

# English Grammar Guides

These guides are for those of us who have forgotten (or were never taught) the basics of English grammar. They are designed to show the range of grammatical understanding encouraged by the enjoyment of Can Do Cubes. All points shown here, from the simple recognition and use of word classes through to that liberating understanding of how the use of sentence variety can bring joy and polish to an individual's writing, are covered in the Activities Book which accompanies the Cubes.

## Word Classes

word	examples
noun	<i>common</i> man, cheese, park <i>proper</i> : Jack, India, Mrs Egg <i>abstract</i> : love, hate, fear <i>collective</i> : herd, gaggle, shoal
pronoun	I, you, him, theirs
determiner	a, the, this, an, these
adjective	good, slimy, red
verb	<i>full</i> : want, eat, give <i>auxiliary</i> : be, have <i>modal auxiliary</i> : would, might, must
adverb	happily, slowly, sometimes
preposition	up, over, on
conjunction	<i>coordinating</i> and, or, but <i>subordinating</i> : if, because, whereas

## Grammar Grid

<b>Nouns</b>	classified as	singular	lion, town, football
		plural	books, boxes, loaves, jellies mice (irregular)
<b>Nouns</b>	classified as	common (concrete)	man, cheese, television
		proper	Jasmine, Manchester
		abstract	love, hatred, fear
		collective	herd, shoal, flock
<b>Determiners</b>	combine with	nouns	<b>a lion, the lion, that lion, my lion, which lion, one lion</b>

<b>Common nouns</b>	agree with	their determiner	<b>that</b> door <b>those</b> doors
<b>Common nouns</b>	may be modified by preceding  or by following	adjectives nouns  prepositions relative clauses	<b>large</b> dog <b>mountain</b> dog  the dog <b>in</b> the water the dog <b>that danced</b>
<b>Pronouns</b>	may replace	a noun  a noun phrase	John said <b>he</b> was coming.  the huge man knew <b>he</b> was right.
<b>Phrases</b>	classified as	noun phrases prepositional phrases adjectival phrases adverbial phrases	the smelly <b>dog</b> <b>inside</b> the zoo as <b>happy</b> as her spoke <b>quickly</b>
<b>Noun phrases and pronouns</b>	may function	as a subject of a verb as the object of a verb as a complement of a verb after a preposition as a possessor	<b>The man</b> went. He kicked <b>the man</b> . He became <b>a man</b> . I walked over <b>a mountain</b> . <b>the boy's</b> pen <b>the boys'</b> school
<b>Prepositional phrases</b>	may function as	a complement of a verb an 'adjectival' modifier of a noun an 'adverbial' modifier of a verb an adjective	He was <b>in a car</b> . a man <b>with a book</b> He ate <b>at the zoo</b> . mad <b>on football</b>
<b>Verbs</b>	are classified as	<b>finite:</b> present past imperative  or <b>non-finite:</b> infinitive  or participle: past present	He/they <b>shouts/shout</b> . He <b>shouted/ran</b> . <b>Run</b> fast!  She likes <b>to think</b> .  he has <b>wanted/given</b> He is <b>singing</b> .
<b>Verbs</b>	are classified as	active  passive	He <b>eats</b> it.  It is <b>eaten</b> .
<b>Verbs</b>	are classified as	main or auxiliary: ordinary or modal auxiliary	She moves.  He <b>has</b> moved.  He <b>should</b> move.

<b>Auxiliary verbs</b>	combine with	each other and main verbs to make verb chains	He <b>must have been</b> going.
<b>Verbs</b>	need	a subject	<b>The man</b> thought. <b>I</b> thought. <b>He</b> was thinking. Was <b>he</b> thinking?
<b>Some verbs</b>	need	an object or complement	I ate <b>the bread</b> . I made her <b>proud</b> .
<b>Verbs</b>	agree with	their subject	She <b>comes</b> in. They <b>come</b> in.
<b>Clauses</b>	are classified as	main  subordinate	She went away. Go away! <b>If he comes</b> , give him bread.
<b>Main clauses</b>	are classified as	declarative interrogative  imperative exclamative	She is noisy. Is she noisy? Why is she noisy? Be good! How good he is!
<b>Subordinate clauses</b>	are marked by	a subordinating conjunction or a wh-pronoun or that or a non-finite verb	If it says it who said it that he said it saying it
<b>Conjunctions</b>	are classified as	coordinating  subordinating	Jim ate and Jane danced.  Jim ate while Jane danced.

