

Phrases

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What is a Phrase?



A phrase is a group of words that act as a single part of speech and does not contain both subject and verb. It includes a head (head word) that determines the type or nature of the phrase. It is part of a sentence but a complete thought is not expressed.

The phrase is read or spoken as a unit and separated by pauses. It is intended to have a meaning.

Example:

- **An entirely new generation** has emerged since the eighties.
- **Passing the exam** was a major achievement to him and me.

Some common examples are, **pick it up, move out, show off** etc.

Types of Phrases

There are eight kinds of phrases.

1. Noun Phrase
2. Verb Phrase
3. Adjectival Phrase
4. Adverbial Phrase
5. Gerund Phrase
6. Prepositional Phrase
7. Participial Phrase
8. Infinitive Phrase

Noun Phrase

This is a string of words that depend in some way on a single [noun](#). The words can be added before or after the noun. The main word is the noun.

Noun phrases can include any words, but particularly often uses determiners and other [adjectives](#) which appear before the noun.

Example:

- The children that were playing just left.
- The men that I saw walking in have started work.

Verb Phrase

This consists of the verb and all related [helping verbs](#). They function as single word verbs to express action or to link [subject](#) and [complement](#).

Example:

- I have been working on this project and know the problems well.
- She has been telling me about him for years

Adjectival Phrase

These phrases either expand noun phrase or complete the verb. An adjective is often modified by an adverb.

Example:

- They bought a house, two years back.
- The king is a man of strong values.

Adverbial Phrase

This is a group of related words which play the role of an adverb.

Example:

- Sita decided to move to Jaipur in May last year.
- They behaved in an uncultured manner.

Gerund Phrase

This is just a noun phrase with a gerund (verb that functions as a noun) at its head. It is a verb with a 'ing' ending that functions as a noun.

Example:

- The weeping of women made Jim very impatient.
- Mina's singing always entralls the class.

Prepositional Phrase

This phrase starts with a preposition such as in, at, by, for, to, over etc. They have a noun or a pronoun object and may also have other modifiers. They function as adjectives, [adverbs](#) or nouns.

Example:

- [After dinner](#), he went home.
- I listened to Beethoven [on the radio](#).

Participial Phrase

These phrases are formed from participles (participles are formed from verbs and end in ing or ed). They function as adjective and often describe the subject of the sentence.

Example:

- The lawyer [looked for a moment](#) and turned away.
- [Running fast](#), she soon reached home.

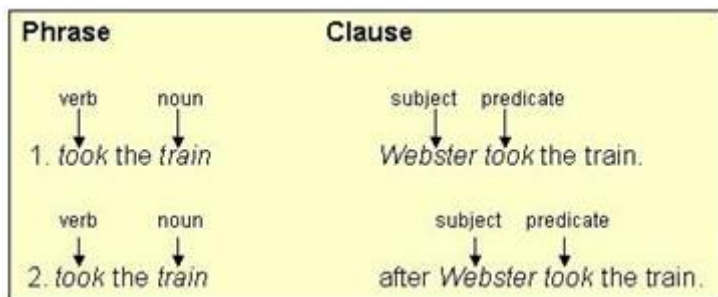
Infinitive Phrase

This is formed from an infinitive or other related word. An infinitive is the word 'to' follow by a verb. This type of phrase, functions as a noun, adjective or an adverb.

Example:

- He went to an university [to study Law](#).
- She wanted [to see the Taj Mahal](#) but did not know where it was.

What is the difference between a Phrase and a Clause?



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Reference Links:

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phrases>
- <http://grammar.about.com/od/pq/g/phrase.htm>
- <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/phrases.htm>
- <http://englishplus.com/grammar/00000014.htm>
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