3 Direct and indirect objects

1 Introduction

Henry gave Claire some flowers.
Here the verb give has two objects. Claire is the indirect object, the person receiving something. Some flowers is the direct object, the thing that someone gives.

Henry gave some flowers to Claire.
Here give has a direct object (some flowers) and a phrase with to. To comes before Claire, the person receiving something.

Here are some more examples of the two structures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIRECT OBJECT</th>
<th>DIRECT OBJECT</th>
<th>DIRECT OBJECT</th>
<th>PHRASE WITH TO/FOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emma gave</td>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>a CD</td>
<td>to Rachel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ll send</td>
<td>my cousin</td>
<td>a postcard</td>
<td>to my cousin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We bought</td>
<td>all the children</td>
<td>an ice-cream</td>
<td>for all the children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 To or for?

We give something to someone, and we buy something for someone.

We can use to with these verbs: bring, feed, give, hand, lend, offer, owe, pass, pay, post, promise, read, sell, send, show, take, teach, tell, throw, write

Vicky paid the money to the cashier. OR Vicky paid the cashier the money.
Let me read this news item to you. OR Let me read you this news item.
We showed the photos to David. OR We showed David the photos.

We can use for with these verbs: book, bring, build, buy, choose, cook, fetch, find, get, leave, make, order, pick, reserve, save

They found a spare ticket for me. OR They found me a spare ticket.
I’ve saved a seat for you. OR I’ve saved you a seat.
Melanie is making a cake for David. OR Melanie is making David a cake.

3 Give + pronoun

Sometimes there is a pronoun and a noun after a verb such as give. The pronoun usually comes before the noun.

Henry is very fond of Claire. He gave her some flowers.
We use her because Claire is mentioned earlier. Her comes before some flowers.

Henry bought some flowers. He gave them to Claire.
We use them because the flowers are mentioned earlier. Them comes before Claire.
A  Give (1)

Look at the Christmas presents and write sentences about them.
Put one of these words at the end of each sentence: necklace, scarf, sweater, tennis racket, watch.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Mike</th>
<th>1 To Melanie</th>
<th>2 To Trevor</th>
<th>3 To Matthew</th>
<th>4 To Claire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From Harriet</td>
<td>From David</td>
<td>From Laura</td>
<td>From Emma</td>
<td>From Henry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet gave Mike a watch.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B  Indirect object or to? (1)

Write the information in one sentence. Put the underlined part at the end of the sentence. Sometimes you need to.

- Daniel lent something to Vicky. It was his calculator.
- Mark sent a message. It was to his boss.
- Emma sold her bike. Her sister bought it.
- Tom told the joke. He told all his friends.
- Melanie gave some help. She helped her neighbour.
- Ilona wrote to her teacher. She wrote a letter.

C  To or for? (2)

Mark’s boss at Zedco is Mr Atkins. He is telling people to do things. Put in to or for.

- Give these papers to ... my secretary.
- Could you make some coffee for us?
- Book a flight for me, could you?
- Can you post this cheque for the hotel?
- Don’t show these plans to anyone.
- Leave a message for my secretary.
- Fetch the file for me, could you?
- Write a memo for all managers.

D  Give + pronoun (3)

Complete each answer using the words in brackets. Sometimes you need to use to or for.

- Matthew: Why is everyone laughing? (a funny story / us)
  Vicky: Daniel told us a funny story.
- Trevor: There’s some fish left over. (it / the cat)
  Laura: I’ll feed it to the cat.
- Mark: What are you doing with those bottles? (them / the bottle bank)
  Sarah: I’m taking
- Trevor: How are things with you, Daniel? (a job / me)
  Daniel: Fine. Someone has offered
- David: What about those papers you found? (them / the police)
  Tom: Oh, I handed
- Emma: It’s pouring with rain, look. (my umbrella / you)
  Rachel: It’s OK. I’ll lend