THE BEGINNER’S GUIDE TO GRAMMAR

ELIZABETH O’BRIEN
Hello there!

If you ever feel dread when you hear the word grammar, I understand. I used to feel the same way. For years, I thought that grammar was confusing and boring. I thought that I wasn’t smart enough to “get” it – a self-limiting belief that stayed with me through most of college, where I was studying to become a teacher.

I was lucky enough to have a couple of amazing teachers later in my life, and they helped me understand grammar. I suddenly felt like I could conquer the world!

I started teaching my students using the same techniques that helped me, and they loved it! Once I saw how much they were learning and how much they were enjoying themselves, I realized how painless - and even fun - grammar could be.

My goal with Grammar Revolution is to open you up to the joy of understanding how language works. I want to turn your dread into confidence and your boredom into fascination. I want to help you love language.

I hope that you enjoy this guide and that it inspires you to learn more about grammar and sentence diagramming.

Welcome to the Grammar Revolution!

Happy learning,

😊 Elizabeth
THE PARTS OF SPEECH

Let’s get started! Did you know that we can categorize the words that we use into eight groups called *the parts of speech*?

Just think about that fact for a minute. We use thousands of words, and they can all be separated into just eight groups! Isn’t that the coolest thing ever?

1. Nouns
2. Pronouns
3. Verbs
4. Adjectives
5. Adverbs
6. Prepositions
7. Conjunctions
8. Interjections

Many words can function as multiple parts of speech.

For your learning pleasure, I’ve listed all eight parts of speech in this handy little guide.

You’ll find a brief definition, a few examples, and a sentence diagram for each one. Are you familiar with sentence diagrams?

They are pictures of sentences. They are made up of lines and words, and they *show* us how each word in a sentence is related to the other words.

RELAX

Remember that this is a *beginner’s guide* and my goal is to give you a big-picture understanding of these categories.

Do not fret about having a perfect understanding of all of this information. This is especially true if you’re new to studying grammar and sentence diagramming.

Just take in whatever you can. I can feel you getting smarter already. 😊
1. **Nouns** name people, places, things, or ideas.

   Examples: *Maria, office, sunlight, happiness*
   
   - *The fish swam through the water in the pond.*
   - *A peacock walked through our yard.*

Sentence diagrams show us the jobs that words perform. As you can see in the following sentence diagram, nouns can perform many jobs. (You’ll see the word *noun* where nouns can go.)

Not every sentence will have all of these nouns, but every sentence will have at least a subject. (The subject tells us whom or what a sentence is about.)

Remember! Do **not** let your head explode!
2. **Pronouns** take the place of one or more nouns.

Examples: *I, you, me, they, who, yourself*

- *Would you like to go with me to the beach?*
- *We walked across the bridge.*

Since pronouns take the place of nouns, they can perform all of the same jobs that nouns perform! Pronouns can fit into any of the slots that say *noun.*
3. **Verbs** express actions or states of being.

   Examples: *eat*, *find*, *run*, *walk*, *become*, *feel*, *seem*, *are*
   
   • *The shuttle flew into space.*
   • *He is president.*

Every sentence needs to have a verb. It tells us what the subject is being or doing.

```
subject | action verb

subject | action verb | direct object

subject | linking verb | predicate noun

subject | linking verb | predicate adjective
```
4. **Adjectives** describe - or modify - nouns and pronouns.

   Examples: *the*, *orange*, *special*, *many*, *Charlie’s*
   
   - *Seven* swans swam across *the* lake in front of *Jane’s* house.
   - *The wise, handsome* owl had *orange* eyes.

Adjectives answer certain questions that we call the *adjective questions*.

- **Which one?** (*Which owl? the wise, handsome owl*)
- **What kind?** (*What kind of eyes? orange eyes*)
- **How many?** (*How many swans? seven swans*)
- **Whose?** (*Whose house? Jane’s house*)

Since adjectives describe nouns and pronouns, we diagram them on diagonal lines coming off of the noun or pronoun that they are describing. Isn’t that neat?

[#](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jIXT671GRUI)

Video Extension

www.youtube.com/watch?v=jIXT671GRUI

I’ll show you how the adjective questions work.
5. **Adverbs** describe verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

Examples: *quickly, silently, well, yesterday, very, so*

- *Yesterday, we shopped *everywhere*!
- *The extremely cute koala hugged its mom very tightly.*

Adverbs answer certain questions that we call the *adverb questions*.

