

## UMD ARC/Writing & Reading Center

### Commonly Misused Verb Forms

All too often, we misuse forms of verbs. This common mistake can easily be fixed with a little studying and practice. This handout will explain the differences between regular and irregular verbs and will give examples of verbs that are commonly misused. Consult the dictionary or internet for further examples.

**Regular Verbs** – When the past tense and past participle are identical and are formed by adding *ed*:

**Examples of regular verbs:**

Present	Past	Participle
Play	Played	Played
Work	Worked	Worked
Love	Loved	Loved

**Irregular Verbs** – When the past tense and the past participle are formed by individualistic changes, frequently a vowel change within a word: Grow, Grew, Grown; Begin, Began, Begun.

**Examples of “tricky” irregular verbs:**

Present	Past	Participle
Choose	Chose	Chosen
Dive	Dived	Dove/Dived
Hang	Hung	Hung
Swim	Swam	Swum

**More “Tricky” Verbs:**

**LIE & LAY**

TO LIE means “to rest in a flat position” or “to be in place”  
TO LAY means “to put something down or to place something”

Examples of LIE:

PRESENT: **Lie** down for a while.

PAST: The cat **lay** in the shade.

PARTICIPLE: After he had **lain** down, he felt better.

Example of LAY:

PRESENT: **Lay** the book on the table.

PAST: He **laid** the book on the table.

PARTICIPLE: **Having laid** the book on the table, he walked out.

## **RISE & RAISE**

TO RISE means “to go up or get up”

TO RAISE means “to make something rise or lift something”

Examples of RISE:

PRESENT: I **rise** at daybreak.

PAST: I **rose** at daybreak.

PARTICIPLE: I **have risen** at daybreak.

Examples of Raise:

PRESENT: I **raise** flowers.

PAST: I **raised** flowers.

PARTICIPLE: I **have raised** flowers.

## **SIT & SET**

TO SIT means “to take a sitting position”

TO SET means “to place something”

Examples of SIT:

PRESENT: **Sit** down and be quiet.

PAST: The little girl **sat** in the corner.

PARTICIPLE: **Having sat** in the corner for an hour, she was allowed to leave.

Examples of SET:

PRESENT: **Set** the basket on the table.

PAST: Yesterday he **set** the basket on the table.

PARTICIPLE: Having **set** the basket on the table, he left.

*Compiled by  
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