# Grammar and Punctuation Sign-off Sheet

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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Instructor Initials</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quick Noun/Pronoun Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subjects and Verbs Work</td>
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<td>Subject and Verbs Quiz (pass with 70% or better)</td>
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<td>Subject/Verb Agreement Work</td>
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<td>Phrases and Clauses Work</td>
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**Nouns—People, Places, Things, or Ideas**  
*Directions: Underline the nouns in the sentences below.*

1. The student put the new textbooks, notebooks, and pens in her backpack.
2. I like my pizza with pepperoni, olives and mushrooms.
3. Americans enjoy many privileges including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
4. Irene’s sadness over losing her mom grew into misery, but she had to have courage.

If you are unsure whether or not a word is a noun, ask yourself if it could come right after *a*, *an*, or *the* and make sense. If it can, it’s a noun.

Example: *A* banana and *an* apple were left on *the* plate.

**Pronouns—Take the place of a noun**

1. Heather wrote Heather’s paper for Heather’s English class, but Heather forgot to put Heather’s name on Heather’s paper.

Rewrite the sentence using pronouns:

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

2. John walked John’s dog to the store to get some milk for John’s wife so John’s wife could fix John’s dinner.

Rewrite the sentence using pronouns:

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________
Nuts & Bolts: Identifying Subjects & Verbs

Why do I need to know this?

You probably learned about subjects and verbs back in elementary school, so you might be wondering why the same topic is showing up again in your college English class! How hard can it be to identify subjects and verbs in a sentence if kids in grade school can do it?

Hold on, because this skill is a lot more difficult than most people think! Those third grade sentences were all very short and easy. Identifying subjects and verbs in real life, adult sentences (the kind college students write) can get a lot more complicated. But that’s not why you need to learn how to do it. Here’s why:

Subjects and verbs are the basic nuts and bolts of every single sentence ever written, including every sentence you will ever write. So to improve your sentence skills, this is where we need to start. You can’t learn how to build something correctly if you don’t even know what the parts are called, right?

Once you can identify subjects and verbs, all kinds of other things about writing a good sentence start to fall into place. Like solving a puzzle, it’s mentally challenging and requires high level critical thinking skills. Consider your subject and verb searches a worthy brain fitness exercise!

GETTING STARTED:

First, you need an adult upgrade of that elementary school knowledge. Your overall goal here is to figure out just two main things:

Who or what did it? (that’s the subject)

What got done? (that’s the verb, the action.)

In a short, simple sentence, answering those two questions is fairly easy, so that’s how we’re going to start. We normally write and speak in longer, more complex sentences than those used as examples below, but we’ll get to more complicated sentences soon enough.

Throughout this chapter, subjects are in bold, and verbs are underlined:

Superman flew over the buildings.

Who did it? Superman (subject)
What did he do? flew (verb)
Where did he fly? (doesn’t matter!)

King Kong pounded his huge chest.

Who did it? King Kong (subject)
What did he do? pounded (verb)
What did he pound? (doesn’t matter!)
There are usually a lot of other words in a sentence that are NOT a subject or a verb, and that’s what can cause confusion. So one thing we’ll be learning is how to decide which words in the sentence to ignore. (That’s why in the previous examples, it doesn’t’ matter where Superman flew or what King Kong pounded.) All we care about for now is the basic core of the sentence, not any of the extra stuff.

It doesn’t really matter which question you decide to answer first, whether “Who did it?” or “What got done?” Both answers depend on each other because the subject has to make sense as something that could perform the action stated in the verb.

We’re going to focus on subjects first simply because the subject often comes first in a sentence, but later you can start with either subject or verb, whichever one you find easier to identify.

Also keep in mind that mastering this skill takes practice. Making lots of mistakes at first is a good thing because you’ll learn a lot from your mistakes. The more you practice this, the easier it gets – guaranteed!

FINDING THE SUBJECT:

The “Who did it?” question refers to the subject, whoever or whatever is named in the sentence as performing some kind of action. In the examples below, the subject is in **bold**, and the verbs are underlined. Here are some general things to remember about subjects:

- The subject can be single, referring to one thing, or plural, (referring to two or more). If the subject is plural, then more than one subject word can be matched up with just one verb.*
  
  “The **dog** ran across the street.” [this is a single subject, one dog ran]
  “The **dogs** ran down the street.” [this is a plural subject, more than one dog ran]

  * “**Two dogs and a cat**, ran across the street.” [also a plural subject]

- Extra words (descriptions, quantities, details) often hang around with the subject, but all we care about is the basic, no frills subject, like those shown in **bold** below.

  17 gorgeous Las Vegas **showgirls** all the **students** with short brown hair
  the purple and blue **scarf** a gigantic, 64 ounce **Coke**

- A subject will never be an action or a description word. In the sentence below, only the word “**monkey**” is the subject. The details about the monkey (what it looks like, where it came from) give us extra information, but they’re not part of the subject.

  “Suddenly, a hairy-faced little **monkey** from Brazil disappeared out the window.”

- Subjects tend to be located near the beginning of a sentence (never at the end), and they always come before the verb (unless the sentence is in the form of a question. See below.)
SUBJECT = PERSON, PLACE OR THING:

You’ve probably been told at some point that the subject will be a **noun** – a **person, place or thing** -- but that’s a pretty vague description of what to look for, so let’s get really specific about what those three words actually mean:

- **Person** = a human being, real or imagined, living or dead, either one or more than one, identified by an actual name or not specifically named. Pronouns (the words _I, you, he/she/it, we, and they_) can also be subjects. In all these examples, on the subject is in **bold** type.

  - My best friend Lisa
  - college student
  - Mr. Jones
  - One of the kids
  - Denise and I
  - Two of the dogs
  - They
  - college math teachers

- **Place** = a location, large or small, specifically named or unnamed, real or imaginary, possible or impossible, one or more than one.

  - Placerville
  - the beach
  - outside
  - a crack in the ceiling
  - Three of the spots
  - a black hole
  - a molecule of water
  - up in the sky
  - New York City
  - All of the rooms

- **Thing** = Any thing or item, one or more than one, real or imagined, living or dead, animal, vegetable or mineral, something you can touch, taste, see, hear or feel:

  - loud pops and whistles
  - cloud of smoke
  - rock song
  - strong wind
  - five of the computers
  - a worn out boat
  - big red ant
  - One of the papers

Before we go any further, do the quick practice below to get in gear for finding subjects. Remember to ignore the “extra” words and just concentrate on finding the bare bones subject. It should make sense with the underlined verb and answer the question, “Who or what did it?”

QUICK PRACTICE: **Circle the subjects in the sentences below. (Verbs are underlined.)**

1. A great big man **sat** on my sandwich. (who sat?)
2. He **squashed** it flat as a bug. (who squashed it?)
3. My sister and I **wondered** if he did it on purpose. (who wondered?)
4. We **decided** it was an accident. (who decided?)
5. Now my sandwich **looked** like a pizza. (what looked like a pizza?)
6. A little boy in the park **pointed** at us.
7. His mother **pulled** him away.
8. Later, the birds **ate** the sandwich crumbs.
9. Park visitors **see** many strange sights.
10. Hot weather **drives** some people crazy.

**Less obvious “things”** that can be subjects are **conditions** or **states of being**. At first glance, these words might seem to be descriptive, but they’re actually **nouns**. They give a name to a particular condition or a state of being:

- the state of being happy = **happiness**
- the condition of being patient = **patience**
- the state of being angry = **anger**
- the condition of being sad = **sadness**
- the state of being tolerant = **tolerance**
- the condition of being rude = **rudeness**

Words like these can stand on their own as subjects, and they will make sense when partnered with a verb:

- Her **happiness** showed in her smile.
- Uncontrolled **anger** can lead to serious problems.
- Great **patience** is required when standing in line at the bookstore.

It’s easy to confuse “state of being” subjects (which are nouns) with words that just describe (adjectives), especially when two words look very similar:

- A successful teacher must be **patient**. (description/ adjective)
- **Patience** is a teacher’s most important skill. (subject / noun)

- The loss of a home causes great **sadness**. (description/ adjective)
- **Sadness** results when we experience loss. (subject / noun)

If you’re not sure whether a particular word could be the subject, create a little test sentence for yourself by putting that word in front of the verb (the action). Which sentences below contain the correct subject? (Verbs are underlined.)

- [**Rudeness irritates** my dog.] or [**Rude irritates** my dog.] ?
- [**Silent is required** in the library.] or [**Silence is required** in the library.] ?
- [**Greedy caused** all his problems.] or [**Greed caused** all his problems.] ?

Another “thing” subject that can cause confusion are words that seem like actions at first glance but which are really subjects (nouns) because they **appear in front of a verb**. These double duty words can be used as subjects OR verbs, all depending on their location in the sentence.

If you see an “-ing” word at the beginning of a sentence, it’s probably a subject. Here are some examples:

- [**Running** keeps you healthy.]
- [**Laughing** makes people happy.]
- [**Practicing** before a test is crucial.]

- That **woman** is running fast.
- The **man** is laughing loudly.
- I will be **practicing** the piano.
QUICK PRACTICE w/ SUBJECTS:

Circle ONLY the subject in the sentences below. The subject circled should make sense with the underlined verb. Cross out or ignore the “extra “description words.

