



**英文寫作秘訣：動詞：Consists of/comprises/composed of/constitutes/made up of/includes**

**難度：中階**

Contain、consist、compose、constitute、comprise……這些動詞共同點是拉丁詞根 com-，意思是「合起來」。它們描述部分與全部之關係，這些動詞有時可互換使用，有時是不行的。我們先看個別用法，留意主動和被動的語態。

### 部分表列？全面表列？

全部列舉或列舉部分的表達方式，是正確使用這些動詞的關鍵。

全部列舉：悉數說出

列舉部分：沒有悉數說出，僅說出部分

全部列舉：My siblings consist of three brothers [中譯：我的手足共有 3 個兄弟]，意思是我沒有姊妹。

列舉部分：My siblings include three brothers [中譯：我的手足有 3 個兄弟]，意思是除兄弟外，我有一或多位姊妹。

### 用對動詞

有的動詞是用在全部列舉，有的則用於列舉部分項目，如何正確使用端視意思表達而定。

### 列舉部分之動詞有：Include/contain

#### Include

Include/contain 意思本質是同義的。

全部 include 部分；部分 included in 全部。

全部 contain 部分；部分 contained in 全部。

正確：Asia includes the countries of China, Japan, and Korea.

[中譯：亞洲的國家包含中國、日本和韓國]

(亞洲還有其他國家)

錯誤：North America includes the countries of the USA, Canada, and Mexico.

[中譯：北美洲的國家有美國、加拿大和墨西哥]

(北美洲已無其他國家)

#### Contain

全部 contain 一部；一部 contained in 全部。

正確 : The report contains statistics about the labor market from 2008-2014.

[中譯 : 這報告納入勞動市場 2008 到 2014 年的統計數據]

(還有其他統計數據)

### 全部列舉動詞有 : **Consist of/compose/comprise/constitute/make up**

#### Consist of

使用 consist of 動詞, 作者必需悉數列出所有項目。全部 consist of 各部。

正確 : North America consists of three countries: the USA, Canada, and Mexico.

[中譯 : 北美洲有三個國家 : 美國、加拿大和墨西哥]

錯誤 : Asia consists of China, Japan, and Korea.

[中譯 : 亞洲包含中國、日本和韓國]

(亞洲不只這三個國家)

另外「is consisted of」是錯誤的表達。

#### Compose

使用 compose 動詞, 作者必需悉數列出所有項目。全部 composed of 各部。

正確 : The nicotinic acetylcholine receptor is composed of five subunits: the muscle-type one is composed of two alpha 1, one beta 1, one delta, and one eta subunits.

[中譯 : 尼古丁乙醯膽素受體由 5 個次單元組成 : 肌肉型包含 2 個  $\alpha$  1、1 個  $\beta$  1、1 個  $\delta$ , 和 1 個  $\eta$  次單元]

另外當 compose 意指「組成、構成」時, 較少用主動語態, 可能是因為主動語態的 compose 另有其他意思, 也就是「作詞、作曲、構圖」, 如 : Mozart composed his first symphony at the age of eight.

[中譯 : 莫札特 8 歲時寫出第一首交響曲]

#### Comprise

使用 comprise 動詞, 作者必需悉數列出所有項目。

標準用法是「全部 comprise 各部」, 現代雖常見「全部 comprised of 各部」的用法, 不過有些講究文體的人士, 認為後者有誤。相較之下, 「consist of」則無爭議。

正確 : A simple circuit comprises a source of voltage (e.g. a battery), a conductive path (e.g. a wire), and a resistor (e.g. a lightbulb).

[中譯 : 簡單電路由電源 (如電池)、導線 (如電線), 和電阻器 (如燈泡) 構成。]

正確代替 : A simple circuit ~~is comprised of~~ **consists of** a source of voltage (e.g. a battery),

a conductive path (e.g. a wire), and a resistor (e.g. a lightbulb).

[中譯：簡單電路包括電源（如電池）、導線（如電線），和電阻器（如燈泡）]

### Make up

使用 make up 動詞，作者必需悉數列出所有項目。

各部 make up 全部；全部 made up of 各部。主動語態和被動語態同樣常見。

正確：Seeds and fern spores make up the finch's diet.

[中譯：籽和蕨類孢子構成雀鳥主食]

正確：The finch's diet is made up of seeds and fern spores.

