

# Present Tense

## 1. Habitual Statement (something done frequently)

Conjugate the verb by adding appropriate endings: *I sing, we go, he has, she is, Bob runs.*

## 2. In Progress (incomplete)

Combine the verb *to be* with a verb ending in *-ing*.

*I am eating, you are typing, she is reading*

This present tense formation means that an action is in progress and that the action of the verb is incomplete.

## 3. Emphatic Response

The third present tense is the emphatic and opposite response to someone's statement. If the statement is negative, you respond in the positive. If it is positive, you respond in the negative. It requires using *do/does* with the infinitive of the original verb.

"You do not read." → "I *do* read."

"We go home." → "We *do not* go home."

"They do not sing." → "They *do* sing."

# Past Tense

## 1. Habitual Statement (something done frequently)

To conjugate, just add *-ed* to the end of a regular verb. If the verb ends in a consonant followed by a *-y*, drop the *-y* and add *-ied*. If a one-syllable verb ends in a single consonant, double that consonant and add *-ed*.

### Just Add *-ed*

borrow, borrowed; call, called; work, worked

### Consonant *-y*

bury, buried; carry, carried; hurry, hurried

### Single Consonant

rot, rotted; pin, pinned; dim, dimmed

## 2. In Progress (incomplete)

Use the past tense of *to be* (*was/were*) plus an *-ing* ending on the verb to form the past tense of an action in progress or incomplete. There is no difference for regular or irregular verbs:

I was speaking English; We were going home; They were singing

## 3. Emphatic Response

Use the past tense of *to do* (*did*) to form the past tense of an emphatic response.

"You did not read" → "I *did* read"

"We went home." → "We *did not* go home"

# Present Perfect Tense

The present perfect tense expresses something that began in the past and continues until the present.

## 1. Habitual or Frequent Action

The habitual present perfect tense is formed by conjugating *to have* (*have/has*) in the present tense and combining it with a past participle:

to work → has worked

to carry → has carried

to speak → has spoken

The participle of a regular verb looks just like the past tense. It ends in *-ed*. But the participle of an irregular verb often makes a change.

Several examples:

Infinitive	Participle
To be	been
To break	broken
To bring	brought

## 2. The action in progress or incomplete.

The present perfect of an action in progress or incomplete is formed by conjugating *to have* (*have/has*) with the participle of *to be* (*been*) and the verb with an *-ing* ending. The structure is *to have + been + verb-ing*:

to work → has been working

to carry → has been carrying

## Past Perfect Tense

To express an action that began in the past and ended in the past use the past perfect tense. It has two formations similar to the present perfect tense. But in the past perfect tense, the verb *to have* is conjugated in the past tense (*had*):

to work → had worked/had been working  
 to carry → had carried/had been carrying  
 to speak → had spoken/had been speaking

You can form a question in the present perfect or past perfect tenses by inverting the verb and the subject:

You have spoken. → Have you spoken?

He had learned. → Had he learned?

You can form the negative by placing *not* after *have* or *had*:

You have spoken. → You have not spoken.

He had learned. → He had not learned.

## The Future Tense

The future tense can be expressed in a few ways.

1. Use the present tense but to imply a future tense meaning. Do this by using the present tense verb formation for an action in progress or incomplete. Examples:

Bob is going home today. (present tense)

Bob is going home tomorrow. (future tense)

2. Combine the verb *shall* or *will* with an infinitive. If the action is one in progress or incomplete, use the structure *shall/will* + *be* + **verb-ing**:

to go → I shall go/I shall be going

to speak → he will speak/he will be speaking

Complete Conjugation:

Pronoun	Habitual Action	Incomplete Action
I	shall speak	shall be speaking
you	will try	will be trying
he, she, it	will make	will be making
we	shall read	shall be reading
they	will work	will be working

3. Form a question in the future by inverting the verb and the subject:

You will sing. → Will you sing?

4. Form a negative by placing *not* after *will*:

You will sing → You will not sing.

