

## Lesson 16: NOUN BOXES Describers and Numbers

What else is in the subject box?

In Lesson 14 we saw that there is at least one main word in every sentence. In some of the sentences, we saw that there was only a **main word** in the subject and nothing more. In other sentences, we saw that a subject can have many words in addition to the **main word**. In Lesson 15 we explored determiners. What are the other words in a noun box?

In addition to determiners and main words, we can also find

- determiners,
- **describers**,
- **numbers**, and
- prepositional phrases.

### Describers

**Describers** are words that describe or give more information about main words. Many describers are adjectives. Some describers are nouns. Sometimes a whole phrase or a clause is a describer. We will look at these in future lessons. I use the abbreviation **Ds** to identify describers.

NOTE:  
describers are often called adjectives.

Look at the following examples:

Dt   Ds   \*

Describer that is an adjective: Nick's old t-shirt looked terrible.

Dt   Ds   \*

Describer that is a noun: His job interview didn't go well.



# The order of Describers

Like everything else in English, describers have to be in order. The order is easy to remember if you memorize this noun box.

Dt    Ds    Ds    Ds    Ds    \*  
The beautiful little pink plastic doll

| DT  | OPINION   | SIZE/AGE | COLOR | MATERIAL/ORIGIN | MAIN NOUN |
|-----|-----------|----------|-------|-----------------|-----------|
| the | beautiful | little   | pink  | plastic         | doll      |

Of course, you don't have to use 4 describers, but those that you do use have to be in order. **Numbers** come right after the Dt. **Describers that are nouns** come last.

| DT            | #   | OPINION  | SIZE/AGE | COLOR | MATERIAL/ORIGIN | NOUN DS | MAIN NOUN |
|---------------|-----|----------|----------|-------|-----------------|---------|-----------|
| Nick's        |     | dirty    | old      |       |                 |         | t-shirt   |
| our           | two |          | new      | red   | New School      | student | IDs       |
| the company's |     | gorgeous | new      |       |                 | office  | space     |

# Numbers

**Numbers** are words that tell us how many of something there is (one, ten, forty-two, 115, etc.) I use the sign # to identify numbers in a subject.

★ Rule: **Numbers** are the words we use to count things (*one, two three...*)

Words like *first, second, third, 149<sup>th</sup>*, etc. are not numbers. They are **describers**.

Look at these examples:

#

Example 1: Over **350** people applied for the job.

#

Example 2: The **two** finalists had identical skills.

#

Example 3: **One** applicant dressed and acted in a way that "fit in."



**Lesson 16 Exercise 1**

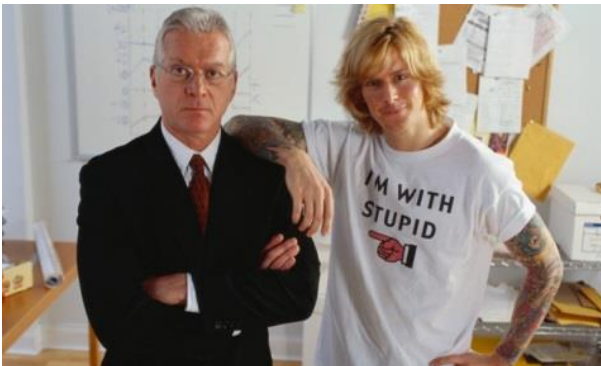
In the following sentences, ignore the underlined words

1. Find the **X-Words** and mark the **verbs**.
2. Place a box around the **subject** of each sentence; if you see other noun boxes, mark them, too. (See Lesson 18 *Where can noun boxes go?*)
3. Next, identify the **main word** of the subject by placing a \* over it
4. put **Dt** over the determiner if there is one.
5. Write **Ds** over each describer.

**“The Worst Job Interview Fashion Mistakes”**

Adapted from David Koeppl, *The Fiscal Times*

1. Dt Ds \* The wrong clothes can make or break X Vb Vb Dt \* your chances at a job interview.
2. A job applicant has to do his or her homework.



3. A business suit used to be the only acceptable dress for a job interview.

4. Since the start of “casual Fridays,” casual clothes might be more appropriate.
5. Those long, glue-on fingernails may be popular with your friends, but they aren't good at a job interview.



6. A short-sleeved shirt on a tattooed arm is not a good idea, even though tattoos are very common today.
7. Studs and piercings in your ears, lips, or tongue may be beautiful to you, but to some people they are horrible.
8. A too-sexy dress or style can ruin your job hopes.
9. "Sexy, short skirts won't get you a job," said the CEO of the company.
10. "Big brains are more important than pretty legs."

**to apply for a job** (applying, applied): formally ask an employer for a job by sending a cover letter, filling out a job application, going to an interview, etc.

**application:** a form that you fill out when you want a job

**applicant:** the person who wants the job

**CEO** Chief Executive Officer



## Lesson 16 Exercise 2

Directions: In each of the sentences below, mark the X-Word and the verb, then put a box around every noun box that you can find and mark Determiners, Numbers, Describers, and Main Nouns--- Dt, #, Ds, \*

1. The three software companies are looking for a new engineer.
2. Each company has gotten more than 100 applications and résumés.
3. Only three applicants will be accepted.
4. How can one applicant improve his or her chances of getting the job?

**Lesson 16 Exercise 3**  Remember, English is a **word order** language.

Circle the correct answer: The correct order of words in the subject box is usually....

a. # \* Ds Dt

b. Dt # Ds \*

c. Dt \* Ds #

**Lesson 16 Exercise 4** Look at the noun boxes below, then write two of your own.

| Determiner | Number   | Describer | Describer | Main noun    |
|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| The        | three    |           | software  | companies    |
|            | Over 100 |           | job       | applications |
|            |          |           |           |              |
|            |          |           |           |              |

**Lesson 16 Exercise 5**

Write these words in the right order to make a noun box.

blue their truck 1962 ugly Ford

\_\_\_\_\_

