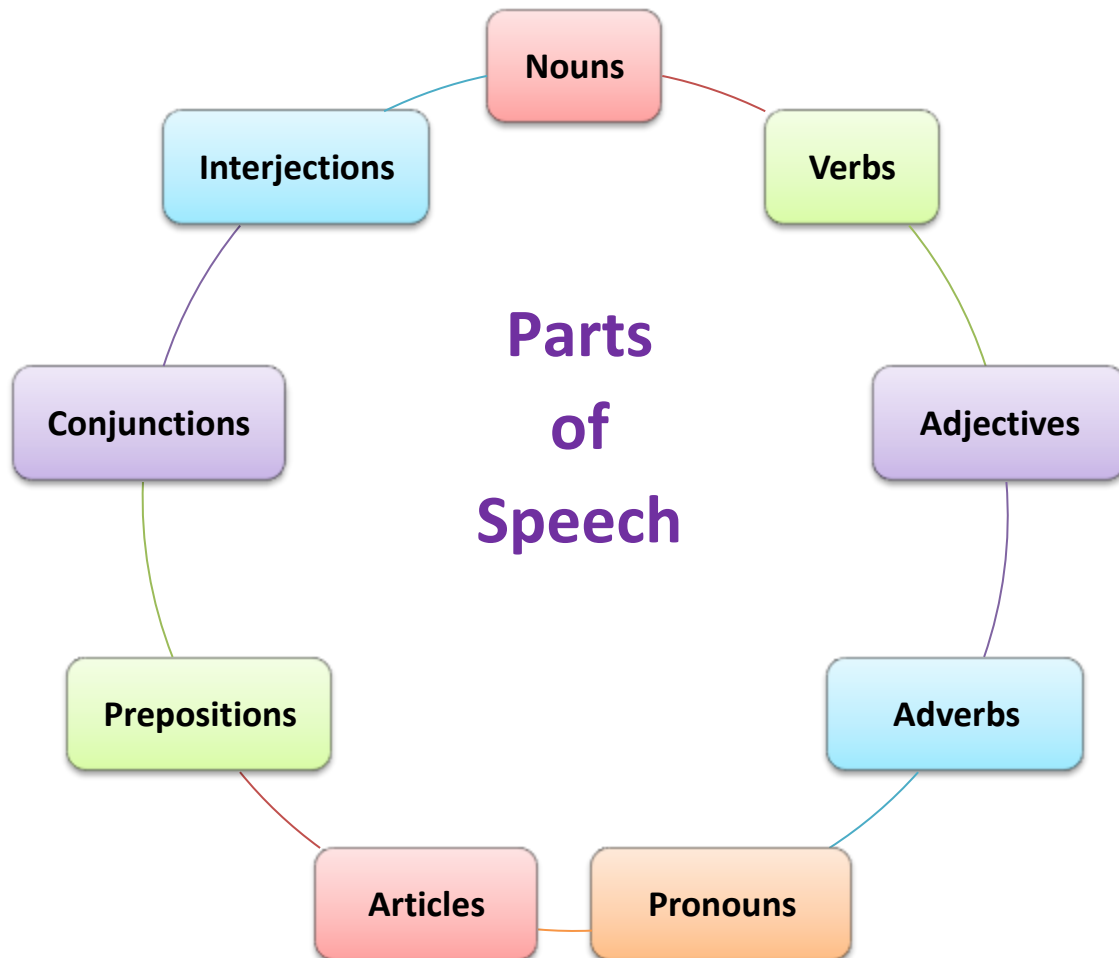


PARTS OF SPEECH

What are Parts of Speech?



Every word in English can be categorised according to its function and meaning. These categories are known as **parts of speech**. A word can be a noun, an adjective or a pronoun depending on the role it plays in a sentence.

There are **nine parts** of speech:

- Nouns
- Verbs
- Adjectives
- Adverbs
- Pronouns
- Articles
- Prepositions
- Conjunctions
- Interjections

Nouns

A **noun** is a word which is used to name a person, a thing, a place or an idea.

Radhika is on a **vacation**.

Mushrooms grow wild in the **fields**.

I do not wish to live in **fear**.

Richard Dawkins writes extensively about **atheism**.

- Proper Noun: **Proper nouns** are specific names given to a person, place or thing. The first letter of each proper noun is capitalised.

Krishna is one of the most trustworthy employees.

Fredrick lives in **Kolkata**.

The **Koh-i-noor** is a diamond which was originally mined from **Kollur Mine** in **Andhra Pradesh**.

- Common Noun: **Common nouns** are names which are generic names. They are the opposites of proper nouns.

