Mastering

AMERICAN ENGLISH

A Handbook - Workbook of Essentials

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PREFACE

A handbook and a workbook as well, *Mastering American English* covers the basic sentence patterns and major grammatical structures, and provides drill and review through diversified exercises. It is intended primarily for adults who are at an intermediate or advanced level in the study of English as a foreign language, but need further review and drill in order to develop fluency and accuracy in its use.

Convenience of reference and review has dictated the arrangement of the material into large Units (Word Order, Verbs, and so on). Some of the Units with a large amount of material, such as Word Order, have been divided into two or more Parts; the Parts in turn are divided into sections numbered consecutively throughout the book. Presented in this way, the material provides flexibility in adapting the text to various learning situations. We have tried to focus attention throughout on the learning of grammatical structures rather than on memorization of rules, and the numerous details represent our attempt to answer some of the questions put to us by students. About half of the book consists of exercises designed for aural, oral, and written drill to aid the student in mastering the structures described in the text.

This handbook-workbook is the latest of a series that has resulted from our experience in teaching in a program of language instruction, orientation, and counseling activities for foreign students initiated over a decade ago at the University of California at Berkeley. The program was organized and the original materials prepared by Aurora M. Quiros (now Aurora Quiros Haggard). In the preparation of *Mastering American English*, therefore, it has been possible to draw on a background of teaching more than two thousand students—whose countries range the alphabet from Afghanistan to Yugoslavia.

TO THE TEACHER

We do not necessarily intend that the parts should be studied in the exact order in which they appear in the book. The unit approach makes it possible for each teacher to determine the order of presentation of material best suited to the particular needs of a class. For those teachers who may be interested we include the following outline of our use of the material:

It has been our experience that the students first need intensive practice, particularly oral drill, in the basic word order patterns (Parts I and II). However, before we get very far, we find it necessary to introduce a review of the formation of verb tenses and verb tense phrases, presented in Part VI. At this time, we may also introduce some of the uses of the various tenses in Parts VII, VIII, and IX in preparation for intensive work at a later time. While we are studying these parts we may also discuss articles, prepositions, etc. as they come up. In this way, the students are constantly mastering, sometimes indirectly, material which will be reviewed in detail later.

Once the basic patterns are well established, we continue with the word order material in Parts III, IV, and V and follow that by an intensive review of the uses of the various verb tenses and verb tense phrases in Parts VII, VIII, and IX. We have found that the diagrams in these parts prove helpful to the student if the instructor refers to them in explaining the uses of the tenses in various situations. Following uses of the tenses, we take up sequence of tenses, passive constructions, and auxiliary verbs (Parts X and XI).

From here on the order is largely determined by the level and needs of the group. For example, we might turn our attention to articles (Part XV) and basic prepositions (Part XVI), or we might continue with the verb structures in Parts XII and XIII and with verbals in Part XIV.

Special mention should be made of the phrasal combinations in Part XVII. If the material is to be covered in detail, we suggest that a few combinations be introduced at regular intervals during the course.

We want to stress the fact that the exercises may be used in various ways. Although we have not always specifically said so in the directions, almost every exercise can be used for aural, oral, and written practice. For example, in addition to the instructions given for Exercise 1, the exercise might be used as follows: First, the instructor might ask the students to repeat affirmative and negative questions after him, either individually or as a group. Then, for further aural practice, he might dictate the statements or questions. Also, the class might be divided into groups of three or four students for further oral drill under the supervision of a native speaker.

We also mention that most of the exercises for articles and prepositions can be used for aural work (the instructor reads and the student fills in or checks what he hears), for oral work (the student reads and gives the forms as directed), and for written work (the student writes the forms as directed).

Our general procedure in presenting new material is to give a brief explanation or demonstration followed by a period of intensive aural, oral, and written practice. The student is then asked to study the text at home and assigned written exercises at the end of the part.

Finally, we believe constant review and diversified practice of the material presented is essential. We try to use every opportunity to carry over the major principles and structures as we progress from one lesson to another throughout the course of study.

