

# GOODNESS GRACIOUS GRAMMAR



## GETTING STARTED



You use grammar every time you read or write or speak. Grammar gives you all the rules about how to put words together in sentences. Using the right grammar helps other people to understand what you mean.

You can make short, sharp sentences, like this:

“Get lost,” she snapped.

You can be poetic:

The crafty creature slowly crept; the terrified child shivered and wept ...

And you can inform:

The two-toed sloth is a tree-dwelling tropical mammal not noted for its speed.

### Extra Information

**Grammar Extra.** Throughout this section, you'll find 'Grammar Extras' that give you more detail on the subject you have just read about – these will really help you impress your teachers!

**Grammar Guidance.** These will give you useful tips and suggestions that will come in handy when you put grammar into practice.

**Did You Know?** Lastly, you'll find extra bits of information under the 'Did You Know?' headings – interesting stuff ranging from the weird to the wonderful.



## THE PARTS OF SPEECH

Every type of word in a sentence has a name and these names are known as the 'parts of speech'. This poem gives you a handy reminder of each of them:

Every name is called a **noun**,  
 As field and fountain, street and town.  
 In place of noun the **pronoun** stands  
 As he and she can clap their hands.  
 The **adjective** describes a thing,  
 As magic wand and bridal ring.  
 The **verb** means action, something done –  
 To read, to write, to jump, to run.  
 How things are done, the **adverbs** tell,  
 As quickly, slowly, badly, well.  
 The **preposition** shows relation,  
 As in the street, or at the station.  
**Conjunctions** join, in many ways,  
 Sentences, words, or phrase and phrase.  
 The **interjection** cries out, "Hark!  
 I need an exclamation mark!"  
 Through poetry, we learn how each  
 Of these make up the **parts of speech**.

The information on the following pages tells you more about the parts of speech.

## HOW ABOUT NOUNS?



A noun is a name for a thing, a person or a place. Words such as 'bus', 'chair', 'dragon', 'firework', 'hosepipe', 'maggot', 'octopus', 'teacher' and 'tree' are all nouns.

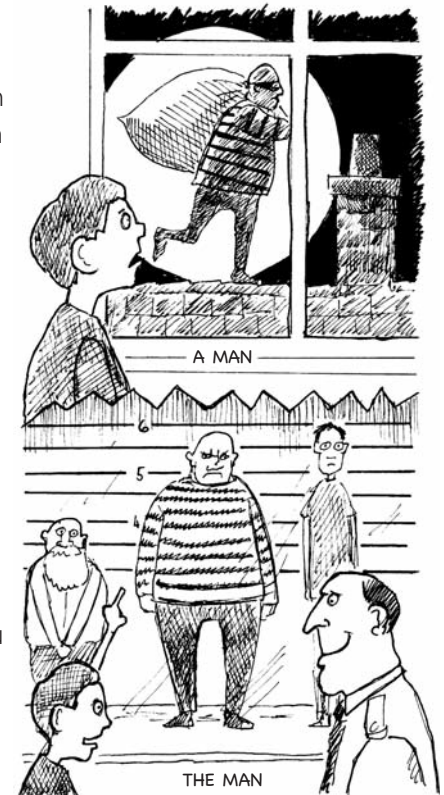
### Common Nouns

There are different types of noun and the easiest type to spot are called 'common nouns'. These are names for ordinary things, such as a book, a box or a button. They are also names for less ordinary things, such as a platypus, an asteroid or an earthquake, but they are all still common nouns. Remember, if you can put 'the', 'a' or 'an' in front of a word, it is probably a common noun.

### Grammar Extra

'The', 'a' and 'an' are short words with long names in grammar. They are known as the 'definite article' (the) and the 'indefinite article' (a and an).

If you say *a* man, you are talking about *any* man. If you say *the* man, you are talking about a particular man – a *definite* man.



## Proper Nouns

Some nouns start with a capital letter. These are called proper nouns. They name one specific thing, such as a particular person or a particular country. Your name is a proper noun and so is the name of the country in which you live. Here are some more examples of proper nouns, followed by the matching common noun:

Proper Noun	(Common Noun)
William	(boy)
Potter	(surname)
Norway	(country)
Friday	(day)
October	(month)

### Did You Know?

The word 'sandwich' is a common noun these days, but it didn't start out that way. Legend has it that a tasty snack of meat placed between two pieces of bread was created for the Earl of Sandwich – Sandwich is a place in England, so it is a proper noun in this case – and named after him.

The words 'cardigan', 'leotard', 'mac' and 'silhouette' were people's names, and so were once proper nouns, too.

## Abstract Nouns

The word 'abstract' describes something that is an idea rather than an object. Abstract nouns are words that describe things, but not things that actually exist as objects. You can't see them or hear them, and you can't touch, smell or taste them either.

'Excitement', 'failure', 'friendship', 'generosity', 'impatience', 'poverty', 'sleep', 'success' and 'virtue' are all abstract nouns.

