

51 Bite-Size Lessons on Verbs

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LIN CUI



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Introduction to the Book

Welcome to “51 Bite-Size Lessons on Verbs”!

To many English as a Second Language / Foreign Language (ESL / EFL) students, verbs cause much more confusion than other aspects of English.

This book intends to address some of the most frequently encountered verb difficulties. It provides an easy-to-follow, three-step “Choose, Explain, Review” format to clarify some confusing verb usages. The book is not designed to offer comprehensive instructions. Rather, it helps fill the gap, one small step at a time, in many ESL / EFL students’ understanding of verbs. The answer key can be found at the end of every lesson.

Each lesson is built on one or two mini topics familiar to students so that they will be able to learn and practice how verbs are used in context. The areas of verb usage covered include “Be” / “Do” verbs, subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, modals, gerunds / infinitives, and subjunctive verbs.

Though some of the lessons are prepared for beginner level students, most of the contents target those at the intermediate level and up. The book can be used as a self-study tool or a supplement to a course.

About the Author

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Lesson 1 holds / hold

Choose the correct answers:

1. My neighbor Joe and his brother often _____ (holds, hold) a BBQ party in their backyard on weekends.
2. Joe _____ (has, have) a huge backyard with beautiful flowers and plants.
3. My sister and I _____ (likes, like) to attend Joe's party.

Explain:

In describing facts and routine activities with the simple present tense, an "s" is necessary after the main verb if the subject is "he", "she", or "it".

Do not try to choose your verb based on whether the subject is singular or plural because "I" is also singular and "you" can be singular as well. Instead, look at the subject, and add an "s" to the main verb if you can change the subject to "he", "she", or "it".

- in Sentence #1, my neighbor Joe and his brother = they (They hold...)
- in Sentence #2, Joe = he (He has...)
- in Sentence #3, my sister and I = we (We like...)

Review:

1. Plants and flowers _____ (keeps, keep) Joe busy and happy.
2. Joe and his brother _____ (has, have) to water them regularly.
3. A beautiful garden _____ (makes, make) life more enjoyable.

Answers:

hold; has; like

keep; have; makes

Lesson 2 take / am take

Choose the correct answers:

1. I _____ (take, am take) four classes every semester.
2. My friend Mia _____ (drove, was drive) me to school four days a week last semester.
3. My family _____ (is going to buy, is going to be buy) a new car next month.

Explain:

“Be” verbs can appear in different forms: “am, is, are, was, were, are going to be, will be, have been, has been, had been...”

The “Do” verbs in their base form appear as “take, have, eat, cook, drive, run, like, think...”

Any form of a “Be” verb and the base form of a “Do” verb can NEVER be used side by side as the main verb of the sentence. This rule applies to all verb tenses.

1. In Sentence #1, “am” is a “Be” verb, so it cannot be used together with the base form “take”.
2. In Sentence #2, “was” is a “Be” verb, so it cannot be used together with the base form “drive”.
3. In Sentence #3, “be” cannot be used together with the base form “buy”.

Review:

1. Mia and I _____ (brought, were bring) our lunch from home to school last week.
2. I _____ (shared, was share) my chicken recipe with her at our lunch.
3. Next week, Mia _____ (will try, will be try) my recipe at her home.

Answers:

take; drove; is going to buy

brought; shared; will try

Lesson 3 is / are / does / do in questions

Choose the correct answers:

Two students (A and B) are talking about their class schedules.

- A. When _____ (is, does) our first class start?
- B. 10 am. _____ (Are, Do) you ready?
- A. Yes. Let's go! What time _____ (is, does) our last class over?

Explain:

In the simple present tense questions, use “do” or “does” if the main verb is a “Do” verb. Otherwise, use “am”, “is”, or “are”. The strategy is to look for a “Do” verb..

Remember, a form of a “Be” verb can NEVER be used together with the base form of a “Do” verb as main verb of a sentence.

- In Sentence #A, “start” is a “Do” verb, so “does” is the correct answer for the subject “class”.
- In Sentence #B, there is not a “Do” verb, so use a “Be” verb. The answer should be “are” for the subject “you”.
- In Sentence #A, there is not a “Do” verb, so use a “Be” verb. The answer should be “is” for the subject “class”.

Review: ‘

The same two students (A and B) are talking about a book.

A. _____ (Is, Does) this new book helpful?

B. Yes. _____ (Are, Do) you want to borrow it?

A. No, thank you. I will buy one in the bookstore. How much _____ (is, does) it cost?

Answers:

does; Are; is

Is; Do; does

Lesson 4 do / does / did in questions

Choose the correct answers:

1. What type of cell phone _____ (you have, do you have, does you have)?
2. Where _____ (your brother and sister bought, did your brother and sister bought, did your brother and sister buy) their cell phones last year?
3. How often _____ (your family changes, do your family change, does your family change) cell phone plans?

Explain:

In asking questions with simple present and simple past tenses, a helping verb “do”, “does”, or “did” is required if the main verb is a “Do” verb. There are many “Do” verbs in English, including “eat, drink, drive, have, take, manage”, etc. After a helping verb, the main verb must be in its base form. The question order is:

Yes/No questions:

does/do/did + subject + base form of “Do” verb...

Information questions:

question word (what, when, how...) + does/do/did + subject + base form of “Do” verb...

- In Sentence #1, the “do” verb is “have”, and the subject is “you”. (...do you have...)
- In Sentence #2, the “do” verb is “buy”, and the subject is “your brother and sister”. (...did they buy...)
- In Sentence #3, the “do” verb is “change”, and the subject is “your family”. (...does your family change...)

Review:

1. There are many types of cell phones. Which type _____ (your teenage son likes, does your teenage son like, does your teenage son like)?
2. _____ (Do you share, Do you shares, You share) a family phone plan every year?
3. Why _____ (did you have, you had, did you had) two separate phone plans last year?

Answers:

do you have; did your brother and sister buy; does your family change

does your teenage son like; Do you share; did you have

Lesson 5 no helping verbs in questions

Choose the correct answers:

1. What _____ (did take place, took place) on campus yesterday?
2. Who _____ (did receive, received) the first prize in the competition?
3. Which college _____ (does host, hosts) the competition every year?

Explain:

If “who”, “what”, or “which” is the subject in a simple present or a simple past question, and the main verb is a “Do” verb, then do not include a helping verb “do”, “does”, or “did” in the question. A good approach is to answer the question. It is easier to see the subject in the answer.

- Answer to Question #1: A math competition took place on campus yesterday. (what = a math competition, subject)
- Answer to Question #2: Amanda received the first prize. (who = Amanda, subject)
- Answer to Question #3: Harper College hosts the competition every year. (which college = Harper College, subject)

Review:

1. Who just _____ (did announce, announced) the winners?
2. Which college _____ (does have, has) the most winners in this math competition?
3. What _____ (makes, do make) math so interesting?

Answers:

took place; received; hosts

announced; has; makes

Lesson 6 answers to negative yes/no questions

Choose the correct answers:

Two people (A and B) are having a conversation before leaving home.

A. It's snowing. Aren't you going to put on your coat?

B. _____ (Yes, I am; No, I am not; Yes, I am not; No, I am.) I don't want to catch cold. By the way, don't you like the new boots I bought you? You're not wearing them.

A. _____ (Yes, I do; No, I don't; Yes, I don't; No, I do.) I will wear them to our holiday party next week.

B. What holiday party?

A. Didn't you read the invitation card on the table?

B. _____ (Yes, I did; No, I didn't; Yes, I didn't; No, I did.) I haven't had time to go through the mail.

Explain:

A Yes/No question is a type of question that requires a yes or no answer. When the question itself is in the negative form, the person asking usually shows some degree of surprise or demands a confirmation. The answer to such a question can be confusing. One strategy is to answer in full instead of using the short version. Remember, do not answer "yes" with a negative verb or answer "no" with a positive verb.

- In Sentence #B, Yes, I am going to wear the coat. (Yes, I am.)
- In Sentence #A, Yes, I like the new boots. (Yes, I do.)
- In Sentence #B, No, I didn't read the invitation card. (No, I didn't.)

Review:

The same two people (A and B) returned home after the holiday party.

A. That was a fun party, but there weren't enough desserts.

B. Not enough? Didn't you eat two large pieces of cake?

A. _____ (Yes, I did; No, I didn't; Yes, I didn't; No, I did.) I gave one to Andy.

B. Oh, I see. Let's open this new bottle of wine.

A. Haven't you drunk enough for one day? I saw you drink at least three glasses at the party.

B. _____ (Yes, I have; No, I haven't; Yes, I haven't; No, I have), but it's a special day. Just one extra sip won't do any harm!

