

CHAPTER

3 Verbs and Tenses

LEARNING OUTCOMES

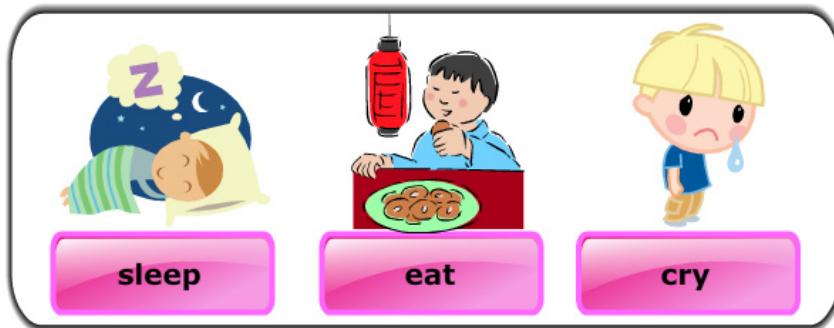
By the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Identify the various categories of verbs;
2. Identify how verbs are formed to show past, present and future tenses;
3. Apply important rules when constructing sentences using modals and auxiliaries; and
4. Construct sentences using gerunds as a noun.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we are going to look at a specific part of speech that describes actions. It is known as verbs. Just consider any word that describes an action. In most likelihood, it will be a verb.

These are examples of verbs.



Some very familiar verbs that you probably use everyday include:



Now read the following passage and see how many action verbs you can spot.

The Flea and the Ox

A flea asked an Ox: "Why is it that although you are so big and strong, you let men treat you like a slave everyday, while I, being a small creature, mercilessly feed on their flesh and drink their blood?"

The Ox replied: "I do not wish to be ungrateful, for I am loved and well cared for by men, and they often pat my head".

"Haha", the flea laughed; "for you it may be a pat to show their appreciation; but if I received the same pat, I will be killed".

(from Aesop's Fables)

3.1 VERBS

Not all verbs are obvious in the actions that they describe. There is a type of verbs known as auxiliaries that show “to be” actions. They include words like “is”, “are”, “will” and so forth.

Apart from showing actions, verbs also indicate when the action takes place, either in the past, present or future. As such, a verb may change its form when showing a past, present or future action.

In this chapter we will first learn the different kinds of verbs in English. They include:

- Transitive and intransitive verbs.
- Linking verbs

We will then look at the tenses. They are:

- Simple present, past and future tenses.
- Progressive present, past and future tenses.

3.1.1 Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

- Present, past and future perfect tenses.

Whether a verb is transitive or intransitive will depend on the object (noun). Look at the following sentences:



The girl **cries**.

The committee **elects**.



Which sentence do you think is complete?

It is quite clear that the second one sounds unfinished because the verb “elects” requires that we are also told who is being elected, for example:



The committee **elects** James as the new president of the club.

A verb that requires an object is known as the **transitive verb**.

Transitive Verb

A verb that requires an object.

In the case of the second sentence, the verb *cries* *does not* require and *cannot* take an object. This kind of verb is known as an **intransitive verb**.

Intransitive Verb

A verb that not require and cannot take an object.

Furthermore, objects can either be direct or indirect. The example above shows a transitive verb with a direct object.

Direct objects are objects which receive the action of the verb.

In this case, in the sentence:

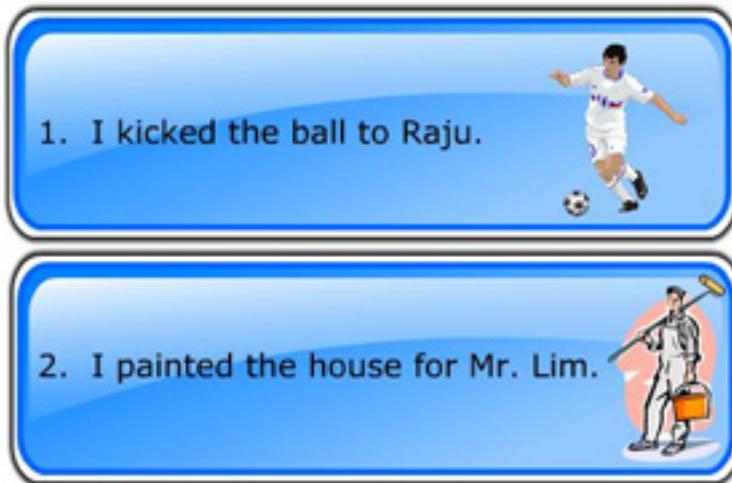


The committee elects James as the new president of the club.

James is the direct object.

An indirect object tells us to whom or for whom the action of the verb took place.

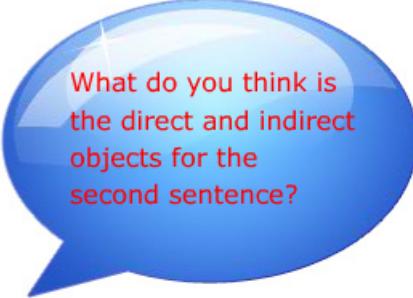
For example:



1. I kicked the ball to Raju.


2. I painted the house for Mr. Lim.

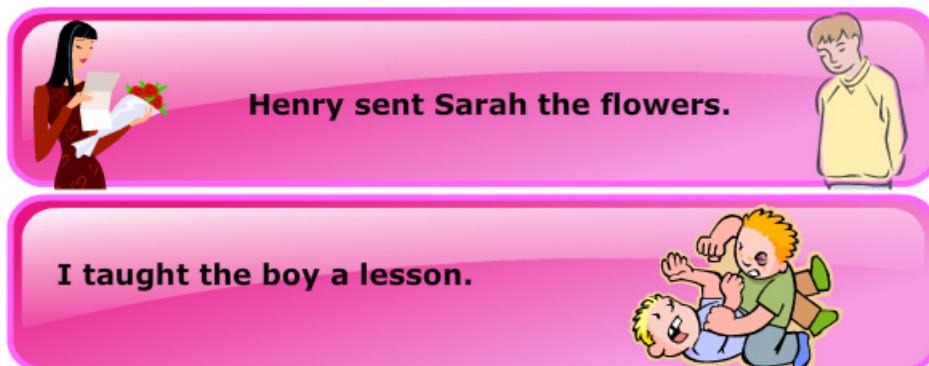

In the first sentence, **kicked** is the verb, and the **ball** is the direct object. **Raju** is the indirect object.



