

# Verbs, tense, aspect, and mood: Week 3

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## 1 Paradigms

The entire set of labeled inflectional forms that a lexeme has. English has fairly simple paradigms, and some forms are even the same.

[2]	PARADIGM		EXAMPLE SENTENCE
PRIMARY FORMS	<b>preterite</b>	<i>walked</i>	<i>She <u>walked</u> home.</i>
	<b>3rd singular present</b>	<i>walks</i>	<i>She <u>walks</u> home.</i>
	<b>plain present</b>	<i>walk</i>	<i>They <u>walk</u> home.</i>
SECONDARY FORMS	<b>plain form</b>	<i>walk</i>	<i>She should <u>walk</u> home.</i>
	<b>gerund-participle</b>	<i>walking</i>	<i>She is <u>walking</u> home.</i>
	<b>past participle</b>	<i>walked</i>	<i>She has <u>walked</u> home.</i>

Figure 1: Verb paradigm table from H & P

**Inflectional form vs shape** Inflectional form is what the verb looks like in a certain tense or aspect (form). Shape is the actual spelling or pronunciation of the word. Words can have different shapes but similar forms (various past participle verbs, eg. walked and flew), or different forms but similar shapes (walked - preterite and past participle).

**Primary vs secondary forms** Primary forms are tensed (set in time), secondary forms are not.

**Preterite** Inflectionally marked past tense.

**Present tense** Indicates present time.

**3rd singular present vs plain present** Subject agreement with the verb.

1st person (I, we, me, us)

2nd person (you)

3rd person (he, she, it, they, him, her, them, and everything else)

**Plain form** Base form of the verb, used in imperatives, subjunctives, and infinitival (to + V)

**Gerund-participle** Verbs with -ing ending.

**The past participle** The form of the verbs in perfect constructions and passive constructions.

## 1.1 Shape sharing

How can you tell what form a word has if it doesn't change shape? For example, how do you know if *walked* is a preterite or a past participle? Or if *walk* is a present tense or a bare form? Substitution tests!

- (1) a. She **walked** there.
- b. She has **walked** there.
- (2) a. She **flew** there.
- b. She has **flown** there.

With that information, you can tell that (2-a) and (1-a) are the preterite forms, but (2-b) and (1-b) are the past participle forms.

A similar test can be used with **be** to distinguish present tenses from bare forms.

- (3) a. They **write** to her. Present
- b. It's vital that he **write** to her. Bare
- (4) a. They **are** kind to her. Present
- b. It's vital that he **be** kind to her. Bare

## 2 Finite and non-finite clauses

Are the verbs placed in time or not? Essentially, all verbs in the infinitive, gerund-participle, or past participle forms are non-finite, all other forms are finite. Closely related to the main/subordinate clause distinction.

## 3 Auxiliary verbs

Different from lexical (main) verbs, they are a closed class. People are not creating new auxiliaries for English. Two main types:

**Modal** can, may, must, will, shall, could, etc.

**Non-modal** be, have, do.

**Combining aux.** If auxiliaries are combined, they go in the following order:

- (5) MODAL (NEG) HAVE BE(progressive) BE(passive)
- (6) They might not have been being considered for the job.

### 3.1 Distinctive properties of Aux

**Subject-Auxiliary inversion** We have talked about this, Aux inverts with the subject in yes/no questions.

**Negation** Negation follows the first Aux in a clause, it precedes the lexical verb as in (7).

- (7) She has **not** taken the money.
- (8) \*She takes **not** the money.
- (9) She does **not** take the money.

### 3.2 Modal auxiliaries

**No secondary inflectional forms** no plain forms, gerund participles, or past participles.

[20]	MODAL AUXILIARY	NOT MODAL AUXILIARY	
i	a. <i>I <u>must</u> work late tonight.</i>	b. <i>I <u>have</u> to work late tonight.</i>	[primary form]
ii	a. * <i>I will <u>must</u> work late.</i>	b. <i>I will <u>have</u> to work late.</i>	[plain form]
iii	a. * <i>I am <u>musting</u> work late.</i>	b. <i>I am <u>having</u> to work late.</i>	[gerund-participle]
iv	a. * <i>I've often <u>must</u> work late.</i>	b. <i>I've often <u>had</u> to work late.</i>	[past participle]

Figure 2: Modal aux vs non-modal aux H & P

**No 3rd singular agreement** Notice the difference between *must* and *have* in the sentences below.

- I **must** leave now.
- She **must** leave now.
- I **have** to leave now.
- She **has** to leave now.

**Bare infinitival complement** Notice the difference between the complements of *must* and *have* above.

### 3.3 Dually-classified verbs

The verbs **do**, **have**, **need**, and **dare** can all be auxiliary verbs and lexical verbs. How can you tell them apart? Turn them into questions and see how they behave.

- (10) She did her best.
  - a. \*Does she her best?
  - b. Does she do her best?
- (11)

Similar patterns can be seen in *need* and *dare*.