them)* have/has yet arrived. (singular or plural count)

In the last example, grammatical concord insists that *none* is singular, but notional concord invites a plural verb. *Has* is typical of ⟨written, formal⟩ style, whereas *have* is more idiomatic in ⟨informal⟩ English.

The same rule also applies to *neither* and *either*:

   I sent cards to Mavis and Margery but *neither (of them)* has/have replied. In fact, I doubt if *either (of them)* is/are coming.

The plural pronoun *they* is often used in ⟨informal⟩ style as a replacement of everyone, everybody, someone, somebody, anyone, anybody, no one, nobody:

   Everyone thinks they have the answer.
   Has anybody brought their camera?

In ⟨formal⟩ English, the tendency is to use *he* when the sex is not stated:

   Everyone thinks he has the answer.

(B) Concord of person

541

As well as concord of number, there is concord of person. *Be* has three forms in the present tense (see 500); main verbs have only two (see 624–5); modal auxiliaries have only one (see 501):

*Be* (the present tense): *I am, he is, they are*

**Main verbs:**

*He (our friend, etc) complains*

*I (you, | we | they, | our friends, etc) complain*

**Modal auxiliaries:**

*I (we, you, he, our friend, our friends, etc) can come.*
Coordination (see GCE 9.24–129)

Coordination of clauses

542

Clauses or phrases may be linked together (coordinated) by the conjunctions and, or, but. In these examples, the conjunctions are used to link clauses:

John plays the piano and his sister plays the guitar. [1]
You can boil yourself an egg or (you can) make some cheese sandwiches. [2]
They may complain but (they) haven’t said anything yet. [3]

When the subjects of the two clauses refer to the same person or thing, the second subject is normally omitted, as in [2] and [3]. Further, if the clauses have matching auxiliary verbs, they are also generally omitted, as in [2].

Here are some further examples of coordinated clauses, with the parts that are usually omitted in brackets:

He found his key and (he) opened the door.
I’m selling the car and (I’m) buying a new one.
He may have received the letter but (he may have) forgotten to reply.

Coordination can be used to link parts of clauses (e.g. subjects, verb phrases, objects) rather than whole clauses. Often we can say, as above, that these are cases of clause coordination in which repeated elements are omitted. For example, the meaning of [4] can be expanded as in [5]:

I bought some bacon and a loaf of bread. [4]
I bought some bacon and I bought a loaf of bread. [5]

But in other cases we cannot reconstruct two complete clauses:

My closest friends are Fred and his wife.

This does not mean:

*My closest friend is Fred and my closest friend is his wife.

In addition, there are cases of coordination which may indicate a ‘reciprocal’ relationship:

Roderick and Mabel are in love. (= ‘Roderick is in love with Mabel, and Mabel is in love with Roderick.’)
Our poodle and the dog down the road were having a fight. (= ‘Our poodle and the dog...were having a fight with each other.’)

Because of these different functions of coordination in phrases we shall treat coordination of phrases in terms of what elements are linked, rather than what elements are omitted. We deal with the omission of repeated elements elsewhere (see 406).

Coordination of clause elements

543

Some examples are:

SUBJECTS
Fred and his wife are my closest friends.

VERB PHRASES
He speaks, or used to speak, with a very strong accent.

COMPLEMENTS
The hotel was very expensive but rather dirty.

ADVERBIALS
You can wash this sweater by hand or in the washing machine.

PREPOSITIONAL COMPLEMENTS
Our team plays in red shirts and white shorts.
Coordination of words
544
Coordination can also link two words of the same word class. For example:

Nouns
Many boys and girls prefer to dress in the same way nowadays.

Adjectives
The house was so old and dirty that no one wanted to buy it.

Conjunctions
If and when the agreement is signed, we can look forward to a period of peace and cooperation.

Coordination of combinations and parts of phrases
545
In addition, coordination can link combinations of phrases (eg combinations of sentence elements), even where these do not occur next to one another in the sentence:

Subject and verb phrase
The papers say, and most people believe, that the Democrats will win the next election.

Subject and complement
Martha is secretary and John chairman.

Also combinations of words which do not make a complete phrase can be linked:

The fund gives help to many orphan children and unmarried mothers.

In this example, we have a single noun phrase (many... mothers) within which the adjective+noun sequences are coordinated. A another example, in which parts of an adjective phrase are linked, is:

He is very friendly and willing to help.

Here very modifies (we assume) both friendly and willing to help.

But notice that sentences can be ambiguous, depending on what parts are understood to be coordinated:

She's wearing a white scarf and gloves.

can mean either '... a white scarf and white gloves' or '... gloves and a white scarf'.

But is in general limited to coordination of clauses (with or without the omission of subject and auxiliary verb(s)), or to coordination of adjective phrases, as in

The weather was warm but rather cloudy.

However, when it comes after a negative construction (not [only]... but), but can be used more freely (see 547).

Omission of conjunctions
546
When more than two items are coordinated, the conjunction is normally omitted before each item except the last:

I would like a ham sandwich, an ice-cream and a cup of tea.

In writing, a comma is used to separate all the items except (normally) the last two; in speech, a rising tone is normally used on all items in the list except the last.

We often omit the conjunction before the linking adverbs then, so and yet:

The car swerved, (and) then crashed into a wall.

He wants her to learn to drive, (and) yet he won't pay for the lessons.
Elsewhere the conjunction can be omitted especially in a rather <iterary> style (but see 389), or where the list of items is understood to be incomplete:

The woods were alive with the call of blackbirds, thrushes, finches, wood-pigeons.

Correlative coordination

547

Sometimes the coordination of two structures is made more emphatic by the addition of a word at the beginning of the first structure: both x and y, either x or y, etc. This is called correlative coordination. The most important correlates in English are illustrated in these examples:

Both America and Russia realise the need for an arms agreement.

Either the pump’s broken or there’s a blockage in one of the pipes.

His doctor allows him neither to drink nor to smoke.

She’s not only an excellent housewife, but (also) a first class mathematician.

Demonstratives (see GCE 4.121, 10.65–70)

548

The words this, that, these and those are called demonstratives. They have number contrast (singular and plural) and can function both as determiners (see 550) and as pronouns (see 747). The general meanings of the two sets can be stated as ‘near’ and ‘distant’ (cf the pairs here/there, now/then, see 89):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘near’</td>
<td>this</td>
<td>these</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘distant’</td>
<td>that</td>
<td>those</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of determiner function:

I like {this book / these books.  

Unless they are subjects, as in

This is my {girl friend.  

{favourite picture.

the demonstratives can have pronoun function only with non-personal reference:

Is he really going to marry {that girl?  

I bought this (picture) in Copenhagen.

549

In <formal> use, that/those can appear as relative antecedents (see 397, 784) but here that/those do not contrast with this/these. The combination that who does not occur, because that cannot refer to people in this construction:

The butter we import is less expensive than that (which) we produce ourselves (= ‘the butter which’).

These flowers are better than those (which) we planted last year (= ‘the flowers which’).

He admires those who succeed (= ‘people who succeed’).

Determiners (see GCE 4.13–27)

550

Determiners are words which specify the range of reference of a noun in various ways, eg by making it definite (the boy), indefinite (a boy), or by indicating quantity (many boys).
To understand the grammatical role of determiners, we have to consider what determiners and nouns can occur together. There are three classes of common nouns relevant to the choice of determiners: they are singular count nouns (such as bottle), plural count nouns (such as bottles), and mass nouns (such as pork and music) (see 45, 49, 53). Proper nouns normally take no determiner (see 755).

Determiners always precede the noun they determine, but they have different positions relative to one another. The most important category is that of CENTRAL DETERMINERS, including articles (see 492). These may be preceded by PREDETERMINERS and/or followed by POSTDETERMINERS (see Table 1).

### Table 1: Determiners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREDETERMINERS</th>
<th>CENTRAL DETERMINERS</th>
<th>POSTDETERMINERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **a. all, both, half**
  (see 559) | a. Articles: the, a(n) (see 492-6) | a. Cardinal numerals: one, two, etc (see 564) |
| b. double, twice, etc
  (see 560) | b. Demonstratives: this, these, that, those (see 548-9) | b. Ordinal numerals: first, second, etc (see 565) |
| c. one-third, etc
  (see 561) | c. Possessives: my, your, etc (see 688-9) and genitives (see 570-2) | c. General ordinals: next, last, other, etc (see 565) |
| d. what, such, etc
  (see 562) | d. Quantifiers: some, any, no, every, each, either, neither, enough, much (see 765-76) | d. Quantifiers: many, few, little, several, more, less, etc (see 566-7) |
| e. Wh- determiners: what(ever), which(ever), whoever, whose
  (see 578, 645-6) | | |

### Central Determiners

551 The central determiners form six groups (A–F) as follows:

552 (A) **DETERMINERS WITH ALL THREE CLASSES OF NOUN** (singular or plural count nouns and mass nouns):

  a. the (see 492–6):

  I’ve lost the pen / the gloves / the money.

  b. Possessives (see 688–9):

  Have you seen my pen / my gloves / my money?

  c. whose, which(ever), what(ever) (see 578, 645–6):

  Whose pen / whose gloves / whose money did you borrow?

  d. stressed some and any (see 768):

  Any pen / any pens / any information will do.

  e. no (see 632):

  He’s got no friend / no friends / no news at all.

The genitive (see 570–2) functions like a possessive determiner. Compare:

I liked the girl’s new dress.

553 (B) **DETERMINERS WITH PLURAL COUNT NOUNS OR MASS NOUNS ONLY**:

  a. zero article (see 494, 654):

  They need tractors/help from us.
b Unstressed *some* /sʌm/ (see 494, 768):
I want *some apples/*some advice*, please.

c Unstressed *any* (see 768, 803):
Have you *any clothes* or *any furniture* to sell?

d *enough* (see 769):
We haven't got *enough oranges*/enough rice.

---

(C) **DETERMINERS WITH SINGULAR COUNT NOUNS OR MASS NOUNS ONLY:**

- *this* (see 548):
  *This lecture/*this (type of) research is very interesting.

- *that* (see 548):
  I find *that poem/*/that (type of) poetry difficult to understand.

---

(D) **DETERMINERS WITH SINGULAR COUNT NOUNS ONLY:**

- *a(n)* (see 492–3):
  Wait a minute!

- *every* (see 62, 766–7):
  He comes here almost *every day*.

- *each* (see 63, 766–7):
  She had a child on *each side* of her.

- *either* (see 65, 766):
  Either solution is a bad one.

- *neither* (see 633, 766):
  Neither method is right.

---

(E) **DETERMINERS WITH PLURAL COUNT NOUNS ONLY:**

- *these* (see 548):
  I dislike *all these meetings*.

- *those* (see 548):
  In *those days* life was enjoyable.

---

(F) **DETERMINERS WITH MASS NOUNS ONLY:**

- *much* (see 769):
  We don't have *much news* of him.

---

**Predeterminers**

558

As the name implies, predeterminers when combined with central determiners, occur before them. There are four classes of predeterminers.

559

(A) **ALL, BOTH, HALF** (see 767)

*All* goes with plural count nouns or mass nouns:

Are you going to buy *all these cans*/all this rice?

*Both* goes with plural count nouns only:

*Both (the) books* were out of the library.

*Half* goes with singular or plural count nouns or mass nouns:

I want *half a pint*/half the plums/half the butter.

**Note** *All the* . . . occasionally occurs with a singular count noun, but *the whole* . . . or *all of the . . .* is preferable:

*All (of) the town* was destroyed by fire.

*The whole town* .

The predeterminers *all, both, half* occur before articles, possessives, or demonstratives. Since they are themselves quantifiers they cannot occur with other
determiners denoting quantity: every, either, neither, each, some, any, no, enough.

(B) **DOUBLE, TWICE, THREE TIMES, etc.**

The second type of predeterminer includes double, twice, three times, etc, which occur with singular and plural count nouns or mass nouns denoting amount, degree, etc:

- The alternative plan would cost three times this amount (= 'three times as much as this').
- They want at least double their salaries (= 'twice as much as they now earn').
- I wish I had twice his strength (= 'I wish I was twice as strong as he').

*Once, twice, three times, etc* can occur with *a, every, each and per* (formal) to form frequency adverbials (see 476):

We go there

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{once} & \quad \text{a} & \quad \text{day.} \\
\text{twice} & \quad \text{every} & \quad \text{week.} \\
\text{three times} & \quad \text{each} & \quad \text{month.} \\
\text{four times} & \quad \text{(per)} & \quad \text{year.}
\end{align*}
\]

(C) **ONE-THIRD, TWO-FIFTHS, etc**

The fractions one-third, two-fifths, three-quarters, etc can also be followed by central determiners, and have the alternative of-construction:

He did it in one-third (of) the time it took me.

(D) **WHAT, SUCH, etc.**

*What* and *such* as predeterminers occur before the indefinite article with singular count nouns, and without an article with plural count nouns and mass nouns. They may be classified as predeterminers, or alternatively, as modifiers of noun phrases (see 486).

*What* a nuisance!

*What* beautiful clothes!

*What* awful weather!

It was *such a nuisance.*

She wore *such beautiful clothes.*

We had *such awful weather.*

*What* here expresses an exclamatory degree (see 568), whereas, as a central determiner (see 552), it is primarily interrogative.

Other degree words can also behave like predeterminers: *rather a strong wind, quite a good crowd, etc.* (see 486).

**Postdeterminers**

563 Postdeterminers follow any central determiners (see 551–7) but come before pre-modifiers (see 731). They include cardinal and ordinal numerals, and various quantifiers.

(A) **CARDINAL NUMERALS** (see 660–1)

564 Apart from one, which can of course occur only with singular count nouns, all cardinal numerals (*two, three, etc*) occur only with plural count nouns:

- He has one sister and *three* brothers.

(B) **ORDINAL NUMERALS** (see 660–1)

565 Ordinal numerals occur only with count nouns and usually precede any cardinal numbers in the noun phrase:
The first three planes were American. **but:** He won three first prizes.

There is also a class of 'general ordinals' (next, last, other, further, etc), which can either precede or follow the ordinal numerals. **Compare:**

- His last/next two books were novels.
- His two last/next books were novels. (less common)
- The other three passengers were men.
- There were three other (= 'more') passengers on the bus.

Another can be thought of as a combination of two determiners an + other:

- He's written another novel.
- He's written another two novels. (= 'two more novels')
- He's written two other novels.

(C) **QUANTIFIERS** (see 766)

566

**a** many, (a) few, fewer, and several occur only with plural count nouns:

- His many friends never deserted him.
- There were very few people left when we got there.
- The few words he spoke were well chosen.
- Several cars were involved in the accident.

**b** much and (a) little occur only with mass nouns:

- There hasn't been much good weather recently.
- There is little evidence that he committed the crime.

Several is rarely (and much virtually never) preceded by a determiner. Notice the different meanings of little and few with or without the indefinite article:

- Hurry up. We've little time to waste.
- Don't hurry. We've a little time before the train comes in.
- Jack rarely spoke: he was a man of few words.
- I have something to say. May I have a few words with you?

**c** The comparative determiner more occurs with plural and mass nouns and less usually only with mass nouns:

- Some more tea, please.
- There are more cars on the road this morning than yesterday.
- Please try to make less noise!

These can follow other postdeterminers:

- We need two/several more chairs.

**d** There are also phrases denoting quantity. Some can occur with both plural count nouns and mass nouns:

\[
\text{The room contained } \left\{ \begin{array}{c}
\text{plenty of} \\
\text{a lot of} \\
\text{lots of}
\end{array} \right\} \text{ students/furniture.}
\]

A lot of is chiefly (informal), and lots of is even (very informal).

567

Quantifying phrases with number are used only with count nouns in the plural:

\[
\text{The room contained } \left\{ \begin{array}{c}
a (\text{great}) \\
a (\text{large}) \\
a (\text{good})
\end{array} \right\} \text{ number of students.}
\]

Phrases with deal and amount can only be used with mass nouns:

\[
\text{The safe contained } \left\{ \begin{array}{c}
a (\text{great deal of}) \\
a (\text{good deal of}) \\
a (\text{large amount of}) \\
a (\text{small amount of})
\end{array} \right\} \text{ money.}
\]

209
Notice that the head of the noun phrase is the noun following of, not plenty, lot and number:

- Plenty of students
- A lot of people
- A great number of guests

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{were (\ast \text{was}) there.} \\
\text{Was (\ast \text{were}) lots of food on the table.}
\end{align*}
\]

However, number and amount can occur in the plural:

- There were large numbers of cars on the road.

**Exclamations (see GCE 7.78–79)**

568

An exclamation is a type of sentence which is used to express the speaker's feeling or attitude. Notice, however, that the exclamation type of sentence is only one way of showing enthusiasm, etc. The exclamation as a sentence type begins with what as determiner in noun phrases (see 562) or how as a degree word with adjectives or adverbs (see 482–3). To form an exclamation, put the element of the sentence containing what or how at the front of the sentence, as with wh-questions (see 779), but do not alter the order of subject and operator:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{She cooked such a good dinner.} & \quad \text{SVO} \\
\text{What a good dinner she cooked!} & \quad \text{OSV} \\
\text{Your son is clever.} & \quad \text{SVC} \\
\text{How clever your son is!} & \quad \text{CSV} \\
\text{He tells such awful lies.} & \quad \text{SVO} \\
\text{What awful lies he tells!} & \quad \text{OSV} \\
\text{She dances beautifully.} & \quad \text{SVA} \\
\text{How beautifully she dances!} & \quad \text{ASV}
\end{align*}
\]

On other types of exclamatory construction, see 260, 309–20.

**Gender (see GCE 4.85–92)**

569

Gender in English applies strictly only to certain pronouns, where the categories masculine/feminine and personal/non-personal can apply, for example:

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
& \text{masculine} & \text{feminine} \\
\hline
\text{personal} & \text{he} & \text{she} \\
\text{non-personal} & \text{it} & \text{which} \\
\text{(see 683)} & \text{(see 579)} & \text{(see 774–5)} \\
\hline
\text{somebody} & \text{} & \text{} \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

Nouns, adjectives, and articles have no gender distinctions, although in a small number of words the feminine ending -ess marks a noun having female reference: actor/actress, manager/manageress.

Since nouns have no grammatical gender, the choice of he, she, and it is based on natural distinctions of meaning. The choice between he and she, for example, is almost entirely based on sex (see 82–3).

**Genitive (see GCE 4.93–105, 13.27–30, 13.55–56, 13.64)**

570

210 In (spoken) English, the genitive case of regular nouns is pronounced only in the
singular, where it takes one of the forms /tʃəl/, /zəl/, /səl/ following the rules for s inflection generally (see 751).

In <i>written</i> English, the inflection of regular nouns is written in the singular ’s, and in the plural s’ by putting an apostrophe after the plural s. In the plural, the genitive is not pronounced (’zero’ genitive).

**Regular -s plural**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>&lt;i&gt;Spoken&lt;/i&gt;</strong></th>
<th><strong>&lt;i&gt;Written&lt;/i&gt;</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>common</td>
<td>/boʊ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genitive</td>
<td>/boʊz/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

571
The ’s is always added to a noun which does not already end in s. This means that it is added to irregular plurals which do not end in -s (see 707–18):

**An irregular plural**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>&lt;i&gt;Spoken&lt;/i&gt;</strong></th>
<th><strong>&lt;i&gt;Written&lt;/i&gt;</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>common</td>
<td>/tʃaɪld/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genitive</td>
<td>/tʃaɪldz/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>&lt;i&gt;Spoken&lt;/i&gt;</strong></th>
<th><strong>&lt;i&gt;Written&lt;/i&gt;</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>common</td>
<td>/tʃaɪldrən/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genitive</td>
<td>/tʃaɪldrənz/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

572
Similarly: people’s, men’s, women’s, etc

In addition to its use with regular plurals, the ’zero’ form occurs with some singular nouns ending in -s:

a: with Greek names of more than one syllable, as in Euripides’ /ˈdɪzəl/ plays.

b: with many other names ending in -s (Burns, Jones, etc). The genitive is written either Burns’ or Burn’s. In speech it is pronounced either /ˈbaːrnz/ or (less commonly) /ˈbaːrnz/.

c: with certain fixed expressions such as for goodness’ sake, for conscience’ sake.

**The of-construction**

573
In many instances a noun in the genitive case is similar in function to the same noun as head of a noun phrase following of:

What’s the ship’s name?
What’s the name of the ship?

Usually, either the s-genitive or the of-phrase is preferred in a given case: with people and things, respectively. In numerous contexts only one construction is grammatically acceptable; eg we can say the leg of a table but not *a table’s leg. We can say John’s car but not *the car of John. (On the choice of construction, see 95–6.)

**The genitive as a feature of noun phrases**

574
Although the genitive is generally discussed as a case of nouns, in some respects it is better to regard it as an ending belonging to noun phrases (see 651–3) rather
than of nouns. In the following examples, preceding determiners and premodifiers belong to the genitive noun phrase rather than to the noun which is head of the whole phrase:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENITIVE NOUN PHRASE</th>
<th>MAIN NOUN PHRASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a horse's</td>
<td>hind leg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some people's</td>
<td>opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>older boys'</td>
<td>books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>every teacher's</td>
<td>guide to child psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the British government's</td>
<td>recent decision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The genitive noun phrase occupies determiner position (see 550) in the main noun phrase. This is seen more clearly when we compare equivalent of-phrases:

- the hind leg of                        a horse
- the opinions of                        some people
- the recent decision of                 the British government

The group genitive (see 575) shows that genitive noun phrases can also contain postmodifiers.

In other cases, however, the genitive behaves more like a single-word noun modifier, and the preceding determiners and premodifiers belong to the head noun of the whole phrase:

- best calves' liver (= 'calves' liver of the best quality')
- new boys' books (= 'new books for boys')

The group genitive

575
In postmodified noun phrases it is necessary to add an -s genitive to the end of the postmodification (rather than to the head noun itself):

**UNMODIFIED NOUN**: the Chairman's business
**POSTMODIFIED NOUN**: the Chairman of the Finance Committee's business

*Also*:

- someone else's house
- the heir apparent's name
- an hour and a half's discussion
- a week or so's sunshine

The genitive with ellipsis

576
The noun modified by the -s genitive may be omitted if the context makes its identity clear (compare 395–6):

- My car is faster than John's (ie 'than John's car').
- But John's is a good car, too.

With the of-phrase, a pronoun is normally required:

- The population of New York is greater than that of Chicago.

Omission of the head noun is typical of expressions relating to houses, shops, etc:

- Tonight we're going to Bill's/the Johnsons', etc. (= 'the place where Bill lives/the Johnsons live')
- I've already been to the dentist's/the butcher's, etc.
The double genitive

577
An of-phrase can be combined with an -s genitive into a DOUBLE GENITIVE. The noun with the -s genitive must be both definite and personal:

This is an opera of Verdi’s (= ‘one of Verdi’s operas’).
She’s a friend of my wife’s.

Unlike the simple genitive, the double genitive usually implies non-unique meaning, ie that ‘Verdi wrote several operas’, and that ‘my wife has several friends’. Compare:

He is \{my brother (suggests I have one, or more than one brother).
a brother of mine (suggests I have more than one brother).

Interrogatives (see GCE 4.120, 5.48, 7.63–67)

578
Interrogatives are words which introduce wh-questions (see 779–80) and interrogative subclauses (see 641–3). The interrogative words of English are who, whom, whose, which, what, where, when, how, why, whether, if (= ‘whether’). They belong, with relative pronouns, to the class of words we call for convenience wh-words (since most of them begin with wh-). Whether and if are restricted to interrogative subclauses (see 828).

Interrogatives in the noun phrase

579
In the noun phrase, the interrogatives which and what can act as both determiner and pronoun and can have both personal and non-personal reference. The different interrogative determiners and pronouns are set out in Table 2.

Table 2

Interrogative determiners and pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DETERMINERS</th>
<th>PRONOUNS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal and non-personal</td>
<td>Personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective case</td>
<td>what, which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective case</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive case</td>
<td>whose</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interrogative . . . + preposition (see 642)
| what, which . . . + preposition | who, whom | what, which . . . + preposition |
| (formal) . . . + preposition | (formal) |

Preposition + interrogative (see 642)
| preposition + what, which | preposition + whom (formal) | preposition + what, which |
| (formal) | (formal) |

580
Who, whom, whose, which, and what are also used as relative pronouns (see 788). Note, however, that the INTERROGATIVE which is used not only with non-personal but also with PERSONAL reference:

The author who is my favourite is . . . (RELATIVE)
Which is your favourite author? (INTERROGATIVE)

Who can also be used about persons:

Who is your favourite author?

But in meaning, who differs from which. There are two groups of interrogatives, those with INDEFINITE REFERENCE and those with DEFINITE REFERENCE:
Determined with personal nouns:

(INDEFINITE)  What conductors do you like best?
(DEFINITE)   Which conductor do you prefer: von Karajan or Stokowsky?

Determined with non-personal nouns:

(INDEFINITE)  What newspapers do you read?
(DEFINITE)   Which records do you like best: classical or popular?

