

### Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

Depending on the type of action that takes place, verbs may be transitive or intransitive.

The meaning of a transitive verb is expressed without a direct object, as in the following examples:

**INCOMPLETE**

The child **cries**.

**COMPLETE**

The child **cries** after looking at his new cat.

**INCOMPLETE**

The committee **met**.

**COMPLETE**

The committee **met** a new chairman.

**INCOMPLETE**

The airplane **flies**.

**COMPLETE**

The airplane **flies** to Paris.

As intransitive verbs, on the other hand, cannot take a direct object:

The child **was** **laughing** with his mother.

The compound verb "was laughing" is intransitive and takes no direct object. The prepositional phrase "with his mother" acts as an adjunct describing where the child was.

The point of the verb "was laughing" is finished.

The verb "laughed" is **intransitive** in the sentence and takes no direct object. The prepositional phrase "through the ceiling" acts as an adjunct describing where the person laughed.

The verb "was laughing" cannot take a direct object.

The intransitive verb "arrived" takes no direct object, and the noun phrase "for lunch" acts as an adjunct describing when the person arrived.

Since the company was pleased and the coffee delicious and good, we **opened** the restaurant for lunch.

The verb "opened" is used intransitively, although it does take the prepositional phrase "in the restaurant for lunch" with an adjunct describing where.

The parking was **full** and the **road** was **empty**.

The compound verb "was full" is used intransitively and the sentence has no direct object. The prepositional phrase "on the south side of the restaurant" acts as an adjunct describing where the parking was.

Many verbs can be either transitive or intransitive, depending on their context in the sentence. In the following pairs of sentences, the first sentence uses the verb transitively and the second uses the same verb intransitively: