

Writing conventions: Spelling

Common errors and patterns of spelling

Each of the following guides to spelling begins with a list of words which often cause difficulty. To begin with, select any words in each list which cause you problems, and then read the rules which follow. When you come across a word which does not follow the rule, add it to your list of exceptions.

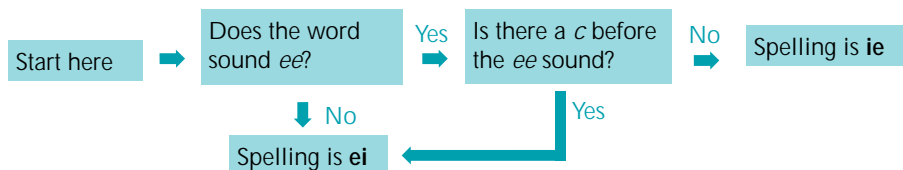
ei/ie rule

The words in the following list contain ei or ie:

belief	believe	deceit	deceive	weigh	friend	neighbour
eight	field	eerie	yield	hygienic	sleigh	ceiling
shield	reign	priest	reprieve	feisty	brief	conceive
heir	handkerchief					

These words follow a pattern, called the ei/ie rule which states 'i before e except after c, only when the sound is ee'.

The following diagram summarises the rule:



Activity A: Spelling ei/ie words

Use either *ie* or *ei* to spell these words correctly.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. n . . ghbour | 2. br . . f | 3. pr . . st | 4. th . . f |
| 5. w . . ght | 6. sh . . ld | 7. dec . . ve | 8. p . . ce |
| 9. rec . . ve | 10. l . . sure | 11. r . . gn | 12. c . . ling |
| 13. h . . ght | 14. ch . . f | 15. th . . r | 16. for . . gn |
| 17. repr . . ve | 18. outf . . ld | | |

Joining words and adding prefixes

When two words are joined to make one, the new word is called a **compound** word, e.g. *lunchbar*, *forehead*.

The following words are formed by attaching a **prefix** to a word. The word and prefix are shown in brackets:

unnatural (un + natural) dissatisfied (dis + satisfied) disapprove (dis + approve)
 unavailable (un + available) interrelated (inter + related)

Generally, when two words are joined, or when a prefix is added to a word, *all the letters remain*. Exception: *all* becomes *al*, e.g. *altogether*.

In some words, a hyphen is used between the word and the prefix to avoid confusion in meaning or mispronunciation, e.g. co-operate, co-ordinate, re-examine.

Activity B: Joining words and adding prefixes

1. Rewrite the following words, showing the two original words, or word and prefix. The first one has been done for you.

misspell (mis + spell)

altogether	co-operate	cupboard	disappoint	reaction
dissatisfied	dissimilar	extraordinary	forehead	handkerchief
illegal	illegible	immovable	impossible	incapable
incredible	interaction	irrelevant	irreparable	disappear

2. Form the opposites of the following words by adding the correct prefixes to them – *un, dis, mis, in, de* or *im*.

decisive	armed	active	activate	do
connect	interpret	humanise	finished	believe
agree	service	natural	moral	tie

Dropping a final e when a suffix is added

The following words have been made by adding a **suffix** to a **base word** which ends in a silent *e* (e.g. *advantage, scarce, race*). The word and suffix are shown in brackets. In some cases the silent *e* is dropped and in others it is kept.

advantageous (advantage + ous)

collapsible (collapse + ible)

advertisement (advertise + ment)

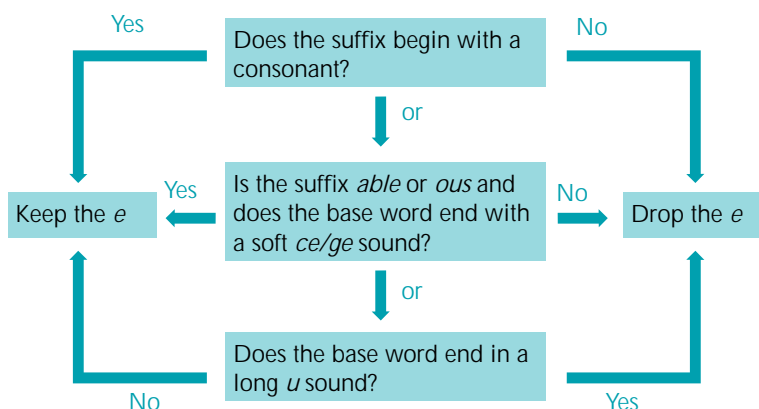
issuable (issue + able)

Activity C: Adding a suffix (1)

Write out each of the words in the list following, and beside it in brackets show the base word and the suffix. Underline the words which keep the silent *e*.

changeable	valuable	famous	issued	truly
courageous	emigration	immovable	raging	ninety
interference	manageable	making	hateful	wherever
disgraceful	racing	managing	living	

The following rules explain the pattern for adding a suffix to a word with a silent *e* ending.



Activity D: Adding a suffix (2)

- Explain why the following words *keep* or *drop* the silent *e* ending when a suffix is added:

courageous	encouragement	managerial	managing
ageless	discouraging	creation	tasty
distasteful	relating	dedication	deliberately
- Use the rules to decide whether or not to drop the silent *e* when adding the suffixes *able*, *ed*, *ing*, *ful*, *less*, *ous*, *ion* to the following words:

rage	change	courage	taste
fame	grace	hope	relate
issue	manage	notice	hate

Some words are correctly spelt either with or without the silent *e*:

abridgement (abridgment) judgement (judgment)
aging (ageing) fledgeling (fledgling)
lodgement (lodgment)

Since *e* makes the *g* soft (like *j*) you will find it easier to include the *e*.

The following words are exceptions to the rules above for dropping or keeping the *e*:

singeing (meaning 'burning slightly') so as not to confuse it with *singing*.
dyeing (meaning 'to dye cloth') so as not to confuse it with *dying* (as in *death*).

Doubling consonants and adding suffixes**Silent *e***

If a word ends in a silent *e*, the **consonant** does not double when a suffix is added. Look at the difference:

Short vowel		Long vowel	
hop + ing	hopping	hope + ing	hoping
plan + ed	planned	plane + ed	planed
cut	cutter	cute	cuter
fill	filling	file	filing

Activity E: Doubling consonants

Add **-ing** to the words below, doubling the consonant if necessary.

- | | | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. rule | 2. cop | 3. bar | 4. game | 5. grab |
| 6. fan | 7. hide | 8. store | 9. set | 10. fib |
| 11. wipe | 12. rage | 13. phone | 14. plod | 15. strut |
| 16. stir | 17. gape | 18. nip | 19. tune | 20. note |

Words ending in a consonant

Each of the following words has a suffix. The word and suffix are shown in brackets. Note that in some cases, the final consonant has been doubled, while in others it remains single.

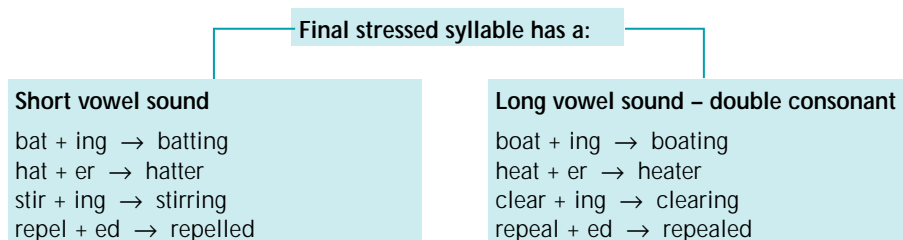
permitted (permit/ed)	fulfilled (fulfil/ed)
fulfilment (fulfil/ment)	reference (refer/ence)

Activity F: Doubling consonants and adding a suffix

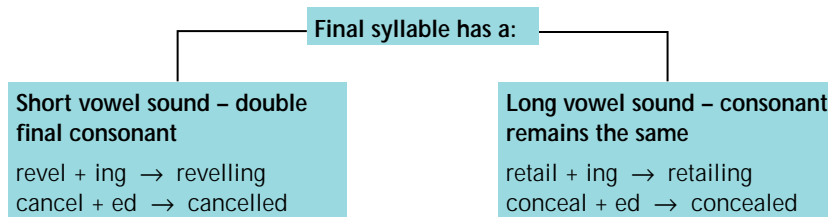
Write down all the words in the following list, and in brackets beside each word show how it is divided into base word and suffix. Underline each word which doubles the final consonant.

labelling	beginning	cancellation	compelled	deferred
deferment	civilised	excellent	controlled	omitting
referred	referral	travelled	unparalleled	reaction

Generally, if a suffix is added to a word, a final single consonant is doubled if the final syllable of the word is **stressed** and has a short vowel sound. One vowel + *r* is counted as short.



When adding a suffix to a word which ends in a single *l*, the *l* usually doubles if the final syllable has a short vowel sound.



