

# Grammar files

## Tenses

### Simple present

- he/she/it + s
- Add 's' to the infinitive in the third person singular (he/she/it): he/she/it looks. But I/you/we/they look.
- Irregular verbs have to be learnt!
- Form questions and negative sentences with do/does + infinitive.  
How much do you spend on advertising?  
The government doesn't invest enough money in alternative technologies.

#### Examples of typical use

- Hybrid engines use less energy than traditional ones. (For facts and general statements)
- Bill always gets into his office at 7.30 am. But does he always leave at 5pm? (For everyday activities or habits)
- The train leaves tomorrow at 10.30am. (For scheduled future events)

### Present progressive

- am/are/is + -ing (present participle)  
I'm writing/you're reading/she's watching
- Form questions by inversion: What are you doing?
- Form negatives by adding 'not': They aren't coming.
- Some verbs are never used in the progressive form, especially many that express feelings or belief, e.g. believe, love, hate, seem, have (in the sense of own), feel, notice, realise.

#### Examples of typical use

- The engineers are testing the prototype (now)./We are preparing the accounts. (For an activity that is going on right now and will continue for a certain limited or temporary period of time)
- They are arriving in a couple of days. (For planned future events)

### Simple past

- verb + -ed: Regular verbs add 'ed' to the infinitive:  
look – looked.  
go – went
- Form negatives and questions with did/didn't + infinitive:  
Did you go to the conference last week?  
We didn't have time to install the software.
- With was/were: Form negative sentences by adding 'not' and form questions by inversion:  
The boss wasn't very happy with our results.  
Why weren't you at yesterday's meeting?

#### Examples of typical use

- Michael Dwyer founded the company in 1998./They started the project two weeks ago. (For activities that began and ended at a specific time in the past)
- As the train left the station, Helen looked around the compartment. There was no one else in sight. She opened her laptop and began to work. (For a series of events in the past which form a narrative)

**Past progressive**

- was/were + -ing (present participle)  
They were listening to the CEO's speech.
- Form negative sentences by adding 'not':  
They weren't listening to the CEO's speech.
- Form questions by inversion:  
Were they listening to the CEO's speech?

**Examples of typical use**

- They were still preparing their presentation when the client arrived.  
(For an activity in the past that was already in progress when something else happened)
- While Tanja was finding the website, I was editing the document.  
(For several activities or events that were happening at the same time in the past)

**Present perfect simple**

- has/have + past participle:  
My colleague has lost his mobile phone.
- Form negative sentences by using hasn't/haven't:  
The company hasn't made a profit.
- Form questions by inversion:  
What have we done so far?

**Examples of typical use**

- With the present perfect simple the result of the action is usually more important than the action itself.  
Never use the present perfect with adverbs of past time, e.g. yesterday, last week, three years ago, in 2009.
- He has moved into a new department.  
(For activities that happened recently and whose effects are still felt in the present)
  - The quarterly results have just been published./We've done very well so far./  
Have you ever been to the Stock Exchange?  
(With certain adverbs: just, so far, ever, never, recently)
  - The product has been on the market for two months./I haven't been to the USA since 2004.  
(With 'for' and 'since', for activities that started in the past and are continuing)

**Present perfect progressive**

- have/has + been + -ing (present participle):  
He has been looking for a job for three months now.
- Form negative statements by using 'hasn't/haven't':  
You haven't been looking properly.
- Form questions by inversion:  
Have you been looking properly?

**Examples of typical use**

The present perfect progressive is used in much the same way as the present perfect simple, but the activity is more important than the result.

- We have been looking for a new computer for several weeks.  
(For activities that have been going on either continuously or at intervals up to the present, often with adverbials of time such as 'all day', 'for a week', etc.)
- It's been raining.  
(With no mention of time, the activity has taken place very recently and the result is clearly visible.)

**Past perfect simple**

- had + past participle:  
He had found ...
- Form negative sentences with 'hadn't':  
He hadn't found ...
- Form questions by inversion:  
What had he found?

