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English Grammar Notes

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01

Sentences and Their Types

Chapter 1 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Subject and Predicate
2. Four Types of Sentences (by purpose)
3. Embedded (Indirect) Questions — a top exam error
4. Sentences by Structure
5. Common Errors
6. Exam Focus

A sentence is a group of words that gives a complete thought. Every sentence needs a Subject (who or what the sentence is about) and a Verb (what the subject does or is).

RULE Subject + Verb = Sentence. If either is missing, it is not a complete sentence.

✓ Birds fly.

✗ Flying over the river. (no subject, no finite verb — only a phrase)

Subject and Predicate

- Subject: the person or thing doing the action or being described
- Predicate: everything said about the subject — the verb and the words after it

Sentence	Subject	Predicate
The old man sat on the bench.	The old man	sat on the bench
My brother and I play chess.	My brother and I	play chess
Honesty is the best policy.	Honesty	is the best policy

Four Types of Sentences (by purpose)

Type	Purpose	Ends with	Example
Assertive (Declarative)	States a fact or opinion	.	Rahul is going to Shimla.
Interrogative	Asks a question	?	Is Rahul going to Shimla?
Imperative	Order, request, advice	.	Please close the door.
Exclamatory	Strong feeling	!	What a lovely view it is!

1. Assertive sentences

Affirmative: Subject + Helping Verb + Main Verb + Object

Negative: Subject + Helping Verb + not + Main Verb + Object

✓ She is reading a novel.

✓ She is not reading a novel.

2. Interrogative sentences

Yes/No question: Helping Verb + Subject + Main Verb + Object + ?

WH-question: WH-word + Helping Verb + Subject + Main Verb + ?



Scan: 20 practice questions on Sentences and Their Types



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questions on Sentences
and Their Types

✓ Are you playing football?

✓ Where are you playing football?

REMEMBER When there is no helping verb in the statement, add do / does / did — "He plays" → "Does he play?"

3. Imperative sentences

The subject "you" is understood, so the sentence starts with a verb, Do / Do not, Please or Let.

✓ Work hard.

✓ Do not touch the wire.

✓ Let us go home.

4. Exclamatory sentences

What + a/an + adjective + noun + subject + verb + !

How + adjective/adverb + subject + verb + !

✓ What a beautiful country Norway is!

✓ How fast he runs!

NOTE Optative sentences express a wish, prayer or blessing: May + Subject + V1 ... ! — "May God bless you!"

Embedded (Indirect) Questions — a top exam error

When a question is placed inside another sentence, the inner part uses statement order: subject first, then verb. Do not repeat the helping verb before the subject.

✗ May I know where are you going?

✓ May I know where you are going?

✗ Could you tell me why did you not come?

✓ Could you tell me why you did not come?

✗ I want to know what is your name.

✓ I want to know what your name is.

✗ He asked me what was I doing.

✓ He asked me what I was doing.

Sentences by Structure

Type	Made of	Example
Simple	One independent clause	He came late.



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Compound	Two independent clauses joined by and, but, or, so, yet	He came late, but he finished the work.
Complex	One independent + one or more dependent clauses	He finished the work because he came early.
Compound-complex	Two independent + at least one dependent clause	When it rained, we stayed in, and the children played games.

Common Errors

✗ Although he worked hard, but he failed.

✓ Although he worked hard, he failed.

✗ Do you know who is she?

✓ Do you know who she is?

✗ Where you are going?

✓ Where are you going?

Exam Focus

- Embedded question = statement order: "where you are", not "where are you"
- Direct question = inverted order: "Where are you going?"
- Imperative sentences have the hidden subject "you"
- Simple = 1 clause; Compound = 2 independent; Complex = independent + dependent



02

Phrases and Clauses

Chapter 2 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Phrase vs Clause
2. Types of Phrases
3. Independent and Dependent Clauses
4. Three Kinds of Dependent Clauses
5. Common Errors
6. Exam Focus

Sentences are built from smaller units. A phrase adds detail but has no subject + verb. A clause has its own subject + verb.

Phrase vs Clause

Point	Phrase	Clause
Subject + finite verb	No	Yes
Complete meaning	No	Independent clause: yes; dependent clause: no
Example	after a long walk	after we had walked a long way
Example	in the morning	when the morning came

Types of Phrases

Phrase	Works as	Example
Noun phrase	Noun (subject or object)	The old wooden house is for sale.
Adjective phrase	Describes a noun	A man of great courage saved the child.
Adverb phrase	Tells how, when, where	She spoke in a soft voice.
Prepositional phrase	Starts with a preposition	The keys are on the table.
Verb phrase	Helping verb + main verb	She has been working all day.
Infinitive phrase	to + V1 + words	To win the race was his dream.
Gerund phrase	V-ing working as noun	Reading novels relaxes me.
Participle phrase	V-ing / V3 describing a noun	Tired of waiting, we left.

Independent and Dependent Clauses

An independent (main) clause can stand alone. A dependent (subordinate) clause cannot — it starts with a connector and needs a main clause.

✓ He ate dinner. (independent)

✗ When Rahul got home.
(dependent — incomplete on its own)

✓ When Rahul got home, he ate dinner.

NOTE Dependent clauses usually start with: when, while, if, unless, although, because, since, as soon as, that, who, which, whose, where.

Three Kinds of Dependent Clauses

Clause	Does the job of	Starts with	Example
--------	-----------------	-------------	---------



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Phrases
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Noun clause	Noun (subject/object)	that, what, whether, if, who, how	I know that he is honest.
Adjective (relative) clause	Adjective — describes a noun	who, whom, whose, which, that, where	The boy who won is my cousin.
Adverb clause	Adverb — time, reason, condition, contrast	when, because, if, although, so that	We stayed in because it rained.

Noun clause tests

✓ What he said was true. (subject of "was")

✓ I wonder whether she will come. (object of "wonder")

✓ The fact that he lied shocked us. (in apposition to "the fact")

Adjective clause tests

✓ This is the house where I was born.

✓ The girl whose bag was lost is crying.

REMEMBER The adjective clause comes right after the noun it describes. "The man is my uncle who is wearing a hat" is wrong — "The man who is wearing a hat is my uncle."

Adverb clause types

Kind	Connectors	Example
Time	when, while, before, after, as soon as, until	Wait here until I return.
Reason	because, since, as	Since it was late, we left.
Condition	if, unless, provided that	Unless you hurry, you will miss the bus.
Contrast	although, though, even if	Although he is poor, he is honest.
Purpose	so that, in order that	He works hard so that he may succeed.
Result	so ... that, such ... that	He was so tired that he slept at once.

Common Errors

✗ Unless you do not work hard, you will fail.

✓ Unless you work hard, you will fail.
("unless" already means "if not")

✗ Until he does not come, we will wait.

✓ Until he comes, we will wait.



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✗ The reason why he failed is because he was lazy.

✓ The reason he failed is that he was lazy.

✗ He is so weak that he cannot to walk.

✓ He is so weak that he cannot walk.

Exam Focus

- Phrase = no subject + verb; clause = has subject + verb
- Unless / until never take "not"
- "The reason ... is that", not "because"
- Relative clause sits right after its noun
- so ... that (result), so that (purpose)



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Phrases
and Clauses



03

Parts of Speech

Chapter 3 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. The 8 Parts of Speech
2. One Word, Different Jobs
3. Verbs — the heart of the sentence
4. Interjections
5. Common Errors
6. Exam Focus

Every word in a sentence does a job. English has 8 parts of speech. The same word can change its part of speech depending on how it is used.

The 8 Parts of Speech

Part	Job	Examples
Noun	Names a person, place, thing or idea	Ravi, Delhi, book, honesty
Pronoun	Replaces a noun	he, she, it, they, who, myself
Verb	Shows action or state	run, write, is, seem, have
Adjective	Describes a noun	tall, red, honest, five
Adverb	Describes a verb, adjective or adverb	quickly, very, often, here
Preposition	Links a noun to the rest of the sentence	in, on, at, under, with
Conjunction	Joins words or clauses	and, but, or, because, although
Interjection	Shows sudden feeling	Oh! Alas! Wow! Hurrah!

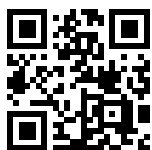
✓ Wow! The young girl quickly climbed up the tree and waved at us.

TIP In this sentence — Wow (interjection), young (adjective), girl (noun), quickly (adverb), climbed (verb), up (preposition), and (conjunction), us (pronoun).

One Word, Different Jobs

Word	Sentence	Part of speech
fast	He is a fast runner.	Adjective
fast	He runs fast.	Adverb
fast	Muslims fast during Ramzan.	Verb
fast	He broke his fast.	Noun
round	The earth is round.	Adjective
round	He walked round the park.	Preposition
well	She sings well.	Adverb
well	I am well.	Adjective
well	Water is drawn from the well.	Noun
but	All but him came.	Preposition (= except)
but	He is poor but honest.	Conjunction

REMEMBER Decide the part of speech by the job the word does in that sentence, not by the word alone.



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Parts of
Speech



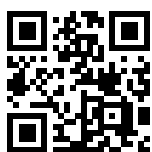
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Scan: 20 practice questions on Parts of Speech

Verbs — the heart of the sentence

Category	Words	Example
Primary helping verbs — Be	is, am, are, was, were, be, been, being	She is going.
Primary helping verbs — Have	has, have, had	I have eaten.
Primary helping verbs — Do	do, does, did	Did you call?
Modal verbs	can, could, may, might, will, would, shall, should, must, ought to, need, dare	You should try.
Main verbs	all action/state words	write, play, think

NOTE A sentence can exist without a helping verb but never without a main verb. After a modal, the main verb is always V1: "He can swim", not "He can swims".

Five forms of a verb

Form	Name	Example
V1	Base form	write
V2	Past form	wrote
V3	Past participle	written
V4	-ing form	writing
V5	V1 + s/es	writes

RULE Adding s/es to a noun makes it plural (books); adding s/es to a verb makes it singular (he writes).

NOTE V3 never comes directly after the subject — it needs has/have/had or a form of be: "I have written", not "I written".

Interjections

- Joy: Hurrah! Wow! Bravo!
- Sorrow: Alas! Oh dear!
- Surprise: Oh! What! Really!
- Greeting / attention: Hello! Hey!

✓ Alas! He is no more.

✓ Hurrah! We have won the match.

Common Errors



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✗ He can speaks four languages.

✓ He can speak four languages.

✗ She written a letter.

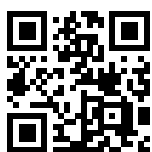
✓ She has written a letter.

✗ He did not went to school.

✓ He did not go to school.

Exam Focus

- 8 parts: Noun, Pronoun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb, Preposition, Conjunction, Interjection
- Part of speech depends on use in the sentence
- Modal / do / does / did + V1 only
- V3 always needs has/have/had or be



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Parts of
Speech



04

Nouns

Chapter 4 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Types of Nouns
2. Collective Nouns — singular or plural?
3. Always-
Uncountable Nouns
4. Plural in Form,
Singular in Meaning
5. Singular in Form,
Plural in Meaning
6. Always Plural
(pairs)
7. Same Form in
Singular and Plural

A noun names a person, place, thing, quality or idea. In exams, most noun errors come from countable vs uncountable nouns, special plurals and the possessive case.

Types of Nouns

Type	Meaning	Examples
Proper	Name of a particular person, place, thing	Rahul, Delhi, the Ganga
Common	General name for a class	student, city, river
Collective	Name of a group taken as one	team, army, jury, flock, committee
Material	Name of a substance	gold, iron, milk, wood
Abstract	Quality, state or idea	honesty, poverty, childhood, joy
Countable	Can be counted	book, chair, idea
Uncountable	Cannot be counted	water, advice, information

NOTE Material and abstract nouns are uncountable: no a/an, no plural -s, singular verb — "Honesty is the best policy."

NOTE The + adjective = plural noun with a plural verb: "The rich are not always happy."

Collective Nouns — singular or plural?

RULE Use a singular verb when the group acts as one unit; use a plural verb when the members act separately or disagree.

✓ The jury has given its verdict. (one unit)

✓ The jury are divided in their opinions. (members acting separately)

Always-Uncountable Nouns

Advice, information, furniture, luggage, baggage, equipment, machinery, scenery, poetry, news, mischief, stationery, bread, traffic, knowledge, evidence, homework, work (meaning job/task), money

✗ She gave me many advices.

✓ She gave me much advice. / She gave me many pieces of advice.

✗ The sceneries of Kashmir are beautiful.

✓ The scenery of Kashmir is beautiful.

✗ All his luggages were lost.

✓ All his luggage was lost.



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Nouns



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Plural in Form, Singular in Meaning

Subjects (Mathematics, Physics, Economics, Politics, Ethics), diseases (measles, mumps), games (billiards, darts), and the word "news" take a singular verb.

✓ Mathematics is my favourite subject.

✓ The news is true.

NOTE Used for something other than the subject itself, they can be plural: "His politics are confusing" (his political views).

