

11 be, have, do

be as an auxiliary verb

113 Form and use in the formation of tenses

A Form

Principal parts: be, was, been Gerund/present participle: being

Present tense:

Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative
I am/I'm	I am not/I'm not	am I? you are/you're
he is/he's	he is not/he's not	is he? she is/she's
she? it is/it's	it is not/it's not	is if? we are/we're
you are/you're	you are not/you're not	are you? they are/they're
are they?	are they?	

Alternative negative contractions: you aren't, he isn't etc. Negative interrogative: am I not/aren't I? we you not/aren't you? is he not/isn't he? etc.

Past tense:

Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative
I was	I was not/wasn't	was I? you were
he/she/it was	he/she/it was not/wasn't	was he/she/it? we were
not/weren't	were we? you were	you were not/weren't
they were not/weren't	were they?	were you? they were

Negative interrogative: was I not/wasn't I? were you not/weren't you? was he not/wasn't he? etc.

The forms are the same when be is used as an ordinary verb. Other tenses follow the rules for ordinary verbs. But be is not normally used in the continuous form except in the passive and as shown in 115 B.

114 Use to form tenses

• be is used in continuous active forms: He is working/will be working etc., and in all passive forms: He was followed/is being/allowed.

Note that be can be used in the continuous forms in the passive:

• Active: They are carrying him. Passive: He is being carried.

(For be used in the continuous with adjectives, see 115 B.)

be + infinitive

The be + infinitive construction, e-g, I am to go, is extremely important and can be used in the following ways:

To convey orders or instructions:

No one is to leave this building without the permission of the police.

(no one must leave)

He is to stay here till we return, (he must stay)'. This is a rather impersonal way of giving instructions and is chiefly used

• With the third person. When used with you it often implies that the speaker is passing on instructions issued by someone else. The difference between (a) Stay here, Tom and (b) You are to stay here, Tom is that in (a) the speaker himself is ordering Tom to stay, while in (b) he

may be merely conveying to Tom the wishes of another person. This distinction disappears of course in indirect speech, and the be + infinitive construction is an extremely useful way of expressing indirect commands, particularly when the introductory verb is in the present tense:

He says, 'Wait till I come.' = He says that we are to wait till he comes.

or when there is a clause in front of the imperative:

He said, 'If I fall asleep at the wheel wake me up.' =

He said that if he fell asleep at the wheel she was to wake him up.

It is also used in reporting requests for instructions:

'Where shall I put it, sir?' he asked =

He asked where he was to put it. (See also 318 B.)

;' To convey a plan:

'a',, She is to be married next month.

;'.- The expedition is to start in a week's time.

^ilis construction is very much used in newspapers:

'^•^ The Prime Minister is to make a statement tomorrow. ^,;"1 headlines the verb be is often omitted to save space:

?'•" Prime Minister to make statement tomorrow. ^Sast forms:

ij,^!' He was to go. (present infinitive) ^ He was to have gone. (perfect infinitive)

The first of these doesn't tell us whether the plan was carried out or not. The second is used for an unfulfilled plan, i.e. one which was not carried out:

The Lord Mayor was to have laid the foundation stone but he was taker, ill last night so the Lady Mayoress is doing it instead.

B was/were + infinitive can express an idea of destiny:

He received a blow on the head. It didn't worry him at the time hut it was to be very troublesome later, (turned out to be/proved

troublesome) They said goodbye, little knowing that they were never to meet again. (were destined never to meet)

C be about + infinitive expresses the immediate future:

They are about to start. (They are just going to start/They are on the point of starting.) just can be added to make the future even more immediate:

They are just about to leave.

Similarly in the past:

He was just about to dive when he saw the shark. be on the point of + gerund has the same meaning as be about + infinitive, but is a shade more immediate.

be as an ordinary verb

Form: as for be used as an auxiliary (see 113 A).

115 be to denote existence, be + adjective

A be is the verb normally used to denote the existence of, or to give information about, a person or thing:

Tom is a carpenter. The dog is in the garden.

Malta is an island. The roads were rough and narrow.

Gold is a metal. Peter was tall and fair.

