



C1

GRAMMAR SHEETS

Free English Grammar Resource

1 Subtle tense & aspect contrasts

FORM

Simple: complete fact · Continuous: temporary, in progress, tentative or emphatic

Perfect: relevance and sequence · Aspect often signals attitude, not just time.

USE

At this level, the choice between aspects frequently expresses politeness, irritation, deduction or perspective rather than a difference in real time.

EXAMPLES

- *I've been meaning to email you for ages.*
- *You're constantly leaving the door open!*
- *She'll have landed by now, I imagine.*

PRACTICE 1

Choose the form that best fits the meaning in brackets or the context.

1. Sorry to bother you — I (hoped / was hoping) you could send the file again. (polite, tentative)
2. He (always interrupts / is always interrupting) people — it drives me mad. (irritation)
3. By the time you read this, I (will leave / will have left) the country.
4. Don't worry about the report — I ('m seeing / see) Hakan tomorrow anyway, so I'll pass it on.
5. I (worked / had been working) there for six years when the factory closed.

2 Advanced modal nuance

FORM

will / would: typical or predictable behaviour · shall: offers and formal undertakings

needn't have + past participle: it was done, but was unnecessary · didn't need to: it wasn't necessary (perhaps not done) · might as well: there's no reason not to

USE

Modals carry fine shades of meaning: habit, willingness, resignation and retrospective judgement.

EXAMPLES

- *She'll sit there for hours just watching the sea.*
- *You needn't have brought a gift — but thank you!*
- *Shall I open a window?*

PRACTICE 2

Choose the correct option.

1. Accidents (will / shall) happen — don't blame yourself.
2. We (needn't have hurried / didn't need to hurry) — the meeting had been cancelled while we were racing across town.
3. On Sundays my grandfather (would / should) take us fishing.
4. There's nothing else to do here — we (might as well / must) go home.
5. (Shall / Will) I carry that for you?

3 Conditional alternatives: but for, otherwise, provided

FORM

But for + noun = if it hadn't been for · otherwise = if not

provided / providing (that), on condition that = only if · supposing = imagine that

USE

These structures express conditions without a standard if-clause, and are typical of formal and written English.

EXAMPLES

- *But for your help, we would have missed the deadline.*
- *Take a map; otherwise you'll get lost.*
- *They agreed to sign, on condition that the price remained fixed.*

PRACTICE 3

Complete each sentence or choose the correct option.

1. If it hadn't been for the traffic, we'd have arrived by noon. → _____ the traffic, we'd have arrived by noon.
2. You may leave early (provided / unless) you finish the report first.
3. Write it down now; _____ you'll forget it.
4. (Supposing / Providing) the flight is cancelled — what's our plan B?
5. He lent me the money on _____ that I paid it back within a month.

4 Inverted conditionals

FORM

Third: Had + subject + past participle (Had I known, ...)

Second: Were + subject + to + verb (Were she to resign, ...) · First: Should + subject + verb (Should you require ...)

USE

Dropping if and inverting makes conditionals more formal. Common in official letters, contracts and reports.

EXAMPLES

- *Had I known about the strike, I would have left earlier.*
- *Were the company to relocate, hundreds of jobs would go.*
- *Should you require assistance, please contact reception.*

PRACTICE 4

Rewrite each sentence with an inverted conditional, without using if.

1. If I had realised the risk, I would never have invested.
2. If you should need anything, just ring the bell.
3. If she were to resign, the project would collapse.
4. If we had been informed, we would have acted sooner.
5. If the weather should worsen, the event will be moved indoors.

5 Advanced passive & reporting structures

FORM

is said / thought / reported + to have + past participle: claims about the past
 get + past participle (informal) · modal perfect passive: should have been checked
 be suspected of / accused of + having + past participle

USE

Combine passives with perfect infinitives and gerunds to report claims precisely and impersonally.

