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### **General English for all competitive examinations**

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# General English

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# General English

Comprehensive theory  
*with*  
Practice Exercise

Section

A

**Tense**

Tense is a form of verb which tells us about the time of action.

1. The Present Tense
2. The Past Tense
3. The Future Tense

**Aspects**

1. Indefinite / Simple
2. Progressive / Continuous
3. Perfect
4. Perfect Progressive

**NOTE**

In fact there are only two tenses in English, but the future aspect is possible with the help of modal i.e. will / shall or *Present Simple / Present Progressive*.

**Simple Present**

introduced by

*Always, Everyday, Sundays, Mondays, Often, Usually, Seldom, .*

**Formation**

1. **Singular Subject** : *He, She, It, Name.*
2. **Plural Subject** : *You, we, They.*
3. 'I' is a singular subject, but treated as plural in the present tense.

**Rule : 1 (Singular sub + V<sub>1</sub> + s/es + ob)**

V<sub>1</sub> [main verb/base form/principal verb/root verb] is always plural; we add s/es to make it singular.

1. *Go* : Plural verb
2. *Goes* : Singular verb

**EXAMPLES —**

1. Mohan *goes* to office.
2. She cooks food.
3. One of my friends lives in Delhi.

**Rule : 2 (Plural sub + V<sub>1</sub> + object)**

1. They go to temple.
2. We help the poor.

**(Negative)**

**[To say no to something or somebody]**

**(Singular sub + does not + V<sub>1</sub> + ob)**

**EXAMPLES —**

1. She does not go to temple.
2. I do not compose a song.

**Never = Not any time in Present, Past or Future.**

1. She never comes on time.
2. They never help the poor.

### Interrogative / Interrogative negative [Asking Question]

**Yes / No Type [Do/ Does/ Sub + V<sub>1</sub> + ob?]**

1. Does she write a letter?
2. Do you play hockey?

**WH type [WH + do / does + sub + V<sub>1</sub> + ob?]**

Where do you live?

When does she go to office?

Why do you not go to school?

#### NOTE

**Who** functions as a singular sub. (**Who + V<sub>1</sub> + s/es + ob?**)

Who teaches you English?

#### Usage:

##### 1. Present Habits

- Cindy cooks food [Again and again]

##### 3. Near future

- She goes to Holland next month.

##### 2. News paper headlines

- India wins by three wickets.

##### 4. Universal Truth

- The sun rises in the east.

## Present Continuous Tense

The present continuous tense is used to indicate an action which is going on at the time of speaking.

#### EXAMPLE —

She is writing a letter. [*Now*]

*To understand it better, please read the following points carefully:*

1. Action should be going on while speaking.
2. Action should be deliberate.
3. Action should be temporary.
4. Sometimes action may be incomplete while speaking.
5. Verb should be dynamic

#### EXAMPLE —

I am writing a novel. [It maybe the writer is not writing a novel while speaking]

**Rule :** (Subject + is / am / are + V<sub>1</sub> + ing + object)

#### EXAMPLES —

1. She is writing a letter.
2. I am listening to the music.
3. They are watering the plants.

**Articles**

In fact like quantifiers, articles belong to the wider class of determiners. There are two articles in English.

| Indefinite Article | Definite Article |
|--------------------|------------------|
| <i>a / an</i>      | <i>The</i>       |

**Indefinite Article** a / an

We use *a / an* before a singular countable noun when it is not specified, or when we mean no matter which one.

**Some Important Key points**

- **A** **Do not use *a / an* before an uncountable noun.**

**Such as** : Information, soap, chalk, bread, etc.

**Wrong** : *an* information, *a* soap, *a* chalk, *a* bread.

**Right** : *a* piece of information

*a* bar of soap

*a* stick of chalk

*a* loaf of bread

**Do not use *a / an* before an adjective which is without a **singular countable noun**.**

**Wrong** : He is a unique.

**Right** : He is unique.

**OR** He is a unique person.

**Do not use *a / an* before a **plural countable noun**.**

**Such as** : Oxen, trousers, theses, oases, teeth, feet, etc.

**Wrong** : He wrote a theses.

**Right** : He wrote theses.

**OR** He wrote a thesis.

**Wrong** : I saw an oxen.

**Right** : I saw several oxen.

**OR** I saw an ox.

**Do not use *a / an* after the following **phrases**.**

|                                                       |                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| kind of, sort of, post of, a number of, the number of | + no article + Noun |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|

- ☒ **Wrong** : Shalini has applied for the post of an editor.
- ☑ **Right** : Shalini has applied for the post of editor.
- ☒ **Wrong** : The number of the Crimes seems to be increasing by leaps and bounds in metropolitans.
- ☑ **Right** : The number of crimes seems to be increasing by leaps and bounds in metropolitans.

