

Correct and incorrect usages in English

Presented by



Incorrect	I have a good news for you.
Correct	I have good news for you
Incorrect	The men are national beings.
Correct	Men are national beings.
Incorrect	The boys leave the school at four o'clock.
Correct	The boys leave school at four o'clock.
Incorrect	He sent a word that he would come soon.
Correct	He sent word that he would come soon.
Incorrect	I have read the Shakespeare's Macbeth .
Correct	I have read Shakespeare's Macbeth
Incorrect	You cannot set a foot in this house.
Correct	You cannot set foot in this house.
Incorrect	The envy is an evil passion.
Correct	Envy is an evil passion.
Incorrect	He has not yet gone to the bed .
Correct	He has not yet gone to bed .

Incorrect	He is Daniel in judgment.
Correct	He is a Daniel in judgment.
Incorrect	He made very wise decision.
Correct	He made a very wise decision.
Incorrect	Fire broke out in our village.
Correct	A fire broke out in our village.
Incorrect	Andamans are a group of islands.
Correct	The Andamans are a group of islands.
Incorrect	The clock has struck five hours .
Correct	The clock has struck five .
Incorrect	There is no place in the hall.
Correct	There is no room in the hall.
Incorrect	Little thing has been done.
Correct	Little has been done.
Incorrect	We have an urgent business .
Correct	We have an urgent piece of business .
Incorrect	He came by the 4:30 o'clock train .
Correct	He came by the 4:30 train .
Incorrect	He left the place with his belonging goods .
Correct	He left the place with his goods .
Incorrect	He absented from the school yesterday.
Correct	He absented himself from the school yesterday.
Incorrect	He availed of the opportunity.
Correct	He availed himself of the opportunity.
Incorrect	Don't pride on your victory.
Correct	Don't pride yourself on your victory.
Incorrect	The girl wants to get herself married .
Correct	The girl wants to get married .

Incorrect	The climate of India is hotter than England .
Correct	The climate of India is hotter than that of England .
Incorrect	Everybody will get their share.
Correct	Everybody will get his share.
Incorrect	We realized where our weak points were and how to get rid of them .
Correct	We realized where our weak points were and how we could get rid of them .
Incorrect	All I know is my friend is right .
Correct	All I know is that my friend is right .
	Note : When the "that clause" is the object of a verb, the subordinating conjunction that may be omitted. When it is a complement of the verb <i>be</i> , <i>that</i> cannot be omitted.
Incorrect	Most of us found difficult to comprehend his speech.
Correct	Most of us found it difficult to comprehend his speech.
Incorrect	Her heart sank and could hardly stand .
Correct	Her heart sank and she could hardly stand .
	Note : Not changing the subject will make "her heart" seem to have "feet" on which it stands.
Incorrect	While doing the work, there are obstacles ahead.
Correct	While doing the work, they met with obstacles.
	Note : A certain action must be attached to the actor; otherwise the action becomes dangling.
Incorrect	Mandy is easy to suffer from cold.
Correct	Mandy suffers from cold easily .
Incorrect	How much is the price of this pen ?
Correct	How much is this pen ? Or How much does this pen cost ? Or What is the price of this pen ?
Incorrect	His room's windows are open.
Correct	The windows of his room are open.
Incorrect	It is everybody's duty to defend their country.
Correct	It is everybody's duty to defend his country.
Incorrect	Either of them are to go.

