

# English Cheat Sheet

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## Readers Expectation (Sentence)

- The action of a sentence will be articulated by its verb.
- A clause will tell the story of whoever or whatever shows up first.
- A multiclausal sentence tells the story of whoever or whatever shows up first in the sentence's main clause.
- The arrival of the grammatical subject will be followed almost immediately by the arrival of verb.
- The material most to be emphasized in the sentence will appear at a moment of full syntactic closure, called a Stress position.
- Every stress position will be filled with material intended to receive significant emphasis.
- The beginning of a sentence provides a connection backward to the previous sentence.
- The beginning of a sentence contextualizes the new and important material to be presented later in the sentence.
  - Readers form that context by answering two questions: (1) whose story is this? And (2) How does this sentence link backward to the sentence before it?

## Readers Expectation (Paragraph)

- If the point of a paragraph is not the last sentence of the issue, it will be the last sentence of the discussion.
- The point of a paragraph to be made explicit either just before the discussion of it begins or just as the discussion of it ends.

## Article (a, an, the)

### Indefinite: a, an

- used only if the noun can be counted.
- use "a" for a singular noun that begins with a consonant
- use "an" before a singular noun that begins with a vowel (a,e,i,o,u)
- use "an" with a singular noun that begins with an h mute: an hour

### Definite (the)

- Used when the noun cannot be counted.
- Used before singular and plural nouns when the noun is particular or specific.
- Not used with uncountable nouns such as coffee, Japanese.
- Used with uncountable nouns that are made more specific by a limiting phrase or clause.
- Use when a noun refers to something unique.

## Subject / Verb Agreement

- Singular subject takes a singular verb while a plural subject takes a plural verb.
- If a subject has two or more parts joined by "or" or "nor", the verb should agree with the part of the subject that is nearest to the verb.
- If a subject has two or more parts connected by "and", the subject is almost always plural.
- Collective nouns name a class or a group. If the group functions as a whole, treat the noun as singular. If the members of a group function individually, treat the noun as plural.
- Indefinite pronouns refer to nonspecific persons or things. Most indefinite pronouns are singular; however, a few are plural.

### References

- [www.coolenglish.co.uk](http://www.coolenglish.co.uk)
- <http://www.cfcc.edu/faculty/rhardin/subject-verbagreement.html>
- "The Sense of Structure" - George D. Gopen