

Free Webinar

Tense

in English

grammar

QUICK REFERENCE

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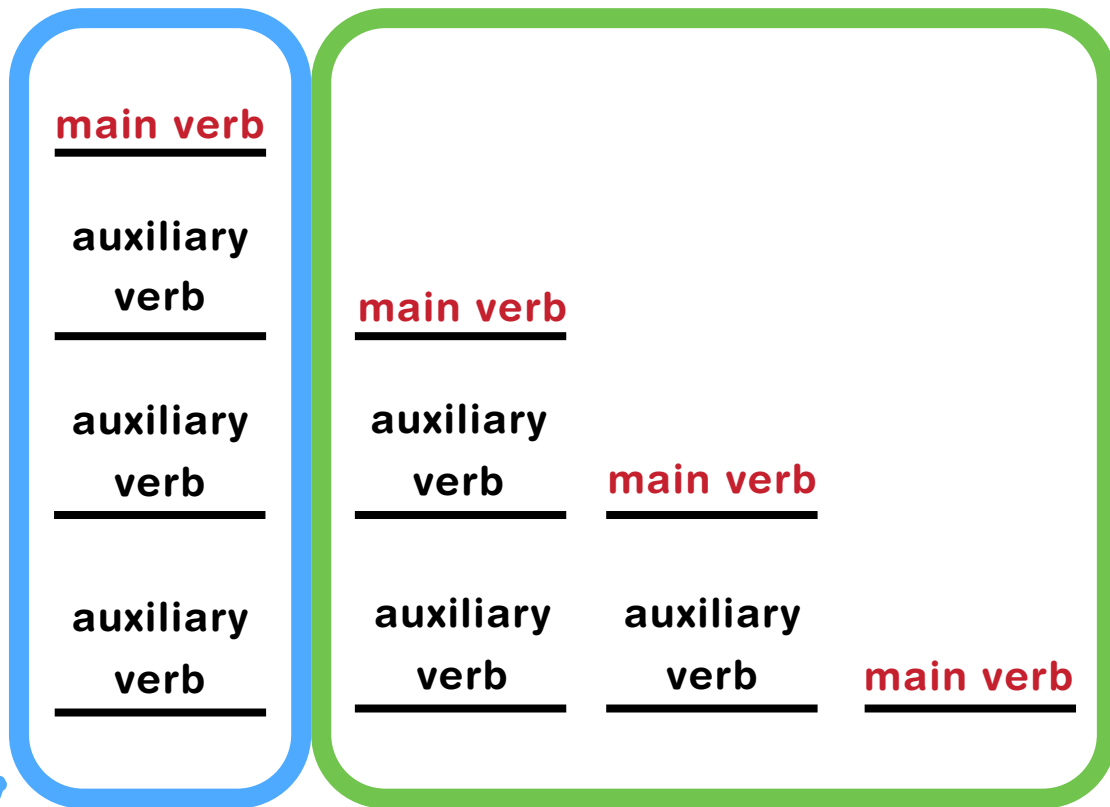
All finite verb forms (regular verb example)

“play” (regular verb)	simple		progressive		perfect		perfect progressive	
	active	passive	active	passive	active	passive	active	passive
past	played	was / were played	was / were playing	was / were being played	had played	had been played	had been playing	had been being played*
present	play / plays	am / is / are played	am / is / are playing	am / is / are being played	has / have played	has / have been played	has / have been playing	has / have been being played*
future	will play	will be played	will be playing	will be being played*	will have played	will have been played	will have been playing	will have been being played*

All finite verb forms (irregular verb example)

“sing” (irregular verb)	simple		progressive		perfect		perfect progressive	
	active	passive	active	passive	active	passive	active	passive
past	sang	was / were sung	was / were singing	was / were being sung	had sung	had been sung	had been singing	had been being sung*
present	sing / sings	am / is / are sung	am / is / are singing	am / is / are being sung	has / have sung	has / have been sung	has / have been singing	has / have been being sung*
future	will sing	will be sung	will be singing	will be being sung*	will have sung	will have been sung	will have been singing	will have been being sung*

“Slot” concept for building finite verb forms

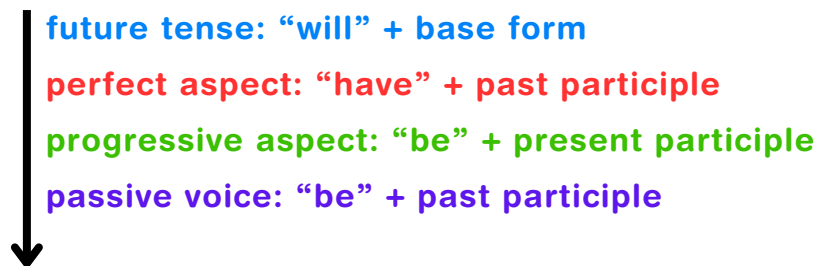


tense form/ending
agreement with the subject

fixed forms:
1. base form
2. present participle
3. past participle

Four statements for building finite verb forms

Apply in this order:

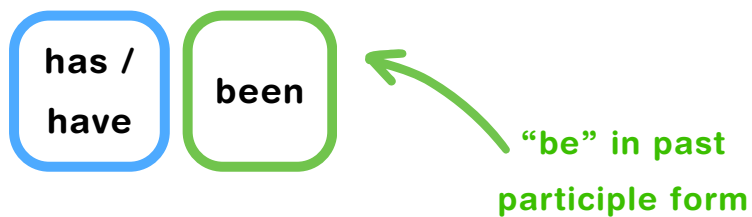


Example: Present Perfect Passive (for "play")

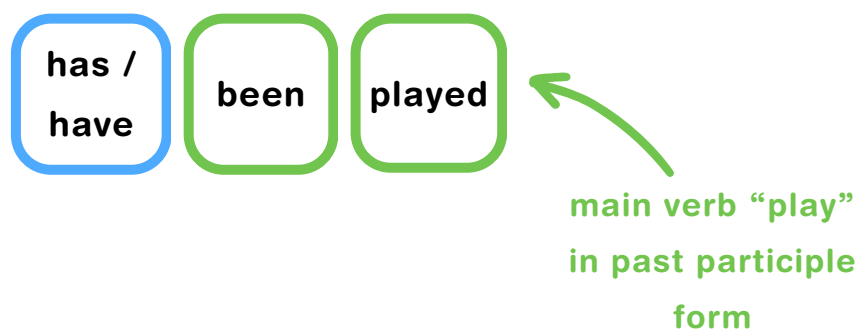
- 1 **perfect aspect: "have" + past participle**



- 2 **perfect aspect: "have" + past participle**
passive voice: "be" + past participle



- 3 **perfect aspect: "have" + past participle**
passive voice: "be" + past participle



Simple Present

(present tense x simple aspect)

the state of things at the time of speaking / writing
說/ 寫那句子時，事實是怎樣的

the "doing" of the action is not the focus
(the "fact" of the action is)
「做」那動作不是重點，「事實是怎樣」才是

Simple Present: Examples

- (e.g. general truths) A minute **consists** of 60 seconds.
- (e.g. states of feelings) I **love** my children.
- (e.g. factual statements) Saturday Night Live **is filmed** live every Saturday night.
- (e.g. habits and routines) I **go** running every Sunday.
- (e.g. narration) I **see** him in line in front of me. He **says**, "I can't do this," so I **do** it for him.

Simple Present: Negation

He **understands**.
→ He **does not understand**.

(The adverb "not" comes after an extra auxiliary verb "do" which takes on the present tense ending because it is in the "first slot." The main verb moves to the "second slot" and goes back to its base form.)

He **is** there.
→ He **is not** there.

(The extra auxiliary "do" is not needed when the main verb is "be.")

Simple Past

(past tense x simple aspect)

actions, states, "how things were" in the past
過去的动作、状态、「是怎樣的」

Simple Past: Examples

(e.g. one-off actions in the past) We **went** to the park on Sunday.

(e.g. states in the past) I **loved** him.

(e.g. narrating a "past" story) Gregor Samsa **woke** up one morning and **found** himself transformed into a giant bug.

Simple Past: Negation

He **understood**.

➔ He **did not understand**.

(The adverb "not" comes after an extra auxiliary verb "do" which takes on the past tense ending because it is in the "first slot." The main verb moves to the "second slot" and goes back to its base form.)

They **were** here.

➔ They **were not** here.

(The extra auxiliary "do" is not needed when the main verb is "be.")

Simple Future

(future tense x simple aspect)

actions, states, "how things will be" in the future
未來的動作、狀態、「是怎樣的」

the "doing" of the action is not the focus
(the "fact" of the action is)
「做」那動作不是重點，「事實是怎樣」才是

Simple Future: Examples

(e.g. one-off future actions) I **will do** it tomorrow.

(e.g. facts about the future) My daughter **will start** K2 next week.

Simple Future: Negation

He **will understand**.

→ He **will not understand**.

