The Parts of Speech in English

There are 8 parts of speech. The easiest way to remember them is to go by spelling and sound. They fall into these natural groupings:

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

1. NOUNS

A noun is the name of:

a. a person
   Mary sings.

b. a place
   Vancouver is a city.

c. a thing
   The dog barks.

d. a quality
   Honesty is the best policy.

e. a general idea
   Honour is important.

f. a game or sport
   Tennis is enjoyable.

g. an event or point in time
   Christmas occurs on December 25.
2. PRONOUNS

A **pronoun** is a word that stands for a noun. (In Latin, the word *pronoun* means “for a name”.) There are eight different kinds of pronouns:

a. A **personal pronoun** refers to an individual or individuals.
   She is my teacher.

b. A **relative pronoun** connects an independent clause to the dependent clause it introduces.
   The novel that I read was interesting.

c. A **demonstrative pronoun** points out or identifies a noun or another pronoun.
   This is the man.

d. An **interrogative pronoun** introduces a question.
   Who asked you to the dance?

e. A **reflexive pronoun** refers to the subject of a sentence or clause.
   Did you hurt yourself?

f. An **intensive pronoun** is used to draw particular attention to a noun.
   The doctor himself examined the x-rays.

g. An **indefinite pronoun** is less specific in reference and less exact in meaning than other pronouns.
   Anyone may come.
   Several are here.

h. A **reciprocal pronoun** completes an interchange of action mentioned in the predicate.
   The two teams complimented each other.
   The opposing lines scowled at each other.

3. VERBS

A **verb** is a word which expresses action or a state of being.

a. **action verbs:**
   He hits the ball.
   They built the house.

b. **verbs of being** (also called **linking verbs**)
   She is my sister.
   The cake tastes good.
4. ADVERBS

An **adverb** is a word which modifies or describes a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. ("**Modifies**" means that it makes the meaning of the word more exact and specific. The job of adjectives and adverbs is to modify other words.)

a. An adverb modifying a verb:
   He walks **slowly**.

b. An adverb modifying an adjective:
   She is **very** pretty.

c. An adverb modifying another adverb:
   He walks **extremely** slowly.

An **adverb** can also modify the sentence as a whole:
   a. Fortunately, the Learning Centre is open all summer.
   b. Personally, I don't like wasabi ice cream.

5. ADJECTIVES

An **adjective** is a word which modifies a noun or a pronoun by making the meaning more exact. There are four kinds of adjectives:

a. **descriptive adjectives**
   She wore a **yellow** dress.

b. **limiting adjectives**
   We are now in the **third** phase.

c. **proper adjectives**:
   This is a **Florida** orange.

d. Three little words are called the "**article adjectives**". They are **a**, **an**, and **the**. They are also called simply **articles**.
   A book is on the **table**.
   An apple is good food.

6. PREPOSITIONS

A **preposition** is a linking word used before a noun or a pronoun to show the relationship of that noun or pronoun to some other word in the sentence. (**Pre**- means "before", so a preposition has a position before a noun or pronoun.) Every preposition has to have an object.
   The bear ran **into** the woods.
   She did it **for** you.
7. CONJUNCTIONS

A conjunction is a linking word used to connect words or groups of words in a sentence.

a. **Coordinating conjunctions** join words or groups of words of equal rank:
   I will read your essay, **but** I will not write it for you.

   **Correlative conjunctions** are coordinating conjunctions which are used in pairs.
   Examples are both... and, either... or, not only... but also.
   **Both** Susan **and** Tom will go.

b. **Subordinating conjunctions** join dependent clauses to independent clauses:
   I shall read the book **when** I have time.

8. INTERJECTIONS

An interjection is a word which expresses strong or sudden feeling. It has little grammatical connection with the rest of the sentence.

   **Oh!** It is cold.
   **Gosh,** that will be fun.