

The Concept of Word Formation

Word formation process is basically how new words are created and become part of the language. In linguistics, **word formation** is the creation of a new word. In other words, it refers to the ways in which new words are made on the basis of other words or morphemes.

Types of Word Formation:

1. **Derivation:** In linguistics, derivation is the process of forming a new word on the basis of an existing word. **For e.g.** the word **happiness** and **unhappy** are derived from the word **happy**. Similarly, the word **determination** has been derived from **determine**.

Derivation is the process of forming a new word by means of **affixation** (prefix, infix and suffix).

2. **Compounding:** A compound is a lexeme (a word) that consists of more than one other lexeme (word). It is categorized in two ways:

An **endocentric compound** consists of a head and modifier. **For e.g.** the English compound **doghouse**, where **house** is the head and **dog** is the modifier, which shows that house is intended for a dog.

Exocentric compounds do not have a head and their meaning often cannot be transparently guessed from its constituent parts. **For e.g.** the English compound **white-collar** is neither a kind of collar nor a white thing.

For e.g.

One word is added to another word to form compound words.

Atom bomb

Waiting list

Home work

Low paid

Dining room

Fire place

Cup cake

Email

E-ticket

3. **Blending**: A blend is a word formed by joining parts of two words after clipping.

For e.g.

When parts of two separate words are combined to form a new word , it is Blending.

Motel – motor+hotel

Telecast – television+broadcast

Brunch – breakfast+lunch

Smog – smoke+fog

Chunnel – channel+tunnel

Biopic - biography+picture

Clash – clap+crash

Sportscast – sports+broadcast

Shopaholic – shop+alcoholic

Workaholic- work+ alcoholic

4. **Acronym**: An acronym is a word made up from the first letter of the words that make up the name of something.

For e.g.

NASA (is a name whose full form is)- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (**Acronym**)

RADAR- Radio Detection and Ranging

5. **Calque/ Borrowing**: Borrowing is just taking a word from another language. The borrowed words are called **loan words or calque**. A loan word is a word directly taken into one language from another language with little or no translation. English has many loan words.

For e.g.

Biology, boxer, ozone- Taken from German language

Jacket, yoghurt, Kiosh- Taken from Turkish language

Pistol, robot- Taken from Czech language

6. **Neologism/ Coinage**: It is the invention of totally new words either deliberately or accidentally. This is a very rare and uncommon method to

create new words, but in the media, people try to outdo each other with more and better words to name their products. Often these trademark names are adopted by the masses and they become “everyday words of a language”. Coinage also refers to the extension of a name of product from a specific reference to a more general one.

For e.g.

Xerox, Kodak, google, nylon, band-aid

In other words, Coinage are words that somebody creates and people start using it. One category of neologism is **Eponym**. These are words that are based on the name of a person or a place.

For e.g.

Watt- this word has been taken from the name of a discoverer

Jeans- this word has been taken from Italian city Jenewa

Sandwich- this word has been taken from a person who makes his meal between two slices of bread.

- 7. Back- Formation:** It refers to the process of creating a new lexeme (word) by removing actual or supposed affixes. In other words, back- formations are shortened words created from longer words.

For e.g.

The word **resurrection** was borrowed from Latin, the word **resurrect** was then back formed hundreds of years later from it by removing **-ion** suffix.

- 8. Reduplication:** It is the process of forming new words either by doubling an entire word or part of a word. English makes use of reduplication very rarely.

For e.g.

Humpty- dumpty

Hustle- bustle

Hotch- potch

Gin- gin

- 9. Clipping:** It is a word formation process which consists of reduction of a word. Clippings are also known as shortenings. It has four types:

Back clipping or **apocopation** is the most common type in which the beginning of the word is retained.

For e.g.

Ad- ~~advertisement~~

Doc- ~~doctor~~

Memo- ~~memorandum~~

Fore- clipping or **aphaeresis** retains the final part.

For e.g.

Phone- ~~telephone~~

Chute- ~~parachute~~

Varsity- ~~university~~

Middle- clipping or **syncope** retains the middle part.

For e.g.

Flu- ~~influenza~~

Complex- clipping: In this clipped forms are used in compounds. One part of the original compound most often remains intact.

For e.g.

Cablegram- ~~cable~~telegram

Op art- ~~optical~~ art

Org man- ~~organization~~ man

Exercise1

1. ACCEPT - I'm sorry, but this arrangement is totally to us.
2. ACCEPT - I've just received their letter of so we can go ahead.
3. ACT - The unions have threatened to take industrial .
4. ACT - It's been a very day on the Stock Exchange.
5. ACT - The R&D department seems full of at the moment.
6. ADD - We'll be bringing out several to our product line.

7. ADD - There's an bonus if I exceed my sales target by more than 10%.
8. ANALYSE - We'll need a detailed cost before giving the final approval.
9. ANALYSE - Most think we're in for a difficult time.
10. APPLY - Unfortunately we can't interview every .
11. APPLY - I sent in my letter of and they phoned me the next day.
12. APPLY - The regulations are not when there are fewer than 10 employees.
13. CONNECT - My flight didn't leave until 10 o'clock.
14. CONNECT - We sent them a letter in with their offer of an agency.
15. CONNECT - She has some useful in the hotel trade.

Root words from Foreign Languages

A root word is the most basic form of a word. In English grammar, a root is a word or portion of a word from which other words grow, usually through the addition of prefixes and suffixes. By learning root words, we can expand our vocabulary and become a better English speaker.

