

English Ladder

Student Workbook

Refuse vs. Reject

A polished self-study handout designed for print or tablet use. Read the concept, notice the pattern, and then complete the matching practice set on your own.



Grammar Concepts :

Key Points

Key Points to Remem

In-depth Explanation and Additional E

Final Takeaways:


Visual anchor

Use the concept poster to spotlight the main language pattern in **Refuse vs. Reject** and keep the explanation visible during practice and discussion.

ENGLISH LADDER

Concept #41 ► **Refuse | Reject**

Note: The word "**deny**" is sometimes mistakenly used to mean "**reject**". However, "**deny**" usually means to claim to be innocent of an accusation. For example, "*He denied that he has stolen the bicycle as many were claiming.*"



Actions	+ agree to	- refuse to	+ She agreed to marry him. - She refused to marry him.
	Things	accept	reject

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Core Idea

Refuse and reject are two verbs that are often used in similar contexts but have distinct meanings and usages in English. Understanding the difference between these verbs is crucial for expressing intentions clearly and correctly.

Quick reference

2. Refuse	Structure: Refuse + to + verb (infinitive form of the verb)
3. Reject	Structure: Reject + noun (the object being rejected)
4. Common Mistake: Confusing "Deny" with "Reject"	Deny means to say that something is not true, often in response to an accusation.
5. Summary and More Examples	Agree to + verb: "She agreed to go to the party."
5. Summary and More Examples	Accept + noun: "She accepted the invitation."
5. Summary and More Examples	"The committee refused to approve the budget." (Action: They would not approve.)

Key Points

1. Understanding the Difference Between "Refuse" and "Reject"

2. Refuse

Refuse is a verb that means to say or show that you will not do something that someone has asked or ordered you to do. It is used with actions (things people do).

- Structure: Refuse + to + verb (infinitive form of the verb)
- Examples: "She refused to help with the project." (She decided not to help.) "They refused to attend the meeting." (They decided not to attend.) "He refused to apologize for his mistake." (He decided not to apologize.)

Refuse is typically followed by the infinitive form of a verb (to + verb). This construction indicates the action that someone does not want to do.

3. Reject



Reject is a verb that means to not accept or approve of something or someone. It is used with things (ideas, proposals, offers, etc.).

- Structure: Reject + noun (the object being rejected)
- Examples: "She rejected the job offer." (She did not accept the job offer.) "They rejected the proposal for a new building." (They did not approve the proposal.) "He rejected the gift." (He did not accept the gift.)

Reject is followed directly by the noun that represents the object or idea that is not being accepted or approved.

4. Common Mistake: Confusing "Deny" with "Reject"

The image highlights a common mistake: Deny is sometimes incorrectly used in place of reject.

- Deny means to say that something is not true, often in response to an accusation.
- Examples: "He denied stealing the money." (He claimed that he did not steal the money.) "She denied the rumors about her." (She claimed the rumors were not true.)

While deny relates to accusations or statements, reject is used when you do not accept an offer, proposal, or idea.

5. Summary and More Examples

Actions (verbs):

- Agree to + verb: "She agreed to go to the party."
- Refuse to + verb: "She refused to go to the party."

Things (nouns):

- Accept + noun: "She accepted the invitation."
- Reject + noun: "She rejected the invitation."

Additional Examples:

- "The committee refused to approve the budget." (Action: They would not approve.)
- "The committee rejected the budget proposal." (Thing: They did not accept the proposal.)
- "He refused to lend me money." (Action: He would not lend money.)
- "He rejected my request for a loan." (Thing: He did not approve my request.)

Key Points to Remember:

- Refuse is used when you do not want to perform an action and is followed by to + verb.
- Reject is used when you do not accept something (like an offer or idea) and is followed by a noun.
- Deny is used when you say something is not true, usually in response to an accusation.



Understanding these differences will help you use these verbs more accurately in conversation and writing.

In-depth Explanation and Additional Examples

Let's delve deeper into the concepts of refuse, reject, and deny, exploring their nuanced uses and any edge cases that might arise.

1. Refuse

Refuse is used when someone decides not to do something that has been requested or expected.