The following words are exceptions, and need to be remembered:

civility	civilian	naturalism	naturalist
devilish	liberalist	liberalism	

When adding a suffix, two consonants together have the same effect as a doubled consonant, so:

develop + ment → development

govern + ed → governed

exist + ence → existence

dim + ly → dimly

Activity G: Adding suffixes

Using the patterns above, add suffixes to the words below. Use any of the following suffixes which are appropriate: *ed, ing, ment, able, ness*.

fit	calm	bad	cage	appal
cool	equip	thin	bare	dim
commit	benefit	conceal	level	worship

Adding *ed* or *ing* to a word which ends in *c*

In the following words, the suffix *ed* or *ing* has been added to a base word which ends in *c*:

picnic: picknicked, picnicking

panic: panicked, panicking

traffic: trafficking, trafficked

mimic: mimicked, mimicking

The rule here is that when the letter *c* ends a word, and the suffixes *ed*, *er* or *ing* are added, instead of doubling the *c* it becomes *ck*.

Changing a final *y* into *i* when a suffix is added

Keep the *y* if:

- the suffix begins with *i* (e.g. rely + ing → relying), or
- the word ends with vowel + *y* (ay, ey, oy) e.g. destroy + ing → destroying.

Change the *y* into *i* if:

- the word ends with consonant + *y* (by, dy, etc.) e.g. rely + ed → relied.

applying	relies	toys	played	enjoying
loneliness	mysterious	utilities	realities	trays
implied	joyful	buried	earliest	friendliness
Exceptions:	daily	gaily	laid	paid said

Activity H: Suffixes and words ending in *y*

Follow the rules above to make as many real words as you can using the suffixes given.

- Add *ish, er, est, ly*, to these words:

hairy ugly easy grey untidy wobbly

- Add *(e)s, ing, or ed* to these words:

bury fly obey ally worry study

- Add *ful* or *(e)s* to these words

enemy beauty volley play speciality factory

Plurals

Most words add *s* to form the plural, e.g.

coat → coats machine → machines computer → computers

For words ending in *ch*, *s*, *ss*, *sh* or *z*, add *es* to form a plural:

church → churches kiss → kisses dish → dishes

Some words which end in *o* also form a plural by adding *es*, e.g.

potato → potatoes tomato → tomatoes

Other words ending in *o* (often foreign-sounding words or musical terms) use the *s* ending:

kimono → kimonos piccolo → piccolos

Maori words do not usually change in the plural:

one iwi → many iwi one marae → many marae one powhiri → many powhiri

Activity 1: Plurals

Use the rules you have learnt to form the plurals of the following words:

tornado	loaf	kilometre	hero	vehicle	piano
sandwich	valley	cauliflower	contralto	branch	library

Common errors in spelling

A lot, a while

The **prefix**, *a*, can be attached to many words, such as:

around, away, amoral, about, along.

There is also the word *a* as in *a* plate, *a* drink, *a* shoe, *a* robot. This is a separate word, which cannot be attached to other words.

A lot is two words, meaning a large amount.

A while is two words, as in 'I haven't seen you for a while.'

Awhile means 'for a short time', as in 'They waited awhile.'

Alright is used informally, and *all right* in formal writing.

Words which sound similar and can be confused

To, too, two

To – meaning direction, or with an action word, e.g. *to jump*, *to eat*, *to buy*. This word can almost be reduced to a light sounding *t* in speech and still be understood, e.g.:

'Let's go to town' (t'town) 'I want to buy a car' (t'buy)

Too – meaning 'more than enough', cannot be pronounced *t*, e.g.:

too many, too much, too bad, too hot

Too also means 'as well', e.g.:

'They came too.'

Two – meaning two (2) of something. Think of words like twin, twelve, twice and other words with two in their meaning.

There, their, they're

There indicates a place, 'Over there.'

Their indicates ownership, 'Their clothes.'

They're is a *contraction* formed from 'they are'.

Here, hear, hair

Here indicates a place, 'Bring it here.'

Hear means to listen (think of *ear*).

Hair means the hair on your head.

Where, were, we're, wear

Where indicates a place, 'Where is it?'

Were is the past tense of was, 'Where *were* you last night?'

We're is a contraction formed from 'we are'.

Wear is used in: 'What shall I wear?' and 'Will it wear out?'

The place words (there, here, where) all end in *here*.

Your, you're

Your indicates ownership, 'It's your record.'

You're is a *contraction* formed from 'you are'.

Affect, effect

Affect is usually used as a verb, meaning 'to influence' or 'to have an effect on something, causing change'.

The hot weather affected their work productivity.

Effect is usually used as a noun, describing the result or consequence of something.

The hot weather had a serious effect on their work productivity.

In formal writing, *effect* can also be used a verb, meaning 'bring about', 'cause to happen'.

Then, than

Then is an adverb used to show a logical pattern of reasoning and events.

First he went to the bank and then he went to the shop.

Than is a conjunction used to introduce another object or make a comparison.

Summer is better than winter.

Activity J: The most common spelling errors

Complete the following sentences using some of the words discussed above.

- Th___ looking h___, th___ and everyw___ for th___ swimsuits.
I h___ that the t___ of them are t___ fat t___ w___ them anyway.
If you wait (awhile / a while) I'll go and find them and bring them h___.
- If y___ going t___ w___ that then be careful w___ you sit. Y___ blue jeans are in t___. They've got plenty of w___ left in them, so why don't you put those on instead.
I h___ it's just a casual affair – no need t___ look y___ best. I'll w___ my jeans t___, and then the t___ of us will be comfortable.
- T___ going to be h___ soon. If they bring t___ dog I'll be so mad. The little beast leaves dog h___ all over the carpet. It's really t___ much. You w___ supposed t___ ask them to leave it at home, but I bet you w___ t___ scared to mention it.

Confused pairs of words

Often, words which sound the same (or very similar) have different meanings:

aloud / allowed	for / four	weather / whether / wether
quite / quiet	no / know	new / knew
principal / principle	who's / whose	except / accept
stationery / stationary	affect / effect	decent / descent
accent / ascent	eligible / illegible	ceiling / sealing
emigrate / immigrate	whole / hole	through / thorough
advice / advise	practice / practise	

One way to remember the correct spelling for the words you use most often is to invent **mnemonics** – ways of remembering things, or memory triggers. For example, for *principal* you might remember that your school principal is a great *pal* of yours; or that *principal* means *main* and so has an *a* near the end. Invent a mnemonic for only one word in each pair.

Activity K: Confused pairs of words

Write the correct word in each gap from the list (e.g. aloud/allowed) in the text above. They are in the same order.

- I'm not _____ to stay out after midnight.
- I've got _____ questions to do.
- He wants to know _____ you're finished.
- That's _____ unnecessary.
- Don't you _____ that?
- We _____ we would be leaving.
- She turned down the job on _____.
- Can you tell me _____ these are?
- He doesn't know how to _____ advice.
- How can you possibly get hit by a _____ vehicle?
- The algae haven't had so much _____ on mussels this year.

12. The plane began its _____ to 10 000 feet.
13. She spoke with a rather unusual _____.
14. Are you _____ for a student allowance?
15. I'll be with you when I've finished _____ the cracks.
16. They want to _____ to Australia.
17. This is a _____ new project.
18. You'll need to give it a _____ wash.
19. My _____ is to leave it alone.
20. Have you had enough _____?

Writing conventions: Punctuation

Introduction

In speech, we pause at various places because we have said something which we feel is complete. This helps the person listening to understand the direction of the conversation, and helps the person speaking to order their thoughts.

The same applies in writing. Without *punctuation*, a reader does not know where to pause to make sense of the writing. The only way to understand unpunctuated writing is to read it through first, decide what it means, and then go back and put the pauses in where the writer has left them out. Readers do not want to do that. They want to understand a piece of writing the first time, because they want to enjoy it the first time.



Punctuation to end sentences

Full stop (.)

A sentence always begins with a capital letter, ends with a full stop, and makes sense.

Exclamation mark (!)

An exclamation mark is used in the following.

- In writing **direct speech** when any exclamation or emotional statement has been made.
'Oh!' 'Get out!' 'It's not here!'

- In **informal** written language, such as personal letters, notes, some advertisements, etc., where words showing emotion are written as if they are being directed at a particular person. The exclamation mark may indicate shock, surprise, or even amusement.

You should see it! I nearly died! Buy now, pay later!

- After a written **command**, made forcefully.

No smoking!

Exclamation marks should be used sparingly in essay writing, stories, reviews, articles and so on. When overused, they lose their effectiveness.

Question mark (?)

A question mark shows that the sentence it ends is a question, which means that it requires an answer from someone.

‘What are you doing?’ she asked.

Do not use a question mark for a reported question:

She asked me what I was doing.

In direct speech, the question mark (and exclamation marks) are placed within the speech marks.

‘What’s happening?’ said Jane. ‘Watch out!’

Activity L: Punctuating with question marks

Punctuate the following sentences, adding question marks *where necessary*.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Who are you | 2. I want to know who you are |
| 3. They wanted to know why I was late | 4. Why did you do that |
| 5. What’s the time | 6. He asked me what I wanted |

Punctuation within sentences

Semicolon (;)

The semicolon can be used instead of a **conjunction** (e.g. *and*, *but*) to join two sentences together:

- if a less definite pause is wanted than a full stop, and
- the two complete groups of words are about the same topic, and
- if the second group of words adds further meaning to the first.

