

Grammar Files

GRAMMAR FILE 1: articles

a / an

Use **a** or **an** to talk about one thing or one person.
There is no plural of **a** or **an**.

*Here's a copy of my itinerary.
Could I have a box of tissues?*

An is used before vowels except **eu** and **u** when they are pronounced **you**.

*I have an appointment.
Do you have a euro for the drink machine?*

a or **an** are used before jobs.

*He's a taxi-driver.
She's an accountant.*

the

1 Use **the** when it's clear what or who you're speaking about.
We need to speak about the contract.

*Keep the change!
The plane was late.*

2 Use **the** when there is only one of something.

The Sheraton Century Center.

3 Don't use **the** when you generalize or talk about everything in a group.

*I really enjoy seafood.
Do you like music?
I can't stand politicians.*

4 Don't use **the** with meals.

*Breakfast is from 7 to 10.
We can have lunch.*

5 Don't use **the** with many place names.

*I've been to Switzerland many times.
Julie is calling from Sydney.
Turn left onto Hollywood Boulevard.
Can you give me directions to Union Station?*

GRAMMAR FILE 2: be and have

be

I	am 'm 'm not	from Kobe. on vacation. fine. blonde.
You	are	
We	're	
They	aren't	
He	is	
She	's	
It	isn't	

The affirmative is usually shortened.

You can also say **you're not** etc. in the negative.

Am	I	from Mexico?
Are	you	
Is	she	
Yes, I am.	No, I'm not.	
Yes, she is.	No, we aren't.	

Never shortened

Always shortened

There is ...

Use **there is** and **there are** to say that something exists.

There's an a la carte menu.

There's no hot water.

There are three Sheratons in Atlanta.

have

I	have	a meeting.
You	have	a voucher.
We	don't have	Newsweek magazine.
They		a vegetarian menu.
He	has	a Russian accent.
She	doesn't have	
It		
Do	you have	cable TV?
Does	it	
Yes, I do.		No, we don't.
Yes, it does.		No, it doesn't.

1 **Have** is used to express possession.

Do you have any baggage?

I have a voucher.

2 **Have** is also used in idiomatic expressions when you mean **eat, drink, experience, take**.

I'll have the Thai fish cakes.

I had a glass of wine.

We had a good time.

For other tenses of **be** and **have**, follow the rules in Grammar Files 7, 8, 9 and 10.

GRAMMAR FILE 3: pronouns and possessives

subject pronoun	object pronoun	possessive adjective	possessive pronoun	reflexive pronoun
I	me	my	mine	myself
you	you	your	yours	yourself
he	him	his	his	himself
she	her	her	hers	herself
it	it	its	its	itself
we	us	our	ours	ourselves
you	you	your	yours	yourself
they	them	their	theirs	themselves

possessive adjectives

My name's Charlene.

*Josh is **our** company lawyer.*

His and **her** go with the person, and not the object.

*What's **her** job? **She's** the C.E.O.*

*What's **his** job? **He's** the Production Manager.*

possessive pronouns

Mine always seems to be the last.

*Have they ever lost **yours**?*

reflexive pronouns

*He made it **himself**.*

*Please help **yourselves** to salad.*

indefinite pronouns

affirmative

someone
somebody
somewhere
something

negative

no one/not anyone
nobody/not anyone
nowhere/not anywhere
nothing/not anything

question

anyone?
anybody?
anywhere?
anything?

subject pronouns

I am from England.

*Are **you** here on business?*

The subject pronoun is sometimes dropped when you're speaking informally.

Sorry. Can't help you.

object pronouns

Always place object pronouns after the verb.

