

A Quick Guide to Sentence Structure and Parts of Speech in English

noun

names a person, place, thing, quality or idea

Examples: Chicago, Mary, table, kindness

Juan lives in **Chicago**. **Mary** likes to travel. The **table** is set for dinner. She is full of **kindness**.

Every complete sentence (or independent clause) must include a subject. This subject is often a noun. Without the subject, the reader wonders "who, what, or where?"

Likes to travel.

-Who likes to travel?

Mary likes to travel.

The is set for dinner.

-What is set for dinner?

The table is set for dinner.

verb

describes an action or state

Examples: write, have, sing, (to) be, can

Students **write** essays. My cat **has** a tail. She **sings** well. The city **is** exciting. We **can** talk.

Every complete sentence (or independent clause) must also include a *verb*. The verb describes what action the subject of the sentence performs. This action can also be a state of being.

Students essays.

-What do the students do?

Students *write* essays.

She well.

-What does she do well?

She *sings* well.

The city exciting

-What is the city?

The city *is* exciting.

Every complete sentence (or independent clause) must also be a complete thought. If it contains a noun and a verb, but it is not a complete thought, then it is a *dependent clause*.

When Mark runs.

-What happens when Mark runs?

When Mark runs, he sweats.

Because it is hot.

-What happens because?

We hydrate because it is hot.

CONJ"unction

joins sentences, clauses or phrases

Examples: and, so, but

It rained, **so** the game was canceled. The food is great, **but** it is expensive.

Any sentence that includes two independent clauses (they contain a subject and verb and form a complete thought) must be jointed with a comma and a **conjunction**.

Incorrect: Jun walked to the store, she bought a bottled water.

Correct: Jun walked to the store, **and** she bought a bottled water.

Other parts of speech to remember:

article

used with a noun to show the noun is definite (one specific thing) or indefinite (any general thing)

Examples: the [definite], a, an [general]

He traveled to **a** city. Watch for **the** fireworks. She wrote **an** essay. **The** computer broke.

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adjective gives more information about a noun
Examples: kind, hot, blue, better.

My brother is a **kind** person. It is **hot** today. You can fill out the **blue** form. That is a **better** hat.

adverb describes or adds meaning to another verb, adjective or adverb
Examples: quickly, very, badly, carefully.

He walked home **quickly**. That test was **very** easy. I sing **badly**. We must **carefully** proofread.

Preposition shows the way words are connected
Examples: on, for, of, in

The cat is **on** the table. She has a plan **for** her life. Where is my bottle **of** water? It's **in** the box.

pronoun replaces or stands in place of a noun
Examples: I, her, him, he, she, it, they

He lives in Los Angeles. I love Italian food. **She** is visiting today. **They** gave the job to **him**.

other determiners indicates possession, demonstrates or quantifies other words
Examples: my, your, this, that, some, few

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Quick usage and mechanics tips:

Capitalize the first letter of a sentence.

-This is a complete sentence.

Include punctuation at the end of a sentence.

-End a statement with a period.

-End a question with a question mark?

Capitalize all proper nouns and names including titles, addresses, months and days of the week.

-Elvis Presley

-United States of America

-Freemont Street

-President Lincoln

-Monday, Tuesday

-May, December

-Mr. Shu

-Las Vegas, Nevada

Use a singular verb with a singular subject. - The dog walks.

-The dog hairy.

Use *plural* verbs with *plural* subjects.

- The *dogs walk*.

-The *dogs are* hairy.

With compound subject, use a *plural* verb. -Bill and Juanita *go* to class every Wednesday.

- The book and the pen *are* on the desk.

With collective a noun, use a singular verb. - The family drives a minivan.

- The staff prepares all meals.