

10 Important Grammar Rules for Band 8 Score

We provided the list of 10 key grammar rules along with explanations, examples and pro tips. Get familiarised with the following major rules of grammar and word forms to attain a band 8 score.

Rule 1: The Simple Aspect

The simple aspect or indefinite aspect refers to any verb used in the simple tenses. Mostly, it denotes general, permanent, or habitual actions. In simple aspect sentences, the verb will not be clear unless it is attached to the context and tenses. In the examples, we have given a 'simple aspect rule' in the lens of three tenses.

Examples:

- I **eat** fruits and nuts every day.
- I **ate** fruits and nuts every day.
- I **will eat** fruits and nuts every day.

(All the sentences indicate the regular act of eating fruits and nuts. Without the word 'everyday', the verbs given in the sentence are not clear whether it is a completed action or continuous action.)

How is the Simple aspect useful for IELTS ?

Generally, the simple aspect is the basic and commonly used word form. It can be used to convey a routine or habitual action, describe a state or an action that is true in general or repeatedly occurred over a period of time. In writing task 1, you are supposed to describe the trends and patterns of a certain period, in this case, you can use the simple aspect sentences.

PRO Tip

Use the right tense or aspect while speaking. If you are talking about actions that you do regularly, use the simple present tense. And, if you talk about the temporary actions or an action that happened at the moment of speaking, you should use the present continuous. Misplacing the tenses leads to confused speech.

Rule 2: The Simple Past and Present Perfect Verb Tenses

The major difference between simple past and past perfect verb tense, is that simple past tense does not have any connection with the present, while present perfect tense denotes

the action which has an impact or continues to the present. Following examples can illustrate this point well.

Examples:

The Simple Past Tense:

- I **ate** breakfast
- I **played** football yesterday

(Here, both the examples indicate 'only' the past. It does not have any connection with the present.)

The Present Perfect Tense:

- I **have been waiting** here for 2 hours.
- I **haven't exercised** in the morning, I am feeling tired.

(Here, the action that happened in the past, continues to the present. Former example implies that I already arrived at the place and waited around 2 hours, now.)

How is the simple past and present perfect verb tenses useful for IELTS ?

In the IELTS test, you would have to articulate or formulate sentences which happened in the past or had an impact on the present. The simple past and present perfect verb tenses will be helpful to bring out those occasions or circumstances in the form of sentences. You have the time to decide which tense form to choose in the writing test. But, in the speaking test, you need to practice well to use the right tense in a natural way.

PRO Tip

In the listening test, you could come across the simple past and present perfect. The easy way to remember the difference between simple past and present perfect, is to understand the **time frame** it describes. If it points out the completed action in the past, then it is a simple past tense. And, if an action started in the past, and continues to the present, then it is a present perfect tense.

Rule 3: The Passive Voice

To define, in passive voice, the subject undergoes the action of the specified verb. If you want to sound formal, you can use passive voice since it is used from the neutral or impersonal point of view. You can form the passive voice by using the 'to be' in an appropriate tense, with the past participle.

Examples:

- The gravy **was cooked** by mom.
- The bike **was driven** by my brother.
- The mistake **was made** by the manager.
- The assignment **was completed** by my friend.

How is the Passive voice useful for IELTS ?

Specifically, in the IELTS writing task, you need to write a report in a formal tone. As passive voice sounds neutral and impersonal, it can be used in academic writing tasks. It is well suitable to the academic context. You can also use the passive voice to shift the reader's attention on the person or thing affected by the action.

PRO Tip

Do not overuse the passive voice in your writing and speaking tasks. Use it only when you find it appropriate for the specific situations.

Rule 4: Modal Verbs

Modal verbs are meant to indicate the degree of certainty or possibility of an action or event to occur. It is a type of auxiliary verb since it supports the main verb. For example: Could, might or may, should, must. These words are used to express certainty and uncertainty.

