

The Grammar Guide

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How to Use This Guide

For Students

The Grammar Guide is designed to help you understand English grammar so that you can write and speak accurately. Each unit has been carefully structured to help you to find information easily and to develop your knowledge of English grammar.

When you are using a resource to edit written assignments and to improve your accuracy when speaking, it is essential to know how to find what you need. This reference book is constructed in a way that will help you find information on your own.

At the beginning of the guide, you will find the Table of Contents. This provides the content of each unit. Search the Table of Contents for general information. If you are not familiar with the terminology, go to the Student Table of Contents that follows it. Here, each section includes an example to help you identify the grammar rule. For instance, if you want to conjugate a regular verb such as *walk* in the simple past tense, you will find it in Unit 4 Verbs: Simple Tenses under the subsection 4.2 Simple Past Tense. In the Student Table of Contents you will find an example of the simple past tense of a regular verb, “I **played** soccer last Saturday.”

At the end of *The Grammar Guide*, there is an alphabetical index of every important element of the book. Search through the Index for more specific information. For instance, if you are looking for the plural form of the noun *child*, you will look under *plural* in the Index.

For Teachers

The purpose of this guide is to help you integrate form-focused instruction into your teaching. Using this book in a classroom allows students to be aware of their errors and, with help, be able to use this guide to try to correct mistakes on their own. You can use this teaching tool to explain language terminology, provide examples in order to give corrective feedback, answer student questions or raise consciousness about frequent or common errors. Students build on this knowledge when they carry out meaningful tasks with the support of *The Grammar Guide*.

The Québec Education Program and the Progression of Learning at the Secondary Level for English as a Second Language clearly state that there is no predetermined order in which language conventions are acquired. Consequently, repeated exposure to language conventions in a variety of contexts is crucial to the development of students’ linguistic knowledge. Focus on form is beneficial to ESL learners and plays a part in English language acquisition.

The Structure of a Unit

The Grammar Guide is divided into twenty colour-coded units. Each unit is structured in the same way.

The unit number helps you identify the unit.

The title of the unit tells you what the unit is about.

The examples at the beginning demonstrate the grammar rules that will be explained in the unit.

Most units are divided into subsections. You can easily identify them by their numbers.

The subsections of each unit have recurring questions.

Questions beginning with *What* explain the meaning of the grammar rule.

Questions beginning with *When do you use* explain the different situations where you apply the grammar rule.

Questions beginning with *How do you form* explain the formation rules so you can use the grammar rule in a sentence.

Unit 2

Nouns

Emma is a student in high school.

A noun is a word that indicates a person, place or thing. Most nouns have singular and plural forms.

[2.1] Proper and Common Nouns

Chef Luigi wrote a great cookbook.

What are proper and common nouns?

Proper nouns represent a specific person, place or thing. They always begin with a capital letter.

Anil visited the Empire State Building in New York.

Common nouns identify a person, place or thing in general. Common nouns begin with a capital letter.

students **Stu**

Here are some examples:

Person	
Place	

Unit 8

Questions

Are you here on vacation? Yes, I am.
Where do you live? I live in Sherbrooke.
You are a student, aren't you? Yes, I am.

There are three different forms of questions in English:

- Yes / No questions
- Information questions
- Tag questions

[8.1] Yes / No Questions

Is he a student? Yes, he is. / No, he isn't.

When do you use yes/no questions?

Use yes / no questions when the answer you are looking for is a short statement starting with yes or no.

How do you form yes/no questions?

Here are the ways to form yes / no questions.

1 When the main verb or the auxiliary verb is be:

She is on vacation.
They are going to visit Paris.
Verb be + subject + complement

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Throughout the book, you will find special features:

Be Careful! shows common errors with examples of incorrect and correct usage.

BE CAREFUL!

It's a mistake to add an *s* to the end of the nouns *information* and *homework*. They are non-count nouns.

Incorrect: I need some **informations**. Correct: I need some **information**.

Incorrect: We have a lot of **homeworks**. Correct: We have a lot of **homework**.

Cross-references help you connect one grammar rule to another.

Exceptions shows you how some words do not follow the general rules.