Correct	Either of them is to go.
Incorrect	More police was sent to the scene of the crime.
Correct	More police were sent to the scene of the crime.
	Note : The noun police is singular in form but plural in sense.
Incorrect	Mary pretended to not recognize me .
Correct	Mary pretended not to recognize me .
Incorrect	She neither speaks English nor Malay.
Correct	She speaks neither English nor Malay.
Incorrect	Only I and my friend were at the concert.
Correct	Only my friend and I were at the concert.
Incorrect	There is a dirty mark on the rug which must be removed.
Correct	On the rug, there is a dirty mark which must be removed.
Incorrect	Lizzie approached me and held my hand, said , "Hello !"
Correct	Lizzie approached me, held my hand, and said , "Hello !"
Incorrect	The climate of Japan is different from Taiwan .
Correct	The climate of Japan is different from that of Taiwan .
Incorrect	He succeeded to get the prize.
Correct	He succeeded in getting the prize.
Incorrect	The students were busy to prepare their lessons.
Correct	The students were busy preparing their lessons.
Incorrect	Please tell him don't come now .
Correct	Please tell him not to come now .
Incorrect	I saw them to work .
Correct	I saw them work .
Incorrect	You had better to go now.
Correct	You had better go now.
Incorrect	The country is belonged to every citizen.
Correct	The country belongs to every citizen.
	Note : Verbs like <i>belong, happen, occur</i> etc. are not used in the

passive voice.

Incorrect Water **composes** of hydrogen and oxygen.
Correct Water **is composed of** hydrogen and oxygen.

Incorrect Shelley looks **cheerfully**.
Correct Shelley looks **cheerful**.

Incorrect I didn't see him **too**.
Correct I didn't see him **either**.

Note : In English, the adverbs *also* and *too* appear in affirmative sentences. The adverb *either* appears at the end of negative sentences.

Incorrect She bought **a new scissors**.
Correct She bought **a new pair of scissors**

Incorrect What is the **difference of** these two things ?
Correct What is the **difference between** these two things ?

Incorrect What is the time **on your watch** ?
Correct What is the time **by your watch** ?

Incorrect Lucy has been absent **from Monday** ?
Correct Lucy has been absent **since Monday** ?

Note : To express the idea of from a certain time to now, we normally say "from ... to/till now ?".
Every week, I work **from Monday to Saturday**.

Incorrect We will tolerate no **interference with** our internal affairs.
Correct We will tolerate no **interference in** our internal affairs.
Note : (**In** means to meddle ; **With** means to hinder/obstruct.)
I don't allow any **interference with** my work.

Incorrect The **answer of this question** is quite complicated.
Correct The **answer to this question** is quite complicated.

Incorrect **Under the help** of an influential friend, he got the job.
Correct **With the help** of an influential friend, he got the job.
Note : To express various states or conditions, we use **under**.
Business improved **under** the new management.

Incorrect Nobody is bound to **suffering**.

Correct	Nobody is bound to suffer .
Incorrect	Some people are not used to live in a hot country .
Correct	Some people are not used to living in a hot country .
Incorrect	Susan is incapable to complete the task by herself.
Correct	Susan is incapable of completing the task by herself.
Incorrect	Nobody can avoid to make mistakes .
Correct	Nobody can avoid making mistakes .
Incorrect	I seldom go to theatre .
Correct	I seldom go to the theatre .
Incorrect	Smiths invited me to a dinner.
Correct	The Smiths invited me to a dinner.
Incorrect	Uncle's advice is great significance .
Correct	Uncle's advice is of great significance .
Incorrect	The judge has decided the case .
Correct	The judge has decided upon the case .
Incorrect	Do you want to try my new car ?
Correct	Do you want to try out my new car ?
Incorrect	I enjoyed during the holidays.
Correct	I enjoyed myself during the holidays.
Incorrect	Mary felt sorry about the matter but she did not voice .
Correct	Mary felt sorry about the matter but she did not voice it .
Incorrect	Many people in the past died from malaria.
Correct	Many people in the past died of malaria.
Incorrect	We were astonished by his sudden resignation.
Correct	We were astonished at his sudden resignation.
Incorrect	He took his girlfriend in the hand .
Correct	He took his girlfriend by the hand .
Incorrect	John said that , "I know the answer."

