



## Use a range of suffixes

Suffixes are a group of letters that are added to the end of root words, changing or adding to their meaning. Sometimes, a letter has to be added to the end of the root word before a suffix can be added.

refer + **ed** = **referred**  
refer + **ing** = **referring**

## Use a range of prefixes

Prefixes are a group of letters that are added to the beginning of a root word, changing their meaning.

**auto** + **matic** = **automatic**    **bi** + **focals** = **bifocals**  
**tele** + **vision** = **television**    **trans** + **port** = **transport**  
**aero** + **dynamic** = **aerodynamic**

## Spell words with silent letters

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**baguette**      **stomach**      **neighbour**  
**twelfth**      **rhyme**      **environment**

## Use semi-colons, colons or dashes to mark independent clauses

An independent clause is a clause that can stand alone as a sentence, often expressing a complete thought. Independent clauses can be joined together to combine ideas.

A colon (:) is used between two independent clauses where the second clause expands or explains the first.

**All the dance practice was worth it: Libby came in first place.**

A semi-colon (;) is used between two closely linked clauses, that balance each other.

**Ewelina wore the red shoes; Maya wore the blue shoes.**

A dash (—) is used when the sentence is more informal or to show shock or surprise.

**The book was very informative — I loved it!**

## Use formal and informal language

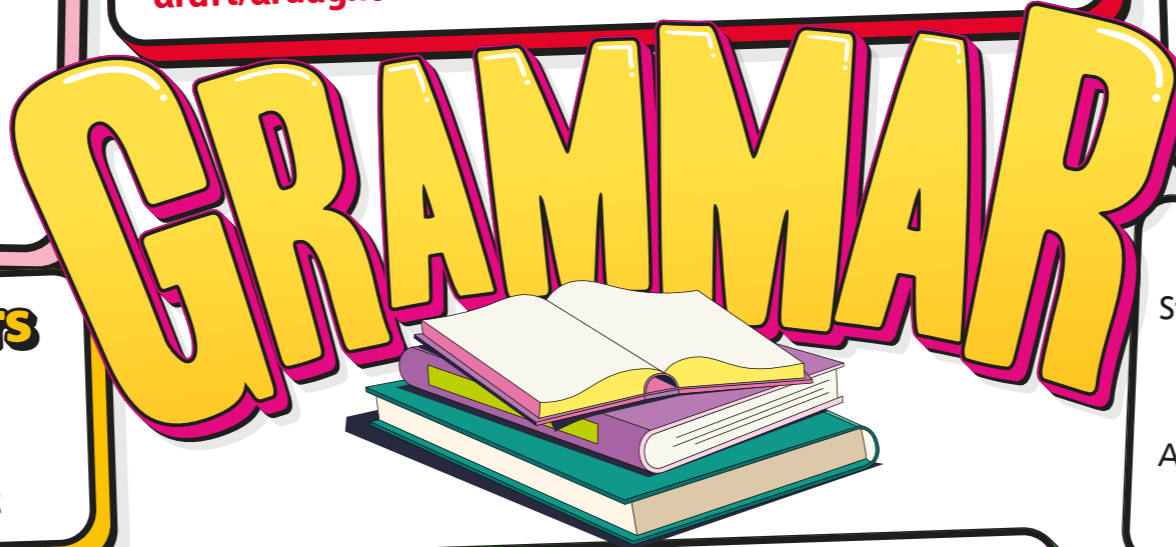
Informal language includes contractions (**don't**) and abbreviations (**TV**). Informal language is used when speaking to friends or people we know. Formal language avoids contractions, abbreviations and chatty language and is used for formal letters and pieces of writing.

**find out (informal) = discover (formal)**

## Spell homophones correctly

Homophones are two or more words that are spelled differently and have different meanings, but they are pronounced the same (or almost the same).

**principle/principal descent/dissent steel/steal**  
**draft/draught their/there/they're stationary/stationery**



## Use colons and semi-colons in lists

A colon (:) is a punctuation mark that is used at the start of a list to introduce the items listed.

A semi-colon (;) is a punctuation mark that is used to separate items in a complicated list.

**I would like to visit a number of European capital cities: Paris, France; Budapest, Hungary; and Oslo, Norway.**

## Use bullet points

Bullet points are used to list information clearly and concisely. They can make information easy to find. An introductory statement, known as a stem, is used to tell the reader what the list is about. A colon is used to introduce the bullet pointed list. Use a new line and bullet point for each item in the list.

**You need several items for cookery tomorrow:**

- **Your ingredients**
- **An apron**
- **A bowl**
- **A tea towel**

## Synonyms and Antonyms

Synonyms are words that have the same (or nearly the same) meaning.

**angry/livid/fuming/irate**

Antonyms are words that have the opposite meaning.