What do you think is
the direct and indirect
objects for the
second sentence?

You will notice that the indirect object usually follows the prepositions “to” or “for”. But this is not always the case.

For examples:



 Henry sent Sarah the flowers.


 I taught the boy a lesson.



Henry sent Sarah the flowers.

indirect object

direct object



In this sentence, Sarah is the indirect object; the direct object is "the flowers". It can be rewritten this way:

Henry sent the flowers to Sarah.



Now try and figure out which are the direct and indirect objects in the second sentence and rewrite it to make them more obvious. Then do the same for the following sentences as well:

1. She wrote her boss a memo.
2. They fed the tiger some deer meat.
3. The teacher presented Thomas with an award.
4. The mother sang the baby a lullaby.
5. John gave Rebecca a wedding ring.

There are verbs that can take both transitive and intransitive forms. Consider the following examples:

1. The woman **watched** her children while they played in the park.
2. The woman **watched** while the children played in the park.

- In the first sentence, the verb watched is transitive because it takes the object "her children".
- In the second sentence, the verb is intransitive as there is no object taken.



Decide whether the verbs in the following sentences are transitive or intransitive.

1. We must leave now.
2. The player kicked the ball hard.
3. My mother baked a cake for my sister's birthday yesterday.
4. The chefs busily cooked while the waiters cleaned the tables.
5. The ban was lifted and people could watch the show again.
6. The doctor called while she was out. He said he would visit her again.
7. The house caught fire last night.
8. More tourists visited the country last year than the year before.
9. The father was worried that his son's behaviour will get him into trouble.
10. I drive to work everyday. My brother takes the bus instead.

3.1.2 Linking Verbs

A linking verb (also called a copular verb) is a verb that connects the subject to information about the subject. Linking verbs usually do not describe actions although there are some linking verbs which can also function as action verbs.

The following three verbs are *always* linking verbs.

To be

is, am, are, was, were, has been, have been, had been,
is being, are being, was being, will have been, etc.

To become

become, becomes, became, has become, have become,
had become, will become, will have become, etc.

To seem

seemed, seeming, seems, has seemed, have seemed,
had seemed, is seeming, are seeming, was seeming,
were seeming, will seem, etc.

Look at the sentences below.

John is a doctor.



The verb "is" does not show an action, but connects the subject John to information about John (also called a complement).

This cake is good.



The adjective "good" is the complement connected to the subject "cake" by a linking verb.

The girl seems quiet.



The linking verb "seems" links the information "quiet" to the subject "the girl".

Figure 3.1 shows verbs that can be both action and linking verbs.

look	smell	appear	prove
feel	remain	sounds	taste

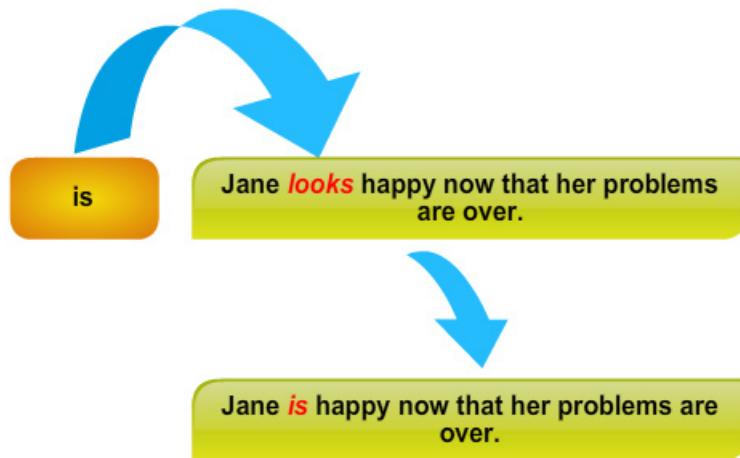
Figure 3.1: Verbs that can be both action and linking verbs

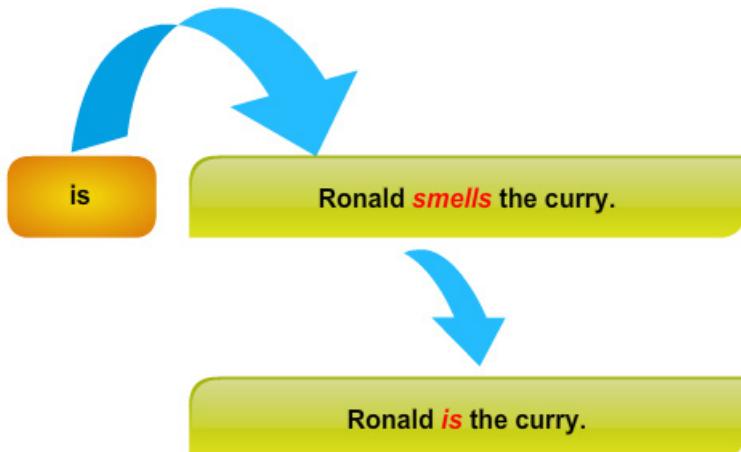
There are verbs that can be linking verbs in some sentences, but are action verbs in other sentences. One way to determine if the verb is functioning as an action verb or a linking verb is to substitute the word “is” for the verb in question. If the sentence still makes sense, then it is probably a linking verb. If the sentence does not make sense, then it is probably an action verb in the sentence.

Look at the examples below.

Example 1:

In the following sentence, the word “looks” is a linking verb. If you substitute it with “is”, the sentence will still make sense.



Example 2:

The situation is different for the sentence below. In this sentence, the verb “smells” is not linking Ronald to more information, but is showing Ronald performing an action. If you replace “smells” with “is”, the sentence does not make sense anymore.



ACTIVITY
Decide if the verbs in the following sentences are functioning as linking verbs or action verbs.

1. What seems to be the problem?
2. This dish tastes funny. Are you sure it is okay to eat it?
3. The woman cleaned the house all day but her children messed it up again.
4. Mrs. Lim appears tired today. I hope she is alright.
5. I get upset everytime I see you wasting your time playing computer games.
6. The farmers in that village grow rice and vegetables and sell them in the market.
7. The monster grows angry when the man tries to save the girl.
8. Lily runs funny. Is something wrong with her leg?
9. Jerry took her daughter to the fair yesterday and bought her a doll.
10. He feels insecure ever since he was robbed outside his house.

