Unit 3: THE VERB

The verb of a sentence can be:

- one word: He **works** in an office.
- two words: He **is working** in the office.
- three words: He **has been working** in the office.
- or even four words: He **must have been working** in the office.

In the sentences above, **work** (**works** and **working**) is an example of a **LEXICAL VERB**. Lexical verbs give basic information. Every simple sentence has one lexical verb in it.

In the sentences above, the words between **He** and **work** are examples of **AUXILIARY VERBS**. There are not many auxiliary verbs. They are:

- **do**
- **have**
- **be**
- **can**
- **could**
- **will**
- **would**
- **shall**
- **should**
- **may**
- **might**
- **must**

They are very important because we can use them together with lexical verbs. For example:

- **AUXILIARY**
- **LEXICAL**
- **AUXILIARY**

  Where **shall** I **meet** you?
  Is **John** **coming** to the party?  No, he **is not**.
  He **does** not **like** parties, **does** he?
  Have **they** **finished**?  Yes, they **have**.

We use auxiliary verbs to:

- make a negative sentence (Unit 5)
- make a question (Unit 9)
- give a short answer (Unit 11)
- make a tag question (Unit 12)
- make passive sentences (Unit 43)
- show what we feel about what we are saying (Unit 27)
- and in continuous and perfect verb formations (Unit 15)

To learn about **do**, **have**, **be** as auxiliaries, look at Unit 17.

The other auxiliaries are called **MODAL VERBS**. You can learn about them in Unit 27.