*Please **call me** Jessica.*

*Enjoy your stay with **us**.*

*You can get **something** to eat in the coffee shop.*

*Do you have **anything** to declare?*

*I don't know **anyone** in Atlanta.*

GRAMMAR FILE 4: adjectives

adjectival order

Adjectives go before nouns. When there are two or three adjectives, you usually put them in this order:

article	observation	size	age	color	origin	
the	funny	little	old	brown-haired	–	man.
the	attractive	tall	–	dark-haired	American	woman.

comparatives and superlatives

short adjectives	new	comparative	superlative
short adjectives ending in -y	big	newer (than)	the newest
long adjectives	busy	bigger (than)	the biggest
irregular adjectives	expensive	busier (than)	the busiest
	good	more expensive (than)	the most expensive
	bad	better (than)	the best
	much / many / more	worse (than)	the worst
		more	the most

*Don't you have anything **smaller**?*

*It's **the biggest** on the market.*

*English is one of **the slowest** languages.*

*Version 3 is **the best** one yet.*

*It has **the most** features.*

When things are the same, you say:

*It's **as easy as** ...*

*It's **as expensive as** ...*

*It's **as bad as** ...*

GRAMMAR FILE 5: adverbs

1 Adverbs

go after verbs or at the end of phrases.
To form an adverb from an adjective, you either add **-ly** or leave it as it is.

*I don't know him **personally**.*

*People speak **too fast**.*

Note that **well** is the adverb of **good**.

*I don't speak English **very well**.*

2 Adverbs of frequency (*always, usually, often, sometimes, seldom, rarely, never*)

go before verbs except **be**.

*I **sometimes** rent a car when I'm away.*

*He **always** cooks when we have guests.*

*I'm **already** late.*

To ask about the frequency of something, use the question **How often?**

How often do you shop?

3 Note that adverbial phrases such as **very much, very well** and **a lot** go after the object.

*I like L.A. **very much**.*

GRAMMAR FILE 6: quantities

1 Use **a** or **an** to talk about one thing or one person.

uncountable nouns

baggage

traffic

change

money

chocolate

countable nouns

bag(s)

car(s)

pound(s)

dollar(s)

bar(s) of chocolate

2 Use **some, any** and **no** when the quantity isn't defined.

affirmative: **some**

*There is **some** baggage.*

*There are **some** bags.*

negative: **any** or **no**

*There isn't **any** / is **no** baggage.*

*There aren't **any** / are **no** bags.*

*Is there **any** baggage?*

*Are there **any** bags?*

3 Use **how much** or **how many** to ask a question about quantity. **How much** is used for prices.

How many people were at the seminar?

How much is the sweater?

4 Use **a lot of** or **lots of** to express a large quantity.

*I spend **a lot of time** on the phone.*

*A **lot of nurses** don't work regular hours.*

5 For small quantities, use **few / not many** or **little / not much**.

*I'm meeting **a few people** from TV companies.*

*There aren't **many people** in that company.*

*She has **a little change**.*

*I don't have **much time** for vacation.*

6 Note the use of **too much / many** for excess quantity.

*There's **too much traffic** and pollution.*

*The restaurant has accepted **too many reservations**.*

GRAMMAR FILE 7: present tenses

present simple

I			
You	work		
We	don't work		
They			
He			
She	works		
It	doesn't work		
Do	you	live in the city?	
Does	he		
Yes, I do.	No, I don't.		
Yes, he does.	No, he doesn't.		

present continuous

I	am 'm (not)		
You	're		
We	are		
They	aren't		cooking dinner tonight.
He	's		
She	is		
It	isn't		
Are	you	staying in Denver?	
Is	he		
Yes, I am.	No, I'm not.		
Yes, he is.	No, he isn't.		

1 Use the **present simple** for regular actions, habits, facts and things which are part of your life.

I live in Scarborough.

She owns the company.

I don't work weekends or holidays.

2 With adverbs of frequency. (See Grammar File 5)

I always take Sunday off.

3 For things you think or feel.

I love the fall.

I hate waiting for baggage.

4 Regular times and schedules.

When do you leave Seoul?

Our main restaurant closes at two thirty.

1 Use the **present continuous** for something which is happening at the moment.

We're now cruising at 30,000 feet.

2 For future plans and arrangements.

I'm planning to be in L.A. next week.

3 Some verbs, expressing feelings, mental activity and perception, are almost never in the continuous form: like / love / hate / know / understand / want / see / hear / seem.

I want to take a shower.

GRAMMAR FILE 8: past tenses

past simple

I	stayed		
You			
He	didn't stay		
She			
It	flew		
We			
They	didn't fly		
Did	he	find	his suitcase?
	Yes, he did.	No, he didn't.	