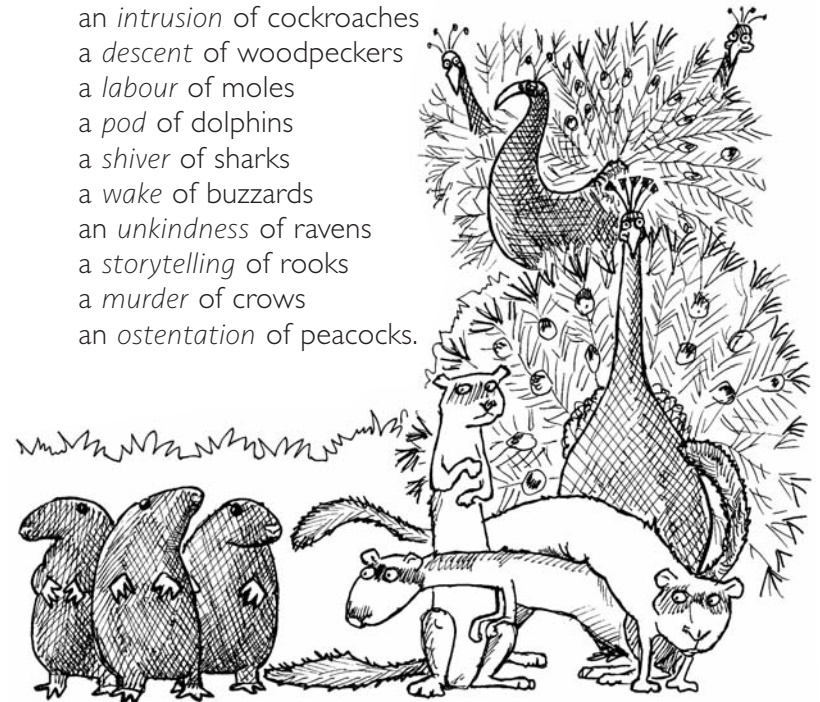
## Collective Nouns

'Collective nouns' describe groups of people or things. For example, a class is a group of school children, an army is a group of soldiers, and a deck is a group of cards. 'Audience', 'bunch', 'collection', 'family', 'jury', 'orchestra', 'parliament' and 'team' are all collective nouns.

### Did You Know?

There are lots of collective nouns for animals, too. You probably know some of the ordinary ones, such as a flock of sheep or a herd of cows, but how about these particularly unusual ones?

a *business* of ferrets  
 an *intrusion* of cockroaches  
 a *descent* of woodpeckers  
 a *labour* of moles  
 a *pod* of dolphins  
 a *shiver* of sharks  
 a *wake* of buzzards  
 an *unkindness* of ravens  
 a *storytelling* of rooks  
 a *murder* of crows  
 an *ostentation* of peacocks.

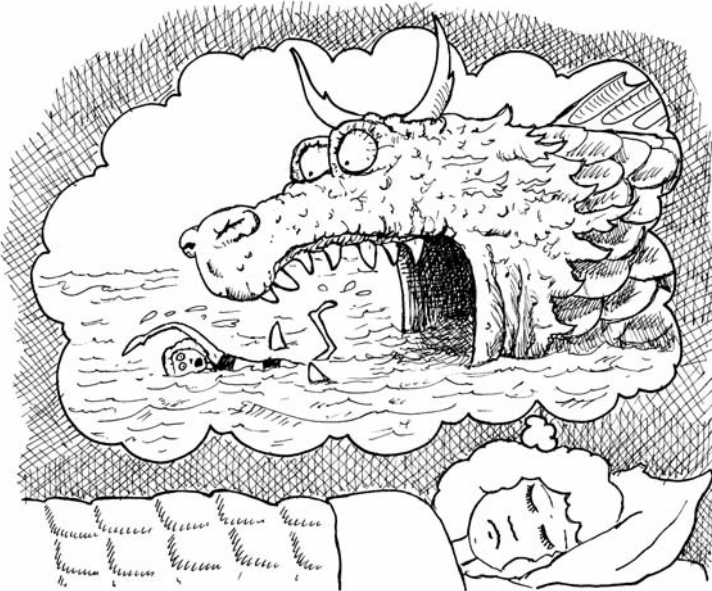




## PUT PRONOUNS IN \_\_\_\_\_

'Pronouns' are words which are used as stand-ins for nouns. This means that you can use them instead of nouns to really liven up your speaking or writing. Try reading this:

Lucy spotted a sea monster. The sea monster had enormous horns and the sea monster was swimming straight towards Lucy. Lucy couldn't outswim the sea monster. Could Lucy tame the sea monster, or hypnotize the sea monster? The sea monster was getting nearer. The sea monster's huge mouth opened in a roar. Help! The sea monster was going to eat Lucy ... Then Lucy woke up.



It's a bit repetitive, isn't it? Now see what happens when you put some pronouns in:

Lucy spotted a sea monster. It had enormous horns and it was swimming straight towards her. She couldn't outswim it. Could she tame it, or hypnotize it? It was getting nearer. Its huge mouth opened in a roar. Help! The sea monster was going to eat her... Then Lucy woke up.

See how much snappier it is, thanks to a few pronouns? In the paragraph above, 'it', 'she' and 'her' are all pronouns.

### What's Mine Is Yours

The words listed below are called 'personal pronouns'. The words in the first column are pronouns that you can use as the subject of a sentence. The pronouns in the second column can be used as the object in a sentence. (See pages 44 to 48 for more on subjects and objects.) The third column contains 'possessive' pronouns. These are used to show that something belongs to someone – or to several people:

Subject	Object	Possessive
I	me	mine
you	you	yours
he	him	his
she	her	hers
it	it	its
we	us	ours
you (plural)	you	yours
they	them	theirs

**Grammar Guidance.** Avoid using a pronoun if it makes the meaning of your sentence unclear. For example:

If the children don't finish their chips, put them in the bin.

Will the chips or the children end up in the bin?