

Southway English Glossary

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS)



The following glossary includes the technical grammatical terms used in the programmes of study for English, as well as others that might be useful. It is intended as an aid for adults working with children at Key Stage 2, not as the body of knowledge that should be learnt by pupils.

Term	Definition	Example
A		
active voice	When the subject of a verb carries out an action	David Beckham scored the penalty.
adjective	A word that describe a noun.	The cat is very <u>happy</u> .
adverb	A word that describes a verb, an adjective or another adverb. It nearly always answers the questions: How? When? Where? or Why? Most adverbs in English end in <i>-ly</i> and come from adjectives.	The beetle is <u>extremely</u> small. The cat moved <u>stealthily</u> .
adverbial	An adverbial is a word or phrase that is used, like an adverb, to modify a verb or clause.	The bus leaves <u>in five minutes</u> . She promised to see him <u>last night</u> .
antonym	Words which mean the opposite to each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• hot – cold• light – dark• light – heavy

apostrophe	Punctuation showing possession or missing letters (omission).	<p><u>I'm</u> going out and I <u>won't</u> be long. [showing missing letters]</p> <p><u>Hannah's</u> mother went to town in <u>Justin's</u> car. [marking possessives]</p>
article	The words 'a', 'an' or 'the'.	<p><u>The</u> dog found <u>a</u> bone in <u>an</u> old box.</p>
B		
brackets	Punctuation used for additional information or explanation.	<p><i>To clarify information:</i></p> <p>Jamie's bike was red (bright red) with a yellow stripe.</p> <p><i>For asides and comments:</i></p> <p>The bear was pink (I kid you not).</p> <p><i>To give extra details:</i></p> <p>His first book (The Colour Of Magic) was written in 1989.</p>
C		
Capital letters	Uppercase letters	<p>Capital letters are used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To begin sentences • To begin proper nouns • To begin words in titles • To write the pronoun, 'I'.
clause	<p>A clause is a group of words which contains a verb; it is part of a sentence.</p> <p>There are 2 kinds of clauses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A main clause (makes sense on its own) 2. A subordinate clause (does not make sense on its own; it depends on the main clause for its meaning) 	<p><u>Main clause:</u> My sister is older than me.</p> <p><u>Subordinate clause:</u> My sister is older than me <u>and she is very annoying.</u></p> <p><u>Embedded clause:</u> My sister, <u>who is very annoying,</u> is older than me.</p>
colon	Punctuation which indicates that an example, list or more detailed explanations follows.	<p>You will need to bring: a waterproof coat, wellies, warm jumpers and any medication.</p> <p>Marvin was stunned: he had never seen a firework display like it!</p>

command	A sentence that tells someone to do something.	Do the washing up.
commas	Punctuation which shows a pause, separates clauses, or separates items in a list.	Jenny's favourite subjects are maths, literacy and art. The giant had a large head, hairy ears and two big, beady eyes. The recipe, which we hadn't tried before, is very easy to follow. Though the snake was small, I still feared for my life.
complex sentences	A sentence with a main clause and at least one subordinate clause.	Although it was late, I wasn't tired. My gran, who is as wrinkled as a walnut, is one hundred years old.
compound sentences	A sentence with two main clauses joined together with a conjunction.	It was late <u>but</u> I wasn't tired.
compound words	A compound word contains at least two <u>root words</u> in its <u>morphology</u> ;	blackbird, bookshop, ice-cream, English teacher, inkjet, one-eyed, bone-dry, baby-sit, daydream, outgrow
conjunction	A word or phrase that links clauses or sentences. There are two main types of conjunctions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>co-ordinating conjunctions</u>: links two words or phrases together as an equal pair • <u>subordinating conjunctions</u>: introduces a subordinate clause. 	James bought a bat <u>and</u> ball. [links the words bat and ball as an equal pair] Kylie is young <u>but</u> she can kick the ball hard. [links two clauses as an equal pair] Everyone watches <u>when</u> Kyle does back-flips. [introduces a subordinate clause] Joe can't practise kicking <u>because</u> he's injured. [introduces a subordinate clause]
contraction	A word that is shortened by missing out some letters.	don't wouldn't

