

Language reference

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Adjectives with -ed and -ing

There are many adjectives which are formed with *-ed* or *-ing*. Some adjectives do not have both forms, e.g. *living* but not *lived*.

- Adjectives with *-ed* express how the person feels about something:

*I was **fascinated** by the photos of her trip to Australia on her Facebook page.*

- Adjectives with *-ing* are used to describe the person or thing which produces the feeling:

*Have you seen that **amazing** video on YouTube? (I felt amazed when I saw it.)*

➔ See also page 176: Spelling

Articles

The indefinite article

We use *a* or *an*:

- with singular, countable nouns mentioned for the first time:

*A **blue car** came round the corner.*

*We have a **new chemistry teacher**.*

- to talk about jobs:

*His mother's a **doctor**.*

We do not use *a* or *an* with uncountable nouns or plural countable nouns:

Knowledge makes people powerful.

More women go to university in this country than men.

- Use *an* before words which begin with a vowel sound: *an app*, *an email* (but not when the letters 'u' or 'e' produce a 'y' sound: *a useful tool*, *a European student*, *a university*).
- When 'h' is silent, use *an*: *an hour*, *an honest man*

The definite article

The is used:

- with things we have mentioned before or when it's clear who or what we are referring to from the context:
*I've got two new teachers. **The maths teacher** is from California and **the English teacher** is from Ireland.*
*Could you go to **the bank** for me, please? (i.e. the bank we always use)*
- when referring to particular things:
*I love music, but I don't like **the music my sister listens to**.*
- with things which are unique: ***the Internet**, **the moon***
- with adjectives to express groups:
*In this country, **the rich** are growing richer and **the poor** are growing poorer.*
- with nationalities:
the French**, **the Spanish**, **the Italians

- with superlative adjectives:
the best**, **the longest
- with ordinal numbers (e.g. ***the first**, **the second**, **the third***) used as adjectives:
*Manolo won **the first prize** and Igor won **the second**.*
- with names of countries which include these words: *Republic, Kingdom, States* or *Emirates*:
The Czech Republic**, **The United Kingdom**, **The United States**, **The United Arab Emirates
- with names of rivers, mountain ranges, seas and oceans:
the Nile**, **the Alps**, **the Mediterranean**, **the Pacific
- with many common expressions:
*at **the moment**, at **the age of 15**, in **the end**, on **the one hand** ... on **the other hand***

Do not use *the*, *a* or *an*:

- when talking in general and in the plural:
Teachers are not paid enough.
I can't imagine offices without computers.
- with many common expressions:
in bed/hospital/prison/school: He's in bed.
at home/university/work: I'm at university.
(go) to bed/hospital/university/work: What time do you go to work?

as and like

as

We use *as*:

- to say someone or something is that thing, or has that function:
*He works **as a nurse**.*
*She uses email **as a way of** keeping in touch with friends.*
*Can I give you some advice **as a friend**?*
- to mean *the same as* before a subject + verb or a past participle:
*Things happened exactly **as I had predicted**.*
*The exam was **as expected** – very difficult!*
- to mean 'because':
***As tomorrow is a public holiday**, I will not be giving you any homework to do.*
- after certain verbs including *describe* and *regard*:
*The teachers **regard you as the best group of students in the school**.*
*The police **are describing him as extremely dangerous**.*
- with adjectives and adverbs to make comparisons:
*Mike is **not as clever as** his sister.*
- to mean 'for example' in the phrase *such as*:
*I spent the summer travelling round Europe and visiting lots of places **such as Venice, Florence and Barcelona**.*
- with the same ... *as*:
*You're wearing **the same colour shirt as me!***

- in the phrases *as far as I know* (I think it's true but I don't know all the facts), *as far as I'm concerned* (this is my personal opinion), *as far as I can see/tell* (this is what I've noticed or understood):

As far as I know, my grandparents have always lived in the same house.

*I don't mind how much money you spend on clothes – you can spend all your money on clothes **as far as I'm concerned**.*

*Arsenal aren't going to win the cup this year **as far as I can see**.*

like

We use *like*:

- to mean 'similar to' (especially after the verbs *be, seem, feel, look, sound, smell* and *taste*):
*He's eating what **looks like** a hamburger.*
*This swimming pool is fantastic – the artificial waves mean it's **like** swimming in the sea.*
- to mean 'for example':
*He enjoys all sorts of adventure sports **like** paragliding, windsurfing and canoeing.*

Causative have and get

We use *have/get* + something + *done* (*cleaned / fixed / made, etc.*) when we ask someone else to do something for us:

*I've just **had** my bike mended.* (i.e. Someone has mended my bike for me.)

- get* is less formal than *have*:
*My dad **has just got** some new furniture delivered.*
- It's not usually necessary to say who did it for us, but it is possible:
*I'm going to **have** my hair dyed blonde this afternoon by my sister.* (i.e. My sister is going to dye my hair for me.)
- have/get* + something + *done* can be used in any tense or form:
*I'm going to **get** my suit dry-cleaned for the wedding.*
- We can also use this structure to say we have been the victim of something:
*Tim **had** his wallet stolen while he was waiting for the bus.*

→ See also page 177: The passive

Conditionals

Conditional sentences express a condition (*If ...*) and the consequence of the condition. The consequence can be expressed before or after the condition:

If you come to Canada, we can visit Vancouver.

We can visit Vancouver if you come to Canada.

Note: If the condition comes first, a comma is used. If the consequence comes first, no comma is used.

Zero conditional

We use a zero conditional to express:

- things which are always or generally true:
*If the teacher **is** late, it **sets** a bad example to the class.*
*People **tend to get** annoyed if/when you **shout** at them.*
- scientific facts:
***When/If** water boils, it **evaporates**.*

Note: In zero conditionals, *when* and *if* often mean the same.

First conditional

We use a first conditional to express a future condition we think is possible or likely:

*If I **get** the job, I'll **buy** myself a new car.*

*If you **wash** the car, it **will** look much smarter.*

*I **won't** phone you **unless** it's urgent.*

*You **can** have an ice cream if you **behave** well.*

*You **shouldn't** go swimming **unless** you **think** it's safe.*

*If he **phones**, **tell** him I'm busy.*

Note: *unless* means 'except if'. We can often use *unless* instead of *if not*:

*I can't watch the football with you **unless** I finish my school work beforehand.* (I can't watch the football with you if I don't finish my school work before the game begins.)

Second conditional

We use a second conditional to express a present or future condition which is imaginary, contrary to the facts, impossible or improbable:

*I **would** go for a walk if it **wasn't** so cold.*

*If I **was** as rich as Bill Gates, I **wouldn't** work.* (Being as rich as Bill Gates is imaginary.)

*I **wouldn't** fly in a helicopter **unless** I was sure it was completely safe.* (This is how I would feel in this situation.)

*We'd **win** more matches if we trained harder.* (This is contrary to the facts – we don't train hard enough.)

Third conditional

We use a third conditional to talk about:

- something which did not happen in the past and
- its results, which are imaginary.

