GRAMMAR

LEARN GRAMMAR RULES TO

RULE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

RULES

7 SMART TIPS
TO IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH

- Help correct one another's mistakes
- Read to improve your English
- Listen to well-spoken English
- Read out loud to grow in confidence
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Countable and Uncountable Nouns

A noun is a word that refers to person, place, thing, event, substance or quality; can be either countable or uncountable.

Countable nouns have singular and plural forms while uncountable nouns can be used only in the singular form.

In English grammar, words that refer to people, places or things are called nouns. There are several ways to classify nouns. One way is whether they are countable (also known as count) or uncountable (also known as non-count) nouns. Countable nouns, as the term suggests, are things that can be counted.

They have singular and plural forms.

E.g.

- *table, tables; month, months; pen, pens.*

A countable noun becomes plural by adding *s* at the end of the word. Of course, there are nouns that form plurals in other ways.

E.g.

- *man, men; child, children; goose, geese.*

In contrast, uncountable nouns cannot be counted. They have a singular form and do not have a plural form – you can't add an *s* to it, e.g. *dirt, rice, information* and *hair.* Some uncountable nouns are abstract nouns such as *advice* and *knowledge*.

E.g.

- *Her **jewellery** is designed by a well-known designer.*
- *I needed some **advice**, so I went to see the counsellor.*

Some nouns can be countable or uncountable depending on the context or situation.

E.g.

- *We'll have two **coffees*** (countable).
- *I don't like **coffee*** (uncountable).

ARTICLES

You cannot refer to a singular countable noun on its own. It is usually preceded by an article, either the indefinite article – *a*, *an* – or the definite article *the*.

Indefinite Article

When the countable noun is mentioned for the first time, you use an indefinite article *a* for words beginning with a consonant sound or *an* if the noun begins with a vowel sound. However, when a countable noun is mentioned for the second time, it is usually preceded by the definite article *the*.

E.g.

- *I saw* ***a*** (indefinite article) *cat yesterday.* ***The*** (definite article) *cat was grey with black stripes.*
- *The girl was wearing* ***a*** (indefinite article preceding word with a consonant sound "you") *uniform but it looked faded.* ***The*** (definite article) *uniform was old.*
- *I took* ***an*** (indefinite article preceding word with a vowel sound "um") *umbrella as it was beginning to rain. It did not help because* ***the*** (definite article) *umbrella was faulty.*

Sometimes when uncountable nouns are treated as countable nouns, you can use the indefinite article.

E.g.

- *Please select **a** wine that you like.*

Definite Article

You can use *the* with countable nouns when you want to refer to a specific person or thing.

E.g.

- *The baby stared at **the** moon in fascination.*
- *Please take me to **the** clinic near the coffee shop. I'm not feeling well.*

The indefinite article is not used with uncountable nouns. However, the definite article *the* can be used with uncountable nouns when referring to specific items.

E.g.

- *I found **the** luggage that I had lost.*
- *I appreciated **the** honesty of the salesman.*

Tricky Uncountable Nouns

The noun *fruit* is usually considered as an uncountable noun.

E.g.

- *Fruit **is** good for your health.*

When referring to a single piece of fruit, you would say,

- *She had only **a** piece of fruit for lunch!*

However, when referring to different kinds of fruit, you may use *fruit* as a countable noun.

E.g.

- *I love to shop at that supermarket – they have a wide variety of tropical **fruits**.*

Similarly, you may use an indefinite article for uncountable nouns when you are referring to a single item.

E.g.

- *a piece of furniture, a bottle of water, a grain of rice.*

Quantifiers

Countable and uncountable nouns may also be used with quantifiers. These are words that express amount or quantity. Common examples are *some, any, more, few, little, several.*

However, there are some quantifiers that can be used with only **countable nouns**: *many, few, a few, fewer, several.*

E.g.

- *The citizens came to the meeting with **many** suggestions on how to improve their neighbourhood.*
- ***Fewer** tourists visited that area as it was known to be unsafe.*

Some other quantifiers can be used with only **uncountable nouns**: *much, little, a bit of.*

E.g.

- *Would you like **a bit** of pepper in your soup?*
- *There's very **little** dessert left.*

Some quantifiers may be used with both countable and uncountable nouns: *all, some, any, lots of, plenty of, enough.*

E.g.

- *He has **enough** courage to face the bullies.*
- *We have **some** plates for the party tonight. Tracy will bring more.*

Subject-Verb Agreement

Countable nouns may take singular or plural verbs.

E.g.

- *Our **neighbour is** singing at the competition tonight.*
- *Our **neighbours are** singing at the competition tonight.*

However, uncountable nouns are considered singular and may take only singular verbs.

Nouns such as *luggage, furniture* and *jewellery* are uncountable nouns and take singular verbs.

E.g.

- *The **furniture** in this house **needs** to be replaced.*
- *The **apparatus** for the next experiment **has** been set up.*
- *My **luggage has** been checked in.*

Uncountable nouns ending with *s* may pose a problem to users of English.

These nouns have the plural ending *s*, but they take a singular verb.

E.g.

- *The* ***news is*** *not good.*
- ***Mathematics is*** *a very important subject.*

All uncountable nouns associated with clothes, such as *shorts*, *jeans* and *briefs*, are plural uncountables. They cannot be used in the singular form or with numbers. We cannot say for example *a shorts* or *two shorts*. Instead we say:

E.g.

- *Can you lend me* ***a pair*** *of* ***shorts****?*
  I didn't bring mine.

Pronouns

A pronoun is a word that replaces a noun or noun phrase that has already been mentioned in a text or conversation.

PRONOUNS

There are several types of pronouns. Among them are personal, possessive, demonstrative, indefinite, reflexive and relative pronouns.

Personal pronouns stand in for nouns and noun phrases, and usually refer back in a text or conversation to them.

E.g.

- ***Jane*** *is going to watch the parade tomorrow.* ***She*** *plans to leave at 4 pm.*
- *We are collecting* ***old photographs*** *for our project.* ***They*** *should still be in good condition.*

Personal pronouns may be categorised as follows:

PERSON	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
	Subject	Object	Subject	Object
First (person speaking)	I	me	we	us
Second (person spoken to)	you	you	you	you
Third (person spoken of)	he, she, it	him, her, it	they	them

He refers to a male.

She refers to a female.

It refers to a thing or animal.

Positions of Pronouns in Sentences

A pronoun can be the subject of a verb:

E.g.

- *I can't catch the mouse.* ***It*** *moves too quickly.*

A pronoun can be the object of a verb:

E.g.

- *The flowers look beautiful.*
  Sally arranged ***them*** *just now.*

A pronoun can be the object of a preposition:

E.g.

- *I'm going to buy some snacks.*
  Make sure you keep a place for ***me****.*

REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS

These refer to the person or animal that is the subject of the verb. The following are reflexive pronouns.