Present Perfect

(present tense x perfect aspect)

the "completion" of past actions relative to the present
相對現在，過去動作的完成或完成的過程

Present Perfect: Examples

(e.g. 做過)

He **has seen** this movie three times.

(e.g. past actions that are still "in completion" 完成中)

I **have trained** really hard since the last competition.

Present Perfect: Negation

They **have seen** this movie.



They **have not seen** this movie.

Present Progressive

(present tense x progressive aspect)

actions that are taking place at the time of speaking/writing
在說/寫句子時進行中的動作

The focus is the “doing” and not the “fact”
「做」那動作是重點，而不是那動作發生的事實

Present Progressive: Examples

(e.g. actions that are happening right now) They **are preparing** your coffee.

(e.g. actions that are about to happen) My daughter **is starting** K2 soon.
They **are going to help us**.
(fixed usage: “go” in this form + **infinitive phrase**)

Present Progressive: Negation

They **are preparing** your coffee.
→ They **are not preparing** your coffee.

Past Progressive

(past tense x progressive aspect)

actions that were taking place in the past context of a sentence
在「過去」語境中正在發生的動作

The focus is the “doing” and not the “fact”
「做」那動作是重點，而不是那動作發生的事實

Past Progressive: Examples

(e.g. actions that were happening) My daughter **was playing** by herself.

(e.g. actions that were about to
or supposed to happen) We **were going to move**.
(fixed usage: “go” in this form + **infinitive phrase**)

Past Progressive: Negation

My daughter **was playing** by herself.
➔ My daughter **was not playing** by herself.

Past Perfect

(past tense x perfect aspect)

the "completion" of actions before a past point in context
相對語境中的「過去」，再之前的動作的完成或完成的過程

This form is appropriate only when we want/need to highlight the sequence of two past events.

只是當我們要強調兩個過去動作的先後次序，才會用這字形

Past Perfect: Examples

(e.g. “做過” before a past point in context)

They **had not been** to this park before they had kids.

(e.g. past actions that were still “in completion” 完成中 at the past point in context)

I **had** already **worked** there for five years before he joined.

Past Perfect: Negation

They **had been** to this park before they had kids.

➔ They **had not been** to this park before they had kids.

Present Perfect Progressive

(present tense x perfect progressive aspect)

actions that started in the past and have
been ongoing until the present
從語境中的過去點起，一直「進行」到現在的動作

The focus is the “doing” and not the “fact”
「做」那動作是重點，而不是那動作發生的事實

Present Perfect Progressive: Examples

(e.g. actions that have been ongoing until now since they started in the past) I **have been doing** this for years.

Present Perfect Progressive: Negation

I **have been doing** this for years.
➔ I **have not been doing** this for years.

Future Perfect

(future tense x perfect aspect)

actions that will be completed by or up to a future point in context

在語境中的未來時間點前會完成或「做過」的動作
(或那動作的完成會延續到那個點)

Future Perfect: Examples

(e.g. actions that will be completed by a future point in context)

Her sister **will** already **have graduated** from college by the time she turns six.

Future Perfect: Negation

It **will have happened**.
→ It **will not have happened**.

Future Progressive

(future tense x progressive aspect)

actions that will be "happening" at a future point
在語境中的未來時間點，進行中的動作

The focus is the "doing" and not the "fact"
「做」那動作是重點，而不是那動作發生的事實

Future Progressive: Examples

(e.g. actions that will be happening at a future point in context) I **will be talking** to them tomorrow.

Future Progressive: Negation

→ I **will be talking** to them tomorrow.
I **will not be talking** to them tomorrow.

Past Perfect Progressive

(past tense x perfect progressive aspect)

actions that had been ongoing up to a past point
在語境中的過去時間點前開始，一直「進行」到那個過去時間點的動作

The focus is the “doing” and not the “fact”

「做」那動作是重點，而不是那動作發生的事實

Past Perfect Progressive: Examples

(e.g. actions that had been happening up to a past point in context) I **had been reading** a lot about him before I met him.

Past Perfect Progressive: Negation

I **had been reading** a lot about him before I met him.
➔ I **had not been reading** a lot about him...

Future Perfect Progressive (future tense x perfect progressive aspect)

actions that will be ongoing up to a future point in context
在語境中的未來時間點前開始，一直「進行」到那個未來時間點的動作

The focus is the “doing” and not the “fact”

「做」那動作是重點，而不是那動作發生的事實

Future Perfect Progressive: Examples

(e.g. actions that will be happening up to a future point in context)

I **will have been teaching** at this school for a year on December 1.

Future Perfect Progressive: Negation

e.g. **will have been teaching**

→ e.g. **will not have been teaching**