

The Ultimate Guide to  
the Verb

TO BE

A Booklet for  
Secondary School  
Students



# Welcome, Student!

The verb **TO BE** is the most important and common verb in the English language. It's like the foundation of a house—without a strong foundation, you can't build anything! We use it all the time to talk about **who we are, where we are, what we feel**, and to **describe** the world around us.

This booklet will guide you through everything you need to know about "**TO BE**." We'll cover:

- **What it is** and what it means.
- **How to conjugate it** in all the main tenses.
- **How to form negative sentences** and **questions**.
- **Practice activities** to test your knowledge.
- A full **Answer Key** with explanations.

## Let's get started!



## Part 1: What is the Verb "TO BE"?

The verb "TO BE" is a **linking verb** and an **auxiliary (helping) verb**.

1. As a **Linking Verb**: It doesn't show an action. Instead, it **connects** the subject of the sentence to more information about that subject (like an adjective, a noun, or a place).
  - **Example**: She **is** happy. (Connects "she" to the adjective "happy")
  - **Example**: They **are** students. (Connects "they" to the noun "students")
  - **Example**: I **am** at home. (Connects "I" to the place "at home")
  
2. As an **Auxiliary (Helping) Verb**: It helps other verbs to form certain tenses, like the **Continuous tenses** and the **Passive Voice**.
  - **Example** (Continuous): He **is** watching a movie. ("Is" helps the main verb "watching")
  - **Example** (Passive): The window **was** broken. ("Was" helps the main verb "broken")

## Part 2: Conjugation of "TO BE"

"TO BE" is **irregular**, which means it doesn't follow the normal rules. You must **memorize** its forms.

### A. Present Simple Tense

| Subject        | Conjugation |
|----------------|-------------|
| I              | am          |
| You (singular) | are         |
| He / She / It  | is          |
| We             | are         |
| You (plural)   | are         |
| They           | are         |

#### Examples:

- I **am** a football fan.
- You **are** my best friend.
- She **is** in the garden.
- We **are** ready for the test.

## B. Past Simple Tense

| Subject        | Conjugation |
|----------------|-------------|
| I              | was         |
| You (singular) | were        |
| He / She / It  | was         |
| We             | were        |
| You (plural)   | were        |
| They           | were        |

### Examples:

- I **was** tired yesterday.
- They **were** at the concert last night.

## C. Future Simple Tense

We use **will be** for all subjects.

- I **will be**... / You **will be**... / He **will be**... etc.

### Example:

- She **will be** a famous scientist one day.

### D. Present Perfect Tense

We use **have been** or **has been**.

- I/You/We/They **have been**.
- He/She/It **has been**.

**Example:**

- I **have been** to London twice.
- She **has been** to Italy once to visit a penfriend.
- We **have been** so busy lately.

### E. Present Continuous Tense (as a helping verb)

We use **am/is/are + [verb]-ing**.

- I **am waiting**.
- He **is talking**.
- We **are talking** about the weather.

## Part 3: Negative Forms & Questions

### A. How to Make Negative Sentences

Simply add **not** after the verb "be."

| Tense   | Structure              | Example                              |
|---------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Present | am/is/are + <b>not</b> | She <b>is not (isn't)</b> late.      |
| Past    | was/were + <b>not</b>  | They <b>were not (weren't)</b> happy |
| Future  | will + <b>not</b> + be | It <b>will not (won't)</b> be easy.  |

### B. How to Make Questions

To make a **Yes/No question**, **invert** the subject and the verb "be."

- **Statement:** You are hungry.
- **Question:** Are you hungry? *Short Answer:* Yes, I am. / No, I'm not.
- **Statement:** He was the winner.
- **Question:** Was he the winner? *Short Answer:* Yes, he was. / No, he wasn't.

For **Wh- questions** (**What**, **Where**, **When**, **Why**, **How**, **Who**), put the question word **first**.

- Where are my keys?
- How was your holiday?