Learning just one root word can help us understand several words in English. So, by learning just 20 or 30 root words, we can expand our English **vocabulary** to include hundreds of new words. A root can be any part of a word that carries meaning: the beginning, middle or end. Prefixes, bases, and suffixes are types of roots. The prefix appears at the beginning of a word, the base in the middle and the suffix at the end.

Most English root words came from the Greek and Latin languages. The root of the word "vocabulary," for example, is *voc*, a Latin root meaning "word" or "name." This root also appears in such words as "advocacy," "convocation," "evocative," "vocal," and "vowel."

Greek Root Words

The table below defines and illustrates 25 of the most common Greek roots.

Root	Meaning	Examples
anti	against	antibacterial, antidote, antithesis
ast(er)	star	asteroid, astronomy, astronaut
aqu	water	aquarium, aquatic, aqualung
auto	self	automatic, automate, autobiograph
biblio	book	bibliography, bibliophile
bio	life	biography, biology, biodegradable
chrome	color	monochromatic, phytochrome
chrono	time	chronic, synchronize, chronicle
doc	teach	document, docile, doctrinal
dyna	power	dynasty, dynamic, dynamite
geo	earth	geography, geology, geometry
gno	to know	agnostic, acknowledge
graph	write	autograph, graphic, demographic

hydr	water	dehydrate, hydrant, hydropower
kinesis	movement	kinetic, photokinesis
logos	word, study	astrology, biology, theologian
narc	sleep	narcotic, narcolepsy

Latin Root Words

The table below defines and illustrates 25 of the most common Latin roots.

Root	Meaning	Examples
ab	to move away	abstract, abstain, aversion
acer, acri	bitter	acid, acrimony, exacerbate
audi	hear	audible, audience, auditorium
bene	good	benefit, benign, benefactor
brev	short	abbreviate, brief
circ	round	circus, circulate
dict	say	dictate, edict, dictionary
duc	lead, make	deduce, produce, educate
fund	bottom	founder, foundation, funding
gen	to birth	gene, generate, generous
hab	to have	ability, exhibit, inhabit
jur	law	jury, justice, justify
lev	to lift	levitate, elevate, leverage
log, logue	thought	logic, apologize, analogy
luc, lum	light	lucid, illuminate, translucent
manu	hand	manual, manicure, manipulate
mis, mit	send	missile, transmit, permit

omni

all

omnivorous, omnipotent, omniscient

Exercise- Find the root word. Take away the suffix to find the root word

- Useless –use (solved example)
- Movement
- Slowly
- Entrepreneurship
- Cafeteria
- Attachment
- Magician
- Direction
- Colorful

ANSWER KEY

1 use 2 move 3 slow 4 Entrepreneur 5 cafe 6 attach 7 magic 8 direct
9 color

Prefixes and Suffixes

Prefixes

Prefixes are added to the beginning of an existing word in order to create a new word with a different meaning. A prefix is a letter or a group of letters that attaches to the beginning of a word and helps to indicate or modify its meaning. An easy example would be the word 'prefix' itself! It begins with the prefix *pre-*, which means '**before**'.

Here is a list of the most common prefixes:

PREFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLES
ante-	before	antenatal, anteroom, antedate
anti-	against, opposing	antibiotic, antidepressant, antidote

PREFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLES
circum-	around	circumstance, circumvent, circumnavigate
co-	with	co-worker, co-pilot, co-operation
de-	off, down, away from	devalue, defrost, derail, demotivate
dis-	opposite of, not	disagree, disappear, disintegrate, disapprove
em-, en-	cause to, put into	embrace, encode, embed, enclose, engulf
epi-	upon, close to, after	epicentre, episcopate, epidermis
ex-	former, out of	ex-president, ex-boyfriend, exterminate
extra-	beyond, more than	extracurricular, extraordinary, extra-terrestrial
fore-	before	forecast, forehead, foresee, foreword, foremost
homo-	same	homosexual, homonuclear, homoplastic
hyper-	over, above	hyperactive, hyperventilate
il-, im-, in-, ir-	not	impossible, illegal, irresponsible, indefinite
im-, in-	into	insert, import, inside
infra-	beneath, below	infrastructure, infrared, infrasonic, infrasonic
inter-, intra-	between	interact, intermediate, intergalactic, intranet
macro-	large	macroeconomics, macromolecule
micro-	small	microscope, microbiology, microfilm,

PREFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLES
		microwave
mid-	middle	midfielder, midway, midsummer
mis-	wrongly	misinterpret, misfire, mistake, misunderstand
mono-	one, singular	monotone, monobrow, monolithic
non-	not, without	nonsense, nonentity, nondescript
omni-	all, every	omnibus, omnivore, omnipotent
para-	beside	parachute, paramedic, paradox
post-	after	post-mortem, postpone, post-natal
pre-	before	prefix, predetermine, pre-intermediate
re-	again	return, rediscover, reiterate, reunite
semi-	half	semicircle, semi-final, semiconscious
sub-	under	submerge, submarine, sub-category, subtitle
super-	above, over	superfood, superstar, supernatural, superimpose
therm-	heat	thermometer, thermostat, thermodynamic
trans-	across, beyond	transport, transnational, transatlantic
tri-	three	triangle, tripod, tricycle
un-	not	unfinished, unfriendly, undone, unknown
uni-	one	unicycle, universal, unilateral, unanimous

Combining forms

When you are learning the different types of prefixes, it is important to remember that not every word containing these combinations is a prefix. Sometimes words have 'combining forms', which look very similar to prefixes but work differently!

