

VERB TENSES & NEGATIVES

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

These are the verb tenses used in English for real events:

		Affirmative Sentences	Negative Sentences	Questions
PAST	SIMPLE PAST – for action completed before the present	Belinda ate.	Belinda did not eat.	Did Belinda eat?
	PAST PROGRESSIVE – for action in progress at a specific time before the present	Belinda was eating.	Belinda was not eating.	Was Belinda eating?
	PAST PERFECT – for action completed before a specific time before the present	Belinda had eaten.	Belinda hadn't eaten.	Had Belinda eaten?
	PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE – for action in progress before a specific time before the present	Belinda had been eating.	Belinda had not been eating.	Had Belinda been eating?
PRESENT	SIMPLE PRESENT – for facts and repeated action	Belinda eats.	Belinda doesn't eat.	Does Belinda eat?
	PRESENT PROGRESSIVE – for action currently in progress	Belinda is eating.	Belinda is not eating.	Is Belinda eating?
	PRESENT PERFECT – for action that began in the past and continues through the present or action completed at an unspecified time before the present	Belinda has eaten.	Belinda has not eaten.	Has Belinda eaten?
	PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE – for action that began in the past and continues through the present	Belinda has been eating.	Belinda has not been eating.	Has Belinda been eating?
FUTURE	SIMPLE FUTURE – for action to be completed after the present	Belinda will eat.	Belinda will not eat.	Will Belinda eat?
	FUTURE PROGRESSIVE – for action in progress at a specific time after the present	Belinda will be eating.	Belinda will not be eating.	Will Belinda be eating?
	FUTURE PERFECT – for action to be completed at a specific time after the present	Belinda will have eaten.	Belinda will not have eaten.	Will Belinda have eaten?
	FUTURE PERFECT PROGRESSIVE – for action to be in progress at a specific time after the present	Belinda will have been eating.	Belinda will not have been eating.	Will Belinda have been eating?

To state a negative idea, use only one negative word:

“We do not buy anything at Target,” and, “We never buy anything at Target,” mean that we don't shop at Target.

“We don't buy nothing at Target,” and “We never buy nothing at Target,” mean we do shop at Target.

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LEARN MORE

Don't forget: students can always ask tutors or their teachers for an explanation of anything that's not clear.

These websites have more information about verb tenses:

[Double Negatives](#)

[Verb Tenses](#)

[Using Verb Tenses](#)

[Choosing a Verb Tense](#)

[Verb Usage : Tense and Conjugation](#)

[Summary of Verb Tenses](#)

[Verb Tense Tutorial](#)

[Sequence of Verb Tenses](#)

[Verb Tense Final Test](#)

[Principle Parts of Some Irregular Verbs](#)

[Forming and Using the Past Perfect Tense](#)

[The Perfect Tenses](#)

See the index of your textbook for more information.

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PRACTICE

Directions: In each of the sentences below, choose the best verb tense.

1. Since becoming a teacher, I (have learned, had learned) so much.
2. It has been said that if you (wanted, want) to really know something, teach it.
3. Last night I (have attended, attended) the musical *Wicked*.
4. Kyle (is, was) nervous about his recital tonight, so he (has been playing, had played) the flute for four hours now.
5. In Octavia Butler's novel *Kindred*, Dana, a black woman in a biracial marriage in the 1970's, (traveled, travels) back in time to rescue her own antebellum ancestor, who (happened, happens) to be a white slave owner.
6. Sarah does not (speak, speaking) at every meeting, but she does (plan, planning) every meeting.
7. By the time Anita finishes college, she (will have taken, has taken) four math classes.
8. Last week, Maurice (had showed, showed) me how to insert a header into my document.
9. Chris (graduated, will graduate) in two more weeks.
10. How are you (do, doing) in this class?