

Grammar rules to remember Sections of SC

Clarity and Concision

Being used as verb is almost always redundant in SC. Except in two kinds of SCs

When the grammar requires it, mean when idiomatic expressions allow only one structure.

Example: In addition to being one of the first restaurants to combine Mediterranean and American tastes, Chez Panisse in Berkeley is also one of the Bay Area's most established restaurants.

The idiomatic structure in addition to does not have a counterpart that uses a subject and a verb, so our only option here is to use being, which is grammatically a noun, but is derived from a verb.

Other example: "There are many reasons to get an MBA, with increased career prospects being the most important for many MBA applicants". This is an absolute phrase. Memorize then the following: **with + NOUN + being + NOUN COMPLEMENT**

Look also for Being considered as a **gerund** and then sentence subject

Prefer **being < since < because**; infact never use being

Six of these prepositions can also be subordinating conjunctions.

In other words, they can be followed by a noun or by a sentence, depending on the meaning. These are:

After

as

before

for

since

until

There constructions are rarely correct (there with a comma in front of it probably wrong).

Which without a comma in front of it probably wrong

GMAT likes active voice, then in general, avoid the construction to be/being because they are usually passive. To be/being are commonly used in junk answer choices

Exept: In Gmatland, **whenever the emphasis is not on the "doer" of the action**, passive voice form is correct. For example, The victim was carried to a nearby hospital. (Here "who" carried the victim is not important)

Subject Verb Inversion

neg intro.

Never do I sleep.

intro adverbial (in, down, prepositional phrase)

intro -ed

comparative

intro comparative

as

so... that...

had, should, were

there is

here is

intro -ing

emphasis

the bigger, the better

questions

"story speech"

nor

so do I/neither do I

intro adjective

“after when” is WRONG

Hopeful is an adjective, **hopefully** is an adverb - to be hopeful

Hopefully, I will get the promotion -- wrong

I am hopeful that I will get a promotion -- correct

I hope that I will get a promotion -- correct

We waited hopefully for the lottery results -- correct

If “who” is present it should refer to one before the comma

in that is usually better than **because**

Verb Tense A sentence that begins in one tense should generally stay in that tense

- Usually related to parallel construction questions.

EXCEPTION: Past perfect

Action set in the past perfect must

have another action that comes after it set

in the simple past.

“He had ridden his motorcycle for 2 hours when it ran out of gas

Verb tense must reflect the sequence of events.

2 reasons to use –**ing form**:

Emphasize continuing nature of an action

Emphasize that two actions are occurring simultaneously.

Use simple past tense instead of *had + past tense*

Have + verb (-ed) + present participle (-ing) is WRONG eg: “have elected retiring” should be “have elected to retire”

A relative pronoun (which, that or who) refers to the word preceding it. If the meaning is unclear, the pronoun is in the wrong position. The word "which" introduces non-essential clauses and "that" introduces essential clauses. "Who" refers to individuals; "that" refers to a group of persons, class, type, or species.

Wrong: The line at the bank was very slow, which made me late.

Right: I was late because of the line at the bank OR The line at the bank made me late

Which vs. That

Which, refers to a group as a whole and That, refers to a subset within the group.

Example: Periodicals, which I hate to read, are a good study strategy for the GMAT.

The periodicals that I hate the most discuss economics.

The second point on Which and that may seem easy to the Verbal Guru's but one that always nailed me when I began my days in GMAT land.

Which or that refers to the most recent noun.

GMAT seems to like to create sentences like:

The periodical written by Oliver Twistie, which took me days to read was boring.

In this case the which is referring to the periodical.

GMAT almost always wants you to put a comma before which. If you see which without a comma before it, it's probably wrong. we have a rule that says, we should use a comma before or after "extra information clauses and phrases," but not with "necessary information clauses or phrases."

Countable words: Fewer, Number, Many answer: “How much?”

Non Countable Words: Less, Amount, quantity Much answer: "How many?"

Less is a word used to describe non-count nouns, but also used for sums of money, periods of time and distance, and citations of numerical/statistical data.

“It’s less than 20 miles to Dallas.”

“We spent less than \$20.”

“The town spent less than 4% of its budget.”

