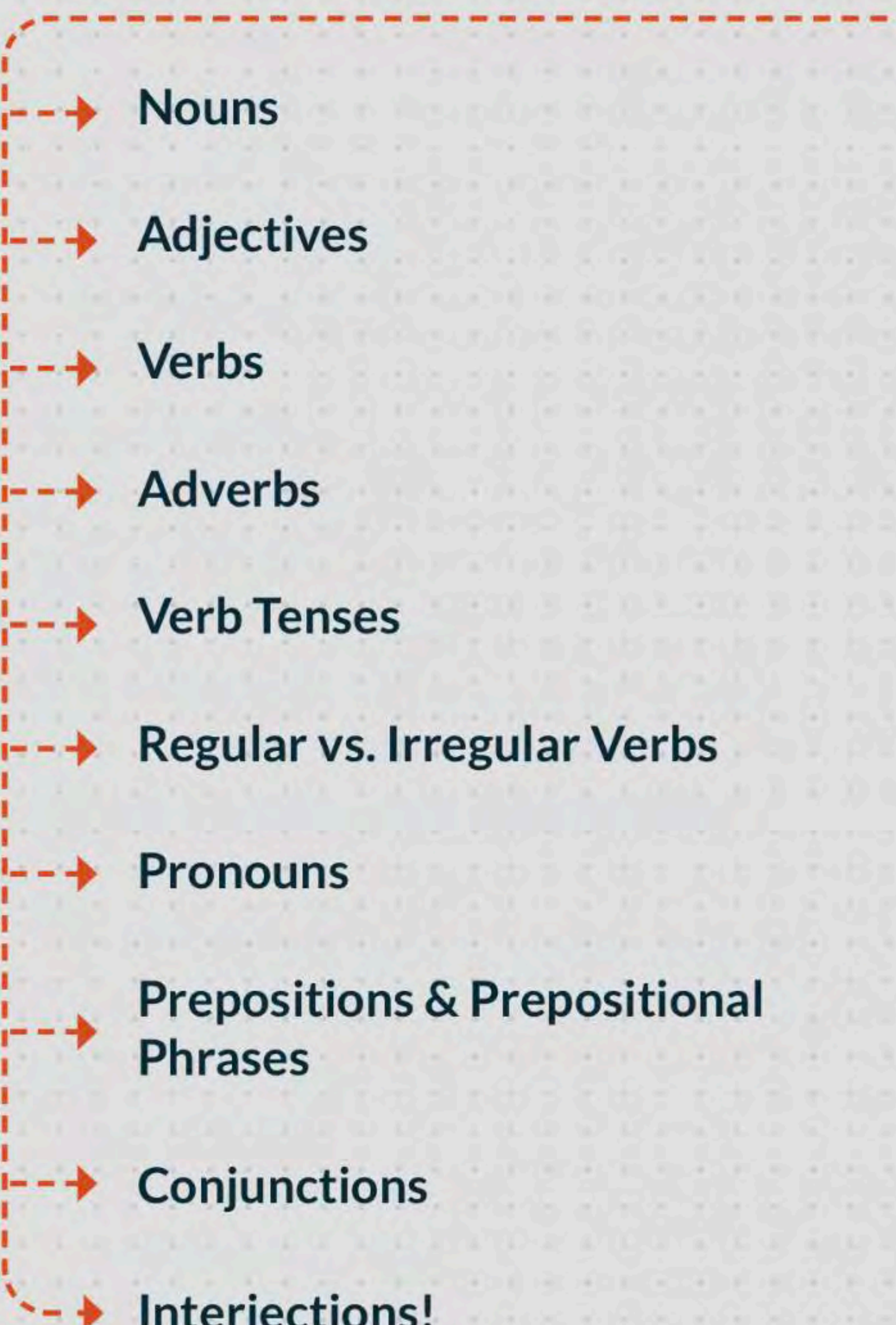


PARTS OF SPEECH



Nouns

Adjectives

Verbs

Adverbs

Verb Tenses

Regular vs. Irregular Verbs

Pronouns

**Prepositions & Prepositional
Phrases**

Conjunctions

Interjections!

IDENTIFYING YOUR PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

Content and Connection

Knowing your specific audience will guide what you write and the words you use.



Determine Purpose

Most writing aims to reach, educate, or persuade.
Be specific: Are you making a case for why your curfew should be extended? Explaining the origins behind the ancient city of Machu Picchu?
Ask yourself: *What is my goal?*



Identify Your Audience

Who will benefit from or be persuaded by your writing?
Again, be specific.
Ask yourself: *Whom am I talking to?*



Consider Content

What will make your writing believable or persuasive?
Recent research? Numbers and statistics? Direct quotes?
Ask yourself: *What do I need to make sure readers know?
What facts will persuade them?*



Decide On Definitions

If you're including jargon or technical terms, do you need to include definitions?
Ask yourself: *Will my readers know what I'm talking about?*



Create Connection

Think of a suspenseful story or a passionately argued opinion-editorial column: Using the right voice and tone can create a specific mood.
Ask yourself: *How would I talk to my audience in person?*



Call to Action

Are you asking your audience to do anything at the end of your writing? Learn more? Consider the issue? If so, include a call to action.
Ask yourself: *What should my audience want to do after reading my writing?*

SENTENCE FUNCTIONS

“ THE SENTENCE: Expressing a Complete Thought ”

A **sentence** is made up of one or more words and expresses a complete thought in a statement, question, request, command, or exclamation.



GOOD TO KNOW:

FRAGMENTS

A sentence fragment looks like a complete sentence but isn't, often because it is a subordinate clause. Let's take this example:

► *Because he was hungry.*

Here, the first word is capitalized and the clause ends with a period, but it cannot stand alone. A correct, complete sentence needs an independent clause:

► *Because he was hungry, the small boy ordered a large hamburger.*

Sentence Types

There are **4** categories of sentences: **simple**, **compound**, **complex**, and **compound-complex**. Using all four types and mixing them up gives your writing variety.

1



SIMPLE

Expresses one complete thought with one independent clause and no dependent clause.

The small boy ordered a large hamburger.

2



COMPOUND

Has two independent clauses—joined by *and* (or another conjunction or a semicolon)—and no dependent clause.

The small boy ordered a large hamburger, and the server brought him ketchup.

3



COMPLEX

Has one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.

Because he was hungry, the small boy ordered a large hamburger.

4



COMPOUND-COMPLEX

Has at least two independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

Because he was hungry, the small boy ordered a large hamburger, and the server brought him ketchup.

PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE

Paragraphs with Purpose

A paragraph is a group of sentences united by a single topic or point. Knowing how to construct a paragraph will help you write coherently and persuasively.

In general, there are
3 TYPES of paragraphs:

- 1. INTRODUCTORY**
- 2. BODY**
- 3. CONCLUDING**

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPHS:

explain the why, what, and how of your writing. They include:

- A hook, which snares your audience's attention.
- A thesis explaining your position or the point of the article, paper, etc.
- A transition telling your audience what to expect next

BODY PARAGRAPHS:

provide evidence. They:

- Introduce the point of the paragraph
- Provide evidence or examples to support your point
- Offer a transition to the next paragraph (remember, use transitional words!)

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPHS:

summarize. They:

- Restate your thesis and the points you've made
- Help your readers understand what you want them to take away
- May include a call to action

VERBS

Describing an Action or State

A **verb** is a word that indicates an action or a state of being. It tells the story of the sentence.

WHAT KIND OF VERB?



ACTION VERBS

Verbs that show movement or change.
*The turtle **dived** into the water.*



VERBS OF BEING

Verbs that express a state, usually a variation of "to be."
*The boy **was** tired.*



LINKING VERBS

These connect a sentence's parts—and are usually forms of "be" in disguise. If you can swap the verb without changing the sentence's meaning, it's a linking verb.
*The coffee **tasted** sweet. = The coffee **was** sweet.*



AUXILIARY VERBS

These helpers express more about the main verb.
*You **can** join the club.*

TRANSITIVE VS. INTRANSITIVE VERBS

Action verbs can be either transitive or intransitive depending on whether or not there is a noun receiving the action (also known as a **direct object**).

TRANSITIVE

Eat, paint, kick

Example:
*He **kicked** (verb) the ball (direct object).*

INTRANSITIVE

Sit, sneeze, arrive

Example: *They **arrived** (verb) at the party (no direct object).*

Some verbs can be both **transitive** and **intransitive**:

Transitive:
*He **closed** the door.*

Intransitive:
*The door **closed**.*



GOOD TO KNOW:

Forms of "Be"



SUBJECTS AND PREDICATES

MAJOR PARTS OF A SENTENCE

Sentences can be very short or very long. At a minimum, though, they must contain a **SUBJECT** and a **PREDICATE** and be able to stand on their own.

SUBJECT: What the Sentence Is About

The complete **subject** is the person, place, or thing that serves as the topic of the sentence—along with all the words that describe it.

To locate the subject, ask yourself:
“Who or what is the sentence about?”

FINDING
THE
SUBJECT

PREDICATE: Action, State of Being, or Condition

The complete **predicate** is what the person, place, or thing is doing or what condition it is in—along with all the words that modify it.



GOOD TO KNOW:

Imperative Sentences

Go find my shoes.

Where’s the subject in this sentence? Some imperative sentences—those that express commands or requests—drop the “you” in the subject. The meaning is really:

You go find my shoes.

The young woman *sprinted.*

Here, “the young woman” is the subject; “sprinted” is the predicate.



PREPOSITIONS & PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Linking

Words

A **preposition** connects a noun or a pronoun to another word in the sentence to show the relationship between the two. It often indicates the position of something in the sentence—**under, over, above, below, or beneath.**

SPOTTING PREPOSITIONS

They sat in the corner.

In is a preposition connecting

they

and

corner.

Jack and Jill went up the hill

Up is a preposition joining

went

and

hill.



GOOD TO KNOW:

ENDING SENTENCES?

Should you end a sentence with a preposition? You can. While some grammar sticklers may frown upon ending a sentence this way in formal written English—such as a book or an article—the practice is perfectly acceptable. In fact, when speaking, people often do.

Whom are you talking with?/What was that about?

COMMON PREPOSITIONS

Look for words like:

about	before	during	over	up
above	behind	for	since	upon
across	between	from	through	with
after	but	into	toward	within
against	by	like	under	without
among	despite	of	until	
around	down	onto		
at				

WHEN IS A PREPOSITION NOT A PREPOSITION?

All prepositions must be used in **prepositional phrases**, which consist of the preposition and a noun or pronoun (and sometimes adjectives and adverbs). If the word is used alone, it's an adjective or adverb. See the difference?



The flag went up the pole.
(*Up* is a preposition connecting *went* and *pole*.)



The flag was up.
(*Up* is an adjective modifying *flag*.)

Isn't that sneaky?

Active & Passive Voice

Voice: Expressing Action

Sentences with action verbs and direct objects can be written in **active voice** or **passive voice**.

Understand the difference between the two.



A Quick Refresher

- ▶ An *action verb* shows movement or change, rather than a state of being.
- ▶ A *direct object* receives the action of the verb.

ACTIVE VOICE IS CLEARER

A sentence in active voice is easier to understand than the same sentence in passive voice. Use active voice whenever possible to make your writing *crisp, clear, and direct*.



Active Voice

The subject is in charge. It performs the action of the verb.

Example:

*The boy **threw** the ball.*



Passive Voice

The subject isn't in charge. Instead, it is acted upon by the verb, and the direct object becomes the subject.

