

Helping Verbs: What Is a Helping Verb?

A Helping Verb
Supports the
Main Action Verb! ♥

Helping
Verb



Action
Verb



1 Quick Summary



A **helping verb** (also called an auxiliary verb) helps the main action verb show time or possibility.

For example:

She **is** running.

Helping verb
(is)

Main action
verb
(running)



He **can** swim.

Helping verb
(can)

Main action
verb
(swim)



2 Memory Trick



Helping verbs are like **trusty sidekicks**—they always team up right beside the main action verb! ♥



TOGETHER
They Make
Stronger
Sentences!
♥

3 Common Helping Verbs



Here are some common helping verbs. They work with a main action verb to show time, ask questions, make negatives, or show possibility.

is



She **is** happy.
(present)

am



I **am** ready.
(present)

are



They **are** friends.
(present)

was



He **was** tired.
(past)

were



We **were** at school.
(past)

has



He **has** a book.
(present)

have



I **have** a book.
(present)

had



He **had** a toy.
(past)

do



I **do** my homework.
(present)

does



She **does** her work.
(present)

did



He **did** his work.
(past)

can



I **can** play soccer.
(possibility)

will



She **will** study tomorrow.
(future)

4 Why It Matters



- ✓ Helping verbs help us talk about the **past**, **present**, and **future**.
- ✓ They show **possibility** (**can**, **will**) and help us ask questions or **make negatives**.
- ✓ They work with the main action verb to give complete meaning.
- ✓ Without a helping verb, our sentences can be **unclear** or **incomplete**.

Helping verbs help us express when, how, and what is possible in English! ♥



Common Helping Verb Teams

Different helping verbs work with action verbs to show time, possibility, ability and more! ♥

Verb Toolkit

Helping Verbs Make Stronger Sentences! ♥

1 The 'To Be' Helpers

The helping verbs **is**, **am**, **are**, **was**, and **were** work with -ing action verbs to show what is happening.

Structure: subject + to be + verb (-ing)

Helping Verb	Example Sentence	Meaning
is	 She is singing.	happening now (present)
am	 I am reading.	happening now (present)
are	 They are playing.	happening now (present)
was	 He was running.	happened in the past
were	 We were watching.	happened in the past

2 The 'To Have' Helpers

The helping verbs **has**, **have**, and **had** work with a main verb (usually the past form) to show completed actions.

Structure: subject + to have + past form of verb

Helping Verb	Example Sentence	Meaning
has	 She has finished.	completed action (present)
have	 They have studied.	completed action (present)
had	 He had eaten.	completed action (past)

3 Modal Helpers

Modal helping verbs like **can**, **will**, and **must** show ability, future, permission, or necessity.

Structure: subject + modal verb + base form of verb

Helping Verb	Example Sentence	Meaning
can	 You can play.	ability (can do)
will	 I will help.	future (will do)
must	 We must be on time.	necessity (need to do)

4 Common Mistakes

Be careful! The helping verb must match the subject and work with the correct form of the action verb.

Incorrect ✗	Correct ✓
He are running. 	He is running. 
They is playing. 	They are playing. 
She have finished. 	She has finished. 
We was watching. 	We were watching. 
I can to swim. 	I can swim. 



Practice
Activities:
Part 1Let's Practice
Helping Verbs!
You've Got This! ♥

1 Find the Helping Verb

Underline the helping verb in each sentence.

1 The dog **is** barking.2 She **is** reading a book.3 They **are** playing soccer.4 He **was** tired.5 We **were** at the park.6 The cat **has** eaten.7 I **have** finished my homework.8 You **can** do it!9 We **will** go tomorrow.10 They **are** watching a movie.

2 Choose the Right Helper

Choose the correct helping verb (**is**, **am**, or **are**) to complete each sentence.

1 She _____ a doctor.

is

am

are

2 I _____ happy.

is

am

are

3 They _____ at school.

is

am

are

4 He _____ playing a game.

is

am

are

5 We _____ ready.

is

am

are

6 The cat _____ sleeping.

is

am

are

7 You _____ a good friend.

is

am

are

8 It _____ raining.

is

am

are

9 We _____ learning English.

is

am

are

10 She _____ my sister.

is

am

are

3 Match Helper to Action

Match the helping verb in Column A with the best sentence in Column B.

