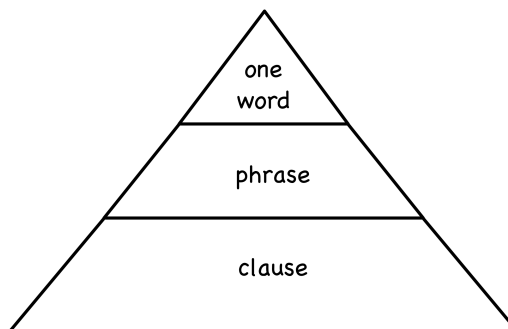
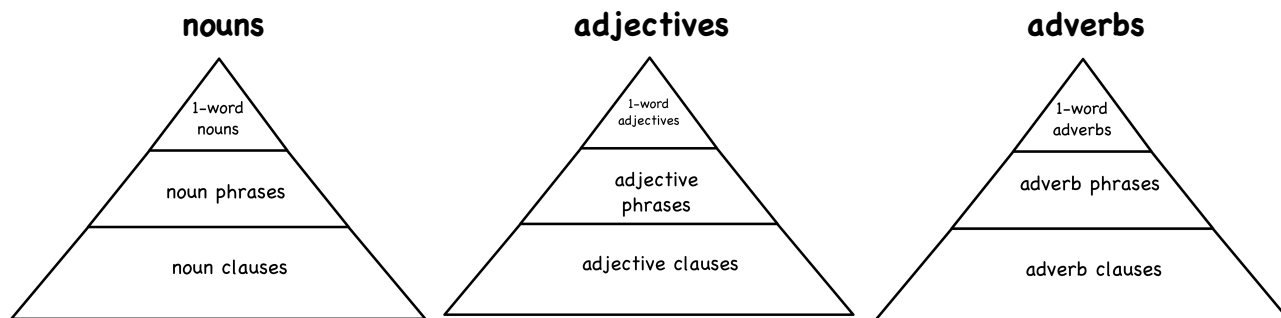


Pyramids



The pyramid is another metaphor (an analogy) that can help you understand the use of one-word nouns, noun phrases and noun clauses; one-word adjectives, adjective phrases and adjective clauses; as well as one-word adverbs, adverb phrases and adverb clauses. Try to expand your thinking to visualize of each of these parts of speech like this:



Here are some definitions of the words that we will look at in this lesson:

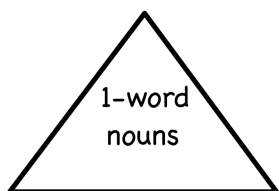
nouns: are people, places, animals and things (either concrete, abstract or activity things). They are written as either proper nouns (names – with an upper case letter) or common nouns (with a lower case letter). Some nouns are groups of words. The four jobs of nouns in the syntax of a sentence are *subject of the sentence, direct object of a transitive verb, object of a preposition, and noun complement*. The “5th” possible job for a noun is to be an *indirect object* (which is really a just an *object of a preposition*).

adjectives: are words or groups of words that modify nouns.

adverbs: are words or groups of words that modify verbs. (“Intensifiers” are a separate type of adverbs that modify adjectives and other adverbs, but not verbs.)

a phrase: is a group of words *without* a subject-verb relationship. There are many kinds of phrases: prepositional phrases, participial phrases, gerund phrases, infinitive phrases, noun phrases, and phrasal verbs.

a clause: is a group of words with a subject-verb relationship. There are many kinds of clauses: main clauses (independent clauses), adverb clauses (dependent clauses), adjective clauses (relative clauses), noun clauses (embedded clauses), and even some others.



One-word nouns are what you have always thought of as nouns, i.e. people, places, animals and things. A *1-word noun* is a single word that, in the syntax of a sentence, functions as the *subject of the sentence*, the *direct object of a transitive verb*, the *object of a preposition*, or a *noun complement*. Also, two types of “activity thing nouns” are gerunds and infinitives. Although a simple infinitive has two words in it, (i.e., *to + base form*), we consider it to be “one word” rather than a “phrase.”