**fast/slow happy/sad**

## Use commas to clarify meaning

Commas are used to mark parts of a sentence, so the meaning is clear. They can completely change the meaning of a sentence if not used correctly!

**Let's eat, Nadia.** This shows the child is inviting his friend Nadia to join him when eating.

**Let's eat Nadia.** This shows the child is planning to eat Nadia!

## Use hyphens to avoid ambiguity

A hyphen (—) is a punctuation mark that is used to join words, making the meaning clear and avoiding ambiguity.

**A man-eating tiger** tells you that the tiger eats people.

**A man eating tiger** could mean that a man is eating the tiger!

## Use brackets, dashes or commas to indicate parenthesis

Parenthesis is an additional thought or piece of information that is inserted into a sentence which would make sense without it.

It can be added using brackets ( ), dashes -- or commas ...  
**London (the capital of England) has a population of approximately 9 million people.**

**London — the capital of England — has a population of approximately 9 million people.**

**London, the capital of England, has a population of approximately 9 million people.**



# GRAMMAR



## Use relative clauses

A relative clause comes directly after the noun it is referring to and provides more information about the noun. A relative clause usually begins with a relative pronoun (who, which, where, when, whose and that).

**The man, who had been waiting in the queue for a while, decided to leave.**

The relative pronoun can be omitted when it is the object of the clause.

**The house my dad built was destroyed.**

## Use a thesaurus

A thesaurus provides you with a list of synonyms that mean the same thing as the word you wish to use.

1. Choose the word you wish to find alternatives for.  
*E.g. ugly.*
2. Using the first letter of the word, turn to the section of the thesaurus that shows all words that begin with this letter. *E.g. For 'ugly', find the section that consists of all the words beginning with 'u'.*
3. Use the second and third letters of the word to find the word you are looking for.
4. Once you have found your word, read all the synonyms that could be used instead of that word and choose an appropriate one for your writing.  
*E.g. hideous, unsightly, repulsive.*

## Use adverbs or modal verbs

Adverbs and modal verbs can be used to show degrees of possibility (how likely something is to happen).

**Adverbs – The sky went black, so surely it was going to rain.**

**Modal verbs – If I try my best, I might score a goal.**

## Use the passive voice

A sentence where the subject does not perform the action of the verb. Instead, the action is done to the subject.

**The slipper was hidden by the mischievous dog.**  
**The kettle was boiled by the welcoming gentleman..**  
**The coffee was added to the mug.**

## Use expanded noun phrases

Expanded noun phrases can be used to combine information about a noun clearly and concisely.

**The energetic boy, who had an infectious laugh and beaming smile, bounced into the crowded room next to the kitchen.**

## Use the subjunctive form

The subjunctive form is a verb form that expresses things that could or should happen. It is used to express wishes, hopes, requests, suggestions or demands.

**It is recommended that you prepare the meal the day before.**  
**If I were a cat, I would sleep all day.**

## Use a range of devices to build cohesion

Cohesion means the text makes sense, flows and is easy to read and follow. A range of devices can be used to build cohesion –

Conjunctions link clauses and improve the flow. They express a relationship between ideas. Repeating a word or phrase helps to link ideas across paragraphs. Adverbials are words or phrases that provide more information about a verb or clause. Adverbials such as **on the other hand** or **as a consequence** can help to link/move ideas on. Ellipsis can help the flow of a sentence by removing unnecessary words. **'Mr Smith loved football but his wife didn't love football.'** can be changed to, **'Mr Smith loved football but his wife didn't.'**

## Use different layout devices

A range of devices can be used to make the layout of a text clearer and easier to read.

- Headings
- Sub-headings
- Columns
- Bullet points
- Tables

These are often used in non-fiction texts.

## Check spellings in a dictionary

Use the first four letters of a word to check a spelling or to locate a word's meaning using a dictionary.

1. Say the word aloud that you are trying to spell and identify the first four letters.  
*E.g. programme.*
2. Take the first letter of the word and locate that section in the dictionary. A dictionary is always written in alphabetical order.  
*E.g. For 'programme', locate the 'P' section.*
3. Repeat this process for the second, third and fourth letter of the word. *E.g. Find all the words that begin with 'pr', then 'pro' and then, 'prog'.*
4. Once you find the full spelling of the word, read the definition to check that it matches the word that you wish to use/spell.

## Use the perfect form of verbs

Perfect verb forms connect an event from the past to another point in time.

When using the past perfect tense, the word 'had' must be used, followed by a past tense verb.

**I had read the book before watching the film.**

When using the present perfect tense, the words 'has' or 'have' must be used, followed by a past tense verb.

**I have known my best friend for ten years.**

When using the future perfect tense, the words 'will have' must be used, followed by a past tense verb.

**I will have been playing cricket for two years in September.**