

11 Correction of Common Errors (Word-Order)

In English, each and every word in a sentence has a definite order called word-order. Let us have a look at the following sentences:-

1. Shakespeare is for me still very difficult. (Incorrect)

Shakespeare is still very difficult for me. (Correct)

2. (a) It was a such cold morning. (Incorrect)

It was such a cold morning. (Correct)

(b) It was so a good pen. (Incorrect)

It was so good a pen. (Correct)

Note: 'Such a' and 'so good a' are correct expressions.

3. (a) Tell me where is the post office. (Incorrect)

Tell me where the post office is. (Correct)

(b) Ask him why does he want a pen. (Incorrect)

Ask him why he wants a pen. (Correct)

Note: In an indirect question, the correct word-order is— subject + verb.

4. (a) Do you know where does he live? (Incorrect)

Do you know where he lives? (Correct)

(b) Does he ever think why are they crying? (Incorrect)

Does he ever think why they are crying? (Correct)

Note: Never use a double question (direct question + direct question) in a sentence such a sentence has a direct question (verb + subject) followed by the indirect question (subject + verb).

5. (a) I exactly don't know. (Incorrect)

I don't know exactly. (Correct)

(b) He speaks very well English. (Incorrect)

He speaks English very well. (Correct)

(c) We want to go home back. (Incorrect)

We want to go back home. (Correct)

Note: An adverb is placed nearest to the word it qualifies.

6. Please speak to the concerned clerk. (Incorrect)

Please speak to the clerk concerned. (Correct)

Note: 'The concerned clerk', means the worried clerk whereas 'the clerk concerned' means the 'clerk in charge'.

7. (a) What you are saying? (Incorrect)

What are you saying? (Correct)

(b) Where he is going? (Incorrect)

Where is he going? (Correct)

(c) Why you can't come? (Incorrect)

Why can't you come? (Correct)

(d) Where you went? (Incorrect)

Where did you go? (Correct)

(e) Why she wants to see him? (Incorrect)

Why does she want to see him? (Correct)

Note: In an interrogative sentence, the word-order is— which/why/where + helping verb + subject + main verb.

8. (a) What she wanted to do? (Incorrect)

What did she want to do? (Correct)

(b) Why she did not like it? (Incorrect)

Why did she not like it? (Correct)

(c) Are you know him? (Incorrect)

Do you know him? (Correct)

(d) When do he came? (Incorrect)

When did he come? (Correct)

(e) What does he had? (Incorrect)

What did he has? (Correct)

Note: In an interrogative sentence, the word-order—what/ when/why + helping verb + subject + main verb—is set keeping in mind the tense of the sentence.

9. (a) What did she made? (Incorrect)

What did she make? (Correct)

(b) Do you ever seen him? (Incorrect)

Have you ever seen him?(Correct)

or

Do you ever see him?(Correct)

(c) How she was? (Incorrect)

How was she? (Correct)

(d) How is that boat called? (Incorrect)

What is that boat called? (Correct)

(e) If you know him? (Incorrect)

Do you know him? (Correct)

Note: In a direct question, the word-order is—verb + subject. Besides, the tense of the verb (principal + auxiliary) should be correct.