

## Glossary

This glossary will help you understand some important words for talking about grammar and vocabulary.

### Active / Passive

An active sentence is used to say what the subject does:

***Our company employs** over 600 people.*

***They have cancelled** the football match due to bad weather.*

A passive sentence is used to say what happens to the subject:

***Over 600 people are employed** by our company.*

***The football match has been cancelled** due to bad weather.*

### Adjective

An adjective describes a noun:

*Peter's got a **new** car.*

*Our neighbours are very **friendly**.*

or a pronoun:

*She's quite **famous**.*

*It's **beautiful**.*

### Adverb

An adverb describes a verb:

*I **often** go to the cinema.*

*He drives **carefully**.*

or an adjective:

*It's **terribly** cold outside.*

*His new film is **slightly** better than his last.*

or another adverb:

*He drives **very** carefully.*

*Alice recovered **surprisingly** quickly from her illness.*

or a whole sentence:

***Unfortunately**, we didn't have an umbrella.*

***Luckily**, the hotel was not fully booked.*

## Article

Definite article '**the**':

***The** computer's broken.*

*Have you seen **the** children?*

Indefinite article '**a**' or '**an**':

*I bought **a** new car.*

*She's **an** artist.*

## Auxiliary verb

An auxiliary verb is used with another verb to form tenses, questions, negatives and passives.

The three basic auxiliary verbs are **be**, **do**, and **have**:

*It **is** raining.*

*The meeting **was** cancelled.*

***Do** you speak English?*

*I **don't** understand.*

*I **have** never been to Japan.*

*When we arrived, the film **had** already started.*

## Collocation

A collocation is a combination of words which are often used together:

*We **took** a lot of **photos** during our last holiday.*

*The accident happened because he **didn't pay attention to** the traffic.*

*We had a **spectacular view** from the balcony of our hotel.*

## Comparative

Adjectives and adverbs have a comparative form, for example 'quicker' is the comparative of the adjective 'quick' and 'more quickly' is the comparative of the adverb 'quickly':

*The exam was **easier** than I thought.*

*Chinese is much **more difficult** to learn than English.*

*He drives **more carefully** when another person is in the car.*

## Conditional

Conditionals talk about possible or imaginary situations. They are typically introduced by the word 'if':

*You **will pass** the exam only if you **study** a lot.*

*If I **were** you, I **wouldn't buy** that car.*

*If we **had left** earlier, we **wouldn't have missed** the plane.*

## Countable / uncountable nouns

A countable noun can be counted. It can be used with the indefinite article 'a' / 'an' and it can be singular or plural:

*I eat an **apple** every day.*

***Apples** are healthy.*

An uncountable noun cannot be counted. It cannot be used with the indefinite article 'a' / 'an' and it cannot be plural:

*I drink **juice** every day.*

***Juice** is healthy.*

## Degree word

A degree word is a word like 'so', 'such', 'too' or 'enough':

*The film was **so** boring that she fell asleep.*

*It was **such** bad weather that we decided not to go out.*

*We didn't go into the shop because it was **too** crowded.*

*The girl was not old **enough** to go to the party alone.*

## Determiner

A determiner is a word that goes before a noun, for example 'some', 'any', 'much', 'many', '(a) few', '(a) little', 'all', 'every', 'each', 'this', 'that', etc.:

*There is **some** chicken in the fridge.*

*We haven't got **much** homework for next week.*

***Few** people turned up for the event.*

*We go skiing **every** year.*

***This** bag cost a fortune.*

## Emphatic structure

An emphatic structure is used to give emphasis to certain information in the sentence. '**It is / was ... that ...**' and '**What ... is / was (that) ...**' are emphatic structures:

***It was** in 1999 **that** I bought my first car.*

***What** I don't understand **is that** he didn't call us.*

## Fixed phrase

A fixed phrase is a group of words whose meaning as a whole is different from the meaning of the individual words:

*The police estimate that about 10,000 people **took part** in the demonstration last weekend. (= participate)*

***Make sure** that you've understood the instructions. (= check)*

*Please leave your phone number so we can **get in touch** with you. (= contact)*

## Gerund (-ing)

The gerund is the '**-ing**' form of the verb and is used in the following ways:

after certain verbs:

*She **enjoys meeting** new people.*

*Paul **suggested going** to Australia for our next holiday.*

or prepositions:

*Mark is very interested **in learning** about other cultures.*

*I look forward **to seeing** you next week.*

or as the subject or object of a sentence:

***Smoking** is bad for your health. (subject)*

*I find **swimming** very relaxing. (object)*

## Infinitive

The infinitive is the basic form of a verb, often with 'to':

*Peter and Cindy have decided **to buy** a house.*

*We must leave now if we want **to catch** the train.*

*They don't **speak** French.*

The past infinitive is formed in the following way:

**(to) have + past participle**

*I'd love **to have gone** to the party but I didn't feel well.*

*The maid is believed **to have stolen** the jewellery.*

*We needn't **have taken** the umbrella. It didn't rain all day.*

## Linking word or phrase

A linking word or phrase is used to join words, parts of sentences, or sentences, for example 'and', 'but', 'because of', 'even though', 'if', 'in order to', 'despite', etc.:

*All planes were delayed **because of** the snow.*

*We set off very early **in order to** avoid traffic.*

***Even though** the bag was very expensive, I decided to buy it.*

## Modal verb

A modal verb or modal auxiliary verb is used with the infinitive (without 'to') of another verb.