Answers:

Yes, I am; Yes, I do; No, I didn't

No, I didn't; Yes, I have

Lesson 7 verbs in tag questions

Choose the correct answers:

1. On some days every year, admission to many museums in Chicago is free, _____ (is it, isn't it, aren't they)?
2. You have not visited the new museum, _____ (have you, haven't you, didn't you)?
3. Your friends are going there tomorrow, _____ (are they, aren't they, don't they)?

Explain:

A tag question is used at the end of a statement to confirm the information mentioned. There is a comma between the statement and the tag question. When the statement is positive, the tag question should be negative. Vice Versa.

- In Sentence #1 and #3, the statements are positive, so the tag questions are negative.
- In Sentence #2, the statement is negative, so the tag question is positive.

The verbs in the two parts should use the same verb tense. The forms of the verbs should agree with the subjects.

- In Sentence #1, subject – admission (it); verb – is (simple present)
- In Sentence #2, subject – you; verb – have (present perfect helping verb)
- In Sentence #3, subject – your friends (they); verb – are (simple future helping verb)

Review:

1. There are many people in the museums on those free days, _____ (isn't there, aren't there, haven't there)?

2. Parking isn't easy, _____ (doesn't it, is it, isn't it)?
3. You spent almost an hour looking for a parking spot on a free day last year, _____ (don't you, haven't you, didn't you)?

Answers:

isn't it; have you; aren't they

aren't there; is it; didn't you

Lesson 8 do / does / did for emphasis

Choose the correct answers:

1. When some friends do not believe that twelve-year-old Ana babysits her younger brother Josh, she insists, "Yes, I _____ (do babysit, does babysit) my brother, three times a week!"
2. Can Ana do a good job? Josh _____ (does look, does looks) happier when Ana lets him eat as much ice cream as he wants.
3. One day when Josh had a stomachache after eating three bowls of ice cream, mom did not believe it, but Ana had to admit, "Yes, he _____ (did eat, did ate) three bowls."

Explain:

Three helping verbs "does, do, did" are used to correct a disbelief or to emphasize the truth of a statement. They are used only in affirmative simple present and simple past sentences. The main verb must be a "Do" verb and must be in its base form.

does/do/did + base form of a "Do" verb

- In Sentence #1, "do" + base form of main verb "babysit" – to correct her friends' disbelief
- In Sentence #2, "does" + base form of main verb "look" – to emphasize that Josh looks happy
- In Sentence #3, "did" + base form of main verb "eat" – to correct mom's disbelief

Review:

Choose answers that show emphasis:

Students sometimes have unusual excuses for not submitting homework assignments. Some of them may say, "My dog ate my homework". One time when I was in high school, my dog _____ (did eat, did ate) my homework. When I told my teacher about this, he did not believe me. I insisted, "I _____ (did do, did) my homework and I _____ (did finish, finished) it on time!"

Answers:

do babysit; does look; did eat

did eat; did do; did finish

Lesson 9 being quiet / quiet

Choose the correct answers:

1. Martha _____ (is usually, is usually being) quiet. She likes to sit in the room and read a book by herself.
2. However, Martha _____ (is, is being) loud today. She usually does not act this way.
3. Martha's elder brothers _____ (are, are being) childish these days. They usually make decisions after careful consideration, but this time they are acting on impulse.

Explain:

The verb “being” has a special function in explaining a temporary behavior that is opposite to a person’s usual way of doing things. The pattern is

subject + a form of “Be” + being + adjective

This expression cannot be used to describe physical conditions.

In describing a person’s usual personality or character, an adjective (without “being”) is sufficient. For example, I am helpful, and they are careless.

- In Sentence #1, the word “usually” and the example followed indicate Martha’s usual personality – quiet.
- In Sentence #2, the transition “however” and the explanation “usually does not act this way” indicate that being loud is a temporary behavior.
- In Sentence #3, the second part of the sentence indicates that being childish is not Martha’s elder brothers’ usual behavior.

Review:

1. I am not feeling well today. I _____ (am, am being) sick. (hint: This is a physical condition.)
2. I _____ (am usually, am usually being) very helpful to my family, but now I need to rest and recover from my illness first.
3. Thankfully, my sister _____ (is, is being) extremely caring today. She usually minds just her own business.

Answers:

is usually quite; is being; are being

am; am usually; is being

Lesson 10 a pair of scissors is / are

Choose the correct answers:

1. Scissors _____ (is, are) useful in art projects.
2. A pair of new scissors _____ (is, are) on the table for my new project.
3. Where _____ (is, are) my glasses? I need them to see better when I start my art project.

Explain:

Nouns like “scissors, glasses, pants, pajamas...” almost always appear in their plural forms, so treat them as “they”. The verbs after them should take the plural form as well. However, when the subject is “a pair of...”, the subject becomes “it”, so the singular form of the verb is correct.

- In sentence #1, scissors = they (They are...)
- In sentence #2, a pair of scissors = it (It is...)
- In sentence #3, glasses = they (Where are they...)

Review:

1. My pajamas _____ (is, are) really old. Maybe I can cut them to make something new.
2. My roommate's new pair of scissors _____ (cut, cuts) really well.
3. “My new scissors _____ (is, are) in the drawer. Help yourself!” She said. I love my roommate for her willingness to share.

Answers:

are; is; are

are; cuts; are

Lesson 11 verbs after "either...or..." and "neither...nor..."

Choose the correct answers:

1. Either a sandwich or two hot dogs _____ (is, are) enough for my lunch.
2. Neither my brother nor my sisters _____ (has, have) eaten lunch with me recently.
3. Neither my sisters nor my brother _____ (is, are) going to have lunch with me tomorrow.

Explain:

When a subject involves "either...or..." or "neither nor...", the part after "or" or "nor" determines the singular or plural form of the verb.

- In sentence #1, two hot dogs = they (They are...)
- In sentence #2, my sisters = they (They have...)
- In sentence #3, my brother = he (He is...)

Review:

1. Either one whole egg or two egg yolks _____ (is, are) good for the new recipe.
2. Either two egg yolks or one whole egg _____ (is, are) good for the new recipe.
3. Neither this new recipe nor the old ones _____ (has, have) turned out well.

Answers:

are; have; is

are; is; have

Lesson 12 everyone needs / need...

Choose the correct answers:

1. Everyone _____ (needs, need) to attend the team meeting this afternoon.
2. Someone _____ (is going to, are going to) introduce the new leadership structure at the meeting.
3. Something important _____ (has changed, have changed) in the company. All of the employees _____ (feels, feel) a bit nervous.

Explain:

When an indefinite pronoun acts as the subject of a sentence, understand it as “he”, “she”, or “it”. Therefore, a singular form of the verb should be used. However, when the subject is a plural noun, understand it as “they”, and the verb must take the plural form as well.

- In Sentence #1, everyone = he or she (He or she needs...)
- In Sentence #2, someone = he or she (He or she is...)
- In Sentence #3, something = it (It has...); all of the employees = they (They feel...)

Review:

When everyone _____ (does, do) his or her best, the company benefits. Employers _____ (manages, manage) the business well, and the employees _____ (is, are) willing to contribute. No one _____ (dodges, dodge) responsibilities.

Answers:

needs; is going to; has changed; feel

does; manage; are; dodges

Lesson 13 five miles is / are...

Choose the correct answers:

1. There are five miles from my home to my school. Five miles _____ (is, are) not too far.
2. It takes me ten minutes to drive from my home to my school. Ten minutes of driving _____ (is, are) not so bad.
3. Taking a cab may cost me about \$20 plus \$4 for the tip. \$24 _____ (sounds, sound) a lot of money for one trip.

Explain:

When a subject is a number associated with distance, time, money, or grade, the subject is considered one unit and can be understood as “it”; therefore, the verb needs to take a singular form.

- In Sentence #1, five miles = it (It is...)
- In Sentence #2, ten minutes = it (It is...)
- In Sentence #3, \$24 = it (It sounds...)
- However, “There are five miles from my home to school.” Here, five miles = they

Review:

Last week, I had a vocabulary quiz. Thirty minutes _____ (was, were) not long enough for me, but I received 90/100 on the quiz. 90 _____ (was, were) good enough for me! I am planning to buy a new English dictionary. It will cost \$60. Though it is expensive, I think \$60 _____ (is, are) worth the money. With the help of this dictionary, I may get 98/100 on my next quiz.

Answers:

is; is; sounds

was; was; is

Lesson 14 the tuition in most colleges has / have...

Choose the correct answers:

1. The tuition in most colleges _____ (has risen, have risen) in the last year.
2. The textbook, on amazon.com and in the bookstores, _____ (costs, cost) the same: \$75.
3. Professor Young, concerned with the high cost of the textbook and tuition, _____ (is going to write, are going to write) a textbook herself and give it to her students at no cost.