Pronouns referring to persons:

(INDEFINITE)  Who is your favourite conductor?
(DEFINITE)   Which is your favourite conductor: von Karajan or Stokowsky?

Pronouns not referring to persons:

(INDEFINITE)  What's the name of this tune?
(DEFINITE)   Which do you prefer: classical or popular music?

The definite interrogative which indicates that the speaker is thinking of a definite group from which to choose other interrogatives are indefinite.

581

Here are some more examples of interogatives:

INTERROGATIVE DETERMINERS

Can be personal or non-personal:

What \{candidate will you vote for?
Which \{party are you in favour of?
Whose children are they?
Whose racket is this?

INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS

Who(m) is personal only:

Who told you where I was?
Who(m) is he marrying?

In the objective case, whom is \langle formal\rangle and who \langle informal\rangle.

Which is either personal or non-personal:

Which are your children in this photo?

Which can also be followed by an of-phrase:

Which of the girls do you like best?

Sentence [1] can have the same meaning as either [2] or [3]:

Which girl do you like best?
Which girls do you like best?

That is, it invites us to choose from a group either one (singular) or more than one (plural).

582

What has a wide range of use, having either personal or non-personal reference both as a determiner and as a pronoun:

(A) What's your address?  (B) (It's) 18 Reynolds Close.

(A) What nationality is he?
(What's his nationality?)

(B) He's Finnish.

(A) What date is it?
(B) (It's) the 15th of March.

(A) What's the time?
(B) (It's) five o'clock.

(A) What is he doing?
(B) (He's) mending the phone.

(A) What was the concert like?  (B) (It was) excellent.

When it refers to a person, however, what as a pronoun is limited to questions about profession, role, status, etc.

Contrast:

(A) What's her husband?  (B) He's a film director.
(A) *Which* is her husband?  (B) He’s the man on the right smoking a pipe.

(A) *Who* is her husband?  (B) He’s Paul Jones, the famous art critic.

**Interrogative adverbs and conjunctions**

583

Besides interrogative determiners and pronouns, there are interrogative adverbs and conjunctions. (see 641–3).

*Where* (place at or place to, see 161–91):

*Where (= ‘At what place’) is he staying?*

*Where (= ‘To what place’) are you going on your vacation this year?*

*When* (time, see 140–50):

*When (= ‘At what time’) are you leaving?*

*Why* (cause, reason, and purpose, see 197–207):

*Why (= ‘For what reason’) are you going there?*

*How* (manner, means, and instrument, see 192–6):

*How (= ‘By what means’) are you travelling?*

*How is also an interrogative adverb of degree (see 217), in which function it can premodify adverbs, adjectives and determiners:*

*How soon will you leave?  How often does he see her?  How tall are you?  How much money do you have?*

*Whether and if are interrogative conjunctions introducing indirect yes-no questions (see 267, 644).*

**Introductory it** (see GCE 14.23, 14.35–38)

584

The regular word order in English is subject + verb:

*Her appearance doesn’t matter.*

When the subject is a clause (see 637), however, the order is normally changed:

*What she looks like doesn’t matter. (unusual order)*

*It doesn’t matter what she looks like. (usual order)*

The subject clause is placed at the end of the sentence, and the subject position is filled by the introductory *it*.

The new sentence contains two subjects: the introductory subject (the pronoun *it*) and the postponed subject (the clause *what she looks like*).

Here are some more examples of sentences with introductory *it*:

*It’s said that she slipped arsenic into his tea.*

*It’s actually been suggested that income tax should be abolished.*

*It’s a pity to make a fool of yourself.*

*It surprised me to hear him say that.*

*It makes her happy to see others enjoying themselves.*

*It was considered impossible for anyone to escape.*

*It was easy getting the equipment loaded.*

*It’s no use telling him that.*

*It would be no good trying to catch the bus now.*
The introductory-it construction is used in the passive in the following cases:

- introducing a that-clause:
  Biologically it may be found that there are few differences between a black African and a white Scandinavian.

- introducing direct or indirect speech:
  It might be asked at this point: 'Why does not the Government alter the law?'

- introducing a to-infinitive:
  It may be decided not to rely exclusively on fixed-site missiles.

Any kind of nominal clause may have an introductory it except a nominal relative clause (see 645–6):

> Whoever said that was wrong.

For certain constructions which look just like introductory-it sentences there is no corresponding 'regular' construction: it seems/appears/happens, etc. For example, there is no such sentence corresponding to It seems that everything is fine (That everything is fine seems).

Sentences with introductory it must be distinguished from sentences where it is a personal pronoun (see 683) which acts as a replacement for a noun phrase in the context, for example:

> I don't like the look of this fish, but it's good to eat.

where it refers back to fish. Similarly:

> It's too wet to play tennis.

where the infinitive clause is the complement of the adjective phrase too wet (see 455).

She's a pleasure to teach

There is another type of construction that gives the emphasis in the main clause to a the object or b the prepositional object of a nominal clause. The object item is 'lifted out' from the clause and placed as subject in the main clause (the objective case form her becomes of course the subjective case form she):

\[
\begin{align*}
a & \quad \{To \text{ teach } her \text{ is a pleasure.} \\
   & \quad \{It's a pleasure to teach her. \\
   & \quad \{She's a pleasure to teach. \\
   & \quad \{For us to be with Margaret is great fun. \\
   & \quad \{It's great fun for us to be with Margaret. \\
   & \quad \{Margaret is great fun for us to be with. \\

b & \quad \{To be sure, be certain, appear, seem, be said, be known, etc + to-infinitive:
   \quad \{You seem to have made a mistake. \\
   \quad \{He's known to be an excellent pianist.
\]

In these cases, however, the corresponding it-construction requires a that-clause, and it is the subject of the nominal clause that has front-position:

> It seems that you've made a mistake.

> It's known that he's an excellent pianist.

Introductory there (see GCE 14.24–30)

An English sentence like A book is on the desk is possible but uncommon. The
natural way of putting it is to begin the sentence with an unstressed there and thus postpone the indefinite subject (a book):

There's a book on the desk.

This is called a sentence with introductory there. All main verb patterns (see 508) can be turned into such sentences with there, so long as the subject is indefinite and the verb phrase contains be:

**Pattern [I]:**

- A bus is coming.
- There's a bus coming.

**Pattern [L]:**

- Something must be wrong.
- There must be something wrong.

**Pattern [L]:**

- Was anyone around?
- Was there anyone around?

**Pattern [T]:**

- Plenty of people are getting promotion.
- There are plenty of people getting promotion.

**Pattern [X]:**

- Two bulldozers have been knocking the place flat.
- There have been two bulldozers knocking the place flat.

**Pattern [D]:**

- Something is causing her distress.
- There's something causing her distress.

**Pattern [V]:**

- Too many people are trying to buy houses.
- There are too many people trying to buy houses.

Passive sentences also occur:

- A whole box has been stolen.
- There's been a whole box stolen.

591

Introductory there differs from there as a front-placed adverb (There you are! see 431) both in lacking stress, and in behaving in most ways like the subject of the sentence:

a In (informal) English, there often determines concord (see 533) so that the verb is singular even when the postponed subject is plural:

- There are two patients in the waiting room.
- There's two patients in the waiting room.

occurs alongside the regular (formal) plural:

- There are two patients in the waiting room.

b There can act as subject in yes-no questions (see 778) and tag questions (see 781):

- Is there any more soup?
- There's nothing wrong, is there?

b There can act as subject in infinitive and -ing clauses (see 515):

- I don't want there to be any misunderstanding.
- He was disappointed at there being so little to do.

592

There is another type of introductory-there sentence which consists of there + be + a noun phrase + a clause which is like a relative clause (see 783). Here the verb need not be a form of be (and, although there must be an indefinite clause element, it need not be the subject):

- Something keeps upsetting him.
- There's something (that) keeps upsetting him.
- Is there anyone (that) you want to speak to?

Note Here that can be omitted even when it is subject, which is not possible in normal relative clauses.

217
Another common sentence pattern with introductory *there is* *there + be + noun phrase + to-infinitive clause*:

*There was no one for us to talk to.*

There is also another type which is most likely to occur in *(literary)* contexts where *there* is followed by a verb other than *be* (such as *lie, stand, exist)*:

*There may come a time (= ‘A time may come’) when Europe will be less fortunate.*

With a place adverbial in front-position, *there* may be omitted in *(literary)* style:

*In front of the carriage *(there)* rode two men in magnificent uniforms. (see 431)*

**Irregular verbs (see GCE 3.63–72)**

**595**

The irregular main verbs of English form a rather small, but important group of verbs. They are like regular verbs in having regular *-s* and *-ing* forms, for example, *walks, walking and spends, spending* (see 620–1). But they differ from regular verbs in that we cannot predict their past form and/or their past participle form from the base (compare the *-ed* form of regular verbs, see 622). We distinguish three types of irregular verbs:

(I) Verbs in which all these three parts (the base, the past, the past participle) are identical, for example, *cut—cut—cut.*

(II) Verbs in which two of the three parts are identical, for example, *spend—spent—spent* and *come—came—come.*

(III) Verbs in which all three parts are different, for example, *speak—spoke—spoken.*

Within each type, the verbs are here arranged according to similarity, for example, ‘the *spend-group*, ‘the *speak-group*, etc. The following list is not exhaustive (see further GCE 3.63–72). ‘R’ denotes that the verb also has regular forms. For auxiliary verbs, see 497–503.

**Irregular main verbs**

(I) *All three parts are identical*

**596**

**THE put-GROUP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bet</td>
<td>bet</td>
<td>bet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bid</td>
<td>bid</td>
<td>bid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burst</td>
<td>burst</td>
<td>burst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cast</td>
<td>cast</td>
<td>cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td>cost</td>
<td>cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cut</td>
<td>cut</td>
<td>cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hit</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>hit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hurt</td>
<td>hurt</td>
<td>hurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knit</td>
<td>knit</td>
<td>knit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>let</td>
<td>let</td>
<td>let</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put</td>
<td>put</td>
<td>put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quit</td>
<td>quit</td>
<td>quit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>set</td>
<td>set</td>
<td>set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shut</td>
<td>shut</td>
<td>shut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>split</td>
<td>split</td>
<td>split</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Also R: betted*

*Usually R: knitted*

*<Informal> verb*  

*Also R: quitted*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASE</th>
<th>PAST</th>
<th>PAST PARTICIPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>spread</td>
<td>spread</td>
<td>spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wed</td>
<td>wed</td>
<td>wed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(II) Two parts are identical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

597

(A) **THE learn-GROUP**

These verbs can be either regular (learned) or irregular (learnt). The regular /d/-form is especially <GA> and the /t/-form especially <RP>, see p 8.

- **burn**: burned/burnt
- **learn**: learned/learnt
- **smell**: smelled/smelt
- **spell**: spelled/spelt
- **spill**: spilled/spilt
- **spoil**: spoiled/spoilt

598

(B) **THE spend-GROUP**

- **bend**: bent
- **build**: built
- **lend**: lent
- **send**: sent
- **spend**: spent

599

(C) **THE read-GROUP**

- **bleed**: bled
- **breed**: bred
- **feed**: fed
- **flee**: fled
- **hold**: held
- **lead**: led
- **read /ri:d/**: read /red/

600

(D) **THE sleep-GROUP**

Where there are regular variants, these are usually preferred in <AmE>.

- **creep**: crept
- **deal /iz/**: dealt /e/
- **dream /iz/**: dreamt /e/
- **feel**: felt
- **keep**: kept
- **lean /iz/**: leant /e/
- **leap /iz/**: leapt /e/
- **leave**: left
- **mean /iz/**: meant /e/
- **meet**: met
- **sleep**: slept
- **sweep**: swept
- **weep**: wept

601

(E) **THE strike-GROUP**

- **cling**: clung
- **dig**: dug

Also R: wedded

Also R: dreamed /iz/

Also R: leaned /iz/

Also R: leaped /iz/
\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{BASE} & \text{PAST} & \text{PAST PARTICIPLE} \\
\text{fling} & \text{flung} & \text{flung} \\
\text{hang} & \text{hung} & \text{hung} \\
\text{sling} & \text{slung} & \text{slung} \\
\text{spin} & \text{spun} & \text{spun} \\
\text{stick} & \text{stuck} & \text{stuck} \\
\text{sting} & \text{stung} & \text{stung} \\
\text{strike} & \text{struck} & \text{struck} \\
\text{string} & \text{strung} & \text{strung} \\
\text{swing} & \text{swung} & \text{swung} \\
\text{win} & \text{won} & \text{won} \\
\text{wring} & \text{wrung} & \text{wrung} \\
\end{array}
\]

**602**

(E) THE **bring**-GROUP

All past and past participle forms have the vowel /ə/. Notice that caught and taught have -au- spellings; the rest -ou-.

- **bring** brought
- **buy** bought
- **fight** fought
- **seek** sought
- **think** thought
- **catch** caught
- **teach** taught

**603**

(G) THE **find**-GROUP

All past and past participle forms have the diphthong /aʊ/:

- **bind** /bænd/ bound /bænd/ bound /bænd/
- **find** /fænd/ found
- **grind** /gränd/ ground
- **wind** /wænd/ wound

**604**

(H) THE **get**-GROUP

- **get** got

\[\text{gotten} = \text{got} \quad \text{got/gotten}\]

- **lose** /loʊz/ lost /loʊst/ lost
- **shine** /ʃaɪn/ shone /ʃaʊn/ shone

- **shoot** shot

**605**

(I) THE **sell**-GROUP

- **sell** sold /saʊld/ sold
- **tell** told /tould/ told

**606**

(J) THE **come**-GROUP

- **become** /-əm/ became become
- **come** /-əm/ came come

**220** run ran run
### (K) OTHER VERBS WITH TWO FORMS IDENTICAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASE</th>
<th>PAST</th>
<th>PAST PARTICIPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beat</td>
<td>beat</td>
<td>beaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hear /hər/</td>
<td>heard /hərd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>light</td>
<td>lit</td>
<td>lit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make</td>
<td>made</td>
<td>made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>say</td>
<td>said /sed/</td>
<td>said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sit</td>
<td>sat</td>
<td>sat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spit</td>
<td>spat</td>
<td>spat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>spit</td>
<td>spit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stand</td>
<td>stood /stəd/</td>
<td>stood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lay</td>
<td>laid</td>
<td>laid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pay</td>
<td>paid</td>
<td>paid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Also R: lighted*

spat is esp ⟨BrE⟩

**Pronunciation**

regular,

spelling only irregular

### (III) All three forms are different

### 608

**A** THE *mow*-GROUP: the past participle can be regular or irregular.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>hew</th>
<th>hewed</th>
<th>hewn/hewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mow</td>
<td>mowed</td>
<td>mown/mowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saw</td>
<td>sawed</td>
<td>sawn/sawed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sew /soʊ/</td>
<td>sewed</td>
<td>sewn/sewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>show</td>
<td>showed</td>
<td>shown/showed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sow</td>
<td>sowed</td>
<td>sown/sowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swell</td>
<td>swelled</td>
<td>swollen/swelled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 609

**B** THE *speak*-GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>break /brr/</th>
<th>broke</th>
<th>broken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>choose /ʃu:/</td>
<td>chose /ʊə/</td>
<td>chosen /ʊə/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freeze</td>
<td>froze</td>
<td>frozen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speak</td>
<td>spoke</td>
<td>spoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>steal</td>
<td>stole</td>
<td>stolen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)woke</td>
<td>(a)woke</td>
<td>(a)woken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weave</td>
<td>wove</td>
<td>woven</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Also R: (a)waked*

### 610

**C** THE *wear*-GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bear /bɛə/</th>
<th>bore</th>
<th>born/borne</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note spelling: ‘She has **borne** six children and the youngest was **born** a month ago.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>swear /swɛə/</th>
<th>swore</th>
<th>sworn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tear /tɛə/</td>
<td>tore</td>
<td>torn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wear /wɛə/</td>
<td>wore</td>
<td>worn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 611

**D** THE *know*-GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>blow /bləʊ/</th>
<th>blew /bləʊ/</th>
<th>blown /bləʊ/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>grow</td>
<td>grew</td>
<td>grown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know</td>
<td>knew</td>
<td>known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>throw</td>
<td>threw</td>
<td>thrown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

221
(E) THE bite-GROUP

base past past participle
bite bit bitten
hide hid hidden/hid

(F) THE take-GROUP

shake shook /u/ shaken
take took /u/ taken

(G) THE write-GROUP

drive /aɪ/ drove /ou/ driven /i/
ride rode ridden
rise rose risen
write wrote written

(H) THE drink-GROUP

begin began begun
drink drank drunk
ring rang rung
shrink shrunk/shrunk shrunk
sing sang sung
sink sank sunk
spring sprang sprung
stink stank stunk
swim swam swum

(IV) Other verbs with all three parts different

eat ate \{/eɪt/\<RP>\} eaten
fall fell fallen
dive \{dived \<BrE, AmE>\, dove \<AmE>\ only \} dived
do /dʌd/ did done /dʌn/
draw drew drawn
give gave given
go went gone
lie lay lain
see saw seen

Main verbs (see GCE 3.9, 3.55–7)

Regular and irregular verbs

There are two types of verbs: main verbs and auxiliary verbs (see 497–503). Main verbs are either regular (such as call, like, try) or irregular (such as buy, drink, set).
'Regular' means that we can state all the verb forms of an English verb once we know its base form. (The base is the uninflected form which is given in dictionaries.) Even irregular verbs are not, however, entirely irregular (see 595). The irregular verbs are listed in 595-616.

619

A regular English verb has the following four forms:

- THE BASE: call
- THE -s FORM: calls
- THE -ing FORM: calling
- THE -ed FORM: called

The vast majority of English verbs are regular. Furthermore, all new verbs that are coined or borrowed from other languages adopt this pattern, for example xerox, xeroxes, xeroking, xeroxid.

THE -s FORM

620

The -s FORM, also called the 3RD PERSON SINGULAR PRESENT, of both regular and irregular verbs is formed in <written> English by adding s or es to the base. In <spoken> English, the s-form is pronounced /iz/, /z/, or /s/.

- BASE
  - press /pres/
  - play /plei/
  - help /help/

- -s FORM
  - presses /'presiz/
  - plays /pleiz/
  - helps /helps/

The rules for the choice of these alternatives are stated in 751; on changes in spelling, for example try/tries, see 809.

Exceptions:
- do /du:/
  - does /dəz/ (also /dæz/ as unstressed auxiliary)
- say /sei/
  - says /sez/
- go /gəu/
  - goes /gouz/

THE -ing FORM

621

The -ing FORM, or the PRESENT PARTICIPLE, of both regular and irregular verbs is formed by adding -ing /in/ to the base:

- press /pres/ → pressing /'pressɪŋ/
- play
- help

On changes in spelling, for example beg/begging, see 817–19.

THE -ed FORM

622

The -ed FORM of regular verbs is formed by adding -ed to the base. It corresponds to two forms of many irregular verbs: the PAST FORM and the PAST PARTICIPLE (or -ED PARTICIPLE). Compare:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGULAR VERBS</th>
<th>-ed FORM</th>
<th>IRREGULAR VERBS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BASE</td>
<td>PAST FORM</td>
<td>PAST PARTICIPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>press</td>
<td>pressed</td>
<td>pressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>play</td>
<td>played</td>
<td>played</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>help</td>
<td>helped</td>
<td>helped</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The -ed form is pronounced /id/, /d/, or /t/:
- pat
- praise
- push

patted /'pættid/
praised /'priːzd/
pushed /pʊʃt/

On the choice of these alternatives, see 752; on changes in spelling, for example pat/patted, see 817–19.
The uses of the verb forms

623
After stating what the *forms* of English verbs are, we shall now describe how they are *used*. The uses are further discussed in the sections referred to below.

624

**The base form** is used

- **a** in all persons of the present tense (*see* 520) except the 3rd person singular:
  
  I/you/we/they (the boys, etc) *like* milk.

- **b** in the imperative (*see* 520):
  
  *Phone* him at once.

- **c** in the present subjunctive (*see* 823–4):
  
  It is necessary that every member *inform* himself of these rules.

- **d** in the infinitive (*see* 515):
  
  We saw them *leave* an hour ago. (the bare infinitive) I want you *to type* this letter. (the *to*-infinitive)

625

**The -s form** is used in the 3rd person singular of the present tense (*see* 880), *ie* the only person where the base form is not used:

- He/she/it (the boy, the cat, etc) *likes* milk.

626

**The -ed form** corresponds to both the past tense and the past participle of many irregular verbs. Unlike the present tense, the past tense has only one form in all persons:

- I/you/he (the boy, the boys, etc) *liked* milk.

The past participle is used

- **a** with a form of have to form the perfective aspect (*see* 881–2):

  He has never *drank* milk.

- **b** with a form of be to form the passive (*see* 676):

  She was *injured* in an accident.

  She was *hidden* by the kidnappers.

- **c** to form -ed participle clauses (*see* 515):

  Many of those *injured* in the accident were taken to a hospital.

  They found her *hidden* in a cellar.

**Nationality words** (*see* GCE 4.33, 5.21–22)

627

When speaking about English people *in general* we can say either *the English* (adjective as head, *see* 465) or *Englishmen* (plural noun without the article):

- *The English* drink beer in pubs.

  *Englishmen* [1]

When referring to some *particular* English persons we say:

- *The Englishmen* (who live here) drink tea in the garden every day. [2]

We call these two types of reference [1] *generic* and [2] *specific*, respectively. In some cases, such as with *English/Englishman* (*Englishmen*) there are different forms for different types of reference. Where nationality words have no separate generic form, *the* +plural can be both generic and specific (*see* 74–8):

- *The Germans* (in general) are musical.

  *The Germans* that I know are musical.
The following table shows the names of some countries and continents and the corresponding adjectives and nouns (with specific and generic reference).

**NATIONALITY WORDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>name of country or continent</th>
<th>adjective</th>
<th>specific singular</th>
<th>specific plural (two, ...)</th>
<th>generic plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>a Chinese</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>the Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>a Japanese</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>the Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>a Portuguese</td>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>the Portuguese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
<td>a Swiss</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
<td>the Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>a Vietnamese</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>the Vietnamese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Iraqi</td>
<td>an Iraqi</td>
<td>Iraqis</td>
<td>the Iraqis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Israeli</td>
<td>an Israeli</td>
<td>Israelis</td>
<td>the Israelis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>a Pakistani</td>
<td>Pakistanis</td>
<td>the Pakistanis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>a German</td>
<td>Germans</td>
<td>the Germans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>a Greek</td>
<td>Greeks</td>
<td>the Greeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>an African</td>
<td>Africans</td>
<td>the Africans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>an American</td>
<td>Americans</td>
<td>the Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>European</td>
<td>an European</td>
<td>Europeans</td>
<td>the Europeans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>an Australian</td>
<td>Australians</td>
<td>the Australians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>an Italian</td>
<td>Italians</td>
<td>the Italians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>a Russian</td>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>the Russians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Belgian</td>
<td>a Belgian</td>
<td>Belgians</td>
<td>the Belgians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Brazilian</td>
<td>a Brazilian</td>
<td>Brazilians</td>
<td>the Brazilians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>an Indian</td>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>the Indians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>a Hungarian</td>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>the Hungarians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Norwegian</td>
<td>a Norwegian</td>
<td>Norwegians</td>
<td>the Norwegians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>a Dane</td>
<td>Danes</td>
<td>the Danes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>a Finn</td>
<td>Finns</td>
<td>the Finns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>a Pole</td>
<td>Poles</td>
<td>the Poles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>a Spaniard</td>
<td>Spaniards</td>
<td>the Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>a Swede</td>
<td>Swedes</td>
<td>the Swedes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>an Englishman</td>
<td>Englishmen</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>a Frenchman</td>
<td>Frenchmen</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Holland, the Netherlands</strong></td>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>a Dutchman</td>
<td>Dutchmen</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>an Irishman</td>
<td>Irishmen</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>Welsh</td>
<td>a Welshman</td>
<td>Welshmen</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>a Briton</td>
<td>Britons</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scots</td>
<td>a Scotsman</td>
<td>Scotsmen</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>a Scot</td>
<td>Scots</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The term Arab is used for example in the Arab nations, while Arabian is used for example in the Saudi Arabian government. Arabic refers to the language and literature: He’s learning Arabic.

2. The noun Briton is not often used.
Negation (see GCE 7.41–52)

Not-negation 629

To negate a finite clause (see 514), you place not (or, in (informal) use, its contracted form -n’t) immediately after the operator (see 673):

**POSITIVE**
- He is coming.
- We may win the match.
- We have been defeated.

**NEGATIVE**
- He is *not* / isn’t coming.
- We may *not* win the match.
- We have *not* / haven’t been defeated.

In these instances, there is an auxiliary (be, may, have) in the positive sentence that can serve as operator. When there is no such operator present, the auxiliary do has to be introduced. This is called the *do-construction* (see 674). Like modal auxiliaries, do is followed by the bare infinitive:

- She enjoys reading. ***She does not / doesn’t enjoy reading.***
- They understood the problem. ***They did not / didn’t understand the problem.***

(On the constructions with be and have as main verbs in negative sentences and on the forms of the modal auxiliaries, see 499–501.)

