

# **Lesson 7. Inversion**

# Lesson 7. Inversion

## Learning Objectives

**After this lesson, students will be able to:**

- Distinguish the normal order of sentences versus the inverted ones.
- Define and understand why inversions are done
- Recognize various usages of inverted sentences.
- Learn how to construct inverted sentences.
- Form inverted sentences based on random topics presented.

# Lesson 7. Inversion

Inversion of the verb before the subject is a common phenomenon in English sentences. The natural order of English sentences is:

(subject + verb + . . . .)

but sometimes it becomes:

(verb + subject)

An **inverted sentence** switches the placement of the verb before the subject of a sentence as if in a question. Inverted sentences are required with certain grammar structures, or used as a means of sentences stress or emphasis. Mainly, this is done to put more emphasis on the verb.

# Lesson 7. Inversion

Almost all forms of **interrogative sentences** (without *subject questions* and *embedded questions*) use inversion. These sentences always place the auxiliary verb before the subject.

Examples:

- ➔ **Is** he going to the club?
- ➔ **Did** he go to the club?
- ➔ Where **is** the club?
- ➔ Who is that guy standing there? (*No inversion for it is a subject question*)

The question form (auxiliary + subject + main verb) takes the place of the standard positive sentence structure (i.e. He goes to work every day) in inverted sentences.

- ➔ Not only do I enjoy classical music, but I also have a season ticket to the symphony.
- ➔ Seldom has the boss been so upset!
- ➔ So difficult has science become that only specialists can fathom its complexities.

In this case, the question form is substituted for standard sentence structure in a statement. Generally, an inversion is used to stress the uniqueness of an event and begins with a negative.

# Lesson 7. Inversion

1. Affirmative and negative agreement: only after ***so***, ***nor***, ***neither*** but not in the cases of ***either*** and ***too***.

## Examples:

- ➔ Alex went to the club, and so **did** his brother.
- ➔ Alex went to the club, and Jenny did too. (No inversion)
- ➔ Robert hasn't reached yet, neither **has** his companion.
- ➔ Robert hasn't reached yet; Robin hasn't either. (No inversion)
- ➔ Russel is not a footballer, and nor **is** Alex.

Create your own sentences.

# Lesson 7. Inversion

## 2. Negative adverbial expressions at the beginning of the sentence.

### Examples:

- ➔ In no way should we accept their offer.
- ➔ Little did they know about me.
- ➔ Never has he felt so embarrassed.
- ➔ Seldom do they go to a tour.
- ➔ Rarely do we see gypsies.
- ➔ Hardly ever do they talk to each other.



**Create your own sentences.**

# Lesson 7. Inversion

<b>Hardly</b>	<i>Hardly had I got into bed when the telephone rang.</i>
<b>Never</b>	<i>Never had she seen such a beautiful sight before.</i>
<b>Seldom</b>	<i>Seldom do we see such an amazing display of dance.</i>
<b>Rarely</b>	<i>Rarely will you hear such beautiful music.</i>
<b>Only then</b>	<i>Only then did I understand why the tragedy had happened.</i>
<b>Not only ... but</b>	<i>Not only does he love chocolate and sweets but he also smokes.</i>
<b>No sooner</b>	<i>No sooner had we arrived home than the police rang the doorbell.</i>
<b>Scarcely</b>	<i>Scarcely had I got off the bus when it crashed into the back of a car.</i>
<b>Only later</b>	<i>Only later did she really think about the situation.</i>
<b>Nowhere</b>	<i>Nowhere have I ever had such bad service.</i>
<b>Little</b>	<i>Little did he know!</i>
<b>Only in this way</b>	<i>Only in this way could John earn enough money to survive.</i>
<b>In no way</b>	<i>In no way do I agree with what you're saying.</i>
<b>On no account</b>	<i>On no account should you do anything without asking me first.</i>

# Lesson 7. Inversion

## 3. Beginning with **only** & **not only**.

### Examples:

- ➔ Only if they come would I go
- ➔ Only by researching can you solve this problem.
- ➔ Only after lunch can you play.
- ➔ Not only did they kill the adults, but they killed also the children.
- ➔ Only then did I understand the problem.
- ➔ Only when all the stars have gone out will I grasp the complexity of the universe.



