Pariksha Saathi — English Notes

17 topics • 51 lessons • updated 28 October 2026

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The English topics in the syllabus of: SSC CGL, IBPS PO, SSC MTS, SSC CHSL, SBI PO, SBI Clerk, IBPS Clerk, SSC GD Constable, Agniveer (Army GD), Bihar Police Constable, UPPSC Prelims, MPPSC Prelims, UPSSSC PET, Rajasthan Patwari, Haryana CET (Group C), DSSSB TGT. Each topic ends with a link to its free practice questions; full mock tests are free in the Pariksha Saathi app and on the website.

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Reading Comprehension

Reading Comprehension Solved Questions

Reading Comprehension rewards careful reading over prior knowledge — every answer is drawn directly from the passage itself, not from what you already know about the topic. Here’s the approach, one short passage with six fully worked questions, and a few more to try yourself. Read the whole passage once before looking at the questions, so you have a sense of its overall structure and where different details sit. Answer strictly from the passage, even if you happen to know more about the real-world topic — the "correct" answer is whatever the passage states, not outside knowledge. For factual-detail questions, locate the specific sentence that contains the answer rather than relying on a vague memory of the passage — re-read that sentence before answering. Watch for absolute words ("always," "never," "only") in answer choices — passages are usually written with moderate, qualified claims, so an option with an absolute word often overstates what the passage actually says. A question can describe the same fact using different words than the passage itself — match the MEANING of the relevant sentence to the question, not just overlapping vocabulary, before deciding an answer isn’t supported.

Examples

- Read the passage and answer the question: "Water is one of the most essential resources for human survival, yet it is often used wastefully in daily life. Simple habits such as turning off taps while brushing teeth, fixing leaking pipes promptly, and reusing water for plants can significantly reduce household water consumption. Many urban areas are now adopting rainwater harvesting systems to capture and store rainwater for later use, reducing dependence on groundwater. Experts suggest that even small changes in individual behaviour, when adopted widely across a community, can meaningfully ease the pressure on shared water resources, particularly during periods of low rainfall." Question: What system are many urban areas now adopting to capture rainwater, according to the passage? Solution: The passage states: "Many urban areas are now adopting rainwater harvesting systems to capture and store rainwater for later use." Answer: Rainwater harvesting systems
- Using the same passage, question: According to the passage, what does rainwater harvesting reduce dependence on? Solution: The passage states this directly reduces "dependence on groundwater." Answer: Groundwater

- Using the same passage, question: According to the passage, during which period does easing pressure on water resources particularly matter? Solution: The passage ends by specifying this matters "particularly during periods of low rainfall." Answer: Periods of low rainfall
- Using the same passage, question: Name one daily habit mentioned in the passage that can reduce household water consumption. Solution: The passage lists three: turning off taps while brushing teeth, fixing leaking pipes promptly, and reusing water for plants — any one of these is a valid answer. Answer: Turning off taps while brushing teeth (or fixing leaking pipes promptly, or reusing water for plants)
- Using the same passage, question: According to the passage, what do rainwater harvesting systems do with the rainwater they capture? Solution: The passage states these systems "capture and store rainwater for later use." Answer: Store it for later use
- Using the same passage, question: According to the passage, what can turning off taps, fixing leaking pipes, and reusing water for plants help reduce? Solution: The passage states these habits "can significantly reduce household water consumption." Answer: Household water consumption
- Practice: According to the passage, what kind of changes can meaningfully ease pressure on shared water resources, according to experts? (Answer: Small changes in individual behaviour, when adopted widely across a community)
- Practice: What does the passage say water is essential for? (Answer: Human survival)
- Practice: According to the passage, how is water often used in daily life? (Answer: Wastefully)
- Practice: According to the passage, what kind of resources does easing pressure particularly help, during periods of low rainfall? (Answer: Shared water resources)
- Practice: According to the passage, what should be done with leaking pipes? (Answer: Fixed promptly)

> **Quick revision:** Read the whole passage once before looking at the questions, so you have a sense of its overall structure and where different details sit; Answer strictly from the passage, even if you happen to know more about the real-world topic — the "correct" answer is whatever the passage states, not outside knowledge; For factual-detail questions, locate the specific sentence that contains the answer rather than relying on a vague memory of the passage — re-read that sentence before answering; Watch for absolute words ("always," "never," "only") in answer choices — passages are usually written with moderate, qualified claims, so an option with an absolute word often overstates what the passage actually says; A question can describe the same fact using different words than the passage itself — match the MEANING of the relevant sentence to the question, not just overlapping vocabulary, before deciding an answer isn't supported

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/reading-comprehension/

Active and Passive Voice

Active and Passive Voice

The active voice puts the DOER of the action as the subject ("The chef cooks the meal"); the passive voice puts the RECEIVER of the action as the subject instead ("The meal is cooked by the chef"), using a form of "be" plus the past participle.

The conversion pattern is mechanical once you know the tense: find the tense of the active verb, use the matching form of "be" in the passive, and switch the active object into the passive subject (with the original subject moving into a "by ___" phrase at the end, or dropped entirely if it's a vague or unknown agent like "someone" or "people"). Simple present "writes" becomes "is written"; simple past "wrote" becomes "was written"; present continuous "is writing" becomes "is being written"; present perfect "has written" becomes "has been written"; modal "can write" becomes "can be written" (the modal stays the same, only the main verb changes form).

Imperatives (commands) convert using "Let + object + be + past participle": "Open the door" becomes "Let the door be opened." Questions keep their question structure but move the auxiliary: "Did she write this?" becomes "Was this written by her?"

A frequent trap: dropping the "by" phrase is not just allowed but PREFERRED when the agent is generic, unknown, or unimportant ("English is spoken worldwide," not "...spoken by people worldwide") — only keep it when naming

the doer actually adds information.

Examples

- Active: "The teacher checks the homework." Passive: "The homework is checked by the teacher." (simple present)
- Active: "Columbus discovered America." Passive: "America was discovered by Columbus." (simple past)
- Active: "The workers are building a bridge." Passive: "A bridge is being built by the workers." (present continuous)
- Active: "You must submit the report by Friday." Passive: "The report must be submitted by Friday." (modal stays "must")
- Active: "Open the door." (imperative) Passive: "Let the door be opened."
- Active: "Did she write this letter?" Passive: "Was this letter written by her?"
- Active: "People speak English all over the world." Passive: "English is spoken all over the world." (the vague agent "people" is dropped, not kept as "by people")
- Active: "The manager had completed the report before the meeting." Passive: "The report had been completed by the manager before the meeting." (past perfect)

> **Quick revision:** Find the active verb's tense, use the matching "be" form in the passive, swap subject/object. Modals stay the same word. Imperatives use "Let X be done." Drop "by ___" when the agent is vague or unimportant.

Active and Passive Voice Solved Questions

Converting active to passive voice is a purely mechanical transformation once you know the three moving parts — the whole topic is just applying the same steps consistently across every tense. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. In active voice, the subject performs the action ("The cat chased the mouse"). In passive voice, the object of that action becomes the new subject ("The mouse was chased by the cat"). Three moving parts, every time: the object of the active sentence becomes the new subject; the verb becomes "a form of be + past participle"; the original subject moves after "by" (or is dropped if unknown or unimportant). The tense must be preserved exactly — only the form of "be" changes to match it: simple present → is/are + past participle, simple past → was/were + past participle, present continuous → is/are + being + past participle, and so on. Only transitive verbs (ones that take a direct object) can become passive. A sentence with no object, like "She slept" or "He arrived," has no passive form at all. A verb with two objects (give, teach, offer, send) can usually form two valid passive sentences, one with each object promoted to subject — "He teaches us English" can become either "We are taught English by him" or "English is taught to us by him"; the first, with the person as subject, is the more common choice.

Examples

- Change to passive voice: "The teacher checks the homework." Solution: Object "the homework" becomes the new subject. The verb "checks" (simple present) becomes "is checked" (is + past participle). The original subject "the teacher" moves after "by". Answer: "The homework is checked by the teacher."
- Change to passive voice: "Columbus discovered America." Solution: Object "America" becomes the new subject. The verb "discovered" (simple past) becomes "was discovered" (was + past participle). The original subject "Columbus" moves after "by". Answer: "America was discovered by Columbus."
- Change to passive voice: "You must submit the report by Friday." Solution: Object "the report" becomes the new subject. The modal "must" stays, and the main verb becomes "be submitted" (be + past participle) right after it. The agent ("by you") is usually dropped here since it's already understood from context. Answer: "The report must be submitted by Friday."
- Change to passive voice: "The workers are building a new bridge." Solution: Object "a new bridge" becomes the new subject. The verb "are building" (present continuous) becomes "is being built" (be + being + past participle) — "is" because the new subject, "a new bridge", is singular. The original subject "the workers" moves after "by". Answer: "A new bridge is being built by the workers."
- Change to passive voice: "He teaches us English." Solution: This verb has two objects: "us" and "English". Promoting the person, "us", to subject is the more natural passive. "Teaches" (simple present) becomes "are taught" (are + past participle), matching the new plural subject "we". Answer: "We are taught English by him."

- Change to passive voice: "They elected him president." Solution: Object "him" becomes the new subject; "president" (the object complement) stays in place after the verb. The verb "elected" (simple past) becomes "was elected" (was + past participle). Answer: "He was elected president by them."
- Practice: Change to passive voice: "She will complete the project next week." (Answer: "The project will be completed by her next week.")
- Practice: Change to passive voice: "They have finished the work." (Answer: "The work has been finished by them.")
- Practice: Change to passive voice: "Open the door." (an imperative sentence) (Answer: "Let the door be opened." (imperatives use "Let + object + be + past participle"))
- Practice: Change to passive voice: "Someone has stolen my bicycle." (Answer: "My bicycle has been stolen." (the agent, "by someone", is dropped since it adds no information))
- Practice: Change to passive voice: "We should respect our elders." (Answer: "Our elders should be respected (by us).")

> **Quick revision:** In active voice, the subject performs the action ("The cat chased the mouse"). In passive voice, the object of that action becomes the new subject ("The mouse was chased by the cat"); Three moving parts, every time: the object of the active sentence becomes the new subject; the verb becomes "a form of be + past participle"; the original subject moves after "by" (or is dropped if unknown or unimportant); The tense must be preserved exactly — only the form of "be" changes to match it: simple present → is/are + past participle, simple past → was/were + past participle, present continuous → is/are + being + past participle, and so on; Only transitive verbs (ones that take a direct object) can become passive. A sentence with no object, like "She slept" or "He arrived," has no passive form at all; A verb with two objects (give, teach, offer, send) can usually form two valid passive sentences, one with each object promoted to subject — "He teaches us English" can become either "We are taught English by him" or "English is taught to us by him"; the first, with the person as subject, is the more common choice

Sentence Transformation Solved Questions

The same idea can be written as a simple, compound, or complex sentence — the content stays the same, only the grammatical structure changes. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. A simple sentence has exactly one independent clause (one subject-verb unit) — if the information is split into two separate ideas, it needs to be compressed into one before it can be "simple." A compound sentence joins two or more independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, so) or a semicolon — both halves could stand alone as complete sentences. A complex sentence joins one independent clause with one or more dependent clauses, using a subordinator (because, although, since, when, if, who, which, that) — the dependent clause can't stand alone. When converting a complex sentence to simple, the subordinate clause usually compresses into a phrase ("Because it was raining" becomes "Due to the rain") rather than disappearing entirely — the meaning has to survive the transformation. Match the compression to the TYPE of relationship, not a single fixed pattern: a reason ("because") usually compresses to "due to/because of + noun," while a purpose ("so that") compresses to "to + verb" — using the wrong pattern changes the meaning.

Examples

- Transform into a complex sentence: "He was tired. He continued working." Solution: Join the two simple sentences using a subordinator that captures the contrast between them, such as "although." Answer: Although he was tired, he continued working.
- Transform into a compound sentence: "Despite being tired, he continued working." Solution: Replace the subordinate structure with two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction that signals contrast, "but." Answer: He was tired, but he continued working.
- Transform into a simple sentence: "Because it was raining, we stayed indoors." Solution: Compress the subordinate clause "Because it was raining" into a short phrase, leaving one independent clause. Answer: Due to the rain, we stayed indoors.
- Transform into a complex sentence: "The sun set. The temperature dropped quickly." Solution: Join the two simple sentences using a subordinator that captures their time relationship, "as." Answer: As the sun set, the temperature dropped quickly.

- Transform into a simple sentence: "He left early so that he could catch the train." Solution: The clause "so that he could catch the train" states a purpose, so it compresses to a "to + verb" phrase, not a "due to" phrase. Answer: He left early to catch the train.
- Transform into a compound sentence: "Because the roads were flooded, the bus was delayed." Solution: Replace the subordinate reason clause with two independent clauses joined by the coordinating conjunction "so," which signals a result. Answer: The roads were flooded, so the bus was delayed.
- Practice: Transform into a compound sentence: "Although she studied hard, she failed the exam." (Answer: She studied hard, but she failed the exam.)
- Practice: Transform into a simple sentence: "Since he was late, he missed the train." (Answer: Due to being late, he missed the train.)
- Practice: Transform into a complex sentence: "He finished his work. He went home." (Answer: After he finished his work, he went home.)
- Practice: Transform into a complex sentence: "She had saved money for years. She was able to buy a house." (Answer: Because she had saved money for years, she was able to buy a house.)
- Practice: Transform into a simple sentence: "Since he did not have a ticket, he could not enter the stadium." (Answer: Without a ticket, he could not enter the stadium.)

> **Quick revision:** A simple sentence has exactly one independent clause (one subject-verb unit) — if the information is split into two separate ideas, it needs to be compressed into one before it can be "simple."; A compound sentence joins two or more independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, so) or a semicolon — both halves could stand alone as complete sentences; A complex sentence joins one independent clause with one or more dependent clauses, using a subordinator (because, although, since, when, if, who, which, that) — the dependent clause can't stand alone; When converting a complex sentence to simple, the subordinate clause usually compresses into a phrase ("Because it was raining" becomes "Due to the rain") rather than disappearing entirely — the meaning has to survive the transformation; Match the compression to the TYPE of relationship, not a single fixed pattern: a reason ("because") usually compresses to "due to/because of + noun," while a purpose ("so that") compresses to "to + verb" — using the wrong pattern changes the meaning

Passive Voice: Questions & Negatives

Converting a statement to passive voice is routine — converting a question or a negative sentence adds one extra move: the auxiliary verb has to come along to a new position instead of just swapping with the subject. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. For a Yes/No question, the auxiliary moves to the front of the passive sentence too: "Does she clean the room?" → "Is the room cleaned by her?" — the auxiliary changes to match the new passive subject, but still leads the sentence. For a Wh-question, the wh-word stays first, the auxiliary comes right after it, then the new subject: "What did he write?" → "What was written by him?" For a negative sentence, "not" stays attached to the auxiliary verb in its new passive position: "She does not clean the room." → "The room is not cleaned by her." The core passive transformation (object becomes subject, verb becomes "be + past participle", original subject becomes "by + agent") still applies underneath — questions and negatives just change where the pieces sit, not the underlying rule. A question built with a modal (can, must, should, will) keeps the modal in front and simply inserts a bare "be" before the past participle: "Can she finish the work?" → "Can the work be finished by her?" And when the wh-word itself is the subject (asking who did something), it becomes "by whom," placed right after the moved auxiliary: "Who wrote this novel?" → "By whom was this novel written?"

Examples

- Change to passive voice: "Does she clean the room?" Solution: The object "the room" becomes the subject, and the auxiliary "does" becomes "is", staying at the front: "Is the room cleaned by her?" Answer: Is the room cleaned by her?
- Change to passive voice: "What did he write?" Solution: The wh-word "What" stays first, "did" becomes "was", and "he" becomes "by him": "What was written by him?" Answer: What was written by him?
- Change to passive voice: "She does not clean the room." Solution: "Not" stays attached to the auxiliary in its new position: "does not" becomes "is not": "The room is not cleaned by her." Answer: The room is not cleaned by her.

- Change to passive voice: "Why did they cancel the meeting?" Solution: The wh-word "Why" stays first, "did" becomes "was", and "they" becomes "by them": "Why was the meeting cancelled by them?" Answer: Why was the meeting cancelled by them?
- Change to passive voice: "Must he submit the report today?" Solution: The modal "must" stays in front, and a bare "be" is inserted before the past participle: "Must the report be submitted by him today?" Answer: Must the report be submitted by him today?
- Change to passive voice: "Who wrote this novel?" Solution: Here the wh-word "who" is itself the subject (the writer), so it becomes "by whom," placed right after the moved auxiliary "was": "By whom was this novel written?" Answer: By whom was this novel written?
- Practice: Change to passive voice: "Did they complete the project?" (Answer: Was the project completed by them?)
- Practice: Change to passive voice: "He does not water the plants." (Answer: The plants are not watered by him.)
- Practice: Change to passive voice: "Where did she buy this dress?" (Answer: Where was this dress bought by her?)
- Practice: Change to passive voice: "Can you solve this puzzle?" (Answer: Can this puzzle be solved by you?)
- Practice: Change to passive voice: "Who designed this building?" (Answer: By whom was this building designed?)

> **Quick revision:** For a Yes/No question, the auxiliary moves to the front of the passive sentence too: "Does she clean the room?" → "Is the room cleaned by her?" — the auxiliary changes to match the new passive subject, but still leads the sentence; For a Wh-question, the wh-word stays first, the auxiliary comes right after it, then the new subject: "What did he write?" → "What was written by him?"; For a negative sentence, "not" stays attached to the auxiliary verb in its new passive position: "She does not clean the room." → "The room is not cleaned by her."; The core passive transformation (object becomes subject, verb becomes "be + past participle", original subject becomes "by + agent") still applies underneath — questions and negatives just change where the pieces sit, not the underlying rule; A question built with a modal (can, must, should, will) keeps the modal in front and simply inserts a bare "be" before the past participle: "Can she finish the work?" → "Can the work be finished by her?" And when the wh-word itself is the subject (asking who did something), it becomes "by whom," placed right after the moved auxiliary: "Who wrote this novel?" → "By whom was this novel written?"

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/active-passive-voice/

Cloze Test

Cloze Test: grammar plus meaning

A cloze test fills blanks in a passage with the right word, and it tests two different skills at once: grammar (does the word fit the sentence structure?) and discourse logic (does the word fit the MEANING relationship with the surrounding sentences?).

For grammar-type blanks, check tense consistency with the rest of the passage, subject-verb agreement, and whether the blank needs a noun, verb, adjective, or preposition based on its position in the sentence. For meaning-type blanks — usually a connector word — identify the LOGICAL relationship between the current sentence and the one before it: is it a CONTRAST (however, nevertheless, although, despite), a RESULT (therefore, consequently, as a result, so), an ADDITION (moreover, furthermore, besides), or an ALTERNATIVE (instead, otherwise)? Picking the wrong relationship word is the single most common mistake, since several options often sound equally fluent in isolation — only the actual logical link to the previous sentence tells you which one is correct. The contrast words also differ in grammar: "however" and "nevertheless" can open a sentence followed by a comma, "although" needs a full clause after it, and "despite" takes a noun or an -ing form.

Read at least one full sentence before AND after the blank before choosing, never just the phrase immediately touching it — the connector's correctness depends on the relationship between two complete ideas, not on local word-fit alone. For tense-based blanks spanning multiple sentences, track whether the passage is narrating something still true now (present perfect: "has/have done"), something ongoing since a point in the past (present perfect continuous: "has/have been doing"), or something fully in the past (simple past).

Examples

- "The company's profits declined sharply. ___, the board decided to cut costs." The cost-cutting is a RESULT of the decline, so "Therefore" fits, not a contrast word like "However."
- "He trained for months. ___, he was unable to finish the race due to injury." Failing to finish CONTRASTS with months of training, so "However" fits, not "Therefore."
- "___ the weather was unfavorable, the flight departed on time." Departing on time DESPITE bad weather is a contrast, so "Although" fits, not a cause word like "Because."
- "The population of the city ___ doubled over the last two decades." An action spanning from the past up to now needs the present perfect: "has doubled," not simple past or present.
- "Scientists ___ studying the effects of climate change for several decades now." The emphasis on ongoing duration ("for several decades now") calls for the present perfect continuous: "have been studying."
- "He did not watch television. ___, he read a book." Reading takes the place of watching television, which fits "Instead"; a result word like "Therefore" does not fit.
- Always read the full sentence on both sides of the blank — a connector that sounds fine in isolation can still be the wrong logical relationship once you check what it's actually connecting.

> **Quick revision:** Grammar blanks: check tense and agreement. Meaning blanks (connectors): identify contrast vs result vs addition vs alternative from the surrounding sentences, not from how the word sounds alone.

Cloze Test Solved Questions

Cloze Test questions give you a short passage with several blanks — each answer has to fit the grammar of its own sentence AND stay consistent with the passage's overall meaning. Here's the approach, six fully worked passages, and a few to try yourself. Read the whole passage once before filling in any blank, so you understand its overall topic and tone — an option can be grammatically fine in isolation and still wrong because it contradicts the passage elsewhere. Pay attention to connector words already in the passage ("however", "therefore", "although") — they tell you whether the missing word should continue the same idea or contrast with it. Apply the same grammar checks as Spotting Errors and Sentence Improvement to each blank individually: subject-verb agreement, correct preposition, and tense consistency with the rest of the passage. When two options both seem grammatically valid, re-read the sentence with each substituted in — the one that fits the passage's actual meaning, not just its grammar, is correct. A blank inside a clause describing an earlier, completed event should match the TENSE already established around it, even if the surrounding verbs are in the present — check the specific sentence the blank sits in, not just the passage's dominant tense.

Examples

- Fill in the blanks: Reading regularly (1)___ vocabulary and improves concentration. Many students, (2)___, find it hard to make time for books because of their busy schedules. Experts suggest setting aside just twenty minutes a day (3)___ build the habit gradually. (1) (A) improve (B) improves (C) improving (D) improved (2) (A) therefore (B) for example (C) however (D) moreover (3) (A) to (B) for (C) at (D) in Solution: (1): The subject "Reading regularly" is singular, so the verb must be singular — "improves", not "improve". (2): The passage shifts from reading's benefits to students finding it HARD to read — a contrast, so "however" fits, not a continuation word like "therefore" or "moreover". (3): "Setting aside time TO build a habit" is the standard infinitive-of-purpose construction. Answer: (1) B improves, (2) C however, (3) A to
- Fill in the blanks: Solar energy is becoming increasingly popular (1)___ it is renewable and produces no harmful emissions. (2)___, the initial cost of installing solar panels remains high for many households. Governments in several countries (3)___ now offering subsidies to make the switch more affordable. (1) (A) because (B) although (C) unless (D) despite (2) (A) Similarly (B) However (C) Therefore (D) For instance (3) (A) is (B) was (C) are (D) has Solution: (1): The clause gives a REASON solar energy is popular (renewable, no emissions), so "because" fits. (2): The passage shifts from solar energy's benefits to a drawback (high cost) — a contrast, so "However". (3): The subject "Governments… in several countries" is plural, so the verb must be plural — "are". Answer: (1) A because, (2) B However, (3) C are
- Fill in the blanks: The human brain uses (1)___ twenty percent of the body's total energy, even though it makes up only about two percent of body weight. This is largely (2)___ neurons require a constant supply of glucose and oxygen to function properly. (3)___ we are resting or asleep, this energy demand does not pause. (1) (A) near (B) nearly (C) nearer

(D) nearest (2) (A) because of (B) because (C) due to (D) owing (3) (A) Despite (B) Although (C) Because (D) Unless Solution: (1): The blank modifies the approximate number "twenty percent", which needs the adverb "nearly", not the adjective "near". (2): What follows is a full clause ("neurons require…"), which needs "because" — "because of", "due to" and "owing" all need a noun phrase instead, not a full clause. (3): What follows is a full clause ("we are resting or asleep") expressing a concession, which needs "Although" — "Despite" would need a noun phrase ("Despite resting"), not a full clause. Answer: (1) B nearly, (2) B because, (3) B Although

- Fill in the blanks: Many companies today (1)___ remote work policies to attract talent from a wider pool of candidates. Employees, (2)___, often report feeling isolated without regular face-to-face contact with colleagues. To address this, many organisations now schedule periodic in-person meetups (3)___ maintain a sense of team connection. (1) (A) adopt (B) adopts (C) adopting (D) adopted (2) (A) therefore (B) however (C) for instance (D) similarly (3) (A) for (B) to (C) at (D) with Solution: (1): The plural subject "Many companies" needs the plural verb "adopt", not "adopts". (2): The passage shifts from companies' good reason for remote work to a downside employees report — a contrast, so "however". (3): "Schedule meetups TO maintain a sense of connection" is the standard infinitive-of-purpose construction. Answer: (1) A adopt, (2) B however, (3) B to
- Fill in the blanks: Many startups fail within the first few years because they (1)___ underestimate the time needed to achieve profitability. Investors, (2)___, continue to fund promising ideas despite this high failure rate. (1) (A) usual (B) usually (C) use (D) using (2) (A) therefore (B) however (C) for example (D) likewise Solution: (1): The blank modifies the verb "underestimate", which needs the adverb "usually", not the adjective "usual". (2): The passage shifts from startups failing to investors continuing to fund them anyway — a contrast, so "however". Answer: (1) B usually, (2) B however
- Fill in the blanks: The ancient city was built along a river that (1)___ fresh water and enabled trade with neighbouring regions. Archaeologists believe the settlement (2)___ abandoned after the river changed its course. (1) (A) provide (B) provides (C) provided (D) providing (2) (A) was (B) is (C) were (D) are Solution: (1): The passage is describing a historical situation ("was built"); the relative clause describing the river's role at that time needs the matching past tense, "provided". (2): The subject "the settlement" is singular, and the passive describes a past event, so "was" fits — not the present-tense "is". Answer: (1) C provided, (2) A was
- Practice: Fill in the blanks: Regular exercise (1)___ both physical and mental health. Doctors recommend at least thirty minutes of activity most days (2)___ the week. (1) (A) benefit (B) benefits (C) benefiting (D) benefited (2) (A) of (B) in (C) for (D) at (Answer: (1) B benefits, (2) A of)
- Practice: Fill in the blanks: The committee (1)___ yet to announce its final decision on the proposal. Members say they need more time (2)___ consider all the options carefully. (1) (A) is (B) are (C) was (D) have (2) (A) for (B) to (C) at (D) of (Answer: (1) A is, (2) B to)
- Practice: Fill in the blanks: Despite the heavy rain, the match (1)___ as scheduled. Fans who had travelled long distances were relieved that it was (2)___ postponed. (1) (A) go (B) goes (C) went (D) going (2) (A) not (B) no (C) none (D) never (Answer: (1) C went, (2) A not)
- Practice: Fill in the blanks: The museum's new exhibit (1)___ artefacts from over twenty different civilisations. Visitors are advised to book tickets in advance (2)___ the exhibit has been extremely popular. (1) (A) feature (B) features (C) featuring (D) featured (2) (A) because (B) although (C) unless (D) despite (Answer: (1) B features, (2) A because)
- Practice: Fill in the blanks: Climate scientists warn that global temperatures (1)___ to rise unless emissions are cut sharply. Several island nations, (2)___, are already experiencing the effects of rising sea levels. (1) (A) is likely (B) are likely (C) likely (D) likely to be (2) (A) therefore (B) for instance (C) however (D) in addition (Answer: (1) B are likely, (2) B for instance)

Quick revision: Read the whole passage once before filling in any blank, so you understand its overall topic and tone — an option can be grammatically fine in isolation and still wrong because it contradicts the passage elsewhere; Pay attention to connector words already in the passage ("however", "therefore", "although") — they tell you whether the missing word should continue the same idea or contrast with it; Apply the same grammar checks as Spotting Errors and Sentence Improvement to each blank individually: subject-verb agreement, correct preposition, and tense consistency with the rest of the passage; When two options both seem grammatically valid, re-read the sentence with each substituted in — the one that fits the passage's actual meaning, not just its grammar, is correct; A blank inside a clause describing an earlier, completed event should match the TENSE already established around it, even if the surrounding verbs are in the present — check the specific sentence the blank sits in, not just the passage's dominant tense

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/cloze-test/

Degrees of Comparison

Degrees of Comparison

English adjectives/adverbs have three degrees: positive (tall), comparative (taller — comparing exactly two), and superlative (tallest — comparing three or more, or picking the single best/most out of a group). Short words usually add "-er"/"-est"; longer words (generally three or more syllables) use "more"/"most" instead ("more interesting," not "interestinger").

A classic trap is the "of the two" rule: when comparing exactly TWO things, English uses the COMPARATIVE with "the" — "the taller of the two," never "the tallest of the two," even though "the ___" might tempt you toward the superlative form. The superlative is reserved for three or more.

A second trap is irregular forms, which don't follow the regular "-er/-est" or "more/most" pattern and simply have to be memorized: good → better → best; bad → worse → worst; well (adverb) → better → best; little → less → least; many/much → more → most.

