

Grammar Explanation

Correct word order in sentences (additional rules)

- When describing nouns, place the adjective clause (beginning with *that, which, who*, etc.) immediately after the noun or noun phrase that it describes.
 - Confusing: *The company sold **toys** in many countries **that are unsafe**.*
(The *countries* are not unsafe; the *toys* are unsafe.)
 - Corrected: *The company sold **toys that are unsafe** in many countries.*
- When describing nouns, place the prepositional phrase (a phrase beginning with *by, in, on*, etc.) after the specific noun or noun phrase it describes.
 - Confusing: *I chose an **article** in the sociology textbook **by Helen Lee** because it was the best researched article in the book.*
(Helen Lee is not the author of the *textbook*; she is the author of *an article* in the textbook.)
 - Corrected: *I chose an **article by Helen Lee** in the sociology textbook because it was the best researched article in the book.*
- When describing the entire sentence, place the prepositional phrase at the beginning of the sentence, not next to a noun. Otherwise, the sentence can be confusing.
 - Confusing: *I read several articles about the importance of the environment **in this class**.*
(The articles are not about *the environment in the class*; they are about *the environment* in general.)
 - Corrected: ***In this class**, I read several articles about the importance of the environment.*
- When describing a verb, do not put an adverb (e.g., *always, carefully*) between the verb and the object.
 - Incorrect: *Middle-class Americans do not have **always** health insurance.*
 - Corrected: *Middle-class Americans do not **always** have health insurance.*

Excerpted from: Sentence Structure: Exercise 2