

A Sentence Needs Three Things

A sentence needs three things: a subject, a verb, and a complete thought. If a group of words is missing any of these things, it is called a **fragment** and is not a complete sentence.

SUBJECT

A **subject** shows who or what is doing or being.

The tall **CACTI** stand like sentinels.

CACTI is the plural of cactus.



VERB

A **verb** shows what the subject does. A verb can be an **ACTION** verb or **BEING** verb.



A row of cacti **LINES** the mountain ridge.

There **ARE** around 2,000 different species of cacti.

COMPLETE THOUGHT

If more to come is indicated but not told, it is an incomplete thought.

Incomplete: When you visit the desert.

Incomplete: If you see a cactus.

Complete: The lizard sought shade near the cactus.

Complete: If you see a cactus, take a picture.



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Abbreviation and Acronym Rules

Rule 1: Very short words do not need to be abbreviated.

Months like May, June, and July need no abbreviations, while months like February, September, and November are often abbreviated because they are so long.

Rule 2: When using acronyms to represent words, use capital letters and no periods.

She worked for ABC, NASA, and the CIA.

FYI (for your information), BRB (be right back), LOL! (laugh out loud)

Rule 3: First spell out fully what will be used later on as an acronym.

I joined the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 1987. During my career at the FBI, I had many different jobs.

Rule 4: It is most common to use capital letters without periods when abbreviating the names for countries or academic degrees.

USA, USSR, UK, EU

BA, BS, MA, MBA, MD, PhD

Rule 5: For abbreviations that include the first and last letters of a word, put a period at the end.

Mr., Dr., Jr., St., Ltd.

(*Note:* British English does not usually add the period.)

Rule 6: When an abbreviation contains only the first part of a word, add a period at the end.

Fri., Nov., Matt., Inc., Admin., anon., adv., irreg., et al.

Rule 7: When using time of day abbreviations (a.m. or p.m.), it is most common to add periods and use lowercase letters. However, it is not incorrect to use small capitals, with or without periods. When using era designations (such as AD, BC, CE, or BCE), it is most common to use capital letters without periods.

Note: The abbreviation AD always precedes the year, while the others follow it.

4:00 a.m. or 4:00 AM

1215 BC or 1215 BCE

AD 2017 or 2017 CE



Rule 8: Time zone acronyms do not use periods, and they are put in parentheses.

(PST) = Pacific Standard Time

(GMT) = Greenwich Mean Time

Rule 9: When an abbreviation comes at the end of a sentence, use only one period.

The ship leaves at 5:00 a.m. | I read about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Rule 10: When in doubt, look it up! There are thousands of acronyms and abbreviations. Make sure you get them right by looking them up using a current dictionary.

Absolute Phrases

An absolute phrase is a nonessential phrase (can be removed from the sentence without changing its meaning) made of a noun followed by a participle (see page 32).

Caleb's father, his heart bursting with gratitude, will not complain.

Kiara is a successful author, her last book being a bestseller.

Dark clouds having cleared, we decided to set up our picnic.



Note: The noun (e.g., clouds) of an absolute phrase can be preceded by an adjective (e.g., dark).



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Absolute Phrases](https://www.goodandbeautiful.com/videos/Absolute-Phrases)

Adjective & Adverb Rule #1 Sense and Appearance Verbs

A subject followed by a sense or appearance verb (feel, taste, smell, sound, look, appear, or seem) should always be modified by an ADJECTIVE, never an adverb. Incorrect use of an adverb will change the meaning entirely. For example, saying, “The cookie tastes badly,” would mean the cookie’s ability to taste is not good. “Sue feels badly,” would mean Sue doesn’t have the ability to feel things well when she touches them.

Incorrect: The flowers smell sweetly.

Correct: The flowers smell sweet. (SWEET is an adjective that modifies FLOWERS.)

Incorrect: He feels badly about the accident.

Correct: He feels bad about the accident. (BAD is an adjective that modifies HE.)



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Sense & Appearance Verbs and Adjective & Adverb Rule #1](https://www.goodandbeautiful.com/videos/Sense-amp-Appearance-Verbs-and-Adjective-amp-Adverb-Rule-1)