Singular in Form, Plural in Meaning

Cattle, poultry, police, people, gentry, vermin, clergy — always plural verb, never a/an, never add -s.

✗ The cattle is grazing.

✓ The cattle are grazing.

✗ The police has arrested the thief.

✓ The police have arrested the thief.

Always Plural (pairs)

Trousers, jeans, scissors, spectacles, pliers, tongs, binoculars, shorts. Use "a pair of" for one.

✓ My trousers are torn.

✓ A pair of scissors is on the table.

Same Form in Singular and Plural

Sheep, deer, fish, swine, series, species, aircraft, crossroads, headquarters, means

✓ One sheep is grazing. / Ten sheep are grazing.

Special Plurals

Singular	Plural
criterion	criteria
phenomenon	phenomena
analysis	analyses
crisis	crises
hypothesis	hypotheses



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medium	media
datum	data
mother-in-law	mothers-in-law
passer-by	passers-by
commander-in-chief	commanders-in-chief
spoonful	spoonfuls

Number + Noun as Adjective

RULE Number + noun used before another noun becomes a hyphenated adjective and stays singular.

✗ He gave me a five-rupees note.

✓ He gave me a five-rupee note.

✗ It was a three-hours journey.

✓ It was a three-hour journey.

REMEMBER Dozen, hundred, thousand, million after a number stay singular: "two hundred books", but "hundreds of books".

Nouns That Change Meaning in the Plural

Singular	Plural
custom (habit)	customs (import duty)
good (benefit)	goods (things for sale)
advice (suggestion)	advices (formal reports, rare)
force (strength)	forces (army)
air (atmosphere)	airs (proud manners)
manner (way)	manners (polite behaviour)
work (labour)	works (factory / writings)

Possessive Case

Rule	Example
Living things: 's	Ravi's bike, the dog's tail
Plural ending in s: only '	the boys' hostel
Non-living things: of	the legs of the table
Time, distance, weight: 's allowed	a week's leave, a stone's throw
Joint ownership: 's on the last noun	Ram and Shyam's shop (one shop)
Separate ownership: 's on each noun	Ram's and Shyam's shops (two shops)



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✗ This is my friend's brother's wife's car.

✓ This car belongs to the wife of my friend's brother.

NOTE Possessive pronouns never take an apostrophe: its, ours, yours, theirs, hers. "It's" means "it is".

Exam Focus

- No plural for advice, information, furniture, luggage, scenery, equipment, news
- Cattle, police, people = plural verb
- five-rupee note, three-hour journey (no -s)
- mothers-in-law, passers-by, commanders-in-chief
- Joint possession: 's on last noun only



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Nouns



05

Pronouns

Chapter 5 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Personal Pronouns — All Forms
2. Subject Case (I, we, he, she, they)
3. Object Case (me, us, him, her, them)
4. Comparison with than / as
5. Possessive Adjective vs Possessive Pronoun
6. Order of Pronouns
7. Indefinite Pronouns

A pronoun replaces a noun to avoid repetition. In exams, pronoun questions test case (I/me), agreement (his/its/one's), relative pronouns (who/whom/which/that) and reflexive verbs.

Personal Pronouns — All Forms

Person	Subject	Object	Possessive adj.	Possessive pron.	Reflexive
1st singular	I	me	my	mine	myself
1st plural	we	us	our	ours	ourselves
2nd	you	you	your	yours	yourself / yourselves
3rd masculine	he	him	his	his	himself
3rd feminine	she	her	her	hers	herself
3rd neuter	it	it	its	—	itself
3rd plural	they	them	their	theirs	themselves

Subject Case (I, we, he, she, they)

RULE Use the subject form as the subject of a verb, and (in formal exam English) after "be": "It is I", "It was he who called".

✗ Him and me went to the market.

✓ He and I went to the market.

Object Case (me, us, him, her, them)

RULE Use the object form after a verb and after a preposition.

✗ She invited you and I.

✓ She invited you and me.

✗ Divide the sweets between you and I.

✓ Divide the sweets between you and me.

✗ Let you and I go.

✓ Let you and me go. ("let" takes an object)

✗ Everyone but she came.

✓ Everyone but her came. ("but" = except, a preposition)

Comparison with than / as

RULE The pronoun after than/as takes the case it would have if the sentence were completed.



Scan: 20 practice questions on Pronouns



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✓ He is taller than I (am).

✓ She is as clever as he (is).

✓ I like you more than (I like) him.

✗ He is taller than me. (accepted in speech, but exams expect "than I")

Possessive Adjective vs Possessive Pronoun

RULE A possessive adjective (my, your, her, their) needs a noun after it. A possessive pronoun (mine, yours, hers, theirs) stands alone.

✗ This book is your.

✓ This book is yours.

✗ Mine car is red.

✓ My car is red.

✗ Your and my house are near.

✓ Your house and mine are near.

Order of Pronouns

Situation	Order	Example
Normal / polite	2nd, 3rd, 1st (you, he, I)	You, he and I will go.
Admitting a fault	1st, 2nd, 3rd (I, you, he)	I, you and he are to blame.
Plural	1st, 2nd, 3rd (we, you, they)	We, you and they must work together.

Indefinite Pronouns

RULE Everyone, everybody, someone, anybody, nobody, each, either, neither are singular and take a singular verb.

✓ Everyone is ready.

✓ Each of the boys has a bicycle.

NOTE For agreement, exams usually expect "his or her" (or "his"): "Everyone must do his or her duty." Modern English also accepts "their".

RULE "One" is followed by one's / oneself, not his / himself.

✗ One should keep his promise.

✓ One should keep one's promise.

Reflexive Pronouns



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questions on Pronouns



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RULE Some verbs need a reflexive pronoun when they have no other object: absent, avail, enjoy (when no object), pride, resign (to fate), acquit, apply (oneself), exert, overreach.

✗ He absented from the class.

✓ He absented himself from the class.

✗ You must avail of this offer.

✓ You must avail yourself of this offer.

RULE These verbs do NOT take a reflexive pronoun: keep, stop, turn, qualify, bathe, hide, rest, move, spread.

✗ He kept himself away.

✓ He kept away.

NOTE Never use a reflexive pronoun as a subject: "Myself Ravi" is wrong — "I am Ravi".

Relative Pronouns

Pronoun	For	Example
who	people (subject)	The boy who came is my friend.
whom	people (object)	The man whom you met is a doctor.
whose	possession	The girl whose bag was lost is crying.
which	animals and things	The book which I bought is new.
that	people or things	The pen that I lost was costly.

RULE Use "that" (not who/which) after superlatives, all, only, none, nothing, everything, the same, any.

✓ This is the best film that I have seen.

✓ All that glitters is not gold.

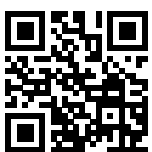
TIP Who or whom? Replace with he/him. If "him" fits, use whom: "whom did you see?" → "you saw him".

✗ The boy whom came first is my cousin.

✓ The boy who came first is my cousin.

Each other vs One another

- each other: two persons — "Ravi and Sita love each other."
- one another: more than two — "The five students helped one another."



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Pronouns



05

Pronouns

Chapter 5 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Personal Pronouns
— All Forms
2. Subject Case (I, we, he, she, they)
3. Object Case (me, us, him, her, them)
4. Comparison with than / as
5. Possessive Adjective vs Possessive Pronoun
6. Order of Pronouns
7. Indefinite Pronouns

Exam Focus

- between you and me; let you and me; everyone but her
- taller than I; as clever as he
- one ... one's; everyone ... his or her
- absent / avail / pride + oneself; keep / stop / qualify — no reflexive
- "that" after superlatives, all, only



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Pronouns



06

Articles — A, An, The

Chapter 6 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. A vs An — decided by SOUND, not spelling
2. Uses of A / An
3. Uses of THE
4. When NOT to use an article
5. School, Church, Hospital, Prison, Bed
6. Common Errors
7. Exam Focus

Articles come before nouns. "A" and "an" are indefinite (any one); "the" is definite (a particular one).

A vs An — decided by SOUND, not spelling

RULE Use "an" before a vowel sound and "a" before a consonant sound.

Use AN (vowel sound)	Use A (consonant sound)
an hour (h silent)	a horse (h spoken)
an honest man	a historical place
an MBA (em-)	a university (you-)
an NCC cadet (en-)	a European (you-)
an umbrella	a one-day match (won-)
an X-ray (ex-)	a useful book (you-)

NOTE When an adjective comes before the noun, the article follows the adjective's sound: "an old man", "a very old man".

Uses of A / An

Use	Example
One (first mention)	I saw a lion. The lion was hungry.
Per / each	60 km an hour; ₹500 a day
A whole class	A dog is a faithful animal.
A certain unknown person	A Mr Sharma called you.
Like a famous person	He is a Shakespeare of our time.
Before profession	She is a doctor.
With certain expressions	a lot of, a few, a little, a great many, half an hour, such a, what a

Uses of THE

Use	Example
Already mentioned / known	The book you gave me is good.
Only one of its kind	the sun, the moon, the earth, the sky
Superlatives	the best, the tallest
Ordinals	the first, the second, the last
Rivers, seas, oceans	the Ganga, the Indian Ocean
Mountain ranges, groups of islands	the Himalayas, the Andamans
Deserts	the Thar, the Sahara
Plural / union country names	the USA, the UK, the Netherlands



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Articles —
A, An, The



06

Articles — A, An, The

Chapter 6 of 26

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Scan: 20 practice
questions on Articles —
A, An, The

Holy books, newspapers	the Gita, the Hindu
Musical instruments	She plays the veena.
Inventions	Who invented the telephone?
Adjective used as noun	the poor, the rich, the blind
Comparative "the ... the"	The more you read, the more you learn.
Parts of the body (after a preposition)	He hit me on the head.
Directions	The sun rises in the east.

When NOT to use an article

Case	Correct
Names of people, cities, most countries	Delhi, India (not "the India")
Single mountains, lakes	Mount Everest, Lake Chilika
Languages	She speaks Telugu. (but "the Telugu language")
Meals in general	We had breakfast at eight.
Games and sports	He plays cricket.
Abstract/material nouns in general	Honesty is the best policy. Gold is costly.
Days, months, festivals	on Monday, in May, at Diwali
By + transport	by bus, by train, by air
Plural or uncountable nouns in general sense	Books are our best friends.

School, Church, Hospital, Prison, Bed

RULE No article when the place is used for its main purpose; use "the" when you go there for another reason.

✓ He goes to school. (as a student)

✓ His mother went to the school to meet the teacher.

✓ He was taken to hospital. (as a patient)

✓ I went to the hospital to visit him.

Common Errors

✗ He is an European.

✓ He is a European.

✗ She is a honest girl.

✓ She is an honest girl.



06

Articles — A, An, The

Chapter 6 of 26

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3. Uses of THE
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6. Common Errors
7. Exam Focus

✗ The honesty is the best policy.

✓ Honesty is the best policy.

✗ He is best player in the team.

✓ He is the best player in the team.

✗ I go to the office by the bus.

✓ I go to the office by bus.

✗ He plays the cricket and the guitar.

✓ He plays cricket and the guitar.

Exam Focus

- a/an depends on the first SOUND: an hour, a university, an MBA, a one-rupee coin
- "the" with rivers, oceans, ranges, superlatives, instruments, unique things
- No article with single peaks and lakes, languages, sports, meals, by bus
- go to school (study) vs go to the school (visit)



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Articles —
A, An, The



07

Adjectives

Chapter 7 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Degrees of Comparison
2. Forming Comparatives and Superlatives
3. Latin Comparatives take TO, not THAN
4. Absolute Adjectives — no degrees
5. "Any other" with comparatives
6. Compare like with like
7. The + comparative, the + comparative

An adjective describes a noun or pronoun. It can come before the noun ("a tall man") or after a linking verb ("He is tall"). Exam questions test degrees of comparison, Latin comparatives, absolute adjectives and confusing pairs.

Degrees of Comparison

Degree	Use	Example
Positive	No comparison / equality	Raju is as strong as Mahesh.
Comparative	Two things, with "than"	Raju is stronger than Mahesh.
Superlative	Three or more, with "the"	Raju is the strongest boy in the class.

Forming Comparatives and Superlatives

Rule	Positive	Comparative	Superlative
One syllable: -er / -est	tall	taller	tallest
Ends in -e: -r / -st	wise	wiser	wisest
Short vowel + consonant: double it	hot	hotter	hottest
Consonant + y: y → i	happy	happier	happiest
Long words: more / most	beautiful	more beautiful	most beautiful
Irregular	good / well	better	best
Irregular	bad / ill	worse	worst
Irregular	many / much	more	most
Irregular	little	less	least

✗ She is more cleverer than her sister.

✓ She is cleverer than her sister.
(never double comparatives)

Latin Comparatives take TO, not THAN

RULE Senior, junior, superior, inferior, prior, anterior, posterior, preferable, prefer — use "to".

✗ He is senior than me.

✓ He is senior to me.

✗ Coffee is preferable than tea.

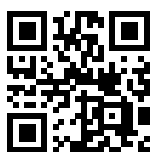
✓ Coffee is preferable to tea.

