ENGLISH SKILLS



PARTS OF SPEECH

Noun – Names a person, place, thing, or idea.

Examples: actor, library, desk, freedom

Pronoun – Takes the place of a noun.

Examples: voters...they; elephant...it; aunt...she; Scott...he

Adjective – Describes a noun or a pronoun. It usually answers one of these questions: which one? how many? what kind? whose?

Examples: She wore the blue dress. The dress was beautiful.

Verb – Expresses physical action, mental action, or a state of being.

Examples: Matthew threw the ball. The scientist thought about her experiment. He was happy to be home.

Adverb – Explains how, when, where, or how often about a verb. It also qualifies adjectives and other adverbs. Many end in *ly*.

Examples: The train left the station yesterday. The train left the station noisily. The train leaves the station daily. The view is quite pretty. The fox moved very quietly.

Preposition – Shows how pronouns or nouns relate to other words in the sentence.

Examples: The child hid near the bush. The swimmer jumped off the board.

Interjection – Expresses strong emotion. It is often followed by an exclamation mark.

Example: Wow! This pie tastes great!

Conjunction – Connects words, phrases, or clauses in a sentence. There are three common types of conjunctions:

1. **Coordinating** – Joins words or word groups that do the same work in a sentence. They are *and, but, or, yet, for, nor.*

   Example: I ate pizza, pie, and cake.

2. **Correlative** – Used in pairs. They include *both/and, not only/but also, either/or, neither/nor.*

   Example: Neither the dog nor the cat would obey.

3. **Subordinating** – Introduces or connects subordinate (dependent) clauses to the rest of the sentence. Words include *as, since, because, so, unless*, etc.

   Example: I can't go to the tournament because I have to study.



GRAMMAR USAGE & GUIDELINES

Possessive Nouns – Nouns that show ownership, possession, or connection.

Examples: Mary's lamb; the girl's dress; Mom's sister

To form the possessive of singular common nouns and plural common nouns which do not end in *s*, add *'s*.

Examples: student becomes student's; children becomes children's.

To form the possessive of plural common nouns which end in *s*, add an apostrophe.

Example: ladies becomes ladies'

When forming the possessive of singular common or proper nouns which end in *s*, the form you should use most often is the addition of *'s* as in James's or class's. The only universal exceptions are the names Jesus, Moses, and Greek names which contain more than one syllable.

Examples: Jesus' life, Moses' writings, Pericles' helmet

Sentence Fragment – A group of words which does not give a complete message when standing alone.

Example: Because of the bad weather.
To Fix: Because of the bad weather, the picnic was canceled.

Run-On Sentence – Two or more sentences written as one with a comma or no punctuation mark between them.

Example: The blizzard came suddenly it caught us by surprise.
To Fix: The blizzard came suddenly. It caught us by surprise.

Should have / Should of – Only *should have* is correct.

Example: He should of gone.
To Fix: He should have gone.

Parallel Structure – Use the same form to express equal ideas.

Example: By studying hard, Sara earned respect, made good grades, and to be self-confident.
To Fix: By studying hard, Sara earned respect, made good grades, and gained self-confidence.

Misplaced Modifier – Word or word group placed so it seems to describe a word it cannot describe sensibly.

Example: I saw the new car walking through the parking lot.
To Fix: Walking through the parking lot, I saw the new car.

Active Voice – In active voice the subject of a sentence *performs* the action.

Example: He sees all the old cars.

Passive Voice – In passive voice the subject *receives* the action.

Example: All the old cars are seen by him.

Use the active voice more often than the passive. It sounds more natural and direct.

Tense Shift – Do not carelessly shift verb tense in sentences or paragraphs.

Example: Reese took a piece of cake and eats it with a fork.
To Fix: Reese took a piece of cake and ate it with a fork.

Titles – *Always capitalize* a title's first word and last word. *Never capitalize* prepositions of four letters or fewer, articles (a, an, the), or short conjunctions. *Underline or italicize* pamphlets, titles of books, magazines, newspapers, movies, radio and TV programs, and plays or poems that are published as separate volumes. *Place title types not listed above in quotation marks.*