## The syntax of events

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## The syntax of events

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Forms of the verb

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Role of aux. vbs

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Further reading

Verb forms can be either **finite** or **non-finite** 

Finite forms express **tense** 

### Finite and non-finite forms

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Finite and non-finite forms

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Verb forms can be either **finite** or **non-finite** 

Finite forms express tense

e.g. laugh-ed

Non-finite forms do not have tense, e.g. e.g. He loves to laugh/laughing

### Finite forms

Finite forms often have rich **inflectional morphology**.

	Singular	Plural	
First person (refers to speaker)	l talk	We talk	
	Yo hablo	Nosotros hablamos	
Second person (refers to	You <sub>sing.</sub> talk	You <sub>pl.</sub> talk	
conversational partner)	Tu habl as	Vosotros habl aís	
Third person (refers to third party)	He/she/it talk s	They talk	
	El / ella habla	Ellos ellas hablan	

## Finite forms

	Singular	Plural	
First person (refers to speaker)	l talked	We talked	
	Yo habl é	Nosotros hablamos	
Second person (refers to conversational partner)	<b>You<sub>sing.</sub> talked</b> Tu hablaste	<b>You<sub>pl.</sub> talked</b> Vosotros hablastaís	
Third person (refers to third	He/she/it talked	They talked	
party)	El / ella habl ó	Ellos ellas hablaron	

## The syntax of

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Present participle, e.g. She is laugh-ing

Past participle, e.g. She has  $\begin{cases} dropped \\ broken \\ lost \end{cases}$  it

Infinitive form, e.g. You must { go now! be quiet! come quickly!! }

Non-finite forms

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Placement of adverbs

Infinitive	Regular / irregular	Present participle	Past simple	Past participle
be	Irr.	being	was/were	been
have	Irr.	hav <b>ing</b>	had	had
go	Irr.	go <b>ing</b>	went	gone
take	Irr.	tak <b>ing</b>	took	taken
wake	Irr.	wak <b>ing</b>	woke	woken
teach	Irr.	teach <b>ing</b>	taught	taught
meet	Irr.	meet <b>ing</b>	met	met
swim	Irr.	swimm <b>ing</b>	swam	swum
laugh	Reg.	laugh <b>ing</b>	laugh <b>ed</b>	laugh <b>ed</b>
rob	Reg.	robb <b>ing</b>	robb <b>ed</b>	robb <b>ed</b>

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**Infinitive** = bare form or base form

Identical to present tense (NOT third person singular)

Be is the only irregular form

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Further reading

I want to go home ( to-infinitive)

You can't go home ( bare infinitive)

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3rd person test...

I can run fast  $\Rightarrow$  he can run-s fast

No -s, therefore *run* is the (bare) infinitive

(we need the infinitive after can)

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urther reading

Are the verbs in **bold** present simple or the infinitive? Use the "third person singular" test.

- 1. Can we have spaghetti for dinner?
- 2. I don't know whether they **like** meat

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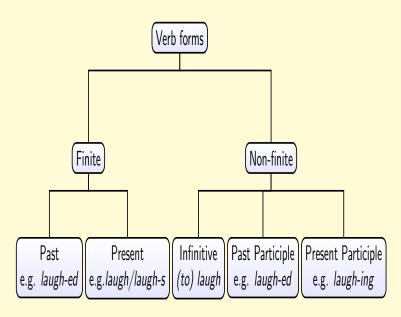
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## The importance of tense-marking

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In English, tense is marked by the third person singular present tense ending ( $he\ go-es$ )

... or a variety of regular and irregular past forms (*dropped*, gave, left).

With a few exceptions, sentences in English **must** have tense.

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# The importance of tense-marking

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In English, tense is marked by the third person singular present tense ending ( $he\ go-es$ )

... or a variety of regular and irregular past forms (*dropped*, gave, left).

With a few exceptions, sentences in English **must** have tense.

- (1) \*I going home
- (2) \*He go home

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## The syntax of events

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What are the past simple and past participle forms of the following verbs?

- consider
- put
- take
- ► look
- make
- speak

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- ▶ look , looked, looked = REGULAR
- make , made, made = IRREGULAR
- speak , spoke, spoken = IRREGULAR

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## How to mark aspect

## The syntax of events

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Marked using participles

Progressive aspect (INTERNAL perspective on the event) is expressed using the **present participle** 

Perfective aspect (EXTERNAL perspective on the event) is marked using the **past participle**.

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In addition to using the participle, we need to use an appropriate **auxiliary verb** which must "agree with" the participle.

The present participle selects **be** as the agreeing auxiliary verb

(3) Zachary is eating

and the past participle selects **have** as the agreeing auxiliary verb, e.g.

