ENGLISH NINJAS
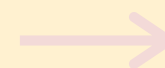
Five Essential Grammar Rules

#EnglishNinjas.sg

→

Used to show the consequence of a condition that is not met.

Note: Avoid double negatives

*unless = if + not

Unless [condition] , [consequence]

Eg. Unless you take a shower, you will not be allowed on the bed.

[Consequence] unless [condition]

Eg. Alex will not get to join the party unless he has fully recovered.

Tag Question [Part 1]

Tip: Identify the VERB / VERB phrase in the first part of the sentence first. If it is positive, then the answer in the second half would be negative and vice versa.

ENGLISH NINJAS

She's = She has   never = negative
                         *First part of the sentence is
                         treated as negative

She's never been to the zoo,
has she?

has = answer is positive
form of the VERB in the
first part of the sentence

Tag Question [Part 2]
Tip: "hardly", "rarely", "never" and "seldom" are considered negative.

ENGLISH NINJAS

hardly = negative
*First part of the sentence
is treated as negative

touched
= did + touch

Dave **hardly touched** his food, <u>did</u> he?

did = answer is positive form of the VERB because the first part of the sentence is negative.

Rule of Proximity
used in "Neither... nor" and "Either... nor"

*Ignore anything before "nor" / "or"

The VERB follows the closest SUBJECT

Eg. Neither those boys nor _that girl_ KNOWS how to swim.

Eg. Either my brother or _I_ AM going to buy groceries.

Eg. Neither my sister nor _that pair of twins_ DANCES ballet.

Tricky Singular Forms - these are all considered Singular and must be paired with a Singular VERB.

ENGLISH NINJAS

Anyone
Everyone
No one
Someone

Eg. No one <u>knows</u> what happened just now.
Eg. Anyone who <u>tries</u> to enter will be punished.

One of those girls <u>HAS</u> a dog.
None of them <u>RIDES</u> a bicycle
Each of the boys <u>EATS</u> a lot.
Neither of the puppies <u>IS</u> male.
Either of the books <u>BELONGS</u> to me.

Uncountable nouns are treated as SINGULAR.

Common uncountable nouns: *equipment, luggage, news, money, information, advice, water, rice, sand, food, work, staff*

Eg. All of the <u>equipment</u> **is** ready.

Eg. Some of the <u>water</u> **has** been contaminated.

If we add units of counting to an uncountable noun, then we can count it and it can be plural.

Eg. <u>Three pieces of</u> luggage **have** gone missing!