

## Sentence Correction Guide

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- GMAT Idiom List
- Common Errors to Avoid
- Tested Topics in Detail
- Tips & Strategies
- Grammar Review
  - Noun & Pronoun
  - Adjective & Adverb
  - Preposition Types & Errors
  - Verb Voices & Tenses
  - Participle & Gerund
  - Mood, Punctuation & Clause
  - Words Frequently Confused
- Official GMAT Question Type Analysis

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(Compiled from Verbal Guides)

Version 5.00

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10-Digit International Standard Book Number: (ISBN: 0-9788435-2-5)

13-Digit International Standard Book Number: (ISBN: 978-0-9788435-2-6)

Last updated on June 7, 2007.

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Dr. Joern Meissner, the founder of Manhattan Review, has over fifteen years of teaching experience in undergraduate and graduate programs at prestigious business schools in the USA, UK and Germany. He created the original lectures, which have been expanded and modified by the Manhattan Review Team to reflect the evolving nature of the GMAT. Dr. Meissner received his Ph.D. in Management Science from Graduate School of Business at Columbia University (Columbia Business School) in New York City and is a recognized authority in the area of Supply Chain Management (SCM), Dynamic Pricing and Revenue Management. He frequently advises companies ranging from Fortune 500 to emerging start-ups on various issues related to his research expertise. His academic homepage is [www.meiss.com](http://www.meiss.com).

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# Chapter 2

## Grammar Review

### 2.1 Noun

Nouns are used as subjects of sentences and as the objects of verbs and prepositions.

#### 2.1.1 Common and Proper Nouns

Generally there are two types of nouns - common nouns and proper nouns.

- Common nouns refer to any place, person or thing, for example, girl, apartment, city.
- Proper nouns refer to particular places, persons and things, for example, Mark, New York, the White House.

#### 2.1.2 Singular and Plural Nouns

Nouns can also be categorized as singular nouns and plural nouns. Sometimes certain nouns are used exclusively as either singular or plural nouns. That means they do not have a corresponding word to their own singular or plural form.

- Singular nouns are used for single occurrence, single person, single item, and etc.
- Plural nouns are used for more than more occurrences, persons, items, and etc.

A quick comparison table of some tricky nouns in their singular and plural forms:

Alumnus	Alumni
Bacterium	Bacteria
Criterion	Criteria
Formula	Formulae
Medium	Media
Phenomenon	Phenomena

There are some singular nouns often mistaken as plural nouns because they end with “s”.

Citrus  
Economics  
Glasses  
Means  
Measles  
News  
Physics  
Scissors  
Series  
Species  
Statistics

### 2.1.3 Countable and Uncountable Nouns

Another way to group nouns is separating them into countable nouns and non-countable nouns. Countable nouns usually have both singular and plural forms. Uncountable nouns are used just as singular.

- Countable nouns can be counted in the number of 1, 2, 3... Examples are desk, pen, person.
- Uncountable nouns can not be counted in any numbers. Rather, they are considered an entire item. Some most commonly used uncountable nouns are water, health, and money.

Other examples of uncountable nouns include:

Advice  
Anger  
Baggage  
Beauty  
Gasoline  
Information  
Luggage  
Smog  
Wheat

Sometimes a noun is used as an uncountable noun when it is referred to the entire idea or substance, but it can be used as a countable noun when used in a context involving:

⇒ Countable pieces or containers for things.

Uncountable: I prefer tea to coke.

Countable: Two teas (two cups of tea) for us, please.

⇒ Different brands, makes, or types.

Uncountable: I love cheese.

Countable: There are so many cheeses to choose from.

⇒ A specific example.

Uncountable: She has shiny hair.

Countable: I found a hair today in my sandwich. It grossed me out.

Uncountable: He is great at sport.

Countable: Skiing is a popular sport in Austria.

### 2.1.4 Collective Nouns

Certain nouns are used to just describe a collection of people, items, or events in their entirety. Even though they are referring to more than one thing in the collection, they are singular. However, when they are used to represent a number of collections, then they are plural.

Examples include:

Audience

Business

Choir

Committee

Company

Crowd

Family

Flock

Government

Group

Majority

Nation

Pack

Team

The Public

Unit

## 2.2 Pronoun

### 2.2.1 Pronoun Types

A pronoun is a part of speech that is typically used as a substitute for a noun or noun phrase. There are **eight subclasses** of pronouns, although some forms belong to more than one group:

- (1) **personal pronouns** (I, you, he/she/it, we, you, they)
  - Make sure sentences use them consistently
- (2) **possessive pronouns** (my/mine, his/her/its/hers, their/theirs, our/ours, etc.)
  - Do not change the gender of noun as in French
- (3) **reflexive pronouns** (myself, yourself, him/herself, ourselves, themselves, etc.)
  - No reflexive verbs in English
- (4) **demonstrative pronouns** (this/these, that/those)
  - Nearness in location
  - That (pronoun) vs. That (conjunction)
- (5) **reciprocal pronouns** (each other, one another)
- (6) **interrogative pronouns** (who, what, when, where, why etc.)
  - Five w's of a journalist's first paragraph
- (7) **relative pronouns** (who, that, what, which etc.)
  - Related different clauses in a sentence to each other
  - That vs. Which: restrictive vs. non-restrictive clause
  - Who vs. Whom: take subject vs. take object (Please see explanation later.)
- (8) **indefinite pronouns** (any, none, somebody, nobody, anyone, etc.)
  - none = singular (when it means "not one"); all = plural (if countable);
  - much = can't be counted; many = can be counted
  - less = can't be counted; fewer = can be counted

### 2.2.2 Nominative and Objective Cases

There are two pronominal cases: nominative (subject) and objective (object).

Subject: I, you, he/she/it, we, you, they.

Object: me, you, him/her/it, us, you, them.

Notice that the second person (both singular and plural) has only one form, *you*. The object case is used after verbs and prepositions:

We met *her* in a bookstore. She went to school with *us*.

Be careful of objects that consist of a proper noun (name) + a pronoun:

The puppy looked across the table at *Sarah* and *me*.

These situations can seem confusing, but there is an easy method to tell which pronoun (nominative or objective) is required. Just remove the noun from the sentence to see if it still makes sense. If it does (as in “The puppy looked across the table at me”), then you have selected the correct pronoun. If it does not (as in “The puppy looked across the table at I”), then you should go back and check whether you selected the correct case for the pronoun (in this case it is the object of a preposition, *at*, so it should be in the objective case).

The relative pronoun *who* also has an objective case form, *whom*:

I kicked the girl *who* tried to steal my coat.

(I kicked the girl. *She* tried to steal my coat.)

I smiled at the girl *whom* I had kicked.

(I smiled at the girl. I had kicked *her*.)

### 2.2.3 Possessive Forms

All these pronouns have possessive forms that **do not** have apostrophes:

my, your, his/her/its, our, your, their

These act as adjectives, and are followed by nouns. If there is no noun and the possessive form is used by itself, this form is said to be disjunctive:

mine, yours, his/hers/its, ours, yours, theirs.

Again, there is no apostrophe. The relative pronoun *who* has the possessive form *whose*:

I comforted the dog *whose* tail had been stepped on.

*One* is used as a supplementary pronoun; it **does** have an apostrophe in the possessive:

*One* can only do *one's* best.

Note that *one's* is used only if the subject *one* is present; following with *his* would not be acceptable.

### 2.2.4 Agreement & Reference

There are several pronominal forms which seem to be plural but act as singular, taking singular verbs and singular pronouns if they act as antecedents. The most common of these words are *another*, *any*, *anybody*, *anything*, *each*, *either*, *every*, *everybody*, *neither*, *no one*, *nobody*, *none* (*not one*), etc.; they must be followed by a singular verb, whatever the meaning might indicate:

*Not one* of the bananas *was* ripe.

*Everybody* wanted *his or her* own way.

Always look back to see what the pronoun refers to; where there is a generalization, it is sometimes tempting to treat a singular as a plural:

*Man*, in all *his* glory, has ascended to the top of the food chain.

## 2.3 Adjective

### 2.3.1 Usage

An adjective is a descriptive word which qualifies a noun, making it more specific:

The *red* car.

The *old red* car.

The *big old red* car.

The two *young* professors lived in Greenwich Village.

A *bright* light flashed through the window of the house.

Adjectives are usually arranged in the order of specificity. Words normally used to perform other grammatical functions may be used as adjectives. These can be recognized by their position before the noun to which they apply:

*remote-control* car

*war* effort

*Christmas* cookies

*spring* carnival

Adjectives can also be used to form a **predicate** with the verb to *be*:

Chocolate *is yummy*.

Normally, only ‘true’ adjectives can be used to form this kind of predicate. It is not possible to say:

**Wrong:** The cookies were *Christmas*, or

**Wrong:** The carnival was *spring*.

In such cases, it is necessary to use the prop-word, *one*:

The cookies were *Christmas ones*.

There are three forms of a ‘true’ adjective.

<b>Normal:</b>	big	beautiful
<b>Comparative:</b>	bigger	more beautiful
<b>Superlative:</b>	biggest	most beautiful

No agreement to noun is necessary for an adjective.

*Student Notes:*

## 2.4 Adverb

An adverb is a part of speech used mainly to modify verbs but also adjectives and other adverbs. Adverbs describe how, where or when.

### 2.4.1 Adverbial Forms

Adverbs are formed in a few different ways:

Most adverbs are formed from adjectives by the addition of the ending “-ly” (as in suddenly, playfully, interestingly) or “-ally” after words in *-ic* (as in, automatically).

Some adverbs are formed from nouns in combination with other suffixes: *-wise* (as in, clockwise, lengthwise) and *-ward(s)* (as in, northwards, westwards, skyward).

Some common adverbs have **no** suffixes, as in: *here/there, now, well, just*.

Some adverbs can qualify other adverbs (the most common are intensifiers, such as very, as in “very quick”).

Some adverbs have the **same** form as their adjective counterpart, e.g., *fast, long, first*.

**Not all words ending in -ly are adverbs:** *lovely, ungainly, and likely* are adjectives. The word *only* and *early* may be either.

### 2.4.2 Adverbial Positions

Adverbs modify verbs in the same way adjectives qualify nouns.

The adverb **often follows the verb** it modifies:

I shouted *loudly* to my friends across the theater.

**Sometimes it precedes the verb:**

I *really* wanted to talk to her.

Sometimes position determines meaning:

I think *clearly*. (My thinking is clear.)

I *clearly* think. (It is clear that I think.)

Where emphasis is needed, the adverb may be put first, and the verb and subject inverted:

*Never* have I seen such an ugly dog.

*Student Notes:*

## 2.5 Adverb vs. Adjective

### 2.5.1 Position and Meaning

When adverbs are used to modify adjectives, it is important to work out the relationships between them:

She heard an *odd*, chilling sound.

She heard an *oddly* chilling sound.

If one is not careful it is easy to confuse whether a word is an adverb or an adjective, and in either case, which other word it is modifying in the sentence.

The change from adjective to adverb can change the meaning drastically:

The centaur appeared *quick*.

The centaur appeared *quickly*.

