

Grammar

Adjectives

An adjective points out or describes a noun.

That building is **tall**.

Adjective Phrases

An adjective phrase is a prepositional phrase that describes a noun or pronoun. See PHRASES.

Articles

An article points out a noun. See ARTICLES.

Common Adjectives

A common adjective expresses an ordinary quality of a noun or pronoun: *fast* car, *delicious* hamburger.

Comparison of Adjectives

Most adjectives have three degrees of comparison: positive, comparative, and superlative.

The positive degree of an adjective shows a quality of a noun or pronoun.

Elephants are **large** animals.

The actor is **famous**.

Those rings are **valuable**.

The comparative degree is used to compare two items or two sets of items. This form is often followed by *than*.

Whales are **larger** than elephants.

The dancer is **more famous** than the actor.

The bracelets are **less valuable** than the rings.

The superlative degree is used to compare three or more items or sets of items.

Whales are the **largest** mammals.

The singer is the **most famous** performer in the show.

The necklaces are the **least valuable** of all the jewelry.

The adjectives *few*, *fewer*, and *fewest* are used to compare concrete nouns. Note that the nouns are plural in form.

Kara made a **few** cookies for the bake sale.

Joel made **fewer** cookies than Kara did.

Keesha made the **fewest** cookies of anyone in class.

The adjectives *little*, *less*, and *least* are used to compare abstract nouns. Note that the nouns are singular in form.

Kara has **little** time to bake cookies.

Joel has **less** time than Kara.

Keesha has the **least** time of us all.

Demonstrative Adjectives

A demonstrative adjective points out a definite person, place, thing, or idea. Demonstrative adjectives always precede the nouns they modify and agree with them in number.

Singular	Plural
<i>this</i> plant	<i>these</i> plants
<i>that</i> plant	<i>those</i> plants

This and *these* point out things or people that are near. *That* and *those* point out things or people that are farther away.

This plant is healthy. (singular and near)

Those plants need water. (plural and far)

Descriptive Adjectives

A descriptive adjective gives information about a noun or pronoun. It tells about age, size, shape, color, origin, or another quality.

This **African** violet has **small, pink, pointy** petals.

Indefinite Adjectives

An indefinite adjective refers to all or any of a group of people, places, or things. Some of the most common indefinite adjectives are *all, another, any, both, each, either, every, few, many, most, neither, no, other, several, and some*. Note that *another, each, every, either, and neither* are always singular and the others are plural.

Every student has a pencil.

Several students have rulers.

Interrogative Adjectives

An interrogative adjective is used in asking a question. The interrogative adjectives are *which, what, and whose*.

Which is used to ask about one or more of a specific set of people or things. *What* is used to ask about people or things but is not limited to a specific group or set. *Whose* asks about possession.

Which backpack is yours?

What supplies do you carry in your backpack?

Whose backpack is under the chair?

Numerical Adjectives

A numerical adjective indicates an exact number. Numerical adjectives may refer to a number of people or things, or they may refer to the arrangement of things in numerical order.

My family has **two** cats.

The **first** day of the week is Sunday.

Position of Adjectives

Most adjectives go before the words they describe.

Many dedicated gardeners live on **my** block.

Adjectives may also directly follow nouns.

Their flowers, **tall** and **colorful**, brighten every yard.

An adjective can follow a linking verb as a subject complement.

The results of their work are **spectacular**.

Possessive Adjectives

A possessive adjective shows possession or ownership. Possessive adjectives have antecedents. A possessive adjective must agree with its antecedent in person, number, and gender.

John has a skateboard. **His** skateboard is silver.

Jo and Luis have bikes. **Their** bikes are new.

Possessive adjectives change form depending on person and number. Third person singular possessive adjectives change form depending on gender—whether they are masculine (*his*), feminine (*her*), or neuter (*its*).

	Singular	Plural
First Person	my	our
Second Person	your	your
Third Person	his, her, its	their

Proper Adjectives

A proper adjective is formed from a proper noun: *Roman* ruins, *Mexican* food.

Subject Complements

An adjective may be used as a subject complement. See SUBJECT COMPLEMENTS.

Adverbs

An adverb modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. Adverbs indicate *time*, *place*, *manner*, *degree*, *affirmation*, or *negation*.

Adverbs of time answer the question *when* or *how often*.

The chorus **frequently** sings for us.

Adverbs of place answer the question *where*.

The tenors walked **forward**.

