Grammar Basics
Noun = person, place or thing
Pronoun = replacement for nouns; refers to the noun without renaming it
Verb = what a noun does, an action
Adjective = describes a noun (or a pronoun)
   answers the questions: which one, what kind, or how many
Adverb = describes verbs, adjectives, other adverbs, clauses
   answers the questions: where, when and how (how often and how much)

Simple Subject = tells who or what the sentence is about; the noun nugget of the complete subject
   Ex. The book fell.

Simple Predicate = tells what is happening to the subject.
   Ex. He ran.

Direct Object = direct recipient of the verb’s actions
   Ex. I bought rocks.

Indirect Object = is the person or thing that receives the direct object
   Ex. She gave me rocks. [me is the IO, while rocks is the DO]
   Ex. Baker threw him the ball. [him is the IO, while ball is the DO]

Object of a preposition = Prepositions often begin prepositional phrases. To complete the phrase, the preposition usually teams up with a noun, pronoun, or gerund, or the object of the preposition. Tip: a preposition is anything a bunny can do to a fence.
   Ex. Behind the light. Behind = preposition, light = the object of the preposition, the = definite article
   Ex. during the game during = preposition, game = object of the preposition.
Ex. At the student council [At = preposition; the, student = modifiers; council = noun or the object of the preposition]
Nominative v. Objective Case Pronouns

Nominative case is used when the **pronoun** is the subject, predicate nominative or noun of the direct address.

VS.

Objective case is used when the **pronoun** is the direct object; the indirect object; the object of a preposition, participle, gerund or infinitive; or the subject of an infinitive.

**Nominative Case** – I, you, he, she, it, we, they, one, who

**Objective Case** – me, you, him, her, it, us, them, one, whom

*Nominative Case Example:*

I snuggled my dog.

*Objective Case Example:*

• Marilyn Monroe couldn’t find *it* in time for the show. (Direct object)
• Leslie Jones threw *him* a wink. (Indirect object)
• Luke Skywalker’s sister borrowed the lightsaber **from him**. (Object of the preposition ‘from’)
• **Missing him**, she wrote a letter. (object of the participle ‘missing’)
• **Cleaning the computer** seemed impossible. (object of the gerund ‘cleaning’)
• The strangers took *him* to be me. (subject of the infinitive ‘to be’)

Other pronoun examples:

As/Like Pronoun agreement:

Right : He did it the same as she [did it].

As/Than Pronoun agreement:

Right : She’s faster than he [is].

“Me” as a pronoun:

Right : Give the report to the committee and me.

“Myself” as a pronoun:

** Use only in a sentence in which I has been used earlier.

Right : I, myself, believe otherwise.
Possessive Pronouns v. Contractions

It's = It is. Ex.) It's cold. / It is cold.
Its = possessive of pronoun Ex.) Its missing.
Their Ex.) Their car was stolen.
Theirs Ex.) The car is theirs.
They're = They are Ex.) They're angry. / They are angry.
There = location Ex.) The car is under the bridge.
Who's = Who is Ex.) Who's responsible? / Who is responsible?
Whose = possessive Ex.) Whose folder is this?
Yours = possessive Ex.) This textbook is yours.

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement
Pronouns have to agree with their antecedents, which basically a fancy term for renaming the noun. Antecedents must agree in number, gender and person.

Examples of agreement in number:

Right : The City Council gave its approval.
Why? City Council is one single thing. There can be multiple city councils coming together for a meeting. It is a collective noun. Collective nouns take the antecedent it or its.

Other common collective nouns:
Audience, cast, choir, class, department, faculty, family, orchestra, press, public, staff, team

Examples of agreement in gender and number:

Best : Singers should check their microphones. (The subject is plural, so the antecedent is plural.)

Examples of agreement with Who & That:

Right : She was the kind of person who disliked her own handwriting.
Why?? The subject of the sentence is a person (she), which correlates with the antecedent who. A person is always a who. Objects are always that.
Right: *Each* person was responsible for *his or her* backpack.
   Why?? The subject is *each*, and *each* is a singular verb.

Other common singular pronouns:
*Another, anybody, each one, either, everyone, everything, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, something*

*Trick: if it has, “any-,” or “-one,” in the word, it is most likely single.*

**All, any, each, more, none, plenty, some and such can be either singular or plural depending on the context.**
   All are here. All is lost.
   Some are coming. Some is left.

*Which & That*
Use *that* to introduce restrictive (essential) clauses that do not require commas.
Use *which* to introduce nonrestrictive (nonessential) clauses that require commas.

