A Fast Track Grammar Review for EFL Teachers
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What is Grammar?
Check all the answers that you feel are true.

☐ A system designed to confuse students and teachers
☐ An antiquated system of rules that no one uses anymore
☐ An incomprehensible jumble of rules with too many exceptions
☐ The first thing to embarrass me in the classroom

If you checked all four responses—you are not alone. This course book is designed to get you up and running—and comfortable with the basics in just a few weeks. Here we go . . .
What is Grammar?

Different sources define grammar in different ways.

Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary defines grammar as:

1 a : the study of the classes of words, their inflections, and their functions and relations in the sentence b : a study of what is to be preferred and what avoided in inflection and syntax

2 a : the characteristic system of inflections and syntax of a language b : a system of rules that defines the grammatical structure of a language

Are you confused yet? Here’s another one:

Ask Jeeves has a “Quick Definition” that reports grammar as “studies of the formation of basic linguistic units.”

Some grammarians also refer to descriptive and prescriptive grammars. Descriptive grammar refers to the way language is actually used. Prescriptive grammar as the way it experts say it should be used. Consider how you would research how to write a language that has no writing system. First, you might listen to how people speak the language. Then you might also ask the more educated speakers how it should be spoken.

Perhaps the easiest way to get a good grasp of the concept is with the TOEFL© test’s use of the word “Structure” as the name of the grammar component of the test. Think of grammar as providing the **structure and organization** for language.

Exercise 1.1.
Start thinking about a definition of grammar that is simple and useful. Make it simple enough that you can use it to explain grammar to your students. Write that definition here:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

When you finish this book, return to this exercise and see if you wish to improve your definition, or leave it as it is. If you improve it, write it here:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Why do I need to know grammar?
Check all the answers that you feel are true.

- so I don’t get embarrassed in the classroom
- because it is an important part of learning English
- so I can explain it to my students when they ask about it
- to help increase my confidence level in the classroom

Once again, if you checked all the answers, no need to worry.
Most new teachers have all these concerns and more.

The Most Important Reasons

Professional:
A taxi driver needs to know his/her way around town, you need to know your way around grammar. Grammar is an important part of most EFL programs. You need a good grasp of grammar and to know how to explain it simply and clearly to your students.

Student Expectations:
Your students will expect you to have an in-depth understanding of grammar, and will quickly lose confidence in you if you can’t deliver.

Confidence:
When you are standing in front of a classroom of five, ten, or even twenty or more students—you'll be much more confident when those grammar questions show up. When you least expect it, students can ask you the most obscure questions, often in front of a large classes. Won’t you feel a lot better knowing you have put in the effort to communicate the basics in a profession and effective manner?

Last of all, remember that EFL students, or their parents, often pay what is for them, a very large amount of money for English lessons. Do a good job for them and deliver the value and quality education they deserve.
Word Classification
according to grammatical function

2.1 How many parts of speech are there?
Check the box with the correct answer

- 8
- 9
- 10
- 12

What are the parts of speech?
Write their names on the lines below

__________________________________________________
__________________________________________________
__________________________________________________

What part of speech is the word the?
Write the answer below

____________________________________

Find the answers on the bottom of the next page
How many parts of speech are there?
It depends on who you ask. Depending on your source, you will find anywhere from eight to nine, or even more! Confused yet? Maybe you should be. But, most of all, don’t be intimidated by it. Remember if you write the book, you get to decide how many parts of speech there are and it is only a matter of classification—how they are sorted into categories. Some grammarians avoid the subject altogether by not even addressing the issue.

What are the parts of speech?
There is fairly common agreement about nine parts of speech: nouns, pronouns, verbs, prepositions, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, articles, and interjections. On some lists you will also find determiners instead of articles (articles are in this class) and possibly quantifiers, most of which can also be classed as determiners. It’s important to know that many words can be used as more than one part of speech—their classification will depend on how they are used in a sentence.