EXCEPTIONS

- Some nouns have only a plural form.
scissors jeans trousers pants
My **pants are** dirty. (plural verb) See Simple Present Tense, page 18.
- Some nouns always take the singular form of the verb.
news series species
subjects such as **physics and gymnastics**
That **species is** rare. (singular verb)
- Some nouns do not change form when they become plural.
fish sheep deer
A black sheep is eating. **All the sheep are** eating.
- Some nouns can have either a regular or an irregular plural.
cactus → **acti** or **cactuses** medium → **media** or **mediums**

Pronunciation shows how to pronounce problematic words.

PRONUNCIATION

There are three ways to pronounce the final *s* in plurals.

/S/ sound for nouns ending in a <i>f, k, p, t</i> or <i>th</i> sound (unvoiced consonants)	/Z/ sound for nouns ending in a <i>b, d, g, l, m, n, ng, r, th, v, w</i> or <i>y</i> sound (voiced consonants) or any vowel sound	/IZ/ sound for nouns ending in a <i>dg, s, sh, tch, x</i> or <i>z</i> sound
beliefs, graphs	jobs	badges
packs, picnics	times	crosses
maps, tapes	songs	brushes, watches
cats, kites	bathes	boxes
breaths, months	zoos	mazes

Note that *th* is listed twice. In the first column, *th* is unvoiced: the sound comes only from your tongue and teeth. In the second column, *th* is voiced: sound comes also from your voice.

More Information provides extra information about the grammar rule.

MORE INFORMATION

The expression *used to* is in the simple past tense because it describes a habit, routine or past situation that is no longer relevant in the present.

She **used to** eat junk food every day, but now she only eats healthy food.

Basics

I was born **at three thirty a.m. on Monday, February 2, 1999.**

Repeat that, please.

1.1 Cardinal and Ordinal Numbers

I'm going to invite **a hundred** people to my **eighteenth** birthday party.

What are cardinal numbers?

Cardinal numbers are the numbers used in simple counting.

0	zero	14	fourteen	28	twenty-eight
1	one	15	fifteen	29	twenty-nine
2	two	16	sixteen	30	thirty
3	three	17	seventeen	31	thirty-one
4	four	18	eighteen	40	forty
5	five	19	nineteen	50	fifty
6	six	20	twenty	60	sixty
7	seven	21	twenty-one	70	seventy
8	eight	22	twenty-two	80	eighty
9	nine	23	twenty-three	90	ninety
10	ten	24	twenty-four	100	a/one hundred
11	eleven	25	twenty-five	1000	a/one thousand
12	twelve	26	twenty-six	1 000 000	a/one million
13	thirteen	27	twenty-seven	1 000 000 000	a/one billion



MORE INFORMATION

When the numbers *hundred*, *thousand*, *million* and *billion* follow a specific number, they are always written in the singular.

two hundred
three thousand
four million
ten billion

When they do not follow a specific number, they add an **s** in the plural form.

There were **thousands** of people at the parade.

What is an ordinal number?

An ordinal number refers to the position of something in a series.

Anna is the **first** student in her class to finish her exams.

Jack is celebrating his **twelfth** birthday today.

Here is a list of ordinal numbers.

1st	first	15th	fifteenth	29th	twenty-ninth
2nd	second	16th	sixteenth	30th	thirtieth
3rd	third	17th	seventeenth	31st	thirty-first
4th	fourth	18th	eighteenth	40th	fortieth
5th	fifth	19th	nineteenth	50th	fiftieth
6th	sixth	20th	twentieth	60th	sixtieth
7th	seventh	21st	twenty-first	70th	seventieth
8th	eighth	22nd	twenty-second	80th	eightieth
9th	ninth	23rd	twenty-third	90th	ninetieth
10th	tenth	24th	twenty-fourth	99th	ninety-ninth
11th	eleventh	25th	twenty-fifth	100th	a/one hundredth
12th	twelfth	26th	twenty-sixth	1000th	a/one thousandth
13th	thirteenth	27th	twenty-seventh	1 000 000th	a/one millionth
14th	fourteenth	28th	twenty-eighth	1 000 000 000th	a/one billionth

1.2 Telling Time

What time is it?

It's **two fifteen**.

It's **a quarter past two**.

How do you tell the time?

There are two ways of telling time: from a digital clock and from an analog clock.

