

Explanations

Inversion

The term inversion covers two different grammatical operations.

- Using a question form of the main verb
*Not only **did he fail** to report the accident, but also later denied that he had been driving the car.*
*Never **have I enjoyed** myself more!*

- Changing the normal positions of verb and subject
*Along the street **came a strange procession.***
 See Grammar 14 for an explanation of this example.

Inversion after negative adverbials

- This only occurs when the adverbial occurs at the beginning of a clause. All the examples below are used in formal language, usually for rhetorical effect, such as in political speeches. They are not usual in everyday spoken language. Compare:

*Never **have I heard** a weaker excuse!*
I have never heard a weaker excuse!

- Time expressions: *never, rarely, seldom*
 These are most commonly used with present perfect or past perfect, or with modals such as *can* and *could*. Sentences of this type often contain comparatives.

***Rarely can a minister** have been faced with such a problem.*
***Seldom has the team** given a worse performance.*
***Rarely had I had** so much responsibility.*

- Time expressions: *hardly, barely, scarcely, no sooner*
 These refer to an event which quickly follows another in the past. They are usually used with past perfect, although *no sooner* can be followed by past simple. Note the words used in the contrasting clause.

***Hardly had the train left** the station, **when** there was an explosion.*
***Scarcely had I entered** the room **when** the phone rang.*
***No sooner had I reached** the door **than** I realised it was locked.*
***No sooner was the team back on the pitch** **than** it started raining.*

- After *only*
 Here *only* combines with other time expressions and is usually used with past simple.

***Only after posting the letter** **did I remember** that I had forgotten to put on a stamp.*

Other examples are *only if/when, only then, only later*.

Note that when *only* refers to 'the state of being the only one', there is no inversion following it.

Only Mary realised that the door was not locked.

- Phrases containing *no/not*
These include *under no circumstances, on no account, at no time, in no way, on no condition, not until, not only ... (but also)*.
On no condition are they to open fire without a warning.
Not until I got home did I notice that I had the wrong umbrella.
- *Little*
Little also has a negative or restrictive meaning in this sense:
Little does the government appreciate what the results will be.
- This occurs with *so* and adjectives when the main verb is *be*. It is used for emphasis and is more common than the example with *such*.
So devastating were the floods that some areas may never recover.
- *Such* used with *be* means *so much/so great*
Such was the force of the storm that trees were uprooted.
- As in the examples with *such*, inversion only occurs if *so/such* is the first word in the clause.
- Three types of *If-* sentence can be inverted without *If-*. This makes the sentences more formal and makes the event less likely.
If they were to escape, there would be an outcry.
Were they to escape, there would be an outcry.
If the police had found out, I would have been in trouble.
Were the police to have found out, I would have been in trouble.
If you should hear anything, let me know.
Should you hear anything, let me know.
If he has cheated, he will have to be punished.
Should he have cheated, he will have to be punished.
If I had known, I would have protested strongly.
Had I known, I would have protested strongly.
- Inversion after *as*
This is more common in formal or written language.
We were short of money, as were most people in our neighbourhood.
I thought, as did my colleagues, that the recession would soon be over.
- Inversion after *so, neither* and *nor*
These are used in 'echoing' statements, agreeing or disagreeing.
A: / *am going home.* B: *So am I.*
A: / *don't like meat.* B: *Neither do I.*
See Grammar 14 for ways of giving emphasis without inverting after *so*.

Inversion after
so/such with that

Inverted
conditional
sentences without
if-

Practice

Complete each sentence by using the phrases from the box.

Rarely have	No sooner had	Under no circumstances are
Not only did	Under no circumstances will	as did
Were you	Hardly had	Little did
		Rarely have

- Hardly had* we arrived at the hotel, when there was a power cut.
-members of staff to accept gratuities from clients.
-Detective Dawson realise what she was to discover!
-to pay the full amount now, there would be a ten per cent discount.
- I supposed,.....most people, that I would be retiring at 60.
-the doctors seen a more difficult case.
-Jean win first prize, but she was also offered a promotion.
-late arrivals be admitted to the theatre before the interval,
-one missing child been found, than another three disappeared,
-so many employees taken sick leave at the same time.



