

## ELLIPSIS

### A Busy Day Ahead

Tomorrow is going to be a busy day for Emma. She is meeting her manager in the morning and **her colleagues in the afternoon**. She wanted to finish the report tonight, but she didn't have enough time to.

Her manager asked whether she could prepare a presentation, and she said she **could**. She isn't sure whether she will have enough time to finish everything, but she **might**. If she does, she'll send the presentation to the team before the meeting.

"Are you coming to the office early tomorrow?" her colleague asked.

"I might," Emma replied. "**Sounds like** we'll have a lot to discuss."

Although Emma knows tomorrow will be demanding, she is looking forward to it. She enjoys working with her team, and **so do** her colleagues.

### GRAMMAR: ELLIPSIS

Ellipsis means leaving out words because their meaning can be understood from the context.

#### 1. Ellipsis after linking words

After **and, but, or, nor**, we can sometimes omit a repeated subject or verb.

Full form: We went shopping and we had lunch.

With ellipsis: We went shopping and had lunch.

#### More examples:

- I might go for a run or I might stay home. → I might go for a run or stay home.
- Jack is finishing his homework and he's preparing for his presentation. → Jack is finishing his homework and preparing for his presentation.

We normally cannot **omit the subject if the subject is different**.

**For example:** "Jack is finishing his homework and Sarah is preparing for the presentation." The subject "Sarah" must remain.

#### 2. Ellipsis after to

When the second part of a sentence contains an infinitive with to, we can sometimes omit the verb after to if it is already clear.

**Full form:** No, I wanted to go to the gym, but I didn't have time.

**With ellipsis:** No, I wanted to, but I didn't have time.

**Example:** I thought about going to the party, but I didn't want to.

#### 3. Ellipsis after auxiliary and modal verbs

We can avoid repeating the main verb after be, have, do, and modal verbs such as can, could, will, would, should, might, and must.

- He might have missed the bus, but I doubt he has. (= he has missed the bus)
- She promised to call, and she did. (= she called)
- I don't think we can finish today, but we might. (= we might finish today)
- She hasn't completed the report, but I have. (= I have completed the report)

#### 4. Omitting subject pronouns

In informal speech, especially in short comments or conversational language, the subject may sometimes be omitted when it is obvious.

- [That] Looks great!
- [It] Seems like a good idea.
- Sounds interesting.
- Hope you have a good time.
- Wish you were here.

This type of ellipsis is especially common in informal spoken English.

#### 5. Omitting subjects and auxiliary verbs

In informal questions, particularly with want and have got, both the subject and auxiliary can sometimes be omitted when the meaning is obvious.

- [Do you] Want to go for lunch?
- [Have you] Got your tickets for the concert?

These forms are common in conversation but are generally less appropriate in formal writing.

#### 6. Omitting auxiliary verbs in informal questions

In informal speech, speakers can sometimes leave out be, have, and do:

- [Are] You going out tonight?
- [Have] You seen this movie?
- [Does] She live here?
- [Will] You give me a call later?

These are highly conversational forms and should not normally be used in formal writing. Treat them as informal conversational ellipsis rather than a general rule.

**IMPORTANT:** Ellipsis is only possible when the missing information can be easily recovered from the context. If omitting a word makes the sentence ambiguous or difficult to understand, we should keep it.

#### Exercise 1 – Identify the Missing Information

1. I went to the supermarket and bought some vegetables.

→ Missing: \_\_\_\_\_

2. She said she would help me, and she did.

→ Missing: \_\_\_\_\_

3. I wanted to apply for the job, but I didn't want to.

→ Missing: \_\_\_\_\_

4. He might come to the party, but I'm not sure whether she will.

→ Missing: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Sounds like a good idea!

→ Missing: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Want another cup of coffee?

→ Missing: \_\_\_\_\_

### Exercise 2 – Rewrite Using Ellipsis

1. Maria works from home and Maria studies online in the evening.

→ \_\_\_\_\_

2. I wanted to buy the laptop, but I didn't want to buy the laptop because it was too expensive.

→ \_\_\_\_\_

3. He said he would help us, and he helped us.

→ \_\_\_\_\_

4. She hasn't finished the assignment, but I have finished the assignment.

→ \_\_\_\_\_

### Exercise 3 – Choose the Most Natural Option

1. "Would you like to come with us?" "Yes, I'd love \_\_\_\_."

a) to b) to come with you c) both are possible

2. "Are you going to apply for the position?" "I might \_\_\_\_."

a) apply b) [nothing] c) both a and b

3. She promised she would call, and she \_\_\_\_.

a) did b) called c) both are possible

4. "Have you seen the new documentary?" "No, but my brother \_\_\_\_."

a) has b) has seen it c) both are possible

5. "Do you want to order pizza?" "Yeah, \_\_\_\_ sounds good."

a) it b) that c) both are possible

6. "Want to grab a coffee?" This is:

a) formal English b) informal conversational English c) incorrect English

#### Exercise 4 – Correct the Errors

1. I went shopping and my sister went too, but went home early.

→ \_\_\_\_\_

2. She doesn't want to attend the meeting, but I think she might to.

→ \_\_\_\_\_

3. He said he would finish the project, and did.

→ \_\_\_\_\_

4. I think this is a good idea, but my colleague doesn't.

→ \_\_\_\_\_

5. Want you to come with us?

→ \_\_\_\_\_

6. Sounds like a great plan!

→ \_\_\_\_\_

7. She is working late and her manager preparing the presentation.

→ \_\_\_\_\_