Adverbs of manner answer the question *how*.

They begin to sing **loudly**.

Adverbs of degree answer the question *how much* or *how little*.

The sopranos had **very** clear voices.

Adverbs of affirmation tell whether a statement is positive or expresses consent or approval. Adverbs of negation express something negative or a refusal.

Yes, we enjoyed the concert.

We **never** miss hearing them sing.

Adverb Clauses

An adverb clause is a dependent clause used as an adverb.
See CLAUSES.

Adverb Phrases

An adverb phrase is a prepositional phrase used as an adverb.
See PHRASES.

Adverbial Nouns

An adverbial noun is a noun that acts as an adverb. An adverbial noun expresses *time*, *distance*, *measure*, *weight*, *value*, or *direction*.

The trip will take only a few **minutes**. (time)

The post office is just five **blocks** away. (distance)

The box is a **foot** long. (measure)

The package weighs six **pounds**. (weight)

It's worth 20 **dollars**. (value)

Look this **way**. (direction)

Comparison of Adverbs

Most adverbs have three degrees of comparison: positive, comparative, and superlative.

Tom **works carefully**.

Eddie works **more carefully** than Tom.

Luz works **most carefully** of anyone in class.

Wiley ate **rapidly**.

Frank ate **less rapidly** than Wiley.

Allison ate **least rapidly** of anyone.

Carla walks **fast**.
Lisa walks **faster** than Carla.
Ping walks **fastest** of us all.

Antecedents

The noun to which a pronoun or a possessive adjective refers is its antecedent. A pronoun or possessive adjective must agree with its antecedent in person and number. Third person singular personal, possessive, intensive, and reflexive pronouns and possessive adjectives must also agree in gender. See GENDER, NUMBER, PERSON.

Appositives

An appositive is a word (or words) that follows a noun and helps identify it or adds more information about it. An appositive names the same person, place, thing, or idea as the noun it explains. An appositive phrase is an appositive and its modifiers.

An appositive is restrictive if it is necessary to understand the sentence. It is nonrestrictive if it is not necessary. A nonrestrictive appositive is set off by commas.

The poet **Langston Hughes** also wrote stories and plays.
Toni Morrison, **the American writer**, won the Nobel Prize.

Articles

An article points out a noun. *The* is the definite article. It refers to a specific item or specific items in a group. *The* may be used with either singular or plural concrete nouns and with abstract nouns.

We went to **the** beach yesterday.
The beaches in California are beautiful.
The sand is very white.

A and *an* are the indefinite articles. Each is used to refer to a single member of a general group. *A* and *an* are used only with singular concrete nouns. The article *an* is used before a vowel sound. The article *a* is used before a consonant sound.

We sat on **a** blanket under **an** umbrella.

Clauses

A clause is a group of words that has a subject and a predicate.

Adverb Clauses

An adverb clause is a dependent clause used as an adverb. An adverb clause can tell *how*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *to what extent*.

We locked all the doors **before we left**.

We went **where we could see the beach**.

We didn't tell anyone **because it was a secret**.

Dependent Clauses

A dependent clause cannot stand on its own as a sentence.

While we were loading the car, my cell phone rang.

Independent Clauses

An independent clause can stand on its own as a sentence.

We drove off after I answered the phone.

Conjunctions

A conjunction is a word used to connect words, phrases, or clauses in a sentence.

Coordinating Conjunctions

A coordinating conjunction is used to connect similar words or groups of words. The coordinating conjunctions are *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, and *yet*.

My cousin is a swimmer **and** a sailor. (nouns)

She is quick **but** methodical. (adjectives)
She doesn't go hiking **or** camping. (verbs)
She owns neither hiking boots **nor** a sleeping bag. (nouns)
She is known for her kindness **and** for her sense of humor.
(prepositional phrases)

Coordinating conjunctions can connect independent or dependent clauses.

She spends a lot of time alone, **yet** she has many friends.
(independent clauses)
She is popular because she is kind **and** because she has a good sense of humor. (dependent clauses)

Subordinate Conjunctions

A subordinate conjunction is used to join a dependent clause and an independent clause. Some common subordinate conjunctions are *although, after, as, because, before, if, in order that, provided that, since, so that, unless, until, when, whenever, where, wherever, whether, and while*.

She is popular **because** she has a good sense of humor.
After she moved away, I e-mailed her every week.

Direct Objects

The direct object of a sentence answers the question *whom* or *what* after the verb. A noun or an object pronoun can be used as a direct object.

