

Troublesome Verbs

Sit and Set

Sit means “**to take a seat or sit down.**”

I want to sit here a while and rest.
Sit in the blue chair.

Set means “**to place something.**”

Please set this blue chair in that corner.
Set the red cushion on the blue chair.

Wrong

Billy, why did you **sit** your trap next to the front door where you knew Samie would get into it?

Right

Billy, why did you **set** your trap next to the front door where you knew Samie would get into it?

Wrong

For that, Billy, you must **set** in the corner for an hour and think about poor, sad Samie.

Right

For that, Billy, you must **sit** in the corner for an hour and think about poor, sad Samie.



I **sit** on the chair.



I **set** my gun down.

Write **sit** or **set** to complete the sentence.

Grandpa did not like to _____ in this chair.

Grandpa did not like to **sit** in this chair.



I **sit** on the chair.



I **set** my gun down.

Write **sit** or **set** to complete the sentence.

Mama carefully _____ the lamp on the table.

Mama carefully **set** the lamp on the table.



I **sit** on the chair.



I **set** my gun down.

Write **sit** or **set** to complete the sentence.

Who _____ the lantern on this table?

Who **set** the lantern on this table?



I **sit** on the chair.



I **set** my gun down.

Write **sit** or **set** to complete the sentence.

Would you like to _____ here by the fire?

Would you like to **sit** here by the
fire?

Practice – Write the correct answer for each of the following items.

1. David carelessly (sit, set) the pork chops on the table where the dog could reach them, and it did.

2. Papa (sit, set) his alarm for 5 A.M. so that he would not be late delivering the mail.

Lie and Lay



People lie on beds. Dogs lie on people. Fleas lie on dogs. The people, the dogs, and the fleas are very still. Lie is a still verb.

A person picks up a dog and lays it on a blanket. A pair of tweezers picks a flea off a dog and lays it outside. A hen lays an egg. The person, the tweezers, and the hen are very active. Lay is an active verb. It implies that somebody is setting or placing something somewhere.

Lie (to lie down on a bed)
lie, lay, lain, lying

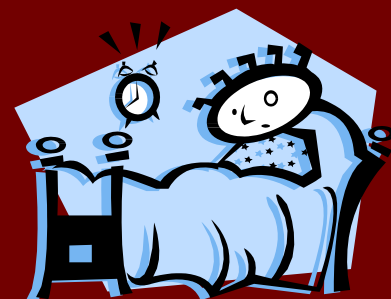
Today I **lie** in bed.

Yesterday I **lay** in bed.

Many times I have **lain** in bed.

Yesterday I was **lying** in bed all day.

Lying in bed all day is boring.



Lay (to place something, to set something down)

lay, laid, laid, laying



Today I **lay** the book on the counter.

Yesterday I **laid** the book on the counter.

Many times I have **laid** the book on the counter.

Yesterday I was **laying** the book on the counter when Mom came home.

Laying books on the kitchen counter is against the rules in my house.

Americans use the words lie and lay incorrectly so often that your ear has trouble telling you which is correct. Here are a few tips to help you keep these words straight.

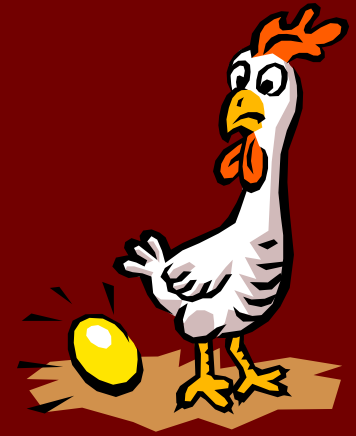
Tip 1



Remember the verb lay works just like **to say** and **to pay**. Those verbs are irregular, but they aren't confusing.

Today I say that I pay; yesterday I said that I paid; many times I have said that I have paid. To lay works the same. Lay, laid, laid

Tip 2



Nobody says that hens lie eggs. We all get that one correct: hens lay eggs. Those hens are mighty busy! Just visualize in your mind how active and busy those hens are. Lay is an active, busy word. When you're doing something active (laying down your backpack, laying a new rug on the floor), lay is the word you want.

Tip 3



Remember that **lie** is a quiet word.

Here's a silly ditty you can use to remind yourself of that (notice all the "eye" sounds): **At night, I turn out my light and lie.** Whether it's on your sofa, on your beach towel, or on your bed, if you are quietly reclining, you're lying – never laying.