1. Greedy birds gobbled all the bird seed.
2. Playing video games helps him relax.
3. Sue tricked her brother into eating healthy food.
4. Sympathy is a quality that children learn early.
5. Her purse weighed over 10 pounds.
6. Five naughty monkeys rolled down the hill.
7. My cousin Sarah loves to buy junk from garage sales.
8. Wanda hates pepperoni pizza.
9. Reading in the car makes me dizzy.
10. This black leather coat costs too much.
11. Your enthusiasm about the book surprised me.
12. The boy outside is selling magazines.
13. Kindness and understanding are appreciated by everyone.
14. Talking on a cell phone is not allowed on the airplane.
15. A beautiful sunset filled the sky.

CUT THE CLUTTER: CROSS OUT PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES:

There’s one other trick to remember when you’re looking for the subject of a sentence, and that’s to look out for prepositional phrases that you can just cross out. This is a really useful trick because it helps you to ignore parts of the sentence that might otherwise be confused with the subject.

Use the handout on the next page to get started with crossing stuff out! Take that page out of your binder and keep it handy in a place where you can look at it often. The more you look at it, the easier it will be to remember what a prepositional phrase looks like.

The ability to recognize prepositional phrases will be a very useful skill throughout this class – that’s why it’s worth taking the time and effort to learn it now, right at the beginning.
HANDY DANDY GUIDE TO PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

WHAT IS IT? A prepositional phrase contains a word called a preposition and it answers questions of description or degree such as:

- Which one?
- How often?
- What kind?
- To what degree?
- How many?
- Where?
- What size?
- When?
- What condition?
- Why?
- How so?
- To what extent?

A prepositional phrase provides extra, non-essential information in a sentence about the subject or the verb. If you cross out the prepositional phrases, the sentence will be shorter, but the subject and verb will remain, making them a lot easier to locate. Usually they still make sense as a complete thought. Take a look at this sentence:

“They sat in their desks at 7:00 o’clock in the room next to the computer lab.”

This sentence has four prepositional phrases (in italics below), all attached to a “core” sentence of “They sat.” It’s a lot easier to find the true subject once you eliminate all those phrases:

They sat in their desks at 7:00 o’clock in the room next to the computer lab.

There are hundreds of prepositions, but since they fit a predictable pattern in a prepositional phrase of describing or specifying how much, you’ll soon learn to recognize them. Here’s a list of some common prepositions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>about</th>
<th>above</th>
<th>according to</th>
<th>across</th>
<th>after</th>
<th>against</th>
<th>along</th>
<th>amid</th>
<th>apart from</th>
<th>as / as to</th>
<th>at</th>
<th>because of</th>
<th>before</th>
<th>behind</th>
<th>below</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beneath</td>
<td>beside</td>
<td>between</td>
<td>beyond</td>
<td>by</td>
<td>by means of</td>
<td>by the way</td>
<td>despite</td>
<td>down</td>
<td>during</td>
<td>except</td>
<td>except for</td>
<td>exclude</td>
<td>following</td>
<td>for</td>
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<td>in</td>
<td>in addition to</td>
<td>in case of</td>
<td>including</td>
<td>in front of</td>
<td>in place of</td>
<td>in regard to</td>
<td>in spite of</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td>instead of</td>
<td>into</td>
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<td>toward</td>
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<td>underneath</td>
<td>until</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>up to</td>
<td>via</td>
<td>with</td>
<td>within</td>
<td>without</td>
<td>with regard to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember: Words used as prepositions can do double duty as other parts of speech too, so look at more than just the word itself. Pay attention to where it’s located in the sentence and what it refers to.
QUICK PRACTICE: FINDING SUBJECTS by CROSSING OUT Prepositional Phrases

In the sentences below, circle the subject after first crossing out the prepositional phrases. (The underlined verbs can’t be part of a prepositional phrase.)

EASIER:

1. After the movie, John ate a cheeseburger. (who ate the cheeseburger?)
2. In the kitchen, his sister was making cookies. (who was making cookies?)
3. Next to the river, you will find my house. (who will find my house?)
4. At 5:00 A.M., Sheila smashed the alarm clock. (who smashed the clock?)
5. Between work and school, Jason had very little free time. (who had little free time?)
6. Within the city of darkness, only one light shined.
7. A circle of boys danced around the camp fire.
8. Under the water, a fish swam by my pole.
9. Instead of a white dress, Sheena wore army fatigues.
10. The child at the counter ordered French fries.

HARDER:

1. Off in the distance, near the horizon, the sun began to rise. (what began to rise?)
2. Underneath the boardwalk, people slowly strolled down by the sea. (who strolled?)
3. In spite of the heat, Jason decided to wear a three piece suit. (who decided to wear?)
4. Because of the new law, Cindy was not allowed to use her cell phone in the car.
5. Following Joe’s advice, I jumped over the ant hill and into the water.
6. Each girl in the group of children wore ribbons in her hair.
7. Without a doubt, the parade down our street will be the best one yet.
8. Since last night after the party, Wally has vowed never to drink again.
9. Following the concert, cake and punch will be served on the patio.
10. Against the wall in the back closet, we found a set of golf clubs.

SNEAKY PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES trying pose as subjects:

We already know that prepositional phrases can’t be subjects or verbs in a sentence, but sometimes words within the phrase will trick our brains to believe otherwise! If a word within
the prepositional phrase works just fine with the verb, it’s easy to mistake it for the subject. Here’s an example:

“All of the boys jump off the bridge at the river.”

It’s pretty easy to see that “jump” is the verb, but what’s the subject? Is it “all” or is it “boys”? Both words make sense with the verb: “All jump,” or “boys jump.” Since the word “boys” is right next to the verb “jump,” your brain is going to trick you into believing that the subject is “boys.” But it’s not!

Once we follow the rule to first cross out prepositional phrases, it turns out that “boys” can’t be the subject because we crossed it out.

“All of the boys jump off the bridge at the river.”

In fact, everything in the sentence except the subject and the verb is a prepositional phrase, so that means “All” has to be the subject. “All jump,” also makes sense as a subject and a verb.

Tricky prepositional phrases usually contain a noun that would make sense as a subject, even though it’s not the subject. The sentences below contain a lot of tricky prepositional phrases, so cross them out to identify the subjects.

Cross out the prepositional phrases and then circle the subjects. (Verbs are underlined.)

1. Each of the girls practiced the piano.
2. Everyone in the choir sang off key.
3. At the party, two of the kids ate all of the cake.
4. No one from my class failed the test.
5. Some of the fish hid in the shadows under water.
6. Five of the windows were brand new.
7. One of the birds dived under the water.
8. Last week, several of my friends drove to the coast.
9. Every one of my pets was adopted from the shelter.
10. A few of the girls were walking to the bus.
11. Each of the monkeys leaped out of the cage.
12. One of these dresses looks shorter than the other one.
13. Only two of the books were on sale.
14. Nobody in the house wanted to clean the bathroom.
15. Several of the workers never returned from their lunch break.
FINDING THE VERB:

Now that you’ve had some practice finding subjects and prepositional phrases, you’ve probably noticed that finding subjects goes right along with finding the verbs. So far, the verbs have been easy to locate because they’ve been underlined for you. The next step is to find the verbs in a sentence on your own.

Locating the verb can be confusing because in English we use verbs in a lot of different ways, and we love irregular verb forms. We even make up verbs when we feel like it. Ten years ago, if you’d said, “Hey, I googled your girlfriend last night,” it probably would have started a fight! But now we can recognize that the word Google from the famous internet search engine has been turned into a verb meaning “to search for a word or phrase online using Google.”

We also make a lot of our words do double duty, so a word that’s a verb in one sentence could be a noun (or an adjective) in another sentence:

The man was running down the hall. [verb / action]

The running water made a loud sound. [adjective/ describes]

Running can be great exercise. [noun / subject]

As you can see, it’s important to pay attention to the exact location of words in the sentence, since it can make all the difference in which words we identify as the subject, the verb, or some other part of speech.

WHAT IS A VERB?

A verb is word or little group of words that tells us the action performed by a subject. However, to make this definition of a verb useful, we have to define the word “action” very loosely, since many verbs are pretty lazy, and the “action” they refer to can range from “just a little bit” to practically nothing! The verb also tells us when in time the action occurred, past, present or future.

ACTION VERBS are the easiest to find in a sentence because they tell it like it is; they name a specific action that involves movement or doing something: run, jump, play, yell. Action verbs provide an immediate mental image of the named activity. Usually if you put a simple subject like “We” or “Joe” in front of them, they make sense. Call it “the Joe test.”

We jumped. Joe yelled. We sleep. Joe plays. We cry. Joe runs.

To practice recognizing verbs, look at the list of words below and circle ONLY the verbs. (Most are action verbs.) Descriptions and prepositional phrases are mixed in, but don’t let them fool you! Try out each word with the “Joe test” from above.
Circle only the verbs in the list below. (Verbs are both present and past tense.)

snores    silly    puncted    raced
pretty    arrives  mistaken  hurry
skinny    depression slapped  braved
eats      joyful   afraid    flopped
joked     write    sensitive achievement
will step  tiny     hits     huge
hikes      sadness  dashed  join
joined     entered  affection  special

There are different kinds of verbs, some with confusing names, but luckily you don’t have to worry about that. Our aim here is simple: identify the subject and the verb (or verbs) in a sentence and not worry yet about anything else.