My mom made **lemonade**.
I helped **her**.

Gender

Third person singular personal, possessive, intensive, and reflexive pronouns and possessive adjectives change form depending on gender—whether the antecedent is masculine (*he, him, his, himself*), feminine (*she, her, hers, herself*), or neuter (*it, its, itself*).

Indirect Objects

An indirect object tells *to whom* or *for whom*, or *to what* or *for what*, an action is done. A noun or an object pronoun can be used as an indirect object.

I gave my **dad** a birthday present.
I made **him** a birthday card.

Interjections

An interjection is a word or phrase that expresses a strong or sudden emotion, such as happiness, disgust, pain, agreement, impatience, surprise, sadness, and amazement.

Ouch! I stubbed my toe.
Oh, no! I lost my keys.
Hurray! I won the contest.
Wow! Your new bike is awesome.

Mood

Mood shows the manner in which the action or state of being of a verb is expressed.

Indicative Mood

The indicative mood is used to make a statement or ask a question. Most sentences are in the indicative mood.

Do you **like** to play baseball?
I **learned** to play last year.
Baseball **is** my favorite game.

Emphatic Mood

The emphatic mood gives special force to a simple present or past tense verb. To make a verb emphatic, use *do*, *does*, or *did* before the base form of the verb.

I **do like** to play baseball.
He **did hit** a home run last night.

Imperative Mood

The imperative mood is used to express a command or a request. The imperative mood uses the base form of a verb. The subject of an imperative sentence is usually understood to be the second person pronoun, *you*.

Catch the ball!
Please **hand** me that bat.

A command can be given in the first person by using *let's* before the base form of a verb.

Let's play another game tomorrow.

Subjunctive Mood

The subjunctive mood is used to express a wish or desire; to express a command, request, or suggestion following the word *that*; or to express something that is contrary to fact (not true). The subjunctive mood refers to what is hoped or wished rather than what actually is.

For the verb *be*, the subjunctive forms are *be* and *were*. *Be* is commonly used with verbs of command, request, or suggestion. Otherwise, *were* is typically used. The auxiliary *would* is used in place of *will*.

I wish I **were** a better player. (a wish)
The coach requested that **we be** here on time. (a request after *that*)
If I **were** you, I would arrive at noon. (something that is contrary to fact)

Nouns

A noun is a name word. A singular noun names one person, place, thing or idea: *boy, city, book, time*. A plural noun names more than one person, place, or thing: *boys, cities, books, times*.

Abstract Nouns

An abstract noun names something that cannot be seen or touched. It expresses an idea, an emotion, a quality, or a condition: *belief, fear, independence, beauty*.

Appositives

An appositive is a word (or words) that follows a noun and helps identify it or adds more information about it. See APPOSITIVES.

Collective Nouns

A collective noun names a group of people, animals, or things considered as one: *team, herd, bunch*.

Common Nouns

A common noun names any one member of a class of people, places, or things: *sailor, town, telephone*.

Concrete Nouns

A concrete noun names something that can be seen or touched: *queen, river, baseball*.

Possessive Nouns

A possessive noun expresses possession or ownership.

To form the singular possessive, add -'s to the singular form of the noun.

friend	friend's report
scientist	scientist's excavation

To form the possessive of a plural noun ending in *s*, add an apostrophe only.

kings	kings' treasure
archaeologists	archaeologists' work

To form the possessive of a plural noun that does not end in *s*, add -'s.

women	women's influence
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The possessive of a proper noun ending in *s* is usually formed by adding *-’s*.

James James’s research

The possessive of a compound noun is formed by adding *-’s* to the end of the word.

brother-in-law’s vacation
brothers-in-law’s vacations

Separate possession occurs when two or more people own things independently of one another. To show separate possession, use *-’s* after each noun.

Ann and Peter each own a boat.
Ann’s and Peter’s boats are in the marina.

Joint possession occurs when two or more people own something together. To show joint possession, use *-’s* after the last noun only.

Tom and Gloria are the owners of three boats.
Tom and Gloria’s boats are all painted bright blue.

Proper Nouns

A proper noun names a particular person, place, or thing: *George Washington, White House, Continental Congress.*

Number

The number of a noun or pronoun indicates whether it refers to one person, place, thing, or idea (singular) or more than one person, place, thing, or idea (plural).

