

Grammar Reference Sheet: Nouns

Count & Noncount Nouns:

Count Nouns: Nouns that you can count.

- A countable noun can be singular (**lemon**) or plural (**lemons**).
- We can use numbers with countable nouns (**one** lemon, **two** lemons).
- We can use **a/an** with singular countable nouns (**a** lemon, **an** accident).

Noncount Nouns: Some nouns are uncountable.

- Noncount nouns cannot be plural (advice not ~~advices~~) (information not ~~informations~~).
- We cannot use numbers with noncount nouns (advice not ~~two advices~~)
- We cannot use **a/an** (advice not ~~an advice~~) (information not ~~an information~~)

Use singular verbs with noncount nouns. (Good advice **is** priceless.)

Common Noncount Nouns:

Abstractions (*concepts/ ideas*): Beauty, confidence, courage, health, honesty, intelligence, justice, peace, truth, violence, advice, information, news, feedback

Fields of study: chemistry, engineering, history, literature, psychology, marketing, journalism

Activities: baseball, soccer, tennis, football, reading, homework, writing, studying, research

Fluids, solids, gases, particles: water, coffee, iron, wood, smoke, air, rice, dirt, dust, sugar, sand

Articles:

Tip #1: Before every singular count noun, you need one of these words:

- an **article** (a/an/the),
- a **singular expression of quantity** (each, every, one)
- a **possessive** pronoun (your, his, her, my, our)
- or a word like: this/that

Example:

✗ At work I usually have 15 minute **break** at 10:00 am. (incorrect)

Break is a singular count noun, so you need something before it.

At work I usually have a/my 15 minute **break** at 10:00 am. (correct)

Tip #2: Use plural count nouns for generalizations.

If you are writing about something in general, you don't have a specific person/ place/ thing in mind, it is more common in English to **use plural count nouns** to make generalizations.

Less common: **A student** needs practice using APA style. (I don't have a specific student in mind.)

More common: **Students** need practice using APA style. (I don't have a specific student in mind.)

Politicians with charisma are more successful. (I don't have a specific politician in mind.)

*Remember: Noncount nouns don't have plural forms.

Grammar Reference Sheet: Verbs

Gerunds and Infinitives:

Gerund: The **verb + ing** form of a verb.

I love **playing** tennis. (**playing** is a gerund)

Infinitive: The **to + verb** form of a verb.

I love **to play** tennis. (**to play** is an infinitive)

Examples: The verb **love** can be followed by the infinitive form of a verb (to + verb) or the gerund form of a verb (verb + ing).

I **love** coffee. (after a verb you might have a **noun** like coffee)

↑ ↑
verb noun

I **love** to drink coffee. (after a verb you might have an **infinitive** like to drink coffee)

↑ ↑
verb infinitive

I **love** drinking coffee. (after a verb you might have a **gerund** like drinking coffee)

↑ ↑
verb gerund

After **some verbs** you can use a gerund, but not an infinitive. (like **enjoy**)

After **some verbs** you can use an infinitive, but not a gerund. (like **need**)

After **some verbs** you can use either a gerund or an infinitive. (like **love**)

Examples: I **enjoy** coffee. (correct)

I **enjoy** drinking coffee. (correct)

× I **enjoy** to drink coffee. (incorrect)

Reference Charts for Verbs:

Verbs followed by **both infinitives and gerunds:**

begin	start	continue	like	love	hate
prefer	can't stand	can't bear			

I **love** to drink coffee. **Or** I **love** drinking coffee. (These sentences have the same meaning.)

Verbs followed by **Infinitives** (to + verb):

afford	appear	ask
claim	want	decide
expect	intend	learn
manage	need	offer
plan	prepare	promise
refuse	seem	wait

I can't **afford** to buy a Prius.

Verbs followed by **Gerunds** (verb + ing):

advise	appreciate	avoid
consider	delay	deny
discuss	enjoy	keep
mention	mind	postpone
recommend	resist	risk
suggest	understand	finish

I **avoid** drinking coffee at night.

Verbs followed by a *pronoun* + an **Infinitive** (to+verb)

advise <i>me</i>	allow <i>us</i>	cause <i>me</i>
convince <i>me</i>	encourage <i>it</i>	force <i>her</i>
persuade <i>him</i>	require <i>us</i>	teach <i>him</i>
tell <i>her</i>	urge <i>him</i>	warn <i>him</i>

She **persuaded** *him* to give her a raise.

We **warned** *them* not to expect immediate results.

(Examples of *pronouns*: *me, you, her, him, it, us, them*)

Phrases ending in *prepositions* are followed by **Gerunds**

in addition <i>to</i>	believe <i>in</i>	be capable <i>of</i>
be committed <i>to</i>	complain <i>about</i>	dream <i>of</i>
be excited <i>about</i>	instead <i>of</i>	be interested <i>in</i>
look forward <i>to</i>	be opposed <i>to</i>	prevent (it) <i>from</i>
succeed <i>in</i>	be tired <i>of</i>	

He is **committed** *to* solving the clean water crisis.

I **am interested** *in* attending the event tomorrow night.

*You can only use a gerund (not an infinitive)

right after a *preposition* (e.g., *of, in, about, to, from*).