Combining forms are similar to prefixes, and are sometimes known as ‘chameleon prefixes’, because they act like them and appear at the beginning of words like them.

PREFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLE	COMBINING FORM	MEANING	EXAMPLE
com-, con-	with, alongside	comprise, connote	com-, con-	with, jointly	companion, comrade, community
ex-	former	ex-husband	ex-	out	exhort
a-	not, without	amoral	a-, an-	not, without	apathy, anaemic
in-	not	inconvenient	in-	into	inebriate, indulge
homo-	same	homograph, homophone	homo-	same	homogeneous
magn-	great	magnate	magn-	great	magnificent, magnanimous, magnitude, magnify
para-	beside	paragraph, paramedic	para-	beside	paradox
sub-	under	submarine	sub-	under	substitute

Suffixes

A suffix is a letter or a group of letters that is usually attached to the end of a word to form a new word.

SUFFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLE
-acy	state or quality	democracy, accuracy, lunacy

SUFFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLE
-al	the action or process of	remedial, denial, trial, criminal
-ance, -ence	state or quality of	nuisance, ambience, tolerance
-dom	place or state of being	freedom, stardom, boredom
-er, -or	person or object that does a specified action	reader, creator, interpreter, inventor, collaborator, teacher
-ism	doctrine, belief	Judaism, scepticism, escapism
-ist	person or object that does a specified action	Geologist, protagonist, sexist, scientist, theorist, communist
-ity, -ty	quality of	extremity, validity, enormity
-ment	condition	enchantment, argument
-ness	state of being	heaviness, highness, sickness
-ship	position held	friendship, hardship, internship
-sion, -tion	state of being	position, promotion, cohesion
-ate	become	mediate, collaborate, create
-en	become	sharpen, strengthen, loosen
-ify, -fy	make or become	justify, simplify, magnify, satisfy
-ise, -ize	become	publicise, synthesise, hypnotise
-able, -ible	capable of being	edible, fallible, incredible, audible
-al	having the form or character of	fiscal, thermal, herbal, colonial
-esque	in a manner of or resembling	picturesque, burlesque, grotesque
-ful	notable for	handful, playful, hopeful, skilful
-ic, -ical	having the form or character of	psychological, hypocritical, methodical, nonsensical, musical

SUFFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLE
-ious, -ous	characterised by	pious, jealous, religious, ridiculous
-ish	having the quality of	squeamish, sheepish, childish

Exercise

Put the word in brackets into the correct form. You will have to use prefixes and/or suffixes.

1. He was sitting _____ on his seat in the train. (comfort)
2. There was a _____ light coming from the window. (green)
3. He was acting in a very _____ way. (child)
4. This word is very difficult to spell, and even worse, it's _____.
(pronounce)
5. He's lost his book again. I don't know where he has _____ it this time. (place)
6. You shouldn't have done that! It was very _____ of you. (think)
7. He didn't pass his exam. He was _____ for the second time.
(succeed)
8. Some of the shanty towns are dreadfully _____. (crowd)
9. The team that he supported were able to win the _____.
(champion)
10. There is a very high _____ that they will be late. (likely)
11. I couldn't find any _____ in his theory. (weak)
12. He wants to be a _____ when he grows up. (mathematics)

13. You need to be a highly trained _____ to understand this report. (economy)

14. There were only a _____ of people at the match. (hand)

ANSWER KEY

1 comfortably 2 green 3 childish 4 mispronounced 5 placed 6 unthinkable 7 unsuccessful 8 crowded 9 championship 10 likeliness 11 weakness 12 mathematician 13 economist 14 handful

Synonyms & Antonyms

Antonyms

Achieve – Fail

Afraid – Confident

Ancient – Modern

Arrive – Depart

Arrogant – Humble

Attack – Defend

Blunt – Sharp

Brave – Cowardly

Cautious – Careless

Complex – Simple

Crazy – Sane

Crooked – Straight

Demand – Supply

Destroy – Create

Divide – Unite

Drunk – Sober

Expand – Contract

Giant – Dwarf

Gloomy – Cheerful

Individual – Group

Innocent – Guilty

Knowledge – Ignorance

Liquid – Solid

Marvelous – Terrible

Noisy – Quiet

Partial – Complete

Passive – Active

Permanent – Unstable

Plentiful – Sparse

Positive – Negative

Powerful – Weak

Praise – Criticism

Private – Public

Problem – Solution

Random – Specific

Rigid – Flexible

Shame – Honor

Simple – Complicated

Single – Married

Sunny – Cloudy

Timid – Bold

Toward – Away

Tragic – Comic

Transparent – Opaque

Triumph – Defeat

Union – Separation

Unique – Common

Upset – Relaxed

Urge – Deter

Vacant – Occupied

Vague – Definite

Synonyms

Amazing: astounding, surprising, stunning

Annihilation: destruction, carnage, extinction

Benefit: profit, revenue, yield

Brave: courageous, valiant, heroic

Cohesive: united, connected, close-knit

Cunning: keen, sharp, slick

Destitute: poor, bankrupt, impoverished

Deterioration: pollution, defilement, adulteration

Enormous: huge, gigantic, massive

Feisty: excitable, fiery, lively

Fertile, fruitful, abundant, productive

Gargantuan: colossal, mammoth, tremendous

Hungry: empty, ravenous, starved

Injured: damaged, wounded, harmed

Intelligent: brilliant, clever, smart

Kindle: ignite, inflame, burn

Loyal: faithful, ardent, devoted

Old: elderly, aged, senior

Organization: association, institution, management

Partner: associate, colleague, companion

Polite: courteous, cordial, gracious

Portion: piece, part, segment

Risky: dangerous, perilous, treacherous

Sleepy: drowsy, listless, sluggish

Senseless: absurd, illogical, unreasonable

Tumultuous: hectic, raucous, turbulent

Vacant: empty, deserted, uninhabited

Veracity: authenticity, credibility, truthfulness

Wet: damp, moist, soggy

Young: budding, fledgling, tenderfoot

Exercise

- Write synonyms of abandon, clue, aroma, communicate, complexion
- Write antonyms of expert, fluent, accept, adore, deplete

