



The Online English Grammar

by Anthony Hughes

full version of the award-winning
Online English Grammar at
<http://www.english4today.com/grammar/>

- Introduction
- Table of Contents
- Subject Index
- About this Version

ABOUT THIS VERSION

PDF Version 1.1

This full PDF version of the Online English Grammar has a number of advantages over the version that you can find online for public viewing:

- It covers more grammar topics than the online version
- You can view it on your desktop as an easy reference guide
- It is easy to print out pages from this version using any standard printer
- You can access regular updates to the Online English Grammar now that you have purchased this copy. All that is required is that you supply your username and password to begin the download. You will receive regular emails when new updates are available. The update subscription is valid for one year from the date you purchased the item from us.

WHAT ELSE IS PLANNED?

After the outstanding response to our release of the Online English Grammar as a desktop edition, we are developing a range of new English language guides and worksheets to help both students and teachers with their English language requirements. These guides and worksheets will all be available as downloads from our website at <http://www.English4Today.com> and you will be notified of their release as we publish them. At the moment we have the following under development:

- English grammar worksheets for teachers and students
- A Writer's Guide to Using English
- Writing Letters
- A Guide to English Pronunciation
- Grammar Games Pack

We are also in the process of working on Version 2.0 of the PDF Version of the Online English Grammar - adding even more sections, sound files and exercises.

MAIN SUBJECT INDEX

1. [active/passive equivalent](#)
Keywords: active, passive equivalent
2. [as + adjective + as](#)
Keywords: as, adjective
3. [as present participle](#)
Keywords: present participle , with verbs of movement with verbs of perception, as adjective with spend, with waste, with catch, with find, replacing time clause, replacing reason clause
4. [certainty](#)
Keywords: certainly, definitely, probably, surely
5. [changes of time and place reference](#)
Keywords: time reference, place reference
6. [common irregular verbs - group 1](#)
Keywords: irregular verbs
7. [common irregular verbs - group 2](#)
Keywords: irregular verbs
8. [common irregular verbs - group 3](#)
Keywords: irregular verbs
9. [comparative + than](#)
Keywords: comparative , than, adjective
10. [comparative form](#)
Keywords: comparative, adverbs
11. [comparatives & superlatives](#)
Keywords: comparatives, superlatives, adjectives
12. [comparisons of quantity - showing no difference](#)
Keywords: quantity, comparison, adjective, difference
13. [comparisons of quantity - menu](#)
Keywords: quantity, comparison, adjective
14. [comparisons of quantity - showing difference](#)
Keywords: quantity, comparison, adjective, difference
15. [compound nouns](#)
Keywords: compound nouns, phrasal verbs
16. [countable & uncountable](#)
Keywords: countable, uncountable, noun
17. [defining relative clauses](#)
Keywords: defining relative clauses
18. [defining words - which, whose](#)
Keywords: which, whose
19. [degree - enough, very, too, extremely, almost etc](#)
Keywords: enough, very, too, extremely, almost, nearly, completely
20. [demonstratives - this, that, these, those etc](#)
Keywords: this, that, these, those, determiners
21. [difference words - other, another](#)
Keywords: other, another
22. [distributives - all, both, half](#)
Keywords: all, both, half, distributives, determiners
23. [distributives - each, every, either, neither](#)
Keywords: each, every, either, neither
24. [distributives - menu](#)
Keywords: all, both, half, each, every, either, neither
25. [examples](#)
Keywords: get, got, getting
26. [exceptions to using the definite article](#)

- Keywords:* no definite article, determiner, exceptions
27. [form - adjectives](#)
- Keywords:* gender, position, form, adjective
28. [form - adverb](#)
- Keywords:* adverb, form
29. [form -past](#)
- Keywords:* be + past participle
30. [form, with or without 'to'](#)
- Keywords:* to-infinitive, zero infinitive
31. [function](#)
- Keywords:* order, adjectives, function
32. [function](#)
- Keywords:* adverb, function
33. [function](#)
- Keywords:* function, infinitive of purpose, infinitive as subject, infinitive after adjectives, infinitive with too/enough
34. [function](#)
- Keywords:* unknown agent, subject, by formal/scientific texts
35. [future continuous](#)
- Keywords:* future, actions in progress
36. [future forms - introduction](#)
- Keywords:* future, attitude
37. [future forms - simple future](#)
- Keywords:* will/shall, prediction, decision, future facts, certainty
38. [future perfect](#)
- Keywords:* future, completed actions
39. [future perfect continuous](#)
- Keywords:* unfinished, future time
40. [future with 'going to'](#)
- Keywords:* plans, intentions
41. [gerund or infinitive?](#)
- Keywords:* gerund/infinitive-, no difference in meaning
42. [gerund/infinitive - difference in meaning](#)
- Keywords:* gerund/infinitive, difference in meaning
43. [gerunds](#)
- Keywords:* gerund, as subject, after prepositions, after phrasal verbs, in compound nouns, can't stand, can't help
44. [get, got, getting](#)
- Keywords:* get, got, getting
45. [get/have something done, x needs doing](#)
- Keywords:* get, need
46. [if sentences with conditional perfect continuous](#)
- Keywords:* conditional perfect continuous
47. [if sentences with if + past, would, present conditional](#)
- Keywords:* if + past, would, present conditional
48. [if sentences with if, conditional tenses](#)
- Keywords:* if, conditional tenses
49. [if sentences with if+not, unless, verbs](#)
- Keywords:* if+not, unless, verbs
50. [if sentences with mixed conditionals](#)
- Keywords:* mixed conditionals
51. [if sentences with perfect conditional, if + past perfect](#)
- Keywords:* perfect conditional, if + past perfect
52. [if sentences with wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only](#)
- Keywords:* wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only
53. [if sentences with present continuous conditional](#)
- Keywords:* present continuous conditional
54. [infinitive after question words](#)
- Keywords:* infinitive, question words
55. [interrogative - why, where, how, when](#)
- Keywords:* why, where, how, when
56. [introduction - defining relative clauses, non-defining relative clauses](#)
- Keywords:* defining relative clauses, non-defining relative clauses
57. [introduction - irregular verbs](#)

- Keywords:* verbs, irregular
58. [introduction - present participle, gerund](#)
Keywords: present participle, gerund
59. [introduction - reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak](#)
Keywords: reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak
60. [irregular comparatives & superlatives](#)
Keywords: irregular comparatives, superlatives, adjectives
61. [list of common irregular verb](#)
Keywords: irregular, verbs
62. [main menu - adjectives](#)
Keywords: adjectives
63. [main menu - adverbs](#)
Keywords: adverbs
64. [manner - adverbs](#)
Keywords: adverbs, manner
65. [menu - function and class](#)
Keywords: determiners, function, class, pre-determiners
66. [menu - kinds of adverbs](#)
Keywords: kinds, adverbs
67. [menu - nouns](#)
Keywords: nouns
68. [menu - quantifiers](#)
Keywords: much, many, a little, a few, some, any
69. [menu / introduction](#)
Keywords: menu, introduction, tenses
70. [nationalities](#)
Keywords: nationalities, country, nouns
71. [negative infinitive](#)
Keywords: negative infinitive
72. [non-defining relative clauses](#)
Keywords: relative clauses, non-defining
73. [not as + adjective + as](#)
Keywords: not, as, so, not as, not so, adjective
74. [noun gender](#)
Keywords: gender, masculine, feminine, noun
75. [order of adjectives](#)
Keywords: order, adjectives
76. [other forms of future](#)
Keywords: is to, obligation, about to, immediate future
77. [other forms of infinitive](#)
Keywords: perfect infinitive, continuous infinitive, passive infinitive, perfect continuous infinitive
78. [past continuous](#)
Keywords: past continuous, description, narrative
79. [past perfect](#)
Keywords: past perfect, just
80. [past perfect continuous](#)
Keywords: past perfect continuous, process, reported speech
81. [place, adverbs of place](#)
Keywords: adverbs, place
82. [plurals](#)
Keywords: singular plural, irregular plural, noun
83. [possessive](#)
Keywords: possessive, time expressions, apostrophe, names, possessive
84. [possessives](#)
Keywords: possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns, my, mine, your, yours, his, her, hers, our, ours, their, theirs
85. [pre-determiners](#)
Keywords: such, what, rather, quite
86. [prepositions in relative clauses](#)
Keywords: prepositions, relative clauses
87. [present continuous](#)
Keywords: -ing, verbs, tenses, present participle, verbs not used in continuous form
88. [present continuous for future events](#)
Keywords: arrangements, future

89. [present perfect 1](#)
Keywords: present perfect, past participle, irregular verbs
90. [present perfect 2](#)
Keywords: present perfect, ever, never, already, yet
91. [present perfect 3](#)
Keywords: present perfect, simple past, time, attitude
92. [present perfect 4](#)
Keywords: present perfect, for, since
93. [present perfect continuous](#)
Keywords: present perfect continuous, present participle
94. [quantifiers 1 - determiners, a few, few, a little, little](#)
Keywords: determiners, a few, few, a little, little
95. [quantifiers 2 - many, much, more, most etc.](#)
Keywords: many, much, more, most, little, less, least, few, fewer, fewest
96. [quantifiers 3 - how, much, many, few, lot etc.](#)
Keywords: how, much, many, few, lot, number, several, countable, uncountable
97. [quantifiers 4 - numbers](#)
Keywords: cardinal, ordinal, fractions, decimals, units, years, zero
98. [quantifiers 5 - some and any](#)
Keywords: determiners, quantifiers, some, any
99. [quantifiers 6 - something, somebody, someone etc.](#)
Keywords: something, somebody, someone, somewhere, anything, anybody, anyone, anywhere, nothing, nobody, noone, nowhere,
100. [quantifiers 7 - enough](#)
Keywords: enough, quantifiers, determiners
101. [question words - which, what, whose](#)
Keywords: which, what, whose
102. [relative adverbs - which, what, whose](#)
Keywords: where, when, why
103. [reporting hopes and intentions](#)
Keywords: hopes, intentions, to-infinitive, that-clause
104. [reporting orders, requests, suggestions](#)
Keywords: orders, requests, suggestions, should - omission, that-clause
105. [reporting questions](#)
Keywords: reporting yes/no questions, reporting questions with question words
106. [simple past](#)
Keywords: simple past, form, function, irregular verbs, irregular verbs, auxiliary 'did', ago
107. [simple present](#)
Keywords: verbs, tenses, present simple
108. [simple present for future events](#)
Keywords: future, facts, timetable, calendar
109. [summary](#)
Keywords: verb tenses, present tenses, perfect tenses, conditional tenses, past tenses, future tenses
110. [summary of reporting verbs](#)
Keywords: summary, reporting verbs, to-infinitive, that-clause
111. [tense changes](#)
Keywords: reported speech, tense changes
112. [the + superlative](#)
Keywords: the, superlative, adjectives
113. [the definite article](#)
Keywords: the, definite article
114. [the indefinite article](#)
Keywords: the, indefinite article, a, an
115. [the, a, an](#)
Keywords: the, a, an, indefinite article, exceptions
116. [time, adverbs of](#)
Keywords: adverbs, time
117. [type 1 conditional](#)
Keywords: if + present + future, fact
118. [use of capital letters](#)
Keywords: capital letters, names, months, days, holidays, seasons, geographical, names, streets, buildings, titles of books, nouns
119. [verbs + infinitive with/without noun](#)
Keywords: verb with or without noun + infinitive

120. [verbs followed by gerund](#)
Keywords: verb + gerund
121. [verbs followed by infinitive](#)
Keywords: verbs + infinitive without a noun
122. [verbs followed by noun + infinitive](#)
Keywords: verb + noun + infinitive
123. [viewpoint, commenting](#)
Keywords: adverbs, viewpoint, commenting
124. [zero conditional](#)
Keywords: if + present, general truths, instructions
125. [zero infinitive](#)
Keywords: zero infinitive

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General

- [About the author](#)
- [Which English?](#)
- [Ask our English teachers a question](#)
- [Visit the members' section of the English4Today website](#)

Adjectives

- [as + adjective + as](#)
- [comparative + than](#)
- [comparatives & superlatives](#)
- [comparisons of quantity - showing no difference](#)
- [comparisons of quantity - menu](#)
- [comparisons of quantity - showing difference](#)
- [form - adjectives](#)
- [function](#)
- [irregular comparatives & superlatives](#)
- [main menu - adjectives](#)
- [not as + adjective + as](#)
- [order of adjectives](#)
- [the + superlative](#)

Adverbs

- [certainty](#)
- [comparative form](#)
- [degree - enough, very, too, extremely, almost etc](#)
- [form - adverb](#)
- [function](#)
- [interrogative - why, where, how, when](#)
- [main menu - adverbs](#)
- [manner - adverbs](#)
- [menu - kinds of adverbs](#)
- [place, adverbs of place](#)
- [relative adverbs - which, what, whose](#)
- [time, adverbs of](#)
- [viewpoint, commenting](#)

Determiners

- [defining words - which, whose](#)
- [demonstratives - this, that, these, those etc](#)
- [difference words - other, another](#)
- [distributives - all, both, half](#)
- [distributives - each, every, either, neither](#)
- [distributives - menu](#)

[exceptions to using the definite article](#)
[menu - function and class](#)
[menu - quantifiers](#)
[possessives](#)
[pre-determiners](#)
[quantifiers 1 - determiners, a few, few, a little, little](#)
[quantifiers 2 - many, much, more, most etc.](#)
[quantifiers 3 - how, much, many, few, lot etc.](#)
[quantifiers 4 - numbers](#)
[quantifiers 5 - some and any](#)
[quantifiers 6 - something, somebody, someone etc.](#)
[quantifiers 7 - enough](#)
[question words - which, what, whose](#)
[the definite article](#)
[the indefinite article](#)
[the, a, an](#)

Direct and Indirect Speech

[changes of time and place reference](#)
[introduction - reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak](#)
[reporting hopes and intentions](#)
[reporting orders, requests, suggestions](#)
[reporting questions](#)
[summary of reporting verbs](#)
[tense changes](#)

-ING Form

[as present participle](#)
[gerund or infinitive?](#)
[gerund/infinitive - difference in meaning](#)
[gerunds](#)
[introduction - present participle, gerund](#)
[verbs followed by gerund](#)

Irregular Verbs

[common irregular verbs - group 1](#)
[common irregular verbs - group 2](#)
[common irregular verbs - group 3](#)
[introduction - irregular verbs](#)
[list of common irregular verb](#)

Nouns

[compound nouns](#)
[countable & uncountable](#)
[menu - nouns](#)
[nationalities](#)
[noun gender](#)
[plurals](#)
[use of capital letters](#)

Passive

[active/passive equivalents](#)

[form -past](#)

[function](#)

[get/have something done, x needs doing](#)

Possessive with 's and '

[possessive](#)

Relative Clauses

[defining relative clauses](#)

[introduction - defining relative clauses, non-defining relative clauses](#)

[non-defining relative clauses](#)

[prepositions in relative clauses](#)

The Infinitive

[form, with or without 'to'](#)

[function](#)

[infinitive after question words](#)

[negative infinitive](#)

[other forms of infinitive](#)

[verbs + infinitive with/without noun](#)

[verbs followed by infinitive](#)

[verbs followed by noun + infinitive](#)

[zero infinitive](#)

To Get

[examples](#)

[get, got, getting](#)

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[future continuous](#)

[future forms - introduction](#)

[future forms - simple future](#)

[future perfect](#)

[future perfect continuous](#)

[future with 'going to'](#)

[if sentences with conditional perfect continuous](#)

[if sentences with if + past, would, present conditional](#)

[if sentences with if, conditional tenses](#)

[if sentences with if+not, unless, verbs](#)

[if sentences with mixed conditionals](#)

[if sentences with perfect conditional, if + past perfect](#)

[if sentences with wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only](#)

[if sentences with present continuous conditional](#)

[menu / introduction](#)

[other forms of future](#)

[past continuous](#)

[past perfect](#)

[past perfect continuous](#)

[present continuous](#)

[present continuous for future events](#)

[present perfect 1](#)

[present perfect 2](#)

[present perfect 3](#)

[present perfect 4](#)

[present perfect continuous](#)

[simple past](#)

[simple present](#)

[simple present for future events](#)

[summary](#)

[type 1 conditional](#)

[zero conditional](#)

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

A

Your search for items starting with the letter 'A' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[irregular comparatives & superlatives](#) *Keywords: irregular comparatives, superlatives, adjectives*

[main menu - adjectives](#) *Keywords: adjectives*

[comparisons of quantity - menu](#) *Keywords: quantity, comparison, adjective*

[not as + adjective + as](#) *Keywords: not, as, so, not as, not so, adjective*

[as + adjective + as](#) *Keywords: as, adjective*

[the + superlative](#) *Keywords: the, superlative, adjectives*

[comparisons of quantity - showing difference](#) *Keywords: quantity, comparison, adjective, difference*

[comparisons of quantity - showing no difference](#) *Keywords: quantity, comparison, adjective, difference*

[comparatives & superlatives](#) *Keywords: comparatives, superlatives, adjectives*

[order of adjectives](#) *Keywords: order, adjectives*

[function](#) *Keywords: order, adjectives, function*

[form - adjectives](#) *Keywords: gender, position, form, adjective*

[comparative + than](#) *Keywords: comparative, than, adjective*

Adverbs

[comparative form](#) *Keywords: comparative, adverbs*

[manner - adverbs](#) *Keywords: adverbs, manner*

[form - adverb](#) *Keywords: adverb, form*

[certainty](#) *Keywords: certainly, definitely, probably, surely*

[time, adverbs of](#) *Keywords: adverbs, time*

[relative adverbs - which, what, whose](#) *Keywords: where, when, why*

[interrogative - why, where, how, when](#) *Keywords: why, where, how, when*

[function](#) *Keywords: adverb, function*

[viewpoint, commenting](#) *Keywords: adverbs, viewpoint, commenting*

[place, adverbs of place](#) *Keywords: adverbs, place*

[degree - enough, very, too, extremely, almost etc](#) *Keywords: enough, very, too, extremely, almost, nearly, completely*

[menu - kinds of adverbs](#) *Keywords: kinds, adverbs*

[main menu - adverbs](#) *Keywords: adverbs*

Determiners

[possessives](#) *Keywords: possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns, my, mine, your, yours, his, her, hers, our, ours, their, theirs*

[exceptions to using the definite article](#) *Keywords:* no definite article, determiner, exceptions

[the, a, an](#) *Keywords:* the, a, an, indefinite article, exceptions

[distributives - menu](#) *Keywords:* all, both, half, each, every, either, neither

[difference words - other, another](#) *Keywords:* other, another

[distributives - all, both, half](#) *Keywords:* all, both, half, distributives, determiners

[the indefinite article](#) *Keywords:* the, indefinite article, a, an

[quantifiers 5 - some and any](#) *Keywords:* determiners, quantifiers, some, any

[quantifiers 6 - something, somebody, someone etc.](#) *Keywords:* something, somebody, someone, somewhere, anything, anybody, anyone, anywhere, nothing, nobody, noone, nowhere,

[the definite article](#) *Keywords:* the, definite article

-ING Form

[as present participle](#) *Keywords:* present participle, with verbs of movement with verbs of perception, as adjective with spend, with waste, with catch, with find, replacing time clause, replacing reason clause

Passive

[active/passive equivalents](#) *Keywords:* active, passive equivalent

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

B

Your search for items starting with the letter '**B**' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Determiners

[distributives - all, both, half](#) *Keywords: all, both, half, distributives, determiners*

[distributives - menu](#) *Keywords: all, both, half, each, every, either, neither*

Passive

[form -past](#) *Keywords: be + past participle*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

C

Your search for items starting with the letter 'C' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[irregular comparatives & superlatives](#) *Keywords:* irregular comparatives, superlatives, adjectives

[comparatives & superlatives](#) *Keywords:* comparatives, superlatives, adjectives

[comparative + than](#) *Keywords:* comparative, than, adjective

[comparisons of quantity - showing difference](#) *Keywords:* quantity, comparison, adjective, difference

[comparisons of quantity - showing no difference](#) *Keywords:* quantity, comparison, adjective, difference

[comparisons of quantity - menu](#) *Keywords:* quantity, comparison, adjective

Adverbs

[comparative form](#) *Keywords:* comparative, adverbs

[certainty](#) *Keywords:* certainly, definitely, probably, surely

[viewpoint, commenting](#) *Keywords:* adverbs, viewpoint, commenting

Determiners

[quantifiers 6 - something, somebody, someone etc.](#) *Keywords:* something, somebody, someone, somewhere, anything, anybody, anyone, anywhere, nothing, nobody, noone, nowhere,

[menu - function and class](#) *Keywords:* determiners, function, class, pre-determiners

[quantifiers 4 - numbers](#) *Keywords:* cardinal, ordinal, fractions, decimals, units, years, zero

[quantifiers 3 - how, much, many, few, lot etc.](#) *Keywords:* how, much, many, few, lot, number, several, countable, uncountable

Direct and Indirect Speech

[changes of time and place reference](#) *Keywords:* time reference, place reference

Irregular Verbs

[common irregular verbs - group 3](#) *Keywords:* irregular verbs

[common irregular verbs - group 1](#) *Keywords:* irregular verbs

[common irregular verbs - group 2](#) *Keywords:* irregular verbs

Nouns

[nationalities](#) *Keywords:* nationalities, country, nouns

[use of capital letters](#) *Keywords:* capital letters, names, months, days, holidays, seasons, geographical, names, streets, buildings, titles of books, nouns

[countable & uncountable](#) *Keywords:* countable, uncountable, noun

[compound nouns](#) *Keywords:* compound nouns, phrasal verbs

Relative Clauses

[introduction - defining relative clauses, non-defining relative clauses](#) *Keywords:* defining relative clauses, non-defining relative clauses

[prepositions in relative clauses](#) *Keywords:* prepositions, relative clauses

[non-defining relative clauses](#) *Keywords:* relative clauses, non-defining

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[type 1 conditional](#) *Keywords:* if + present + future, fact

[present continuous](#) *Keywords:* -ing, verbs, tenses, present participle, verbs not used in continuous form

[future continuous](#) *Keywords:* future, actions in progress

[zero conditional](#) *Keywords:* if + present, general truths, instructions

[if sentences with if + past, would, present conditional](#) *Keywords:* if + past, would, present conditional

[if sentences with present continuous conditional](#) *Keywords:* present continuous conditional

[if sentences with perfect conditional, if + past perfect](#) *Keywords:* perfect conditional, if + past perfect

[if sentences with conditional perfect continuous](#) *Keywords:* conditional perfect continuous

[if sentences with mixed conditionals](#) *Keywords:* mixed conditionals

[if sentences with if, conditional tenses](#) *Keywords:* if, conditional tenses

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

D

Your search for items starting with the letter '*D*' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adverbs

[degree - enough, very, too, extremely, almost etc](#) *Keywords:* enough, very, too, extremely, almost, nearly, completely

Determiners

[quantifiers 2 - many, much, more, most etc](#) *Keywords:* many, much, more, most, little, less, least, few, fewer, fewest

[defining words - which, whose](#) *Keywords:* which, whose

[question words - which, what, whose](#) *Keywords:* which, what, whose

[difference words - other, another](#) *Keywords:* other, another

[distributives - each, every, either, neither](#) *Keywords:* each, every, either, neither

[distributives - menu](#) *Keywords:* all, both, half, each, every, either, neither

[menu - function and class](#) *Keywords:* determiners, function, class, pre-determiners

[quantifiers 7 - enough](#) *Keywords:* enough, quantifiers, determiners

[menu - quantifiers](#) *Keywords:* much, many, a little, a few, some, any

[possessives](#) *Keywords:* possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns, my, mine, your, yours, his, her, hers, our, ours, their, theirs

[demonstratives - this, that, these, those etc](#) *Keywords:* this, that, these, those, determiners

[exceptions to using the definite article](#) *Keywords:* no definite article, determiner, exceptions

[the, a, an](#) *Keywords:* the, a, an, indefinite article, exceptions

[the definite article](#) *Keywords:* the, definite article

[quantifiers 4 - numbers](#) *Keywords:* cardinal, ordinal, fractions, decimals, units, years, zero

[distributives - all, both, half](#) *Keywords:* all, both, half, distributives, determiners

[quantifiers 6 - something, somebody, someone etc](#) *Keywords:* something, somebody, someone, somewhere, anything, anybody, anyone, anywhere, nothing, nobody, noone, nowhere,

[quantifiers 5 - some and any](#) *Keywords:* determiners, quantifiers, some, any

[quantifiers 1 - determiners, a few, few, a little, little](#) *Keywords:* determiners, a few, few, a little, little

[quantifiers 3 - how, much, many, few, lot etc](#) *Keywords:* how, much, many, few, lot, number, several, countable, uncountable

[the indefinite article](#) *Keywords:* the, indefinite article, a, an

[pre-determiners](#) *Keywords:* such, what, rather, quite

Direct and Indirect Speech

[reporting hopes and intentions](#) *Keywords:* hopes, intentions, to-infinitive, that-clause

[summary of reporting verbs](#) *Keywords:* summary, reporting verbs, to-infinitive, that-clause

[reporting orders, requests, suggestions](#) *Keywords:* orders, requests, suggestions, should - omission, that-clause

[reporting questions](#) *Keywords:* reporting yes/no questions, reporting questions with question words

[changes of time and place reference](#) *Keywords:* time reference, place reference

[tense changes](#) *Keywords:* reported speech, tense changes

[introduction - reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak](#)

Keywords: reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak

Passive

[get/have something done, x needs doing](#) *Keywords:* get, need

Relative Clauses

[non-defining relative clauses](#) *Keywords:* relative clauses, non-defining

[defining relative clauses](#) *Keywords:* defining relative clauses

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

E

Your search for items starting with the letter 'E' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adverbs

[degree - enough, very, too, extremely, almost etc](#) *Keywords:*
enough, very, too, extremely, almost, nearly, completely

Determiners

[distributives - each, every, either, neither](#) *Keywords:* each, every,
either, neither

[quantifiers 7 - enough](#) *Keywords:* enough, quantifiers, determiners

[exceptions to using the definite article](#) *Keywords:* no definite
article, determiner, exceptions

[the, a, an](#) *Keywords:* the, a, an, indefinite article, exceptions

To Get

[examples](#) *Keywords:* get, got, getting

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

F

Your search for items starting with the letter 'F' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[form - adjectives](#) *Keywords: gender, position, form, adjective*

[function](#) *Keywords: order, adjectives, function*

Adverbs

[function](#) *Keywords: adverb, function*

[form - adverb](#) *Keywords: adverb, form*

[comparative form](#) *Keywords: comparative, adverbs*

Determiners

[quantifiers 4 - numbers](#) *Keywords: cardinal, ordinal, fractions, decimals, units, years, zero*

[quantifiers 2 - many, much, more, most etc.](#) *Keywords: many, much, more, most, little, less, least, few, fewer, fewest*

[menu - function and class](#) *Keywords: determiners, function, class, pre-determiners*

[quantifiers 1 - determiners, a few, few, a little, little](#) *Keywords: determiners, a few, few, a little, little*

-ING Form

[introduction - present participle, gerund](#) *Keywords: present participle, gerund*

Nouns

[noun gender](#) *Keywords: gender, masculine, feminine, noun*

Passive

[form -past](#) *Keywords: be + past participle*

[function](#) *Keywords: unknown agent, subject, by formal/scientific texts*

The Infinitive

[verbs followed by infinitive](#) *Keywords: verbs + infinitive without a noun*

[form, with or without 'to'](#) *Keywords: to-infinitive, zero infinitive*

[function](#) *Keywords: function, infinitive of purpose, infinitive as subject,*

infinitive after adjectives, infinitive with too/enough
[other forms of infinitive](#) *Keywords:* perfect infinitive, continuous
infinitive, passive infinitive, perfect continuous infinitive

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[future continuous](#) *Keywords:* future, actions in progress
[future forms - introduction](#) *Keywords:* future, attitude
[future with 'going to'](#) *Keywords:* plans, intentions
[future perfect](#) *Keywords:* future, completed actions
[future perfect continuous](#) *Keywords:* unfinished, future time
[other forms of future](#) *Keywords:* is to, obligation, about to, immediate
future
[future forms - simple future](#) *Keywords:* will/shall, prediction,
decision, future facts, certainty

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

G

Your search for items starting with the letter 'G' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[form - adjectives](#) *Keywords: gender, position, form, adjective*

-ING Form

[gerund/infinitive - difference in meaning](#) *Keywords:*

gerund/infinitive, difference in meaning

[gerund or infinitive?](#) *Keywords: gerund/infinitive-, no difference in meaning*

[verbs followed by gerund](#) *Keywords: verb + gerund*

[gerunds](#) *Keywords: gerund, as subject, after prepositions, after phrasal verbs, in compound nouns, can't stand.can't help*

Nouns

[noun gender](#) *Keywords: gender, masculine, feminine, noun*

Passive

[get/have something done, x needs doing](#) *Keywords: get, need*

To Get

[examples](#) *Keywords: get, got, getting*

[get, got, getting](#) *Keywords: get, got, getting*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

H

Your search for items starting with the letter '*H*' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Determiners

[distributives - all, both, half](#) *Keywords:* all, both, half, distributives, determiners

[distributives - menu](#) *Keywords:* all, both, half, each, every, either, neither

Direct and Indirect Speech

[reporting hopes and intentions](#) *Keywords:* hopes, intentions, to-infinitive, that-clause

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

I

Your search for items starting with the letter 'I' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[irregular comparatives & superlatives](#) *Keywords:* irregular comparatives, superlatives, adjectives

Adverbs

[interrogative - why, where, how, when](#) *Keywords:* why, where, how, when

Determiners

[the, a, an](#) *Keywords:* the, a, an, indefinite article, exceptions

[the indefinite article](#) *Keywords:* the, indefinite article, a, an

Direct and Indirect Speech

[summary of reporting verbs](#) *Keywords:* summary, reporting verbs, to-infinitive, that-clause

[reporting hopes and intentions](#) *Keywords:* hopes, intentions, to-infinitive, that-clause

[reporting orders, requests, suggestions](#) *Keywords:* orders, requests, suggestions, should - omission, that-clause

[changes of time and place reference](#) *Keywords:* time reference, place reference

[tense changes](#) *Keywords:* reported speech, tense changes

[introduction - reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak](#)

Keywords: reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak

-ING Form

[verbs followed by gerund](#) *Keywords:* verb + gerund

[introduction - present participle, gerund](#) *Keywords:* present participle, gerund

[gerunds](#) *Keywords:* gerund, as subject, after prepositions, after phrasal verbs, in compound nouns, can't stand, can't help

[gerund or infinitive?](#) *Keywords:* gerund/infinitive-, no difference in meaning

[gerund/infinitive - difference in meaning](#) *Keywords:* gerund/infinitive, difference in meaning

[as present participle](#) *Keywords:* present participle, with verbs of movement with verbs of perception, as adjective with spend, with waste, with catch, with find, replacing time clause, replacing reason clause

Irregular Verbs

[introduction - irregular verbs](#) *Keywords: verbs, irregular*

[list of common irregular verb](#) *Keywords: irregular, verbs*

[common irregular verbs - group 1](#) *Keywords: irregular verbs*

[common irregular verbs - group 3](#) *Keywords: irregular verbs*

[common irregular verbs - group 2](#) *Keywords: irregular verbs*

Relative Clauses

[introduction - defining relative clauses, non-defining relative clauses](#) *Keywords: defining relative clauses, non-defining relative clauses*

The Infinitive

[negative infinitive](#) *Keywords: negative infinitive*

[infinitive after question words](#) *Keywords: infinitive, question words*

[function](#) *Keywords: function, infinitive of purpose, infinitive as subject, infinitive after adjectives, infinitive with too/enough*

[other forms of infinitive](#) *Keywords: perfect infinitive, continuous infinitive, passive infinitive, perfect continuous infinitive*

[verbs followed by infinitive](#) *Keywords: verbs + infinitive without a noun*

[verbs followed by noun + infinitive](#) *Keywords: verb + noun + infinitive*

[verbs + infinitive with/without noun](#) *Keywords: verb with or without noun + infinitive*

[zero infinitive](#) *Keywords: zero infinitive*

[form, with or without 'to'](#) *Keywords: to-infinitive, zero infinitive*

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[if sentences with mixed conditionals](#) *Keywords: mixed conditionals*

[menu / introduction](#) *Keywords: menu, introduction, tenses*

[if sentences with if, conditional tenses](#) *Keywords: if, conditional tenses*

[zero conditional](#) *Keywords: if + present, general truths, instructions*

[type 1 conditional](#) *Keywords: if + present + future, fact*

[if sentences with if + past, would, present conditional](#) *Keywords: if + past, would, present conditional*

[if sentences with present continuous conditional](#) *Keywords: present continuous conditional*

[if sentences with conditional perfect continuous](#) *Keywords: conditional perfect continuous*

[if sentences with if+not, unless, verbs](#) *Keywords: if+not, unless, verbs*

[if sentences with wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only](#) *Keywords: wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only*

[if sentences with perfect conditional, if + past perfect](#) *Keywords: perfect conditional, if + past perfect*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

J

Your search for items starting with the letter 'J' has not returned any related items. You may have better luck with a keyword search using the keyword search box.