Tip 4

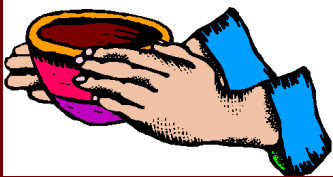


Substitute the word **place** or the word **put**. If the sentence sounds right, **lay** is the word you want. If it doesn't sound right, **lie** is the word you want. Does it sound right to say that you place the book on the table? Yes, so it's correct to say that you lay the book on the table. Does it sound right to say you place in your bed at night? No, so it's correct to say that you lie in your bed at night.

Write lie, lies, lay, or lays to correctly complete the sentence.



I will **lie** down and take a nap.



Mama will **lay** the bowl on the table.

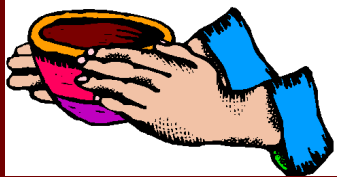
His little sister _____ the bowl of milk beside Old Dan.

His little sister **lays** the bowl of
milk beside Old Dan.

Write lie, lies, lay, or lays to correctly complete the sentence.



I will **lie** down and take a nap.



Mama will **lay** the bowl on the table.

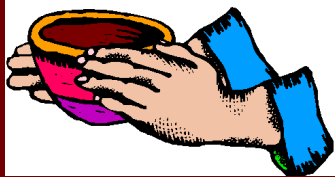
Mama asked if she might _____ on the bed.

Mama asked if she might **lie** on the bed.

Write lie, lies, lay, or lays to correctly complete the sentence.



I will **lie** down and take a nap.



Mama will **lay** the bowl on the table.

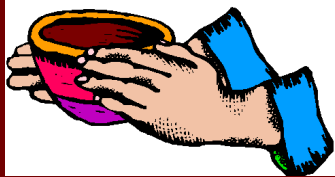
Will you _____ down your trap
for a few minutes?

Will you **lay** down your trap for a few minutes?

Write lie, lies, lay, or lays to correctly complete the sentence.



I will **lie** down and take a nap.



Mama will **lay** the bowl on the table.

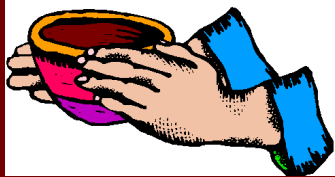
Old Dan likes to _____ in the sun.

Old Dan likes to **lie** in the sun.

Write lie, lies, lay, or lays to correctly complete the sentence.



I will **lie** down and take a nap.



Mama will **lay** the bowl on the table.

Why don't you _____ down for a few minutes?

Why don't you **lie** down for a few minutes?

Practice – Write the correct answer for each of the following items.

1. I will (lay, lie) a blanket out for Billy to use when he washes his hair.

2. You'll feel much better if you just (lay, lie) down and rest for a while.

Leave or Let

- **Leave** means “to go away, depart, or set out” or “to allow to remain.”

What time should we **leave** for the fiddle contest?

If you **leave** Old Dan behind, he will just follow us.

- **Let** means “to permit or consent.”

I will **let** you wear my new hat.

Wrong

Let him alone!

Right

Leave him alone!

(Allow him to remain alone.)

Wrong

Leave me do it again.

Right

Let me do it again.

(Permit me to do it.)

The most common mistake is
whether to say:

Let it be. or

Leave it be.

Just remember the old Beatles
song to help you remember this.

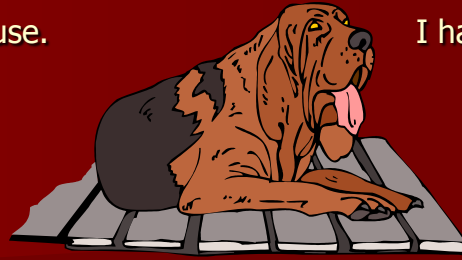


I **let** Little Ann sleep in the house.

I had to **leave** Old Dan outside.



I **permitted** Little Ann sleep in the house.



I had **to allow** Old Dan **to remain** outside.

OR

Old Dan had to **leave** the porch.

Old Dan had **to depart** the porch.

Write **let** or **leave** to complete the sentence.

_____ it sitting on the stove.

Leave it sitting on the stove.

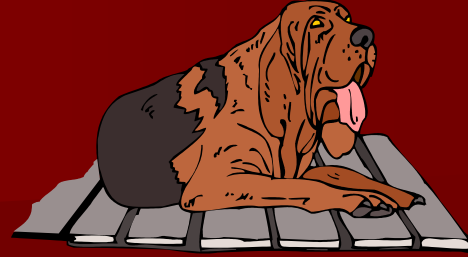
Allow it to remain on the stove.

