

# Practical Guide to English Usage

*Draft version*

Language Service, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya



Universitat Oberta  
de Catalunya

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Language Service, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, June 2011  
Av. Tibidabo 39-43, Barcelona, 08035

Design: Manel Andreu

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**Servei Lingüístic de la Universitat Oberta de Catalunya**

The Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (Open University of Catalonia, UOC) Language Service was opened in 1995, at the same time as the University itself. Since the start of the University's activities it has played an important role in the tasks of editing and translating the texts produced for the University's Virtual Campus and teaching materials. Likewise, the Language Service has worked to produce guidelines to help cover the language needs and to respond to the doubts that inevitably arise when dealing with large amounts of documents, as is the case at the UOC.

## Practical Guide to English Usage

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## Practical Guide to English Usage

## Presentation

The following guide comes in response to the language needs that have arisen at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (Open University of Catalonia, UOC) since its founding. These needs regarding the English language have been met by the University's Language Service.

This guide provides a comprehensive review of issues with the language that could be resolved by consulting textbooks or dictionaries, but which are brought together here in one volume and linked to the texts produced at the University. This guide is also special and unique in the way it links its contents and examples to the Catalan language. It offers guidance for those problematic aspects of the language that are often found when revising or translating the texts produced at the University: academic and administrative documents, websites, opinion articles, teaching materials, emails, etc.

When applying the criteria from the different sections of this guide, we always bear in mind that the original text has an author who has left their imprint and any subsequent handling of the language should ensure the highest levels of consistency in the document without losing sight of the original meaning of the text.

Generally speaking, the examples herein are taken from texts that have been revised by the Language Service, and reflect the desire to bring coherency to the documents handled while being careful not to make more corrections than strictly necessary.

Imma Sánchez  
Director, Language Service

## Presentació

La guia que us presentem a continuació és fruit de les necessitats lingüístiques que han sorgit a la Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) des que es va crear i que el Servei Lingüístic ha estat l'encarregat de satisfer adequadament pel que fa a l'anglès.

D'una banda, aquesta guia és un recordatori d'algunes qüestions de llengua que, si bé es podrien resoldre consultant gramàtiques i diccionaris, recollides en un volum i relacionades amb la documentació de la Universitat donen una visió global del ventall de dubtes que poden aparèixer i, al mateix temps, fan que la guia es converteixi en un mòdul especial i singular perquè el contingut i els exemples es relacionen amb la llengua catalana. D'altra banda, és una orientació en els casos vacil·lants, que sovint es presenten a l'hora de fer les revisions i les traduccions dels textos de la Universitat: documents acadèmics i administratius, espais web, articles d'opinió, materials docents, missatges de correu electrònic, etc.

A l'hora d'aplicar els criteris dels diferents apartats de la guia, sempre tenim en compte que els textos tenen un autor que hi ha posat una intenció i que qualsevol tractament lingüístic posterior ha d'intentar aportar la màxima homogeneïtat al document final mirant de no desviar-se del sentit del text original.

En general, el recull d'exemples que hi hem incorporat és extret de textos que s'han revisat al Servei Lingüístic i respon a la intenció d'ajudar a unificar cada un dels textos tenint cura a no fer més correccions de les necessàries.

Imma Sánchez  
Directora del Servei Lingüístic

## **Introduction**

### **Content**

The contents of this Practical Guide to English Usage are designed to provide support for members of the university community who need to write in English. The Guide is based on the work carried out by the Language Service over the years since the UOC's founding to produce similar guides to aid the work of those writing in Catalan and Spanish at the University.

### **Organisation**

The Guide has been divided into three main sections: Spelling, Morphology and Syntax. These sections offer guidelines and examples for the proper use of the English language. They are designed to help writers with any level of competence in the language to overcome the common problems encountered with English. The Guide is not intended to be exhaustive, but to cover as many points as possible in a clear and easily understandable way. Each point has a brief introduction and examples of its actual use to guide writers.

### **Further information**

The Language Service has a webpage on the UOC's portal where you can find more resources on the Catalan and Spanish languages. The address is as follows:

<http://www.uoc.edu/serveilinguistic>

### **Target audience**

This Guide is designed, above all, for university students, faculty, researchers and staff who have to write in English. Nonetheless, it is also designed to be of use to all those who are interested in improving their level of competence in English, and Catalan speakers in particular.

## Contributors

This Guide was commissioned by the UOC's Language Service and written by Martin Louis Hevly, author of the five-volume *Gramàtica anglesa*, a reference work for Catalan-speakers interested in learning more about the English language. The Language Service's experts, Alba Corral Serramià, David Cullen and Pilar Gispert-Saüch Viader, then contributed by editing and adapting the initial text to the university context, with the help of Xavier Marzal Doménech.

## Key

Words in bold are either key points that need to be highlighted or examples of correct use of the language.

Words and phrases that have been ruled out show erroneous use of the language.

The abbreviations BrE. and AmE. are used to distinguish between British and American English, where necessary.

Catalan translations are given (in italics) in those cases where the point in English is being compared and contrasted to its equivalent use in Catalan.

Internal references to other chapters in this Guide have been abbreviated as follows:

Spelling → Sp  
Morphology → Mo  
Syntax → Sy

## Spelling

This section looks at the common difficulties that writers may encounter with the spelling of words in English. These include English's irregular separation of syllables or use of the apostrophe to indicate omissions. There are also sub-sections to highlight the differences between punctuation in English and Catalan.

### 1. Syllabification (Separation of Syllables)

The division of syllables in English is extremely complex because English is not written as it is spoken. For example, we pronounce learning /ler·ning/ but we separate it learn·ing. The separation method depends on the etymology and spelling of the word. Even most native English speakers occasionally need to consult a dictionary to know definitely how a word should be separated.

As is the case in Catalan, all doubled consonants are generally separated: **rub·ber**, **broc·coli**, **ped·dle**, **scuf·fle**, **smug·gle**, **yel·low**, **gram·mar**, **ten·nis**, **cop·per**, **cor·rect**, **fos·sil**, **glut·ton**, **guz·zle**.

The suffixes -ing and -er are almost always separated, except when following a doubled consonant. So, **tub·ing**, **spac·ing**, **hold·ing**, **brief·ing**, **grudg·ing**; but, **run·ning**, **pas·sing**, **bet·ting**; **run·ner**, **pas·ser**, **bet·ter**, etc.

There are a few words ending in -ling and -ler for which this rule also does not apply. The most important are **an·gling**, **crack·ling**, **cy·cling**, **dan·gling**, **kin·dling**, **sti·fling**, **twin·kling** and **wres·tling**. **An·gler**, **han·dler**, **knuck·ler**, **ram·bler**, **sam·pler**, **spar·kler**, **sprin·kler**, **tum·bler**, **whis·tler** and **wran·gler**.

We might also mention words ending in the suffix -ling for which, obviously, the -ing ending is not a suffix: **dar·ling**, **duck·ling**, **dump·ling**, **earth·ling**, **ink·ling**, **sap·ling**, **seed·ling**, **sib·ling**, **star·ling**, **ster·ling**.

Compound words are of course separated between the words: **bag·man**.

If you are in doubt, consult a good dictionary. Here, for example, is the entry in Webster's dictionary for learning showing both its syllabification and pronunciation: learn·ing (lɜr'nɪŋ).

### 2. Punctuation Marks

The use of punctuation marks in English and Catalan are quite similar, though there are differences. In the following thirteen sections we will give a brief description of the use of punctuation marks in English, paying special attention to those cases in which it differs from that of Catalan.

## 2.1. Apostrophe

The most important use of the apostrophe in English is in contractions, constructions in which a letter or, less frequently, a group of letters is elided. Contractions are nearly always used in oral English and in written English they are generally considered to give a more relaxed and informal tone to the writing; they should therefore be avoided if this is not the intention of the writer.

Some common examples of contractions are:

Between a pronoun and the following verb forms: **am, are, is, have, has, had, will and would**:

**I'm, she's (she is or she has), you've, they'd (they had and they would).**

Between all auxiliary verbs except **am** and **not**:

**aren't, isn't, wasn't, weren't, haven't, hasn't, don't, doesn't, didn't, can't, couldn't, shan't, shouldn't, won't, wouldn't, mayn't, mightn't, mustn't.**

Because the verbs **is** and **are** can be contracted with both the personal pronouns and the adverb **not**, negative constructions using these elements can be expressed in two ways; for example, **You aren't thinking = You're not thinking; She's not here = She isn't here.**

In informal style, between the words **how, when, where, why, who, what** and **that** and the auxiliaries **is, has, have, did, will** and **would**. However, not all combinations are possible; specifically:

The words **how, when, where, why, who, what** and **that** can all contract with **is**:

**How's he doing? When's the meeting? Where's your brother? Why's that?  
Who's she? What's going on? That's funny.**

The auxiliaries **have** and **has** are generally limited to contractions with **how, where, who** and **what**; **has** can also be contracted with **that**:

**How've you been? Where've they gone? Who've they seen? What've we  
got here? Where's he gone? Who's fallen? What's he done? That's been used.**

The auxiliary **did** can be contracted with **how, where, why** and **who**:

**How'd (How did) you get there? Where'd they take my clothes? Why'd  
you lie to me? Who'd you see?**

The auxiliary **will** can be contracted with **who, what** and **that**:

**Who'll know? What'll happen? That'll be nice.**

The auxiliary **would** can only be contracted with **who**:

**Who'd like more cake?**

Other common contractions include:

**bo's'n (boatswain), fo'c's'le (forecastle), ha'penny (half-penny),  
jack-o'-lantern (jack of the lantern), ma'am (madam), o'clock (of the  
clock), rock 'n' roll (rock and roll), will-o' the-wisp (will of the wisp) and  
young'un (young one).**



Besides their use in contractions, apostrophes are also used to mark the Saxon genitive (see section Sy 1.1) and in the plural of letters:

**Tom's, Neus's, the Virtual Library's website.**  
**How many s's are there in Mississippi?**

## 2.2. Comma

As is the case in Catalan, in English the comma is used in the following contexts:

### To separate enumerations

Examples:

**The assignment requires us to think, write and speak.**  
**The University's governing team meets with students in China, Mexico, Brussels, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico.**

As shown in the examples above, a comma is normally not used before the last element in a series, that is, before the conjunction **and**. An exception is made, however, if the sentence would otherwise be ambiguous:

**The months with the most connections are October and November, and March, April and May, coinciding with the start of the semesters.**

### Before a coordinating conjunction

Examples:

**Our physics teacher is receiving an award next week, and we're having a party to celebrate it.**  
**English has very few verb forms, but their various functions often cause problems.**

The comma is normally omitted if the coordinated sentences are short:

**My name is Esteve and I work at the University.**

### Before or after subordinate and prepositional clauses

The comma is generally used when the subordinate or prepositional clause precedes the main clause, or, if following the main clause, when the main clause is long or complex:

**Since you're here, you might as well help me.**  
**While I agree with your goals, I abhor your methods.**  
**If we come to the extreme, our society will come to resemble the type of society that Hobbes described.**  
**Under the new concept of education, schools are no longer places to teach, but rather places to learn.**  
**The teachers' group has agreed to go on strike next Wednesday, even if the official union position is against it.**

The comma is not generally used if the subordinate or prepositional clause is short and follows the main clause, or, in the case of prepositional clauses, if the clause is very short:

**The evaluation is a complex process because there are different kinds of impacts.**

I'll do it even if they tell me not to.  
In Seattle people live well.  
After dinner we went for a walk.

#### In parenthetical expressions

Examples:

My mother, who lives in Scotland, is coming to stay with us next week.  
Roger, noticeably excited, began to speak.  
He came up and, looking him up and down, gave him a dressing down.

#### In elisions

Examples:

Sweden is a grand country; and its capital, a beautiful city.  
Italy is famous for her composers and musicians, France, for her chefs  
and philosophers, and Poland, for her mathematicians and logicians.

#### When addressing another person

Examples:

Hey, Joe, where are you going?  
Listen, honey, they're playing our song.

#### In interjections and asides

Examples:

Good grief, what a mess!  
Your comments, if you don't mind my saying so, reveal an astonishing  
ignorance of the situation.

#### In the separation of digits

It is important to keep in mind that, unlike Catalan, English uses commas to separate figures larger than 9999: **10,000; 25,950**, etc. (in Catalan, *10.000; 25.950*, etc.). Moreover, English uses the full stop to separate decimals, whereas Catalan uses the comma. Compare: **\$525,429.50** (*525.429,50 \$*).

Finally, English doesn't use a comma in four-digit numbers: **4350** (in Catalan, *4.350*).

### 2.3. Semicolon

The semicolon is used in English exactly as it is used in Catalan; specifically, it is used in the following two cases:

To separate two closely related sentences:

**It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.**  
**Women's conversation is cooperative; men's is competitive.**

A semicolon is often used before adverbial conjuncts such as **however, on the other hand, otherwise**, etc.:

**Schools have considerable autonomy; however, they must meet certain objectives.**

**We'll fight the eviction; otherwise we'll be homeless.**

To separate elements in a series when the elements are long or complex, or when they include other punctuation marks (especially commas):

**A study was done; next, an interactive consultation; and lastly, a digital terrain model was introduced.**

**Of these three special prizes, one is for the application of ICTs; one is for the applications in the world of employment, and the final one is for projects, products or services.**

## 2.4. Full Stop (AmE. = Period)

The punctuation mark called *punt* in Catalan has various names in English. When used to indicate the end of a sentence or in abbreviations, it is called **full stop** in British English and **period** in American English. When used as a decimal separator it is generally pronounced **point** (eg 6.2 is pronounced **six point two**). Finally, when used to separate Internet protocol addresses and named web addresses, it is called **dot**: 69.94.110.70 is pronounced **sixty-nine dot ninety-four dot one ten dot seventy**; google.com is pronounced **google dot com**.

Its use is exactly the same as in Catalan, with the exception that Catalan uses a comma rather than a full stop to separate decimals (eg \$650.50, 650,50 \$). However, there are questions of style:

In British English the full stop is normally omitted after titles and in initialisms –abbreviations pronounced as letters– (**Mr, Ms, Dr, USSR**, etc.), whereas it is normally included in American English (**Mr., Ms., Dr., U.S.S.R.**, etc.). However, the full stop is never used in acronyms (abbreviations pronounced as words, such as **NATO**: /néito/).

In American English, full stops are used inside quotation marks even when they are not part of the quoted sentence; in British English, the punctuation indicates whether the full stop forms part of the quotation. Compare:

“Carefree” means “free from care or anxiety”. (British style)

“Carefree” means “free from care or anxiety.” (American style)

## 2.5. Colon

As is the case in Catalan, a colon is used to indicate that what follows is a demonstration, an example or a consequence of what is referred to before; sometimes it is simply an enumeration of elements.

Examples:

**I know one thing: I'm never going to live in a big city.**

**Please send photocopies of the following documents: your passport, your driver's licence, and your birth certificate.**

In British English, the first word following a colon is always in lower case, unless there is some other reason for capitalizing it. In American English, it can also be capitalized if what follows is a complete sentence. Compare:

BrE.: I've just had some good news: my brother-in-law has been offered a job.

AmE.: I've just had some good news: My brother-in-law has been offered a job.

Colons are also used for speech in scripts:

**Groucho:** How many children do you have?

**Contestant:** Sixteen.

**Groucho:** Sixteen! That's amazing!

**Contestant:** I love my wife very much.

**Groucho:** I love my cigar, but I take it out every once in a while.

Unlike Catalan, English usually uses a comma before quotations:

**I believe it was Pope who said, "To err is human, to forgive divine".**

*Em penso que va ser Pope que va dir: "Error és humà, perdonar és diví".*

An exception is made when the quote is in apposition, when it explains what comes before:

**He reminded me of Alexander Pope's words: "To err is human, to forgive divine"** (the quote explains what Alexander Pope said).

Also unlike Catalan, which uses the full stop, in English the colon is used to separate hours, minutes and seconds:

**The file was last modified at 12:35:10.** (*Es va modificar l'arxiu per última vegada a les 12.35.10.*)

Finally, the colon is used to separate chapters and verses in the Bible and other sacred texts (**Matthew 7:12, Sura 5:18**).

## 2.6. Ellipses (Suspension Dots)

As in Catalan, ellipses are used in English to indicate a pause, an incompleteness, a reticence or an interruption in the sentence. They are also used to indicate that a part of a quotation has been omitted. Examples:

**I'm sure he's a charming young fellow, but...**

**Don't count your chickens...**

**If she'd only get better... or die.**

**"I'm broke; can you lend me..." "Don't even think about it!"**

**In the Times it says, "Prisoners from allied countries... were due to be released Thursday."**

Unlike in Catalan, in English ellipses are never used as a synonym for **etc.**

Catalan: *S'hi inclouen alguns tipus de noms (composició, finalitat, pertinença...).*

English: **Certain nouns (composition, finality, belonging, etc.) are included.**

Finally, an ellipsis at the end of a sentence with no sentence following should be followed by a period (for a total of four dots).

**They talk a lot, but when it's time to get down to work....**

## 2.7. Question Mark

As in Catalan, the question mark is used in English to signal that the sentence should be pronounced in an interrogative tone of voice. Unlike in Catalan, it is never used initially.

Examples:

**Who goes there?**  
**Why do women not choose to study ICTs?**  
**Where do you want to search?**

## 2.8. Exclamation Mark

As in Catalan, the exclamation mark is used to indicate wonder, surprise and other significant emotions.

Examples:

**Hooray!/Help!/Good grief!/What a pity!/Do whatever you are inspired to do, and share your ideas!/This has been an excellent two months!/Don't touch that wire!/Now you've done it!**

## 2.9. Em Dash

The em dash is used, both in English and in Catalan, to signal a parenthetical thought. Some style guides suggest that, as in Catalan, it be set closed (**We thought – or wanted to think – that the train was late**), but others recommend that it be set open: **We thought – or wanted to think – that the train was late.**

Unlike in Catalan, in English double quotes are used in dialogues, rather than em dashes:

**“We are concerned with how to employ the technology properly,” said the director of the programme.**

*–Ens preocupa com s’han de fer servir les tecnologies adequadament, va dir el director del programa.*

## 2.10. Hyphen

Hyphens are generally used in four contexts in English:

between elements in certain numbers;  
after prefixes and before suffixes;  
between compound words;  
to indicate that a word has been divided at the end of a line.

Concerning the fourth use, see section Sp 1.

### Numbers

As in Catalan, the hyphen is used to separate compound numbers between twenty-one and ninety-nine; it is also used for the ordinal numbers in this range:

**twenty-one, twenty-two... ninety-nine; twenty-first, twenty-second...  
ninety-ninth**

Note that, unlike in Catalan, in English the hyphen is not used to separate a single digit and hundreds: we write **four hundred**, not “**four-hundred**”.

The hyphen also comes between elements in fractions, except in the case that either the numerator or denominator already contains a hyphen:

**a one-third share, a three-quarter turn, a five-eighths inch screw**  
(hyphen in the numerator) **twenty-one hundredths lead**  
(hyphen in the denominator) **three one-thousandths calcium**

The hyphen is not used when a fraction is followed by a preposition:

**three eighths of an inch, four fifths of the sample, one millionth of a gram**

### Prefixes and Suffixes

In English, hyphens are used with prefixes and suffixes to support ease of reading, a concept that is somewhat subjective. Definitive rules for their use do not exist and examples such as **mini-skirt** and **miniskirt** are both perfectly correct. Moreover, British and American usage varies somewhat, so when in doubt, the writer should consult a dictionary. Nonetheless, there are certain cases in which a hyphen is always used:

After the prefixes **all-**, **ex-**, **half-**, **quasi-** and **self-**:

**all-knowing, ex-minister, half-fare, quasi-scientific, self-adhesive**

When a prefix comes before a capital letter or number:

**pro-German, non-EC countries, anti-American demonstrations,**  
**post-Napoleonic Europe, pre-1500 English literature**

When the prefix is added to a word that already has a hyphen:

**a pseudo-open-minded attitude, non-Spanish-speaking Catalans**

A hyphen is also added after a prefix that precedes a two-word combination; the space between these two words then becomes hyphenated: **Blue Period Picasso** becomes **pre-Blue-Period Picasso**.

The hyphen is also mandatory in the following cases:

When the combination prefix + word could be confused with another word with the same spelling: **re-count** (count again), **recount** (tell).

When the prefix is a single letter or number:

**U-boat, T-square, 10-speed bicycle, 8-cylinder engine**

Preceding the suffix **-elect**:

**president-elect.**

In short, hyphens are nearly always used when their lack would cause confusion. This is especially the case when the last letter of the prefix is the same as the first of the following word:

**anti-imperialism, après-ski, bird-dog, get-together, knock-kneed,**  
**non-negotiable, part-time, pre-election, self-fulfilling, sloe-eyed, test-tube**  
**and water-repellent**

## Compound Words

The formation of compound words is quite complex and is discussed in detail in sections Mo 1.1 (compound nouns) and Mo 2.3 (compound adjectives). In general, the use of the hyphen depends on the formation of the word: **firecracker** is written as one word because the two elements, **fire** and **cracker**, combine well and are easy to read, but **fire-eater** is hyphenated to avoid the conjunction of the two e's. Moreover, the more a word establishes itself within the lexis, the more likely it is that the two elements that form the compound word will combine.

Some common compound nouns that are generally hyphenated are:

**passer-by, dry-cleaning, x-ray, do-it-yourself, turn-over, pen-friend, t-shirt**

Another class of hyphenated nouns are those that have been derived from prepositional or adverbial verbs. Some common examples are:

**go-between, run-around and write-up.**

Similarly to Catalan, certain repetitive expressions are always hyphenated, such as the following:

**south-southeast, north-northwest (etc.), fender-bender, goody-goody,  
no-no, tom-tom and yo-yo.**

Compounds using the Saxon genitive are also frequent:

**bull's-eye, cat's-paw, crow's-nest, death's-head and hand's-breadth**

The term **in-law** and all its derivatives are always hyphenated:

**brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, father-in-law, mother-in-law,  
sister-in-law, son-in-law**

In the case of compound adjectives, if two words combine to modify a noun, they are usually hyphenated when they appear before the term. For example:

**a well-behaved child, cold-blooded murder, a low-cut dress and  
a free-and-easy relationship.**

The formation of compound adjectives is covered in section Mo 2.3. Some common examples are:

**quick-tempered, heart-felt, nerve-racking, ready-made, out-going,  
class-conscious, blood-red and watered-down**

Finally, English uses the hyphen in expressions that combine a quantity with a measure, such as **five-mile walk, ten-foot pole, ten-dollar bill**, etc.

### 2.11. Parentheses

As is the case in Catalan, in English parentheses are used to set off additional information, comment, explanations and other supplementary information. Examples:

**The number of living languages (currently about 6000, by most  
estimates) is decreasing rapidly.**

**A total of 751 students (9% more than the previous semester) registered  
for one of the 33 courses on offer.**

## 2.12. Box Brackets (Square Brackets) [], Curly Brackets {} and Angle Brackets <>

Box brackets, also called square brackets, are used in quoted text to insert additional explanatory information. Examples:

**We took them [the new plants] back to the nursery.  
I doubt whether non-GUI interfaces [see definition] will ever become popular.**

The expression [sic] indicates an error that is in the original:

**Between you and I [sic], I don't think it's going to work.**

Box brackets are also used in nested parenthetical expressions:

**Our three colleagues (Bill, Rosa [who you met last summer] and Hugh) will take care of the details.**

Curly brackets and angle brackets are normally only used in technical writing (mathematics, science, computer programming, etc.).

## 2.13. Quotation Marks (Single and Double)

In English, quotation marks are used to set off direct speech, quotations, titles, and both special and improper words.

Examples:

**"What makes this model different is that we are one-hundred percent online," says the Vice President.  
"The only thing we have to fear," declared President Roosevelt, "is fear itself."  
That reminds me of Edison's famous words: "Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine per cent perspiration."  
The Prime Minister condemned what he called "simple-minded solutions".  
Most programming languages have methods for creating "arrays".  
In English, nobody "does footing"; we jog.**

Quotation marks are also used to indicate irony:

**Only one party participates in the "elections".**

In modern English, the use of single quotes is generally reserved for nested quotations. This is because, in many cases (especially when using ASCII characters), the single quote and the apostrophe use the same glyph. For example, the expression **She said, "John's here."** is clearer than **She said, 'John's here.'** Other examples:

**The editor declared, "Describing the figures as 'disappointing' is an insult to the British people."  
"At some point you become the student and say 'do I want to pay \$200,000 for two years of business school when I can work for a top company and get a better education,'" says Mr Horn.**



### 3. Diacritical Marks (Accents and the Diaeresis/Umlaut)

Here is a list of the most important English words that are generally written using diacritical marks, though in many cases they may appear without accents as well. In some cases the marks are useful in that they distinguish the accented word from a similarly spelled word with no accent; for example, **resume** = *reprendre* and **résumé** = *currículum*. The examples given below are all words borrowed from French.

Words Normally Written With Diacritical Marks		
à la carte	coup d'état	naïve
à la mode	croûton	négligée
après-ski	crème de menthe	purée
bric-à-brac	crêpe	pâté
bête noire	déjà vu	raison d'être
café	détente	rosé
canapé	exposé	résumé
cause célèbre	façade	sauté
château	fiancé	soufflé
cliché	fiancée	séance
consommé	hors d'œuvre	touché

## Practical Guide to English Usage

## Morphology

Morphology deals with the way in which words are formed. The following sections detail the way in which nouns, adjectives, determiners, pronouns and verbs are formed in English. The examples used highlight certain irregularities in their formation and their differences when compared to Catalan.

### 1. Nouns

#### 1.1. Noun Formation

As is the case in Catalan, in English nouns can be formed from adjectives –eg **happy** → **happiness** (*feliç* → *felicitat*)–, from verbs –eg **write** → **writer** (*escriure* → *escriptor*)– and from other nouns: eg **friend** → **friendship** (*amic* → *amistat*). A thorough treatment of suffixation is beyond the scope of this study, but in the following three divisions we will give examples of the most important suffixes used to derive nouns from adjectives, verbs and other nouns.

##### 1.1.1. Nouns Derived From Adjectives

Nouns derived from adjectives are generally abstract nouns expressing the quality of the adjective; for example, **importance** expresses the quality of being **important**.

The two most productive suffixes for forming nouns from adjectives are -ance and -ence, which derive from adjectives ending in -ant and -ent, respectively, and which correspond to the Catalan suffixes -ància and -ència. (These two suffixes are also used to derive nouns from verbs; see Mo 1.1.2).

Nouns Derived From Adjectives: -ance		
abundant → abundance	extravagant → extravagance	radiant → radiance
arrogant → arrogance	fragrant → fragrance	relevant → relevance
brilliant → brilliance	important → importance	reluctant → reluctance
distant → distance	instant → instance	vigilant → vigilance
elegant → elegance	irrelevant → irrelevance	

Nouns Derived From Adjectives: -ence		
absent → absence	evident → evidence	permanent → permanence
affluent → affluence	frequent → frequency	present → presence
belligerent → belligerence	innocent → innocence	prudent → prudence
decadent → decadence	intelligent → intelligence	sentient → sentience
eloquent → eloquence	lenient → lenience	silent → silence
eminent → eminence	negligent → negligence	violent → violence
equivalent → equivalence	patient → patience	

Other important suffixes used to derive nouns from Latin adjectives are *-ity* –corresponding to the Catalan suffix *-itat*– and *-acy*, which is used especially when deriving nouns from adjectives ending in *-ate*.

Nouns Derived From Adjectives: <i>-ity</i>		
able → ability	false → falsity	pure → purity
civil → civility	legal → legality	real → reality
dense → density	major → majority	sane → sanity
equal → equality	novel → novelty	virile → virility
final → finality	obese → obesity	

Nouns Derived From Adjectives: <i>-acy</i>		
accurate → accuracy	illegitimate → illegitimacy	supreme → supremacy
celibate → celibacy	private → privacy	vacant → vacancy
delicate → delicacy		

Finally, in the case of nouns derived from adjectives of Anglo-Saxon origin, the most productive suffix is *-ness*.

Nouns Derived From Adjectives: <i>-ness</i>		
bright → brightness	ill → illness	strange → strangeness
fit → fitness	kind → kindness	thick → thickness
gentle → gentleness	mad → madness	weak → weakness
good → goodness	mean → meanness	well → wellness
hard → hardness	same → sameness	wet → wetness
high → highness	sick → sickness	

### 1.1.2. Nouns Derived From Verbs

Two of the most common suffixes used to derive nouns from verbs are *-er* and *-or*, which correspond to the Catalan *-dor* (and variants), and are used to describe the person or thing that performs the action described by the verb. The suffix *-er* is by far the more common of the two –there are literally thousands of *-er* nouns derived from verbs– and it is used with both Latin- and Anglo-Saxon-based words; the use of *-or* is generally limited to words of Latin origin. Because it is used less often, it is a good idea to study carefully the list of *-or* words.

Nouns Derived From Verbs: -er		
bake → baker	kill → killer	smoke → smoker
buy → buyer	open → opener	surf → surfer
dive → diver	pay → payer	talk → talker
drive → driver	play → player	use → user
heat → heater	race → racer	wait → waiter
help → helper	read → reader	walk → walker
hold → holder	ride → rider	wash → washer
joke → joker	sell → seller	write → writer
kick → kicker	serve → server	

Because many nouns and verbs share the same form (eg work means both *treball* and *treballar*), some words here also appear in the Nouns Derived From Other Nouns list Mo 1.1.3.

Nouns Derived From Verbs: -or		
abduct → abductor	convey → conveyor	govern → governor
act → actor	create → creator	mediate → mediator
agitate → agitator	credit → creditor	operate → operator
animate → animator	debt → debtor	sail → sailor
assess → assessor	dictate → dictator	sculpt → sculptor
audit → auditor	direct → director	vibrate → vibrator
capture → captor	edit → editor	visit → visitor
conjure → conjuror	educate → educator	

Though less productive, the suffix -ant is also used with some verbs to describe the doer of an action.

Nouns Derived From Verbs: -ant		
apply → applicant	cool → coolant	inform → informant
assail → assailant	defend → defendant	lubricate → lubricant
assist → assistant	depend → dependant	occupy → occupant
attend → attendant	dispute → disputant	pollute → pollutant
celebrate → celebrant	dominate → dominant	react → reactant
claim → claimant	emigrate → emigrant	relax → relaxant
colour → colourant	enter → entrant	seal → sealant
combat → combatant	examine → examinant	serve → servant
confide → confidant	immigrate → immigrant	stimulate → stimulant

The suffix -ee is used to describe the one receiving the action of the verb. Examples:

Nouns Derived From Verbs: -ee		
arrest → arrestee	devote → devotee	parole → parolee
assign → assignee	draft → draftee	pay → payee
attend → attendee	employ → employee	refer → referee
award → awardee	induct → inductee	retire → retiree
deport → deportee	intern → internee	train → trainee
detain → detainee	nominate → nominee	trust → trustee

Two other very productive suffixes are -tion, used especially for verbs ending in -ate, and -sion, used especially after verbs ending in -d or -de, -s, or -t. -tion corresponds to the Catalan -ció and -sion/-ssion to the Catalan -sió/-ssió. These generally designate an abstract noun describing the result of the action of the verb.

Nouns Derived From Verbs: -tion		
absolve → absolution	duplicate → duplication	negate → negation
agitate → agitation	educate → education	negotiate → negotiation
animate → animation	elevate → elevation	note → notion
approve → approbation	estimate → estimation	obligate → obligation
associate → association	execute → execution	operate → operation
attribute → attribution	fascinate → fascination	opposite → opposition
automate → automation	fornicate → fornication	penetrate → penetration
calculate → calculation	generate → generation	persecute → persecution
circulate → circulation	graduate → graduation	pollute → pollution
complete → completion	hesitate → hesitation	populate → population
conjugate → conjugation	humiliate → humiliation	promote → promotion
cooperate → cooperation	ignite → ignition	prosecute → prosecution
create → creation	imitate → imitation	radiate → radiation
cultivate → cultivation	indicate → indication	relate → relation
decorate → decoration	integrate → integration	rotate → rotation
dedicate → dedication	legislate → legislation	separate → separation
delegate → delegation	locate → location	terminate → termination
delete → deletion	medicate → medication	tolerate → toleration
designate → designation	meditate → meditation	translate → translation
devote → devotion	migrate → migration	vaccinate → vaccination
dictate → dictation	motivate → motivation	vegetate → vegetation
dominate → domination	narrate → narration	vibrate → vibration
donate → donation	navigate → navigation	

Nouns Derived From Verbs: -sion		
admit → admission	discuss → discussion	omit → omission
cohere → cohesion	divert → diversion	permit → permission
collide → collision	divide → division	persuade → persuasion
concede → concession	erode → erosion	possess → possession
conclude → conclusion	evade → evasion	profess → profession
confess → confession	exclude → exclusion	recede → recession
confuse → confusion	explode → explosion	revert → reversion
converse → conversion	express → expression	revise → revision
corrode → corrosion	impress → impression	submit → submission
decide → decision	intend → intension	succeed → succession
depress → depression	invade → invasion	suspend → suspension
deride → derision		

Other important suffixes that designate the action described by the verb are -ance and -ence (in Catalan, *-ància/-ança* and *-ència/-ença*; see also Mo 1.1.1); -ment (in Catalan, *-ment*, but there is often a lack of correspondence) and -al.

Nouns Derived From Verbs: -ance		
accept → acceptance	continue → continuance	maintain → maintenance
acquaint → acquaintance	deliver → deliverance	observe → observance
allow → allowance	disturb → disturbance	perform → performance
annoy → annoyance	expect → expectance	pursue → pursuance
appear → appearance	govern → governance	remember → remembrance
assist → assistance	ignore → ignorance	repent → repentance
attend → attendance	illumine → illuminance	resist → resistance
avoid → avoidance	import → importance	suffer → sufferance
clear → clearance	inherit → inheritance	vary → variance

Nouns Derived From Verbs: -ence		
abstain → abstinence	differ → difference	occur → occurrence
coincide → coincidence	diverge → divergence	persist → persistence
compete → competence	emerge → emergence	precede → precedence
condole → condolence	excel → excellence	prefer → preference
confer → conference	exist → existence	refer → reference
confide → confidence	indulge → indulgence	reside → residence
consist → consistence	infer → inference	subsist → subsistence
defend → defence	obey → obedience	verge → vergence
depend → dependence	depend → dependence	

Nouns Derived From Verbs: -ment		
agree → agreement	enjoy → enjoyment	pay → payment
ail → ailment	equip → equipment	place → placement
amend → amendment	increase → increment	ship → shipment
amuse → amusement	judge → judgement	state → statement
argue → argument	move → movement	treat → treatment

Nouns Derived From Verbs: -al		
accrue → accrual	deny → denial	renew → renewal
approve → approval	deprive → deprivation	rent → rental
arrive → arrival	dispose → disposal	revise → revision
bury → burial	rebut → rebuttal	revive → revival
carouse → carousal	refuse → refusal	survive → survival
defer → deferral	remove → removal	

### 1.1.3. Nouns Derived From Other Nouns

The most common suffix used to derive nouns from other nouns is -er, which indicates profession, residence, activity or origin. Note that, because many nouns and verbs share the same form, a word such as *worker* can be said to derive from both a noun and verb (**work** means both *treball* and *treballar*).

Nouns Derived From Other Nouns: -er		
bank → banker	hat → hatter	report → reporter
bat → batter	heat → heater	review → reviewer
bloom → bloomer	hostel → hosteller	roof → roofer
blush → blusher	island → islander	room → roomer
boat → boater	jail → jailer	sand → sander
bomb → bomber	jewel → jeweller	shovel → shoveller
camp → camper	log → logger	speed → speeder
cream → creamer	London → Londoner	steam → steamer
dream → dreamer	mail → mailer	surf → surfer
dust → duster	mark → marker	toast → toaster
falcon → falconer	mill → miller	trap → trapper
field → fielder	murder → murderer	trip → tripper
fight → fighter	New York → New Yorker	truck → trucker
fish → fisher	oil → oiler	weed → weeder
forest → forester	paint → painter	weld → welder
garden → gardener	prison → prisoner	work → worker
gun → gunner	ranch → rancher	wreck → wrecker



The suffixes -eer and -ster are used to indicate persons involved with the noun in question.

Nouns Derived From Other Nouns: -eer, -ster		
auctioneer	gamester	racketeer
engineer	mountaineer	trickster
gangster	mutineer	volunteer

Three common suffixes that convert nouns into abstract nouns are -dom, -hood and -ship.

Nouns Derived From Other Nouns: -dom, -hood, -ship		
authorship	leadership	partnership
brotherhood	manhood	scholarship
childhood	martyrdom	sportsmanship
citizenship	membership	stardom
fatherhood	motherhood	womanhood
friendship	neighbourhood	workmanship
kingdom		

The suffix -ful, when forming nouns, indicates quantity (eg **arm** → **armful**). This is also a productive suffix for deriving adjectives from nouns (see Mo 2.2.1).

Nouns Derived From Other Nouns: -ful		
cupful	glassful	plateful
eyeful	handful	roomful

Some common diminutive suffixes are -et, -ette and -y.

Nouns Derived From Other Nouns: -et, -ette, -y		
booklet	droplet	piglet
cigarette	Johnny	ringlet
doggy	kitchenette	wavelet

## 1.2. Noun + Noun

English often uses nouns to modify other nouns: for example, **horse race** means *cursa de cavalls* and **race horse** means *cavall de curses*. (For more information concerning these constructions, see section Sy 1.5). As far as the morphology of these combinations is concerned, there are three possibilities: 1) separate words, as in the two previous cases; 2) combinations using a hyphen, such as **shirt-sleeves**, and 3) fusions, such as **bloodstain**. In general, the more a certain combination establishes itself in the common language, the more likely it is to be written as one word. For example, **fire fighter** was originally written as two words, but has gradually evolved into both a hyphenated form (**fire-fighter**) and a single word (**firefighter**).

The spelling of the two nouns can also have its effect: **policeman** is written as one word because the two elements of which it is composed, **police** and **man** combine well. However, its synonym, **police officer** is written as two words (or with a hyphen: **police-officer**) because the sequence **eo** in “**policeofficer**” looks strange to English speakers. Similarly, **racehorse** is now quite often written as a single word, whereas “**horserace**” is not; the combination **eh** is unusual in English, so the two elements in **racehorse** are easily distinguished, but the combination **er** is quite common and thus makes it difficult to see the separation in “**horserace**”.

Finally, we should also mention that a noun that modifies another noun is almost always written in the singular. Examples:

**car salesman**  
**tooth decay**  
**apple pickers**  
**a ten-dollar bill**

In fact, even some invariable plural nouns use a singular form when modifying another noun. Examples:

**pyjama tops**  
**scissor case**  
**trouser press**

Exceptions:

**arms control**  
**clothes closet**  
**glasses frames**  
**pants pockets**

## 1.3. Plural Nouns

The great majority of plurals in English are regular, formed by adding the suffixes **-s** or **-es** to the noun. We will discuss the spelling of these forms in section Mo 1.3.1. As for the irregular plurals, there are five main categories, which we will study in section Mo 1.3.2.

### 1.3.1. Regular Plural Nouns

The majority of English nouns form the plural by adding the suffix *-s*. If the noun ending is voiced, the *s* is pronounced /z/ (like the *z* in the Catalan word *zoo*); if the ending is unvoiced, the *-s* is pronounced /s/.

Voiced Endings:	Unvoiced Endings:
pea, peas	cup, cups
cow, cows	tape, tapes
game, games	cat, cats
job, jobs	plate, plates
deed, deeds	rock, rocks
bag, bags	smoke, smokes
ball, balls	
drum, drums	
bean, beans	
ear, ears	

The only exception to the previous rule is that, when a noun ends in a sibilant sound, the suffix is written *-es* (unless the noun ends in *e*, when it is written *-s*). The sibilant terminations are:

- ze, -z, -se, pronounced /z/
- ge pronounced either /dʒ/ (like the *tg* in the word *metge*) or /j/ (like the *j* in the word *jove*)
- s, -ce, -se, pronounced /s/
- ch, pronounced /tʃ/ ([tx])
- sh /ʃ/ (the sound of the Catalan *xeix*)

Examples:

**prize, prizes**  
**fuzz, fuzzes**  
**bruise, bruises** (pronounced /brúːzəz/)  
**judge, judges**  
**garage, garages**  
**bus, buses**  
**face, faces**  
**case, cases** (pronounced /keiːsəz/)  
**match, matches**  
**dish, dishes**  
**box, boxes**

If the noun ends consonant + y, the y is replaced with i and the suffix is -es. Examples:

**baby, babies**  
**agency, agencies**  
**lady, ladies**  
**sky, skies**  
**reply, replies**  
**army, armies**  
**city, cities**

### 1.3.2. Irregular Plural Nouns

In English there are five classes of nouns that form the plural irregularly:

nouns ending in -f or -o;  
 nouns that undergo a vowel change;  
 nouns that use the suffix -en;  
 nouns whose singular and plural forms are the same;  
 nouns borrowed from Latin and Greek.

What's more, there are two nouns that don't fit into any classification: **die, dice**; or **house**, in which the s is unvoiced (/haus/), has as its plural **houses**, in which the s becomes voiced (/hàuːzəz/).

Some nouns ending in -f or -o always form the plural by simply adding the suffix -s; others always form the plural irregularly, either by changing the -f to -ves, in the case of nouns ending in f, or by adding -es in the case of those ending in -o; and finally, with a third group, the two spellings are optional. The important thing is to remember which nouns are in the second group, those whose plurals are always irregular.

