

Handy Guide to Writing and Grammar

Parts of Speech			
Part of Speech	Definition	Examples	Use in a Sentence
Verb	A word that shows an action or a state of being. It can also link the subject to the rest of the sentence.		
Action Verb	A verb that shows a physical or mental action.	run, think	I <u>run</u> very quickly. They <u>think</u> the movie will end soon.
Helping Verb	A word that cannot show action by itself but does help the main verb show action.	am, are, was, were, is, been, being have, has, had, having do, does, did can, should, must, may, might, shall would, could, may, will	We <u>might</u> leave the party early. Bill <u>should</u> make his bed. Margaret <u>can</u> play the piano.
Linking Verb	A verb that does not express action but links the subject of a sentence to words about the subject.	to be is, am, are, was, were, has been, have been, had been, is being, are being, was being, will have been to become become, becomes, became, has become, have become, had become, will become, will have become to seem seemed, seeming, seems, has seemed, have seemed, had seemed, is seeming, are seeming, was seeming, were seeming, will seem	The Bengal Tiger <u>is</u> endangered. Kayla <u>has been</u> a good student. Robin <u>has become</u> an excellent reader. You <u>have seemed</u> sad lately.
Adverb	A word that describes a verb, another adverb, or an adjective. Most adverbs end in <i>-ly</i> .	quickly, loudly, perfectly, very	Jill ran <u>quickly</u> across the room. Joe is <u>very</u> happy.
Noun	A person, place, thing, or idea.	father, mountain, machine, happiness	My <u>father</u> is on the <u>mountain</u> . <u>Happiness</u> is the key to a good life.
Proper Noun	A word that names a specific person, place, or thing.	Jonathan, Alabama, Ford	Can <u>Jonathan</u> come out and play?
Pronoun	A word used in place of a noun.	I, me, you, he, him, she, her they, them, we, us, it who, which, that	I told <u>you</u> <u>he</u> would come. <u>That</u> is not <u>him</u> .
Adjective	A word that describes a noun.	big, silly, smart	Fred is a <u>silly</u> boy.
Article	A word that combines with a noun to clarify what it refers to.	a, an, the	Don't run in <u>the</u> house.
Preposition	A word that connect nouns to other parts of the sentence. Prepositions usually indicate location, time, or relationship.	in, on, above, behind after, before, until of, for, by, from	Don't run <u>in</u> the house. She woke up <u>after</u> the bell rang. That letter is <u>from</u> my uncle.
Prepositional Phrase	A group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun.	on the table, under the sink, around the corner	The keys are <u>on the table</u> .
Conjunction	A word used to connect words, phrases, and clauses.	and, or, nor, but, so, yet, for	Please come inside <u>and</u> wash your hands.

Sentences					
Sentence	A group of words that expresses a complete thought. A sentence must have a subject and a predicate. A sentence is also called an <i>independent clause</i> .				
Parts of a Sentence					
Subject	The subject of a sentence is what the sentence is about.				
Predicate	The predicate of a sentence tells something about the subject.				
<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Jane and her dog</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">run through the park.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Subject</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Predicate</td> </tr> </table>		Jane and her dog	run through the park.	Subject	Predicate
Jane and her dog	run through the park.				
Subject	Predicate				
Types of Sentences					
Imperative Sentence	A sentence that gives a command or order. It ends with a period or exclamation mark. <i>Go clean your room!</i>				
Interrogative Sentence	A sentence that asks a question. It ends with a question mark. <i>Why aren't you cleaning your room?</i>				
Declarative Sentence	A sentence that makes a statement. It ends with a period. <i>I already cleaned my room.</i>				
Exclamatory Sentence	A sentence that shows strong emotion or excitement. It ends with an exclamation mark. <i>I can't believe that your room is so clean!</i>				
Grammar Rules					
Rules of Capitalization					
All sentences begin with a capital letter.					
Proper nouns begin with a capital letter.					
Geographical locations begin with a capital letter.					
The months of the year, the days of the week, and the names of holidays begin with a capital letter.					
The title of books, poems, songs, movies, newspapers, and magazines begin with a capital letter.					
Apostrophes					
Possessive nouns	Use apostrophes to show that a noun owns or has possession of something. <i>This is Carl's book.</i>				
Contractions	Use apostrophes to show that you have left out letters in a contraction. <i>I haven't seen Carl today.</i>				
Possessive Pronouns	Do NOT use apostrophes in the possessive pronouns <i>hers, yours, theirs, ours, or its</i> . When you write <i>it's</i> with an apostrophe, you are writing a contraction for "it is."				
Quotation Marks					
Quotation marks should be inserted only around the words a person speaks aloud.					
Periods, question marks, and exclamation points that are part of the quotation go within quotation marks.	Jill said, " I will go with you."				
A comma is used to set off the quotation from the rest of the sentence.	Mary yelled, "Stop it!"				
If the quotation ends with a question mark or exclamation point, you do not use a comma to set off the quotation.	"Should we leave them here?" asked Sam.				
Subject / Verb Agreement					
Plural subjects require plural verbs.	Her <u>friends</u> <i>are</i> at the fair.				
Singular subjects require singular verbs.	<u>She</u> <i>is</i> at the fair.				
A subject with two or more nouns separated by "and" requires a plural verb.	<u>She and her friends</u> <i>are</i> at the fair.				
A subject with two singular verbs separated by "or" requires a singular verb.	<u>The book or the pen</u> <i>is</i> in the drawer.				