*If you **had gone** to the concert, you **would have enjoyed** it.
If you **had phoned** me this morning, I **would not have been** late for school.*

*If I **had lived** in the 19th century, I **would have gone** to school by horse. (If I had lived in the 19th century (something which did not happen – I am alive now), I would have gone to school by horse (an imaginary consequence because I didn't live in the 19th century).)*

*If he **hadn't reacted** quickly, the hippo **would have killed** him. (He reacted quickly, so the hippo didn't kill him.)*

Note: We can contract the third conditional as follows:
*If I'd lived in the 19th century, I'd have gone to school by horse.
If he **hadn't** been in such a hurry, he **wouldn't** have had an accident.*

We can use *could* and *might* instead of *would*:

*If our team had played harder, they **could have won** the match. (They had the ability to win the match, but they didn't, because they didn't play hard enough.)*

*If our team had played harder, they **would have won** the match. (They were sure to win, but they didn't because they didn't play hard enough.)*

*If the weather had been better, we **might have gone** swimming. (Swimming was a possibility.)*

*If the weather had been better, we **would have gone** swimming. (Swimming was a certainty.)*

Mixed conditionals

When we want to use a conditional sentence to talk about both the past and the present, we can use second conditional in one part of the sentence and third conditional in the other:

*If tickets **weren't so expensive**, I'd have gone to the cinema last night.*

2nd conditional (present time)

3rd conditional (past time)

- The tickets are expensive and that is why the speaker didn't go to the cinema.

*If Mar **hadn't fallen off her bike**, she'd be champion now.*

3rd conditional (past time)

2nd conditional (present time)

- Mar fell off her bike and that is why she isn't champion.

Note: You cannot use zero or first conditionals in mixed conditionals.

Countable and uncountable nouns

Nouns can be either countable [C] or uncountable [U].

However, some nouns can be both countable [C] and uncountable [U], but with a difference in meaning:

*They say it's healthy to drink **tea**.* (tea in general, uncountable)

*Would you like **a tea**?* (a cup of tea, countable)

*Living in a large house **is a lot of work**.* (work in general, uncountable)

*That picture **is a work of art**.* (a particular work, countable)

The grammar for countable nouns is different from the grammar for uncountable nouns.

countable nouns	uncountable nouns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use <i>a</i> or <i>an</i> in the singular: a job, an animal • can be made plural: cars, books • use <i>some</i> and <i>any</i> in the plural: some friends, any answers • use <i>few</i> and <i>many</i> in the plural: few students, many years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not use <i>a</i> or <i>an</i> • cannot be made plural: work, music • use verbs in the singular: The news <i>is</i> good, Music <i>helps</i> me relax. • use <i>some</i> and <i>any</i> in the singular: some food, any advice • use <i>little</i> and <i>much</i> in the singular: little information, much homework • use other words to refer to a quantity: a piece of advice, a small amount of money



Some common uncountable nouns in English

accommodation advice behaviour countryside
damage equipment experience food furniture
homework housework information knowledge
luggage media music news paper pollution
research scenery smoke software stuff
transport work

Infinitive and verb + -ing forms

Infinitive

We use the infinitive:

- to say why we do something:
I've just gone running to get some exercise.
He's taken up tennis to make friends.
- to say why something exists:
There's an example to help you.
- after too and enough:
It's too cold to go swimming today.
He isn't good enough to make the national team.
- We use the infinitive in the following verb patterns:

verb + to infinitive	agree appear bother decide demand fail hope learn manage offer plan refuse seem be supposed threaten	<i>She agreed to meet him after work.</i>
verb + (somebody/ something) + to infinitive	ask choose expect help intend promise want	<i>She expected to win the race.</i> <i>I expect you to play in the match.</i>
verb + somebody/ something + to infinitive	advise allow enable encourage forbid force invite order permit persuade recommend remind teach tell warn	<i>The money enabled him to go to university.</i>

- We use these verbs from the lists above to report speech:

advise agree allow ask decide encourage
forbid invite offer order permit persuade
promise recommend refuse remind
tell threaten warn

→ See also page 173: Reported speech

Verb + -ing

We use a verb + -ing:

- after prepositions:
He's made a lot of friends by joining the tennis club.
We watched a film about climbing in the mountains.

Note: We also use a verb + -ing after to when to is a preposition:

I'm looking forward to going on holiday.
She's used to studying everything in English.

- as subjects or objects of a sentence:
Climbing is safer than it looks.
He decided to take up running.

We use a verb + -ing after these verbs:

admit appreciate avoid celebrate consider
delay deny dislike enjoy finish imagine
involve keep mind miss postpone practise
regret risk stop suggest

I really enjoyed winning that match.
She suggested playing a game of squash after school.

We can use these verbs from the list above in reported speech:

admit deny regret suggest

→ See page 174: Reported speech – reporting verbs

We use a verb + -ing after these expressions:

it's no good it's not worth it's no use
it's a waste of time can't stand can't bear can't help

It's not worth joining that sports club.
It's a waste of time entering the competition unless you're really fit.
I can't bear watching my team when they play badly.

Verbs followed by either an infinitive or a verb + -ing with almost the same meaning:

love begin continue hate prefer like start

I love playing tennis. I love to play tennis.
It continued raining all day. It continued to rain all day.

Note: When love, hate, prefer and like are used with would, they are always followed by the infinitive:

I wouldn't like to do an adventure race.
I'd prefer to watch it on television.

Verbs followed by either an infinitive or a verb + -ing with a difference in meaning

	verb + infinitive	verb + -ing
remember	<i>Did you remember to bring your running shoes?</i> (an action you have to do)	<i>I remember feeling very tired at the end of the race.</i> (a memory of something in the past)
forget	<i>Don't forget to bring your tennis racket.</i> (an action you have to do)	<i>I'll never forget winning my first tennis championship.</i> (a memory of something in the past)
regret	<i>I regret to tell you the race has been cancelled.</i> (regret + to say / to tell / to inform means 'I'm sorry to give you this information'.)	<i>I regret not training harder before the race.</i> (I'm sorry I didn't do this.)
try	<i>I'm running every day because I'm trying to get fit.</i> (My objective is to get fit.)	<i>If you want to get fit, why don't you try swimming?</i> (Swimming is a method to reach your objective.)
mean	<i>Mario means to win the championship.</i> (This is his intention.)	<i>I wanted to be a swimming champion, but it meant going to the pool every day at 5.30.</i> (it involved)
stop	<i>Halfway through the marathon, he stopped to drink some water.</i> (in order to drink some water)	<i>When he realised he couldn't win, he stopped running.</i> (He didn't continue.)

Note: The form *forget + verb + -ing* is unusual. It is more normal to use (not) *remember*:

~~*I forget riding a bike the first time.*~~ *I don't remember riding a bike the first time.*

Linking words and phrases: when, if, in case, even if and even though

We use *when* to talk about:

- a situation:
*I feel very uncomfortable **when** the weather is so hot.*
- something we know will happen at some point in time:
*I'm writing an essay at the moment. **When** I finish, I'll phone you back.*

We use *if* to describe:

- something we are not sure will happen:
*We'll miss the beginning of the film **if** the bus is late.*
- Compare:
***If** I get a place at university, my parents will buy me a new car.* (I'm not sure if I'll get a place at university.)
***When** I get a place at university, my parents will buy me a new car.* (I'm confident I'll get a place at university.)

We use *in case* with the:

- present tense to talk about something which might happen in the future:
*I'll take a book to read **in case** I have to wait a long time for the train.*
*Take a bottle of water with you **in case** you get thirsty.*
- past simple to explain why someone did something:
*Clara turned off her mobile phone **in case** it rang during the exam.* (She thought it might ring during the exam, so she turned it off.)

in case and *if* are different. Compare:

- *I'll take my swimming costume **in case** we go to the beach.* (I'll take it now because we might go to the beach later.)
- *I'll take my swimming costume **if** we go to the beach.* (I won't take my swimming costume now, because I don't know if we'll go to the beach – we might not go.)

