

Unit 2 — Verbs III Helping Verbs and the Verb Phrase

The helping verbs

being or helping	helping or action	helping

- **Helping verbs** help the main verb from the verb phrase.
*We **have been** traveling to Mississippi every year on our vacation.*

 - The **verb phrase** is comprised of the main verb plus its helpers.
*We **have been traveling** to Mississippi every year on our vacation.*
The main verb is *traveling*. *have been* helps the main verb.

 - The **main verb** is always the last verb in the verb phrase.
*We have been **traveling** to Mississippi every year on our vacation.*

 - The verb phrase can be interrupted by adverbs, such as ***not, also, very, well, simply, even***
*Gordon did **not even** miss a single free throw.* (Not is an adverb, not a verb.)
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Exercise 1

In each sentence, underline the verb phrase twice. On the line in front of the number, write the main verb.

- _____ 1. Admitting a mistake can take real courage.
- _____ 2. Because of their pride, some people will not admit their errors.
- _____ 3. Fear of exposure may also be a cause.
- _____ 4. Punishment might very well be the consequence of such a confession.
- _____ 5. One might well recall past errors and punishments.
- _____ 6. He or she may simply deny the results of error.
- _____ 7. Other people might laugh at such weakness.
- _____ 8. Still others might very well use such a confession against a person later.
- _____ 9. Yet, honesty often can compel acceptance of one's mistakes.
- _____ 10. Justice can be an important factor.
- _____ 11. Most people do have a conscience.
- _____ 12. This conscience can override all the fears of confession.
- _____ 13. A person can show maturity in many ways.
- _____ 14. Maturity will result from a series of successes and failures.
- _____ 15. An error can even lead to a good experience.

