

HOW TO SOLVE SENTENCE IMPROVEMENT QUESTIONS:

Keep a Close Watch on the Following Points:

1. Subject-verb Agreement: It is necessary to consider the verb according to the subject. Verbs should always be dependent on the subject or the vice-versa. Like, if the subject is plural then verb should also be plural, and if it is singular, then the given verb will also be singular.

For example:

The boys were abandoning the residence where they had been living since 2010 **(Plural)**

The boy was abandoning the residence where he had been living since 2010 **(Singular)**

Likewise, other points should always be kept in mind such as collective nouns, confusing pair of words, objective and normative cases etc.

2. Repetition: Sometimes, there is redundancy in the sentence. In other words, the same thing is written twice in a single statement. Most of the times, you can spot such errors easily.

Example: I returned back from Goa. **(Incorrect)**

I came back from Goa. **(Correct)**

3. Misplaced Modifiers: One of the most common problems is where to place them. Specifically, modifiers can cause confusion or unintentional humor in a sentence when they are placed too far from the noun they are modifying. For example, consider the following sentence:

Only Maiden wants pizza

Maiden wants pizza **only**

4. Parallelism: What exactly can be parallelism in sentence? Well, it relates to the structure of the sentence. Putting it other ways, the different phrases/words performing the same function should be used in the same format. Example:

Preeti likes to dance, sing and cook. **(Correct)**

Preeti likes dancing, singing and cooking. **(Correct)**

Preeti likes to dance, sing and cooking. **(Incorrect)**

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5. Error in diction: A diction error refers to the error in choice of words/phrases. At other times, even some idioms occur in sentences in an incorrect way. Common pair of words and phrases where you may face diction error are:

- affect v/s effect (E.g. the effect of the decision, ..affect the outcome)
- adapt v/s adopt
- argue against v/s argue with
- later v/s latter
- lay v/s lie
- few v/s less (E.g. less water left., ..few students in class)

6. Wrong Comparisons: Sometimes we end up comparing things which are not logical or equivalent. Like, we have to compare furniture with furniture and persons with persons. You can't compare a table to a person.

Ravi is wiser than all men. **(Incorrect way)**

Ravi is wiser than all other men. **(Correct way- Ravi needs to be excluded from the rest of the same category.)**

In the above example, comparative degree is used. **But in case of superlative degree, the person/thing compared is included in the rest of the class. E.g. Ravi is the strongest of all men.**

7. Relative noun and pronoun agreement: Pronoun should always have clear antecedent. If it fails to do so, then it should be replaced by a proper noun. Likewise, in the noun agreement, single person or thing can't take a plural noun or vice-versa.

Example: It is incorrect to say 'John and Sarah want to become a doctor'.
The correct sentence is 'John and Sarah want to become doctors'.

Some Tips to Improve The Proficiency One Should Keep in Mind:

- Analyze the tone of the given statement or sentence. It can be positive, negative, sarcastic, critical or analytical. Keeping in mind the purview of the whole scenario, one can easily spot the incorrect part of the sentence after a deep analysis.
- Use elimination before you do anything. This is the quickest approach one can easily apply to every situation. If you are unable to spot the exact error, eliminate.
- It is not mandatory that there should always be errors present in the sentence. Often, there are no errors present in the statement and the sentence is grammatically correct. Try to curtail the tendency of always finding the errors and improving it. You can also go for "no correction required" sometimes.
- Of course, the knowledge of fundamental concepts should be there. And obviously, one must be hand in glove with the grammatical rules of Verbal.