## The Future Perfect Tense

The future perfect tense describes an action that begins and ends in the future tense. Just like other perfect tenses, it has two formations:

1. Habitual or Frequent Action

The structure for a habitual action is *will* + *have* + **past participle**:

To work → will have worked

To see → will have seen

2. Action in progress or incomplete

The structure for an action in progress or incomplete is *will* + *have* + *been* + **verb-ing**:

To work → will have been working

To see → will have been seeing

Complete conjugation:

Pronoun	Habitual Action	Incomplete Action
I	will have spoken	will have been speaking
you	will have tried	will have been trying
he, she, it	will have made	will have been making
we	will have read	will have been reading
They	will have worked	will have been working

## Present Tense

Only the third-person singular (he, she, it) requires an ending. That ending is an *-s* (or *-es*). And with some verbs there is no ending at all.

	<b>to go</b>	<b>to see</b>	<b>to want</b>	<b>can</b>	<b>must</b>
<b>I</b>	go	see	want	can	must
<b>you</b>	go	see	want	can	must
<b>he, she, it</b>	<b>goes</b>	<b>sees</b>	<b>wants</b>	<b>can</b>	<b>must</b>
<b>we</b>	go	see	want	can	must
<b>they</b>	go	see	want	can	must

When the verb ends in the vowel *-o*, add *-es* for the third-person singular pronouns:

**do** → **does**

*Can* and *must* are special auxiliary verbs. They never have an ending change in the present tense. There are other auxiliaries that do the same thing.

There are two special verbs that have more complicated ending changes in the present tense: *to have* and *to be*.

	<b>to have</b>	<b>to be</b>
<b>I</b>	have	am
<b>You</b>	have	are
<b>he, she, it</b>	has	is
<b>We</b>	have	are
<b>they</b>	have	are

## The Past Tense

The past tense conjugation of a habitual or frequent action is quite simple. Just add *-ed* to the end of a regular verb. If the verb ends in a consonant followed by a *-y*, drop the *-y* and add *-ied*. If a one-syllable verb ends in a single consonant, double that consonant and add *-ed*.

Just Add <i>-ed</i>	Consonant <i>-y</i>	Single Consonant
borrow, borrowed	bury, buried	bed, bedded
call, called	carry, carried	pin, pinned
Help, helped	hurry, hurried	rot, rotted
work, worked	rally, rallied	sin, sinned

The verbs listed above are *regular verbs*. They form their past tense by the addition of *-ed*. There are also *irregular verbs*. They form their past tense by making a change within the stem of the verb. It is usually a vowel change, but there can also be a consonant change as well. Following are irregular past tense forms of some commonly used verbs:

Infinitive	Past Tense	Infinitive	Past Tense	Infinitive	Past Tense	Infinitive	Past Tense
to be	was/were	to make	made	to do	did	to sit	sat
to break	broke	to put	put	to find	found	to speak	spoke
to bring	brought	to read	read	to fly	flew	to stand	stood
to build	built	to ride	rode	to go	went	to take	took
to buy	bought	to run	ran	to have	had	to teach	taught
to catch	caught	to sell	sold	to hit	hit	to throw	threw
to cut	cut	to see	saw	to lose	lost	to write	wrote

# The Present Perfect

To express something that began in the past and continues until the present use the present perfect tense. This tense has two formations: (1) the habitual or frequent action and (2) the action in progress or incomplete. The habitual present perfect tense is formed by conjugating to have (have/has) in the present tense and combining it with a past participle:

to work → has worked

to carry → has carried

to speak → has spoken

The participle of a regular verb looks just like the past tense. It ends in –ed. But the participle of an irregular verb often makes a change. Look at this list of irregular participles of commonly used verbs:

Infinitive	Participle	Infinitive	Participle	Infinitive	Participle	Infinitive	Participle
to be	been	to make	made	to do	done	to sit	sat
to break	broken	to put	put	to find	found	to speak	spoken
to bring	brought	to read	read	to fly	flown	to stand	stood
to build	built	to ride	ridden	to go	gone	to take	taken
to buy	bought	to run	ran	to have	had	to teach	taught
to catch	caught	to sell	sold	to hit	hit	to throw	thrown
to cut	cut	to see	seen	to lose	lost	to write	written