We use *even though* as a stronger way of saying *although* when we are certain about something:

- *He bought a new computer, **even though** his old one was working perfectly.* (The speaker is certain the old one was working perfectly.)
- *I'm really looking forward to my holiday, **even though** the weather forecast is for rain.* (The speaker knows the weather forecast is for rain.)

We use *even if* as a stronger way of saying *if*, when we are not certain about something:

- *I'm going to have a holiday in the USA this summer **even if** I fail all my exams.* (I'm not sure if I'm going to fail my exams – but I'm going to have the holiday anyway.)
- *I'll come to your party **even if** I have to walk there.* (I don't know if I'll have to walk there, but I'll make sure I come to your party.)

Linking words for contrast

We use these linking words to show contrast:

although even though while whereas but
 however despite in spite of
 on the one hand, ... (on the other hand,)

although, even though, while and whereas

- We use *although*, *even though*, *while* and *whereas* to put two contrasting ideas in one sentence:
*I didn't buy the dress **although** I thought it was beautiful.*
- They can be placed at the beginning of the sentence or in the middle, between the two contrasting ideas:
*It was late. She decided to phone him. → **Although** it was late, she decided to phone him.* OR *She decided to phone him **although** it was late.*
- When the sentence begins with *although*, *even though*, *while* or *whereas*, we separate the two parts with a comma. When these words are placed in the middle, the comma is optional:
Berlin is a noisy city. My home village is quite peaceful.
 → ***While** Berlin is a noisy city, my home village is quite peaceful.* OR *Berlin is a noisy city **whereas** my home village is quite peaceful.*
- *even though* is stronger than *although*:
*I didn't buy the car, **even though** I had the money ready in my pocket.*

but

- *but* can be used to join two sentences. In this case, it is used in the middle of the sentence and it often follows a comma:
*We warned her, **but** she didn't pay any attention.*
- *but* can sometimes be used at the beginning of a new sentence:
*He likes romantic films. **But** don't tell anybody!*

→ See also page 177: Using commas

however

- *however* normally starts a new sentence and refers to the sentence before.
- It is usually followed by a comma:
*He decided to go out to the cinema. **However**, he didn't tell his family where he was going.*

despite and in spite of

- *despite* and *in spite of* mean 'without taking any notice of or being influenced by'; 'not prevented by':
*He got into the basketball team **despite** being quite short.*
*She went swimming **in spite of** the cold weather.*
- They can be placed at the beginning of the sentence or in the middle. They are followed by a noun or a verb + *-ing*.
- When used at the beginning of a sentence, a comma is also used to separate the two parts of the sentence:
***Despite** working all day, Teresa didn't feel at all tired.*
*We got to school on time **in spite of** the heavy traffic.*

on the one hand, ... (on the other hand,)

- *on the one hand ... (on the other hand)* normally start new sentences and can be used to balance two contrasting ideas or points of view:
*I'm not sure whether to go to the seaside for my holidays this year. **On the one hand**, most of my friends are going. **On the other hand**, it's time to have a change and go somewhere different.*
- *on the other hand* can be used to introduce a contrasting idea even if you haven't used *on the one hand*:
*Doing sport can be a great way to relax. **On the other hand**, it can cause quite serious injuries.*

look, seem and appear

We use these verbs to express our impressions of something or someone:

*I haven't talked to him very much, **but** he **seems** very intelligent.*
*You still **look** tired, even if you have slept all night.*

We use these with the following patterns:

<i>look/seem/appear + adjective</i>	<i>She looks very old.</i> <i>He seems hungry.</i> <i>Marga appeared tired.</i>
<i>subject + look + as if + sentence</i>	<i>The car looks as if it needs washing.</i> <i>You look as if you've had a bad day.</i>
<i>it looks/seems/appears + as if + sentence</i>	<i>It looks as if the car needs washing.</i> <i>It seems as if you've had a bad day.</i>
<i>seem/appear + infinitive</i>	<i>The weather seems to have changed.</i> <i>She appeared to be crying.</i>
<i>look/seem + like + noun</i>	<i>He looks like my uncle.</i> <i>It may seem like an impossible task, but it isn't really.</i>

Making comparisons

Comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs

comparative forms	adjective/adverb + -er + <i>than</i> more + adjective/ adverb + <i>than</i>	<i>Tennis is cheaper than golf.</i> <i>Marina works harder than before.</i> <i>Golf is more expensive than tennis.</i> <i>It rains more often than in the past.</i>
superlative forms	<i>the</i> + adjective/ adverb + -est the most + adjective/adverb	<i>Chess is one of the cheapest hobbies.</i> <i>Playing team sports is the most sociable free-time activity.</i>

Comparison of adjectives

Add -er and -est with:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one-syllable adjectives: <i>Fiona is fitter than last year.</i> two-syllable adjectives ending in -y and -ly, e.g. <i>happy, friendly</i>: <i>My brother's the friendliest person in my family.</i>
Use <i>more</i> and <i>most</i> with:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adjectives of two syllables or more (except two-syllable adjectives ending in -y and -ly): <i>Biking is the most dangerous activity.</i>

➔ See also page 176: Spelling

These form irregular comparisons:

good – better – best	bad – worse – worst
well – better – best	badly – worse – worst
much – more – most	many – more – most
little – less – least	far – farther/further – farthest/furthest

To say two things are the same, use *as* + adjective + *as*:
*She finds doing aerobics **as interesting as** playing team sports* (this means 'She finds doing aerobics and playing team sports equally interesting').

To say that one thing is less than another, use:

- not so/as* + adjective + *as*:
*Window shopping is **not so/as enjoyable as** clubbing.*
- less/least* + adjective:
*Playing chess is **less healthy than** playing team sports.*
*Clubbing is **the least healthy** activity you can do.*

Comparison of adverbs

Add -er and -est with:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one-syllable adverbs, e.g. <i>hard, fast, straight</i>: <i>My mum works harder than my dad.</i>
Use <i>more</i> and <i>most</i> with:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two-syllable adverbs including adverbs ending in -ly: <i>Maria read the text more quickly than Susanna.</i> <i>She visits me more often than in the past.</i>

These adverbs form irregular comparisons:

well – better – best badly – worse – worst

To say two things are the same, use *as* + adverb + *as*:
*Julia finished the exercise **as quickly as** Mark.* (Julia and Mark finished the exercise equally quickly.)

To say that we do one thing differently from another, use:

- not so/as* + adverb + *as*:
*Sophie **doesn't** speak Spanish **so/as well as** Gordon.*

We can use words and phrases with comparative forms to express large and small differences. These are some ways of expressing a large difference:

- much / far / a lot / considerably* + adjective/adverb + -er/more + adjective/adverb:
*Playing team sports is **much riskier** than many people imagine.*
- not nearly as* + adjective/adverb + *as*:
*Some mobile apps are **not nearly as difficult** to use as normal computer programs.*

These are some ways of expressing a small difference:

- slightly / a bit / a little* + adjective/adverb + -er/more + adjective/adverb:
*People drive **slightly slower** than they did in the past.*
- not quite as* + adjective/adverb + *as*:
*I **don't** find running **quite as enjoyable as** cycling.*

Modal verbs

We use modal verbs to express the speaker's view of ability, certainty and possibility, obligation, prohibition and permission.

- These modal verbs are always followed by the infinitive without *to*:
can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would
- These modal verbs are always followed by the infinitive with *to*: *have to, ought to*

Note: Modal verbs always have the same form, i.e. no 's' in the third person singular (*He can come*) or -ed in the past (except for *have to*, which changes in the same way as *have*).

