

English Grammar in Use

Grammar Reference

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For Further Practice:

English Grammar in Use Supplementary Exercises

Louise Hashemi with Raymond Murphy

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Present perfect (I have done)



Tom is looking for his key. He can't find it.
He **has lost** his key.

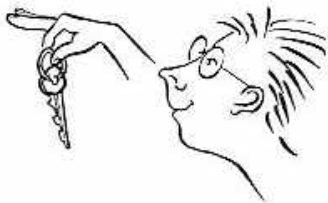
'He has lost his key' = He lost it and he still hasn't got it.

Have/has lost is the *present perfect simple*:

I/we/they/you	have	(=I've etc.)	finished
			lost
he/she/it	has	(=he's etc.)	done
			been etc.

The present perfect simple is **have/has + past participle**. The past participle often ends in **-ed** (finished/decided etc.), but many important verbs are *irregular* (lost/done/been/written etc.). For a list of irregular verbs, see p.12.

Present perfect and past (I have done and I did)



Now Tom **has found** his key. He has it now.

Has he lost his key? (*present perfect*)

No, he **hasn't**. He **has found** it.

Did he lose his key? (*past simple*)

Yes, he **did**.

He **lost** his key (*past simple*)

but now he **has found** it. (*present perfect*)

The *present perfect* is a *present* tense. It always tells us something about *now*. 'Tom **has lost** his key' = he doesn't have his key *now*.

The *past simple* tells us only about the *past*. If somebody says 'Tom **lost** his key', we don't know whether he has it now or not. We only know that he lost it at some time in the past.

Do not use the present perfect (I have done) when you talk about a *finished* time (for example, *yesterday / ten minutes ago / in 1985 / when I was a child*). Use a *past* tense:

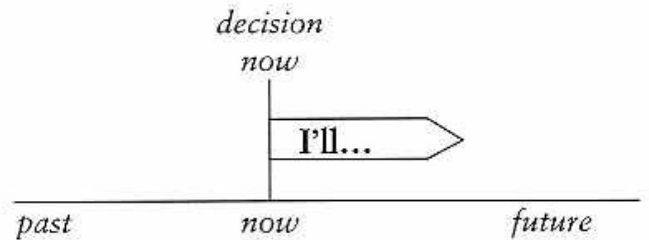
- The weather was nice **yesterday**. (*not* 'has been nice')
- They arrived **ten minutes ago**. (*not* 'have arrived')

I will and I'm going to

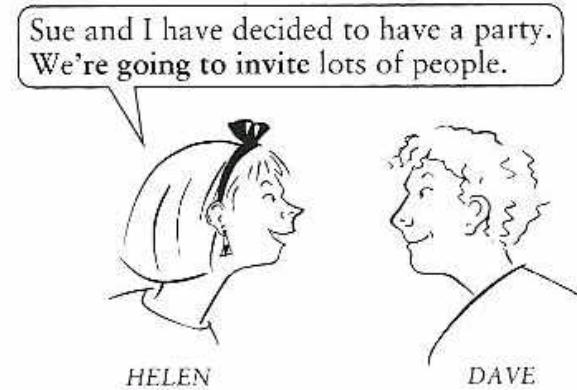
Sue is talking to Helen:



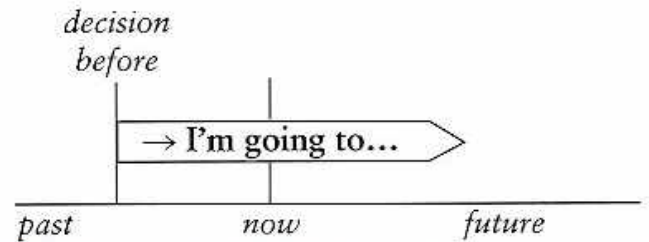
will ('ll): We use **will** when we decide to do something at the time of speaking. The speaker has not decided before. The party is a new idea.



