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Last Updated July 23, 2025 The verb to do in text conversation. By Gfex on Canva.When is it correct to use do, does, did or done? Phrased differently, whats the past tense of the verb do? Lets go ahead and do our best to learn the proper usage of this particularly irregular verb form. They did everything I asked. She has done her work already. He doed his homework last night. She has did everything already. To define the word, when you do something, this means you perform, take part in, or achieve something: that was a really silly thing for me to do. Do is an irregular verb since its past tense conjugations do not end in the standard -ed that regular verbs take on. Additionally, do changes depending on whether the subject is in the first-person singular or third-person singular.We use does for all third-person present singular subjects, such as the pronouns he, she, and it; e.g., She does the shopping on Wednesdays.We use do, on the other hand, for all first-person singular subjects: Im about to do the laundry.presentspastfuturesimple do/does| did| will| docontinuous| am doing| will be doingperfect| have done| had done| will have doneperfect continuous| have been doing| had been doing| will have been doingVerb tenses of do.base verbpast tensepast particledo or doesdidonewrotewrotewrittenbittebitteteateateenidehididideroderiden Compare how the tenses of do work in both sentences:He does his schoolwork when he gets home from school.He did his homework when he got home from school.Did and does are simply two different tenses that we use to denote either the past or present time. The simple past tense of do is did for all subjects. The past participle form is done, also for all subjects.Thus, the difference is did denotes the past, and do/does is in the present (in the first person/third-person singular). Word FormExamplesOtherHe did a lot of homework today.He had done a lot of homework before he went out with his friends.He did a lot of homework today is the simple past tense, and simply mentions an action that took place at a time before now.The second sentence with he had done includes the past participle done + the auxiliary verb had, to form the past perfect tense. The past perfect, also called pluperfect, is a form of the past that depicts something that happened before something else which also occurred in the past. To do is one of the three auxiliary verbs, along with to be and to have (not including modal auxiliaries). When do is used in sentences with another verb, its probably taking on an auxiliary role:We use do to make negatives (do + not), to make question forms, and to make the verb more emphatic. I didnt see you at the concert the other night. Do they open at nine oclock on weekdays? Cambridge Dictionary. Practice using the verb in different tenses with example sentences to memorize the correct forms.Sentence examples: do/does, present tense Do you play cricket? No, I dont. I didnt do anything wrong. Henry does all of his chores once he returns home from school. He doesnt want any chocolate. Sentence examples: did/done, past tenses I did not want to hear about it. I did the dishes every day. Did Tim pay for his ticket last night? She did everything she could to make sure it was done by the deadline. Ive never done yoga, and Im not sure if they do, but Im sure that he does. From etymology online on do (v.):To perform, execute, achieve, carry out, bring to pass by procedure of any kind, etc., Middle English do, first person singular of Old English don make, act, perform, cause; to put, to place, from West Germanic \*doanan.Q. What is the past tense of do?A: The simple past tense of do is did, used for all subjects. For example, He did his homework. The past participle is done, used with auxiliary verbs like had to form the past perfect.Q: How does do differ from does?A: Do is used for first-person singular (I and plural subjects (we, you, they)). Does is used for third-person singular subjects (he, she, it). For instance, I do my best, while She does hers.Q: Whats the difference between did and done?A: Did is the simple past tense of do, indicating a completed action in the past (e.g., He did the dishes). Done is the past participle, used with auxiliary verbs like had to form the past perfect.Q: When is the past perfect tense used with do?A: The past perfect tense, using had done, shows an action completed before another past action. For example, He had done his homework before he watched TV indicates the homework was finished first.Q: Is I have knew grammatically correct?A: No, I have knew is incorrect. The correct present perfect tense is I have known, using the past participle known. The example highlights a common mistake of incorrectly using the simple past instead of the past participle. Merriam-Webster, definition of do.Etymology online, origin of do. From grammar and writing to style and clarity, our experts tackle the biggest questions in English and content creation. Verbs are essential to creating complete sentences, as they help us express physical actions (She jumped in the puddle), mental actions (He thought about puppies), and states of being (I am hungry).There are several types of verbs that can each be written in different tenses, so they can be tricky to work with, especially if English isnt your first language. Weve put together a guide to help you use one of the most common verbs, do, in your writing. Read on below to learn more!As the name suggests, action verbs are used to express actions completed by the subject of a sentence. The base verb do is conjugated according to the tense.1. Present TenseIn the present tense, do takes the form do or does, depending on the subject.Subject:Verb:I/you/we/theyDo/He/she/itDoesConsider the following examples: We did our homework last night. She did her homework last