



Writing Centre

Basic Sentence Syntax/Structure

There are three parts to a sentence: the **subject**, its **action** and its **object**.

The **subject** is who, or what, is doing something.

The **action** is to what is being done.

The **object** is that to which the action is being done.

The subject is generally placed at the beginning of the sentence, which is followed by the action and the object of the action.

Ex: Layla walked to the store today.

Layla is the subject, *walked* is the action and the object of the sentence is *the store*.

This can be repeated in more complex, compound sentences as well. Just make sure to place the sentence's actions as close to their subjects as one can arrange, and to place the objects as close to the actions as possible. Once again, this seems more difficult than it actually is in practice. Here's an example:

Layla (subject) walked (action) to the store (object) and bought (action) some apples (object).

Because there is only one subject in the sentence, it is placed at the beginning of the sentence. The same general rule applies to almost any kind of sentence. These are examples with more than one subject, action or object in different kinds of sentences:

Gordon and Yuki (subjects) ate (action) at the restaurant (object) then went (action) to the movies (object).

Dave (subject) went (action) fishing (object) after he and Susan (subjects) argued (action).

Badr (subject) ran (action) at the track (object) while Francis (subject) stayed (action) at home (object).

Remember, if you have an idea of who or what your sentence is about, what he/she/it is doing and what it is being done to, and you stick to this general rule, you will create easily-understood sentences every time.