

BASIC ENGLISH GRAMMAR

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Basic English Grammar is a developmental skills text for students of English as a second language. It presents fundamental structures and vocabulary and provides ample opportunities for practice through extensive and varied exercises. While focusing on grammar, the text actively promotes the development of speaking, listening, and writing skills (and by extension reading skills) as well as situationally appropriate language use in everyday life in the United States and Canada.

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Notes to the Teacher

LEVEL

Basic English Grammar seeks to meet the needs of lower-level ESL classes. While the introduction of structures and vocabulary is geared toward the low- or mid-beginner in the first parts of the text, the text can also, with appropriate pacing, be used with lower-intermediate students as a quick review and expansion of structure usage.

Basic English Grammar is the first in a series of three ESL grammar texts. The second in the series is *Fundamentals of English Grammar*, which is directed toward lower-intermediate and intermediate students. The third text, *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, is for intermediate through advanced students.

PRESENTATION OF GRAMMAR

In general, each unit is organized around a group of related structures and usages. The text is intended to be taught in the order in which it is presented; structures and vocabulary in earlier chapters serve as the basis for material in later chapters. However, if your class is lower-intermediate rather than beginning, you may wish to change the order of presentation somewhat to suit the needs of your students and your purposes.

Grammar receiving major emphasis is presented in charts consisting of examples accompanied by explanations. The examples are intended to be almost self-explanatory. The explanations are simplified as much as possible, with a minimum of

terminology. Still, the students may not be able to grasp some parts of the charts by themselves at first. The intention is that you use the charts as a springboard in class. You may wish to discuss your own examples drawn from the immediate classroom context and relate them to the examples in the text as preparation for usage exercises. At times you may wish to delve into a usage exercise immediately, discuss form and meaning during the course of the exercise, and then return to a chart for the purpose of making certain generalizations.

The grammar charts serve various functions for various students. Some students devour the charts, while others pay them little or no mind, depending upon their learning strategies. Some students need to gain initial understanding from the charts before risking use, while others freely risk anything during usage exercises and refer to the charts only incidentally. In any case, the charts are not intended to be “learned” as an out-of-class homework assignment. A chart is only a starting point and a later reference source.

VOCABULARY

The text views vocabulary development as integral to the development of structure usage ability. Vocabulary is introduced and reinforced regularly. At times you will find it necessary to spend time in class discussing new vocabulary during exercises. The introduction of vocabulary is controlled so that it can easily be handled in the classroom and so that students should not have to spend a great deal of time at home looking up words in their dictionaries. Some exercises are specifically designed to enhance vocabulary acquisition while the students are practicing structure usage. Many of the illustrations are intended as aids for the teaching/learning of vocabulary.

EXERCISES

The goal in the exercises is to get the students talking about themselves—their activities, their ideas, their environment—as soon as possible, using the target structures. In general, the exercises in any given unit move from ones that focus almost entirely on manipulation of form and meaning to ones that demand more independent usage and involve a combination of skills.

Most of the exercises, those other than the oral exercises, are intended for out-of-class preparation and then in-class use. Typically, a teacher might discuss the grammar in a chart, have the students do the first three or four entries of an exercise in class, and then assign the rest of the exercise to be prepared for the next class. Usually students benefit more from preparing exercises at home than they do from going through exercises “cold” in class. Exercises that the students have prepared at home take less classtime to discuss and lead to more fruitful discussion.

Exercises specifically intended as written homework to be submitted to you are usually designated WRITTEN.

Some of the exercises are designated ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED). These exercises have various uses and purposes.

a) The students should be strongly encouraged to keep their books closed during these exercises. If an ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercise is too difficult or too uncomfortable for your students, do the exercise first with books open and then later with books closed.

b) To initiate an ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercise, it is usually sufficient simply to give the class an example or two of the intended pattern. The exercise examples can, of course, be supplemented by oral directions, and at times you may wish to write key words on the board to help the students focus on target structures or consider their options in their responses.

