



Common Core
ENGLISH GRAMMAR
& Mechanics

4

Help Pages

Some material addressed in standards covered at earlier grade levels may not be available in these *Help Pages*, but you can access all grade levels of *Simple Solutions Common Core English Grammar & Mechanics Help Pages* at SimpleSolutions.org.

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Parts of Speech - Nouns

A **common noun** names a person, place, thing, or idea. A **proper noun** names a particular person, place, thing or idea. A proper noun begins with a capital letter. Nouns may be singular or plural.

Some of the Functions of Nouns

Subject	The subject is whom or what the sentence is about. <i>Example:</i> <u>Tom</u> likes to play piano.
Direct Object	A direct object receives the action of the verb. <i>Example:</i> Tom plays the <u>piano</u> . To find the DO, ask: Tom plays what?
Possessive	A possessive noun shows ownership and usually modifies another noun. <i>Examples:</i> <u>Mr. Gore's</u> class uses <u>Tom's</u> piano.

Parts of Speech - Pronouns

A **pronoun** takes the place of a noun. The noun that the pronoun is referring to is called the **antecedent**. The antecedent is in the same sentence or a recent, earlier sentence; occasionally, an antecedent is not specifically named. It is implied, or "understood."

Examples: The puppy is in its pen.
("its pen" refers to the puppy's pen, so "puppy" is the antecedent.)
It has been raining all day.
(There is no clear antecedent, but we know "it" refers to the weather.)

Personal Pronouns

Subject Pronouns	Used as the subject of a sentence or clause <i>Singular:</i> I, you, he/she, it <i>Plural:</i> we, you, they
Object Pronouns	Used as an object; found in the predicate of a sentence <i>Singular:</i> me, you, him/her, it <i>Plural:</i> us, you, them
Possessive Pronouns	Used to show ownership; modify nouns <i>Singular:</i> my, mine*, your, yours*, his*, her, hers*, its* <i>Plural:</i> our, ours*, your, yours*, their, theirs* * These can stand alone.

Relative Pronouns	Connect incomplete thoughts to complete thoughts (that, which, who, whom, whose, whoever, whomever, whichever, whatever) <i>Example:</i> She is the one <u>who</u> won the prize.
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Parts of Speech - Conjunctions

Coordinating Conjunctions	Join two equal elements or two complete thoughts Use the acronym FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) to remember them. <i>Example:</i> We swam in the ocean <u>and</u> roasted hot dogs over the fire.
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Parts of Speech - Adjectives

Adjectives modify nouns or pronouns. Adjectives tell *how many, what color, how big, how small, what kind*, and so on. **Example:** He was a tall man.

A proper adjective begins with a capital letter. **Example:** Siberian Husky

An **article** is a special type of adjective (a, an, the). **Example:** Throw Jack the ball.

Conventional Adjective Patterns

There is an accepted pattern to the order of speaking or writing types of adjectives. This table shows types of adjectives and the order in which they would normally be spoken or written.

Number	Observation or opinion	Physical properties				Noun
		Size	Shape	Age	Color	
seven	beautiful	large			blue	marbles
dozen		small	oval			eggs
a	slow			old		turtle
couple	smart			young		toddlers

Parts of Speech - Verbs

Action Shows an action

Example: A stunt man performs dangerous feats.

The symphony performs every Sunday.

Being Does not show action; shows a state of being

Examples: is, are, was, were, be, am, being, been

Helping Pairs with a main verb to form a verb phrase

Examples: is, are, was, were, be, am, being, been, might, could, should, would, can, do, does, did, may, must, will, shall, have, has, had

Verb Tense

Verb tense tells the time when the action or condition of the verb occurs.

Simple Verb Tenses

Present The action is occurring now or is unchanging.

The house is new. (singular subject)

The boys swim. (plural)

Past The action was started and completed in the past.

The clock stopped. (singular subject)

The buses ran. (plural)

Future The action will not start until the future.

The snow will fall. (singular subject)

The lakes will freeze. (plural)

Progressive Verb Tenses

A main verb that ends in *-ing* works with a helping verb to form the progressive tense.