Nouns Ending In -f That Always Form The Plural Changing The -f To -ves	Nouns Ending In -o That Always Form The Plural Adding -es
calf, calves	echo, echoes
elf, elves	embargo, embargoes
half, halves	hero, heroes
knife, knives	potato, potatoes
leaf, leaves	tomato, tomatoes
life, lives	torpedo, torpedoes
loaf, loaves	veto, vetoes
self, selves	
sheaf, sheaves	
shelf, shelves	
thief, thieves	
wife, wives	
wolf, wolves	

Nouns That Form The Plural By Changing The Vowel	Nouns That Form Their Plural Adding The Suffix -en
foot, feet	brother, brethren
goose, geese	child, children
louse, lice	ox, oxen
man, men	
mouse, mice	
tooth, teeth	
woman /w'mən/, women /wé'mən/	

There are many nouns in English whose singular and plural forms are the same. This is especially true of certain animals and fish.

Nouns Whose Singular And Plural Forms Are The Same	
bison	salmon
cod	series
deer	species
fish	sheep
herring	shrimp
moose	trout
quail	

Many nouns in English that have been borrowed from Latin and Greek form their plural according to the rules of the original language. Others of these borrowings form their plurals regularly and, for a third group, the two spellings are optional.

Nouns Borrowed From Latin And Greek	
alga, algae	larva, larvae
analysis, analyses	parenthesis, parentheses
bacterium, bacteria	phenomenon, phenomena
crisis, crises	stimulus, stimuli
criterion, criteria	thesis, theses
hypothesis, hypotheses	

## 1.4. Capitalisation

In general, the rules in English for the capitalisation of nouns are the same as those in Catalan. There are, however, some important differences marked with an asterisk.

English capitalises nouns in the following cases.

Proper nouns:

**Pau Casals, John Doe, Barcelona, Russia, Africa, the Pyrenees,  
Mount Everest, Lake Superior, Christmas, the Fourth of July,  
The New York Times, Punch, etc.**

Days, months, holidays and special days:

**Monday\*, Tuesday\*, etc.  
January\*, February\*, etc.**

Languages, races, nationalities, etc. (ie *gentilicis*):

**French\*, English\*, Londoners\*, Catalans\*, Europeans\***

Religions, their adherents and sacred texts:

**Christianity\*, Judaism\*, Hindus\*, Muslims\*, the Bible, the Koran**

Organizations, businesses, institutions, etc.

**the United Nations, the European Economic Community; Microsoft,  
Alaska Airlines; the European Central Bank, the Asian Institute  
of Technology**

Titles, when preceding proper names:

**Prince Philip\*, Professor William Coll\*, Chief Inspector Andrew Dalziel\***

Points of the compass, when referring to geographic regions:

**Seattle is located in the rainy Northwest\*.  
They searched for gold in the far North\*.**

School subjects, when referring to a specific course:

**Social Studies 302  
Introduction to Physics**

But there is no capitalisation for general reference (except, of course, languages):

**I'm studying philosophy and Spanish\*.**

Family members:

A common noun referring to a family member is capitalised when it substitutes for the proper name of the person in question. Examples:

**Why did Mother\* scold you?  
I've just seen Grandmother\*.**

Note that these terms are only used when addressing other members of the same family; when we speak with non-family members, a possessive is used and there is no capitalization:

**Opened on the initiative of her maternal grandmother, the house passed  
to her mother and finally to her and it is she who is in charge of  
the business today.**

Street names:

**Basin Street\*, Third Avenue\*, 42nd Street\*, Sunset Strip\*, Thunder Road\***

### 1.5. Formation of the Saxon Genitive

Regarding the morphology (and, we might add, the pronunciation) of the Saxon genitive, it is important to distinguish between proper nouns and common nouns. We will begin with the former.

#### Proper Nouns

The Saxon genitive is usually formed by adding the suffix 's (apostrophe + s) to a proper noun. It is pronounced:

/z/ after a voiced consonant or vowel (eg **John's** /tjɒnz/, **Mary's** /mɛrɪz/, **Maria's** /məˈriːz/),

/s/ after an unvoiced consonant (eg **Robert's** /rɒˈbɜːts/, **Roc's** /rɒks/) and /əz/, adding a syllable, after a sibilant.

In this latter case it is possible to use a simple apostrophe rather than apostrophe + s, but it is very important to remember to pronounce an additional syllable; that is, we can write either **Charles's** or **Charles'**, but we must pronounce /tʃɑːlˈzəz/ [or, in BrE, /tʃɑːlˈzəz/]; similarly, we can write either **Neus's** or **Neus'**, but must pronounce /néu.səz/.

Exception: In the case of classical and biblical proper names, the Saxon genitive is normally written with a single apostrophe and the extra syllable is not pronounced:

**Socrates'** /səˈkræːtɪz/, **Euripedes'** /iuːˈrɛːpəˈdɪz/, **Jesus'** /tʃɪˈzəs/, **Moses'** /móuˈzəs/, etc.

Plurals that refer to families are also written with a single apostrophe:

**the Simpsons'** /sémˈsənz/, **the Kennedys'** /kèˈnəˈdɪz/.

Finally, note that the Saxon genitive of compound names is written adding the apostrophe + s to the final element: **Alexander the Great's**, **King John the Fair's**, **Billy the Kid's**, etc.

#### Common nouns

The Saxon genitive of common nouns is formed adding apostrophe + s to singular nouns (eg **the boy's mother**) and the simple apostrophe to plural nouns ending in -s (eg **the boys' bicycles**). There is one important point to consider:

The Saxon genitive of a plural noun ending in -s is pronounced exactly the same as the singular Saxon form; that is, **boy's** and **boys'** are both pronounced /boɪz/. Note that this is exactly the opposite of what happens with proper nouns ending in -s, for which the pronunciation of the Saxon genitive is distinguished from that of name (eg **James** /tjeɪmz/ and **James's** /tjeɪmˈzəz /). The reason is that the -s at the end of proper nouns forms an integral part of these nouns, whereas the -s forming the plural of common nouns is merely a suffix.

Examples:

**Where once a teacher's primary role was to disseminate content, today their task is to help students make sense of it.**  
**The new model stresses the students' learning.**

In the case of plural nouns not ending in -s, the Saxon genitive is formed normally, with the addition of apostrophe + s. The most important nouns in this category are **men**, **women** and **children**. Examples:

**The men's clothes are in room 270.**

**Sweden leads the way in women's rights.**

**There's too much violence in children's TV shows.**

As for compound nouns, the apostrophe + s is added to the last of the elements:

**Her mother-in-law's interference ruined their marriage.**

**The professor of chemistry's laboratory is on the third floor.**



## 2. Adjectives

### 2.1. Adjective Formation

As is the case in Catalan, in English adjectives can be formed from nouns –eg **doubt** → **doubtful** (*dubte* → *dubtós*)– and from verbs –eg **read** → **readable** (*llegir* → *llegible*). A thorough treatment of suffixation is beyond the scope of this study, but in the following two divisions we will give examples of the most important suffixes used to derive adjectives from nouns and verbs.

#### 2.1.1. Adjectives Derived From Nouns

The most productive suffixes for deriving adjectives from nouns are:

- ful, (in Catalan, *ple de* or a number of suffixes).
- ed indicates that the adjective is provided with or has the quality of the noun.
- ic, -ous, -al, -like and -ish indicate that the adjective has the quality described by the noun.
- ly and -y both indicate qualities as well.
- less indicates that the adjective is lacking in the quality described by the noun.
- en indicates the material of which an object is composed.

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -ful		
art → artful	fruit → fruitful	sin → sinful
awe → awful	grace → graceful	skill → skilful
beauty → beautiful	harm → harmful	sorrow → sorrowful
care → careful	help → helpful	soul → soulful
cheer → cheerful	hope → hopeful	spite → spiteful
colour → colourful	joy → joyful	stress → stressful
deceit → deceitful	law → lawful	success → successful
delight → delightful	master → masterful	tact → tactful
disgrace → disgraceful	meaning → meaningful	taste → tasteful
doubt → doubtful	pain → painful	thought → thoughtful
dread → dreadful	peace → peaceful	trust → trustful
duty → dutiful	play → playful	truth → truthful
event → eventful	power → powerful	waste → wasteful
faith → faithful	resource → resourceful	will → wilful
fate → fateful	respect → respectful	wish → wishful
fear → fearful	rest → restful	wonder → wonderful
flavour → flavourful	right → rightful	wrong → wrongful
fright → frightful	shame → shameful	youth → youthful

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -ed		
age → aged	experience → experienced	privilege → privileged
arch → arched	feather → feathered	ring → ringed
bias → biased	fork → forked	spirit → spirited
bigot → bigoted	gift → gifted	spot → spotted
braid → braided	heat → heated	stripe → striped
can → canned	ice → iced	wall → walled
conceit → conceited	marble → marbled	wing → winged
crowd → crowded	mask → masked	wire → wired
culture → cultured	oil → oiled	wood → wooded
date → dated	point → pointed	wretch → wretched
disease → diseased	principle → principled	

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -ic		
academy → academic	cycle → cyclic	melody → melodic
acid → acidic	demon → demonic	meteor → meteoric
allergy → allergic	diabetes → diabetic	mystery → mystic
anarchy → anarchic	drama → dramatic	number → numeric
anaemia → anaemic	economy → economic	organ → organic
Arab → Arabic	empathy → empathic	period → periodic
artist → artistic	galaxy → galactic	poet → poetic
atom → atomic	German → Germanic	rhythm → rhythmic
barbar → barbaric	Goth → Gothic	Roman → Romanic
centre → centric	graph → graphic	scene → scenic
citrus → citric	harmony → harmonic	Semite → Semitic
class → classic	hero → heroic	sulphur → sulphuric
climate → climatic	history → historic	system → systemic
comedy → comedic	hysteria → hysteric	titan → titanic
cosmos → cosmic	magnet → magnetic	volcano → volcanic
crypt → cryptic	majesty → majestic	

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -ous		
amour → amorous	glory → glorious	ruin → ruinous
anxiety → anxious	grace → gracious	sonor → sonorous
bigamy → bigamous	grief → grievous	space → spacious
bile → bilious	humour → humorous	study → studious
bulb → bulbous	joy → joyous	ulcer → ulcerous
caution → cautious	libel → libellous	usury → usurious
covet → covetous	lustre → lustrous	vapour → vaporous
desire → desirous	lute → luteous	venom → venomous
envy → envious	nerve → nervous	vigour → vigorous
fame → famous	pity → piteous	virtue → virtuous
fibre → fibrous	pore → porous	wonder → wondrous
fury → furious	rigor → rigorous	zeal → zealous
gas → gaseous	riot → riotous	

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -al		
beast → bestial	fate → fatal	nature → natural
bride → bridal	front → frontal	norm → normal
brute → brutal	globe → global	race → racial
cause → causal	grade → gradual	rent → rental
centre → central	herb → herbal	space → spatial
cynic → cynical	line → lineal	try → trial
face → facial	magic → magical	use → usual
fact → factual	music → musical	

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -like		
business → businesslike	dream → dreamlike	life → lifelike
cat → catlike	god → godlike	war → warlike
child → childlike	lady → ladylike	workman → workmanlike

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -ish		
amateur → amateurish	fool → foolish	prude → prudish
ape → apish	freak → freakish	self → selfish
book → bookish	girl → girlish	sheep → sheepish
boor → boorish	imp → impish	slug → sluggish
boy → boyish	kitten → kittenish	snob → snobbish
child → childish	mule → mulish	style → stylish
fever → feverish	owl → owlsh	wasp → waspish
fiend → fiendish	pig → piggish	

Note that the -ish suffix is also used with colours: **greenish**, **reddish**, etc.

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -ly		
beast → beastly	kind → kindly	queen → queenly
brother → brotherly	king → kingly	saint → saintly
cost → costly	leisure → leisurely	scholar → scholarly
coward → cowardly	low → lowly	shape → shapely
curl → curly	man → manly	sick → sickly
death → deathly	master → masterly	sister → sisterly
earth → earthly	month → monthly	time → timely
father → fatherly	mother → motherly	week → weekly
friend → friendly	neighbour → neighbourly	woman → womanly
ghost → ghostly	night → nightly	wool → woolly
god → godly	order → orderly	world → worldly
heaven → heavenly	poor → poorly	year → yearly
hour → hourly	quarter → quarterly	

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -y		
air → airy	luck → lucky	snow → snowy
bag → baggy	milk → milky	soap → soapy
bitch → bitchy	mist → misty	squeak → squeaky
blood → bloody	mud → muddy	sugar → sugary
brain → brainy	oil → oily	summer → summery
cheek → cheeky	powder → powdery	sun → sunny
chunk → chunky	rain → rainy	sweat → sweaty
cloud → cloudy	risk → risky	thirst → thirsty
cream → creamy	rock → rocky	thrift → thrifty
dirt → dirty	room → roomy	touch → touchy
dream → dreamy	salt → salty	trick → tricky
dust → dusty	sand → sandy	water → watery
fish → fishy	sex → sexy	wax → waxy
freak → freaky	shine → shiny	wealth → wealthy
fun → funny	silk → silky	wind → windy
hair → hairy	sleep → sleepy	worth → worthy
itch → itchy	snoop → snoopy	

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -less		
age → ageless	hope → hopeless	root → rootless
aim → aimless	humour → humourless	self → selfless
air → airless	job → jobless	sense → senseless
art → artless	joy → joyless	shame → shameless
base → baseless	law → lawless	shape → shapeless
blame → blameless	life → lifeless	sight → sightless
bottom → bottomless	limit → limitless	sleep → sleepless
breath → breathless	love → loveless	smoke → smokeless
care → careless	luck → luckless	speech → speechless
clue → clueless	match → matchless	spine → spineless
colour → colourless	meaning → meaningless	spot → spotless
cord → cordless	mercy → merciless	stain → stainless
count → countless	mind → mindless	sugar → sugarless
doubt → doubtless	mother → motherless	sun → sunless
effort → effortless	motion → motionless	taste → tasteless
end → endless	name → nameless	thank → thankless
fault → faultless	need → needless	thought → thoughtless
fear → fearless	odour → odourless	time → timeless
flaw → flawless	pain → painless	tire → tireless
form → formless	penny → penniless	tooth → toothless
gut → gutless	pity → pitiless	top → topless
hair → hairless	point → pointless	use → useless
harm → harmless	power → powerless	voice → voiceless
head → headless	price → priceless	weight → weightless
heart → heartless	purpose → purposeless	wing → wingless
heed → heedless	remorse → remorseless	wire → wireless
help → helpless	rest → restless	word → wordless
home → homeless	roof → roofless	worth → worthless

Adjectives Derived From Nouns: -en		
ash → ashen	hemp → hempen	wax → waxen
earth → earthen	lead → leaden	wheat → wheaten
flax → flaxen	rot → rotten	wood → wooden
gold → golden	silk → silken	wool → woollen

### 2.1.2. Adjectives Derived From Verbs

The most productive suffixes for deriving adjectives from verbs are *-able* (in Catalan, *-able* and *-ible*); *-ive* (in Catalan, *-iu*, *-iva*), and *-ant* and *-ent* (in Catalan, *-ant*, *-ent* and *-int*).

Adjectives Derived From Verbs: <i>-able</i>		
adapt → adaptable	desire → desirable	pass → passable
admire → admirable	do → doable	pay → payable
adore → adorable	drink → drinkable	quote → quotable
advise → advisable	elect → electable	read → readable
agree → agreeable	endure → endurable	remove → removable
avail → available	excite → excitable	suit → suitable
bear → bearable	imitate → imitable	tolerate → tolerable
break → breakable	laugh → laughable	use → usable
count → countable	like → likeable	vary → variable
cure → curable	live → liveable	wash → washable
debate → debatable	love → lovable	work → workable
deny → deniable	move → movable	write → writable

Some adjectives derived from verbs ending in silent *e* can also be spelled including the *e* (for example, *like* → *likable* or *likeable*); however, the spelling without the *e* is more common. Also, there are some adjectives that spell the suffix *-ible*: *eat* → *edible* and *fail* → *fallible*.

Adjectives Derived From Verbs: <i>-ive</i>		
abort → abortive	defect → defective	invade → invasive
abuse → abusive	defend → defensive	invent → inventive
act → active	detect → detective	narrate → narrative
adapt → adaptive	direct → directive	negate → negative
adopt → adoptive	divide → divisive	object → objective
assert → assertive	effect → effective	offend → offensive
capture → captive	elect → elective	operate → operative
corrode → corrosive	exclude → exclusive	receive → receptive
create → creative	execute → executive	reduce → reductive
cure → curative	expand → expansive	resist → resistive
deceive → deceptive	expend → expensive	seduce → seductive
decide → decisive	explode → explosive	select → selective
deduct → deductive	imitate → imitative	talk → talkative

Note that adjectives derived from verbs ending in -d or -de are usually spelled with a -sive ending (**expend** → **expensive**, **exclude** → **exclusive**, etc.).

Adjectives Derived From Verbs: -ant		
abound → abundant	dominate → dominant	repent → repentant
accept → acceptant	expect → expectant	resonate → resonant
ascend → ascendant	exult → exultant	retard → retardant
descend → descendant	hesitate → hesitant	stagnate → stagnant
deviate → deviant	radiate → radiant	tolerate → tolerant
disinfect → disinfectant	relax → relaxant	vacate → vacant

Adjectives Derived From Verbs: -ent		
abhor → abhorrent	deter → deterrent	persist → persistent
absorb → absorbent	differ → different	provide → provident
adhere → adherent	dissolve → dissolvent	recur → recurrent
cohere → coherent	diverge → divergent	reminisce → reminiscent
coincide → coincident	emerge → emergent	repel → repellent
compete → competent	excel → excellent	reside → resident
confide → confident	exist → existent	respond → respondent
consist → consistent	indulge → indulgent	resurge → resurgent
correspond → correspondent	insist → insistent	transcend → transcendent
depend → dependent	luminesce → luminescent	urge → urgent
descend → descendent		

## 2.2. Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

English one-syllable adjectives and two-syllable adjectives ending in -y generally form their comparatives and superlatives adding to the root the suffixes -er and -est, respectively.

Examples:

**slow, slower, slowest**  
**happy, happier, happiest**

When adding the suffixes -er and -est to the adjectives there are certain morphological changes that occur.

The final consonant is doubled if it is preceded by a single vowel:

**big, bigger, (the) biggest**  
**fat, fatter, (the) fattest**  
**sad, sadder, (the) saddest**

If the adjective ends in consonant + y, the y is changed to i:

**funny, funnier, (the) funniest**  
**windy, windier, (the) windiest**  
**sly, slier, (the) sliest**

If the adjective ends in a silent e, this letter is dropped:

**lame, lamer, (the) lamest**  
**safe, safer, (the) safest**  
**wide, wider, (the) widest**

See also Sy 2.4. Comparative and Superlative Adjectives (and Adverbs).

### 2.3. Compound Adjectives

In the same way that English uses nouns to modify other nouns (see Mo 1.2. Noun + Noun), it also forms compound adjectives formed by the combination word + adjective.

The adjectives that form part of these compounds are of four types.

The second element is formed body part + -ed.

The Second Element Is Formed Body Part + -ed; -blooded	
blue-blooded	pure-blooded
cold-blooded	red-blooded
hot-blooded	

The Second Element Is Formed Body Part + -ed; -eyed	
blue-eyed, green-eyed, etc.	eagle-eyed
clear-eyed	hawk-eyed
cold-eyed	sharp-eyed
cross-eyed	wide-eyed



**The Second Element Is Formed Body Part + -ed; -faced**

boldfaced	straight-faced
moonfaced	two-faced
poker-faced	

**The Second Element Is Formed Body Part + -ed; -haired**

fair-haired	shorthaired
longhaired	

**The Second Element Is Formed Body Part + -ed; -handed**

bare-handed	red-handed
empty-handed	right-handed
evenhanded	shorthanded
heavy-handed	single-handed
high-handed	sure-handed
left-handed	underhanded
openhanded	

**The Second Element Is Formed Body Part + -ed; -headed**

bigheaded	hardheaded
boneheaded	hotheaded
bubbleheaded	levelheaded
clearheaded	pigheaded
featherheaded	

**The Second Element Is Formed Body Part + -ed; -hearted**

bighearted	hardhearted
brokenhearted	kindhearted
chickenhearted	lighthearted
coldhearted	softhearted
downhearted	tenderhearted
fainthearted	wholehearted
halfhearted	

**The Second Element Is Formed Body Part + -ed; -minded**

absentminded	narrow-minded
broad-minded	open-minded
fair-minded	simpleminded
high-minded	single-minded

The Second Element Is Formed Body Part + -ed; - mouthed	
closemouthed	mealy-mouthed
foulmouthed	

The second element is a participle or gerund.

The Second Element Is A Participle	
custom-built	overcrowded
dry-cleaned	so-called
far-fetched	suntanned
handmade	typewritten
homemade	well-balanced
ill-advised	well-known
mass-produced	

The Second Element Is A Gerund	
backbreaking	nerve-racking
breathtaking	never-ending
easy-going	on-going
eye-catching	out-going
fast-acting	painstaking
good-looking	record-breaking
heart-breaking	spellbinding
long-lasting	up-coming

The second element is a pure adjective.

The Second Element Is A Pure Adjective; -free	
carefree	tax-free
duty-free	

The Second Element Is A Pure Adjective; -proof	
bulletproof	rainproof
childproof	rustproof
dustproof	shockproof
fireproof	soundproof
foolproof	waterproof

The Second Element Is A Pure Adjective; -sick	
airsick	homesick
carsick	lovesick
heartsick	seasick

The Second Element Is A Pure Adjective; others	
accident-prone	war-weary
class-conscious	world-weary

The second element is a colour adjective.

The Second Element Is A Colour Adjective	
ash-blond	ice-blue
blood-red	jet-black
bottle-green	sea-green

The majority of these compounds are written with a hyphen, though in certain cases they have been combined into a single word (see Mo 1.2).

### 3. Determiners

The English indefinite article *a* (pronounced /ə/, except when stressed, when it is pronounced /eɪ/) is spelled **an** (pronounced /ən/) when it precedes a word beginning with a vowel sound. Examples:

**a car** / ə kɑː/, **a hat** / ə hæt/, **a finger** / ə ˈfɪŋɡər/, etc.  
**an apple** /ən ˈæpəl/, **an egg** /ən ɛɡ/, **an umbrella** /ən ʌmˈbrɛlə/, etc.

Moreover, the article is spelled **an** when it comes before a silent **h** and is spelled **a** when it precedes initial **u**, **eu** and **ew**, when these are pronounced /iu/. Examples:

**an honour** /ən ɒˈnər/, **an hour** /ən ˈaʊər/  
**a unit** /ə ˈjuːnət/, **a European** /ə iuˈrəpiːən/

Finally, it should be kept in mind that these two forms are never used before plurals. The Catalan plural indefinite articles *uns* and *unes* are translated in English by **some**. Example:

*unes sabates* = **some shoes**

The English definite article is always spelled **the**; it is pronounced /ðə/, except when it precedes a word beginning with a vowel sound, when it is pronounced /ði/. Examples:

**the car** /ðə kar/, **the hat** /ðə hæʔ/, **the finger** /ðə ˈfɪŋɡər/, etc.  
**the apple** /ði æˈpəl/, **the egg** /ði èɡ/, **the umbrella** /ði ʌmˈbrɛlə/, etc.

It is also pronounced /ði/ when it comes before a silent **h** and /ðə/ when preceding initial **u**, **eu** and **ew**, when these are pronounced /iu/. Examples:

**the honor** /ði ɒˈnər/, **the hour** /ði àuər/  
**the unit** /ðə ɪuˈnət/, **the Europeans** /ðə iuˈrɒpiːənz/

The demonstrative determiners **this** (*aquest -a*) and **these** (*aquests -es*) are often confused because of their pronunciation. **This** is pronounced /ðés/, rhyming with the Central Catalan pronunciation of the word *més*. **These** is pronounced /ðiiz/ (the *z* pronounced as in the Catalan word *zoo*), rhyming with the English word *please*.

The disjunctive determiners **either** and **neither** are pronounced /íːðər/ and /níːðər/ in American English, and /àiːðər/ and /nàiːðər/ in British English.

The predeterminer **half** is pronounced /hæf/ in American English, and /ha:f/ in British English. The *l* is always silent.

#### 4. Pronouns

The nominative personal pronouns in English can all be contracted with the present tense forms of the verb **be**, as well as with the auxiliary verbs **have**, **has**, **had**, **will** and **would**.

Singular	Plural
I'm, I've, I'd, I'll	we're, we've, we'd, we'll
you're, you've, you'd, you'll	you're, you've, you'd, you'll
she's, she'd, she'll	
he's, he'd, he'll	they're, they've, they'd, they'll
it's, it'd, it'll	

Observe that the **'d** contraction can stand for either **had** or **would** and that the **'s** contraction can stand for either **is** or **has**. There is seldom any ambiguity, however, because the contractions of **had** and **has** are always followed by a participle, **would** is always followed by an infinitive, and, in its auxiliary use, **be** is always followed by a gerund.

Remember not to confuse the form **it's**, which means **it is** or, less often, **it has**, with the possessive pronoun **its**, which refers to a quality of inanimate objects (eg **The UOC bases its educational model on the Virtual Campus**).

Note that the possessive personal pronouns in English are often formed adding an **-s** to the possessive adjective; eg **your** → **yours**, **her** → **hers**, **our** → **ours**, etc. In this case the suffix has nothing at all to do with a plural, so these forms mustn't be used as attributive adjectives. Examples: **our friend** → **our friends**, not ~~**ours friends**~~.

## 5. Verbs

### 5.1. Verb Formation

As is the case in Catalan, in English verbs can be formed from adjectives –eg **active** → **activate** (*actiu* → *activar*)– and from nouns: eg **origin** → **originate**. It is interesting to note that adjectives and nouns use the same suffixes when forming verbs.

#### 5.1.1. Verbs Derived From Adjectives

English uses the same suffixes to derive verbs from both adjectives and nouns. By far the most important is **-ise** (**-ize** in American English); other important suffixes are **-en**, which is used almost exclusively with words of Anglo-Saxon origin (eg **hard** → **harden**), **-ate** (eg **active** → **activate**) and **-ify** (eg **false** → **falsify**).

Verbs Derived From Adjectives: -ise (-ize)		
actual → actualise (-ize)	individual → individualise (-ize)	ritual → ritualise (-ize)
brutal → brutalise (-ize)	industrial → industrialise (-ize)	rural → ruralise (-ize)
capital → capitalise (-ize)	initial → initialise (-ize)	sensual → sensualise (-ize)
central → centralise (-ize)	intellectual → intellectualise (-ize)	sentimental → sentimentalise (-ize)
chaste → chastise (-ize)	internal → internalise (-ize)	serial → serialise (-ize)
civil → civilise (-ize)	legal → legalise (-ize)	sexual → sexualise (-ize)
commercial → commercialise (-ize)	legitimate → legitimatise (-ize)	slender → slenderise (-ize)
conventional → conventionalise (-ize)	local → localise (-ize)	social → socialise (-ize)
criminal → criminalise (-ize)	marginal → marginalise (-ize)	solemn → solemnise (-ize)
digital → digitalise (-ize)	material → materialise (-ize)	special → specialise (-ize)
emotional → emotionalise (-ize)	memorial → memorialise (-ize)	sterile → sterilise (-ize)
equal → equalise (-ize)	national → nationalise (-ize)	tranquil → tranquilise (-ize)
eternal → eternalise (-ize)	natural → naturalise (-ize)	trivial → trivialise (-ize)
federal → federalise (-ize)	neutral → neutralise (-ize)	universal → universalise (-ize)
fertile → fertilise (-ize)	penal → penalise (-ize)	urban → urbanise (-ize)
final → finalise (-ize)	personal → personalise (-ize)	visual → visualise (-ize)
formal → formalise (-ize)	phenomenal → phenomenalise (-ize)	vital → vitalise (-ize)
general → generalise (-ize)	polar → polarise (-ize)	vocal → vocalise (-ize)
ideal → idealise (-ize)	politic → politicise (-ize)	volatile → volatilise (-ize)
illegal → illegalise (-ize)	popular → popularise (-ize)	vulgar → vulgarise (-ize)
immobile → immobilise (-ize)	random → randomise (-ize)	
immortal → immortalise (-ize)	rational → rationalise (-ize)	

Verbs Derived From Adjectives: -en		
black → blacken	fresh → freshen	sick → sicken
bright → brighten	glad → gladden	slack → slacken
broad → broaden	hard → harden	smart → smarten
chaste → chasten	light → lighten	smooth → smoothen
cheap → cheapen	like → liken	soft → soften
coarse → coarsen	live → liven	straight → straighten
crispy → crisp	loose → loosen	sweet → sweeten
damp → dampen	mad → madden	thick → thicken
dark → darken	moist → moisten	tight → tighten
dead → deaden	red → redden	tough → toughen
deaf → deafen	ripe → ripen	weak → weaken
deep → deepen	rough → roughen	white → whiten
fast → fasten	sad → sadden	wide → widen
fat → fatten	sharp → sharpen	worse → worsen
flat → flatten	short → shorten	

Verbs Derived From Adjectives: -ate		
active → activate	domestic → domesticate	potent → potentiate
antique → antique	different → differentiate	invalid → invalidate
authentic → authenticate	instant → instantiate	valid → validate

Verbs Derived From Adjectives: -ify		
diverse → diversify	intense → intensify	simple → simplify
false → falsify	just → justify	solid → solidify
French → Frenchify	pure → purify	vile → vilify
humid → humidify	rare → rarify	

### 5.1.2. Verbs Derived From Nouns

English uses the same suffixes to derive verbs from both nouns and adjectives. By far the most important is -ise (-ize in American English); for example, **colony** → **colonise** (AmE.: **colonize**). Other important suffixes are -en, which is used almost exclusively with words of Anglo-Saxon origin (eg **strength** → **strengthen**), -ate (eg **liquid** → **liquidate**) and -ify (eg **beauty** → **beautify**).

Verbs Derived From Nouns: -ise (-ize)		
agony → agonise (-ize)	fossil → fossilise (-ize)	plastic → plasticise (-ize)
apology → apologise (-ize)	harmony → harmonise (-ize)	pressure → pressurise (-ize)
apostrophe → apostrophise (-ize)	hospital → hospitalise (-ize)	private → privatise (-ize)
author → authorise (-ize)	human → humanise (-ize)	revolution → revolutionise (-ize)
burglar → burglarise (-ize)	ideal → idealise (-ize)	rubber → rubberise (-ize)
capital → capitalise (-ize)	idol → idolise (-ize)	scandal → scandalise (-ize)
category → categorise (-ize)	individual → individualise (-ize)	sermon → sermonise (-ize)
character → characterise (-ize)	irony → ironise (-ize)	standard → standardise (-ize)
colony → colonise (-ize)	journal → journalise (-ize)	style → stylise (-ize)
computer → computerise (-ize)	liquid → liquidise (-ize)	summary → summarise (-ize)
critic → criticise (-ize)	local → localise (-ize)	symbol → symbolise (-ize)
crystal → crystallise (-ize)	magnet → magnetise (-ize)	sympathy → sympathise (-ize)
custom → customise (-ize)	material → materialise (-ize)	system → systemise (-ize)
demon → demonise (-ize)	memory → memorise (-ize)	terror → terrorise (-ize)
economy → economise (-ize)	miniature → miniaturise (-ize)	theory → theorise (-ize)
empathy → empathise (-ize)	moisture → moisturise (-ize)	vapour → vaporise (-ize)
energy → energise (-ize)	monopoly → monopolise (-ize)	victim → victimise (-ize)
epitome → epitomise (-ize)	motor → motorise (-ize)	woman → womanise (-ize)
fantasy → fantasise (-ize)	patron → patronise (-ize)	

Verbs Derived From Nouns: -en		
Christ → christen	heart → hearten	strength → strengthen
fright → frighten	height → heighten	threat → threaten
haste → hasten	length → lengthen	

Verbs Derived From Nouns: -ate		
alien → alienate	granule → granulate	person → impersonate
assassin → assassinate	hyphen → hyphenate	pollen → pollinate
calibre → calibrate	liquid → liquidate	pulse → pulsate
captive → captivate	machine → machinate	sulphur → sulphurate
carbon → carbonate	medic → medicate	syncope → syncope
chlorine → chlorinate	motive → motivate	ulcer → ulcerate
comment → commentate	orient → orientate	urine → urinate
decree → decorate	origin → originate	vaccine → vaccinate
design → designate	oxygen → oxygenate	value → value
fluoride → fluoridate		

Verbs Derived From Nouns: -ify		
acid → acidify	gas → gasify	rate → ratify
beauty → beautify	glory → glorify	sign → signify
city → citify	note → notify	speech → speechify
code → codify	object → objectify	type → typify
fort → fortify	person → personify	verse → versify

## 5.2. Verb Forms

English, unlike Catalan, makes very little use of verbal inflections. With only one exception, all English verbs have at most five distinct forms (the exception is *be*, which has eight). These five forms are the infinitive, the -s form, the -ing form, the simple past and the participle.

A regular verb is one in which the simple past and participle forms are constructed by adding -ed to the infinitive, a construction often referred to as the -ed form. In the case of irregular verbs, the forms for the simple past and participle are given along with the infinitive in the dictionary.

In the first three divisions of this section, we will study the spelling of the -s form, the -ing form and the -ed form, and in the fourth, the verb *be*.

### 5.2.1. The -s Form

There are five possible cases to consider when writing the -s form in English.

If the infinitive ends in a sibilant –that is, with the sounds /s/, /z/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/ (the sound of the Catalan *xeix*) or /ks/ – the suffix is written -es and is pronounced /és/ (/əz/ in American English), adding a syllable. The suffix is written -s if the infinitive already ends in e.

Sound	Verb	-s form	Pronunciation
/s/	kiss dance	kisses dances	/ké:ssés/ /dæn:sés/
/z/	cause sneeze	causes sneezes	/kò:zés/ /sní:zés/
/tʃ/	watch	watches	/uò:tʃés/
/dʒ/	change	changes	/tʃeɪn:tjés/
/f/	finish	finishes	/fɛ:neix:és/
/ks/	mix	mixes	/mék:sés/



If the infinitive ends in a nonsibilant, unvoiced sound –that is, with the sounds /k/, /f/, /p/ or /t/–, the suffix is pronounced /s/ and written -s. Examples:

Sound	Verb	-s form	Pronunciation
/k/	check	checks	/txèks/
/f/	loaf	loafs	/lóufs/
/p/	stop	stops	/stòps/
/t/	chat	chats	/txæts/

If the infinitive ends in a nonsibilant, voiced sound –that is, with the sounds /b/, /d/, /g/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /r/ or /v/, or a vowel–, the suffix is pronounced /z/ and written -s. Examples:

Sound	Verb	-s form	Pronunciation
/b/	rob	robs	/ròbz/
/d/	fold	folds	/fóldz/
/g/	hug	hugs	/hʌgz/
/l/	call	calls	/kòlz/
/m/	seem	seems	/siimz/
/n/	plan	plans	/plænz/
/r/	stir	stirs	/stərz/
/v/	live	lives	/lévz/
/óu/	snow	snows	/snóuz/

If the infinitive ends in consonant + y, the y is replaced by i and the suffix is written -es. If the infinitive ends in vowel + y, no change is made.

Verbs Ending In Consonant + y	-s form	Pronunciation
try	tries	/traiz/
reply	replies	/replàiz/

Verbs Ending In Vowel + y	-s form	Pronunciation
play	plays	/pleɪz/
obey	obeys	/əbeɪz/

There are four verbs in English whose -s forms are written or spelled irregularly:

Verb	-s form	Pronunciation
have had had	has	/hæz/
do did done	does	/dʌz/
go went gone	goes	/góuz/
say said said	says	/sèz/

### 5.2.2. The -ing Form

The English -ing form is always pronounced /ɪŋ/. There are, however, three orthographic changes to consider.

If the infinitive ends in consonant + vowel + consonant and the stress falls on the final syllable, the final consonant is doubled.

Verb	-ing form	Pronunciation
rob	robbing	/rò·bɪŋ/
drag	dragging	/dræ·guɪŋ/
plan	planning	/plæ·nɪŋ/
drop	dropping	/drò·pɪŋ/
chat	chatting	/tʃætɪŋ/
begin began begun	beginning	/be·gué·nɪŋ/
admit	admitting	/ad·mɛ·tɪŋ/

It is good to keep in mind that the final consonant is not doubled if it is preceded by two vowels –for example, **rain** → **raining**– nor is it doubled if the stress doesn't fall on the final syllable: **open** → **opening**. An exception to this last rule is that, in British English, a final l is doubled even if the stress doesn't fall on the final syllable; eg **travel** → **travelling**.

If the infinitive ends in -ie, these two vowels are replaced by y before adding the suffix.

Verb	-ing form	Pronunciation
tie	tying	/taɪŋ/ or /taɪ·ɪŋ/
lie	lying	/laɪŋ/ or /laɪ·ɪŋ/
die	dying	/daɪŋ/ or /daɪ·ɪŋ/

Remember too that all infinitives ending in -y form their -ing forms regularly; eg **study** → **studying**, **reply** → **replying**, **play** → **playing**, etc.

If the infinitive ends in a silent e, this letter is dropped before the -ing suffix.

Verb	-ing form	Pronunciation
close	closing	/kloʊ·zɪŋ/
come came come	coming	/kʌ·mɪŋ/

However, if the infinitive ends in -ee or -oe, the final e is not dropped.

Verb	-ing form	Pronunciation
agree	agreeing	/ə·ɡri·ɪŋ/
canoe	canoeing	/kə·nu·ɪŋ/

### 5.2.3. The -ed Form

For regular English verbs, the simple past and participle form are constructed adding the suffix -ed to the infinitive. There are five possible cases to consider when writing the -ed form in English.

If the infinitive ends in the sounds /t/ or /d/, the suffix is pronounced /éd/ (in American English, /əd/) and a syllable is added.

Sound	Verb	-ed form	Pronunciation
/t/	count	counted	/caʊn·téd/
	vote	voted	/vóʊ·téd/
/d/	fold	folded	/fól·déd/
	concede	conceded	/kən·sɪ·déd/

If the infinitive ends in an unvoiced sound (except /t/) –that is, with the sounds /k/, /f/, /p/, /s/, /tx/, /ʃ/ (the sound of the Catalan *xeix*) or /ks/– the suffix is pronounced /t/.

Sound	Verb	-ed form	Pronunciation
/k/	smoke	smoked	/smóukt/
/f/	loaf	loafed	/lóuft/
/p/	jump	jumped	/tjʌmt/
/s/	kiss dance	kissed danced	/kést/ /dænst/
/tx/	watch	watched	/uðtxt/
/ʃ/	finish	finished	/féːneixt/
/ks/	mix	mixed	/mékst/

If the infinitive ends in a voiced sound (except /d/) –that is, with the sounds /b/, /g/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /r/, /v/, /z/ or /tj/ or a vowel– the suffix is pronounced /d/.

Sound	Verb	-ed form	Pronunciation
/b/	rob	robbed	/robd/
/g/	hug	hugged	/hʌgd/
/l/	call	called	/kòld/
/m/	seem	seemed	/siimd/
/n/	plan	planned	/plænd/
/r/	stir	stirred	/stərd/
/v/	live	lived	/lévd/
/z/	use sneeze	used sneezed	/iuzd/ /snízd/
/tj/	judge	judged	/tjʌtjd/
/óu/	snow	snowed	/snóud/

If the infinitive ends in consonant + y, the y is replaced by i and the suffix is written -ed.  
If the infinitive ends in vowel + y, no change is made.

Verbs ending in consonant + y	-ed form	Pronunciation
try	tried	/traɪd/
reply	replied	/reˈplaɪd/

Verbs ending in vowel + y	-ed form	Pronunciation
play	played	/pleɪd/
obey	obeyed	/oʊˈbeɪd/

If the infinitive ends in consonant + vowel + consonant and the stress falls on the final syllable, the final consonant is doubled.

Verb	-ed form	Pronunciation
rob	robbed	/rɒbd/
drag	dragged	/drægd/
plan	planned	/plænd/
drop	dropped	/drɒpt/
chat	chatted	/tʃætəd/
admit	admitted	/ədˈmɪtəd/

It is good to keep in mind that the final consonant is not doubled if it is preceded by two vowels –for example, **rain** → **rained**– nor is it doubled if the stress doesn't fall on the final syllable: **open** → **opened**. An exception to this last rule is that, in British English, a final l is doubled even if the stress doesn't fall on the final syllable; eg **travel** → **travelled**.

#### 5.2.4. The Verb Be

The verb be is the only verb in English that has more than five forms; it actually has eight:

Infinitive: **be**

Present forms: **am, is** and **are**

-ing form: **being**

Forms of simple past: **was** and **were**

Participle: **been**

Unlike other verbs, the verb **be** doesn't use the infinitive in the present indicative tense, rather it uses three special forms: **am**, **are** and **is**. It is good to keep in mind that, unlike Catalan, English doesn't distinguish between *ser* and *estar*. For example, the expressions *sóc alt* and *estic cansat* are translated by **I am tall** and **I am tired**.

Present Indicative Tense Of Be		
Person	Singular	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	I am	we are
2 <sup>nd</sup>	you are	you are
3 <sup>rd</sup>	he is she is it is	they are

The verb **be** is also unique in that it has two forms in the simple past: **was** and **were**. Those persons that use **are** in the present –**we**, **you** and **they**– use **were** in the past; the others –**I**, **he**, **she** and **it**– use **was**. It is useful to remember that the past simple of the English verb **be** translates four different expressions in Catalan; for example, *vaig ser*, *vaig estar*, *era* and *estava* are all translated: **I was**.

Past Simple Tense Of Be		
Person	Singular	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	I was	we were
2 <sup>nd</sup>	you were	you were
3 <sup>rd</sup>	he, she and it was	they were

### 5.3. Verb Contractions

The following English auxiliary verbs can be contracted with personal pronouns:

**am, are, is**

**have, has, had**

**will, would**

Singular	Plural
I'm, I've, I'd, I'll	we're, we've, we'd, we'll
you're, you've, you'd, you'll	you're, you've, you'd, you'll
he's, he'd, he'll	
she's, she'd, she'll	they're, they've, they'd, they'll
it's, it'd, it'll	

(For more details, see 2.4. Morphology of Pronouns).