B be is used to express physical or mental condition:

/ am hot/cold. He was excited/calm. They will be happy/unhapfy.

With certain adjectives, e.g. quiet/noisy, good/bad, wise/foolish, it is possible to use the continuous form of be, e.g. Tom is being foolish, lo imply that the subject is showing this quality at this time. Compare ToW is being foolish, which means Tom is talking or acting foolishly now, with Tom is foolish, which means that Tom always acts or talks foolishly. Similarly, The children are being quiet means they are playing quietly now, but The children are quiet might mean that they usually play quietly.

Other adjectives include:

annoying	generous/mean	cautious/rash	helpful/unhelpful	clever/stupid
irritating	difficult	mysterious	economical/extravagant	optimistic/pessimistic
formal	polite	funny	selfish/unselfish	

... With some of these, e.g. stupid, difficult, funny, polite, the continuous " form may imply that the subject is deliberately acting in this way:

You are being stupid may mean You are noi trying to understand.

He is being difficult usually means He is raising unnecessary 'objections.

He is being funny usually means He is only joking. Don't ' believe him.

She is just being polite probably means She is only pretending to '(C admire your car/clothes/house etc.

beis used for age:

How old are you? ~ I'm ten/I am ten years old. (not I'm ten years}

How old is the tower? ~ It is 400 years old. (years old must be used

when giving the age of things.)

Size and weight are expressed by be:

How tall are you?/What is your height? ~ I am 1'65 metres. \ How high are we flow? - We're about 20,000 feet. ;; What is your weight? or What do you weigh/How much do you weigh? ~ I am 65 kilos or / weigh 65 kilos.

be is used for prices:

How much is this melon? or What does this melon cost? ~ It's £1. ^ The best seats are (= cost) £25.

I. Ignore is/are, there was/were etc.

When a noun representing an indefinite person or thing is the subject of I.'t'fie verb be we normally use a there + be + noun construction. We |;can say A policeman is at the door but There is a policeman at the door

Juld be more usual.

te that, though there appears to be the subject, the real subject is ' noun that follows the verb, and if this noun is plural the verb must plural too:

There are two policemen at the door.

the above sentences both constructions (noun + be and there + J|yfc + noun) are possible.

But when be is used to mean exist/happen/ ^•rtt place the there construction is necessary:

There is a mistake/There are mistakes in this translation.

ese sentences could not be rewritten A mistake is/Mistakes are etc.

In the following examples (R) is placed after the example when the there construction is replaceable by noun/pronoun + verb:

There have been several break-ins this year.

There will be plenty of room for everyone.

There were hundreds of people on the beach. (R)

B there can be used similarly with someone/anyone/no one/iSmnething etc.:

There's someone on the phone for you. (R)

C there + be + something/nothing/anything + adjective is also possible:

/s there anything wrong (with your car)? (R) ~

No, there's nothing wrong with it. (R) There's something odd/strange about this letter.

D A noun or someone/something etc. could be followed by a relative clause:

There's a film I want to see. There's something I must say.

or by an infinitive:

There's nothing to do. (nothing that we can do/must do; see 250)

E The there construction can be used with another auxiliary + be:

There must be no doubt about this. There may be a letter for me. or with seem ••• be, appear ••• be:

There seems to be something wrong here.

F there used as above is always unstressed.

Be careful not to confuse there used in this way with there, stressed, used as an adverb:

^There's a man I want to see. (He is standing by the door.)

Compare with:

There's a man I want to see. (This man exists.)

117 it is and there is compared

For uses of it is, see 67. Some examples may help to prevent confusion between the two forms:

1 it is + adjective; there is + noun:

It is foggy or There is a fog.

It was very wet or There was a lot of rain.

It won't be very sunny or There won't be much sun.

2 it is, there is of distance and time:

It is a long way to York.

There is a long way still to go. (We have many miles still to go.) It is time to go home. (We always start home at six and it is six, now -i There is time for us to go home and come back here again before the film starts. (That amount of time exists.)

3 it is, used for identity, and there is + noun/pronoun:

There is someone at the door. I think it's the man to read the meter. There's a key here. Is it the key of the safe?