Answer Key

1 synonym of abandon- leave, clue-hint, aroma- smell, communicate-interface, complexion-color or texture

2 antonyms of expert- incompetent, fluent- inarticulate, accept- reject, adore-hate, deplete- increase

Exercise

Fill in the blanks with the words opposite in meaning to those underlined.

1. What looks like a convenient shortcut may prove to be very in the long run.
2. No one wants to listen to an ignorant man but everybody listens to a man.
3. Gold is an expensive metal while iron is
4. My application was accepted but his was
5. The teacher tried to make the student confident but he still looked very
6. He failed to qualify in the first two attempts but in the third one.
7. He often visits me but I go to his house.
8. He is brave but his brother is
9. An airplane consumes more fuel while ascending than while
10. Tigers are very common in Kerala but lions are

Answer Key

1. What looks like a convenient shortcut may prove to be very **inconvenient** in the long run.
2. No one wants to listen to an ignorant man but everybody listens to a **wise** man.
3. Gold is an expensive metal while iron is **cheap**.
4. My application was accepted but his was **rejected**.
5. The teacher tried to make the student confident but he still looked very **diffident**.
6. He failed to qualify in the first two attempts but **succeeded** in the third one.
7. He often visits me but I **seldom** go to his house.
8. He is brave but his brother is **timid**.
9. An airplane consumes more fuel while ascending than while **descending**.
10. Tigers are very common in Kerala but lions are **rare**.

Complex Synonyms

Accident; incident; mishap

a) Accident: that happens by chance (usually negative)

The accident that took place yesterday proved fatal for the truck driver. (Negative)

By accident of birth, he was very rich. (positive)

b) Incident: occurrence (used in neutral sense)

Little incidents also play an important role in life.

c) Mishap: unfortunate accident (less serious than accident)

Yesterday he injured his leg; it was the second mishap in this week for him.

Anxious; eager

a) Anxious: willing to do something with an element of worry.

I am anxiously waiting for my exam result.

b) Eager: to show keenness to do something.

I am eager to learn a new language.

Bear; endure

a) Bear: to put up with something painful.

A soldier is expected to bear the pain of any wounds of war.

b) Endure: A quality to bear patiently for a long time.

A brave man endures misfortunes with smiles.

Careful; cautious

a) Careful: one who tries to do a thing in a right manner.

The officer was known for his careful selection of cadets.

b) Cautious: one who is always anxious not to make any mistake.

A cautious man is often nervous.

Deep; profound

a) Deep: can be used with both concrete and abstract things.

I have deep feeling for my mother.

Look at this well; it is very deep.

b) Profound: used in a metaphorical sense.

He is a man of profound knowledge

Increase; grow

a) Increase: sudden growth

The prices of essential items have increased.

b) Growth: a steady development

A healthy child grows into a young man.

Refuse; deny

a) Refuse: not to take what is offered.

He refused to work for this small pay.

b) Deny: means that a statement is false.

He denied that this has been done by him.

Homonyms

- **Arm** – body part
- Arm** – division of a company

- **Atmosphere** – the gases surrounding the earth
Atmosphere – the mood of a situation
- **Bail** – to clear out water
Bail – to release a prisoner
- **Band** – a ring, sometimes symbolizing eternity
Band – a musical group
- **Bat** – an implement used to hit a ball
Bat – a nocturnal flying mammal
- **Employ** – to put into use
Employ – to hire someone for a job
- **Express** – something done fast
Express – to show your thoughts by using words
- **Ring** – a band on a finger
Ring – something circular in shape
- **Right** – correct
Right – direction opposite of left
- **Rock** – a genre of music
Rock – a stone
- **Stalk** – a part of a plant
Stalk – to follow or harass someone
- **Tender** – sensitive or painful to the touch
Tender – soft food i.e. a chicken tender

Abbreviations

AD	After the birth of Christ
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
am	Ante meridiem (in the morning)
asap	As soon as possible
ATM	Automated Teller Machine

Aug	August
Ave	Avenue
b	born
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BA	British Airways
BC	Before Christ
BCE	Before the common era
BSc	Bachelor of Science
C	Celsius, centigrade
Capt	Captain
CD	Compact Disc
CE	Common Era
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
cl	Centilitre
cm	Centimetre
c/o	Care of
Co	Company
Col	Colonel
Corp	Corporation
Cpl	Corporal
cu	Cubic
CV	Curriculum vitae
d	Died
Dec	December
dept	Department
DIY	Do it yourself
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
Dr	Doctor
DVD	Digital versatile disc, digital video disc
E	East
ed	Edited, editor
e.g.	Example
ETA	Estimated time of arrival
etc	et cetera
EU	European union

