

# 大学英语语法

A CONCISE ENGLISH GRAMMAR  
FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

林立 王丽萍 主编



南海出版公司

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## 大学英语语法

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# Foreword

Grammar teaching is generally considered necessary in language learning. To learn a language, for one thing, is to acquire its rules, with which one can create an infinite number of grammatical sentences. This book aims to help build up grammatical competence in learners.

Already there are many grammar books and course books on grammar out on the market. This book, however, has its unique features. First, it is written in English. Many teachers feel that using English to explain English often facilitate teaching and learning processes, particularly so for college students, who have acquired some basic knowledge of grammar, and want to systematize and consolidate this body of knowledge.

Second, this book deals with the most crucial part of most areas of English grammar. It does not mean to be exhaustive in coverage nor thorough in details. The choice of topics for explanation is no doubt subjective. Those that are assumed to be easier or less problematic for junior college students or individuals of intermediate level are left out. Thus conciseness resulted.

Third, the book contains a large number of exercises. However, dull repetition and lengthy practice are avoided. Though the exercises are not entirely exam-oriented, it is believed that they will be of some help in passing exams for both English or non-English majors.

Many teachers of different schools participated in the writing of this book. Apart from the common goal and shared interest in English grammar, the market economy also helped to bring these teachers together. Obviously, no one individual, nor one school can possibly consume enough copies for the book to be profitably published for a publisher. We all cherish the opportunity for cooperation and feel happy to be able to jointly contribute our bit to the English teaching in China.

The keys to Exercises and Index are provided for the easy use of the book. The References included show not only the sources we went to, but also our deep indebtedness to these authors. Some chapters of this book rely on their views of English grammar, some adopted their classification systems, some paraphrase their ideas, and others even, directly or indirectly, quote their original phrases. We hope learners will find time to consult these works for a more thorough and technical treatment.

*Garden Village, 1996*

*J. L. W. L. P.*

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# Chapter 1 Nouns

A noun is the name of a person, place, or a thing, or some quality, state, or action. In a sentence it typically functions as subject, object and complement.

## I. CLASSIFICATION OF NOUNS

1. **Sementically**, nouns can be divided into two classes: proper nouns (专有名词) and common nouns (普通名词).

Proper nouns are the names of particular persons, places or things while common nouns are the common names shared by a class of living beings or things, materials or abstract notions.

2. Common nouns can be subdivided into the following.

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| (1) individual nouns (个体名词) eg | <i>worker, cat, book, plane</i>                 |
| (2) collective nouns (集合名词) eg | <i>police, family, people, furniture</i>        |
| (3) mass nouns (物质名词) eg       | <i>air, water, glass, silver</i>                |
| (4) abstract nouns (抽象名词) eg   | <i>happiness, hatred, revolution, blindness</i> |

3. However a noun sometimes does not stick loyally to one class of the above-mentioned division. It shifts to one of the other classes. This shift is mainly determined by whether it is used as a count noun (可数名词) or as a mass noun. Thus the countability of nouns is quite important.

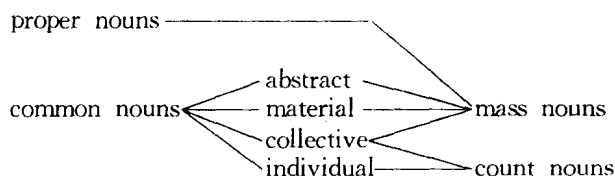
## II. COUNT NOUNS AND MASS NOUNS

1. **Formally**, nouns can be classified into count nouns and mass nouns. The distinction according to countability into count nouns and mass nouns is basic in English. Count nouns are the names of something that can be counted and take definite and indefinite articles and admit a plural form, eg *book, teacher, cup, rabbit*.

Mass nouns are the names of something that can not be counted and take zero articles as well as definite article and indefinite quantifier, but does not have a plural form, eg *water, Lenin, bread, youth*.

2. For most of the cases, individual nouns and most of the collective nouns are count nouns. Proper nouns, material nouns, abstract nouns and the rest of the collective nouns are mass nouns.

Below is a figure of noun classification and its countability.