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

K

Your search for items starting with the letter 'K' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adverbs

[menu - kinds of adverbs](#) *Keywords: kinds, adverbs*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

L

Your search for items starting with the letter 'L' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Determiners

[quantifiers 1 - determiners, a few, few, a little, little](#) *Keywords:*

determiners, a few, few, a little, little

[quantifiers 2 - many, much, more, most etc.](#) *Keywords:* many,

much, more, most, little, less, least, few, fewer, fewest

Irregular Verbs

[list of common irregular verb](#) *Keywords:* irregular, verbs

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

M

Your search for items starting with the letter 'M' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[main menu - adjectives](#) *Keywords: adjectives*

Adverbs

[menu - kinds of adverbs](#) *Keywords: kinds, adverbs*

[main menu - adverbs](#) *Keywords: adverbs*

[manner - adverbs](#) *Keywords: adverbs, manner*

Determiners

[distributives - menu](#) *Keywords: all, both, half, each, every, either, neither*

[quantifiers 2 - many, much, more, most etc.](#) *Keywords: many, much, more, most, little, less, least, few, fewer, fewest*

[menu - quantifiers](#) *Keywords: much, many, a little, a few, some, any*

[menu - function and class](#) *Keywords: determiners, function, class, pre-determiners*

Nouns

[menu - nouns](#) *Keywords: nouns*

[noun gender](#) *Keywords: gender, masculine, feminine, noun*

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[menu / introduction](#) *Keywords: menu, introduction, tenses*

[if sentences with mixed conditionals](#) *Keywords: mixed conditionals*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

N

Your search for items starting with the letter 'N' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[not as + adjective + as](#) *Keywords: not, as, so, not as, not so, adjective*

Determiners

[quantifiers 4 - numbers](#) *Keywords: cardinal, ordinal, fractions, decimals, units, years, zero*

[quantifiers 3 - how, much, many, few, lot etc.](#) *Keywords: how, much, many, few, lot, number, several, countable, uncountable*

[distributives - each, every, either, neither](#) *Keywords: each, every, either, neither*

[quantifiers 6 - something, somebody, someone etc.](#) *Keywords: something, somebody, someone, somewhere, anything, anybody, anyone, anywhere, nothing, nobody, noone, nowhere,*

Nouns

[plurals](#) *Keywords: singular plural, irregular plural, noun*

[countable & uncountable](#) *Keywords: countable, uncountable, noun*

[compound nouns](#) *Keywords: compound nouns, phrasal verbs*

[use of capital letters](#) *Keywords: capital letters, names, months, days, holidays, seasons, geographical, names, streets, buildings, titles of books, nouns*

[noun gender](#) *Keywords: gender, masculine, feminine, noun*

[menu - nouns](#) *Keywords: nouns*

[nationalities](#) *Keywords: nationalities, country, nouns*

Relative Clauses

[non-defining relative clauses](#) *Keywords: relative clauses, non-defining*

The Infinitive

[negative infinitive](#) *Keywords: negative infinitive*

[verbs followed by noun + infinitive](#) *Keywords: verb + noun + infinitive*

[verbs + infinitive with/without noun](#) *Keywords: verb with or without noun + infinitive*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

O

Your search for items starting with the letter 'O' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[order of adjectives](#) *Keywords: order, adjectives*

[function](#) *Keywords: order, adjectives, function*

Determiners

[difference words - other, another](#) *Keywords: other, another*

[quantifiers 4 - numbers](#) *Keywords: cardinal, ordinal, fractions, decimals, units, years, zero*

Direct and Indirect Speech

[reporting orders, requests, suggestions](#) *Keywords: orders, requests, suggestions, should - omission, that-clause*

The Infinitive

[other forms of infinitive](#) *Keywords: perfect infinitive, continuous infinitive, passive infinitive, perfect continuous infinitive*

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[other forms of future](#) *Keywords: is to, obligation, about to, immediate future*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

P

Your search for items starting with the letter 'P' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adverbs

[place, adverbs of place](#) *Keywords:* adverbs, place

Determiners

[menu - function and class](#) *Keywords:* determiners, function, class, pre-determiners

[pre-determiners](#) *Keywords:* such, what, rather, quite

[possessives](#) *Keywords:* possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns, my, mine, your, yours, his, her, hers, our, ours, their, theirs

-ING Form

[as present participle](#) *Keywords:* present participle , with verbs of movement with verbs of perception, as adjective with spend, with waste, with catch, with find, replacing time clause, replacing reason clause

[introduction - present participle, gerund](#) *Keywords:* present participle, gerund

Nouns

[plurals](#) *Keywords:* singular plural, irregular plural, noun

Passive

[form -past](#) *Keywords:* be + past participle

[function](#) *Keywords:* unknown agent, subject, by formal/scientific texts

[get/have something done, x needs doing](#) *Keywords:* get, need

[active/passive equivalents](#) *Keywords:* active, passive equivalent

Possessive with 's and '

[possessive](#) *Keywords:* possessive, time expressions, apostrophe, names, possessive

Relative Clauses

[prepositions in relative clauses](#) *Keywords:* prepositions, relative clauses

[defining relative clauses](#) *Keywords:* defining relative clauses

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[past perfect](#) *Keywords:* past perfect, just

[present perfect 1](#) *Keywords:* present perfect, past participle, irregular verbs

[present continuous](#) *Keywords:* -ing, verbs, tenses, present participle, verbs not used in continuous form

[present perfect 2](#) *Keywords:* present perfect, ever, never, already, yet

[present perfect 3](#) *Keywords:* present perfect, simple past, time, attitude

[present perfect 4](#) *Keywords:* present perfect, for, since

[past continuous](#) *Keywords:* past continuous, description, narrative

[past perfect continuous](#) *Keywords:* past perfect continuous, process, reported speech

[present continuous for future events](#) *Keywords:* arrangements, future

[if sentences with wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only](#)

Keywords: wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only

[present perfect continuous](#) *Keywords:* present perfect continuous, present participle

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

Q

Your search for items starting with the letter 'Q' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[comparisons of quantity - showing no difference](#) *Keywords:*

quantity, comparison, adjective, difference

[comparisons of quantity - showing difference](#) *Keywords:* quantity,

comparison, adjective, difference

[comparisons of quantity - menu](#) *Keywords:* quantity, comparison,

adjective

Determiners

[quantifiers 6 - something, somebody, someone etc.](#) *Keywords:*

something, somebody, someone, somewhere, anything, anybody, anyone, anywhere, nothing, nobody, noone, nowhere,

[quantifiers 5 - some and any](#) *Keywords:* determiners, quantifiers,

some, any

[quantifiers 1 - determiners, a few, few, a little, little](#) *Keywords:*

determiners, a few, few, a little, little

[quantifiers 3 - how, much, many, few, lot etc.](#) *Keywords:* how,

much, many, few, lot, number, several, countable, uncountable

[pre-determiners](#) *Keywords:* such, what, rather, quite

[question words - which, what, whose](#) *Keywords:* which, what, whose

[quantifiers 4 - numbers](#) *Keywords:* cardinal, ordinal, fractions,

decimals, units, years, zero

[quantifiers 7 - enough](#) *Keywords:* enough, quantifiers, determiners

[quantifiers 2 - many, much, more, most etc.](#) *Keywords:* many,

much, more, most, little, less, least, few, fewer, fewest

[menu - quantifiers](#) *Keywords:* much, many, a little, a few, some, any

Direct and Indirect Speech

[reporting questions](#) *Keywords:* reporting yes/no questions, reporting

questions with question words

The Infinitive

[infinitive after question words](#) *Keywords:* infinitive, question words

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

R

Your search for items starting with the letter 'R' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adverbs

[relative adverbs - which, what, whose](#) *Keywords: where, when, why*

Determiners

[pre-determiners](#) *Keywords: such, what, rather, quite*

Direct and Indirect Speech

[summary of reporting verbs](#) *Keywords: summary, reporting verbs, to-infinitive, that-clause*

[reporting hopes and intentions](#) *Keywords: hopes, intentions, to-infinitive, that-clause*

[reporting orders, requests, suggestions](#) *Keywords: orders, requests, suggestions, should - omission, that-clause*

[reporting questions](#) *Keywords: reporting yes/no questions, reporting questions with question words*

[changes of time and place reference](#) *Keywords: time reference, place reference*

[tense changes](#) *Keywords: reported speech, tense changes*

[introduction - reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak](#)

Keywords: reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak

Relative Clauses

[non-defining relative clauses](#) *Keywords: relative clauses, non-defining*

[prepositions in relative clauses](#) *Keywords: prepositions, relative clauses*

[defining relative clauses](#) *Keywords: defining relative clauses*

[introduction - defining relative clauses, non-defining relative clauses](#) *Keywords: defining relative clauses, non-defining relative clauses*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

S

Your search for items starting with the letter 'S' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[the + superlative](#) *Keywords: the, superlative, adjectives*

[comparatives & superlatives](#) *Keywords: comparatives, superlatives, adjectives*

Determiners

[quantifiers 6 - something, somebody, someone etc.](#) *Keywords: something, somebody, someone, somewhere, anything, anybody, anyone, anywhere, nothing, nobody, noone, nowhere,*

[quantifiers 5 - some and any](#) *Keywords: determiners, quantifiers, some, any*

[pre-determiners](#) *Keywords: such, what, rather, quite*

Direct and Indirect Speech

[summary of reporting verbs](#) *Keywords: summary, reporting verbs, to-infinitive, that-clause*

[introduction - reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak](#)

Keywords: reported speech, 'that', say, tell, talk, speak

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[simple present for future events](#) *Keywords: future, facts, timetable, calendar*

[simple past](#) *Keywords: simple past, form, function, irregular verbs, irregular verbs, auxiliary 'did', ago*

[simple present](#) *Keywords: verbs, tenses, present simple*

[summary](#) *Keywords: verb tenses, present tenses, perfect tenses, conditional tenses, past tenses, future tenses*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

T

Your search for items starting with the letter 'T' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adjectives

[the + superlative](#) *Keywords: the, superlative, adjectives*

[comparative + than](#) *Keywords: comparative, than, adjective*

Adverbs

[time, adverbs of](#) *Keywords: adverbs, time*

Determiners

[the indefinite article](#) *Keywords: the, indefinite article, a, an*

[demonstratives - this, that, these, those etc](#) *Keywords: this, that, these, those, determiners*

[the, a, an](#) *Keywords: the, a, an, indefinite article, exceptions*

[the definite article](#) *Keywords: the, definite article*

Direct and Indirect Speech

[changes of time and place reference](#) *Keywords: time reference, place reference*

[tense changes](#) *Keywords: reported speech, tense changes*

The Infinitive

[verbs + infinitive with/without noun](#) *Keywords: verb with or without noun + infinitive*

[infinitive after question words](#) *Keywords: infinitive, question words*

[negative infinitive](#) *Keywords: negative infinitive*

[zero infinitive](#) *Keywords: zero infinitive*

[other forms of infinitive](#) *Keywords: perfect infinitive, continuous infinitive, passive infinitive, perfect continuous infinitive*

[form, with or without 'to'](#) *Keywords: to-infinitive, zero infinitive*

[verbs followed by infinitive](#) *Keywords: verbs + infinitive without a noun*

[verbs followed by noun + infinitive](#) *Keywords: verb + noun + infinitive*

[function](#) *Keywords: function, infinitive of purpose, infinitive as subject, infinitive after adjectives, infinitive with too/enough*

To Get

[examples](#) *Keywords: get, got, getting*

[get, got, getting](#) *Keywords: get, got, getting*

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[present perfect continuous](#) *Keywords: present perfect continuous, present participle*

[simple present](#) *Keywords: verbs, tenses, present simple*

[future continuous](#) *Keywords: future, actions in progress*

[present continuous](#) *Keywords: -ing, verbs, tenses, present participle, verbs not used in continuous form*

[present perfect 1](#) *Keywords: present perfect, past participle, irregular verbs*

[present perfect 2](#) *Keywords: present perfect, ever, never, already, yet*

[present perfect 3](#) *Keywords: present perfect, simple past, time, attitude*

[present perfect 4](#) *Keywords: present perfect, for, since*

[summary](#) *Keywords: verb tenses, present tenses, perfect tenses, conditional tenses, past tenses, future tenses*

[simple past](#) *Keywords: simple past, form, function, irregular verbs, irregular verbs, auxiliary 'did', ago*

[past continuous](#) *Keywords: past continuous, description, narrative*

[past perfect](#) *Keywords: past perfect, just*

[past perfect continuous](#) *Keywords: past perfect continuous, process, reported speech*

[future forms - introduction](#) *Keywords: future, attitude*

[future forms - simple future](#) *Keywords: will/shall, prediction, decision, future facts, certainty*

[present continuous for future events](#) *Keywords: arrangements, future*

[future with 'going to'](#) *Keywords: plans, intentions*

[menu / introduction](#) *Keywords: menu, introduction, tenses*

[future perfect](#) *Keywords: future, completed actions*

[future perfect continuous](#) *Keywords: unfinished, future time*

[other forms of future](#) *Keywords: is to, obligation, about to, immediate future*

[type 1 conditional](#) *Keywords: if + present + future, fact*

[simple present for future events](#) *Keywords: future, facts, timetable, calendar*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

U

Your search for items starting with the letter '**U**' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Determiners

[quantifiers 3 - how, much, many, few, lot etc.](#) *Keywords:* how, much, many, few, lot, number, several, countable, uncountable
[quantifiers 4 - numbers](#) *Keywords:* cardinal, ordinal, fractions, decimals, units, years, zero

Nouns

[use of capital letters](#) *Keywords:* capital letters, names, months, days, holidays, seasons, geographical, names, streets, buildings, titles of books, nouns
[countable & uncountable](#) *Keywords:* countable, uncountable, noun

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[if sentences with wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only](#)
Keywords: wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

V

Your search for items starting with the letter 'V' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adverbs

[viewpoint, commenting](#) *Keywords: adverbs, viewpoint, commenting*

Direct and Indirect Speech

[summary of reporting verbs](#) *Keywords: summary, reporting verbs, to-infinitive, that-clause*

-ING Form

[verbs followed by gerund](#) *Keywords: verb + gerund*

Irregular Verbs

[common irregular verbs - group 2](#) *Keywords: irregular verbs*

[common irregular verbs - group 1](#) *Keywords: irregular verbs*

[list of common irregular verb](#) *Keywords: irregular, verbs*

[introduction - irregular verbs](#) *Keywords: verbs, irregular*

[common irregular verbs - group 3](#) *Keywords: irregular verbs*

The Infinitive

[verbs followed by noun + infinitive](#) *Keywords: verb + noun + infinitive*

[verbs + infinitive with/without noun](#) *Keywords: verb with or without noun + infinitive*

[verbs followed by infinitive](#) *Keywords: verbs + infinitive without a noun*

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[present continuous](#) *Keywords: -ing, verbs, tenses, present participle, verbs not used in continuous form*

[simple past](#) *Keywords: simple past, form, function, irregular verbs, irregular verbs, auxiliary 'did', ago*

[future forms - introduction](#) *Keywords: future, attitude*

[past perfect continuous](#) *Keywords: past perfect continuous, process, reported speech*

[past perfect](#) *Keywords: past perfect, just*

[future forms - simple future](#) *Keywords: will/shall, prediction, decision, future facts, certainty*

[past continuous](#) *Keywords:* past continuous, description, narrative

[present perfect continous](#) *Keywords:* present perfect continous, present participle

[present perfect 4](#) *Keywords:* present perfect, for, since

[present perfect 3](#) *Keywords:* present perfect, simple past, time, attitude

[present continuous for future events](#) *Keywords:* arrangements, future

[present perfect 1](#) *Keywords:* present perfect, past participle, irregular verbs

[if sentences with if,conditional tenses](#) *Keywords:* if, conditional tenses

[simple present](#) *Keywords:* verbs, tenses, present simple

[summary](#) *Keywords:* verb tenses, present tenses, perfect tenses, conditional tenses, past tenses, future tenses

[present perfect 2](#) *Keywords:* present perfect, ever, never, already, yet

[if sentences with if + past,would,present conditional](#) *Keywords:* if + past, would, present conditional

[menu / introduction](#) *Keywords:* menu, introduction, tenses

[if sentences with wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only](#) *Keywords:* wish, would rather, suppose, what if, if only

[if sentences with if+not,unless,verbs](#) *Keywords:* if+not, unless, verbs

[if sentences with mixed conditionals](#) *Keywords:* mixed conditionals

[if sentences with conditional perfect continuous](#) *Keywords:* conditional perfect continuous

[future perfect continuous](#) *Keywords:* unfinished, future time

[if setences with present continuous conditional](#) *Keywords:* present continuous conditional

[simple present for future events](#) *Keywords:* future, facts, timetable, calendar

[type 1 conditional](#) *Keywords:* if + present + future, fact

[zero conditional](#) *Keywords:* if + present, general truths, instructions

[other forms of future](#) *Keywords:* is to, obligation, about to, immediate future

[future perfect](#) *Keywords:* future, completed actions

[future continuous](#) *Keywords:* future, actions in progress

[future with 'going to'](#) *Keywords:* plans, intentions

[if sentences with perfect conditional,if + past perfect](#) *Keywords:* perfect conditional, if + past perfect

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

W

Your search for items starting with the letter 'W' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Adverbs

[relative adverbs - which, what, whose](#) *Keywords: where, when, why*

[interrogative - why, where, how, when](#) *Keywords: why, where, how, when*

Determiners

[pre-determiners](#) *Keywords: such, what, rather, quite*

[defining words - which, whose](#) *Keywords: which, whose*

[question words - which, what, whose](#) *Keywords: which, what, whose*

The Infinitive

[verbs + infinitive with/without noun](#) *Keywords: verb with or without noun + infinitive*

[form, with or without 'to'](#) *Keywords: to-infinitive, zero infinitive*

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

X

Your search for items starting with the letter 'X' has not returned any related items. You may have better luck with a keyword search using the keyword search box.

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

Y

Your search for items starting with the letter 'Y' has not returned any related items. You may have better luck with a keyword search using the keyword search box.

SEARCH BY ALPHABETICAL LETTER

Z

Your search for items starting with the letter 'Z' has returned the following list.

The item may appear in the top heading, main sub-heading or in the list of keywords.

Determiners

[quantifiers 4 - numbers](#) *Keywords:* cardinal, ordinal, fractions, decimals, units, years, zero

The Infinitive

[zero infinitive](#) *Keywords:* zero infinitive
[form, with or without 'to'](#) *Keywords:* to-infinitive, zero infinitive

Verbs and Verb Tenses

[zero conditional](#) *Keywords:* if + present, general truths, instructions

THE QUANTIFIERS

NUMBERS

The **cardinal** numbers (one, two, three, etc.) are adjectives referring to quantity, and the **ordinal** numbers (first, second, third, etc.) refer to distribution.

| Number | Ordinal | Cardinal |
|-----------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | one | first |
| 2 | two | second |
| 3 | three | third |
| 4 | four | fourth |
| 5 | five | fifth |
| 6 | six | sixth |
| 7 | seven | seventh |
| 8 | eight | eighth |
| 9 | nine | ninth |
| 10 | ten | tenth |
| 11 | eleven | eleventh |
| 12 | twelve | twelfth |
| 13 | thirteen | thirteenth |
| 14 | fourteen | fourteenth |
| 15 | fifteen | fifteenth |
| 16 | sixteen | sixteenth |
| 17 | seventeen | seventeenth |
| 18 | eighteen | eighteenth |
| 19 | nineteen | nineteenth |
| 20 | twenty | twentieth |
| 21 | twenty-one | twenty-first |
| 22 | twenty-two | twenty-second |
| 23 | twenty-three | twenty-third |
| 24 | twenty-four | twenty-fourth |
| 25 | twenty-five | twenty-fifth |
| 26 | twenty-six | twenty-sixth |
| 27 | twenty-seven | twenty-seventh |
| 28 | twenty-eight | twenty-eighth |
| 29 | twenty-nine | twenty-ninth |
| 30 | thirty | thirtieth |
| 31 | thirty-one | thirty-first |
| 40 | forty | fortieth |
| 50 | fifty | fiftieth |
| 60 | sixty | sixtieth |
| 70 | seventy | seventieth |
| 80 | eighty | eightieth |
| 90 | ninety | ninetieth |
| 100 | one hundred | hundredth |
| 500 | five hundred | five hundredth |
| 1,000 | one thousand | thousandth |
| 100,000 | one hundred thousand | hundred thousandth |
| 1,000,000 | one million | millionth |

Examples:

- There are *twenty-five* people in the room.
- He was the *fourteenth* person to win the award since 1934.
- *Six hundred thousand* people were left homeless after the earthquake.
- I must have asked you *twenty* times to be quiet.
- He went to Israel for the *third* time this year.

Fractions and decimals

| Said | Written | Said |
|----------------|---------|------------------|
| half | 0.5 | point five |
| a quarter | 0.25 | point two five |
| three quarters | 0.75 | point seven five |

Percentages

| Written | Said |
|---------|-----------------------|
| 25% | twenty five percent |
| 50% | fifty percent |
| 75% | seventy five percent |
| 100% | a/one hundred percent |

Units

| Written | Said |
|---------|---|
| \$1,200 | one thousand two hundred dollars |
| £16,486 | sixteen thousand four hundred and eighty-six pounds |
| 545kms | five hundred and forty-five kilometres |
| \$25.35 | twenty-five dollars thirty-five |

Years

| Written | Said |
|---------|-----------------------|
| 1988 | Nineteen eighty-eight |
| 1864 | Eighteen sixty-four |
| 1999 | Nineteen ninety-nine |

How to say '0'

| | |
|--------|---|
| nought | used in mathematical expressions and decimals: 'nought times three equals <i>nought</i> ' 0.3 = ' <i>nought</i> point three' (or 'point three') 0.03 = 'point <i>nought</i> three' |
|--------|---|

| | |
|------------------|--|
| zero | used in scientific expressions, especially temperatures: 20°C = minus twenty degrees <i>or</i> twenty degrees below <i>zero</i> also used to mean 'the lowest point': 'The heavy rain reduced visibility to <i>zero</i> ' |
| 'o' (the letter) | used in telephone numbers: 0171 390 0062 = ' <i>o</i> one seven one three nine <i>o</i> double <i>o</i> six two' |
| nil/nothing | used to express the score in games such as football: 2 - 0 = 'two <i>nil</i> ' or 'two <i>nothing</i> ' |

 previous

next 

DETERMINERS

FUNCTION AND CLASSES OF DETERMINERS

Function

Determiners are words placed in front of a noun to make it clear what the noun refers to. The word '*people*' by itself is a general reference to some group of human beings. If someone says '*these people*', we know which group they are talking about, and if they say '*a lot of people*' we know how big the group is.

Classes of Determiners

There are several classes of determiners:

[Definite and Indefinite articles](#)

the, a, an

[Demonstratives](#)

this, that, these, those

[Possessives](#)

my, your, his, her, its, our, their

[Quantifiers](#)

a few, a little, much, many, a lot of, most, some, any, enough, etc.

[Numbers](#)

one, ten, thirty, etc.

[Distributives](#)

all, both, half, either, neither, each, every

[Difference words](#)

other, another

[Question words](#)

Which, what, whose

[Defining words](#)

which, whose

The following words are [pre-determiners](#). They go before determiners, such as articles: *such and what, half, rather, quite*

DEFINITE AND INDEFINITE ARTICLES

THE, A, AN

[Definite article: THE](#)

[Indefinite article: A/AN](#)

[Exceptions to using the definite article](#)

[◀ previous](#)

[next ▶](#)

DEFINITE ARTICLE

THE

Articles in English are invariable. That is, they do not change according to the gender or number of the noun they refer to, e.g. **the boy, the woman, the children**

'The' is used:

1. to refer to something which has already been mentioned.

Example: An elephant and a mouse fell in love.
The mouse loved **the elephant's** long trunk,
and **the elephant** loved **the mouse's** tiny nose.

2. when both the speaker and listener know what is being talked about, even if it has not been mentioned before.

Example: 'Where's **the bathroom?**'
'It's on **the first floor.**'

3. in sentences or clauses where we define or identify a particular person or object:

Examples: **The man** who wrote this book is famous.
'Which car did you scratch?' '**The red one.**'
My house is **the one** with a blue door.'

4. to refer to objects we regard as unique:

Examples: **the sun, the moon, the world**

5. before superlatives and ordinal numbers: ([see Adjectives](#))

Examples: **the highest** building, **the first** page, **the last** chapter.

6. with adjectives, to refer to a whole group of people:

Examples: **the Japanese** (see [Nouns - Nationalities](#)), **the old**

7. with names of geographical areas and oceans:

Examples: **the Caribbean, the Sahara, the Atlantic**

8. with decades, or groups of years:

Example: she grew up in **the seventies**

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

THE + SUPERLATIVE

'*the*' is placed before the superlative:

For example: He is *the richest* man in the world.

[◀ previous](#)

[next ▶](#)

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

IRREGULAR COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

These adjectives have completely irregular comparative and superlative forms:

| Adjective | Comparative | Superlative |
|-----------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| good | <i>better</i> | <i>best</i> |
| bad | <i>worse</i> | <i>worst</i> |
| little | <i>less</i> | <i>least</i> |
| much | <i>more</i> | <i>most</i> |
| far | <i>further / farther</i> | <i>furthest / farthest</i> |

[◀ previous](#)[next ▶](#)

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

FORMING THE COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE

| Number of syllables | Comparative | Superlative |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| one syllable | + -er | + -est |
| <i>tall</i> | <i>taller</i> | <i>tallest</i> |
| one syllable with the spelling <i>consonant + single vowel + consonant</i> : double the final consonant: | | |
| <i>fat</i> | <i>fatter</i> | <i>fattest</i> |
| <i>big</i> | <i>bigger</i> | <i>biggest</i> |
| <i>sad</i> | <i>sadder</i> | <i>saddest</i> |



| Number of syllables | Comparative | Superlative |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| two syllables | + -er OR more + adj | + -est OR most + adj |
| ending in: -y, -ly, -ow ending in: -le, -er or -ure these common adjectives - handsome, polite, pleasant, common, quiet | | |
| <i>happy</i> | <i>happier/ more happy</i> | <i>happiest/ most happy</i> |
| <i>yellow</i> | <i>yellower/ more yellow</i> | <i>yellowest/ most yellow</i> |
| <i>simple</i> | <i>simpler/ more simple</i> | <i>simplest/ most simple</i> |
| <i>tender</i> | <i>tenderer/ more tender</i> | <i>tenderest/ most tender</i> |

If you are not sure, use **MORE + OR MOST +**

Note: Adjectives ending in '-y' like *happy, pretty, busy, sunny, lucky* etc.: replace the -y with -ier or -iest in the comparative and superlative form

| <i>busy</i> | <i>busier</i> | <i>busiest</i> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | |
| Number of syllables | Comparative | Superlative |
| three syllables or more | more + adj | most + adj |
| <i>important</i> | <i>more important</i> | <i>most important</i> |
| <i>expensive</i> | <i>more expensive</i> | <i>most expensive</i> |

Examples:

- a. A cat is *fast*, a tiger is *faster* but a cheetah is *the fastest*
- b. A car is *heavy*, a truck is *heavier*, but a train is *the heaviest*
- c. A park bench is *comfortable*, a restaurant chair is *more comfortable*, but a sofa is the *most comfortable*

 previous

next 

FORM AND FUNCTION OF ADJECTIVES

ORDER

Where a number of adjectives are used together, the order depends on the function of the adjective. The usual order is:

Value/opinion, Size, Age/Temperature, Shape, Colour, Origin, Material

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Value/opinion | delicious, lovely, charming |
| Size | small, huge, tiny |
| Age/Temperature | old, hot, young |
| Shape | round, square, rectangular |
| Colour | red, blonde, black |
| Origin | Swedish, Victorian, Chinese |
| Material | plastic, wooden, silver |

Examples:

- a *lovely old red* post-box
- some *small round plastic* tables
- some *charming small silver* ornaments

FORM AND FUNCTION OF ADJECTIVES

FUNCTION

Adjectives tell us more about a noun. They can:

Describe feelings or qualities:

He is a *lonely* man
They are *honest* people

Give nationality or origin:

Pierre is *French*
This clock is *German*
Our house is *Victorian*

Tell more about a thing's characteristics:

A *wooden* table.
The knife is *sharp*.

Tell us about age:

He's a *young* man
My coat is very *old*

Tell us about size and measurement:

John is a *tall* man.
This is a very *long* film.

Tell us about colour:

Paul wore a *red* shirt.
The sunset was *crimson* and *gold*.

Tell us about material/what something is made of:

It was a *wooden* table
She wore a *cotton* dress

Tell us about shape:

A *rectangular* box
A *square* envelope

Express a judgement or a value:

A *fantastic* film

Grammar is *boring*.

 previous

next 

FORM AND FUNCTION OF ADJECTIVES

FORM

1. Adjectives are **invariable**:

They do not change their form depending on the gender or number of the noun.

