

Grammar Dictionary

(Alphabetical Order)

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A

Abbreviations

An abbreviation is a shortened word or title where an apostrophe shows missing letters.

Abstract Nouns

An abstract noun is a word that names a quality or condition, an action, or an idea apart from any object: faith, hope, charity, brilliance, game.

Action Verbs

An action verb is a word that expresses the action of the subject of a sentence. Its voice is formed in the active tense. Jim runs. "Runs" is the action of the subject "Jim".

Adjective Case

The adjective case is a subset of the possessive case in that the possessive nouns or possessive pronouns are being used as adjectives.

Adjective Clause

An adjective clause is a clause that describes the quality of a noun or pronoun.

Adjectives

An adjective is a word that describes a quality of a noun or pronoun, it modifies the meaning of the noun or pronoun. I like red apples. The adjective "red" modifies the noun "apples".

Adverb

An adverb is a word that expresses a quality of a verb, it modifies a verb, an adjective, a participle, or another adverb and many are formed by adding the suffix ending -ly and can be a pronoun (his), phrase, clause, or many other words that are otherwise used as other English parts of speech. (See why they look tricky to learn?!)

Analysis

Analysis is the separation of a sentence into its elements.

Apostrophe

An apostrophe is a comma suspended near the top of letters that is used show that one or more letters are missing in an abbreviation or to show possession.

Appositives

An appositive is a noun or pronoun used to explain another noun or pronoun so as to nearly restate the same meaning. My job, to bake, is a joy. “To bake” is an appositive noun to the noun “job”.

Articles

An article is a limiting adjective. There are three articles: “a”, and “an” are indefinite adjectives since they loosely specify; “the” is a definite adjective since it points out a specific noun.

B

Brackets

Brackets are marks of punctuation, either [] or {}, that include words, phrases, or clauses that describe what precedes them or corrects an error.

C

Capitalization Rules

Capitalization rules are the guidelines for using upper case letters in the written word.

Case

Case is the word used to denote a word’s relation to other words in a sentence. There are three cases: nominative case, objective case, possessive case.

Clause

A clause is a phrase (word or group of words) that has one subject and one predicate verb in a sentence that has more than one subject and predicate verb. Three ladies came today and two will leave tomorrow. (Two clauses.)

Collective Nouns

A collective noun is a word that names a group, even in the singular: team, navy, congregation.

Colon

A colon is the mark of punctuation (:) that denotes a longer degree of separation, equal to that of a period, between parts of a sentence before an example, a list, a lengthy quotation, or after the introduction to a speech. The colon is also used between numerical combinations as with Bible chapter and verse; Gen. 3:15 or volume and page number; The Tribune 23:12. When reading, leave two breath’s space to aid diction and reading comprehension.

Comma

A comma is the mark of punctuation (,) that denotes the smallest degree of separation between parts of a sentence and frequently indicates that a list or a parenthend follows. Three or more nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, or adverbs should be separated by commas. The members of a compound sentence , when long and connected by conjunctions, should be separated by commas. A direct quotation should be set off with a comma. When reading, leave a short breath's space at a comma to aid diction and reading comprehension.

Common Nouns

A common noun is a name that may be given to any one of a class, the name is common to many members: animal, window, storm.

Complex Sentences

A complex sentence, according to STRUCTURE, is a sentence that is made up of ONE independent clause AND ONE or more dependent clauses.

Compound Complex Sentences

A compound-complex sentence, according to STRUCTURE, is a sentence that has TWO or more independent clauses AND one or more dependent clauses.

Compound Nouns

A compound noun is two words used as names not usually used in combination that are hyphenated (a short dash is between the words with no space before or after the dash).

Compound Sentences

A compound sentence, according to STRUCTURE, is a sentence made up of TWO or more independent clauses that are connected by punctuation or conjunctions.

Conjunctions

A conjunction is a word, or group of words, that joins sentence parts, sentences, and paragraphs. A conjunction does not take an object as does a preposition.

Contractions

A contraction shows that one or more letters are missing from one or more words by using an apostrophe in their place.