Every verb comes in a “base” model (its infinitive form), which just means that it’s like the cheapest model of a new a car that doesn’t come with any extras. This basic model of the verb doesn’t yet specify past, present or future, so it doesn’t have a verb tense yet.

From that base model verb, we can add on and customize, just like we add to the new car by ordering chrome rims and leather seats. The base model of a verb will always have “to” in front of it; sometimes it stays in that form and gets attached to another verb, but the base model of a verb will never stand alone as a main verb.

Here are examples of some regular verbs and the ways we modify them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASE model verb (infinitive form)</th>
<th>present tense</th>
<th>past tense</th>
<th>future tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to walk</td>
<td>walk</td>
<td>walked</td>
<td>will walk</td>
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<td>walks</td>
<td>have walked</td>
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<td>had walked</td>
<td>will be walking</td>
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<td>to hope</td>
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<td>to dream</td>
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<td>dreams</td>
<td>have dreamed,</td>
<td>will have dreamed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dreaming</td>
<td>had dreamed</td>
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We can take any verb and use it in all these different ways, depending on the subject and the time frame. Always keep in mind that verbs often come with support staff. Even though we say “the verb,” in many cases it would be more accurate to say, “the verbs” because there will be more than one of them.

Any main verb can have “helping” verbs attached to it to fine-tune the meaning. The examples below all derive from the base model verb “to love.” *(Subjects are in bold.)*

Romeo loves Juliet in a play by Shakespeare.

He loved her from the first moment he saw her.

Romeo has loved her for just a few weeks in the play.

Previously he had loved a different girl, but then he met Juliet.

Romeo and Juliet have loved each other for centuries, in fact.

They will have loved each other for 500 years by the time you read this.

This famous couple will keep loving each other until the end of time.

Now you’re ready to do some basic subject and verb hunting on your own! Then we’ll move on to the trickier aspects of verbs and practice with more complex sentences. This practice uses one word action verbs.

*Cross out the prepositional phrases and then circle the subject and underline the verb.*

1. Tom learned all about American history.
2. His boat floated away on the tide.
3. Lisa from Sacramento hates the taste of mustard.
4. This hotdog smells really awful.
5. Brian ate it anyway.
7. Debora wanted a new coat.
8. Five boys from Georgetown won the prize.
9. Linda watered the garden last week.
10. That ball of rubber bands looked useful.
11. Yvonne wished it was Saturday.
12. All of the buildings turned orange in the rain.
13. In her book group, Jan started the discussion.
14. Tina’s baby discovered his feet only yesterday.
15. Tracy graded papers until midnight or later.
“LAZY” VERBS (linking and helping verbs) are harder to recognize than action verbs because they’re very low on the action. These verbs are sitting around all day watching TV instead of DOING much of anything. Because they refer to passive activities such as “feeling” or “being,” they often don’t make us think of any action at all – but they’re still verbs.

Any low action verb can also “help” or combine with other verbs in the sentence to clarify the meaning. The action verbs are easier to find in a sentence, but always remember to check other words in the vicinity that might be “lazy” verbs hitching a ride. (Forms of “to be” and “to have” are especially common -- see next page.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>some COMMON Low Action VERBS</th>
<th>forms of “to be” (am, is, are, was, were, will be)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>appear, seem, look, act</td>
<td>forms of “to have” (have, has, had, will have)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taste, smell, feel, sound, think, listen</td>
<td>forms of “to do” (do, does, did, will do)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>become, admire, influence, love, hate</td>
<td>[to indicate possibility] may, might, can, could, couldn’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will, won’t, would, wouldn’t</td>
<td>[to indicate obligation] must, shall, should, shouldn’t</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUICK PRACTICE w/ LOW ACTION VERBS: *Circle the subjects and underline the verbs. Don’t forget to cross out prepositional phrases.*

1. The blockbuster movie had seemed long and dull.
2. The solar eclipse will appear for only 12 seconds.
3. We must be quiet as mice during the test.
4. The music at the concert did not sound very good.
5. My son can taste even one grain of pepper in his spaghetti.
6. That guy’s hair looks like the wrath of God.
7. A can of Coke might explode if violently shaken.
8. The Buddhist monks are seeking spiritual peace.
9. The last singer on *American Idol* will become a superstar.
10. That peanut butter and jelly sandwich is disgusting.
IRREGULAR VERBS don’t follow the rules:

In English, we make slight changes to our verbs to indicate the tense, like adding –ed to show past tense, but English also has MANY irregular verb forms that love to ignore the rules. These outlaw verbs are one of the main reasons English is such a difficult language to learn if you didn’t grow up speaking it!

When you were three years old and said, “I hitted the ball,” you were just doing the logical thing by adding –ed to the end of the verb “hit.” Once you got a little older, though, you learned to say, “I hit the ball,” instead, because “hit” is an irregular verb.

Whether you grew up speaking English as your first language or learned it later, you gradually picked up the irregular verb forms and began using most of them correctly in speaking and writing. Don’t worry that you now have to learn lots of irregular verbs – you already know them. You’re just not used to thinking about them very much!

As noted earlier, two very common irregular verbs, TO BE and TO HAVE, which perform a huge amount of support staff work when paired with other verbs. You will immediately notice that they are more complicated than regular verbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>infinitive form: TO BE</th>
<th>single subject (I, you, he, she, it)</th>
<th>plural subject (we, they)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>present tense</strong></td>
<td>I am / I am being</td>
<td>They are / they are being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You are / you are being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He is / he is being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>past tense</strong></td>
<td>I was</td>
<td>They were / have been/ had been</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have been/ I had been</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You are/ have been/ had been</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He was/ has been / had been</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>future tense</strong></td>
<td>I will be / you will be</td>
<td>They will be</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>infinitive form: TO HAVE</th>
<th>single subject (I, you, he, she, it)</th>
<th>plural subject (we, they)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>present tense</strong></td>
<td>I have; I am having</td>
<td>We have; we are having</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You have; you are having</td>
<td>They have; they are having</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He has; he is having</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>past tense</strong></td>
<td>I had; I have had; I had had</td>
<td>We have had; we had had</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You had; you have had; you had had</td>
<td>They have had; they had had</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He had, he has had; he had had</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>future tense</strong></td>
<td>You will have</td>
<td>We will have</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUICK PRACTICE w/ “TO BE” and “TO HAVE” verbs:

*Circle the subjects and underline the verbs in the sentences below. Remember: descriptions and prepositional phrases can’t be verbs.*

1. My doctor will be on vacation next week.
2. This book is the best one in the house.
3. She has had the flu three times this year.
4. Gina has been working in the English Center for over 20 years.
5. Joel had had five jobs by the time he decided on a career.
6. Members of the club are being very stubborn.
7. All college instructors have had 6 years of college.
8. I am especially tired today.
9. They are being very flexible with their travel plans.
10. We were all sick last week.
11. Don hasn’t had a raise in five years.
12. The governor isn’t happy about the budget crisis.
13. By next week, everyone will have had a flu shot.
14. My parents have been driving to work every day.
15. The problem is too many cooks in the kitchen.
16. The children have been acting wild and crazy today.

**WHAT’S NOT A VERB:**

As you can see, you’ll be more successful finding verbs if you look out for more than one word and carefully check out the words hanging around near the main verb. Often description words or negatives (words like *no, not, always, or never*) come between the main verb and helping verbs, but don’t let them throw you off track. Just cross them out or ignore them because they’re not verbs:

Suddenly, the car would *not* shift into second gear.

He *had never* experienced a transmission failure.

Jeff *was really* hoping to repair the car himself.

Remember that a verb never describes anything (other than itself), so words like “beautiful” or “perfect” or “weird” can’t be verbs because they are description words instead.
Here’s a somewhat silly way to test any word to see if it might be a verb. It’s a variation on the “Joe test” we used earlier. This doesn’t always work, but it’s worth a try: put “Joe” in front of any word that might be a verb, and then add –ed at the end of the word in question.

Let’s say you’re wondering if the words “happy,” “sad” and “crazy” are verbs. Do the “Joe test” and you’ll get this:

“Joe happied.”  “Joe sadded.”  “Joe crazied.”

Clearly these words cannot be verbs! Instead, they describe. In the same way, a prepositional phrase can’t be a verb either, but it could describe something about a verb. Be careful not to include words from the prepositional phrase as part of the verb.

In the sentence below, “over” is NOT part of the verb “jumped” because “over” is part of the prepositional phrase:

“Zack jumped over the fence and caught the ball.”

**SUBJECTS & VERBS in the FORM OF A QUESTION:**

Finding the subject and verb in a sentence that’s a question requires a little mind shifting. Turn the question into a statement instead, a sort of answer to the question, even if it doesn’t make complete sense; then, look for the subject and verb:

1. Did my brother eat all the pizza? → My brother did eat all the pizza.
2. Have you done your homework? → You have done your homework.
3. Who does Sara plan to marry? → Sara does plan to marry [who]
4. What will Jason decide to do next? → Jason will decide [what]
5. Where did Lara get those jeans? → Lara did get those jeans
6. How long will Jeff stay? → Jeff will stay [how] long
7. When will we get a break? → We will get a break [when]

Note that in a question, the verb is often split apart, with the subject (usually) sandwiched in between a helping verb and the main verb. In most cases, the verb comes before the subject in a question, not after it as in a statement. Be sure to underline the complete verb and look for it on BOTH sides of the subject. Also, you can still cross out prepositional phrases.

