Grammar Companion for Agricultural Researchers

Abebe Kirub አበበ ኪሩብ

Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research
Well-written document gets to the point quickly, efficiently, and free of superfluous words

Gregory S. et.al 2014

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Preface

A poorly written research paper discourages reviewers and editors and risks rejection of the manuscript. Symptoms include incorrect grammar, the lack of substantive results, erroneous units, lists of research facilities, research design, modeling techniques, and jargon. In its most general sense, grammar for writing science successfully refers to the rules that govern how meaningful statements can be made.

Over the years, a number of books dealing directly or indirectly with questions of grammar have been published worldwide. Tips for writing are available on the internet and in many books. Certain grammatical features are highlighted in several books in terms of how they operated within particular category. This provided insights into how grammar could be treated functionally and in context. So why is it necessary to write this book, which is functionally related with agricultural or any allied disciplines? The increasing interest in grammar throughout Ethiopian agricultural research system has stimulated a demand for a companion publication, which familiarizes agricultural researchers with the basics of the English grammatical system.

This book is intended therefore as a bridge for agricultural researchers between what they already know.
about grammar and how they might extend that knowledge to include a more functional perspective for them to write scientific papers emanated from their research activities.

This book provides an overview of those features of grammar that have been found to be useful in agricultural and allied sciences research contexts in terms of supporting and extending researchers' ability to use English productively for writing scientific papers successfully. For further detail on any of the aspects, researchers are encouraged to consult more detailed descriptions of English.

_Abebe Kirub_
Nouns

A noun is any word that defines a person, place, or thing in a sentence. Nouns give names to:

- **Concrete things:** Gebremedhin lost his keys.
- **Abstract ideas:** Her personal philosophy about tissue culture is odd.
- **Abstract qualities:** She says I lack sensitivity in nutrition analysis.
- **Feelings:** I feel great joy when I participate in household surveys.
- **Actions:** Parking can be difficult on EIAR campus.
- **People:** Abegaz Kebede is our lead researcher in our research center.
- **Animals:** What kind of breed is horro?
- **Places:** The University of Gondar is located in Gonder Town.

Nouns can be divided into two categories: **common nouns** and **proper nouns**.
Common Nouns

Common nouns name ordinary things that are not specific or important enough to be capitalized (except at the beginning of a sentence). Common nouns refer to any of a class of people, places, or things. Common nouns include most of the nouns used to name things.

Examples:

*Key, flower, dog, city, village, river, mountain*
Proper Nouns

Proper nouns name particular people, places, or things that are special enough to be always capitalized.

Example:

President Girma, Getinet, Sony, Gurage, Abay, Lake Tana, Melese, Arbegnoch School, St Michael Church, Benin Mosque, Africa Street
Mass and Count Nouns

Every noun can also be distinguished as count or mass.

Count Nouns

Count nouns are nouns that can be quantified or counted with a number.

Examples:

- Names of persons, animals, plants, insects, a boy, a calf, a goat, an ear, three boys, seven calves, twelve goats, two ears, five days

- Objects with a definite shape: a building, a balloon, a house, an ox, four buildings, six balloons, four houses, two oxen

- Units of measurement and words of classification: a gram, a pound, a piece, a lump, an
item, a bit, a family, a state, a language, a phrase, a word, a field

• Some abstract words: a hindrance, a scheme, an idea, a plan, a taboo, a rest, an action plan

Tests for Count Nouns

Count nouns can be quantified by a number. They have singular and plural forms. They can use a, an, or one as a modifier. They can use "many" as a modifier.

Mass Nouns

Mass nouns are uncountable by a number. Mass nouns are quantified by a word that signifies amount.

Examples:

• Materials, food, metals, and natural qualities: bread, cotton, soil, wood, lightness, adolescence
• **Names of liquids, gases, and substances made of many small particles**: milk, oil, smoke, oxygen, rice, sugar, salt, cement, gravel

• **Names of languages**: Amharic, Arabic, English, Spanish, French, Chinese

• **Most gerunds**: looking, listening, swimming, running, anticipating

Remember that a number cannot be used to quantify a mass noun.

**Incorrect:**

*four woods, one rice, three butter.*

To measure or classify mass nouns, use "of" after a measurement: *a meter of wood, a gram of rice, an ounce of courage, a bar of chocolate, a piece of music, a bag of money, a sack of flour*
Tests for Mass Nouns

Mass nouns are quantified by an amount rather than a number. They have only one form (singular). They cannot have "a," "an," or "one" before
Pronouns

Pronouns are words that take the place of nouns.

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns are the most commonly used pronouns. Singular personal pronouns: I, me, you, he, him, she, her, it. Plural personal pronouns: we, us, you, they, them

Example:

*Dawit baked a cake for Yeshi* = *He baked it for her.*

Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns are personal pronouns that show ownership or possession.

Singular possessive pronouns: my, mine, your, yours, his, her, hers, its plural possessive pronouns: our, ours, your, yours, their, theirs
Example:

• I found Kaleb's hat = I found his hat.

**Demonstrative Pronouns**

Demonstrative pronouns call attention to their antecedents. An antecedent is the word or words to which a pronoun refers.

Singular demonstrative pronouns: *this, that*  
Plural demonstrative pronouns: *these, those*

Example:

• The black cow is his = That is his cow.

**Reflexive Pronouns**

Reflexive pronouns reflect the action back to the noun or pronoun that has just been named (ends in -self or -selves).
Singular reflexive pronouns: *myself, yourself, himself, herself*. Plural reflexive pronouns: *ourselves, themselves, yourselves*

**Example:**

- *I will find it myself.*

**A Helpful Hint**

When a pronoun is used in a sentence, it should always be clear to what or to whom the pronoun is referring. Too many pronouns in a sentence can be very confusing:

**Example:**

- *He went there to do that, but she didn't know where he was.*

**Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement**

A pronoun is a substitute for a noun. The pronouns or nouns that they refer to are called *antecedents*. A
pronoun and its antecedent are in agreement if they are both singular or both plural.

**Example:**

- Dr. Birhanu finished his rounds.

Frequent misuse of plural pronouns occurs with two types of singular antecedents: **indefinite pronouns** and **generic nouns**.

**Indefinite pronouns**

Indefinite pronouns refer to nonspecific persons or things. They include: *any, either, everything, no one, each, anybody, everybody, neither, someone, anyone, everyone, none, something*

**Example:**

- In class, everyone performs at his or her level of ability.
Generic Nouns

Generic nouns represent a typical member or any member of a group, such as *a typical student* or *any lawyer*.

**Example:**

Every researcher must write well if he or she wants to excel.

**Suggestions for working with generic nouns**

Treat collective nouns as singular unless the meaning is clearly plural. Collective nouns include such words as: *committee, crowd, family, audience, couple, troop, team, class*.

Ordinarily the group functions as a unit, so the noun should be considered singular; however, if the members of the group function as individuals, the noun should be treated as plural.
Example:

- The Belay Zeleke jury has reached its decision.

- The Shenkora farmers clapped their hands for the recommendation given by the researcher.

Compound antecedents connected by "and" should be treated as plural.

Example:

- Shimelis and Andualem climbed up a shelf and fetched a number of files.

When compound antecedents are connected by "or" or "nor" (or by "either...or" or "neither...nor"), make the pronoun agree with the nearer antecedent.

Examples:

- Either Solomon or Hiwot should be excluded from the survey team.
Neither the engineering student nor the biology majors could remember their schedules.

**Correcting Agreement Problems**

To correct a mistakenly plural pronoun referring to a singular indefinite pronoun or generic noun, you can do one of three things:

Replace the plural pronoun with him or her or [his or her.]

*Example:*

- When someone has been drinking, he or she is probably acting dumb.

Make the antecedent plural.

*Example:*

- When children have been dancing, they are probably acting involuntarily.
Rewrite the sentence so that no problem of agreement exists.

Example:

- A naughty child who has been dancing is probably acting involuntarily.

Noun and Pronoun Case

Case refers to how nouns and pronouns are used in relation to the other words in a sentence. The three cases are subjective, objective, and possessive. See below for a chart of pronoun cases.

Subjective Case

Subjective case is sometimes called the nominative case. A noun or pronoun is in the subjective when it is used as the subject of the sentence or as a predicate noun. A predicate noun follows a form of the "be" verb, and it renames the subject of the sentence.
Examples:

- I hope to finish my paper tonight.
- Tariku nominated in the national award.
- He is a clown (The word clown is a predicate noun)

Objective Case

A noun or pronoun is in the objective case when it is used as a direct object, an indirect object, or an object of the preposition.