What is a noun?
A noun is a part of speech that represents the name of a person, animal, place, thing, quality (such as kindness), action (reading), or measurement (hour, kilogram). Nouns can be categorized as very specific: “proper nouns” - which are capitalized and typically used without an article, and general: “common nouns” - which are typically accompanied with a determiner.

Nouns may also be classified as countable and uncountable (sometimes called count and non-count nouns). Countable nouns can have a plural form.

There are also “collective” nouns: names for groups, such as committee, government, team, jury, family, etc.

What is a pronoun?
The most simple forms of pronouns (personal pronouns) substitute for nouns and noun phrases. They can be further classed as first, second, and third-person pronouns. (me, you, them) They can also be classified by case as subjective or objective (used as the subject or object of a sentence). Examples: I vs. me; she vs. her; they vs. them.

Pronouns representing noun phrases can make speech or writing easier by representing much longer passages and ideas with a simple pronoun.
Demonstrative pronouns are pronouns such as this, that, these, and those, which by their very use indicate or demonstrate what is being talking about. Example: I want those. If they are used in front of a noun, they are called demonstrative adjectives. Example: I want those pencils.

Possessive pronouns indicate ownership. That car is hers. It is mine.

If a pronoun is used to indicate to whom an object belongs—it is called a possessive adjective. Example: That is her car. Some grammarians would classify such use as determiners—not adjectives.

Reflexive pronouns indicate that the subject receives the action of the verb. Example: I treated myself to a big piece of chocolate cake. Intensive or emphatic pronouns strengthen the action of the subject. Example: I’ll do it myself.

Interrogative pronouns introduce questions — which, what, who, whom, and whose are examples. Who did that?

Relative pronouns are used to tie together related groups of words. Examples are which, what, who, whom and whose. I went to the doctor that my friend recommended.

What is an article? Some times called a noun marker, sometimes classed as a determiner, articles precede nouns. A and an are called indefinite articles, the is called the definite article.

How about determiners? Determiners are a broader class of words than articles and include most quantifiers. Determiners can be defined as words that begin noun phrases and help limit or specify the nouns they precede. This class of words would also include possessive and demonstrative adjectives. Examples include a, the, your, this, each, several, some.

Quantifiers? As long as we have stepped in these waters—let’s finish it with quantifiers. They are simply words that precede nouns that give some indication of how many or how much of a noun we are talking about. Examples include few, little, many, much, a lot, several. Quantifiers are typically classified as determiners. In a system in which determiners are not used, quantifiers would typically be classified as adjectives.
What are Adjectives?
Adjectives are words that describe nouns and pronouns. They give us more information about them. 
*She is hungry.* The *big red car is beautiful.*

**Possessive adjectives** do that by telling us who the noun belongs to: 
*It is my car.*

**Demonstrative adjectives** do it by telling us which nouns we are talking about: *I want those pencils.*

Adjectives are sometimes said to modify or limit nouns. They modify or limit them by making it more clear which one or how many are being talked about: *I want only one large egg.*

In classification systems with only eight parts of speech, articles are classified as adjectives.

### 2.2 Classify These Words

Write the name of the part of speech on the blank line.  
Be as specific as possible, name more than one class if possible.  
(answers are below)

1. I’d like those eggs, please. ______________________________
2. Who did that? ______________________________
3. Many students don’t enjoy studying. _____________________
4. That’s my car. ______________________________
5. Our football *team* won the game. _____________________
6. San Francisco is a beautiful city. _____________________
7. He did it *himself*. ______________________________
8. The *cat in the hat*. ______________________________
What is a Verb?
Verbs are words that express action (run) or a state of being (love). The action can also be abstract rather than visible, such as the words think and decide.

Verb Tenses — what are they, how do they work?
Verb tenses are the twelve categories of verb usage that are related to the time at which something happens and its duration.