A much larger number of auxiliary verbs can be contracted with the adverb not; for example:

Contraction Of Auxiliary Verbs With Not		
are not → aren't	had not → hadn't	cannot → can't
is not → isn't	do not → don't	could not → couldn't
was not → wasn't	does not → doesn't	must not → mustn't
were not → weren't	did not → didn't	need not → needn't
have not → haven't	will not → won't	should not → shouldn't
has not → hasn't	would not → wouldn't	

Note that **am** is the exception; it cannot be contracted with not.

## 6. Adverbs

The only morphological changes English adverbs undergo is in the case of adverbs of manner derived from adjectives. In the same way that Catalan produces these adverbs adding the suffix *-ment* to the feminine form of adjectives, English adds the suffix *-ly*. Examples:

Adverbs Formed With -ly		
awful → awfully	calm → calmly	slow → slowly
bad → badly	quick → quickly	

The morphological rules are as follows:

The final silent e is not dropped, except in the case of adjectives ending in consonant + le, in which case the -le is replaced by -ly. Examples:

Adverbs Formed With -ly (Adjectives Ending in -e)]		
brave → bravely	loose → loosely	able → ably
close → closely	polite → politely	simple → simply
false → falsely	safe → safely	

Exceptions:

**due → duly**  
**true → truly**  
**whole → wholly**

The suffix -ally is added to adjectives ending in -ic; examples:

Adverbs Formed With -ally		
basic → basically	economic → economically	fanatic → fanatically

Exception:

**public → publicly**

If the adjective ends in consonant + y, the y is usually replaced by i before adding the -ly suffix. Examples:

Adverbs Formed With -ily		
angry → angrily	easy → easily	happy → happily

Exceptions:

**shy → shyly**

**spry → sprily**

**wry → wryly**

Finally, English adverbs of manner can also be derived from adjectives ending in -ed and -ing. Examples:

**admittedly, allegedly, belatedly, half-heartedly, pointedly, repeatedly, wholeheartedly**

**alarmingly, amazingly, cunningly, grudgingly, jokingly, knowingly**

## 7. Demonyms (Gentilics)

We will divide the demonym section into countries and cities.

### 7.1. Country Demonyms

Country demonyms, or nationality names, are usually determined by the ending of the name of the nation. However, there are some important exceptions, which we will mention as we go on.

Countries whose names end in -a usually form the demonym by adding -n to the country name. Examples:

**Andorra → Andorran**

**Australia → Australian**



**Bolivia → Bolivian**  
**Colombia → Colombian**  
**Cuba → Cuban**  
**Galicia → Galician**  
**India → Indian**  
**Korea → Korean**  
**Libya → Libyan**  
**Nicaragua → Nicaraguan**  
**Nigeria → Nigerian**  
**Russia → Russian**

Exceptions:

**Argentina → Argentine or Argentinean**  
**Canada → Canadian**  
**Catalonia → Catalan (not ~~Catalonian~~)**  
**China → Chinese**  
**Guyana → Guyanese**  
**Malta → Maltese**  
**Saudi Arabia → Saudi or Saudi Arabian**  
**Slovakia → Slovak or Slovakian**  
**Slovenia → Slovene or Slovenian**  
**Somalia → Somali**

Countries whose names end in a vowel other than a sometimes add -an to the country name, but there are many exceptions. Examples:

**Chile → Chilean**  
**Singapore → Singaporean**  
**Burundi → Burundian**  
**Fiji → Fijian**  
**Haiti → Haitian**  
**Morocco → Moroccan**

Exceptions:

**Congo → Congolese**  
**France → French or Frenchman or Frenchwoman**  
**Greece → Greek**  
**Ukraine → Ukrainian**  
**Mexico → Mexican**  
**Peru → Peruvian**

Countries whose names end in -y generally have their demonyms ending in -an, but the morphological changes vary somewhat. Examples:

**Germany → German**  
**Hungary → Hungarian**  
**Italy → Italian**  
**Norway → Norwegian**  
**Paraguay → Paraguayan**  
**Uruguay → Uruguayan**

Exception:

**Turkey → Turk or Turkish**

Countries whose names end in consonants often add the -an or -ese suffixes. Examples:

**Afghanistan → Afghan**  
**Belgium → Belgian**  
**Brazil → Brazilian**  
**Ecuador → Ecuadorean**  
**Egypt → Egyptian**  
**Iran → Iranian**

**Bhutan → Bhutanese**  
**Gabon → Gabonese**  
**Japan → Japanese**  
**Lebanon → Lebanese**  
**Nepal → Nepalese**  
**Portugal → Portuguese**  
**Sudan → Sudanese**  
**Taiwan → Taiwanese**  
**Vietnam → Vietnamese**

Note:

**Niger → Nigerien** should not be confused with **Nigeria → Nigerian**

Here are some countries whose demonyms end in -i:

**Azerbaijan → Azerbaijani**  
**Bangladesh → Bangladeshi**  
**Iraq → Iraqi**  
**Israel → Israeli**  
**Kuwait → Kuwaiti**  
**Pakistan → Pakistani**

Finally, here are some demonyms that resist categorisation:

Basque Country → Basque  
Cyprus → Cypriot  
Czech Republic → Czech  
Denmark → Dane or Danish  
England → Englishman or Englishwoman  
Finland → Finn or Finnish  
Iceland → Icelander  
Ireland → Irishman or Irishwoman or Irish  
Luxembourg → Luxembourger  
Netherlands → Netherlander, Dutchman, Dutchwoman, Hollander or Dutch  
Philippines → Filipino  
Poland → Pole or Polish  
Scotland → Scot or Scotsman or Scotswoman  
Spain → Spaniard or Spanish  
Sweden → Swede or Swedish  
Switzerland → Swiss  
United Kingdom → Briton or British (collective)  
United States → American\*  
Wales → Welshman or Welshwoman  
Yemen → Yemeni or Yemenite

\*Remember that in English, **American** refers to citizens of the United States. **North Americans** are the citizens of Canada, the United States and Mexico; for example, the North American Free Trade Agreement is an agreement between these three countries. People living between Mexico and Venezuela are generally referred to as Central Americans (though Mexico is sometimes referred to as being part of Central America) and those living in Venezuela and points south, South Americans. Remember too that, in English geography, North America and South America are separate continents.

There is a complete list of demonyms in alphabetical order at <http://geography.about.com/library/weekly/aa030900a.htm>

## 7.2. City Demonyms

City demonyms are particularly difficult to predict and, in fact, are sometimes non-existent. For example, in English there are no city demonyms for Madrid, Beijing and many other cities; we simply say **someone from Madrid**, **someone from Beijing**, etc.

In this section we will limit ourselves to providing some of the most important city demonyms, organised by suffix.

-(a)n – The -(a)n suffix is especially productive for cities ending in vowels. Examples:

**Barcelonan, Roman, Atlantan, Chicagoan, Singaporean.**

-er – The -er suffix is also very productive for all kinds of cities. Examples:

**Amsterdamer, Berliner, Dubliner, Frankfurter, Hamburger,  
Hong Konger, Londoner, New Yorker.**

Other less common suffixes for important city demonyms:

-ese

**Viennese.**

-ian

**Athenian, Bostonian, Houstonian, Parisian, Torontonion.**

-ite

**Muscovite, Seattleite.**

Also: **Los Angeleno, Washingtonian, Liverpooldian, Sydneysider.**

## Syntax

This section explores the rules governing the proper construction of sentences in English, breaking them down into their integral parts, such as nouns and verbs.

### 1. Nouns

Noun syntax in English involves a number of issues, which we will look at in detail in the following section. The points dealt with include the possessive, partitives or noun + noun combinations.

#### 1.1. The Saxon Genitive

We have already studied the morphology of the Saxon genitive in section Mo 1.5. In this section we will look at its syntax and use.

##### Syntax of the Saxon genitive

The Saxon genitive is normally used either as an attributive adjective (an adjective that precedes the noun it modifies), a predicate adjective (one that comes after the verb be) and an “independent possessive”, a possessive that is used to avoid the repetition of another noun. The following examples should make this clear.

Use as an Attributive Adjective

**Eric's car is blue.**

**The teacher's role is to guide the student.**

**This course's main objective is to introduce GNU/Linux.**

Use as a Predicate Adjective

**The blue car is Eric's.**

**That is the teacher's role.**

**The bag under the table is the doctor's.**

Note that English generally doesn't use a Saxon genitive as a predicate adjective for non-personal nouns:

**The decision was made by the government (better than The decision was the government's).**

**Independent possessive (the use of the independent possessive is underlined)**

**Monica's car is red and Eric's is blue.**

**The materials used will be the University's.**

A special use of the Saxon genitive as an independent possessive is when it refers either to someone's house, or to a commercial or professional establishment. Examples:

**We're going to Rick's.**

**Elena invited Louis to dinner at her mother's.**

**Meritxell is at the dentist's.**

Finally, if two people have one thing in common, the 's is added only to the second, whereas if each has their own thing, the 's is added to both nouns. Examples:

**We're going to Edward and Irene's (they live together).**

**Tom's and Jerry's wives have enrolled on a course (each man has a different wife).**

### The "double genitive"

A special case is the so-called "double genitive", which is formed either by an indefinite or demonstrative determiner (**a, an, some, this, that, these** or **those**) plus the locution noun + **of** + Saxon genitive. Its basic meaning is "one of several" or "some of many", so examples such as **a friend of Tom's** and **some students of Alicia's** are equivalent to **one of Tom's friends** and **some of Alicia's students**, respectively. However, in the case of the demonstratives, no alternative is possible; care must be taken not to use constructions such as **this** + Saxon genitive + noun; eg we don't say ~~this Monica's letter~~, but rather **this letter of Monica's**.

The double genitive can also be used to describe artistic and literary works; for example, **a painting of Van Gogh's** or **some novels of Josep Pla's**.

More examples:

**She was a college classmate of Hillary Clinton's.**

**We heard about it from a neighbour of Bill's.**

**That car of my brother's needs new tyres.**

**This is the only painting of Joan's we have** (ie this is the only picture painted by Joan that we have). Note that if Joan were the subject of the painting, we would say the following: **This is the only painting of Joan we have.**

Finally, the double genitive can be used to express annoyance or praise.

**I just saw that stupid friend of Henry's!**

**Those wonderful children of your sister's have given me some flowers!**

### Combinations of the Saxon genitive

Combinations of the Saxon genitive can seem particularly confusing because the English construction is precisely the reverse of the order in Catalan. It is useful to remember that the Saxon genitive functions as an adjective and thus precedes the noun it modifies. Perhaps the following comparisons will make this relation clearer.

*La Pilar* – **Pilar**

*De la Pilar* – **Pilar's**

*El germà de la Pilar* – **Pilar's brother**

*Del germà de la Pilar* – **Pilar's brother's**

*La xicota del germà de la Pilar* – **Pilar's brother's girlfriend**

*De la xicota del germà de la Pilar* – **Pilar's brother's girlfriend's**

Examples:

**Pilar's brother's girlfriend knows our neighbours.**

**My mother's neighbour's son is from Blanes.**

**Whose car is that? It's my mother's neighbour's son's.**

**Whose handbag is under the table? It's Pilar's brother's girlfriend's.**

## Use of the Saxon genitive

The two most important uses of the Saxon genitive are to indicate possession –eg **John's car**– and to indicate personal relationships: eg **John's mother**. For this reason, the use of the Saxon genitive is usually reserved for people or animate beings. However, there are exceptions, and so the simplest way to explain the proper use of the Saxon genitive is to mention three possibilities.

Cases in which the use of the Saxon genitive is generally required.

Cases in which the use of Saxon genitive is optional.

Cases in which the use of the Saxon genitive would be incorrect.

Before entering into details, a general rule that almost never fails is to use the Saxon genitive with people and time expressions (**yesterday, today, tomorrow, last Tuesday**, etc.; see below) and, in other cases, either the **of** form or the noun + noun form (see section Sy 1.5). In those cases where the Saxon genitive is non-personal and optional (section B), use the **of** form.

### Cases in which the use of the Saxon genitive is generally required

The use of the Saxon genitive is generally obligatory in the following cases.

When referring to possession or relationships between people

**Roger's book**, not ~~the book of Roger~~;

**The nurse's watch**, not ~~the watch of the nurse~~

**Mary's friends** not ~~the friends of Mary~~

**Her husband's aunt**, not ~~the aunt of her husband~~

When referring to someone's house, or a commercial or professional establishment

**We're going to John's.**

**They've gone to the hairdresser's.**

In time expressions

**Yesterday's weather, today's newspaper, tomorrow's class, a month's wages, last week's lecture**, etc. (not ~~the weather of yesterday, the newspaper of today~~, etc.).

When referring to products from live animals

**Goat's milk, sheep's wool, a hen's egg**

### Cases in which the use of Saxon genitive is optional

There are many cases in which either the Saxon genitive or the **of** form can be used with no difference in meaning.

Genitive constructions that are not possessive

**Shakespeare's sonnets** or **the sonnets of Shakespeare**

**my parents' permission** or **the permission of my parents**

**Abraham Lincoln's assassin** or **the assassin of Abraham Lincoln**

Animals

**The lion's roar** or **the roar of the lion**

**A deer's grace** or **the grace of a deer**

If an animal has a name (eg **Bobi** or **Tula**), the Saxon genitive is always used (eg **Bobi's dish**, **Tula's collar**, etc.).

Plants

**The tree's leaves** or **the leaves of the tree**

Natural phenomena

**The light of the stars** or **the stars' light**

Political, geographical or institutional entities

**The city's air pollution** or **the air pollution of the city**

**The river's current** or **the current of the river**

**Their school's reputation** or **the reputation of their school**

Collective nouns

**The public's confidence** or **the confidence of the public**

**The government's decision** or **the decision of the government**

Names of special interest to human activity

**The brain's weight** or **the weight of the brain**

**The game's history** or **the history of the game**

Cases in which the use of the Saxon genitive would be incorrect

With the exception of the cases mentioned above, the general rule in English is to use the Saxon genitive for people and chronological time. Here are some examples in which the use of the Saxon genitive would be incorrect.

**A piece of cake**, not ~~a cake's piece~~

**The side of the building**, not ~~the building's side~~

**The table leg** or **the leg of the table**, not ~~the table's leg~~

**The consequences of their inactivity**, not ~~their inactivity's consequences~~

**The value of his ideas**, not ~~his ideas' value~~

**Some aspects of the problem**, not ~~some of the problem's aspects~~

## 1.2. Animal Names

As is the case in Catalan, there are many instances in English in which the name of a male animal is different from that of the female. This is particularly the case for common mammals. The following is a list of some of the most important:

**Boar/sow**

**Buck/hind, stag/doe**

**Bull/cow**

**Dog/bitch**

**Lion/lioness**

**Ram/ewe**

**Cock [BrE.], rooster [AmE.]/hen**

**Stallion/mare**

**Tiger/tigress**



Drake/duck  
Fox/vixen  
Gander/goose  
Billygoat/goat

English also has a large number of special words that describe groups of animals. The following are some of the most important.

A bed of clams, of oysters  
A brood of hens  
A clutch of chicks  
A colony of ants, of beavers, of gulls, of penguins  
A covey of grouse, of partridges, of pheasants, of ptarmigans, of quail  
A drove of cattle  
An exaltation of larks  
A flock of sheep, of birds  
A gam of whales  
A murder of crows  
A pack of wolves, of hounds  
A pod of seals, of whales  
A pride of lions  
A school of fish  
A skulk of foxes  
A swarm of bees  
An unkindness of ravens

### 1.3. Partitives

Partitive constructions are those that describe part of a whole. These distinctions can be based on quality (a kind of cheese or a type of behaviour) or quantity (a slice of bread or three pieces of cake).

#### 1.3.1. Quality Partitives

There are three main expressions that are used as partitive constructions of quality: **type of**, **kind of** and **sort of**. Broadly speaking, we can say that **type of** is used in more formal contexts and **kind of** is used more colloquially. As for **sort of**, it is used especially when the reference is vague or imprecise. Examples:

This type of architecture is known as Romanic.  
There is a new type of carburettor that is more fuel-efficient.  
What kind of internet connection do I need?  
We've had all kinds of problems.  
I'd never do that sort of thing.

It is worth noting that, in certain circumstances, there is a lack of correspondence between singular and plural forms in English and Catalan. Where Catalan uses the singular expressions *tota mena* and *tot tipus*, English uses the plural expressions **all kinds of** and **all types of**. Examples:

**We work in alliance with all kinds of public and private organisations.**

*Treballem en aliança amb tota mena d'organitzacions públiques i privades.*

**They've tried all types of remedies, but he's still sick.**

*Han provat tot tipus de cures, però encara està malalt.*

As for the demonstrative pronouns, English grammar manuals recommend that there be agreement between the various elements.

Singular: [this/that] + [kind/type/sort] of + singular noun  
**this kind of thing, that type of education, this sort of problem**

Plural: [these/those] + [kinds/types/sorts] of + plural noun  
**these kinds of jobs, those types of architecture, these sorts of criminals**

However, note that there are many examples in which good authors do not observe this distinction, particularly as regards to **kind of** and **sort of**. One might very well come across cases such as the following:

**this kind of poems, that sort of people, these kind of guys, those kind of statements.**

Finally, the interrogative adjectives **which** and **what** are used with both singular and plural partitives; examples:

**Which/What kind of studies are being done on this subject?**

**Which/What kinds of studies are being done on this subject?**

### 1.3.2. Quantity Partitives

The quantity partitive constructions are most often used to talk about a particular part of another noun; for example, **a sheet of paper** and **a slice of bread**. Obviously it is important not to confuse the terminology, because the expressions ~~a slice of paper~~ and ~~a sheet of bread~~ are wrong.

In English there are two types of quantity partitive constructions: general and specific. The first are used in a large number of cases and the second only in specific cases. We will examine first the general and then the specific.

#### General partitive constructions

The two most common partitive constructions in English are **a piece of** and **a bit of**. The former is used more often; it can be used with virtually all concrete and abstract nouns (eg **a piece of pie, a piece of wood, a piece of news, a piece of advice**, etc.). It is worth noting that expressions using **piece of** are translated in various ways in Catalan, depending on the noun. Generally speaking, Catalan will use various partitives when referring to concrete nouns and the indefinite article when referring to abstract nouns.

Concrete nouns

**A piece of paper/cake/clothing/furniture/coal/land/luggage**

Abstract nouns

**A piece of advice/research/news/work**

Finally, the expression **a bit of** is used to mean a small quantity of and, as such, generally corresponds to the Catalan *una mica de*. It is synonymous with the English quantitative

adjective **a little** (eg **a bit of wine = a little wine**). It is also sometimes translated *petit -a*.  
Examples:

**A bit of wine/fun/advice/trouble**

*Una mica de vi, una mica de diversió, un petit consell, un petit problema*

### Specific partitive constructions

Here is a list of the most important English partitive constructions; many of them might equally be considered to be idioms.

**A bar (of chocolate, of soap, of gold, of iron)**

**A grain of truth**

**A blade of grass**

**A block (of ice, of shares)**

**A crowd of people**

**A cut (of meat, of lamb, of beef, etc.)**

**A drop (of water, of oil, of whisky)**

**A grain (of corn, of rice, of sand, of salt)**

**A loaf of bread**

**A lump (of coal, of lead, of sugar)**

**A pack (of cards, of cigarettes)**

**A series (of incidents, of concerts, of lectures)**

**A sheet (of paper, of metal, of ice)**

**A slice (of bacon, of cake, of meat, of bread)**

**A speck (of dust, of dirt)**

**A stick (of dynamite, of celery)**

**A strip (of paper, of cloth, of land)**

**A suit (of clothes, of armour)**

### 1.4. Collective Nouns

Collective nouns are those that refer to groups of people (or animals; see section Sy 1.2), such as **the army** and **our team**. Whereas in American English, as in Catalan, these nouns take a singular verb, in British English they can be used with either singular or plural verbs. Broadly speaking, British English uses the singular forms when the group is considered as an impersonal entity and uses the plural forms when the group is considered a collection of individuals. Examples:

**My family are (AmE. is) moving to Bristol.**

**The government have (AmE. has) passed several new laws.**

**The orchestra are (AmE. is) tuning up.**

Note that, as is the case in Catalan, a singular collective noun can be the antecedent of plural pronoun.

**The union (the entity) is upset about the new work rules; they (the members) have threatened to go on strike.**

### 1.5. Noun + Noun

Nouns in English are often used to premodify other nouns; for example, **breadcrumb** (*engruna de pa*), **fire engine** (*cotxe de bombers*) and **honey-bee** (*abella [que produeix la mel]*). Catalan occasionally uses similar constructions –eg *hora punta* and *escola pilot*–, but they are used much more extensively in English. We have already discussed the morphology of the combination Noun + Noun in section Mo 1.2, and though a complete analysis of all the uses of these forms lies beyond the scope of the present study (see <http://visca.com/apac/articles/noun-noun.html>), in this section we will take brief look at some of the most important uses of these forms.

#### Classification of noun + noun combinations

The following is a list of nine basic kinds of Noun + Noun combinations, two of which have sub-categories.

Material composition. The second noun is composed of the first (**stone bridge**). More examples:

**Chocolate bar**  
**Raindrop**  
**Snowflake**  
**Straw hat**  
**Chicken soup**  
**Lamb/pork chop**

Use. The second noun is used for the first (**address book**). More examples:

**Ashtray**  
**Cat food**  
**Toilet paper**

Components. The second noun is a component of the first (**doorknob**). More examples:

**Window pane**  
**Arrowhead**  
**Phone number**  
**Car keys**

Location. The first noun localises the second (**kitchen counter**). More examples:

**Basement door**  
**Road sign**  
**City dweller**  
**Earthworm**

Containers. The second noun is used to contain the first (**coffee cup**). More examples:

**Matchbox**  
**Milk bottle**  
**Water bucket**

In cases such as these, it is important to distinguish between **a coffee cup**, that is, a cup that we use to hold coffee, and **a cup of coffee**, a cup that is full of coffee. So, if we want to say *Va beure una ampolla de cervesa*, we must say **He drank a bottle of beer**, not ~~**He drank a beer bottle**~~, which would mean he had swallowed the bottle as well!

Activities. The second, personal, noun performs the activity described by the first (**football player**). More examples:

**Blood donor**  
**Housekeeper**  
**Sales manager**

Quantities, sizes, distances and durations. The first noun describes the quantity, size, distance or duration of the second (**five-pound note**). More examples:

**Two-gallon jug**  
**Forty-foot drop**  
**Three-mile walk**  
**Two-hour talk**

Production. The first noun is produced or given by the second (**oil well**). More examples:

**Dairy farm**  
**Bicycle factory**  
**Gold mine**  
**Power plant**

The second noun is produced or given by the first (**cane sugar**). More examples:

**Bloodstain**  
**Food poisoning**  
**Sawdust**

Verb derivation. The first noun performs the second (**heartbeat**). More examples:

**Horserace**  
**Headache**  
**Earthquake**

The second noun performs the first (**rattlesnake**). More examples:

**Washing machine**  
**Dancing girl**  
**Hangman**  
**Watchdog**

Someone causes the action of the second noun to affect the first (**can opener**). More examples:

**Haircut**  
**Handshake**  
**Tax cut**

The second noun is subjected to the action of the first (**sleeping bag**). More examples:

**Living room**  
**Chewing gum**  
**Frying pan**  
**Hiding place**

## 2. Adjectives

It is important to keep in mind that adjectives in English are almost always invariable, the exceptions being the possessive and demonstrative adjectives (see section Sy 2.2). Note that in the following four examples the adjective **tall** remains the same in singular and plural, masculine and feminine.

**A tall boy** (*un noi alt*)

**Two tall boys** (*dos nois alts*)

**A tall girl** (*una noia alta*)

**Two tall girls** (*dues noies altes*)

There is a common tendency to pluralise Latin-derived adjectives when they appear in predicative position (ie after the verb **be**); this must be avoided. Examples:

**Steel and iron are important** (*L'acer i el ferro són importants*) (not **Steel and iron are ~~important~~s**).

**The concerts were popular** (*Els concerts eren populars*) (not **The concerts were ~~popular~~s**).

### 2.1. Adjective Order

When considering adjective order, it should be remembered that English has two types of adjectives: attributive and predicative. The first are generally noun complements and are typically found before the nouns they modify –eg **a white horse** (*un cavall blanc*)–, whereas predicate adjectives can play two roles: as a predicative of the subject (in Catalan, a *predicat nominal*), linked to it by a copula –eg **the horse is white** (*el cavall és blanc*)– or as a predicative of the object (in Catalan, *complement predicatiu*), following the modified noun –eg **you make me happy** (*em fas feliç*).

#### 2.1.1. Attributive Adjectives

As is the case in Catalan, English attributive adjectives determine, delimit or classify the nouns they modify and form part of the noun phrase. On the other hand, predicative adjectives, which we will study in section Sy 2.1.2, qualify the nouns they modify and, in both English and Catalan, appear after a copulative verb, such as **be**, **seem** or **feel**. Compare:

Attributive use:

**I like dry wine** (*M'agrada el vi sec*).

The adjective **dry** classifies the noun **wine**.

Predicative use:

**The wine is dry** (*El vi és sec*).

The adjective **dry** describes a quality of the noun **wine**.

#### Attributive adjectives that precede the noun

In English, attributive adjectives generally precede the nouns they modify (we'll look at the exceptions in section Sy 2.1.1). The following are some typical examples; note that

determiners always precede attributive adjectives.

**A small problem**  
**Some dirty clothes**  
**An angry woman**  
**A dull movie**  
**The bad examples**  
**A famous event**  
**The daily news**  
**The wrong way**  
**A complete failure**  
**Some hungry people**

It should be pointed out that two common Catalan constructions are often erroneously translated literally into English; they are the combinations definite article + noun + *més* + adjective and determiner + noun + adv. + adj. Examples:

*La vista més atractiva* = **the most attractive view** (not ~~the view most attractive~~)  
*Les noies més populars* = **the most popular girls** (not ~~the girls most popular~~)  
*Un altre fet molt important* = **another very important fact** (not ~~another fact very important~~)  
*Moltes noies una mica begudes* **many slightly drunken girls** (not ~~many girls slightly drunken~~)

### Ordering groups of attributive adjectives

The ordering in English of attributive adjectives is somewhat complex. Broadly speaking, we can say that adjectives that express essential qualities of the noun they are modifying are placed as close as possible to these nouns, whereas general adjectives that can be used with a large number of nouns are placed further away, that is, further to the left. What follows is a general rule for the placement of adjectives before nouns in English; note, however, that there can be considerable variation in the order of categories IV through VII.

I) articles, possessive adjectives, demonstrative adjectives and the Saxon genitive

II) the adjectives **another**, **other** and **same**

III) numbers

\*\*\*

IV) general quality adjectives (**nice**, **stupid**, **complicated**, etc.)

V) size and weight (eg **big**, **small**, **heavy**, etc.)

VI) dimension and shape (eg **tall**, **round**, etc.)

VII) age (eg **young**, **old**, etc.)

\*\*\*

VIII) colour

IX) demonyms (*gentilicis*) (eg **French**, **Catalan**, etc.)

X) material (eg **leather**, **cotton**, etc.)

XI) purpose (eg **table** wine, **car** tools, etc.)

Examples:

<b>a</b>	<b>fat</b>	<b>old</b>	<b>Russian</b>	<b>horse</b>
article	shape	age	demonym	noun

<b>the</b>	<b>other</b>	<b>six</b>	<b>brown</b>	<b>beer</b>	<b>bottles</b>
article	(II)	number	colour	purpose	noun

<b>an</b>	<b>impressive</b>	<b>tall</b>	<b>grey</b>	<b>metal</b>	<b>radio</b>	<b>tower</b>
article	quality	dimension	colour	material	purpose	noun

<b>numerous</b>	<b>small</b>	<b>carved</b>	<b>Chinese</b>	<b>jade</b>	<b>idols</b>
number	size	quality	demonym	material	noun

It should be added, however, that we can say both **a big old fat man** and **a big fat old man**. In the first case we consider the principal quality of the man to be fatness, whereas in the second we consider it to be age.

### The use of commas and the conjunction and

Commas are generally used to separate strings of adjectives that come before nouns, but can often be omitted if the adjectives are common and short. They are never placed between the final adjective and the noun. Examples:

**An exciting, innovative, revolutionary, new proposal**

**A tall dark handsome cowboy**

The conjunction **and** is almost never used between adjectives that precede a noun. The only exceptions are when the adjectives refer to two or more parts of a single thing –for example, **a black and yellow taxi**– or, in formal styles, when the two adjectives are similar (eg **a cruel and evil tyrant**, **a refined and elegant air**).

### Attributive adjectives that follow the noun

There are certain special cases in which English postposes adjectives; the following are the most important.

English always postposes adjectives modifying the indefinite pronouns ending **-body**, **-one** and **-thing** and the indefinite adverbs ending in either **-where** or **-place**. Examples:

**Somebody interesting is waiting for you in the hall.**

**No one interested in ancient Egypt should miss this exposition.**



**I'd never do anything really dangerous.  
Shall we go somewhere a little more quiet?**

Certain adjectives beginning with the prefix *a-*, which are normally found in the predicative position (see section Sy 2.1.2), are postposed when used attributively. Examples:

**Ten ships afloat in the bay  
A boy asleep  
A man alone**

The adjectives **present**, **concerned**, **responsible** and **involved** are used both before and after nouns, with a change in meaning. Examples:

**All those present agreed.** (*Tots els presents estaven d'acord.*)  
**The present situation is quite difficult.** (*La situació actual és força difícil.*)  
**The man concerned refuses to press charges.** (*L'home en qüestió es nega a fer acusacions.*)  
**The concerned parents called for stricter discipline.** (*Els pares preocupats van demanar una disciplina més severa.*)  
**The man responsible has been arrested.** (*Han arrestat l'home responsable.*)  
**It's hard to find a responsible young man these days.** (*Avui dia és difícil de trobar un jove fiable.*)  
**The politicians involved in the fraud have fled the country.** (*Els polítics implicats en el frau han fugit del país.*)  
**I'm reading one of those really involved murder mysteries.** (*Llegeixo una d'aquestes novel·les de sèrie negra molt enrevessades.*)

### 2.1.2. Predicative Adjectives

Predicative adjectives are those that appear after a copulative verb, such as **be**, **seem** or **feel**. Broadly speaking, their use corresponds with that of Catalan (see section Mo 2.1.1); however, it is important to keep in mind that certain adjectives in English are restricted to predicative use; for example, we can say **the man is ill**, but we don't generally refer to ~~an ill man~~, rather **a sick man**.

We can divide adjectives that are only used predicatively into four groups.

The first group is composed of adjectives that are related to health or moods, such as **well**, **ill**, **unwell**, **faint**, **dizzy**, **content**, **glad**, and **sorry**. Note that some of these adjectives can be used attributively, but that in these cases they are not related to health or moods. Examples:

**She isn't well; she's been ill/unwell for months.  
I'm feeling a little dizzy.  
The graduate students were content with their lot.  
He seemed glad about the news.  
I'd never felt so sorry in my life!**

Adjectives that begin with the prefix *a-*, such as **afraid**, **alike**, **alive**, **alone**, **asleep** and **awake**, or **averse (to)** and **aware (of)**. Examples:

**He's hiding because he is afraid.  
They look alike to me.**

Let's go somewhere where we can be alone.

Their party is averse to all change.

I doubt whether they are aware of the difficulties.

Certain participial adjectives in English are used to describe temporal conditions, caused by the action of the verb in question, and these are also restricted to predicative position. For example, we can say **My sister was prepared** (*La meva germana estava preparada*) but not ~~**my prepared sister**~~ (*la meva germana preparada*). Here is a list of other participial adjectives of this class.

Ashamed  
Camped  
Convinced  
Finished  
Found  
Gone  
Stopped  
Touched

Here is a list of some miscellaneous English adjectives whose meanings change according to whether they are used attributively or predicatively.

Adjective	Predicative Sense	Attributive Sense
due	<i>ser previst</i>	<i>degut, oportú</i>
likely	<i>probable</i>	<i>prometedor</i>
ready	<i>preparat, a punt</i>	<i>prompte</i>
welcome	(people) <i>benvingut</i>	(events) <i>agradable</i>
faint	<i>marejat i a punt de desmaiar-se</i>	<i>dèbil</i>
dizzy	<i>marejat quan roda el cap</i>	<i>eixelebrat</i>

Examples of predicative use (for examples of **faint** and **dizzy**, see above):

The train is due soon.

Publishers are more likely to allow the reproduction of texts.

They're ready for anything!

You're welcome to spend the night if you like.

## 2.2. Possessive Adjectives (and Pronouns)

In modern English grammar, the possessive adjectives now fall under the grammatical category of determiners. However, we are referring to them here as adjectives because their relation to the corresponding Catalan forms is clearer.

Unlike Catalan, English distinguishes between possessive adjectives and possessive pronouns. We'll study this distinction in the following section; for now, here is a table showing the correspondence between the English possessive adjectives and pronouns and their Catalan counterparts.

Possessive Adjectives And Pronouns		
English		Catalan
Adjective	Pronoun	
my	mine	(el) meu, (la) meva, (els) meus, (les) meves
your	yours	(el) teu, (la) teva, (els) teus, (les) teves
our	ours	(el) nostre, (la) nostra, (els, les) nostres
your	yours	(el) vostre, (la) vostra, (els, les) vostres
his (d'ell)	his (d'ell)	(el) seu, (la) seva, (els) seus, (les) seves
her (d'ella)	hers (d'ella)	
its (d'una cosa)		
their (d'ells)	theirs (d'ells)	

Determiners are never used before English possessive adjectives or pronouns. Examples:

**My dog has fleas** (not ~~The my dog...~~). (*El meu gos té puces*).

**This plane must be ours** (not ... ~~must be the ours~~). (*Aquest avió deu ser el nostre*).

**I like your music more than theirs.** (*M'agrada més la vostra música que la seva*).

In English, the third-person possessive adjectives and pronouns are determined by the possessor, whereas in Catalan they are determined by that which is possessed (masculine or feminine, singular or plural). This difference can be extremely anti-intuitive, as the following table should make clear.

If we say in Catalan:	... and we are referring to:	... in English we say:
<i>el seu pare</i> <i>la seva mare</i> <i>els seus germans</i> <i>les seves germanes</i>	<i>en Jordi</i>	his father his mother his brothers his sisters
	<i>la Maria</i>	her father her mother her brothers her sisters
	<i>en Jordi i la Maria</i>	their father their mother their brothers their sisters

Examples:

**Their mother is eighty-eight** (*La seva mare [d'ells] té vuitanta-vuit anys*).

**His sisters visit him often** (*Les seves germanes [d'ell] el visiten sovint*).

**These books are hers** (*Aquests llibres són seus [d'ella]*).

**My keys are here and his are over there** (*Les meves claus són aquí i les seves [d'ell], allà*).

Remember that English has no pronoun corresponding to either *vostè* or *vós*; in the same way that both are translated in English by **you**, their corresponding possessives are translated by **your** and **yours**. Thus the sentence **We've received your letter** can be translated *Hem rebut la teva carta*, *Hem rebut la vostra carta* (*de vosaltres o de vós*) or *Hem rebut la seva carta* (*de vostè o de vostès*).

English must use a possessive adjective when translating Catalan adjectives that have a possessive sense. Examples:

*Els nens fan els deures* – **The children are doing their** [not ~~the~~] **homework**.

*Perds el temps* – **You're wasting your** [not ~~the~~] **time**.

*Aquestes festes han perdut la gràcia* – **These festivals have lost their** [not ~~the~~] **charm**.

### The use of English possessive adjectives and pronouns

In English, possessive adjectives are used only attributively (before the nouns they modify; eg **my dog**) and possessive pronouns are used both as predicative adjectives (after the verb **be**; eg **The dog is mine**) and independent possessives (eg **Your dog is old and mine is young**).

Attributive Adjective	Predicative Adjective	Independent Possessive
<b>my dog</b> <i>el meu gos</i>	<b>the dog is mine</b> <i>el gos és meu</i>	<b>mine is old</b> <i>el meu és vell</i>
<b>your dog</b> <i>el teu/vostre gos</i>	<b>the dog is yours</b> <i>el gos és teu/vostre</i>	<b>yours is old</b> <i>el teu/vostre és vell</i>
<b>his dog, her dog, their dog</b> <i>el seu gos</i>	<b>the dog is his/hers/theirs</b> <i>el gos és seu</i>	<b>his/hers/theirs is old</b> <i>el seu és vell</i>
<b>our dog</b> <i>el nostre gos</i>	<b>the dog is ours</b> <i>el gos és nostre</i>	<b>ours is old</b> <i>el nostre és vell</i>

We should mention that the independent possessive construction is generally used to avoid the repetition of a noun. Here are a few more examples:

**My room is small and yours is large.**

**His jacket is blue but hers is yellow.**

**Our classes are in the morning and yours are in the afternoon.**

### 2.3. Quantifying Adjectives (and Adverbs)

In modern English grammar, the quantifying adjective/adverbs now fall under the grammatical category of determiners. However, we are referring to them here as adjectives and adverbs because their relation to the corresponding Catalan forms is clearer.

We will deal with the following quantifiers in this section.

many much a lot (of)	few little a few several a little	enough	(not) any no none (pronoun) at all (emphatiser)
----------------------------	---	--------	--

These quantifiers can be modified by the adverbs **too**, **very** and **quite**, which will also form part of our study.

Quantifying adjectives modify both singular and plural nouns and have a great deal in common with quantifying adverbs, which modify verbs, adjectives or other adverbs. The most difficult aspect of the study of these quantifiers is that they usually take on different forms depending on the part of speech they modify. For example, consider the English equivalents of the Catalan *massa*, an invariable adjective/adverb that indicates an excessive quantity, number or degree.

*Massa problemes* (modifying a plural noun) = **too many problems**

*Massa vi* (modifying a singular noun) = **too much wine**

*Treball massa* (modifying a verb) = **I work too much**

*Massa dolç* (modifying an adjective) = **too sweet**

*Massa tard* (modifying an adverb) = **too late**

We will divide this chapter into three main parts: first we will study those quantifiers that, when modifying nouns or verbs, generally include the words **many** and **much**. It will also be convenient to see how these forms change when modifying adjectives and adverbs. In the second section, we will look at those quantifiers that include the words **few** and **little**, again with a note on their modification of adjectives and adverbs. Finally we'll study the terms **enough**, **no**, **any** and **none**, and the emphasiser **at all**.

#### Quantifiers that use **many** and **much**

There are five expressions in English that commonly use either **many**, when modifying plural nouns, or **much** when modifying singular nouns and verbs. (There are also the interrogative expressions **how many** and **how much**, which we'll study in section Sy 5.4) One of these, **so... that**, is not strictly speaking a quantitative expression, but we've included it here because of its syntactic similarity to the quantifying forms. In the examples section, note that Catalan makes very few changes to quantifying modifiers, whereas the changes in English are significant.

Quantifiers That Generally Use Many And Much When Modifying Nouns Or Verbs			
Plural Nouns	Singular Nouns/Verbs	Adjectives/Adverbs	Catalan Equivalent
too many	too much	too	<i>massa</i>
many/a lot of	a lot of/a great deal of	very/really	<i>molt/-a/-s/-es</i>
(not) many	(not) much	(not) very	<i>(no) gaire/-s</i>
as many as	as much as	as... as	<i>tant/-a/-s/-es</i> (as many/much as) / <i>tan</i> (as... as)
so many that	so much that	so... that	<i>tant/-a/-s/-es</i> (so many/much that) / <i>tan</i> (so... that)

Examples:

Too

**I have too many problems.**

**Hunting down the answers to such questions would take too much time.**

**It weighs too much.**

**The tea is too hot.**

**They're working too slowly.**

Many/a lot of (a great deal of)/very

**There have been many recent initiatives in this field.**

**We stayed there many days.**

**There are a lot of useful sites.**

**There was a lot of snow.**

**The senator has a great deal of confidence.**

**It's very difficult.**

**He runs very/really fast.**

The word **much** generally isn't used to modify singular nouns and verbs in affirmative expressions. For example, we can't say ~~There was much snow~~. Passive uses, however, are sometimes found in more formal English: **Much work has been done** (*S'ha fet molta feina*), but not ~~We have done much work~~.

Some verbs accept the compound modifier **very much**; for example, we can say **I love you very much** (*t'estimo molt*) but not ~~I love you much~~. Nor can we say ~~I eat very much~~. As a general rule, when modifying singular nouns and verbs, it is safest to use either the informal **a lot (of)** (or the very informal **lots of**) or the more formal **a great deal (of)**.

Although **many** and **a lot of** are completely synonymous when modifying plural nouns, **a lot of** is more common in spoken English. An exception to this is that **many** tends to be used more when modifying time periods; eg **many days** is more common than **a lot of days**. Also, **many** will more often be found modifying subjects than complements.

(Not) many, (not) much, (not) very (non-affirmative use)

**Do you know many soldiers?**

**We didn't see many bears.**

**Was there much traffic?**

**He hasn't spent much money.**

Have you danced much?  
 I don't go out much any more.  
 Was it very difficult?  
 They aren't very friendly.  
 She didn't react very quickly.

As many as, as much as, as... as

I have as many problems as you.  
 It offers as much detail as you could want.  
 Adults don't sleep as much as children.  
 It is made as easy as possible.  
 They come as often as the others.

So many that, so much that, so... that

I had so many problems that I got upset.  
 I drink so much coffee that I can't sit still.  
 I work so much that I have no time for my husband.  
 It's so sweet that I don't like it.  
 He paints so well that they offered him a scholarship.

### Quantifiers that use few and little

There are three expressions in English that commonly use either **few**, when modifying plural nouns, or **little** when modifying singular nouns and verbs. Note that these terms never modify adjectives or adverbs; that is, English has no equivalent to Catalan expressions such as *L'aigua és poc calenta*, and must use a negative instead: **The water isn't very hot** (*L'aigua no és gaire calenta*).