Expressing ability

To say someone has an ability, we use *can, can't, could, couldn't* and *be able to*.

In the present, we use:

- *can* or *am/is/are able to* to express ability
- *can't* or *am not/isn't/aren't able to* for things which are not possible.

Liz can speak five languages, but she can't speak Russian. The doctor's able to see you now, but she isn't able to see you tomorrow.

Note: We usually use *can* and *can't* when speaking because they are shorter and less formal than *able to*.

In the past, we use:

- *could* only when speaking in general:
When I was a child, I could read without glasses.
- *was/were able to* when speaking about something someone succeeded in doing on one particular occasion:
Dad didn't have any money on him, but fortunately he was able to use his credit card to pay the bill. (not ~~He could use his credit card to pay the bill.~~)
- *couldn't* and *wasn't/weren't able to* when speaking in general and also when speaking about one particular occasion:
Pascual wasn't able to / couldn't do all the questions in the maths exam. Olga couldn't / wasn't able to ride a bike till she was 18.

When talking about ability, we use *can* only in the present and *could* only in the past. For perfect and future tenses, we use *able to*:

I've been very busy so I haven't been able to finish reading the novel. (present perfect)

When you finish the course, you'll be able to speak English really well. (future simple)

Note: We do not use *be able to* in the continuous.

- We use *be able to* after an infinitive:
She hopes to be able to study medicine when she goes to university.
- We use *be able to* after modal verbs (*might, should, may, etc.*):
If I'm free this weekend, I might be able to help you paint your house. When you've finished this course, you should be able to speak English very well.
- We usually use *can* and *could* with *see, hear, smell, feel* and *taste*:
From the top of the mountain we could see for miles. I can hear a strange noise coming from upstairs.
- However, we use *manage* when we succeed in doing something quite difficult to do:
I know you've been busy, but did you manage to phone my mum? He managed to pass the exam, although he was feeling ill when he did it.

Note: *could* is not possible in this example:

~~*He could pass the exam, although he was feeling ill when he did it.*~~

Expressing certainty and possibility

To express certainty about the present, we use:

- *must*:
She's been in over 15 films, so she must be very well known.

Note: We usually have a good reason for expressing this certainty, e.g. *She's been in over 15 films.*

- *can't* or *couldn't* for the negative (not *mustn't*):
You can't be tired. You've just got out of bed! Mark couldn't have been at the party – he's on holiday in America at the moment.

To express certainty about the past, we use:

- *must have* + past participle:
You have a very big part in the play. It must have taken you ages to learn all the lines.
- *can't have* and *couldn't have* + past participle in negative sentences:
She can't have left her glasses at home – I saw her wearing them on the bus. She couldn't have stolen the money because she's far too honest!

To express possibility about the present or future, we use:

- *may, might* or *could*:
I may come and visit you next summer. We might go to the cinema if we finish all our work in time. We'd better go for a walk now because it could rain later.

- *may not* and *might not* (or *mightn't*) in negative sentences (not *can't* or *couldn't* which express certainty):
Frankie is looking very pale. He may not be very well.
Don't cook any dinner for me because I might not be back in time.

To express possibility about the past, we use:

- *may have*, *might have*, *could have*, *may not have*, *might not have* + past participle:
It's unlike Sally to be late. She may have overslept, or she might not have remembered the appointment.

Expressing obligation, prohibition and permission

Obligation – *must* and *have to*

We can often use *must* and *have to* without any difference in meaning:

*Teachers **must** / **have to** try to make their lessons as interesting as possible.*

However, we use:

- *must* + infinitive without *to* in the present tense. For other tenses, we use *have to* + infinitive:
*I'd like to go camping, but I'll **have to** ask my parents.*
*In order to get the holiday job I **had to** fill in an application form and do an interview.*
- *have to* more often in questions:
***Do we have to** answer all the questions?*
- *must* for a goal (or an obligation) that we give ourselves:
*I **must go** to the supermarket later.*
- *have to* when the obligation comes from someone else:
*My teacher has given me a lot of homework which I **have to do** for Monday.*
- *must* for strong advice:
*You **must be** careful if you stay out late at night.*

Other ways of expressing obligation:

- We use *be supposed to* + infinitive to talk about an obligation which is different from what really happens:
*We're **supposed to do** five writing tasks each term. (But most people only do two or three.)*
***Aren't you supposed to be** in class right now? (i.e. not out here playing football)*
- We use *should* + infinitive without *to* to talk about the right thing to do, but which is different from what really happens:
*You **should answer** using your own ideas, not things you have memorised beforehand.*
- The past of *should* is *should have* + past participle:
*You **shouldn't have tried** to answer all three questions in Writing Part 2!*
- We can use *ought to* to mean 'should':
*You **ought to be** more polite to the people you deal with.*

Prohibition

We use these modal verbs and phrases to express prohibition: *can't*, *mustn't*, *not let*, *(be) not allowed to*, *don't allow* (somebody) *to*.

*You **can't go** in there – it says 'No entry!'*

*You **mustn't speak** during the exam – it's forbidden.*

*My sister **won't let** me **listen** to her CDs.*

*I'm **not allowed to use** the kitchen in my host family's house.*

*My parents **didn't allow** me **to play** computer games when I was small.*

We do not use *don't have to* to express prohibition:

*You **mustn't use** your mobile phone in class. (It's not allowed.)*

Compare this with:

*You **don't have to use** your mobile phone to speak to Fayed.*

Look! He's over there. (i.e. It's not necessary.)

In the past, we use: *couldn't*, *didn't let*, *wasn't allowed to*, *didn't allow* (somebody) *to*:

*I **couldn't leave** the room until the end of the meeting.*

*She **wasn't allowed to invite** her boyfriend to the party.*

We don't use *mustn't* to talk about the past:

*I ~~mustn't~~ **couldn't ride** my bike to school because my mum thought it was dangerous.*

*We ~~mustn't~~ **weren't allowed to** use our dictionary in the exam last week.*

Permission

To express permission, we use: *can* (past *could*), *let*, *am allowed to* and *may* (past *was/were allowed to*).

*You **can only use** your phone during the break, not in class.*

***Are we allowed to use** calculators in the maths exam?*

*She **let him borrow** her bicycle to get to the station.*

We only use *may* in formal situations:

It's not necessary to stay until the end of the examination.

*When you have answered all the questions, you **may** leave the room.*

To say that there is no obligation, or it's not necessary, we use: *don't have to*, *don't need to* and *needn't*:

*This is a really good exercise on phrasal verbs for anyone who's interested, but it's not for homework, so you **don't have to do** it if you don't want to. You **needn't learn** all the vocabulary on this page – only the words you think are useful.*

*I **didn't need to** means 'It wasn't necessary and I didn't do it'; I **needn't** have means 'It wasn't necessary but I did it':*

*I **didn't need to buy** a newspaper to find out the story because I'd already heard it on the radio.*

*What lovely roses! You **needn't have bought** me so many, but it was very generous of you.*

Prepositions

at, in and on in time expressions

We use **at** with:

- points of time:
at three o'clock, at the end of the lesson, at midnight
- mealtimes:
We can meet at breakfast.
- the weekend, Christmas and Easter:
Why don't we go to the cinema at the weekend?
- night when talking about nights in general:
I prefer to study at night because it's quieter.

Note: *on the weekend* is common in American English.

We use **in**:

- for periods of time:
in 2014, in April, in the summer, in the 19th century
- for parts of the day:
Paola often has a short sleep in the afternoon. (But Paola slept for two hours on Sunday afternoon. See below.)
- to say the period of time before something happens or how long something takes:
I'll be going to university in six weeks' time.
He did the writing task in just 13 minutes.