We hope that you and your students will find much of value in this book. We are interested in any questions, comments, or suggestions you may have as a result of your experience in using this book.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As with most texts, this one could not have been written without the work previously done by others in the field. We have undoubtedly been influenced in our thinking by the works of scholars such as Curme, Fries, Hornby, and Jesperson. In addition, we found Paul Roberts' *Understanding Grammar* and L. M. Myers' *A Guide to American English* delightful and useful references.

This book has been a long time growing, and many more persons than we can give credit to here have given freely of their time, energy, and suggestions during its development. The teachers who have used the syllabus material during the past seven years, our colleagues in the English language program at the University of California at Berkeley, and the students whom we have had in our classes have contributed in many ways to the present book.

Among the persons to whom we wish to express our special appreciation for guidance on this book are Professor David P. Harris of the University of Florida, who read a good part of the manuscript and gave us many ideas on content and format, and Professor Lois M. Wilson of San Francisco State College for the reading of the manuscript and for her valuable comments and encouragement. Above all, are we deeply indebted to Professor David W. Reed of the University of California, whose expert and tactful criticism encouraged us to work even harder in our attempt to produce a good book. We, of course, accept the responsibility for any weaknesses which may remain. We also extend thanks to Mrs. Alida Dixon and Mrs. Celia Wakefield for typing the manuscript.

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UNIT 1 WORD ORDER

PART I Basic Word Order

1 INTRODUCTION

Mastering *basic word order patterns* is an essential step in learning English. Native speakers frequently vary these patterns, but the student learning English would do well to concentrate on basic word order until he is able to use the patterns of *statements, questions, requests,* and *commands* automatically.

2 AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENTS

The regular order of words in affirmative statements is SUBJECT + VERB + COMPLEMENT or OBJECT.

SUBJECT + VERB	George smokes.
SUBJECT + VERB + COMPLEMENT	They are students.
SUBJECT + VERB + OBJECT	John likes Mary.

2a. The verb **be** is frequently followed by a *complement.* The complement may be an adjective, a noun, or a pronoun.

SUBJECT	VERB	COMPLEMENT
Jack	is	ill.
They	are	friends.
It	was	mine.

When the following verbs are similar in meaning to **be,** they may be followed by an adjective: **appear, become, feel, look, seem, smell, sound, taste.**

I **feel** tired.
She **looks** happy.
He **became** ill.

Become may also be followed by a noun or pronoun.

The brothers **became** engineers.
The fortune **will become** his.

2b. Verbs other than **be** are frequently followed by an *object.* The object may be a noun, a pronoun, or a noun-equivalent. (A noun-equivalent is a word, phrase, or clause that is a substitute for a noun.)

SUBJECT	VERB	OBJECT
Alfred	collects	stamps.
I	saw	them.
He	likes	swimming.

2c. Certain verbs are frequently followed by two objects: an *indirect object* and a *direct object*. Some examples are the verbs **bring, get, give, hand, leave, offer, pass, send, take, tell, read, write, teach, buy, sell, fix, make.**

The indirect object is the person *to* whom, or occasionally *for* whom, something (the direct object) is given, sent, told, and so forth. When a verb is followed by two objects, the order after the verb is INDIRECT OBJECT + DIRECT OBJECT.

		INDIRECT OBJECT	DIRECT OBJECT
He	gave	me	the book.
Jim	bought	Mary	a present.

Frequently a phrase introduced by **to** or **for** is used instead of the indirect object. The **to**-phrase may follow all of the verbs listed above except **buy, fix,** and **make.** The **for**-phrase follows **buy, fix,** and **make.**[1] When the **to**- or **for**-phrase is used, the word order after the verb is DIRECT OBJECT + PHRASE. Compare:

		INDIRECT OBJECT	DIRECT OBJECT	PHRASE
He	gave	me	the book.	
He	gave		the book	to me.
Jim	bought	Mary	a present.	
Jim	bought		a present	for Mary.

The **to**- or **for**-phrase is generally used when the direct object is a pronoun. Compare:

He gave me the book.
He gave the book **to me.**
BUT: He gave it **to me.** (NOT: He gave me it.)

