Verbs

Introduction to Verbs

These are the words which **describe an action, event or state of being** in a sentence. It is derived from the Latin '*verbum*' which means 'a word'. If it is proper to compare different parts of speech according to their relative importance, then verbs can be considered as **the most important part of speech**. You can form a sentence without any of the other parts of speech, but you cannot make a sentence without a verb.

> For example: Run! Jump! Fight! Eat! Drink! Sing!

All these can be regarded as sentences as they contain the most important part of a sentence—verb. However, the following don't:

> This not a sentence.
>
> Why this not a sentence?

In both these cases, the verbs are absent. Hence, they cannot be called sentences. Let us study verbs in detail.

Properties of verbs

As mentioned before, verbs are used for describing an action, event or state of being. The same verb can be used differently in different sentences.

Let us study the properties of a verb that undergo changes. These properties are as follows:

1. Person and Number

2. Tense

3. Voice

4. Mood

Person and Number

A verb changes according to the number and the person of its subject.

Singular and plural are the two numbers. **Singular** means one, while **plural** means more than one.

The persons in English language are classified as **first person**, **second person** and **third person**. The **first person** refers to the **person or persons speaking**. The **second person** refers to the **person or persons being spoken to**. The **third person** refers to the **person or persons being spoken of**.

The following table lists the singular and plural forms of the persons:

	First Person	**Second Person**	**Third Person**
Singular	I	You	He, She, Noun, It
Plural	We	You	They

Using the verb 'do', let us see how a verb changes its form according to the number and person of it subject.

	Present	**Past**	**Future**
First Person Singular (I)	*do* *am doing* *have done* *have been doing*	*did* *was doing* *had done* *had been doing*	*will do* *will be doing* *will have done* *will have been doing*

First Person Plural (We)	do are doing have done have been doing	did were doing had done had been doing	will do will be doing will have done will have been doing
Second Person Singular (You)	do are doing have done have been doing	did were doing had done had been doing	will do will be doing will have done will have been doing
Second Person Plural (You)	do are doing have done have been doing	did were doing had done had been doing	will do will be doing will have done will have been doing
Third Person Singular (He/She/Noun/It)	does is doing has done has been doing	did was doing had done had been doing	will do will be doing will have done will have been doing

Third Person Plural (They)	do are doing have done have been doing	did were doing had done had been doing	will do will be doing will have done will have been doing

Tenses

The word 'tense' is derived from the Latin word '*tempus*'. It indicates the time of the occurrence of an action or an event. In any sentence, an action or a state of being is denoted by the verb. Hence, tenses are directly related to verbs. **The form of a verb used in a sentence depends on the tense**. In English grammar, there are twelve tenses. The following table lists these tense forms.

Simple Present	Simple Past	Simple Future
Present Continuous	Past Continuous	Future Continuous
Present Perfect	Past Perfect	Future Perfect
Present Perfect Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous	Future Perfect Continuous

According to the tense, a verb can be used in its:

Root form or base form: This is the simplest form of a verb.

For example:

> Sing, Dance, Play, Break, Kick, Sleep, Eat
>
> They **sing** on the roof every afternoon.

Past form: This is the form of a verb in the simple past tense. It represents an action completed in the past; here, the emphasis is on the time of completion of action.

For example:

> Sang, Danced, Played, Broke, Kicked, Slept, Ate
>
> They **sang** on the roof yesterday.

Present participle form: In this form, the base form of a verb is joined with '−*ing*'. It represents an action in progress.

For example:

> Singing, Dancing, Playing, Breaking, Kicking, Sleeping, Eating
>
> They are **singing** on the roof.

Past participle form: This form usually ends in '−*ed*', '−*d*', '−*t*', '−*en*' or '−*n*'. It is the form of a verb in the perfect tense. It represents a completed action; here, the emphasis is on the completion of the action.

For example:

> Sung, Danced, Played, Broken, Kicked, Slept, Eaten
>
> They have **sung** on the roof.

The following table lists the different forms of a verb according to the twelve tenses. The verb 'do' has been used for this purpose.

	PRESENT	PAST	FUTURE
Simple	*do / does* (Base form)	*did* (Past form)	*will do* (Base form)
Continuous	*am doing / is doing / are doing* (Present participle)	*was doing / were doing* (Present participle)	*will be doing* (Present participle)
Perfect	*have done / has done* (Past participle)	*had done* (Past participle)	*will have done* (Past participle)
Perfect Continuous	*have been doing* (Present participle)	*had been doing* (Present participle)	*will have been doing* (Present participle)

Voice

Active and Passive Voices

The voice of a verb represents the relationship between the action being described by it on the one hand **and the subject and the object** on the other.

