

18 Types of Subject/Verb Inversion

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Type	Examples	Notes
1. negative intro	<p>Never do I sleep.</p> <p>Only at night can I study.</p> <p>In no way could I help you with your Japanese grammar question.</p> <p>I believe that only rarely will I need your help.</p> <p>Not until I got home did I realize that my shoes were untied.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question form is obligatory. • Used with all verbs. • This one is very common on the TOEFL and somewhat common on the GMAT and GRE. • We need to learn the various types of words and phrases that require this type of inversion. • Notice that sometimes the inversion occurs right after the negative introduction form and sometimes it occurs in the next subject and verb.
2. intro adverbial	<p>Into the room ran the lady.</p> <p>First comes love, then comes marriage.</p> <p>After A comes B, then comes C, next comes D.</p> <p>Down came the rain and washed the spider out.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is optional. • Used with be-verbs, linking verbs, and verbs of direction. • This one is less common on the TOEFL, but more common on the GMAT and GRE. • Notice that sometimes we have an adverb, like first and down and sometimes we have an adverb phrase like into the room or after A. These adverbs and adverb phrases usually show location or direction. • This type of inversion usually only occurs with be-verbs, linking verbs and verbs that show direction or movement, like come, go, run, etc.

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3. intro –ed	<p>Found in San Francisco is Lombard Street, the so-called crookedest street in the world.</p> <p>Lost among the old tables and chairs was the priceless Victorian desk.</p> <p>Located between San Francisco and Marin County is the Golden Gate Bridge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory. • Used with be-verbs. • This one is very common on the TOEFL, GMAT, and GRE. • This type of inversion usually occurs with be-verbs, but sometimes with linking verbs. • Notice that the phrase is the complement of the be-verb.
4. comparatives	<p>Cheetahs run faster than do antelopes.</p> <p>You speak Chinese better than do I.</p> <p>Jessica is more interested in Computer Science than is Benjamin.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is optional. • Used with all verbs. • This form of inversion is common on the TOEFL, GMAT, and GRE. • We normally only have inversion here if we are comparing subjects of the verb, not objects. For example, in the following two sentences, we are comparing objects, carrots and potatoes, not the subject I: J I like carrots more than I do potatoes. J L I like carrots more than do I like potatoes. L • Now, in this sentence, we are comparing subjects, I and my friend Carl: J I like carrots more than does my friend Carl. J
5. intro comparative	<p>Bigger than an apatosaur is the blue whale.</p> <p>More important than your personal statement is your GPA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory. • Used with be-verbs. • This form is more common on the GMAT and GRE than it is on the TOEFL.

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	<p>No less impressive than the invention of the laser was the development of the wheel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice that we can only use this form of inversion when the verb is a be-verb since in every case, the comparative is the complement of the be-verb. • Remember that less than is also a comparative.
6. as	<p>Megumi is from Japan, as is Sato.</p> <p>So-eun wants to leave early today, as does Oi.</p> <p>If thrown into the water, camels can swim, as can cats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory. • Used with all verbs. • We can only use inversion if we are using as for comparisons. • ‘as’ is one of the trickiest words in English; it can have many different meanings.
7. so... that...	<p>So happy was I that I bought flowers for everybody in class.</p> <p>So quickly did she leave that we did not even realize was gone.</p> <p>So rarely does a comet appear visible to the naked eye that when one does, it is considered a major event.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question form is obligatory. • Used with all verbs. • This is not so common on the TOEFL, but is fairly common on the GMAT and GRE. • The so... that... clause must be before the verb in for this type of inversion.
8. had, should, were for if-clauses	<p>Had I remembered Tomomi's birthday, she wouldn't be mad at me now.</p> <p>Note that the word if does NOT appear in the clause when inversion is used:</p> <p>Had I remembered = <u>If</u> I had remembered</p> <p>Should you need a hand, I will be more than happy to help you.</p> <p>Should you need a hand = <u>If</u> you should need a hand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory. • Used with all verbs. • This is somewhat common on the TOEFL and more common on the GMAT and GRE. • This type of inversion is kind of special. Notice that we can only use this type of inversion when we are using an if-clause. In other words, if is omitted: even though the word if does not appear