2.3 Classify the following verb forms - pretest
(see answers below)

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<th>Verb Form</th>
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<td>Had been running</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will have been running</td>
<td>C. Past simple</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ran</td>
<td>D. Past progressive</td>
</tr>
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<td>E. Future simple</td>
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<td>F. Future progressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was running</td>
<td>G. Present perfect simple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has run</td>
<td>H. Present perfect progressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has been running</td>
<td>I. Past perfect simple</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will be running</td>
<td>J. Past perfect progressive</td>
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<tr>
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<td>K. Future perfect simple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is running</td>
<td>L. Future perfect progressive</td>
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How do the Verb Classifications Work?
These twelve classifications are all time related. Six are simple and six are continuous or progressive forms. (Continuous or progressive may be - and often are - used interchangeably here) Simple forms are used when we view the action or state as being complete. The continuous or progressive form is used when the action or state is seen as being incomplete.

Examples:

I think so.  
Simple form - the subject has taken a position and is not continuing to consider or evaluate it.

I am thinking about it.  
Progressive form - the subject continues to evaluate or consider the issue at hand. His evaluation is not yet complete.
There are also six perfect and six non-perfect forms. The perfect forms are used when the actions being talked or written about looks back into the past (from the speakers perspective - this is important).

**Examples:**

I *am talking.*  
non-perfect form: The action is happening right now.

I *have been talking.*  
perfect form: The action began in the past and continues into the present time.

When we mix the simple and continuous forms with the perfect and non-perfect forms - and use them to talk about the past, present and future - we end up with the twelve major verb tenses we will focus on in this text.

**Present Simple:** The most basic and simple form of the verb. *Think, run, talk, sleep, and work* are all examples. This form is generally used to talk about present time and expressive habitual action and things that are believed to be true. The easiest way to remember this is as fact and habit. You will see this tense expressed as Present Simple in some texts and as Simple Present in others. Use it the way your students are most familiar with.

**Examples:**

I *brush* my teeth everyday.  
This is my daily habit.

My teeth *are* very clean.  
I believe this to be true.

On a time line this tense can be expressed as being now.

**Past Simple:** This tense denotes past time - an action or condition that was completed in the past.
Examples:

I was sick yesterday.

I ran five miles every day when I was young.

The condition (sick) and the action (ran) occurred and were completed sometime in the past.

Future Simple: This tense is used to denote future time - an action or condition that will occur in the future. The future is expressed using will + the base form of the verb (or “simple” unchanged form).

Examples:

I will be tired tomorrow.

I will run five miles every day when I get old.

The condition (tired) and the action (run) will occur and be completed sometime in the future.

Progressive Forms:
These forms use a structure of be + main verb + ing

Present Progressive: This tense is used to denote an action or condition that began in the past and continues into present time.

Examples:

I am feeling sick today. This condition began sometime earlier and continues even now.

I am studying French. I study French, but I started sometime in the past - and I continue to study it now.

The condition (sick) and the action (study) both started in the past and continue at the present time.
Past Progressive:  This tense is used to denote an action or condition that began in the past and was completed prior to the present time.

Examples:

I was feeling sick yesterday.  This condition began and ended sometime earlier - I am no longer sick.
I was studying French.  I studied French. I started sometime in the past - but I don’t study it now.

The condition (sick) and the action (study) both started and stopped in the past and do not continue at the present time. It is clear also that the speaker could have used the past simple form to provide the same meaning. It is the speaker’s choice - and in this case the speaker may have wanted to stress that something else was happening (or happened) at the time.

Examples:

I was feeling sick yesterday, so I went to the doctor.
I was taking a shower, when the phone rang.

On a time line past progressive forms look like this:

I was studying grammar when I got really sleepy.
**Future Progressive:** This tense is used to denote an action or condition that will be taking place sometime in the future. Here we must add *will* to the standard progressive form of *be + main verb + ing*.