3. The above figure is true most of the time. Yet, as mentioned above, nouns sometimes shift from one class to another. It is quite natural to see a mass noun used as a count noun and a count noun as a mass noun. For example:

*Several youths were playing outside the room.*

(一些年轻人在室外玩耍。) (*abstract*—→*individual*)

*They need more bricks.*

(他们需要更多的砖。) (*material*—→*individual*)

*Do you have any grey hairs?*

(你有白头发吗?) (*collective*—→*individual*)

*We see more Lei Fengs now.*

(我们看到了许许多多的雷锋。) (*proper*—→*individual*)

Of course, count nouns can shift to mass nouns, too, with the change of their meanings:

*There is not much room here.*

(这里没有多少地方。) (*individual*—→*abstract*)

*I want to enjoy some more lamb.*

(我想再吃点羔羊肉。) (*individual*—→*material*)

*A large body of facts will be brought to the court.*

(大量犯罪的事实将带到法庭。) (*individual*—→*collective*)

*They are reading **The Engineers**.*

(他们正在阅读《工程师》杂志。) (*individual*—→*proper*)

## III. NUMBER

As we have noted, nouns are divided into count nouns and mass nouns. Mass nouns do not have a plural. Count nouns bear the forms of both singular number and plural number.

1. A noun usually takes its original form as its singular form. eg *a writer, a desk, an apple*.

But the plural form of a noun is not so simple as the singular form.

2. Formation of the plural

(1) regular plural:

cases	formation	example
most nouns	+s	cats, books
words ending in -s, -x, -z, -ch, -sh	+es	brushes, boxes
words ending in consonants +y	y→i+es	factories, cities
words ending in -f, or -fe	f, fe→v+es	leaves, knives
words ending in consonants +o	+es	Negroes, potatoes

**Note:**

If the proper nouns end in "y" and "o", the formation of their forms is to add "s" not "es" to them, e. g. *the Henrys, Romeos*.

**(2) Irregular plural:**

formation	example
vowel changing a → e oo → e ou → i	man → men foot → feet mouse → mice
adding "(r) en"	ox → oxen child → children
no change	deer → deer means → means jin → jin
loan words -um → -a -on → -a -is → -es -us → -i -ix → -ices	bacterium → bacteria phenomenon → phenomena thesis → theses stimulus → stimuli appendix → appendices

**(3) Plural of compound nouns:**

formation	example
only changing the main component	boy friends runners-up lady drivers
changing both of the components (the modifier is "man" or "woman")	men servants women doctors
changing the last component (with no noun as the main component)	grown-ups good-for-nothings

**3. Use of count nouns**

Individual nouns and most collective nouns are count nouns. Singular expresses the number of one. Plural has the meaning of more than one.

**(1) Use of singular**

- 1) With the meaning of "one", "any", it doesn't matter which one it refers to.

*I have a book to read.*

*You'd better consult a driver about it.*

- 2) With an individual noun to represent the whole class.



*A teacher should be strict with both himself and his students.*

- 3) Some collective nouns being regarded as one unit.

*The class is small. It is easy to teach.*

*The government pays no attention to its citizens.*

- 4) Some collective nouns such as *machinery, merchandise, foliage, etc.*

- 5) Some words ending in -s with the meaning of scientific subjects, games, disease, and proper nouns.

*Linguistics is taught here in this department.*

*Is draughts a game for two?*

*The United States is not the largest in this area.*

- (2) Use of plural

- 1) With the meaning of more than one.

*Two dogs are running after him.*

*Here are the books you want.*

- 2) Names of things consisting of two similar halves, eg *scissors, shears, shorts, spectacles, trousers, etc.* (but "a pair of..." is often used as singular.)

*The trousers are too long for me.*

*This pair of trousers is too long for me.*

- 3) Some verbal nouns ending in -ing

*belongings, earnings, savings, surroundings, etc.*

- 4) Some nouns with a certain sense such as

*arms, clothes, remains, stairs, wages, etc.*

- 5) Some collective nouns

*cattle, clergy, police, etc.*

- 6) Some collective nouns used to refer to members of the whole.

*Our family are having a discussion now.*

#### IV. SPECIAL POINTS

1. Material nouns do not have a plural, but certain nouns can have their plural in the following cases:

- (1) To express several or different kinds

*A large number of metals have been found in the mountains.*

- (2) Used in a much broader meaning

*They saw several dead animals on the sands.*

- (3) To omit unit nouns

*I'd like 4 teas and 6 lemonades.*

2. Certain abstract nouns are countable. They have a plural.

*I kicked the door open after a few knocks at it.*

3. Proper nouns are generally regarded as mass nouns. But they take a plural in the fol-

lowing cases:

- (1) All the members of a certain family

*The Smiths are very kind to us.*

- (2) Two or more people of the same name

*We have 3 Joneses and 5 Marys here in the grade.*

### Exercises

#### I. Choose the correct plural forms.

1. We found two \_\_\_\_\_ (deer/deers) in a large cage in the zoo.
2. The wagon is being pulled by \_\_\_\_\_ (oxes/oxen).
3. We have gathered enough \_\_\_\_\_ (data/datas) on the subject.
4. Three \_\_\_\_\_ (Swiss/Swisses) are over there in front of a car.
5. Those little \_\_\_\_\_ (mouse/mice) are lovely.
6. He likes going sight-seeing with his \_\_\_\_\_ (boys friends/boy friends).
7. There are more \_\_\_\_\_ (woman/women) doctors here.
8. They are \_\_\_\_\_ (goods-for nothing/good-for-nothings).