Later that day, Helen meets Dave:



going to: We use **(be) going to** when we have *already decided* to do something. Helen had already decided to invite lots of people *before* she spoke to Dave.



Compare:

- 'George phoned while you were out.' 'OK. I'll phone him back.'
- but* • 'George phoned while you were out.' 'Yes, I know. I'm going to phone him back.'
- 'Ann is in hospital.' 'Oh really? I didn't know. I'll go and visit her.'
- but* • 'Ann is in hospital.' 'Yes, I know. I'm going to visit her tomorrow.'

When we say that 'something' is **going to happen**, the situation *now* makes us believe this. The man is walking towards the hole *now*, so he is **going to fall** into it.

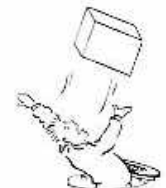
He is **going to fall** into the hole.

situation now




going to

future happening



Past continuous (I was doing)



Yesterday Karen and Jim played tennis. They began at 10 o'clock and finished at 11.30.
So, at 10.30 they **were playing** tennis.
They **were playing** = 'they were in the middle of playing'. They had not finished playing.
Was/were -ing is the *past continuous*:

I/he/she/it	was	playing
we/you/they	were	doing
		working etc.

When we use it:

We use the past continuous to say that somebody was in the middle of doing something at a certain time. The action or situation had already started before this time but had not finished:





- This time last year I **was living** in Brazil.
- What **were you doing** at 10 o'clock last night?
- I waved at her but she **wasn't looking**.

Past continuous (I was doing) and past simple (I did)

<p><i>Past continuous</i> (in the middle of an action)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was walking home when I met Dave. (= in the middle of walking home) • Ann was watching television when the phone rang. 	<p><i>Past simple</i> (complete action)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I walked home after the party last night. (= all the way, completely) • Ann watched television a lot when she was ill last year.
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Past perfect (I had done)


At 10.30 



Bye!

PAUL

Half an hour later 



Hello!

SARAH

Sarah went to a party last week. Paul went to the party too but they didn't see each other. Paul went home at 10.30 and Sarah arrived at 11 o'clock. So:

When Sarah arrived at the party, Paul wasn't there. He **had gone** home.

Had gone is the *past perfect (simple)*:

I/we/they/you he/she/it	had	(= I'd etc.) (= he'd etc.)	gone seen finished etc.
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The past perfect simple is **had** + *past participle* (gone/seen/finished etc.). For a list of irregular verbs, see p.12.

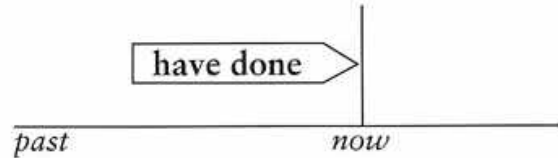
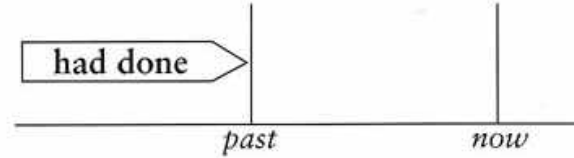
Sometimes we talk about something that happened in the past:

- Sarah arrived at the party.


This is the *starting point* of the story. Then, if we want to talk about things that happened *before* this time, we use the past perfect (had...):

- When Sarah arrived at the party, Paul **had** already gone home.

Compare have done (present perfect) and had done (past perfect):

<p><i>present perfect</i></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is that woman? I've never seen her before. • We aren't hungry. We've just had lunch. • The house is dirty. They haven't cleaned it for weeks. 	<p><i>past perfect</i></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I didn't know who she was. I'd never seen her before. (= before that time) • We weren't hungry. We'd just had lunch. • The house was dirty. They hadn't cleaned it for weeks.
--	--

Reported speech (He said that...)



You want to tell somebody else what Tom said. There are two ways of doing this: You can repeat Tom's words (*direct speech*): Tom said 'I'm feeling ill.' Or you can use *reported speech*: Tom said that he was feeling ill.