Coordinating Conjunctions

A coordinating conjunction is a word, or group of words that join sentence parts, sentences, and paragraphs that are of the SAME order or rank (coordinate): two subject nouns, two predicate verbs, two adjective modifiers, two independent clauses, two dependent clauses, etc.

Copula

The copula (linking verb) is a word, or group of words, used to join a subject and predicate and to make an assertion. Subject-Copula-Predicate; Fire is hot. “Fire” is the subject, “is” is the copula, and “hot” is the predicate.

Correlative Conjunctions

A correlative conjunction is a coordinating conjunction that is PAIRED with another. The common correlative conjunctions are: both – and; either – or; if (whether) – or; neither – nor; not only – but also; whether – or.

D

Dash

A dash is a straight, horizontal line placed where a sentence breaks off suddenly, where there is a change in meaning or construction, or where marks of parenthesis would be.

Declarative Sentence

A declarative sentence, according to USE, is a sentence that makes (declares) a statement and ends with a period

Demonstrative Pronouns

A demonstrative pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun and specifies its antecedent with emphasis. The demonstrative pronouns are: this, that, these, those.

Diagramming Sentences

A sentence diagram is a chart that shows the relation of the words, phrases, and clauses in a sentence to analyze a fault in a sentence or whether the word “who” or “whom” is to be used.

Direct Object

A direct object is the noun or pronoun that receives the action of a transitive verb in the ACTIVE voice and is formed in the objective case. A bug hit Ann. “Ann” is the direct object of the verb “hit”.

E

Element

Grammatically an element is one of two distinct parts of a sentence, the subject and predicate.

English Parts of Speech

English parts of speech are defined somewhat by their meanings, but chiefly according to the way in which they are used in sentences. There are nine general parts of speech: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, exclamatory word and dummy subjects. Most English words can be used as several different English parts of speech; for example, most nouns are also action verbs. Can, cans. Dole cans pineapples and puts the fruit in cans.

Exclamation Mark

The exclamation mark (exclamation point) is the mark of punctuation (!) that denotes the end of an exclamatory sentence, which shows emotion, and has the same degree of separation as a period. A period is used after every abbreviated word. When reading, leave two breath's space at the end of a sentence to aid diction and reading comprehension.

Exclamatory Sentence

An exclamatory sentence, according to USE, (an exclamation) is a sentence that expresses a strong emotion and ends with an exclamation mark. Fire! I wish you a Happy Birthday! Grandma and Grandpa are coming for Easter!

F

Future Perfect Tense

The future perfect tense of a verb expresses action or state that is completed at or before a certain future time and is formed by adding "shall have" or "will have" before the verb (perfect participle). I shall have left by that time.

G

Gender

Gender is the sense of a noun or pronoun that has the quality of being masculine, feminine, neuter, or common. The word "stallion" has the masculine quality of a male horse. The word "mare" has the feminine quality of a female horse. The word "gelding" has the neuter quality of the gender quality being removed or not present in a horse. The word "horse" is common to all horses.

Gerunds

A gerund is a verb that is used as a noun and is formed by adding –ing. The joy of cooking is yours. “Cooking” is the object of the preposition “of” and is used as a noun.

H

Helping Verbs (Auxiliary Verbs - “Auxiliary” nearly means “helping”.)

A helping verb is used with another verb to form its conjugations. Do, be, have, shall, will, may, can, must.

Hyphen

A hyphen is a short dash between two or more words with no space before or after the short dash. Twenty-five.

Hyphen

A hyphen is a short dash used to join compound words, to divide syllables as in music or the end of a line when the rest of the word is carried to the next line.

I

Imperative Sentence

An imperative sentence, according to USE, is a sentence that gives a command (an entreaty, a warning, a prohibition, etc.) and ends with a period or an exclamation mark. Go. Fetch. Help me! Thou shalt not kill.

