Verb complementation

ONE
Reflexive and reciprocal verbs

• We can use most transitive verbs with reflexive pronouns (*himself*; *ourselves*, *etc.*) when the meaning is appropriate:

  The driver *blamed himself* for the accident.
  The escaped prisoner *turned himself in* to the police.

• *Behave* is normally intransitive but we can use it transitively with reflexive pronouns:

  The boys *behaved themselves* very well.
VERBS THAT ARE ALWAYS REFLEXIVE

• A very few verbs are always followed by reflexive pronouns:

*He busied himself* cleaning the room.
*You'll have to content yourself* with second place.
*They prided themselves* on their performance.
*They availed themselves* of the free coffee.
VERBS THAT ARE COMMONLY REFLEXIVE

- The following examples show verbs, including phrasal verbs, that we commonly use with reflexive pronouns:

  *He proved himself to be unreliable.*
  *Don't kid yourself he's completely untrustworthy.*
  *Pull yourself together!*
  *If you don't stop working for a bit you'll wear yourself out.*

- Other verbs that we commonly use reflexively include: assert, distinguish, commit, exert, repeat, suit
VERBS THAT CHANGE THEIR MEANING WHEN USED REFLEXIVELY

A few verbs change their meanings when used with reflexive pronouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANING 1</th>
<th>MEANING 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bach composed an enormous amount of music.</td>
<td>The witness took a deep breath and composed himself:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you explain what you mean?</td>
<td>I think you need to explain yourself:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you applied for the job yet?</td>
<td>You'll have to apply yourself to the work more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They expressed their disapproval.</td>
<td>Doesn't he express himself well!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you enjoy watching golf on TV?</td>
<td>Did you enjoy yourself last night?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VERBS NOT USED REFLEXIVELY

• Some verbs are commonly reflexive in some languages but are generally used intransitively in English:

   He got up, washed and shaved.

• We may use these verbs reflexively for emphasis:

   He got up and washed himself and got dressed.

• Other verbs we use in this way include:

   adapt dress undress hide
RECIPROCAL VERBS

• We use some verbs that involve two or more participants (crash, marry) intransitively when it's clear who the participants are. In many other languages these verbs have an object or reflexive pronoun:

We disagreed, we fought, then we kissed and made up.
Here are more examples of verbs we use this way:

embrace – argue – touch – fall out – compete – meet
split up – talk – collide – shake hands
• We sometimes use *with each other* with some of these verbs for emphasis or to make the meaning clear, but it isn't grammatically necessary:

*We disagreed (with each other).*

• With other verbs, we must always use a prepositional phrase:

A. *I didn't see her coming and we bumped into each other.*

B. *I didn’t see her coming and we bumped*
You must ___(1) yourself that you are a winner. Don't ___(2) yourself get dragged down by self-pity ___(3) yourself in front of a mirror and ___(4) yourself in the eye. Don't ___(5) too hard on yourself, don't ___(6) yourself for things that have gone wrong, but at the same time, don't ___(7) yourself to be carried away; keep your feet on the ground. ___(8) yourself why you don't exactly ___(9) yourself in class. If you feel you're getting angry, ___(10) yourself. Never ___(11) yourself down, but at the same time don't ___(12) yourself above the others. As for exercise, ___(13) yourself to a couple of sessions in the gym every week and you won't ___(14) yourself ill, I promise you.
answers

(1) tell  (2) let  (3) Position  (4) look
(5) be    (6) blame  (7) allow  (8) Ask
(9) distinguish  (10) control  (11) put
(12) rate  (13) limit  (14) make
For each of the sentences below, write a new sentence as similar as possible in meaning to the original sentence, but using the word given. This word must not be altered in any way.