**PRACTICE w/ QUESTIONS:** In the sentences below, circle the subject & underline the verb.

1. Has John returned from the store yet?
2. When will the cookies be done?
3. Do you know the way to San Jose?
4. Why did you put the TV remote in the freezer?
5. Can you eat that whole enchilada by yourself?
6. When will this class be over?
7. Did Jay miss the last test?
8. Will Mom go to the Farmer’s Market or to Raley’s?
9. Does Linda weed the garden every day?
10. How does Sharon clean the entire house?
11. Where did Joanie hide all the Oreos?
12. When will my favorite movie be in town?
13. How does George manage the restaurant?
14. Why does Cindy keep running in circles?
15. When will Laura write her essay?

Now you’ve had lots of experience in finding subjects and verbs, and you’ve learned some good tricks for success, so the next step is to put all of this information together in some practices that will cover all the different kinds of subjects and verbs noted in this chapter.

Being able to correctly identify subjects and verbs in a sentence is a high level critical thinking skill that isn’t easy for anyone, not even English teachers. The key to improvement is practice. You might feel sometimes as if you’re not getting it, but one day it will all “click” into place!

**PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER : SUBJECTS & VERBS**

_In the sentences below, circle the subject and underline the verb. Cross out prepositional phrases if that helps you._

1. Jim and Susan have been planning a trip for over a year.
2. Have you been to the Academy of Sciences in San Francisco?
3. The buildings and grounds were all carefully planned to be energy efficient.
4. Solar panels and landscaping help keep maintenance costs low.
5. Even the snack bar uses only biodegradable or recycled materials.
6. Thousands of people will visit the museum each month and tour the grounds.
7. Busloads of children on field trips have been arriving every single day of the week.
8. Patience and planning are required for a successful visit.
9. Over the last five years, the Academy was being retrofitted to meet earthquake standards.
10. The original building had been declared unsafe because of its age.
Be Agreeable: Practice with Present Tense Agreement

What is it?

You’ve probably never stopped to think about it, but as a speaker of English, you are already an expert at one of the most difficult languages around. (Just ask anyone who had to learn English as a second language!) Every day, you speak in long, complicated sentences even though, for the most part, you definitely aren’t thinking things like, “Does this subject go with this verb?” Your skill of speaking correctly can be a great help in your writing. Read your writing out loud, and very often you’ll notice that something just doesn’t “sound right.” Use that skill to your advantage! It doesn’t work for everything in English grammar, of course, but it will be a big help with this chapter.

Back when you were learning to talk, you figured out pretty quickly that a subject in a sentence has to agree in number with the verb. You know not to say, “We bakes a cake,” even if you’re not exactly sure WHY it’s wrong. The sentence sounds wrong because the verb doesn’t match the plural subject. If more than one person is baking that cake, then “We bake a cake,” sounds right. That’s what this chapter is all about – making a single or plural subject match its verb, and often you’ll be able to rely on what sounds correct (with a few exceptions.)

Making the subject of a sentence agree with its verb is not usually a problem in speaking or writing except sometimes when we use present tense, which is used for actions happening right now, at the present moment.

In past or future tense the verb form stays the same, so it doesn’t matter whether the subject refers to one (singular) or to more than one (plural). See below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[past tense]</th>
<th>[future tense]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single subject</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One man jumped into the river.</td>
<td>One kid will dive off the bridge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural subject</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifteen women jumped into the river.</td>
<td>Ten kids will dive off the bridge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But what happens when we want to use present tense? Then we have to change the verb slightly depending on whether the subject refers to one or more than one.

One man jumps in the river.  Four men jump in the river.

One kid dives off the bridge.  Ten kids dive off the bridge.
Even though it’s only a minor change, in present tense the verb form must agree with the subject in number. Often the wrong verb form will sound wrong, but not always, so don’t rely completely on that method. In some cases, it’s easy to mistakenly use the wrong verb form when you’re writing in present tense, so that’s what we’ll mainly focus on in this chapter.

Then you wills not make this mistake very often, or if you does, you wills know how to fixes it!

(Please tell me you noticed how wrong that the sentence is!) 😊

The minor change to the verb when the subject is single involves just one little letter – s. In the sentence below with the singular subject [one swimmer] the verb ends in “s,” while the sentence with the plural subject [all the others] doesn’t.

One swimmer walks upstream to find a favorite pool. [singular subject]
All the others walk down to the foot of the bridge. [plural subject]

Often (not always), the verb used with a single subject will end with an “s” or have an “s” in it. Think of it this way:

VERB + “s” stands for “single” subject.

You may be wondering why this simple formula is hard to keep straight. Here’s why: normally when our brains see an “s” on the end of a word, we tend to think it means plural, “more than one.” However, it’s exactly the opposite with present tense verbs. For a plural subject, the verb does NOT end in “s,” but the single subject verbs DO end in “s.” See below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESENT TENSE</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>single subject verbs</td>
<td>HE eats sleeps drinks studies laughs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural subject verbs</td>
<td>THEY eat sleep drink study laugh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now you try it with 3 different verbs of your own. Write both the singular and plural forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESENT TENSE</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>single subject verbs</td>
<td>HE ___________ ___________ ___________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural subject verbs</td>
<td>THEY ___________ ___________ ___________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do the verbs you chose for the first box end in an “s”? Do those in the second box LACK an “s”?

Next, let’s try it with sentences. Look on the grid below and finish the sentences using action verbs of your choice for each single subject. Keep your sentences simple, like the example, and make sure you are using present tense (happening right now.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>single subject</th>
<th>w/ a single verb for present tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This boat</td>
<td>looks really old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The kite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The new car</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A house plant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did all of your verbs end up containing an “s” somewhere near the end?

EASY PRACTICE: Underline the correct present tense verb. Some subjects are in bold to help you out. Subjects are both single and plural, so remember the formula:

VERB + “s” stands for “single” subject.

1. My friend Jenny (believes, believe) that her cat has magic powers.
2. Most people (trains, train) their dogs.
3. Our dog (prefers, prefer) to stay outside even when it rains.
4. Raccoons (loves, love) to eat cherry tomatoes and strawberries.
5. The women in the PE class (walks, walk) a mile around the track.
6. Teenagers in high school (needs, need) more time for sleep.
7. The desk drawer (sticks, stick) every time I try to open it.
8. A loud bell (rings, ring) every day at 12:00 o’clock noon.
9. Vacations (is, are) always too short.
10. The fountain in the plaza (splashes, splash) water onto the sidewalk.
11. All these books (costs, cost) exactly the same.
12. This candy bar (contains, contain) 200 delicious calories.
English also includes some irregular present tense verbs, but even then, the formula of single subjects being paired with verbs ending in “s” often still holds true. The only time that formula doesn’t completely work is with pronoun subjects (*I, you, he, she, it, we, they*), but in that case, an incorrect verb will usually sound wrong.

This chart shows three of the most common irregular verbs and how to use them correctly in present tense with pronouns and with single or plural subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pronoun</th>
<th>“to be”</th>
<th>“to have”</th>
<th>“to do”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>HAVE</td>
<td>DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You / We / They</td>
<td>ARE</td>
<td>HAVE</td>
<td>DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He / She / It</td>
<td>IS</td>
<td>HAS</td>
<td>DOES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>single subject</strong></td>
<td><strong>Joe</strong></td>
<td>Joe is</td>
<td>Joe has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>plural subject</strong></td>
<td><strong>[Dogs]</strong></td>
<td>Dogs are</td>
<td>Dogs have</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A brief note about “HAVE TO:”**

This is a good place to bring up a really common mistake people make when using the present tense form of the verb “to have.” It only comes up when we use “have to” with a plural subject and want the verb to mean “is required to do something” or “must do something.”

The problem is that the way we *say* it doesn’t really match the way we *spell* it:

WE SAY: “These clothes *haf to* be cleaned.” [*“haf” is not a real word]*

but WE SHOULD WRITE: “These clothes *have to* be cleaned.”

WE SAY: “I *hausta* hurry up and get to class.”

but WE SHOULD WRITE: “I *have to* hurry up and get to class.”

This is a quirky little thing that you basically just *have to* remember, or at least you’ll *have to* until “*haf*” and “*hausta*” become actual words!
**QUICK PRACTICE:** First, put an X next to the sentences below that sound wrong. Trust your instincts and don’t think about it too much! Then go back to your “X sentences” and cross out the incorrect verb, replacing it above the line with the right one. Refer to the chart above for help.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>irregular present tense verbs:</strong></th>
<th><strong>present tense verbs w/ pronouns:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane have a bad cold.</td>
<td>I are happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My sisters have ten dogs.</td>
<td>You is the last one in line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob has not been absent.</td>
<td>We is on the same team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The concert is tomorrow.</td>
<td>They all have excellent scores.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The musicians is famous.</td>
<td>I has to know what happened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My dogs are worth $500.</td>
<td>We does not need to wait.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The kids does not know the answer.</td>
<td>You has to do your work quickly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mom has the magic touch.</td>
<td>I has to go on a diet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The package does not seem heavy.</td>
<td>We are now eating dinner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold are a rare metal.</td>
<td>I have too many shoes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers has to be updated often.</td>
<td>They do not expect to win.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you didn’t miss any of the sentences above, then you probably won’t have much trouble with present tense irregular verbs and/or their usage with pronouns. If you missed some, see if there’s a pattern. It might be that only one of the irregular verbs is giving you some trouble.