The present perfect of an action in progress or incomplete is formed by conjugating *to have* (*have/has*) with the participle of *to be* (*been*) and the verb with an –ing ending. The structure is *to have + been + verb-ing*:

to work → has been working

to carry → has been carrying

to speak → has been speaking

## The Past Perfect Tense

To express an action that began in the past and ended in the past use the past perfect tense. It has two formations similar to the present perfect tense. But in the past perfect tense, the verb *to have* is conjugated in the past tense (*had*):

to work → had worked/had been working

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to speak → had spoken/had been speaking

You can form a question in the present perfect or past perfect tenses by inverting the verb and the subject:

You have spoken. → Have you spoken?

He had learned. → Had he learned?

You can form the negative by placing *not* after *have* or *had*:

You have spoken. → You have not spoken.

He had learned. → He had not learned.

# The Future Tense

The future tense can be expressed in a few ways. One of the most common is to use the present tense but to imply a future tense meaning. This is done by using the present tense verb formation for an action in progress or incomplete. Look at the following examples:

Ray is going to school *today*. (present tense)      Ray is going to school *tomorrow*. (future tense)

They are traveling to Brazil today. (present tense)      They are traveling to Brazil tomorrow. (future tense)

Another way to form the future tense is to combine the verb *shall* or *will* with an infinitive. If the action is one in progress or incomplete, use the structure *shall/will* + be + **verb-ing**:

to go      → I shall go/I shall be going

to speak → he will speak/he will be speaking

Let's look at the complete conjugation:

<b>Pronoun</b>	<b>Habitual Action</b>	<b>Incomplete Action</b>
<b>I</b>	shall speak	shall be speaking
<b>you</b>	will try	will be trying
<b>he, she, it</b>	will make	will be making
<b>we</b>	shall read	shall be reading
<b>they</b>	will work	will be working

Traditionally, *shall* has been used for the first-person singular and plural (I and we). However, many modern speakers of English use only *will*.

Form a question in the future by inverting the verb and the subject: You will sing → Will you sing?

Form the negative by placing *not* after *will*: You will sing. → You will not sing.

## The Future Perfect Tense

The future perfect tense describes an action that begins and ends in the future tense. Just like other perfect tenses, it has two formations: one for habitual or frequent action and one for an action in progress or incomplete. The structure for a habitual action is *will + have + past participle*:

To work → will have worked

To see → will have seen

The structure for an action in progress or incomplete is *will + have + been + verb-ing*:

to work → will have been working

to see → will have been seeing

Let's look at the complete conjugation:

<b>Pronoun</b>	<b>Habitual Action</b>	<b>Incomplete Action</b>
I	will have spoken	will have been speaking
you	will have tried	will have been trying
he, she, it	will have made	will have been making
we	will have read	will have been reading
they	will have worked	will have been working



## Comparison of Regular and Irregular Verbs

The regular verbs are the easiest to work with. Since there are no unusual changes to make in the conjugations, they follow very neat patterns. With irregular verbs, you must remember that the past tense and the participle are formed with vowel changes. Let's look at three verbs and how they appear in all the tenses:

<b>Tense</b>	<b>to play</b>	<b>to go</b>	<b>to sing</b>
<b>Present</b>	he plays	he goes	he sings
	he is playing	he is going	he is singing
	he does play	he does go	he does sing
<b>Past</b>	he played	he went	he sang
	he was playing	he was going	he was singing
	he did play	he did go	he did sing
<b>Present Perfect</b>	he has played	he had gone	he had sung
	he has been playing	he has been going	he had been singing
<b>Past Perfect</b>	he had played	he had gone	he had sung
	he had been playing	he had been going	he had been singing
<b>Future</b>	he will play	he will go	he will sing
	he will be playing	he will be going	he will be singing
<b>Future Perfect</b>	he will have played	he will have gone	he will have sung
	he will have been playing	he will have been going	he will have been singing