



Useful Grammatical Terms

- noun** a word that names a person, place, thing or idea
Examples: John, boy, Toronto, city, garden, honesty, applause, table
- pronoun** a word that takes the place of a noun
Examples: I, me, myself, mine, anyone, it, who, she, they
- adjective** a word that tells more about (or modifies) nouns, such as their shape, colour or age
 An adjective comes before a noun or after a linking verb.
Examples:
 a | tall | man | She | is | careless. | It | looks | awful.
 | adj. | noun | | subj. | LV | adj. | | subj. | LV | adj.
- verb** a word that shows action or a state of being
Examples:
Action Verbs: jump, sit, laugh, work
Linking Verbs: be, become, seem, look
- adverb** a word that tells more about (or modifies) verbs, adjectives or adverbs by telling how, how much, how often, when, where, or to what extent
 Adverbs can modify whole sentences, too.
Examples:
Modifying Verbs: Tom slowly read his letter. (how)
Yesterday I went to the movies. (when)
 The students looked everywhere. (where)
 The baby usually eats bananas. (how often)
Modifying Adjectives: I am really upset. (to what extent)
Modifying Adverbs: She speaks very quickly. (how)
Modifying Sentences: Surprisingly they had returned. (opinion)
- preposition** a word that relates a noun or pronoun to another word
 Prepositions are often small words that explain position or time.
 Some verbs and prepositions combine as two-word verbs.
Examples:
in the desk, at three o'clock, around me, look at me, call her up
- conjunction** a word that joins words or groups of words
Examples: and, or, but, because, if, when

More ...



phrase a group of words that does **not** contain both a subject and a verb
Examples:
Verb Phrases: has been waiting, will have finished
Prepositional Phrases: in my life, across the street, before noon
Noun Phrases: many fad diets, a bunch of bananas, the people's votes

clause a group of words that **does** contain both a subject and a verb
Independent clauses can stand alone as complete sentences.
Dependent clauses are not complete sentences; they connect to an independent clause with a subordinating conjunction or a relative pronoun. Dependent clauses function as a noun, adjective or adverb in a sentence.
Examples:
She walks to work in the morning whether it's raining or not.
Independent Clause *Dependent Clause*
John needs to stay home because he is sick.
Adverb Clause It answers "why?", so it acts as an adverb.
She is looking for a person who she can talk to.
Adjective Clause It describes the person, so it acts as an adjective.
We didn't know that coffee is grown in Brazil.
Noun Clause It is the object or subject of the sentence, so it acts as a noun.

subject the person or thing performing an action or being described by the rest of the sentence.
The subject usually comes before the verb.
Examples: Babies crawl before they walk. ("who" crawls)
Taxes are high. ("what" are high)

direct object the person or thing that receives the action of the verb
Examples: Tom bought textbooks. (bought "what")
Sally recommended Louisa. (recommended "whom")

indirect object a secondary object of the verb
It explains "to whom/what" or "for whom/what" an action is performed.
It follows the verb or is written as a prepositional phrase with "to" or "for" after the direct object.
*Many verbs refer to the indirect object with only a prepositional phrase.
Examples: Tom bought me some textbooks.
Indirect object after the verb
Tom bought some textbooks for me.
Prepositional phrase after the direct object
*Sally recommended Louisa to them.
Only a prepositional phrase after the direct object

