

Prepare for {IELTS}

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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Complex noun phrases

DETERMINERS,
ADJECTIVES, RELATIVE
CLAUSES AND EXAMPLES

EXPLANATION

- In the IELTS Writing Test, it is important to make some of your sentences more complex.
- One of the easiest ways to do this is to make your **NOUNS** and **NOUN PHRASES** more complex.
- Understanding **COMPLEX NOUN PHRASES** will also help you in IELTS Reading (General and Academic). Texts often contain **COMPLEX NOUN PHRASES**.
- You can add **determiners, adjectives, relative clauses** and **examples** to make your **NOUN PHRASES** more complex.

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING DETERMINERS

- **Each and every / Every single** child deserves a decent education.
- As far as I am concerned, **all** children should wear a uniform.
- **The majority of** children actually want to learn.
- **Most of** my friends went to a state school.
- **Several of** the children in my class went on to study at prestigious universities.
- **A few** children might be disruptive in class, but this is quite unusual.
- **Few** schoolchildren enjoy doing homework.
- **Almost none of** the children in my school enjoyed Physics.
- **No** child should be expected to go to school hungry.

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING ADJECTIVES

- **The best/brightest schoolchildren** in the country need to be given every opportunity to shine.
- **Unmotivated/unwilling schoolchildren** clearly need support.
- **Hard-working and determined schoolchildren** usually succeed academically.
- **Schoolchildren** who are **academically gifted** should be educated separately from **those who** are **not quite as clever**.
- **Badly-behaved and poorly-disciplined schoolchildren** often respond well to one-to-one mentoring.

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING ADJECTIVES

- **Unusually/extremely quiet** schoolchildren may be lacking some of the essential social skills.
- **Reasonably bright** schoolchildren are likely to earn more as adults.
- **Significantly more intelligent** schoolchildren should be allowed to spend a large part of the school week studying on their own.
- **Academically-competent** schoolchildren have often benefitted from having **supportive** parents and a **stable** home environment.

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING RELATIVE CLAUSES

- Schoolchildren **who** are studying for their school-leaving exams
- Schoolchildren **who** would prefer to be outside in the playground
- Schoolchildren **who** are unlucky enough to have unmotivated and poorly-qualified teachers
- Schoolchildren **whose** parents desperately want them to succeed
- Schoolchildren **whose** results may not have been as good as expected
- Schoolchildren **who** have to wear a uniform usually have to ask family members, **whose** income is limited, to buy it for them.

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING RELATIVE CLAUSES

- Schoolchildren **with whom** teachers work
- Teachers **to whom** students owe a great deal
- Schools **which** get government funding
- Classroom equipment **which** needs replacing urgently
- Educational institutions **in which** nobody seems to care
- Classrooms **where** there are hardly any teaching resources
- Times **when** teachers almost lose their tempers
- Reasons **why** children do not want to go to school

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING EXAMPLES

- Sportspeople **such as** swimmers, rowers and tennis players
- Artists **such as** painters, sculptors and ballet dancers
- Scientists **like** nuclear physicists, biochemists and botanists
- University classes **like** lectures, one-to-one tutorials and group seminars
- Wild animals **including** lions, tigers and zebras
- Children who enjoy social sciences **including** Psychology and Sociology
- The punishments for arriving late, **namely** detention and a loss of privileges, are not usually handed out to younger students.

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

COMBINING STRATEGIES

- Heavy **snow** which can lead to problems such as road closures and even loss of life in some cases
- Undervalued and underpaid **teachers** who are often blamed for the poor standard of education in our country
- Reckless **drivers** who are responsible for the deaths of innocent people, such as pedestrians and cyclists
- Top-quality, five-star **hotels** where guests can stay in comfort and style
- A number of corrupt **politicians** who are willing to take bribes and who do not seem to care about those who elected them

