CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

NOUNS

Nouns   Adjectives   Pronouns   Verbs   Adverbs   Prepositions   Conjunctions   Interjections

1.1 Part One and Part Two Overview

In this first chapter, an important basic concept, the noun, is introduced. Nouns are a powerful part of speech. Here is a summary of the material about the form and uses of nouns covered in this chapter.

Part One: Form of English Nouns
What Information Do Nouns Give?

Types of Nouns
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PART ONE: FORM OF ENGLISH NOUNS
What Information Do Nouns Give?

> ***Form* refers to the qualities and characteristics that nouns have in common.**

Let's start with the different types of nouns.

1.2 Types of Nouns

> **A *noun* is a word used to name a person, place, thing, or idea.**

A *noun* is one of the most important words you use when speaking and writing. A noun names a person, place, or thing; a quality, idea, or action.

We can classify or group nouns into the following categories: proper, common, concrete, abstract, collective, and compound nouns. The following chart explains these classifications.

Types of Nouns

Susan	*Proper*	Proper nouns label specific people, places, or things. The first letter must be capitalized.
school	*Common*	Common nouns label general groups, places, people, or things.
hamburger	*Concrete*	Concrete nouns label things experienced through the senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch.
love	*Abstract*	Abstract nouns label things not knowable through the senses.
family	*Collective*	Collective nouns label groups as a unit.
suntan lotion	*Compound*	Compound nouns label a single concept composed of two or more words.

Note: A noun can belong to more than one group. For example, **suntan lotion** is both a common and a concrete noun, as well as a compound noun.

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1.3 One or Many: Singular and Plural Nouns

Nouns carry information about *number*. When a word refers to one person or thing, it is singular in number. When it refers to more than one of the same type of thing, it is plural in number.

One   More Than One

Singular   Plural

> **The *number* of a noun is indicated by its ending.
> The final letters of a noun determine
> how its plural is formed.**

The following examples illustrate how to change from the singular form of a noun to the plural form of a noun.

The plural of most nouns is formed by adding **-s**.

ball   ball**s**

For nouns ending in **s**, **x**, **z**, **sh**, and **ch**, add **-es**.

watch   watch**es**

Nouns ending in **f** or **fe** form their plurals by changing the **f** or **fe** to **v** and adding **-es**.

wife   wi**ves**

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Nouns ending in **y** form their plurals by changing the **y** to **i** and adding **-es**.

family   famil**ies**

Take a look at other noun endings to discover other irregular noun plurals.

1.4 A Closer Look at Noun Endings: Common Noun Suffixes

The main part of a word is called the *root*. Suffixes are added to the end of the root. A suffix consists of one or more letters or syllables added to the end of a root to change its meaning.
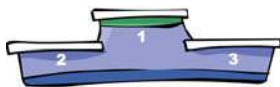
Adding **-er** indicates the person who is carrying out an action.

Example: A person who swims is a swimm**er**.

Note: Because of spelling rules, the **-m-** is doubled.

Adding **-ance** indicates the fact or state of carrying out an action.

Example: Someone who performs gives a perform**ance**.

Adding **-ness** indicates a quality or state of being.

Example: The state of being happy is happi**ness**.

Note: Because of spelling rules, the **-y** changes to **-i-**.

Adding **-ity** indicates an action or state of affairs that is abstract.

Example: Something that is possible
is a possibil**ity**.

Note: Because of spelling rules, the **-e-** is dropped.

Recognizing these suffixes can help you to identify nouns.
The ability to distinguish nouns from other words is very useful.

1.5 The Biological Nature: Masculine, Feminine, and Neuter Nouns

English nouns do not have gender. That is, they are not
inherently masculine or feminine. However, they may refer
to male or female people or animals. When things have no clear
gender, they are often said to be inanimate objects or things,
and they are thought of as being neuter.