I **let** Little Ann sleep in the house.



I **permitted** Little Ann sleep in the house.

I had to **leave** Old Dan outside.



I had **to allow** Old Dan **to remain** outside.

OR

Old Dan had to **leave** the porch.

Old Dan had **to depart** the porch..

Write **lets** or **leaves** to complete the sentence.

My mom _____ me stay up until 9:00.

My mom **lets** me stay up until
9:00.

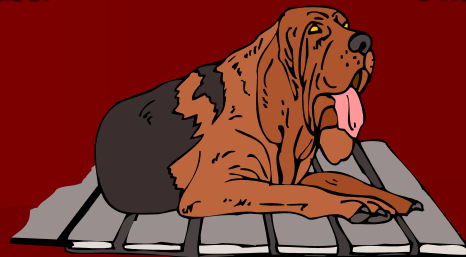
My mom **permits** me stay up until
9:00.

I **let** Little Ann sleep in the house.



I **permitted** Little Ann sleep in the house.

I had to **leave** Old Dan outside.



I had **to allow** Old Dan **to remain** outside.

OR

Old Dan had to **leave** the porch.

Old Dan had **to depart** the porch.

Write **lets** or **leaves** to complete the sentence.

Billy _____ his books on the table.

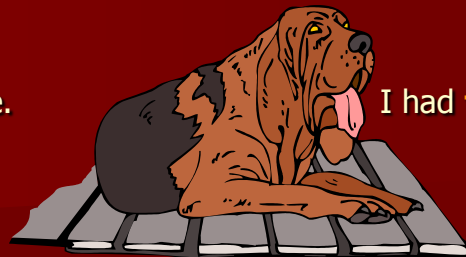
Billy **leaves** his books on the table.

Billy allows his books to remain on
the table.



I **let** Little Ann sleep in the house.

I **allowed** Little Ann sleep in the house.



I had to leave Old Dan outside.

I had **to allow** Old Dan **to remain** outside.

Write **let** or **leave** to complete the sentence.

We _____ the room together.

We **leave** the room together.

We depart the room together.

Practice – Write the correct answer for each of the following items.

1. (Let, Leave) me help you with that.

2. Dad will (let, leave) the pie on the counter for Billy.

Teach and Learn

- **Teach** means “to instruct, train, or pass on knowledge.”

Ms. Fletcher **teaches** her class how to read.

- To **learn** something is “to receive or be given knowledge.”

The students **learn** to read with the help of the teacher.

Think of it this way.



Many people can **teach** you
something they know how to do.
However, you are the one who
learns how to do something
new.

Wrong

I will **learn** you how to solve this math problem.

Right

I will **teach** you how to solve this math problem. I am sure you can learn it.

Wrong

I will **teach** how to dance after a series of lessons.

Right

I will **learn** how to dance after a series of lessons.



Billy will **teach** the hounds how to hunt.

Billy will train the dogs.



The hounds will **learn** how to hunt.

The hounds will
gain knowledge.

Write **teach** or **learn** to complete
the sentence.

Little Ann will _____ Old Dan
how to swim across the river.

Little Ann will **teach** Old Dan how
to swim across the river.



Billy will **teach** the hounds how to hunt.

Billy will train the dogs.



The hounds will **learn** how to hunt.

The hounds will
gain knowledge.

Write **teach** or **learn** to complete
the sentence.

Billy used a raccoon hide to _____
Little Ann and Old Dan.

Billy used a raccoon hide to **teach**
Little Ann and Old Dan.



Billy will **teach** the hounds how to hunt.

Billy will train the dogs.



The hounds will **learn** how to hunt.

The hounds will
gain knowledge.

Write **teach** or **learn** to complete
the sentence.

Samie could not _____ to stay
away from the trap.

Samie could not **learn** to stay
away from the trap.



Billy will **teach** the hounds how to hunt.

Billy will train the dogs.



The hounds will **learn** how to hunt.

The hounds will
gain knowledge.

Write **taught** or **learned** to
complete the sentence.

Little Ann and Old Dan _____
quickly how to track coons.

Little Ann and Old Dan **learned**
quickly how to track coons.

Practice – Write the correct answer for each of the following items.

1. Why did Billy (teach, learn) the girls to take care of Samie?

2. Do you want to (teach, learn)
how to trap coons?