A hot potato *Some hot potatoes*

2. To **emphasise** or strengthen the meaning of an adjective use 'very' or 'really':

A very hot potato *Some really hot potatoes.*

(BUT see also [Modifiers/Adverbs](#))

3. **Position** of adjectives:

a) Usually **in front of** a noun: *A beautiful girl.*

b) **After** verbs like "to be", "to seem", "to look", "to taste":

- *The girl is beautiful*
- *You look tired*
- *This meat tastes funny.*

c) **After** the noun: in some fixed expressions:

- *The Princess Royal*
- *The President elect*
- *a court martial*



the adjectives *involved*, *present*, *concerned*:

1. I want to see the people *involved/concerned* (= the people who have something to do with the matter)
2. Here is a list of the people *present* (= the people who were in the building or at the meeting)

Be careful! When these adjectives are used before the noun they have a different meaning:

- An *involved* discussion = detailed, complex
- A *concerned* father = worried, anxious
- The *present* situation = current, happening now

ADVERBS - FUNCTION

Adverbs modify, or tell us more about other words, usually verbs:

- The bus moved *slowly*.
- The bears ate *greedily*.

Sometimes they tell us more about **adjectives**:

- You look *absolutely* fabulous!

They can also modify other adverbs:

- She played the violin *extremely* well.
- You're speaking *too* quietly.

[◀ previous](#) [next ▶](#)

ADVERBS - MENU

- [Function](#)
- [Form](#)
- [Comparative forms](#)
- [Kinds of adverbs](#)

next 

ADVERBS - FORM

1. In most cases, an adverb is formed by adding '*-ly*' to an adjective:

| Adjective | Adverb |
|-----------|---------|
| cheap | cheaply |
| quick | quickly |
| slow | slowly |

Examples:

- Time goes *quickly*.
- He walked *slowly* to the door.
- She *certainly* had an interesting life.
- He *carefully* picked up the sleeping child.

If the adjective ends in '*-y*', replace the '*y*' with '*i*' and add '*-ly*':

| Adjective | Adverb |
|-----------|---------|
| easy | easily |
| angry | angrily |
| happy | happily |
| lucky | luckily |

If the adjective ends in '*-able*', '*-ible*', or '*-le*', replace the '*-e*' with '*-y*':

| Adjective | Adverb |
|-----------|----------|
| probable | probably |
| terrible | terribly |
| gentle | gently |

If the adjective ends in '*-ic*', add '*-ally*':

| Adjective | Adverb |
|-----------|--------------|
| basic | basically |
| economic | economically |
| tragic | tragically |

Note: Exception: *public* - *publicly*

2. Some adverbs have the same form as the adjective:

| Adjective / Adverb | |
|--------------------|----------|
| early | late |
| fast | near |
| hard | straight |
| high | wrong |

Compare:

- It is a *fast* car.
- He drives very *fast*.
- This is a *hard* exercise.
- He works *hard*.
- We saw many *high* buildings.
- The bird flew *high* in the sky.

3. 'Well' and 'good'

'Well' is the adverb that corresponds to the adjective 'good'.

Examples:

- He is a *good* student.
- He studies *well*.
- She is a *good* pianist.
- She plays the piano *well*.
- They are *good* swimmers.
- They swim *well*.



COMPARATIVE FORMS OF ADVERBS

In general, comparative and superlative forms of adverbs are the same as for adjectives:

- add *-er* or *-est* to short adverbs:

| Adverb | Comparative | Superlative |
|--------|-------------|-------------|
| hard | harder | the hardest |
| late | later | the latest |
| fast | faster | the fastest |

Example:

- Jim works *harder* than his brother.
- Everyone in the race ran *fast*, but John ran *the fastest* of all.

with adverbs ending in *-ly*, use *more* for the comparative and *most* for the superlative:

| Adverb | Comparative | Superlative |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| quietly | <i>more</i> quietly | <i>most</i> quietly |
| slowly | <i>more</i> slowly | <i>most</i> slowly |
| seriously | <i>more</i> seriously | <i>most</i> seriously |

Example:

- The teacher spoke *more slowly* to help us to understand.
- Could you sing *more quietly* please?

Some adverbs have irregular comparative forms:

| Adverb | Comparative | Superlative |
|--------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| badly | <i>worse</i> | <i>worst</i> |
| far | <i>farther/further</i> | <i>farthest/furthest</i> |
| little | <i>less</i> | <i>least</i> |
| well | <i>better</i> | <i>best</i> |

Example:

- The little boy ran *further* than his friends.
- You're driving *worse* today than yesterday !

BE CAREFUL! Sometimes '*most*' can mean '*very*':

- We were *most* grateful for your help

- I am *most* impressed by this application.

 previous next 

KINDS OF ADVERBS

There are several classes or 'kinds' of adverbs that we use for specific functions:

1. [Adverbs of manner](#)
2. [Adverbs of place](#)
3. [Adverbs of time](#)
4. [Adverbs of certainty](#)
5. [Adverbs of degree](#)
6. [Interrogative adverbs](#)
7. [Relative adverbs](#)
8. [Viewpoint and commenting adverbs](#)

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

KINDS OF ADVERBS

ADVERBS OF MANNER

Adverbs of manner tell us **how** something happens. They are usually placed **after the main verb** or **after the object**.

Examples:

- He swims *well*, (after the main verb)
- He ran... *rapidly, slowly, quickly*..
- She spoke... *softly, loudly, aggressively*..
- James coughed *loudly* to attract her attention.
- He plays the flute *beautifully*. (after the object)
- He ate the chocolate cake *greedily*.

BE CAREFUL! The adverb should **not** be put **between** the verb and the object:

- He ate *greedily* the chocolate cake [**incorrect**]
- He ate the chocolate cake *greedily* [**correct**]

If there is a **preposition** before the object, e.g. *at, towards*, we can place the adverb either before the preposition or after the object.

Example:

- The child ran *happily towards* his mother.
- The child ran *towards* his mother *happily*.

Sometimes an adverb of manner is placed before a verb + object to add emphasis:

- He *gently* woke the sleeping woman.

Some writers put an adverb of manner at the beginning of the sentence to catch our attention and make us curious:

- *Slowly* she picked up the knife.

(We want to know *what* happened *slowly*, *who* did it *slowly*, *why they did it slowly*)

However, adverbs should always come **AFTER** intransitive verbs (=verbs which have no object).

Example:

- The town grew *quickly*
- He waited *patiently*

Also, these common adverbs are almost always placed **AFTER** the verb:

- *well*
- *badly*
- *hard*
- *fast*

The position of the adverb is important when there is more than one verb in a sentence. If the adverb is placed after a *clause*, then it modifies the **whole action** described by the clause.

Notice the difference in meaning between the following pairs of sentences:

- She *quickly* agreed to re-type the letter (= her agreement was quick)
- She agreed to re-type the letter *quickly* (= the re-typing was quick)
- He *quietly* asked me to leave the house (= his request was quiet)
- He asked me to leave the house *quietly* (= the leaving was quiet)



KINDS OF ADVERBS

ADVERBS OF PLACE

Adverbs of place tell us *where* something happens.
They are usually placed after the main verb or after the object:

Example:

after the main verb:

- I looked *everywhere*
- John looked *away, up, down, around...*
- I'm going *home, out, back*
- Come *in*

after the object:

- They built a house *nearby*
- She took the child *outside*

'Here' and 'there'

With verbs of movement, *here* means towards or with the speaker:

- Come *here* (= towards me)
- It's in *here* (= come with me to see it)

There means away from, or not with the speaker:

- Put it *there* (= away from me)
- It's in *there* (= go by yourself to see it)

Here and *there* are combined with prepositions to make many common adverbial phrases:

down here, down there;
over here, over there;
under here, under there;
up here, up there

Here and *there* are placed at the beginning of the sentence in exclamations or when emphasis is needed.

They are followed by the **verb** if the subject is a **noun**:

- *Here* comes the bus. (followed by the verb)

Or by a **pronoun** if this is the subject (it, she, he etc.):

- *Here* it is! (followed by the pronoun)
- *There* she goes! (followed by the pronoun)

NOTE: most common adverbs of place also function as **prepositions**.

Examples:

about, across, along, around, behind, by, down, in, off, on, over, round, through, under, up.

Go to **Prepositions** or **Phrasal Verbs**

Other adverbs of place: ending in '*-wards*', expressing movement in a particular direction:

| | |
|-----------|------------|
| backwards | northwards |
| forwards | southwards |
| downwards | eastwards |
| upwards | westwards |
| inwards | homewards |
| outwards | onwards |

Example:

- Cats don't usually walk *backwards*.
- The ship sailed *westwards*.

BE CAREFUL! 'Towards' is a **preposition**, not an adverb, so it is always followed by a *noun* or a *pronoun*:

- He walked *towards the car*.
- She ran *towards me*.

expressing both movement and location:

ahead, abroad, overseas, uphill, downhill, sideways, indoors, outdoors

Example:

- The child went *indoors*.
- He lived and worked *abroad*.



KINDS OF ADVERBS

ADVERBS OF TIME

Adverbs of time tell us *when* an action happened, but also *for how long*, and *how often*.

Examples:

- **When:** *today, yesterday, later, now, last year*
- **For how long:** *all day, not long, for a while, since last year*
- **How often:** *sometimes, frequently, never, often, yearly*

"When" adverbs are usually placed at the end of the sentence:

- Goldilocks went to the Bears' house *yesterday*.
- I'm going to tidy my room *tomorrow*.

This is a "neutral" position, but some "when" adverbs can be put in other positions to give a different emphasis

Compare:

- *Later* Goldilocks ate some porridge. (the time is more important)
- Goldilocks *later* ate some porridge. (this is more formal, like a policeman's report)
- Goldilocks ate some porridge *later*. (this is neutral, no particular emphasis)

"For how long" adverbs are usually placed at the end of the sentence:

- She stayed in the Bears' house *all day*.
- My mother lived in France *for a year*.

Notice: 'for' is always followed by an expression of *duration*:

- *for three days*,
- *for a week*,
- *for several years*,
- *for two centuries*.

'since' is always followed by an expression of *a point in time*:

- *since Monday*,
- *since 1997*,
- *since the last war*.

"How often" adverbs expressing the *frequency* of an action are usually placed before the main verb but after auxiliary verbs (such as *be, have, may, must*):

- I **often** eat vegetarian food. (before the main verb)
- He **never** drinks milk. (before the main verb)
- You must **always** fasten your seat belt. (after the auxiliary *must*)
- She is **never** sea-sick. (after the auxiliary *is*)
- I have **never** forgotten my first kiss. (after the auxiliary *have* and before the main verb *forgotten*)

Some other "**how often**" adverbs express the **exact number of times** an action happens and are usually placed at the end of the sentence:

- This magazine is published **monthly**.
- He visits his mother **once a week**.

When a **frequency** adverb is placed at the end of a sentence it is much stronger.

Compare:

- She **regularly** visits France.
- She visits France **regularly**.

Adverbs that can be used in these two positions:

- **frequently**,
- **generally**,
- **normally**,
- **occasionally**,
- **often**,
- **regularly**,
- **sometimes**,
- **usually**

'Yet' and 'still'

Yet is used in questions and in negative sentences, and is placed **at the end of the sentence or after *not***.

- Have you finished your work **yet?** (= a simple request for information)
No, **not yet**. (= simple negative answer)
- They haven't met him **yet**. (= simple negative statement)
- Haven't you finished **yet?** (= expressing slight surprise)

Still expresses continuity; it is used in positive sentences and questions, and is placed **before the main verb and after auxiliary verbs** (such as *be, have, might, will*)

- I am **still** hungry.
- She is **still** waiting for you
- Are you **still** here?
- Do you **still** work for the BBC?

ORDER OF ADVERBS OF TIME

If you need to use more than one adverb of time at the end of a sentence, use them in this order:

- 1: '**how long**'
- 2: '**how often**'
- 3: '**when**' (think of 'low')

Example:

- 1 + 2 : I work (1) *for five hours* (2) *every day*
- 2 + 3 : The magazine was published (2) *weekly* (3) *last year*.
- 1 + 3 : I was abroad (1) *for two months* (3) *last year*.
- 1 + 2 + 3 : She worked in a hospital (1) *for two days* (2) *every week* (3) *last year*.

 previous next 

KINDS OF ADVERBS

ADVERBS OF CERTAINTY

These adverbs express how certain or sure we feel about an action or event.

Common adverbs of certainty:

certainly, definitely, probably, undoubtedly, surely

Adverbs of certainty go before the main verb but after the verb 'to be':

- He **definitely** left the house this morning.
- He is **probably** in the park.

With other auxiliary verb, these adverbs go between the auxiliary and the main verb:

- He has **certainly** forgotten the meeting.
- He will **probably** remember tomorrow.

Sometimes these adverbs can be placed at the beginning of the sentence:

- **Undoubtedly**, Winston Churchill was a great politician.

BE CAREFUL! with **surely**. When it is placed at the beginning of the sentence, it means the speaker thinks something is true, but is looking for confirmation:

Example:

- **Surely** you've got a bicycle?

See also [ADVERBS OF ATTITUDE](#)



KINDS OF ADVERBS

VIEWPOINT AND COMMENTING ADVERBS

There are some adverbs and adverbial expressions which tell us about the speaker's viewpoint or opinion about an action, or make some comment on the action.

Viewpoint

Frankly, I think he is a liar. (= this is my frank, honest opinion)

Theoretically, you should pay a fine. (= from a theoretical point of view but there may be another way of looking at the situation)

These adverbs are placed at the **beginning** of the sentence and are separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma.

Some common Viewpoint adverbs:

honestly, seriously, confidentially, personally, surprisingly, ideally, economically, officially, obviously, clearly, surely, undoubtedly.

Examples:

- *Personally*, I'd rather go by train.
- *Surprisingly*, this car is cheaper than the smaller model.
- *Geographically*, Britain is rather cut off from the rest of Europe.

Commenting

- She is *certainly* the best person for the job.
- You *obviously* enjoyed your meal.

These are very similar to viewpoint adverbs, and often the same words, but they go in a different position - after the verb *to be* and before the main verb.

Some common Commenting adverbs:

definitely, certainly, obviously, simply.

KINDS OF ADVERBS

ADVERBS OF DEGREE

Adverbs of degree tell us about the intensity or degree of an action, an adjective or another adverb.

Common adverbs of degree:

Almost, nearly, quite, just, too, enough, hardly, scarcely, completely, very, extremely.

Adverbs of degree are usually placed:

1. before the adjective or adverb they are modifying:
e.g. The water was *extremely cold*.
2. before the main verb:
e.g. He was *just* leaving. She has *almost* finished.

Examples:

- She doesn't *quite* know what she'll do after university.
- They are *completely* exhausted from the trip.
- I am *too* tired to go out tonight.
- He *hardly* noticed what she was saying.

Enough, very, too

Enough as an adverb meaning 'to the necessary degree' goes *after* adjectives and adverbs.

Example:

- Is your coffee *hot enough?* (adjective)
- He didn't work *hard enough.* (adverb)

It also goes before nouns, and means 'as much as is necessary'. In this case it is not an adverb, but a 'determiner'.

Example:

- We have *enough bread.*
- They don't have *enough food.*

Too as an adverb meaning 'more than is necessary or useful' goes *before* adjectives and adverbs, e.g.

- This coffee is *too* hot. (adjective)
- He works *too* hard. (adverb)

Enough and **too** with adjectives can be followed by '*for someone/something*'.

Example:

- The dress was big **enough** for me.
- She's not experienced **enough** for this job.
- The coffee was **too** hot for me.
- The dress was **too** small for her.

We can also use 'to + infinitive' after **enough** and **too** with adjectives/adverb.

Example:

- The coffee was **too** hot to drink.
- He didn't work hard **enough** to pass the exam.
- She's not old **enough** to get married.
- You're **too** young to have grandchildren!

Very goes before an adverb or adjective to make it stronger.

Example:

- The girl was **very** beautiful. (adjective)
- He worked **very** quickly. (adverb)

If we want to make a negative form of an adjective or adverb, we can use a word of opposite meaning, or **not very**.

Example:

- The girl was ugly OR The girl was **not very** beautiful
- He worked slowly OR He didn't work **very** quickly.

BE CAREFUL! There is a big difference between **too** and **very**.

- **Very** expresses a fact:
He speaks **very** quickly.
- **Too** suggests there is a problem:
He speaks **too** quickly (*for me to understand*).

Other adverbs like very

These common adverbs are used like very and not very, and are listed in order of strength, from positive to negative:

extremely, especially, particularly, pretty, rather, quite, fairly, rather, not especially, not particularly.

Note: **rather** can be positive or negative, depending on the adjective or adverb that follows:

Positive: The teacher was **rather** nice.

Negative: The film was **rather** disappointing.

Note on inversion with negative adverbs:

Normally the subject goes before the verb:

| SUBJECT | VERB |
|---------|------|
| I | left |
| She | goes |

However, some negative adverbs can cause an **inversion** - the order is reversed and the verb goes before the subject

Example:

I have *never* seen such courage. ➡➡ ***Never*** have I seen such courage.

She *rarely* left the house. ➡➡ ***Rarely*** did she leave the house.

Negative inversion is used in **writing**, not in speaking.

Other adverbs and adverbial expressions that can be used like this:

seldom, scarcely, hardly, not only

but also, no sooner

than, not until, under no circumstances.

 previous next 

KINDS OF ADVERBS

INTERROGATIVE ADVERBS

These are:

why, where, how, when

They are usually placed at the *beginning of a question*.

Examples:

- *Why* are you so late?
- *Where* is my passport?
- *How* are you?
- *How* much is that coat?
- *When* does the train arrive?

Notice that *how* can be used in four different ways:

1. meaning '*in what way?*':

How did you make this sauce?

How do you start the car?

2. with *adjectives*:

How tall are you?

How old is your house?

3. with *much* and *many*:

How much are these tomatoes?

How many people are coming to the party?

4. with other *adverbs*:

How quickly can you read this?

How often do you go to London?

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

KINDS OF ADVERBS

RELATIVE ADVERBS

The following adverbs can be used to join sentences or clauses. They replace the more formal structure of *preposition + which* in a relative clause:

where, when, why

Examples:

- That's the restaurant **where** we met for the first time.
(*where = at/in which*)
- I remember the day **when** we first met.
(*when = on which*)
- There was a very hot summer the year **when** he was born.
(*when = in which*)
- Tell me (the reason) **why** you were late home.
(*why = for which, but could replace the whole phrase 'the reason for which'*)

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

ADJECTIVES

Section Menu

FORM AND FUNCTION OF ADJECTIVES

- [Form](#)
- [Function](#)
- [Order](#)

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

- [Forming the Comparative and Superlative](#)
- [Irregular Comparatives and Superlatives](#)
- [the + Superlative](#)
- [The Comparative + than](#)
- [As + adjective + as](#)
- [Not as + adjective + as](#)
- [Comparisons of quantity](#)



COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

COMPARATIVE + THAN

To compare the difference between two people, things or events.

Examples:

- Mt. Everest is *higher than* Mt. Blanc.
- Thailand is *sunnier than* Norway.
- A car is *more expensive than* a bicycle.
- Albert is *more intelligent than* Arthur.

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

AS + ADJECTIVE + AS

To compare people, places, events or things, when there is **no difference**, use *as + adjective + as*:

- Peter is 24 years old. John is 24 years old. Peter is *as old as* John.

More examples:

- Moscow is *as cold as* St. Petersburg in the winter.
- Ramona is *as happy as* Raphael.
- Einstein is *as famous as* Darwin.
- A tiger is *as dangerous as* a lion.



COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

NOT AS + ADJECTIVE + AS

Difference can also be shown by using **not so/as ...as**:

- Mont Blanc is *not as high as* Mount Everest
- Norway is *not as sunny as* Thailand
- A bicycle is *not as expensive as* a car
- Arthur is *not as intelligent as* Albert

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

COMPARISONS OF QUANTITY

To show difference: *more, less, fewer + than*

To show no difference: *as much as, as many as, as few as, as little as*

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

COMPARISONS OF QUANTITY

To show difference: *more*, *less*, *fewer* + *than*

Examples:

With countable nouns: *more* / *fewer*

- Eloise has *more* children *than* Chantal.
- Chantal has *fewer* children *than* Eloise.
- There are *fewer* dogs in Cardiff *than* in Bristol
- I have visited *fewer* countries *than* my friend has.
- He has read *fewer* books *than* she has.

With uncountable nouns: *more* / *less*

- Eloise has *more* money *than* Chantal.
- Chantal has *less* money *than* Eloise.
- I spend *less* time on homework *than* you do.
- Cats drink *less* water *than* dogs.
- This new dictionary gives *more* information *than* the old one.

So, the rule is:

MORE + nouns that are **countable** or **uncountable**

FEWER + **countable** nouns

LESS + **uncountable** nouns

To show [no difference](#) see next page.

 previous

next 

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

COMPARISONS OF QUANTITY

To show no difference: *as much as* , *as many as* , *as few as* , *as little as*

- *as many as* / *as few as* + countable nouns
- *as much as* / *as little as* + uncountable nouns

Examples:

With countable nouns:

- They have *as many* children *as* us.
- We have *as many* customers *as* them.
- Tom has *as few* books *as* Jane.
- There are *as few* houses in his village *as* in mine.
- You know *as many* people *as* I do.
- I have visited the States *as many* times *as* he has.

With uncountable nouns:

- John eats *as much* food *as* Peter.
- Jim has *as little* food *as* Sam.
- You've heard *as much* news *as* I have.
- He's had *as much* success *as* his brother has.
- They've got *as little* water *as* we have.



NOUNS

NATIONALITIES

- a. **Country:** I live in *England*.
- b. **Adjective:** He reads *English* literature.
- c. **Noun:** She is an *Englishwoman*.

| COUNTRY | ADJECTIVE | NOUN |
|--------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| Africa | African | an African |
| America | American | an American |
| Argentina | Argentinian | an Argentinian |
| Austria | Austrian | an Austrian |
| Australia | Australian | an Australian |
| Bangladesh | Bangladesh(i) | a Bangladeshi |
| Belgium | Belgian | a Belgian |
| Brazil | Brazilian | a Brazilian |
| Britain | British | a Briton/Britisher |
| Cambodia | Cambodian | a Cambodian |
| Chile | Chilean | a Chilean |
| China | Chinese | a Chinese |
| Colombia | Colombian | a Colombian |
| Croatia | Croatian | a Croat |
| the Czech Republic | Czech | a Czech |
| Denmark | Danish | a Dane |
| England | English | an Englishman/Englishwoman |
| Finland | Finnish | a Finn |
| France | French | a Frenchman/Frenchwoman |
| Germany | German | a German |
| Greece | Greek | a Greek |
| Holland | Dutch | a Dutchman/Dutchwoman |
| Hungary | Hungarian | a Hungarian |
| Iceland | Icelandic | an Icelander |
| India | Indian | an Indian |
| Indonesia | Indonesian | an Indonesian |
| Iran | Iranian | an Iranian |
| Iraq | Iraqi | an Iraqi |
| Ireland | Irish | an Irishman/Irishwoman |
| Israel | Israeli | an Israeli |
| Jamaica | Jamaican | a Jamaican |

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Japan | Japanese | a Japanese |
| Mexico | Mexican | a Mexican |
| Morocco | Moroccan | a Moroccan |
| Norway | Norwegian | a Norwegian |
| Peru | Peruvian | a Peruvian |
| the Philippines | Philippine | a Filipino |
| Poland | Polish | a Pole |
| Portugal | Portuguese | a Portuguese |
| Rumania | Rumanian | a Rumanian |
| Russia | Russian | a Russian |
| Saudi Arabia | Saudi, Saudi Arabian | a Saudi, a Saudi Arabian |
| Scotland | Scottish | a Scot |
| Serbia | Serbian | a Serb |
| the Slovak Republic | Slovak | a Slovak |
| Sweden | Swedish | a Swede |
| Switzerland | Swiss | a Swiss |
| Thailand | Thai | a Thai |
| The USA | American | an American |
| Tunisia | Tunisian | a Tunisian |
| Turkey | Turkish | a Turk |
| Vietnam | Vietnamese | a Vietnamese |
| Wales | Welsh | a Welshman/Welshwoman |
| Yugoslavia | Yugoslav | a Yugoslav |

Note: We use *the + nationality adjective ending* in *-ese* or *-ish* with a plural verb, to refer to all people of that nationality:

The Chinese are very hard-working.

The Spanish often go to sleep in the afternoon.



INDEFINITE ARTICLE

A / AN

Use 'a' with nouns starting with a *consonant* (letters that are not vowels),
'an' with nouns starting with a *vowel* (a, e, i, o, u)

Examples:

A boy
An apple
A car
An orange
A house
An opera

NOTE:

An before an *h* mute - an hour, an honour.

A before *u* and *eu* when they sound like 'you': a european, a university, a unit

The indefinite article is used:

- to refer to something for the first time:
An elephant and *a mouse* fell in love.
Would you like *a drink*?
I've finally got *a good job*.
- to refer to a particular member of a group or class

Examples:

- with names of jobs:
John is *a doctor*.
Mary is training to be *an engineer*.
He wants to be *a dancer*.
- with nationalities and religions:
John is *an Englishman*.
Kate is *a Catholic*.
- with musical instruments:
Sherlock Holmes was playing *a violin* when the visitor arrived.
(BUT to describe the activity we say "He plays the violin.")
- with names of days:
I was born on *a Thursday*

- to refer to a kind of, or example of something:
the mouse had *a tiny nose*
the elephant had *a long trunk*
it was *a very strange car*
- with singular nouns, after the words 'what' and 'such':
What *a shame!*
She's such *a beautiful girl*.

- meaning 'one', referring to a single object or person:
I'd like *an orange* and two lemons please.
The burglar took *a diamond necklace* and *a valuable painting*.

Notice also that we usually say *a hundred, a thousand, a million*.

NOTE: that we use '*one*' to add emphasis or to contrast with other numbers:
I don't know *one person* who likes eating elephant meat.
We've got *six computers* but only *one printer*.

 previous next 

EXCEPTIONS TO USING THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

There is **no** article:

- with names of **countries** (if singular)
Germany is an important economic power.
He's just returned from *Zimbabwe*.
(But: I'm visiting *the United States* next week.)
- with the names of **languages**
French is spoken in Tahiti.
English uses many words of *Latin* origin.
Indonesian is a relatively new language.
- with the names of **meals**.
Lunch is at midday.
Dinner is in the evening.
Breakfast is the first meal of the day.
- with people's **names** (if singular):
John's coming to the party.
George King is my uncle.
(But: we're having lunch with *the Morgans* tomorrow.)
- with titles and names:
Prince Charles is *Queen Elizabeth's* son.
President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas.
Dr. Watson was Sherlock Holmes' friend.
(But: *the Queen of England, the Pope*.)
- After the 's possessive case:
His brother's *car*.
Peter's *house*.
- with **professions**:
Engineering is a useful career.
He'll probably go into *medicine*.
- with **names of shops**:
I'll get the card at *Smith's*.
Can you go to *Boots* for me?
- with **years**:
1948 was a wonderful year.
Do you remember *1995*?
- With **uncountable nouns**:
Rice is the main food in Asia.
Milk is often added to *tea* in England.
War is destructive.
- with the names of **individual mountains, lakes and islands**:
Mount McKinley is the highest mountain in Alaska.

She lives near *Lake Windermere*.
Have you visited *Long Island*?

- with most names of towns, streets, stations and airports:
Victoria Station is in the centre of London.
Can you direct me to Bond Street?
She lives in Florence.
They're flying from Heathrow.

- in some fixed expressions, for example:

by car
by train
by air
on foot
on holiday
on air (*in
broadcasting*)

at school
at work
at University
in church
in prison
in bed



THE DEMONSTRATIVES

THIS, THAT, THESE, THOSE

1. Function

The demonstratives *this*, *that*, *these*, *those* ,show *where* an object or person is in relation to the speaker.

This (singular) and *these* (plural) refer to an object or person near the speaker. *That* (singular) and *those* (plural) refer to an object or person further away. It can be a *physical* closeness or distance as in:

Who owns *that* house? (distant)
Is *this* John's house? (near)

Or it can be a *psychological* distance as in:

That's nothing to do with me.. (distant)
This is a nice surprise! (near)

2. Position

- a) Before the noun.
- b) Before the word 'one'.
- c) Before an adjective + noun.
- d) Alone when the noun is 'understood'.

Examples:

This car looks cleaner than *that* one.
This old world keeps turning round
Do you remember *that* wonderful day in June?
I'll never forget *this*.

 previous

next 

THE POSSESSIVES

Possessive pronouns and possessive adjectives show who the thing belongs to.

| PERSON_ | | ADJECTIVES | PRONOUNS |
|---------|--------|------------|----------|
| 1st | (I) | my | mine |
| 2nd | (you) | your | yours |
| 3rd | (he) | his | his |
| | (she) | her | hers |
| | (it) | it | its |
| Plural_ | | | |
| 1st | (we) | our | ours |
| 2nd | (you) | your | yours |
| 3rd | (they) | their | theirs |

NOTE: In English, possessive adjectives and pronouns refer to the possessor, not the object or person that is possessed.

Example:

Jane's brother is married to John's sister.
Her brother is married to his sister.

Examples:

- a. Peter and *his* sister.
- b. Jane and *her* father.
- c. Do you know where *your* books are?
- d. Is this *their* picnic? No, it is *ours*.
- e. I think this is *your* passport. Yes, it is *mine*.

 previous

next 

THE QUANTIFIERS

Quantifiers are adjectives and adjectival phrases that give approximate answers to the questions "How much?" and "How many?"

Example:

I've got a *little* money.
I've got a *lot of* friends.

- [Quantifiers with countable and uncountable nouns](#)
- [A few and few, a little and little](#)
- [Some and any](#)
- [Compound nouns made with SOME, ANY and NO](#)
- [Graded Quantifiers](#)
- [Enough + Noun](#)

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

THE QUANTIFIERS

Quantifiers with countable and uncountable nouns

Adjectives and adjectival phrases that describe quantity are shown below. Some can only go with *countable* nouns (friends, cups, people), and some can only go with *uncountable* nouns (sugar, tea, money, advice). The words in the middle column can be used with *both* countable and uncountable nouns.

| Only with uncountable nouns | With uncountable and countable nouns | Only with countable nouns |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| How much? | How much? or How many? | How many? |
| a little | no/none | a few |
| a bit (of) | not any | a number (of) |
| - | some (any) | several |
| a great deal of | a lot of | a large number of |
| a large amount of | plenty of | a great number of |
| - | lots of | - |
| + noun | | |

Note: *much* and *many* are used in negative and question forms.

Example:

- *How much* money have you got?
- *How many* cigarettes have you smoked?
- There's *not much* sugar in the cupboard.
- There weren't *many* people at the concert.

They are also used with *too*, (*not*) *so*, and (*not*) *as*: There were *too many* people at the concert - we couldn't see the band.
It's a problem when there are *so many* people.
There's *not so much* work to do this week.

In positive statements, we use *a lot of*:

- I've got *a lot of* work this week.
- There were *a lot of* people at the concert.

THE QUANTIFIERS

A few and few, a little and little

These expressions show the speaker's **attitude** towards the quantity he/she is referring to.

A few (for countable nouns) and *a little* (for uncountable nouns) describe the quantity in a **positive** way:

- "I've got *a few* friends" (= maybe not many, but enough)
- "I've got *a little* money" (= I've got enough to live on)

Few and *little* describe the quantity in a **negative** way:

- *Few* people visited him in hospital (= he had almost no visitors)
- He had *little* money (= almost no money)



THE QUANTIFIERS

Some and Any

Some and *any* are used with countable and uncountable nouns, to describe an indefinite or incomplete quantity.