- "He refused to answer the question." He decided not to answer.
- "She refused to sign the contract." She chose not to sign the document.
- "They refused to join the club." They decided not to become members.
- Refusing without a clear action: "He refused, but didn't say why." In this case, the action isn't explicitly stated, but the context makes it clear that he did not comply with something. The implied action could be answering a question, following a request, or doing something that was expected. "The dog refused to move." Animals can also refuse to do something, highlighting that "refuse" can apply beyond human actions. Here, it shows a resistance to an action.
- Refuse used with objects (rare and informal): "He refused the gift." Although "reject" would be more appropriate, "refuse" can sometimes be used in place of "reject," especially in informal contexts. This usage is less common and might sound slightly outdated or formal.

2. Reject

Reject is used when someone does not accept something offered, proposed, or suggested.

- "The editor rejected the manuscript." The editor did not accept the manuscript for publication.
- "She rejected the job offer." She decided not to accept the offer for employment.
- "The team rejected the new design." The team did not approve the new design proposal.
- Rejecting people (emotional or personal context): "He felt rejected by his friends." In this case, "reject" is used to convey emotional distance or the act of excluding someone, rather than not accepting something tangible. This use of "reject" can have a strong emotional connotation. "She rejected his advances." Here, "reject" is used to describe not accepting romantic or physical advances. It's a specific context where the term takes on a social or interpersonal dimension.
- Rejecting ideas or opinions (abstract context): "They rejected his theory." This indicates that the theory was not accepted as valid or correct. It's an abstract use of "reject" where the object is not physical but intellectual. "The proposal was rejected on ethical grounds." The rejection is based on principles, which shows that "reject" can also be used when decisions are made based on values or rules rather than simply declining an offer.

3. Deny



Deny is used when someone claims that something is not true, often in response to an accusation or a statement.

- "He denied stealing the money." He claimed that the accusation of stealing is not true.
- "She denied knowing anything about the incident." She claimed that she did not have any knowledge of the incident.
- "They denied all allegations." They claimed that all the accusations against them were false.
- Denying access or resources (a different sense of "deny"): "The company denied the workers access to the building." In this case, "deny" is used not in the context of an accusation but rather in the sense of not granting something that is requested or needed. This use of "deny" is common when discussing rights, access, or resources. "The parents denied their children any dessert." Here, "deny" means not giving or not allowing something, which is a broader and slightly different use than denying a statement or accusation.
- Denying oneself (self-denial or restraint): "He denied himself the pleasure of a vacation." In this context, "deny" is used reflexively, where a person deliberately refrains from indulging in something they desire. This use is more about self-restraint or discipline. "She denied herself any luxury." This phrase shows the act of refraining from enjoying luxury items or experiences, often for ethical, financial, or personal reasons.

4. More Examples and Complex Sentences

- "She refused to reject the offer outright, but she also denied that she was interested." Here, we see all three verbs used: "refused" indicates a decision not to do something, "reject" indicates an action of not accepting something, and "denied" indicates a claim of not being interested.
- "The company refused to negotiate, rejected the union's demands, and denied any wrongdoing in their practices." This sentence showcases how each verb operates in different contexts- "refused" with an action, "rejected" with a thing (demands), and "denied" with an accusation.
- "He refused the invitation, rejecting the notion that he needed to be there." "Refused" is used for the action of not accepting the invitation, while "rejecting" is used for dismissing the idea or reason behind the invitation.
- "She denied any wrongdoing but refused to cooperate with the investigation." "Denied" is used to claim that something is not true (wrongdoing), while "refused" is used to indicate not taking part in an action (cooperation).

Final Takeaways:

- Refuse is primarily about actions someone decides not to do.
- Reject is about not accepting or approving something offered, suggested, or presented.
- Deny is about claiming something is not true, often in response to an accusation.



These verbs can sometimes overlap, especially in informal contexts or in edge cases, but understanding their core meanings will help you use them correctly and effectively in English.



Practice Check

Answer the quiz questions below with responses consistent with the grammar concepts taught in this article.

ITEM 01

Which sentence is grammatically correct?

- a) She refused the proposal.
- b) She refused to the proposal.
- c) She refused of the proposal.

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 02

Choose the correct sentence.

- a) He rejected to accept the offer.
- b) He rejected the offer.
- c) He rejected for the offer.

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 03

Identify the correct use of "deny".

- a) She denied to help me.
- b) She denied the rumors.
- c) She denied for the rumors.

Correct choice: _____

**ITEM 04**

Which of the following sentences is correct?

- a) They refused to participate in the event.
 - b) They refused participate in the event.
 - c) They refused in the event.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 05

Select the sentence that uses "reject" correctly.