2 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

- a) It was only when the office phoned me that I found out about the meeting.
find
 Not until , *the office phoned me did I find out* about the meeting.
- b) The facts were not all made public at the time.
 later
 Only.....all made public.
- c) The response to our appeal was so great that we had to take on more staff.
 response
 Such.....to our appeal that we had to take on more staff.
- d) Harry broke his leg, and also injured his shoulder.
 but
 Not only.....also injured his shoulder.
- e) The police didn't suspect at all that the judge was the murderer.
 did
 Little.....as being the murderer.
- f) The bus driver cannot be blamed for the accident in any way.
 held
 In.....responsible for the accident.
- g) If the government raised interest rates, they would lose the election.
 raise
 Were.....interest rates, they would lose the election,
- h) As soon as I got home, I realised I'd left my bag in the shops.
had
 No sooner.....I realised I'd left my bag in the shops,
- i) It was only when I asked a passer-by that I realised where I was.
did
 Not until.....where I was.
- j) The minister was interrupted just after starting his speech.
when
 Hardly.....he was interrupted.

3 Decide which sentences are inappropriate in the contexts given.

- a) Guest to host: 'So nice was that pudding, that I would like to have some more. inappropriate
- b) Witness to court: 'No sooner had I turned out the light, than I heard a noise outside.'
- c) News reader: 'Such was the force of the earthquake, that whole villages have been devastated.'
- d) Parent to child: 'Should you fancy a pizza, let's order one now.'
- e) Friend to friend: 'Never before have I seen this film.'
- f) Politician to audience: 'Seldom has the country faced a greater threat.'
- g) Celebrity to interviewer: 'Were I to have the time, I'd go climbing more often.'
- h) Victim to police officer: 'Scarcely had we been introduced when he punched me for no reason.'
- i) Printed notice: 'Under no circumstances is this control panel to be left unattended.'
- j) Colleague to colleague: 'Should you change your mind, just let me know.'

4 Complete each sentence with a suitable phrase containing the verb in brackets in an appropriate form.

- a) Should you need (need) anything, could you let me know?
- b) Were the plane.....(take off), everyone in it would have been killed.
- c) Had.....(study) harder, I would probably have passed all my exams.
- d) Should.....(be) in the neighbourhood, drop in.
- e) Had.....(go) to the doctor immediately, your daughter would not be so ill.
- f) Never before.....(spend) so much money on her daughter's birthday.
- g) Should.....(feel) hungry, just call room service, and order a meal.
- h) Were.....(offer) her the job, we couldn't be sure that she would accept.
- i) Had.....(take) the necessary measures, this political crisis could have been avoided,
- j) Scarcely.....(get) home when the police called us with news of Geoffrey.

5 **Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.**

- a) Jim promised that he would never/never would he tell anyone else.
 b) Not until it was too late / remembered/did I remember to call Susan.
 c) Hardly had we settled down in our seats than/when the lights went out.
 d) Only after checking three times / was/was I certain of the answer.
 e) At no time I was aware/was I aware of anything out of the ordinary.
 f) Only Catherine and Sally passed/did they pass the final examination.
 g) Only when Pete has arrived/has Pete arrived can we begin the programme,
 h) No sooner had it stopped raining than/when the sun came out.

6 **Complete the text by using the words and phrases from the box.**

little	such	not only	under no circumstances	had
seldom	along	no sooner	as	scarcely

Well, ladies and gentlemen, we've done it again - another election victory. The last four years of office has been a wonderful time for the party, a tale of adversity overcome. No sooner had we come to office than the Stock Market crashed. But we survived that scare, and we came out of it stronger for the experience. The opposition claimed we were faltering.

(2).....have I heard such hypocrisy from a party which continued to squabble internally for the next four years. Then

(3).....came a fellow called David Rew, with his new breakaway Democratic party - but he didn't have much success in the opinion polls! (4).....did he claim he'd become Prime Minister within three years, he also reckoned that this party was now unpopular with younger voters. (5).....did he realise that it would be the young voters who gave us an overwhelming vote of confidence in yesterday's election. (6).....had the first votes rolled in when it was obvious that we would be re-elected with a huge majority.

(7).....was the extent of our victory that the New Democrats obtained a meagre five seats. (8).....they known they would perform so poorly, I don't think they would have been quite so scathing in their criticism of our economic policy. But rest assured, ladies and gentlemen, (9).....will we rest on our laurels. There is no room for complacency in this government. And I am confident, (10).....I'm sure are most of you, that the next four years will be a resounding success. Thank you.

7 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

a) Please never ever interrupt me when I'm in a meeting.

am

On no account am I (ever) to be interrupted when I'm in a meeting.

b) Nobody from this school has ever written a better composition.

anyone

Never.....written a better composition.

c) Such was the demand for tickets that people queued day and night.

great

The demand for tickets.....that people queued day and night.

d) The money is not to be paid under any circumstances.

no

Under.....to be paid.

e) Three days passed before we arrived at the first oasis.

had

Not until.....at the first oasis.

f) Little did Brenda know what she was letting herself in for.

no

Brenda.....what she was letting herself in for.

g) It was only when I stopped that I realised something was wrong.

did

Only.....that something was wrong.

h) The accused never expressed regret for what he had done.

time

At.....regret for what he had done.

i) Exhaustion prevented any of the runners from finishing the race.

were

So.....of them finished the race.

j) It's not common for there to be so much rain in March.

see

Seldom.....so much rain in March.