A third trap is the double comparative/superlative: once a word already carries "-er" or "-est" (or is already irregular, like "better"), adding "more" or "most" on top is redundant and wrong — "more better" and "most best" are both errors, since "better"/"best" already ARE the comparative/superlative forms. Finally, "one of the ___" is always followed by a PLURAL noun, and when it compares, by a superlative before it: "one of the best players," never "one of the best player."

Examples

- "Riya is taller than her sister." — comparative, comparing exactly two people.
- "This is the tallest building in the city." — superlative, comparing against the whole group of buildings.
- "She is the taller of the two sisters." — "of the two" always takes the comparative with "the," not the superlative.
- "My phone is better than yours." — "good" has the irregular comparative "better," not "more good" or "gooder."
- "This is one of the best movies I have seen this year." — "one of the ___" needs a superlative PLUS a plural noun: "best movies," not "best movie."
- "This book is more better than that one." is WRONG — "better" is already comparative, so adding "more" creates a double comparative. Correct: "This book is better than that one."
- "He is the most intelligent of all the students." — superlative, comparing one person against the whole group (more than two).
- "The Nile is the longest river in Africa." — superlative, picking the single longest out of many rivers.

Quick revision: Comparative = exactly two ("the taller of the two"); superlative = three or more. Irregular forms (good/better/best) don't take -er/-est. Never stack "more"/"most" onto a word that's already comparative/superlative.

Degrees of Comparison Solved Questions

Degrees of Comparison questions test whether you can match an adjective's form to how many things are actually being compared — one straightforward rule, plus a short list of irregular forms to memorise. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Adjectives have three degrees: positive (describing one thing on its own — "tall"), comparative (comparing exactly two things — "taller"), and superlative (comparing three or more things, picking out the extreme — "tallest"). Short adjectives usually add "-er"/"-est" (tall → taller → tallest). Longer adjectives usually use "more"/"most" instead (beautiful → more beautiful → most beautiful). Never combine both forms — "more taller" or "most tallest" is always wrong. Pick either the suffix or "more"/"most", never both. Some common adjectives are irregular and must be memorised directly: good → better → best, bad → worse → worst, little → less → least, much/many → more → most, far → farther/further → farthest/furthest. A small set of adjectives already describe an absolute or complete state (perfect, complete, ideal, impossible) — these exams treat them as not normally gradable, so "more perfect" or "most complete" is typically marked wrong in favour of the plain form. The structure "than" always signals the comparative, regardless of how many things are being compared overall — "she sang better than everyone else" stays comparative (not "best") because it's phrased as one thing against a group via "than".

Examples

- Choose the correct form: "Riya is ___ than her sister." (A) tall (B) taller (C) more tall (D) most tall Solution: Comparing exactly two people (Riya and her sister) needs the comparative degree. "Tall" is a short, one-syllable adjective, so it takes the "-er" suffix: "taller" — not "more tall". Answer: (B) taller
- Choose the correct form: "This is ___ building in the city." (A) tall (B) taller (C) tallest (D) the tallest Solution: Comparing this building against ALL other buildings in the city (three or more) needs the superlative degree. "Tall" takes "-est" for its superlative, and the superlative always takes "the" in front of it: "the tallest". Answer: (D) the tallest
- Choose the correct form: "This novel is ___ than the one I read last month." (A) more interesting (B) most interesting (C) interestinger (D) more interestinger Solution: Comparing exactly two novels needs the comparative degree. "Interesting" is a longer adjective, so it takes "more" rather than an "-er" suffix — "interestinger" isn't a real word, and "more interestinger" wrongly combines both forms. Answer: (A) more interesting
- Choose the correct form: "Of all the players on the team, Arjun played ___." (A) good (B) better (C) best (D) more good Solution: Comparing Arjun against ALL the other players (three or more) needs the superlative degree. "Good" is irregular — its superlative is "best", not "goodest" or any "-est"/"most" form. Answer: (C) best
- Choose the correct form: "This is the ___ solution to the problem." (A) most perfect (B) more perfect (C) perfect (D) perfectest Solution: "Perfect" already describes an absolute, complete state. It isn't graded with "more"/"most" in this exam convention — the plain form, "perfect", is correct. Answer: (C) perfect
- Choose the correct form: "Of the two routes, this one is ___." (A) short (B) shorter (C) shortest (D) more shortest Solution: Comparing exactly two routes needs the comparative degree. "Short" is a short adjective, so it takes "-er": "shorter". Answer: (B) shorter
- Practice: Choose the correct form: "My bag is ___ than yours." (A) heavy (B) heavier (C) more heavy (D) heaviest (Answer: (B) heavier)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: "This is ___ book I have ever read." (A) bad (B) worse (C) worst (D) the worst (Answer: (D) the worst)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: "She is ___ experienced than her colleague." (A) more (B) most (C) much (D) many (Answer: (A) more)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: "She sang ___ than everyone else in the competition." (A) good (B) well (C) better (D) best (Answer: (C) better ("than" signals the comparative, regardless of group size))
- Practice: Choose the correct form: "This is one of the ___ methods to learn a language." (A) effective (B) more effective (C) most effective (D) effectivest (Answer: (C) most effective ("one of the + superlative + plural noun" needs the superlative))

Quick revision: Adjectives have three degrees: positive (describing one thing on its own — "tall"), comparative (comparing exactly two things — "taller"), and superlative (comparing three or more things, picking out the extreme — "tallest"); Short adjectives usually add "-er"/"-est" (tall → taller → tallest). Longer adjectives usually use "more"/"most" instead (beautiful → more beautiful → most beautiful); Never combine both forms — "more taller" or "most tallest" is always wrong. Pick either the suffix or "more"/"most", never both; Some common adjectives are irregular and must be memorised directly: good → better → best, bad → worse → worst, little → less → least, much/many → more → most, far → farther/further → farthest/furthest; A small set of adjectives already describe an absolute or complete state (perfect, complete, ideal, impossible) — these exams treat them as not normally gradable, so "more perfect" or "most complete" is typically marked wrong in favour of the plain form; The structure "than" always signals the comparative, regardless of how many things are being compared overall — "she sang better than everyone else" stays comparative (not "best") because it's phrased as one thing against a group via "than"

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/degrees-of-comparison/

Direct and Indirect Speech

Direct and Indirect Speech

Converting direct speech (the exact words in quotes) to indirect/reported speech (a summary without quotes) involves three coordinated shifts: tense back-shifts one step into the past, pronouns change to match who's speaking about whom, and time/place references shift to match the new vantage point.

Tense back-shift: present simple → past simple ("am" → "was"); present continuous → past continuous; present perfect → past perfect; simple past → past perfect; modals shift too (can→could, will→would, may→might, must→had to for obligation). If the reporting verb is in the PRESENT tense ("He says..."), no back-shift is needed at all — only switch it when the reporting verb itself is in the past ("He said...").

Time/place shifts: today→that day, tomorrow→the next day, yesterday→the day before, now→then, here→there, this→that. Reported questions drop the question-mark word order and use "if"/"whether" for yes/no questions ("Do you like coffee?" → "He asked if I liked coffee") or keep the wh-word for wh-questions ("Where do you live?" → "She asked where I lived") — but always in STATEMENT word order, not question order (never "asked where did I live").

Commands become infinitives ("Submit your homework" → "told them to submit their homework"); negative commands use "not to" ("Don't make noise" → "told them not to make noise"). "Let's" suggestions become "suggested that..." Exclamations become "exclaimed that...", dropping the exclamation mark entirely.

Examples

- "I am tired," he said. → He said that he was tired. (present → past)
- "I will finish the work tomorrow," she said. → She said that she would finish the work the next day. (will→would, tomorrow→the next day)
- "Do you like coffee?" he asked me. → He asked me if I liked coffee. (yes/no question uses "if")
- "Where do you live?" she asked. → She asked where I lived. (wh-question keeps the wh-word, statement order)
- "Submit your homework today," the teacher told the students. → The teacher told the students to submit their homework that day. (command → infinitive, today→that day)
- "Don't make noise," he said. → He told them not to make noise. (negative command → "not to")
- "Let's go for a walk," she said. → She suggested that they go for a walk. ("Let's" → "suggested that")
- "I have finished my homework," she said. → She said that she had finished her homework. (present perfect → past perfect)

Quick revision: Back-shift tense one step into the past (only if the reporting verb is past). Shift time/place words (today→that day, here→there). Questions use "if" (yes/no) or the wh-word, always in statement order.

Direct & Indirect Speech

Converting direct speech to indirect (reported) speech is another mechanical transformation, like Active and Passive Voice — tense shifts back a step, pronouns and time words change to match the new perspective, and questions lose their question-word-order. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Direct speech quotes a speaker's exact words. Indirect (reported) speech reports them without quotation marks, usually introduced by "that" (statements), "if/whether" (yes/no questions), or a wh-word (wh-questions). When the reporting verb is in the past ("said", "told"), the tense inside the quoted speech generally shifts one step back: present simple → past simple, present continuous → past continuous, "will" → "would", "can" → "could". Pronouns and time/place words shift to match the reporting perspective: "I" becomes whoever is speaking in the reported version, "here" → "there", "now" → "then", "today" → "that day", "tomorrow" → "the next day", "yesterday" → "the day before". Questions convert differently from statements: the word order reverts to normal statement order (no more question-style inversion), a yes/no question gains "if"/"whether", and an imperative (a command) becomes "told...to + base verb" instead of "said that". Other modals shift the same way: "may" (permission/possibility) → "might"; "must" (a specific, one-time obligation) usually becomes "had to". Demonstratives shift too: "this/these" → "that/those" when the reporting removes the speaker's immediate context.

Examples

- Change to indirect speech: He said, "I am tired." Solution: The reporting verb "said" is past, so present simple "am" shifts back to past simple "was". "I" refers to the person who said it, so it becomes "he" in the reported version. Answer: He said that he was tired.
- Change to indirect speech: She said, "I will finish the work tomorrow." Solution: "Will" shifts back to "would" since the reporting verb is past. "Tomorrow" is relative to the moment of speaking, so it becomes "the next day" in reported speech. "I" becomes "she" to match the reporting subject. Answer: She said that she would finish the work the next day.
- Change to indirect speech: He asked me, "Do you like coffee?" Solution: A yes/no question introduces "if" or "whether" in place of "that". The word order reverts to normal statement order ("you like" instead of "do you like") — the question-style inversion disappears. "You" refers to the person being asked ("me" in the original), so it becomes "I" in the reported version. Answer: He asked me if I liked coffee.
- Change to indirect speech: She asked, "Where do you live?" Solution: A wh-question keeps its wh-word ("where") in place of "that"/"if". The word order reverts to normal statement order ("you live" instead of "do you live"), and the question mark is dropped. Answer: She asked where I lived.
- Change to indirect speech: He told me, "I can help you with this." Solution: "Can" shifts back to "could" since the reporting verb is past. "This" shifts to "that" since the speaker's immediate context is gone in the reported version. "I" becomes "he", and "you" (the listener, "me" in the original) becomes "me". Answer: He told me that he could help me with that.
- Change to indirect speech: She said, "I must finish this report today." Solution: "Must", expressing a specific one-time obligation, shifts back to "had to". "This" shifts to "that", and "today" shifts to "that day" since it's now relative to the moment of speaking, not reporting. Answer: She said that she had to finish that report that day.
- Practice: Change to indirect speech: He said, "I am going to the market now." (Answer: He said that he was going to the market then.)
- Practice: Change to indirect speech: She asked, "Did you complete the assignment?" (Answer: She asked if I had completed the assignment. (simple past shifts back to past perfect))
- Practice: Change to indirect speech: The teacher said to the students, "Submit your homework today." (Answer: The teacher told the students to submit their homework that day. (an imperative becomes "told...to + base verb"))
- Practice: Change to indirect speech: He said, "I may come to the party." (Answer: He said that he might come to the party.)
- Practice: Change to indirect speech: She said, "These are my books." (Answer: She said that those were her books.)

Quick revision: Direct speech quotes a speaker's exact words. Indirect (reported) speech reports them without quotation marks, usually introduced by "that" (statements), "if/whether" (yes/no questions), or a wh-word (wh-questions); When the reporting verb is in the past ("said", "told"), the tense inside the quoted speech generally shifts one step back: present simple → past simple, present continuous → past continuous, "will" → "would", "can" → "could"; Pronouns and time/place words shift to match the reporting perspective: "I" becomes whoever is speaking in the reported version, "here" → "there", "now" → "then", "today" → "that day", "tomorrow" → "the next day", "yesterday" → "the day before"; Questions convert differently from statements: the word order reverts to normal statement order (no more question-style inversion), a yes/no question gains "if"/"whether", and an imperative (a command) becomes "told...to + base verb" instead of "said that"; Other modals shift the same way: "may" (permission/possibility) → "might"; "must" (a specific, one-time obligation) usually becomes "had to". Demonstratives shift too: "this/these" → "that/those" when the reporting removes the speaker's immediate context

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/direct-indirect-speech/

English Grammar Fundamentals

Articles (A, An, The) Solved Questions

"A"/"an" versus "the" comes down to one question — is this something specific and already identified, or just any one example of its kind? Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. "A" and "an" are indefinite articles, used for one unspecified item from a class, or when introducing something for the first time. "The" is the definite article, used for something already identified, unique, or previously mentioned. Choose "a" or "an" based on the SOUND of the next word, not its spelling: "an" before a vowel sound (an hour, an MBA), "a" before a consonant sound (a university, a one-rupee coin) — "hour" starts with a silent "h" (a vowel sound), while "university" starts with a "y" consonant sound despite the spelled vowel "u". "The" is used for something unique in context (the sun, the Prime Minister), something already mentioned ("I saw a dog. The dog was brown."), superlatives (the best, the tallest), and specific well-known geographic features (the Ganges, the Himalayas) — but not before most country/person names, or uncountable nouns used generally. No article at all is used before plural or uncountable nouns speaking generally ("Dogs are loyal," not "The dogs are loyal," unless referring to specific known dogs), and before most proper nouns. "The" is also used whenever a following phrase or clause makes an otherwise general noun specific — "the book on the table" or "the man who called" — even though "a book" or "a man" alone would take the indefinite article; it's the specifying phrase that triggers "the", not the noun by itself.

Examples

- Fill in the blank: "She bought ___ umbrella because it looked like rain." (A) a (B) an (C) the (D) no article Solution: "Umbrella" starts with a vowel sound, so "an" is correct. This is also the first mention of a non-specific umbrella. Answer: (B) an
- Fill in the blank: "He is ___ honest man, and everyone trusts him." (A) a (B) an (C) the (D) no article Solution: "Honest" starts with a silent "h", so it begins with a vowel sound, requiring "an" despite the spelled consonant. Answer: (B) an
- Fill in the blank: "___ Ganges is one of the longest rivers in India." (A) A (B) An (C) The (D) No article Solution: Specific, well-known geographic features like major rivers conventionally take "the". Answer: (C) The
- Fill in the blank: "I saw a cat in the garden. ___ cat was black." (A) A (B) An (C) The (D) No article Solution: The cat has already been mentioned once ("a cat"), so the second reference uses "the", since it's now specific and identified. Answer: (C) The
- Fill in the blank: "___ book on the table belongs to Reena." (A) A (B) An (C) The (D) No article Solution: "On the table" specifies exactly which book is meant, so it needs the definite article even though "book" alone could take "a". Answer: (C) The
- Fill in the blank: "He wants to become ___ IAS officer." (A) a (B) an (C) the (D) no article Solution: "IAS" is read aloud as individual letters, and the first letter, "I", is pronounced as the vowel sound "eye" — so it takes "an", the same rule as for any other vowel sound. Answer: (B) an
- Practice: Fill in the blank: "She wants to become ___ engineer." (A) a (B) an (C) the (D) no article (Answer: (B) an)
- Practice: Fill in the blank: "___ Taj Mahal is located in Agra." (A) A (B) An (C) The (D) No article (Answer: (C) The)

- Practice: Fill in the blank: "He completed ___ one-year course in just six months." (A) a (B) an (C) the (D) no article (Answer: (A) a (because "one" starts with a "w" consonant sound))
- Practice: Fill in the blank: "___ Sun rises in the east." (A) A (B) An (C) The (D) No article (Answer: (C) The (a unique object))
- Practice: Fill in the blank: "She is ___ honest and hardworking employee." (A) a (B) an (C) the (D) no article (Answer: (B) an ("honest" starts with a silent "h", a vowel sound))

> **Quick revision:** "A" and "an" are indefinite articles, used for one unspecified item from a class, or when introducing something for the first time. "The" is the definite article, used for something already identified, unique, or previously mentioned; Choose "a" or "an" based on the SOUND of the next word, not its spelling: "an" before a vowel sound (an hour, an MBA), "a" before a consonant sound (a university, a one-rupee coin) — "hour" starts with a silent "h" (a vowel sound), while "university" starts with a "y" consonant sound despite the spelled vowel "u"; "The" is used for something unique in context (the sun, the Prime Minister), something already mentioned ("I saw a dog. The dog was brown."), superlatives (the best, the tallest), and specific well-known geographic features (the Ganges, the Himalayas) — but not before most country/person names, or uncountable nouns used generally; No article at all is used before plural or uncountable nouns speaking generally ("Dogs are loyal," not "The dogs are loyal," unless referring to specific known dogs), and before most proper nouns; "The" is also used whenever a following phrase or clause makes an otherwise general noun specific — "the book on the table" or "the man who called" — even though "a book" or "a man" alone would take the indefinite article; it's the specifying phrase that triggers "the", not the noun by itself

Tag Questions Solved Questions

Tag questions run on one flip rule — positive statement, negative tag; negative statement, positive tag — plus matching the auxiliary verb and pronoun exactly. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. The core rule: if the main statement is POSITIVE, the tag is NEGATIVE; if the main statement is NEGATIVE, the tag is POSITIVE. The tag always uses the SAME auxiliary verb as the main statement, and a PRONOUN matching the subject — never the subject's own noun repeated: "Ravi is coming, isn't he?" not "isn't Ravi?". If the main statement has no visible auxiliary (a simple present or simple past sentence with just a main verb), the tag borrows "do/does" (present) or "did" (past): "She likes tea, doesn't she?" A few fixed exceptions: "I am" pairs with the tag "aren't I?" (not "amn't I"); imperatives ("Close the door") typically take "will you?"; "Let's" sentences take "shall we?". A statement counts as NEGATIVE — needing a positive tag — even without the word "not", if it contains a negative word like "never", "nobody", "hardly" or "no": "She never arrives late" is logically negative, so its tag is positive ("does she?"), not negative.

Examples

- Add the correct tag question: "She is a doctor, ___?" Solution: Positive statement ("is") → negative tag, using the same auxiliary "is" and the pronoun "she". Answer: isn't she?
- Add the correct tag question: "They don't like coffee, ___?" Solution: Negative statement ("don't") → positive tag, using the same auxiliary "do" and the pronoun "they". Answer: do they?
- Add the correct tag question: "Ravi completed his homework, ___?" Solution: Positive, simple past, no visible auxiliary — borrow "did" for the tag, made negative since the statement is positive. Answer: didn't he?
- Add the correct tag question: "I am your friend, ___?" Solution: "I am" is a fixed exception — its tag is always "aren't I?", never "amn't I?". Answer: aren't I?
- Add the correct tag question: "She never arrives late, ___?" Solution: "Never" makes the statement logically negative even without "not", so the tag must be positive. The main verb "arrives" has no visible auxiliary, so the tag borrows "does". Answer: does she?
- Add the correct tag question: "Nobody called during the meeting, ___?" Solution: "Nobody" is a negative subject, so the tag must be positive. The conventional pronoun used for "nobody"/"no one" in a tag is "they". Answer: did they?
- Practice: Add the correct tag question: "He can swim well, ___?" (Answer: can't he?)
- Practice: Add the correct tag question: "You haven't finished the project, ___?" (Answer: have you?)
- Practice: Add the correct tag question: "Let's go to the market, ___?" (Answer: shall we?)
- Practice: Add the correct tag question: "There isn't any milk left in the fridge, ___?" (Answer: is there?)

- Practice: Add the correct tag question: "You'd better finish your homework now, ___?" (Answer: hadn't you?)

> **Quick revision:** The core rule: if the main statement is POSITIVE, the tag is NEGATIVE; if the main statement is NEGATIVE, the tag is POSITIVE; The tag always uses the SAME auxiliary verb as the main statement, and a PRONOUN matching the subject — never the subject's own noun repeated: "Ravi is coming, isn't he?" not "isn't Ravi?"; If the main statement has no visible auxiliary (a simple present or simple past sentence with just a main verb), the tag borrows "do/does" (present) or "did" (past): "She likes tea, doesn't she?"; A few fixed exceptions: "I am" pairs with the tag "aren't I?" (not "amn't I"); imperatives ("Close the door") typically take "will you?"; "Let's" sentences take "shall we?"; A statement counts as NEGATIVE — needing a positive tag — even without the word "not", if it contains a negative word like "never", "nobody", "hardly" or "no": "She never arrives late" is logically negative, so its tag is positive ("does she?"), not negative

Punctuation Solved Questions

Punctuation questions test a handful of fixed, learnable rules — comma placement, apostrophes, and semicolons — not a feel for "what looks right." Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Use a comma after an introductory word, phrase, or subordinate clause that comes before the main clause ("Although it was raining, we decided to go"). Use an apostrophe + s for a singular possessive ("the boy's bicycle"); for a plural noun that already ends in s, add only an apostrophe ("the boys' bicycles"); for a plural that doesn't end in s (like "children"), add apostrophe + s ("the children's toys"). Use a semicolon to join two closely related independent clauses when there's no connecting word like "and" or "but" — joining them with just a comma (a "comma splice") is a common error. Use commas to separate three or more items in a list ("apples, bananas, and oranges"). Use a colon to introduce a list or explanation after a complete independent clause ("She packed three things: a map, a torch, and water") — and use a comma before a direct quotation ("The teacher said, 'Submit your assignments by Friday.'").

Examples

- Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) Although it was raining we decided to go for a walk. (B) Although it was raining, we decided to go for a walk. Solution: The sentence opens with a subordinate clause ("Although it was raining") before the main clause, which needs a comma after it. Answer: (B) Although it was raining, we decided to go for a walk.
- Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) The childrens toys were scattered across the room. (B) The children's toys were scattered across the room. Solution: "Children" is already plural and does not end in s, so its possessive is formed with apostrophe + s: "children's". Answer: (B) The children's toys were scattered across the room.
- Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) She finished her work quickly, she went home early. (B) She finished her work quickly; she went home early. Solution: These are two closely related independent clauses with no connecting word — joining them with only a comma is a comma splice; a semicolon is correct here. Answer: (B) She finished her work quickly; she went home early.
- Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) I need to buy apples, bananas, and oranges from the market. (B) I need to buy apples bananas and oranges from the market. Solution: Three or more items in a list need commas separating them. Answer: (A) I need to buy apples, bananas, and oranges from the market.
- Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) She packed three things: a map, a torch, and water. (B) She packed three things, a map, a torch, and water. Solution: A colon, not a comma, is used after a complete independent clause to introduce the list that follows. Answer: (A) She packed three things: a map, a torch, and water.
- Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) The teacher said, "Submit your assignments by Friday." (B) The teacher said "Submit your assignments by Friday". Solution: A comma is needed before a direct quotation, and the closing punctuation belongs inside the quotation marks. Answer: (A) The teacher said, "Submit your assignments by Friday."
- Practice: Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) The boys bicycle was parked outside. (B) The boy's bicycle was parked outside. (Answer: (B) The boy's bicycle was parked outside.)
- Practice: Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) Having finished the exam she left the room immediately. (B) Having finished the exam, she left the room immediately. (Answer: (B) Having finished the exam, she left the room immediately.)
- Practice: Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) It started to rain heavily, the match was postponed. (B) It started to rain heavily; the match was postponed. (Answer: (B) It started to rain heavily; the match was postponed.)

- Practice: Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) My brother who lives in Delhi is visiting us next week. (B) My brother, who lives in Delhi, is visiting us next week. (Answer: (B) My brother, who lives in Delhi, is visiting us next week.)
- Practice: Choose the correctly punctuated sentence. (A) Its going to be a long day. (B) It's going to be a long day. (Answer: (B) It's going to be a long day.)

> **Quick revision:** Use a comma after an introductory word, phrase, or subordinate clause that comes before the main clause ("Although it was raining, we decided to go"); Use an apostrophe + s for a singular possessive ("the boy's bicycle"); for a plural noun that already ends in s, add only an apostrophe ("the boys' bicycles"); for a plural that doesn't end in s (like "children"), add apostrophe + s ("the children's toys"); Use a semicolon to join two closely related independent clauses when there's no connecting word like "and" or "but" — joining them with just a comma (a "comma splice") is a common error; Use commas to separate three or more items in a list ("apples, bananas, and oranges"); Use a colon to introduce a list or explanation after a complete independent clause ("She packed three things: a map, a torch, and water") — and use a comma before a direct quotation ("The teacher said, 'Submit your assignments by Friday.'")

Collective Nouns Solved Questions

English has a specific, fixed noun for a group of almost any animal or thing — a pride of lions, not a "group" of lions — and these are simply learned, not derived from logic. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Each collective noun is fixed to its specific group, usually by long-standing convention — there's no pattern to derive it from, so these are learned one at a time, like vocabulary. Many collective nouns for animals are historically tied to the animal's behaviour or hunting style (a "murder" of crows, a "pride" of lions) — a short story or association can help the word stick. Some words serve as the collective noun for several different groups (a "school" works for fish, and separately for whales) — don't assume each word maps to only one group. When in doubt between two options, eliminate any word you recognise as the correct collective noun for a DIFFERENT group first — that process of elimination narrows it down fast. In a sentence, a collective noun used as the subject normally takes a singular verb when the group is acting as one unit ("The herd is grazing peacefully") — treat it as singular by default unless a question specifically emphasises the members acting individually.

Examples

- Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of lions. (A) flock (B) pride (C) herd (D) swarm Solution: The fixed collective noun for a group of lions is "pride." Answer: pride
- Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of wolves. (A) pack (B) pride (C) school (D) colony Solution: The fixed collective noun for a group of wolves is "pack." Answer: pack
- Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of fish. (A) herd (B) flock (C) school (D) pack Solution: The fixed collective noun for a group of fish is "school." Answer: school
- Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of bees. (A) swarm (B) herd (C) pride (D) flock Solution: The fixed collective noun for a group of bees is "swarm." Answer: swarm
- Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of elephants. (A) herd (B) pack (C) school (D) troop Solution: The fixed collective noun for a group of elephants is "herd" — the same word also used for cattle. Answer: herd
- Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of monkeys. (A) troop (B) pride (C) swarm (D) colony Solution: The fixed collective noun for a group of monkeys is "troop." Answer: troop
- Practice: Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of sheep. (A) herd (B) flock (C) pack (D) pride (Answer: flock)
- Practice: Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of crows. (A) murder (B) pride (C) school (D) swarm (Answer: murder)
- Practice: Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of cattle. (A) flock (B) herd (C) pack (D) school (Answer: herd)
- Practice: Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of ants. (A) colony (B) pride (C) herd (D) flock (Answer: colony)
- Practice: Choose the correct collective noun: A ___ of geese. (A) gaggle (B) pack (C) pride (D) school (Answer: gaggle)

Quick revision: Each collective noun is fixed to its specific group, usually by long-standing convention — there's no pattern to derive it from, so these are learned one at a time, like vocabulary; Many collective nouns for animals are historically tied to the animal's behaviour or hunting style (a "murder" of crows, a "pride" of lions) — a short story or association can help the word stick; Some words serve as the collective noun for several different groups (a "school" works for fish, and separately for whales) — don't assume each word maps to only one group; When in doubt between two options, eliminate any word you recognise as the correct collective noun for a DIFFERENT group first — that process of elimination narrows it down fast; In a sentence, a collective noun used as the subject normally takes a singular verb when the group is acting as one unit ("The herd is grazing peacefully") — treat it as singular by default unless a question specifically emphasises the members acting individually

Determiners Solved Questions

Determiners like "much," "many," "few" and "a few" are chosen based on two things: whether the noun is countable or uncountable, and whether the sentence means "almost none" or "a reasonable amount." Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. For UNCOUNTABLE nouns (milk, money, time, sugar): use "much" in questions/negatives, "a little" for a small positive amount, and "little" for almost none. For COUNTABLE plural nouns (apples, friends, books): use "many" in questions/negatives, "a few" for a small positive amount, and "few" for almost none. "A few"/"a little" (WITH "a") have a positive tone — some, and that's enough. "Few"/"little" (WITHOUT "a") have a negative tone — almost none, implying a problem or lack. "Some" is used in positive statements and in offers/requests phrased as questions ("Would you like some tea?"); "any" is used in negatives and ordinary questions ("Do you have any tea?"). "This"/"that" (singular) and "these"/"those" (plural) must agree in number with the noun they point to, regardless of what else sits between them in the sentence — "this kind of behaviour" (kind is singular), "these students" (students is plural).

