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# English Verbs

THIRD EDITION

**Loretta Gray**

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**THIRD EDITION**

**Loretta Gray**



New York Chicago San Francisco Athens London Madrid  
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# Introduction

When you study English verbs, you must do more than search for their meanings in a dictionary. You must also learn how to conjugate them and use these conjugations appropriately. Most students begin their studies by memorizing verb forms. They learn both the verb endings for regular verbs and the more complicated forms of the irregular verbs. *Practice Makes Perfect: English Verbs* provides you with opportunities to practice conjugating more than three hundred verbs, both regular and irregular.

However, this text is more than a list of verb forms and mechanical exercises. It also presents the reasons for choosing one verb form over another. For example, you may know the dictionary meaning of *walk*, but to use this verb to refer to the future, you must understand your options; that is, you must understand the role of tense and aspect. To indicate future, you could say *I'll walk to school today*, *I'm going to walk to school today*, or *I'm walking to school today*, but not *I walk to school today*.

When most people think of *tense*, they think of time. While it is true that tense is sometimes related to present, past, and future time, this is not always the case. In the sentence *My plane leaves in twenty minutes*, the simple present tense of the verb *leave* is used to refer to future time. As well as being marked for tense, verbs are marked for aspect. Aspect provides information about whether an action, a state, or an event has been completed and how a verb is related to other verbs in a time sequence. *I study English* and *I am studying English* are both in the present tense, but they differ in aspect. The verb in the first sentence refers to a habitual action; the verb in the second sentence refers to an action that is not yet completed. To indicate both tense and aspect, *study* is said to be in the simple present and *am studying* is said to be in the present progressive. In the sentence *I had been studying for the test when the phone rang*, there are two main verbs: *study* and *ring*. They are both in the past tense; however, they differ in aspect. *Had been studying* is the past perfect progressive, whereas *rang* is just the simple past. The difference in aspect indicates that the action of studying was ongoing and prior to the action of ringing. Tense and aspect intersect in the following way.

<b>Tense/Aspect</b>	<b>present</b>	<b>past</b>	<b>future</b>
<b>simple</b>	simple present	simple past	simple future
<b>progressive</b>	present progressive	past progressive	future progressive
<b>perfect</b>	present perfect	past perfect	future perfect
<b>perfect progressive</b>	present perfect progressive	past perfect progressive	future perfect progressive

The form and meaning of each of these tense-aspect combinations will be described in the units of this book. Although you will study all the tenses mentioned in traditional textbooks, you will also study the concept of aspect so that you will have a deeper understanding of the grammatical meaning conveyed by the form of a verb. Thus, as you work through the material in *Practice Makes Perfect: English Verbs*, you will learn not only how to conjugate verbs but also why to use specific verb forms.



Any study of verbs would be incomplete without the inclusion of special types of verbs and complementation patterns. After you become familiar with verb conjugations, you will study phrasal verbs, modal verbs, and verb complementation (gerunds and infinitives).

This book focuses on the verbs most frequently used in English. It is appropriate for classroom use or individual study. If you are in a class, your teacher may choose to assign exercises to supplement your other coursework. If you are studying alone, you can use the Answer Key at the back of the book to check your work and decide whether you should review a chapter or go on to the next.

There are six principal parts in this book:

**PART I—THE PRESENT TENSE** The five units in Part I will help you learn the verb forms that constitute four different tense-aspect combinations: simple present, present progressive, present perfect, and present perfect progressive. You will practice using these forms in positive statements, negative statements, and questions. You will also learn how to form contractions with pronouns or the word *not*. A special section focuses on the verb *be*.

**PART II—THE PAST TENSE** The five units in Part II will help you learn four more tense-aspect combinations: simple past, past progressive, past perfect, and past perfect progressive. As in Part I, you will practice using these tense-aspect combinations and their contracted forms in positive statements, negative statements, and questions. In this part also, there is a special section focusing on the verb *be*.

**PART III—THE FUTURE TENSE** Part III differs from the others in that the modal *will* is introduced rather than verb endings. This part consists of five units: simple future, future progressive, future perfect, future perfect progressive, and a unit on the use of *be going to*. You will practice using the future tense-aspect combinations and their contracted forms in positive statements, negative statements, and questions.

