



Four principal parts of the verb: Verb tenses are based on four primary forms that each verb possesses. These four primary forms are called the verb's **principal parts**:

the **infinitive**: to do (do), to go (go), to play (play), to ponder (ponder)

the **present participle**: doing, going, playing, pondering

the **past**: did, went, played, pondered

the **past participle**: done, gone, played, pondered

Auxiliary or helping verbs: Auxiliary verbs combine with main verbs to express tense, mood, voice, or condition. In a **simple tense**, the verb stands alone as a single word: *Julie temporized*. In a **compound tense**, the principal part is supplemented by an **auxiliary** or **helping verb** to construct the tense: *Julie has temporized* or *Julie will have temporized*. The auxiliary verbs fall into three categories: the **primary**, the **modal**, and the **marginal**.

Primary auxiliary verbs: *be, do, have*

These verbs also can be main verbs, used by themselves. They are used to make compound tenses and to create emphatic forms.

I **am** talking.

I **do** swim quickly.

I **have** not capitulated.

Modal auxiliary verbs: *can/could, may/might, must, shall/should, will/would*

These helping verbs are sometimes called *defective* because they are auxiliary only; they cannot be main verbs and have no infinitive forms. For example, there is no *to might* or *he mights today*. These verbs help create subjunctive and conditional forms.

I **can** enumerate the details.

I **might** vociferate if she insists.

I **must** rectify the problem.

I **should** acquiesce.

I **would** mediate.

Marginal auxiliary verbs: *dare, need, ought to, used to*

When used as auxiliary verbs, these enhance the meaning of main verbs.

I **dare** not censure their statements.

I **need** not elucidate the reasons.

Verbs, like pronouns, have **person** and **number**:



PRESENT

singular

First person: I equivocate
Second person: You equivocate
Third person: He, she, it equivocates;
they equivocate

plural

We equivocate
You equivocate
They equivocate

PAST

singular

First person: I equivocated
Second person: You equivocated
Third person: He, she, they, it equivocated

plural

We equivocated
You equivocated
They equivocated

FUTURE

singular

First person: I will (shall) equivocate
Second person: You will equivocate
Third person: He, she, they, it will equivocate

plural

We will (shall) equivocate
You will equivocate
They will equivocate

PRESENT PERFECT

singular

First person: I have equivocated
Second person: You have equivocated
Third person: He, she, they, it has equivocated

plural

We have equivocated
You have equivocated
They have equivocated

PAST PERFECT

singular

First person: I had equivocated
Second person: You had equivocated
Third person: He, she, they, it had equivocated

plural

We had equivocated
You had equivocated
They had equivocated

FUTURE PERFECT

singular

First person: I will (shall) have equivocated
Second person: You will have equivocated
Third person: He, she, they, it will have equivocated

plural

We will (shall) have equivocated
You will have equivocated
They will have equivocated