✗ This cloth is more superior to that.

✓ This cloth is superior to that. (no "more")

Absolute Adjectives — no degrees

Unique, perfect, complete, ideal, supreme, universal, impossible, round, square, eternal, entire, chief, extreme, excellent, matchless



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Adjectives



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Scan: 20 practice questions on Adjectives

✗ This is the most unique painting.

✓ This is a unique painting.

✗ The work is more complete now.

✓ The work is complete now. (or "more nearly complete")

"Any other" with comparatives

RULE When comparing a thing with others of its OWN group, add "other" (or "else").

✗ Mumbai is bigger than any city in India.

✓ Mumbai is bigger than any other city in India.

✓ Delhi is bigger than any city in Nepal. (different group — no "other")

✗ He is the cleverest of all other boys.

✓ He is the cleverest of all the boys. (no "other" with superlatives)

Compare like with like

RULE Use "that of" (singular) or "those of" (plural) so you compare the same kind of thing.

✗ The climate of Ooty is better than Chennai.

✓ The climate of Ooty is better than that of Chennai.

✗ The roads of Vizag are wider than Vijayawada.

✓ The roads of Vizag are wider than those of Vijayawada.

The + comparative, the + comparative

The + comparative + subject + verb, the + comparative + subject + verb

✓ The harder you work, the better you score.

Two qualities of the same person

RULE When comparing two qualities of one person, use "more ... than", not "-er ... than".

✗ He is wiser than brave.

✓ He is more wise than brave.

Confusing Adjective Pairs

Pair

Use



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few / a few / the few	few = hardly any (negative); a few = some; the few = all the (small number)
little / a little / the little	same as above, for uncountable nouns
fewer / less	fewer + countable (fewer books); less + uncountable (less sugar)
elder / older	elder: family, never with than; older: age, with than
later / latter	later: time; latter: second of two
farther / further	farther: distance; further: additional
last / latest	last: final; latest: newest
oldest / eldest	eldest only within a family

✗ He is elder than me.

✓ He is older than me. / He is my elder brother.

✗ There were less students today.

✓ There were fewer students today.

Order of Adjectives

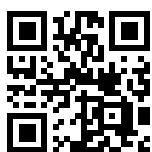
Opinion – Size – Age – Shape – Colour – Origin – Material – Purpose + Noun

✓ a lovely small old round red Indian wooden dining table

TIP Remember "OSASCOMP".

Exam Focus

- senior/junior/superior/inferior/prefer + TO
- No degrees for unique, perfect, complete, ideal
- "any other" within the same group; "that of / those of" to compare like with like
- fewer (count) vs less (amount); elder (family) vs older (with than)
- No double comparatives: "more better" is wrong



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Adjectives



08

Adverbs

Chapter 8 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Types of Adverbs
2. Adjective or Adverb after the verb?
3. Words that change meaning with -ly
4. Very / Much / Too
5. Enough
6. Position of Adverbs
7. Hardly, Scarcely, Barely

An adverb describes a verb, an adjective or another adverb. It answers How? When? Where? How often? How much?

Types of Adverbs

Type	Answers	Examples
Manner	How?	slowly, carefully, well, fast, hard
Time	When?	now, today, soon, already, yet, lately
Place	Where?	here, there, everywhere, abroad, upstairs
Frequency	How often?	always, usually, often, seldom, never, rarely
Degree	How much?	very, too, quite, almost, enough, rather
Interrogative	Question	when, where, why, how
Relative	Joins clauses	the place where, the time when, the reason why

NOTE Most manner adverbs end in -ly, but fast, hard, late, early, straight, high are both adjectives and adverbs. "Fastly" does not exist.

NOTE Noun + ly usually makes an ADJECTIVE: friendly, lovely, manly, costly — "He spoke in a friendly way", not "He spoke friendly".

Adjective or Adverb after the verb?

RULE After linking verbs (be, seem, look, feel, smell, taste, sound, appear, become, grow) use an ADJECTIVE. After action verbs use an ADVERB.

✗ The rose smells sweetly.

✓ The rose smells sweet.

✗ She looks beautifully.

✓ She looks beautiful.

✗ He drives careful.

✓ He drives carefully.

✓ She looked carefully at the map. (look = action here, so adverb)

Words that change meaning with -ly

Word	Meaning	-ly form	Meaning
hard	with effort	hardly	almost not
late	not on time	lately	recently
near	close	nearly	almost
high	at a height	highly	very much
short	suddenly / not long	shortly	soon

✓ He works hard. / He hardly works. (opposite meanings)



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questions on Adverbs



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Scan: 20 practice
questions on Adverbs

Very / Much / Too

Word	Used with	Example
very	positive degree, present participle	very good, very interesting
much	comparative, past participle	much better, much obliged
very much	verbs	I like it very much.
too	more than needed (negative idea)	too hot to drink

✗ He is very better today.

✓ He is much better today.

✗ She is too beautiful. (when you only mean "very")

✓ She is very beautiful.

✓ The tea is too hot to drink.

RULE "too ... to" already has a negative meaning — do not add "not": "He is too weak to walk", not "too weak to not walk".

Enough

RULE Enough comes AFTER an adjective or adverb, but BEFORE a noun.

✗ He is enough old to vote.

✓ He is old enough to vote.

✓ We have enough money.

Position of Adverbs

RULE Frequency adverbs (always, often, never, seldom, hardly, usually) go before the main verb, but after "be" and after the first helping verb.

✗ He goes always to school by bus.

✓ He always goes to school by bus.

✓ She is never late.

✓ I have often visited Goa.

RULE "Only" goes just before the word it limits.

✓ Only Ravi passed. (no one else)

✓ Ravi only passed. (he did not get distinction)

Hardly, Scarcely, Barely



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RULE These are negative words — never add "not" or "no" with them; use "any", "ever".

✗ I hardly have no time.

✓ I hardly have any time.

✗ He hardly never comes here.

✓ He hardly ever comes here.

Ago vs Before, Since

- ago: counts back from now, with past simple — "He left two days ago."
- before: counts back from a past point, with past perfect — "He had left two days before."

✗ He has come two days ago.

✓ He came two days ago.

Exam Focus

- Linking verb + adjective: smells sweet, looks beautiful, feels bad
- Action verb + adverb: drives carefully
- much + comparative (much better); very + positive (very good)
- old enough (adjective + enough); enough money (enough + noun)
- hardly any / hardly ever, never "hardly no / hardly never"
- "ago" with past simple only



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Adverbs



09

Verbs — Types and Forms

Chapter 9 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Transitive and Intransitive Verbs
2. Linking Verbs
3. Stative Verbs — usually no -ing form
4. Irregular Verbs — high-frequency exam list
5. Confusing Verb Pairs
6. Causative Verbs — have, get, make, let
7. Phrasal and Prepositional Verbs (common in exam...)



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Verbs —
Types and Forms

The verb is the most important word in a sentence. Exams test transitive vs intransitive verbs, irregular forms (V2 / V3), confusing pairs like lie/lay and rise/raise, and stative verbs.

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Type	Needs an object?	Example
Transitive	Yes	She wrote a letter. (letter = object)
Intransitive	No	The baby slept.
Both	Depends on use	He runs fast. / He runs a shop.

NOTE Only transitive verbs can be changed into the passive voice.

Linking Verbs

Be, seem, appear, become, look, feel, sound, smell, taste, grow, remain, turn — they link the subject to a description and are followed by an adjective or noun.

✓ She became a doctor.

✓ The soup tastes good.

Stative Verbs — usually no -ing form

RULE Verbs of feeling, thinking, possession and the senses are normally not used in continuous tenses.

- Feelings: love, like, hate, want, prefer, wish
- Thinking: know, believe, understand, remember, forget, mean, suppose
- Possession: have (= own), own, belong, possess, consist, contain
- Senses: see, hear, smell, taste (when not deliberate)

✗ I am knowing the answer.

✓ I know the answer.

✗ This bag is belonging to me.

✓ This bag belongs to me.

✗ She is having two cars.

✓ She has two cars.

NOTE Some can be continuous when they show an action: "I am having lunch", "She is tasting the soup", "I am thinking about the plan".

Irregular Verbs — high-frequency exam list

V1	V2	V3
begin	began	begun



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bite	bit	bitten
break	broke	broken
choose	chose	chosen
draw	drew	drawn
drink	drank	drunk
fly	flew	flown
forbid	forbade	forbidden
forgive	forgave	forgiven
hide	hid	hidden
ring	rang	rung
shake	shook	shaken
sink	sank	sunk
spring	sprang	sprung
steal	stole	stolen
strike	struck	struck
swim	swam	swum
tear	tore	torn
tread	trod	trodden
weave	wove	woven
bear	bore	borne / born
cast	cast	cast
burst	burst	burst
broadcast	broadcast	broadcast
forecast	forecast	forecast
spread	spread	spread

✗ The pipe bursted last night.	✓ The pipe burst last night.
✗ The bell has rang.	✓ The bell has rung.

Confusing Verb Pairs

Verb	V2	V3	Meaning	Object?
lie	lay	lain	rest / recline	No
lie	lied	lied	tell an untruth	No
lay	laid	laid	put something down	Yes
rise	rose	risen	go up	No
raise	raised	raised	lift something	Yes



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Verbs —
Types and Forms



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sit	sat	sat	take a seat	No
set	set	set	put in place	Yes
fall	fell	fallen	come down	No
fell	felled	felled	cut down (a tree)	Yes
find	found	found	discover	Yes
found	founded	founded	establish	Yes
hang	hung	hung	suspend a thing	Yes
hang	hanged	hanged	execute a person	Yes
flow	flowed	flowed	move like water	No
fly	flew	flown	move in the air	No

✗ He laid on the bed all day.

✓ He lay on the bed all day.

✗ Please lie the book on the table.

✓ Please lay the book on the table.

✗ Prices are raising.

✓ Prices are rising.

✗ The murderer was hung.

✓ The murderer was hanged.

✗ The school was found in 1990.

✓ The school was founded in 1990.

Causative Verbs — have, get, make, let

Pattern	Example
have + object + V3	I had my car repaired.
get + object + V3	She got her hair cut.
make + person + V1	He made me wait.
let + person + V1	Let him go.
get + person + to V1	I got him to sign the form.

✗ He made me to wait.

✓ He made me wait.

✗ Let him to go.

✓ Let him go.

NOTE In the passive, "make" takes "to": "I was made to wait."

Phrasal and Prepositional Verbs (common in exams)

Verb	Meaning
put off	postpone
put up with	tolerate
call off	cancel



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Verbs —
Types and Forms



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Chapter 9 of 26

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look into	investigate
give up	stop / quit
bring up	raise a child / mention
turn down	reject
carry out	perform
break down	stop working / lose control
look down upon	despise
make up for	compensate
run out of	have no more

Exam Focus

- lie–lay–lain (rest, no object) vs lay–laid–laid (put, needs object)
- rise (no object) vs raise (needs object); hanged (person) vs hung (thing)
- found–founded (establish) vs find–found
- No -ing for know, belong, own, understand, believe
- make / let + V1 without "to"; burst, cast, spread, broadcast — same in all three forms



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Verbs —
Types and Forms



10

Tenses

Chapter 10 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. The 12 Tenses at a Glance
2. Simple Present
3. Present Continuous
4. Present Perfect
5. For vs Since
6. Simple Past
7. Past Continuous

Tense shows WHEN an action happens. There are 3 times (present, past, future) and 4 forms of each (simple, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous) — 12 tenses in all.

The 12 Tenses at a Glance

Tense	Structure	Example
Simple Present	V1 / V1+s	She writes.
Present Continuous	is/am/are + V-ing	She is writing.
Present Perfect	has/have + V3	She has written.
Present Perfect Continuous	has/have been + V-ing	She has been writing for an hour.
Simple Past	V2	She wrote.
Past Continuous	was/were + V-ing	She was writing.
Past Perfect	had + V3	She had written.
Past Perfect Continuous	had been + V-ing	She had been writing for an hour.
Simple Future	will/shall + V1	She will write.
Future Continuous	will be + V-ing	She will be writing.
Future Perfect	will have + V3	She will have written.
Future Perfect Continuous	will have been + V-ing	She will have been writing for an hour.

Simple Present

- Habits: "He goes for a walk every morning."
- Universal truths: "The earth revolves round the sun."
- Timetables / fixed schedules: "The train leaves at 6 pm."
- Inside time and condition clauses for the future (see below)

RULE "Always" with a habit = simple present; "always" showing irritation = present continuous.

✓ She always speaks the truth.

✓ He is always complaining about the food.

Present Continuous

- Action happening now: "She is cooking."
- Planned near future: "We are leaving for Goa tomorrow."

NOTE Stative verbs (know, believe, like, love, own, belong, understand, want) do not take -ing: "I know him", not "I am knowing him".



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Tenses



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Scan: 20 practice
questions on Tenses

Present Perfect

Used for a past action connected to now, when the exact time is not stated.

