

# SLAC VERB AID

## VERBS

A verb expresses action or being. The main word in the predicate of a sentence is a verb.

Maya *writes* a wonderful letter.  
The *verb* writes *expresses* action.

Your letters *are* full of news.  
The *verb* are *expresses* being.

## ACTION VERBS

An *action verb* is a word that tells what the subject does, did, or will do.

Letters usually *contain* facts about the writer.  
In the past, people *wrote* letters frequently.  
I *will mail* your letter this afternoon.

## LINKING VERBS

A *linking verb* connects the subject to a noun or an adjective that names or describes it. The most common linking verbs are forms of *be*, including *am*, *is*, *are*, *was*, and *were*.

(Washington Irving) *was* a writer.  
(*subject*) (noun)

His stories *are* still popular  
(*subject*) (adjective)

Some other common linking verbs are *appear*, *become*, *feel*, *grow*, *look*, *seem*, and *taste*.

The valley *appears* misty.  
The Hudson River *looks* beautiful.  
The story *seems* familiar.

## MAIN VERBS

A simple predicate may be made up of two or more verbs. The *main verb* is the most important verb in the predicate.

I am *writing* a report about insects.  
Insects have *lived* on the earth for more than 400 million years.  
You will *enjoy* this book about insects.  
Did you *read* the first chapter yet?

## HELPING VERBS

A *helping verb* can work with the main verb to tell about an action. These words are often used as helping verbs: *am*, *is*, *has*, *do*, *could*, *was*, *were*, *have*, *does*, *would*, *are*, *will*, *had*, *did*, and *should*.

I *am* watching that anthill.

Sometimes other words appear between the helping verb and the main verb.

You will *soon* see the ants.

I have *never* seen the queen.

## TENSE

The tense of a verb shows when the action happens.

There are three basic verb tenses.

I *am taking* a photo of a grasshopper. Present

I *develop* my pictures in my darkroom. Present

I *watched* the grasshopper for an hour. Past

I *will show* you the photographs tomorrow. Future

## PRESENT TENSE

A verb in the *present tense* shows action that happens over and over.

Use these rules for spelling singular present-tense verbs when the subject is a singular noun or *he, she,* or *it*:

Add *-s* to most verbs. walk-----walks sit-----sits

Add *-es* to verbs ending in *s, ch, sh, x,* or *z.* catch-----catches wish-----wishes

If the verb ends in a consonant plus *y,* change the *y* to *i* and add *-es.* dry-----dries fly-----flies

## PAST TENSE

A verb in the *past tense* shows action that happened in the past.

Use these rules for spelling past-tense verbs: Add *-ed* to most verbs. If a verb ends in *e* add *-d.* use-----used  
move-----moved. If a verb ends with a consonant plus *y,* change the *y* to *i* and add *-ed.* If a verb ends with  
consonant-vowel-consonant, double the final consonant and add *-ed.* dip-----dipped shop-----shopped

## IRREGULAR VERBS

An *irregular verb* is a verb that does not end with *-ed* in the past tense. This chart shows some irregular verbs.

<b>Verb</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Past</b>	<b>Past with Helping Verb</b>
be	am, is, are	was, were	(has, have, had) been
begin	begin(s)	began	(has, have, had) begun
bring	bring(s)	brought	(has, have, had) brought
come	come(s)	came	(has, have, had) come
do	do(es)	did	(has, have, had) done

## FUTURE TENSE

A verb in the *future tense* shows action that will happen in the future. To form the future tense of a verb, use the helping verb *will* with the main verb.

The audience *will* have a surprise in store.

The musicians *will* play bells.

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