*Examples:*
1. Which (nonrestrictive) : The Nile, *which* flows into the Mediterranean, gives Egypt life.
   Why? You can remove the clause enclosed in commas, and what is left is a complete thought/sentence.
   Hint: nonrestrictive will use commas.

   That (Restrictive) : The Nile is the river *that* gives Egypt life.
   Why?? Using *that* restricts the clause from being removed. You cannot remove this clause or else it would be an incomplete thought.

2. Nonrestrictive : The policy, which critics charged was flawed from the beginning, was amended.

   Restrictive : The policy that critics charged was flawed from the beginning was amended.

3. Nonrestrictive : The corner house, which had a brick front, was theirs.

   Restrictive: The house that had a brick front was theirs.
Who, Whoever v. Whom, Whomever

Use who or whoever when the clause calls for the nominative case.

**TIPS**

1. **Nominative Case** – I, you, he, she, it, we, they, one, who
   2. If you can use he, she or they: who or whoever is the correct choice.
   3. Whom goes with him because they both have “m.” So, if you can replace the word with him, then it is probably correct.

*Example:*

1. Who did you say wrote the poem?
   Why? Who is the subject of the clause, so nominative case. “Did you say she wrote the poem?”

Use whom or whomever when the clause calls for the objective case.

**TIP**

2. **Objective Case** – me, you, him, her, it, us, them, one, whom
   If you can use him, her or them: whom or whomever is the correct choice.

*Examples:*

1. To whom are you speaking?
   Why? Whom is the object of preposition to, so objective case: “Are you speaking to them?”

2. Talk with whomever you like, and you’ll get the same answer.
   Why? Whomever is the object of preposition with, so objective case: “You like her.”

To decide when who or whom needs ever at the end, remember that whoever is used in place of anyone or anyone who and whomever is used in place of anyone whom.

**Interrogative and Reciprocal Pronouns**

Whose = possessive form of who
Who’s = Who is OR Who has

*Examples:*
1. Who’s [Who is] going to see the new The Rock movie?
2. Selena Gomez said she didn’t care whose [possessive] feelings were hurt.

**Reciprocal pronouns:**

There are 2! The reciprocal pronouns express mutual action, effect or relationship.

- **Each other** = involving two people or things
- **One another** = involving more than two people or things

**Examples:**
1. Tevis and I are going to help each other do homework tonight. (two people)
2. The ambassadors looked at one another in awe. (more than two people)

**Demonstrative Pronouns**

There are only 4!

- **This** and **That**, which are singular
- **These** and **Those**, which are plural

*This* and *These* are used to identify and point out people, places and things nearby. All of the demonstrative pronouns are specific to an object or a specific group of objects.

**Examples:**
1. This is my book.
2. These are my favorite flowers.

*That* and *Those* are used to identify and point out people, places, and things more distant.

**Examples:**
1. That is Professor John Schmeltzer.
2. Those are the books I need.
Reflexive Pronouns
These pronouns come after the verb and refer to the subject. They serve as either the
direct object or the predicate complement.

**Singular “self” pronouns:** *herself, himself, itself, **myself** and *yourself*
Use only in a sentence in which *I* has been used earlier.

**Plural “self” pronouns:** *themselves, yourselves and ourselves*
THESE DO NOT EXIST! DON’T USE: *hisself, theirself, ourself or theirselves*

**Examples:**
1. Bugs Bunny hurt himself when he dropped a basketball on his foot.
2. The editor promised herself that she would never smoke again.
3. I, myself, will do it.

Subject-verb agreement with/ Collective and uncountable nouns
Examples with conjunctions:
• Larson and Smith *oppose* the bill. [Plural subject, plural verb]
• Mary or her colleagues *are* answering the calls today. [Nearest noun is plural, so plural
verb.]
• Carrie, as well as all of the student bodies, *is* voting in the primary election.
[Parenthetical words or phrases -- meaning the words inside the commas -- do not
affect the number of the subject.]

**Collective Nouns examples:**
What are these? They are nouns in singular form but plural in meaning.
They count as one thing. SINGULAR verbs.

*Army, assembly, audience, board, breed, cast, choir, class, club, commission,
committee, community, company, corporation, council, couple, covey, crew, crowd,
department, faculty, family, firm, flock, furniture, gang, gossip, group, herd, jury, mob,
orchestra, panel, press, public, staff, team, union and U.S.*

**Note:** ‘Couple’ can take both a singular or plural verb.
Examples:
Singular : A married couple often pays more under U.S. tax law than two people living
together but filing separately.
   Why?? The *couple* here is two people acting as a unit, filing jointly.
Plural: A couple were holding hands in the park.
    Why?? The couple here refers to two people acting as individuals, holding each other’s hands.

