

Direct objects are the nouns that receive the action. They answer the question “who” or “what” about the verb. For example:

Jo ate the cookies. “Ate” is the verb (action). Who or what did Jo eat? Cookies. So “cookies” is the direct object. Usually the direct object comes after the verb. However, in the passive tense, the direct object comes first.

EX: The cookies were eaten by Jo.

Direct objects only follow action verbs. In the sentence “Jo is a baker.”, baker is not the direct object. It is called a subject complement. We will talk about those later. Just remember, the verb must be an action verb to have a direct object.

The direct objects are underlined in these sentences. Study the sentences.

Tom hit the ball. Mary won an award. The baby threw the food. The kids played baseball.
Gloria hates broccoli. Brenda skipped class on Thursday because she had a headache.

Don't get distracted by phrases. Notice the direct object in these sentences.

We use a key to get into the apartment.

When it rains, I take an umbrella.

I pack my boots if snow is in the forecast.

Gus wears contact lenses while he does his homework.

Underline the direct objects in these sentences.

1. Mother is baking ten pies for the party.
2. Grandpa sent a birthday card to my daughter.
3. Jesse practices piano every day.
4. The boys built a castle out of sand.
5. Because it rained, we sold fewer cakes.
6. The students ate their lunch in silence.
7. Jim failed math last semester.
8. A good teacher inspires students to perform better.
9. Amy had a book from the library in her locker.
10. TV audiences love reality programs.

Direct objects cannot be inside a prepositional phrase. Nouns inside a prepositional phrase are objects of the preposition.

Example: We waited for the bus. “Bus” is not the direct object. It is the object of the preposition.

Indirect objects are the nouns or pronouns who receive the BENEFIT of the action. For example, Joe baked Mother a birthday cake. “Cake” is the direct object because it answers “Who or what did Joe bake.” Mother is the indirect object because she received the “baking”.

You cannot have an indirect object unless you have a direct object. So you cannot have an indirect object if there is no action verb.

A pronoun used as an indirect object must be an “object pronoun” not a “subject pronoun”. Subject pronouns are “HE, SHE, IT, WE, THEY”

Object pronouns are “HIM, HER, IT, US, THEM”.

Don't say:

I gave he a book. SAY I gave him a book.

Mom baked we a cake SAY Mom baked us a cake.

Audiences love they. SAY Audiences love them.

The indirect objects are underlined. Study the sentences.

They told us a lie.

Tom took her the book.

We gave Mother a new dictionary.

Gary bought me a new cell phone.

Indirect objects can be in a prepositional phrase. Study this example.

Mom passed Carol the peas.

Mom passed the peas to Carol.

In both sentences, "Carol" is the indirect object.

Underline the indirect objects.

1. Tom gave Linda his homework.
2. We gave them a ride home.
3. Dad paid the mechanic \$200.
4. Don't tell the children any ghost stories tonight!
5. They gave the beggar some money.
6. We kicked the ball to the first basemen.
7. Sherry and Marty took me to the party.
8. My brother loaned me some money.
9. My sister loaned some money to my cousin.
10. I showed Dad the new computer.
11. We gave the children their awards.
12. Sara offered us her room while we were in Paris.
13. She sold me a horse.
14. Dad made me a desk from the extra wood.
15. We gave some money to the church.

Use the verbs in parenthesis to create sentences with a direct and indirect object.

1. (made) _____
2. (told) _____
3. (asked) _____
4. (bought) _____
5. (offered) _____
6. (sold) _____
7. (gave) _____
8. (threw) _____

Practice using indirect objects by talking about the topics below:

1. Things you have received from a friend: I received _____ from my friend.
2. Things your Mother has given you: Mother gave me _____
3. Things you give your relatives on birthdays: I gave _____ a new _____.
4. Causes you give money to: I give _____ money.
5. Things someone made for you: "My dad made me _____.