• *it is, used in cleft sentences (see 67 D). and there is:*

It is the grandmother who makes the decisions, (the grandmother, not any other member of the family)

... and there's the grandmother, who lives in the granny-flat. ', , (the grandmother exists)

have as an auxiliary verb

Form and use in the formation of tenses

A *Form*

Principal parts; have, had, had

Gerund/present participle: having

Present tense:

<i>Affirmative</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Interrogative</i>
have/I've	I have not/haven't	have I?

you have/you 've	you have not/haven't	have you?	he has/he's	he has
hasn't	has he?			
has/she's	she has not/hasn't	has she?	it has/it's	it has not/hasn't
has it? ta-	we have/we've	we have not/haven't	have we?	

you have/you 're	you have not/haven't	have you?
they have/they've	they have not/haven't	have they?

Alternative negative contractions (chiefly used in perfect tenses): I've not, \ you've not, he's not etc.

Negative interrogative; have I not/haven't I? have you not/haven't you? I 'has he not/hasn't he? etc.

Past tense:

Affirmative: had/d for all persons

Negative: had not/hadn't for all persons

Interrogative: had I? etc.

Negative interrogative: had I not/hadn't I? etc.

Other tenses follow the rules for ordinary verbs.

Use to form tenses: have is used with the past participle to form the following tenses:

Present perfect: I have worked.

Past perfect: I had worked.

Future perfect: I will/shall have worked.

Perfect conditional: I would/should have worked.

119 have + object + past participle

A This construction can be used to express more neatly sentences of the type 'I employed someone to do something for me'; i.e. instead of saying 'I employed someone to clean my car we can say 'I had my car cleaned, and instead of 'I got a man to sweep my chimneys ('got' here = paid/persuaded etc.), we can say 'I had my chimneys swept. Note that this order of words, i.e. have + object + past participle, must be observed as otherwise the meaning will be changed: He had his hair cut means he employed someone to do it, but He had cut his hair means that he cut it himself some time before the time of speaking (past perfect tense).

When have is used in this way the negative and interrogative of its present and past tenses are formed with do:

Do you have your windows cleaned every month? ~ I don't have them cleaned; I clean them myself.

He was talking about having central heating put in. Did he have it put in in the end? It can

also be used in continuous tenses:

I can't ask you to dinner this week as I am having my house painted at the moment.

While I was having my hair done the police towed away my car.

The house is too small and he is having a room built on. get can be used in the same way as have above but is more colloquial. get is also used when we mention the person who performs the action:

She got him to dig away the snow. (She paid/persuaded him to dig etc.)

(have with a bare infinitive can be used in the same way, e.g. She had him dig away the snow, but the get construction is much more usual in British English.)

B The have + object + past participle construction can also be used colloquially to replace a passive verb, usually one concerning some accident or misfortune:

His fruit was stolen before he had a chance to pick it can be replaced by

He had his fruit stolen before he had a chance to pick it, and

Two of his teeth were knocked out in the fight can be replaced by

He had two of his teeth knocked out. It will be seen that, whereas in A above the subject is the person who orders the thing to be done, here the subject is the person who suffers as a result of the action. The subject could be a thing:

The houses had their roofs ripped off by the gale. get can also replace have here:

The cat got her tail singed through sifting too near the fire. (The cat's tail was singed etc.)

had better + bare infinitive

had here is an unreal past: the meaning is present or future:

I had/I'd better ring him at once/tomorrow. (This would be a good thing to do/the best thing to do.) ,*

The negative is formed with not after better:

You had better not miss the last bus. (It would be unwise to miss it, :^H or I advise/warn you not to miss it.) "'; had here is usually contracted after pronouns and in speech is •i sometimes

so unstressed as to be almost inaudible. I^had better is not normally used in the ordinary interrogative, but is ^ sometimes used in the negative interrogative as an advice form:

Hadn 't you better ask him first? =

Wouldn 't it be a good thing to ask him first?

you had better is a very useful advice form:

You had better fly. (It would be best for you to fly, or I advise t¹ you to fly.)