In this example when the adjective is used, it appears that the centaur is quick, whereas when the adverb is used, it is the centaur's appearance which occurred quickly.

**Good vs. well:** When used as adjectives, *good* refers to morality or quality and *well* refers to health. However, only *well* can be used as adverb and *good* is always an adjective.

Correct:

I feel *good* about my work.

I feel *well*.

I am *well*.

I'm doing *well*.

**Wrong:** I am doing *good*.

### 2.5.2 Adverb and Adjective

Great care must be taken to align only with the word it actually modifies, because its positioning can affect the meaning of the sentence:

I ate some peas *only* yesterday - I don't need to eat any today.

I *only* ate some peas yesterday - I didn't do anything else.

I ate *only* some peas yesterday - I didn't eat anything else.

*Only* I ate some peas yesterday - nobody else had any.

*Early* may be both adjective and adverb:

I take the *early* train.

I get up *early* to take the train.



### 2.5.3 Adjective Only

Notice that some verbs may take adjectives to complete the meaning required (complementary adjectives). These verbs cannot form a complete thought without the required adjectives:

He looks *confused* today.

The music seemed *loud*.

#### Likely

Special care must be taken with the adjective *likely*. It is often mistaken for an adverb because of its form, but this is not an acceptable usage, for example:

**Correct:** The Republic is *likely* to fall.

**Wrong:** The Republic will likely fall.

#### Like (used as adjective or preposition)

*Like*, with its opposite *unlike*, should be treated as an adjective or a preposition; that is, it must always have a noun to relate to. A predicate is formed with the verb *to be*:

Life is *like* a box of chocolates. (Life resembles a box of chocolates.)

Used in the form of a phrase, *like* will link two nouns (or noun phrases) of the same kind. In this case, *like* functions as a preposition, a phrase-maker, and it is categorized so in some grammar books.

*Like* any politician, he often told half-truths.

#### Like vs Such As

In the above example, *like* is used to introduce similarity between two items or persons. This is an accepted usage in Sentence Correction on the GMAT. In other words, *like* cannot be used to introduce examples or a subset of a category, which should be used following *such as*.

**Correct:** I enjoy playing musical instruments *such as* piano and violin.

**Wrong:** I enjoy playing musical instruments *like* piano and violin.

In sum, on the GMAT, use *like* before a noun or pronoun when emphasizing similar characteristics between two persons, groups or things. Use *such as* before a noun or phrase when introducing examples.

#### Like vs. As/As If/As though

Use *like* before a noun or pronoun. Use *as* before a clause, adverb or prepositional phrase. Use *as if* and *as though* before a clause. *Like* is generally used as a preposition in such a context. *As* is generally used as an adverb while sometimes serving as a preposition with the meaning of “in the capacity of”. As you can tell, the focus of the comparison shifts from the noun when used with *like* to the verb when used with *as*, *as if*, or *as though*.

My mother’s cheesecake tastes *like glue*.

I love frozen pizza because there is no other snack *like* it.

My mother’s cheesecake tastes great, *as* a mother’s cheesecake should.

There are times, *as* now, that learning grammar becomes important.

He golfed well again, *as* in the tournament last year.

He served *as* captain in the navy.

He often told half-truths, *as* any politician would.

He looks *as if* he knows me.

It looked *as if* a storm were on the way.

He yelled at me *as though* it were my fault.

The same rule applies when you use the expressions *seem like* and *look like*.

**Correct:**

He *seemed like* a nice guy at first.

That *looks like* a very tasty cake.

**Wrong:** It *seemed* like he liked me.

**Correct:** It *seemed as if* he liked me.

Here the comparison is with a clause, not a noun.

**Due to**

*Due to* is also used adjectivally, and must have a noun to attach itself to:

My failure, *due to* a long-term illness during the semester, was disappointing.

(That is, the failure was attributable to the long-term illness, not the disappointment, which would have had other causes, such as the failure.)

**Owing to**

If an adverbial link is needed, the expression *owing to* has lost its exclusively adjectival quality:

My failure was disappointing *owing to* a long-term illness during the semester.

(In this case, the disappointment at the failure was caused by the long-term illness during the semester.)

## 2.6 Preposition

Prepositions are words that are placed before a noun making a particular relationship between it and the word to which it is attached.

### 2.6.1 Preposition Types

There are a few types of prepositions:

- 1) **simple prepositions:** these are the most common prepositions, such as: *in, on, of, at, from, among, between, over, with, through, without*.
- 2) **compound prepositions:** two prepositions used together as one, such as: *into, onto/on to* (*on to* is British English, *onto* is American English), *out of*.
- 3) **complex prepositions:** a two- or three-word phrase that functions in the same way as a simple preposition, as in: *according to, as well as, except for, in favor of*.

Preposition i.e. pre position. Prepositions always occur before the thing they refer to.

*In:* I was born *in* that house. (Here that house is the object of the preposition *in*)

Prepositional phrases may be adjectival or adverbial, according to what they modify:

The girl *in my science class* kissed me.

Here, *in my science class* qualifies *girl*, and it is adjectival, but in

The girl kissed me *in my science class*.

*in my science class* modifies *kissed*, indicating where the kiss took place, and it is therefore adverbial.

*Between* refers to two things only; for more than two, use *among*.

I sat *between* two very large people.

We split the loot *among* the four of us.

## 2.6.2 Prepositions Frequently Misused

You should use prepositions carefully. Some prepositions are used interchangeably and carelessly.

For example:

*beside* vs. *besides*

*beside* - at the side of someone or something

Frank stood *beside* Henry.

*besides* - in addition to

*Besides* his Swiss bank account he has many others in Austria.

Exception: some idioms do not refer directly to either direct meaning.

She was *beside* herself with emotion.

*The use of 'of'*

Phrases such as: could of, must of are **incorrect** forms for could have, must have etc.

*between* vs. *among*

Use the preposition *among* in situations involving more than two persons or things and use *between* in situations involving only two persons or things.

The money was divided *among* the workers.

The money was divided *between* the two boxers.

*at* vs. *with*: usually at a thing but with a person. Exceptions include throw something *at* somebody *with* something, be angry *at* someone, be pleased *with* something, and others.

For example,

I went at Roger *with* a bat.

What's wrong with this sentence? Nothing actually, it is grammatically correct. It is simply an odd usage of the prepositions.

Be careful to use the right preposition for the meaning you want; *agree with* differs in meaning from *agree to*, *compare with* is distinct from *compare to*, and so on.

The expressions *superior to*, *preferable to* and *different from* are the only standard forms.

*Student Notes:*

### 2.6.3 Idioms with Prepositions

#### A

a sequence **of**

in accordance **with**

be accused **of**

acquiesce **in**

access **to**

adhere **to**, be an adherent **of** (follower)

affinity **with**

be afraid **of**

agree **with** (a person/idea)

agree **to** (a proposal or action)

aim **at**

allow **for**

an instance **of**

analogy **with**, analogous **to**

be attended **by** (not **with**)

attend **to**

appeal **to** (a person)

approval **of**

as a result **of**

associate **with**

attribute A **to** B (B is attributed to A)

authority **on**

#### B

*be based **on***

*have belief **in***

*be capable **of***

*be careful **of***

C

*be capable **of***

*care **about** – be considerate of; to think about*

*care **for** - like*

*center **on**, center **upon** (not round)*

*collide **with** (not against)*

*comment **on***

*compare **with**, in comparison **with** (used when emphasizing differences)*

*compare **to** (used when emphasizing similarities)*

*comply **with***

*be composed **by** – be created by*

*be composed **of** – to be made up of*

*comprise **of***

*be concerned **with***

*concur **in** (an opinion)*

*concur **with** (a person)*

*conducive **to***

*conform **to***

***in** conformity **with***

*consist **of***

***in** contrast **to***

*contrast A **with** B*

*credit **with** (not to)*

*give someone credit **for** (something or doing something)*

D

***in** danger **of***

*debate **on**, debate **over***

*decide **on***

*depend **on** (whether . . . , not if . . . ), be dependent **on**, be independent **from***

*determine **by***

*differ **from** - to be unlike something; to be different from*

*differ **with** - to disagree with someone*

*discourage **from***

*feel disgusted **with** (not at)*

***at** one's disposal*

*distinguish **from***

*be drawn **to***

E

*be embarrassed **by** (not at)*

*end **with**, end **in** (not by)*

*be envious **of**, jealous **of***

*be equal **to** (not as)*

*be essential **to***

*except **for**, except that...*

F

*be familiar **with***

*be fascinated **by***

H

*be hindered **by***

I

*be identical **with**, be identical **to***

*be independent **from***

*be indifferent **towards***

*inherit **from***

*instill something **in** someone (not instill someone with)*

*invest **in***

*involve **in** (not by)*

*insist **on**, insist that someone do something*

*be isolated **from***

J

*judge **by** (not on)*

M

*mistake **for***

N

*native **to***

*a native **of***

*necessity **of**, necessity **for***

*a need **for***

O

*be oblivious **of**, oblivious **to***

P

*participate **in***

*preferable **to***

*prevent **from***

*profit **by** (not from)*

*prohibit **from***

*protest **against** (not at)*

R

*receptive **of**, receptive **to***

*be related **to***

*relations **with** (not towards)*

*repent **of***

*in response **to***

*result **from***

*result **in***

S

*be in search **of** (not for)*

*be sensible **of***

*be sensitive **to***

*separate **from** (not away from or out)*

*similar **to***

*be sparing **of** (not with)*

*be solicitous **of** (not to)*

*suffer **from** (not with)*

*be superior **to***

*subscribe **to***

*sacrifice **for***

T

*tendency **to** (not for)*

*tinker **with** (not at, although this is British English usage)*

*be tolerant **of** (not to)*

W

*wait **for** - to spend time in waiting for someone or something*

*wait **on** - to serve someone, typically used in a restaurant setting*

## 2.7 Verb

A class of words that serve to indicate the occurrence or performance of an action, or the existence of a state or condition. English verbs are normally expressed in the infinitive form, together with “to”. For example, to run, to walk, to work, etc.

### 2.7.1 Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

A verb is said to be **transitive** if it needs an object to complete the meaning:

Joern *kicked his brother*.

It is **intransitive** if the meaning is complete in itself:

I *smiled*.

The rain *falls*.

Some verbs may be either transitive or intransitive (meaning that they do not require an object to be complete, but they can take one to add detail):

I *ate*.

I *ate pudding*.

### 2.7.2 Active and Passive Voices

Transitive verbs may appear in **active** or **passive** constructions. In active verb constructions, the subject is directly concerned with the verbal process; it is the agent:

The hit-man *killed* my boyfriend.

When an active construction is made passive, the object becomes the subject, and the relationship is reversed, so that the subject is now acted upon, ‘passive’:

My boyfriend *was killed* by the hit-man.

### 2.7.3 Major Tenses

You will not have to memorize all of the commonly used tenses for the GMAT, but a quick review of the tenses and their respective meanings will help you make sense of what can be a confusing topic.