Present She is sleeping.
They are eating.

Past She was sleeping.
They were eating.

Future She will be sleeping.
They will be eating.

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Irregular Verbs					
Present	Past	Use with <i>has, have, or had</i>	Present	Past	Use with <i>has, have, or had</i>
am/is/are	was/were	been	keep	kept	kept
begin	began	begun	make	made	made
blow	blew	blown	mistake	mistook	mistaken
break	broke	broken	ride	rode	ridden
bring	brought	brought	ring	rang	rung
build	built	built	say	said	said
choose	chose	chosen	shrink	shrank	shrunk
do	did	done	sing	sang	sung
draw	drew	drawn	speak	spoke	spoken
drink	drank	drunk	steal	stole	stolen
drive	drove	driven	stink	stank	stunk
eat	ate	eaten	swim	swam	swum
fall	fell	fallen	teach	taught	taught
fly	flew	flown	tear	tore	torn
freeze	froze	frozen	tell	told	told
get	got	gotten	think	thought	thought
grow	grew	grown	throw	threw	thrown
have	had	had	wear	wore	worn

Parts of Speech - Prepositions					
<p>Prepositions relate nouns or pronouns to other words in the sentence. A prepositional phrase begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or a pronoun.</p>					
Some Common Prepositions					
about	around	by	into	out	under
above	before	down	near	outside	underneath
across	behind	during	nearby	over	until
after	below	except	next to	past	up
against	beneath	for	of	through	upon
along	beside	from	off	throughout	with
alongside	between	in	on	to	within
among	beyond	inside	onto	toward	without

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Parts of Speech - Adverbs						
Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.						
Adverbs That Tell <i>When</i>						
after	before	finally	never	often	until	while
always	earlier	later	next	sometimes	when	yesterday
Adverbs That Tell <i>How</i>						
beautifully	eagerly	greedily	noisily	politely	quietly	selfishly
calmly	gracefully	loudly	perfectly	quickly	sadly	wildly
Adverbs That Tell <i>Where</i>						
back	down	forward	in	outside	there	up
behind	everywhere	here	inside	somewhere	under	upward
Adverbs That Tell <i>To What Extent</i>						
almost	completely	extremely	rather	scarcely	thoroughly	totally
also	entirely	quite	really	somewhat	too	very
Sentences						
A sentence is a complete thought that includes a subject and a verb.						
Features of a sentence:						
1. begins with a capital letter						
2. ends with punctuation/end mark						
3. conveys a complete thought						
Parts of a Sentence						
Subject	The simple subject tells whom or what the sentence is about but does not include any words that describe the subject. The complete subject includes the simple subject plus all of the modifiers that go with it. Example: <i>A few hungry teenagers</i> devoured the pizza. <i>Teenagers</i> is the simple subject. <i>A few hungry teenagers</i> is the complete subject.					
Predicate	The simple predicate is the verb. The complete predicate is the verb plus the other words that say something about the subject – what the subject is or does. Example: The tired children climbed slowly upstairs. <i>Climbed</i> is the simple predicate, or verb. <i>Climbed slowly upstairs</i> is the complete predicate.					
The Four Sentence Types						
Type	Other Name	Punctuation	Example:			
declarative	statement	period	This is a sentence.			
interrogative	question	question mark	Is this correct?			
imperative	command/request	period	Please open the door.			
exclamatory	exclamation	exclamation point	This is awesome!			