Some is used in positive statements:

- I had *some* rice for lunch
- He's got *some* books from the library.

It is also used in questions where we are sure about the answer:

- Did he give you *some* tea? (= I'm sure he did.)
- Is there *some* fruit juice in the fridge? (= I think there is)

Some is used in situations where the question is not a request for information, but a method of making a request, encouraging or giving an invitation:

- Could I have *some* books, please?
- Why don't you take *some* books home with you?
- Would you like *some* books?

Any is used in questions and with *not* in negative statements:

- Have you got *any* tea?
- He *didn't* give me *any* tea.
- I *don't* think we've got *any* coffee left.

More examples:

SOME in positive sentences.

- I will have *some* news next week.
- She has *some* valuable books in her house.
- Philip wants *some* help with his exams.
- There is *some* butter in the fridge.
- We need *some* cheese if we want to make a fondue.

SOME in questions:

- Would you like *some* help?
- Will you have *some* more roast beef?

ANY in negative sentences

- She *doesn't* want *any* kitchen appliances for Christmas.
- They *don't* want *any* help moving to their new house.
- No, thank you. I *don't* want *any* more cake.
- There *isn't any* reason to complain.

ANY in interrogative sentences

- Do you have *any* friends in London?

- b. Have they got *any* children?
- c. Do you want *any* groceries from the shop?
- d. Are there *any* problems with your work?

 previous next 

THE QUANTIFIERS

Compound nouns made with SOME, ANY and NO

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|-------|------|--------|
| Some + | | | | |
| Any + | -thing | -body | -one | -where |
| No + | | | | |

Compound nouns with *some-* and *any-* are used in the same way as *some* and *any*.

Positive statements:

- *Someone* is sleeping in my bed.
- He saw *something* in the garden.
- I left my glasses *somewhere* in the house.

Questions:

- Are you looking for *someone*? (= I'm sure you are)
- Have you lost *something*? (= I'm sure you have)
- Is there *anything* to eat? (real question)
- Did you go *anywhere* last night?

Negative statements:

- She didn't go *anywhere* last night.
- He doesn't know *anybody* here.

NOTICE that there is a difference in emphasis between *nothing*, *nobody* etc. and *not ... anything*, *not ... anybody*:

- I *don't* know *anything* about it. (= neutral, no emphasis)
- I know *nothing* about it (= more emphatic, maybe defensive)

More examples:

SOMETHING, SOMEBODY, SOMEWHERE

- I have *something* to tell you.
- There is *something* to drink in the fridge.
- He knows *somebody* in New York
- Susie has *somebody* staying with her.
- They want to go *somewhere* hot for their holidays.
- Keith is looking for *somewhere* to live.

ANYBODY, ANYTHING, ANYWHERE

- Is there *anybody* who speaks English here?
- Does *anybody* have the time?
- Is there *anything* to eat?
- Have you *anything* to say?
- He doesn't have *anything* to stay tonight.

f. I wouldn't eat *anything* except at Maxim's.

NOBODY, NOTHING, NOWHERE

- a. There is *nobody* in the house at the moment
- b. When I arrived there was *nobody* to meet me.
- c. I have learnt *nothing* since I began the course.
- d. There is *nothing* to eat.
- e. There is *nowhere* as beautiful as Paris in the Spring.
- f. Homeless people have *nowhere* to go at night.

ANY can also be used in positive statements to mean '*no matter which*', '*no matter who*', '*no matter what*':

Examples:

- a. You can borrow *any* of my books.
- b. They can choose *anything* from the menu.
- c. You may invite *anybody* to dinner, I don't mind.



THE QUANTIFIERS

Graded Quantifiers

They function like comparatives and hold a relative position on a scale of *increase* or *decrease*.

INCREASE From 0% to 100%

With plural countable nouns:

many **more** **most**

With uncountable nouns:

much **more** **most**

DECREASE From 100% to 0%

With plural countable nouns:

few **fewer** **fewest**

With uncountable nouns:

little **less** **least**

Examples:

- There are *many* people in England, *more* in India, but the *most* people live in China.
- *Much* time and money is spent on education, *more* on health services but *the most* is spent on national defence.
- *Few* rivers in Europe are not polluted.
- *Fewer* people die young now than in the seventeenth century.
- The country with *the fewest* people per square kilometre must be Australia.
- Scientists have *little* hope of finding a complete cure for cancer before the year 2,000.
- She had *less* time to study than Paul but had better results.
- Give that dog the *least* opportunity and it will bite you.

THE QUANTIFIERS

Enough + Noun

Enough is placed before the noun, to indicate the quantity required or necessary:

- There is *enough* bread for lunch.
- She has *enough* money.

Enough is also used with [adjectives](#) and [adverbs](#) - see these sections.

- We didn't have *enough* time to visit London Bridge.
- Are there *enough* eggs to make an omelette?
- Richard has *enough* talent to become a singing star.



THE DISTRIBUTIVES

[ALL, BOTH, HALF](#)

[EACH, EVERY, EITHER, NEITHER](#)

These words refer to a group of people or things, and to individual members of the group. They show different ways of looking at the individuals within a group, and they express how something is distributed, shared or divided.

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

THE DISTRIBUTIVES

ALL, BOTH, HALF

These words can be used in the following ways:

| | | | |
|-------|----|----------------|------------------------------|
| | 1 | - | Uncountable noun |
| | 2 | the | or |
| ALL + | 3 | my, your, etc. | Countable noun in the plural |
| | 4a | this, that | Uncountable noun |
| | 4b | these, those | Countable noun in the plural |

Example:

1. **All cheese** contains protein
All children need affection
2. **All the people** in the room were silent.
Have you eaten **all the bread**?
3. I've invited **all my friends** to the party.
I've been waiting **all my life** for this opportunity.
- 4a. Who's left **all this paper** on my desk?
- 4b. Look at **all those** balloons!

| | | | |
|--------|---|----------------|------------------------------|
| | 1 | - | |
| | 2 | the | Countable noun in the plural |
| BOTH + | 3 | my, your, etc. | |
| | 4 | these, those | |

Example:

1. **Both children** were born in Italy.
2. He has crashed **both (of) the cars**.
3. **Both (of) my parents** have fair hair.
4. You can take **both (of) these books** back to the library.
[See note below](#)

| | | | |
|---------------|---|-----------------------------|----------------|
| HALF + | 1 | a | Uncountable |
| | 2 | the | or |
| | 3 | my, your, etc. | countable noun |
| | 4 | this, that, these, those | |

Example:

1. I bought *half a kilo* of apples yesterday.
2. You can have *half (of) the cake*.
She gave me *half (of) the apples*.
3. I've already given you *half (of) my money*.
Half (of) his books were in French.
4. *Half (of) these snakes* are harmless
You can take *half (of) this sugar*.

NOTE: *All, both, half + OF*: 'OF' must be added when followed by a pronoun:

All of you; both of us; half of them

It is also quite common to add it in most of the above situations except when there is no article (No.1 in all the tables above.)



THE DISTRIBUTIVES

EACH, EVERY, EITHER, NEITHER

These distributive words are normally used with singular nouns, and are placed before the noun.

Each, *either* and *neither* can be used with plural nouns but must be followed by 'of':

Each is a way of seeing the members of a group as individuals:

- *Each child received a present.*
- *Each of the children received a present.*

Every is a way of seeing a group as a series of members:

- *Every child in the world deserves affection.*

It can also express different points in a series, especially with time expressions:

- *Every third morning John goes jogging.*
- *This magazine is published every other week.*

Either and **Neither** are concerned with distribution between two things - *either* is positive, *neither* is negative:

- *Which chair do you want? Either chair will do.*
- *I can stay at either hotel, they are both good*
- *There are two chairs here. You can take either of them.*
- *Neither chair is any good, they're both too small.*
- *Which chair do you want? Neither of them - they're both too small.*



DIFFERENCE WORDS

OTHER, ANOTHER

These words refer to something different, remaining, or additional.

They are placed **before the noun**.

Another is used with singular nouns, *other* with singular or plural.

- There are *other* jobs you could try.
- Where's the *other* packet of cereals?
- Is there any *other* bread?
- Have *another* cup of tea.

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

QUESTION WORDS

WHICH, WHAT, WHOSE

In questions, these words ask which thing or person is being referred to. They are placed before the noun.

- *Which* dress are you going to wear tonight?
- *What* colour is your dress?
- *Whose* car are you going to use?

[◀ previous](#) [next ▶](#)

DEFINING WORDS

WHICH AND WHOSE

In a statement, these words define or explain which thing or person is referred to:

Example:

- He went back to the house. (Which house?) The house **which** stood on the corner. = He went back to the house **which** stood on the corner.
- I saw the man. (Which man?) The man **whose** car you damaged. = I saw the man **whose** car you damaged.

More examples:

- He couldn't remember **which** film he had seen.
- That's the man **whose** wife works in my office.
- Tell me **which** coffee you like.
- The woman **whose** dog bit you is at the door.

[◀ previous](#)

[next ▶](#)

PRE-DETERMINERS

SUCH, WHAT, RATHER, QUITE

These words are normally placed before the indefinite article.

Such and **what** are often used to express surprise or other emotions:

Examples:

- a. **What** a lovely day!
- b. She's **such** a lovely woman!
- c. **What** an incredible film!
- d. He's **such** a fantastic guitarist!

Rather and **quite** are 'commenting' words, referring to the degree of a particular quality. They can express disappointment, pleasure, or other emotions, and are used before *a/an + adjective + noun*:

Examples:

- a. It's **rather** a small car. (= I'm a bit disappointed because it's small)
- b. It was **quite** a nice day. (= I was agreeably surprised.)
- c. He's had **quite** a bad accident. (= I'm worried)
- d. I've just met **rather** a nice man. (= I'm pleased)

 previous

next 

THE INFINITIVE

The zero infinitive is used:

- a. [after most auxiliaries](#) (e.g. *must, can, should, may, might*)
- b. [after verbs of perception](#), (e.g. *see, hear, feel*) with the pattern *verb + object + zero infinitive*
- c. [after the verbs 'make' and 'let'](#), with the pattern *make/let + object + zero infinitive*
- d. [after the expression 'had better'](#)
- e. [after the expression 'would rather'](#)
when referring to the speaker's **own** actions

Examples:

After auxiliaries:

- She can't *spea*k to you.
- He should *give* her some money.
- Shall I *talk* to him?
- Would you *like* a cup of coffee?
- I might *stay* another night in the hotel.
- They must *leave* before 10.00 a.m.

After verbs of perception:

- He saw her *fall* from the cliff.
- We heard them *close* the door.
- They saw us *walk* toward the lake.
- She felt the spider *crawl* up her leg.

After the verbs 'make' and 'let':

- Her parents let her *stay* out late.
- Let's *go* to the cinema tonight.
- You made me *love* you.
- Don't make me *study* that boring grammar book!

NOTICE that the '*to-infinitive*' is used when '*make*' is in the passive voice:

- I *am made to sweep* the floor every day.
- She *was made to eat* fish even though she hated it.

After 'had better':

We had better *take* some warm clothing.
She had better *ask* him not to come.
You'd better *not smile* at a crocodile!
We had better *reserve* a room in the hotel.
You'd better *give* me your address.
They had better *work* harder on their grammar!

After 'would rather':

Note: this is **ONLY** when referring to the speaker's own actions - see 'would rather' in section on Unreal past.

 previous next 

THE INFINITIVE

1. Form

The infinitive is the base form of a verb. It may be preceded by 'to' (the *to-infinitive*) or stand alone (the *base or zero infinitive*).

2. Infinitive with or without 'to'

The to-infinitive is used:

- after certain verbs. e.g. *want, wish, agree, fail, mean, decide, learn*
- after the auxiliaries *to be to, to have to, and ought to*
- in the pattern 'it is + adjective + *to-infinitive*'

Examples:

with 'to'

- The elephant decided *to marry* the mouse
- The mouse agreed *to marry* the elephant
- You will have *to ask* her
- You are *to leave* immediately
- He ought *to relax*
- She has *to go* to Berlin next week
- It's easy *to speak* English
- It is hard *to change* jobs after twenty years
- It's stupid *to believe* everything you hear

without 'to'

- I would rather *visit* Rome.
- She would rather *live* in Italy.
- Would you rather *eat* steak or fish?
- He would rather *work* in a bank.
- I'd rather *be* a forest than a tree.

THE 'ZERO' CONDITIONAL

1. Form

In 'zero' conditional sentences, the tense in **both parts** of the sentence is the **simple present**:

| 'IF' CLAUSE (CONDITION) | MAIN CLAUSE (RESULT) |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| If + simple present | simple present |
| If you heat ice | it melts. |
| If it rains | you get wet |

NOTE: The order of the clauses is not fixed - the 'if' clause can be first or second:

- *Ice melts if you heat it.*
- *You get wet if it rains.*

2. Function

In these sentences, the time is *now or always* and the situation is *real and possible*. They are used to make statements about the real world, and often refer to general truths, such as scientific facts.

Examples:

- If you *freeze* water, it *becomes* a solid.
- Plants *die* if they *don't get* enough water.
- If my husband *has* a cold, I usually *catch* it.
- If public transport *is* efficient, people *stop* using their cars.
- If you *mix* red and blue, you *get* purple.

This structure is often used to give instructions, using the imperative in the main clause:

- If Bill *phones*, *tell* him to meet me at the cinema.
- *Ask* Pete if *you're* not sure what to do.

THE INFINITIVE

VERBS NORMALLY FOLLOWED BY THE INFINITIVE

C. These are the most common of the verbs followed by a *to-infinitive*, with or without a noun.

Example:

- I asked him *to show* me the book.
- I asked *to see* the book.

| | |
|---------|-----------------|
| ask* | expect* |
| beg* | help |
| choose | mean* (=intend) |
| dare | request* |
| desire* | want |
| elect | wish* |

The verbs marked * can also be followed by a *that-clause*

Note:

dare: In negative and interrogative sentences the infinitive with or without 'to' is possible, though it is more common to omit the 'to':

- I never dared tell him what happened.
- Dare you tell him the news?
- Would you dare (to) jump out of a plane?

Examples:

- We've chosen John to represent the company at the conference.
- The elephant didn't mean to tread on the mouse.
- We expect you to do your best in the exam.
- Do you want to go to the beach?
- Do you want me to go with you to the beach?
- You are requested to be quiet in this library.

REPORTED SPEECH

SUMMARY OF REPORTING VERBS

Note that some reporting verbs may appear in more than one of the following groups.

1. Verbs followed by 'if' or 'whether' + clause:

| | |
|----------|-----|
| ask | say |
| know | see |
| remember | |

2. Verbs followed by a *that*-clause:

| | | |
|----------|----------|------------|
| add | doubt | reply |
| admit | estimate | report |
| agree | explain | reveal |
| announce | fear | say |
| answer | feel | state |
| argue | insist | suggest |
| boast | mention | suppose |
| claim | observe | tell |
| comment | persuade | think |
| complain | propose | understand |
| confirm | remark | warn |
| consider | remember | |
| deny | repeat | |

3. Verbs followed by either a *that*-clause or a *to*-infinitive:

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| decide | promise |
| expect | swear |
| guarantee | threaten |
| hope | |

4. Verbs followed by a *that*-clause containing *should* (but note that it may be omitted, leaving a subject + zero-infinitive):

| | | |
|--------|---------|-----------|
| advise | insist | recommend |
| beg | prefer | request |
| demand | propose | suggest |

5. Verbs followed by a clause *starting with a question word*:

| | | |
|----------|----------|------------|
| decide | imagine | see |
| describe | know | suggest |
| discover | learn | teach |
| discuss | realise | tell |
| explain | remember | think |
| forget | reveal | understand |
| guess | say | wonder |

6. Verbs followed by *object + to-infinitive*

| | | |
|---------|----------|-------|
| advise | forbid | teach |
| ask | instruct | tell |
| beg | invite | warn |
| command | | |



'- ING' FORM

VERBS FOLLOWED BY THE GERUND

The gerund is used after certain verbs.

Example:

miss: I miss living in England.

The most important of these verbs are shown below.
Those marked * can also be followed by a *that-clause*

Example:

| VERB | GERUND |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| She admitted... | breaking the window |
| | THAT-CLAUSE |
| She admitted... | that she had broken the window. |
| acknowledge,* | keep, |
| admit,* | loathe, |
| anticipate,* appreciate,* | mean,(= <i>have as result</i>)* |
| avoid, | mention,* |
| celebrate, | mind, |
| consider, contemplate, | miss, |
| defer, | pardon, |
| delay, | postpone, |
| deny,* | prevent, |
| detest, | propose,* |
| dislike, | recall,* |
| dread, | recollect,* |
| enjoy, | remember, |
| entail, | report,* |
| escape, | resent, |
| excuse, | resist, |
| fancy (=imagine)*, | risk, |
| finish, | save (=prevent the wasted effort) |
| forgive, | stop, |
| imagine,* | suggest,* |
| involve, | understand,* |

Notes:

Appreciate is followed by a *possessive adjective* and the gerund when the gerund does not refer to the subject. Compare :

*I appreciate **having** some time off work.* (I'm having the time...)

*I appreciate your **giving** me some time off work.* (You're giving me the time...)

Excuse, forgive, pardon can be followed by *an object* and the gerund or *for + object* and the gerund (both common in spoken English), or a *possessive adjective + gerund* (more formal and less likely to be said):

Excuse me interrupting.

Excuse me for interrupting.

Excuse my interrupting.

Suggest can be used in a number of ways, but **BE CAREFUL**. It is important not to confuse these patterns:

suggest/suggested (+ possessive adjective) + gerund:

He suggests *going* to Glastonbury

He suggested *going* to Glastonbury

He suggested/suggests my *going* to Glastonbury

suggest/suggested + that-clause (where both *that* and *should* may be omitted):

He suggests that I should go to Glastonbury

He suggested that I should go to Glastonbury

He suggested/suggests I should go to Glastonbury

He suggested/suggests I go to Glastonbury

He suggested I went to Glastonbury.

suggest/suggested + question word + infinitive:

He suggested where to go.

Propose is followed by the gerund when it means 'suggest':

John proposed going to the debate

but by the infinitive when it means 'intend':

The Government proposes bringing in new laws..

Stop can be followed by a gerund or infinitive, but there is a change of meaning - see [GERUND / INFINITIVE?](#) section.

Dread is followed by the infinitive when used with 'think', in the expression 'I dread to think':

I dread to think what she'll do next.

Prevent is followed

EITHER by a possessive adjective + gerund:

You can't prevent my leaving.

OR by an object + from + gerund:

You can't prevent me from leaving.

Examples:

- Normally, a mouse wouldn't contemplate *marrying* an elephant.
- Most mice dread *meeting* elephants.
- We can't risk *getting* wet - we haven't got any dry clothes.
- If you take that job it will mean *getting* home late every night.
- I can't imagine *living* in that big house.
- If you buy some petrol now, it will save you *stopping* on the way to London.
- She couldn't resist *eating* the plum she found in the fridge.
- They decided to postpone *painting* the house until the weather improved.

'- ING' FORM

GERUND OR INFINITIVE?

The two groups of verbs below can be followed either by the gerund or by the infinitive. Usually this has no effect on the meaning, but with some verbs there is a clear difference in meaning. Verbs marked * can also be followed by a *that-clause*.

Example: *to prefer*

I prefer **to live** in an apartment.
I prefer **living** in an apartment.

A. Verbs where there is little or no difference in meaning:

| | | |
|----------|---------|------------|
| allow | deserve | neglect |
| attempt | fear* | omit |
| begin | hate* | permit |
| bother | intend* | prefer* |
| cease | like | recommend* |
| continue | love | start |

Notes:

1. **Allow** is used in these two patterns:

a. *Allow + object + to-infinitive:*

*Her parents allowed her **to go** to the party.*

b. *Allow + gerund:*

*Her parents don't allow **smoking** in the house.*

2. **Deserve** + gerund is not very common, but is mainly used with passive constructions or where there is a passive meaning:

a. *Your proposals deserve **being** considered in detail.*

b. *These ideas deserve **discussing**.* (= to be discussed).

3. The verbs **hate**, **love**, **like**, **prefer** are usually followed by a gerund when the meaning is *general*, and by a *to-infinitive* when they refer to a particular time or situation. You must always use the *to-infinitive* with the expressions '*would love to*', '*would hate to*', etc.

Compare:

- *I hate **to tell** you, but Uncle Jim is coming this weekend.*
- *I hate **looking** after elderly relatives!*
- *I love **dancing**.*
- *I would love **to dance** with you.*

 [Back](#) [irregular verbs introduction page](#)

COMMON GROUP 2 ENGLISH IRREGULAR VERBS

Two of the three forms are the same.

Examples with 'catch':

- Mary **catches** the bus to work every day.
- Mary **caught** the bus to work yesterday.
- Mary has **caught** the bus to work since her car broke down.

| Base | Past | Past Participle | Group | Note |
|---------|----------------|-----------------|-------|----------------|
| beat | beat | beaten | 2 | |
| become | became | become | 2 | |
| behold | beheld | beheld | 2 | |
| bend | bent | bent | 2 | |
| beseech | besought | besought | 2 | |
| bet | bet, betted | bet, betted | 2 | |
| bind | bound | bound | 2 | |
| bleed | bled | bled | 2 | |
| breed | bred | bred | 2 | |
| bring | brought | brought | 2 | |
| build | built | built | 2 | |
| burn | burnt, burned | burnt, burned | 2 | regular in AE |
| buy | bought | bought | 2 | |
| catch | caught | caught | 2 | |
| cling | clung | clung | 2 | |
| come | came | come | 2 | |
| creep | crept | crept | 2 | |
| dare | dared | dared | 2 | |
| deal | dealt | dealt | 2 | |
| dig | dug | dug | 2 | |
| dive | dived | dived | 2 | |
| dream | dreamt | dreamt | 2 | regular in AE |
| dwell | dwelt, dwelled | dwelt, dwelled | 2 | |
| feed | fed | fed | 2 | |
| feel | felt | felt | 2 | |
| fight | fought | fought | 2 | |
| find | found | found | 2 | |
| fit | fit, fitted | fit, fitted | 2 | regular in BE |
| flee | fled | fled | 2 | |
| fling | flung | flung | 2 | |
| get | got | got, gotten | 2 | 'gotten' in AE |
| gild | gilt, gilded | gilt, gilded | 2 | |
| gird | girt, girded | girt, girded | 2 | |
| grind | ground | ground | 2 | |

| | | | | |
|--------|-----------------|-----------------|---|---------------|
| hang | hung | hung | 2 | |
| have | had | had | 2 | |
| hear | heard | heard | 2 | |
| hold | held | held | 2 | |
| keep | kept | kept | 2 | |
| kneel | knelt | knelt | 2 | |
| lay | laid | laid | 2 | |
| lead | led | led | 2 | |
| leap | leapt, leaped | leapt, leaped | 2 | |
| learn | learnt | learnt | 2 | regular in AE |
| leave | left | left | 2 | |
| lend | lent | lent | 2 | |
| light | lit | lit | 2 | |
| lose | lost | lost | 2 | |
| make | made | made | 2 | |
| mean | meant | meant | 2 | |
| meet | met | met | 2 | |
| pay | paid | paid | 2 | |
| plead | pled, pleaded | pled, pleaded | 2 | |
| rend | rent | rent | 2 | |
| run | ran | run | 2 | |
| say | said | said | 2 | |
| seek | sought | sought | 2 | |
| sell | sold | sold | 2 | |
| send | sent | sent | 2 | |
| shine | shone | shone | 2 | |
| sit | sat | sat | 2 | |
| sleep | slept | slept | 2 | |
| slide | slid | slid | 2 | |
| sling | slung | slung | 2 | |
| slink | slunk | slunk | 2 | |
| smell | smelt | smelt | 2 | regular in AE |
| sneak | snuck, sneaked | snuck, sneaked | 2 | |
| speed | sped, speeded | sped, speeded | 2 | |
| spell | spelt | spelt | 2 | regular in AE |
| spend | spent | spent | 2 | |
| spill | spilt | spilt | 2 | regular in AE |
| spin | spun | spun | 2 | |
| spit | spat | spat | 2 | |
| spoil | spoilt, spoiled | spoilt, spoiled | 2 | |
| stand | stood | stood | 2 | |
| stick | stuck | stuck | 2 | |
| sting | stung | stung | 2 | |
| strike | struck | struck | 2 | |
| sweep | swept | swept | 2 | |
| swing | swung | swung | 2 | |
| teach | taught | taught | 2 | |
| tell | told | told | 2 | |

| | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|---|---------------|
| think | thought | thought | 2 | |
| understand | understood | understood | 2 | |
| weep | wept | wept | 2 | |
| wet | wet, wetted | wet, wetted | 2 | regular in BE |
| win | won | won | 2 | |
| wind | wound | wound | 2 | |
| withdraw | withdrew | withdraw | 2 | |
| wring | wrung | wrung | 2 | |
| AE=American English BE=British English | | | | |

ENGLISH IRREGULAR VERBS

Irregular verbs are the bane of students whose mother tongue is not English and who are trying to understand how these verbs are applied in various tenses. They even trip up native English speakers who aren't always sure of the form of these verbs! It isn't made any easier by the fact that some verbs are regular in American English and irregular in British English.

However, there are some general classifications that make it a little easier to remember how these verbs are formed and to remember them when applying them in your sentences.

Irregular verbs in English fall into three categories:

1. [GROUP 1: verbs where all three forms are the same](#) - e.g. '*hit, hit, hit*'
2. [GROUP 2: verbs where two of the three forms are the same](#) - e.g. '*become, became, become*'
3. [GROUP 3: verbs where all three forms are different](#) - e.g. '*choose, chose, chosen*'

Common irregular verbs that differ in American English and British English

- *wake* can be regular in American English but is irregular in British English
- *dive* is irregular in American English but regular in British English
- *get* in American English usually has a past participle of '*gotten*' while in British English the past participle is '*got*'
- *wet, quit, and fit* are regular in British English but irregular in American English
- *learn, lean, smell, burn, dream, spill and spoil* are all regular in American English while in British English they can be regular but is more common to see the past and past participles with *-t* added (e.g. *dreamt, spoilt, spilt, smelt*)

[Back](#) [irregular verbs introduction page](#)

COMMON GROUP 1 ENGLISH IRREGULAR VERBS

All three forms are the same.

| Base | Past | Past Participle | Group | Note |
|---|--------|-----------------|-------|---------------|
| bid | bid | bid | 1 | |
| cut | cut | cut | 1 | |
| hit | hit | hit | 1 | |
| hurt | hurt | hurt | 1 | |
| let | let | let | 1 | |
| put | put | put | 1 | |
| quit | quit | quit | 1 | regular in BE |
| read | read | read | 1 | |
| rid | rid | rid | 1 | |
| shut | shut | shut | 1 | |
| split | split | split | 1 | |
| spread | spread | spread | 1 | |
| thrust | thrust | thrust | 1 | |
| AE=American English BE=British English | | | | |

 [Back](#) [irregular verbs introduction page](#)

COMMON GROUP 3 ENGLISH IRREGULAR VERBS

All of the three forms are different.