We use **on**:

- for particular dates, days, parts of days or types of days:
He was born on July 13th.
What are you doing on Sunday night?
I got married on a sunny day in August.

at, in and on to express location

We use **at**:

- when we think of a place as a point, not an area (including *at home, at school, at work, at university*):
The postman is at the front door.
- to talk about an event with a number of people:
I'll see you at the party tonight!
- for addresses:
The party is at 367 Wood Avenue.

We use **in**:

- when we think of a place as an area or space:
Olga lives in St Petersburg.
Sonia lives in a large house in the country.
- for cars and taxis:
I love listening to music when I'm in the car.
- normally with *in class, in hospital, in prison, in court*:
Patrick is in hospital with a broken leg.
- with people or things which form lines:
We stood in the ticket queue for four hours.
- for the world:
He's reputed to be one of the richest men in the world.

We use **on**:

- to talk about a position in contact with a surface:
There's an insect on your forehead.
She lay on the beach all day.
- with *coast, road to, the outskirts of, the edge of, border, the way to/from*, etc:
We can stop at my village, which is on the way to Madrid.
- with means of transport apart from cars and taxis (see above):
I always get frightened on planes.
- for technology:
He's been on the phone for hours.
I found out about it on Facebook.
- with *left and right*:
Talk to the student on your right.
- with *premises, farm, floor, island and list*:
It's on the fifth floor.
You're not on my list of students for this class.



at	in	on
at your/my house	in the world	on the beach
at the festival	in the city	on the/a train
at the party	in the mountains	on the island
at the theatre	in the country	on the/a farm
at the/your hotel	in the town	on the outskirts
at the concert	in the sky	on the floor
at my school	in the hotel	on the stage
at the camp	in a car	on the bus
at the university	in this area	on the road(s)
at the beach	in the countryside	on the plane
at the airport	in the street	
at the seaside	in the sea	
	in traffic jams	

Relative pronouns and relative clauses

A clause is a group of words containing a subject and a verb in a tense which form a sentence or part of a sentence. Relative clauses start with these relative pronouns: *who, which, that, whose, where, when* and *why*.

relative clause ↓

The man **who** phoned you is my doctor.

Defining relative clauses

Relative clauses which tell us which particular person or thing the speaker is talking about are called defining relative clauses. They give essential information:
*The doctor **who** treated me is my cousin.*

The relative clause tells us which doctor we are talking about.

Non-defining relative clauses

Relative clauses which give us extra information are called non-defining relative clauses:

My doctor, who belongs to the same tennis club as you, vaccinated me yesterday.

We already know which doctor (it's my doctor); *who belongs to the same tennis club as you* does not tell us which doctor we are talking about; it just adds extra information.

There are differences in grammar:

defining relative clauses	non-defining relative clauses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't have commas. • Use the following relative pronouns: <i>who, which, whose, where, when</i> and <i>why</i>. • Can use <i>that</i> instead of <i>who</i> or <i>which</i>. • <i>who, which</i> or <i>that</i> can be omitted when they are the object of the clause: <i>The medicine (- / which / that) the doctor gave me should be taken twice a day</i> (the doctor is the subject and - / which / that the object of the clause). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use commas (or pauses in spoken English). • Use the following relative pronouns: <i>who, which, whose, where</i> and <i>when</i>. • Don't use <i>that</i>. • The relative pronoun cannot be omitted.

Reported speech

Tense changes in reported speech

If the reporting verb (*said, told, admitted, warned, etc.*) is in the past, we tend to change the original verb to a past form as well. Here are some changes we make:

present simple → past simple	'I live in Berlin.'	She said she lived in Berlin.
present continuous → past continuous	'I'm watching TV.'	He said he was watching TV.
present perfect → past perfect	'I've seen the film already.'	She said she had seen the film already.
past simple → past perfect	'I missed the concert.'	He told me he had missed the concert.
will → would	'I'll phone you soon.'	She promised she would phone me soon.

We also change these modal verbs:

can → could	'I can understand German, but I can't speak it.'	She said she could understand German but she couldn't speak it.
may → might	'I may give the book to John.'	Sam suggested he might give the book to John.
must → had to	'I must cook dinner.'	Tanya said she had to cook dinner.

We do not change these modal verbs in reported speech: *could, would, should, might, ought to* and *used to*:

'I would prefer to study in London.' → She said that she **would prefer to study** in London.

must can change to *had to*:

'You must read this text for the next lesson.' → My teacher told me I **had to read** the text for the following lesson.

But we don't change *must* when:

- it's negative:
'You **mustn't** tell Katya our secret.'
- Ana told Stefan he **mustn't tell** Katya their secret.
- it expresses a deduction:
'Arturo **must still be** asleep.'
- She said that Arturo **must still be** asleep.

Note: If the reporting verb is in a present tense, no tense changes are necessary: 'I'll help you with your homework.'

→ She says she'll help me with my homework.

Questions in reported speech

To report a question, we make the following changes.

- We change the word order in the question to the same as a normal sentence.
- We make the same tense changes as in reported speech (see above).
- We use the same question words (*when, how, etc.*).
- We use a full stop (.), not a question mark (?):
'How long have you been living in London?' → She asked me how long I had been living in London.
'When can I phone you?' → Abdullah asked Magdi when he could phone him.
- We do not use the auxiliary verbs *do, does* and *did*; the question has the same form as a normal sentence:
'What time does the lesson start?' → Ludmila asked what time the lesson started.
- We use *if* or *whether* with Yes/No questions:
'Can I come to your party?' → Aniela wanted to know whether she could come to our party.

We often use these verbs and phrases to introduce reported questions: *ask, wonder, want to know, enquire*.

Pronoun, adjective and adverb changes in reported speech

We usually make the following changes:

you → he/she/they	'I spoke to you earlier.'	He said he had spoken to her earlier.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your → his/her/their • our → their 	'I saw your brother earlier.'	He mentioned that he had seen her brother earlier.
this/that (as pronouns) → it	'You should give this to Joan.'	She told him he should give it to Joan.
this/that/these/those + noun → the + noun	' This work is very good.'	She told him the work was very good.

Remember that references to times also need to change in reported speech:

'I saw Adam **this morning**.' → She said she had seen Adam **that morning**.

Other changes include:

present reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • today • this week / this month / this year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that day • that week / that month / that year
future reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tomorrow • next month/ next year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the next / the following day • the next / the following month/year
past reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • yesterday • last week/ month/year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the day before OR the previous day • the previous week/month/year OR the week/month/year before

Descriptions of place also frequently change: 'Did I leave my book **here**?' He asked if he'd left his book **there**.

Imperatives in reported speech

We use verb + infinitive to report orders and commands:

'Fetch that book!' → She asked him **to fetch** the book.

'Don't look out of the window!' → She told him **not to look** out of the window.

