



# St John's

School & Sixth Form College  
A Catholic Academy

## Quick Guide to Grammar

# Word Types

# Nouns

Words that identify a person, idea or thing.

woman, tree, love, city, computer

'Naming' words

## Types of Noun

Common: refers to things in general  
friendship, dog, night, road, education

Proper: a specific person/place/thing  
Edinburgh, Asia, Clare, Tuesday, Big Ben

Concrete: something that exists physically  
dog, road, Asia, Big Ben, computer

Abstract: intangible idea  
love, friendship, education, time

Collective: groups of people or things  
audience, team, family, class

# Adjectives

Words that are used to modify nouns.

small, quick, annoying, beautiful

'Describing' words

# Using Adjectives

Placed before a noun:

I have brown hair.  
It was an interesting book.

Placed after a link verb:

This cake is delicious.  
The snow feels cold.

## Verbs

Words that express the actions  
of a person or thing.

run, breathe, grow, have, be

'Doing' words

## Using Verbs

Actions: She is **laughing**.

Events: It **rained** for days.

Situations: We **had** a lovely time.

Change: Children **grow** up quickly.

## Adverbs

Gives information about a verb, adjective or another adverb.

clearly, soon, hopefully, there, really

## Using Adverbs

How something happens:  
We watched the match **hopefully**.

When something happens:  
The film will be starting **soon**.

Where something happens:  
We will set up the stage over **there**.

# Pronouns

Used in place of a noun  
that is already known.

I, you, we, her, mine, them, ours

# Using Pronouns

Subjective: subjects of verbs

I, you, we, he, she, it, they

Objective: objects of verbs/prepositions

me, you, us, him, her, it, them

Possessive: refer to something owned

mine, yours, hers, his, ours, theirs

Reflexive: refers back to subject of clause

myself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves,  
yourselves, themselves

# Conjunctions

Used to connect phrases, clauses and sentences.

and, because, if, but, or, until

'Joining' words. Also called 'connectives'

# Using Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions: join items of equal importance

You can have coffee or tea.

Subordinating conjunctions: connect a subordinate clause to a main clause.

I made a sandwich because I was hungry.



## Prepositions

Used to show relationships between nouns and the other words in a sentence.

under, over, between, on, in, with

## Using Prepositions

Positioning:

"Your shoes are **under** the table."

Timing:

"The party is **on** Saturday."

A way of doing things:

"We had to go **without** them."

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Punctuation

# Comma (,)

Used in Four Main Cases:

- lists
- direct speech
- to separate clauses
- to mark off parts of a sentence

## Using Commas

In Lists:

"There's a choice of duck, pork, beef or fish."

In Direct Speech:

"Pass the salt," he said.

To separate clauses in complex sentences:

"We met in York, where I was living then."

To Mark off parts of a sentence:

"My brother, David, will be joining us."

# Apostrophe (')

Used in two main ways:

- to show possession (belonging to)
- to show omission (missing letters)

## Using Apostrophes

Showing possession:  
This pen is Priya's.

Showing possession (plural ending 's'):  
She attends a girls' school in Cornwall.

Showing omission:  
Don't use those stairs.  
It's cold today.

# Inverted Commmas (“”)

Used to indicate direct speech or quotation.

Also known as quotation marks or speech marks.

Can be single " or double ""

# Using Inverted Commmas

Direct speech:

'You never listen to me,' she said.

'Why should I?' he replied.

Quotation:

The minister's plans were described as 'too ambitious' and lacking 'a clear focus'.

## Colons (:)

Used in between two related clauses, where the second clause cannot stand alone.

- Also used
- to introduce a list
- before quotation or direct speech

## Using Colons

Between two clauses:  
I knew what I had to do: confess my crime.

Introducing a list:  
You will need the following ingredients:  
flour, sugar, eggs, milk

Before a quote:  
Everyone remembers Hamlet's dilemma:  
"to be or not to be."

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# Tenses

## Present Simple

I go

Used to describe permanent or regular activities.

Subject + Verb

## Using Present Simple Tense

- 1) We live in Paris.
- 2) She practises every day.
- 3) I like chocolate.



## Present Continuous

I am going

Used to describe activities happening in the present moment

Subject + IS + Verb (continuous)

## Using Present Continuous

- 1) I am training to be a teacher.
- 2) The rain is falling.
- 3) We're driving home.

