

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE OMIT WORDS?

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Dalekese would be a long-winded language if you included all the boundary words, tense syllables, etc. Cutting it down to size is important, so let's see how this works with a simple example.

***VLAA** Ian **ZHA** likes **VLEE** Barbara.*

- VLAA = subject
- ZHA = present simple
- VLEE = object

...but we don't need any of those.

*Ian likes Barbara.*

- Ian = subject, being the noun before the verb.
- Likes = present simple, because that's the default.
- Barbara = object, being the noun after the verb.

That was easy. It becomes a little harder if we leave the present, but not by much.

*Ian **ZHI-RAKH** liked Barbara. They travelled in the TARDIS.*

- ZHI = past simple
- RAKH = sets "ZHI" as the new default
- Travelled = still the past simple, thanks to RAKH

You can trust your listener to make similar assumptions in other carry-on situations, incidentally. You don't need to say "Alydon" twice in the following, for instance.

*Alydon returned to the other Thals, **MIRZH** hoping Susan could negotiate peace.*

You'll have noticed the conjunction. (**MIRZH** = "and"). An English-speaker might see it as unnecessary, but it's not. Conjunctions are mandatory, unless you have two verbs with other words between them. (Tense syllables don't count.) This is an absolute rule. It's that simple. It's not good enough to say a verb tense syllable and expect that to do the job. You can leave out all sorts of words in Dalekese, but keep the conjunctions that join mini-sentences.

Note that even my example here could be misunderstood if you omitted the conjunction and left your listener to misplace it.

*Alydon returned to the other Thals hoping **MIRZH** Susan could negotiate peace.*

This is perfectly grammatical. It's not what you meant to say, but your listener's done nothing wrong. This implies that it's the other Thals who are hopeful, whereas it's supposedly a fact that Susan can negotiate a Dalek-Thal peace treaty.

*Ian was **ZHIS** dancing **ZHIS** listening to the Beatles.*

Do you need the second ZHIS? The two verbs are practically linked, after all. Answer: yes, you do. Sorry. You need both tense syllables, short of making ZHIS the RAKH-default.

Let's get more complicated!

*In Peking, the TARDIS crew met Kublai Khan.*

That's probably okay as it is. Theoretically you could make it clearer by putting VLAA after the comma, indicating the subject of the sentence, but I don't think it's possible to misinterpret this one.

Technically, the key factor here is that the preposition ("in") makes it impossible for "Peking" to be part of a three-word compound noun. However you'd definitely need a VLAA if there was any chance that you might be

saying “*In the Peking TARDIS, the crew met Kublai Khan*”. Note that in my example, the English word “*the*” is doing the same job as the Dalekese **VLAA**. They’re both separating “Peking” and “TARDIS”.

You could also underline this with intonation. That might even still be true when Daleks are speaking. Next, a deletion too far:

*Fortunately, Mavic Chen was exterminated by the Daleks.*

No no no. There’s no difference between adjectives and adverbs in Dalekese, so this sentence appears to be saying that Mavic Chen was fortunate. He’d disagree. You need a boundary word, drawing a line between “fortunately” and “Mavic Chen”.

*Fortunately **VLAA** Mavic Chen was exterminated by the Daleks.*

...but another option is to rearrange the sentence. Dalekese has a preferred sentence order (adverbs before the verb), so why not comply with that? It’ll make your life easier.

*Mavic Chen was fortunately exterminated by the Daleks.*

Finally, clauses. Consider the following two English sentences:

*The Doctor kidnapped Ian, whom Barbara liked.*

*The Doctor kidnapped Ian, who liked Barbara.*

English-speakers tell the difference with word order, unless you’re someone who trusts the world to be careful about “who” vs. “whom”. Dalekese basically forces you to become that person.

*The Doctor kidnapped Ian, **VUUN** Barbara liked.*

*The Doctor kidnapped Ian, **VEEN** Barbara liked.*

...but you can slim even that down:

*The Doctor kidnapped Ian, Barbara liked.*

Obviously this is a bit risky. Apart from anything else, it almost sounds as if Barbara likes kidnapping. However, even if we assume that our listener isn’t going to make any mistakes like that, which of the two possible clauses will be assumed? (It would be possible to construct more dramatic examples, e.g. *I saw shark crocodile eating*.)

Answer: **VUUN**, the subject-focused one. Ian likes Barbara (and the shark ate the crocodile).

Those were object clauses. Omitting words is riskier with subject clauses, because there’s more of the sentence coming afterwards to confuse your listener. Here’s an English example:

*The Bedfordshire countryside that had been torn apart by Dalek mining operations was proving dangerous for Larry and Ian.*

That’s prose, not dialogue. Most people don’t talk like that. However it’s still perfectly valid English, so how would one turn it into Dalekese? Well, it could be any of these:

- *The Bedfordshire countryside **VEEN** by Dalek mining operations apart torn **VAUM** was proving dangerous for Larry and Ian.*
- *The Bedfordshire countryside **VEEN** by Dalek mining operations apart torn was proving dangerous for Larry and Ian.*
- *The Bedfordshire countryside by Dalek mining operations apart **X**-torn was proving dangerous for Larry and Ian.*

(The X puts a verb in the passive voice, turning an object-focused clause into a subject-focused one.)

How important are those VEEN/VAUMs? All this is down to personal preference, but I think clauses that always end in verbs are quite easy to read. I think the third sentence is fine. However it’s easy to imagine more complicated sentences that would be improved by some boundary words. Just make sure that if you omit them, you still mean what you think you mean.