3.2 TENSES

Verbs do not only describe actions or link subjects to more information about the subjects, but also indicate the time in which the action/situation takes place. Verbs will therefore take different forms to show time (sometimes, they change because of the noun that precedes them).

By looking at the verb in the sentence, we can tell if:

- An action took place in the past (past tense).
- An action will take place in the future (future tense).
- An action is taking place at the moment (present tense).



Notice that the verb in each of the sentences below changes to show the timing of the activity. When verbs do this, we say that they are showing tenses.

Sentences	Explanation
She is cleaning the house.	The action is taking place while the speaker is talking.
She cleans the house.	The action is probably habitual. She cleans the house daily.
She has cleaned the house.	The action has taken place and is no longer happening now.
She cleaned the house last night.	The action is over.
She was cleaning the house when her friend called.	The speaker is talking about an action that took place in the past, but wants to show that this action was occurring when something else happened.
She had cleaned the house and was making lunch when her friend called.	The speaker was talking about something in the past, but wants to show that something else had happened even further in the past.

In this section we will look at three primary tenses: the present tense, the past tense and the future tense, and their subdivisions into the simple tense, the progressive tense, the perfect tense and the perfect progressive tense.

3.2.1 The Simple Tense

Verbs in their basic form commonly show the **simple present tense**. When a verb is in the simple tense, it means that something is happening now, and will probably continue to happen.

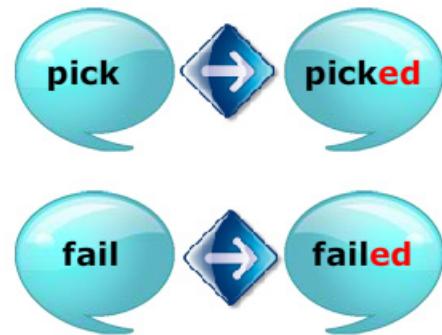
For example, if someone says:

I play computer games.



It means that he has played computer games before, is playing computer games now, and will probably be playing for a long while to come.

When the verb shows a simple past tense, the form of the verb very often changes. A simple past tense tells us that the action happened in the past and is over. In most cases, to change a verb form from the simple present to the simple past, we just add “ed”.

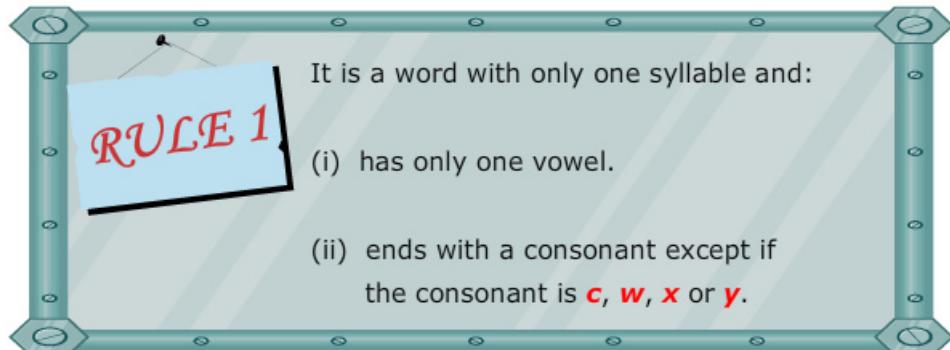


For some verbs however, we need to repeat the last letter before adding ed.

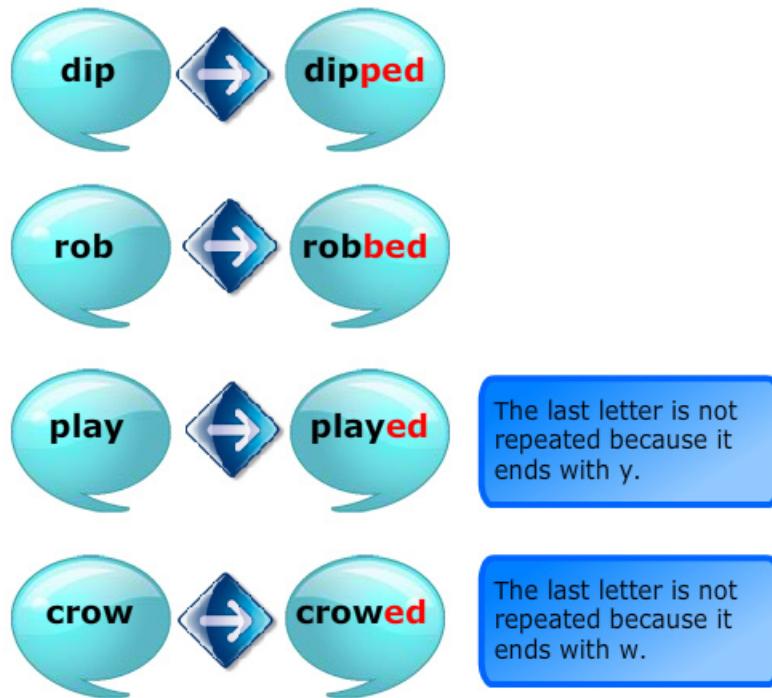
For example:



The rules to remember if you have to repeat a letter before adding **ed** to form the past tense are as follows:



Examples:



RULE 2

It is a two-syllable word and:

- (i) the vowel in the second syllable has only one letter.
- (ii) ends with a consonant except if the consonant is **c, w, x or y**.
- (iii) the second syllable is stressed.

Examples:

omit**omitted****transfer****transferred****betray****betrayed**

The last letter is not repeated because it ends with y.

repeat**repeated**

The last letter is not repeated because there are two vowels in the second syllable.

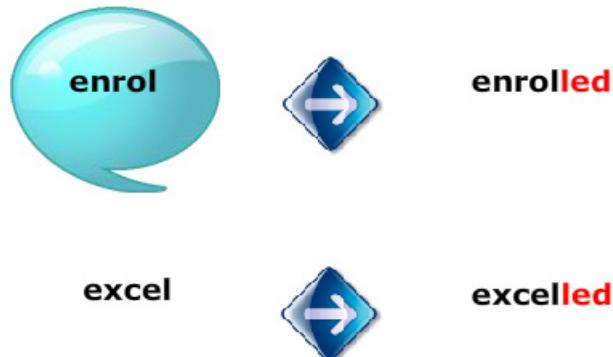
batter**battered**

The last letter is not repeated because it is the first syllable in this word that is stressed.