<u>**Active Voice**</u>

> Subject (*doer of the action*) **+** Verb (*action*) **+** Object (*receiver of the action*)

If the subject is the doer of the action (i.e., **the subject is active**), then the verb is in the active voice. This voice is used when the doer of the action is to be emphasised.

For example:

> Pankaj found the treasure.
>
> Here, 'Pankaj' is the subject, while 'the treasure' is the object. The doer of the action ('to find') is the subject. Hence, the verb is used in the active voice.

Passive Voice

> Subject (*receiver of the action*) **+** Verb (*action*) **+** Object (*doer of the action*)

If the subject is the receiver of the action (i.e., **the subject is passive**), then the verb is in the passive voice. In other words, **the object in the active voice becomes the subject in the passive voice**. This voice is used when the receiver of the action is to be emphasised.

For example:

> The treasure was found by Pankaj.
>
> Here, 'the treasure' is the subject, while 'Pankaj' is the object. The receiver of the action ('to find') is the subject. Hence, the verb is used in the passive voice.

If the subject in the active voice is unknown or indefinite (for example: anyone, anybody, someone, somebody, people), then the passive voice is favoured.

For example:

Anyone can do this work.

(Here, the subject 'anyone' is indefinite.)

This work can be done.

(Here, the emphasis is on 'the work')

Changes in the verb form from the active voice to the passive voice

When the verb is in the *simple present tense*

Gagan **throws** the stone.

The stone **is thrown** by Gagan.

When the verb is in the *present continuous tense*

Gagan **is throwing** the stone.

The stone **is being thrown** by Gagan.

When the verb is in the *present perfect tense*

Gagan **has thrown** the stone.

The stone **has been thrown** by Gagan.

When the verb is in the *simple past tense*

Gagan **threw** the stone.

The stone **was thrown** by Gagan.

When the verb is in the *past continuous tense*

Gagan **was throwing** the stone.

The stone **was being thrown** by Gagan.

When the verb is in the *past perfect tense*

Gagan **had thrown** the stone.

The stone **had been thrown** by Gagan.

When the verb is in the *simple future tense*

Gagan **will throw** the stone.

The stone **will be thrown** by Gagan.

Mood

This property shows the manner in which a verb describes the action or state of being in a sentence. There are three moods in English— Imperative, Indicative and Subjunctive.

Imperative Mood

This mood is used for expressing a command or a request.

For example:

Jump! (Command)

Go there. (Command)

Please **sit** down. (Request)

[**Note:** *The subject in an imperative mood is always 'you' and it is usually not expressed.*]

Indicative Mood

This mood is used for stating facts and asking questions.

For example:

> The soldier is **fighting** his brother. (Stating a fact)
>
> Do you **want** to come with me? (Asking a question)

Subjunctive Mood

This mood is used for expressing a wish, doubt/uncertainty or something opposed to fact.

For example:

> If I **were** the king of this land, I would **free** all the prisoners.
>
> (Expressing a wish; the wish is 'to be the king of this land')
>
> I wish I had **said** something to her.
>
> (Expressing a wish; the wish is 'to say something to her')
>
> I cannot **say** for sure if they **know** me.
>
> (Expressing a doubt; the doubt is 'they know me or not?')
>
> If he does not **come** to office tomorrow, then you shall **complete** the pending work.
>
> (Expressing something uncertain; the uncertainty is 'will he come to office tomorrow or not?')
>
> They **continued** with their work as if I **was** not there.
>
> (Expressing something opposed to fact; the fact is 'I am there')
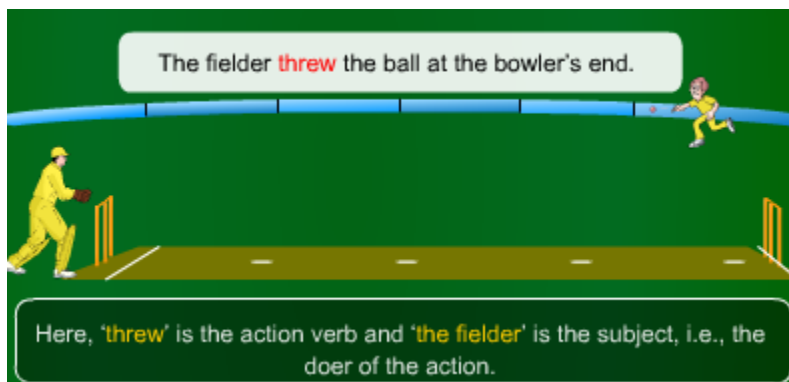
Subject-Verb Agreement Rules

A verb describes an action or a state of being. This action is performed by a subject or the state of being is that of a subject. Hence, **a verb must always agree with its subject**, in person and in number. As already mentioned, in English there are two numbers (Singular and Plural) and three persons (First, Second and Third persons).