In the following example, a full stop could have been used instead of a semicolon, making each idea a separate sentence. Using a semicolon, however, shows the two ideas are related:

Karen felt that her treatment was far too heavy-handed; she had not been given a chance to explain herself.

Items listed within a sentence are generally separated by **commas**. However, when the list contains items which are several words long and already have commas, semicolons are used to clearly separate one item from the next.

We saw Pushtu tribesmen, looped about with bandoleers and rifles; Kabuli government officials, conspicuous in pressed shirts; bebies of women, indistinguishable in their all-concealing black veils; and tourists, pale skinned and unaccustomed to the heat, haggling with shopkeepers.

Do not use a semicolon to introduce lists or ideas. Use a *colon*.

Activity M: Punctuating with commas and semicolons

Rewrite these sentences, adding either commas or semicolons to punctuate them.

1. Alex who only liked softball was disappointed.
2. Jupiter could be described as a failed star it produces more energy than it absorbs.
3. Strangely enough none of us noticed what had been happening we were obviously too concerned with our own troubles.

Colon (:)

The colon can be used after (minor) headings and within paragraphs to introduce lists, explanations, examples and speech. Within paragraphs it is best used at the end of complete sentences.

- Following headings:
Commands: A command is an instruction to your word processor to perform an action. The commands are found on the pull-down menus ...
- Lists and examples:
The inert gases are: neon, argon, xenon, krypton and radon.
- Explanations:
The reason for his disappearance was simple: he owed money to practically everyone.
- Speech:
The Chairperson opened the meeting with the following words: 'Madam Mayor, honoured guests ...'

A colon is usually used to introduce a list of bulleted points.

Commas (,)

Commas indicate short pauses within a sentence, but not necessarily at every natural pause for breath. They are used less often than they used to be.

- Commas are used to separate words in a list. The last two words in any list are separated by *and* or *or*, which indicates that the list is at an end.
They visited London, Paris, Bonn, Belgrade and Athens in the space of a week.
The text books are written about Maths, English, Science or Social Studies.
- Commas can be used before or after **adverbial phrases**.
Next week, I will be talking about the computer industry.
Every night, you could hear a morepork call.
Lastly, I'd like to thank Mark and his team.

- Commas are placed around many phrases found straight after a **noun** which describe or explain more about the noun (called **apposition**).

Commas used this way distinguish that particular person or thing from any others of the same name or type.

Charlie Chaplin, *the great actor*, is most famous for his silent movies.

The players, *particularly those who had been sent off*, were angry at the decision.

- In **direct speech**, commas are used before, after, or around, the name of a person spoken to, when their name is used as part of the spoken words.

‘Come on, Irene.’

‘If we do that, Henry, we haven’t a chance.’

- Commas are used between direct speech and the rest of the sentence. The comma goes just before the opening speech marks, and just after the final punctuation mark ending the spoken words.

He replied, ‘I’m not interested.’

‘I’m not interested,’ he replied.

‘Well,’ he replied, ‘I’m not interested.’

Commas do not usually join complete sentences.

Commas never separate the **subject** of the sentence and the verb, no matter how complicated the subject is:

Several of the players we had been speaking to were angry at the decision. (Note that there is no comma after ‘to’.)

Activity N: Punctuating with commas

Insert commas in the appropriate places in the following sentences. *Some may need no commas.*

- The lead singer of Squelch David Shea will be in Mataura by tomorrow evening.
- Good morning Mr Morton.
- The recently appointed vice-chairperson of the Rift Valley Bone Carving Association is a keen saxophonist.
- Someone stole my Lady Gaga CD which isn’t very nice.
- She said slowly ‘Do you realise what you are doing?’
- I interviewed Ted the new supervisor.
- Sun block shades hat towel – that’s it.
- After tomorrow all this is going to change.

Apostrophe (’)

Apostrophes are used to show ownership, to show that one or more letters are missing when two words are joined, or to make a meaning clearer.

Use of the apostrophe can be difficult; however, the rules are actually very simple and take very little time to learn.

Apostrophes to show ownership

The rule for using apostrophes to show ownership is summed up in the following instructions:

1. Write the base word.

e.g. rabbit rabbits Kelly James child children

2. Add an apostrophe.

3. Add -s if you say it that way.

Result: rabbit's rabbits' Kelly's James's child's children's

Ownership normally means that something belongs to somebody. For the purposes of punctuation, anything which 'belongs to' or is 'for' something is said to be 'owned' by it. *The apostrophe goes straight after the name of the owner.*

The examples below are **singular** – the owner is one person or thing.

The auditor inspected the company's accounts.

(The accounts belong to the *company*, so the apostrophe goes straight after *company*.)

I brought a *child's bicycle*.

(It is a bicycle for a *child*, so the apostrophe goes straight after *child*.)

It took a *week's work* to do that.

(It was the work of a *week*, therefore apostrophe after *week*.)

The examples below are **plural** – the owners are two or more people or things. Note the position of the apostrophe.

Look in the women's room.

(It is a room for *women*, so the apostrophe goes straight after *women*.)

The children's birthdays are only a week apart.

(The birthdays are for the *children*, so the apostrophe goes straight after *children*.)

She paid me for two weeks' work.

(The work lasted two *weeks*, therefore apostrophe after *weeks*.)

Exceptions to the above rule

Possessive adjectives (*yours, hers, its, his, ours, theirs, whose*) do not need an apostrophe because they already have the meaning 'belongs to'.

The coat is yours. The coat is hers. Its coat is soft.

Whose coat is it? It's (it is) theirs.

But: somebody's, someone's, anybody's, anyone's, each other's, one's.

Do not use an apostrophe when an *s* is added to a verb (e.g. *He walks everywhere*), or to show plural (e.g. *We sell plants*).

Activity O: Using apostrophes

1. For each of the following, insert apostrophes *where necessary*.

a. Its Daniels fish.	b. Daniel fishes here.
c. I saw three tigers.	d. Three tigers eyes shone brightly.
e. I received two hours pay.	f. The hours fly quickly.
g. Two secretaries replied.	h. The secretarys reply was brief.
i. Jennys voice was heard.	j. The womens concern was justified.
2. Rewrite the following, changing the word in brackets and adding apostrophes *where needed*.

a. A (policeman) uniform.	b. (Lucy) artwork.
c. Martha (drive) a truck.	d. Several (child) homework.
e. The (camel) hump.	f. Too many (banana).
g. (Les) red bike.	h. This is (your).
i. The two (girl) presents	j. Both (man) briefcases.

Apostrophes to show contractions

When two words are joined into one by leaving out one or more letters, a **contraction** is formed. In **contractions**, the apostrophe replaces the missing letters.

has not becomes *hasn't*

I have becomes *I've*

could not becomes *couldn't*

should have becomes *should've* *

he has becomes *he's*

you will becomes *you'll*

it is becomes *it's*

they will becomes *they'll*

you are becomes *you're*

She would becomes *she'd*

I am becomes *I'm*

I would becomes *I'd*

will not becomes *won't*

I had becomes *I'd*

- * The word *should've* is made from *should have*, leaving out the letters *ha*, and putting an apostrophe in their place. *There is no such expression as 'should of'.*

Many common spelling errors can be avoided by understanding contractions.

Its means *belonging to it*; *it's* means *it is* (contraction).

Theirs means *it is their property*; *there's* means *there is* (contraction).

Their means *belonging to them*; *they're* means *they are* (contraction).

There means *that place* (like here and where).

Your means *belonging to you*; *you're* means *you are* (contraction).

Activity P: Apostrophes

Rewrite the following sentences, adding apostrophes *where necessary*.

1. Ive tried again, but I cant do it.
2. Wouldnt they give you theirs?
3. Dont you want to rent a tent?
4. You shouldve brought your raincoats.
5. Hes forgotten to give the dog its biscuits again.

Using dashes (–) or commas (,)

Commas

Commas are the mildest separators. Words between commas read as part of the main sentence. They do not form a complete sentence on their own, and do not contain any other punctuation. When commas are placed around a group of words within a sentence, those words usually provide helpful background information about the subject of the sentence, as in the following *relative clauses*:

The mountaineers, who had survived the avalanche, continued the climb.

Ronald Hugh Morrieson, who died in 1964, found it impossible to get his last two novels published.

Dashes

Dashes are the strongest separators, and should be used sparingly.

The words between dashes may be a complete sentence, a list, a comment, or an explanation. A complete sentence within dashes does not begin with a capital letter, but may end with a question mark or exclamation mark, e.g.

By then I was desperately hungry – who wasn't? – and I was making plans to escape.

I wanted to go back to Italy – you know how much I loved it last time – but I had so little time it didn't seem worth spending that much money.

Quotation marks (“ ” or ‘ ’)

Speech marks

Quotation marks are sometimes called *speech marks*. Use them around words that are spoken, together with the final punctuation mark which belongs with them. Anything else is outside the speech marks.

“I haven't done anything wrong,” he said.

“Watch out!” she cried.

“Be careful,” she said, “or you'll find yourself in trouble.”

If the words spoken by someone have been changed, or are being reported, quotation marks are *not* used.

He said that he hadn't done anything wrong.

