

BUILDING ENGLISH SENTENCES

with auxiliary verbs

Eugene J. Hall

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Foreword

This series of books is designed to give oral and written practice on the basic sentence patterns of English. It also shows the ways in which basic patterns can be combined into longer sentences. By pointing out similarities of structure, it should help prevent students of English from getting lost in a syntactic maze.

Language is not just a finite number of patterns and sentences. More important, it is a system for creating and understanding sentences which have never been uttered before. These books contain exercises that will give some of this ability to generate and comprehend new sentences to students of English. They contain extensive drills on the basic syntactic patterns of English, the handful of patterns that are repeated over and over again even in the longest sentences. They also give drills on the essentially repetitive nature of syntactic composition. The aim of these books is to give a cumulative, synthesizing and meaningful experience with the language.

Building English Sentences is not intended as a complete course in English, but rather as a series of exercises to supplement the many courses which already exist. Because of its emphasis on the syntactic aspect of language experience, it does not include material on phonology or on many of the cultural features which are necessary to achieve complete understanding. Therefore, it is suggested that **Building English Sentences** be used in conjunction with complementary English language series, like IML's *Orientation in American English*.

The basic types of practice in this book of **Building English Sentences** are:

1. *Substitution*, for which the instructions are always "Complete the sentences." These are similar to substitution drills which are found in many modern textbooks, though in **Building English Sentences** they have been put in a format which permits the student to use them as written exercises also.
2. *Transformation*, for which the instructions always begin with "Change . . ."
3. *Combination*, for which the instructions always begin with "Add . . ."

Within these basic exercises there are, of course, many variations. There are, for example, both simple substitutions, in which only one item is varied, and mixed substitutions, in which more than one item is varied. Many kinds of changes and combinations can be made.

The drills are designed so that they can be given orally. In the substitution exercises, blanks are left for the items to be supplied in order to complete the sentences. In all other drills, the cues to be provided by the teacher are given on the left side of the page. On the right side, an example of the correct response is given. In doing the exercises orally, the recommended method is for the teacher to have the students *repeat both the cue sentences and the responses* after him/her, and then to have the students *give only the correct responses* from the cues provided by the teacher.

After the exercises have been prepared orally, they can be assigned as written work, with the answers to be written in the spaces provided in the right-hand column on each page, or in the blanks in the substitution drills.

One of the greatest problems in language teaching is the process of synthesizing a language which has been taught analytically, structure by structure. It is hoped that these books will make a contribution toward this necessary final step in the language experience.

EUGENE J. HALL

1

The Functional Auxiliaries: Be . . . Do . . . Have . . . Go

A

1. There are two types of auxiliary verbs in English. One type is the "modal auxiliary," which serves as a signal for questions and negatives, etc., but also has a meaning of its own. The other type is the "functional auxiliary," which only serves as a signal for various verb forms, questions, negatives, etc.
2. The functional auxiliaries comprise a very limited group that includes **be**, **do**, **have**, **go**, and **get**.
3. Forms of **be** are used with the present participle in progressive (or continuous) verb phrases.

He **is walking** to the door now.
 She **was sitting** quietly in her chair.
4. The auxiliary indicates the time reference of the verb. Present forms of **be** are used with the present progressive; past forms of **be** are used with the past progressive.

Exercise I: Complete the sentences with the present participle of the verb in parentheses to make a progressive verb phrase.

She is cooking (cook) dinner now.

1. We are _____ (study) Lesson One now.
2. He is _____ (answer) your letter now.
3. They are _____ (take) an exam today.
4. I am _____ (have) a very good time.
5. She is _____ (work) in the file room today.
6. You are _____ (learn) some important facts.
7. The days are _____ (get) very hot.
8. The water is _____ (boil).

Exercise II: Complete the sentences with the appropriate present form of **be**.

He is talking on the phone.

1. I _____ wearing a heavy coat today.
2. The plumber _____ fixing the sink.

He is talking on the phone.

3. The Jacksons _____ looking for a new car.
4. You _____ sitting too close to the blackboard.
5. Helen _____ relaxing this week.
6. The snow _____ melting.
7. We _____ waiting to see the boss.
8. The buses _____ running on time.

