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ENGLISH GRAMMAR



85 SHORTCUTS & RULES

FOR NDA CDS AFCAT AND SSB INTERVIEW

English Grammar Shortcut Rules For CDS, NDA, AFCAT Exams

Articles - Shortcut Rules

Rule 1 : The indefinite article 'A' should be used before the word 'Half' when it follows a whole number.

I stayed in Madras for one and half years. ✗
I stayed in Madras for one and a half years. ✓
He spent one and half a half rupee. ✗
He spent one and a half rupees. ✓

Rule 2 : The definite article 'THE' should be used with a comparative adjective if the phrase 'of the two' is used.

She is better of the two sisters. ✗
She is the better of the two sisters. ✓
This is the best of the two books. ✗
This is the better of the two books. ✓

Rule 3 : With the names of meals such as Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner / Supper, no article should be used in a general way except in particular causes.

I have the breakfast at 8 hrs in the morning ✗
I have breakfast at 8 hrs in the morning ✓

Rule 4 : The + Positive Adjective represent the whole class, and take a plural verb.

The rich is responsible for the lawlessness in the country. ✗
The rich are responsible for the lawlessness in the country. ✓

Say 'The poor are / The young are / The old are' etc...

Rule 5 : After Di- Transitive Verbs like Elect / Make / Appoint, articles should not be used except when they are used as Mono transitive verbs.

We appointed him a chairman. ✗
We appointed him chairman ✓
We made him a leader ✗
We made him leader. ✓
The Govt. has appointed a Committee (mono transitive) (As a mono transitive verb)

Rule 6 : After type of / kind of / sort of / post of / title of / rank of / articles are not used.

He is not that sort of a man. ✗
He is not that soft of man. ✓
He was promoted to the rank of a General Manager. ✗
He was promoted to the rank of General Manager. ✓

Noun- Shortcut Rules

Shortcut Rule 1 : The following words are uncountable and are normally used in the singular form only. The indefinite article "A or An" Should not be used with them. They have no plural forms. 'A/An' not used before them.

Ex : Luggage / Baggage / Breakage / Advice / Furniture / Information / Scenery / Poetry / Work / Soap / Food / Bread / Fish / Paper / Machinery etc.

The Sceneries of Kashmir is very beautiful. ✗

The Scenery of Kashmir is very beautiful. ✓

I know that he has many informations. ✗

I know that he has much information / a lot of information. ✓

They gave me a good advice. ✗

They gave me a piece of good advice. ✓

I want a Soap/Bread. ✗

I want a piece of Soap/Bread. ✓

Shortcut Rule 2 : The words such as "News / Maths / Ethics / Politics / Phonetics / Economics / Statistics / Measles / Mumps / Rickets / Billiards / Innings" look like plural nouns but give singular meaning. So, they take singular form of verbs.

Mathematics is a difficult subject. ✓

But say "His Mathematics are very weak". ✓

Rule : When Preceded by a possessive adjective, the noun takes a plural verb Billiards are an interesting game. ✗

Billiards is an interesting game. ✓

The news are not reliable. ✗

The news is not reliable. ✓

Shortcut Rule 3 : Some Nouns have the same form whether singular or plural. Ex : Sheep / Deer / Service / Series / Species / Fish / Apparatus

He saw two sheeps in the zoo. ✗

He saw two sheep in the zoo ✓

A series of lectures are to be delivered tomorrow. ✗

A series of lectures is to be delivered tomorrow. ✓

Shortcut Rule 4 : The following nouns are always used in the plural form only Cattle / People / Police / Electorate / Poultry / Trousers / Scissors / Spectacles / Binoculars / Crackers / Swine / Gentry / Clergy. All these are used with plural form of verbs.

The police is coming towards us now. ✗

The police are coming towards us now. ✓

The scissor is very sharp. ✗

The scissors are very sharp. ✓

Shortcut Rule 5 : Add 'S' to the main word in compound noun to make it plural. Sister-in-Law, the plural form is Sisters-in-Law, not Sister-in-Laws Brother-in- Law, the plural form is Brothers-in-law, not Brothers-in- Laws

Shortcut Rule 6 : The possessive case of a compound noun is formed by adding 'S' to the last word.