EXAMPLES: **dog**, **car**, **freedom**, **friends**, **education**, **swimming** (gerund), **to win** (infinitive)

1. **Freedom** is important for everyone.
subject

2a. I want a **dog**.
direct object

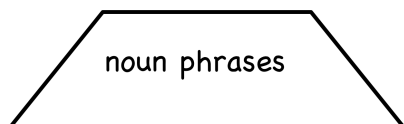
2b. I want a **to win**.
direct object

3. I read a book about **swimming**.
gerund

4. My goal is an **education**.
noun complement after the linking verb “be”

...and the other special one... 5a. I sent my **friends** some presents.
indirect object

...which can also be expressed... 5b. I’ll sent the report to my **friends**.
object of the preposition “to”



Noun phrases do the same four (or five) jobs as one-word nouns: the *subject of the sentence*, the *direct object of a transitive verb*, the *object of a preposition*, or a *noun complement*.

EXAMPLES: **five important friends**, **getting an education** (gerund), **to buy a new car** (infinitive)

1. **Getting an education** is important for everyone.
a gerund phrase used as a subject

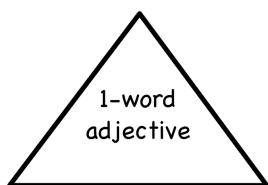
2. I want **to buy a new car**.
an infinitive phrase used as a direct object

3. I read a book about **getting an education**.
a gerund phrase used as the object of the preposition “about”

4. My goal is **to get an education**.
an infinitive phrase used as a noun complement after the linking verb “be”

...and the other special one... 5a. I sent **five good friends** some presents.
a noun with two adjectives used as an indirect object

This can also be expressed... 5b. I’ll send the report to **five important friends**.
a noun with two adjectives used as the object of a preposition



One-word adjectives modify (Please, don't use the word "describe.") nouns, and sometimes they modify pronouns. A *1-word adjective* is a single word that, in the syntax of a sentence, modifies (or changes) the noun in some way. There are MANY types of adjectives: for example, adjectives of color, size, shape, nationality, quantity, possession, and many others. An article, like a number, is one sort of adjective, a one-word participle is another, and a simple infinitive can be another. A simple infinitive, though, breaks the placement rule because it occurs **after** the noun it modifies.

NOTE: A gerund and a present participle can look exactly the same, "swimming" and "swimming." The difference between the two is the jobs that each one does in the syntax of its sentence. A gerund does the job of a noun while a participle does the job of an adjective.

EXAMPLES: **tall**, **American**, **free**, **beautiful**, **educational**, **swimming** (present [a.k.a active] participle), **broken** (past [a.k.a. passive] participle), **to succeed** (infinitive)

1. A **free** life is important for everyone.

The adjective "free" modifies the noun "life."
("free" answers the question, "What kind of life?")

2. I'll find a way **to succeed**.

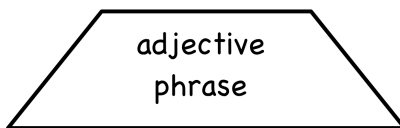
The infinitive "to succeed" modifies "way,"
and it answers the question, "Which way?")

3. I read a book about **flying** fish.

The present participle
"flying" modifies the noun
"fish," and it answers
the question, "What kind of fish?"

4. He can fix the **broken** radio.

The past participle
"broken" modifies
the noun "radio."
("Which radio?")



Adjective phrases modify nouns (and sometimes pronouns), and they (as well as simple infinitives) are placed **AFTER** the nouns they modify. Adjective phrases are usually participial phrases or prepositional phrases. Sometimes they are infinitive phrases.

EXAMPLES: **buying the car** (present participial phrase), **made by hand** (past participial phrase), **to win the race** (infinitive phrase), **on the bus** (prepositional phrase)

1. The man **buying the car** is Mr. Smith.

"buying the car" is a present participial phrase used
to modify the noun "man." ("Which man is Mr. Smith?")

2. Keeping a good pace is a way **to win a race**.

"to win the race" is an infinitive phrase
that modifies the noun "way." ("Which way?")

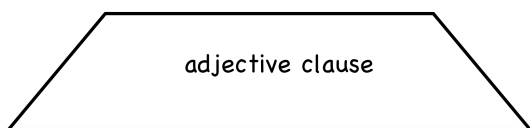
3. I bought some clothes **made by hand in India**.

This is a past participial phrase
which modifies the word "clothes"
and answers the question "What
kind of clothes did you buy?"

4. The man **on the bus** told me his name.

"on the bus" is an adjectival
prepositional phrase that
answers the question "Which
man told you his name?"

NOTE: Participial phrases and adjectival prepositional phrases can often be understood as "reduced forms" of adjective clauses. E.g.: "The man **who is buying the car** is Mr. Smith." "I bought some clothes **that were made in India**." "The man **whom I met on the bus** told me his name." The infinitive phrase in #2 above could be written as an adjective clause as well: "Keeping a good pace is a way **that can help you win the race**."



