

# COMMUNICATIVE ENGLISH GRAMMAR 1

**IRENE ADRYANI NABABAN, S.S., M.M., M.PD.**  
**DR. BLONERSINURAT, M.HUM.**



# **Communicative English**

## **Grammar 1**

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Dr. Bloner Sinurat, M.Hum.**



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Editor: Anita Sitanggang, S.Pd., M.Pd.

Cetakan Pertama: Januari 2024

Cover: Tim Penyusun

Tata Letak: Tim Kreatif PRCI

Hak Cipta 2024, pada Penulis. Diterbitkan pertama kali oleh:

**Perkumpulan Rumah Cemerlang Indonesia**  
**ANGGOTA IKAPI JAWA BARAT**

Pondok Karisma Residence Jalan Raflesia VI D.151  
Panglayungan, Cipedes Tasikmalaya – 085223186009

Website: [www.rcipress.rcipublisher.org](http://www.rcipress.rcipublisher.org)  
E-mail: [rumahcemerlangindonesia@gmail.com](mailto:rumahcemerlangindonesia@gmail.com)

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- Cet. I –: Perkumpulan Rumah Cemerlang Indonesia, 2024  
Dimensi : 14,8 x 21 cm

**ISBN 978-623-448-773-2**

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## KATA PENGANTAR

First of all we would like to express our sincere thanks to the Almighty God for the completion of this book 'Communicative English Grammar 1'. In this occasion we would also like to thank those who have offered significant contribution for the completion and publication of this book. We also sincerely address our deepest thanks to University of HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar for the valuable support for the publication of this book.

Last but not least, our deepest and sincere thanks are also addressed to our family for their understanding and spiritual support for the completion and publication of this book.

This book is expected to be able to provide sufficient English grammatical explanation and help those who wants to learn English.  
May the Almighty God bless them all.

Pematangsiantar, 2024

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# LESSON 1

## AUXILIARY VERBS

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### 1. Introduction

---

An auxiliary verb (also called a helping verb or verbal auxiliary) is a verb functioning to give further syntactic or semantic information about the main or full verb following it. In English, the extra meaning an auxiliary verb imparts alters the basic form of the main verb to have one or more of the following functions: *passive*, *progressive*, *perfect*, or *modal*. In English, every clause has a finite verb which consists of a full verb (a non-auxiliary verb) and optionally one or more auxiliary verbs, each of which is a separate word. Examples of finite verbs include *write* (no auxiliary verb), *have written* (one auxiliary verb), and *have been written* (two auxiliary verbs).

There is a syntactic difference between an auxiliary verb and a full verb; that is, each has a different grammatical function within the sentence. In English, there are some verbs that can act either as auxiliary or as full verbs, such as *be* ("I *am* writing a letter" vs "I *am* a postman") and *have* ("I *have* written a letter" vs "I *have* a letter"). In the case of *be*, it is sometimes ambiguous whether it is auxiliary or not; for example, "*The ice cream was melted*" could mean either "*Someone/something melted the ice cream*" (in which case *melt* would be the main verb) or "*the ice cream was mostly liquid*" (in which case *be* would be the main verb).

There are many auxiliary verbs in English. The primary auxiliary verbs are *to be* and *to have*, and other major auxiliaries include *shall*, *will*, *may* and *can*. There are also numerous other lesser used verbs such as *do*, *must*, *ought to*, *used to* and *dare*. Auxiliary verbs are formed by conjugation into the different forms: *am*, *is*, *are*, *shall*, *should*, *be*, *being*, *been*, *was*, *were*, *will*, *would*, *has*, *have*, *having*, *had*, *do*, *does*, *did*, *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *must*, *ought (to)*, *get*, *got(ten)*.

### 2. Functions of the English Auxiliary Verb

---

#### 2.1. Passive Voice

---

The auxiliary verb *be* is used with a past participle to form the passive voice; for example, the clause "the door **was opened**" implies that someone

opened it, without stating who it was. Besides, the verb *get* is sometimes used colloquially instead of *be* in forming the passive voice.

Examples:

- The window **got closed** at 8:30.
- We all got invited to the party.

## 2.2. Progressive Aspect

The auxiliary verb *be* is used with a present participle to form the progressive aspect; for example, the sentence "I **am riding** my bicycle" describes what the speaker is doing at the very moment of utterance, while the sentence "I **ride** my bicycle" is a temporally general statement.

## 2.3. Perfect Aspect

The auxiliary verb *have* is used with a past participle to form the perfect aspect; for example, the sentence "Peter **has fallen** in love" differs from "Peter fell in love" in that the former implies some connection to the present — likely that Peter is still in love — while the latter does not.