Father-in-Law, Father-in-Law's property. Sister-in-Law, Sister-in-Law's property.

Shortcut Rule 7 : After the phrases One of / Some of/ Each of / Either of /Neither of / Any of / None of, a plural form of a noun is used.

One of my best friends (not One of my best friend)

One of the biggest cities (not One of the biggest city)

Each of the boys is (not Each of the boys are)

Either of the teachers is (not Either of the teachers are)

Shortcut Rule 8 : Nouns indicating numerals should be used in singular form "A Dozen eggs / Two Dozen Oranges". But say Hundreds of eggs / Houses / A hundred rupees / Two hundred rupees.

Shortcut Rule 9 : After collective nouns either a singular or plural form of verb is used.

The team is strong (here, we are treating the TEAM as an UNIT) ✓

The team are fighting among themselves (Here, we are saying about the players of the team) ✓

Shortcut Rule 10 : An "Apostrophe" and 'S' should be used with living beings only to show possession.

The table's legs were broken. ✗

(This is wrong, because the table is a non living thing) We can say "The legs of the table were broken" ✓

Shortcut Rule 11 : Say, "A five rupee note", " A two mile walk"

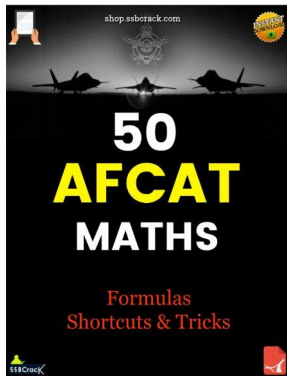
Shortcut Rule 12 : Don't say "family members / cousin brother or cousin sister" but say "The members of the family / he or she is my cousin".

Shortcut Rule 13 : When two nouns are connected by "and", and are closely related, add an apostrophe and S to the last noun.

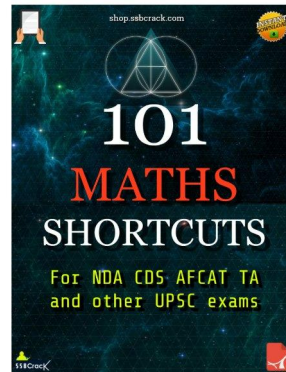
Kareena's and Saif's house ✗ (if you think they are wife and husband then this sentence is wrong)

Kareena and Saif's house (as they live in a SINGLE house) ✓

But you can say "India's and Pakistan's population" ✓



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Pronouns - Shortcut Rules

Shortcut Rule 1 : We should use the personal pronouns in the order of 231 for good results (I mean, Second Person, Third Person, First Person). Have a look at the following Examples.

I, He and You are to finish it. ✗

You, He and I are to finish it. ✓

The order 123 (First Person, Second Person and Third Person) is also possible when we admit guilt.

I, You and He have committed the Sin. ✓

Shortcut Rule 2 : A Pronoun in the nominative form should be compared with the same form of the pronoun.

He is better than I (am) (Two Nominatives are compared) ✓

I respect you more than him (Two objectives are compared) ✓

Shortcut Rule 3 : A Pronoun in the objective case is used after "Let / Between / Any Preposition"

Let you and me play (You and me are objects) ✓

There is no dispute between you and me. ✓

Shortcut Rule 4 : When a pronoun stands for a collective noun, it should be used in the singular form.

The army has left its Head Quarters (As a Whole) ✓

The committee were divided in their opinion (Separate Individuals) ✓

Shortcut Rule 5 : When two singular nouns are joined by "and", refer to the same person, the pronoun used in their place should be singular in form.

The Collector and Magistrate has done his best. ✓

But the collector and the Magistrate have done their best. ✓

Shortcut Rule 6 : A singular pronoun should be used when two singular nouns are joined by either or / neither nor

Either Ravi or Gopal should do his duty ✓

Shortcut Rule 7 : A pronoun in the plural form should be used when two nouns of different members are joined by "or" or "nor".