**Create your own sentences.**



# Lesson 7. Inversion

## 4. Adverbials at the beginning of a sentence.

### Examples:

- ➔ Hardly had I reached there, he left.
- ➔ Seldom does the teacher finishes his class early.
- ➔ Rarely does Alex forget to do his
- ➔ Scarcely had I got out of bed when the doorbell rang.
- ➔ No sooner had he finished dinner, when she walked in the door.
- ➔ Barely had I walked in the door when my dog came rushing to greet me.



**Create your own sentences.**

# Lesson 7. Inversion

5. Adverbs of place (here & there) at the beginning of a sentence. This type of sentence requires the main verb (not the auxiliary verb) to come before the subject.

## Examples:

- ➔ There is a lady standing in front of the club.
- ➔ Here comes the king.
- ➔ Here is your home-made cola.
- ➔ There are so many people in that field.



**Create your own sentences.**

# Lesson 7. Inversion

6. Adverbs of place (here & there) at the beginning of a sentence. This type of sentence requires the main verb (not the auxiliary verb) to come before the subject.

## Examples:

- ➔ There is a lady standing in front of the club.
- ➔ Here comes the king.
- ➔ Here is your home-made cola.
- ➔ There are so many people in that field.

7. Some prepositional phrases at the beginning of a sentence.

## Examples:

- ➔ Into the room came she when I was sleeping.
- ➔ Behind me cries a child.
- ➔ Over the table hangs a painting.

**Create your own sentences.**

# Lesson 7. Inversion

8. Sometimes conditional forms are inverted as a means of sounding more formal. In this case, the conditional if is dropped and the inverted forms take the place of the if clause.

## Examples:

- ➔ Had he been there, he could have seen it.
- ➔ Were I the president, I could do the good things.
- ➔ Were he my brother, I would support him to reach his dreams.
- ➔ Should you go there, I will go with you.
- ➔ Had he understood the problem, he wouldn't have committed those mistakes.
- ➔ Should he decide to come, please telephone.
- ➔ Had I known, I would have helped him.



**Create your own sentences.**

# Lesson 7. Inversion

Rewrite the following sentences using the cue and proper structure or inverted sentences.

1. I haven't ever felt so lonely. - *never*
2. I couldn't work because of the loud noise. - *so*
3. She didn't play a lot of basketball. - *little*
4. Peter didn't understand the situation. If he had, he would have quit. - *had*
5. The story hasn't been told correctly. - *rarely*
6. She bought the car after he had explained its benefits. - *only after*
7. I don't eat pork very often. - *seldom*
8. I would have bought a new house if I had had enough money. - *had*
9. I will sign the check when you finish the work. - *only then*
10. It was a day that we will all remember forever. - *such*

# Lesson 7. Inversion

**Change the sentences so that they use inversion.**

1. John had never been to such a fantastic restaurant.
2. I in no way want to be associated with this project.
3. They had no sooner eaten dinner than the ceiling crashed onto the dining table.
4. I had scarcely finished writing my essay when the examiner announced the end of the exam.
5. I seldom leave my house so early.
6. People rarely appreciate this musician's talent.
7. We would understand what had happened that night only later.
8. They had met such rude people nowhere before.
9. He understood little about the situation.
10. The children should on no account go on their own.
11. We seldom have goods returned to us because they are faulty.
12. The environment does not just give us air to breathe but also filters out harmful rays.
13. You will rarely see anyone using typewriters nowadays.
14. He had hardly entered the room when he realized that he forgot his wallet.
15. After entering the store, Jonathan realized that there was a danger.

# Lesson 7. Inversion

Talk about the following topics using inverted sentences.



Places you've never been to.



Similarities between you and your best friend.



Something that you realized a bit too late



What you would do if you were wealthy



Something very interesting in Indonesia



An activity that is seldom a part of people's routines

**The End**