Exercise III: Complete the sentences with the appropriate past tense form of **be**.

I was thinking about that problem.

1. The women _____ sitting in the garden.
2. It _____ raining very hard.
3. We _____ getting ready to go home.
4. The men _____ working on their cars.
5. You _____ making some mistakes.
6. His secretary _____ bringing us some coffee.
7. I _____ hurrying to cross the street.
8. The girls _____ operating the computers.

B

1. **Be** is also used with the past participle to form passive verb phrases.

Walking on the grass **is prohibited**.

He **was allowed** to take some extra credits last year.

2. The auxiliary indicates the time reference of the verb. Present forms of **be** are used with the present passive; past forms of **be** are used with the past passive.

Exercise I: Complete the sentences with the past participle of the verb in parentheses to make a passive verb phrase.

Medicine **is sold** (sell) in a drugstore.

1. That machine **is** _____ (call) a mimeograph.

Medicine is sold (sell) in a drugstore.

2. The mail is _____ (deliver) in the morning.
3. The boys are _____ (require) to take gym.
4. All that work is _____ (do) by girls.
5. The exams are _____ (give) in May.
6. The supplies are _____ (keep) in this closet.
7. Radios are _____ (make) in this factory.
8. Talking is _____ (prohibit) in the reading room.

Exercise II: Complete the sentences with the appropriate present form of be.

The boys are required to take gym.

1. The children _____ permitted to play outside.
2. Magazines _____ sold in drugstores.
3. The boss _____ expected to return soon.
4. The class _____ scheduled to begin in September.
5. The cars _____ sold on time payments.
6. Walking on the grass _____ forbidden.
7. The houses _____ equipped with washers and dryers.
8. The computers _____ operated by girls.

Exercise III: Complete the sentences with the appropriate past form of be.

Only Spanish was spoken in the store.

1. He _____ taught to dance by his sisters.
2. I _____ chosen to play in the big game.
3. The letters _____ sent by air mail.
4. His favorite program _____ canceled.
5. You _____ told to rest and relax.
6. Her portrait _____ painted by a famous artist.

Only Spanish was spoken in the store.

7. The elevators _____ repaired last month.
8. We _____ put in an advanced class.

Exercise IV: Complete the sentences with the present or the past participle of the verb in parentheses, whichever is appropriate.

Those novels were written (write) by an American.

1. John was _____ (assign) to an advanced class.
2. The teacher ~~was~~ _____ (give) a quiz to the students.
3. My friend was _____ (write) a letter.
4. That letter was _____ (write) by my friend.
5. The whole family was _____ (watch) television.
6. We're _____ (assign) students to their classes this week.
7. The chauffeur is _____ (drive) him to work.
8. He is _____ (drive) to work every day.
9. The students are _____ (assign) to their classes every September.
10. They are _____ (paint) the house this spring.
11. We are _____ (send) out all our letters by air mail.
12. He is _____ (repair) the roof.
13. The house was _____ (paint) last spring.
14. The roof was _____ (repair) by a carpenter.
15. The house was _____ (design) by an architect.
16. An architect is _____ (design) a house for them.

C

1. Do is used with the simple present and simple past tenses in all forms except affirmative statements in which the verb is not emphasized.

They **don't** take a bus to school.
He **doesn't** study math this year.
It **didn't** rain very much this spring.

(Continued)

(C continued)

2. **Do** and **does** are used with the simple present tense.
Did is used with the simple past tense.
3. **Do**, **does**, and **did** are ALWAYS followed by the simple form of the main verb.

Exercise I: Change these sentences to the negative.

He plays tennis every day.

He doesn't play tennis every day.

1. The boss attends a lot of meetings.
2. The bus stops here.
3. His wife likes to cook.
4. This store opens at nine.
5. The manager stays late every night.
6. The receptionist answers the telephone.
7. The afternoon newspaper carries a lot of advertising.
8. His secretary takes dictation.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Exercise II: Change these sentences to the negative.

The girls take home economics.

The girls don't take home economics.

1. The buses stop at this corner.
2. The elevators work at night.
3. The men eat lunch in the cafeteria.
4. The Jacksons buy a new car every year.
5. The store opens at nine.
6. The students like to do homework.
7. We work at night.
8. I understand the problem.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Exercise III: Change these sentences to the negative.

