Action Verbs

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

What is a Transitive Verb?

A transitive verb is one whose action must be used in relation to an object, and when using the verb, it only makes sense if the verb is transferring action upon an object. That means the verb doesn’t sound good or work on its own without an object.

Consider the verb to bring: The verb will not make sense if the action of the verb is not acting on something, i.e. you have to bring something or someone. Simply saying I bring will not make sense on its own, you must bring something, an object or a person or a feeling. That something or someone – Joe, a book, your brother, a good mood – is the direct object of the sentence, i.e. the thing that the verb is acting upon.

I bring (doesn’t make sense without an object).

I bring a book for Grandma (makes sense because of the direct object, book).

I will bring my brother to the meeting.

Examples of Transitive Verbs

There are lots of examples of transitive verbs. They can be any verb that fulfils the criteria of needing to confer action upon an object. Consider these examples and see how the verb exerts action on an object.

I love

Please carry the books for me.

Can we buy these ones?

Johnny kicked the ball.

She didn’t take anything from the table.

I will send the note for the doctor.

Consider how these verbs need to confer the action upon the object. This makes them transitive verbs:

Love – you need to love something or someone for the verb to make sense.

Carry – you need to carry something or someone for the verb to make sense.

Buy – you need buy something for the verb to make sense.

Kick – you need to kick something or someone for the verb to make sense.

Take – you need to take something or someone for the verb to make sense.

Send – you need to send something or someone for the verb to make sense.