1 To form the **past tense using regular verbs**: add **-d**, **-ed**, or **-ied** in the affirmative.

stay – stayed arrive – arrived carry – carried

With **irregular verbs**: change in the affirmative.

fly – flew (see Grammar File 18)

2 Use the **past simple** for a past completed event with no link to the present. There is often an indication of when it happened.

We moved to Toronto when I was ten.

3 You often use ... **ago** and **last ...** with the past simple.

I went to Tokyo a couple of years ago.

Last week I worked fifty-two hours.

used to

The **used to** form is for something you did regularly in the past which is now finished.

I used to work in the London office, then in Boston.

was / were

The past simple of **be** is **was / were**.

I was in London last year.

Some of the talks were good.

There was a lot of information.

past continuous

The **past continuous** is used for an action which was in progress at a particular time in the past.

I was looking at that sweater in the window.

GRAMMAR FILE 9: present perfect

present perfect simple

I	've			
You	have			
We	haven't			
They		landed	in Aspen.	
He	's			
She	has			
It	hasn't			
Have	you	met	Josh?	
Has	she			
Yes, I have.		No, I haven't.		
Yes, he has.		No, she hasn't.		

1 To form the **present perfect simple** with regular verbs: the past participle takes **-d**, **-ed**, or **-ied**.
 arrive – arrived stay – stayed try – tried

With irregular verbs: the past participle changes.
 have – **had** (see Grammar File 18)

2 Use the **present perfect** for past experiences with little or no indication of time; often with **ever** or **never**.
I've done three computer courses.
Have you ever seen an American football game?

3 When you can see the results of a recent event in the present; often with **just**, **already** or **yet**.

We've had a wonderful evening.
The plane has just taken off.
They haven't landed yet.

4 Events which started in the past and continue in the present.

How long have you been with us?

5 Use **for** to say the length of time of the event.
You've been our guest here **for** a long time.

6 Use **since** to say when the event started.
I've been here **since** December.

present perfect continuous

The **present perfect continuous** emphasizes the continuous or repeated nature of the event.

How long have you been studying Spanish?
I've been trying to get hot water for 10 minutes.

Note that some verbs never take the continuous form even if the action seems repeated or continuous.

I've known Consuela for ten years.

Not: *I've been knowing* Consuela for ten years.

GRAMMAR FILE 10: future tenses

future simple

I	'll			
You	will			
He		be		
She			in a meeting.	
It	won't			
We				
They				
Will	they	buy	some perfume?	
Yes, they will.		No, they won't.		

1 Use the **future simple** when you decide to do something spontaneously.

I'll go for the specials.

2 For something you think or hope will happen.

We hope you'll fly with us again soon.

3 For future certainties.

The room charge will be \$295.

4 When you offer, agree or promise to do something.
 (See Grammar File 16)

I'll upload the files right now.
I'll get you a headset.

going to (+ verb)

Use **going to** for something you plan or intend to.

I'm going to be in Seoul in the morning.

Are you going to travel soon?

future continuous

In everyday situations, the **future continuous** is very similar to the **present continuous** or **going to** and used for something arranged or planned. (See Grammar File 7)

How long will you be staying in the States?

I'll be reporting on our progress later.

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GRAMMAR FILE 11: passive

To form the **passive**, use the verb **be** and add the **past participle**. (See **Grammar File 18** for irregular verbs)

It	is was has been will be can be is being	done / said / made / etc.
They	are were have been are being	

To have / get something done is a passive construction.

You can have your eggs poached or scrambled.
I'm having my hair cut tomorrow.
Did you have those letters copied?
I want to have this jacket dry-cleaned.

present One form is required for every member of the family.

past Write your name as **printed** on the card.
must Those seats **were sold out** months ago.
future This form **must be kept** in your passport.
should Dinner **will be served** in 30 minutes.
Matches **should only be carried** in hand baggage.

Use the **passive** in the **past simple** with **born**.

Where were you **born**?
I **was born** in Montreal.

GRAMMAR FILE 12: questions

1 To form a **question**, place the **auxiliary verb** (*be*, *have*, *do*, etc.) before the subject of the sentence. Don't just change the intonation of an affirmative sentence.

