[b] In both BrE and AmE the general rule is broken by the doubling of *-g* in *humbug ~ humbugging ~ humbugged* and of words ending in *c* (spelled *-ck-*), *eg*: *panic ~ panicking ~ panicked*.

[c] In certain verbs whose base ends in a vowel followed by *-s*, there is variation between *-s-* and *-ss-* when the inflection is added:

'bias	*'biasing/'biassing*	*'biased/'biassed*
bus	*'busing/'bussing*	*bused/bussed*
'focus	*'focusing/'focussing*	*'focused/'focussed*

Deletion of and addition of *-e*

3.7   If the base ends in an unpronounced *-e*, this *-e* is regularly dropped before the *-ing* and *-ed* inflections:

create ~ creating ~ created	*shave ~ shaving ~ shaved*
bake ~ baking ~ baked	*type ~ typing ~ typed*

Verbs with monosyllabic bases in *-ye*, *-oe*, and *-nge*, pronounced /ndʒ/, are exceptions to this rule: they do not lose the *-e* before *-ing*, but they do lose it before *-ed*:

dye ~ dyeing ~ dyed	*singe ~ singeing ~ singed*
hoe ~ hoeing ~ hoed	*tinge ~ tingeing ~ tinged*

The final *-e* is also lost before *-ed* by verbs ending in *-ie* or *-ee*: *tie ~ tied, die ~ died, agree ~ agreed*.

Before the *-s* ending, on the other hand, an *-e* is added after the following letters, representing sibilant consonants:

-s pass ~ passes	*-ch watch ~ watches*	*-x coax ~ coaxes*
-z buzz ~ buzzes	*-sh wash ~ washes*	

NOTE   **[a]** An *-e* is added after *-o* in GO (~ *goes*), DO (~ *does* /dʌz/), ECHO (~ *echoes*), VETO (~ *vetoes*).
[b] The *-e* is regularly dropped in *impinging* and *infringing*.

Treatment of *-y*

3.8   In bases ending in a consonant followed by *-y*, the following changes take place:
(a) *-y* changes to *-ie-* before *-s*: *carry ~ carries, try ~ tries*
(b) *-y* changes to *-i-* before *-ed*: *carry ~ carried, try ~ tried*
The *-y* remains, however, where it follows a vowel letter: *stay ~ stayed, alloy ~ alloys*, etc; or where it precedes *-ing*: *carry ~ carrying, stay ~ staying*.
A different spelling change occurs in verbs whose bases end in *-ie*: DIE, LIE, TIE, VIE. In these cases, the *-ie* changes to *-y-* before *-ing* is added: *die ~ dying, lie ~ lying, tie ~ tying, vie ~ vying*.

NOTE   Exceptions to these rules are certain verbs where the *y* changes to *i* after *-a-*: PAY (~ *paid*) and LAY (~ *laid*) and their derivatives, *eg*: REPAY (~ *repaid*), MISLAY (~ *mislaid*). The irregular verb SAY follows the same pattern (~ *said*).

The morphology of irregular full verbs

3.9   Irregular full verbs differ from regular verbs in that either the past inflection, or the *-ed* participle inflection, or both of these, are irregular. More precisely the major differences are:
(a) Irregular verbs either do not have the regular *-ed* inflection, or else have a variant of that inflection in which the /d/ is devoiced to /t/ (*eg*: *burn ~ burnt*, which occurs alongside the regular *burned*).
(b) Irregular verbs typically, but not invariably, have variation in their base vowel: *choose ~ chose ~ chosen, write ~ wrote ~ written*.
(c) Irregular verbs have a varying number of distinct forms. Since the *-s* form and the *-ing* form are predictable for regular and irregular verbs alike, the only forms that need be listed for irregular verbs are the base form (V), the past (V-*ed₁*), and the *-ed* participle (V-*ed₂*). These are traditionally known as the PRINCIPAL PARTS of the verb. Most irregular verbs have, like regular verbs, only one common form for the past and the *-ed* participle; but there is considerable variation in this respect, as the table shows:

	V	V-ed_1	V-ed_2
all three forms alike:	*cut*	*cut*	*cut*
V-ed_1 = V-ed_2:	*meet*	*met*	*met*
V = V-ed_1:	*beat*	*beat*	*beaten*
V = V-ed_2:	*come*	*came*	*come*
all three forms different:	*speak*	*spoke*	*spoken*

Irregular verbs in alphabetical order

3.10   Irregular verbs can be classified on the basis of criteria derived from the variation discussed in 3.9. However, we shall merely list alphabetically the principal parts (including common variants) of the most common irregular verbs. The list omits most verbs with a prefix such as *out-*, *over-*, *re-*, and *un-* that have otherwise the same parts as the corresponding unprefixed verbs.