Examples

- Choose the correct determiner: There isn't ___ milk left in the bottle. (A) many (B) much (C) few (D) a few Solution: "Milk" is uncountable, and the sentence is negative — uncountable + negative takes "much." Answer: much
- Choose the correct determiner: She has ___ friends in this city, so she often feels lonely. (A) few (B) a few (C) much (D) a little Solution: "Friends" is countable, and "so she often feels lonely" signals a negative tone (almost none) — that's "few," not the positive "a few." Answer: few
- Choose the correct determiner: Would you like ___ sugar in your tea? (A) many (B) much (C) some (D) any Solution: An offer phrased as a question conventionally uses "some," even though it's a question. Answer: some
- Choose the correct determiner: He doesn't have ___ money to buy a new phone. (A) many (B) much (C) few (D) a few Solution: "Money" is uncountable, and the sentence is negative — uncountable + negative takes "much." Answer: much
- Choose the correct determiner: ___ kind of behaviour is not acceptable in the workplace. (A) This (B) These Solution: "Kind" is singular, so it needs the singular determiner "this" — not "these," even though the full phrase describes a category. Answer: This
- Choose the correct determiner: I don't have ___ information about the new policy. (A) many (B) much (C) few (D) a few Solution: "Information" is uncountable, and the sentence is negative — uncountable + negative takes "much." Answer: much
- Practice: Choose the correct determiner: There are ___ apples in the basket; we don't need to buy more. (A) much (B) many (C) little (D) a little (Answer: many)
- Practice: Choose the correct determiner: We have ___ time left, so let's hurry. (A) few (B) a few (C) little (D) a little (Answer: little)
- Practice: Choose the correct determiner: I have ___ friends who can help me with this. (A) few (B) a few (C) much (D) little (Answer: a few)
- Practice: Choose the correct determiner: There is ___ sugar left; we should buy more soon. (A) few (B) a few (C) little (D) a little (Answer: little)
- Practice: Choose the correct determiner: ___ students in the class passed with distinction. (A) This (B) These (C) Much (D) Little (Answer: These)

Quick revision: For UNCOUNTABLE nouns (milk, money, time, sugar): use "much" in questions/negatives, "a little" for a small positive amount, and "little" for almost none; For COUNTABLE plural nouns (apples, friends, books): use "many" in questions/negatives, "a few" for a small positive amount, and "few" for almost none; "A few"/"a little" (WITH "a") have a positive tone — some, and that's enough. "Few"/"little" (WITHOUT "a") have a negative tone — almost none, implying a problem or lack; "Some" is used in positive statements and in offers/requests phrased as questions ("Would you like some tea?"); "any" is used in negatives and ordinary questions ("Do you have any tea?"); "This"/"that" (singular) and "these"/"those" (plural) must agree in number with the noun they point to, regardless of what else sits between them in the sentence — "this kind of behaviour" (kind is singular), "these students" (students is plural)

Subject-Verb Agreement Solved Questions

The core rule is simple — singular subjects take singular verbs, plural subjects take plural verbs — but exam questions test it through a handful of specific situations where it's easy to lose track of which word is actually the subject. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Indefinite pronouns — each, every, everyone, everybody, someone, somebody, either, neither — are always treated as singular, even when followed by "of the [plural noun]." With "either...or," "neither...nor," or plain "or"/"nor" joining two subjects, the verb agrees with the subject NEARER to it, not the one farther away. Collective nouns (team, committee, family, jury) take a singular verb when acting as a single unit — which is the default assumption unless the sentence specifically emphasises the members acting individually. A phrase inserted between the subject and the verb — "along with," "as well as," "together with," "in addition to" — does NOT change the verb's number; the verb still agrees with the original subject, not the noun inside the inserted phrase. "A number of" (meaning several) is treated as plural, but "the number of" (naming one specific count) is treated as singular — both phrases contain the word "number," so the article in front of it is the real signal.

Examples

- Choose the correct verb: Each of the students ___ submitted their assignment. (A) have (B) has Solution: "Each" is an indefinite pronoun and is always singular, regardless of the plural noun ("students") that follows it. Answer: has
- Choose the correct verb: Neither the manager nor the employees ___ aware of the change. (A) is (B) are Solution: With "neither...nor," the verb agrees with the nearer subject — "employees" (plural) — not the farther one. Answer: are
- Choose the correct verb: The committee ___ decided to postpone the meeting. (A) have (B) has Solution: "Committee" is a collective noun acting as a single unit here, so it takes the singular verb "has." Answer: has
- Choose the correct verb: The teacher, along with her students, ___ visiting the museum today. (A) are (B) is Solution: The inserted phrase "along with her students" doesn't change the verb's number — the actual subject is still the singular "the teacher." Answer: is
- Choose the correct verb: A number of students ___ absent today. (A) is (B) are Solution: "A number of" means "several" and is treated as plural, so it takes "are." Answer: are
- Choose the correct verb: The number of accidents on this road ___ increased this year. (A) have (B) has Solution: "The number of" names one specific count and is treated as singular, so it takes "has," unlike "a number of." Answer: has
- Practice: Choose the correct verb: Everybody in the class ___ excited about the trip. (A) are (B) is (Answer: is)
- Practice: Choose the correct verb: Either the coach or the players ___ responsible for the decision. (A) is (B) are (Answer: are)
- Practice: Choose the correct verb: The news ___ surprising to everyone. (A) are (B) is (Answer: is)
- Practice: Choose the correct verb: One of the reasons for the delay ___ the bad weather. (A) are (B) is (Answer: is)
- Practice: Choose the correct verb: Mathematics ___ my favourite subject. (A) are (B) is (Answer: is)

Quick revision: Indefinite pronouns — each, every, everyone, everybody, someone, somebody, either, neither — are always treated as singular, even when followed by "of the [plural noun]."; With "either...or," "neither...nor," or plain "or"/"nor" joining two subjects, the verb agrees with the subject NEARER to it, not the one farther away; Collective nouns (team, committee, family, jury) take a singular verb when acting as a single unit — which is the default assumption unless the sentence specifically emphasises the members acting individually; A phrase inserted between the subject and the verb — "along with," "as well as," "together with," "in addition to" — does NOT change the verb's number; the verb still agrees with the original subject, not the noun inside the inserted phrase; "A number of" (meaning several) is treated as plural, but "the number of" (naming one specific count) is treated as singular — both phrases contain the word "number," so the article in front of it is the real signal

Infinitives and Gerunds Solved Questions

Some verbs are always followed by "to + verb," others always by the "-ing" form, and a few change meaning depending on which one follows — this is a short, fixed list to learn, not a rule to derive. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Verbs that always take a gerund (-ing): enjoy, avoid, suggest, finish, mind, consider, admit, deny, risk, practise — "She enjoys reading," never "enjoys to read." Verbs that always take a to-infinitive: decide, hope, plan, promise, agree, refuse, manage, afford, offer, want — "He decided to accept," never "decided accepting." A few verbs change meaning depending on the choice: "stop to do" (pause in order to do something) vs. "stop doing" (quit a habit); "remember to do" (not forget a future duty) vs. "remember doing" (recall a past action). When a verb isn't on either fixed list and doesn't change meaning either way (start, begin, like, love, continue, prefer), either form is usually acceptable — these aren't typically what exam questions target. A verb immediately following ANY preposition always takes the gerund (-ing) form, never the infinitive — "He apologised for being late," "She left without saying goodbye," "They succeeded in finishing on time."

Examples

- Choose the correct form: She enjoys ___ novels in her free time. (A) to read (B) reading Solution: "Enjoy" is always followed by a gerund, never a to-infinitive. Answer: reading
- Choose the correct form: He decided ___ the offer. (A) to accept (B) accepting Solution: "Decide" is always followed by a to-infinitive, never a gerund. Answer: to accept
- Choose the correct form: I remember ___ the door before leaving, so I'm sure it's locked. (A) to lock (B) locking Solution: "Remember doing" means recalling a past action that already happened — the sentence describes recalling the act of locking, confirmed by "I'm sure it's locked." Answer: locking
- Choose the correct form: Please remember ___ the door when you leave. (A) to lock (B) locking Solution: "Remember to do" means not forgetting a future duty — this is an instruction about something to do later, not a memory of something already done. Answer: to lock
- Choose the correct form: He apologised for ___ late. (A) to be (B) being Solution: "For" is a preposition, and a verb right after a preposition always takes the gerund form. Answer: being
- Choose the correct form: She left without ___ anyone. (A) to tell (B) telling Solution: "Without" is a preposition, so the verb that follows it must be the gerund "telling," not the infinitive. Answer: telling
- Practice: Choose the correct form: They avoided ___ about the accident. (A) to talk (B) talking (Answer: talking)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: She promised ___ early tomorrow. (A) to arrive (B) arriving (Answer: to arrive)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: He stopped ___ a cigarette during the meeting break. (A) to smoke (B) smoking (Answer: to smoke)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: They succeeded in ___ the project on time. (A) to finish (B) finishing (Answer: finishing)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: Before ___ the house, please switch off the lights. (A) to leave (B) leaving (Answer: leaving)

Quick revision: Verbs that always take a gerund (-ing): enjoy, avoid, suggest, finish, mind, consider, admit, deny, risk, practise — "She enjoys reading," never "enjoys to read."; Verbs that always take a to-infinitive: decide, hope, plan, promise, agree, refuse, manage, afford, offer, want — "He decided to accept," never "decided accepting."; A few verbs change meaning depending on the choice: "stop to do" (pause in order to do something) vs. "stop doing" (quit a habit); "remember to do" (not forget a future duty) vs. "remember doing" (recall a past action); When a verb isn't on either fixed list and doesn't change meaning either way (start, begin, like, love, continue, prefer), either form is usually acceptable — these aren't typically what exam questions target; A verb immediately following ANY preposition always takes the gerund (-ing) form, never the infinitive — "He apologised for being late," "She left without saying goodbye," "They succeeded in finishing on time."

Redundancy Solved Questions

A redundant phrase pairs two words that say the same thing twice — "repeat again," "free gift" — where one word already contains the other's meaning. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Check whether removing one word from a pair changes the meaning at all — if "free" adds nothing to "gift" (gifts are inherently free), the pair is redundant. Many redundant pairs involve a word that already implies time, finality, or scope: "past history" (history is already about the past), "final outcome" (an outcome is already final), "future plans" (plans are inherently about the future). A word implying "together" or "mutual" paired with another word already meaning that is a common redundancy pattern: "mutual cooperation," "join together," "combine together." The fix is almost always to simply delete the redundant word, not to replace the phrase with something else — redundancy questions test recognising the overlap, not rephrasing. The repeated idea isn't always a single extra word — sometimes it's a short phrase that duplicates a meaning already built into the main verb, as in "return back" (return already means to come back) or "completely eliminate" (eliminate already means to remove entirely).

Examples

- Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "Please repeat that again for me." Solution: "Repeat" already means "to say again" — "again" adds nothing and should be deleted. Answer: "Repeat that again" → "Repeat that"
- Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "They offered us a free gift for signing up." Solution: A gift is, by definition, given free of charge — "free" is redundant and should be deleted. Answer: "Free gift" → "Gift"
- Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "We need to focus on the final outcome of the project." Solution: An outcome is, by definition, what results at the end — "final" adds nothing and should be deleted. Answer: "Final outcome" → "Outcome"
- Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "The two companies agreed to mutual cooperation on the new venture." Solution: Cooperation is, by definition, a two-way (mutual) activity — "mutual" is redundant and should be deleted. Answer: "Mutual cooperation" → "Cooperation"
- Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "Please return back the book by Friday." Solution: "Return" already means "to come or go back" — "back" adds nothing and should be deleted. Answer: "Return back" → "Return"
- Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "The company plans to completely eliminate all forms of waste." Solution: "Eliminate" already means "to remove entirely" — "completely" adds nothing and should be deleted. Answer: "Completely eliminate" → "Eliminate"
- Practice: Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "The scientists made a new innovation in battery technology." (Answer: "New innovation" → "Innovation")
- Practice: Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "The two offices are located in close proximity to each other." (Answer: "Close proximity" → "Proximity")
- Practice: Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "The announcement came as an unexpected surprise to everyone." (Answer: "Unexpected surprise" → "Surprise")
- Practice: Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "Kindly revert back to me with your decision by tomorrow." (Answer: "Revert back" → "Revert")
- Practice: Identify the redundant expression and correct it: "The two teams will collaborate together on this project." (Answer: "Collaborate together" → "Collaborate")

Quick revision: Check whether removing one word from a pair changes the meaning at all — if "free" adds nothing to "gift" (gifts are inherently free), the pair is redundant; Many redundant pairs involve a word that already implies time, finality, or scope: "past history" (history is already about the past), "final outcome" (an outcome is already final), "future plans" (plans are inherently about the future); A word implying "together" or "mutual" paired with another word already meaning that is a common redundancy pattern: "mutual cooperation," "join together," "combine together."; The fix is almost always to simply delete the redundant word, not to replace the phrase with something else — redundancy questions test recognising the overlap, not rephrasing; The repeated idea isn't always a single extra word — sometimes it's a short phrase that duplicates a meaning already built into the main verb, as in "return back" (return already means to come back) or "completely eliminate" (eliminate already means to remove entirely)

Modal Verbs Solved Questions

Modal verbs each carry a specific shade of meaning — obligation, permission, possibility, deduction — and exam questions test exactly that distinction, most often the trap between "must not" (forbidden) and "need not" (no obligation). Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. "Must" expresses strong obligation or a confident logical deduction ("she must be tired" = I'm confident this is true, based on evidence). "Must not" means forbidden (a prohibition). "Need not" means there's no obligation either way — these look similar but mean nearly opposite things, and exam questions deliberately test this pair. "May" is used for formal permission or a genuine possibility; "might" suggests a weaker, less certain possibility than "may." "Should" gives advice or a recommendation — weaker than "must," which is closer to an obligation or a rule. "Could" expresses a general ability spread over time ("She could speak French as a child"), while "was/were able to" is preferred for one specific accomplished action, especially when it happened despite some difficulty ("He was able to reach the station on time despite the traffic").

Examples

- Choose the correct modal: You ___ park here; it is a no-parking zone, so please move your car. (A) must not (B) need not (C) may (D) should Solution: The sentence describes a prohibition (a no-parking zone) — "must not" is the correct modal for forbidding something. Answer: must not
- Choose the correct modal: You ___ finish this today; there is no urgency, you can do it tomorrow if you prefer. (A) must (B) need not (C) may not (D) should not Solution: The sentence describes an absence of obligation ("no urgency"), not a prohibition — "need not" is correct, not "must not." Answer: need not
- Choose the correct modal: She has been studying for ten hours straight; she ___ be exhausted by now. (A) can (B) must (C) may (D) should Solution: The sentence draws a confident logical conclusion from the evidence given (ten hours of studying) — "must" expresses this kind of near-certain deduction. Answer: must
- Choose the correct modal: ___ I open the window? It's getting a bit warm in here. (A) Must (B) May (C) Should (D) Need Solution: This is a formal request for permission — "May" is the standard modal for asking permission. Answer: May
- Choose the correct modal: Despite the heavy traffic, he ___ reach the station on time. (A) could (B) was able to Solution: This describes one specific accomplished action despite a difficulty (the traffic) — "was able to" is preferred here over the general-ability "could." Answer: was able to
- Choose the correct modal: As a child, she ___ run very fast. (A) could (B) was able to Solution: This describes a general ability spread over her childhood, not one single event — "could" is the natural choice. Answer: could
- Practice: Choose the correct modal: All passengers ___ wear seatbelts during takeoff and landing; it is mandatory. (A) might (B) must (C) could (D) would (Answer: must)
- Practice: Choose the correct modal: You ___ worry about the results; you did very well in the exam. (A) must not (B) need not (C) may not (D) shall not (Answer: need not)
- Practice: Choose the correct modal: The lights are off and the car isn't in the driveway; they ___ be out. (A) can (B) must (C) need (D) shall (Answer: must)
- Practice: Choose the correct modal: The rescue team ___ save all the passengers from the sinking boat. (A) could (B) was able to (Answer: was able to)
- Practice: Choose the correct modal: My grandfather ___ read without glasses even at the age of eighty. (A) could (B) will (Answer: could)

> **Quick revision:** "Must" expresses strong obligation or a confident logical deduction ("she must be tired" = I'm confident this is true, based on evidence); "Must not" means forbidden (a prohibition). "Need not" means there's no obligation either way — these look similar but mean nearly opposite things, and exam questions deliberately test this pair; "May" is used for formal permission or a genuine possibility; "might" suggests a weaker, less certain possibility than "may."; "Should" gives advice or a recommendation — weaker than "must," which is closer to an obligation or a rule; "Could" expresses a general ability spread over time ("She could speak French as a child"), while "was/were able to" is preferred for one specific accomplished action, especially when it happened despite some difficulty ("He was able to reach the station on time despite the traffic")

Tenses Solved Questions

The two traps that come up again and again: Present Perfect versus Simple Past, and "since" versus "for" — both come down to whether a specific past time is named. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Use the Present Perfect (have/has + past participle) when NO specific past time is named — the action happened at some unspecified point, and its result or relevance connects to now ("I have seen this movie"). Use the Simple Past (verb + -ed, or irregular form) when a SPECIFIC past time IS named — "yesterday," "last week," "in 2020," "two hours ago" — the action is treated as a completed, dated event. "Since" is followed by a POINT in time — a date, a year, an event ("since 2015," "since Monday"). "For" is followed by a DURATION — a length of time ("for eight years," "for two hours"). A sentence naming a specific past time word (yesterday, ago, last year) almost never takes "has/have" — that's the single fastest way to catch a Present-Perfect-vs-Simple-Past error. When a sentence describes two actions that both happened in the past but at different times, use the Past Perfect (had + past participle) for the one that happened FIRST, and the Simple Past for the one that happened second — "By the time she arrived, the meeting had already started."

Examples

- Choose the correct form: I ___ this movie already. (A) saw (B) have seen Solution: No specific past time is named — "already" signals an unspecified-time action connected to now, which needs the Present Perfect. Answer: have seen
- Choose the correct form: I ___ this movie yesterday. (A) saw (B) have seen Solution: "Yesterday" names a specific past time, so the Simple Past is correct, not the Present Perfect. Answer: saw
- Choose the correct form: She has been living in Delhi ___ 2015. (A) since (B) for Solution: "2015" is a point in time, so "since" is correct. Answer: since
- Choose the correct form: She has been living in Delhi ___ eight years. (A) since (B) for Solution: "Eight years" is a duration, so "for" is correct. Answer: for
- Choose the correct form: By the time he reached the station, the train ___ already. (A) left (B) had left Solution: Two past actions are being compared — the train leaving happened BEFORE he reached the station, so it needs the Past Perfect, "had left." Answer: had left
- Choose the correct form: She ___ her breakfast before she left for office. (A) finished (B) had finished Solution: Finishing breakfast happened before leaving for office — the earlier of the two past actions takes the Past Perfect. Answer: had finished
- Practice: Choose the correct form: He ___ his homework already; he can go out and play. (A) finished (B) has finished (Answer: has finished)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: He ___ his homework two hours ago. (A) finished (B) has finished (Answer: finished)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: They have been working on this project ___ three months. (A) since (B) for (Answer: for)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: When I ___ home, my parents had already gone to bed. (A) reached (B) had reached (Answer: reached)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: The patient ___ before the doctor arrived. (A) died (B) had died (Answer: had died)

Quick revision: Use the Present Perfect (have/has + past participle) when NO specific past time is named — the action happened at some unspecified point, and its result or relevance connects to now ("I have seen this movie"); Use the Simple Past (verb + -ed, or irregular form) when a SPECIFIC past time IS named — "yesterday," "last week," "in 2020," "two hours ago" — the action is treated as a completed, dated event; "Since" is followed by a POINT in time — a date, a year, an event ("since 2015," "since Monday"). "For" is followed by a DURATION — a length of time ("for eight years," "for two hours"); A sentence naming a specific past time word (yesterday, ago, last year) almost never takes "has/have" — that's the single fastest way to catch a Present-Perfect-vs-Simple-Past error; When a sentence describes two actions that both happened in the past but at different times, use the Past Perfect (had + past participle) for the one that happened FIRST, and the Simple Past for the one that happened second — "By the time she arrived, the meeting had already started."

Relative Pronouns Solved Questions

"Who," "whom," "which," "that" and "whose" each have one fixed job — the trick is checking whether the pronoun is acting as a subject or an object, and whether it points to a person or a thing. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. "Who" is the SUBJECT of its own clause, referring to a person ("the man who called" — who is doing the calling). "Whom" is the OBJECT of a verb or preposition, referring to a person ("the man whom you called" — you called him; "the man to whom I spoke"). "Which" refers to things or animals, never people. "Whose" shows possession and works for both people and things. Test "who" vs "whom" by mentally answering the clause with he/him: if "he" fits, use "who"; if "him" fits, use "whom" ("who called" → he called; "whom you called" → you called him). "That" can replace "who" or "which" in a defining (restrictive) clause, but it cannot be used in a non-defining clause set off by commas, and it cannot directly follow a preposition — "the pen with which," never "the pen with that," and "Rahul, who scored the highest marks," never "Rahul, that scored...".

Examples

- Choose the correct relative pronoun: The man ___ called you yesterday is my colleague. (A) whom (B) who (C) which (D) whose Solution: The pronoun is the subject of "called" (he called, not "him called") — "who" is correct. Answer: who
- Choose the correct relative pronoun: The man ___ you met at the party is my colleague. (A) whom (B) who (C) which (D) whose Solution: The pronoun is the object of "met" (you met him, not "you met he") — "whom" is correct. Answer: whom
- Choose the correct relative pronoun: This is the book ___ changed my perspective on life. (A) who (B) whom (C) which (D) whose Solution: The pronoun refers to a thing ("book"), not a person — "which" is correct. Answer: which
- Choose the correct relative pronoun: The author ___ book won the award attended the ceremony. (A) who (B) whom (C) which (D) whose Solution: The pronoun shows possession (the author's book) — "whose" is correct. Answer: whose
- Choose the correct relative pronoun: Mumbai, ___ is the financial capital of India, is also home to Bollywood. (A) that (B) which Solution: The clause is set off by commas (non-defining), and "that" cannot be used in a non-defining clause — "which" is correct. Answer: which
- Choose the correct relative pronoun: This is the pen with ___ she signed the document. (A) that (B) which Solution: "That" cannot directly follow a preposition — "with which," not "with that." Answer: which
- Practice: Choose the correct relative pronoun: The teacher ___ taught us mathematics has retired. (A) whom (B) who (C) which (D) whose (Answer: who)
- Practice: Choose the correct relative pronoun: The movie ___ we watched last night was excellent. (A) who (B) whom (C) which (D) whose (Answer: which)
- Practice: Choose the correct relative pronoun: The woman ___ purse was stolen reported it to the police. (A) who (B) whom (C) which (D) whose (Answer: whose)
- Practice: Choose the correct relative pronoun: Rahul, ___ scored the highest marks, was awarded a scholarship. (A) that (B) who (Answer: who)
- Practice: Choose the correct relative pronoun: The company for ___ he works is expanding rapidly. (A) that (B) which (Answer: which)

Quick revision: "Who" is the SUBJECT of its own clause, referring to a person ("the man who called" — who is doing the calling); "Whom" is the OBJECT of a verb or preposition, referring to a person ("the man whom you called" — you called him; "the man to whom I spoke"); "Which" refers to things or animals, never people. "Whose" shows possession and works for both people and things; Test "who" vs "whom" by mentally answering the clause with he/him: if "he" fits, use "who"; if "him" fits, use "whom" ("who called" → he called; "whom you called" → you called him); "That" can replace "who" or "which" in a defining (restrictive) clause, but it cannot be used in a non-defining clause set off by commas, and it cannot directly follow a preposition — "the pen with which," never "the pen with that," and "Rahul, who scored the highest marks," never "Rahul, that scored..."

Conditional Sentences Solved Questions

There are four standard "if" patterns, each tied to a different degree of reality — a general fact, a real future possibility, a present hypothetical, or a past that didn't happen. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples covering each type, and a few to try yourself. Zero conditional (general truths): If + present simple, present simple — "If you heat ice, it melts." True every time, not just hypothetically. First conditional (real future possibility): If + present simple, will + base verb — "If it rains, I will stay home." A genuinely possible future situation. Second conditional (present/future hypothetical, unlikely or untrue): If + past simple, would + base verb — "If I won the lottery, I would travel." Note: formal English uses "were" for every subject in this pattern ("If I were," not "If I was"). Third conditional (past hypothetical, didn't actually happen): If + past perfect, would have + past participle — "If I had studied harder, I would have passed." Describes an unreal past. A mixed conditional combines time frames when a past cause still affects the present: If + past perfect (the past cause) + would + base verb (the present result) — "If I had studied medicine, I would be a doctor now," not "would have been."

Examples

- Choose the correct form: If water freezes, it ___ into ice. (A) turns (B) will turn (C) would turn (D) would have turned Solution: This describes a general, always-true fact — the zero conditional, which takes present simple in both clauses. Answer: turns
- Choose the correct form: If it rains tomorrow, we ___ the match. (A) postpone (B) will postpone (C) would postpone (D) would have postponed Solution: This describes a real, possible future situation — the first conditional, which takes "will" in the main clause. Answer: will postpone
- Choose the correct form: If I ___ a bird, I would fly around the world. (A) am (B) was (C) were (D) will be Solution: This is a present hypothetical that isn't true (second conditional) — formal English uses "were" for every subject in this pattern, not "was." Answer: were
- Choose the correct form: If she had left earlier, she ___ the train. (A) would catch (B) would have caught (C) caught (D) catches Solution: This describes an unreal past situation that didn't happen — the third conditional, which takes "would have + past participle." Answer: would have caught
- Choose the correct form: If she had saved money earlier, she ___ financially secure today. (A) would be (B) would have been Solution: The cause ("saved money earlier") is in the past, but the result ("today") is in the present — this mixed conditional takes "would be," not "would have been." Answer: would be
- Choose the correct form: If he ___ harder in college, he would have a better job now. (A) worked (B) had worked Solution: The result clause is present ("now"), but the "if" clause still describes a past cause, so it still needs the past perfect, "had worked." Answer: had worked
- Practice: Choose the correct form: If you mix red and blue, you ___ purple. (A) get (B) will get (C) would get (D) would have gotten (Answer: get)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: If he studies hard, he ___ the exam. (A) passes (B) will pass (C) would pass (D) would have passed (Answer: will pass)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: If they had invited me, I ___ the party. (A) would attend (B) would have attended (C) attended (D) attend (Answer: would have attended)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: If I had taken that job, I ___ in Mumbai now. (A) would live (B) would have lived (Answer: would live)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: If they ___ earlier, they wouldn't be stuck in this traffic right now. (A) left (B) had left (Answer: had left)

Quick revision: Zero conditional (general truths): If + present simple, present simple — "If you heat ice, it melts." True every time, not just hypothetically; First conditional (real future possibility): If + present simple, will + base verb — "If it rains, I will stay home." A genuinely possible future situation; Second conditional (present/future hypothetical, unlikely or untrue): If + past simple, would + base verb — "If I won the lottery, I would travel." Note: formal English uses "were" for every subject in this pattern ("If I were," not "If I was"); Third conditional (past hypothetical, didn't actually happen): If + past perfect, would have + past participle — "If I had studied harder, I would have passed." Describes an unreal past; A mixed conditional combines time frames when a past cause still affects the present: If + past perfect (the past cause) + would + base verb (the present result) — "If I had studied medicine, I would be a doctor now," not "would have been."

Connectors & Conjunctions

The same idea — contrast, cause, condition — can be expressed with different connectors, but each one has a fixed grammatical requirement: some need a full clause after them, others need just a noun. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. "Although," "though" and "even though" are followed by a full clause (a subject + verb): "Although it was raining..." "Despite" and "in spite of" are followed by a noun or gerund, never a clause: "Despite the rain..." "Because" is followed by a clause (a reason with its own subject + verb); "because of" is followed by a noun phrase, not a clause. "Unless" already means "if...not" — it introduces a negative condition by itself, so pairing it with another "not" creates a double negative. Check what follows the blank first — a full clause (subject + verb) or just a noun/noun phrase — since that alone rules out half the options in most of these questions. "So...that" is followed directly by an adjective or adverb ("so boring that..."), while "such...that" is followed by a noun phrase, optionally with an adjective in front of it ("such a boring movie that...") — "so a boring movie" is a common mistake.

