

PATTERNS OF THE ENGLISH VERB PHRASE RULE

LEGEND

VERB	= BARE VERB
AUX	= BARE AUXILIARY (have or be)
VERBED	= verb, verbs, verbed (or walk/walks/walked) (am, are, is, was, were) (i.e. inflected)
AUXED	= aux, auxs, auxed (have, has, had) (be , am, are, is, was, were) (i.e. inflected)
AUXPART	= BEEN (past participle) when it follows HAVE (for PERFECT), or BEING (present participle) when PROGRESSIVE precedes PASSIVE.

PERFECT is first, so it is never in participle form though the lexical verb (to possess) can be.

*The team **has** had the lead before.*

*The mushrooms **have** not been had before.*

PARTICIPLE = EN if PERFECT or PASSIVE are the last auxiliary, and
ING if PROGRESSIVE is the last auxiliary.

NOTE

EN is a common way to show the participle form since most past participles end in ED and can be confused with the simple past tense. EN **must** follow one of the three auxiliaries, where simple past ED **cannot** follow an Auxiliary or a Modal. Also, note that the difference between the **BE** verb's past tense forms "was/were" & its past participle form "been" and that for **HAVE** they are the same: "had".

GUIDE

The rules below and examples provided show nearly all verb phrases. One type not shown are those using Semimodals. Most Semimodals will show tense and person, but the Verbs and Auxiliaries following Semimodals will not be tensed (whether the "to" is explicit or reduced in pronunciation). It is also possible to have a mix of Modals and Semimodals.

In the example below, the Semimodal "need to" fills the Participle slot, but makes "be able to" a bare Semimodal, which is followed by the bare verb "get".

*I would have **needed to be able to get** there, to do that.*

In the next example, the Semimodal "be able to" takes the past participle form since it follows the auxiliary the PERFECT.

*I could have **been able to** do that.*

In the last example, the Semimodal "be supposed to" starts the sentences so it is inflected with person and past tense, but the present perfect progressive that follows is not.

*He **was supposed to** have been working on his homework.*



1. If **DO**, then **DO/DOES/DID** + VERB

2. If **no DO**, then

a. if **no MODAL** or **AUX**, then **VERBED**

b. if **MODAL**, then **MODAL** + VERB

c. if **AUX**, then

[	AUXED	]	+ PARTICIPLE
	AUXED + AUXPART		+ PARTICIPLE
	AUXED + AUXPART + AUXPART		+ PARTICIPLE
[perfect + progressive + passive]			

d. if **MODAL & AUX**, then **MODAL** +

[	AUX	]	+ PARTICIPLE
	AUX + AUXPART		+ PARTICIPLE
	AUX + AUXPART + AUXPART		+ PARTICIPLE
[perfect + progressive + passive]			

1. You **do** do it. It **does** do it. It **did** do it.

2.

a. You do it. It does it. It did it.

b. You **can** do it. It **can** do it. It **could** do it.* I would do it.*

c. (**AUXED**)

You **have** done it. It **has** done it. It **had** done it.

I **am** done. You **are** done. It **is** done. It **was** done. They **were** done.

I **am** doing it. You **are** doing it. It **is** doing it. It **was** doing it. They **were** doing it.

(**AUXED + AUXPART**)

I **have been** doing it. It **has been** doing it. It **has been** done. It **has been** done.

I **am being** told. It **is being** told. They **are being** told. I **was being** told.

They **were being** told.

(**AUXED + AUXPART + AUXPART**)

It **has been being** done. They **have been being** cleaned.

d. (**AUX**)

I **will have** done it. It **will have** done it. It **would have** done it.*

I **will be** doing it. It **will be** doing it. It **would be** doing it.*

I **will be** done. It **will be** done. It **would be** done.*

(**AUX + AUXPART**)

It **will have been** doing it. It **will have been** done. It **will be being** done.

(**AUX + AUXPART + AUXPART**)

It **will have been being** done.

* only **could** and **would** are able to show simple past, but they only do so without auxiliaries.

