

**Must Know:**

Subjects composed of two nouns joined by the coordinating conjunction “and” take a singular verb when the two nouns name a single entity, such as “bed and breakfast,” or “rice and beans.”

**Must Know:**

The verb in a clause or sentence containing a compound subject joined by the conjunctions “or,” “nor,” “either ... or,” or “neither ... nor” must agree with the subject noun to which it is closest.

**Must Know:**

When the context of a sentence containing a subject made up of a collective noun followed by a prepositional phrase makes it clear that the group is acting as a single unit, a singular verb is required.

**Must Know:**

When the context of a sentence containing a collective noun followed by a prepositional phrase makes it clear that the members of the group are *not* acting as a single unit but rather as individuals, a plural verb is required.

²Note that, when “whoever” precedes a plural noun, as in, for example, “whoever the owners,” the plural noun may be the subject of the sentence and take a plural verb, as in:

Whoever **the owners are**, they are doing a great job of preserving the wetlands on the property.



Must Know:

Singular indefinite pronouns always take singular verbs. These pronouns are: “anybody,” “anyone,” “anything,” “each,” “*either,” “everybody,” “everyone,” “everything,” “neither¹,” “nobody,” “no one,” “nothing,” “one,” “somebody,” “someone,” “something,” and “whoever².”



Must Know:

When a subject begins with the word(s) “every,” “each,” “many a,” or “many an,” the subject always takes a singular verb.



Must Know:

A plural indefinite pronoun always takes a plural verb. These pronouns include: “both,” “few,” “many,” and “several.”



Must Know:

The SANAMM indefinite pronouns, “some,” “any,” “none,” “all,” “more,” and “most,” can be singular or plural depending on their referents.



Must Know:

When a subject begins with one of the indefinite pronouns “some,” “any,” “none,” “all,” “more,” or “most,” we can’t ignore the prepositional phrase that comes between the subject and the verb.

**Must Know:**

Subjects that begin with “the number of” take singular verbs. Subjects that begin with “a number of” take plural verbs.

**Must Know:**

A subject that begins with “the percentage of” takes a singular verb.

**Must Know:**

A subject that begins with “a percentage of” takes a verb that agrees in number with what the percentage is a percentage of.

**Must Know:**

A subject that begins with a fraction such as “half” or “one-fourth” can take a singular or plural verb depending on what the fraction is a fraction of. **When a subject begins with a fraction, we cannot ignore a prepositional phrase that comes between the fraction and the main verb.**

**Must Know:**

In a situation involving a subject that is a portion described via the use of the word “percent,” whether the subject is singular or plural depends on whether what the portion is a portion of is singular or plural.

You are correct, **pk6969**, that a *proportion* is a singular noun. So, too, are other “counting” nouns such as *percent* and *number*. However, this is one of those rare cases in which not only the object of the preposition—here, *women*—but also the article ahead of the counting word dictates subject-verb agreement. The article *a* or *an* calls for agreement with the object of the preposition, so the sentence will adopt a plural agreement with, say, *women*. Change *a* to *the*, though, and now *the proportion* is considered a singular standalone entity. I know it may be confusing, but the concept is one of those finer points of grammar that pops up now and then on the GMAT™, and learning how to sort out what is what can be useful. To better illustrate, both of the following sentences are grammatically sound:

- 1) **A proportion of turtles** never **make** it back to the sea, lured by the bright lights of the city.
- 2) **The number of countries** opting to sign the new bill **is** lower than was anticipated.

I hope that helps. Good luck with your studies.

- Andrew

Singular	Plural
alumnus	alumni
criterion	criteria
datum ¹	data ¹
fungus	fungi
medium ²	media ²
phenomenon	phenomena
nucleus	nuclei
syllabus	syllabi

Furthermore, there are some nouns that appear to be plural, but are actually singular. Among these are words such as “mathematics,” “measles,” and “news.” When these words act as subjects, they take singular verbs. Consider the sentences below:

Mathematics **is** my worst subject.

Good news **makes** me smile.

Diabetes **is** on the rise in the United States.

The mumps **is** a disease that affects only humans.

Note that some of these nouns that appear to be plural are fields of study that end in –ics, such as “politics,” “economics,” “ethics,” “statistics,” “linguistics,” and the aforementioned “mathematics.” When used to denote a branch of study, these nouns are always singular. However, some of them can also be used to refer to a set of something (for instance, beliefs), and in those cases they are plural. Consider the sentences below:



Must Know:

Subjects in the forms of infinitives, gerunds, and noun phrases/clauses always take singular verbs.

Modifiers



Must Know:

When we encounter prepositional phrases of time, we must take extra care to ensure that their placement does not result in ambiguity, confusion, or an illogical meaning.



