

10 LIFE-SAVING

English tips

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With this small **eBOOK:**

WE DO NOT INTEND TO TEACH
YOU **TO SPEAK OR WRITE**
ENGLISH

— We simply want to **share ten rules of the English language that challenge** even those who write in English or translate to English every day.

— We've tried to do this **in a very simple way**, with examples that help memorise these key rules.

▶ 1 ▶

PLACE

prepositions



AMONG



ON



NEXT TO



OVER



BETWEEN



IN
FRONT
OF



UNDER



BEHIND



IN

2 WORD ORDER *in sentences*

POSITIVE SENTENCES

Subject + Verb + Indirect Object + Direct Object + Place + Time

The client + will brief + all concerned parties + on the details of the project + at the meeting + tomorrow

NEGATIVE SENTENCES

Subject + Verb + Indirect Object + Direct Object + Place + Time

The client + doesn't want us + us + to make any mistakes + at the conference room + tomorrow

He + won't need + + to worry + +

QUESTIONS

Question word + Auxiliary Verb + Subject + Verb + Indirect Object + Direct Object + Time

Why + did + the client + send + us + a letter + today

Where + were + you + + + + when the order arrived



3 “HOW MUCH” & “HOW MANY”

USE “HOW MUCH?”

TO ASK ABOUT SOMETHING
THAT IS **UNCOUNTABLE**

“ How much does our company
spend on coffee? ”

What is an uncountable noun?

It is a noun that **cannot** have a number in front of it and that has no plural: **performance, money, oil, expectations**

USE “HOW MANY?”

TO ASK ABOUT SOMETHING
THAT IS **COUNTABLE**

“ How many hours does it take to
translate five thousand words? ”

What is a countable noun?

It is a noun that **can** have a number in front of it and can be plural: **3 buttons, 2 files, 1 suit**

4 THIS – THESE – THAT – THOSE

USE THESE WORDS TO SHOW THE DISTANCE FROM THE SPEAKER

THIS THESE THAT THOSE

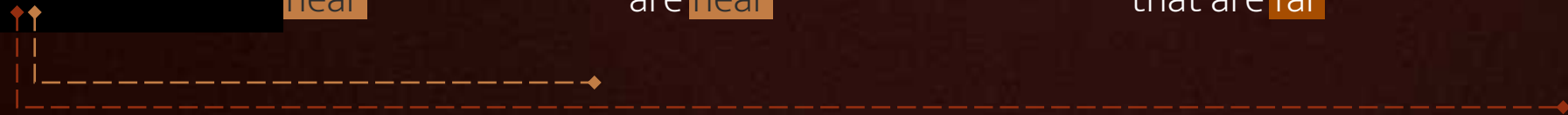


For **singular** nouns
that are **near**

For **plural** nouns that
are **near**

For **singular** nouns
that are **far**

For **plural** nouns that
are **far**



5

«'S + NOUNS» to express possession

SINGULAR NOUN + 'S

“ The **applicant's writing** is excellent. ”

IRREGULAR PLURAL NOUN + 'S

“ I care about **people's well-being**. ”

“ My **boss's job** is highly challenging. ”

NAMES + 'S

“ **Amelia's** clients are very satisfied. ”

“ **Dennis's** boss praised his work. ”

REGULAR PLURAL NOUN + S'

“ The **books' pages** are stained. ”

6

Modal verbs

ARE USED TO EXPRESS
HOW SURE WE ARE
ABOUT SOMETHING

«MAY», «MIGHT» AND «COULD»

Are used when **we think something is possible** but are not sure

- “ Considering the current economic context, I think there might be another increase of real-estate prices. ”
- “ We’ll try to make the best decisions but we may miss the business goals. ”
- “ Even though sales have been increasing, they could fall short of the month’s objectives. ”

«MUST», «HAVE TO» AND «HAVE GOT TO»

Are used when we are **sure of something** due to strong evidence

- “ She has been working long hours and must need some rest. ”
- “ It is too cold, you must come inside. ”
- “ I have no idea of the formula, I have got to ask John. ”



6

Modal verbs

ARE USED TO EXPRESS
HOW SURE WE ARE
ABOUT SOMETHING

«CANNOT», «CAN'T» AND «COULDN'T»

Indicate that **we feel sure** something is **not true**

- “ Such a goal cannot be reached within less than two years. ”
- “ They can't feel very happy about missing the goals. ”
- “ He couldn't win the race in such a bad shape. ”

«MUSTN'T»

Indicates a **little less negative certainty**

- “ You mustn't enter the market before designing a business plan. ”

«MAY NOT» AND «MIGHT NOT»

Indicate **even less negative certainty**

- “ The deal might not have been lost if we had sent the proposition one month before. ”
- “ The agreement has been sent to our partners but they may not sign it. ”



7

ADJECTIVES *in regards to* NOUNS

ADJECTIVES COME
BEFORE THE NOUN

“ The **new book** took many hours to translate ”
(the book new)

THE NUMBER OF THE
NOUN DOES NOT MAKE
ADJECTIVES CHANGE

“ Joana is a good translator. ”

“ We have many good translators. ”





ADJECTIVES ENDING IN –ED

provide information on how someone feels about

“ Laura was **thrilled** while reading the book

ADJECTIVES ENDING IN –ING PROVIDE INFORMATION ON WHAT CAUSES THE FEELING.

“ Laura enjoyed the book because it was **interesting.** ”



9 CHOOSING THE RIGHT ORDER OF SEVERAL ADJECTIVES *for the same noun*



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
ARTICLE / PRONOUN	OPINION	SIZE	AGE	SHAPE	COLOR	ORIGIN	MATERIAL	PURPOSE	NOUN
An	ugly	-	old	-	-	German	-	-	sweater.
The	-	small	-	curvy	-	-	wooden	-	spoon
My	wonderful	-	-	-	blue	-	-	sleeping	pillow

10

Punctuating

DEFINING CLAUSES AND NON-DEFINING CLAUSES

DEFINING CLAUSES

Are introduced by relative pronouns and contain information that is essential to understand the sentence. **When deleted, the sentence becomes unclear.** Defining clauses are not separated by a comma.

“ The clothes she is making are colourful. ”

THE RELATIVE
PRONOUNS
USED ARE:

FOR PEOPLE:

WHO THAT

(and **whom** followed by a preposition)

FOR THINGS:

WHICH THAT

NON-DEFINING CLAUSES

Are also introduced by relative pronouns, but do not contain information that is essential to understand the sentence. **When deleted, the sentence will still be clear.** Non-defining clauses are separated from the main clause by a comma.

“ The book, which I thought would be boring, is actually interesting. ”

THE RELATIVE
PRONOUNS
USED ARE:

FOR PEOPLE:

WHO (and **whom, whose**)

FOR THINGS

WHICH (and **whose**)

If you enjoyed reading it,

**SHARE IT WITH
COLLEAGUES
AND FRIENDS**



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