Examples with 'begin':

- I **begin** my day with a glass of orange juice.
- I **began** to study French when I was living in Paris.
- I have **begun** to understand my parents since I have had children of my own.

| Base | Past | Past Participle | Group | Note |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------|-------|---------------|
| arise | arose | arisen | 3 | |
| awake | awoke, awaked | awoken | 3 | |
| be | was | been | 3 | |
| bear | bore | borne | 3 | |
| befall | befell | befallen | 3 | |
| beget | begot | begotten | 3 | |
| begin | began | begun | 3 | |
| bereave | bereaved | bereft | 3 | |
| bestride | bestrode | bestriden | 3 | |
| bid | bade | bidden | 3 | |
| bite | bit | bitten | 3 | |
| blow | blew | blown | 3 | |
| blow | blew | blown | 3 | |
| break | broke | broken | 3 | |
| broadcast | broadcast | broadcast | 3 | |
| burst | burst | burst | 3 | |
| cast | cast | cast | 3 | |
| choose | chose | chosen | 3 | |
| cost | cost | cost | 3 | |
| dive | dove | dived | 3 | regular in BE |
| do | did | done | 3 | |
| draw | drew | drawn | 3 | |
| drink | drank | drunk | 3 | |
| drive | drove | driven | 3 | |
| eat | ate | eaten | 3 | |
| fall | fell | fallen | 3 | |
| fly | flew | flown | 3 | |
| forbear | forbore | forborne | 3 | |
| forbid | forbade | forbidden | 3 | |
| forget | forgot | forgotten | 3 | |
| forgive | forgave | forgiven | 3 | |
| forsake | forsook | forsaken | 3 | |

| | | | | |
|---|-------------|----------------|---|----------------------|
| freeze | froze | frozen | 3 | |
| give | gave | given | 3 | |
| go | went | gone | 3 | |
| grow | grew | grown | 3 | |
| hide | hid | hidden | 3 | |
| know | knew | known | 3 | |
| lie | lay | lain | 3 | |
| melt | melted | melted, molten | 3 | |
| mow | mowed | mown, mowed | 3 | |
| ride | rode | ridden | 3 | |
| ring | rang | rung | 3 | |
| rise | rose | risen | 3 | |
| rise | rose | risen | 3 | |
| see | saw | seen | 3 | |
| sew | sewed | sewn | 3 | |
| shake | shook | shaken | 3 | |
| shear | sheared | shorn, sheared | 3 | |
| shed | shed | shed | 3 | |
| shoe | shod, shoed | shone | 3 | |
| shoot | shot | shone | 3 | |
| show | showed | shown | 3 | |
| shrink | shrank | shrunk | 3 | |
| sing | sang | sung | 3 | |
| sink | sank | sunk | 3 | |
| slit | slit | slit | 3 | |
| smite | smote | smitten | 3 | |
| speak | spoke | spoken | 3 | |
| spring | sprang | sprung | 3 | |
| steal | stole | stolen | 3 | |
| stride | strode | stridden | 3 | |
| swear | swore | sworn | 3 | |
| swim | swam | swum | 3 | |
| take | took | taken | 3 | |
| tear | tore | torn | 3 | |
| throw | threw | thrown | 3 | |
| tread | trod | trodden | 3 | |
| tread | trod | trodden | 3 | |
| undergo | underwent | undergone | 3 | |
| undertake | undertook | undertaken | 3 | |
| wake | woke | woken | 3 | can be regular in AE |
| wear | wore | worn | 3 | |
| weave | wove | woven | 3 | |
| write | wrote | written | 3 | |
| AE=American English BE=British English | | | | |

ENGLISH IRREGULAR VERBS

| Base | Past | Past Participle | Group |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------|-------|
| arise | arose | arisen | 3 |
| awake | awoke, awaked | awoken | 3 |
| be | was | been | 3 |
| bear | bore | borne | 3 |
| beat | beat | beaten | 2 |
| become | became | become | 2 |
| befall | befell | befallen | 3 |
| beget | begot | begotten | 3 |
| begin | began | begun | 3 |
| behold | beheld | beheld | 2 |
| bend | bent | bent | 2 |
| bereave | bereaved | bereft | 3 |
| beseech | besought | besought | 2 |
| bestride | bestrode | bestriden | 3 |
| bet | bet, betted | bet, betted | 2 |
| bid | bade | bidden | 3 |
| bid | bid | bid | 1 |
| bind | bound | bound | 2 |
| bite | bit | bitten | 3 |
| bleed | bled | bled | 2 |
| blow | blew | blown | 3 |
| blow | blew | blown | 3 |
| break | broke | broken | 3 |
| breed | bred | bred | 2 |
| bring | brought | brought | 2 |
| broadcast | broadcast | broadcast | 3 |
| build | built | built | 2 |
| burn | burnt, burned | burnt, burned | 2 |
| burst | burst | burst | 3 |
| buy | bought | bought | 2 |
| cast | cast | cast | 3 |
| catch | caught | caught | 2 |
| choose | chose | chosen | 3 |
| cling | clung | clung | 2 |
| come | came | come | 2 |
| cost | cost | cost | 3 |
| creep | crept | crept | 2 |
| cut | cut | cut | 1 |
| dare | dared | dared | 2 |
| deal | dealt | dealt | 2 |

| | | | |
|---------|----------------|----------------|---|
| dig | dug | dug | 2 |
| dive | dove | dived | 3 |
| dive | dived | dived | 2 |
| do | did | done | 3 |
| draw | drew | drawn | 3 |
| dream | dreamt | dreamt | 2 |
| drink | drank | drunk | 3 |
| drive | drove | driven | 3 |
| dwell | dwelt, dwelled | dwelt, dwelled | 2 |
| eat | ate | eaten | 3 |
| fall | fell | fallen | 3 |
| feed | fed | fed | 2 |
| feel | felt | felt | 2 |
| fight | fought | fought | 2 |
| find | found | found | 2 |
| fit | fit, fitted | fit, fitted | 2 |
| flee | fled | fled | 2 |
| fling | flung | flung | 2 |
| fly | flew | flown | 3 |
| forbear | forbore | forborne | 3 |
| forbid | forbade | forbidden | 3 |
| forget | forgot | forgotten | 3 |
| forgive | forgave | forgiven | 3 |
| forsake | forsook | forsaken | 3 |
| freeze | froze | frozen | 3 |
| get | got | got, gotten | 2 |
| gild | gilt, gilded | gilt, gilded | 2 |
| gird | girt, girded | girt, girded | 2 |
| give | gave | given | 3 |
| go | went | gone | 3 |
| grind | ground | ground | 2 |
| grow | grew | grown | 3 |
| hang | hung | hung | 2 |
| have | had | had | 2 |
| hear | heard | heard | 2 |
| hide | hid | hidden | 3 |
| hit | hit | hit | 1 |
| hold | held | held | 2 |
| hurt | hurt | hurt | 1 |
| keep | kept | kept | 2 |
| kneel | knelt | knelt | 2 |
| know | knew | known | 3 |
| lay | laid | laid | 2 |
| lead | led | led | 2 |
| leap | leapt, leaped | leapt, leaped | 2 |
| learn | learnt | learnt | 2 |
| leave | left | left | 2 |
| lend | lent | lent | 2 |

| | | | |
|--------|----------------|----------------|---|
| let | let | let | 1 |
| lie | lay | lain | 3 |
| light | lit | lit | 2 |
| lose | lost | lost | 2 |
| make | made | made | 2 |
| mean | meant | meant | 2 |
| meet | met | met | 2 |
| melt | melted | melted, molten | 3 |
| mow | mowed | mown, mowed | 3 |
| pay | paid | paid | 2 |
| plead | pled, pleaded | pled, pleaded | 2 |
| put | put | put | 1 |
| quit | quit | quit | 1 |
| read | read | read | 1 |
| rend | rent | rent | 2 |
| rid | rid | rid | 1 |
| ride | rode | ridden | 3 |
| ring | rang | rung | 3 |
| rise | rose | risen | 3 |
| rise | rose | risen | 3 |
| run | ran | run | 2 |
| say | said | said | 2 |
| see | saw | seen | 3 |
| seek | sought | sought | 2 |
| sell | sold | sold | 2 |
| send | sent | sent | 2 |
| sew | sewed | sewn | 3 |
| shake | shook | shaken | 3 |
| shear | sheared | shorn, sheared | 3 |
| shed | shed | shed | 3 |
| shine | shone | shone | 2 |
| shoe | shod, shoed | shone | 3 |
| shoot | shot | shone | 3 |
| show | showed | shown | 3 |
| shrink | shrank | shrunk | 3 |
| shut | shut | shut | 1 |
| sing | sang | sung | 3 |
| sink | sank | sunk | 3 |
| sit | sat | sat | 2 |
| sleep | slept | slept | 2 |
| slide | slid | slid | 2 |
| sling | slung | slung | 2 |
| slink | slunk | slunk | 2 |
| slit | slit | slit | 3 |
| smell | smelt | smelt | 2 |
| smite | smote | smitten | 3 |
| sneak | snuck, sneaked | snuck, sneaked | 2 |
| speak | spoke | spoken | 3 |

| | | | |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|---|
| speed | sped, speeded | sped, speeded | 2 |
| spell | spelt | spelt | 2 |
| spend | spent | spent | 2 |
| spill | spilt | spilt | 2 |
| spin | spun | spun | 2 |
| spit | spat | spat | 2 |
| split | split | split | 1 |
| spoil | spoilt, spoiled | spoilt, spoiled | 2 |
| spread | spread | spread | 1 |
| spring | sprang | sprung | 3 |
| stand | stood | stood | 2 |
| steal | stole | stolen | 3 |
| stick | stuck | stuck | 2 |
| sting | stung | stung | 2 |
| stride | strode | stridden | 3 |
| strike | struck | struck | 2 |
| swear | swore | sworn | 3 |
| sweep | swept | swept | 2 |
| swim | swam | swum | 3 |
| swing | swung | swung | 2 |
| take | took | taken | 3 |
| teach | taught | taught | 2 |
| tear | tore | torn | 3 |
| tell | told | told | 2 |
| think | thought | thought | 2 |
| throw | threw | thrown | 3 |
| thrust | thrust | thrust | 1 |
| tread | trod | trodden | 3 |
| tread | trod | trodden | 3 |
| undergo | underwent | undergone | 3 |
| understand | understood | understood | 2 |
| undertake | undertook | undertaken | 3 |
| wake | woke | woken | 3 |
| wear | wore | worn | 3 |
| weave | wove | woven | 3 |
| weep | wept | wept | 2 |
| wet | wet, wetted | wet, wetted | 2 |
| win | won | won | 2 |
| wind | wound | wound | 2 |
| withdraw | withdrew | withdraw | 2 |
| wring | wrung | wrung | 2 |
| write | wrote | written | 3 |

THE INFINITIVE

VERBS NORMALLY FOLLOWED BY THE INFINITIVE

B. These are the most common of the verbs that are normally followed by a noun + infinitive. The verbs marked * may also be followed by a '*that-clause*'.

Example:

| VERB | NOUN | INFINITIVE |
|-------------|------|------------------------------|
| He reminded | me | to buy some eggs. |
| | | THAT-CLAUSE |
| He reminded | me | that I had to buy some eggs. |

| | | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| accustom | entitle | order* |
| aid | entreat | persuade* |
| appoint | force | press |
| assist | get | prompt |
| cause | implore* | provoke |
| challenge | incite | remind* |
| command* | induce | require* |
| defy | inspire | stimulate |
| direct* | instruct* | summon |
| drive | invite | teach |
| empower | lead | tell |
| enable | leave (make someone responsible) | tempt |
| encourage | oblige | trust* |
| entice | | warn* |

Notes:

command, direct, entreat, implore, order, require, trust:
there is no noun between these verbs and a '*that-clause*':

- The general commanded his men to surrender.
- The general commanded that his men should surrender.

persuade and remind:

there is always a noun between these verbs and a '*that-clause*':

- You can't persuade people to buy small cars.
- You can't persuade people that small cars are better.

instruct, teach, warn:

the noun is optional between these verbs and a '*that-clause*':

- She taught her students to appreciate poetry.
- She taught her students that poetry was valuable.
- She taught that poetry was valuable.

Examples:

- The professor challenged his students to argue with his theory.
- This law empowers the government to charge more taxes.
- You can't force me to do something I don't agree with.
- You are obliged to drive on the left in England.
- I invited the new student to have dinner with me.
- What inspired you to write this poem?
- The elephant told the mouse to climb up his tail.

 previous

next 

THE INFINITIVE

VERBS NORMALLY FOLLOWED BY THE INFINITIVE

A. The *to-infinitive* is used after the verbs in this group, **without** a preceding noun. The verbs marked * can also be followed by a *'that-clause'*

Example:

| VERB | TO-INFINITIVE |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| I hope... | to see you next week. |
| | THAT- CLAUSE |
| I hope... | that I'll see you next week |

| | | |
|------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| afford | fail | promise* |
| agree* | guarantee* | propose |
| aim | happen † | prove (= turn out) |
| appear † | hasten | refuse resolve* |
| arrange* | have (= be obliged) | seek |
| bother | hesitate | seem † |
| care | hope* | strive |
| claim* | learn | swear* |
| condescend | long | tend |
| consent | manage | threaten* |
| decide* | offer | trouble |
| demand* | prepare | undertake |
| determine* | pretend* | volunteer |
| endeavour | proceed | vow* |

† These verbs can only be followed by a *'that-clause'* when they have the subject *'it'*. e.g. *It appeared that no-one had locked the door.*

Examples:

- He claimed to be an expert.
- I managed to reach the top of the hill.
- I know you're only pretending to love me!
- Don't pretend that you know the answer.
- She failed to explain the problem clearly.
- The customs man demanded to search our luggage.
- I can't afford to go out tonight.

TENSES

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

1. Present continuous, form

The present continuous of any verb is composed of two parts - *the present tense of the verb to be* + *the present participle of the main verb*.

(The form of the present participle is: *base+ing*, e.g. *talking, playing, moving, smiling*)

| Affirmative | | |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Subject | + <i>to be</i> | + base+ <i>ing</i> |
| she | is | talking |

| Negative | | |
|----------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Subject | + <i>to be + not</i> | + base+ <i>ing</i> |
| she | is not (isn't) | talking |

| Interrogative | | |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>to be</i> | + <i>subject</i> | + base+ <i>ing</i> |
| is | she | talking? |

Example: *to go*, present continuous

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| I am going | I am not going | Am I going? |
| You are going | You aren't going. | Are you going? |
| He, she, it is going | He, she, it isn't going | Is he, she, it going? |
| We are going | We aren't going | Are we going? |
| You are going | You aren't going | Are you going? |
| They are going | They aren't going | Are they going? |

Note: alternative negative contractions: *I'm not going, you're not going, he's not going etc.*

2. Present continuous, function

As with all tenses in English, the *speaker's attitude* is as important as the time of the action or event. When someone uses the present continuous, they are thinking about something that is *unfinished or incomplete*.

The present continuous is used:

- to describe an action that is going on at this moment e.g. *You are using the Internet. You are studying English grammar.*
- to describe an action that is going on during this period of time or a trend, e.g. *Are you still working for the same company? More and more people are becoming vegetarian.*
- to describe an action or event in the future, which has already been planned or prepared (See also 'Ways of expressing the future') e.g. *We're going on holiday tomorrow. I'm meeting my boyfriend tonight. Are they visiting you next winter?*
- to describe a temporary event or situation, e.g. *He usually plays the drums, but he's playing bass guitar tonight. The weather forecast was good, but it's raining at the moment.*
- with 'always, forever, constantly', to describe and emphasise a continuing series of repeated actions, e.g. *Harry and Sally are always arguing! You're forever complaining about your mother-in-law!*

BE CAREFUL! Some verbs are not used in the continuous form - see below.

3. Verbs that are not normally used in the continuous form

The verbs in the list below are normally used in the simple form, because they refer to *states*, rather than actions or processes:

List of common verbs normally used in simple form:

Senses / Perception

feel*, hear, see*, smell, taste

Opinion

assume, believe, consider, doubt, feel (= think), find (= consider), suppose, think*

Mental states

forget, imagine, know, mean, notice, recognise, remember, understand

Emotions / desires

envy, fear, dislike, hate, hope, like, love, mind, prefer, regret, want, wish

Measurement

contain, cost, hold, measure, weigh

Others

look (=resemble), seem, be (*in most cases*), have (*when it means to possess*)*

Notes:

1. 'Perception' verbs (see, hear, feel, taste, smell) are often used with 'can':
e.g. *I can see...*

2. * These verbs *may* be used in the continuous form but with a different meaning, compare:

- This coat feels nice and warm. (= your perception of the coat's qualities)*
- John's feeling much better now (= his health is improving)*

- She has three dogs and a cat. (=possession)*
- She's having supper. (= She's eating)*

- a. *I can see Anthony in the garden* (= perception)
b. *I'm seeing Anthony later* (= We are planning to meet)

Examples:

- I *wish* I was in Greece now.
- She *wants* to see him now.
- I don't *understand* why he is shouting.
- I *feel* we are making a mistake.
- This glass *holds* half a litre.

 previous next 

TENSES

SIMPLE PAST

BE CAREFUL! The simple past in English may look like a tense in your own language, but the meaning may be different.

1. Simple past, form

Regular verbs: *base+ed*

e.g. *walked, showed, watched, played, smiled, stopped*

Irregular verbs: see list in verbs

Simple past, *be, have, do*:

| Subject | Verb | | |
|-------------|------|------|-----|
| | Be | Have | Do |
| I | was | had | did |
| You | were | had | did |
| He, she, it | was | had | did |
| We | were | had | did |
| You | were | had | did |
| They | were | had | did |

Affirmative

- I **was** in Japan last year
- She **had** a headache yesterday.
- We **did** our homework last night.

Negative and interrogative

Note: For the negative and interrogative simple past form of "do" as an ordinary verb, use the auxiliary "do", e.g. We **didn't do** our homework last night. The negative of "have" in the simple past is usually formed using the auxiliary "do", but sometimes by simply adding *not* or the contraction "n't". The interrogative form of "have" in the simple past normally uses the auxiliary "do".

- They **weren't** in Rio last summer.
- We **hadn't** any money.
- We **didn't have** time to visit the Eiffel Tower.
- We **didn't do** our exercises this morning.
- **Were they** in Iceland last January?
- **Did you have** a bicycle when you were a boy?
- **Did you do** much climbing in Switzerland?

Simple past, regular verbs

Affirmative

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| Subject | verb + ed | |
| I | washed | |
| Negative | | |
| Subject | did not | infinitive without <i>to</i> |
| They | didn't | visit ... |
| Interrogative | | |
| Did | subject | infinitive without <i>to</i> |
| Did | she | arrive...? |
| Interrogative negative | | |
| Did not | subject | infinitive without <i>to</i> |
| Didn't | you | like..? |

Example: *to walk*, simple past.

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| I walked | I didn't walk | Did I walk? |
| You walked | You didn't walk | Did you walk? |
| He, she, it walked | He didn't walk | Did he walk? |
| We walked | We didn't walk | Did we walk? |
| You walked | You didn't walk | Did you walk? |
| They walked | They didn't walk | Did they walk? |

Note: For the negative and interrogative form of **all** verbs in the simple past, always use the auxiliary '**did**'.

Examples: Simple past, irregular verbs

to go

- He *went* to a club last night.
- Did he go* to the cinema last night?
- He *didn't go* to bed early last night.

to give

- We *gave* her a doll for her birthday.
- They *didn't give* John their new address.
- Did Barry give* you my passport?

to come

- My parents *came* to visit me last July.
- We *didn't come* because it was raining.
- Did he come* to your party last week?

2. Simple past, function

The simple past is used to talk about a **completed action** in a time **before now**. Duration is not important. The time of the action can be in the recent past or the distant past.

- John Cabot *sailed* to America in 1498.
- My father *died* last year.
- He *lived* in Fiji in 1976.
- We *crossed* the Channel yesterday.

You always use the simple past when you say **when** something happened, so it is associated with certain past time expressions

Examples:

- **frequency:**
often, sometimes, always;
- **a definite point in time:**
last week, when I was a child, yesterday, six weeks ago.
- **an indefinite point in time:**
the other day, ages ago, a long time ago etc.

Note: the word **ago** is a useful way of expressing the distance into the past. It is placed **after** the period of time e.g. *a week ago, three years ago, a minute ago.*

Examples:

- a. *Yesterday, I **arrived** in Geneva.*
- b. She **finished** her work at seven o'clock.
- c. We **saw** a good film *last week*.
- d. I **went** to the theatre *last night*.
- e. She **played** the piano *when she was a child*.
- f. He **sent** me a letter *six months ago*.
- g. Peter **left** *five minutes ago*.

 previous next 

TENSES

FUTURE FORMS

Introduction

There are a number of different ways of referring to the future in English. It is important to remember that we are expressing more than simply the **time** of the action or event. Obviously, any 'future' tense will always refer to a time 'later than now', but it may also express our **attitude** to the future event.

All of the following ideas can be expressed using different tenses:

- a. Simple prediction
- b. Arrangements
- c. Plans and intentions
- d. Time-tabled events
- e. Prediction based on present evidence
- f. Willingness
- g. An action in progress in the future
- h. An action or event that is a matter of routine
- i. Obligation
- j. An action or event that will take place immediately or very soon
- k. Projecting ourselves into the future and looking back at a completed action.

The example sentences below correspond to the ideas above:

- a. There *will be* snow in many areas tomorrow.
- b. *I'm meeting* Jim at the airport.
- c. *We're going to spend* the summer abroad.
- d. The plane *takes off* at 3 a.m.
- e. I think *it's going to rain!*
- f. *We'll give* you a lift to the cinema.
- g. This time next week *I'll be sun-bathing*.
- h. *You'll be seeing* John in the office tomorrow, won't you?
- i. You *are to travel* directly to London.
- j. The train *is about to leave*.
- k. A month from now *he will have finished* all his exams.

It is clear from these examples that several tenses are used to express the future. The sections that follow show the form and function of each of these tenses.

TENSES

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

Past perfect continuous, form

The past perfect continuous is composed of two elements - the past perfect of the verb *to be* (=had been) + the present participle (*base+ing*).

Examples:

| Subject | had been | verb-ing |
|---------|----------|----------|
| I | had been | walking |

| Affirmative | | |
|------------------------|-------------|----------|
| She_ | had been | trying |
| Negative | | |
| We | hadn't been | sleeping |
| Interrogative | | |
| Had you | been | eating |
| Interrogative negative | | |
| Hadn't they | been | living |

Example: *to buy*, past perfect continuous

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| I had been buying | I hadn't been buying | Had I been buying? |
| You had been buying | You hadn't been buying | Had you been buying? |
| He, she, it had been buying | He hadn't been buying | Had she been buying? |
| We had been buying | We hadn't been buying | Had we been buying? |
| You had been buying | You hadn't been buying | Had you been buying? |
| They had been buying | They hadn't been buying | Had they been buying? |

Past perfect continuous, function

The past perfect continuous corresponds to the present perfect continuous, but with reference to a time earlier than 'before now'. Again, we are more interested in the *process*.

Examples:

- Had you been waiting* long before the taxi arrived?
- We had been trying* to open the door for five minutes when Jane found her key.
- It had been raining hard* for several hours and the streets were very wet.
- Her friends *had been thinking* of calling the police when she walked in.

This form is also used in reported speech. It is the equivalent of the past

continuous and the present perfect continuous in direct speech:

Jane said "I have been gardening all afternoon." → Jane said *she had been gardening* all afternoon.

When the police questioned him, John said "I was working late in the office that night." → When the police questioned him, John told them *he had been working* late in the office that night.

 [previous](#) [next](#) 

TENSES

PAST PERFECT

Past perfect, form

The Past Perfect tense in English is composed of two parts: the past tense of the verb *to have* (*had*) + the past participle of the main verb.

| Subject | had | past participle |
|---------|-----|-----------------|
| We | had | decided... |

| Affirmative | | |
|-------------|-----|--------|
| She | had | given. |

| Negative | | |
|----------|--------|--------|
| We | hadn't | asked. |

| Interrogative | | |
|---------------|------|----------|
| Had | they | arrived? |

| Interrogative negative | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----------|
| Hadn't | you | finished? |

Example: *to decide*, Past perfect

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| I had decided | I hadn't decided | Had I decided? |
| You had decided | You hadn't decided | Had you decided? |
| He, she, it had decided | He hadn't decided | Had she decided? |
| We had decided | We hadn't decided | Had we decided? |
| You had decided | You hadn't decided | Had you decided? |
| They had decided | They hadn't decided | Had they decided? |

Past perfect, function

The past perfect refers to a time *earlier than* before now. It is used to make it clear that one event happened before another in the past. It does not matter which event is mentioned first - the tense makes it clear which one happened first.

In these examples, Event A is the first or earliest event, Event B is the second or latest event:

| | | |
|----|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. | John <i>had gone</i> out | when I arrived in the office. |
| | Event A | Event B |
| b. | I <i>had saved</i> my document | before the computer crashed. |
| | Event A | Event B |
| c. | When they arrived | we <i>had already started</i> cooking |
| | Event B | Event A |

| | | |
|----|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| d. | He was very tired | because he <i>hadn't slept</i> well. |
| | Event B | Event A |

Past perfect + *just*

'*Just*' is used with the past perfect to refer to an event that was only a short time earlier than before now, e.g.

- a. The train *had just left* when I arrived at the station.
- b. She *had just left* the room when the police arrived.
- c. I *had just put* the washing out when it started to rain.



TENSES

SIMPLE FUTURE

Simple future, form

The 'simple' future is composed of two parts: *will* / *shall* + the infinitive without 'to'

| Subject | will | infinitive without to |
|---------|------|-----------------------|
| He | will | leave... |

| Affirmative | | |
|------------------------|----------|-------|
| I | will | go |
| I | shall | go |
| Negative | | |
| They | will not | see |
| They | won't | see |
| Interrogative | | |
| Will | she | ask? |
| Interrogative negative | | |
| Won't | she | take? |

| Contractions: | | |
|---------------|---|----------------------|
| I will | → | <i>I'll</i> |
| You will | → | <i>you'll</i> |
| He, she, will | → | <i>he'll, she'll</i> |
| We will | → | <i>we'll</i> |
| You will | → | <i>you'll</i> |
| They will | → | <i>they'll</i> |

NOTE: The form '*it will*' is not normally shortened.

Example: *to see*, simple future

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| I'll see | I won't see/ | Will I see?/ |
| *I will/shall see | I shan't see | Shall I see? |
| You'll see | You won't see | Will you see? |
| He, she, it will see | He won't see | Will she see? |
| We'll see | We won't see/ | Will we see?/ |
| *We will/shall see | We shan't see | Shall we see? |
| You will see | You won't see | Will you see? |
| They'll see | They won't see | Will they see? |

*NOTE: *shall* is slightly dated but can be used instead of *will* with *I / we*.

Simple future, function

The simple future refers to a time later than now, and expresses facts or certainty. In this case there is no 'attitude'.

The simple future is used:

- a. to predict a future event: It **will rain** tomorrow.
- b. (with *I/we*) to express a spontaneous decision: **I'll pay** for the tickets by credit card.
- c. to express willingness: **I'll do** the washing-up. **He'll carry** your bag for you.
- d. (in the negative form) to express unwillingness: The baby **won't eat** his soup. I **won't leave** until I've seen the manager!
- e. (with *I* in the interrogative form) to make an offer: **Shall I open** the window?
- f. (with *we* in the interrogative form) to make a suggestion: **Shall we go** to the cinema tonight?
- g. (with *I* in the interrogative form) to ask for advice or instructions: What **shall I tell** the boss about this money?
- h. (with *you*) to give orders: **You will do** exactly as I say.
- i. (with *you*) to give an invitation: **Will you come** to the dance with me?
Will you marry me?

NOTE: In modern English *will* is preferred to *shall*.

Shall is mainly used with *I* and *we* to make an offer or suggestion (see examples (e) and (f) above, or to ask for advice (example (g) above). With the other persons (*you, he, she, they*) *shall* is only used in literary or poetic situations, e.g.

"With rings on her fingers and bells on her toes, She shall have music wherever she goes."



TENSES

PAST CONTINUOUS

1. Past continuous - form.

The past continuous of any verb is composed of two parts : the past tense of the verb *to be* (*was/were*), and the base of the main verb + *ing*.

| Subject | was/were | base-ing |
|---------|----------|----------|
| They | were | watching |

| Affirmative | | |
|-------------|-----|---------|
| She | was | reading |

| Negative | | |
|----------|--------|---------|
| She | wasn't | reading |

| Interrogative | | |
|---------------|-----|----------|
| Was | she | reading? |

| Interrogative negative | | |
|------------------------|-----|----------|
| Wasn't | she | reading? |

Example: *to play*, past continuous

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| I was playing | I was not playing | Was I playing? |
| You were playing | You were not playing | Were you playing? |
| He, she, it was playing | She wasn't playing | Was she playing? |
| We were playing | We weren't playing | Were we playing? |
| You were playing | You weren't playing | Were you playing? |
| They were playing | They weren't playing | Were they playing? |

2. Past continuous, function

The past continuous describes actions or events in a time *before now*, which began in the past and was *still going on* at the time of speaking. In other words, it expresses an *unfinished or incomplete* action in the past.

It is used:

- often, to describe the background in a story written in the past tense, e.g. "The sun *was shining* and the birds *were singing* as the elephant came out of the jungle. The other animals *were relaxing* in the shade of the trees, but the elephant moved very quickly. She *was looking* for her baby, and she didn't notice the hunter who *was watching* her through his binoculars. When the shot rang out, she *was running* towards the river..."
- to describe an unfinished action that was interrupted by another event or action: "I *was having* a beautiful dream when the alarm

clock rang."

- to express a change of mind: e.g. "I *was going* to spend the day at the beach but I've decided to go on an excursion instead."
- with '*wonder*', to make a very polite request: e.g. "I *was wondering* if you could baby-sit for me tonight."

More examples:

- a. They *were waiting* for the bus when the accident happened.
- b. Caroline *was skiing* when she broke her leg.
- c. When we arrived he *was having* a bath.
- d. When the fire started I *was watching* television.

Note: with verbs not normally used in the continuous form, the simple past is used. [See list in Present continuous](#)



TENSES

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

Present perfect continuous, form

The present perfect continuous is made up of two elements: (a) the present perfect of the verb 'to be' (have/has been), and (b) the present participle of the main verb (base+ing).

| Subject | has/have been | base+ing |
|---------|---------------|----------|
| She | has been | swimming |

| Affirmative | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| She has been / She's been | running |
| Negative | |
| She hasn't been | running |
| Interrogative | |
| Has she been | running? |
| Interrogative negative | |
| Hasn't she been | running? |

Example: *to live*, present perfect continuous

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| I have been living | I haven't been living | Have I been living? |
| You have been living | You haven't been living | Have you been living? |
| He, she, it has been living | He hasn't been living | Has she been living? |
| We have been living | We haven't been living | Have we been living? |
| You have been living | You haven't been living | Have you been living? |
| They have been living | They haven't been living | Have they been living? |

Present perfect continuous, function

The present perfect continuous refers to an **unspecified time** between 'before now' and 'now'. The speaker is thinking about something that started but perhaps did not finish in that period of time. He/she is interested in the **process as well as the result**, and this process may still be going on, or may have just finished.

Examples:

1. Actions that started in the past and continue in the present.

a. She **has been waiting** for you all day (=and she's still waiting now).

b. **I've been working** on this report since eight o'clock this morning (=and I still haven't finished it).

c. *They have been travelling* since last October (=and they're not home yet).

2. Actions that have just finished, but we are interested in the results:

a. *She has been cooking* since last night (=and the food on the table looks delicious).

b. *It's been raining* (= and the streets are still wet).

c. *Someone's been eating* my chips (= half of them have gone).

Note:

Verbs without continuous forms

With verbs not normally used in the continuous form, use the present perfect simple. See list of these verbs under 'Present Continuous':

- *I've wanted* to visit China for years.
- *She's known* Robert since she was a child.
- *I've hated* that music since I first heard it.
- *I've heard* a lot about you recently.
- *We've understood* everything *we've heard* this morning.

 previous

next 

TENSES

PRESENT PERFECT + *for*, *since*

Using the present perfect, we can define a period of time before now by considering its **duration**, with *for* + a period of time, or by considering its **starting point**, with *since* + a point in time.

For + a period of time:

for six years, *for* a week, *for* a month, *for* hours, *for* two hours.
I have worked here *for* five years.

Since + a point in time:

since this morning, since last week, since yesterday,
since I was a child, since Wednesday, since 2 o'clock.
I have worked here since 1990.

More examples:

present perfect with *for*:

- She has lived here *for* twenty years.
- We have taught at this school *for* a long time.
- Alice has been married *for* three months.
- They have been at the hotel *for* a week.

present perfect with *since*:

- She has lived here *since* 1980.
- We have taught at this school *since* 1965.
- Alice has been married *since* March 2nd.
- They have been at the hotel *since* last Tuesday.

Note:

- For* and *since* can both be used with the past perfect.
- Since* can only be used with perfect tenses, *for* can also be used with the simple past.



TENSES

PRESENT PERFECT OR SIMPLE PAST?

Always use the **present perfect** when the time is not important, or not specified.

Always use the **simple past** when details about the time or place are specified or asked for.

Compare:

| Present perfect | Simple past |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| I <i>have lived</i> in Lyon. | I <i>lived</i> in Lyon <i>in 1989</i> . |
| They <i>have eaten</i> Thai food. | They <i>ate</i> Thai food <i>last night</i> . |
| <i>Have you seen</i> 'Othello'? | Where <i>did you see</i> 'Othello'? |
| We <i>have been</i> to Ireland. | When <i>did you go</i> to Ireland? |

There is also a difference of **attitude** that is often more important than the time factor.

"*What did you do at school today?*" is a question about **activities**, and considers the school day as **finished**.

"*What have you done at school today?*" is a question about **results** - "show me", and regards the time of speaking as a **continuation** of the school day.

 previous

next 

TENSES

PRESENT CONTINUOUS FOR FUTURE EVENTS

1. Present continuous for the future, form

See notes on form in section on Present Continuous.

| Subject | + <i>to be</i> | + base- <i>ing</i> |
|---------|----------------|--------------------|
| She | is | meeting |

2. Future: Present continuous for the future, function

The present continuous is used to talk about *arrangements* for events at a time later than now.

There is a suggestion that more than one person is aware of the event, and that some preparation has already happened. e.g.

- a. *I'm meeting Jim at the airport* = and both Jim and I have discussed this.
- b. *I am leaving tomorrow*. = and I've already bought my train ticket.
- c. *We're having a staff meeting next Monday* = and all members of staff have been told about it.

More examples:

- a. *Is she seeing* him tomorrow?
- b. *He isn't working* next week.
- c. *They aren't leaving* until the end of next year.
- d. *We are staying* with friends when we get to Boston.

Note: in example (a), *seeing* is used in a continuous form because it means *meeting*.

BE CAREFUL! The **simple present** is used when a future event is part of a programme or time-table. Notice the difference between:

- a. *We're having a staff meeting next Monday*.
- b. *We have a staff meeting next Monday*. (= we have a meeting every Monday, it's on the time-table.)