Must Know:

In Sentence Correction questions, the words “that” and “which” are not interchangeable. The relative pronoun “that” introduces restrictive relative clauses, whereas the relative pronoun “which” introduces nonrestrictive relative clauses.

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Must Know:

To determine whether an underlined clause is restrictive or nonrestrictive, eliminate it from the sentence. If it can be eliminated without the meaning of the sentence changing, it is nonrestrictive and will use the pronoun “which.”



Must Know:

Nonrestrictive relative clauses must always be set off from the rest of sentences by commas.



Must Know:

When the word “which” is preceded by a preposition or is used to mean “which one,” no comma preceding “which” is necessary.



Must Know:

A relative clause may be separated from the noun that it modifies by another modifier, such as a prepositional phrase or an appositive.

**Must Know:**

Certain types of main verbs that indicate arrival, positioning, and coming into being can exist between a relative clause and the noun that it modifies in cases in which there is unlikely to be any confusion and the author would like to avoid putting the main verb after a long intervening relative clause.

e.g. Answer E

Gusty westerly winds will continue to usher in a seasonably cool air mass into the region, as a broad area of high pressure will build and bring fair and dry weather for several days.

(A) to usher in a seasonably cool air mass into the region, as a broad area of high pressure will build and

(B) ushering in a seasonably cool air mass into the region and a broad area of high pressure will build that

(C) to usher in a seasonably cool air mass to the region, a broad area of high pressure building, and

(D) ushering a seasonably cool air mass in the region, with a broad area of high pressure building and

(E) to usher a seasonably cool air mass into the region while a broad area of high pressure builds, which will

**Must Know:**

Commit the following two lists to memory.

Subject Pronouns: I, you, he, she, it, we, they, who

Object Pronouns: me, you, him, her, it, us, them, whom

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**Must Know:**

Entities made up of people such as teams, groups, or classes, are considered things when the context treats such an entity as a single unit and, in such cases, are referred to via the use of the relative pronouns “that” or “which.”

**Must Know:**

Appositives generally appear on the GMAT in the form of nouns, pronouns, noun phrases, or noun clauses that modify other nouns, pronouns, noun phrases, or noun clauses.

**Must Know:**

If, when we replace a noun in a sentence with its modifier, the sentence retains its core meaning, the noun modifier is an appositive.

**Must Know:**

GMAT Sentence Correction questions often contain structures called “abstract appositives,” which, rather than rename and modify specific words or phrases, rename and modify entire ideas presented in clauses.

**Must Know:**

In Sentence Correction questions, abstract appositives may appear in sentence versions that are more effective than versions created via the use of other structures.

**Must Know:**

A participle is a verb form that functions as a modifier. Participles come in two varieties: present participles, which always end in -ing, and past participles, which usually end in -ed or -en.

**Must Know:**

Participial phrases that modify specific nouns generally modify those nouns restrictively, meaning that the phrases somehow further define the nouns.

**Must Know:**

For the purpose of evaluating placement, a present participial phrase that appears at the beginning or in the middle of a clause and is set off from the rest of the clause by a comma or commas can be treated as a nonrestrictive noun modifier.

**Must Know:**

A present participial phrase can be used to modify an entire preceding clause, in which case the phrase is set off from the preceding clause by a comma and may have as its agent the subject of the clause that it modifies.

**Must Know:**

Present participial phrases that modify entire clauses often describe the results of the actions mentioned in the preceding clauses, the causes of the events described in the preceding clauses, or events that were occurring while the events described in the preceding clause were occurring.

3. Modifiers

3.14.6 How Past Participial Phrases Are Used In Sentences

Past participial phrases, phrases based on past participles (usually “-ed” or “-en” verbs), are used in two ways:

- (1) Past participial phrases are used to restrictively modify nouns, in which cases the phrases are placed directly before or after the nouns that they modify and are not separated from the nouns by commas.
- (2) Past participial phrases are used to nonrestrictively modify nouns, in which cases the phrases may appear directly before or directly after the nouns that they modify and are separated from the nouns and other sentence elements by commas.

**Must Know:**

Be on the lookout for an introductory phrase that begins with a past participle; we may have a misplaced modifier question on our hands. The noun that follows an introductory phrase that begins with a past participle must be the noun that that phrase intends to modify.

**Must Know:**

Be on the lookout for an introductory phrase that begins with a present participle; we may have a misplaced modifier question on our hands. The subject of the clause that follows an introductory phrase that begins with a present participle must be the noun that that phrase is meant to modify.