[中譯：雀鳥主食是由籽和蕨類孢子構成]

### Constitute

使用 constitute 動詞，作者必需悉數列出所有項目。

各部 constitute 全部；全部 constituted of 各部。主動語態比被動語態常見。

正確：Automobile exhaust constitutes a large proportion of total greenhouse gas emissions.

[中譯：汽車廢氣佔大部分溫室氣體總排放量]

說明：此句從文法來看，「全部」是 large proportion of total greenhouse gas emissions [大部分溫室氣體總排放量]，而非 total greenhouse gas emissions [溫室氣體總排放量]。

## Uni-edit English Writing Tip: Verbs: Consists of / comprises / composed of / constitutes / make up / includes

Difficulty: Medium

Contain, consist, compose, constitute, comprise...what these verbs have in common is the Latin root “com-“, which means “to put together”. They describe the relationship of parts to the whole, or whole to parts. They can be used interchangeably in some cases, but cannot in others. Let’s look at the usages of each word, with attention to active and passive voice.

### What’s an Exhaustive List? What’s a Non-Exhaustive List?

The idea of an exhaustive vs. non-exhaustive list is crucial to using the verbs correctly.

Exhaustive list - report all the items

Non-exhaustive list - report some but not all of the items

Exhaustive list: **My siblings consist of three brothers.**

This means I have no sisters.

Non-exhaustive list: **My siblings include three brothers.**

This means I have one or more sisters.

### Choose the right verb

Some verbs are used for exhaustive lists. Some verbs are used for non-exhaustive lists. You must choose the right verb for the situation.

### Non-exhaustive verbs: include / contain

#### Include

The meanings are essentially equivalent.

The whole includes the parts; the parts are included in the whole.

The whole contains the parts; the parts are contained in the whole.

Correct: **Asia includes the countries of China, Japan, and Korea.**

(It also includes other countries.)

Incorrect: **North America includes the countries of the USA, Canada, and Mexico.**

(It does not include other countries.)

#### Contain

The whole contains the parts; the parts are contained in the whole.

Correct: [The report contains statistics about the labor market from 2008–2014.](#)

(It also includes other statistics.)

### **Exhaustive verbs: consist of / compose / comprise / constitute / make up**

#### Consist of

When you write 'consist of', you must write the entire list. The whole consists of the parts.

Correct: [North America consists of three countries: the USA, Canada, and Mexico.](#)

Incorrect: [Asia consists of China, Japan, and Korea.](#)

(There are more than these three countries in Asia.)

By the way, “is consisted of” is incorrect English.

#### Compose

When you write 'compose', you must write the entire list. The whole is composed of the parts.

Correct: [The nicotinic acetylcholine receptor is composed of five subunits: the muscle-type one is composed of two alpha1, one beta1, one delta, and one epsilon subunits.](#)

By the way, when using 'compose' with this meaning, the active voice is less common, perhaps because active-voice “compose” has another meaning, which is “to write (an artistic work)”: e.g., Mozart composed his first symphony at the age of eight.

#### Comprise

When you write 'comprises', you must write the entire list.

Standard usage is “the whole comprises the parts”. In modern times, the usage “the whole is comprised of the parts” is common. However, since some English style authorities think the latter usage is mistaken, use it at your own risk. An alternative like “consists of” is uncontroversial.

Correct: [A simple circuit comprises a source of voltage \(e.g. a battery\), a conductive path \(e.g. a wire\), and a resistor \(e.g. a lightbulb\).](#)

Alternative correct: [A simple circuit ~~is comprised of~~ \*\*consists of\*\* a source of voltage \(e.g. a battery\), a conductive path \(e.g. a wire\), and a resistor \(e.g. a lightbulb\).](#)

#### Make up

When you write 'make up' or 'made up of', you must write the entire list.

The parts make up the whole; the whole is made up of the parts. Active voice and passive voice are equally common.

Correct: [Seeds and fern spores make up the finch's diet.](#)

Correct: [The finch's diet is made up of seeds and fern spores.](#)

### Constitute

When you write 'constitute', you must write the entire list.

The parts constitute the whole; the whole is constituted of the parts. The active voice is more common than the passive voice.

Correct: [Automobile exhaust constitutes a large proportion of total greenhouse gas emissions.](#)

Explanation: Here, in grammatical terms, the 'whole' is the 'large proportion of total greenhouse gas emissions', not 'total greenhouse gas emissions'.

END OF TIP