Examples

- Choose the correct connector: ___ it was raining heavily, they continued the match. (A) Despite (B) Although (C) Because of (D) Due to Solution: What follows is a full clause ("it was raining heavily") — "Although" is correct, since "Despite," "Because of" and "Due to" all need a noun phrase, not a clause. Answer: Although
- Choose the correct connector: ___ the heavy rain, they continued the match. (A) Although (B) Despite (C) Because (D) Since Solution: What follows is a noun phrase ("the heavy rain"), not a clause — "Despite" is correct, since "Although" needs a clause. Answer: Despite
- Choose the correct connector: She failed the exam ___ she had studied very hard. (A) because (B) although (C) despite (D) because of Solution: The sentence needs a contrast connector (failing despite studying hard is a contrast, not a cause), and what follows is a full clause — "although" is correct. Answer: although
- Choose the correct connector: You will miss the bus ___ you leave right now. (A) if (B) unless (C) despite (D) because Solution: The sentence means "if you don't leave now" — "unless" already carries that negative condition by itself. Answer: unless
- Choose the correct connector: The lecture was ___ long that half the audience fell asleep. (A) so (B) such Solution: What follows is a plain adjective ("long"), not a noun phrase — "so" is correct. Answer: so
- Choose the correct connector: It was ___ a difficult question that nobody could answer it. (A) so (B) such Solution: What follows is a noun phrase ("a difficult question") — "such" is correct, not "so." Answer: such
- Practice: Choose the correct connector: ___ his busy schedule, he always makes time for his family. (A) Although (B) Despite (C) Because (D) Since (Answer: Despite)
- Practice: Choose the correct connector: The flight was delayed ___ bad weather. (A) because (B) because of (C) although (D) unless (Answer: because of)
- Practice: Choose the correct connector: ___ you apologize, she will not forgive you. (A) If (B) Unless (C) Despite (D) Because (Answer: Unless)
- Practice: Choose the correct connector: She is ___ talented that she won three awards this year. (A) so (B) such (Answer: so)
- Practice: Choose the correct connector: He gave ___ a convincing speech that everyone applauded. (A) so (B) such (Answer: such)

Quick revision: "Although," "though" and "even though" are followed by a full clause (a subject + verb): "Although it was raining..." "Despite" and "in spite of" are followed by a noun or gerund, never a clause: "Despite the rain..."; "Because" is followed by a clause (a reason with its own subject + verb); "because of" is followed by a noun phrase, not a clause; "Unless" already means "if...not" — it introduces a negative condition by itself, so pairing it with another "not" creates a double negative; Check what follows the blank first — a full clause (subject + verb) or just a noun/noun phrase — since that alone rules out half the options in most of these questions; "So...that" is followed directly by an adjective or adverb ("so boring that..."), while "such...that" is followed by a noun phrase, optionally with an adjective in front of it ("such a boring movie that...") — "so a boring movie" is a common mistake

Correlative Conjunctions Solved Questions

Correlative conjunctions come as fixed pairs — either...or, neither...nor, not only...but also — and the two most common errors are mixing the pair (either...nor) or breaking the parallel structure after each half. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. The pairs are fixed and never mixed: "either" always pairs with "or"; "neither" always pairs with "nor" — never "either...nor" or "neither...or." What follows each half of the pair must be grammatically parallel — the same part of speech or structure both times: "either lazy or foolish" (adjective, adjective), not "either lazy or he is foolish" (adjective, clause). "Not only...but also" keeps "also" attached to "but" — don't strand it at the end of the sentence instead. "Both...and" always takes a plural verb, since it's joining two things as a combined subject: "Both my sister and my brother ARE doctors," not "is." "No sooner...than" and "scarcely/hardly...when" are also fixed correlative pairs, and both conventionally invert the subject and auxiliary in the first clause: "No sooner had he reached home than it started raining," not "he had reached home."

Examples

- Choose the correct sentence: (A) He is either lazy or he is foolish. (B) He is either lazy or foolish. Solution: "Either...or" needs parallel structure on both sides — "lazy" and "foolish" are both adjectives in (B), while (A) breaks parallelism by switching to a full clause after "or." Answer: (B) He is either lazy or foolish.
- Choose the correct sentence: (A) She neither called nor she messaged. (B) She neither called nor messaged. Solution: "Neither...nor" needs parallel structure — (B) keeps both sides as plain verbs ("called," "messaged"), while (A) breaks parallelism by repeating the subject "she" after "nor." Answer: (B) She neither called nor messaged.
- Choose the correct sentence: (A) He is not only intelligent but also hardworking. (B) He is not only intelligent but hardworking also. Solution: "Not only...but also" is a fixed pair — "also" belongs directly after "but," as in (A), not stranded at the end of the sentence as in (B). Answer: (A) He is not only intelligent but also hardworking.
- Choose the correct sentence: (A) Either you apologize or you leave. (B) Either you apologize nor you leave. Solution: "Either" must pair with "or," never "nor" — "neither" is the one that pairs with "nor." (A) is correct. Answer: (A) Either you apologize or you leave.
- Choose the correct sentence: (A) No sooner he reached home than it started raining. (B) No sooner had he reached home than it started raining. Solution: "No sooner" requires the subject and auxiliary to invert in the first clause ("had he reached"), not stay in normal order — (B) is correct. Answer: (B) No sooner had he reached home than it started raining.
- Choose the correct sentence: (A) Hardly had the movie started when the power went off. (B) Hardly the movie had started when the power went off. Solution: "Hardly" also requires inversion in its clause ("had the movie started"), which (A) follows correctly and (B) does not. Answer: (A) Hardly had the movie started when the power went off.
- Practice: Choose the correct sentence: (A) Neither the teacher or the students were present. (B) Neither the teacher nor the students were present. (Answer: (B) Neither the teacher nor the students were present.)
- Practice: Choose the correct sentence: (A) Both my sister and my brother is doctors. (B) Both my sister and my brother are doctors. (Answer: (B) Both my sister and my brother are doctors.)
- Practice: Choose the correct sentence: (A) The book is both informative and it is entertaining. (B) The book is both informative and entertaining. (Answer: (B) The book is both informative and entertaining.)
- Practice: Choose the correct sentence: (A) No sooner did she see the snake than she screamed. (B) No sooner she saw the snake than she screamed. (Answer: (A) No sooner did she see the snake than she screamed.)
- Practice: Choose the correct sentence: (A) Scarcely he had sat down when the guests arrived. (B) Scarcely had he sat down when the guests arrived. (Answer: (B) Scarcely had he sat down when the guests arrived.)

Quick revision: The pairs are fixed and never mixed: "either" always pairs with "or"; "neither" always pairs with "nor" — never "either...nor" or "neither...or."; What follows each half of the pair must be grammatically parallel — the same part of speech or structure both times: "either lazy or foolish" (adjective, adjective), not "either lazy or he is foolish" (adjective, clause); "Not only...but also" keeps "also" attached to "but" — don't strand it at the end of the sentence instead; "Both...and" always takes a plural verb, since it's joining two things as a combined subject: "Both my sister and my brother ARE doctors," not "is."; "No sooner...than" and "scarcely/hardly...when" are also fixed correlative pairs, and both conventionally invert the subject and auxiliary in the first clause: "No sooner had he reached home than it started raining," not "he had reached home."

Countable & Uncountable Nouns

Countable nouns can be counted one by one and take a plural form; uncountable nouns are treated as a single mass and never take "-s" or a number in front of them — mixing up which is which is what trips up "much/many," "a few/a little," and singular/plural verb questions. Here's the rule, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. A countable noun has a singular and plural form (one book, two books) and can follow "a/an," "many," "few," "a few," or "number of." An uncountable noun has no plural form (never "informations," "furnitures," "advices") and takes a singular verb, even when it feels like more than one thing. Uncountable nouns follow "much," "little," "a little," or "amount of" instead of "many"/"few" — and to count them at all, use a partitive phrase like "a piece of advice" or "a glass of water." Common nouns that are uncountable in English despite sounding plural or countable: information, advice, furniture, luggage/baggage, news, knowledge, equipment, bread, rice, money, homework, traffic, evidence, scenery, stationery. A few nouns switch category depending on meaning: "paper" is uncountable as the material ("I need more paper") but countable as a specific document ("he wrote three research papers"); "experience" is uncountable as general exposure ("she has experience") but countable as one specific event ("a valuable experience").

Examples

- Choose the correct word: There is ___ (much / many) information available on the website. Solution: "Information" is uncountable — it has no plural form and cannot be counted directly. Uncountable nouns pair with "much," not "many." Answer: much
- Choose the correct word: He gave me ___ (a little / a few) advice before the interview. Solution: "Advice" is uncountable, even though it refers to more than one piece of guidance. Uncountable nouns pair with "a little," not "a few" (which is for countable nouns). Answer: a little
- Spot the error: "The furnitures in this house are very old." Solution: "Furniture" is uncountable — it has no plural form, so "furnitures" is wrong. Being uncountable, it also takes a singular verb: "is," not "are." Answer: The furniture in this house is very old.
- Choose the correct word: How ___ (much / many) luggage do you have for the trip? Solution: "Luggage" is uncountable in English, even though each individual bag is countable. Uncountable nouns pair with "much." Answer: much
- Choose the correct word: I don't have much ___ (paper / papers) left to print the report. Solution: Here "paper" refers to the material itself, which is uncountable — "papers" would wrongly treat it as a countable noun meaning documents. Answer: paper
- Choose the correct word: He has written several research ___ (paper / papers) on this topic. Solution: Here "paper" means a specific article, which IS countable in this sense, so the plural "papers" is correct. Answer: papers
- Practice: Choose the correct word: There isn't ___ (much / many) traffic on this road today. (Answer: much)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: Can you give me a piece of ___ (advice / advices)? (Answer: advice)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: The news ___ (is / are) surprising. (Answer: is)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: Moving to a new city was a valuable ___ (experience / experiences) for me. (Answer: experience)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: Finding a good job requires a lot of ___ (work / works) these days. (Answer: work)

> **Quick revision:** A countable noun has a singular and plural form (one book, two books) and can follow "a/an," "many," "few," "a few," or "number of."; An uncountable noun has no plural form (never "informations," "furnitures," "advices") and takes a singular verb, even when it feels like more than one thing; Uncountable nouns follow "much," "little," "a little," or "amount of" instead of "many"/"few" — and to count them at all, use a partitive phrase like "a piece of advice" or "a glass of water."; Common nouns that are uncountable in English despite sounding plural or countable: information, advice, furniture, luggage/baggage, news, knowledge, equipment, bread, rice, money, homework, traffic, evidence, scenery, stationery; A few nouns switch category depending on meaning: "paper" is uncountable as the material ("I need more paper") but countable as a specific document ("he wrote three research papers"); "experience" is uncountable as general exposure ("she has experience") but countable as one specific event ("a valuable experience")

Clauses (Noun, Adjective, Adverb)

A clause has its own subject and verb — a main (independent) clause can stand alone as a sentence, while a subordinate (dependent) clause cannot, and plays the role of a noun, an adjective, or an adverb inside the sentence instead. Here's the rule, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. A Noun Clause does the job of a noun — as a subject, object, or complement — and often starts with that/what/who/whether/why ("I know THAT HE IS HONEST"). An Adjective (Relative) Clause describes a noun, usually starting with who/which/that/whom/whose, and sits right after the noun it describes ("The man WHO STOLE MY WALLET was arrested"). An Adverb Clause modifies the verb, showing time, reason, condition, contrast or place, and usually starts with words like because/although/if/when/while/before/since ("She left BEFORE THE MEETING ENDED"). To identify the type, ask what job the clause is doing: naming a thing (noun), describing a noun (adjective), or answering when/why/how/where/under what condition (adverb). A "that"-clause is especially easy to misclassify: it's a Noun Clause when it names a fact and could be swapped for "it" ("That he lied is obvious" → "It is obvious"), but an Adjective Clause when it directly follows and describes a noun like "belief," "claim" or "news" ("The belief that the earth is flat...").

Examples

- In the sentence "I know that he is honest," identify the type of the clause "that he is honest." Solution: It answers "what do I know?" — it names the thing known, acting as the object of the verb "know." A clause that functions as a noun (subject, object, or complement) is a Noun Clause. Answer: Noun clause
- In the sentence "The man who stole my wallet was arrested," identify the type of the clause "who stole my wallet." Solution: It describes the noun "man," telling us which man is meant. A clause that describes a noun, usually starting with who/which/that/whom/whose, is an Adjective (Relative) Clause. Answer: Adjective clause
- In the sentence "She left before the meeting ended," identify the type of the clause "before the meeting ended." Solution: It tells us WHEN she left, modifying the verb "left." A clause that modifies a verb by showing time, reason, condition, or place is an Adverb Clause. Answer: Adverb clause
- Identify the main (independent) clause in the sentence "Although it was raining, the match continued." Solution: "Although it was raining" cannot stand alone as a complete sentence — it is the subordinate (adverb) clause. "The match continued" can stand alone as a complete sentence — that is the main clause. Answer: The match continued
- In the sentence "That the earth is round is a well-known fact," identify the type of the clause "that the earth is round." Solution: The clause is the subject of the sentence and could be replaced by "it" ("It is a well-known fact") — that makes it a Noun Clause, not a description of any noun. Answer: Noun clause
- In the sentence "The belief that the earth is flat was common in ancient times," identify the type of the clause "that the earth is flat." Solution: The clause directly follows and describes the noun "belief" — it cannot simply replace the whole sentence with "it," so it is an Adjective Clause, not a Noun Clause. Answer: Adjective clause
- Practice: In the sentence "What she said surprised everyone," identify the type of the clause "what she said." (Answer: Noun clause)
- Practice: In the sentence "This is the house where I was born," identify the type of the clause "where I was born." (Answer: Adjective clause)
- Practice: In the sentence "He will succeed if he works hard," identify the type of the clause "if he works hard." (Answer: Adverb clause)

- Practice: In the sentence "I am aware that you are busy," identify the type of the clause "that you are busy." (Answer: Noun clause)
- Practice: In the sentence "The news that she had resigned shocked everyone," identify the type of the clause "that she had resigned." (Answer: Adjective clause)

> **Quick revision:** A Noun Clause does the job of a noun — as a subject, object, or complement — and often starts with that/what/who/whether/why ("I know THAT HE IS HONEST"); An Adjective (Relative) Clause describes a noun, usually starting with who/which/that/whom/whose, and sits right after the noun it describes ("The man WHO STOLE MY WALLET was arrested"); An Adverb Clause modifies the verb, showing time, reason, condition, contrast or place, and usually starts with words like because/although/if/when/while/before/since ("She left BEFORE THE MEETING ENDED"); To identify the type, ask what job the clause is doing: naming a thing (noun), describing a noun (adjective), or answering when/why/how/where/under what condition (adverb); A "that"-clause is especially easy to misclassify: it's a Noun Clause when it names a fact and could be swapped for "it" ("That he lied is obvious" → "It is obvious"), but an Adjective Clause when it directly follows and describes a noun like "belief," "claim" or "news" ("The belief that the earth is flat...")

Error Spotting

Error spotting: subject-verb agreement

Spot-the-error questions split a sentence into labelled segments (A/B/C) plus a "No error" option, and ask you to find which segment (if any) contains a mistake. Read the sentence part by part, not as a whole — the error is confined to one segment, and reading in chunks makes it far easier to isolate.

A handful of error types cover most questions. Subject-verb agreement is the single most common: watch for disguised-singular subjects like "each of," "neither of," "one of," and "the number of," which all take a SINGULAR verb despite being followed by a plural noun ("a number of," meaning "several," is the one common exception — that one IS plural). Collective nouns (committee, team, family) are usually treated as singular when acting as one unit. With "neither...nor" or "either...or," the verb agrees with whichever subject is NEARER to it, not the first one.

Beyond agreement: fixed prepositions get swapped ("married WITH" instead of "married TO"), tenses drift inconsistently within one sentence, comparatives double up ("more better"), and inversions after negative adverbials get skipped ("Scarcely he had left" instead of "Scarcely had he left"). Absolute adjectives like "unique" and stative verbs like "know" (not normally used in continuous form: "I am knowing" is wrong) are smaller but recurring traps.

Once you think you've found the error, mentally read the corrected sentence back end-to-end — if it now sounds right as a whole, you've likely found the right segment, not just A plausible one.

Examples

- "Each of the students have submitted their assignment" — "each of + plural noun" is still singular, so it should be "has submitted," not "have submitted" (and many answer keys also expect "his or her" rather than "their").
- "The number of students in the class are increasing" — "the number of X" is singular (a count), so "is increasing"; contrast with "A number of students ARE..." which IS plural.
- "If I was you, I would not accept that offer" — a hypothetical needs the subjunctive "If I WERE you," for every subject, never "was."
- "Neither of the two boys were able to solve the puzzle" — "neither of" takes a singular verb: "was able," not "were able."
- "He is married with a doctor who works in Delhi" — the fixed preposition is "married TO," not "married WITH."
- "He is senior than me by two years" — "senior" is a Latin-origin comparative that takes "TO," not "than": "senior to me."
- "Scarcely he had reached the station when the train left" — after "scarcely" at the start, the clause needs inversion: "Scarcely HAD HE reached," not "he had reached."
- "This is the most unique painting I have ever seen" — "unique" is absolute (something either is or isn't one-of-a-kind) and never takes "most" before it.

Quick revision: "Each of"/"neither of"/"one of"/"the number of" = singular verb ("a number of" is the plural exception). Subjunctive "if" clauses always use "were." Negative adverbials at the sentence start (scarcely, not only) require inversion.

Spotting Errors (English Grammar)

Spotting Errors questions split a sentence into parts and ask which part has a grammar mistake — most of them turn on a small set of recurring rules, not obscure grammar trivia. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Read the sentence part by part, not as a whole — the error is confined to one segment, and reading in chunks makes it easier to spot. Four error types cover most questions: subject-verb agreement, wrong preposition in a fixed phrase (like "married to", "good at"), tense inconsistency, and faulty comparison. Watch for disguised-singular subjects: "each of", "neither of", "one of", and "the number of" all take a SINGULAR verb — even though they are followed by a plural noun. ("A number of", meaning "several", is the one common exception — that one is plural.) Once you think you've found the error, mentally read the corrected sentence back — if it now sounds right end-to-end, you've likely found the right segment. These exams follow the traditional convention that a singular antecedent like "each", "every" or "everyone" is matched with a singular pronoun ("his/her"), not "their" — even though singular "they" is widely accepted in everyday English today, answer keys for this question type still expect the singular form. A collective noun (committee, team, jury, family) takes a singular verb when it acts as one unit ("the committee has decided"); and a comparative should never double up a comparison marker — "more braver" or "more better" is wrong, since the "-er" ending already makes the comparison.

Examples

- Spot the error: (A) Each of the students / (B) have submitted / (C) their assignment / (D) No error Solution: "Each of + plural noun" is always treated as a SINGULAR subject — the verb must agree with "each", not with "students". "have submitted" is plural; it should be "has submitted". Answer: (B) — should be "has submitted"
- Spot the error: (A) He is married / (B) with a doctor / (C) who works in Delhi / (D) No error Solution: The fixed idiom is "married TO" someone, not "married WITH" someone. Part (B) should read "to a doctor". Answer: (B) — should be "to a doctor"
- Spot the error: (A) The number of students / (B) in the class are / (C) increasing every year / (D) No error Solution: "The number of X" refers to a single count, and takes a singular verb — "is", not "are". This is different from "A number of students ARE..." (meaning "several students"), which correctly takes a plural verb. Here it should read "...in the class is increasing", so part (B) is wrong. Answer: (B) — should be "is"
- Spot the error: (A) If I was you / (B) I would not accept / (C) that offer / (D) No error Solution: This describes a hypothetical, "unreal" situation ("if I were you") rather than a real past fact — so the subjunctive mood is required. In the subjunctive mood, "were" is used for every subject, including "I" — "If I were you" is correct; "If I was you" is not. Answer: (A) — should be "If I were you"
- Spot the error: (A) Each student / (B) must submit their assignment / (C) before the deadline / (D) No error Solution: "Each student" is a singular subject. Per the traditional rule these exams follow, a singular antecedent needs a singular pronoun — "his/her", not "their". Answer: (B) — should be "must submit his/her assignment"
- Spot the error: (A) The committee have decided / (B) to postpone / (C) the meeting till next week / (D) No error Solution: "Committee" is a collective noun. When it acts as a single, unified body making one decision (as here), it takes a singular verb. "have decided" is plural; it should be "has decided". Answer: (A) — should be "The committee has decided"
- Practice: Spot the error: (A) Neither of the two boys / (B) were able / (C) to solve the puzzle / (D) No error (Answer: (B) — should be "was able" ("neither" is singular))
- Practice: Spot the error: (A) One of my friends / (B) are going / (C) to Mumbai tomorrow / (D) No error (Answer: (B) — should be "is going" ("one" is singular))
- Practice: Spot the error: (A) He is good / (B) in English / (C) but weak in Maths / (D) No error (Answer: (B) — should be "at English" (the fixed idiom is "good at"))
- Practice: Spot the error: (A) He is more braver / (B) than his elder brother / (C) in facing challenges / (D) No error (Answer: (A) — should be "He is braver" ("more" and "-er" together double up the comparison))

- Practice: Spot the error: (A) The manager insisted for / (B) all employees to attend / (C) the meeting on time / (D) No error (Answer: (A) — should be "insisted on" (the fixed idiom is "insist on", not "insist for"))

> **Quick revision:** Read the sentence part by part, not as a whole — the error is confined to one segment, and reading in chunks makes it easier to spot; Four error types cover most questions: subject-verb agreement, wrong preposition in a fixed phrase (like "married to", "good at"), tense inconsistency, and faulty comparison; Watch for disguised-singular subjects: "each of", "neither of", "one of", and "the number of" all take a SINGULAR verb — even though they are followed by a plural noun. ("A number of", meaning "several", is the one common exception — that one is plural.); Once you think you've found the error, mentally read the corrected sentence back — if it now sounds right end-to-end, you've likely found the right segment; These exams follow the traditional convention that a singular antecedent like "each", "every" or "everyone" is matched with a singular pronoun ("his/her"), not "their" — even though singular "they" is widely accepted in everyday English today, answer keys for this question type still expect the singular form; A collective noun (committee, team, jury, family) takes a singular verb when it acts as one unit ("the committee has decided"); and a comparative should never double up a comparison marker — "more braver" or "more better" is wrong, since the "-er" ending already makes the comparison

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/error-spotting/

Fill in the Blanks

Fill in the blanks: prepositional collocations

Fill-in-the-blank questions draw from across the whole of English grammar, but a large share come down to fixed collocations — word pairings (usually an adjective or verb plus a fixed preposition) that simply have to be learned as set phrases: "apologise FOR," "afraid OF," "succeed IN," "good AT," "married TO." There's no deriving these from a general rule; building familiarity through repeated exposure is the only real shortcut.

Beyond fixed collocations, a cluster of genuine GRAMMAR RULES shows up repeatedly: subject-verb agreement with tricky subjects ("each of," "neither of" = singular), tense sequencing in complex sentences (an earlier past action needs the past perfect: "had already started" relative to another past-tense action), the subjunctive "were" in hypotheticals regardless of subject ("if I were," never "if I was"), and "since" (point in time) versus "for" (duration).

Also common: article choice (a/an/the/no article) depending on whether a noun is being introduced for the first time, referred back to, or used generically; and the "too + adjective + to + verb" versus "so + adjective + that" constructions, which are often confused but aren't interchangeable ("too tired to walk," not "too tired that he cannot walk").

When several options are all grammatically possible in isolation, the deciding factor is almost always which one fits the SPECIFIC collocation or rule the sentence is actually testing — read for that signal rather than picking whichever option sounds most natural at a glance.

Examples

- "He apologised ___ being late." — "apologise FOR," a fixed collocation.
- "She is afraid ___ spiders." — "afraid OF," a fixed collocation.
- "They have been waiting ___ two hours." — "FOR" + duration, not "since" (which needs a starting point).
- "He succeeded ___ passing the exam." — "succeed IN," a fixed collocation.
- "By the time we arrived, the movie ___ already started." — an earlier past action relative to another past action needs the past perfect: "HAD already started."
- "If I ___ rich, I would travel the world." — the subjunctive "WERE" is used for every subject in a hypothetical, not "was."
- "Neither of the answers ___ correct." — "neither of" takes a singular verb: "IS correct," not "are."
- "He is too tired ___ continue working." — the fixed construction is "too + adjective + TO + verb," not "too...that."

> **Quick revision:** Many blanks test fixed collocations (apologise for, afraid of, succeed in) that must be memorized. Recurring rules: each of/neither of = singular verb; since=point in time, for=duration; subjunctive "were" in hypotheticals; "too...to," not "too...that."

Fill in the Blanks Solved Questions

One blank, one correct word — but picking it means reading the whole sentence for meaning, not just the words right next to the gap, since English pairs certain words with certain prepositions and forms by fixed convention. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Read the entire sentence first, not just the phrase around the blank — the right word often depends on something earlier or later in the sentence. Many blanks test fixed collocations — words that conventionally pair together ("good at," "pride oneself on," "capable of") — which have to be learned, not derived from logic alone. After a preposition like "despite," "without," or "besides," a verb takes its -ing (gerund) form, not the infinitive ("to + verb") or plain form. Eliminate options that are grammatically wrong first (wrong part of speech, wrong tense), then choose among what's left by meaning and convention. Some blanks test a time preposition ("since" vs "for") rather than a fixed collocation — "since" needs a specific point in time, "for" needs a duration; check which kind of time expression follows before picking.

Examples

- Despite ___ hard, he failed the exam. (A) study (B) studying (C) studied (D) to study Solution: After "despite," a verb must take its -ing (gerund) form — "studying," not the plain or infinitive form. Answer: studying
- She is good ___ mathematics. (A) in (B) at (C) on (D) with Solution: "Good at" is a fixed collocation for describing skill in a subject or activity. Answer: at
- The train arrived ___ time, exactly as scheduled. (A) in (B) on (C) at (D) by Solution: "On time" is the fixed phrase meaning punctual, neither early nor late. Answer: on
- He prides himself ___ his honesty. (A) in (B) on (C) at (D) for Solution: "Pride oneself on" is a fixed phrasal expression meaning to feel proud of a particular quality. Answer: on
- He has been living in Mumbai ___ ten years. (A) since (B) for (C) from (D) at Solution: "Ten years" is a DURATION, not a specific point in time, so it needs "for", not "since". Answer: for
- The teacher asked the students to pay ___ attention during the lecture. (A) close (B) closely (C) closer (D) closest Solution: "Pay close attention" is the fixed phrase — "close" here is an adjective describing "attention", not an adverb modifying a verb, so "closely" doesn't fit. Answer: close
- Practice: I am not interested ___ politics. (A) in (B) at (C) on (D) with (Answer: in)
- Practice: She apologized ___ being late to the meeting. (A) of (B) for (C) at (D) with (Answer: for)
- Practice: He is capable ___ solving this problem on his own. (A) in (B) at (C) of (D) for (Answer: of)
- Practice: She has a strong interest ___ classical music. (A) on (B) in (C) at (D) for (Answer: in)
- Practice: He was accused ___ stealing the documents. (A) of (B) for (C) with (D) about (Answer: of)

> **Quick revision:** Read the entire sentence first, not just the phrase around the blank — the right word often depends on something earlier or later in the sentence; Many blanks test fixed collocations — words that conventionally pair together ("good at," "pride oneself on," "capable of") — which have to be learned, not derived from logic alone; After a preposition like "despite," "without," or "besides," a verb takes its -ing (gerund) form, not the infinitive ("to + verb") or plain form; Eliminate options that are grammatically wrong first (wrong part of speech, wrong tense), then choose among what's left by meaning and convention; Some blanks test a time preposition ("since" vs "for") rather than a fixed collocation — "since" needs a specific point in time, "for" needs a duration; check which kind of time expression follows before picking

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/fill-blanks/

Idioms and Phrases

Idioms and Phrases Solved Questions

Idioms can't be worked out from their individual words — "break the ice" has nothing to do with ice — so this topic is pure recognition, built up one phrase at a time. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples using some of the most common idioms tested, and a few to try yourself. An idiom is a fixed phrase whose overall meaning isn't the literal sum of its words — these have to be learned as whole units, the same way vocabulary is learned. Context still matters: once you have a candidate meaning, check that substituting it back into the sentence still makes sense in

context. Many idioms cluster around familiar domains — weather, body parts, animals, cooking. Recognising a phrase as "idiom-shaped" (an unusual combination that wouldn't quite make literal sense) is often the first clue that a fixed meaning is intended. Don't try to guess an idiom's meaning from its literal words — "once in a blue moon" has nothing to do with the moon's colour. These are better memorised directly from repeated exposure than reasoned out. Idioms from the same domain can mean very different things — "under the weather" (feeling mildly unwell) and "in hot water" (in trouble) both reference weather/water, but check the EXACT wording given rather than the general domain it belongs to.

