

Intermediate 2
Unit 1 Grammar
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Linking Verbs vs. Action Verbs

A linking verb is a verb that connects the subject of a sentence to a word that describes its state of being, such as an adjective or a noun. An action verb is a verb that shows what action the subject is performing, such as running, singing, or jumping. For example:

She **is** happy. (linking verb)

She **runs** fast. (action verb)

Verbs:

➤ **Action Verbs**

We can add –ing to them.

They describe an action.

We modify them with adverbs.

Examples:

Michael is **running** fast.

They **speak** English very fluently.

Jane is **driving** carefully.

➤ **Linking Verbs**

We can't add –ing to them.

We modify them with adjectives.

- **Showing a State**

be, seem, taste, smell, sound, ...

Examples:

They **are** happy.

It **seems** good.

The soup **tastes** awful.

The perfume **smells** nice.

- **Showing a Change**

become, get, turn, grow, ...

Examples:

They **became** tired.

He **got** angry.

The weather **turned** cold all of a sudden.
She **grew** old.

Point:

Some verbs are sometimes linking verbs and sometimes action verbs depending on the meaning.
Examples:

Sally was **looking** at the ring carefully. → Look = Observe → Action Verb
Sally **looked** excited. → Look = Seem → Linking Verb

The chef **tasted** the food. → Taste = Test the flavor → Action Verb
The food **tasted** delicious. → Taste = Have a flavor → Linking Verb

I am **smelling** the flower. → Smell = Test the smell → Action Verb
The flower **smells** fantastic. → Smell = Have a smell → Linking Verb

How can we make sure a verb is a linking verb or an action verb?

A simple way to tell the difference is to replace the verb with a form of to be (am, is, are, was, were, etc.). If the sentence still makes sense, it is a linking verb. If not, it is an action verb. For example:

He looks tired. = He is tired. (linking verb)

He looks at the painting. ≠ He is at the painting. (action verb)

Go as a Linking Verb

go = become

➤ **Go + Color**

The leaves of trees **go orange** in fall and **go green** in spring.

Tom **went red**. = Tom got angry.

Mary **went green** with jealousy. = Mary felt jealous.

➤ **Go + Adjective Showing a Permanent Change for Worse**

Andrew **went bald** at the age of 28.

Mrs. Green **went blind** at the end of her life.

Source:

[Intermediate 2 \(anglophone.ir\)](http://intermediate2(anglophone.ir))