Reporting verbs

There are many verbs which we can use to introduce reported speech, each followed by different grammatical patterns. You will see that most verbs can be followed by more than one grammatical pattern.

verb + infinitive

- agree: Magda **agreed to look** after the children.
- offer: She **offered to take** the children to the zoo.
- promise: She's **promised to phone** me later.

verb + object + infinitive

- advise: The doctor **advised Mrs Carter to take** a long holiday.
- ask: The neighbours **asked us to turn** our music down.
- invite: Patsy **has invited me to go** to the party with her.
- order: The police **ordered everyone to leave** the building.
- persuade: I **persuaded my mother to take** a holiday.
- remind: Can you **remind me to phone** Stephen?
- tell: Carl **told Jane to close** all the windows.
- warn: They **warned us not to walk** on the ice.

verb + preposition + noun or verb + -ing

- accuse of: Sophie **accused Marcel of stealing** her books.
- admit to: Bill **admitted to the mistake**.
Sally **admitted to taking** the money.
- apologise for: Tommy **apologised for the accident**.
Mandy **apologised for being** late.
- complain about: The neighbours **have been complaining about the noise**.
We **complained about being** given too much homework to do.

verb + noun or verb + -ing

- admit: Danny **admitted the theft**.
Sue **admitted stealing** the money.
- deny: Silvia **denied the crime**.
Sean **denied causing** the accident.
- recommend: I can really **recommend this book**.
I **recommend cycling** as a way of getting fit.
- suggest*: Jasmine **suggested the solution** to the problem.
Mike **suggested going** climbing at the weekend.

verb + (that) + sentence

- admit: Sally **admitted (that) she had taken** the money.
- agree: The headteacher **agreed (that) the exam had been** too difficult.
- complain: We **complained that we had been given** too much homework to do.
- deny: Pablo **denied that he had caused** the accident.
- explain: She **explained that she wasn't feeling** very well.
- promise: Mandy **promised (that) she would phone** later.
- recommend: The doctor **recommended (that) I take** more exercise.
- say: Robin **said (that) he was going** swimming later.
- suggest*: Liz **suggested (that) I should try** the shopping centre on the edge of town.

verb + object + (that) + sentence

- persuade: *I persuaded my mother that she should take a holiday.*
- promise: *Lynn promised Charlie (that) she would phone him later.*
- remind: *Can I remind you (that) you've got to phone Stephen?*
- tell: *The school told the students (that) they had the rest of the day free.*
- warn: *Nobody warned me (that) my grandmother was visiting us today.*

*Note: suggest is never followed by the infinitive. The following patterns are possible:

- suggest + verb + -ing:
Maria suggested buying a new computer.
- suggest + noun:
Phil suggested the idea.
- suggest + (that) + sentence:
Tony suggested that they played football that afternoon.
- suggest + (that) + should:
Chantal suggested (that) I should write a letter.

Other common patterns are:

- ask + if/what, etc. + sentence:
She asked me what I was doing.
He asked me if I was free.
- invite + object + to + noun:
Patsy has invited me to the party.

➔ See also page 166: Infinitive and verb + -ing forms

➔ See also page 177: The passive – the passive with reporting verbs

so and such, too and enough

so and such

so and such (a/an) mean 'very', 'extremely':

That was so kind of you!

I've had such a nice time.

We use so and such (a/an) to talk about cause and effect:

He was so late that he missed the beginning of the exam.

She gave such a good performance that she won an Oscar.

so + adjective or adverb (+ that):	such + adjective + uncountable noun / plural noun (+ that)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>He was so nervous before the exam that he couldn't sleep at all.</i> • <i>That remark was just so silly!</i> • <i>He cooks so well that I think he'll win the competition.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>She tells such good jokes.</i> • <i>Switzerland has such spectacular scenery that we always choose it for our holidays.</i>

so + much/many/few/little + noun (+ that)	such a/an + adjective + singular countable noun (+ that); such a lot of ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We had so little money left at the end of our holiday that we had to sleep on a bench in the station.</i> • <i>Marta makes so many mistakes when she's speaking!</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why did you come in such an old pair of jeans?</i> • <i>It was such a beautiful day that we decided to go for a picnic.</i> • <i>Elena's got such a lot of friends that the telephone never stops ringing.</i>

We also use such (+ noun) to mean 'of a similar type':

When children commit crimes, adults are often shocked.

Fortunately such behaviour is not as common as newspapers make us believe.

too and enough

- *too* means 'more than is needed or wanted':
She's too old to join the police.
- *enough* means 'as much as is necessary or needed':
Have we got enough eggs to make a cake?

too + adjective (+ noun) + (for somebody) (+ infinitive)	adjective/adverb + enough + (for somebody) (+ infinitive)
<i>He's too young to drive. That suitcase is too heavy for me to lift.</i>	<i>This coffee is not warm enough! Please heat it up again. Franz didn't answer the questions convincingly enough to get the job. That hotel is not smart enough for her.</i>

too + adverb + (for somebody) (+ infinitive); too much / too many + noun + (for somebody) (+ infinitive)	enough + noun + (for somebody) (+ infinitive)
<i>You're driving too dangerously. Please slow down. They brought too much food for us to eat. I've received too many emails to answer.</i>	<i>Have you got enough money to get to London? There isn't enough cake in the cupboard for me to give some to everyone.</i>

Spelling

Spelling changes when adding -ed, -ing, -er and -est to words

We double the final consonant when we add -ed, -ing, -er or -est to words:

- which are one syllable and end in a consonant-vowel-consonant: *stop – stopped, hit – hitting, flat – flatter*
- which have two or more syllables which end in consonant-vowel-consonant and the final syllable is stressed: *admit – admitted, occur – occurring*

Note: In British English, we always double a final 'l' after a single vowel: *travel – travelling, cancel – cancelled*

We don't double the final consonant when:

- there are two final consonants: *send – sending, hard – hardest*
- there are two vowels before the final consonant: *appeal – appealed, mean – meanest*
- the word ends in a vowel: *strike – striking, safe – safest*

- for a verb, the stress is not on the final syllable:
open – opening
- the word ends in -w, -x or -y:
slow – slower, relax – relaxing, display – displayed

When adding -ed, a final 'y' after a consonant becomes 'i':
study – studied, lovely – loveliest

When adding -ing, a final 'y' after a consonant does not change: *study – studying*

Note: Notice how the spelling of these words changes:
lie – lying – lied; die – dying – died; lay – laying – laid; try – trying – tried

Spelling changes when adding prefixes and other suffixes

We normally do not change the spelling of the base word when we add a prefix or a suffix:

need – unneeded, arrange – arrangement

However:

- we drop the final 'e' when there is a consonant before it and the suffix begins with a vowel (-er, -ed, -ing, -ance, -ation, etc.): *irritate – irritating, fame – famous*
- we do not drop the final 'e' when the suffix begins with a consonant: *safe – safety, manage – management*
- a final 'y' becomes 'i': *industry – industrial*

Adding prefixes

When we add a syllable like *un-*, *dis-*, or *in-* before the word to make it negative, we do not change the spelling, e.g. with *dis-* and *un-*: *appoint – disappoint, satisfied – dissatisfied, like – unlike, necessary – unnecessary*

Note: Before words beginning with 'r', we use *ir-*: *irrelevant*; before words beginning with 'm' or 'p', we use *im-*: *immature, impatient*; before words beginning with 'l', we use *il-*: *illogical, illiterate*.

These words are frequently misspelled by exam candidates:



The most common spelling errors by candidates

accommodation advertisement beautiful because
beginning believe between children
comfortable communicate convenient
country/countries course different
embarrassed/embarrassing environment excellent
experience government loose lose necessary
nowadays opinion opportunity/opportunities
prefer receive recommend restaurant society
their until wealthy which

The passive

The passive is formed by the verb *to be* + past participle (*done/eaten/cleaned*, etc.).

active	passive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They ate all the food very quickly.</i> • <i>We've sold the car.</i> • <i>It's nice when people invite me to dinner.</i> • <i>On a clear day, you can see Ibiza from the mainland.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All the food was eaten very quickly.</i> • <i>The car has been sold.</i> • <i>It's nice when I'm invited to dinner.</i> • <i>On a clear day, Ibiza can be seen from the mainland.</i>

We use the passive when:

- what happens is more important than who does it:
The car has been repaired, so we can go away this weekend.
- we don't know who or what does/did something:
My mobile phone has been stolen!
- we don't need to say who or what does/did something because it's obvious from the situation or context:
The law was passed earlier this year (obviously by a government).
- when writing in an official style:
Your ticket has been booked and can be collected from our office.