TENSES

PRESENT PERFECT

1. Present perfect - form

The present perfect of any verb is composed of two elements : the appropriate form of the auxiliary verb **to have** (present tense), plus the past participle of the main verb. The past participle of a regular verb is **base+ed**, e.g. *played, arrived, looked*. For irregular verbs, see the [Table of irregular verbs](#) in the section called 'Verbs'.

| Affirmative | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Subject | to have | past participle |
| <i>She</i> | <i>has</i> | <i>visited</i> |
| Negative_ | | |
| Subject | to have + not | past participle |
| <i>She</i> | <i>hasn't</i> | <i>visited</i> |
| Interrogative_ | | |
| to have | subject | past participle |
| <i>Has</i> | <i>she</i> | <i>visited..?</i> |
| Interrogative negative_ | | |
| to have + not | subject | past participle |
| <i>Hasn't</i> | <i>she</i> | <i>visited...?</i> |

Example: *to walk*, present perfect

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| I have walked | I haven't walked | Have I walked? |
| You have walked | You haven't walked | Have you walked? |
| He, she, it has walked | He, she, it hasn't walked | Has he, she, it walked |
| We have walked | We haven't walked | Have we walked? |
| You have walked | You haven't walked | Have you walked? |
| They have walked | They haven't walked | Have they walked? |

2. Present perfect, function

The Present Perfect is used to indicate a link between the present and the past. The time of the action is **before now but not specified**, and we are often more interested in the **result** than in the action itself.

BE CAREFUL! There may be a verb tense in your language with a similar form, but the meaning is probably NOT the same.

The present perfect is used to describe:

1. An action or situation that started in the past and continues in the present.
Example: *I have lived in Bristol since 1984* (= and I still do.)

2. An action performed during a period that has not yet finished. Example: She **has been** to the cinema twice this week (= and the week isn't over yet.)
3. A repeated action in an unspecified period between the past and now. Example: We **have visited** Portugal several times.
4. An action that was completed in the very recent past, (expressed by 'just'). Example: I **have just finished** my work.
5. An action when the time is not important. Example: He **has read** 'War and Peace'. (the result of his reading is important)

Note: When we want to give or ask details about *when, where, who*, we use the [simple past](#). Example: He **read** 'War and Peace' **last week**.

Examples:

1. Actions started in the past and continuing in the present.
 - a. They **haven't lived** here for years.
 - b. She **has worked** in the bank for five years.
 - c. We **have had** the same car for ten years.
 - d. **Have you played** the piano since you were a child?
2. When the time period referred to has not finished.
 - a. **I have worked** hard **this week**.
 - b. It **has rained** a lot **this year**.
 - c. We **haven't seen** her **today**.
3. Actions repeated in an unspecified period between the past and now.
 - a. They **have seen** that film six times.
 - b. It **has happened** several times already.
 - c. She **has visited** them frequently.
 - d. We **have eaten** at that restaurant many times.
4. Actions completed in the very recent past (+just).
 - a. **Have you just finished** work?
 - b. I **have just eaten**.
 - c. We **have just seen** her.
 - d. **Has he just left**?
5. When the precise time of the action is not important or not known.
 - a. Someone **has eaten my soup**!
 - b. **Have you seen** 'Gone with the Wind'?
 - c. **She's studied** Japanese, Russian and English.

'IF' SENTENCES AND THE 'UNREAL' PAST

In this section you will find information on sentences containing the word 'if', the use of conditional tenses, and the 'unreal past', that is, when we use a past tense but we are not actually referring to past time.

IF AND THE CONDITIONAL

There are four main types of 'if' sentences in English:

1. [The 'zero' conditional](#), where the tense in **both parts** of the sentence is the **simple present**:

| 'IF' CLAUSE | MAIN CLAUSE |
|---------------------|----------------|
| If + simple present | simple present |
| If you heat ice | it melts. |
| If it rains | you get wet |

In these sentences, the time is **now or always** and the situation is **real and possible**. They are often used to refer to general truths.

2. [The Type 1 conditional](#), where the tense in the 'if clause is the **simple present**, and the tense in the main clause is the **simple future**

| 'IF' CLAUSE | MAIN CLAUSE |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| If + simple present | Simple future |
| If it rains | you will get wet |
| If you don't hurry | we will miss the train. |

In these sentences, the time is the **present or future** and the situation is **real**. They refer to a **possible condition** and its **probable result**.

3. [The Type 2 conditional](#), where the tense in the 'if' clause is the **simple past**, and the tense in the main clause is the **present conditional**:

| 'IF' CLAUSE | MAIN CLAUSE |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| If + simple past | Present conditional |
| If it rained | you would get wet |
| If you went to bed earlier | you wouldn't be so tired. |

In these sentences, the time is **now or any time**, and the situation is **unreal**. They are **not based on fact**, and they refer to an **unlikely or hypothetical condition** and its **probable result**.

4. [The Type 3 conditional](#), where the tense in the 'if' clause is the **past perfect**, and the tense in the main clause is the **perfect conditional**:

| 'IF' CLAUSE | MAIN CLAUSE |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| If + past perfect | Perfect conditional |
| If it had rained | you would have got wet |
| If you had worked harder | you would have passed the exam. |

In these sentences, the time is **past**, and the situation is **contrary to reality**. The facts they are based on are the **opposite** of what is expressed, and they refer to an **unreal past condition** and its **probable past result**.

A further type of 'if' sentence exists, where Type 2 and Type 3 are mixed. The tense in the 'if' clause is the past perfect, and the tense in the main clause is the present conditional:

| 'IF' CLAUSE | MAIN CLAUSE |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| If + past perfect | Present conditional |
| If I had worked harder at school | I would have a better job now. |
| If we had looked at the map | we wouldn't be lost. |

In these sentences, the time is **past** in the 'if' clause, and **present** in the main clause. They refer to an **unreal past condition** and its **probable result in the present**.



TYPE 1 CONDITIONAL

1. Form

In a *Type 1* conditional sentence, the tense in the 'if clause is the **simple present**, and the tense in the main clause is the **simple future**

| 'IF' CLAUSE (CONDITION) | MAIN CLAUSE (RESULT) |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| If + simple present | Simple future |
| If it rains | you will get wet |
| If you don't hurry | we will miss the train. |

2. Function

In these sentences, the time is the **present or future** and the situation is **real**. They refer to a **possible condition** and its **probable result**. They are based on facts, and they are used to make statements about the real world, and about particular situations. We often use such sentences to give warnings:

- *If you don't leave, I'll call the police.*
- *If you don't drop the gun, I'll shoot!*

Examples:

- If you **drop** that glass, it **will break**.
- Nobody **will notice** if you **make** a mistake.
- If I **have** time, **I'll finish** that letter.
- What **will you do** if you **miss** the plane?

NOTE: We can use modals to express the degree of certainty of the result:

- *If you drop that glass, it **might** break.*
- *I **may** finish that letter if I have time.*

TYPE 2 CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

1. Form

In a *Type 2 conditional sentence*, the tense in the 'if' clause is the **simple past**, and the tense in the main clause is the **present conditional**:

| 'IF' CLAUSE | MAIN CLAUSE |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| If + simple past | Present conditional |
| If it rained | you would get wet |
| If you went to bed earlier | you wouldn't be so tired. |

Present conditional, form

The present conditional of any verb is composed of two parts - the modal auxiliary *would* + the infinitive of the main verb (without 'to'.)

| Subject | would | infinitive without <i>to</i> |
|---------|-------|------------------------------|
| She | would | learn |

| Affirmative | | |
|------------------------|----------|---------|
| I | would | go |
| Negative | | |
| I | wouldn't | ask |
| Interrogative_ | | |
| Would | she | come? |
| Interrogative negative | | |
| Wouldn't | they | accept? |

Would: Contractions of would

In spoken English, *would* is contracted to 'd.

| | |
|-------------|--------|
| I'd | We'd |
| you'd | you'd |
| he'd, she'd | they'd |

The negative contraction = *wouldn't*.

Example: *to accept*, Present conditional

| Affirmative | Negative_ | Interrogative_ |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| I would accept | I wouldn't accept | Would I accept? |

| | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| You would accept | You wouldn't accept | Would you accept? |
| He would accept | She wouldn't accept | Would he accept? |
| We would accept | We wouldn't accept | Would we accept? |
| You would accept | You wouldn't accept | Would you accept? |
| They would accept | They wouldn't accept | Would they accept? |

2. Function

In these sentences, the time is **now or any time**, and the situation is **unreal**. They are **not based on fact**, and they refer to an **unlikely or hypothetical condition** and its **probable result**. The use of the past tense after 'if' indicates **unreality**. We can nearly always add a phrase starting with "but", that expresses the real situation:

- *If the weather **wasn't** so bad, we **would go** to the park* (...but it is bad, so we can't go)
- *If I **was** the Queen of England, I **would give** everyone £100.* (...but I'm not, so I won't)

Examples of use:

1. To make a statement about something that is not real at present, but is possible:

*I **would visit** her if I **had** time. (= I haven't got time but I might have some time)*

2. To make a statement about a situation that is not real now and never could be real:

*If I **were** you, I'd **give up** smoking (but I **could never be** you)*

Examples:

- If I **was** a plant, I **would love** the rain.
- If you really **loved** me, you **would buy** me a diamond ring.
- If I **knew** where she lived, I **would go** and see her.
- You **wouldn't need** to read this if you **understood** English grammar.
- Would he go** to the concert if I **gave** him a ticket?
- They **wouldn't invite** her if they **didn't like** her
- We **would be able** to buy a larger house if we **had** more money

NOTE: It is correct, and very common, to say "If I were" instead of "If I was".

TYPE 3 CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

1. Form

In a Type 3 conditional sentence, the tense in the 'if' clause is the past perfect, and the tense in the main clause is the perfect conditional:

| 'IF' CLAUSE | MAIN CLAUSE |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| If + past perfect | Perfect conditional |
| If it had rained | you would have got wet |
| If you had worked harder | you would have passed the exam. |

Perfect conditional - form

The perfect conditional of any verb is composed of two elements: *would* + the perfect infinitive of the main verb (=have + past participle):

| Subject | would | perfect infinitive |
|------------------------|----------|--------------------|
| He | would | have gone... |
| They | would | have stayed... |
| Affirmative | | |
| I | would | have believed ... |
| Negative | | |
| She | wouldn't | have given... |
| Interrogative | | |
| Would | you | have left...? |
| Interrogative negative | | |
| Wouldn't | he | have been...? |

Example: *to go*, Past conditional

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| I would have gone | I wouldn't have gone | Would I have gone? |
| You would have gone | You wouldn't have gone | Would you have gone? |
| He would have gone | She wouldn't have gone | Would it have gone? |
| We would have gone | We wouldn't have gone | Would we have gone? |
| You would have gone | You wouldn't have gone | Would you have gone? |
| They would have gone | They wouldn't have gone | Would they have gone? |

In these sentences, the time is *past*, and the situation is *contrary to reality*. The facts they are based on are the *opposite* of what is expressed.

Type 3 conditional sentences, are truly *hypothetical* or *unreal*, because it is now too late for the condition or its result to exist. There is always an unspoken "*but...*" phrase:

- If I *had worked* harder I *would have passed* the exam (but I didn't work hard, and I didn't pass the exam).

- If *I'd known* you were coming *I'd have baked* a cake (but I didn't know, and I haven't baked a cake).

NOTE: Both *would* and *had* can be contracted to *'d*, which can be confusing. Remember that you **NEVER** use *would* in the *IF*-clause, so in the example above, "If I'd known" must be "If I *had* known", and "I'd have baked" must be "I *would* have baked.."

Examples:

- a. If *I'd known* you were in hospital, I *would have visited* you.
- b. I *would have bought* you a present if *I'd known* it was your birthday.
- c. If *they'd had* a better goalkeeper they *wouldn't have lost* the game.
- d. If you *had told* me you were on the Internet, *I'd have sent* you an e-mail.
- e. *Would you have bought* an elephant if *you'd known* how much they eat?



TENSES

SIMPLE PRESENT

(See also Verbs -'Regular verbs in the simple present')

Simple present, third person singular

Note:

1. **he, she, it:** in the third person singular the verb **always ends in -s:**
he wants, she needs, he gives, she thinks.
2. Negative and question forms use **DOES** (=the third person of the auxiliary'DO') + the infinitive of the verb.
He wants. Does he want? He does not want.
3. Verbs ending in **-y** : the third person changes the **-y** to **-ies:**
fly → flies, cry → cries

Exception: if there is a vowel before the **-y:**
play → plays, pray → prays
4. Add **-es** to verbs ending in: **-ss, -x, -sh, -ch:**
he passes, she catches, he fixes, it pushes

See also Verbs -'Regular verbs in the simple present', and 'Be, do & have'

Examples:

1. Third person singular with s or -es

- a. *He goes* to school every morning.
- b. *She understands* English.
- c. *It mixes* the sand and the water.
- d. *He tries* very hard.
- e. *She enjoys* playing the piano.

2. Simple present, form

Example: *to think*, present simple

| Affirmative | Interrogative | Negative |
|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| I think | Do I think ? | I do not think. |
| You think | Do you think? | You don't think. |
| he, she, it thinks | Does he, she, it think? | He, she, it doesn't think. |
| we think | Do we think? | We don't think. |
| you think | Do you think? | You don't think. |

The simple present is used:

1. to express habits, general truths, repeated actions or unchanging situations, emotions and wishes:
I smoke (habit); I work in London (unchanging situation); London is a large city (general truth)
2. to give instructions or directions:
You walk for two hundred metres, then you turn left.
3. to express fixed arrangements, present or future:
Your exam starts at 09.00
4. to express future time, after some conjunctions: *after, when, before, as soon as, until*:
He'll give it to you when you come next Saturday.

BE CAREFUL! The simple present is not used to express actions happening now. [See Present Continuous.](#)

Examples:

1. **For habits**
He *drinks* tea at breakfast.
She only *eats* fish.
They *watch* television regularly.
2. **For repeated actions or events**
We *catch* the bus every morning.
It *rains* every afternoon in the hot season.
They *drive* to Monaco every summer.
3. **For general truths**
Water *freezes* at zero degrees.
The Earth *revolves* around the Sun.
Her mother *is* Peruvian.
4. **For instructions or directions**
Open the packet and *pour* the contents into hot water.
You *take* the No.6 bus to Watney and then the No.10 to Bedford.
5. **For fixed arrangements**
His mother *arrives* tomorrow.
Our holiday *starts* on the 26th March
6. **With future constructions**
She'll see you before she *leaves*.
We'll give it to her when she *arrives*.

TENSES

SUMMARY OF VERB TENSES

Present tenses

[Simple present](#): *She wants a drink.*

[Present continuous](#): *They are walking home.*

Past tenses

[Simple past](#): *Peter lived in China in 1965.*

[Past continuous](#): *I was reading when she arrived.*

Perfect tenses

[Present Perfect](#): *I have lived here since 1987.*

[Present perfect continuous](#): *I have been living here for years.*

[Past perfect](#): *We had been to see her several times before she visited us.*

[Past perfect continuous](#): *He had been watching her for some time when she turned and smiled.*

[Future perfect](#): *We will have arrived in the States by the time you get this letter.*

[Future perfect continuous](#): *By the end of your course, you will have been studying for five years.*

Future tenses

[Simple future](#): *They will go to Italy next week.*

[Future continuous](#): *I will be travelling by train.*

Conditional tenses

Present conditional: *If he had the money he would go*

Present continuous conditional: *He would be getting up now if he was in Australia.*

Perfect conditional: *She would have visited me if she had had time.*

Perfect continuous conditional: *I would have been playing tennis if I hadn't broken my arm.*

[◀ previous](#)

[next ▶](#)

TENSES

FUTURE PERFECT

Future perfect, form

The future perfect is composed of two elements: the simple future of the verb *to have* (*will have*) + the past participle of the main verb:

| Subject | will have | past participle |
|---------|-----------|-----------------|
| He | will have | finished |

Affirmative

I will have left

Negative

They won't have gone

Interrogative

Will we have seen?

Interrogative negative

Won't he have arrived?

Example: *to arrive*, future perfect

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| I'll have arrived | I won't have arrived | Will I have arrived? |
| You'll have arrived | You won't have arrived | Will you have arrived? |
| He'll have arrived | She won't have arrived | Will it have arrived? |
| We'll have arrived | We won't have arrived | Will we have arrived? |
| You'll have arrived | You won't have arrived | Will you have arrived? |
| They'll have arrived | They won't have arrived | Will they have arrived? |

Future perfect, function

The future perfect refers to a completed action in the future. When we use this tense we are projecting ourselves forward into the future and looking back at an action that will be completed some time later than now. It is often used with a time expression using *by* + a point in future time.

Examples:

- I'll have been* here for six months on June 23rd.
- By the time you read this *I'll have left*.
- You will have finished* your work by this time next week.

TENSES

FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS

Future perfect continuous, form

This form is composed of two elements: the future perfect of the verb *to be* (*will have been*) + the present participle of the main verb (*base+ing*):

| Subject | will have been | base+ing |
|---------|----------------|----------|
| We | will have been | living |

| Affirmative | | |
|-------------|----------------|---------|
| I | will have been | working |

| Negative | | |
|----------|-----------------|---------|
| I | won't have been | working |

| Interrogative | | |
|---------------|-------------|----------|
| Will | I have been | working? |

| Interrogative negative | | |
|------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Won't | I have been | working? |

Example: *to live*, Future Perfect continuous

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| I'll have been living | I won't have been living | Will I have been living? |
| You'll have been living | You won't have been living | Will you have been living? |
| He'll have been living | He won't have been living | Will she have been living? |
| We'll have been living | We won't have been living | Will we have been living? |
| You'll have been living | You won't have been living | Will you have been living? |
| They'll have been living | They won't have been living | Will they have been living? |

Future perfect continuous, function

Like the future perfect simple, this form is used to project ourselves forward in time and to look back. It refers to events or actions in a time *between now and some future time*, that may be *unfinished*.

Examples:

- I will have been waiting* here for three hours by six o'clock.
- By 2001 *I will have been living* here for sixteen years.
- By the time I finish this course, *I will have been learning* English for twenty years.
- Next year *I will have been working* here for four years.

TENSES

FUTURE CONTINUOUS

Future continuous, form

The future continuous is made up of two elements: the simple future of the verb 'to be' + the present participle (*base+ing*)

| Subject | simple future, 'to be' | base+ing |
|---------|------------------------|----------|
| You | will be | watching |

Affirmative

I will be asking

Negative

She won't be leaving

Interrogative

Will they be retiring?

Interrogative negative

Won't we be staying?

Example: *to stay*, future continuous

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| I will be staying | I won't be staying | Will I be staying? |
| You will be staying | You won't be staying | Will you be staying? |
| He, she, it will be staying | He won't be staying | Will she be staying? |
| We will be staying | We won't be staying | Will we be staying? |
| You will be staying | You won't be staying | Will you be staying? |
| They will be staying | They won't be staying | Will they be staying? |

Future continuous, function

The future continuous refers to an *unfinished* action or event that will be *in progress* at a time *later than now*. It is used:

- to project ourselves into the future and see something happening: This time next week *I will be sun-bathing* in Bali.
- to refer to actions/events that will happen in the normal course of events: *I'll be seeing Jim* at the conference next week.
- in the interrogative form, especially with 'you', to distinguish between a simple request for information and an invitation: *Will you be coming* to the party tonight? (= request for information) Will you come to the party? (= invitation)
- to predict or guess about someone's actions or feelings, now or in the

future: *You'll be feeling tired* after that long walk, I expect.

More examples:

a. events in progress in the future:

When you are in Australia *will you be staying* with friends?

This time next week *you will be working* in your new job.

At four thirty on Tuesday afternoon I *will be signing* the contract.

b. events/actions in normal course of events:

I'll be going into town this afternoon, is there anything you want from the shops?

Will you be using the car tomorrow? - No, you can take it.

I'll be seeing Jane this evening - I'll give her the message.

c. asking for information:

Will you be bringing your friend to the pub tonight?

Will Jim be coming with us?

d. predicting or guessing:

You'll be feeling thirsty after working in the sun.

He'll be coming to the meeting, I expect.

You'll be missing the sunshine now you're back in England.



TENSES

PRESENT PERFECT + *ever*, *never*, *already*, *yet*

The adverbs *ever* and *never* express the idea of an unidentified time *before now* e.g. *Have you ever visited Berlin?*

'Ever' is used

a. in questions. e.g.

Have you ever been to England?

Has she ever met the Prime Minister?

b. in negative questions e.g.

Haven't they ever been to Europe?

Haven't you ever eaten Chinese food?

c. and in negative statements using the pattern

nothing.....ever, nobody.....ever e.g.

Nobody has ever said that to me before.

Nothing like this has ever happened to us.

d. 'Ever' is also used with 'The first time....' e.g.

It's the first time (that) I've ever eaten snails.

This is the first time I've ever been to England.

'Never' means *at no time before now*, and is the same as *not ever*:

I have never visited Berlin

BE CAREFUL!

You must not use *never* and *not* together:

~~*I haven't never been to Italy.*~~

I have never been to Italy.

Position: 'Ever' and 'never' are always placed before the main verb (past participle).

Already and *yet*:

Already refers to an action that has happened at an unspecified time before now. It suggests that there is no need for repetition, e.g.

a. *I've already drunk three coffees this morning.* (and you're offering me another one!)

b. *Don't write to John, I've already done it.*

It is also used in questions:

a. *Have you already written to John?*

b. *Has she finished her homework already?*

Position: *already* can be placed before the main verb (past participle) or at the end of the sentence:

- a. I have **already** been to Tokyo.
- b. I have been to Tokyo **already**.

yet is used in negative statements and questions, to mean *(not) in the period of time between before now and now, (not) up to and including the present.*

e.g.

- a. Have you met Judy **yet**?
- b. I haven't visited the Tate Gallery **yet**.
- c. Has he arrived **yet**?
- d. They haven't eaten **yet**.

Position: **Yet** is usually placed at the end of the sentence.



TENSES

Introduction

It is important to understand the meaning and use of tenses in English. The form may be like that of a tense in your own language, but the meaning may be different, so be **very careful!**

[Summary of Verb Tenses](#)

Present tenses

[Simple present](#)

[Present continuous](#)

Past tenses

[Simple past](#)

[Past continuous](#)

Perfect tenses

[Present Perfect](#)

[Present perfect continuous](#)

[Past perfect](#)

[Past perfect continuous](#)

[Future perfect](#)

[Future perfect continuous](#)

Future tenses

[Simple future](#)

[Future continuous](#)

Conditional tenses

Present conditional

Present continuous conditional

Perfect conditional

Perfect continuous conditional

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

UNREAL PAST

The past tense is sometimes used in English to refer to an 'unreal' situation. So, although the tense is the past, we are usually talking about the present, e.g. in a Type 2 conditional sentence:

*If an elephant and a mouse **fell** in love, they would have many problems.*

Although *fell* is in the past tense, we are talking about a hypothetical situation that might exist now or at any time, but we are **not** referring to the past. We call this use the **unreal past**.

Other situations where this occurs are:

- after other words and expressions like '*if*' (*supposing, if only, what if*);
- after the verb '*to wish*';
- after the expression '*I'd rather..*'

Expressions like '*if*'

The following expressions can be used to introduce hypothetical situations: - *supposing, if only, what if*. They are followed by a *past tense* to indicate that the condition they introduce is unreal:

- Supposing an elephant and a mouse *fell* in love? (= but we know this is unlikely or impossible)
- What if we *painted* the room purple? (= that would be very surprising)
- If only *I had* more money. (= but I haven't).

These expressions can also introduce hypothetical situations in the past and then they are followed by the *past perfect*.

Examples:

- If only I *hadn't kissed* the frog (= I did and it was a mistake because he turned into a horrible prince, but I can't change it now.)
- What if the elephant *had trodden* on the mouse? (She didn't, but we can imagine the result!)
- Supposing I *had given* that man my money! (I didn't, so I've still got my money now.)

The verb *to wish*

The verb *to wish* is followed by an 'unreal' past tense when we want to talk about situations in the present that we are not happy about but cannot change:

- I wish I *had* more money (=but I haven't)
- She wishes she *was* beautiful (= but she's not)
- We wish we *could* come to your party (but we can't)

When we want to talk about situations in the past that we are not happy about or actions that we regret, we use the verb **to wish** followed by the past perfect:

- I wish I **hadn't said** that (= but I did)
- He wishes he **hadn't bought** the car (= but he did buy it.)
- I wish I **had taken** that job in New York (= but I didn't, so I'm stuck in Bristol)

NOTE: When we want to talk about situations we are not happy about and where we want **someone else** to change them, we use **to wish** followed by **would + infinitive**:

- I wish he **would stop** smoking. (= I don't like it, I want **him** to change it)
- I wish you **would go** away. (= I don't want you here, I want **you** to take some action)
- I wish you **wouldn't squeeze** the toothpaste from the middle! (= I want you to change your habits.)

I'd rather and ***it's time...***

These two expressions are also followed by an unreal past. The verb is in the past tense, but the situation is in the present.

When we want to talk about a course of action we would prefer someone else to take, we use ***I'd rather + past tense***:

- I'd rather you **went**
- He'd rather you **called** the police
- I'd rather you **didn't** hunt elephants.

NOTE: the stress can be important in these sentences, to show what our preference is:

- ***I'd rather you went*** = not me,
- ***I'd rather you went*** = don't stay
- ***He'd rather you called the police*** = he doesn't want to
- ***He'd rather you called the police*** = not the ambulance service

Similarly, when we want to say that **now** is a suitable moment to do something, either for ourselves or for someone else, we use ***it's time + past tense***:

- It's (high) time I **went**.
- It's time you **paid** that bill.
- Don't you think it's time you **had** a haircut?

UNLESS

Unless means the same as if...not. Like *if*, it is followed by a present tense, a past tense or a past perfect (never by *would*). It is used instead of if + not in conditional sentences of all types:

Type 1: (Unless + present)

- a. You'll be sick unless you **stop** eating. (= You will be sick if you don't stop eating)

- b. I won't pay unless you **provide** the goods immediately. (= If you don't provide them I won't pay)

- c. You'll never understand English unless you **study** this grammar carefully. (= You'll never understand if you don't study...)

Type 2: (Unless + past)

- a. Unless he **was** very ill, he would be at work.

- b. I wouldn't eat that food unless I **was** really hungry.

- c. She would be here by now unless she **was** stuck in the traffic.

Type 3: (Unless + past perfect)

- a. The elephant wouldn't have seen the mouse unless **she'd had** perfect eyesight.

- b. I wouldn't have phoned him unless **you'd suggested** it.

- c. They would have shot her unless **she'd given** them the money.

MIXED CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

It is possible for the two parts of a conditional sentence to refer to different times, and the resulting sentence is a "mixed conditional" sentence. There are two types of mixed conditional sentence:

A. Present result of past condition:

1. Form

The tense in the 'if' clause is the past perfect, and the tense in the main clause is the present conditional:

| 'IF' CLAUSE | MAIN CLAUSE |
|--|---|
| If + past perfect If I had worked harder at school If we had looked at the map | Present conditional I would have a better job now. we wouldn't be lost. |

2. Function

In these sentences, the time is *past* in the 'if' clause, and *present* in the main clause. They refer to an *unreal past condition* and its *probable result* in the *present*. They express a situation which is *contrary to reality* both in the past and in the present:

'If I had worked harder at school' is contrary to past fact - I didn't work hard at school, and 'I would have a better job now' is contrary to present fact - I haven't got a good job.

If we had looked at the map (we didn't), we wouldn't be lost (we are lost).

Examples:

- I *would be* a millionaire now if I *had taken* that job.
- If *you'd caught* that plane *you'd be dead* now.
- If *you hadn't spent* all your money on CDs, you *wouldn't be broke*.

B. Past result of present or continuing condition.

1. Form

The tense in the *If*-clause is the simple past, and the tense in the main clause is the perfect conditional:

| 'IF' CLAUSE | MAIN CLAUSE |
|---|---|
| If + simple past If I wasn't afraid of spiders If we didn't trust him | Perfect conditional I would have picked it up. we would have sacked him months ago. |

2. Function

In these sentences the time in the *If*-clause is *now or always*, and the time in the main clause is *before now*. They refer to an unreal present situation and its probable (but unreal) past result:

'If I *wasn't afraid of spiders*' is contrary to *present* reality - I **am** afraid of spiders, and 'I *would have picked it up*' is contrary to *past* reality - I **didn't** pick it up.

- 'If we *didn't trust him*' is contrary to *present* reality - we **do** trust him, and 'we *would have sacked him*' is contrary to *past* reality - we **haven't** sacked him.

Examples:

- If she *wasn't afraid* of flying she *wouldn't have travelled* by boat.
- I'd have been able* to translate the letter if my Italian *was better*.
- If I *was* a good cook, *I'd have invited* them to lunch.
- If the elephant *wasn't* in love with the mouse, *she'd have trodden* on him by now.



PERFECT CONDITIONAL, CONTINUOUS

1. Perfect conditional, continuous - Form

This tense is composed of two elements: the perfect conditional of the verb 'to be' (*would have been*) + the present participle (*base+ing*).

| Subject | would have been | base+ing |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| I | would have been | sitting |
| We | would have been | swimming |
| Affirmative | | |
| I | would have been | studying. |
| Negative | | |
| You | wouldn't have been | living. |
| Interrogative_ | | |
| Would | we have been | travelling? |
| Interrogative negative | | |
| Wouldn't | it have been | working? |

Examples: *to work*, Past continuous conditional

| Affirmative | Negative_ |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| I would have been working | I wouldn't have been working |
| You would have been working | You wouldn't have been working. |
| He would have been working | She wouldn't have been working |
| We would have been working | We wouldn't have been working |
| You would have been working | You wouldn't have been working |
| They would have been working | They wouldn't have been working |
| Interrogative_ | Interrogative negative |
| Would I have been working? | Wouldn't I have been working? |
| Would you have been working? | Wouldn't you have been working? |
| Would he have been working? | Wouldn't she have been working? |
| Would we have been working? | Wouldn't we have been working? |
| Would you have been working? | Wouldn't you have been working? |
| Would they have been working? | Wouldn't they have been working? |

2. Function

This tense can be used in Type 3 conditional sentences. It refers to the **unfulfilled result** of the action in the **if**-clause, and expresses this result as an **unfinished or continuous action**. Again, there is always an unspoken "but.." phrase:

- If the weather had been better (but it wasn't), *I'd have been sitting* in the garden when he arrived (but I wasn't and so I didn't see him).
- If she hadn't got a job in London (but she did), she *would have been working* in Paris (but she wasn't).

Examples:

- If I'd had a ball I *would have been playing* football.
- If I'd had any money *I'd have been drinking* with my friends in the pub that night.
- If I had known it was dangerous I *wouldn't have been climbing* that cliff.
- She *wouldn't have been wearing* a seat-belt if her father hadn't told her to.

 previous

next 

Join the G-Club!
We'll keep you up-to-date
with new info about the
Online Grammar, Test
Centre, Grammar Tips and
other DEN facilities.

PRESENT CONTINUOUS CONDITIONAL

In *type 2 conditional sentences*, the continuous form of the present conditional may be used:

If I were a millionaire, I wouldn't be doing this job!