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	<p>Were I you, I think I would study more for your exam tomorrow.</p> <p>Were I you = if I were you</p>	<p>in the clause, we still have the meaning of an if-clause.</p>
<p>9. there is, there are, there exists, there comes, etc.</p>	<p>There is a good restaurant nearby.</p> <p>There comes a time in every person's life when she realizes that she is responsible for her own happiness, not other people.</p> <p>Scientists hypothesize that there exists a certain type of particle that can travel faster than the speed of light.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory. • Usually used only with these verbs. • This form of inversion is common on the TOEFL, GMAT, and GRE, as well as in spoken and written English. • Most people remember there is and there are. BUT we must also remember that there are other verbs that we can use instead of is and are. The most common ones are exist, come, and go.
<p>10. here is, here are, here comes, here come</p>	<p>Here is some good food for you to try.</p> <p>Here are the books that I don't need anymore.</p> <p>Here comes the bus!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory. • Usually used only with these verbs. • You will probably not see this on the grammar section of the TOEFL or on the GMAT or GRE. It could, however, appear on the Listening Comprehension Section of the TOEFL. We use this form mostly in spoken English.
<p>11. intro -ing</p>	<p>Burning out of control was the forest located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains.</p> <p>Coming in last in the race was Joe "Elephant Legs" Blow.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory. • Used only with be-verbs. • This form is not common on the TOEFL, but might show up on the GMAT or GRE.

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	<p>Not helping the situation was little Susie, who was throwing newspaper on the spreading fire.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice the intro –ing phrase is the complement of the be-verb.
12. emphasis	<p>Boy am I hungry.</p> <p>Is it ever hot in here!</p> <p>Do you know how to cook!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is optional. • Used with all verbs. • You will probably not see this on the grammar section of the TOEFL or on the GMAT or GRE. It could, however, appear on the Listening Comprehension Section of the TOEFL. We use this form mostly in spoken English.
13. the bigger, the better	<p>The closer an object is to another object, the greater is the gravity between the two objects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question form is optional. • Used with all verbs.
14. questions	<p>Is this the last example?</p> <p>Do you enjoy reading these lists?</p> <p>Are we finished yet?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory. • Used with all verbs. • You will probably not see this on the grammar section of the TOEFL (TOEFL doesn't test questions anymore) or on the GMAT or GRE. It would, however, appear on the Listening Comprehension Section of the TOEFL.
15. "story speech"	<p>"I think it's time to go," said Susan.</p> <p>"It's time for you, but not for me," replied Gary.</p> <p>"Maybe we should collect our thoughts for a moment," commented Lany.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is optional. • Used with verbs that report speech. • You will probably not see this on the grammar section of the TOEFL or on the GMAT or GRE.

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16. nor	<p>No one has volunteered for the job, nor dowe expect anyone to volunteer in the future.</p> <p>Hok-ming cannot speak Portuguese, nor can José speak Cantonese.</p> <p>The zoo regulations will not permit you to touch the animals, nor would most people advise you to do so.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory. • Used with all verbs. • You might see this on the adaptive TOEFL if you are scoring high and it could appear on the GMAT or GRE. • Remember that nor is considered a conjunction, but we use it between two sentences (not between any two elements like the other conjunctions).
17. "so do I"/ "neither do I."	<p>"So do I."</p> <p>"So can Terry."</p> <p>"Neither do most people I know."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory. • Used with all verbs. • You will probably not see this on the grammar section of the TOEFL or on the GMAT or GRE.
18. intro adjective	<p>Beautiful beyond belief was my baby daughter.</p> <p>Happy about their acceptance into their dream schools were Lany and Tomo.</p> <p>Quick and painless will be your medical procedure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inversion is obligatory in most cases. • Used with be-verbs. • This one is fairly rare and probably would not appear on the TOEFL, but you might see it on the GMAT or GRE. • Inversion is sometimes not used in poetic language.