**PART IV—IMPERATIVE, PASSIVE, AND HYPOTHETICAL CONDITIONAL** The three units in Part IV will help you learn to use verbs in special constructions not discussed earlier: imperative (*Be careful!*), passive (*The project was finished on time.*), and hypothetical conditional (*If I were you, I would accept the offer.*).

**PART V—PHRASAL VERBS AND MODAL AUXILIARY VERBS** The English language is full of phrasal verbs, which are verb-particle combinations, such as *run into* in *run into an old friend*. In the first unit of Part V, you will practice using some common phrasal verbs. The second unit of Part V focuses on modal auxiliary verbs. Although you will be introduced to modal verbs in Parts III and IV, you will learn more about the subtle shades of meaning that tense and aspect add to these verbs.

**PART VI—GERUND AND INFINITIVE COMPLEMENTS** Some verbs take gerunds, some take infinitive complements, and some take both. Part VI will help you learn to choose appropriate verb complements.

Following these six parts are **Review Exercises**, twenty-five exercises that can reveal your overall comprehension. And new to this edition are complementary review quizzes in the McGraw-Hill Education Language Lab app.

*Practice Makes Perfect: English Verbs* ends with an appendix of irregular verb forms, followed by a glossary of grammatical terms.



# English Verbs

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# PART I

## THE PRESENT TENSE

Verbs in the present tense occur in four forms, each signaling a different aspect. (*Aspect* is explained in the Introduction.) Each of these forms conveys information about an action, state, or event that is relevant now.

SIMPLE PRESENT: **I study** every day.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE: **I am studying** right now.

PRESENT PERFECT: **I have studied** English for two years.

PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE: **I have been studying** all day for my test tomorrow.

In the following units, you will learn about these verb forms and the reasons for using them.

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# Simple Present

When you refer to habitual actions, customs, and facts, use simple present verb forms.

HABITUAL ACTION: I **work** in the library.

CUSTOM: Most Americans **eat** turkey on Thanksgiving Day.

FACT: The earth **revolves** around the sun.

If you include a time reference, you can also use the simple present to indicate future time.

FUTURE ACTION: The concert **starts** in five minutes.

Except for *be* and *have*, verbs in the simple present follow this pattern:

	Singular	Plural
<b>First Person</b>	I <b>verb</b>	we <b>verb</b>
<b>Second Person</b>	you <b>verb</b>	you <b>verb</b>
<b>Third Person</b>	he, she, it <b>verb + s/es</b>	they <b>verb</b>

As you can see, the base form of the verb is used with the subject pronouns *I*, *you*, *we*, and *they* and with the nouns these pronouns can replace. For example, *the students* takes the same verb form as *they*. An ending, either *-s* or *-es*, is added to the verb when the subject pronoun is *he*, *she*, or *it* or a noun these pronouns can replace. The *-s* ending is used most frequently. The *-es* ending is used after certain letters or letter combinations.

Letters	Examples
s	pass + es
sh	push + es
ch	march + es
x	box + es
o	do + es
When a verb ends in a consonant and y, change the y to i and add <i>-es</i> .	bury → buries

The verb *be* is described in Unit 2. In the following chart are the forms of the verb *have*:

	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
<b>First Person</b>	I <b>have</b>	we <b>have</b>
<b>Second Person</b>	you <b>have</b>	you <b>have</b>
<b>Third Person</b>	he, she, it <b>has</b>	they <b>have</b>

Notice that *has* is the verb form used with *he, she, it*, and the nouns these pronouns can replace.

**exercise****1-1**

Complete each sentence with the simple present form of the verb in parentheses. Circle the reason that the simple present is used.

