



Unit 16 – Verbs, Objects and Complements (*Chris threw the ball..*)

A) Types of Verbs – There are three major types of verbs: **i) linking verbs, ii) helping verbs & ii) action verbs:**

1) Linking Verbs – A linking verb connects the subject of a sentence to a noun or adjective (or phrase) that either renames or describes the subject. This noun or adjective is called the *subject complement*.

- o Kelly / became / a professional firefighter.
-> The verb (became) connects the subject (Kelly) to the complement (a professional firefighter).

Note: -> The next unit is dedicated to 'Linking Verbs' (Unit 18).

2) Helping Verbs are used before linking or action verbs to convey additional information. A **verb phrase** is simply a main verb (study, go, etc.) with an accompanying helping verb (can, could, was, did, has, etc.)

- o Kara is (helping verb) going (main verb) to the bank.
- o Danny has (helping verb) prepared (main verb) for his presentation.

Note: -> **Modal verbs** (*may, might, should, would, will, etc.*) always function as helping verbs.

- o The bank might (helping verb) be (main verb) busy today.
- o The meeting could (helping verb) finish (main verb) early if we hurry.

In addition, the following forms of the verbs **to be**, **to do** and **to have** can serve as **helping, action, or linking verbs**:

am	is	<u>are</u>	was	were	be	been	being	do	does	<u>did</u>	have	has	had
Helping:		We <u>are</u> moving to a new house today.						Helping:		My son <u>did</u> do his homework.			
Linking:		We <u>are</u> ready to go!						Action:		My son <u>did</u> his homework.			

3) Action Verbs are words that express action (play, go, study, etc.) or possession (own, have, etc.). Action verbs can be either **transitive** or **intransitive**:

i) Intransitive Verbs never take an object. In other words, there is no object to receive its action:

- o The leaves fell softly from the tree.
-> The verb is 'fell.' The phrase '*softly from the tree*' modifies the verb but no object receives the action.

The following verbs are mostly used intransitively:

-> **appear, arrive, come, cough, die, disappear, fall, happen, lie, live, rain, rise, sneeze, snow, rain, work**

ii) Transitive Verbs always have a noun, called a **direct object** that receives the action of the verb:

- o I threw the ball.
-> The verb is 'threw.' The ball is the object receiving the verb's action. Therefore, it is a **transitive verb**.

These verbs are mostly used transitively:

-> **ask, attend, believe, buy, consider, contact, describe, discuss, emphasize, enjoy, expect, find, get, like, join, lose, love, make, need, raise, receive, say, suggest, take, telephone, use, want, watch**

Note: -> Some transitive verbs don't require an object when the context is clear:

- o He parked (his car) across the street. -> We understand 'what' he parked. '*His car*' can be left out.
- o I'm studying (English) right now.

Also: **answer, ask, change, cook, dance, drink, drive, eat, fail, park, phone, read, smoke, study, wash, win, write**

In addition, in some cases the context of a sentence can be clear without an object or complement at all:

- A: What did you do on the weekend? B: I **moved**. (to a different apartment)
A: How did you get to the conference? B: I **drove**. (my car)



B) Transitive or Intransitive Verbs – Some verbs can be used with an object (transitively) or without an object (intransitively). To understand this, firstly determine what is receiving the action of the verb:

- i) if there is a **noun receiving the action of the verb**, then the verb is transitive.
- ii) if there is **no direct object to receive the action**, then the verb is intransitive.

We will start <u>the meeting</u> on time. (transitive)	The meeting started <u>on time</u> . (intransitive)
All of my students play <u>soccer</u> . (transitive)	All of my students play <u>outside</u> . (intransitive)
He drives <u>a van</u> for a living. (transitive)	He drives <u>too fast sometimes</u> . (intransitive)

C) Verbs, Objects & Complements – When verbs have a direct object, the subject does the action. Usually, there is additional information expressed in phrases before or after this object. These are referred to as ‘*complements*.’

i) Prepositional phrases of time or place -> Direct Object = ‘DO’ / Prepositional Phrase = ‘PP’:

- o Could you put your bag (DO) on the table (PP)?
- o We laid flowers (DO) by the grave (PP).
- o Mary sent a gift (DO) to her mother (PP) for her birthday.

-> Oftentimes, the prepositional phrase actually comes before the object in the sentence:

- o I had to deal with (PP) several problems (DO) at work today.
- o Christina specializes in (PP) calligraphy (DO) and does beautiful work.
- o Our company set up (PP) a booth (DO) at the motor show.

Also: bring, drive, lay, lead, place, put, send, set, show, stand, take

ii) Verbs followed by a direct object and an -ed clause (the -ed form of the verb):

- o Mr. Johnson wants everything (DO) prepared by 3pm.
- o We had the entire apartment (DO) painted.
- o The bank required the contract (DO) signed before 5pm today.