A few verbs, including **deliver, describe, explain, return, say,** are regularly followed by DIRECT OBJECT + PHRASE.

She **described** her house **to us.**
He **explained** the theory **to us.**
He **returned** it **to me.**

2d. Single-word modifiers of the *subject, object,* or *complement* are ordinarily placed before the word modified.

Modifiers	SUBJECT	VERB	Modifiers	COMPLEMENT or OBJECT
	Richard	is	very[2]	ill.
	He	bought	three	shirts.
The tall	man	wants	that	suitcase.
His older	brother	is	a very brilliant[3]	lawyer.

[1] Many verbs followed by a **to**-phrase may also be followed by a **for**-phrase, but there is an obvious change in meaning. Compare:

I wrote several letters **to** her. I wrote several letters **for** her.

[2] Modifiers of adjectives usually indicate intensity or degree. Examples:

too hot **extremely** tired
very long **more** difficult

Enough follows the adjective it modifies.
The coffee is **hot enough.**

2e. Most modifiers of *verbs* are regularly placed *after* the verb and *after* the complement or object, if any.

SUBJECT	VERB	COMPLEMENT or OBJECT	Modifiers of Verb
They	went		home.
The paper	is		here.
He	was	ill	yesterday.
Joe	saw	Bob	on Tuesday.
I	like	music	very [4] much.

2f. An important exception to the regular order of *subject* + *verb* occurs in statements beginning with **there is, there are,** etc. In sentences of this kind, **there** appears in the subject position. The real subject follows the verb.

There is a lecture today.
There are many people here.
There was a fire this morning.

3 NEGATIVE STATEMENTS

A statement may be made negative by using **not** with the verb. Three basic principles operate in making statements negative.

(1) With simple present and past tense forms of **be:**

Not is placed after **am, is, are, was, were.**

He	is		a student.
He	is	**not**	a student.
He	**isn't**		a student.

Contractions of **is, are, was** and **were** + **not** are generally used in conversational English.

isn't = is not **aren't** = are not
wasn't = was not **weren't** = were not

He **isn't** (is not) here.
They **aren't** (are not) students.
It **wasn't** (was not) mine.
Those **weren't** (were not) yours.
I **am not** ready.

(2) With simple present and past tense forms of verbs other than **be:**

The original verb is first changed to a verb phrase composed of **do (does)** or **did** + the simple form of the verb.[5] Then **not** is placed after **do (does)** or **did.**

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[3] The intensifier **very** modifies the adjective **brilliant;** in turn, the adjective **brilliant** modifies **lawyer.**

[4] The intensifier **very** modifies the adverb **much.** Modifiers of adverbs are ordinarily placed before the word modified.

[5] The simple form of the verb is the same as the infinitive without **to.**
to walk = infinitive **walk** = simple form

He			likes	coffee.
He	does	**not**	like	coffee.
He	does**n't**		like	coffee.
He			liked	coffee.
He	did	**not**	like	coffee.
He	did**n't**		like	coffee.

Contractions of **do, does** and **did** + **not** are generally used in conversational English.

don't = do not **doesn't** = does not **didn't** = did not

I **don't** (do not) want that book.
She **doesn't** (does not) speak French.
They **didn't** (did not) arrive yesterday.

(3) With constructions of auxiliary + principal verb:[6]
Not is placed after the auxiliary.

He	will		be	a student.
He	will	**not**	be	a student.
He	wo**n't**		be	a student.
He	is		working	here.
He	is	**not**	working	here.
He	is**n't**		working	here.

Contractions of the auxiliaries + **not** are generally used in conversational English.

haven't = have not **won't** = will not **wouldn't** = would not
hasn't = has not **can't** = cannot **shouldn't** = should not
hadn't = had not **couldn't** = could not

He **hasn't** (has not) arrived yet.
Jack **can't** (can not) come.
You **shouldn't** (should not) go home yet.

I AFFIRMATIVE QUESTIONS

Three basic principles operate in changing statements to questions.