## Verb Tenses

Voice	Present Tense	Past Tense	Future Tense
	<b>Simple Present</b>	<b>Simple Past</b>	<b>Simple Future</b>
active	I <b>want</b> the dog.	I <b>wanted</b> the dog.	I <b>will want</b> the dog. I <b>am going to want</b> the dog.
passive	The dog <b>is wanted</b> .	The dog <b>was wanted</b> .	The dog <b>will be wanted</b> .
	<b>Present Continuous</b>	<b>Past Continuous</b>	<b>Future Continuous</b>
active	I <b>am wanting</b> the dog.	I <b>was wanting</b> the dog.	I <b>will be wanting</b> the dog. I <b>am going to be wanting</b> the dog.
passive	The dog <b>is being wanted</b> .	The dog <b>was being wanted</b> .	The dog <b>will be being wanted</b> *

	<b>Present Perfect</b>	<b>Past Perfect</b>	<b>Future Perfect</b>
active	I <b>have wanted</b> the dog.	I <b>had wanted</b> the dog.	I <b>will have wanted</b> the dog. I am going to have wanted the dog.
passive	The dog <b>has been wanted.</b>	The dog <b>had been wanted.</b>	The dog <b>will have been wanted.</b>
active	<b>Present perfect Continuous</b>	<b>Past Perfect Continuous</b>	<b>Future Perfect Continuous</b>
passive	I <b>have been wanting</b> the dog.	I <b>had been wanting</b> the dog.	I <b>will have been wanting</b> the dog. I am going to have been wanting the dog.
	The dog <b>has been being wanted.</b> *	The dog <b>had been being wanted.</b> *	The dog <b>will have been being wanted.</b> *

\* very rarely used

## Sentences

A sentence must make sense.

It must have at least one **subject** (noun or pronoun) and at least one *verb*.

**Simple sentences** contain one **subject** and one *verb*. They consist of one main clause.

e.g. **Jack ate**

Smelly **Jack** happily *ate* the slimy, red cheese.

**It** *was* good.

**Compound sentences** contain at least two **main clauses** joined by a *coordinating conjunction* (and, or, but).

e.g. **Jack ate and Jasmin laughed.**

**Smelly Jack ate the slimy cheese, but Jasmin went to India.**

The two clauses in each of these compound sentences contain different information of equal importance.

**Complex sentences** contain one **main clause** and one or more *subordinate clauses*. *Subordinate clauses* add information to the **main clause**. They do not make sense on their own.

**Subordinate clauses may be formed by:**

1. starting a clause with a *subordinating conjunction*;
2. starting a clause with a pronoun *who, whom, which, that* (forming a relative clause);
3. using a *non-finite verb* in a clause (forming a non-finite clause).

e.g.

- i. **Jasmine went to India** *because Jack ate the cheese.*  
*If Jasmine eats the cheese, Jack will go to India.*
- ii. **Jasmine, who ate the cheese, went to India.**  
**The cheese, that was inside Jack, went to India.**
- iii. *Eating the cheese, Jasmine laughed at Jack.*  
**Jack, smelling of cheese, went to India.**  
**The cheese, wanted by Jasmine, was in India.**

## **Punctuation in complex sentences**

A subordinate clause does not need a comma if it comes after the main clause. If a subordinate clause starts the sentence, a comma should be used to show where it ends and the main clause begins. A subordinate clause, which is embedded within a sentence, has its beginning and end marked by a comma.