Master Guide to Parts of Speech

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1. Identification of Nouns

A **noun** is a word that names a **person, place, thing, animal, idea, or quality**. They are the "naming words" of a sentence.

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The Main Types of Nouns

Type	Definition	Examples
Common Noun	General name for a person, place, or thing	boy, city, dog, book
Proper Noun	Specific name; always capitalized	Ravi, Delhi, Pluto, Monday
Concrete Noun	Physical, tangible thing	table, apple, car, rain
Abstract Noun	Idea, quality, or feeling (not physical)	love, courage, freedom, honesty
Countable Noun	Can be counted	one book, two books
Uncountable Noun	Cannot be counted	water, rice, milk, advice
Collective Noun	Names a group	team, family, flock, crowd
Compound Noun	Two or more words combined	toothpaste, mother-in-law, swimming pool
Material Noun	Substance/material	gold, iron, wood, cotton
Possessive Noun	Shows ownership	Ravi's, the dog's, students'

How to Identify a Noun (Step-by-Step)

1. **Look for a naming word:** Ask: *Does this word name a person, place, thing, or idea?* (e.g., The **teacher** gave the **students** a **test** on **history**.).

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2. **Apply the "Article Test":** Can you put **a/an/the** before it? (e.g., **a** dog, **an** apple, **the** truth).

3. **Apply the "Pronoun Test":** Can you replace it with **he, she, it, they, this, that**? (e.g., **The car** is fast. **It** is fast.).

4. **Apply the "Plural Test":** Can you make it plural by adding **-s/-es**? (e.g., book → books).

5. **Check its position in the sentence:** Nouns commonly appear after a determiner/article, after an adjective, as a subject, as an object, or after a preposition.

6. **Apply the "Possessive Test":** Can you add **'s** or **'** to show ownership? (e.g., the **dog's** tail).

Noun Identification Flowchart

- Is the word a naming word? (YES) → Can you put a / an / the before it? (Common/Countable Noun).

- Can you replace it with he/she/it/they? (Noun).

- Can you add -s/-es to make it plural? (Countable Noun).

- Is it a specific name (capitalized)? (Proper Noun).

- Is it a feeling/idea you can't touch? (Abstract Noun).

- Does it name a group? (Collective Noun).

Special Categories & Functions of Nouns

- **Proper Nouns:** Capitalized names of specific People (Ravi), Places (Delhi), Days/Months (Monday), Organizations (Google), Brands (Nike), and Languages (English).

- **Abstract Nouns:** Formed from adjectives or verbs (e.g., happy → happiness, kind → kindness, free → freedom, know → knowledge, believe → belief, grow → growth, strong → strength, wise → wisdom).

- **Collective Nouns:** Refers to groups (e.g., team of players, family of relatives, flock of birds, herd of cattle, swarm of bees, crowd of people, bunch of grapes/keys, fleet of ships, pack of wolves/cards, jury of judges).

- **Compound Nouns:** Combinations like noun + noun (toothpaste), adjective + noun (blackboard), verb + noun (swimming pool), noun + prep + noun (mother-in-law), prep + noun (underground).

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- **Uncountable Nouns:** Have no plural form. Use "some water" (not waters), "a piece of advice" (not advices), "a piece of furniture" (not furnitures), "a piece of information" (not informations).

- **Functions in a Sentence:** Subject, Direct Object, Indirect Object, Object of Preposition, Predicate Nominative, Appositive, Possessive, and Vocative (address).

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- **Alphabetical Categories:** People (boy, girl), Places (school, city), Things (book, table), Animals (dog, cat), Ideas (love, freedom), Qualities (honesty, kindness), Events (birthday, war), Substances (gold, water), Groups (team, family), Times (morning, Monday).

2. Master Identification Guide: All Parts of Speech

The 8 Parts of Speech at a Glance

Part of Speech	Function	Key Question	Examples
Noun	Names a person, place, thing, idea	Who? What?	Ravi, city, love, dog
Pronoun	Replaces a noun	Who? What? (instead of noun)	he, she, it, they, who
Verb	Shows action or state of being	What is happening?	run, is, think, become
Adjective	Describes a noun/pronoun	What kind? How many?	happy, red, three, tall
Adverb	Describes verb/adjective/adverb	How? When? Where?	quickly, very, here, soon
Preposition	Shows relationship (place/time/direction)	Where? When? How?	in, on, at, under, by
Conjunction	Joins words/phrases/clauses	What connects them?	and, but, because, or
Interjection	Shows sudden emotion	-	oh!, wow!, alas!

Word Confusion Chart (Same Word, Different Roles)

- **love:** I feel **love** (Noun) | I **love** you (Verb) | a **love** song (Adjective).
- **run:** a **run** (Noun) | I **run** (Verb) | a **run** race (Adjective).
- **fast:** I **fast** (Verb) | a **fast** car (Adjective) | runs **fast** (Adverb).
- **before:** seen **before** (Adverb) | before **dinner** (Preposition) | before **you go** (Conjunction).
- **after:** came **after** (Adverb) | after **lunch** (Preposition) | after **we ate** (Conjunction).
- **like:** I **like** it (Verb) | like **a bird** (Preposition) | like **I said** (Conjunction).