Explain:

Very often, something stands in the middle of a subject and a verb, such as a prepositional phrase, a participle phrase, an adjective clause. It is important to identify the subject before deciding on the verb. A good approach is to cross out the middle part.

- In Sentence #1, The tuition ~~in most colleges~~ has risen in the last year.
- In Sentence #2, This textbook, ~~on amazon.com and in the bookstores~~, costs the same: \$75.
- In Sentence #3, Professor Young, ~~concerned with the high cost of textbook and tuition~~, is going to write, her a textbook herself and give to her students at no cost.

Review:

A student who _____ (is experiencing, are experiencing) financial difficulties _____ (appreciates, appreciate) the free textbook from his professor. Everyone in Professor Young's classes _____ (receives, receive) the book. All her students, happy with the help, _____ (is, are) more motivated to learn.

Answers:

has risen; costs; is going to write

Is experiencing; appreciates; receives; are

Lesson 15 always naps / is always napping

Choose the correct answers:

1. My sister _____ (always naps, is always napping) on the couch near dinner time.
2. She _____ (constantly talks, is always talking) loudly on the phone until midnight.
3. When she is off the phone or couch, she _____ (always plays, is always playing) video games.

Explain:

While both choices are grammatically correct, there is a difference in tone. When an adverb such as “always”, “constantly”, or “forever” is used with the simple present or simple past tense, the sentence states a present or past fact or routine. When it is used with the present progressive or past progressive tense, it implies emotion in addition to a fact or routine.

with simple present or simple past:

fact or routine

with present progressive or past progressive:

fact or routine + emotion (usually negative as in complaints)

- In the above sentences, all of them state a fact AND imply that I don't like my sister's behaviors.

Review:

Having roommates helped me cut down my living cost; however, my first roommate in college _____ (always left, was always leaving) dirty dishes in the sink. He _____ (forever played, was forever playing) loud music, and he _____ (constantly invited, was constantly inviting) his friends over for parties. I realized that saving my money and saving my sanity could not always go hand in hand.

Answers:

Is always napping; is constantly talking; is always playing

was always leaving; was forever playing; was constantly inviting

Lesson 16 works / is working

Choose the correct answers:

1. My friend Miguel _____ (works, is working) for a consulting company.
2. He _____ (also helps, is also helping) out in his cousin's electronics store this month as the store is extremely busy during the holiday season.
3. For now, he _____ (lives, is living) with his cousin's family. Michael hopes to buy his own condo next year.
4. His cousin's family _____ (lives, is living) in Arlington Heights.

Explain:

Sometimes the two verb tenses are very close in meaning, but the present progressive implies a temporary situation, while the simple present indicates a more permanent fact.

- In Sentences #1 and #4, the work and living situations are more permanent.
- In Sentences #2 and #3, the work and living situations are temporary.

Review:

My kids' babysitter is on vacation this month, so my mom _____ (helps, is helping) me these days. She _____ (lives, is living) with my sister in another city, but now she _____ (lives, is living) with me to help me with my kids.

Answers:

works; is also helping; is living; lives

is helping; lives; is living

Lesson 17 verb tenses with "for"

Choose the correct answers:

1. My friends and I _____ (were, have been, had been) high school classmates for four years.
2. Now, we _____ (are, have been, had been) college classmates for one year. We all enjoy college.
3. We hope that we _____ (will work, work, have worked) together for at least two years after college graduation.

Explain:

“For” is used to indicate the duration of time. With present perfect, the action/situation started in the past, continues till the present, and may continue into the future. However, with simple past or simple future, it refers only to the past or future, not including the present.

- In Sentence #1, four years in the past
- In Sentence #2, We became college classmates one year ago, and we are still classmates now. We may still be college classmates next year.
- In Sentence #3, two years in the future

Review:

My neighbors _____ (lived, have lived, had lived) next door to me for ten years. Now they live in New York. Their house _____ (is, was, has been) on the market for six months. They hope to sell it soon. My old neighbors _____ (live, lived, have lived) in their new house in New York for half a year now.

Answers:

were; have been; will work

lived; has been; have lived

Lesson 18 is going to have / is having

Choose the correct answers:

Which sentences show more definite plans?

1. The class is going to have an end-of-the-semester celebration after the final exam tomorrow.
2. The class is having an end-of-the-semester celebration after the final exam tomorrow.
3. Everyone in our class is going to come to the party tomorrow.
4. Everyone in our class is coming to the party tomorrow.

Explain:

While all the sentences above are correct and mean planned future activities/schedules, present progressive implies that the plans are more certain to happen. Also, while using present progressive for the future, be sure to add a future time expression in order not to cause confusion with activities going on at the moment of speaking unless the context makes the future reference clear.

- In Sentences #2 and #4, the use of the present progressive tense shows that the plans are more definite.

Review:

Choose the answers that show more certain plans:

Some of our professors _____ (are going to come, are coming) to the celebration tomorrow. The college _____ (is going to let, is letting) us use an area in the cafeteria. A few classmates

_____ (are going to perform, are performing) the most popular dances from their home countries.

(Note: The last two sentences do not have a future time expression, but the context from the first sentence is clearly indicating that the time is "tomorrow".)

Answers:

Sentence #3 and Sentence #4

are coming; is letting; are performing

Lesson 19 verb tenses in future time clauses

Choose the correct answers:

1. When Josephine _____ (holds, will hold) her birthday party next month, she is going to invite eight closest friends.
2. She is going to send them the party invitation as soon as she _____ (reserves, is going to reserve) the restaurant next week.
3. While all the guests _____ (are enjoying, will be enjoying) the party on that special day, Josephine's brother will be flying in from New York. He hopes that he will be able to make it to the party before it _____ (ends, will end).

Explain:

A future time clause is a dependent clause about future, but the verb tense used is simple present or present progressive, not future. However, a future verb tense must be used in the independent clause. A good way to be certain of the right tenses is to **highlight** the future time clause and make sure that the verb inside uses the simple present or present progressive form.

- In Sentence #1, **When Josephine holds her birthday party next month...** (simple present verb in future time clause)
- In Sentence #2, ... **as soon as she reserves the restaurant next week.** (simple present verb in future time clause)
- In Sentence #3, **While all the guests are enjoying the party on that special day** (present progressive verb in future time clause)... **before it ends.** (simple present verb in future time clause)

Review:

My graduation ceremony will take place in May next year. Before the day _____ (arrives, will arrive), I will complete all the requirements for graduation. When I _____ (put on, am going to put on) my cap and gown that day, I will feel happy and proud. My family will be so proud of me while I _____ (am walking, will be walking) across the stage to receive my diploma.

Answers:

holds; reserves; are enjoying; ends

arrives; put on; am walking

Lesson 20 verb tenses with "when" clauses

Choose the correct answers:

1. When Susan came home at 5 pm yesterday, her mother _____ (cooked, was cooking, had cooked) dinner. Her mother had been watching TV.
2. When Susan came home at 5 pm yesterday, her mother _____ (cooked, was cooking, had cooked) dinner. It will be ready in five minutes.
3. When Susan came home at 5 pm yesterday, her mother _____ (cooked, was cooking, had cooked) dinner. They started eating right away.

Explain:

The dependent clauses in the above sentences are the same: when Susan came home at 5 pm yesterday (simple past tense).

The different tenses in the independent clauses show the different times of her mom's cooking. Pay close attention to the contexts. They will help you understand the sequence of actions.

- In Sentence #1, "her mom cooked" – simple past tense. This means that her mom started cooking after Susan arrived home. Before Susan arrived, her mom had been watching TV. (watch TV first, arrive second, cook third)
- In Sentence #2, "her mom was cooking" – past progressive tense. This means that her mom was in the middle of cooking when Susan arrived home. In other words, her mom had started cooking before Susan arrived, and she finished cooking five minutes after Susan arrived. (start cooking first, arrive second, finish cooking third)
- In Sentence #3, "her mom had cooked" – past perfect tense. This means that her mom had finished cooking by the time Susan arrived home. Therefore, they were able to start dinner right away. (finish cooking first, arrive second)

Review:

1. When Susan finished dinner, she _____ (washed, was washing, had washed) the dishes.
2. When Susan finished dinner, her mother _____ (still ate, was still eating, had already eaten). Her mother was a slow eater.
3. When Susan finished dinner, she _____ (told, was telling, had told) her mother about her day at college. "I'm glad it was a good day for you!" Her mom commented.

