

49 Types of verbs

Verbs can be described as main verbs or auxiliary verbs. Main verbs describe actions, occurrences, or states of being. Auxiliary verbs modify the meaning of main verbs.

See also:
Present perfect simple 11
Modal verbs 56

49.1 MAIN VERBS

Main verbs are the most important verbs in a sentence. They can describe actions or states, or they can be used to link a subject to a description.

"Play" is the main verb that describes an action.

I play tennis every Wednesday evening.



49.2 AUXILIARY VERBS

Auxiliary verbs are used with main verbs to modify their meaning. Auxiliary verbs are used very frequently to form different tenses.

The auxiliary verb "do" is used to make questions and negatives of statements that don't already have an auxiliary verb.

Modal verbs are also auxiliary verbs. They modify the meaning of the main verb, expressing various notions such as possibility or obligation.

PRESENT PERFECT



"Has" is an auxiliary verb here. It's being used to form the present perfect.



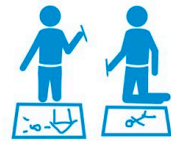
49.3 LINKING VERBS

Linking verbs express a state of being or becoming. They link a subject to a complement, which renames or describes the subject.

The children **are** happy.

Subject →

Complement →



FURTHER EXAMPLES

Harry **looks** just like his father.



This **seems** like a lovely place to live.



Whatever you're cooking **smells** delicious!

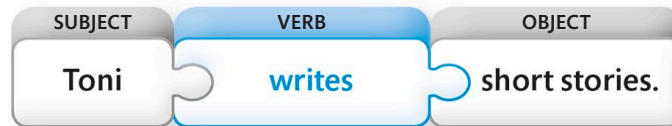


After leaving school, she **became** a teacher.



49.4 TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE VERBS

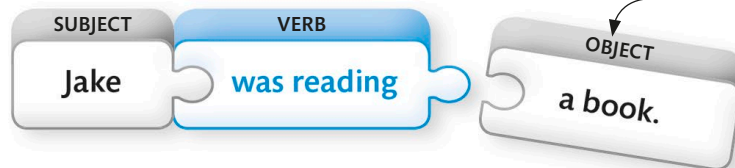
Some verbs take an object, which is a noun or phrase that receives the action of the verb. Verbs which take an object are known as **transitive verbs**.



Some verbs never take an object. These verbs are known as **intransitive verbs**.



Some verbs can be either **transitive or intransitive**.



"Read" can be used with or without an object.



Some verbs can take **two objects**, a direct object and an indirect object.



The indirect object benefits from the action.

The direct object is what the verb "gave" refers to.