PERSON	SINGULAR	PLURAL
First	myself	ourselves
Second	yourself	yourselves
Third	himself, herself, itself	themselves

Positions of Reflexive Pronouns in Sentences

Reflexive pronouns may be used:

As the object of a verb.

E.g.

- *Meera blames **herself** for the mistake.*

As the object of a preposition.

E.g.

- *Stop looking at **yourself** in the mirror.*

As the indirect object of a verb.

E.g.

- *Tara gave **herself** a treat.*

To emphasise a noun or personal pronoun.

E.g.

- *Jane **herself** baked this delicious cake.*

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Examples of possessive pronouns are *mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs, its.*

Unlike personal pronouns, these usually stand alone and do not have to precede a noun.

E.g.

- *Karen told me that she had lost her phone. That must be **hers**.*
- *They have found their seats. Have you spotted **ours**?*
- *The cat is looking for **its** master.*

Note: The possessive pronoun **its** is different from **it's**. **It's** is a contracted form of **it is**.

INDEFINITE PRONOUNS

The indefinite pronoun is used when referring to no particular person or thing.

Some indefinite pronouns refer to people,
e.g. *someone, anyone, everybody, no one, everyone, nobody.*

Some indefinite pronouns refer to things,
e.g. *something, anything, everything, nothing.*

E.g.

- ***Someone** is at the door.*
- *Where is **everyone**?*
- *Has **anyone** seen the television remote control?*

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

A demonstrative pronoun points to a specific thing or things to indicate whether they are close or far, in space and/or time. Like possessive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns stand alone and do not have to precede a noun.

	NEAR IN DISTANCE OR TIME	FAR IN DISTANCE OR TIME
Singular	this	that
Plural	these	those

E.g.

- *Jane stopped eating rice for dinner.*
  ***This** has helped her lose weight quickly.*
- ***That** was the last time I saw my colleague Matthew.*

RELATIVE PRONOUNS

Who, whom, whose, which and **that** function as relative pronouns when they add further information to the things or people mentioned in the sentence.

RELATIVE PRONOUN	REFERS TO
who	a person or people
whom	a person or people
which	a thing or things
whose	a person, people, a thing or things
that	animal(s) or thing(s)

The difference between **who** and **whom** is that **who** may be the subject of a verb; it is also often used as an object although this is frowned upon.

E.g.

- *Isn't that Shyla **who** objected to the proposal?*
- *These are candidates **whom** we interviewed last week.*

Whom is used only as the object of a verb. Both **who** and **whom** can be the object of a preposition but if the preposition comes before the pronoun, you must use **whom**. This is illustrated in the examples below.

E.g.

- ***Whom/who*** *did you speak to about this matter?*
- *To* ***whom*** *did you speak about this matter?*

The relative pronoun **that** can often be used instead of **who**, **whom** and **which**.

E.g.

- T*he shirt* ***that*** *Matthew bought has some stains on it.*

Note: American English favours the use of **that** over **which** while British English still uses both **that** and **which**.

Now test yourself!
How well do you know your pronouns?

.....

Fill in the blanks with the correct pronouns from the box below.

I	it	we	herself	she	this	you	they	your	that

Dear Mr Eric Tan

I am writing this letter as a note of appreciation for the good service I received at your restaurant recently. I was at the Plum Blossom Restaurant with my family on 20th June. 1. _____ were fortunate to experience the great service that 2. _____ restaurant is well known for. The dishes were served promptly. More importantly, Ms Shirley Teo and her team provided excellent service.

3. _____ were very attentive and Ms Teo

4. _____ ensured that we were well taken care of.

5. _____ was never flustered even when the restaurant became more crowded.

The dish 6. _____ we liked best was the Peking Duck. 7. _____ is the best I have ever eaten. The duck was succulent and tender. 8. _____ would give it five stars!

My family will definitely dine at the Plum Blossom Restaurant again. 9. _____ is a promise I intend to keep! Once again I thank 10. _____ for the excellent service and food.

Yours sincerely
Mrs Jamie Lee

ANSWERS

1. We (personal pronoun, refers back to the noun, **family**)

2. your (possessive pronoun, refers to the restaurant owned by the reader, **Mr Eric Tan**)

3. They (personal pronoun, refers back to the noun phrase, **Ms Shirley Teo and her team**)

4. herself (reflexive pronoun, for emphasis, draws attention to **Ms Shirley Teo**)

5. She (personal pronoun, refers back to **Ms Shirley Teo**)

6. that (relative pronoun, refers to the noun phrase, **the dish**)

7. It (personal pronoun, refers back to the noun phrase, **the Peking Duck**)

8. I (personal pronoun, refers to the writer of the letter, **Mrs Jamie Lee**)

9. This (demonstrative pronoun, used before a singular noun, **promise.** It also indicates something that will take place soon)

10. you (personal pronoun, refers to the reader, **Mr Eric Tan)**

Adjectives

An adjective is a word that describes people, objects, events, substances and ideas.

ADJECTIVES

Do you want to add colour to your speech or writing? Try using appropriate, vivid adjectives to express your thoughts and feelings. Adjectives describe nouns by telling us more about them, e.g. their size, colour or shape.

Using adjectives to describe the things, people or ideas we are talking about helps our readers and listeners form a more vivid picture of them.

E.g.

- *Please bring that **beautiful leather** bag to me.* (expresses a positive opinion)
- *She was a **timid, nondescript** girl when she was at school.* (expresses a negative opinion)

Formation of Adjectives

Many adjectives do not have prefixes or suffixes.

E.g.

- *good, tall, fat, wide, simple, gaunt.*

However, adjectives may be formed by adding prefixes (before a word) or suffixes (after a word).

E.g.

- ***il****legal,* ***in****sensitive, rust****y****, child****ish****, merci****less****, enjoy****able****.*

Usually adjectives are formed by adding suffixes to nouns.

E.g.

- *bagg****y****, hair****y****, hair****less****, burden****some****, quarrel****some****, beauti****ful****.*

Sometimes, adjectives may be formed by adding suffixes to verbs.

E.g.

- *attract**ive**, wash**able**, expect**ant**, compliment**ary**, bor**ing**, disappoint**ed**.*

When a negative prefix such as **un, il, dis, in, im** or **ir** is added to an adjective, it creates an opposite or negative meaning.

E.g.

- ***un**natural, **il**logical, **dis**honest, **in**famous, **im**moral, **ir**reverent.*

Positions of Adjectives in Sentences

Adjectives may be found in three positions in a sentence:

Before a noun:

E.g.

- ***exciting*** *lesson,* ***empty*** *room.*

As a complement, after a linking verb:

E.g.

- *The shop is* ***open.***
- *John is* ***sick.***

After a noun or an indefinite pronoun:

E.g.

- *I wrote to the person* ***concerned.***
- *Is there anyone* ***important*** *at the meeting?*

How do you use Adjectives?

You can use adjectives in the ways suggested below.

Use two or more adjectives to describe a noun in greater detail.

E.g.