Action and Linking Verbs

Action Verbs

An action verb describes some action on the part of its subject, (i.e., the doer of the action). In other words, what the subject of a sentence 'does' is described by an action verb. For example, words such as 'take', 'bring', 'cry', 'laugh', 'think', 'imagine' and 'worry' are all action verbs. Among these words such as 'take', 'bring', 'cry' and 'laugh' are verbs that describe **physical actions**, while words such as 'think', 'imagine' and 'worry' describe **mental actions**.

Here, 'cried' is the action verb and 'the baby' is the subject, i.e., the doer of the action.

Here, 'threw' is the action verb and 'the fielder' is the subject, i.e., the doer of the action.

Linking Verbs

A linking verb describes the condition or the state of being of its subject (i.e., the person, place, thing or idea described). It does not describe any action (either physical or mental). It serves as the equal to ('=') sign in a sentence. The different forms of the verbs 'be' (e.g., 'am', 'is', 'are', 'was', 'were') and 'become' are used as linking verbs.

[I] = [the greatest fool]

↓

I **am** the greatest fool.

(Here, 'am' links the subject 'I' with the condition 'the greatest fool'.)

[Yuvika] = [a brave girl]

↓

Yuvika **is** a brave girl.

(Here, 'is' links the subject 'Yuvika' with the condition 'a brave girl'.)

[They] = [angry with him]

↓

They **are** angry with him.

(Here, 'are' links the subject 'they' with the condition 'angry with him'.)

[The teacher] = [extremely intelligent]

↓

The teacher **was** extremely intelligent.

(Here, 'was' links the subject 'the teacher' with the condition 'extremely intelligent'.)

[The batsmen] = [unhappy with the sightscreen]

↓

The batsmen **were** unhappy with the sightscreen.

(Here, 'were' links the subject 'the batsmen' with the condition 'unhappy with the sightscreen'.)

[He] = [famous after that song]

↓

He **became** famous after that song.

(Here, 'became' links the subject 'he' with the condition 'famous after that song'.)

Action Verbs as Linking Verbs

Sometimes action verbs can also perform the role of linking verbs. For example, words like 'look', 'feel', 'taste' and 'smell' are all classified as action verbs. However, in the following sentences, they act as linking verbs.

[The joker] **=** [crazy]

↓

The joker **looked** crazy.

(Here, 'looked' links the subject 'the joker' with the condition 'crazy'.)

As opposed to, say:

The thief **looked** through the window.

(Here, 'looked' is the specific action performed by the subject 'the thief'.)

[I] = [really happy]

↓

I **feel** really happy.

(Here, 'feel' links the subject 'I' with the condition 'really happy'.)

As opposed to, say:

The doctor **felt** my pulse.

(Here, 'felt' is the specific action performed by the subject 'the doctor'.)

[The food] = [good]

↓

The food **tastes** good.

(Here, 'tastes' links the subject 'the food' with the condition 'good'.)

As opposed to, say:

The chef **tasted** the soup made by the new recruit.

(Here, 'tasted' is the specific action performed by the subject 'the chef'.)

[The house] = [like a bakery]

↓

The house **smells** like a bakery.

(Here, 'smells' links the subject 'the house' with the condition 'like a bakery'.)

As opposed to, say:

Omkar **smelt** the kitchen to see if the gas was leaking.

(Here, 'smelt' is the specific action performed by the subject 'Omkar'.)

[**Note:** *When an action verb acts as a linking verb in a sentence, it does not describe an action anymore. It does what a linking verb would do in its place, i.e., describe a state or condition.*]

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Transitive Verbs

The word 'transitive' means 'passing over to something else' or 'affecting something else', while the word 'intransitive' means 'not passing over to something else'.

When a verb is used transitively (i.e., in the transitive manner), **the verb requires a direct object**, (i.e., the noun or pronoun that receives the action, and answers the questions 'what?' or 'whom?'). In this case, **the action is passed on from the doer or subject to the receiver of the action or the direct object**.