**SPECIAL SINGULAR SUBJECTS:**

So far, we’ve learned that the key to dealing with present tense is **pay attention to the subject.** Whether it refers to one thing (singular) or many (plural), the subject and its verb construction have to match. Certain types of subjects, however, might make you wonder: is this a single subject or a plural one?

**Special singular subjects** are words grammatically classified as being **single**, even though we might associate the word itself with a group or more than one. Common sense would indicate that words like “everybody” and “everyone” are plural subjects because we use them to refer to a lot of people.
However, grammatically, these words are considered single subjects because they refer to one unit or one grouping. Yes, this does seem kind of crazy. But look what happens when you use the plural verb form instead: you end up with whacked out wrong sentences like those below!

- Everybody are happy.
- Everyone love the movie.
- Someone look great.
- Somebody are singing.
- Anyone cans join.
- Anybody are invited.

OK, so that’s not going to work! Instead, just follow the “use an “s” for single” rule, and then you will get the correct verb forms:

- Everybody is happy.
- Everyone loves the movie.
- Someone looks great.
- Somebody is singing.
- Anyone can join.
- Anybody is invited.

The words in the boxes below are special singular subjects (also known as indefinite pronouns.) This is all of them, so just remember that each one is SINGULAR, a subject that means “one” or “a unit of one.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>either</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>each</th>
<th>one</th>
<th>every one (of)</th>
<th>which one (of)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>either one</td>
<td>neither one</td>
<td>each one</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>everyone</td>
<td>somebody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>no one</td>
<td>anyone</td>
<td>everyone (of)</td>
<td>somebody</td>
<td>anybody</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Be careful not to confuse the words above with other indefinite terms that are NOT single subject such as some, all, many, most, several, few, both, others. These are all regular, ordinary plural subjects.

When special singular subjects appear alone, without additional words, it’s pretty easy to figure out which verb form is correct. Try these:

1. Everyone (is, are) happy that it’s Friday.
2. No one ever (choose, chooses) the raisins from the salad bar.
3. Neither girl (enjoy, enjoys) her piano lessons.
4. Which one (sound, sounds) like the correct answer?
5. Each dog (eat, eats) his treat in less than 5 seconds.
6. Somebody (need, needs) to throw a huge party.
7. One kitten (love, loves) playing with a ribbon.
8. Anyone who (read, reads) this book will enjoy it.
9. Someone (need, needs) to turn on the lights in here.
10. Anybody who (listen, listens) closely can hear a weird humming noise.

So far, so good. However, it gets tricky when we find a special singular subject right next to a prepositional phrase in a sentence. If words inside the prepositional phrase are plural, your confused brain could easily be thinking “plural” instead of “singular!” Look at this example:

“Each of the mallard and pintail ducks (fly, flies) south in the winter.”

Since the word “ducks” is right next to the verb, you might at first think that “ducks fly,” sounds pretty good, so the verb must be “fly.”

But it’s not!

**The real subject is “Each,”** because “ducks” is part of a prepositional phrase (which can never be a subject.) Cross out the prepositional phrases (just like you learned to do when finding subjects and verbs) and you’re left with the single subject “EACH,” which means the verb has to be FLIES:

“Each of the mallard and pintail ducks (fly, flies) south in the winter.” [Each flies.]

Give your confused brain a break by first crossing out all prepositional phrases and then mentally adding the word “one” anytime you see a special singular subject. Here’s an example:

Neither of the big red balls (bounce, bounces) higher than the roof.

ONE
Neither of the big red balls (bounce, bounces) higher than the roof.

**PRACTICE: Cross out prepositional phrases & mentally add the word ONE (if needed) to find the correct verb choice. (See the first two examples.)**

ONE
Either of the books (is, are) approved for young readers. [Either one is approved.]

ONE
Each of the birds on the beach (flies, fly) gracefully to the cliff. [Each one flies gracefully.]

1. Neither of the songs on the CD (sounds, sound) very good.

2. One of the ants (crawls, crawl) under the window sill every morning.
3. Neither of the dogs (want, wants) that rotten piece of meat.
4. Both of my cousins (hate, hates) to stay up late.
5. Which one of the kids (yells, yell) every day when the bell rings?
6. Everyone on the planet (loves, love) to eat pizza for dinner.
7. Either of the my sisters usually (forgets, forget) to lock the front door.
8. Anybody in this room and in this class (works, work) hard to succeed in college.
9. Several of the chickens (leaves, leave) their pen each morning.
10. Each of the girl scouts (sells, sell) at least two boxes of cookies.
11. Some of the pies (tastes, taste) especially good with cinnamon added.
12. Every one of the tools (has, have) been used by the work crew.
13. Someone in the campus buildings (keeps, keep) triggering the alarm system.
14. All of the children under age 12 (enters, enter) the fair for free.
15. Neither of the boats (has, have) left the dock in years.

**COLLECTIVE NOUNS are also SINGULAR:**

Even though we know a word like “group” or “team” means more than one person, grammatically such words are considered singular. These words are called **collective nouns** because they refer to a “collection” of people or things, so consider these words as meaning “one unit.”

Here are some common collective nouns. Each one is a single subject, so each one will require a present tense singular verb. Follow the “verb with an ‘s’ stands for single” rule, and keep crossing out prepositional phrases to avoid confusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>army</th>
<th>committee</th>
<th>group</th>
<th>population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>association</td>
<td>company</td>
<td>herd</td>
<td>public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>audience</td>
<td>family</td>
<td>jury</td>
<td>school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>band</td>
<td>flock</td>
<td>mob</td>
<td>society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class</td>
<td>gang</td>
<td>organization</td>
<td>team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>club</td>
<td>government</td>
<td>panel</td>
<td>tribe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(There are many more collective nouns – this is just a representative list.) Most of these words will sound wrong if used with the wrong verb, but they might give you
trouble when used with irregular verbs or in prepositional phrases, so that’s what we’ll practice below.

**QUICK PRACTICE:** *Circle the correct verb in each of the sentences below.*

1. The army *(has, have)* sent many soldiers to the Middle East.
2. Our brass band *(is, are)* world famous and *(has, have)* played in 30 countries.
3. The jury *(has, have)* been attending the trial for two weeks.
4. The committee of teachers *(does, do)* not meet more than once a month.
5. The mob from the village *(is, are)* coming after Frankenstein with pitchforks!
6. Our government *(has, have)* many programs to help low income residents.
7. A panel of bomb experts *(is, have)* investigating the accident.
8. The tribe *(does, do)* not plan to open another casino.
9. Deep Bay Yacht Club *(has, have)* been in business for one hundred years.
10. A huge gang of pirates *(is, are)* invading the California coastline.

**SEPARATION OF SUBJECT AND VERB**

Sometimes, a lot of additional words come between the subject and the verb in a sentence, to the point where it’s easy to lose track of whether you need a singular or plural verb form. Look for the subject first by crossing out any prepositional phrases and description words. Then make sure the subject agrees (singular or plural) with the verb. Here’s an example:

The two big guys at the door of the bar on First Street *(checks, check)* everyone’s I.D.

**PRACTICE:** *Circle the correct verb.*

1. My grandmother’s house over the river and through the woods *(looks, look)* deserted.
2. The window curtains that I bought last year at the Labor Day Swap Meet *(is, are)* white.
3. At the donut shop, hungry tourists from Australia *(lines, line)* up to buy their favorite treats.
4. In Hawaii, little geckos cling to walls and doorways near porch lights and *(eats, eat)* insects.
5. Some of the passengers on the cruise ship traveling to Mexico *(eats, eat)* five times a day.
6. In my office, a huge pile of books and notepads *(sit, sits)* on the desk.
7. That guy with the brown hair who has 10 brothers *(live, lives)* in Portland.
8. Over on Main Street, some of the clowns from the circus (drinks, drink) coffee every day.
9. Tons of empty plastic water bottles and other trash (ends, end) up in the Pacific Ocean.
10. The houses near the riverbank in the city of Sacramento (needs, need) flood protection.

VERB before the SUBJECT SENTENCES:

Sentences come in all kinds of different patterns, but you are probably most familiar with the pattern of subject + verb. However, sometimes the verb comes first, before the subject, and that means you have to sort of think backwards. Sentences that begin with “there” or “here” fit that pattern, and so do sentences in the form of questions.

So, if the verb comes first, how do you know if it matches the subject in number?

There (is, are) a gang of werewolves howling in my back yard.

How (do, does) someone get rid of a problem like that?