night.Auxiliary, or helping verbs, are used with another base verb to create negative sentences, questions, or add emphasis. Heres how do should be used as an auxiliary verb.1. Negative SentencesFollowing the same subject-verb pairings introduced above, we combine the auxiliaries do, does, and did with the adverb not to create negative sentences. We do not do our homework every night. She did not do her homework last night.Note that we can combine the auxiliary and the adverb to create the contractions dont, doesnt, and didnt. You simply remove the space between the two words and replace the letter o in not with an apostrophe (').Contractions are more common in conversations and informal writing and typically shouldnt be used in formal writing (e.g., academic or business).2. QuestionsTo create questions, the auxiliary is combined with the infinitive of another verb in this way: auxiliary verb + subject + infinitive verb. Simple present questions:Do they sell childrens books?Does he speak English?Note that the third person verb speaks isnt spelled with the s when paired with the auxiliary to form a question. Simple past questions:Did you buy anything at the bookstore?Did he learn how to speak English?Note that did indicates the past tense, so the main verbs dont also take the past tense (i.e., bought and learned).3. EmphasisIn positive sentences, we can also combine the auxiliaries do, does, and did with the main verb to emphasize that something is true: We do sell childrens books. He did learn to speak English.Try using these sentences aloud and adding emphasis to the auxiliary terms with your tone. It adds a dramatic effect!Proofreading and Editing ServicesHopefully, this guide will help you feel more confident when using different forms of the verb do in your writing. If youre still learning or want to be sure your work is error-free, our editors are ready to help. You can upload a free trial document today to learn more!A form of the present tense (indicative mood) of do I Collins English Dictionary Complete & Unabridged 2012 Digital Edition William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd. 1979, 1996 HarperCollins Publishers 1998, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012Examples have not been reviewed.When previously reached for comment, a spokesperson for the hospital said that the medical center does not comment on current or former personnel and did not respond to a question about the hospitals media policy.The sole representative from former Mayor Ray Nagins office, his PR flak Sally Forman, does her job incredibly well even now, eloquently passing the buck to people who arent available to explain themselves.However, when taking 'football inflation' into account - the annual increases in Premier League revenue - their spending does not seem quite as lavish, with Chelsea topping the all-time list with their 2003-04 transfers.If the agreement is not performed to EPAs satisfaction, EPA does have the authority to take over the cleanup and bill Vistra for the cost.Although the contents of any unreleased documents remain unknown, the existing materials in the public domain mention a number of high-profile figures who were connected to Epstein - though that does not imply any illegal activity.doer and goneDoeskinBrowse#aabbccddeeffghijhijklmnnnooppqrrsstuuuvvwxxyzzAboutCareersContact usCookies, terms, & privacyHelpFollow usGet the Word of the Day every day! 2025 Dictionary.com, LLCDo you know the difference between 'do' or 'does' and when to use each one? If you don't, not to worry: that's what this article is here to help you with.In short, 'do' and 'does' are both present tenses of the verb 'to do.' 'Does' is used with third-person singular pronouns. 'Do' is used with all the other pronouns.Comparing 'Do' or 'Does' 'Do' and 'does' are both forms of the present indefinite tense of the verb 'to do.' Which one you'll use will mostly depend on the sentence's subject. Their usage is almost identical, except for one instance where you can use 'do' and not 'does.' I'll cover all of them in this article.How to Use 'Do' or 'Does' The verb 'do' can be either a main or helping verb. 'Do' and 'Does' as Main VerbsAs a main verb, it denotes an action. "To do" something is "to perform, take part in, or achieve something." Here's how the verb is conjugated in the present tense: I doYou doShe/he/it doesWe doThey doYou doAs you can see, we use 'does' with the third-person singular pronouns and 'do' with all the others.What does that look like in practice? Here are a couple of examples of 'do' and 'does' used as main verbs:What shall we do now?I don't know what she does all day.'Do' and 'Does' as Helping Verbs'Do' and 'does' can also be used as helping verbs to form questions. The same pronoun rules apply here. For example:Do you like karaoke? Does he cycle to work?In both cases, 'do' isn't the main verb; instead, it helps the main verb: 'like' in the first sentence and 'cycle' in the second one.Top Tip! The only verb 'do' can't help is the verb 'to be.' You couldn't say, for example, "Do you be happy?"/Using 'Do' and 'Does' To Avoid RepetitionYou can also use 'do' and 'does' to avoid repeating the main verb when it's already been stated.This comes in handy when answering a question. For example, if someone asks us if we like tomatoes, instead of saying, "Yes, I like tomatoes," we can say, "Yes, I do." "Do you like tomatoes?Yes, I do.Does she like tomatoes?Yes, she does.It doesn't have to be an answer to a question, though. It can also be used as a substitute verb in almost any sentence to avoid repetition or when the main verb is obvious. For example:He types much faster than she does.Instead of repeating the verb 'type,' we use 'does' as a replacement. Here's another example:I don't play with my dog in the house; I do it in the garden.'Do' replaces the main verb 'play.'