- Correct John said, "I know the answer."
- Incorrect Although he was ill, but he went to work as usual.
Correct Although he was ill, he went to work as usual.
- Incorrect You may not realize that how important time is.
Correct You may not realize how important time is.
- Incorrect He is a more nicer person than you.
Correct He is a nicer person than you.
- Incorrect John's work is more perfect than Tom's.
Correct John's work is better than/superior to Tom's.
- Incorrect This book is the most unique of all.
Correct This book is unique.
- Incorrect I don't have enough money to buy big house.
Correct I don't have enough money to buy a big house.
- Incorrect Why do you need hundred dollars ?
Correct Why do you need a hundred dollars ?
- Incorrect He has good knowledge of English grammar.
Correct He has a good knowledge of English grammar.
- Incorrect Japanese are industrious and frugal.
Correct The Japanese are industrious and frugal.
Note : Once the is omitted, the meaning changes from people to language.
Not all the Chinese are proficient in Chinese.
Is French a beautiful language ?
- Incorrect I like to play the football.
Correct I like to play football.
- Incorrect The blue is my favorite color.
Correct Blue is my favorite color.
- Incorrect Mary went shopping on the Saturday.
Correct Mary went shopping on Saturday.
Note : When seasons, months or days are specified, they are preceded by the definite article.
In the winter of 1976 she met with an accident.

I shall be going to the States **in the fall**.

Incorrect **The dogs** are faithful animals.

Correct **Dogs** are faithful animals.

Incorrect She has not **answered to his question**.

Correct She has not **answered his question**.

Incorrect We had a meeting **in this afternoon**.

Correct We had a meeting **this afternoon**.

Note : With *the*, the preposition *in* is used.

I work best **in the morning**.

He will be back **in the afternoon**.

Incorrect **My sister she** is at school.

Correct **My sister** is at school.

Note : In speaking, one may sometimes repeat the subject for emphasis, but such a construction normally occurs in this type of sentence.

You people must come earlier tomorrow.

Incorrect **The company**, having finished the construction project, **it received** its pay.

Correct **The company**, having finished the construction project, **received** its pay.

Incorrect The hunter took aim **and then he shot** the boar.

Correct The hunter took aim **and then shot** the boar.

Incorrect I bought a story book **to read it**.

Correct I bought a story book **to read**.

Incorrect The discussion will begin **after the dinner**.

Correct The discussion will begin **after dinner**.

Incorrect Can **the communism** coexist with **the capitalism** ?

Correct Can **communism** coexist with **capitalism** ?

Incorrect Professor Li will speak on the latest development **in the chemistry**.

Correct Professor Li will speak on the latest development **in chemistry**.

Incorrect We make **the bread** with **the flour**.

Correct We make **bread** with **flour**.

Incorrect **The experience** is the best teacher.

Correct **Experience** is the best teacher.

Incorrect	David has just been commissioned as the captain .
Correct	David has just been commissioned as captain .
Incorrect	When children grow up, they are sent to the school .
Correct	When children grow up, they are sent to school .
Incorrect	They study in the England .
Correct	They study in England .
Incorrect	Some of the students speak the Mandarin very well.
Correct	Some of the students speak Mandarin very well.
Incorrect	More and more people today die of the cancer .
Correct	More and more people today die of cancer .
Incorrect	I think your express will have a little difficult, but that is a lucky thing, I can understand you.
Correct	I think you have difficulty in expressing your idea. Luckily, I can understand you.
Incorrect	How are you this week ?
Correct	How have you been this week ?
Incorrect	I know you are good in computer and English.
Correct	I know you are good at computers/computing and English.
Incorrect	I think your qualification will surely make you open a computer or English training center.
Correct	I think you can open up a computer or English training center with your qualifications.
Incorrect	I am no exceptional.
Correct	I am no exception.
Incorrect	My telephone conversation with you for past one and half week has made me feel you as a very firm character.
Correct	Having telephoned with you for one week, I think you have a very firm/strong character.
Incorrect	It is easy or not get visa?
Correct	Is it easy to get visa ?

