Grammar Reference

1. 'That' and dependent clauses

- **Verbs** of knowledge, perception, opinion, agreement, affirmation, assumption, remembrance, forgetting, hope, surprise, and fear may **precede dependent clauses introduced** by '**that**.' '**That**' is often **omitted**.

Example: Do you **think** (**that**) Japan can outmatch the United States?
They**'re saying** (**that**) the sea's going to be very rough for three days.

Note. Such **dependent clauses** can be **elliptical**.

Example: I don't like dogs.
I know you **don't**.

- Main verbs expressing assumptions, suggestions, and requests necessitate use of the **subjunctive** mood in the explanatory **dependent clauses** (**introduced** by '**that**') that follow them.

Example: He insists **that** she **come**.

- Following a verb like 'to tell,' 'to remind,' or 'to inform,' a '**that**' clause can be **preceded by the object** of the main verb.

Example: He told **me** **that** she was ill.

Note. When the verb in such a case is 'to explain,' '**to**' precedes the indirect **object**.

Example: I explained **to them** **that** it would be a good idea to go to Spain.

2. 'To be likely'

- '**To be likely**' precedes an **infinitive** and indicates the **high probability** of the event it describes. When conjugated in the **present**, this expression refers to a present or a future event.

Example: This meeting**'s likely to bore** me.
It**'s likely to be** food poisoning.

- In the **preterite** or **conditional**, '**to be likely**' conveys, respectively, a past or conditional event.

Example: She **was likely** to appreciate the gift.
It's the kind of challenge he'**d be likely** to take on.

- When it expresses an opinion about a past event, '**to be likely**' is followed by a **past infinitive**.

Example: He'**s likely to have forgotten** our appointment.

Note.
- The related impersonal expressions '**it's likely (that)**' and '**it seems likely (that)**' are also common.

Example: **It's likely that** it will rain.
Do you think that she's going to win?
It seems likely.

- '**Unlikely**' is the opposite of '**likely**.'

Example: He **is unlikely to** come.
It's unlikely that it will snow.

- '**To be liable to do**' has the same meaning as '**to be likely to do**.'

Example: It'**s liable** to be a long wait.

3. **Omission of certain prepositions**

In American English, certain **prepositions** (**on, in, at**...) can be **omitted**.

Example:

She arrived **Thursday** (= **on** Thursday).
We usually go hiking **Sundays** (= **on** Sundays).
He often gets up **nights** (= **in** the night).
I won't be **home** (at home) till 7 o'clock.