

Word Order in Positive Sentences

For the beginning, remember this simple rule:

subject	verb(s)	object
I	speak	English
I	can speak	English

If you are a more advanced learner, remember the following rule:

subject	verb(s)	indirect object	direct object	place	time
I	will tell	you	the story	at school	tomorrow.

Word Order in Negative Sentences

The word order in negative sentences is the same as in [affirmative sentences](#). Note, however, that in negative sentences we usually need an auxiliary verb:

subject	verbs	indirect object	direct object	place	time
I	will <i>not</i> tell	you	the story	at school	tomorrow.

Word Order in Subordinate Clauses

In subordinate clauses, the word order is the same as in simple affirmative sentences. (Conjunctions are often used between two clauses):

conjunction	subject	verb(s)	indirect object	direct object	place	time
	I	will tell	you	the story	at school	tomorrow ...
because	I	don't have		time		now.

Position of Time Expressions - (e.g.: recently, now, then, yesterday)

Adverbs of time are usually put at the end of the sentence.

subject	verb(s)	indirect object	direct object	time
I	will tell	you	the story	tomorrow.

If you don't want to put emphasis on the time, you can also put the adverb of time at the beginning of the sentence.

time	subject	verb(s)	indirect object	direct object
Tomorrow	I	will tell	you	the story.

Note that some time expressions are **adverbs of frequency** (always, never, usually). These are usually put before the main verb (except for 'be' as a main verb). (see also [Position of Adverbs](#))

subject	auxiliary/be	adverb	main verb	object, place or time
I		often	go swimming	in the evenings.
He	doesn't	always	play	tennis.
We	are	usually		here in summer.
I	have	never	been	abroad.

Position of Adverbs

Adverbs of Manner - (e.g.: slowly, carefully, awfully)

These adverbs are put behind the direct object (or behind the verb if there's no direct object).

Subject	verb(s)	direct object	adverb
He	drove	the car	carefully.
He	drove		carefully.

Adverbs of Place - (e.g.: here, there, behind, above)

Like adverbs of manner, these adverbs are put behind the direct object or the verb.

subject	verb(s)	direct object	adverb
I	didn't see	him	here.
He	stayed		behind.

Adverbs of Time - (e.g.: recently, now, then, yesterday)

Adverbs of time are usually put at the end of the sentence.

subject	verb(s)	indirect object	direct object	time
I	will tell	you	the story	tomorrow.

If you don't want to put emphasis on the time, you can also put the adverb of time at the beginning of the sentence.

time	subject	verb(s)	indirect object	direct object
Tomorrow	I	will tell	you	the story.

Adverbs of Frequency - (e.g.: always, never, seldom, usually)

Adverbs of frequency are put directly before the main verb. If 'be' is the main verb and there is no auxiliary verb, adverbs of frequency are put behind 'be'. Is there an auxiliary verb, however, adverbs of frequency are put before 'be'.

subject	auxiliary/be	adverb	main verb	object, place or time
I		often	go swimming	in the evenings.
He	doesn't	always	play	tennis.
We	are	usually		here in summer.
I	have	never	been	abroad.

Word Order in Questions

In questions, the word order *subject-verbs-object* is the same as in [affirmative sentences](#).

The only thing that's different is that you usually have to put the auxiliary verb (or the main verb "be") before the subject. Interrogatives are put at the beginning of the sentences:

interrogative	auxiliary verb	subject	other verb(s)	indirect object	direct object	place	time
What	would	you	like to tell	me			
	Did	you	have		a party	in your flat	yesterday?
When	were	you				here?	

You don't use an auxiliary verb if you ask for the subject. In this case the interrogative simply takes the place of the subject.

interrogative	verb(s)	object
Who	asked	you?