Example:

- Dad prepared the dinner.
- Our dog crawled under the fence.
- Mom gave us the money.

Possessive Case

A noun or pronoun is in the possessive case when it is used to show ownership of an object:
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Example:

• Mom washed Tariku's body.
• Where did you find her book?

A Chart of Pronoun Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Possessive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Me</td>
<td>My, Mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>Your, Yours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
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<td>His</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Her</td>
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<tr>
<td>It</td>
<td>It</td>
<td>Its</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>Us</td>
<td>Our, Ours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>Them</td>
<td>Their, Theirs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verbs

Principal Tenses of Verbs

The three principal parts of verbs are the present tense, the past tense, and the past participle. The present participle or "-ing" form is sometimes considered a fourth principal tense.

Present Tense

Present tense indicates an action in the present

Example:

• Now the meeting begins.
• She walks to cooperative office.

Past Tense

Past tense indicates an action that occurred in the past
Example:

- We wanted to visit the Choke watershed.
- The little girl threw a stone.

Past Participle

The past participle can be used as an adjective or modifier. It is typically formed by adding 'd' or 'ed' to the base form. Many times, this form is identical to the past tense of the verb:

Example:

- Since the dishes were washed, we left the kitchen.
- The broken vase sat unceremoniously on the kitchen table.

Common Mistakes

There are many irregular verbs that confuse science writers when forming past tense and past participles. Here is a sample of irregular verbs.
**Auxiliary Verbs**

Auxiliary or helping verbs are verbs that are used to help form verb phrases but cannot do so independently. There are four basic auxiliary verb groups:

**To Be**
This auxiliary verb is used in the progressive tenses and passive voice

**Progressive Tense**

*Examples:*

- You are picking.
- You were picking.
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• You have been picking.

Passive Voice

Examples:

• You are picked.

• You were picked.

• You have been picked.

To Have

This verb is used as an auxiliary in the perfect tense

Examples:

• I have finished my paper.

• I had finished my paper.

• I have been finished with my paper.
Model Auxiliaries

These auxiliaries affect the mood of the verb; that is, they determine whether a verb is a fact, desire, possibility, or command. They are most commonly used to represent degrees of freedom or severity. Most common modal auxiliaries: will, shall, can, may, need (to), dare, would, should, could, might, must, ought (to)

- **Ability**: *I can run.*
- **Necessity**: *I must run.*
- **Obligation**: *I ought to run.*
- **Permission**: *I may run.*

To Do

This verb is used when the main verb of the sentence requires aid of an auxiliary, but there is no other helping verb that will fit. It is often used in questions, negative or emphatic statements:
Examples:

• Does he drive?

• He drives, doesn't he?

• Despite his flat tire he does drive.
Can/Could and May/Might/Must

Can

Used to express ability (to be able to do something):

*Example:*

- I can make butter.
- He can’t speak Tigrigna.
- Can you open this jar?

Used to ask for permission

*Example:*

- Can I use your bathroom?
- Can I leave now?
- Can I raise the volume?

Used to make requests or suggestions
Example:

- Can I have more enjera?
- Can I have the bill?
- You can take this spot if you like.
- You can do whatever you want.

**Could (past form of can)**

Describes an ability that someone had in the past

Example:

- I could drive a tractor when I was young.
- You could see the forest burning.
- They could tell he was a prosperous farmer.

Often used in auxiliary functions to express permission politely

Example:

- Could I take this jacket with me?
- You could borrow my umbrella.
- Could you please let me pass you?
- Could I get you more water?

Used to express possibility
Example:

- All of them could ride in the bus.
- You could always stay at our house.
- Could it be true?
- This research design could really work out.

May

Used to ask for formal permission

Example:

- May I come in?
- May I say something now?
- May I ask one question?

Used to suggest something that is possible

Example:

- She may agree with this farm plan.
- They may not be happy about what happened.
- It may rain this morning.
Might (past form of may)

Used to suggest a smaller possibility than may does (actually, might is more common than may in American English)

Example:

- He might have finished it.
- I might go see a doctor.
- I might not come this time.
- It might be right.
- You might have lost it.
- The seed store might have been closed today.

Must

Used to express something formally required or necessary

Example:

- I must complete the research project by this year.
- The government must provide credit service for farmers
- Everyone must save the natural resources of the locality.
- The building must have a fire alarm.
You must answer my question right now.

Used to show that something is very likely

Example:

- He must be a genius.
- You must be joking!
- There must be an accident.
- She must be very tired.
Will/Would and Shall/Should

The verbs will, would, shall, should, can, could, may, might, and must cannot be the main (full) verbs alone. They are used as auxiliary verbs only and always need a main verb to follow.

Will

Used to express desire, preference, choice, or consent

Example:

- I will take this duty.
- Will you stop talking like that?

Used to express the future

Example:

- It will rain tomorrow.
- The news will spread soon.
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Used to express capacity or capability

Example:

- This bucket will hold two gallons of milk.
- This airplane will take 200 passengers.

Used to express determination, insistence, or persistence

Example:

- I will do it as you say.

Would (past form of will)

Often used in auxiliary functions with rather to express preference

Example:

- I would rather go shopping today.
- We’d rather say something than stay quiet.

Used to express a wish or desire

Example:

- I would like to have one more pencil.
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Used to express contingency or possibility

**Example:**

- If I were you, I would be so happy.

Used to express routine or habitual things

**Example:**

- Normally, we would work until 6 p.m.

**Shall**

Mainly used in American English to ask questions politely (it has more usages in British English). For the future tense, will is more frequently used in American English than shall.

**Example:**

- Shall we dance?
- Shall I go now?
- Let’s walk, shall we?
Often used in formal settings to deliver obligation or requirement

**Example:**

- You shall abide by the law.
- There shall be no trespassing on this property.
- Students shall not enter this room.

**Should (past form of shall)**

Often used in auxiliary functions to express an opinion, suggestion, preference, or idea

**Example:**

- You should rest at home today.
- I should take a bus this time.
- He should be more thoughtful in the decision-making process.

Used to express that you wish something had happened but it didn’t or couldn’t (should + have + past participle)

**Example:**

- You should have seen it. It was really beautiful.
- I should have completed it earlier to meet the deadline.
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- We should have visited the vegetable farm on the way.

Used to ask for someone’s opinion

**Example:**

- What should we do now?
- Should we continue our meeting?
- Should we go this way?
- Where should we go this weekend?

Used to say something expected or correct

**Example:**

- There should be an old church here.
- Everybody should arrive by 6 p.m.
- We should be there this evening.
Verb Forms

Perfect Form

The perfect form is the verb tense used to indicate a completed, or perfected, action or condition. Verbs can appear in any one of three perfect tenses: present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect. Verbs in the perfect form use a form of "have" or "had" + the past participle. It is the form of the helping verb that indicates the tense.

Present Perfect:

• I have finished my homework already.

Past Perfect:

• He had watched TV for an hour before dinner.
Future Perfect:

- Selam will have finished her homework by the time her parents return.

**Progressive Form**

The progressive form is a verb tense used to show an ongoing action in progress at some point in time. It shows an action still in progress. Verbs can appear in any one of three progressive tenses: present progressive, past progressive, and future progressive. The verbs in the progressive form use a form of "to be" + the present participle (an -ing verb). It is the form of the helping verb that indicates the tense.

**Present Progressive:**

- The cake is baking slowly.

**Past Progressive:**

- The trees were waving back and forth.
Future Progressive:

• The children will be laughing

**Perfect + Progressive**

The perfect and progressive forms can be combined, as in the following examples (again, the form of the helping verbs indicates the tense):

**Present Perfect Progressive:**

• The farmer has been plowing for an hour.

**Past Perfect Progressive:**

• The farmer had been for an hour.

**Future Perfect Progressive:**

• The farmer will have been plowing for an hour.
Regular and Irregular Verbs

Verbs are subdivided into two groups, regular verbs and irregular verbs, on the basis of how their past tense and past participles are formed. See below for tips on how to distinguish between them.

Regular Verbs

Most verbs are regular verbs. Regular verbs are those whose past tense and past participles are formed by adding a -d or an -ed to the end of the verb. "To roll" is a good example of a regular verb: roll, rolled, rolled. Sometimes the last consonant must be doubled before adding the -ed ending.