D

dash	Punctuation which indicates a stronger pause than a comma. Can be used like a comma or a bracket to add parenthesis.	I stood—waiting—waiting—waiting. The woman—only 25 years old—was the first to win a gold medal for Britain.
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determiner	Specifies a noun as known or unknown, and it goes before any modifiers (e.g. adjectives or other nouns).	<u>the</u> home team <u>a</u> good team <u>that</u> pupil <u>Julia's</u> parents <u>some</u> big boys
dialogue	A conversation between two or more people.	"Who's there?" asked Marvin. "Doctor," replied the mysterious man behind the door. "Doctor Who?" Marvin enquired. "Exactly..." came the ominous response.
direct speech	When you write down the actual words spoken and use speech marks.	"Who's there?" asked Marvin.
E		
ellipsis	Punctuation used to show a pause in someone's speech or thoughts, and to build tension or to show that a sentence is not finished.	"The sight was awesome... truly amazing," My Daily gritted his teeth, gripped the scalpel tightly in his right hand and slowly advanced...
exclamation	A sentence which shows someone feels strongly about something.	What a triumph!
exclamation mark	Punctuation which shows something is being exclaimed or said with feeling or surprise.	What a triumph! I've just about had enough! Wonderful!
F		
finite verb	Every sentence typically has at least one verb which is either past or present tense. Such verbs are called 'finite'.	Lizzie <u>does</u> the dishes every day. [present tense] Even Hana <u>did</u> the dishes yesterday. [past tense] <u>Do</u> the dishes, Naser! [imperative] Not finite verbs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have <u>done</u> them. [combined with the finite verb have] • I will <u>do</u> them. [combined with the finite verb will]

first person	When the writer speaks about him / herself.	My family went to the park. We all loved it, especially me. I always love the slide.
formal language	Language which follows the traditional rules, without using casual or colloquial vocabulary.	
fronting, fronted	<p>A word or phrase that normally comes after the verb may be moved before the verb: when this happens, we say it has been 'fronted'.</p> <p>For example, a fronted adverbial is an adverbial which has been moved before the verb. When writing fronted phrases, we often follow them with a comma.</p>	<p><u>Before we begin</u>, make sure you've got a pencil.</p> <p>[Without fronting: Make sure you've got a pencil before we begin.]</p> <p><u>The day after tomorrow</u>, I'm visiting my granddad.</p> <p>[Without fronting: I'm visiting my granddad the day after tomorrow.]</p>
full stop	Punctuation which shows the end of a sentence.	Terry Pratchett's latest book is not yet out in paperback.
H		
homonym	Two different words are homonyms if they both look exactly the same when written, and sound exactly the same when pronounced.	<p>Has he <u>left</u> yet? Yes – he went through the door on the <u>left</u>.</p> <p>The noise a dog makes is called a <u>bark</u>. Trees have <u>bark</u>.</p>
homophone	Two different words are homophones if they sound exactly the same when pronounced.	hear, here some, sum
hyphen	Punctuation which joins one or more words or adds a prefix to a word.	Happy-go-lucky
I		
idiom	Phrases in a language which do not mean exactly what they say.	<p>'I'm feeling blue' - I'm feeling sad.</p> <p>'a piece of cake' - easy</p> <p>'rasie the roof' - celebrate / make a lot of noise</p>

infinitive A verb's infinitive is the basic form used as the head-word in a dictionary (e.g. walk, be). I want to walk.
I will be quiet.

Infinitives are often used:

- after 'to'
- after modal verbs

informal language Language which does not follow the traditional rules. It can be a use of colloquial word or expressions.