The passive with *get*

- We can use *get* instead of *be* to form the passive, especially when we want to say that something happened to someone or something:
He got hurt playing football yesterday. (He was hurt.)
I'm afraid we were playing football and one of your windows got broken. (One of your windows was broken.)
- *get* is used mainly in informal spoken English.
- We only use *get* when something happens or changes:
He got arrested by the police.
- It is not possible with state verbs:
~~*The car got owned by a film star.*~~ *The car was owned by a film star.*

The passive with reporting verbs

We often use the passive to report what people say, think, etc., especially when we don't know who said it or thought it, or it's not important:

The Queen is thought to be suffering from a heavy cold.
Fernando Alonso is considered to be the best Spanish Formula One driver of all time.

This use of the passive is common in news reports.

We use three possible forms:

- *He/She is said/thought/considered*, etc. + infinitive:
Lions are known to hunt in this area.
Elena is thought to be highly intelligent.
- Verbs that we can use with this pattern are:

consider expect feel know say suppose think understand

- To talk about the past, we can use: *She is said to have played/eaten/been*, etc.:
The Prime Minister is understood to have spoken to the rebels on the phone.
- *It is said/thought/considered*, etc. + *that* + a sentence:
It is thought that Elena is highly intelligent.
It is known that lions hunt in this area.
- Verbs that we can use with this pattern are:

agree announce consider decide expect feel find know propose recommend say suggest suppose think understand

- *It is agreed/planned*, etc. + infinitive:
It has been agreed to change the dates of the meeting.
- Verbs that we can use with this pattern are:

agree decide forbid hope plan propose

Using commas

We use commas (,):

- when we make lists:
I like playing tennis, listening to music, chatting with friends and watching TV.

Note: We don't use a comma with the final item on the list; we use *and*.

- to separate adjectives when there are a number of adjectives before the noun:
He's an enthusiastic, hard-working student.

Note: With short common adjectives, commas are not necessary:

My village is quite a friendly little place.

- after an adverb or a short introductory phrase at the beginning of a sentence such as *first, as a result, consequently, for this reason, all in all, generally, finally, however, in my opinion*, etc.:
Generally, people in my country start university aged 19.
In my opinion, young people should help their parents to do the housework.

- after a time phrase at the beginning of a sentence:
In 2014, he left school and went to university.
- after clauses at the beginning of sentences starting with *if, unless, when, while, after, before, although, even though, whereas, as, etc.*:
When everyone in a family helps with the housework, they have a better relationship.
- when we join two sentences with *but*, we often put a comma before *but*:
He got quite good marks in his exams, but he wasn't happy with his results.

Using it, this, that or they

We use *it, this* and *that* (in the plural *they, these* and *those*) to refer to something we have already mentioned. Often more than one of them is correct in the context. However:

- we use *it* when we are not making any emphasis:
I prefer listening to live music. It's more spontaneous.
- *this* and *that* are more emphatic in drawing attention to the thing just mentioned:
*People usually listen to music through headphones. There's some evidence that **this** damages their hearing.*
- we often use *this* when:
 - we still have something more to say about the thing we are referring to:
*File sharing has become a common activity. **This** is having serious effects on the music industry.*
 - we refer to the second of two things mentioned in the previous sentence. Compare:
 - 1 *While many festivals are welcomed by local people, they are usually very **noisy**. **This** means that people living in the district find it hard to sleep. (This = the noise)*
 - 2 *While many **festivals** are welcomed by local people, **they** are usually very noisy. Also, they are normally held in the summer. (they = the festivals)*
- we often use *that* in conditional sentences:
*I think that every town and village should have a festival if **that** is what local people want.*

Verb tenses

Simple and continuous forms

- Present simple describes a situation which is permanent, or happens regularly:
*Paul **lives** in London.*
*He **catches** the bus at eight every morning.*
- Present continuous describes a temporary situation or one in progress:
*I'm **staying** with my aunt while Mum and Dad are away.*
*He's **playing** tennis at the moment.*

State verbs

We do not usually use verbs which describe states, not actions, in the continuous. These verbs describe:

- thoughts: *believe, know, remember, think* (meaning 'believe'), *feel* (meaning 'believe'), *suppose*, etc.
- feelings: *love, like, hate, want, prefer*, etc.
- senses: *smell, hear, taste, see, feel, touch*
- possession: *have, belong, own*, etc.
- the verb *to be*

Note:

- When *think* means 'to use your brain to plan something, solve a problem, make a decision', etc., it can be used in the continuous:
*I'm **thinking** about what to do today.* (I'm planning.)
- When *feel* means 'to experience something physical or emotional', it can be used in the continuous:
*I don't want to come to the party because I'm **feeling** tired.*

Candidates often spell these words wrong:



writting writing studing studying comming coming

→ See also page 176: Spelling

Present perfect simple and continuous

Both the present perfect simple and present perfect continuous talk about something which started in the past and:

- either has a result in the present:
*He's **twisted** his ankle, so he can't play football with us this afternoon.*
*I've **been partying** all weekend, so I'm feeling tired now.*
- or is still happening now:
*We've **been building** an extension to our house (and we haven't finished yet).*

Often they are interchangeable. However:

The present perfect simple	The present perfect continuous
emphasises the result : <i>I've phoned all my friends and they're coming to the party.</i>	emphasises the action : <i>I've been phoning my friends (and that's why I haven't done my homework).</i>
says how much of an activity is complete : <i>I've written two essays.</i>	says how long the activity has been in progress : <i>I've been studying all afternoon.</i>

<p>may give the idea that something is permanent (and may be accompanied by a time expression which shows this): <i>My dad has worked in the same shop all his life. I've always lived here.</i></p>	<p>may give the idea that something is temporary (and may be accompanied by a time expression which shows this): <i>I've been working here for the last two months until I go to university. We've been eating dinner in the garden during the warm weather.</i></p>
<p>is used when we want to say how many times an action has been repeated: <i>I've invited her two or three times, but she always says she's busy.</i></p>	<p>when we want to emphasise the process of change over a period of time and that these changes are not finished: <i>My teacher says my English has been improving since I started doing my homework!</i></p>

Remember! State verbs are not normally used in the continuous.

→ See also page 178: Verb tenses – state verbs

Past simple, past continuous and used to

Past simple

We use the past simple to talk about:

- actions or events in the past: *I **visited** Egypt last year.*
- actions or events which happened one after another:
*I **saw** the Pyramids, then I **went** round the Cairo Museum and later I **went** to a traditional restaurant.*
- things which happened for a long time in the past:
*She **lived** in Zurich for ten years from 2003 to 2013.*

Past continuous

We use the past continuous to talk about:

- an activity which started before and continued until an event in the past:
*He **was riding** to school when his motorbike broke down. (The activity of riding was interrupted by the problem with the motorbike.)*
- an activity which started before and continued after an event in the past:
*I **was watching** television when the news was announced. (I continued to watch television afterwards.)*

Remember! State verbs are not normally used in the continuous.