Example:

- plan, planned, planned
Irregular Verbs

There is no formula to predict how an irregular verb will form its past tense and past participle forms. There are over 250 irregular verbs in English. Although they do not follow a formula, there are some common irregular forms. Some of these forms are:

- break, broke, broken
- cut, cut, cut
- run, ran, run
- meet, met, met
- come, came, come
- repay, repaid, repaid
- swim, swam, swum
- be was/were been

Distinguishing Regular and Irregular Verbs

Dictionaries are perhaps the most valuable tool one can use in distinguishing between regular and irregular verbs. If only one form of the verb is listed,
the verb is regular. If the verb is irregular, the dictionary will list the principal parts of the other forms.
Verb Mood

Verbs may be in one of three moods: indicative, imperative, or subjunctive. The indicative mood is used to make factual statements. The imperative mood makes a request or a command. The subjunctive mood can express a doubt or a wish using clauses beginning with "if" or "that"; it can also express a request, demand, or proposal in a clause beginning with "that."

Indicative Mood

Present indicative:

• Mulualem Tadesse laughs on television.

Past indicative:

• Mulualem Tadesse on television.
Future indicative:

- Mulualem will laugh on television tomorrow.

Imperative Mood

Examples:

- Notice how deep the soil profile appears.
- Call her tomorrow.
- Take a seat!

Subjunctive Mood

Examples:

- He talks about irrigation as if he were an engineer. (Expresses doubt or an idea contrary to fact.)
- I wish that I were a chairperson of the farmers’ association of my district. (Expresses a wish.)
Sensing Verbs

Sensing verbs reflect processes of our ‘internal world’. They are typically used only in relation to humans – or non-humans given human-like qualities – describing what they think, feel, desire and perceive. The following are some examples:

**Thinking**
Know, reflect, comprehend, believe, imagine, forget, remember, recollect, realise, decide, consider, recall, hypothesise, wonder, understand, assume

**Recognise**

**Feeling and Wanting**
Like, hate, dislike, want, wish, need, fear, enjoy

**Perceiving**
See, taste, hear, smell, observe, notice, sense

As with saying verbs, agricultural researchers can test whether a verb is a sensing verb by asking whether it can potentially be followed by ‘that’
Thinking verbs are used to express processes of cognition and can feature in texts such as arguments and discussions.

Example:

- It is thought that ...
- I believe that ...
- I wonder whether ...

Sensing verbs are concerned not only with people’s thoughts but with their feelings and desires. Sensing verbs also encompass actions of perception – those that involve the use of our senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, and smelling.

Example:

- He heard the cows mooing loudly.
- He saw the herd devouring his sage and thyme
- He felt his chest thumping
- He *smelled* the beef roasting
Adjectives and Adverbs

Adjectives

Adjectives are words that are used to modify a noun.

Example:

- *Green grass (the adjective "green" describes the noun "grass")*

There are three kinds of adjectives known as the positive, comparative, and superlative forms, as in green, greener, greenest.

Adjectives can be grouped into seven categories: nouns as adjectives, adjectives that modify an object, numbers as adjectives, pronouns and articles as adjectives, multiple adjectives, compound adjectives, adjectives used as nouns.
A noun can be used to qualify (or describe) another noun, as in goatskin, in which case there are no comparative or superlative forms such as "goater" or "goatest." Some nouns can be made into an adjective by adding an ending such as -ish, -like, -ly, -y, -en, -al, -ar, -ory.

Examples:

- He spoke in a childish manner.
- My, what a high yielding cow you have.
- His teeth were yellowish.
- He was sitting on a wooden desk.
- He works at the main cooperatives office.
- What a spectacular irrigation scheme!
- Our scaling up program is going through a transitory period.

Oftentimes, the endings -en and -al will be dropped, and the noun form will be used by itself, as in junipers' table, cotton shirt, and coastline.
Adjectives that modify an object

Adjectives such as "like" and "worth" may be used to modify objects.

Examples:

• Your sorghum is worth one thousand birr a quintal.

Sometimes prepositions like "of" and "with" are used to form adjectives.

Examples:

• She is fearful of dogs.
• Sometimes parents can be impatient with you.

Numbers as adjectives

Any words related to number are considered adjectives, including "two," "twenty," "few," "many," "dozen," "third," and so on.
**Pronouns and articles as adjectives**

Pronouns such as "this," "that," and "those" used to modify a noun are called demonstrative adjectives.

Possessive pronouns such as "my," "your," and "his" used to modify a noun are called possessive adjectives.

Articles such as "a," "an," and "the" are also adjectives.

**Multiple adjectives**

When using more than one adjective to modify a noun, the adjectives may be separated by a conjunction or by commas.

*Examples:*

- Your teeth are strong and beautiful. You have strong, beautiful teeth.
Compound adjectives

Nouns and adjectives may be combined to modify another noun, in which case the word can be hyphenated (although the hyphen is often a matter of personal preference).

Examples:

- He is a warm-hearted farmer.
- I can be empty-headed sometimes.

Past participles of verbs can also be used as adjectives, such as "native born," "foreign made," "soft spoken," "warmly dressed," "well cultivated," and so on.

Adjectives used as nouns

It is possible to use an adjective as a noun by simply using the adjective as the subject and omitting the noun, it modifies. Usually, adjectives used as nouns refer to a specific quality shared by a group (the pleasant) or a specific human characteristic shared by a group of people (the wise).
Example:

- Moderns are to the ancients what the poor are to the rich.
Adverbs

An adverb is a word or group of words that modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. They come in three different classes: **simple**, **interrogative**, and **conjunctive**. Also, see below for some common mistakes with adverbs.

**Simple Adverb**

A simple adverb is used as a simple modifier telling manner, time, place, degree, or number.

*Examples:*

- *Alemayehu jumped yesterday.*
- *The farm belongs there.*
- *He seemed extremely nervous.*
- *She came to the field day first.*
Interrogative Adverb

An interrogative adverb asks a question.

Example:

- Where have you been?

Conjunctive Adverb

A conjunctive adverb connects independent clauses. Some common conjunctive adverbs are accordingly, also, anyhow, besides, consequently, however, moreover, nevertheless, otherwise, still, then, therefore, and yet. Use a semicolon before the conjunctive adverb to join the two clauses.

Example:

- Worku did not do his homework; however, he still received good grades.
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Common Mistakes

• **Most** is an adjective, but **almost** is an adverb

• **Easy** is an adjective, but **easily** is an adverb

• **Good** is an adjective, but **well** is an adverb
Comparatives and Superlatives

Comparative

The second or middle degree of comparison in adjectives or adverbs

Superlative

The third or highest degree of comparison in adjectives or adverbs

The comparative and superlative degrees are formed by adding the -er and -est suffix to adjectives and adverbs with a single consonant for an ending.
Adjectives and adverbs ending in -y drop the -y and add an -ier in the comparative degree and an -iest in the superlative degree:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dark</td>
<td>Darker</td>
<td>darkest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free</td>
<td>freer</td>
<td>freest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adjectives and adverbs ending in the silent or mute -e drop the ending -e and add the -er for the comparative and the -est for the superlative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dry</td>
<td>drier</td>
<td>driest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early</td>
<td>earlier</td>
<td>earliest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Degrees of comparison can also be distinguished with the use of "more" and "most"
Example:

- more clever
- most clever

### Irregular Adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>badly</td>
<td>worse</td>
<td>worst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>less</td>
<td>least</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>far</td>
<td>farther</td>
<td>farthest</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>further</td>
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<tr>
<td>well</td>
<td>better</td>
<td>best</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Irregular Adverbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
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<td>best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad</td>
<td>worse</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>older</td>
<td>oldest</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>elder</td>
<td>eldest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conjunction

Conjunctions are grammatical connectors that link words, phrases, or clauses. A conjunction can indicate the relationship between the elements that it connects in the sentence. Without these, we would not see the relationship. There are three types of conjunctions: coordinating, correlative, and subordinating.

Coordinating Conjunctions

A coordinating conjunction connects words, phrases, and clauses that have equal or the same grammatical functions. The coordinating conjunctions include and, but, or, yet, nor, for, and so.

Examples:

Connecting nouns:

- I will buy a sheep and a goat.
Connecting verbs:

- I did not call nor write my mother.

Connecting adjectives:

- The boy was nice but weird.

Connecting dependent clauses:

- If the farmers show up and the extension agent is prepared, field days will be productive.

Connecting independent clauses:

- Ten thousand farmers applied to the district agricultural office for a new fertilizer, but only six thousand were accepted.

**Correlative Conjunctions**

A correlative conjunction is a coordinating conjunction that works in pairs to connect elements in a sentence. The correlative conjunctions include both...and, not...but, not only...but also, either...or, neither...nor, although...yet, whether...or.
Examples:

Connecting nouns:

• The name of the seed store is not Mohamed Nur but Mohamed Nuru.