For example:

Intransitive Verbs

When a verb is used intransitively (i.e., in the intransitive manner), the verb is not followed by an object. The **action stays with the subject**. It is **not passed on to any object**.

For example:

Main and Helping Verbs

Main Verbs

The main verb is the most important verb of a sentence. A sentence is not possible in the absence of the main verb. **The main verb describes the action or the state of being of the subject**.

Helping Verbs

Helping verbs are of two types: PRIMARY HELPING VERBS and MODAL HELPING VERBS.

Primary Helping Verbs – BE

BE — It can also function as the main verb of a sentence. Its forms are: **AM, IS, ARE, WAS, WERE**, **BEEN** and **BEING**. **It is used for making the continuous tense and passive voice. It is also used for making questions and negatives.**

For making the continuous tense; for making questions; for making negatives

I **am** drinking lemon tea.

(Here, 'am' is helping the main verb 'drinking'.)

Am I drinking lemon tea?

I **am not** drinking lemon tea.

She **is** jumping on the bed.

(Here, 'is' is helping the main verb 'jumping'.)

Is she jumping on the bed?

She **is not** jumping on the bed.

They **are** playing with the toys.

(Here, 'are' is helping the main verb 'playing'.)

Are they playing with the toys?

They **are not** playing with the toys.

Kishen **was** troubling Upendra.

(Here, 'was' is helping the main verb 'troubling'.)

Was Kishen troubling Upendra?

Kishen **was not** troubling Upendra.

The children **were** screaming loudly.

(Here, 'were' is helping the main verb 'screaming'.)

Were the children screaming loudly?

The children **were not** screaming loudly.

You **have been** waiting since morning.

(Here, both 'have' and 'been' are helping the main verb 'waiting'.)

Have you **been** waiting since morning?

You **have not been** waiting since morning.

The dog **has been** playing with the cat.

(Here, both 'has' and 'been' are helping the main verb 'playing'.)

Has the dog **been** playing with the cat?

The dog **has not been** playing with the cat.

It **had been** raining for five hours.

(Here, both 'had' and 'been' are helping the main verb 'raining'.)

Had it **been** raining for five hours?

It **had not been** raining for five hours.

For making passives

The box **is** opened by the little girl.

(Here, 'is' is helping the main verb 'opened'.)

The crowd **was** stopped by the police personnel.

(Here, 'was' is helping the main verb 'stopped'.)

The boys **were** punished by the teacher.

(Here, 'were' is helping the main verb 'punished'.)

The gate **is being** closed by the gatekeeper.

(Here, both 'is' and 'being' are helping the main verb 'closed'.)

The envelope **was being** held by the waiter.

(Here, both 'was' and 'being' are helping the main verb 'held'.)

The thieves **were being** chased by the watchman.

(Here, both 'were' and 'being' are helping the main verb 'chased'.)

The bus **has been** stopped by the angry crowd.

(Here, both 'has' and 'been' are helping the main verb 'stopped'.)

The brothers **had been** asked to keep quiet by their parents.

(Here, both 'had' and 'been' are helping the main verb 'asked'.)

Primary Helping Verbs - DO and HAVE

DO — It can also function as the main verb of a sentence. Its forms are: **DO, DOES** and **DID**. **It is used for emphasising the action of the main verb. It is also used for making questions and negatives.**

For emphasising the action of the main verb; for making questions; for making negatives

I **do** realise the complexity of the issue.

(Here, 'do' emphasises the main verb 'realise'.)

Do I realise the complexity of the issue?

I **do not** realise the complexity of the issue.

He **does** wish to go to the park.

(Here, 'does' emphasises the main verb 'wish'.)

Does he wish to go to the park?

He **does not** wish to go to the park.

They **did** find the joke to be funny.

(Here, 'did' emphasises the main verb 'find'.)

Did they find the joke to be funny?

They **did not** find the joke to be funny.

HAVE — It can also function as the main verb of a sentence. Its forms are: **HAVE, HAS** and **HAD**. **It is used for making the perfect tense. It is also used for making questions and negatives.**

For making the perfect tense; for making questions; for making negatives

She **has** made the cake.

(Here, 'has' is helping the main verb 'made'.)

Has she made the cake?

She **has not** made the cake.

You **have** taken the DVD.

(Here, 'have' is helping the main verb 'taken'.)

Have you taken the DVD?

You **have not** taken the DVD.

They **had** run in the race.

(Here, 'had' is helping the main verb 'run'.)

Had they run in the race?

They **had not** run in the race.