Either the Principal or his teachers have attended their duty. ✓

Shortcut Rule 8 : The distributive pronouns "Either / Neither / None / Any / No one" are used with singular verbs.

Either / NeitherUsed for two Person / Things

None / No one / AnyUsed for more than two person / things.

Any ...Used for more than two persons / things.

Have a look at some examples.

Either of the two girls is diligent. ✓

Neither of the brothers is quarrelsome. ✓

None of the four sisters is intelligent. ✓

Any of the four men can do it. ✓

Shortcut Rule 9 : The Reciprocal pronouns "Each other / One another"

Each other - For two persons

One another - For more than two persons.

The two sister hate each other.

The five brother love one another.

Shortcut Rule 10 : The indefinite pronoun "One" should be used as "One's" for its possessive case.

One should love one's country. ✓

Shortcut Rule 11 : The verbs such as "Hurt / Cheat / Prostrate / Introduce / Present / Absent / Satisfy / Prepare / Enjoy / Avail of" are followed by either "an" object or "a" reflexive pronoun. (Myself / Ourselves / Yourself / Yourselves) (Himself / Herself / Itself / Themselves)

I introduced her to the Principal (Her.....object) ✓

I introduced myself to the Principal (Myself.....Reflexive pronoun) ✓

He enjoyed the party (Party.....Object) ✓

He enjoyed himself at the Party (Himself.....Reflexive Pronoun) ✓

Shortcut Rule 12 : The use of Relative Pronouns :

Who..... for Persons eg.This is the boy who is diligent.

Whichfor Things. eg. The book which is in the shelf is mine.

That is used both for persons and things.

One boy who stole my purse was a student ✓

The boy that stole my purse was a student. ✓

As a relative pronoun "That" is used with superlative Adjective / Only / Any / Nothing / Some / All / None" All that glitters is not gold This is the best thing that I can do.

Shortcut Rule 13 : The word "Who" as a relative pronoun is used in the nominative case, takes a verb.

The Principal who came here was Raju's Brother.

The word "Whom"as a relative pronoun is used in the objective case (takes no verb)

The doctor whom I met yesterday was Krishna's Father

Shortcut Rule 14 : Agreement of the verb with its antecedent in number and person

I who is your brother must trust you ✗

I who am your brother must trust you. ✓

You who is my friend ✗

You who are my friend ✓

Shortcut Rule 15 : If a pronoun is to be placed after "to be", the pronoun in the subjective case is used.

It is Him ✗

It is He ✓

Adjectives - Shortcut Rules

Examples :

Sizes : big, small, large, thin, thick

Shapes : triangular, round, square, circular

Colors : black, blue, white, green, red

Personality : happy, sad, angry, depressed

Time : Yearly , monthly, annually

Ages : new, young, old, brand-new, second-hand

Sounds : Loud, noisy, quiet, silent

Tastes : juicy, sweet

Qualities : good, bad, mediocre

Shortcut Rule 1 : In a comparison, the conjunction 'than' should be followed by 'any other'. If a person / thing is compared with any other person / thing among some / many.

Mumbai is greater than any city in India. ✗

Mumbai is greater than any other city in India. ✓

Shortcut Rule 2 : In comparisons, the monosyllable words like "hot / easy / tall / small" should not be used with more / most.

This question is more easier than that. ✓

This question is easier than that. ✓

He is more taller than Kumar. ✗

He is taller than Kumar. ✓

Shortcut Rule 3 : Elder / Eldest should be used with the members of the same family. Older / Oldest these comparative adjective denote the age of person / thing.

Ex : He is elder to me. (He and me belong to one family).

Ronald Reagan was the oldest person elected to the Presidency in US history (Not specifying a family)

This is the eldest tree in the garden ✗

This is the oldest tree in the garden. ✓

Shortcut Rule 4 : While comparing the objects, we should see that a noun is compared with another but not with some other word.