We’ll start with sentences that aren’t questions. Often you can figure out the correct subject and verb by mentally reversing the word order of the sentence and crossing out prepositional phrases and other extra words (see below.) Also try rewording the sentence so that the subject comes first. Your rearranged sentence won’t be perfect, but it can help you figure out the subject and the correct verb:

There (is, are) a gang of werewolves howling in my back yard.

A gang of werewolves (is, are) howling in my back yard.

There (is, are) more than one way to start a sentence.

One way to start a sentence (is, are) . . . .

Here (is, are) all the cookies I baked last night.

All the cookies I baked last night (is, are) here.”

Now give it a try yourself by first finding the subject and then underlining the correct verbs in the sentences below:

1. There (is, are) a giant space ship landing on my front lawn.
2. Here (is, are) my reasons for not attending the party.
3. According to my brother, there (have, has) been many accidents on his road.
4. There (is, are) something wrong with this camera.
5. Here (is, are) the most important facts about tomorrow’s test.
6. There (has, have) been several reported sightings of UFOs this week.
7. There (doesn’t, don’t) seem to be enough copies of the handout.
8. Here (is, are) the shells I collected from the tide pool.
9. There (is, are) fifty two gypsies camped outside on the lawn.
10. Here (is, are) a sack full of gold coins from a ship wreck.

**Agreement in QUESTIONS:**

In questions, the subject often gets sandwiched in between a two or thee word verb. To find the correct present tense verb, try reversing the word order so that the subject comes first instead. You should end up with more of a statement than a question. It won’t be a great sentence, but it does work:

Why (do, does) teenage boys need so much sleep? ➔ teenage boys (do, does) need much sleep
(Is, are) your sisters going to the concert? ➔ Your sisters (is, are) going to the concert.
Where (is, are) the list of ingredients? ➔ The list of ingredients (is, are) [somewhere]
(Does, do) students get enough sleep? ➔ Students (does, do) get enough sleep.

**PRACTICE: Circle the correct verb after you figure out if the subject is single or plural.**

1. How (do, does) one little Ipod hold so many songs?
2. Who (is, are) those people staring out the window?
3. What (is, are) the main points I need to remember?
4. Why (has, have) all the birds stopped singing?
5. Which toys (need, needs) batteries?
6. What (is, are) the names of your favorite candy bars?
7. Where (do, does) the children go after school?
8. How (has, have) you managed to make such a mess?
9. (Have, Has) anyone seen my car keys today?
10. (Do, Does) love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage?
11. How old (is, are) your new little puppies?
12. (Do, Does) the swimming pool contain chlorine?
13. Do you (has, have) time to go grab a cup of coffee?
14. Who (has, have) you been talking to all night?
15. How (do, does) a flash drive hold so much information?

**REVIEW & PUT IT ALL TOGETHER:** ✅

Now it’s time to take everything you’ve learned in this chapter about present tense agreement and mix it all together. Don’t do this final practice until after you’ve completed and corrected all the previous work in this chapter and understand your mistakes.

**Here’s a brief review of everything covered so far:**

- In present tense agreement, **it’s all about the subject** – the subject has to agree in number (single or plural) with the verb form.

- **VERB + “s” stands for single subject**: This trick works even with most irregular verbs like forms of “to be,” “to have,” and “to do.”

  If the subject is single, the verb usually ends in an “s”
  If the subject is plural, the verb usually does not end with an “s”

- Special singular subjects are grammatically SINGLE, so use VERB + S with them. Mentally add the word “ONE” to remind yourself these are singular.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>either</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>each</th>
<th>one</th>
<th>everyone</th>
<th>which one</th>
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<tr>
<td>either</td>
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<td>one</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>everybody</td>
<td>anybody</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Collective nouns like “class, gang, herd, flock, team, panel” refer to “one unit” or “one collection” of many things, so these words are grammatically SINGULAR.

- If the subject is separated from the verb by lots of extra descriptive words, cross them out, especially prepositional phrases.

- In sentences and questions where the verb comes before the subject, reword the sentence or question so that the subject comes first – then you’ll be able to tell which verb form is right for that subject, whether single or plural.

**FINAL PRACTICE with PRESENT TENSE AGREEMENT:**
In the sentences below, underline the correct present tense verb.

1. Neither of the children (shows, show) any signs of illness.
2. The exact purpose of the crop circles (remains, remain) a mystery.
3. Somebody from Southern California (arrives, arrive) here every ten minutes.
4. There (seems, seem) to be seven students in this class who are asleep.
5. Each of the rock bands (plays, play) for at least fifty minutes.
6. Customers shopping at the grocery store on the hill (believes, believe) it is the best.
7. In the mountains, wolves hide during the day in burrows and (hunts, hunt) by night.
8. Drinking alcohol at parties (requires, require) good judgment and self control.
9. Here (is, are) the homework I forgot to hand in last week.
10. In your opinion, (is, are) the students in this class ready to take a test?
11. Either of the boys (love, loves) playing video games all day.
12. The giant buildings made of stone (blocks, block) out the sunlight.
13. The toy boat I bought at the Dollar Store last week (sinks, sink) in the bath tub.
14. On the other side of the world, there (is, are) mountains of ice and snow.
15. There (has, have) been many attempts to map the ocean depths.
16. My tiny house (seems, seem) to fill up with junk overnight.
17. Everyone here (agrees, agree) that it’s time to take a break.
18. Which books in your back pack do you (plans, plan) to keep?
19. Nobody (is, are) nervous about the test scheduled for next week.
20. The black leather jacket on sale at Macy’s last week still (costs, cost) too much for me.
21. (Has, Have) you done enough practices now to take this test with confidence?
22. Everyone who attends college (has to, have to) get a photo identification card.
Phrases and Clauses
We combine the various parts of speech to write “word groups” that express our thoughts. There are 2 major kinds of word groups: **phrases and clauses**.

1. **Phrase**—a phrase is a group of closely related words. This group of words makes some sense together, although it does not express a complete thought. A phrase is a fragment, or part of a complete thought. One common phrase you are familiar with is a prepositional phrase—to the store, around the corner, in the house, beyond the trees, after the play, etc. Notice how these groups of words make some sense to you, but they express only part of a larger idea.

2. **Clause**—A clause, like a phrase, is a group of related words. The difference is that a clause is a more complete expression—it contains a subject and a verb.

   There are two kinds of clauses:
   1. **Dependent Clause**—has a subject and verb and a dependent word (subordinate conjunction). A dependent clause expresses only part of an idea, and relies upon some other information in the sentence for complete meaning (hence the term "dependent").

   We usually use dependent clauses in sentences to express thoughts that are additional or accessory to our main thought in the sentence.

   2. **Independent Clause**—an independent clause is a group of related words that has both a subject (actor) and verb (action) and makes sense to us without needing any additional information. Therefore, an independent clause is also known as a simple sentence. It is not just part of a thought, but is complete on its own. When combined with phrases or dependent clauses, independent clauses form the basis of compound and complex sentences. Alone, an independent clause expresses one main complete thought.
**Clauses and Simple Sentences**

A *clause* is a group of two or more related words that has a subject and a verb. There are two kinds of clauses:

1. independent
2. dependent

**PRACTICE 1**
Read each of the following groups of words and decide if the group of words is a clause or a phrase. **Place a C beside the groups that are clauses and P by groups that are phrases.**

1. In the rain.  
2. When he finished.  
3. Because the movie is over.  
4. Tina screamed.  
5. While he was jogging home.  
6. Over the rainbow.

**The Independent Clause or Simple Sentence**

An *independent clause* is a group of related words that has a subject and a verb and *expresses a complete thought*. An independent clause is also called a *simple sentence*.

Every sentence you write **must have both a subject and verb, and these two parts go together.** That is, whatever you identify as the subject must be performing the action of the verb. These two parts are not isolated; they work together to express an idea. Also remember that verbs can express actions (walk, see, run, eat, go type, sit, etc.) or states of being (am, is, are, was, were, appear, seem, etc.).

**Examples:**

- I read all day Sunday.  
  (subject = I; verb = read)

- I am very happy.  
  (subject = I; verb = am)
The Dependent Clause

A dependent clause has a subject and a verb, but it does not express a complete thought because it has a dependent word. A dependent clause is not a sentence.

Example: While Dan was driving.

This clause does have a subject (Dan) and a verb (was driving), but it does not express a complete thought. We still need more information to understand the whole idea. The writer did not tell us what happened while Dan was driving.

Look at these two versions of the same idea:

Examples: The dog barked all night.
           Because the dog barked all night.

The first sentence is complete, but the second sentence is not because it does not tell us the result of the dog’s barking. We still need more information to understand the whole idea.

Both clauses, While Dan was driving and Because the dog barked all night, contain subjects and verbs, but do not express complete thoughts; therefore, both are dependent clauses.

The list of words on the following page are commonly used subordinate conjunctions and relative pronouns. These words are clues to help us identify and write dependent clauses. It may be easier for you to remember these words as “Dependent Words” because one of these words always appears as the first word of a dependent clause. In other words, if a group of words that has a subject and a verb begins with one of these subordinate conjunctions or relative pronouns (dependent words), the clause is a dependent clause.
Subordinate Conjunctions
(also called “Dependent Words”)

after although since whenever
as so that when even though
as if though where provided that
because unless whether whereas
except until while than
what before that in order that
once (meaning “if” or “when”) if why

that whoever which whatever
whom who whichever

PRACTICE 2
In the space provided, label the word or groups of words as follows: IC (independent clause), DC (dependent clause), P (phrase). You may refer to the list of subordinate words and relative pronouns above to help you.