Compare:

<p><i>direct:</i> Tom said</p> <p><i>reported:</i> Tom said that</p>	<p>'I am feeling ill.'</p> <p>↓ ↓</p> <p>he was feeling ill.</p>	<p><i>In writing we use these to show direct speech.</i></p>
--	--	--

When we use reported speech, the main verb of the sentence is usually past (Tom said that... / I told her that... etc.) The rest of the sentence is usually past too:

- Tom **said** that he **was** feeling ill.
- I told her that I **didn't** have any money.

In general, the *present* form in direct speech changes to the *past* form in reported speech:

am/is → was	do/does → did	will → would
are → were	have/has → had	can → could
want/like/know/go etc. → wanted/liked/knew/went etc.		

Say and tell

If you say *who* you are talking to, use **tell**:

- Sonia **told me** that you were ill. (*not* 'Sonia said me')
- What did you **tell the police**? (*not* 'say the police')

TELL SOMEBODY

Otherwise use **say**:

- Sonia **said** that you were ill. (*not* 'Sonia told that...')
- What did you **say**?

~~**SAY SOMEBODY**~~

But you can 'say something to somebody':

- Ann **said** goodbye to me and left. (*not* 'Ann said me goodbye')
- What did you **say** to the police?

If I do... and If I did...

Compare:

(1) Sue has lost her watch. She thinks it may be at Ann's house.

SUE: I think I left my watch at your house. Have you seen it?

ANN: No, but I'll have a look when I get home. **If I find** it, I'll tell you.

In this example, Ann feels there is a real possibility that she will find the watch. So she says:

If I find..., I'll... .

(2) Ann says: If I found a wallet in the street, I'd take it to the police.

This is a different type of situation. Here, Ann is not thinking about a real possibility; she is *imagining* the situation and doesn't expect to find a wallet in the street. So she says:

If I found..., I'd (= I would)... (not 'If I find..., I'll...').

When you imagine something like this, you use **if + past** (if I found / if you were / if we didn't etc.). But the meaning is *not* past:

- Sarah has decided not to apply for the job. She isn't really qualified for it, so she probably wouldn't get it if she applied.

If I had known...

Study this example situation:

Last month Gary was in hospital for an operation. Liz didn't know this, so she didn't go to visit him. They met a few days ago. Liz said:

If I had known you were in hospital, **I would have gone** to visit you.

Liz said: **If I had known** you were in hospital... . The *real* situation was that she *didn't* know he was in hospital.

When you are talking about the past, you use **if + had ('d)...** (**if I had known/been/done** etc.):

- I didn't see you when you passed me in the street. **If I'd seen** you, of course I would have said hello. (but I didn't see you)
- The view was wonderful. **If I'd had** a camera, I would have taken some photographs. (but I didn't have a camera)

Must and can't

Present	I/you/he (etc.)	must can't	be (tired / hungry / at work etc.)
			be (doing / coming / joking etc.) do / go / know / have etc.)

We use **must** to say that we feel sure something is true:

- You've been travelling all day. You **must** be tired. (Travelling is tiring and you've been travelling all day, so you **must** be tired.)

We use **can't** to say that we feel sure something is not possible:

- You've just had lunch. You **can't** be hungry already. (People are not normally hungry just after eating a meal. You've just eaten, so you **can't** be hungry.)

Past	I/you/he (etc.)	must can't	have	been (asleep / at work etc.)
				been (doing / working etc.) done / gone / known / had etc.

- The phone rang but I didn't hear it. I **must** have been asleep.
- Tom walked straight into a wall. He **can't** have been looking where he was going.

May and might

Present	I/you/he (etc.)	may might	(not)	be (true / in his office etc.)
				be (doing / working / having etc.) do / know / have / want etc.

We use **may** or **might** to say that something is a possibility. Usually you can use **may** or **might**, so you can say:

- It **may** be true, *or* It **might** be true. (= perhaps it is true)
- She **might** know, *or* She **may** know.