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Sentences (continued)	
<p>Fragments A fragment is not a sentence because it does not express a complete thought. A fragment is missing either a subject or a verb.</p> <p>Examples: The book that I read. (missing a verb) Running down the street. (missing a subject)</p>	
<p>Run-on Sentences A run-on is two or more complete thoughts that run together without proper punctuation or conjunctions.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Incorrect: The twins really wanted to ride the rollercoaster there was a height requirement they were too short decided to ride the Ferris wheel instead.</p> <p>Correct: The twins really wanted to ride the rollercoaster. There was a height requirement, and they were too short. They decided to ride the Ferris wheel instead.</p>	
Sentence Structure	
Simple	<p>Parts: subject and predicate only Example: We will hold a rally at the local park.</p>
Compound	<p>Parts: two or more complete thoughts Joined by: coordinating conjunction Example: There will be speeches in the morning, and we will play games in the afternoon.</p>
Complex	<p>Parts: one complete thought and one or more incomplete thoughts Joined by: subordinating conjunction Example: I took my umbrella because it was raining.</p>
Punctuation	
Commas (,)	<p>Use commas to separate words or phrases in a series. Example: Sun brought a coloring book, some crayons, and a pair of scissors.</p>
	<p>Use a comma to separate two independent clauses joined by a conjunction. Example: Dad works in the city, and he is a commuter.</p>
	<p>Use a comma to separate two words or two numbers when writing a date. Example: Friday, April 8, 2011</p>
	<p>Use a comma between the city and state in an address. Examples: Boston, MA Seattle, WA Honolulu, HI</p>
	<p>Use commas in greetings and closings of letters. Examples: Dear Mr. Clydesdale, Sincerely yours,</p>
Apostrophe (')	<p>Use an apostrophe to form a contraction or a possessive noun. Examples: I don't want to go. That was Sherry's little sister.</p>
End marks	<p>Use end punctuation for sentences. See Four Sentence Types.</p>

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Punctuation (continued)

Commas and Quotation Marks in Dialogue

Put quotation marks before and after the actual words that someone says. Quotation marks are like a frame around spoken words. Keep the end mark inside the quotes.

Example: She said, "We need to go now."

Capitalize the first word of a sentence in quotes.

Example: "Wait," said Sam, "the door is locked."

Use a comma or end mark before and after a quote.

Examples: "It's starting to rain!" Marcy exclaimed. Mickey replied, "Don't worry, you won't melt."

Do not use a comma at the end of a sentence within quotes if there is another end mark.

Example: "Grandma's here!" exclaimed Sasha.

Capitalization Rules

Capitalize the first word in a sentence, the pronoun *I*, proper nouns, and proper adjectives.

Capitalize names of days and months.

Capitalize holidays, product names, and geographic names. These are all proper nouns.

Capitalize the first, last and the important words in titles.

Example: *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*

Other Types of Punctuation

Punctuating Titles

Show the title of a book, movie, play, television show, magazine, or website by using italics or by underlining it.

Examples: *Sarah, Plain and Tall* or Sarah, Plain and Tall
Peter and the Wolf or Peter and the Wolf
Sesame Street or Sesame Street

Put quotation marks around the title of a short work, such as a poem, song, short story, article or book chapter.

Examples: "Dreams" is a poem by Langston Hughes.

We sang "Jingle Bells" and many other winter songs.

"The Monkey's Paw" is a scary short story by W.W. Jacobs.

In My Side of the Mountain, by Jean Craighead George, one of the chapters is called "The Old, Old Tree."

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Proofreader's Symbols		
Description	Symbol	Example
Make capital	≡	<u>the</u> car raced down the street.
Add something	^	The car raced down [^] street. the
Make lower case	/	The car raced down the street.
Take something out	~	The car raced down the the street.
Check spelling	o ^{sp}	The <u>cor</u> ^{sp} raced down the street.
Indent	¶	¶The car raced down the street.
Add end punctuation	o ! ?	The car raced down the street o

Greek and Latin Roots and Affixes and Their Meanings

Word Part	Meaning	Word Part	Meaning
<i>able, ible</i>	able to	<i>hema</i>	blood
<i>anti</i>	against	<i>il</i>	opposite
<i>auto</i>	self	<i>im/in</i>	not
<i>bio</i>	life	<i>ion, tion, sion</i>	forms noun from verb
<i>centi</i>	hundred	<i>ment</i>	state of
<i>co</i>	together	<i>mono</i>	one
<i>dec</i>	ten	<i>ology</i>	study of
<i>dent</i>	tooth	<i>port</i>	carry
<i>dia</i>	across	<i>pre</i>	before
<i>dis</i>	not	<i>re</i>	again
<i>er</i>	one who does	<i>scrip</i>	to write
<i>ess</i>	female	<i>sent</i>	feel
<i>ful</i>	full of	<i>ty, ity</i>	forms noun from adjective
<i>graph, gram</i>	written	<i>un</i>	not

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Figurative Language

A **simile** is a way to describe something using a comparison. A simile compares two things using the words *like* or *as*.

