

The Verb's Toolkit

A Guide to the Five Forms of English Verbs



Verbs don't just act. They adapt.



In English, a verb has **five main forms**. These forms are used in **different tenses** and **grammatical structures**.

Every Verb Has Five Essential Tools.

Each verb can change into one of five forms to do a specific job in a sentence. Understanding these forms is the key to clear and accurate expression.



Base Form



-s Form



-ing Form



Past Form



Past Participle

Tool 1: The Base Form

The verb in its simplest state.

This is the verb's core identity. It's used in the simple present tense (with I, you, we, they) and after auxiliary verbs like 'can', 'will', or 'should'.

I **eat** breakfast.

They **cook** together.

We **sleep** late on weekends.

Tool 2: The -s Form

The specialist for the third-person singular. Inter Regular

This form is used only in the simple present tense when the subject is 'he', 'she', or 'it'.

She **eats** breakfast.

He **cooks** dinner.

The cat **sleeps** all day.



Tool 3: The -ing Form

The tool for action in progress.

Also known as the present participle, this form shows that an action is ongoing. It is used with a helping verb (like is, am, are, was, were).

I am **eating** breakfast.

He is **cooking** dinner.

They are **sleeping**.



Tool 4: The Past Form

The tool for looking back.

This form shows an action that was started and completed in the past.

For many verbs, this form ends in '-ed'. For others, it changes completely.

- I **ate** breakfast. (Irregular)
- She **cooked** dinner. (Regular)
- The dog **slept** on the rug.
(Irregular)



Tool 5: The Past Participle

The tool for a perfected action.

This form is used to create the perfect tenses, always paired with a helping verb like 'have', 'has', or 'had'. It describes a past action relevant to the present.

They **have eaten** breakfast.

She **has cooked** dinner.

I **have slept** for eight hours.

The Same Verb, Five Different Jobs

See how changing the form of 'cook' alters
the meaning of the sentence.

- I **cook** dinner.
- She **cooks** dinner.
- She is **cooking** dinner.
- She **cooked** dinner.
- She has **cooked** dinner.

The Complete Verb Toolkit: A Reference Guide

Form	Eat	Cook	Sleep	Primary Function
Base Form	eat	cook	sleep	The verb's simple, core identity.
-s Form	eats	cooks	sleeps	For third-person singular subjects (he, she, it).
-ing Form	eating	cooking	sleeping	Shows a continuous, ongoing action.
Past Form	ate	cooked	slept	Shows a completed past action.
Past Participle	eaten	cooked	slept	Used with have/has/had to form perfect tenses.