- **light:** turn on the **light** (Noun) | **light** it (Verb) | a **light** bag (Adjective).

- **work:** I have **work** (Noun) | they **work** (Verb) | **work** clothes (Adjective).

Golden Rules for Identification

1. **Position matters:** The same word can be different parts of speech depending on where it sits.

2. **Look at what follows:** Preposition → noun; Conjunction → clause.

3. **Look at what it modifies:** Adjective → noun; Adverb → verb/adjective/adverb.

4. **Test by substitution:** Replace with a known word of that type.

5. **Check capitalization:** Proper nouns are always capitalized.

6. **Check plurality:** Only nouns (and pronouns) can be plural.

7. **Check articles:** Only nouns take a/an/the before them.

3. Determiners

Determiners specify whether a noun is known/specific or unknown/general, indicate distance, or express amount.

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- **Articles:** The Definite Article (the); Indefinite Articles (a, an); Zero Article (Ø).

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- **Demonstratives:** Singular (this, that); Plural (these, those).

- **Possessives:** First Person (my, our), Second Person (your), Third Person (his, her, its, their), Impersonal (one's), Interrogative (whose).

- **Quantifiers:** Large (many, much, several, a lot of, tons of), Small (few, a few, little, less), Undefined (some, any, enough), Absence (no).

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- **Distributives:** Individual Focus (each, every), Choice (either, neither, both), Total Focus (all, half).

- **Numerals:** Cardinals (one, two, fifty), Ordinals (first, second, last, next).

- **Difference Words:** other, another, the other.

- **Interrogatives & Relatives:** Questions (which, what, whose), Connecting (whichever, whatever).

- **Exclamative:** Used for strong emotion (what, such).

- **Determiner Sequence Rule:** Stack determiners in strict order: Pre-determiners (twice, half, such, all) + Central determiners (articles, possessives, demonstratives) + Post-determiners (numerals, quantifiers) (e.g., "All these rules", "The first few days").

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4. Interjections

Interjections express sudden emotion and have no grammatical connection to the sentence.

- **Joy/Excitement:** Hurrah, Hooray, Yay, Yippee, Yahoo, Eureka, Bingo, Hallelujah, Aha.

- **Sorrow/Pain:** Alas, Ouch, Ow, Oof, Ah, Oh, Woe, Dear me, Oh dear.

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- **Surprise/Shock:** What, How, Wow, Whoa, Gosh, Goodness, Heavens, Yikes, Crikey, Blimey, Egad, Zounds, Indeed.

- **Disgust/Annoyance:** Ugh, Ew, Yuck, Bah, Fie, Pff, Pshaw, Tut-tut, Tsk-tsk, Drat, Blast, Darn, Grr, Argh.

- **Approval/Praise:** Bravo, Brilliant, Splendid, Awesome, Excellent, Hear-hear, Spot-on, Cheers.

- **Attention/Warning:** Hush, Shh, Whisht, Listen, Look, Behold, Lo, Hark, Hey, Yo, Ahem, Psst.

- **Realization/Panic:** Phew, Sigh, Duh, Oops, Whoops, Help, Mayday, Eek.

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- **Agreement/Hesitation (Fillers):** Yes, Yeah, Nope, Hmm, Uh, Um, Er, Well.

- **Greetings/Farewells:** Hello, Hi, Greetings, Goodbye, Farewell, Bye, Adios, Ciao.

- *Note on Secondary Interjections:* Normal words thrown into a sentence with an exclamation mark (e.g., Nonsense!, Great!, Exactly!) function as interjections.

5. Prepositions

A **preposition** shows the relationship between a noun/pronoun (its object) and another word, indicating location, time, direction, manner, or possession.

- **The Ultimate Identification Rule (The "Object" Test):** A preposition MUST have an object (a noun, pronoun, or gerund) following it. If there is no object, it is likely an adverb.

Common Exam Traps for Prepositions

- **Preposition vs. Adverb:** If followed by an object, it is a Preposition (e.g., He climbed **up** the tree). If it modifies a verb with no object, it is an Adverb (e.g., He looked **up**).

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- **Preposition vs. Conjunction:** If followed only by a noun, it is a Preposition (e.g., Call you **after** work). If followed by a subject and a verb clause, it is a Conjunction (e.g., Call you **after** I finish work).

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- **Participle Prepositions (-ing trap):** Words like *regarding, concerning, considering, barring, excluding, including, during* function as prepositions, not verbs.

Categories of Prepositions

- **Simple (One-Word):** in, on, at, to, from, with, by, for, of, off, up, down, till, out, through, past.

- **Double:** into, onto, upon, within, without, out of, throughout, from behind.

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- **Compound:** about, above, across, along, amidst, among, around, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, besides, between, beyond, inside, outside, underneath.

- **Phrase (Complex):** according to, along with, because of, by dint of, by way of, for the sake of, in addition to, in front of, in lieu of, in order to, in spite of, instead of, on account of, owing to, with regard to.

