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## Action vs non action verbs list

Verbs that do not describe actions are called non-action verbs (also known as stative verbs, state verbs, or non-continuous verbs). These verbs express emotions, mental states, wants, preferences, senses, perceptions, appearance, possession, and relationship. Non-action verbs are not used in Continuous Tenses. Most of these verbs are only (or mostly) used in Simple Tenses. For instance: Mary loves pizza. (NOT Mary is loving pizza) John has a car. (NOT John is having a car) Here is a list of common non-action verbs: EMOTIONS, FEELINGS MENTAL STATES WANTS, PREFERENCE SENSES, PERCEPTION APPEARANCE, EXISTENCE, MEASUREMENT, VALUE POSSESSION, RELATIONSHIP admire agree desire deserve appear belong adore assume hope feel be come from (origin) appreciate astonish need hear consist of contain care believe prefer impress cost have detest concern want involve equal lack dislike consider wish notice fit own doubt deny observe include possess envy disagree perceive look (seem) fear disbelief see matter hate estimate smell measure (be long) like expect sound owe love feel (believe) taste represent miss find (believe) resemble regret forget seem respect guess signify trust hesitate weigh hope imagine know mean mind please presume promise realize recognize remember see (understand) suppose surprise suspect think (believe) understand wonder BE CAREFUL: Some verbs are non-action and action verbs! Verb Type Example HAVE non-action He has a car. (possession) action I'm having breakfast. (activity) THINK non-action I think you should go home. (opinion) action I'm thinking of changing my car. (consider) SEE non-action I see the bird. (see with your eyes)I see what you mean. (understand) action I'm seeing Mary later. (appointment)I've been seeing John for 1 year. (have a relationship with) SMELL non-action This flower smells really good. (scent) action I was smelling that flower. (activity) LOOK non-action John looks tired. (appearance) action Mary was looking at John. (activity) TASTE non-action This beer tastes delicious. (sense) action She is tasting the beer. (activity) BE non-action You are really cool. (personality) action You are being cool. (behaving) FEEL non-action She feels someone touching her shoulder. (sensation) action I am feeling fine OR I feel fine. (emotional state) P.S. Nowadays, people will use both the Continuous tense or Simple tense to express emotions. Although the purists believe that emotions should be expressed in the simple tense only, there is a popular movement to express emotions in the progressive tense. E.g. "I'm lovin' it" (Mc Donalds) What are non action words? Is continue an action verb? What is an action word called? Is understand an action verb? What are continuous verbs? What is present continuous tense with examples? Can stative verbs be used in continuous? Can we use feel in continuous? What is non continuous verb? How do you tell if a word is a preposition? What is the definition of present continuous? How do you use the present continuous tense in English? If you compare action vs. non-action words in a sentence you can easily see the difference. Following are explanations of these types of verb, reasons to use one or the other, and lots of examples.Action words, or action verbs, simply express an action. The action is something the subject of the sentence or clause is doing and includes sleeping, sitting, and napping—so even though there is no movement, there is still an action. Other examples are:CrawlDecorateJumpHauntKickEntertainWalkFollowGrowYellListenEat.Non-action words, or non-action verbs, do not refer to an action as such, but represent a state of being, need, opinion, sense, or preference. Examples are the "be" verbs, like: am, are, was, were, is, has been, and had. Referring to the senses, some non-action words are: look, smell, feel, taste, and sound. More examples of non action words are:prefer like love want need appear seem possess belong believe considerown When you are writing, you have to choose between using action or non-action words. This decision will depend on what kind of writing you are doing. When you write in the active voice, it adds impact to your writing and makes it stronger. Your sentences will be more positive and concise. Using action words is part of the process of active writing, where the subject is doing the action. When you use the passive voice, the action is done to the subject. Using non-action words, your sentence is less dynamic. Here are some examples:Active: The kids ate the cookies. Passive: The cookies were eaten by the kids.Active: Mary guided the tourists.Passive: The tourists were guided by Mary.You can see from these sentences that the active voice is more direct and strong, whereas the passive voice is weak and less concise. The passive voice in writing can also be confusing to the reader, because it is not precise and uses more words. Many times the passive voice is awkward because you have to work harder to figure out who did what. It can also be vague and is often used a lot by politicians, businesses, and advertisers to obscure facts and place blame elsewhere. For example:Mistakes were made. (By whom?)Your service will be interrupted. (Not, We will interrupt your service.) If you are writing a mystery story or novel, you may want to be deliberately vague. You may want to place emphasis on "the painting that was taken" rather than on who is responsible, as you won't reveal that information until later in the book or story. Crime reports often have to be written in the passive voice because all the facts are not available. You would have to say "the store was robbed" if you don't know