#### II. Choose the correct one of the two choices.

1. Measles \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) being talked about among those parents.
2. Physics \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) my favourite subject.
3. The *New York Times* \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) published daily.
4. The Andes \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) rich in minerals, especially copper, gold and silver.
5. That iron works \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) being built in the town.
6. Our family \_\_\_\_\_ (has/have) agreed not to exchange gifts this year.
7. Thirty minutes \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) enough for me to finish my homework.
8. This pair of shoes \_\_\_\_\_ (is/are) not of the same size.

#### III. Decide whether the followingsentences are correct. (I=incorrect, C=correct)

1. *Great Expectations* were written by Dickens in 1860.
2. Why do you order 4 coffees since Jack and Jane can't come?
3. The Henries are very kind to their neighbours.
4. I want some white chalks.
5. As youth he should show the enthusiasm.
6. Their advice is fairly sound, and so are his opinions.
7. Domestic cattle provide us with milk, beef and hides.
8. The data you have got is incorrect.

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## Chapter 2 Articles

The English articles are a type of determiner (限定词). They can take three forms: indefinite article (不定冠词), definite article (定冠词) and zero article (零冠词).

Semantically, articles can be used for generic reference (类指), specific reference (特指) and unique reference (独指).

Generic reference is intended when we think of people or things in their entire class, eg

*The dog is a faithful animal.*  
*Dogs are faithful animals.*  
*A dog is a faithful animal.* } All dogs are faithful animals:

With specific reference, we refer to specific specimens of a class, eg

*The dog is sleeping.*  
*A dog is sleeping.* } A specific dog is sleeping.

Some names have unique reference; they take zero article, eg

*Father is here.*

*Dr. Stone, South Asia, Mount Everest*

### I. THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

#### 1. Forms of the indefinite article

The form **a** is used before a word beginning with a consonant, or a vowel with a consonant sound;

a man, a car, a pilot, a college  
 a European, a UN spokesman, a University

The form **an** is used before words beginning with a vowel (a, e, i, o, u) or words beginning with a mute *h*;

an aunt, an invention, an egg, an honour

or individual letters spoken with a vowel sound;

an X-ray, an MP, an SOS, an FBI agent

#### 2. Use of a/an

Meaning	Examples
(a specific) one	A car is waiting outside. She bought an ice-cream.
any	A cow has horns. A soldier must obey orders.

each, per	He earns ¥1000 a month. Take the medicine three times a day.
a certain	A Mr. Brown came to see you this morning. I remember there was a Miss Smith at the party.

## II. THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

### 1. Form of the definite article

**the** is the same for singular and plural and for all genders:

the boy	the girl	the student
the boys	the girls	the students

### 2. Use of the definite article

	Examples	
the + superlative/first/second, etc (specific reference)	the best student the first day	the only way the most important affair
the + adjective (refer to a class of people)	the affluent the unemployed	the black the privileged
the + proper noun (unique reference)	the Atlantic the West	the Middle East the Gulf of Mexico
the + plural surname (refers to a family)	the Smiths	the Browns

## III. THE ZERO ARTICLE

Below are some groups of common nouns without articles, chiefly occurring in idiomatic expressions. They appear in left-hand column. For contrast, parallel examples with regular uses of the article are given in the right hand column.

### Without article

#### 1. Institutions, etc.

be in	+ bed church prison hospital <esp BrE>
go to	

### With article

lie down on the bed  
walk towards the church  
drive past the prison  
look for the hospital

be at go to	> +	school
		college
		sea
		(the) university <BrE>
		the university <AmE>

go	home
be	at home
	in town
leave	town

## 2. Means of Transport (with by)

travel leave come	+	by bicycle
		by bus
		by car
		by boat/ship
		by train
		by plane

## 3. Times of the day and night

They met +	at dawn, at daybreak
	at sunrise, at sunset
	at noon, at midnight
	at dusk, at twilight
	at night, by night

## 4. Meals

We'll	+	have	breakfast
		stay for	
She arrived	+	before	+ tea <esp BrE>
		at	
		after	
Dinner			dinner
			supper

Dinner will be served  
at 6 o'clock.