→ SEE ALSO
Grammar 14: Emphasis
Grammar 15: Consolidation 3



Explanations

Changing word
order to change
focus

- **Passive**
Passive constructions vary the way information is given in a sentence, putting more emphasis on what comes first. See Grammar 6 and 7.
All roads to the north have been blocked by snow.
- **Fronting and inversion**
Inversion here refers to changing the normal word order in the sentence so that a prepositional phrase is emphasised before the verb. This also involves putting the verb before the subject.
Suddenly down came the rain!
Up in the air went the balloon.
Fronting involves changing the order of clauses in a sentence and putting first for emphasis a clause that would usually not be first.
/ don't know where the money is coming from.
Where the money is coming from, I don't know.
Time phrases can vary in position, and are often put first because the time reference is important.
At six o'clock Monica decided to phone the police.
May clauses
There is a type of may clause introduced by although which can be inverted. It is a highly formal expression.
Although it may seem/be difficult, it is not impossible.
Difficult as/though it may seem/be, it is not impossible.
- **Cleft and pseudo cleft sentences**
These are sentences introduced by it is/it was or by a clause beginning what. Different parts of the sentence can be emphasised in this way. In speech, stress and intonation also identify the emphasis.
With it is/was
Sue borrowed my bike last night.
It was Sue who borrowed my bike.
It was last night that Sue borrowed my bike.
It was my bike that Sue borrowed.
Sentences with because are also possible.
It was because I felt ill that I left.
Modal auxiliaries are also possible.
You can't have read the same book.
It can't have been the same book that you read.

What clauses

These are common with verbs such as need, want, like, hate.

I hate rainy weather.

What I hate is rainy weather.

You need a holiday.

What you need is a holiday.

It is also possible to emphasise events, using auxiliary do/did.

Peter left the windows unlocked.

What Peter did was (to) leave the windows unlocked.

They are destroying the environment.

What they are doing is destroying the environment.

Clauses beginning all emphasise 'the only thing'.

/ only need another £15.

All I need is another £15.

Adding words for emphasis

•Own

This intensifies possessive adjectives.

It was my own idea.

• Very and indeed

Very can be used emphatically to mean exactly/precisely.

At the very same moment, the telephone rang.

Very ... indeed is another way of intensifying adjectives.

It was very cold indeed.

• Emphasising negatives

Ways of emphasising not include: at all, in the least, really.

It was not at all cold. It was not cold at all.

In the least/slightest usually adds bit if used before an adjective.

/ wasn't interested in the slightest.

I wasn't the least bit interested.

No and none can be emphasised by at all and whatsoever.

There were none left at all.

There were no tickets left whatsoever.

•The

The can emphasise uniqueness. It is heavily stressed in speech.

Surely you are not the Elizabeth Taylor, are you?

• Question words ending in -ever

These add an air of disbelief to the question.

Whatever are you doing? Whoever told you that?

- **Auxiliary do**
 This can emphasise the verb, and is stressed in speech.
 / do like this film! It's really great!
 It is also used in polite forms.
 / do hope you'll come again! Do sit down!
- **Adverbs and adjectives**
 A large number of adverbs and adjectives are used to add emphasis.
 Common examples are:
 / actually went inside one of the Pyramids.
 It is by no means certain that the match will take place.
 Some people were even wearing pullovers, it was so cold.
 Her performance was sheer magic!
 This book is utter nonsense!
 The following examples are only possible with adjectives which express an absolute opinion (non-gradeable adjectives).
 It was absolutely fantastic!
 The third exam question was quite (completely) impossible.
 This guide book is utterly useless.
 You were simply wonderful!
 Don't cook the meat any more. It's just right!
- **Echoing phrases with so**
 These express agreement.
 A: This is the book you are looking for. B: So it is!
- **Time phrases**
 Common examples are: day after day; time and time again; over and over again; day in, day out
 David reads the same book over and over again!
- **Repetition of main verb**
 / tried and tried, but it was no use.
- **In the repetition of a phrase with a possessive it is possible to omit the first mention of the noun and use a possessive pronoun.**
 Their marriage was a successful marriage.
 Theirs was a successful marriage.

