

GRAMMAR REVISION HANDBOOK

SATs

GRAMMAR GUIDE

The information in this guide is based on National Curriculum requirements.

Word Classes

All words belong to families of 'word classes' depending on what part they play in a sentence. The English language has four main word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs). Words can belong to more than one class depending on the job they are doing in a sentence. For example:

I caught the early tram into Bilston. (In this sentence, 'early' is an adjective because it is describing the tram which is a noun.)

I arrived early at the station. (In this sentence, 'early' is an adverb because it is describing the verb 'arrived')

Nouns

A **noun** is a naming word. There are different types of nouns:

- concrete nouns
- abstract nouns
- proper nouns
- collective nouns

Concrete nouns are the names of things we can either smell, hear, see, touch or taste.

The flower has an amazing scent.

The music is too quiet.

We had pizza for lunch.

All the leaves fell off the trees.

Abstract nouns are the names of things we cannot see, taste, touch, smell or hear.

I have just had a great idea.

The children had a lot of curiosity.

The wizard was filled with wisdom.

All you need is love.

Proper nouns are the names of specific people, places or things.

I saw Mrs Smith last Tuesday.

The Christmas holidays start in December.

My birthday is on Tuesday the second of August.

I live in McKean Road, Oldbury.

Collective nouns describe a group or collection of people or things.

An angry swarm of wasps.

The flock of sheep ran across the field.

Adjectives

Adjectives describe nouns.

adjective noun adjective noun
The high-performance car raced along the narrow road.

Adjectives usually come before nouns but they can also be separated from the noun.

noun adjective
The children were cheerful.

Verbs

A verb is a being, doing or action word.

The student sat on the chair.

We saw the birds flying across the sky.

Auxiliary verbs are verbs which help the main verb. Auxiliary verbs can be any form of be, have or do. The table below lists auxiliary verbs.

Be	Do	Have
am	does	has
is	do	have
are	did	had
was		having
were		
being		
been		

Modal verbs are verbs that tell us whether an action is certain, possible or needed. Modal verbs never change their form – they always look the same.

Modal Verbs
can could may might must should ought to shall will could

Only the modal verbs are underlined in the sentences below.

We ought to include all our friends in the game.

They may need to see a doctor.

You will have to complete your work later.

Some modal verbs tell us that something is certain. For example:

Jim can play the piano. (certain)

Morning break will start at 10.10. (certain)

Some modal verbs tell us that something is possible. For example:

I might see you tomorrow. (possible)

It may be a long time before I see you again. (possible)

You could choose to study history or English at university. (possible)

All the verbs are underlined in the sentences below.

The boy is looking at the leaf through the microscope.

I was too early for my appointment.

Tim is sitting in Jane's place.

The school may have to close tomorrow.

You should wash your hands before eating.

Verb Tenses

The **present tense** tells us about something that is happening now.

I am talking to you.

Oil floats on water.

We are eating our lunch.

The **past tense** tells us about something that happened in the past.

I saw you last night.

The children played rounders last week.

I was excited when I saw the new book.

The **future tense** tells us about something that will happen in the future.

We are going to Disneyland Paris next week.

He will play the piano in the concert.

The **subjunctive** is used to describe something you intend to do or might do.

If I were sure you would enjoy it, I would take you to the ballet.

If I were rich, I would buy a larger house.

It is essential you be allowed to go.

It is important you begin immediately.

The **present progressive tense** tells us about something that is in progress or happening now. It can also tell us about something that may happen in the future. The present progressive tense can be spotted by looking for the auxiliary verb 'am/are/is' with an 'ing' verb. For example: am walking/ is looking/are helping...

He is working hard.

The children are getting their books out.

She is speaking loudly.

The match is starting in two hours.

I am moving to Scotland next year.

The **past progressive tense** tells us about something that was happening in the past. The past progressive can be spotted by looking for the verb 'was' with an 'ing' verb. For example: was doing/was sleeping/was cycling/was looking/was sitting/was eating/was playing/was being/was having....

For example:

Tom was doing his homework last night.

I was sleeping when the alarm went off.

Jamie was cycling when he had his accident.

The **present perfect tense** tells us about something that happened in the past but is still happening (or has finished) now. The present perfect tense can be spotted by looking for the auxiliary verb '*have*' or '*has*' with a past tense verb. For example: have looked/has listened/has played/has lived/has been/have seen...

We have watched the film.

We have had the same car for five years.

I have just finished my lunch.

Anna has lived in Bilston all her life.

The boy's behaviour has been excellent.

I have seen that film before.

I have been to France three times.

Adverbs

An **adverb** tells you more about the verb – it ‘adds’ to the verb. It nearly always answers the following questions: How? When? Where? Why?

A lot of adverbs end in the letters ‘ly’.

The rain fell softly onto the garden.

My bike sped swiftly down the hill.

Some words can be either adjectives or adverbs depending on what they do in a sentence. If they answer the questions: When? Where? Why? Who? How? – they are adverbs. If they answer the questions: What is it like? – they are adjectives because they are describing the noun.

That is hard question. (adjective)

Yesterday, it rained hard all afternoon. (adverb)

The dog smells clean. (clean is an adjective because it is describing what the dog is like – it is a clean dog)

The dog smells enthusiastically. (enthusiastically is an adverb because it is describing how the dog carries out the action of smelling – the dog is smelling with enthusiasm)

Pronouns

Pronouns are little words that can be used to replace nouns. For example:

Aran waved to David. (‘Aran’ and ‘David’ are proper nouns)

He waved to him. (‘He’ replaces ‘Aran’ ; ‘him’ replaces ‘David’)

Examples of pronouns: he, she, I, you, them, us, we, they, themselves, ourselves, yourself.....

Relative pronouns are pronouns that refer back to a noun; they can be used to introduce a relative clause.

The player, who had just won the trophy, cheered in triumph.

The school, that had been damaged in the storm, was closed for a week.

I have a friend whose dog barks constantly.

Examples of relative pronouns: that, whose, which, who....

Possessive pronouns are pronouns that show us something belongs to someone. Examples of possessive pronouns are: hers/his/ours/mine/yours/theirs

The books are hers.

Yours are the sandwiches in the fridge; mine are the ones on the worktop.

The car in the garage is mine.

All of the cakes are yours.

Be careful not to confuse possessive pronouns with possessive determiners. See the section on determiners for help with this.

Remember – the possessive pronoun ‘*its*’ does NOT need an apostrophe. An apostrophe is only used for joining the words ‘*it*’ and ‘*is*’ together to make a contraction. For example:

The dog had lost *it's* ball. (WRONG – in this sentence ‘*its*’ is a possessive pronoun NOT the words ‘*it*’ and ‘*is*’ joined together.)

The dog had lost *its* ball. (CORRECT – the word ‘*its*’ is a possessive pronoun and does not need an apostrophe.)

Am sure *it's* not the right way to go. (CORRECT – in this sentence the words ‘*it*’ and ‘*is*’ have been contracted and an apostrophe has been used to show where a letter has been left out... *it+is = it's*.)

The bike had a puncture in *its* front tyre. (CORRECT – in this sentence the word ‘*its*’ is used as a possessive pronoun NOT the words ‘*it*’ and ‘*is*’ joined together.)

Determiner or Pronoun?

Determiners are words that are placed in front of a noun or noun phrase.

The box... A man... An apple... The red car... Some bricks... Many children... Three pencils...

Determiners point at nouns; be careful not to confuse determiners with pronouns.

Determiners ALWAYS come before nouns.

This book is amazing! (‘*This*’ is a determiner – it comes before the noun ‘*book*’ .)

I can see *your* work is improving. (‘*your*’ is a determiner – it comes before the noun ‘*work*’.)

Please put *that* box of apples on the table. (‘*that*’ is a determiner – it comes before the noun phrase ‘*box of apples*’.)

Theirs is the blue car. (‘*Theirs*’ is a pronoun – it does not come before a noun.)

Their car is blue. (‘*Their*’ is a determiner – it comes before the noun ‘*car*’ .)

This is an amazing book. (‘*This*’ is a pronoun – it does not come before a noun.)

That grammar lesson was mind-blowing. (*'That'* is a determiner – it comes before the noun *'grammar lesson'*.)

That was an amazing grammar lesson. (*'That'* is a pronoun – it does not come before a noun.)

Prepositions

Prepositions tell us the position of something. They can also tell us a position in time when an event occurred.

The book was placed on the desk near the window. (*'on'* and *'near'* tell us the position of the book)

The boat raced over the sea beyond sight of land. (*'over'* and *'beyond'* tell us the position of the boat)

Here are some examples of place prepositions: *over, under, above, below, beneath, through, within, alongside, inside, outside, beside, at, in, next to*

Here are some examples of time prepositions:

I completed my homework before lunch.

My birthday is in December.

I always work best in the morning.

I played Minecraft after tea.

I have not seen you since last April.

Conjunctions

Conjunctions join together words, phrases, clauses and sentences.

Subordinating conjunctions are used to join a subordinate clause to a main clause. The most commonly used subordinating conjunctions are: *although, because, since, while, unless, until.*

We went to the shops before going to the cinema.

Year 1 listened carefully while the teacher explained the task.

I will eat all the rice pudding although I detest it.

Co-ordinating conjunctions can be used to join two equal clauses.

The rain poured down but we still went outside.

You can play cricket in the hall or you can go and play hockey outside.

Parts of a Sentence : Subject, Object, Verb

The subject, object and verb are the names given to different parts of a sentence.

	What is it?
subject	the person or thing doing the action
object	the person or thing affected by or receiving the action
verb	the action being done

Sentences are groups of words that contain a **subject** and a **verb**.

subject verb
↑ ↑
The boy ran quickly.

subject verb
↑ ↑
My friends play.

subject verb object
↑ ↑ ↑
The cat sat in its basket.

subject verb object
↑ ↑ ↑
We continued with our work.

Make sure that your subject and verb agree with each other. If there is one subject, the verb must be singular. If there is more than one subject, the verb must be plural.

The girl was drawing. (Correct)

The girls were drawing. (Correct)

The girls was drawing. (Wrong)

The girl were drawing. (Wrong)

I am going to school. (Correct)

We am going to school. (Wrong)

We are going to school. (Correct)

Types of Sentences

Questions

- *What time is it?*
- *Why are you doing that?*
- *Have you seen my sister?*

Questions can also be formed by adding a question tag to the end of a statement. The question tag is separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma. For example:

- *You are doing it, aren't you?*
- *He is ready, isn't he?*

Statements

- *I am very hungry.*
- *The shop will close in five minutes.*
- *The water is cold.*

Commands

- *Do your work.*
- *Be quiet.*
- *Stop talking.*

Phrases

A **phrase** is a group of words that may have nouns and verbs but does not have a subject doing a verb. For example:

some exciting news *sitting on the chair*

before going to school *ringing the bell*

Noun Phrases

A **noun phrase** is a group of words that work together and contain a noun. Expanded noun phrases give extra detail about a noun. The noun phrases are underlined in the sentences below.

The bag was in the classroom. ('The bag' is a noun phrase made up of a determiner and a noun.)

The large blue bag with the leather handle was in the classroom. ('The large blue bag with the leather handle' gives lots more detail about the noun.)

This sandwich with the spicy filling is delicious.

Those biscuits with the jam and cream centre are amazing.

Preposition Phrases

A **preposition phrase** is a phrase that begins with a preposition and is followed by a noun phrase. For example:

We played cricket in the garden.

We walked through the dark forest.

I learned how to play chess over four tedious months.

I sat in the waiting room when I arrived at the doctor's.

Clauses

A **clause** is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb. For example:

she is very intelligent

Jane has seen you

because you were first

while you were gone

A **main clause** (sometimes called an **independent clause**) is strong enough to be a complete sentence on its own. For example:

She is very intelligent.

Jane has seen you.

A **subordinate clause** starts with a subordinating conjunction and is not strong enough to make sense on its own. For example:

because you were first

while you were gone

Examples of subordinating conjunctions: if, when, so, because, before, although, even though, though....

A **relative clause** is a type of subordinate clause that begins with a relative pronoun such as *who/that/which/whose/where/when*. For example:

Tim is the person who I would pick as team captain.

I bought some paint which I used to decorate the kitchen.

Raj and Jeevan, whose parents are on holiday, are staying with their cousins.

Quickly and quietly, she crept along the castle walls which towered over the town below.

Adverbials

An **adverbial** is a part of a sentence that gives us more information about the verb. Adverbials can be a single word or a group of words. Preposition phrases and subordinate clauses can work as adverbials.

I will leave in 10 minutes. (the preposition phrase 'in 10 minutes' gives us more information about when to 'leave')

Please put your work on the desk. (the preposition phrase 'on the desk' gives us more information about the place that the work must be 'put')

I will see you after I have spoken to Tom. (the subordinate clause 'after I have spoken to Tom' gives us more information about the verb 'see')

Quickly and quietly, the mouse crept across the carpet. (the adverbs 'quickly and quietly' tell us the manner in which the mouse 'crept' across the carpet)

Stealthily, the cat closed in on the mouse. (the adverb 'stealthily' tells us the manner in which the cat 'closed in' on the mouse)

If adverbials come at the beginning of the sentence, they are called '**fronted adverbials**' and are separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma. For example:

Before going to bed, I brushed my teeth.

After you have been to assembly, return to the classroom.

Simple Sentences

Simple sentences have a subject and one verb. For example:

The dogs barked loudly.

The howling wind blew fiercely through the trees.

Compound Sentences

Compound sentences are made up of two main clauses joined by a FANBOYS conjunction (for/and/nor/but/or/yet/so). For example:

I like sprouts but I prefer carrots.

Kerry played chess and David enjoyed drawing.

You can go to town now or you can go this afternoon.

Complex Sentences

Complex sentences contain a main clause and a subordinate clause. For example:

Because you have done so well, you can have five minutes extra break.

We will have a cup of tea before starting the work.

As a general rule, you use a comma between clauses when starting a sentence with a subordinate clause. You do not need a comma between clauses when the main clause starts the sentence (this is because the subordinating conjunction comes in the middle of the sentence and acts a 'glue word' to stick the two clauses together).

Before eating your lunch, wash your hands. (CORRECT – a comma is needed because the sentence starts with a subordinate clause.)

Wash your hands before eating your lunch. (CORRECT – the sentence starts with a main clause so there is no need to use a comma; the conjunction 'before' is joining the two clauses together.)

Because you have worked so hard, you can have five minutes extra break. (CORRECT – a comma is needed because the sentence starts with a subordinate clause.)

You can have five minutes extra break because you have worked so hard. (CORRECT – the sentence starts with a main clause so there is no need to use a comma; the conjunction 'because' is joining the two clauses together.

Active and Passive Sentences

A sentence is **active** when the subject is doing the verb. For example:

The cyclist was racing down the hill.

My sister was eating a sandwich.

Fred took a photograph.

A sentence is **passive** when the subject has the action done to it.

The hill was being raced down by the cyclist.

The sandwich was being eaten by my sister.

The photograph was taken by Fred.

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