

Transitive, Intransitive and Linking Verbs

Depending on the type of complement, verbs may be transitive, intransitive, or linking.

Transitive verbs: the bearing of a complement that is required without a direct object, as in the following examples.

ENCOURAGE

He **encouraged** me.

CREATE

She **created** a masterpiece.

ENCOURAGE

He **encouraged** me.

CREATE

She **created** the plan.

Intransitive verb: the verb does not require a complement, as in the following examples.

He **travels** around the world.

The intransitive verb "travel" takes no object, as in the following example. The verb "be" will also be defined as intransitive in the following.

* Many verbs occur without objects or complements, depending on their context, as the verb "be". In the following pairs of sentences, the first sentence uses the verb transitively and the second sentence uses it intransitively.

Transitive

He **is** a lawyer. (He is the subject; "is" is the verb; "a lawyer" is the object.)

In this example, the verb "is" takes a direct object, the noun phrase "a lawyer".

Intransitive

He **is**. (He is the subject; "is" is the verb.)

In this example, the verb "is" does not take a direct object.

Intransitive

He **is** a lawyer. (He is the subject; "is" is the verb; "a lawyer" is the object.)

The verb "is" occurs intransitively in the second sentence as well as transitively in the first.

Transitive

Every spring, the flowers **are** beautiful. (The flowers are the subject; "are" is the verb; "beautiful" is the object.)

In the sentence "flowers" is the subject; "are" is the verb; "beautiful" is the object.