Contracted negation 630

As well as the contracted negative, English has contracted verb forms (see 497), which can be tagged on to the subject (usually only if it is a pronoun). There are thus two forms of (informal) negation possible, one with a contracted verb, and one with a contracted negative:

**CONTRACTED VERB**
- He’s *not* coming.
- We’re *not* ready.
- They’ve *not* caught him.
- She’ll *not* miss us.

**CONTRACTED NEGATIVE**
- He *isn’t* coming.
- We *aren’t* ready.
- They *haven’t* caught him.
- She *won’t* miss us.

Both sets of contracted forms are used in (informal) English. In (formal) English, the full forms are used: He is *not* coming, etc.

As there is no widely acceptable contraction for am *not* (see 500, Note a), only the verb contraction is possible in a sentence like I’m *not* ready.

631

In questions with inversion, *not* can be placed either after the auxiliary in its contracted form -n’t, or after the subject in its full form not:

\[
\{ \text{Haven’t you heard the news? (informal)} \}
\text{Have you *not* heard the news?}
\]

Negative pronouns and determiners 632

Instead of the following sentence with not-negation:

There *isn’t* any butter left.

we may equally well say:

There *is* no butter left.

*No* is a negative determiner (see 550), and is one of a number of negative items in English with different functions, as appears from Table 3:
As the table shows, *none* can be treated as either singular or plural as far as concord is concerned (see 540): *None of them has/have arrived.*

**Other negative items**

**633**

Other negative items beginning with *n*- are:

- *nowhere* (adverb of place)
- *never* (adverb of time when or frequency)
- *neither* (adverb of addition, see 238)
- (*neither*)...*nor* (coordinating conjunction, see 547)

Also, there are certain words which are negative in meaning and behaviour, although they do not appear negative in form:

- *hardly, scarcely, barely* (=‘almost... not’)
- *few, little* (=‘not many’, ‘not much’)
- *rarely, seldom* (=‘not often’)

**The grammatical behaviour of negative items**

**634**

The usual effect of all these negative items is to make the whole clause in which they occur negative (but see 269-71). This means that certain characteristics of negative clauses are found not only with *not*, but also with other negative items:

(A) After a negative item, normally *any*-words occur instead of *some*-words (see 803-7):

> No one has any doubts about his ability.

I *seldom* get any sleep after the baby wakes up.

I’ve spoken to *hardly anyone* who disagrees with me on this point.

(B) A negative item at the beginning of a clause brings about the inversion of subject and operator, *ie* the order is operator + subject (unless the negative item belongs to the subject). This construction can sound rather ⟨elevated⟩ and ⟨rhetorical⟩ (see 432):

> Only after a long argument *did he agree* to our plan.

(C) Negative words are followed by positive rather than negative tag-questions (see 781):

> [She never/scarcely seems to care] *do* she?

> [You won’t forget the shopping] *will* you?

*Compare:*

> [You’ll remember the shopping] *won’t* you?
Negation in phrases and non-finite clauses

635

Sometimes the word not is attached not to the verb phrase of a clause, but to another element of the clause, such as a noun phrase. Not then comes before the word or phrase which it negates. There is no inversion when the negated noun phrase is itself subject:

*Not* all of the passengers escaped unhurt.

*Not* a single word did he utter.

No nation can afford to offend its allies—*not even* the United States of America.

To negate non-finite clauses (see 515), we place the negative before the verb phrase:

*Not* having read the book, I can't tell you whether it is worth buying.

I asked him *not* to interfere.

He told me *never* to do it again.

Transferred negation

636

After some verbs like believe, suppose, and think, a *not* which belongs, in terms of meaning, to a *that*-clause is usually transferred to the main clause:

*I don’t believe* (that) you two have met, have you?

(=*I believe you two haven’t met*)

*I don’t suppose* (that) anyone will object to my absence.

(=*I suppose no one will object . . . *)

*I don’t think* (that) you need worry.

(=*I think you needn’t worry.*)

Nominal clauses (see GCE 11.16–25)

637

Nominal clauses function like noun phrases (see 651). Just as noun phrases may occur as subject, object, complement, appositive, and prepositional complement, so every nominal clause may occur in some or all of these roles:

| SUBJECT | Whether we need it is a different matter. |
| OBJECT | I don’t know whether we need it. |
| COMPLEMENT | The problem is whether we need it. |
| APPOSITIVE | That question, whether we need it, has not yet been considered. |
| PREPOSITIONAL COMPLEMENT | The decision must depend on whether we need it. |

638

There are five main types of nominal clause:

*That*-clauses (see 639–40)

Interrogative subclauses (see 641–4)

Nominal relative clauses (see 645–6)

Nominal to-infinitive clauses (see 647–8)

Nominal *-ing* clauses (see 649–50)

*That*-clauses

639

*That*-clauses can occur as:

| SUBJECT | That she’s still alive is sheer luck. |
| DIRECT OBJECT | I told him that he was wrong. |
The assumption is that things will improve. Your assumption, that things will improve, is not well-founded.

I'm sure that things will improve.

640  When the that-clause is object or complement or postponed subject (see 584), that is frequently omitted in <informal> use:

I told him \{ he was wrong.  I know \{ you're leaving.

**Wh-interrogative subclauses**

641  Interrogative subclauses are introduced by *wh*-interrogative words (see 578-583) and occur in the whole range of functions available to that-clauses. In addition, they can act as prepositional complement:

**SUBJECT**  
*How the book will sell* largely depends on its author.

**DIRECT OBJECT**  
I can't imagine *what made him do a thing like that*.

**SUBJECT**  
The point is not *who will go*, but *who will stay*.

**APPOSI TIVE**  
My original question, *why he did it at all*, has not yet been answered.

**COMP LEMENT OF AN ADJECTIVE**  
I wasn't certain *whose house we were in*.

**COMPLEMENT OF A PREPOSITION**  
None of us were consulted on *who should have the job*.

642  *Wh*-interrogative clauses are like *wh*-questions (see 779) in that the *wh*-word is placed first. We have, in the *wh*-interrogative subclause, the same choice between initial and final preposition where the prepositional complement is the *wh*-element:

He couldn't remember \{ on which shelf he kept it. <formal>
\{ which shelf he kept it on. <informal>

643  An infinitive *wh*-clause can be formed with all *wh*-words except *why*:

He explained to me *how to start the motor*.
(= 'how one should start . . . ')

On British trains, I never know *where to put my overcoat*.
(= 'where I'm supposed to put . . . ')

**Yes-no interrogative subclauses**

644  *Yes-no* interrogative subclauses are formed with *if* or *whether*:

Do you know *if/whether the shops are open now*?

The alternative question (see 246) has *if/whether . . . or*:

I don't care *if/whether your car breaks down or not*.

Only *whether* can be directly followed by *or not*:

I don't care *whether or not your car breaks down*.

**Nominal relative clauses**

645  Nominal relative clauses, also introduced by a *wh*-word, can act as
What John really needs is a wife.

Whoever wrote this book is a genius (=‘the person who wrote . . . ’).

I want to see whoever deals with complaints.

You’ll find what you need in this cupboard (=‘the things that . . . ’).

She gave whoever came to the door a winning smile.

Home is where your friends and family are.

You can call me what(ever) names you like.

Let us know your college address, that is, where you live during the term.

You should vote for which(ever) candidate you like best.

646

These clauses are introduced by a wh-pronoun or wh-determiner (see 578–82), which combines the functions of the relative pronoun with that of the determiner and/or head of the whole noun phrase. For example, the proverb

Whoever laughs last, laughs longest.

can be put in the form:

Those who laugh last, laugh longest.

in which whoever is replaced by a demonstrative pronoun and a relative pronoun.

Who hardly occurs in contemporary English in this nominal relative function:

*Who told you that was lying. Other expressions are used:

Whoever

The person who

Anyone who

told you that was lying.

As these examples show, a nominal relative clause can be introduced by a wh-word ending in -ever (whatever, etc). These words have general or inclusive meaning. Thus the pronoun whatever means roughly ‘anything which’.

Nominal to-in infinitive clauses

647

Nominal to infinitive clauses can occur as:

For a bridge to collapse like that is unlikely.

He likes everyone to be happy.

His ambition is to be a pilot.

His ambition, to be a pilot, was never fulfilled.

I’m glad to be of help.

648

The subject of a to infinitive is normally introduced by for. A pronoun subject is here in the objective case (see 684). Compare:

The idea is that we should meet on Thursday.

for us to meet on Thursday.

When the clause is a direct object, the for is omitted:

He wants us to meet on Thursday.

Nominal -ing clauses

649

The nominal -ing participle clause can act as:

Telling lies is wrong.
DIRECT OBJECT  No one enjoys being disturbed in the middle of the night.

SUBJECT COMPLEMENT APPOSITIVE  What he likes best is playing practical jokes.
He was absorbed in his hobby, collecting stamps.

COMPLEMENT OF A PREPOSITION COMPLEMENT OF AN ADJECTIVE  I’m tired of being treated like a child.
The children were busy building sandcastles.

650 When the -ing clause has a subject there is sometimes a choice between genitive case in ⟨formal⟩ style:
I’m surprised at his/John’s making that mistake.
and, in ⟨informal⟩ style, objective case (for personal pronouns) or common case (for nouns):
I’m surprised at him/John making that mistake.

Noun phrases (see GCE Chapters 4 and 13)

651 A noun phrase is a phrase which can act as subject, object, or complement of a clause (see 529), or as prepositional complement (see 739). It is called a noun phrase because the word which is its head (ie main part) is typically a noun.
In the following sentence:
John found the new secretary in his office a very attractive woman.
John, secretary, office and woman are NOUNS. The subject John, the object the new secretary in his office, the object complement a very attractive woman are NOUN PHRASES. Also part of the object, his office, is a prepositional complement, constituting yet another noun phrase.

652 The head noun can be accompanied by DETERMINERS (the, his, a, etc) and one or more MODIFIERS. Modifiers which precede the head are called PREMODIFIERS (eg new, very attractive), and those which follow the head are called POSTMODIFIERS (eg in his office).

653 Thus the structure of the English noun phrase can be written:

Noun Phrase

Determiner(s) (Prenomodifier(s)) Head (Postmodifier(s))

Here the brackets are a reminder that the determiners and modifiers can be left out. However, determiners are more essential to noun phrase structure than modifiers. The only situation in which a noun phrase has no expressed determiner is where it has a ‘zero article’ (see 494). Some examples of noun phrases are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DETERMINER(S)</th>
<th>PREMODIFIER(S)</th>
<th>HEAD</th>
<th>POSTMODIFIER(S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the</td>
<td></td>
<td>boys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>tall</td>
<td>boy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all those</td>
<td>tall</td>
<td>boys</td>
<td>in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>boys</td>
<td>with long hair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any one of these noun phrases could be the object which completes the sentence Mary likes...
The different parts of noun phrase structure are treated separately as follows: Determiners (see 550–67), Premodifiers (see 731–8), Postmodifiers (see 719–30). Apart from nouns, pronouns (see 747) and adjectives (see 464) may act as head of a noun phrase.

**Number (see GCE 4.48–84)**

**Singular and plural number**

654

In English, number is a feature of nouns, demonstratives, personal pronouns and verbs. Nouns have singular or plural number and verbs in the 3rd person vary for singular and plural agreement with the subject noun (see 532). The nouns which, according to the main rule, are SINGULAR are

a singular count nouns, ie nouns denoting 'one' (see 45): a boy, the table, this idea, etc.

b mass nouns (see 49): advertising, our music, the butter, this evidence, etc.

c proper nouns (see 755–64): John, Cairo, Mars, the Thames, etc.

The only nouns which normally occur in the PLURAL are plural count nouns, ie nouns denoting 'more than one': two boys, the tables, these ideas, etc.

655

The regular plural is formed by adding -s or -es to the singular (see 704). But special mention must be made of

(A) some nouns which end in -s but are singular, and

(B) some nouns which occur only in the plural.

(On the number of adjectives as head, as in the supernatural and the rich, see 464–7.)

(A) **SINGULAR NOUNS ENDING IN -S**

656

a News:

This is the eight o'clock news.

b Some diseases: measles, German measles, mumps, rickets, shingles. (Some speakers also accept a plural verb here.): (The) measles is an infectious disease.

c Subject names in -ics (usually with a singular verb): classics, linguistics, mathematics, phonetics, etc.

Statistics (= 'the subject') is not as difficult as some people think.

*but*: The recent statistics (= 'figures') on marriage are interesting.

d Some games: billiards, darts, dominoes, fives, ninepins:

Billiards is my favourite game.

e Some proper nouns: Algiers, Athens, Brussels, Flanders, Marseilles, Naples, Wales; the United Nations (the UN) and the United States of America (the USA) have a singular verb when considered as units: The United States of America is one of the most powerful nations in the world.

(B) **NOUNS WHICH OCCUR ONLY IN THE PLURAL**

657

a Cattle:

Many cattle have died in the drought.

People as the plural of person:

There were a great many people waiting at the airport.

(people is however regular in the sense of 'nation': the peoples of Africa.)
Police:

The police were checking all the cars entering the city.

but: A policeman was searching the building.
Two policemen were

658

b Some nouns denoting a tool, instrument or article of dress consisting of two equal parts which are joined together. These are always plural, but can be turned into ordinary count nouns by means of pair of:

(A) ‘Where are my trousers?’ (B) ‘They are here.’
‘I’d like a pair of scissors, please.’
‘There are two pairs of glasses on the table. Which pair do you want?’

Here is a list of other nouns which are used in the same way as trousers, scissors and glasses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>binoculars</td>
<td>jeans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spectacles</td>
<td>pants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pincers</td>
<td>pyjamas (BrE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pliers</td>
<td>pajamas (AmE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tongs</td>
<td>shorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scales</td>
<td>tights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

659
c There are also many other nouns which, in a given sense, only occur in the plural, for example contents:

Have you studied the contents of the book?

In many cases they have a singular form (without -s), with a different meaning (which a dictionary will explain), for example:

What is the silver content of this coin?

Here are further examples of plural nouns:

the Middle Ages
archives
arms (‘weapons’, as in an arms depot)
ashes (but also mass: tobacco ash)
funds (‘money’; but a fund, ‘a source of money’)
means (as in He’s a man of means.)
 oats (but corn, barley, etc)
odds (in betting)
outskirts (as in on the outskirts of a city)
promises (‘building’)
quarters, headquarters (but the Latin quarter)
spirits (‘mood’: He’s in good spirits; but He has a kindly spirit.)
stairs (a flight of stairs) and steps
surroundings (as in the surroundings of a town)
thanks (‘Many thanks!’)

Numerals (see GCE 4.129)

Cardinals and ordinals (see 564–5)

The cardinal numerals (one, two, etc) and the ordinal numerals (first, second, etc) are shown in the following list. Both types can function as pronouns or as deter-
miners. The ordinals are normally preceded by another determiner, usually the definite article:

There are ten on the list, so you are the eleventh.
They have five children already, so this will be their sixth child.

661

**CARDINALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>nought, etc (see 662)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>six</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>seven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>nine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>eleven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>twelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>thirteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>fourteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>fifteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>sixteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>seventeen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>eighteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>nineteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>twenty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>twenty-one, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>thirty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>forty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>fifty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>sixty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>seventy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>eighty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>ninety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>one hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>one hundred and one, etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 200| two hundred |
| 1,000| one thousand |
| 100,000| one hundred thousand |
| 1,000,000| one million |

**ORDINALS**

| 1st | first |
| 2nd | second |
| 3rd | third |
| 4th | fourth |
| 5th | fifth |
| 6th | sixth |
| 7th | seventh |
| 8th | eighth |
| 9th | ninth |
| 10th| tenth |
| 11th| eleventh |
| 12th| twelfth |
| 13th| thirteenth |
| 14th| fourteenth |
| 15th| fifteenth |
| 16th| sixteenth |
| 17th| seventeenth |
| 18th| eighteenth |
| 19th| nineteenth |
| 20th| twentieth |
| 21st| twenty-first, etc |
| 30th| thirtieth |
| 40th| fortieth |
| 50th| fiftieth |
| 60th| sixtieth |
| 70th| seventieth |
| 80th| eightieth |
| 90th| ninetieth |
| 100th| (one) hundredth |
| 101st| (one) hundred and first, etc |
| 200th| two hundredth |
| 1,000th| (one) thousandth |
| 100,000th| (one) hundred thousandth |
| 1,000,000th| (one) millionth |

*Nought* (*AmE* naught) /nɔt/ occurs chiefly as the name of the numeral 0, and is replaced, in general use, by the negative determiner *no* or the pronoun *none*:

There were no survivors from the air disaster.

None of the passengers or crew survived.

*Zero* /ˈziəroʊ/ is used for 0 especially in mathematics and for temperature:

It’s five degrees below zero.

*0 /ˈeʊ/ is used for example in telephone numbers:

Dial 7050 /ˈsevn ou faɪv ou/ and ask for extension 90 /ˈnain ou/.

*Nil* /nɪl/ or *nothing* is used for example in football:

Brazil won 4–0 (four nil/(to) nothing).

*Love* /ˈloʊv/ is used in tennis, squash, etc:

Borg leads by 30–0 (thirty love).
One or a must be used with 100, 1,000 and 1,000,000 when they are written with letters or spoken:

- one/a hundred (passengers)
- one/a thousand (pounds)
- one/a million (French francs)

Similarly:

- one/a hundred and one (= 101) etc

**664**

*Hundred, thousand* and *million* have the singular form following both singular and plural numbers or quantifiers:

- two *hundred* (times)
- three *thousand* (casualties)
- several *million* (dollars)

**Note** As a head, *million* sometimes has a plural form:

The population of New Zealand is now three *million(s).*

(*but*: three *million* five thousand)

But all three have the -s plural when they denote an indefinite number:

- I’ve told him so *hundreds* of times.
- There were *thousands* of spectators at the demonstration.
- *Millions* of people die every year from starvation.

**665**

The plural *forties* denotes an age or a period between 40 and 49; similarly with *sixties*, *seventies*, etc:

- She was a good-looking woman in her forties.
- The book was published *in the seventies*/*in the 70s*/*in the 1970s*.

**Fractions and decimals**

**666**

Fractions are read out in full as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\frac{1}{2} & \quad \text{(a) half} \\
\frac{1}{4} & \quad \text{a quarter} \\
\frac{1}{10} & \quad \text{a tenth} \\
\frac{3}{4} & \quad \text{three quarters} \\
1\frac{1}{2} & \quad \text{one and a half} \\
3\frac{3}{5} & \quad \text{three and one fifth}
\end{align*}
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fraction</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \frac{1}{2} )</td>
<td>a half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \frac{1}{4} )</td>
<td>a quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \frac{1}{10} )</td>
<td>a tenth of the population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \frac{3}{4} )</td>
<td>three quarters of an hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( 1\frac{1}{2} )</td>
<td>one and a half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( 3\frac{3}{5} )</td>
<td>three and one fifth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They stayed (for) \{ *half an hour*, *a half hour* \}

They stayed (for) *a quarter of an hour*.

\( a \) *one tenth* of the population

\( \frac{3}{4} \) *three quarters of an hour*\{ *one and a half hours*, *an hour and a half* \}

\( 3\frac{3}{5} \) *three and one fifth* inches

**667**

Decimals are read out in full as follows:

- 2.5      two point five
- 3.14     three point one four

**Times and dates**

**668**

Times of the clock are read out in full as follows:

- at 5      at *5 (o’clock)*
- at 5.15    at five fifteen, at a quarter past five, at a quarter after five *<AmE>*
- at 5.30    at five thirty, at half past five
- at 5.45    at five forty-five, at a quarter to six, at a quarter of six *<AmE>*
- at 5.50    at five fifty, at ten (minutes) to six
- at 6.10    at ten (minutes) past six, at ten minutes after six *<AmE>*; *at six ten* can be used when one is referring eg to a timetable.
Dates are written and read out as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{written} & \quad \text{He died on} \begin{cases} 5 \text{ May 1974. } \text{BrE} \\ 5 \text{ May 1974. } \text{AmE} \end{cases} \\
\text{spoken} & \quad \text{He died} \begin{cases} \text{on the fifth of May, nineteen seventy-four. } \text{BrE} \\ \text{on May the fifth, nineteen seventy-four. } \text{AmE} \end{cases}
\end{align*}
\]

**Objects (see GCE 7.10, 7.14, 7.19–21, 12.44–70)**

670

\(a\) Like the subject, the object of a clause is a noun phrase (see 651-3):

Yesterday I met a strange man.

or a nominal clause (see 637–50):

She told me that we had met before.

\(b\) The object usually refers to the person, thing, etc, affected by the action of the verb:

John is patting the dog.

\(c\) The object normally follows the verb phrase. English typically has SVO order in both main clauses and subclauses (but see 426, 568, 780, 787):

After they had seen the play, Bill and Mary had a snack.

\(d\) The object of an active sentence can usually be turned into the subject of a passive sentence (see 676–82):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Some friends of ours found } & \text{my cat in the woods.} \\
\text{My cat was found in the woods.}
\end{align*}
\]

671

When a clause has two objects, the first is an **indirect object** (which is often personal) and the second a **direct object**:

I gave her the flowers.

I bought Mabel a new dress.

The indirect object is often equivalent to a prepositional phrase with to or for (see 857–8):

I gave the flowers to her.

I bought a new dress for Mabel.

**Operators (see GCE 2.2, 2.17–23, 3.6, 10.53–60)**

672

Auxiliary verbs can vary in their number and in their functions in the verb phrase (see 874–83). However, there is one important syntactic function that they have in common when they occur first in the finite verb phrase. Compare the following interrogative sentences:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Will they ask many questions?} \\
\text{Were they asking many questions?} \\
\text{Was he asked many questions?} \\
\text{Have they asked many questions?} \\
\text{Have they been asking many questions?} \\
\text{Would he have been asked many questions?}
\end{align*}
\]

In each case, the first auxiliary of the finite verb phrase is isolated from the rest of the verb phrase, no matter how complex the phrase is. Because of this syntactic function, we call the first auxiliary of a verb phrase the **operator**. Be and,
sometimes in \(<\text{BrE}\)\), *have* act like operators even when they are main verbs, and so the term operator will be used for the following cases, too:

*Is* she a good student?

*Have* you any money? \(<\text{BrE}\)\)

673

The operator stands before the subject in *yes-no* questions (as above). In negative statements the operator stands before *not*:

He *will not* / *won’t* ask many questions.

He *is not* / *isn’t* asking many questions.

He *has not* / *hasn’t* asked many questions.

He *has not* / *hasn’t* been asking many questions.

The same position is normally that taken by adverbs with mid-position (see 478):

He *will never/rarely/then/always* ask the same questions.

The *do*-construction

674

When a verb phrase contains no auxiliary verbs, it contains no word that can act as operator for the purpose of forming *yes-no* questions and negative sentences with *not*:

He *knows* what I want.

*You need* some advice.

*John* came yesterday.

In such cases, we have to introduce the special ‘dummy’ operator *do* for forming questions (see 778) and *not*-negation (see 629):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a} \quad &\text{Does he know what I want?} \\
&\quad \{\text{He doesn’t know what I want.}

\text{b} \quad &\text{Do you need some advice?} \\
&\quad \{\text{You don’t need any advice.}

\text{c} \quad &\text{Did John come yesterday?} \\
&\quad \{\text{John didn’t come yesterday.}
\end{align*}
\]

675

Apart from *yes-no* questions and *not*-negatives, there are a number of other constructions which require the use of an operator (and hence, sometimes, the use of the ‘dummy’ operator *do*). They include

\begin{enumerate}
\item emphatic sentences (see 313):
  \[\text{Do be quiet!}\]
  \[\text{I did enjoy that meal!}\]

\item tag questions (see 781):
  \[\text{John came yesterday, didn’t he?}\]

\item *wh*-questions where the *wh*-element is **not** the subject:
  \[\text{When did John come?}\]
  \[\text{Who did he meet at the station?} \text{\textless\textit{informal}}\]

\item with: Who met him at the station?

\item statements with inversion (see 432):
  \[\text{Only after a long delay did news of Livingstone’s fate reach the coast.}\]
\end{enumerate}

Passives (see GCE 12.2–18)

676

The term **passive** is used to describe

(A) the type of verb phrase which contains the construction *be* + past participle: *was killed, was seen, etc* (see 878–9).

(B) the type of clause in which a passive verb phrase occurs.

The opposite of passive is **active**. Examples of the contrast between active and passive clauses:
ACTIVE  
The butler murdered the detective.
The policeman persuaded him to leave.
My father gave me this watch.
His wife considered him a genius.

PASSIVE  
The detective was murdered (by the butler).
He was persuaded to leave (by the policeman).
I was given this watch (by my father).
He was considered a genius (by his wife).

