

The 100 Most Common English Verbs

Verbs carry the meaning of almost every English sentence, and a very small number of them do most of the work. These are the 100 most frequent verbs in a one-billion-word corpus of real American English — the ones you will meet on your first day of reading and still be using at C1.

	#	WORD	CEFR	MEANING AND EXAMPLE
☐	1	be	A1	to exist, or to have a particular quality or identity <i>She is a nurse at the city hospital.</i>
☐	2	have	A1	to own or hold something, or to experience it <i>They have two children.</i>
☐	3	do	A1	to perform an action; also used to form questions and negatives <i>I do the shopping on Saturdays.</i>
☐	4	say	A1	to speak words, or to express something in words <i>He said he would call back later.</i>
☐	5	go	A1	to move or travel from one place to another <i>We go to the beach every summer.</i>
☐	6	get	A1	to receive or obtain something, or to become <i>I got a letter from my sister.</i>
☐	7	can	A1	to be able to do something, or to be allowed to <i>She can speak three languages.</i>
☐	8	know	A1	to have information about something, or to be familiar with someone <i>I know the answer to that question.</i>
☐	9	will	A1	used to talk about the future or to make a decision at the moment of speaking <i>I will help you carry those bags.</i>
☐	10	would	A2	used for polite requests, offers, and imagined situations <i>I would travel more if I had the time.</i>
☐	11	make	A1	to create or produce something, or to cause something to happen <i>He makes his own bread every week.</i>
☐	12	think	A1	to have an opinion, or to use your mind to consider something <i>I think this is the right decision.</i>
☐	13	see	A1	to notice something with your eyes, or to understand it <i>I saw her at the station this morning.</i>
☐	14	come	A1	to move towards the speaker or to arrive somewhere <i>Come here and look at this.</i>
☐	15	take	A1	to get hold of something, or to carry it somewhere <i>Please take an umbrella with you.</i>

#	WORD	CEFR	MEANING AND EXAMPLE
☐ 16	want	A1	to wish for or desire something <i>She wants a quieter place to live.</i>
☐ 17	could	A2	the past of 'can'; also used for polite requests and possibility <i>Could you open the window, please?</i>
☐ 18	look	A1	to turn your eyes towards something, or to seem a certain way <i>You look tired this morning.</i>
☐ 19	use	A1	to do something with a tool, method, or object for a purpose <i>I use this app to track my spending.</i>
☐ 20	tell	A1	to give someone information by speaking to them <i>Tell me what happened yesterday.</i>
☐ 21	find	A1	to discover something, especially after looking for it <i>I finally found my keys under the sofa.</i>
☐ 22	give	A1	to hand something to someone or let them have it <i>She gave me her phone number.</i>
☐ 23	need	A1	to require something because it is necessary <i>We need more time to finish this.</i>
☐ 24	should	A2	used to give advice or say what is the right thing to do <i>You should see a doctor about that cough.</i>
☐ 25	work	A1	to do a job, or (of a machine) to function properly <i>He works in a small design studio.</i>
☐ 26	try	A1	to make an effort to do something <i>I tried to call you three times.</i>
☐ 27	let	A2	to allow someone to do something <i>My parents let me stay out late.</i>
☐ 28	call	A1	to telephone someone, or to give someone or something a name <i>I'll call you when I get home.</i>
☐ 29	may	B1	used to say something is possible, or to ask permission politely <i>It may rain later this afternoon.</i>
☐ 30	mean	A2	to have a particular sense or intention <i>What does this word mean?</i>
☐ 31	feel	A1	to experience an emotion or physical sensation <i>I feel much better today.</i>
☐ 32	ask	A1	to put a question to someone, or to request something <i>She asked me where I was going.</i>
☐ 33	talk	A1	to speak with someone about something <i>We talked for hours about the trip.</i>

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☐ 34	keep	A2	to continue having something, or to continue doing something <i>Keep your ticket until the end of the journey.</i>
☐ 35	leave	A1	to go away from a place, or to let something stay behind <i>The train leaves at nine o'clock.</i>
☐ 36	put	A1	to move something into a particular place or position <i>Put the milk back in the fridge.</i>
☐ 37	like	A1	to enjoy something or find it pleasant <i>I like walking in the rain.</i>
☐ 38	help	A1	to make it easier for someone to do something <i>Can you help me move this table?</i>
☐ 39	start	A1	to begin doing something, or to make something begin <i>The film starts in ten minutes.</i>
☐ 40	become	A2	to begin to be something <i>She became a teacher after university.</i>
☐ 41	happen	A2	to take place, especially without being planned <i>Nobody knows what happened that night.</i>
☐ 42	show	A1	to let someone see something, or to explain how to do it <i>Show me the photos from your trip.</i>
☐ 43	seem	A2	to appear to be a certain way <i>He seems happy in his new job.</i>
☐ 44	might	B1	used to say something is possible but not certain <i>We might go to Spain this summer.</i>
☐ 45	hear	A1	to notice a sound with your ears <i>I couldn't hear you over the music.</i>
☐ 46	believe	A2	to think something is true <i>I believe she's telling the truth.</i>
☐ 47	play	A1	to take part in a game or sport, or to make music <i>They play football every Sunday.</i>
☐ 48	turn	A1	to move so you face a different direction, or to become <i>Turn left at the traffic lights.</i>
☐ 49	run	A1	to move quickly on foot, or to manage something <i>She runs five kilometres every morning.</i>
☐ 50	live	A1	to have your home somewhere, or to be alive <i>They live in a flat near the park.</i>
☐ 51	write	A1	to produce words on paper or a screen <i>He wrote me a long letter.</i>