- **How?** *(How did the koala hug its mom? *tightly*)
- **When?** *(When did you shop? *yesterday*)
- **Where?** *(Where did you shop? *everywhere*)
- **To what extent?** *(To *what extent* did the koala hug tightly? *very*)
- **Why?** *(Adverbs that answer this question are typically made up of more than one word. Example: I shopped *because I needed new shoes.*)

Since adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs, we diagram them on diagonal lines coming off of the verb, adjective, or adverb that they are modifying!
6. **Prepositions** show the relationship between a noun or a pronoun and some other word or element in the rest of the sentence.

They are always in prepositional phrases (a *preposition* + a *noun* or pronoun).

Examples: *above, behind, below, from, inside, up, over*

- *The monkey with stripes is cute.*
- *The frog sat in the flower.*

Note that prepositional phrases need to have a noun or a pronoun and that noun or pronoun may be modified by an adjective!

Video Extension

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHX-CiJBVy0

I’ll sing you a song!
7. **Conjunctions** connect two or more words, phrases, or clauses.

Examples: *and, but, or, so, when, because, if*

- *Whenever* I feel sad, I go for a walk.
- *The hummingbird sat* **and** waited.

There are different kinds of conjunctions, but they are all connectors. They are also all diagrammed on dotted lines that connect the elements they are joining.
8. **Interjections** show emotion. They are not grammatically related to the rest of the sentence.

Examples: *rats, gee, dam, gosh, yes, holy cow*

- *Oh no, we lost the game.*
- *Wow! That jump was amazing!*

Since interjections aren’t grammatically related to the rest of the sentence, we diagram them on lonely little lines that hang above the rest of the sentence.
Nice work!

Give yourself a pat on the back. You just read through all eight parts of speech. Wahoo! Would you like to give yourself a little quiz now?

Tiny Quiz

Directions: Identify each word’s part of speech in the following sentences. Try to diagram the sentences if you can!

1. Flowers grow.
2. Sydney has been playing.
3. Walter ran very quickly.
4. The green box fell.
5. Cathy is my mom.
6. The flowers in the garden are growing.

You can use this space to write your answers, or you can write them on another sheet of paper. You’ll find the answers on the next page.
Tiny Quiz Answers

1. Flowers grow.

Flowers grow.
Flowers subject (noun)
grow verb

4. The green box fell.

The green box fell.
box subject (noun)
The, green adjectives (modifying box)
fell verb

2. Sydney has been playing.

Sydney has been playing.
Sydney subject (noun)
has been playing verbs (This is called a verb phrase.)

5. Cathy is my mom.

Cathy is my mom.
Cathy subject (noun)
is verb
mom noun
my adjective

3. Walter ran very quickly.

Walter ran very quickly.
Walter subject (noun)
ran verb
quickly adverb (modifying ran)
very adverb (modifying quickly)

6. The flowers in the garden are growing.

The flowers in the garden are growing.
flowers subject (noun)
are growing verbs (This is a verb phrase.)
The adjective (modifying flowers)
in the garden prepositional phrase
in preposition
garden object of the preposition (noun)
the adjective (modifying garden)
Thanks for taking the time to read through this guide. I hope that you found it helpful.

If you’d like to learn (or teach) more, I’m here to help.

www.GrammarRevolution.com

P.S. I love hearing from people, so feel free to drop me a line and let me know what you thought of this guide.

www.GrammarRevolution.com/contact.html

Your materials are a life-saver and a confidence-booster.

- Lori

We LOVE your curriculum. I tell everyone who will listen about your program and how they will not regret getting it for their children (and themselves).

- Mindy, Homeschool Mom

I recently purchased your online Get Smart program. I am a huge fan! You are the one who made grammar, in all its complexity, simple for me. That's the sign of a true genius! :)

- Becky, Tutor

Because of sentence diagramming, my students were ‘climbing all over each other’ to go to the board. They loved it.

- A Lowe, Teacher

I have to tell you how much I love your product [Get Smart]. I have struggled with understanding grammar my whole life, and I felt like I was stupid because I could not memorize the rules.

I was seriously leaning towards walking away from my dream job as a college professor because of my embarrassment and fear of getting caught as being a fraud! Thank God for you! I have confidence, and I actually love grammar now. Thank you for everything!

- C., College Professor