Incorrect	I wonder why are you keep study after graduated high school ?
Correct	I wonder why you keep studying after graduation from high school ?
Incorrect	He will be great help for you.
Correct	He will be of great help to you.
Incorrect	Am I a simple girl and has not any brains ?
Correct	Am I a naive lady who doesn't have intelligence ?
Incorrect	What sport are you interest ?
Correct	What sports are you interested in ?
Incorrect	He is sick .
Correct	He is ill .
Incorrect	I have strong headache .
Correct	I have a severe headache .
Incorrect	This is more preferable than that .
Correct	This is preferable to that .
Incorrect	No less than fifty students were present.
Correct	No fewer than fifty students were present.
Incorrect	I want a little quantity of milk.
Correct	I want a small quantity of milk.
Incorrect	Ram only is guilty.
Correct	Ram alone is guilty.
Incorrect	Do not go out in the sun with your head open .
Correct	Do not go out in the sun with your head bare OR uncovered .
Incorrect	Give a verbal translation of the passage.
Correct	Give a literal translation of the passage.
Incorrect	The association has three thousands of rupees in cash .
Correct	The association has only three thousand rupees .
Incorrect	He does not know to swim .
Correct	He does not know how to swim .

Incorrect	Don't go in the sun.
Correct	Don't go out in the sun.
Incorrect	I know him too well.
Correct	I know him very well.
Incorrect	I shall of course do it.
Correct	I shall certainly do it.
Incorrect	Now you are tired, you may rest awhile.
Correct	Now that you are tired, you may rest awhile.
Incorrect	No sooner had he died, when his sons began to quarrel.
Correct	No sooner had he died than his sons began to quarrel.
Incorrect	He asked me that why I had not gone there.
Correct	He asked me why I had not gone there.
Incorrect	Until you remain idle, you cannot succeed.
Incorrect	One of his family members is dead.
Correct	A member of his family is dead.
Correct	One of the members of his family is dead.
Incorrect	My brother's all the books have been stolen.
Correct	All my brother's books have been stolen.
Correct	All the books of my brother have been stolen.
Incorrect	For what you are here ?
Correct	What are you here for ?
Incorrect	Tell me why did you go there ?
Correct	Tell me why you went there ?
Incorrect	I, you and he will go together.
Correct	You, he and I will go together.
Incorrect	Exercise is good both for work as well as health.
Correct	Exercise is good for work as well as health.
Incorrect	He did not abstain to smoke but persisted to purchase valuable cigars.

Correct	He did not abstain from smoking but persisted in purchasing valuable cigars.
Incorrect	To him I did a request which he did not comply.
Correct	To him I made a request with which he did not comply.
Incorrect	I cannot bear your separation .
Correct	I cannot bear separation from you .
Incorrect	Open the last but one page of the book.
Correct	Open the last page but one of the book.
Incorrect	I solicit your favor to grant me leave .
Correct	I solicit the favor of your granting me leave.
Incorrect	Those who are absent, I shall punish them.
Correct	I shall punish those who are absent.
Incorrect	After doing the work , his face brightened.
Correct	After he had done the work , his face brightened.
Incorrect	We shall be glad to get your good news .
Correct	We shall be glad to get good news from you .
Incorrect	I feel myself feverish.
Correct	I feel feverish.
Incorrect	You have no excuse to be forgetful .
Correct	You have no excuse for being forgetful .
Incorrect	He rose equal to the occasion .
Correct	He rose to the occasion .
Correct	He was equal to the occasion .
Incorrect	Are your work busy ?
Correct	Do you have a busy job ?
Incorrect	I am going to a picnic.
Correct	I am going on a picnic.
Incorrect	I am a bit in a hurry .
Correct	I am in a bit of a hurry .