1. Present continuous conditional - form.

This form is composed of two elements: the present conditional of the verb '*to be*' (*would be*) + the present participle of the main verb (*base+ing*).

| Subject | would be | base+ing |
|------------------------|----------|---------------|
| He | would be | going |
| They | would be | living |
| Affirmative | | |
| We | would be | coming |
| Negative | | |
| You | wouldn't | working be |
| Interrogative | | |
| Would | you be | sharing? |
| Interrogative negative | | |
| Wouldn't | they be | playing? |

Example: *to live*, Present continuous conditional.

| Affirmative | Negative | Interrogative |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| I would be living | I wouldn't be living | Would I be living? |
| You would be living | You wouldn't be living | Would you be living? |
| He would be living | She wouldn't be living | Would he be living? |
| We would be living | We wouldn't be living | Would we be living? |
| You would be living | You wouldn't be living | Would you be living? |
| They would be living | They wouldn't be living | Would they be living? |

2. Present continuous conditional - function

This form is common in Type 2 conditional sentences. It expresses an unfinished or **continuing action** or situation, which is the probable result of an **unreal condition**:

- I **would be working** in Italy if I spoke Italian.
(but I don't speak Italian, so I am not working in Italy).
- She **would be living** with Jack if she wasn't living with her parents.
(but she is living with her parents so she's not living with Jack).

More examples:

- I **wouldn't be eating** this if I wasn't extremely hungry.
- If I had an exam tomorrow, **I'd be revising** now.
- You **wouldn't be smiling** if you knew the truth.

NOTE: This form is also found in: mixed conditional sentences (See section on Mixed Conditional Sentences); in indirect speech:

She said "I'll be working in the garden."
→ *She said she would be working in the garden.* (See section on Indirect Speech)



TENSES

SIMPLE PRESENT FOR FUTURE EVENTS

1. Form - see Simple Present section.
2. Simple present for future events - function

The simple present is used to make statements about events at a *time later than now*, when the statements are based on *present facts*, and when these facts are something fixed like a *time-table, schedule, calendar*.

Examples:

- a. The plane *arrives* at 18.00 tomorrow.
- b. She *has* a yoga class tomorrow morning.
- c. The restaurant *opens* at 19.30 tonight.
- d. Next Thursday at 14.00 there *is* an English exam.

Note the difference between:

- a. The plane *leaves* in ten minutes (= statement of fact)
- b. The plane's *going to leave* in ten minutes (= prediction based on present situation, meaning "...and if you don't hurry up you're going to miss it!")



TENSES

OTHER WAYS OF TALKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

1. IS TO + INFINITIVE

Form:

This form is composed of two elements: the appropriate form of the verb *to be* + *to* (*am to*, *are to*, *is to*), and the infinitive of the main verb without 'to'.

| Subject | to be to | infinitive without to |
|---------|----------|-----------------------|
| We | are to | leave |

| Affirmative | | |
|-------------|-------|--------|
| She | is to | travel |

| Negative | | |
|----------|---------------------|--------|
| You | are not (aren't) to | travel |

| Interrogative | | |
|---------------|------|---------|
| Am | I to | travel? |

| Interrogative negative | | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|
| Aren't | they to | travel? |

Function:

This form refers to an **obligation** to do something at a time later than now. It is similar to '*must*', but there is a suggestion that something has been arranged or organised for us. It is not normally used in spoken English, but might be found in spy stories, e.g.

"You **are to leave** this room at once, and you **are to travel** by train to London. In London you **are to pick up** your ticket from Mr Smith, and you **are to fly** to your destination alone. When you arrive, you **are to meet** our agent, Mr X, who will give you further information. You **are to destroy** this message now."

2. BE + ABOUT TO + INFINITIVE

Form:

This form is composed of three elements : the appropriate form of the verb to be, present tense, + '*about to*' + the infinitive of the main verb without 'to':

| Subject | be | about to | infinitive without to |
|---------|----|----------|-----------------------|
| I | am | about to | leave |

She is about to arrive

Function:

This form refers to a time *immediately after the moment of speaking*, and emphasises that the event or action will happen very soon:

Examples:

- a. She *is about to leave*.
- b. You *are about to see* something very unusual.
- c. I *am about to go* to a meeting - can I talk to you later?

It is often used with the word '*just*', which emphasises the immediacy of the action:

We *are just about to go* to sleep.
Sally *is just about to take* an exam.

This form can also be used in the simple past tense to refer to an action that was imminent, but was interrupted. In such cases it is often followed by a '*when - clause*':

She *was about to leave* when he arrived.
I *was just about to telephone* her when she walked into the house.

 previous next 

TENSES

FUTURE WITH GOING TO

1. Future with Going to - form

This form is composed of three elements: the appropriate form of the verb 'to be' + *going to* + the *infinitive* of the main verb:

| Subject | 'to be' | going to | infinitive |
|---------|---------|----------|------------|
| She | is | going to | leave |

2. Future with Going to - function

The use of 'going to' to refer to future events suggests a very strong association with the present. The *time* is not important - it is later than now, but the *attitude* is that the event depends on a *present situation*, that we know about. So it is used:

a) to refer to our plans and intentions:

We're going to move to London next year. (= the plan is in our minds now.)

b) to make predictions based on present evidence:

Look at those clouds - it's going to pour with rain! (= It's clear from what I can see now.)

Note: In everyday speech, '*going to*' is often shortened to '*gonna*', especially in American English.

More examples:

Plans and intentions:

- Is Freddy going to buy* a new car soon?
- Are John and Pam going to visit* Milan when they are in Italy?
- I think Nigel and Mary *are going to have* a party next week.

Predictions based on present evidence:

- There's going to be* a terrible accident!
- He's going to be* a brilliant politician.
- I'm going to have* terrible indigestion.

NOTE: It is unusual to say 'I'm going to go to...'
Instead, we use '*going to*' + a *place or event*:

Examples:

We *are going to the beach* tomorrow.
She *is going to the ballet* tonight.
Are you going to the party tomorrow night?

NOUNS

USE OF CAPITAL LETTERS WITH NOUNS

Capital letters are used with:

Names and titles of people

- a. Winston Churchill
- b. Marilyn Monroe
- c. the Queen of England
- d. the President of the United States
- e. the Headmaster of Eton
- f. Doctor Mathews
- g. Professor Samuels.

Note: The personal pronoun 'I' is always written with a capital letter.

Titles of works, books etc.

- a. War and Peace
- b. The Merchant of Venice
- c. Crime and Punishment
- d. Tristan and Isolde

Months of the year

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| January | July |
| February | August |
| March | September |
| April | October |
| May | November |
| June | December |

Days of the week

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| Monday | Friday |
| Tuesday | Saturday |
| Wednesday | Sunday |

Thursday

Seasons

Spring
Summer
Autumn
Winter

Holidays

| | | |
|------------|---------|------------------|
| Christmas | Easter | New Year's Day |
| Boxing Day | May Day | Thanksgiving Day |

Geographical names... names of countries and continents

| | | |
|---------|---------|----------|
| America | England | Scotland |
| China | Peru | Albania |
| Africa | Europe | Asia |

names of regions, states, districts etc.

| | | |
|----------|-------------|------------|
| Sussex | California | Queensland |
| Provence | Tuscany | Vaud |
| Florida | Costa Brava | Tyrol |

names of cities, towns, villages etc.

| | | |
|-----------|------------|-------------|
| London | Cape Town | Rome |
| Florence | Bath | Wagga Wagga |
| Vancouver | Wellington | Peking |

names of rivers, oceans, seas, lakes etc.

| | | |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| the Atlantic | the Dead Sea | the Pacific |
| Lake Leman | Lake Victoria | Lake Michigan |
| the Rhine | the Thames | the Nile |

names of geographical formations

| | | |
|---------------|----------|------------|
| the Himalayas | the Alps | the Sahara |
|---------------|----------|------------|

Adjectives relating to nationality nouns

France - French music
Australia - Australian animals
Germany - German literature
Arabia - Arabic writing
Indonesia - Indonesian poetry
China - Chinese food

Names of streets, buildings, parks etc.

| | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Park Lane | Central Avenue | Pall Mall |
| George Street | Sydney Opera House | Central Park |
| Hyde Park | the Empire State Building | Wall Street |



NOUNS

COUNTABLE AND UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS

Countable nouns are for things we can count

Example: *dog, horse, man, shop, idea.*

They usually have a singular and plural form.

Example: *two dogs, ten horses, a man, six men, the shops, a few ideas.*

Uncountable nouns are for the things that we cannot count

Example: *tea, sugar, water, air, rice.*

They are often the names for abstract ideas or qualities.

Example: *knowledge, beauty, anger, fear, love.*

They are used with a singular verb. They usually do not have a plural form.
We cannot say *sugars, angers, knowledges.*

Examples of common uncountable nouns:

money, furniture, happiness, sadness, research, evidence, safety, beauty, knowledge.

We cannot use *a/an* with these nouns. To express a quantity of one of these nouns, use a word or expression like:
some, a lot of, a piece of, a bit of, a great deal of...

Examples:

- There has been *a lot of research* into the causes of this disease.
- He gave me *a great deal of advice* before my interview.
- They've got *a lot of furniture*.
- Can you give me *some information* about uncountable nouns?

Some nouns are countable in other languages but uncountable in English.
Some of the most common of these are:

accommodation
advice
baggage
behaviour
bread
furniture
information
luggage

news
progress
traffic
travel
trouble
weather
work

BE CAREFUL with the noun *'hair'* which is normally uncountable in English:

She has long blonde hair

It can also be countable when referring to individual hairs:

My father's getting a few grey hairs now

See also [Adjectives - Comparisons of quantity](#)



REPORTED SPEECH

CHANGE OF TIME AND PLACE REFERENCE

Time/place references are also changed in reported speech

Examples:

"I will see you here tomorrow", she said. → She said that she would see me there the next day.

The most common of these changes are shown below:

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Today <i>"I saw him today", she said.</i> | → | that day <i>She said that she had seen him that day.</i> |
| Yesterday <i>"I saw him yesterday", she said.</i> | → | the day before <i>She said that she had seen him the day before.</i> |
| The day before yesterday <i>"I met her the day before yesterday", he said.</i> | → | two days before <i>He said that he had met her two days before.</i> |
| Tomorrow <i>"I'll see you tomorrow", he said</i> | → | the next/following day <i>He said that he would see me the next day.</i> |
| The day after tomorrow <i>"We'll come the day after tomorrow", they said.</i> | → | in two days time/ two days later <i>They said that they would come in two days time/ two days later.</i> |
| Next week/month/year <i>"I have an appointment next week", she said.</i> | → | the following week/month/year <i>She said that she had an appointment the following week.</i> |
| Last week/month/year <i>"I was on holiday last week", he told us.</i> | → | the previous/week/month/ye <i>He told us that he had been on holiday the previous week.</i> |
| ago <i>"I saw her a week ago," he said.</i> | → | before <i>He said he had seen her a week before.</i> |
| this (for time) <i>"I'm getting a new car this week", she said.</i> | → | that <i>She said she was getting a new car that week.</i> |
| this/that (adjectives) <i>"Do you like this shirt?" he asked</i> | → | the <i>He asked if I liked the shirt.</i> |
| here <i>He said, "I live here".</i> | → | there <i>He told me he lived there.</i> |

Other changes:

In general, personal pronouns change to the third person singular or plural, except when the speaker reports his own words:

I/me/my/mine, you/your/yours → *him/his/her/hers*
we/us/our/ours, you/your/yours → *they/their/theirs*:

He said: "I like your new car." → He told her that he liked her new car.

I said: "I'm going to my friend's house." → I said that I was going to my friend's house.

 previous next 

REPORTED SPEECH

TENSE CHANGES

Normally, the tense in reported speech is one tense back in time from the tense in direct speech:

She said, "I am tired." → *She said that she was tired.*

The changes are shown below:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Simple present <i>"I always drink coffee", she said</i> | → | Simple past <i>She said that she always drank coffee.</i> |
| Present continuous <i>"I am reading a book", he explained.</i> | → | Past continuous <i>He explained that he was reading a book</i> |
| Simple past <i>"Bill arrived on Saturday", he said.</i> | → | Past perfect <i>He said that Bill had arrived on Saturday</i> |
| Present perfect <i>"I have been to Spain", he told me.</i> | → | Past perfect <i>He told me that he had been to Spain</i> |
| Past perfect <i>"I had just turned out the light," he explained.</i> | → | Past perfect <i>He explained that he had just turned out the light.</i> |
| Present perfect continuous <i>They complained, "We have been waiting for hours".</i> | → | Past perfect continuous <i>They complained that they had been waiting for hours.</i> |
| Past continuous <i>"We were living in Paris", they told me.</i> | → | Past perfect continuous <i>They told me that they had been living in Paris.</i> |
| Future <i>"I will be in Geneva on Monday", he said</i> | → | Present conditional <i>He said that he would be in Geneva on Monday.</i> |
| Future continuous <i>She said, "I'll be using the car next Friday".</i> | → | Conditional continuous <i>She said that she would be using the car next Friday.</i> |

NOTE:

1. You do not need to change the tense if the reporting verb is in the present, or if the original statement was about something that is still true, e.g.

He says he has missed the train but he'll catch the next one.
We explained that it is very difficult to find our house.

2. These modal verbs do not change in reported speech:

might, could, would, should, ought to, e.g.

*We explained that it **could** be difficult to find our house.*

*She said that she **might** bring a friend to the party.*

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

THE INFINITIVE

INFINITIVE AFTER QUESTION WORDS

These verbs: *ask, decide, explain, forget, know, show, tell, understand*, can be followed by a question word such as *where, how, what, who, when* or '*whether*' + the 'to-infinitive'.

Examples:

- She asked me *how* to use the washing machine.
- Do you understand *what* to do?
- Tell me *when* to press the button.
- I've forgotten *where* to put this little screw.
- I can't decide *whether* to wear the red dress or the black one.

The question word **Why** is followed by the **zero infinitive** in suggestions:

Examples:

- *Why wait* until tomorrow?
- *Why not ask* him now?
- *Why walk* when we can go in the car?
- *Why not buy* a new bed for your bedroom?
- *Why leave* before the end of the game?
- *Why not spend* a week in Beirut and a week in Baghdad?



THE INFINITIVE

NEGATIVE INFINITIVE_

To form the negative infinitive, place **not** before the *to-* or *zero infinitive*:
e.g. *not to worry*:

It's hard *not to worry* about exams.

Examples:

- I decided *not to go* to London.
- He asked me *not to be* late.
- Elephants ought *not to marry* mice.
- You'd better *not smile* at the crocodile.
- I'd rather *not eat* meat.

[◀ previous](#)

[next ▶](#)

THE INFINITIVE

OTHER FORMS

The infinitive can have the following forms:

- [The perfect infinitive](#)
- [The continuous infinitive](#)
- [The perfect continuous infinitive](#)
- [The passive infinitive](#)

NOTE: as with the present infinitive, there are situations where the **to** is omitted, e.g. after most modal auxiliaries.

The perfect infinitive:

to have + past participle, e.g. to have broken, to have seen, to have saved.

This form is most commonly found in Type 3 conditional sentences, using the conditional perfect, e.g. If I had known you were coming I would have baked a cake.

Examples:

- Someone must have broken the window and climbed in.
- I would like to have seen the Taj Mahal when I was in India.
- He pretended to have seen the film.
- If I'd seen the ball I would have caught it.

The continuous infinitive:

to be + present participle, e.g. to be swimming, to be joking, to be waiting

Examples:

- I'd really like to be swimming in a nice cool pool right now.
- You must be joking!
- I happened to be waiting for the bus when the accident happened.

The perfect continuous infinitive:

to have been + present participle

Examples:

to have been crying
to have been waiting
to have been painting

- The woman seemed to have been crying.
- You must have been waiting for hours!
- He pretended to have been painting all day.

The passive infinitive:

to be + past participle, e.g. to be given, to be shut, to be opened

Examples:

- I am expecting to be given a pay-rise next month.
- These doors should be shut.
- This window ought to be opened.



THE INFINITIVE

FUNCTION

The most common uses of the infinitive are:

To indicate the purpose or intention of an action
(where the 'to' has the same meaning as 'in order to' or 'so as to'):

- She's gone to collect her pay cheque.
- The three bears went into the forest to find firewood.

As the subject of the sentence:

- To be or not to be, that is the question.
- To know her is to love her.
(Note: this is more common in written English than spoken)

With nouns or pronouns, to indicate what something can be used for, or what is to be done with it:

- Would you like something to drink?
- I haven't anything to wear.
- The children need a garden to play in.

After adjectives in these patterns:

- *It is + adjective + to-infinitive*
It is good to talk
- *It is + adjective + infinitive + for someone + to-infinitive.*
It is hard for elephants to see mice
- *It is + adjective + infinitive + of someone + to-infinitive.*
It is unkind of her to say that.

After an adjective + noun when a comment or judgement is being made:

- It was a stupid place to park the car.
- This is the right thing to do.
- It was an astonishing way to behave.

With too and enough in these patterns:

too much/many (+ noun) + to-infinitive
There's too much sugar to put in this bowl.
I had too many books to carry.

too + adjective + to-infinitive

This soup is too hot to eat.

She was too tired to work.

too + adverb + to-infinitive

He arrived too late to see the actors.

enough (+ noun) + to-infinitive

I've had enough (food) to eat.

adjective + enough + to-infinitive

She's old enough to make up her own mind.

not enough (+noun) + to-infinitive

There isn't enough snow to ski on.

not + adjective + enough + to-infinitive

You're not old enough to have grand-children!



TO GET

TO GET + direct object = to obtain, to receive, to buy:

To obtain

- *She got her driving license last week.*
- *They got permission to live in Switzerland.*

To receive

- *I got a letter from my friend in Nigeria.*
- *He gets £1,000 a year from his father.*

To buy

- *She got a new coat from Zappaloni in Rome.*
- *We got a new television for the sitting room.*

TO GET + place expression = reach, arrive at a place:

- *We got to London around 6 p.m.*
- *What time will we get there?*
- *When did you get back from New York?*

TO GET + adjective = to become, show a change of state:

- *It's getting hotter.*
- *By the time they reached the house they were getting hungry.*
- *I'm getting tired of all this nonsense.*
- *My mother's getting old and needs looking after.*
- *It gets dark very early in the winter.*
- *Don't touch the stove until it gets cool.*

TO GET + preposition / adverb is used in many phrasal verbs. Here are some of the most common ones:

| Phrasal Verb | Meaning |
|---------------|---|
| get at | try to express |
| get away with | escape punishment for a crime or bad action |
| get by | manage (financially) |
| get down | descend; depress |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| get off | leave a form of transport (train, bus, bicycle, plane) |
| get on | enter/sit on a form of transport (train, bus, bicycle, plane); have a relationship with someone; manage |
| get out of | avoid doing something, especially a duty |
| get over | recover (from an illness, a surprise) |
| get through | use or finish the supply of something |
| get up | leave your bed |
| get up to | do - usually something bad |

Examples:

- a. He **got on** his bicycle and rode down the street.
- b. He **gets up** at 6.00 a.m. every morning.
- c. She **got out of** the washing-up every day, even when it was her turn.
- d. We **got off** the train just before the bomb exploded.
- e. We've **got through** all the sugar - can you buy some more?
- f. The children are very quiet - I wonder what they're **getting up to**.

 previous next 

TO GET

'To get' can be used in a number of patterns and has a number of meanings.

TO GET + direct object = obtain, receive, buy.

Example: *I got my passport last week.*

[More Examples](#)

TO GET + place expression = reach, arrive at a place.

Example: *How are you getting home tonight?*

[More Examples](#)

TO GET + adjective = become, show a change of state.

Example: *I am getting old.*

[More Examples](#)

TO GET + preposition/adverb is used in many phrasal verbs.

Example: *This rain is really getting me down.*

[More Examples](#)

TO GET has a number of other meanings:

- Do you get it?* (= understand)
- He's getting dinner tonight.* (= prepare a meal)
- I'll get the bill.* (= pay)
- That really gets me!* (= irritate, annoy)

Other expressions with GET:

- To get rid of something means to throw it away.
Example: *I'm going to get rid of all these old newspapers.*
- To get out of bed on the wrong side means to be in a bad mood.
Example: *He got out of the wrong side of the bed this morning and he's been horrible all day.*
- To get your own back means to have your revenge or punish someone.
Example: *She's getting her own back for all those rude things you said at the party last night.*

 previous

next 

DIRECT AND REPORTED SPEECH

You can answer the question "What did he/she say?" in two ways:

- by repeating the words spoken (direct speech)
- by reporting the words spoken (indirect or reported speech).

Direct Speech

Direct speech repeats, or quotes, the exact words spoken. When we use direct speech in writing, we place the words spoken between inverted commas ("...") and there is no change in these words. We may be reporting something that's being said NOW (for example a telephone conversation), or telling someone later about a previous conversation

Examples:

She says "What time will you be home?"
She said "What time will you be home?"
and I said "I don't know!"
"There's a fly in my soup!" screamed Simone.
John said, "There's an elephant outside the window."

Reported Speech

Reported speech is usually used to talk about the past, so we normally change the tense of the words spoken. We use reporting verbs like 'say', 'tell', 'ask', and we may use the word 'that' to introduce the reported words. Inverted commas are not used.

She said, "I saw him." → *She said that she had seen him.*

- 'That' may be omitted:
She told him that she was happy.
She told him she was happy.
- 'Say' and 'tell':
 Use 'say' when there is no indirect object:
He said that he was tired.

Always use 'tell' when you say who was being spoken to (i.e. with an indirect object):

He told me that he was tired.

'Talk' and 'speak' are used:

- to describe the action of communicating:

He talked to us.

She was speaking on the telephone.

- with 'about' to refer to what was said:

He talked (to us) about his parents.

REPORTED SPEECH

HOPES, INTENTIONS, PROMISES

When we report an intention, hope or promise, we use an appropriate reporting verb followed by a *that-clause* or a *to-infinitive*:

"I'll pay you the money tomorrow." →
He promised to pay me the money the next day.
He promised that he would pay me the money the next day.

Other verbs used in this pattern include:
hope, propose, threaten, guarantee, swear.

Examples:

- a. "I'll be back by lunchtime."
He promised to be back by lunchtime.
He promised that he would be back by lunchtime.
- b. "We should arrive in London before nightfall."
They hoped to arrive in London before nightfall.
They hoped they would arrive in London before nightfall.
- c. "Give me the keys to the safe or I'll shoot you!"
He threatened to shoot me if I didn't give him the keys to the safe.
He threatened that he would shoot me if I didn't give him the keys to the safe.

Note: see also [Summary of Reporting Verbs](#).

 previous

next 

REPORTED SPEECH

ORDERS, REQUESTS, SUGGESTIONS

1. When we want to report an order or request, we can use a verb like 'tell' with a to-clause.

Examples:

He told me to go away.

The pattern is *verb + indirect object + to-clause*.

(The indirect object is the person spoken to.)

Other verbs used to report orders and requests in this way are: *command, order, warn, ask, advise, invite, beg, teach, forbid*.

Examples:

a. The doctor said to me, "Stop smoking!" →
The doctor **told me to stop smoking**.

b. "Get out of the car!" said the policeman. →
The policeman **ordered him to get out of the car**.

c. "Could you please be quiet," she said. →
She **asked me to be quiet**.

d. The man with the gun said to us, "Don't move!" →
The man with the gun **warned us not to move**.

(See also section on [Verbs followed by infinitive](#) and [Verbs followed by gerund](#))

2. Requests for objects are reported using the pattern *ask + for + object*: Examples:

a. "Can I have an apple?", she asked. → She **asked for an apple**.

b. "Can I have the newspaper, please?" →
He **asked for the newspaper**.

c. "May I have a glass of water?" he said. →
He **asked for a glass of water**.

d. "Sugar, please." →
She **asked for the sugar**.

e. "Could I have three kilos of onions?" →
He **asked for three kilos of onions**.

3. Suggestions are usually reported with a *that-clause*. 'That' and 'should' are optional in these clauses:

She said: "Why don't you get a mechanic to look at the car?" → She suggested that I should get a mechanic to look at the car. OR She suggested I get a mechanic to look at the car.

Other reporting verbs used in this way are: *insist, recommend, demand,*

request, propose.

Examples:

- a. "It would be a good idea to see the dentist", said my mother. → My mother **suggested I see** the dentist.
- b. The dentist said, "I think you should use a different toothbrush". → The dentist **recommended that I should use** a different toothbrush.
- c. My manager said, "I think we should examine the budget carefully at this meeting." → My manager **proposed that we examine** the budget carefully at the meeting.
- d. "Why don't you sleep overnight at my house?" she said. → She **suggested that I sleep** overnight at her house.

Notes:

Suggest can also be followed by a gerund: I *suggested* postponing the visit to the dentist.

See also [Summary of Reporting Verbs](#).



'- ING' FORM

VERBS FOLLOWED BY THE GERUND

The gerund is used after certain verbs.

Example:

miss: I miss living in England.

The most important of these verbs are shown below.
Those marked * can also be followed by a *that-clause*

Example:

| VERB | GERUND |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| She admitted... | breaking the window |
| | THAT-CLAUSE |
| She admitted... | that she had broken the window. |
| acknowledge,* | keep, |
| admit,* | loathe, |
| anticipate,* appreciate,* | mean,(= <i>have as result</i>)* |
| avoid, | mention,* |
| celebrate, | mind, |
| consider, contemplate, | miss, |
| defer, | pardon, |
| delay, | postpone, |
| deny,* | prevent, |
| detest, | propose,* |
| dislike, | recall,* |
| dread, | recollect,* |
| enjoy, | remember, |
| entail, | report,* |
| escape, | resent, |
| excuse, | resist, |
| fancy (=imagine)*, | risk, |
| finish, | save (=prevent the wasted effort) |
| forgive, | stop, |
| imagine,* | suggest,* |
| involve, | understand,* |

Notes:

Appreciate is followed by a *possessive adjective* and the gerund when the gerund does not refer to the subject. Compare :

*I appreciate **having** some time off work.* (I'm having the time...)

*I appreciate your **giving** me some time off work.* (You're giving me the time...)

Excuse, forgive, pardon can be followed by *an object* and the gerund or *for + object* and the gerund (both common in spoken English), or a *possessive adjective + gerund* (more formal and less likely to be said):

Excuse me interrupting.

Excuse me for interrupting.

Excuse my interrupting.

Suggest can be used in a number of ways, but **BE CAREFUL**. It is important not to confuse these patterns:

suggest/suggested (+ possessive adjective) + gerund:

He suggests *going* to Glastonbury

He suggested *going* to Glastonbury

He suggested/suggests my *going* to Glastonbury

suggest/suggested + that-clause (where both *that* and *should* may be omitted):

He suggests that I should go to Glastonbury

He suggested that I should go to Glastonbury

He suggested/suggests I should go to Glastonbury

He suggested/suggests I go to Glastonbury

He suggested I went to Glastonbury.

suggest/suggested + question word + infinitive:

He suggested where to go.

Propose is followed by the gerund when it means '*suggest*':

John proposed going to the debate

but by the infinitive when it means '*intend*':

The Government proposes bringing in new laws..

Stop can be followed by a gerund or infinitive, but there is a change of meaning - see [GERUND / INFINITIVE?](#) section.

Dread is followed by the infinitive when used with '*think*', in the expression '*I dread to think*':

I dread to think what she'll do next.

Prevent is followed

EITHER by a possessive adjective + gerund:

You can't prevent my leaving.

OR by an object + from + gerund:

You can't prevent me from leaving.

Examples:

- Normally, a mouse wouldn't contemplate *marrying* an elephant.
- Most mice dread *meeting* elephants.
- We can't risk *getting* wet - we haven't got any dry clothes.
- If you take that job it will mean *getting* home late every night.
- I can't imagine *living* in that big house.
- If you buy some petrol now, it will save you *stopping* on the way to London.
- She couldn't resist *eating* the plum she found in the fridge.
- They decided to postpone *painting* the house until the weather improved.

REPORTED SPEECH

QUESTIONS

1. Normal word order is used in reported questions, that is, the subject comes before the verb, and it is not necessary to use 'do' or 'did':

"Where does Peter live?" → She asked him **where Peter lived**.

2. Yes / no questions: This type of question is reported by using 'ask' + 'if / whether' + clause:

a. "Do you speak English?" → He asked me **if I spoke English**.

b. "Are you British or American?" → He asked me **whether I was British or American**.

c. "Is it raining?" → She asked **if it was raining**.

d. "Have you got a computer?" → He wanted to know **whether I had a computer**.

e. "Can you type?" → She asked **if I could type**.

f. "Did you come by train?" → He enquired **whether I had come by train**.

g. "Have you been to Bristol before?" → She asked **if I had been to Bristol before**.

3. Question words:

This type of question is reported by using 'ask' (or another verb like 'ask') + question word + clause. The clause contains the question, in normal word order and with the necessary tense change.

Examples:

a. "What is your name?" he asked me. → He asked me **what my name was**.

b. "How old is your mother?", he asked. → He asked **how old her mother was**.

c. The mouse said to the elephant, "Where do you live?" → The mouse asked the elephant **where she lived**.

d. "What time does the train arrive?" she asked. → She asked **what time the train arrived**.

e. "When can we have dinner?" she asked. → She asked **when they could have dinner**.

f. The elephant said to the mouse, "Why are you so small?" → The elephant asked the mouse **why she was so small**.

RELATIVE CLAUSES

NON-DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

The information in these clauses is not essential. It tells us more about someone or something, but it does not help us to identify them or it.

Compare:

1. *Elephants **that love mice** are very unusual.* (This tells us which elephants we are talking about).
2. *Elephants, **which are large and grey**, can sometimes be found in zoos.* (This gives us some extra information about elephants - we are talking about all elephants, not just one type or group).
3. *John's mother, **who lives in Scotland**, has 6 grandchildren.* (We know who John's mother is, and he only has one. The important information is the number of grandchildren, but the fact that she lives in Scotland might be followed with the words "by the way" - it is additional information).

Punctuation

Non-defining relative clauses are always separated from the rest of the sentence by commas. The commas have a similar function to brackets:

*My friend John has just written a best-selling novel. (He went to the same school as me) > My friend John, **who went to the same school as me**, has just written a best-selling novel.*

Relative pronouns in non-defining clauses

| | Person | Thing | Place |
|------------|----------|-------|-------|
| Subject | who | which | |
| Object | who/whom | which | where |
| Possessive | whose | | |

Notes:

1. In non-defining clauses, you cannot use '*that*' instead of *who*, *whom* or *which*.
2. You cannot leave out the relative pronoun, even when it is the object of the verb in the relative clause:
He gave me the letter, which was in a blue envelope.
He gave me the letter, which I read immediately
3. The preposition in these clauses can go at the end of the clause, e.g. *This is Stratford-on-Avon, which you have all heard about.*

This pattern is often used in spoken English, but in written or formal English you can also put the preposition before the pronoun: e.g. *Stratford-on-Avon, about which many people have written is Shakespeare's birthplace.*

4. Non-defining clauses can be introduced by expressions like *all of*, *many of* + relative pronoun:

| | Person | Thing |
|----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>all of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>any of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>(a) few of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>both of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>each of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>either of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>half of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>many of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>most of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>much of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>none of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>one of</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |
| <i>two of etc...</i> | + <i>whom</i> | + <i>which</i> |

Examples:

a. There were a lot of people at the party, *many of whom* I had known for years.

b. He was carrying his belongings, *many of which* were broken.