_____1. before the storm
_____2. Henry who is a sailor
_____3. he gave a dazzling performance
_____4. at the party in the old house
_____5. millions have cable television
_____6. while she was playing golf
_____7. when she took her seat
_____8. nearly every American drives a car
_____9. beyond the blue horizon
_____10. after the clock struck 12
_____11. despite the blizzard
_____12. if he goes
_____13. since she is rich
_____14. in the spring
_____15. on the beach
PRACTICE 3

Read the clauses below. If the clause expresses a complete thought, place an IC (for Independent Clause) next to it. If the clause does not express a complete thought, place a DC (for Dependent Clause) next to it. Be sure to look at the first word of the clause to determine if the clause is dependent or independent. For all that you mark “DC,” add information to make the clause a complete sentence.

__________ 1. Although the day was bright and sunny.

__________ 2. Because she is so vain and conceited.

__________ 3. I believe in ghosts.

__________ 4. When we reach our destination.

__________ 5. He completed his work.

__________ 6. If the recession ever ends.

__________ 7. Before the play starts.

__________ 8. The cat climbed the oak tree.

__________ 9. While Anne was driving east.

__________ 10. She received an “A” in English.
Practice 4—More Practice Recognizing Independent Clauses
Underline the Independent Clauses in the following sentences and put parenthesis around the Dependent Clauses. Be sure to look for subordinating words to help you recognize dependent clauses.

1. Nate often visits his mother’s house because he likes her homemade dinners.
2. Joe likes to listen while Jeffery likes to talk.
3. School is a challenge although it has its rewards.
4. Nathan plays the guitar while he sings his own songs.
5. Since the freeway was congested, James was late for work.
6. Whenever Jeffery is late for work, he feels very stressed.
7. Most adolescent girls are unhappy with their bodies.
8. Shawna wants to lose weight even though she only weighs one hundred pounds.
9. I used to watch TV until I realized how much time it wasted.

PRACTICE 5--Labeling Dependent and Independent Clauses
In the following sentences, underline the independent clauses and label them “IC”; put parenthesis ( ) around the dependent clauses and label them “DC.”

1. Although Americans celebrate “Presidents Day” in February, many people do not know which presidents are being honored by this holiday.
2. Americans enjoy celebrating St. Patrick’s Day, but hardly anyone knows who St. Patrick is.
3. Halloween is another day for celebration in the United States; however, the meaning of this “holiday” is a mystery to most people.
4. Maybe it does not matter why we celebrate certain days; the important part is to have a good time!
NO MORE FRAGS:
SENTENCE FRAGMENTS AND HOW TO FIX THEM

What is a sentence fragment?

As the name implies, a sentence fragment is not a complete sentence; it’s just a piece of one. It could be missing a subject or a verb (or both), or it might have a subject and a verb but still not form a complete thought. Although the word “fragment” implies something short and partial, a fragment can really be of any length. What matters is that something crucial to the meaning is always missing in a sentence fragment. Often if you read a fragment out loud, it will sound weird and unfinished:


Yes, those are all fragments. They can sound hasty and careless, as if the writer was in too much of a hurry and forgot to carry the thought through from the brain to the page.

Why is AVOIDING fragments such a big deal?

When you write, you want to communicate. You want the reader to pay attention, regardless of the subject. However, writing that contains fragments is distracting and hard to read, even kind of annoying. The reader will start to wonder: “Doesn’t this person know how to write a complete sentence?” It’s not as bad as walking down the hallway with toilet paper stuck to your shoe, but in the world of writing, it’s close!

Fragments communicate carelessness. While it’s true that we all speak in fragments now and then or write them in text messages and other casual forms of communication, in college or work-place writing, fragments are guaranteed to make a bad first impression. But don’t despair.

Most fragments are easy to fix once you learn to recognize them, but the best strategy by far is to train yourself to stop writing them in the first place. Some “bad habit” fragments are caused by rushing. When your brain gets ahead of your hands, you’re more likely to write or type incomplete thoughts and leave out words. So it really helps to make a conscious effort to slow down and remind yourself to write in complete sentences.

Now all that hard work you did in identifying subjects and verbs in an earlier chapter is going to pay off, because the easiest fragments to fix are those lacking a subject or a verb. Sometimes just adding a word or two or joining the fragment to a nearby sentence will turn it into a complete thought.

In real life writing, fragments are sneaky because they get mixed in with everything else, so proofreading for them takes practice and close attention. There’s always more than one way to fix a fragment, depending on what you want to say, so next we’ll explore different kinds of fragments and ways to avoid them.
FRAGMENTS WITHOUT A SUBJECT:
This passage begins with a complete sentence followed by three fragments, each one lacking a subject:

“I took my truck everywhere. Blue Canyon to go four wheeling. Tail gate parties. Build big bonfires that would light up the whole sky.”

Who went to Blue Canyon? What happened with the tail gate parties? Who built bonfires? Each fragment needs additional words to make the thoughts complete and to tell who did what. Here’s one way to fix it, with the added words in **bold**:

“I took my truck everywhere. **My friends and I** went four wheeling at Blue Canyon. **We had** tail gate parties **there**, and **we** built big bonfires that lit up the whole sky.”

Another common fragment without a subject just starts with a verb. We know the action that was performed, but not who did it or how it relates to a complete thought. To fix them, add a subject plus any other words that will form a complete thought:

Going to the store. [who is going?]  ⇒  **Jenny is** going to the store.

Have enough to eat. [who doesn’t have enough?]  ⇒  **We don’t** have enough to eat.

Entered the movie theater. [who entered?]  ⇒  **My friends** entered the movie theater.

Threw the baseball. [ who threw it?]  ⇒  **Bob** threw the baseball.

FRAGMENTS WITHOUT A VERB:
Usually this kind of fragment is mixed in with correct sentences, as in the example below. It begins with a complete thought followed by a lot of fragments that don’t quite link up the subject with the action:

“Ed loved candy bars. Snickers, Paydays, Mars Bars, you name it. All day, every day. In the classroom, outside at break. Even before breakfast.”

To fix these fragments, we could add some action verbs (first example) or put all the fragments into a list (second example.) Either way is correct. Which one do you like better? [added words are in **bold.**]

**ADD VERBS**  →  Ed loved candy bars **like** Snickers, Paydays, and Mars Bars. You name it **and he ate it**, all day, every day. **He was munching** in the classroom **and crunching** outside at break. **Ed even ate candy bars** before breakfast.

**MAKE A LIST**  →  Ed loved candy bars, **including** Snickers, Paydays and Mars Bars. You name it, **and he ate it**, all day, every day, in the classroom, outside at break, and even before breakfast.
QUICK PRACTICE: Fragments w/out a Subject and/or Verb:

Correct these fragments by adding a subject, verb or other information above the line to form complete sentences. Don’t forget capital letters and periods. (Answers will vary.)

1. been thinking about going to Alaska [who has been thinking about it?]
2. that guy with the really cute dog [what did he do?]
3. what up, my friend? [is this a complete thought?]
4. want to hang out and watch a movie tomorrow [who wants to do this?]
5. my sister the clean freak [what did she do?]
6. ran around the track fifteen times
7. am finishing my essay
8. who ate all those cheeseburgers
9. as soon as the moon is full
10. driving all night
11. considering skipping my math class
12. Michael Jackson’s sister Janet
13. down two blocks past the grocery store
14. drinking and having fun.
15. the directions said to

Fragments are easier to recognize when they’re listed out separately as in the exercise above, but in real life and in your own writing, they’ll be mixed in with complete sentences. In the example paragraph below, all the words are there, but they’re not all connected in ways that form complete sentences.
Read the paragraph and highlight the SEVEN fragments. All of them can be corrected by attaching them in some way to other sentences in the passage. Fix the fragments by changing commas, periods and capital letters only.

The most boring job I ever had was working one summer at a prune dehydrator. As a weigh master. The weigh master’s job was to collect prunes that came down a chute into a mesh sack. And then weigh them. Usually the prunes slowly dropped into the sack, but not always. Every once in awhile. The prunes came out of the chute at lightning speed. When that happened. I had to quickly take off one mesh bag, tie it closed and replace it with another one. All without letting even one prune fall on the ground. I felt like a robot working on a speeded up assembly line, only worse. Because no one had programmed me to move fast enough! Luckily these “fast collections” didn’t last longer than 15 minutes at a time, but at least they were exciting. Right up to this very day. I still refuse to eat a prune.

FRAGMENTS and CLAUSES:

At this point, a little bit of terminology will give you another way to look at fragments. So far we’ve been focusing on fragments that lack a subject or a verb, which are contained in little groups of words that are called phrases (like a prepositional phrase.) For example if the subject is “house,” then it might be inside the phrase “A little house by the sea.” A phrase will never have both a subject and a verb.

However, if a group of words does contain BOTH a subject and a verb, then it’s called a clause. But is a clause also a sentence, or is it a fragment? Read on.

You’ve probably always been taught that a complete sentence must contain a subject and a verb, which is true. However, there’s another really important part to that rule: a complete sentence also must express a complete thought.