Other means

Practice

1 Complete each sentence with one suitable word.

- a) You can't complain. It's your own fault, isn't it?
- b) A: That looks like Janet.
B:..... it is! My goodness, hasn't she changed.
- c) I'm sorry to keep you waiting. I..... hope you haven't been here long.
- d) It is by no..... certain that the Prime Minister will attend the meeting.
- e)..... I really enjoy in winter is a bowl of hot soup.
- f) I searched and..... for my keys but I couldn't find them.
- g)..... you are all going to sleep I can't quite work out!
- h) What the government then..... was to raise interest rates.
- i) There isn't much to eat..... we've got is some leftovers.
- j) Cathy wasn't the..... bit put out when I couldn't make it to her wedding.

2 Complete each sentence with a suitable phrase from the box.

the least bit	waited and waited	by no means
what we did	not at all	as it may seem
none at all	do think	can't have been
		time and time again

- a) I know you're busy, but I do think you could have helped me with the decorating.
- b) It's..... certain that the president will be re-elected.
- c) You may have lots of restaurants where you live, but there are..... in this part of town.
- d) I told you..... about the leaking pipes, but you wouldn't listen.
- e) You don't seem..... interested in my problems!
- f) Strange....., the bus is actually faster than the train.
- g) In the end..... was to call a plumber.
- h) We..... all day, but Chris never turned up.
- i) Pauline was..... bothered by our turning up so late.
- j) It..... Jim that you saw; he is in Germany at the moment.

- 3 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.
- a) The car doesn't need anything else except new tyres.
needs
All the car needs is new tyres.
- b) Brenda didn't worry at all about her exams.
bit
Brenda wasn't the about her exams.
- c) The person who told me about the hotel was Keith.
who
It told me about the hotel.
- d) I had spent every last penny of my money.
absolutely
I had whatsoever.
- e) Although the ticket may seem expensive, it is good value for money.
though
Expensive the ticket is good value for money.
- f) I really hate lukewarm food.
stand
What I lukewarm food.
- g) In the end Martha went to the police.
was
In the end what Martha to the police.
- h) I think you must have seen a ghost.
that
It you saw.
- i) Her car was the last car you'd expect to be stolen.
very
Hers you'd expect to be stolen.
- j) The accident happened because someone was very careless.
caused
Sheer happen.

4 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) Don't worry, I'm none at all/not at all tired.
- b) I thought that speech was utter/utterly rubbish.
- c) It was because/why the car broke down that we missed our plane.
- d) A: You are sitting on my hat! B: So am I/So I am!
- e) The sea was so rough that actually/even the experienced sailors were seasick.
- f) Whatever/Why ever are you looking at me like that for?
- g) I would like to make it quite/simply clear that we are just good friends.
- h) This is my very private/very own computer.
- i) On this course, we absolutely expect/do expect you to work hard.
- j) There were warnings, but nothing whatsoever/nothing simply was done.

5 Read the dialogue and decide which answer (A, B or C) best fits each space.

Jane: Well, did you see 'Western Warrior' at the cinema?

Ben: Yes, and I thought it was very good (1) **.B.** A lot of people had warned me that the plot got a bit far-fetched, but I didn't notice anything like that (2)What about you?

Jane: No, I'm afraid I wasn't interested (3) I find these action films (4)unbelievable and over the top. Give me 'Love on the Danube' any day. I could watch that film (5)

Ben: Well, I (6)hope you'll come with me to see 'The Fall of Julian'.

Jane: It hasn't exactly done very well, has it?

Ben: (7)makes you think that? I heard it's been very popular. Some newspaper critics have (8)suggested it'll win several Oscar awards.

Jane: Well I think it's (9)not possible to predict these things. You never know what the judges will go for. Last year I was certain that 'The Leaping Lady' would sweep the board, but in the end it got no awards (10)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1) A certainly | B indeed | C surely |
| 2) A at all | B by no means | C absolutely |
| 3) A whatever | B slightly | C in the least |
| 4) A very | B sheer | C utterly |
| 5) A over and over again | B whatsoever | C at the very moment |
| 6) A would | B do | C utterly |
| 7) A Whatever | B Whatsoever | C Whoever |
| 8) A quite | B utterly | C even |
| 9) A completely | B simply | C utterly |
| 10) A whatsoever | B at least | C indeed |

O Choose the most appropriate continuation (1-10) for each sentence (a-j).

- a) All of the trains were delayed by fog 4...
- b) It wasn't so much my qualifications that impressed them
- c) I found that I was spending more time staying late at the office
- d) I don't find that the buses are especially late, actually.
- e) Actually my fridge is in quite good condition, considering its age
- f) I don't find watching television particularly relaxing
- g) I've decided to buy a new stereo after all
- h) This book didn't teach me everything I know about cooking
- i) The flight itself didn't really bother me at all
- j) Actually I wasn't in the office yesterday.

