

The Parts of Speech

The eight parts of speech are **nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions,** and **interjections.**

1. **Nouns:** Nouns are words that name something—a person, place, thing, concept or idea. There are several kinds of nouns. Nouns can be proper or common.

Proper Nouns: A proper noun is the name of a particular person, place, thing, language, country, day, month or religion. Your name is an example of a proper noun. Here

are some other examples: *Sir John A. MacDonald, Toronto, the CN Tower, Monday, English.*

Proper nouns are always capitalized.

Common Nouns: Common nouns are divided into two groups: Concrete and abstract.

a) **Concrete Nouns:** These refer to tangible things perceived through the senses.

E.g., *rain, bookcase, student.*

b) **Abstract Nouns:** These refer to intangible things as well as whole groups. We perceive them through intellect rather than through our senses. These nouns are singular in form.

E.g., *honesty, happiness, courage, information, government.*

A. Put one line under the common nouns, two lines under the proper nouns.

1. Louise paid a lot of money for that dress.
2. You like Coke, but I prefer Pepsi.
3. These are not difficult questions, but they make you think.
4. For Christmas, his parents gave him a computer.
5. Sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will never hurt me.

Count and Noncount Nouns:

a) **Count Nouns** are words that refer to objects that are seen as separate items and that can be counted. These nouns have a plural form.

E.g., *(one) book, (two) books; desk, desks; word, words; car, cars.*

b) **Noncount Nouns** are words that refer to things that are not seen separately and that cannot be counted. These nouns do not have a plural form.

E.g., *sugar, water, information, traffic, homework, truth*. Many abstract nouns can also be described as noncount nouns.

B. Find all the count nouns and change them to their plural forms by adding

–s or –es. (Remember that noncount nouns do not have a plural form.)

1) chair

2) electricity

3) flour

4) potato

5) kilometer

6) bread

7) flower

8) food

9) song

10) jewellery

2. **Pronouns**: Most pronouns are words that stand for nouns or take the place of nouns. there are several kinds of pronouns. Here are some of them:

Personal Pronouns: Personal pronouns usually refer to a person, and sometimes to a thing. Personal pronouns are further broken down into **subject** pronouns, **object** pronouns, and **possessive** pronouns.

Singular Subject Object Possessive

1st person I me my mine

2nd person you you your yours

3rd person he him his his

she her her hers

it it its its

Plural

1st person we us our ours 2nd person you you your yours 3rd person they them their theirs

Demonstrative Pronouns: These pronouns point out someone or something. There are only four—**this, that** (singular); **these, those** (plural).

E.g., **This** is mine. **Those** are yours.

Interrogative Pronouns: Interrogative pronouns ask questions— who, whom, whose, which, whichever, what.

E.g., **Who** has my book? **Whose** is this? Which is mine? **What** is your opinion? **Whichever** will you choose? (___-ever in a question usually emphasizes surprise or confusion.)

Reflexive Pronouns: Reflexive pronouns end in “-self” or “-selves” and indicate that the subject reflects back to itself; in other words, it has the same identity as the subject.

E.g., I hurt **myself**. He can do it by **himself**.

The forms are **myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves**.

Indefinite Pronouns: These pronouns don't refer to any specific person. They include all words which end in **-one, -body, or -thing**.

someone somebody something everyone no one nobody nothing anyone anything

The important thing to remember with the above noted pronouns is that *they are always singular*, even though they sometimes sound as though they should be plural.

E.g., Everybody **is** here. Something **was** missing.

The following indefinite pronouns *are always plural*: **both, many, few, several**.

Another group of indefinite pronouns *can be singular or plural*: **all, some, none, more, most, any**. If the noun in the prepositional phrase following is singular, the pronoun is considered singular, and the verb following is singular also.

C. Underline the pronouns in the following exercise:

1. My mother and I saw him at the park. 2. She hurt herself on that sharp rock. 3. Most of the guests brought gifts and put them under the Christmas tree. 4. Nobody told her about our decision. 5. Those are the rules; we expect everyone to obey them.

3. Verbs: Verbs are words that express an action or state of being. They change their form to indicate that time frame of the action or condition. There are different kinds of verbs.

Action Verbs: As the name implies, action verbs express an action, although the action can be either physical or mental.

E.g., I **walk** to school. I **think** about him often.

Helping Verbs: These are also called “auxiliary” verbs. The main helping verbs are: **be**, **do**, **have** and the sub-group of verbs called **modal** verbs.

1. **be** am, are, is, was, were, been

2. **have** have, has, had

3. **do** do, does, did

4. **modals** will/would may/might can/could ought to shall/should must have to/had to

Helping verbs are used *with* main verbs to form verb phrases. When you are looking for the verb in a sentence, you must include the *complete* verb phrase (the helping verb + the main verb.)

She **was listening**. Was she **listening**?

Does he **listen**? He **did** not **listen**.

As you can see, the helping verbs can be separated by the main verb, but it is still part of the verb phrase. “Not” and “never” are never part of the verb phrase. An infinitive (a verb with the word “to” in front of it) is not considered the verb in a sentence.

E.g., Mary **did** not **want** to go to the party. Mary **doesn't like** parties.