How to construct passive sentences

677  
To change an active clause into a passive clause,

a  replace the active verb phrase by the matching passive one
b  make the object of the active clause the subject of the passive clause
c  make the subject of the active clause the agent of the passive clause. The agent is the noun phrase which occurs after the preposition by in the passive clause.

These three changes can be pictured as follows:

SUBJECT
Many critics
           ↓
ACTIVE VERB
disliked
           ↓
OBJECT
the play

The play
SUBJECT
            ↓
PASSIVE VERB
was disliked
            ↓
AGENT
by many critics.

The effect of the change into the passive, as you see, is to reverse the positions of the noun phrases acting as subject and object in the active sentence.

678  
Except for a few cases (see Note), all active sentences with a noun phrase or pronoun object can be made passive. Sentences [1] to [4] above illustrate this process with four different basic verb patterns (see 508–9):

ACTIVE  
[T]  SVO  
[V]  SVOV  
[D]  SVOO  
[X]  SVOC

PASSIVE
SV (passive) by-agent
SV (passive) V by-agent
SV (passive) O by-agent
SV (passive) C by-agent

In the third of these patterns (SVOO), it is usually the first object (the indirect object) that becomes subject of the passive clause. There is, however, another passive construction in which it is the direct object that is made subject. Thus both the following are possible passive forms of the active sentence in [3]:

1. I was given this watch by my father.
2. This watch was given (to) me by my father.

Note  
A number of verbs belonging to the [T] pattern do not have a passive. They include have (as in I have a Fiat), and hold (as in This jug holds two pints). Also, the passive is sometimes not possible when the object is a clause (see 837, 845–52).

679  
The by-phrase containing the agent of a passive clause is only required in specific cases (in fact, about four out of five English passive clauses have no agent). The passive is especially associated with (impersonal) style (eg in scientific and official
writing), where the question of who is the agent (ie who performs the action described by the verb) is unimportant and often irrelevant:

A police officer was killed last night in a road accident.
The question will be discussed at a meeting tomorrow.

The passive auxiliary is normally be, but can sometimes be get. The passive with get is normally found only in (informal) style, and in constructions without an agent:

The boy got hurt on his way home from work.
It is upsetting when a person gets punished for a crime that he didn’t commit.

Another variation of the passive occurs with prepositional verbs (see 699). It is possible, in many cases, for the prepositional object (the noun phrase following the preposition of the active sentence) to become the subject of the passive sentence:

ACTIVE Someone will have to deal with this matter right away.
PASSIVE This matter will have to be dealt with right away.

Other examples:
Other possibilities were talked about at the meeting.
An improvement in relations between East and West is to be hoped for as a result of the conference.
I don’t like being stared at.
Likewise ask for, believe in, cuter for, look at, talk to, wonder at, etc.

Notice that there are also passive non-finite verb phrases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>to-INFINITIVE CLAUSE</th>
<th>ACTIVE</th>
<th>PASSIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to understand</td>
<td>seeing</td>
<td>being seen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I want this to be clearly understood by everybody.
Without being seen by any of the servants, the assassin entered the house.

Personal and reflexive pronouns (see GCE 4.112–116)

Personal and reflexive pronouns are related in the following way. (The examples include only subjective personal pronouns. See Table 4 on p. 250.)

(A) They distinguish between personal and non-personal gender, and within personal gender between masculine and feminine (see 569):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL</th>
<th>masculine</th>
<th>he</th>
<th>himself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>feminine</td>
<td></td>
<td>she</td>
<td>herself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| NON-PERSONAL   |           | it       | itself  |

(B) They distinguish between 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I; we</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>he, she, it; they</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>myself; ourselves</td>
<td>yourself; yourselves</td>
<td>himself; themselves, etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(C) They distinguish between singular and plural number (see 654):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I; he, she, it</td>
<td>we; they</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the 2nd person the same form is used in the singular and plural of personal and possessive pronouns (you; your, yours), but there is a separate plural of reflexive pronouns: yourself (singular) and yourselves (plural).
We, the 1st person plural pronoun, denotes 'I plus one or more others' (see 85).

In addition, five personal pronouns (together with who, see 788, 579) are unique in having both subjective and objective case forms (see 504) as well as two genitive case forms. The genitives of the personal pronouns are usually called 'possessive pronouns' (see 688-90).

**Table 4**

**Personal and Reflexive Pronouns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL PRONOUNS</th>
<th>POSSESSIVES</th>
<th>REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subjective case</td>
<td>objective case</td>
<td>acting as determiners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st person</td>
<td>singular</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>plural</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person</td>
<td>singular</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>plural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>non-personal</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>plural</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Personal pronouns**

685

Personal pronouns, as we see from Table 4, are classified according to person (1st, 2nd, 3rd person), number (singular, plural), case (subjective, objective, genitive) and gender (masculine, feminine, non-personal).

686

The choice of person, number and gender is determined by meaning (see 82-5), which is supplied either by context outside language, or by the sort of noun phrase for which the pronoun acts as a substitute (see 391-3). Pronouns generally substitute for a noun phrase which precedes them:  
*My brother is out, but he will be returning soon.*

But especially in formal written English, a personal pronoun in a subclause can be used as a substitute for a noun phrase which follows it in the main clause. Compare:

- As soon as it had refuelled, the plane took off.
- The plane took off as soon as it had refuelled.
- As soon as the plane had refuelled, it took off.
The choice of subjective and objective case is made on the basis of grammatical position. The simplest rule to use is that the subjective form is the one used in subject position with finite verbs, while the objective form is the one used in all other positions:

SUBJECTIVE CASE
- He was late as usual. (subject)
- I saw him yesterday. (direct object)
- Will you give him my regards? (indirect object)
- I've written to him already. (prepositional complement)

OBJECTIVE CASE
- She's several years older than him. (informal) (after than, as in comparisons)

(A) Who's there? (subject complement)
(B) It's me. (informal) (reply form)

(A) Who's going to drive?
(B) Me. (informal)

(Compare with verb: (B) I am.)

But this rule is restricted to (informal) English in the last three cases illustrated. In these cases, traditional grammar tells us that the subjective form is the correct form to use. But in practice, the subjective form sounds rather stilted, and is avoided. Thus you will scarcely ever hear: It's I, or I in answer to questions like Who's there? The comparative form (older) than I is slightly more common.

Possessives

There are two kinds of possessives, each with its separate function. My, your, her, etc act as determiners before noun heads, and mine, yours, hers, etc as pronouns, ie as independent noun phrases:

DETERMINER FUNCTION
This is her book.

PRONOUN FUNCTION
The book is hers.

In pronoun function, the possessive is always stressed. (Compare the genitive constructions of This is John's book and This book is John's, see 576.)

Possessive as determiner

Unlike many other languages, English uses determiner possessives with reference to, for example, parts of the body and personal belongings:
- Mary broke her leg when she was skiing in Austria.
- Don't tell me they've changed their minds again!
- There stood a man at the door with his hat in his hand.
- Don't lose your balance and fall into the water!

The definite article is, however, usual in prepositional phrases related to the object (or, in passive constructions, the subject):
- The little girl took me by the hand.
- Something must have hit me on the head.
- He was shot in the leg during the war.

Possessive as pronoun

The forms mine, hers, theirs, etc, can act in all the main positions where a noun phrase is possible:

SUBJECT
Can I borrow your pen? Yours (= 'your pen') works better than mine.
These books are ours (= 'belong to us').

Philip wanted a screwdriver, so I let him borrow yours (= 'your screwdriver').

I parked our car directly behind theirs (= 'their car').

My parents are
\[
\{ \text{older than} \} \hers
\{ \text{not so old as} \}
\]

(= 'her parents').

**Reflexive pronouns**

**691**

Reflexive pronouns are used as objects, complements, and (often) prepositional complements where these elements have the same reference as the subject of the clause or sentence:

- The soldiers tried to defend themselves.
- I'm not worried about myself. (But I am about you.)
- We have to find ourselves a new home.
- Most authors start by writing novels about themselves.
- He's not (feeling) himself today. (ie 'He's feeling ill, out of condition')

Notice that in some cases the reflexive pronoun receives nuclear stress, and in other cases not.

The indefinite pronoun one (see 776) has its own reflexive, as in

- One mustn't fool oneself.

but other indefinites use himself or themselves (see 540):

- No one must fool himself.

**692**

Also reflexives are used in imperative and non-finite constructions, where they point back to the element which is understood to be the subject of the verb:

- Make yourself at home.
- I've asked everyone to help themselves.

However, in many prepositional phrases denoting place the ordinary personal pronouns are used:

- He turned around and looked about him.
- Have you any money on you?
- She had her fiancé beside her in the back of the car.
- They placed their papers in front of them.

**693**

The reflexive pronouns myself, ourselves, etc are sometimes used as alternatives to me, us, etc after as (for), like, but (for), except (for) and in coordinated noun phrases:

- As for me/myself, I don't mind what you decide to do.
- For someone like me/myself, one good meal a day is quite enough.
- Did you want to speak to my wife or me/myself?

**694**

The reflexive pronouns also have an emphatic use, where they follow a noun phrase or another pronoun, and reinforce its meaning:

- I spoke to the manager himself.
She's getting a divorce; she herself told me.

We can also postpone the reflexive pronoun to the end of the sentence (see 444).

After a determiner possessive, the word own can be used for emphatic or reflexive meaning: my own, your own, his own, etc:

He cooks his own dinner (= ‘He cooks dinner for himself’).
The government is encouraging people to buy their own homes.

The intensifying adverb very can be added before own:

Do you like the soup? The recipe is my very own.

The combination possessive + own can also occur in an of-phrase (see 577):

I’d love to have a house of my own.

Phrasal and prepositional verbs (see GCE 12.19–28)

Phrasal verbs

Verbs may form combinations with adverbal particles which, in their form and behaviour are like prepositional adverbs (see 746):

- The children were sitting down.
- Drink up quickly.
- The plane has just taken off.
- When will they give in?

Get up at once.
Did he catch on?
He turned up unexpectedly.

Such verb–adverb combinations are called phrasal verbs. Most of the adverbs are place adverbs (see 189). Verbs can also combine with prepositional adverbs which function like prepositional phrases. Here we do not speak of ‘phrasal verbs’:

- They walked past (the place).
- She ran across (the street).

Some phrasal verbs retain the individual meanings of the verb and the adverb (for example sit down), whereas for other phrasal verbs the meaning of the combination cannot be built up from the meanings of the individual verb and adverb, for example: catch on (= ‘understand’), give in (= ‘surrender’), turn up (= ‘appear, arrive’) etc.

Many phrasal verbs can take an object:

- Find out whether they are coming.
- Drink up your milk quickly.
- They turned on the light.
- They is bringing up her brother’s children.
- They called off the strike.

With most of these phrasal verbs, the adverb can either come before or follow a noun object:

= \{\text{They turned on the light.} \\
\text{They turned the light on.}\}

Personal pronoun objects, however, always have to come before the adverb:

- They turned it on.

not: *They turned on it.

Other examples of phrasal verbs with objects are:

- blow up (a bridge)
- break off (our relations)
- bring about (a change)
burn up (the leaves in the garden)
fill out (a form) (esp. AmE)
get out (a book)
get over (an idea)
make up (a story)

Most phrasal verbs are (informal).

In some cases phrasal verbs with objects look identical to verbs followed by a prepositional phrase:

- They ran over the bridge (= 'crossed the bridge by running'). (verb + preposition)
- They ran over the cat (= 'knocked down and passed over'). (phrasal verb)

**Prepositional verbs**

699

A verb may also form a combination with a preposition (see 744), for example:

- He's applied for a new job.
- Has anyone commented on the results?
- The article also hinted at other possibilities.
- Her parents strongly objected to her travelling alone.
- Who will be running for president at the next election?

The noun phrase following the preposition is termed the **prepositional object**.

Other examples of prepositional verbs are:

- add to (the bill)
- allow for (delays)
- amount to (50 dollars)
- approve of (an action)
- attend to (the matter)
- care for (somebody)
- compete with (somebody)
- conform to (a standard)
- consent to (a proposal)
- enlarge on (a topic)
- hope for (improvements)
- live on (a small salary)
- part with (a car)
- refer to (a dictionary)
- resort to (violence)
- shout for (help)

**Differences between phrasal and prepositional verbs**

700

Phrasal and prepositional verbs may seem very similar, for example the pair:

- They called up all young men (= 'enlisted').
- They called on their friends (= 'visited').

They are, however, different in at least four respects:

(A) The adverb in a (a phrasal verb) is normally stressed and has nuclear stress in end-position. The preposition in b (a prepositional verb), however, is normally unstressed:

- They called 'up all young men.
- All young men were called up.

- They called on their friends.
- Their friends were called on.
(B) The preposition in a prepositional verb must come before the prepositional object:

a) They called up all young men.
   They called them up.

b) They called on their friends.

(C) On the other hand, the prepositional verb allows an adverb to be placed between the verb and the preposition:

a) They called early up all young men.

b) They called early on their friends.

(D) A prepositional verb also accepts a relative pronoun after the preposition:

a) All young men up whom they called were not at home.

b) The friends on whom they called were not at home.

But both types of verb can have the preposition or adverb end-placed:

The men (whom) they called up were not at home.

The friends (whom) they called on were not at home.

Note that, unlike some languages, English often allows the prepositional object to become the subject of a passive sentence (see 681):

They looked upon him as a hero.

He was looked upon as a hero.

Phrasal-prepositional verbs

701

In <informal> English, some verbs can combine as an idiom with both an adverb and a preposition, for example

He puts up with almost anything (= ‘tolerates’).

You shouldn’t break in on a conversation like that (= ‘interrupt’).

We must all cut down on spending (= ‘reduce’).

Don’t imagine you can get away with that sort of thing.

He walked out on the project (= ‘abandoned’). 702

We call these phrasal-prepositional verbs. We can make a clause containing such a verb passive, by changing the prepositional object into the subject (see 681):

They have done away with (= ‘abolished’) the old laws.

The old laws have been done away with.

We cannot insert an adverb between the preposition and the object:

*He puts up with willingly that secretary of his.

though it is possible to do so between the adverb and the preposition:

He puts up willingly with that secretary of his.

In relative clauses and questions, where the object is front-placed, the adverb and preposition come after the verb:

What are the police checking up on (= ‘investigate’)?

You don’t realise what I’ve had to put up with (= ‘tolerate’). <informal>

703

Other examples of phrasal-prepositional verbs in <informal> English are:

back out of (an agreement)
catch up on (my reading)
catch up with (somebody)
drop in on (a neighbour)
face up to (the problems)
get down to (serious talk)
look down on (somebody)
make away with (a large sum)
stand up for (one’s ideals)
Plurals (see GCE 4.60–84)

Regular plurals

704
Most nouns are count nouns (see 45), i.e. they can occur in both the singular (denoting ‘one’) or in the plural (denoting ‘more than one’). Most count nouns have the regular -s plural which is formed by adding an s to the singular:

one dog → two dogs

In some cases further spelling changes occur when -s is added (see 809–14). For the pronunciation of the -s ending, see 751.

The plural of compounds

705

a In most compounds the ending is added to the last part:

assistant director → assistant directors

So also:

boy friends, breakdowns, check-ups, grown-ups, sit-ins, stand-bys, take-offs, etc.

b But a few compounds take the ending after the first part:

notaries public, passers-by, etc.

c A few compounds have both the first and the last part in the plural:

menservants, women doctors, etc.

Irregular plurals

(A) VOICING + -S PLURAL

706

Some nouns which in the singular end in the voiceless /θ/ or /f/ sound (spelled -th and -f) change to the corresponding voiced sound /ð/ or /v/ in the plural, before the regular /z/ ending.

a NOUNS IN -th

With a consonant before the -th, the plural is regular: months (/mʌnθ/ → /mʌnθz/). With a vowel before the -th, the plural is also often regular, as with cloths, deaths, faiths; but in one or two cases the plural has voicing: mouths (/maʊθ/ → /maʊθz/), paths. In several cases we find both regular and voiced plurals: oaths (/əʊθ/ → /əʊθz/, /əʊðz/), truths, wreaths.

b NOUNS IN -f(e)

The voiced plurals /-vz/ are spelled -ves:

calf calves loaf loaves
half halves shelf shelves
knife knives thief thieves
leaf leaves wife wives
life lives wolf wolves

Other nouns in -f have only the regular plural /-fs/: beliefs, chiefs, cliffs, proofs, roofs, safes, etc.

c ONE NOUN IN -s HAS THE IRREGULAR PLURAL PRONUNCIATION /-ziz/:

house /haus/ houses /ˈhauzɪz /

(B) CHANGE OF VOWEL IN THE PLURAL

707

The following nouns form the plural by a vowel change instead of an ending:

foot /fut/ feet /fiːt/
tooth /tuːθ/ teeth /tiːθ/
goose /ɡʊs/ geese /ˈɡiːz/
man /mæn/
mouse /maʊs/
woman /ˈwʊmən/
men /mɛn/
mice /maɪs/
women /ˈwʊmən/ (C) PLURAL IN -en (with or without vowel change)

708
child /tʃaɪld/
children /ˈtʃildrən/
ox /ɒks/ oxen /'ɒksən/ /'breðərn/ in the special
brother /ˈbrʌðər/ brethren /ˈbreðrən/ sense 'fellow members of a
religious society'; otherwise
regular: brothers.

(D) NO PLURAL ENDING

709
Some nouns can be used both with a singular and a plural meaning without
change: a sheep/many sheep, etc.
Some animal names are, like sheep, unchanged, but there is great variation.
Most such nouns are regular: bird, cow, eagle, hen, rabbit, etc: two birds
Always unchanged: deer, sheep, plaise, salmon, grouse: two deer
Usually unchanged: pike, trout, carp, moose: two trout
Both the regular and the unchanged plurals: antelope, reindeer, fish, flounder,
herring: two herring(s)

710
Dozen, stone <BrE>, and foot have no plural form in many expressions of quantity:
1) I want two dozen eggs, please.
2) Dozens of eggs were broken.)
He weighs 14st 2 lb. <BrE>
198 lb. <AmE>
(A) How tall are you?
(B) I'm 6 ft. (But: I'm six feet tall)
(six feet) two (inches) [6 ft 2 in].
Plural expressions like five pounds do not have -s when they act as premodifiers
(see 735): a five-pound note <BrE>, a six-lane motorway, a four-piston engine.

711
Series and species can be used as either singular or plural:
He gave one series/two series of lectures.

(E) FOREIGN PLURALS

712
In some words borrowed from foreign languages, foreign plurals occur instead of
regular plurals. With other foreign words, both a regular plural and a foreign
plural can occur. Foreign plurals tend to be commoner in technical usage, whereas
the -s plural is more natural in everyday language: thus formulas (general) but
formulae (in mathematics); antennae (general and in electronics) but antennas
(in biology). Here is a list of some nouns which have foreign plurals:

713
a NOUNS IN -us (Latin)
The foreign plural is -i, as in stimulus, → stimuli /ˈstɪmjʊli/. Only regular plural (-uses): bonus (→ bonuses), campus, chorus, circus, virus, etc.
Both plurals: cactus (→ cacti), focus, nucleus, radius, terminus, syllabus.
Only foreign plural: alumnus (→ alumni), bacillus, stimulus.

714
b NOUNS IN -a (Latin)
The foreign plural is -ae (pronounced /iː/), as in alumna → alumnæ.
Only regular plural (-as): area (→ areas), arena, dilemma, diploma, drama, etc.
Both plurals: formula (→ formulas/formulae), antenna.
Only foreign plural: alga (→ algae), larva.

715

c Nouns in -um (Latin)
The foreign plural is -a /a/, as in curriculum → curricula.
Only regular plural: album (→ albums), museum, etc.
Usually regular: forum (→ forums), stadium, ultimatium.
Both plurals: aquarium (→ aquariums/aquaria), medium (but always media in
the mass media), memorandum, symposium.

716
d Nouns in -ex, -ix (Latin)
The foreign plural is -ices (pronounced /ɛzɪs/), as in index → indices.
Both regular and foreign plurals: apex (→ apexes/apices), appendix, matrix.
Only foreign plural: codex (→ codices).

717
e Nouns in -is (Greek)
The foreign plural is -es (/iːz/), as in basis → bases.
Regular plural: metropolis (→ metropolises).
Foreign plural: analysis (→ analyses), axis, crisis, diagnosis, ellipsis, hypothesis,
oasis, parenthesis, synopsis, thesis.

718
f Nouns in -on (Greek)
The foreign plural is -a /a/, as in criterion → criteria.
Only regular plurals: demon (→ demons), electron, neutron, proton.
Both plurals: automat(on) (→ automat(on)s/automata).

Postmodifiers (see GCE 13.5–43)

719
Postmodifiers occur after the head in a noun phrase (see 651–3). We have the
following range of postmodifiers:
(A) Relative Clauses (see separate entry 783–95)
   Did you see the girl who was sitting in the corner?
(B) Prepositional Phrases (see 783–95)
   Did you see the girl in the corner?
(C) Non-finite Clauses Equivalent to Relative Clauses (see 720)
   Did you see the girl sitting in the corner?
(D) Appositive Clauses (see 725–7)
   The fact that she’s good-looking is not the only reason why
   I’d like to meet her.
(E) Clauses of Time, Place, Manner and Reason (see 728)
   We visited the house where Mozart stayed in 1789.
(F) Adverbs (see 729)
   The way out is over there.
(G) Adjectives (see 730)
   There’s something odd about her.

Prepositional Phrases as Postmodifiers

720
The prepositional phrase (see 739–43) is by far the most common type of post-
modifier in English. Prepositional phrases can often be related to relative clauses:
   Is this the road to Paris?
   (= ‘Is this the road that leads to Paris?’)
The house beyond the church was for sale.
His life after the war was rather dull.
All passengers on board the ship had to pass a medical examination.
There is no cause for alarm.
(On of-phrases, see 44–59, 95–6, 573–4.)

Non-finite clauses equivalent to relative clauses as postmodifiers

721
All three types of non-finite clause (-ing participle clauses, -ed participle clauses, and to-infinitive clauses) can function as postmodifiers similar to relative clauses.

-ing PARTICIPLE CLAUSES

The people working in the factory asked for a pay increase last month. (= ‘who are/were working in the factory’)
When you enter, please hand your tickets to the man standing at the door. (= ‘who [will be] standing at the door’)

As the participle clause does not have tense (see 407–8, 103), it can be interpreted, according to context, as past or present tense. However, the -ing participle clause need not carry the meaning of the progressive aspect (see 882, 122):
‘All articles belonging to the college must be returned. (= ‘all articles that belong . . .’)’

722
-ed PARTICIPLE CLAUSES

The question debated in Parliament yesterday was about abortion laws. (= ‘that was debated in Parliament’)
The only car yet repaired by that mechanic is mine. (= ‘that has yet been repaired’)

The participle clause corresponds in meaning to a passive relative clause, but the participle clause contains none of the distinctions that can be made by tense and aspect.

723

-to-INFINITE CLAUSES

The question to be debated tomorrow is whether income tax should be increased. (= ‘the question which [is to] be debated’)
The next train to arrive was from Chicago. (= ‘the train which arrived next’)
John is the last person to cause trouble. (= ‘the person who would be the last to cause trouble’)
Amundsen was the first man to reach the South Pole. (= ‘who reached the South Pole first’)

As we see, the to-infinitive resembles the other non-finite clauses in not making distinctions of tense and aspect, so that its time reference alters according to context. The to-infinitive clause is often preceded by next, last, ordinal numerals or superlatives.

724

In many infinitive clauses, the head of the noun phrase stands in the relation of object or prepositional object to the infinitive verb:
The (best) man to consult is Wilson. (= ‘the man you/one/etc should consult’)
There are plenty of toys to play with. (= ‘with which to play’)

In these cases, a subject preceded by for may be added:
The (best) man for you to consult is Wilson.
There are plenty of toys for the children to play with.
(On other infinitive clauses, such as the time to arrive, see 728.)
Appositive clauses as postmodifiers

Appositive clauses are nominal clauses which have a relation to the head similar to that between two noun phrases in apposition (see 489–91). They can be that-clauses (see 639–40) or to-infinitive clauses (see 647–8):

The news that he was resigning his job proved to be incorrect. [1]
The police have been investigating a plot to kidnap a prominent diplomat. [2]

The relation of apposition can be seen if we relate the noun phrase to a subject + be + complement construction:

The news was that he was resigning his job. [1a]
The plot is to kidnap a prominent diplomat. [2a]

Notice that the that-clause is a nominal clause and not a relative clause. We can show this by contrasting [1] with [3]:

The news that was spreading proved to be incorrect. [3]

That in [3] is a relative pronoun, and could be replaced by which. It acts as the subject of the clause. But in [1] that is a conjunction.

The head of an appositive clause must be an abstract noun such as fact, idea, reply, answer, appeal, promise:

His wife tried to conceal the fact that he was seriously ill.
We were delighted at the news that our team had won.
Stories that the house was haunted had been current for centuries.
The mayor launched an appeal to the public to give blood to the victims of the disaster.

We gratefully accepted his promise to help us.