The population of Hyderabad is greater than Nagpur ✗

The population of Hyderabad is greater than that of Nagpur (OR) ✓

The population of Hyderabad is greater than the population of Nagpur. ✓

The climate of Ooty is better than Chennai. ✗

The climate of Ooty is better than that of Chennai. ✓

Adverbs in English - Shortcut Rules

Rule 1 : The adverbs 'too much' is used with nouns and 'much too' is used with adjectives.
Too much pain / Too much insincerity (Nouns)
Much too painful / much too careless (Adjectives)

Adverbs examples

His failure is too much painful for me ✗
His failure is much too painful for me ✓

His wife's rude behavior gives him much too pain ✗
His wife's rude behavior gives him too much pain ✓

Rule 2 : Before the word 'Enough' an adjective under positive form should be used.

He is more intelligent enough to follow you. ✗
He is intelligent enough to follow you. ✓
She is enough lucky to get the job. ✗
She lucky enough to get the job. ✓

Rule 3 : The adverb quite ('quite means perfectly/ completely) should not be used with the adjective 'Handsome'.

He is quite handsome. ✗
He is very handsome. ✓

Rule 4 : Late / Lately. The adverb 'late' indicates time and lately means recently.

He was punished for coming lately. ✗
He was punished for coming late. ✓

Rule 5 : When we begin a sentence with 'seldom / never / hardly / rarely / scarcely / barely / neither / never, the rule of inversion should be applied (i.e.,) an auxiliary verb is used before the subject.

Hardly he goes to school. ✗
Hardly does he go to school. ✓
Seldom I got to films. ✗
Seldom do I got to films. ✓
No sooner the school bell rings than all the boys go to their class rooms. ✗
No sooner does the school bell ring, than all the boys go to their class rooms.

After Only + adverbial expression.

Only by working hard, he got success. ✗
Only by working hard, did he get success. ✓

Not only but also

Not only she reads but also she writes. ✗
Not only does she read but also writes. ✓

Rule 6 : The adverbial phrase 'No less than' should be used with uncountable nouns whereas 'No fewer than' is used with countable nouns.

There were no less than forty people who were killed in the accident. ✗
No fewer than forty people were killed in accident. ✓

Rule 7 : The adverb (As) is not used after call and consider.

He called me as a fool ✕

He called me a fool. ✓

I always consider him as my brother. ✕

I always consider him my brother. ✓

Rule 8 : The derived adjectives such as interested / pleased / satisfied / delighted are used with 'much' but not 'very'.

I am very interested to play cricket. ✕

I am much interested to play cricket. ✓

Rule 9 : The adverb 'very' is used with positive adjectives and 'much' with comparative adjective forms.

He is very clever to understand it. ✓

He is much clever to understand it. ✕

Rule 10 : 'Very much' should be used with comparative forms.

It is very much better to stay here tonight. ✓

Verbs - Shortcut Rules

Shortcut Rule 1 : If the subject is of the third person, singular number (He, She, It) add 'S' or 'es / ies' to the first form of the verb to make it singular number.

She plays the violin every day.
He loves his parents.
The dog barks at the people.
The bird flies in the Sky.
He does his duty.

Shortcut Rule 2 : The following verbs are not usually used in the continuous form. See / Smell / Feel / Hear / Notice / Recognize / See / Think / Agree / Believe / Consider / Remember / Hope / Understand / Mind / Suppose / Hate / Love / Know / Have / Want / Forgive / Keep / Prevent etc. But they may be used in continuous forms in a particular cases.

He is having a telephone connection. ✗
He has a telephone connection ✓
The flower is smelling sweet ✗
The flower smells sweet (you can say I am smelling this flower) ✓
The manager is seeing your application (Seeing - Examining) ✓ (in particular situation)

Shortcut Rule 3 : The present perfect tense should not be used with adverbs indicating past time. Instead the simple past tense should be used.

I have seen a film last night ✗
I saw a film last night. ✓
He has left for Hyderabad last week. ✗
He left for Hyderabad last week. ✓

Shortcut Rule 4 : The present perfect tense with "For or Since" is used to express an action began at some time in the past and is still continuing upto the time of speaking or just finished.

Forperiod of time (for 2 days / for 10 days / for a long time) Sincepoint of time. (Since 1996, Since morning, since yesterday, since last week)

I know him since 1986 ✗
I have know him since 1986 ✓
Out teacher is sick for the last two days ✗
Our teacher has been sick for the last two days. ✓

Shortcut Rule 5 : The present perfect continuous Tense" is also used for actions began in the past and are still continuing.