→ See also page 178: Verb tenses – state verbs

used to

We use *used to* to talk about:

- situations or states in the past which are not true now:
*My maths teacher **used to be** in the army.*
- repeated activities or habits in the past which do not happen now:
*She **used to run** in the London Marathon every year until she injured her leg.*

Note: We only use *used to* in the past:

*She **used to run** in marathons.*

*Did you **use to run** in marathons?*

*I **didn't use to run** in marathons.*

- When we want to talk about habits in the present, we use the present simple with an adverb like *usually*, *every day*, etc.:
*I **usually drink** tea with my lunch.
 He **catches** the same train **every day**.*

Past perfect simple and continuous

Past perfect simple

We use the past perfect simple:

- to indicate that we are talking about something which happened before something which is described in the past simple:
*When he **got** to the station, his train **had already left**.*
 Compare this with:
*When he **got** to the station, his train **left**.*
 This indicates that the train left at the time he arrived.
- typically with time expressions such as *when*, *as soon as*, *after*, *before*, etc.:
*She started driving **before he'd fastened** his seatbelt.*
- often with these adverbs: *already*, *just*, *never*:
*He'd **never eaten** steak and kidney pie until he came to England.*

Past perfect continuous

We use the past perfect continuous to show that we are talking about something which happened before something which is described in the past simple, but it:

- focuses on the length of time:
*Mandy needed a walk because she'd **been sitting down all day**.*
- says how long something happened up to a point in the past:
*It was **two months before** any of the teachers noticed that Paula **hadn't been coming** to school.
 He'd **been playing** for Arsenal for only two games when he scored his first goal.*

→ See also page 176: Spelling

wish, if only and hope

We use *wish / if only* + past simple to say we would like a present situation to be different:

I wish I had a warmer jacket. (This one doesn't keep me warm.)
If only it was the summer holidays! (But it isn't – I'm still at school.)

Note: This use of *wish / if only* is similar to second conditional, i.e. it uses a past tense to refer to something which is contrary to the facts in the present.

We use *wish / if only* + *would* to say:

- we want something to happen:
I wish my car would start. (I can't make it start and I want it to start.)
- we want someone to start doing something they don't do:
If only you'd listen to me!
- or we want someone to stop doing something which annoys us:
If only my mum wouldn't phone me every five minutes!

We use *wish / if only* + past perfect to talk about things which we are unhappy about which happened in the past:
He wishes he had studied harder when he was at school.
 (He didn't study hard enough – perhaps if he had studied harder he would have gone to university.)

Note: This use of *wish / if only* is similar to third conditional, i.e. it uses a past perfect tense to refer to something which is contrary to the facts in the past.

If only means 'I wish'. When talking about other people, we use *he wishes, they wish*, etc. We use *if only* when we feel something very strongly. Otherwise we use *I wish*.

We use *hope* when we want something to happen or to be true, and usually have a good reason to think that it might:
I hope you have a good holiday.
She hopes her students will get a high grade in their exams.

Note: We use *hope* + present/future tense with a future meaning, especially when the subject of the two clauses is different, i.e. *I* and *you* in *I hope you have a good holiday*. We often use *hope* + infinitive when there is only one subject to the sentence:
He hopes to go into politics in the future. (He hopes he'll go into politics in the future.)

We can use *hope* when we want something to be true about the past, but we don't know if it is true:
I hope you had a good flight. (but I don't know if you had a good flight.)



Word formation

Forming personal nouns

You can form personal nouns (nouns which describe people who do particular activities) by adding:

- *-er, -or, -ant, -ee* to a verb, e.g. *entertain – entertainer, operate – operator, inhabit – inhabitant, refer – referee*
- *-ist, -ian, -man/-woman/-person* to a noun, e.g. *motor – motorist, electricity – electrician, post – postman*

Adding prefixes

Prefixes to give negative meanings

You can give some words the negative meaning by adding a prefix (e.g. *dis-* + *like* = *dislike*) to the beginning of a word. Here are some common prefixes which give a negative meaning:

- *dis-*: **discourage**
- *in-*: **inexperienced**
- *un-*: **unbelievable**

Before many words beginning with:

- 'l' we add the prefix *il-*: **illegal**
- 'm' and 'p' we add the prefix *im-*: **impatient**
- 'r' we add the prefix *ir-*: **irresponsible**

Other prefixes and their meanings:

- *mis-* usually means 'wrongly' or 'badly': **misunderstand** (= understand wrongly or badly)
- *re-* usually means 'do again' and is often added to verbs: **rewrite** (= write again)
- *inter-* means 'between or among': **interact**

Note: When you add a prefix to a word, the spelling of the original word does not change: *dis* + *satisfied* = **dissatisfied**

Adding suffixes

You can form verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs from other related or base words by adding a suffix (e.g. *appear* + *-ance* = **appearance**) to the end of the word. There are no clear rules – each word and the words which can be formed from it must be learned individually.

➔ See also page 176: Spelling – spelling changes when adding prefixes and other suffixes

Some of the most common suffixes are listed below.

EP verb → noun

suffix	verb	noun
-ment	<i>adjust</i>	<i>adjustment</i>
-ation/-ition/ -tion/-sion	<i>combine</i> <i>define</i> <i>create</i> <i>divide</i>	<i>combination</i> <i>definition</i> <i>creation</i> <i>division</i>
-er/-or	<i>publish</i> <i>survive</i>	<i>publisher</i> <i>survivor</i>
-ance/-ence	<i>guide</i> <i>exist</i>	<i>guidance</i> <i>existence</i>
-ant	<i>inhabit</i>	<i>inhabitant</i>
-al	<i>approve</i>	<i>approval</i>
-ee	<i>employ</i>	<i>employee</i>

EP adjective → noun

suffix	adjective	noun
-ance/-ence	<i>relevant</i> <i>patient</i>	<i>relevance</i> <i>patience</i>
-ness	<i>friendly</i>	<i>friendliness</i>
-ity	<i>popular</i> <i>available</i>	<i>popularity</i> <i>availability</i>

EP noun → adjective

suffix	noun	adjective
-y	<i>boss</i>	<i>bossy</i>
-ful	<i>meaning</i>	<i>meaningful</i>
-ous	<i>fury</i>	<i>furious</i>
-less	<i>hope</i>	<i>hopeless</i>
-al	<i>emotion</i>	<i>emotional</i>
-ic	<i>optimist</i>	<i>optimistic</i>
-ish	<i>child</i>	<i>childish</i>

EP noun → noun

suffix	noun	noun
-ism	<i>critic</i>	<i>criticism</i>
-ist	<i>motor</i>	<i>motorist</i>
-ship	<i>partner</i>	<i>partnership</i>

EP adjective/noun → adjective/noun

suffix	adjective / noun	verb
-ify	<i>simple</i> <i>class</i>	<i>simplify</i> <i>classify</i>
-ise/-ize	<i>special</i> <i>critic</i>	<i>specialise/specialize</i> <i>criticise/criticize</i>

EP verb → adjective

suffix	verb	adjective
-ed	<i>educate</i>	<i>educated</i>
-ing	<i>mislead</i>	<i>misleading</i>
-able/-ible	<i>rely</i> <i>respond</i>	<i>reliable</i> <i>responsible</i>
-ent	<i>confide</i>	<i>confident</i>
-ive	<i>compete</i>	<i>competitive</i>

EP adjective → adverb

Adverbs are almost always formed by adding *-ly*. If the adjective ends in *-ic*, you change it to an adverb by adding *-ally*.

suffix	adjective	adverb
<i>-ly / -ally</i>	<i>simple</i> <i>organic</i>	<i>simply</i> <i>organically</i>