Word Order

Word order can change the meaning

1. Normal word order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object/complement</th>
<th>Place expression</th>
<th>time expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>watched</td>
<td>a video</td>
<td>at home</td>
<td>last night</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Inverted (verb subject) word order: there are six situations

   a) Questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>are</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hungry?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   b) Sentences beginning with "there":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>there</td>
<td>are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven continents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   c) Sentences beginning with "it":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>it</td>
<td>Wasn't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>easy</td>
<td>To find a parking place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   d) Sentences beginning with Place expression + an intransitive verb:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place expression</th>
<th>verb</th>
<th>subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Next to the motorcycle</td>
<td>stood</td>
<td>A tall man with leather jacket</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   e) Sentences beginning with negative word:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>verb</th>
<th>subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nowhere</td>
<td>Were</td>
<td>the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not only</td>
<td>Do</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>win, but he also set a new world record</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   f) Conditional sentences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal pattern</th>
<th>Inverted pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If I were rich, I would travel.</td>
<td>Were I rich, I would travel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If he should call, tell him that I am not at home.</td>
<td>Should he call, tell him that I am not at home.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Word order of direct and indirect object:

   Some verbs can be followed by two objects: a direct object and an indirect object.

   We can use:

   - Verb+ direct object+ to or for+ indirect object:
     - I've lent my book to Michael.
   - Verb+ indirect object without to or for+ direct object:
     - I've lent Michael my book.
4. Order of adjectives:

There is a general order for adjectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number</th>
<th>diminutive</th>
<th>size</th>
<th>shape</th>
<th>age</th>
<th>colour</th>
<th>pattern</th>
<th>material</th>
<th>nationality</th>
<th>adjectival noun</th>
<th>noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A/An</td>
<td>nice</td>
<td>large</td>
<td>square</td>
<td>old</td>
<td>new</td>
<td>green</td>
<td>striped</td>
<td>woolen</td>
<td>wooden</td>
<td>metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>towel(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>chair(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large old wooden table.
Four green metal garden chairs.

5. Varying sentence openings

- **Time word or phrase:** First, we wrote a summary of the article.
- **Prepositional phrase of time or place:** For two days, they waited for news about their family.
- **Transition expression:** As a result, we had to cancel our plans.
- **Infinitive phrase:** To get an A in grammar class, you have to work hard.
- **Adverb:** Anxiously, they waited for news about their family.
- **Adverb clause:** If you vary your sentence openings, you will improve your writing style.
- **-ing/-ed phrase:** Worried about his grade in lab class, Alan went to see the instructor.

Let's practice (on):

Rearrange the word order of the following statements to make correct sentences.

e.g. was sailing/In 1894/the Atlantic Ocean/a steamship/from/England to America/across/. In 1894 a steamship was sailing across the Atlantic Ocean from England to America.

- was shining/gentle breezes/The sun/and/were blowing/.
- was sailing/three weeks/The ship/for/.
- was/New York/halfway to/It/its destination-/.
- were relaxing/when/on deck/The passengers/a loud bang/suddenlyheard/they/.
- looked over/all/the edge/They/ran to/of the boat/and/jumped up/the side/.
- a terrible scene/saw/To their horror/they/.
- which/They/in the side of/some hard object/had hit/had torn/a hole/the ship/.
- the steamship/was pouring/at an alarming speed/into/Water/.
- half an hour/arrived/Fortunately/another ship/late/.
- everyone/It/just in time/to save/on board/ was/.

Let’s practice (on): Rewrite the following sentences using the words given, without changing the meaning.

e.g. As soon as she entered the room, they stopped gossiping.
No sooner had she entered the room than they stopped gossiping.
1. I have never met such a ridiculous man!
   Never ____________________________
2. Seldom have I seen a better football player.
   ________________________________
3. She found a job only last week.
   Only last week ___________________________________________________________________
4. Not only is she beautiful, but she is also rich.
   She is _______________________________________________________________________
5. Not until Mr. Chan is here will we begin our lunch meeting.
   We will not __________________________________________________________________
6. We will pay you only after you finish the job.
   Only after ____________________________________________________________________
7. Only if you study hard will you pass the exam.
   You will ______________________________________________________________________
8. We had such a warm winter only once before.
   Only once before __________________________________________________________________
9. I would not buy those pirated CDs under any circumstances.
   Under no circumstances __________________________________________________________________
10. The bird flew out when I opened the cage door.
    Out __________________________________________________________________________

Let’s practice (to):
PUT THE WORDS IN BRACKETS IN THE CORRECT ORDER.

a. 1. I _________________________ sugar in my tea. (take/not/usually)
2. ‘Where’s Jim?’ ‘He _________________________ home early.’ (gone/has/probably)
3. Ann _________________________ very generous. (is/always)
4. Tim is a good pianist. He _________________________ . (very/sing/also/well/can)
5. Our tv _________________________ down. (breaking/always/is)
6. We _________________________ a long time for the bus. (to/have/always/wait)
7. My sight isn’t very good. I _________________________ with glasses. (read/can/only)
8. I _________________________ tomorrow. (probably/early/leaving/will/be)
9. I’m afraid I _________________________ come to the party. (to/won’t/probably/able/be)
10. If we hadn’t done it, we _________________________ each other. (never/met/might/have)

b. 1. we/interesting/found/the/some/library/books/in
2. football/Ken/play does/weekend/every
3. park/building/opposite/new/they/a/are/hotel/the
4. his/minutes/a/I/few/name/remembered/after
5. write/page/please/top/name/of/the/at/your/the
6. Friday/go/bank/I/every/the/to
7. late/did/come/why/so/you/home
8. London/going/few/to/I’m/week/a/for/days/next
9. the/on/see/night/at/Saturday/you/didn’t/I/party
10. morning/town/I’ve/around/all/the/walking/been