

TESOL Lesson Plan – Intermediate Class: Verb Phrases

Administrative Details

Lesson Title	When, How Long, and How Sure – Understanding Verb Phrases
Date	27/10/2025
Level	Intermediate (A2 – B1)
Lesson Duration	20 minutes
Number of Students	15
Teacher	David Grant

Lesson Objectives

- Recognise how verb phrases express time (tense), duration (aspect), and attitude (modality).
- Identify the auxiliary verbs used to mark each system.
- Sort and categorise sentences into tense, aspect, and modality.
- Produce accurate verb phrases using all three systems.
- Apply these concepts in short, communicative sentences about personal experience.

Special Considerations

Students may not be aware that verb phrases contain multiple systems working together. Highlight that even short verb phrases can express time, progress, and attitude. Help learners differentiate tense (when?), aspect (ongoing or completed?), and modality (how sure or necessary?).

Target Language

Verb phrases combining tense, aspect, and modality.

Auxiliary verbs: will, have, be, must, can, might, etc.

Examples:

- He walks to school. (tense)
- He is walking to school. (aspect)
- He must walk to school. (modality)
- He will have been working. (all three systems combined)

Lesson Stages & Activities

Duration	Stage / Activity	Link to Objective
3 mins	Lead-In / Warm-Up: Elicit difference in meaning between 'He works', 'He is working', and 'He must work'. Use slide 1-2 to prompt discussion.	Link to key grammar system(s) and communicative application.
5 mins	Presentation: Use slides to explain tense (when), aspect (how long), and modality (how sure). Show examples and link to auxiliary verbs.	Link to key grammar system(s) and communicative application.
4 mins	Guided Practice: Sentence sort – learners categorise sentences by system (tense/aspect/modality). Review using answer slide.	Link to key grammar system(s) and communicative application.
5 mins	Controlled Practice: Students complete a short categorisation or matching task to reinforce meaning of each system.	Link to key grammar system(s) and communicative application.

2 mins	Communicative Practice: Students say three true sentences about themselves using different systems. E.g., 'I studied yesterday', 'I am studying now', 'I will study tomorrow'.	Link to key grammar system(s) and communicative application.
1 min	Feedback & Wrap-Up: Review concept questions: When? Finished or continuing? How sure? Summarise systems.	Link to key grammar system(s) and communicative application.

Anticipated Problems & Solutions

- Learners may confuse tense with aspect. Use clear timelines and sentence comparisons.
- Learners may see 'will' as a tense marker, not a modal. Explain it as a modal showing future time.
- Learners may over-focus on rules. Emphasise meaning and communication (When? Finished? Sure?).

Differentiation Strategies

- Stronger students can reformulate basic verb phrases with added aspect or modality.
- Weaker students can use sentence stems (e.g., 'I will...', 'I have been...')
- Peer support and group feedback in sentence sorting tasks.

Homework / Extension Activities

Write three sentences about yourself:

- One using tense only
- One showing aspect (e.g., progressive or perfect)
- One using a modal verb

Optional: Combine all three in one sentence (e.g., 'I will have been living in Australia for two years by January').

Self-Evaluation / Reflection

How do you feel the overall lesson went?

Were the students engaged in learning?

Did the students follow instructions? Why?

Did you allow enough time?

What would you change next time?

Did you give effective feedback to students?

What did you learn from this teaching experience?