Look out for phrases between the subject and the verb.	<u>Julie</u> , along with all of her friends, <u>is</u> at the fair.																																
The words <i>each, each one, either, neither, everyone, everybody, anybody, anyone, nobody, somebody, someone, and no one</i> are singular.	<u>Each</u> of the hotdogs <u>is</u> juicy. <u>Everybody</u> <u>knows</u> that hotdogs are tasty.																																
Identifying Dependent Clauses																																	
A <i>clause</i> is a group of words that contains a subject and verb. An independent clause is a complete sentence. Dependent clauses cannot stand alone as a sentence; they need to be attached to an independent clause. The following words often identify the beginning of a dependent clause:																																	
Related to Time	as, after, before, until, once, since, while, when, whenever <u>Before you go</u> , I want to show you something.																																
Related to Place	where, wherever You can go <u>wherever you want</u> .																																
Acknowledging Contradictions	although, though, despite <u>Although he loved chocolate</u> , he couldn't finish the whole candy bar.																																
Acknowledging Contingencies	if, even if, even though, how, unless, whether <u>Unless you come with me</u> , I won't go.																																
Examining Cause and Effect	because, in order to, why <u>Because she didn't feel well</u> , she stayed home from school.																																
Commas																																	
Rule 1: Commas separate items in a list.	I need to get eggs, milk, cheese, and butter at the grocery store.																																
Rule 2: Combining Two Clauses a) Two Independent Clauses A comma is used to combine two independent clauses with a conjunction. b) Independent Clause Followed by Dependent Clause Do not use a comma after an independent clause if it is followed by a dependent clause. c) Dependent Clause Followed by Independent Clause Use a comma if a dependent clause is followed by an independent clause.	a) <u>She stayed home from school</u> , and <u>she missed all her assignments</u> . b) <u>She stayed home from school</u> <i>because she didn't feel well</i> . c) <i>Because she didn't feel well</i> , <u>she stayed home from school</u> .																																
Rule 3: A comma is used in a sentence after a response of <i>yes</i> or <i>no</i> .	Yes, you can have dessert after dinner.																																
Rule 4: A comma is needed after a direct address.	Leslie, bring me your new book.																																
Rule 5: Use a comma in dates and between the names of cities and states.	She was born on <u>July 10, 1998</u> . We will visit <u>Richmond, Virginia</u> .																																
Irregular Verbs																																	
There are some verbs whose past tense form does not involve just adding <i>-ed</i> (or <i>-d</i> for verbs ending in <i>e</i>). These verbs are called irregular verbs.	Examples of irregular verbs: <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; margin-right: 20px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Present</th> <th>Past</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>become</td><td>became</td></tr> <tr><td>begin</td><td>began</td></tr> <tr><td>choose</td><td>chose</td></tr> <tr><td>feel</td><td>felt</td></tr> <tr><td>feed</td><td>fed</td></tr> <tr><td>wear</td><td>wore</td></tr> <tr><td>cut</td><td>cut</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Present</th> <th>Past</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>grow</td><td>grew</td></tr> <tr><td>have</td><td>had</td></tr> <tr><td>do</td><td>did</td></tr> <tr><td>go</td><td>went</td></tr> <tr><td>take</td><td>took</td></tr> <tr><td>find</td><td>found</td></tr> <tr><td>catch</td><td>caught</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Present	Past	become	became	begin	began	choose	chose	feel	felt	feed	fed	wear	wore	cut	cut	Present	Past	grow	grew	have	had	do	did	go	went	take	took	find	found	catch	caught
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Writing Participle Phrases		
<p>A participle is a verb form that can be used as an adjective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present participles end in: -ing. • The past participles of most verbs end in <i>-ed</i> or <i>-d</i> (such as <i>mixed</i> or <i>changed</i>). The past participles of irregular verbs usually in <i>-en</i>, <i>-t</i>, <i>-n</i>, or <i>-en</i> (<i>written</i>, <i>fought</i>, <i>grown</i>, <i>taken</i>). <p>A participle phrase is a group of words (starting with a participle) that describes a noun.</p>		
	Explanation	Example
Step 1	Choose the noun for your sentence.	- police
Step 2	Create the participle phrase that describes something about the noun.	- working under cover
Step 3	Decide where you want to place the participle phrase in the sentence. If it comes at the beginning, you need to put a comma after it. If it follows the noun, put a comma after the noun and after the phrase.	- <i>Working under cover</i> , the police made many arrests. - The police, <i>working under cover</i> , made many arrests.
Appositives		
An appositive is a noun or noun phrase that renames another noun beside it. An appositive is set off by commas within the sentence.		My father, <i>the man with the brown hat</i> , is waiting for me.
Rules for Possessive Nouns		
Rule 1: For singular nouns, form the possessive by adding 's.		The boy's hat ...
Rule 2: For plural nouns ending in <i>s</i> , add only an apostrophe.		Dogs' owners ...
Rule 3: For plural nouns not ending in <i>s</i> , add 's.		Children's coats ...
Rule 3: When a sentence indicates joint ownership in a compound construction, the possessive is attached only to the second noun.		The sister and brother's home ...
Rule 4: Individual ownership in a sentence is marked by a double possessive.		Courtney's and Mem's paintings ...
Spelling Rules for Adding -ed and -ing to Verbs		
General Spelling Rule: Add -ed or -ing to the end of the base verb.		work-> working -> worked play-> playing-> played
Exceptions		
If the base verb ends in:	Do this:	Example:
consonant + vowel + consonant and a stressed syllable (or is a one-syllable word)	First: Double the final consonant. Then: Add -ed or -ing.	stop -> stopping -> stopped tap -> tapping -> tapped But open -> opening -> opened because there is no stress on the last syllable of <i>open</i>
consonant + -e	First: Remove the -e. Then: Add -ed or -ing.	phone -> phoning -> phoned dance -> dancing -> danced rake -> raking -> raked dye -> dying -> dyed
-ie	To Add -ing: Change the -ie to -y and then add -ing. To form the past tense: Add -d	lie -> lying die -> dying lie -> lied die -> died