- **B** Read the following *fixed phrases* with or without articles.

|                        |                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>In the morning</b>  | <b>On foot</b>                  |
| <b>In the evening</b>  | <b>By bus, by car, by plane</b> |
| <b>At noon</b>         | <b>Make a noise</b>             |
| <b>At night</b>        | <b>In difficulty</b>            |
| <b>At midnight</b>     | <b>In trouble</b>               |
| <b>Tell a lie</b>      | <b>In a hurry</b>               |
| <b>Speak the truth</b> | <b>On horse back</b>            |

- **C** We use *a/an* before a **singular countable noun** when it is mentioned for the first time,

*Ex. :*

- Once there was a king.
- I bought a car.

- **D** *A/an* can be used before *food, lunch, breakfast, dinner* if they are preceded by an adjective.

*Ex. :*

- He gave me a delicious food.

## Rules Regarding a / an

- 'A' is used before a singular countable noun which begins with a consonant sound.
- 'An' is used before a singular countable noun which begins with a vowel sound.

### Examples —

an S.D.M

an M.P.

an hour

an heir

an Umbrella

a Unique woman

a European citizen

an L.L.B student

a tube of toothpaste

a sheet of paper

an English woman

**Nouns**

Nouns are naming words, they can name anything that we can see, touch, and feel.

**Such as**

*Mohan, Sohan, Agra, Delhi, Honesty, Beauty, Childhood, etc are nouns.*

**Types of Nouns**

1. **Proper Noun** : A Proper noun is the name of a particular person or thing, such as *Meera, Deepak, Agra, Meerut* etc.  
Proper noun begins with capital letter.
2. **Common Noun** : A common noun is a name shared by every person or thing of the same class.  
Such as *man, woman, dog, river, table, pen etc.*
3. **Collective Noun** : Collective noun is (also called group noun) the name of a group of people.  
Such as *class, team, army, committee, mob, team, crowd, etc.*
4. **Abstract Noun** : Abstract noun is the name of quality, state or idea.  
Such as *beauty, wisdom, childhood, kindness, etc.*
5. **Material Noun** : Material noun refers to a material or substance from which things are made such as  
Such as *gold, iron, silver, copper, plastic, etc.*

**Genders**

1. **Feminine gender** : Indicates *female sex*  
Such as *woman, girl, bitch, hen, cow, etc.*
2. **Masculine gender** : Indicates *male sex*  
Such as *man, boy, dog, bull etc.*
3. **Neuter gender** : Indicates an object that is *neither male nor female*,  
Such as *pen, book, table.*  
**Birds, wild animals, baby (whose sex is not known) are also included in neuter gender.**
4. **Common gender** : Indicate either man or woman  
Such as *baby, student, nurse, homemaker, poet, actor, doctor, parent, etc.*  
*poet, actor, homemaker, nurse etc.* are included in common gender

**EXAMPLE –**

- He is an actor
- She is an actor

## Points to Remember

Some nouns are personified (They are non living but considered living)

**Male category** : Death, sun, winter, summer, time.

**Female category** : Moon ship, yacht, spring, nature, earth, name of the country except France.

EXAMPLES –

1. *Death* has put *his* icy hands on her rosy lips.
2. The *ship* has lost *her* way in the tempest.

## Remember

- ❑ Some nouns are countable and some are uncountable, (that cannot be counted eg. milk, water, nouns are always singular.)
- ❑ Countable nouns (That can be counted such as one pen, three books, etc.) are singular and plural.
- ❑ Some countable nouns have their fixed plural forms.

## Cases of Nouns

The case of a noun is form of a noun which shows its relationship to the other word in a sentence.

**A noun has the following cases :**

1. Nominative case
2. Objective case
3. Dative case
4. Possessive case

### 1. Nominative case :

When a noun is used as the subject of a verb it is called subjective case or nominative case.

**Ram** goes to school.



Subjective case / Nominative case

### 2. Objective case :

When a noun is used after the verb it is said to be in objective case. Nominative case and objective case of nouns are same

**Ram** teaches me English.



Nominative case

**He** helps Ram.



Objective case

### 3. Possessive case :

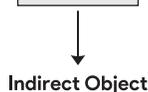
Possessive case is used to show ownership.

