

## INTRODUCTION

The content of the Athabasca University Mobile ESL project is derived from James O'Driscoll's *Penguin Basic English Grammar* book. It is used with the author's permission.

The book has:

- 86 units of English grammar. Most units are one page long. In each unit, the writing in black tells you about the grammar, and the writing in **blue** gives you examples.
- 13 appendices after the units. They give detailed information about things such as spelling and punctuation.
- an index in alphabetical order.

### ***This book's content can help you:***

- to write and speak English correctly
- if you do not know much English
- it can also help you if you know quite a lot. The answer to an 'advanced' problem of grammar is often very basic.

### ***Using the units:***

Each unit tells you about a small part of English grammar. There is a short introduction at the beginning of each unit, but the most important thing is the examples.

You will often find references in brackets in the units. For example:

Noun Phrase (Unit 45.3)

This means that you can turn to Unit 45, part 3, if you need to find out more about noun phrases.

You will often find **NOTICE** in the units. This means there is something here you should be careful about.

## Useful words:

To understand grammar, it helps you to understand a few special 'grammar' words. You can find the meanings of most of these words in the units, but it will help you if you understand the words below.

<b>AFFIRMATIVE</b>	the opposite of negative. For example, <b>He likes coffee</b> is affirmative, but <b>He does not like coffee</b> is negative.
<b>CLAUSE</b>	examples of clauses are: <b>that he has gone</b> in I know <b>that he has gone</b> <b>when I see him</b> in I'll tell him <b>when I see him</b> <b>because it's cold</b> in Let's stay in <b>because it's cold</b> Clauses have subjects and verbs (Unit 1), but they cannot make a sentence alone.
<b>FORM</b>	the exact shape of a word. For example, many adverbs (Unit 64) end with <b>-ly</b> (for example, <b>largely</b> ), so we can say that many adverbs have an <b>-ly</b> form. Some words have only one form. For example, the only form of <b>the</b> (Unit 52) is <b>the</b> ; it never changes. But all verbs and many other words have more than one form. For example, the verb <b>go</b> has five forms ( <b>go, goes, going, went, gone</b> ).
<b>FORMATION</b>	one verb or two verbs or three verbs together in a sentence. For example, Present Continuous (Unit 22) is a verb formation.
<b>NEGATIVE</b>	the opposite of affirmative. A negative sentence has the word <b>not</b> ( <b>n't</b> ) in it. For example, <b>He does not like coffee</b> .
<b>PREPOSITION</b>	examples of prepositions are: <b>at, in on, under, and with</b> . They go before noun phrases (Unit 45.3). They can help to say 'where' (Units 44-79) or 'when' (Unit 72).
<b>QUESTION</b>	a sentence (Unit 1) which asks for information. For example, <b>Does he like coffee?</b>
<b>STATEMENT</b>	a sentence (Unit 1) which gives information. <b>He likes coffee</b> and <b>He does not like coffee</b> are both statements.
<b>TENSE</b>	a verb form which tells us something about time. In English there are two tenses: <b>present</b> (shown by the base form or s form – Unit 14) and <b>past</b> (shown by past form – Unit 14). The verb of a sentence (Unit 3) always has tense: the first word of the verb tells us if it is

present or past. For example, **I have been working** is present because **have** is base form.

Note: **TENSE** is not the same thing as time. **TENSE** is a grammar word. Time is not.

## **VERB**

we use this word for two meanings:

1. A type of word (like noun (Unit 45) or preposition).  
Examples are **do, have, run, believe, learn**.
2. A part of the sentence (like subject (Unit 1) or clause (Unit 1)). For example, in **I have been working very hard** the verb is **have been working**.