F	Fahrenheit
FAQ	Frequently asked questions
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
Feb	February
ft	Foot, feet
gal	Gallon
Gen	General
GMT	Greenwich mean time
GNP	Gross National Product
Govt	Government
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency virus
hr	Hour
i.e.	In other words
in	Inch(es)
Inc	Incorporated
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IT	Information Technology
Jan	January
Jr	Junior
kg	Kilogram
kph	Kilometres per hour
lb	Pound(s)
LCD	Liquid crystal display
LED	Light emitting diode
Lt	Lieutenant
Ltd	Limited
m	Metre
MA	Master of Arts
MD	Managing Director
mg	Milligram
MI5	The security service (concerned with information from Inside Britain)
MI6	The secret intelligence service (concerned with information from outside Britain)
min	Minute
ml	Millilitre

mm	Millimetre
MP	Member of Parliament
mph	Miles per hour
Mt	Mount
N	North
NATO	National Atlantic Treaty Organization
NE	North-east
NHS	National Health Service
No	Number
Nov	November
NW	North-west
Oct	October
oz	Ounce
PA	Personal Assistant
PC	Personal Computer, police constable
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PM	Prime Minister
pm	Post meridiem (in the afternoon)
Prof	Professor
PS	Post scriptum
pt	Pint
Rd	Road
RIP	Rest in peace
rpm	Revolutions per minute
RSVP	Please reply (French- repondez s'll vous plait)
S	South
SE	South- east
sec	Second
Sept	September
Sgt	Sergeant
Sq	Square (in place names)
sq	Square (in measurements)
St	Street, saint
SW	South-west
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
uni	University
Univ	University
US	United States
USA	United States of America
VAT	Value added tax
VIP	Very important person
vol	Volume
v;	Against
W	West
WHO	World Health Organization
www	World wide web
yd	yard

Exercise

Write full form of the given abbreviations : ATM, Misc. GPS, FAX,CPU,IDRC, UNESCO.

ANSWER KEY

ATM- Automated teller machine

Misc.- miscellaneous

GPS- global positioning system

FAX- facsimile

CPU- central processing unit

IDRC- International development research centre

UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Importance of Proper Punctuation

A **punctuation mark** is a mark, or sign, used in writing to divide texts into phrases and sentences and make the meaning clear. Punctuation marks play a very

important role in giving intended meaning to the language. Use of wrong mark of punctuation or even wrong placement of mark of punctuation can change the meaning of the sentence completely and sometimes even convert the sentence to complete nonsense.

Types of Punctuation

There are many types of punctuation, and each has its own purpose and rules. They are discussed below:

1 Capitalization: It is the capital form of a letter (A vs. a). The first letter of a sentence is ALWAYS capitalized, whether it's one letter, like I went or A dog, or the first letter of a word, like The. Besides at the start of a sentence, we use capitalization for proper nouns, like places, people's names, titles, and brand-named things.

2 Comma: A comma (,) tells the reader when to pause in a sentence. Most importantly, commas help make things clear in a sentence. They can separate ideas or events:

For e.g. *The fox ran, and then he drank some water.*

We also use them for listing things:

For e.g. *One, two, three, four, and five.*

A lot of sentences need commas—they're one of the most used punctuation marks. But, commas are also misused all of the time. Wrong placement of comma can give different meaning to sentence depending upon where it is placed. Consider following sentences:

Let us eat, daddy. &

Let us eat daddy.

In the first sentence daddy is being called for dinner. However, in the second sentence, daddy himself has become an item to be eaten. Omission of comma in this case has converted the first sentence to complete non sense.

Hang him, not let him free &

Hang him not, let him free.

In above sentences, just shifting comma by one position has completely changed the meaning of the sentence.

3 Question Mark: The question mark simply indicates that a sentence is asking a question. It always comes at the end of a sentence:

For e.g. *Are we at the end?*

4 Exclamation Mark: An exclamation mark (!) adds strong feelings like joy or fear to a sentence. “To exclaim” is to say something with excitement, and that’s just what an exclamation mark does—it exclaims! Since they add excitement, it’s also important not to overuse them.

For e.g. *The fox was faster than the wind!*

Like this sentence, an exclamation mark can put emphasis on the meaning of the sentence as a whole. Here, it makes us aware that the fox really runs fast, and that seems important.

5 Semicolon: A **semicolon** (;) can connect two independent clauses that are related to each other.

For e.g. *Ram liked pancakes; he ate them every day for breakfast.*

A semicolon can be combined with a transition, like “but,” to connect two related sentences:

For e.g. *Ram liked pancakes; but he couldn’t eat them without syrup and butter.*

A semicolon can also separate items on a list that might be confusing: Lisbon, Portugal; Barcelona, Spain; Venice, Italy; Paris, France; and Berlin, Germany are all popular places to visit in Europe.

6 Colon: A colon (:) has three main uses. The first is after a word introducing a quotation, an explanation, an example, or a series.

For e.g. *He was planning to study four subjects: politics, philosophy, sociology and economics.*

The second is between independent clauses, when the second explains the first, similar to a semicolon.

For e.g. *I didn't have time to get changed: I was already late.*

The third use of a colon is for emphasis

For e.g. *There was one thing she loved more than any other: her dog.*

7 Hyphen: A **hyphen** is used to join two or more words together into a compound term and is not separated by spaces. **For e.g.** part-time, back-to-back, well-known.