Writers Guide		
Figurative Language		
Metaphor	A comparison between two seemingly unrelated subjects.	The sea is <u>a raging monster</u> today.
Simile	A type of metaphor that uses <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> to make the comparison.	Her head is <u>as cold as ice</u> .
Alliteration	Repetition of the same sound at the beginning of words in the same sentence or verse.	The <u>slimy snake</u> <u>slipped</u> <u>silently</u> through the grass.
Irony	Verbal – When a speaker says one thing but means something else. Situational – When an outcome turns out to be very different from what was expected.	Verbal – You are having a bad day, and your mom says, “You’re in a great mood today.” Situational – Holding a sleeping baby, a mom says to her other children, “Be quiet, the baby’s sleeping!” and her voice wakes the baby up.
Imagery	The use of vivid language to create a picture in the reader’s mind	“The clouds were low and hairy...Like locks blown forward in the gleam of eyes.” – Robert Frost, “Once by the Pacific”
Personification	Giving inanimate objects, ideas, or animals human characteristics.	The car moaned when I turned the key.
Idiom	A group of words that, when used together, have a different meaning than the literal meaning of each word.	I heard <u>through the grapevine</u> that the team is getting a new coach.
Acronyms	A word formed from the initial letters in a phrase.	<u>NASA</u> – National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Onomatopoeia	A word or group of words that imitate the sound it is describing.	oink, boom, buzz, pop, hiccup, splash
Hyperbole	The use of exaggeration for effect.	My dog is the smartest dog in the whole wide world!
Story Elements		
Plot	The events that make up the action of a story.	
Setting	The time and place where the action of a story takes place.	
Character	A person, animal, or creature who takes part in the action of the story.	
Theme	A central message an author tries to convey.	
The Writing Process		
Pre-writing	Organize and record your ideas based on the form of writing you are doing.	
First Draft	Write what comes to your mind without worrying about mistakes.	
Revising	Read through your draft and add, cut, or change ideas; share your writing with someone to get feedback.	
Editing	Carefully read through each line and correct misspelled words and grammar.	
Final Draft/Publishing	Write or type a final version of your piece.	