Signal words: just, already, yet, ever, never, so far, till now, recently, since, for, this is the first time

RULE Never use the present perfect with a definite past time word (yesterday, ago, last year, in 2019).

✗ I have seen him yesterday.

✓ I saw him yesterday.

✗ They did not come yet.

✓ They have not come yet.

✓ This is the first time I have visited Ooty.

For vs Since

Word	Used with	Example
for	a period of time	for two hours, for ten years
since	a point of time	since Monday, since 2015, since morning

✗ I am living here since 2015.

✓ I have been living here since 2015.

✗ He is ill for three days.

✓ He has been ill for three days.

Simple Past

- Completed past action with a time: yesterday, ago, last week, in 1999
- Past habit: used to + V1 / would + V1
- After "It is time / It is high time": "It is high time we left."

✗ It is high time you go home.

✓ It is high time you went home.

✗ He used to played cricket.

✓ He used to play cricket.

NOTE "be used to" = be accustomed to, followed by V-ing: "She is used to working late."

Past Continuous

- Long action interrupted by a short action: "I was reading when the light went off."
- Two actions going on together: "While she was cooking, he was watching TV."

Past Perfect — the earlier of two past actions



10

Tenses

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RULE The action that happened first takes had + V3; the later action takes V2.

✓ The train had left before we reached the station.

✓ When I reached, the film had started.

✗ After he finished his work, he had gone home.

✓ After he had finished his work, he went home.

✗ By the time the police arrived, the thief escaped.

✓ By the time the police arrived, the thief had escaped.

No "will" in time and condition clauses

RULE After when, if, unless, until, before, after, as soon as, in case — use the simple present for a future meaning.

✗ I will call you when I will reach Delhi.

✓ I will call you when I reach Delhi.

✗ If it will rain, we will stay home.

✓ If it rains, we will stay home.

Future Perfect

Action that will be complete before a future time — "by tomorrow", "by next year", "by the time".

✓ By next March, I will have finished the course.

✗ By this time tomorrow, I will reach home.

✓ By this time tomorrow, I will have reached home.

Hardly / Scarcely ... when; No sooner ... than

✓ Hardly had I reached the station when the train left.

✓ No sooner had I reached the station than the train left.

Exam Focus

- No present perfect with yesterday / ago / last / in 2019
- since + point, for + period, with perfect (continuous) tenses
- No "will" after when / if / unless / as soon as
- Earlier past action = had + V3
- It is high time + V2; used to + V1; be used to + V-ing
- By + future time = will have + V3



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Tenses



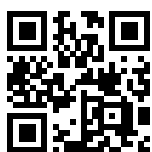
11

Subject-Verb Agreement

Chapter 11 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Subjects joined by AND
2. "As well as", "along with", "together with", "w..."
3. Either ... or / Neither ... nor / Not only ... but al...
4. Singular words
5. One of / None of
6. Number of / A number of
7. Collective nouns, amounts and titles



Scan: 20 practice questions on Subject-Verb Agreement

The verb must agree with its subject in number: a singular subject takes a singular verb, a plural subject takes a plural verb. This is the single most tested topic in error spotting.

RULE Find the real subject first. Ignore the words between the subject and the verb.

✗ The quality of the mangoes are good.

✓ The quality of the mangoes is good. (subject = quality)

Subjects joined by AND

RULE Two subjects joined by "and" take a plural verb.

✓ Ravi and Sita are friends.

RULE When both nouns refer to ONE person or ONE idea, use a singular verb.

✓ The secretary and treasurer has resigned. (one person with two posts — one "the")

✓ The secretary and the treasurer have resigned. (two people — two "the")

✓ Bread and butter is my breakfast. (one dish)

✓ Slow and steady wins the race.

RULE Each / every before nouns joined by "and" = singular verb.

✓ Every boy and every girl was given a prize.

"As well as", "along with", "together with", "with", "besides", "in addition to", "no less than", "like", "unlike", "and not", "rather than"

RULE The verb agrees with the FIRST subject.

✗ The teacher, along with her students, are going on a trip.

✓ The teacher, along with her students, is going on a trip.

✗ He, and not his friends, are to blame.

✓ He, and not his friends, is to blame.

Either ... or / Neither ... nor / Not only ... but also / Or / Nor



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RULE The verb agrees with the NEAREST subject.

✓ Neither the manager nor the clerks were present.

✓ Neither the clerks nor the manager was present.

✓ Either you or he has to go.

✓ Not only the students but also the teacher was late.

Singular words

Each, every, either, neither, everyone, everybody, someone, nobody, anyone, many a, more than one + singular noun

✓ Each of the players has a kit.

✓ Many a student has failed this test.

✓ More than one student was absent.

✓ Neither of the answers is correct.

One of / None of

✓ One of my friends is a doctor. (subject = one)

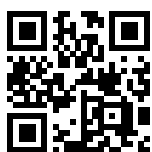
✓ He is one of those men who never give up. (who refers to "men" — plural)

✓ He is the only one of those men who never gives up. ("the only one" — singular)

NOTE "None" can take a singular or plural verb; exams usually prefer singular with countable nouns ("None of the boys is absent") and singular with uncountable ("None of the money was spent").

Number of / A number of

Expression	Verb	Example
A number of + plural noun	Plural	A number of students were absent.
The number of + plural noun	Singular	The number of students is rising.
A lot of / plenty of / most of / half of / some of / all of	Follows the noun after "of"	Most of the milk is spoilt. / Most of the boys are here.
Percentage / fraction + of	Follows the noun	40% of the land is dry. / 40% of the voters were women.



Scan: 20 practice questions on Subject-Verb Agreement



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Chapter 11 of 26

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Scan: 20 practice questions on Subject-Verb Agreement

Collective nouns, amounts and titles

- ✓ The committee has approved the plan. (acting as one unit)
- ✓ The committee are divided over the plan. (members acting separately)
- ✓ Ten kilometres is a long distance. (one amount)
- ✓ Five thousand rupees is a big sum.
- ✓ "Gitanjali" was written by Tagore. (title = singular)
- ✓ The United States is a large country.

There is / There are

RULE After "there", the verb agrees with the noun that follows.

✗ There is many reasons for his failure.

✓ There are many reasons for his failure.

- ✓ There is a pen and two books on the table. (nearest = a pen)

Plural-looking singular words and the reverse

- Singular: news, mathematics, physics, economics, measles, politics (as a subject), billiards
- Plural: cattle, police, people, poultry, scissors, trousers, spectacles
- Same: sheep, deer, series, species

Exam Focus

- Real subject decides the verb: "The quality of the mangoes **IS**"
- along with / as well as / together with → first subject
- either...or / neither...nor → nearest subject
- each, every, many a, more than one + singular noun → singular verb
- A number of → plural; The number of → singular
- one of those who → plural; the only one of those who → singular



12

Modal Verbs

Chapter 12 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Modals and Their Uses
2. Need and Dare — two forms
3. Must not vs Need not
4. Modal + have + V3 (past meaning)
5. Ought to, Had better, Would rather
6. Can vs May; Could vs Might
7. Shall and Will (traditional exam rule)

Modals are helping verbs that show ability, permission, possibility, obligation, advice or habit. They never change with the subject and are always followed by V1 (base form).

RULE Modal + V1. No -s, no "to" (except ought to, used to, have to), no double modals.

✗ He can drives a car.

✓ He can drive a car.

✗ She must to go now.

✓ She must go now.

✗ You should can finish it.

✓ You should be able to finish it.

Modals and Their Uses

Modal	Main use	Example
can	ability, permission (informal)	I can swim. Can I come in?
could	past ability, polite request	He could read at four. Could you help me?
may	permission (formal), possibility	May I go? It may rain.
might	weaker possibility, past of may	He might come late.
must	strong duty, certainty	You must obey the law. He must be tired.
have to	duty from outside (rules)	I have to wear a uniform.
should	advice, duty	You should exercise daily.
ought to	moral duty	We ought to respect elders.
will	future, willingness	I will help you.
would	past habit, polite request, conditional	He would walk every morning. Would you mind...?
shall	future with I/we, offer	Shall I open the window?
need (modal)	necessity (negative/question)	You need not worry. Need I come?
dare (modal)	courage (negative/question)	He dare not speak.
used to	past habit, no longer true	I used to live in Vizag.

Need and Dare — two forms

RULE As modals (in negatives and questions): no "to", no -s. As main verbs: they take "to" and -s.

✓ He need not come. (modal)



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Modal
Verbs



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Scan: 20 practice
questions on Modal
Verbs

✓ He does not need to come. (main verb)

✗ He need not to come.

✗ He needs not come.

✓ How dare he insult me?

✓ He does not dare to speak.

Must not vs Need not

Form	Meaning	Example
must not	it is forbidden	You must not smoke here.
need not / don't have to	it is not necessary	You need not bring lunch; it will be served.

Modal + have + V3 (past meaning)

Form	Meaning	Example
should have + V3	it was right but you did not do it	You should have told me.
must have + V3	I am sure it happened	He must have missed the bus.
may / might have + V3	perhaps it happened	She may have forgotten.
could have + V3	it was possible but did not happen	You could have won.
can't have + V3	I am sure it did not happen	He can't have seen me; I was hiding.
needn't have + V3	you did it but it was not necessary	You needn't have bought milk; we had some.

Ought to, Had better, Would rather

ought to + V1 | had better + V1 | would rather + V1 + than + V1

✗ You ought respect your parents.

✓ You ought to respect your parents.

✗ You had better to leave now.

✓ You had better leave now.

✗ I would rather die than to beg.

✓ I would rather die than beg.

NOTE "had better" refers to the present or future, even though it uses "had".

Can vs May; Could vs Might



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✓ Can you lift this box? (ability)

✓ May I use your phone? (formal permission)

TIP In exam-style formal English, use "may" for permission and "can" for ability.

Shall and Will (traditional exam rule)

- Simple future: shall with I/we; will with you/he/she/they
- Determination, promise or threat: reverse it — "You shall be punished." "I will do it at any cost."

Common Errors

✗ She used to went to school by bus.

✓ She used to go to school by bus.

✗ You must had seen him.

✓ You must have seen him.

✗ Need you to go now?

✓ Need you go now? / Do you need to go now?

Exam Focus

- Modal + V1 always; no -s, no "to" (except ought to, used to, have to)
- need not / dare not without "to"; needs to / dares to with "to"
- had better / would rather + V1 (no "to")
- must not = forbidden; need not = not necessary
- should have + V3 = past regret; must have + V3 = past certainty



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Modal
Verbs



13

Non-Finite Verbs — Infinitive, Gerund, Participle

Chapter 13 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Infinitive (to + V1)
2. Gerund (V-ing as a noun)
3. Verbs with a change of meaning
4. Participles
5. Exam Focus



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Non-Finite
Verbs — Infiniti...

Non-finite verbs do not change with the subject or tense. There are three: the infinitive (to + V1), the gerund (V-ing used as a noun) and the participle (V-ing / V3 / having + V3 used as an adjective).

Infinitive (to + V1)

- ✓ To err is human. (subject)
- ✓ I want to learn French. (object)
- ✓ He came to meet you. (purpose)

Verbs followed by to + V1

Agree, afford, attempt, decide, expect, fail, hope, intend, learn, manage, offer, plan, prepare, pretend, promise, refuse, seem, threaten, want, wish

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| ✗ He refused helping me. | ✓ He refused to help me. |
| ✗ She decided going home. | ✓ She decided to go home. |

Bare infinitive (V1 without "to")

After modals, make, let, help (optional), see, hear, watch, feel, had better, would rather, why not

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ✗ I saw him to cross the road. | ✓ I saw him cross the road. |
| ✗ Why not to try again? | ✓ Why not try again? |

Know / learn / teach / explain + how to

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| ✗ He knows to drive. | ✓ He knows how to drive. |
|----------------------|--------------------------|

Gerund (V-ing as a noun)

- ✓ Swimming is good exercise. (subject)
- ✓ I enjoy reading. (object)
- ✓ She is fond of dancing. (after a preposition)

Verbs followed by V-ing

Avoid, admit, appreciate, consider, delay, deny, enjoy, finish, imagine, keep, mind, miss, postpone, practise, quit, recall, resist, risk, suggest, can't help

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ✗ I enjoy to read novels. | ✓ I enjoy reading novels. |
| ✗ He suggested to go by train. | ✓ He suggested going by train. |
| ✗ I can't help to laugh. | ✓ I can't help laughing. |



13

Non-Finite Verbs — Infinitive, Gerund, Participle

Chapter 13 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Infinitive (to + V1)
2. Gerund (V-ing as a noun)
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5. Exam Focus



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Non-Finite
Verbs — Infiniti...

"To" as a preposition + V-ing

RULE In these expressions "to" is a preposition, so it takes V-ing: look forward to, be used to, be accustomed to, object to, with a view to, devoted to, addicted to, confess to, prefer ... to, averse to.

✗ I look forward to meet you.

✓ I look forward to meeting you.

✗ He went to Delhi with a view to get a job.

✓ He went to Delhi with a view to getting a job.