Other types of nominal clause (interrogative and -ing clauses, see 641–4, 649–50) strictly do not occur as appositive clauses, but they can be put in an appositional relation with the head of the noun phrase by means of the preposition of:

He made the mistake of attacking a neutral country. (Compare: His mistake was attacking . . . )
We shall soon have to face the annual problem of what to give Aunt Matilda for her birthday. (Compare: Our annual problem is what to give . . . )

Appositive clauses so far illustrated have been restrictive (cf 99–102). Examples of non-restrictive appositive clauses are:

His main argument, that scientific laws have no exceptions, was considered absurd.
His last appeal, for his son to visit him, was never delivered.
She suffered from a common misfortune of women at that time: having too much time and too little money.
We'll soon have to face that annual problem—what to give Aunt Matilda for her birthday.

All types of nominal clause can act as non-restrictive appositive clauses.

Clauses of time, place, manner, and reason

These postmodifying clauses are similar in that they are linked to the head by an adverbial relation (see 140–53, 161, 204). They are:

a  Finite clauses introduced by a wh-word:

TIME  He is always talking about the years when he was a student.

PLACE  We visited the house where Beethoven was born.

REASON  Is that the reason why you came? <informal>
b Finite clauses introduced by that or zero:

TIME It's about time (that) you had a holiday.
PLACE I'll show you the place (that) we stayed (at) last year. (informal)
MANNER I like the way (that) she does her hair. (informal)
REASON The reason (that) I came was to ask your forgiveness.

c To-infinite clauses:

TIME It will soon be time to leave.
PLACE A good place to stay (at) is the White Hart.
MANNER That's not the way to make an omelette!
REASON That's no reason to complain!

Adverbs as postmodifiers

729 The use of adverbs as postmodifiers is more restricted than the use of other postmodifiers (see also 487).

The road back was dense with traffic.

(= 'The road which led back . . . ')

The people outside started to shout.

The weather tomorrow will be cloudy.

Adjectives and adjectival constructions as postmodifiers

730 Adjectives normally premodify the noun (see 732), but in some constructions (discussed elsewhere, see 459), they follow the noun:

There was something odd about his behaviour.

Anyone keen on modern jazz should not miss this opportunity.

Premodifiers (see GCE 13.44–68)

731 Premodifiers in a noun phrase (see 651–3) are placed after determiners (see 550–67) but before the noun which is head of the phrase. There are the following types of premodifiers, all of which can be related to complements in sentences with a linking verb (see 529):

732

(A) ADJECTIVES (see 456–7)

He's rented a delightful cottage.

(Compare: The cottage is delightful.)

A premodifying adjective can itself be premodified by degree adverbs (see 482):

his really quite unbelievably delightful cottage

just as if it were in complement position:

His cottage is really quite unbelievably delightful.

733

(B) PARTICIPLES (see 621–2)

He's rented a crumbling cottage.

(The cottage is crumbling.)

He's rented a converted cottage.

(The cottage is/has been converted.)

734

(C) NOUNS

He's rented a country cottage.

(The cottage is in the country.)
Genitive nouns can occasionally act as premodifiers, although in general genitives function as determiners (see 552). The premodifying function is shown by the position of the genitive in:

He's rented a quaint fisherman's cottage.
(= ‘a quaint cottage of the kind which belong to fishermen’.)

**Compound premodifiers**

735

Compound premodifiers are quite common. These are combinations of words which function as a single adjective or noun. They have various patterns:

- icy-cold water
- a record-breaking jump
- a hard-working mother
- a first-class performance

(On a five-pound note, see 710.)

**Premodifiers consisting of more than one word**

736

In addition, there are modifiers which consist of more than one word but which make up a syntactic construction rather than a compound word. These are not hyphenated when they occur as complements (ie after the verb in a clause), but are often hyphenated when they premodify, and are therefore not easy to distinguish from compounds. They take the form of prepositional phrases, adjective phrases, noun phrases, participial constructions, etc:

- an out-of-the-way cottage (The cottage is out of the way.)
- the town-hall clock (The clock is on the town hall.)
- a ready-to-wear suit (The suit is ready to wear.)
- a recently converted cottage (The cottage has recently been converted.)
- a red and white scarf (The scarf is red and white.)

737

Sequences of three, four, or even five nouns occur quite commonly in a noun phrase; eg Lancaster City football club supporters. These are formed either through noun premodification or through noun compounds, or through a combination of both. We can show the way in which the above example is built up as follows:

Lancaster City

(= ‘the city of Lancaster’)

football club

(= ‘club for playing football’)

Lancaster City football club

(= ‘the football club in the city of Lancaster’)

Lancaster City football club supporters

(= ‘the supporters of the Lancaster City football club’)

**More than one premodifier**

738

When a noun head has more than one premodifier, these tend to occur in a certain order. We deal with them in a right-to-left order, ie starting from the head (here in CAPITAL LETTERS).
The item that comes next before the head is the type of adjective which means 'consisting of', 'involving', or 'relating to':

This is not a political problem, it's a social problem.

Next closest to the head is the noun modifier:

a world political problem

Next before the noun modifier comes the adjective derived from a proper noun:

the American spring medical conference

Normally, of course, noun phrases do not have all these types of premodifiers. We are more likely to find a simpler structure, for example:

a Russian trade delegation
Scandinavian furniture designs

Before this type of adjective we find a variety of other modifiers: participles, colour-adjjectives, adjectives denoting age, etc:

printed Scandinavian designs
red oriental carpets
a young physics student

These premodifiers may of course themselves have modifiers:

badly copied Scandinavian furniture designs
really attractive deep-red oriental silk
a very, very young physics student

a large enough lecture hall

Notice the middle position of unstressed little, old and young:

a 'nice little' cottage (informal)
a 'fine old' gentleman
a 'pretty young' lady

Prepositional phrases (see GCE Chapter 6)

739

A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition (see 744–5) followed by a prepositional complement, which is usually

(A) A NOUN PHRASE (see 651–3):

There will be 1400 delegates at the conference.

(B) A WH-CLAUSE (see 641–6):

No conclusions can be drawn from what the press reported yesterday.

(C) AN -ING CLAUSE (see 649–50):

By signing the treaty both nations have made an effort towards peace.

Compare:

He was surprised {at her remark. (A)
at what she said. (B)
at her saying this. (C)

740

There are two categories of nominal clause which cannot directly follow a preposition. These are that-clauses (see 639–40) and to-infinitive clauses (see 647–8). With such clauses, the preposition is omitted:

He was surprised {that she said this.
to hear her say this.

Compare these with preposition + a wh-clause:

He was surprised at what she said.

Sometimes, the addition of the fact that can serve to convert the that-clause construction into a form suitable for a prepositional complement:
of the many problems which still existed.

She was aware of the fact that there were still many problems.

that there were still many problems.

741

Normally a preposition must come before its complement. However, there are some cases where this does not happen, because the complement is at the front of the clause.

(A) In relative clauses, wh-questions, and exclamations the preposition can occur either at the beginning or the end. The first position is (formal).

RELATIVE CLAUSES (see 783–96)

The party (which) most people vote for does not necessarily win the election.

The party for which most people vote does not necessarily win the election. (formal)

WH-QUESTIONS (see 779–80)

Which house is he staying at?

At which house is he staying? (formal)

EXCLAMATIONS (see 568)

What a difficult situation he’s in!

With what amazing skill this artist handles the brush! (formal)

742

(B) In nominal wh-clauses, passives, and infinitive clauses the preposition must occur at the end:

WH-CLAUSES (see 641–2, 645)

What I’m convinced of is that the world’s population will grow too fast.

PASSIVES (see 681)

The old woman was cared for by a nurse from the hospital.

INFINITIVE CLAUSES (see 647–8)

That man is impossible to work with. (informal)

The functions of prepositional phrases

743

Prepositional phrases may function as:

(A) ADVERBIALS (see 468)

My brother works in an insurance company.

To my surprise, the doctor phoned the next morning.

(B) POSTMODIFIERS IN A NOUN PHRASE (see 651–3, 720)

The people on the bus were singing.

(C) VERB COMPLEMENTS (see 843, 869)

I want to congratulate you on your exam.

(D) COMPLEMENTS OF ADJECTIVES (see 530)

I’m terribly bad at mathematics.

(E) SUBJECT, COMPLEMENT, etc

Also prepositional phrases may occasionally take the role of a noun phrase as subject, complement, prepositional complement, etc:

Before breakfast is when I do my best work.

The view from above the shore is magnificent.

Prepositions and prepositional adverbs (see GCE 6.9–10)

Prepositions

744

254 Prepositions are words which, as their name implies, are placed before a noun
phrase (see 651–3). The most common English prepositions are simple, ie consist of one word:

We had to wait at the airport for five hours before take-off.

Common simple prepositions are:

- about
- above
- after
- along
- around
- at
- before
- below
- beside
- between
- by
- down
- for
- from
- into
- of
- off
- on
- over
- past
- since
- till
- through
- to
- under
- until
- up
- with
- without

Other prepositions, consisting of more than one word, are called complex, for example:

- according to
- along with
- as for
- away from
- because of
- due to
- except for
- in comparison with
- out of
- in front of
- owing to
- in relation to
- up to
- on top of

The following sentences illustrate the use of complex prepositions:

- Two men were interviewed at the police station in connection with a theft from a department store.
- This development is in line with latest trends in fashion.

Prepositional adverbs

A prepositional adverb is an adverb which behaves like a preposition with the complement omitted (see 189–90):

- A car drove past the gate. (*past = a preposition*)

- A car drove past. (*past = a prepositional adverb*)

Prepositions consisting of one syllable are normally unstressed, but prepositional adverbs are stressed:

- He stayed in the house.
  He stayed in.

All the words listed in 744 (except at, beside, for, from, into, of, till, to, until, with) can act as prepositional adverbs (cf 179).

Pronouns (see GCE 4.106–111)

Pronouns are words which can function as a whole noun phrase (eg in being subject or object of a clause) or as the head of a noun phrase. Many of them act as substitutes (see 391–7) or ‘replacements’ for noun phrases in the context.

In the majority of cases, a pronoun functions as a whole noun phrase, and therefore does not have any determiners or modifiers. Here are a few examples where determiners and modifiers do accompany the noun phrase:

- So you're going to Spain for your holidays. Lucky you! (familiar)
- You have the large room, and I'll have the small one.
- *Those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.* (proverb)
Many items can function as both as determiners (which require a head) and as
pronouns (which do not require a head). Others can be b determiner only, or
c pronoun only:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DETRMINER</th>
<th>PRONOUN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>Which car () is yours?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DETRMINER</td>
<td>This bike is mine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRONOUN</td>
<td>This is my bike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>The bike is mine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>John has hurt himself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRONOUN</td>
<td>We don’t actually dislike one another.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Partly because pronouns differ among themselves, partly because many
pronouns are related to other categories, pronouns are treated under the following
headings:

DEMONSTRATIVES this, that, these, those (see 548-9)
INTERROGATIVES who, which, what, where, etc (see 578-83)
NEGATION no, nobody, no one, nothing, etc (see 632)
PERSONAL AND REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS i, my, mine, myself, etc (see 683-95)
RECIPROCAL PRONOUNS each other and one another (see 782)
RELATIVE CLAUSES who, whom, whose, which, that (see 783-96)
QUANTIFIERS some, any, and every and their combinations with -body, -one, -thing, each, all, both, either; much, many, more, most, enough, several, (a) little, (a) few, less, least, etc (see 765-76)

Pronunciation of endings (see GCE 3.54-62, 4.61, 4.96, 5.73)

Here we deal with rules for the pronunciation of grammatical endings, whether
they are added to nouns, verbs, or adjectives.

The -s ending

The -s ending has three different functions: plural (see 704), genitive (see 570),
and 3rd person singular present (see 620). However, the rules for pronouncing
the ending are the same in all functions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>PRONUNCIATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>plural</td>
<td>(A) /(\text{iz})/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genitive</td>
<td>horse (\rightarrow) horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td>George (\rightarrow) George’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>catch (\rightarrow) catches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(A) The pronunciation is /\(\text{iz}\)/ after bases ending in voiced or voiceless sibilants,
\(\text{ie} /\text{z}/, /\text{s}/, /\text{\text{d\text{3}}}/, /\text{\text{t\text{3}}}/, /\text{\text{t\text{3rt}}}/, /\text{\text{z}}/:
church /\text{\text{t\text{3f\text{3}}}t\text{\text{f\text{3rt}}}t\text{\text{iz}}}|
Reg /\text{\text{red\text{3}}}z/ |
praise /\text{\text{preiz}}/ |
churches /\text{\text{t\text{3f\text{3}}}t\text{\text{f\text{3rt}}}t\text{\text{iz}}}|
Reg’s /\text{\text{red\text{3}}}z/ |
praises /\text{\text{preiz}}z/ |

(B) The pronunciation is /\text{z}/ after bases ending in voiced sounds other than
/\text{z}/, /\text{\text{d\text{3}}}/, /\text{\text{z}}/ (including vowels):
The pronunciation is /s/ after bases ending in voiceless sounds other than /s/, /tʃ/, /ʃ/:  
month /mænθ/  
week /wiːk/  
pick /pɪk/  

Note: these irregular pronunciations:  
do /dzu:/  
say /seɪ/  

does /dəz/ (or /dæz/ when unstressed)  
says /sez/  

The -ed ending (see 622)  
752  
The -ed ending of regular verbs has three spoken forms:  
(A) /t/ after bases ending in /d/ and /t/:  
    pad /pæd/  
    pat /pæt/  
    padded /ˈpætɪd/  
    patted /ˈpætɪd/  

(B) /d/ after bases ending in voiced sounds other than /d/ (including vowels):  
because /bəʊz/  
pay /peɪ/  
paid /peɪd/  
payed /peɪd/  

(C) /t/ after bases ending in voiceless sounds other than /t/:

The -er and -est endings (see 523)  
753  
(A) Syllabic /l/ is no longer syllabic before -er and -est:  
simple /ˈsɪmpl/  
simpler /ˈsɪmplər/  
simplest /ˈsɪmplɪst/  

(B) Adjectives ending in /ŋ/ change /ŋ/ to /ŋg/ before -er and -est:  
long /lɒŋ/  
strong /strɔŋ/  
young /yŋ/  

longest /ˈlɒŋɡɪst/  
stronger /ˈstrɔːrər/  
younger /ˈjŋər/  

Contrast verbs: sing /sɪŋ/ → singing /ˈsɪŋɪŋ/, etc.  

The -ing and -er/-est endings (see 621, 523)  
754  
Whether or not speakers pronounce final r in words like pour and poor, the r is  
of course always pronounced before -ing and -er/-est:  
The rain is pouring /ˈpærɪŋ/ down.  
It would be fairer /ˈfɛərɪŋ/ to take a vote.  

Proper nouns (see GCE 4.2, 4.40–47)  
755  
Proper nouns have ‘unique’ reference and, in the singular, usually take no article  
in English (see 492). The following list gives examples of article usage with some  
classes of proper nouns:  

Proper nouns without an article  
756  
(A) PERSONAL NAMES (with or without titles)  
    Mary  
    Peter Jones  
    257
Mr and Mrs Johnson Lady Churchill
President Roosevelt Cardinal Spellman
Dr Watson Judge Darling <mainly AmE>
Professor Brown Uncle Toni

Contrast: *the President of the United States of America, the Lord (God), the Duke of Wellington* (see 71)

Family terms with unique reference often behave like proper nouns. No article is used in the vocative (see 364):

Hello Mother/Mummy <familiar>/Mum <familiar>.

Elsewhere the article is also omitted in <familiar> use:

Father/Daddy <familiar>/Dad <familiar> will soon be home.

Have you thanked Auntie <familiar>/Uncle for the present?

Compare: *Your father will soon be home.*

757

(B) CALENDAR ITEMS

a Names of festivals
   Christmas (Day) Independence Day
   Easter (Sunday)

b Names of the months and the days of the week
   January, February, . . . Monday, Tuesday, . . .

c Names of seasons may have the article omitted <esp BrE>:
   I last saw her in (the) spring.
   but: *in the spring of 1975* (see 71)

758

(C) GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

There is normally no article whether or not the name is premodified (see 731):

a Names of continents
   (North) America (medieval) Europe
   (Central) Australia (East) Africa

b Names of countries, counties, states, etc
   (modern) Brazil (industrial) Lancashire
   (Elizabethan) England (northern) Florida

Exceptions: *the Argentine* (but *Argentina*), *the Ruhr, the Saar, the Sahara, the Ukraine, the Crimea, (the) Lebanon, the Midwest.*

c Cities and towns
   (downtown) Boston (suburban) London
   (ancient) Rome (central) Tokyo

But note: *The Hague; the Bronx; the City, the West End, the East End (of London).*

d Lakes and mountains
   Lake Michigan (Lake) Windermere
   Mount Everest Vesuvius

759

(D) NAME + COMMON NOUN

In combinations of name and common noun denoting buildings, streets, bridges, etc, the second noun usually has the main stress: *Hampstead Heath*, except that names ending in *Street* have the main stress on the first noun: *Oxford Street.*

Madison Avenue Westminster Bridge
Park Lane Leicester Square
Russell Drive Greenwich Village
Reynolds Close
Kennedy Airport
Portland Place
Harvard University

But note the Albert Hall; also the Haymarket, the Strand, the Mall (street names in London); the Merritt Parkway, the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Names of universities where the first part is a place-name can usually have two forms: the University of London and London University. Universities named after a person have only the latter form: Yale University.

Proper nouns with the definite article

760
The following classes of proper nouns take the definite article:

761
(A) PLURAL NAMES
The Netherlands (but: Holland)
the Midlands
the Hebrides, the Shetlands, the Bahamas, the Canaries
the Himalayas, the Alps, the Rockies, the Pyrenees
the Wilsons (= 'the Wilson family')

762
(B) SOME GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
Rivers: the Avon, the Danube, the Mississippi, the Thames, etc
Seas: the Atlantic (Ocean), the Pacific, the Baltic, the Mediterranean, etc
Canals: the Panama (Canal), the Erie Canal, etc

763
(C) PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS, FACILITIES, etc
Hotels and restaurants: the Grand (Hotel), the Hilton, etc
Theatres, cinemas, clubs, etc: the Globe, the Athenaeum, etc
Museums, libraries, etc: the Tate (Gallery), the British Museum, the Huntington (Library), etc

But note: Drury Lane, Covent Garden.

(D) NEWSPAPERS
Magazines and periodicals normally have no article: Language, Newsweek, Time, Punch, New Scientist, Practical Boat Owner. But: the Spectator, the New Statesman. After genitives and possessives the article is dropped: today's Times, this week's New Statesman.

Quantifiers (see GCE 4.18–26, 4.122–128)

765
Quantifiers are determiners and pronouns denoting quantity or amount (see 57–68). Of the quantifiers which are determiners, some (like all) function as predicatizers in the noun phrase (see 558–62), others (like some) function as central determiners (see 551–7), and yet others (like many) as postdeterminers (see 563–5). There are five main groups of quantifiers, and within each group we may distinguish:

(1) Determiners (as in some friends)
(2) Pronouns which may be followed by an of-construction (as in some of the men)
(3) Other pronouns (as in Somebody is knocking)
Determiners

The five groups of quantifiers (A–E) are illustrated in Table 5, which shows quantifiers that are determiners.

### Table 5

**QUANTIFIERS WHICH ARE DETERMINERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th></th>
<th>MASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>Singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROUP (A):</strong></td>
<td>all</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>determiners of</td>
<td>every</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inclusive meaning</td>
<td>each</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see 61–3)</td>
<td>half</td>
<td>half</td>
<td>half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROUP (B):</strong></td>
<td>some</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some and any words</td>
<td>any</td>
<td>any</td>
<td>any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see 803–7)</td>
<td>either</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROUP (C):</strong></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>degrees of quantity/</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amount (see 58)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>most</td>
<td>most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>enough</td>
<td>enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>(a) few</td>
<td>(a) little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>fewer/less</td>
<td>less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>fewest</td>
<td>least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>several</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROUP (D): unitary</strong></td>
<td>one</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROUP (E):</strong></td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative (see 632)</td>
<td>neither</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Examples:

**Group (A)**

*All the world* mourned his death. (Less usual than: *The whole world...*)

*I’ve lost all my books/money.*

*Every/each student* will have to take the test.

*Both carpets* have been cleaned.

*He gave half the apple/apples/food to his sister.*

*All and both* (but not *half*) can also occur after their heads. If the head is subject, *all and both* have the mid-position of adverbs (see 470):

*The students/they* {all} like their new professor.

If the head is a pronoun but not a subject, their position is immediately after the pronoun:

*She made us both/all welcome (= ‘... both/all of us ...’).*

**Group (B)**

*Some* and *any* can be used as determiners with singular count nouns when they are stressed (on unstressed *some, see 494, 553*):
There was *some* *book* or other on this topic published last year. *Any* *pen* will do.

In *(familiar)* style, stressed *some* means *(an) extraordinary* *etc*:
That's *some* *car* you have there.

More usually, these words are used with plural or mass nouns:
I've found *some glasses/wine* in the cupboard.
Did *any chairs/furniture* get broken?

**769**

**Group (C)**

Did you see \{ *many cars* \*much traffic* \} on the road?

We've had *more fine days/weather* this summer than last.
*Most food is* \} *expensive* these days.

Have we got *enough glasses/wine*?

There's only \{ *a few minutes* \*a little time* \} before the train leaves.

The president has \{ *few supporters* \*little support* \} in the army.

There were *fewer/less accidents* on the road this year than last year, but this doesn't mean there is *less need* for careful driving.

The countries with the *least population* often seem to be those with the *fewest problems*.
He hasn't been to work for *several days*.

**770**

**Group (D)**

Apart from being a numeral *(see 661)* and a pronoun *(see 776)*, *one* is used as an indefinite determiner in such contexts as:

*One day I’ll come and visit you* (= *at an indefinite time*).
*One politician* is just as bad as another.

**771**

**Group (E)**

*No problem is* \} *insoluble*.
*No problems are* \} *insoluble*.
He has almost *no money*.

**Pronouns which may take an *of*-construction**

**772**

These quantifiers are frequently followed by an *of*-phrase, in which *of* is normally followed by a pronoun or a definite noun phrase. However, the *of*-phrase may be omitted if the quantifier acts as a substitute for an earlier noun phrase *(see 394)*:

\{ *Both of them/the men* were wanted by the police. \}
\{ *The two men* looked suspicious, and in fact we later discovered that *both* were wanted by the police. \}

Compare Table 6 *(next page)* with the table for determiners *(Table 5)*.

**773**

Since the pronouns with the *of*-construction correspond closely to the determiners, we need give only a few examples:

*The children had eaten all of the pie/pears/fruit*.
*Both of his parents* are German.
Table 6
QUANTITY PRONOUNS WHICH MAY TAKE AN OF-CONSTRUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP (A)</th>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th>MASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all (of)</td>
<td>all (of)</td>
<td>all (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>each (of)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>half (of)</td>
<td>both (of)</td>
<td>half (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP (B)</td>
<td>some (of)</td>
<td>some (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>any (of)</td>
<td>any (of)</td>
<td>any (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>either (of)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP (C)</td>
<td></td>
<td>many (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>more (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>most (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>enough (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(a) few (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>fewer/less (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>fewest (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>several (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP (D)</td>
<td>one (of)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP (E)</td>
<td>none (of)</td>
<td>none (of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neither (of)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that every and no do not act as pronouns: instead, we use everyone and none.

(A) Would any of you like some more soup/peas?

(B) Yes, I'd love some.

I haven't read many of his poems.
much of his poetry.

We've sold most of the tickets/land, but we've kept enough for our own needs.

I've been to a few of his lectures, but understood little of what he said.

Several of the passengers were hurt and one (of them) was taken to hospital. Luckily, none was/were killed. (On concord, see 540.)

Other pronouns

774

Except for one, which merits separate discussion (see 776), the other quantifier pronouns are singular pronouns which have either personal or non-personal reference. They are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP (A)</th>
<th>Personal reference</th>
<th>Non-personal reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>everybody, everyone</td>
<td>everything</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP (B)</td>
<td>somebody, someone</td>
<td>something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>anybody, anyone</td>
<td>anything</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP (E)</td>
<td>nobody, no one</td>
<td>nothing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pronouns of personal reference have a genitive form (everybody's, etc).
Examples:

Everybody/everyone over eighteen now has a vote.
I’ve tried everything, but nothing works.
Somebody/someone told me you’ve been to America.
I’ve got something to tell you.
Has anybody/anyone got anything to say?
There was nobody/no one at the office.

One

One is a numeral, and also a singular count pronoun. As a pronoun, it has three uses:
(A) as a pronoun which may be followed by of (see 772). One so used can follow certain other quantifiers, notably every, each, and any:

Every one of the cups was broken.

With each and any, one is optional:

Each/any (one) of us could have made that mistake.

(B) as a pronoun which may substitute for an indefinite noun (see 395). In this use, one has the plural form ones:

I have several maps of the area. Which one/ones do you need?