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

COMBINING STRATEGIES

- Leading **economists** who specialise in areas such as finance or banking and who advise governments on their fiscal and monetary policies
- Nutritious **fish-** such as salmon, sardines and trout- which provides a significant amount of the protein we need to survive
- Famous **celebrities** (such as pop-singers and actors) who are followed by photo-journalists wherever they go
- Well-equipped primary and secondary **schools**, where pupils and students are prepared for their future life,

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

COMBINING STRATEGIES

- Leading international **scientists** such as physicists, chemists and biologists
- Wild **animals**, such as leopards and zebras, whose natural habitat is threatened by human activity
- Popular spectator **sports**, like football and baseball, which are played in packed stadiums all over the world
- Serious and life-threatening **illnesses**, including malaria, which many people are afraid of getting



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GRAMMAR FOR IELTS

Complex noun phrases

**DIFFERENT CLAUSES AND
LONGER STRUCTURES**

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EXPLANATION

- In the IELTS Writing Test, it is important to make some of your sentences more complex.
- One of the easiest ways to do this is to make your **NOUNS** and **NOUN PHRASES** more complex.
- Understanding **COMPLEX NOUN PHRASES** will also help you in IELTS Reading (General and Academic). Texts often contain **COMPLEX NOUN PHRASES**.
- You can add **different types of clauses** and **combine nouns into longer structures**.

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING PARTICIPLE CLAUSES

We can use the **-ing** form when the meaning is active:

- Children **living** in poor-quality housing (= children who are living in poor-quality housing)
- Children with parents **working** in low-paid jobs (= parents who work in low-paid jobs)
- Children **attending** schools with limited resources (= children who attend schools with limited resources)
- Children **going** to well-equipped secondary schools (= children who go to well-equipped secondary schools)

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING PARTICIPLE CLAUSES

We can use the **-ing** form when the meaning is active:

- Children **having** the self-confidence to apply to top universities (= children who have the self-confidence to apply to top universities)
- Children **learning** about the past and **developing** an understanding of history are often struck by the differences between previous times and our own. (= children who learn about the past and develop...)
- In the past, children **living** in squalor had little chance of becoming successful. (= children who lived in squalor...)
- Those **living** in large urban areas are likely to struggle with air quality. (= those who are living... / those who will be living...)

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING PARTICIPLE CLAUSES

We can use the past participle when the meaning is passive:

- Children **taught** by poorly-paid and over-worked teaching staff (= children who are taught... / children who have been taught...)
- Children **undervalued** at school and at home (= children who are undervalued... / children who were undervalued...)
- Children **given** limited access to the internet (= children who are given... / children who have been given...)
- Children **forced** to take on part-time jobs while they are still at school (= children who are forced... / children who have been forced...)

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING PARTICIPLE CLAUSES

We can use the past participle when the meaning is passive:

- Children **not expected** to perform well academically (= children who are not expected...)
- Children **not shown** how to study (= children who are not shown...)
- Children **told** how to organise their work make far more progress than those **left** to their own devices. (= children who are told how to organise their work; those who are left to their own devices)
- Children **not given** the opportunity to learn tended to remain poor. (= children who were not given the opportunity to learn)
- Children **not supported** by parents are likely to fail. (= children who are not supported... / children who have not been supported...)

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MAKING **NOUNS** MORE **COMPLEX**

ADDING CLAUSES WITH PREPOSITIONS

We can begin a clause with a preposition such as **in, at, with, under, over**. This is often a way of replacing a relative clause:

- Children **with** learning difficulties and problems paying attention
- Children **in** trouble with the school authorities or even the police
- Children **from** so-called broken homes
- Children **over/under** the age of sixteen
- Children **on** trips organised by the school
- Children **at** risk of failing the final exam
- Children **between** the ages of sixteen and eighteen have the option to continue in full-time education if they wish.

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING CLAUSES WITH ADJECTIVES

We can start a clause with an adjective followed by a preposition. This is often a way of replacing a relative clause:

- Children **desperate to** do well at school
- Children **willing to** work hard and participate in class
- Children **happy to** co-operate with their classmates
- Children **tired of** being asked to do pointless pieces of homework every day
- Children **worried about** what will happen to them when they finish school
- Children **keen to** do extra work usually make much more academic progress than those **unwilling to** try hard.

