

What are Verbs?

A **Verb** is a word or words in a sentence that describe an action or a state of being and is necessary to make a complete statement.

The primary purpose of a verb is to express time—**present, past, and future**. Verbs express time by means of several *tenses*—but have four principal parts—present, present participle, past, past participle. All tenses are made from these forms and have three basic levels—past, present, future—but vary greatly in their time sense.

Principal Verb Parts		
Present	simple verb form that uses –s to maintain agreement	walk, walks He walks every day.
Present Participle	is, are, was, were, am + simple verb + ing	is walking, was walking He is walking every day.
Past	simple verb with –d or –ed (does have irregular forms)	walked He walked every day
Past Participle	has, had, have + past	has walked, had walked He has walked every day.

Verb	Time Sense	Form
Present	occurs in the present	simple verb (may have –s added)
Past	occurs in the past	simple verb + d or ed
Future	occurs in the future	will, or shall + basic verb
Present Perfect	occur in past but lead to present	has + past participle
Past Perfect	occur in past but prior to another event	have, had + past participle
Future Perfect	occur in past and will continue until a future time	will, shall + have + past participle
Present Progressive	activity in progress	am, is, was + present participle
Past Progressive	past action occurred over a period of time	are, were + present participle
Future Progressive	future action but related to circumstances in the present	will, shall + be + present participle
Present Perfect Progressive	continuous action, may continue	has + been + present participle
Past Perfect Progressive	continuous action that was completed in past	had + been + present participle
Future Perfect Progressive	continuous action that will end in future	will have + been + present participle

I know . . . all of this looks overwhelming. Really . . . to properly use verbs and all their tenses you just need to know the patterns. We will be looking at these patterns over the next few lessons. For now, just learn to recognize verbs in general.

Examples:

National parks in the American Southwest **include** Bryce Canyon, Zion, Mesa Verde, and Grand Canyon.

Over the centuries, water and wind erosion **change** the land dramatically.

Despite modern intrusions, many Indian traditions **are** unchanged.

FROM *THE RANGELAND AVENGER* BY MAX BRAND

The blond head of Cold Feet **turned**, and his large, dark eyes **rested** without expression upon the face of the Swede. He **seemed** almost literally to **fold** his hands and **await** the result of his trial. The illusion **was** so **complete** that even Riley Sinclair **began** to **feel** that the prisoner might **be** guilty--of an act which he himself had **done!** The opportunity **was** indeed too perfect to **be dismissed** without consideration. It **was** in his power definitely to **put** the blame on another man; then he **could remain** in this community as long as he **wished**, to **work** his will upon Sandersen.



John Ford's Point in Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park--July 2007--Luca Galuzzi—wikimedia.org

Sandersen himself **was** a great problem. If Bill **had spoken** up in good faith to **save** Sinclair from the posse that morning, then Riley **felt** that he **was disarmed**. But a profound suspicion **remained** with him that Sandersen **guessed** his mission, and **was** purposely **trying to brush** away the wrath of the avenger. It **would take** time to **discover** the truth, but to **secure** that time it **was** necessary to **settle** the blame for the killing. Cold Feet **was** a futile, weak-handed little coward. In the stern scheme of Sinclair's life, the death of such a man **was** almost less than nothing.