## Present Perfect

I have gone

Used to indicate a connection between the past and the present, where the action is complete.

Subject + HAS + Verb (past participle)

## Using Present Perfect

- 1) I've already read that book.
- 2) We have finished painting the house.
- 3) He has called the doctor to come as soon as he can.

## Future Simple

I will go / I am going to go

Used to describe future events.

Subject + IS + GOING + TO + Verb  
(future events already decided)

Subject + WILL + Verb  
(future unplanned events)

## Using Future Simple

Future events already decided:

- 1) I am going to take the bus.
- 2) Are you going to stay here tonight?
- 3) It looks like it is going to rain.

Future unplanned events:

- 1) Do you think we'll win?
- 2) She will look wonderful in that dress.
- 3) It will be a nice day.

## Future Continuous

I will be going

Used to indicate being in the middle of something at a specified point in the future.

Subject + WILL + BE  
+ Verb (continuous)

## Using Future Continuous

- 1) This time next week, I will be going to the beach.
- 2) They won't be arriving until after ten.
- 3) Will you be coming to the party tonight?

## Future Perfect

I will have gone

Used to describe actions that will be finished by a specified time in the future.

Subject + WILL + HAVE  
+ Verb (past participle)

## Using Future Perfect

- 1) They will have parked the car at your house.
- 2) I'm sure she will have left by now.
- 3) Will you have finished the report by tomorrow morning?

## Past Simple

I went

Used to describe actions which occurred in the past and are now completed.

Subject + Verb (past form)

## Using Past Simple

- 1) I saw that film yesterday.
- 2) She ran for miles.
- 3) We danced the night away.

## Past Continuous

I was going

Used to describe past actions which lasted for an extended period of time.

Subject + WAS  
+ Verb (continuous form)

## Using Past Continuous

- 1) I was trying to keep it a secret.
- 2) Were you hoping to catch the three o'clock train?
- 3) She wasn't coping very well with the stress.

## Past Perfect

I had gone

Used to describe a past action which was started and completed before another past action began.

Subject + HAD + Verb (past participle)

## Using Past Perfect

- 1) I **had already** gone to bed by then.
- 2) He **had taken** the day off work to look after his daughter.
- 3) We'd **started eating** by the time she arrived.



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# Sentence Parts

## Subject

The person or thing a sentence is about.

**Sarah** plays football.

## Subject Examples

- 1) **Teaching** is an exciting job.
- 2) **Mark** came to our house for dinner.
- 3) Is **your aunt** feeling better?

## Object

The person or thing affected by the sentence's verb.

We were listening to **music**.

## Object Examples

Direct object:  
(directly affected by verb action)  
I bought her **some flowers** to say sorry.

Indirect object:  
(person or thing benefitting from action of main verb)  
I bought **her** some flowers to say sorry.

## Phrase

A small group of words which act as a meaningful unit within a clause, but do not stand alone.

I **was living** in York,  
where I worked.

## Phrase Examples

Noun phrase:

A **pile of books** were on the desk.

Verb phrase:

Tomorrow, we **will be going** to the park.

Adjective phrase:

The wedding was **really beautiful**.

## Main Clause

A group of words that contains a verb and can stand on its own.

I was living in York, where I worked.

## Main Clause Examples

- 1) I am eating a piece of cake.
- 2) It will be sunny today.
- 3) There was no answer.

## Subordinate Clause

A secondary clause, which depends on a main clause for meaning.

I was living in York, **where I worked.**

## Subordinate Clause Examples

- 1) I went to visit my sister, **who has just had a baby.**
- 2) Venice, **where we went last year,** is a beautiful city.
- 3) **After the game,** we celebrated at the pub.

## Simple Sentence

A group of words which contains a verb and makes complete sense, with one main clause. Can stand alone and still make sense.

I love cats.

## Simple Sentence Examples

- 1) I went shopping.
- 2) She grew up in London.
- 3) I took him to the park.

## Complex Sentence

A main clause joined to one or more subordinate clauses.

I love cats, having owned several.

## Complex Sentence Examples

- 1) I went shopping, which is my favourite activity.
- 2) She grew up in London, after her family moved from Ireland.
- 3) I took him to the park, where he enjoyed playing on the swings.