Złote zasady j. angielskiego

Ponad pięćdziesiąt zasad, których powinien przestrzegać każdy, kto pragnie porozumiewać się w języku angielskim. Artykuł jest też listą gaf językowych, których popełnienie w towarzystwie może kosztować Cię twoją dobrym reputację.

Golden Grammar Rules

selected from Practical English Usage by M. Swan

(3rd edition)

1. Another is one word.

Can I have another cup of coffee? (NOT an other cup...)  
Ann's going to look for another job.

2. After would rather, use an infinitive (without to) or a past tense, not a present tense.

I'd rather stay at home this evening. (NOT I'd rather to stay at home...) 
I would rather you paid me in cash. (NOT I would rather you pay me in cash.)

3. Use an -ing form after be/get used to.

I'm used to driving in London now, but it was hard at the beginning. (NOT I'm used to drive...) 
I'll never get used to living in this place.

4. How long are you here for? asks about the future.

'How long are you here for?' 'Till Easter.' (NOT 'Since Christmas.')

5. Don't use could to talk about something that you succeeded in doing.

I managed to run 10 km yesterday in under an hour. (NOT I could run 10 km yesterday...)  
How many eggs were you able to get? (NOT ...could you get?)

6. Indirect questions usually have the same construction as statements.

I asked where her parents were. (NOT USUALLY I asked where were her parents.) 
The policeman wanted to know where I lived. (NOT ...where did I live?)

7. To say that something is not necessary, use needn't or don't have to, not mustn't.

You needn't pay now; tomorrow will be OK. (NOT You mustn't pay now; tomorrow will be OK.)
I don't have to wear a tie at work. (NOT I mustn't wear a tie at work.)

8. Everything is a singular word.

Everything was broken. (NOT Everything were broken.) 
Is everything ready?

9. Use because or so, but not both together.

Because the train was late I missed the meeting. OR The train was late, so I missed the meeting. (BUT NOT
Because the train was late, so I missed the meeting.)

10. We say something to a person.

She never says 'Hello' to me. (NOT She never says me 'Hello'.)
Andrew has said nothing to Peter. (NOT Andrew has said Peter nothing.)

11. We don't normally use to after arrive.

What time do we arrive in Bedford? (NOT ... arrive to Bedford?)
The train arrived at our station half an hour late.

12. Because is a conjunction; because of is a preposition.

We cancelled the match because it rained. (NOT ... because of it rained.)
We cancelled the match because of the rain. (NOT ... because the rain.)

13. After the verb lack, no preposition is necessary.

The soup lacks salt. (NOT ... lacks of salt.)
It's a good novel, but it lacks structure.

14. Before (meaning 'before that') follows an expression of time.

Last summer, I decided to go and visit the town that I had left eight years before. (NOT ... before eight years.)
I had already met her once, about three years before.

15. News is singular.

All the news is bad. (NOT All the news are bad.)
BBC Radio 4. Here is the news.

16. You borrow something from somebody.

I borrowed the money from my mother. (NOT I borrowed my mother the money.)
Can we borrow some glasses from you?

17. We prefer closed, not shut, before a noun.

When I talk to you, I feel as if I'm standing in front of a closed door. (NOT ... a shut door.)
He's got a closed mind. You can't tell him anything.

18. We say come from (present) to give our town, country etc of origin.

Sarah comes from Texas. (NOT Sarah came from Texas.)
Where do you come from?

19. Comparatives are made with more or -er, but not both.

The weather is getting colder. (NOT ... more colder.)
Please try to be more polite. (NOT ... more politer.)

20. We don't use on the contrary to give another side of a question.

It's hard work. On the other hand, it's interesting. (NOT on the contrary, it's interesting.)
She's very bad-tempered. On the other hand, she's generous.

21. In affirmative sentences we generally use a long time, not long, except in a very formal style.
We waited a long time, but she didn’t come. (NOT We waited long, but …)

It will be a long time before we invite her again.

22. Use superlatives to compare people and things with the groups that they belong to.

Sandra is the tallest of the five girls. (NOT Sandra is the taller of the five girls.)

I think I’m the oldest person in the class.

23. We usually use in after dressed.

She was dressed in yellow from head to foot. She looked like a daffodil.

The bride was dressed in white silk.

24. We don’t use it … + infinitive with allow.

Smoking is not allowed. (NOT It is not allowed to smoke.)

We weren’t allowed to use calculators in the exam. (NOT It wasn’t allowed to use …)

25. Whose means ‘who is’ or ‘who has’; whose is a possessive.

Who’s that? (NOT Whose that?)

Who’s taken my keys? (NOT Whose taken my keys?)

Whose coat is that? (NOT Who’s coat is that?)

26. We don’t usually use other with uncountable nouns.

Can I have more rice? (NOT … other rice?)

Perhaps we should use different oil. (NOT … other oil.)

27. We use either, not any, to talk about two people or things.

I can write with either hand. (NOT … with any hand.)