Generally, punctuation marks are not put before and after a quotation mark. If a sentence ends with direct speech, the punctuation mark inside the speech marks is sufficient.

I screamed, 'Let's go!'

I remember him saying to me, 'John, things can only get better.'

Was it you who asked, 'Is \$10 000 the right figure?'

Punctuation marks which belong to the whole sentence go outside the quotation marks:

Should we have said 'no'?

Both double (" ") and single (' ') quotation marks are correct, but the single ones are becoming more common.

Activity Q: Quotation marks – Speech

1. Copy the following sentences, adding quotation marks *where necessary*.
 - a. I'm glad you can come with us, said Henrietta.
 - b. This, said our guide, was the entrance to the fortified village.
 - c. I'm sure he said he was coming.
 - d. Her doctor said she needed a rest.
 - e. Where do you think you are going?
 - f. Chris asked, Are you new here?
 - g. Stephen explained that he meant to come back.
 - h. What, demanded the guard, do you think you're doing?
 - i. Michael went over and asked the clerk at the booking office, What time does this train leave?
 - j. Don't put that down here!
2. Punctuate the following sentences.
 - a. Did someone say Who's that
 - b. Get out she yelled and don't come back
 - c. His final words were: I shall come back
 - d. Did you say two o'clock
 - e. Would you bring me that cheese said the fox
 - f. I'm going to watch TV said one of them
 - g. Did you actually go up and say would you like to walk me home

Names and titles

Quotation marks are traditionally used around titles of books, plays, films, poems and stories although underlining, full capitals, italic or a different font may also be used.

Stanley Kubrik wrote 'A Clockwork Orange'. (Used in handwritten references.)

We all went to see *Romeo and Juliet* yesterday.

O'Connor, J. D., 1980. *Better English Pronunciation*, C.U.P., Cambridge. (This method should be used in a **bibliography**.)

Quotation marks are also used around nicknames.

Ian 'Spider' Webb, John 'Circus' Ryder, Paul 'Razor' Sharpe.

Activity R: Quotation marks – names and titles

Rewrite the following sentences, adding quotation marks *where necessary*.

1. I was listening to Set Fire to the Rain last night.
2. I set fire to the rain-proof jacket.
3. Have you read The Hunger Games?
4. I'd like to introduce Len Knucklehead Falconer.
5. The Tournament, by Witi Ihimaera, is an amusing short story.

Direct speech

Quotation marks are used around words which have first been used elsewhere, or are taken from another person's speech or writing, forms, signs, brochures, etc., to show that they have been borrowed.

I had to learn a poem that went, 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' and then say it in front of the class.

The article said, 'New Zealanders don't read as much as they used to' and I think it's true.

It says 'children' here, on page 3.

Other uses

When a word is being talked about, rather than actually being used in a sentence, the word is put in quotation marks.

Avoid the word 'situation' as it is over-used.

Quotation marks can be used sarcastically, to make words mean the opposite to what they say.

We had a 'great' time. (You actually had a *terrible* time.)

'My, that's a "charming" outfit.' (You actually think the outfit looks *awful* and are being sarcastic.)

Quotation marks can be used to show that the word being used is not really suited to the style of the writing.

In conclusion, success can only be achieved by those willing to apply themselves in a consistent, determined fashion. That is – 'give it a go!'

The final words are informal and contrast with the formal language of what has gone before. The quotation marks show that there is a change in language style, but they *do not emphasise* the final words – the exclamation mark does that.

Quotation marks are sometimes omitted when something is obviously a quote.

'Did you say twenty or thirty?'

Activity S: Further uses of quotation marks

Rewrite the following sentences, using quotation marks *where necessary*.

1. Ten dollars is what he told me.
2. Haven't you written Yours faithfully on the wrong line?
3. She doesn't seem to think I'm very bright.
4. Patsy walked out when Kevin called her cabbage-features.
5. Only a-five minute walk you said.

Activity T: Punctuating with quotation marks

Punctuate the following sentences, adding quotation marks *if necessary*.

1. I think Dad's out pig-hunting said Malcolm.
2. Tururangi asked if he could come too.
3. My book has biscuit spelt wrong.
4. Have you finished reading The Rime of the Ancient Mariner?
5. That's absolutely fantastic.
6. All we could do was yell help.
7. Who has seen Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf.
8. Sally told us she was staying behind.
9. I politely requested said the constable that the defendant vacate the premises, whereupon he said eff off.
10. Look said Dad getting angry will you stop standing there saying I don't know!

Using capital letters

Capital/small letters are also termed upper-case/lower-case letters.

Although capital letters are not really punctuation marks, they are signposts. Capital letters are used *to begin a sentence*, or *a quoted sentence* and for *proper nouns*.

To begin a sentence, or a quoted sentence

A sentence must begin with a capital letter.

This is a sentence.

A quoted sentence always has a capital letter.

When Ann said, 'There's more than one way to skin a cat,' I wondered what she was getting at.

Proper nouns

Words like *school*, *college*, *mountain*, *lake*, *committee*, *club* all begin with small letters unless they form part of a particular name. When this happens, they need a capital letter.

The Billionaire Boys' Club.

Thames High School held its annual school ball last week.

Trade names and things named after people keep their capital letters, but once the origin is forgotten, they may become ordinary words like watt, sandwich, dance.

Coca-Cola culture Churchillian oratory

He's a little Hitler. We had a Clayton's holiday.

An English friend (from England) American spelling (from America)

The traditional custom was to capitalise all the important words in a heading and in titles of books, plays, films, etc.

Rise of the Planet of the Apes Four Weddings and a Funeral

However, this is becoming less formal. Newspapers and magazines no longer capitalise their headlines. Writers can choose to capitalise headings and titles in the style of a sentence, with one capital at the beginning.

Rise of the Planet of the Apes Four weddings and a funeral

Any names in titles must still be given their normal capitals. When you are writing *formally*, such as to answer an NCEA Level 1 English examination, it is often better to use the formal, capitalised style.

Activity U: Capital letters

Read the following piece, then explain why each of the capital letters has been used. If a word is in *italics*, explain why a capital letter has not been used.

The 13-inch MacBook Pro now features a 2.4 GHz Intel Core i5 *processor* or the fastest dual-core processor available — the 2.8 GHz Intel Core i7. With turbo boost speeds up to 3.5 GHz, these processors allow the 13-inch MacBook Pro to perform up to twice as fast as the previous *generation*. The new 15- and 17-inch models bring quad-core power to almost everything you do. MacBook Pro *models* run applications up to twice as fast as their top-of-the-line predecessors.

Writing conventions: Grammar

Introduction

Grammar is the study of the rules for writing and speaking correct English. This chapter revises the key features of English grammar which are useful for NCEA Level 1 English.

If you are a native speaker of English, you already know the rules for spoken English. If you didn't, you would speak in muddled sentences and nobody would be able to understand you. You might not know the names of the rules, but you use them automatically – like driving a car without knowing how a petrol engine works.

If your first language is not English, the rules of your language and of English will be different, and you will be learning the rules of spoken English too.

Some of the rules of written English are different from those of spoken English. You need to understand those differences so that you can write correctly. For example, someone might congratulate a group of people with the sentence:

'You's done real good!'

This is spoken following the rules of **vernacular** New Zealand English, which many people in New Zealand speak. According to the rules of **standard English**, the sentence must become:

‘You did really well!’

When this section describes sentences as ‘correct’ or ‘wrong’, it is referring to the rules of standard English.

You need to know the names of **word classes** (nouns, verbs, etc.) and parts of sentences (subject, object, etc.).

The word classes

Each word has a different role in a sentence – to understand the way language has been used to convey meaning, each word is given a category or class. The eight important word classes are outlined with brief definitions below.

The eight important word classes				
Open (lexical – carry meaning)	Noun – name of a place, thing, person or idea	Verb – a doing word	Adjective – describes a noun	Adverb – adds information to verbs
Abbreviation	N	V	Adj	Adv
Closed (functional – gives framework)	Pronoun – substitute for proper name	Preposition – position of object	Determiner – gives more information about noun	Conjunction – joining word(s)
Abbreviation	Pro	Pre	D	Conj

Open word classes are words which carry the meaning of the sentence (**lexical** words). They are ‘open’ because new nouns, etc., are being created all the time. Closed word classes don’t often take in new members. They are **functional** words, forming the framework to hang a sentence on. These functional words are often left out when people text each other as the sense of the words remains intact.

Sue quickly left the car in the first garage before she went into the house.

N Adv V D N Pre D Adj N C Pro V Pre D N

Sense can be made from the lexical words alone:

Sue quickly left car first garage went house.

But there is no message at all in the functional words:

the in the before she into the

Words are put into **classes** according to the job they do in the sentence. A word can belong to different classes (usually open classes) at different times.

book is a noun in ‘Open your *books*’ but a verb in ‘Can I *book* my ticket?’

A word’s class can be changed by adding a suffix.

showed *anger* (noun), to *anger* (verb), *angry* (adjective), and *angrily* (adverb).

Choose the correct form to suit the job of the word in the sentence.

Activity V: Recognising word classes

- Copy the following sentence then write the word class underneath each word. If you're not sure, leave it blank.