M

metaphor Compares different things, by saying one thing is another. Marvin became a lion—frightened of nothing.

modal verb These change the meaning of other verbs. They can express meanings such as certainty, ability, or obligation. I can do this maths work by myself.
This ride may be too scary for you!
You should help your little brother. Is it going to rain? Yes, it might.
The main modal verbs are will, would, can, could, may, might, shall, should, must and ought.

morphology A word's morphology is its internal make-up in terms of root words and suffixes or prefixes, as well as other kinds of change such as the change of mouse to mice. dogs has the morphological make-up: dog + s.
unhelpfulness has the morphological make-up:
unhelpful + ness

- where unhelpful = un + helpful □
- and helpful = help + ful

N

noun A part of speech which names a thing or person. Common nouns: everyday things: *car, toothbrush, tree...* - and kinds of people: *man, woman, child*

Nouns can be classified into 4 different types: common nouns, proper nouns, collective nouns, abstract nouns. Proper nouns: particular people and places: *Jim, Betty, London...* - and some 'times': *Monday, April, Easter*. These always begin with a capital letter.

Collective nouns: A group or collection of people or things: *army, bunch, team...*

Abstract nouns: Cannot actually be seen, heard, smelt, felt or tasted: *sleep, honesty, boredom, freedom, beauty, power...*

noun phrase	A phrase with a noun as its head.	<u>Adult foxes</u> can jump. <u>Almost all healthy adult foxes in this area</u> can jump.
O object	The person or thing that the action or verb is done to.	Year 4 designed <u>puppets</u> .
P passive	When a subject or verb has an action done to them. Often, the subject is not even mentioned.	A window was smashed.
phrase	Part of a sentence, which does not contain a verb, and does not make sense on its own.	formally the city of Perth so very sweet the information age very happy with his work
plural	More than one person, place or thing.	<u>dogs</u> [more than one dog]; <u>boxes</u> [more than one box] <u>mice</u> [more than one mouse]
prefix	A prefix is added at the beginning of a word in order to turn it into another word.	<u>o</u> vertake, <u>dis</u> appear
preposition	Words which show the relationship between two things. They often tell you where one thing is as opposed to another.	<i>About, above, across, after, against, along, amid, among, before, behind, beside, beyond, by, during, except, for, from, into, near, of, off, on, over, round, since, towards, with, without...</i> Tom waved goodbye <u>to</u> Christy. She'll be back <u>from</u> Australia <u>in</u> two weeks. I haven't seen my dog <u>since</u> this morning.
preposition phrase	A preposition phrase has a preposition as its head followed by a noun, pronoun or noun phrase.	He was <u>in bed</u> . I met them <u>after the party</u> .

progressive The progressive (also known as the 'continuous') form of a verb generally describes events in progress. Michael is singing in the store room. [present progressive]
Amanda was making a patchwork quilt. [past progressive]
Usha had been practising for an hour when I called. [past perfect progressive]

pronoun Words used to avoid repeating a noun. Amanda waved to Michael. She waved to him.
John's mother is over there. His mother is over there.
The visit will be an overnight visit. This will be an overnight visit.
Simon is the person: Simon broke it. He is the one who broke it.

Q

question

A sentence that asks something. Who else will be there?

question mark

Punctuation which indicates a question or disbelief. Who else will be there?
Is this really little Thomas?

R

relative clause

A relative clause is a special type of subordinate clause that modifies a noun. It often does this by using a relative pronoun such as who or that to refer back to that noun, though the relative pronoun is often omitted. That's the boy who lives near school. [who refers back to boy]
The prize that I won was a book. [that refers back to prize]
Tom broke the game, which annoyed Ali. [which refers back to the whole clause]

reported speech

When you write what people say, think or believe, without using speech marks. "I feel sick," said Bill to Ben.
would change to this:
Bill told Ben that he felt sick.