1. I \_\_\_\_\_ (eat) lunch in the cafeteria every day but Friday.

**Habitual action                      Custom                      Fact                      Future time**

2. Julia \_\_\_\_\_ (carry) a heavy backpack to school every day.

**Habitual action                      Custom                      Fact                      Future time**

3. You \_\_\_\_\_ (speak) English well.

**Habitual action                      Custom                      Fact                      Future time**

4. The state of Florida \_\_\_\_\_ (produce) a great deal of citrus fruit.

**Habitual action                      Custom                      Fact                      Future time**

5. During the holidays, we always \_\_\_\_\_ (make) special meals.

**Habitual action                      Custom                      Fact                      Future time**

6. He \_\_\_\_\_ (watch) television every night.

**Habitual action                      Custom                      Fact                      Future time**

7. My roommate \_\_\_\_\_ (say) a prayer before he eats.

**Habitual action                      Custom                      Fact                      Future time**

8. The game \_\_\_\_\_ (begin) in an hour.

**Habitual action                      Custom                      Fact                      Future time**

9. My friends and I \_\_\_\_\_ (live) near a park.

**Habitual action                      Custom                      Fact                      Future time**

10. Trees \_\_\_\_\_ (grow) tall in the Pacific Northwest.

**Habitual action**

**Custom**

**Fact**

**Future time**

11. We \_\_\_\_\_ (wear) traditional dress on holidays.

**Habitual action**

**Custom**

**Fact**

**Future time**

12. Most people \_\_\_\_\_ (shake) hands when they first \_\_\_\_\_ (meet).

**Habitual action**

**Custom**

**Fact**

**Future time**

## exercise

## 1-2

Using the pronoun and verb provided, create your own sentences.

1. She always (make) \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I (take) \_\_\_\_\_.
3. It (give) \_\_\_\_\_.
4. They (come) \_\_\_\_\_.
5. I (use) \_\_\_\_\_.
6. He (leave) \_\_\_\_\_.
7. They (like) \_\_\_\_\_.
8. She (write) \_\_\_\_\_.
9. We (listen) \_\_\_\_\_.
10. It (contain) \_\_\_\_\_.
11. It (start) \_\_\_\_\_.
12. He (understand) \_\_\_\_\_.

## Forming Negatives

To make a verb negative, add the auxiliary verb *do* and the word *not* before the main verb.

do not go

does not like

Remember that *does* is used with the pronouns *he*, *she*, and *it*. When *does* is used, the main verb has no *-s* or *-es* ending.



**exercise**

**1-3**

*Make each of the following sentences negative.*

EXAMPLE: I spend a lot of money.

*I do not spend a lot of money.*

1. He goes to school every day.

---

2. My roommate likes snakes.

---

3. You know my family.

---

4. The owner opens the store every day at 8:00.

---

5. We help our neighbors.

---

6. My friends send me letters.

---

7. I feel tired.

---

8. She speaks five different languages.

---

9. They study in the library.

---

10. We listen to pop music.

---

11. They grow tomatoes in their backyard.

---

12. This car runs well.

---

---

## Forming Contractions

---

In English, verbs are often combined with other words to form contractions. These shortened forms include an apostrophe (') to indicate missing letters. It is important to learn contractions because you will often hear them in conversation or see them in informal writing. Formal writing, though, rarely contains contractions.

The auxiliary verb *do* is often combined with *not* to form a contraction. Notice that an apostrophe indicates that the letter *o* is omitted:

do + not = don't

does + not = doesn't

**exercise**

**1-4**

*Rewrite the sentences in exercise 1-3 using contractions.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

---

## Forming Yes/No Questions

---

To form questions that can be answered yes or no (yes/no questions), begin the question with the auxiliary verb *do*. After the auxiliary verb, place the subject and the main verb.

Statement: He rides his bicycle to school.

Yes/no question: Does he ride his bicycle to school?

Statement: They ride the bus to work.

Yes/no question: Do they ride the bus to work?

<b>exercise</b>	<b>1-5</b>
-----------------	------------

*Rewrite the following statements as yes/no questions.*

EXAMPLE: You get tired easily.  
*Do you get tired easily?*

1. The artist shows his work at a local gallery.

---

2. They meet on Thursday mornings.

---

3. She works hard.

---

4. You commute to work.

---

5. It seems like a good decision.

---

6. This work requires patience.

---

7. The Carsons live in a small town.

---

8. You don't believe my story. (Notice that *do* has already been used to indicate negation.)

---

9. The patient feels better.

---

10. The lecture ends at 5:30.

---

11. The plot involves many characters.

---

12. Most students complete the program in four years.

---

---

## Forming Wh-Questions

---

*Wh*-questions are used to elicit specific pieces of information. They usually begin with *what*, *who*, *why*, *where*, *when*, *how*, or combinations such as *how much*, *how many*, and *how often*. When the question word is the subject of the sentence, the form of the question is similar to the form of a statement.

Statement: Max needs a new key.

*Wh*-question: Who needs a new key?

Statement: My foot hurts.

*Wh*-question: What hurts?

When the question word is any other part of the sentence, the auxiliary verb *do* comes after the question word and is followed by the subject and the main verb.