- *Ram's book* is on the table.
- *The legs of this table* are broken.

#### 4. Dative case :

When a noun indicates the indirect object of the verb, it is said to be in the dative case.

Sandra gave Candida a bouquet of flowers.



## Numbers

There are two numbers in English.

1. Singular number
2. Plural number

#### 1. Singular number :

A noun that denotes only one person or thing is said to be in the singular number. Such as *man, pen, girl, toy, chair, etc.*

#### 2. Plural number :

A noun that denotes 'more than one' person or thing is said to be in the 'plural number.' Such as *men, pens, girls, toys, chairs, etc.*

### Formation of Plural Nouns

#### 1. Some nouns have their fixed plural.

Examples –

| Singular Noun | Plural noun      | Singular Noun           | Plural noun       |
|---------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>man</i>    | <i>men</i>       | <i>mouse</i>            | <i>mice</i>       |
| <i>woman</i>  | <i>women</i>     | <i>mouse (computer)</i> | <i>mouses</i>     |
| <i>child</i>  | <i>children</i>  | <i>madam</i>            | <i>ladies</i>     |
| <i>ox</i>     | <i>oxen/oxes</i> | <i>person</i>           | <i>people</i>     |
| <i>tooth</i>  | <i>teeth</i>     | <i>crisis</i>           | <i>crises</i>     |
| <i>foot</i>   | <i>feet</i>      | <i>oasis</i>            | <i>oases</i>      |
| <i>goose</i>  | <i>geese</i>     | <i>thesis</i>           | <i>theses</i>     |
| <i>louse</i>  | <i>lice</i>      | <i>hypothesis</i>       | <i>hypotheses</i> |

#### 2. If a singular countable noun ends with SS, CH, X, O, Z, S add 'es' otherwise 's'.

Examples –

| Singular Noun | Plural noun    | Singular Noun | Plural noun  | Singular Noun | Plural noun   |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>bus</i>    | <i>buses</i>   | <i>book</i>   | <i>books</i> | <i>solo</i>   | <i>solos</i>  |
| <i>fuss</i>   | <i>fusses</i>  | <i>lip</i>    | <i>lips</i>  | <i>memo</i>   | <i>memos</i>  |
| <i>box</i>    | <i>boxes</i>   | <i>bed</i>    | <i>beds</i>  | <i>photo</i>  | <i>photos</i> |
| <i>watch</i>  | <i>watches</i> | <i>home</i>   | <i>homes</i> | <i>kilo</i>   | <i>kilos</i>  |

When 'ch' is pronounced 'k' and s.

monarch — monarchs

stomach — stomachs

arch — arches

3. If a singular countable noun ends with 'y' add 's' if a vowel comes before y.

Examples –

| Singular Noun  | Plural noun      |
|----------------|------------------|
| <i>baby</i>    | <i>babies</i>    |
| <i>quality</i> | <i>qualities</i> |
| <i>country</i> | <i>countries</i> |
| <i>party</i>   | <i>parties</i>   |

days      boys      keys

Change 'y' into *ies* if a consonant comes before *y*.

4. If the noun ends with *f/fe*, replace *f/fe* by *ves*.

Examples –

| Singular Noun | Plural noun   | Singular Noun | Plural noun    |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>knife</i>  | <i>knives</i> | <i>belief</i> | <i>beliefs</i> |
| <i>life</i>   | <i>lives</i>  | <i>chief</i>  | <i>chiefs</i>  |
| <i>loaf</i>   | <i>loaves</i> | <i>cliff</i>  | <i>cliffs</i>  |
| <i>wife</i>   | <i>wives</i>  | <i>roof</i>   | <i>roofs</i>   |
|               |               | <i>hoof</i>   | <i>hoofs</i>   |

### Plural of Compound Noun

Two or more nouns are combined to form a compound noun.