Past	I/you/he (etc.)	may might	(not) have	been asleep / at work etc.)
				been (doing / waiting etc.) done / known / had / seen etc.

- A: I wonder why Kay didn't answer the phone.
B: She **may** have been asleep. (= perhaps she was asleep)
- A: I was surprised that Sarah wasn't at the meeting.
B: She **might** not have known about it. (= perhaps she didn't know)

Passive (is done / was done)

The passive is **be (is/was/have been etc.) + the past participle (done/cleaned/seen etc.):**
(be) done (be) cleaned (be) seen (be) damaged (be) built etc.

For irregular past participles (done/known/seen etc.), see

Present simple

active: clean(s)/sees(s) etc.

Somebody cleans this room every day.

passive: am/is/are cleaned/seen etc.

This room is cleaned every day.

- Many accidents **are caused** by careless driving.
- I'm **not often invited** to parties.
- How is this word **pronounced**?

Past simple

active: cleaned/saw etc.

Somebody **cleaned** this room yesterday.

passive: was/were cleaned/seen etc.

This room **was cleaned** yesterday.

- We **were woken up** by a loud noise during the night.
- 'Did you go to the party?' No, I **wasn't invited**.'
- How much money **was stolen**?

Verbs with two objects

Some verbs can have two objects. For example, give:

- We gave the police the information. (= We gave the information to the police.)
└──────────┘ └──────────┘
object 1 object 2

So it is possible to make two passive sentences:

- **The police** were given the information. or **The information** was given to the police.

Other verbs which can have two objects are: ask offer pay show teach tell

When we use these verbs in the passive, most often we begin with the *person*:

- I **was offered** the job but refused it. (= they offered me the job)
- You **will be given** plenty of time to decide. (= we will give you plenty of time)
- **Have you been shown** the new machine? (= has anybody shown you...?)
- **The men were paid** £200 to do the work. (= somebody paid the men £200)

Verb + -ing

Here are some verbs that are followed by -ing:

stop	delay	fancy	consider	admit	miss	involve
finish	postpone	imagine	avoid	deny	risk	practise

- Suddenly everybody **stopped** talking. There was silence.
- I'll do the shopping when I've **finished** cleaning the flat.

Verb + to...

If these verbs are followed by another verb, the structure is usually *verb + to... (infinitive)*:

offer	decide	hope	deserve	attempt	promise
agree	plan	aim	afford	manage	threaten
refuse	arrange	learn	forget	fail	

- It was late, so we **decided to take** a taxi home.
- Simon was in a difficult situation, so I **agreed to lend** him some money.

Preposition (in/for/about etc.) + -ing

If a preposition (*in/for/about* etc.) is followed by a verb, the verb ends in -ing. For example:

	<i>preposition</i>	<i>verb (-ing)</i>	
Are you interested	in	working	for us?
I'm not very good	at	learning	languages.
She must be fed up	with	studying.	
What are the advantages	of	having	a car?
This knife is only	for	cutting	bread.
How	about	playing	tennis tomorrow?
I bought a new bicycle	instead of	going	away on holiday.
Carol went to work	in spite of	feeling	ill.

Spelling rules

Nouns, verbs and adjectives can have the following endings:

noun + <i>s/es</i> (<i>plural</i>)	books	ideas	matches
verb + <i>s/-es</i> (after <i>he/she/it</i>)	works	enjoys	washes
verb + <i>-ing</i>	working	enjoying	washing
verb + <i>-ed</i>	worked	enjoyed	washed
adjective + <i>-er</i> (<i>comparative</i>)	cheaper	quicker	brighter
adjective + <i>-est</i> (<i>superlative</i>)	cheapest	quickest	brightest
adjective + <i>-ly</i> (<i>adverb</i>)	cheaply	quickly	brightly

Words ending in *-y* (baby, carry, easy etc.)