The following are modal verbs: **can, could, may, might, must, ought to, shall, should, will, would**:

***Can** you help me?*

*We **should** hurry if we want to catch the train.*

*He **might** have been delayed.*

## Noun

A noun is a word for a person or thing:

*The **boys** broke the **window** while playing **football**.*

*His new **film** is about **love** and **courage**.*

## Past participle

The past participle of a verb is used to form the perfect tenses:

*We've **known** each other since we were children.*

*At the airport she realised that she had **forgotten** her passport.*

or the passive:

*The new exhibition centre will be officially **opened** this weekend.*

*'Hamlet' was **written** by Shakespeare.*

It can also be used as an adjective:

*The interviewer was **impressed** by her past achievements.*

*I don't like **cooked** vegetables.*

## Phrasal verb

A phrasal verb is made up of two or three words: a verb (e.g. look) and a preposition or an adverb (e.g. after). Often the meaning of the phrasal verb is different from the verb on its own:

*Could you **look after** my cat while I'm away? (= take care of)*

*I **took up** jogging to keep fit. (= start)*

*While she was cleaning up, she **came across** her old diary. (= find by chance)*

## Phrase

A phrase is a group of words which is part of a sentence:

***go on holiday***

***a great deal of money***

## Possessive

A possessive is a word which shows who or what someone or something belongs to or is connected with, for example 'my', 'mine', 'your', 'yours', etc.:

*Is this **my** book or **yours**?*

*She was sitting on **her** own.*

## Prefix / Suffix

A prefix is a group of letters which is added to the beginning of a word in order to form a different word, for example '**un-**', '**in-**', '**dis-**', '**extra-**', '**over-**', etc.:

*The staff in this shop is so **unhelpful**.*

*The **disadvantage** of travelling by bus is that you are not flexible.*

A suffix is a letter or a group of letters which is added to the end of a word in order to form a different word, for example '**-y**', '**-able**', '**-ment**', '**-ion**', etc.:

*This chair is not very **comfortable**.*

*The park offers a wide range of **attractions**.*

## Preposition

A preposition is a word like '**in**', '**at**', '**on**', '**for**', '**against**', '**by**', '**until**', etc.:

*There's a nice restaurant **opposite** the park.*

*I completely agree **with** you that we need to employ additional staff.*

*I'm afraid **of** spiders.*

## Pronoun

A pronoun is a word which is used in place of a noun:

*Could **you** help me with the bags? **They** are very heavy.*

*What's **this**?*

***There's** **somebody** at the door.*

## Relative clause

A relative clause describes a person or a thing that has been mentioned before. It is usually introduced by a relative pronoun, such as '**who**', '**which**', '**that**', or '**whose**':

*The police caught the men **who burgled several houses last week**.*

*We live in a small village **which has about 200 inhabitants**.*

*This is Mr Jones, **whose grandfather founded the company**.*

## Relative pronoun

A relative pronoun is a word which introduces a relative clause. The following are relative pronouns: **who, which, that, whose**:

*The police caught the men **who** burgled several houses last week.*

*We live in a small village **which** has about 200 inhabitants.*

*This is Mr Jones, **whose** grandfather founded the company.*

The words '**where**', '**when**' and '**why**' can also be used as relative pronouns:

*What's the name of the shop **where** you bought your sofa?*

*I'll never forget the day **when** I got my first job.*

*Do you know the reason **why** he didn't attend the meeting?*

## Reported speech and reported question

Reported speech and reported questions are used to report what another person has said or written:

*'I'm going to buy a new car,' Jenny said. (**direct speech**)*

***Jenny said that she was going** to buy a new car. (**reported speech**)*

*'Have you been to the new restaurant?' Tom asked. (**direct question**)*

***Tom asked if I had been** to the new restaurant. (**reported question**)*

## Sentence

A sentence is a group of words which express a statement, a question, or an instruction:

***I'm studying English.***

***Do you like learning languages?***

***Fill in the gaps with one word.***

## Subject / Object

The subject of a sentence is a noun or a pronoun which usually comes before the verb and refers to the person or the thing that does something:

***Peter** bought a new car.*

*Could **you** do me a favour?*

The object of a sentence is a noun or a pronoun which usually comes after the verb and refers to the person or the thing that something happens to:

*Peter bought **a new car**.*

*Could you do **me a favour**? ('me' and 'a favour' are both objects).*



## Superlative

Adjectives and adverbs have a superlative form, for example 'quickest' is the superlative of the adjective 'quick' and 'most quickly' is the superlative of the adverb 'quickly':

*This building is one of the **oldest** in Europe.*

*He was one of the **most influential** people in history.*

*This is the **most originally** written book I've ever read.*

## Tense

The tense of a verb shows if something happens in the past, present or future time. Tenses can be simple (e.g. work, worked), continuous (e.g. is working, was working), or perfect (e.g. has worked, had worked):

*Tina **works** for an insurance company.*

*She's **been working** there for five years.*

*Before that she **worked** for a consultancy.*

## Verb

A verb expresses an action or a state:

*I **play** tennis every Thursday.*

*Shall we **go** to the cinema?*

*I'd **prefer** to **stay** at home.*

*Do you **like** fish?*