- 1 Where I am going to get the money from is another matter.
- 2 What I really need is a new washing machine.
- 3 It must have been my assistant whom you dealt with.
- 4 It was after 10.00 when I finally got home.
- 5 What really gets on my nerves is people who push into the queue.
- 6 It was when I got off the plane that I felt ill.
- 7 What I did in the end was to ask for a pay-rise.
- 8 It was Sarah who taught me how to make bread.
- 9 It was because I spoke well at the interview that I got the job.
- 10 What I like most is a long walk in the country.

7 Complete the dialogue by choosing the most appropriate word from the list

whatever whatsoever why all as again what is
utter at

David: I can't make any sense of this letter from the council (1) at
all. It's (2)nonsense, if you ask me. (3)the
council can't write in plain English is beyond me. (4)I
really hate is this long-winded, complicated English. In my opinion,
what they're doing (5)systematically destroying the
language with all this new jargon - 'input', 'time window', 'feasibility
study' - (6)are they talking about? (7)we
get is the same meaningless drivel over and over (8)
Listen to this: 'Difficult (9)it may be for all parties
concerned, this is the most viable solution on offer.' I have no idea,
none (10)what that means.

Eve: Oh for heaven's sake, shut up!

→ SEE ALSO
Grammar 6 and 7: Passive 1 and 2
Grammar 15: Consolidation 3

1 Complete the text with one suitable word in each space.

Some people always have good advice to give you, but only after the event. You (1) *must* have come across the type, who somehow always know what you (2) have done when it has become too late. By now I (3) spot them a mile off. It (4) be because I have had so much practice. Last week, for example, I (5) to take my car to the garage because the lights weren't working. It was an expensive job, but I decided that I (6) as well pay, and get it over quickly. 'You (7) have told me,' said a friend when I was telling him how much I (8) to pay. 'I (9) easily have fixed it for you. Then you (10) not have wasted so much money.' You (11) imagine how I felt! Actually, he (12) probably have made a mess of the job, and I (13) well have ended up paying more. But it does seem strange that everyone else (14) know exactly what I (15) to do.

2 Complete each sentence with one suitable word.

- a) Do you think I had . *better* catch the earlier train?
- b) have we eaten a more enjoyable meal!
- c) Strange as it seem, I have never drunk coffee!
- d) You have told me the meeting was cancelled!
- e) Not I woke up did I realise that Diana had left.
- f) I really need is a new motorbike.
- g) You be Jane's mother. Pleased to meet you.
- h) At the end of the film, she meets the murderer.
- i) did we know what was in store for us later!
- j) You know Steve, he's to be late, so don't bother waiting for him.

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

- a) You are not to leave the hospital under any circumstances.
are
Under *no circumstances are you to* leave the hospital.
- b) Two weeks passed before the letter arrived.
did
Not until the letter arrive.
- c) She was so popular that everyone voted for her.
her
Such that everyone voted for her.
- d) Luckily it wasn't necessary for Jim to take the exam again.
need
Luckily Jim the exam.
- e) In the end I had no choice but to get a lift with a colleague.
could
In the end all get a lift with a colleague.
- f) The guests didn't finally leave until after midnight.
before
It the guests finally left.
- g) Paul smashed a window and damaged the television too.
but
Not only damaged the television.
- h) By law, all rear-seat passengers are obliged to wear seat-belts.
have
By law, seat-belts all rear-seat passengers.
- i) Harry tells the same joke all the time!
over
Harry tells the same joke again!
- j) It may seem strange but I like stale cake!
as
Strange I like stale cake!
- k) It was very kind of you to bring me chocolates.
shouldn't
You me chocolates.
- l) There's nothing better to do, so go home.
may
You go home.

- 4 Complete each sentence with a suitable word or phrase so that the meaning stays the same. The new sentence must not contain the word or words underlined.
- a) It would have been a good idea to take your umbrella.
 You should have taken your umbrella.
- b) It's certain to rain tomorrow.
 It's to rain tomorrow.
- c) I know you're tired, but that's no reason to be so irritable.
 You tired, but that's no reason to be so irritable.
- d) The hotel was as comfortable as possible.
 The hotel could more comfortable.
- e) It's possible that Ann is out.
 Ann out.
- f) You are quite wrong to eat so much chocolate.
 You eat so much chocolate.
- g) I'm sure this isn't the road to Canterbury.
 We on the road to Canterbury.
- h) It's typical of Martin to get promoted!
 I Martin would get promoted!
- i) Connie's mother refused to let the children watch TV.
 Connie's mother let the children watch TV.
- j) I don't think anyone would agree with you.
 I whether anyone would agree with you.
- 5 Choose the best meaning, A or B, for each sentence.
- a) He might have let me know! ...A....
 A I wish he had let me know.
 B I'm not sure whether he let me know.
- b) It's quite the best film I've ever seen
 A I have seen some that were better.
 B I haven't seen any that were better.
- c) You must be joking!
 A I'm sure you are joking.
 B You are supposed to make people laugh.
- d) I should like to invite her out
 A People think it an obligation for me to do this.
 B I think it would be a good idea.
- e) You mustn't work so hard
 A It's not necessary to work so hard.
 B It isn't a good idea to work so hard.