**Must Know:**

When an introductory noun modifier is followed by a clause that has “it” as its subject, the modifier may not logically modify “it.”

**Must Know:**

Be on the lookout for a modifying phrase followed by a possessive noun. In such a case, the modification and the resulting sentence may be illogical.

**Must Know:**

An absolute phrase is a phrase composed of a noun and its modifiers that modifies an entire clause, adding information that is descriptive or explanatory.

An abstract appositive names what was stated in the preceding clause, adding information in the process.

An absolute phrase does not name what was stated by preceding clause. It adds entirely new information.

VERBS



Must Know:

When a connecting word or phrase such as “once,” “as soon as,” “as long as,” “until,” “when,” “after,” or “before” is used to connect a present tense clause to a future tense clause, the present tense clause is understood to be about a condition that will exist in the future, and the future tense clause is about an event related to that condition.



Must Know:

The future in the past is used when sentences about past events refer to events that were in the future when the past events occurred.

The future in the past can be formed either via the use of the past tense of “will,” which is “would,” or via the use of a past tense form of “to be” in a “to be” + “going to” expression. For example, the future in the past could use “was going to.”



Must Know:

In sentences that describe events in the past, the helping verb “would” can be used to indicate that an action was habitual.



Must Know:

The present perfect tense may be used in sentences that include a preposition such as “in,” “within,” “for,” “during,” or “over” immediately followed by the phrase “the past [X amount of time].”

It's helpful to memorize this list of verbs that are often followed by the command subjunctive.

Advise	Ask	Command	Decree
Demand	Desire	Determine	Dictate
Insist	Mandate	Order	Pray
Prefer	Propose	Recommend	Request
Require	Stipulate	Suggest	Urge

Parallelism

**Must Know:**

A structure built around one of the FANBOYS must be parallel.

**Must Know:**

The coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS): ‘For,’ ‘And,’ ‘Nor,’ ‘But,’ ‘Or,’ ‘Yet,’ ‘So.’

**Must Know:**

A repeating element that is essential to what introduces a list must either appear once, before the first item in the list, OR appear in every one of the items in the list. Such a repeating element cannot appear haphazardly in the list.

**Must Know:**

Sometimes we’ll encounter a list within a list. We call these structures nested lists. In other words, a nested list is a list within one of the elements of another list.

**Must Know:**

The most important correlative conjunctions to learn are “both ... and,” “not only ... but also,” “not only ... but ... as well,” “not ... but,” “either ... or,” and “neither ... nor.”

5.16 Other Structures That Demand Parallelism

So far in this chapter, we’ve seen many situations in which parallelism must be maintained. In addition to those situations, each of the following structures demands parallelism.

X rather than Y

mistake X for Y

prefer X to Y

range from X to Y

more X than Y (in certain contexts)



Must Know:

A general strategy that we can employ in answering Sentence Correction questions involving parallel structures is the following: if we have to choose between two choices, both of which seem basically correct, we choose the choice the use of which results in the more parallel structure.

- Parallelism: **similar elements** in a series expressed in **similar form**

One prepositional phrase → all prepositional phrases

One participial phrase → all participial phrases

One relative clause → all relative clauses

Comparison:

In general, we must be very vigilant for errors and ambiguities in meaning and logic when pronouns refer to nouns that are immediately followed by modifiers, such as “dogs that live in the house,” “women who attend Stanford University,” or “elephants that live in Africa.”



Must Know:

Logical comparisons can be created via the substitution of “does” or “do” for repeated present tense action verbs or verb phrases and “did” for repeated past tense action verbs or verb phrases.



Must Know:

Verbs of multiple tenses can appear in comparisons as long as the resulting comparisons make sense.



Must Know:

It’s important to pay attention to the verbs used in comparisons, because the use of the wrong verb in a sentence that expresses a comparison can render the sentence illogical.



Must Know:

Words that would otherwise be repeated in a sentence that expresses a comparison can be omitted as long as the sentence effectively expresses its meaning without the omitted words.



Must Know:

Nouns that name quantities of time, money, or weight are treated as uncountable nouns.

6.15 “Greater Than” Versus “More Than”

“Greater than” is used in comparing the sizes, levels, degrees, magnitudes, or extents of things.

“Greater than” is synonymous with “larger than” or “higher than.”

“More ... than” is not synonymous with “larger than” or “higher than.” “More” can be used in multiple ways, including as a determiner that directly modifies what follows it.



Must Know:

When comparing statistics, use “greater than”; do not use “more than.”

The more coffee these doctors drank, the greater was their likelihood of having coronary disease

We are using greater because likelihood is also the degree/magnitude

Always use greater than when mentioned 3 times , 5 times. E.g. 5x, 3x