

# Grammar Verbs

## Identify Transitive and Intransitive Verbs 1

All English verbs (main verbs) have transitive and / or intransitive uses. **Transitive verbs** must be followed by a **direct object** – e.g. 'I have a new car.' – while **intransitive verbs** cannot be. Most English verbs can be used either transitively or intransitively.

<b>Transitive Verbs:</b>	<b>Intransitive Verbs:</b>
The meaning is incomplete without a direct object: 'What did you do yesterday?' ' <del>Learned.</del> ' [What?]	The meaning is complete without a direct object. 'What did you do yesterday?' 'I studied.'
The verb can be used in passive voice: 'My mum made it.' / 'It was made by my mum.' [object: it]	The verb cannot be used in passive voice: 'I slept for ten hours.' / ... [no object]
The verb cannot end a clause or sentence. ' <del>Where did I put?</del> ' [What?]	The verb can end a clause or sentence. 'Everybody laughed.'
The verb cannot be a one-word order (Imperative): 'Put!'	The verb can be a one-word order (Imperative): 'Sit!'
The verb is followed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• noun: I like <b>books</b>. / gerund: I like <b>running</b>.</li> <li>• noun phrase: I like <b>the new kettle</b>.</li> <li>• determiner: I bought <b>a</b> plant. / I lost <b>my</b> phone.</li> <li>• pronoun: I met <b>him</b>. / quantifier: I had <b>many</b> ideas.</li> </ul>	The verb is followed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adverb: I ran <b>quickly</b>.</li> <li>• adverbial phrase: I went <b>to the theatre</b>.</li> <li>• preposition (e.g. first word in an adverbial)</li> <li>• no words (punctuation: e.g. full stop; semi-colon)</li> </ul>
<i>Verbs that are always or typically* transitive:</i> bring, discuss, envy, find, give, guard, have, let, like, take	<i>Verbs that are always or typically* intransitive:</i> act, appear, arrive, be, chat, come, die, fall, giggle, go, happen, itch, jump, laugh, lie, live, look, mean, rise, seem, sit, sleep, smile, snore, use, wait, work

\*This is the general rule, but in a living language like English we might find a few exceptions, as in some of the questions below. Check a good dictionary to discover which definitions of a particular verb are transitive and intransitive.

Mark the verbs in **bold T** for transitive or **I** for intransitive. Underline the object of each transitive verb, then match 16 pairs of verbs. Say why the other 8 sentences do not have a match. Discuss your answers with a partner:

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|---|--|
| 1. I <b>asked</b> him to remove his car.                  | 21. I thought he <b>knew</b> the way there.              |
| 2. I have so much to <b>do</b> today.                     | 22. Please <b>bring</b> me my umbrella.                  |
| 3. That was a nasty thing to <b>say</b> .                 | 23. I <b>gave</b> her a DVD for her birthday.            |
| 4. Please <b>guard</b> my little brother with your life!  | 24. Has the doctor <b>been</b> yet?                      |
| 5. We <b>got</b> home late last night.                    | 25. I don't know who to <b>tell</b> or what to do.       |
| 6. The concert <b>made</b> for a nice evening.            | 26. Unfortunately, the skin graft didn't <b>take</b> .   |
| 7. 'It's raining.' 'I <b>know</b> .'                      | 27. We were <b>doing</b> a drawing.                      |
| 8. I <b>needed</b> a new jacket.                          | 28. If you need any help, please <b>ask</b> .            |
| 9. My in-laws are <b>arriving</b> at four in the morning. | 29. I've never <b>used</b> Microsoft Paint.              |
| 10. 'Was it a good party?' 'What do you <b>think</b> ?'   | 30. It's the same answer I <b>put</b> for that question. |
| 11. I'm <b>taking</b> my phone to school on Monday.       | 31. I really <b>wanted</b> another cream cake!           |
| 12. I <i>will</i> be famous – you'll <b>see</b> , mother! | 32. They will <b>get</b> a wonderful surprise.           |
| 13. I'm sorry, but I <b>want</b> out of this deal.        | 33. Tom has been <b>telling</b> us his good news.        |
| 14. Don't forget to <b>say</b> hello to Grandma for me.   | 34. We <b>discussed</b> the films of Marlon Brando.      |
| 15. Have you been <b>making</b> a mess?                   | 35. The addict was <b>using</b> for years.               |
| 16. It <b>appears</b> that he was absent all last month.  | 36. I <b>saw</b> a squirrel stealing a nut.              |
| 17. I <b>put</b> the key in the lock and turned it.       | 37. I've always <b>envied</b> your confidence, Bernard.  |
| 18. I <b>thought</b> the same as you.                     | 38. Did you <b>find</b> an injured bird yesterday?       |
| 19. The judge is bound to <b>find</b> for the defendant.  | 39. The meeting <b>is</b> on Wednesday morning.          |
| 20. It is far better to <b>give</b> than receive.         | 40. I'll go – you <b>need</b> only say the word.         |