Adjective clauses modify nouns (and sometimes pronouns). We place adjective clauses after the nouns that they modify. They begin with a relative pronoun ("who," "whom," "that," "which") and sometimes with a relative adverb ("when," "why," or "where"). For this reason, they are often called *relative clauses*. Some adjective clauses are "identifying," and some adjective clauses are "non-identifying." The *non-identifying ones*, which we think of as giving "extra information," require commas in order to make them parenthetical – to set them apart.

EXAMPLES: **that/which he said, who/that made the mess, whom/that we invited, which/that he bought yesterday, where she lives, when he was born, why/that I said it**

A. Identifying Adjective Clauses

The four sentences below are examples of "identifying adjective clauses," which means that they give us information that is necessary to know who or which person or thing we are talking about. These clauses identify the nouns that they modify.

1. Please repeat the words **that he said**. 2. The kids **who made the mess** should clean it up.

"that he said" modifies the noun "words" and answers the question, "Which words should I repeat?"

"who made the mess" modifies the noun "kid," and answers the question "Which kids should clean it up?" We could also write this clause: "...that made the mess."

3. The place **where she lives** had a fire. 4. This is the reason **why I said that**.

This clause modifies the noun "place" and answers the question "Which place had a fire?"

This clause modifies the noun "reason" and answers the question: "Which reason is this?" We could also write this clause: "...that I said that."

B. Non-identifying Adjective Clauses

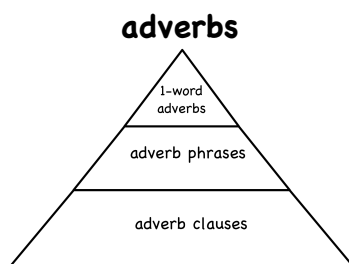
The two sentences below are examples of "non-identifying adjective clauses," which means that they give us extra (or parenthetical) information about a person or thing that we already know – that is, that has already been identified in some way. We use commas on either side of the clause to make it parenthetical – i.e., to set it aside. (NOTE: Don't use "that" in these clauses.)

1. His marriage proposal, **which he made to you last night**, was like music to your ears.

The clause "which he made to you last night" modifies the noun phrase "marriage proposal." The clause gives us the extra, but not identifying information that "he" made the marriage proposal last night. The clause does **not** answer the question "Which marriage proposal was like music to your ears?"

2. Mary Johnson, **who made the mess**, should clean it up.

The clause "who made the mess" modifies the noun "Mary Johnson" and gives the important information that she made the mess, but it does **not** answer the question "Which Mary Johnson should clean it up?" Mary Johnson is Mary Johnson. She does not need to be identified. But in the sentence from #2 above, "The kids **who made the mess** should clean it up," the "kids" are unknown to us without the words "who made the mess." This clause answers the question, "Which kids should clean it up?"



Adverbs modify verbs. (One group of *adverbs*, called “*Intensifier Adverbs*,” modifies *adjectives* and other *adverbs* – but NOT *verbs*. We will talk about that special group of *adverbs* later.) For now, you should think of the job of all *adverbs* as to modify *verbs*. In general, *adverbs*, especially adverb phrases and clauses, answer the questions: “When?” “Where?” “Why?” “How?” “How long?” and “How often?” These types of adverbs are known respectively as *Time Adverbs* (“When?”), *Place Adverbs* (“Where?”), *Adverbs of Reason or Adverbs of Cause* (“Why?”), *Adverbs of Method or Manner* (“How?”), *Adverbs of Duration* (“How long?”), and *Frequency Adverbs* (“How often?”).

Try to visualize the placement of *adverbs* in these 2 ways:

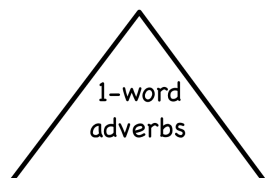
Add a comma.

“The people celebrated .”

The natural place for an *adverb* is after the *verb* that it modifies.

“, the people celebrated.”

An *adverb* can be moved to the front of the sentence, before the *subject* of the sentence, if you add a comma to show that it has been moved from its natural place after the *verb*.



One-word adverbs, with the exception of *Intensifier Adverbs*, modify verbs. However, *one-word adverbs* usually answer only these four questions: “When?” “Where?” “How?” and “How often?” The questions “Why?” and “How long?” are generally reserved for adverb phrases and adverb clauses.