Answers:

cooked; was cooking; had cooked

washed; was still eating; had told

Lesson 21 had had

Choose the correct answers:

1. Sandia _____ (had, had been having, had had) a severe toothache for three days by the time she went to see her dentist.
2. She also _____ (had, had been having, had had) a worsening headache caused by the toothache. This was the one of the reasons she made the dental appointment.
3. When the dentist saw her, Sandia _____ (had not, did not have, had not had) anything to eat for two days.

Explain:

If you type “had had” in Microsoft Word, a red wiggly line will appear underneath “had had”, indicating a spelling error. However, a human brain is smarter than a computer, and “had had” is not a mistake!

When you describe a past action or situation before another past event, you use the past perfect tense with “had + past participle”. The past participle of the main verb “have” is “had”, so you get “had had” as the complete verb of the sentence.

1. In Sentence #1 and #2, had (helping verb) + had (past participle of the main verb “have”)
2. In Sentence #3, had (helping verb) + not + had (past participle of the main verb “have”)

Note: In these three sentences, the main verb “have” is a non-action verb and cannot be used in a progressive tense. Therefore, “had been having” is wrong.

Review:

The date for the final exam approached so quickly. I _____ (had not, did not have, had not had) a chance to study for it. Fortunately, when it was time to submit the final exam, I _____ (had, have had, had had) some time to review my answers. I hoped that I _____ (did, have done, had done) well.

Answers:

had had; had had; had not had

had not had; had had; had done

Lesson 22 had visited/ have visited/ will have visited

Choose the correct answers:

1. Maria visited New York for the first time in 2015 and the second time in 2017. By the time she moved to Chicago in 2018, she _____ (had visited, has visited, will have visited) New York two times.
2. Since Maria moved to Chicago in 2018, she _____ (had visited, has visited, will have visited) New York one more time. It was in 2019.
3. Maria is planning to visit New York again next year. By the end of next year, she _____ (had visited, have visited, will have visited) New York four times.

Explain:

These three verb tenses – past perfect, present perfect, future perfect – are not as confusing as many people might think. One of the best ways to understand their differences is to move the time periods from the past, to the present, and to the future. While these tenses may have other uses and meanings, here is an explanation of the above three sentences:

past perfect: from further past (or past's past) to past

present perfect: from past to present

future perfect: from past or present to future

- In Sentence #1, from 2015 and 2017 to 2018, two visits (past's past to past)
- In Sentence #2, from 2018 to now, one visit (past to present)
- In Sentence #3, from 2015 to next year, total four visits (past to future)

Review:

Maria _____ (had finished, has finished, will have finished) high school when she left her home country. She came to Harper College in 2020. Since then, she _____ (had finished, has finished, will have finished) twenty credit hours in the Early Childhood Education Certificate program. Maria plans to complete all the thirty credit hours required for the Certificate in the next year. She _____ (had obtained, has obtained, will have obtained) her Early Childhood Education Certificate by the end of next year.

Answers:

had visited; have visited; will have visited

had finished; has finished; will have obtained

Lesson 23 may be / maybe

Choose the correct answers:

1. It _____ (may be, maybe) snowy tomorrow.
2. It _____ (may be, maybe) snowing right now. Open the curtain to take a look!
3. _____ (May be, Maybe) it will snow tomorrow.

Explain:

“May be” and “maybe” sound the same, and they both mean “probably” or “perhaps”. However, they are totally different in their grammatical function in sentences.

“may be” (2 words): modal “may” + verb “be” = complete verb of the sentence

“may be + verb-ing (3 words): modal “may” + verb “be + verb-ing” = complete verb of the sentence

“maybe” (one word) is an adverb, and there must be a verb somewhere in the sentence.

- In Sentence #1, “may be” is the complete verb of the sentence, indicating future possibility.
- In Sentence #2, “may be snowing” is the complete verb of the sentence, indicating present possibility.
- In sentence #3, helping verb “will” + verb “snow” = complete verb (will snow). “Maybe” is an adverb. The whole sentence also indicates future possibility.
- Sentence #1 and #3 have a similar meaning.

Review:

1. _____ (May be, Maybe) the storm is coming earlier than expected.
2. The store _____ (may be, maybe) coming earlier than expected.
3. The rain _____ (may be, maybe) good for the lawn.

Answers:

may be; may be; Maybe

Maybe; may be; may be

Lesson 24 verbs after "would you mind ...?"

Choose the correct answers:

1. Would you mind _____ (send, to send, sending) me the address for the party tomorrow?
2. Would you mind _____ (not playing, don't playing, not play) loud music at the party?
3. Would you mind if my brother _____ (come, comes, came) with me to the party tomorrow?

Explain:

Question "Would you mind...?" means "Is it Ok to ...?", "Could you/I please...?", or "Will it cause you any inconvenience?" It has a present or future meaning, never past. The patterns are:

"Would you mind + verb-ing...?" You want the listener to do something.

- Sentence #1: You want the listener to send you the address.

"Would you mind + not + verb-ing ...?" You want the listener not to do something.

- Sentence #2: You want the listener not to play music so loud.

"Would you mind + if + subject + simple past verb...?" You want to get permission to do something or for another person to do something. (Use simple past verb to mean present or future.)

- Sentence #3: You are asking the listener to allow your younger brother to come to the party.

Notes: When the answer means "You can do it" or "I don't mind at all", you should say: No, not at all. / No, of course not. / I'd be happy to. / Go ahead / No problem. / Sure / Ok.

The opposite answers could be: Yes, I do mind. / Sorry, please don't.

Review:

1. Would you mind _____ (give, to give, giving) me a ride to the party tomorrow?
2. Would you mind if I _____ (turn, turning, turned) on the car radio?
3. Would you mind _____ (not using, don't use, not use) your phone while driving?

Answers:

sending; not playing; came

giving; turned; not using

Lesson 25 must / have to / had to

Choose the correct answers:

1. When most people visit a foreign country, they _____ (must, have to, had to) get a passport and a visa.
2. My cousin _____ (must, has to, had to) get his passport and visa before he came to study in the United States.
3. He also _____ (must, has to, had to) arrive here before the semester started.

Explain:

“Must”, “have to”, and “had to” all explain responsibilities, obligations, and necessities.

must, have to: They are for current or future situations. “Must” is stronger than “have to”.

had to: It is for past situations. It is the past tense of “must” and “have to”.

- In Sentence #1, it is about the current official law. Both “must” and “have to” are correct, but “must” has a stronger and more formal tone.
- In Sentence #2 and #3, the context shows that the actions occurred in the past, so the past tense “had to” is used.

Review:

1. To learn to drive in the United States, a person _____ (must, has to, had to) be at least sixteen years old.
2. I learned to drive for the first time in my mid-twenties. I _____ (must, have to, had to) go to a driving school in order to learn well.
3. I also _____ (must, have to, had to) borrow my friend's car to practice driving because I did

not have a car of my own then.

Answers:

must/have to; had to; had to

must/has to; had to; had to

Lesson 26 mustn't / don't have to

Choose the correct answers:

1. People under twenty-one years old _____ (mustn't, don't have to, didn't have to) drink alcohol, but they can drink juice
2. People at and over twenty-one years old _____ (mustn't, don't have to, didn't have to) drink alcohol. They can choose juice.
3. At twenty-one, I am allowed to drink alcohol, but I _____ (mustn't, don't have to, didn't have to) drink too much because I will need to drive afterwards.

Explain:

Even though “must” and “have/has to” have similar meanings in the positive forms, they are very different in negative sentences.

mustn't: not allowed. It shows clear prohibition, no choice.

don't/doesn't/didn't have to: no need, not necessary. It implies a choice.

- In Sentence #1 and #3, there is no choice because of the law.
- In Sentence #2, people can choose to drink alcohol or not to drink it. It is not necessary to drink alcohol if they do not want to.

Review:

1. An elementary school pupil _____ (mustn't, doesn't have to, didn't have to) stay home alone on a school holiday.
2. A high school student _____ (mustn't, doesn't have to, didn't have to) stay home alone on a school holiday. He or she may choose to relax at home or visit friends.
3. As a college student, my schedule is flexible. For example, I _____ (mustn't, don't have to,

didn't have to) get up early last Monday because my classes are on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Answers:

mustn't; don't have to; mustn't

mustn't; doesn't have to; didn't have to

Lesson 27 had better

Choose the correct answers:

Walking at night in some parts of the city could be very dangerous. Here are some warnings from my friends:

1. You _____ (have better finish, had better finish, had better to finish) your business during the day.
2. You _____ (have not better walk, had not better walk, had better not walk) alone at night.
3. You _____ (have better staying, had better to stay, had better stay) in a group.

