

Sentence Structure

In this lecture, you can learn about sentence structure in English. You will learn how to construct all kinds of sentences in English, from the simplest possible sentences to long, complex sentences which contain many different ideas. Practice using correct sentence structure whenever you study English.

What is the simplest sentence you can make in the English language? What does every sentence in English need? Every sentence needs a verb. The simplest sentence is imperative which means when you tell someone to do something. For example "Run!, Leave! , Work! "

These are the simplest sentences you can make in English. They're just one word long.

Of course, most sentences are longer than the previous imperative sentence. Most sentences also need a noun before the verb. The noun is the subject: S. + v. (subject plus verb) by this pattern you can make a simple sentence: for example: She left / he runs/ they are working. You can see that the verb can be in different forms, past or present, simple or continuous.. etc. The verb form doesn't change the structure of the sentence, the previous pattern (S. + V.) is always the same. This pattern is simple, and you can't say much by the simple sentences mentioned above.

| Let's add a little more information, take the sentence-: He runs, what could you add after "run" to make it longer?

- 1- You could add an adverb of place: 'He runs around the park'.
- 2- You could add an adverb of time: 'He runs every morning'.
- 3- You could add both: 'He runs around the park every morning'.
- 4- You could add an adverb of manner: 'He runs slowly'.

You have many choices, but they are also limited. In this case, you can use different kinds of adverbs: however, there are also certain parts of speech you can't use, for instance, you can't use another verb, a noun, or an adjective after 'run'; at least you can't use it in this particular meaning of 'run'.

Complement, what comes next? For example:

1. She likesWhat? She has to like s.th.
2. He wantsWhat? He has to want s.th.
3. We goWhere? We have to go somewhere.

They aren't complete sentences, why? Because they aren't finished; their meaning is incomplete.

Complements are a word or words you have to add after the verb to make the sentence complete. The "complement" can have many different forms. It can be a **noun**, a **verb**, an **adjective**, or an **adverb**. These can be a single word or phrases (more than one word). In other words, when we say a noun phrase we mean a noun, and when we say a verb phrase we mean a verb. For example **'a table'** is a noun, and **the wooden table which my mother gave me** is also a noun (phrase). Now, what are the possible complement of the example sentences above?

1. She likes a **strawberry**; (a noun) (What?)
2. She likes **swimming**; (a gerund:-ing form acts as a noun)
3. She likes **getting up before the sun rises**; (a gerund phrase) (when?)
4. She likes **to listen** to Quran while she works. (infinitive verb)

All the choices are still limited: only certain structures are possible.

The idea of complement isn't just for the first verb in the sentence, many words need a complement. For example, **She**

likes getting up. It is grammatically correct but it doesn't make any sense. When? Why? How? (What comes next?) It needs a complement to complete the idea. She likes to get up before (no sense), or She likes to get up before the sun (no sense) She likes to get up before the sun rises.

We can remember from that there are limited choices in what kind of word you can use next. To speak or write in clear English you don't just need new English words, you need to know what can come next: how to make a sentence. For example with verbs like **want** or **like** you don't just know the verb but what comes after using it: what kind of complement it needs.

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