That’s where clauses come in – they will always have the required subject and verb, but they don’t always express a complete thought. Most clauses, left on their own, are fragments.

Here are a few examples of fragment clauses (subjects are bold and verbs are underlined). None of these express a complete thought:

Because Laura shouted at her friend, Jane. [because what? what happened?]
Although Jane could not hear her. [although what?]
Which everyone agreed was true. [what did everyone agree about?]
Clauses like those above cannot transform into complete sentences or become complete thoughts without some additional help from other words or phrases. On their own, they don’t really make sense because they’re incomplete. In fact, with one exception, anything that’s a clause is also going to be a fragment if left standing on its own.

The one exception, the kind of clause that CAN stand on its own, is one you already know – it’s called an independent clause, or a complete sentence. (Both terms mean exactly the same thing.) This kind of clause is “independent” because it can stand on its own without any additional words required.

Different kinds of clauses have specific names that we’ll be learning later, but for now, the main thing you need to know is that fragment clauses can be pretty good fakers. It’s easy to mistake a clause for a complete sentence, especially when it’s mixed in with a lot of other sentences.

So, for any group of words to be considered a sentence, it has to fit these three requirements:

- **contain a subject + verb + express a complete thought = sentence**

An independent clause (complete sentence) can be quite short. It might not contain anything except a subject and a verb, but the number of words isn’t important; what matters is the complete thought, like the examples below. These sentences are short, but they still meet the three requirements:

- He lied.
- It rained.
- Winter has arrived.
- Cats bite.
- You said so.
- Jan snores.
- We slept.
- Joe laughs a lot.

A sentence doesn’t have to tell you everything to qualify as a complete thought!

**QUICK PRACTICE:** Circle the number of the complete sentences below, keeping this formula in mind:

- subject + verb + express a complete thought = a sentence

1. Someone yawned.
2. Three of my friends
3. Joe and his sister
4. The cat slept.
5. It is hot today.
6. Jumped over it.
7. Feels sticky.
8. Ants crawl.
9. Boat in the harbor
10. Doing my homework.
11. He finished last.
12. Diane loves to sing.
13. So does Deena.
14. Engines backfire.
15. A bee sting hurts.
16. Another day at school
17. Into the bright sun.
18. Computers can be frustrating.
19. I ignored it.

Did you end up with 11 sentences circled? Check your answers with the key or in class.
Many fragments include words that signal their dependency, their need to “lean” on and “depend” on other sentence elements in order to form complete thoughts.

When a word like those in the chart below appears at the beginning of a sentence, check to make sure it’s a complete thought. Usually the dependent part of the sentence (which would be a fragment on its own) needs to be joined with something else to be whole.

**Common dependent words**

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<td>although</td>
<td>once</td>
<td>which</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUICK PRACTICE:** Circle the number of the sentences below that are complete thoughts. *(All others will be fragments.)* Then fix the fragments in any way you choose by writing above the line.

1. Since kids never listen anyway, no matter how much you talk.
2. If this snow keeps falling through the night, we will be snowed in tomorrow.
3. My brother, who is like a mad scientist from a movie.
4. This painting, which is over 100 years old, is really ugly.
5. Because of the Christmas holiday and all the celebrations.
6. Even if I study for my math test all night.
7. Until we know all the facts, we can’t make an educated decision.
8. After the movie ended, everyone left except a man who wanted to read the credits.
9. Whenever Jeff hears this particular song, the one by Pearl Jam.
10. Where the road crosses the highway, over by the new Dairy Queen.
11. This car, which I bought last summer, gets great mileage.

12. My friend screamed as if she had been shot when she won the lottery.

13. Whoever decides to eat the tacos with hot sauce.

14. Although computers are now common, people still find them frustrating.

The other thing to note about clause fragments is that if you take out the dependent word, quite often you’ll be left with a complete sentence. That’s a really easy way to solve the fragment problem! Even though you’re only taking out one word, that word is exactly what makes the difference between a complete sentence and a fragment.

Here are some examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>fragment w/ dependent word start</th>
<th>sentence minus dependent word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Because it is cold outside today</td>
<td>Because It is cold today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When this movie is over</td>
<td>When This movie is over.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the building is cleaned.</td>
<td>After The building is cleaned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUICK PRACTICE**: Each line below is either a fragment clause or a complete sentence. Circle the number of JUST those that are fragments, and then change them into sentences by crossing out only one word. (Fix capital letters if needed too.)

1. Because he ate the whole thing at the pie eating contest.
2. Since it has started to snow and is very cold outside.
3. She skis because it’s fun and great exercise.
4. When this class is over in December.
5. He shouldn’t jump into the river until the ice melts.
6. If Henry plans to retire by next year.
7. While the shops open in the morning.
8. After the test was over, we all left.
9. Although the moon is full tonight, it’s still dark.
10. Ever since he heard the news.
Certainly you can fix fragments without knowing anything at all about clauses, but as with most things, it’s a lot easier to get a job done when you know the names of all the tools and parts you’ll be working with!

When you fix a fragment, what you’re doing in grammatical terms is changing a phrase or a dependent clause into an independent clause. Here are a few examples of how a dependent fragment can be turned into a complete sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>fragment clause = incomplete thought</th>
<th>complete thought = sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where I live.</td>
<td>Cats roam the street where I live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While you turn off the T.V.</td>
<td>I will eat while you turn off the T.V.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although Jim likes to read</td>
<td>Although Jim likes to read, he doesn’t have time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who told a joke.</td>
<td>The woman who told a joke is laughing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which is wool.</td>
<td>My wet hat, which is wool, smells like a goat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This doesn’t mean you can’t use dependent words to begin a sentence; in fact, a fragment clause can go anywhere in a sentence, but it will always need additional help to form a complete thought.

Add words either BEFORE or AFTER each fragment clause to make it a complete thought. Don’t forget capital letters and periods where needed. (You should only be writing on one of the lines, not both.)

1. ________________________ after the movie is over ____________________________
2. ________________________ which was painted red ____________________________
3. ________________________ because it could be dangerous _______________________
4. ________________________ instead of mowing the lawn __________________________
5. ________________________ while he is attending college _______________________
6. ________________________ since it is hot outside ____________________________
7. ________________________ if we finish painting the house ______________________
8. ________________________ since it is 5:00 o’clock in morning ____________________
Now that you’ve learned all about fragments, you can start paying more attention to them in your own writing. Most people only write certain kinds of fragments or their fragments fall into the same patterns. If you have had problems with fragments, see if you can figure out WHY you write them and how you can avoid them.

PRACTICE fixing ALL KINDS of FRAGMENTS:

Change each fragment below into a complete sentence in any way you choose. You can take out, add, or change words as needed either before or after the fragment. Make corrections above the lines, and don’t forget to adjust punctuation and capitalization.

Write “OK” after sentences that are already complete, although you’ll still have to capitalize and put in the period. Otherwise, don’t fix it if it’s not broken!

1. have started their trip with nothing but their sleeping bags

2. I didn’t turn on the lights because I didn’t want to wake up the dog

3. something that Weston hoped wouldn’t happen

4. it’s not anything important

5. which is what Betsy had hoped for all along

6. people keep talking while we are trying to sleep

7. a movie that Dennis wanted to see

8. the biggest apple pie in the county.

9. the senator made all kinds of promises during his campaign

10. a person who is always ready to help
I used to love to visit my Grandma. Because she had a great maple tree to climb, and she let me eat animal crackers all day long. In the afternoon, I sat up in the tree and read books. Mostly while she took her daily nap. Hot days in the summer, cool in the shade of green leaves. I was always happy in my secret hiding place. Even when I got older, I still kept the habit. Of reading among the branches of that tree. As long as I could. Many, many years have passed, but now whenever I see a maple leaf or an animal cracker.
Pronouns

_Pronouns that refer to specific people and things:_

I we you he she they it
me us your him her them its
my our yours his her their
mine ours yours his her their

_Pronouns that refer to general people and things:_

some everyone anyone someone no one
all everything anything something nothing
each everybody anybody somebody nobody
one none

_Pronouns that end in self or selves:_

myself ourselves
yourself yourselves
himself yourselves
herself
itself

_Other Pronouns:_

who, whom, whose that this
which those these

_Pronouns that ask questions:_

who, whom, whose
which
what

Linking Verbs

am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been
Helping Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>can</th>
<th>may</th>
<th>could</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>will</td>
<td>must</td>
<td>would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shall</td>
<td>might</td>
<td>should</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Forms of have | Forms of do | Forms of be
have | do | am | was | be |
has | does | is | were | being |
had | did | are | been |

Dependent Words (Subordinate Conjunctions)

| after | although | since | whenever |
|       | as       |       |          |
|       | as if    |       |          |
| because | unless |       |          |
| except | until    |       |          |
| what | before |       |          |
| once (meaning “if” or “when”) | if |       |          |

Relative Pronouns

| that | whoever | which | whatever |
|      | whom    |       |          |

Conjunctive Adverbs

| also | consequently | finally | furthermore | hence |
|      | however | incidentally | indeed | instead | likewise |
| meanwhile | still | nevertheless | nonetheless | next |
| otherwise | then | therefore | thus |