
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The Grammar Gameshow

Verb patterns

Will

Hello and welcome to today's Grammar Gameshow! I'm your host, Will! – at least, if I'm able to! And of course, let's not forget Leslie, our all-knowing voice in the sky.

Leslie

Hello everyone!

Will

Tonight we're going to be asking 3 questions about...

Leslie

Verb patterns – when two verbs are used together in English, which forms do they take?

Will

OK! Now, let's meet our contestants!

Mya

Hello, everyone. I'm Mya!

Will

Contestant number two.

Helen

Hello, everyone. My name's Helen!

Will

Welcome back Mya! Four in a row. Wow, we've never had a contestant on for so long...we're all starting to get a little bit sick of your face! Ok. Let's get going and don't forget you can play along at home too. Our first round is a matching round. Listen to each of these sentences and tell me what form the verb 'dance' takes in each one. I can...

Helen

dance

Leslie

Correct!

Will

I enjoy...

Mya

dancing

Leslie

Correct!

Will

I would like...

Helen

to dance

Leslie

Correct!

Will

I intend...

Mya

to dance

Leslie

Correct!

Will

I must...

Helen

dance

Leslie

Correct!

Will

I can't help...

Mya

dancing

Leslie

Correct!

Will

Leslie?

Leslie

All correct, well done. Some verbs, such as modal verbs like can and must, are followed by a bare infinitive. Some verbs, such as would like and intend, are followed by a full infinitive. Finally, some verbs, such as enjoy and can't help, are followed by an ING form. These are called verb patterns.

Will

A pattern is something that repeats itself over and over again. Like calling my ex- at 4am ... Well done! But, if you want any points, you'll have to fulfil your promise.

Mya, Helen

Promise?

Will

Why to dance, of course! Alright, not bad. Mya, I liked your finger thing there, and Helen – oh, good moves! Have two points each. Now, on to our second question. Happy, terrible and wonderful are all what types of word? How does this relate to verb patterns?

Helen

They're all adjectives. Aren't adjectives always followed by an ING verb?

Will

Leslie?

Leslie

Sorry...almost. They are indeed adjectives. When an adjective is followed by a verb, its form is usually a full infinitive – for example, it's wonderful to see you!

Will

Wonderful to see you too Leslie! Wherever you are! Sorry Helen, I'm going to have to take away 10 points.

Helen

Oh wait...look.

Will

Yes!.You know, I used to have a pet octopus. Thirty points to you! No one likes an attention seeker Mya. Here comes our third question! Look at these sentences and tell me what kind of verb pattern follows each one. I believe without... Turn off the alarm before... I want to sit instead of ...

Mya

They all end with a preposition. After the preposition we use an ING verb.

Will

Leslie?

Leslie

Yes, Mya. As Mya just mentioned, we usually follow prepositions with ING verbs and not full or bare infinitives. I believe without seeing. Turn off the alarm before leaving. I want to sit instead of standing.

Will

Well done Mya. I'd give you some points, but I don't want you to win! And that brings us to the end of today's Grammar Gameshow. Let's count out the points. And the winner is.... Helen with more than Mya! Well done! Here's what you've won!

Leslie

It's a tin opener! Look at that handle action!

Will

Wow! An opener for a tin can be useful in oh so many situations! And Mya, my oldest friend. I wanted you to keep winning for ever and ever. But alas. Are you happy?

Mya

I don't want to ...

Will

Watch out for the squirrels! It looks like we'll need another contestant. Thanks for joining us. Say goodbye Leslie

Leslie

Goodbye Leslie

Will

See you next time.