If a word ends in a *consonant** + *y* (*-by/-ry/-sy insert / oblique -vy* etc.):

y changes to *ie* before the ending *-s*:

baby/babies	lorry/lorries	country/countries	secretary/secretaries
hurry/hurries	study/studies	apply/applies	try/tries

y changes to *i* before the ending *-ed*:

hurry/hurried	study/studied	apply/applied	try/tried
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y changes to *i* before the endings *-er* and *-est*:

easy/easier/easiest	heavy/heavier/heaviest	lucky/luckier/luckiest
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y changes to *i* before the ending *-ly*:

easy/easily	heavy/heavily	temporary/temporarily
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Doubling consonants (*stop/stopping/stopped, wet/wetter/wettest* etc.)

Sometimes a word ends in *vowel* + *consonant*. For example:

stop plan wet thin slip prefer regret

Before the endings *-ing/-ed/-er/-est*, we double the consonant at the end. So *p* → *pp*, *n* → *nn* etc. For example:

stop	p	→	pp	stopping	stopped
plan	n	→	nn	planning	planned
rub	b	→	bb	rubbing	rubbed
big	g	→	gg	bigger	biggest
wet	t	→	tt	wetter	wettest
thin	n	→	nn	thinner	thinnest

List of irregular verbs

<i>infinitive</i>	<i>past simple</i>	<i>past participle</i>	<i>infinitive</i>	<i>past simple</i>	<i>past participle</i>
be	was/were	been	light	lit	lit
beat	beat	beaten	lose	lost	lost
become	became	become	make	made	made
begin	began	begun	mean	meant	meant
bend	bent	bent	meet	met	met
bet	bet	bet	pay	paid	paid
bite	bit	bitten	put	put	put
blow	blew	blown	read	read [red]*	read [red]*
break	broke	broken	ride	rode	ridden
bring	brought	brought	ring	rang	rung
broadcast	broadcast	broadcast	rise	rose	risen
build	built	built	run	ran	run
burst	burst	burst	say	said	said
buy	bought	bought	see	saw	seen
catch	caught	caught	seek	sought	sought
choose	chose	chosen	sell	sold	sold
come	came	come	send	sent	sent
cost	cost	cost	set	set	set
creep	crept	crept	sew	sewed	sewn/sewed
cut	cut	cut	shake	shook	shaken
deal	dealt	dealt	shine	shone	shone
dig	dug	dug	shoot	shot	shot
do	did	done	show	showed	shown/showed
draw	drew	drawn	shrink	shrank	shrunk
drink	drank	drunk	shut	shut	shut
drive	drove	driven	sing	sang	sung
eat	ate	eaten	sink	sank	sunk
fall	fell	fallen	sit	sat	sat
feed	fed	fed	sleep	slept	slept
feel	felt	felt	slide	slid	slid
fight	fought	fought	speak	spoke	spoken
find	found	found	spend	spent	spent
flee	fled	fled	spit	spat	spat
fly	flew	flown	split	split	split
forbid	forbade	forbidden	spread	spread	spread
forget	forgot	forgotten	spring	sprang	sprung
forgive	forgave	forgiven	stand	stood	stood
freeze	froze	frozen	steal	stole	stolen
get	got	got	stick	stuck	stuck
give	gave	given	sting	stung	stung
go	went	gone	stink	stank	stunk
grow	grew	grown	strike	struck	struck
hang	hung	hung	swear	swore	sworn
have	had	had	sweep	swept	swept
hear	heard	heard	swim	swam	swum
hide	hid	hidden	swing	swung	swung
hit	hit	hit	take	took	taken
hold	held	held	teach	taught	taught
hurt	hurt	hurt	tear	tore	torn
keep	kept	kept	tell	told	told
kneel	knelt	knelt	think	thought	thought
know	knew	known	throw	threw	thrown
lay	laid	laid	understand	understood	understood
lead	led	led	wake	woke	woken
leave	left	left	wear	wore	worn
lend	lent	lent	weep	wept	wept
let	let	let	win	won	won
lie	lay	lain	write	wrote	written