Quantifiers That Generally Use Few And Little When Modifying Nouns Or Verbs			
Plural Nouns	Catalan Equivalent	Singular Nouns/Verbs	Catalan Equivalent
quite a few	<i>bastants, força</i>	quite a lot (of)	<i>bastant, força</i>
quite a lot (of)		quite a bit (of) quite a little	
a few (several)	<i>uns quants/ unes quantes</i>	a little	<i>una mica</i>
few	<i>pocs/poques</i>	little	<i>poc/-a</i>

Quite a few; quite a lot (of), quite a bit (of), quite a little

The book gives quite a few examples.  
 We've drunk quite a bit of coffee this morning.  
 It rained quite a bit last night.

A few, several, a little

Here are a few general rules.  
 The well is several miles away.  
 Would you like a little wine?  
 I try to swim a little every day.

Few, little

**There were few choices.**  
**Little information has been released.**  
**We read little.**

Especially in colloquial English, the use of **not many** and **not much** is generally more common than **few** and **little**. That is, it is more usual to say **We don't have many tomatoes** or **We don't see them much** than to use their equivalents: **We have few tomatoes** and **We see them little**. However, **few** and **little** are commonly used after the adverb **very**. Examples:

**He makes very few mistakes.**  
**We have very little patience.**  
**He studies very little.**

**Enough, no, none, any, at all**

**Enough**

The word **enough** always indicates a sufficiency. Here are some examples of its use.

**There weren't enough players to form the team.**  
**We have enough oil, for now.**  
**You haven't helped me enough.**  
**Distance education offers a solution where other systems are not extensive enough.**  
**He didn't speak loudly enough.**

The adverb **enough** always follows an adjective or adverb, whereas the Catalan adverb *prou* always precedes them; eg **strong enough** (*prou fort*), **late enough** (*prou tard*).

When *prou* means certament, it is translated in English by **of course** or some similar expression, never by **enough**. Example: –*Vols més vi?* –*Prou!* “**Do you want more wine?**” “**Of course!**”.

It is good to keep in mind that *prou* is sometimes used colloquially to mean *força* or *bastant* (eg *Aquest peix és prou bo!*). In these cases English will never use **enough**, but rather **quite** or even **very** or **really** (**This fish is quite/very/really good!**).

**No, none, (not) any**

The adjectives **no** and **any** can be used to indicate a zero quantity of nouns. Their distribution is as follows.

**No** and **none** are used to indicate a zero quantity of the subject of a sentence.

**No birds have come to visit us.**  
**No women agreed.**  
**None of the women agreed.**  
**No player can win a match alone.**  
**No alcohol can be sold after 11 pm.**

(**Not**) **any** is used to indicate zero quantity of the complements of a sentence.

**We haven't found any mushrooms.**  
**They didn't send the information to any customers.**  
**They didn't buy any sugar.**



The adjective **any** is not generally used to modify singular count nouns, a case in which the indefinite article is more common. Examples:

**I don't have a car.**

**I don't want a coat.**

### **At all**

The expression **at all** is a negative emphasiser and corresponds to the Catalan *gens*, except that it is occasionally used before plural nouns. Examples:

**We don't have any bread at all.**

**It doesn't interest me at all.**

**I don't trust him at all.**

**He isn't strong at all (or He isn't at all strong).**

**It shouldn't happen to any people at all.**

## **2.4. Comparative and Superlative Adjectives (and Adverbs)**

In modern English grammar, the comparative and superlative adjective/adverbs now fall under the grammatical category of determiners. However, we are referring to them here as adjectives and adverbs because their relation to the corresponding Catalan forms is clearer.

In English, the two most important comparative and superlative adjectives (or adverbs, when they modify verbs, adjectives or other adverbs) are, respectively, **more** (*més*) and **most** (*el més*). They can be used to modify all nouns and verbs as well as the majority of adjectives and adverbs that are not monosyllabic (or bisyllabic ending in -y).

### **2.4.1. More and Most**

The use of the comparative adjective/adverb **more** to modify nouns and verbs is fairly straightforward and corresponds closely with Catalan usage. Examples:

**I have more problems than you.**

**I have more time than you.**

**I study more than you.**

However, the syntax of the superlative **most** modifying nouns and verbs is somewhat unusual. Examples:

**I have the most problems.**

**I have the most time.**

**I study the most.**

Alternative constructions such as **I am the one who has the most problems**, **I am the one who has the most time** and **I am the one who studies the most** are much less frequently used.

### 2.4.2. Fewer, Fewest, Less and Least

According to many English grammarians, the comparative **fewer** is used to modify plural nouns and **less** is used to modify singular nouns and verbs. Examples:

**I have fewer problems than you.**

**I have less time than you.**

**I study less than you.**

Unfortunately, there are many cases in which **less** is also used to modify plural nouns, especially before numerical quantifiers; eg both **less** and **fewer** can be used in the following sentence:

**Less/Fewer than ten people came to the party.**

In fact, it is much more natural to say **less than three weeks** than **fewer than three weeks**, perhaps because the expression more often refers to a single time period and not to three individual weeks.

In conclusion, it is probably best to simply follow the rule: **fewer = not as many**, **less = not as much**. But keep in mind that there can be exceptions.

As in the case of superlative **most**, constructions using **fewest** and **least** to modify nouns or verbs sound strange to Catalan ears. Examples:

**I have the fewest (or least) problems.**

**I have the least time.**

**I study the least.**

As noted in the previous section, alternative constructions such as **I am the one who has the fewest/least problems**, **I am the one who has the least time** and **I am the one who studies the least** are much less frequently used.

### 2.4.3. Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

English adjectives and adverbs form their comparative and superlative forms in two ways: monosyllabic adjectives and adverbs, and bisyllabic ones ending in -y, add the suffix -er for comparatives and -est for superlatives. Here are some common examples:

**Slow, slower, slowest**

**Happy, happier, happiest**

**Early, earlier, earliest**

Most other adjectives and adverbs form the comparative and superlative using, respectively, **more** and **most**.

**Beautiful, more beautiful, most beautiful**

**Nervously, more nervously, most nervously**

Examples:

**Your house is older than his.**

**Who has the oldest house in the town?**

**Esteve has been more successful than Toni.**

**It's been the most successful project of the year.**

**Marc runs faster than Marià.**

**Sílvia is the fastest runner on the team.**

**Sara arrived earlier than Alba.**

**My aunt and uncle always arrive the earliest.**

Adverbs derived from adjectives through the use of the -ly suffix are always compared using **more**. Examples:

**Drive more slowly (not ~~slowlier~~).**

**These children work more eagerly (not ~~eagerlier~~) than the others.**

Certain adjectives ending in -er, -le, -ow, -ure, as well as some others listed below, have the option of using both the suffixes -er and -est and the words **more** and **most**. For example, we can say both **cleverer** and **more clever**, or **nobler** and **more noble**, etc. Here are some of the most important adjectives in this group.

**Slender, simple, narrow, mature, common, cruel, quiet, handsome, remote, stupid**

Comparative adjectives can themselves be positively emphasised by preceding them with **much**, **a lot** or **far**; they can be de-emphasised by preceding them with either a little or slightly. Examples:

**He is (much/a lot/far) stronger than you.**

**You are (a little/slightly) more practical than I am.**

**She's much more intelligent (or a lot more intelligent or far more intelligent) than you.**

**It's a little colder (or slightly colder) than yesterday.**

#### 2.4.4. Irregular Comparative and Superlative Adjectives and Adverbs

Most monosyllabic English adjectives and adverbs use the -er and -est suffixes for their comparative and superlative forms (eg **big**, **bigger**, **biggest**). There are, however, exceptions and the following is a list of the most important.

**Good/well, better, best**

**Bad/badly, worse, worst**

**Many, more, most**

**Little, less, least**

**Far, farther/further, farthest/furthest**

Examples:

**Joan plays better than Robert.**

**It is designed to offer the best service possible.**

**It was the worst storm of the year.**

**They live worse than we do (or than us).**

**Sabadell is farther/further than Terrassa.**

**Which country in the world is the farthest/furthest from Catalonia?**

#### 2.4.5. Proportional Comparative Constructions

English forms its proportional comparative constructions using the expression the + comparative ..., the + comparative .... Note that the Catalan equivalent is quite dissimilar. Examples:

**The more books you read, the more confused you get** (*Com més llibres llegeixes, més et confons*).

**The more I think about it, the less I like it** (*Com més hi penso, menys m'agrada*).

**The hotter it is, the slower I go** (*Com més calor fa, més a poc a poc vaig*).

#### 2.4.6. Use of Subjective and Objective Pronouns in Comparisons

English often uses the objective form of a personal pronoun in comparisons where one might expect a nominative form. For example, it is more common to say **he is taller than me** than **he is taller than I**. The reason for this is that English does not generally like to end sentences with those personal pronouns –**I, he, she, we** and **they**– that are used exclusively as subjects. Another option, especially in formal writing, is to use an auxiliary after the final pronoun; eg **he is taller than I am**. This solution is especially suitable with certain transitive verbs; for example, **he ate more than I did** sounds better to many speakers than **he ate more than me**.

#### 2.5. Participial and Gerundial Adjectives

As is the case in Catalan, English uses participles and gerunds as adjectives. The former normally describe temporary states and the latter permanent qualities. Here are some simple examples:

**We were interested because the speech was interesting.**

**I'm surprised because the news is surprising.**

The most common use of participial adjectives in English is to describe emotional states. Here is a list of some of the most important of these adjectives.

amused bored confused convinced disappointed disgusted embarrassed depressed	excited frightened hurt interested scared surprised thrilled tired
---	---

Gerundial adjectives normally describe permanent qualities of the nouns they modify. In some cases there is a direct correspondence with Catalan gerunds.

alarming amazing depressing embarrassing exciting impending	interesting surprising relaxing shocking thrilling
--	--

In other cases, the English gerund is translated in Catalan by adjectives or even occasionally by a participle.

amusing annoying boring challenging charming confusing daring disappointing disgusting	entertaining exhausting fascinating frightening misleading pleasing promising satisfying tiring
--	---

Finally, it should be mentioned that some gerundial adjectives have meanings that are completely different to those of the verbs they are derived from.

Verb	Gerundial Adjective
act – actuar	acting – <i>interí, suplent, en funcions</i>
become – esdevenir	becoming – <i>atractiu</i>
cut – tallar	cutting – <i>mordaç, sarcàstic</i>
dash – córrer impetuosament	dashing – <i>elegant i viu</i>
drive – conduir	driving – <i>dinàmic, enèrgic</i>
engage – contractar	engaging – <i>captivador</i>
fetch – buscar	fetching – <i>atractiu</i>
miss – no encertar, perdre	missing – <i>absent</i>
move – moure, bellugar-se, traslladar	moving – <i>commovedor</i>
press – prémer	pressing – <i>urgent</i>
revolt – revoltar	revolting – <i>fastigós</i>
search – buscar	searching – <i>penetrant, minuciós</i>
try – intentar	trying – <i>difícil</i>

## 2.6. Interrogative Adjectives

In modern English grammar, the interrogative adjectives now fall under the grammatical category of determiners. However, we are referring to them here as adjectives because their relation to the corresponding Catalan forms is clearer.

For information concerning the syntax of interrogative expressions, see Sy 5.2. Non-affirmative Constructions.

### 2.6.1. The Difference between Which and What

English has three interrogative adjectives, **which**, **what** and **whose**. Both **which** and **what** are used in the same way as the Catalan *quin -a*, but there is a difference: we use **which** when the speaker considers that there is a limited choice of options and **what** when the options seem unrestricted. Here are two pairs of examples that show this difference.

**What time is it?**

**The movie shows at 7:30, 9:45 and midnight; which time do you want to go?**

**What books have you read lately?** (in general)

**Which books do you recommend?** (books concerning a specific topic)

Another way of looking at this is to say that we use **which** when we consider that we know what all the possible responses might be, and we use **what** when we have no idea what the responses might be. Compare:

**What is your address?** (The speaker has no idea what it might be.)

**Which TV channel do you watch most often?** (The speaker believes he knows what the possibilities are.)

### 2.6.2. The Interrogative Adjective Whose

Catalan has no equivalent to the English interrogative adjective **whose** and its syntax can present difficulties. The main thing to remember is that **whose** is an adjective and goes before the noun it modifies. The speaker is asking a question concerning the possessor of the object modified by **whose**. Here are some simple examples.

**Whose glass is this?**

**Whose car was it?**

**Whose paintings are those?**

**Whose cats were they?**

It is perhaps helpful to remember that the syntax of **whose** is exactly the same as that of **which** (*quin -a*). Examples:

**Which papers are these?**

**Whose papers are these?**

**Which dog weighs the most?**

**Whose dog weighs the most?**

When the complements are understood, **which**, **what** and **whose** can be used as pronouns. Examples:

(Holding two jackets) **Which is yours?**

**What is the issue?**

**Whose are they?**

### 2.6.3. Use of Which, What and Whose in Indirect Questions

The three interrogative adjectives **which**, **what** and **whose** can also be used to head indirect questions. In this case there is no inversion of subject and verb. Examples:

I don't remember which books she took.  
Do you know what time the train leaves?  
I can't tell whose dog is barking.

### 3. Determiners

In modern English grammatical terminology, determiners are considered to be words that limit or specify the nouns they modify. The most common examples are articles, demonstratives, possessives, quantifiers and other less easily classified terms such as **all**, **some** and **other**, which we will refer to as indefinites. Remember that we have classified the possessives and quantifiers as adjectives or adverbs, due to their similarity with the corresponding forms in Catalan (see sections Sy 2.2 and Sy 2.3, respectively).

#### 3.1. Articles

See section Mo 3 for the morphology of the articles.

##### 3.1.1. The Definite Article The

As is the case in Catalan, the definite article **the** always precedes the noun it modifies and indicates that it is definite and specific. However, unlike Catalan, English does not use the definite article when the reference is general and unspecific. Compare the following cases:

**The students are distributed into six groups** (a reference to some specific students).  
**Students need another kind of training** (general, unspecific reference).

When referring to time periods, English usually omits the article after the prepositions **at**, **by**, **after** and **before**, but retains it after **in** and **during**. Examples:

**At dawn, at sunrise, at noon, at sunset, at night, at midnight**  
**By day, by night**  
**After midnight, before dawn**  
**In the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening**  
**During the summer**

Exception: The article isn't used after the preposition **in** when followed by the name of a month; for example, **I was born in June**.

When referring to the immediately preceding or following week, month or year, English uses the adjectives **next** and **last**, respectively. Unlike Catalan, however, the definite article is not used. Examples:

**I saw her last week** (*La setmana passada la vaig veure*).  
**We'll buy more heating oil next month** (*Comprarem més fuel el mes vinent*).  
**You won't meet them till next year** (*No els coneixeràs fins a l'any que ve*).

There are also some common English expressions for which the article is not normally used.

**To be in bed**

**To be in jail or to go to jail**

**To be in hospital** (BrE.)

**To make breakfast, make lunch, make dinner**

### 3.1.2. The Indefinite Articles A and An

As is the case in Catalan, the indefinite articles in English are used to indicate a single but unspecified noun. Examples:

**It has a section on publication.**

**I need a new car.**

It's important to keep in mind that **a** and **an** are used only before singular nouns. In fact, English has no plural indefinite article and for this purpose uses the affirmative determiner **some** (see section Sy 3.3.2), which translates all of the following six forms: *uns, unes, algun, alguna, alguns, algunes*. Examples:

**There are some basic rules.**

**Some thoughts on digital culture.**

The distribution of the articles **a** and **an** and the adjective **one**, all translated by *un -a* in Catalan, can also cause confusion. In general, English only uses **one** when 1) the meaning is **exactly one**, not two or three; 2) when emphasising singularity or 3) when contrasting one with another. Examples:

**They've been working for an hour.**

**Give me a pound of apples.**

**Why don't you take a pill?**

**They only have one child.**

**There is only one book I really like.**

**It is a four-month course with just one lecturer.**

In negative and conditional sentences, the indefinite article is often used to modify singular count nouns, where Catalan uses *cap*:

**I don't need a prize.** (*No necessito cap premi*).

**If you make a mistake, we win.** (*Si feu cap falta, guanyem nosaltres*).

Finally, unlike Catalan, English requires the indefinite article before professions. Examples:

**Amada is a biologist.** (*L'Amada és biòloga*).

**Joan is a pilot.** (*En Joan és pilot*).

### 3.2. Demonstrative Determiners

See section Mo 3 for some comments on the pronunciation of these determiners.

The demonstrative determiner **this** and its plural **these** indicate that the noun they modify is relatively close, whereas **that** and its plural **those** refer to something further away.



Although, broadly speaking, their use is the same as their corresponding forms in Catalan (*aquest -a, aquests -es, aquell -a, aquells -es*), English tends to use **that** and **those** more frequently; specifically, anything out of reach, that is, further away than the length of one's arm, can be modified by **that**, where Catalan would be more likely to use *aquest -a*. Examples:

**This pen is mine.**  
**That watch is broken.**  
**These books are out of order.**  
**Those people look lost.**

Remember too that **this** and **that** are also pronouns and correspond to the Catalan *això* and *allò*.

### 3.3. Indefinite Determiners

#### 3.3.1. Universal Determiners

##### All

The determiner **all** indicates the total number, amount, or quantity of the noun following it. It is almost always translated by the Catalan *tot/-a/-s/-es*. Examples:

**All the windows are open.**  
**I've spent all my money.**  
**We send these emails to all our clients.**

The same constructions using **all of** (eg **all of the windows**, **all of my money**, etc.), while not incorrect, are much less usual. However, **of** must normally be used with the object pronouns **us**, **you** and **them** (eg **all of us**, **all of you**, **all of them**).

When the reference is generic, English does not use the definite article, nor is the preposition **of** possible.

**All dogs like meat.**  
**All rules have their exceptions.**

Unlike Catalan, English doesn't generally use the determiner **all** to modify singular count nouns, but rather prefers the combination **the whole** + noun (*el nom sencer*). Examples:

**I read the whole book** (better than **I read all the book**).  
**I met their whole family** (better than **I met all their family**).

An exception is made for time periods:

**I've worked all morning** (= **I've worked the whole morning**).  
**They spend all day studying** (= **They spend the whole day studying**).

Note too that the following time period expressions using **all** omit the definite article:

**All day, all morning, all afternoon, all evening, all night**

The determiner **all** can also come after a subject noun or pronoun, or after a complement pronoun (but not after a complement noun). Remember that the preposition **of** is obligatory before **us**, **you** and **them**. Examples:

**The deer all** (or **All the deer**) **started running**.  
**We all** (or **All of us**) **know you're lying**.  
**We have sold them all** (or **all of them**).  
**We have sold all the books** (not ~~...the books all~~).

Finally, the determiner **all** can precede any numeral except **two**, where the determiner **both** must be used (see the following section):

**I've taken up all four suitcases.**

### Both

The combination ~~**all two**~~ is not possible in English (see above).

The determiner **both**, relating to two in conjunction, can be used in three ways: alone, followed by **the**, or followed by the group **of the**. The first alternative is the most usual. Examples:

**Both boys are working hard** (more usual than **Both the boys...** or **Both of the boys...**).

In common with the determiner **all**, **both** can come after a subject noun or pronoun, or after a complement pronoun (but not after a complement noun). Here too, the preposition **of** must be used before the pronouns **us**, **you** and **them**.

**The boys both decided to stay home** (or **Both boys...**).  
**They both want the same thing** (or **Both of them...**).  
**I've hidden them both** (or **I've hidden both of them**).  
**Both of my brothers have been to Paris** (or **My brothers have both been to Paris**).  
**I saw you both** (or **both of you**) **last night**.  
**She made a pot of tea for both of us** (or **for us both**).

### Every, each

Both **every** and **each** are translated by the Catalan adjective *cada*, and in many cases there is little difference between the two. Examples:

**Every/Each student passed the test.**  
**We gave a present to every/each boy.**  
**I learn a little more every/each day.**

An important difference, however, is that the determiner **every** can be used generically (eg **Every gorilla is strong** = **All gorillas are strong**), whereas **each** can have only specific reference, calling attention to the members of a group as individuals. Examples:

**Every creature** (= **All creatures**) **must eat to live**.  
**Every philosopher** (= **All philosophers**) **respect Plato**.  
**Each nurse** (better than **Every nurse**) **has her own locker**.  
**We've examined each case carefully** (better than **every case**).

Another difference between **each** and **every** is that only **every** can be pre-modified:

**We danced almost every night.**

Finally, unlike **all**, **both** and **each**, the determiner **every** cannot be used as a pronoun.

### 3.3.2. Affirmative Determiners

The determiner **some** is used most often in affirmative contexts; it corresponds to the plural indefinite articles *uns*, *unes*, the adjective *algun/-a/-s/-es*, and expressions such as *una mica de*, or no determiner at all. It indicates an unspecific quantity.

**Can you fetch some chairs?**

**There are some letters for you.**

**We have some milk in the fridge.**

The determiner **some** can be used in questions, especially when the speaker anticipates or desires a positive response. Hence, **some** is commonly used when making offers. The determiner **any** (see below) is more usual in neutral questions.

**Do you have some pictures of your baby?** (The speaker believes this is probably the case.)

**Can we give you some help?** (Using **any**, **Can we give you any help?**, gives the offer a rather tentative air.)

The determiner **some** is also used when indicating a part of a whole.

**Some doctors believe it is true.**

**Some folks left early.**

Finally, in colloquial speech it can be used to express admiration or anger.

**That's some black-eye!**

**Some idiot has scratched my car!**

### 3.3.3. Non-affirmative Determiners

See also section Sy 2.3.

The non-affirmative determiners **any** and **either** are used in questions and negations and are not usually translated in Catalan. (An exception is that **any** can optionally be translated by *cap* when modifying count nouns.) They should not be confused with the elective determiners **any** and **either**, which mean, respectively, *qualsevol* and *qualsevol dels dos* (see the following section). Note also that the non-affirmative determiner **either** is only used before count nouns. Examples:

**Have you made any changes?**

**No, I haven't made any changes.**

**Have you drunk any water?**

**No, we haven't drunk any water.**

**Do you like either city?**

**No, we don't like either city.**

Unless we wish to imply that the speaker anticipates or desires a positive response (see **some**), **any** is generally the form used in questions. Examples:

**Did you have any problems?**

**Has she had any experience?**

Although **any** is generally not used before a singular count noun, where the use of the article **a/an** is more common (see Sy 3.1.2), there can be exceptions: **I haven't got any idea what they did.**

### 3.3.4. Elective Determiners

When used as elective determiners, **any** (translated in Catalan by *qualsevol*) offers an unlimited choice, whereas **either** (translated by *qualsevol dels dos*) offers a choice between two. Examples:

**Any girl can learn maths.**

**Any wine is fine with me.**

**Either road will get you there.**

The only case in which the elective **any** is used in a negative sentence is when accompanied by the adverb **just**. Note the differences between the following two pairs of sentences.

Non-affirmative **any**: **He doesn't eat any cheese** (*No menja formatge*).

Elective **any**: **He won't eat just any cheese** (*No menjarà un formatge qualsevol*).

Non-affirmative **any**: **We don't read any books** (*No llegim llibres*).

Elective **any**: **We don't read just any books** (*No llegim uns llibres qualssevol*).

### 3.3.5. Negative Determiners

See also section Sy 2.3.

The negative determiner **no** can modify both count and non-count nouns; before the former it can be translated in Catalan by *cap*, and before the latter it is untranslated. The negative determiner **neither** can modify only count nouns and is generally translated in Catalan by *cap dels dos*.

Because English generally doesn't allow a double negative, the negative determiners **no** and **neither** can only be used with affirmative verbs. When modifying complements, their meaning is equivalent to that of the non-affirmative determiners **any** and **either** (see Sy 3.3.3); for example, **we have no bananas** = **we don't have any bananas** (*no tenim plàtans*) and **he took neither pill** = **he didn't take either pill** (*no va prendre cap de les dues píndoles*). However, it is important to remember that they are the only option available when modifying the subject of a sentence; that is, we can say: **no children were admitted** (*no es va deixar entrar cap nen*) and **neither solution will be effective** (*cap de les dues solucions no serà efectiva*) but not ~~**not any children were admitted**~~ nor ~~**either solution will not be effective**~~. Examples:

**Only 21% have no previous experience.**

**No women agreed.**

**No player can win a match alone.**

**Neither car runs very well.**

**I wanted neither book in my home.**

### 3.3.6. Alternative Determiners

The alternative determiners **other** and **another** are translated in Catalan by *altre -a* and *un altre/una altra*, respectively. Their use normally presents no special problems. Examples:

His **other** works include several novels.  
Other people have the same problem.  
We still haven't seen his **other** photos.  
They called us the **other** day.  
Another key factor is investment.  
Would you like **another** glass of cider?  
Let's put it off for **another** day.

### 3.3.7. The Predeterminer Half

When the predeterminer **half** is used to modify a definite noun, it is never preceded by the definite article **the**. We mention this because its Catalan equivalent, *meitat*, is a noun that requires the article. Examples:

**Half the people** left early.  
I spend **half my time** on the phone.

Note that the expression **half of my time** is also possible and that, as is the case with **all** and **both**, the preposition **of** must precede the pronouns **us**, **you** and **them**. What's more, **of** is also necessary when **half** is itself pre-modified. Examples:

I've **only got half of them**.  
I'll be on vacation **the first half of August**.

When **half** modifies an indefinite noun it is usually followed by the indefinite article. We mention this because the Catalan equivalent in this case, *mig/mitja*, is never followed by an article. Examples:

**It took us half an hour**.  
**Unemployment in Catalonia is over half a million**.

Finally, the syntax in English for a combination of numbers and fractions is usually number + **and a half** + noun. Examples:

**Two and a half hours**  
**Three and a half kilos**

Exception: **an hour and a half**.

## 4. Pronouns

As is the case in Catalan, in English pronouns are forms that substitute nouns or noun phrases.

### 4.1. Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns in English can be nominative, objective, reflexive or possessive. We have studied the possessive pronouns along with the possessive adjectives in section Sy 2.2 and will study the reflexive pronouns along with the reciprocal pronouns in section Sy 4.6. In this section we will look at the nominative and objective personal pronouns.

#### 4.1.1. Nominative Personal Pronouns

The following table shows the English nominative pronouns and their corresponding forms in Catalan.

Nominative Pronouns		
Person	Singular	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	I ( <i>jo</i> )	we ( <i>nosaltres</i> )
2 <sup>nd</sup>	you ( <i>tu, vós, vostè</i> )	you ( <i>vosaltres, vostès</i> )
3 <sup>rd</sup>	he ( <i>ell</i> )	they ( <i>ells, elles</i> )
	she ( <i>ella</i> )	
	it ( <i>things</i> )	

Modern English doesn't distinguish between the polite and formal forms in the second person. Therefore, *tu, vosaltres, vós, vostè* and *vostès* are all translated by the **you** form.

With the exception of the imperative voice, English must always use a pronoun as subject when no other noun is mentioned. Note also that, unlike Catalan, English doesn't distinguish masculine and feminine in the third person plural. Examples:

*És aquí* – **He is here, She is here, It is here.**

*Són aquí* – **They are here.**

Except in very formal English, the nominative personal pronouns are always followed by a verb or auxiliary. Examples:

**She eats more than I do** (better than **She eats more than I**).

**You're as tired as we are** (better than **You're as tired as we**).

Remember that nominative personal pronouns are never used after prepositions. Examples:

**Come with us** (not ~~**Come with we**~~).

**Between you and me, I think he loves her** (not ~~**Between you and I**~~).

### 4.1.2. Objective Personal Pronouns

The following table shows the English objective pronouns and their corresponding forms in Catalan.

Objective Pronouns		
Person	Singular	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>me</b> ( <i>me, m', em, 'm</i> )	<b>us</b> ( <i>nos, ens, 'ns</i> )
2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>you</b> ( <i>te, t', et, 't, vos, lo, l', el, 'l, la</i> )	<b>you</b> ( <i>vos, us, els, les</i> )
3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>him</b> ( <i>lo, l', el, 'l, li</i> )	<b>them</b> ( <i>los, els, 'ls, les</i> )
	<b>her</b> ( <i>la, l', li</i> )	
	<b>it</b> ( <i>lo, l', el, 'l, la, ho</i> )	

As in the case of nominative pronouns, English doesn't distinguish between the polite and formal forms in the second person. Example:

**I love you.**

*T'estimo; us estimo (a vosaltres, a vós); l'estimo (a vostè); els estimo (a vostès).*

In colloquial English, the objective pronouns are often used as the second element in comparisons and equivalences (after than and as). Examples:

**I'm taller than her (also I'm taller than she is).**

**We don't work as hard as them (also We don't work as hard as they do).**

Remember that the objective forms must always be used after a preposition:

**He was behind her.**

**These books are for them.**

### 4.1.3. Singular They

The third person plural form **they** and its inflected forms (**them**, **their**, etc.) are often used with singular antecedents. The only acceptable singular pronoun in this context would be **he** (and its inflected forms), and this has the disadvantage of seeming to make the reference exclusively masculine. Examples:

**If anyone can't attend the meeting, they should let me know.**

**Everybody complained, but they did nothing.**

## 4.2. The Pronoun It

The principal use in English of the pronoun **it** is to refer to an antecedent that is an object or an abstraction; the other third person personal pronouns –**he**, **she**, **him**, **her**, etc.– generally

refer only to people or animals whose names are known. Remember that the third person plural pronouns –**they, them, their**, etc.– are used to refer to both people and things. Examples:

**Where did you put the bread? It's in the pantry.**  
**Did you wash my car/shirt? No, I didn't wash it.**  
**Well, shall we buy it?**  
**I hadn't noticed it.**  
**Where have you put them?**

That said, there are three other uses of **it** in which the pronoun does not refer to an antecedent.

#### 4.2.1. Anticipatory It

When the subject of a sentence is an infinitive or a relative clause, English normally introduces it with the anticipatory subject **it**. Examples:

**It's important to read the instructions carefully.**  
**It's lucky that we met.**

It's good to keep in mind that, unlike in Catalan, this construction is never used when the subject is a noun. Examples:

**It's interesting to compare the two versions.**  
**It's interesting that you mention this.**  
**This book is interesting (not It's interesting, this book:).**

#### 4.2.2. Identifying It

The pronoun **it** is used as a subject when identifying persons. Note that there is no concordance between the singular **it** and the plural complement. Examples:

**Who is there? It's me. It's John. It's us. It's John and Mary.**  
**Can you see who it is? Yes... It's her. It's Monica. It's them. It's Pere and Monica.**  
**I would have sworn it was you.**

#### 4.2.3. It Referring to Time, Weather and Distance

The pronoun **it** is also used as a subject when referring to time, weather conditions and distance. Examples:

Time

**It's two-thirty. It's later than you think.**  
**What day's today? It's Thursday. What's the date? It's the third of May.**

Weather conditions

**It's sunny. It's foggy. It's windy. It's hot/warm/cool/chilly/cold.**  
**It's nice (out). It's 40 degrees below zero.**



Distance

It's forty-eight hundred kilometres from New York to LA.

How far is their house from here? It's about two hundred yards.

### 4.3. Interrogative Pronouns

The interrogative pronouns **who** and **whom** refer to persons, and the interrogative pronoun **what** refers to objects or abstractions. The syntax for **who** and **what** is the same and depends on their grammatical role, whereas in modern English **whom** is rarely seen except following a preposition.

All three of these interrogative pronouns can also be used as relative pronouns (see section Sy 4.4.3).

#### 4.3.1. Who and What as Subjects

When **who** or **what** are the subjects of the sentence, the syntax is simply subject + verb. The pronoun **whom** is never used as a subject. Examples:

**Who came?**

**What happened?**

**Who has followed the tourists?**

**What caused the gas leak?**

#### 4.3.2. Who and What as Direct Objects

When **who** or **what** are the direct objects of the sentence, the syntax is **who/what** + auxiliary + subject + verb (for more details concerning interrogative constructions, see section Sy 5.4). Examples:

**Who do you love?**

**What did you do?**

**Who have the tourists followed?**

**What did the gas leak cause?**

In very formal English, **who** is substituted by **whom** (**whom do you love?**). This construction is, however, no longer idiomatic.

#### 4.3.3. Who and What as Prepositional Objects

When **who** or **what** are the prepositional objects of the sentence, there are two possible syntaxes, one very formal and the other more usual. In the formal syntax, **who** is substituted by **whom**; usually, however, the sentence is restructured with the preposition following the verb or its complement, if there is one. Here are the two syntaxes.

More usual: **who/what** + auxiliary + subject + verb [+ complements] + prep.

Very formal: prep. + **who/what** + auxiliary + subject + verb

Examples:

**Who did you dance with?** (Very formal: **With whom did you dance?**)

**What are they talking about?** (Very formal: **About what are they talking?**)

**Who are you referring to?** (Very formal: **To whom are you referring?**)

**What does it depend on?** (Very formal: **On what does it depend?**)

The interrogative pronoun **who** can also be used as an indirect object. In this case also, the prepositions **to** and **for** are placed at the end of the expression. Examples:

**Who did you give the money to?** (Very formal: **Whom did you give...**)

**Who have you bought those clothes for?** (Very formal: **Whom have you bought...**)

Finally, for the use of **who**, **whom** and **what** as relative pronouns, see section Sy 5.5.

#### 4.4. Relative Pronouns

The relative pronouns in English can be divided into those that act as adjectives and, less commonly, those that act as nouns. The former always have an antecedent, whereas the latter often don't. Here is an example of each.

Adjectival: **She's the girl who cuts my hair** (*És la noia que em talla els cabells*).

The adjectival relative pronoun **who** has **the girl** as an antecedent.

Nominal: **What I want is a watch** (*El que vull és un rellotge*).

The nominal relative pronoun **what** has no antecedent.

In this chapter we'll also give examples of interrogative pronouns and adverbs used as relatives.

##### 4.4.1. Adjectival Relative Pronouns

The choice of adjectival relative pronouns depends first of all on whether the pronoun is restrictive or non-restrictive. A restrictive relative pronoun defines its antecedent and a non-restrictive relative pronoun simply gives us more information about it. Examples:

Restrictive: **The man who sells peanuts is here.**

The relative clause **who sells peanuts** tells us who the man is.

Non-restrictive: **My father, who sells peanuts, is here.**

The relative clause **who sells peanuts** merely gives us more information about **my father**; in saying **my father**, we know who he is.

Note that non-restrictive relative clauses are always set off with commas.

The choice of relative pronouns also depends on the grammatical category of the pronoun and on whether the pronoun reference is human or non-human.

We will organise this section on adjectival relative pronouns according to the grammatical function of the relative pronoun within the subordinate clause it heads.

### Adjectival relative pronouns as subject or direct object

The most common use of relative pronouns is as the subject or direct object of the subordinate clause. Here is a brief summary.

The human restrictive pronoun is generally **who**, though **that** is sometimes used. It is required when the pronoun is the subject, but usually omitted when the pronoun is the direct object.

The non-human restrictive pronoun is generally **that**, though **which** is sometimes used. It is always required when the pronoun is the subject, but usually omitted when the pronoun is the direct object.

The human non-restrictive pronoun is always required and is always **who**, though **whom** can be used in very formal English.

The non-human non-restrictive pronoun is always required and is always **which**.

### Relative pronoun as subject

Human, restrictive:

**The girl who cuts my hair is named Dolores.**

Human, non-restrictive:

**Gemma's boyfriend, who just bought himself a new car, wants us all to come over and see it.**

Non-human, restrictive:

**The fog that covered the valley soon burned off.**

Non-human, non-restrictive:

**The Space Needle, which was constructed in 1962, is symbolic of Seattle.**

Although the use of **that** when referring to humans in restrictive clauses is common, many stylists discourage its use. An exception, however, is made when the antecedent is a superlative:

**He's the best midfielder that (better than who) has ever played for Barcelona.**

Although the pronoun **which** is often used in restrictive clauses, such a use can often produce unintended ambiguities; it is safer to use **that**. An exception is when the speaker prefers to avoid a repetition of the word **that**:

**Last night we saw that play which has been causing all the controversy.**

### Relative pronoun as direct object

Human, restrictive:

**The girl Ø we met last night is named Glòria.**

Human, non-restrictive:

**The fisherman, who we saw fall off his boat, is now suffering from hypothermia.**

Non-human, restrictive:

**The bananas Ø you bought this morning are too ripe.**

Non-human, non-restrictive:

**Our groceries, which we had just bought, ended up all over the street.**

### Adjectival relative pronouns as prepositional objects

When adjectival relative pronouns, both human and non-human, are prepositional objects, English can construct the sentence in various manners. When the pronoun comes after a preposition, in both restrictive and non-restrictive cases, the pronouns must always be **whom** and **which**. However, in common use English often prefers to shift the preposition to the end of the clause. Here are some examples of all these uses:

For human reference in restrictive clauses, the pronouns can be either **who** or **that**, or eliminated:

Very formal: **They are the children with whom Jaume used to play.**

Less formal: **They are the children who/that Jaume used to play with.**

Most usual: **They are the children Ø Jaume used to play with.**

For non-human reference in restrictive clauses, the pronouns can be either **that** or **which**, or can be eliminated:

Very formal: **These are the tools with which we repair skis.**

Less formal: **These are the tools that/which we repair skis with.**

Most usual: **These are the tools Ø we repair skis with.**

For human reference in non-restrictive clauses, the pronouns can be either **whom** or **who**, but their presence is always necessary.

Very formal: **Our children, on whom we depend, are very generous.**

Most usual: **Our children, who we depend on, are very generous.**

For **non-human** reference in non-restrictive clauses, the pronoun can only be **which**; it is always necessary.

Very formal: **Our house, in which we'd lived for ten years, was completely destroyed.**

Most usual: **Our house, which we'd lived in for ten years, was completely destroyed.**

### Adjectival relative pronouns as genitives

In genitive contexts, English uses the form **whose** for both restrictive and non-restrictive, and both human and non-human reference. For non-human reference, some stylists prefer the structure noun + **of which**. Examples:

**Today I met a man whose wife works with your daughter.**

**Do you see that old car whose tyres (or the tyres of which) are all flat?**

**This is Alba, whose sister you already know.**

**We passed by the Royal Palace, whose roof (or the roof of which) had been damaged in the bombing.**

### Adjectival relative pronouns as adverbials

There is one important adverbial relative pronoun, **where**, and two of lesser importance, **when** and **why**. The use of the latter is generally optional. Examples:

**It is the shop where we buy all our books.**

**Let's meet at Cal Ramon, where the beer is cold and the food is hot.**

**That was the year (when) we met.**

**That's the reason (why) I did it.**

#### **When the antecedent is a clause**

A special case is when the relative pronoun refers to a clause. In this case, English always uses **which**. Example:

**He had locked the door to the men's room, which we discovered too late.**

#### **4.4.2. Nominal Relative Pronouns**

The proper use of nominal relative pronouns can be complicated. We will begin with a look at personal relative pronouns, distinguishing those with specific reference from those with non-specific reference. In the second section, we will study non-personal relative pronouns, again distinguishing those with specific reference from those with non-specific reference, but also, in the case of the specific non-personal pronouns, distinguishing definite and non-definite reference.

##### **Personal nominal relative pronouns**

The specific personal nominal relative pronouns are **who**, **the one(s)**, or **the one(s) who**. When the reference is non-specific we use **whoever** or, more rarely, **whomever**. The difference between **the one(s)** and **the one(s) who** is that the former is used when the pronoun is a complement and the latter when it is the subject.

Note that **who** is never used as the subject of an affirmative sentence; we must use either **the one(s) who** (specific) or **whoever** (non-specific).

Specific reference (when referring to specific persons, not just anybody):

Subject: **The ones who stayed to help are heroes.**

Subject: **He is the one who created these characters.**

Direct object: **I saw who (or the one) you were helping.**

Indirect object: **The song is dedicated to the ones we love.**

Non-specific reference (when referring to anybody):

Subject: **Whoever said that is a liar.**

Subject: **Whoever wins will have our support.**

Direct object: **Whoever you marry had better know how to cook.**

Indirect object: **Whoever you sent fliers to, it wasn't me.**

##### **Impersonal nominal relative pronouns**

The specific impersonal nominal relative pronouns are **the one(s) [that]**, when the reference is definite, and **what** when the reference is indefinite. When the reference is non-specific we use either **whatever** or **whichever**, the latter when the speaker considers that there is a limited choice of options. These forms are not affected by grammatical category.

As for the difference between **the one(s) [that]** and **what**, though both are translated by the Catalan *el que*, the former corresponds to the expression *aquell que* (and variants), whereas the latter corresponds to *allò que*.

Specific reference (when referring to specific objects or abstractions):

Definite: **These books are last year's and the ones on the shelves are new.**

Definite: **Do you want to wear this shirt or the one you wore yesterday?**

Indefinite: **You'll never guess what happened last night!**

Indefinite: **What he says and what he does are two different things.**

Non-specific reference (when referring to things in general):

**Whatever you want you can have.**

**I took whatever they gave me.**

**Whatever you did, it was wrong.**

**There are three coats in the closet; take whichever you like.**

#### 4.4.3. Interrogative Pronouns and Adverbs Used as Relatives

All the interrogative pronouns (see Sy 4.3) and adverbs (see Sy 6.7) can be used as relatives. Remember that, in these cases, there is no inversion of subject and verb. Examples:

**He wouldn't admit where he had gone.**

**She asked him when he could start.**

**I've found out why they were in such a bad mood.**

**Did you see how he scored that goal?**

**I wonder who she's loving now.**

**I can't remember which train we're supposed to take.**

**She wouldn't tell me what the problem was.**

#### 4.5. Indefinite Pronouns (and Adverbs)

Indefinite pronouns refer to one or more unspecified persons or things, and indefinite adverbs to an unspecified place.

See also section Sy 3.3. Indefinite Determiners.