- ***small grey*** *cat,*
- ***desperate***, ***brazen*** *thief*

Show comparison and contrast using parallel phrases such as '**not only … but also', 'as … as'**.

E.g.

- *Beatrice is not only* ***intelligent****, but also* ***hardworking****.*
- *Tom is as* ***strong*** *as his father.*

Use adjectives to express opinions:

E.g.

- What a ***boring*** play! The director was ***unimaginative***.

Adjectives describe many different things, such as size, shape, colour, quality, origin or nationality, material, and the speaker's or writer's opinion.

It is common to find two or more adjectives before a noun. However, they cannot be strung together randomly; rather, they follow a fairly strict order, from top to bottom:

Observation/Opinion	:	lovely, boring, beautiful, fascinating
Size	:	petite, gigantic, high, long
Shape	:	round, square, oval, circular
Age	:	old, new, young
Colour	:	red, blue, green, yellow
Nationality/Origin	:	Chinese, American, British, Christian
Material	:	gold, silver, silk, linen

E.g.

- *small old wooden box*
- *beautiful colourful Turkish rug*

Some pointers when using Adjectives

Your opinion usually precedes any other adjective.

E.g.

*Those **horrible yellow** chairs; a **foolish young** boy.*

It is common to use two adjectives, but it is unusual to use three or more adjectives.

Use commas to separate adjectives from the same category, e.g. *opinion*.

- *A **handsome, charming** man.*

You do not have to use commas if the adjectives are from different categories, e.g. opinion and nationality.

- *A **wealthy Japanese** businessman.*

Comparison of Adjectives

Adjectives are useful when you want to compare things. Adjectives have three degrees: *positive, comparative, superlative*.

The **positive** merely describes a noun, e.g. a *tall* child.

The **comparative** compares one person, animal or object with another.

E.g.

- *She is **taller** than her mother.*

The **superlative** compares a person, animal or object with more than one other.

E.g.

- *She is the **tallest** in her class.*

How do you use adjectives to show comparison?

Words containing one or two syllables take the suffix *-er* in the comparative form and *-est* in the superlative.

Many adjectives containing two syllables and all adjectives containing three or more syllables have the word *more* or *most* before the adjective to convey the comparative and superlative respectively.

E.g.

- ***more*** *intelligent,* ***most*** *comfortable.*

Here are some examples:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
fast	faster	fastest
small	smaller	smallest
careful	more careful	most careful
generous	more generous	most generous

Here are some examples where the comparative and superlative do not have the *-er* or *-est* suffix:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
bad	worse	worst
good	better	best
many	more	most
much	more	most

Now test yourself!
How well do you know your adjectives?

.....

Test 1

Correct the following sentences by changing the order of the adjectives. Explain why the order is incorrect.

1. I want to buy that ruby oval ring.

2. Chartres is a French beautiful city near Paris.

3. I'm going to feed the small pitiful cat.

4. They have a new blue charming letter box.

5. John wore a silk blue tie to the wedding.

Test 2

Fill in the table with the correct comparative and superlative adjectives.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
active		
old		
simple		
far		
little		

ANSWERS

Test 1

The sentences are incorrect as they do not follow the accepted order of adjectives. Here are the sentences, with the correct versions:

1. Incorrect: I want to buy that ruby oval ring.
   (material, shape)
   Correct: I want to buy that oval ruby
   (shape, material) ring.

2. Incorrect: Chartres is a French beautiful city near Paris.
   (nationality, opinion)
   Correct: Chartres is a beautiful French
   (opinion, nationality) city near Paris.

3. Incorrect: I'm going to feed the small pitiful cat.
   (size, opinion)
   Correct: I'm going to feed the pitiful small
   (opinion, size) cat.

4. Incorrect: They have a new blue charming letter box. (age, colour, opinion)
   Correct: They have a charming new blue (opinion, age, colour) letter box.

5. Incorrect: John wore a silk blue tie to the wedding. (material, colour)
   Correct: John wore a blue silk (colour, material) tie to the wedding.

Test 2

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
active	more active	most active
old	older	oldest
simple	simpler	simplest
far	farther, further	farthest, furthest
little	less	least

Tenses

Tenses show when something happens.

Present tense - I eat.
Past tense - I ate.
Future tense - I will eat.

Verbs are one of the most important classes of words. They tell us what is happening in terms of actions or the state of affairs in a particular situation.

E.g.

- *The children* ***talk*** (verb) *very loudly.*
- *My daughter* ***is*** (verb) *a talented artist.*

All sentences require a verb. The tenses are parts of verbs that tell you the time when the action referred to in the sentence took place.

The base form is the basic verb form. It is so called as it has no inflections (i.e., no endings such as *-s*, *-ing* or *-ed*).

This is the form of the verb that is listed in dictionary entries. The base form of any verb can be changed into a singular or plural, present or past tense.

E.g.

- *smile* (base form)
- *smiles* (third person singular, present tense)
- *smiled* (past tense)

In the English Language there are two tenses: the present and past. As the terms imply, the present tense refers to actions and states in the present while the past tense talks about actions and states in the past. To refer to the future, we often use the present tense and modal verbs.

E.g.

- *We **leave** for London tonight.*
  (using the present tense)
- *We **will attend** the dinner on Friday.*
  (using the modal verb *will*)

The present tense is the most basic tense in the English Language. Generally we use it to refer to present activities or to talk about routines or habits. We also use the present tense to refer to facts and beliefs. It is also used to make general statements about people and things.

E.g.

- *She **leaves** for work at 7.30 every morning.* (routine)
- *The sun **rises** in the east.* (fact)
- *Harry usually **drinks** a glass of wine with his meal.*
  (generalisation)

Regular verbs are made past tense by adding *-ed*.

E.g.

- *The audience* ***laughed*** (past tense) *loudly at his joke*. [*laugh* (base form) + *ed*]

Irregular verbs differ from the base form as they have a different spelling to indicate the past tense.

E.g.

- *swim* (base form) - *swam* (past tense).

Unlike the present tense, the form of a verb in the past tense is the same whether the subject is singular or plural.

E.g.

- *The* ***girl*** (singular subject) ***drank*** *the water.*
  The ***girls*** (plural subject) ***drank*** *the water.*

Other parts of the verb are the present participle and past participle. (See table on page 50: Different forms of the Verb.) The present participle and the auxiliary verb *be* form the **continuous tenses**.

The **present continuous** indicates ongoing or future activity.

E.g.

- *The workers **are repairing** the burst pipe.*
- *I **am taking** my dog for a walk in an hour's time.*

The **past continuous** is used for an activity that was ongoing at a certain point in the past.

E.g.

- *She **was working** very hard last month.*

It is also used to indicate an ongoing situation that was interrupted by a single past action.

E.g.

- *The audience **was enjoying** the concert when the police **arrived**.*

The **present perfect tense** is used when an action or situation in the present is linked to a moment in the past. It is often used to show actions that have happened up to the present but aren't completed yet.