Tense	Example
<b>Simple Present</b> (action frequently happening in the present)	<b>He laughs.</b> <b>They laugh.</b>
Perfect Progressive (action ongoing at this moment)	He is laughing. They are laughing.
<b>Present Perfect</b> (action started previously and completed thus far)	<b>He has laughed.</b> <b>They have laughed.</b>
<b>Simple Past</b> (completed action)	<b>He laughed.</b> <b>They laughed.</b>
Present Perfect Progressive (action started previously and ongoing at this moment)	He has been laughing. They have been laughing.
<b>Past Perfect</b> (action completed before another past time)	<b>He had laughed.</b> <b>They had laughed.</b>
<b>Future</b> (action to occur later)	<b>He will laugh.</b> <b>They will laugh.</b>
Future Progressive (action ongoing at a later time)	He will be laughing. They will be laughing.
<b>Future Perfect</b> (action regarded as completed at a later time)	<b>He will have laughed.</b> <b>They will have laughed.</b>
Future Perfect Progressive (action started at a later time and ongoing)	He will have been laughing. They will have been laughing.

**Verbal Tense Examples:****Present:** ring**Past:** rang**Past Participle:** rung**Present:** walk**Past:** walked**Past Participle:** walked**More examples:****Past:** danced**Present:** dance**Future:** will dance**Past perfect:** had danced**Present perfect:** have danced**Future perfect:** will have danced**Present Progressive:** am dancing**Conditional:** would dance

**Common Irregular Verbs**

<u>Infinitive Participle</u>	<u>Part Participle</u>	<u>Future Participle</u>
do	did	done
go	went	gone
take	took	taken
rise	rose	risen
begin	began	begun
swim	swam	swum
throw	threw	thrown
break	broke	broken
burst	burst	burst
bring	brought	brought
lie	lay	lain
lay	laid	laid
get	got	got or gotten

An extensive list of irregular verbs can be found in Helpful Topics.

**2.7.4 Indicative, Imperative and Subjunctive Moods**

Mood is a set of verb forms expressing a particular attitude. There are three main types of mood in English:

⇒ **Indicative**

⇒ **Imperative**

⇒ **Subjunctive**

The indicative mood is the most common one, used to express factual statements.

I love playing the piano.

The imperative mood is used to express commands.

Please close the window immediately!

The subjunctive mood expresses possibilities and wishes.

If I were you, I would tell him my feelings.

The subjunctive is rarely used, but it is more often found in formal American usage than in British. The present subjunctive is very rare, having been overtaken by the present indicative, which it resembles in all parts except the third person singular: the subjunctive has no *-s* ending. The verb *to be*, however, has the form *be* for every person.

I'll call you if need *be*.

The past subjunctive is identical with the ordinary past tense, but again, the verb *to be* is different, having the form *were* for all persons.

If I *were* you, I would not do that.

Since the subjunctive expresses possibility, not fact, it is therefore found in

- (1) Clauses beginning with *if*, *as if*, *though*, *as though* and

(2) After verbs expressing some kind of wish, recommendation, proposal, desire, regret, doubt, or demand.

The *if* (in subjunctive mood), *as if*, *though*, *as though* clauses express a condition that is NOT true.

Dependent Clause	Main Clause	Example
Present (True Condition)	Will/Can + Verb (base form)	<b>If you put your heart into it, you will be the winner.</b>
Past (Untrue Condition)	Would/Could + Verb (base form)	<b>If you put your heart into it, you could be the winner.</b>
Past Perfect (Untrue Condition)	Would have/Could have + Verb (past participle)	<b>If you had put your heart into it, you could have been the winner.</b>

When the subjunctive is used after verbs expressing some kind of wish, recommendation, proposal, desire, regret, doubt, or demand, there is a degree of uncertainty related to the final outcome.

### Wrong

She recommended that John *should* take the ferry.

She recommended that John *takes* the ferry.

She recommended that John *had taken* the ferry.

### Correct

She recommended that John *take* the ferry.

Note that you should ALWAYS just use the base form of the verb in such a subjunctive construction involving the *that* clause.

Regarding a list of words that are associated with the subjunctive mood, unfortunately, there's no hard and fast principle for it. This is what the linguists would call a lexical issue; the particular word and its meaning determine whether or not it can take an infinitive complement.

The following verbs can be used with a subjunctive that-clause:

advise

advocate

ask

beg

decide

decree

demand

desire

dictate

insist

intend

mandate

move (in the parliamentary sense)

order

petition  
propose  
recommend  
request  
require  
resolve  
suggest  
urge  
vote

Of these, the following can ALSO take an infinitive, X to Y construction:

advise  
ask  
beg  
order  
petition  
request  
require  
urge

The infinitive group is to some degree distinguished by their being directed at a person, rather than at a state of affairs.

## 2.7.5 Participle

There are several parts of the verb system which function as if they were different parts of speech (in the case of a participle, an adjective). In grammar, the PARTICIPLE is the term for two verb forms, the PRESENT PARTICIPLE (the “-ing” participle) and the PAST PARTICIPLE (the “-ed” participle, also ending in “-d” and “-t”). Both participles may be used like adjectives, but only if the participle indicates some sort of permanent characteristic: “running water”, “the missing link”, “lost property”.

The PRESENT PARTICIPLE ends in “-ing” and is used in combination with the auxiliary “be” for the progressive continuous, as in: “am driving”, “has been talking”, etc.

The PAST PARTICIPLE ends in “-ed”, “-d” or “-t” for all regular verbs and many irregular verbs, but many irregular verbs end in “-en” and “-n” (as in, “stolen” and “known”) or with a change in the middle vowel (as in, “sung”).

### 2.7.5.1 Present Participle

The present participle ends in *-ing*. Like an adjective, it may be used to form a predicate with the verb *to be*:

Her feelings for Bob *were burgeoning* quickly.

She *is stunning* in that dress.

Used as an adjective, it holds the normal adjectival position:

Her *burgeoning* feelings for Bob surprised her.

The *stunning* woman looked straight at me.

Participles are commonly found in phrases alongside the main part of the sentence:

*Burgeoning* rapidly, *her feelings* for Bob rose to an untenable level.

If there is no appropriate noun, the sentence becomes nonsensical. The falsely assigned participle is known as ‘dangling’ or ‘misrelated’:

**Wrong:** *Burgeoning* rapidly, *she* was soon unable to control her feelings for Bob.

As we will discuss in the Sentence Correction section, this is one of the most common errors on the GMAT, so learn to recognize a misplaced modifier (dangling participle), and you will have great success with these questions.

### 2.7.5.2 Past Participle

The past participle ends in *-(e)d* or *-t* in most verbs. A few archaic strong forms remain; these are verbs which make the past tense by changing the internal vowel, e.g., *write, wrote; see, saw*. These have participles that end in *-(e)n*, e.g. *written, seen*. The past participle forms a compound tense (perfect) with the addition of the verb *to have*. This denotes the perfected or completed action:

I have *decided* to leave you.

It is useful to be able to recognize tenses in the Sentence Correction section, because another of the most common errors on the GMAT is changing tenses needlessly in the middle of a sentence. Make sure that the answer you select does not have a change of tense which is not justified by the meaning of the sentence.

Used adjectivally, however, the past participle may also form a predicate with the verb *to be*.

I have *slain* you.

You *are slain*.

As with the present participle, the past participle must be related to its proper noun when forming a modifying phrase:

*Embarrassed* by her faux pas, *Ellen* left the room.

If the participle is misrelated (misplaced), comic results will occur:

**Wrong:** *Covered* with aluminum foil, I popped the lasagna into the oven.

(Here it is me, and not the lasagna, that is covered with aluminum foil!)

### 2.7.5.3 Special Situations

Absolute participle constructions are rare, and normally consist of noun and participle - the noun to which the participle refers is actually present, although it does not have a function in the rest of the sentence:

*The game being over*, the players all went home.

*Weather permitting*, the wedding will be held outdoors.

A similar construction has the preposition *with*:

I returned to school *with my essay revised*.

A few participles have virtually become prepositions in their own right. These are:

*barring, considering, excepting, including, owing (to), regarding, respecting, seeing, touching;*

and the past forms,

*excepted, provided, given.*

*Student Notes:*

### 2.7.6 Gerund & Infinitive

The GERUND is a verbal noun, in English a word ending in “-ing”. In fact, many grammarians of English use the term PARTICIPLE to include the gerund. Take the word “visiting” in the sentence: “They appreciate my visiting their parents regularly.”

Like participles, gerunds are verbal elements which take on the role of another part of speech (in this case, that of a noun).

More common is the form ending in *-ing*, and this is identical with the form of the present participle. The two are distinguished only by function:

Taking this route was a mistake. (subject, *taking*)

Why are we going this way? (participle, *going*)

There is no preferred version, but it is important to maintain parallelism in your constructions.

If an ordinary noun can be substituted for the *-ing* form, then it is a gerund, e.g.,

*Taking it* was the fun part.

*Its capture* was the fun part.

The gerund retains its verbal function by taking an object:

*Owning a monkey* is very unconventional.

Less commonly, the noun function dictates the form:

*The wearing of pink* by red-headed people is a major fashion crime. (Wearing pink ...)

Where a noun or pronoun is used with a gerund, it should be in the possessive case:

*My admonishing him* will not change his mind.

It was *his winning* that bothered me, not *my losing*.

I can't stand *my mother's telling* my friends embarrassing stories about me.

Any word may be used as an attributive (adjective) if placed before a noun. A gerund may be used this way (called a *gerundive*); its form is identical with the present participle, but the meaning will be different:

A *building* reputation - participle (a reputation that is building)

Some *building* blocks - gerund (blocks for building with)

A *working* appliance - participle (an appliance that works)

*working* papers - gerund (papers which allow you to work)

The infinitive form of a verb has a “to” preceding it:

to + verb

The infinitive form may be used in this function:

To err is human, to forgive, divine.

(= Error is human, forgiveness, divine.)

Care must be taken not to use a mixture of the two forms:

Talking to him was one thing, but kissing him was entirely another!

To talk to him was one thing, but to kiss him was entirely another!

**Not:** Talking to him was one thing, but to kiss him was entirely another!

Do avoid inserting a word or a phrase between the to and the verb in the infinitive form. This error is known as a *split infinitive*.

### Wrong

I asked him to quickly clean the table.

### Correct

I asked him to clean the table quickly.

*Student Notes:*

## 2.8 Conjunction

Conjunctions are used to connect words or constructions. You should simply keep in mind that the most common conjunctions are AND, BUT, OR, which are used to connect units (nouns, phrases, gerunds, and clauses) of equal status and function. The other conjunctions, BECAUSE, IF, ALTHOUGH, AS, connect a subordinate clause to its superordinate clause, as in “We did it BECAUSE he told us to.”

Generally don’t begin sentences with conjunctions- *however* is better than *but* for this, but it goes best after semicolons. Or use the adverb *instead*.

Correlative expressions such as *either/or*, *neither/nor*, *both/and*, *not only/but also* and *not/but* should all correlate ideas expressed with the same grammatical construction.

Special care has to be taken with clauses: only clauses of the same kind can be joined with a conjunction. Similarly, a phrase cannot be joined to a clause.

American usage is extremely fastidious in making constructions parallel, and this is another one of the common tricks in the Sentence Correction questions. Keep a lookout for conjunctions and lists, and you will be able to catch these errors.