Less = “not as much” **Fewer** = “not as many”

One of the + PLURAL NOUN + that/who/ +PLURAL VERB

“He is one of the persons who make money.”

“This is one of the cars that run on hydrogen.”

"if" vs. "whether" vs "whether or not". if these are being tested in one sentence choose "whether" almost 100% of the time!!

If Vs Whether:

Whether is correct when you’re discussing two options. *If* is correct for more than 2 options.

Disinterested vs Uninterested

Disinterested: neutral, unbiased

Ex: The best judges are disinterested.

Uninterested: bored, not interested

Ex: Uninterested in his homework, Martin nodded off.

Who vs Whom

if you can’t get who and whom straight, try this trick: rephrase the sentence to get rid of who or whom.

If you find you’ve replaced who/whom with he, she, or they, then "who" is correct.

If you find you’ve replaced who/whom with him, her, or them, then "whom" is correct.

Conditional

The conditional might trip you up or give you pause, but it’s actually a wonderfully simple verb form to get right.

The formula always goes: **If.....were.....would**. That’s it! There’s nothing else to memorize.

Ex: If I were principal, I would let everyone leave at eleven a.m.

Note that it’s never correct to say if . . . was . . . were.

The title of the song “If I Were a Rich Man” is an excellent way to remember the use of were with the conditional.

If...Then Construction

Sentences that use the word ‘if’ to describe hypothetical conditions require a conditional verb construction.

These sentences have two parts: **if clause, and the then clause**.

The word ‘if’ does not always signal a conditional sentence.

Only when the sentence has a ‘then’ clause, then the sentence is considered a conditional sentence.

Also note **would/could** never appears in the ‘if’ clause.

The actual word then is frequently omitted

If Clause ; Then Clause

Present Tense ; Will + Base Verb

Past Tense ; Would/Could + Base Verb

Past Perfect Tense ; Would/Could + Have + Past Participle

Subjunctive

In GMATland, subjunctive mood can be seen in two types of sentences.

1) IF clauses, when the IF clause expresses a condition contrary to reality.

E.g. If i were a rich man, i would have bought some horses. (in reality, i am not a rich man)

2) When Hopes, proposals, desires, and requests are followed by "that".

The government requires that every man be prepared for the onslaught of the hurricane. (notice the basic verb form "be" without the "to" in infinitive.)

Like vs As

'Like' is used to compare people or things (nouns)

Ex: Jack and Jull, like Humpty Dumpty, are extremely stupid.

'As' is used to compare clauses. A clause is any phrase that includes a verb

Ex: Just as jogging is a good exercise, swimming is a great way to burn calories.

Such as Vs Like

Such as is used to indicate examples

Like is used to indicate similarities

Can you buy me some fruit like oranges or grapefruit?

In GMATLand, this sentence would mean that you do NOT want oranges or grapefruit; instead, you'd prefer some fruit similar to oranges and grapefruit. For example, you may want pomelo, lemons, or limes. Yes, I know this sounds a little crazy, but our goal is to understand what GMAT is looking for, not what is "correct" English.

Can you buy me some fruit such as oranges or grapefruit?

Yes, this is what we're supposed to say in GMATLand -- oranges and grapefruit are examples of the type of fruit we want

Each other vs One another

Each other - used when two persons are involved

Ex: Ross and Rachel love each other.

One another - used when there are more than 2 people

Ex: The three brothers love one another.

As Long As vs So Long As

As long as - deals with physical comparison

Ex: The baseball bat was as long as the club

So long as - deals with a condition

Ex: So long as you maintain your cool, the meeting should be fine

Equal vs Equivalent

Equal should be used only in its strict sense.

Ex: 4+3 is equal to 5+2

Equivalent is preferable when we are saying that two things are not entirely identical, but are almost equal.

Ex: Country X spent \$xx on something, equivalent to the GDP of country Y

The number of VS. A number of

When you use the number of , use a singular verb.

The number of excuses grows every time he tells the story.

When you use a number of , use plural verb.

A number of survivors of the plane crash swim to shore

When there is a semicolon ';', you have to treat the part that follows it to be

1. Closely following and related to the part that appears before the ;
2. to be on a broad level

Semi Colons are used to separate different clauses in a statement

When the items in a series themselves contain commas, separate the items with semicolons.