Linking Verbs: Linking verbs are words that express a condition or state rather than an action.

All forms of the verb “**be**” are linking verbs. E.g., He **is** a doctor.

Here are some other linking verbs: **appear**, **become**, **feel**, **look**, **seem**, **taste**, **smell**. Some of these linking verbs can also be action verbs.

E.g., She **tasted** the soup (Action) The soup **tasted** salty. (Linking)

D. Underline the verbs or verb phrases in the following sentences.

1. That lesson **seems** very easy.

2. The car **swerved** off the road and **went** into the ditch.

3. **Did** the police **charge** the driver?

4. When I **am** happy, I **dance** and **sing**.

5. She **enjoyed** the book, but she **didn't like** the movie.

6. Helen doesn't watch TV very often.

7. What time is it?

8. Tim had a hamburger for lunch.

9. Is anyone going to the party?

10. Do you believe everything you hear?

4. **Adjectives:** These are the words that modify a noun or pronoun. They limit, qualify or make the meaning of another word more specific. They describe. Adjectives usually answer 'what kind of', 'how many', or 'which one'.

Adjectives usually come in front of the noun they modify. E.g., the **beautiful** dress

Adjectives can also be used alone after a linking verb. E.g., The dress is **beautiful**.

Some common adjective endings include the following:

Examples:

-ful careful, helpful beautiful -al comical, hysterical -able, ible
adorable, edible -ent, -ant independent, redundant -ous, -ious
courageous, curious, adventurous

Articles: Articles are a special form of adjective. There are only three: **a**, **an**, and **the**. **A** and **an** are used only with singular nouns that can be counted. You use **a** in front of a consonant and **an** in front of a vowel; **the** may be used with a singular or plural noun.

5. **Adverbs:** Adverbs, like adjectives, describe, qualify, or limit other elements in the sentence. Examples:

Adverbs tell how slowly, well how much extremely, somewhat how often frequently, never when late, afterwards where there, here

Many adverbs end in **-ly** but not all **-ly** words are adverbs. (for example, "friendly" and "lovely" are adjectives.)

Adverbs can modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

E.g., ran **fast** ("**Fast**" modifies the verb "ran".) ran **very fast** ("**Fast**" modifies the verb "ran", and "**very**" modifies the adverb "fast".) an **extremely** intelligent girl ("**Extremely**" modifies the adjective "intelligent".)

E. Put one line under the adjectives and two lines under the adverbs.

1. He walked slowly toward the tall, dark man.

2. I am reading a very interesting book.

3. Later, we will visit the CN Tower, the tallest free-standing structure in the world.
4. The quick, brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.
5. That young student read extremely well.

6. **Conjunctions**: Conjunctions are words that connect words, phrases or clauses.

Coordinating Conjunctions: The coordinating conjunctions are **for, and, not, but, or, yet, and so**. These conjunctions join similar elements in a sentence.

E.g., John **and** Mary live in Toronto, **but** their parents live in Ottawa.

Subordinating Conjunctions: There are many of these words. Here are a few of them: **since, although, because, if, unless, until, and after**. These conjunctions, as the name implies, subordinate one element of the sentence to another; they make one part of a sentence dependent or inferior to another part of a sentence.

E.g., **Although** John and Mary live in Toronto, their parents live in Ottawa.

F. Underline the conjunctions in the following sentences.

1. I will make the dinner if you will wash the dishes.
2. Jack and Alan studied all night, yet they failed the test.
3. After you get home, please feed the dog and cat.
4. Go to the movies or watch TV, but please don't bother me.
5. I'm tired, so let's stay home tonight.

7. **Prepositions**: Prepositions are words that show the relationship of a noun or pronoun to some other word in the sentence. Most prepositions are short single words such as **in, on, at, to, for, from, with, across, above, along, among, of, beside, beneath, during**.

E.g., He is running **with** the dog. He is running **toward** the dog. He is running **beside** the dog. He is running **from** the dog. He is running **behind** the dog.

Notice how the preposition changes the runner's location in relation to the dog.

Additionally, a preposition introduces and is a part of a group of words known as a prepositional phrase. A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition followed by a noun or pronoun which is the object of the preposition.

E.g., The book is on the shelf.

G. Put brackets around each prepositional phrase and a circle around the preposition.

1. Will you be at home at ten o'clock?
2. The elderly lady fell down the stairs.
3. Near my house, there are a number of stores.
4. He did many odd jobs around the house.
5. The tourists went into the museum.

8. Interjections: Interjections (also called “exclamations”) are words that exclaim. They are used to express surprise or strong emotions. They may stand alone or serve as part of a sentence.

E.g., **Oh! Help! Well! Indeed,** we should go.

H. In the blank at the right of each sentence, identify the part of speech of the underlined words.

1. There are two new students in the class. _____
2. They will arrive at ten o'clock. _____
3. Is everybody going to the party? _____
4. Those are not difficult questions to answer. _____
5. I like coffee, but my roommate likes tea. _____
6. Did you find this exercise difficult? _____
7. Ouch! I cut myself. _____
8. Ouch! I cut myself. _____
9. He limped slowly and painfully toward the car. _____
10. Some people learn from books, others from experience. _____