8 Dash: A dash is used to separate parts of a sentence.

For e.g. *She gave him her answer — No!*

Tom can't wait for Christmas—he's very excited.

9 Brackets: **Brackets** are the squared off notations ([]) used for technical explanations or to clarify meaning. If you remove the information in the brackets, the sentence will still make sense.

For e.g. *He [Mr. Jones] was the last person seen at the house.*

10 Braces: **Braces** ({}) are used to contain two or more lines of text or listed items to show that they are considered as a unit. They are not commonplace in most writing, but can be seen in computer programming to show what should be contained within the same lines. They can also be used in mathematical expressions. **For e.g.,** $2\{1+[23-3]\}=x$.

11 Parentheses: Parentheses () are curved notations used to contain further thoughts or qualifying remarks. However, parentheses can be replaced by commas without changing the meaning in most cases.

For e.g. *John and Jane (who were actually half brother and sister) both have red hair.*

12 Apostrophe: An **apostrophe** (') is used to indicate the omission of a letter or letters from a word, the possessive case, or the plurals of lowercase letters. Examples of the apostrophe in use include:

- Omission of letters from a word: *I've seen that movie several times. She wasn't the only one who knew the answer.*
- Possessive case: *Sara's dog bit the neighbor.*
- Plural for lowercase letters: *Six people were told to mind their p's and q's.*

13 Quotations: Quotations ("") are used for lots of things, but probably the most important way we use quotations is to "quote" someone's exact words.

For e.g. *Witnesses say that they heard the fox yell "I like pancakes!"*

14 Ellipses: The **ellipsis** is most commonly represented by three periods (. . .) although it is occasionally demonstrated with three asterisks (***). The ellipsis is used in writing or printing to indicate an omission, especially of letters or words. Ellipses are frequently used within quotations to jump from one phrase to another, omitting unnecessary words that do not interfere with the meaning. Students writing research papers or newspapers quoting parts of speeches will often employ ellipsis to avoid copying lengthy text that is not needed.

- Omission of words: *She began to count, "One, two, three, four..." until she got to 10, then went to find him.*
- Within a quotation: *When Newton stated, "An object at rest stays at rest and an object in motion stays in motion..." he developed the law of motion.*

15 Period: The **period** (.) is placed at the end of declarative sentences, statements thought to be complete and after many abbreviations.

- As a sentence ender: *Jane and Jack went to the market.*
- After an abbreviation: *Her son, John Jones Jr., was born on Dec. 6, 2008.*

Exercise: Use appropriate punctuation marks in the following sentences.

1. We had a great time in France the kids really enjoyed it
2. Some people work best in the mornings others do better in the evenings
3. What are you doing next weekend
4. Mother had to go into hospital she had heart problems
5. Did you understand why I was upset
6. It is a fine idea let us hope that it is going to work
7. We will be arriving on Monday morning at least I think so
8. A textbook can be a wall between teacher and class

9. The girl's father sat in a corner
10. In the words of Murphy's Law: 'Anything that can go wrong will go wrong.'

Answer Key

1. We had a great time in France – the kids really enjoyed it.
2. Some people work best in the mornings; others do better in the evenings.
3. What are you doing next weekend?
4. Mother had to go into hospital: she had heart problems.
5. Did you understand why I was upset?
6. It is a fine idea; let us hope that it is going to work.
7. We will be arriving on Monday morning – at least, I think so.
8. A textbook can be a 'wall' between teacher and class.
9. The girl's father sat in a corner.
10. In the words of Murphy's Law: 'Anything that can go wrong will go wrong.'

ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES OF PARAGRAPHS

The Structure of a Paragraph

A paragraph is a unit of written discourse with one or more than one sentence woven around a central idea. The main idea is usually given in the topic sentence (the sentence that talks about the topic of the paragraph). The basic rule of paragraph writing is that it focuses on one idea only. This idea is further elaborated with supporting details in other sentences in the form of suitable examples, proofs, statistical details, anecdotes etc. The paragraph normally ends with a concluding statement which rephrases the main idea powerfully.

A **paragraph** is usually around 250 words and consists of five or six sentences, although this can vary depending on the purpose of the **paragraph**, and the length of the piece you are writing. **Paragraphs** play an important role in writing because they provide a framework for organizing your ideas in a logical order.

TSC is an abbreviation that can be used to remember the structure of the paragraph.

T—Topic sentence

S—Supporting details

C – Concluding statement

Basic structure of a paragraph

The structure of a coherent paragraph includes- Introduction, Body and Conclusion. Each part of the paragraph plays an important role in communicating the meaning you intend to convey to the reader.

Introduction: the first section of a paragraph includes - the topic sentence which focuses on the main idea. The first few sentences also provide background information about the topic.

Body: follows the introduction; the topic sentence is followed by supporting sentences that develop the idea using facts, arguments, analysis, examples, and other information.

Conclusion: the final section; summarizes the connections between the information discussed in the body of the paragraph and add a concluding sentence to tie up all together.

1. Start by writing down one of your main ideas, in sentence form.
2. Next, write down each of your supporting points for that main idea, but leave four or five lines in between each point.
3. In the space under each point, write down some elaboration for that point.

Elements of a good Paragraph

There are four essential elements of paragraph writing and each element contributes to the whole. The four elements essential to good paragraph writing are:

- **Unified**—All of the sentences in a single paragraph should be related to a single controlling idea
- **Clearly related to the research problem**—The sentences should all refer to the central idea, or the thesis, of the paper.
- **Coherent**—The sentences should be arranged in a logical manner and should follow a definite plan for development.

