Verb Summary

The BE verb Present and Past

BE is a special verb in English, and it has different rules from other verbs. Here are some differences that are easy to see:

1. BE has no action. Most other verbs (go, study, eat, sleep) show action

2. BE has many forms. They change with different subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/She/It</td>
<td>is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (all)</td>
<td>are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>are</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. BE has different forms (irregular) for past tense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/She/It</td>
<td>was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>were</td>
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There are other important points to remember about BE

1. Be verbs can be followed by these 3 kinds of words: nouns, adjectives, and propositions

   1. **Noun**: name of person, place, or thing: Who? What?
      Cathy is a teacher.
      Yoko is a student.
      EdCC is a community college.

   2. **Adjective**: tells about the noun: What kind of...? How is...?
      Rashed is intelligent.
      Lisa is tall.
      Grammar is easy.

   3. **Preposition**: tells about when or where
      Grammar is at 12:00.
      Cathy is from California.
      We are in MLT 141.
2. Making questions is different when BE is the verb. We don’t need a helping verb. We use BE at the beginning of a yes/no question

   He is intelligent.  
   IS he intelligent?

We use BE after the question word

   He is at home.  
   Where IS he?

   He is a student?  
   What IS his job? (What does he do?)

   Class is at 12:00  
   What time IS class?

2. Making negatives with BE is also different. We don’t need a helping verb. We use the BE verb + not

   I’m not really crazy.  
   am not-----’m not
   You aren’t a lazy student.  
   are bit------aren’t
   She isn’t here today.  
   is not------isn’t
   We aren’t homesick yet.  
   We aren’t lonely.  
   They aren’t students.