Example:

*The ball **was thrown** by the boy.*

Converting Passive Voice to Active Voice

1. Look for the prepositional phrase; that's where you're likely to find your subject. In the previous example, it's *by the boy*.
2. Remove the auxiliary verb; *was*.
3. Correct the verb tense: *thrown* becomes *threw*.
4. Make the subject the direct object: *the ball*.
5. **Final:** *The boy **threw** the ball.*

USING TRANSITIONAL WORDS AND PHRASES

We learn to speak when we're really young, so talking often comes naturally. Sometimes writing doesn't. Use transitional words and phrases to keep your sentences and paragraphs flowing.

	USAGE	EXAMPLE WORDS
123	To show sequence or explain steps	<i>first, second, before, after, then, afterward, next, as soon as, still, furthermore, last, finally</i>
	To indicate cause and effect	<i>therefore, thus, as a result, so, since, consequently</i>
	To compare	<i>similarly, actually, indeed, likewise, in fact</i>
	To contrast	<i>however, nevertheless, on the one hand, on the other hand, despite, still, regardless</i>
+	To show addition or emphasis	<i>besides, also, furthermore, in addition, another, moreover</i>
	To indicate time	<i>before, during, after, while, earlier, later, after a bit</i>
	To generalize	<i>generally, in general, typically, usually</i>
	To show place	<i>above, below, beyond, in front of, behind, lower, higher</i>
	To indicate exceptions or signal concession	<i>of course, no doubt, sure, naturally, certainly</i>



Quotation marks show which words are yours and which belong to someone else.

QUOTATION MARKS

Borrowing Words



DIRECT QUOTATIONS

Most commonly, quotation marks show readers the exact words someone said, in the exact order they were said.

She told her student,
“Keep your eyes on your own paper.”



DIALOGUE

Quotation marks are used in written dialogue to capture a conversation. Use them to open and close each speaker's contribution.

Anna said, “Your phone is ringing.”
“I'll get it,” John said, “right after I find my keys.”



QUOTING SOURCES

When quoting from a source, enclose all quoted material in quotation marks.

The text said, “I'll be at the park at 6:00 p.m., but I won't wait longer than an hour.”



TITLES

Quotation marks are also used for titles of short works, such as short poems, short stories, newspaper or magazine articles, book chapters, songs, and TV show episodes.

Her mother's favorite poem was
“The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost.



SLANG OR TECHNICAL TERMS

Slang, jargon, and other words outside their normal usage can be put in quotation marks or italics.

Her grandma didn't know what “LOL” meant.



GOOD TO KNOW:

PUNCTUATION AND QUOTATION MARKS

Periods and commas always go inside closing quotation marks. Colons and semicolons go outside closing quotation marks. If a question mark or exclamation point was originally part of the quoted text, the punctuation mark goes inside the closing quotation mark; if it was not part of the original quote, it goes outside the closing quotation mark.



FIXING REPETITION AND INTRODUCING VARIETY

Making Writing Sparkle

Clarity is important in writing, but so is variety. Keep your readers interested by avoiding repetition in sentence length and word choice.



GOOD TO KNOW:

SYNONYMS AND ANTONYMS

Synonyms are equivalents, while antonyms are opposites.

EXAMPLE:

Fast

SYNONYMS: speedy, quick

ANTONYMS: slow, sluggish



DID YOU KNOW?

A thesaurus expands your vocabulary with synonyms and antonyms. You can find online and print versions.



SENTENCE LENGTH

Remember the four basic types of sentences: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex? Express your thoughts in a variety of sentence types to keep your reader engaged.

- **SHORT SENTENCES**
add emphasis or contrast.
- **LONGER SENTENCES**
keep your ideas flowing.

(For a refresher, see Sentence Functions in Chapter 2.)



SENTENCE VARIETY

You can make your writing more interesting and engaging by including a variety of sentence types in each paragraph. Vary the length, complexity, and word choices in your sentences to keep your content from sounding too repetitive.

For example:

She looked at the clock.
(simple sentence)

*If she didn't hurry,
she would miss the train.*
(complex sentence)

*The tickets were sold out,
and it was her only chance to
get home for the holidays.*
(compound sentence)

SENTENCE VARIETY

CLICHÉS, GENERALIZATIONS, PLATITUDES, AND JARGON

WORDS OF CAUTION:
Tips for Avoiding Traps

There's as much magic in knowing the right words to use as in knowing which ones to avoid. Familiarize yourself with the common traps shown here and the tips to keep them out of your writing.