The personal indefinite pronouns ending in the suffixes **-one** or **-body** are completely synonymous.

The indefinite adverbs ending in **-place** are informal alternatives to the **-where** adverbs. They are most often found in American speech and generally not used in formal writing.

Because English does not usually allow double negations, non-affirmative pronouns and adverbs are used in a negative sense when the verb is negated. Compare:

**I did not see anyone, but not ~~I didn't see no one.~~**

(In this example, **I saw no one** is also possible.)

**I did not send it to anyone, but not ~~I did not send it to no one.~~**

(In this example, **I sent it to no one**, while possible, is quite unusual.)

**We haven't gone anywhere, but not ~~We haven't gone nowhere.~~**

(In this example, **We have gone nowhere**, while possible, is quite unusual.)

Non-affirmative pronouns cannot be used as the subject of negative sentences:

**No one** came, but not ~~Anyone did not come.~~

When expressing possession, the indefinite personal pronouns use the Saxon genitive:

**Someone's** coat is lying out on the lawn.

**It was nobody's** fault.

Adjectives are placed after all the indefinite pronouns:

**Everything** available

**Someone** interesting

**Nothing** major

The adverb **else** is positioned after the indefinite pronoun with the meaning of **other** or **more** (we'll offer examples in the relevant sections). Note too that these forms also take the Saxon genitive.

**Everyone** else

**Everything** else

**Someone** else

**Nobody** else

**Someone else's** problem

**Nobody else's** business

#### 4.5.1. Universal Indefinite Pronouns

The English universal indefinite pronouns are **everybody/everyone** (*tothom* or *cadascú*) and **everything** (*tot* [*totes les coses*]), and the universal indefinite adverb is **everywhere** (*per tot arreu*). Remember that **everybody** and **everyone**, in spite of their plural reference, are singular and take a singular verb (as does *tothom*). Note also that when the Catalan *tot* is used as a pronoun, it is generally translated by **everything** and not **all**. Finally, it is common to use the plural possessive forms **their** and **theirs** with the singular antecedents **everybody** and **everything**. Examples:

**Everybody** is free to have **their** own opinion.

**Everyone's** vote counts.

**Everyone** else has gone home.

**Everything** is happening too fast (not ~~All is happening...~~).

**Thanks** for **everything**.

**We** had to sell **everything**.

**His** chair was spotless; **everything** else was covered with dust.

**I've** looked **everywhere** but can't find the money.

**Nowadays** you find McDonald's restaurants **everywhere**.

#### 4.5.2. Affirmative Indefinite Pronouns

The English affirmative indefinite pronouns are **somebody/someone** (*algú*) and **something** (*alguna cosa*), and the adverb is **somewhere** (*algun lloc*). These are used not only in affirmations, but also in questions when the speaker anticipates or desires a positive response. Examples:

Someone has left this package for you.  
I saw someone taking pictures of your house.  
Has someone been bothering you? (The speaker thinks this is likely.)  
I must be drinking someone else's coffee.  
There's something the matter with my computer.  
I want to tell you something very important.  
Would you like something to eat? (The speaker hopes you'll say yes.)  
Let's go somewhere quiet and talk.

Keep in mind that, in certain contexts, **somebody** can mean **someone important**.

Because he won the award now he really thinks he's **somebody**.

#### 4.5.3. Non-affirmative Indefinite Pronouns

The English non-affirmative indefinite pronouns **anybody/anyone** and **anything**, and the adverb **anywhere** have three meanings in English. First of all, when used with a negative verb, they correspond, respectively, to the Catalan *ningú, res* and *enlloc* or *cap lloc*. We will indicate the cases in which the expression can be restated with an affirmative verb and a negative pronoun or adverb. Examples:

I haven't seen anyone yet. I haven't seen anyone else.  
(Or I have seen no one. I have seen no one else.)  
We don't want to depend on anybody.  
We don't need anyone else's help. (Unusual: We will need no one else's help).  
We haven't taken anything. (Or We have taken nothing.)  
Anything else?  
It didn't say anywhere that we had to pay.  
I don't want to go anywhere.

Secondly, this group of non-affirmative pronouns can correspond to the Catalan *qualsevol persona, qualsevol cosa* or *qualsevol lloc*. Examples:

Anybody can look you up on the internet.  
"What do you want for dinner?" "Anything is fine with me."  
You can find love anywhere.

Although sentences of this type are nearly always affirmative, an exception is the phrase **just + non-affirmative**:

I won't go out with just anyone.  
A rational person doesn't believe just anything.  
Cats won't do their business just anywhere.

Finally, in conditional and interrogative sentences, the English non-affirmatives correspond to the Catalan indefinite pronouns *algú, alguna cosa, algun lloc, ningú, res* and *enlloc*. Remember that in these cases the affirmatives **someone/somebody**, **something** and **somewhere** are used when the speaker desires or anticipates an affirmative response. Examples:

Has anybody seen my keys?  
If anyone calls, I'm out.  
Did he suspect anything?



If you break anything, you'll have to pay for it!  
 I never go anywhere without my cell phone.  
 If I see your friends anywhere, I'll let you know

#### 4.5.4. Negative Indefinite Pronouns

The English negative indefinite pronouns are **nobody/no one** (*ningú*), **nothing** (*res*) and **none** (*cap*), and the adverb is **nowhere** (*enlloc*). Moreover, the indefinite determiner **neither** (*cap dels dos*) can also be used as a pronoun. These pronouns are most often used as the subjects of sentences, though they can be used as complements if the verb is affirmative (see the previous section). Examples:

**No one** came.  
**Nothing** has changed.  
**None** of the solutions was/were successful.  
**There** was nowhere to hide.  
**Neither** of them liked the show.

#### 4.5.5. Other Indefinite Pronouns

The indefinite determiners the **other** (*l'altre*), **another** (*un altre*) and **either** (*qualsevol dels dos*) can also be used as indefinite pronouns. What's more, the pronoun **one** can be considered an indefinite in certain contexts. Examples:

**One** girl was willing to help us, but the other wasn't.  
 Those cookies are great! Can I have **another**?  
 Which movie do you want to see? **Either** is fine.  
**One** twin's eyes were blue, but the other's were brown.  
 They are both attractive; I can't decide between one and the other.

### 4.6. Reflexive and Reciprocal Pronouns

#### 4.6.1. Reflexive Pronouns

Here is a table showing the nine English reflexive pronouns.

Reflexive Pronouns	
Singular	Plural
myself	ourselves
yourself	yourselves
himself	themselves
herself	
itself	
oneself	

Note that the suffix **-self** is pluralised in **-selves** for the three plural reflexive pronouns.

There are three main uses for the reflexive pronouns in English.

As a complement, when the action of a transitive verb falls on the subject itself.

As an emphasiser.

Forming part of certain reflexive verbs.

### Reflexive pronouns as complements

The use of reflexive pronouns is obligatory when their antecedent is the subject of the sentence. They can be used as direct objects, indirect objects and prepositional objects. Examples:

**Last night I saw myself on TV.**

**Have you hurt yourself?**

**The rabbit freed itself from the trap.**

**He has bought himself a new watch.**

**We should depend on ourselves and not others.**

Exceptions: When referring back to an antecedent that is the subject, English will use an objective pronoun after a preposition if the reference could only be to that person. For example, we say **I'm taking the dog with me** (and not ~~with myself~~) because it would be impossible to take the dog with anyone other than myself. I certainly couldn't take the dog with you or with him. On the other hand, we say **I'm angry with myself** (not ~~with me~~) because it's possible for me to be angry with someone else.

In certain dialects, the reflexive pronouns are sometimes used even when not referring back to the subject; this generally occurs after the prepositions like, but and except, and also in compound sentences. For example, **Like myself, he married young** or **Either John or myself will help you**.

### Reflexive pronouns as emphasisers

Reflexive pronouns are also used to emphasise their antecedents. When referring to the subject, they usually come at the end of the sentence (though they can come directly after the subject) and when referring to a complement, they must come directly after it. Examples:

**I'll take care of it myself** (less usual: **I myself will take care of it**).

**We've picked these mushrooms ourselves** (less usual: **We ourselves have...**).

**In New York we saw Bob Dylan himself.**

### Reflexive pronouns forming part of reflexive verbs

Unlike in Catalan, reflexive verbs are rather uncommon in English. That said, there are a few verbs for which the inclusion of the reflexive pronoun **oneself** is generally felt necessary. Here is a list of the most important of these verbs.

**Demean oneself**

**Enjoy oneself**

**Ingratiate oneself (with)**

**Perjure oneself**

**Pride oneself (on)**

#### 4.6.2. Reciprocal Pronouns

As is the case in Catalan, reciprocal pronouns are used when two people or things are both the agents and the objects of the action of the verb. The two reciprocal pronouns in English are compound: they are **each other**, which is most often used when there are only two persons or things involved, and **one another**, which is used when referring to three or more. Examples:

**Jordi and Marta love each other very much.**  
**We haven't seen each other for months.**  
**We were placed on earth to love one another.**  
**All lawyers trust one another.**

When used as prepositional objects, the preposition must go before the compound pronoun, never between the two elements. Examples:

**They are getting tired of each other.**  
**The twins are often confused with one another.**

Note that both *each other* and *one another* can take the Saxon genitive.

**John and Mary cut each other's hair.**  
**The children were playing with one another's toys.**

#### 4.7. Translation of the Catalan Pronouns *ho*, *en* and *hi*

The translation in English of the Catalan weak pronouns *ho*, *en* and *hi* depends on the grammatical role they play. Moreover, in nearly all contexts, the translation can be either obligatory, optional or null.

Although a complete study of these pronouns falls outside the scope of this work, we will try to touch upon the most important issues concerning these pronouns and their relationship to English.

Broadly speaking, these pronouns are used to avoid the repetition of a noun, an adjective, a syntagma, etc. They are especially frequent in conversation. For example:

–*És molt intel·ligent* –No ho és pas!  
–*Tindràs pa?* –Sí que en tindré.  
–*Vas mai amb pantalons curts?* –Sí que hi vaig sovint.

It often happens that English will use other means, especially auxiliary verbs, to express the same ideas. For example, the translation in English of the previous three uses of the Catalan pronouns might well be “No, he isn't!”, “Yes, I will” and “Yes, I often do”.

##### 4.7.1. Translation of the Catalan Pronoun *ho*

The Catalan weak pronoun *ho* can represent either the direct object of the sentence –eg *Qui ha portat això? Qui ho ha portat?*– or the subject complement –eg *L'un és dolent i l'altre també ho és; Ets músic? Sí que ho sóc.*

### **Ho as direct object**

The pronoun *ho* can represent three kinds of direct objects: a non-specific noun, a subordinate clause or an infinitive clause.

#### **Ho representing a non-specific noun**

In the first case, *ho* is almost always translated by **it**. Examples:

*Ahir ho vaig fer.*

**I did it yesterday.**

*Dimarts ho acabarem.*

**We're going to finish it Tuesday.**

*Ho he tret d'en Toni.*

**I got it from Toni.**

#### **Ho representing a subordinate clause**

When *ho* represents a subordinate clause, it can be translated by either **it**, on the one hand, or **so** or **not**, on the other, depending on the verb. The former case is by far the most frequent, and here are some examples in which *ho*, representing a subordinate, is translated by **it**.

*He descobert que els coneixen; ho he descobert.*

**I've learned that they know them; I've learned it.**

*Garanteixo que arribarà puntualment; ho garanteixo.*

**I guarantee he'll be on time; I guarantee it.**

*El sospitos va jurar que no havia robat res; ho va jurar.*

**The suspect swore that he hadn't stolen anything; he swore it.**

The weak pronoun *ho* can be translated by **so** (or **not** in negative statements) in the case of the verbs **say** and **tell**, and certain other verbs that express opinions or speculations. Here is a list of the most important verbs of this class.

#### **Verbs That Accept So Or Not Representing A Subordinate Clause Complement**

assume  
be afraid  
believe  
expect  
guess  
hope  
imagine

presume  
say  
suppose  
suspect  
tell  
think

Examples:

*Espero que se'n recordi; ho espero.*

**I hope she remembers; I hope so.**

*M'imagino que no saben què dir-li; m'ho imagino.*

**I imagine they don't know what to tell him; I imagine not.**

*Penso que això els agafarà per sorpresa; ho penso.*

**I think this is going to take them by surprise; I think so.**

*Suposo que véns per cobrar; ho suposo.*

**I suppose you've come to get paid; I suppose so.**

*Tothom diu que fracassarà; tothom ho diu.*

**Everybody says he'll fail; everybody says so.**

Finally, there are certain verbs for which English omits the complement. For example, in Catalan we say *Ja ho sé*, whereas in English it's **I know** (more usual than **I know it**). In the case of some ditransitive verbs (verbs that accept an indirect object), English converts the indirect object pronoun into a direct object, omitting the original direct object; for example, *M'ho van dir* is translated **They told me** (more usual than **They told it to me**). We can confirm that the pronoun **me** is now the direct object because the passive construction, **I was told**, is perfectly correct. The following is a list of the most important verbs in this class; the asterisk marks those verbs that convert a personal indirect object into a direct object.

Verbs That Don't Translate <i>Ho</i> Representing A Subordinate Clause Complement	
forget	remember
*guarantee	*show
guess	*teach
hear	*tell
imagine	understand
notice	wonder
*promise	

Examples:

*Has fet el que t'he demanat? No, ho he oblidat.*

**Have you done what I asked? No, I forgot.**

*No sabeu què tinc a les mans? Doncs endevineu-ho!*

**Don't you know what I've got in my hands? Well, guess!**

*Heu sentit que s'apujaran els preus? Sí, ho hem sentit.*

**Have you heard that prices are going up? Yes, we've heard.**

*Que no anem a la platja? Però si ens ho vas prometre!*

**We're not going to the beach? But you promised us!**

*Ens han mostrat on podíem fer càmping; ens ho han mostrat.*

**They showed us where we could camp; they showed us.**

### ***Ho* representing an infinitive clause**

When the pronoun *ho* represents an infinitive clause, it is translated by **to** if the corresponding English verb accepts an infinitive as complement, and by **it** if the corresponding English verb accepts a gerund as complement. What's more, depending on the verb, this translation can be either obligatory or optional.

Here is a list of English verbs that accept an infinitive as complement and use the particle **to** to substitute for it. An asterisk marks those verbs for which the presence of **to** is obligatory.

Verbs That Accept Infinitives As Complements	
ask	*need
decide	pretend
*expect	promise
*hope	*want
manage	

Examples:

*Ha demanat de venir amb nosaltres; ho ha demanat.*

**He's asked to come with us; he's asked (to).**

*Espero acabar la feina avui; ho espero.*

**I expect/hope to finish the work today; I expect/hope to.**

*Fingien de treballar; ho fingien.*

**They were pretending to work; they were pretending (to).**

*Volem treballar de nit. Nosaltres també ho volem.*

**We want to work at night. We also want to.**

Here is a list of English verbs that accept a gerund as complement and use the pronoun *it* to substitute for it. An asterisk marks those verbs for which the presence of *it* is obligatory. Note that the verb **quit** is an exception.

Verbs that accept gerunds as complements	
*admit	*deny
*avoid	*miss
*can't stand	practice
confess	quit [ <i>ho</i> not translated]
*consider	*regret

Examples:

*Evitem conduir de nit; ho evitem.*

**We avoid driving at night; we avoid it.**

*No puc suportar de fer cua; no ho puc suportar.*

**I can't stand queuing; I can't stand it.**

*Va negar haver vist res d'estrany; ho va negar.*

**He denied seeing anything strange; he denied it.**

*Va deixar de fumar; va deixar de fer-ho.*

**He quit smoking; he quit.**

### ***Ho* as subject complement**

Broadly speaking, when used as a subject complement, the weak pronoun *ho* is only translated into English when it refers to an adjective or a non-specific noun. The copulative verbs used before subject complements are **be** (*ser*, *estar*), and **seem**, **appear** and **look**

(*semblar, aparentar, parèixer*). The translation of the pronoun *ho* depends on both the verb itself and the part of speech represented by *ho*; the following table shows this relationship (null means it is not translated; look cannot take a noun complement).

Translation of <i>Ho</i> When Representing A Subject Complement			
Part of Speech	Be	Seem, Appear	Look
Adjective	null/so	so	null
Noun	null	so	–

Examples:

*La Lúdia és alta i la seva germana encara ho és més.*

**Lidia is tall and her sister is even more so.**

*És canadenc, però la seva mare no ho és.*

**He's a Canadian but his mother isn't.**

*Sembla una bona idea; sí que ho sembla.*

**It seems (to be) a good idea; yes, it seems so.**

*Aquestes dues línies semblen paral·leles. A mi no m'ho semblen pas.*

**Those two lines appear/seem (to be) parallel. They don't appear/seem so to me.**

*Ell sembla cansat, però ella no ho sembla gens.*

**He looks tired but she doesn't at all.**

Finally, the Catalan construction noun + *també ho* + verb is translated in English by the expression **so** + auxiliary + noun. Examples:

*La Laura sembla cansada i la Marta també ho sembla.*

**Laura seems/appears/looks tired and so does Marta.**

*L'un és dolent i l'altre també ho és.*

**One is bad and so is the other.**

#### 4.7.2. Translation of the Catalan Pronoun *En*

The Catalan weak pronoun *en* can represent either the direct object of the sentence –eg *Us agrada el vi? Doncs beveu-ne!*–; a prepositional object –eg *En tinc cura (d'una àvia)*; a noun complement –eg *Dels nostres amics, cal apreciar-ne les qualitats*–, or an adverbial complement: eg *En vénen ara, del jardí*. We will therefore divide this chapter into four sections, corresponding to these four uses.

##### *En* as direct object

Broadly speaking, the translation in English of the weak pronoun *en* representing the direct object depends on whether it is accompanied by an adjective. In this case it is usually not translated, though it can be translated **of it**, for non-count nouns, or **of them** for count nouns. Examples:

*–Tenim tomàquets? –Sí, en tenim tres.*

**“Do we have any tomatoes?” “Yes, we have three (of them).”**

–Voleu bitllets? –Sí, compra'n tres (indeterminate antecedent: bitllets).

**“Do you want tickets?” “Yes, buy three (of them).”**

*No en vull gaires. No en volia gaire.*

**I don't want many (of them). I didn't want much (of it).**

*Si no t'agraden aquests mocadors, tria'n uns altres.*

**If you don't like these handkerchiefs, choose some others.**

When the weak pronoun *en*, representing the direct object, is not accompanied by an adjective, it is usually translated **some**. Examples:

*Tens pomes? Doncs, porta-me'n.*

**Do you have (any) apples? Then bring me some.**

*El vi era molt bo i per això n'he begut.*

**The wine was really good and so I drank some.**

A special case is the Catalan construction *en* + verb + *de* + adjective. Examples:

*Camises? En tenim de molt maques.*

**Shirts? We have some really pretty ones.**

*Trobaràs capsas petites i també en trobaràs de grosses.*

**You'll find (some) little boxes and you'll also find (some) big ones.**

*Val més que en compres un de nou.*

**You'd better buy a new one.**

### ***En* as prepositional object**

The most important use of the pronoun *en* as a prepositional object is accompanying those verbs that require the preposition *de* before the complement, verbs such as *queixar-se* and *enamorar-se*. For example, *Es va queixar de la calor*; *se'n va queixar* and *M'enamoro d'ella*; *me n'enamoro*. These expressions are usually translated in English by the combination preposition + pronoun, which is logical if we consider that the meaning of *en* in these cases is *d'això* and *d'ella*, respectively. Hence: **He complained about the heat; he complained about it** and **I'm falling in love with her; I'm falling in love with her**. Note that in the second example, the two sentences come out the same. Note too that there is often a discrepancy between the Catalan and English prepositions (eg *enamorar-se de* = **fall in love with**).

Here are some examples in which the pronoun *en* can be translated in English by the combination preposition + pronoun.

*Parlem-ne.*

**Let's talk about it.**

*És molt innocent, aquest noi; sempre se'n riuen.*

**That boy is really naïve; they're always laughing at him.**

*Al principi m'agradava aquesta cervesa, però ara me n'he cansat.*

**At first I liked this beer, but now I've got tired of it.**

*És un cap de pardals; un no se'n pot refiar.*

**He's a scatterbrain; you can't rely on him.**

We should mention too that there is another group of Catalan verbs that require *de* before their complements, and that are translated in English by transitive verbs. In these cases, *en* is translated simply by a pronoun. Examples:



*L'Imma és una mica perillosa; no te'n fiïs.*  
**Imma is a little dangerous; don't trust her.**  
*Parlava sense pensar i ara me'n penedeixo.*  
**I spoke without thinking and now I regret it.**

### **En as noun complement**

When the pronoun *en* is used as a noun complement, it generally refers to an element pertaining to another. As such, it is usually translated in English by some kind of possessive. Examples:

*Hem d'analitzar l'afer i esbrinar-ne les conseqüències.*  
**We have to analyse the affair and discover its consequences.**  
*No hauríem de criticar massa els nostres amics; cal apreciar-ne les qualitats.*  
**We shouldn't criticise our friends too severely; we need to appreciate their good qualities.**

### **En as an adverbial complement**

When the pronoun *en* refers to an adverb complement, it is usually one of origin; it can be translated by the expression **from** + place or simply be omitted.

*No vénen de Mollerussa, aquestes cireres? Sí que en vénen.*  
**Don't those cherries come from Mollerussa? Yes, they come from there.**  
*Quan nosaltres entrem a classe, ells en surten.*  
**When we go into class, they're coming out.**

## **4.7.3. Translation of the Catalan Pronoun *Hi***

The two most important uses of the Catalan weak pronoun *hi* are as a prepositional object –eg *No hi pensis més*– and as a place adverb: *Hi vaig (allà) cada dia*.

### ***Hi* as prepositional object**

The most important use of the pronoun *hi* as a prepositional object is accompanying those verbs that use a preposition other than *de* before the complement, verbs such as *acostumar-se* and *somiar*. For example, *No li agrada la calor però s'hi acostumarà* and *Estic obsessionat amb el tema i fins i tot hi somio*. These expressions are usually translated in English by the combination preposition + pronoun, which is logical if we consider that the meaning of *hi* in these cases is *a la calor* and *amb el tema*, respectively. Hence: **He doesn't like the heat but he'll get used to it** and **I'm obsessed with the subject and I even dream about it**. Note that there is often a discrepancy between the Catalan and English prepositions (eg *somiar amb* = **dream about**).

Here are some examples in which the pronoun *hi* can be translated in English by the combination preposition + pronoun.

*No oblida pas la Maria; sempre hi pensa.*  
**He can't forget Maria; he's always thinking of/about her.**  
*Penses massa en els teus problemes; no hi pensis tant.*  
**You think too much about your problems; don't think about them so much**  
*La Maria? No hi comptis pas!*  
**Maria? Don't count on her!**

We should mention too that there is another group of Catalan verbs that require prepositions other than *de* before their complements, which are translated in English by transitive verbs. In these cases, *hi* is translated simply by a pronoun. Examples:

*No estic d'acord amb la proposta i m'hi oposaré.*

**I don't agree with the proposal and I'm going to oppose it.**

*Vols jugar a escacs? –D'acord, però no hi he jugat mai.*

**"Would you like to play chess?" "OK, but I've never played it before."**

*Aquell gos és perillós, no t'hi acostis.*

**That dog is dangerous, don't approach it.**

*És molt bonica i m'hi vull casar.*

**She's very beautiful and I want to marry her.**

### ***Hi* as place adverb**

*Hi* is often used to represent 'there' when referring to place. It is commonly not required when translated into English. For example:

*Anem-hi.*

**Let's go (there).**

*N'hi tenen alguns.*

**They have some (there).**

## **5. Verbs**

### **5.1. Verb Tenses**

In English there are eight indicative verb tenses and two subjunctive ones, as can be seen in the following table.

Indicative Tenses	
simple present	present perfect
present continuous	present perfect continuous
simple past	past perfect
past continuous	past perfect continuous

  

Subjunctive Tenses	
present subjunctive	past subjunctive

Note that English does not really have a future or conditional tense as such. Although some authorities have cited the compound forms **will + simple infinitive** and **would + simple infinitive** as the future and conditional tenses, respectively, this denomination is unsatisfactory because, on the one hand, the future in English is more often expressed using expressions other than the **will** form (see section Sy 5.1.6 Future) and, on the other, the **would** form is also used in non-conditional contexts.

### 5.1.1. Simple Present and Present Continuous

#### Simple present

The simple present tense is formed using the bare infinitive for all persons except the third person singular, which must use the -s form (this is, in fact, the only use made of this form). The simple present is used in the following cases.

To express habitual or repetitive actions.

**I work in Girona.**

**Jon smokes too much.**

**In our house the men wash the dishes.**

To express general truths.

**Mice fear cats.**

**Beginnings are difficult.**

**The universe forms a harmonic whole.**

To describe mental states and emotions.

**We agree.**

**Ramona knows the answer.**

**I want to tell you something.**

With copulative verbs.

**He's French.**

**She looks tired.**

In zero conditional and first conditional expressions (see also Sy 5.1.7).

**If you heat water, it boils.**

**If you call me this evening, I'll give you his number.**

The simple present tense is also frequently used to translate the Catalan subjunctive.

#### Present continuous

The present continuous is formed using the present conjugation of **be** plus the gerund. It is commonly used in the following cases.

To express an action that is happening at the present moment.

**She's changing her clothes.**

**They're playing our song.**

**The children are jumping on the bed.**

To express an action that is progressing over a relatively long period of time.

**He's studying to be an engineer.**

**What are you working on now?**

To express future arrangements (see also Sy 5.1.6).

**This summer we're travelling to Italy.**

**I'm having dinner with Griselda tonight.**

With the adverb **always**, when referring to repeated actions in the past that will probably continue into the future. In this case there is always an element of exaggeration, expressing annoyance, praise, love, etc.

**They're always complaining.**

**She's always helping someone.**

**I'm always thinking of you, dear.**

The present continuous is also used to distinguish habitual actions that have a limited time span from those with an indefinite time span.

**He's living in Vic these days** (He is living there temporarily).

**Pau and Sílvia live in Vic** (Vic is their home).

**She's writing some articles for Regió7** (She is, for example, a freelance writer).

**She writes articles for Regió7** (This is her permanent job).

### 5.1.2. Simple Past and Past Continuous

#### Simple past

For regular verbs, the simple past tense is formed by adding the -ed suffix to the infinitive; for irregular verbs, it is the second of the three words that make up the verb.

The simple past is used to describe completed actions in both the remote and near past.

**I saw her two months ago; I saw her two hours ago.**

**They were there for three days.**

**During the movie, I had to change my seat twice.**

**I got off work and then walked home.**

**I waited for them for an hour.**

In American English, the simple past is also used to describe actions that have just occurred (in British English the use of present perfect is more usual).

**He just left.**

**I just saw her.**

The simple past tense is also frequently used to translate the Catalan subjunctive.

#### Past continuous

The past continuous is formed using the past conjugation of **be** (**was** or **were**) plus the gerund. It is commonly used to describe continuous past action. As is the case with the imperfect tense in Catalan, neither the beginning nor the end of the action is referred to. Examples:

**I was taking a shower when the phone rang.**

**While I was watching TV, my wife was studying.**

**Last night at this time I was sleeping.**

As is the case with the present continuous (see section Sy 5.1.1), the past continuous can be used along with the adverb **always** to express annoyance, praise, love, etc. Examples:

**He was always calling at the oddest hours.**

**They were always asking if they could bring us anything from their farm.**

### 5.1.3. Present Perfect and Present Perfect Continuous

#### Present perfect

The present perfect tense is formed using the present conjugation of the verb **have** (**have** or **has**) as an auxiliary and adding the participle. It is commonly used in the following cases:

To refer to unspecific actions concluded in the past. Note that in these cases it is not possible to use a specific time reference, such as **yesterday**, **ago**, **at two o'clock**, etc. You can, however, use such unspecific time references as **ever**, **always**, **yet**, **so far**, etc. Examples:

**I have lived in Paris.**

**Have you read any Harry Potter books?**

**We still haven't had breakfast.**

**It's the best wine I've ever had.**

**There have been a lot of changes.**

**We haven't done anything so far.**

**She has always lived in Gósol.**

To refer to actions that have just finished happening; in these cases the adverb **just** is added. (In American English, the simple past is sometimes used in this context.) Examples:

**He has just left.**

**I have just seen her.**

To refer to actions that begin in the past and continue until the present. Note that Catalan uses the present tense to describe such actions. Note too that in many cases, the use of present perfect or present perfect continuous is optional. The difference is that with present perfect we focus our attention more on the result of the action and with the present perfect continuous we focus more on the progression of the action. Examples:

**I have had the flu for six days.**

**We've been here for an hour.**

**Ever since I've lived here, I've been running (or I've run) two hours a day.**

**Ever since the weather changed, I've been cold.**

To refer to past actions that have some relevance in the present. Examples:

**I've bought some cheese and I want you to try it.**

**They have worked a lot and so they are tired.**

**She has bought herself a new car.**

#### Present perfect continuous

The past continuous is formed using the present conjugation of the verb **have** (**have** or **has**) plus the participle **been** and the gerund. It is used in the following cases.

To talk about actions that began in the past and continue into the present (in which case Catalan uses the present tense). Examples:

**We've been working since two o'clock.**  
**They've been travelling in Africa for eight years.**  
**They've been going together ever since they were in high school.**

To refer to continuous actions that have recently finished and have some relevance to the present. Examples:

**I'm tired because I've been studying.**  
**You've been eating garlic, haven't you?**  
**I've been reading your novel and I find it fascinating!**

#### 5.1.4. Past Perfect and Past Perfect Continuous

##### Past perfect

The past perfect tense is formed using the verb **had** as an auxiliary and adding the participle. Its only use is to indicate that an action or a state in the past ended before some other finished action occurred. It corresponds to the *pretèrit plusquamperfet* in Catalan. Examples:

**I reminded him that he hadn't washed the dishes yet.**  
**They didn't think they had been treated fairly.**

The past perfect tense is also frequently used to translate the Catalan subjunctive.

##### Past perfect continuous

The past perfect continuous is formed using the verb **had** plus the participle **been** and the gerund. It is used to describe continuous actions in the past that were happening until some other finished action occurred. Examples:

**We'd been working three hours when the bell sounded.**  
**They'd been travelling in Africa for eight years when we met them.**  
**They told me they'd been going together ever since they were in high school.**

#### 5.1.5. Present and Past Subjunctive

##### Present subjunctive

The present subjunctive form is always the same as the infinitive. Therefore, it only differs from the simple present for the verb **be** (eg **I be, you be, he be**, etc.) and for the third person singular (eg **he go, she do, it occur**, etc.). It is generally used in subordinate clauses following adjectives that express what is important or desirable, or following verbs that express orders, requests, suggestions and other similar ideas. Examples:

**It's essential that they be there on time.**  
**I insisted that he resign.**

When the subordinate clause is headed by an adjective, in informal contexts the use of the subjunctive can be optional. Example:

**It's important that he (keeps or keep) us informed.**

What's more, in British English, the combination **should + simple infinitive** is often used.

**It's necessary that the nurse should be present.**

(Or: **It's necessary that the nurse [be or is] present.**)

The verbs most often used with the subjunctive are **demand, insist, propose, recommend** and **suggest**. These verbs almost always take either the subjunctive or the **should** form, though an indicative tense is sometimes seen, especially in British English. Examples:

**They demanded that he (should) do something to help them.**

**We proposed that he (should) be named king.**

**He recommended/suggested that we (should) be ready by seven.**

Other verbs that can also head a subordinate clause in the subjunctive are **ask** (when it means **request**, not when it means **inquire**), **order, request** and **urge**. However, with these verbs there is an alternate construction that is more common: verb + noun/pronoun + **to** infinitive. Examples:

**She asked/ordered/requested/urged them to come.**

(Or: **She asked/ordered/requested/urged that they [should] come.**)

The present subjunctive is also used in certain idioms that express desire or hope. Examples:

**Let there be light!**

**Long live the King!**

**God bless you.**

**May all your Christmases be white.**

Finally, we should mention the expressions **if need be** (*si cal*), **far be it from me** (*Déu me'n guard de*) and **suffice it to say** (*n'hi ha prou que diguem*).

### Past subjunctive

The past subjunctive form in English coincides with the **simple past** form, and thus is only noticeable in the case of the verb **be** (eg **If I were a rich man**). The sense is always hypothetical or unreal. In modern English its use is generally considered to be optional; that is, we can say both **I wish he were here** and **I wish he was here** (*Tant de bo que fos aquí*). More examples:

**He looked as if he were/was fifteen or sixteen.**

**I wish it were/was sunnier.**

**Even if his statement were/was true, my opinion wouldn't change.**

**I live each day as if it were/was my last.**

#### 5.1.6. Future

As was mentioned in section Sy 5.1, there is no future tense in English, as such. The two principal forms used to express the future are the **will** form (**will + simple infinitive**; in British English, **shall** can sometimes be used instead of **will**, though it is never obligatory) and the **be going to** form (**am/are/is + going to + simple infinitive**). What's more, in certain contexts, English often uses the **present continuous** tense to express the future. Finally, the construction **be to + infinitive** is used when referring to formal or official plans and for giving orders in a very formal way, and the **simple present** is used when referring to events scheduled in the future.

We should mention too that there are three combination forms: the **future continuous** (I **will be doing** or I'm **going to be doing**), the **future perfect** (I **will have done** or I'm **going to have done**) and the **future perfect continuous** (I **will have been doing** or I'm **going to have been doing**).

The use of one or other of the various future forms in English depends on the kind of future that is being expressed: whether it be a prediction, intention, decision, promise or request. The emotional state of the speaker can also play a part.

### Future: Prediction

Predictions are most often expressed in English using the **will** form or the **be going to** form. The most important difference between these two forms is that we use the **be going to** form when we have some evidence in the present for what will happen in the future, or when we consider some future event to be likely. On the other hand, we use the **will** form when the prediction is not based on anything specific, or when it is conditional or hypothetical (eg **If this is, then that will be**). Note that expressions beginning with the adverbs **maybe** and **perhaps** almost always use the **will** form, because they indicate uncertainty. Finally, there are many predictions that can be perfectly well expressed using either form, though the **be going to** form implies more certainty on the part of the speaker.

#### Predictions using the **be going to** form

She's going to have a baby (not ~~She will have a baby~~).

Look at those black clouds! I think it's going to rain (not ~~I think it will rain~~).

Here we might note that when the prediction is further off in the future, there is little difference between, for example, **I think it will snow next week** and **I think it's going to snow next week**. The latter expresses more certainty, but both are perfectly correct.

Be careful! You're going to fall! (more usual than You'll fall!)

Hold still; this is going to hurt a little (more usual than this will hurt a little).

What a traffic jam! We're going to be late (more usual than We will be late).

#### Predictions using the **will** form

We'll get there too early if we leave now (not ~~We're going to get there~~).

Someday they'll find a cure for cancer (not ~~Someday they're going to find~~).

Maybe he'll forget all about it (more usual than Maybe he's going to forget).

Even if you run you'll miss the train (more usual than you're going to miss).

Unless you live abroad, the new law won't affect you (more usual than isn't going to).

Here is an example showing the difference between **will** and **be going to** in a specific case.

A) Don't shout so loud! They'll kick you out.

B) You've been too noisy and now they're going to kick you out.

In example A), we use the **will** form because the prediction is based on a condition, that of shouting too loud. In example B, we use the **be going to** form because the condition has been fulfilled and it now seems certain that the noisy person will be kicked out.

#### Predictions that can use either form indifferently

Remember that, for these examples, the **be going to** form expresses more certainty; the speaker considers the prediction more likely to occur.



I think (he will/he's going to) win the election.  
I guess (it will/it's going to) take a while.  
This new song (will soon be/is going to be) very popular.  
The bus (will/is going to) be here soon.

### Future: Intention

Intentions are most often expressed in English using the **be going to** form. Examples:

When are you going to write to your mother?  
I'm going to ask my boss for a transfer.  
I'm going to quit (or give up) eating meat.  
I'm going to be a doctor when I grow up.  
They're going to show us how to do it.  
We've bought this camera and now we're going to take pictures.

That said, it should be mentioned that intentions modified by either conditions or time clauses (clauses headed by conjunctions such as **when**, **until**, **after**, etc.) most often use the **will** form. Examples:

If I have time, I'll do it.  
We'll tell him about it when he comes.

Note that, in the second example, the conditionality is expressed in Catalan by the use of the subjunctive. Examples:

We'll leave as soon as they call us.  
We won't know until they tell us.  
He'll give a reward to the person that finds his watch.

Finally, we should mention that the **be going to** form can be used with time clauses when the outcome seems certain. Compare:

The princess will marry the knight who kills the dragon (conditional, because we don't know whether someone will actually manage to kill it).  
The princess is going to marry the knight who wins the tournament (not conditional because there will certainly be a winner of the tournament).

### Future: Decision

#### Examples of decisions using the present continuous

When referring to a decision to do something that is made in the past but that has not yet occurred, English often uses the **present continuous**. Another way of looking at it is to say that the **present continuous** is used to refer to those kinds of activities that one might write down in an agenda: definite appointments, arrangements to meet, special activities, etc. Examples:

They're closing the Girona highway tomorrow.  
We're leaving Thursday.  
They're getting married in July.

As far as the difference between the **present continuous** and the **be going to** form (see above) is concerned, the latter is a bit vaguer; it generally refers more often to an intention on the part of the speaker, without the same degree of certainty that the action will take place. Compare the following examples:

**I'm going to take Marta out to dinner next week.**

This is my intention, though I may not be sure yet which night we'll both be free.

**I'm taking Marta out to dinner next Friday.**

We have a definite date set.

**We're going to stay here tonight.**

This is our intention. However, we might not be able to find a room.

**We're staying here tonight.**

We have our room booked.

**This year we're going to have the house painted.**

This is our intention, but we haven't hired the painters yet.

**Next week we're having the house painted.**

We have hired the painters and settled on a day to begin the work.

### Examples of spontaneous decisions using the will form

In contrast to decisions made in the past that haven't yet occurred –for which we normally use the **be going to** form– English always uses the **will** form when the decision is spontaneous; that is, when it is made on the spur of the moment, without forethought. This decision is often the consequence of what someone else has said. Examples:

**"I have a fever." "OK, I'll get you an aspirin."**

**"We'd like to see some yellow pants, please." "All right, come with me and I'll show you what we have."**

**"I don't have time to go shopping." "No problem, I'll go."**

**Wait, I'll help you.**

**I think I'll stop now; I'm feeling tired.**

### Use of the be to + infinitive construction

The **be to + infinitive** construction is used when referring to formal or official plans and for giving orders in a very formal way. Examples:

**The president is to travel to Andalusia this week.**

**They are not to leave without my permission.**

### Promises, requests and strong emotions

English normally uses the **will** form to express promises and requests, whereas it is more usual to use the **be going to** form when expressing such strong emotions as hope, anger, love, etc. Examples:

**I'll do whatever is necessary.**

**I promise I'll never be unfaithful.**

**Will you help me open these jars, please?**

**Barcelona is going to win the league!**

**If the service doesn't improve, I'm going to complain!**

**I'm really going to miss you.**

### Compound future constructions

There are three compound future constructions in English, the most important of which is the **future continuous**, which is formed **will be + gerund** or **am/are/is going to be + gerund**. There is generally no difference in meaning between these two forms, though the first is rather more usual. The other two compound future constructions are the **future perfect**, formed **will have + participle**, and the **future perfect continuous**: **will have been + gerund**.

### Examples of the future continuous

The most important use of the **future continuous** is expressing actions in the future that will be happening “as usual” or “in the normal course of events”. Consider the following example:

(Pilot to passengers): “**We’ll be flying at an altitude of thirty thousand feet.**”

In this case, none of the other future forms we’ve studied would be adequate: the **will** form would be incorrect because this is neither a prediction nor a spontaneous decision, and the **be going to** form would sound unusual to passengers, implying that the flight plan was a mere intention.

This form is also a polite way of asking about someone’s plans or cancelling a previous commitment. Examples:

**Will you be coming to the party Thursday?**

**I’m afraid I won’t be coming to your party.**

It is also a polite way of expressing what we feel to be likely.

**You’ll be feeling tired after all that walking.**

Finally, the **future continuous** is used to emphasise the continuous nature of actions that will be taking place in the future.

**This time tomorrow, we’ll be driving to France.**

**We’ll be waiting for you at the station when you get to Ripoll.**

### Future perfect and the future perfect continuous

As is the case in Catalan, the **future perfect** is used to refer to states or actions that will be finished at some time in the future. The **future perfect continuous** refers to continuous actions occurring between now and some time in the future that may be unfinished. Examples:

**Next week we will have been married ten years.**

**When they get here, we will have already left.**

**At six I’ll have been waiting here two hours!**

**By Christmas I’ll have been working here for twenty years.**

#### 5.1.7. Conditional

The first thing to keep in mind is the difference between conditional clauses and the conditional verb form. The latter is constructed **would** + simple infinitive (what we will refer to as the **would** form) and nearly always can be used to translate the Catalan conditional tense. Examples:

**I would do it.**

**I knew they wouldn’t help us.**

**Would you please step back?**

Conditional expressions, on the other hand, express hypothetical situations and their consequences. They are sometimes referred to as if sentences, because they always include the conjunction if, and are traditionally referred to as the zero, first, second and third conditionals. The following table clearly shows the construction of these four conditional expressions in English.

TYPE	IF CLAUSE	RESULT CLAUSE
Zero	simple present	simple present/imperative
First	simple present	will form
Second	simple past	would, could, should, might forms
Third	past perfect	would/could have + participle
		would form

In the following four sections we will give an explanation and examples of these conditional clauses. Note that in every case the verb tenses correspond exactly to their Catalan counterparts.

### Zero conditional

The zero conditional is most often used to talk about certainties, universal truths, scientific facts, etc. It is unique among the conditionals in that **if** can be replaced with **when** or **whenever** without changing the meaning of the sentence (except in the case of the imperative).