Connecting adjectives:

• The place of employment shall provide both health and life insurance.

Connecting prepositional phrases:

• Orange juice is made either by squeezing oranges or by mixing a can of frozen concentrate.

Connecting independent clauses:

• Not only did the cat jump over the fence, but he also scratched the paint.
Subordinating Conjunctions

A subordinating conjunction connects elements with different grammatical functions, usually a dependent, and an independent clause. The subordinating conjunctions include after, in case, unless, although, in that, until, as, now that, when, as if, once, whenever, as though, since, where, because, so, whereas, before, so that, whether, even though, than, which, except that, that, while, however, though, who/whom, if.

Examples:

- He acts as though he has done something wrong.
- I am sure that the teacher will let class out early.
- When the bell rings, the students must sit down.
- Since the cat ran away, the girl has been sad.
Conjunctive Adverb

A conjunctive adverb is an adverb that connects independent clauses. Some of the most common conjunctive adverbs are however, moreover, nevertheless and therefore. See below for more on usage, common pitfalls, and flexibility of conjunctive adverbs.

Usage

Conjunctive adverbs require semicolons:

Example:

- "The operation will probably be successful; however, I should tell you I'm nervous about performing it," said Dr. Geremew.

Common Pitfalls

Conjunctive adverbs are often confused with coordinating conjunctions such as and, but, for, nor,
or, yet, or while. One difference is that coordinating conjunctions join clauses of equal rank and conjunctive adverbs do not. Another difference is that conjunctive adverbs are not true linking devices themselves, as indicated by their needing semicolons:

Example:

- I don't have enough butter for my bread; therefore, I'll buy butter to make my bread better.

Flexibility

The flexibility of the conjunctive adverb in the sentence also indicates they are not true linking devices like coordinating conjunctions. For example, the second part of this sentence could also be written:

...I will therefore buy some butter to make my bread better.
Prepositions

A preposition is a word or group of words that shows the relationship—in time, space, or some other sense—between its object (the noun or pronoun that follows the preposition) and another word in the sentence.

Examples:

- Tsehay put the bag in her locker. ("In" shows the spatial relationship between the verb "put" and the object of the preposition "locker."

- Hailu kicked the ball through the goalposts. ("Through" indicates the direction, which the ball traveled.)

Kinds of Prepositions

There are three kinds of prepositions: simple, compound, and phrasal. The following are representative examples of each.
Simple

- after, except, off, with

Compound

- alongside, throughout, underneath

Phrasal

- across from, near to, in place of

Common prepositions

A list of most of the common prepositions in English include:

aboard, about, above, according to, across, across from, after, against, along, alongside, alongside of, along with, amid, among, apart from, around, aside from, at, away from, back of, because of, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, besides, between, beyond, but, by, by means of, concerning, considering, despite, down, down from, during, except, except for, excepting for, from, from among, from between, from under, in, in addition to, in
behalf of, in front of, in place of, in regard to, inside, inside of, in spite of, instead of, into, like, near, near to, of, off, on, on account of, on behalf of, onto, on top of, opposite, out, out of, outside, outside of, over, over to, owing to, past, prior to, regarding, round, roundabout, save, since, subsequent to, together, with, through, throughout, till, to, toward, under, underneath, until, unto, up, up to, upon, with, within, without

Prepositional phrases

A prepositional phrase includes the preposition, the object of the preposition, and the modifiers of the object. It may function as an adverb or an adjective:

• The cat climbed on the couch. (The phrase describes, "Climbed," so it's an adverb.)

• The field by the lake is a great place to play volleyball. (The phrase acts as an adjective because it gives more information about the field.)
Interjections

Interjections are words or expressions, which are inserted into a sentence to convey surprise, strong emotion, or to gain attention. Interjections are usually placed at the beginning of a sentence. They have no grammatical connection to the sentence in which they occur; therefore, interjections may stand-alone. In addition, if an interjection is mild, it is followed by a comma. If it is strong, it is followed by an exclamation point. In no instance should an interjection with a comma or exclamation point be followed by a period or comma respectively.

Examples include words like oh, wow, hey, and well.

The following are two examples of the proper usage of interjections in sentences:

- Well, I suppose I should stay home and study this weekend.

- Oh! I broke my fingernail.
Nouns and Verb Phrases

Noun Phrases

A noun phrase is made up of a noun and all its modifiers. It can function in a sentence as a subject, an object, or a complement. Some noun phrases begin with an infinitive (to go) or a gerund (going); this type of noun phrase is always singular:

Examples:

- To climb mount Ras Dashen was my lifelong dream. (subject)
- Dereje prefer green salad. (object)
- An Shiro Wot is a popular lunch. (complement)

Verb Phrases

A verb phrase consists of a main verb plus one or more helping verbs, its complements, objects, or
other modifiers, and functions syntactically as a verb.

Some common helping verbs are:

• to be (am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been)

• to have (has, have, had)

• to do (do, does, did)

• others: may, might, must, can, could, shall, should, will, would

Helping verbs add meaning to other verbs. Some helping verbs change the time expressed by the key verb. Others, such as "should" and "might," are used to indicate obligation, possibility, ability, or permission:
Examples:

• The researcher is going to Adet for annual leave.

• The cooperative will probably not hire an accountant today.

• You should plow your own farm.
**Prepositional Phrases**

A prepositional phrase is a group of words including a preposition and a noun, pronoun, or group of words used as a noun. They are fragments that usually do not stand alone, except in commands like "At once!" or "On your feet!"

**Kinds of Phrases**

There are two kinds of prepositional phrases: **adjective phrases** and **adverb phrases**. An adjective phrase modifies a noun or pronoun. It always comes immediately after the noun or pronoun it modifies:

**Example:**

- Yilma is the researcher with the highest quality research papers. ("with the highest quality of research papers" modifies "researcher.")
An **adverb phrase** modifies a verb, adjective, or adverb. It is used to tell when, where, how, or to what extent about the word it modifies:

- *Belaynesh keep her pregnant cow in its barn.* ("in its barn" modifies the verb "keep.")

**Two or More Phrases**

When two or more prepositional phrases follow each other, they may modify the same word, or one phrase may modify the object in the preceding phrase:

**Examples:**

- *They arrived at the farm on time.* (Both phrases modify "arrived"; "at the farm" tells where and "on time" tells when.)

- *Adigrat is on the northeast tip of Tigray.* ("on the northeast tip" modifies "is"; "of Tigray" modifies "tip.")
Verbal and Verb Phrases

Verbals are verb forms which act as another part of speech in a sentence, i.e., as adjectives, nouns, and adverbs).

Verbal phrases are verbals and any of the verb form's modifiers, objects, or complements. The three types of verbal phrases are participial, gerund, and infinitive phrases.

Participial Phrases

Participial Phrases are present participles or past participles and any modifiers, objects, or complements. Participial phrases contain verbs, which act as adjectives in a sentence.
Examples:

• *Singing very softly*, the boy lulled his baby brother to sleep. *(the participial phrase works as an adjective, modifying "boy")*

• *The girls, frightened by the police car's headlights*, quickly came down from the school's roof. *(the participial phrase works as an adjective, modifying "girls")*

Gerund Phrases

Gerund Phrases contain verbs ending in -ing and any modifiers, objects, or complements. Gerund phrases act as nouns in a sentence. They can act as the subject or object of a verb, as a predicate nominative, and as the object of a preposition.

Examples:

• *Waiting for his cow to deliver* drove him crazy. *(the gerund phrase works as the subject of the verb "drove")*
Abebe Kirub

- The woman denied knowing her own horticultural land. (the gerund phrase works as the object of the verb "denied")

- He thought he could escape from his problems by running away from his village. (the gerund phrase works as the object of the preposition "by")

- Making many acquaintances is cultivating future friendships. (the gerund phrases work as the subject and as the predicate nominative)

**Infinitive Phrases**

Infinitive phrases contain verbals consisting of "to" followed by a verb and any modifiers, objects, or complements. Infinitive phrases usually act as nouns, but they can also act as adjectives and adverbs.

**Examples:**

- To live in Hawassa eventually is his main goal in life. (the infinitive phrase works as the subject of the sentence)
Grammar companion

- Chilot Alemayehu loves to babble during interviews. (the infinitive phrase works as the object of the verb "loves")

- Do you have any clothes to donate to the homeless shelter? (the infinitive phrase works as an adjective, modifying "clothes")

- She went home to visit her family. (the infinitive phrase works as an adverb, modifying "went")
Claususes

A clause is a group of words that includes a subject and a predicate. There are two types of clauses: independent and dependent. An independent clause can stand alone as a sentence, while a dependent clause must be accompanied by an independent clause.

