

# English Grammar

by John Mason and staff of ACS Distance Education



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The information in this book is derived from a broad cross section of resources (research, reference materials and personal experience) from the authors and editorial assistants in the academic department of ACS Distance Education. It is, to the best of our knowledge, composed as an accurate representation of what is accepted and appropriate information about the subject, at the time of publication.

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## PREFACE

We all use language in some form, and most of us effortlessly combine words to effectively communicate with others. Most people find spoken communication particularly effortless, but when we start to communicate ideas in writing, more focus needs to be given to perfecting grammar. In spoken communication, we rely heavily on intonation, pauses, body language, rhythm, inflection and other cues to understand what is being communicated to us. These cues are not available to us in written communication. Instead, we rely on punctuation and grammar to enhance our communication and reduce misunderstandings.

Grammar then, is a tool through which we can enhance communication through writing (as well as speech). Grammar provides a coherent structure for the expression of thoughts and ideas. By following grammatical rules we are able to compile logical sentences that make sense to the receiver.

### Consider the following paragraph:

when we write without punctuation it can become difficult to decipher the exact meaning of a paragraph you can not tell if something being asked is a question like what do you think it is sometimes difficult to make sense of what someone is trying to get across you would also miss out on things like demonstrating possession like it is janes ball and it would be confusing to see a list such as i like dogs horses cats guineapigs but not snakes

People communicate with each other more and more frequently in recent years using mobile phone, internet, and other technologies. In an office environment people often communicate with each other via email. Punctuation and grammar help determine the meaning of the message.

### Consider receiving an email with the following punctuations, how do you interpret each of the versions?

*Can you finish the report by the end of the day?*

*Can you finish the report by the end of the day...*

*Can you finish the report by the end of the day!*

*Can you finish the report by the end of the day !!?*

*Can you finish the report by the end of the day!!!!*

Different situations require a higher level of grammatical accuracy than others. For example formal or academic writing will need to have a high level of accuracy, whereas a text or email to a friend may not.

This book is primarily written to help English speakers improve their grammar, particularly in written communication. It is also a useful tool for English as a second language speakers, to clarify some of the rules to follow in both spoken and written language. This book as an excellent reference tool that is easy to understand and use.

# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION - THE COMPONENTS OF LANGUAGE

Language is made up of different types of words, including nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections.

- Nouns are words that represent things (e.g. something you can see, touch, a place, a person, etc)
- Pronouns are words that can substitute for nouns (e.g. she, he or it)
- Verbs are “doing words” - or words that indicate something happening (e.g. run, go, appear, build)
- Adjectives are descriptive words - words that say something about a noun or pronoun ( i.e. quick, brown, sneaky, sweaty)
- Adverbs are words that say something about a verb such as indicating how, when where etc. (they add to the verb - quickly, patiently...)
- Prepositions connect words in a way that shows a relationship between different words in a sentence (e.g. come home after you finish –“after” relates to both come and home)
- Conjunctions links different words or phrases in a sentence (e.g. and)
- Interjections are words that express a feeling, interjecting or emphasising something on top of or to the side of the essence of the sentence (e.g. wow, hooray, oh, ouch, etc)

## WHERE DO WORDS COME FROM?

### THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF WORDS:

#### 1. Eponyms

Words that are created by naming something after a person or after something else e.g. a place or thing named after the person who discovered it such as Alzheimer’s disease - named after Alois Alzheimer who is credited with identifying the first published case of presenile dementia.

#### Other examples include –

**Achilles’ heel** – after Achilles

**Adam’s apple** – after the biblical Adam

**Asperger Syndrome** – Hans Asperger

**Halley’s Comet** – Edmond Halley