Example: The baby is *as playful as a kitten*. (A baby is compared to a kitten.)

A **metaphor** compares two things but does not use *like* or *as*. It uses a form of the verb *be*.

Example: Joey is *a magnet for bad luck*. (He attracts bad luck.)

An **idiom** is a phrase whose meaning can't be understood from the literal meaning of the words.

Example: *This article is way over my head*. (This phrase could mean something is taller than I am. But when *over my head* is an idiom, it means something is too complicated to be understood.)

Examples: We bought a used car, and it's a real lemon!
(refers to a car that has many problems or doesn't run)

At first I was angry, but I got over it.
(refers to letting go of something that was upsetting)

An **adage** or **proverb** is a wise saying that most people think is true. It may give advice.

Example: *All that glitters is not gold*. (This saying warns us that something might seem valuable, but really is not valuable.)

Spelling Rules

Adding Prefixes

When adding a prefix or joining two words, do not change the spelling of the base word.

Examples: precook, cookbook

Adding Suffixes that Begin with a Consonant

When adding a suffix that begins with a consonant, do not change the spelling of the base word.

Examples: joy + ful → joyful wool + ly → woolly agree + ment → agreement
pain + ful → painful sincere + ly → sincerely govern + ment → government

Common Exceptions: argue + ment → argument true + ly → truly nine + th → ninth
judge + ment → judgment due + ly → duly awe + ful → awful

Adding Suffixes that Begin with a Vowel

When a word ends in a **vowel + y**, add a suffix without changing the spelling of the base word.

Examples: employ + er → employer play + ing → playing
gray + est → grayest enjoy + ment → enjoyment

When a word ends in **silent -e**, usually drop the -e to add a suffix that begins with a vowel.

Examples: love + able → lovable

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Spelling Rules (continued)

Adding Suffixes that Begin with a Vowel

When a word ends in a **consonant + y** pattern, usually change the *y* to *i* when adding a suffix.

Examples: try + ed → tried (ends in consonant + y; change the *y* to *i*)

Do not change the *y* to *i* if the word ends in a vowel + *y* pattern or if the suffix is *ing*.

Examples: destroy + ed → destroyed (vowel + *y*)
hurry + ing → hurrying (suffix is *ing*)

When a one-syllable word ends in the **CVC pattern (consonant - vowel - consonant)**, usually double the final consonant to add a suffix that begins with a vowel.

Examples: ship + ing → shipping (suffix begins with a vowel)
ship + ment → shipment (suffix begins with a consonant)
nut + y → nutty (suffix is *y*)

When a one-syllable word ends in the **CVC pattern**, and the final consonant is **s, x** or **w**, do not double the final consonant.

Examples: mix + ing → mixing box + ed → boxed slow + er → slower

When a multi-syllable word ends in the **CVC pattern**, and the **accent is on the last syllable**, usually double the final consonant to add a suffix that begins with a vowel.

Example: commit + ing → committing (suffix begins with a vowel)

Common Exception: prefer + able → preferable

Making Plurals

When a word **ends in s, x, z, ch, or sh** add *-es* to make the plural

Examples: tax → taxes; wish → wishes

Many words that **end in f or fe**, change the *f* or *fe* to *-ves*.

Examples: life → lives; thief → thieves

Other words that **end in f or ff** do not follow the rule for making plurals.

Examples: cliff → cliffs; belief → beliefs

Irregular plural nouns have a completely different spelling in the plural form.

Common irregular plural nouns							
child	children	man	men	ox	oxen	tooth	teeth
louse	lice	mouse	mice	person	people	woman	women

Additional Spelling Rule

Place *i* before *e*, except after *c*, or when sounded like /ā/ as in neighbor and weigh.

Examples: mischief receive eight

There are many exceptions to spelling rules. If you are not sure of the spelling of a word, use a dictionary to check.