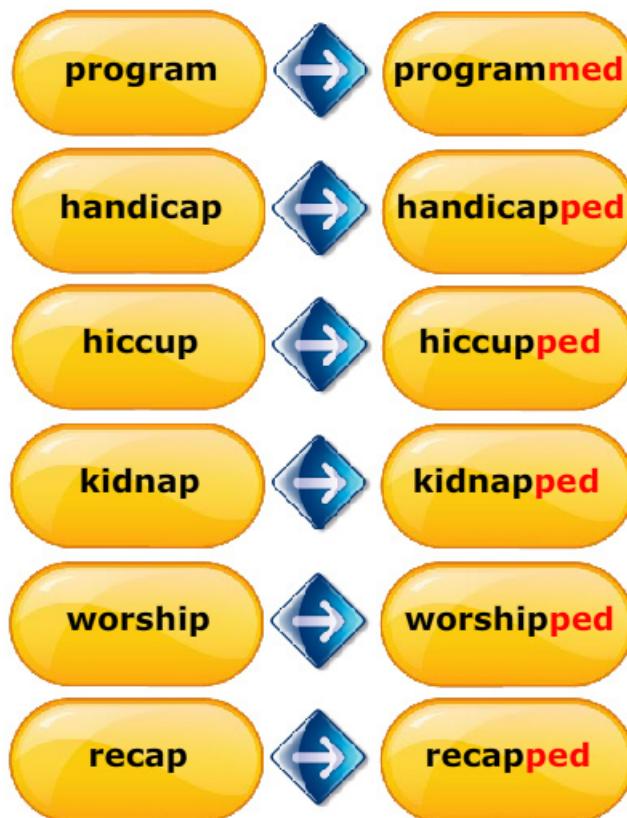
RULE 3

It is a two-syllable word and:

- (i) the vowel in the second syllable has only one letter.
- (ii) ends with the letter "**I**".

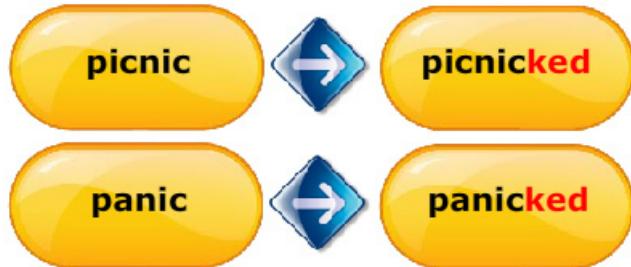
Examples:**Exceptions:**

- (a) There are verbs however, which do not obey the rules outlined below.

Examples:

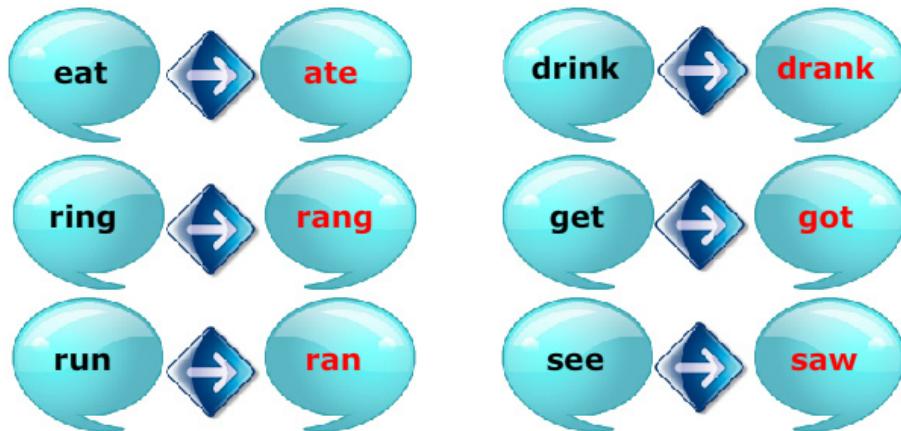
(b) Some verbs which end with “c” require a “k” to be added before the “ed”.

Examples:



(c) There are verbs in English that change their form totally when showing the past tense.

Examples:



(d) Finally, there are verbs which do not change their form at all. The past tense form is exactly the same as the present tense form.

Examples:



Verbs under (c) and (d) are also known as irregular verbs. At the end of this chapter, there is a list which shows more examples of these kinds of verbs.



Fill in the blanks with the simple present or simple past tense of the verbs in the brackets. The first one has been done for you.

Mr. Tan (1) takes (**take**) his family on a holiday when the school term (2) _____ (**be**) over. His two sons always (3) _____ (**work**) hard during the term and they (4) _____ (**look**) forward to visiting various interesting and scenic places in Malaysia for the holidays. They always (5) _____ (**travel**) by car as it (6) _____ (**be**) both cheaper and more convenient. In all the places they (7) _____ (**visit**), Mr. Tan (8) _____ (**like**) to drive his family everywhere. Last June, the Tans (9) _____ (**drive**) up to Genting Highlands. The journey to Genting (10) _____ (**be**) very interesting. The boys (11) _____ (**see**) beautiful scenery, lots of tall trees and plants, and (12) _____ (**experience**) cool weather all the way. While at Genting, they (13) _____ (**stay**) at the Awana Apartments. They (14) _____ (**take**) the cable car up to the resort and there (15) _____ (**enjoy**) the various rides at the amusement park. The two boys (16) _____ (**ride**) all roller-coasters three times. After a three-day stay, the Tans (17) _____ (**return**) home with many fond memories. Mr. Tan (18) _____ (**plan**) to take his family to Sabah this coming holiday. He (19) _____ (**hope**) that he can take extra time off work because he (20) _____ (**intend**) to climb Mt. Kinabalu. His two sons (21) _____ (**be**) very excited as this will be their first trip to Sabah.



Use a good dictionary and find out what are the past tense verb forms for the following verbs.

Basic Form	Past Tense	Basic Form	Past Tense
awake		make	
begin		munch	
bite		meet	
bleed		seek	
burst		slow	
block		sweep	
buy		teach	
catch		trace	
cry		tear	
close		think	
fall		understand	
graze		utter	
give		win	
know		write	

The simple future tense retains the verb form of the simple present tense, but adds the words **will** or **shall** in front of it.

will/shall

+

verb

Look at the sentences.

Example 1:

I **walk** to school.