Person

Personal, possessive, intensive, and reflexive pronouns and possessive adjectives change form according to person—whether the antecedent is the person speaking (first person), being spoken to (second person), or being spoken about (third person).

Phrases

A phrase is a group of words that is used as a single part of speech.

Adjective Phrases

An adjective phrase is a phrase used as an adjective.

The clown **with the red hair** was twisting balloons.

Adverb Phrases

An adverb phrase is a prepositional phrase used as an adverb.

She threw the balloons **into the air**.

Predicates

The predicate of a sentence names an action or a state of being.

Complete Predicates

The complete predicate of a sentence is the verb or verb phrase along with its modifiers and complements or objects.

The boy **carried his books slowly down the street**.

Compound Predicates

Two or more predicates joined by a coordinating conjunction form a compound predicate.

He **stopped** and **waited for his friends**.

Simple Predicates

The simple predicate of a sentence is the verb or verb phrase.

His friends **were racing** their bikes on Main Street.

Prepositions

A preposition is a word that shows the relationship of a noun or a pronoun to another word in a sentence.

Adjective Phrases

A prepositional phrase can be used as an adjective.

The woman **in the red dress** is my mother.

Adverb Phrases

A prepositional phrase can be used as an adverb.

She is walking **across the street**.

Objects of Prepositions

The noun or pronoun that follows a preposition is the object of that preposition.

Did you jump over the **log** or walk around **it**?

Prepositional Phrases

A prepositional phrase is a preposition, its object, and any words that describe the object.

We walked **through the dark, silent woods**.

Pronouns

A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun. The noun to which a pronoun refers is its antecedent. A pronoun must agree with its antecedent in person and number. Third person personal, possessive, intensive, and reflexive pronouns must also agree in gender. See GENDER, NUMBER, PERSON.

Demonstrative Pronouns

A demonstrative pronoun points out a particular person, place, or thing.

Singular	Plural
this	these
that	those

This and *these* point out things or people that are near. *That* and *those* point out things or people that are farther away.

This is my favorite sweater. (singular and near)

Those are my old ski boots. (plural and far)

Indefinite Pronouns

An indefinite pronoun refers to any or all of a group of people, places, or things. Some indefinite pronouns are *anybody*, *many*, *both*, *none*, *few*, and *everyone*.

Most indefinite pronouns are singular. The indefinite pronouns *both*, *few*, *many*, and *several* are always plural.

Everyone in the class is invited to the party.

Few of the students are going to miss it.

The indefinite pronouns *all*, *some*, and *none* may be singular or plural, depending on whether they refer to concrete or to abstract nouns.

All of the children are here.

All of the class is here.

Indefinite pronouns such as *no one*, *nobody*, *none*, and *nothing* are negative words. In a sentence they should never be used with other negative words, such as *no*, *not*, and *never*.

Intensive Pronouns

Intensive pronouns end in *self* or *selves*. An intensive pronoun emphasizes a preceding noun or pronoun. It must agree with its antecedent in person, number, and gender.

She made the whole dinner **herself**.

I **myself** have never cooked an entire meal.

Intensive pronouns change form depending on person and number. Third person singular intensive pronouns change form depending on gender—whether the antecedent is masculine (*himself*), feminine (*herself*), or neuter (*itself*).

	Singular	Plural
First Person	myself	ourselves
Second Person	yourself	yourselves
Third Person	himself herself itself	themselves

Interrogative Pronouns

An interrogative pronoun is used to ask a question. The interrogative pronouns are *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *what*, and *which*.

Who refers to people. It is often the subject of a question. *Whom* also refers to people. It is the object of a verb or a preposition.

Who is starring in the play?

Whom did you see at rehearsal?

To **whom** did they sell the tickets?

Whose is used to ask about possession. *Which* is used when asking about a group or class. *What* is used for asking about things or for seeking information.

Whose is the script on the chair?

Which of the actors missed his entrance?

What did he leave on stage?

What did the director tell him?

Object Pronouns

An object pronoun can be used as the direct object or the indirect object of a verb or as the object of a preposition. The object pronouns are *me*, *you*, *him*, *her*, *it*, *us*, and *them*.

Carla met **him** at the party. (direct object)

Tom gave **her** a present. (indirect object)

The house was decorated by **them**. (object of a preposition)

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns change form depending on person and number. Third person singular pronouns change form to reflect gender—whether the antecedent is feminine (*she*, *her*), masculine (*he*, *him*), or neuter (*it*).

	Singular	Plural
First Person	I, me	we, us
Second Person	you	you
Third Person	he, she, it, him, her	they, them

Personal pronouns also change form depending on whether they are used as subjects (*I, you, he, she, it, we, they*) or objects (*me, you, him, her, it, us, them*).

Possessive Pronouns

A possessive pronoun shows possession or ownership. It takes the place of a possessive noun. Possessive pronouns must agree with their antecedents in person, number, and gender.

Maria and Tom have pets.

Hers is a cat, and **his** is a hamster.

Possessive pronouns change form depending on person and number. Third person singular possessive pronouns change form to reflect gender—whether the antecedent is masculine (*his*), feminine (*hers*), or neuter (*its*).

	Singular	Plural
First Person	mine	ours
Second Person	yours	yours
Third Person	his, hers, its	theirs

Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns end in *self* or *selves*. A reflexive pronoun can be the direct or indirect object of a verb or the object of a preposition. It generally refers to the subject of the sentence. Reflexive pronouns must agree with their antecedents in person, number, and gender.

I consider **myself** a good reader. (direct object)

He bought **himself** a new book. (indirect object)

They read it by **themselves**. (object of a preposition)

Reflexive pronouns change form depending on person and number. Third person singular reflexive pronouns change form depending on gender—whether the antecedent is masculine (*himself*), feminine (*herself*), or neuter (*itself*).

	Singular	Plural
First Person	myself	ourselves
Second Person	yourself	yourselves
Third Person	himself herself itself	themselves

Subject Pronouns

A subject pronoun can be used as the subject of a sentence or as a subject complement. The subject pronouns are *I, you, he, she, it, we, and they*.

She painted that picture. (subject)

The subject of the portrait is **he**. (subject complement)

Sentences

A sentence expresses a complete thought. The essential parts of a sentence are a subject and predicate.

Complex Sentences

A complex sentence contains an independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.

As soon as Marta arrives, we will leave for the movie.

Compound Sentences

A compound sentence contains two or more independent clauses. Independent clauses in a compound sentence are usually connected by a coordinating conjunction. A semicolon may be used instead of a coordinating conjunction.

Marta will be here soon, and then we'll leave.

Tom is going to drive; he has the biggest car.

Declarative Sentences

A declarative sentence makes a statement. It ends with a period.

Elephants are the largest land mammals.

Exclamatory Sentences

An exclamatory sentence expresses a strong emotion. It ends with an exclamation point.

That elephant is huge!

Imperative Sentences

An imperative sentence gives a command. It ends with a period.

Find out how much that elephant weighs.

Interrogative Sentences

An interrogative sentence asks a question. It ends with a question mark.

Did you ask the keeper what the elephant weighs?

Inverted Order in Sentences

A sentence is in inverted order when the main verb or an auxiliary verb comes before the subject.

Across the exhibit walked the baby elephant.

Have you seen the new elephant at the zoo?

There are now three elephants in our zoo.

Here is my DVD of *Dumbo*.

Natural Order in Sentences

A sentence is in natural order when the verb follows the subject.

The baby elephant walked toward its mother.

Simple Sentences

A simple sentence contains a subject and a predicate and expresses a complete thought. Either or both may be compound.

The baby and its mother watched the keeper.

Subject Complements

A subject complement follows a linking verb such as the forms of *be*. A noun or pronoun used as a subject complement renames the subject of the sentence; it refers to the same person, place, thing, or idea. An adjective used as a subject complement describes the subject of the sentence.

My sister is a **doctor**.

The winner of that award was **she**.

Her job can be very **rewarding**.

Subjects

The subject of a sentence names the person, place, or thing the sentence is about. To determine the subject of a sentence, ask *who* or *what* before the verb.

Complete Subjects

The complete subject of a sentence is the simple subject and all the words that describe it.

The small, shaggy dog barked loudly.

Compound Subjects

Two or more subjects joined by a coordinating conjunction form a compound subject.

The dog and **its owner** walked through the park.

Simple Subjects

The simple subject of a sentence is the noun or pronoun that names the person, place, or thing the sentence is about.

The small **dog** with the red collar is mine.

Tenses

The tense of a verb expresses the time of the action or state of being.

Perfect Tenses

The present perfect tense tells about an action that happened at some indefinite time in the past or an action that started in the past and continues into the present. It uses *have* or *has* and the past participle.

I **have finished** all my homework.

