

OWL Simplified English

First you need to learn rules for constructing entity names.

Individuals start either with a name (i.e., capitalised word) or ‘the’. After that you can add further names, prepositions, nouns adjectives, or numbers (e.g., ‘John Brown’, ‘the queen of England’, ‘Cantebury cathedral’, ‘August 2011’).

Classes are formed from nouns, names, prepositions, adjectives, or numbers (e.g., ‘residence in London’, ‘white van driver’).

Properties start with ‘is’, ‘has’ or a verb in the present tense, after which you can add nouns, prepositions, adjectives, or past participles (e.g., ‘has as location’, ‘lives in’, ‘is owned by’).

Literals are either numbers (365, 2.78) or strings enclosed in double quotes (“Pride and Prejudice”).

It is important not to use the function words ‘is’, ‘has’, ‘and’, ‘that’, ‘a’, ‘every’, in any identifier phrase. Also, phrases for individuals and classes must not contain verbs in the present tense, and phrases for properties must not contain names or numbers.

There are six **simple sentence patterns**:

[I] is a [C]	John is a gardener
[I] [P] [I]	The queen lives in London
[I] [P] a [C]	Elizabeth lives in a castle
A [C] is a [C]	A governess is a woman
A [C] [P] [I]	A Marxist follows Karl Marx
A [C] [P] a [C]	A governess teaches a child

You can start sentences with ‘Every’ instead of ‘A’ if you prefer. You can also use literals as objects of a property, for instance ‘The London Olympics takes place in 2012’.

To form **complex sentences** you can extend the simple patterns in one of three ways: (1) class list (2) property list, (3) property chain. These are illustrated by the following sentences.

Class list	John is a gardener and a poet and an Englishman
Class list	A governess is a woman and a teacher
Property list	Elizabeth lives in a castle and owns a carriage
Property list	A governess lives with a family and teaches a child
Property chain	John owns a dog that lives in a kennel that ...

You can even have a class list, property list and property chain in a single sentence — provided that they come in that order:

‘A governess is a woman and a teacher that lives with a family and teaches a child that studies in a nursery that contains a blackboard.’