

PARTS OF SPEECH

In language, the parts of speech are the categories of words based on their function within a sentence. This is true with English, as well as any number of other languages such as Arabic and Swahili. Understanding part of speech is a helpful way to look at words to help you understand the underlying grammar and logic of any language you study.

In English, there are eight different parts of speech. However, some people also classify determiners as part of speech making a total nine.

1. NOUN (N)

A noun is a word that refers to a person, place, or thing. The category of “things” may sound super vague, but in this case it means inanimate objects, abstract concepts, and activities. Phrases and other parts of speech can also behave like nouns and can be the subject in a sentence, as in *jogging is a fun exercise*. Here, the verb jogging acts like a noun and is the subject of the sentence.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF NOUNS

- Proper nouns

Proper nouns help to distinguish a specific person, place, or thing. These words should be capitalized. The names and titles of things are always proper nouns, such as the brand name *Coca cola* and the personal name *Jenny*.

- Common nouns

Are words that refer to undefined or generic people, places, or things. For example, the country is a common noun that refers to a generic place (not specific) while the word *Canada* is not a common noun because it refers to a specific place. Common nouns are only capitalized when they begin sentences, the words like *house, cat, girl, foot, and country* are the good examples of common noun.

- Concrete nouns

A concrete is something that can be perceived through the five senses. If you can see, hear, touch, taste, or smell something, it uses a concrete noun, the words like *table, apple, rabbit* and *ear* are the examples of a concrete noun.

- Abstract nouns

Abstract noun are intangible ideas that can't be perceived with the five senses, such as social concepts, political theories and character traits. For example, the abstract noun *anger* refers to an emotion and the abstract noun *courage* refers to the quality a person has, so the words like, and *democracy* are the abstract noun.

- Collective nouns

A collective noun is a noun that functions as a singular noun while referring to a group of people or things. A collective noun refers to a group that functions as one unit or performs the same action at the same time, words like *crowd*, *committee*, and *flocks* are the collective nouns.

- Countable nouns

A countable nouns also known as a count noun, is one that you can count, when you have two *books* or 10 *pencils*, you are describing a noun that is countable. Words like *table*, *apple* and *rabbit* are the examples of countable noun.

- Uncountable noun

An uncountable noun also known as a mass noun; is one that cannot be counted. For example, *happiness* cannot be counted. You don't say that you have "three happiness." Uncountable nouns typically don't have plural forms, words like salt, sugar, sand and water are the examples of uncountable noun.

2. ADJECTIVES (A)

An adjective describes or modify nouns and pronouns. They may name the qualities of all kinds: *huge*, *red*, *angry*, *rare*, etc. An adjective usually comes right before a noun: a *red dress*, *fifteen people*. When an adjective follows a linking verb such as be or seem, it is called a predicate adjective: "*That building is huge*," "*The workers seem happy*." Most adjectives can be used as predicate adjectives, although some are always used before a noun. Similarly, a few adjectives can only be used as predicate adjectives and are never used before a noun.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ADJECTIVES

- Descriptive adjectives

Are the ones that show the kind and quality of a person or thing. For example "*a brave person*." "*a beautiful child*.", "*a careful mother*.", all the underlined words are the examples of descriptive adjectives.

- Demonstrative adjectives

Are the ones that point out which person or thing, the four demonstrative adjectives "*this*," "*that*," "*these*," and "*those*," which are identical with the demonstrative pronouns. They are used to distinguish the person or thing being described from others of the same category or class. "*This and these*" describe people or things that are nearby, or in the present. "*That and those*" are used to describe people or things that are not here, not nearby, or in the past or future. For example; *That car is mine, this car is mine*.

- Interrogative adjectives

The interrogative adjectives are primarily *which*, *what*, and *whose* that are used to begin questions. They can also be used as interrogative pronouns. For examples:

Which horse did you bet on? = which did you bet on?

What songs did they sing? = what did they sing?

Whose coat is this? = whose is this?

- Possessive adjectives

Words like *my, your, his, her, our, its, our, their* – tell you who has, owns, or has experienced something, as in “*I admired her laptop, “our cat is 14 years old,” and “*They said their trip was wonderful.**

- Participles (ordinary) adjectives

They may come before a noun or after a linking. A present participle (an –ing word) describes the person or thing that causes something; for example *a boring conversation* is one that bores you. A past participle (usually an –ed word) describes the person or thing who has been affected by something; for example, *a bored person* is one who has been affected by boredom.