Simple Present Tense

I **walked** to school yesterday.

Past Tense

I **will walk** to school tomorrow.

Future Tense

Example 1:

I find the answer.	Simple Present Tense
I found the answer.	Past Tense
I shall find the answer.	Future Tense

3.2.2 The Progressive Tense

The progressive tense is sometimes called the continuous tense.



To form the progressive tense, we normally add “ing” to the basic form of the verb.

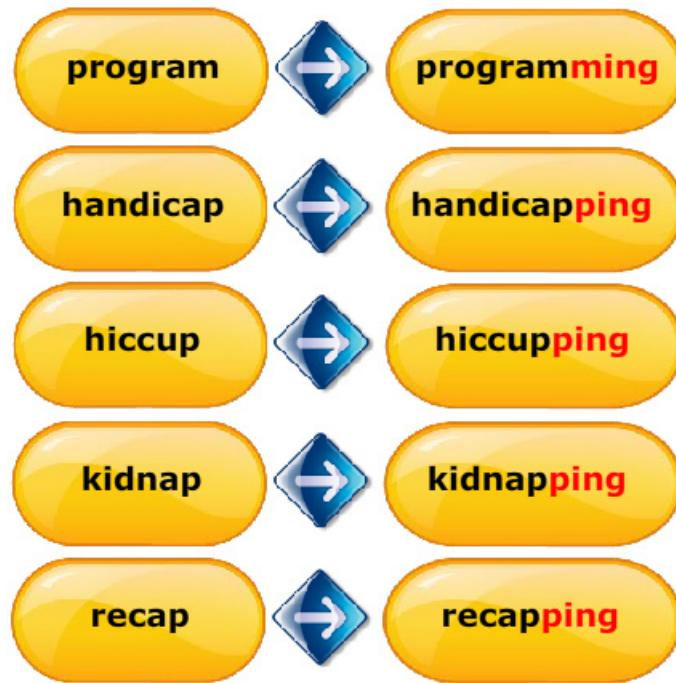
For example:



You will need to use the rules described above as to whether or not you need to repeat the last letter of the word before adding “ing”. Then there are the exceptions as well.

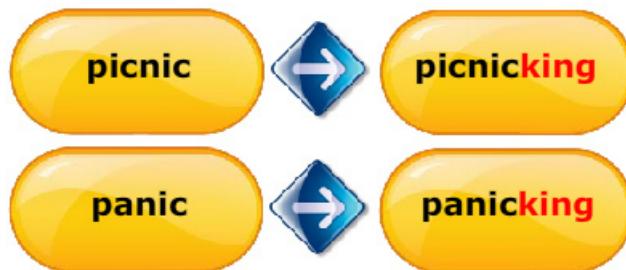
- (i) There are verbs however, which do obey the rules outlined below.

Examples:



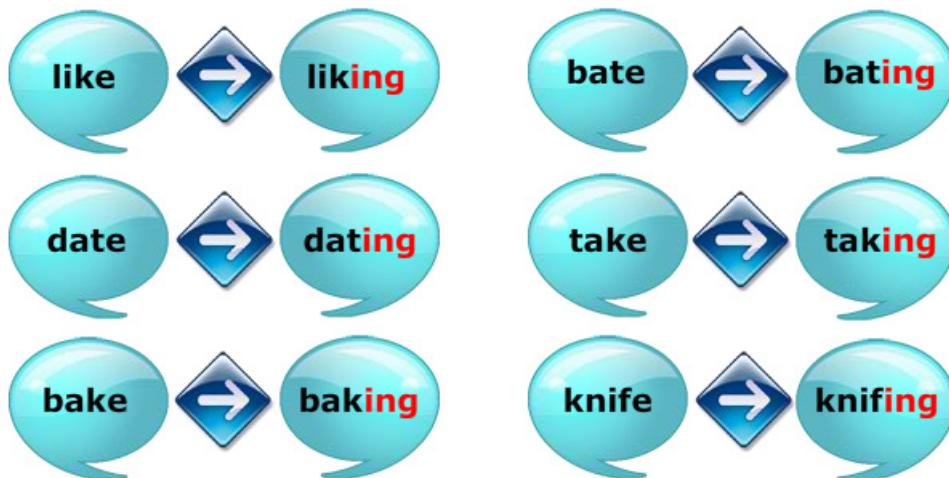
- (ii) Some verbs which end with “c” require a “k” to be added before the “ing”.

Examples:



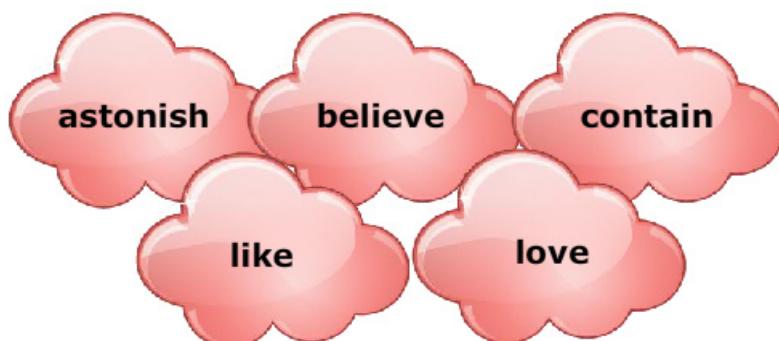
(iii) If the basic form of the word ends with an “e”, we usually drop the “e” before adding “ing”.

Examples:



(iv) There are verbs that *cannot* be used in the continuous tense. Although they can take the “ing” form, they cannot be joined up with a linking verb such as is/am/are.

These includes:



Consider the examples below:

I love to eat ice-cream.	✓	
I am loving to eat ice-cream.	✗	
I believe that she is innocent.	✓	
I am believing that she is innocent.	✗	

(a) Present Progressive Tense

The present progressive tense is formed by:



Examples:

Three examples of the Present Progressive Tense are shown in green rounded rectangular boxes, each with a small image to its right.

- She is talking.** (Image: A teacher pointing at a world map.)
- They are running.** (Image: Four female runners on a track.)
- I am eating.** (Image: A boy eating a sandwich.)

You use this tense in the following situations:

- (i) To talk about something that is happening at the same time we are speaking.

For example:

An example of the Present Progressive Tense being used to advise someone to stop talking on a phone while driving. The sentence 'You are driving. Stop talking on the handphone.' is displayed in a green rounded rectangular box, accompanied by an illustration of two people in a car and a 'no mobile phone' sign.