## 5. Parallel phrases

They walked +	arm in arm.
	hand in hand.
They are	husband and wife.
We met	face to face.

go into the school  
The college has a new building.  
look out towards the sea  
play against the university

A university is the home of learning.  
approach the town

ride on the bicycle  
sit in the bus  
sleep in the car  
disembark from the ship  
catch the train  
board the plane

during the day  
admire the sunrise/sunset  
in the afternoon  
invisible in the dusk  
wake up in the night

Were you at the lunch with the chairman?  
Have you made (me ) tea?

She was preparing (the) dinner.  
The supper was cold.

The dinner was well.

He took her by the arm.  
What have you got in your hand?  
She is the wife of a famous artist.  
He punched me right in the face.

## Exercises

### I. Fill in each of the blanks with an appropriate article.

1. George is \_\_\_\_\_ successful musician, but he is not \_\_\_\_\_ Beethoven.
2. She holds \_\_\_\_\_ post of \_\_\_\_\_ secretary to the company.
3. Give me \_\_\_\_\_ knife and \_\_\_\_\_ fork, please.
4. He took \_\_\_\_\_ pen, \_\_\_\_\_ paper, and \_\_\_\_\_ ink, walked to \_\_\_\_\_ table, sat down, and began to write.
5. It is \_\_\_\_\_ key, but it is not \_\_\_\_\_ key that I am looking for.
6. He listened to \_\_\_\_\_ music, \_\_\_\_\_ eyes half closed.
7. Professor Smith will give us \_\_\_\_\_ series of \_\_\_\_\_ lectures on \_\_\_\_\_ history and geography of \_\_\_\_\_ United States.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ steam engine was invented in \_\_\_\_\_ 18th century. This was how \_\_\_\_\_ Industrial Revolution began.
9. I prefer travelling by \_\_\_\_\_ plane to train.
10. The boy ate \_\_\_\_\_ couple of \_\_\_\_\_ oranges and gave \_\_\_\_\_ remainder to \_\_\_\_\_ others.

### II. Insert appropriate articles in the blanks of the following passages.

#### A

Every summer 1 Time invites 2 number of 3 talented college students to 4 New York City offices to get 5 taste of 6 life and 7 journalism at 8 news magazine. And most years, we published 9 letter to our readers about 10 young journalists' experiences here. When Luiza was in 11 grade schools in 12 1980, she read 13 description like this one and decided that someday she would apply for 14 Time internship. Nearly 15 decade later, she did.

#### B

If you ever visit 1 United States, you will probably use only 2 four of 3 paper bills now in 4 circulation; 5 one-dollar bill, 6 five-dollar bill, 7 ten-dollar bill, and 8 twenty-dollar bill. On three of 9 bills you will find 10 pictures of 11 presidents of 12 United States. On 13 one dollar bill is 14 picture of George Washington, 15 first president; on 16 five-dollar bill, 17 picture of Abraham Lincoln, 18 sixteenth president. And 19 picture of Andrew Jackson, 20 seventh president, appears on 21 twenty-dollar bill. 22 ten-dollar bill has 23 picture of 24 first secretary of 25 Treasury, Alexander Hamilton.

#### C

It took me only 1 few minutes to come to 2 foot of 3 Cliff Bath. Half-way up I paused to enjoy 4 sight of 5 purple hills stretching away to my right and to my

left 6 open sea. When I reached 7 top I had left all 8 signs of 9 habitation behind me. 10 moorland turf was springy under my feet, 11 air was like 12 wine and I felt rejuvenated and intoxicated with it. Glancing seaward 13 minute or two later, I was surprised to notice that 14 sky was already aflame with 15 sunset. 16 air grew perceptibly cooler and I began to look forward to 17 delectable hot meal I should have when I reached 18 inn. It seemed to be getting dark amazingly quickly. I did not think that I had walked unduly slowly and I was at 19 loss to account for 20 exceptionally early end of 21 daylight, until I recollected that on 22 previous visits I had walked in 23 high summer and now it was 24 October and 25 nights were drawing in.