Telling digital time

Start the sentence with **It's** and then read the numbers in the order they appear.

2:45 It's **two forty-five**.

3:20 It's **three twenty**.

5:35 It's **five thirty-five**.

21:55 It's **nine fifty-five**.

Telling analog time

Start the sentence with **It's** and then read the minutes before the hour.



It's **a quarter past two**.



It's **half past two**.



It's **twenty past two**.



It's **a quarter to two**.

Remember:

- 1 Use the word **past** to indicate a time that comes after the hour but before the half hour.



It's **twenty past nine**.

- 2 Use the word **to** to indicate a time that comes before the hour, between half past and the full hour.



It's twenty **to** nine.

- 3 When referring to the exact hour, add the word **o'clock** after the number.



It's eight **o'clock**.

Time markers

Use the twelve-hour clock. To differentiate between day and night when telling time, use time markers.

Time markers	Examples
a.m. (after midnight)	It's two a.m.
p.m. (past midday)	It's two p.m.
in the morning	It's two o'clock in the morning.
in the afternoon	It's two o'clock in the afternoon.
in the evening	It's eight o'clock in the evening.
at night	It's eleven o'clock at night.



MORE INFORMATION

The abbreviations *a.m.* and *p.m.* come from Latin:

a.m. stands for *ante meridiem* (before midday).

p.m. stands for *post meridiem* (after midday).



BE CAREFUL!

When telling time, we say *at night* and not *in the night*.

Incorrect: The restaurant closes at twelve o'clock ~~in the night~~.

Correct: The restaurant closes at twelve o'clock **at night**.

1.3 Days

It's my birthday **on Monday**.

What are the days of the week?

The days of the week can be grouped into two categories.

Weekdays	Weekend days
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	Saturday, Sunday

How do you refer to the days of the week?

Use the preposition **on** to refer to the days of the week.

The days of the week always start with a capital letter.

On Monday, I will go to work.

He is playing football **on Sunday**.



See Prepositions,
page 94.



BE CAREFUL!

Don't confuse *Tuesday* and *Thursday*.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
--------	--------	----------------	-----------	-----------------	--------	----------

1.4 Months, Seasons and Dates

My birthday is **in February**.

I was born **on February 2, 1999**.

What are the months of the year?

These are the twelve months of the year:

January	February	March	April	May	June
July	August	September	October	November	December

Months always begin with a capital letter.

What are the four seasons?

These are the four seasons:

Season	Months
spring	March, April, May
summer	June, July, August
autumn / fall	September, October, November
winter	December, January, February

The four seasons are written without a capital letter unless they are used as a proper noun.

See Nouns, page 9.

In **winter**, we go skiing.

I watched the **Winter** Olympics.

How do you write the date?

You can write the date with or without the day of the week.

Saturday, June 15, 2013 June 15, 2013

In the first example, notice that there is a comma after the day of the week.

In both examples, notice that there is a comma between the day of the month and the year.

Dates, months and seasons in a sentence

In general, use the preposition **on** to write the date in a sentence.

My birthday is **on February 2**.

Use the preposition **in** to write only the month, the season or the year.

His vacation is **in May**.

She was born **in 2001**.

We will visit France **in the summer**.

In summer, we always go to the beach.

See Prepositions, page 94.

1.5 Imperative Sentences

Turn off the light and **go** to sleep!

What is an imperative sentence?

An imperative sentence expresses instructions, warnings, suggestions or advice. The imperative sentence uses only the base form of the verb without the subject. The subject is understood.

When do you use the imperative sentence?

Use the imperative sentence for the following situations:

- To give instructions
Open your books to page 11, please.
- To give a warning
Wait!
- To make suggestions
Write about your summer in California.
- To offer advice
Don't worry.
- To offer something to someone
Have a chocolate. **Take** two.

How do you form the verb in an imperative sentence?

Here are the ways to form the verb in an imperative sentence. Note that the verb has the same form whether the subject is singular or plural.

Affirmative form	Negative form
Verb (+ complement)	<i>Do not (Don't) + verb (+ complement)</i>
Write your name on the paper.	Do not throw your pencil at her! Please don't speak while I'm speaking!

