

What are Verbs?

- The verb is king in English. The shortest sentence contains a verb.
- You can make a one-word sentence with a verb, for example: "**Stop!**" You cannot make a one-word sentence with any other type of word.

Verbs

- Verbs are sometimes described as "action words".
- This is partly true. Many verbs give the idea of action, of "doing" something. For example, words like *run*, *fight*, *do* and *work* all convey action.

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- But some verbs do not give the idea of action; they give the idea of existence, of state, of "being". For example, verbs like *be*, *exist*, *seem* and *belong* all convey state.

Verbs

- A verb always has a subject. In simple terms, therefore, we can say that verbs are words that tell us what a subject **does** or **is**; they describe:
- **action** (Ram plays football.)
- **state** (Anthony seems kind.)

Verbs

- Most other words (adjectives, adverbs, prepositions etc) do not change in form (although nouns can have singular and plural forms). But almost all verbs change in form.
- The verb *to work* has five forms:
- *to work, work, works, worked, working*

Verb Classification

- We divide verbs into two broad classifications:
- **1. *Helping Verbs***
- **2. *Main Verbs***

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Helping verbs

- Imagine that a stranger walks into your room and says:
- **I can.**
- **People must.**
- **The Earth will.**
- Do you understand anything?
- They "help" the main verb.

2. Main Verbs

- I **teach**.
- People **eat**.
- The Earth **rotates**.
- Do you understand something? Probably yes! Not a lot, but something. **have** meaning on their own. They tell us something.
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Helping Verbs

- *Primary helping verbs (3 verbs)*
- We use them in the following cases:
- **be**
 - to make continuous tenses (He **is** watching TV.)
 - to make the passive (Small fish **are** eaten by big fish.)

Helping Verbs

- **Have**

to make perfect tenses (I **have** finished my homework.)

do

to make negatives (I **do** not like you.)

to ask questions (**Do** you want some coffee?)

to show emphasis (I **do** want you to pass your exam.)

Modal helping verbs (10 verbs)

- “Modify” main verb. It expresses necessity or possibility.
- can, could
- may, might
- will, would,
- shall, should
- must
- ought to

Semi-modal verbs (3 verbs)

The following verbs are often called "semi-modals" because they are partly like modal helping verbs and partly like main verbs:

- need
- dare
- used to