The tree grew tall and strong.

The lady bid farewell to her **sons**.

The city was under siege.

- Abstract Noun: **Abstract nouns** are names given to entities which have no physical form but exist as ideas.

The new leader was a staunch proponent of **democracy**.

Stress and **worry** cause health **problems**.

One should seek **happiness** and **contentment** within oneself.

- Collective Nouns: **Collective nouns** are names given to groups or collections.

A **congregation** of worshippers thronged the temple.

A **pack** of dogs growled viciously at the young couple.

The farmer transported the **bale** of hay to the cowshed.

- Material Nouns: **Material nouns** are names given to materials or substances through which other things can be made.

These cups and plates are made of **plastic**.
Cotton is used to make saris and kurtas.
My earrings are made of **silver**.

- Countable Nouns: **Countable nouns** are nouns which can be counted.

Five **birds** are perched on a branch.
She gave me a few **pieces** to try.
Lata is mother to three **children**.

- Uncountable Nouns: **Uncountable nouns** are nouns which cannot be counted. These nouns are measured using various systems of measurement.

Meena served **water** to the weary traveller.
A boxful of **sugar** was added to the cake **batter**.
The **air** which we breathe is polluted.

Verbs

Verbs are words which represent actions or express the state of being. They form the main part of the predicate. Without verbs, the sentence will make little or no sense.

The children **are walking** to school.
Manik **lives** with his mother and two siblings.
India **will embark** on a new journey under the new leadership.

- Transitive Verbs: Verbs which can take one or more objects are known as **transitive verbs**.

Ramesh **packed** his bags.
Kushal **wrote** a poem for his friend.
Grandma **cooked** a hearty meal for all of us.

- Intransitive Verbs: Verbs which cannot take objects are known as **intransitive verbs**.

Mr Gupta **sneezed** loudly.
The kitten **slept** peacefully.
The train **arrived** ten minutes late.

- Finite Verbs: A **finite verb** is that which has a subject and shows the tense in a sentence.

Harish **has been working** here for five years. (Harish – Subject; Tense – Present Perfect Continuous)
Karim **is** my dearest friend. (Karim – Subject; Tense – Simple Present Tense)
We **lay** on the grass and **watched** the clouds. (We – Subject; Tense – Simple Past Tense)

- Nonfinite Verbs: A **nonfinite verb** is that which neither has a subject nor exhibits tenses in a sentence.

I wish **to buy** a house in Mumbai.
They found him **sleeping** soundly on his bed.
Knitting is what she likes doing the most.

- Main Verbs: A **main verb** is the primary verb of the sentence. It carries the meaning in the verb phrase of which it is the main part.
- Helping or Auxiliary Verbs: A **helping** or **auxiliary verb** is not the primary verb. It expresses ideas such as tense, mood and nature of the main verb. It is always used before the main verb.

Jayesh is **taking** care of the tickets as we speak.
Mithun has been **working** with this company for the last two years.
Dr Herman would be **available** only after 4 pm.

- The verbs which are in **italics** are main verbs.
- The verbs which are underlined are helping or auxiliary verbs.

Adjectives

Adjectives are words which are used to describe nouns or pronouns. They can be used to describe the quality, quantity, size, age and function of the words they qualify.

The house is **palatial**.
She is **upset**.
Christine was a **persistent old** woman.

- Adjectives of Quality: **Adjectives of quality** show the kind or quality of the noun or the pronoun.

The tangerine was very **huge**.
Madhukar is a **helpful** neighbour.
The **grieving** man wished to stay back home.

- Adjective of Quantity: **Adjectives of quantity** show the amount of the noun or the pronoun.

The **entire** cake was decorated with rosettes.
Smitha has **little** patience with her pet.
He has **enough** money to buy another car.

- Adjective of Number: **Adjectives of number** show the number of the noun.

There were **three** birds in the cage.
Stephen had **no** pictures of his family in his wallet.
I have a **few** friends in the cricket club.

- Distributive Numeral Adjective: **Distributive numeral adjectives** are used to refer to members of a group individually.

Each boy went home with a gift.
Neither book is recommended.
Every day is a blessing.

- **Demonstrative Adjectives:** They point towards the nouns they qualify.

That house is beautiful.
This girl is the culprit.

- **Interrogative Adjectives:** They are used with nouns to ask questions.

Which biscuit do you want?
What time are you expected at?
Whose car was Seema seen in?

Adverbs

An adverb is a word which qualifies a verb, an adjective or another adverb.

Birds sing **sweetly** in spring.
I am **very** anxious to know the results.
The train moved **quite** slowly.

