

Transitive, Intransitive and Linking Verbs

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

Transitive verbs: the meaning of a transitive verb is completed without a direct object, as in the following examples.

ENCOURAGE

Ex. The committee **encouraged**

CONCLUDE

Ex. The committee **concluded** the project.

DISCOVER

Ex. The child **discovered**

CREATE

Ex. The artist **created** the plan.

Intransitive verbs: the meaning of an intransitive verb cannot take a direct object.

Ex. The team **celebrated** around the trophy cup.

The intransitive verb "celebrate" takes an object (agent), but the complement "the trophy cup" will not be selected because it is not the complement.

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

Example:

Ex. The manager **changed** the instructions. (transitive) The manager **changed** around his thinking. (intransitive)

In the example, the verb "change" takes a direct object in the first sentence "the instructions".

Example:

Ex. The crowd **cheered** the singer. (transitive) The crowd **cheered**.

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

Example:

Ex. The architect **designed** the building. (transitive) The architect **designed** the building. (intransitive)

When the verb "design" is used as an intransitive verb and takes no direct object.

Example:

Every spring, the committee **elects** a new president. (transitive) The committee **elects** the new president. (intransitive) The committee **elects** the president. (intransitive) The committee **elects** the president. (intransitive) The committee **elects** the president. (intransitive)