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- **Disguised:** The "a" prefix (ashore, ablaze) or "o'" prefix (o'clock).

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Prepositions by Meaning

- **Place/Location:** in, on, at, under, over, above, below, beneath, underneath, between, among, behind, beside, near, by, inside, outside, within, without, around, against, along, across, through, amid, opposite, past, beyond, onto, into, upon, aboard, alongside, atop.

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- **Time:** at, on, in, before, after, during, since, until, till, by, from, to, for, throughout, between, past, toward(s), upon, pending.

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- **Direction/Movement:** to, from, into, onto, toward, towards, through, across, along, up, down, over, under, past, around, off, out of, at.

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- **Agent/Instrument:** by, with, without, via, through, in, like.

- **Possession/Relation:** of, to, with, for, about, on, concerning, regarding, respecting.

6. Conjunctions

A **conjunction** connects words, phrases, or clauses.

The Three Main Types

1. **Coordinating (FANBOYS):** Joins equal elements (For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So) (e.g., I wanted to go, **but** I was busy).

2. **Subordinating:** Joins a dependent clause to a main clause.

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    - *Time:* when, whenever, while, as, before, after, since, until, till, once, as soon as, by the time, now that.

    - *Cause/Reason:* because, since, as, inasmuch as.

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    - *Condition:* if, unless, provided (that), providing, in case, as long as, on condition that, only if, whether, even if, assuming.

    - *Contrast/Concession:* although, though, even though, whereas, while, much as, even if.

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- *Purpose:* so that, in order that, lest, for fear that.

- *Result:* so...that, such...that.

- *Manner/Comparison:* as, as if, as though, than, the way.

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- *Place:* where, wherever, everywhere.

3. **Correlative:** Works in pairs to join equal parts.

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- either...or, neither...nor, both...and, not only...but also, not...but, whether...or, as...as, so...as, just as...so, the more...the more, no sooner...than, hardly...when, scarcely...when.

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7. Pronouns

A **pronoun** replaces a noun or noun phrase to avoid repetition.

Types of Pronouns

- **Personal (Subject vs Object):** I/me, you/you, he/him, she/her, it/it, we/us, they/them.

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- **Possessive Pronouns vs Possessive Adjectives:** Pronouns stand alone (mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs). Adjectives come before a noun (my, your, his, her, its, our, their).

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- **Reflexive vs Intensive:** Both use *-self/-selves*. Reflexive reflects action back (I hurt **myself**). Intensive emphasizes (I **myself** did it).

- **Demonstrative:** Points to things near/far (this, that, these, those).

- **Interrogative:** Asks questions (who, whom, whose, which, what).

- **Relative:** Introduces relative clauses and refers back to a noun (who, whom, whose, which, that).

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- **Indefinite:** Refers to non-specific things. Singular (everyone, someone, nobody, each, either, one, nothing), Plural (both, few, many, several, others), or Both depending on context (all, some, none, any, most).

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- **Reciprocal:** Shows mutual action (each other, one another).

- **Distributive:** Refers to members individually (each, either, neither).

Pronoun Identification Step-by-Step

1. Look for a word that replaces a noun.

2. Apply the "Replacement Test" (Can you replace it with a name?).

3. Check the "Article Test" (If you cannot put a/an/the before it, it's likely a pronoun).

4. Check for an antecedent (referring back to an earlier noun).

5. Determine the type by its function.

8. Adverbs

An **adverb** modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb, answering *how, when, where, how often, or to what degree*.

Types of Adverbs

- **Manner (How?):** quickly, slowly, well, badly, carefully, loud, fast, straight, hard.

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- **Time (When?):** now, then, yesterday, today, tomorrow, soon, already, yet, still, just, recently, lately, before, after, later, early, late, eventually, immediately.

- **Place (Where?):** here, there, everywhere, nowhere, somewhere, anywhere, outside, inside, upstairs, downstairs, nearby, far, away, back, forward, backward, abroad, home.

- **Frequency (How Often?):** always (100%), usually (90%), often (70%), sometimes (50%), occasionally (30%), seldom (10%), rarely/hardly ever (5%), never (0%), daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, again, once, twice.

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- **Degree (To What Extent?):** very, quite, rather, fairly, extremely, absolutely, completely, totally, almost, nearly, hardly, barely, scarcely, too, enough, so, just, only, really, much, far, a lot, slightly, somewhat.

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- **Reason (Why?):** therefore, hence, thus, consequently, accordingly.

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- **Affirmation/Negation:** certainly, surely, definitely, absolutely, indeed, not, never, no, yes.

- **Interrogative (Asking Questions):** when, where, why, how.
- **Relative (Introducing Clauses):** when, where, why.

Adjective vs. Adverb Master Comparison

- **Adjectives** describe a noun/pronoun, answering *What kind? How many? Which?* and usually come before a noun (e.g., a **quick** runner, a **hard** test, a **daily** routine).

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- **Adverbs** describe a verb/adjective/adverb, answering *How? When? Where? How often? To what degree?* and often come after a verb (e.g., runs **quickly**, works **hard**, exercises **daily**).

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