Incorrect: We visited Erie, Pennsylvania, Buffalo, New York, and Toronto, Ontario.
(Confusing. Semicolons needed to make clear distinctions.)

Correct: We visited Erie, Pennsylvania; Buffalo, New York; and Toronto, Ontario

Use of colons

Usages:

Colons with lists - Use a colon before a list when the list is preceded by a complete independent clause. Eg. John has all the ingredients: minced clams, milk, potatoes, and onions

Colons introduce quotations that are formal or lengthy. Eg. Dickens wrote: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

Colons may be used to separate independent clauses that are not separated by a conjunction or any other connecting word or phrase. Semi colons may also be used in such cases. Eg. Grapes are not squeezed: The pulp is pressed.

If two nouns are combined, a conjunction is required to make it plural. In the absence of a conjunction, the two nouns take a singular form.

Two nouns combined with a conjunction

My father and myself **ARE** going to the market

Two nouns combined, without a conjunction

The teacher together with the student **IS** going to the market

Usage of During

"During" used with time period without an intermediate mention of the timing of the period is wrong.

Wrong: During two hours, I felt sleepy

Right: During the last two hours, I felt sleepy

-ing form When the GMAT gives you a choice between one verb tense that uses an *-ing* form and another that doesn't, usually the *-ing* form is wrong.

Possessive + participle

It is a strict NO NO. Never choose a choice that has this formation. For example, "Organization's trying" is wrong

Transitive verbs Vs Intransitive Verbs

Raise, set and lay are transitive verbs; they are followed by an object.

a) Tom raised his hand

b) I will set the book on the desk.

Rise, sit and lie are intransitive; they are not followed by an object.

c) The sun rises in the east.

d) I sit in the front row.

Careful with Comparison of nouns and Actions

Nouns "The people in my office are smarter than those in other offices."

Actions: "Synthetic oils burn less efficiently than do natural oils."

Modifiers should be as close as possible to the word or clause it modifies.

Pronoun A pronoun must agree with its antecedent and refer to only one antecedent.

- 2 types of errors: reference, agreement

that is singular

those is plural

Greater than Vs More than

Greater than is appropriate when describing *numbers alone*.

- "Greater than 100..."

More than should be used when describing the numbers of objects or when making comparisons.

- "More than 100 fish."

Comparison : Most of the time when we use a comparison using *than* or *as*, we leave words out.

"He is taller than she."

"He is as happy as they."

Infinitive to avoid

To include is wrong. *Including* is correct.

To implement is wrong. *Implementing* is correct.

PREPOSITION + NOUN + PARTICIPLE "to avoid ...with child-care facilities included." (Incorrect)

Idioms:

As a + <noun> is always correct for GMAT

Eg: as a student

Expose to

Pronounce(d) does not take anything

Pronouncing on

Many do X but they can do Y

Consider (no **as** required), while **regard...as** and **think of...as** require it

From x to Y - CORRECT, From x up to Y – INCORRECT

Rates for - CORRECT, **Rates of** – INCORRECT

"so much.....as" is preferred if it is preceded by a negative. Ex: She left not so much as a trace

"So as" is **never correct**

Incorrect: He runs everyday **so as** to build his stamina.

Correct: He runs everyday in an effort to build his stamina

Correct: Her debts are **so** extreme **as** to threaten the future of the company

Compared to/Compared With

Compared to is used when unlike things are compared and is used to stress the resemblance

Eg. Caliban is compared to a beast in Shakespeare's The Tempest.

"Compared with" is used when like or similar things are compared and is used to stress the resemblance or difference (usually difference)

Eg. Compared with you, I cannot sing well at all.

"Decided to stage the work himself" is an idiomatic expression

Native to/Native of

Penguins are native to the Antarctic.

Steve is a native of Canada

"Save For" Save for that inconvenience, the trip was a success

to prohibit s.o. **from doing** sth.

to forbid s.o. **to do** sth.

to distinguish between X **and** Y

X **is believed to be** Y

X **is estimated to be...**

range from A **to** B

Agree with another person.

Es: "I agree with you on this one."

Agree to something inanimate.: "I agree to your proposal."

Agree that

Distinguish between X and Y.