Explain:

“Had better” is used to give warnings or strong advice. It implies that something serious might happen if the advice is not followed. Below are the rules of how to use “had better”:

- Even though “had” is in the past tense, “had better” means present or future.
 - It is followed by a base verb: **had better + base verb**
 - The negative is **had better + not + base verb**
 - It is almost always used in conversations, not in formal writing.
 - Its contraction form such as “You’d better” is more commonly used. Sometimes, “d” is even dropped as in “You better...”
- In Sentence #1, had better + base verb “finish” (positive)
 - In Sentence #2, had better + not + base verb “walk” (negative)
 - In Sentence #3, had better + base verb “stay” (positive)

Review:

This is the third time in a week when Lucas has a severe migraine headache. He _____ (have better take, had better take, 'd better to take) take a day off work. He _____ (had better call, would better to call, had better calling) his doctor. Most importantly, he _____ (had not better ignore, 'd better not ignore, 'd better not ignoring) this health issue anymore.

Answers:

had better finish; had better not walk; had better stay

had better take; had better call; 'd better not ignore

Lesson 28 would / used to

Choose the correct answers:

1. When my sister and I were little, we _____ (would, used to) play hide-and-seek after school.
2. We _____ (would, used to) live close to our grandparents.
3. Our grandparents _____ (would, used to) have a house with a huge yard.

Explain:

Would + base verb: habitual past actions

used to + base verb: habitual past actions and past situations

To summarize, for habitual past actions, both can be used. However, for past situations, only “used to” is correct.

- In Sentence #1, both answers are correct because both refer to a past action – play
- In Sentence #2 and #3, only “used to” is correct because the sentences are about past situations – live and have

Review:

In my childhood,

1. I _____ (would, used to) have long hair.
2. My parents _____ (would, used to) be very busy at their work.
3. My sister and I _____ (would, used to) finish homework assignments as soon as we got home from school.

Answers:

would/used; used to; used to

used to; used to; would/used to

Lesson 29 should have / should has / should of

Choose the correct answers:

1. Michael _____ (should have driven, should has driven, should of driven) more slowly yesterday. Now he has to pay a \$120 fine for speeding.
2. He _____ (shouldn't have gotten, shouldn't had gotten, shouldn't of gotten) up so late.
3. He _____ (could have left, could has left, could of left) home a bit earlier.

Explain:

should/could/might/may + have + past participle: a regret or blame for things that already happened in the past.

After the modal, “have” is correct, not “has” or “had”, regardless of the subject.

In conversations, “have” is often pronounced like “of”, so it may sound like “should of driven, shouldn't of gotten”, or “could of left”. However, “have” is the correct word. Never use “of”.

- In Sentence #1, should + have + driven (past participle of the main verb “drive”) to show strong blame
- In Sentence #2, should + not + have + gotten (past participle of the main verb “get”) to show strong blame
- In Sentence #3, could + have + left (past participle of the main verb “leave”) to show mild blame

Review:

1. When Michael arrived at the class, he _____ (should have explained, should had explained, should of explained) the reason for being late, but he did not.
2. He _____ (shouldn't has kept, shouldn't of kept, shouldn't have kept) quiet about his reason for being late.
3. His classmates _____ (might have asked, might had asked, might of asked) him after class, but they had to rush to the next class.

Answers:

should have driven; shouldn't have gotten; could have left

should have explained; shouldn't have kept; might have asked

Lesson 30 could not speak / could not have spoken

Choose the correct answers:

1. When Diana arrived in the United States six months ago, she _____ (could not speak, could not have spoken) English well, so her friends helped her register for an English as a Second Language class.
2. She _____ (could not have written, could not write) that long essay last semester because it was an assignment from an English 101 course.
3. She _____ (could not know, could not have known) how to write this essay without taking the course. It must have been written by another student with the same name.

Explain:

could not + base verb:

unable to do something in the past (inability) or not allowed to do something in the past (without permission)

could not + have + past participle:

impossible that something happened in past (impossibility)

- In Sentence #1, past inability: Diana was not able to speak English well.
- In Sentence #2, past impossibility: It was impossible that she was the author because the essay assignment was from another class.
- In Sentence #3: past impossibility: It was impossible for her to know how to write this essay.

Review:

1. When my daughter Jenny was five years old, I hired my neighbor Magdalena as a babysitter because Jenny _____ (could not stay, could not have stayed) home alone.
2. Magdalena was a great babysitter. She not only kept Jenny entertained but also taught me how to cook Polish meals. I _____ (could not hire, could not have hired) a better helper.
3. Jenny was able to speak a few sentences in Polish. She _____ (could not learn, could not have learned) it from anyone else but Magdalena.

Answers:

could not speak; could not have written; could not have known

could not stay; could not have hired; could not have learned

Lesson 31 different meanings of “may/might/could + have + past participle”

Choose the correct answers:

What do the underlined verbs mean, blame or speculation?

Fact: The professor and the classmates did not know why Alex was absent for three days last week.

1. Alex might have notified the professor. (blame or speculation?)
2. He could have been sick. (blame or speculation?)
3. Something may have happened to him. (blame or speculation?)

Explain:

The structure “may/might/could + have + past participle” is usually used in two past situations:

1. **Gently blame someone or express regret in oneself for a past situation/action**
2. **Speculate with about 50% certainty what caused that past situation/action**

The best approach is to understand the context, like the fact listed above.

- In Sentence #1, gently blaming Alex for not notifying the professor.
- In Sentence #2, speculating with 50% certainty that he was sick.
- In Sentence #3, speculating with 50% certainty that something happened to him.

Review:

Alex's story continues.

1. As Alex's friend, I may have called him last week. (blame/regret or speculation?)
2. He might have sent me a text message. (blame or speculation?)
3. He could have felt overwhelmed by the amount of homework and wanted a break. (blame or speculation?)

Answers:

blame; speculation; speculation

blame/regret; blame; speculation

Lesson 32 different meanings of "must"

Choose the correct answers:

What do the underlined verbs mean, obligation or speculation?

1. In some cultures, a bride must wear something red. (obligation or speculation?)
2. In these cultures, the red color must mean good fortune. (obligation or speculation?)
3. In some other cultures, the wedding celebration must include everyone in town. (obligation or speculation?)
4. Such a long celebration must be tiring for the bride's and the groom's families (obligation or speculation?)

Explain:

The structure “must + base verb” can be used in two situations. Both refers to present or future situations.

1. **obligation/responsibility/necessity.**
2. **speculation/possibility/guessing, with a high degree of certainty, but not 100% sure.**
It is also a way to soften the tone of a personal belief.

The context is the only way to determine which meaning the word “must” refers to.

- In Sentence #1, it is the responsibility/obligation of the bride to wear something red. It is necessary for her to do so.
- In Sentence #3, it is the responsibility/obligation of the bride's and the groom's families to invite everyone in town to the celebration. It is necessary for them to do so.
- In Sentence #2, it is highly possible that the red color means good luck.
- In Sentence #4, it is highly possible that the families are very tired.

Review:

What do the underlined verbs mean?

a. obligation/responsibility/necessity

b. speculation/possibility/guessing

1. The new couple must kneel down to serve hot tea to their parents.
2. That must be a tradition from some East Asian countries.
3. The bride's parents must prepare dowry for their daughter's marriage.
4. The preparation of the dowry must add joy or burden to most families.

Answers:

obligation; speculation; obligation; speculation

a; b; a; b

Lesson 33 different meanings of "should"

Choose the correct answers:

What do the underlined verbs mean, advice or speculation?

1. Your sister's birthday is coming. You should buy her a present. (advice or speculation?)
2. How about an Amazon gift card? It should be the best and most "flexible" present because of all the products Amazon sells. (advice or speculation?)
3. She should be very appreciative when you give the gift card to her. (advice or speculation?)

Explain:

The modal "should" can mean:

1. **advice**
2. **speculation/possibility/guessing**

Both meanings refer to present or future. The best approach is to examine and understand the contexts.

- In Sentence #1, giving advice about buying a gift.
- In Sentence #2, speculating that an Amazon gift card is the best.
- In Sentence #3, speculating that the sister will appreciate the gift card.

Review:

What do the underlined verbs mean, advice or speculation?

When we have a tight budget, we should always spend money on the most important necessities like food and housing. Even so, an occasional indulgence such as going to a Chicago Symphony Orchestra concert should make everyone happy. When our finances improve, we should gradually spend more on nonessential things such as entertainment and vacations.

Answers:

advice; speculation; speculation

advice; speculation; advice

Lesson 34 different meanings of "could"

Choose the correct answers:

Which meaning and time frame does each "could + verb" refer to in the following sentences?

- a. speculation/possibility/guessing, present or future
- b. polite request, present or future
- c. ability, past
- d. permission, past

1. Could you close the windows at bedtime? It could rain in the middle of the night.
2. Listen! Who could be knocking at the door at this hour?
3. I could play the violin well at age 10, but I could not play it while someone was sleeping.