## 2.9 Helpful Topics

### 2.9.1 Punctuation

Punctuation is the practice in writing of using a set of marks to regulate texts and clarify their meanings, mainly by separating or linking words, phrases and clauses. Currently, punctuation is not used as heavily as in the past. Punctuation styles vary from individual, newspaper to newspaper and press to press, in terms of what they consider necessary.

Improper punctuation can create ambiguities or misunderstandings in writing, especially when the comma is misused. For example, consider the following examples:

“They did not go, because they were lazy.” In this case, the people in question did not go for one reason: “because they were lazy.” But consider the sentence again:

“They did not go because they were lazy.” In this case, without the comma, the people probably DID go, but not because they were lazy, for some other reason (they did not go because they were lazy, they went because they were tired).

#### Periods and Commas

- (1) **Periods and Commas:** the most common form of punctuation. The period ends a sentence, whereas the comma marks out associated words within sentences. Commas are used for pauses, prepositional phrases, and appositive clauses offset from the rest of the sentence to rename a proper noun (Thomas, a baker,); they are the rest stop in English language.
- (2) **Colons, Semicolons, and Dashes (or Hypens):** Many people avoid the use of colon and semicolon, because of uncertainty as to their precise uses. In less formal writing, the dash is often used to take the place of both the colon and the semi-colon. The rule is that both colons and semicolons must follow a complete independent clause. A semicolon must be followed by another complete clause, either dependent or independent. A colon may be followed by a list or phrase, or by a complete clause.
  - The APOSTROPHE (') used to show possession. the books' but Thomas's books
  - The COLON (:) is normally used in a sentence to lead from one idea to its consequences or logical continuation. The colon is used to lead from one thought to another.
  - The SEMICOLON (;) is normally used to link two parallel statements.



- Consider the following examples:
  - COLON: “There was no truth in the accusation: they rejected it utterly.”
    - \* Points to a cause/effect relationship, as a result of ...
  - SEMICOLON: “There was no truth in the accusation; it was totally false.” (Here two parallel statements are linked “no truth” and “totally false”. In the COLON example, the consequence is stated after the insertion of the colon).
    - \* Re-states initial premise, creates relation between disparate parts
    - \* Technically these sentences could be broken down into two separate sentences and they would remain grammatically sound. But two sentences here would suggest separateness (which in speech the voice would convey with a longer pause) that is not always appropriate.
- HYPHENS or DASHES: The hyphen or dash is perhaps most important in order to avoid ambiguity, and is used to link words. Consider the following example:
  - “Fifty-odd people” and “Fifty odd people”. When the hyphen is used, the passage means “approximately fifty people.” But the second passage means “fifty strange people”.

Otherwise, the use of the hyphen is declining. It was formerly used to separate vowels (co-ordinate, make-up), but this practice is disappearing.

For example:

House plant → house-plant → houseplant

## 2.9.2 List of Irregular Verbs

To correctly use the verbs in different tense forms, please study the list carefully.

<b>Base Form</b>	<b>Past Tense</b>	<b>Past Participle</b>
Awake	Awaked; awoke	Awaked; awoken
Be	Was/Were	Been
Beat	Beat	Beat; beaten
Become	Became	Become
Begin	Began	Begun
Bend	Bent	Bent
Bite	Bit	Bitten
Bleed	Bled	Bled
Blow	Blew	Blown
Break	Broke	Broken
Bring	Brought	Brought
Build	Built	Built
Burst	Burst	Burst
Buy	Bought	Bought
Catch	Caught	Caught
Choose	Chose	Chosen
Come	Came	Come
Cost	Cost	Cost
Cut	Cut	Cut
Deal	Dealt	Dealt
Dig	Dug	Dug
Dive	Dived; dove	Dived
Do	Did	Done
Draw	Drew	Drawn
Dream	Dreamed; dreamt	Dreamed; dreamt
Drink	Drank	Drunk

<b>Base Form</b>	<b>Past Tense</b>	<b>Past Participle</b>
Drive	Drove	Driven
Eat	Ate	Eaten
Fall	Fell	Fallen
Feed	Fed	Fed
Feel	Felt	Felt
Fight	Fought	Fought
Find	Found	Found
Fit	Fitted; fit	Fitted; fit
Fly	Flew	Flown
Forget	Forgot	Forgotten
Freeze	Froze	Frozen
Get	Got	Gotten; got
Give	Gave	Given
Go	Went	Gone
Grow	Grew	Grown
Hang (an object)	Hung	Hung
Hang (a person)	Hanged	Hanged
Hear	Heard	Heard
Hide	Hid	Hidden; hid
Hit	Hit	Hit
Hold	Held	Held
Hurt	Hurt	Hurt
Keep	Kept	Kept
Kneel	Knelt; kneeled	Knelt; kneeled
Knit	Knit; knitted	Knit; knitted
Know	Knew	Known
Lay (put down)	Laid	Laid
Lead	Led	Led
Lean	Leaned	Leaned
Leave	Left	Left
Lend	Lent	Lent
Let	Let	Let
Lie (recline)	Lay	Lain
Light	Lighted; lit	Lighted; lit
Lose	Lost	Lost
Make	Made	Made
Mean	Meant	Meant
Meet	Met	Met
Pay	Paid	Paid
Prove	Proved	Proved; proven
Put	Put	Put
Quit	Quit; quitted	Quit; quitted
Read	Read	Read
Rid	Rid; ridden	Rid; ridden
Ride	Rode	Ridden
Ring	Rang	Rung
Run	Ran	Run
Say	Said	Said
See	Saw	Seen
Sell	Sold	Sold
Send	Sent	Sent
Set	Set	Set
Shake	Shook	Shaken
Shine	Shone; shined (polish)	Shone; shined (polish)

<b>Base Form</b>	<b>Past Tense</b>	<b>Past Participle</b>
Shoot	Shot	Shot
Show	Showed	Showed; shown
Shrink	Shrank	Shrunk
Shut	Shut	Shut
Sit	Sat	Sat
Sleep	Slept	Slept
Slide	Slid	Slid
Speak	Spoke	Spoken
Speed	Sped; speeded	Sped; speeded
Spend	Spent	Spent
Spin	Spun	Spun
Spring	Sprang	Sprung
Stand	Stood	Stood
Steal	Stole	Stolen
Stick	Stuck	Stuck
Sting	Stung	Stung
Strike	Struck	Struck; stricken
Swear	Swore	Sworn
Swim	Swam	Swum
Swing	Swung	Swung
Take	Took	Taken
Teach	Taught	Taught
Tear	Tore	Torn
Tell	Told	Told
Think	Thought	Thought
Throw	Threw	Thrown
Wake	Waked; woke	Waked; woken
Wear	Wore	Worn
Win	Won	Won
Wring	Wrung	Wrung
Write	Wrote	Written

### 2.9.3 Words Frequently Confused

The following words are often misused, even by experienced writers:

adverse, averse

anomaly, analogy

affect, effect

apposite, opposite

affluent, effluent

appraise, apprise

allusion, illusion, delusion

ascent, assent, accent

alternate, alternative

belated, elated

beneficent, benevolent

biannual, biennial

censer, censor, censure

colloquy, obloquy

complement, compliment

contemptuous, contemptible

continual, continuous, contiguous

credible, credulous

decry, descry

deduce, deduct

deficient, defective

denote, connote

deprecate, depreciate

dependent, dependant

derisive, derisory

devolve, evolve

digress, regress

disburse, disperse

discrete, discreet

disquisition, inquisition

economic, economical

edible, eatable

efficient, effectual, effective

eject, inject

elusive, illusive

erotic, exotic

erupt, disrupt

euphony, cacophony

fallacious, fallible

fictitious, factitious

further, farther

historic, historical

hoard, horde

homogenous, homogeneous

human, humane

hypercritical, hypocritical

inchoate, chaotic

induce, indict

ineligible, illegible	precipitate, precipitous
ingenious, ingenuous	precede, proceed
insidious, invidious	preclude, prelude
introspection, retrospection	prescribe, proscribe
judicial, judicious	principle, principal
lie, lay	raise, rise
lightening, lightning	reputed, imputed
luxurious, luxuriant	resource, recourse
monitory, monetary	salutary, salubrious
negligible, negligent	seasonal, seasonable
notable, notorious	spasmodic, sporadic
observance, observation	tacit, taciturn
obtrude, intrude	temporize, extemporize
ordinance, ordnance	tortuous, torturous
oral, aural	uninterested, disinterested
overt, covert	urban, urbane
perspicacious, perspicuous	veracious, voracious
	vocation, avocation

If you think you may not know the difference between any of these pairs, or would like to brush up on the meanings of any of these words, please ask your instructor to clarify them, or look them up in a dictionary before your test date.

*Student Notes:*

## 2.9.4 American vs. British Usage

American spelling often differs from British usage, but this is **not** one of the factors tested in the GMAT examination. Examples include:

- The use of *-or* instead of British *-our*, e.g., *color, harbor, favor*, and the use of *-er* for *-re*, e.g., *center, fiber, theater*.
- The final or internal *e* is dropped in *ax, acknowledgment, judgment, jewelry*. Other modifications include: *plow, wagon, check* (cheque), *pajamas, gray, mold, program, draft, marvelous, traveler*.
- The double *-ll* is retained in *skillful, fulfill, install*; the endings *-ise, -isation*, are written, *-ize, -zation*.

If such American spelling forms appear in the sentences for correction, no alternatives will be given, so that there is in fact no problem.

Some nouns have given rise to new usages, such as *service*, and this is acceptable in both American and British English. Others are not, e.g., *suspicion* for ‘suspect’. Again, the presence of other forms in the choices given will indicate whether this usage is to be considered non-standard or not. The word *loan* is used only as a noun in British English, but is an acceptable verb form in American English.

Standard American words frequently differ from their British equivalents -

<u>Frequently Used in America</u>	<u>Frequently Used in Britain</u>
<i>apartment</i>	flat
<i>boardwalk</i>	promenade
<i>bug</i>	insect
<i>drapes</i>	curtains
<i>elevator</i>	lift
<i>fall</i>	autumn
<i>fix a flat</i>	change a tire
<i>garbage can, ashcan</i>	dustbin
<i>gas</i>	petrol
<i>hardware store</i>	ironmonger's
<i>mad</i>	angry
<i>peek</i>	peer, glimpse
<i>pillow</i>	cushion
<i>pitcher</i>	jug
<i>railroad</i>	used as a verb
<i>round trip</i>	return trip
<i>salesgirl</i>	shop assistant
<i>sidewalk</i>	pavement
<i>sick</i>	ill, diseased
<i>smokestack</i>	chimney

There are many more of these, but as these are not ‘diction’ errors, no alternative version will be given among the multiple choice answers in the Sentence Correction section.

*Student Notes:*

## 2.9.5 Standard vs. Non-standard Usage

There are many American expressions that do not meet standard requirements; most of these are easily recognized, but some may raise doubts. As a general rule, *kind of* and *sort of* are to be avoided altogether:

I was *sort of* hurt by that.