Possessive before a gerund

RULE Use a possessive (my, his, your, Ravi's), not an object pronoun, before a gerund.

✗ I do not like him coming late.

✓ I do not like his coming late.

✗ Excuse me being late.

✓ Excuse my being late.

Verbs with a change of meaning

Verb	+ to V1	+ V-ing
stop	stop to do = pause in order to do	stop doing = quit the activity
remember	remember to do = not forget a future task	remember doing = recall a past action
forget	forget to do = fail to do	forget doing = not recall a past act
try	try to do = make an effort	try doing = test a method
regret	regret to say = sorry to announce	regret doing = sorry for a past act

✓ He stopped to smoke. (he stopped walking in order to smoke)

✓ He stopped smoking. (he gave up the habit)

Participles

Type	Form	Example
Present participle	V-ing	a running train, a sleeping baby
Past participle	V3	a broken chair, a written test
Perfect participle	having + V3	Having finished the work, he went home.

RULE -ing participle = the noun causes the feeling (an interesting book). -ed participle = the noun feels it (an interested student).



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Non-Finite Verbs — Infinitive, Gerund, Participle

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Scan: 20 practice
questions on Non-Finite
Verbs — Infiniti...

✗ I was very boring in the lecture.

✓ I was very bored in the lecture. /
The lecture was very boring.

Dangling (misrelated) participle — a common exam error

RULE The subject of the main clause must be the one doing the participle's action.

✗ Walking along the road, a snake bit him.

✓ While he was walking along the road, a snake bit him.

✗ Having finished the work, the TV was switched on.

✓ Having finished the work, he switched on the TV.

Exam Focus

- Gerund after: enjoy, avoid, mind, suggest, finish, deny, can't help
- Infinitive after: decide, refuse, agree, hope, plan, want
- look forward to / used to / with a view to + V-ing
- make / let / see / hear + V1 (no "to")
- Possessive + gerund: "his coming", "my being late"
- Check dangling participles: who is doing the action?



14

Conditionals

Chapter 14 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. The Four Types
2. "Were" for all subjects in imaginary situations
3. I wish / If only
4. Inversion without "if"
5. Unless = if ... not
6. Other condition words
7. Mixed conditionals

A conditional sentence has two parts: the condition (if-clause) and the result (main clause). The tense pair you choose shows whether the situation is real, possible or imaginary.

The Four Types

Type	Situation	If-clause	Main clause	Example
Zero	General truth	V1 (simple present)	V1 (simple present)	If you heat ice, it melts.
First	Real / possible future	V1 (simple present)	will + V1	If it rains, we will stay home.
Second	Imaginary present / unlikely future	V2 / were	would + V1	If I were rich, I would travel.
Third	Imaginary past (did not happen)	had + V3	would have + V3	If he had worked hard, he would have passed.

RULE Never use "will" or "would" in the if-clause.

✗ If you will come, I will help you.

✓ If you come, I will help you.

✗ If I would have known, I would have helped.

✓ If I had known, I would have helped.

"Were" for all subjects in imaginary situations

RULE In the second conditional, and after "I wish", "as if", "as though", "if only", use "were" with every subject.

✗ If I was a bird, I would fly.

✓ If I were a bird, I would fly.

✗ He behaves as if he is the boss.

✓ He behaves as if he were the boss.

I wish / If only

Wish about	Structure	Example
Present	wish + V2 / were	I wish I knew the answer.
Past	wish + had + V3	I wish I had studied harder.
Future / annoyance	wish + would + V1	I wish he would stop shouting.

✗ I wish I am taller.

✓ I wish I were taller.

✗ I wish you came to the party yesterday.

✓ I wish you had come to the party yesterday.



Scan: 20 practice
questions on
Conditionals



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Scan: 20 practice
questions on
Conditionals

Inversion without "if"

Normal

If I were you, ...

If he had known, ...

If you should need help, ...

Inverted

Were I you, ...

Had he known, ...

Should you need help, ...

✓ Had I known the truth, I would have told you.

✗ Had I would known, I would have told you.

Unless = if ... not

RULE "Unless" already has a negative meaning — do not add "not".

✗ Unless you do not hurry, you will miss the train.

✓ Unless you hurry, you will miss the train.

✓ If you do not hurry, you will miss the train.

Other condition words

- provided (that) / providing: only if — "You can go provided you finish your work."
- as long as / so long as: on condition that
- in case: as a precaution — "Take an umbrella in case it rains."
- otherwise / or else: if not — "Hurry, otherwise you will be late."
- suppose / supposing: imagine that — never with "if": "Suppose you won", not "Suppose if you won".

Mixed conditionals

✓ If I had taken the medicine, I would be fine now. (past condition, present result)

✓ If he were more careful, he would not have made that mistake. (present condition, past result)

Exam Focus

- No will/would in the if-clause
- If I were / I wish I were / as if he were
- Third conditional: had + V3 ... would have + V3
- Had I known = If I had known; Were I you = If I were you
- Unless has no "not"; suppose has no "if"



15

Active and Passive Voice

Chapter 15 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Steps to change Active → Passive
2. Tense Table
3. Questions
4. Imperative sentences
5. Two objects
6. Prepositions other than "by"
7. Agent dropped

In the active voice the subject does the action; in the passive voice the subject receives it. The passive is always: form of BE + V3.

✓ Active: Rahul plays cricket.

✓ Passive: Cricket is played by Rahul.

RULE Passive = be (is/am/are/was/were/be/been/being) + V3. Only transitive verbs (with an object) can be made passive.

Steps to change Active → Passive

- 1. Make the object of the active sentence the new subject
- 2. Use the correct form of "be" for the tense, then V3 of the main verb
- 3. Put the old subject after "by" (or leave it out)
- 4. Change pronoun case: I → me, he → him, they → them, we → us

Tense Table

Tense	Active	Passive
Simple present	He writes a letter.	A letter is written by him.
Present continuous	He is writing a letter.	A letter is being written by him.
Present perfect	He has written a letter.	A letter has been written by him.
Simple past	He wrote a letter.	A letter was written by him.
Past continuous	He was writing a letter.	A letter was being written by him.
Past perfect	He had written a letter.	A letter had been written by him.
Simple future	He will write a letter.	A letter will be written by him.
Future perfect	He will have written a letter.	A letter will have been written by him.
Modals	He can write a letter.	A letter can be written by him.

NOTE Perfect continuous tenses and future continuous have no passive form in exam grammar.

Questions

Active	Passive
Does he write a letter?	Is a letter written by him?
Did she call you?	Were you called by her?
Who broke the glass?	By whom was the glass broken?
What did he say?	What was said by him?



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Active and
Passive Voice



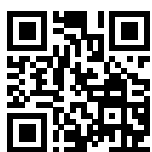
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Scan: 20 practice questions on Active and Passive Voice

Why did you beat him?

Why was he beaten by you?

Imperative sentences

Active	Passive
Shut the door.	Let the door be shut.
Please help me.	You are requested to help me.
Do not touch the wire.	You are warned not to touch the wire. / Let the wire not be touched.
Work hard.	You are advised to work hard.

Two objects

RULE Either object can become the subject; the person is usually preferred.

✓ He gave me a book. → I was given a book by him. / A book was given to me by him.

Prepositions other than "by"

Verb	Preposition	Example
known	to	He is known to everyone.
pleased / satisfied / disappointed	with	I am pleased with your work.
surprised / astonished / shocked	at / by	We were surprised at the news.
filled / crowded / covered	with	The hall was filled with people.
interested	in	She is interested in music.
married / engaged	to	She is married to a doctor.
made	of / from	The chair is made of wood.

✗ He is known by everyone.

✓ He is known to everyone.

Agent dropped

RULE When the doer is obvious, unknown or general (people, someone, they, police, everyone), drop "by ...".

✓ Someone has stolen my bag. → My bag has been stolen.

✓ They speak English in Australia. → English is spoken in Australia.



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Scan: 20 practice
questions on Active and
Passive Voice

Common Errors

✗ The work was did by him.

✓ The work was done by him.

✗ The house is being build.

✓ The house is being built.

✗ The thief has caught.

✓ The thief has been caught.

✗ A letter will written tomorrow.

✓ A letter will be written tomorrow.

Exam Focus

- Passive = be + V3; check both parts
- continuous passive: is/was being + V3; perfect passive: has/had been + V3
- modal passive: modal + be + V3
- known to, pleased with, surprised at, interested in, married to
- Who → By whom; imperative → Let ... be + V3



16

Direct and Indirect Speech

Chapter 16 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Rule 1 — Change of tense (when the reporting verb...)
2. Rule 2 — Change of pronouns
3. Rule 3 — Words of time and place
4. Statements
5. Questions
6. Orders, requests, advice
7. Suggestions with "Let us"

Direct speech repeats the exact words inside quotation marks. Indirect (reported) speech gives the meaning in our own words, usually with changes in tense, pronouns and time words.

✓ Direct: He said, "I am tired."

✓ Indirect: He said that he was tired.

Rule 1 — Change of tense (when the reporting verb is past)

Direct	Indirect
Simple present (am/is/are, V1)	Simple past (was/were, V2)
Present continuous (is writing)	Past continuous (was writing)
Present perfect (has written)	Past perfect (had written)
Simple past (wrote)	Past perfect (had written)
Past continuous (was writing)	Past perfect continuous (had been writing)
will / shall	would
can	could
may	might
must	had to (or must)

RULE No change of tense when the reporting verb is in the present or future ("He says ..."), or when the reported words are a universal truth, a habit still true, or a historical fact.

✓ He says, "I am busy." → He says that he is busy.

✓ The teacher said, "The sun rises in the east." → The teacher said that the sun rises in the east.

Rule 2 — Change of pronouns

- First person (I, we, my) changes to match the SUBJECT of the reporting verb
- Second person (you, your) changes to match the OBJECT of the reporting verb
- Third person (he, she, they) does not change

✓ She said to me, "You are my best friend." → She told me that I was her best friend.

Rule 3 — Words of time and place

Direct	Indirect
now	then



Scan: 20 practice questions on Direct and Indirect Speech



16

Direct and Indirect Speech

Chapter 16 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

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2. Rule 2 — Change of pronouns
3. Rule 3 — Words of time and place
4. Statements
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Scan: 20 practice questions on Direct and Indirect Speech

today	that day
tonight	that night
tomorrow	the next day / the following day
yesterday	the previous day / the day before
last week	the previous week
next week	the following week
ago	before
this / these	that / those
here	there
thus	so

Statements

Subject + said (that) + clause / Subject + told + object + (that) + clause

✗ He said me that he was ill.

✓ He told me that he was ill. / He said to me that he was ill.

Questions

RULE Reporting verb becomes asked / enquired / wanted to know. Use statement order and no question mark. Yes/No questions take "if" or "whether"; WH-questions keep the WH-word.

✓ He said to me, "Are you coming?" → He asked me if I was coming.

✓ She said to him, "Where do you live?" → She asked him where he lived.

✗ He asked me where was I going.

✓ He asked me where I was going.

Orders, requests, advice

RULE Use told / ordered / requested / advised / begged + object + to + V1. For negatives use "not to".

✓ He said to me, "Close the door." → He told me to close the door.

✓ She said to him, "Please help me." → She requested him to help her.

✓ The doctor said, "Don't smoke." → The doctor advised him not to smoke.

✗ He told me that close the door.

Suggestions with "Let us"



16

Direct and Indirect Speech

Chapter 16 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Rule 1 — Change of tense (when the reporting ve...
2. Rule 2 — Change of pronouns
3. Rule 3 — Words of time and place
4. Statements
5. Questions
6. Orders, requests, advice
7. Suggestions with "Let us"



Scan: 20 practice questions on Direct and Indirect Speech

✓ He said, "Let us go for a walk." → He suggested that they should go for a walk. / He proposed going for a walk.

Exclamations and wishes

✓ He said, "What a beautiful scene!" → He exclaimed that it was a very beautiful scene.

✓ She said, "Alas! I have failed." → She exclaimed with sorrow that she had failed.

✓ They said, "May God bless you!" → They prayed that God might bless me.

Exam Focus

- Past reporting verb: present → past, past → past perfect, will → would, can → could
- Universal truths and habits: no tense change
- said to + object → told + object; questions → asked + if/whether + statement order
- Orders/requests: told/requested + to V1; "don't" → "not to"
- now → then, today → that day, tomorrow → the next day, yesterday → the previous day



17

Prepositions

Chapter 17 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Time: at, on, in
2. Place and movement
3. Verbs that take NO preposition
4. Fixed Prepositions — high-frequency list
5. Common confusions
6. Exam Focus

A preposition links a noun or pronoun to the rest of the sentence. Exams test three things: the right preposition for time and place, fixed word + preposition pairs, and prepositions that should NOT be used.

Time: at, on, in

Preposition	Used with	Example
at	exact time, festivals, night, noon	at 6 pm, at noon, at night, at Diwali
on	days, dates, special days	on Monday, on 15 August, on my birthday
in	months, years, seasons, parts of day, centuries	in May, in 2024, in winter, in the morning
for	a period of time	for two hours
since	a point of time (perfect tense)	since 2010
during	within a period	during the vacation
by	not later than	by Friday
within	before the end of	within a week
from ... to / till	start and end	from 9 to 5

✗ I will meet you on 5 pm.

