Transitive And Intransitive Verbs

Read the following sentences.

- Ann heard a loud noise.
- Ann ran.

In the first sentence, the verb heard has an object (a loud noise), whereas in the second sentence the verb ran has no object.

A verb which has an object is called a transitive verb. A verb which has no object is called an intransitive verb.

More examples are given below.

- She sat in a corner. (Intransitive: sat has no object.)
- She wrote a letter. (Transitive: verb – wrote; object – a letter)
- The baby cried. (Intransitive: cried has no object.)
- He won a prize. (Transitive: verb – won; object – a prize)

Most verbs can be used both as transitive and intransitive verbs.

- Heat expands metals. (Transitive; object: metals)
- Metals expand on heating. (Intransitive; no object)
- The guard stopped the train. (Transitive; object: the train)
- The train stopped. (Intransitive; no object)

**Verbs with two forms**

Some verbs have different forms for the transitive and the intransitive. Examples are: fall, fell; lie, lay; rise, raise; sit, set.

- He fell off the stairs. (Fell – intransitive)
- The woodcutter felled a huge tree. (Felled – transitive; object – huge tree)
- Books lay on the table. (Lay – intransitive)
- He laid the books on the table. (Laid – transitive; object – the books)
- He rose to address the gathering. (Rose – intransitive)
- He raised his voice. (Raised – transitive; object – his voice)

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