Can we meet?

Do you have a menu?

Where are you going?

Who do you tip?

How can I help you?

2 **Prepositions** often go at the end of questions.

So, where do you come from?

Who do you eat with?

What are you here for?

3 **What?, which?, whose?** and **how much? / many?** can be followed by objects or phrases.

What day of the week is that?

Which model is it?

What exactly does Jessica Adams do?

What kind of room do you want?

Whose lunch do you prefer?

How much is that video games console?

4 **How?** and **what ... like?** are used to ask for a description of something.

How was the trip?

What was the weather like?

Note the use of **how** to ask about people.

How's Jodie? She's fine.

Hey, how are you doing, Mike?

Many **adjectives** and **adverbs** are used after **how?** to ask about size, frequency etc.

length of time / duration **How long** have you been here?

frequency

How often do you stay in hotels?

size

How wide is it precisely?

degree

How well do you speak French?

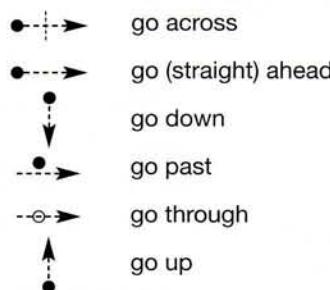
GRAMMAR FILE 13: verbs with prepositions; phrasal verbs

verbs with prepositions

1 Some verbs need a preposition before the object.

We **apologize for** the delay.
They might **ask for** a list.
I've **heard** so much **about** you.
She isn't **laughing at** his jokes.
Look at page ten.
I'm **looking for** my bag.
I'll be **paying for** credit card.
They'll **pay for** things you need.
Thank you for the flowers.
What do you **think of** L.A.?
I'm **waiting for** my baggage.
She **works in** the Design Department.
She **works for** a TV company.

2 With movement, the direction is indicated by the preposition, not the verb.



phrasal verbs

A **phrasal verb** is a two-word verb. The original meaning of the verb changes completely.

Look at the examples and their meanings.
We're out of USA Today.
If you'll **bear with** me, ...
Consuela's **checking in** to the hotel.
Wilbur's **checking out**.
Can you **fill out** this form?
He **hung up** on me.
I'll **look forward to** it.
We'll **look you up**.
I'll **look after** your bags.
We'll **pick you up** at your hotel.

What does E.T.A. **stand for**?

I'll **take care of** your bags.
They've just **taken off**.
Turn on the MP3 player.
Turn off the cell phone.
When Max **wakes up**.

have no more of
be patient, wait
register your arrival
register your departure
complete
put down the phone
wait for / expect with pleasure
visit
be responsible for / deal with
take someone from an
arranged place
mean
be responsible for / deal with
leave the ground (plane)
start a machine
stop a machine
stop sleeping

GRAMMAR FILE 14: prepositions

ABOUT

about 3 months approximate length of time

AHEAD

not three hours ahead time zones (forwards)

AT

at 10:15 / at night time expressions
at the airport public places
at AlphaCom names of companies
at the Devereux's people's houses

BEFORE

before the game prior to

BEHIND

three hours behind time zones (backwards)

BETWEEN

between Reeboks and L.A. Gear

BY

by next Friday deadline
pay by credit card way of doing something

FOR

for 10 ten days length of time
F for fox-trot as in ...
it's for you purpose

FROM

from England, the airport origin

IN

in January, in 2005
in the morning
in one hour
in Toronto, Florida, Japan
in the restaurant

IN FRONT OF

in front of the hotel

NEXT TO

sit next to me

ON

on Wednesday, on the 19th
on the weekend
on Olvera Street
on a Boeing 767
on business / vacation
on the Net, on the phone

PER

per night

TO (INTO, ONTO)

to the Sheraton
into Chicago

UNTIL

until next Sunday

WITH

He's with Ms. Adams
the man with glasses

time: months, years

parts of the day
the end of a period of time
towns, states, countries
public places when inside

dates, days

streets, roads
transportation
idiomatic use

Internet, phone, radio, TV

each

destination

up to a certain time

in the company of
physical features

GRAMMAR FILE 15: modal verbs 1

The verbs and expressions **have to**, **must**, **need to**, **should**, **had better**, **allowed to**, **permitted** are used before other verbs when you want to express the following meanings.