The **present perfect tense** is formed by *have/has* + past participle; the **past perfect** is formed by *had* + past participle.

Examples of the use of the **present perfect tense**.

- *We can go out now – my car **has been** repaired.*
- *I **have worked** in the city for the past five years.*

Often, speakers of English make mistakes with the use of the **present perfect** and **simple past**.

E.g.

- *I **have watched** that movie on Friday.*

The use of the simple past tense would be correct in this instance:

E.g.

- *I **watched** that movie on Friday.*

Usually the **present perfect** should not be linked to a specific time (in this case, Friday) but to a duration of time such as *recently, before,* and *since last year*.

Most people have a problem with the **past perfect tense**. A rule to remember is: when a sentence refers to two past actions, you use the past perfect to indicate the action that took place first.

E.g.

- *By the time I **arrived*** (simple past), *the train **had left*** (past perfect).
- *To my horror, I **realised*** (simple past) *at the airport that I **had forgotten*** (past perfect) *to bring my passport!*

Different Forms of the Verbs

BASE FORM	SINGULAR PRESENT TENSE	PRESENT PARTICIPLE	PAST TENSE	PAST PARTICIPLE
begin	begins	beginning	began	begun
bite	bites	biting	bit	bitten
catch	catches	catching	caught	caught
fall	falls	falling	fell	fallen
forget	forgets	forgetting	forgot	forgotten
freeze	freezes	freezing	froze	frozen
give	gives	giving	gave	given
know	knows	knowing	knew	known
run	runs	running	ran	run
sing	sings	singing	sang	sung
write	writes	writing	wrote	written

Subject-Verb Agreement

Singular subjects go with singular verbs while plural subjects go with plural verbs.

Match your subject with the correct verb form.

Have you ever wondered why we say *She looks very pretty* and not *She look very pretty*? The answer lies in grammar rules on concord, or subject-verb agreement. The basic rule is that singular verbs must agree with singular nouns, while plural verbs must agree with plural nouns. What is a noun? It is a word to name *people, places, events, things or ideas.*

E.g.

- *teacher, Orchard Road, party, basket, beauty.*

How do you recognise a singular or plural verb?

A singular verb is one that has an *s* added to it in the present tense, such as *writes, plays, runs*, and uses forms such as *is, was, has, does*. A plural verb does not have an *s* added to it, such as *write, play, run*, and uses forms such as *are, were, have and do*.

E.g.

- ***Jack*** (singular noun) ***enjoys*** (singular verb) *playing golf every Sunday*.
- ***The men*** (plural noun) ***enjoy*** (plural verb) *playing golf every Sunday.*

In the case of pronouns, *he*, *she* and *it* take a singular verb while *you*, *we* and *they* take a plural verb.

We (plural pronoun) ***think*** (plural verb) *that* ***she*** (singular pronoun) ***is*** (singular verb) *innocent*.

However, there are exceptions to the rules mentioned earlier.

If the two nouns are conjoined and represent a single idea, then the verb is singular.

E.g.

- *Bread and butter **is** available on request.*
- *Fish and chips **is** my favourite meal.*
- Law and order ***is*** the new government's priority.

Problems also arise when the speaker or writer is faced with more than one noun or pronoun in the sentence.

E.g.

- *The quality of our students' essays **has fallen** drastically.*

In this case, the verb ***has fallen*** agrees with the subject (first noun mentioned) or head noun of the noun phrase, ***quality***.

E.g.

- *The spokes of that wheel **are** broken.*

In this case, the subject of the sentence is ***spokes*** (plural head noun), hence the plural verb ***are***.

When a singular and a plural noun or pronoun (subjects) are joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb should agree with the subject nearer the verb.

E.g.

- *The girls or their **father collects** the newspapers every morning.*

In this example, the singular verb, ***collects**,* agrees with the noun closer to it, the singular noun, ***father***.

People often get confused when deciding whether a singular or plural verb should agree with some **collective nouns**.

E.g.
Should we say

- *The football team **is*** (singular verb) *ready to be photographed.*

Or

- *The football team **are*** (plural verb) *ready to be photographed.*

Well, it all depends on whether we are thinking of the team as a single collective unit or as individuals. If it is the former, then the verb should be singular. However, if we are considering the team as comprising individual members who are not acting as a single unit, then we use the plural verb.

Other examples:

- *My family* (considered as a collective unit) ***comes*** *from Kuala Lumpur.*
- *The audience* (considered as individuals) ***were*** *clamouring for more songs but the singer left the stage.*
- *The Committee* ***is*** *ready to present its findings this afternoon.*

A point to note is that American English almost always treats collective nouns as singular, hence a singular verb is used with it.

Nouns which have two parts such as *spectacles, scissors* or *pants* require plural verbs.

E.g.

- *My spectacles* ***are*** *missing.*
- *These scissors* ***need*** *sharpening.*

However, when regarded as a pair, a singular verb is used.

E.g.

- *My **pair** of spectacles **is** missing.*
- *This **pair** of scissors **needs** sharpening.*

There are some occasions when we should use ***singular verbs***.

Expressions such as *each of, one of, anybody, each, every* and *nobody* must be followed by a singular verb.

E.g.

- ***Each** of the ladies **has** a designer handbag.*
- ***Anybody is** allowed to enter this hall.*
- ***Nobody is** disappointed with the results.*

A singular subject with attached phrases introduced by *with* or *like* or *as well as* is followed by a singular verb.

E.g.

- *The **boy**, with several others, **was** late for school.*
- ***Meiling**, like Johan, **is** tall for her age.*
- ***Tom**, as well as Fred, **is** on the first shift.*

Two singular nouns or pronouns separated by *either ... or* or *neither ... nor* take a singular verb.

E.g.

- ***Either** he or she **has** eaten the cake.*
- ***Neither** Meera nor Gopal **knows** anything about the accident.*

Amounts, even if plural, have a singular verb.

E.g.

- *Sixty dollars **is** too much to pay for that dress.*
- *Ten kilometres **is** too long a distance for me to walk.*
- *Five kilogrammes of flour **is** all that I need for my baking.*

There are some occasions when we should use **plural verbs**. When two or more plural subjects are connected by *and*, the verb is plural.

E.g.

- *The officers and their men **were** patrolling the area.*
- *Domestic cats and dogs **need** adequate care and attention.*

Plural subjects separated by *either ... or* or *neither ... nor*, *both ... and*, and *all but* take a plural verb.

E.g.

- ***Either** the boys **or** the girls **are** to blame.*
- ***Neither** the contestants **nor** the audience **were** aware of the fire.*
- ***All but** Sam **are** going to the cinema.*
- ***Both** the twins and their parents **are** attending their graduation ceremony.*

Another problem that users of English face is this: does the verb in a sentence agree with the noun (subject) before it or the noun or adjective after it (subject complement)?

The answer is that it should agree with the subject – the noun before it.

E.g.