Examples – *Father in law, brother in law, passer by, boy friends, girl fiend etc.*

1. To make a compound noun plural. Change the main noun into its plural form.

| Singular Noun         | Plural noun            |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>father in law</i>  | <i>fathers in law</i>  |
| <i>brother in law</i> | <i>brothers in law</i> |
| <i>passer by</i>      | <i>passers by</i>      |
| <i>boy friend</i>     | <i>boy friends</i>     |

2. Nouns ending in '*ful*' add '*s*' to the end.

| Singular Noun   | Plural noun      |
|-----------------|------------------|
| <i>Cupful</i>   | <i>Cupfuls</i>   |
| <i>Spoonful</i> | <i>Spoonfuls</i> |
| <i>Basinful</i> | <i>Basinfuls</i> |

3. If the first element is man or woman, both elements are made plural.

| Singular Noun       | Plural noun          |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Woman doctor</i> | <i>Women doctors</i> |
| <i>Woman driver</i> | <i>Women drivers</i> |
| <i>Man servant</i>  | <i>Men servants</i>  |

But we say, Man haters, woman killers etc.

## Pronouns

### Pro + Noun

'*Pro*' means at the place of

A word which is used at the place of a noun or a noun phrase is called pronoun.

### Examples –

1. Meera is a good student.
2. She is one of my friends.

Here '*Meena*' is a *noun* '*She*' is a *pronoun*. 'Meera ' is the antecedent of the pronoun 'She'. Thus we see that - *I, we, you, he, she, it, they* are all pronouns.

## Types of Pronoun

### 1. Personal pronouns

Indicate persons such as, *I, we, you, he, she, it, they*.

### 2. Relative pronouns

Show relations such as, *who, which, that, whom, whose*.

### 3. Reciprocal pronouns

Show relationship with one another such as, *each other, one another*, etc.

### 4. Reflexive pronouns

The **singular pronouns** *myself, yourself, himself, herself, it self* and the **plural pronouns** *ourselves, yourselves and themselves* are called **reflexive pronouns**. They are used when the action done by the subject affects upon the subject.

### Examples –

- She is looking at herself in the mirror.
- He cut himself.

### 5. Indefinite pronouns

Indefinite pronouns are used to denote persons or things in a general way.

The indefinite pronouns are :

- **Singular :**

**Somebody, nobody, anybody, everybody, someone, no one, anyone, everyone something, nothing, anything, everything, etc.**

- **Plural :**

**Both, few, many, several, others, all, etc.**

- **Singular and Plural :**

**All, any, more, most, none, some, etc.**

## 6. Interrogative pronouns

They are used to ask questions. Interrogative pronouns are

*Who, whom, which, what, etc.*

*Examples –*

- Who is that man?
- Which is your pen?

## 7. Distributive pronouns

Distributive pronouns are used to denote persons or things one at a time. These are

*Each, either, neither, etc.*

*Examples –*

- Each of the articles is informative.
- Either of you is not allowed to sit at this desk.

## 8. Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns are used to point out a thing or things / person / persons these are:

*This, that, these, those, etc.*

## 9. Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronouns are used to denote possession or ownership.

*Mine, his, hers, theirs, yours, etc.*

## Points to Remember

- Without pronouns we have to repeat the same nouns over and over again.

*Examples –*

- Tom said that Tom was going to call Tom's father.

*This sentence can be written as :*

- Tom said that he was going to call his father.

- Every pronoun has an antecedent.
- The antecedent is the noun that the pronoun replaces.

- ❑ The pronoun must agree with the antecedent in person, case, and gender.
- ❑ Personal pronouns have three persons. Such as

|                         |                                                                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. <b>First person</b>  | <i>I, We</i> (speaker)                                               |
| 2. <b>Second person</b> | <i>You</i> , (listener)                                              |
| 3. <b>Third person</b>  | <i>he, she, it, they</i> , (The person / persons that we talk about) |

- ❑ *You* : Singular and Plural.
- ❑ '*You*' is used for singular / plural / male / female.
- ❑ A 'pronoun' like a noun must be used alone as sub or as an object etc.

|               | Subjective case         | Objective case           | Possessive case            | Possessive pronoun         |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| First Person  | I<br>We                 | me<br>us                 | my<br>our                  | mine<br>ours               |
| Second Person | You                     | you                      | your                       | yours                      |
| Third Person  | He<br>She<br>It<br>They | him<br>her<br>it<br>them | his<br>her<br>its<br>their | his<br>hers<br>—<br>theirs |

**NOTE**

*My, our, your, her, their* etc. are *pronomial adjectives* also known as *possessive adjective*. They are called possessive adjectives because they cannot be used alone.

*Example –*

- We cannot say.
- My is coming

*We say* : My friends are coming.

**Rules Regarding Pronouns**

**Rule : 1** Always use a subjective case after a helping verb, and an objective case after a main verb.

- ⊗ **Wrong** : It is me who can solve these sums.
- ☑ **Right** : It is I who can solve these sums.