Indefinite Pronouns

An indefinite pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun and takes the place of an antecedent that is not named and that cannot be named as a specific person or thing. Singular indefinite pronouns are: another, anybody, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, little, much, neither, nobody, nothing, one, other, somebody, someone, something, what, whatever, whatsoever, which, whichever, whoever, whom, whomever, whose, whomever; plural indefinite pronouns are: both, few, many, others, several; singular or plural are: all, any, more, none, some.

Indirect Object

An indirect object is the noun or pronoun that receives the direct object and is formed in the objective case. Ann gave him a cookie. The word “him” receives the direct object “cookie”.

[Infinitive Verb](#)

An infinitive is a verb that is used as a noun often preceded by “to”, that has –ing only in the progressive form. It names an action. It is too warm to skate. “Skate” is the infinitive verb used as a noun.

[Interjections](#)

An interjection is a word, or phrase, that implies a sudden or strong feeling or emotion that is not a sentence, yet it is punctuated with an exclamation mark.

[Interrogative Pronouns](#)

An interrogative pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun AND asks a question. Interrogative pronouns are all third person. The interrogative pronouns are: nominative – who, which, what; possessive – whose; objective – whom, which, what.

[Interrogative Sentence](#)

An interrogative sentence, according to USE, is a sentence that asks a direct question and ends in a question mark.

[Intransitive Verb](#)

An intransitive verb is a verb that does NOT require the addition of an object to complete its meaning. “People think.” The verb “think” does NOT require another word to complete its meaning.

[Irregular Verbs](#)

An irregular verb is a word that does not form its simple past tense and past perfect participle by adding –d or –ed to the present indicative; such as go, went, gone; see, saw, seen; do, did, done.

L

[Linking Verbs](#)

A linking verb (copulative) joins, or links, a predicate to a subject and to make an assertion, positive or negative. All linking verbs carry some sense of the verb “be”. Subject-Copula-Predicate; Fire is hot. “Fire” is the subject, “is” is the copula, and “hot” is the predicate. “Mice are cute.” The linking verb joins the subject “mice” to the predicate adjective “cute”.

N

Nominative Case

The nominative case is the sense that shows a noun or pronoun is the subject or predicate complement of a verb and is found by its position or use in the sentence. There are three cases: nominative case, objective case, possessive case.

Nominative Pronouns

A nominative pronoun is a word used instead of a noun to name a subject. The nominative pronouns are: I, you, he, she, it, we, they.

Noun Clause

A noun clause is a group of words with a subject and a predicate (clause) that is used as a name (noun).

Noun Phrase

A noun phrase is a group of words (phrase) that is used as a name (noun).

Nouns

A noun is a name for a person or thing: girl, Maria, highway. A noun is used as a subject (nominative case) or an object (objective case).

Number

Number is the word used to denote whether a noun or pronoun is singular or plural and is used to find subject-verb agreement.

O

Object of a Preposition

The object of a preposition is a noun or pronoun that is linked to the rest of the sentence by the preposition. It is on the table. The word “table” is the object of the preposition “on”.

Object

An object is a word, or a group of words, that completes the meaning of the verb in a sentence, an object does not do the action. In the sentence, “Girls learn sewing.” the word “sewing” is needed to complete the predicate “learn”. Those verbs that require the addition of an object to complete their meaning are called transitive verbs.

Objective Case

The objective case is the sense that shows that a noun or pronoun is an object of some other word; object of a preposition, direct object, indirect object and is found by its position or use in the sentence. There are three cases: nominative case, objective case, possessive case.

Objective Pronouns

An objective pronoun is a word used instead of a noun to name an object. The objective pronouns are: me, you, him, her, it, us, them.

P

Parentheses

The marks of parenthesis are the marks of punctuation () that set off unrelated words, phrases, or clauses that do not change the meaning of the sentence when omitted. Use marks of parenthesis in pairs.

Participles

A participle is a verb that is used as an adjective. Katie, searching, found the tent. "Searching" is a verb used as an adjective.

Passive Verbs

A passive verb is a word that shows that the subject is being acted upon. Its voice is formed in the passive tense.

Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect tense of a verb expresses action or state that is completed in the past and is formed by adding "had" before the verb (perfect participle). I had left before the storm.