CLICHÉS

These worn-out, overused expressions can make your writing feel stale and overly simple.

Example: *She felt like a million bucks.*

- ! **QUICK TIP:** Use clichés in your first draft but find a more original way to express the same idea in your second and final drafts.



GENERALIZATIONS

These are broad statements made about a group of people or things. Often, they're not true—and they can be offensive.

Example: *Politicians are greedy.*

- ! **QUICK TIP:** If a statement is really broad or begins with "all," you might be making a generalization.



PLATITUDES

These are statements of the obvious, said as if they were new ideas.

Example: *Just be yourself.*

- ! **QUICK TIP:** As with clichés, you can usually find a more original way to express your idea.



JARGON

These are technical words or phrases specific to a particular industry or context.

Example:

I whiffed on my first shot off one yesterday, but luckily my partner let me take a mulligan. (I missed my golf shot off the first hole yesterday, but luckily my teammate let me have a do-over.)

- ! **QUICK TIP:** Be sure to define jargon terms if you're writing for an audience that won't know what they mean.

COMMONLY CONFUSED WORDS



Even native English speakers struggle with some words and expressions. Take the time to learn which word is right in which context, and you'll always choose with confidence.

LEARN THE DIFFERENCES TO AVOID MISTAKES



GOOD TO KNOW:

Homophones are pronounced the same way but have very different meanings; for example, *eye* and *I*.

THEIR/THERE/THEY'RE

Don't let this trio of homophones confound you.

Their indicates possession by two or more people:
Their car is in the shop.

There indicates a certain location:
I found the ball over there.

They're is a contraction of "they are":
They're going to come over later.

YOUR/YOURE

Your indicates possession:
That is your coat.

You're is a contraction of "you are":
You're going with me.

WHOSE/WHO'S

As with *your*, **whose** indicates possession:
Whose coat is that?

Who's is a contraction of "who is":
Who's coming with me?

ITS/IT'S

Its is for possession:
*My device needs charging;
its cord is on the counter.*

It's is a contraction of "it is"; remember to check if the sentence sounds right when you substitute "it is": *It's snowing again.*

TOO/TO/TWO

Too is an adverb meaning "also":
Now she is sick too.
It can also mean "excessively" or "very":
It is too cold.

To is a preposition: *They're going to the store.*
It can also be an adverb:
She was unconscious for a moment but then came to.

Two indicates the number:
She had two cookies.

LOOSE/LOSE

Loose is an adjective describing something that is not secure or evading capture:
*The dog is on the loose.
I have a loose tooth.*

Lose is a verb:
We are going to lose the game.

DOUBLE NEGATIVES

Two Wrongs Don't Usually Make a Right



A double negative combines the negative form of a verb with a negative pronoun, adverb, or conjunction.

- **Negative Verb Forms:**
cannot, did not, have not
- **Negative Pronouns:**
nobody, nothing
- **Negative Adverbs:**
never, hardly
- **Negative Conjunctions:**
neither/nor



GOOD TO KNOW:

WHAT ABOUT "AIN'T"?

This contraction—meaning *am not*, *is not*, *are not*, *has not*, or *have not*—is centuries old. While it's considered unacceptable in formal writing, *ain't* peppers spoken English from time to time. You'll see it or use it when quoting a source or when you want to sound folksy.

"I ain't telling you anything you want to know, Sheriff!"

✗ When They're Wrong

Most of the time, a double negative is grammatically incorrect.

I didn't see nothing
should be ▶ *I didn't see anything.*

She didn't have neither vanilla nor chocolate
should be ▶ *She didn't have either vanilla or chocolate.*

✓ When They're Right

Sometimes, a double negative lets a speaker speak factually—but not in a complimentary way. These are correct but awkward sentences.

