

Grammar terms beginning with letter A

Absolute comparative

The label absolute comparative refers to a comparative form used without a standard of comparison. Example: *the younger generation*. There is no answer to the question 'younger than who?'

Absolute construction

A phrase which has no grammatical link of any kind to the sentence containing it. An absolute construction is linked to the sentence only by meaning and intonation. In the following examples, the italicized phrases are absolute constructions.

The day being rainy, we decided to stay home.

The two men, *their business concluded*, went back.

Adjectival

The label adjectival applies to any word or phrase which modifies a noun in the same way that an adjective does. In the following examples the bold italic item is adjectival.

My *new* phone (An adjective phrase consisting only of an adjective)

A *very long* journey (An adjective phrase containing a degree modifier and an adjective)

The woman *you are talking about* (Here the adjectival is a relative clause.)

Adjunct

Any part of a sentence which can be removed without leaving behind an ungrammatical fragment. In the sentence *I met an old friend of mine yesterday*, the words *old* and *yesterday* are adjuncts since they can be removed without producing ungrammaticality. Note that an adjunct is always an adverbial of some kind.

Adverbial

A label applied to any linguistic item that behaves like an adverb. An adverbial may be an adverb phrase, a prepositional phrase or an adverbial clause.