

INVERSION

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INVERSION → **AUXILIARY VERB + SUBJECT + MAIN VERB**

We use **Inversion** for **emphasis** in **formal** and **written** English

→ when the following words and expressions are at the beginning of a sentence:

- Seldom
- Rarely
- Never
- Never before
- Little
- Barely
- Scarcely (ever) when
- Hardly (ever) when
- No sooner than
- Not only..... but also
- Not even once
- Nowhere
- Only in this way
- Only then
- In no way
- On no account
- On no occasion
- In/ Under no circumstances

☞ **Rarely** *do we go* out in winter.

☞ **No sooner** *had the Browns got* in their house *than* they realized that someone had broken into.

☞ **Under no circumstances** *should you* sign this contract.

NOTE: After **Not until**, **Not since**, **Only when**, **Only if**, **Only after**, **Only by**, the inversion comes **in the main clause**.

☞ **Not until** I had reached the office *did I remember* that I had left the kitchen window open.

☞ **Only after** she had left the supermarket *did she realize* that she hadn't bought any cheese.



➔ after **so** and **such** (a/ an) when they are at the beginning of a sentence, to express result:

☞ **So** tired *did he feel* that he fell asleep at his desk.

☞ **Such** a lovely day *was it* that we had lunch in the garden.

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➔ after **so**, **neither/ nor** when they are at the beginning of a sentence, to express agreement:

☞ “ I love comedies. ” “ **So do we.** ”

☞ “ He isn’t coming to the party. “ **Neither/ Nor am I.** ”

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➔ with **should**, **were**, **had** at the beginning of conditional sentences when if is omitted:

☞ *Should you finish* the project today, e mail it to me. (Type 1)

☞ *Were I* you, I would confess. (Type 2)

☞ *Had I seen* John, I would have told him. (Type 3)

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➔ with **here** and **there** when they are at the beginning of a sentence:

☞ **Here comes the bride!**

☞ **There goes the bus!**

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LET'S PRACTICE

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first.

- 1 - We had never seen such an outstanding performance before.
Never _____
- 2 - As soon as I left home it started raining.
No sooner _____
- 3 - My husband doesn't often read magazines.
Rarely _____
- 4 - She didn't speak to him until he apologized to her.
Not until _____
- 5 - You won't finish this project today unless you start working on it now.
Only if _____
- 6 - They had no idea what damage they would cause.
Little _____
- 7 - This rare species of bird doesn't live anywhere else in the world.
Nowhere _____
- 8 - My sister is such a bright student that she's got straight As.
Such _____
- 9 - You must not open this letter under no circumstances.
Under no circumstances _____
- 10 - He fell asleep after I had read him a story.
Only after _____
- 11 - I lost my passport as well as my credit card.
Not only _____
- 12 - You aren't allowed to purchase alcohol until you are eighteen.
Not until _____
- 13 - They will watch the film and then they will be able to form an opinion.
Only when _____
- 14 - They didn't recognize me until I took off my mask.
Only when _____
- 15 - We hadn't seen such interesting museums since we went to Italy.
Not since _____
- 16 - She's a successful politician as well as a devoted mother.
Not only _____
- 17 - The little girl got so scared that she screamed.
So _____
- 18 - I wouldn't go out with my boss in any way.
In no way _____
- 19 - The dog attacked him as soon as he walked in.
No sooner _____
- 20 - If you see Mary, tell her to call me.
Should _____

ANSWER KEY

- 1 - We had never seen such an outstanding performance before.
Never before had we seen such an outstanding performance.
- 2 - As soon as we left home it started raining.
No sooner had we left home than it started raining.
- 3 - My husband doesn't often read magazines.
Rarely does my husband read magazines.
- 4 - She didn't speak to him until he apologized.
Not until he apologized did she speak to him.
- 5 - You won't finish this project on time unless you start working on it now.
Only if you start working on this project now will you finish it on time.
- 6 - They had no idea what damage they would cause.
Little did they know what damage they would cause.
- 7 - This rare species of bird doesn't live anywhere else in the world.
Nowhere else in the world does this rare species of bird live.
- 8 - My sister is such a bright student that she's got straight As.
Such a bright student is my sister that she's got straight As.
- 9 - You must not open this letter under no circumstances.
Under no circumstances must you open this letter.
- 10 - He fell asleep after I had read him a story.
Only after I had read him a story, did he fall asleep.
- 11 - I lost my passport as well as my credit card.
Not only did I lose my passport but I also lost my credit card.
- 12 - You aren't allowed to purchase alcohol until you are eighteen.
Not until you are eighteen are you allowed to purchase alcohol.
- 13 - They will watch the film and then they will be able to form an opinion.
Only when they watch the film will they be able to form an opinion.
- 14 - They didn't recognize me until I took off my mask.
Only when I took off my mask did they recognize me.
- 15 - We hadn't visited such interesting museums since we went to Italy.
Not since we went to Italy had we visited such interesting museums.
- 16 - She's a successful politician as well as a devoted mother.
Not only is she a successful politician but she's also a devoted mother.
- 17 - The little girl got so scared that she screamed.
So scared did the little girl get that she screamed.
- 18 - I wouldn't go out with my boss in any way.
In no way would I go out with my boss.
- 19 - The dog attacked him as soon as he walked in.
No sooner had he walked in than the dog attacked him.
- 20 - If you see Mary, tell her to call me.
Should you see Mary, tell her to call me.