Sir Edmund Hillary was the first person to climb Mount Everest.

Note: *Sir* is a noun and *to* is a particle in this sentence.

- Do the same with this sentence:

A New Zealand version of the series detailed events beginning in the late 1960s to and throughout the 1970s and told the origin of the Mr Asia drug syndicate and its original leader Marty Johnstone.

Activity W: Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs

For each question, look at the word in brackets. Then write down how this word has been used in each of the following sentences as *noun*, *verb*, *adjective* or *adverb*. Any class may be used more than once per question.

- (record)
 - He has made a new world record.
 - They are recording in the next room.
 - The programme was recorded last week.
 - The job was done in record time.
- (square)
 - She landed squarely on her feet.
 - He had a heavy, square face.
 - I'll square it up with you tomorrow.
 - Please draw a square.
- (fool)
 - That was rather foolish.
 - I think he's a fool.
 - She looked round foolishly.
 - A fool and his money are soon parted.
- (savage)
 - It was a savage attack.
 - I'm afraid his play was savaged by the critics.
 - The dog bit savagely.
 - The people were thought of as savages.
- (reason)
 - I don't have to give you any reason.
 - Do you think he has behaved reasonably?
 - You can't reason with them.
 - Humans have highly developed powers of reason.

Word classes – Some rules of standard English

Adverbs normally end in *ly*, and they modify verbs and adjectives by stating *how* or *where* or *when* something happens. Adjectives cannot do the job of adverbs.

The verb in 'The cat bounded in' can be modified with *gracefully*, *eagerly*, *fiercely*, and so on.

In the same way, the verb in 'He did it' can be modified with *slowly*, *angrily*, *quickly*,

well. For this reason, 'Do it quick!' is wrong because *quick* is an adjective. You must change the adjective to the adverb, 'Do it quickly!'

This also applies after 'more' and 'most'.

Don't write 'You can do it more easy now' because an adverb is needed – 'You can do it more *easily* now'.

After 'more' and 'most', a regular adjective is used.

Write 'She's the cleverest' or 'She's the most clever', not 'She's the most cleverest'.

There are two forms of the determiner *a*. It becomes *an* before a vowel (a, e, i, o, u) except when *u* is pronounced *y* as in 'union'. It is *a* everywhere else.

'A banana' but 'an apple'.

There is only one form of 'you' for **singular** or **plural**. Do not write 'yous'.

Activity X: Word classes

Read the following letter from a manager to their employees. The purpose of the letter is to *make the employees feel valued*. Copy and complete the chart, writing the word in brackets with the correct change and word class where appropriate. The first three have been done for you.

Word in brackets	Change required	Word class
1. [a]	a (no change)	determiner
2. [difficult]	difficulties	adjective
3. [deal]	to deal	verb
4. [rise]		
5. [difficult]		
6. [the]		
7. [disastrous]		
8. [a]		
9. [head]		
10. [splendid]		
11. [rapid]		
12. [you]		
13. [extreme]		
14. [good]		

This has been [1. a] year full of [2. difficult]. We have had [3. deal] with [4. rise] import prices, transport has become more [5. difficult], and it has been [6. the] most [7. disastrous] growing season for many years. However, for many staff, it has been [8. a] opportunity to show their qualities. The four department [9. head] in particular have responded [10. splendid] to the challenge and our turnover has been more [11. rapid] than ever. But [12. you] have all done [13. extreme] [14. good].

Determiners and nouns

Determiners appear before nouns to add information, such as which one we are talking about or how many there are. We don't usually begin a sentence with a word like 'truck'; we put a determiner before it, writing *a truck*, *some trucks*, *many trucks*, *these trucks*, *all the trucks*, and so on. If there is an adjective, it goes between the determiner and the noun, e.g. *a heavy truck*, *some new trucks*.

Nouns are either countable or uncountable.

Example

Sugar is uncountable, while shoe is countable.

Often the determiners *many* and *much* are confused, which affects the determiners you can use with them:

- *many* is used with countable nouns.
- *much* is used with uncountable nouns.

Example

Quantity:	1	2	small	decrease	large	increase
sugar (uncountable)	n/a	n/a	a little sugar	less sugar	much sugar	more sugar
shoes (countable)	a shoe	two shoes	a few shoes	fewer shoes	many shoes	more shoes

Words can be used both countably and uncountably.

Example

'cheese' is normally uncountable ('I'm trying to eat *less* cheese') but it is countable when it means a *type* of cheese ('There used to be *fewer* cheeses on the market than there are now.') Similarly, 'two sugars' really means 'two teaspoons of sugar'.

When 'more' or 'less' are used alone, as in 'I'll work *less*', they are not determiners but adverbs.

In informal speech and writing, the word *fewer* is often replaced by *less*.

Activity Y: Determiners and nouns

1. Classify each of the following nouns as countable or uncountable. For each, choose an appropriate determiner:

information, furniture, wood, thought, chair, work, stick, game, time, job.

2. Read the following passage and choose the correct determiner to match the noun. The first has been done for you (in italics).

This year I aim to do [(a.) much fewer / *much less*] work than last year. Firstly, I'm taking [(b.) a more / more] holidays, which would cost [(c.) more / many] money, but I'll do [(d.) much / more] camping this time and stay in [(e.) less / fewer] motels, so it will actually cost [(f.) less / fewer]. If I don't do so [(g.) many / much] driving I'll use [(h.) fewer / less] petrol, and I'll have [(i.) fewer / less] meals in expensive restaurants. I hope I can have [(j.) a / some] great time with [(k.) a little / a few] money. That way I can work [(l.) less / fewer] and enjoy myself [(m.) more / a more].

Pronouns, verbs, person and number

A pronoun takes the place of a noun. Pronouns can be described by their person (first, second or third) and number (singular or plural). Memorise the chart below:

	Singular		Plural	
	Subject	Object	Subject	Object
1st person	I	me	we	us
2nd person	you	you	you	you
3rd person:				
male	he	him	they	them
female	she	her	they	them
either	they	them	they	them
unknown or neuter	it	it	they	them

See 'Phrases', following page, for an explanation of **subject** and **object**.

Every time you use *I* or *me* you are using the 'first person' (the person who is talking or writing). When you use *you*, this is the person you are speaking or writing to – the second person. Everyone else is someone we are speaking *about*, so they're the third person.

Nouns are usually *third person*. You can test this by putting a pronoun in place of the noun:

We met Sally yesterday. (We met *her* yesterday – 3rd person.)

Sally, what do you think? (Here, someone is speaking to Sally, so they say *you* – second person.)

Note that *you* is the same for singular and plural. There was a singular *you* hundreds of years ago – it was *thou/thee*. It became old fashioned, so the plural *you* took over for both. *Thou/thee* can be found in the Bible, Shakespeare, and may be used in prayers and poetry.

There are two 'numbers' in English nouns and pronouns – singular (one of something) and plural (more than one).

'Computer' is singular, 'computers' is plural. 'I' is singular (there's only one of me) but 'we' is plural because it means 'me and one or more others'.

Some languages such as Maori have a form for *two* people ('korua') but English doesn't.

The person and number affect the verb in the present tense.

You can say or write 'I walk' or 'you walk', but 'Koro walks'.

This final *s* appears only on the *third person singular* of nearly all verbs in the *present tense*. A third person singular verb such as 'she sings' does not have an apostrophe.

Sentences and clauses

Several sentences can be put together to make a larger sentence.

The following two sentences can be combined in various ways.

She had a broken finger

She carried on playing

such as

Although she had a broken finger, she carried on playing.

Every sentence is made up of one or more **clauses**. Subject, verb phrase, etc., are called the 'elements' of a clause.

A clause (e.g. 'She disappeared') must have a subject (she) and a finite verb (disappeared).

Phrases

A phrase is a group of one or more words which does the job of one word. A **noun phrase** is a group of words, containing a noun or pronoun, which behaves like a noun. A **verb phrase** is a group of words, containing a verb, which behave like a verb.

The following four sentences begin with a *noun phrase* (shown in italics and underlined) containing the common noun 'food'. A phrase is a group of *one or more words* which does the job of one word.

1. *Food* has arrived.
2. *Tasty food* has arrived.
3. *Only half the expected amount of food* has arrived.
4. *The food you have been waiting for* has arrived.

The noun phrase and verb phrase are the key elements of the basic English clause – the noun phrase is called the **subject** (and usually goes first), then the verb phrase follows. There may be other elements in the clause, but you must be able to identify the noun phrase and verb phrase.

- Ask 'Who/what was doing the action?' to identify the noun phrase/subject.
- Ask 'What were they doing?' to identify the verb phrase.

Stumbling forward towards the dimly outlined hut, ignoring the freezing gale ripping at their thin coats, *they felt* certain that help was near.

- 'Who/what was doing the action?' – *they* is the noun phrase.
- 'What were they doing?' – *they felt* – *felt* is the verb phrase.

The subject and noun phrase and the verb phrase form the grammatical core of the sentence.

Subjects

The subject *you* is left out of a command. No subject appears in 'Take two eggs and beat them well'. This is called an 'understood' subject, since we understand that it means 'you'. All other complete sentences must have a subject.