If used adjectivally - and this would be possible - *kind of* does not have an article:

I thought I saw you with some *kind of* food.

The expression *those (these) kind of things* is particularly offensive, since *kind* and *sort* are singular and would properly be preceded by *that* or *this*. Similarly, the ending *-s* should never be attached to compounds of *-where*, e.g., *somewhere*. The *-s* ending is, however to be found in the compounds of *-ways*, e.g., *always*, *sideways*, *longways*, *lengthways*, but *anyways* and *ways* are nonstandard forms, as are *someway*, *noway* and *nohow*. Nonstandard also are the expressions *can't seem to*, for ‘seem unable to’ and *go to*, meaning ‘intend’. *Any* should not be used adverbially:

**Wrong:** I don't think I hurt him *any*.

The correct expression is *at all*.

Adjectives should not be used as adverbs:

**Wrong:** We agreed on the specifics *some*; (use *some* for ‘somewhat’)

**Wrong:** I thought my plan would *sure* succeed; (use *sure* for ‘surely’, ‘certainly’.)

**Wrong:** I noticed a guy who was *real* cute standing outside; (use *real* for ‘really’.)

Non-standard usages would include verbs used as nouns, as in *eats* or *invite* (invitation), prepositions used in conjunctions, or *without* for ‘unless’:

**Wrong:** I won't come along *without* you apologize.

or *on account* for ‘because’:

**Wrong:** I liked him *on account* he made me toys and things.

*All* should not be followed by *of* unless a pronoun follows:

I hate *all those people*.

I hate *all of you!*

Other nonstandard expressions include:

<u>Nonstandard</u>	<u>Standard</u>
<i>be at</i>	be
<i>both alike</i>	either 'both' or 'alike'
<i>bring</i>	take
<i>equally near</i>	equally
<i>have a loan of</i>	borrow
<i>have got</i>	have
<i>human</i>	human being
<i>in back of</i>	behind
<i>inside of</i>	within
<i>lose out</i>	lose
<i>no account, no good</i>	worthless
<i>no place</i>	nowhere
<i>nowhere near</i>	not nearly
<i>off of</i>	from or completely
<i>out loud</i>	aloud
<i>outside of</i>	outside or except
<i>over with</i>	ended
<i>over with</i>	over
<i>plenty, mighty</i>	very

*Student Notes:*



*Student Notes:*

## Chapter 3

# Sentence Correction

The Grammar Review in the previous section touches on nearly all of the flaws you are likely to encounter in Sentence Correction questions on the GMAT.

The Sentence Correction section tests your knowledge of written English grammar by asking you which of the five choices best expresses an idea or relationship. This section gives you a sentence that may or may not contain errors of grammar or usage. You must select either the answer that best corrects the sentence or the answer stating that the sentence is correct as is. The questions will require you to be familiar with the stylistic conventions and grammatical rules of standard written English and to demonstrate your ability to improve incorrect or ineffective expressions.

This section tests two broad aspects of language proficiency:

- Correct expression
- Effective expression
- Proper Diction

A correct sentence is grammatically correct and structurally sound. It conforms to all the rules of standard written English such as subject-verb agreement, verb tense consistency, modifier reference and position, idiomatic expressions and parallel construction.

In addition to being correct, a sentence needs to be effective. It should express an idea or relationship clearly and concisely, as well as grammatically. A best choice should have no superfluous words or unnecessarily complicated expressions. This does not mean that the shortest choice is always the best answer. Proper diction is another important part of effectiveness. It refers to the standard dictionary meanings of words and the appropriateness of words in context. In evaluating the diction of a sentence, you must be able to recognize whether the words are well-selected, correctly presented, and suitable for the context.

One common error that test takers often make in the Sentence Correction section is choosing an answer that sounds good. Do not go on with your gut feeling in this section. Remember your grammar and look for errors in construction (e.g., noun-verb agreement) and eliminate answers that you are sure are incorrect.

## 3.1 How to Tackle

The following is a step by step process that you should follow to tackle Sentence Correction questions:

(1) **Read the whole sentence for structure and content.**

You have to understand the entire sentence to be able to pick the best choice later. You should read the sentence for meaning as well as structure. Two questions you should ask yourself are:

- What is the author trying to say?  
Some answers to GMAT questions are grammatically correct but change the meaning of the sentence. Such answers are wrong.
- What is the structure of the sentence?  
As you read the sentence, try to identify the subject and verb, prepositions, conjunctions, and participles. These parts of speech are associated with the common errors found in Sentence Correction questions. You won't have to identify the grammatical function of each word, phrase and clause in the sentence, but please just be familiar with the common errors and watch for **signals** (which we will discuss later) that the question is testing a specific error.

(2) **Try to predict the correct answer.**

You may already have an idea of how to correct the sentence. Before you plunge into the answers for the question, try to predict what the correct answer is going to be.

For example, in the sentence “Shelly have three items in her pocket,” the correct answer choice is likely to contain the verb “has”.

While your ability to predict the correct answer will improve with practice, you will not be able to correctly predict the correct answer choice all the time.

(3) **Don't read the first answer choice.**

Reading the first answer choice is **always** a waste of your time. You have already read it in the original sentence! The first answer choice is **always** the same as the underlined portion of the original sentence.

Remember that 1 of 5 Sentence Correction questions contain no error. If you think that the original sentence is correct, then go ahead and scan through answers 2-5, but do not become flustered if none of the answers are correct. After all **20% of the Sentence Correction problems need no correction.**

(4) **Scan through the answer choices.**

Each Sentence Correction problem in the GMAT is created usually with two or three different possible errors where you have to pay attention. The various combinations of these possible errors result in the options you are given.

If you have predicted the correct answer, you need only to identify the choice which matches your prediction. Sometimes you will find an exact match, but more often you will be able to narrow the answer choices to two or three.

If you were not able to predict the correct answer, look for evidence in the answer choices to determine what is being tested by the question in order to pick the best answer. For example, if more than one answer choice is similar except for a few words, your investigation should begin with the answers that are similar.

When you have found the parts of the sentence being varied, look for evidence in the remaining part of the sentence to determine which option to choose. Start with whatever is dictated by the unchanging part of the sentence. For example, if a verb is provided in singular and plural forms, find the subject of the sentence.

(5) **Eliminate wrong answers.**

By now, you should have an idea of what answers are grammatically or stylistically incorrect. Eliminate these answers and focus on the differences among the remaining choices.

(6) **Read your choice back into the sentence.**

Remember that the GMAT test-writers will often create answer choices which are grammatically correct, but either change the meaning of the sentence or are not stylistically the best answer. Since the GMAT tests not only grammar but also efficiency and effectiveness of communication, you have to look for redundancy, ambiguity, and uncommon or confusing expressions.

Reading your choice back into the sentence will help you decide which answer communicates the meaning of the sentence most effectively and prevent you from making careless errors.

## 3.2 Special Advice

Sentence Correction accounts for 13-16 of the 41 questions in the verbal section of the GMAT. While you have an average of almost 2 minutes to answer each question on the verbal section, we recommend that you spend less time on each Sentence Correction question. **In fact, we recommend that you should practice getting your speed down to one minute or less!**

Answering Sentence Correction questions rapidly will allow you to “bank” time in the verbal section that you can use to concentrate on a difficult reading comprehension passage or to focus on a challenging critical reasoning question. Remember that the verbal section is the last section on the GMAT, and your endurance is likely to be fading at this point in the test. You may find that you need a few moments of the additional time you have saved to recover your energy to push through to the last question.

The Sentence Correction questions in the GMAT have several types of errors, most of which reoccur frequently throughout this section of the test. A close and thorough study of Manhattan Review’s Grammar Review will help you rapidly identify and correct these errors. We often recommend to students who are pressed for preparation time that they spend the lion’s share of their studies on Sentence Correction. The time you spend concentrating on Sentence Correction and practicing spotting the common errors quickly is among the most productive time you may spend studying for the GMAT.

While trying to answer each question correctly in such a short amount of time may seem daunting, practicing the steps outlined earlier will help you answer the questions efficiently, effectively and most important, correctly.

*Student Notes:*

### 3.3 Common Errors and Tested Topics

#### 3.3.1 Misplaced Modifiers (and Dangling Participles)

Modifiers are phrases that modify another part of the sentence. In order to be correct, the modifying phrase must be as close as possible to what it modifies. For example:

*Disgusting and pus-filled*, Enrico nursed his festering wound.

In this example it sounds as if Enrico is disgusting and pus-filled, rather than his wound. As soon as you read this sentence, you should immediately realize that the correct answer choice will place *disgusting and pus-filled* as close as possible to wound. To wit:

Enrico nursed his *disgusting and pus-filled* festering wound.

#### Signals

- An introductory phrase is a common signal of a Misplaced Modifier.
- Any modifying phrase which is not close to what it modifies may also indicate this error.

#### Another example

Career switchers often schedule interviews with high-level managers, believing that the insight of professionals will help narrow down the many choices of careers available to graduating MBAs.

- (A) Career switchers often schedule interviews with high-level managers, believing that the insight of professionals will help narrow down the many choices of careers available to graduating MBAs
- (B) Career switchers, believing that the insight of professionals will help narrow down the many choices of careers available to graduating MBAs, often schedule interviews with high-level managers
- (C) Career switchers believing that scheduling interviews with the insight of high-level professional managers will help narrow down the many choices of careers available to graduating MBAs
- (D) Career switchers, believing that interviews with high-level managers whose insight will help narrow down the many choices of careers available to graduating MBAs, often schedule them
- (E) Career switchers often schedule interviews to narrow down the many choices of careers available to graduating MBAs, believing that the insight of professionals with high-level managers will help them

### 3.3.2 Agreement (Concord)

A very common Sentence Correction error centers on the agreement between the subject of a sentence and the verb. The subject and verb must agree in number, that is, a plural verb must have a plural subject and a singular verb must have a singular subject.

This is particularly important with *of* constructions:

A *flock* of birds, flying south for the winter, *was* above us.

Another example:

My *group* of fourth graders *are* so well behaved.

The singular subject group demands the singular verb *is*. Thus the corrected sentence should read:

My *group* of fourth graders *is* so well behaved.

If the verb is inverted, care must be taken to find the subject:

I journeyed to the graveyard *where once stood my father's tomb*.

Agreement is based on formal grammar, and plurals do not depend on meaning but on the grammatical relationships between words. Two single subjects joined by *and* take a plural verb, but an addition in parentheses, such as *as well as*, *not to mention*, takes a singular verb.

#### Signals

- Collective nouns such as team, audience, staff, family, public or committee are singular.
- An intervening phrase which separates the noun from the verb is used to confuse the unwary test-taker.
- A sentence structure with the verb before the subject may indicate an Agreement error.
- A conjunction such as *and*; *either/or*; *neither/nor*, can be used as a trap.

### 3.3.3 Tense

Many GMAT questions center upon the relationships between tenses. While the tenses in a sentence do not have to be the same, they must relate to each other in a way that makes the sequence of actions clear to the reader. The term sequence of tenses refers to the rules which govern how we alter verb tenses to make clear that all events, past, present or future, are not simultaneous.

As soon as I *hear* the dog bark, I *knew* you *were* at the door.