He studied calculus last year.

He didn't study calculus last year.

1. He walked to work.
2. We attended night school.
3. He took his driver's test last week.
4. They watched television all evening.
5. She bought some new clothes.
6. He understood the problem.
7. I answered his question.
8. We repeated the instructions.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Exercise IV: Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

Did she study (study) math last year?

1. Does he _____ (have) on a new suit?
2. Did she _____ (see) something interesting?
3. Did he _____ (pass) his driver's test?
4. Did they _____ (solve) the problem?
5. Does he _____ (understand) the work?
6. Did you _____ (see) my glasses?
7. Did the teacher _____ (ask) you a question?
8. Do you _____ (work) in the post office?
9. Does she _____ (know) the answer?
10. Did he _____ (think) about what he was doing?

D

1. **Have** is used with the past participle to form perfect verb phrases.

He **has seen** everything that he wants to.

They **have taken** their final exams.

We **had enjoyed** ourselves at the party.

2. **Have** and **has** are used with the present perfect. **Had** is used with the past perfect.

Exercise I: Complete the sentences with the past participle of the verb in parentheses to form perfect verb phrases.

He has done (do) everything that you can think of.

1. We have _____ (see) all the paintings in the museum.
2. I have _____ (write) a lot of letters.
3. He has _____ (take) the driver's test twice.
4. She has _____ (choose) the university she wants to attend.
5. They have _____ (sell) their house.
6. The elevator has _____ (break) down three times this month.
7. I have _____ (know) her a long time.
8. They have _____ (eat) up all the candy.

Exercise II: Complete the sentences with the correct present form of **have**.

The boys have finished those exercises.

1. Miss Jackson _____ typed the letters.
2. They _____ changed the time of his favorite program.
3. We _____ seen that movie before.
4. The weather _____ gotten very cold.
5. You _____ had a lot of fun this month.
6. The boss _____ left already.
7. The men _____ gone fishing.
8. The elevators _____ stopped working for the evening.

Exercise III: Change the sentences to the past perfect.

He has studied hard for the exams.

He had studied hard for the exams.

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. I have thought about the problem carefully. | 1. _____ |
| 2. You have made some mistakes. | 2. _____ |
| 3. He has studied long enough. | 3. _____ |

He has studied hard for the exams.

He had studied hard for the exams.

4. She has studied shorthand.

4.

5. We have tried to solve the problem.

5.

6. He has forgotten his notebook.

6.

7. The weather has changed suddenly.

7.

8. She has explained the lesson carefully.

8.

E

1. The present progressive form of go plus the infinitive of the main verb is used as one of several ways to indicate the future in English.

We are going to visit his parents next month.

2. When go is the main verb, the redundant to go is usually left out.

She is going (to go) to New York soon.

3. The past form only indicates a future when it is in a subordinate clause. Otherwise it has a negative significance.

He said that he was going to get a new car.

We were going to visit his uncle (but we didn't).

Exercise I: Change these sentences to the going to future.

He's getting some exercise.

He's going to get some exercise.

1. His work is improving.

1.

2. The men are playing golf.

2.

3. The Jacksons are looking for a new car.

3.

4. Tom is taking his driver's test.

4.

5. The Jacksons are visiting Japan.

5.

6. She's selling her house.

6.

7. I'm taking a short vacation.

7.

8. We're relaxing at home.

8.

Exercise II: Change these sentences so that the infinitive is omitted.

We're going to go sightseeing in New York.

We're going sightseeing in New York.

1. I'm going to go to the library.
2. We're going to go hunting this fall.
3. The girls are going to go on a field trip.
4. She's going to go to the post office.
5. We're going to go to the movies.
6. They're going to go dancing.
7. I'm going to go to the drugstore.
8. We're going to go to the mountains next summer.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Exercise III: Change these sentences to the past.

He thinks he's going to pass the exam.

He thought he was going to pass the exam.