## Part 4: Practice Activities

### Activity 1: Multiple Choice

Choose the **correct** form of the verb "*to be*."

1. My brother and I \_\_\_\_ good tennis players.
  - a) is
  - b) am
  - c) are
2. \_\_\_\_ you at the supermarket this morning?
  - a) Was
  - b) Were
  - c) Are
3. I think it \_\_\_\_ sunny tomorrow.
  - a) will be
  - b) was
  - c) is
4. Look! The children \_\_\_\_ playing in the park.
  - a) is
  - b) am
  - c) are
5. She \_\_\_\_ never been to Italy.
  - a) have
  - b) has
  - c) is

### Activity 2: True or False

Decide if the sentences are grammatically **Correct** (*True*) or **Incorrect** (*False*).

1. They is very intelligent students. (True / False)
2. Was she at the party last weekend? (True / False)
3. We am going to the cinema tonight. (True / False)
4. The books weren't on the shelf. (True / False)
5. I will be 16 years old next month. (True / False)

### Activity 3: Fill in the Gap

Fill in the **blanks** with the **correct** form of "*to be*" (*am, is, are, was, were, will be*).

1. There \_\_\_\_\_ three apples on the table.
2. Yesterday, it \_\_\_\_\_ a very hot day.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ you coming to my house later?
4. I \_\_\_\_\_ not interested in that film.
5. By 2030, I \_\_\_\_\_ a university graduate.

**Activity 4: Choose the Best Answer**

*Read the short dialogue and **choose the best option** to complete it.*

Maria: Hi, Tom! (1) \_\_\_\_ you busy?

Tom: Not really. I (2) \_\_\_\_ just watching a video.

Maria: (3) \_\_\_\_ you at the football match yesterday? I (4) \_\_\_\_ there but I didn't see you.

Tom: No, I (5) \_\_\_\_ sick at home.

- |           |         |         |
|-----------|---------|---------|
| 1. a) Is  | b) Are  | c) Am   |
| 2. a) am  | b) is   | c) were |
| 3. a) Was | b) Are  | c) Were |
| 4. a) was | b) were | c) am   |
| 5. a) was | b) were | c) am   |

## Part 5: Answer Key & Explanations

### Activity 1: Multiple Choice

1. c) are - The subject "My brother and I" is plural (we), so we need the plural form "are."
2. b) Were - The question is about "this morning" (past time) and the subject is "you," which uses "were" in the past tense.
3. a) will be - The clue "tomorrow" tells us we need the future tense.
4. c) are - The subject "The children" is plural, and the sentence is in the present continuous tense ("playing").
5. b) has - This is the Present Perfect tense. The subject "She" is singular, so we need "has been."

### Activity 2: True or False

1. False - "They" is a plural subject, so it must be followed by "are," not "is."
2. True - This is a correct past tense question. "She" uses "was."
3. False - The subject "We" is plural, so it must be followed by "are," not "am."
4. True - This is a correct negative past tense sentence. "The books" is plural, so "weren't" is correct.
5. True - This is a correct future tense sentence. "Will be" is used for all subjects.

### Activity 3: Fill in the Gap

1. are - The subject "three apples" is plural and the sentence is in the present tense.
2. was - The clue "yesterday" indicates the past tense. The subject "it" is singular.
3. Are - This is a present continuous question. The subject is "you."
4. am - The subject is "I," which always uses "am" in the present tense.
5. will be - The phrase "By 2030" indicates a future time.



1. b) Are - Question to "you" in the present tense.
2. a) am - The subject is "I" in the present continuous tense ("watching").
3. c) Were - Question about "yesterday" (past) to "you."
4. a) was - The subject is "I" in the past tense.
5. a) was - The subject is "I" in the past tense.

## Your Notes

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## Congratulations!

You've completed the booklet on the verb **TO BE**. Keep practicing by using it in your speaking and writing. Remember, mastering this verb is a huge step towards fluency in English!

## Keep up the great work!

Find more resources on grammar here:

[www.connectlearntogether.com](http://www.connectlearntogether.com)