Types of Writing	
Narrative Writing	
Definition	Narrative writing tells a story. A personal narrative tells about an event that happened to you. Narrative writing also includes made-up stories to entertain an audience.
Writing Tips	Showing the reader is much more effecting than telling the reader. Follow these tips to help you show the reader: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't tell how a character feels; instead, describe actions that reveal the character's emotions. • Use dialogue • Appeal to the reader's five senses. • Use action verbs and descriptive nouns (imagery).
Expository Writing	
Definition	Expository writing is writing that explains, describes, or provides information. Expository writing includes reports, lists, newspaper stories, speeches, biographies, magazine articles, and other informational writing.
Writing Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay focused on your topic. • Use good vocabulary. You want your reader to know that you are intelligent and know what you are talking about. • Organize your writing well. • Don't make statements that are not supported. • Use transitions such as <i>first</i>, <i>second</i>, <i>third</i>, <i>next</i>, <i>before</i> or <i>after</i>, and <i>finally</i>.
Persuasive Writing	
Definition	Persuasive writing attempts to convince the reader to believe something or to do something.
Writing Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a firm opinion that you want your reader to accept. • Grab your reader's attention in the opening paragraph with a story, quotation, or anecdote. • Clearly state your position in the opening paragraph. • Use statistics, research, real-life experiences, or examples to support your position. • Conclude with a restatement of what you want your reader to do or believe.

Writing Dialogue	
Using Dialogue Tags	
Balance basic tags like "said" with more descriptive tags like "screamed" or "muttered".	
	exclaimed, announced, replied, cried, screamed, mumbled, objected, hissed, hollered, asked, joked, laughed, ranted, muttered, shouted, shrieked, snickered, uttered, wailed, whined, whispered, yakked
Usually put the subject before the verb in the tag.	
	Use "the girl screamed" rather than "screamed the girl".
When a new character speaks, move to the the next line in the story and indent. Each speaker inhabits his or her own paragraph.	
	"Why do we have to go? We go every year and it is always so boring. Can't we just skip it?" Claire asked. "It's expected," her mother explained. "Do you think I really want to go again?" Claire begged, "Please don't make me."
Vary the placement of the tag. The tag can come before or after the words spoken. (Not every quote in a paragraph must have a tag. It will be clear who is talking if there is at least one tag. All the quotes in that paragraph will be from the same person. The paragraph that contains dialogue can contain other ideas, too.)	
	"It's expected," her mother explained. "Do you think I really want to go again?" She looked softly into Claire's eyes. "You know I would let you stay home if I could."
If the tag follows the quote, put a comma after the words spoken and inside the quotation marks. If the quote is a question or exclamation, use a question mark or exclamation point.	
	"What did you get for Christmas?" Josh asked. "Let's see what's in the box," Candace urged.
If the tag comes before the quote, put a comma after the tag and end the quote with correct punctuation inside the quotation marks.	
	Josh asked, "What did you get for Christmas?"