Other uses

- 1 It is possible to use someone's name in an imperative sentence and, therefore, to state the subject. Write the name at the beginning or at the end of the sentence. Separate the name from the rest of the sentence with a comma.
Emily, don't go too fast! Sit down, **Joe**.
- 2 It is also possible to use the imperative form with the expression **let's**.
Let's go, Tyler.

1.6 Basic Sentence Structure

I have a dog.

What is a sentence?

A sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete idea and that contains a subject and a verb.

How do you form a sentence?

Here is the way to form a simple sentence.

Affirmative form	Subject	+	main verb	+	complement		
	She		works		hard.		
	Tarek and Kayla		are		students.		
Negative form	Subject	+	verb <i>be</i>	+	main verb	+	complement
	We		are		eating		pizza.
	I		do not (don't)		drink		milk.
Negative form	Subject	+	verb <i>be</i> + not	+	complement		
	He		is not (isn't)		hungry.		
	Subject	+	verb <i>be</i> + not	+	main verb	+	complement
Interrogative form	Verb <i>do</i>	+	subject	+	main verb	+	complement
	Do		you		have		four cats?
	Verb <i>be</i>	+	subject	+	complement		
Interrogative form	Is		she		your teacher?		
	Verb <i>be</i>	+	subject	+	main verb	+	complement
	Are		you		eating		pizza?

Punctuation and capitalization

A sentence always starts with a capital letter and ends with a period, an exclamation mark or a question mark.

See Punctuation, page 108.

I like pizza. **T**his pizza tastes great! **C**an I have another slice?

Nouns

Emma is a **student** in **high school**.

A noun is a word that indicates a person, place or thing. Most nouns have singular and plural forms.

2.1 Proper and Common Nouns

Chef **Luigi** wrote a great **cookbook**.

What are proper and common nouns?

Proper nouns represent a *specific* person, place or thing. They always begin with a capital letter.

Anil visited the Empire State Building in New York.

Common nouns identify a person, place or thing *in general*. Common nouns begin with a capital letter only when they start a sentence or are part of a title.

students **Students** are visiting from Ontario.

Here are some examples:

	Proper nouns	Common nouns
Person	Mark	man
	Julie	teacher
	Céline Dion	singer
Place	Canada	country
	The Eastern Townships	region
	Calgary	city

→	Proper nouns	Common nouns
Thing	The Gazette	newspaper
	New Year's Day	holiday
	War and Peace	book

How do you form plural nouns?

Regular plurals

Follow these rules to form regular plurals.

Rule	Example
Most nouns: add s	cat → cat s
Nouns ending with a consonant + y : change y to i and add es	baby → bab ies
Nouns ending in ch, s, sh, x, z or o : add es But if ch is pronounced "k," add s	brush → brush es box → box es potato → potato es stomach → stomach s
Most nouns ending in f or fe : change the f or fe to v and add es	leaf → leav es knife → kniv es
Other nouns ending in f or fe : add s	belief → belie fs chef → che fs
Nouns with a vowel before the final o : add s	zoo → zoo s

Irregular plurals

An irregular plural changes part of the spelling of the singular noun. Here are the most common irregular plural nouns.

Singular form	Plural form	Singular form	Plural form
analysis	analyses	goose	geese
cactus	cacti	hypothesis	hypotheses
child	children	louse	lice
crisis	crises	man	men
criterion	criteria	medium	media
die	dice	mouse	mice
foot	feet	oasis	oases

Singular form	Plural form	Singular form	Plural form
ox	oxen	stimulus	stimuli
person	people	tooth	teeth
phenomenon	phenomena	woman	women



EXCEPTIONS

- Some nouns have only a plural form.

scissors jeans trousers pants

My **pants are** dirty. (plural verb) See Simple Present Tense, page 18.

- Some nouns always take the singular form of the verb.

news series species

subjects such as physics and gymnastics

That **species is** rare. (singular verb)

- Some nouns do not change form when they become plural.

fish sheep deer

A black **sheep is** eating. **All the sheep are** eating.

- Some nouns can have either a regular or an irregular plural.

cactus → cacti or cactuses medium → media or mediums



PRONUNCIATION

There are three ways to pronounce the final s in plurals.

