Basic Sentence Pattern in English

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In English, our sentences usually operate using a similar pattern: subject, verb, then object. The nice part about this type of structure is that it lets your reader easily know who is doing the action and what the outcome of the action is.

A **subject** performs the action in a sentence.

- For instance, in the sentence, “Matt eats pizza,” *Matt* is the subject because he is the one eating the pizza.

A **verb** is a word that usually indicates some type of action. There are two basic types of verbs in English: **action verbs** and **linking verbs**. An action verb represents something the subject of a sentence does, whereas a linking verb connects the subject to a specific state of being. In other words, a linking verb describes a subject instead of expressing an action. Linking verbs are also known at **state of being verbs**, and the most common one in English is the verb *to be*.

- If we consider the above sentence, “Matt eats pizza,” the verb is *eats*, which is an action verb because it tells us what Matt does—he *eats*.
- In this sentence, “Matt is hungry,” our verb is *is*, which is a form of *to be*, a linking verb. Notice how Matt does not do anything in this sentence. Instead, the verb *is* describes how Matt feels—hungry. *Is* links Matt with hunger.

An **object** usually appears after the verb. There are two (2) types of objects in the English language: **direct** and **indirect**.

A **direct object** takes or receives the action of the verb. In other words, the subject of the sentence acts on the direct object.

The direct object in our sample sentence “Matt eats pizza” is *pizza*. Matt eats what? Pizza.

An **indirect object** tells us to whom or for whom an action is done. To understand this concept, we need to come up with a longer sentence.

- Our new sample sentence will be, “Matt cuts the pizza for Nate.” In this sentence, our subject is *Matt*, our verb is *cuts*, the direct object is *the pizza*, and our indirect object is *Nate*. The pizza is cut for whom? Nate because Matt cuts the pizza for him.

So, remember, this is the basic pattern of an English sentence: **SUBJECT + VERB + OBJECT**.
Here are some extra examples:

*John kicks the can.*

In this sentence, *John* is our subject, *kicks* is our action verb, and *can* is the direct object.

*Maggie folds the blanket for Matt.*

In this sentence, *Maggie* is our subject, *folds* is our action verb, *blanket* is the direct object, and *Matt* is our indirect object.

*Nate is an actor.*

In this sentence, *Nate* is our subject and *is* links the word *actor* to Nate. In other words, *is* describes Nate’s profession.