✓ I will meet you at 5 pm.

✗ He was born in 15 August.

✓ He was born on 15 August.

Place and movement

Preposition	Meaning	Example
at	a point / small place	at the bus stop, at home
in	inside / big place	in the room, in Delhi
on	on a surface	on the table, on the wall
into	movement inside	He jumped into the river.
onto	movement on to a surface	The cat climbed onto the roof.
to	destination	We went to Goa.
towards	direction only	He ran towards the gate.
between	two people/things	between you and me
among	more than two	among the five friends
beside	next to	Sit beside me.
besides	in addition to	Besides English, he knows Hindi.
above / below	higher / lower (no contact)	above sea level



Scan: 20 practice
questions on
Prepositions



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over / under	directly above or covering / beneath	a bridge over the river
across	from one side to the other (surface)	across the road
through	from one end to the other (inside)	through the tunnel

✗ Divide the toffees **between** the four children.

✓ Divide the toffees **among** the four children.

✗ He jumped **in** the well.

✓ He jumped **into** the well.

Verbs that take NO preposition

RULE These verbs take a direct object — adding a preposition is an error.

Wrong	Right
discuss about	discuss the matter
describe about	describe the scene
explain about	explain the rule
enter into the room	enter the room
reach at / reach to	reach Delhi
return back	return
order for	order a pizza
request for	request help (but "a request for help")
attack on	attack the enemy (but "an attack on")
resemble with	resemble his father
emphasise on	emphasise the point (but "emphasis on")
comprise of	comprise three parts / consist of three parts
investigate into	investigate the case
despite of	despite / in spite of
answer to	answer the question (but "the answer to")
marry with	marry her (but "married to")
accompany with	accompany him

✗ We discussed **about** the plan.

✓ We discussed the plan.

✗ The book **comprises of** ten chapters.

✓ The book **comprises** ten chapters.
/ The book **consists of** ten chapters.

Fixed Prepositions — high-frequency list



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Prepositions

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Scan: 20 practice
questions on
Prepositions

Word	Preposition	Example
accused	of	accused of theft
charged	with	charged with murder
afraid	of	afraid of dogs
aim	at	aim at the target
angry	with (person) / at (thing)	angry with him, angry at the delay
capable	of	capable of doing it
congratulate	on	congratulate him on his success
consist	of	consists of two parts
deal	in (trade) / with (handle)	deals in cloth; deal with a problem
depend / rely	on	depend on parents
deprive	of	deprived of food
different	from	different from others
fond	of	fond of music
good	at	good at maths
guilty	of	guilty of fraud
independent	of	independent of others
insist	on	insist on going
interested	in	interested in art
jealous / envious	of	jealous of his success
prefer	to	prefer tea to coffee
prevent	from	prevented from going
proud	of	proud of her son
refrain	from	refrain from smoking
senior / junior / superior / inferior	to	senior to me
suffer	from	suffering from fever
sure	of	sure of success
tired	of (bored) / from (exhausted)	tired of waiting; tired from the walk
wait	for	wait for the bus
full	of	full of water
abide	by	abide by the rules
comply	with	comply with the order
die	of (disease) / from (cause)	died of cancer; died from wounds
beware	of	beware of dogs



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Prepositions

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Common confusions

- in time (early enough) vs on time (punctual)
- in the end (finally) vs at the end of (at the final part)
- by car / by bus / by train, but on foot / in my car
- in front of (place) vs before (time; in the presence of a person)
- since / for: since 2010 vs for ten years

Exam Focus

- at 5 pm, on Monday, in May; at night, in the morning
- between two, among many; into for movement
- No preposition after discuss, describe, enter, reach, resemble, comprise, emphasise, order
- congratulate on, prevent from, prefer to, insist on, accused of, charged with
- Noun forms keep the preposition: request for, emphasis on, attack on, answer to



Scan: 20 practice
questions on
Prepositions



18

Conjunctions

Chapter 18 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Three kinds of conjunctions
2. Correct pairs to remember
3. No double connectors
4. Placement of correlatives
5. Lest
6. Till / Until vs Unless
7. Because, since, as, for

A conjunction joins words, phrases or clauses. Exam errors come from wrong pairs (although ... but), wrong correlatives (not only ... but also) and double connectors (because ... so).

Three kinds of conjunctions

Kind	Job	Words
Coordinating	Join equal parts	and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet (FANBOYS)
Subordinating	Join a dependent clause	because, since, as, although, though, if, unless, until, when, while, after, before, so that, lest, whether
Correlative	Work in pairs	either ... or, neither ... nor, both ... and, not only ... but also, whether ... or, no sooner ... than, hardly ... when, so ... that, such ... that, rather ... than, as ... as

Correct pairs to remember

Pair	Example
although / though ... yet (or comma)	Although he is poor, (yet) he is honest.
both ... and	Both Ravi and Sita came.
either ... or	Either you or I must go.
neither ... nor	Neither he nor she came.
not only ... but also	He is not only clever but also hardworking.
no sooner ... than	No sooner had he left than it rained.
hardly / scarcely ... when / before	Hardly had he left when it rained.
so ... that	He was so tired that he slept.
such ... that	It was such a hot day that we stayed in.
whether ... or	Whether you like it or not, you must go.
rather ... than	I would rather walk than wait.
as ... as / so ... as	He is as tall as his father. He is not so tall as his father.
lest ... should	Walk carefully lest you should fall.
the same ... as	This is the same pen as mine.
such ... as	Choose such friends as are honest.

✗ Although he is rich, but he is not happy.

✓ Although he is rich, he is not happy.

✗ Both he as well as his brother came.

✓ Both he and his brother came.



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✗ No sooner had I sat down when the phone rang.

✓ No sooner had I sat down than the phone rang.

✗ Neither he or his friend helped me.

✓ Neither he nor his friend helped me.

No double connectors

RULE Use only one connector for one idea.

✗ Because he was ill, so he did not come.

✓ Because he was ill, he did not come. / He was ill, so he did not come.

✗ Since it was late, therefore we left.

✓ Since it was late, we left.

Placement of correlatives

RULE Put each part of the pair directly before the matching words. What follows each part must be the same kind of word (parallel).

✗ He not only likes tea but also coffee.

✓ He likes not only tea but also coffee.

✗ Either you can come with me or stay here.

✓ You can either come with me or stay here.

Lest

RULE "Lest" means "so that ... not". It takes "should" or V1, never "not".

✗ Work hard lest you may not fail.

✓ Work hard lest you should fail.

Till / Until vs Unless

- until / till = up to the time when (time) — "Wait until I come."
- unless = if not (condition) — "You will fail unless you work hard."

RULE Neither takes "not" in the clause.

Because, since, as, for

- because: strong, direct reason
- since / as: reason already known
- for: adds a reason as an afterthought, after a comma — "He was tired, for he had walked all day."



Scan: 20 practice
questions on
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Whether vs If

RULE Use "whether" (not "if") with "or not", after prepositions, and before an infinitive.

✓ I doubt whether he will come or not.

✓ It depends on whether he agrees.

✓ She can't decide whether to go.

Than vs Then; As vs Like

- than: comparison — "taller than me"; then: time — "first eat, then rest"
- as + clause: "Do as I say." like + noun: "He runs like a deer."

✗ Do like I say.

✓ Do as I say.

Exam Focus

- although ... (yet), never although ... but
- no sooner ... than; hardly / scarcely ... when
- not only ... but also / neither ... nor / either ... or — keep them parallel
- No double connectors: because ... so / since ... therefore
- lest ... should (no "not")
- whether ... or not; like + noun, as + clause



19

Determiners and Quantifiers

Chapter 19 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Kinds of Determiners
2. Countable vs Uncountable — the key table
3. Few, a few, the few / little, a little, the lit...
4. Some vs Any
5. Each vs Every
6. Either / Neither (two only)
7. This / That / These / Those

Determiners come before a noun and tell us which one or how much.

Quantifiers are determiners of amount (some, many, much, few, little). Most errors come from using a countable word with an uncountable noun, or the reverse.

Kinds of Determiners

Kind	Words	Example
Articles	a, an, the	a book, the sun
Demonstratives	this, that, these, those	this pen, those houses
Possessives	my, your, his, her, its, our, their	my bag
Quantifiers	some, any, many, much, few, little, several, enough, all, no	some water
Numbers	one, two, first, second	two boys, the first day
Distributives	each, every, either, neither	each student
Interrogatives	which, what, whose	Which book?

Countable vs Uncountable — the key table

With countable (plural) nouns	With uncountable nouns	With both
many	much	some, any
few / a few	little / a little	a lot of, lots of, plenty of
fewer	less	enough, all, no, most
a number of	an amount of / a great deal of	more
several, both	—	half of

✗ I don't have much friends.

✓ I don't have many friends.

✗ There is too many traffic.

✓ There is too much traffic.

✗ He has less books than me.

✓ He has fewer books than me.

✗ A great deal of people came.

✓ A large number of people came.

Few, a few, the few / little, a little, the little

Word	Meaning	Example
few	hardly any (negative)	Few people trust him. (almost nobody)
a few	some (positive)	A few friends helped me.
the few	all of the small number	The few books he had were old.
little	hardly any (negative)	There is little hope.



Scan: 20 practice
questions on
Determiners and
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Scan: 20 practice
questions on
Determiners and
Quantifiers

a little some (positive) Add a little salt.

the little all of the small amount He spent the little money he had.

Some vs Any

RULE "Some" in positive sentences and offers/requests; "any" in negative sentences and questions.

✓ I have some money.

✓ I don't have any money.

✓ Do you have any questions?

✓ Would you like some tea? (offer)

✓ You may take any book. (any = no matter which)

Each vs Every

- each: two or more, seen one by one; can stand alone — "Each of them has a ticket."
- every: three or more, as a group; always needs a noun — "Every student has a ticket."

✗ Every of the boys was present.

✓ Each of the boys was present. /
Every boy was present.

Either / Neither (two only)

✓ Either of the two roads leads to the station.

✓ Neither of my parents is at home.

RULE For more than two, use any / none.

✗ Neither of the five students
passed.

✓ None of the five students passed.

This / That / These / Those

- this / these: near; that / those: far
- "these" and "those" go with plural nouns

✗ These kind of books are useful.

✓ This kind of book is useful. / These
kinds of books are useful.



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Determiners and Quantifiers

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Scan: 20 practice
questions on
Determiners and
Quantifiers

All, Both, Whole

✓ All the students / all of the students (both correct)

✓ Both of them came. / They both came.

✓ The whole class was silent. / The whole of India celebrated.

✗ The whole students were happy.

✓ All the students were happy.

Exam Focus

- many / few / fewer / a number of + countable plural
- much / little / less / a great deal of + uncountable
- few = almost none; a few = some; the few = all (of a small number)
- some (positive / offer), any (negative / question)
- either / neither = two only; any / none = more than two
- "this kind of book" / "these kinds of books"



20

Question Tags

Chapter 20 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Steps to make a tag
2. Special cases
3. Negative words make the statement negative
4. Common Errors
5. Exam Focus

A question tag is a short question added at the end of a statement to check or confirm something: "You are coming, aren't you?"

RULE Positive statement → negative tag. Negative statement → positive tag.

Statement + , + helping verb (+ n't) + pronoun + ?

✓ She is a doctor, isn't she?

✓ She isn't a doctor, is she?

Steps to make a tag

- 1. Take the helping verb of the statement (is, are, was, has, can, will...)
- 2. If there is no helping verb, use do / does / did
- 3. Flip positive ↔ negative and use the short form (isn't, don't, can't)
- 4. Use a pronoun for the subject (Ravi → he, the girls → they)

✓ Ravi plays chess, doesn't he?

✓ They went home, didn't they?

✓ You have finished, haven't you?

Special cases

Statement starts with / contains	Tag	Example
I am	aren't I?	I am late, aren't I?
I am not	am I?	I am not late, am I?
Let's (suggestion)	shall we?	Let's go out, shall we?
Let me / Let him (request)	will you?	Let me help you, will you?
Imperative (order/request)	will you? / won't you?	Shut the door, will you?
Negative imperative	will you?	Don't be late, will you?
There is / there are	isn't there? / aren't there?	There is a bank nearby, isn't there?
Everyone / somebody / nobody	they	Everyone came, didn't they?
Nothing / everything	it	Nothing happened, did it?
This / that	it	This is yours, isn't it?
These / those	they	Those are new, aren't they?
One	one	One should be honest, shouldn't one?



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Question
Tags



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Question Tags

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used to	didn't	He used to smoke, didn't he?
had better	hadn't	You had better go, hadn't you?
would rather	wouldn't	You would rather stay, wouldn't you?
must (duty)	mustn't	We must leave now, mustn't we?
have (possess, British)	haven't / don't	He has a car, doesn't he?