The above sentence sets forth a likely condition anticipated by the speaker. The use of the past tense is incorrect. The sentence may be corrected thus:

As soon as I *hear* the dog bark, I *will* know you *are* at the door.

In the above example, the future tense makes clear that the dog's barking is anticipated by the speaker.

Errors in sequence of tenses often occur with the perfect tenses, all of which are formed by adding an auxiliary or auxiliaries to the past participle, the third principal part.

Some common auxiliaries are "had", "has", and "have". They are used with the past participle to form perfect tenses.

Unfortunately, the rules governing sequence of tenses are a bit of a jumble. Often you will have to rely on your ear and common sense to guide you with these questions. But below are some guidelines you can use in order to sort out what the correct sentence should look like.

- In complex sentences, the tense of the verb in the main clause governs the tenses of the verbs in subsequent or dependent clauses.

Tense in Main Clause	Purpose of Dependent Clause	Tense In Dependent Clause	Example
<b>Present</b>	To show same-time action	Simple Present	<b>I am eager to go for a walk because I enjoy exercise.</b>
-	To show earlier action	Simple Past	<b>He feels that she made a mistake last year.</b>
-	To show a period of time extending from some point in the past to the present	Present Perfect	<b>The congregation believes that it has selected a suitable preacher.</b>
-	To show action to come	Future	<b>My teacher says that he will grade the test next week.</b>
<b>Simple Past</b>	To show another completed past action	Simple Past	<b>She cooked the salmon because she knew it was fresh.</b>
-	To show an earlier action	Past Perfect	<b>He cooked the salmon well because he had attended culinary school.</b>
-	To state a general truth	Simple Present	<b>Copernicus believed that the universe is like a giant clock.</b>
<b>Present Perfect</b>	To show an earlier action	Simple Past	<b>The lawyer has handled many cases since he passed the bar.</b>
-	To show action happening at the same time	Present Perfect	<b>She has grown a foot because she has taken steroids.</b>
<b>Past Perfect</b>	For any purpose	Simple Past	<b>The bird had flown for miles before it landed.</b>
<b>Future</b>	To show action happening at the same time	Simple Present	<b>I will be a senator if they vote for me.</b>
-	To show an earlier action	Simple Past	<b>You will go to the concert if you waited in line.</b>
-	To show future action earlier than the action of the independent clause	Present Perfect	<b>My grandmother will finish the puzzle soon if her dog has not eaten the pieces.</b>
<b>Future Perfect</b>	For any purpose	Simple Present or Present Perfect	<b>The factory will have produced many widgets long before it closes. The factory will have produced many widgets long before it has closed.</b>

Do not confuse the present perfect (“has walked”) and the past perfect (“had walked”). While both verbs convey past action, the present perfect is actually a present tense verb.

The future tense makes clear that the dog’s barking is anticipated by the speaker.

### Signals

- Several actions occurring in different time frames.
- Multiple tenses.

### Another example

When he phones her, she tells him to stop calling, but he acted as if he had not understood her.

- (A) she tells him to stop calling, but he acted as if he had not understood her.
- (B) she told him to stop calling, but he acted as if he had not understood her.
- (C) she tells him to stop calling, but he acts as if he did not understand her.
- (D) she tells him to stop calling, but he acts as if he has not understood her.
- (E) she tells him to stop calling, but he acted as if he does not understand her.



### 3.3.4 Faulty Parallelism

Parallelism is the most mathematical of the errors tested on the GMAT. Just as the expressions on each side of an algebraic equation must be equivalent, so too must the parts of speech on either side of a conjunction be the same. By thinking about a conjunction in a sentence as an equal sign, you can identify and correct this error.

For example:

Which do you like best, *to swim, a drive, or jogging?*

Predicting the correct answer for these types of errors presents some difficulty as often there is more than one way of restating the sentence correctly. For example the previous sentence may be corrected in three different ways:

Which do you like best, *to swim, to drive, or to jog?* Which do you like best, *a swim, a drive, or a jog?* Which do you like best, *swimming, driving, or jogging?*

Any of the above is correct as long as the words or phrases connected by the conjunction *or* are the same part of speech.

#### Signals

- Items in a list.
- Long phrases or clauses connected by a conjunction.

#### Another example

Our firm is best suited to undertake the project because we have the financial wherewithal, vast experience undertaking similar projects, and can use our large employee base - all of which is necessary to complete the work on-time and under-budget.

- (A) the financial wherewithal, vast experience undertaking similar projects, and can use our large employee base - all of which is necessary
- (B) the financial wherewithal, vast experience undertaking similar projects, and a large employee base - all necessary
- (C) the financial wherewithal, vast experience undertaking similar projects, and a large employee base - all of whom are necessary
- (D) the financial wherewithal, vast experience undertaking similar projects, and can use our large employee base necessary
- (E) the financial wherewithal, vast experience undertaking similar projects, and can use our large employee base since they are necessary

### 3.3.5 Comparisons

Comparisons are a first cousin of Parallelism. Frequently a sentence with a comparison will appear at first glance to be correct but will actually compare two or more elements which are not expressed in similar form. For example:

The judge of the baking contest liked *the pastry* Sally made better than *Bob*.

In this sentence, the judge is evaluating the comparative merits of Sally's pastry and Bob himself. Put it in another way, he is comparing Sally's pastry to Bob, rather than comparing Sally's pastry to Bob's pastry. The correct way of expressing the idea is thus:

The judge of the baking contest liked *Sally's pastry* better than *Bob's*.

#### Signals

- Key words such as than, like, unlike, as, compared to, more than, and less than should alert you to check what is being compared in the sentence.

#### Another example

Unlike its competitors, Globex and MondoCorp, the revenues of Galactic Enterprises increased by cornering the widget market in the fourth quarter, thus making Galactic Enterprises the world's most profitable company and a darling of Wall Street.

- (A) its competitors, Globex and MondoCorp, the revenues of Galactic Enterprises increased by cornering the widget market in the fourth quarter, thus making
- (B) Globex and MondoCorp, its competitors, the revenues of Galactic Enterprises increased by cornering the widget market in the fourth quarter, thus making
- (C) its competitors, Globex and MondoCorp, Galactic Enterprises increased its revenues by cornering the widget market in the fourth quarter, by making
- (D) Globex and MondoCorp, its competitors, Galactic Enterprises increased its revenues by cornering the widget market in the fourth quarter, thus making
- (E) its competitors, Globex and MondoCorp, the revenues of Galactic Enterprises cornered the widget market in the fourth quarter, thus making

### 3.3.6 Pronoun Agreement & Reference

Errors regarding pronouns fall into two broad categories: agreement and reference.

#### Agreement

Pronouns must agree with their antecedents in person, number and gender. If the antecedent is third person singular male, then the pronoun must be third person singular male as well. For example:

In recent years, Fred has tried to lose *its* excess weight through numerous diets.

The correct sentence would read:

In recent years, Fred has tried to lose *his* excess weight through numerous diets.

#### Reference

Pronoun reference errors occur when ambiguity exists as to the antecedent of the pronoun. Additionally, the pronouns must clearly refer to only one antecedent. The sentence must leave no doubt in the reader's mind as to what the pronoun refers. Sentences with multiple nouns are a classic signal of a pronoun reference error.

The attorney argued that students who were denied the use of school facilities for political activities had lost *their* right of free assembly.

In the above sentence, the writer does not make clear to what *their* refers. It could refer to students, facilities or activities. The sentence must be constructed so that the reader has no doubt about the antecedent of the pronoun *their*:

The attorney argued that students lost their right of free assembly when they were denied the use of school facilities for political activities.

#### Signals

- Several nouns preceding a pronoun.

#### Another example

The *Federalist Papers* is a compilation of articles written by Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, as well as a few by John Jay, since each of them were advocates of the Constitution.

- (A) since each of them were
- (B) since they were each
- (C) since all of them were
- (D) each of which was
- (E) because all of the men were

### 3.3.7 Idioms, Usage, and Style

Sentence correction questions that revolve around idioms, usage and style generally test subtle errors in expression. Idiomatic expressions often have no basis in grammar or even logic but have been accepted into the language.

Especially for non-native speakers, some of the trickiest errors in this section are incorrect idioms. This includes using the wrong preposition with a verb, among many other things. Unfortunately, the only thing to do about this problem is practice, so do as many practice questions as possible and take note of any examples in which two different versions of an idiom are used. After you check your answers, make a list of the idioms you did not know and memorize them.

Native speakers often use idioms without thinking about the literal meaning of the words. For example:

We finished the rest of the tasks *in one fell swoop*.

The expression in *one fell swoop* makes little sense literally, but English speakers recognize it as meaning all at once.

Some conventions of Standard English may seem nit-picky, but you should familiarize yourself with some rules which are commonly tested. For example:

#### Wrong

When *compared to* Greg's ability to carry a tune, Marsha's musical skill is unimpressive.

The correct expression in this case is *compared with* because the items being compared are dissimilar: the relative musical abilities of Greg and Marsha. The construction using *compared with* points out the differences.

#### Correct

When *compared with* Greg's ability to carry a tune, Marsha's musical skill is unimpressive.

Use *compared to* when illustrating similarities. For example:

He *compared* his teacher *to* Bruce Greenwald, the esteemed professor famous for his Value Investing lectures at Columbia Business School.

May I *compare* thee *to* a summer's day? (Shakespeare, Sonnet 18)

In sum, *Compare to* is used when things are being likened. *Compare with* is used when the comparison is more specific and implies differences.

*Each . . . other* refer to **two** entities; where more than two are concerned, use *one . . . another*.

The two of them hated *each other* with a passion. The four of us looked at *one another* and laughed.

*Student Notes:*

### 3.3.7.1 GMAT Idiom List

**a lot** – The proper form is two words, not *alot*.

**agree on** – must be followed by the *-ing* form of a verb.

**an instance of** – is different in meaning from *an example of*. An *example* is one of a number of things while an *instance* is an *example* which proves or illustrates. People may be *examples* but never *instances*.

**as vs. than** – The words are not interchangeable. Use *as* for comparisons of similarity or equality and *than* for comparisons of degree or difference. Always use *than* with the comparative (*-er*) form of an adjective.

**as good as or better than** – is a cliché and should be avoided. Do not telescope a comparison of similarity - *as* with a comparison of degree - *than*. A better construction is to break the juxtaposition up into separate thoughts.

**as ... as** – is a grammatical way of expressing similarity: he is *as* tall *as* his sister.

**such ... as** – is grammatical when both words are used as prepositions in a comparison : *such* men *as* he. Avoid *as such* when meaning *in principle*.

**based on** – The phrasal verb *based on* is grammatical and can be used either actively or passively.

The style of her cooking is *based on* Southern cuisine.

She *bases* her thinking *on* sound logic.

**depends on whether** – The construction is generally accepted and is certainly preferable to *depends on if*.

His fate *depends on whether* the governor calls back in time.

**different from vs. different than (differ from)** – Although strict grammarians say that *from* is the correct word to use after *different*, many authorities believe that *than* may be used in order to avoid elaborate constructions. In contrast, the authorities agree that *from* is the correct word when used with *differ*.

