

The Verb

What Is a Verb?

****Best way to remember a verb is to find the subject of the sentence; then, to find the main verb look for what the subject IS, HAS, DOES, or FEELS!**

3a. A **verb** is a word that tells the action or a state of being.

EXAMPLES Jesse **ran** around the house three times. [The verb *ran* tells what action Jesse performed.]
After that, Jesse **was** very thirsty. [The verb *was* does not tell about an action. Instead, it tells something about Jesse's state of being.]

EXERCISE A Underline the verb in each of the following sentences.

Examples 1. The moon is the earth's closest neighbor. [The verb *is* tells something about the moon's state of being.]

2. It reflects light from the sun. [The verb *reflects* tells what action *it* performs.]

1. The moon orbits the earth. [Which word tells what action the *moon* performs?]
2. It is about one quarter the size of earth. [Which word tells something about the state of being of *it*?]
3. Humans first landed on the moon in 1969.
4. The astronauts left footprints in the fine dust.
5. Meteors crushed rocks into dust.
6. The moon has no atmosphere.
7. Impressions from meteors and footprints last for a long time.
8. Many of the moon's features are visible to the eye.
9. One side of the moon never faces earth.
10. Sometimes, the moon blocks the light of the sun from the earth.

Helping Verbs and Main Verbs

The main verb is the word that shows the action or state of being in a sentence. Sometimes, other verbs are added to the main verb to make the main verb more specific. These other verbs are called **helping verbs**. *Helping verbs* are sometimes called *auxiliary verbs*.

3d. A **helping verb** helps the main verb express an action or a state of being.

Some common helping verbs include *am, is, was, were, do, have, can, must,* and *will*.

EXAMPLES Monica **will** be at third base. [The helping verb *will* helps the main verb *be* express a future state of being.]
The lilac **should have** bloomed by now. [The helping verbs *should* and *have* help the main verb *bloomed* express an expected action.]

A *verb phrase* contains at least one main verb and one or more helping verbs.

VERB PHRASES A round of applause **was given** to the award-winning teacher. [The helping verb is *was* and the main verb is *given*.]

My dog Pepper **has** not yet **found** her missing toy. [The helping verb is *has* and the main verb is *found*. The words *not* and *yet* are adverbs.]

Have three more dogs **been adopted** from the shelter today? [The helping verbs *Have* and *been* help the main verb *adopted* express the action that occurred in the past. Notice that helping verbs are sometimes separated from the main verb by other parts of the sentence.]

EXERCISE B Underline the verb phrase in each of the following sentences. Then, draw a second line under each helping verb.

Examples 1. All eight birds had been eating from the feeder. [The word that shows the action of the sentence is *eating*, so *eating* is the main verb. The other verbs, *had* and *been*, are helping verbs.]

2. Did Tracey win a blue ribbon? [The word that shows the action of the sentence is *win*, so *win* is the main verb. The other verb in the sentence, *Did*, is a helping verb.]

11. Thomas is leading the overall competition. [Which word shows the action? What other verb is helping it?]
12. The radio station has played that song three times today. [Which word shows the action? What other verb is helping it?]
13. Those rules may be out of date.
14. Have you heard the weather forecast?
15. This scarecrow should protect the garden.
16. The kitten has been growing very quickly.
17. Today's classes have not been canceled.
18. Would that piece have completed the puzzle?
19. A chipmunk has been making tunnels under this field.
20. When will Sarah be visiting her cousins?