

Subjects & Verbs

A **sentence** is a group of words that expresses a complete thought, has at least one subject and verb, begins with a capital letter, and is completed with end punctuation. (., ?, !).

The **Subject** is what the sentence is about. The **Verb** is sometimes called the **predicate**, which is what the subject is doing. The easiest way to identify the subject and the verb is to ask these questions:

What is the action doing? Who or what is doing the action?

Example: Barbara sang.

What is the action? Sang Who sang? Barbara

The subject is usually a noun or a pronoun.

Ruth went to the store.

California is a state.

They are happy.

The subject may be a compound (two or more)

The books and tapes must be sent today.

The subject usually comes before the verb, but it may appear anywhere in the sentence.

Where are you going?

Around the corner went the motorcycle.

The subject may be implied or understood; it is not written in the sentence. This type of sentence is usually in command form.

You come over here now!

You Stop!

The subject may be an *-ing* word

Singing is her chief talent.

Swimming is good exercise.

The subject may be a phrase.

Growing vegetables organically is healthy.

Taking criticism from others is painful.

A simple sentence may be expanded without changing the subject and verb.

The plane landed.

The hijacked plane landed safely.

The first hijacked plane that we have ever seen at this airport landed safely on the south runway, which has been closed for a year.

Verbs express an action or a state of being. There are two types of verbs: *Action* and *Linking*.

Action verbs express any type of activity:

To run, To think, To laugh, To buy

Linking verbs link a descriptive word or noun to the subject, and they show a state of being:

To be, To sense, To become, To seem, To appear.

Some words can be action or linking on how they are used.

Linking verb:

I am fine.

She appears nervous.

They were roommates.

The flowers smell sweet.

Action verbs:

I ran two miles.

He appeared suddenly.

They were going home.

I smell the flowers.

A sentence may have a compound verb (two or more actions done by the same subject).

They sang and danced all night.

Sometimes a verb uses helpers to describe the time of the action.

I ask.

I am asking.

I will ask.

I was asking.

I have asked.

I have been asking.

I will have asked.

I should have asked.

These helper verbs are called helping verbs and are considered part of the complete verb.

I am going.

We should have gone.

They have been talking lessons.

UNDERLINE THE COMPLETE VERB:

1. We waited twenty minutes for the bus.
2. The bread tastes stale.
3. Brian is washing the car.
4. Lucy was singing in the shower.
5. She seemed upset by the news.
6. He is a great actor.
7. I am building a log cabin.
8. We are prepared to do anything.
9. Tom washed the dishes and dried them.

10. We have always wanted a puppy.
11. I am going to Mexico.
12. I am happy today!
13. Larry and John are joining the club.
14. He has been studying hard all semester.

UNDERLINE THE SUBJECT:

1. Henry runs a mile every day.
2. Sugar has many empty calories.
3. Jogging is a good exercise.
4. Collecting stamps is my hobby.
5. Using common sense is important.
6. Spelling and grammar are useful.
7. There was a long line at the unemployment office.
8. Raising a child is no easy task.
9. Bring me the book.
10. Do you live here?
11. In the basket were bread and cheese.
12. The jar on the shelf is filled with fruit.
13. A group of chambers is coming up the hill.
14. Juggling requires good coordination.

Ready For The Hard Ones?!

UNDERLINE BOTH SUBJECT & VERB:

1. Two-thirds of the federal tax dollars goes to past, present and future wars.
2. Our marshlands are rapidly disappearing.
3. Organic fruits and vegetables do not contain harmful chemicals.
4. Doing personally meaningful and socially useful work is a joy.
5. As soon as he returned from the meeting, I left.

ANSWER SHEET

Part One:

1. We waited
2. bread tastes
3. Brian is washing
4. Lucy was singing
5. She seemed
6. He is
7. I am building
8. We are prepared
9. Tom washed
10. We have wanted
11. I am going
12. I am
13. Larry and John are joining
14. He has been studying

Part Two:

1. Henry runs
2. Sugar has
3. Jogging is
4. Collecting stamps is
5. Using common sense is

6. Spelling and grammar are
7. line was
8. Raising a child is
9. (you) Bring me
10. you do live
11. bread and cheese were
12. jar is filled
13. group is coming
14. Juggling requires

Part Three:

1. Two-thirds goes.
2. Marshlands are disappearing.
3. fruits and vegetables do contain
4. Doing personally meaningful and socially useful work is
5. I left.