Punctuation

Don't put a comma after the subject unless there is another reason to do so. If you look at the four sentences listed above, even no. 4, which has a very long subject, has no comma.

Extra pronouns

It is common in everyday English to hear a noun followed by its pronoun as the subject.

My parents, they don't like hip hop.

That kid over there, he's Mark's brother.

Some of those shops by the supermarket, they've just closed down.

This structure is not used in standard written English. Leave out the comma and the pronoun:

My parents don't like hip hop.

Questions

To form a question, the *order* of subject and verb may be different.

You went to the movies can form the questions:

	Subject	Verb phrase
<i>Did you go to the movies?</i>	you	did go
<i>When did you go to the movies?</i>	you	did go

Activity Z: Subject noun phrases and verb phrases

Copy out the subject and verb phrase of the following sentences. You are only looking for *one* subject and *one* verb phrase (the main verb), but each of them can include one or more words. Three examples have been done for you.

Uncle George has left his glasses here again.

Subject: Uncle George

Verb phrase: has left

Are you allergic to peanuts?

Subject: you

Verb phrase: are

That jacket you lent me has gone missing

Subject: that jacket you lent me

Verb: has gone

1. The Committee meets at lunchtime.
2. The last four players forgot to collect their tops.
3. Poor old Charlie was the last one to find out.
4. Why do I have to do it?
5. Since about fifteen years ago the brontosaurus has been known as 'apatosaurus'.

6. My analogue TV became obsolete last week.
7. Chloe was dancing all evening.
8. Who's seen 'The Dark Knight Rises' yet?
9. That wasn't the best way of asking her.
10. Waiting at the checkout, Max discovered his wallet was gone.

Verb phrases

Verb forms

A verb phrase can be formed from a single verb.

'You *collect* basketball cards'. 'Collect' is the main verb and the verb phrase.

There can also be two or more verbs in a verb phrase.

'I *have tried* that one'. *Have* and *tried* are both verbs.

The first verb in a verb phrase changes according to *person*, *number* and *tense*, by adding suffixes.

First person:	I <i>collect</i> baseball cards
Third person:	Jason <i>collects</i> basketball cards (+ <i>s</i>)
Third person plural:	Jason and Troy <i>collect</i> basketball cards
Past tense:	Jason <i>collected</i> basketball cards (+ <i>ed</i>)

A verb adds suffixes only to form the present and past tense. We can talk about future time by using 'going to' or the **auxiliary** *will* as in 'I *will* see you soon'.

Activity AA: Identifying verb forms

Copy out the subjects and their verbs from the sentences below. Look at the verb and identify its person, number and tense. Two examples have been done for you.

I'm asking you nicely – will you please go?

Subject: *I* Verb phrase: *am asking* – 1st person (I); singular (one person); present tense (happening now).

Subject: *you* Verb phrase: *will go* – 2nd person (you); singular or plural; present tense.

Chelsea spoke to her doctor yesterday.

Subject: *Chelsea* Verb phrase: *spoke* – 3rd person (she); singular (one person); past tense (happened before now).

1. I usually have piano practice on Wednesdays.
2. The beach was too crowded.
3. Melissa gets in around 9 o'clock.
4. You all passed yesterday's test.
5. Twenty dollars has gone missing from my wallet.
6. I won't call him again.
7. Some of the chimpanzees were running around and screaming.
8. The wizard puts a spell on anyone he doesn't like.

9. You washed the wrong lot of clothes, Peter.
10. We are trying to get these boots clean.

Past tense – standard English

There are differences between the past tenses of some verbs in **vernacular** and **standard English**. For example, many people say *I done it*, but you should write *I did it*. Here are some examples:

Present tense

you *bring* some kai

the people *come*

Chris *does* it

I *give* thanks

they players *know* why

Jenny *sees* us

you *shake* it up

I *speak* clearly

the river *runs* west

Past tense

you *brought* some kai

the people *came*

Chris *did* it

I *gave* thanks

the players *knew* why

Jenny *saw* us

you *shook* it up

I *spoke* clearly

the river *ran* west

Past participle

you *have brought* some kai

the people *have come*

Chris *has done* it

I *have given* thanks

the players *have known* why

Jenny *has seen* us

you *have shaken* it up

I *have spoken* clearly

the river *has run* west

Negatives

Another difference between Standard and Vernacular English is the use of words like *nothing*, *no one* or *never*. Standard English uses a rule something like maths – ‘two negatives make a positive’.

If you write ‘I didn’t see nobody’, you mean that you *did* see someone! The correct sentence is ‘I didn’t see *anybody*’.

The word *never* means what it says – at no time. Only use *never* when it is important to say that something has really *not ever* happened.

Activity BB: Standard English

Answer the questions below using *complete sentences*, in correct standard English, using the same verb. Use the information in brackets in your answer. An example has been done for you.

What did you see in the tunnel?

[nothing]

A. I didn’t see anything *or* I saw nothing.

1. Who gave you that bracelet?

[boyfriend / present]

2. Have you done the washing up?

[yes, this morning]

3. Whom do they know in Raglan?

[no one]

4. When did your parents come?

[yesterday morning]

5. Where should I take her?

[nowhere]

6. Whom did you speak to?

[my brother]

7. Whom did you bring that for?

[no one]

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 8. How much did you give them? | [\$5] |
| 9. How much can you give me? | [nothing] |

Object noun phrases

The object

A basic clause is made of two elements – someone/thing (the **subject**), doing something (the **verb phrase**).

Very often, the subject is doing something *to* something else. The ‘something else’ is another noun phrase – the **object**. The object is closely related to the verb phrase, so we say that it is the object of that verb. The object normally follows the verb phrase.

Joanna runs a restaurant. You can ask: ‘What does Joanna run?’ The thing she is running is a *restaurant* – the object.

If a verb has an object, it is **transitive**. If it cannot have an object, it is **intransitive**.

Intransitive: Joanna runs in the morning.
I’m talking.

Transitive: Joanna runs a restaurant.
I told you.

The indirect object

There are two kinds of object – direct and indirect. If I say ‘I’ll send *you* a copy’, I’m sending to *you* and I’m sending a copy. Clearly I am not doing the same thing to both of these objects. The *copy* is a direct object, which I am sending to *you*. ‘You’ is called an *indirect object* in this sentence.

Word classes – *v* = verb; *det* = determiner; *pron* = pronoun; *n* = noun.

Clause elements – *S* = subject; *IO* = Indirect Object; *DO* = Direct Object; *VP* = Verb Phrase.

Could	you	pass	me	that	ruler?
v	pron	v	pron	det	n
VP (+ pass)	S		IO		DO
They	gave	him	the	Victoria	Cross.
pron	v	pron	det	n	n
S	VP	IO		DO	

The complement

Sometimes a phrase looks like an object, but it is not doing quite the same job. For example:

You look beautiful. We’ll paint it green. I hope you’re satisfied. This is Allan.

In these sentences, *beautiful*, *green*, *satisfied* and *Allan* are in the place where you would expect to find an object. However, *you* are not doing anything to *beautiful*, and *this* is not doing anything to *Allan*. In fact, you can see that the subjects and these final words really refer to the same person or thing. In these cases, it is called the complement. The **complement** is another element of a clause. Complements can be noun or adjective phrases. You will find a complement after verbs like *be* (which include *am*, *are*, *is*, *was*, *were*) and *become*.

Activity CC: Verb phrase, object, complement

Draw up columns headed *Subject*, *Verb Phrase*, *Indirect Object*, *Direct Object*, and *Complement*, and put the parts of each sentences under the correct heading. Some parts will not go under these headings. Three examples have been done for you.

We haven't seen Mr Tan this morning.

These shoes are much too big.

I'll fax you our prices right away.

S	VP	IO	DO	C
We	haven't seen		Mr Tan	
These shoes	are			much too big
I	'll (= will) fax	you	our prices	

1. You'll need a circular saw for this job.
2. They tried on some incredibly expensive shoes.
3. I really didn't write that note.
4. My grandfather is sending me some of his rare stamps.
5. Sefulu's father is a matai.
6. His main interest is trying to swim Cook Strait.
7. I'll lend you the money tomorrow.
8. The children are playing football.
9. Shorn of all their wool, the sheep looked puzzled and rather cold.
10. They built one of the first aeroplanes ever seen in New Zealand.

Types of sentence

Simple sentences

The basic English sentence has a subject and a verb phrase.

The cats were howling.

In this sentence, 'the cats' is the subject and 'were howling' is what they were doing – the verb phrase. All sorts of extra information can be added:

The huge assortment of motley cats, hidden under every bush in our garden, were howling again late last night.

A description of the cats and information about the place and time are given, but this is all part of the same simple sentence because there is only one verb. There can even be more than one subject:

The cats and dogs were howling.

but there is still only one clause, so it is a simple sentence.

Compound sentences

If a second clause is added to a sentence, the two clauses can form a **compound sentence**. The two clauses must be joined in some way.

For example:

The cats were howling the dogs were barking.

In this sentence there are two clauses (*cats + howling, dogs + barking*), so it is no longer a simple sentence.

Some students try to use a comma:

The cats were howling, the dogs were barking.