Period

The period is the mark of punctuation (.) that denotes the end of a declarative or imperative sentence and has the longest degree of separation. A period is used after every abbreviated word. When reading, leave two breath's space at the end of a sentence to aid diction and reading comprehension.

Personal Pronouns

A personal pronoun is a word that replaces a noun and shows whether it is first person (speaker), second person (one spoken to), or third person (one spoken of).

Phrase

A phrase is a group of words that is not a clause (subject and predicate) or a sentence (complete thought with both subject and predicate).

Plural Nouns

Plural is a word that denotes the number of more than one object named. There must be subject-verb agreement between plural nouns or pronouns used as a subject and the verb. If the subject is a plural noun the verb must also be a plural verb.

Possessive Case

The possessive case is the sense that shows that a noun or pronoun has the quality of ownership, or possession, and can be an adjective case which means that it frequently changes a noun to an adjective. This is her best work. The pronoun “her” describes the quality of ownership related to the word “work”. A possessive noun is usually formed with an

Possessive Pronouns

A possessive pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun to show possession and is formed in the possessive case. The Possessive pronouns are: mine, his, hers, its, ours, yours, their and theirs

Predicate Adjective

A predicate adjective is a predicate word or phrase that states a quality of the subject. There are three predicate complements: predicate noun, predicate pronoun, and the predicate adjective.

Predicate Complement

A predicate can be a QUALITY which is called a predicate adjective. A predicate can be a NAME which is called a predicate noun or a predicate pronoun.

Predicate Nominative

The predicate nominative is the case for a noun (name word) or pronoun that completes the meaning of a verb.

Predicate Noun

A predicate noun is a noun (name word) that completes the meaning of a verb. There are three predicate complements: predicate noun, predicate pronoun, and the predicate adjective. The predicate nominative is the case in which a predicate noun is used.

[Predicate of a Sentence](#)

The predicate of a proposition (sentence) is that which is affirmed of the subject. Subject-Copula-Predicate; Fire is hot. “Fire” is the subject, “is” is the copula, and “hot” is the predicate.

[Predicate Pronoun](#)

A predicate pronoun is a pronoun that completes the meaning of the predicate. There are three predicate complements: predicate noun, predicate pronoun, and the predicate adjective.

[Prepositional Phrases](#)

A prepositional phrase is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with the object of the preposition. It is on the table. “On the table” is the prepositional phrase.

[Prepositions](#)

A preposition is a word that has a noun or pronoun as its object and begins a phrase ending in that object that links that same object in relation to the rest of the sentence. Hint: Think of the meaning of the word pre- (before) position. It is on time. The word “on” is the preposition to the object time.

[Present Continuous \(Present Progressive Tense\)](#)

The present continuous tense of a verb expresses action or state that is happening in the present, now and is formed by adding the suffix –ing to the regular verb. You are learning grammar now.

[Present Perfect Tense](#)

The present perfect tense of a verb expresses action or state that is completed today and is formed by adding “have” or “has” before the verb (present participle). I have run.

[Principal Elements](#)

A principle element is necessary to a sentence since no sentence can be had without them: subject and predicate. A copula is not an element. Subject-Copula-Predicate; Lead is heavy. “Lead” is the subject, “is” is the copula (linking word), and “heavy” is the predicate.

Pronoun List

A pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun and is formed in the nominative case, objective case, or possessive case. Nominative Pronouns: I, you, he, she, it, we, they. Objective Pronouns: me, you, him, her, it, us, them. Possessive pronouns: mine, his, hers, its, ours, yours, their and theirs.

Pronouns

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun. When a pronoun is used as a subject it uses the nominative case. (The nominative pronouns are: I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they.) When a pronoun is used as an object (of a preposition, direct object, indirect object) it uses the objective case. (The objective pronouns are: me, you, him, her, it, us, them.) When a pronoun is used as a possessive it is formed in the possessive case, usually by adding an apostrophe and an –s ('s). (The possessive pronouns are: mine, his, hers, its, ours, yours, their and theirs.)

Proper Noun

A proper noun is a word that names a PARTICULAR person, place, people or thing: James, France, American, Earth.