a 1 couldn't face telling her what had really happened.
• bring
b Of course most heating systems come on and off automatically nowadays.
• switch
c I simply lost all self-control when I saw them together.
• contain
d It's very difficult to put together a convincing defence against such allegations.
• yourself
e You can all of you take what you want from the fruit in that box.
• help
f I'm so annoyed.
• kick
Answers

a  I couldn’t bring myself to tell her what had really happened.
b  Of course most heating systems switch themselves on and off automatically now.
c  I simply couldn’t contain myself when I saw them together.
d  It’s very difficult to defend yourself convincingly against such allegations.
e  You can all of you help yourselves to the fruit in that box.
f  I could kick myself.
Verbs followed by that-clauses and adjectives
VERBS FOLLOWED BY A THAT-CLAUSE

• Many verbs can be followed by a that-clause, especially report verbs and verbs referring to mental processes such as thinking, feeling, realising:

  I've decided that I'm going away for the weekend.

• Here are more examples of verbs we can use in this way:

  comment – say – forecast – request – write – warn –
  assume – consider – infer – conclude – reckon –
  recognise – presume
the fact that

• We can use the phrase the fact that with some of these verbs for additional emphasis:
  
  I recognise **the fact that** she can't help it.

• Some transitive verbs can't be followed by a **that** clause alone but only by **the fact that**:
  
  We cannot **ignore the fact that** she lied to us.

• Other examples include:

  *quote* – *can't bear / stand* – *enjoy* – *express* – *investigate* – *leave out* – *face*
**THAT- CLAUSE OR TO- INFINITIVE**

- We can use a *that-clause* or *to-infinitive* after some of these verbs (agree, hope, pretend, forget, etc.) with practically no difference in meaning:

  He agreed *to come*.

  *He agreed that he would come.*

  *I promise to remember.*

  *I promise that I'll remember.*
• A few verbs can be followed by an object + to infinitive (usually to be).
• This is usually more formal than the alternative that-clause:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To-infinitive</th>
<th>That-clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I recognize her to be one of our best players.</td>
<td>I recognize that she is one of our best players.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know him to be scrupulously honest.</td>
<td>I know that he is scrupulously honest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They estimated costs to be in the region of £1m.</td>
<td>They estimated that costs were in the region of £1m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other examples include: announce confirm discover pronounce feel
wh-clauses

• Many verbs commonly followed by a that-clause can also be followed by a wh-clause:
  
  *I didn't know what to do.*
  
  *I can't imagine why they did that.*

• They are sometimes reported questions:
  
  *He asked what I was doing*
• Some verbs are followed by nouns or adjectives that describe the subject.

• Verbs used in this way include those connected with appearance and the senses (appear, look, sound, seem, etc.) and those connected with change (become, remain, grow, turn, etc.):

My father remained a member of the society even after they criticised his behaviour.
• Other verbs (*prove, appear, seem*, etc.) are followed by an **adjective** or **to be + adjective**:

*The plan proved (to be) unworkable.*

• Some verbs (*make, constitute, form, comprise*, etc.) are followed by **describing noun phrases**:

*You'll make a rotten teacher - you've no patience.*

*This represents a considerable increase in our profits.*
• Some verbs are followed by *object + complement*.
• We use most of these verbs in a limited range of collocations:

  The jury *found him guilty* of arson.
  He *knocked him unconscious* in the third round.
  You're *driving me crazy*!
  I *hold you responsible* for the damage.
  I *want him caught* as soon as possible.
• A few intransitive verbs can also be followed by adjectives:

*lie* empty /awake / helpless etc.

*stand* motionless /erect /firm /proud / idle etc.

*sit* quiet /silent /still etc.

*die* young / happy / intestate etc.

*escape* unharmed etc.

*pass* unnoticed / undetected etc.

*emerge* unscathed / uninjured etc.

(law) having made no legally valid will before death or not disposed of by a legal will
Choose every word that can complete each of the following sentences. One, two, three or four may be possible.