She isn't unqualified.
He isn't unattractive.

RUN-ON SENTENCES

AND WORDINESS

Too Many Words

Contrary to their name, run-on sentences aren't necessarily long. In fact, they can be short. A run-on is a sentence that contains two or more independent clauses that are not joined properly. Usually, a punctuation mark or conjunction is needed to fix the problem.

Quick Tip: Remember, sentences need to be complete thoughts.

Example:

*Dave brought his own lunch
we bought hot lunch.*

3 Ways to Solve Run-On Sentences

- 1 **Insert a period:** *Dave brought his own lunch.
We bought hot lunch.*
- 2 **Use a semicolon:** *Dave brought his own lunch;
we bought hot lunch.*
- 3 **Add a conjunction:** *Dave brought his own lunch,
but we bought hot lunch.*

When you use more words than necessary, your writing is wordy. Wordiness can result from overly long transitional phrases or too much use of passive voice.

Keep It Short

- Instead of *due to the fact that* → use *since* or *because*.
- Instead of *last but not least* → use *finally*.
- Instead of *a small number of* → use *a few*.
- Instead of *the majority of* → use *most*.

MORE COMMON MISTAKES

These words can also cause confusion.

EFFECT/AFFECT

EFFECT is most commonly used as a noun meaning "result":

The boat ride had a bad effect on me.

AFFECT is most commonly used as a verb, and means "to impact" or "to produce a change."

The boat ride affected me badly.

HINT

You can use the acronym **RAVEN** to remember which word to use:

Remember: **A**ffect-**V**erb, **E**ffect-**N**oun.



FARTHER/FURTHER

Use **FARTHER** for physical distance you can measure:

How much farther is our destination?

Use **FURTHER** when you can't measure the distance:

Before we go any further, let's make sure we're clear.



HINT

Remember, **FARTHER** contains **FAR**, so it is for distance you can measure.

GOOD/WELL



GOOD is an adjective and modifies nouns:
That was a good meal.

WELL is an adverb and modifies verbs:

*She wasn't feeling well.
That meeting didn't go well.*

FEWER/LESS



Use **FEWER** when you can count the items being discussed:
I have fewer apples than you do.

Use **LESS** when you can't:
She has less energy than I do.

FIGURATIVELY/LITERALLY



FIGURATIVELY makes use of a figure of speech:
I was figuratively thrown under the bus.

LITERALLY means "without exaggeration." Unless you were actually thrown under the bus, you cannot say *I was literally thrown under the bus.*

LIE/LAY

In the present tense, the **LIE/LAY** choice is pretty simple. You **LAY** something down, and people **LIE** down on their own. In the past tense, things get confusing, so memorize this table:

PRESENT TENSE	PAST TENSE	PAST PARTICIPLE
Lie	Lay	Lain
Lay	Laid	Laid

*After hearing the news,
I lay down on my bed.*



I laid the book on the table.



Improving Writing

4 Tips to Improve Your Writing

Like any skill, your writing ability improves over time with practice. Here are a few tips that can help.

#1

READ GOOD WRITING



Fill your eyes and ears with good writing, and your own will improve. Read articles from such news sources as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and more. Choose novels and short stories that have received recognition or ask a local librarian for guidance.

#2

READ ALOUD



It's one thing to write words on a page and another to hear them spoken aloud. Your writing will have a more natural rhythm when it flows like you're talking. Get comfortable reading passages aloud to yourself or others.

#3

USE DIGITAL TOOLS



Most word processing programs, like Microsoft Word and Notes, come with a built-in spellcheck and grammar function, or you can download program extensions like Grammarly that flag common mistakes.

#4

RELY ON A PROOFREADER OR EDITOR



When it matters, ask for help. Writers and reporters rely on proofreaders or editors, and you can too. Ask a parent, teacher, or knowledgeable friend, classmate, or colleague to help.

A VISUAL REFERENCE

FOR EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

THE

INFOGRAPHIC

... --- GUIDE TO --- ...

GRAMMAR

JARA KERN