c) Once in a while you may wish to ask a student to assume the teacher role in some of the ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercises; i.e., the student conducts the exercise by giving the cues and determining the appropriateness of the responses, while you retire to a corner of the room. Not all, but many, of the ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercises are suitable for a "student-teacher." You may wish to designate a certain student as the "student-teacher" for a particular exercise for the next day's class and work with that student out of class in preparation for his/her role as teacher. Generally, a student-led oral exercise will take twice as much classtime as it would if teacher led, but if the time is available, it can be a valuable experience for the "student-teacher" and fun for the class as a whole.

d) Another use of the ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercises is to divide the students into pairs or groups, with one student (book open) as the leader of the exercise.

e) Many of the ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercises, especially those in which one student asks another a question, are meant to spur spontaneous discussion. Most of these exercises give a format (focusing on target structures) and topics that are intended to be used freely in the classroom. Encourage your students to expand upon their oral responses. Pursue interesting responses, grammar focus aside. Downplay correctness of form in favor of spontaneous communicative interaction. Allow for, even hope for, a modicum of mayhem as the students blurt out English in brief conversations with each other or with you in an easy, comfortable classroom.

f) Constant review is of course important, and the ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercises provide a quick, easy way to review. Set aside five or ten minutes at the beginning or end of a class period to go over ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercises from previous lessons. Besides benefiting from the reinforcement of structure usage and vocabulary, the students gain in self-confidence as they find their responses flowing more easily. Ask a "student-teacher" to conduct a review exercise if the time is available.

g) In the ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED) exercises, the symbol (. . .) indicates that you are to supply the name of a class member. Sometimes expressions of time and place are in parentheses, indicating that you are to supply an expression relevant to

the people in your class. Delete entries that are irrelevant and make up your own entries to take advantage of the here-and-now classroom context and the particular situations of your students.

Exercises designated ORAL are intended to be done with books open but require no writing and no preparation.

TEACHER'S MANUAL

A teacher's manual is available. While primarily an answer key, it also contains a few additional oral exercises as well as some comments and suggestions.

I hope the text provides many enjoyable and profitable hours in class for both you and your students.

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Langley, Washington

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chapter 1

Using Be and Have



EXERCISE 1: Learn the names of your classmates. Write the names of your classmates in your book.

1-1 SUBJECT + BE + NOUN

SINGULAR			PLURAL			
SUBJECT + BE + NOUN			SUBJECT + BE + NOUN			SINGULAR = one PLURAL = more than one (two or three or four or more)
(a) I	am	a student.	(i) We	are	students.	I you he she it we they } = pronouns
(b) You	are	a student.	(j) You	are	students.	
(c) John	is	a student.	(k) John and Mary	are	students.	
(d) He	is	a student.	(l) They	are	students.	
(e) Mary	is	a student.				John Mary rose student flower } = nouns
(f) She	is	a student.				
(g) A rose	is	a flower.	(m) Roses	are	flowers.	
(h) It	is	a flower.	(n) They	are	flowers.	
						a student = singular noun students = plural noun NOTE: To make a noun plural, add -s to the noun.* Do not use a with a plural noun.
						be = a verb am } is } = forms of be are }



* See 5-1 for more information about plural nouns.

EXERCISE 2: Complete the sentences. Use a verb: *am, is, or are*. Use a noun: *a student or students*.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. We _____ are students. | 7. John and Mary _____ |
| 2. I _____ | 8. They _____ |
| 3. John _____ | 9. We _____ |
| 4. He _____ | 10. You (<i>one person</i>) _____ |
| 5. Mary _____ | 11. You (<i>two persons</i>) _____ |
| 6. She _____ | 12. You and I _____ |

EXERCISE 3—ORAL (BOOKS CLOSED):

(To the teacher: Give the subject(s). The student is to complete the sentence with a form of **be** + a student/students while indicating the subject or subjects.)

Example: (...)

Response: (...) is a student. The responding student indicates (...).

