

Correct Uses of the verb BE

In earlier lessons some irregular verbs were included. I'm sure you had no trouble with these because your ears know what sounds correct. However, we will review the rules just in case you become confused.

Regular verbs work this way.

<u>Today</u>	<u>Yesterday</u>
He cooks I, You, or We cook	cooked
He fixes I, You, or We fix	fixed
He picks I, You, or We pick	picked

Sometimes there's a pattern to irregular verbs

<u>Today</u>	<u>Yesterday</u>
He blows I, You, or We blow	blew
He grows I, You, or We grow	grew
He knows I, You, or We know	knew

Sometimes there's no pattern

<u>Today</u>	<u>Yesterday</u>
He rides I, You, or We ride	rode
He slides I, You, or We slide	slid
He wakes I, You, or We wake	woke

Other times you may not even recognize the verb.

Singular Forms of the Verb BE

<u>Today</u>	<u>Yesterday</u>
I am	I was
you are	you were
he, she, it is	he, she, it was

Plural Forms of the Verb BE

<u>Today</u>	<u>Yesterday</u>
We are	We were

Rules for Present Tense

am is are

- Use **am** with the pronoun I.
- Use **is** when you mean one person, place, or thing.
- Use **are** when you mean more than one person, place, or thing, and with the pronoun you.

Examples – Present Tense Singular

<u>Singular Nouns or Pronouns</u>	<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Sentences</u>
I	am	I am the biggest boy in the valley.
Billy	is	Billy is too young to hunt by himself.
It	is	It is the biggest coon I have ever seen.

Examples – Present Tense Plural

<u>Plural Nouns or Pronouns</u>	<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Sentences</u>
Hounds	are	Hounds are good hunters.
You	are	You are in for a long, cold night.

Write the correct present tense form of be (**am, is, are**) to complete the sentence.

The beautiful night _____
perfect for hunting.

The beautiful night **is** perfect for
hunting.

Write the correct present tense form of be (**am, is, are**) to complete the sentence.

Papa _____ happy to see my ax sharpened.

Papa **is** happy to see my ax
sharpened.

Write the correct present tense form of be (**am, is, are**) to complete the sentence.

The hounds _____ anxious to go.

The hounds **are** anxious to go.

Write the correct present tense form of be (**am, is, are**) to complete the sentence.

He told the sheriff, "I _____ Billy Colman."

He told the sheriff, "I **am** Billy
Colman."

Rules for Past Tense

was were

- Use **was** when you mean one person place, or thing.
- Use **were** when you mean more than one person, place, or thing.

Examples – Past Tense Singular

<u>Singular Nouns or Pronouns</u>	<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Sentences</u>
I	was	I was twelve years old when I caught my first coon.
Billy	was	Billy was too cold to stop shaking.
It	was	It was time to go home.

Examples – Past Tense Plural

<u>Plural Nouns or Pronouns</u>	<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Sentences</u>
Hounds	were	Hounds were all over the mountain.
We	were	We were here first.
You	were	You were the last one to go home.

Write the correct present tense form of be (**was, were**) to complete the sentence.

I _____ as nervous as Samie,
our house cat.

I **was** as nervous as Samie, our house cat.

Write the correct present tense form of be (**was, were**) to complete the sentence.

One of the things I promised Mama _____ to not go into the river.

One of the things I promised Mama
was to not go into the river.

Write the correct present tense form of be (**was, were**) to complete the sentence.

My boots _____ as soft as a hummingbird's nest.

My boots **were** as soft as a hummingbird's nest.

Write the correct present tense form of be (**was, were**) to complete the sentence.

I could tell Mama _____ as worried as a cat in a room full of rocking chairs, and it didn't make me feel too good.

I could tell Mama **was** as worried as a cat in a room full of rocking chairs, and it didn't make me feel too good.

Practice with this online quiz using
forms of **Be**

<http://a4esl.org/q/f/z/zz86skm.htm>

Practice – Number your paper from 1 to 18. Write the correct answer for each of the following items.

1. We (am, is, are) down by the river bottom in record time.

2. Because I told Little Ann that today is important, she (am, is, are) ready with her tail wiggling and twisting.

3. A large raccoon (am, is, are)
down in the river bottom.

4. Hanging on the tool shed (am, is, are) my first hide.

5. I (am, is, are) old enough to go hunting by myself.

6. Two large coons (am, is, are) up
in the tree.

7. While Mama and my sisters
(was, were) bundling me up,
Papa lit my lantern.

8. By the large oak tree (was, were) the largest coon I have ever seen.

9. Two pairs of coon eyes (was, were) staring back at Billy.

10. Choose the sentence that is written correctly.

- a) Billy was beside his hounds expecting one of them to bawl, but the hounds were ready for a rest.
- b) Billy was beside his hounds expecting one of them to bawl, but the hounds was ready for a rest.
- c) Billy were beside his hounds expecting one of them to bawl, but the hounds were ready for a rest.
- d) Billy were beside his hounds expecting one of them to bawl, but the hounds was ready for a rest.

11. Read this sentence.

Billy is an inexperienced trainer, but Old Dan and Little Ann are the best coon dogs a boy could wish for.

What is the correct way to write this sentence?

- a) Billy am an inexperienced trainer, but Old Dan and Little Ann are the best coon dogs a boy could wish for.
- b) Billy is an inexperienced trainer, but Old Dan and Little Ann is the best coon dogs a boy could wish for.
- c) Billy are an inexperienced trainer, but Old Dan and Little Ann are the best coon dogs a boy could wish for.
- d) Best as is.

12. Which of the following is **NOT** written correctly?

- a) My dogs were just big, awkward pups, trailing their first live coon.
- b) The ring-tail fool was not going to trick my dogs again.
- c) My dogs didn't know it, but I was pretty well convinced the coon had hidden in the log.
- d) Neither Old Dan or Little Ann were bewildered.

13. Choose the sentence that is written correctly.

- a) After seeing that there was nothing to be scared of, once again I were the fearless hunter.
- b) The trails was forgotten as I tore off through the brush.
- c) I are afraid to believe it.
- d) Little Ann is about to stand on the stepping stone in the river.

14. Which of the following is **NOT** written correctly?

- a) It was the king of the woods, towering far above the smaller trees.
- b) The huge limbs was spreading out over the small birch, ash, box elder, and water oak.
- c) I am the one who named this tree "the giant".
- d) I was thinking of going to the river to wash my face in cool water.

15. Which sentence in the paragraph below contains a mistake?

(1) The raccoon are a furry animal that has a bushy ringed tail. (2) Their fur coloring makes them appear to be wearing masks. (3) This is why they have been given the nickname "Bandit". (4) The "mask" goes across the raccoon's face from cheek to cheek then around the eyes above the nose.

16. Which sentence in the paragraph below contains a mistake?

- (1) The fur on the mask is a dark brown color. (2) The rest of the raccoon's fur are gray to a blackish color. (3) The tail of a raccoon has rings of different colors. (4) The rings are black and light brown or gray.

17. Which sentence in the paragraph below contains a mistake?

(1) Seven species of raccoons live in the world. (2) The northern raccoon are 30 to 38 inches long. (3) They weigh 12 to 25 pounds.

18. Which sentence in the paragraph below contains a mistake?

(1) Raccoons have stiff, long hair. (2) The hair are generally gray with yellow or brown. (3) Raccoons have tails which are 12 inches long.