Explain:

The modal "could" has all the above meanings and time references.

1. **speculation/possibility/guessing, present or future**
2. **polite request, present or future**
3. **ability, past**
4. **permission, past**

The best way to understand the sentences is to look at the contexts. This modal also provides some excellent examples in which a word has a past "appearance" but with a present or future meaning.

- In Sentence #1, a polite request to close the windows in the near future; a speculation of rain in the near future
- In Sentence #2, a speculation of who is knocking right now
- In Sentence #3, an ability to play the violin in the past, but with no permission to do so while someone was sleeping.

Review:

Which meaning and time frame do the underlined verbs refer to?

a. speculation/possibility/guessing, present or future

b. polite request, present or future

c. ability, past

d. permission, past

1. It's so cold today. The temperature could be as low as -20F outside. It could get colder tomorrow. Could you check the heating system in the house?
2. My grandfather developed arthritis in his 40s and could participate in a marathon race only with his doctor's permission. However, in his younger days, he could run like an Olympic athlete.

Answers:

b, a; a; c; d

a, a, b; d; c

Lesson 35 verb order in compound sentences with "nor"

Choose the correct answers:

1. My brother is sick today. He is not in school, _____ (nor he is, nor he is not, nor is he) at work.
2. He has not eaten anything, _____ (nor he has not drunk, nor has he drunk, nor he drank) anything since this morning.
3. Fortunately, his supervisor will not ask him to work tomorrow, _____ (she will not deduct, nor she will deduct, nor will she deduct) his pay for being absent.

Explain:

When “nor” is used as a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence, it means “and not”. Do not use another “not” or “no”. In the second part of the sentence, follow the patterns below:

When the main verb is a “Be” verb:

nor + a form of “Be” + subject

When the main verb is a “Do” verb:

nor + helping verb + subject + main verb

- In Sentence #1, nor + is (a form of “Be”) + he (subject) [simple present tense]
- In Sentence #2, nor + has (helping verb) + he (subject) + drunk (past participle of the main verb “drink”) [present perfect tense]
- In Sentence #3, nor + will (helping verb) + she (subject) + deduct (base form of main verb) [simple future tense]

Review:

1. My sister did not buy any clothes in the mall yesterday, _____ (she nor bought, nor did she buy) any shoes.
2. She has not spent too much money on herself recently, _____ (nor has she spent, nor she has not spent) too much on her family.
3. She is not going to buy useless things, _____ (she is not going to overspend, nor is she going to overspend) on other things until she saves enough for a house.

Answers:

nor is he; nor has he drunk; nor will she deduct

nor did she buy; nor has she spent; nor is she going to overspend

Lesson 36 verb order in not only / hardly ever / never

Choose the correct answers:

1. Not only _____ (is Juan receiving, Juan is receiving) his college degree next week, but he has also obtained his first job offer!
2. No sooner _____ (did he hear, he heard) the good news than he told his family.
3. Never _____ (has everyone been, everyone has been) so happy for him.

Explain:

When a sentence starts with “not only, no sooner, never, hardly ever, never, rarely, not until”, the verb order should be changed. Such sentences usually indicate emphasis. Follow the patterns below:

When the main verb is a “Be” verb:

one of these expressions + a form of “Be” + subject

When the main verb is a “Do” verb:

one of these expressions + helping verb + subject + main verb

- In Sentence #1, Not only + is (helping verb) + she (subject) + receiving (present participle form of main verb “receive”) [present progressive tense]
- In Sentence #2, No sooner + did (helping verb) + she (subject) + hear (base form of main verb “hear”) [simple past tense]
- In Sentence #3, Never + has (helping verb) + everyone (subject) + been (past participle of main verb “be”) [present perfect tense]

Review:

Not only _____ (is Eunsoo, Eunsoo is) my neighbor, she is also my best friend. Never _____ (has she failed, she has failed) to help me in my sickness. She is always on time to bring me food and medicine. Rarely _____ (does she show, she shows) up late.

Answers:

is Juan receiving; did he hear; has everyone been

is Eunsoo; has she failed; does she show

Lesson 37 verb order in embedded questions

Choose the correct answers:

1. Do you know what time _____ (do most stores open, most stores open) on Black Friday?
2. I need a new TV. I would like to know how low _____ (the prices will go, will the prices go) on Black Friday.
3. I am not sure if _____ (I should buy, should I buy) it online or in the store.

Explain:

When a question is included in a sentence or another question, the first question is called an embedded question. It should not follow the usual question order. Follow the patterns below:

When the embedded question is an information question:

question word (when, where, who...) + subject + complete verb

When the embedded question is a yes/no question:

if/whether + subject + complete verb

- In Sentence #1, what time (question word) + most stores (subject) + open (complete verb)
- In Sentence #2, how low (question word) + the prices (subject) + will go (complete verb)
- In Sentence #3, if + I (subject) + should buy (complete verb)

Review:

I just bought my TV! Do you know how much _____ (did I save, I saved) by buying it on Black Friday? The line had been so long that I wondered whether _____ (I would be lucky, would I be lucky) enough to get it. Of course, after getting the TV, I realized how tired _____ (I was, was I).

Answers:

most stores open; the prices will go; I should buy

I saved; I would be lucky; I was

Lesson 38 get, have, let, make

Choose the correct answers:

1. When we were little, our grandmother had a great way to get us _____ (do, to do, doing) household chores willingly.
2. Once, she had my elder sister _____ (vacuum, to vacuum, vacuuming) the carpet and made my elder brother _____ (do, to do, doing) the dishes.
3. She always let me _____ (choose, to choose, choosing) what to do. I was her favorite!

Explain:

The meanings of these four words are not exactly the same, but they are similar: want/allow somebody to do something. Here are their patterns:

get + a person + to + base verb

have + a person + base verb

let + a person + base verb

make + a person + base verb

If a pronoun is used to replace the person, use the object pronoun such as “us, me, him, them...”

“To” is used with “get”, but not with “have, make, let”. “Verb-ing” is never used.

- In Sentence #1, get + us (people) + to + do (base verb)
- In Sentence #2, had + my elder sister (person) + vacuum (base verb); made + my elder brother (person) + do (base verb)
- In Sentence #3, let + me (person) + choose (base verb)

Review:

Why was our grandmother able to have us _____ (do, to do, doing) the chores willingly? She always set a time limit. If we finished the chores within the time limit, she let us _____ (pick, to pick, picking) a toy or _____ (have, to have, having) more TV time. She made us _____ (believe, to believe, believing) that our work should be rewarded. That was how she got us _____ (help, to help, helping) around the house!

Answers:

to do; vacuum; do; choose

do; pick; have; believe; to help

Lesson 39 have photos taken / take photos

Choose the correct answers:

1. In the past, many people went to a photo studio to _____ (have their photos taken, take their photos).
2. Later, they had their own analogue camera and _____ (took photos, had their friend take photos) of them.
3. Now, most people have a smart phone. They can _____ (take their own photos, have their photos taken) called selfies.

Explain:

have a person do something = have something done (by a person)

In the left part, “do” is the base verb and can be replaced by other base verbs such as “take, cook, drive...”

In the right part, “done” is the past participle and can be replaced by other past participles such as “taken, cooked, driven...”

In both cases, the subject is not the one doing the action.

- In Sentence #1, people went to a photo studio and asked a photographer to take photos of them. They could not take their own photos.

have their photos taken = have a photographer take their photos

- In Sentence #2, people asked a friend to use an analogue camera and take photos of them. In most cases, they could not take photos of themselves with an analogue camera.

had their friend take photos = had their photos taken by their friend

- In Sentence #3, now people can use a smart phone to take photos (selfies) of themselves. They do not need to ask another person to do it.

Review:

1. My sister is talented in doing things by herself. With a mirror and some tools, she is able to - _____ (cut her own hair, have her hair cut). Some of her friends come to her to _____ (have their hair cut, cut their hair). This means that they _____ (have my sister cut, cut) their hair.
2. The expression “_____” (have a haircut, cut my hair, have my sister cut my hair) usually can mean a haircut by another person or by oneself.

Answers:

have their photos taken; had their friend take photos; take their own photos

cut her own hair; have their hair cut; have my sister cut; have a haircut

Lesson 40 advise to walk / advise walking

Choose the correct answers:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises adults _____ (walk, to walk, walking) briskly for 150 minutes each week.
2. CDC also advises them _____ (run, to run, running) for 75 minutes every week for a healthy body.
3. For greater health benefits, CDC advises _____ (exercise, to exercise, exercising) longer than the recommended number of minutes.