The teacher is **saying** something important.
Pay attention.

- (ii) To talk about a situation that is undergoing change.

For example:



The old man is **getting** sicker.



The frightened girl is **walking** faster by the minute.

- (iii) To talk about a situation that is happening at the time we are speaking, but this situation does not recur again and again.

For example:

*I **watch** television.*

(I probably do this everyday)



*I **am watching** television.*

(I am doing this now, but I don't do it habitually)

*I **am collecting** this stamp.*

(only this particular stamp because I like it)



*I **collect** stamp.*

(I do this as a hobby)

(iv) To talk about an event that hasn't happened yet, but will in the future.

For example:

I am leaving for Jakarta tomorrow afternoon.

She is arriving at the airport at 3pm today.

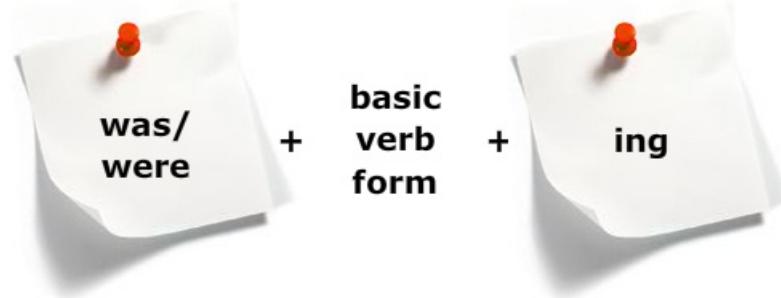


Write a sentence based on the information given in the present progressive tense.

1. Martin/clean/the house.
2. He/cook/fried rice/for dinner.
3. The man/smile/at me.
4. The girl/run/to catch/the taxi.
5. Mike/dance/at the disco.
6. She/cry.
7. They/laugh/at you.
8. Mina/practice/the piano.
9. The old man/wait/for the bus.
10. I/read/a novel.

(b) Past Progressive Tense

The past progressive tense is formed this way:



Examples:

She **was talking**.



They **were swimming**.



You use this tense in the following situations:

- When you want to talk about an action that happened in the past during which another past action also took place.

For example:

She **was laughing** when he walked into the room.

I **was sleeping** while all the shouting **was happening**.

- (ii) When you want to refer to a past situation that was temporary.

For example:

They **were swimming** the river until it started raining.

He **was getting** better until a week ago.

- (iii) When you want to talk about a situation that continued for a time but is no longer happening now.

For example:

They **were searching** for a house in that area for a long time.

My husband's hand **was hurting** after the cupboard fell on it.



For the sentences below:

- Fill in the blanks with the past progressive tense form of the verbs in brackets.
- Ensure that the subject-verb agreement is correct.
- Write in a suitable phrase to complete the sentence.

The first two has been done for you:

The girl _____ (speak) aloud.

The girl was speaking aloud **for three minutes**.

Several engineers _____ (build) the bridge.

Several engineers was building the bridge **when the incident happened**.

1. The scientist _____ (analyse) the data.
2. The children _____ (bought) ice-cream.
3. The students _____ (protest) against the demolishing of a national heritage.
4. Marion and Dora _____ (listen) to the recital.
5. All the employees _____ (queue) to receive their bonuses.
6. Rama _____ (look) at the expensive car.
7. The workers _____ (cut) down the trees.
8. Lisa _____ (read) the newspaper.
9. Three teachers _____ (eat) lunch.
10. My friend, Thomas _____ (rest) in the guest room.

(c) Future Progressive Tense

This is how you form the future progressive tense:



Examples:

He **will be coming** home later this evening.



I **shall be telling** the story next week.



We use this tense in the following situations:

- (i) This tense indicates continuing action, something that will be happening, going on, at some point in the future.

Example:

He **will be coming** home later this evening.



This sentence suggests that the act of “coming home” has not happened yet, but will only happen at some point in the future (“this evening”).

- (ii) When we want to indicate that a longer action in the future will be interrupted by a shorter action in the future. Remember this can be a real interruption or just an interruption in time.

Examples:

I **will be sleeping** when they arrive tonight.



He **will be waiting** for you when your plane lands.



I **am going to be staying** at the Oscar Inn, if anything you need to contact me.



- (iii) In addition to using short actions as interruptions, you can also use a specific time as an interruption.

Tonight at 7pm, I am going to eat dinner.



At noon tomorrow, she will be cleaning the house.



3.2.3**The Perfect Tense**

There is another group of tenses known as the perfect tense. As with the simple and progressive tense, the perfect tense can be in the past, present or future.

The present perfect tense will have the words “have” or “has” in front of the simple past tense form of the verb.

have/ has**+****simple past tense form**

For example:

have watched**has remembered**

The past perfect tense will have the word “had” in front of the simple past tense form of the verb.

had**+****simple past tense form**

For example:

had lived**had opened**

simple past tense form of the verb.

will have**+****simple past tense form**

For example:

will have kicked

will have played



The list below provides some familiar examples:

Past	Present	Participle
awake	awoke	awaken
arise	arose	arisen
bear	bore	borne
bind	bound	bound
eat	ate	eaten
know	knew	known
show	showed	shown
write	wrote	written



Consult a dictionary and look for perfect tense form for the following verbs.

- break
- blow
- cost
- find
- freeze
- grow
- mean
- saw
- sink
- sang
- swim
- tear
- wear

(a) Present Perfect Tense

We use this tense when:

- When we want to indicate that a longer action in the future will be interrupted by a shorter action in the future. Remember this can be a real interruption or just an interruption in time.

Examples:



I have worked in this company for 20 years.

I started working for this company 20 years ago, and I am still working for this company now.



I have taken care of her since she fell ill a month ago.



She has eaten 10 bananas since this morning.

When speaking or writing in the present perfect tense, the words “for” and “since” are often also used. We use since to indicate a particular time in the past that continues to the present time of speaking; we use for to talk about the duration of time separating the past event and the present time of speaking.

For example:

Malaysia **has been** independent **since** 1957.



Malaysia **has been** independent **for** over 50 years.

(ii) We want to talk about an event that has concluded.

Examples:



I have worked in that company.

I used to work in that company but I don't anymore.



A sentence in the present perfect tense tends to be similar in meaning with the simple past tense. Consider the two sentences below:

- I **have worked** in that company.
- I **worked** in that company.