She **has lived** in that house for a year.

The past perfect tense tells about a past action that was completed before another past action started. It uses *had* and the past participle.

I **had finished** my homework before my dad got home.

Progressive Tenses

The present progressive tense tells about something that is happening right now. It uses the present tense of the verb *be* (*am, is, are*) and the present participle.

The students **are working** on a science project.

The past progressive tense tells about something that was happening in the past. It uses the past tense of the verb *be* (*was, were*) and the present participle.

They **were doing** math an hour ago.

Simple Tenses

The simple present tense tells about an action that happens again and again or about things that are general truths. The simple present tense uses the present, or base, form of a verb. If the subject is a third person singular noun or pronoun, *-s* is added to the base form.

I **like** ice cream.

He **eats** ice cream every day.

The simple past tense tells about an action that happened in the past. The past tense uses the past form.

We **walked** to the ice-cream shop.

The simple future tense tells about an action that will happen in the future. The simple future tense uses the auxiliary verb *will* or *be going to* followed by the base form of a verb.

I am going to buy a quart of ice cream.

We ***will eat*** it for dessert tonight.

Verbs

A verb shows action or state of being. See MOOD, TENSES, VOICE.

Carlo ***opened*** the present. (action)

He ***was*** very excited. (state of being)

Auxiliary Verbs

An auxiliary verb combines with a main verb to form a verb phrase. Auxiliary verbs help to show voice, mood, and tense. Some common auxiliaries are the forms of *be* (*am, is, are, was, were*), the forms of *have* (*have, has, had*), and the forms of *do* (*do, did*). Other auxiliary verbs are *can, could, may, might, should, and will*.

Intransitive Verbs

An intransitive verb has no receiver of its action—no direct object. An intransitive verb may be followed by an adverb or adverb phrase.

She ***comes*** from Cleveland.

She ***writes*** well.

Irregular Verbs

The past and the past participle of irregular verbs are not formed by adding *-d* or *-ed*.

Present	Past	Past Participle
sing	sang	sung
write	wrote	written
put	put	put

Linking Verbs

A linking verb links the subject of a sentence with a subject complement (a noun, a pronoun, or an adjective). The most common linking verbs are *be* and its forms (*am, is, are, been, be, was, were*). Other verbs that can be used as linking verbs include *appear, become, continue, feel, grow, look, remain, seem, smell, sound,* and *taste*.

My cousin **is** a poet.
The poet who won the prize **was** she.
She **looks** very happy.

Modal Auxiliaries

Modal auxiliaries are used to express possibility, permission, ability, necessity, intention, and willingness. They are followed by main verbs in the base form. The common modal auxiliaries are *may, might, can, could, must, should, will,* and *would*.

You **might find** that information on the Internet. (possibility)
The librarian **could help** you find it. (possibility)
Anyone **may use** the computer in the library. (permission)
June **can help** you set up your Web site. (ability)
We **must finish** this project by tomorrow. (necessity)
You **should help** June with her report. (obligation)
I **will help** you after lunch. (willingness)
Tom **would help** if you asked him. (willingness)

Principal Parts

The four basic parts of all verbs are the present, or base form; the past; the past participle; and the present participle. The past and past participle of regular verbs are formed by adding *-d* or *-ed* to the base form. The present participle is formed by adding *-ing*.

Present	Past	Past Participle	Present Participle
sail	sailed	sailed	sailing

Regular Verbs

The past and past participle of regular verbs are formed by adding *-d* or *-ed* to the present, or base, form. If a verb ends in *y* preceded by a consonant, the past and past participle are formed by changing the *y* to *i* and adding *-ed*. If a single-syllable verb ends in a consonant preceded by a vowel, the past and past participle are formed by doubling the consonant and adding *-ed*.

Present	Past	Past Participle
walk	walked	walked
smile	smiled	smiled
try	tried	tried
hop	hopped	hopped

Transitive Verbs

A transitive verb expresses an action that passes from a doer to a receiver. Every transitive verb has a receiver of its action. That receiver is the direct object.

George **passed** the test.

Verb Phrases

A verb phrase is two or more verbs that work together as a unit. A verb phrase may have one or more auxiliary verbs and a main verb. The verbs in a verb phrase are usually written together. In negative sentences and in questions, the verbs may be separated.

He **has finished** cleaning the garage.

He **did** not **mow** the lawn.

Will he **rake** the leaves?

Voice

Voice shows whether the subject of a sentence is the doer or the receiver.