- **Well-developed**—Every idea discussed in the paragraph should be adequately explained and supported through evidence and details that work together to explain the paragraph's controlling idea.

Paragraphs are the building blocks of papers. Without well-written paragraphs that flow logically from one idea to the next and that inform and help support in some meaningful way the central research problem being investigated, your paper will not be viewed as credible and, well, you'll probably receive a poor grade.

Here are some suggestions for troubleshooting common problems associated with developing paragraphs:

1. **The paragraph has no controlling idea.** Imagine each paragraph as having three general layers of text. The core content is in the middle. It includes all the evidence you need to make the point. However, this evidence needs to be introduced by a topic sentence in some way or your readers don't know what to do with all the evidence you have given them. Therefore, the beginning of the paragraph explains the controlling idea of the paragraph. The last part of the paragraph tells the reader how the paragraph relates to the broader argument and often provides a transition to the next idea. Once you have mastered the use of topic sentences, you may decide that the topic sentence for a particular paragraph really should not be the first sentence of the paragraph. This is fine—the topic sentence can actually go at the beginning, middle, or end of a paragraph; what's important is that it is there to inform readers what the main idea of the paragraph is and how it relates back to the broader thesis of your paper.

2. **The paragraph has more than one controlling idea.** This is the most common reason why a paragraph is too long. If a paragraph is more than a page long, it likely contains more than one controlling idea. In this case, consider eliminating sentences that relate to the second idea, with the thought that maybe they don't really inform and help support the central research problem, or split the paragraph into two or more paragraphs, each with only one controlling idea.

3. **Transitions are needed within the paragraph.** You are probably familiar with the idea that transitions may be needed between paragraphs or sections in a paper. Sometimes they are also helpful within the body of a single paragraph. Within a paragraph, transitions are often single words or short phrases that help to establish relationships between ideas and to create a logical progression of those ideas in a paragraph. This is especially true within paragraphs that discuss multiple examples or discuss complex ideas, issues, or concepts.

Structure and Writing Style

I. General Structure

Most paragraphs in an essay parallel the general three-part structure of each section of a research paper and, by extension, the overall research paper, with an introduction, a body that includes facts and analysis, and a conclusion. You can see this structure in paragraphs whether they are narrating, describing, comparing, contrasting, or analyzing information. Each part of the paragraph plays an important role in communicating the meaning you intend to convey to the reader.

Introduction: the first section of a paragraph; should include the topic sentence and any other sentences at the beginning of the paragraph that give background information or provide a transition.

Body: follows the introduction; discusses the controlling idea, using facts, arguments, analysis, examples, and other information.

Conclusion: the final section; summarizes the connections between the information discussed in the body of the paragraph and the paragraph's controlling idea. For long paragraphs, you may also want to include a bridge sentence that introduces the next paragraph or section of the paper. In some instances, the bridge sentence can be written in the form of a question. However, use this rhetorical device sparingly, otherwise, ending a lot of paragraphs with a question to lead into the next paragraph sounds cumbersome.

NOTE: This general structure does not imply that you should not be creative in your writing. Arranging where each element goes in a paragraph can make a paper more engaging for the reader. However, do not be too creative in experimenting with the narrative flow of paragraphs. To do so may distract from

the main arguments of your research and weaken the quality of your academic writing.

II. Development and Organization

Before you can begin to determine what the composition of a particular paragraph will be, you must consider what is the most important idea that you are trying to convey to your reader. This is the "controlling idea," or the thesis statement from which you compose the remainder of the paragraph. In other words, your paragraphs should remind your reader that there is a recurrent relationship between your controlling idea and the information in each paragraph. The research problem functions like a seed from which your paper, and your ideas, will grow. The whole process of paragraph development is an organic one—a natural progression from a seed idea to a full-blown research study where there are direct, familial relationships in the paper between all of your controlling ideas and the paragraphs which derive from them.

The decision about what to put into your paragraphs begins with brainstorming about how you want to pursue the research problem. There are many techniques for brainstorming but, whichever one you choose, this stage of paragraph development cannot be skipped because it lays a foundation for developing a set of paragraphs [representing a section of your paper] that describes a specific element of your overall analysis. Each section is described further in this writing guide.

Given these factors, every paragraph in a paper should be:

- Unified—All of the sentences in a single paragraph should be related to a single controlling idea [often expressed in the topic sentence of the paragraph].
- Clearly related to the research problem—The sentences should all refer to the central idea, or the thesis, of the paper.
- Coherent—The sentences should be arranged in a logical manner and should follow a definite plan for development.
- Well-developed—Every idea discussed in the paragraph should be adequately explained and supported through evidence and details that work together to explain the paragraph's controlling idea.

There are many different ways you can organize a paragraph. However, the organization you choose will depend on the controlling idea of the paragraph.

Ways to organize a paragraph in academic writing include:

- Narrative: Tell a story. Go chronologically, from start to finish.
- Descriptive: Provide specific details about what something looks or feels like. Organize spatially, in order of appearance, or by topic.
- Process: Explain step by step how something works. Perhaps follow a sequence—first, second, third.
- Classification: Separate into groups or explain the various parts of a topic.
- Illustrative: Give examples and explain how those examples prove your point.

