

- d. Batik cloth from Bali, blue and white ceramics from Delft, and a bocce ball from Turin has made Angeli's room the talk of the dorm.
- e. The board of directors, ignoring the wishes of the neighborhood, has voted to allow further development.

**EXERCISE 21-2** For each sentence in the following passage, underline the subject (or compound subject) and then select the verb that agrees with it. (If you have trouble identifying the subject, consult 48a.)

Loggerhead sea turtles (migrate / migrates) thousands of miles before returning to their nesting location every two to three years. The nesting season for loggerhead turtles (span / spans) the hottest months of the summer. Although the habitat of Atlantic loggerheads (range / ranges) from Newfoundland to Argentina, nesting for these turtles (take / takes) place primarily along the southeastern coast of the United States. Female turtles that have reached sexual maturity (crawl / crawls) ashore at night to lay their eggs. The cavity that serves as a nest for the eggs (is / are) dug out with the female's strong flippers. Deposited into each nest (is / are) anywhere from fifty to two hundred spherical eggs, also known as a *clutch*. After a two-month incubation period, all eggs in the clutch (begin / begins) to hatch, and within a few days the young turtles attempt to make their way into the ocean. A major cause of the loggerhead's decreasing numbers (is / are) natural predators such as raccoons, birds, and crabs. Beach erosion and coastal development also (threaten / threatens) the turtles' survival. For example, a crowd of curious humans or lights from beachfront residences (is / are) enough to make the female abandon her nesting plans and return to the ocean. Since only one in one thousand loggerheads (survive / survives) to adulthood, special care should be taken to protect this threatened species.

## 22 Make pronouns and antecedents agree.

A pronoun is a word that substitutes for a noun. Many pronouns have antecedents, nouns or pronouns to which they refer. A pronoun and its antecedent agree when they are both singular or both plural.

- Do you expect to perform good on the exam next week?
- With the budget deadline approaching, our office hasn't hardly had time to handle routine correspondence.
- When I worked in a flower shop, I learned that some flowers smell surprisingly bad.
- The customer complained that he hadn't been treated nice by the agent on the phone.
- Of all the smart people in my family, Aunt Ida is the most cleverest.

## 27 Choose appropriate verb forms, tenses, and moods.

Except for the verb *be*, all verbs in English have five forms. The following list shows the five forms and provides a sample sentence in which each might appear.

BASE FORM	Usually I ( <i>walk, ride</i> ).
PAST TENSE	Yesterday I ( <i>walked, rode</i> ).
PAST PARTICIPLE	I have ( <i>walked, ridden</i> ) many times before.
PRESENT PARTICIPLE	I am ( <i>walking, riding</i> ) right now.
-S FORM	He/she/it ( <i>walks, rides</i> ) regularly.

The verb *be* has eight forms instead of the usual five: *be, am, is, are, was, were, being, been*.

### 27a Choose correct forms of irregular verbs.

For all regular verbs, the past-tense and past-participle forms are the same (ending in *-ed* or *-d*), so there is no danger of confusion. This is not true, however, for irregular verbs, such as the following.

BASE FORM	PAST TENSE	PAST PARTICIPLE
go	went	gone
break	broke	broken
fly	flew	flown
sing	sang	sung

The past-tense form always occurs alone, without a helping verb. It expresses action that occurred entirely in the past: *I rode to work yesterday. I walked to work last Tuesday.* The past participle is used with a helping verb. It forms the perfect tenses with *has, have, or had*; it forms the passive voice with *be, am, is, are, was, were, being, or been.* (See 47c for a complete list of helping verbs and 27f for a survey of tenses.)

**PAST TENSE**

Last July, we *went* to Tokyo.

**HELPING VERB + PAST PARTICIPLE**

We *have gone* to Tokyo twice.

The list of common irregular verbs below will help you distinguish between the past tense and the past participle. Choose the past-participle form if the verb in your sentence requires a helping verb; choose the past-tense form if the verb does not require a helping verb. (See verb tenses in 27f.)

- ▶ Yesterday we <sup>saw</sup> **seen** a documentary about Isabel Allende.

The past-tense *saw* is required because there is no helping verb.

- ▶ The truck was apparently <sup>stolen</sup> **stole** while the driver ate lunch.

- ▶ By Friday, the stock market had <sup>fallen</sup> **fell** two hundred points.