**Examples of typical use**

- When we arrived at the station the train had already left. (For an activity that happened before another activity in the past, showing the connection between the two activities.)
- Peter admitted that he had forgotten to complete his tax return. (In indirect speech, when the original statement is in the past simple or present perfect)

**Past perfect progressive**

- had been + -ing (present participle):  
They had been negotiating.
- Form negative sentences with 'hadn't':  
They hadn't been negotiating.
- Form questions by inversion:  
What had they been doing?

**Examples of typical use**

- He was tired because he had been working so hard. (For a past activity that occurred before another and there is a direct relation to the activity that followed.)
- He said that he had been working hard. (For indirect speech, when the original statement is in the present perfect progressive)

**Future simple ('will' future)**

- will/shall + infinitive: *It will start tomorrow.*
- Form negative sentences with 'won't':  
*It won't happen tomorrow.*
- Form questions by inversion:  
*Will it start tomorrow?*

**Examples of typical use**

- English 'will' = German 'werden/wird'  
German 'will' = English 'want/wants'
- You'll be head of this department one day. (For things that are likely to happen at a defined or undefined time in the future)
  - At the conference there'll be a lot of potential customers. (For forecasts/predictions)

**Future progressive**

- will + be + -ing (present participle):  
They will be doing ...
- Form negative sentences with 'won't':  
They won't be doing ...
- Form questions by inversion:  
What will they be doing?

**Examples of typical use**

- You will be working by the time I get to the office.  
(For events – often planned – that will be going on at a certain time in the future when another event occurs.)

**Future perfect simple**

- will + have + past participle:  
She will have finished.
- Form negative sentences with 'won't':  
She won't have finished.
- Form questions by inversion:  
Will she have finished?

**Examples of typical use**

- Frank will have finished his part-time MBA by the time he is 25.  
(For future activities that take place before other future activities to show a relation between them. The simple present is used for the other activities.)

**Future perfect progressive**

- will + have been + -ing (present participle):  
They will have been studying.
- Form negative sentences with 'won't':  
They won't have been studying.
- Form questions by inversion:  
Will they have been studying?

**Examples of typical use**

- They will have been studying English for eight years by the time they take the exam.  
(Used in the same way as the future perfect simple but placing more emphasis on the activity.)

# If-clauses

There are three main types of 'if-clauses' (or conditional sentences) in English.

## First conditional – future situations (probable/possible)

- if-clause: simple present/present perfect
  - main clause: 'will' future
- Tip: the 'if-clause' can come in the second part of the sentence, but the rule is the same.

### Examples of typical use

- If you're not careful you'll break it.
- If you pay cash, we'll offer you a discount.
- Will you be at home if I call later?

## Second conditional – future situations (hypothetical/unlikely)

- if-clause: simple past
- main clause: would (or could) + infinitive

### Examples of typical use

- If I got laid off, I'd look for a job overseas.
- If you bought this in the UK it would probably cost more.
- You would save electricity if you used energy-saving light bulbs.

## Third conditional – past situations (that can't be changed now)

- if-clause: past perfect
- main clause: would (or could) + have + past participle.

### Examples of typical use

- If you had agreed to increase your offer we could have closed the deal.
- I wouldn't have changed jobs if they had given me a pay rise.

# Modal auxiliaries

## will/would/can/could/may

When asking someone to do something	Will/Would/Can/Could you do me a favour?
When asking for permission or when giving permission	May I use your phone? – Yes, of course you may.
When talking about abilities	She can speak fluent Italian.

## must/mustn't/needn't

When instructing someone to do something or not to do something	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You must wear a safety helmet.</li> <li>You mustn't smoke on the factory floor.</li> </ul>
When talking about a necessity or duty or when talking about something that is not necessary	I must finish the project by Friday. You needn't pay in advance.

## may/might/could/must/will

When expressing a possibility or probability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It may/might/could/will rain today.</li> <li>Hello, I'm Steve. You must be the new intern.</li> </ul>
When making a suggestion	We could ask the client to pay in advance.

## should/ought to/shouldn't/ought not to

When giving advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You ought to/should consult a lawyer about this.</li> <li>You shouldn't arrive late for an interview.</li> </ul>
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## Substitutes

Modal auxiliaries only have a present and/or past tense form. For other tenses substitutes are used.

