**INVERSION**

**(verb before the subject)**

**Inversion** means putting the verb before the subject.  
It is a literary technique in which the normal order of words is reversed, generally for emphasis or special effect.  
It makes a sentence sound striking or unusual. It also sounds quite formal.  
  
Sentences with inversion are less common in everyday English.  
In a sentence with no special effect or emphasis, the normal order of words is retained.  
  
Example 1 :**I have never seen** such a beautiful rose.  
Example 2 : **Never have I seen** such a beautiful rose.  
  
In example 2 inversion is used to emphasise the fact that in your whole lifetime you have not seen such a beautiful rose.

It is sometimes difficult to remember when inversion is or can be used. Here are some guidelines and examples to help you.

In normal everyday English, inversion is used :

* **To make questions** : Does he?   Can you?
* **After 'so', 'neither', 'nor' :** So do I, neither do I, nor do I.

In written English, as well as in a very formal style, inversion can be used in the following cases :

* **After negative adverbial expressions  :**
  + Under no circumstances *can we accept*credit cards.
  + In no way *can he be* held responsible.
  + At no time *did she say*she would come.
  + At no point *was* the price *mentioned.*
  + Not until I heard my name *did I believe* I had won the race.
* **After adverbial expressions of place :**
  + Round the corner *came the postman.*
  + On the doorstep *was a bunch of flowers*.
* **After 'seldom', 'rarely', 'never', and 'little':**
  + *Seldom* *have I seen*such a beautiful view.
  + *Rarely* *did he pay*anyone a compliment.
  + *Never* *had I felt*  so happy.
  + *Little did he imagine* how dangerous it would be. (*hij kon zich niet voorstellen)*
* **After 'hardly', 'scarcely', 'barely', 'no sooner', when one thing happens after another.**
  + *Hardly had I begun* to speak *when*I was interrupted.
  + *Scarcely had we started* our meal *when*the phone rang.
  + *Barely had they finished* the match *when* the rain started to fall.
  + *No sooner had I arrived* *than* they all started to argue.

- Note that hardly, scarcely and barely are followed by **when.**  
- No sooner is followed by **than**.

* **After adverbial expressions beginning with 'only' and 'not only' :**
  + *Only* after the meeting *did I realize* the importance of the subject.
  + *Only* when the plane landed safely *did he calm down.*
  + *Not only was the car slow,*it was also very uncomfortable.
* **Conditionals with inversions**  
  In conditional sentences we can sometimes replace the 'if' with an inversion:
  + *If I had known*it would be so difficult I would never have enrolled.
  + *Had I known* it would be so difficult I would never have enrolled.
* **After exclamations with 'here' and 'there' :**
  + *Here come*s the winner!
  + *There goes* all our money!
* **With verbs of reporting such as 'say' or 'ask' in direct speech:**
  + *"I love you"* said Harry.
  + *"How far is it?"* asked the passenger.