

## How to Spot a Verb

OK, it's time to look at how sentences work. Writing clear sentences can be a bit of a nightmare at times — but learn this stuff and you'll have no problems with them in your SAT.

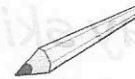
### A Sentence is a Complete Idea

A sentence is a group of words about one complete idea. Sentences start with a capital letter and end with a full stop. They usually describe an action.

### The Action word in a sentence is the Verb

Here's a nice, easy rule to learn. It's very simple — whenever you write a sentence it must have at least one action word in it. This action word is called a verb.

Henry surfed into a giant cucumber.



These are the verbs. Some verbs are made of two separate words.

Emily is eating a turnip.



### Some Verbs are 'Being' words

This can be a bit confusing. Nearly all verbs are action words like the ones above, but there's a few that are 'being' words. They tell you about something, instead of what it is doing.



The surgeon is ready for the operation.

The men were very old.

The main thing to remember is that these are still verbs, even though they are not really 'action' words.

I am cold.

### Come on — I want to see some action...

There it is then — a verb is just an action word or a being word. Without a verb, it's not a proper sentence. It's as simple as that. And whatever you do, don't forget the capital letter and full stop.



## Using Verbs in Sentences

VERBS

Slightly trickier now. It's not just what goes in a sentence that matters — you've got to get the verbs in the right form too. Yes, it's definitely getting tougher now, but stick with it.

### The Form of the Verb tells you *Who's doing the Action*

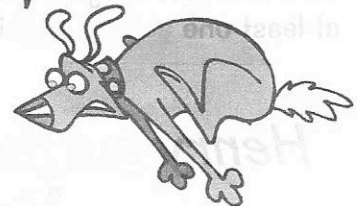
This is something to watch out for. Most verbs have one form if you're talking about 'I', 'we', 'you' or 'they', but they have a different form with 'he', 'she' or 'it'. Take a look at these...

Don't say *'They has a mad dog'* ✗

say *'They have a mad dog.'* ✓

This is the 'they' form of the verb. It's the same as the 'I', 'we' and 'you' forms.

Miaow!



Don't say *'Jane play skittles'* ✗

say *'Jane plays skittles.'* ✓

This is the form of the verb that you use with 'he', 'she' and 'it'.

Don't say *'Boris and Betty looks sad'* ✗

say *'Boris and Betty look sad.'* ✓

There's two people here, so you use the 'they' form of the verb — I could have written 'they look sad' instead.

Don't say *'I likes yodelling'* ✗

say *'I like yodelling.'* ✓

The 'I' form of the verb — the same as the 'we', 'you' and 'they' forms.

### Changing forms — I used to be in class 3B...

Don't stuff the action word in any old how — you've got to make it work with the thing that's doing it... in other words, don't write "you is" or "they wants" or anything daft like that.



# Verbs

Verbs are something else that you've met already. The thing is, they expect you to know a little bit more about them now. Read on, and find out what it's all about.

## Verbs are Doing and Being words

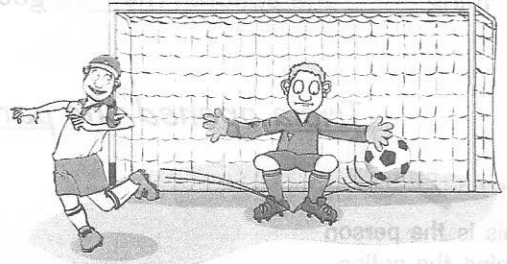
Verbs are action or being words. They tell you what a person or thing is doing. Remember that every single sentence needs a verb. If it hasn't got a verb, it isn't a sentence.

*Jodie plays football.*

'Plays' is the verb.

*Ben is the goalkeeper.*

'Is' is the verb.



## The Person of a Verb tells you Who

Things written from the point of view of 'I' are in the first person. Instructions written to someone are in the second person. Stories about someone are in the third person.

*I am* first person

*we are* first person (plural)

*you are* second person

*you are* second person (plural)

*he is, she is, it is* third person

*they are* third person (plural)

## The Tense of a Verb tells you When

The tense of a verb can be past, present or future.  
Some tenses need a helping verb.

*Jodie is playing football.*

The two words 'is playing' are a verb phrase. You need both words together to make this tense of the verb 'to play'.

'is' is a helping verb.



This is going on right now.



*Jodie has been playing football.*

'Has' and 'been' are helping verbs.



This has been happening in the past.



*Jodie will go ice-skating.*

'Will' is a helping verb.



This will happen in the future.





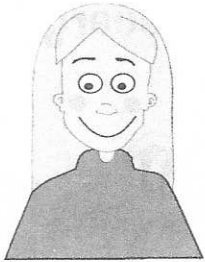
# Verbs

Verbs are really important words — they tell you what's going on. You need to know how to use them properly, so read on.

## A Verb is a Doing word

Doing words are verbs — they're words about doing an action. Verbs tell you what's happening in the sentence. A sentence has to have a verb in it for it to make sense.

*Carl likes disco music.*



the verb is 'likes'

Being words are verbs too:

*Shirley is happy.*

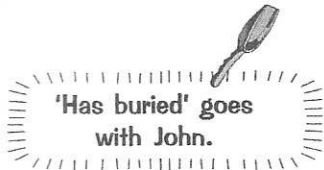
the verb is 'is'



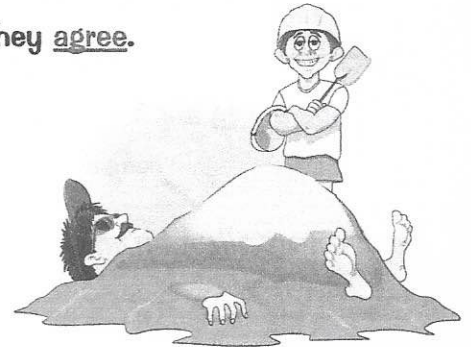
## Verb Agreement is getting your verbs Right

When the verb and the noun doing the action go together, then they agree. If they don't go together, the sentence won't make sense.

*John has buried his dad in the sand.*



You can't write 'John have buried'!



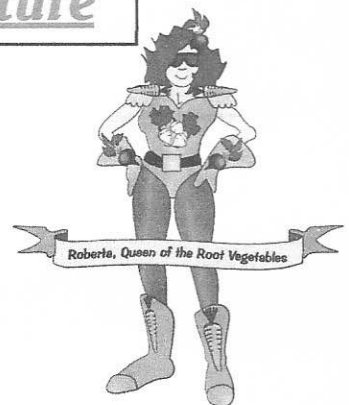
## The Tense of a verb is Past, Present or Future

The tense of a verb tells you when the action is happening. Verbs can be in the past tense, the present tense or the future tense.

*Roberta fought for the rights of vegetables.*  past

*Roberta fights for the rights of vegetables.*  present

*Roberta will fight for the rights of vegetables.*  future



## Verbs tense? — take some deep breaths...

There it is, then — a verb is an action word or a being word. Every sentence has got a verb in somewhere. Think about a verb before you put it in a sentence — it's got to go with the noun that's doing the action. Don't write "you is" or "they wants" or anything daft like that.