Independent Clauses

Two independent clauses can be connected by:

A coordinating conjunction

Example:

• Today is Tuesday and our meeting is due Wednesday.

A conjunctive adverb or another transitional expression:
Grammar companion

Example:

- I need to study for my test; in fact, I am going to the library now. (In this case, use a semicolon to separate the two clauses.)

Correlative conjunction

Example:

- Ayele not only finished his weeding on time, but he also got more tef yield.

Semicolon

Example:

- This is one of my biotechnology classes; conventional breeding is my other.

Colon (sometimes)

Example:

- She received the statistical analysis assignment: it is to be turned in next Friday.
Dependent Clauses

Dependent clauses can be either adjective, adverb, or noun based on how they are used in a sentence. Adjective (or relative) clauses modify nouns or pronouns and, in order to make the relationship clear, follow the noun or pronoun they modify.

Example:

- Our conference, which meets at nine in the morning, discusses the importance and use of pesticides in our vegetable farms. (An adjective clause modifies the noun "conference").

Adverb clauses
Modify single words (verbs, adjectives, or adverbs) or entire phrases or clauses. They always begin with a subordinating conjunction. Adverb clauses answer the questions how? where? when? why? and to what extent? Adverb clauses appear in any of several places in the sentence as long as the relationship is clear and its position conveys the intended purpose.
Example:

- Confused, after meeting was over, Konjit decided to meet with her group to discuss the pesticide. (An adverb clause modifies the participle "confused.")

Noun clauses
Act as nouns in sentences (subjects, direct objects, indirect objects, or complements). They may begin with a relative pronoun or "by," "whether," "when," "where," "why," or "how."

Examples:

- Whoever wins the science and technology competition will receive the national award. (A noun clause serves as the subject of the sentence.)

- This award is what I deserve. (A noun clause serves as the subject complement.)
A clause is a group of related words, which has both a subject and a predicate. A clause is different from a phrase because a phrase is a group of related words, which lacks either a subject or a predicate or both.

**Adjective Clauses**

Adjective clauses modify nouns or pronouns. An adjective clause nearly always appears immediately following the noun or pronoun. To test for adjective clauses there are a couple of questions that you can ask. Which one? What kind? Most adjective clauses begin with "who," "whom," "which," or "that." Sometimes the word may be understood. The words "that" or "who," for example, might not specifically be in the sentence, but they could be implied. To determine the subject of a clause ask "who?" or "what?" and then insert the verb.
Example:

- The book that is on the floor should be returned to the library.

Occasionally, an adjective clause is introduced by a relative adverb, usually "when," "where," or "why."

Example:

- Home is the place where you relax.

**Adverb Clauses**

Adverb clauses usually modify verbs, in which case they may appear anywhere in a sentence. They tell why, where, under what conditions, or to what degree the action occurred or situation existed. Unlike adjective clauses, they are frequently movable within the sentence.

Example:

- When the whistle blew rings, we know the game is over. OR
We know the game is over when the whistle blew.

Adverb clauses always begin with a subordinating conjunction. Subordinating conjunctions introduce clauses and express their relation to the rest of the sentence.

**Noun Clauses**

Noun clauses are not modifiers, so they are not subordinators like adjectives and adverbs, and they cannot stand-alone. They must function within another sentence pattern, always as nouns. A noun clause functions as a subject, subject complement, direct object, or object of a preposition.

A noun clause usually begins with a relative pronoun like *that, which, who, whoever, whomever, whose, what, and whatsoever.* It can also begin with the subordinating conjunctions *how, when, where, whether, and why.*
Example:

- Whoever applies fertilizer will get better maize yield.

Relative Clauses

A relative clause acts as a clause that modifies a noun or pronoun. Relative clauses begin with a relative pronoun (who, whom, which, that, whose). Relative clauses can either be restrictive or nonrestrictive. Also see below for common usage problems.

Restrictive Relative Clauses

A restrictive relative clause is essential in order to complete the meaning of the main clause.

Examples:

- Where is the girl who is going?

- That's the one that I like best.
• Is he the one whose wheat field is attached by yellow rust?

Nonrestrictive Relative Clauses

A nonrestrictive relative clause adds definition to the main clause, but is not necessary for meaning. Nonrestrictive relative clauses are set off by commas.

Examples:

• That girl, who is going to the school, has a green dress.

• The red tractor, which is my favorite, has seating for two.

• The farmer, whose wheat field is attacked by yellow rust, just went to farmers’ training center

Common Usage Problems

Beware of sentence fragments when trying to use a relative clause.
Examples:

- He was a loser. Who never thought he would win. [incorrect]

- He was a loser who never thought he would win. [revised]

The relative pronoun should immediately follow the antecedent in a relative clause. Violating this rule leads to confusion:

Examples:

- She saw the farmer who married Derartu who has a red shirt. [unclear]

- Does Derartu or the farmer have a red shirt? [confusing]
Revised:

- She saw the farmer, who has a red shirt, who married Derartu.
Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Clauses

A modifying clause can be either restrictive or nonrestrictive.

Restrictive Clause

A restrictive modifying clause (or essential clause) is an adjective clause that is essential to the meaning of a sentence because it limits the thing it refers to. The meaning of the sentence would change if the clause were deleted. Because restrictive clauses are essential, they are not set off by commas.

Examples:

• All students who do their work should pass easily.

• The house that I want is out of my price range.
The fertilizer company will discontinue our service unless we pay our bills by Friday.

Nonrestrictive Clauses

A nonrestrictive modifying clause (or nonessential clause) is an adjective clause that adds extra or nonessential information to a sentence. The meaning of the sentence would not change if the clause were to be omitted. Nonrestrictive modifying clauses are usually set off by commas.

Example:

• Tsegaye Gebremedhin, who wrote "Esat woy Abeba," is a great Ethiopian poet.
Sentences and Sentence Elements

Sentence Types

Sentences can be simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex.

Simple Sentence

Simple sentences have only one independent clause. There are no dependent clauses, and the sentence must be limited to one subject and one predicate. The sentence may contain modifying words or phrases:

Examples:

• Bioinformatics class is interesting.

• Lalibella is an Ethiopian historical place
Compound Sentence

Compound sentences are composed of two or more independent clauses, which are joined by a coordinating conjunction or a semicolon. One should always use a comma before any coordinating conjunction that connects two independent clauses:

Examples:

- Sisay likes Lalibella, but he thinks bioinformatics class is interesting.

Complex Sentence

Complex sentences use one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses:

- When Sisay is in bioinformatics class, he often dreams of Lalibella. ("When Sisay..." is a dependent clause, "he often..." is an independent clause.)
Compound-Complex Sentence

The compound-complex sentence joins a compound and a complex sentence together. It should contain two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses:

Example:

• Lalibella is a historical place and Sisay feels that bioinformatics has no place at the site, which is often quite simple talk to his friends about it.
Subjects and Predicates

Every sentence has two essential parts: a complete subject and a complete predicate.

Subjects

The complete subject is the simple subject (a noun or a pronoun) plus any word or group of words modifying the simple subject that tells who or what the sentence is about:

Example:

*The flood from the Adulala watershed usually lasts about an hour.*

To find the complete subject, ask Who? or What? insert the verb, and finish the question. The answer is the complete subject:
Example:

What usually lasts about an hour? The flood from Adulala watershed.

The simple subject is the essential noun, pronoun, or group of words acting as a noun that cannot be left out of the complete subject. In order to identify it, remove the complements and modifiers and whatever is left is the simple subject:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Simple Subject</th>
<th>Prepositional Phrase</th>
<th>Predicate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The</td>
<td>flood</td>
<td>from Adulala watershed</td>
<td>usually lasts about an hour.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Compound Subjects and Predicates**

Although the examples so far have contained only one subject and one verb, a sentence may contain a **compound subject**, a **compound predicate**, or both.
Compound Subject

The compound subject consists of two or more subjects that have the same verb and are joined by a conjunction such as *and* or *or*.

Example:

- Kebede and Tatu waved their hands.

Compound Predicate

The compound predicate consists of two or more verbs that have the same subject and are joined by a conjunction such as "and" or "or":

Example:

- I came, saw, and joined.
Active and Passive Voices

The voice of a verb tells whether the subject of the sentence performs or receives the action. In English there are two voices: active and passive.