(1) With the simple present and past tense forms of **be:**
The verb is placed before the subject. Compare:

[6] Combinations of auxiliary verbs and principal verbs are called verb phrases. The verb that expresses the main meaning is called the *principal* verb; the other verb (or verbs) is called an *auxiliary* (or *helping*) verb. **Go, going, gone** are the principal verbs in the following examples: will **go,** is **going,** has **gone,** can **go.**

	He	is	a student.
Is	he		a student?
	He	was	a student.
Was	he		a student?

(2) With simple present and past tense forms of verbs other than **be:**
The original verb is first changed to **do (does)** or **did** + the simple form of the verb. Then **do (does)** or **did** is placed before the subject. Compare:

	He	likes	coffee.
Does	he	like	coffee?
	He	studied	English.
Did	he	study	English?

(3) With constructions of auxiliary + principal verb:
The auxiliary is placed before the subject. Compare:

	He	will	be	a doctor.
Will	he		be	a doctor?
	He	can	drive	a car.
Can	he		drive	a car?

5 LONG AND SHORT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

Questions like those in Section 4 normally receive a **yes** or **no** type of response. The response may be either *long* (a full statement) or *short.* Short responses are very frequently used in conversational English.

QUESTION	TYPICAL LONG RESPONSES	TYPICAL SHORT RESPONSES
Is Bob in his room?	Yes, he's there. No, he isn't there now.	Yes, he is. No, he isn't.
Were you there?	Yes, I was there. No, I wasn't there.	Yes, I was. No, I wasn't.
Do you like beer?	Yes, I like it very much. No, I don't like it.	Yes, I do. No, I don't.
Did he fail the course?	Yes, he failed it all right. No, he passed it.	Yes, he did. No, he didn't.
Has he left already?	Yes, he left at noon. No, he hasn't gone yet.	Yes, he has. No, he hasn't.
Are you going with us?	Yes, I'm going with you. No, I'm sorry, but I can't.	Yes, I am. No, I'm not.

The following contractions of subject and verb are frequently used in conversational English:

I'm = I am	**he's** = he is	**you're** = you are
I've = I have	**he'll** = he will	**you've** = you have
I'll = I will	**she's** = she is	**you'll** = you will
we're = we are	**she'll** = she will	**they're** = they are
we've = we have	**it's** = it is	**they've** = they have
we'll = we will		**they'll** = they will

6 NEGATIVE QUESTIONS

In the negative forms of questions, **not** may be *contracted* with the *verb form before* the subject or may be placed after the subject.

Is	he			a student?
Is	he	**not**		a student?
Is**n't**	he			a student?
Does	he		like	coffee?
Does	he	**not**	like	coffee?
Does**n't**	he		like	coffee?
Will	he		give	a speech?
Will	he	**not**	give	a speech?
Won**'t**	he		give	a speech?

A negative question does not express simple negation in the same way that a negative statement does. Three general types of meaning may be expressed by negative questions.

(1) A negative question may suggest an emotional tone or bias on the part of the speaker.

Haven't you cleaned your room yet?
Won't you help me?

The person to whom such questions are directed usually senses the emotional tone or bias and responds accordingly.

For example, in the first question, he may detect ridicule or the implication that he *should* have already cleaned the room, and he would probably qualify his answer to defend himself. He might give one of the following responses:

Of course I have. I cleaned it yesterday.
No, I've been too busy studying.

In the second question, he may detect in the tone of the speaker an uncertainty or doubt about his willingness to help. To assure the speaker, he might give the following response:

Certainly I'll help you. Have I ever refused?

(2) A negative question may also suggest that the speaker expects a certain response, usually agreement.

Isn't she pretty?
Shouldn't we leave now?

Although the speaker may *expect* affirmative responses to these questions, the response may be either affirmative or negative.

For example, the responses to the first question might be as follows:

Yes, she is.
You may think so, but I don't.

(3) In some situations, negative and affirmative questions may express practically the same meaning, although the negative form seems to suggest greater interest or concern on the part of the speaker. Compare:

Will you have some coffee?
Won't you have some coffee?

The responses to either question might be as follows:

Yes, thank you.
No, thank you.