

Advanced & Post Reading Material (APRM)
EPP- I, 2024-25 GLA U, Mathura
Module-1 (Verbal Skills)
Verbs in English-II

Let us take the verb – Speak (Base Form) Let us now consider all the different forms (Paradigm) of this base form Speak that exist.

Speak – Plain Present (E.g. They speak well)

Speaks – 3rd Person Singular Present (E.g. She speaks well)

Spoke – Past (E.g. They spoke well)

Spoken – Past Participle (E.g. They spoken well)

Speaking – Progressive (Present) Participle (E.g. They speaking well)

Speak – Bare Infinitive (E.g. They speak well)

To Speak – to infinitive (E.g. They to speak well)

You would notice that the first three formations are possible and grammatically correct, but the others are not.

The first three forms and corresponding sentences are the examples of Finite Verbs or Tensed Verbs.

Tensed Verbs: Verbs that can make tense on their own.

The other examples/verbs which cannot make tense on their own or requires a main/helping verb are known as Non-Finite Verbs. They are verb forms that do not show tense, person, or number. They're called

non-finite as they're not limited to a specific subject or time frame.

Let us revisit the above examples:

Spoken – Past Participle (E.g. They had spoken well)

Speaking – Progressive (Present) Participle (E.g. They were/are speaking well)

Speak – Bare Infinitive (E.g. They helped him speak well)

To Speak – to infinitive (E.g. They want to speak well)

So, if a verb does not talk about the tense, what does it tell us about?

It tells us about

Aspect [Progressive (-ing) or Perfect(-en/-ed)] and

Mood [Subjunctive, Imperative and Infinitive]

Finite verbs

Verbs which inflect for tense are known as finite verbs. In English, a finite verb agrees with the person or number with its subject.

Non-Finite verbs

Non-finite verbs do not inflect for tense. A non-finite verb need not agree with the person and number of its subject. The three non-finite forms of the verb are: 1. Infinitive, 2. Gerund, and 3. Participle.

Infinitives

Infinitives are non-finite verbs that are often preceded by 'to'. There are four kinds of infinitive:

a. To-infinitive

(to + first form of the verb)

A 'to' infinitive can function as a subject, direct object, subject complement, adjective or as an adverb in a sentence.

e.g. a. To find fault in others is easy (subject).

b. Everyone wanted to swim. (direct object)

c. Her desire is to sing. (subject complement)

d. This is a site to see. (adjective)

e. They must sing to learn. (adverb)

Note:

- If a verb related to a skill is in the infinitive form, we use 'how' before the infinitive.

I am learning how to ride a bicycle/horse.

- Do not confuse an infinitive (i.e. to + verb) with a prepositional phrase [i.e. to + noun/pronoun].

Infinitives: e.g. to walk, to read, to sing, to catch, etc.

Prepositional phrases:

e.g. to him, to the committee, to my house, etc.

b. Split Infinitive

A split infinitive is understood when a full infinitive (to+ verb) is split into two parts, and an adverb is placed between the two.
e.g. He asked me to clearly write my bio-data.

c. Anaphoric 'to'

Sometimes 'to' alone is used instead of 'to+ first form of the verb' (i.e. full infinitive). It

is understood as anaphoric usage because it refers back to something in the text.

e.g. Rohan: Would you like to have samosa?

Sohan: Yes, I would love to.

(here 'to' refers back to 'to have samosa')

d. Bare Infinitive:

An infinitive without 'to' is known as a bare infinitive. A bare infinitive has a deceptive form because it looks like a finite verb, which is not the case. e.g.

I saw him cross the road.

He made me sing.

Gerund:

The first form of the verb + 'ing', which is used as a noun in a sentence is known as a Gerund. It can function in various ways:

As an object

e.g. He likes driving.

As a subject

e.g. Smoking is prohibited in a public place.

c. As an appositive

e.g. My favourite summer activity, swimming, keeps me always active.

Participles:

Participles are used as adjectives and most often end with -ing or -ed. They modify nouns and pronouns. There are three types of participles:

Present Participle (base form of verb +ing),
e.g.

i. The sleeping child was wearing a wet diaper.

ii. He tried to console the crying baby.

Past Participle (third form of the verb)

e.g. i. The wounded soldier was crawling in the forest.

ii. He was wearing a torn shirt.

Perfect Participle (V3)

(having+third form of the verb)

e.g. i. Having finished his work, Mukesh was ready to play.

ii. The child, having found its mother, was again happy.