Modal Helping Verbs

The following are the most common modals:

CAN

To show ability	To give permission	To make a request	To show possibility
I **can** bowl real fast.	You **can** have dinner in your room.	**Can** you tell me where Rahul lives?	Sometimes a little appreciation **can** help a person achieve a lot of self confidence.

COULD

To show past ability	To make a suggestion	To make a request	To show possibility	In a conditional

I **could** bowl at 90 miles an hour when I was in my teens.	We **could** go to Simla for the office trip.	**Could** you please tell my mother that I will have dinner outside?	In the coming general elections, the voters **could** choose to vote one of the major parties into power.	If I had saved some money, then we **could** have gone to London for the vacation.

MAY

To seek permission	To give permission	To show possibility
May I sit down please?	You **may** leave the house after you have done your home work.	The postman **may** come with the parcel tomorrow.

MIGHT

To make a suggestion	To make a request	To show possibility	In a conditional
You **might** like to go through my article in the Indian Express.	**Might** I get some breakfast for myself?	The Damodars **might** be vacating their flat by the end of this month.	If I had known that you were in a fix, then I **might** have helped you get out of it.

WILL

To show future voluntary action	To make a promise	To make a prediction

I **will** see to it that the work is completed on time.	I promise that I **will** call you on reaching Canada.	Both the teams have remained unbeaten in the tournament. It **will** be a closely contested final.

WOULD

To show regularity or repetition	*As the past form of will*	*In a conditional*
They **would** regularly meet in the canteen during recess.	They knew that it **would** be difficult to enter the party.	If I were you, then I **would** never do this.

SHALL

(*commonly used with I and We*)

To make a suggestion	*To make a promise*	*To show an unavoidable future action or event*
You must be really tired. **Shall** I help you carry your luggage? **Shall** we take the children along with us?	I **shall** always remember the kindness you showed towards me.	They **shall** be here at precisely 6 P.M.

SHOULD

To make a suggestion or recommendation; To give advice	To show some obligation	To show an expectation
When you go to Kerala for the vacations, you **should** make it a point to visit the Guruvayoor temple. You **should** pay more attention in class.	This file **should** be on my table first thing tomorrow morning.	At this very minute, they **should** be boarding their plane for New Delhi.

MUST

To show certainty	To show a necessary condition	To make a strong recommendation
Mother said that she would be back by six. She **must** be the one knocking on the door.	You **must** study really hard to clear the entrance exams.	You **must** try on this new shirt. It is the new look of generation next.

OUGHT TO

To give advice	To show probability	To show an expectation
You are out of shape. You **ought to** start exercising regularly.	The sky looks black. It **ought to** rain heavily today.	He has worked so hard. He **ought to** get the due recognition.

[**Note:** *Apart from the verbs 'be', 'do' and 'have', no other helping verb can act as the main verb in a sentence.*]

Regular and Irregular Verbs

On the basis of how a verb forms its past tense form and its past participle form, it can be classified as either regular or irregular.

Regular verbs

In the case of regular verbs, **the past tense and the past participle are formed by adding '−ed' to the root form** of the verbs.

For example:

Root form	Past tense form	Past participle form
Accept	*Accepted*	*Accepted*
Complain	*Complained*	*Complained*
Rescue	*Rescued*	*Rescued*
Work	*Worked*	*Worked*
Visit	*Visited*	*Visited*
Taste	*Tasted*	*Tasted*

Fool	Fooled	Fooled
Increase	Increased	Increased
Decrease	Decreased	Decreased
Order	Ordered	Ordered

Irregular verbs

In the case of irregular verbs, three variations exist:

(i) When the root form, past tense form and past participle form are the same

For example:

Root form	Past tense form	Past participle form
Cut	Cut	Cut
Read	Read	Read
Hit	Hit	Hit
Shut	Shut	Shut

Hurt	*Hurt*	*Hurt*

(ii) When the root form, past tense form and past participle form are all different

For example:

Root form	Past tense form	Past participle form
Go	*Went*	*Gone*
Be	*Was/Were*	*Been*
Forget	*Forgot*	*Forgotten*
Sing	*Sang*	*Sung*
See	*Saw*	*Seen*

(iii) When two of the three forms are the same

For example:

Root form	Past tense form	Past participle form
Run	*Ran*	*Run*

Become	*Became*	*Become*
Beat	*Beat*	*Beaten*
Teach	*Taught*	*Taught*
Lose	*Lost*	*Lost*

Participle, Gerund and Infinitive

In English language, there are verb forms that perform the role of other parts of speech. These are:

(i) Present Participle: In this form, the root form of a verb is joined with '*−ing*'. It acts as both a verb and an adjective.