Examples

- Choose the meaning of the idiom "to break the ice": (A) To start a fight (B) To make the first move in an awkward or formal situation (C) To cause an accident (D) To end a relationship Solution: "Break the ice" means to ease tension or initiate conversation in an awkward or formal setting. Answer: (B) To make the first move in an awkward or formal situation
- Choose the meaning of the idiom "to cost an arm and a leg": (A) To be very expensive (B) To cause an injury (C) To take a long time (D) To be free of charge Solution: "Cost an arm and a leg" means to be extremely expensive. Answer: (A) To be very expensive
- Choose the meaning of the idiom "once in a blue moon": (A) Every full moon (B) Very rarely (C) Every night (D) Regularly, once a month Solution: "Once in a blue moon" means something that happens very rarely, almost never. Answer: (B) Very rarely
- Choose the meaning of the idiom "to let the cat out of the bag": (A) To release an animal (B) To accidentally reveal a secret (C) To escape from danger (D) To cause confusion Solution: "Let the cat out of the bag" means to accidentally reveal a secret. Answer: (B) To accidentally reveal a secret
- Choose the meaning of the idiom "to be under the weather": (A) To be very busy (B) To feel slightly unwell (C) To be outdoors (D) To be in trouble Solution: "Under the weather" means feeling mildly ill or unwell, not literally about the weather. Answer: (B) To feel slightly unwell
- Choose the meaning of the idiom "to spill the beans": (A) To waste food (B) To reveal secret information (C) To make a mess (D) To cook a meal Solution: "Spill the beans" means to reveal information that was meant to be kept secret. Answer: (B) To reveal secret information
- Practice: Choose the meaning of the idiom "to hit the nail on the head": (A) To make a mistake (B) To say or do something exactly right (C) To work very hard (D) To finish a task quickly (Answer: (B) To say or do something exactly right)
- Practice: Choose the meaning of the idiom "to burn the midnight oil": (A) To waste resources (B) To work or study late into the night (C) To start a fire (D) To wake up early (Answer: (B) To work or study late into the night)
- Practice: Choose the meaning of the idiom "a piece of cake": (A) A small reward (B) Something very easy to do (C) A tasty dessert (D) A difficult challenge (Answer: (B) Something very easy to do)
- Practice: Choose the meaning of the idiom "to be in hot water": (A) To be very busy (B) To be in trouble (C) To be angry (D) To be tired (Answer: (B) To be in trouble)
- Practice: Choose the meaning of the idiom "to beat around the bush": (A) To waste time gardening (B) To avoid getting to the point (C) To win a competition easily (D) To search thoroughly (Answer: (B) To avoid getting to the point)

> **Quick revision:** An idiom is a fixed phrase whose overall meaning isn't the literal sum of its words — these have to be learned as whole units, the same way vocabulary is learned; Context still matters: once you have a candidate meaning, check that substituting it back into the sentence still makes sense in context; Many idioms cluster around familiar domains — weather, body parts, animals, cooking. Recognising a phrase as "idiom-shaped" (an unusual combination that wouldn't quite make literal sense) is often the first clue that a fixed meaning is intended; Don't try to guess an idiom's meaning from its literal words — "once in a blue moon" has nothing to do with the moon's colour. These are better memorised directly from repeated exposure than reasoned out; Idioms from the same domain can mean very different things — "under the weather" (feeling mildly unwell) and "in hot water" (in trouble) both reference weather/water, but check the EXACT wording given rather than the general domain it belongs to

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/idioms-and-phrases/

One Word Substitution

One Word Substitution

This topic replaces a phrase or definition with a single precise word — it's pure vocabulary recall, but the key skill is noticing which specific DISTINGUISHING feature the definition is pointing at, since the wrong options are usually near-synonyms that miss that one detail.

Build words in related FAMILIES rather than memorizing in isolation — "-logist"/"-ologist" words for specialists (ornithologist=birds, dermatologist=skin, cardiologist=heart), "-phile"/collector words (philatelist=stamps, numismatist=coins, bibliophile=books), words for people who leave/arrive (emigrant=leaving, immigrant=arriving — same person, different reference point), and attitude words (optimist/pessimist/stoic/cynic — all describe an outlook, but each is a DIFFERENT outlook, not interchangeable).

Watch especially for pairs that sound similar but mean something different: "illegible" (handwriting that can't be read) versus "illiterate" (a person who can't read or write) — both involve reading, but one describes writing quality and the other describes a person's ability. Similarly "audible" (can be heard) is unrelated to "legible" (can be read) despite the parallel structure.

When two options both seem to fit the general topic, pick the one that matches the definition's EXACT scope — not broader, not narrower. "A person who studies birds" is an ornithologist specifically, not simply "a scientist" or "a zoologist" (who studies animals generally, a broader category).

Examples

- "A person who studies birds": Ornithologist — not the broader "zoologist" (who studies all animals).
- "A person who can speak many languages": Polyglot.
- "A person who collects stamps": Philatelist — distinct from "Numismatist," who collects coins.
- "A doctor who treats diseases of the skin": Dermatologist — distinct from "Cardiologist" (heart) or "Neurologist" (nervous system).
- "A person who leaves their own country to settle in another": Emigrant (leaving) — distinct from "Immigrant," the same person described from the perspective of the country they're entering.
- "One who believes that all events are predetermined by fate": Fatalist — a specific outlook, distinct from "Pessimist" (expects bad outcomes) or "Realist" (sees things as they are).
- "Handwriting that cannot be read": Illegible — distinct from "Illiterate," which describes a PERSON who cannot read or write, not the quality of the writing itself.
- "A person who is indifferent to pleasure or pain": Stoic — distinct from "Hedonist," who actively seeks pleasure (the opposite disposition).

> **Quick revision:** Build words in families (specialists, collectors, outlooks). Match the definition's exact scope, not a broader or narrower related word. Watch for similar-sounding pairs with different meanings (illegible vs illiterate).

One Word Substitution Solved Questions

One Word Substitution questions give you a phrase or a whole sentence and ask for the single precise word that means the same thing — it’s a vocabulary topic, but a narrow and learnable one, since the same few dozen words come up again and again. Here’s the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Read the phrase as a definition, not just a description — the correct word is the exact dictionary term for that definition, not merely a word that relates to it. Many of these words follow recognisable patterns: "-ist" or "-ologist" often names a person who studies or practises something (ornithologist, philanthropist); "-phobia" names a fear; "-cide" names a killing. Watch for near-miss options that describe something related but not identical — the right answer matches the phrase exactly, not just the general topic. These words repeat often across past papers, so building a working list from practice is usually more efficient than trying to memorise a dictionary. Some substitutions have close look-alikes with very different meanings (a "philanthropist" loves and helps mankind generally; a "philatelist" collects stamps) — check the word’s actual root rather than picking whichever option merely sounds similar.

Examples

- One word for "a person who studies birds": Solution: This describes someone whose subject of study is birds. The exact term for this is "Ornithologist". Answer: Ornithologist
- One word for "a person who can speak many languages": Solution: This describes someone fluent in several languages. The exact term for this is "Polyglot". Answer: Polyglot
- One word for "a place where coins are made": Solution: This describes the specific place where a government manufactures its coins. The exact term for this is "Mint". Answer: Mint
- One word for "a person who loves and works for the welfare of mankind": Solution: This describes someone devoted to promoting the welfare of others, often through charitable giving. The exact term for this is "Philanthropist". Answer: Philanthropist
- One word for "a person who collects stamps": Solution: This describes someone whose hobby is collecting postage stamps. The exact term for this is "Philatelist" — not to be confused with "Philanthropist" (someone who loves and helps mankind). Answer: Philatelist
- One word for "a word formed from the initial letters of other words": Solution: This describes a word built by combining the first letters of a longer phrase (like "NASA" or "radar"). The exact term for this is "Acronym". Answer: Acronym
- Practice: One word for "a person who walks in their sleep": (Answer: Somnambulist)
- Practice: One word for "a person who has no money": (Answer: Pauper)
- Practice: One word for "a shelter or enclosure for birds": (Answer: Aviary)
- Practice: One word for "a person who hates mankind": (Answer: Misanthrope)
- Practice: One word for "the scientific study of stars and planets": (Answer: Astronomy)

> **Quick revision:** Read the phrase as a definition, not just a description — the correct word is the exact dictionary term for that definition, not merely a word that relates to it; Many of these words follow recognisable patterns: "-ist" or "-ologist" often names a person who studies or practises something (ornithologist, philanthropist); "-phobia" names a fear; "-cide" names a killing; Watch for near-miss options that describe something related but not identical — the right answer matches the phrase exactly, not just the general topic; These words repeat often across past papers, so building a working list from practice is usually more efficient than trying to memorise a dictionary; Some substitutions have close look-alikes with very different meanings (a "philanthropist" loves and helps mankind generally; a "philatelist" collects stamps) — check the word's actual root rather than picking whichever option merely sounds similar

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/one-word-substitution/

Para Jumbles

Para Jumbles: following the chain

Para Jumbles give you four or five sentences out of order and ask you to arrange them into a coherent paragraph. The reliable method is to find explicit LINKS between sentences, not to guess based on overall topic familiarity.

Start by finding the OPENING sentence: it introduces the subject in general terms, without any pronoun ("it," "this," "they") or connector ("however," "as a result," "this shift") that would require something to have already been said. A sentence starting with "This process..." or "As a result..." can never be first, since there's nothing yet for "this" or "as a result" to refer back to.

Then chain the rest by matching pronouns and demonstratives to their antecedents: if one sentence ends by introducing "pollen," the next sentence in the chain is whichever one actually uses the word "pollen" or refers to it as "it." Connector words are equally strong signals — "however" or "despite this" must follow a sentence making the OPPOSITE point; "as a result" or "therefore" must follow the sentence describing the cause; "besides" or "in addition" must follow a sentence on the same side of the argument, adding to it rather than contrasting.

Finish by checking the CLOSING sentence makes sense as a conclusion — often a broader implication, a summary, or a forward-looking statement, rather than a sentence that itself demands a continuation. After assembling an order,

read it straight through once as ordinary prose — a genuinely correct order should read naturally, with no sentence feeling like it's answering a question nobody asked yet.

Examples

- A paragraph about honeybee pollination: "Honeybees play a vital role in pollinating flowering plants" is the opening (introduces the general topic, no pronoun needing an antecedent). A sentence starting "This pollen is then transferred..." cannot be first, since "this pollen" needs an earlier sentence that introduced pollen.
- If one sentence ends by describing bees collecting pollen on their bodies, the next sentence in the chain is whichever one opens by referring to that pollen being transferred — matching the noun across sentences pins down the order.
- A sentence starting with "However," must immediately follow a sentence making the point it's about to contrast with — never place it right after the opening sentence unless that opening already set up something to contrast against.
- A sentence starting with "As a result," or "Consequently," must immediately follow the sentence describing the CAUSE, not any other sentence in the set, even if it's topically related.
- The closing sentence of a paragraph about the printing press ("As a result, literacy rates rose and ideas spread faster than ever before") works as a conclusion because it states a broad, forward-looking IMPLICATION — not a specific claim needing more support after it.
- After tentatively ordering four sentences, read them straight through as a plain paragraph — if any sentence feels like it's referring to something not yet mentioned, the order is still wrong, even if each individual transition seemed to make sense in isolation.

> **Quick revision:** Find the opening sentence (no pronoun/connector needing an earlier reference). Chain the rest by matching pronouns/nouns to what they refer to, and connectors (however/as a result/besides) to the relationship they require. Read the final order as plain prose to confirm it flows.

Para Jumbles (Sentence Rearrangement)

Para Jumbles give you a set of sentences out of order and ask for the sequence that reads as one coherent paragraph — the fastest way in is to follow the pronouns and connector words, which only make sense in a specific order. Here’s the approach, four fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Find the opening sentence first: it introduces the topic in general terms, without a pronoun ("it", "this", "they") or connector ("however", "as a result") that would need something earlier to refer back to. Pronouns and demonstratives must point at something already introduced — use them to chain a sentence directly to whichever sentence mentioned that thing. Connector words carry a specific logical relationship: "however"/"but" signal a contrast with the idea just stated; "therefore"/"as a result" signal a consequence; "for instance"/"for example" signal that the previous sentence made a general claim this one illustrates. Once the opening sentence is fixed, follow the pronoun/connector chain one link at a time rather than trying to see the whole order at once — each sentence should point unambiguously to exactly one predecessor. When two sentences could both plausibly open the paragraph on topic grounds alone, check for a pronoun or connector needing an earlier antecedent — the one that genuinely stands alone, with nothing to refer back to, is the real opening sentence.

Examples

- Arrange A, B, C and D into the correct order to form a coherent paragraph. A: This pollen is then transferred to the next flower they visit, fertilising it. B: Honeybees play a vital role in pollinating flowering plants. C: Without this process, many fruits, vegetables and nuts that we eat would not exist. D: As they fly from flower to flower in search of nectar, pollen sticks to their bodies. Solution: B introduces the topic in general terms (honeybees and pollination) with no pronoun needing an antecedent — it’s the opening sentence. D follows B: "they" refers to the honeybees just introduced, and it explains the mechanism (pollen sticking to their bodies). A follows D: "This pollen" refers to the pollen just mentioned in D. C closes the paragraph: "this process" sums up the pollination process described in D and A, and states why it matters. Answer: B, D, A, C
- Arrange A, B, C and D into the correct order to form a coherent paragraph. A: Johannes Gutenberg’s printing press, introduced in the 15th century, changed this completely. B: With it, identical copies of a text could be produced quickly and cheaply. C: Before the invention of the printing press, books had to be copied out by hand, a slow and expensive process. D: As a result, literacy rates rose and ideas spread faster than ever before. Solution: C opens the paragraph: it

describes the "before" state with no pronoun needing an earlier reference. A follows C: "changed this completely" — "this" refers to the slow, expensive hand-copying described in C. B follows A: "With it" — "it" refers to the printing press just introduced in A. D closes the paragraph: "As a result" draws the consequence from the fast, cheap copying just described in B. Answer: C, A, B, D

- Arrange A, B, C and D into the correct order to form a coherent paragraph. A: For instance, recycling one tonne of paper can save about seventeen trees. B: Given these benefits, many cities now offer separate collection bins for recyclable waste. C: Recycling helps reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills. D: It also conserves natural resources such as trees, water and minerals that would otherwise be used to make new products from scratch. Solution: C opens the paragraph with a general claim (recycling reduces landfill waste) and no pronoun needing an antecedent. D follows C: "It also conserves..." — "It" refers to recycling from C, and "also" signals a second benefit being added. A follows D: "For instance" illustrates D's point specifically — D names trees as one of the conserved resources, and A gives the tree-saving example. B closes the paragraph: "these benefits" sums up the two benefits from C and D, concluding with the real-world response. Answer: C, D, A, B
- Arrange A, B, C and D into the correct order to form a coherent paragraph. A: For this reason, experts recommend a full night's sleep over last-minute, late-night cramming. B: However, research shows that sleep plays a crucial role in consolidating memory. C: Many people believe that studying late at night is the most effective way to prepare for exams. D: Students who sleep well after studying tend to retain information better than those who stay up all night. Solution: C opens the paragraph by stating a common belief, with no pronoun needing an antecedent. B follows C: "However" signals a contrast between the common belief in C and what research actually shows. D follows B: it elaborates on B's claim with a specific comparison, supporting the point about sleep and memory. A closes the paragraph: "For this reason" draws the recommendation from the case just built in B and D. Answer: C, B, D, A
- Arrange A, B, C and D into the correct order to form a coherent paragraph. A: This infrastructure gap remains one of the biggest obstacles to a full transition away from fossil fuels. B: Many governments have set ambitious targets to shift towards renewable energy sources like solar and wind. C: However, achieving these targets requires significant investment in storage and grid infrastructure. D: Without reliable storage, excess energy generated on sunny or windy days is often wasted. Solution: B opens the paragraph with a general claim (governments' renewable energy targets) and no pronoun needing an antecedent. C follows B: "these targets" refers to the targets just named in B, and "However" introduces the catch. D follows C: it elaborates specifically on "storage", one of the two things C says is needed. A closes the paragraph: "this infrastructure gap" sums up the storage-and-grid problem described in C and D. Answer: B, C, D, A
- Practice: Arrange A, B, C and D into the correct order to form a coherent paragraph. A: Despite this brief duration, the achievement marked the beginning of modern aviation. B: The Wright brothers achieved the first powered, sustained flight in 1903. C: Within decades, powered flight transformed travel, trade and warfare around the world. D: Their aircraft, the Flyer, stayed airborne for just twelve seconds on its first flight. (Answer: B, D, A, C)
- Practice: Arrange A, B, C and D into the correct order to form a coherent paragraph. A: They provide habitat and shelter for thousands of species of fish and other marine life. B: Rising ocean temperatures, however, are causing widespread coral bleaching. C: Coral reefs are among the most biodiverse ecosystems on Earth. D: This threatens not just the coral itself but the entire web of life that depends on it. (Answer: C, A, B, D)
- Practice: Arrange A, B, C and D into the correct order to form a coherent paragraph. A: Critics argue, however, that remote work can weaken team collaboration and company culture. B: This shift has reduced commuting time and given workers more flexibility over their schedules. C: As a result, many organisations are experimenting with hybrid models that combine both approaches. D: Many companies now allow employees to work from home at least part of the week. (Answer: D, B, A, C)
- Practice: Arrange A, B, C and D into the correct order to form a coherent paragraph. A: However, today, free online encyclopedias allow anyone with an internet connection to access a vast range of knowledge instantly. B: Access to information was once limited to those who could visit a library or afford expensive reference books. C: This shift has democratised learning on a scale that would have been unimaginable a century ago. D: As a result, people in remote areas now have the same access to basic knowledge as those in major cities. (Answer: B, A, D, C)
- Practice: Arrange A, B, C and D into the correct order to form a coherent paragraph. A: However, consuming caffeine too close to bedtime can disrupt the body's ability to fall asleep. B: Caffeine is widely used to combat tiredness and improve alertness during the day. C: For this reason, experts recommend avoiding caffeine at least six hours before

going to bed. D: This disruption occurs because caffeine blocks adenosine, a chemical that promotes sleepiness. (Answer: B, A, D, C)

> **Quick revision:** Find the opening sentence first: it introduces the topic in general terms, without a pronoun ("it", "this", "they") or connector ("however", "as a result") that would need something earlier to refer back to; Pronouns and demonstratives must point at something already introduced — use them to chain a sentence directly to whichever sentence mentioned that thing; Connector words carry a specific logical relationship: "however"/"but" signal a contrast with the idea just stated; "therefore"/"as a result" signal a consequence; "for instance"/"for example" signal that the previous sentence made a general claim this one illustrates; Once the opening sentence is fixed, follow the pronoun/connector chain one link at a time rather than trying to see the whole order at once — each sentence should point unambiguously to exactly one predecessor; When two sentences could both plausibly open the paragraph on topic grounds alone, check for a pronoun or connector needing an earlier antecedent — the one that genuinely stands alone, with nothing to refer back to, is the real opening sentence

Para Completion Solved Questions

A paragraph has an internal logic — a direction it's building toward — and the right completion continues that direction without overreaching, contradicting, or wandering off into an unrelated detail. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Read the whole paragraph first and identify the trend or point it's building — the correct ending continues that same line of thought, usually with a natural connector like "therefore," "as a result," or "this." Eliminate any option that contradicts something already stated in the paragraph, even partially. Eliminate any option that overreaches — makes an extreme, absolute claim ("completely," "always," "never") the paragraph's moderate tone doesn't support. Eliminate any option that's a true-sounding but unrelated detail or trivia — it doesn't continue the paragraph's point just because it's a plausible fact. The correct option often paraphrases the paragraph's point in slightly different words rather than repeating it verbatim — don't reject an option just because it doesn't reuse the paragraph's exact phrasing, as long as the idea still follows logically.

Examples

- Complete the paragraph: "Renewable energy sources like solar and wind are becoming cheaper every year. Many countries are now generating a significant share of their electricity from these sources. ___" (A) As costs continue to fall, this share is expected to keep growing in the coming decades. (B) However, fossil fuels will remain completely irrelevant from now on. (C) Solar panels require regular cleaning to maintain efficiency. (D) Wind turbines are very tall structures. Solution: (A) directly continues the established trend (falling costs, growing share) into the future. Correct. (B) overreaches with "completely irrelevant," far stronger than anything the paragraph supports. (C) and (D) are plausible but unrelated details, not a continuation of the trend. Answer: (A) As costs continue to fall, this share is expected to keep growing in the coming decades.
- Complete the paragraph: "The number of electric vehicles on Indian roads has grown rapidly over the past five years. Several state governments have introduced subsidies to encourage buyers. Charging infrastructure, however, is still limited in smaller towns. ___" (A) This remains one of the key challenges to wider EV adoption outside major cities. (B) Many car manufacturers also produce motorcycles. (C) Petrol prices have remained stable this year. (D) Most buyers prefer vehicles with manual transmissions. Solution: (A) directly follows from the stated limitation, naming it as a consequence/challenge. Correct. (B), (C) and (D) are all unrelated details that don't continue the point about limited charging infrastructure. Answer: (A) This remains one of the key challenges to wider EV adoption outside major cities.
- Complete the paragraph: "Libraries have traditionally been seen as quiet spaces for reading and research. In recent years, many libraries have begun hosting community events, workshops and even coding classes. ___" (A) This reflects a broader shift towards libraries as multi-purpose community spaces. (B) Reading remains the only activity allowed inside library buildings. (C) Library buildings are typically made of brick and concrete. (D) Most libraries close on public holidays. Solution: (A) names the broader trend the paragraph's examples (events, workshops, coding classes) are pointing to. Correct. (B) directly contradicts the paragraph, which says libraries now host other activities. (C) and (D) are unrelated details. Answer: (A) This reflects a broader shift towards libraries as multi-purpose community spaces.
- Complete the paragraph: "Regular physical exercise has been linked to improved mood and reduced stress. Several studies show that even short daily walks can have a measurable positive effect. ___" (A) Therefore, many health experts now recommend incorporating some form of daily movement into one's routine. (B) Exercise equipment can be

expensive to purchase. (C) Many people enjoy walking in natural surroundings such as parks. (D) Walking shoes come in many different styles. Solution: (A) draws the natural "therefore" conclusion from the stated benefits. Correct. (B), (C) and (D) are all plausible but unrelated tangents, not a conclusion drawn from the stated benefits. Answer: (A) Therefore, many health experts now recommend incorporating some form of daily movement into one's routine.

- Complete the paragraph: "Many cities are expanding their public transport networks to reduce dependence on private vehicles. Metro systems, in particular, have seen a sharp rise in daily ridership over the past decade. ___" (A) This growth suggests that well-connected public transport can meaningfully shift commuter habits. (B) Private car ownership will disappear completely within a few years. (C) Metro trains are typically powered by electricity. (D) Ticket prices vary across different cities. Solution: (A) continues the stated trend (rising ridership) with a measured, supported conclusion. Correct. (B) overreaches with "disappear completely" — far stronger than the paragraph supports. (C) and (D) are unrelated details. Answer: (A) This growth suggests that well-connected public transport can meaningfully shift commuter habits.
- Complete the paragraph: "A significant portion of food produced globally is never eaten and ends up in landfills. This waste occurs at multiple stages, from farms and storage facilities to retail stores and households. ___" (A) Addressing food waste at each of these stages could meaningfully reduce the overall amount lost. (B) Farmers will stop growing crops entirely if this trend continues. (C) Landfills are typically located outside city limits. (D) Some fruits ripen faster than others. Solution: (A) draws a measured conclusion directly from the stated multi-stage problem. Correct. (B) overreaches with an absurd, unsupported absolute claim. (C) and (D) are unrelated trivia. Answer: (A) Addressing food waste at each of these stages could meaningfully reduce the overall amount lost.
- Practice: Complete the paragraph: "Urban green spaces such as parks and gardens help reduce air pollution and provide recreational areas for residents. Many cities are now investing in rooftop gardens and vertical greenery to make up for limited land. ___" (A) This trend is especially useful in densely populated cities with little available ground space. (B) Most rooftop gardens require a specially reinforced roof structure. (C) Most parks charge an entrance fee. (D) Air pollution levels vary by season. (Answer: (A) This trend is especially useful in densely populated cities with little available ground space.)
- Practice: Complete the paragraph: "Online learning platforms have made education more accessible to students in remote areas. However, not every student has access to a stable internet connection or a suitable device. ___" (A) This gap continues to limit how equally the benefits of online learning are shared. (B) Online courses are always shorter than traditional classroom courses. (C) Some universities require entrance exams for admission. (D) Most universities now have a library. (Answer: (A) This gap continues to limit how equally the benefits of online learning are shared.)
- Practice: Complete the paragraph: "Traditional handicrafts play an important role in preserving a region's cultural heritage. Many artisans, however, struggle to find a sustainable market for their products. ___" (A) Online marketplaces have begun helping some of these artisans reach a wider base of customers. (B) Handicrafts are always more expensive than factory-made goods. (C) Most artisans work exclusively with wood. (D) Cultural heritage cannot be measured in economic terms. (Answer: (A) Online marketplaces have begun helping some of these artisans reach a wider base of customers.)
- Practice: Complete the paragraph: "Working from home has given many employees greater flexibility over their schedules. However, some employees report feeling more isolated without regular in-person interaction with colleagues. ___" (A) This has led several companies to introduce regular in-person meetups to address the issue. (B) Remote work will be banned in most industries soon. (C) Office buildings are often located in city centres. (D) Some employees prefer working late at night. (Answer: (A) This has led several companies to introduce regular in-person meetups to address the issue.)
- Practice: Complete the paragraph: "Several regions are experiencing increasingly severe water shortages due to changing rainfall patterns. Many local governments have begun promoting rainwater harvesting as a partial solution. ___" (A) Wider adoption of such practices could help ease the pressure on existing water sources. (B) Rainfall will stop occurring in affected regions entirely. (C) Most rainwater harvesting systems use plastic pipes. (D) Groundwater levels are measured in metres. (Answer: (A) Wider adoption of such practices could help ease the pressure on existing water sources.)

Quick revision: Read the whole paragraph first and identify the trend or point it's building — the correct ending continues that same line of thought, usually with a natural connector like "therefore," "as a result," or "this."; Eliminate any option that contradicts something already stated in the paragraph, even partially; Eliminate any option that overreaches — makes an extreme, absolute claim ("completely," "always," "never") the paragraph's moderate tone doesn't support; Eliminate any option that's a true-sounding but unrelated detail or trivia — it doesn't continue the paragraph's point just because it's a plausible fact; The correct option often paraphrases the paragraph's point in slightly different words rather than repeating it verbatim — don't reject an option just because it doesn't reuse the paragraph's exact phrasing, as long as the idea still follows logically

Sentence Rearrangement Solved Questions

A single sentence is broken into labelled fragments, and the job is to put them back in the order that forms one grammatically correct, meaningful sentence — distinct from Para Jumbles, which reorders whole sentences into a paragraph. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Find the main subject and verb first — the fragment containing them is usually (though not always) the core the rest of the sentence attaches to. Look for connector words (since, although, despite, which, that) at the start of a fragment — they signal that fragment introduces a clause and needs something specific before or after it. Read your assembled order out loud (mentally) — a sentence that sounds grammatically natural and complete is a strong signal you have the right order, even before checking it against the options. Watch for a fragment that can only grammatically follow one specific other fragment (like a relative clause starting with "which" that must immediately follow the noun it describes) — these fixed pairs are the fastest way to eliminate wrong options. If two fragments both seem grammatically acceptable in either order, check which arrangement actually makes sense as a complete thought — grammatical correctness in isolation doesn't guarantee a fragment is in its correct logical position.

Examples

- Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: to complete the project / Q: Despite facing several obstacles / R: before the deadline / S: the team managed Solution: The connector "Despite facing several obstacles" (Q) must open the sentence, followed by the main clause "the team managed" (S), then "to complete the project" (P), then "before the deadline" (R). Answer: Q, S, P, R — "Despite facing several obstacles, the team managed to complete the project before the deadline."
- Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: since several members / Q: to postpone the meeting / R: The committee decided / S: were unable to attend Solution: The main clause "The committee decided" (R) opens the sentence, followed by "to postpone the meeting" (Q), then the reason clause "since several members" (P) and "were unable to attend" (S). Answer: R, Q, P, S — "The committee decided to postpone the meeting since several members were unable to attend."
- Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: the farmers managed / Q: Although the weather was unfavourable / R: on time / S: to complete the harvest Solution: The connector "Although the weather was unfavourable" (Q) opens the sentence, followed by "the farmers managed" (P), then "to complete the harvest" (S), then "on time" (R). Answer: Q, P, S, R — "Although the weather was unfavourable, the farmers managed to complete the harvest on time."
- Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: which was announced last week / Q: aims to improve road safety / R: The new policy / S: across the city Solution: "The new policy" (R) is the subject, immediately followed by the relative clause describing it, "which was announced last week" (P), then the main verb phrase "aims to improve road safety" (Q), then "across the city" (S). Answer: R, P, Q, S — "The new policy, which was announced last week, aims to improve road safety across the city."
- Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: the new bridge / Q: once completed / R: will reduce travel time significantly / S: between the two cities Solution: "The new bridge" (P) is the subject, immediately followed by the parenthetical "once completed" (Q), then the main verb phrase "will reduce travel time significantly" (R), then "between the two cities" (S). Answer: P, Q, R, S — "The new bridge, once completed, will reduce travel time significantly between the two cities."
- Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: who scored the winning goal / Q: was given / R: a special award / S: the young player Solution: "The young player" (S) is the subject, immediately followed by the relative clause describing

them, "who scored the winning goal" (P), then the verb "was given" (Q), then the object "a special award" (R). Answer: S, P, Q, R — "The young player, who scored the winning goal, was given a special award."