3. PRONOUN (PRN)

A pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun or noun phrase. Pronouns refer to either a noun that has already been mentioned as in *Sarah said she is almost finished with the application* or to a noun that does not need to be named specifically as *she is almost finished with the application*. So, words like *I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they, me, you, him, her, it, us, you, them* are examples of personal pronoun.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF PRONOUNS

- Personal pronouns

Are the ones which refer to the person or people speaking or writing (*first person*), the person or people being spoken to (*second person*), or other people or things (*third person*). Like nouns, personal pronouns can function as either the subject or the object of a verb or preposition: “*she likes him*” but *he loves her.*” Most of the personal pronouns have different subject and object forms.

- Interrogative pronouns

These are the ones introduce questions for which a noun is the answer. The interrogative pronouns are *who, what, which, and whose*. For example “*what is your name?, “who wants a bag of jelly beans?*

- Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronouns refer to things or people that belong to someone. The main possessive pronouns are *mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, and theirs*. For example “*The students practiced their presentation after school*” “*paschal is working in his application.*

- Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns take a place of a noun or a noun phrase that has already been mentioned, distinguish the person or thing being referred to from other people or things; they are identical to the demonstrative adjectives. Words like *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those* are typically used as the demonstrative pronoun. For example “*here is a letter with no return address. Who could have sent this?*” “*That is my wife.*”

- Reflexive pronouns

Reflexive pronouns refer back to the subject of a sentence or clause and are formed by adding *-self* or *-selves* to a personal pronoun or possessive adjectives as in *myself*, *herself*, *ourselves*, and *itself*. For example “*They booked themselves a room at the hotel.*” “*I told myself it was nothing.*”

- Indefinite pronouns

Indefinite pronouns are used when you need to refer to a person or thing that doesn't need specifically identified. Some common indefinite pronouns are *one*, *other*, *none*, *some*, *anybody*, *everybody*, and *no one*.

4. ADVERBS (ADV)

Adverbs are words that usually modify, that is they limit or restrict the meaning of verbs. They may also modify adjectives, other adverbs, phrases, or even entire sentences. An adverb answer the question *when?*, *where?*, *how?*, *how much?*, *how long?*, or *how often?*. For example “*Alex works hard,*” “*I love her very much.*” Many adverbs end in *-ly* like in sentence “*He wrote that willingly*” but some words which end in *-ly* (such as *friendly*) are not adverbs. Many words can be both adverbs and adjectives according to their activity in the sentence.

There are, however many common adverbs that do not end in *-ly*, such as *again*, *also*, *just*, *never*, *often*, *soon*, *today*, *too*, *very*, and *well*.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ADVERBS

- Adverbs of place/Direction (Where?)

Adverbs of place/direction that indicate place/direction of the action in the sentence. They answer the question “where is the action performed?”

The words like: *Across*, *over*, *under*, *in*, *out*, *backward*, *around*, *here* are some common adverbs of place/direction. For example “*Alex is going to school,*” “*He plays in the field*”

- Adverbs of manner (How?)

Adverbs that express the manner/approach/process of the action in the sentence are called **adverbs of manner**. They answer the question ‘how is the action performed?’. Hence adverbs like *beautifully*, *equally*, *carefully*, *coldly*, *nicely*, *slowly*, etc. These adverbs usually end with *-ly*. For example: “*Let’s divide the prizes equally,*” “*Mike is walking slowly.*”

- Adverbs of degree (How Much?)

Adverbs that express the importance/degree/level of the action in the sentence are called **adverbs of degree**. They answer the question ‘how much is the action performed?’.

The words like; *completely, nearly, entirely, excessively, very* are common adverbs of degree. For example; “*She completely forgot about her anniversary,*” “*I read the newspaper thoroughly”*

- Adverbs of time/Frequency (When)

Adverbs of time/frequency indicate time or frequency of the action in the sentence. They answer the question ‘when/how frequently is the action performed?’.