I am reading this novel since morning. ✗
I have been reading this novel since morning. ✓
They are going to English classes for the last one month. ✗
They have been going to English classes for the last one month. ✓

Shortcut Rule 6 : When the first action led to the second action immediately The simple Past Tense + Simple Past Tense are used.

When he opened the gate, they came in. ✓

Shortcut Rule 7 : When the first action completed before the second one started, the Past Perfect Tense for the first finished action and the Simple Past Tense for the Second are used.

The patient had died before the doctor arrived. ✓

Shortcut Rule 8 : After negative sentences, the question tag used should be in an ordinary interrogative form.

She didn't like that book, didn't she? ✗

She did not like that book, did she? ✓

They have not told him the news, Haven't they? ✗

They have not told him the news, Have they? ✓

Shortcut Rule 9 : After Positive Statements, we use the negative interrogative.

I am a student, Am I? ✗

I am a student, Aren't I? ✓

Let's play for some Time, Shall We? ✓

He works hard, Does He? ✗

Shortcut Rule 10 : When the verb in the principal clause is in a past tense, the verbs in the subordinate clauses are normally in the Past Tense.

He said that He will pass the examination. ✗

He said that he would pass the examination. ✓

They told me that they have paid the fees. ✗

They told me that they had paid the fees. ✓

Conjunctions in English - Shortcut Rules

Rule 1 : The co-relative conjunctions are used in pairs.

Not only - but also, Either - or Neither – nor, Both – and, Though – yet, Whether – or.
Please see that the pair is properly used.

They will either do the work else return the money. ✗
They will either do the work or return the money. ✓

Both kumar as well as Ravi must finish it. ✗
Both kumar and Ravi must finish it. ✓

Not only does he read but also writes. ✓

Though he is rich but he is economical. ✗
Though he is rich yet he is economical. ✓

Rule 2 : After the adverbs "Hardly / Scarcely", the conjunction 'when or before' should be used.

Hardly had he left the place than the Bomb exploded. ✗
Hardly had he left the place when the Bomb exploded. ✓

Rule 3 : After 'Rather / Other, the subordinating conjunction 'Than should be used.

He has no other object but to get a handsome job. ✗
He has no other object than to get a handsome job. ✓
I would rather buy a scooter but not a cycle. ✗
I would rather buy a scooter than a cycle. ✓

Rule 4 : After the subordinating conjunction 'lest' the auxiliary 'should' is used. Lest - for fear that / If it is not so.

Work hard lest you fail. ✗
Work hard lest you should fail. ✓

Rule 5 : The connecting word 'that' is used with the adjective phrase 'the same/the only/superlative adjectives/all

This is the same book which I wanted. ✗
This is the same book that I wanted. ✓

Rule 6 : The conjunction 'or' is used with not / never.

I have never spoken to him nor written to him. ✗
I have never spoken to him or written to him. ✓

Rule 7 : With the word 'such' the connective 'that' may be used.

There was such a noise what we could not hear ourselves. ✗
There was such a noise that we could not hear ourselves. ✓

Rule 8 : > Until - Denotes Time > Unless - Denotes Condition

You will not succeed until you work hard. ✗
You will not succeed unless you work hard. ✓
I want to stay here unless she speaks the truth. ✗
I want to stay here until she speaks the truth. ✓

You cannot do well until you prepare yourself. ✗
You cannot do well unless you prepare yourself. ✓

Rule 9 : After the connective 'because' the words ' so / therefore / as' are not used.

Because he came late so he failed to see her. ✗
Because he came late, he fail to see her. ✓

Rule 10 : The adverb 'Not' should not be used with the connective 'Till/unless/lest/until' in that clause.

Until he does not solve this problem, I will stay with him. ✗
Until he solves this problem, I will stay with him. ✓
Unless they do not work sincere, they will not succeed. ✗
Unless they work sincerely, they will not succeed. ✓

Rule 11 : When 'since' is used as a conjunction should be preceded by present perfect tense and followed by a verb in the past tense to denote point of time.