In indirect speech had better with the first or third person remains I^Bnchanged; had better with the second person can remain unchanged fi. Or be reported by advise + object + infinitive:

He said, 'I'd better hurry' = He said (that) he 'd better hurry. ^ He said, 'Ann had better hurry' = I?" He said (that) Ann had better hurry. He said, 'You'd better hurry' = He said (that) I'd better hurry or }, He advised me to hurry.

feave + object + present participle

expression is often used with a period of future time:

I'll have you driving in three days. (As a result of my efforts, you be driving in three days.)

can also be used in the past or present:

He had them all dancing. (He taught/persuaded them all to dance.) Il¹- / have them all

talking to each other. (I encourage/persuade them all !• to talk to each other.) H.Itcan be used in the interrogative:

Will you really have her driving in three days? often used in the negative.

If you give all-night parties you 'll have the neighbours complaining.

(The neighbours will complain/will be complaining.)

If film-stars put their numbers in telephone books they'd have

everyone ringing them up. (Everyone would ring/would be ringing

P... ^themup.)

'll have in the first example conveys the idea 'this will happen to

Similarly they'd have in the second example conveys the idea 'this ld happen to them'.

If you don't put a fence round your garden you'll have people walking

in and stealing your fruit. (People will walk in and steal/will be

walking in and stealing it, i.e. this will happen to you.) The construction can be used in the interrogative and negative:

When they move that bus stop, you won't have people sitting on your steps waiting/or the bus any more.

This structure is chiefly used for actions which would be displeasing to the subject of have, as in the above example, but it can be used for an action which is not displeasing:

When he became famous, he had people stopping him in the street and asking/or his autograph =

When he became famous, people stopped him in the street and asked for his autograph.

But I won't have + object + present participle normally means 'I won't/don't allow this':

/ won't have him sitting down to dinner in his overalls. I make him

change them. (I won't/don't allow him to sit down etc.) This use is restricted to the first person. (For have used for obligation, see chapter 14.)

have as an ordinary verb

122 have meaning 'possess'

A This is the basic meaning of have:

He has a black beard.

I have had this car for ten years.

She will have £4,000 a year when she retires.

B Form

Affirmative Negative Interrogative

Present *have (got) or haven't (got) or have I (got)? etc. or*

have don't have do you have? etc. Past had hadn't (got) or had you (got)? etc. or didn't have did you have? etc.

Note that the negative and interrogative can be formed in two ways.

C have is conjugated with do for habitual actions:

Do you have earthquakes in your country? - Yes, but we don't have them very often.

When there is not this idea of habit, the have not (got)/have you (got) forms are more usual in Britain, whereas other English-speaking countries (notably America) use the do forms here also. An American might say:

Can you help me now? Do you have time?

where an Englishman would probably say:

Can you help me now? Have you got time?

do forms can therefore be used safely throughout, but students living in Britain should practise the other forms as well.

got can be added to have/have not/have you etc. as shown above. It makes no difference to the sense so it is entirely optional, but it is quite common addition- got, however, is not added in short answers or in question tags:

' Have you got an ice-axe? ~ Yes, I have.

^ She's got a nice voice, hasn't she?

I've have (affirmative) followed by got is usually contracted:

S'i I've got my ticket. He's got a flat in Pimlico. t-The stress falls on got- The 've or 's is

often barely audible. i^i have (affirmative) without got is often not contracted. The have or I've must then be audible.

^ P

I've have meaning 'take' (a meal), 'give' (a party) etc,

have can also be used to mean:

'Intake' (a meal/food or drink, a bath/a lesson etc.)

'Give' (a party), 'entertain' (guests)

'*ite(icoounter' (difficulties/trouble)

'Experience', 'enjoy', usually with an adjective, e.g. good.

^,," We have lunch at one.

I", They are having a party tomorrow.

1^,' Did you have trouble with Customs?

EI hope you 'll have a good holiday.

e when used as above obeys the rules for ordinary verbs:

never followed by got.

negative and interrogative are made with do/did.

in be used in the continuous tenses.
 We are having breakfast early tomorrow, (near future)
 She is having twenty people to dinner next Monday, (near future)
 I can't answer the telephone; I am having a bath. (present)
 How many English lessons do you have a week? ~ I have six.
 You have coffee at eleven, don't you? (habit)
 Ann has breakfast in bed. but Mary doesn't. (habit)
 Will you have some tea/coffee etc.? (This is an invitation. We can also omit Will you and say Have some tea etc.)
 Did you have a good time at the theatre? (Did you enjoy yourself?)
 Have a good time! (Enjoy yourself!)
 / am having a wonderful holiday.
 I didn't have a very good journey.