(<https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adults/index.htm>)

Explain:

The verb “advise” is often used in two ways:

advise + a person + to + base verb

advise + verb-ing

Here, “to + base verb” is called an infinitive. “Verb-ing” is called a gerund.

- In Sentence #1, advises + adults (people) + to + walk (base verb)
- In Sentence #2, advises + them (people) + to + run (base verb)
- In Sentence #3, advises + exercising (verb-ing)

Review:

Some professional trainers advise Olympic long-distance runners _____ (run, to run, running) over 100 miles per week. They also advise _____ (do, to do, doing) vigorous strength training. However, they do not advise non-athletes _____ (exercise, to exercise, exercising) that much.

Answers:

to walk; to run; exercising

to run; doing; to exercise

Lesson 41 decide to apply / postpone applying

Choose the correct answers:

1. Jorge has decided _____ (to apply, applying) for a scholarship.
2. He is going to postpone _____ (to apply, applying) for a part-time job.
3. When he finishes _____ (to apply, applying) for the scholarship next week, he is going to check the course offerings at the college.

Explain:

Some verbs and expressions are followed by **“verb-ing”, called a gerund**.

Some more examples in this category: avoid walking alone, enjoy reading books, suggest going to a movie theater...

Some verbs and expressions are followed by **“to + base verb”, called an infinitive**.

Some more examples in this category: volunteer to help the neighbor, plan to visit a museum; fail to arrive on time...

In most cases, the main verb (decide, postpone, finish, avoid, enjoy, suggest, volunteer, plan, fail...) determines whether to use an infinitive or a gerund after it.

- In Sentence #1, has decided + to + apply (base verb) [infinitive]
- In Sentence #2, is going to postpone + applying (verb-ing) [gerund]
- In Sentence #3, finishes + applying (verb-ing) [gerund]

Review:

My friends have offered _____ (to help, helping) me babysit my young children. Some of them have promised _____ (to babysit, babysitting) them three days a week. I appreciate their kindness, but I enjoy _____ (to spend, spending) time with my children. I have decided _____ (to postpone, postponing) my work until they are old enough to go to school.

Answers:

to apply; applying; applying

to help; to babysit; spending; to postpone

Lesson 42 used to live / be used to living

Choose the correct answers:

1. Almer and Angie _____ (used to live, used to living) in a warm country, but now they are going to spend their first winter in Chicago.
2. Paula has been living in Chicago for six years. Now she has become _____ (used to drive, used to driving) in snow.
3. How long does it usually take most people to grow _____ (used to live, used to living) in a totally different climate?

Explain:

used to + base verb:

It means a regular activity or situation in the past and is no longer true in the present. It is used only in the past tense.

be/get/become/grow + used to + verb-ing:

It means “adapt to”. It can be used in different tenses. In this sense, “used to ” can be replaced by “accustomed to”.

Besides the difference in meaning, another way to tell them apart is to check the other parts surrounding “used”. In the first case, “used” is the only verb followed by “to + base verb”. In the second case, there is a verb before “used” and “to + verb-ing” follows it.

- In Sentence #1, Alma and Angie lived in a warm country in the past, but they no longer live there.
- In Sentence #2, Paula has adapted herself to driving in snow. Now it is not a problem for her to drive in snow.
- In Sentence #3, How long does it take people to adapt to living in a different climate? How long does it take people to feel comfortable living in a different climate?

Review:

1. I never _____ (used to eat, used to eating) cheese in my country, so I will never get _____ (used to eat, used to eating) it even though I am now living in the United States.
2. My brother is a fast learner. In short six months, he has become _____ (used to communicate, used to communicating) naturally in English.
3. I _____ (used to take, used to taking) the bus to school. After I got my driver's license, I began to drive myself. I felt a bit nervous in the beginning, but now I am _____ (used, to drive, used to driving).

Answers:

used to live; used to driving; used to living

used to eat; used to eating; used to communicating; used to take; used to driving

Lesson 43 commit to work / commit to working

Choose the correct answers:

1. Sachiko is a college student. She is devoted _____ (to work, to working) hard in all her courses.
2. She is also dedicated _____ (to look after, to looking after) her sick father.
3. Therefore, in addition _____ (to attend, to attending) college, she is also the caregiver of her father.

Explain:

In most cases, “to” is followed by a base form of verb to form an infinitive. However, in some expressions, verb-ing (a gerund) is used after “to”. In the latter case, “to” is a preposition. Other examples include:

look forward to, be/get/become/grow used to, be/get/become/grow accustomed to, be devoted to, devote oneself to, commit oneself to, dedicate oneself to, be opposed to, oppose to, object to...

- in Sentence #1, “be devoted to + verb-ing”: She is devoted to working...
- in Sentence #2, “be dedicated to + verb-ing”: She is also dedicated to looking...
- in Sentence #3, “in addition to + verb-ing”: In addition to attending college...

Review:

Sachiko’s father wants to get stronger. He commits himself _____ (to walk, to walking) two hours

every day. Sachiko opposes _____ (to leave, to leaving) her father alone for so long, but he looks forward _____ (to live, to living) independently.

Answers:

to working; to looking; to attending

to walking; to leaving; to living

Lesson 44 verbs after “suggest” and “recommend”

Choose the correct answers:

1. The academic advisor suggested that Ona _____ (takes, take, will take) a math class next semester.
2. He also recommended _____ (her to register, registering, register) as soon as possible.
3. All of Ona’s friends suggested _____ (she does not take, not taking, not to take) more than four courses.
4. The friends also recommended that she _____ (does not work, not work, not working) full time.

Explain:

Nouns, pronouns, verbs, and clauses can follow these two verbs to explain the specific suggestion or recommendation. Follow the patterns below for verbs and clauses:

1. **suggest/recommend + verb-ing**
2. **suggest/recommend + that + subject + base verb (Use base verb regardless of the subject or verb tense)**
3. **suggest/recommend + that + subject + should + base verb (This option is less common.)**

The structure “suggest/recommend + a person + to + base verb” is not used.

- In Sentence #1: suggested + that + Ona (subject) + register (base verb)
- In Sentence #2, recommended + registering (verb-ing)
- In Sentence #3, suggested + not + taking (verb-ing) [negative]
- In Sentence #4, recommended + that + she (subject) + not + work (base verb) [negative]

Review:

Mike's professor has strongly suggested that he _____ (do, does, doing) the extra-credit project to boost his grade. She has also recommended _____ (use, to use, using) the online learning materials to prepare for the final exam. Mike's parents have a different suggestion. They suggest that he _____ (not play, do not play, not playing) computer games any more.

Answers:

take; registering; not taking; not work

do; using; not play

Lesson 45 verbs after "remember"

Choose the correct answers:

1. Mei and Johnny have been married for ten years. Johnny still remembers _____ (to carry, carrying) Mei over the threshold of their new home on their wedding day.
2. Mei also remembers _____ (to put, putting) salt instead of sugar in the first dessert she made for Johnny.
3. Since that incident, Mei has always remembered _____ (to place, placing) the sugar and the salt on separate shelves.

Explain:

The verb "remember" can be followed by both an infinitive (to + base verb) and a gerund (verb-ing), with very different meanings.

remember + to + base verb (infinitive): remember before the action

remember + verb-ing (gerund): remember after the action; the action was already performed in the past.

- In Sentence #1, remember + gerund. Johnny carried Mei over the threshold. It happened, and Johnny still remembers that. "Remembering" occurs after "carrying".
- In Sentence #2, remember + gerund. Mei put salt instead of sugar in the dessert. It happened, and Mei still remembers that incident. "Remembering" occurs after "putting".
- In Sentence #3, remember + infinitive. When Mei places the salt and the sugar, she reminds herself to put them on different shelves. "Remembering" occurs before "placing".

Review:

When Johnny left home in the morning, Mei said, "Remember _____ (to stop, stopping) by the post office. When Johnny came back home after work, he could not find the stamps he had brought. "Strange! I remember _____ (to buy, buying) them and _____ (to put, putting) them in my wallet. Why aren't they there now?"

Answers:

carrying; putting; to place

to stop; buying; putting

Lesson 46 verbs after "forget"

Choose the correct answers:

1. When people get old, they often forget _____ (to do, doing) things they have planned. For example, when my grandmother goes shopping, she frequently forgets _____ (to buy, buying) one or two items.
2. Meanwhile, old people tend to say the same things over and over. My grandmother often forgets _____ (to tell, telling) me the same stories of her youth, but I listen to her patiently every time.