- *The **thing*** (subject) *we need at this moment **is*** (verb) *more eggs.*
- *The **greatest benefit*** (subject) ***is*** (verb) *the opportunities presented to our staff.*

Prepositions

A preposition is a word that shows the relationship between an object – a noun or pronoun – and other words in a sentence.

Memorise how prepositions are to be used. There is no easy way out. Our notes here may help too!

The preposition is placed before a noun or pronoun. It shows the relationship between nouns and pronouns in the same sentence. It may be used to indicate *position, place, direction* or *time.*

Prepositions of Position

With regard to place, *in* tends to be used with larger or enclosed areas such as cities, countries and tunnels, whereas *at* tends to be used for smaller places, points on a journey, or for activities typically associated with a place.

E.g.

- *The couple will spend their money **in** London.* (large area)
- *Their train stops **at** London Paddington.* (point on a journey)
- *The boys are running around **in** the library.* (enclosed area)
- *They boys are **at** the library, reading.* (reading is associated with libraries)

When talking about heights or levels, you use *below, over* or *under.*

E.g.

- *The dog is sleeping **under** the bed.*
- *The plane flew **over** the hills.*

Prepositions of Direction

These prepositions indicate a movement towards a goal.

E.g.

- *Let's go **to** the market.*
- *The swimmers walked **into** the sea.*
- *The students eagerly ran **towards** the campsite.*

Prepositions of Time

On is used for days and dates.

E.g.

- *The wedding will be **on** Saturday.*

At is used to indicate a specific time.

E.g.

- *I'll see you **at** six o'clock.*

From ... to and *during* are used to indicate a period of time.

E.g.

- *The tulip festival is **from** March **to** May.*
- ***During** the school holidays, students engage in community projects.*

Other prepositions indicating time are *before, until, after, since* and *by*.

E.g.

- *My wife exercises **before** breakfast.*
- *You can visit her **after** office hours.*
- *You must submit the forms **by** 1st July.*
- ***Until** now, I've always thought that she was a meticulous officer.*
- *She has been making a lot of progress **since** she started her exercise programme.*

Troublesome Prepositions

There are times when we are unsure which preposition we should use. These are some troublesome prepositions.

Beside and Besides

Beside means "next to".

E.g.

- *She sits **beside** me in the office.*

Besides means "other than" or "apart from".

E.g.

- ***Besides** enjoying cooking, I like reading a book when I'm free.*

Between and Among

Between is used when referring to two people, places or things.

Among is used for three or more people, places or things.

E.g.

- *Divide the cake **among** the five of you.*
- *The twins shared the sweets **between** themselves.*

'Differ with' and 'Differ from'

When you *differ with* someone, you disagree with that person's opinion or idea.

When you *differ from* someone, it means that you are unlike that person.

E.g.

- *The form teacher **differed with** the English teacher on the boy's abilities.*
- *Mr Chan **differed from** his predecessor in terms of management style.*

Sometimes you may find it hard to decide which preposition you should use with a word.

This is a list to help you.

- *according* ***to***
- *angry* ***with***
- *ashamed* ***of***
- *bored* ***with*** (something)
- *comment* ***on***
- *disagree* ***with***
- *disappointed* ***in*** (something)
- *disappointed* ***with*** (somebody)
- *disgusted* ***at*** (something)
- *disgusted* ***with*** (somebody)
- *pride oneself* ***on*** (something)
- *protest* ***against***
- *rely* ***on***
- *similar* ***to***
- *write* ***about*** (something)
- *write* ***to*** (somebody)

Phrasal verbs – verbs used with a preposition or adverb. Phrasal verbs are never hyphenated.

- *back **away** – to retreat*
- *back **down** – retract or withdraw* (from a position or argument)
- *back **out** – fail to keep an agreement*
- *back **up** – make a copy of computer data*
- *back* (someone) ***up** – to support someone*
- *fall **apart** – break into pieces* (literally) *or become emotionally disturbed* (figuratively)
- *fall **behind** – make little progress*
- *fall **out** – have a bad relationship with someone*
- (something) *fall **through** – be unsuccessful*
- *get **across** – communicate successfully*
- *get **ahead** – make progress*
- *get **along** – have a good relationship with someone*
- *get **around to** – finally manage to do something*
- *get **back at** – take revenge*
- *put **across** – communicate*
- *put* (someone) ***down** – insult someone*
- *put **forward** – suggest or nominate*
- *put **up** – allow someone to stay at your house for a few days*
- *put **up with** – tolerate*

Adverbs

An adverb is a word that modifies verbs, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions.

While adjectives tell you more about a noun or pronoun, adverbs do the same for verbs. Adverbs tell you, among other things, how (manner), when (time) or where (place) an action took place.

E.g.

- *She sang **beautifully**.* (manner)
- *She came **early** for the interview.* (time)
- *I stayed **here** when I visited Hanoi.* (place)

Some adverbs also moderate or intensify adjectives or adverbs.

E.g.

- *That was an **extremely** entertaining performance.*
- *I wouldn't recommend it. It was a **very** bad show.*
- *I went to the market **rather** early on Saturday.*
- *She danced **remarkably** well.*

Possible Positions of Adverbs in a Sentence

At the beginning of a sentence
(usually to emphasise a point).

- ***Finally,*** *we found our way back to the camp.*

In the middle of a sentence.

- *The philanthropist* ***rarely*** *reveals his identity when he makes his donations.*

At the end of a sentence, after a verb.

- *She screamed* ***loudly****.*

Adverbs may be categorised into the following classes:

Manner	:	gracefully, sadly, slowly, well
Time	:	before, now, since, eventually
Place	:	here, there, everywhere, nowhere
Degree	:	almost, quite, very, rather
Number	:	once, twice
Interrogative	:	where, when, how

Adverbs of Manner

Adverbs of manner tell you the way an action is performed. They answer the question **how?** Usually, the adverb follows the verb.

E.g.

- *The students cheered **enthusiastically** when they were told that they were getting a holiday.*

Sometimes, the adverb is placed before the verb to emphasise the manner of the action.

E.g.

- *He **deliberately** tripped the rude boy.*
- *She **suddenly** appeared out of nowhere.*

Although many adverbs of manner end in *-ly*, not all do.

E.g.

- *She's trying **hard** to impress the judges.*

Adverbs of Time

Adverbs of time answer the questions **when? how long?** and **how often?**

E.g.

- *Lunch will be ready **soon**.*
- *Jenny visited us twice last year but we haven't seen her **since**.*
- *Harold **rarely** visits his grandparents.*

Possible Positions of Adverbs of Time in a Sentence

At the beginning of the sentence, usually for emphasis.

E.g.

- ***Frankly,*** *the job is not worth doing for the money alone.*

After the verb or at the end of a sentence.

E.g.

- *The school looked very different* ***then****.*

Before the verb.

E.g.

- *The neighbours* ***now*** *realise what had happened.*

Adverbs of Degree

Adverbs of degree answer the question **how much?** or **to what extent?** They increase or reduce the force of the word they describe.

They are usually used with adjectives and are placed before the adjective that they describe.