Proposition

A proposition is a sentence that states that a subject is connected to a predicate, it affirms or denies the truth of a statement. An equation is a proposition: Four and four are eight. "Four and four" is the subject, "are" is the copula (linking verb) and "eight" is the predicate.

Punctuation

Punctuation is the method of dividing text into sentences and parts of sentences by means of points and marks: comma (,), semicolon (;), colon (:), period (.), question mark (?), exclamation mark (!), dash (-), parentheses (), brackets [] or {}.

Q

Question Mark

The question mark is the mark of punctuation (?) that denotes the end of an interrogative sentence, which denotes that a question has been asked, and has the same degree of separation as a period. When reading, leave two breath's space at the end of a sentence to aid diction and reading comprehension.

Quotation Marks

The quotation mark is the mark of punctuation, used in pairs "", that show a verbatim passage from another speaker.

R

[Regular Verb List](#)

A regular verb is a word that forms its simple past tense and past perfect participle by adding –d or –ed; such as love, loved, loved; help, helped, helped.

[Relative Pronouns](#)

A relative pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun AND joins, or relates, a dependent adjective clause to an antecedent in another clause. The relative pronouns are: nominative - who, that, which; possessive – whose; objective – whom, that, which.

S

[Semicolon](#)

A semicolon is the mark of punctuation (;) that denotes the next degree of separation between parts of a sentence before introducing an example, between clauses of compound sentences joined by conjunctions, between the clauses of compound sentences when there is no conjunction or if the clauses are long. When reading, leave a more full breath's space at a semicolon to aid diction and reading comprehension.

[Sentence Construction](#)

A sentence is a word, or group of words, that expresses a complete statement, question, or command, plea, etc.

[Simple Future Tense](#)

The simple future tense form of a verb expresses action or state in the future and is formed by adding shall or will before the verb. Go, will go.

[Simple Past Tense](#)

The simple past tense form of a verb expresses action or state in the past (the action already happened) and is formed by adding –ed to the verb. Fan, fanned.

[Simple Present Tense](#)

The simple present tense form of a verb expresses action or state in the present and the third person singular is formed by adding –s or –es to the verb (similar to plural nouns). Run, runs.

Simple Sentences

A simple sentence, according to STRUCTURE, is a sentence that has only one subject and one predicate. Jesus wept. “Jesus” is the only subject and “wept” is the only predicate of this simple sentence.

Singular Nouns

Singular is a word that denotes the number of only one object named by singular nouns. There must be subject-verb agreement between singular nouns. If the subject is a singular noun the verb must also be a singular verb.

Subject of a Proposition

The subject of a proposition is that of which something is affirmed, it is the noun or pronoun that does the acting or being, it receives the action of a transitive verb in the PASSIVE voice. Subject-Copula-Predicate; Fire is hot. “Fire” is the subject, “is” is the copula (linking verb), and “hot” is the predicate.

Subject Verb Agreement (Person and Number)

The person and number of verbs are the changes that indicate that the verbs agree in person and number with their subjects.

Subordinating Conjunctions(subordinators)

Subordinating Conjunctions connect dependent and independent clauses, words that introduce an adverb clause. Acronym for subordinating conjunctions FANBOYS: For-And-Nor-But-Or-Yet-So

T

Transitive Verb

A transitive verb is a verb that requires the addition of an object to complete its meaning. “Bell invented phones.” The verb “invented” requires a word to complete its meaning. The object of a transitive word is not always expressed but some word different from the subject can be made the object.

V

Verb Conjugation

The verb conjugation is the correct expression in regular order of a verb’s modes, tenses, voices, persons, and numbers.

Verb Tenses

A verb tense is the different form a verb takes to show the time of an action or state.

Verb

A verb is a word that expresses both the predicate and the copula and affirms the subject directly. A verb is a word that expresses action, being, or state; run, am, awake. Ducks waddle. "Waddle" is a verb because it affirms action of the subject "duck". Ducks sleep. "Sleep" is a verb because it affirms the state of the subject "duck".