/S/ sound for nouns ending in a <i>f, k, p, t</i> or <i>th</i> sound (unvoiced consonants)	/Z/ sound for nouns ending in a <i>b, d, g, l, m, n, ng, r, th, v, w</i> or <i>y</i> sound (voiced consonants) or any vowel sound	/IZ/ sound for nouns ending in a <i>dg, s, sh, tch, x</i> or <i>z</i> sound
beliefs, graphs	jobs	badges
packs, picnics	times	crosses
maps, tapes	songs	brushes, watches
cats, kites	bathes	boxes
breaths, months	zoos	mazes

Note that *th* is listed twice. In the first column, *th* is unvoiced: the sound comes only from your tongue and teeth. In the second column, *th* is voiced: sound comes also from your voice.

2.2 Possessive Form

I took **Alex's dog** for a walk.

What is the possessive form of a noun?

The possessive form of a noun indicates that something belongs to somebody.

How do you form the possessive?

Use the apostrophe (') to show possession.

- 1 For most singular nouns, add 's.
the **girl's** room **David's** bicycle
- 2 For plural nouns that end in s, add only an apostrophe.
her **parents'** professions the **students'** books
- 3 For irregular plural nouns, add 's.
the **children's** toys **men's** basketball
- 4 For proper nouns that end in s, add 's or an apostrophe only.
Tess's book **Tess'** book



BE CAREFUL!

Adding 's or s' to a noun changes the meaning of the word.

the **boy's** house = the house belonging to only one boy

the **boys'** house = the house belonging to two or more boys

2.3 Count and Non-Count Nouns

I have five **dollars** in my wallet. (count)

I have **money** in my wallet. (non-count)

What are count and non-count nouns?

Count nouns have both a singular and a plural form. They refer to people or things that you can count.

I have to buy some **eggs**.

Non-count nouns do not have a plural form. They refer to things that you usually cannot count.

I have to buy some **coffee**.

To express quantity for non-count nouns, use measurement words such as *cup*, *glass*, *sheet* and *slice* + the preposition *of*.

This recipe asks for a **cup of** sugar.

Could I have a **glass of** water?

I need a **sheet of** paper.

Would you like a **slice of** pizza?



BE CAREFUL!

It's a mistake to add an *s* to the end of the nouns *information* and *homework*. They are non-count nouns.

Incorrect: I need some **informations**.

Correct: I need some **information**.

Incorrect: We have a lot of **homeworks**.

Correct: We have a lot of **homework**.

Here are examples of non-count nouns.

Categories	Examples
Abstract concepts	advice, courage, fun, information
Activities or sports	homework, music, reading, soccer
Food	bread, butter, fish, meat, popcorn
Gases	air, oxygen, smog, smoke, steam
Groups of similar items	furniture, luggage, mail, money
Liquids	blood, coffee, gasoline, water
Materials	chalk, cotton, glue, wood
Natural phenomena	rain, snow, thunder, weather
Particles or grains	corn, dust, flour, rice, sugar
Subjects or fields of study	geography, drama, photography

2.4 Compound Nouns

I saw a **car accident**.

What is a compound noun?

A compound noun is formed by combining two (or more) words.

note + book = notebook

How do you form compound nouns?

Compound nouns have different forms. They can be written in the following ways:

- 1 As one word (without a space or hyphen):

footprint
pancake
toothbrush

- 2 With a space between the words:

post office
tennis racket
washing machine

- 3 With a hyphen between the words:

eye-opener
great-aunt
grown-up

Use a dictionary to check the correct way to write a compound noun.

Plural compound nouns

 See page 10.

In a compound noun, the first word usually functions as an adjective. The second word forms the plural. Here are some examples:

Singular form	Plural form
dishwasher	dishwashers
grandchild	grandchildren
toothbrush	toothbrushes
soccer shoe	soccer shoes
front-runner	front-runners



EXCEPTIONS

Some hyphenated compound nouns form the plural by adding an *s* to the first word before the hyphen.

passer-by → passers-by

brother-in-law → brothers-in-law

Types of compound nouns

Here are combinations used to form compound nouns.

Combinations	Compound nouns
noun + noun	homework
verb + noun	swimming pool
noun + verb	haircut
noun + adverb	passer-by
adjective + noun	greenhouse
adverb + noun	bystander

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