**Active Voice**

In active voice, the subject performs the action expressed by the verb:

*Example:*

- The researcher recommended fungicide application.

**Passive Voice**

In passive voice, the subject receives the action expressed by the verb:
Example:

- A recommendation is made by the researcher.

**Forming Tenses of Passive Verbs**

The passive voice always consists of two parts: a form of the verb *to be* + *past participle*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Passive voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>it is cleaned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>it was cleaned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>it will be cleaned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present perfect</td>
<td>it has been cleaned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past perfect</td>
<td>it had been cleaned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future perfect</td>
<td>it will have been cleaned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Uses of Passive Voice**

Use the passive voice to call attention to receiver of the action rather than the performer:

*Example:*

- The senior researcher was nominated by the committee.
Point out the receiver of the action when performer is unknown or unimportant:

Examples:

- A call for meeting was delivered to the research center.
- The signs will be posted.

Avoid calling attention to the performer of the action (known as the "institutional passive"):

Example:

- The tax will be collected on Monday.

Active and Passive Voice in Writing

The choice between using the active or passive voice in writing is a matter of style, not correctness. However, most authors recommend using active voice, which they describe as more natural, direct, lively, and succinct. The passive voice is considered wordy and weak (except when used in cases above).
Examine the following examples

Weak passive:

- The athlete was slammed into the wall by Asnakech.

Strong active:

- Asnakech slammed the athlete into the wall.

Weak passive:

- The book was enjoyed by me because the events of her childhood were described so well by the author.

Strong active:

- I enjoyed the book because the author described the events of her childhood so well.

**Identifying the Passive Voice**

An active verb may or may not have a direct object, but the passive verb almost never does.
• "It is...That" construction (It is clear that... It is noted...)

Use of the verbs To Be, Make, or Have

**Passive:**

• Your exits should be made quickly.

**Active:**

• Leave quickly.

Endings that turn verbs into abstract nouns: -ion,-ing,-ment:

**Passive:**

• When application of force is used, the lid will open.

**Active:**

• Apply force to open the lid.
Complements

A complement is called a complement because it completes the predicate in a sentence. There are two kinds of complements: object complements and subject complements.

Object Complements

An object complement follows the direct object and modifies or refers to the direct object. An object complement can be an adjective; a noun, a word, or a group of words which acts as an adjective or noun;

Examples:

- If you elect me chairperson, I'll keep the unions satisfied. ("Chairperson" is an object complement referring to the direct object "me." "satisfied" is an object complement modifying the direct object "unions.")
• The students elected Dina president. ("president" is an object complement referring to the direct object "Dina.")

• Wool socks will keep your feet very warm. ("very warm" is an object complement modifying the direct object "your feet.")

Subject Complements

A subject complement follows a linking verb and modifies or refers to the subject. A subject complement can be an adjective, a noun, a pronoun, a word, or a group of words, which acts as an adjective, or noun:

Examples:

• I am a researcher, but I am not yet experienced. ("researcher" and "experienced" are both subject complements that modify the subject "I.")

Subject complements have two subgroups: predicate adjectives and predicate nouns.
**Predicate Adjectives**

A predicate adjective is a subject complement that is an adjective.

*Example:*

- *I am not yet experienced.* ("experienced" is a predicate adjective that modifies the subject "I.")

**Predicate Noun**

A predicate noun (nominative) is a subject complement that is a noun

*Example:*

- *I am a researcher.* ("researcher" is a predicate noun that refers to the subject "I.")
Direct and Indirect Objects

A direct object is the word or words in a sentence designating the person or thing receiving the action of a transitive verb:

*Example:*

- *The farmer broke the seeding equipment.*

An indirect object comes before the direct object. It tells to whom or for whom the action of the verb is being done:

*Example:*

- *Sing me a song.*

- *He feeds the goat alfalfa.*
Appositives

Appositives are two words or word groups, which mean the same thing and are placed together. Appositives identify or explain the nouns or pronouns, which they modify:

Example:

- Our senior researcher, Dr. Lemma, loves statistical analysis.

- We can say that “Dr. Lemma" is an appositive or is in apposition to "our researcher." "Senior Lemma" identifies or explains “researcher.'

Appositive Phrases

An appositive phrase includes an appositive and its modifiers:
Example:

- My favorite place, the Fasil building, is located in Gonder, in the middle of the Town.

Restrictive Appositives

A restrictive appositive is necessary to maintain the meaning of the sentence and does not require commas. Usually, a restrictive appositive is a single word closely related to the preceding word. It restricts or narrows the meaning of the word it modifies:

Examples:

- The musician Tilahun Gessese will come to Champaign. ("Tilahun Gessese " restricts the general term "musician.")

- My daughter Dina has four cats.
Nonrestrictive Appositive

A nonrestrictive appositive may be omitted without changing the basic meaning of the sentence. Commas separate a nonrestrictive appositive. Commas are always used when the word, which the appositive modifies, is a proper noun.

Examples:

- Tilahun Gessese, the musician, will come to Champaign. ("Musician" offers additional information about the specific name “Tilahun Gessese”)

- There are many parades for the Grand Renaissance Dam, a cultural festival celebrating the last day before New Year, in Debre Markos, a town in Amhara Regional State.
Punctuation Note

A dash or colon, as well as a comma, can be used to set off appositives:

Example:

- For the prisoner there was only one goal--escape.
Homophones

Homophones are words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings. As a result, these words are often miss used.

Examples:

Accept (to receive):

- I accept your apology.

Except (excluded from):

- I like everyone except her.

Principal (head of a school):

- The principal is your friend.

Principle (a moral or fundamental truth):
• That is against my principles.

• There (meaning "in that place"): "The farm is over there."

• Their (possessive pronoun "belonging to them"): "Their farm"

• They're (contraction for "they are"): "They're coming soon."

• Its (possessive pronoun): "The dog lost its bone."

• It's (contraction for "it is"): "It's a shame you can't come"
Parallelism

Parallelism occurs when compound verbs or verbals express an action taking place at the same time or in the same tense. When such is the case, the verb and/or verbals must be in the same, or parallel, form.

Example:

- Gemechu publishes and presents scientific issues on faba bean breeding. ("publishes" and "presents" are parallel forms of the verb.)

Types of Parallel Structure

Coordinated ideas of equal rank, connected by "and," "but," "or," or "nor."
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Correct:

• Hailu loves trading and farming. (A gerund is paired with a gerund.)

• Hailu loves to trade and to farm. (An infinitive is paired with an infinitive.)

Incorrect:

• Hailu loves trading and to farm. (Here, a gerund is paired with an infinitive.)

Compared ideas

Correct:

• The farmer likes plowing Nitosols more than draining Vertisols. (A gerund is paired with a gerund.)

• The farmer likes to plow Nitosols more than graining Vertisols. (An infinitive is paired with an infinitive.)
Incorrect:

• I like to plow Nitosols more than I like draining vertisols. (An infinitive is paired with a gerund.)

Correlative ideas are linked with the correlative conjunctions both...and, either...or, neither...nor, and not only...but also.

Example:

Correct:

• Yosef is talented not only as a basketball player, but also as a tennis player. (A noun is paired with a noun.)

• Yosef is talented not only at playing basketball, but also at playing tennis. (A gerund is paired with a gerund.)

Incorrect:

• Yosef is talented not only as a basketball player, but also at playing tennis. (A noun is paired with a gerund.)
Placement

Place correlative conjunctions immediately before the parallel terms:

Example:

Incorrect:

- The farmer has both experienced both success and failure of climate change.

Revised:

- The farmer has experienced both success and failure of climate change.
Misplaced Modifiers

Misplaced modifiers are single words, phrases, or clauses that do not point clearly to the word or words they modify. As a rule, related words usually should be kept together.

Tips for Placing Modifiers Correctly

Limiting modifiers (only, even, almost, nearly, just) should be placed in front of the words they modify.

Example:

Unclear:

- You will only need to plant one seed per hole.

Revised:

- You will need to plant only one seed per hole. ("Only" modifies "one," not "need.")
Place modifying phrases and clauses so that readers can see at a glance what they modify.

**Example:**

**Unclear:**

- *The driver was described as a tall man with a black moustache weighing 90 kilograms.*

**Revised:**

- *The driver was described as a one meter and sixty-five cm tall man weighing 90 kg with a black moustache. ("90 kg" describes the man, not the moustache.)*

Sentences should flow from subject to verb to object without lengthy detours along the way. When adverbs separate subject from verb, verb from object, or helping-verb from main-verb, the result can be awkward.
Example:

Unclear:

• Alula, after trying to dig a pond, decided to get a ladder.
Revised:

• After trying to dig a pond, Alula decided to get a ladder. (Subject and verb are no longer separated.)