He is a *different* man *than* he was in 1985. Compare to: He is a *different* man *from* the man that he was in 1985.

**Identical with/to** – *Identical* may be used with either preposition without changing the intended meaning.

**no less a ... than** – The expression is an accepted idiom meaning great or not less impressive.

**not only/but also** – *Not only* is **always** followed by *but also* in a sentence.

The subways in summer are *not only* hot, *but also* humid.

**regard as** – The verb *regard* may be used with *as* and either an adjective or a noun.

We *regard* George's ranting *as* silly. The tribe *regards* shaking hands *as* taboo.

Do not use *regard* with an infinitive or *being*: He is regarded to be an expert; He is regarded as being an expert.

**regardless** – The word is correct. *Irregardless* is non-standard usage.

**So ... as** – The comparative construction may only be used in questions and negative statements. Otherwise, use *as ... as*.

Your house is not *so* large *as* mine.

**So ...** – Avoid the use of the appealing *so* as an intensifier. The weather is *so* delightful. *Very* would be a better choice. Similarly, when using *so* with a part participle, consider using *much* or *well* to qualify.

The car was *so much* damaged that it was not drivable.

Mary is *so well* suited to be an attorney.

### 3.3.7.2 Words Frequently Misused

**Aggravate/annoy** – *To aggravate* is to make a situation worse. *To annoy* is to irritate. In formal English, people cannot be aggravated, only annoyed.

When the Chairman of the Federal Reserve lowered interest rates, he *aggravated* the flailing economy and *annoyed* many Wall Street bankers.

**Ago/since** – *Ago* carries a thought from the present to the past. *Since* carries a thought from the past to the present.

It was twenty years *ago* that I first heard that song.

It has been twenty years *since* I first heard that song.

**Among/between** – Use *between* when comparing two items and *among* when comparing three or more

I was torn *between* studying finance and studying marketing.

After I was accepted into all three MBA programs, I had to choose *among* Harvard, Wharton and Columbia.

**Amount/number** – Use *amount* when referring to an uncountable noun and *number* when referring to a countable word.

There is a large *amount* of water in the ocean.

There are a large *number* of fish in the ocean.

**Fewer/less** – Use *fewer* when referring to a countable noun and *less* when referring to an uncountable noun. The usage of fewer/less is similar to amount/number.

The supermarket express lane is open to customers with ten items or *fewer*.

There is *less* rudeness at Dean and Deluca than at Fairway.

**Good/well** - When used as adjectives, good refers to morality or quality and well refers to health. However, only well can be used as adverb and good is always an adjective.

I feel *good* about my work. I feel *well*. I am *well*. I'm doing *well*. It is *good* to hear that you feel *well* today.

**Imply/infer** – *To imply* is to express a thought indirectly. *To infer* is to derive a conclusion indirectly.

While the politician never *implied* that he would raise taxes, the audience *inferred* that he would soon do so.

**Like/as** – Use *like* before a noun, or pronoun. Use *as* before a clause, adverb or prepositional phrase. *Like* is generally used as a preposition in such a context. *As* is generally used as an adverb while sometimes serving as a preposition with the meaning of “in the capacity of”.

My mother's cheesecake tastes *like* glue.

I love frozen pizza because there is no other snack *like* it.

My mother's cheesecake tastes great, *as* a mother's cheesecake should.

There are times, *as* now, that learning grammar becomes important.

He golfed well again, *as* in the tournament last year.

He served *as* Captain in the navy.

**Less than/under** – *Less than* is the correct expression when making a comparison of number or amount. *Under* is limited to describing spatial relationships.

I will host the party if the guest list is *less than* fifty people.

**More than/over** – *More than* is the correct expression when making a comparison of number or amount. *Over* is limited to describing spatial relationships.

We processed *more than* 1,000 applications in one hour.

*Student Notes:*

### 3.4 What to Do If You Are Completely Stumped

Sometimes you may find yourself with one or more answer choices which seem to be correct. If you have followed Manhattan Review's six-step process for Sentence Correction and still find yourself to be lost, take a step back and think about the answer choices.

#### **Read the answers back into the sentence, again**

- You should have already done this, but if you are still stumped, do it again. Remember that a correct answer retains the meaning of the original sentence. You may be analyzing an answer choice which changes the idea which the author wished to convey. Make sure that word order has not been switched in the answer to suggest a different meaning.

#### **Shorter is better**

- Wordy or long-winded ways of expressing thoughts are often not the best means of expression. Sometimes the best answer is the one with the fewest words.

#### **Eliminate answers with passive voice**

- You will seldom encounter a correct answer that employs the use of the passive voice. While use of the passive voice is not in and of itself grammatically incorrect, expressing an idea actively is preferable. Given the choice between The ball was hit by me and I hit the ball, the latter is the better choice.

#### **Avoid redundancy**

- The best answer should be clear and concise. An answer which repeats elements of the sentence unnecessarily is incorrect.

#### **Don't choose the answer with being**

- Don't choose such answer if there are options which don't include the word being. Unless you are positive that being is a necessary and useful part of the sentence, it is probably just confusing the issue and is better left out.

If you review the rules discussed in the Grammar Review section and follow the six-steps for Sentence Correction questions, you should have little trouble identifying the best answer among your choices.

## 3.5 Detailed List of Typical Errors

Based on our close examination of all the Sentence Correction problems in the Official Guides and released old exams, we compiled the following list for your easy reference.

**TIP: PLEASE FOCUS YOUR INITIAL ATTENTION ON BASIC GRAMMAR ELEMENTS ONLY - SUBJECT, VERB AND OBJECT.** Then examine the sentence in detail. That way you will not get bogged down by verbiage.

### Goal I: Effectiveness of the Language

To achieve conciseness & clarity in a sentence, you should pick the choices that contain:

- a. No wordiness or fragment
- b. No redundancy  
Example: the remarkable growth in increased revenue
- c. No ambiguous double negative meanings
- d. No possibility for multiple interpretations of the sentence
- e. No change in meaning or intent

Also, be suspicious of any answer choice containing:

- “being”
- “thing”

### Goal II: Correctness of the Language

#### 3.5.1 Modifiers

**Be aware:**

- a. A participle at the start of a sentence must modify the subject of the sentence. Otherwise, it is a dangling participle.

#### Wrong

Having read the book, there is no question the book is better than the film.

#### Correct

Having read the book, I have no doubt that the book is better than the film.

**Also please pay attention to:**

- b. Misplaced modifying clause.

#### Wrong

Whether baked or mashed, Tom loves potatoes.



**Correct**

Tom loves potatoes, whether baked or mashed.

**c. Ambiguous modifying clause****Example**

People who jog frequently develop knee problems.

To eliminate ambiguity, you can change it to:

People develop knee problems if they jog frequently.

Or

People frequently develop knee problems if they jog.

**d. Proximity between the modifier and the modified object**

Limiting modifiers (*just, only, hardly, almost*) must be used immediately before what they modify:

**Wrong**

The priest only sees children on Tuesdays between 4pm and 6pm.

**Correct depending on meaning**

The priest sees only children on Tuesdays between 4pm and 6pm.

-or-

The priest sees children only on Tuesdays between 4pm and 6pm.

-or-

The priest sees children on Tuesdays only between 4pm and 6pm.

**e. Correct use of *that* vs *which* modifying clauses**

As relative pronouns the two words “*that*” and “*which*” are often interchangeable:

The house *that/which* stands on the hill is up for sale.

The school *that/which* they go to is just around the corner.

(When *that* or *which* is the object of a following verb, it can be omitted altogether, as in The school they go to . . .)

When the relative clause adds incidental (non-essential) information rather than identifying the noun it follows, *which* is used and is preceded by a comma:

The house, *which* stands on the hill, is up for sale.

It means:

The house is up for sale. It happens to be on the hill.

When the relative clause identifies the noun it follows with essential information rather than adding incremental information, *that* is used without a comma:

The house *that* stands on the hill is up for sale.

It implies:

The house on the hill is up for sale. Not the house on the lake.

In other words, you can remove *which* from the sentence without affecting the meaning, while you have to keep *that* in the sentence to understand it fully.

**f. Correct usage of the modifier, such as “little” vs. “few”****g. Difference between adjective and adverb as modifiers**

### 3.5.2 Agreement

In grammar, Concord (also known as Agreement) refers to the relationship between units in such matters as number, person, and gender. Consider the following examples:

- “THEY did the work THEMSELVES” (number and person concord between THEY and THEMSELVES).
- “HE did the work HIMSELF” (number, person and gender concord between HE and HIMSELF).
- If there is no agreement, then grammatical errors occur. Consider the following example:  
“The apples is on the table.” (Apples is plural; therefore, for concord to occur, the sentence should read: “The apples are on the table.”)

**A) Number and Person Concord:** In Standard English, number concord is most significant between a singular and plural subject and its verb in the third person of the simple present tense:

“That book seems interesting” (singular BOOK agreeing with SEEMS), and

“Those books seem interesting” (plural BOOKS agreeing with SEEM).

Number concord requires that two related units must always both be singular or both be plural.

Both number and person concord are involved in the use of pronouns and possessives, as in “I hurt MYself,” and “MY friends said THEY WERE COMING in THEIR car.”

**B) Gender Concord:** Gender concord is an important part of the grammar of languages like German and French. In English, gender concord does not exist apart from personal and possessive pronouns, such as “Elizabeth injured HERself badly in the accident,” and “Thomas lost HIS glasses.” These errors are generally couched in a longer sentence, so the test taker is distracted and misses the simple error.

**C) Subject-Verb Agreement:** The easiest kind of trick the GMAT will pull is to give you subjects and verbs that do not agree in time or in number.

TIP: One of the things you always have to look out for is that the GMAT will throw in lots of extra words to confuse you about what subject the verb is referring to.

#### Example

Although the sting of brown honey locusts are rarely fatal, they cause painful flesh wounds.

#### Please remember:

**a. Certain words ending in “s” such as “Diabetes” and “News” are singular.**

Other examples include:

two hundred dollars  
five hundred miles  
United States

**b. Compound subject is plural.** Exception: “Romeo and Juliet” is a singular noun when it is referred to as a play.

**c. “Each” and “Everyone” are singular.**

**d. Collective nouns are singular.**

Common examples include group, audience, etc.

Note that if the subject of a sentence is an entire phrase or clause, you should use a singular verb, regardless of the plural words inside this phrase or clause.

**Example**

Networking with professionals certainly helps a lot when you first start your career.

**e. Indefinite Pronouns are singular.**

Examples: each, either, anything, everything, nothing, anyone, everyone, no one, neither, anybody, everybody, nobody

**f. No verb should be missing in a sentence.****g. Subject and verb should ALWAYS be in agreement.**

<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
The number of _____ together with _____ (as well as, combined with, etc)	A number of _____ and _____
_____ or _____ _____ nor _____ (verb agrees with nearer subject)	
none, all, any, some (depends on context; pay attention to the object after “of”)	
majority, minority (depends on context)	
(Singular when referring to the total group; plural when referred to many individual members of the group)	

**3.5.3 Verb Tense, Voice & Mood**

Please remember to avoid:

- a. Inconsistent tense
- b. Passive voice
- c. Incorrect use of verbs in the subjunctive mood

**3.5.4 Parallelism**

Please pay attention to the inconsistent use of:

- a. Clauses
- b. Phrases (verb phrases, noun phrases, prepositional phrases, adjective phrases, etc.)
- c. Gerunds
- d. Infinitives (If an infinitive is repeated once in a list, it must be repeated each time.)