**If (When) you heat water to 100 degrees, it boils.**

**If (When) you eat lots of salted peanuts, you get thirsty.**

**If you get lost, phone us.**

### First conditional

The **if** clause in the first conditional, normally in the **simple present** tense, is used to refer to a present or future situation, and the result clause, usually using the **will** form, states its possible (or probable) result. Examples:

**If you help us, we'll help you.**

**If it snows this afternoon, they'll call off the match.**

**If you don't finish this evening, you'll have to work on it tomorrow.**

**Nobody will say anything if you make a mistake.**

**What will you do if she isn't elected?**

### Second conditional

The **if** clause in the second conditional is used to refer to an unreal event or state in the present, generally expressed in the **simple past**; the result clause, which usually uses the **would** form but which can also use the **could**, **should** and **might** forms, refers to what could have been the consequence of the **if** clause had it been true. Examples:

**If I were (or was) a woman, I'd tell you to get lost.**

**If we had more money, we could buy a better car.**

**If you left now, you still might catch your train.**

**I wouldn't do that, if I were (or was) you.**

### Third conditional

The **if** clause of the third conditional is used to refer to what was unreal in the past and is generally expressed using the **past perfect**. There are two possible result clauses: the first refers to an unreal situation in the past that could have been the result had the **if** clause been true, and this is expressed using the expression **would/could have + participle**. The second refers to an unreal situation in the present that could have been the result had the **if** clause been true, and this is expressed using the **would** form.

Result clause expressing an unreal situation in the past

**If you had told me, I would have done something.**

**If we had had more time, we could have had dinner together.**

**If I had wanted a fast car, I wouldn't have bought this one.**

Result clause expressing an unreal situation in the present

**If you hadn't drunk so much, you wouldn't be feeling sick.**

**If we'd left on time, we'd already be there.**

## 5.2. Non-affirmative Constructions

### Negative constructions

Negative expressions in English are formed by adding the adverb **not** after the auxiliary verb. Examples (the contracted forms, where possible, are included in parentheses).

Present continuous

**I am reading the paper – I am not reading the paper.**

Past continuous

**He was driving too fast – He was not (wasn't) driving too fast.**

Present perfect

**I have already had breakfast – I have not (haven't) had breakfast yet.**

Present perfect continuous

**They have been running – They have not (haven't) been running.**

Past perfect

**He said he had done it – He said he had not (hadn't) done it.**

Past Perfect Continuous

**I realised she had been wearing shoes – I realised she had not (hadn't) been wearing shoes.**

In the case of the **simple present** and **simple past** tenses, the auxiliaries **do** or **does** (**simple present**) and **did** (**simple past**) must be placed after the subject; in both cases, the original verb then takes on the infinitive form. However, an important exception is that the auxiliaries **do**, **does** and **did** are never used with the verb **be**.

Simple present

**They live in Torà – They do not (don't) live in Torà.**

**He works in Sabadell – He does not (doesn't) work in Sabadell.**

**You are funny – You are not (aren't) funny.**

Simple past

**We saw them – We did not (didn't) see them.**

**He was angry – He was not (wasn't) angry.**

Remember too that the modal auxiliaries, which we will study in section Sy 5.7, do not require the use of **do**, **does** or **did**. Examples:

**We can make the fire – We cannot (can't) make the fire.**

**I will help you tomorrow – I will not (won't) help you tomorrow.**

**You should see her again – You should not (shouldn't) see her again.**

### **Affirmative yes-no questions**

Affirmative yes-no questions in English are formed by inverting the subject and the auxiliary verb.

Present continuous

**You are reading the paper – Are you reading the paper?**

Past continuous

**He was driving too fast – Was he driving too fast?**

Present perfect

**They have already had breakfast – Have they had breakfast yet?**

Present perfect continuous

**They have been running – Have they been running?**

Past perfect

**He had done it – Had he done it?**

Past Perfect Continuous

**She had been wearing shoes – Had she been wearing shoes?**

### **Negative yes-no questions**

Negative yes-no questions in English are formed in two ways. The first, which is used mostly in written English, is constructed auxiliary + subject + not + verb. The second form, used mostly in oral English, is constructed contraction of the auxiliary and not + subject + verb. (See section Sp 2.1 for a list of the possible contractions).

Present continuous

**Are you not reading the paper? Aren't you reading the paper?**

Past continuous

**Was he not driving too fast? Wasn't he driving too fast?**

Present perfect

**Have they not had breakfast yet? Haven't they had breakfast yet?**

Present perfect continuous

**Have they not been running? Haven't they been running?**

Past perfect

**Had he not done it? Hadn't he done it?**

Past Perfect Continuous

**Had she not been wearing shoes? Hadn't she been wearing shoes?**

Simple present

**Do they not live in Torà? Don't they live in Torà?**

**Does he not work in Sabadell? Doesn't he work in Sabadell?**

**Are you not funny? Aren't you funny?**

Simple past

**Did we not see them? Didn't we see them?**

**Was he not angry? Wasn't he angry?**

Remember too that the modal auxiliaries, which we will study in section Sy 5.7, do not require the use of **do**, **does** or **did**. Examples:

**Can we not make the fire? Can't we make the fire?**

**Will he not help you tomorrow? Won't he help you tomorrow?**

**Should you not see her again? Shouldn't you see her again?**

A special case is that in negative questions, the contraction of **am** and **not** is not possible. Therefore, in informal English, the form **aren't I** is used. Examples:

**Am I not your husband? Aren't I your husband?**

**Am I not coming too? Aren't I coming too?**

### 5.3. Question Tags and Short Answers

#### 5.3.1. Question Tags

Question tags are used in English to question or confirm a declaration, making the overall statement into a question. If the declaration is affirmative, then the question tag will consist of the first two words of a negative question (translated in Catalan, *oi que sí?*); if the declaration is negative, the question tag will consist of the first two words of an affirmative question (translated in Catalan, *oi que no?*). Note that the first half of the statement is never in the form of a question. Examples:

**You know each other, don't you?**

(This is the same as saying: **You know each other, don't you know each other?**)

**The train hasn't left yet, has it?**

(This is the same as saying **The train hasn't left yet, has it left yet?**)

**They are sleeping, aren't they?**

**You can come tomorrow, can't you?**

**They won't see me, will they?**

**It's dangerous, isn't it? or It isn't dangerous, is it?**

#### 5.3.2. Short Answers

In English, when a short answer to a question is given, it is usually of the form **yes**, + pronoun + auxiliary, or **no**, + pronoun + negative contraction. Examples:

Are you tired? Yes I am or No, I'm not  
Has she been dancing? Yes, she has or No, she hasn't.  
Haven't they finished? No, they haven't or Yes, they have.  
Can't they give you some help? No, they can't or Yes, they can.

#### 5.4. Use of Interrogative Adverbs

The interrogative adverbs in English are **where**, **when**, **why** and **how**. The first three always correspond to the Catalan adverbs *on*, *quan* and *per què*, respectively, and the latter always corresponds to the Catalan *com* when this means *de quina manera*.

As is the case in Catalan, the interrogative adverbs are placed at the head of the sentence. Examples:

**Where** are my bags?  
**When** is the party?  
**Why** didn't you stop?  
**How** do you feel?

Keep in mind that when these adverbs are used in indirect questions, the inversion doesn't take place. Examples:

**I don't know where** they've gone.  
**I don't remember when** the party is.  
**Do you know why** he is angry?

#### 5.5. Use of Interrogative Pronouns and Adjectives

There are three interrogative pronouns in English: **who** and **whom** (*qui*), and **what** (*què*). The three interrogative adjectives, **which** and **what** (*quin -a*), and **whose** (*de qui*), can also be used as pronouns if the noun they modify is understood. Note that **what** can be used as both a pronoun meaning *què* and an adjective meaning *quin -a*.

##### Interrogative pronouns as subject or object

When an interrogative pronoun (or a noun modified by an interrogative adjective) is the subject of the sentence, there is a syntax change: the pronoun is followed directly by the verb and there is no inversion. Compare the following two sentences.

Who as object:

**Who do you love?** (you is the subject, who is the direct object).

Who as subject:

**Who loves you?** (who is the subject, you is the direct object).

Examples:

**Who did the tourists follow?**  
**Who followed the tourists?**  
**Who have they seen?**  
**Who has seen them?**  
**What caused the gas leak?** (What was the cause of the leak?)



**What did the gas leak cause?** (What were the consequences of the gas leak?).

**Which jacket do you want?**

**Which key opens this door?**

### Interrogative pronouns as prepositional objects

There are two constructions used when an interrogative pronoun is a prepositional object. The first, which is seldom used, is **prep. + whom + auxiliary + verb**. The second, which we will use exclusively from now on, is **who + auxiliary + subject [+ complements] + prep.** Compare the following two examples.

Very formal: **With whom did you go there?**

More usual: **Who did you go there with?**

Examples:

**Who are they talking about?**

**Who did you buy the mushrooms from?**

**What does it depend on?**

It is good to keep in mind that English never translates the Catalan preposition *a* when it comes before a direct object, but it must always be translated when it comes before an indirect object. Compare the following.

**Who do they help?** (The preposition is not translated because it comes before the direct object.)

**Who do they send letters to?** (The preposition is translated because it comes before the indirect object.)

### The difference between the adjectives **which** and **what**

Both **which** and **what** can be used as adjectives when referring to a particular one or ones. The difference is that **which** implies a limited choice –that is, the speaker feels they have a good idea of what the possibilities are–, whereas **what** is used for unlimited, unknown possibilities. Compare the following:

**What time is it?** (unlimited possibilities)

**The movie shows at 7:30, 9:45 and midnight; which time do you want to go?**

Examples:

**What problems have you had?** (unlimited possibilities)

**Which shirt should I wear?**

**What is your address?** (unlimited possibilities)

**Which channel is the program on?**

### The uses of **whose** and **whom**

English has a genitive form of the pronoun **who**, **whose**, which has no Catalan equivalent. It is used to inquire about the possessor of an object or objects and, because it is an adjective, it precedes the noun it modifies. Its use is very similar to that of the possessive pronouns; for example, compare **It is his book** (*És el seu llibre*) with **It is whose book?** (*De qui és el llibre?*). However, because it is a question, the more common construction for the latter sentence is **Whose book is it?** Finally we might mention that the syntax for **whose** is exactly the same as that for **which**.

Compare:

**Which horse won?**

**Whose horse won?**

Examples:

**Whose glass is this?**

**Whose papers are these?**

**Whose cars were they?**

The pronoun **whom** is the objective form of the pronoun **who**, corresponding to the objective personal pronoun **him**. It is almost never used in modern English. As a direct object it is almost always substituted with **who**. For example, it is much more natural to say **Who did you see** than **Whom did you see?** The pronoun **whom** is sometimes seen after a preposition, since to many speakers the combination prep. + **who** sounds unusual, though the preposition is more commonly transferred to the end of the expressions (see above). Finally, there is one expression in which **whom** is always used: quantity adj/adv + **of whom**. Examples:

**We met many men, most of whom were on vacation.**

**There were several writers there, some of whom we knew.**

## 5.6. Interrogative Adverbial Expressions

### How much, how many

The expressions **how much** and **how many** inquire about quantities; the former modifies noncount nouns and verbs and the latter is restricted to the modification of plural count nouns. Examples:

Modifying noncount nouns:

**How much wine do you drink every day?**

**How much work have you done?**

Modifying verbs:

**How much do you drink every day?**

**How much do you weigh?**

Modifying plural count nouns:

**How many books have you read?**

**How many children go to this school?**

Remember that, unlike in Catalan, in English **people** (*gent*) is plural and **money** (*diners*) is singular.

**How many people were there?**

**How much money do you have?**

### How far

The expression **how far** is used to inquire about distances and corresponds to two Catalan expressions, (*a*) *quina distància* and *fins on*. Note too that where Catalan uses the verb *haver-hi*, English uses the combination **it + be** (see also Sy 4.2.3) Examples:

How far is it from here to Sallent?  
How far is the Earth from the Sun?  
How far is the camera supposed to be from the object?  
How far is the beach?  
How far did they take you?  
How far do you want to walk?

### How often

The expression **how often** is used to inquire about frequency and corresponds to the Catalan expression *cada quan*. Examples:

How often do you go there?  
How often are we supposed to clean the filters?  
How often should drink coffee?

### How long

The expression **how long** is used in two contexts: when it inquires about time periods it corresponds to the Catalan expression *quant temps* (and variants), and this is the sense we will study in this section. However, it can also be used to inquire about length and we will study this meaning in the following section.

The correspondence between **how long** and its Catalan equivalents is a bit complicated and is easiest to understand if we consider the difference between *quant temps* and *quant (temps) fa*. The former is translated quite straightforwardly. Examples:

How long do the batteries last?  
How long did you have to wait for them?

On the other hand, the expression *quant (temps) fa* is translated into English in three ways.

Affirmative expressions in the present tense are translated **how long** + present perfect [or] present perfect continuous. Examples:

How long have you had this car?  
How long have you been here?  
How long (have you studied/have you been studying) English?

Negative expressions in the present tense are usually translated **how long has it been since** + present perfect. Examples:

How long has it been since you've been there?  
How long has it been since you have eaten meat?

Expressions in the past tense are translated **how long ago** + simple past. Examples:

How long ago did they arrive?  
How long ago were they there?  
How long ago did you have lunch?

### How + adj. + be; how old + be

When inquiring about the height, length, width or depth of an object, English generally uses an expression of the type **how + adjective + be**, where Catalan used *quina* + nom + *tenir*. Examples:

How tall are you? How tall is the Eiffel Tower?  
How long is this pencil?  
How wide is this sheet of paper?  
How deep is Loch Ness?

The difference between **tall** and **high** is somewhat ambiguous. The adjective **tall** is used for people, animals and objects that are significantly taller than they are wide. So we can have **tall people**, **a tall dog**, **a tall tower**, **tall trees**, **tall buildings**, etc., but a mountain is generally **high** because it is as wide as it is tall. On the other hand, only **high** can be used to describe something that is above, not touching, the ground. So we say **a plane flies high**, **that lightbulb is high up**, and **a window-washer works high above the ground**. Here is a curious example: **Mt Everest is the world's highest peak, but Mauna Kea is the tallest mountain on Earth**. Mauna Kea is an undersea mountain and, since its height is not measured from ground level, it is referred to as being **tall**.

Finally when inquiring about someone's age, English uses the expression **how old + be + noun**. Examples:

How old are your parents?  
How old were they when they married?

### 5.7. Modal Verbs

We can conveniently divide the modal verbs into three classifications: **modal auxiliaries**, **modal idioms** and **marginal modals**. The most important of these are the **modal auxiliaries**, but because of their special limitations there are contexts in which they cannot be used, and in these cases their associated **modal idioms** come into play. What's more, we will also look at three **modal idioms** that have meanings independent of the modal auxiliaries: **would rather**, **had better** and **be about to**. Finally we should mention the two marginal modals, **dare** and **need**, so called because they can be used as both modal auxiliaries and regular verbs.

#### Characteristics of the modal auxiliaries

The nine modal auxiliaries –**can**, **could**, **will**, **would**, **shall**, **should**, **may**, **might** and **must**– have the following identifying characteristics.

They have a single form; that is, they have no infinitive, -s form, gerund, simple past or participle.

They are always used with a simple infinitive, never the to infinitive.

They can refer to the present, past or future.

They cannot be combined.

What's more, because they are auxiliaries, they form negative expressions by adding the adverb **not** –in fact, all the modal auxiliaries can be contracted with **not**– and they are inverted with the subject to form questions. They can also be used in question tags and short answers (see Sy 5.3).

### 5.7.1. Can, Could, Be Able To, Be Allowed To

The modal auxiliaries **can** and **could** are used to express ability and possibility, to ask for and to give permission, and to make offers. They are nearly always translated by a corresponding form of the Catalan verb *poder*. Examples:

**I can help you now/tomorrow.**  
**I could drive when I was sixteen.**  
**We can/could call her tomorrow.**  
**Can we park here?**  
**You can stay out as late as you like.**  
**Can I help you?**

When speaking of ability, English will often use **can** where Catalan will use the verb *saber*. Examples:

**I can sew = I know how to sew.**  
**Can you type? = Do you know how to type?**

#### Can

The modal auxiliary **can** is generally used to express ability or possibility in the present and can also express these concepts in the future. However, when the future is speculative, the combination **will be able to** is generally used. Moreover, when referring to future permission, we use **will be allowed to**.

Present: **I can go there now.**  
Present: **I can carry three of those boxes.**  
Future: **We can pay you tomorrow.**  
Speculative future: **Soon we'll be able to** (not ~~Soon we can~~) **offer more services.**  
Speculative future: **When the fog lifts we'll be able to see where we are.**  
Present permission: **I can use Father's tools whenever I like.**  
Future permission: **Next year we will be allowed to leave early.**

#### Could

The modal auxiliary **could** is used first of all to express general ability or possibility in the past. Note that specific abilities in the past are generally expressed using **was/were able to** and that the present perfect tense almost always uses the **have/has been able to** construction.

General ability or possibility in the past

**I could speak French when I was younger.**  
**Nothing could be done.**

Specific ability or possibility in the past

**I was able to** (not ~~I could~~) **establish two facts.**  
**They were able to** (not ~~They could~~) **confirm that the payment had been made.**

Present Perfect

**Have you been able to find another flat?**  
**We haven't been able to see them yet.**

However, when the past specific ability or possibility is negative, then the use of **couldn't** is generally preferred.

**We couldn't** (more usual than **weren't able to**) **get into the house.**

**He couldn't** (more usual than **wasn't able to**) **pay his bills.**

The modal auxiliary **could** is also commonly used in conditional expressions. This use is much more common than the equivalent construction, **would be able to**.

**If I had more money I could travel a lot more.**

**If you moved to Berkeley we could see each other more often.**

The construction **could have** + participle is used to describe unrealised hypothetical actions in the past.

**If we had had more time we could have played longer.**

**If they hadn't hurried they could have missed the train.**

Finally, **could** is used in polite suggestions and requests.

**If you're feeling tired we could always stay home.**

**Could you please not smoke in here?**

### Be able to

As we have seen, the construction **be able to** is employed in English when the use of **can** or **could** is impossible. In most cases, this is because we need a verb form, such as an infinitive or participle, that the modal auxiliaries cannot provide. Here are some typical examples of the use of **be able to**.

When an infinitive is needed

**If no one else calls, I'll be able to finish this evening.**

**The police want to be able to trace cellular calls.**

**You'll have to be able to deal with children.**

**You should be able to tell the difference between the two photos.**

**I used to be able to touch my toes without bending my knees.**

When a gerund is needed

**I like being able to walk to work.**

**Being able to speak English is more and more important.**

When a participle is needed

**We haven't been able to find a replacement.**

**It would have helped if I had been able to speak with her.**

Simple past

**I'm glad you were able to see the program.**

### Be allowed to

Because the modal auxiliaries **can** and **could** can express other concepts besides permission, we sometimes use the construction **be allowed to** to make it clear that we are talking about permission and not ability, possibility, etc. Consider the following example.

**He can drive his father's car.**

As it stands, this sentence can mean either that he is able to drive the car, or that he has permission to drive the car. The use of **be allowed to** removes this ambiguity.

**He is allowed to drive his father's car.**

**We are not allowed to smoke on the playground.**

**Were you allowed to express your opinions?**

**Cars are not allowed to park near the police station.**

Finally, when referring to a specific permission given in the past, the form **be allowed to** must be used. Example:

**Last night I was allowed to (not ~~I could~~) lead the prayer.**

### 5.7.2. May and Might

The most important uses of **may** and **might** are to express possibility. The expression **I may/might go** means **It is possible that I will go**. When referring to the present, in modern English, **may** and **might** are basically synonymous, though some speakers consider that the use of **might** indicates a slightly lesser possibility. However, when referring to the past, **might** can have two meanings whereas **may** has only one. The examples in the following sections should make this clear.

In the final section, we will briefly touch on the use of **may** to request permission.

#### May and might in the present

**It may/might rain tomorrow.**

**I may/might be a little late.**

**There may/might be many people in favour of the proposal.**

**Anna may/might not know the answer.**

Note that when the reference is to a presently continuing or future action, in English the continuous tense is generally obligatory. Examples:

**They may/might be waiting for us (no ~~They may wait for us~~) now/tomorrow.**

**They may/might be having dinner (no ~~They may have dinner~~) [now / when we arrive tomorrow].**

Note that first conditional expressions can use either **may** or **might**, but that second conditional expressions must use **might**. Examples:

**If you speak more slowly, we may/might be able to understand you.**

**If you spoke more slowly, we might be able to understand you.**

#### May and might in the past

When referring to possibilities in the past, we use the constructions **may have** + participle and **might have** + participle. The former always indicates that the speaker is uncertain whether the past possibility became reality or not. On the other hand, the expression **might have** + participle is ambiguous; it can be either a synonym for **may have** + participle, indicating that we don't know whether the possibility came about or not, or it can have a similar meaning to the **could have** + participle construction, describing unrealised hypothetical actions in the past.

Examples in which we don't know if the possibility occurred or not.

**I don't see them; they may/might have missed the train.**

**We may/might have taken a wrong turn back there.**

**I'm afraid that I may/might have offended him.**

Examples in which we know that the possibility did not occur.

**If I had known that, I might have acted differently.**

**If we had been alone, I might have told her what I really thought.**

**He might have learned even more about their language if he hadn't fallen ill.**

### May and can to request permission

The use of **may** to request permission is generally restricted to formal uses. As a rule of thumb, we can say that if in Catalan we would address the person as *vostè* or *vós*, in English we will request permission using **may**, whereas we use **can** when we would address the person as *tu*. Examples:

**May I help you?**

**Can I help you?**

### 5.7.3. Will, Shall, Be Going To, Be To

The modal auxiliaries **will** and **shall**, and the modal idioms **be going to** and **be to** can all be used to refer to the future. In the case of **be going to** and **be to**, there are no alternative meanings –that is, these modal idioms always indicate some future activity or state–, and their study was thus completed in sections Sy 5.1.6. On the other hand, the modal auxiliaries **will** and **shall** are used in other non-future contexts, and it is these uses that we will study in this section.

#### Non-future uses of will

The most important non-future use of the modal auxiliary **will** is expressing volition or lack of volition in non-affirmative contexts. In these cases, the use of **will** is the same as the constructions **am/are/is willing to**, in questions, and **refuse + to infinitive**, in negations. Examples:

**Will you (= Are you willing to) work weekends?**

**I won't (= I refuse to) date men who smoke.**

The **will** form is also used in certain colloquial impersonal expressions, expressing a lack of will on the part of inanimate objects. Examples:

**The car won't start.**

**My guitar won't stay in tune.**

We can also use **will** to refer to latent possibility. For example:

**How fast will this car go?**

Finally, **will** is used colloquially, emphasised and without contraction, to express annoyance. For example:

**He will have his own way.**



### Non-future use of shall

There is only one non-future use of **shall**. It is used in a kind of ‘imperative-interrogative’ context to offer suggestions. Examples:

**Shall we dance?**

**Shall I open the window?**

Note that this use is always oral and is limited to cases in which there is a certain familiarity between the speaker and hearer; that is, if two people are unacquainted, the **shall** form would sound somewhat presumptuous, and the more formal **Would you like to dance?** and **Do you mind if I open the window?** should be used.

### Would, used to

The most common use of the modal auxiliary **would** is in conditional expressions, a use that we have already studied in section Sy 5.1.7. However, **would** is also used, synonymously with the modal idiom **used to**, when referring to repeated actions in the past, as well as in other less important contexts. What’s more, **used to** is used in three other contexts, as we will see.

#### Would and used to describing repeated actions in the past

Both the modal auxiliary **would** and the modal idiom **used to** can be used to describe routine repeated actions in the past. Note that, when **would** is used in this context, it must be accompanied by a time clause indicating when the past action occurred. (The same is true of the Catalan *solia* and variants.) As we will see, the **used to** form is not thus limited. Examples:

**When I was young I [used to / would] swim every day.**

**Small clinics that doctors used to set up in a room are giving way to large clinics.**

**When I was working in Girona I [used to / would] have lunch at three.**

When we are referring to a series of repeated actions in the past, it is more natural to use **would** than **used to**. Example:

**On Sundays Joan used to get up early. He’d walk as far as the town where his friends would be waiting for him. They’d have breakfast together in the bar and then he’d ride his motorbike to the cove, where he would swim and sun-bathe until it was time for lunch.**

#### Other non-conditional uses of would

As is the case of the modal auxiliary **will**, **would** can be used in certain other non-conditional contexts. The most important of these is expressing a lack of volition in the past, equivalent to the expression **refused + to infinitive**. For example:

**They wouldn’t (= They refused to) let us in.**

The **would** form is also used in certain colloquial impersonal expressions, expressing a lack of will on the part of inanimate objects. For example:

**I tried to open the door but the key wouldn’t turn.**

Finally, **would** is used colloquially, emphasised and without contraction, to express annoyance. For example:

**You would forget!**

#### **Used to meaning no longer**

The most important use of the modal idiom **used to** is to describe past actions or states that no longer continue. It corresponds to the Catalan construction *abans* + pretèrit imperfect. Unlike the **would** form (see above), it can be used to describe former states and does not need to be accompanied by a time clause. Examples:

**It used to be a bank.**

**There used to be a restaurant on this corner.**

Negative and interrogative constructions normally use the auxiliary **did**. Examples:

**He didn't use to talk so much.**

**Did you use to go out with Sara?**

#### **Uses of be used to and get used to**

The constructions **be used to** and **get used to** are not modal idioms, but we include them here because of the obvious confusion that results from the use of **used to** in two completely different contexts. It is perhaps helpful to note that **be used to** means the same as **be accustomed to** and **get used to** equals **get accustomed to**; they correspond, respectively, to the Catalan *estar acostumat a* and *acostumar-se a*. Note that in these constructions the word **to** is a preposition and, if followed by a verb, requires the gerund. Examples:

**I'm used to the noise; it no longer bothers me.**

**I'm used to working at night.**

**I'm getting used to the rain.**

**I still haven't gotten used to having dinner so late.**

Finally, it is worth noting that English has no equivalent to the present tense use of the verb *acostumar* when it describes habitual action or states in the present; a paraphrase must be used. Examples:

**They usually arrive at nine.**

**It usually rains in November.**

#### **5.7.4. Must, Have To, Be Supposed to, Should, Ought To, Have Got To**

Obligation in English can be expressed using various constructions, most of which add some shade of meaning to the obligation. All are translated by some form of the Catalan periphrasis *haver de*. Perhaps the easiest method of organising these various forms is by verb tense, which is what we shall now proceed to do.

##### **Obligation (and prohibition) in the present tense**

English has four constructions to express various kinds of affirmative obligation in the present, which we will call (somewhat arbitrarily) general, emphatic, impersonal and informal.

### General: **Have to**

The **have to** form is the most common and most generic way of expressing obligation. In British English the use of **have to** implies that someone else has imposed the obligation, though this is not the case in American English. In the negative and interrogative the auxiliaries **do** and **does** must be used, and the sense of the negative is of a lack of obligation, not prohibition. Examples:

**We have to (or We must) fight against this prejudice.**  
**The doctor says I have to quit smoking.**  
**Do we have to get up early tomorrow?**  
**You do not have to present any documentation to accredit it.**

### Emphatic: **Must**

In both American and British English the use of the modal auxiliary **must** often emphasises the authority or desire of the speaker. Moreover, in British English, it implies that it is the speaker who has decided that something is necessary. In American English, the **must** form is only used in formal contexts. In British English the use of **must** in interrogative sentences is less common than **have to**, and generally has **you** as the subject; in the negative, **mustn't** expresses prohibition in a rather emphatic way. (For a less authoritative way to express prohibition, see both the use of **shouldn't**, and **not supposed to** in the following sections.) Examples:

(BrE.) **We must hurry or we'll be late** (AmE.) **We have to hurry...**  
(BrE.) **We must be coherent with the model.** (AmE.) **We have to be...**  
(BrE. and AmE.) **Fines must be paid within thirty days.**  
**Must you leave now? We'd be so happy if you stayed.**  
**You mustn't blame yourselves.**

### Impersonal: **Be Supposed To**

The **be supposed to** construction is used to indicate that the obligation comes from someone other than the speaker. It can also be used to speak of what is done as a matter of course. In the negative, it is the most polite way of expressing a prohibition; it implies that it isn't the speaker who makes the rules, but that the prohibition comes from some other source, such as society as a whole. Finally, when used in the first person, it can imply that the speaker doesn't really intend to fulfil the obligation. Examples:

**Mum says you're supposed to come in for dinner.**  
**Do you remember how long we're supposed to cook the rice?**  
**When are we supposed to hand in our homework?**  
**You're not supposed to turn left here.**  
**We're supposed to make a reservation, but I doubt it's really necessary.**

### Informal: **Have got to**

The **have got to** construction has the same meaning as **have to**. It can only be used in the present tense and is generally limited to oral expressions. In informal American English, **got to** can be contracted to **gotta** and the auxiliary **have** can be suppressed. Examples:

**I've got to (or I've gotta or I gotta) get some more money.**  
**We've got to (or We've gotta or We gotta) do better than that.**

### Obligation in the future

Obligation in the future is generally expressed in English using the synonymous constructions **will have to** + infinitive or **going to have to** + infinitive. (In informal English, **going to** can be contracted to **gonna** and **have to** is pronounced /hæf tə/.)

**We'll have to** (or **We're going to have to**) **finish tomorrow.**

**You'll have to wait** (or **You're going to have to wait**).

### Obligation in the conditional: should and ought to

Obligation in the conditional in English is nearly always expressed using the construction **would have to** + infinitive and the sense of this form is always hypothetical. Unfortunately, the corresponding Catalan construction can express not only a hypothesis, but also advice, moral obligation and what seems likely and, in the latter three cases, English uses either the modal auxiliary **should** or the modal idiom **ought to**. The following examples should make this clear.

Hypothesis (conditional sense)

**If you wanted to travel to China, you would have to get a visa.**

Advice

**You should** (or **You ought to**) **study more.**

Moral obligation

**We should** (or **We ought to**) **love our fellow man.**

What seems likely

**They should** (or **They ought to**) **be there by now.**

Therefore, different expressions such as **What would I have to do?** (a hypothetical question) and **What should I do?** (a question requesting advice) are both translated by the same Catalan expression: *Què hauria de fer?* Obviously, when translating from Catalan to English, this can create a problem. Examples:

**We would have to leave early if it started to snow.**

**We should** (or **We ought to**) **accept that the web is the dominant infrastructure.**

**These exercises should be easy for you.**

Note that the modal idiom **ought to** is normally only used in the affirmative; questions and negations usually use **should**. Examples:

**Should the police** (more usual than **Ought the police to**) **have authority in these matters?**

**References should not** (more usual than **References ought not to**) **be used in footnotes.**

In the past, the hypothetical conditional is expressed **would have had to** + infinitive and the various meanings expressed by **should** are expressed **should have** + participle. Note that in this case there is no ambiguity, since Catalan expresses these concepts differently as well. Examples:

**If John hadn't done it, I would have had to do it.**

**You should have studied more.**

### Obligation in the past tenses

There are three possibilities for talking about past obligations. The first is the construction **had to** + infinitive and describes a past obligation that has been carried out. It corresponds generally to the Catalan perifràstic form of *haver de*. The second, the construction **was/were supposed to** + infinitive describes past actions that were not carried out and corresponds to the Catalan imperfect form of *haver de*. Examples:

Yesterday I **had to** go to Barcelona.

Yesterday I **was supposed to** go to Barcelona, but I stayed home.

He **didn't have to** take his final exam.

He **wasn't supposed to** interfere.

Finally, we can use the present perfect form of **have to** (**have/has had to** + infinitive) to talk about repeated past obligations or a past obligation that is relevant to the present. This construction corresponds to the indefinite tense of *haver de*. Examples:

I've **had to** do a lot of homework this quarter.

What **have you had to** deal with?

Here is your paper; I've **had to** make a few changes.

#### 5.7.5. Would Rather

When talking about preferences, English most often uses the modal idiom **would rather**: eg I **would** (I'd) **rather stay home** (*M'estimo més quedar-me a casa*). (The verb *prefer* is also possible: I **prefer to stay home**). Examples:

I'd **rather have** red wine than white.

I'd **rather not talk** about it.

Would you **rather watch** TV?

I'd **rather sleep** than watch cricket.

If our preference is that someone else do something, the construction **would rather** [+ **that**] + noun + **simple past** is used. Examples:

We'd **rather that he had** more experience.

I'd **rather (that) you came** tomorrow.

They'd **rather we didn't park** here.

Would you **rather I told** the police?

#### 5.7.6. Had Better

The construction **had better** + infinitive is used to refer to necessary, sometimes urgent action. It is stronger than **should** (see Sy 5.7) and can sometimes even have a threatening overtone. It is usually abbreviated to 'd. Examples:

We'd **better save** our money.

You'd **better have** another drink.

You'd **better be** quiet.

They'd **better not say** that to her face.

He'd **better not come** back here.

### 5.7.7. Be About To

In English we use the construction **be about to** + infinitive to refer to an imminent action. It corresponds to the Catalan expression *estar a punt de* + infinitive, which should not be confused with the similar *estar a punt per a* + infinitive (in English, **to be ready to** + infinitive). Examples:

**I can't talk now; we're about to have lunch.**

**Can you make it quick? I was just about to leave.**

In negative constructions it indicates an unwillingness to do something on the part of the subject. Examples:

**We're not about to change our minds.**

**I'm not about to let her make a fool of me.**

### 5.7.8. Dare and Need

The marginal modals **dare** (*atrevir-se*) and **need** (*necessitar, caldre*) can be used both as modal auxiliaries and as normal lexical verbs, though in the latter case they usually appear in non-affirmative contexts. Note that, when **dare** is used as a lexical verb, it can take as a complement either the simple infinitive or the to infinitive.

USED AS MODAL AUXILIARIES	USED AS NORMAL LEXICAL VERBS
Dare she tell him?	Does she dare (to) tell him?
She daren't do anything wrong.	She doesn't dare (to) do anything wrong.
Need we be there early?	Do we need to be there early?
You needn't lock the door.	You don't need to lock the door.

In British English, the **needn't** form generally indicates obligation and permission, whereas the lexical form **don't/doesn't need to** is used more for necessity.

The lexical verb **dare** can also take a personal complement, in which case it corresponds to the Catalan *desafiar*. For example:

**I dare you to eat a worm.**

Only the lexical form of **dare** can be used in the past, whereas **need** can be used in the construction **needn't have** + participle. Some speakers detect a difference between a sentence such as **You needn't have done it** and **You didn't have to do it**. The first indicates that someone has done something that was unnecessary, whereas the second indicates that someone did not have the obligation to do something and therefore, presumably, did not do it.

## 5.8. Prepositional Verbs

As is the case in Catalan, some English verbs require prepositions before their complements, and it is often the case that the meaning of the preposition has nothing to do with its normal lexical meaning. For example, in English we **rely on** someone (*refiar-se d'algú*), though the

lexical meaning of **on** (*sobre, damunt, etc.*) seems inappropriate. Similarly, there are verbs that require a preposition in English whose counterparts in Catalan are transitive; for example, in English we **wait for** someone (*esperar algú*), but the preposition is not used in Catalan.

There are literally hundreds of prepositional verbs in English, and a complete list is beyond the scope of this study, in which we will mention only the forty or fifty most important. We will divide the prepositional verbs into four groups.

Prepositional verbs whose prepositions keep their basic meanings

**I agree with you.**

Prepositional verbs whose prepositions change their basic meanings

**This depends on you.**

Prepositional verbs that are not prepositional in Catalan

**We listen to the radio.**

Prepositional verbs whose prepositions change the meaning of the verb

**He fell for the scam.**

What's more, as an aid to Catalans who use these pages, in section Sy 5.8 we will offer a list of Catalan prepositional verbs that are not prepositional in English. For example, *gaudir de* = **enjoy** (eg *Gaudeixo de la vida* = **I enjoy life**).

For a more detailed study of English prepositional verbs and their relation to Catalan, see the online book *Phrasal verbs, pas a pas* at <http://visca.com/apac/pv-nsum/>.

### Prepositional verbs whose prepositions keep their basic meanings

The following table lists some of the most important English prepositional verbs whose prepositions maintain their basic meaning.

agree with arrive at arrive in belong to care about complain about/of fight for forget about get to know about/of insist on lead to meet with	pass through play with read about refer to speak about/of subscribe to suffer from talk about/of think about/of turn into work on worry about
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The difference between **arrive at** and **arrive in** is that the former is generally used for locations, such as train and bus stations, schools, theatres, etc., whereas the latter is used more commonly before place names.

The verb **care about** means *preocupar-se de* in the sense of having a regard for something.

The verb **lead to** always has an impersonal subject.

The verb **meet with** means *trobar-se amb* in the sense of having a meeting or getting together for some purpose. When *trobar-se amb* means meeting by chance, the preposition **with** is not used.

The difference between the two pairs **speak of** and **speak about**, and **talk of** and **talk about** is that the combinations with **of** imply the simple mentioning of a subject, whereas the combinations with **about** imply discussion. However, this is a generalisation and there can be exceptions.

### Prepositional verbs whose prepositions do not keep their basic meanings

The following table lists some of the most important English prepositional verbs whose prepositions do not maintain their basic meaning.

<b>ask about</b> – <i>preguntar per (algú)</i> <b>beware of</b> – <i>anar amb compte amb</i> <b>count on</b> – <i>comptar amb</i> <b>deal with</b> – <i>tractar de, ocupar-se de</i> <b>depend on</b> – <i>dependre de</i> <b>dream about/of</b> – <i>somiar amb (or en)</i> <b>fit into</b> – <i>formar part de</i> <b>graduate from</b> – <i>llicenciar-se a</i> <b>laugh at</b> – <i>riure's de</i> <b>leave for</b> – <i>marxar cap a (un lloc)</i>	<b>live on</b> – <i>viure de (alimentar-se de)</i> <b>look like</b> – <i>assemblar-se a</i> <b>pay by</b> – <i>pagar amb (per mitjà de)</i> <b>rely on</b> – <i>refiar-se de</i> <b>run into</b> – <i>xocar contra</i> <b>steal from</b> – <i>robar a (algú, una entitat)</i> <b>think about/of</b> – <i>pensar en</i> <b>travel by</b> – <i>viatjar en (or amb)</i> <b>trip over</b> – <i>ensopegar amb (sentit físic)</i> <b>vouch for</b> – <i>respondre de (fer-se garant)</i>
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The verb **beware of** is normally used in the imperative.

The verb **deal with** means *tractar de* in the senses of taking action on or being concerned with. It means *ocupar-se* in the sense of conducting oneself with others or doing business with someone.

The difference between **think about** and **think of** is that the former implies rumination and contemplation, whereas the latter implies simply having something present in the mind. Remember both these verbs can also mean to have an opinion.

### Prepositional verbs that are not prepositional in Catalan

The following table lists some of the most important English prepositional verbs that are translated in Catalan by transitive verbs.

<b>appeal to</b> – <i>atraure</i> <b>apply for</b> – <i>sol·licitar</i> <b>approve of</b> – <i>aprovar</i> <b>ask for</b> – <i>demanar (sol·licitar)</i> <b>check on</b> – <i>comprovar, verificar, controlar</i> <b>compensate for</b> – <i>compensar</i> <b>deal with</b> – <i>tractar (manejar)</i> <b>focus on</b> – <i>enfocar</i> <b>listen to</b> – <i>escoltar</i> <b>look at</b> – <i>mirar</i> <b>look for</b> – <i>cercar</i>	<b>look into</b> – <i>investigar</i> <b>look like</b> – <i>semblar</i> <b>pay for</b> – <i>pagar</i> <b>plan on</b> – <i>proposar-se/anticipar</i> <b>run after</b> – <i>empaitar</i> <b>search for</b> – <i>cercar</i> <b>stand for</b> – <i>representar/defensar/tolerar</i> <b>step on</b> – <i>trepitjar</i> <b>substitute for</b> – <i>substituir</i> <b>wait for</b> – <i>esperar (restar)</i> <b>wait on</b> – <i>atendre</i>
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The verb **appeal to** means *atraure* in the sense of being attractive or interesting.

The verb **apply for** is generally used for scholarships, jobs, credit cards and such like.

The verb **ask for** means *demanar* in the sense of requesting something. When it means *preguntar* the preposition is not used. Examples: **We asked the waiter for the bill; We asked the waiter a question.**

The verb **look at** means *mirar* when what is observed is static; we use **watch** when what is observed is active. So we **look at paintings**, but we **watch a football match**.

We use the verb **pay for** when the object is the thing acquired, but the preposition is not used when what is paid is money, debts, the rent, etc. So, **I paid for the wine**, but **I paid the rent**.

The verb **stand for** means *representar* in the sense of representing by a symbol; for example, **The letters BBC stand for British Broadcasting Company**. On the other hand, it means *defensar* in the sense of supporting a cause or opinion; for example, **He stands for honesty and fair play**.

### Prepositional verbs whose prepositions change the meaning of the verb

Although it is somewhat unusual, there are prepositions that change the basic meaning of the verbs they follow. Here is a list of the most important.

<p>account for – <i>explicar</i>  allow for – <i>tenir en compte</i>  come across – <i>trobar (per casualitat)</i>  come by – <i>adquirir</i>  do without – <i>prescindir de</i>  drive at – <i>voler dir, voler anar a parar</i>  fall for – <i>deixar-se enganyar per/enamorar-se de</i>  get over – <i>superar (una situació o un esdeveniment traumàtic)/fer-se a la idea/recuperar-se de</i></p>	<p>go over – <i>repassar</i>  pick on – <i>criticar injustament, victimitzar</i>  relate to – <i>empatitzar amb</i>  run into – <i>trobar-se amb (per casualitat)/xocar contra</i>  take to – <i>afeccionar-se a/aprovar</i>  touch on – <i>mentonar breument</i></p>
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The object of the first sense of **fall for** is always the scam or swindle, never the person who perpetrates it.