/Using 'Do' and 'Does' for EmphasisSometimes you can use 'do' or 'does' to emphasize what you're about to say. So, for example, if you want to say that you like a T-shirt, you can accentuate the verb 'like' with 'do.' 'I do like that T-shirt.Or with 'does,' if the pronoun is third person singular:She does like that T-shirt.Using 'Do' for Imperative SentencesRemember when I said earlier that there was one instance where you could use 'do' but not 'does'? Yep, so that's what I'll explain now.You can use 'do' with the imperative mood. You use this mood to give someone an order or make a request:Do the dishes, please.Do stop by on your way home.Do not tease your brother.Using "Do" or "Does" in Negative FormI wanted to mention a quick word about using 'do' and 'does' in the negative form. If you're forming a negative sentence, you can still use 'do' and 'does' in the same ways as described above, except you'll use the negative form of the verbs:Do do not / doesn'tPronunciation: How to Pronounce 'Do' and 'Does'Now that we've covered all the different usages of the 'do' and 'does,' would you like to know how to pronounce them?'Do' rhymes with 'blue,' 'moo,' and 'shoe.' It sounds like this:[d]uh JAs for 'does,' it rhymes with 'buzz' and 'because' and sounds like this:[d]uhz In case you're curious, here are the International Phonetics Alphabet spellings:/du / /doz Examples of 'Do' and 'Does' I know we've looked at plenty of examples, but I will list a few more here for each word because I believe repetition and practice are the best ways to improve our English skills. Therefore, the more examples you see, the better you'll understand how to use the words.Let's start with 'do.'/How to Use 'Do' in a SentenceI do like the color blue.They've broken up again; they do this annually.Do you want your apple pie?How to Use 'Does' in a SentenceI love the way she does her makeup.My dog always does a little excited bark when I tell him we're going out.Yes, he does believe in Santa Claus.Concluding ThoughtsThat concludes this article on the difference between 'do' and 'does' and how to use them correctly. Let's summarize what we've learned:'Do' and 'does' are present tense forms of the verb 'to be.'/Use 'does' with the third-person singular pronounUse 'do' with all the other pronounsYou can also use 'do' to form an imperative sentence with any pronounIf you found this article helpful, you might like the others in our Confusing Words blog archive. Check it out! English grammar can be tricky, especially when it comes to choosing between do and does. These two little words play a big role in how we ask questions and make statements, yet they often lead to confusion among English learners. If you've ever stopped mid-sentence, unsure of which one fits your query or statement, you're not alone.The good news is that there's a straightforward way to understand how and when to use these verbs correctly. It's not about memorizing complex rules but grasping a simple concept that will clear up the confusion once and for all. So, if you're looking to polish your English skills and say goodbye to those awkward pauses, you're on the right track.But wait! There's a twist in the tale that even native speakers sometimes miss. Stay tuned as we unravel this key piece of the puzzle.Understanding when to use do and does is key for speaking and writing English correctly. Use do and does with the pronouns I, you, we, and they. For example, I do like pizza or They do not want to go. On the other hand, use does with the third person singular pronouns: he, she, and it. So, you would say She does play the piano or It does not matter. Remember, in questions, these words shift to the start: Do you want tea? or Does he know her? Getting this right will make your English sound more natural.The Role of Do and Does in English GrammarIn English grammar, understanding the role of Do and Does as auxiliary verbs can greatly improve ones writing and communication skills. By examining the basic principles of sentence structure, familiarizing oneself with the distinction between these auxiliaries, and recognizing their impact on clarity and meaning, a strong foundation can be built to achieve grammatical accuracy.Understanding Basic Sentence StructureTo construct sentences using Do and Does, a solid comprehension of the basic English sentence structure is essential. The primary role of these auxiliary verbs is to assist in forming questions and negative sentences. As a rule, Do is used with plural pronouns (e.g., I, you, we, and they) as well as first person singular pronoun I, while Does is used exclusively with third person singular subjects (e.g., he, she, it, and singular nouns). Do you like apples?She does not have a dog.Distinguishing Between Do and Does as AuxiliariesAs auxiliaries, Do and Does determine the tense and agreement with the subject in a sentence. In particular, Do pairs with plural pronouns and I while Does is used with third person singular pronouns. These helping verbs allow for the indication of actions or states of being without the repetition of the main verb. Example: Do: We do need help.Does: He does understand the situation.The Impact of Verb Forms on Clarity and MeaningUsing Do and Does appropriately is crucial for maintaining clarity and preserving the intended meaning of sentences, especially when specifying present tense actions. Incorrect usage can result in ambiguity or misunderstandings regarding the timing of an action or statement.Related: Brackets in Writing with Clear ExamplesCorrectIncorrectThey do like to travel.But wait! There's a twist in the tale that even native speakers sometimes miss. Stay tuned as we unravel this key piece of the puzzle.Understanding when to use do and does is key for speaking and writing English correctly. Use do and does with the pronouns I, you, we, and they. 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