Negative words make the statement negative

RULE never, seldom, hardly, scarcely, rarely, barely, few, little, no, nobody, nothing — the statement counts as negative, so the tag is **POSITIVE**.

✗ He never comes late, doesn't he?

✓ He never comes late, does he?

✗ Few people came, didn't they?

✓ Few people came, did they?

✓ A few people came, didn't they? ("a few" is positive)

Common Errors

✗ You are tired, isn't it?

✓ You are tired, aren't you?

✗ She can swim, can she?

✓ She can swim, can't she?

✗ I am right, amn't I?

✓ I am right, aren't I?

Exam Focus

- Positive → negative tag; negative → positive tag
- I am ... aren't I?; Let's ... shall we?; imperative ... will you?
- never / hardly / seldom / few / little / nobody → positive tag
- everyone / nobody → they; nothing / this → it
- used to → didn't; had better → hadn't



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Question
Tags



21

Inversion and Emphasis

Chapter 21 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Words that cause inversion at the start
2. Conditionals without "if"
3. So / Neither / Nor for agreement
4. Place and movement inversion
5. "It is ... that / who" for emphasis (cleft sentences...)
6. Emphatic "do / does / did"
7. Exam Focus

Inversion means putting the helping verb before the subject, as in a question, even though the sentence is a statement. It happens when certain negative or limiting words move to the start of the sentence.

Negative / limiting word + helping verb + subject + main verb

✓ Normal: I have never seen such a sight.

✓ Inverted: Never have I seen such a sight.

RULE If there is no helping verb, add do / does / did: "He rarely speaks" → "Rarely does he speak."

Words that cause inversion at the start

Word / phrase	Example
Never	Never have I been so happy.
Seldom / Rarely	Seldom does she smile.
Hardly ... when	Hardly had he arrived when it rained.
Scarcely ... when	Scarcely had we left when the bus came.
No sooner ... than	No sooner had I sat down than the bell rang.
Not only ... but also	Not only is he clever, but he is also kind.
Not until	Not until he left did I realise the truth.
Only then / Only after / Only when	Only then did he understand.
Little	Little did he know what was coming.
Under no circumstances / On no account	Under no circumstances should you open this door.
At no time	At no time did he complain.
In no way	In no way can this be called fair.
Nowhere	Nowhere will you find such peace.
So + adjective	So tired was he that he fell asleep.
Such	Such was his anger that nobody spoke.

✗ Never I have seen such a beautiful place.

✓ Never have I seen such a beautiful place.

✗ Seldom he goes to the cinema.

✓ Seldom does he go to the cinema.

✗ Little he knew about the plan.

✓ Little did he know about the plan.

✗ Not only he is rich but also generous.

✓ Not only is he rich but he is also generous. / He is not only rich but also generous.



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Inversion
and Emphasis



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Inversion and Emphasis

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Scan: 20 practice
questions on Inversion
and Emphasis

Conditionals without "if"

- ✓ Had I known, I would have come. (= If I had known)
- ✓ Were I in your place, I would apologise. (= If I were)
- ✓ Should you need help, call me. (= If you should need)

So / Neither / Nor for agreement

So + helping verb + subject (positive) | Neither / Nor + helping verb + subject (negative)

- ✓ I like tea. — So do I.
- ✓ She can't swim. — Neither can I.
- ✓ He has finished, and so have I.
- ✗ I am tired, and so I am.
- ✓ I am tired, and so is she.

Place and movement inversion

- ✓ Here comes the bus.
- ✓ There goes our train.
- ✓ On the hill stood an old temple.

NOTE With pronouns, no inversion: "Here it comes", not "Here comes it".

"It is ... that / who" for emphasis (cleft sentences)

- ✓ It was Ravi who broke the window. (emphasis on Ravi)
- ✓ It is in the evening that I study best.
- ✓ What I need is a holiday.

Emphatic "do / does / did"

- ✓ I do believe you. (strong statement)
- ✓ He did come, but you were not at home.
- ✓ Do sit down, please.



21

Inversion and Emphasis

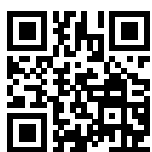
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Exam Focus

- Never / Seldom / Rarely / Little / Hardly at the start → helping verb before subject
- No helping verb → add do / does / did
- No sooner ... than; Hardly / Scarcely ... when
- Not until / Only after → inversion in the MAIN clause
- So do I / Neither can I; "Here it comes" (pronoun, no inversion)



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Inversion
and Emphasis



22

Parallelism and Redundancy

Chapter 22 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Parallelism
2. Parallel comparisons
3. Parallel with correlatives
4. Repeat the preposition / article when needed
5. Redundancy — remove the extra word
6. Double negatives
7. Double comparatives / superlatives



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Parallelism
and Redundancy

Two common sentence-improvement topics. Parallelism means items in a list or pair have the same grammatical form. Redundancy means using extra words that repeat the same meaning (superfluous words).

Parallelism

RULE Words joined by and, or, but, not only ... but also, either ... or, neither ... nor, both ... and, as well as, rather than must have the same form: noun with noun, verb with verb, -ing with -ing, to V1 with to V1.

✗ She likes dancing, singing and to cook.

✓ She likes dancing, singing and cooking.

✗ He is intelligent, hardworking and has honesty.

✓ He is intelligent, hardworking and honest.

✗ The job requires typing skills and to be able to speak English.

✓ The job requires typing skills and the ability to speak English.

✗ I would rather walk than taking a bus.

✓ I would rather walk than take a bus.

Parallel comparisons

RULE Compare like with like, and use the same structure on both sides of "than" / "as".

✗ Running is better than to walk.

✓ Running is better than walking.

✗ The climate of Shimla is cooler than Delhi.

✓ The climate of Shimla is cooler than that of Delhi.

Parallel with correlatives

RULE The words after each half of the pair must match.

✗ She not only plays the piano but also the guitar.

✓ She plays not only the piano but also the guitar.

✗ Either we can go now or wait for an hour.

✓ We can either go now or wait for an hour.

Repeat the preposition / article when needed

✓ He was interested in, and good at, mathematics.

✗ He is interested and good at mathematics.

✓ I have a dog and a cat. (separate animals)



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Parallelism and Redundancy

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1. Parallelism
2. Parallel comparisons
3. Parallel with correlatives
4. Repeat the preposition / article when needed
5. Redundancy — remove the extra word
6. Double negatives
7. Double comparatives / superlatives



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Parallelism
and Redundancy

Redundancy — remove the extra word

Redundant (wrong)	Correct
return back	return
repeat again	repeat
revert back	revert
reply back	reply
join together	join
enter into (a room)	enter
descend down / ascend up	descend / ascend
final conclusion / end result	conclusion / result
past history / past experience	history / experience
future plans	plans
free gift	gift
advance planning	planning
each and every	each / every
sufficient enough	sufficient / enough
cancel out	cancel
still remain / still continue	remain / continue
the reason why ... is because	the reason ... is that
because of the reason that	because
fellow colleague	colleague
mutual cooperation	cooperation
unexpected surprise	surprise
new innovation	innovation
true facts	facts
exact same	same
collaborate together	collaborate

✗ He returned back from Delhi yesterday.

✓ He returned from Delhi yesterday.

✗ Please repeat it again.

✓ Please repeat it.

✗ The reason why he left is because he was sick.

✓ The reason he left is that he was sick.

✗ He is the most cleverest boy.

✓ He is the cleverest boy.

Double negatives



22

Parallelism and Redundancy

Chapter 22 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Parallelism
2. Parallel comparisons
3. Parallel with correlatives
4. Repeat the preposition / article when needed
5. Redundancy — remove the extra word
6. Double negatives
7. Double comparatives / superlatives

RULE Two negatives cancel each other. Use only one negative word.

✗ I did not see nobody.

✓ I did not see anybody. / I saw nobody.

✗ He hardly never smiles.

✓ He hardly ever smiles.

Double comparatives / superlatives

✗ more better, most best, more superior, more preferable

✓ better, best, superior, preferable

Exam Focus

- Keep lists parallel: -ing, -ing, -ing / noun, noun, noun / adjective, adjective
- would rather walk than take (V1 ... V1)
- return, repeat, reply, revert — no "back" / "again"
- "The reason ... is that", not "because"
- No double negatives, no double comparatives



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Parallelism
and Redundancy



23

Word Formation — Prefixes and Suffixes

Chapter 23 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Negative Prefixes
2. Other Common Prefixes
3. Noun-forming Suffixes
4. Adjective-forming Suffixes
5. Verb- and Adverb-forming Suffixes
6. Same root, different meaning
7. Exam Focus

New words are made by adding a prefix (before the root) or a suffix (after the root). Prefixes usually change the MEANING; suffixes usually change the PART OF SPEECH. Exams test this in fill-in-the-blank and cloze tests ("He showed great _____ (brave)" → bravery).

Negative Prefixes

Prefix	Used with	Examples
un-	many adjectives	unhappy, unable, unfair, unusual
in-	Latin words	incomplete, incorrect, inactive, invisible
im-	before b, m, p	impossible, impatient, immoral, imbalance
il-	before l	illegal, illogical, illiterate
ir-	before r	irregular, irresponsible, irrelevant
dis-	verbs and adjectives	disagree, dishonest, dislike, disappear
non-	nouns and adjectives	non-violence, non-stop, non-fiction
mis-	wrongly	misunderstand, misuse, mislead
mal-	badly	malpractice, malnutrition, malfunction
a- / an-	without	atypical, amoral, anarchy

✗ He is an irresponsible person.

✓ He is an irresponsible person.

✗ This plan is impossible.

✓ This plan is impossible.

Other Common Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
re-	again	rewrite, rebuild, revisit
pre-	before	preview, prehistoric, precaution
post-	after	postpone, postwar, postgraduate
over-	too much	overload, overconfident, overestimate
under-	too little / below	underpaid, underestimate, underground
sub-	under	subway, submarine, substandard
super-	above	superpower, supernatural
inter-	between	international, interstate
intra-	within	intranet, intrastate
trans-	across	transport, transfer, transatlantic
anti-	against	antibiotic, antisocial
co-	together	cooperate, co-author, coexist
ex-	former / out	ex-captain, export
semi-	half	semicircle, semifinal



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Word
Formation — Prefixes a...



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Word Formation — Prefixes and Suffixes

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auto-	self	autobiography, automatic
bi-	two	bicycle, bilingual, biweekly
multi-	many	multinational, multipurpose
en- / em-	make / put into	enlarge, enrich, empower

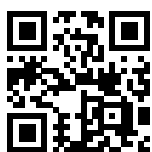
Noun-forming Suffixes

Suffix	From	Examples
-tion / -sion	verbs	educate → education, decide → decision
-ment	verbs	develop → development, agree → agreement
-ness	adjectives	kind → kindness, dark → darkness
-ity	adjectives	able → ability, pure → purity, curious → curiosity
-ance / -ence	verbs/adjectives	perform → performance, patient → patience
-er / -or / -ist	person	teacher, actor, scientist
-ship	state / skill	friendship, leadership
-hood	state	childhood, brotherhood
-dom	state / area	freedom, kingdom, wisdom
-al	verbs	arrive → arrival, refuse → refusal
-ery / -ry	quality	brave → bravery, slave → slavery
-th	adjectives	wide → width, strong → strength, deep → depth, long → length

Adjective-forming Suffixes

Suffix	Examples
-ful (full of)	careful, hopeful, beautiful
-less (without)	careless, hopeless, useless
-able / -ible	readable, washable, visible, flexible
-ous	dangerous, famous, courageous
-ive	active, creative, expensive
-al	national, natural, cultural
-ic	historic, scientific, economic
-y	rainy, healthy, sleepy
-ish	childish, foolish, reddish
-ly (from nouns)	friendly, lovely, costly

Verb- and Adverb-forming Suffixes



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Word
Formation — Prefixes a...



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Word Formation — Prefixes and Suffixes

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Suffix	Examples
-ise / -ize (verb)	modernise, organise, realise
-ify (verb)	simplify, beautify, justify
-en (verb)	widen, strengthen, shorten, deepen
-ate (verb)	activate, motivate
-ly (adverb)	quickly, carefully, happily

Same root, different meaning

Word pair	Meaning
historic / historical	historic = famous, important; historical = about history
economic / economical	economic = about the economy; economical = saving money
industrial / industrious	industrial = about industry; industrious = hardworking
respectful / respectable	respectful = showing respect; respectable = deserving respect
sensible / sensitive	sensible = wise; sensitive = easily affected
childish / childlike	childish = silly; childlike = innocent
imaginary / imaginative	imaginary = not real; imaginative = creative
official / officious	official = formal; officious = too eager to give orders
continual / continuous	continual = again and again; continuous = without a break
uninterested / disinterested	uninterested = not interested; disinterested = impartial

Exam Focus

- im- before b/m/p, il- before l, ir- before r
- Noun from adjective: -ness, -ity, -th (wide → width); from verb: -tion, -ment, -al
- historic vs historical; economic vs economical; industrial vs industrious
- sensible (wise) vs sensitive (easily hurt); respectful vs respectable



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Word
Formation — Prefixes a...



