

SPAG Grammar Glossary

Active voice	In active sentences, the thing doing the action is the subject of the sentence and the thing receiving the action is the object. Most sentences are active. <i>Example:</i> Ben walked the dog (NOT: “The dog was walked by Ben”). Her sister baked the cake (NOT: The cake was baked by her sister).
Adjective	Used to make a noun’s meaning more specific, to modify the noun. They are sometimes called “describing words”. Adjectives can come before or after the noun. Can be formed from a verb (e.g. create – creative) <i>Example:</i> The pupils did some good work. Their work was good .
Adverb	Used to modify a verb or an adjective, and tells you how, when or where something happens. <i>Example:</i> He soon started snoring loudly .
Antonym	A word that means the opposite of another word. <i>Example:</i> hot and cold; light and dark
Apostrophe ’	A punctuation mark which is used to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Show omission in the place of a missing letter or letters. <i>Example:</i> I’m going out and I won’t be long. 2. Show possession, when something belongs to somebody. <i>Example:</i> Hannah’s mother went to town in Justin’s car. If the word already ends in ‘s’, an apostrophe follows the ‘s’ (and sometimes another ‘s’). <i>Example:</i> Mrs Evans’ class. (Mrs Evans’s class).
Brackets ()	A punctuation mark which is used in pairs to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add information within a sentence. <i>Example:</i> The man (who had grey hair) sat down. 2. Add information in a sentence by itself. Punctuation inside brackets. <i>Example:</i> The man sat down. (He looked tired!) He waited for the rain to stop.
Colon :	A punctuation mark used to introduce a: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List. <i>Example:</i> I need you to bring: a pen, two pencils and a ruler. 2. Quotation. <i>Example:</i> The text explains: ‘His eyes filled with tears.’ 3. Second clause. <i>Example:</i> He was very cold: the temperature was below zero.
Comma ,	A punctuation mark showing the relationship between parts of a sentence. Also used to separate items in a list, to separate a main and subordinate clause, or to change the meaning in two sentences. <i>Example:</i> As the skies darkened, the rain began to fall. Her long, curly, chestnut brown hair.
Command	A sentence that gives an order. <i>Example:</i> Get my bag. Give me your book.
Conjunction	Links two words or phrases together. <i>Example:</i> She is young but can kick the ball hard. I read because it’s relaxing.
Contraction (contracted form)	Two words put together to make one shorter word with an apostrophe to show the place of missing (omitted) letters. A contraction is less formal. <i>Example:</i> you are – you’re ; did not – didn’t ; she will – she’ll
Co-ordinating conjunction	A word that joins two equal words or phrases. These are often ‘and’ and ‘but’. <i>Example:</i> Susan took the bus but Joe walked. We ate cake and drank tea.

Dash -	<p>A punctuation mark which is used:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In pairs to replace brackets, to give extra information in the middle of a sentence. <i>Example:</i> The man – who had grey hair – sat down. 2. To show an afterthought or to give extra information. <i>Example:</i> The book was an adventure story – I loved it.
Determiner	<p>A word that introduces a noun, such as: a, the, an, this, that, my, your, his, some, any, each. <i>Example:</i> Pass me the book. Can you come to my house? It's his car.</p>
Direct Speech	<p>Inverted commas (“ ”) surround words that are spoken. Punctuation goes before the closing inverted comma. <i>Example:</i> “Are you coming to my party?” asked Anne.</p>
Ellipsis ...	<p>A punctuation mark which is used:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To show where some information has been left out. <i>Example:</i> Nervously he turned the corner and saw... 2. When there is a pause or interruption, to create suspense. <i>Example:</i> He held his breath... and jumped in.
Exclamation mark !	<p>Punctuation mark used at the end of a sentence to indicate great emotion such as joy, anger, surprise. <i>Example:</i> It was unbelievable! She couldn't believe her eyes!</p>
Hyphen -	<p>A punctuation mark which links two words or parts of words to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make a single word or expression. <i>Example:</i> well-known, co-operate, sword-fight 2. Join a prefix to a word (when a different word would be created without the hyphen). <i>Example:</i> re-cover (not 'recover', which has a different meaning).
Inverted commas “ ”	<p>A punctuation mark used in pairs to indicate the start and end of speech. Punctuation is written before the last inverted comma, e.g. ? ! , A full stop can be used inside the inverted commas if it is not followed by a 'said' word. <i>Example:</i> “Be quiet!” she hissed. “Pass me that book please,” he instructed.</p>
Main clause	<p>A sentence with a subordinate clause also has its main clause. The main clause makes sense by itself. <i>Example:</i> We can watch a film when we have finished. We went to the castle after lunch.</p>
Modal verbs	<p>Used to change the meaning of other verbs. They express meanings such as uncertainty or possibility <i>Example:</i> It might rain. I could work by myself. You should help your brother.</p>
Noun	<p>Sometimes called “naming words” because they name people, places and things. Nouns can be classified as common nouns (e.g. boy, day), proper nouns, which always have a capital letter (e.g. Tom, October), abstract nouns (e.g. sadness, love) and collective nouns, which show a group of something (e.g. herd, team, flock) <i>Example:</i> My brother did an amazing jump on his skateboard.</p>
Noun phrase	<p>A phrase with a noun as its head. Adjectives can be added to the noun and they all belong to the noun phrase. <i>Example:</i> Adult foxes can jump. ('Adult' describes the noun 'foxes').</p> <p>Expanded noun phrases add further information to the noun phrase. <i>Example:</i> Healthy adult foxes in this area can jump.</p>
Object	<p>The object is the thing being acted upon by a verb. An object is often a noun, pronoun or noun phrase that comes straight after the verb. <i>Example:</i> The children designed puppets. (The noun 'puppets' is being designed.) Please pass that. (The pronoun 'that' is being passed.)</p>

