

Adult Learner Grammar Essentials

Great for Non-Traditional & Adult Education Students



Ashan R. Hampton

Adult Learner Grammar Essentials

Plain English Explanations
+
Self-Study Exercises



Ashan R. Hampton

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Chapter 1

PARTS OF SPEECH REVIEW

Adjective

.....
An **adjective** is a description word that adds details to a noun or pronoun, such as color, size, number, or type. **Adjectives** that appear **before** the noun or pronoun they **modify** are called *attributive* adjectives. Adjectives enhance descriptions of people, places or things in very specific ways.

Adjectives often answer the questions:

- How many?
- What kind?



Note: Modify means to enhance or transform words with description.

Examples:

- Three pages → **How many?**
- Blue folder → **What kind?**
- Competent supervisor → Adjective
- A black, spandex shirt → Multiple adjectives create vivid images for the reader.
- The tall, gray, apartment building on the corner of 6th and Louisiana St.

Notice the adjectives in the sentence below:

Cynthia wore a **white, silk** wrap-dress and **cherry red** pumps with **gold** tips to the **cocktail** party.

Adjectives can also appear **after** linking verbs. When this happens, the adjective describes the subject or main noun that appears **before** the linking verb, as in the following examples.

Linking Verbs

appear	look	prove	fall	were
become	sound	go	lay	been
grow	smell	stand	is	
remain	feel	work	am	
seem	taste	run	are	
get	continue	turn	was	

Examples:

S LV A

- Mrs. Gottbucks is generous with her money.
- The adjective *generous* comes after the linking verb is and describes *Mrs. Gottbucks*.

S LV A

- Your plan to save the universe sounds interesting.
- The adjective *interesting* comes after the linking verb sounds and describes *plan*.

S LV A

- Your puppy looks cute.
- The adjective *cute* comes after the linking verb looks and describes *puppy*.

Adverb

Adverbs usually describe or modify verbs. However, adverbs can also modify adjectives and other adverbs. One-word adverbs usually end in *-ly* (e.g. slowly).

Adverbs often answer the questions:

- How much?
- How often?
- To what degree?



Examples of Adverbs	Adverbs Modifying Adjectives and Other Adverbs
• walked <u>slowly</u>	• a <u>really</u> (adverb) cool (adjective) day
• typed <u>quickly</u>	• a <u>slightly</u> (adverb) crooked (adjective) nose
• Bob dresses <u>casually</u> .	• Silvia talks <u>very</u> (adverb) <u>loudly</u> (adverb).
• She speaks <u>well</u> .	• The weather is <u>extremely</u> (adverb) hot (adjective).

Antecedent

An **antecedent** is a noun that a pronoun refers back to later in the sentence. The pronoun replaces the antecedent to avoid repetition. The antecedent is not always the subject of a sentence.

Examples:

- **Teresa** (antecedent) paid **her** (pronoun) dorm fee yesterday.
- The **football players** (antecedent) experienced **their** (pronoun) first win today.
- Do you want a large **cone** (antecedent) or a small **one** (pronoun)?

Instead of repeating, “Do you want a large **cone** or a small **cone**?” The pronoun “**one**” replaces the antecedent, “**cone**” to avoid repetition.

Article

Articles specify or point out particular places, people, things or ideas—in other words—**nouns**.

In English grammar, the following words are considered articles: **a, an, the**.

When to use the article “a”

- Use “a” when referring to a **single item**.
- Use “a” **before** nouns that begin with a **consonant letter** or **consonant sound**.
- **Consonants** consist of the alphabet letters:
b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z
- Remember, “a” is considered an **indefinite article**, because it often refers to general items or approximate amounts.

Examples of “a”:

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| • a car | • a flute |
| • a book | • a kiwi |
| • a pencil | • a lamp |



When to use the article “an”

- Use “an” when referring to a **single item**.
- Use “an” **before** nouns that begin with a **vowel letter** or **vowel sound**.
- **Vowels consist of the alphabet letters:**
a, e, i, o, u and sometimes y

Examples of “an”:

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| • an apple | • an orange |
| • an igloo | • an idea |
| • an odor | • an umpire |

Exceptions to the articles “a & an”

- The “yoo” sound in the vowel letter “u” is also considered a **consonant** when it sounds like the consonant letter “y.” Take for example the word “*unanimous*.”
- Based on its pronunciation, the “u” in “*unanimous*” acts as a consonant, and is therefore paired with the article “a.” **For example**, “a *unanimous* decision.”
- When the letter “u” sounds like a vowel, it is paired with the article “an.” For example, “An ugly couch blocked the doorway.”
- In some words, as in the examples above, the consonant **SOUND** determines the article, not the actual letter.

Examples of Exceptions:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| • a eulogy | • a university |
| • a historical novel | • an F.B.I. agent |
| • a unicorn | • an honest man |
| • a uniform | • an hour ago |
| • a unique situation | • a UAMS medical student |

When to use the article “the”

- Use “the” when indicating or pointing out **specific items**.
- Use “the” when referring to multiple items, mass nouns or plural nouns.