Statement: She collects butterflies.

*Wh*-question: What does she collect?

Statement: They live on the coast of Maine.

*Wh*-question: Where do they live?

**exercise****1-6**

Complete the following questions based on the statements provided.

EXAMPLE: The performance starts at 7:00.

When *does the performance start*?

1. The person in the back row knows the answer.

Who \_\_\_\_\_

2. She looks healthy.

How \_\_\_\_\_

3. They always go to that restaurant because they like the food.

Why \_\_\_\_\_

4. They go golfing twice a week.

How often \_\_\_\_\_

5. We turn left at the corner.

Where \_\_\_\_\_

6. The notebook costs \$3.00.

How much \_\_\_\_\_

7. My mother worries too much.

Who \_\_\_\_\_

8. You exercise every day at the gym.

How often \_\_\_\_\_

9. Jerry and Carol repair computers.

What \_\_\_\_\_

10. She teaches English.

What \_\_\_\_\_

11. Mark blames other people for his problems.

Whom \_\_\_\_\_

(*Who* may be used instead of *whom* in conversation and informal writing.)

12. Many people go to Cape Cod for their vacations.

Where \_\_\_\_\_

# Be Verb Forms, Simple Present

The verb *be* has three different forms in the simple present: *am*, *is*, and *are*.

	Singular	Plural
<b>First Person</b>	I <b>am</b>	we <b>are</b>
<b>Second Person</b>	you <b>are</b>	you <b>are</b>
<b>Third Person</b>	he, she, it <b>is</b>	they <b>are</b>

## exercise

## 2-1

Complete each sentence with the simple present form of the verb *be*.

- I \_\_\_\_\_ a student.
- You \_\_\_\_\_ taller than I \_\_\_\_\_.
- My parents \_\_\_\_\_ on vacation.
- Misuzu \_\_\_\_\_ from San Francisco.
- My roommate's name \_\_\_\_\_ Chris.
- They \_\_\_\_\_ late again.
- We \_\_\_\_\_ ready for the test.
- I \_\_\_\_\_ interested in all kinds of sports.
- It \_\_\_\_\_ easy.
- Your coat \_\_\_\_\_ in the closet.
- She \_\_\_\_\_ the director.
- They \_\_\_\_\_ in class together.

The word *there* is often used with the verb *be* to acknowledge the existence of someone or something. The form of the *be* verb is based on the subject that follows it.

SINGULAR SUBJECT: There **is a concert** in the park tonight.

PLURAL SUBJECT: There **are four rooms** in the house.

**exercise****2-2**

*Circle the verb that agrees in number with the subject that follows it.*

1. There **is/are** someone at the door.
2. There **is/are** several parks in the town.
3. There **is/are** fifty-two cards in a deck.
4. There **is/are** a restroom at the end of the hall.
5. There **is/are** sixteen students in the class.
6. There **is/are** a bank on the corner of Lincoln and Ash.
7. There **is/are** an information booth in the lobby.
8. There **is/are** many specialty stores in the Mall of America.
9. There **is/are** still tickets available.
10. There **is/are** a typo on page 3.
11. There **is/are** a huge fountain in front of the building.
12. There **is/are** only one possible answer to the question.

---

### **Forming Contractions: Pronouns and *There* with *Am*, *Is*, and *Are***

---

Contractions are often formed by combining pronouns and the verb *be*. The word *there* can also be combined with *be*. It is important to learn these contractions because you will often hear them in conversation or see them in informal writing. However, you should avoid using them in formal writing.

Notice that an apostrophe indicates that a letter is omitted:

I + am = I'm

you + are = you're

he + is = he's

she + is = she's

we + are = we're

they + are = they're

there + is = there's

it + is = it's

## exercise

## 2-3

Rewrite each sentence using a contraction.

EXAMPLE: He is not here today.

*He's not here today.*

1. She is a student.

---

2. I am an engineer.

---

3. There is a test on Tuesday.

---

4. You are next.

---

5. It is difficult.

---

6. We are from Canada.

---

7. He is a supervisor.

---

8. They are really funny.

---

9. I am sick today.

---

10. There is a package for you on the table.

---

11. He is first on the list.

---

12. It is cold in here.

---



---

**Forming Negatives**


---

To make the verb *be* negative, just add *not*.

am not  
I'm not

is not  
it's not

are not  
we're not

**exercise**
**2-4**

Using contractions, make each of the sentences in exercise 2-3 negative.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Forming Contractions: *Isn't* and *Aren't***


---

The word *not* can be contracted with the verb forms *is* and *are*.

is + not = isn't

are + not = aren't

**exercise**
**2-5**

Complete the sentences using either *isn't* or *aren't*.