EXAMPLES

- *The manuscript is thought to have been written in the 14th century.*
- *He got caught cheating.*
- *The error should have been spotted earlier.*

PRACTICE 5

Rewrite each sentence using a passive reporting structure.

1. People believe the fire was started deliberately. (The fire ...)
2. Reporters say the two companies are negotiating a merger. (The two companies ...)
3. Somebody should have checked these figures. (These figures ...)
4. They suspect that the goalkeeper accepted a bribe. (The goalkeeper ... of ...)
5. People report that the missing climbers have been found. (The missing climbers ...)

6 Participle clauses: perfect, negative & with conjunctions

FORM

Having (been) + past participle: a completed earlier action · Not having ...: negative
 Conjunction + participle: once opened · when asked · if approved · while acknowledging

USE

These compressed clauses are a hallmark of concise formal writing. The implied subject must match the main clause.

EXAMPLES

- *Having been warned twice, he was finally dismissed.*
- *Once submitted, the form cannot be changed.*
- *While admiring her ambition, I doubt her methods.*

PRACTICE 6

Rewrite each sentence using a participle clause. Keep the conjunction where one is given.

1. After it has been opened, the sauce should be refrigerated. (Once ...)
2. Because she had not received a reply, she phoned the office.
3. When it is frozen, this soup keeps for months. (When ...)
4. Because he had been misinformed about the time, he arrived an hour late.
5. If the plan is approved, work will begin in March. (If ...)

7 Complex relative structures

FORM

Quantifier + of + whom / which: three hundred delegates, many of whom ...

Preposition + which / whom: the process by which ... · the speed at which ... · whose for possession

USE

These structures let one sentence carry layered information elegantly — essential in academic and professional prose.

EXAMPLES

- *The committee, several of whom were absent, postponed the vote.*
- *This is the process by which decisions are made.*
- *She raised issues, none of which had been discussed before.*

PRACTICE 7

Complete each sentence with one suitable word.

1. The conference attracted 300 delegates, many of _____ came from overseas.
2. He gave three reasons, none of _____ was convincing.
3. This is the tool _____ which the data was analysed.
4. The author, _____ novels have sold millions, rarely gives interviews.
5. I was struck by the speed _____ which the team responded.

8 Nominalisation & complex noun phrases

FORM

verb / adjective → noun: fail → failure · decide → decision · rely → reliance · grow → growth

Typical frame: the + (adjective) + noun + of / in / to + noun phrase

USE

Nominalisation compresses whole clauses into noun phrases, giving writing a formal, information-dense register.

EXAMPLES

- *The failure of the talks surprised no one.*
- *There has been a significant improvement in air quality.*
- *The committee's decision to delay the launch proved wise.*

PRACTICE 8

Rewrite each pair as one formal sentence, turning the first clause into a noun phrase. Model answers are given in the key.

1. They decided to expand. This surprised investors.
2. The economy grew strongly. This created new jobs.
3. People increasingly rely on smartphones. This worries some educators.
4. The company failed to act quickly. This damaged its reputation.
5. Ticket prices rose sharply. This angered fans.

9 Advanced determiners & quantification

FORM

each (individual focus, + of) vs every (whole group) · either / neither (+ of + plural)
whichever / whatever · a great deal of + uncountable · hardly any

USE

Precision with determiners and quantifiers distinguishes advanced writing; several combinations are grammatically fixed.

EXAMPLES

- *Each of the applicants was interviewed twice.*
- *Neither option appeals to me.*
- *Whatever you decide, let me know by Friday.*

PRACTICE 9

Choose the correct option.

1. (Each / Every) of the rooms has its own bathroom.
2. There was (a great deal of / a great many) confusion after the announcement.
3. (Either / Neither) candidate impressed the panel, so the post was re-advertised.
4. (Whichever / However) route you take, allow extra time.
5. Hardly (no / any) research has been done in this area.