5. The relative pronoun *which* at the beginning of a non-defining relative clause, can refer to all the information contained in the previous part of the sentence, rather than to just one word.

a. Chris did really well in his exams, *which was a big surprise*. (= the fact that he did well in his exams was a big surprise).

b. An elephant and a mouse fell in love, *which is most unusual*. (= the fact that they fell in love is unusual).

Examples:

a. My grandmother, *who is dead now*, came from the North of England.

b. I spoke to Fred, *who explained the problem*.

c. The elephant looked at the tree, *under which she had often sat*.

d. We stopped at the museum, *which we'd never been into*.

e. She's studying maths, *which many people hate*.

f. I've just met Susan, *whose husband works in London*.

g. He had thousands of books, *most of which he had read*.



RELATIVE CLAUSE

WHERE TO PUT THE PREPOSITION IN A RELATIVE CLAUSE

There are often prepositions in relative clauses, and the relative pronoun is the *object* of the preposition. This means that the preposition can sometimes be omitted.

1. The preposition is normally placed at the end of the relative clause:

Is that the man (who) you arrived *with*?

Do you know the girl (that) John is talking *to*?

2. In formal or written English, the preposition is often placed before the relative pronoun, and in this case the pronoun cannot be omitted:

The person with whom he is negotiating is the Chairman of a large company.

It is a society to which many important people belong.

However, this is unusual in spoken English.

Examples:

- The jungle *the elephant lived in* was full of strange and unusual animals.
- He was very fond of the mouse *that he lived with*.
- The tree *under which they had their home* was the largest and oldest in the jungle.
- In the middle of the jungle was a river *that all the animals went to every day*.
- It was the stream *in which the elephant and the mouse preferred to swim*.

 previous

next 

RELATIVE CLAUSES

DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSES

As the name suggests, these clauses give essential information to define or identify the person or thing we are talking about. Obviously, this is only necessary if there is more than one person or thing involved.

Example:

Elephants who marry mice are very unusual.

In this sentence we understand that there are many elephants, but it is clear that we are only talking the ones *who marry mice*.

Punctuation

Commas are not used in defining relative clauses.

Relative pronouns

The following relative pronouns are used in defining relative clauses:

| | Person | Thing | Place | Time | Reason |
|------------|-----------------|--------------|-------|------|--------|
| Subject | who/that | which/that | | | |
| Object | who/whom/that/ø | which/that/ø | where | when | why |
| Possessive | whose | whose | | | |

Notes:

1. The relative pronoun stands in place of a noun.

This noun usually appears earlier in the sentence:

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| The woman | who/that | spoke at the meeting | was very knowledgeable. |
| Noun, subject of main clause | relative pronoun referring to 'the woman', subject of 'spoke' | verb + rest of relative clause | verb + rest of main clause |

2. *Who*, *whom* and *which* can be replaced by *that*. This is very common in spoken English.

3. The relative pronoun can be omitted (ø) when it is the *object* of the clause:

The mouse that the elephant loved was very beautiful.

OR *The mouse the elephant loved was very beautiful.*

Both of these sentences are correct, though the second one is more common in spoken English.

| | | | |
|-----------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|
| The mouse | that/ø | the elephant loved | was very beautiful. |
|-----------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Noun, subject of main clause | relative pronoun, referring to 'the mouse, object of 'loved' | verb + rest of relative clause | verb + rest of main clause. |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|

(You can usually decide whether a relative pronoun is an object because it is normally followed by another subject + verb.)

4. *Whose* is used for things as well as for people.

Examples:

The man whose car was stolen.

A tree whose leaves have fallen.

5. *Whom* is very formal and is only used in written English. You can use *who/that*, or omit the pronoun completely :

The doctor *whom/who/that/ø I was hoping to see* wasn't on duty.

6. *That* normally follows words like *something, anything, everything, nothing, all*, and superlatives.

Examples:

- There's something *that you should know*.
- It was the best film *that I've ever seen*.

Examples:

- A clown is someone *who makes you laugh*.
- An elephant is an animal *that lives in hot countries*.
- The plums *that were in the fridge* were delicious. I have eaten them.
- Where are the plums *(that) I put in the fridge?*
- Has anyone seen *the book I was reading?*
- Nothing *that anyone does* can replace my lost bag.
- Let's go to a country *where the sun always shines*.
- They live in the house *whose roof is full of holes*.

RELATIVE CLAUSES

See also Pronouns.

There are two different types of relative clause:

1. A "**defining**" or identifying clause, which tells us which person or thing we are talking about.
2. A "**non-defining**" or non-essential clause, which gives us more information about the person or thing we are talking about. This kind of clause could often be information included in brackets (...)

Example:

The farmer (his name was Fred) sold us some potatoes. →

The farmer, whose name was Fred, sold us some potatoes.

It is important to see the difference between the two types of clause, as it affects:

- a. the choice of pronoun used to introduce the clause,
- b. the punctuation - you must use commas with a non-defining clause.

 previous

next 

'- ING' FORM

THE PRESENT PARTICIPLE

The present participle of most verbs has the form *base+ing* and is used in the following ways:

a. as part of the continuous form of a verb

(See continuous tenses in [VERB TENSES](#))

Example:

I am working,
he was singing,
they have been walking.

b. after verbs of movement/position in the pattern: *verb + present participle*

Example:

- She went *shopping*
- He lay *looking* up at the clouds
- She came *running* towards me

This construction is particularly useful with the verb '*to go*', as in these common expressions :

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| to go shopping | to go walking |
| to go ski-ing | to go swimming |
| to go fishing | to go running |
| to go surfing | to go dancing |

c. after verbs of perception in the pattern: *verb + object + present participle*

Example:

I heard someone singing.
He saw his friend walking along the road.
I can smell something burning!

NOTE: There is a difference in meaning when such a sentence contains a *zero-infinitive* rather than a participle. The infinitive refers to a **complete** action, but the participle refers to an **incomplete** action, or part of an action.

Compare:

- I heard Joanna **singing** (= she had started before I heard her, and probably went on afterwards)
- I heard Joanna **sing** (= I heard her complete performance)

d. as an adjective

Examples:

amazing, worrying, exciting, boring.

- It was an **amazing** film.
- It's a bit **worrying** when the police stop you
- Dark **billowing** clouds often precede a storm.
- **Racing** cars can go as fast as 400kph.
- He was trapped inside the **burning** house.
- Many of his paintings depict the **setting** sun.

e. with the verbs *spend* and *waste*, in the pattern: **verb + time/money expression + present participle**

Example:

- My boss spends two hours a day **travelling** to work.
- Don't waste time **playing** computer games!
- They've spent the whole day **shopping**.

f. with the verbs *catch* and *find*, in the pattern: **verb + object + present participle:**

With *catch*, the participle always refers to an action which causes annoyance or anger:

- If I catch you **stealing** my apples again, there'll be trouble!
- Don't let him catch you **reading** his letters.

This is not the case with *find*, which is unemotional:

- We found some money **lying** on the ground.
- They found their mother **sitting** in the garden.

g. to replace a sentence or part of a sentence:

When two actions occur at the same time, and are done by the same person or thing, we can use a present participle to describe one of them:

- They went out into the snow. They laughed as they went. ➡ They went **laughing** out into the snow.
- He whistled to himself. He walked down the road. ➡ **Whistling** to himself, he walked down the road.

When one action follows very quickly after another done by the same person or thing, we can express the first action with a present participle:

- He put on his coat and left the house. ➡ **Putting** on his coat, he left the house.
- She dropped the gun and put her hands in the air. ➡ **Dropping** the

gun, she put her hands in the air.

The present participle can be used instead of a phrase starting *as*, *since*, *because*, and it explains the cause or reason for an action:

- *Feeling hungry, he went into the kitchen and opened the fridge.*
(= because he felt hungry...)
- *Being poor, he didn't spend much on clothes.*
- *Knowing that his mother was coming, he cleaned the flat.*

 [previous](#)

[next](#) 

'- ING' FORM

INTRODUCTION

The '-ing' form of the verb may be a present participle or a gerund.

The form is identical, the difference is in the function, or the job the word does in the sentence.

The present participle:

This is most commonly used:

- as part of the continuous form of a verb,
he is painting; she has been waiting
- after verbs of movement/position in the pattern:
verb + present participle,
She sat looking at the sea
- after verbs of perception in the pattern:
verb + object + present participle,
We saw him swimming
- as an adjective, e.g. *amazing, worrying, exciting, boring*

The gerund:

This always has the same function as a noun (although it looks like a verb), so it can be used:

- as the subject of the sentence:
Eating people is wrong.
- after prepositions:
Can you sneeze without opening your mouth?
She is good at painting
- after certain verbs,
e.g. *like, hate, admit, imagine*
- in compound nouns,
e.g. *a driving lesson, a swimming pool, bird-watching, train-spotting*

NOUNS

THE PLURAL OF NOUNS

Most nouns form the plural by adding -s or -es.

| Singular | Plural |
|----------|--------|
| boat | boats |
| hat | hats |
| house | houses |
| river | rivers |

A noun ending in -y preceded by a consonant makes the plural with -ies.

| Singular | Plural |
|----------|---------|
| a cry | cries |
| a fly | flies |
| a nappy | nappies |
| a poppy | poppies |
| a city | cities |
| a lady | ladies |
| a baby | babies |

There are some *irregular* formations for noun plurals. Some of the most common ones are listed below.

Examples of irregular plurals:

| Singular | Plural |
|----------|----------|
| woman | women |
| man | men |
| child | children |
| tooth | teeth |
| foot | feet |
| person | people |
| leaf | leaves |
| half | halves |
| knife | knives |
| wife | wives |
| life | lives |
| loaf | loaves |
| potato | potatoes |

| | |
|------------|--------------------|
| cactus | cacti |
| focus | foci |
| fungus | fungi |
| nucleus | nuclei |
| syllabus | syllabi/syllabuses |
| analysis | analyses |
| diagnosis | diagnoses |
| oasis | oases |
| thesis | theses |
| crisis | crises |
| phenomenon | phenomena |
| criterion | criteria |
| datum | data |

Some nouns have the same form in the singular and the plural.

Examples:

| Singular | Plural |
|----------|----------|
| sheep | sheep |
| fish | fish |
| species | species |
| aircraft | aircraft |

Some nouns have a plural form but take a singular verb.

Examples:

news → The *news is* on at 6.30 p.m.
athletics → *Athletics is* good for young people.
linguistics → *Linguistics is* the study of language.
darts → *Darts is* a popular game in England.
billiards → *Billiards is* played all over the world.

Some nouns have a plural form and take a plural verb.

Examples:

trousers → My *trousers are* too tight.
jeans → Her *jeans are* black.
glasses → Those *glasses are* his.

others include:

savings, thanks, steps, stair, customs, congratulations, tropics, wages, spectacles, outskirts, goods, wits



THE PASSIVE VOICE

PASSIVE, FORM

The passive voice in English is composed of two elements : the appropriate form of the verb *'to be'* + the past participle of the verb in question:

| Subject | verb 'to be' | past participle |
|-----------|--------------|-----------------|
| The house | was | built ... |

Example: *to clean*

| Subject | verb 'to be' | past participle |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Simple present: | | |
| The house | is | cleaned every day. |
| Present continuous: | | |
| The house | is being | cleaned at the moment. |
| Simple past: | | |
| The house | was | cleaned yesterday. |
| Past continuous: | | |
| The house | was being | cleaned last week. |
| Present perfect: | | |
| The house | has been | cleaned since you left. |
| Past perfect: | | |
| The house | had been | cleaned before their arrival. |
| Future: | | |
| The house | will be | cleaned next week. |
| Future continuous: | | |
| The house | will be being | cleaned tomorrow. |
| Present conditional: | | |
| The house | would be | cleaned if they had visitors. |
| Past conditional: | | |
| The house | would have been | cleaned if it had been dirty. |

NOTE: *'to be born'* is a passive form and is most commonly used in the past tense:

I was born in 1976. When were you born?

BUT: Around 100 babies are born in this hospital every week.

Infinitive form: infinitive of 'to be' + past participle: *(to) be cleaned*

This form is used after modal verbs and other verbs normally followed by an infinitive, e.g.

You have *to be tested* on your English grammar
John might *be promoted* next year.
She wants to *be invited* to the party.

Gerund or -ing form: being + past participle: *being cleaned*

This form is used after prepositions and verbs normally followed by a gerund

Examples:

- a. Most film stars hate *being interviewed*.
- b. I remember *being taught* to drive.
- c. The children are excited about *being taken* to the zoo.

NOTE: Sometimes the passive is formed using the verb *to get* instead of the verb *to be*:

- a. He *got arrested* for dangerous driving.
- b. *They're getting married* later this year.
- c. I'm not sure how the window *got broken*.

 previous next 

THE PASSIVE VOICE

PASSIVE, FUNCTION

The passive voice is used to show interest in the person or object that experiences an action rather than the person or object that performs the action, e.g.

- *The passive is used ...:*
We are interested in the passive, not who uses it.
- *The house was built in 1654:*
We are interested in the house, not the builder.
- *The road is being repaired:*
We are interested in the road, not the people repairing it.

In other words, the most important thing or person becomes the subject of the sentence.

Sometimes we use the passive voice because we don't know or cannot express who or what performed the action:

- *I noticed that a window had been left open*
- *Every year people are killed on our roads.*

If we want to say who or what performs the action, we use the preposition *by*:

- *"A Hard Day's Night" was written by the Beatles*
- *ET was directed by Spielberg*

The passive voice is often used in formal or scientific texts:

- *A great deal of meaning is conveyed by a few well-chosen words.*
- *Our planet is wrapped in a mass of gases.*
- *Waste materials are disposed of in a variety of ways.*



THE PASSIVE VOICE

GET / HAVE SOMETHING DONE

This construction is passive in meaning. It may describe situations where we want someone else to do something for us.

Examples:

- a. *I must **get / have my hair cut**.*
- b. *When are you going to **get that window mended**?*
- c. *We're **having the house painted**.*

If the verb refers to something negative or unwanted, it has the same meaning as a passive sentence:

- d. *Jim **had his car stolen last night**. (= Jim's car was stolen)*
- e. *They **had their roof blown off in the storm**. (= Their roof was blown off in the storm)*

The construction can refer to the completion of an activity, especially if a time expression is used:

- f. *We'll **get the work done as soon as possible**.*
- g. *I'll **get those letters typed before lunchtime**.*

In all these sentences, we are more interested in the **result** of the activity than in the person or object that performs the activity.

'X' NEEDS DOING

In the same way, this construction has a passive meaning. The important thing in our minds is the person or thing that will experience the action, e.g.

- a. *The ceiling **needs painting** (= the ceiling needs to be painted)*
- b. *My hair **needs cutting** (= my hair needs to be cut)*



THE PASSIVE VOICE

PASSIVE TENSES AND ACTIVE EQUIVALENTS

Notice that the tense of the verb to be in the passive voice is the same as the tense of the main verb in the active voice.

Example: *to keep*

| TENSE / VERB FORM | ACTIVE VOICE | PASSIVE VOICE |
|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Simple present | keeps | is kept |
| Present continuous | is keeping | is being kept |
| Simple past | kept | was kept |
| Past continuous | was keeping | was being kept |
| Present perfect | have kept | have been kept |
| Past perfect | had kept | had been kept |
| future | will keep | will be kept |
| Conditional present | would keep | would be kept |
| Conditional past | would have kept | would have been kept |
| present infinitive | to keep | to be kept |
| perfect infinitive | to have kept | to have been kept |
| present participle/gerund | keeping | being kept |
| perfect participle | having kept | having been kept |

Example sentences:

Active: *I keep* the butter in the fridge.

Passive: The butter *is kept* in the fridge.

Active: They *stole* the painting.

Passive: The painting *was stolen*.

Active: They *are repairing* the road.

Passive: The road *is being repaired*.

Active: Shakespeare *wrote* Hamlet.

Passive: Hamlet *was written* by Shakespeare.

Active: A dog *bit* him.

Passive: He *was bitten* by a dog.

NOUNS

COMPOUND NOUNS

Formation

Words can be combined to form **compound nouns**. These are very common, and new combinations are invented almost daily. They normally have two parts. The **second part** identifies the object or person in question (**man**, **friend**, **tank**, **table**, **room**). The **first part** tells us what kind of object or person it is, or what its purpose is (**police**, **boy**, **water**, **dining**, **bed**):

| What type / what purpose | What or who |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| police | man |
| boy | friend |
| water | tank |
| dining | table |
| bed | room |

The two parts may be written in a number of ways :

1. as one word.
Example: **policeman**, **boyfriend**
2. as two words joined with a hyphen.
Example: **dining-table**
3. as two separate words.
Example: **fish tank**.

There are no clear rules about this - so write the common compounds that you know well as one word, and the others as two words.

| The two parts may be: | Examples: |
|-----------------------|--|
| noun + noun | <i>bedroom</i> <i>water tank</i> <i>motorcycle</i> <i>printer cartridge</i> |
| noun + verb | <i>rainfall</i> <i>haircut</i> <i>train-spotting</i> |
| noun + adverb | <i>hanger-on</i> <i>passer-by</i> |
| verb + noun | <i>washing machine</i> <i>driving licence</i> <i>swimming pool</i> |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| verb + adverb* | <i>lookout</i> <i>take-off</i> <i>drawback</i> |
| adjective + noun | <i>greenhouse</i> <i>software</i> <i>redhead</i> |
| adjective + verb | <i>dry-cleaning</i> <i>public speaking</i> |
| adverb + noun | <i>onlooker</i> <i>bystander</i> |
| adverb + verb* | <i>output</i> <i>overthrow</i> <i>upturn</i> <i>input</i> |

Compound nouns often have a meaning that is different from the two separate words.

Stress is important in pronunciation, as it distinguishes between a compound noun (e.g. *greenhouse*) and an adjective with a noun (e.g. *green house*).

In compound nouns, the stress usually falls on the first syllable:

a '*greenhouse* = place where we grow plants (compound noun)

a *green* '*house* = house painted green (adjective and noun)

a '*bluebird* = type of bird (compound noun)

a *blue* '*bird* = any bird with blue feathers (adjective and noun)

* Many common compound nouns are formed from phrasal verbs (verb + adverb or adverb + verb).

Examples: *breakdown, outbreak, outcome, cutback, drive-in, drop-out, feedback, flyover, hold-up, hangover, outlay, outlet, inlet, makeup, output, set-back, stand-in, takeaway, walkover.*



NOUNS

Nouns answer the questions "What is it?" and "Who is it?" They give names to things, people and qualities.

Examples: *dog, bicycle, man, girl, beauty, truth, world.*

NOUN GENDER

In general there is no distinction between masculine, feminine and neuter in English nouns. However, gender is sometimes shown by different forms or different words.

Examples:

Different words:

| Masculine | Feminine |
|-----------|----------|
| man | woman |
| father | mother |
| uncle | aunt |
| boy | girl |
| husband | wife |

Different forms:

| Masculine | Feminine |
|-----------|----------|
| actor | actress |
| prince | princess |
| hero | heroine |
| waiter | waitress |
| widower | widow |

Some nouns can be used for either a *masculine* or a *feminine* subject:

Examples:

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|---------|--------|
| cousin | teenager | teacher | doctor |
| cook | student | parent | friend |
| relation | colleague | partner | leader |

- Mary is a doctor. *She* is a doctor
- Peter is a doctor. *He* is a doctor.
- Arthur is my cousin. *He* is my cousin.
- Jane is my cousin. *She* is my cousin.

It is possible to make the distinction by adding the words '*male*' or '*female*'.

Example: a *female* student; a *male* cousin

For professions, we can add the word 'woman'

Example: a *woman* doctor; a *woman* journalist.

In some cases nouns describing things are given gender.

Examples:

- I love my car. *She* (the car) is my greatest passion.
- France is popular with *her* (France's) neighbours at the moment.
- I travelled from England to New York on the Queen Elizabeth, *she* (the Queen Elizabeth) is a great ship.

 previous

next 

NOUNS

SECTION MENU:

[Noun Gender](#)

[The Plural of Nouns](#)

[Countable and Uncountable nouns](#)

[Compound Nouns](#)

[Proper Nouns](#)

[Nationalities](#)

[◀ previous](#)

[next ▶](#)

'- ING' FORM

THE GERUND

This *looks* exactly the same as a present participle, and for this reason it is now common to call both forms '*the -ing form*'. However it is useful to understand the difference between the two. The gerund always has the same function as a noun (although it looks like a verb), so it can be used:

a. as the subject of the sentence:

- *Eating* people is wrong.
- *Hunting* elephants is dangerous.
- *Flying* makes me nervous.

b. as the complement of the verb 'to be':

- *One of his duties is attending* meetings.
- *The hardest thing about learning* English is *understanding* the gerund.
- *One of life's pleasures is having* breakfast in bed.

c. after prepositions. The gerund *must* be used when a verb comes after a preposition:

- *Can you sneeze without opening* your mouth?
- *She is good at painting*.
- *They're keen on windsurfing*.
- *She avoided him by walking* on the opposite side of the road.
- *We arrived in Madrid after driving* all night.
- *My father decided against postponing* his trip to Hungary.

This is also true of certain expressions ending in a preposition, e.g. *in spite of, there's no point in...*:

- *There's no point in waiting*.
- *In spite of missing* the train, we arrived on time.

d. after a number of '*phrasal verbs*' which are composed of a verb + preposition/adverb

Example:

to look forward to, to give up, to be for/against, to take to, to put off, to keep on:

- *I look forward to hearing* from you soon. (at the end of a letter)
- *When are you going to give up smoking?*
- *She always puts off going* to the dentist.
- *He kept on asking* for money.

NOTE: There are some phrasal verbs and other expressions that include the

word **'to'** as a preposition, **not** as part of a *to-infinitive*: - *to look forward to, to take to, to be accustomed to, to be used to*. It is important to recognise that **'to'** is a preposition in these cases, as it must be followed by a gerund:

- *We are looking forward **to seeing** you.*
- *I am used **to waiting** for buses.*
- *She didn't really take **to studying** English.*

It is possible to check whether **'to'** is a preposition or part of a *to-infinitive*: if you can put a noun or the pronoun **'it'** after it, then it is a preposition and must be followed by a gerund:

- *I am accustomed **to it** (the cold).*
- *I am accustomed **to being** cold.*

e. in compound nouns

Example:

- *a **driving** lesson, a **swimming** pool, **bird-watching**, **train-spotting***

It is clear that the meaning is that of a noun, not of a continuous verb.

Example:

- *the pool is not swimming, it is a **pool for swimming in**.*

f. after the expressions:

can't help, can't stand, it's no use/good, and the adjective worth:

- *The elephant couldn't help **falling** in love with the mouse.*
- *I can't stand **being** stuck in traffic jams.*
- *It's no use/good **trying** to escape.*
- *It might be worth **phoning** the station to check the time of the train.*

'- ING' FORM

GERUND OR INFINITIVE?

B. Verbs where there is a clear difference in meaning:

Verbs marked with an asterisk* can also be followed by a *that-clause*.

| | | |
|---------|-----------|------|
| come | mean* | stop |
| forget* | regret* | try |
| go on | remember* | |

NOTES:

Come:

Come + gerund is like other verbs of movement followed by the gerund, and means that the subject is doing something as they move:

- *She came **running** across the field.*

Come + to-infinitive means that something happens or develops, perhaps outside the subject's control:

- *At first I thought he was crazy, but I've come **to appreciate** his sense of humour.*
- *How did you come **to be** outside the wrong house?*
- *This word has come **to mean** something quite different.*

Forget, regret and remember:

When these verbs are followed by a gerund, the gerund refers to an action that happened earlier:

- *I remember **locking** the door (= I remember now, I locked the door earlier)*
- *He regretted **speaking** so rudely. (= he regretted at some time in the past, he had spoken rudely at some earlier time in the past.)*

Forget is frequently used with 'never' in the simple future form:

- *I'll never forget **meeting** the Queen.*

When these verbs are followed by a to-infinitive, the infinitive refers to an action happening at the same time, or later:

- *I remembered **to lock** the door (= I thought about it,*

then I did it.)

- *Don't forget **to buy** some eggs!* (= Please think about it and then do it.)
- *We regret **to announce** the late arrival of the 12.45 from Paddington.* (= We feel sorry before we tell you this bad news.)

Go on:

Go on + gerund means to continue with an action:

- *He went on **speaking** for two hours.*
- *I can't go on **working** like this - I'm exhausted.*

Go on + to-infinitive means to do the next action, which is often the next stage in a process:

- *After introducing her proposal, she went on **to explain** the benefits for the company.*
- *John Smith worked in local government for five years, then went on **to become** a Member of Parliament.*

Mean:

Mean + gerund expresses what the result of an action will be, or what will be necessary:

- *If you take that job in London it will mean **travelling** for two hours every day.*
- *We could take the ferry to France, but that will mean **spending** a night in a hotel.*

Mean + to-infinitive expresses an intention or a plan:

- *Did you mean **to dial** this number?*
- *I mean **to finish** this job by the end of the week!*
- *Sorry - I didn't mean **to hurt** you.*

Stop:

Stop + gerund means to finish an action in progress:

- *I stopped **working** for them because the wages were so low.*
*Stop **tickling** me!*

Stop + to-infinitive means to interrupt an activity in order to do something else, so the infinitive is used to express a purpose:

- *I stopped **to have** lunch.* (= I was working, or travelling, and I interrupted what I was doing in order to eat.)
- *It's difficult **to concentrate** on what you are doing if you have **to stop** to answer the phone every five minutes.*

Try:

Try + gerund means to experiment with an action that might be a solution to your problem.

- *If you have problems sleeping, you could try **doing** some yoga before you go to bed, or you could try **drinking** some warm milk.*
- *'I can't get in touch with Carl.' 'Have you tried **e-mailing** him?'*

Try + to-infinitive means to make an effort to do something. It may be something very difficult or even impossible:

- *The surgeons tried **to save** his life but he died on the operating table.*
- *We'll try **to phone** at 6 o'clock, but it might be hard to find a public telephone.*
- *Elephants and mice have to try **to live** together in harmony.*



ABOUT ANTHONY HUGHES

Author of the Online English Grammar

Anthony Hughes has been involved in education for the past twenty years. He spent his formative years in Australia and attended the Universities of Sydney (B.A.), New England (M.Litt) and the University of New South Wales (Cert. TESOL)

After receiving a Masters in English Literature and Language he went on to teach English in several countries including Australia, Switzerland and France. While in Switzerland he wrote and directed a six part audio-visual course for English language learners and was the director of the international education fair 'Mondolingua'.

In 1995 he moved to Bristol in the UK and formed the [Digital Education Network Ltd](#) with David Blackie.

The Digital Education Network (DEN) is now a world leader in the provision of educational information on the Internet and counts amongst its clients many of the world's top educational organisations.

Charged with the development of the DEN websites and content and with the development of educational websites for clients around the world, he has become an expert in the development and design of high-end, database driven and interactive sites for education. Along with the technical expertise he has developed content in the form of the Online English Grammar which currently attracts over 180,000 monthly user sessions on DEN and of interactive games in the DEN test centre. He is currently working on a number of multimedia and DV video based projects for primary and secondary schools as well as a series on the use of English.

In 1999 he formed [ZEP Media Ltd](#) to provide an online educational software shop and resource centre for schools and to act as a 'laboratory' for the development of educational applications using the new technologies.

Apart from his business activities he has contributed articles and photographs to a number of magazines, written a screenplay on the life of Friedrich Nietzsche and maintains a strong interest in the development of creative learning applications using the new technologies.

Professional, publishing and Online Grammar licensing enquiries can be sent to akh@zepmedia.com

WHICH ENGLISH?

Trash or Rubbish? - Sorting out our English

Colour or color? Socks or sox? Organisations or Organizations? Underground or subway? Gas or petrol? Fall or Autumn? Candy or sweets? Cookie or biscuit? Centre or Center, Trash or rubbish?

I often get emails from users berating me for my terrible spelling. While I admit to a few glaring typos from time to time the emails are often concerned with spellings that have more to do with geography than with poor literacy skills.

Just to confuse the issue a little more, I was born in England, went to Australia when I was five, was entirely educated in Australia, spent several years in the USA and Canada and then ten years in France, and now live in England married to a Colombian wife where the common language at home is French, where my wife speaks Spanish to the children, I speak English to them and they spend undue amounts of time listening to American TV shows like Sesame Street, Buffy the Vampire Killer and the Simpsons or listening to American rappers, English Spice Girls or, when forced, heroes from the seventies such as Van Morrison and James Taylor. And they suck vocabulary, expressions, idioms and grammar out of all of this and plonk it into their own English. In my home, as in many others around the world, English isn't something that you can pin down as you would a prize butterfly and say 'There it is! That is English'.

There is no longer, if there ever was, a standard English to which all speakers should pay homage. Now we recognise as legitimate variations American English, Australian English, British English, Indian English, there is even a variety called Singlish from Singapore. You only have to have used an electronic spell checker to know that you can select from some of these English varieties when correcting your spelling in a word processor.

Although it is true that we have a wonderfully rich global mapping of English which makes it possible for English speakers to almost immediately fix a fellow English speaker to a geographical area, it is also true that there is more that is similar among these English varieties than is dissimilar. If there wasn't, English speakers from different parts of the world would have absolutely no hope of understanding each other! In most cases it is pronunciation and not usage, vocabulary or grammar that makes a fellow English speaker from another part of the world, or sometimes even another part of the country, difficult to understand.

In the Online English Grammar I try to remain open to the international and evolving character of English and, at the risk of falling into the sea, try to keep one foot each in British and American English - if I had more feet I would attempt to cover some of the other main English variations as well, but a shortage of feet is one of the many drawbacks of being a lowly biped. What this means is that I try to point out grammatical rules that may vary slightly depending on where you are, the same with spelling. As far as spelling goes for the actual explanations and examples I tend to use the Australian/British spellings. For example I use 'organisation' rather than 'organization' and 'colour' rather than 'color' and prefer 'program' to 'programme'. Australia has always

had the great advantage of being able to choose to follow the American or British ways or invent things for itself. However, if you look under the bonnet of these pages you will see that we are forced to use American English in the HTML which we use to code the pages - 'colour' is always 'color' and 'centre', 'center' there!

The important thing to remember is that while spelling 'remember' as 'rember' is definitely wrong, spelling 'socks' as 'sox' is not! That saying 'She speak English really well' is definitely wrong (the verb 'speak' must be third person 'speaks' or used in another tense such as 'spoke'), saying 'She speaks English real well' may not be wrong (it is acceptable to use 'real' rather than 'really' in informal American English.)

When visualising English always think of it as a writhing, many-headed, sensual, changing and wonderful creature and not some dry, changeless, inanimate measuring stick.

That should avoid the urge to condemn other people's use of English before carefully thinking about what they have said and where they come from - perhaps they are even contributing something new, unique and colourful to the language.

This may also slow the flow of emails arriving in my in-tray from angry users who think it is a disgrace that I consistently spell 'center' as 'centre' - am I dyslexic?

Anthony Hughes
Author of the Online English Grammar