MAKING NOUNS MORE COMPLEX

ADDING CLAUSES WITH INFINITIVES

We can add a clause which begins with **to + verb**:

- Her **decision to leave** the school was taken after serious consideration.
- Students often take a **book to read** on the journey to school. Sometimes they even take **homework to do**.
- The teacher's **plan to change** the curriculum met with disapproval from the Head of Department.
- Students sometimes receive a **warning to avoid** plagiarising. They receive **advice to be** very careful about referencing when handing in their work.

MAKING **NOUNS** MORE **COMPLEX**

COMBINING NOUNS WITH **IN**

We can use the structure **noun + in + noun** to describe changes:

- There has been a **fall in the price** of coffee over the past few years.
- The statistics indicate that, between 1980 and 1990, there was a **reduction in demand** for second-hand cars.
- A sharp **increase in the production costs** of oil led to a period of economic recession.
- An unexpected **rise in the number** of people wanting to emigrate has recently been observed.

MAKING **NOUNS** MORE **COMPLEX**

COMBINING NOUNS WITH **OF**

The structure **noun + of + noun** is very common and useful:

- **The importance of mental health** should not be under-estimated.
- **The possibility of serious consequences** needs to be taken into account.
- **The likelihood of a major pandemic** has been seriously debated by medical experts.
- **The thought of going to work in another country** can be quite daunting.
- **The discovery of a cure for cancer** would change millions of lives.

MAKING **NOUNS** MORE **COMPLEX**

COMBINING NOUNS WITH **OF**

The structure **noun + of + noun** is very common and useful:

- The **problem of overcrowding** affects many cities.
- The **issue of poverty** must be addressed immediately.
- The **fear of failure** can have a very negative impact on the **development of a child**.
- The **success of an individual** is connected to genetic and environmental factors.
- There has been a rise in the **percentage/proportion of students** failing to complete their courses.
- The **standard of living** may have risen but the **quality of life** has probably gone down.

MAKING **NOUNS** MORE **COMPLEX**

COMBINING NOUNS WITH **TWO PREPOSITIONS**

We can make longer noun phrases with two prepositions:

- There has been a **fall in the price of coffee** over the past few years.
- The statistics indicate that, between 1980 and 1990, there was a **reduction in demand for second-hand cars**.
- A sharp **increase in the production costs of oil** led to a period of economic recession.
- An unexpected **rise in the number of people** wanting to emigrate has recently been observed.



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PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following phrases and try to identify the original noun:

EXAMPLE: Hard-working and well-motivated teachers who deserve a pay rise

ANSWER: **teachers**

1. Well-known and well-respected scientists such as biologists, astrophysicists and neurologists
2. Leading academics from the worlds of science, social science and the arts
3. Reckless drivers who cause terrible accidents by speeding or drunk-driving
4. Top-ranking and well-established universities
5. State-of-the-art fitness centres where members can go to work out and become stronger, healthier or more muscular
6. Singers from the worlds of opera, jazz and modern pop music who earn huge amounts of money performing at sold-out concerts in massive venues

ANSWERS

1. Scientists
2. Academics
3. Drivers
4. Universities
5. Fitness centres
6. singers

PREPARE for IELTS: Grammar Exercises

Look at the following nouns. Try to write a complex noun phrase including each noun:

EXAMPLE: drivers

ANSWER: skilful and experienced drivers who should not have to pay as much insurance as others

1. Students
2. Rain
3. Sports
4. Food
5. Vehicles
6. Illnesses

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

1. hard-working and well-motivated students who are desperate to get good exam grades and go to university
2. torrential rain which can cause flooding, damage and loss of life
3. major spectator sports such as football, baseball and basketball which are played in packed stadiums all over the world
4. essential and nutritious food such as fruit and vegetables
5. gas-guzzling vehicles like cars and lorries which are partly responsible for the increase in carbon emissions
6. serious, chronic and life-threatening illnesses such as malaria, which can devastate communities and lead to countless deaths