10 Ellipsis & substitution: advanced patterns

FORM

Reduced infinitive: “Join us?” “I’d love to.” · if so / if not
do so (formal) · believe / hope / think + so / not · stranded auxiliary: ... but my sister has.

USE

Skilled speakers leave out everything the listener can reconstruct. These patterns keep discourse tight and natural.

EXAMPLES

- *“Join us for dinner?” “I’d love to.”*
- *The results may be delayed; if so, we will notify you.*
- *He asked me to review the contract, and I did so at once.*

PRACTICE 10

Complete each sentence with one or two words.

1. “Are you coming to the retrospective?” “I’d like _____, but I’m away.”
2. Applicants may be asked to resit the test; if _____, travel costs will be reimbursed.
3. She promised to send the minutes, and she did _____ within the hour.
4. “Has the invoice been paid?” “I believe _____.”
5. I haven’t read the sequel yet, but my sister _____.

11 Cleft structures & fronting

FORM

It-cleft: It was only after the audit that ... · Wh-cleft: What matters most is ...

Fronting: object or complement first (The details we can discuss later.) · locative inversion: At the top stood ...

USE

Reorganising the sentence controls emphasis and information flow — a defining skill of advanced writing.

EXAMPLES

- *It was only after the audit that the losses came to light.*
- *What matters most is transparency.*
- *Sitting in the front row were the sponsors themselves.*

PRACTICE 11

Rewrite each sentence beginning as shown.

1. The finance team discovered the error. (It was ...)
2. I admire her persistence above all. (What ...)
3. A small chapel stood at the top of the hill. (At the top of the hill ...)
4. We can discuss the details later. (The details ...)
5. They realised their mistake only then. (It was only then ...)

12 Inversion & emphasis

FORM

Little did + subject + verb · Only after / when + clause + auxiliary + subject

So + adjective + be + subject + that ... · Such + be + noun + that ...

USE

These emphatic patterns are dramatic and formal; the inversion happens in the main clause, not the only-clause.

EXAMPLES

- *Little did we know what lay ahead.*
- *Only when the results arrived did we relax.*
- *Such was the demand that the site crashed.*

PRACTICE 12

Rewrite each sentence beginning as shown.

1. We only understood the scale of the problem after the flood. (Only after the flood ...)
2. He didn't realise he had been recorded. (Little ...)
3. The performance was so moving that the audience stood in silence. (So ...)
4. The noise was such that no one could sleep. (Such ...)
5. She spoke only when everyone had left. (Only when ...)

13 Hedging & register-sensitive grammar

FORM

would / might / could + suggest / argue / appear · appear / seem / tend to + verb

It could be argued that ... · arguably, somewhat, to some extent

USE

Hedging softens claims and signals academic caution. Overstated claims sound naive in formal writing.

EXAMPLES

- *The data would appear to support this view.*
- *It could be argued that the policy has failed.*
- *Sales tend to dip in January.*

PRACTICE 13

Rewrite each claim more cautiously, beginning as shown. Model answers are given in the key.

1. The new drug is effective. (The new drug appears ...)
2. This proves that remote work increases productivity. (This would suggest ...)
3. The strategy failed. (It could be argued ...)
4. Young customers prefer the app. (Young customers tend ...)
5. The figures are wrong. (The figures may ...)

14 Complex prepositional patterns

FORM

Dependent prepositions: insist on · object to · result in / from · accuse ... of · depend on

Formal phrases: on behalf of · with regard to · in terms of · preposition + -ing

USE

Every dependent preposition is fixed; a verb + wrong preposition instantly marks writing as non-native.

EXAMPLES

- *She objected to being photographed.*
- *The delay resulted from a technical fault.*
- *I'm writing with regard to your recent enquiry.*

PRACTICE 14

Complete each sentence with one preposition.