- Adverbs of Manner: They describe the manner of the action.

He moved **fast**.
Ranjini danced **gracefully**.
She spoke **softly**.

- Adverbs of Time: They describe when the action took place.

Trains were slow **yesterday**.
Come here **now**!
I met her **today**.

- Adverbs of Place: They describe where the action took place.

Stand **there**.
Air is **everywhere**.
She will meet us **at the park**.

- Adverbs of Frequency: They describe how often the actions take place.

Naresh **often** visits his grandparents.
Phillip has **never** lied to his wife.
Maneka is **usually** in good spirits.

- Adverbs of Degree or Quantity: They show *how much* or *to what extent*.

Gajendra is **too** tired **to** walk.
Priti is **very** annoyed at you.
This soup is **rather** cold.

- Adverbs of Affirmation or Negation: They express certainty and uncertainty; surety and unlikelihood; affirmation or negation.

Lionel will **surely** call you tonight.
We will **certainly** go.
No. We will **not** agree to this.

- Adverbs of Reason: They express the reason or purpose of an action.

Tom is **hence** the only suspect in this crime.
Escape was **therefore** the only option left to us.
He **thus** sold his house in the village.

Pronouns

Pronouns are words used in place of a noun or a noun phrase.

- Personal Pronouns: They are pronouns which represent 'persons' in the grammatical sense.

1st Person: I, me, mine, myself, we, us, ours, ourselves

2nd Person: You, yours, yourself

3rd Person: He, she, it, his, hers, its

- Reflexive Pronouns: We use a **reflexive pronoun** when the actions by the subject affect itself.

Varun hurt **himself**.
Krishna taught **himself** how to play a violin.
Rachna hates **herself** for letting go of a golden opportunity.

- Emphatic Pronouns: These pronouns may look like reflexive pronouns, but they have a completely different function. They are used solely for the purpose of **emphasis**.

The principal **herself** will speak to you.
Norman **himself** was present at the function.
The course **itself** will not promise you a job.

- Demonstrative Pronouns: They are used to refer to or point at objects they refer to.

This is the best day of my life.
That is the job I like the most.
These are words of wisdom.

- Indefinite Pronoun: They are used to refer to persons or things in the general sense.

All are invited.
Some are not worthy of your friendship.
Many of the manuscripts were destroyed in the fire.

- Distributive Pronoun: They are used to refer to people or things one at a time.

Each of the servants was thoroughly checked.
Neither of the men was qualified for the job.
Either of the methods can be employed.

- Relative Pronoun: They are used to connect clauses or phrases to a noun or a pronoun.

This is house **that** I bought.
This is the uncle **whose** house I live in.
The guests **whom** we invited enjoyed the party.

Articles

Articles are words which accompany nouns. They are adjectives which provide a definition to the nouns.

- **Definite Articles:** They introduce nouns or noun phrases which have already been mentioned before. They refer to nouns which are definite or specific.

The wind in the willows
The old man and the sea
The woman is at the door.

- **Indefinite Articles:** They introduce nouns which have not been mentioned before. They refer to nouns which are neither definite nor specific.

A boy is asking for his mother.
Only **an** idiot would doubt your intentions.

Conjunctions

Conjunctions are words used to join sentences, phrases or clauses.

- **Co-ordinating Conjunctions:** They are used to connect sentences, phrases or clauses of equal rank.

Sanjay went to the police station **and** lodged a complaint.
I wrote to him, **but** there was no reply.
Tina did not prepare for the exam, **yet** she passed with flying colours.

- **Subordinate Conjunctions:** They are used to connect clauses which are not of equal rank. One clause depends on the other for completing its meaning.

After the guests left, Ritu rushed to open her presents.
When we were young, we used to relish these fruits.
I thought I was the only one who loved comic books, **until** I met you.

Prepositions

Prepositions are words which establish relationship between two things in a sentence.

The fly sat **on** his nose.

(The preposition 'on' expresses the relationship between the phrases 'sat' and 'his nose'.)

Ramesh is fond **of** his niece.

(The preposition 'of' expresses the relationship between the phrases 'fond' and 'his niece'.)

The food is in **the refrigerator.**

(The preposition 'in' expresses the relationship between the phrases 'The food' and 'the refrigerator'.)

Interjections

Interjections are words used to express emotions such as happiness, sadness, surprise or disgust.

Oh! That is indeed a surprise.

Alas! It is indeed a big loss.

Dear me! What a ghastly sight!

Every word in English can be categorised into one of these groups. When two or more words have similar grammatical qualities, they are said to belong to the same **part of speech**.