24

Confusing Words

Chapter 24 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Most-Tested Pairs
2. Usage pairs
3. Exam Focus

Many exam questions test pairs of words that look or sound alike but mean different things. Learn each pair with a short example.

Most-Tested Pairs

Words	Meaning	Example
accept / except	receive / leave out	I accept your gift. Everyone except Ravi came.
advice / advise	noun / verb	Take my advice. I advise you to rest.
affect / effect	verb: influence / noun: result	Smoking affects health. Its effect is bad.
altar / alter	place of worship / change	Flowers on the altar. Alter the dress.
beside / besides	next to / in addition to	Sit beside me. Besides tea, he drinks coffee.
cite / site / sight	quote / place / view	Cite an example. A building site. A lovely sight.
complement / compliment	complete / praise	Wine complements food. She paid me a compliment.
council / counsel	group / advice, lawyer	The city council. Legal counsel.
desert / dessert	dry land, abandon / sweet dish	The Thar Desert. Ice cream for dessert.
device / devise	noun: tool / verb: plan	A useful device. Devise a plan.
eminent / imminent	famous / about to happen	An eminent scientist. The storm is imminent.
emigrate / immigrate	leave a country / come into a country	He emigrated from India. He immigrated to Canada.
ensure / insure	make sure / buy insurance	Ensure the door is locked. Insure your car.
farther / further	more distance / more, additional	Walk farther. Further details.
formally / formerly	officially / earlier	Dress formally. He was formerly a teacher.
lose / loose	fail to keep / not tight	Don't lose your keys. Loose clothes.
moral / morale	lesson / confidence	The moral of the story. Team morale is high.
personal / personnel	private / staff	A personal matter. Army personnel.
practice / practise	noun / verb (British)	Daily practice. Practise daily.
principal / principle	head, main / rule	The school principal. A man of principle.
quiet / quite / quit	silent / fairly / stop	Keep quiet. Quite good. Quit smoking.



Scan: 20 practice questions on Confusing Words



24

Confusing Words

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1. Most-Tested Pairs
2. Usage pairs
3. Exam Focus

stationary / stationery	not moving / paper, pens	A stationary car. Buy stationery.
than / then	comparison / time	Taller than me. Then he left.
their / there / they're	belonging to them / place / they are	Their house is there; they're inside.
weather / whether	climate / if	The weather is fine. I wonder whether he will come.
who's / whose	who is / belonging to whom	Who's there? Whose pen is this?
its / it's	belonging to it / it is	The dog wagged its tail. It's raining.
loath / loathe	unwilling / hate	He is loath to leave. I loathe lies.
canvas / canvass	cloth / seek votes	A canvas bag. Canvass for votes.
ingenious / ingenuous	clever / innocent	An ingenious plan. An ingenuous child.
judicial / judicious	of courts / wise	Judicial system. A judicious decision.
credible / creditable	believable / praiseworthy	A credible story. A creditable result.
illusion / allusion	false idea / indirect reference	An optical illusion. An allusion to Shakespeare.
elicit / illicit	draw out / illegal	Elicit a reply. Illicit liquor.
prescribe / proscribe	order a medicine / ban	Prescribe rest. Proscribe a group.
precede / proceed	come before / go on	May precedes June. Proceed with the work.
raise / rise	lift something / go up	Raise your hand. Prices rise.
lie / lay	rest / put down	Lie down. Lay the book here.
amiable / amicable	friendly (person) / friendly (agreement)	An amiable man. An amicable settlement.
childish / childlike	silly / innocent	Childish behaviour. Childlike wonder.

Usage pairs

Words	Rule	Example
fewer / less	count / amount	fewer chairs, less water
between / among	two / more than two	between two, among five
each other / one another	two / more than two	The two hugged each other.
amount / number	uncountable / countable	the amount of milk; the number of boys



Scan: 20 practice questions on Confusing Words



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Confusing Words

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bring / take	towards / away from the speaker	Bring it here. Take it there.
borrow / lend	take / give for a time	Can I borrow your pen? Can you lend me your pen?
say / tell	say something / tell someone	He said hello. He told me a story.
speak / talk	formal / conversation	She spoke at the event. We talked for hours.
hear / listen	without effort / with attention	I heard a noise. Listen to the teacher.
see / watch / look	notice / observe moving thing / direct eyes	I saw a bird. Watch TV. Look at the board.
rob / steal	rob a person or place / steal a thing	They robbed the bank. They stole money.

✗ Can you borrow me your book?

✓ Can you lend me your book?

✗ Thieves stole the bank.

✓ Thieves robbed the bank.

Exam Focus

- affect (verb) / effect (noun); advice (noun) / advise (verb)
- principal (head) / principle (rule); stationary (still) / stationery (paper)
- eminent (famous) / imminent (near); ensure / insure
- lend (give) / borrow (take); rob (person/place) / steal (thing)
- its (possessive) / it's (it is); whose / who's



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Confusing
Words



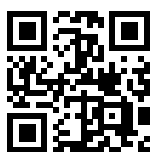
25

Punctuation and Capitalisation

Chapter 25 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Main Punctuation Marks
2. Comma rules
3. Essential vs non-essential clauses
4. Apostrophe rules
5. Quotation marks
6. Capital Letters
7. Exam Focus



Scan: 20 practice
questions on
Punctuation and
Capitalisation...

Punctuation marks make meaning clear. Exams test them in "choose the correctly punctuated sentence" and in descriptive writing (letters, essays).

Main Punctuation Marks

Mark	Name	Main use	Example
.	Full stop	End of a statement or command; abbreviations	She is here. Dr. Rao
,	Comma	Pause; separate items, clauses, names in address	Ravi, come here.
?	Question mark	End of a direct question	Where are you?
!	Exclamation mark	Strong feeling	What a goal!
'	Apostrophe	Possession; short forms	Ravi's bag; don't
" "	Quotation marks	Exact words spoken	He said, "I am ready."
:	Colon	Before a list, explanation or quotation	Bring three things: a pen, a pencil and a ruler.
;	Semicolon	Join two closely related independent clauses	It rained; the match was cancelled.
-	Hyphen	Join words; compound adjectives	a well-known writer, mother-in-law
—	Dash	Sudden break or extra information	He was — I think — very tired.
()	Brackets	Extra information	The PM (Prime Minister) spoke.

Comma rules

- Between items in a list: "I bought apples, mangoes and bananas."
- After an introductory word or clause: "However, he did not come." / "When I reached, the film had started."
- Around extra (non-essential) information: "My brother, who lives in Pune, is a doctor."
- Before direct speech: He said, "I am busy."
- When addressing someone: "Ravi, close the door."
- Before a coordinating conjunction joining two long clauses: "I called him, but he did not answer."

RULE Do not join two complete sentences with only a comma (comma splice). Use a full stop, a semicolon or a conjunction.

X I was tired, I went to bed.

✓ I was tired, so I went to bed. / I was tired; I went to bed.

Essential vs non-essential clauses



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Punctuation and Capitalisation

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✓ My brother who lives in Pune is a doctor. (I have more brothers — no commas)

✓ My brother, who lives in Pune, is a doctor. (I have one brother — commas)

NOTE "That" clauses are always essential and never take commas.

Apostrophe rules

Use	Example
Singular owner	the girl's book
Plural owner ending in s	the girls' hostel
Plural not ending in s	the children's park, men's room
Short forms	it's (it is), don't, can't, I'm

✗ The dog wagged it's tail.

✓ The dog wagged its tail.

✗ Ladie's tailor

✓ Ladies' tailor

Quotation marks

✓ He said, "I will come tomorrow."

✓ "I will come tomorrow," he said.

✓ "Where are you going?" she asked.

NOTE In indirect speech, no quotation marks: He said that he would come the next day.

Capital Letters

Use capitals for	Example
First word of a sentence	The sun is hot.
The pronoun "I"	Ravi and I went.
Names of people, places, rivers, mountains	Sita, Vizag, the Godavari
Days, months, festivals (not seasons)	Monday, May, Diwali, but summer
Nationalities, languages, religions	Indian, Telugu, Hindu
Titles before names	Dr. Rao, Prime Minister Modi
Books, films, newspapers (main words)	The Discovery of India
Organisations and abbreviations	RBI, UNESCO, the State Bank of India
First word in direct speech	She said, "We are late."



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Punctuation and Capitalisation

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✗ I went to delhi on monday in Summer.

✓ I went to Delhi on Monday in summer.

Exam Focus

- No comma splice: two sentences need . ; or a conjunction
- its (possessive) vs it's (it is); girls' (plural owner)
- Comma before direct speech and after the reporting clause
- Commas around non-essential who/which clauses
- Capitals for days, months, languages, nationalities — not seasons



Scan: 20 practice
questions on
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26

Error Spotting — Master Rules

Chapter 26 of 26

IN THIS CHAPTER

1. The 6-Step Method
2. Top 40 Rules — Quick Revision
3. Traps that look wrong but are correct
4. Exam Focus

Error spotting is the most common grammar question in Bank, SSC and Railway exams. This chapter puts the top rules from every chapter into one checklist, with a method to solve each sentence in under 30 seconds.

The 6-Step Method

- Step 1: Read the whole sentence once for meaning
- Step 2: Find the main subject and verb — check agreement first
- Step 3: Check the tense, especially time words (yesterday, since, by the time, if, when)
- Step 4: Check pronouns (case, agreement) and articles
- Step 5: Check prepositions, conjunction pairs and comparisons
- Step 6: Look for extra words (return back, discuss about) and missing words

TIP If no rule is broken after all six steps, mark "No error". Around 15–20% of exam answers are "No error".

Top 40 Rules — Quick Revision

#	Rule	Wrong → Right
1	Verb agrees with the real subject	The quality of the mangoes are → is
2	along with / as well as → first subject	The PM, along with ministers, are → is
3	either...or / neither...nor → nearest subject	Neither he nor I are → am
4	each / every / many a → singular	Many a student have → has
5	The number of → singular	The number of cars are → is
6	One of + plural noun + singular verb	One of my friends are → is
7	No present perfect with past time	I have seen him yesterday → I saw him
8	since + point, for + period, perfect tense	I am here since 2015 → have been
9	No "will" after if / when / as soon as	when he will come → when he comes
10	Earlier past action = had + V3	before the doctor came, the patient died → had died
11	It is high time + V2	It is high time we leave → left
12	Modal + V1	He can speaks → speak
13	make / let / see + V1	made me to wait → made me wait
14	enjoy / avoid / suggest + V-ing	avoid to meet → avoid meeting
15	look forward to / used to + V-ing	look forward to meet → meeting
16	Object case after prepositions	between you and I → me
17	One → one's	One should do his duty → one's
18	"that" after superlatives / all / only	the best film which → that



Scan: 20 practice questions on Error Spotting — Master Rules



26

Error Spotting — Master Rules

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1. The 6-Step Method
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19	absent / avail / pride + oneself	He absented from → absented himself
20	Uncountable nouns: no plural	advices, furnitures, informations → advice, furniture, information
21	Cattle / police / people → plural	The police has → have
22	Number + noun as adjective = singular	a five-rupees note → five-rupee
23	a / an by sound	an university → a university; a hour → an hour
24	the + superlative	He is best player → the best
25	senior / junior / superior / prefer + to	senior than → senior to
26	No double comparatives	more better → better
27	"any other" within the same group	better than any boy in the class → any other boy
28	that of / those of	than Delhi → than that of Delhi
29	Linking verb + adjective	smells sweetly → sweet
30	hardly / scarcely + any / ever	hardly no → hardly any
31	Although ... (yet), not but	Although..., but → Although...,
32	No sooner ... than; Hardly ... when	No sooner...when → than
33	No double connectors	Because..., so → remove "so"
34	Unless / until — no "not"	Unless you do not → Unless you
35	lest ... should	lest you may not → lest you should
36	No preposition: discuss, reach, enter, resemble, comprise	discuss about → discuss
37	Fixed prepositions	congratulate for → on; prevent to → from
38	Parallelism	singing, dancing and to cook → cooking
39	No redundancy	return back, repeat again → return, repeat
40	Inversion after Never / Seldom / Hardly at start	Never I have seen → Never have I seen

Traps that look wrong but are correct

✓ Bread and butter is good for health. (one dish — singular)

✓ The committee has accepted the report. (one unit)

✓ Ten kilometres is a long walk. (one amount)

✓ Neither of the two answers is correct.



Scan: 20 practice questions on Error Spotting — Master Rules



26

Error Spotting — Master Rules

Chapter 26 of 26

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2. Top 40 Rules — Quick Revision
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4. Exam Focus

✓ He is one of those men who work hard. (who → men → plural)

✓ A number of students were absent.

✓ I wish I were a doctor.

Exam Focus

- Always check subject-verb agreement first: it is the most common error
- Time words decide the tense
- Watch the "small words": a/an/the, prepositions, pronoun case
- Keep "No error" as a real option — do not force an error



Scan: 20 practice
questions on Error
Spotting — Master Rul...