

## 2 Sentence structure: subject, verb, object, etc.

MIKE AND HARRIET ARE MOVING THEIR PIANO UPSTAIRS.  
TOM, MELANIE AND DAVID ARE HELPING THEM.



### 1 Sentence structure

The parts of a sentence are the subject, verb, object, complement and adverbial. A statement begins with the subject and the verb. There are five main structures which we can use to make a simple statement.

1	SUBJECT	VERB	
	<i>My arms</i>	<i>are aching.</i>	
	<i>Something</i>	<i>happened.</i>	
2	SUBJECT	VERB	OBJECT
	<i>I</i>	<i>need</i>	<i>a rest.</i>
	<i>Five people</i>	<i>are moving</i>	<i>the piano.</i>
3	SUBJECT	VERB	COMPLEMENT
	<i>This piano</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>heavy.</i>
	<i>It</i>	<i>was</i>	<i>a big problem.</i>

The subject and object can be a pronoun (e.g. *I*) or a noun phrase (e.g. *the piano*).

4	SUBJECT	VERB	ADVERBIAL
	<i>It</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>on my foot.</i>
	<i>Their house</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>nearby.</i>

An adverbial can be a prepositional phrase (e.g. *on my foot*) or an adverb (e.g. *nearby*).

5	SUBJECT	VERB	OBJECT	OBJECT
	<i>It</i>	<i>'s giving</i>	<i>me</i>	<i>backache.</i>
	<i>David</i>	<i>bought</i>	<i>Melanie</i>	<i>a present.</i>

We use two objects after verbs like *give* and *send* (see Unit 3).

### 2 Adverbials

We can add adverbials to all the five main structures.

*My arms are aching terribly.*   *I really need a rest.*

*Of course this piano is heavy.*   *Fortunately their house is nearby.*

*To everyone's surprise, David actually bought Melanie a present yesterday.*

▷ 34, 36 Word order in questions   ▷ 113 Adverbs and word order

▷ page 377 *Seem, look, etc.* in American English

# Practice

## A Parts of the sentence (1)

Mike and Harriet are on holiday. They have written a postcard to David and Melanie. Look at each underlined phrase and say what part of the sentence it is: subject, verb, object, complement or adverbial.

► We're having a great time. object .....

1 The weather is marvellous. ....

2 We really enjoy camping. ....

3 It's great fun. ....

4 We're on a farm. ....

5 We like this place. ....

6 The scenery is beautiful. ....

## B Sentence structure (1)

After moving the piano, the five friends had a rest and a cup of tea.

Look at this part of their conversation and then write the letters a)–e) in the correct place.

a) David: That was a difficult job.

b) Tom: I agree.

c) Mike: I'm on my deathbed.

d) David: Someone should give us a medal.

e) Harriet: I've made some more tea.

► Subject + verb b .....

1 Subject + verb + object .....

2 Subject + verb + complement .....

3 Subject + verb + adverbial .....

4 Subject + verb + object + object .....

## C Word order (1)

Put the words in the correct order and write the statements.

► is / Melanie / very nice

Melanie is very nice.

1 football / likes / Tom

.....

2 an accident / David / had

.....

3 moved / the piano / we

.....

4 a tall woman / Harriet / is

.....

5 sat / on the floor / everyone

.....

6 gave / some help / Mike's friends / him

.....

## D Adverbials (2)

These sentences are from a news report. Write down the two adverbials in each sentence.

Each adverbial is a prepositional phrase or an adverb.

► Prince Charles opened a new sports centre in Stoke yesterday.

in Stoke

yesterday

1 He also spoke with several young people.

.....

2 The sports centre was first planned in 1994.

.....

3 Naturally, the local council could not finance the project without help.

.....

4 Fortunately, they managed to obtain money from the National Lottery.

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