

Quick Grammar Guide

Clauses and Phrases

Clauses: S + V (optional O)

Active Voice: Subject then Verb (optional Object)

- “A car hit the tree.”

Passive Voice: Object then Verb (optional Subject)

- “The tree was hit by a car.”

Clauses: contain at least a S + V

Independent (Ordinate): has S + V; a whole thought

Dependant (Subordinate): has S + V and a conj.

Phrases: either don't have a subject or don't have a verb (i.e., less than a clause)

Phrases in Apposition: surround with commas

- literally *out of position*, not where they're supposed to be
- “Christopher Nolan, who directed *The Dark Knight*, will also direct the sequel.”

Restrictive Clauses: have phrases with necessary information

- precede with “that” for objects, “who” for people

- “The door **that is blue** has a hungry tiger behind it.”

Non-Restrictive Clauses: have phrases that carry optional information

- surround with commas; “which” for objects and “who” for people
- “The door, **which is blue**, has a hungry tiger behind it.”

Conjunctions

Coordinating Conjunctions: and, or, yet, but, for, nor, so

- precede with commas when they act as conjunctions
- “I went home, **and** then I made dinner.”
- “I would go home, **but** I have more work to do.”

Correlative Conjunctions: either... or, neither... nor, not only... but also, whether... or, both... and

- place one before the first item in the pair and the next before the second item
- do not use commas between the two items
- “**Either** ride your bike to class **or** take the bus.”
- “I have **neither** the money for a trip to Paris **nor** the time to take one.”

Subordinating Conjunctions:

- use a comma only if the subordinating clause comes first
- “We went for a bite **after** we saw the movie.”
- “**After** we saw the movie, we went for a bite.”

Examples:

- after, even, if, that, while, whether, even though, though, as if, if, although, unless, as though, in order to, until, so that, as long as, rather than, when, whenever, because, before, since, where, wherever

Conjunctive Adverbs

- can go almost anywhere in a second clause/sentence
- surround with commas when they're in a clause
- precede with period or semi-colon when they're between clauses
- "We wanted to go to the park. **However**, it rained"
- "We wanted to go to the park. It rained, **however**."

Examples:

- accordingly, however, nonetheless, also, still, incidentally, now, anyway, indeed, likewise, otherwise, besides, instead, similarly, certainly, consequently, meanwhile, then, finally, moreover, thereafter, further, namely, therefore, hence, furthermore, nevertheless, undoubtedly, thus, next

Verb Tenses

Simple Present: an action that is repeated regularly

- "I **walk** to the store."

Present Progressive: continuous action

- "I **am walking** to the store."

Progressive Verbs: turns a verb into an adjective

- "High costs **are indicative of** rising prices." (wordy)

instead, use the simple present:

- “High costs **indicate** rising prices.”

Punctuation

Comma: “ , ” separates clauses, indicates phrases, separates list items

Colon: “ : ” joins an independent clause to a related fragment

Semi-Colon: “ ; ” joins two independent clauses to each other

Slash: “ / ” goes between two words, creates an option between them (e.g., “if/when” “and/or”)
(aka Forward Slash)

Apostrophe: “ ’ ” indicates the possessive (“Dave’s car doesn’t work”) *and* abbreviations (“Don’t take Dave’s car.”) (NB: Do not use for quotations!)

Quotation Marks: “ ” “ ” surrounds quotations
(aka Double Quotes)

M-dash: “ — ” distinguishes a phrase from the surrounding text

Parenthesis: “ () ” separates a phrase from the sentence
(aka Round Bracket)

Bracket: “ [] ” indicates edits in a quotation
(aka Square Bracket)

Period: “ . ” full stop at the end of a sentence

Question Mark: “ ? ” an interrogative period

Exclamation Mark: " ! " an emphatic period