28. Don’t put articles and possessives together before nouns.

She’s a friend of mine. OR She’s my friend. (BUT NOT She's a my friend.)

Peter’s lost his keys. (NOT … the his keys.)

29. We say that somebody is good, bad, clever etc at something.

My sister is very good at maths. (NOT … good in maths.)

I’m not very clever at languages.

30. Don’t leave out a/an in negative expressions.

Don’t got out without a coat. (NOT … without coat.)

It’s difficult to get there if you haven’t got a car. (NOT … if you haven’t got car.)

31. We use any, not every, to say ‘one or another’.

‘Which newspaper would you like?’ ‘It doesn’t matter. Any one.’ (NOT … every one.)
‘When would you like to come to dinner?’ ‘Any day is OK.’

32. Advice is uncountable.

Can you give me some advice? (NOT ... an advice?)
My father gave me three pieces of advice. (NOT ... three advices.)

33. We don’t use some if we know the exact number.

You’ve got beautiful fingers. (NOT ... some beautiful fingers.)
A mountain bike needs to have strong wheels. (NOT ... some strong wheels.)

34. We drop articles in some common expressions with school and bed.

Why isn’t Angela at school today? (NOT ... at the school today?)
I want to spend a day in bed.

35. When which? what? or who? are subjects, we make questions without do.

Which costs more - the blue one or the grey one? (NOT Which does cost more ...?)
What happened to your car? (NOT What did happen to your car?)
Who phoned? (NOT Who did phone?)

36. We drop articles after the amount/number of.

I was surprised by the amount of money that was collected. (NOT ... the amount of the money ...)
The number of unemployed rose sharply last month. (NOT The number of the unemployed...)

37. We use because, not as or since, if the reason is the most important part of the sentence.

Why am I leaving? I’m leaving because I’m fed up. (NOT I’m leaving as/since I’m fed up.)
They’re laughing because they think your hat’s funny.

38. Travel is normally uncountable.

I like travel.
We went on a trip/journey to the Antarctic last spring. (NOT We went on a travel ...)

39. Can has no infinitive. We use be able to instead.

I’d like to be able to sing. (NOT ... to can sing.)
When will you be able to meet us?

40. We don’t normally use an infinitive after why.

I know how to do it, and I know when to do it, but I don’t know why I should do it. (NOT ... I don’t know why to do it.)
Why do we lock this office?

41. Demonstratives replace articles.
I don’t like that colour. (NOT ... the that colour.)

Have you seen this report? (NOT ... the this report.)

**42. We don’t normally use progressive forms of hear.**

I *(can)* hear the sea. (NOT I am hearing the sea.)

I think I *(can)* hear Peter coming up the stairs.

**43. After discuss, no preposition is necessary.**

We spent half an hour *discussing* the weather. (NOT ... discussing about the weather.)

Let’s *discuss* your plans.

**44. We usually drop at in questions beginning What time ...?**

*What time* would you like to eat? (NOT USUALLY At what time ...?)

I’m not sure *what time* the film starts.

**45. We say on holiday (singular).**

I’ll be *on holiday* next week. (NOT ... on holidays ...)

We met John and Virginia when we were *on holiday* in Greece.

**46. Don’t drop a before hundred.**

Our family has lived here for *a hundred* years. (NOT ... for hundred years.)

The factory is about *a hundred* miles west of London.

**47. If you can’t see or find somebody, they are nowhere to be seen/found.**

When I went back to the car park, my car was *nowhere to be seen*. (NOT ... my car was nowhere to see.)

The children were *nowhere to be found*. (NOT ... nowhere to find.)

**48. We don’t normally use might to talk about past possibility.**

I felt very hot and thirsty. *Perhaps* I was ill. (NOT ... I might be ill.)

I saw a girl going into Peter’s house. *Maybe* it was Jeanne. (NOT ... It might be Jeanne.)

**49. We use beat, not win, to say that one person defeats another in a game, fight etc.**

My girlfriend *beat* me at poker last night. (NOT My girlfriend won me at poker last night.)

Aberdeen *beat* Bristol 3-0.

**50. With abbreviations, the difference between a and an depends on pronunciation, not spelling.**

She’s a US citizen. (NOT She’s an US citizen.)

Would you like to be an MP? (NOT ... a MP?)

**51. Weather is uncountable.**

We had *terrible weather* last week. (NOT ... a terrible weather ...)
I hope we get **good weather** at the weekend.

**52. Words like President, King, Doctor in titles have no article.**

**President Nixon** resigned over the Watergate scandal. (NOT The President Nixon ...)

I'd like to see **Dr Franklin.** (NOT ... the Dr Franklin.)

**53. We usually use over, not across, to mean 'on/to the other side of something high'.**

Why are you climbing **over** that wall? (NOT ... across that wall?)

I threw his keys **over** the fence, where he couldn't get them.

**54. Actually means 'really' or 'in fact', not 'now'.**

She said she was 18, but **actually** she was 15.

In 1900 the population of London was higher than it is now. (NOT ... than it actually is.)