**Wrong**

I like to jog, swim and to run.

**Correct**

I like to jog, to swim and to run.

(Occasionally acceptable: I like to jog, swim and run.)

**3.5.5 Comparisons**

Please pay attention to the use of:

- a. *Like vs. As vs. Such As*
- b. *As Old As vs. Older Than*
- c. Illogical Comparison
- d. Ambiguous Comparison

**3.5.6 Pronoun Agreement & Reference**

Please remember:

- a. Antecedent and pronoun should be in agreement.
- b. No ambiguity with antecedent
- c. No missing antecedent
- d. Use of the relative pronoun should be correct
  - Which is for things only; Who/Whom for people only
  - Who vs Whom – nominative vs. objective case forms.
  - They/them is not correct as a singular pronoun, nor is it correct as a pronoun with no antecedent.

**3.5.7 Idioms, Usage and Style**

Here are some selected examples of common words and phrases tested on the GMAT.

From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

The same to \_\_\_\_\_ as to \_\_\_\_\_

No less \_\_\_\_\_ than \_\_\_\_\_

The more \_\_\_\_\_ the greater \_\_\_\_\_

Better served by \_\_\_\_\_ than by \_\_\_\_\_

Not only \_\_\_\_\_ but also \_\_\_\_\_

Both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Different from \_\_\_\_\_ (not “than” or “to”)

Either \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

Neither \_\_\_\_\_ nor \_\_\_\_\_

Whether to do something or not

They do not know x or y (NOT x nor y)

Doubt that

At the urging of somebody

Between (2) vs Among (> 2)

Affect (verb) vs Effect (noun)

Assure (give an assurance) vs Ensure (make sure something happens) vs Insure (financially guarantee)

Equivalent in number (vs “as many as people”)

A number of (not “numbers of”)

Whether vs. If - “I had to decide whether”, not “I had to decide if”

Whether is typically used to introduce doubt regarding two equal possibilities or two alternatives.

We should try to have a dinner with them *whether* it’s snowing or not.

He wonders *whether* it’s worth the try.

She said she’d get here *whether* by train *or* by flight.

It is preferred to use “whether” over “if” when the word “if” is not used to signal a condition and instead takes the meaning of “whether”. This is particularly true with the GMAT. Using “whether” exclusively avoids the possible confusion between different possible meanings of “if”.

### **Wrong**

I don’t know *if* I am ready to take the test now and *if* I will ever be ready in the future.

### **Correct**

I don’t know *whether* I am ready to take the test now and *whether* I will ever be ready in the future.

“Despite” is not the same as “Although”. “Despite” means ‘with intention, in the face of an obstacle’.

### **Wrong**

Despite having 5% of the world’s population, the USA uses 30% of the world’s energy.

### **Correct**

Despite his poor education, he succeeded in becoming wealthy.

**Idiomatic Prepositions:**

based *on*

composed *by* meaning “created by” vs composed of meaning “made up of”

credit *with* (not credit to)

depend *on*

differ *with* (meaning “disagree with”) vs differ *from* (meaning “be different from”)

discourage *from* doing something/encourage to do something (from is a preposition here; to is the infinitive here)

prefer \_\_\_\_\_ *to* \_\_\_\_\_

prevent *from*

prohibit *from*

**Idiomatic Phrases Involving or Omitting “As”**

consider x y (not *to be* y)

defined *as*

depicted *as*

regard x *as* y

regarded *as*

think of x *as* y

view x *as* y

**Idiomatic Phrases Involving or Omitting the Infinitive “to”**

Help someone do something

Make someone do something

Enable someone to do something

Forbid x to do y

**Words Associated with Subjunctive Mood in “that” Clause**

Demand *that*

Mandate *that*

Request *that*

Require *that* something be (not are/is)

**Different Applications Involving “use”**

*Use* (verb):

I use a pencil to write.

*Used to* (*to* is the infinitive):

I used to teach every night.

*Be used to* something/doing something (*to* is preposition):

I am used to challenges.

I am used to being challenged.

***It + adjective***

After verbs such as *believe, consider, feel, find, think*, we can use *it + adjective* before a “that” clause or the infinitive.

I find *it* impulsive to talk to the CEO directly in an elevator without being introduced.

He felt *it* dreadful that his wife was diagnosed with anemia.

***Avoid Run-On Sentence***

A run-on sentence consists of two or more main clauses that are run together **without** proper punctuation. People often speak in run-on sentences, but they make pauses and change their tone so others can understand them. But in writing, we must break our sentences into shorter units so that all the readers can understand us.

**Wrong**

*It is nearly six o'clock we have not gone through all the practice problems yet.*

There are several acceptable ways to correct this:

- Insert a semicolon between the clauses:

*It is nearly six o'clock; we have not gone through all the practice problems yet.*

- Write the two clauses as two separate sentences:

*It is nearly six o'clock. We have not gone through all the practice problems yet.*

- Insert a comma and a conjunction between the clauses:

*It is nearly six o'clock, and we have not gone through all the practice problems yet.*

### 3.6 Useful Examples

Here are some examples of the types of questions you will be faced with in the Sentence Correction section.

Q1. Unlike Lee Ang whose films transcend ideology, Zhang Yi Mou is frequently dismissed with being merely a photographer for a visually impressive production with little meaning.

- (A) with merely being a photographer
- (B) as being a photographer merely
- (C) for being merely a photographer
- (D) as a mere photographer
- (E) merely for being a photographer

The problem with the sentence as it stands: dismissed with is not idiomatic, it should be dismissed as or dismissed for. These two idioms mean different things - you can be dismissed for something from a job, but by critics, etc. one is dismissed AS something.

This leaves you with choices B and D. B includes the word being, which automatically makes it suspect. Also, it is the longer choice, which makes it less likely to be correct. The adverb merely is placed very far away from the verb, causing an awkward construction.

This makes D a better choice.

\*D\* is correct.

Q2. Once almost covered under centuries of debris, skilled artisans have now restored some original famous paintings during the Italian Renaissance.

- (A) skilled artisans have now restored some original famous paintings during the Italian Renaissance.
- (B) some original famous paintings during the Italian Renaissance now have been by skillful artisans restored.
- (C) the restoration of some original famous paintings during the Italian Renaissance has been done by skilled artisans.
- (D) skilled artisans during the Italian Renaissance have now restored some original famous paintings.
- (E) some original famous paintings during the Italian Renaissance have now been restored by skilled artisans.

What was covered? Some original famous paintings. The rest are like certain garnishes in a cocktail.

With modifying phrases at the beginning of the sentence, just determine what is being modified and select the answer which places that item directly after the phrase. Which have the correct opening? \*B\* \*E\*

B needlessly separates subject from verb, creating a very awkward construction.

This makes \*E\* the better choice.



**Example**

Janowitz, as other writers in New York City, considered Woolf as one of the foremost female modernist literary figures of the twentieth century.

2 mistakes:

Like vs. As in the first part (Janowitz like other artists...)

The second “As” is unnecessary (consider as is not idiomatic).

**Another Example**

In many rural provinces, the so-called party leaders are more powerful, wealthy and wield more influence as any other illicit group.

2 mistakes:

For sake of parallelism, third item in the list should be an adjective, not a verb phrase

It should be “more than”, not “more as”.

Q3. With centuries of seasonal roaming in search of pasture for their herds or food and water, the Nomads still found the goal of a bawdy, prolonged adventure an elusive one.

- (A) With
- (B) Following
- (C) Despite
- (D) Having spent
- (E) As a result of

\*C\* is the best choice to indicate the emphasis of the Nomads’ unchanging mentality after all the journeys.

Q4. The uniformized set of characters, which some historians date in the late Qing dynasty, was the key to the sustainability and prosperity of the Chinese culture over thousands of years.

- (A) The uniformized set of characters, which some historians date
- (B) The uniformized set of characters, which some historians have thought to occur
- (C) Uniformizing the set of characters, dated by some historians at
- (D) The uniformization of a set of characters, thought by some historian to have occurred
- (E) The set of characters’ uniformization, dated by some historians to have been

Before we look at the answers, let’s answer the question: what is occurring? Historians are dating something. What are they dating? Not the uniformized set of characters itself, but the time when the characters became uniformized (the uniformization of the characters).

Therefore the correct answer must be \*D\*.

## **Chapter 6**

# **Home Study Guide - Official Guide (11th Edition) - Categorized**

## 6.1 Sentence Correction

### 6.1.1 By Tested Concepts - Verbal Guide

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Sentence Correction	Agreement	19
Sentence Correction	Agreement	24
Sentence Correction	Agreement	25
Sentence Correction	Agreement	29
Sentence Correction	Agreement	30
Sentence Correction	Agreement	35
Sentence Correction	Agreement	41
Sentence Correction	Agreement	44
Sentence Correction	Agreement	59
Sentence Correction	Agreement	72
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Sentence Correction	Diction	92
Sentence Correction	Diction/Redundancy	5
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Sentence Correction	Idiom	14
Sentence Correction	Idiom	17
Sentence Correction	Idiom	18
Sentence Correction	Idiom	20
Sentence Correction	Idiom	43
Sentence Correction	Idiom	48
Sentence Correction	Idiom	52
Sentence Correction	Idiom	53
Sentence Correction	Idiom	54
Sentence Correction	Idiom	56
Sentence Correction	Idiom	57
Sentence Correction	Idiom	69
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Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	42
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	45
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	46
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	63
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	67
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	68
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	79
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	86
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	87
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	91
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Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	110
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	112
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Sentence Correction	Parallelism	2
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	4
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	6
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	11
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	22
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	26
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	27
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	34
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	51
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	62
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	64
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	66
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	70
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	81
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### 6.1.2 By Sequence - Verbal Guide

<u>Training Set</u>	<u>Concepts</u>	<u>Problem No.</u>
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	1
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	2
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Sentence Correction	Diction/Redundancy	5
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Sentence Correction	Agreement/Idiom	8
Sentence Correction	Idiom	9
Sentence Correction	Usage/Style	10
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	11
Sentence Correction	Agreement	12
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Sentence Correction	Agreement	15
Sentence Correction	Agreement	16
Sentence Correction	Idiom	17
Sentence Correction	Idiom	18
Sentence Correction	Agreement	19
Sentence Correction	Idiom	20
Sentence Correction	Verb Errors	21
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	22
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Sentence Correction	Parallelism	27
Sentence Correction	Verb Errors	28
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Sentence Correction	Diction	31
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	32
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	33
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Sentence Correction	Idiom	43
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Sentence Correction	Pronoun/Idiom	58
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Sentence Correction	Usage/Style	61
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	62
Sentence Correction	Logical Predication	63
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	64
Sentence Correction	Verb Errors	65
Sentence Correction	Parallelism	66
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