6 Decide which sentences are correct. Put a tick (/) if the sentence is correct, or a cross (X) if it is wrong.

- a) Never have I had such a good holiday. /
- b) Into the room three policemen came.
- c) Hardly I sat down, when there was a knock at the door.
- d) Exactly where the boat leaves from, I'm not quite sure.
- e) You must not leave the door locked under no circumstances.
- f) Should you need me, I'll be in my office all day.
- g) Strange as it may seem, but I enjoy hard work,
- h) All I need is time.
- i) Had the government acted more swiftly, the crisis might have been avoided,
- j) Until you've completed this form, there's not much we can do.

/ In most lines of this text there is an extra word. Write the word, or put a tick if the line is correct.

Dear John,

Have a little problem, to say the least - might it be grateful of your	1 ..it.....
advice. Things should have gone pretty badly this week up in Marketing.	2.....
On Thursday I did missed this really important meeting. I supposed,	3.....
as did we all us, that the meeting would be cancelled, as my boss,	4.....
DW, had flu. Little bit did I know, DW's boss, Mike Tranter himself,	5.....
was there in the meeting room, waiting for us all, and nobody	6.....
turned up! Apparently, as Mike had sent me an e-mail that morning,	7.....
asking me to tell everyone what the meeting was still on, but that would	8.....
be the day I was too busy to check my e-mails, wouldn't it! Mike	9.....
was livid, and accused me of having no common sense so whatever.	10.....
I tried to apologise and suggested we shall rearrange the meeting, but	11.....
he wasn't at the least bit interested. From his point of view, not only	12.....
did I fail to attend a meeting, but also that I failed to communicate a	13.....
vital message from him which he'd entrusted me with. No sooner	14.....
had I emerged from Mike's office after a dressing-down that it must	15.....
have lasted for a good 15 minutes, than who should phone me but	16.....
DW, wanting to know exactly what might had happened at the meeting.	17.....
He must have arranged it for Mike to chair the meeting in his place.	18.....
Well, I feel like I might have as well go and hand in my resignation now.	19.....
Any advice will more than gratefully received from a desperate friend!	20.....

Tim

8 Complete each sentence with a suitable phrase containing the word(s) in brackets, in an appropriate form. Some negatives are needed.

- a) But I only lent you the book this morning! You can't have finished (finish) it already!
- b) I don't know who phoned, but I suppose it..... (might) Sophia.
- c) Strange.....(seem), Harry has never been to London.
- d) Never.....(see) a more boring film!
- e) I told you we would miss the train! We.....(leave) earlier!
- f) I was just thinking about you. It's strange that..... (should) phoned me!
- g) Try.....(might), I just can't understand how this computer works!
- h) Seldom.....(snow/fall) here in winter, even when it is very cold.
- i) It rained every day on my holiday in France, so I(need) the suntan lotion after all!
- j) Well, I thought the food was awful. It.....(can) the same restaurant you went to.

9 Complete each sentence with one suitable word.

- a) Jean must have had a good time in Denmark.
- b) I'm sure.....was last week that I paid the bill.
- c) I think Phil.....better stay in bed today.
- d) The meals in the hotel were.....awful.
- e) Really the whole house.....painting.
- f) Strange.....it may seem, Mary likes it here.
- g) This restaurant is.....place to be seen in this town.
- h) This is my.....own recipe, actually.
- i) Hardly had I entered the office,.....the phone started ringing.
- j) After we had been on the beach for an hour,.....came the rain!

Explanations

Problems

This unit assumes that the basic rules for forming reported speech are already known.

- The most important rule is to use verb forms that are natural in the situation.
 - 'I'm happy to help you' she said.
 - She told me she is happy to help us.

In the above example, the verb has not been put one stage back in the past. In the following example, the same is true.

 - 'I wanted to go to the cinema, but John wasn't so keen,' said Sue.
 - Sue said that she wanted to go to the cinema, but John wasn't so keen.
- Reported speech with modal auxiliaries

If the reporting verb is in a past verb form, modals change where there is a 'past' equivalent.

Will - would can - could may - might

Could, would, and might do not change.

/ might be late. She said (that) she might be late.

Should changes to would if it is used as a first person form of would.

I should love to come. She said (that) she would love to come.

Otherwise should remains unchanged.