1. He says he's going to check our work.
2. He's sure that he's going to get sick.
3. I think that I'm going to visit Chicago.
4. She says that she's going to take the letters to the post office.
5. I think I'm going to solve the problem.
6. She says she's going to explain the lesson.
7. He says he's going to visit his uncle.
8. We think the exam is going to be easy.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

2

The Modal Auxiliaries:

**Can, Could . . . Will, Would . . . Shall
. . . Should . . . Must . . . May, Might**

A

1. As already indicated, the modal auxiliaries are used for the same purposes as the functional auxiliaries but also have independent meanings of their own.

2. **Can** indicates ability, either physical or mental. It is also used to indicate permission.

She can answer all the teacher's questions. (She has the ability to do it; she knows how to do it.)

Automobiles can travel at speeds of a hundred miles an hour. (They possess the capability.)

She can leave early today. (She has permission to leave early.)

3. **Could** is used as a past form for **can** in all its meanings, both in main or subordinate clauses.

She couldn't leave before five-thirty because she was busy.
He said that he could finish the work in an hour.

4. Both **can** and **could**, like all the modal auxiliaries, are **ALWAYS** followed by the simple form of the verb.

Exercise 1: Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

I can meet (meet) you for lunch tomorrow.

1. She says she can _____ (type) 120 words per minute.
2. He said that he could _____ (find) the house without any trouble.
3. We can _____ (take) the baby with us.
4. They could _____ (see) the ocean from their house.
5. We can _____ (make) that delivery on Thursday.
6. You can _____ (buy) a newspaper in the drugstore.
7. We can _____ (do) these exercises very quickly.
8. She couldn't _____ (get) to work on time.

Exercise II: Change these sentences so that **can** or **could** is used instead of a form of **know** how.

My father knew how to give a good speech.

My father could give a good speech.

1. She knows how to operate the computer.
2. My mother knew how to bake good pies.
3. I know how to speak Spanish fairly well.
4. I know how to pass any exam.
5. He knows how to solve those problems.
6. She knows how to drive very well.
7. I knew how to swim when I was only five.
8. She knows how to explain the lesson very clearly.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Exercise III: Change the following sentences to the past.

He says that I can sit here.

He said that I could sit here.

1. I think that I can leave at four thirty.
2. She says that she can meet me at four.
3. He says he can finish the work today.
4. He knows he can find a better job.
5. She knows she can learn how to paint.
6. They say they can go to the beach this summer.
7. He thinks he can learn anything.
8. I'm sure that I can pass all my exams.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

B

1. **Will** is used to indicate the future. In fact, **will** plus the simple form of the verb is often called the future tense. The future with **will** usually indicates an expected or scheduled future action, whereas the **going to** future indicates an intended or planned future event.

Mr. Wilson will be back in a few minutes. (I expect him back.)

The plane will arrive at five o'clock. (It is scheduled to arrive at five.)

(Continued)

(B continued)

2. The future with **will** often suggests the root meaning of will, to be willing.

I'll help you with your homework. (I'm willing to help you.)

3. Very occasionally, **will** is used for a habitual action in the present.

They sit in the room all day long. They will sing a few songs
or they will write in their notebooks or they will draw pictures
on the blackboard.

4. **Would** is used as a past tense for **will**. In a main clause, it is used for a habitual action in the past.

They would go to the store every day at exactly the same time.

Otherwise, it occurs principally in subordinate clauses.

He said that he would return in a few minutes.

5. Both **will** and **would** are ALWAYS followed by the simple form of the verb.

NOTE: The use of modal auxiliaries in conditional sentences is discussed in **Building English Sentences with Two Verbs**.

Exercise I: Complete these sentences with the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

I'll see (see) you next week.

1. We'll _____ (visit) the Grand Canyon on our trip.
2. I'll _____ (meet) you down in the lobby.
3. We'll _____ (watch) TV tonight.
4. They'll _____ (open) the doors in a few minutes.
5. They'll _____ (deliver) the package on Thursday.
6. We'll _____ (get) together at Thanksgiving.
7. We would always _____ (have) dinner at seven.
8. He would _____ (take) the car to the garage every week.

Exercise II: Change these sentences so that they use the future with **will**.

The fair is scheduled to begin next Sunday.

The fair will begin next Sunday.

1. The show is scheduled to start at eight.
2. The store is scheduled to open at nine-thirty.
3. He's expected to return in an hour.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____