Fill in the blanks with the present perfect form of the verbs provided in the brackets. The first one has been done for you.

1. The company has sold (sell) millions of cars since its establishment in 1979.
2. My sister _____ (buy) a house near the lake.
3. They _____ (resign) from their current company in order to start a new business next month.
4. Mr. Latiff _____ (remarry) since his wife died three years ago.
5. I _____ (notice) for the last two weeks that the library is under renovation.
6. A teacher in my school _____ (fall) ill since her trip to China. Doctors believe that she _____ (contract) a rare kind of fever.
7. I think it is time to go home since the day _____ (grow) dark.
8. She and her sister _____ (sleep) since 7 pm yesterday.
9. Richard _____ (work) hard for the last 2 years to achieve his dream of owning a car.
10. Since the Age of Reason, men and women _____ (use) science to solve many life's problems.



You have just returned from a week's holiday in Taman Negara. Write a letter in the **present perfect tense** to a friend describing your visit. You may use the information below:

Taman Negara – travel – by jeep – tour guide – see many flora and fauna – birds, bears, trees, flowers, even a tiger – meet indigenous people – live in tribal homes – buy handicrafts – walk a rope bridge – return to Kuala Lumpur – many memorable moments.

(b) Past Perfect Tense

We use this tense when:	Example:
We are talking about the past but want to refer to an event that occurred even earlier.	They had finished setting up camp when they heard a loud growl from the bushes.
We are repeating what someone else had said.	Mark told me that he had eaten his lunch.



Underline the past perfect tense verbs in the following sentences. No. 1 has been done for you.

1. They came home after they had eaten dinner.
2. The policeman went away after he had written out a summons for me.
3. The boy had completed his chores before he went out to play.
4. Ramlah had finished washing the dishes when her neighbors came to visit.
5. Donald told me that he had finished reading the novel.
6. I had withdrawn all my money from the bank before leaving for London.
7. When she went home, Puan Laila took the medicine the doctor had prescribed.
8. Wong and Tan had been housemates before Ramli went to live with them.
9. My father had driven to the airport when Mr. Lim called to say that his flight will be delayed.
10. The performance had ended by the time she arrived.

(c) Future Progressive Tense

We use this tense when we want to indicate that something will happen before another action in the future.

Look at the examples:

Martha will have finished cleaning her room before her friends arrive.



 By next week, I will have received my results.

By the time he graduates, he will have mastered the rules of English grammar.



3.2.4 The Perfect Progressive Tense

(a) Present Perfect Progressive

This tense describes an action that began in the past, continues in the present, and may continue into the future.

This is how you form this tense:



Example:

My mother **has been thinking** about sending my sister to an international school.



(b) Past Perfect Progressive

This tense describes a past, ongoing action that was completed before some other past action. This is how you form this tense:



Example:

Even before he started schooling, Imran **had been mastering** the fundamentals of advanced mathematics.



(c) Future Perfect Progressive

This tense describes a future, ongoing action that will occur before some specified future time. This is how you form this verb:



Example:

She **will have been completing** the final chapter before Christmas of this year.



3.3 MODAL AND AUXILIARIES

Modals and auxiliaries are small verbs which always appear before the action verb. In fact, some verbs in a particular form such as in the progressive tense cannot be used without them. Consider the following example:

He jogging at the park now.



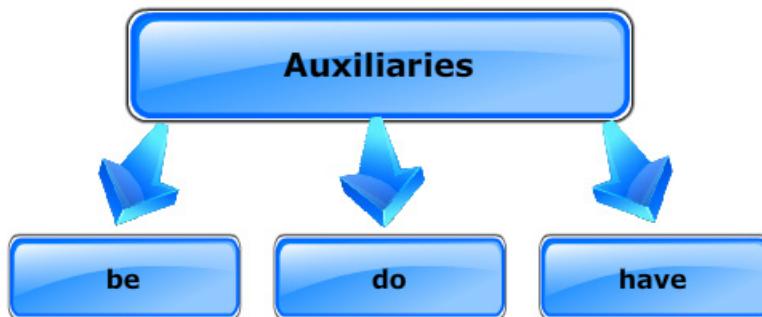
He is jogging at the park now.



3.3.1

Auxiliaries

Auxiliaries include the verbs “be”, “do” and “have”.



Interestingly, the verb “be” (or “to be”) never appears in this form. They appear instead as “**am**”, “**is**” or “**are**” in the *present tense*, and “**was**” and “**were**” in the *past tense*. “**Am**” is used exclusively after the pronoun “**I**”.

When the auxiliary “be” is used after pronouns, the rules are as follows:

Pronoun	Present	Participle	
I	am	was	
He, she, it	is	was	
We, they, you	are	were	watching television

We use this verb when we want to show that something “is”, whether this “is” involves location, emotional or mental state, age or feature.

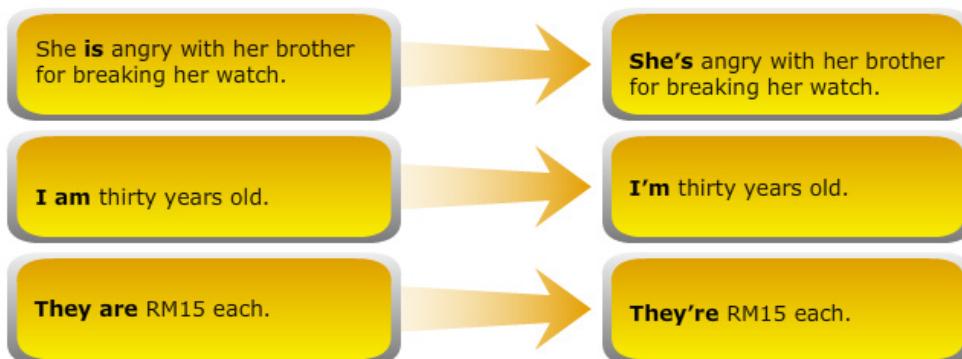
Look at the examples below:

Sentences	To show
The Headmaster was here a minute ago.	location or situation
She is angry with her brother for breaking her watch.	emotion
I am thirty years old.	age
I am buying some cakes. They are RM15 each.	a feature, such as price or color

In the present tense, the “be” auxiliary can often be contracted (short form).

This is especially true in the *spoken* language.

In the case of the examples above, we can re-state them in the following way:



You can also use the auxiliary verb to ask questions.