### Catalan prepositional verbs that are not prepositional in English

The following table lists some of the most important Catalan prepositional verbs that are translated in English by transitive verbs.

<p>acostar-se a – <b>approach</b>  adonar-se de – <b>notice, realize</b>  assistir a – <b>attend</b>  casar-se amb – <b>marry</b>  entrar a – <b>enter</b>  equivaler a – <b>equal</b>  fiar-se de – <b>trust</b></p>	<p>gaudir de – <b>enjoy</b>  jugar a – <b>play</b>  marxar de – <b>leave left left</b>  penedir-se de – <b>regret</b>  telefonar a – <b>phone</b>  trucar a – <b>call</b></p>
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The verb *casar-se* is translated by **get married** when used without a preposition: *Vol casar-se* = **He wants to get married**; *Vol casar-se amb tu* = **He wants to marry you**.

In abstract senses, we can use **enter into**; for example, **He entered into politics** or **Financial matters entered into the discussion**.

### 5.9. Adverbial Verbs (Phrasal Verbs)

**Adverbial verbs**, popularly called **phrasal verbs**, are verbs that combine a verb and an adverb into a single verbal unit. A simple example is **run away** (*fugir*). Although there are English manuals that group prepositional verbs (see Sy 5.8) along with the adverbials, there are several good reasons for not doing so.

Prepositional verbs are generally translated in Catalan by prepositional verbs –eg **talk about** = *parlar de*–, whereas adverbial verbs are generally translated by either simple verbs or locutions. For example, **depend on**, a prepositional verb, is translated *dependre de*, whereas **call off**, an adverbial verb, is translated *anul·lar*.

When an adverbial verb is transitive, its complement can usually be placed either between the two elements or after the second. For example, **She put on her dress** = **She put her dress on** (*Es va posar el vestit*). With prepositional verbs, the complement always follows the preposition. Note too that when the object of an adverbial verb is a pronoun, the pronoun *must* come between the two elements: **She put it on**, no ~~**She put on it**~~.

When an adverb and a verb combine to form an adverbial verb, the result is often a verb whose meaning is completely different from that of the two elements considered separately. For example, **go over** means *repassar*. This happens much less frequently with prepositional verbs.

The meaning of adverbial verbs is often determined by the adverb, rather than the verb. For example, the adverbial verbs **come back**, **go back**, **walk back** and **run back** are all translated by the Catalan verb *tornar* (*tornar cap aquí*, *tornar cap allà*, *tornar caminant* and *tornar corrent*).

Finally, a rather high percentage of adverbial verbs have more than one meaning, whereas prepositional verbs tend to have only one.

#### Grouping phrasal verbs according to the adverb

English has well over two thousand adverbial verbs with more than three thousand different meanings, and an enumeration of all these is obviously beyond the scope of the present study. (For a detailed look at these verbs, see *Phrasal verbs, pas a pas* [<http://visca.com/apac/pv-nsum/>] and *Phrasal verbs traduïts al català* [<http://visca.com/apac/pv/phrasal-verbs.html>].) However, there are only about seventeen adverbs that are commonly used to form part of adverbial verbs and, as we hope to show, there are significant advantages to organising the adverbial verbs according to these adverbs. We offer first a list of them along with their approximate translations in Catalan. The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of adverbial verbs of which these adverbs form part in the online dictionary *Phrasal verbs traduïts al català*. For example, there are nearly 400 different adverbial verbs that include the adverb **up**, whereas there are only sixteen that include **aside**.

<b>about</b> (36) <b>across</b> (23) <b>along</b> (24) <b>around</b> (63) <b>aside</b> (16) <b>away</b> (87) <b>back</b> (75) <b>by</b> (23)	<b>down</b> (143) <b>in</b> (135) <b>off</b> (161) <b>on</b> (104) <b>out</b> (303) <b>over</b> (64) <b>through</b> (25) <b>up</b> (382)
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Note that all these adverbs have meanings that have to do with placement or direction. The most easily understood phrasal verbs are those that combine a movement verb with an adverb indicating direction. Here are several examples, along with their Catalan equivalents.

<b>go across</b> – <i>travessar (d'un costat a l'altre)</i> <b>move along</b> – <i>continuar caminant</i> <b>pass around</b> – <i>fer circular</i> <b>pull aside</b> – <i>apartar estirant</i> <b>put away</b> – <i>desar</i> <b>come back</b> – <i>tornar (cap aquí)</i> <b>drive by</b> – <i>passar conduint</i> <b>go down</b> – <i>baixar (cap allà)</i>	<b>come in</b> – <i>entrar (cap aquí)</i> <b>run off</b> – <i>fugir, marxar corrent</i> <b>move on</b> – <i>continuar endavant</i> <b>bring out</b> – <i>treure (cap aquí)</i> <b>take over</b> – <i>portar (cap allà)</i> <b>pass through</b> – <i>ser de passada</i> <b>walk up</b> – <i>pujar caminant</i>
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We would like to emphasise again that it is often the adverb of an adverbial verb that determines its translation in Catalan. In other words, the English adverb determines which Catalan verb translates the verb-adverb combination. Moreover, the sense of the English verb is in many cases expressed by a Catalan gerund. Here are five common examples.

UP	DOWN
<b>come up</b> – <i>pujar (cap aquí)</i>	<b>come down</b> – <i>baixar (cap aquí)</i>
<b>bring up</b> – <i>pujar (una cosa, cap aquí)</i>	<b>bring down</b> – <i>baixar (una cosa, cap aquí)</i>
<b>drive up</b> – <i>pujar conduint</i>	<b>drive down</b> – <i>baixar conduint</i>
<b>go up</b> – <i>pujar (cap allà)</i>	<b>go down</b> – <i>baixar (cap allà)</i>
<b>run up</b> – <i>pujar corrent</i>	<b>run down</b> – <i>baixar corrent</i>
<b>take up</b> – <i>pujar (una cosa, cap aquí)</i>	<b>take down</b> – <i>baixar (una cosa, cap aquí)</i>
<b>walk up</b> – <i>pujar caminant</i>	<b>walk down</b> – <i>baixar caminant</i>

IN	OUT
<b>come in</b> – <i>entrar (cap aquí)</i>	<b>come out</b> – <i>sortir (cap aquí)</i>
<b>bring in</b> – <i>entrar (una cosa, cap aquí)</i>	<b>bring out</b> – <i>treure (una cosa, cap aquí)</i>
<b>drive in</b> – <i>entrar conduint</i>	<b>drive out</b> – <i>sortir conduint</i>
<b>go in</b> – <i>entrar (cap allà)</i>	<b>go out</b> – <i>sortir (cap allà)</i>
<b>run in</b> – <i>entrar corrent</i>	<b>run out</b> – <i>sortir corrent</i>
<b>take in</b> – <i>entrar (una cosa, cap aquí)</i>	<b>take out</b> – <i>treure (una cosa, cap aquí)</i>
<b>walk in</b> – <i>entrar caminant</i>	<b>walk out</b> – <i>sortir caminant</i>

BACK	
come back – tornar ( <i>cap aquí</i> )	run back – tornar corrent
bring back – tornar ( <i>una cosa, cap aquí</i> )	take back – tornar ( <i>una cosa, cap allà</i> )
drive back – tornar conduint	walk back – tornar caminant
go back – tornar ( <i>cap allà</i> )	

### Other adverbial meanings

Although the adverbs that form part of adverbial verbs usually describe position or movement, some of them can have other meanings as well. For example, the adverb **up** sometimes indicates action upward (eg **go up** means *pujar, anar cap amunt*), but it can also express the ideas of completion or destruction. For example, **burn up** can mean *cremar(-se) completament* and **blow up** can mean *esclatar* or *fer esclatar*. The following is a list of some adverbs for which this is the case.

**Away** expresses the ideas of disappearance or complete elimination.

**Down** expresses the ideas of reduction or destruction.

**Off** expresses the ideas of disappearance, disconnection or completion.

**On** expresses the ideas of connection or putting two things together.

**Out** expresses the ideas of finishing, disappearance or obliteration.

**Up** expresses the ideas of finishing or destruction.

Examples:

**When surgeons clean a wound, they cut away the dead tissue.**

*Quan els cirurgians netegen una ferida tallen (i descarten) el teixit mort.*

**His house burned down last night.**

*Anit es va cremar del tot la seva casa.*

**The pain eased off and completely vanished.**

*El dolor s'ha alleujat i ha desaparegut del tot.*

**Hold on tight and don't let go!**

*Agafa't fort i no et deixis anar!*

**She made a wish and blew out all the candles.**

*Va demanar un desig i apagà (amb una bufada) totes les espelmes.*

**They burned up all the evidence.**

*Van cremar completament totes les proves.*

### Phrasal verbs whose meanings are unpredictable

Until this point, all the phrasal verbs we have studied have maintained the sense of both the verbs and the adverbs. Unfortunately, a very large number of phrasal verbs have meanings that are completely different from the meanings of the verb and adverb taken separately. Unfortunately also, learning to recognise and understand these verbs is critical, for although many of them have simpler equivalents –for example, **raising children** and **bringing up children** are synonymous– English speakers make frequent use of phrasal verbs in both speech and writing. One might say that learning these irrational compound verbs is like learning figures of speech: in the same way that English speakers must learn that *fer campana* means *to not attend*, Catalans must learn that **turn out** can mean *resultar*.

Here is a partial list of some of the most important phrasal verbs in English. Observe that many have multiple meanings.

**Be off** – 1 *anar-se'n* 2 *ser passat (menjar)*

**Break down** – 1 *dividir (per a analitzar)* 2 *desmuntar* 3 *patir un col·lapse físic o mental*

**Come off** – 1 *desenganxar-se* 2 *tenir èxit (un afer)*

**Come up** – 1 *acostar-se* 2 *sortir (un imprevist)*

**Get on** – 1 *avenir-se* 2 *anar fent* 3 *fer-se gran*

**Make up** – 1 *inventar* 2 *recuperar (p.e., una classe)* 3 *completar* 4 *fer les paus* 5 *maquillar-se*

**Pick up** – 1 *adquirir per casualitat* 2 *detenir (un sospitós)* 3 *passar a recollir (una persona)* 4 *endreçar (una sala)*

**Point out** – *advertir*

**Put on** – 1 *posar-se (peça de roba, joies, etc.)* 2 *produir (un espectacle)* 3 *guanyar (pes)* 4 *encendre (el llum)* 5 *enganyar (humorísticament)*

**Take in** – 1 *allotjar (algú a casa)* 2 *enganyar (algú)* 3 *entendre (p.e., una idea)* 4 *estrènyer (una peça de roba)* 5 *acollir (un animal)*

**Work out** – 1 *fer exercici, entrenar-se* 2 *tenir un bon resultat*

## 5.10. Use of Infinitives

English has two infinitive forms: the **simple infinitive** (eg **work**) and the **to infinitive** (eg **to work**). The first is used almost exclusively in verb tenses (eg **we work**, **we don't work**, etc.), the imperative (eg **Work harder!**), and as the complement of modal verbs (eg **we can work**, **we will work**, etc.). On the other hand, the **to infinitive** is used principally as a complement –whether of nouns, adjectives or verbs–, or as an extraposed subject (eg **It is important to work** = **To work is important**). These constructions are a bit more complicated and we'll give examples of them in the pertinent sections.

### 5.10.1. Use of the Simple Infinitive

The simple infinitive is the form that defines a verb; it is the form we find in the dictionary. Its most important use is as the verb form in the **simple present** (see Sy 5.1.1), and as the form used in non-affirmative constructions in the **simple present** and **simple past** (see Sy 5.2). What's more, it is also used in subjunctive constructions. Examples:

**We live in Vic.**

**We don't live in Vic.**

**We didn't live in Vic.**

**I insist that it be soon.**

The simple infinitive is also used in imperative constructions (see Sy 9). Examples:

**Come here.**

**Don't leave.**

**Let's go home.**

Another important use of the simple infinitive is as the complement of modal verbs and such semi-modal constructions as **be able to**, **be supposed to**, **have to**, etc. Examples:

They might not know.  
 I can't see a thing.  
 You're not supposed to close the window.  
 No one had to pay.

The simple infinitive can also be used as the complement of constructions headed by verbs of perception, such as **hear** and **see**, and the causative verbs **make**, **have** and **let**. As we shall see in the following section (Sy 5.11, Use of Gerunds), gerunds can also be used in this context with little change in meaning. Examples:

I heard them come in.  
 I see you like dogs.  
 I'll make him tell the truth.  
 We'll have him call you.  
 They don't let me use the phone.

Finally, the simple infinitive can occasionally be used in combination with a noun to describe what the noun does. Examples:

bee- <u>sting</u> earthquake hang <u>man</u> headache heart <u>beat</u>	<u>rattlesnake</u> <u>sunrise</u> <u>tugboat</u> <u>watchdog</u>
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### 5.10.2. Use of the To Infinitive

The to infinitive is used primarily as a complement of adjectives, nouns and verbs, as an extraposed subject, or in expressions of intention. We will see that Catalan translates many of these cases inserting a preposition.

#### The to infinitive as an adjective or noun complement

Here are some common examples of the use of the to infinitive as an adjective or noun complement.

We're pleased to see you.  
 I was foolish to believe them.  
 She's certain to win.  
 He's afraid to go in.  
 I'm too tired to start over.  
 I have a lot to do.  
 You have the right to remain silent.  
 It was a night to remember.  
 It's time to get up.  
 I have enough money to buy it.

It should be noted that if the subject of the infinitive is different to that of the main verb, the construction adjective/noun + **for** + noun + to infinitive must be used. Note that in this second case Catalan uses a subordinate construction with the verb in the subjunctive. Examples:

**We'd be happy for them to stay with us.**

*Estaríem contents que es quedessin amb nosaltres.*

**It's too heavy for me to lift.**

*És massa pesant perquè jo el pugui aixecar.*

**We need someplace for them to play.**

*Ens cal algun lloc perquè puguin tocar.*

**There's enough light for them to see the road.**

*Hi ha prou llum perquè puguin veure el camí.*

### The to infinitive as a verb complement

The majority of English verbs that take other verbs as complements govern the to infinitive. We should mention here, however, that many also govern gerunds, and we will study these cases in the following section (Sy 5.11). An extensive article detailing the possibilities of verb complementation by infinitives or gerunds in English can be found at [http://visca.com/apac/articles/verb\\_comp/](http://visca.com/apac/articles/verb_comp/).

In the following examples, note that English precedes the to infinitive with the adverb **not** when the infinitive is negative.

**I want to see your pictures.**

**I'm beginning to see the light.**

**They've offered to help us.**

**We've decided not to go.**

**We tried not to laugh.**

When the subject of the infinitive is different to that of the main clause, English uses the construction verb + noun + to infinitive. Examples:

**I want him to know how I feel.**

**I like my children to eat well.**

### The to infinitive as an extraposed subject

Although the to infinitive is not normally used as a subject –in this case, a gerund is generally used–, it is used in the construction **it is** + adjective + to infinitive. Examples:

**It is important to be on time.**

**It was hard to hear him.**

**It would be better to wait.**

### The to infinitive in expressions of intention

English uses the to infinitive in expressions of intention. It is important to keep in mind that in this case Catalan uses the combination *per/per a* + infinitive, and to avoid translating the preposition *per/per a* into English. Examples:

**I go to Girona to see my uncle** (*Vaig a Girona per veure el meu oncle*).

**They should have stopped to sleep** (*Haurien d'haver parat per a dormir*).

**I eat to live, I don't live to eat** (*Menjo per viure, no visc per menjar*).

## 5.11. Use of Gerunds (Present Participles)

In modern English this form is often referred to as the gerund-participle, since it is used as both a present participle in continuous tenses and as a gerund (a verb that acts as a noun).

For the sake of simplicity, we will call this form simply a gerund.

English gerunds can act as verbs, adverbs, adjectives and nouns. We will dedicate a subsection to each of these cases.

### Use of gerunds as verbs

The gerund is used, following the verb **be**, in all English continuous tenses. See Sy 5.1 Verb Tenses. Examples:

**They are singing.**  
**I was reading in the library.**  
**I have been waiting for you for an hour.**  
**He hadn't been working long.**

### Use of gerunds as adverbs

As is the case in Catalan, the gerund can be used as an adverb to describe a verb. Examples:

**I slipped coming out of the house.**  
**They ran screaming from the house.**  
**Turning the corner, we saw our friends.**

### Use of gerunds as adjectives

We have already seen in section Sy 2.5 that gerundial adjectives normally describe permanent qualities of the nouns they modify (eg **an interesting film** *una pel·lícula interessant*, **a boring class** *una classe avorrida*). They can also be used to describe what the noun they modify is used for, as in the case of **dining room**, or to describe the kind of thing modified –eg **drinking water**. Examples:

chewing gum dancing girl frying pan	hiding place sleeping bag swimming pool
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### Use of gerunds as nouns

When used as the subjects of a sentence, an English verb usually takes on the form of a gerund, unlike the Catalan, which uses the infinitive. The gerund is also used as a subject complement. Examples:

**Swimming is healthy.**  
**Learning English is difficult.**  
**Smoking is expensive.**  
**My favourite sport is fishing.**  
**Her first job was selling clothes.**

The gerund is also always used after prepositions.

**I did it without thinking.**  
**I'm looking forward to seeing you.**  
**Kings aren't used to waiting.**



For certain verbs, the gerund is also used as a verb complement. In some cases, this corresponds to Catalan use, but in many others English uses a gerund where Catalan uses an infinitive. What's more, some verbs can take either an infinitive or a gerund as a complement, sometimes with a change of meaning, sometimes without.

Verbs That Can Only Take A Gerund As A Verb Complement	
avoid	keep
can't help	mind
can't stand	miss
delay	practise
deny	quit
end up	recommend
enjoy	regret
finish	risk
give up	

Examples:

**I avoid seeing them.**  
**We can't help being concerned.**  
**They ended up staying home.**  
**She still hasn't finished dressing.**  
**Keep working!**  
**I didn't mind waiting.**  
**I have to quit smoking.**

Here is a list of verbs that can take either the gerund or the infinitive as a verb complement, with little or no change of meaning.

Verbs That Can Take Either The Gerund Or The Infinitive As A Verb Complement	
afford	like
begin	prefer
continue	start
hate	

Examples:

**We can't afford (living / to live) in Barcelona.**  
**I hate (to mop / mopping).**  
**When Isabel came in we started (singing / to sing).**

The verbs **mean**, **need**, **remember**, **stop**, **try** and **want** can take either a gerund or verb as a complement, but the meanings are quite different. Examples:

**We mean to do it without fail!**  
**That would mean driving all night.**

We need to talk.  
 The house needs painting.  
 I didn't remember to close the door.  
 I remember closing the door.  
 We stopped to have lunch.  
 He stopped crying when he saw her.  
 The cat tried to get down from the tree.  
 Have you tried emailing him?  
 I want to see you after the meeting.  
 Your hair wants cutting. [AmE.]

### 5.12. Use of Past Participles

The past participle in English is used in three main ways.

As a verb form, following the auxiliary **have**.

We have finished our homework.  
 He said he hadn't seen her.  
 Tomorrow we will have been here one year.  
 If you had phoned me, I would have come over.

In the passive voice.

The house was built last year.  
 The meal has been prepared by the men.  
 She is respected by everyone who knows her.

As an adjective, modifying nouns.

This broken glass should be swept up.  
 The written word has great power.  
 Please correct the attached files.

We should also note that participles are used with the verbs **get** (and, less often, **turn**) to describe a change of state. Here is a list of the most common of these constructions, which are generally translated by pronominal verbs in Catalan.

get bored – <i>avorrir-se</i> get dressed – <i>vestir-se</i> get drunk – <i>emborratxar-se</i> get excited – <i>emocionar-se</i> get hurt – <i>fer-se mal</i> get lost – <i>perdre's</i>	get married – <i>casar-se</i> get scared – <i>espantar-se</i> get stuck – <i>encallar-se</i> get tired – <i>cansar-se</i> get used to – <i>acostumar-se</i>
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Examples:

I'm getting bored.  
 He got hurt.  
 Don't get lost!  
 When are you getting married?  
 I got tired of waiting.  
 You'll get used to it.

## 6. Adverbs

### 6.1. Position of Adverbs

When modifying verbs, adverbs in English can appear in three different positions: initial, final and central. (For the position of adverbs when modifying adjectives or other adverbs, see section Sy 6.9.) Most adverbs are restricted to one or the other of these positions, though there are some that have a certain flexibility. In this section we will study each of these three positions and give a general idea of which adverbs are so located. However, the proper placement of adverbs in English is complex, and so we will always include this position in the individual descriptions of the adverbs throughout the subsections of Sy 6.

#### Initial position

Adverbs in initial position come before the subject of a sentence or clause, and are sometimes followed by comma. Almost all the conjunctive adverbs –such as **at least** and **at any rate** (*com a mínim*, *si més no*); **all the same** and **even so** (*tanmateix*, *no obstant això*), and **now then** and **that said** (*ara bé*)– come before the subject. (See section Sy 6.8 for a complete list). This is also true of the adverbs **maybe** and **perhaps** (*potser*), and also **actually** and **really** when they mean *en efecte*, *realment*, *el fet és que*, etc. Here are some typical examples.

##### Conjunctive adverbs

**At least 60% of working hours must be spent on site each week.**  
**I doubt, therefore I might be.**  
**Now then, that doesn't mean that we won't help you if we can.**

##### Adverbs of doubt or possibility

**Maybe I was there and maybe I wasn't.**  
**"It must get very cold in Seattle." "Actually, the climate is quite mild."**

Finally, though adverbs of manner are normally placed after the verb, many of them can take initial position if the direct object is somewhat long or complex, or when one wants to emphasise the adverb.

**We quickly gained over sixty thousand readers and thirty thousand comments.**  
**He easily won the chess match.**

#### Final position

Adverbs that come after verbs, or after the objects of those verbs, are considered to be in final position. Nearly all adverbs of manner, such as **well** and **slowly**, are so placed, as we will see in section Sy 6.2. Moreover, final position is most usual for adverbs of specific time, such as **today** and **last night**, and certain adverbs of relative time, such as **yet** and **early**. Finally, adverbs of place and direction, which, as we shall see in section Sy 6.3, normally combine with verbs to form so-called **phrasal verbs**, always follow the verb they modify. However, in this case (as we saw in section Sy 5.9), the object can often follow either the adverb or the verb. For example, in the sentence **I left that part out**, the object follows the verb, but in the sentence **I left out that part**, it follows the adverb.

Here are some typical examples of adverbs placed in final position.

Adverbs of manner

**We speak German well.**

**They process, gather and calculate data quickly.**

Adverbs of time

**I did it yesterday.**

**We haven't finished yet.**

Adverbs of place and direction

**They've gone away.**

**Important aspects have been left out.**

### Central position

The rule for placing adverbs in central position is that they go after the auxiliary and also after the verb **be**. However, if there is no auxiliary, which is the case when the verb tense is **simple present** or **simple past**, they come before the verb. Examples:

After the auxiliary or **be**

**We have always admired you.**

**I'll never forget our night together.**

**There should never be two headings in a row.**

**They are usually here.**

Before the verb

**I still have your books.**

**We almost had an accident.**

In the case of negations and questions, the order is normally the following.

Negation: subject + auxiliary + not + adverb + verb

Question: auxiliary + subject + adverb + verb

Examples:

**Young people do not frequently play videogames.**

**Have you ever been in London?**

**Haven't they just got here?**

Note that the adverb **still** is exceptional in that it must precede a contracted negative.

**They still haven't paid me.**

The adverbs that most frequently are found in central position are those of frequency –eg **always** (*sempre*) and **often** (*sovint*)–, those of relative time –eg **already** (*ja*) and **soon** (*aviat*)– and those of affirmation, such as **also** (*també*) and **certainly** (*certament*).

## 6.2. Adverbs of Manner

The most common adverbs of manner are those derived from adjectives by adding to them the suffix **-ly**. We have already studied these morphological changes in section Mo 6.

Adverbs of manner are usually found in final position, though many of them can precede the verb if the direct object is somewhat long or complex, or when one wants to emphasise the adverb. It should be remembered that in nearly all cases, it is not correct to put an adverb between a verb and its direct object. Examples:

**He landed the plane safely** or **He safely landed the plane.** (Not ~~He landed safely the plane.~~)

In some cases, the adverb derived from the adjective has a completely different meaning. Here is a list of the most important adverbs in this class.

ADJECTIVE	ADVERB
<b>bare</b> – <i>nu, despullat</i>	<b>barely</b> – <i>amb prou feines, a penes</i>
<b>hard</b> – <i>dur, fort</i>	<b>hardly</b> – <i>amb prou feines, a penes</i>
<b>late</b> – <i>tard</i>	<b>lately</b> – <i>últimament</i>
<b>present</b> – <i>present, actual</i>	<b>presently</b> – <i>aviat; correntment</i>
<b>scarce</b> – <i>escàs</i>	<b>scarcely</b> – <i>amb prou feines, a penes</i>
<b>short</b> – <i>baix, curt</i>	<b>shortly</b> – <i>aviat (d'aquí a poc temps)</i>

### Adverbs and adjectives with the same form

In English, many adjectives and adverbs share the same form. For example, fast means both ràpid and ràpidament (eg a fast car, he runs fast). In some cases, the -ly adverb form also exists, but it has a different meaning than the simple adverb. For example, consider the word hard: as an adjective it means either dur or difícil –eg a hard surface (una superfície dura); a hard job (una feina difícil)–, as an adverb it means fort or de valent –eg to work hard treballar fort–, but as an -ly adverb it means amb prou feines: He is hardly able to stand (Amb prou feines pot estar-se dret).

Here is a list of the most important adjectives and adverbs that share the same form, along with their -ly meanings, if these exist. An underline indicates that the adverb in question can also modify adjectives or other adverbs (see section Sy 6.9).

Adjectives And Adverbs With The Same Form				
Adj./Adv.	Meaning of Adjective	Meaning of Adverb	The -ly Form	Meaning of the Adverb
alone	<i>sol</i>	<i>sols</i>	*	*
clean	<i>net</i>	<i>totalment</i>	cleanly	<i>netament</i>
dead	<i>mort</i>	<i>exactament, totalment</i>	*	
dear	<i>estimat</i>	<i>car</i>	dearly	<i>tendrament</i>
dirty	<i>brut</i>	<i>brut</i>	*	*
easy	<i>fàcil</i>	<i>amb calma</i>	easily	<i>fàcilment</i>
fast	<i>ràpid</i>	<i>ràpidament, fermament</i>	*	*
fine	<i>menut, bo</i>	<i>bé</i>	finely	<i>finament</i>
flat	<i>pla</i>	<i>desafinadament (massa greu)</i>	flatly	<i>rotundament</i>
hard	<i>dur, difícil</i>	<i>fort</i>	<u>hardly</u>	<i>amb prou feines</i>

high	<i>alt</i>	<i>alt, enlaire</i>	<u>highly</u>	<i>molt, altament</i>
<u>just</u>	<i>just, correcte</i>	<i>solament, exactament</i>	<u>justly</u>	<i>amb dret</i>
late	<i>tard, endarrerit</i>	<i>tard</i>	lately	<i>últimament</i>
loud	<i>alt de volum</i>	<i>alt de volum</i>	loudly	<i>fort(ament)</i>
low	<i>baix</i>	<i>baix</i>	lowly	<i>humilment</i>
most	<i>(el) més, la majoria de</i>	<i>més</i>	mostly	<i>principalment</i>
<u>pretty</u>	<i>bonic</i>	<i>força</i>	prettily	<i>amb gràcia</i>
<u>right</u>	<i>just, correcte</i>	<i>just, exactament, a la dreta, correctament</i>	rightly	<i>degudament</i>
sharp	<i>esmolat, agut</i>	<i>desafinat (massa alt), en punt</i>	<u>sharply</u>	<i>agudament, asprament</i>
straight	<i>dret, recte</i>	<i>directament, en línia recta</i>	*	*
well	<i>bo/bona/bons/ bones de salut</i>	<i>bé</i>	*	*
wide	<i>ample, gran</i>	<i>separadament, del tot</i>	<u>widely</u>	<i>extensament</i>

Examples:

I want to talk to you alone.

Is today your name day? Sorry, I clean forgot!

I was dead sure they wouldn't find out.

Buy cheap, sell dear.

Be careful; they have a reputation for playing dirty.

Take it easy, there's no rush.

The little girl sat on her father's lap, clinging fast.

"How are you?" "Fine thanks, and you?"

You're singing flat/sharp.

We are working hard to resolve this problem.

Don't talk so loud.

We need to find solutions that bring these technologies to those who need them most.

Though there are a couple of mistakes, the essay is pretty well done.

They parked their car right behind mine.

Go straight for three blocks, turn left, then look for a place to park.

He opened the door wide and invited us in.

#### Adverbs of manner not derived from adjectives

There are four important adverbs of manner that are not derived from adjectives. They can all modify adjectives and other adverbs (see section Sy 6.9).

**Almost** – *gairebé, quasi*

We've almost finished.

I almost fell in the water.

**Just** – 1 *en aquest mateix moment (acabar de + infinitiu)* 2 *solament, sols, només*

He **just** come in.

He **was just** telling us it wasn't going to rain when we heard thunder.

I **was just** trying to help!

**Only** – *solament, sols, tan sols, només, únicament*

They **only** pay local calls.

I've **only** seen her twice.

**Well** – *bé, ben*

He **knows the region well**.

Barcelona **has played well** tonight.

### Adverbial idioms of manner

As is the case in Catalan, English has many adverbial idioms that describe how something is done. The following is a list of the most important.

at full speed	half and half	in public
at intervals	in a flash	in secret
at least	in a hurry	in silence
at length	in a moment	in the same way
at most	in advance	in this way
at once	in cold blood	in vain
at random	in confidence	like this
at short notice	in detail	more or less
by chance	in earnest	now and then
by choice	in full	on and off
by degrees	in fun	on and on
by fits and starts	in good faith	on purpose
by hand	in high spirits	on the sly
by heart	in jest	on the square
for good	in order	so
for free	in part	
for keeps	in private	

### 6.3. Adverbs of Place or Direction

The majority of English adverbs of place or direction combine with verbs to form an entity called, in English, a **phrasal verb** or, perhaps more accurately, an **adverbial verb**. There are no corresponding verbal constructions in Catalan and this fact, combined with various other difficulties discussed in section Sy 5.9, makes the study of **phrasal verbs** particularly complex. In this section, we will limit ourselves to providing a list of these adverbs and a general description of their meanings in Catalan. More information can be found in the aforementioned

section Sy 5.9 and online in the manual *Phrasal Verbs, pas a pas* (<http://visca.com/apac/pv-nsum/>). That said, there is another group of place or direction adverbs that normally don't form part of phrasal verbs which we will also study in this section.

### Adverbs that normally form phrasal verbs

**About** – 1 *aquí, allà* 2 *per aquí, per allà, arreu* 3 *en la direcció contrària*

**We passed by their house but they weren't about.**

*Vam passar per casa seva però no hi eren.*

**We've been running about for hours.**

*Correm arreu (amunt i avall) des de fa hores.*

**When I heard the door open, I slowly turned about.**

*En sentir obrir la porta, m'he girat a poc a poc.*

**Across** – 1 *aquí* or *allà* (travessant una distància curta) 2 *a l'altre costat; d'un costat a l'altre*

**I've just been across to meet our new neighbors.**

*Acabo d'anar allà (or a l'altre costat del carrer, or a l'altre pis, etc.) per conèixer els nous veïns.*

**The stream is pretty wide; can you get across?**

*La riera és força ampla; la pots travessar?*

**Along** – *endavant (continuant en una línia de moviment)*

**They went out to dinner and I decided to go along.**

*Van sortir a sopar i vaig decidir d'anar-hi també (or ... d'acompanyar-los).*

**Certain myths are still maintained that have been dragged along since antiquity.**

*Alguns mites que s'han continuat arrossegant des de l'antiguitat.*

**We drove along for hours, enjoying the view.**

*Anàvem amb cotxe durant hores, gaudint de la vista.*

**Apart** – *a part, separadament*

**They're still married, but live apart.**

*Encara són casats, però viuen separats.*

**(A)round** – 1 *aquí, allà* 2 *arreu* 3 *en la direcció contrària* 4 *en direcció circular.*

**When I got downstairs, Mercè wasn't around.**

*Quan vaig arribar a baix, la Mercè no hi era.*

**She reported that a strange man had been following her around.**

*Ella va denunciar que un desconegut l'havia seguit (arreu).*

**Don't turn around until we tell you to.**

*No et giris fins que t'avisem.*

**The pigeons circled around and round.**

*Els coloms giravoltaven.*

**Aside** – *a part.*

**He set his books aside and turned on the TV.**

*Va apartar els llibres i va engegar la televisió.*

**Away** – 1 *fora, lluny* 2 *cap a un altre lloc.*

**My grandparents are away.**

*Els meus avis són fora.*



**I'd like to move away, but I'm afraid.**

*M'agradaria anar-me'n (a viure) en un altre lloc, però tinc por.*

**Back** – 1 endarrere 2 a un lloc o a una posició original.

**Take two steps back, please.**

*Fes-te dos passos endarrere, si us plau.*

**What time did you get back?**

*A quina hora vau tornar?*

**By** – 1 passant un cert punt en l'espai o en el temps 2 a prop

**They waved to us as we passed by.**

*Ens han saludat (amb la mà) quan passàvem.*

**My brother is not by now to protect her.**

*Ara el meu germà no és a prop per a protegir-la.*

**Down** – avall, cap avall

**Now the elevator is going down.**

*Ara l'ascensor baixa (va avall).*

**In** – 1 (cap a) dins 2 aquí (a casa), allà

He came in and took off his coat.

Va entrar i es va treure l'abric.

Is the doctor in?

És aquí, el metge?

**Off** – 1 a distància, a un altre lloc 2 fora de lloc, no tocant 3 indicant separació, allunyament o la idea de no sobre.

**He was only here a moment, then he hurried off.**

*Només ha estat aquí un instant i després se n'ha anat amb pressa.*

**A button has dropped off.**

*Ha saltat un botó.*

**He was trying to walk along the fence but fell off.**

*Intentava de caminar per sobre de la tanca, però caigué.*

**On** – 1 endavant 2 a sobre 3 subjectat, en contacte amb.

**After the accident, the officer asked the bystanders to move on.**

*Després de l'accident, el policia demanà que la gent circulés.*

**As the bus moved away, Pere unexpectedly jumped on.**

*Quan l'autobús s'apartava, en Pere inesperadament hi pujà.*

**Hold on tight!**

*Agafa't fort!*

**Out** – 1 (cap a) fora 2 no aquí, no allà 3 sobresortir 4 distribuir.

**She went out to look at the sky.**

*Ella va sortir per mirar el cel.*

**Mr Evans is out; can you call back in twenty minutes?**

*El senyor Evans no hi és; podeu tornar a trucar d'aquí a vint minuts?*

**I cut my knee on a nail that was sticking out.**

*M'he tallat el genoll amb un clau que sobresortia.*

**The gamblers watched him intently as he dealt out the cards.**

*Els jugadors el miraven atentament mentre distribuïa les cartes.*

**Over** – 1 *aquí, allà* 2 *per sobre; d'un costat a l'altre (passant per damunt).*

**Run over to Sandra's and tell her dinner is ready.**

*Corre a casa de la Sandra i digues-li que el sopar és a punt.*

**Our spirits lifted after the clouds passed over.**

*Ens vam animar quan els núvols van haver passat.*

**Through** – 1 *de punt a punt, de banda a banda*

**The door was so narrow we couldn't get through.**

*La porta era tan estreta que no hi podíem passar.*

**Up** – 1 *amunt, cap amunt* 2 *acostant-se a* 3 *fora del llit*

**How does a balloon stay up?**

*Com s'aguanta enlaire un globus?*

**A stranger came up to me and asked for a light.**

*Un desconegut se'm va acostar i em demanà foc.*

**Isn't Isidre up yet?**

*Encara no s'ha llevat l'Isidre?*

**Adverbs that normally do not form phrasal verbs**

**Above** – *dalt, amunt*

**There was a wooden staircase leading above.**

*Hi havia una escala de fusta que pujava.*

**Abroad** – *a l'estranger*

**She plans to live abroad for a year.**

*Pensa viure a l'estranger durant un any.*

**Ahead** – *al davant, endavant*

**They've gone further ahead.**

*Han anat (més) endavant.*

**Below** – *sota, davall, a baix*

**One was above the surface and the other below.**

*L'un era sobre la superfície i l'altre a sota.*

**Beneath** – *a sota*

**The truth that lies beneath.**

*La veritat que hi ha a sota.*

**Behind** – *endarrere, enrere*

**Look behind; are they still following us?**

*Mira endarrere; encara ens segueixen?*

**Between** – *entremig*

**I can see the two houses, but I can't make out the fields between.**

*Veig les dues cases, però no albiro els camps que hi ha entremig.*

**Beyond – més enllà**

**He pointed to the mountains and said, “The city lies beyond”.**

*Assenyalà les muntanyes i digué; «La ciutat és més enllà»*

**Close, near – a prop**

**She felt an urge to hold him close/near (... to herself).**

*Va sentir un desig d'agafar-lo ben a prop.*

**Deep – profundament**

**Still waters run deep.**

*Les aigües quietes són fondes (El qui no parla gaire pot tenir pensaments profunds).*

**Downstairs – 1 a baix 2 escales avall**

**Everybody's downstairs.**

*Tothom és a baix.*

**He walked/ran/fell/crawled downstairs.**

*Va caminar/córrer/caure/arrossegar-se escales avall.*

**Far (away) – lluny**

**We're going to move far away (... from here).**

*Fugirem ben lluny.*

**High – alt**

**The balloon soared high over the Pyrenees.**

*El globus volava alt sobre els Pirineus.*

**Inside – (a) dins**

**You're all wet! Go inside before you catch a cold.**

*Estàs xop! Entra abans no agafis un constipat.*

**Low – baix**

**“Swing low, sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home”.**

*Vola baix, carrossa dolça, per a portar-me a casa (al cel).*

**Near/nearby – a la vora, a prop**

**Who knows what dangers might be near.**

*Qui sap quins perills podrien ser a la vora.*

**Opposite – a/al davant**

**Students should sit opposite (to) each other for this activity.**

*Per a aquesta activitat els alumnes haurien de seure l'un davant de l'altre.*

**Outside – (a) fora**

**Who left the dog outside?**

*Qui ha deixat el gos a fora?*

**Past – per davant**

**He stepped aside so we could move past.**

*Ha fet un pas al costat perquè poguéssim passar pel davant.*

**Under** – *per sota, a sota*

**Do you know the Devil's Bridge? Well we have to pass under.**

*Coneixes el pont del Diable? Doncs hi hem de passar per sota.*

**Underneath** – *per sota, a sota*

**The cake had powdered sugar on top and jelly underneath.**

*El pastís tenia sucre en pols per sobre i melmelada (gelea) a sota.*

**Upstairs** – *1 a dalt 2 escales amunt*

**Will you take the laundry upstairs for me, please?**

*Em pujaràs la bugada (lit. m portaràs la bugada a dalt), si us plau?*

**He walked/ran/crawled upstairs.**

*Va caminar/córrer/arrossegar-se escales amunt.*

**Here, there and home**

The adverbs **here** and **there** present few difficulties, since they almost correspond to their Catalan equivalents *aquí* and *allà*. Note that *allà* is often substituted by *hi* –eg *Hi són ara*– and must be translated **there** in English: **They are there now.**

Both **here** and **there** are also used colloquially to indicate or call attention to the presence of someone or something **here** or **there**. Examples:

**Here's our bus.**

**Here's a letter we've been saving for you.**

**Look! There's Mònica!**

**There goes the bus.**

The word **home** can be used as an adverb with verbs indicating direction; its meaning is *a casa, de casa*, etc. In American English, **home** can also be used with verbs indicating presence, such as **be** and **stay**. Examples:

**It's time to go home.**

**After the dinner party he had to be driven home.**

**What time did you get home last night?**

**I phoned them but they weren't home.**

**I'd rather stay home.**

**He leaves home at ten.**

**The -wards suffix**

The suffix **-ward/-wards** can be combined with various adverbs of place and direction with a sense of *cap a aquesta direcció*. Examples:

**backward** (*enrere*)

**downward** (*cap avall*)

**forward** (*endavant*)

**inward** (*endins*)

**leftward** (*cap a l'esquerra*)

**onward** (*endavant*)

**outward** (*enfora*)

**rightward** (*cap a la dreta*)

**towards** (*cap a*)

**upward** (*cap amunt*)

## 6.4. Adverbs of Time

### 6.4.1. Frequency Adverbs

**Always** – *sempre* (central position)

We always get up at seven.

**Ever** – *mai* (*alguna vegada*) (central position)

The frequency adverb **ever** is generally used in comparative, interrogative and conditional sentences and corresponds to the Catalan *mai* in the same circumstances. Examples:

**The traffic last Sunday was worse than ever.**

**Have you ever been to Boston?**

**If you ever come to Gósol, be sure to drop in.**

Although **ever** can be used in negative sentences –eg **I haven't ever seen that film**–, the use of **never** (see below) in such cases is much more usual: **I've never seen that film** (*No he vist mai aquesta pel·lícula*). However, the use of **ever** is more common than **never** in negative questions: the expression **Haven't you ever heard of Facebook?** (*No has sentit mai parlar de Facebook?*) is more usual than **Have you never heard...**.

**From time to time** – *de tant en tant* (usually final position; sometimes initial position)

**They stop by from time to time to say hello.**

**From time to time, we may provide you with information about new features.**

**Never** – (*no*) *mai* (central position)

See above for the comments concerning **ever**.

