The Transitive Verb

Recognize a transitive verb when you find one.

A transitive verb has two characteristics. First, it is an action verb, expressing a doable activity like kick, want, paint, write, eat, clean, etc. Second, it must have a direct object, something or someone who receives the action of the verb.

This is the pattern:

Subject + Action Verb + Direct Object

Read these examples:

Sylvia kicked Juan under the table.

*Kicked* = transitive verb; *Juan* = direct object (the person that Sylvia, the subject, kicked).

Joshua wants a smile from Leodine, his beautiful but serious lab partner.

*Wants* = transitive verb; *smile* = direct object (the thing that Joshua, the subject, wants).

Cornelius painted the canvas in Jackson Pollock fashion, dribbling bright colors from a heavily soaked brush.

*Painted* = transitive verb; *canvas* = direct object (the thing that Cornelius, the subject, painted).

Alicia wrote a love poem on a restaurant napkin.

*Wrote* = transitive verb; *poem* = direct object (the thing that Alicia, the subject, wrote).

Antonio will eat lima beans drenched in brown gravy.

*Will eat* = transitive verb; *lima beans* = direct object (the things that Antonio, the subject, will eat).
Pinky the poodle clean the dirty supper dishes with his tongue before Grandma load the "prewashed" items into the dishwasher.

*Clean, load* = transitive verbs; *dishes, items* = direct objects (the things that Pinky, the first subject, clean and Grandma, the second subject, load).

**Important note:** An action verb is **intransitive** when no direct object follows it.