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Grammar Reference

1. Grammar Reference (Please remember that this grammar reference section is not a lesson plan for teachers. In fact, it is and should be designed in such a way that students can comprehend the grammar points on their own.)

Infinitive and gerund phrases

It's + be + adjective/noun + infinitive phrase is often used to comment on behavior. These sentences can also be restated with gerund phrases.

For example,

Infinitive	Gerund
It's rude to ignore your conversation partner.	Ignoring your conversation partner is rude.
It's a good idea to try out different topics.	Trying out different topics is a good idea.

Form:

It + to be + adjective/noun + infinitive phrase...

Gerund phrase + to be + adjective/noun phrase...

Note: The word **considered** may also follow **be** in this kind of sentence.

Example:

Infinitive	Gerund
It's considered impolite to interrupt people.	Interrupting people is considered impolite.

We can also include the phrase **for + person/pronoun** in the following sentences.

Infinitive	Gerund
It's customary for the complimenter to say nice things about others.	Saying nice things about others is customary for the complimenter.

In a sentence with **It's + adjective + infinitive**, it is possible to follow the adjective with **for** and an object. The object can be a pronoun or a noun.

Example:

It's difficult for him to talk about his feelings openly.

It's customary for Americans to make frequent eye contact.

For sentences in the negative, use **not + infinitive or not + gerund**.

Example:

Infinitive	Gerund

Adjectives of feeling (glad, happy, pleased) cannot be used with the **It's + adjective + infinitive structure**. Instead, the sentence needs to say who has (or doesn't have) these feelings.

Example:

Most parents are happy to see their children go to college.

People are always delighted to get compliments.

Reported speech

When a statement in direct speech changes to reported (or indirect) speech, the statement becomes a noun clause. The tense in the noun clause usually changes to a tense one step back in the past.

Example:

Statements	Reported statements
"It's a big secret."	He said (that) it was a big secret.
"I'm getting a terrible grade."	He said (that) he was getting a terrible grade.
"They got engaged."	He said (that) they had gotten engaged.
"We weren't talking about you."	They claimed (that) they hadn't been talking about me.
"She has been absent since Tuesday."	He said (that) she had been absent since Tuesday.
"We had never been there before."	She said (that) they had never been there before.
"I'll meet you at the café."	He said (that) he would meet me at the café.

Note: There is no tense change in general truths or when a very recent statement is being reported.

Example:

Statements	Reported statements
"The sun rises in the east."	She said (that) the sun rises in the east. (No change in tense)

When questions are used in reported speech, question word order becomes statement word order. In yes/no questions, the auxiliaries **do/does/did** are normally replaced with **if**.

Example:

Statements	Reported statements
" Does David see a lot of movies?"	I asked if David saw a lot of movies.
"What are you saying ?"	I asked them what they were saying .

With commands, the verb in the imperative becomes an infinitive. Don't + base form of verb becomes **not + infinitive**.

Example:

Statements	Reported statements
" Don't say anything!"	He warned his sister not to say anything.

The modals **can, may, must, have to, and don't have to** also change in reported speech. **Might** and **should** do not change. Also notice how the pronouns change in reported speech.

Example:

Statements	Reported statements
"You can go to the party with me."	She said I could go to the party with her .
"I may go to a movie tonight."	He said he might go to a movie tonight.
"We must tell him the truth."	They said they had to tell him the truth.
"He has to go to the bank."	He said he had to go to the bank.
"You don't have to pay me back."	She said I didn't have to pay her back.
"We might get married."	She said they might get married.
"I should replace my old	He said he should replace

laptop.”	his old laptop.
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Say and **tell** are used differently in reported speech. **Tell** must be followed by a noun or object pronoun. **Say** is not followed by a noun/pronoun object.

Example:

Statements	Reported statements
“Don’t park the car there.”	She told me not to park the car there. She said not to park the car there.