III. Translate the following pairs of sentences, paying attention to the italicized words.

1. a. Light travels faster than *sound*.  
b. Be quiet. Don't let me hear *a sound*.
2. a. He has been elected *member* of the parliament.  
b. *A member* of parliament serves for five years.
3. a. On weekends, people always go to *market* to buy a quantity of goods for the week.  
b. I met an old friend of mine in *the market* yesterday.
4. a. *Husband and wife* ought to stand on an equal footing.  
b. *The husband* is an army officer and *the wife* works in the hospital.
5. a. We call him *thief* who takes away things without knowledge and permission of the owner.  
b. *A thief* was caught last night, but it is not *the thief* who stole my bike.
6. a. *A book* I want has been acquired by the library.  
b. *The book* I want has been checked out.
7. a. *The dinner* for her wedding was held in her father's house.  
b. *Dinner* is at half past seven.
8. a. *Hotels* are almost the same all over the world.  
b. I haven't been to *the hotel* but I have heard of it.
9. a. *A Smith* called you this morning. He said he would call you again this evening.  
b. I don't know anyone called *Smith*.
10. a. *Class* begins at eight.  
b. She didn't come to *the class*, because she has got a temperature.

# Chapter 3 Pronouns: an introduction

## I. SUBCLASSES OF PRONOUNS

Pronouns (代词) are words which can replace nouns or noun phrases. Pronouns consist of:

- Personal Pronouns (人称代词)
- Possessive Pronouns (物主代词)
- Reflexive Pronouns (反身代词或自身代词)
- Reciprocal Pronouns (相互代词)
- Demonstrative Pronouns (指示代词)
- Interrogative Pronouns (疑问代词)
- Relative Pronouns (关系代词)
- Indefinite Pronouns (不定代词)

Before dealing with the different subclasses of pronouns, we'll discuss common characteristics in relation to the categories of person (人称), case (格), gender (性), and number (数).

## II. PERSON, CASE, GENDER, NUMBER

1. Person: Personal, possessive, and reflexive pronouns have distinctions of person.

1st person = the speaker (singular I/plural we, etc.)

2nd person = the person addressed (you, etc.)

3rd person = "the rest", one or more persons or things mentioned, etc. (singular: he/she/it, plural: they, etc.)

English makes no difference between singular and plural number in the 2nd person except for reflexive pronouns:

*If you don't believe me, you can go and see for yourself.*

*If you don't believe me, you can go and see for yourselves.*

Person used in the sentence must be in concordance with the antecedent (先行项):

*Helen and I have applied for the scholarship, but we don't know whether we can get it.*

*You and Peter are welcome. You may go with us.*

*John and his brother felt very sad because of their mother's death.*

*You've got a pretty car. When did you buy it?*

2. Case

Personal pronouns and interrogative pronouns have three cases: Subjective Case (主格), Objective Case (宾格) and Genitive Case (所有格).

**subjective** I/we/he/she/they/who



**objective**      me/us/him/her/them/who(m)

**genitive**      my/mine; our/ours; his/his; her/hers; their/theirs; whose/whose

Other pronouns in English have only two cases: common case (通格)(somebody, one) and genitive case (somebody's, one's).

### 3. Gender

The 3rd person singular of personal, reflexive and possessive pronouns is further distinguished by natural gender (自然性别).

**masculine** (阳性)      he/his/himself/his

**feminine** (阴性)      she/her/herself/hers

**neuter** (中性)      it/itself/its

Relative pronouns also manifest a distinction between personal (who, whom) and non-personal (which).

Therefore, these pronouns must be consistent with the antecedents of the sentences in gender.

(1) Masculine nouns or feminine nouns as antecedents;

The choice of the pronoun depends on the antecedent of the sentence. If the antecedent is a masculine noun or noun phrase, "he (or his, etc)" is used.

*The little girl is lovely. We all like **her**.*

*The old man lives by **himself**.*

(2) Neuter nouns as antecedents;

Neuter nouns refer to such lifeless nouns as *book, boat, car, room*, and so on. Neuter pronouns (it/its/itself) are usually used to replace neuter nouns:

*I posted the letter two weeks ago. **He** must have already received **it**.*

*That book has lost **its** cover. I will put a new one on **it** tomorrow.*

Sometimes the speaker carries his emotion in his tone, so he would adopt **he** or **she** rather than **it**.

*The sun is shining in all **his** splendid beauty.*

*China is steadily growing economically. I love **her** much.*

*The moon glittered as **she** rolled through the deep vault of a cloudless sky.*

*The cat leaped onto my bed and coiled **herself** there.*

*The sailors saw a ship in the distance. **She** was sailing toward them.*

3) Nouns of common gender as antecedents;

Nouns of common gender (通格) can be used to mean both masculine and feminine (baby, infant, student, doctor, lawyer, professor, etc.) When such nouns appear as antecedents, we usually use 3rd person to replace them.

*A good teacher should leave **his** students more time to think.*

*Good teachers should leave **their** students more time to think.*

*There is a baby in the pram. Why, **it** is crying. (without knowing the sex)*

*Your baby is crying in the pram. **She** must be hungry. (The baby is a girl.)*