EXAMPLES: **yesterday, then, now, here, there, quickly, fast, sometimes, usually, often**

1. I bought a new bicycle **yesterday**.

The adverb “yesterday” modifies the verb “bought.” (“yesterday” answers the question, “When did you buy it?”)

2. She will arrive **there** tomorrow.

The adverb “there” modifies the verb “will arrive,” and it answers the question, “Where will she arrive...?”

3. The boy ran **quickly** to the store.

The adverbs “quickly” and “fast” both modify the verb “runs.” They mean the same thing, and they both modify the verb “run.” They answer the question “How does the boy run?”

4. He comes **here** usually.

The adverb “often” modifies the verb “comes” and it answers the question, “How often does he come here?”

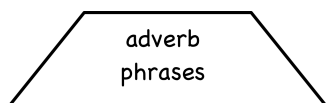
NOTE: The adverb can be moved to the front of the sentence in most of the above sentences:

1. **Yesterday**, I bought a new bicycle.

2. **Quickly**, the boy ran to the store.

3. **Usually**, he comes here. (However, not all 1-word adverbs can be moved to the front of the sentence.)

We don’t say, for example, “There, she will arrive tomorrow.” But we can move “there” before the subject in a sentence like, “There she goes!”



Adverb phrases, like all *adverbs*, modify *verbs*. *Adverb phrases* are of **two** basic types: *adverbial prepositional phrases* and *infinitives used as adverbs*. Remember, *adverb phrases* answer the questions: "When?" "Where?" "Why?" "How?" "How long?" and "How often?"

EXAMPLES: **on the bus**, **since noon** (prepositional phrases), **to learn English** (infinitive phrase),

1. I saw my friend **on the bus**.

The phrase "on the bus" is an adverbial prepositional phrase that modifies the verb "saw," and it answers the question: "Where did you see the man?"

2. I came to Laney College **to learn English**.

The phrase "to learn English" is an infinitive phrase that modifies the verb "came" and answers the question: "Why did you come to Laney College?" You could also use the phrase "in order to learn..."

3. I have been studying math **since noon**.

The phrase "since" is an adverbial prepositional phrase that modifies the verb "been studying," and it answers the question: "How long have you been studying math?"

4. She works there **on Fridays**.

The phrase "on Fridays" is a prepositional phrase that modifies the verb "works" and answers the question: "How often/When does she work there?"

NOTE: The *adverb phrase* in the above sentences can be moved (with a comma) before the subject:

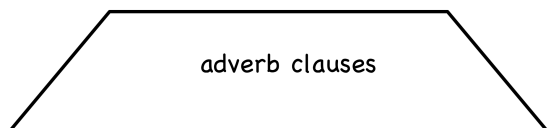
1. **On the bus**, I saw my friend.

2. **To learn English**, I came to Laney College.

You could also say, "In order to learn English, I came..."

3. **Since noon**, I have been studying math.

4. **On Fridays**, she works there.



Adverb clauses modify verbs, and they are sometimes called *dependent clauses* or even, because they begin with subordinating conjunctions, *subordinate clauses*. Sometimes people call them "adverbial clauses" as well. (Unfortunately, you will need to learn all of these terms because a future

English instructor might choose to use any one of them.) A sentence that has both a main clause (independent clause) and an adverb clause is known as a complex sentence. And remember, they answer: "When?" "Where?" "Why?" "How?" "How long?" and "How often?"

EXAMPLES: **because I love her**, **if he can find the time**, **where they used to live**, **since we came to America**, **when you get home**, **where she lives**, **as often as I can**

Compare the word order...

in these examples on the left.....with the reversed order.....in these similar examples on the right.

1. I gave her the ring **because I love her**.

In both versions, "because I love her" modifies the verb "gave" and answers the question, "Why did you give her the ring?"

1. **Because I love her**, I gave her the ring.

2. He'll visit **if he can find the time**.

In both versions, "if he can find the time" modifies the verb "visit" and answers the question, "Why or under what conditions..."

2. **If he can find the time**, he'll visit.

3. Will you study **when you get home**?

In both versions, "when you get home" modifies the verb "study" and answers the question, "When will you study?"

3. **When you get home**, will you study?

4. There was a big fire **where she lives**.

In both versions, "where she lives" modifies the verb "was" and answers the question, "Where was there a big fire?"

4. **Where she lives**, there was a big fire.