

Grammar Basics

The 8 Parts of Speech

1. **N—Noun** (person, place, thing, idea—can be singular or plural): **concrete** nouns = doctor, home, table; **abstract** nouns = beauty, courage, peace.
2. **PRO—Pronoun** (are used in place of nouns to avoid repetition): **personal** pronouns = I/me/my, his/he/him, it, they/their, etc.; **reflexive** pronouns = myself, herself, themselves, etc.; **interrogative** pronouns = which, who, whom, whose; **demonstrative** pronouns = this, that, these, those; **indefinite** pronoun = anyone, someone, something, everyone, anything, etc.
3. **V—Verb** (action word or state of being—can be in any tense): run/ran is/was/were.
4. **ADJ—Adjective** (describes noun): large, hairy, sharp, fast, beautiful, wealthy, insane, big, fuzzy, long-winded, crazy, serene, intelligent, skilled, obstreperous, funny, long, dying.
5. **ADV—Adverb** (describes verb, often in form of adjective + -ly): darkly, quickly, morosely, long-windedly, sometimes, soon, later, again, seldom, always, etc.
6. **PREP—Preposition** (see list)
7. **CONJ—Conjunction** (connects words, phrases or clauses together): **FANBOYS** (**F**or, **A**nd, **N**or, **B**ut, **O**r, **Y**et, **S**o); also **SUB-CONJ—Subordinate Conjunction** (comes at the beginning of a dependent clause): because, that, if, since, etc.
8. **INT—Interjection** (expresses emotion; does not relate grammatically to the rest of the sentence): wow, hey, cheers, oh, oops

Other Important Grammatical Terms

- **ART—Article** (a kind of **adjective**) **definite** article = the; **indefinite** article = a/an.
- **PART—Participle** (looks like a verb, but functions like an **adjective**. It needs a linking verb or an action verb to complete a sentence. To form, add a suffix to an action verb like -en or -ing or sometimes -ed): (is) beaten, (is) walking, jilted boyfriend, working woman.
- **GER—Gerund** (looks like a verb, but functions like a noun. To form, add -ing): “I like **skiing**”; “**shopping** is my hobby”
- **LV—Linking Verb** (a verb that links the subject to the predicate by functioning like an equal sign. Examples: is, are, will be, was, becomes, seems, appears): “She **is** a doctor.” “He **seems** afraid.” Exception: In the sentence “Who **is** singing?” **is** is a helping verb that is part of the present progressive form of the verb **sing**.
- **INF—Infinitive** (“to + verb): to sleep, to dream, to write, etc.

Types of Phrases

- **NP—Noun Phrase** (typically ART + ADJ + N “the blue dog”)
- **VP—Verb Phrase** (also called predicate, typically ADV + V “ran fast”; V + NP “gave some money”; V + PP “jump off the bridge”)
- **PP—Prepositional Phrase** (preposition and any noun phrase—for example, PREP + ART + ADJ + N “through the dark woods”)
- **PART P—Participial Phrase** (participle and any noun phrase or prepositional phrase—“**Seeing her mother again**, she felt unbridled joy.” “**Working around the clock**, the firefighters managed to put out the fire.” “**Frozen since December**, the pond is now safe for skating.”)
- **GER P—Gerund Phrase** (gerund and any noun phrase or prepositional phrase—“**Watching television** is not my thing.” “**Cramming for tests** is not a good idea.”)

3 Types of Sentences

1. A **simple sentence** has the basic elements that make up a sentence: a **subject** and a **verb phrase** or **predicate**. Examples:

- Jose waited for the train. "Jose" = subject, "waited" = predicate (verb + prepositional phrase)
- The train was late. "The train" = subject, "was late" = predicate (linking verb + adjective)
- Jose and Rebecca took the bus. "Jose and Rebecca" = compound subject, "took the bus" = predicate (verb + noun phrase)
- I looked for Jose at the bus station. "I" = subject, "looked for Jose at the bus station" = predicate (verb + prepositional phrase + prepositional phrase)

2. A **compound sentence** refers to a sentence made up of two independent clauses (or complete sentences) connected to one another with a **coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS)**. Examples:

- Jose waited for the train, **but** the train was late.
- I looked for my friends at the bus station, **but** they arrived at the station before noon and left on the bus before I arrived.
- My friends arrived at the bus station before noon, **and** they left on the bus before I arrived.
- My friends left on the bus before I arrived, **so** I did not see them at the bus station.

3. A **complex sentence** is made up of an **independent clause** (a clause that can also stand alone as a simple sentence) and one or more **dependent clauses** connected to it. Some examples of **dependent clauses** are "because we arrived at the bus station before noon"; "while he waited at the train station"; "after they left on the bus". Dependent clauses **cannot** stand alone as a sentence, but they can be added to an independent clause to form a complex sentence. Dependent clauses often begin with **subordinating conjunctions**, such as **after, although, as, because, before, even though, if, since, though, unless, until, when, whenever, whereas, wherever, that, why, and while**, but may also begin with infinitive phrases or participial phrases.

Examples of complex sentences:

- **Because** Jose and Rebecca arrived at the bus station before noon, I did not see them at the station.
- **While** he waited at the train station, Jose realized that the train was late.
- **After** they left on the bus, Jose and Rebecca realized that I was waiting at the train station.
- I did not see Jose and Rebecca at the station **because** they arrived at the bus station before noon.
- Jose realized **that** the train was late **while** he waited at the train station.
- Jose wondered **why** the train was late.
- **To get** to the train station on time, Jose left home an hour early.
- **Seeing** Rebecca after a long time, Jose realized she had changed a lot.