	#	WORD	CEFR	MEANING AND EXAMPLE
☐	52	bring	A1	to carry or take something with you to a place <i>Bring your passport to the interview.</i>
☐	53	move	A2	to change position or place <i>We moved to a bigger house last year.</i>
☐	54	must	A2	used to say something is necessary or very likely <i>You must wear a helmet on the site.</i>
☐	55	begin	A2	to start doing something or to start happening <i>The lesson begins at half past two.</i>
☐	56	love	A1	to care about someone very much, or to enjoy something greatly <i>I love the smell of fresh coffee.</i>
☐	57	hold	A2	to keep something in your hand, or to contain something <i>She held the baby carefully.</i>
☐	58	read	A1	to look at words and understand their meaning <i>I read two books on holiday.</i>
☐	59	stop	A1	to end an action, or to no longer move <i>The bus stopped outside the school.</i>
☐	60	pay	A1	to give money for something <i>I paid for the tickets online.</i>
☐	61	provide	B1	to give someone something they need <i>The hotel provides towels and soap.</i>
☐	62	lose	A2	to no longer have something, or to fail to win <i>I always lose my umbrella on the train.</i>
☐	63	understand	A2	to know what something means or why it happens <i>I don't understand this question.</i>
☐	64	wait	A1	to stay somewhere until something happens <i>We waited twenty minutes for the bus.</i>
☐	65	meet	A1	to come together with someone, or to get to know them <i>Let's meet outside the cinema.</i>
☐	66	thank	A1	to tell someone you are grateful <i>I thanked her for all her help.</i>
☐	67	change	A1	to become different, or to make something different <i>The weather changed very quickly.</i>
☐	68	watch	A1	to look at something for a period of time <i>We watched the sunset from the balcony.</i>
☐	69	sit	A1	to rest with your weight on your bottom <i>Sit down and make yourself comfortable.</i>

	#	WORD	CEFR	MEANING AND EXAMPLE
☐	70	create	B1	to make something new exist <i>The law created thousands of new jobs.</i>
☐	71	learn	A1	to get knowledge or a skill through study or experience <i>She's learning to play the guitar.</i>
☐	72	kill	A2	to cause someone or something to die <i>The frost killed all the young plants.</i>
☐	73	include	B1	to have something as one of its parts <i>The price includes breakfast.</i>
☐	74	stand	A2	to be on your feet in an upright position <i>He stood by the window for a long time.</i>
☐	75	follow	A2	to go after someone, or to do what a rule says <i>Follow this road until the roundabout.</i>
☐	76	remember	A1	to keep something in your mind or bring it back to mind <i>I can't remember her surname.</i>
☐	77	speak	A1	to say words, or to be able to use a language <i>Do you speak Portuguese?</i>
☐	78	set	B1	to put something in a place, or to fix a time or level <i>They set the meeting for Friday morning.</i>
☐	79	allow	B1	to let someone do something <i>The school doesn't allow phones in class.</i>
☐	80	win	A2	to come first in a competition or fight <i>Our team won the final on penalties.</i>
☐	81	lead	B1	to guide a group, or to result in something <i>This path leads to the lake.</i>
☐	82	continue	B1	to keep happening or keep doing something <i>The rain continued all afternoon.</i>
☐	83	spend	A2	to use money, or to pass time doing something <i>We spent the weekend in the mountains.</i>
☐	84	stay	A1	to remain in a place or condition <i>Stay here until I come back.</i>
☐	85	add	A2	to put something with something else to increase it <i>Add a little salt to the sauce.</i>
☐	86	die	A2	to stop living <i>The old oak tree died last winter.</i>
☐	87	buy	A1	to get something by paying money for it <i>I bought these shoes online.</i>

	#	WORD	CEFR	MEANING AND EXAMPLE
☐	88	send	A1	to make something go somewhere, especially a message <i>She sent me a photo of the house.</i>
☐	89	walk	A1	to move on foot at a normal speed <i>I walk to work when the weather is good.</i>
☐	90	grow	A2	to get bigger, or to make plants develop <i>These tomatoes grow well in pots.</i>
☐	91	open	A1	to move something so it is no longer closed <i>Could you open the window?</i>
☐	92	consider	B1	to think about something carefully before deciding <i>We're considering moving to a smaller town.</i>
☐	93	hope	A2	to want something to happen and think it might <i>I hope you feel better soon.</i>
☐	94	offer	B1	to ask someone if they would like something <i>They offered her the job on the spot.</i>
☐	95	build	A2	to make something by putting parts together <i>They're building a new bridge over the river.</i>
☐	96	expect	B1	to think that something will happen <i>We expect the parcel to arrive on Tuesday.</i>
☐	97	fall	A2	to move down towards the ground, usually by accident <i>The leaves fall early this year.</i>
☐	98	appear	B1	to become visible, or to seem <i>A message appeared on the screen.</i>
☐	99	serve	B1	to give food or drink to someone, or to be useful for a purpose <i>Breakfast is served until ten.</i>
☐	100	break	A2	to separate into pieces, or to stop working <i>I broke a glass while washing up.</i>

Why these 100 verbs first

This list is ordered by raw corpus frequency, not by what a textbook thinks you should learn first. That is deliberate: frequency is the one ordering that reflects what English speakers actually say and write, rather than what is convenient to teach.

A few entries may surprise you. Modal verbs like *can*, *will*, *would* and *could* appear high on the list because the corpus tags them as verbs — they are not separated out. They are genuinely among the most common verbs in English, so we have left them where the data puts them.

Ranked by frequency in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), a corpus of one billion words. Entries are lemmas: one entry covers all inflected forms of the word. CEFR levels are FluencyRoad's editorial estimate and are not part of the corpus data.

Frequency data from www.wordfrequency.info, derived from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA).
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