

Mistakes with verbs

Here are some common mistakes in the use of verbs.

Incorrect: He asked that what I was doing.

Correct: He asked what I was doing.

If a noun-clause begins with a wh-word, 'that' is omitted.

Incorrect: She asked had we finished our meals.

Correct: She asked if we had finished our meals.

We use 'if' or 'whether' to introduce an indirect 'Yes' or 'No' question.

Incorrect: Rahul said can he go home.

Correct: Rahul asked if he could go home.

When the reporting verb is in the past tense, the verb in the reported speech should also be in the past tense.

Incorrect: He does not care for his father's words.

Correct: He pays no attention to his father's words.

To care for is to look after or to provide for the needs of someone.

To pay attention to someone is to listen to what they are saying.

Incorrect: James does not care for money.

Correct: James does not take care of his money.

Incorrect: He said that he paid the fee last week.

Correct: He said that he had paid the fee the previous week.

This is an example of the common failure to use the past perfect tense in the reported speech when the verb in the main clause is in the past tense.

Mistakes with verbs

Incorrect: This has been going on since a long time.

Correct: This has been going on for a long time.

Use 'for' to indicate duration.