E.g.

- *The students put up a **totally** entertaining performance.*

They are used with other adverbs and are placed before the adverb they describe.

E.g.

- *The young man walked **incredibly** slowly.*

When used with verbs, they come before the verb.

E.g.

- *The audience **absolutely** hated the show.*

Adverbs are used to indicate comparison in the same way as adjectives. They generally form the comparative or superlative by adding *more* and *most* to the positive adverb.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
early	earlier	earliest
long	longer	longest
bravely	more bravely	most bravely
carefully	more carefully	most carefully
greedily	more greedily	most greedily

Exceptions:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
badly	worse	worst
well	better	best

Confusion between Adjectives and Adverbs

Adjectives describe nouns and pronouns.
Using adjectives to modify verbs, adverbs or other adjectives is not Standard English.

E.g.

- *He behaves strange.* (not Standard English)
- *He behaves strangely.* (Standard English)
- *After a few lessons Tom sang real well.* (not Standard English)
- *After a few lessons Tom sang really well.* (Standard English)

Now test yourself!
How well do you know your adverbs?

.....

Re-write the following sentences so that they are grammatically correct.

1. The team played good.

_____

2. The tiger stalked its prey slow and quiet.

_____

3. It's rude to talk so loud on the bus.

_____

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate adverb.
Use the words in the box to fill in the blanks.

shabbily	rarely	slightly	firmly
surprisingly	recently	frantically	when

4. _____, when I was in Bangkok on a business trip, I had a strange experience. A frail-looking Thai girl, dressed 5. _____ in a torn dress, came up to me. Thinking that she was just another beggar, I took a coin from my pocket and gave it to her. However, she took no interest in it. She placed her grubby hands 6. _____ on my briefcase. When I tried to remove her hand, she said something 7. _____ in Thai. I was 8. _____ annoyed by her. She then pointed to a street food vendor and urged me to buy her some food. I 9. _____ pay attention to street children but 10. _____ I found myself getting her some food.

ANSWERS

1. The team played good. (*good* is an adjective)
   Amended: The team played well.
   (The adverb *well* modifies the verb *played.*)

2. The tiger stalked its prey slow and quiet.
   (*slow* and *quiet* are adjectives)
   Amended: The tiger stalked its prey
   slowly and quietly. (The adverbs *slowly*
   and *quietly* modify the verb *stalked.*)

3. It's rude to talk so loud on the bus.
   (*loud* is an adjective)
   Amended: It's rude to talk so loudly on the bus.
   (The adverb *loudly* modifies the verb *talk.)*

4. Recently

5. shabbily

6. firmly

7. frantically

8. slightly

9. rarely

10. surprisingly

Conjunctions

A conjunction is a word that connects similar words or group of words such as phrases, clauses and sentences.

CONJUNCTIONS

Conjunctions are connectors that link words, phrases, clauses or sentences. There are two main types of conjunctions: coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.

Coordinating conjunctions join equivalent word classes, phrases or clauses. Joined words and phrases should be of the same class or type, and joined clauses should be main clauses.

Coordination can take place between two or more main clauses.

E.g.

- *Emily went to see a doctor and was given two days' medical leave but went to work anyway.*

The main coordinating conjunctions are **and, but** and **or**.

Conjunctions are useful as they help avoid unnecessary repetition of words or phrases.

E.g.

- *It is a small kitchen. It is a practical kitchen.*
  *→ It is a small **but** practical kitchen.*
- *John will inform you of the results. John's assistant will inform you of the results.*
  *→ John **or** his assistant will inform you of the results.*
- *They gave their opinions. I gave my opinions.*
  *→ They gave their opinions **and** I gave mine.*

Coordinating conjunctions may be used in several ways.

Addition

The conjunction **and** connects words and phrases that are linked in some way.

E.g.

- *Sam **and** I will not be attending the meeting.*

The conjunctions **both … and** are used as a pair for emphasis.

E.g.

- ***Both** the girls **and** I were eager to participate in the competition.*

Contrast

The conjunctions **but**, **though** and **so** link words, phrases or clauses that have contrasting meanings. In the case of clauses containing a contrasting idea, **whereas** and **while** are used.

E.g.

- *Slowly **but** surely the ancient temple was painstakingly rebuilt.*
- *Jane, **though** looking better, is still feeling weak after the operation.*
- *Alex ate too much at the buffet lunch, **so** he skipped dinner.*
- *Mrs Gopal is firm with her students **whereas** Mrs Chan tends to be more lenient.*
- ***While** Stanley tended the garden, his wife baked a cake.*

A Choice or Alternative

You use the conjunction **or** to link words, phrases or clauses that present a choice or alternative.

E.g.

- *Would you like to have dinner now **or** later?*
- *I'll contact you by phone **or** email.*

The pairs **either … or** and **neither … nor** are used to lend greater emphasis to the alternatives.

E.g.

- ***Neither** the boys **nor** Sally believes her story.*
- ***Either** Meiling **or** Sharon is going to the airport today.*

Cause and Effect

The coordinating conjunctions **so** and **therefore** link a cause to its effect.

E.g.

- *He had worked hard, **so** his success was not unexpected.*
- *They heard the announcement on the radio and **therefore** took another route to avoid the traffic jam.*

Unlike coordinating conjunctions, **subordinating conjunctions** join an independent clause to a dependent clause.

The dependent clause cannot stand on its own and often does not make sense without the main clause.

Most subordinating conjunctions are single words, e.g. *although, as, because, since, when.*

- **Although** the journey to the disaster site was difficult, the volunteers want to continue to support the project.
- **Since** they refused to obey the school rules, the boys were suspended from school for a week.
- Sarah was waiting for the bus to arrive **when** she fell.

However, some subordinating conjunctions consist more than one word, e.g. *except that, as long as, even if.*

E.g.

- ***Even if*** *he gives me a lift, I am not going to the funfair.*
- ***Except for*** *Jane, all are expected at the lunch.*
- *She will be allowed to keep her pet* ***as long as*** *she looks after it well.*
- ***Even if*** *he gives me a lift, I am not going to the funfair.*

These are some subordinating conjunctions that convey the following ideas:

Cause	:	since, because, so that
Concession and Comparison	:	although, as though, even though
Condition	:	even if, unless
Place	:	where, wherever
Time	:	after, as soon as, whenever

Correlative Conjunctions

Some conjunctions combine with other words to form **correlative conjunctions.** They appear together, joining various sentence elements that should be treated as grammatically equal.

Some examples are *both…and; not only, but also; either … or/neither … nor; whether … or.*

- **Whether** you win **or** lose this competition is not the issue; it's how hard you've tried.

Using "like" as a Conjunction.

Although *like* is often used as a conjunction, this is regarded as rather informal and should be avoided in formal writing.

E.g.

- *He doesn't go out **like** he used to.* (informal)
- *He doesn't go out the way he used to***.** (formal)

Instead of "Like I told you yesterday, we aren't going to the zoo today", say "As I told you yesterday, we aren't going to the zoo today".

