

The Eight Parts of Speech

Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs, Conjunctions, Prepositions and Interjections at a Glance

NOUNS name people, places, things, or ideas. They can be common or proper (like *teacher* or *Dr. Smith*) and they can also be concrete or abstract (like *letter* or *honor*). Every proper sentence has a subject, and a subject can be a noun, or a pronoun. So what is a pronoun?

The PRONOUN is said to "take the place of a noun," although a possessive pronoun can be used as an adjective. Just think, what if a book read: "See Spot run. See Spot jump. See Spot walk." This would be a terrible book! This is why the pronoun was invented; the usage of pronouns dramatically decreases the number of times that you must directly refer to "Spot."

Personal pronouns: *I am me, you are he, we are us, they are them*, etc. If you did not know who Spot was, you could just say, "He ran."

Possessive pronouns: "This is *my* precious! *Mine!* It is not *yours* or *hers* or *theirs!*" NO apostrophes can be used with possessive personal pronouns. Think about it—"It is not **your is* or *her is* or *there is!**"—makes no sense.

Indefinite pronouns: "Spot needs help! *Somebody* help! *Anybody?* Come on *everyone*, please?"

Interrogative pronouns ask questions. They are: who, whom, what, which, and whose. Pretend you are *interrogating* Spot. Who are you? Whom did you seek? What is his name? Whose hat is this? Which door did you enter?

Demonstrative pronouns: This, that, these, and those (there are only four!). Pretend you are giving a tour and *demonstrating* the use of certain objects. "*This* is Spot's house! *That* is where he prepares for races, and *these* are his trophies. Oh, and *those* are pictures of when he was little."

The ADJECTIVE modify (describe) nouns or pronouns. For instance, we could say: "Spot was *brave* and *victorious!*" or "The *talented* and *dedicated* Spot ran." Possessive nouns and pronouns can be adjectives, too; "That is *Spot's* house!" or "That is *his* house!" are sentences that both use possessive words to describe "house."

Note: *Articles* like "the," "a," and "an" are all adjectives.

The VERB shows action, makes a statement, or shows a link between word relationships.

Action verbs show action: "Spot *ran*."

Linking verbs make statements OR they express links and relationships. "Spot *is* fast."

Linking verbs include: am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been, has been, have been, had been, will be, shall be, may be, would have been, should have been, can be, should be, would be (any combination that ENDS with be or been.) seem, and become. The words taste, feel, smell, sound, look, appear, grow, remain, and stay may be used as action or linking verbs.

ADVERBS modify (describe!) verbs. An adverb can also modify adjectives and other adverbs.

Adverbs answer "where?" "when?" "how?" "how often?" and "to what extent." Let us test these questions:

Where is Spot? "*Here* he is at the finish line!"

When is Spot going to run? "Spot will run *today* and *tomorrow* and *forever* in our hearts and minds."
How will Spot run? "Spot will run *quickly* and *easily*." *Note the *-ly* endings. This is common for adverbs.

How often will Spot run? "Spot will run *always*!"

To what extent will Spot run? "Spot will run *really* well!"

The PREPOSITION shows relationship between nouns or pronouns and other words in a sentence. Prepositional phrases usually contain the preposition and a noun that is the object of the preposition.

Hint: One common way to check if a word is a preposition is to use the formula "_____ the cloud."
Under the cloud? Beneath the cloud? To the cloud? Inside the cloud?

Be careful: Make sure that the object of a preposition is a noun. If it is a verb, you are not dealing with a preposition.

CONJUNCTIONS are connecting words.

Coordinating conjunctions connect words, phrases, and independent clauses (a group of words that could be a sentence by itself). Spot *and* I did not stop running *or* walking *but* once, *for* we were not tired. (See how ""We were not tired" is a sentence connected to a sentence with a conjunction?)

Subordinating conjunctions introduce dependent clauses (a group of words that cannot stand alone as a proper sentence).

For instance: *Although* sick, Spot soldiered on.

INTERJECTIONS are exclamatory words that express strong emotion.

"Ouch! My shoulder is killing me," "Crikey, this is a big crocodile," "Fail! I was so close to winning,"
"Alas, Spot is with us no more,"