

## VERBS

Verbs are words which show action. Since time is an important factor in a subject's actions, writers often become concerned with the verb's tense.

To deal with the notion of time, Verbs have many different tenses, which show the time of the verb's action.

The Common Tenses include:

The Present Tense  
The Past Tense  
The Future Tense

Some Common Tenses need to include other verbs to help them (usually forms of the words, Have and Had, which we call helping verbs).

These tenses, which we ironically call Perfect (although they seem less than perfect) include:

The Present Perfect  
The Past Perfect  
The Future Perfect

And, a progressive form (which is found throughout each of the tenses above).

Verbs are also concerned with Voice (either an Active or Passive Voice).

## LINKING VERBS

Verbs are words which show action and state of being; however, linking verbs perform a different function. Linking verbs are used to link the subject of the sentence to the complement.

Example:

The university is closed today.  
The professors are on strike.

Derivatives of the Verb "BE" are the most common linking verbs:

Is     Was  
Are    Were  
Have/Had/Has Been  
Will Be

Oftentimes, imaging the verb as an equal sign helps to establish if the verb is a linking verb.

Example:

The teacher was sick

Teacher = Sick

“Was” is the linking verb in this sentence.

Also, the follow verbs (i.e., sensory verbs) are also linking verbs:

Appear                      Appeared

Become                      Became

Feel                      Felt

Grow                      Grew

Look                      Looked

Remain                      Remained

Seems                      Seemed

Smell                      Smelled

Sound                      Sounded

Taste                      Tasted

Turn                      Turned

Example:

The lunch food tasted bad.

The homework seemed difficult.

## AUXILIARY VERBS (OR HELPING VERBS)

Auxiliary Verbs (or Helping Verbs) are verbs which work with the main verb of the sentence to form a verb phrase.

Example:

Mary did know the answers to the math exam.

She was taking lessons from a tutor.

Jane might have taken lessons too.

I will sign up for tutoring, so I can pass the test too.

## PRIMARY AUXILIARY VERBS

Primary Auxiliary Verbs include:

Am

Is                      Was

Are                      Were

Have/Had/Has

Can                      Could

Do/Does      Did                      Done

Will

## MODAL AUXILIARY VERBS

Modal Auxiliary Verbs include:

May	Might
Must	
Ought (to)	
Shall	Should
Will	Would

Oftentimes, modal auxiliary verbs help to show what might be probable or what might be allowed.

## VERB TENSES

### PRESENT TENSE

#### SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE

The present tense indicates an action which is occurring now or which occurs all the time. In addition, the present tense may indicate that something is essentially true or false, valid or invalid, or generally agreed upon logically.

Example:

I watch television.

You watch television.

He watches television.

She watches television.

We watch television.

They watch television.

Notice a shift in singular and plural forms of the verb when using HE/SHE/IT. Be aware of this possibility.

#### PRESENT PROGRESSIVE TENSE

The present progressive tense indicates that an action is happening at this moment.

Example:

I am watching television.

You are watching television.

He is watching television.

She is watching television.

We are watching television.

They are watching television.

#### PRESENT PERFECT TENSE

The present perfect tense indicates that an action which began in the past is linked to the present. The helping verbs HAVE (plural) or HAS (singular) are added to the past participle to form the future perfect tense.

Example:

I have watched television.  
You have watched television.  
He has watched television.  
She has watched television.  
We have watched television.  
They have watched television.

### PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE TENSE

The present perfect progressive tense indicates an action which happened continually in the past and is linked to the present.

Example:

I have been watching television.  
You have been watching television.  
He has been watching television.  
She has been watching television.  
We have been watching television.  
They have been watching television.

### PAST TENSE

#### SIMPLE PAST TENSE

The Past Tense indicates an action completed in the past or which occurred before now.

Example:

I watched television.  
You watched television.  
He watched television.  
She watched television.  
We watched television.  
They watched television.

#### PAST PROGRESSIVE TENSE

The past progressive tense indicates an action which had been completed continuously in the past (at one point).

Example:

I was watching television.

You were watching television.  
He was watching television.  
She was watching television.  
We were watching television.  
They were watching television.

#### PAST PERFECT TENSE

The past perfect tense indicates an action which was completed before another action in the past. The use of the helping verb HAD is found alongside the regular verb.

Example:

I had watched television.  
You had watched television.  
He had watched television.  
She had watched television.  
We had watched television.  
They had watched television.

#### PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE TENSE

The past perfect progressive tense indicates an action which happened continually in the past but had ceased in the past. The use of the helping verbs HAD and BEEN is found alongside the regular verb.

Example:

I had been watching television.  
You had been watching television.  
He had been watching television.  
She had been watching television.  
We had been watching television.  
They had been watching television.

#### FUTURE TENSE

##### SIMPLE FUTURE TENSE

The simple future tense indicates an action that will occur in the future.

Example:

I will watch television.  
You will watch television.  
He will watch television.  
She will watch television.  
We will watch television.  
They will watch television.

Notice that oftentimes the inclusion of the word WILL with a common verb will indicate a future tense.

### FUTURE PROGRESSIVE TENSE

The future progressive tense indicates that an action is going to be happening continuously in the future (at some point).

Example:

I will be watching television.  
You will be watching television.  
He will be watching television.  
She will be watching television.  
We will be watching television.  
They will be watching television.

### FUTURE PERFECT TENSE

The future perfect tense indicates that an action is to be completed before another future action. The helping verb HAVE is added to the past participle to form the future perfect tense.

Example:

I will have watched television.  
You will have watched television.  
He will have watched television.  
She will have watched television.  
We will have watched television.  
They will have watched television.

### FUTURE PERFECT PROGRESSIVE

The future perfect progressive tense indicates that an action will be completed continuously in the future (at some point).

Example:

I will have been watching television.  
You will have been watching television.  
He will have been watching television.  
She will have been watching television.  
We will have been watching television.  
They will have been watching television.

### USING CONSISTENT VERB TENSE

Using consistent tense within paragraph is very important. Otherwise, the reader may have the sense that they are time traveling back and forth from idea to idea.

Example: (NOT CONSISTENT)

I am scared, but the first day of college was excellent. My first professor, Dr. Cotter, is wonderful. She was this tiny lady with a kind disposition. My colleagues are smart and are likewise very friendly. The first day, they were asking me about where I lived and what I liked to do for fun. Overall, the first day is fantastic.

VERSUS

Example: (CONSISTENT)

I was scared, but the first day of college was excellent. My first professor, Dr. Cotter, was wonderful. She was a tiny lady with a kind disposition. My colleagues were smart and likewise very friendly. The first day, they were asking me about where I lived and what I liked to do for fun. Overall, the first day was fantastic.

If you located the verbs in the first example, then you should have decided that not all of these verbs were in a consistent tense. Sentences in the paragraph switched from past to present to past to present and so forth.

I am scared, but the first day of college was excellent. My first professor, Dr. Cotter, is wonderful. She was this tiny lady with a kind disposition. My colleagues are smart and are likewise very friendly. The first day, they were asking me about where I lived and what I liked to do for fun. Overall, the first day is fantastic.

STRATEGY

The best thing to do is to decide which tense you wish to express yourself in, locate the verbs, and change the verbs to match the desired tense.

Remember: You can change tense in the next paragraph. However, it is customary and useful to keep the same tense in a single paragraph.