Incorrect	I'll date her out this Saturday.
Correct	I'll take her out on a date this Saturday.
Incorrect	If one day I am good in English, I would definitely admit it.
Correct	If someday I am good at English, I will definitely admit to it.
Incorrect	How do you think to learn the English ?
Correct	What is your point on learning English ?
Incorrect	Are you investing on stock market ?
Correct	Are you investing in the stock market ?
Incorrect	I am difficult to learn English.
Correct	It is difficult for me to learn English.
Incorrect	We have full off and half off on Sunday.
Correct	We are given the option to work either full or half day on Sunday.
Incorrect	In fact, Billy really owns some personality to be a VIP.
Correct	In fact, Billy really has what it takes to be a VIP.
Incorrect	China is coming into rainy weather.
Correct	China is in rainy season now.
Incorrect	All these three cities are similar warm as Malaysia.
Correct	All three of these cities are as warm as Malaysia.
Incorrect	What time of a day now in your country ?
Correct	What is the time now in your country ?
Incorrect	Comes to think of it, it sounds right !
Correct	Come to think of it, it does sound right !
Incorrect	You can try it more
Correct	You can try a few times
Incorrect	He went to abroad to further his study.
Correct	He went abroad to further his study.
Incorrect	Today, I'll wash my cat.

Correct	I'll give my cat a bath today.
Incorrect	How many days left for you to quit your position ?
Correct	How many days are left before you quit your job?
Correct	How many days are left until you quit your job?
Incorrect	Did Thailand come into rain season ?
Correct	Is it the rainy season in Thailand ?
Incorrect	How was your sleeping yesterday ?
Correct	Did you have a good sleep yesterday ?
Incorrect	He is trying to look cute to make himself forgiven.
Correct	He is trying to get away with it by looking cute.
Incorrect	Why don't stay more time here ?
Correct	Why don't you stay a little longer ?
Incorrect	But you know a lot about computer, isn't it ? I know nothing at all about it !
Correct	But you know a lot about computer, don't you ? I myself know nothing about it !
Incorrect	The sales of light arms is the main cause of heavy casualty in conflicting nations.
Correct	The sale of light arms to conflicting nations is the main cause of heavy casualties.
Incorrect	Why you want to know more about me ? I am just a small people.
Correct	Why do you want to know more about me ? I am a nobody.
Incorrect	Make sure that it is a high pay job.
Correct	Make sure that it is a high paying job.
Incorrect	I wonder if there is a comment on the certificate by GE about how good a student perform in the course ?
Correct	I wonder if there is a comment on the certificate by GE about how well a student performs in the course ?
Incorrect	We have lots of rain, because we're in monsoon season.
Correct	There is a lot of rain here as we are in monsoon season now.
Incorrect	How much is the temperature?
Correct	What is the temperature ?
Incorrect	Don't feel anger with me !!! I'm just kidding.

- Correct Don't be mad at me !!! I'm just kidding.
- Incorrect Kitty, your honey was left just now because I told him you will coming soon.
Correct Kitty, your honey **has** just left as I told him you would be coming soon.
- Incorrect I am a Chinese and have been abroad 10 years.
Correct I am Chinese and have been in abroad for 10 years.
- Incorrect OK, tell me how does he like ?
Correct OK, tell me what he looks like ?
- Incorrect I think you should go to abroad find a job make your life a little bit changed.
Correct I think you should **go abroad** to find a job and make your life a little bit different for a change.
- Incorrect Lilian is living far away with China.
Correct Lilian is living far away from China.
- Incorrect I am sure not even one man can control himself if he meet this kind of situation.
Correct I doubt that there is even one man who can control himself in this situation.
- Incorrect Are you a saler, Alvin ?
Correct Are you a salesman, Alvin ?
- Incorrect The team bring a lot of happy for football fan in the world but now I doubtful them.
Correct The team used to bring a lot of fun to the soccer fans in the world but I am doubtful of them now.
- Incorrect Which kind of car ?
Correct What type of car ?

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