(C) as an indefinite personal pronoun (= ‘people in general’, see 86). This use of one has a genitive form one’s and a reflexive form oneself:

One doesn’t need to justify oneself to one’s friends.

Questions (see GCE 7.55–71)

Questions are either direct:

‘Where were you last night?’ she asked.

or indirect:

She asked me where I was last night.

Indirect questions are always signalled by an interrogative word. Direct questions, on the other hand, need not contain an interrogative word, for example:

‘Are you going out again tonight?’ she asked.

On interrogative words, see 578–83. On indirect questions, see 267. The two most important kinds of questions are yes-no questions and wh-questions (see 245–68).

(A) Yes-No questions

These are called yes-no questions because the answer (which may be expressed or just implied) is yes or no. To make a statement into a yes-no question, simply put the operator (will, is, etc) before the subject. Yes-no questions usually have rising intonation (see 41).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>QUESTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They’ll will be coming.</td>
<td>Will they be coming? [1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She’s a nice girl.</td>
<td>Is she a nice girl? [3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She’s been working hard.</td>
<td>Has she been working hard? [4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His brothers like football.</td>
<td>Do his brothers like football? [5]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notice that in the questions [1], [2] and [4] the verb phrase is divided: the subject comes between the operator and the rest of the verb phrase. In [3], the whole verb phrase comes before the subject. Sentence [5] shows the 'dummy operator' do in a question. Do (see 674) has to be used here because there is no operator in the corresponding statement.

(B) Wh-questions

779
Wh-questions (unlike yes-no questions) normally have falling intonation.

(A) Where do you live?  
(B) (I live in) London.

(A) What's your name?  
(B) (My name is) Catherine.

780
Wh-questions begin with an interrogative like who, what, when, etc (see 578–83). This is how to form wh-questions:

a) Put the sentence element which contains the wh-word at the beginning of the sentence.

b) If the element containing the wh-word is object, complement, or adverbial, place the operator in front of the subject.

Wh-ELEMENT IS OBJECT:

John asked a question.  
What question did John ask?  

[6]

Wh-ELEMENT IS COMPLEMENT:

These animals are very clever.  
How clever are these animals?  

[7]

Wh-ELEMENT IS ADVERBIAL:

They'll leave tomorrow.  
When will they leave?  

[8]

The operator normally comes just after the wh-element. In [6], the do-construction has to be used, because the corresponding statement has no operator.

c) If the element containing the wh-word is the subject, the verb phrase remains the same as in the corresponding statement, and no do-construction is necessary (see 674–5):

Susan has been reading.  
Who's been reading this book?  

this book.

That man knows your brother.  
Which man knows your brother?

(On cases where the wh-element is a prepositional complement, see 741.)

(C) Tag questions

781
Tag questions are shortened yes-no questions added to a statement. They consist of operator plus pronoun, with or without a negative particle. The choice and tense of the operator depend on the preceding verb phrase, and the pronoun repeats or refers back to the subject of the statement:

The boat has left, hasn't it?

The boat left yesterday, didn't it?

He hasn't left, has he?

264 On tag questions, see further 250.
Reciprocal pronouns

782
We can bring together two sentences such as
John likes Mary.
and
Mary likes John.
into a reciprocal structure:
John and Mary like \{each other.
\{one another.

*Each other* and *one another* are reciprocal pronouns.

Where more than two are involved, *one another* is often preferred:
The four children were very fond of *one another.*
He put all the books on top of *one another.*
The reciprocal pronouns can be freely used in the genitive:
The students borrowed *each other’s* notes.

Relative clauses (see GCE 4.117–119, 13.5–15)

783
The term *relative clause* is used for various types of subclause which are
linked to part or all of the main clause by a back-pointing element (see 70–82),
usually a *relative pronoun* (but see 645–6 on nominal relative clauses). The
principal function of a relative clause is that of postmodifier in a noun phrase
(see 719), where the relative pronoun points back to the head of the noun phrase
(*the antecedent*).

784
The relative pronouns of English are *who, whom, whose, which, that,* and zero
(*ie* pronoun omitted). That is, we include in our list a pronoun which is not
pronounced, but which ‘exists’ in that it fills the position of subject, object, *etc* in the
clause. *Compare:*

The records *which* he owns are mostly classical.
(relative pronoun = *which*)

The records *he* owns are mostly classical.
(relative pronoun = zero)

Relative pronouns

785
The choice of relative pronoun depends on

(A) Whether the clause is *a restrictive* or *b non-restrictive* (see 99–100):

* a People *who/that live in towns* are deprived of life’s greatest bless-
ing—a healthy environment.

* b Many people, *who live in towns,* are deprived of life’s greatest bless-
ing—a healthy environment.

(B) Whether the head of the noun phrase is *a personal* or *b non-personal:*

* a The man *who was following us* seems to have disappeared.

* b The car *which was following us* seems to have disappeared.

(C) What the role of the pronoun is within the relative clause: *eg* whether it is
subject, object, *etc.* This determines the choice of *a subjective* or *b ob-
jective case:*

* a The girl *who* is going to marry Peter is an extremely attractive
brunette.

* b The girl (*whom*) Peter is going to marry is an extremely attractive
brunette.
In addition, we have a choice of two constructions when the relative pronoun acts as prepositional complement (see 739–43):

The girl (who/whom) Peter is engaged to . . .

The girl to whom Peter is engaged . . .

(see 794)

The construction in which the preposition comes at the end of the clause is less (formal) than that in which it precedes the pronoun. Apart from this construction, relative pronouns are always placed first in the clause.

Because of the front placing of the relative pronoun, the order of elements in a relative clause is often different from that of normal statements:

(The girl) who(m) Peter married . . .

but: Peter married the girl.

(O SV)

(SVO)

(The student) with whom I share a room . . .

but: I share a room with a student.

(ASVO)

(SVOA)

(He's not the fool) that he looks

but: He looks a fool.

(CSV)

(SVC)

But when the relative pronoun is subject, the normal order is retained:

(The girl) who marries Peter . . .

(SVO)

The uses of relative pronouns are classified in Table 7.

Table 7

RELATIVE PRONOUNS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESTRICTIVE AND NON-RESTRICTIVE</th>
<th>RESTRICTIVE ONLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>personal</td>
<td>non-personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subjective case</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who</td>
<td>* which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>objective case</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who(m)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genitive case</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whose</td>
<td>of which / whose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We deal now with three classes of relative pronouns: (A) the wh-pronouns, (B) that, and (C) zero.

(A) WH-PRONOUNS

The wh-series reflects the personal/non-personal gender of the antecedent:

PERSONAL

who, whom, whose

NON-PERSONAL

which, [whose, see 790]

There's a man outside who wants to see you.

I want a watch which is waterproof.

If a pronoun is in a genitive relation to a noun head, the pronoun can have the form whose:

The woman whose daughter you met is Mrs Brown.

(The woman is Mrs Brown; you met her daughter.)
The house whose roof was damaged has now been repaired.
(The house has now been repaired: its roof was damaged.) [2]

In examples like [2] where the antecedent is non-personal, there is some tendency

to avoid the use of whose by using the of-phrase:

The house the roof of which was damaged has now been repaired.

<awkwardly formal>

791

With a personal antecedent, the relative pronoun can show the distinction be-
tween who and whom, depending on its role as subject of the relative clause [3],
or as object [4] and [5], or as prepositional complement [6], [7] and [8]:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I know the girl} & : \\
\{ & who he met. \quad \text{<informal>} [4] \\
\{ & whom he met. \quad \text{<formal>} [5] \\
\{ & who he spoke to. \quad \text{<informal>} [6] \\
\{ & whom he spoke to. \quad \text{<more formal>} [7] \\
\{ & to whom he spoke. \quad \text{<most formal>} [8]
\end{align*}
\]

When the relative pronoun is object, as in [4] and [5], or when it is the com-
plement of an end-placed preposition, as in [6] and [7], there is some choice between

who and whom. Whom is preferred in <formal> English. Among the wh-pronouns

there is no choice when the pronoun is the subject (who), as in [3], or when it is

the complement of a preceding preposition (whom), as in [8].

(B) That

792

That is used with both personal and non-personal reference. However, it cannot

follow a preposition (see 794c), and is not usually used in non-restrictive relative

clauses (see 795).

(C) Zero

793

The zero relative pronoun is used like that except that it cannot be the subject of

a clause:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{OBJECT} & : \quad \text{The man} \{ \begin{align*}
\{ & \text{the policeman caught} \\
\{ & \text{that the policeman caught}
\end{align*} \} \text{ received ten} \\
\text{SUBJECT} & : \quad \text{The policeman} \{ \begin{align*}
\{ & \text{*caught him} \\
\{ & \text{that caught him}
\end{align*} \} \text{ received a reward.}
\end{align*}
\]

Restrictive relative clauses

794

All the relative pronouns can be used in restrictive relative clauses: who (whom,

whose), which and, particularly, that and the zero relative. We can now complete

the picture given so far of the possible choices among all the relative pronouns by

four sets of examples.

\[a\] The relative pronoun is the subject:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Have you met anybody} \{ \begin{align*}
\{ & \text{who} \\
\{ & \text{that}
\end{align*} \} \text{ has been to China?} \\
\text{There's still one thing} \{ \begin{align*}
\{ & \text{which} \\
\{ & \text{that}
\end{align*} \} \text{ is not explained.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[b\] The relative pronoun is the object:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Do you know the boy} \{ \begin{align*}
\{ & \text{we met?} \\
\{ & \text{that we met?} \\
\{ & \text{who we met?} \quad \text{<informal>} \\
\{ & \text{whom we met?} \quad \text{<formal>}
\end{align*} \} \text{ I've bought.} \\
\text{That's the house} \{ \begin{align*}
\{ & \text{that I've bought.} \\
\{ & \text{which I've bought.}
\end{align*} \}
\end{align*}
\]
c The relative pronoun is the complement of a preposition.

Do you know the boy

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{whom your daughter writes to?} & \quad \langle \text{more} \quad \langle \text{more} \\
\text{to whom your daughter writes?} & \quad \langle \text{formal} \rangle
\end{align*}
\]

This is the house

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{we wrote to you about.} & \quad \langle \text{informal} \rangle \\
\text{that we wrote to you about.} & \quad \langle \text{formal} \rangle \\
\text{which we wrote to you about.} & \quad \langle \text{formal} \rangle \\
\text{about which we wrote to you.} & \quad \langle \text{formal} \rangle
\end{align*}
\]

Non-restrictive relative clauses

The meaning of a non-restrictive relative clause is often very similar to that of a coordinated clause (with or without conjunction), as we indicate by paraphrases of the examples below. Only \textit{wh}-pronouns are usually used in non-restrictive clauses:

- Then he met Mary, \{who invited him to a party.
- \{and she invited him to a party.
- Here is John Smith \{, who(m) I mentioned the other day.
- \{; I mentioned him the other day.

(On intonation and punctuation here, see 411–13.)

Sentence relative clauses

This type of non-restrictive clause points back not to a noun, but to a whole clause or sentence (or even a sequence of sentences):

- He admires Mrs Brown, \{which surprises me.
- \{which I find strange.
- \{‘and it surprises me that he does’
- \{‘and I find it strange that he does’

These clauses have the function of sentence adverbials (see 479).

Sentences (see \textit{GCE} 7.1, 7.53, 11.1–2, 11.80–85)

Clauses and sentences

Sentences are units made up of one or more clauses (see 505). Sentences containing just one clause are called \textit{simple}, and sentences containing more than one clause are called \textit{complex}. There are two main ways of linking clauses together, \textit{i.e.} of forming complex sentences: \textit{coordination} and \textit{subordination}.

Two simple sentences, for example

\begin{itemize}
\item He heard an explosion.
\item He phoned the police.
\end{itemize}

may be joined into one sentence, either by coordinating the two clauses by \textit{and} or by making one clause into a main clause and the other into a subclause:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{COORDINATION}
\item He heard an explosion \textit{and} (he) phoned the police.
\item \textbf{SUBORDINATION}
\item When he heard an explosion, he phoned the police.
\end{itemize}

(For coordination, see 542–7; for subordination, see 826–34.)
Four kinds of sentence

A simple English sentence, *i.e.* a sentence consisting of only one clause, may be—grammatically—a statement, a question, a command, or an exclamation.

(A) **STATEMENTS** are sentences in which the subject is present and generally comes before the verb (*but see* 426):

I'll speak to the boss today.

(B) **QUESTIONS** are sentences which are marked in one or more of these ways:

a. The operator is placed immediately before the subject (*see* 778):

Will you speak to the boss today?

b. The sentence begins with an interrogative word (*see* 780):

Who will you speak to?

c. The sentence has rising intonation in *spoken* English (*see* 41, 249):

You'll speak to the boss today?

In *written* English, questions end with a question mark (*?*).

(C) **COMMANDS** are sentences with the verb in the imperative (*i.e.* the base form, *see* 624). Although they usually have no expressed subject, they sometimes take *you* (*see* 520):

(You) speak to the boss today.

Note that in *written* English, command sentences do not normally end with an exclamation mark, but with a full stop:

Come here.

(D) **EXCLAMATIONS** are sentences which begin with *what* or *how*, without inversion of subject and operator (*see* 568):

What a noise they are making!

In *written* English exclamations usually end with an exclamation mark (*!*).

Some-words and any-words (*see* GCE 4.127, 7.44–48)

803

*Some* and *any* as determiners (*see* 552–3) and pronouns (*see* 772) tend to occur in different grammatical contexts: *some* is the normal word to occur in positive statements, and *any* is the normal word to occur in *yes-no* questions and after negatives.

There are a number of pairs of terms which behave like *some* and *any* in this respect. Therefore we need to distinguish two classes of words, which we call *some-words* and *any-words*:

**Some-words are:**

some, someone, somebody, something, somewhere, sometime, sometimes, already, somewhat, somehow, too (adverb of addition).

**Any-words are:**

any, anyone, anybody, anything, anywhere, ever, yet, at all, either.

804

The contrast between *some-words* and *any-words* is illustrated in these examples of *some* and *any*:

Ann has bought some new material.  

(POSITIVE STATEMENT)
Ann hasn’t bought any new material. (AFTER NEGATIVES) [2]
Has Ann bought any new material? (QUESTIONS) [3]

Some can occur in [2] and [3], but these sentences would then require a special context (see 248).

Note
Any can be used with stress and with distributive meaning in positive statements eg Anyone can do that! (see 64), but we are not concerned with this use of any here.

805
In negative clauses, any-words follow not only not or n’t, but also other negative words such as nobody, no, scarcely, etc (see 629–34):

Nobody has ever given her any encouragement.

806
The following illustrate the contrasts between matching some- and any-words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>some-WORDS</th>
<th>any-WORDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSITIVE STATEMENTS</td>
<td>AFTER NEGATIVES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DETERMINER</td>
<td>They’ve had some lunch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRONOUN</td>
<td>He was rude to somebody.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLACE ADVERB</td>
<td>They’ve seen him somewhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME-WHEN ADVERB</td>
<td>I’ll see you again sometime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FREQUENCY ADVERB</td>
<td>He sometimes visits her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEGREE ADVERB</td>
<td>She was somewhat annoyed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are similar contrasts between somehow and in any way, already and yet, still and any more.

807
These are a few other contexts in which any-words typically occur:

(A) IN YES-NO INTERROGATIVE SUBCLASSES
I sometimes wonder whether examinations are any use to anyone.

(B) IN CONDITIONAL CLAUSES (see 211)
If there were anything wrong, he would certainly let us know.

(C) AFTER CERTAIN WORDS WITH NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS
a Verbs: deny, fail, forget, prevent, etc
He denies I ever told him.

b Adjectives: difficult, hard, reluctant, etc
It’s difficult for anyone to understand him.

c Prepositions: against, without, etc
He arrived without any of his belongings.

(D) IN COMPARISONS (see 523–8) after -er, more, less, as, too:
The climate here is wetter than anywhere else in the country.
It’s too late to blame anyone for the accident.
Spelling changes (see GCE 3.55–62, 4.62, 4.96, 5.73)

808
There are a number of changes in the spelling of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, which occur when certain endings are added to them. It will be convenient to deal with all such spelling changes here in one place. They involve three types of change: replacing, adding, and dropping letters.

Replacing letters
CHANGING y TO i(e)

809
In bases ending in a consonant + y
(A) y becomes ie in verbs before 3rd person singular present -s (see 620):
    they carry                  he carries
    they try                   he tries
(B) y becomes ie in nouns before plural -s (see 704):
    a spy                     two spies
    a lady                    several ladies
(C) y becomes i in adjectives before comparative -er or -est (see 523–5):
    early                     earliest
    earlier
(D) y becomes i in verbs before -ed (see 622):
    they carry                  they carried
    they try                   they tried
(E) y becomes i in adverbs before the -ly used to form adverbs from adjectives
    (see 480):
    easy                       easily
    happy                      happily

810
But y is kept in the following cases:

a in proper nouns: the Kennedys
b in a few words such as standbys, etc

and, of course, after a vowel: journeys, stays, gayer (except the u of -quy: soliloquy→soliloquies). In three verbs there is however a change from y to i also after a vowel:

    lay                        laid
    pay                        paid
    say                        said (Note here also a change of vowel sound: /sei/ → /sed/)

    y changes to i also in certain words in -ly:
    gay                        gaily
    day                        daily

CHANGING -ie TO -y

811
Before the -ing ending (see 621), -ie is changed to -y:

    they die                  they are dying
    they lie                  they are lying

Adding letters

ADDING e TO NOUNS ENDING IN SIBILANTS

812
Unless already spelled with a final mute e, bases ending in sibilants (ie /z/, /s/, /dʒ/, /tʃ/, /ʒ/, /ʃ/) receive an additional e before the -s ending
(A) in the plural of nouns:
  box   boxes
  church churches
  dish   dishes

(B) in the 3rd person singular present of verbs:
  they pass he passes
  they polish he polishes

813
Note: An additional -e is also added in two irregular verbs ending in -o:
  they do /du:/ he does /d3z/ (Note also the change of vowel sound)
  they go /gou/ he goes /gouz/

ADDING e TO NOUNS ENDING IN -o

814
The following ending in -o have the plural spelled -oes:
  echoes    noes
  embargoes potatoes
  goes      tomatoes
  heroes    torpedoes
  negroes   vetoes

815
Most nouns ending in -o can have either -oes or -os, for example:
  archipelagoes / archipelagos
  cargoes    / cargos

816
The plural is spelled only -os after a vowel (radios, studios, etc) and in abbreviations (hippos, kilos, photos, pianos, etc).

Doubling consonants

817
Final consonants are doubled when the preceding vowel is stressed and spelled with a single letter

(A) in adjectives and adverbs before -er and -est:
  big   bigger biggest
  hot   hotter hottest

(B) in verbs before -ing and -ed:
  drop  dropping dropped
  stop  stopping stopped
  occur occurring occurred
  permit permitting permitted
  prefer preferring preferred

Compare hoping/hoped (from hope) with hopping/hopped (from hop) and starring/stared (from star) with starring/starred (from star).

818
Note: There is no doubling when the vowel is unstressed or written with two letters:
  quiet quieter quietest
  great greater greatest
  enter /'ente/ entering entered
  visit /'vizit/ visiting visited
  dread dreading dreaded
In ⟨BrE⟩ /ˈl/ is doubled also when it is in an unstressed syllable:

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{′cruel} & \{\text{crueller} & \text{cruellest} & \langle \text{BrE} \rangle \\
\text{′travelling} & \{\text{travelling} & \text{travelled} & \langle \text{BrE} \rangle \\
\text{′travel} & \{\text{travelling} & \text{travelled} & \langle \text{AmE} \rangle \\
\end{array}
\]

**Dropping letters**

**DROPPING e**

**820**

If the base ends in silent e, the e is dropped

(A) in adjectives and adverbs before -er and -est:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Braver</th>
<th>Bravest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brave</td>
<td>braver</td>
<td>bravest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free</td>
<td>freer</td>
<td>freest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(B) in verbs before -ing and -ed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Created</th>
<th>Hoped</th>
<th>Shaved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create</td>
<td>creating</td>
<td>hoped</td>
<td>shaved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>hoping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shave</td>
<td>shaving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**821 Note:** Verbs ending in -ee, -ye, -oe and often -ge do not drop the -e before -ing (but they do drop it before -ed):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Agreeing</th>
<th>(Agreed)</th>
<th>Dyeing</th>
<th>(Dyed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>agreeing</td>
<td>(agreed)</td>
<td>dye</td>
<td>(dyed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singe</td>
<td>singeing</td>
<td>(singed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compare *dyeing* with *dying* (from *die*) and *singeing* /ˈsɪndʒɪŋ/ with *singing* /ˈsɪŋɪŋ/ (from *sing*).

**Subjects (see GCE 7.9, 7.13–18)**

**822**

a The subject of a clause is a noun phrase (see 651–3) or pronoun:

- Bill/He will be late for the meeting.

b The subject normally occurs before the verb in statements. In questions (see 777–81), the subject occurs immediately after the operator (see 672–5):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They've had some lunch.</td>
<td>Have they had any lunch?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm coming, too.</td>
<td>Mary is coming, too.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most typical function of a subject is to denote the actor: that is, the person, etc causing the happening denoted by the verb:

- John opened his eyes.
subject of the active sentence becomes the agent of the passive. The agent occurs in a by-phrase, which is however usually omitted (see 679):

\begin{itemize}
\item Everybody rejected the proposal.
\item The proposal was rejected (by everybody).
\end{itemize}

**Subjunctives** *(see GCE 3.16, 12.35, 12.37)*

823
On the whole, subjunctive verb forms are little used in modern English. We may distinguish three categories of the subjunctive:

(A) The **Mandative Subjunctive** in that-clauses after expressions like demand, require, insist, suggest, be necessary, obligatory, etc has only one verb form, the base (see 624). This means there is lack of the usual concord between subject and finite verb in the 3rd person singular present (\ldots he come \ldots), and that the present and past tenses (see 880) are indistinguishable. The use of this subjunctive occurs chiefly in \langle formal\rangle style, and especially in \langle AmE\rangle (see 7). In other contexts, that-clauses with should+infinitive (see 289-90) or to-infinitive are more common:

\begin{itemize}
\item It is necessary that every member inform himself of these rules. \langle formal\rangle
\item It is necessary that every member should inform himself of these rules.
\item It is necessary for every member to inform himself of these rules.
\end{itemize}

824

(B) The **Formulaic Subjunctive** also consists of the base, but is only used in certain set expressions:

\begin{itemize}
\item Come what may, \ldots
\item Suffice it to say that \ldots
\item Be that as it may \ldots
\end{itemize}

825

(C) The **were-subjunctive**, when were is used instead of the expected was, occurs in clauses expressing condition or contrast and in subclauses after verbs like wish (see 283–6). Was can also be used and is more common in \langle informal\rangle style:

\begin{itemize}
\item If she \{\textit{were} \} to do something like that, \ldots
\item He spoke to me as if I \{\textit{were} \} deaf.
\item I wish I \{\textit{were} \} dead.
\item \textit{but:} \{\textit{Were} \} I to yield to your demand \ldots (see 286-7)
\end{itemize}

**Subordination** *(see GCE Chapter 11)*

826
Two clauses in the same sentence may be related either by coordination (see 542–7) or by subordination. In the case of coordination, the two clauses are 'equal partners' in the same structure. But in subordination one clause, which we call a **Subclause**, is included in the other, which we call the **Main Clause**. A subclause can also have another subclause inside it, which means that it behaves as a **main clause** with respect to the other subclause. For example, the sentence *
know that you can do it if you try is made up of three clauses, each within the other:

![Diagram of sentence structure]

Subclauses can have various functions in their main clause. They may be subjects, objects, adverbials, prepositional complements, postmodifiers, etc (see 517).

A main clause is almost always a finite clause (see 514). A subclause, on the other hand, can be a finite, non-finite, or verbless clause:

**FINITE SUBCLAUSE**

After its owner had been forced to leave, the castle was allowed to fall into ruin.

**NON-FINITE SUBCLAUSE**

The castle, abandoned by its owner, was allowed to fall into ruin.

**VERBLESS SUBCLAUSE**

The castle, now empty, was allowed to fall into ruin.

All three types of clause (finite, non-finite, and verbless) may of course themselves have subclauses inside them. Here is a non-finite clause containing a finite subclause:

*Having left before the letter arrived, he was surprised to find his wife at the station.*

Here is a verbless clause containing a non-finite subclause:

*Never slow to take advantage of an opponent's weakness,*

Borg moved ahead confidently to win the fourth set 6–3.

