The right part of a sentence

The right side only consists of three main parts:

- Miscellaneous (MISC)
- Prefix of the separable compound verb (PF)
- Other verbs (OV)

'Miscellaneous' contains a whole bunch of sentence-components that we can conveniently put in one box. In fact, if you are not sure about a component, just put it under MISC and you will probably have a sound sentence.

Under MISC, you will find the indirect object, the complement, the prepositional phrase - just to name a few. Not all sentences have an indirect object or a complement, or a MISC part at all.

Before we get to the miscellaneous part, we will discuss the 'other verbs' (OV) and the prefix of the separable compound verb (PF). Most sentences contain OV and many have a PF.

The other verbs

The 'other verbs' (OV) are all verbs other than the finite verb. We find the OV at the very end of the right side.
If a sentence has more than one verb, the OV is placed at the end of the sentence. As a consequence, if there is more than one OV, these OV's are always grouped together. OV's are either infinitives or past participles. Recall, that in general, the independent verb comes last (see also → Independent verbs, p.93).

De tulpen zullen heel veel water opnemen

*The tulips will absorb a lot of water.*

De mensen willen niet langer op het eten blijven wachten

*The people no longer want to (keep) wait(ing) for dinner.*

If a phrase contains an auxiliary verb that requires *te*, we will simply consider *te* part of the OV. The same goes for *aan het*. Recall, that we need the latter to form the continuous.

Zij zitten de hele dag te kibbelen

*They are quarrelling all day.*

In the above example, it is *zitten* that urges the independent verb *kibbelen* to be preceded by *te*.

The word *te* can also occur in the middle of the OV. This is the case if one of the OV's (rather than the finite verb) is an auxiliary verb that needs to be followed by *te*.

Hij heeft ons niet weten te overtuigen

*He has not managed to convince us.*

---

56 Recall, that when a past participle serves as an auxiliary verb, it turns into an infinitive (see also Past participle turning into an infinitive, p.96).
We use *aan het* for the conjugation of the continuous. *Aan het* is also considered part of OV:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Left</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FF</td>
<td>DIROB</td>
<td>OV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ze zijn</td>
<td>de huizen aan de overkant</td>
<td>aan het verbouwen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*They are renovating the houses across the street.*

**The prefix of a separable compound verb**

The prefix of a separable compound verb is sometimes attached to, and sometimes separated from its verb. In the chapter about separable compound verbs, you can read about the situations in which the prefix and verb are separated. In this section, we are more concerned about the position of the prefix when it appears as a separate word.

As you can see in the graph below, the prefix immediately precedes the OV.

![Graph showing the position of the prefix of a separable compound verb in the right part of a sentence](image)

As long as the prefix remains attached to its verb, we will not encounter any problems placing it. The prefix remains part of its verb if the verb has the form of an infinitive or past participle. The infinitive and past participle can only be used in the OV. Recall, that in the FF they are always conjugated in the simple present or simple past.

Infinitive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Left</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FF</td>
<td>DIROB</td>
<td>OV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De tulpen zullen</td>
<td>onzettend veel water</td>
<td>opnemen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The tulips will absorb a lot of water.*
Past participle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Left</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>De tulpen hebben</td>
<td>heel veel water</td>
<td>opgenomen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The tulips have absorbed a lot of water.*

There are two cases where the prefix of a separable compound verb (from now on: ‘PF’) is separated from its verb:

1. The separable compound verb is the finite verb
2. The separable compound verb is part of the OV that contains more than one verb

1. **The separable verb is the finite verb**

   If the separable compound verb is the finite verb, it is conjugated in either the simple present or the simple past. As you read in the chapter about compound verbs, the PF is then separated from its verb and thus requires its own place. Fortunately, this is not so difficult: when the separable compound verb is the finite verb, there are no OV, and the PF can be placed at the very end of the sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Left</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>De tulpen nemen</td>
<td>heel veel water</td>
<td>op</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The tulips absorb a lot of water.*

2. **The separable verb is part of the ‘other verbs’ (OV)**

   If the OV consist of more than one verb, we place the separable compound at the very end. As you can read in the chapter about auxiliary verbs, the independent verb generally goes last. Since there are no separable compound verbs that can function as auxiliary verbs, the separable compound verb is always the independent verb, and thus placed at the end.

   We can do two things, the first thing being the easiest solution:

   1. We leave the PF attached to its verb.
   2. We place the PF immediately before the OV.
The tulips will keep absorbing a lot of water.

Whether the first or the second solution is used, depends on what Dutch speaking region you visit. In many regions in Flanders, the first solution is more common, while in the western part of the Netherlands, you will mostly hear and read examples of the second. In the rest of this chapter, we will stick to the second alternative.

If a separable compound verb is supported by an auxiliary verb that needs to be followed by *te*, the word *te* stands between the prefix and the verb.

She promised to finish the assignment tomorrow.

Even though the separable compound verb *afmaken* (to finish) appears as an infinitive, it is separated because the auxiliary verb *beloven* is always followed by *te*. And this little word simply insists on being placed between the prefix and the verb.

**The miscellaneous box**

There is a whole bunch of sentence-components claiming the same place in a sentence. The main ones are the five mentioned in the blue box in the graph below. The good thing is that they do not often occur together, so we can assign *one* place to all these components.

In the miscellaneous box, we find:

- the postposition
- the indirect object
- the complement
- the place of the direct object
- the prepositional phrase (or prepositional ‘object’, as the Dutch call it)