- Practice: Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: she handled / Q: Even though she had very little experience / R: the difficult situation / S: calmly and effectively (Answer: Q, P, R, S — "Even though she had very little experience, she handled the difficult situation calmly and effectively.")
- Practice: Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: commuters faced long delays / Q: Since the roads were blocked / R: due to construction work / S: during peak hours (Answer: Q, R, P, S — "Since the roads were blocked due to construction work, commuters faced long delays during peak hours.")
- Practice: Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: published their findings / Q: The researchers / R: after analysing the data for several months / S: in a leading journal (Answer: Q, R, P, S — "The researchers, after analysing the data for several months, published their findings in a leading journal.")
- Practice: Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: before signing / Q: you should read / R: the contract carefully / S: any legal document (Answer: Q, R, P, S — "You should read the contract carefully before signing any legal document.")
- Practice: Rearrange the parts to form a correct sentence: P: the company announced / Q: a new product line / R: that will launch / S: next month (Answer: P, Q, R, S — "The company announced a new product line that will launch next month.")

> **Quick revision:** Find the main subject and verb first — the fragment containing them is usually (though not always) the core the rest of the sentence attaches to; Look for connector words (since, although, despite, which, that) at the start of a fragment — they signal that fragment introduces a clause and needs something specific before or after it; Read your assembled order out loud (mentally) — a sentence that sounds grammatically natural and complete is a strong signal you have the right order, even before checking it against the options; Watch for a fragment that can only grammatically follow one specific other fragment (like a relative clause starting with "which" that must immediately follow the noun it describes) — these fixed pairs are the fastest way to eliminate wrong options; If two fragments both seem grammatically acceptable in either order, check which arrangement actually makes sense as a complete thought — grammatical correctness in isolation doesn't guarantee a fragment is in its correct logical position

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/para-jumbles/

Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal Verbs Solved Questions

A phrasal verb's meaning is rarely the sum of its parts — "give up" has nothing to do with giving or being up — so this topic is learned the same way as idioms, one combination at a time. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples using some of the most common phrasal verbs tested, and a few to try yourself. A phrasal verb combines a verb with one or more particles (a preposition or adverb), and the combined meaning is often unrelated to the individual words — "give up" means to quit or surrender, not literally "give" something "up". Some phrasal verbs are transitive (take a direct object: "call off the meeting") and some are intransitive (no object: "the plane took off"). If the object is a pronoun, it must go between the verb and particle — "call it off," never "call off it". Context picks the right meaning when a phrasal verb has more than one sense — "look up" can mean "search for information" (look up a word) or "improve" (business is looking up). These are best learned through repeated exposure to the specific combinations, the same way idioms and vocabulary are learned, rather than reasoned out from the individual words. A single particle can completely change a verb's meaning — "take off" (a plane leaving the ground, or removing clothing) and "take after" (resembling a relative) share the verb "take" but mean entirely different things, so learn each full combination as its own item.

Examples

- Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "The meeting was called off due to heavy rain." (A) Postponed to a later time (B) Cancelled (C) Moved to a different location (D) Extended Solution: "Called off" means cancelled. Answer: (B) Cancelled

- Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "She had to give up smoking for her health." (A) To start (B) To quit or stop (C) To reduce (D) To delay Solution: "Give up" means to quit or stop doing something. Answer: (B) To quit or stop
- Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "Please look after my plants while I am away." (A) To take care of (B) To search for (C) To ignore (D) To observe from a distance Solution: "Look after" means to take care of. Answer: (A) To take care of
- Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "The new policy came into effect on 1st January." (A) Was cancelled (B) Became operative (C) Was discussed (D) Was postponed Solution: "Came into effect" means became operative — started being applied. Answer: (B) Became operative
- Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "She takes after her mother in temperament." (A) To imitate deliberately (B) To resemble a family member (C) To take care of (D) To avoid Solution: "Take after" means to resemble an older family member in appearance or character. Answer: (B) To resemble a family member
- Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "The company had to lay off a hundred workers last year." (A) To promote (B) To hire (C) To dismiss from a job due to lack of work (D) To train Solution: "Lay off" means to dismiss employees, usually because there isn't enough work or funding to keep them. Answer: (C) To dismiss from a job due to lack of work
- Practice: Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "He had to put off the trip because of the weather." (A) To cancel permanently (B) To postpone (C) To enjoy (D) To begin (Answer: (B) To postpone)
- Practice: Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "She ran into her old friend at the market." (A) To avoid someone (B) To meet someone unexpectedly (C) To chase someone (D) To call someone (Answer: (B) To meet someone unexpectedly)
- Practice: Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "The company is looking into the complaint seriously." (A) To ignore (B) To investigate (C) To publish (D) To approve (Answer: (B) To investigate)
- Practice: Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "He decided to go ahead with the plan despite the risks." (A) To cancel (B) To proceed (C) To delay (D) To reconsider (Answer: (B) To proceed)
- Practice: Choose the meaning of the phrasal verb in: "The fire eventually died down after an hour." (A) To become stronger (B) To gradually become less intense (C) To spread rapidly (D) To start suddenly (Answer: (B) To gradually become less intense)

> **Quick revision:** A phrasal verb combines a verb with one or more particles (a preposition or adverb), and the combined meaning is often unrelated to the individual words — "give up" means to quit or surrender, not literally "give" something "up"; Some phrasal verbs are transitive (take a direct object: "call off the meeting") and some are intransitive (no object: "the plane took off"). If the object is a pronoun, it must go between the verb and particle — "call it off," never "call off it"; Context picks the right meaning when a phrasal verb has more than one sense — "look up" can mean "search for information" (look up a word) or "improve" (business is looking up); These are best learned through repeated exposure to the specific combinations, the same way idioms and vocabulary are learned, rather than reasoned out from the individual words; A single particle can completely change a verb's meaning — "take off" (a plane leaving the ground, or removing clothing) and "take after" (resembling a relative) share the verb "take" but mean entirely different things, so learn each full combination as its own item

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/phrasal-verbs/

Prepositions

Prepositions

Most preposition questions test fixed idiomatic pairings that have to be memorized rather than derived from a general rule — "good AT" something, "afraid OF" something, "married TO" someone, "accused OF" a crime, "suffering FROM" an illness. There's no shortcut except building familiarity with the common ones.

A few genuine RULES do exist, though, and are worth knowing explicitly: "since" pairs with a specific starting POINT in time (a date, year, or event — "since 2015", "since Monday"), while "for" pairs with a DURATION ("for five years", "for two hours"). "Between" is reserved for exactly TWO people or things; "among" is used for three or more. "In" is used for being inside an enclosed space and for larger areas and longer time periods ("in the box", "in Delhi", "in

March"); "on" is for something touching a surface or a specific day ("on the table", "on Monday"); "at" is for a precise point, whether location or time ("at the door", "at 5 o'clock").

Watch for prepositions that change meaning with a different partner word: "interested IN" a subject but "interested TO" hear news; "good AT" a skill but "good TO" someone (kind); "different FROM" (the standard, safest choice) versus the less formal "different THAN"/"different TO". When two prepositions are both grammatically possible but mean different things, read the full sentence for which specific sense is intended, not just which word "sounds right."

Examples

- "She is interested in learning new languages." — interested + in (a subject/activity).
- "He apologised for being late." — apologise + for (a reason/action).
- "I have been living here since 2010." — since + a specific starting point in time.
- "We have been waiting for two hours." — for + a duration, not a starting point.
- "Please divide the sweets among the three children." — among for three or more; "between the two children" would use between.
- "She is married to a doctor." — married + to, not "with".
- "He is suffering from a fever." — suffering + from, not "with" or "of".
- "The bird flew across the river to reach the other side." — across for movement from one side to the other.

> **Quick revision:** Most prepositions are fixed idioms to memorize (good at, afraid of, married to). Real rules: since=point in time, for=duration; between=exactly two, among=three or more.

Prepositions Solved Questions

Most preposition questions test fixed pairings — words that always take one specific preposition by convention, not by logic — plus a size-based pattern for time and place. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Many verbs and adjectives pair with ONE specific preposition by convention — these fixed pairings have to be learned individually, like vocabulary, rather than reasoned out from a rule: "interested in", "good at", "afraid of", "married to", "different from", "depend on", "apologise for". Time prepositions follow a size-based pattern: "at" for a precise point (at 5 o'clock), "on" for a specific day or date (on Monday, on 15 August), "in" for a longer period (in May, in 2024, in the morning). Place prepositions follow a similar size-based pattern: "at" for a specific point (at the bus stop), "in" for an enclosed space (in the room, in Delhi), "on" for a surface (on the table). When unsure, say the sentence out loud with each option — fixed pairings usually "sound" wrong immediately in a way that's hard to explain logically but easy to hear. The same verb can take different prepositions depending on what follows, with a real shift in meaning: "agree WITH" a person, but "agree TO" a plan or proposal — check what noun comes next before picking the preposition.

Examples

- Choose the correct preposition: "She is interested ___ learning new languages." (A) on (B) at (C) in (D) for Solution: The fixed pairing is "interested IN" something — a set collocation to be learned directly. Answer: (C) in
- Choose the correct preposition: "He apologised ___ being late to the meeting." (A) for (B) of (C) about (D) with Solution: The fixed pairing is "apologise FOR" a specific action or reason. Answer: (A) for
- Choose the correct prepositions: "The meeting is scheduled ___ 10 o'clock ___ Monday." (A) in / on (B) at / on (C) on / at (D) at / in Solution: "At" is used for a precise point in time: "at 10 o'clock". "On" is used for a specific day: "on Monday". Answer: (B) at / on
- Choose the correct prepositions: "The keys are ___ the drawer, not ___ the table." (A) in / on (B) on / in (C) at / on (D) in / at Solution: "In" is used for an enclosed space: "in the drawer". "On" is used for a surface: "on the table". Answer: (A) in / on
- Choose the correct preposition: "I agree ___ you on this matter." (A) to (B) with (C) for (D) at Solution: When agreeing with a PERSON, the fixed pairing is "agree WITH". Answer: (B) with
- Choose the correct preposition: "He finally agreed ___ the new proposal." (A) with (B) to (C) at (D) for Solution: When agreeing to a PLAN or PROPOSAL (not a person), the fixed pairing is "agree TO". Answer: (B) to
- Practice: Choose the correct preposition: "I am afraid ___ spiders." (A) from (B) of (C) with (D) about (Answer: (B) of)

- Practice: Choose the correct preposition: "This result is quite different ___ what we expected." (A) than (B) to (C) from (D) with (Answer: (C) from)
- Practice: Choose the correct preposition: "The company depends heavily ___ exports for its revenue." (A) of (B) on (C) in (D) with (Answer: (B) on)
- Practice: Choose the correct preposition: "The students were divided ___ four groups for the project." (A) in (B) into (C) with (D) at (Answer: (B) into)
- Practice: Choose the correct preposition: "She succeeded ___ convincing the committee." (A) at (B) to (C) in (D) with (Answer: (C) in)

> **Quick revision:** Many verbs and adjectives pair with ONE specific preposition by convention — these fixed pairings have to be learned individually, like vocabulary, rather than reasoned out from a rule: "interested in", "good at", "afraid of", "married to", "different from", "depend on", "apologise for"; Time prepositions follow a size-based pattern: "at" for a precise point (at 5 o'clock), "on" for a specific day or date (on Monday, on 15 August), "in" for a longer period (in May, in 2024, in the morning); Place prepositions follow a similar size-based pattern: "at" for a specific point (at the bus stop), "in" for an enclosed space (in the room, in Delhi), "on" for a surface (on the table); When unsure, say the sentence out loud with each option — fixed pairings usually "sound" wrong immediately in a way that's hard to explain logically but easy to hear; The same verb can take different prepositions depending on what follows, with a real shift in meaning: "agree WITH" a person, but "agree TO" a plan or proposal — check what noun comes next before picking the preposition

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/prepositions/

Sentence Improvement

Sentence improvement: common error patterns

Unlike Error Spotting, which only asks you to LOCATE a mistake, Sentence Improvement asks you to pick the BEST replacement for an underlined part — and sometimes the original is already correct, so "No improvement" is the right answer. Don't assume there's always an error to find.

Judge each option against the same core grammar rules used throughout English questions: subject-verb agreement, the correct fixed preposition, consistent tense, and matching conditional forms. Conditional sentences are a frequent target — a THIRD conditional (describing a past hypothetical that didn't happen) needs "If + past perfect" in the if-clause and "would have + past participle" in the main clause ("If I had worked harder, I would have passed" — not plain "would pass," which mismatches the past-hypothetical frame already set by "had worked"). A FIRST conditional (a real future possibility) keeps the "if" clause in the simple present, never "will": "If he tries harder" not "If he will try harder."

Watch for redundancy: "and nor" repeats the negative meaning "nor" already carries; "more better" stacks a comparative on top of an already-comparative word; "despite of" wrongly adds "of" to a preposition that never takes it (it's either "despite X" or "in spite of X," never "despite of X").

Always read the WHOLE sentence with each option substituted in, not just the underlined phrase in isolation — an option can fix the original problem while quietly introducing a new one elsewhere in the sentence, which only shows up when you read it end to end.

Examples

- "She has been working here since five years" needs "for five years" — "since" pairs with a point in time, "for" pairs with a duration.
- "If I had worked harder, I would pass the exam" needs "I would have passed the exam" — a third-conditional sentence pairs a past-perfect "if" clause ("had worked") with "would have + past participle" in the main clause, not plain "would."
- "If he will try harder, he will succeed" needs "If he tries harder" — a first-conditional "if" clause uses the simple present, never "will," even though the main clause does use "will."
- "He does not know how to swim and nor can he dive" needs "nor can he dive" — "nor" already carries the negative meaning, so "and nor" is redundant.

- "This book is more better than that one" needs "better" — "better" is already comparative, so adding "more" creates a double comparative.
- "Despite of the rain, the match continued" needs "Despite the rain" (or "In spite of the rain") — "despite" never takes "of."
- "Not only he is talented but also hardworking" needs "Not only is he talented but he is also hardworking" — "Not only" at the start of a sentence requires inverted word order ("is he"), and the second half then needs its own subject and verb ("he is also").
- Always substitute the chosen option back into the FULL sentence and read it end to end before finalizing — a fix to the underlined part can still leave (or create) a problem elsewhere.

> **Quick revision:** "Since"=point in time, "for"=duration. Third conditional: "if" + past perfect, main clause "would have + past participle"; first conditional's "if" clause never uses "will." Watch for redundant doubling (and nor, more better, despite of).

Sentence Improvement Solved Questions

Sentence Improvement asks for the best replacement for an underlined part of a sentence — sometimes the original is already correct. The same grammar rules from Spotting Errors apply here, just in a pick-the-fix format instead of find-the-fault. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Unlike Spotting Errors, which only asks you to locate a mistake, Sentence Improvement asks you to pick the best replacement — and sometimes the original is already correct, so "No improvement" is the right answer. Judge each option using the same core rules as grammar generally: subject-verb agreement, the correct fixed preposition, consistent tense, and matching conditional forms. Read the WHOLE sentence with each option substituted in, not just the underlined phrase alone — an option can fix the original problem while quietly introducing a new one. Longer or more formal-sounding is not automatically more correct, and shorter is not automatically better — judge only by whether the grammar and meaning are right. A handful of comparison words — "senior", "junior", "prior", "superior", "inferior" — pair with "to", never "than" ("senior to me", not "senior than me"), unlike ordinary comparatives which do use "than". Certain inversion idioms have one fixed partner word: "hardly/scarcely" pairs with "when", and "no sooner" pairs with "than" — mixing them up ("scarcely...than", "no sooner...when") is a recurring trap in this question type.

Examples

- Improve the underlined part: "She has been working here since five years." (A) for five years (B) from five years (C) since five years' time (D) No improvement Solution: "Since" pairs with a specific POINT IN TIME (since 2020, since Monday); "for" pairs with a DURATION (for five years, for two hours). "Five years" is a duration, not a point in time, so "since five years" is wrong — it should be "for five years". Answer: (A) for five years
- Improve the underlined part: "He does not know how to swim and nor can he dive." (A) and neither can he dive (B) and he also cannot dive (C) nor can he dive (D) No improvement Solution: "Nor" already carries the "and...not" meaning by itself — pairing it with "and" ("and nor") is redundant. The correct form simply drops "and": "...nor can he dive". Answer: (C) nor can he dive
- Improve the underlined part: "If I had worked harder, I would pass the exam." (A) I will pass the exam (B) I would have passed the exam (C) I had passed the exam (D) No improvement Solution: "If I had worked harder" is a past-hypothetical condition (third conditional) — describing something that did not actually happen. The matching result clause for a third conditional is "would have + past participle", not plain "would + base verb" — so it should be "I would have passed the exam". Answer: (B) I would have passed the exam
- Improve the underlined part: "Each of the players were given a medal." (A) was given a medal (B) have been given a medal (C) were giving a medal (D) No improvement Solution: "Each of + plural noun" is treated as a singular subject, so the verb must be singular, not plural. "were given" is plural; it should be "was given". Answer: (A) was given a medal
- Improve the underlined part: "He is senior than me in the department." (A) senior to me (B) more senior than me (C) senior from me (D) No improvement Solution: "Senior" is one of a small set of comparison words (senior, junior, prior, superior, inferior) that pair with "to", not "than". It should read "senior to me". Answer: (A) senior to me
- Improve the underlined part: "Scarcely had the train left the station than it started raining." (A) when it started raining (B) then it started raining (C) and it started raining (D) No improvement Solution: "Scarcely/hardly" always pairs with

"when", never "than" — "than" is reserved for the related idiom "no sooner...than". It should read "...than it started raining" → "...when it started raining". Answer: (A) when it started raining

- Practice: Improve the underlined part: "Neither Rahul nor his friends was present at the meeting." (A) were present (B) are present (C) had being present (D) No improvement (Answer: (A) were present — with "neither...nor", the verb agrees with the nearer subject, and "his friends" (plural) is closer to the verb)
- Practice: Improve the underlined part: "This is one of the best movie I have seen this year." (A) one of the best movies (B) one of the best movie's (C) one among the best movie (D) No improvement (Answer: (A) one of the best movies — "one of the best + plural noun" always needs a plural noun)
- Practice: Improve the underlined part: "Hardly he had reached the station when the train left." (A) Hardly had he reached (B) Hardly he reaches (C) Hardly does he reach (D) No improvement (Answer: (A) Hardly had he reached — a sentence starting with "Hardly" requires the subject and auxiliary verb to invert)
- Practice: Improve the underlined part: "It is high time that we should leave." (A) we left (B) we will leave (C) we are leaving (D) No improvement (Answer: (A) we left — the idiom "it is high time" is followed by a simple past verb, not "should + verb")
- Practice: Improve the underlined part: "No sooner he reached home than it started raining." (A) No sooner had he reached home (B) No sooner he reaches home (C) No sooner has he reached home (D) No improvement (Answer: (A) No sooner had he reached home — "no sooner" requires inversion with the past perfect ("had he reached"), paired with "than")

> **Quick revision:** Unlike Spotting Errors, which only asks you to locate a mistake, Sentence Improvement asks you to pick the best replacement — and sometimes the original is already correct, so "No improvement" is the right answer; Judge each option using the same core rules as grammar generally: subject-verb agreement, the correct fixed preposition, consistent tense, and matching conditional forms; Read the WHOLE sentence with each option substituted in, not just the underlined phrase alone — an option can fix the original problem while quietly introducing a new one; Longer or more formal-sounding is not automatically more correct, and shorter is not automatically better — judge only by whether the grammar and meaning are right; A handful of comparison words — "senior", "junior", "prior", "superior", "inferior" — pair with "to", never "than" ("senior to me", not "senior than me"), unlike ordinary comparatives which do use "than"; Certain inversion idioms have one fixed partner word: "hardly/scarcely" pairs with "when", and "no sooner" pairs with "than" — mixing them up ("scarcely...than", "no sooner...when") is a recurring trap in this question type

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/sentence-improvement/

Spelling Correction

Spelling Correction Solved Questions

Unlike Homophones (choosing between different words that sound alike), this topic tests the correct spelling of a single intended word — pure recognition, built from exposure to the words that repeat most often. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples using some of the most frequently tested misspellings, and a few to try yourself. These questions give several spellings of the same word and ask which one is correct — this tests spelling of a single intended word, not choosing between different words (that's what Homophones covers). A few patterns behind commonly misspelled words: double letters that get dropped or doubled wrongly ("necessary" has one C and two S's); silent letters that get skipped ("Wednesday", "foreign"); -able/-ible and -ance/-ence endings, which mostly have to be memorised individually rather than derived from a rule. When unsure between similar-looking spellings, break the word into its recognisable parts — "misspell" is "mis" + "spell", so it genuinely needs two S's in the middle, not one, despite looking like it might not. These words repeat often across past papers, so building a working list from practice is usually more efficient than trying to memorise a dictionary. "-ise"/"-ize" verb endings (realise/realize, organise/organize) are both accepted as correct spelling conventions (British vs American) in most of these exams unless a question specifies otherwise — but the rest of the word's letters still have only one correct spelling regardless of which ending convention is used.

Examples

- Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Recieve (B) Receive (C) Receve (D) Receeve Solution: "Receive" follows "i before e except after c" — since it comes after "c", it's "ei", not "ie". Answer: (B) Receive
- Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Neccessary (B) Necessary (C) Neccesary (D) Necesary Solution: "Necessary" has one C and two S's — often misremembered the other way around. Answer: (B) Necessary
- Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Accomodate (B) Acommodate (C) Accommodate (D) Acomodate Solution: "Accommodate" has two C's and two M's — one of the most commonly misspelled English words, usually dropping one of the double letters. Answer: (C) Accommodate
- Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Embarass (B) Embarrass (C) Embaras (D) Embarrasse Solution: "Embarrass" has two R's and two S's. Answer: (B) Embarrass
- Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Maintainance (B) Maintenance (C) Maintainence (D) Maintenence Solution: "Maintenance" is spelled with "-tenance", not "-tainance" or "-tainence" — a frequently misspelled word. Answer: (B) Maintenance
- Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Priviledge (B) Privilege (C) Privelege (D) Previlege Solution: "Privilege" has no "d" before the "g", and the middle vowel is "i", not "e". Answer: (B) Privilege
- Practice: Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Occassion (B) Ocassion (C) Occasion (D) Occasionn (Answer: (C) Occasion (two C's, one S))
- Practice: Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Definately (B) Definitely (C) Definitly (D) Definatly (Answer: (B) Definitely (contains "finite": de-FINITE-ly))
- Practice: Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Enviroment (B) Environment (C) Enviromment (D) Envirnoment (Answer: (B) Environment (the often-dropped "n" before "ment"))
- Practice: Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Rythm (B) Rhythm (C) Rhytm (D) Rhythem (Answer: (B) Rhythm)
- Practice: Choose the correctly spelled word: (A) Harrass (B) Harass (C) Harrasss (D) Haras (Answer: (B) Harass (one R, two S's))

> **Quick revision:** These questions give several spellings of the same word and ask which one is correct — this tests spelling of a single intended word, not choosing between different words (that's what Homophones covers); A few patterns behind commonly misspelled words: double letters that get dropped or doubled wrongly ("necessary" has one C and two S's); silent letters that get skipped ("Wednesday", "foreign"); -able/-ible and -ance/-ence endings, which mostly have to be memorised individually rather than derived from a rule; When unsure between similar-looking spellings, break the word into its recognisable parts — "misspell" is "mis" + "spell", so it genuinely needs two S's in the middle, not one, despite looking like it might not; These words repeat often across past papers, so building a working list from practice is usually more efficient than trying to memorise a dictionary; "-ise"/"-ize" verb endings (realise/realize, organise/organize) are both accepted as correct spelling conventions (British vs American) in most of these exams unless a question specifies otherwise — but the rest of the word's letters still have only one correct spelling regardless of which ending convention is used

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/spelling-correction/

Synonyms and Antonyms

Synonyms and Antonyms

These questions test vocabulary depth directly — there's no formula, only exposure to words and their precise shades of meaning. A few habits make the difference between a confident guess and a real answer.

First, separate a word's CORE sense from its connotation: "frugal" and "stingy" both relate to spending little, but "frugal" is neutral-to-positive (sensible thrift) while "stingy" is negative (unwilling to share) — a question testing precise meaning will treat them as different words, not interchangeable synonyms. Second, watch for words with more than one common meaning: "sound" can mean "healthy" ("sound in body and mind") or "logical" ("a sound argument") — the surrounding sentence, not the word alone, tells you which sense is being tested.

Third, build small FAMILIES of related words rather than memorizing in isolation — grouping antonym pairs (abundant/scarce, optimistic/pessimistic, verbose/concise) is more durable than learning each word on its own. Fourth, when stuck between two options, eliminate the one that's merely RELATED to the word's topic rather than actually matching its meaning — "generous" and "wealthy" are often found near each other in real text, but they aren't synonyms (a wealthy person isn't necessarily generous).

For antonym questions specifically, make sure you're negating the right ASPECT of the word — the antonym of "diligent" (hardworking) is "lazy," not "careless" (which negates a different quality, attention to detail, not effort).

Examples

- Synonym of "ABUNDANT": Plentiful (existing in large quantities) — not "Huge" (which describes size, not quantity).
- Antonym of "GENEROUS": Stingy (unwilling to give/share) — the opposite of generosity specifically, not of wealth.
- "Despite his age, the old man was remarkably SOUND in both body and mind." Closest in meaning: Healthy (the physical/mental-health sense of "sound").
- "The lawyer presented a SOUND argument that convinced the jury." Closest in meaning: Logical (the reasoning sense of the SAME word "sound" — context picks the meaning).
- Synonym of "METICULOUS": Careful (showing great attention to detail) — not "Slow," which is a possible side-effect, not the meaning itself.
- Antonym of "DILIGENT": Lazy (opposite of hardworking effort) — not "Careless," which negates attention to detail instead.
- Synonym of "FRUGAL": Thrifty (careful with money, neutral-to-positive) — distinct from "Stingy" (unwilling to share, negative connotation), even though both relate to spending little.
- Antonym of "VERBOSE": Concise (brief and to the point) — the opposite of using more words than necessary.

> **Quick revision:** Separate core meaning from connotation (frugal vs stingy). Multi-sense words (sound=healthy or logical) need their sentence's context. Group antonym pairs together rather than memorizing in isolation.

Synonyms and Antonyms Solved Questions

Synonym and antonym questions reward a sharp read more than a huge vocabulary — many words have more than one meaning, and the sentence around a word usually tells you which one is in play. Here’s the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. A synonym means (nearly) the same thing as the given word; an antonym means the opposite. Read the instruction carefully — picking a synonym when the question asks for an antonym (or vice versa) is the single most common careless mistake. Many common words have more than one meaning (for example, "sound" can mean "noise," "healthy," or "well-reasoned"). When the word appears in a sentence, let the sentence’s context pick the right meaning — don’t just grab the word’s most familiar meaning out of habit. Mentally substitute your chosen option back into the original sentence. If it still reads naturally with the same sense, that’s a strong sign you’ve picked correctly. Knowing common prefixes helps spot antonym pairs quickly: "bene-" means "good" (benevolent, beneficial) while "mal-" means "bad" (malevolent, malfunction) — opposite prefixes often mean opposite words. Not every antonym pair is a prefix flip — some are "relational" opposites describing two ends of the same real-world relationship (parent/child, buy/sell, arrive/depart) rather than one word with a negating prefix added. For these, think about which relationship is being reversed.