# 3. Properties of the English Auxiliary Verb

---

## 3.1. Negation

Auxiliaries take *not* (or *n't*) to form the negative, e.g. cannot (can't), will not (won't), should not (shouldn't), etc. In certain tenses, in questions, when a contracted auxiliary verb can be used, the position of the negative particle *n't* moves from the main verb to the auxiliary, e.g., *Does it not work?* and *Doesn't it work?*

## 3.2. Inversion

Auxiliaries invert to form questions:

- *You will come.*
- *Will you come?*

## 3.3. Emphasis

The dummy auxiliary *do* is used for emphasis in positive statements (see above):

- I *do* like this beer!

## 3.4. Ellipsis

Auxiliaries can appear alone where a main verb has been omitted, but is understood:

- I will go, but she won't (will not) [*go*].

The verb *do* can act as a pro-VP (or occasionally a pro-verb) to avoid repetition:

- John never sings in the kitchen, but Mary does. (*pro-VP: replaces sings in the kitchen*)
- John never sings in the kitchen, but Mary does in the shower. (*pro-verb: replaces sings*)

### 3.5. Tag Questions

Auxiliaries can be repeated at the end of a sentence, with negation added or removed, to form a tag question. In the event that the sentence did not use an auxiliary verb, a dummy auxiliary (a form of *do*) is used instead:

- You *will* come, *won't* you?
- You *didn't* eat, *did* you?
- You know how to dance, *don't* you?

## 4. Types of Auxiliaries

Auxiliary verbs are classified into three types, they are: Tense Auxiliaries, Do Auxiliaries, and Modal Auxiliaries (Frank, 1972). Each type serves a different purpose.

### 4.1. Tense Auxiliaries

Tense auxiliaries are those used to form sentences in various tenses. Auxiliaries used in present progressive tense: *am*, *are*, and *is*; Auxiliaries used in past progressive tense: *was* and *were*; Auxiliaries used in present perfect: *have* and *has*; Auxiliary used in past perfect is *had*; Auxiliaries used in future tense: *shall* and *will*. The Tense Auxiliaries can be shown as in the following chart.

#### Present Continuous Tense

| Subject | Auxiliary | Verb    | Adverb |
|---------|-----------|---------|--------|
| I       | am        | working | now.   |
| We      | are       |         |        |
| You     |           |         |        |
| They    |           |         |        |
| He      | is        |         |        |
| She     |           |         |        |
| It      |           |         |        |

#### Past Continuous Tense

| Subject | Auxiliary  | Verb | Adverb |
|---------|------------|------|--------|
| I       | <b>was</b> |      | then.  |

|      |      |         |  |
|------|------|---------|--|
| We   | were | working |  |
| You  |      |         |  |
| They |      |         |  |
| He   | was  |         |  |
| She  |      |         |  |
| It   |      |         |  |

### Present Perfect Tense

| Subject | Auxiliary | Adverb | Verb    |
|---------|-----------|--------|---------|
| I       | have      | just   | Worked. |
| We      |           |        |         |
| You     |           |        |         |
| They    |           |        |         |
| He      | has       |        |         |
| She     |           |        |         |
| It      |           |        |         |

### Past Perfect Tense

| Subject | Auxiliary  | Verb   | Adverb |
|---------|------------|--------|--------|
| I       | <b>had</b> | worked | Hard.  |
| We      |            |        |        |
| You     |            |        |        |
| They    |            |        |        |
| He      |            |        |        |
| She     |            |        |        |
| It      |            |        |        |

### Simple Future Tense

| Subject | Auxiliary  | Verb | Adverb |
|---------|------------|------|--------|
| I       | shall/will | work | hard.  |
| We      |            |      |        |
| You     | will       |      |        |
| They    |            |      |        |
| He      |            |      |        |
| She     |            |      |        |
| It      |            |      |        |

#### 4.1.1. Verb Patterns of Auxiliary Verb “Be”

The verb “Be” can be conjugated as in the following sentences, and the students may be asked to form more examples by changing the subject or by using the question words. Question words used to indicate the subject are *who*, *what*, or *which*; and question words used to indicate the subject complements are *who*, *what*, *how*, *where*, or *when*.

