

Using do and make

The words do and make are often confused. They have very similar meanings; however, there are some differences as well. In this lesson, we will explain the correct usage of do and make. Examples of common standard expressions with do and make are also given.

Using do

Do is a general purpose verb. Use it for activities. For example, you can use do to talk about your daily activities or routines.

'Do' for Activities

Note that these activities do not usually produce a physical object.

Examples are given below.

You should do your homework before watching TV.

She doesn't like to do housework.

Can you do the ironing?

I will do the dishes but you have cook dinner.

As you can see, none of these activities produce a physical object.

The verb do can also be used to talk about general ideas.

In this case, we do not name the activity. With this meaning, do is quite common words like something, anything, nothing, everything etc.

I didn't do anything.

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I would like to do something.

Are you doing anything about that letter from the tax people?

I did everything I could.

Using make

The verb make is used for constructing, creating and building. When you make something, you usually produce a physical object.

I made a cake.

The kettle is boiling. Shall I make tea?

She makes beautiful decorative items with paper.

Standard expressions with make

The word make doesn't necessarily have to produce a physical object that you can touch. It is also used with several abstract ideas. For example, you can make plans, but you don't do plans.

Here is a list of common standard expressions with make.

Make an exception

Make arrangements

Make plans

Make money

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Make a call

Make a mistake

Make a decision

Make noise

Make an effort