Uncountable Nouns:
What are these? They are nouns that have no plural, although they look plural already. Some take a singular verb, while some take a plural.

SINGULAR Uncountable nouns:
Advice, apparatus, athletics, civics, courage, economics, fun, health, information, jazz, kudos, linguistics, mathematics, measles, mumps, news, remainder, shambles, summons and whereabouts

PLURAL Uncountable nouns:
Assets, barracks, earnings, goods, odds, pants, pliers, proceeds, remains, riches, scissors, shears, tactics, tanks, tongs and wages

SINGULAR OR PLURAL Uncountable nouns:
(depending on context)

Ethics, gross, headquarters, mechanics, politics, savings, series, species and statistics.

Examples:
1. Politics is her favorite subject.
2. Her politics are democratic.
Irregular verbs
Common irregular verbs and their tenses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bear</td>
<td>bore</td>
<td>borne</td>
<td>bearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drink</strong></td>
<td>drank</td>
<td>drunk</td>
<td>drinking (special)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>drove</td>
<td>driven</td>
<td>driving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fly</td>
<td>flew</td>
<td>flown</td>
<td>flying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lay (to set down)</td>
<td>laid</td>
<td>lain</td>
<td>laying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie (to recline)</td>
<td>lay</td>
<td>lain</td>
<td>lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>rang</td>
<td>rung</td>
<td>ringing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swim</td>
<td>swam</td>
<td>swum</td>
<td>swimming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I drink coffee. (Present)
I drank coffee. (Past)
I have never drunk coffee. / I had never drunk coffee. (Past Participle)

Subjunctive mood
This mood should be used to talk about any condition contrary to fact, or to express a wish, doubt, prayer, desire, request, hypothetical situation or hope.
Note: The **subjunctive** is often **used** after **if** in sentences in which the verb in the main clause is in the conditional.

Subjunctive Forms of *To Be*:
Present Tense: *I be, you be, he/she/it be, we be, they be*
Past Tense: *I were, you were, he/she/it were, we were, they were*

Examples:
1. The bill would close tax loopholes if it *were* [not was] passed into law.
   Why?? The *were* is in the subjunctive mood because it’s proposing a hypothetical situation.
2. If I *were* you, I’d leave. [I cannot be you, so it is hypothetical, which calls for subjunctive.]
3. I wish I *were* a popstar.
4. The hijackers demanded that 17 terrorists *be* set free. [They have not yet been freed.]
5. He asked that the editor edit [not edits] his story.
6. I could do it were I given extra funding. [Could is conditional; were given is a passive-voice form of subjunctive.]

**Apostrophes**

Rule 1: **Add an ‘s** to make possessive both singular and plural common nouns and indefinite pronouns whose spelling does not end with an s.

*Example:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular nouns</th>
<th>Plural nouns</th>
<th>Indefinite pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child’s</td>
<td>children’s</td>
<td>anyone’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rule 2: Add an apostrophe to make possessive a plural noun ending in s, es or ies.

*Examples:*

Boys’ actresses’ Joneses’ companies’

Rule 3: In journalistic uses, add an apostrophe to make possessive singular proper nouns whose spelling ends in s.

*Examples:*

Hayes’ Jones’ Lucas’ Sias’ Willis’

Rule 4: In formal writing, add an ‘s to make possessive singular proper nouns whose spelling ends in s.

*Examples:*

Hayes’s Jones’s Lucas’s Sias’s Willis’s

Rule 5: **Add an ‘s** to a singular common noun ending in s. HOWEVER, if the next word starts with an s, add only an apostrophe.

*Examples:*

Actress’s best role actress’ stand-in

Rule 6: **Add an ‘s** to the last word to make compound nouns possessive.
Examples:
Sister-in-law’s      mother-in-law’s      attorney general’s

Rule 7 and a condition: **Add an ’s** to the last noun to indicate joint ownership OR to EACH name to indicate separate ownership.

Examples:
Pete and Bob’s Drive –In
Ed and Wilma’s coffee shop

OR

Pete’s and Bob’s cars
Ed’s and Wilma’s computers

Rule 7: Use an apostrophe to replace a letter or a figure omitted on purpose.

