

# INVERSION

BOOK 2, UNIT 5

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## Inversion

### A. modal/auxiliary verb + subject + main verb

It is used in the following cases: Rectangular Snip

- in questions.  
*Can you really sing well?*
- after the following words or expressions, when they come at the beginning of a sentence.

Seldom	Only in this way
Rarely	Only then
Little	Hardly (ever) ... when
Barely	No sooner ... than
Nowhere (else)	Not only ... but (also)
Never (before)	Not until
Not (even) once	In no way
On no account	In/Under no circumstances
Only by	So/Such
	Not since, etc.

*Never (before) have I seen such an exciting match.*

*Not only did they make a lot of money but they (also) made a good name for themselves.*

*Seldom do we go out since I took up Spanish classes.*

**BUT** *We seldom go out since I took up Spanish classes.*  
(There is no inversion because the word *seldom* does not come at the beginning of the sentence.)

**Note:** When the expressions **only after**, **only by**, **only if**, **only when**, **not until/till** come at the beginning of a sentence, the inversion is in the main clause.

*Only after saving money for months was she able to buy a new car.*

*Only if you do what the doctor tells you will you get well soon.*

- with **so**, **neither**, **nor**, as to express agreement.  
*"I love chocolate yoghurt." "So do I."* (We use "so" to agree with an affirmative statement.)  
*She was a talented artist, as was her brother/and so was her brother.*

**"Neither/Nor can I."** (We use "neither/nor" to agree with a negative statement.)

*"I can't stand classical music." Neither/Nor can I.*

- with **should**, **were**, **had** when they come at the beginning of an if-clause instead of "if".  
e.g. Type 1: *Should he call, tell him I'll meet him at six.*  
(= If he should call ...)  
Type 2: *Were I you, I would tell her how I feel.*  
(= If I were you ...)  
Type 3: *Had I been told, I would have been prepared for what would follow.* (= If I had been told ...)

### B. main verb + subject

It is used in the following cases:

- after verbs of movement or adverbial expressions of place when they come at the beginning of a sentence.  
*Outside the house was a big pine tree.*  
*On the chair lay a cat.*  
*Here comes the bus.*  
*There goes the train.*  
If the subject is a pronoun, there is no inversion.  
*Here they come.* (NOT: ~~Here come they.~~)  
*Out you go.* (NOT: ~~Out go you.~~)
- in direct speech when the subject of the introductory verb is a noun.  
*"I don't like this book," said Jimmy.*  
(OR: ... Jimmy said.)  
*"I'll call you tomorrow," said her mother.*  
(OR: ... her mother said.)  
**BUT** *"How can I help you?" she asked.*  
(NOT: ~~asked she,~~ because the subject of the introductory verb is a pronoun.)