**I'll never fall in love any more!**

**There are people who will never team up with others.**

**We've never been to England.**

**Often** – *sovint* (central position or final position)

**We often go there or We go there often.**

**I've often heard about her or I've heard about her often.**

**Sometimes** – *a vegades* (initial, central or, less frequently, final position)

**Sometimes quality can be a problem/Quality can sometimes be a problem/**

**Quality can be a problem sometimes.**

**Sometimes it's better to wait/It's better sometimes to wait/(It's better to wait sometimes).**

### 6.4.2. Adverbs of Relative Time

**Afterwards** – *després, més tard* (final position; sometimes initial)

**I didn't find out about it until afterwards.**

**How do you think you'll feel about it afterwards?**

**We had dinner on the beach; afterwards, we went for a walk.**

**Already** – *ja*, in the sense of *des d'abans* (central position, but can be used in final position when interrogative and expressing surprise)

**I've already met your wife.**

**When we got there, Lluc had already left.**

**Are you already here? or Are you here already?**

**Any more / any longer** – *ja no* (final position)

Note that **any more** and **any longer** are synonyms of **no longer** (see below).

**Audiences are not a passive entity any more/any longer.**

**Don't they live here any more/any longer?**

**At once** – 1 *alhora*, *al mateix temps* 2 *de seguida* (both senses, final position)

**You can't do three things at once.**

*No pots fer tres coses alhora.*

**Laura's in trouble; we'll have to leave at once!**

*La Laura s'ha ficat en un embolic; haurem de marxar de seguida!*

**At the same time** – *alhora*, *al mateix temps* (final position)

**With our new TV you can watch two programs at the same time.**

**Before** – *abans* (final position)

**Have you ever been here before?**

**Before long** – *ben aviat*, *aviat*, *abans de gaire* (initial position)

**Before long he was making more money than his father.**

**Early** – *d'hora*, *abans d'hora*, *aviat*, *massa aviat* (final position)

It is good to keep in mind that the Catalan adverb *aviat* is sometimes a synonym for *d'hora* (eg *Em llevo molt aviat* = *Em llevo molt d'hora*), and in this case is translated **early**. When its meaning is *d'aquí a poc temps* it is translated by **soon** (see below).

**We usually have lunch early.**

*Acostumem a dinar d'hora.*

**You're twenty minutes early.**

*Has arribat vint minuts abans d'hora (massa d'hora).*

**In time** – *a temps*, *amb temps* (final position)

**We weren't in time for the opening number.**

**You're just in time for lunch.**

**Late** – *tard* (final position)

**You're late.**

**The train from Lleida is usually late.**

**Meanwhile (meantime)** – *mentrestant* (initial position)

**Meanwhile, some societies are weakened by bad government, inequalities and a lack of education.**

**No longer** – *ja no* (central position)

Note that **no longer** is a synonym of **any more** and **any longer** (see above).

**Many products are no longer produced for a local market.**

**On time** – *a l'hora, puntual* (final position)

**He has trouble getting to work on time.**

**I doubt if they'll be on time.**

**So far** – *fins ara* (both initial and final position)

Note that there is a subtle difference between **so far** and its apparent synonym **until now** (see below). We use **so far** to mean *fins ara* when the situation has not changed; eg **We haven't had any problems so far** (*Fins ara no hem tingut problemes*) means that we still have no problems. On the other hand, **We haven't had any problems until now** (same translation) means that there has been a change and that now we do have problems.

**This is all I've been able to do so far.**

**So far, he hasn't shown any interest at all.**

**Soon** – *aviat* (final position or central position if following the auxiliaries **will** or **would**)

**He'll be here soon or He'll soon be here.**

**They will be available in English soon or They will soon be available in English.**

**I have to drive back soon.**

**Still** – *encara* (central position, but before a negative contraction)

**He still wants to come with us.**

**Do you still work at the Port del Comte?**

**I still don't understand.**

**Is she still not speaking to him?**

**Yet** – 1 *ja* interrogatiu 2 *encara* negatiu

**Have they finished painting your bathroom yet?**

*Ja han acabat de pintar el vostre lavabo?*

**Is it nine o'clock yet?**

*Ja són les nou?*

**They don't know me yet.**

*Encara no em coneixen.*

**We haven't had a chance to call them yet.**

*Encara no hem tingut l'oportunitat de trucar-los.*

#### 6.4.3. Adverbs of Specific Time

The term **adverbs of specific time** refers not only to such terms as **today**, **tomorrow** and **yesterday**, but to days, months and periods of the day. All these adverbs normally occur in final position, though they can, for reasons of style, be used in initial position.

It is important to keep in mind that, when the names of the months or days of the week – or the terms **week** (*setmana*), **month** (*mes*) or **year** (*any*) – refer to the one immediately

previous, English uses the adjective **last**, but without the article. Similarly, when referring to the one immediately to come, it uses **next**, again without the article. Examples:

**We met them last March.**

**They're going to Tamariu next Tuesday.**

**August was much rainier this year than last year.**

**We won't know how much we'll have to pay until next week.**

Finally, it should be mentioned that all these adverbs can also be used as nouns. Examples:

**Tomorrow will be sunny.**

**Last Wednesday was the twenty-third of May.**

**Now is the time to tell him how you feel.**

**Now – ara**

**You can come over now or wait until tomorrow.**

**Nobody's there now.**

Note also the expressions **by now** (*a hores d'ara*), **from now on** (*d'ara endavant*), **right now** (*ara mateix*) and **until now** (*fins ara*, but see the comments above concerning the adverb **so far**). Examples:

**If he hasn't gotten here by now, he isn't coming.**

**From now on we'll do the class in English.**

**Do it right now!**

**These problems were caused by a server failure which had not been detected until now.**

**Then – aleshores, en aquell temps** (initial or final position)

**There was no TV then.**

**Then, when I was about twenty, I began to try my luck with editors.**

Note also the expression **then and there** (*en aquell precís moment, immediatament*).

**I decided then and there to become a doctor.**

**Today, nowadays – avui, avui dia**

**The boss won't be in today.**

**Today is Saturday, but I have to work anyway.**

**Today's class will be held on the beach.**

**Most cars sold today (nowadays) are front-wheel drive.**

**People travel a lot nowadays.**

**Tomorrow – demà**

**I don't think I'll be able to pay you tomorrow.**

**We'll have to finish the job tomorrow.**

**Tomorrow's my birthday.**

We should also mention the expressions **the day after** and **the next day** (*l'endemà*). Examples:

**They aren't getting here till the day after tomorrow.**

**In England, the day after Christmas is Boxing Day.**

**The next day was cold and windy.**



**Tonight** – *aquesta nit*

**We'll probably see them later tonight.**

**We're leaving for the coast tonight.**

**Yesterday** – *ahir*

**Joan didn't come to class yesterday.**

**Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away.**

Note too the expression **the day before yesterday** (*abans-d'ahir*). For example:

**She had her knee operation the day before yesterday.**

## 6.5. Adverbs of Affirmation and Doubt

### 6.5.1. Adverbs of Affirmation

As in Catalan, English adverbs of affirmation are used to indicate or emphasise that a statement is true. The most common, of course, is **yes**. As for the others, it is important to remember that those that go in central position almost always precede a negative contraction. Example:

**We definitely haven't done anything to be ashamed of.**

The following is a table of the most common affirmative adverbs.

<b>certainly</b> [central] – <i>certament</i> <b>definitely</b> [central] – <i>segurament</i> <b>for sure</b> (colloquial) [initial, final] – <i>sens dubte</i> <b>indeed</b> [initial, final] – <i>en efecte</i>	<b>probably</b> [central] – <i>probablement</i> <b>really</b> [central] – <i>en realitat, de debò</i> <b>surely</b> [central, initial] – <i>segurament</i> <b>undoubtedly</b> [central] – <i>sens dubte</i>
--	--

Examples:

**There are three things I know for sure about teaching English.**

**Indeed, the classroom has not changed over the last one hundred years.**

**Most people will probably stay home.**

**The government was really directed from London.**

When expressing surprise, the Catalan expression *Ah, sí?*, meaning *De debò?* is normally translated **Really?** Examples:

**"John's asked Mary to marry him." "Really?"**

### 6.5.2. Adverbs of Doubt

Adverbs of doubt express negativity or uncertainty. Here is a list of the most important of these adverbs.

<b>apparently</b> [central, initial] – <i>no</i> <b>maybe</b> [initial] – <i>potser</i> <b>not</b> [central] – <i>no</i>	<b>perhaps</b> [initial] – <i>potser</i> <b>possibly</b> [initial] – <i>possiblement</i> <b>seemingly</b> [central] – <i>aparentment</i>
--	--

Examples:

**Maybe/Perhaps** they got lost.  
**I couldn't possibly** have had better care.  
**They were seemingly** identical.

## 6.6. Adverbs of Degree

We have already studied the adverbs **too**, **very**, **quite** and **enough** in section Sy 2.3. Quantifying Adjectives (and Adverbs). The following table lists other important adverbs of degree – all go in a central position.

<b>almost</b> – <i>gairebé</i> <b>barely</b> – <i>amb prou feines</i> <b>completely</b> – <i>completament</i> <b>extremely</b> – <i>extremadament</i> <b>fairly</b> – <i>bastant</i>	<b>hardly</b> – <i>amb prou feines</i> <b>nearly</b> – <i>gairebé</i> <b>pretty</b> – <i>bastant</i> <b>rather</b> – <i>bastant</i> <b>scarcely</b> – <i>amb prou feines</i>
--	--

Examples:

**We're almost** there!  
**We had barely/hardly/scarcely** begun when it started to rain.  
**She was extremely** displeased.  
**The work was fairly/pretty/rather** easy.

## 6.7. Interrogative Adverbs

For a study of the interrogative English adverbs **when**, **where**, **why** and **how**, see section Sy 5.4. Use of Interrogative Adverbs.

## 6.8. Conjunctive Adverbs

Conjunctive adverbs, as their name implies, act very much like conjunctions. They generally appear in initial position (unless otherwise noted) and are sometimes followed by a comma. Here is a list of the most common along with an example of each.

**All the same, even so** – *tanmateix, no obstant això*

**We'd never met but (all the same / even so),** I felt I'd known him all my life.

**Altogether, all in all** – *en resum, en conjunt*

**The hotel is a bit smaller than we'd hoped but all in all** we're quite pleased.  
**The 9/11 attacks in New York and their consequences provided the basis for a series of artistic proposals that have been altogether** shocking.

**Anyway** – *malgrat això; de tota manera*

The adverb **anyway** goes in final position when it means *malgrat això*, and in initial position when it means *de tota manera*.

**You may not like it, but do it anyway.**

**I don't know what happened to your money; anyway, it's gone.**

**Anyway, those of you that for this period prefer to work from home can do so.**

**At any rate, in any event** – *de tota manera*

**At any rate / In any event, it doesn't hurt to check it out.**

**At least, at any rate, anyway** – *com a mínim, si més no*

**I think the children are finally asleep; at least / at any rate / anyway, they're quiet.**

**At any rate, it is still not very clear how emotions are reflected in EEG patterns.**

**For example, for instance** – *per exemple*

**For example, say "I speak English well", not "I speak well English".**

**However** – *tanmateix, no obstant això*

The adverb **however** can also appear in central position, separated by commas.

**However, we understand that not everybody agrees OR**

**We understand, however, that not everybody agrees.**

**In other words, that is (to say)**– *és a dir*

**Those units that do not appear often in the set of documents will have more weight, that is, will be more representative of the full set of documents.**

**Nevertheless, nonetheless** – *tanmateix, no obstant això*

The adverbs **nevertheless** and **nonetheless** can appear in any position, with or without commas.

**Though we disliked each other, nevertheless/nonetheless we agreed.**

**Say what you will, we must nevertheless/nonetheless go forward.**

**Nevertheless/nonetheless, when we consider all the elements, we can single out the environment as key.**

**The mines were modern but dangerous, nevertheless/nonetheless.**

**Now then, that said** – *ara bé*

**The results were unexpected; (now then / that said), the experiment wasn't a failure.**

**On the other hand** – *per altra banda; però*

**These systems have to guarantee their independence, and, on the other hand, be able to show information in multiple formats.**

**Otherwise** – *altrament, si no*

**I'm glad you accompanied me; otherwise I wouldn't have come.**

**Still, all the same** – *tanmateix, no obstant això*

**Granted that it is dangerous; still / all the same, I still want to go.**

Then – *doncs*

Is it raining? Then don't go out.

Therefore, thus – *per tant*

A is equal to B and B is equal to C; therefore, A is equal to C.

Though – *tanmateix, no obstant això, però*

The adverb **though** normally appears in final position.

This is not the only new development though.

## 6.9. Adverbs Modifying Adjectives or Other Adverbs

Although an adverb usually modifies a verb, there are cases in which it modifies other grammatical categories. In this section we will study three important cases of this.

### Adverbs modifying adjectives

The most common cases of adverbs modifying adjectives are those of amplifying adverbs, which reinforce the sense of the adjective, and reducing adverbs, which lessen the sense of the adjective. Note that many of these can also be considered adverbs of degree, which we studied in section Sy 2.4. Comparative and Superlative Adjectives (and Adverbs). Here are some examples of the most common adverbs in each category.

#### Amplifying adverbs

I'm very/really/awfully sorry you can't come.

Esther was deeply concerned about the safety of the climb.

This product is entirely free of chemical additives.

Their company has a highly skilled staff.

His wife was sharply critical of his behaviour.

The benefactors wish to remain totally anonymous.

#### Reducing adverbs

The movie was a bit / a little dull.

His words were barely/hardly/scarcely intelligible.

The boat was relatively small.

The adverbs **fairly**, **rather** and **pretty** all mean *bastant*; **fairly** is generally used to express a positive quality (eg **He's fairly intelligent**), **rather** generally modifies a negative quality (eg **The room was rather warm**) and **pretty**, the least formal of the three, can be used in both cases: **He's pretty intelligent** and **The room was pretty warm**. Note too that the adverb **quite** can have both an amplifying and reducing sense. Examples:

You're **quite right** (*Tens tota la raó*).

Your paper is **quite good** (*El teu treball és bastant bo*).

### Adverbs modifying other adverbs

As in the case of adverbs modifying adjectives, the adverbs modifying other adverbs can be either amplifying or reducing. Examples:

You've come too/very soon.

Your son plays the violin surprisingly well.

He recovered from the accident fairly/pretty/rather quickly.

### Adverbs modifying other grammatical categories

There are three main cases in which adverbs can modify other grammatical categories.

Reducing adverbs that modify indefinite pronouns and the adjectives associated with them.

Adverbs that express approximation, such as **about**, **around** and **roughly**, can modify time and quantity expressions, as well as certain subordinate clauses.

The adverbs **over** and **under** (*més de* and *menys de*) can modify quantity expressions.

Examples:

**Almost everybody in this town has a dog.**

**Nearly all/half the women left early.**

**It rains so much there's virtually no air pollution.**

**We got home about/around six in the morning.**

**The company paid him roughly double the amount he expected.**

**That's roughly what happened to us.**

**I have saved up over two thousand euros.**

**There were under ten thousand shares sold.**

## 7. Prepositions

As for the three first sections, although prepositions can have other meanings –indicating, for example, subject matter (a song **about** love), object (to shoot **at** someone), means (to be good **at** something)–, to deal with every possible meaning of every preposition is beyond the scope of our study and we consider these three categories to be the most significant. Remember too that we have already studied prepositional verbs –verbs that require prepositions before their complements– in section Sy 5.8.

Finally keep in mind that, whereas Catalan uses the infinitive as a prepositional complement, English uses the gerund (see Sy 5.11. Use of Gerunds (Present Participles)).

### 7.1. Prepositions of Place

Prepositions of place, as their name implies, are used to refer to either the place an object or person is located (eg **John is in the kitchen**), or the relation this position has with some other object or person (**John is standing behind Judith**). Keep in mind that many of these prepositions can also be used to refer to both temporal relations (see Sy 7.2) and to movement (see section Sy 7.3).

#### At, in, on, inside, outside, within

When referring to the place a person or thing is located, the prepositions **at**, **in** and **on** can all be translated in Catalan by *a*. Obviously this can cause confusions, which we will try to clear up with the following summary.

**At** – *a* (public buildings, commercial establishments)

**In** – *a* (spaces with limits (rooms, parks, fields, etc.); toponyms (countries, cities, etc.); water)

**On** – *a*, *per* (surfaces (table, ceiling, floor, etc.); areas with no limits; small islands)

Examples:

They're at the theatre.  
 We met some friends of ours at the bakery.  
 The children are in the house.  
 They met in London.  
 My wallet fell in the water.  
 There's a stain on the ceiling.  
 We walked on the beach.  
 We spent our vacation on Menorca.

Note too the following related prepositions of place.

**Inside** – *dins, a la part interior*

Inside the house everything appeared to be undisturbed.

**Outside** – *fora, a la part exterior*

I live outside the city.

**Within** – *dins, no més lluny de*

We need more leadership within the school.  
 He planted the firs within twenty feet of the house.

**Among and Between**

**Among** – *entre* (many)

**Between** – *entre* (generally two)

The preposition **between** describes the relation between two objects or persons, or a relation between many when considered one by one. The preposition **among** is always applied to more than two objects or persons, without distinguishing them individually. Examples:

Andorra lies between Spain and France.  
 I sit between Mar and Doris.  
 Between music, the Internet and giving classes, I have no time for romance.  
 The interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes.  
 There were no men among the survivors.  
 We were able to observe deer among the trees.

**Above, below, over, under, on, on top of**

Higher than	Lower than
Above – <i>sobre, damunt de</i>	Below – <i>sota, davall de</i>
Over – <i>sobre, damunt de</i>	Under – <i>sota, davall de</i>
On – <i>sobre, damunt de</i>	
On top of – <i>sobre, damunt de</i>	

The prepositional pairs **above** and **below**, and **over** and **under**, are used to describe a person or thing that occupies a position higher or lower in altitude than another. They also imply that there is no point of contact between the two elements. In contrast, **on** and **on top of** both imply that there is contact, the latter more specifically indicating a point of

contact at the highest point of some object. Note too that **below** is used more when referring to surfaces and body parts (eg **below the water**, **below the knee**); otherwise, its use is less common than that of **under**. Examples:

**The lamp hangs above/over the table.**

**A man was sitting on the table.**

**The suitcase is on top of the wardrobe.**

**The dog is sleeping under (not ~~below~~) the table.**

The prepositions **over** and **under** have a tendency to indicate that there is a more or less vertical relation between the two elements. So, for example, it is more common to say **the hills above (not over) the town** (*les muntanyetes sobre el poble*) or **the bridge is 100 metres below (not under) the pass** (*el pont és a 100 metres sota el coll*).

Both **over** and **under** can also imply movement from one side to another, whereas **above** and **under** don't. Thus, **The bird flew over the mountain** (*L'ocell travessava la muntanya volant*) and **The rabbit burrowed under the fence** (*El conill travessava la tanca soscavant*).

**Beneath** and **underneath** are used less frequently as synonyms of **under**.

**Across, ahead of, behind, in back of, in front of, opposite**

**Across** – *a l'altre costat de; arreu de*

**Ahead of** – *davant de*

**Behind** – *darrere de*

**In back of** – *darrere de*

**In front of** – *davant de*

**Opposite** – *davant de*

Examples:

**They live across the street from us.**

**At markets across America, people are searching for healthy food.**

**We saw the glow of their taillights ahead of us.**

**I'm standing behind (in back of (AmE.)) Mary.**

**Two women were working behind the bar.**

**The swings are in front of the house.**

**She likes to stand in front of the mirror.**

**She was sitting opposite you at dinner.**

Note too the expressions **behind bars** (*a la presó*) and **behind the wheel** (*al volant del cotxe*).

**Beside, by, close to, near, next to**

**Beside** – *al costat de*

**By** – *al costat de, prop de*

**Close to** – *prop de*

**Near** – *prop de*

**Next to** – *al costat de*

**The students had a picnic beside the river.**

**The old woman wished to be buried by her husband.**

**Cut the stem as close to the ground as you can.**

**We want to live near the sea.**

**The house next to mine sold for two hundred thousand pounds.**

**Along, around, beyond, past**

**Along** – *al llarg de*

Plane trees had been planted along the highway.

**Around** – *al voltant de, arreu de, tombant*

They sat around the fire.

Images were beamed around the world.

Note too the expression **around the corner** (*després de la cantonada*).

**Beyond** – *més enllà de*

Their house is beyond those fields.

**Past** – (*més*) *enllà de, després de*

They live three houses past the butcher's.

**Other compound prepositions**

**At/in/on the back of** – *al darrere de*

He was sitting at/in the back of the room.

We put the camera in the back of the car.

Write down your number on the back of this card.

**At/in/on the front of** – *a/a/sobre la part davantera*

The dining room was at the front of the house.

There was a TV in the front of the bus.

I wrote my address on the front of the envelope.

**At the top of** – *a dalt de*

They were hiding at the top of the stairs.

**At the bottom of** – *al fons de*

There's a lot of crud at the bottom of my bag.

**7.2. Prepositions of Time**

**After** – *després de (més tard)*

We can meet after class.

After twenty years in the country he still hadn't learned the language.

**At** – *a, per*

Six is too early for me; can I come at seven?

He started smoking at an early age.

Note too the following expressions.

**at dawn, at sunrise, at noon, at dusk/twilight, at sunset, at night, at midnight**

**Before** – *abans de*

Alice got home before ten o'clock.

A cure may be discovered before long.



**Between – entre**

Where were you on Friday night between eleven and midnight?

**By – no més tard que, per**

He was usually home by five.

Also: **by day** and **by night** (*de dia, de nit*). Example:

Some truckers like to drive by night and others, by day.

**During – durant**

Note that it is not possible to use **during** before a quantitative term; that is, we can say **during the summer** (*durant l'estiu*), but not ~~**during three months**~~ (*durant tres setmanes*). In this latter case we say **for three months**.

My elder brother was born during a thunderstorm.

Services closed during the holidays.

**For – durant, des de fa, per**

They stayed there for three days.

We've been here for an hour.

I'll lend you my bicycle for three days.

**In – en, per, a**

If the time period is greater or less than a day, English usually uses **in**; for the day itself, we use **on** (see below).

It was finished in a year.

He doesn't do shows in summer.

The third term is scheduled to start in September.

The combination **in** + time period translates the Catalan expression *d'aquí a* + time period; eg **in two days** = *d'aquí a dos dies*.

**On – a**

Note that in its temporal sense, the preposition **on** is only used for days.

I was born on June 20.

We met on Christmas day.

Life seems better on a sunny day.

**Over – més de, durant, per**

He spent over three years writing his memoirs.

He worked here over the summer.

I hope to get a lot of work done over the Christmas holidays.

**Past – després de, més tard que**

It's twenty past ten.

We didn't get home till past midnight.

**Since – des de**

We've been here since four-thirty.

Since its start, over a hundred people have studied the courses.

**Through** – *a, durant*

We meet every day, from Monday through Friday.  
Our guests will be staying through Easter.

**Throughout** – *al llarg de*

Throughout his life the doctor had always tried to help others.

**To** – *a, fins a*

It's already a quarter to nine.  
I'll be home this evening from seven to nine.  
We enjoyed the whole show, from beginning to end.

**Towards** – *pels volts de, cap a*

The fog began to lift towards noon.  
Towards the end of the century, Romanticism made a come-back.

**Until** – *fins (a)*

The documents will not be available until September.

**Within** – *menys de*

Document archiving is to take place within 12 months.

### 7.3. Prepositions of Movement

**About** – *arreu de, per*

The tourists wandered about the town.

**Across** – *travessant, de l'un costat a l'altre*

We took a train journey across Siberia.

**Along** – *per*

The system incorporates the routes followed by vehicles along unmapped roads.

**Down** – *locutions*

He walked/ran/drove down the road.

**In** – *a*

This service lets users access the full text of articles available in the Library.

**Into** – *a*

He came into the room.  
The water was running down the stairs and into the kitchen.  
These trends will influence investors to expand their operations into the Indian market.

**Off** – *de* (indicating separation)

He fell off his bike.  
Cut off from the rest of the world.

**On – sobre**

**They loaded their baggage on the cart.**

**Onto – sobre**

**He climbed onto the roof.**

**Out of – (fora) de, locucions**

**He pulled the kittens out of the box.**

**The skydivers jumped out of the plane too soon.**

**She walked/ran out of the room.**

**Over – per sobre (d'un costat a l'altre)**

**Joan leaped over the bonfire.**

**Past – per davant de**

**She walked past me and didn't say a word.**

**Through – per, a través de, per mitjà de**

**The card will be sent through the post to the address detailed here.**

**Light passes through the windowpanes.**

**To – a, en, fins a**

**Due to the move to Barcelona, the documents will not be available until September.**

**When we got to this little town, we started trying to find a place to sleep.**

**I drove her to the foot of the mountain.**

**Towards (also toward) – cap a**

**This is an important step towards bringing the two research centres under the same roof.**

**Under – sota, per sota de**

**This is an important step towards bringing the UOC's two research centres under the same roof.**

**Up – locutions**

**He walked/ran/drove up the hill.**

#### 7.4. Placement of Prepositions

In English, prepositional phrases generally come after the verb or its complement, if there is one. In most cases this is the only possible position. Examples:

**There is a checkbox to the left of each journal title.**

**They are all experts in their fields.**

**One of the distinctive features is how students are helped along the entire process.**

It's important to remember not to put prepositional phrases between a verb and its complement, as sometimes occurs in Catalan. Example:

**They put three apples in the basket (not ~~They put in the basket three apples~~).**

That said, there are four cases in which the prepositional complement precedes the preposition, which is put after the verb or verb complement. In the following examples, we'll underline the preposition and double underline its complement.

In interrogations

**Who did you go with?**

**What are you talking about?**

**Where do they come from?**

When accompanied by relative pronouns (see Sy 4.4.1. Adjectival Relative Pronouns)

**The latest editions of the scientific journals that you are interested in.**

**The data (that) they work with.**

**His mother, who he'd looked after for years, died yesterday.**

In passive expressions

**The first 10 requests made by students will not be charged for.**

**I don't like getting shot at.**

**The judge he was brought before is very strict.**

When an adjective is complemented by a clause headed by an infinitive

**My boss is very easy to work for.**

**Your dogs are fun to play with.**

**This neighborhood isn't safe to walk in at night.**

## 8. Conjunctions

### 8.1. Coordinating Conjunctions

Before studying the coordinating conjunctions themselves, we should observe that English can eliminate the second subject in coordinated expressions linked by **and**, **but** and **yet** if the two expressions are complete sentences and share the same subject. Examples:

**It also studies the steps that have to be followed, and indicates its weak points.**

**He knew the answer but didn't tell her.**

**She knew she was in danger, yet refused to move.**

**And – *i***

**The street was long and narrow.**

**It's raining and snowing.**

**They provide information on current affairs and show trends in public opinion.**

**But – *sinó, però***

**The interview's questions were generally open but following a pattern.**

**It wasn't at Reus, but at Tarragona.**

**He's a good boy, but he doesn't study much.**

**There are increasingly more internet users, but government surveillance is growing.**

**For – *ja que***

The conjunction **for** is generally only used in formal contexts.

**Hearing the song affected me deeply, for it had been my mother's favourite.**

**Nor – *ni***

**The vast majority of adolescents say that videogames do not limit nor are they a substitute for their usual social life.**

**No commercial use can be made of the original work, nor can derivative works be produced.**

**Or – *o***

**You can go back to any of the screens and change or revise your entry without losing any data.**

**Hurry up, or else we'll miss the train.**

**Professionals are interested in undertaking innovation projects or finding new jobs in a dynamic new environment.**

**So – *per tant, doncs***

Note that the word **so** is also used in consecutive expressions (eg **so big that, so much work that**, etc.; see section 3.2.3. Quantifying Adjectives and Adverbs).

**It started to rain, so we left early.**

**This information will allow users to retrieve your document, so we recommend that you provide all the data applicable.**

**Currently, you do not form part of any group, so no information can be shown.**

**Yet – *tanmateix, no obstant això, però***

Note that **yet** is also a time adverb (*ja* interrogatiu and *encara* negatiu; see section Sy 6.4).

**You've got all the money you want, and yet you don't use it.**

**Machines are neither creative nor trusting, yet in our daily lives, we are increasingly in their hands.**

**He was a stern yet fair master.**

## 8.2. Correlative Conjunctions

Correlative conjunctions link balanced words and expressions. In English, the following five are the most important.

**Both... and – *tant... com***

**Both my mother and yours were born in California.**

**It was a masterpiece, both for style and content.**

Note that, because of the inherent dual nature of the word **both**, the construction **both... and** is limited to describing two entities. If three entities are mentioned, other expressions must be used. Example:

**Both the students and teachers, as well as the parents, laughed a lot.**

**Either... or – o... o**

Either he didn't tell me or I've forgotten.

Decide: one or the other.

We must either go forward, stay where we are or retreat.

**Neither... nor – ni... ni**

They have neither the land nor the means to develop into modern operations.

He neither smiled nor spoke nor looked at me.

**Not only... but – no solament... sinó**

It's not only legal, but also necessary.

He not only drinks too much, but he tries to hide it.

What is intended is not only to evaluate a specific website, but also to establish a series of guidelines.

**Whether... or – tant si... com**

Whether we go by bus or train, it will take us at least three hours.

You'll have to pay the full price whether you leave this evening or stay until tomorrow morning.

### 8.3. Subordinating Conjunctions

#### Causal conjunctions

**As – com que**

As you didn't show up, I left.

As the journal focuses on library services, it is of great interest to the librarians.

As we'd done our homework, the test presented no special difficulties.

Note that the conjunction **as** is also a temporal conjunction, with the meaning of *mentre*.

Note too that the compound conjunction **as long as**, apart from its conditional sense, is sometimes used to express cause. Compare the following sentences.

Conditional: **We'll be fine as long as we follow the map.**

*Anirem bé (mentre / sempre que) seguim el mapa.*

Causal: **As long as you've picked it, why don't you eat it?**

*Ja que l'has agafat, ¿per què no te'l menges?*

**Because – perquè**

They pay me more because I work more.

Around 70% of students choose the UOC because it lets them manage their time.

We can't turn down his help, because otherwise he would be offended.

Note too the expression **because of**, translated in Catalan by *a causa de*; example:

**During my career, I've seen too many projects fail because of a lack of attention to change management principles.**

*Al llarg de la meua carrera, he vist fracassar molts projectes a causa de la manca d'atenció als principis de gestió del canvi.*

**Since** – *com que, atès que*

Note that the conjunction **since** is also a temporal conjunction, with the meaning of *des que* (see the entry for **since** in section Sy 8.3).

**Since the government refuses to take action, the criminals have gone unpunished.**  
**Since systems administration is a very broad-ranging field, this manual only seeks to be an introduction to this passionate world.**

**Concessive conjunctions**

**Although, though, even though** – *tot i que*

**Although we had the same ideas, we sometimes argued.**  
**Even though it's raining, I still want to go out.**

Note that these three concessive conjunctions can also be translated by *encara que* when this Catalan conjunction is followed by the indicative. (*Encara que* is translated **even if** when followed by a subjunctive expression; see below.) Example:

**Even though it's your first concert, you've sung very well.**  
*Encara que és el primer concert heu cantat molt bé.*

**Even if** – *encara que* (plus subjunctive)

**Even if we run, we'll miss the train.**  
*Encara que correuem, perdrem el tren.*  
**Even if we ran, we'd miss the train.**  
*Encara que correguéssim, perdríem el tren.*  
**Even if we had run, we would have missed the train.**  
*Encara que haguéssim corregut, hauríem perdut el tren.*  
**We're going to do it even if you oppose us.**  
*Ho farem encara que t'hi oposis.*

**If not** – *si no*

**She's as fast as her sister, if not faster.**  
**Her salary was good, if not up to her expectations.**

**Whereas** – *mentre que*

**They believe that women are emotional, whereas men are rational.**  
**Individual responsibility is mentioned four times, whereas legislation is only mentioned once.**

**While** – *tot i que; mentre que*

The concessive conjunction **while** is synonymous with **although** (*tot i que*) when it appears at the beginning of a sentence and is a synonym of **whereas** (*mentre que*) when it appears after the main clause. Examples:

**While (Although) I admire your goals, I abhor your methods.**  
**The total number of users stands at 8,362, while (whereas) the total number of visits was 10,879.**

However, it is good to keep in mind that the most important use of the conjunction **while** is temporal (see below, section Sy 8.3, with the meaning of *mentre*, and therefore the use of **while** should be avoided when ambiguity might otherwise result. For example:

**While they state that they want them to collaborate, they are actually encouraging a rock-star mentality among employees.**

**I work while you have fun.**

When the sense is concessive, these two sentences would be better expressed using **although** and **whereas**, respectively:

**Although they state that they want them to collaborate, they are actually encouraging a rock-star mentality among employees.**

**I work, whereas you have fun.**

### Conditional conjunctions

**As long as** – *sempre que, mentre*

**We'll go there tomorrow, as long as it doesn't rain.**

**As long as there are computers, there will be malicious viruses.**

**If** – *si* (see also section Sy 8.5. The Conjunctions If and Whether)

**If you want to learn English, you have to study.**

**If you click on the link, you will be taken to the homepage.**

**In case** – *en cas que*

**In case you haven't read the article, we'll reprint it here.**

**What should be done in case there were an accident?**

Note also the expression **just in case** (*per si de cas*):

**I'll bring along an umbrella, just in case.**

**Unless** – *llevat que*

**We never go there unless we're invited.**

**We are headed for catastrophe unless we change our economic system.**

### Conjunctions of purpose

**So that, in order that** – *per tal que* (*perquè* plus subjunctive)

Note that the conjunction **in order that** is generally limited to formal use.

**They pay me more so that I'll work more.**

*Em paguen més perquè (per tal que) treballi més.*

**I said this so that no one would be able to doubt my good will.**

*Vaig dir això per tal que ningú no pogués dubtar de la meva bona voluntat.*

**We can carry out feasibility studies in order that the properties of the software be accurately evaluated prior to its acquisition.**

*Podem dur a terme estudis de factibilitat per tal que es valorin acuradament les propietats del programari abans de l'adquisició.*

### Conjunctions of time

**After** – *després que*

**I don't want to leave until after they've come back.**

**He had to drop out of the race after his car broke down.**



**As – mentre, a mesura que**

The basic difference between the synonyms **as** and **while** is that **while** applies to longer periods of time and **as** to shorter. Also, **while** tends to be used more often when the main clause is in the present tense and the subordinate in the future (see the entry for **while** further below).

**He came in as (not ~~while~~) I was leaving.**

**As (not ~~while~~) we get older, our bodies change.**

**Before – abans que**

**They knew how to swim before they could walk.**

**Let's stop this war before it begins.**

**Since – des que**

**The educational model has been the hallmark of the university since it began.**

**Zoe has known Carla since they were in school together.**

Remember that the conjunction **since** can also be used as a causal conjunction (see above). To avoid confusions, if the temporal **since** is used at the beginning of a sentence, it is usually expressed **ever since**.

**Ever since we got rid of the TV, our conversations have been getting more and more interesting.**

**Until, till – fins que**

**Wait until I get back.**

**You cannot collect it until you have received notification by email.**

**When – quan**

**I learned to ride when I was a child.**

**We'll tell him when he comes.**

**While – mentre**

Remember that, in contrast to its synonym **as** (see above), **while** is used for lengthy periods of time. It is also more often used when the main clause is in the present tense and the subordinate in the future.

**While (not ~~As~~) I was living in Vic, my sister was studying in Girona.**

**They broke into my house while (not ~~as~~) I was on vacation.**

**While (not ~~As~~) you pluck the chicken, I'll light the fire.**

That said, in many cases **as** and **while** are completely synonymous. Examples:

**While/As I was walking to work I saw a terrible accident.**

**While/As she was cooking dinner we heard an explosion.**

## 8.4. The Conjunction That

The conjunction **that** corresponds to the Catalan conjunction *que*. An important difference, however, is that English can in some cases omit the conjunction. Broadly speaking, the briefer and more colloquial the expression, the more likely it is that the conjunction will be omitted.

What's more, there are certain cases in which the sentence might sound ambiguous without the conjunction. Generally speaking, it is probably safer to always include the conjunction –after all, it is never wrong–, except in very brief, colloquial expressions.

In the following examples we will put the conjunction **that** in parentheses when we consider that its use is optional.

It's funny (that) they haven't said anything about it.  
It isn't fair that a man be paid more than a woman for the same work.  
My feeling is (that) we should forget about it.  
Another of the conclusions was that the current crisis represents an opportunity.  
He said (that) he was tired.  
Our lawyer insisted (that) father be released.  
The paper alleges that misguided social reforms have disrupted family life.  
I'm really happy (that) you've come.  
Galileo was afraid that the Church's reputation would be damaged if they rejected Copernicanism.  
The fear that the enemy would attack made them flee.  
Do you agree with Freud's view that neuroses are caused by sexual factors?

### 8.5. The Conjunctions If and Whether

Remember first that we have studied the conditional conjunction **if** (*si*) and the concessive expression **if not** (*si no*) in section Sy 3.8.

Apart from these uses, the conjunction **if** is also used to express uncertainty and questions, cases in which it is often synonymous with the conjunction **whether**. However, there are two or three important contexts in which **whether** must be used, and it is important to keep them in mind because Catalan does not make this distinction.

Finally, **if** is used in a number of idiomatic expressions that we will study below.

#### If and whether expressing uncertainty or interrogation

Broadly speaking, the use of **if** or **whether** is optional when introducing expressions of uncertainty or interrogation; in general, **whether** is a bit more formal. Here are some colloquial examples in which the use of **if** would probably be more likely:

Ask him if he knows anything about it.  
Do you remember if she was afraid of him?  
I don't know if I'll ever be able to forget it.

Here are some examples in which both **whether** and **if** would sound perfectly natural:

I wonder whether/if she's got any sisters.  
I asked her whether/if she'd like to see a film.  
We'll soon learn whether/if it is true.  
I really doubt whether/if they told you the whole story.

That said, the use of **whether** is obligatory in the following cases.

After prepositions

It depends on whether (not if) we can get a loan.  
They quarrelled about whether (not if) he should have the operation or not.

Before infinitives

**We didn't know whether (not *if*) to laugh or cry.**

**Have you decided whether (not *if*) to call the police?**

After the verb **discuss**

**We were discussing whether (not *if*) we should buy new drapes.**

Finally, many stylists consider the use of **whether** to be preferable when two or more alternatives are presented:

**We haven't decided whether we are going to cut staff or reduce other costs.**

**I couldn't tell whether they were sleeping, dozing or just lying there.**

**Idiomatic expressions using *if***

***if only*** – *tant de bo*

Note that ***if only*** is almost always used to express resignation, that is, acceptance of something considered impossible to change (eg **If only you were younger** = *Tant de bo que fossis més jove*). When the speaker considers that there is a possibility that the desire be completed, the use of **wish** is more common (eg **I wish you would drive slower** = *Tant de bo que portessis el cotxe més a poc a poc*). More examples:

**If only you were here with me!**

*Tant de bo que estiguessis aquí amb mi!*

**If only we hadn't spoken without thinking!**

*Tant de bo que no haguéssim parlat sense pensar!*

The following expressions have no exact equivalent in Catalan, but their meanings are not difficult to discern.

**What or little, if anything**

**What, if anything, is wrong with our schools?**

*Què va malament en les nostres escoles, si és que hi va res?*

**There was little, if anything, anybody could do.**

*Hi havia poca cosa que algú pogués fer, si és que hi havia res a fer.*

**Who, if anyone**

**Who, if anyone, deserves a statue?**

*Qui mereix una estàtua, posat que hi hagi algú que la mereixi?*

**Few/little, if any**

**There are few, if any, benefits to totalitarian government.**

*Hi ha pocs beneficis en els governs totalitaris, si és que n'hi ha.*

**I have little, if any, interest in the matter.**

*L'assumpte m'interessa poc, suposant que m'interessí una mica.*

**Seldom/rarely, if ever**

**Most students had seldom, if ever, used a computer.**

*La majoria dels alumnes no havia fet servir gaire un ordinador, si és que n'havien fet servir mai cap.*

Usually, if not always

**They are usually, if not always, in bed by ten.**

*Si no sempre, són normalment al llit abans de les deu.*

Finally, we should mention the negative declaration **if anything**.

**She didn't seem surprised to me; if anything, she seemed rather blasé.**

*A mi ella no em semblava sorpresa; de fet, semblava bastant indiferent.*

## 9. Imperative

### Second person (singular and plural) affirmative

The second person singular and plural imperative affirmative is used to give orders, and for this in English the infinitive is used without a subject. Note that, whereas Catalan has four different expressions, depending on the person addressed, English has just one. Examples:

**Come here.**

*Vine. Vineu. Vingui. Vinguin.*

**Speak more slowly.**

*Parla/Parleu/Parli/Parlin més a poc a poc.*

### Second person (singular and plural) negative

The second person singular and plural imperative negative is expressed with the composition **don't** + simple infinitive. Note again that, whereas Catalan has four different expressions, depending on the person addressed, English has just one. Examples:

**Don't touch me!**

*No em toquis/toqueu/toqui/toquin!*

**Don't leave the door open.**

*No deixis/deixeu/deixi/deixin la porta oberta.*

### First person plural affirmative

The first person plural affirmative in English is expressed with the combination **Let's** + simple infinitive. The word **let's** is a contraction of **let us**, which is only used in formal contexts (eg **Let us pray** = *Preguem*). Examples:

**Let's look at the search results in greater detail.**

**Let's go to the beach.**

### First person plural negative

The first person plural negative in English is expressed with the combination **Let's not** + simple infinitive. The word **let's** is a contraction of **let us**, which is only used in formal contexts (eg **Let us not forget those who have died for their beliefs** = *No oblidem els qui ha mort per les seves creences*). Examples:

**Let's not leave yet.**

**Let's not be hasty.**

**First person (singular and plural) interrogative**

The first person interrogative imperative is an informal way of making a suggestion, and uses the construction **shall I/we + simple infinitive**. Examples:

**Shall we dance?**

**Shall I open the window?**

# Practical Guide to English Usage

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