1. There \_\_\_\_\_ a ball game tonight.

2. There \_\_\_\_\_ any rooms available.
3. There \_\_\_\_\_ a full moon tonight.
4. There \_\_\_\_\_ any cookies left.
5. There \_\_\_\_\_ many people here today.
6. There \_\_\_\_\_ much time.

---

### **Forming Yes/No Questions**

---

To form yes/no questions, begin the question with a form of the verb *be* and place the subject after it.

Statement: Nancy is a doctor.

Yes/no question: Is Nancy a doctor?

Statement: They are friendly.

Yes/no question: Are they friendly?

To form yes/no questions with *there*, place *there* after the *be* verb.

Statement: There is a gas station near the freeway.

Yes/no question: Is there a gas station near the freeway?

**exercise****2-6**

Rewrite the following statements as yes/no questions.

EXAMPLE: It is late.

*Is it late?*

1. Portland is in the state of Oregon.  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Your car is in the garage.  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. He is in a good mood.  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. They are friends.  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Sam is depressed.  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Her computer is broken.

---

7. There are many items on the menu.

---

8. The coffee is too hot.

---

9. The city hall is the oldest building in town.

---

10. There is a bank near here.

---

11. The museum is open on Thursday evenings.

---

12. The lights are off.

---



---

### **Forming *Wh*-Questions**

---

To form *wh*-questions, place the *be* verb after the question word. When the question word is the subject of the sentence, the form of the question is similar to the form of a statement.

Statement: Someone is at the door.

*Wh*-question: Who is at the door?

When the question word is any other part of the sentence, the subject follows the *be* verb.

Statement: She is from Colorado.

*Wh*-question: Where is she from?

Statement: His birthday is July 11.

*Wh*-question: When is his birthday?

**exercise**

**2-7**

*Complete the following questions based on the statements provided.*

EXAMPLE: You are twenty-two years old.

How old *are you*?

1. Kevin Lee is the editor of the local newspaper.

Who \_\_\_\_\_

2. She is five feet tall.

How tall \_\_\_\_\_

3. They are visitors from another school.

Who \_\_\_\_\_

4. His roommate is at work right now.

Where \_\_\_\_\_

5. The graduation ceremony is on Saturday.

When \_\_\_\_\_

6. The house is white.

What color \_\_\_\_\_

7. That is a bike lock.

What \_\_\_\_\_

8. The scissors are in the drawer.

Where \_\_\_\_\_

9. Sandy Craig is the producer.

Who \_\_\_\_\_

10. The children are at their grandmother's house.

Where \_\_\_\_\_

11. The library is open until 8:00.

How late \_\_\_\_\_

12. They are in the cafeteria.

Where \_\_\_\_\_

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# Present Progressive

## (*Be* Verb + *-ing*)

When you refer to a temporary situation or an activity in progress, use the present progressive.

TEMPORARY SITUATION: I **am working** in the library this term.

ACTIVITY IN PROGRESS: She **is studying** right now.

If you include a time reference, you can also use the present progressive to indicate future time.

FUTURE TIME: My parents **are coming** *tomorrow*.

The present progressive consists of the auxiliary verb *be* and the *-ing* form of the main verb. The auxiliary verb is marked for tense.

	Singular	Plural
<b>First Person</b>	I <b>am verb + ing</b>	we <b>are verb + ing</b>
<b>Second Person</b>	you <b>are verb + ing</b>	you <b>are verb + ing</b>
<b>Third Person</b>	he, she, it <b>is verb + ing</b>	they <b>are verb + ing</b>

When a one-syllable word or a word with a stressed final syllable ends in a single consonant sound, double the last letter before adding *-ing*.

One-syllable word: run → running

Word ending in a stressed syllable: admit → admitting

BUT mow → mowing [This word ends in a vowel sound.]

When a word ends with a consonant and the letter *e*, drop the *e* before adding *-ing*: come → coming. The letter *e* is not dropped from words such as *be*, *see*, and *free*.