Examples:

- I **can** write better since I am practising writing on a daily basis.
- I **could** run faster, If I am not tired.
- He **may** not come tomorrow.
- She **might have** won the prize, if she had prepared better.
- You **should** practise the preparation material to succeed in the IELTS exam.

How are the Modal verbs useful for IELTS ?

Modal verbs can be used to communicate your ideas clearly and precisely. If you are writing a report or writing task 2 essays, you can use the modal verbs to indicate your certainty or uncertainty about your ideas. It will show your grammatical and articulation skills.

Pro Tip

Make sure to use the correct modal verb. If you are using 'should' to express uncertainty, it will be erroneous. And, also consider the tense when you are using the modal verb.

Rule 5: The Definite Article

The definite article (the) can be used in three cases. You can use it to mention a specific noun that you have already addressed. To refer to the specific or definite group, you can use 'the'. And, when you want to indicate something that is unique or popular, you can use the definite article.

Examples:

- I picked **the** key chain in the street.
- **The** Taj Mahal is the symbol for love.
- **The** Sun was shining.

How is the Definite Article useful for IELTS ?

The IELTS Examiner measures your grammatical accuracy in writing and speaking tests. So, if you use the definite article appropriately, it will add up your score. Using the definite article in a proper place can help you to communicate the intended meaning, which is crucial in the IELTS exam.

Pro Tip

Make sure you are using 'the' for the specific things or people or places. Using the definite article for the generic things will be a grammatical error.

Rule 6: Adjectives

To define simply, adjectives are used to describe the qualities or characteristics of the noun or pronoun. It can also be used to compare the nouns or pronouns. You need to have a wide range of vocabulary in order to use adjectives to the fullest extent.

Examples:

- I think he can solve the problem since he is an **intelligent** person.
- She is wearing **beautiful** clothes which attracts all the people.
- Jack is **smaller** than Diya.

How are Adjectives useful for IELTS ?

Expressing your thoughts and ideas clearly is an important skill to excel in the IELTS test. Your speech and writing can be more refined by using the adjectives. In the opinion essay, you can express your opinions or feelings about something with the help of adjectives.

Pro Tip

Do not overuse the adjectives while you are writing and speaking. Using the accurate adjective to the noun or pronoun will prove that you are grammatically well-versed.

Rule 7: Use the Appropriate Possessive Forms

Possessive forms are used to indicate the ownership or possession. It involves words such as my, your, his. For example, it is **my** pen. Here, I am saying that **pen is mine**. Using the possessive form properly is necessary to bring out the right structure of meaning. Another form is adding an apostrophe and 's' in nouns.

Examples:

- He spent **his money** on cars and bikes.
- **My cat** has been sick for four days.
- The **man's** coats are well made.
- **Dogs'** place is untidy.

How are possessive forms helpful for IELTS ?

Possessive forms can be used in the IELTS exam in various ways. In the IELTS speaking and writing test, you might have to tell the examiner about the relationship between the people and things. For example, in the cue card, you might be asked to describe your country. In this case, you have to start the speech in the angle of 'my country'.

Pro Tip

When you use possessive form (s) in a sentence, you need to use it in a specific way for singular nouns and plural nouns. In singular nouns, you have to add 's' after the apostrophe (boy's). On the other hand, using an apostrophe after the plural nouns is the proper way (boys').

Rule 8: Comparatives and Superlatives

You can use the comparatives when you want to compare two things. To express the height of the palm tree is tall compared to the mango tree, you can tell 'Palm tree is **taller than** the mango tree'. And, superlatives will be used if you are describing something of higher quality than others. For example, Sid is the **funniest among us**.

Examples:

- Today, rain is **heavier than** yesterday.
- My proficiency in French is **better than** German.
- My house is **the smallest** one in this area.
- Liza is **the fastest** runner in our school.

How are comparatives and superlatives useful for IELTS ?

Comparatives and Superlatives can be used to emphasize something is better than other things. In writing task 1, you will come across charts and graphs which you have to describe. In the process of describing, you need to compare two years and arrive at some sort of conclusion, where you can use comparative and superlative.