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. (...) | 8. They |
| 2. (...) and (...) | 9. You |
| 3. I | 10. (...) |
| 4. We | 11. (...) and (...) |
| 5. (...) | 12. He |
| 6. She | 13. You and I |
| 7. (...) and (...) | 14. (...) and (...) and (...) |

1-2 CONTRACTIONS WITH BE

AM	PRONOUN + BE = CONTRACTION I + am = I'm	(a) I'm a student.	When people speak, they often push two words together. A <i>contraction</i> = two words that are pushed together. Contractions of a <i>subject pronoun</i> + <i>be</i> are used in both speaking and writing. PUNCTUATION: The mark in the middle of a contraction is called an <i>apostrophe</i> .
IS	he + is = he's she + is = she's it + is = it's	(b) He's a student. (c) She's a student. (d) It's a flower.	
ARE	you + are = you're we + are = we're they + are = they're	(e) You're a student. You're students. (f) We're students. (g) They're students.	

Note: Write an apostrophe above the line. Do not write an apostrophe on the line.

Right: I'm a student.

Wrong: I,m a student.

EXERCISE 4: Complete the sentences. Use contractions (*pronoun + be*).

- Mary is a student. She's in my class.
- John is a student _____ in my class.
- I have *one brother*. _____ twenty years old.
- I have *two sisters*. _____ students at the university.

5. I have *a dictionary*. _____ on my desk.
6. I like *my classmates*. _____ friendly.
7. I have *three books*. _____ on my desk.
8. *My brother* is twenty-six years old. _____ married.
9. *My sister* is twenty-one years old. _____ single.
10. *Mary and John* are students. _____ in my class.
11. I like *my books*. _____ interesting.
12. I like *grammar*. _____ easy.
13. *My brother and my sister* live at home. _____ students in high school.
14. *My brother and I* live in an apartment. _____ students at the university.
15. *Bob and I* live in a dormitory. _____ students.
16. I know *Mr. Smith*. _____ a teacher.
17. I know *Mrs. Smith*. _____ a teacher.
18. I know *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*. _____ teachers.
19. *Sue and I* live in an apartment. _____ roommates.
20. We live in *an apartment*. _____ on Pine Street.

EXERCISE 5—ORAL: *Is* and *are* are also often contracted with nouns in spoken English. Listen to your teacher say the contractions in the following sentences and practice saying them yourself.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Grammar is easy. ("Grammar's easy.") | 9. My money is in my wallet. |
| 2. Mary is a student. | 10. Mr. Smith is a teacher. |
| 3. My book is on the table. | 11. John is at home now. |
| 4. My books are on the table. | 12. The sun is bright today. |
| 5. The weather is cold today. | 13. My roommate is from Chicago. |
| 6. My brother is twenty-one years old. | 14. My roommates are from Chicago. |
| 7. The window is open. | 15. My sister is a student in high school. |
| 8. The windows are open. | |

1-3 USING *HAVE* AND *HAS*

SINGULAR	PLURAL	
I have a pen.	We have pens.	$\left. \begin{array}{l} I \\ you \\ we \\ they \end{array} \right\} + \textit{have}$
You have a pen.	You have pens.	
He has a pen.	They have pens.	$\left. \begin{array}{l} he \\ she \\ it \end{array} \right\} + \textit{has}$
She has a pen.		
It has blue ink.		

EXERCISE 6: Complete the sentences. Use *have* or *has*.

- I _____ *have* _____ a dictionary.
- We _____ grammar books.
- Mary _____ a blue pen. She _____ a blue notebook too.
- You _____ a pen in your pocket.
- Bob _____ a notebook on his desk.
- Mary and Bob _____ notebooks. They _____ pens too.
- John is a student in our class. He _____ a red grammar book.
- I _____ a grammar book. It _____ twelve chapters.
- You and I are students. We _____ books on our desks.
- John _____ a penny in his pocket. Mary _____ a dollar bill in her purse.

1-4 USING *MY*, *YOUR*, *HIS*, *HER*, *OUR*, *THEIR*

SINGULAR	PLURAL	
(a) I have a book. My book is red.	(e) We have books. Our books are red.	SUBJECT — POSSESSIVE* <i>I — my</i> <i>you — your</i> <i>he — his</i> <i>she — her</i> <i>we — our</i> <i>they — their</i>
(b) You have a book. Your book is red.	(f) You have books. Your books are red.	
(c) He has a book. His book is red.	(g) They have books. Their books are red.	
(d) She has a book. Her book is red.		

* *My*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *our*, and *their* are called possessive adjectives. They come in front of nouns.