(4) Julia has eaten

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Summary

- 1. Mark aspect on the *rightmost* verb and insert an appropriate *auxiliary verb*
- 2. Repeat last rule if necessary
- 3. Mark tense (plus "the future") on the *leftmost verb*

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(5) Zachary eats

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- (5)Zachary eats
- \*Zachary eating (6)

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- (5)Zachary eats
- (6) \*Zachary eating
- (7)Zachary is eating

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(8) Anna falls

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- (8) Anna falls
- \*Anna fallen (9)

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- (8) Anna falls
- (9) \*Anna fallen
- (10) Anna has fallen

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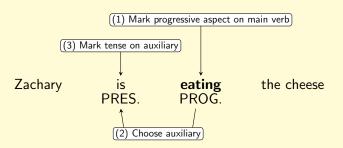
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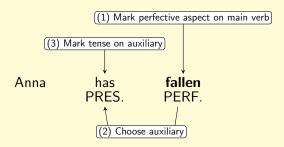
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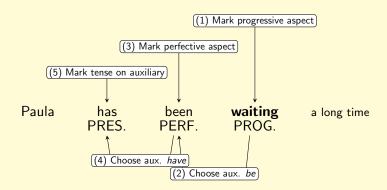
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When we build the sentence we go backwards

When we describe the tense-aspect combination we go forwards

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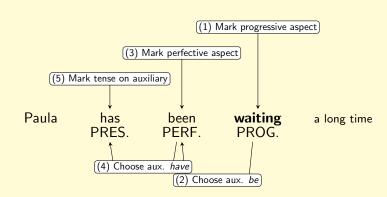
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Meanings are built up compositionally

ASPECT expresses 'viewpoint' (internal or external)

TENSE expresses temporal location of viewpoint (past, present, future)

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External viewpoint = Completed event (11)Zachary has eaten Present viewpoint

A completed event with a viewpoint located in the present.

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External viewpoint = Completed event (11)Zachary has eaten Present viewpoint

A completed event with a viewpoint located in the present.

So what's the difference between the following?

- (12)Zachary has eaten
- (13)Zachary ate

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Further reading

Internal viewpoint = Ongoing event (14)(When I arrived) Janice was cooking spaghetti Past Viewpoint

An ongoing event with a viewpoint located in the past

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External viewpoint = completed event

(15) By this time next week, I will have eaten the cheese.

A completed event with a viewpoint in the future

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COMPLETED event

(16) When he got home she had already done the cleaning

A completed event with a viewpoint in the past

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Auxiliary verbs are chosen to **support** the main verb (an auxiliary = a helper).

They are *servants* of the main verb.

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What are auxiliary verbs?

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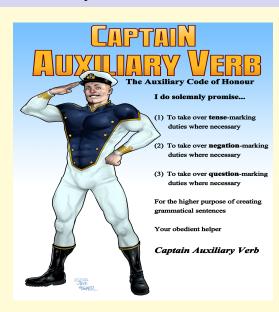
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urther reading

# Auxiliary verbs are chosen to **support** the main verb (an auxiliary = a helper).

- They are servants of the main verb.
- The main (non-modal) auxiliary verbs are have, be, and do

### What are auxiliary verbs?



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(17)\*John broken his watch

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(17)\*John broken his watch

(18)✓ John has broken his watch

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- (17)\*John broken his watch
- (18)✓ John **has** broken his watch
- (19)\*Amy singing in the shower

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Meanings of TA combs. Tense-marking duties

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- (17)\*John broken his watch
- (18)✓ John **has** broken his watch
- (19)\*Amy singing in the shower
- (20)✓ Amy **is** singing in the shower

Comb. T & Asp.

Meanings of TA combs. Tense-marking duties

## Negation-marking duties

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(21)\*I like not this food

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## Negation-marking duties

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(21) \*I **like not** this food

(22) I do not / don't like this food

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## Negation-marking duties

## The syntax of events

Nick Riches

- (21) \*I **like not** this food
- (22) I do not / don't like this food

The negative particle is always attached to the first auxiliary in the sentence;

(23) She has<sub>1</sub>n't been<sub>2</sub> coming here long

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(24) She has done it?

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## Question-marking duties

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(24)Aux. movement Has she t done it? (25)

She has done it?

(26)He is doing it? Importance of Tense

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(24) She has done it?

Aux. movement
Has she t done it?

(26) He is doing it?

(27)

Is he t doing it?

### Do-support

## The syntax of events

### Nick Riches

If there is no auxiliary, we have to create one (do/does/did);

- (28) Does he like it?
- (29) Did he like it?
- (30) I didn't like it

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### Do-support

### The syntax of events

#### Nick Riches

If there is no auxiliary, we have to create one (do/does/did);

- (28) Does he like it?
- (29) Did he like it?
- (30) I didn't like it

The process of adding *do/does/did* to express either negation or interrogative mood is sometimes called **do support** 

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Do support

- (31) Does he do it?
- (32) He did **n't** do it

Do support

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(33) I have Aux occasionally seen v shooting stars

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- (33) I have Aux occasionally seen V shooting stars
- (34) Jake is Aux really motoring V down the home straight
- (35) Helen has Aux sometimes been Aux seen downing Bloody Maries in the Frog and Bucket

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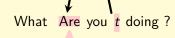
Why are the following sentences incorrect? Can you correct them?

- 1. I no like this book!
- 2. You had a good time at the party?
- 3. Mary been studying hard lately
- 4. You've seen Janet recently?

#### Nick Riches

Why are the following sentences incorrect? Can you correct them?

- 1. I don't like this book!
- 2. Did you have a good time at the party?
- 3. Mary has been studying hard lately



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