Instead of "It looks like it's going to rain", say "It looks as if it's going to rain".

Misuse of "either ... or"

This construction presents a choice between two alternatives. However, the two alternatives should belong to the same word class.

E.g.

- *We can go to **either Bangkok or Bali** for our vacation this year.* (Both are nouns.)
- *They can eat **either now or after** the show.* (Both are adverbs.)

Sometimes *either* is placed in an incorrect position.

E.g.

- *She can take **either the exam or ask** to be interviewed.* (One is a noun – *exam* – and the other is a verb – *ask*.)

The correct phrasing should be: She can **either take** the exam **or ask** to be interviewed. (Both are verbs.)

Misuse of "due to"

Due to is often used in place of *because of* or *as a result of*. However, the correct way to use it is when it follows a noun or pronoun, i.e., in a sentence structure such as "something is due to...".

Therefore, the sentence below is incorrect:

- *Our departure was delayed **due to** bad weather.*

It should be recast as:

- *The delay in our departure was **due to** bad weather.*

Now test yourself!
How well do you know your conjunctions?

Incorrect conjunctions have been used in the sentences below. Choose the correct conjunction from the box to correct each sentence.

but	so	as	or	although	until	if	unless	and	whereas

1. Vast forests of trees used to cover the mountain slopes, **and** much of them have been cleared for roads.
2. The old lady spoke to them in a soft **but** gentle voice.
3. Are we going to walk **and** take the bus to town?
4. It was getting late, **while** I decided to take a taxi.
5. Joyce enjoys listening to pop songs, **and** her husband prefers classical music.
6. **While** it was raining, we decided to cancel our plans to visit the zoo.
7. **Unless** you do not try, you will not succeed.
8. **Unless** James knows he's wrong, he won't admit it.

9. Wait **when** your mother comes back.

10. She won't go to the party **before** she gets a lift from a friend.

ANSWERS

1. Vast forests of trees used to cover the mountain slopes, **but** much of them have been cleared for roads.
   – **but** introduces a contrary idea. The trees used to cover the mountain slopes but no longer do so.

2. The old lady spoke to them in a soft **and** gentle voice.
   – **and** provides a similar positive aspect of the old lady's voice.

3. Are we going to walk **or** take the bus to town?
   – or indicates the choices available to the speaker and his friend/s.

4. It was getting late, **so** I decided to take a taxi.
   – **so** indicates a consequence of the preceding clause.

5. Joyce enjoys listening to pop songs, **whereas** her husband prefers classical music.
   – **whereas** introduces a clause that has a contrasting idea.

6. **As** it was raining, we decided to cancel
   our plans to visit the zoo.
   – **As** suggests that the clause provides a reason.

7. **If** you do not try, you will not succeed.
   – **If** indicates a likely possibility or condition.

8. **Although** James knows he's wrong, he won't admit it.
   – **Although** expresses a concession,
   that there is something positive and
   negative in the same sentence.

9. Wait **until** your mother comes back.
   – **until** indicates a specific time.

10. She won't go to the party **unless**
    she gets a lift from a friend.
    – **unless** indicates a condition.

Grammar Gaffes

A gaffe is an embarrassing mistake people make in public.

This compilation of corrections to common grammar gaffes may save you from unintended awkward moments.

Gaffe: When I will arrive, I will call you.
Correct: When I arrive, I will call you.

Gaffe: He don't care about me anymore.
Correct: He doesn't care about me anymore.

Gaffe: I am not speaking to nobody here.
Correct: I am not speaking to anybody here.

Gaffe: To gain insights on the matter.
Correct: To gain insights into the matter.

Gaffe: Irregardless of what she said, he should not have punched her.
Correct: Regardless of what she said, he should not have punched her.

Gaffe: Can you borrow/loan me $2?
Correct: Can you lend me $2? May I borrow $2?

Gaffe: I am staying in Jurong.
Correct: I live in Jurong.

Gaffe: He plays computer games everyday.
Correct: He plays computer games every day.

Gaffe: I prefer green tea more than English tea.
Correct: I prefer green tea to English tea.

Gaffe: On hindsight, I should have attended that meeting.
Correct: In hindsight, I should have attended that meeting.

Gaffe: He stayed at Indonesia for a week.
Correct: He stayed in Indonesia for a week.

Gaffe: The fire alarm has gone on again.
Correct: The fire alarm has gone off again.

Gaffe: He emphasised on the importance of being punctual for meetings.
Correct: He emphasised the importance of being punctual for meetings.

Gaffe: The commander stressed on the importance of being fit.
Correct: The commander stressed the importance of being fit.

Gaffe: He travelled between 1 January to 10 January.
Correct: He travelled between 1 January and 10 January.

Gaffe: Divide the chocolates among the two of you.
Correct: Divide the chocolates between the two of you.

Gaffe: He smoked despite the continuous warnings of his Principal.
Correct: He smoked despite the continual warnings of his Principal.

Gaffe: Help arrived just on time.
Correct: Help arrived just in time.

Gaffe: Do you have sometime to check this?
Correct: Do you have some time to check this?

Gaffe: This phone costs a hundred over dollars.
Correct: This phone costs over a hundred dollars.

Gaffe: This chocolate bar comprises of nuts.
Correct: This chocolate bar comprises nuts.

Gaffe: Here is the details of the meeting.
Correct: Here are the details of the meeting.

Gaffe: What does it comes with?
Correct: What does it come with?

Gaffe: It doesn't makes sense.
Correct: It doesn't make sense.

Gaffe: He look very serious.
Correct: He looks very serious.

Gaffe: She always say I very lazy.
Correct: She always says that I am very lazy.

Gaffe: The place I've been to are all in Asia.
Correct: The places I've been to are all in Asia.

Gaffe: My three weeks experience in catering ...
Correct: My three-week experience in catering ...

Gaffe: I eat fish yesterday.
Correct: I ate fish yesterday.

Gaffe: What happen yesterday?
Correct: What happened yesterday?

Gaffe: I see you last week.
Correct: I saw you last week.

Gaffe: How much you willing to let go?
Correct: How much are you willing to sell it for?

Gaffe: I want to talk on this problem.
Correct: I want to talk about this problem.

Gaffe: In my personal opinion
Correct: In my opinion

Gaffe: My fellow colleague will attend to you.
Correct: My colleague will attend to you.

Gaffe: I am concern about his health.
Correct: I am concerned about his health.

Common Errors in Singapore

HEARD IN SINGAPORE

At Home

Singaporean Blunder:	Please on/off it.
Standard English:	Please turn it on/off.
Singaporean Blunder:	Please off the tap.
Standard English:	Please turn off the tap.
Singaporean Blunder:	Please off/close the light.
Standard English:	Please turn off the light.
Singaporean Blunder:	Please on/open the light.
Standard English:	Please switch on the light.
Singaporean Blunder:	He likes to play cheat when we play card games.
Standard English:	He likes to cheat when we play cards.
Singaporean Blunder:	With regards to the matter, I think ...
Standard English:	With regard to the matter, I think ...