Paragraph	A section of a piece of writing. A new paragraph is started when there is a change in time, location or topic. A new paragraph begins on a new line with an indent. They help writers to organise their writing into clear sections and helps readers to follow the piece of writing clearly.
Passive voice	A sentence or phrase in which the subject is the person or thing being acted upon by the verb, rather than the one who performs the action. <i>Example:</i> The dog was walked by Ben (not 'Ben walked the dog'). The cake was baked by her sister (not 'Her sister baked the cake').
Past progressive	A form of the past tense using 'was' or 'were' followed by the -ing verb. <i>Example:</i> They were running a race. (Not: They ran a race). She was baking yesterday. (Not: She baked yesterday).
Perfect verbs	Made by adding a form of 'have' before a verb. They have two types: 1. Present perfect verbs. <i>Example:</i> She has been to the shop. 2. Past perfect verbs: <i>Example:</i> I had eaten when you arrived.
Prefix	A group of letters that go at the beginning of a word to make a new word with a different (sometimes opposite) meaning, such as 'mis', 'un', 're', 'de'. <i>Example:</i> mis understood, def rost, re write, il legal, im mature, un tie.
Preposition	<u>Prepositions</u> often describe locations or directions but can also describe time. <i>Example:</i> The cat slept on the chair. She'll return from France in two weeks. We haven't seen him since this morning.
Prepositional phrase	A phrase that has a preposition as its head, followed by a noun, pronoun or noun phrase. <i>Example:</i> The cat slept on the chair . She'll return from France in two weeks . We haven't seen him since this morning .
Plural	More than one. A plural noun usually (but not always) has a suffix 's' or 'es'. Other times the whole word changes. <i>Example:</i> One dog, two dogs . One box, two boxes . One mouse, two mice .
Possessive pronouns	Possessive pronouns are those that show that something belongs to a person or group of people. <i>Example:</i> That book is mine . They are his shoes. Our class goes next.
Pronoun	Usually used in the place of nouns that have already been mentioned. <i>Example:</i> She waved to him . It took them to the hotel.
Question mark ?	A punctuation mark used at the end of a sentence to show a question. <i>Example:</i> Why are you late? What is your favourite colour?
Quotation mark ''	Used to show words taken from texts for evidence. Single inverted commas are usually used instead of double inverted commas, to differentiate them from speech. <i>Example:</i> The boy was 'shaking' and had 'tears in his eyes', showing he was afraid.
Relative clauses	A type of subordinate clause, often modified by using a pronoun such as 'who', 'which', 'where' or 'that' to refer back to a noun. <i>Example:</i> That's the boy who lives near school . ('who' refers to the boy). The prize that I won was a book. ('that' refers to the prize).
Semi-colon ;	A punctuation mark used to: 1. Separate phrases or clauses in a sentence. It is stronger than a comma but not as strong as a full stop. <i>Example:</i> I love apples; my brother prefers pears. 2. Separate items in a list when the items are phrases or several words, not just single words. <i>Example:</i> At the shop I need ripe, juicy tomatoes; bacon, preferably smoked; a box of healthy, fruity cereal.

Standard English	Good or correct English language use that reads well and does not contain slang words or phrases.
Subject	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Usually the noun doing the action (in the active form). <i>Example: John</i> washes the dishes. (John is the subject doing the action) Sometimes the noun receiving the action (in the passive form). <i>Example: The dishes</i> are washed by John. (The dishes are receiving the action).
Subjunctive form	Uses the verbs 'be' or 'were' in a sentence. It is not commonly used because it is considered to be too formal/posh for everyday use. <i>Example: He should be</i> given a chance. If I <i>were</i> you, I would think again.
Subordinate clause	A clause which is subordinate to another clause in the same sentence that adds extra information. Often a subordinate clause does not make sense by itself. <i>Example: The boy who lives on a hill</i> is 8 years old. She went outside to play <i>even though it was raining</i> .
Subordinating conjunction	A conjunction (word or words) that introduces a subordinate clause, such as: however, although, despite, even though, whilst, when, who. <i>Example: She went outside to play even though</i> it was raining. You can have ice cream <i>when</i> you have finished.
Suffix	A group of letters added to the end of an existing word to create a new word with a different meaning, such as 'ed', 'er', 'ly', 'al'. <i>Example: accidental, teacher, carefully.</i>
Synonym	A word that means the same (or almost the same) as another word. <i>Example: talk and speak; run and sprint.</i>
Verb	Verbs name an action and usually have a tense, either present or past. <i>Example: He lives</i> in Chester (present). She <i>wrote</i> a song for them (past).