**Examples:**

I *will be feeling* sick tomorrow. This condition will begin in the future and continue for an unspecified or unknown period of time.

I *will be studying* French soon. I will study French in the future and will continue for an unspecified or unknown period of time.

Note again that the speaker could have used the future simple form, but chose to use the future progressive form. This is the speaker’s choice and s/he may chose this form to emphasize another action or condition.

On a time line future progressive looks like this:

---

**The Perfect Simple Forms:**

Perfect simple forms use the following structure: *have + past participle of the verb*. Perfect forms are generally used to express the time relationship between two events or conditions.

**Present Perfect Simple:** This form denotes action that is completed at the time of speaking or writing, but may also indicate action that is continuing into the present.

**Examples:**

I *have felt* sick for two days. This condition began in the past continues into the present.

I *have studied* French for a long time. Study began in the past and continues to the present time. My study began in the past and continues to the present time but is stopping now.

I *have studied* enough!
On a time line the **present perfect simple** form looks like this:

![Time line diagram](image)

**Past Perfect Simple:** This form is used to denote the relationship of two events or conditions that occurred in the past. It uses the same form as the present perfect simple, but uses the past form of *have* - *had*.

**Examples:**

I *had been* sick for two days when I went to the doctor.  
I was sick before I went to the doctor.

I *had studied* French for a long time before I traveled to France.  
I studied French first.  
I went to France second.

They *had sold* all the tickets before I got there.  
The tickets were sold out first.  
I got there second.

On a time line the **past perfect simple** form looks like this:

![Time line diagram](image)

**Future Perfect Simple:** This form establishes the time relationship between two conditions or actions that will occur and be completed in the future. The structure is *will* + *have* + *past participle*.

**Examples:**

By the time I get to Chiang Mai,  
I *will have walked* 500 kilometers.  
I am going to walk to Chiang Mai. When it is all done - 500km will have been walked.  
When I leave Phuket, my studies will have been completed.

I *will have completed* my studies by the time I leave Phuket.
On a time line *future perfect simple* looks like this:

![Time line diagram](image)

*The Perfect Progressive Forms*

Perfect progressive forms use the following structure: *have* + *past participle of be* + *main verb + ing.*

**Present Perfect Progressive:** This tense is used to show that an action or condition that began in the past is continuing into the present and/or future.

**Examples:**

I *have been feeling* sick for two days.

I *have been studying* French for a long time.

Both of these examples indicate the condition or action began in the past and continues at the present - and may continue into the future.

On a time line *Present Perfect Continuous* looks like this:

![Time line diagram](image)

**Past Perfect Progressive:** This tense is used to denote and action or condition that began in the past and was interrupted by another action or condition.

**Examples:**

I *had been feeling* sick for two days, when suddenly I felt better.

I *had been studying* French for a long time, then I just gave it up.
Both of these examples indicate the condition or action began in the past and was interrupted by something else.

On a time line **Past Perfect Continuous** looks like this:

![Past Perfect Continuous Time Line](image)

**Future Perfect Progressive:** This tense is used to indicate that an action or condition will continue until a specific time in the future. The form for this tense is *will + have + been + main verb + ing*

**Examples:**

By the time I get to France, I **will have been studying** French for two years.

By the time I get married, I **will have been looking** for a wife for a long time.

Both of these examples indicate the condition or action will continue until (at least) a specific time in the future.

On a time line **Future Perfect Continuous** looks like this:

![Future Perfect Continuous Time Line](image)

Okay, this has been pretty exciting, but I think it is time for a break.
2.4 Classify the verb tenses in the following sentences

1. By the time I finish studying grammar, I will be an old man. _______

2. I love sushi! _______

3. I went to Koh Phuket last year and really loved it. _______

4. Ramon had been planning to buy an airplane, after he finished his pilot training, but he ran out of money. _______

5. By the time I finish my TEFL certification course, I will have been sitting in a classroom far too long. _______

6. My dog has been walking to work everyday since he was just a pup. _______

7. He will be walking to work for the rest of his life. _______

8. Jenny’s Alfa Romeo was running poorly by the time she drove back to Chiang Mai. _______

9. My student had talked me out of an “F”, so I gave him a “D”. ______

10. I hope that when I die, I will have lived a good enough life to come back next time as a sea otter. They really enjoy life! _______

11. Most teachers are making so much money that they don’t know what to do with it all! True or False? _______

12. Big bucks! Big bucks! I have earned big bucks this year! _______

Measure your expertise!