Examples:
’37 flood (1937)   summer of ’83 (1983)
the ‘40s (the 1940s)  singin’ (singing)

**NEVER USE APOSTROPHE’S** to form the possessive of relative and personal pronouns:
Examples: our’s, it’s, who’s your’s, their’s

Commas, colons, and semicolons

**Commas:**
Rule 1: Use a comma after *said* when introducing a direct quotation that is at least one sentence long.

Examples:
Cooper said, “I don’t feel like going to work today.”

Rule 2: Use a comma after words in a series but not before the conjunction unless the meaning would be unclear. Meaning, **NO** oxford comma.
Examples:
The new budget proposals would cut spending for student loans, building repairs, road improvements and farm subsidies.

Rule 3: Use a comma between two independent clauses joined by a conjunction to form a single sentence.

Examples:
COMMA NEEDED: A dentist and her assistant discussed tooth care with the students, and **they used** a mould to illustrate their points.

NO comma needed: A dentist and her assistant discussed tooth care with the students **and used** a mould to illustrate their points.

Rule 4: Use commas around nonrestrictive (nonessential) words, phrases or clauses.

Example:
The yellow car, which was in the driveway, belongs to Jim.

Rule 5: Use a comma after a dependent clause at the start of a sentence. (Sentences beginning with **although, because, if or since**)

Examples:
1. **Although** the police were criticized for the arrest, the chief defended it.
2. **Because** clouds covered the sky, it was difficult to see the comet last night.

Semicolons:

Rule 1: Use a semicolon between items in a series that has commas within the items. Remember to put a semicolon before the final conjunction.

Examples:
1. The American flag is red, white and blue, the Canadian flag is red and white; and the German flag is red, gold and black.
2. Their diet consists of juice, toast and coffee for breakfast; fruit with yogurt, cottage cheese or tofu for lunch; and lean meat, vegetables and a starch for dinner.

Rule 2: A semicolon may be used between independent clauses when a conjunction is absent.

Example:
The UT teams are weak this year; they have the worst record in the league.

Rule 3: A semicolon can be used before a conjunctive adverb connecting two independent clauses.

Example:
Smith’s lawyer said he was unstable; however, the jury decided the evidence was not so clear.

Colons:

Colons are used before a list.

Example:
Last year, I bought shirts from 7 states: Florida, Missouri, Nebraska, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, California.

Adjective/adverb recognition
For most short adjectives, to make the comparative form, add –er the end of the positive form.
To make a superlative form, add –est to the end of the positive form.

Examples:
Tall [Positive]
Taller [Comparative]
Tallest [Superlative]

Note**
Don’t say someone is “the oldest of the two brothers.” If there are only two, he’s the older.
To form most adverbs, add –ly to the end of the positive form of an adjective. This –ly form is then the positive form of the adverb. You can add more or less in from of the positive form, and the superlative by putting the word most or least in front of the positive form.

Examples:
Quick [adjective]
Quickly [positive form of the adverb]
More quickly or less quickly [comparative form of the adverb]
Most quickly or least quickly [superlative form of the adverb]

Some intransitive verbs in some uses may be linking verbs and take a predicate adjective, but in other uses may be complete verbs or transitive verbs and be followed by an adverb.

Examples:
He says it feels good to be alive.
The sculptor said her hands cannot feel the clay well with heavy gloves on.
The patient feels well enough to be discharged.

Sentence fragment v. complete sentence
Fragments: A fragment is a word or group of words that isn’t a complete sentence. Either it lacks a subject or verb, or it’s a dependent clause.

Examples:
A team for all seasons.
Takes the guesswork out of the game.
Because he was sick.
Active v. passive voice
All verbs are in either the active voice or the passive voice, but it may be easier to think of all sentences as being either active or passive.

Examples:
ACTIVE VOICE, PRESENT TENSE: The printer publishes the magazine.
ACTIVE VOICE, PAST TENSE: The printer published the magazine.

Passive-voice sentences stress the receiver of an action by making the receiver the subject of the sentence and having the subject acted upon:

Examples:
PASSIVE VOICE, PRESENT TENSE: The magazine is published by the printer.
PASSIVE VOICE, PAST TENSE: The magazine was published by the printer.

PASSIVE VOICE, EXPRESSED: The magazine was published by the printer.
PASSIVE VOICE, IMPLIED: The magazine was published.

ACTIVE VOICE: The kidnappers interrogated the prisoners.
PASSIVE VOICE, EXPRESSED: The prisoners were interrogated by the kidnappers.
PASSIVE VOICE, IMPLIED: The prisoners were interrogated.