Active Voice

When a verb is in the active voice, the subject is the doer of the action.

Marietta **wrote** this poem.

Passive Voice

When a verb is in the passive voice, the subject is the receiver of the action. A verb in the passive voice is formed by combining a form of *be* with the past participle.

This poem **was written** by Marietta.

Mechanics

Capitalization and Punctuation

Apostrophes

Use an apostrophe to show possession.

John's the Joneses' the boys'

Use an apostrophe to indicate the omission of a letter, letters, or numbers.

aren't we've the class of '12

Use an apostrophe to show the plural of a lowercase letter.

i's m's u's

Capital Letters

Use a capital letter to begin the first word in a sentence.

The boy is lost.

Use a capital letter to begin the first word in a quotation.

A woman said, "**T**he boy is lost."

Use a capital letter to begin a proper noun or proper adjective.

America **A**merican

Use a capital letter to begin a title before a name.

General George Custer

Use a capital letter to begin *North*, *South*, *East*, and *West* when they refer to sections of the country.

She was born in the **S**outh.

Use a capital letter to begin the first and last word and each principal word in a title.

"The **B**attle **H**ymn of the **R**epublic"

*Harry **P**otter and the **O**rders of the **P**hoenix*

Use a capital letter to begin the first word of every line of most poems and songs.

“The time has come,” the Walrus said,
“To talk of many things.”

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain.

Colons

Use a colon after the salutation of a business letter.

Dear Mr. Monroe:

Use a colon before a list of items.

I bought three things for my vacation: a backpack, a tent, and a lantern.

Commas

Use a comma to separate words in a series of three or more.

We had roast beef, carrots, potatoes, and salad.

Use a comma to set off parts of dates, addresses, and geographic names.

He was born in Des Moines, Iowa, on February 3, 1990.

Use a comma to set off a nonrestrictive appositive.

Thomas Jefferson, our third president, was an inventor.

Use a comma to separate the clauses of a compound sentence connected by a coordinating conjunction.

Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, and he was elected our third president.

Use a comma to set off a direct quotation.

Thomas Jefferson wrote, “All men are created equal.”
“I admire Thomas Jefferson,” Allison remarked, “because he was so inventive.”

Exclamation Points

Use an exclamation point at the end of an exclamatory sentence and after interjections and exclamatory words.

Wow, we won the game!

Quick! Let's congratulate the coach.

Hyphens

Use a hyphen to divide a word at the end of a line when one or more syllables are carried to the next line.

When the game was over, everyone congratulated the coach.

Use a hyphen in compound numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine.

Use a hyphen to separate parts of some compound terms.

brother-in-law drive-in six-year-old

Periods

Use a period at the end of a declarative or an imperative sentence.

The birdhouse is almost finished.

Please hand me that hammer.

Use a period after many abbreviations.

Dr. a.m. Oct.

Fri. ft. min.

Gov. gal. Co.

Question Marks

Use a question mark at the end of a question.

What are you going to do next?

Quotation Marks

Use quotation marks to set off quotations. Quotation marks are placed before and after every complete quotation and every part of a divided quotation. Commas set off direct quotations

from the rest of the sentence. The comma goes inside the quotation marks. Periods also go inside quotation marks.

“I’m going to the movies,” said Marilee.

“Call me when you’re ready to leave,” Carol responded, “and I’ll meet you there.”

A question mark or an exclamation point that is part of the quotation replaces the comma that sets off the quotation and goes inside the quotation marks. A question mark or an exclamation point that is part of the entire sentence goes outside the quotation marks.

“What time are you planning to leave?” Janet asked.

Who said, “Meet me at five o’clock”?

Use quotation marks to set off titles of songs, short stories, poems, magazine articles, newspaper articles, and television shows. Titles of books, magazines, newspapers, movies, plays, television series, operas, and works of art are usually printed in italics. When these titles are handwritten, they are underlined.

The article “My Favorite Cookie Recipes” appeared in the magazine *Cooking for Today*.

The lyrics to “America the Beautiful” were reprinted in the Charleston Tribune.

Semicolons

Use a semicolon to separate the clauses of a compound sentence that are not connected by a coordinating conjunction.

George Washington was our first president; he is called the Father of Our Country.

Use a semicolon to separate the items in a series when the items themselves contain commas.

I have lived in Baltimore, Maryland; Little Rock, Arkansas; and Fargo, North Dakota.