1. The success of the project depends _____ careful planning.
2. He was accused _____ leaking the documents.
3. The reforms resulted _____ a sharp fall in costs across the business.
4. She insisted _____ paying for dinner.
5. I'm speaking _____ behalf of the whole team.

Mixed Grammar Review

Choose the correct option.

1. (Had / If) we been told sooner, we could have prevented it.
2. You (needn't have printed / didn't need to print) all fifty pages — we'd already emailed them, so the printing was a waste.
3. The painting is believed (to be stolen / to have been stolen) decades ago.
4. Once (signing / signed), the agreement is legally binding.
5. He made several claims, few of (which / them) stood up to scrutiny.
6. Only after the second inspection (the fault was / was the fault) identified.
7. (It / What) was the tone of the email that offended her most.
8. Such (was the response / the response was) that a second event was arranged.
9. The findings would (appear / appearing) to contradict earlier studies.
10. She objected (to be treated / to being treated) like a beginner.

C1 Grammar Sheets — Answer Key

Practice 1 · Subtle tense & aspect contrasts

1. was hoping 2. is always interrupting 3. will have left 4. 'm seeing 5. had been working

Practice 2 · Advanced modal nuance

1. will 2. needn't have hurried 3. would 4. might as well 5. Shall

Practice 3 · Conditional alternatives: but for, otherwise, provided

1. But for 2. provided 3. otherwise 4. Supposing 5. condition

Practice 4 · Inverted conditionals

1. Had I realised the risk, I would never have invested. 2. Should you need anything, just ring the bell. 3. Were she to resign, the project would collapse. 4. Had we been informed, we would have acted sooner. 5. Should the weather worsen, the event will be moved indoors.

Practice 5 · Advanced passive & reporting structures

1. The fire is believed to have been started deliberately. 2. The two companies are said to be negotiating a merger. 3. These figures should have been checked. 4. The goalkeeper is suspected of having accepted a bribe. 5. The missing climbers are reported to have been found.

Practice 6 · Participle clauses: perfect, negative & with conjunctions

1. Once opened, the sauce should be refrigerated. 2. Not having received a reply, she phoned the office. 3. When frozen, this soup keeps for months. 4. Having been misinformed about the time, he arrived an hour late. 5. If approved, work will begin in March.

Practice 7 · Complex relative structures

1. whom 2. which 3. with 4. whose 5. at (or: with)

Practice 8 · Nominalisation & complex noun phrases

1. Their decision to expand surprised investors. 2. The strong growth of the economy (The economy's strong growth) created new jobs. 3. The increasing reliance on smartphones worries some educators. 4. The company's failure to act quickly damaged its reputation. 5. The sharp rise in ticket prices angered fans.

Practice 9 · Advanced determiners & quantification

1. Each 2. a great deal of 3. Neither 4. Whichever 5. any

Practice 10 · Ellipsis & substitution: advanced patterns

1. to 2. so 3. so 4. so 5. has

Practice 11 · Cleft structures & fronting

1. It was the finance team that (who) discovered the error. 2. What I admire above all is her persistence. 3. At the top of the hill stood a small chapel. 4. The details we can discuss later. 5. It was only then that they realised their mistake.

Practice 12 · Inversion & emphasis

1. Only after the flood did we understand the scale of the problem. 2. Little did he realise (that) he had been recorded. 3. So moving was the performance that the audience stood in silence. 4. Such was the noise that no one could sleep. 5. Only when everyone had left did she speak.

Practice 13 · Hedging & register-sensitive grammar

1. The new drug appears to be effective. 2. This would suggest that remote work increases productivity. 3. It could be argued that the strategy failed. 4. Young customers tend to prefer the app. 5. The figures may be wrong.

Practice 14 · Complex prepositional patterns

1. on 2. of 3. in 4. on 5. on

Mixed Grammar Review

1. Had 2. needn't have printed 3. to have been stolen 4. signed 5. which 6. was the fault 7. It 8. was the response 9. appear 10. to being treated