Infinitives ("to" + verb, such as "to go," "to catch," "to shout") usually should not be split unless necessary, especially in formal writing.

Example:

Unclear:

• The farmer should try to, if possible, avoid plowing hilly places up and down.

Revised:

• If possible, the farmer should try to avoid plowing hilly places up and down.
Dangling Modifiers

A dangling modifier is a phrase or clause that does not connect grammatically with what it is intended to modify. The problem is most common with adjective participial phrases, especially when they open the sentence. Such open participial phrases can be taken to modify the noun, but when the noun is not present in the sentence, then the phrase becomes nonsensical.

Dangling modifiers are word groups (usually introductory) that may seem confusing to some people if they fail to refer logically to any word in a sentence. Rewording a sentence may help to clarify the meaning.

Problems with Dangling Modifiers

There are two kinds of problems with dangling modifiers. A word (often a pronoun) has been left out, so that the introductory phrase does not complement what follows.
Example:

Unclear:

• Deciding to join the farmers’ training center, the extension agent happily pumped Tolossa’s hand. (The extension agent is not deciding to join the farmers’ training center; Tolossa is.)

Revised:

• The extension agent happily pumped Tolossa’s hand after learning that Tolossa had decided to join the farmers’ training center.

Unclear:

• Though only sixteen, Hawassa University accepted Martha’s application. (Hawassa University is not sixteen; Martha is.)

Revised:

• Though Martha was only sixteen, Hawassa University accepted her application.
Dangling modifiers can be repaired by restructuring the sentence, but this restructuring may vary according to the writer's stylistic preferences.

Example:

Unclear:

- When watching films, commercials are especially irritating.

Revised:

One option would be to change the subject so that it names the actor that the modifier implies:

- When watching films, I find commercials especially irritating.

Another option would be to turn the modifier into a word group that includes the actor:

- When I am watching films, commercials are especially irritating.
A phrase or word in a sentence is too far from the idea that it modifies.

Example:

Unclear:

- A dependable car, the family decided to buy the minibus.

Correcting the Problems

There are two ways to correct dangling modifiers. The main clause can be left alone and the participial construction altered, usually to an adverbial phrase.

Example:

Unclear:

- Running down the street, the house was on fire.
Revised:

- *When the man ran down the street, the house was on fire.*

The participial construction can be allowed to stand and the main clause modified so that the modified object is in the subject position.

Revised:

- *Running down the street, the man saw the house was on fire.*
Sentence Fragments

A sentence fragment is a part of a sentence punctuated as if it were a complete sentence. It is a group of words that begins with a capital letter and ends with a period, exclamation point, or a question mark, but does not express a complete thought.

Phrases as Sentence Fragments

A word group is a sentence fragment if it lacks a subject.

Example:

• Swam into the lake. (Note: Sentences in the imperative mood (e.g., "Swim into the lake!") have, by convention, an understood "you" for a subject and are not considered fragments.)

A word group is also a sentence fragment if it lacks a verb.
A word group missing both a subject and a predicate is a sentence fragment.

**Example:**

- The white plastic chair.

A clue that a group of words may be a sentence fragment is that it begins with a subordinator. Often, when a group of words begins with a subordinator, it is a dependent clause, a clause that cannot stand alone as a sentence. Some common subordinators are: when, until, after, before, however, while, because, since, though, although, if, so that, so, and where.

**Example:**

- Until the field day is over.
Another clue is that the word group begins with a relative pronoun. Some common relative pronouns are: *that, who, whose, whom, which, and when.*

**Example:**

- *Whom Kassahun had known since the third grade.*

**Using Sentence Fragments**

Researchers should understand that sentence fragments can be used in writing, but that they should be used rarely and cautiously. Pointing out these structures in literature might be a good way to identify the difference between strong use of sentence fragments and weak sentence fragments.

**Example:**

- *Every life is many days, day after day. We walk through ourselves, meeting, old farmers young farmers, wives, widows, and brothers-in-law.*
The last word group is a sentence fragment. A sentence fragment is used here for emphasis. In this example, the meaning of the fragment is clear.

**Misusing Sentence Fragments**

It is very easy to misuse sentence fragments. The following piece of writing shows how this misuse can make writing unclear and disorganized.

*Example:*

*It is my opinion that the hillside farming should end. A credit privilege is not a bad idea. After all, farmers receive enough credit; More money than they need.*

The last word group is a sentence fragment.
Fused Sentences, Run-ons, and Comma Splices

Fused Sentences

A fused sentence (also known as a run-on sentence) occurs when two independent clauses are joined without any punctuation or connecting word between them.

Example:

- It was close to fall the trees were losing their leaves.

Comma Splices

A comma splice occurs when only a comma joins two independent clauses.
Example:

- It was close to fall; the trees were losing their leaves.

Eliminating Fused Sentences and Comma Splices

Separate the clause into two sentences:

Example:

- It was close to fall. The trees were losing their leaves.

Link the clauses with a semicolon:

Example:

- It was close to fall; the trees were losing their leaves.

Link the clauses with a comma and a coordinating conjunction:

Example:
Example:

- It was close to fall, so the trees were beginning to lose their leaves.

Recast the two independent clauses as one independent clause:

Example:

- It was the time of year when trees begin to lose their leaves.

Recast one of the independent clauses as a dependent clause.

Example:

- Because it was close to fall, the trees were losing their leaves.

Use a semicolon before a conjunctive adverb (also, anyway, besides, furthermore, incidentally, moreover, otherwise, and thus) or a transitional expression (after...
all, by the way, for example, in other words, and on the other hand) placed between independent clauses:

Example:

- It was close to fall; consequently, the trees were losing their leaves.
Space between Numbers and Units

Temperatures need spaces between value and degree sign: 37 °C, not 37 °C or 37 °C but the degree sign for angles goes with the number: 90° angle.

Centrifugal forces need spaces on both sides of the "x" 10,000 x g, not 10,000g or 10,000xg

Other "places for spaces" around equals sign: n = 3, not n=3 also around >, <, ~, etc around plus/minus: 29 ± 7, not 29±7.

Percentages may be the only exception 5% serum, 0.01% ammonium. This is because % is not really a unit, just an indication that the value is presented as the "ratio to 100"
Hyphens between Numbers and Units

Hyphenate if the number-plus-units is used as an adjective. Space if the number is an adjective and the unit is a noun 35 mm or 35-mm. Cells were grown in 35-mm dishes. "35-mm" is a compound adjective modifying the noun "dishes". The diameter of the dish was 35 mm. Here "35" is the adjective and "mm" is the noun a 2-ml reaction volume; 2 ml were added to each tube. The average 60-kg person weighs about 60 kg.

The one exception is concentrations, which are not hyphenated a 50 mM buffer. The 10 μM concentration inhibited but the 1 μM samples were unchanged. But a space is required: 10 mM or 6 M, never 10mM or 6M.

All compound adjectives with numbers must be hyphenated. Numbers as words, just like numbers as numerals. Numbers written out, but only when
used as adjective two-site competition curve. The data were best fit by a two-component curve. The data indicated that the reaction had two components. Four-step pathway but "a pathway with four steps" a six-sided pentagon cannot be drawn.

Note that this includes both "number plus adjective" (six-sided) and "number plus noun" (four-step). But only when the combination is used as an adjective in the sentence. Most other "quantity-related" words are also hyphenated

**Examples:**

- semi-transparent plastic tubes
- bi-directional reaction
- multi-component signaling complex
- Her half-finished manuscript lay beside her pillow.
Some of these can be written as one word--no clear rules.

Example:

- bidirectional, monophasic

Compound numbers are hyphenated if written as words

Examples:

- Fifty-four households were enrolled in the study.
- One-hundred percent of the sheep resisted the disease.
- Average cost per kilogram of pesticide run was over three-thousand birr.
Hyphens in Compound Words

A noun-verb combination used as an adjective is always hyphenated.

Example:

- The fertilizer-induced side effects of vegetables include stomach distress.

Here fertilizer-induced is a compound adjective modifying side effects which is the subject
Hyphens in Compound Adjectives

Adjective-verb combinations are hyphenated when used as compound adjectives

Examples:

- fast-thinking graduate student
- high-minded journal editors;
- heavy-handed administrators

The part of speech for the words determines the hyphen

Examples:

- "blue-labeled" tubes
- if the labels on the tubes are blue
Grammar companion

- but "blue labeled tubes"

- if the tubes are blue and also labeled (but labeled in red?)