root word	The simplest form of a word that prefixes or suffixes can be added to.	help is a root word It can grow into: helps, helpful, helped, helping, helpless, unhelpful
S		
second person	When the writer speaks to the reader. The word 'you' is often placed before verbs.	You are reading a GPS glossary.
semi colon	Punctuation used in place of a conjunction. It separates to complete sentences which are closely related. It can also be used in lists of phrases.	The children came home today; they had been away a week. Star Trek, created by Gene Roddenberry; Babylon 5, by JMS; Buffy, by Joss Whedon; and Farscape, from the Harry Henson Company.
sentence	A sentence contains at least a subject and a verb. A sentence may convey a statement, question, command or explanation.	Short example: <i>Walker walks.</i> A subject is the noun that is doing the main verb. The main verb is the verb that the subject is doing. A sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.
simile	Compares two or more things, usually using the words 'like' or 'as'.	The water was as hot as lava. He was as scared as a mouse.
simple sentence	A one clause sentence.	He walked to the park.
speech marks (inverted commas)	Punctuation marks used in pairs (" ") to indicate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quotes (evidence) • Direct speech • Words that are defined, that follow certain phrases or that have special meaning. 	Janet asked, "Why can't we go today?" The man claimed that he was, "Shocked to hear the news." 'Buch' is German for book.
statement	A statement is a sentence which gives information.	Paper is made from trees.

subject	The person or thing that carries out the action or verb in a sentence.	<p><u>Rula's mother</u> went out.</p> <p><u>That</u> is uncertain.</p> <p><u>The children</u> will study the animals.</p> <p>Will <u>the children</u> study the animals?</p>
subordinate clause	A clause which does not make sense on its own, but gives extra information to the main clause.	<p>Sue bought a new dress <u>when she went shopping</u>.</p> <p>The subordinate clause would not make sense without the main clause.</p>
suffix	A letter, or group of letters, added to the end of a word to change its meaning.	<p>call – <u>called</u></p> <p>teach – <u>teacher</u> [turns a verb into a noun]</p> <p>terror – <u>terrorise</u> [turns a noun into a verb]</p> <p>green – <u>greenish</u> [leaves <u>word class</u> unchanged]</p>
syllable	A syllable sounds like a beat in a word. Syllables consist of at least one vowel, and possibly one or more consonants.	<p><u>Cat</u> has one syllable.</p> <p><u>Fairy</u> has two syllables.</p> <p><u>Hippopotamus</u> has five syllables.</p>
synonym	Two words are synonyms if they have the same meaning, or similar meanings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talk – speak • old – elderly
T tense	Tense is the choice between present, past and future verbs.	<p>He <u>studies</u>. [present tense – present time]</p> <p>He <u>studied</u> yesterday. [past tense – past time]</p> <p>He <u>studies</u> tomorrow, or else! [present tense – future time]</p> <p>He <u>may study</u> tomorrow. [present tense + infinitive – future time]</p> <p>He <u>plans to study</u> tomorrow. [present tense + infinitive – future time]</p> <p>If he <u>studied</u> tomorrow, he'd see the difference! [past tense – imagined future]</p>
third person	When the writer speaks about someone or something else.	<p>He walked to the shops because he wanted to taste the new chocolate bar.</p>

V

verb

The surest way to identify verbs is by the ways they can be used: they can usually have a tense, either present or past.

Verbs are sometimes called 'doing words' because many verbs name an action that someone does; while this can be a way of recognising verbs, it doesn't distinguish verbs from nouns (which can also name actions). Moreover many verbs name states or feelings rather than actions.

He lives in Birmingham. [present tense]

The teacher wrote a song for the class. [past tense]

He likes chocolate. [present tense; not an action]

He knew my father. [past tense; not an action]

Not verbs:

- [The walk to Halina's house will take an hour. [noun]]
- All that surfing makes Morwenna so sleepy! [noun]

W

word class

Every word belongs to a word class which summarises the ways in which it can be used in grammar.

The major word classes are: noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, determiner, pronoun, conjunction.

Word classes are sometimes called

word family

The group of words that can be built from the same root word.

builds, building, builder, built, rebuild, rebuilt