Likely to be

Angry about -- (an event, idea, etc.) Bob is angry about the demonstration

Angry at --- (a person) Wanda is angry at me

Angry with -- (a person; more confrontational than angry at) Max is angry with me

Dispute over

Lavish on

Acquiesce in - The director refused to acquiesce in the face of opposition.

Credit with (followed by verb)

credit for X Y

credit to (noun)

Deciding that

Just as...so

Not so much...as

Not X, but rather Y

result from (when result is a verb) Bad temper results from lack of sleep.

result in (when result is a verb) Lack of sleep results in a bad temper

result of (when result is a noun) Bad temper is a result of lack of sleep

Targeted at is the correct idiom **Targeted to** is WRONG ù

"The shoe company targeted its advertising at high-school kids."

modeled after

as is usually preferred over *like*

- **regarded as** (don't use to be)

- **as long as**

- **such questions as**

- **plays as**

Same to X as to Y.

X forbids Y to do Z

X prohibits Y from doing Z

So X as to be Y

Same as X as to Y

Just as...so too

NO PREPOSITIONS:

Consider

When *consider* means “regard as,” *as* should not be present with *consider* in the sentence.
Consider is also not followed by an infinitive like *to be*.

“Critics consider facilities to be an integral part...” (Incorrect)

“Critics consider facilities an integral part...” (Correct)

Continue

Equally

Inside

Meet

Name

Off

Tend

Visit

Singular/plural words:

None

Some

More

Most

All

Singular words

Politics

No one

Plural Words

Broadcast

People

Collective nouns: audience, committee are singular

Either, or; neither, nor: Verbs agree with whatever follows “or/nor”

Grammar Usages

That is a conjunction(used to intro restrictive clauses) while it a pronoun

Help + bare infinitive (not use of **to** in between)

We use “**because of**” and “**on account of**” to introduce adverbial phrases and should modify verbs

"DUE TO" should be used only when you can replace it with "caused by".

Do not use due to as a preposition.

INCORRECT He dropped out of school due to failing grades.

CORRECT He dropped out of school because of failing grades

Usages: You can change a misplaced modifier into a legal sentence by changing a phrase into a clause.

- “While leaving the bank, Evelyn’s purse was stolen.” (Incorrect, underlined portion is a phrase)

- “As she was leaving the bank, Evelyn’s purse was stolen.” (Correct, underlined portion is a clause)

Strategy:

When the entire sentence is underlined in the question, the answer has a higher probability of being 'D' or 'E'.

Always be suspicious of the pronoun *they*.

Whenever we have two options that are both grammatically correct, and the only difference is meaning, we **MUST** go with the original meaning.

NOUN + BE-verb + NOUN/ADJECTIVE

- "The change was good for me." (Correct)
- "The change was when I came to the U.S." (Incorrect) Use "changed occurred" instead.

So and it

So is used to replace a verb in a sentence. *It* is used to replace a noun.

Each is usually singular.

But when *each* follows a plural subject, the verb and subsequent pronouns remain in the plural.

- "Three cats each eat." (Correct)
- "Three cats, each of which eats..." (Correct)

Numbers greater than 1 are plural.

"Three out of every four automobile owners in the US also own a bicycle."

Having + past participle

Used to express actions that are finished and to show that one thing comes after another

Thinking words (i.e., *theory, belief, believe...*) + *that*

Thinking words are always followed by *that*

- "Lucy's belief that the Earth is flat is great." (Correct)
- "Lucy's belief of..." (Incorrect)

QUANTIFIER + of + NOUN + VERB

The noun determines whether verb is singular or plural.

- "Most of the people are..."
- "Most of the water is..."

So + ADJECTIVE + as to + VERB

- "Her debts are so extreme as to threaten her company." (Correct)
- "He exercises everyday so as to build his stamina." (Incorrect)

Just as can replace in the same way that.

Like and As

Use *like* when you want to focus on two nouns.

Use *as* when you want to focus on two nouns doing two actions.

Use not/but to join linguistically equivalent things.

- "Pucci is not a dog but a cat"

Whether is correct when a sentence describes alternatives. - "Whether to participate or not."

If is correct when a sentence describes a hypothetical situation. - "If he participated, he would..."