Many things have happened since I have left the school. ✗
Many things have happened since I left the school. ✓

Rule 12 : With the conjunction 'if 'then' should not be used.

If you work for 8 hours a day, then you will get through the examination. ✗
If you work for 8 hours a day, you will get through the examination. ✓

Rule 13 : When two objects are joined by 'as well/besides/along with /together with / in addition to / except / including with, the verb agrees with the first subject in number.

He as well as his students have gone there. ✗
He as well as his students has gone there. ✓

Prepositions in English – Shortcut Rules

Rule 1 : Across

Across - On the opposite side of
My Cousin lives across the river. ✓

Across - From one side to another
The boy swam across the river ✓

Across - both sides
He threw the luggage across his shoulders ✓

Come Across - means meet accidentally / suddenly
When I was going to market, I came across an old friend. ✓
I suddenly came across him ✗
I came across him. ✓

Rule 2 : Between Used for two persons / things.
Eg. She is sitting between munnii and sheela. ✓

Among Used with more than two persons / things
Eg. The principal distributed prizes among the winners ✓

Amid or Amidst Used for more than two persons / things (groups)
Amid his friends ✓
It was hard to hear amid all the cheering. ✓

Rule 3 : During - denotes duration.

During the war, many people suffered hardship. ✓
We go to Darjeeling during summer every year. ✓

Rule 4 : From - is used with past / future tenses.

I stayed there from Monday to Wednesday. ✓
I will start my preparation from Monday next. ✓

Rule 5 : Of - denotes origin / cause

She comes of a rich family (origin) ✓
He died of Malaria (cause) but she died in an accident. ✓

Off - denotes 'separation'
A button has come off. ✓
He is off duty today. ✓

Rule 6 : After a preposition, a pronoun under objective case should be used.

He depends on I. ✗
He depends on me. ✓

Rule 7 : When two words are connected by 'and / or' etc., the prepositions should be mentioned clearly to be used with them.

He was surprised at as well as pleased with her performance. ✓ She is conscious and engaged in her work. ✗
She is conscious of and engaged in her work ✓

Rule 8 : No preposition should be used with the noun 'Home' except when it is followed by an adjective in the possessive case, say go to home / arrive home / reach home / get home.

I went to his home / He went home. ✓

He decided to go to Krishna's home. ✓

Rule 9 : After transitive verbs such as 'Discuss/Describe/reach/order/tell/demand/attach/resemble/ridicule etc. no preposition is used. The verbs directly take an object.

The poet describes about the beauty of nature. ✗

The poet describes the beauty of nature. ✓

He ordered for two cups of tea. ✗

He ordered two cups of tea. ✓

Rule 10 : After the verbs "Say / suggest / propose / speak / explain / reply / complain / talk / listen / write" the preposition "to" should be used if any object is used.

He did not reply me. ✗

He did not reply to me. ✓

You never wrote me. ✗

You never wrote to me. ✓

He suggested her that she should eat less. ✗

He suggested to her that she should eat less. ✓

Rule 11 : Since - Denotes point of time For - denotes period of time.

They should be used with present tense or the present perfect continuous tense / past perfect tense / past perfect continuous tenses.

I know her since 2011. ✗

I have known her since 2011. ✓

He is working in the bank for the past 3 years. ✗

He has been working in the bank for the past 3 years. ✓

Rule 12 : After the verb "Enter" the preposition "into" should not be used except when it is used with reference to agreement or conversation.

He entered into the premises without any permission. ✗

He entered the premises without any permission. ✓

They entered a hot discussion. ✗

They entered into a hot discussion. ✓

Rule 13 : Wait for - Await.

He is awaiting for the reply. ✗

He is awaiting the reply. ✓

Despite - inspite of.

Despite of his hard work, he failed in the examination. ✗

Despite his hard work he failed in the examination. ✓

This book comprises of 5 chapters. ✓

This book consists of 5 chapters. ✓

Rule 14 : Dispose of - Sell away.

He disposed off his scooter. ✗

He disposed of his scooter. ✓

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