

Confusing Verbs

English has many verbs that are very similar, but have some important differences. For example, 'say' and 'tell' have very similar meanings, but we say some *thing* and we tell some *one*.

For example: "The teacher tells us to do our homework." ('tells us' = someone)

"The teacher says grammar is important."

Note: In the past tense 'say' is 'said' and 'tell' is 'told.'

1. Complete the gaps with 'say' or 'tell', or if the sentence is in the past 'said' or 'told.'

- a) Can you please **tell** me what time it is?
- b) I am very quiet at school, I usually don't **say** anything in class.
- c) He **told** me his name yesterday, but I forgot what it is.
- d) My dad loves to **tell** people dumb jokes.
- e) She **said** that her job is very hard, but it looks easy to me.
- f) Last night she **said** that she was feeling sick.
- g) Last week my boss **told** me that I don't have to work on Friday.
- h) I don't think it's a good idea to **tell** your colleagues that you hate your boss.
- i) He always **says** really mean things to his sister.
- j) A few minutes ago, the manager **said** the shop is closed.

2. Ask and answer the questions with a partner. Try to use what you have learned above.

- a) Is there any word in English that you find hard to say?
- b) If you are late to class, what do you say?
- c) Did your parents tell you anything when you were a child that was not true?
- d) What was the last good news someone told you?
- e) Do you say 'please' and 'thank you' a lot? Why?

Listen vs Hear

'Listen' and 'hear' have similar meanings, but listen means you are focused on that thing.

For example: *"I listen to music every morning."* (note: 'listen' is usually followed by 'to.')

'Hear' means the sound is in your ears, but doesn't mean you are focused on it.

For example: *"Every morning I can hear my neighbour playing music."*

We also use 'hear' to mean you got some information from somewhere.

For example: *"I heard you were sick last week, are you feeling ok?"*

Note: In the past tense 'listen' is 'listened', and 'hear' is 'heard' ('heard' is pronounced 'hurd').



3. Complete the gaps with 'listen to' or 'hear', or if the sentence is in the past 'listened to' or 'heard.'

- a) I always **listen to** the teacher in class.
- b) My grandfather has bad hearing, he can't **hear** his phone ring.
- c) I always **listen to** a podcast or an audiobook when I am driving.
- d) Last night I **heard** a strange sound coming from outside my window.
- e) I can always **hear** traffic in my apartment, it drives me crazy.
- f) Please **listen to** what I am saying very carefully.
- g) I **heard** Simon quit his job last week, good for him!
- h) Hello? Can you **hear** me? The connection isn't very good.
- i) I **listened to** your voice message this morning, but I couldn't understand all of it.
- j) I never **listen to** heavy metal, it's too angry!



4. Ask and answer the questions with a partner. Try to use what you have learned above.

- a) What type of music do you listen to?
- b) What sounds do you hear where you live (traffic, animals etc)?
- c) Do you usually listen to music while working or studying?
- d) Who was the last person you heard talking on the phone?

Do vs Make

'Do' often means to complete a task or activity. For he, she, and it statement we say 'does.'

For example: *"I always do my homework."* or *"She always does her homework."*

The verb 'do' is often used for activities such as sport and work.

Note: In the sentence above, 'do' is the main verb. It is different to 'do' in sentences such as 'Do you have a car?' where it is an auxiliary (helping) verb.

'Make' is used to talk about creating or building something.

For example: *"She makes her own cakes, they're so delicious!"*


Note: In the past tense 'do' is 'did', and 'make' is 'made.'

5. Complete the gaps with 'do' or 'make', or if the sentence is in the past 'did' or 'made.'

- a) We *make* dinner for our families most of the time.
- b) I *do* a lot of sports, I'm very healthy.
- c) They *made* a lot of money last year.
- d) The door *makes* a loud noise every time you open it.
- e) He met a lot of new people at school and *made* a lot of new friends.
- f) She *did* very well on her test, she got an A!
- g) Please don't *do* that, it's very annoying!
- h) We need to *make* some plans for our next holiday, we still don't know what we're going to do.
- i) We usually *do* most of the work on Mondays and Tuesdays.
- j) Can you please *make* an appointment with the doctor tomorrow?

6. Ask and answer the questions with a partner. Try to use what you have learned above.

- a) What do you usually do on Christmas?
- b) Do you make friends easily?
- c) When was the last time you made a very nice meal?
- d) What do you usually do on the weekend?

 7. Complete the conversation using 'say', 'tell', 'listen', 'hear', 'do', or 'make.' You may have to put the verbs in the past tense.

Sally. Hi Jeff, did Sarah *tell* you about Greg's birthday party?

Jeff. Greg's birthday party? No, she didn't *say* anything about it. What does he want to *do* for his birthday?

Sally. Well that's the problem, he hasn't organised anything, so we want to have a surprise party, I'm going to *make* a cake for him.

Jeff. Are you sure that's a good idea? Not everybody likes surprises. Last year he *said* that he usually doesn't have a birthday party because they make him uncomfortable.

Sally. I know, but he *said* last week that he feels lonely on his birthday.

Jeff. Really? He never *told* me that.

Sally. Maybe he didn't want to *tell* anyone directly. If we *do* something small with just a few friends, I think he would like it.

Jeff. Exactly. Let's just have a quiet dinner and *tell* everyone to keep it simple.