ACTIVE VOICE: The City Council voted to censure the mayor.
[The City Council took action.]
PASSIVE VOICE: The mayor was censured by the City Council. [The mayor was acted upon by the City Council.]
PASSIVE VOICE: The mayor was censured.
[The mayor was acted upon by someone or something else.]
(EXTREME) PASSIVE VOICE: Censure was effectuated by the City Council.
[The subject has been turned into a thing being acted upon.]

Frequently Misspelled Words
accessible    battalion    caffeine    defendant
accidentally  believable   calendar    definite
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>accommodate</th>
<th>bookkeeper</th>
<th>canceled</th>
<th>definitely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acquaint</td>
<td>cemetery</td>
<td>descendant</td>
<td>acquit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changeable</td>
<td>despair</td>
<td>aerial</td>
<td>commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>develop</td>
<td>aggressive</td>
<td>committee</td>
<td>disappoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allege</td>
<td>conscious</td>
<td>analyze</td>
<td>correspondence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>annual</td>
<td>courageous</td>
<td>arctic</td>
<td>criticize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ascend</td>
<td>assassin</td>
<td>athlete</td>
<td>eligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feasible</td>
<td>gauge</td>
<td>harass</td>
<td>embarrass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fiery</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>hemorrhage</td>
<td>environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guarantee</td>
<td>homicide</td>
<td>equivalent</td>
<td>hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exercise</td>
<td>hypocrite</td>
<td>exhaust</td>
<td>existence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exorbitant</td>
<td>incidentally</td>
<td>judgment</td>
<td>kindergarten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison</td>
<td>independence</td>
<td>license</td>
<td>indispensable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lightning</td>
<td>interfere</td>
<td>likelihood</td>
<td>irrelevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loneliness</td>
<td>irresistible</td>
<td>maintenance</td>
<td>necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occasion</td>
<td>parallel</td>
<td>maneuver</td>
<td>occasional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parliamentary</td>
<td>miscellaneous</td>
<td>noticeable</td>
<td>occurred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>misspell</td>
<td>nuisance</td>
<td>omitted</td>
<td>perennial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>optimistic</td>
<td>permanent</td>
<td>murmure</td>
<td>perseverance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precedent</td>
<td>privilege</td>
<td>professor</td>
<td>pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questionnaire</td>
<td>receive</td>
<td>secretary</td>
<td>tendency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seize</td>
<td>tragedy</td>
<td>repetition</td>
<td>sergeant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siege</td>
<td>simultaneous</td>
<td>sophomore</td>
<td>subpoena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surprise</td>
<td>usable</td>
<td>visible</td>
<td>weird</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Frequently confused words**

Accept— to receive

Except — but for; to exclude

All right — everything is ok (prefered in proper English writing)

Alright — informal ok

Affect — verb; to influence or produce a change in (an ongoing change)

Effect — noun; result OR verb; to cause or accomplish (end result)
A lot — an abundance of
Alot — not a word

Anyone — any person at all
Any one — any single person or thing

Altogether — thoroughly
All together — everyone grouped

Principal — noun; someone or something first in rank OR adj.; most important. Also the school profession
Principle — basic rule, guide or law

Martial -- as in martial law (Marital — pertaining to marriage)
Marshall — word as a name only
Marshal — verb; to direct OR noun; title of an office in the military or in police department

Are — To be
Our — Possessive
Hour — Time

Advice — noun
Advise — verb
Advize — NOT A WORD

Elusion — an escape
Allusion — casual mention referencing another work
Illusion — erroneous perception or belief
Desert — noun; barren region OR verb; to abandon
Dessert — noun; sweet course in a meal

Lead — noun; metal OR verb; present tense of lead
Led — past tense of lead

Council — deliberative body; assembly of advisers
Counsel — noun; legal adviser OR verb; to advise
Consul — diplomat

Their — possessive
They’re — contraction of they are
There — placement, location

Its — possessive
It’s — contraction of it is
Its — NOT A WORD

Whose — possessive
Who’s — contraction of who is
Who’s — NOT A WORD

Yours — possessive plural
Yours’ — NOT A WORD
Your’s — NOT A WORD

Your — possessive singular
You’re — contraction of you are
Let’s — contraction for *let us*
Lets — allows

Into -- within a thing (ie jump into a pool)
In to -- to expand on an idea (ie we will get in to this subject next class)

Onto -- change in location
On to -- DOES NOT EXIST (ie must be either “on,” or “to”)