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**1ST Year LMD / Group 3&4**

**Word Order in English Sentences**

To understand the order of words let us consider two sentences:

1. Basic mathematics **is** easy to solve.
2. Basic mathematics to solve **is** easy.

Both the sentences convey the same meaning, but when we follow the grammar, the first sentence will be correct. The mistake in the second sentence is the order in which it is constructed, thus following the correct order of words is important while constructing the sentence.

**1.Standard Word Order**

Sentences in English use a standard general order that can be simply explained as:

**Subject - Verb – Object**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Verb(s)** | **Object** |
| I | speak | English |
| I | can speak | English |

For sentences with more information, we can add other words as **indirect object, direct object, place, and time**.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **Subject** |  **Verb(s)** | **Indirect object** | **Direct object** |  **Place** |  **Time** |
|  I |  Will tell |  you |  the story |  at school |  tomorrow |

Place and time are interchangeable referring to their place in the sentence.

* I will tell you the story **tomorrow at school**.

We can also put time and/or place in front of the sentence as well:

* **Tomorrow at school**, I will tell you the story.

Not all groups of words are necessary in all the sentences. A basic sentence should at least have a subject and verb (eg3).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Verb (s)** | **Indirect object** | **Direct object** | **Prepositional phrase(place)** | **Time** |
|  He |  went |  |  |  home |  |
|  They |  made |  |  a mess |  on the floor | this morning |
| 3.The baby |  cried |  |  |  |  |
|  The bird |  flew |  |  | past the tower |  at noon |
|  I |  had |  |  dinner |  With Jim |  |

**2.Word Order in Negative Sentences**

The word order in negative sentences is the same as in affirmative sentences.

* Paul is a nice person.
* Paul is **not** a nice person.

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The difference is that negative statements must contain **not**, and must have either an auxiliary verb or a modal auxiliary. In these sentences, **not** comes after the auxiliary or modal verb, but before any other verbs (main verb). So, the word order is:

 **subject + auxiliary v/ modal auxiliary + not + main verb**

* Kate is not working this evening.
* I will not go to the party.

|  |
| --- |
|  **Auxiliary Verbs** |
|  **Be** |  **Do** |  **Have** |
|  Am |  do |  have |
|  Are |  does |  has |
|  Is |  did |  had |
|  was/were |  |  |
|  **Modal Auxiliaries** |
| Can |  could |  should |
| Might |  may |  shall |
| ought to |  must |  would |
| Will |  |  |

* If the verb phrase does not contain one of these verbs. It is necessary to add the supporting auxiliary verb **do.**
* The present and the past simple tenses of the main verbs take the appropriate form of

-( do+ not + base form of the main verb. For example:

* He runs. He does not run.
* He ran. He did not run.
* Lynn does not work overtime now. I did not see the film.

**3.Question Structure**

**a. Questions that can be answered with Yes or No**

To form questions, the auxiliary verb, or a modal auxiliary comes before the subject.

* Have you done the homework?
* Can you help me?

When we have a verb other than **be** as the main verb and when there is no auxiliary or modal as part of a verb phrase, use the appropriate form of the auxiliary verb **do**.

* He saw the film.
* **Did** he see the film?
* The teacher knows the correct answer
* **Does** the teacher know the correct answer?
* **Do** you hear me well?
* **Is** it raining now?
* **Are** you sure?

**b. Information Questions (Wh Question Word)**

We can form questions with question words, which usually come at the very beginning of the sentence, before the verb. For example, when, where, why, what, and how.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  **Question Word** |  **Main Verb** |  **Subject** |
|  Why  |  is |  that door open |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **Question Word** |  **Auxiliary Verb** |  **Subject** |  **Main Verb** |
|  What What |  does did |  The book he |  Discuss do |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **Question Word** |  **Modal Auxiliary** |  **Subject** |  **Main Verb** |
|  When Where |  Can can |  I we |  read the book go this weekend |

Sometimes question words replace the subject, when the subject is absent. The word order remains the same, without a subject.

* What happened in the garden?
* Who dropped the book?