Words like *Always, never, often, eventually, now, frequently, occasionally, once, forever, before, Sunday, Monday, 10 AM,* etc. are common adverbs of time/frequency. For example “*I will leave Monday,*” “*He smokes occasionally,*” “*She always get a good result.*”

- Sentence adverbs

When an adverb modifies a whole sentence or clause, it is called a **sentence adverb**, words such as *fortunately, frankly, hopefully,* and *luckily* are generally used as sentence adverbs and usually express the speaker’s feelings about the content of the sentence, but may also come in the middle or at the end. For example; “*Unfortunately, Friday will be cloudy,*” “*Friday, unfortunately, will be cloudy,*” “*Friday will be cloudy, unfortunately,*” “*Hopefully, we will win the match,*”

5. VERBS (V)

A word that characteristically is the grammatical center of a predicate and expresses an act, occurrence, or state of being. Almost every sentence requires a verb, verbs are the important part of the English language, without them sentences wouldn’t have any action. For example “*He drove to the mountains,*” (The action is driving), “*She prefers coffee,*” (The state of being is preferring coffee)

DIFFERENT TYPES OF VERBS

- Action verbs

As the name indicates, these verbs describe actions. They describe things a person can do or demonstrate. For example “*she accepted the job offer*” (The action is to accept), “*He sings a song*” (The action is to sing). Action verbs can be either transitive or intransitive.

- Transitive verbs

The only thing to note with this category of verbs is that they are always followed by a direct object, which is someone or something that’s receiving the action of the verb. With transitive verbs, an object is required. Sentence with transitive verbs follow the pattern subject, **verb**, direct object. In the example below, subject is underlined, the transitive verb is bold, and the direct object is italicized.

- ❖ Molly **drove** *the car*.
- ❖ Joshua **ate** *the cake*
- ❖ Allen **wrote** *a letter*

- Intransitive verbs

Intransitive verbs are also verbs that show action. Unlike transitive verbs, they are ones that are not followed by a direct object. Nothing is receiving the action of the verb. Instead, the action is being performed by the subject of the sentence. For example:

- ❖ The plane **lands** at 5 o'clock.
- ❖ We **went** to the coffee shop.

Some verbs can be either transitive or intransitive; the type depends on how the verb is used in a sentence.

- Linking verbs

Linking verbs do not express action. Rather, they connect the subject to the additional information that's about to come. In other words, they link the subject to details about the subject. Various forms of the verb "*to be*" are linking verbs, including verbs like "*am*," "*is*," "*are*," and "*were*." For example;

- ❖ The car *was* here.
- ❖ I *am* Jennifer.

Some words (*such as smell, look or appear*) can be used as linking verbs or action verbs. With these words, it's important to consider the function the verb is performing in the sentence in order to identify the type.

- Helping verbs

Helping verbs do exactly what it seems like they should do. They help the main verb of the sentence by extending its meaning. They are used in cases where the linking verb on its own is not sufficient to form a complete thought or sentence. For example;

- ❖ We *are* reading the book together.
- ❖ He *will* run for president.

- Stative verbs

Stative verbs they describe a position or state of being; they have no duration, no beginning and no end. Normally they don't perform any action, notice that they are typically followed by a direct object. For example;

- ❖ You deserve prize.
- ❖ Henry loves Jenny.

6. PREPOSITION (P)

A preposition is an important part of the English language. It is used to show a relationship between a noun or pronoun in a sentence and another words in the sentence, and almost always a very small, very common word that shows direction (“to”) in (“a letter to you, ”), location (“at”) in (“at the door”), or time (“by”) in (“by noon”). Prepositions are typically followed by an object, which can be a noun (*noon*), a noun phrase (*the door*), or a pronoun (*you*).

The most common prepositions are; *at, by, for, from, in, of, on, to, and with*. Other common prepositions are; *about, above, across, after, against, along, among, around, because of, before, behind, below, beneath, between, close to, etc.*

7. CONJUNCTION

Conjunctions are used to connect words, phrases, and clause. They coordinate the words together so they make sense as a cohesive thought, sentence, or paragraph.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CONJUNCTIONS

- Coordinating conjunction

A coordinating conjunction connects words, phrases, and clauses of equal importance. The main coordinating conjunctions are *and, or, and but*. For example;

- ❖ They bought apples, pears, *and* oranges.
- ❖ You can wait either on the steps *or* in the car.
- ❖ The paintings are pleasant *but* bland.

- A subordinating conjunction

A subordinating conjunction introduces a subordinate clause (a clause that does not form a simple sentences by itself) and joins it to a main clause (a clause that can be used as a simple sentence by itself). *It had been quiet since the children left.*

8. INTERJECTION

Interjections are words used as exclamations to show feelings. They are usually abrupt, interrupting the speech for emotional effect. Are words or phrases which grammatically independent from the words around them, and mainly express feeling rather than meaning. For examples;

- ❖ Uh-oh, this look bad.
- ❖ I can't believe I lost the key! Ugh!