



Verb To Be

The verb to be is the most common verb in English but it's also a very tricky verb. It can be used in two different ways;

- 1) Main verb
- 2) Auxiliary verb (helping to create other tenses)

Verb To Be: Main Verb

The verb to be describes identity, characteristics, states and existence. It is a stative verb so you don't normally use it in continuous forms but we sometimes use it when describing temporary behaviour (*She is being annoying today. He was being rude yesterday*).

Present Simple	Past Simple	Future Simple
I am You/we/they are He/she/it is I am not You/we they aren't He/she/it isn't <i>I <u>am</u> happy</i> <i>He <u>isn't</u> a teacher</i> <i><u>Are</u> you a teacher?</i>	I/he/she/it was You/we/they were I/he/she/it wasn't You/we/they weren't <i>I <u>was</u> happy yesterday</i> <i>He <u>wasn't</u> a teacher</i> <i><u>Were</u> you a teacher?</i>	<u>Will Future</u> Will be Won't be <u>Going To Future</u> I'm going to be You / we / they are going to be He /she / it is going to be <i>I <u>will be</u> happy tomorrow</i> <i>I am going to <u>be</u> a grandma.</i>

Present Perfect	Past Perfect	Future Perfect
I/you/we/they have been He/she/it has been	Had been Hadn't been	Will have been Won't have been
I/you/we/they haven't been He/she/it hasn't been <i>I have <u>been</u> to France</i> <i>He hasn't <u>been</u> to a museum</i> <i>Have you <u>been</u> to England?</i>	<i>I had <u>been</u> in London until I flew to Paris.</i> <i>Had you <u>been</u> in London before you flew to Paris?</i>	<i>By 2050 I will have <u>been</u> a teacher for 30 years.</i> <i>Will you have <u>been</u> in England by 2050?</i>

Verb To Be: There Is/There Are

Another common use of *to be* as a main verb is to show existence: there is/ there are or there was / there were.

There is a dog on the street

There are 24 children

There was a dog on the street yesterday

There were 24 children

Verb To Be: Auxiliary Verb

As an auxiliary verb, the verb to be helps build continuous tenses and the passive voice.

Present Continuous	Past Continuous	Future Continuous
I am +ING You/we/they are +ING He/she/it is +ING I am not +ING You/we they aren't +ING He/she/it isn't +ING <i>I <u>am</u> helping you now</i> <i>He <u>isn't</u> watching TV</i> <i><u>Are</u> you speaking?</i>	I/he/she/it was +ING You/we/they were +ING I/he/she/it wasn't +ING You/we/they weren't +ING <i>I <u>was</u> watching TV</i> <i>He <u>wasn't</u> going to work</i> <i><u>Were</u> you waiting for the bus?</i>	Will be +ING Won't be +ING <i>I <u>will be</u> watching TV at 7am tomorrow</i> <i>I <u>won't be</u> visiting her in the future</i> <i>Will you <u>be</u> watching TV?</i>

Present Perfect Continuous	Past Perfect Continuous	Future Perfect Continuous
I/you/we/they have been +ING He/she/it has been +ING I/you/we/they haven't been +ING He/she/it hasn't been +ING <i>I <u>have been</u> learning English with you.</i> <i>He <u>hasn't been</u> watching TV</i> <i><u>Have</u> you <u>been</u> watching TV?</i>	Had been +ING Hadn't been +ING <i>I <u>had been</u> watching TV before I went to bed.</i> <i>She <u>hadn't been</u> learning English before she started school.</i> <i><u>Had</u> you <u>been</u> watching TV before you went to bed?</i>	Will have been +ING Won't have been +ING <i>I <u>will have been</u> learning English</i> <i>She <u>won't have been</u> learning English</i> <i>Will she <u>have been</u> learning English ?</i>

The passive voice is created with the verb to be in any tense, followed by the past participle.

The car is cleaned every day.

The report was written yesterday.

The work will be finished tomorrow.

The verb to be is everywhere in English so it's important to be able to use this verb correctly.