TEFL Genius: 12 correct
Pretty d*mn smart: 10-11
Know it all: 9
Party Guy/Gal: 7-8
Back to the books!: 0-6
What is an Adverb?
Adverbs are modifiers of verbs - and adjectives - and other adverbs. They generally answer questions about when (tonight), where (downtown), how (carefully), in what manner (quickly), and to what extent or degree (very).

Remember earlier we said some words can have several functions? Notice here that you would ordinarily think of downtown as a noun, but if we use it in the sentence: **Please meet me downtown tonight.** Downtown tells us where and is functioning as an adverb. So is tonight as it says when. Nouns that express time, place, size, measurement, degree or number - are often used as adverbs.

**Examples:**

Let’s go **home.**
Leopards can run through the night **very quickly.**

*Home* tells us *where.* (part of the definition of an adverb).
*Quickly* is an adverb as it tells us to what manner the leopard runs, and *very* is an adverb as it tells to what degree (*very* quickly) and it modifies the adverb quickly.

**Interrogative Adverbs** are used at the beginning of a sentence to form a question. These adverbs are *when, where,* and *how.* These make sense if you revisit the definition of an adverb above.

**Examples:**

*When* did you get here?
*Where* are going tonight?
*How long* were you gone?

What are Prepositions?
Prepositions denote relationships between certain words in a sentence. Prepositions are placed before a noun (or the article/quantifier preceding the noun) and helps establish a relationship between that noun and another noun—or between that noun and a verb.

*The book is on the table* - establishes the relationship of the book to the table. *Bob’s car fell off the bridge* - establishes the relationship of the verb *fell* to Bob’s car. Notice that this prepositional phrase - *off the bridge* - is working as an adverb. The phrase says *where* the car fell. Uh-oh, things can get complicated from here . . .
What are Conjunctions?
In Latin conjunction means “join together” and that’s what conjunctions do - they join words together. The most commonly used conjunctions are *and*, *or* and *but*. We’ll talk about others later in this guide.

Examples:

I am hot **and** tired, **but** still ready to party!
Oscar jumped into the pool **and** swam to the other side.
You can have the cash **or** the prize.

What are Interjections?
Interjections are used to express strong feeling or emotion, usually that occurs quickly. Sometimes called exclamations - you’ll notice they always come with an exclamation mark.

Examples:

*Ouch!*
*Great!*
*Oh no!*

*Oh no!* We are finished with the Parts of Speech section! What will we do for entertainment now?

2.5

Classify the underlined words in the sentence below.

(mark the part of speech under each word—be as specific as possible)

It was way after midnight when we finally got Raoul to confess that he

had planned the **most** successful bank robbery ever on Mars.

How did you do?
2.6 Classify the underlined words in the sentences below.
(Mark the part of speech - and verb tenses - under each word. Be as specific as possible)

1. International schools often pay more than language schools.
2. As a career, TEFL opens many international doors.
3. What do you intend to do with your TEFL certification?
4. I had started teaching EFL before my 39th birthday.
5. Many trials and tribulations await the classroom teacher.
6. When Ted turns 35, he will have been teaching for ten years.
7. I was already teaching when you were still a baby.
8. If I had started teaching when I was younger, I would have saved a lot more money.
9. How is it that life can be so rewarding, yet so challenging?
10. When the tsunami struck, I was sleeping on the couch.