Paragraph organisation principles:

Different ways of organising ideas in a paragraph include:

1. **General to specific:** Start with the most general idea in your topic sentence and then use the following sentences to bring in specific examples. Paragraphs 1 and 2 above are both examples of this organising principle.
2. **Problem and solution:** Start by stating a problem in the topic sentence and then use the following sentences to explain how the problem might be solved.
3. **Claim and evidence:** Present a claim in your topic sentence and then provide evidence in the following sentences.
4. **Claim and counter-claim or counter-argument:** Present a claim in your topic sentence that you don't agree with and then present an opposing claim or argument against that claim. This is used when you are trying to argue against an objection that your reader might make to your argument. Chronological order (time): Start with the topic or main point in your topic sentence, then introduce events relating to that topic or point in time sequence in the following sentences. This is especially useful when you need to present a historical overview of something.
5. **Most important to least important:** Start with the topic or main point in your topic sentence, then introduce supporting points in order of importance in the following sentences.

Writing Tip

Coherence of Ideas is What Matters, Not Length!

Do not think of developing paragraphs in terms of their length. Length and appearance do not determine whether a part in your paper is a paragraph. It is

the unity and coherence of ideas represented in a sentence or among sentences that constitutes to a good paragraph.

Sentence Structures

Sentence structure refers to the physical nature of a sentence and how the elements of that sentence are presented. Just like word choice, writers should strive to vary their sentence structure to create rhythmic prose and keep their reader interested. Sentences that require a variation often repeat subjects, lengths, or types.

Simple sentences: It is the most basic type of sentence which contains only one clause. It is made up of a subject and a verb. A simple sentence is an independent clause with no conjunction or dependent clause. **For E.g.**

- The house is vacant
- Alisha wants to visit Singapore.
- I saw him laughing at a beggar.

Compound sentences: A compound sentence has two or more independent clauses or simple sentences joined by a comma, a semicolon or a coordinating conjunction (e.g., and, but, or, for, nor, yet, so). Sometimes, it also includes one or more subordinate clauses. **For E.g**

- He locked the door **and** went out.
- Alisha worked very hard **but** she failed.
- **The horse reared and the rider was thrown** (2 main clauses)
- **They were fond of music, played on various kinds of instruments and indulged in singing.** (3 main clauses)
- **They asked him how he received the wound but he refused to answer.** (2 main clauses, 1 subordinating clause underlined one)

Complex sentences: A complex sentence contains one independent clause and at least one dependent clause. It can have more than one dependent clause. **But if there are two or more main clauses in a sentence, even though it may have dependent clause, it is a compound sentence and not a complex sentence.** The clauses in a complex sentence are combined with conjunctions and subordinators, terms that help the dependent clauses relate to the independent clause. Subordinators can refer to the subject (who, which), the sequence/time (since, while), or the causal elements (because, if) of the independent clause. **For E.g**

- **We have our breakfast** when the sun rises. (red is Independent, black is dependent clause)
- **As soon as the fog disappeared,** we went out. (red is Independent, black is dependent clause)

Techniques For Writing Precisely

Effective writing allows the reader to understand everything you are saying.

Techniques for Writing

Effective writing allows the reader to understand everything you are saying. Following are the tips for writing precisely:

1. **Clarity:** Know the purpose of your writing and state it clearly. Your purpose needs to be stated in the communication. Avoid information that is not relevant.
2. **Tone:** The kind of tone depends on the audience and purpose of writing. Official and Business letters need a formal tone whereas writing to someone you know well; an informal tone can be used.
3. **Language:** Language needs to be simple. Do not overuse clichés, expressions or try to impress with big words. Keep sentences and paragraphs short and concise.
4. **Conciseness:** Less is more when it comes to length. Leave out words that do not contribute to the main focus of the communication.
5. **Active Voice:** Using an Active voice will strengthen your writing. Sentences that are written in the Active voice have a better flow and are easier to understand. Long and complicated sentences will slow the reader down. Eg.

An active example is "I caught the ball."

A passive example is "A ball was caught by me."

Active voice will engage the reader and keep his attention.

6. **Communication:** The social purpose of language is communication – to inform, misinform or otherwise influence our fellows.
7. **Emphasis:** The art of writing depends a good deal on putting the strongest words at the most important places to emphasize your points of view.
8. **Honesty:** Writing reveals your character. So, adopt an honest style to writing.
9. **Reading:** One learns to write by reading good books just like one learns to talk by hearing good talkers.

10.Revision: Revise your work thoroughly before making the final draft.

BEFORE WRITING

- What is the occasion/purpose?
 - To share
 - To inform
 - To persuade
 - To entertain
- Who is my audience?
 - Size
 - Eminence
- Outline—Memory and Organization
- Develop a routine

DURING WRITING

Introductions

- What to include in introductions
 - The importance of the topic
 - Background information (history)
 - Anecdotes
 - Common ground (you and I)
 - Description (e.g., of the problem)
 - A thesis (what you are arguing)
- Keep it short

It may be helpful to skip the introduction and come back to it when you have finished the paper.

Conclusions

- Revisit the thesis. (not re-state)
- Explain what will happen if your view is not adopted.

- Explain the significance of your main point.
- Keep it short.

Organization and Content

- Make sure that your memo, proposal, letter, or essay follows a natural, cohesive structure. Structure your paragraphs in terms of either chronology (first, second, third) or importance (most to least, or vice versa).
- Within paragraphs, go from old to new information.
- Use analogies, comparisons, and examples to emphasize your point.
- Be descriptive.
- Discuss past, present, and future (potential) outcomes (causes and effects).
- Vary your sentence structure.