

# VERBS

An **action verb** tells what action a subject is performing.

- Most action verbs show physical action: Dad **plants** tulip bulbs every fall.
- Some action verbs show mental action: José **remembered** the formula.
- Others show ownership or possession: Toby **has** a new friend.

**Verb phrases** use **helping verbs** or **auxiliary verbs** with the main verb to change the mood or tense of the verb.

- A verb phrase can contain as many as 3 helping verbs: Ron **should have been** studying when his parents arrived at home.
- A verb phrase can be interrupted by other words: Robin **should not go** with us tomorrow. Barbara **will** surely **help** you with your math.
- Common helping verbs:

**be** am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been

**have** has, have, had

**do** do, does, did

**others** may, might, must, can, could, shall, should, will, would

All action verbs are either transitive or intransitive. To decide if a verb is transitive or intransitive, say the subject and the verb--then ask the question *What?* or *Whom?* The word that answers that question is called the object.

- An action verb with an object is transitive: Josh always **eats** dinner late. (Josh eats what? dinner = object)
- An action verb without an object is intransitive: The car **skidded** on the icy road. (The car skidded what? The car skidded whom? no object)

A **linking verb** links the subject with another word in the sentence.

- The other word can rename the subject: Tim **is** my brother. (brother renames the subject)
- The other word can describe the subject: Sheila **had been** sad lately. (sad describes the subject)
- The most common linking verb is **be**: be, is, am, are, was, were, been (be and been often have helping verbs as well)
- Other linking verbs include: appear, become, feel, grow, look, remain, seem, smell, sound, stay, taste, turn (note: pay attention, many of these can also be action verbs)