

# TO BE VERBS

**To Be Verbs** help express the state of the subject. They can link the subject to an adjective description (e.g., to be happy, to be clean, to be tired), a noun description (e.g., to be a teacher, to be a child, to be a musician), or a prepositional phrase (e.g., to be in the house, to be by the door, to be behind the building). This resource will help you understand the different forms of the verb “to be” and how to correctly use this verb in English writing.

## PRESENT TENSE TO BE VERBS

The Present Tense forms of the verb “to be” include “am,” “is,” and “are.” The form of the verb changes depending on whether the subject is in the first person, second person, or third person; and whether the subject is singular or plural.

Singular	Plural
I <b>am</b>	We <b>are</b>
You <b>are</b>	You (all) <b>are</b>
He/she/it <b>is</b>	They <b>are</b>

## EXAMPLES

1. I **am** a student at Regent University.
2. We **are** basketball players.
3. The children **are** friends with each other.
4. She **is** my professor.
5. You **are** a great artist.

## PAST TENSE TO BE VERBS

The Past Tense forms of the verb “to be” include “was” and “were.” Remember to match the verb form to the subject.

Singular	Plural
I <b>was</b>	We <b>were</b>
You <b>were</b>	You (all) <b>were</b>
He/she/it <b>was</b>	They <b>were</b>

## EXAMPLES

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1. I *was* grateful for the gift.
2. It *was* cold outside yesterday.
3. We *were* loud at the concert.
4. You *were* tired this morning.
5. The boxes *were* red.

\* This information comes from the chapter “Key 1: To Be,” in *Keys to Teaching Grammar to English Language Learners: A Practical Handbook*, by Keith S. Folse.

**PRACTICE NOW**