- a) He rejected to go to the party.
 - b) He rejected the party invitation.
 - c) He rejected to the party invitation.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 06

Which sentence uses "deny" correctly?

- a) He denied stealing the car.
 - b) He denied to stealing the car.
 - c) He denied the to steal car.
-

Correct choice: _____

**ITEM 07**

Identify the correct sentence.

- a) She refused to sign the document.
 - b) She refused signing the document.
 - c) She refused sign the document.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 08

Choose the sentence that correctly uses "reject".

- a) They rejected for the idea.
 - b) They rejected the idea.
 - c) They rejected to the idea.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 09

Select the correct use of "deny".

- a) She denied that she knew him.
 - b) She denied to know him.
 - c) She denied for knowing him.
-

Correct choice: _____

**ITEM 10**

Which sentence is grammatically correct?

- a) He rejected to offer help.
 - b) He rejected the offer to help.
 - c) He rejected for offering help.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 11

Choose the correct sentence.

- a) They denied the accusations.
 - b) They denied for the accusations.
 - c) They denied to the accusations.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 12

Select the sentence that uses "refuse" correctly.

- a) He refused to attend the meeting.
 - b) He refused attending the meeting.
 - c) He refused for attending the meeting.
-

Correct choice: _____

**ITEM 13**

Which of the following sentences is correct?

- a) She denied to participate in the event.
 - b) She denied for participating in the event.
 - c) She denied participating in the event.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 14

Identify the sentence that correctly uses "reject".

- a) She rejected to apply for the job.
 - b) She rejected the job application.
 - c) She rejected for applying the job.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 15

Choose the correct sentence.

- a) He refused for giving me money.
 - b) He refused to give me money.
 - c) He refused giving me money.
-

Correct choice: _____

**ITEM 16**

Which sentence uses "deny" correctly?

- a) She denied the rumors about her.
 - b) She denied for the rumors about her.
 - c) She denied to the rumors about her.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 17

Identify the correct use of "reject".

- a) They rejected to sign the contract.
 - b) They rejected the contract.
 - c) They rejected for signing the contract.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 18

Choose the sentence that uses "refuse" correctly.

- a) She refused for accepting the offer.
 - b) She refused to accept the offer.
 - c) She refused accept the offer.
-

Correct choice: _____

**ITEM 19**

Select the correct sentence.

- a) He rejected to buy the car.
 - b) He rejected buying the car.
 - c) He rejected the offer to buy the car.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 20

Which sentence uses "deny" correctly?

- a) They denied knowing each other.
 - b) They denied for knowing each other.
 - c) They denied to knowing each other.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 21

Identify the correct sentence.

- a) She refused the promotion.
 - b) She refused for the promotion.
 - c) She refused to the promotion.
-

Correct choice: _____

**ITEM 22**

Choose the sentence that correctly uses "reject".

- a) He rejected to join the group.
 - b) He rejected joining the group.
 - c) He rejected the group's invitation.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 23

Select the sentence that uses "deny" correctly.

- a) She denied for causing the accident.
 - b) She denied causing the accident.
 - c) She denied to cause the accident.
-

Correct choice: _____

ITEM 24

Choose the correct sentence.

- a) He rejected to complete the task.
 - b) He rejected completing the task.
 - c) He rejected the task as incomplete.
-

Correct choice: _____



Self-check Answer Key

Use the key after you have completed every item on your own.

ITEM 01

a) She refused the proposal.

ITEM 02

(b)

ITEM 03

(b)

ITEM 04

a) They refused to participate in the event.

ITEM 05

(b)

ITEM 06

a) He denied stealing the car.

ITEM 07

(a)

ITEM 08

(b)

ITEM 09

a) She denied that she knew him.

ITEM 10

(b)

ITEM 11

a) They denied the accusations.

ITEM 12

a) He refused to attend the meeting.

ITEM 13

a) She denied to participate in the event.

ITEM 14

a) She rejected to apply for the job.



ITEM 15 (b)

ITEM 16 a) She denied the rumors about her.

ITEM 17 (b)

ITEM 18 (b)

ITEM 19 a) He rejected to buy the car.

ITEM 20 a) They denied knowing each other.

ITEM 21 (a)

ITEM 22 a) He rejected to join the group.

ITEM 23 (b)

ITEM 24 a) He rejected to complete the task.