Verb Pattern a. Subject + To Be + Noun

| Positive                  | Negative                      | Interrogative             |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>I am a student.</b>    | <b>I am not a student.</b>    | <b>Am I a student?</b>    |
| <b>We are students.</b>   | <b>We are not students.</b>   | <b>Are we students?</b>   |
| <b>You are a student.</b> | <b>You are not a student.</b> | <b>Are you a student?</b> |
| <b>They are students.</b> | <b>They are not students.</b> | <b>Are they students?</b> |
| <b>He is a student.</b>   | <b>He is not a student.</b>   | <b>Is he a student?</b>   |
| <b>She is a student.</b>  | <b>She is not a student.</b>  | <b>Is she a student?</b>  |
| <b>It is a pen.</b>       | <b>It is not a pen.</b>       | <b>Is it a pen?</b>       |

Verb Pattern b. Subject + To Be + Adjective

| Positive               | Negative                  | Interrogative         |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>I am fine.</b>      | <b>I am not fine.</b>     | <b>Am I fine?</b>     |
| <b>We are fine.</b>    | <b>We are not fine.</b>   | <b>Are we fine?</b>   |
| <b>You are fine.</b>   | <b>You are not fine.</b>  | <b>Are you fine?</b>  |
| <b>They are fine.</b>  | <b>They are not fine.</b> | <b>Are they fine?</b> |
| <b>He is diligent.</b> | <b>He is not fine.</b>    | <b>Is he fine?</b>    |
| <b>She is fine.</b>    | <b>She is not fine.</b>   | <b>Is she fine?</b>   |
| <b>It is fine.</b>     | <b>It is not fine.</b>    | <b>Is it fine?</b>    |

### Verb Pattern c. Subject + To Be + Adverb

| Positive                      | Negative                          | Interrogative                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>I am in Perth now.</b>     | <b>I am not in Perth now.</b>     | <b>Am I in Perth now?</b>     |
| <b>We are in Perth now.</b>   | <b>We are not in Perth now.</b>   | <b>Are we in Perth now?</b>   |
| <b>You are in Perth now.</b>  | <b>You are not in Perth now.</b>  | <b>Are you in Perth now?</b>  |
| <b>They are in Perth now.</b> | <b>They are not in Perth now.</b> | <b>Are they in Perth now?</b> |
| <b>He is in Perth now.</b>    | <b>He is not in Perth now.</b>    | <b>Is he in Perth now?</b>    |
| <b>She is in Perth now.</b>   | <b>She is not in Perth now.</b>   | <b>Is she in Perth now?</b>   |
| <b>It is in Perth now.</b>    | <b>It is not in Perth now.</b>    | <b>Is it in Perth now?</b>    |

#### 4.1.2. Conjugation of Verb “Be”

The auxiliary verb “be” varies according to the time and the subjects used in sentences. Based on the time, the auxiliary verb “be” varies in simple present, present perfect, simple past, past perfect, simple future, and future perfect. In relation to the subjects, it varies and belongs to the first singular and plural persons (I and we), the second singular or plural person (you), and the third singular and plural persons (he, she, it and they). The conjugation of the auxiliary verb “be” can be drawn as in the following chart.

#### Conjugation of Verb “Be”

| Subject | Present | Present Perfect | Past | Past perfect | Future        | Future Perfect       |
|---------|---------|-----------------|------|--------------|---------------|----------------------|
| I       | Am      | have been       | was  | had been     | shall/will be | shall/will have been |
| We      | Are     |                 | were |              | will be       | will have been       |
| You     |         |                 |      |              |               |                      |
| They    |         |                 |      |              |               |                      |
| He      | Is      | has been        | was  |              |               |                      |
| She     |         |                 |      |              |               |                      |
| It      |         |                 |      |              |               |                      |

### Affirmative Sentences - Present

| Subject | Auxiliary | Subject Complement       |
|---------|-----------|--------------------------|
| I       | am        | in the classroom<br>now. |
| We      | are       |                          |
| You     |           |                          |
| They    |           |                          |
| He      | is        |                          |
| She     |           |                          |
| It      |           |                          |
|         |           |                          |

### Negative Sentences - Present

| Subject | Auxiliary      | Subject Complement               |
|---------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| I       | am <i>not</i>  | <b>in the classroom<br/>now.</b> |
| We      | are <i>not</i> |                                  |
| You     |                |                                  |
| They    |                |                                  |
| He      | is <i>not</i>  |                                  |
| She     |                |                                  |
| It      |                |                                  |
|         |                |                                  |

### Interrogative Sentences - Present

| Auxiliary | Subject     | Subject Complement           |
|-----------|-------------|------------------------------|
| Am        | <b>I</b>    | <b>in the classroom now?</b> |
| Are       | <b>we</b>   |                              |
|           | <b>you</b>  |                              |
|           | <b>they</b> |                              |
| Is        | <b>he</b>   |                              |
|           | <b>she</b>  |                              |
|           | <b>it</b>   |                              |

### Question Asking the Subject - Present

| Question Word | Auxiliary | Subject Complement           |
|---------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| Who           | is        | <b>in the classroom now?</b> |
|               | isn't     |                              |