You should rest. They said (that) I should rest.

Must can be reported as either had to or remain as must.
- Reported speech with conditional sentences

After a past tense reporting verb, real situations include verb form changes.

If we leave now, we'll catch the train.

I told him that if we left then we'd catch the train.

In reported hypothetical situations, verb form changes are not made if the event has reference to a possible future.

If you came back tomorrow, I'd be able to help you.

She said that if I came back the next day, she'd be able to help me.

If the event is clearly hypothetical and impossible, time changes are made.

If I had a spanner, I could fix it.

He said that if he had had a spanner he could have fixed it.

Hypothetical past conditional sentences do not change.
- Don't think

Statements reported with verbs of thinking such as think, expect, suppose can transfer the negative from the statement to the verb.

/ suppose she won't come. (This means I don't suppose she'll come.)

Reporting verbs

There are numerous reporting verbs, which report the words of others, or our own words and thoughts. Only a selection is given here. Other examples are included in the activities. Only the most useful categories are given here. It is advisable to use a dictionary to check on how reporting verbs are used. See Grammar 19, 21 and 22 for prepositions or -ing forms following verbs.

- Verbs followed by **that + clause** (with * can be followed by a person)

add	confirm	feel	predict	say
admit	consider	hope	promise*	state
agree	decide	imply	reassure*	suggest
announce	deny	insist	reckon	suppose
argue	doubt	mean	remark	tell*
believe	estimate	mention	repeat	think
claim	expect*	object	reply	threaten
complain	explain	persuade	report*	warn*

- Verbs followed by **person + to**

advise	forbid	invite	persuade	tell	ask	instruct	order
remind	warn						

- Verbs followed by **subjunctive or should**

Most of these verbs can also be used in the other ways given.

As these verbs contain the sense that someone 'should do' something, **should** can follow them.

They suggested that she should apply again.

More formally, the subjunctive can be used instead of **should**. This is formed from the base of the verb (without third person V).

They suggested that she apply again.

Some other verbs of this type are:

advise (also: someone to do/against something)

agree (also: to do something, that + clause)

demand (also: to do something)

insist (also: on someone doing something)

prefer (also: someone to do something)

propose (also: doing something)

recommend (also: doing something)

request (also: someone to do something)

suggest (also: that + clause)

urge (also: someone to do something)

- Verbs which can be followed by that + clause containing would
All these verbs report statements containing will. These verbs can also be followed by 'to do something'.

/ // leave at 8.00.

She decided to leave at 8.00.

She decided (that) she would leave at 8.00.

Others are: expect, hope, promise, threaten.

Functions

- Many verbs describe a function, rather than report words.

Look, if I were you I'd leave early.

She advised me to leave early.

Examples are:

admit complain request suggest

advise invite remind warn

agree persuade threaten

- Some verbs describe actions.

Hi, Dave, how are you?

He greeted me.

Examples are:

accept, congratulate, decide, greet, interrupt, introduce

Changes of viewpoint

Changes of time, place and person reference are assumed known at this level. In reported speech, there is no longer a clear reference which can be understood by two people in the same place.

/ left the parcel on this chair.

In reported speech one would have to specify which chair:

He said he had left the parcel on the chair by the window.

Or the reference may be replaced by a more general one:

/ love this town.

She said that she loved the town.

Practice

Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- a) The government spokesperson denied/refused that there was a crisis.
- b) Jane said me/told me there was nothing the matter.
- c) Peter persuaded me/insisted me to stay to dinner.
- d) The director of studies advised me/suggested me to spend more time in the library.
- e) Sheila explained me/warned me not to leave the heater on all night.
- f) The chairperson mentioned us/reminded us that time was extremely short.
- g) Bill answered them/replied them with a detailed description of his plans.
- h) Michael and Sarah announced/reported that they were going to get married,
- i) Paul accepted/expected that he had made a mistake, and apologised,
- j) The manager confirmed/reassured that our room had been reserved.

2 Rewrite each sentence in reported speech, using the verbs given in the appropriate verb form. Some may be negative.

- a) 'I think I'll take the brown pair/' said the customer.
The customer decided to take the brown pair. (decide)
 (decide) + (will)
 (say) + (will)
- b) 'Me? No, I didn't take Sue's calculator.' said Bob.
 (deny)
 (deny)
- c) 'Don't forget to buy some milk, Andy,' said Clare.
 (remind)
 (say) + (should)
 (remind) + (need)
- d) 'I'm sorry I couldn't come on Saturday,' said David.
 (say) + (could)
 (say) + (be able to)
 (apologise for)
- e) 'Why don't you go back to Singapore, Brian?' I said.
 (ask) + (do)
 (suggest) + (should)
 (suggest)
- f) 'Make sure you don't take the A20, Tim,' said Jack.
 (say) + (should)
 (warn)
 (warn)

