

Le verbe BE en anglais

Be au présent

Forme affirmative

Construction: sujet + be

- I am
- you are
- he / she / it is
- we are
- you are
- they are

La forme contractée est très courante (surtout à l'oral):

- I am → I'm
- you are → you're
- he is → he's
- she is → she's
- it is → it's
- we are → we're
- you are → you're
- they are → they're

Forme négative

Il faut simplement ajouter NOT après le verbe:

- I am **not**
- you are **not**
- he / she / it is **not**
- we are **not**
- you are **not**
- they are **not**

La forme négative peut être contractée:

- I am not → I'm not
- he is not → he isn't OU he's not
- you are not → you aren't OU you're not

Forme interrogative

Pour faire une question, c'est simple: il faut inverser le sujet et be. Be se place alors en tête de phrase:

- **am** I making myself clear?
- **are** you happy?
- **is** he ok?
- **are** we arrived yet?

Be au prétérit

Forme affirmative

- I was
- you were
- he / she / it was
- we were
- you were

Attention, il n'y a pas de forme contractée.

Forme négative

- I was not
- you were not
- he / she / it was not
- we were not
- you were not
- they were not

La forme négative peut être contractée:

- was not → wasn't
- were not → weren't

Forme interrogative

Comme pour le présent, be se place en tête de phrase à la forme interrogative au prétérit:

- **was** I?
- **were** you?
- **was** he / she / it?
- **were** we?
- **were** you?
- **were** they?

Les emplois de be

En anglais, le verbe be peut être verbe ou auxiliaire.

Comme verbe principal:

Avec un nom, pour parler d'une caractéristique:

- Sam is very tall.
- My mother was a teacher.
- This cake is very tasty.
- The children were good.
- Paul and his wife are from New York.
- The flowers are on the table.

Comme auxiliaire:

Pour faire la forme continue avec -ing:

- They are eating
- It had been raining for hours.

Pour faire la voie passive:

- It's broken
- This car was made in Japan.

À SAVOIR

Be est souvent utilisé pour traduire 'avoir':

Pour parler d'un état:

- I'm hungry / thirsty → J'ai faim / soif
- I'm lucky → J'ai de la chance

Pour dire son âge:

- I'm 24. → J'ai 24 ans.
- He is 17. → Il a 17 ans.
- She is my age. → Elle a mon âge.

Be peut être utilisé pour parler du temps:

- It's hot / it's cold today. → Il fait chaud / froid aujourd'hui.

Pour parler de la taille:

- She is the same height as her husband. → Elle fait la même taille que son mari.
- He is 6 feet tall. → Il fait 1,80m.
- How tall are you? → Quelle taille fais-tu ? (attention on ne dit pas *How high are you?*)
- That tree is about 20 metres high. → Cet arbre fait à peu près 20 mètres de haut.

Attention: pour parler du poids, ne pas employer to be mais le verbe weigh: *He weighs 70 kilos.* (*He is 70 kilos.* = FAUX)

Pour indiquer une distance:

- It's 5 km to the next town. → La prochaine ville est à 5 km.

Attention à la traduction en anglais de 'être né'

- Je suis né → I was born (et pas: I am born)
- Il est né → He was born (et pas: He is born)
- Ils sont nés → They were born (et pas: They are born)

Les question tag avec TO BE

Il faut utiliser la formule suivante: be (contracté si négatif) + pronom personnel.

Les phrases positive sont suivies par un question tag négatif, et les phrases négatives par un question tag positif:

- You are Paul, **aren't you?**
- Miguel is from Spain, **isn't he?**
- He isn't coming, **is he?**
- Linda was tired, **wasn't she?**
- This isn't working, **is it?**
- We weren't late, **were we?**

Les phrasal verbs avec BE

Il y en a beaucoup ! Voici quelques uns des plus courants:

be about to (= être sur le point de)

- The bus is about to leave
- He was about to say something.

be off (= s'en aller / ne plus fonctionner)

- Bye guys, I'm off!
- Make sure the lights are off.

be out (= être absent de la maison ou de son travail)

- You can't talk to my boss. He's out.

be out of (= être à cours de quelque chose)

- I am out of flour, I can't make pancakes.
- He's been out of work for a long time.

be up (= être réveillé / augmenter / expiré)

- It's ten o'clock and Tina isn't up yet.
- The price of bread is up again this week.
- The warranty on the camera is up. If it breaks now we'll have to pay for it.

be up to (= préparer un mauvais coup, quelque chose de mauvais)

- What are those children up to now?

BE + GOING TO

Be + going to exprime une intention dans le futur, ou une certitude:

- We're going to have a party.
- He's going to wash the car.
- I think it's going to rain.