

14 Everyday English Verb Mistakes Beginners Make, Series: Part 1

[Learning English is a journey](#), and even confident speakers sometimes make mistakes with everyday English verbs. The good news is that most mistakes come from predictable patterns and once you understand them, they're easy to fix. So, in this article related to English [grammar essentials](#), you'll know 14 typical mistakes and how to fix them. We'll also included in the article translation for Portuguese speaking learners especially those from Mozambique.

Here we go:

◆ 1. "Do" vs. "Make." → "do" = "fazer" (executar / realizar). "Make" = "fazer" (criar / produzir).

Here is how to use "Do" and "Make" correctly to avoid making mistakes with these English verbs:

✔ Use make for:

- Creating or producing something
- Actions that result in a physical object or outcome

Examples:

- make a cake
- make a mistake
- make a decision

✔ Use do for:

- General activities → Atividades gerais
- Tasks, work, or responsibilities → Tarefas, trabalho, or responsabilidades

Examples:

- do homework
- do the dishes
- do your best

Common Mistake beginners Make:

✘ *I need to do a decision.*

✔ *I need to make a decision.*

◆ 2. Mistakes with [everyday English verbs](#): Use of “Go” Without “To” → Uso de “Go” Sem “To”

Learners often forget the preposition.

Common Mistakes:

✗ *I go the gym.*

✓ *I go to the gym.* I go home. (This is actually correct!)

Rule:

- Use **go + to + place** → use **go + to + local**
- But remember: **home** never takes “to”

✓ *I'm going home.*

✓ *I'm going to work.*

Like "go" above, there are other [essential English verbs](#) you need to know:

◆ 3. Beginner English Verb Mistakes: Using “Want” With Two Verbs Incorrectly → "Want" = Querere

Learners often forget the structure.

Correct pattern:

Want + to + verb

✓ *I want to learn English.*

✓ *They want to travel.*

Common Mistake:

✗ *I want learn English.*

◆ 4. Beginner English Verb Mistakes: Using “Like” Incorrectly With Activities → “Like” = Gostar

Two forms are correct — but learners often mix them. → As duas formas estão corretas, mas os alunos fazem confusão.

✓ *I like to swim.*

✓ *I like swimming.*

Common Mistake:

✗ *I like swim* ✗ *I like to swimming*

See [tenses of English verbs](#)

◆ 5. Confusing “Know” and “Meet” → Confusão entre “Know” e “Meet”

These verbs describe different stages of knowing someone. → Estes verbos descrevem diferentes etapas de conhecer alguém

✓ Meet = first time → Primeiro encontro

- I met John yesterday. → Eu conheci/encontrei John ontem.

✓ Know = after you already met → Depois que você conheceu a ele.

- *I know him well.* → “Eu conheço ele bem.

Common Mistake:

✗ *I know him yesterday.*

✓ *I met him yesterday.*

◆ 6. Beginner English Verb Mistakes: Use of “Have” for Age → Uso de “Have” = “Ter” para Idade

In many languages, age uses “have,” but English uses “be” = “ser” ou “estar”.

Common Mistake:

- ✗ *I have 25 years.*
 - ✓ *I am 25 years old.*
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◆ 7. Using “Look”, “See”, and “Watch” Incorrectly → “Look = Olhar”, “See = Ver” e “Watch” = Assistir”

These three verbs describe different actions.

Have a look on this table → Preste atenção a este quadro:

Verb	Used when	Example	Tradução	Exemplo
see	something enters your eyes naturally	<i>I can see the stars.</i>	ver (naturalmente)	<i>Eu consigo ver as estrelas.</i>
look	you focus your eyes on something	<i>Look at the picture.</i>	olhar (intencionalmente)	<i>Olhe para a foto.</i>
watch	something moving	<i>Watch the movie.</i>	assistir/observar (movimento)	<i>Assista ao filme.</i>

English Grammar Common Mistake with "See":

- ✗ *I'm seeing TV.*
 - ✓ *I'm watching TV.*
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◆ 8. Using “Borrow” and “Lend” Incorrectly → “Borrow” = “Pedir por Emprestado”; “Lend” = “Dar emprestado”

These verbs describe opposite directions.

✓ borrow = take something from someone

- *Can I borrow your pen?*

✓ lend = give something to someone

- Can you lend me your pen?

Common Mistake:

✗ *Can you borrow me your pen?*

✓ *Can you lend me your pen?*

◆ 9. “Speak”, “Talk”, “Say” and “Tell”. → “Speak” = falar, “Talk” = conversar, “Say” = dizer e “Tell” = contar.

A quick guide to help you avoid beginner English verb confusion → Um guia rápido:

Verb (EN)	Used For	Example (EN)	Tradução (PT)	Exemplo (PT)
speak	languages, formal situations	<i>I speak Portuguese.</i>	falar (idiomas, situações formais)	<i>Eu falo português.</i>
talk	conversations	<i>We talked for hours.</i>	conversar	<i>Nós conversamos por horas.</i>
say	words spoken	<i>She said hello.</i>	dizer (palavras específicas)	<i>Ela disse olá.</i>
tell	giving information to someone	<i>She told me the news.</i>	contar (informar alguém)	<i>Ela me contou a notícia.</i>

Common Mistake:

✗ *I'm saying you the truth.* ✓ *I telling you the truth.*

[See also other English daily verbs](#)

◆ 10. Beginner English Verb Mistakes: “Know” vs. “Learn” vs. “Understand” → Conhecer; Aprender; Entender

✓ Know = have information

I know the answer of you question.

✓ Learn = get new information

- I'm learning English.

✓ Understand = you "get" the meaning

- I understand the question.

Common Mistake:

✗ *I'm knowing English.*

✓ *I know English.*

◆ 11. "Grow" vs. "Grow Up" → "Grow" = Crescer / Cultivar; "Grow Up" = Crescer / Tornar-se Adulto

✓ Grow = increase in size

- Plants grow quickly.

✓ Grow up = become an adult,

- I grew up in Mozambique.

Common Mistake:

✗ *I grew in Maputo.*

✓ *I grew up in Maputo.*

◆ 12. Beginner English Verb Mistakes: "Stay" vs. "Keep" → Stay = Permanecer; Keep= Continua

✓ **stay** = remain in a place or condition

- Stay here.
- Stay calm.

✓ **keep** = continue doing something

- Keep studying.

- Keep going.

Common Mistake:

✗ *Stay going.*

✓ *Keep going.*

◆ 13. “Win” vs. “Beat” — Competition Verbs → “Win” = Vencer e “Beat” = Derrotar

✓ Win = you are the champion

- We won the game.

✓ Beat = defeat someone

- We beat the other team.

English Common grammar mistake for these two verbs:

✗ *We won the other team.*

✓ *We beat the other team.*

◆ 14. Beginner English Verb Mistakes: “Raise” vs. “Rise” → Raise = “levantar algo” e Rise = “erguer-se”

One Needs an Object

✓ **Raise** = lift something

- Raise your hand.
- They raised the flag.

✓ **Rise** = go up by itself

- Prices are rising.

Common Mistake:

✗ The sun raises in the east. ✓ The sun rises in the east

Conclusion:

What to say about mistakes?

Mistakes with everyday English verbs make part of your English journey. Each mistake points to a specific grammar pattern that needs reinforcement. So just focus on the patterns they offer. They can help you build confidence.

Learning a language is like building a house. Check also how to write and read [English numbers](#).

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