Masculine Nouns

Nouns that refer to male people or animals
are *masculine nouns.*

Examples:
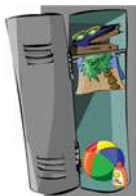Mr. Miller, man, father, actor, bull

Feminine Nouns

Nouns that refer to female people or animals
are *feminine nouns.*

Examples:
Mrs. Miller, woman, mother, actress, cow

Neuter Nouns

Nouns that denote things of neither gender
are *neuter nouns.*

Examples:
locker, ball, towel, lotion

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Nouns often come in the company of other words. It is important to learn about these little words, since they signal that a noun follows, and this could assist you in identifying nouns more easily.

1.6 In the Company of a Noun: Articles

Nouns are often accompanied by *articles,* also commonly called *noun namers.* These are placed before a noun.

Articles

General

a boy

The indefinite article **a** (or **an** used before a noun starting with a vowel) signals that the noun is indefinite. It can refer to any member of a group as opposed to one particular member.

Example: **a** boy

boys

There is no indefinite article used with plural, general nouns.

Example: boys

Specific

the boy

The definite article **the** is used before a singular noun when the noun is particular or specific.

Example: **the** boy

the boys

The definite article **the** is also used before a plural noun when the noun is particular or specific.

Example: **the** boys

> **!** Hint: **A** *is used before words beginning with a consonant;* **an** *is used before words beginning with a vowel.*

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Noun Starting with a Consonant

Noun Starting with a Vowel

Example: ***a*** beach towel

Example: ***an*** air mattress

Part One looked at the form of nouns. Many concepts introduced in this section will appear again later in this book. Next, let's take a closer look at what nouns can do.

PART TWO: USES OF ENGLISH NOUNS
What Jobs Can Nouns Do?

1.7 From Form to Use of Nouns

> **Nouns have jobs to do.**

When you express a thought or idea in a sentence, you place words into what is called *context*. Nouns are assigned different roles or jobs to do when they are used in sentences. Here is an example to illustrate use and context.

The context for all these things is their use in water.

What is wrong with this picture? If Maria wants to wear her bathing suit, she needs a pool, a lake, or the sea to put it to use. Here in the desert, she is in the wrong environment to wear a bathing suit: It is not the right context.

Similarly, words have jobs to do for which they are suited. When you put a sentence together that is grammatically correct, you give each part the right job to do.

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1.8 When Nouns Become Subjects

Nouns have specific jobs to do when placed within a sentence.
These jobs are labeled as subjects, subject complements,
possessive nouns, or objects. Let's look at each.

The first, and most important, job that nouns can do in
a sentence is to act as a *subject*.

The chart below shows how nouns become subjects. They are
still nouns, but they are now called subjects in the form of a
noun. They are the focus of the sentence, and their job is to carry
out the action described by the verb.

> **A noun that names the person(s) or thing(s)**
> **about which a statement is to be made**
> **is labeled the *subject*.**

Nouns as Subjects

Noun		Subject	Verb
Maria		Maria	swims.
pool	*becomes*	The pool	opens.
party		The party	begins.
friends		The friends	celebrate.

Any type of noun can become a subject.

Nouns referring to people often act as subjects and are easily recognized:

Proper Nouns

Ben   Maria   Mr. and Mrs. Miller

Common Nouns

man   swimmer   girl

Nouns referring to inanimate objects can also be used as subjects:

chair   swimsuit   suntan lotion   school

To find the subject of a sentence, use a question word. When the subject is a person, use the question word **Who**: For example, for the sentence **Ben swims**, ask **Who** swims? The answer is **Ben**.

Example: Ben swims.
Who swims? **Ben** swims.

In the example above, the statement is about Ben. The noun **Ben** is the subject of the sentence **Ben swims**. Ben performs the action of swimming. The verb **swims** tells what Ben does.

When the subject is not a person, use the question word **What**: For example, for the sentence **The pool opens**, ask **What** opens? The answer is **The pool**.

Pool Hours
9:00 a.m. —
10:00 p.m.

Example: The pool opens.
What opens? **The pool** opens.

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