- the red-labeled blue tubes = the blue tubes with red label

Preposition-verb combinations used as adjectives are usually hyphenated

Example:

- over-utilized phrases

- under-developed sexual organs in Turner's syndrome

- often written as one word--overlooked, upturned, inbred

Prepositions often come after the verb form clearly spelled-out expectations but "expectations were spelled out clearly from the start"
Example:

- laced-up shoes
- tightened-down fasteners
- wrap-around insulation

Adverb-verb combinations used as adjectives are NOT hyphenated. Adverbs always modify verbs or adjectives, so they don't need special treatment when used that way words ending in "-ly" are adverbs and not hyphenated

Examples:

- a newly established barley seed production field
- a highly regarded scientist in tef breeding

Also "too", "very", and "much" combos are usually not hyphenated
Grammar companion

Examples:

- a very limited interaction

- a much appreciated team leader

It may not be wrong to hyphenate these, but it is not required.

Adjective-noun combinations used as adjectives are seldom hyphenated

Examples:

- centrifuge tube rack

- farmers group meeting

- side effect profile

But they can be hyphenated and often are

Examples:

- open-door policy
• closed-door meeting

• fixed-rate insurance

• long-term effects

Don't hyphenate if both words modify the same word

Examples:

• a weak organic acid: a weak acid, an organic acid

• weekly planning meeting: a weekly meeting, a planning meeting

• strategy-planning meeting

Strategy modifies planning here, doesn't modify meeting

Example:

• an insulated urea container
the container is insulated and it is made of urea, the urea is not insulated, the container is a urea-insulated container, the container is insulated, and the insulation is by urea

Hyphenate both terms if they modify the same word

Two modifiers before the verb form

*Examples:*

- the Ca$^{2+}$- and phospholipid-dependent enzyme PKC

- The epinephrine- and isoproterenol-induced responses were....

Two modifiers after the verb form

*Example:*

- The drug-sensitive and -insensitive cells were compared for...
Always hyphenate

- All noun-verb combinations if used as adjective
- All number-verb, number-noun, number-adverb combinations used as adjectives

Sometimes hyphenate

- Some adverb-verb combinations if used as adjectives
- A few adjective-noun combinations if used as adjectives

Don't hyphenate

- Adverbs, including -ly words and others
- Two adjectives that modify the same noun
Inappropriate use of Time Words

Don't use "while", "since" or "as" except to indicate the relationship of events in time. Often use "while" when you mean "whereas" or "although". Often use "as" when you mean "because". Often use "since" when you mean "because". Use the proper word, not the time word, unless it is a time concept.

While

Examples:

Incorrect

- While chemical is a PKC inhibitor, it can also inhibit other kinases. (The intent is not to indicate that these two events are taking place at the same point in time.)

Better

- Although the chemical is....
• Whereas the chemical is.....

• Correct use of "while":

• While the cells were being incubated in serum-free medium to induce cell cycle arrest, they were also being exposed to pertussis toxin to inactivate $G_i$. (Here the point is that the starvation and pertussis toxin treatments were going on simultaneously.)

As

Examples:

Incorrect

• As C3 toxin is a highly selective Rho inhibitor, our data implicate Rho as a mediator of synergism. (The intent is NOT to indicate that these two events are taking place at the same point in time.)

Better

• Because C3 toxin is....
Correct use of "as":

- As the cells reached confluence, their shape changed from flattened to cuboidal. (Here the point is that the shape change coincided in time with the attainment of confluence.)

Since

Similar to "as", "because" is often what is meant

Examples:

Incorrect:

- Since pyroxulam is a selective herbicide C3 toxin is a highly selective Rho inhibitor, our data indicate pyroxulam is a non-partnering product. (The intent is not to indicate that one event is taking place later than the other.)

Better:

- Because pyroxulam is ....
Correct use of "since"

- Since changing the fertilizer application in their farms, farmers have no further problems with chickpea yield. (Here the word "since" is properly used to indicate that one thing has happened following another thing in time.)
Which vs. That

A tough distinction, but with simple differences and rules of thumb. "That" is used to "restrict" the meaning or to "identify" a specific entity. "Which" does not restrict but rather "elaborates" or "describes"

Examples:

- The estrogen that is present in most birth control pills is ethinyl estradiol.

- The estrogen drug ethinyl estradiol, which is present in most birth control pills, is only slightly different from endogenous estradiol.

- The estrogen that is present in most birth control pills, which has been modified for greater oral effectiveness, is ethinyl estradiol.
Wrong:

- The estrogen which is present in most birth control pills is ethinyl estradiol.

If the phrase can be taken out without losing the meaning of the overall sentence, use "which." If the phrase is vital to the point of the sentence, use "that." "Which" statements are almost always set off with commas. "That" statements should NOT be set off with commas. If commas seem needed or natural, use "which." If commas are not needed or seem awkward, use "that"

Correct use of both

Example:

- The car that hit my bicycle, which is a Toyota, is now in the garage with a big dent in its hood.
Common incorrect use

Example:

- The cow *which* was bitten by hyena is now in the veterinary clinic.
Articles

The indefinite article

The indefinite article A/AN is used before singular countable nouns. A is used before nouns beginning with a consonant sound and AN before nouns beginning with a vowel sound.

Example:

- a farm
- an ox

A/AN are used to say what somebody/something is or what someone's job is.

Example:

- My brother is a veterinarian.
- A dictionary is a book.

Do not use A/AN with uncountable nouns. Use some instead.
Example:

- some sugar
- some milk

Do not use A/AN before an adjective when there is no noun after it. However, when there is a noun after it, we use A/AN according to the first sound of the adjective.

Example:

- I've got a flat in the center of the city.
- It's big. It's also comfortable.

The Definite Article

The definite article THE is used when it is clear which thing or person you are talking about; for example, when the noun is mentioned for a second time or is already known.

Example:

- I can see a cow. The cow is black with white spots.

Use THE with nouns which are unique and before the names of musical instruments.
Example:

- the earth
- the sun
- the sky

Also use THE before the names of rivers, seas/oceans, mountain ranges, deserts, group of islands/states, families and nationalities.

Example:

- the river Nile
- the Ras Dashen
- the Wolaitas
- the Solalis

Don't use THE with plural nouns when we talk about them in general.

Example:

- Scorpions are very dangerous.
- Elephants live in Africa.

Don't use THE before proper nouns or names of meals or games/sports.

Example:
• That is Almaz.
• I like playing football.

Don't use THE with the words "school, church, prison, home, bed, hospital" when we refer to the purpose for which they exist.

Example:

• Zelalem is in school. (= he is a student)
• Bdilu is in hospital. (= he is ill)
Abbreviations

Do not abbreviate unless necessary. Avoid abbreviating single words, with the exception of chemicals. Abbreviations should be used at least three times, in general, otherwise write out the entire word both times. Avoid making up your own non-standard abbreviations. Define each abbreviation the first time you use it in the text or in a footnote, per journal style. Use the abbreviation every time after you define it. Check your journal's style sheet for standard abbreviations such as DNA, RNA, DAP.

Double-check abbreviation usage before submitting search for full word and for abbreviation from start to finish
Capitalization for Abbreviations

Commonly the convention on when to capitalize in abbreviations not a "rule", but a good way of being consistent. Capitalize only the first letter of abbreviations that are shortened words.

Examples:

- Iso for isoproterenol (not ISO)
- Veh for vehicle (not VEH)
- Ctl for control

Capitalize all letters that stand for words or at least syllables.

Examples:

- EGF for epidermal growth factor
• PCR for polymerase chain reaction

• CTL for cytotoxic T lymphocyte

More contrasting examples

• Ser for serine, but SER for stimulus-evoked response

• Ala for alanine, but ALA for antigen-like activity
Abbreviations - Using "a" or "an"

Decide based on the sound of the spoken term, not based on the first written letter of the abbreviation.

Example:

- *a UTP analog* not *an*, even though UTP begins with a vowel the sound (YouTeePee) begins with a consonant (Y)

- *an MCP-mediated effect on IL8 release*. Not *a*, even though MCP begins with a consonant. The sound (EmSeePee) begins with a vowel. Many consonant sounds begin with a vowel

- "*an SDS gel*, "*an LTP-inducing agent." "U" is the only vowel that *sometimes* begins with a consonant sound. The same "U" policy applies to whole words "*a unilateral triangle"
• "an unpaired T-test"; "an upward deflection in the curve"
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