This is not usually the right punctuation. Commas are weak punctuation. This needs a **co-ordinating conjunction** or other punctuation:

The cats were howling *and* the dogs were barking. (*Co-ordinating conjunction.*)

The cats were howling; the dogs were barking. (*Semicolon.*)

Activity DD: Simple and compound sentences

Look at the following sentences.

- If they are simple sentences, write 'S'. If they are compound sentences, join them with a co-ordinating conjunction such as *and, but, or, then*.
- Make sure that commas have been used correctly.

Two examples have been done for you.

Keeping a marriage going these days, can be an uphill battle at the best of times.

ANSWER: S. (*No comma needed. Note: 'Keeping' is not a finite verb.*)

Ask any 'other half' of a top athlete, they'll tell you.

ANSWER: Ask any 'other half' of a top athlete and they'll tell you. (*No comma needed. Note: The two verb phrases are 'ask' and 'tell'.*)

1. The Rangers' top scorer this year, is Mark Te Kaa.
2. Most of the North Island has had an unusually warm spell this year.
3. Thousand of troops were left behind, they were not thought to be in danger.
4. Curries, stir-fried vegetables and other 'foreign' dishes are replacing the 'meat and three veg' meal.
5. Nearly two metres tall, he found the school desks ridiculously small and uncomfortable.
6. Two fishermen were rescued yesterday, their boat has not been found.
7. The driver of the speeding car was arrested, her car was found to be without a warrant.
8. Retailers paying high rentals as well as 'excessive' rates, are complaining to the City Council.
9. The noise from the grounds was within official limits, some residents still found it too high.
10. Police are on the lookout for a man with straggly blond hair, hearing aids, and a limp.

Complex sentences

In some sentences, one of the clauses is called the **main clause** because it expresses the key idea of the sentence, and because it could be correctly written alone. All the other clauses *depend* on it, and cannot be written alone. They are called **dependent clauses**, also known as **subordinate clauses**.

In *This little piggy stayed home because he had a bad cold*, the first part (up to *home*) could be a separate sentence, but *because he had a bad cold* makes no sense on its own. It gives a reason for doing something, so we expect to hear what was done as well. The word *because* is a **subordinating conjunction**.

Other examples of subordinating conjunctions are *so, if, unless, although, even though, though, while, when, since, as, after, before, as soon as*. Sentences can also be **compound complex** if they have more than one main clause plus a subordinate clause.

Activity EE: Complex sentences

Make two complex sentences from the pairs of clauses, following these instructions:

- Make the clause in *italics* subordinate, using the first conjunction in brackets.
- Use the second conjunction to make the other clause the subordinate one. You can change their order and make necessary changes to the words.

The two sentences do not have to have the same meaning.

Two examples have been done for you (the subordinate clauses are in *italics*).

The shoes were left outside. *They were dirty*. [because, so]

Answer:

a. The shoes were left outside *because they were dirty*.

b. The shoes were dirty, *so they were left outside*.

We'll go to Australia. *We can afford it*. [if, so]

Answer:

a. *If we can afford it*, we'll go to Australia.

b. We can afford it, *so we'll go to Australia*.

- You'll get paid. *You've finished*. [when, so]
- You can finish by Friday*. The deal's off. [unless, otherwise]
- They hung around for an hour or so. *The film was starting later than they thought*. [since, so]
- I want you to come back. *The shop has opened*. [as soon as, so]
- They teach Japanese in Year 12. *I'll probably take it*. [as, so]
- The burglar must have been getting in. *You were taking a shower*. [while, as]
- I'm going out this morning. *I need to do some shopping*. [as, so]
- The watches are assembled. *They are thoroughly checked*. [after, before]
- They decided to buy the house. *It was in Remuera*. [even though, yet]
- They have finished building the runway*. The plane will land here. [if, although]

Minor sentences

Writers do not always use full grammatical sentences. They may use sentences without verbs, or without subjects, to create an effect.

Ted Burney. Criminal psychologist. Last year's hero. And now? Not a pretty sight ...
(*No verbs*.)

Finally we caught sight of them. Gliding, swooping, plummeting like sparks flung from a fire, plucking fish from the sea. (*No subjects and no finite verbs* in the second sentence.)

Minor sentences are found mostly in poetic and expressive writing, and rarely in formal writing. Do not over-use minor sentences.

Activity A: Spelling ei/ie words

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. neighbour | 2. brief | 3. priest |
| 4. thief | 5. weight | 6. shield |
| 7. deceive | 8. piece | 9. receive |
| 10. leisure | 11. reign | 12. ceiling |
| 13. height | 14. chief | 15. their |
| 16. foreign | 17. reprieve | 18. outfield |

Activity B: Joining words and adding prefixes

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. all+together | co+operate | cup+board |
| dis+appoint | re+action | |
| dis+satisfied | dis+similar | extra+ordinary |
| fore+head | hand+kerchief | |
| il+legal | il+legible | im+movable |
| im+possible | in+capable | |
| in+credible | inter+action | ir+relevant |
| ir+reparable | dis+appear | |
| 2. indecisive | unarmed (dis-) | inactive |
| deactivate (in-) | undo | |
| disconnect (mis-) | misinterpret | dehumanise |
| unfinished | disbelieve | |
| disagree | disservice | unnatural |
| immoral | untie | |

Activity C: Adding a suffix (1)

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| <u>change+able</u> | value+able | fame+ous |
| issue+ed | true+ly | |
| <u>courage+ous</u> | emigrate+ion | (im)move+able |
| rage+ing | <u>nine+ty</u> | |
| interfere+ence | <u>manage+able</u> | make+ing |
| <u>hate+ful</u> | where+ever | <u>disgrace+ful</u> |
| race+ing | manage+ing | live+ing |

Activity D: Adding a suffix (2)

- Drop the *e* if the suffix begins with a vowel (e.g. notice + ing → noticing) *or* if the base word ends in a long *u* (e.g. true + ly → truly).
 - Keep the *e* if the suffix begins with a consonant (e.g. age + less → ageless) *or* the suffix is *able* *or* *ous* and the base word ends in a soft *ce* *or* *ge* sound (e.g. manage + able → manageable).
- All of these words follow the rule.

raging	changeable
courageous	tasteful
famed	graceless
hoped	relation
issuable	manageable
noticing	hated

Activity E: Doubling consonants

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. ruling | 2. coping | 3. barring |
| 4. gaming | 5. grabbing | 6. fanning |
| 7. hiding | 8. storing | 9. setting |
| 10. fibbing | 11. wiping | 12. raging |
| 13. phoning | 14. plodding | 15. strutting |
| 16. stirring | 17. gaping | 18. nipping |
| 19. tuning | 20. noting | |

Activity F: Doubling consonants and adding a suffix

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|
| label+ing | begin+ing | |
| cancel+ation | compel+ed | defer+ed |
| defer+ment | civilise+ed | excel+ent |
| control+ed | omit+ing | |
| refer+ed | refer+al | travel+ed |
| unparallel+ed | react+ion | |

Activity G: Adding suffixes

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| fitness | calming | badness |
| caging | appalling | |
| coolness | equipped | thinness |
| bareness | dimming | |
| committed | benefiting | concealment |
| levelness | worshipping | |

Activity H: Suffixes and words ending in y

- hairier, hairiest
 - uglyish, uglier, ugliest
 - easier, easiest, easily
 - greyish, greyer, greyest
 - untidier, untidiest, untidily
 - wobblier, wobbliest
- buries, burying, buried
 - flies, flying
 - obeys, obeying, obeyed
 - allies, allying, allied
 - worries, worrying, worried
 - studies, studying, studied
- enemies
 - beautiful, beauties
 - volleys
 - playful, plays
 - specialities
 - factories

Activity I: Plurals

- | | | |
|------------|----------|--------------|
| tornadoes | loaves | kilometres |
| heroes | vehicles | pianos |
| sandwiches | valleys | cauliflowers |
| contraltos | branches | libraries |

Activity J: The most common spelling errors

- They're looking here, there and everywhere for their swimsuits. I hear that the two of them are too fat to wear them anyway. If you wait awhile I'll go and find them and bring them here.
- If you're going to wear that then be careful where you sit. Your blue jeans are in there. They've got plenty of wear... I hear it's just a casual affair – no need to look your best. I'll wear my jeans too, and the two of us will be comfortable.
- They're going to be here soon. If they bring their dog I'll be so mad. The little beast leaves dog hair all over the carpet. It's really too much. You were supposed to ask them to leave it at home, but I bet you were too scared to mention it.

Activity K: Confused pairs of words

- | | | | |
|------------|---------|------------|--------------|
| 1. allowed | 6. knew | 11. effect | 16. emigrate |
|------------|---------|------------|--------------|

2. four 7. principle 12. descent 17. whole
 3. whether 8. whose 13. accent 18. thorough
 4. quite 9. accept 14. eligible 19. advice
 5. know 10. stationary 15. sealing 20. practice

Activity L: Punctuating with question marks

Question marks: 1, 4, 5. Full stops: 2, 3, 6.