As a verb, it represents an action in progress or incomplete action.

For example:

They are **playing** scrabble.

(Here, the present participle form of the verb 'play' indicates that the game of scrabble is in progress.)

It also acts **as an adjective**, and like any adjective, it modifies a noun or a pronoun.

For example:

Fatima was fighting a **losing** cause.

(Here, the present participle of the verb 'lose' is modifying the noun 'cause'. Ask the question 'what kind of cause?' and you get the answer 'losing cause'. Hence, 'losing' is working as an adjective.)

(ii) Past Participle: This form usually ends in '−*ed*', '−*d*', '−*t*', '−*en*' or '−*n*'. It acts as both a verb and an adjective.

As a verb it represents a completed action, with the emphasis on the completion of the action.

For example:

I have **eaten** my lunch.

(Here, the past participle form of the verb 'eat' indicates the completion of action.)

It also **acts as an adjective**, and like any adjective, it modifies a noun or a pronoun.

For example:

His **polished** look gave him an edge over his competitors.

(Here, the past participle form of the verb 'polish' is modifying the noun 'look'. Ask the question 'what kind of look?' and you get the answer 'polished look'. Hence, 'polished' is working as an adjective.)

(iii) Perfect Participle: This form is used for simply referring to an action completed at some time in the past.

For example:

Having sized up the problem at hand, Ravi went forward and took hold of the situation.

(Here, the entire phrase containing the perfect participle form of the verb 'size up' is modifying the noun 'Ravi', thereby acting **as an adjective** phrase.)

(iv) Gerund: In this form, the root form of a verb is joined with '−*ing*'. However, unlike present participle, a gerund **acts as a noun**. Hence, like a noun, it can be the subject or the object of a sentence.

For example:

Playing cricket is not allowed here.

(Here, the gerund 'playing' is working as a noun. Ask the question 'what is not allowed?' and you get the answer '*playing* cricket'.)

You can see here that 'playing' (like a noun) is the subject of the sentence, but at the same time it also has an object (like a verb), and this object is 'cricket'. **This is why a gerund is called a verbal noun, or a noun that has the qualities of a verb.**

(v) Infinitive: In this form, the root form of a verb is preceded by the preposition 'to'. Like a gerund, it **acts as a noun**. Hence, like a noun, it can be the subject or the object of a sentence.

For example:

Yash likes **to play** cricket.

(Here, the infinitive 'to play' is working as a noun. Ask the question 'likes what?' and you get the answer '*to play* cricket'.)

You can see here that 'to play' (like a noun) is the object of the sentence, but at the same time it also has an object (like a verb), and this object is 'cricket'. **This is why an infinitive is called a verbal noun, or a noun that has the qualities of a verb.**

Sometimes, the infinitive form of a verb functions **as an adverb**.

For example:

Nidhi has gone **to see** her friend.

(Here, the infinitive 'to see' is modifying the verb 'gone'. Hence, it is acting as an adverb.)

The mangoes of this tree are good **to eat**.

(Here, the infinitive 'to eat' is modifying the adjective 'good'. Hence, it is acting as an adverb.)

Sometimes, the infinitive form of a verb functions **as an adjective**.

For example:

I have no time **to listen** to your cock-eyed theories.

(Here, the infinitive 'to listen' is modifying the noun 'time'. Hence, it is acting as an adjective.)

Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are an important part of the everyday English language— both spoken and written. They are also known as **multi-word verbs**. These are the verbs that contain a verb and another word(s). Very often, the meanings of these verbs are different from the meanings of the verbs with which they are made.

For example:

After long discussions, we finally **arrived at** a solution that pleased all.

Here, the phrasal verb 'arrived at' is made up of the verb 'arrive' and the word 'at'. The phrasal verb means 'to reach an agreement'.

My boss asked me to **do away with** my glasses as she said I look better without them.

Here, the phrasal verb 'do away with' is made up of the verb 'do' and the words 'away' and 'with'. The phrasal verb means 'to get rid of something'.

He **brought about** a great many changes during his tenure as the prime minister.

Here, the phrasal verb 'brought about' is made up of the verb 'bring' and the word 'about'. The phrasal verb means 'to make something happen'.

I **counted on** you and you did not disappoint me.

Here, the phrasal verb 'counted on' is made up of the verb 'count' and the word 'on'. The phrasal verb means 'to rely on someone for help or support'.