Singaporean Blunder:	Why you never do your homework?
Standard English:	Why didn't you do your homework?
Singaporean Blunder:	You got eat already?
Standard English:	Have you eaten?
Singaporean Blunder:	I lazy to go out.
Standard English:	I am too lazy to go out.
Singaporean Blunder:	He scored 8 upon 10 for the Math test.
Standard English:	He scored 8 out of 10 for the Math test.

In the Office

Singaporean Blunder:	Lisa is taking writing classes to upgrade her skills.
Standard English:	Lisa is taking writing classes to improve her skills.
Singaporean Blunder:	Eric wants to apply leave next week.
Standard English:	Eric wants to apply for leave next week.

Singaporean Blunder: I feedback to her.
Standard English: I gave her feedback.

Singaporean Blunder: Please revert to me as soon as possible.
Standard English: Please reply as soon as possible.

However, using *revert* to mean "reply to" is common in some varieties of English, e.g. Indian English.

Singaporean Blunder: Today is my off day. [An off day is a day when things don't go well for you]
Standard English: Today is my day off.

Singaporean Blunder: Don't worry, sure can one.
Standard English: Don't worry. It will surely work.

Singaporean Blunder: So late already. Why never go back?
Standard English: It's late now. Why haven't you left for home?

At the Shopping Mall

Singaporean Blunder: Where is the in-charge of this shop?
Standard English: Where is the person in charge of this shop?

Singaporean Blunder: Please give me lesser salt.
Standard English: Please give me less salt.

Less is used with uncountable nouns; *few* is used with countable nouns. Lesser is an adjective meaning "not as great in size, amount or importance" (Oxford) and is a synonym for words such as "inferior" and "poorer".

Singaporean Blunder: The shop is opened from 10 am to 8 pm.
Standard English: The shop is open from 10 am to 8 pm.

Singaporean Blunder: You have key in invalid password.
Standard English: You have keyed in an invalid password.

Singaporean Blunder: You are entitle to discount.
Standard English: You are entitled to a discount.

Singaporean Blunder: You go where?
Standard English: Where are you going?

Here, There and Everywhere

Singaporean Blunder:	The driver behind just horned at you.
Standard English:	The driver behind just honked/ sounded his horn at you.
Singaporean Blunder:	He is one kind.
Standard English:	He is strange / He behaves strangely.
Singaporean Blunder:	I will fetch the kids to school.
Standard English:	I will take the kids to school.
Singaporean Blunder:	From the SLE, you exit out at Yishun.
Standard English:	From the SLE, you exit at Yishun.
Singaporean Blunder:	I need to draw money from the ATM.
Standard English:	I need to withdraw money from the ATM.
Singaporean Blunder:	Got so many car here!
Standard English:	There are so many cars here!
Singaporean Blunder:	I cannot ownself do.
Standard English:	I can't do this myself.
Singaporean Blunder:	The house sell already.
Standard English:	The house has been sold.

Redundancies

Singaporean Blunder: To make it more clearer, I will rewrite the proposal. [**More** is redundant]
Standard English: To make it clearer, I will rewrite the proposal.

Singaporean Blunder: I will reprint the document again. [**Again** is redundant]
Standard English: I will reprint the document.

Singaporean Blunder: Please repeat your question again. [**Again** is redundant]
Standard English: Please repeat your question.

Singaporean Blunder: I like blue colour bags. [**Colour** is redundant]
Standard English: I like blue bags.

Singaporean Blunder: He is big in size. [**In size** is redundant]
Standard English: He's big.

Singaporean Blunder: I will return back the files to you later. [**Back** is redundant]
Standard English: I will return the files to you later.

Singaporean Blunder:	We discussed about this during the meeting. [**About** is redundant]
Standard English:	We discussed this during the meeting.
Singaporean Blunder:	I didn't include it in. [**In** is redundant]
Standard English:	I didn't include it.
Singaporean Blunder:	Let me separate them out. [**Out** is redundant]
Standard English:	Let me separate them.
Singaporean Blunder:	The manager emphasised on the importance of exercising regularly. (**On** is not necessary)
Standard English:	The manager emphasised the importance of exercising regularly.

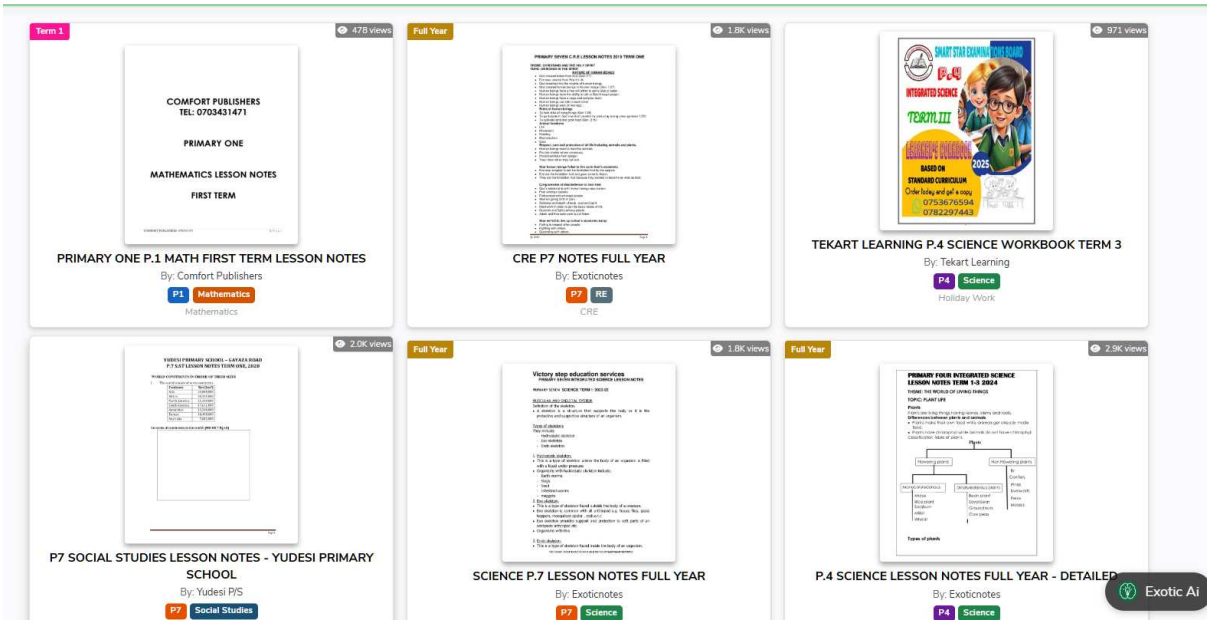
The Speak Good English Movement
recommends these resources:

www.goodenglish.org.sg
www.theoatmeal.com
www.grammaropolis.com
www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl



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