Activity M: Punctuating with commas and semicolons

1. Alex, softball,
 2. star;
 3. enough, happening;

Activity N: Punctuating with commas

1. Squelch, David Shea, 2. morning, Mr
 3. *No commas.* 4. CD, which
 5. slowly, 'Do...'
 6. Ted, the
 7. Sun block, shades, hat, towel
 8. tomorrow, **Comma optional**

Activity O: Using apostrophes

1. a. It's, Daniel's b. *None* c. *None*
 d. tigers' e. hours' f. *None*
 g. *None* h. secretary's i. Jenny's
 j. women's
 2. a. policeman's b. Lucy's c. drives
 d. children's e. camel's f. bananas
 g. Les's h. yours i. girls'
 j. men's

Activity P: Apostrophes

1. I've, can't 2. Wouldn't 3. Don't
 4. Should've 5. He's

Activity Q: Quotation marks – Speech

1. a. 'I'm ... us,'
 b. 'This,' said our guide, 'was... village.'
 c. *None.*
 d. *None.*
 e. *None.*
 f. Chris asked, 'Are you new here?'
 g. *None.*
 h. 'What,' demanded the guard, 'do you think you're doing?'
 i. ... office, 'What leave?'
 j. *None.*
 2. a. Did somebody say, 'Who's that?'
 b. 'Get out!' she yelled. 'And don't come back!'
 c. His final words were: 'I shall come back.'
 d. Did you say 'two o'clock'?
 e. 'Would you bring me that cheese?' said the fox.
 f. 'I'm going to watch TV,' said one of them.
 g. Did you actually go up and say, 'Would you like to walk me home?'

Activity R: Quotation marks – Names and Titles

1. I was listening to 'Set Fire to the Rain' last night.
 2. *None.*
 3. Have you read 'The Hunger Games'?
 4. I'd like to introduce Len 'Knucklehead' Falconer.
 5. 'The Tournament', by Witi Ihimaera ...

Activity S: Further uses of quotation marks

1. 'Ten dollars' is what he told me. **Quotation marks optional.**

2. Haven't you written 'Yours faithfully' on the wrong line?

3. *None.*

4. 'cabbage-features'.

5. 'Only a five-minute walk,' you said.

Activity T: Punctuating with quotation marks

1. 'I think Dad's out pig-hunting,' said Malcolm.
 2. *None.*
 3. 'biscuit'
 4. 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner?'
 5. *None.*
 6. 'Help!'
 7. Who has seen 'Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?'
 8. *None.*
 9. 'I politely requested,' said the constable, 'that the defendant vacate the premises, whereupon he said, "Eff off".'
 10. 'Look,' said Dad getting angry, 'will you stop standing there saying "I don't know"!'

Activity U: Capital letters

The – Start of sentence;

MacBook Pro – Proper noun;

2.4 G Hz Intel Core i5 – Information technology usage;

2.8 G Hz Intel Core i7 – Information technology usage;

With – S; 3.5 GHz – Information technology usage;

Macbook Pro – Proper noun;

The – Start of sentence;

MacBook Pro – Start of sentence *and* Proper noun
processor – a common noun – does not require a capital

generation – a common noun – does not require a capital

models – a common noun – does not require a capital

Activity V: Recognising word classes

Key: n – noun; v – verb; adj – adjective; adv – adverb; conj – conjunction;
 d – determiner; part – particle; prep – preposition; pro – pronoun.

1. Sir Edmund Hillary was the
 n *n* *n* *v* *d*

first person to climb
 adj *n* *part* *v*

Mount Everest.
 n *n*

2. A New Zealand version of
 d *n* *n* *n* *prep*

the series detailed events beginning
 d *n* *v* *n* *v*

in the late 1960s to
 prep *n* *adj* *n* *prep*

and throughout the
 conj *prep* *d*

1970s and told the origin

<i>n</i>	<i>conj</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>n</i>
of	the	Mr	Asia	drug
<i>prep</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
syndicate	and	its	original	
<i>n</i>	<i>conj</i>	<i>pro</i>	<i>adj</i>	
leader	Marty	Johnstone.		
<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>		

Activity W: Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. a. noun | b. verb |
| c. verb | d. adjective |
| 2. a. adverb | b. adjective |
| c. verb | d. noun |
| 3. a. adjective | b. noun |
| c. adverb | d. noun |
| 4. a. adjective | b. verb |
| c. adverb | d. noun |
| 5. a. noun | b. adverb |
| c. verb | d. noun |

Activity X: Word classes

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4. rising: adjective | 5. difficult: adjective |
| 6. the: determiner | 7. disastrous: adjective |
| 8. an: determiner | 9. heads: noun |
| 10. splendidly: adverb | 11. rapid: adjective |
| 12. you: pronoun | 13. extremely: adverb |
| 14. well: adverb | |

Activity Y: Determiners and nouns

1. information – uncountable, more information
 furniture – uncountable/countable, more furniture
 wood – uncountable, less wood
 thought – countable, a thought
 chair – countable, the chair
 work – uncountable, more work
 stick – countable, two sticks
 game – countable, a game
 time – countable, many times
 job – countable, fewer jobs
- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|----------|
| 2. a. much less | b. more | c. more |
| d. more | e. fewer | f. less |
| g. much | h. less | i. fewer |
| j. a | k. a little | l. less |
| m. more | | |

Activity Z: Subject noun phrases and verb phrases

Subject phrase	Verb
1. The Committee	meets
2. The last four players	forgot
3. Poor old Charlie	was
4. I	do have
5. the brontosaurus	has been known
6. My analogue TV	became
7. Chloe	was dancing
8. Who	has seen
9. That	wasn't
10. Max	discovered

Activity AA: Identifying verb forms

	Subject	Verb phrase	Person, number, tense
1.	I	have	1st person singular, present
2.	the beach	was	3rd person singular, past
3.	Melissa	gets in	3rd person singular, present
4.	You all	passed	2nd person plural, past
5.	Twenty dollars	has gone (missing)	3rd person plural, past*
6.	I	won't call	1st person singular, future
7.	Some of the chimpanzees	were running / screaming	3rd person plural, past
8.	the wizard	puts	3rd person singular, present

You could also look at the second part of the sentence:

	he	doesn't like	3rd person singular, present
9.	You	washed	2nd person, singular, past
10.	We	are trying	1st person plural, present

* The correct term for this tense, with 'have/has done something' is the 'present perfect'. At this point, it can be thought of as a past tense.

Activity BB: Standard English

- Her boyfriend gave it to her as a present.
- Yes, I did it this morning.
- They don't know anyone in Raglan.
Or: They know no one in Raglan.
- They came yesterday morning.
- Don't take her anywhere.
Or: Take her nowhere.
- I spoke to my brother.
- I didn't bring it for anyone.
Or: I brought it for no one.
- I gave them \$5.
- I can't give you anything.
Or: I can give you nothing.

The alternative answers given are much less common, and more formal.

Activity CC: Verb phrase, object, complement

	S	VP	IO	DO	C		
1.	you	will need	-	a circular saw	-		
2.	they	tried on	-	some incredibly expensive shoes	-		
3.	I	didn't write	-	that note	-		
4.	my grandfather	is sending	me	some of his stamps	-		
5.	Sefulu's father	is	-	-	a matai		
6.	his main interest	is	-	-	trying to swim	Cook Strait	
7.	I	will lend	you	the money	-		
8.	the children	are playing	-	football	-		
9.	the sheep	looked	-	-	puzzled and rather cold		
10.	they	built	-	one of the first aeroplanes	-	ever seen	in New Zealand

Activity DD: Simple and compound sentences

1. S. No comma.
2. S.
3. Thousands of troops were left behind, *but* they were not thought to be in danger. **Comma optional.**
4. S.
5. S. Comma correct.
6. Two fishermen were rescued yesterday, *but* their boat has not been found. **Comma optional.**
7. The driver of the speeding car was arrested, *and* her car was found to be without a warrant. **Better with comma.**
8. S. No comma. Note: 'paying' is not a finite verb – it just describes the retailers.
9. The noise from the grounds was within official limits, *but* some residents still found it too high. **Better with comma.**
10. S. Commas correct – they separate elements in a list.

Activity EE: Complex sentences

3. a. You'll get paid when you've finished.
b. You've finished, so you'll get paid.
4. a. Unless you can finish by Friday, the deal's off.
b. You can finish by Friday, otherwise the deal's off.
5. a. They hung around for an hour or so since the film was starting later than they thought.
b. The film was starting later than they thought, so they hung around for an hour or so.

6. a. I want you to come back as soon as the shop has opened.
b. The shop has opened, so I want you to come back.
7. a. I'll probably take Japanese as they teach it in Year 12.
b. They teach Japanese in Year 12, so I'll probably take it.
8. a. The burglar must have been getting in while you were taking a shower.
b. You were taking a shower as the burglar must have been getting in.
9. a. I'm going out this morning as I need to do some shopping.
b. I need to do some shopping so I'm going out this morning.
10. a. The watches are assembled after they are thoroughly checked.
b. The watches are thoroughly checked before they are assembled.
11. a. They decided to buy the house even though it was in Remuera.
b. The house was in Remuera, yet they decided to buy it.
12. a. If they have finished building the runway, the plane will land here.
b. They have finished building the runway, although the plane will land here.