**Signals of subordination**

A subclause is not usually capable of standing alone as the main clause of a sentence. This is because subclauses are usually marked as subclauses by some signal of subordination. The signal may be

a that, which may usually be omitted (see 639–40):

I hope (that) you'll like this place.

b a subordinating conjunction, for example if (see 208):

I'll be surprised if he can do it.

c a wh-word (see 578–83):

We asked him where he'd been all night.

d inversion (rather formal) (see 287):

Had I known, I wouldn't have come.

e lack of a finite verb (see 876):

I hope to see you tonight.
Apart from *that*-clauses with *that* omitted (including relative clauses, see 793) there is only one type of subclause that contains no expressed signal of subordination. This is a comment clause (see 522) which can be related to the main clause of a *that*-clause:

You’re right, *I suppose*. (= ‘I suppose (that) you’re right.’)

### Subordinating conjunctions

829

We can distinguish between simple, compound, and correlative conjunctions.

#### Simple subordinating conjunctions:

- after, (al)though, as, because, before, if, how(ever), like (familiar), once, since, that, till, unless, until, when(ever), where(ver), whereas, whereby, whereupon, while, whilst (esp BrE).

#### Compound subordinating conjunctions ending with *that*:

- in that, so that, in order that (in order to with infinitives), such that, except that, for all that, save that (elevated)

ending with *that* which may be omitted:

- but (that), now (that), providing (that), provided (that), supposing (that), considering (that), given (that), granting (that), granted (that), admitting (that), assuming (that), presuming (that), seeing (that), immediately (that)

ending with *as*:

- as far as, as long as, as soon as, so long as, in-so-far as, so far as, inasmuch as (very formal), according as, so as (+ to-infinitive)

ending with *than*:

- sooner than (+ non-finite clause), rather than (+ non-finite clause)

other compound subordinating conjunctions:

- as if, as though, in case

#### Correlative subordinating conjunctions (see 547):

(A) *if* . . . *then*, (al)though . . . yet/nevertheless, as . . . so

(B) *more/less-er* . . . than, as . . . as, so . . . as, so . . . *(that)* (with *that* omitted, so is (informal)), such . . . as (formal), such . . . *(that)*, no sooner . . . than

(C) *whether* . . . *or*

(D) *the* . . . *the*

The various uses of subordinating conjunctions are discussed in Part Three (see the index).

**Note**

Some subordinating conjunctions (*as, like, since, until, till, after, before, but*) also function as prepositions (see 744–5): *since the war (ended)*.

### The functions of subclauses

833

Subclauses may function grammatically as subject, object, complement, or adverbial in a main clause:

| SUBJECT | That we badly need new equipment is obvious. |
| DIRECT OBJECT | I know that she’s bright. |
| INDIRECT OBJECT | I gave whoever it was a drink. |
| SUBJECT COMPLEMENT | The point is that they’re leaving right away. |
| OBJECT COMPLEMENT | I can’t imagine John overcome with grief. |
| ADVERBIAL | When we meet, I’ll explain everything. |
In addition, they may function as:

POSTMODIFIER IN A NOUN
PHRASE

I like a friend who remains a friend.

COMPLEMENT OF A PREPO-
SITION

That depends on what is decided at the
meeting.

COMPLEMENT OF AN AD-
JECTIVE

The workers are ready to go on strike.

834

NOMINAL CLAUSES (see 637–50) are those which can function as subject, object, complement, or complement of a preposition (ie which have the same kinds of position in the sentence as noun phrases). ADVERBIAL CLAUSES take the position of adverbial in a main clause. On these and other types of subclause, see 517.

Verb patterns (see GCE 12.29–70)

835

The part of a clause following the verb phrase depends on the verb for its basic structure. For example, we can use the verb want with the following objects:

He wants

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a bicycle.} & \quad (\text{A NOUN PHRASE}) \\
\text{to see you.} & \quad (\text{A to-INFINITIVE}) \\
\text{the man to come.} & \quad (\text{A NOUN PHRASE + A to-INFINITIVE})
\end{align*}
\]

However, want cannot, for instance, have a that-clause (like the corresponding verb in many other languages):

*He wants that she comes.

836

We have distinguished six basic verb patterns in English (see 508):

[L] Linking verbs

[T] Verbs with one object

[V] Verbs with object + verb . . .

[D] Verbs with two objects

[X] Verbs with object and object complement

[I] Verbs without object or complement

Within each basic verb pattern, we can distinguish a varying number of sub-patterns, which are numbered [T1], [T2], etc.

In various senses, the same verb can sometimes occur in different basic verb patterns. For example find may be [T], [D], and [X]:

[T1] I found her (in the library).

[D1 (for)] I found her a new job.

[X (to be) 1] I found her (to be) an entertaining partner.

837

Although we can state the different verb patterns, it is not possible to list here all the verbs which can occur in each pattern. For this you will need to consult a dictionary, such as A Dictionary of Contemporary English (ed. by P. Proctor, Longman, 1978). We use the same system here as in that dictionary. Only those patterns which give learners the greatest difficulty will be exemplified more fully here. In the examples, optional adverbials are placed in brackets. The patterns are given in the active, but, where passives (see 676–82) are common, this is indicated by one passive example in each pattern. Notice, however, that where a passive example is given, this does not necessarily mean

1 We thank the publishers and the editor of DOCE for permission to use and adapt this system of verb patterns. For a chart explaining the verb codings see Table 8 on page 288.
that all verbs in that pattern can have a passive. For example, in Pattern [V3]:

They \{\text{allowed} \text{\{wanted}}\} us to stay another week.

Only the first of these sentences can be changed into the passive:

We were allowed to stay another week.

\textbf{but not:} *We were wanted to stay another week.

\textbf{Linking verbs: [L]}

838
In this pattern, the verb is a linking verb (also called a copula, \textit{see} 510). There are two groups of linking verbs: CURRENT LINKING VERBS and RESULTING LINKING VERBS.

Current linking verbs, such as \textit{look} and \textit{feel}, indicate a state. Other current linking verbs are:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{appear} (happy)
\item \textit{lie} (scattered)
\item \textit{remain} (uncertain, a bachelor)
\item \textit{seem} (restless, an efficient secretary)
\item \textit{stay} (young)
\item \textit{smell} (sweet)
\item \textit{sound} (surprised)
\item \textit{taste} (bitter)
\end{itemize}

Resulting linking verbs, such as \textit{become} and \textit{get}, indicate that the role of the verb complement is a result of the event or process described in the verb:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{grow} (tired)
\item \textit{fall} (sick)
\item \textit{run} (wild)
\item \textit{turn} (sour, teetotaller)
\end{itemize}

We can distinguish the following patterns with linking verbs.

839

[L1] The complement is a noun phrase (\textit{see} 651-3) or nominal clause (\textit{see} 637-50):

This \textit{is} a really good book.
The answer \textit{is} that we don’t want to stay in.
He \textit{became} a beggar.

840

[L (to be) 1] \textit{To be} can occur between the linking verb and the complement, but this \textit{to be} is not necessary:

She \textit{seems} (to be) a sweet girl.
He \textit{proved} (to be) a fool.

841

[L7] The complement is an adjective (which may have the form of a participle):

He \textit{became} very sick (on board their yacht).
Your garden \textit{looks} awfully nice.
She \textit{sounded} rather surprised (on the phone).
Just \textit{stay} calm.

842

[L: (to be) 7] \textit{To be} can occur between the linking and the complement, but this \textit{to be} is not necessary:

The task \textit{proved} (to be) impossible.
He \textit{seems} (to be) tired.

843

[L9] The verb is followed by an adverbial:

John \textit{is} at school (between 9 and 4).
Their wedding will be in late June.
The road leads there, through the forest, etc.
He leaned out of the window, down, etc.

The verb may have an adverbial particle to complete or intensify its meaning (down, up, etc):
He landed (up) in jail. <informal>
She lay (down) on the bed.

In the case of lie the word down may occur as the only adverbial, whereas with land, up must be accompanied by another adverbial: *He landed up.

**Verbs with one object (monotransitive verbs): [T]**

**844**

[T1] The object is a noun phrase:
She cut the cake (with a knife).
He boiled the water (in the pan).

The verb may be a phrasal verb (see 696), ie verb + adverbial particle + object. When the object of these verbs is a noun, it may be placed either before or after the adverbial particle. If it is a pronoun, it may only be placed before the particle:
They blew up the bridge.
They blew the bridge up.

**PASSIVE**
The bridge (It) was blown up.

The verb may have an adverbial particle to complete or intensify its meaning (out, up, etc):
= {He cleaned the room (out).
   He cleaned (out) the room.
= {Eat (up) your dinner.
   Eat your dinner (up).

**PASSIVE**
The room was cleaned (out).

The verb may be a prepositional verb (see 699), ie verb + preposition + object:
I bumped into George the other day (= 'met'). <informal>
He came across an interesting letter to his grandfather (= 'discovered').

They came by these facts only yesterday (= 'acquired').

**PASSIVE**
These facts were come by only yesterday.

The verb may be a phrasal-prepositional verb (see 701), ie verb + adverbial particle + preposition + object:
They should do away with these prejudices (= 'abolish, get rid of').

**PASSIVE**
These prejudices should be done away with.

**845**

[T2] These verbs are used with a bare infinitive (without to):
Can I help clean the windows?
Don't you dare speak to me like that!

This behaviour is rare for main verbs, although it is the usual case with the modal auxiliaries (see 501). Help and dare also belong to [T3].
[T3] The object is a to-infinitive:

We agreed to stay over night.
They decided to go home at once.
You deserve to win this time.
I expect to be back by noon.
She has promised to write every week.

[T4] The verb is followed by an -ing form:

We all enjoyed seeing them again.
Why have you stopped doing your exercises?

Other [T4] verbs include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acknowledge</td>
<td>dislike</td>
<td>resent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoid</td>
<td>fancy</td>
<td>resist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consider</td>
<td>finish</td>
<td>risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deny</td>
<td>miss</td>
<td>cannot stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>detest</td>
<td>postpone</td>
<td>suggest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The verb may have an adverbial particle before the -ing form to complete or intensify its meaning:

She kept (on) working.

[T5a] The verb has a that-clause (where that may be omitted):

They agree (that) she is efficient.
We discovered (that) we had lost our keys.

Passive with introductory it (see 584–9):
It was agreed that she is efficient.

Other [T5a] verbs include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>accept</td>
<td>doubt</td>
<td>indicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admit</td>
<td>feel</td>
<td>remark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>claim</td>
<td>forget</td>
<td>understand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[T5b] The that-clause can be replaced by so (in a positive clause) or not (in a negative clause):

I believe (suppose) so.
I hope (think) not.

[T5c] The verb has a that-clause with putative should (see 289–90) or a subjunctive verb (see 823–4). That is rarely omitted with should or with the subjunctive:

I request that she (should) go alone.
He suggested that John (should) leave at once.

Other [T5c] verbs include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ask</td>
<td>insist</td>
<td>recommend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>command</td>
<td>order</td>
<td>require</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demand</td>
<td>propose</td>
<td>urge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[T6a] The verb has a finite clause introduced by a wh-word (see 578–83):

how, why, where, who, whether (or sometimes if) etc:

He asked {if (whether) they were coming.

Other [T6a] verbs include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>decide</td>
<td>doubt</td>
<td>guess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discuss</td>
<td>forget</td>
<td>wonder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and, with the verb typically in the negative,

\[ \text{know} \quad \text{notice} \quad \text{say} \]

852

[T6b] The verb has a non-finite clause introduced by a wh-word:

I don’t know how to address this letter.
She forgot where to look.

\textbf{Verb + object + verb: [V]}

These transitive verbs have an object which is followed by another verb.

853

[V2] Verb + object + infinitive without to:

Will you help me write the invitations?
Please let her stay!
You made me change my mind.

Note that the to-infinitive is used in the passive:

I was made to change my mind.
In this pattern, let is not used in the passive.

854

[V3] Verb + object + to-infinitive:

He allowed the neighbours to use his car.
They asked us not to be late for the train.
What caused them to revise their decision? (informal)
What got them to change their minds? (informal)
They advised us to stay another week.

\textbf{Passive}

We were asked not to be late for the train.

Other [V3] verbs include:

\begin{align*}
\text{force} & \quad \text{order} & \quad \text{teach} \\
\text{help} & \quad \text{permit} & \quad \text{tell} \\
\text{intend} & \quad \text{require} & \quad \text{urge}
\end{align*}

\textbf{Note:} Want, like, etc as in He wants us to help are better classed under [T3] (see 647–8, 846).

855

[V4] Verb + object + -ing form:

And please don’t keep us waiting!
I don’t like him being rude to you.
We saw her crossing the lawn.

856

[V8] Verb + object + ed-form:

I must get my shoes mended.
He had the house rebuilt.

\textbf{Verbs with two objects (ditransitive verbs): [D]}

857

[D1 (to)] The verb has an indirect object + a direct object. This construction can be replaced by a direct object + to + noun phrase:

\[ \{ \text{He gave George the money.} \} \]
\[ \{ \text{He gave the money to George.} \} \]

\textbf{Passive}

\[ \{ \text{George was given the money.} \} \]
\[ \{ \text{The money was given (to) George.} \} \]

Other [D1 (to)] verbs include:

\begin{align*}
\text{bring} & \quad \text{hand} & \quad \text{owe} \\
\text{grant} & \quad \text{offer} & \quad \text{promise}
\end{align*}
read  show  teach
send  take  write

858
[D1 (for)] The verb has an indirect object + a direct object. This construction can be replaced by a direct object + for + noun phrase:

= \{He bought his wife a gold watch.
He bought a gold watch for his wife.

Other [D1 (for)] verbs include:
cook  leave  peel
cut  make  save
got  order  spare

859
[D1a] The verb has two objects which cannot be replaced by prepositional constructions with to or for. Each object can appear alone in [T1]:
He asked me some awkward questions.
He struck him a heavy blow.

860
[D1b] With these verbs, only the second object can appear alone. There is no corresponding passive:
The coat cost (George) 30 pounds.

861
[D5a] The verb has an object + a that-clause (see 639–40), where that is often omitted:
He told her (that) he would be back early.

**PASSIVE**
She was told that he would be back early.

Other [D5a] verbs include:
assure  inform  remind
convince  persuade  warn

862
[D5b] So can be put in the place of the that-clause as substitute:
I told you so (that he would come).

863
[D6a] The verb has an object + a finite wh-clause (see 641–3).
He asked us who she was.
They didn’t tell us where he had gone.

**PASSIVE**
We were asked who she was.

864
[D6b] The wh-word is followed by a to-infinitive:
I told her how to do it.
I showed him where to park.

**Verbs with object and object complement (complex-transitive verbs): [X]**

865
[X1] The complement is a noun phrase:
The parents named the baby Susan.
They voted him Sportsman of the Year.

**PASSIVE**
He was voted Sportsman of the Year.

After verbs such as name and vote, the complement has no article when the office is unique (see 496). Other [X1] verbs are:
appoint  christen  make
call  elect
866
[X (to be) 1] To be may be inserted before a noun phrase complement:
They considered him (to be) the best player on the team.
He found her (to be) a very efficient secretary.

PASSIVE
He was considered (to be) the best player on the team.

Other [X (to be) 1] verbs include:
- appoint
- pronounce
- think
- imagine
- suppose
- vote

867
[X7] The complement is an adjective:
He painted the door blue.
She served the coffee black.

PASSIVE
The door was painted blue.

Other [X7] verbs include:
- keep
- make
- leave
- wash

868
[X (to be) 7] To be may be inserted before an adjective complement:
They believed him (to be) innocent.
Many students thought the exam (to be) rather unfair.

PASSIVE
He was believed (to be) innocent.
Other [X (to be) 7] verbs include:
- feel
- know
- imagine
- suppose

869
[X9] The verb has an adverbial following the object:
Put your coat in the cupboard.
(*Put your coat)
She showed me to the door / out etc.

Verbs without object or complement (intransitive verbs): [1]

870
[I0]
He paused.
The water boiled (in the saucepan).
The verb may be a phrasal verb without an object:
The bridge blew up (= ‘exploded’).
Don’t ever give up (= ‘surrender’).
There is no object but an object is understood:
John smokes. (understood object = cigars, cigarettes, etc)

871
[I3] The verb is used with a to + infinitive:
He lived to be ninety.

872
[I4] The verb is followed by an -ing form:
He went shopping.
She came running.

Verb phrases (see GCE 3.10–15, 3.23–42)

873
Verb phrases consist either of a main verb (see 617):
She writes several letters every day.
or of one or more auxiliary verbs together with a main verb. As the name implies, auxiliary verbs 'help' the main verb to make up verb phrases:

She is writing a long letter home. [2]
She has been writing letters all morning. [3]
Those letters might never have been written, if you hadn't reminded her. [4]

874

There are two types of auxiliaries: primary auxiliary verbs and modal auxiliary verbs. The primary auxiliary verbs are do, have, and be.

Do helps to form the do-construction (see 674–5):
She didn't write many letters.

Have helps to form the perfective aspect (see 878):
She has written only one letter.

Be helps to form the progressive aspect, as in [2], and the passive, as in

The letters were written in two hours.

The modal auxiliaries help to express a variety of meanings (see 129, 292–301, 335–44), for example future time and ability, as in

The letter will reach you tomorrow.
She cannot spell very well.

Here is a table showing the different types of verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAIN VERBS (see 617–26)</th>
<th>write, walk, frighten, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUXILIARY VERBS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary (see 498–500)</td>
<td>do, have, be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modal (see 501–3)</td>
<td>can, may, shall, will, could, might, should, would, used to, must, ought to, need, dare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finite and non-finite verb phrases

875

There are two kinds of verb phrase: finite and non-finite. Finite verb phrases are distinguished by containing a finite verb as their first (or only) word. The finite verb is the element of the verb phrase which has present or past tense:

FINITE VERB PHRASE

He studies/studied English.  

NON-FINITE VERB PHRASE

Studying English is useful.  
It is useful to have studied English.

876

Finite verb phrases occur as the verb element of main clauses (see 826). There is usually also person and number concord between the subject and the finite verb. Concord is particularly clear with be (see 500, 541):

I am / you are / he is here.

With most finite main verbs, there is no concord contrast except between the 3rd person singular present and all other persons:

He reads (They read) the paper every morning.

Modal auxiliaries count as finite verbs, although they have no concord with the subject:

I / you / he / they can play the piano.

877

The non-finite forms of the verb are the infinitive (to call), the -ing participle
(calling), and the -ed participle (called). Non-finite verb phrases consist of one or more such items. Compare:

**FINITE VERB PHRASES**

- He smokes heavily.
- He is working hard.
- After he had left the office, he went home by car.

**NON-FINITE VERB PHRASES**

- To smoke like that must be dangerous.
- I found him working hard.
- After having left the office, he went home by car.

**Combinations of verbs**

878

When a verb phrase consists of more than one verb, there are certain rules for how they can be combined. We have four basic verb combinations:

(A) **MODAL**, a modal auxiliary followed by a verb in the infinitive:

  He can type quite well.

(B) **PERFECTIVE**, a form of *have* followed by a verb in the past participle form:

  He had typed several letters.

(C) **PROGRESSIVE**, a form of *be* followed by a verb in the *-ing* form:

  He was typing when the telephone rang.

(D) **PASSIVE**, a form of *be* followed by a verb in the past participle form:

  Several letters were being typed by him.

879

These four basic combinations may also combine with each other to make up longer strings of verbs in one single verb phrase. The order is then alphabetical:

- (A)+(B)+(C)+(D), for example:

  - (A)+(B): He may have typed the letter himself.
  - (A)+(C): He may be typing at the moment.
  - (A)+(D): The letters may be typed by Mrs Anderson.
  - (B)+(C): He has been typing all morning.
  - (B)+(D): The letters have been typed by Ann.
  - (C)+(D): The letters are being typed, so please wait a moment.
  - (A)+(B)+(C): He must have been typing the letters himself.
  - (A)+(B)+(D): The letters must have been typed by the secretary.

As we can see, the verbs in the middle of the phrase serve both as the second part of the previous combination and as the first part of the following combination:

```
  must     have      been     typing
A: Modal + Infinitive + Past participle

  B: Have +               + -ing form

  C: Be                   +
```

**Tense and aspect**

880

By **tense** we understand the correspondence between the form of the verb and our concept of time (past, present, or future). Aspect concerns the manner in which a verbal action is experienced or regarded (for example as complete or in progress).

285
English has two simple tenses: the PRESENT TENSE (see 106-11) and the PAST TENSE (see 112-14).

THE PRESENT TENSE
Today Bill is in his office.
THE PAST TENSE
Yesterday Bill was at a conference.

881
English also has two marked aspects: the PROGRESSIVE ASPECT (see 116, 122) and the PERFECTIVE ASPECT (see 115-19).

THE PROGRESSIVE ASPECT
Bill is/was just writing a letter home.
THE PERFECTIVE ASPECT
Bill has/had written five letters.

882
The present and past tenses can form combinations with the progressive and perfective aspects (the letters in [square brackets] denote the basic combinations, see 879).

PRESENT TIME
THE SIMPLE PRESENT
THE PRESENT
PROGRESSIVE [C]

THE SIMPLE PAST
THE PAST
PROGRESSIVE [C]

THE PRESENT PERFECT
PERFECT [B]

PAST TIME
THE PRESENT PERFECT
PROGRESSIVE [B+C]

THE PAST PERFECT
PROGRESSIVE [B+C]

He always writes long letters.
He is writing one now to his wife.
He also wrote to her yesterday.
He was writing a letter when somebody came in.
He has written several letters to her.
He has been writing letters all morning.
He had written five letters by lunch-time.
He had been writing letters all morning and felt tired.

These are the active tenses and aspects. The PASSIVE (see 676-82) is formed by adding combination type [D], for example:

THE PASSIVE SIMPLE PRESENT [D]
Nowadays long letters are rarely written by hand.

THE PASSIVE PRESENT
PROGRESSIVE [C+D]
The letter is just being written.

There is no future tense in English corresponding to the time/tense relation for present and past (but see 128-37).

Contrasts in the verb phrase
883
In addition to the contrasts already mentioned of a tense, b aspect, and c the active-passive relation, there are other constructions in which the verb phrase plays an important part. For these constructions, the first auxiliary of the verb phrase has a special role as OPERATOR (see 672-5).

d Yes-no questions (see 778) requiring movement of the subject involve the use of an auxiliary as operator:

John sang.
Did John sing?

e Negation with not (see 629-31) makes a similar use of operators:

John sang.
John didn’t sing.

f Emphasis (see 272, 313) is frequently carried by the operator:

John did sing!

g Imperatives (see 520-1):

Do be careful.
Word-classes (see GCE 2.12–16)

We distinguish between minor and major word-classes.

(A) Minor word-classes

**AUXILIARY VERBS**  
*can, should, used to, etc* (see 497–503)

**DETERMINERS**  
*the, a(n), this, every, such, etc* (see 550–67)

**PRONOUNS**  
*he, they, anybody, one, which, etc* (see 747–9)

**PREPOSITIONS**  
*of, at, without, in spite of, etc* (see 744–5)

**CONJUNCTIONS**  
*and, that, when, although, etc* (see 542–7, 829–32)

**INTERJECTIONS**  
*oh, ah, ugh, phew, etc* (see 309)

(B) Major word-classes

**MAIN VERBS**  
*search, get, say, do, etc* (see 617–26)

**NOUNS**  
*John, room, belief, etc* (see 45–56)

**ADJECTIVES**  
*happy, steady, new, large, round, etc* (see 456–63)

**ADVERBS**  
*steadily, completely, really, very, etc* (see 480–8)

It is quite common in English for words belonging to different word-classes to have the same written or spoken form. *Many* is both a determiner and pronoun; *love* is both a verb and a noun; *since* is both a conjunction and a preposition, etc.

885

Members of the minor word-classes are also called closed-system items. That is, the sets of items are closed in the sense that they cannot normally be extended by creating new members. The members in a closed system can be listed.

886

The major word-classes are sometimes called open classes. Unlike minor word-classes, major word-classes are ‘open’ in the sense that they can be indefinitely extended. No one could, for example, make a complete inventory of all the nouns in contemporary English, because new nouns are continually being formed (*miniskirt, minicomputer, minimovie, minirecession, etc*). On the other hand, determiners, pronouns, or conjunctions form a fixed class of words which changes relatively little from one period of the language to another.
Table 8

THE MEANING OF THE NUMBERS USED IN VERB PATTERNS AFTER THE LETTERS L, T, V, D, X, AND I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>L Linking</th>
<th>T Transitive (+ Object)</th>
<th>V (Object + Verb)</th>
<th>D Ditransitive (+ Object + Object)</th>
<th>X Complex Transitive (+ Object + Complement)</th>
<th>I Intransitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>I0 VERB alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 + NOUN or + NOUN or + NOUN</td>
<td>L1 VERB + NOUN or VERB + (to be) NOUN</td>
<td>T1 VERB + NOUN</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>D1 VERB + NOUN + NOUN or VERB + NOUN or VERB + NOUN + (to be) NOUN</td>
<td>X1 VERB + NOUN or VERB + NOUN or VERB + NOUN + (to be) NOUN</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 + BARE INFINITIVE</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>T2 VERB + BARE INFINITIVE</td>
<td>V2 VERB + OBJECT + BARE INFINITIVE</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 + to-INFinitive</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>T3 VERB + to-INFinitive</td>
<td>V3 VERB + OBJECT + to-INFinitive</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>I3 VERB + to-INFinitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 + ing-FORM</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>T4 VERB + -ing-FORM</td>
<td>V4 VERB + OBJECT + -ing-FORM</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>I4 VERB + -ing-FORM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 + that-CLAUSE</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>T5 VERB + that-CLAUSE</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 + wh-WORD</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>T6 VERB + wh-WORD</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 + ADJECTIVE</td>
<td>L7 VERB + ADJECTIVE or VERB + (to be) ADJECTIVE</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>X7 VERB + NOUN + ADJECTIVE or VERB + NOUN + (to be) ADJECTIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 + ed-FORM</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 + ADVERBIAL</td>
<td>L9 VERB + NECESSARY ADVERBIAL</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>X9 VERB + OBJECT + NECESSARY ADVERBIAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Index

References are to section numbers

Grammatical terms are entered in **small capitals** (eg abstract nouns). Other subjects and notions appear in ordinary type (eg ability). Individual words treated in the Grammar are printed in *italics* (eg able).