Column A (Helping Verb)

1 has

2 will

3 can

4 is

5 were

Column B (Sentence)

A I **can** play the guitar.B They **were** at the beach.C She **has** a new bike.D He **will** help you.E The dog **is** running.Great
Effort!
♥

Practice
Activities:
Part 2Keep Practicing!
You're Getting
Stronger! ♥4 Complete the Verb Phrase

Choose the correct helping verb from the box to complete each sentence.

is

am

are

was

were

has

have

had

can

will

1 She _____ reading a book.



2 They _____ playing in the park.



3 He _____ finished his lunch.



4 We _____ going to the zoo.



5 I _____ help you.



6 The dog _____ running fast.



7 You _____ do it!



8 She _____ a new bike.



9 We _____ at the beach.



10 They _____ tired after the game.

5 Spot the Helping Mistake Each sentence has a mistake in the helping verb.
Rewrite the sentence correctly on the line.1 He **are** playing soccer.
2 She **have** a new book.
3 They **is** watching TV.
4 I **was** happy yesterday.
5 We **has** finished.
6 You **were** a good friend.
7 She **can** sings well.
8 They **was** at the party.
9 I **will** goes tomorrow.
10 He **have** a big dog.
6 Write Your Own Helper Sentence

Use a helping verb and a main verb to write your own sentences. You can use the ideas or your own.

1 Write a sentence using a helping verb to talk about something you can do.

Example ideas:
can play,
can swim,
can draw

2 Write a sentence using a helping verb to talk about something that happened in the past.

Example ideas:
was happy,
had a toy,
were at school

Great job!
Let's see how you did
and find out what's next
on your English learning
journey! ♥



Answer Key

Here are the correct answers for your practice activities from Pages 3 and 4.

1 Find the Helping Verb (Page 3)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 The dog is barking. | 6 The cat has eaten. |
| 2 She is reading a book. | 7 I have finished my homework. |
| 3 They are playing soccer. | 8 You can do it! |
| 4 He was tired. | 9 We will go tomorrow. |
| 5 We were at the park. | 10 They are watching a movie. |

2 Choose the Right Helper (Page 3)

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1 is | 6 is |
| 2 am | 7 are |
| 3 are | 8 is |
| 4 is | 9 are |
| 5 are | 10 is |

4 Complete the Verb Phrase (Page 4)

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1 is | 6 is |
| 2 are | 7 can |
| 3 has | 8 is |
| 4 are | 9 are |
| 5 can | 10 are |

3 Match Helper to Action (Page 3)

- | | | |
|---------------|-----|----------------------------------|
| 1 has | – C | (She has a new bike.) |
| 2 will | – E | (The dog will run.) |
| 3 can | – A | (I can play the guitar.) |
| 4 is | – B | (They were at the beach.) |
| 5 were | – D | (He will help you.) |

5 Spot the Helping Mistake (Page 4)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 is playing soccer. | 6 were a good friend. |
| 2 has a new book. | 7 can sings well. |
| 3 is watching TV. | 8 were at the party. |
| 4 was happy yesterday. | 9 will go tomorrow. |
| 5 have finished. | 10 has a big dog. |

6 Write Your Own Helper Sentence (Page 4)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Sample: I can ride a bike.
(Answers may vary) | 2 Sample: We were at the zoo.
(Answers may vary) |
|---|--|

Key Takeaways

- ✓ **Helping verbs** (also called auxiliary verbs) support the **main action verb**.
- ✓ They help show **when an action** happens (past, present, or future).
- ✓ Common helping verbs include: **is, am, are, was, were, has, have, had, do, does, did, can, will, and must**.
- ✓ They work with a **main verb** to make complete and clear sentences.
- ✓ Helping verbs can show **possibility, ability, permission, or a completed action**.
- ✓ Without a helping verb, a sentence can sound **unclear or incomplete**.

What's Next?

Your next lesson is:

Action Verbs

In the next lesson, you'll learn:

- ✓ What **action verbs** are.
- ✓ How action verbs show what someone or something **does**.
- ✓ Lots of easy examples with pictures.
- ✓ Fun practice activities to use action verbs in your own sentences.



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My Learning Progress

- ☐ I have read the lesson.
- ☐ I have completed the practice activities.
- ☐ I have checked my answers.
- ☐ I am ready for the next lesson!



"Small steps. Big progress." ♥