Also: feel, find, get, have, leave, like, need, want

iii) Verbs followed by a direct object and an adjective or adjective phrase:

- o I consider Roger Federer (DO) an incredible tennis player.
- o Marsha proved herself (DO) ready for the promotion. (*prove is a reflexive pronoun*)
- o I know my teacher believes Sara (DO) is sincere in her efforts.

Also: assume, believe, consider, declare, find, judge, prove, report, think

iv) Verbs followed by a wh-clause as direct object – These verbs are followed by a clause beginning with **wh-** (*who, what, when, where, which, whose, why or how*) as the direct object:

- o Jonathan explained how he (DO) trains for marathons.
- o I totally didn’t realize who Jim (DO) was at first.
- o I checked to find out which classroom (DO) the exam would be in.

Also: arrange, ask, check, choose, consider, decide, discover, discuss, explain, find out, forget, imagine, judge, know, learn, notice, remember, say, see, show, tell, think

v) Wh-clause + to-infinitive as direct object – These verbs are followed by a **wh-clause** with to-infinitive:

- o After class, we decided what to do for our team project.
- o Can you understand how to perform the research assignment?
- o Before we left, I checked when to arrive at the station for our train.

Also: arrange, ask, check, choose, consider, decide, discover, discuss, explain, find out, forget, imagine, judge, know, learn, notice, remember, say, see, show, tell, think, wonder



Unit 16 – Exercises:

16.1 – For each sentence, underline the **action verb** and write whether it is **transitive (T)** or **intransitive (I)**. Also, if there is a **direct object** of the action verb, circle or highlight it. **(16-A/B)**

1. T The Wright brothers built the first airplane in 1903.
2. ___ When we arrived, nobody was there.
3. ___ For about an hour, they passed the ball back and forth at practice.
4. ___ Mom is sleeping so don't be loud in the house!
5. ___ Jennifer turned off the light before bed.
6. ___ We moved the tables closer to each other.
7. ___ The candidate sat down but she was clearly nervous.
8. ___ The boys wore their raincoats because of the weather outside.
9. ___ My friend reviews her notes a lot so that she isn't confused in class.

16.2 – Four of the sentences require an object and four do not. If no object is required, leave the sentence blank.

Objects: their own vegetables / the dance / a company / the furniture **(16-A/B)**

1. Our neighbors enjoy growing their own vegetables. They taste absolutely delicious!
2. Your kids are really growing _____! I can't believe how tall they have gotten.
3. I was late for class so I ran _____ all the way to school.
4. My dad ran _____ for 30 years before he retired last month.
5. We had to move _____ around so that we could paint the living room.
6. I'm going to take some pictures. Please don't move _____!
7. Amy practiced _____ every day before her school violin recital.
8. Our class practiced _____ until we completely memorized it.

16.3 – Underline the correct word for each of the **wh-clauses + infinitives** in the following sentences. **(16-C)**

1. When we went shopping today, Sue showed me where / when / why to buy the shoes.
2. The nurse will inform you where / when / what to enter the room to see the doctor.
3. Our family hasn't decided where / why / what to do with our old furniture when we move next week.
4. My sister is so hard to shop for! I can't decide when / what / who to buy her for her birthday.
5. Mike told me who / what / where to speak to when I arrive at the ticket office at the stadium.
6. We're really excited about our wedding but my fiancé still hasn't decided why / what / which dress to wear!
7. The attendant showed me why / what / where to park my car at the department store.

16.4 – In each sentence write the correct **verb** and indicate whether it is **transitive (T)** or **intransitive (I)**.

Note: Some of the verbs from the list below will be changed to the past or future tense. **(16-A/B)**

raise / set / lay / rise / sit / lie

1. T The teacher instructed the students to raise their hands if they have any questions.
2. ___ When the bell rang, the teacher rose to his feet and started to speak to the class.
3. ___ My manager had already laid a stack of documents on my desk when I got to the office.
4. ___ We had a busy day getting ready for Christmas! Tonight I'm just going to sit down and rest.
5. ___ When I was young, I always set the table before we had dinner.
6. ___ During mid-summer, the sun sets at about 10pm in my hometown.
7. ___ On Saturdays mornings, I want nothing more than to just lie in bed and read.
8. ___ Tim gave a lovely toast after the wedding and we raised our glasses to celebrate the bride and groom.
9. ___ My English lecture usually fills up quickly. Today we sat in the back row of the classroom.
10. ___ My daughter lost her balloon at the park today. We watched it rise until we couldn't see it anymore.
11. ___ On cold winter days, my dogs lie in the sun and stay warm.
12. ___ Healthy hens are able to lay eggs once a day.