Recognize an *intransitive verb* when you see one.

An intransitive verb has two characteristics. First, it is an action verb, expressing a doable activity like *arrive, go, lie, sneeze, sit, die*, etc. Second, unlike a transitive verb, it will *not* have a direct object receiving the action.

Here are some examples of intransitive verbs:

Huffing and puffing, we *arrived* at the classroom door with only seven seconds to spare.

*Arrived* = intransitive verb.

James *went* to the campus cafe for a steaming bowl of squid eyeball stew.

*Went* = intransitive verb.

To escape the midday sun, the cats *lie* in the shade under our cars.

*Lie* = intransitive verb.

Around fresh ground pepper, Sheryl *sneezes* with violence.

*Sneezes* = intransitive verb.

In the evenings, Glenda *sits* on the front porch to admire her immaculate lawn.

*Sits* = intransitive verb.

Flipped on its back, the beetle that Clara soaked with insecticide *dies* under the refrigerator.

*Dies* = intransitive verb.

Realize that many verbs can be both transitive and intransitive.

An action verb with a direct object is transitive while an action verb with no direct object is intransitive. Some verbs, such as *arrive, go, lie, sneeze, sit, die*, are always intransitive; it is impossible for a direct object to follow.

Other action verbs, however, can be transitive or intransitive, depending on what follows in the sentence. Compare these examples:
Because of blood sugar problems, Rosa always eats before leaving for school.

*Eats* = intransitive verb.

If there is no leftover pizza, Rosa usually eats whole-grain cereal.

*Eats* = transitive verb; *cereal* = direct object.

During cross-country practice, Damien runs over hills, through fields, across the river, and along the highway.

*Runs* = intransitive verb.

In the spring, Damien will run his first marathon.

*Will run* = transitive verb; *marathon* = direct object.