who did it yet. Another place that the passive voice may be used is in reporting on scientific findings. The passive voice will keep the author's opinions out of the writing, so the sentence may read like this: "Data supports the theory that this disease is caused by bacteria XYZ." That is better than saying: "I think that bacteria XYZ caused the disease." Five of the following sentences are active and five are passive. Remember that the state of being verbs (are, am, were, is, was, and has been) are used in passive sentences. Also to identify an action word pay attention to the person or thing doing the action.Tom walked to the park.The horse is being brushed by Sarah.I ran all the way home!His new kite was broken.Is your dad going to the movie? Information was discovered yesterday.Our snowman is melting.The cake was baked yesterday.I can't decide what to do.That play has been seen by thousands of people.Answers: The odd numbered sentences are active, and the even numbered ones are passive. Share on FacebookShare on Twitter Look at this sign. Is there something wrong with it? This is a derivative of "i'm lovin it" by Leonid Mamchenkov, used under CC BY.Think about it carefully. Because you might not be right!You probably think that there's a problem with this sentence because "love" is what we call a non-action or stative verb. Non-action verbs are those verbs that we can't use in the continuous (-ing) form.e.g.I have a cat.notI'm having a cat.This rule is kind of right. Most of the time.But of course, it's a little bit more complicated than that.Today I want to answer two questions about non-action verbs:What's the logic behind them? Is there a shortcut?I hear people breaking the rules all the time. Why?So before we start, I want to give you a statement to really get to the logic behind non-action verbs and why we have them:Non-action verbs (stative verbs) are about control.This statement is basically the big secret to understanding when to "ing" and when not to "ing."Where there's no control over an action, it's a non-action verb. So you can't use the continuous.That's because the continuous tenses are all about being in the "driving seat" — about being in control.It makes sense, right? If you say something simple like, "I'm feeding the sharks," then this is something you have control over.Your brain is controlling your arm, which is releasing the shark food into the water.This is a derivative of "throwing a piece of stone." by mxmstryo, used under CC BY.You are in control. And that feels good! It's good to be in control around sharks.Of course, perhaps feeding sharks is your job, and you feed them every morning. In this case, you would use the present simple tense: "I feed the sharks every morning." But the important thing is the control. If it's possible to control it, it's an action verb.So what about things that you can't control?This is when you can't use the continuous. No control means no driving seat, which means no continuous.So what kinds of things can't we control?Well — here is a simple diagram of the general areas of "no control" in English.The heart, the mind, existence and perception are the main parts of life that we have no control over — no matter how hard we try.Let's look at these in detail, and then see how we can break the rules that we've just discovered!Non-action verb hack #1:So let's go back to your shark-feeding job.This is a derivative of "throwing a piece of stone." by mxmstryo, used under CC BY.Maybe you feed the sharks every day.Maybe you're feeding the sharks right now.But how do you feel about it?Personally, I would feel great about it. I would love feeding the sharks.Can I control this feeling? Absolutely not. You can't control what you like and what you don't like. So verbs about liking (and not liking) are non-action verbs. That means no continuous tenses for these verbs! love feeding the sharks. (I'm loving feeding the sharks.)I like feeding the sharks. (I'm liking feeding the sharks.)I hate feeding the sharks. (I'm hating feeding the sharks.)I want to feed the sharks...OK. But what if we want to say that we like something but only now. Like... I like it now, but I usually don't like it?We have a useful verb for this. Although it's about our heart, we can actually use it in the continuous tense. Let's call it a "useful exception."This verb is "enjoy."We can use it how we want. So instead of:I like feeding the sharks. But only today, because it's sunny.You can say:I'm enjoying feeding the sharks today.Instead of:I love feeding the sharks. But only today, because Bruce is here.You can say this:This is a derivative of "throwing a piece of stone." by mxmstryo, used under CC BY.And instead of saying:I hate feeding the sharks. But only today, because Bruce isn't here.You can say:I'm really not enjoying feeding the sharks. I miss Bruce.So there you have it — "enjoy" is the useful verb we can use to express our temporary feelings.OK. Got it. Can I break the rules now? Sure!There's a phrase that has been getting more and more popular over the years. It's a phrase that serious grammar people would hate but so many people use because it actually serves a real purpose.Imagine your colleague walks into work with a completely new hairstyle.She looks awesome and you want to tell her so.Some people would probably notice the new hair immediately and say something like, "I love the new hair."Other people, like me, may be a little quieter about it. But we like the hair and want to tell her.It might be a week later, so normally, that would be too late to say you like the hair, right?That's when this phrase can come in use:It's a way of saying, "I love the new hair. Even though I didn't say it before, I've liked it all this