1 Obligation / Necessity

I have to go.

I'm sorry you'll have to turn it off.

I'd better be going.

We need to speak about the contract.

These articles must be transported in checked baggage only.

2 Permission

How much whiskey am I allowed to take into France?

Passengers must not take off their seat belts.

Knives are not permitted in the cabin.

3 Advice / Recommendation

You should see a doctor.

You'd better write one.

You shouldn't pack aerosols in your baggage.

4 No obligation or necessity

It doesn't have to go through the scanner.

You won't have to pick it up in Denver.

There's no need to get angry.

GRAMMAR FILE 16: modal verbs 2

The verbs and expressions, **can**, **could**, **may**, **might**, **will**, **would**, **would like** are used before other verbs when you want to express the following meanings.

1 Possibility

We can talk business after we have lunch.

You might be happier elsewhere.

I hope you can get the carpet clean.

2 Permission

You can go through now.

I could give you an extra hour.

You may proceed.

You can't use that here.

3 Requests

Can you get me a Denver newspaper?

Could I have a glass of water?

Could you sign it here?

May I see your driver's license?

Would you please complete the guest registration card?

I'd like to use the pool.

Would you mind opening your briefcase, sir?

4 Offers

How can I help you?

May I take your coats?

Would you like to sit over here?

5 Promising / Agreeing

I'll look after your bags.

I'll take two packs of that gum.

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GRAMMAR FILE 17: gerunds and infinitives

gerund (verb + -ing)

1 Use a **gerund** after all prepositions. (Also after verbs and expressions taking prepositions.)

*Thank you **for inviting** me.*

*How **about coming** along with me on Sunday?*

Note that you need to be careful with **to**. Sometimes it's a preposition. Sometimes it's part of the infinitive.

*I'll **look forward to** seeing you.*

*I'd like **to use** the pool.*

2 When a verb becomes a noun.

*Reading isn't too hard **for me**.*

Listening is more difficult.

3 After certain verbs and expressions.

*I hate **waiting** for baggage.*

*Would you mind **opening** your briefcase?*

*It was a **pleasure having** you.*

4 Some social expressions take either the gerund or the infinitive.

*It's been nice **to meet** you.*

*It's been good **meeting** you.*

infinitive

Use the infinitive after **want**, **would like**, and **have** when you want someone else to do something.

*Would you like me to **tag** this bag through to Aspen?*

*I want you to **come** over for dinner at my house on Sunday.*

*I'll have our publicity department **send** you some pictures.*

*I'll have them **send** someone up.*

GRAMMAR FILE 18: irregular verbs

infinitive	past simple	past participle	infinitive	past simple	past participle
be	was	been	know	knew	known
begin	began	begun	leave	left	left
break	broke	broken	let	let	let
bring	brought	brought	lose	lost	lost
build	built	built	make	made	made
buy	bought	bought	mean	meant	meant
catch	caught	caught	meet	met	met
choose	chose	chosen	pay	paid	paid
come	came	come	put	put	put
cost	cost	cost	read	read	read
cut	cut	cut	say	said	said
deal	dealt	dealt	see	saw	seen
do	did	done	sell	sold	sold
draw	drew	drawn	send	sent	sent
drink	drank	drunk	set	set	set
drive	drove	driven	shake	shook	shaken
eat	ate	eaten	show	showed	shown
fall	fell	fallen	shut	shut	shut
feel	felt	felt	sit	sat	sat
find	found	found	speak	spoke	spoken
fly	flew	flown	spend	spent	spent
forbid	forbade	forbidden	stand	stood	stood
forget	forgot	forgotten	stick	stuck	stuck
get	got	gotten/got	take	took	taken
give	gave	given	teach	taught	taught
go	went	gone	tell	told	told
hang	hung	hung	think	thought	thought
have	had	had	understand	understood	understood
hear	heard	heard	wake	woke	woken
hit	hit	hit	wear	wore	worn
hold	held	held	write	wrote	written
keep	kept	kept			