Because of the helping verbs *was* and *had*, the past-participle forms are required: *was stolen, had fallen.*

**Common irregular verbs**

BASE FORM	PAST TENSE	PAST PARTICIPLE
be	was, were	been
begin	began	begun
bring	brought	brought
buy	bought	bought
catch	caught	caught
choose	chose	chosen
come	came	come
do	did	done
drink	drank	drunk
drive	drove	driven

eat	ate	eaten
fall	fell	fallen
find	found	found
get	got	gotten, got
give	gave	given
hang (execute)	hanged	hanged
hang (suspend)	hung	hung
have	had	had
hear	heard	heard
keep	kept	kept
know	knew	known
lead	led	led
let (allow)	let	let
lose	lost	lost
make	made	made
ride	rode	ridden
rise (get up)	rose	risen
run	ran	run
say	said	said
see	saw	seen
send	sent	sent
set (place)	set	set
sit (be seated)	sat	sat
speak	spoke	spoken
stand	stood	stood
steal	stole	stolen
sting	stung	stung
swear	swore	sworn
take	took	taken
teach	taught	taught
throw	threw	thrown
wake	woke, waked	waked, woken
wear	wore	worn
write	wrote	written

## 27b Distinguish among the forms of *lie* and *lay*.

Writers and speakers frequently confuse the various forms of *lie* (meaning “to recline or rest on a surface”) and *lay* (meaning “to put or place something”). *Lie* is an intransitive verb; it does not take a direct object: *The forms lie on the table.* The verb *lay* is transitive; it takes a direct object: *Please lay the forms on the table.* (See 48b.)

BASE FORM	PAST TENSE	PAST PARTICIPLE	PRESENT PARTICIPLE
lie (recline)	lay	lain	lying
lay (put)	laid	laid	laying

- Niko was so exhausted that she <sup>lay</sup> laid down for a nap.

The past-tense form of *lie* (“to recline”) is *lay*.

- The patient had <sup>lain</sup> laid in an uncomfortable position all night.

The past-participle form of *lie* (“to recline”) is *lain*. If the correct English seems too stilted, recast the sentence: *The patient had been lying in an uncomfortable position all night.*

- The customer gently <sup>laid</sup> lay the tablet on the help desk counter.

- Letters dating from 1915 were <sup>lying</sup> laying in a corner of the chest.

The present participle of *lie* (“to rest on a surface”) is *lying*.

**EXERCISE 27-1** Edit the following sentences to eliminate problems with irregular verbs. If a sentence is correct, write “correct” after it. Answers appear in the back of the book.

The ranger <sup>saw</sup> seen the forest fire ten miles away.

- When I get the urge to exercise, I lay down until it passes.
- Grandmother had drove our new hybrid to the sunrise church service, so we were left with the station wagon.
- A pile of dirty rags was laying at the bottom of the stairs.
- How did the game know that the player had went from the room with the blue ogre to the hall where the gold was heaped?
- Abraham Lincoln took good care of his legal clients; the contracts he drew for the Illinois Central Railroad could never be broke.

## 27c Use -s or -es endings on present-tense verbs that have third-person singular subjects.

All singular nouns (*child, tree*) and the pronouns *he, she,* and *it* are third-person singular; indefinite pronouns such as *everyone* and *neither* are also third-person singular. When the subject of a sentence is third-person singular, its verb takes an -s or -es ending in the present tense. (See also 21.)

	SINGULAR	PLURAL
FIRST PERSON	I know	we know
SECOND PERSON	you know	you know
THIRD PERSON	he/she/it knows	they know
	child knows	parents know
	everyone knows	

- ▶ My neighbor <sup>drives</sup> drive to Marco Island every weekend.
- ▶ Sulfur dioxide <sup>turns</sup> turn leaves yellow, <sup>dissolves</sup> dissolve marble, and <sup>eats</sup> eat away iron and steel.

The subjects *neighbor* and *sulfur dioxide* are third-person singular, so the verbs must end in -s.

**NOTE:** Do not add the -s ending to the verb if the subject is not third-person singular. The writers of the following sentences added -s endings where they don't belong.

- ▶ I prepare<sup>s</sup> system specifications for every installation.  
The pronoun *I* is first-person singular, so its verb does not require the -s.

- ▶ The tile floors require<sup>s</sup> continual sweeping.

The -s form is used only for present-tense verbs with third-person singular subjects.

### Has versus have

In the present tense, use *has* with third-person singular subjects; all other subjects require *have*.