For example:





You cannot, however, use “am” to form questions.

When we use the *progressive* tense, we must always have the auxiliary “be” in front of the verb.

For example:



They **are clearing** the rubbish.



I **am watching** television now.



The tigers **were sleeping** when the hunter approached them.



Fill in the blanks using the correct auxiliaries.

Wendy: Mom, I _____ going out with Susan. Do you want to buy anything?

Mother: Where _____ you going? _____ you going to be near a grocery store?

Wendy: I _____ not sure, but if you need anything, I can always go to one.

Mother: Good. Can you buy some chicken meat? I _____ making curry tonight.

Wendy: How much meat do you need?

Mother: Please get half a chicken. Will you be eating dinner with us?

Wendy: Yes. Can Susan join us? She _____ coming home with me later.

Mother: Of course. In that case, please buy some soft drinks as well.


(b) Have

We use “**have**” and “**has**” in the present tense and “**had**” in the past tense. This auxiliary is very important when we are writing in the perfect tense.

When used with pronouns, the rules are as follows:

Pronoun	Present	Past	
I	have	had	a pet cat
He, she, it	has	had	
We, they, you	have	have	

We use this verb to talk about “possessing” and “doing” something.

For example:

I **have** a pet cat.



He **has** two eggs for breakfast every morning.



They **had** a quarrel last night over a small matter.

The verb “**have**” can also be joined with “-ing”.

have

+

ing

To do this, you must remember to put the auxiliary “be” in front, and drop the final ‘e’ in “have”.



I **am having** class now. Please call me later.

The auxiliary “have” can also be contracted. Look at the following examples below:

I **'ve** a pet cat.



He **'s** finished his homework.



They **'ve** quarreled over a small matter.



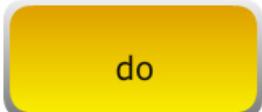
(c) Do

In the present tense, we use “**do**” or “**does**”. In the past tense, we use “**did**”.

When used with pronouns, the rules are as follows:

Pronoun	Present	Past
I, we, they, you	do	did
He, she, it	does	did

The verb “do” can also be joined with “-ing”.



do



ing

To do this, put the auxiliary “be” in front.



I am **doing** my work now. Please call me later.

This auxiliary verb can be used in many situations. Most commonly, we use it to talk about someone performing an action.



I **am doing** my work now.



She **did** house cleaning yesterday.



My mother **does** the cooking everyday.

We can also use it to ask questions.

For example:

Do you know the way to the market?



Does she know the answer to your question?



Did I lock the door before leaving the house?



We can also form the negative using this auxiliary by adding “not”.

For example:

do not



don't

does not



doesn't

did not



didn't



ACTIVITY

Fill in the blanks with the correct auxiliary verbs. They can be either “be”, “have” or “do” verbs.

1. The flight _____ delayed yesterday because of bad weather.
2. _____ you do much sightseeing when you were on vacation in Kuantan?
3. They _____ leaving for the train station when I last saw them.
4. _____ forgotten to set my alarm clock, so I was late for my bus.
5. _____ it raining when you left your house this morning?
6. The students _____ informed last night that their teacher was not feeling well.
7. The police located the diamond which _____ been stolen from the jewelry shop.
8. The fire _____ caused by an electrical problem.
9. I am surprised that you know my name. I _____ never met you before.
10. How many times _____ you check your travel documents before boarding the airplane?

3.3.2 Modals

The modals in English include the following:



There are two important rules to remember when using modals:

1. The modal must *always* appear before the action verb.
2. The verb following the modal must *always* be in the basic form.



Examples:

I **must go** to the office now.



You **ought to know** the direction by now.

She **would tell** you the answer if she knew.



To form the negative, just add “not” after a modal.

For example:

I **must not** tell a lie.



You **ought not to** buy that car if you **do not have** the money.



She **would not give** me the book.

In the case of the negatives, you can further truncate them in the following way:



We use modals in the following ways:

- In the case of the future tense, we use “shall” or “will” before the verb.
- To show ability.

For examples:

He can drive a car.

(iii) To show or ask for permission.

For examples:

You may borrow my book if you need it.



Shall I come over at 5 pm today?



(iv) To show order or command.

For examples:

You must arrive here by noon tomorrow.



Fill in the blanks with the correct modals.

There are many things you _____ do when you visit Sabah and Sarawak. For example, you _____ go to the Niah Caves. Here, you _____ see the formation of stalactites and stalagmites, and you _____ even catch a glimpse of bats if you are lucky. You _____ be careful when exploring the caves. They are very dark and you _____ walk slowly. Or you _____ visit the rich rainforest where many interesting flora and fauna _____ be found. The largest flower in the world, the Rafflesia, grows here, and you _____ certainly see many different types of birds, such as the hornbill, and insects as well. One thing you _____ not miss when you are in Sabah is to climb Mount Kinabalu. You _____ hire a tour guide to take you up the mountain. There are chalets and rest stops on the way up so you _____ rest before continuing your journey.

3.4

GERUNDS

Gerunds or verbal nouns are a special group of words that looks like progressive tense verbs but functions as nouns.



Because a gerund is based on a verb, it therefore expresses action or a state of being.

But because a gerund functions as a noun, it occupies the same positions a noun would in a sentence that is either as subject or object of a sentence, or as an object of a preposition.

Look at these examples:

Jogging is good exercise.



Gerund as subject of sentence

Of all the sports, Mary likes *swimming* best.



Gerund as object

The teacher punished the boy for *sleeping* in class.



Gerund as object of a preposition



ACTIVITY Make sentences using the following gerunds:

- Feeling
- Offering
- Painting
- Smoking
- Turning
- Building
- Setting
- Warning

SUMMARY

1. Verbs can be difficult to use and understand because of the tenses.
2. It is important therefore that you go through this chapter several times and slowly so that you are clear about the different tenses and the forms the verbs take when they represent these tenses.
3. In the case of progressive and perfect tenses, the verb will change and sometimes take irregular forms as well.
4. Then there are verbs called modals and auxiliaries that have specific uses.
5. Finally we learn that there is a special group of verbs that function like nouns. These are called gerunds.

KEY TERMS

Verbs	Past progressive
Tense	Future progressive
Simple present	Perfect present
Simple past	Perfect past
Simple future	Auxiliary
Present progressive	Modal
Perfect future	Gerund

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