Explain:

The verb "forget" can be followed by both an infinitive (to + base verb) and a gerund (verb-ing), with very different meanings.

forget + to + base verb (infinitive): forget before the action; the action not performed

forget + verb-ing (gerund): forget after the action; the action performed but forgotten

- In Sentence #1, forget + infinitive. Old people often forget their plans. In my grandmother's case, she does not buy a few items because she forgets about them. "Forgetting" occurs before "doing" and "buying".
- In Sentence #2, forget + gerund. My grandmother has repeated the same stories because she forgets that she has told me many times. "Forgetting" occurs after "telling".

Review:

While I was clearing my closet one day, I saw my green sweater. I was stunned and upset. I had just brought another green sweater! I had forgotten _____ (to buy, buying) it a year before and

_____ (to put, putting) it in the closet. Now I have two green sweaters with the same style. My sister, on the other hand, was pleased. "Don't forget _____ (to share, sharing) one of your sweaters when I go to the birthday party next week. I love that color and style!" She said excitedly.

Answers:

to do; to buy; telling

buying; putting; to share

Lesson 47 verbs after "try"

Choose the correct answers:

1. Most students always try _____ (to do, doing) their best in all the classes.
2. For students with small children, they try _____ (to take care of, taking care of) their children and their study at the same time.
3. When they have aging parents and young children, some students have a hard time. Zakia is trying _____ (to come, coming) up some effective solutions. She has tried _____ (to find, finding) a babysitter for her children. She has also tried _____ (to hire, hiring) a home caregiver for her parents. However, nothing has worked well so far. She is considering quitting school and staying home full time.

Explain:

The verb “try” can be followed by both an infinitive (to + base verb) and a gerund (verb-ing), with very different meanings.

try + to + base verb (infinitive): make an effort, do one’s best

try + verb-ing (gerund): experiment with a plan to see if it works.

- In Sentence #1, try + infinitive. Students make an effort to do well in their classes.
- In Sentence #2, try + infinitive. Students make an effort to take care of their children and study.
- In Sentence #3, try + gerund. Zakia has experimented two plans to see which works better: hiring a babysitter or a home caregiver.

Review:

Baking is my way to relax after a busy day at work. Yesterday, I tried _____ (to bake, baking) a

new cake to surprise my family. I wanted it to be less sweet, so I tried _____ (to add, adding) half the required amount of sugar. The cake did not turn out as yummy as I had hoped. I did not give up but baked the second one. This time I tried _____ (use, using) half the required amount of sugar plus a half cup of chopped dates. The result was fantastic!

Answers:

to do; to take care of; to come; finding; hiring

to bake; adding; using

Lesson 48 verbs after "regret"

Choose the correct answers:

1. My manager announced to the employees yesterday, "I regret _____ (to inform, informing) you that the company is going to let go ten of the workers."
2. I told the news to my family after work, "I regret _____ (to tell, telling) you that I might be one of the employees to lose the job."
3. I did not know the company had not been performing well. I regret _____ (to turn down, turning down) the job offer from another company six months ago.

Explain:

The verb "regret" can be followed by "to + base verb" (an infinitive) or "verb-ing" (a gerund), with very different meanings.

regret + to + base verb (infinitive):

It is usually used to announce bad news. It is the same as "I am sorry to tell you..."

regret + verb-ing (gerund):

It is usually used to show regret about things that have already happened.

- In Sentence #1, the manager is sorry to tell the employees the bad news.
- In Sentence #2, I am sorry to tell my family the bad news.
- In Sentence #3, I turned down a job offer from another company six months ago. It already happened. Now I am sorry that I turned it down.

Review:

In our lives, we often reflect on past experiences and feel sorry about what has already happened. Once while visiting my aunt, I broke her favorite dish. I had to tell her, "I regret _____ (to tell, telling) you that I just broke this plate." I regret _____ (to run, running) around the dining table with my cousin for fun. My aunt was very gracious. She comforted me, "It's OK. Don't worry!" I think that she regretted _____ (to place, placing) the plate near the edge of the table.

Answers:

to inform; to tell; turning down

to tell; running; placing

Lesson 49 hope / wish

Choose the correct answers:

Facts: It has been snowing since last night, and I have to drive to school half an hour later.

1. I _____ (hope, wish) it were not snowing.
2. I _____ (hope, wish) it had not snowed at all last night.
3. I _____ (hope, wish) the snow will stop before I leave home.

Explain:

The verb “hope” expresses a desire for something that is possible. The clause after “hope” uses a present or future tense verb.

The verb “wish” expresses a desire to change a real situation to an unreal, imagined, or wishful one. The desire is not possible to become a reality. The clause after “wish” does not use a present or future tense verb. Instead, a simple past verb is used to show a desire opposite to the present reality, and a past perfect verb is used to show a desire opposite to the past reality.

hope + (optional “that”) + subject + verb in present or future tense

wish + (optional “that”) + subject + verb in simple past or past perfect

- In Sentence #1, the desire cannot come true because it is opposite to the current reality: It is snowing now. Therefore, “wish” is the correct answer. The verb in the clause is in the simple past tense.
- In Sentence #2, the desire cannot come true because it is opposite to the past reality: I snowed last night. Therefore, “wish” is the correct answer. The verb in the clause uses the past perfect tense.
- In Sentence #3, it is possible for the desire to come true: It is possible that the snow will stop. Therefore, “hope” is the correct answer. The verb in the clause is in the future tense.

Review:

Fact: Carl does not have a car.

1. Carl _____ (hopes, wishes) that he had a car.
2. He _____ (hopes, wishes) that he can buy one in a few years. He has been saving money for it.
3. He _____ (hopes, wishes) that he had bought a car last year.

Answers:

wish; wish; hope

wishes; hopes; wishes

Lesson 50 was / were / had been in unreal conditionals

Choose the correct answers:

1. If I _____ (was, were, had been) you, I would not plan to move to Florida.
2. Sergey would also advise you to stay in Chicago if he _____ (was, were, had been) your brother.
3. If Sergey and I _____ (was, were, had been) your neighbors last year, we would have helped you deal with the house issues.

Explain:

All these three sentences express unreal, imagined, or wishful scenarios.

present unreal situation: simple past tense verb in “if” clause

past unreal situation: past perfect tense verb in “if” clause

If the verb in the “if” clause is a “Be” verb, then “were” or “had been” is the choice, even when the subject is “I/he/she/it”. In conversations, it is common to hear people say “was” instead of “were”, but “were” should be used in formal situations.

“If I were you...” is a common and gentle way to give advice.

- In Sentence #1, use simple past verb “were” in the present unreal situation because I am not you.
- In Sentence #2, use simple past verb “were” in the present unreal situation because Sergey is not your brother.
- In Sentence #3, use past perfect verb in the past unreal situation because Sergey and I were not your neighbors last year.

Review:

1. I am taking a quiz now, but I would be happier if I _____ (was, were, had been) at the beach.
2. If there _____ (was not, were not, had not been) so much noise outside the classroom at the moment, I would be able to focus on my quiz better.
3. If I _____ (was, were, had been) free yesterday, I would have gone to the beach instead of preparing for the quiz.

Answers:

were; were; had been

were; were not; had been

Lesson 51 verbs in mixed unreal conditionals

Choose the correct answers:

Facts: Ahmad received a promotion at work last week. He is planning to take his family on a vacation.

1. If Ahmad _____ (had not gotten, did not get) a promotion last week, he _____ (does not plan, will not be planning, would not be planning) to take his family on a vacation.
2. The plane tickets have been sold out. Now Ahmad has to postpone the vacation. If the plane tickets _____ (were not sold out, had not been sold out), Ahmad _____ (will not have to postpone, would not have to postpone) the vacation now.

Explain:

Things in the past have an effect on the present or future. Therefore, it is common to use a mix of tenses in unreal conditional sentences. Start from the basic patterns below. Mix and match them based on the time of the action or situation.

present or future time:

if clause: simple past

result clause: would+ base form of verb / would+ be + verb-ing

past time:

if clause: past perfect

result clause: would + have + past participle

Here, “would” can be replaced by “could” or “might” for a softer tone.

- In Sentence #1,

if clause: had not gotten (past perfect) to show past

result clause: would not be planning (would + be + verb-ing) to show present

- In Sentence #2,

if clause: had not been sold out (past perfect) to show past

result clause: would not have (would + base form of verb) to show present.

Review:

Facts: You accepted a job offer yesterday without discussing with me. We are arguing now.

1. I _____ (would not have accepted, would not accept) this job offer yesterday if I _____ (were, had been) you.
2. If you _____ (discussed, had discussed) the offer with me before accepting it, we _____ (would not be arguing, are not arguing, would not have been arguing) now.

Answers:

*had not gotten; would not be planning; had not been sold out; would not have to postpone
would not have accepted; were; had discussed; would not be arguing*