Do

124 Form

Principal parts: do, did, done Gerund/present participle: doing

Present tense:

Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative			
I do	I do not/don't	do I? you do	you do not/don't	do you?	he does
he does	not/doesn't	does he? she does	she does not/doesn't	does she?	it does
it does	not/doesn't	does it? we do	we do not/don't	do we?	you do
not/don't	do you?	they do	they do not/don't	do they?	

Negative interrogative: do I not/don't I? do you not/don't you? does he not/doesn't he? etc.
 do as an ordinary verb has the affirmative shown above. But for negative and interrogative we add the infinitive do to the above forms:

What does/did she do? (See 126.)

Past tense:

Affirmative: did for all persons

Negative: did not/didn't for all persons

Interrogative: did he? etc.

Negative interrogative: did he not/didn't he? etc.

do is followed by the bare infinitive:

I don't know. Did you see it? He doesn't like me.

125 do used as an auxiliary

A do is used to form the negative and interrogative of the present simple and past simple tenses of ordinary verbs (see 103-5):

He doesn't work. He didn't work. Does he work? Did he work?

B It is possible to use do/did + infinitive in the affirmative also when we wish to add special emphasis- It is chiefly used when another speaker has expressed doubt about the action referred to:

You didn't see him. ~ I'didseehim. (The Ad is strongly stressed in speech. This is more emphatic than the normal / saw him.) I know that you didn't expect me to go. but I 'did go.

C do is used to avoid repetition of a previous ordinary verb: short agreements and disagreements (see 109):

' Tom talks too much. - Yes, he does/No, he doesn't.

He didn't go. - No, he didn't/Oh yes, he did. In additions (see 112):

He likes concerts and so do we. (Note inversion.) , He lives here but I don't. He doesn't drive but I do.

* In question tags (see also 110):

He lives here, doesn't he? He didn't see you, did he?

do is used in short answers to avoid repetition of the main verb:

Do you smoke? ~ Yes, I do (not Yes, I smoke)/No, I don't. ; Did you see him? ~ Yes, I did/No, I didn't. (See 108.)

Similarly in comparisons (see 22): He drives faster than I do.

do + imperative makes a request or invitation more persuasive:

Do come with us. (more persuasive than Come with us.) 1: Do work a little harder. Do help me, please.

can similarly be used as an approving or encouraging affirmative answer to someone asking for approval of, or permission to do, something: Shall I write to him? ~ Yes, do or Do alone.

126 do used as an ordinary verb

do, like **have**, can be used as an ordinary verb. It then forms its It-negative and interrogative in the simple present and past with do/did:

do not do do you do? don't you do? He does not do does he do? doesn't he do? || I did not do did he do? didn't he do? etc. || It can be used in the continuous forms, or simple forms:

What are you doing (now)? ~ I'm doing my homework. Hi. What's he doing tomorrow? (near future) |H; What does he do in the evenings? (habit) (; Why did you do it? ~ I did it because I was angry. |How do you do? is said by both parties after an introduction:

HOSTESS: Mr Day, may I introduce Mr Dams? Mr Daws, Mr Day. Both men say How do you do? Originally this was an enquiry about the |Hher person's health. Now it is merely a formal greeting. pme examples of other uses of do:

He doesn't do what he's told. (doesn't obey orders)

S What do you do for a living? ~ I'm an artist.

How's the new boy doing? (getting on)

I haven't got a torch. Will a candle do? (= be suitable/adequate) ~

A candle won't do. I'm looking for a gas leak. (A candle would be unsuitable.)

Would £10 do? (= be adequate) ~ No, it wouldn't. I need £20.

do with (in the infinitive only) can mean 'concern'. It is chiefly used in the construction it is/was something/nothing to do with + noun/gerund: It's nothing to do with you = It doesn't concern you.