- This respected musician almost always <sup>has</sup> have a message to convey in his work.

The subject *musician* is third-person singular, so the verb should be *has*.

- My law classes <sup>have</sup> has helped me understand contracts.

The subject of this sentence — *classes* — is third-person plural, so the verb should be *have*.

### Does versus *do* and *doesn't* versus *don't*

In the present tense, use *does* and *doesn't* with third-person singular subjects; all other subjects require *do* and *don't*.

- Grandfather really <sup>doesn't</sup> don't have a place to call home.

*Grandfather* is third-person singular, so the verb should be *doesn't*.

### Am, is, and are; was and were

The verb *be* has three forms in the present tense (*am, is, are*) and two in the past tense (*was, were*).

	SINGULAR	PLURAL		
FIRST PERSON	I	am/was	we	are/were
SECOND PERSON	you	are/were	you	are/were
THIRD PERSON	he/she/it	is/was	they	are/were

- Did you think you <sup>were</sup> was going to drown?

The subject *you* is second-person singular, so the verb should be *were*.

## 27d Do not omit -ed endings on verbs.

The verb ending *-ed* is sometimes not fully pronounced with words and phrases such as *asked, fixed, pronounced, supposed to, and used to*. While the meaning of such words is often clear while speaking, include *-ed* endings in academic writing to avoid confusion.

### Past tense

Use the ending *-ed* or *-d* to express the past tense of regular verbs. The past tense is used when the action occurred entirely in the past.

- ▶ In 2020, author Colson Whitehead <sup>received</sup> receive the Pulitzer Prize for his novel *The Nickel Boys*.
- ▶ Last summer, my counselor <sup>advised</sup> advise me to ask my graphic arts instructor for a recommendation.

### Past participles

Past participles are used in three ways: (1) following *have*, *has*, or *had* to form one of the perfect tenses; (2) following *be*, *am*, *is*, *are*, *was*, *were*, *being*, or *been* to form the passive voice; and (3) as adjectives modifying nouns or pronouns. The perfect tenses are listed in 27f, and the passive voice is discussed in 8a. For a discussion of participles as adjectives, see 49b.

- ▶ Robin <sup>asked</sup> ask for more housing staff for next year.  
*Has asked* is present perfect tense (*have* or *has* followed by a past participle).
- ▶ Though it is not a new phenomenon, domestic violence is now <sup>publicized</sup> publicize more than ever.  
*Is publicized* is a verb in the passive voice (a form of *be* followed by a past participle).
- ▶ All kickboxing classes end in a cool-down period to stretch <sup>tightened</sup> tighten muscles.  
The past participle *tightened* functions as an adjective modifying the noun *muscles*.

## 27e Do not omit needed verbs.

Linking verbs, used to link subjects to subject complements, are frequently a form of *be*: *be*, *am*, *is*, *are*, *was*, *were*, *being*, *been*. (See 48b.) While some of these forms may be contracted (*I'm*, *she's*, *we're*, *you're*, *they're*), avoid omitting them altogether in academic writing.

- ▶ The city of Venice <sup>is</sup> better protected from flooding thanks to its new system of dams and gates called MOSE.

Helping verbs, used with main verbs, include forms of *be*, *do*, and *have* and the modal verbs *can*, *will*, *shall*, *could*, *would*, *should*, *may*, *might*, and *must*. (See 47c.) Like linking verbs, helping verbs may be contracted (*he's leaving*, *we'll celebrate*, *they've been told*), but avoid omitting them altogether in your writing.

- ▶ Astronomers <sup>have</sup> been studying the skies with the Hubble Telescope since 1990.

### FOR MULTILINGUAL WRITERS

Some languages do not require a linking verb between a subject and its complement. However, written English sentences always contain a verb. See 30a.

- ▶ Every night, I read to my daughter. When I <sup>am</sup> too busy, her older brother reads to her.

**EXERCISE 27-2** Edit the following sentences to eliminate problems with *-s* and *-ed* verb forms and with omitted verbs. If a sentence is correct, write "correct" after it. Answers appear in the back of the book.

The Pell Grant sometimes <sup>covers</sup> ~~cover~~ the student's full tuition.

- a. The glass sculptures of the Swan Boats was prominent in the brightly lit lobby.
- b. Visitors to the glass museum were not suppose to touch the exhibits.

