***The verb be***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Infinitive form | *be* | | |
| Present simple: | + | *I am, I'm You are, You're He/She/It is, He/She/It's* | *We are, we're You are, you're They are, they're* |
| ? | *Am I? Are you? Is he/she it?* | *Are we? Are you? Are they?* |
| - | *I am not, I’m not You are not, You aren’t, You're not He/She/It is not, He/She/It isn’t, He's not* | *We are not, We aren’t, We're not You are not, You aren’t, You're not They are not, They aren't, They're not* |
| Past simple | + | *I was You were He/She/It was* | *We were You were They were* |
| ? | *Was I? Were you? Was he/she/it?* | *Were we? Were you? Were they?* |
| - | I *was not, I wasn't You were not, You weren't He/She/It was not, He/She/It wasn't* | *We were not, We weren't You were not, You weren't They were not, They weren't* |
| Past participle | *been* | | |
| Present perfect | *has/have been* | | |
| Past perfect | *had been* | | |
| Present participle | *being* | | |
| Present continuous | *am/is/are being* | | |
| Past continuous | *was/were being* | | |

We use the infinitive form *be* with [modal verbs](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/node/1441):

*It* ***will be*** *dark soon.  
They* ***might be*** *tired.*

The verb ***be*** is a [link verb](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/node/10384). It is used:

* with a [**noun phrase**](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/node/10372):

*My mother* ***is a teacher****.  
Bill Clinton* ***was the president of the US****.*

* with an [**adjective**](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/node/1276):

*This soup* ***is very tasty****.  
The children* ***were good****.*

* with a **prepositional phrase**:

*John and his wife* ***are from Manchester****.  
The flowers* ***are on the table****.*

[am, is, are 1](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/grammar/english-grammar-reference/verb-be)

[am, is, are 2](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/grammar/english-grammar-reference/verb-be)

[am, is, are, was, were 1](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/grammar/english-grammar-reference/verb-be)

[am, is, are, was, were 2](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/grammar/english-grammar-reference/verb-be)

**Level: intermediate**

* with the ***-ing*** **form** to make [**the continuous**](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/node/1371) aspect:

*We* ***were walking*** *down the street. Everything was wet.  
It* ***had been raining*** *for hours.*

* with the **past participle** to make [**the passive**](https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/node/1389) voice:

*The house* ***was built*** *in 1890.  
The street* ***is called*** *Montague Street.  
This car* ***was made*** *in Japan.*