Pro Tip

You can remember the comparative and superlative in the following way. In comparative, you are supposed to add 'er' in an adjective and 'than' succeeding. And, to use the superlative, you have to add 'est' with an adjective.

Rule 9: Gerunds and Infinitives

To use the gerunds, you will add 'ing' to the verb such as walking, talking etc. But, it should not be confused with present or past continuous tense. It is a verb form used as a noun. And, infinitive is a verb form, where you have to add 'to' with a verb such as to walk, to talk etc. It can also be used as an adverb to describe a main verb.

Examples:

- Walking in the morning is my favourite pastime.
- He is afraid of swimming.
- He has too many things to carry.
- I don't know how much time I need to prepare to pass the test.

How are gerunds and infinitives useful for IELTS ?

Gerunds and infinitives are basic grammatical forms. You can prove your grammatical skills to the examiner in the writing and speaking test by using the gerunds and infinitives appropriately.

Pro Tip

Do not overuse the gerunds and infinitive forms since you need to use the various grammatical forms and structures.

Rule 10: Subject-Verb Agreement

The fundamental rule of subject-verb agreement or 'subject-verb concord' is that the singular verb must match with the singular subject, while the plural verb must match with the plural subject. The meaning of the sentence will be confused if the subject did not agree with the verb or vice versa.

Examples:

- A cat rolls in the mud (singular noun and singular verb)
- Cats roll in the mud (plural noun and plural verb)

How will the following subject-verb agreement be helpful for IELTS ?

Better communication is the key to succeed in the IELTS test. If the subject does not agree with the verb, the meaning will be distorted since it is not agreed with grammatical rules. Following the subject-verb agreement rule can be helpful to add up the band score.

Pro Tip

Do not confuse descriptions or explanations of subjects when it comes to choosing the verb. The rule is that verbs must agree with the subject, that's all.

IELTS Grammar Practice Test

We have designed the following 27 questions based on the 10 significant grammar rules that you have read. Check your understanding by answering the questions.

1. He _____ French like a native speaker.
2. My friends _____ football every weekend.
3. We _____ our beach house once a week.
4. Rohan _____ (call) me yesterday evening.
5. We _____ (travel) to Canada the previous month.
6. She _____ (do) the artwork for 5 hours.
7. This sweet _____ (make) by my father.
8. The report _____ (prepare) by the journalist.
9. The cycle _____ (repair) by my neighbour.
10. Students _____ study sincerely in order to succeed in the future
11. He _____ pick up the bag even if it is heavier.
12. He _____ come to the office on Tuesday.
13. _____ (a/an/the) Pigeon is a beautiful bird that I have ever seen
14. My brother, _____ (a/an/the) engineer, earns well.
15. He made a _____ cake for my birthday
16. I found a _____ shell near the sea
17. I think George Shepherd is a _____ dog.
18. My _____ (grandma) house seems very damaged
19. _____ (chocolates) worth is very high.
20. Nowadays, the _____ (pencil) quality is becoming bad.
21. Rabbit loses the game even though it is _____ (smart) than a turtle
22. I believe the petrol price is _____ (low) than the diesel price.
23. Mount Everest is the _____ (tall) of all the mountains
24. Rohan wakes up early in the morning _____ (walk).

25. _____ (ban) plastic bags does not improve the world at an environmental level.
26. The teacher _____ (spoil) the mood of the students by scolding them.
27. Birds _____ (fly) to migrate from colder regions to warmer regions.

Answer Key

1. speaks
2. play
3. visit
4. called
5. travelled
6. has been doing
7. was made
8. was prepared
9. was repaired
10. must
11. can
12. may
13. The
14. the
15. delicious
16. beautiful
17. courageous
18. grandma's
19. Chocolates'
20. pencil's
21. smarter
22. lower
23. tallest
24. to walk
25. Banning
26. spoils
27. fly