Modal auxiliary	Substitutes	Examples
can/could	be able to	He won't be able to come to the meeting on Monday.
may/mustn't	be allowed to/not be allowed to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We were allowed to visit the cleanroom.</li> <li>We weren't allowed to ask questions during the presentation.</li> </ul>
must/needn't	have to/not have to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will have to offer a substantial discount if we want to secure the deal.</li> <li>We didn't have to wait long for our money.</li> </ul>

# The passive

## Forming the passive

The passive is formed using a form of 'to be' + past participle.

The passive is often used when the action is more important than who or what performed it.

The passive is frequently used in scientific and technical writing.

Tense	Examples of use
<b>Simple present</b> am/is/are + past participle:	The staff are always paid on the first of the month.
<b>Simple past</b> was/were + past participle	The company was founded in the early years of the 20th century.
<b>Present perfect</b> have/has been + past participle:	This photocopier hasn't been serviced since we bought it.
<b>Future</b> will + be + past participle:	Do you think our company will be awarded a prize for innovative products?

## Relative clauses

- A relative clause usually begins with a relative pronoun: who, which, that, whose.
- Relative clauses are used to describe people or things.
- There are two kinds of relative clauses: defining relative clauses are not set off from the rest of the sentence by commas, whereas non-defining relative clauses contain additional information between commas.

Defining relative clauses	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The pronoun 'that, which, who(m)' can be left out if the pronoun is the object of the relative clause. This type of relative clause is known as a 'contact clause'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The office that we work in is very hot in summer.</li> <li>• The office we work in is very hot in summer.</li> <li>• I'm giving the job to the woman who I interviewed yesterday.</li> <li>• I'm giving the job to the woman I interviewed yesterday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepositions often come at the end of a defining relative clause in everyday English.</li> </ul>	This is the product (that) we were talking about.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In formal English, the preposition can be placed directly before the relative pronoun:</li> </ul>	This is the product about which we were talking.

Non-defining relative clauses	Examples
Non-defining relative clauses are set off from the rest of the sentence by commas.	Mrs. Jackson, who is very ambitious, has just been promoted again.
In everyday English a preposition may be placed within or at the end of the relative clause.	My friend Roland, who I worked with on the spring campaign, is going to be my new boss!
In formal English the preposition comes before the relative pronoun.	My friend Roland, with whom I worked on the spring campaign, is going to be my new boss!



# Reported speech

Reported speech (or indirect speech) is used to report what someone has said without quoting them.

## Changing direct speech to reported speech

If the reporting verb (say, tell, know, think, learn, mention, claim ...) is in the past tense (which it most commonly is), the tense of the reported speech changes:

simple present → simple past	"I check the share prices every day." → Dan said (that) he checked the share prices every day.
present progressive → past progressive	"I'm loading the software." → The IT technician said that he was loading the software.
future → conditional	"I will check my email every two hours." → He promised that he would check his email every two hours.
simple past → past perfect	"I locked the warehouse at 9pm last night." → The security guard claimed that he had locked the warehouse at 9pm last night.
past progressive → past perfect progressive or past progressive	"I was waiting for a taxi." → Sally said that she had been waiting/was waiting for a taxi.
present perfect → past perfect	"I've worked ten hours today." → He told me that he had worked ten hours today.
Imperative forms become infinitives (+ 'to') in reported speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Hurry up!" → She told us to hurry up.</li> <li>• "Quiet please!" → The speaker asked the audience to be quiet.</li> </ul>

## Question tags

A question tag is added to the end of a sentence turning it into a question.  
In German you use expressions like "..., *nicht wahr?*" "..., *oder?*" in a similar way.

- If the statement is positive, the question tag is negative.
- If the statement is negative, the question tag is positive.
- If the statement is in the simple present or simple past tense, the question tag is formed with 'do/don't' or 'did/didn't'.

Statement (+)	Tag (-)
It was a difficult meeting,	wasn't it?
You're new here,	aren't you?
It will be an interesting conference,	won't it?
You can use PowerPoint,	can't you?
She's made a good impression,	hasn't she?

Statement (-)	Tag (+)
This new law isn't going to work,	is it?
The customer didn't get back to us,	did he?
We can't use this equipment,	can we?
You won't be coming tomorrow,	will you?
You don't know George,	do you?