1. I ___ the way certain birds make their way home from miles away incredible.
   • a think b find c consider d make

2. She ___ that she had had enough of that kind of life.
   • a expressed b ignored c concluded d recognised

3. I ___ that she wasn't totally honest with us.
   • a reckon b can't bear c question d couldn't stand

4. We ___ that you intend to give less than the statutory period of notice.
   • a conclude b infer c assume d estimate

5. I think his presence in the side will ___ a big difference.
   • a have b do c become d make

6. They ___ him guilty of grievous bodily harm.
   • a said b found c told d charged
7 All of a sudden he went ___
• a blind b deaf c mad d crazy
8 Perhaps in the end it was best that he died ___
• a suddenly b young c intestate d happily
9 Your presence here is ___ me nervous.
• a getting b turning c making d having
10 Everyone fell ___ when the prince came in.
• a silent b quiet c asleep d over
11 You do ___ to have coped extraordinarily well.
• a seem b feel c appear d sound
12 It is a fact that this kind of snakebite rarely ___ fatal.
• a proves b emerges c grows d turns
Answers

(underline:) 1 a, b, c  2 c, d  3 a
4 a, b, c, d  5 d  6 b  7 a, b, c, d
8 a, b, c  9 c  10 a, c, d  11 a, c  12 a
Verbs used with prepositional and adverbial phrases
VERBS OF MOVEMENT

• Most verbs of movement are commonly followed by a prepositional phrase or an adverbial phrase:

The van skidded into the back of the car in front.
The rescue workers hurried towards the scene of the accident.
The smell of something wonderful wafted through from the kitchen.
• Other verbs we use in this way include:

post – burst – limp – race – shuffle
WATCH OUT

• We use *home* as an adverb after verbs of movement.
• We don't use a preposition:

*I'm going home as soon as we've finished*

*I'm going to home as soon as we've finished*
VERBS OF POSITION

• Some verbs which indicate the position of things are commonly followed by a prepositional phrase or an adverbial phrase:

I grabbed my coat which was hanging behind the door. We all sat at our desks and stared out of the window. The sandy beach stretches for miles along this part of the coast.

His land extends as far as the eye can see. She turned his chair so it faced towards the sea.

• Other verbs we use in this way include: remain - end up - occur - stay - settle - stick
VERB + OBJECT + PREPOSITIONAL/ADVERBIAL PHRASE

• With some verbs, the prepositional or adverbial phrase commonly follows an object:

_I picked up the picture and replaced it on the table._

_You need to plunge the tomatoes into boiling water to help remove their skins._

_Pop the pies into the oven for five minutes to heat them through._
• Other verbs we use in this way include:

VERB + ADVERB

• Some verbs are commonly followed by an adverb describing a particular quality:
The car handles particularly well on corners. Ping's English is coming along nicely. You'll find the section you need breaks off easily.

• Other verbs we use in this way include:
• A small group of verbs is commonly followed by *together*:

*We must all stick together if we're going to survive.*

• Verbs we use in this way include:

  *pull – get – knock around – move in – club – live*
VERB + WAY

• Some verbs are commonly followed by a possessive pronoun + way + prepositional / adverbial phrase: Spiderman managed to smash his way into the robbers' hideaway.

The advance guard slowly crawled their way across no-man's-land.

• Other verbs we use in this way include:

Fill each of the blanks with one of the verbs listed. You may need to change the form of the verb.


a. She rapidly __ her way up from Junior Assistant to Head of Department.
b. The couple were able to __ their way back to their hotel with the help of the new moon.
c. The doctor __ his way most convincing convincingly out of a potentially embarrassing situation.
d. He cleverly __ his way into Sonia's affections with mock-humility and subtle flattery.
e. The gang __ their way out of the gaol using wooden poles stolen from the workshop.
f. The fire officer __ his way along the ledge until he could just touch the girl's outstretched hand.
g. From 2-0 down, United bravely __ themselves out of a hole and emerged 2-3 winners.
h. The following week they __ their way back from 3-0 to earn a well-deserved draw.
Answers

a worked  b find  c lied  d wormed
e smashed  f inched  g dug  h fought
VOCABULARY
Dependent prepositions and prepositional phrases
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• longman