Examples

- Choose the synonym of "ABUNDANT": (A) Scarce (B) Plentiful (C) Hidden (D) Fragile Solution: "Abundant" means existing in large quantities. "Plentiful" matches that meaning directly. "Scarce" (A) is actually the opposite of abundant — a common distractor. "Hidden" and "Fragile" are unrelated in meaning. Answer: (B) Plentiful
- Choose the antonym of "GENEROUS": (A) Kind (B) Wealthy (C) Stingy (D) Friendly Solution: "Generous" means willing to give freely. Its opposite is being unwilling to give — "stingy". "Kind" and "Friendly" (A, D) are actually close in meaning to generous, not its opposite. "Wealthy" (B) describes having money, which is unrelated to willingness to share it. Answer: (C) Stingy
- Choose the word closest in meaning to the capitalised word: "Despite his age, the old man was remarkably SOUND in both body and mind." (A) Loud (B) Healthy (C) Quick (D) Wealthy Solution: "Sound" has more than one meaning — it

can mean "noise," or, as used here, "healthy / in good condition." The sentence is praising the man's body and mind positively despite his age, which matches "healthy," not "noise". "Loud" (A) wrongly picks the noise-meaning of "sound," which does not fit this sentence. Answer: (B) Healthy

- Choose the antonym of "BENEVOLENT": (A) Generous (B) Malevolent (C) Wealthy (D) Famous Solution: "Benevolent" (from "bene-" = good) means kind and well-meaning. "Malevolent" (from "mal-" = bad) means wishing harm to others — the direct opposite. "Generous" (A) is close in meaning to benevolent, not its opposite. Answer: (B) Malevolent
- Choose the synonym of "CANDID": (A) Secretive (B) Frank (C) Confused (D) Cautious Solution: "Candid" means open and honest in speech, without holding anything back. "Frank" matches that meaning directly. Answer: (B) Frank
- Choose the antonym of "OPTIMISTIC": (A) Hopeful (B) Confident (C) Pessimistic (D) Energetic Solution: "Optimistic" means expecting good outcomes. "Pessimistic" means expecting bad outcomes — the direct opposite. "Hopeful" (A) is close in meaning to optimistic, not its opposite. Answer: (C) Pessimistic
- Practice: Choose the synonym of "RAPID": (A) Slow (B) Quick (C) Silent (D) Heavy (Answer: (B) Quick)
- Practice: Choose the antonym of "TRANSPARENT": (A) Clear (B) Opaque (C) Fragile (D) Visible (Answer: (B) Opaque)
- Practice: Choose the word closest in meaning to the capitalised word: "The lawyer presented a SOUND argument that convinced the entire jury." (A) Loud (B) Logical (C) Lengthy (D) Weak (Answer: (B) Logical — here "sound" means well-reasoned, a different meaning of the same word seen in the worked examples)
- Practice: Choose the synonym of "METICULOUS": (A) Careless (B) Careful (C) Quick (D) Lazy (Answer: (B) Careful)
- Practice: Choose the antonym of "ARRIVE": (A) Depart (B) Enter (C) Return (D) Stay (Answer: (A) Depart (a relational opposite, not a prefix-based one))

> **Quick revision:** A synonym means (nearly) the same thing as the given word; an antonym means the opposite. Read the instruction carefully — picking a synonym when the question asks for an antonym (or vice versa) is the single most common careless mistake; Many common words have more than one meaning (for example, "sound" can mean "noise," "healthy," or "well-reasoned"). When the word appears in a sentence, let the sentence's context pick the right meaning — don't just grab the word's most familiar meaning out of habit; Mentally substitute your chosen option back into the original sentence. If it still reads naturally with the same sense, that's a strong sign you've picked correctly; Knowing common prefixes helps spot antonym pairs quickly: "bene-" means "good" (benevolent, beneficial) while "mal-" means "bad" (malevolent, malfunction) — opposite prefixes often mean opposite words; Not every antonym pair is a prefix flip — some are "relational" opposites describing two ends of the same real-world relationship (parent/child, buy/sell, arrive/depart) rather than one word with a negating prefix added. For these, think about which relationship is being reversed

Free practice questions: parikshasaathi.com/q/synonyms-antonyms/

Vocabulary Building

Homophones & Commonly Confused Words

Homophones sound identical, so the only way to tell them apart in writing is by what each one means and does in the sentence. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples covering the most frequently confused pairs, and a few to try yourself. Homophones are words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings ("their/there/they're", "its/it's", "affect/effect") — since they sound identical, correct spelling is the only thing that tells them apart in writing. A few of the most frequently confused pairs: "its" (possessive: belonging to it) vs. "it's" (contraction: it is/it has); "their" (possessive) vs. "there" (place) vs. "they're" (contraction: they are); "affect" (usually a verb, meaning to influence) vs. "effect" (usually a noun, meaning a result). Quick test for "its" vs. "it's" (and "their" vs. "they're"): mentally expand the contraction to its full form. If "it is" or "they are" still makes sense in the sentence, the contraction is correct; if not, use the possessive. Quick test for "affect" vs. "effect": try substituting "influence" (a verb) or "result" (a noun) — whichever substitution keeps the sentence meaningful tells you which word is correct. Another frequently confused pair: "stationary" (not moving) vs. "stationery" (writing materials like paper and pens) — and "principal" (the head of a school, or a main/primary thing) vs. "principle" (a fundamental rule or belief). These aren't distinguished by sound at all, only by checking which specific meaning the sentence needs.

Examples

- Choose the correct word: "The company announced ___ quarterly results yesterday." (A) its (B) it's Solution: Expanding "it's" gives "the company announced it is quarterly results," which doesn't make sense. "Its" (possessive, belonging to the company) is correct. Answer: (A) its
- Choose the correct word: "___ going to rain later today." (A) Its (B) It's Solution: Expanding "it's" gives "It is going to rain later today," which makes sense. Answer: (B) It's
- Choose the correct word: "The students left ___ bags in the classroom." (A) their (B) there (C) they're Solution: The bags belong to the students, so the possessive "their" is correct — not the place word "there" or the contraction "they're". Answer: (A) their
- Choose the correct word: "The new policy will ___ all employees starting next month." (A) affect (B) effect Solution: The sentence needs a verb here (to influence), so "affect" is correct, not the noun "effect". Answer: (A) affect
- Choose the correct word: "The car remained ___ for almost an hour due to the traffic jam." (A) stationary (B) stationery Solution: The sentence needs a word meaning "not moving", which is "stationary" — not "stationery" (writing materials). Answer: (A) stationary
- Choose the correct word: "Honesty is a core ___ that the school tries to instil in its students." (A) principal (B) principle Solution: The sentence needs a word meaning "a fundamental rule or belief", which is "principle" — not "principal" (the head of a school). Answer: (B) principle
- Practice: Choose the correct word: "___ not sure if the meeting has been rescheduled." (A) Their (B) There (C) They're (Answer: (C) They're)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: "Please put the book over ___." (A) their (B) there (C) they're (Answer: (B) there)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: "The medicine had an immediate ___ on his headache." (A) affect (B) effect (Answer: (B) effect)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: "The school ___ gave a speech at the morning assembly." (A) principal (B) principle (Answer: (A) principal)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: "He bought some ___ from the shop to write his letters." (A) stationary (B) stationery (Answer: (B) stationery)

> **Quick revision:** Homophones are words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings ("their/there/they're", "its/it's", "affect/effect") — since they sound identical, correct spelling is the only thing that tells them apart in writing; A few of the most frequently confused pairs: "its" (possessive: belonging to it) vs. "it's" (contraction: it is/it has); "their" (possessive) vs. "there" (place) vs. "they're" (contraction: they are); "affect" (usually a verb, meaning to influence) vs. "effect" (usually a noun, meaning a result); Quick test for "its" vs. "it's" (and "their" vs. "they're"): mentally expand the contraction to its full form. If "it is" or "they are" still makes sense in the sentence, the contraction is correct; if not, use the possessive; Quick test for "affect" vs. "effect": try substituting "influence" (a verb) or "result" (a noun) — whichever substitution keeps the sentence meaningful tells you which word is correct; Another frequently confused pair: "stationary" (not moving) vs. "stationery" (writing materials like paper and pens) — and "principal" (the head of a school, or a main/primary thing) vs. "principle" (a fundamental rule or belief). These aren't distinguished by sound at all, only by checking which specific meaning the sentence needs

Commonly Confused Words Solved Questions

These word pairs sound alike, look alike, or get mixed up in casual speech — but each has one fixed, distinct meaning, and exam questions test exactly that distinction. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Learn confusable pairs by their distinct core meaning, not by spelling similarity — "affect" (verb, to influence) vs "effect" (usually a noun, a result) is a meaning distinction, not a spelling one. "Stationary" (not moving) and "stationery" (paper/pens/writing materials) are completely unrelated in meaning despite the near-identical spelling — a classic trap. "Principal" (the head of a school/institution, or a noun/adjective meaning "main") and "principle" (a fundamental rule or belief) are distinguished by context: a person/main thing vs. an idea. Comparison words like "than" (used to compare two things) and sequence words like "then" (next, at that time) serve completely different grammatical roles — read the sentence's function, not just its sound. "Lose" (verb, to misplace something or fail to win) and "loose" (adjective, not tight or not fastened) differ by only one letter but are never interchangeable — check whether the sentence needs an action word or a descriptive word.

Examples

- Choose the correct word: "The news will ___ our decision." (A) effect (B) affect Solution: The sentence needs a verb meaning "to influence" — that's "affect." "Effect" is usually the noun for the resulting outcome, not the verb for influencing. Answer: affect
- Choose the correct word: "He is taller ___ his brother." (A) than (B) then Solution: Comparing two things ("taller... his brother") needs the comparison word "than," not the sequence word "then." Answer: than
- Choose the correct word: "I am happy to ___ your invitation to the ceremony." (A) except (B) accept Solution: The sentence needs a verb meaning "to agree to receive" — that's "accept." "Except" means "excluding," which doesn't fit here. Answer: accept
- Choose the correct word: "The school's ___ addressed the students during the assembly." (A) principle (B) principal Solution: The sentence needs a noun for the head of the school — that's "principal." "Principle" refers to a fundamental rule or belief, not a person. Answer: principal
- Choose the correct word: "Please make sure the dog's collar isn't too ___." (A) lose (B) loose Solution: The sentence needs an adjective meaning "not tight" — that's "loose." "Lose" is a verb, which doesn't fit this position. Answer: loose
- Choose the correct word: "If you don't study, you might ___ the exam." (A) lose (B) loose Solution: The sentence needs a verb meaning "to fail to win/pass" — that's "lose." "Loose" is an adjective, which doesn't fit here. Answer: lose
- Practice: Choose the correct word: "Honesty is an important ___ to live by." (A) principal (B) principle (Answer: principle)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: "She bought some ___ from the shop near her office." (A) stationary (B) stationery (Answer: stationery)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: "The car remained ___ at the signal for several minutes." (A) stationary (B) stationery (Answer: stationary)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: "She decided to ___ the invitation from her college roommate." (A) except (B) accept (Answer: accept)
- Practice: Choose the correct word: "Everyone attended the meeting ___ Rahul, who was on leave." (A) except (B) accept (Answer: except)

> **Quick revision:** Learn confusable pairs by their distinct core meaning, not by spelling similarity — "affect" (verb, to influence) vs "effect" (usually a noun, a result) is a meaning distinction, not a spelling one; "Stationary" (not moving) and "stationery" (paper/pens/writing materials) are completely unrelated in meaning despite the near-identical spelling — a classic trap; "Principal" (the head of a school/institution, or a noun/adjective meaning "main") and "principle" (a fundamental rule or belief) are distinguished by context: a person/main thing vs. an idea; Comparison words like "than" (used to compare two things) and sequence words like "then" (next, at that time) serve completely different grammatical roles — read the sentence's function, not just its sound; "Lose" (verb, to misplace something or fail to win) and "loose" (adjective, not tight or not fastened) differ by only one letter but are never interchangeable — check whether the sentence needs an action word or a descriptive word

Word Formation Solved Questions

This is pure letter-accounting — can a target word be spelled using only the letters available in a given word, each used at most as many times as it actually appears? No shortcuts, just a careful letter-by-letter check. Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Go through the target word letter by letter, and for each one, check it appears in the source word — if even one letter is missing entirely, the answer is immediately "No". Watch repeated letters carefully: if the target word needs a letter TWICE but the source word only has it ONCE, that's also "No" — count occurrences, don't just check presence. Letters can be used in ANY order and don't need to be adjacent in the source word — this isn't about finding a substring, only about which letters (and how many of each) are available. Extra, unused letters in the source word are irrelevant — the question is only whether the target word's letters are fully covered, not whether every source letter gets used. A quick first filter for longer words: compare total letter counts before checking individual letters — if the target word has more letters than the source word, it can never be formed, no matter which specific letters are involved.

Examples

- Using the letters of the word COMPUTER, can the word ROUTE be formed? (Each letter may be used only as many times as it appears in COMPUTER.) Solution: ROUTE needs: R, O, U, T, E — each once. COMPUTER contains: C, O, M, P, U, T, E, R — each of R, O, U, T, E appears at least once. Answer: Yes
- Using the letters of the word COMPUTER, can the word CORPSE be formed? Solution: CORPSE needs: C, O, R, P, S, E. COMPUTER contains: C, O, M, P, U, T, E, R — there is no letter S anywhere in COMPUTER. Answer: No
- Using the letters of the word ELEPHANT, can the word PLANET be formed? Solution: PLANET needs: P, L, A, N, E, T — each once. ELEPHANT contains: E, L, E, P, H, A, N, T — every required letter is present at least once (E appears twice in ELEPHANT, but PLANET only needs it once). Answer: Yes
- Using the letters of the word ELEPHANT, can the word TABLE be formed? Solution: TABLE needs: T, A, B, L, E. ELEPHANT contains: E, L, E, P, H, A, N, T — there is no letter B anywhere in ELEPHANT. Answer: No
- Using the letters of the word INTERNATIONAL, can the word RATION be formed? Solution: RATION needs: R, A, T, I, O, N — each once. INTERNATIONAL contains: I, N, T, E, R, N, A, T, I, O, N, A, L — every required letter is present at least once. Answer: Yes
- Using the letters of the word INTERNATIONAL, can the word NATURAL be formed? Solution: NATURAL needs: N, A, T, U, R, A, L. INTERNATIONAL contains: I, N, T, E, R, N, A, T, I, O, N, A, L — there is no letter U anywhere in INTERNATIONAL. Answer: No
- Practice: Using the letters of the word GRANDFATHER, can the word FATHER be formed? (Answer: Yes)
- Practice: Using the letters of the word GRANDFATHER, can the word MOTHER be formed? (Answer: No)
- Practice: Using the letters of the word UNIVERSITY, can the word VISIT be formed? (Answer: Yes)
- Practice: Using the letters of the word MATHEMATICS, can the word THEME be formed? (Answer: No (THEME needs the letter E twice, but MATHEMATICS has only one E))
- Practice: Using the letters of the word MATHEMATICS, can the word TEAM be formed? (Answer: Yes)

> **Quick revision:** Go through the target word letter by letter, and for each one, check it appears in the source word — if even one letter is missing entirely, the answer is immediately "No"; Watch repeated letters carefully: if the target word needs a letter TWICE but the source word only has it ONCE, that's also "No" — count occurrences, don't just check presence; Letters can be used in ANY order and don't need to be adjacent in the source word — this isn't about finding a substring, only about which letters (and how many of each) are available; Extra, unused letters in the source word are irrelevant — the question is only whether the target word's letters are fully covered, not whether every source letter gets used; A quick first filter for longer words: compare total letter counts before checking individual letters — if the target word has more letters than the source word, it can never be formed, no matter which specific letters are involved

Confusable Verbs (Lay/Lie, Rise/Raise)

"Lie" and "lay," "rise" and "raise" trip people up because one verb in each pair doesn't take a direct object and the other always does — and to make it worse, "lay" is also the past tense of "lie." Here's the approach, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. "Lie" (lie – lay – lain) means to recline or rest, and never takes a direct object: "I lie down," not "I lie something down." "Lay" (lay – laid – laid) means to put or place something down, and always takes a direct object: "She lays the book," not "She lays" alone. The confusion peaks in the past tense: "lay" is both the base form of "to put something down" AND the past tense of "lie" — "Yesterday, I lay in bed" uses "lay" as the past of "lie," with no object. "Rise" (rise – rose – risen) means to go up by itself, with no direct object: "The sun rises." "Raise" (raise – raised – raised) means to lift something, and always takes a direct object: "She raises her hand." "Sit" (sit – sat – sat) follows the same no-object pattern as "lie" — "He sits on the chair." "Set" (set – set – set) follows the same always-takes-an-object pattern as "lay" — "She sets the table."

Examples

- Choose the correct form: Please ___ the book on the table. (A) lie (B) lay Solution: The sentence has a direct object ("the book") — "lay" (to put something down) is correct, not "lie." Answer: lay
- Choose the correct form: I need to ___ down; I have a headache. (A) lie (B) lay Solution: There's no direct object — this is about reclining, so "lie" is correct, not "lay." Answer: lie

- Choose the correct form: Yesterday, the dog ___ in the sun all afternoon. (A) lay (B) laid Solution: This is the past tense of "lie" (to recline), which is "lay" — not "laid," which is the past tense of "lay" (to put something down). Answer: lay
- Choose the correct form: The sun ___ every morning at 6 AM. (A) rises (B) raises Solution: There's no direct object, and the sun moves on its own — "rises" is correct, not "raises." Answer: rises
- Choose the correct form: Please ___ the plates on the table before the guests arrive. (A) sit (B) set Solution: The sentence has a direct object ("the plates") — "set" (to put something down) is correct, not "sit." Answer: set
- Choose the correct form: The old man ___ quietly on the bench for hours. (A) sat (B) set Solution: There's no direct object — the man is the one sitting, so "sat" (the past of "sit") is correct, not "set." Answer: sat
- Practice: Choose the correct form: She ___ her hand to ask a question. (A) rose (B) raised (Answer: raised)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: The price of petrol has ___ sharply this month. (A) risen (B) raised (Answer: risen)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: He ___ the documents on my desk this morning. (A) lay (B) laid (Answer: laid)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: She ___ the vase carefully on the shelf. (A) sat (B) set (Answer: set)
- Practice: Choose the correct form: The children ___ around the campfire, telling stories. (A) sat (B) set (Answer: sat)

> **Quick revision:** "Lie" (lie – lay – lain) means to recline or rest, and never takes a direct object: "I lie down," not "I lie something down."; "Lay" (lay – laid – laid) means to put or place something down, and always takes a direct object: "She lays the book," not "She lays" alone; The confusion peaks in the past tense: "lay" is both the base form of "to put something down" AND the past tense of "lie" — "Yesterday, I lay in bed" uses "lay" as the past of "lie," with no object; "Rise" (rise – rose – risen) means to go up by itself, with no direct object: "The sun rises." "Raise" (raise – raised – raised) means to lift something, and always takes a direct object: "She raises her hand."; "Sit" (sit – sat – sat) follows the same no-object pattern as "lie" — "He sits on the chair." "Set" (set – set – set) follows the same always-takes-an-object pattern as "lay" — "She sets the table."

Prefixes and Suffixes Solved Questions

A prefix attaches to the FRONT of a word and usually changes its meaning (often to a negative or opposite); a suffix attaches to the END and usually changes its part of speech (turning a verb or adjective into a noun, for instance) — knowing the common ones by sight is most of this topic. Here's the rule, six fully worked examples, and a few to try yourself. Common negative prefixes: "un-" (unhappy), "in-" (incomplete), "dis-" (disagree), "mis-" (misunderstand), "non-" (nonsense) — the one that fits depends on the specific word, not a single universal rule. "in-" changes its spelling before certain letters: "im-" before words starting with p, b or m (impossible, imbalance), "il-" before l (illegal), and "ir-" before r (irregular) — this is a common error-spotting trap. Common noun-forming suffixes turn a verb or adjective into a noun: "-tion"/"-ion" (action), "-ment" (agreement), "-ness" (kindness), "-ity" (ability), "-er"/"-or" (teacher, actor, for "a person who..."). Common adjective-forming suffixes turn a noun or verb into an adjective: "-ful" (helpful), "-less" (careless), "-able"/"-ible" (comfortable, visible), "-ous" (dangerous). The remaining two categories: verb-forming suffixes turn a noun or adjective into a verb — "-ize"/"-ise" (modernize), "-ify" (simplify), "-en" (strengthen); the adverb-forming suffix "-ly" turns an adjective into an adverb — "quick" becomes "quickly," "happy" becomes "happily."

Examples

- Add the correct prefix to make "agree" mean the opposite: ___agree. Solution: "Agree" takes the negative prefix "dis-". disagree Answer: dis- (disagree)
- Add the correct suffix to turn the verb "act" into a noun meaning "the process or result of acting": act + ___ ? Solution: The noun-forming suffix "-ion" attaches to "act". action Answer: -ion (action)
- Which prefix turns "possible" into its opposite, "impossible"? ___possible. Solution: The negative prefix is normally "in-", but it changes to "im-" before a word starting with p, b or m. "possible" starts with p, so the prefix is "im-". Answer: im- (impossible)
- Add the correct suffix to turn the adjective "kind" into a noun meaning "the quality of being kind": kind + ___? Solution: The noun-forming suffix "-ness" attaches to "kind". kindness Answer: -ness (kindness)
- Add the correct suffix to turn the adjective "simple" into a verb meaning "to make simple": simple + ___? Solution: The verb-forming suffix "-ify" attaches to "simpl-" (dropping the final "e"). simplify Answer: -ify (simplify)

- Add the correct suffix to turn the adjective "quick" into an adverb: quick + ___? Solution: The adverb-forming suffix "-ly" attaches to "quick". quickly Answer: -ly (quickly)
- Practice: Add the correct prefix to make "legal" mean the opposite: ___legal. (Answer: il- (illegal))
- Practice: Add the correct suffix to turn "teach" into a noun meaning "a person who teaches": teach + ___? (Answer: -er (teacher))
- Practice: Which prefix means "before" and turns "historic" into "before recorded history"? ___historic. (Answer: pre- (prehistoric))
- Practice: Add the correct suffix to turn the adjective "modern" into a verb meaning "to make modern": modern + ___? (Answer: -ize (modernize))
- Practice: Add the correct suffix to turn the adjective "happy" into an adverb: happy + ___? (Answer: -ly (happily))

Quick revision: Common negative prefixes: "un-" (unhappy), "in-" (incomplete), "dis-" (disagree), "mis-" (misunderstand), "non-" (nonsense) — the one that fits depends on the specific word, not a single universal rule; "in-" changes its spelling before certain letters: "im-" before words starting with p, b or m (impossible, imbalance), "il-" before l (illegal), and "ir-" before r (irregular) — this is a common error-spotting trap; Common noun-forming suffixes turn a verb or adjective into a noun: "-tion"/"-ion" (action), "-ment" (agreement), "-ness" (kindness), "-ity" (ability), "-er"/"-or" (teacher, actor, for "a person who..."); Common adjective-forming suffixes turn a noun or verb into an adjective: "-ful" (helpful), "-less" (careless), "-able"/"-ible" (comfortable, visible), "-ous" (dangerous); The remaining two categories: verb-forming suffixes turn a noun or adjective into a verb — "-ize"/"-ise" (modernize), "-ify" (simplify), "-en" (strengthen); the adverb-forming suffix "-ly" turns an adjective into an adverb — "quick" becomes "quickly," "happy" becomes "happily."

Revision sheet

Every lesson’s quick-revision box in one place, for the last read before the exam.

Reading Comprehension Solved Questions	Read the whole passage once before looking at the questions, so you have a sense of its overall structure and where different details sit; Answer strictly from the passage, even if you happen to know more about the real-world topic — the "correct" answer is whatever the passage states, not outside knowledge; For factual-detail questions, locate the specific sentence that contains the answer rather than relying on a vague memory of the passage — re-read that sentence before answering; Watch for absolute words ("always," "never," "only") in answer choices — passages are usually written with moderate, qualified claims, so an option with an absolute word often overstates what the passage actually says; A question can describe the same fact using different words than the passage itself — match the MEANING of the relevant sentence to the question, not just overlapping vocabulary, before deciding an answer isn’t supported
Active and Passive Voice	Find the active verb's tense, use the matching "be" form in the passive, swap subject/object. Modals stay the same word. Imperatives use "Let X be done." Drop "by ___" when the agent is vague or unimportant.
Active and Passive Voice Solved Questions	In active voice, the subject performs the action ("The cat chased the mouse"). In passive voice, the object of that action becomes the new subject ("The mouse was chased by the cat"); Three moving parts, every time: the object of the active sentence becomes the new subject; the verb becomes "a form of be + past participle"; the original subject moves after "by" (or is dropped if unknown or unimportant); The tense must be preserved exactly — only the form of "be" changes to match it: simple present → is/are + past participle, simple past → was/were + past participle, present continuous → is/are + being + past participle, and so on; Only transitive verbs (ones that take a direct object) can become passive. A sentence with no object, like "She slept" or "He arrived," has no passive form at all; A verb with two objects (give, teach, offer, send) can usually form two valid passive sentences, one with each object promoted to subject — "He teaches us English" can become either "We are taught English by him" or "English is taught to us by him"; the first, with the person as subject, is the more common choice
Sentence Transformation Solved Questions	A simple sentence has exactly one independent clause (one subject-verb unit) — if the information is split into two separate ideas, it needs to be compressed into one before it can be "simple."; A compound sentence joins two or more independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, so) or a semicolon — both halves could stand alone as complete sentences; A complex sentence joins one independent clause with one or more dependent clauses, using a subordinator (because, although, since, when, if, who, which, that) — the dependent clause can’t stand alone; When converting a complex sentence to simple, the subordinate clause usually compresses into a phrase ("Because it was raining" becomes "Due to the rain") rather than disappearing entirely — the meaning has to survive the transformation; Match the compression to the TYPE of relationship, not a single fixed pattern: a reason ("because") usually compresses to "due to/because of + noun," while a purpose ("so that") compresses to "to + verb" — using the wrong pattern changes the meaning

Passive Voice: Questions & Negatives	For a Yes/No question, the auxiliary moves to the front of the passive sentence too: "Does she clean the room?" → "Is the room cleaned by her?" — the auxiliary changes to match the new passive subject, but still leads the sentence; For a Wh-question, the wh-word stays first, the auxiliary comes right after it, then the new subject: "What did he write?" → "What was written by him?"; For a negative sentence, "not" stays attached to the auxiliary verb in its new passive position: "She does not clean the room." → "The room is not cleaned by her."; The core passive transformation (object becomes subject, verb becomes "be + past participle", original subject becomes "by + agent") still applies underneath — questions and negatives just change where the pieces sit, not the underlying rule; A question built with a modal (can, must, should, will) keeps the modal in front and simply inserts a bare "be" before the past participle: "Can she finish the work?" → "Can the work be finished by her?" And when the wh-word itself is the subject (asking who did something), it becomes "by whom," placed right after the moved auxiliary: "Who wrote this novel?" → "By whom was this novel written?"
Cloze Test: grammar plus meaning	Grammar blanks: check tense and agreement. Meaning blanks (connectors): identify contrast vs result vs addition vs alternative from the surrounding sentences, not from how the word sounds alone.
Cloze Test Solved Questions	Read the whole passage once before filling in any blank, so you understand its overall topic and tone — an option can be grammatically fine in isolation and still wrong because it contradicts the passage elsewhere; Pay attention to connector words already in the passage ("however", "therefore", "although") — they tell you whether the missing word should continue the same idea or contrast with it; Apply the same grammar checks as Spotting Errors and Sentence Improvement to each blank individually: subject-verb agreement, correct preposition, and tense consistency with the rest of the passage; When two options both seem grammatically valid, re-read the sentence with each substituted in — the one that fits the passage's actual meaning, not just its grammar, is correct; A blank inside a clause describing an earlier, completed event should match the TENSE already established around it, even if the surrounding verbs are in the present — check the specific sentence the blank sits in, not just the passage's dominant tense
Degrees of Comparison	Comparative = exactly two ("the taller of the two"); superlative = three or more. Irregular forms (good/better/best) don't take -er/-est. Never stack "more"/"most" onto a word that's already comparative/superlative.
Degrees of Comparison Solved Questions	Adjectives have three degrees: positive (describing one thing on its own — "tall"), comparative (comparing exactly two things — "taller"), and superlative (comparing three or more things, picking out the extreme — "tallest"); Short adjectives usually add "-er"/"-est" (tall → taller → tallest). Longer adjectives usually use "more"/"most" instead (beautiful → more beautiful → most beautiful); Never combine both forms — "more taller" or "most tallest" is always wrong. Pick either the suffix or "more"/"most", never both; Some common adjectives are irregular and must be memorised directly: good → better → best, bad → worse → worst, little → less → least, much/many → more → most, far → farther/further → farthest/furthest; A small set of adjectives already describe an absolute or complete state (perfect, complete, ideal, impossible) — these exams treat them as not normally gradable, so "more perfect" or "most complete" is typically marked wrong in favour of the plain form; The structure "than" always signals the comparative, regardless of how many things are being compared overall — "she sang better than everyone else" stays comparative (not "best") because it's phrased as one thing against a group via "than"
Direct and Indirect Speech	Back-shift tense one step into the past (only if the reporting verb is past). Shift time/place words (today→that day, here→there). Questions use "if" (yes/no) or the wh-word, always in statement order.

Direct & Indirect Speech	Direct speech quotes a speaker's exact words. Indirect (reported) speech reports them without quotation marks, usually introduced by "that" (statements), "if/whether" (yes/no questions), or a wh-word (wh-questions); When the reporting verb is in the past ("said", "told"), the tense inside the quoted speech generally shifts one step back: present simple → past simple, present continuous → past continuous, "will" → "would", "can" → "could"; Pronouns and time/place words shift to match the reporting perspective: "I" becomes whoever is speaking in the reported version, "here" → "there", "now" → "then", "today" → "that day", "tomorrow" → "the next day", "yesterday" → "the day before"; Questions convert differently from statements: the word order reverts to normal statement order (no more question-style inversion), a yes/no question gains "if"/"whether", and an imperative (a command) becomes "told...to + base verb" instead of "said that"; Other modals shift the same way: "may" (permission/possibility) → "might"; "must" (a specific, one-time obligation) usually becomes "had to". Demonstratives shift too: "this/these" → "that/those" when the reporting removes the speaker's immediate context
Articles (A, An, The) Solved Questions	"A" and "an" are indefinite articles, used for one unspecified item from a class, or when introducing something for the first time. "The" is the definite article, used for something already identified, unique, or previously mentioned; Choose "a" or "an" based on the SOUND of the next word, not its spelling: "an" before a vowel sound (an hour, an MBA), "a" before a consonant sound (a university, a one-rupee coin) — "hour" starts with a silent "h" (a vowel sound), while "university" starts with a "y" consonant sound despite the spelled vowel "u"; "The" is used for something unique in context (the sun, the Prime Minister), something already mentioned ("I saw a dog. The dog was brown."), superlatives (the best, the tallest), and specific well-known geographic features (the Ganges, the Himalayas) — but not before most country/person names, or uncountable nouns used generally; No article at all is used before plural or uncountable nouns speaking generally ("Dogs are loyal," not "The dogs are loyal," unless referring to specific known dogs), and before most proper nouns; "The" is also used whenever a following phrase or clause makes an otherwise general noun specific — "the book on the table" or "the man who called" — even though "a book" or "a man" alone would take the indefinite article; it's the specifying phrase that triggers "the", not the noun by itself
Tag Questions Solved Questions	The core rule: if the main statement is POSITIVE, the tag is NEGATIVE; if the main statement is NEGATIVE, the tag is POSITIVE; The tag always uses the SAME auxiliary verb as the main statement, and a PRONOUN matching the subject — never the subject's own noun repeated: "Ravi is coming, isn't he?" not "isn't Ravi?"; If the main statement has no visible auxiliary (a simple present or simple past sentence with just a main verb), the tag borrows "do/does" (present) or "did" (past): "She likes tea, doesn't she?"; A few fixed exceptions: "I am" pairs with the tag "aren't I?" (not "amn't I"); imperatives ("Close the door") typically take "will you?"; "Let's" sentences take "shall we?"; A statement counts as NEGATIVE — needing a positive tag — even without the word "not", if it contains a negative word like "never", "nobody", "hardly" or "no": "She never arrives late" is logically negative, so its tag is positive ("does she?"), not negative
Punctuation Solved Questions	Use a comma after an introductory word, phrase, or subordinate clause that comes before the main clause ("Although it was raining, we decided to go"); Use an apostrophe + s for a singular possessive ("the boy's bicycle"); for a plural noun that already ends in s, add only an apostrophe ("the boys' bicycles"); for a plural that doesn't end in s (like "children"), add apostrophe + s ("the children's toys"); Use a semicolon to join two closely related independent clauses when there's no connecting word like "and" or "but" — joining them with just a comma (a "comma splice") is a common error; Use commas to separate three or more items in a list ("apples, bananas, and oranges"); Use a colon to introduce a list or explanation after a complete independent clause ("She packed three things: a map, a torch, and water") — and use a comma before a direct quotation ("The teacher said, 'Submit your assignments by Friday.'")

Collective Nouns Solved Questions	Each collective noun is fixed to its specific group, usually by long-standing convention — there's no pattern to derive it from, so these are learned one at a time, like vocabulary; Many collective nouns for animals are historically tied to the animal's behaviour or hunting style (a "murder" of crows, a "pride" of lions) — a short story or association can help the word stick; Some words serve as the collective noun for several different groups (a "school" works for fish, and separately for whales) — don't assume each word maps to only one group; When in doubt between two options, eliminate any word you recognise as the correct collective noun for a DIFFERENT group first — that process of elimination narrows it down fast; In a sentence, a collective noun used as the subject normally takes a singular verb when the group is acting as one unit ("The herd is grazing peacefully") — treat it as singular by default unless a question specifically emphasises the members acting individually
Determiners Solved Questions	For UNCOUNTABLE nouns (milk, money, time, sugar): use "much" in questions/negatives, "a little" for a small positive amount, and "little" for almost none; For COUNTABLE plural nouns (apples, friends, books): use "many" in questions/negatives, "a few" for a small positive amount, and "few" for almost none; "A few"/"a little" (WITH "a") have a positive tone — some, and that's enough. "Few"/"little" (WITHOUT "a") have a negative tone — almost none, implying a problem or lack; "Some" is used in positive statements and in offers/requests phrased as questions ("Would you like some tea?"); "any" is used in negatives and ordinary questions ("Do you have any tea?"); "This"/"that" (singular) and "these"/"those" (plural) must agree in number with the noun they point to, regardless of what else sits between them in the sentence — "this kind of behaviour" (kind is singular), "these students" (students is plural)
Subject-Verb Agreement Solved Questions	Indefinite pronouns — each, every, everyone, everybody, someone, somebody, either, neither — are always treated as singular, even when followed by "of the [plural noun]."; With "either...or," "neither...nor," or plain "or"/"nor" joining two subjects, the verb agrees with the subject NEARER to it, not the one farther away; Collective nouns (team, committee, family, jury) take a singular verb when acting as a single unit — which is the default assumption unless the sentence specifically emphasises the members acting individually; A phrase inserted between the subject and the verb — "along with," "as well as," "together with," "in addition to" — does NOT change the verb's number; the verb still agrees with the original subject, not the noun inside the inserted phrase; "A number of" (meaning several) is treated as plural, but "the number of" (naming one specific count) is treated as singular — both phrases contain the word "number," so the article in front of it is the real signal
Infinitives and Gerunds Solved Questions	Verbs that always take a gerund (-ing): enjoy, avoid, suggest, finish, mind, consider, admit, deny, risk, practise — "She enjoys reading," never "enjoys to read."; Verbs that always take a to-infinitive: decide, hope, plan, promise, agree, refuse, manage, afford, offer, want — "He decided to accept," never "decided accepting."; A few verbs change meaning depending on the choice: "stop to do" (pause in order to do something) vs. "stop doing" (quit a habit); "remember to do" (not forget a future duty) vs. "remember doing" (recall a past action); When a verb isn't on either fixed list and doesn't change meaning either way (start, begin, like, love, continue, prefer), either form is usually acceptable — these aren't typically what exam questions target; A verb immediately following ANY preposition always takes the gerund (-ing) form, never the infinitive — "He apologised for being late," "She left without saying goodbye," "They succeeded in finishing on time."
Redundancy Solved Questions	Check whether removing one word from a pair changes the meaning at all — if "free" adds nothing to "gift" (gifts are inherently free), the pair is redundant; Many redundant pairs involve a word that already implies time, finality, or scope: "past history" (history is already about the past), "final outcome" (an outcome is already final), "future plans" (plans are inherently about the future); A word implying "together" or "mutual" paired with another word already meaning that is a common redundancy pattern: "mutual cooperation," "join together," "combine together."; The fix is almost always to simply delete the redundant word, not to replace the phrase with something else — redundancy questions test recognising the overlap, not rephrasing; The repeated idea isn't always a single extra word — sometimes it's a short phrase that duplicates a meaning already built into the main verb, as in "return back" (return already means to come back) or "completely eliminate" (eliminate already means to remove entirely)

Modal Verbs Solved Questions	"Must" expresses strong obligation or a confident logical deduction ("she must be tired" = I'm confident this is true, based on evidence); "Must not" means forbidden (a prohibition). "Need not" means there's no obligation either way — these look similar but mean nearly opposite things, and exam questions deliberately test this pair; "May" is used for formal permission or a genuine possibility; "might" suggests a weaker, less certain possibility than "may."; "Should" gives advice or a recommendation — weaker than "must," which is closer to an obligation or a rule; "Could" expresses a general ability spread over time ("She could speak French as a child"), while "was/were able to" is preferred for one specific accomplished action, especially when it happened despite some difficulty ("He was able to reach the station on time despite the traffic")
Tenses Solved Questions	Use the Present Perfect (have/has + past participle) when NO specific past time is named — the action happened at some unspecified point, and its result or relevance connects to now ("I have seen this movie"); Use the Simple Past (verb + -ed, or irregular form) when a SPECIFIC past time IS named — "yesterday," "last week," "in 2020," "two hours ago" — the action is treated as a completed, dated event; "Since" is followed by a POINT in time — a date, a year, an event ("since 2015," "since Monday"). "For" is followed by a DURATION — a length of time ("for eight years," "for two hours"); A sentence naming a specific past time word (yesterday, ago, last year) almost never takes "has/have" — that's the single fastest way to catch a Present-Perfect-vs-Simple-Past error; When a sentence describes two actions that both happened in the past but at different times, use the Past Perfect (had + past participle) for the one that happened FIRST, and the Simple Past for the one that happened second — "By the time she arrived, the meeting had already started."
Relative Pronouns Solved Questions	"Who" is the SUBJECT of its own clause, referring to a person ("the man who called" — who is doing the calling); "Whom" is the OBJECT of a verb or preposition, referring to a person ("the man whom you called" — you called him; "the man to whom I spoke"); "Which" refers to things or animals, never people. "Whose" shows possession and works for both people and things; Test "who" vs "whom" by mentally answering the clause with he/him: if "he" fits, use "who"; if "him" fits, use "whom" ("who called" → he called; "whom you called" → you called him); "That" can replace "who" or "which" in a defining (restrictive) clause, but it cannot be used in a non-defining clause set off by commas, and it cannot directly follow a preposition — "the pen with which," never "the pen with that," and "Rahul, who scored the highest marks," never "Rahul, that scored..."
Conditional Sentences Solved Questions	Zero conditional (general truths): If + present simple, present simple — "If you heat ice, it melts." True every time, not just hypothetically; First conditional (real future possibility): If + present simple, will + base verb — "If it rains, I will stay home." A genuinely possible future situation; Second conditional (present/future hypothetical, unlikely or untrue): If + past simple, would + base verb — "If I won the lottery, I would travel." Note: formal English uses "were" for every subject in this pattern ("If I were," not "If I was"); Third conditional (past hypothetical, didn't actually happen): If + past perfect, would have + past participle — "If I had studied harder, I would have passed." Describes an unreal past; A mixed conditional combines time frames when a past cause still affects the present: If + past perfect (the past cause) + would + base verb (the present result) — "If I had studied medicine, I would be a doctor now," not "would have been."
Connectors & Conjunctions	"Although," "though" and "even though" are followed by a full clause (a subject + verb): "Although it was raining..." "Despite" and "in spite of" are followed by a noun or gerund, never a clause: "Despite the rain..."; "Because" is followed by a clause (a reason with its own subject + verb); "because of" is followed by a noun phrase, not a clause; "Unless" already means "if...not" — it introduces a negative condition by itself, so pairing it with another "not" creates a double negative; Check what follows the blank first — a full clause (subject + verb) or just a noun/noun phrase — since that alone rules out half the options in most of these questions; "So...that" is followed directly by an adjective or adverb ("so boring that..."), while "such...that" is followed by a noun phrase, optionally with an adjective in front of it ("such a boring movie that...") — "so a boring movie" is a common mistake

Correlative Conjunctions Solved Questions	The pairs are fixed and never mixed: "either" always pairs with "or"; "neither" always pairs with "nor" — never "either...nor" or "neither...or."; What follows each half of the pair must be grammatically parallel — the same part of speech or structure both times: "either lazy or foolish" (adjective, adjective), not "either lazy or he is foolish" (adjective, clause); "Not only...but also" keeps "also" attached to "but" — don't strand it at the end of the sentence instead; "Both...and" always takes a plural verb, since it's joining two things as a combined subject: "Both my sister and my brother ARE doctors," not "is."; "No sooner...than" and "scarcely/hardly...when" are also fixed correlative pairs, and both conventionally invert the subject and auxiliary in the first clause: "No sooner had he reached home than it started raining," not "he had reached home."
Countable & Uncountable Nouns	A countable noun has a singular and plural form (one book, two books) and can follow "a/an," "many," "few," "a few," or "number of."; An uncountable noun has no plural form (never "informations," "furnitures," "advices") and takes a singular verb, even when it feels like more than one thing; Uncountable nouns follow "much," "little," "a little," or "amount of" instead of "many"/"few" — and to count them at all, use a partitive phrase like "a piece of advice" or "a glass of water."; Common nouns that are uncountable in English despite sounding plural or countable: information, advice, furniture, luggage/baggage, news, knowledge, equipment, bread, rice, money, homework, traffic, evidence, scenery, stationery; A few nouns switch category depending on meaning: "paper" is uncountable as the material ("I need more paper") but countable as a specific document ("he wrote three research papers"); "experience" is uncountable as general exposure ("she has experience") but countable as one specific event ("a valuable experience")
Clauses (Noun, Adjective, Adverb)	A Noun Clause does the job of a noun — as a subject, object, or complement — and often starts with that/what/who/whether/why ("I know THAT HE IS HONEST"); An Adjective (Relative) Clause describes a noun, usually starting with who/which/that/whom/whose, and sits right after the noun it describes ("The man WHO STOLE MY WALLET was arrested"); An Adverb Clause modifies the verb, showing time, reason, condition, contrast or place, and usually starts with words like because/although/if/when/while/before/since ("She left BEFORE THE MEETING ENDED"); To identify the type, ask what job the clause is doing: naming a thing (noun), describing a noun (adjective), or answering when/why/how/where/under what condition (adverb); A "that"-clause is especially easy to misclassify: it's a Noun Clause when it names a fact and could be swapped for "it" ("That he lied is obvious" → "It is obvious"), but an Adjective Clause when it directly follows and describes a noun like "belief," "claim" or "news" ("The belief that the earth is flat...")
Error spotting: subject-verb agreement	"Each of"/"neither of"/"one of"/"the number of" = singular verb ("a number of" is the plural exception). Subjunctive "if" clauses always use "were." Negative adverbials at the sentence start (scarcely, not only) require inversion.
Spotting Errors (English Grammar)	Read the sentence part by part, not as a whole — the error is confined to one segment, and reading in chunks makes it easier to spot; Four error types cover most questions: subject-verb agreement, wrong preposition in a fixed phrase (like "married to", "good at"), tense inconsistency, and faulty comparison; Watch for disguised-singular subjects: "each of", "neither of", "one of", and "the number of" all take a SINGULAR verb — even though they are followed by a plural noun. ("A number of", meaning "several", is the one common exception — that one is plural.); Once you think you've found the error, mentally read the corrected sentence back — if it now sounds right end-to-end, you've likely found the right segment; These exams follow the traditional convention that a singular antecedent like "each", "every" or "everyone" is matched with a singular pronoun ("his/her"), not "their" — even though singular "they" is widely accepted in everyday English today, answer keys for this question type still expect the singular form; A collective noun (committee, team, jury, family) takes a singular verb when it acts as one unit ("the committee has decided"); and a comparative should never double up a comparison marker — "more braver" or "more better" is wrong, since the "-er" ending already makes the comparison
Fill in the blanks: prepositional collocations	Many blanks test fixed collocations (apologise for, afraid of, succeed in) that must be memorized. Recurring rules: each of/neither of = singular verb; since=point in time, for=duration; subjunctive "were" in hypotheticals; "too...to," not "too...that."

Fill in the Blanks Solved Questions	Read the entire sentence first, not just the phrase around the blank — the right word often depends on something earlier or later in the sentence; Many blanks test fixed collocations — words that conventionally pair together ("good at," "pride oneself on," "capable of") — which have to be learned, not derived from logic alone; After a preposition like "despite," "without," or "besides," a verb takes its -ing (gerund) form, not the infinitive ("to + verb") or plain form; Eliminate options that are grammatically wrong first (wrong part of speech, wrong tense), then choose among what's left by meaning and convention; Some blanks test a time preposition ("since" vs "for") rather than a fixed collocation — "since" needs a specific point in time, "for" needs a duration; check which kind of time expression follows before picking
Idioms and Phrases Solved Questions	An idiom is a fixed phrase whose overall meaning isn't the literal sum of its words — these have to be learned as whole units, the same way vocabulary is learned; Context still matters: once you have a candidate meaning, check that substituting it back into the sentence still makes sense in context; Many idioms cluster around familiar domains — weather, body parts, animals, cooking. Recognising a phrase as "idiom-shaped" (an unusual combination that wouldn't quite make literal sense) is often the first clue that a fixed meaning is intended; Don't try to guess an idiom's meaning from its literal words — "once in a blue moon" has nothing to do with the moon's colour. These are better memorised directly from repeated exposure than reasoned out; Idioms from the same domain can mean very different things — "under the weather" (feeling mildly unwell) and "in hot water" (in trouble) both reference weather/water, but check the EXACT wording given rather than the general domain it belongs to
One Word Substitution	Build words in families (specialists, collectors, outlooks). Match the definition's exact scope, not a broader or narrower related word. Watch for similar-sounding pairs with different meanings (illegible vs illiterate).
One Word Substitution Solved Questions	Read the phrase as a definition, not just a description — the correct word is the exact dictionary term for that definition, not merely a word that relates to it; Many of these words follow recognisable patterns: "-ist" or "-ologist" often names a person who studies or practises something (ornithologist, philanthropist); "-phobia" names a fear; "-cide" names a killing; Watch for near-miss options that describe something related but not identical — the right answer matches the phrase exactly, not just the general topic; These words repeat often across past papers, so building a working list from practice is usually more efficient than trying to memorise a dictionary; Some substitutions have close look-alikes with very different meanings (a "philanthropist" loves and helps mankind generally; a "philatelist" collects stamps) — check the word's actual root rather than picking whichever option merely sounds similar
Para Jumbles: following the chain	Find the opening sentence (no pronoun/connector needing an earlier reference). Chain the rest by matching pronouns/nouns to what they refer to, and connectors (however/as a result/besides) to the relationship they require. Read the final order as plain prose to confirm it flows.
Para Jumbles (Sentence Rearrangement)	Find the opening sentence first: it introduces the topic in general terms, without a pronoun ("it", "this", "they") or connector ("however", "as a result") that would need something earlier to refer back to; Pronouns and demonstratives must point at something already introduced — use them to chain a sentence directly to whichever sentence mentioned that thing; Connector words carry a specific logical relationship: "however"/"but" signal a contrast with the idea just stated; "therefore"/"as a result" signal a consequence; "for instance"/"for example" signal that the previous sentence made a general claim this one illustrates; Once the opening sentence is fixed, follow the pronoun/connector chain one link at a time rather than trying to see the whole order at once — each sentence should point unambiguously to exactly one predecessor; When two sentences could both plausibly open the paragraph on topic grounds alone, check for a pronoun or connector needing an earlier antecedent — the one that genuinely stands alone, with nothing to refer back to, is the real opening sentence

Para Completion Solved Questions	Read the whole paragraph first and identify the trend or point it's building — the correct ending continues that same line of thought, usually with a natural connector like "therefore," "as a result," or "this."; Eliminate any option that contradicts something already stated in the paragraph, even partially; Eliminate any option that overreaches — makes an extreme, absolute claim ("completely," "always," "never") the paragraph's moderate tone doesn't support; Eliminate any option that's a true-sounding but unrelated detail or trivia — it doesn't continue the paragraph's point just because it's a plausible fact; The correct option often paraphrases the paragraph's point in slightly different words rather than repeating it verbatim — don't reject an option just because it doesn't reuse the paragraph's exact phrasing, as long as the idea still follows logically
Sentence Rearrangement Solved Questions	Find the main subject and verb first — the fragment containing them is usually (though not always) the core the rest of the sentence attaches to; Look for connector words (since, although, despite, which, that) at the start of a fragment — they signal that fragment introduces a clause and needs something specific before or after it; Read your assembled order out loud (mentally) — a sentence that sounds grammatically natural and complete is a strong signal you have the right order, even before checking it against the options; Watch for a fragment that can only grammatically follow one specific other fragment (like a relative clause starting with "which" that must immediately follow the noun it describes) — these fixed pairs are the fastest way to eliminate wrong options; If two fragments both seem grammatically acceptable in either order, check which arrangement actually makes sense as a complete thought — grammatical correctness in isolation doesn't guarantee a fragment is in its correct logical position
Phrasal Verbs Solved Questions	A phrasal verb combines a verb with one or more particles (a preposition or adverb), and the combined meaning is often unrelated to the individual words — "give up" means to quit or surrender, not literally "give" something "up"; Some phrasal verbs are transitive (take a direct object: "call off the meeting") and some are intransitive (no object: "the plane took off"). If the object is a pronoun, it must go between the verb and particle — "call it off," never "call off it"; Context picks the right meaning when a phrasal verb has more than one sense — "look up" can mean "search for information" (look up a word) or "improve" (business is looking up); These are best learned through repeated exposure to the specific combinations, the same way idioms and vocabulary are learned, rather than reasoned out from the individual words; A single particle can completely change a verb's meaning — "take off" (a plane leaving the ground, or removing clothing) and "take after" (resembling a relative) share the verb "take" but mean entirely different things, so learn each full combination as its own item
Prepositions	Most prepositions are fixed idioms to memorize (good at, afraid of, married to). Real rules: since=point in time, for=duration; between=exactly two, among=three or more.
Prepositions Solved Questions	Many verbs and adjectives pair with ONE specific preposition by convention — these fixed pairings have to be learned individually, like vocabulary, rather than reasoned out from a rule: "interested in", "good at", "afraid of", "married to", "different from", "depend on", "apologise for"; Time prepositions follow a size-based pattern: "at" for a precise point (at 5 o'clock), "on" for a specific day or date (on Monday, on 15 August), "in" for a longer period (in May, in 2024, in the morning); Place prepositions follow a similar size-based pattern: "at" for a specific point (at the bus stop), "in" for an enclosed space (in the room, in Delhi), "on" for a surface (on the table); When unsure, say the sentence out loud with each option — fixed pairings usually "sound" wrong immediately in a way that's hard to explain logically but easy to hear; The same verb can take different prepositions depending on what follows, with a real shift in meaning: "agree WITH" a person, but "agree TO" a plan or proposal — check what noun comes next before picking the preposition
Sentence improvement: common error patterns	"Since"=point in time, "for"=duration. Third conditional: "if" + past perfect, main clause "would have + past participle"; first conditional's "if" clause never uses "will." Watch for redundant doubling (and nor, more better, despite of).

Sentence Improvement Solved Questions	Unlike Spotting Errors, which only asks you to locate a mistake, Sentence Improvement asks you to pick the best replacement — and sometimes the original is already correct, so "No improvement" is the right answer; Judge each option using the same core rules as grammar generally: subject-verb agreement, the correct fixed preposition, consistent tense, and matching conditional forms; Read the WHOLE sentence with each option substituted in, not just the underlined phrase alone — an option can fix the original problem while quietly introducing a new one; Longer or more formal-sounding is not automatically more correct, and shorter is not automatically better — judge only by whether the grammar and meaning are right; A handful of comparison words — "senior", "junior", "prior", "superior", "inferior" — pair with "to", never "than" ("senior to me", not "senior than me"), unlike ordinary comparatives which do use "than"; Certain inversion idioms have one fixed partner word: "hardly/scarcely" pairs with "when", and "no sooner" pairs with "than" — mixing them up ("scarcely...than", "no sooner...when") is a recurring trap in this question type
Spelling Correction Solved Questions	These questions give several spellings of the same word and ask which one is correct — this tests spelling of a single intended word, not choosing between different words (that's what Homophones covers); A few patterns behind commonly misspelled words: double letters that get dropped or doubled wrongly ("necessary" has one C and two S's); silent letters that get skipped ("Wednesday", "foreign"); -able/-ible and -ance/-ence endings, which mostly have to be memorised individually rather than derived from a rule; When unsure between similar-looking spellings, break the word into its recognisable parts — "misspell" is "mis" + "spell", so it genuinely needs two S's in the middle, not one, despite looking like it might not; These words repeat often across past papers, so building a working list from practice is usually more efficient than trying to memorise a dictionary; "-ise"/"-ize" verb endings (realise/realize, organise/organize) are both accepted as correct spelling conventions (British vs American) in most of these exams unless a question specifies otherwise — but the rest of the word's letters still have only one correct spelling regardless of which ending convention is used
Synonyms and Antonyms	Separate core meaning from connotation (frugal vs stingy). Multi-sense words (sound=healthy or logical) need their sentence's context. Group antonym pairs together rather than memorizing in isolation.
Synonyms and Antonyms Solved Questions	A synonym means (nearly) the same thing as the given word; an antonym means the opposite. Read the instruction carefully — picking a synonym when the question asks for an antonym (or vice versa) is the single most common careless mistake; Many common words have more than one meaning (for example, "sound" can mean "noise," "healthy," or "well-reasoned"). When the word appears in a sentence, let the sentence's context pick the right meaning — don't just grab the word's most familiar meaning out of habit; Mentally substitute your chosen option back into the original sentence. If it still reads naturally with the same sense, that's a strong sign you've picked correctly; Knowing common prefixes helps spot antonym pairs quickly: "bene-" means "good" (benevolent, beneficial) while "mal-" means "bad" (malevolent, malfunction) — opposite prefixes often mean opposite words; Not every antonym pair is a prefix flip — some are "relational" opposites describing two ends of the same real-world relationship (parent/child, buy/sell, arrive/depart) rather than one word with a negating prefix added. For these, think about which relationship is being reversed

Homophones & Commonly Confused Words	Homophones are words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings ("their/there/they're", "its/it's", "affect/effect") — since they sound identical, correct spelling is the only thing that tells them apart in writing; A few of the most frequently confused pairs: "its" (possessive: belonging to it) vs. "it's" (contraction: it is/it has); "their" (possessive) vs. "there" (place) vs. "they're" (contraction: they are); "affect" (usually a verb, meaning to influence) vs. "effect" (usually a noun, meaning a result); Quick test for "its" vs. "it's" (and "their" vs. "they're"): mentally expand the contraction to its full form. If "it is" or "they are" still makes sense in the sentence, the contraction is correct; if not, use the possessive; Quick test for "affect" vs. "effect": try substituting "influence" (a verb) or "result" (a noun) — whichever substitution keeps the sentence meaningful tells you which word is correct; Another frequently confused pair: "stationary" (not moving) vs. "stationery" (writing materials like paper and pens) — and "principal" (the head of a school, or a main/primary thing) vs. "principle" (a fundamental rule or belief). These aren't distinguished by sound at all, only by checking which specific meaning the sentence needs
Commonly Confused Words Solved Questions	Learn confusable pairs by their distinct core meaning, not by spelling similarity — "affect" (verb, to influence) vs "effect" (usually a noun, a result) is a meaning distinction, not a spelling one; "Stationary" (not moving) and "stationery" (paper/pens/writing materials) are completely unrelated in meaning despite the near-identical spelling — a classic trap; "Principal" (the head of a school/institution, or a noun/adjective meaning "main") and "principle" (a fundamental rule or belief) are distinguished by context: a person/main thing vs. an idea; Comparison words like "than" (used to compare two things) and sequence words like "then" (next, at that time) serve completely different grammatical roles — read the sentence's function, not just its sound; "Lose" (verb, to misplace something or fail to win) and "loose" (adjective, not tight or not fastened) differ by only one letter but are never interchangeable — check whether the sentence needs an action word or a descriptive word
Word Formation Solved Questions	Go through the target word letter by letter, and for each one, check it appears in the source word — if even one letter is missing entirely, the answer is immediately "No"; Watch repeated letters carefully: if the target word needs a letter TWICE but the source word only has it ONCE, that's also "No" — count occurrences, don't just check presence; Letters can be used in ANY order and don't need to be adjacent in the source word — this isn't about finding a substring, only about which letters (and how many of each) are available; Extra, unused letters in the source word are irrelevant — the question is only whether the target word's letters are fully covered, not whether every source letter gets used; A quick first filter for longer words: compare total letter counts before checking individual letters — if the target word has more letters than the source word, it can never be formed, no matter which specific letters are involved
Confusable Verbs (Lay/Lie, Rise/Raise)	"Lie" (lie – lay – lain) means to recline or rest, and never takes a direct object: "I lie down," not "I lie something down."; "Lay" (lay – laid – laid) means to put or place something down, and always takes a direct object: "She lays the book," not "She lays" alone; The confusion peaks in the past tense: "lay" is both the base form of "to put something down" AND the past tense of "lie" — "Yesterday, I lay in bed" uses "lay" as the past of "lie," with no object; "Rise" (rise – rose – risen) means to go up by itself, with no direct object: "The sun rises." "Raise" (raise – raised – raised) means to lift something, and always takes a direct object: "She raises her hand."; "Sit" (sit – sat – sat) follows the same no-object pattern as "lie" — "He sits on the chair." "Set" (set – set – set) follows the same always-takes-an-object pattern as "lay" — "She sets the table."
Prefixes and Suffixes Solved Questions	Common negative prefixes: "un-" (unhappy), "in-" (incomplete), "dis-" (disagree), "mis-" (misunderstand), "non-" (nonsense) — the one that fits depends on the specific word, not a single universal rule; "in-" changes its spelling before certain letters: "im-" before words starting with p, b or m (impossible, imbalance), "il-" before l (illegal), and "ir-" before r (irregular) — this is a common error-spotting trap; Common noun-forming suffixes turn a verb or adjective into a noun: "-tion"/"-ion" (action), "-ment" (agreement), "-ness" (kindness), "-ity" (ability), "-er"/"-or" (teacher, actor, for "a person who..."); Common adjective-forming suffixes turn a noun or verb into an adjective: "-ful" (helpful), "-less" (careless), "-able"/"-ible" (comfortable, visible), "-ous" (dangerous); The remaining two categories: verb-forming suffixes turn a noun or adjective into a verb — "-ize"/"-ise" (modernize), "-ify" (simplify), "-en" (strengthen); the adverb-forming suffix "-ly" turns an adjective into an adverb — "quick" becomes "quickly," "happy" becomes "happily."

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