- c. The electrician went to the security office to repair the close circuit TV.  
 d. Christos didn't know about Marlo's promotion because he never listens. He always talking.  
 e. Most psychologists agree that no one performs well under stress.

## 27f Choose the appropriate verb tense.

Tenses indicate the time of an action in relation to the time of the speaking or writing about that action.

The most common problem with tenses, shifting confusingly from one tense to another, is discussed in section 13. Other problems with tenses are detailed in this section, after the following survey of tenses.

### Survey of tenses

Tenses are classified as present, past, and future, with simple, perfect, and progressive forms for each.

**Simple tenses (base form or -s form)** For general facts, states of being, and habitual actions

#### SIMPLE PRESENT SINGULAR

I walk, ride, am  
 you walk, ride, are  
 he/she/it walks, rides, is

#### PLURAL

we walk, ride, are  
 you walk, ride, are  
 they walk, ride, are

#### SIMPLE PAST SINGULAR

I walked, rode, was  
 you walked, rode, were  
 he/she/it walked, rode, was

#### PLURAL

we walked, rode, were  
 you walked, rode, were  
 they walked, rode, were

#### SIMPLE FUTURE

I, you, he/she/it, we, they will walk, ride, be

**Perfect tenses (a form of have plus past participle)** For actions that were or will be completed at the time of another action

#### PRESENT PERFECT

I, you, we, they  
 he/she/it

have walked, ridden, been  
 has walked, ridden, been

## AFTER ALTHOUGH

- ▶ Although, the air was balmy, the water was cold.

## BEFORE A PARENTHESIS

- ▶ Sylvia knew that her ACT score was low, (only 22), but she felt confident about her application essay.

## TO SET OFF AN INDIRECT (REPORTED) QUOTATION

- ▶ Samuel Goldwyn once said, that a verbal contract isn't worth the paper it's written on.

## WITH A QUESTION MARK OR AN EXCLAMATION POINT

- ▶ "Why don't you try it?/" she coaxed. "You can't do any worse than the rest of us."

## EXERCISE 34-1

Delete any unnecessary commas in the following sentences. If a sentence is correct, write "correct" after it. Answers appear in the back of the book.

In his Silk Road Project, Yo-Yo Ma incorporates work by composers such as, Kayhan Kalhor and Richard Danielpour.

- After the morning rains cease, the swimmers emerge from their cottages.
- Tricia's first artwork was a bright, blue, clay dolphin.
- Some modern musicians, (trumpeter Jon Hassell is an example) blend several cultural traditions into a particular sound.
- Myra liked hot, spicy foods such as, chili, kung pao chicken, and buffalo wings.
- On the display screen, was a soothing pattern of light and shadow.

## EXERCISE 34-2

Delete unnecessary commas in the following passage.

Each spring since 1970, New Orleans has hosted the Jazz and Heritage Festival, an event that celebrates the music, food, and culture, of the region. Although, it is often referred to as "Jazz

Fest,” the festival typically includes a wide variety of musical styles such as, gospel, Cajun, blues, zydeco, and, rock and roll. Famous musicians who have appeared regularly at Jazz Fest, include Dr. John, B. B. King, and Aretha Franklin. Large stages are set up throughout the fairgrounds in a way, that allows up to ten bands to play simultaneously without any sound overlap. Food tents are located throughout the festival, and offer popular, local dishes like crawfish Monica, jambalaya, and fried, green tomatoes. Following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Jazz Fest revived quickly, and attendance has steadily increased each year. Like many festivals and events around the world, the Jazz and Heritage Festival was canceled in 2020, because of the pandemic. Fans, who missed the festival, still enjoyed the music by downloading songs, watching previous years’ performances online, and looking forward, to the festival’s return in future years.

## 35 The semicolon

### 35a Use a semicolon between closely related independent clauses not joined with a coordinating conjunction.

The semicolon is used to connect major sentence elements of equal grammatical rank. When two independent clauses appear in one sentence, they are usually linked with a comma and a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet*). If the clauses are closely related and the relation is clear without a conjunction, they may be linked with a semicolon instead.

In film, a low-angle shot makes the subject look powerful; a high-angle shot does just the opposite.

A semicolon must be used whenever a coordinating conjunction has been omitted between independent clauses. To use merely a comma creates a type of run-on sentence known as a *comma splice*. (See 20.)

- In 1800, a traveler needed six weeks to get from New York City to Chicago; in 1860, the trip by railroad took only two days.