**55. Asleep and afraid are not normally used before nouns.**

He had the innocent expression of a **sleeping** baby. (NOT ... of an asleep baby.)

In the house, we found a **frightened** child hiding in the kitchen. (NOT ... an afraid child.)

**56. We don't usually put an adverb and its complement together before a noun.**

We're looking for people **who are skilled in design.** (NOT ... skilled in design people.)

He has a **difficult** accent to understand. (NOT ... a difficult to understand accent.)

**57. Eventually means 'finally', not 'possibly' or 'perhaps'.**

It took a long time, but **eventually** he finished his studies.

I'm not sure what I'll do next year. **Perhaps** I'll go to university if I can get a place. (NOT Eventually I'll go to university ...)

**58. We don't usually use too before adjective + noun.**

The problem was **too difficult.** (BUT NOT It was a too difficult problem.)

I put down the bag because it was **too heavy.** (BUT NOT I put down the too heavy bag.)

**59. We usually put descriptive adjectives before classifying adjectives.**

An **old political** idea (NOT A political old idea)

The **latest educational** reform (NOT The educational latest reform)

**60. Nouns referring to nationality are often different from the corresponding adjectives.**

Ellis considers himself a typical **Welshman.** (NOT ... a typical Welsh.)

She's married to a **Spaniard.** (NOT ... a Spanish.)

**61. Adjectives that express opinions usually come before other descriptive adjectives.**

a **lovely cool** drink (NOT a cool lovely drink)
their wonderful old house (NOT their old wonderful house)

62. Pronoun objects come before adverb particles.

Can you switch it on, please? (NOT ...switch on it...)
I’m going to throw them all out. (NOT ... throw out them all.)

63. Adverbs can’t usually be used instead of adjectives.

She danced happily into the room. (NOT She danced happy ...)
I’m terribly sorry. (NOT I’m terrible sorry.)

64. After all doesn’t mean ‘finally’. It means ‘all things considered’ or ‘in spite of what was expected’.

It took a long time, but finally we found our dream house. (NOT ... but after all we found our dream house.)
She can make her own bed. After all, she’s not a baby any more.
I expected to fail the exam, but I passed after all.

65. Ago comes after an expression of time.

Ann phoned two hours ago. (NOT ... ago two hours.)
I should have finished this work six weeks ago.

66. We don’t normally use all without a noun to mean ‘everybody’.

Everybody was quiet. (NOT All were quiet.)
I’ve written to everybody. (NOT I’ve written to all.)

67. In exclamations with how, the adjective or adverb comes immediately after how.

How cold it is! (NOT How it is cold!)
How well she sings! (NOT How she sings well!)

68. We don’t use every with uncountable nouns.

I like all music. (NOT I like every music.)
I can do every kind of work. (NOT ... every work.)

69. After either, we use a singular noun.

I can come on Wednesday or Thursday - either day is OK. (NOT ... either days ...)
She can write with either hand.

70. We usually ask ‘What colour ...?’ without a preposition.

What colour is your new car? (NOT Of what colour ...?)
What colour is her hair this week?

71. We don’t usually drop nouns after adjectives.
Poor little boy! (NOT Poor little!)

The most important thing is to be happy. (NOT The most important is to be happy.)

72. All day doesn’t mean the same as every day.

I worked all day yesterday, from 8.00 till bedtime.

I worked every day except Sunday last week. (NOT ... all day except Sunday ...)

73. Don't drop a/an after what in exclamations.

What a rude man! (NOT What rude man!)

What an awful film! (NOT What awful film!)

74. Experience and experiment don’t mean the same.

We did an experiment in the chemistry lesson to see if you could get chlorine gas from salt. (NOT We did an experience ...)

I’m experimenting with a new perfume.

I had a lot of interesting experiences during my year in Africa. (NOT I had a lot of interesting experiments ...)

Have you ever experienced the feeling that you were going mad? (NOT Have you ever experimented the feeling ...?)

75. We don’t usually use reflexive pronouns after feel.

I feel really energetic today. (NOT I feel myself really ...)

Andrew often feels depressed. (NOT ... feels himself depressed.)

76. We use half without of in expressions of measurement and amount.

They live about half a mile from here. (NOT ... half of a mile ...)

I only need half a pint.

77. We use hear, not listen to, to say that something ‘comes to our ears’.

Suddenly I heard a strange noise. (NOT Suddenly I listened to a strange noise.)

Did you hear that?

78. After help, we can use object + infinitive (with or without to).

Can you help me (to) find my ring? (NOT ... help me finding my ring?)

Let me help you (to) wash up.

79. We usually say hope ... not, rather than do not hope.

I hope it doesn’t rain tomorrow. (NOT I don’t hope it rains tomorrow.)

‘Is Peter coming this evening?’ ‘I hope not.’

80. We say that you crash into something.

Granny crashed into a tree yesterday. (NOT Granny crashed against a tree yesterday.)
The plane crashed into a mountain.

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