- 3 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.
- a) 'Helen, would you like to come to lunch on Sunday?' asked Mary.
if
Mary *asked Helen if she would like* to come to lunch on Sunday.
- b) 'You are not allowed to smoke in your room, Dick/' said his mother.
forbade
Dick's mother in his room.
- c) Sue thought it would be a good idea for me to see a doctor.
advised
Sue see a doctor.
- d) The minister proposed regular meetings for the committee.
suggested
The minister should meet regularly.
- e) Jack demanded urgent action from the police.
do
Jack demanded something urgently.
- f) My bank manager invited me to visit him at home.
could
My bank manager visit him at home.
- g) 'No, I really don't want to stay the night, Sophia,' Ann said.
staying
Ann insisted the night at Sophia's house.
- h) 'I'll call off the football match if you don't behave,' the teacher said.
threatened
The teacher the children's behaviour improved.
- i) 'Ok mum, I'll do my homework, I promise,' said Laura.
that
Laura do her homework.
- j) 'Congratulations on getting engaged, Sue,' said Harry.
congratulated
Harry engagement.

4 Underline the most suitable word to complete each sentence.

- a) I thought Jim would say something about his new job. But he didn't mention/state/declare it.
- b) Sorry, I wasn't being insulting. I simply offered/reassured/remarked that you seem to have put on rather a lot of weight recently.
- c) The police requested/estimated/advised that the crowd was under 50,000, although the organisers of the march put it at nearer 100,000.
- d) The children complained/threatened/persuaded that their parents were always checking up on them.
- e) It has been objected/hoped/predicted that by the year 2050 some capital cities will be almost uninhabitable because of the effects of air pollution.
- f) During the months before Smith's transfer from City, it had been rumoured/doubted/threatened that he and the manager had come to blows in the dressing-room, though this was denied by the club.
- g) Brown forbade/recommended/claimed that the arresting officers had treated him roughly, and that one of them had punched him in the eye.
- h) An army spokesman stressed that all troops patrolling the streets had been denied/ordered/announced to issue clear warnings before firing any shots.
- i) Although he didn't say so directly, the Prime Minister told/ordered/suggested that an agreement between the two sides was within reach.
- j) The witness suggested/insisted/gave her name and address to the court before the cross-examination began.

5 Complete the text with one word in each space.

The case of the break-in at a Cambridge home entered its third day today. The accused's defence was based on the fact that he (1) ...could..... not have entered the house at 6.30. He claimed (2).....have been playing football at the time, and stated that several witnesses could confirm this. At this point, the prosecution (3).....him of changing his story, as he had previously stated that he had been at home at the (4).....of the break-in. The defendant agreed that his memory (5).....not in the best of shape, as he had been (6).....from bouts of depression. The judge stepped in, reminding the defendant that he (7).....taken an oath to tell the truth, and warning (8).....of the severe consequences of lying in court. The defendant said that he had simply forgotten (9).....the football match, and insisted (10)..... he was not changing his story.

- O Using the information in the e-mail as a guide, complete each space in the letter with a verb. The first letters of the verbs have been given.

TO: Roberts.hifi.co.uk

FROM: Dave@electricalsupplies.com

We are sorry that our computer ordering system went on the blink last week. Don't worry, the system is now up and running again, but we think goods will arrive 2 or 3 days late. I'd guess the goods you've just ordered should arrive round about Thursday. Thanks a lot for telling us about the problem with the ZP200. You'll be pleased to know the problem's been put right now. Re the exhibition you're organising, it seems you want to return any goods you don't sell. We're certainly interested, yes, but could I ask for more details before I let you know. Finally, just to tell you, as of 1st May our warehouse is now open 24 hours a day!

Dear Mrs Henderson,

We would like to (1) a *pologise*..... for the failure of our computer ordering system last week. Please (2) b.....reassured that the system is now fully functional again. It is (3) a.....that the goods ordered will be delayed by two or three working days. The (4) e.....arrival time for your latest order is Thursday.

We are grateful to you for (5) r.....the defect in the ZP200 model. We are happy to (6) a.....that the defect has now been remedied.

You (7) m.....the possibility of taking goods from us 'on sale or return' at an exhibition you are organising. We can certainly (8) c.....our interest, but we would like to (9) r.....further information before we commit ourselves to a decision.

Please be (10) a.....that as of 1 May our warehouse is now open 24 hours a day.

Yours sincerely,
David Smith

→ SEE ALSO

Grammar 19: Verbs + infinitive or *-ing*
Grammar 21: Verbs + prepositions
Grammar 22: Prepositions