time."Useful, right?Non-action verb hack #2:...sometimesYou think you can control your brain? Really?Well, can you control...what you believe?...what you understand?...what you know?...who you know?When we believe something — that's it, right? We can't "unbelieve" it. It's the same with "understand" and "know."What about the things we can control with our brain?Well, of course. There are some verbs we can control and as a result, they're action verbs, so we can use the continuous:The most interesting example of this control/no-control dynamic is with the verb "think." Take a look at these examples:See the difference?Non-action verb hack #3:...or a thing can't control its existence"To be, or not to be."Yep — that's right. It's either one or the other.Hamlet is a great example of someone who has no control over himself. He's like the non-action verb pop star.You either exist or you don't. This is pretty simple, right?So that works for people:He's a doctor.And that's also why "have" is a non-action verb — you have no control over what you have.I have the most beautiful guitar in the world!I suppose you could just throw the guitar away. But you just wouldn't, would you?This is also the case with objects. Objects can't control... well, most of them can't really control anything at all.So we have words like "consist":The whole band consists of old women.And "contain" or "include":Or "weigh" and "measure":...anything we use to describe what an object is.OK. Got it. Can I break the rules now?Of course.I wouldn't actually go as far as saying this is breaking the rules, but there are strong exceptions to the rule.Like "be." "Be" is the ultimate "existence" verb. It's entire meaning is... EXIST!But we can actually use it to describe temporary actions.Let's look at Jamie, the dog.He's usually really chilled out.But this is him now.I think it's because he got bitten by a bee. Now he's being noisy and aggressive.So — when we describe people's (or dogs') temporary behaviour, we can use "be" in the continuous.Another big example of exceptions is with the verb "have."Remember, that "have" can mean "possess." Like with the best guitar in the world.But it can also be like "do." We use this in soooooo many ways, but here are some examples:No, I'm not having a barbecue. I'm at work.He can't talk to you now. He's having a shower: People have been having fights here for 40 years now.Non-action verb hack #4:(except you can, like... half of the time)OK. Perception.The interesting thing about perception is that it's both voluntary and involuntary at the same time.That means that you can both control it, and you also can't at the same time.I remember when I was a kid and I was thinking about this sort of stuff for the first time.I thought, "It's interesting that if I don't want to see anything, all I have to do is close my eyes and that's it. But if I don't want to hear anything there's not much I can do. I can put my fingers in my ears, but that doesn't really solve it."Then I really started thinking about it more and realised that even when I close my eyes, I haven't turned off my eyes. I can still see something — it's just the inside of my eyelids.Then I decided to stop thinking and start playing with the cat.All of these thoughts I had as a kid have a direct connection to how we use "perception" verbs in English.For each of the two main senses (seeing and hearing), we have two verbs. One of them is non action, the other is an action verb:Non-action verbAction verbseelook athearlisten to We can control what we look at (by moving our eyes/head) but we always see something. Even if it's the inside of our eyelids.Now when we look at all the senses, things get a bit more complicated.Take a look at this picture:Notice how he uses the verb "look" twice. Once for "I'm looking at your report," and once for the report: "It looks awful."This is something we can do with the "5 senses" verbs. We can use them for ourselves — this is when we have control. ("I'm looking at your report.")And we can use them for the thing that we're perceiving — this is when there's no control. ("It looks awful.")Here's an example for each sense:OK. Got it! Can I break the rules now?You can!Let's look at these one by one:HearAs you saw above, "hear" is a non-action verb. We have no control.Except when it comes to this particular phrase... Check out this conversation:"I'm hearing things."What's going on here? Why did she say that?You know that feeling when you think you hear something... but it was all in your head?This usually happens when you're frightened, or when you're expecting to hear something.That's when we break the rule with this phrase.SeeRemember our lovely couple from back in April?Such a nice couple, right?Let's listen to what their friends are saying about them:"Jo and Emma are perfect for each other. How long had they been seeing each other before they got married?"You guessed what it means, right?If you're "seeing someone," it means you're in a relationship with them. It's a little less formal than being in a serious relationship, but a bit more serious than "dating." (I'm British, so I have no idea how this "dating" thing actually works — but I know it's kind of informal...)OK. So let's go back to that image from the beginning:Would you say it's correct?Think about your answer first, then let me know in the comments and give a reason for your answer. (Make sure you scroll down to the comment box.)Want more? Get a free month of Gymglish, a daily English workout with a fun, engaging narrative and personalised corrections. Get it here.Share on FacebookShare on Twitter what are action and non action verbs. what are non action verbs







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