

Complements A complement is a word or group of words that says something about the subject or object of a sentence. Beware: The word 'complement' is used in grammatical descriptions of English in a number of different ways, referring to various categories of word or word-group that are needed to complete the sense of a sentence. The verb that links a subject and a subject-complement is called a linking verb: Some plums are green and some are purple. Grammar Help It can be difficult to distinguish a sentence consisting of Subject + Verb + Direct Object from one consisting of Subject + Verb + Subject-complement. (Stella – chairman) We've appointed Susan the union rep. (Susan = the union rep) Direct and indirect objects, on the other hand, always refer to different people or things: She lent me her new pen. A complement is always a noun or an adjective or a word-group that functions like a noun or an adjective. Linking verbs are also known as intensive verbs or copulas. However, a 'Verb + Object' construction says what somebody does to something, whereas a 'Verb + Complement' construction says what somebody or something is or is like: She tasted the juice. Other uses of the word 'complement' will be described in later units of this book. A 'complement' is called a complement because it 'completes' the sense of a sentence by saying what someone or something is or is like. Copula is a Latin word meaning 'link'. Subject-complements A subject-complement says something about the subject of the sentence, for example what it is or what it is like. (= You are a silly boy!) Object-complements An object-complement says something about the direct object of a sentence. (transitive verb) She got very scared. (linking verb) Did You Know? (verb + indirect object + direct object) She called him an idiot. We always thought her very reliable. They felt really stupid when they saw what they had done. You'll get wet if you go out in the rain. She got angrier and angrier. Joan felt a bit silly. Leaves turn brown in autumn. I am an old man now. She was so tired after working all day in the garden. Her eyes are blue. Someday I will prove you wrong! Did You Know? Did You Know? Her daughter seems very happy in her new job. This cheese is nice. Three years later he became a priest. That girl's my daughter and that's her boyfriend over there. His reaction was a bit over the top. Her parents are doctors. She seems very happy. That tastes nice. That smells good. She became an American citizen in 1981. The weather has turned out fine again today. (me # her new pen) Did you show her the photos? (her # the photos) 2