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Verbs

The delivery action crew





Grammar at a glance

When you want to...	Form to use	Worked example
Show an action	subject + action verb	The kite dips above the field.
Describe a state	be + description / have + noun	The room is warm. It has a fan.
Find the whole verb group	helper + main verb form	The twins are building a fort.
Choose a precise action	verb matched to evidence	One quick touch? She tapped the lid.

SELECT A ROW TO OPEN ITS LESSON

VERBS

Find the verb, not just the named thing



Lily and Sam carry a box together. Their names tell us who is involved. Box tells us what they hold. Carry tells us what happens.

A verb can tell what happens. In “The bell rings”, bell names the thing and rings tells what it does.

USE	EXAMPLE	WHAT TO NOTICE
Name the people and thing	Lily, Sam, a box.	These words name people and a thing, but do not tell us an action.
Tell what happens	Lily and Sam carry a box.	Carry is the verb telling what the helpers do.
Another example	The kite dips above the field.	Show an action. Pattern: subject + action verb.

HOW THE PATTERN WORKS

Who?	Action verb	What?
Lily and Sam	carry	a box

Are only people allowed to have action verbs?

No. The box falls and The door opens describe what happens to things. A verb’s subject can name a person, animal or thing.

YOUR TURN

Find the action verb: “The visitor knocks on the door”.

door / knocks / visitor

> **Answer • knocks**
> Knocks tells what the visitor does.

VERBS

Verbs for states and possession



The delivery record says the box is ready and Lily has a bag. Ready describes the box's condition, but is is the verb. Has tells possession in this message. Neither sentence needs a running or jumping action to contain a verb.

Verbs can express a state or possession. In "The room is quiet", is links the room to its description.

USE	EXAMPLE	WHAT TO NOTICE
Describe a condition	The box is ready.	Is is the verb linking the box to its condition. Ready describes that condition.
Tell possession	Lily has a bag.	Has is the main verb telling possession here. The record, not simply the picture, supplies the fact.
Tell an action	Lily carries a bag.	Carries tells an action. Carrying a bag does not by itself prove that Lily owns it.

HOW THE PATTERN WORKS

Subject	Linking verb	Condition	Possession verb
the box	is	ready	has

Are all verbs doing words?

Doing words is a useful starting idea, but it is incomplete. Verbs also express states, existence and possession. Is and has can be main verbs even when no movement is described.

YOUR TURN

Which is the verb in "The room is quiet"?

is / quiet

> Answer • is
> Is links room to its description.

VERBS

Helping verbs and main verbs



The crew carries a box. A live report says “They are carrying a box.” An ability message says “They can carry a box.” The main action stays carrying, but the helping words change how the message presents it.

Several words can work together as a verb group. In “Sam is reading”, is helps reading show an action in progress.

USE	EXAMPLE	WHAT TO NOTICE
Report an action	They carry a box.	Carry is the main verb in this simple statement.
Describe it in progress	They are carrying a box.	Are helps carrying form the verb group are carrying.
Describe ability	They can carry a box.	Can helps carry express ability. Ability alone does not prove the action is happening now.

HOW THE PATTERN WORKS

Helping verb	Main action verb	Whole group	Ability group
are	carrying	are carrying	can carry

Is the longest action word always the whole verb?

No. In are carrying the whole verb group includes the helping word are. If a question asks for the main action verb, carrying is enough; if it asks for the whole group, include both.

YOUR TURN

Find the whole verb group: “Sam is opening the gate”.

the gate / opening only / is opening

> Answer • is opening
> Is helps opening form the group.

VERBS

Choose verbs that match the facts



Lily waves to Sam while holding the bag. “Lily does something” is too vague for the report. “Lily waves to Sam” identifies the action.

Choose a verb that matches the facts. Speaking softly and shouting describe different actions.

USE	EXAMPLE	WHAT TO NOTICE
Vague report	Lily does something.	The reader cannot tell which action is meant.
Specific report	Lily waves to Sam.	Waves identifies the visible hand gesture.
Unsupported report	Lily throws the bag to Sam.	The picture shows Lily still holding the bag, not releasing it. A vivid verb must still match the facts.

HOW THE PATTERN WORKS

Too vague	Supported gesture	Unsupported event
does something	waves	throws the bag

Should I always replace an ordinary verb with a dramatic one?

No. Walks and sprints describe different actions and speeds. Choose the verb that fits what happened; an ordinary accurate verb is better than an unsupported dramatic one.

YOUR TURN

The record says Lily uses a soft voice so she will not disturb anyone. Which verb fits?

whispers / shouts

> **Answer • whispers**
> Whispers matches the stated quiet voice.

ONE LAST CHALLENGE

Can you hear the difference?

A baby is asleep. Ravi wants to tell a friend a secret without waking her. Choose a precise verb for his voice.



A POSSIBLE ANSWER

Ravi whispers the secret to his friend.

Whispers tells us how quietly Ravi speaks.

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