*a(n) 69, 485, 492-493, 555, 560, 663; = per 157

a bit, see 'bit'
a little, see 'little'
a lot, see 'lot'
ability 296
able, be able to 296
about 180, 190, 744;
  describing emotions
  321; subject matter 243;
  with adjective 453; be
  about to 135-136
above 176-177, 179, 188,
  487-488, 744
absolute 315
absolutely 219-221, 224
Abstractions 54-56
**abstract nouns 14,**
  54-56, 95, 451
abstract place meaning 188
abstract quality 466
absurd, the absurd 466
accept 848
according as 831
according to 745
accordingly 207
accusative, see
  'objective (case)'
ache 125
acknowledge 847
acre 51
across 164-165, 182-183,
  185, 189
**active-passive relation**
  509, 676-682
activity in progress 122
**activity verbs 123**
actor 197-198
actually 479
adding 370
adding letters 812-816
addition 238, 384
**adjective 452-467, 884**
  as head 464-467
  as postmodifier
  459, 719, 730
  as premodifier 732
  complement 452-455,
  458, 530, 840
  coordination 544
  of adverb 461-463,
  516
  of participle 460
  patterns 452-455
adjunct, see 'sentence
  adverbial'
administrative, (the) 47,
  78
admittedly 479
admitting (that) 831
adore 124
adverb 156, 193, 214,
  461-463, 468-488, 525,
  696-698, 884
  as complement of a
  preposition 488
  as modifier of an
  adjective 482
  as modifier of an
  adverb 483
as modifier of a
determiner 485
as modifier of a	noun 487
as modifier of a
  noun phrase 486
as modifier of a
  numeral 485
as modifier of a
  prepositional
  phrase 484
as postmodifier 719,
  729
adverb of adjective
  461-463, 516
adverbial 119, 421,
  468-479, 506-507, 743
attributive
adverbial 457
clauses 132, 517
coordination 544
in relation to past
  and perfect tense
  119
link 375-385
of degree 217-226,
  477
of duration 151-156,
  475
of frequency
  157-160, 476
of manner 193-194,
  471
of place 161-191,
  431, 472
ADVERBIAL [continued]
of time—when 140–150, 474
positions 470–479
advice 56, 350
advise 350, 352, 854
affirmation 272, 274, 277
afraid 323, 458
after adverb 145, 148, 488; conjunction 132, 145, 150, 379, 830;
preposition 145, 744
afterwards 148–149, 488
again 149
against 97
agent 677–679
ages, for 156
age 119, 148
agree 844, 846
agreement 278–282
(= concord), 532–541
aim 338
ain’t 500
alarm calls 260
alarming 454
all adverb 187;
determiner 60–62, 152, 559, 766–767;
pronoun 57, 67–68, 772–773;
substitute 394
all but 477
all over 187
all right 340, 361
all the same 214
all through 187
allow 340, 352, 854
almost 220
along 164, 181, 183, 488, 744
along with 745
already 145–146, 211, 248, 806
also 238, 242, 370, 384
alternative conditions 216
alternatives 246–247, 385
although 212, 376, 830, 832
altogether 220–221, 372
always 68, 115, 119, 156–157, 160, 211, 248, 476
amazing(ly) 323, 332
ambiguity 101
3–7, 29
amid 180
among 180, 188
amount 567
amount words 57–68, 446
and 184, 375, 386, 542
anger 55–56
animals 82–83 (gender), 95 (genitive)
animate, see ‘animals’, ‘human nouns’, ‘person’
another 565
answer 726
answers 245–258
antecedent 783
any 64, 158, 552–553; see
also ‘any-words’
any-words 61–68, 211, 270, 540, 634, 749, 772–775, 803–807
any more 145
anybody, anyone 393; see
also ‘any-words’
anyplace 66
anything, see ‘any-words’
anyway 216, 371
anywhere 66, 162, 803, 806
apart from 239
apologies 361
apparently 305
appear 124, 305, 589, 838
appearance 305–306
applause 54, 56
appoint 864, 866
appointment 489–491
appositive clause 719, 725–727
appropriate 454
approval 330
area 166–169
army 47
around 180, 182, 488, 744
arrangement 131
arrive 169
articles 69–78, 492–496, 552–553, 555
as 830; comparison 194, 232; contrast 213;
proportion 237; reason 118, 204–205, 409; role
227; time 132
as ... as 230, 236, 832
as far as 831
as (for) 693, 745
as if 194, 285, 305, 831
as long as 132, 831
as ... so 237, 832
as soon as 132, 150, 831
as though 194, 285
as well (as) 238, 384
ask 352, 401, 403, 850–851, 854, 859, 863
aspect 103–139, 880–882
assume 132, 305
assuming (that) 831
assumption 305–306
assure 861
astonishing 332
at 744, 746; emotion 321, 453; place 163, 171, 173–174; role 227;
time 119, 141, 143, 147
at-type prepositions 163, 171–174
at all 68, 225, 317, 803
attitudes to truth 302–306
attributive adjectives 457
audience 47, 536
auxiliary verbs 497–503.
672, 874–875, 885
avoid 847
awake 609
away (from) 163, 181, 191, 745
awfully 315
baby 83
back-pointing use of the 70, this/that 88–90
backward(s) 190
bad 467, 524
badly 226
bar 50, 239
bare infinitive 437, 515
barely 225, 633
base form 618–619, 624
basic, verb patterns 508, 835–836
be commands 520; forms 500; main verb 399, 432; operator 672;
passive 680; progressive 126; with complement 496
be able to 296
be about to 135–136
be certain 589
be going to 130–131, 136
338
American English <AmE>
far 191, 217, 524–525
farewells 358
farther, farthest 524–525
favour 847
feed 599
feel 124–126, 458, 510, 600, 847, 863–864
feelings 54
feeling, verb of 124
female person 82
FEMININE, see 'GENDER', 'female person'
few, a few, fewer, fewest 58–60, 67–68, 394, 432, 526, 566, 633, 766, 769, 773–774
fight 602
finally 370
find 458, 603, 858, 866
finish 847
FINITE CLAUSE 468, 513–514, 827
FINITE VERB PHRASE 875–876
first(l)y 149, 370, 565
FIRST PERSON PRONOUN 85, 392
fish 709
fit 124
flying 601
flock 47
fly 616
FOCUS OF INFORMATION 414–416, 423–424
fond 458
foot 51, 191, 707, 710
for 744; cause 200;
contrast 214; duration 151–153, 156;
INDIRECT OBJECT 671;
person affected 322, 455; reason 206;
standard 227, 234;
subject 648, 724;
support 97
for (all) 214
for all that 831
for ever 156
for example (instance) 373, 491
forbid 354
force 854
FOREIGN PLURAL 712–718
forget 124, 616, 848, 851–852
<formal English> 10–13, 25
formerly 149, 457
FORMULAIIC SUBJUNCTIVE 824
fortunate(ly) 323, 454, 479
forward(s) 190, 328
FURTHER-POINTING the 71,
is(what) 88–90
fractions 561, 666
freeze 609
frequency 157–160, 476, 478, 560
frequently 68, 157, 476
friendly communications 357–363
from 98, 163, 172, 185, 188, 199, 744
from . . . through (to) 153
front, see 'in front of'
FRONTED TOPIC 426–429
FRONTING with so 433
FRONT-POSITION 470
fulfilment of the present 130
furious 321
furniture 49
further, furthest 524–525, 565
furthermore 370–371
future 128–139; future in the past, see 'would', future perfect, see 'will', see also 'will, shall, be going to'
gallon 51
games 656
gang 47
GENDER 82–84, 569, 683
general, attorney general 459
general meaning 61–66, 76–78
'GENERAL PURPOSE' LINKS 386–389
generalisation 372
generally 157, 372, 476
GENERIC REFERENCE 74–78, 627–628
GENERIC USE
of ADJECTIVES 78, 464–467, 627–628
of GROUP NOUNS 78
of the 74–75
GENITIVE 93–96, 504, 552, 570–577, 650, 751
GENITIVE WITH ELLIPSIS 576
geographical and national varieties 3–7
geographical names 758, 762
German 627–628
GERUND, see 'ing-clause'
get 510, 604, 680, 852, 854
GET-PASSIVE 680
give 451, 616, 857
GIVEN INFORMATION 417–419
GIVEN TOPIC 429
given (that) 831
glasses 658
go 616, 620
going to 130–131, 136, 338
good 315, 462, 524
good wishes 362
goose 707
got(ten) 4, 604
government 47, 78, 535
grace 55
GRADABLE WORDS 218–219
grand 315
grant 857
granted, granting (that) 831
great 315
greetings 358, 362
grand 603
GROUP GENITIVE 575
GROUP NOUNS 47, 78, 95, 393, 536
group of objects 46
grow 611, 838, 842
guess 850
habit 108, 110, 120, 300
had (I known. . .) 287
had better 343–344, 350, 353, 499
had to 299, 341
hair 49
half 48, 58, 394, 559, 706, 766–771
hand 856
hang 851
hard 226, 457, 461
hardly 68, 157, 225, 432, 461, 470, 477, 485, 633
harm 55
hate 124, 324
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>leap</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>learn</td>
<td>597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>least</td>
<td>58, 231, 772</td>
<td>leave</td>
<td>600, 858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lend</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>less</td>
<td>comparison 229, 236, 525–526, 528;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>determiner 566;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>quantifier 58, 60, 766, 773–774;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>subordination 832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>let</td>
<td>19, 337, 340, 350, 521, 596, 853</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>letters</td>
<td>10, 360</td>
<td>levels</td>
<td>usage 20–21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>libraries</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>life</td>
<td>706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lie</td>
<td>463, 616, 838</td>
<td>light</td>
<td>607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like</td>
<td>conjunction 830;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>preposition 193–194, 693; verb 124, 324, 331, 337, 363;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>likelihood 292–301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>likely 301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>liking 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>limit</td>
<td>words 218, 220–221, 224</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>duration 109, 116, 122</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>line</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>linking</td>
<td>constructions 375–385;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>signals</td>
<td>367–374, 413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>verb</td>
<td>508, 510, 836, 838–843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>listing</td>
<td>literally</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keep</td>
<td>462, 600, 855</td>
<td>(literary) language 19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kick</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>little</td>
<td>a little 58, 60, 68, 219, 223, 432, 485, 525–526, 566, 633, 773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kind</td>
<td>(of) 52</td>
<td>live</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'ll</td>
<td>501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>loaf</td>
<td>706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>load (of) 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>loathe</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>logical     necessity 297-299</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>long</td>
<td>461, 845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>look</td>
<td>124, 126, 305, 328, 458, 510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lose</td>
<td>604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lot, a lot, lots 58–60, 68, 219, 221, 457, 566</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>love</td>
<td>124, 324, 362; = zero 662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>luck</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>luckily</td>
<td>323, 479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lump</td>
<td>(of) 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lunch</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>madam</td>
<td>360, 364–365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>magazines</td>
<td>764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>main clause 129, 517, 826</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>main focus</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>main        information 420–422</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>main verbs</td>
<td>617–626, 873, 884, 991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mainly      491</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>major       word-classes 884, 886</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>majority    58, 536</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>make        201, 607, 853, 857</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>make (of) 52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>male person</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>man         707</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mandative   subjunctive 823</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>manner      193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>manner      192–194, 471, 478, 728</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>many        58–60, 67–68, 158, 526, 566, 776, 773</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>martial, court martial 459</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>masculine, see 'male person'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mass nouns</td>
<td>49, 95, 552–554, 557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>material    44, 98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mathematics 656</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>matter      124; no matter wh- 216</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>may         501; permission 340; possibility 293–295; prohibition 344; reported commands 353</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>maybe       293</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>me          85, 683</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>meals       495</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mean        124, 338, 608</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>means       192, 195–196, 388, 471, 478</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>means of transport 495</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>meanwhile   375</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
measles 656
MEASURE NOUNS 51, 56
meet 600
MENTAL ACTIVITY VERBS 126
merely 241
midnight 495
MID-POSITION 470
might 501; permission 340;
possibility 293–295;
suggestion 350
mile 191
million 663–664
mind 340, 355
mine 683–684, 688–690
MINOR WORD-CLASSES
884–885
minority (of) 58
miss 846
MODAL AUXILIARIES 292,
501–503, 874
MODAL VERB COMBINATION
878
MODIFIERS 480–489,
652–653
moment, for the 156
MOMENTARY EVENT VERBS
123
monthly 157
MOOD 307–365
moonlight 55
more 58, 523–526, 566,
766, 773
more ... than 236, 528,
832
moreover 370, 375, 479
most comparison 523–526;
frequency 158;
QUANTIFIER 58, 60, 67,
766, 773–774
motion 181–184
mouse 707
mow 608
much ADVERB 485;
comparison 525–526;
degree 217, 219,
221–222, 477;
DETERMINER 557, 566,
QUANTIFIER 58–60,
67–68, 766, 773–774
much as 213
mumps 656
museums 763
must 501; COMMANDS 345,
353; indirect speech
266; necessity 297–301;
obligation 341–342;
mustn’t 344
my 85, 552, 683–684,
688–690
myself 683, 691–695
name 861
namely 373, 491
names 755–764
nationality words 627–628
naturally 479
naught 662
naught future 131
nearly 157, 220, 224, 477,
485
necessarily 297
necessity 297–299
need 298, 342–343, 501,
503
NEGATION 432, 629–636,
749
NEGATION with not
629–631, 883
negative
attitude 223
bias 248
COMMAND 520
condition 210, 382
DETERMINER 632
INTENSIFIER 317
PRONOUN 632
QUANTIFIER 776
QUANTIFIER 251
SENTENCE 269–271,
674
WORD 432
neither addition 238;
CONCORD 540;
DETERMINER 555;
NEGATION 632–633;
QUANTIFIER 394, 766
neither ... nor 541, 547, 633
neuter see ‘NON-
PERSONAL’, ‘INANIMATE’
novel future of
prediction 129
neutrality 288
never 68, 115, 119, 157,
318, 432, 455, 470,
476–477, 633
nevertheless 214, 376
NEW INFORMATION 417
news 55–56, 656
newspapers 291, 764
next 144, 149, 370, 565, 723
nice 315
night 147, 495
nil 662
no CONCORD 540; denial
269–271; DETERMINER
552; inversion 432;
NEGATION 632; offers
363; QUANTIFIER 60,
67–68, 766
no matter wh- 216
no one 68, 393, 540, 632,
774–775
no sooner ... than 832
nobody 68, 540, 632,
774–775
NOMINAL
CLAUSE 517, 529,
637–650, 839
-ing CLAUSE 649–650
RELATIVE CLAUSE
645–646
that-CLAUSE 639–640
to-INFINITIVE CLAUSE
647–648
wh-CLAUSE 641–644
NON-COUNT NOUNS, see
‘MASS NOUNS’
NON-DEFINING, see
‘NON-RESTRICTIVE’
NON-FINITE CLAUSE
407–408, 505, 513, 515,
719, 721–724
NON-FINITE VERB PHRASE
118, 875–877
NON-PERSONAL 569
NON-RESTRICTIVE
ADJECTIVE 101–102
NON-RESTRICTIVE
APPOSITION 491
non-restrictive meaning
99–102
NON-RESTRICTIVE
MODIFIER 413
NON-RESTRICTIVE RELATIVE
... CLAUSE 100, 413, 795
none 57, 67–68, 394, 540,
632, 776
noon 495
nor 238, 632
normally 157, 476
not 269–271, 275, 317–318,
401, 432, 629–631, 674
not ... but 277
not only ... (but) 238, 384,
547
297
several 58, 60, 67, 566, 766, 773–774
sew 608
sex 82–84
shake 613
shall, forms 501; future 129, 134, 139; insistence 339; intention 338; obligation 343; suggestion 350; wish 337
shame, it’s a shame 329
she 82, 569, 683–684
sheep 709
sheer (of) 50
shelf 706
shingles 656
shine 462, 604
ships 83
shoot 604
shopping 55
short (ly) 461
shorts 658
should, forms 266, 501; advice 350; hypothetical 286–287; obligation 343; probability 301; prohibition 344; putative 289–291, 321, 353, 454; wish 337
show 608, 856
shrink 615
shut 596
sick 458
SIMPLE PAST 882
SIMPLE PREPOSITION 744
SIMPLE PRESENT 106–108, 121, 132–133, 139, 882
SIMPLE SENTENCE 797
simply 241, 477
since 744, 830; time 119, 154; adverb 149, 156; reason conjunction 204–205, 409
sing 615
SINGULAR NUMBER 45, 654–655
SINGULAR NOUN ending in -s 656
sink 615
sir 360, 364–365
sit 607
slang 15
sleep 600
slightly 219
sling 601
slogans 260
slow(ly), slower 463
smell 124, 126, 462, 597, 838
smoking 55
so addion 238, 433; cause 207; degree 235, 446, 459, 482; emphatic 311; proportion 237; result 202; substitute 306, 400–401
so ( . . . ) as 230, 349, 831–832
so as to 203
so far (as) 119, 831
so long as 209, 831
so (that) 202–203, 235, 380, 831–832
some 158, 394, 494, 552–553, 766, 772; see also some-words
some-words 57, 67–68, 158, 211, 248, 270, 634, 774–775, 803–807
somebody, someone 68, 393, 540; see also some-words
somehow 803
something see some-words
sometimes 803
sometimes 68, 157, 160, 293, 476, 803
somewhat 224, 803
somewhere 162, 803; see also some-words
soon 149
sooner than 831
sorry 329, 361–362
sort (of) 52
sound 124, 838
sow 608
spare 857
speak 463, 609
speaker 85
species 52, 711
species nouns 52, 56
SPECIFIC REFERENCE 76–77, 627–628
spec (of) 50
spectacles 658
spell 597
spelling changes 808–821
spend 598
spill 597
spin 601
spit 607
split 596
spoil 597
spoken English 8–9, 24
spread 596
spring 615
stand 169, 607; cannot stand 847
standard 227–228
state 54, 104–105, 120
STATE VERBS 104–105
STATEMENTS 244, 799
statistics 656
stay 838
steal 609
stick 601
still 145, 214, 383, 462
stink 615
stone (weight) 710
straight 461
strangely 323, 479
stress 32–34, 313
strike 601, 859
string 601
strong(ly) 462
SUBCLAUSE 517, 826, 833
subject 369, 506–507, 822
subject–complement relation 93
subject–operator
inversion 430, 432
subject–verb concord 533
subject–verb inversion 430–431
subject–verb relation 93, 95
subject matter 243
subject names 656
subjective (case) 504, 687, 785
s subjunctive 7, 286–287, 291, 454, 823–825
subordinate clause, see ‘subclause’
subordinating
conjunctions 828–832
subordination 375–385, 797, 826–834
subsequently 149

301
subsidiary information 420-422
substances 44
SUBSTITUTES
for nouns and noun phrases 391-397
for structures
containing a verb 398-400
for that-clauses 401
for to-infinitive clauses 403
for wh-clauses 402
SUBSTITUTION 390-409
such 311, 459, 486, 562, 568
such . . . as 832
such . . . (that) 235, 831-832
suffice 124
suggest 7, 350, 353, 823, 846, 849, 853
suggestions 18, 350
summary 372
sunrise 495
sunset 495
sunshine 55
superficially 479
superlative 231, 523, 723
supernatural, the 466
supper 495
support 97
suppose 124, 132, 285, 305, 636, 866
supposing (that) 831
sure 297, 303-304, 589
surely 479
surface 165
surprise 332
surprised 290, 321, 332, 454
surprising 332;
surprisingly 323, 332, 479
swear 610
sweep 600
sweet 462
swell 608
swim 615
swing 601
(tactful) language 17-18
TAG QUESTIONS 250, 305, 634, 675, 781
302 take 451, 613
taste 124, 126, 462, 838
tea 495
teach 602, 854, 857
team 47
tear 610
technically 479
telephone 73
television 73
tell 121, 288, 401, 605, 854
temporarily 156
temporary
activity 122
habit 110
meaning 105
present 109
tense 103-139, 880-882
(tentative) language 17-18
terribly 315
terrific 315
than 229, 232, 524,
527-528
thank 361, 363
thanks 361
that, conjunction
639-640, 725, 828, 830;
see also ‘that-clause’;
PROXIMITY
(debatable) 87-90,
438, 548-549, 554;
relative 788, 792-794;
sacrifice 232, 397,
400, 404
that-clause 132, 235,
264-266, 288, 290-292,
302, 306, 321, 353, 401,
452, 454, 512, 518, 522,
530, 639-640, 740, 823
that is (to say) 373
the 69-78, 493, 552
generic use 74-75
institutional use 73
specific use 76-77
unique use 72
with adjectives 78
the . . . the 237, 832
their(s) 540, 683-684,
688-690
them 683-684
themselves 683, 691-695
then 89, 149, 285, 379, 381,
474, 546
theoretically 479
there 89, 162, 431, 488,
590-594
therefore 207, 380, 479
these 89-90, 548-549, 556
they 86, 540, 683-684
thief 706
-thing 485
think 126, 304, 331, 602,
636, 849, 866
third 58
third person pronoun
82-84, 391, 863-866
third person singular
620, 751
this 87-90, 144, 404, 438,
548-549, 554
this week, etc 119
thoroughly 226, 477
those 89-90, 397, 548-549,
556, 646; see also ‘that’
though 212-213, 376, 830,
832
thousand 663-664
theatres 763
threats 355-356
through 744; cause 200;
measures 196; pervasive
187; place, direction
165-167, 181-182, 185;
time 153
throughout 187
throw 611
thus 89, 207
tights 658
till 153, 155, 830
time, it’s time . . . 285
time 103-139, 409, 495,
668, 728
adverbials 132,
473-476, 478
duration adverbials
475
frequency
adverbials 476
nouns (in the
genitive) 96
time relationships
145-147
time-when 140-150, 379,
387-388, 474, 478
times 157, 560
titles 364
to, preposition 744;
adjective complement
453; = indirect
object 188, 671; place
163, 172, 174;
personal pronouns 325;
what(ever) 132, 216, 291, 317, 552
when 132, 150, 255, 375, 578, 583
when(ever) 830
where 255, 485, 578, 583
-where 485
where(ever) 216, 316, 830
whereas 212, 830
whereby 830
whereupon 830
whether 267–268, 288, 402, 578, 583, 644
whether . . . or 216, 644, 832
which 13, 255, 569, 578–582, 788–791
which(ever) 552
while 150, 154, 212, 830
while, for a 156
whilst 830
who 13, 485, 578–581, 646, 788–791
whoever 132, 216, 316, 645–646
whom 13, 578–581, 788–791
whose 552, 578–581, 788–791
why 255, 347, 350, 578–581
wife 706
will 501; COMMANDS, requests 345–348; future 129, 134, 137, 139;
insistence 339;
tension, prediction, predictability 300–301;
willingness 335
willingly 335
willingness 335
win 600
wind 603
wish 124, 336–337
wish 329, 336, 360, 362
with 92, 97–98, 193, 195, 198, 321, 454, 744
within 146, 168
without 97, 195, 744
wolf 706
woman 707
wonder 349, 850
won’t 335, 347
wood 53
WORD-CLASSES 884–886
word-order 425–449, 470–479, 738
work 53, 55–56
worry 321, 333, 453
worse, worst 467, 524–525
would 501; future in the past 136; habit 120;
hypothesis 284;
invitations 351; requests 348–349; willingness 335
would like 337, 351
would prefer 325, 337
would rather 325, 337
wring 601
write 614, 856
<written English> 8–9, 23
wrong 461
yard (of) 51, 191
yearly 157
yes 254, 363
yes-no QUESTION 245–246, 248, 267, 319, 674–675, 778, 883
yesterday 144
yet 145, 211, 214, 375–376, 479, 546, 803
you, your, yours 85–86, 346, 520, 683
young, the young 465
Yours faithfully
(sincerely, . . .) 360
yourself, yourselves 683, 691–695
zero 662
ZERO ARTICLE 494, 553
ZERO PLURAL 709
ZERO RELATIVE PRONOUN 788, 793