BASE (V)	PAST TENSE (V-ed_1)	*-ed* PARTICIPLE (V-ed_2)
arise	arose	arisen
awake	awoke, awaked	awoken, awaked
be	was, were	been
bear	bore	borne
beat	beat	beaten
become	became	become
begin	began	begun
bend	bent	bent
bereave	bereft, bereaved	bereft, bereaved
beseech	besought, beseeched	besought, beseeched
beset	beset	beset

BASE (V)	PAST TENSE (V-ed_1)	-ed PARTICIPLE (V-ed_2)
bet	bet, betted	bet, betted
bid	bad(e), bid	bade, bid, bidden
bind	bound	bound
bite	bit	bitten
bleed	bled	bled
blow	blew	blown
break	broke	broken
breed	bred	bred
bring	brought	brought
broadcast	broadcast	broadcast
build	built	built
burn	burnt, burned	burnt, burned
burst	burst	burst
buy	bought	bought
cast	cast	cast
catch	caught	caught
choose	chose	chosen
cling	clung	clung
come	came	come
cost	cost	cost
creep	crept	crept
cut	cut	cut
deal	dealt	dealt
deepfreeze	deepfroze, -freezed	deepfrozen, -freezed
dig	dug	dug
dive	dived, ⟨AmE⟩ dove	dived
do	did	done
draw	drew	drawn
dream	dreamt, dreamed	dreamt, dreamed
drink	drank	drunk
drive	drove	driven
eat	ate	eaten
fall	fell	fallen
feed	fed	fed
feel	felt	felt
fight	fought	fought
find	found	found
flee	fled	fled
fling	flung	flung
fly	flew	flown

BASE (V)	PAST TENSE (V-ed_1)	-ed PARTICIPLE (V-ed_2)
forbid	forbade, forbad	forbidden
forecast	forecast	forecast
forget	forgot	forgotten
forgive	forgave	forgiven
forgo	forwent	forgone
forsake	forsook	forsaken
freeze	froze	frozen
get	got	{ got, gotten ⟨AmE⟩ }
give	gave	given
go	went	gone
grind	ground	ground
grow	grew	grown
hamstring	hamstrung	hamstrung
hang	hung (see Note)	hung
have	had	had
hear	heard	heard
heave	heaved, hove	heaved, hove
hide	hid	hidden
hit	hit	hit
hold	held	held
hurt	hurt	hurt
keep	kept	kept
kneel	knelt, kneeled	knelt, kneeled
knit	knitted, knit	knitted, knit
know	knew	known
lead	led	led
lean	leant, leaned	leant, leaned
leap	leapt, leaped	leapt, leaped
learn	learnt, learned	learnt, learned
leave	left	left
lend	lent	lent
let	let	let
lie	lay	lain
light	lit, lighted	lit, lighted
lose	lost	lost
make	made	made
mean	meant	meant
meet	met	met
miscast	miscast	miscast

BASE (V)	PAST TENSE (V-ed_1)	-ed PARTICIPLE (V-ed_2)
mislead	misled	misled
misspell	misspelt, misspelled	misspelt, misspelled
mistake	mistook	mistaken
misunderstand	misunderstood	misunderstood
mow	mowed	mown, mowed
offset	offset	offset
put	put	put
quit	quit, quitted	quit, quitted
read	read	read
rend	rent	rent
rid	rid, ridded	rid, ridded
ride	rode	ridden
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
run	ran	run
saw	sawed	sawn, sawed
say	said	said
see	saw	seen
seek	sought	sought
sell	sold	sold
send	sent	sent
set	set	set
sew	sewed	sewn, sewed
shake	shook	shaken
shear	sheared	shorn, sheared
shed	shed	shed
shine	shone, shined	shone, shined
shoot	shot	shot
show	showed	shown
shrink	shrank	shrunk
shut	shut	shut
sing	sang	sung
sink	sank	sunk
sit	sat	sat
sleep	slept	slept
slide	slid	slid
sling	slung	slung
slit	slit	slit
smell	smelt, smelled	smelt, smelled

BASE (V)	PAST TENSE (V-ed_1)	-ed PARTICIPLE (V-ed_2)
sow	sowed	sown, sowed
speak	spoke	spoken
speed	sped, speeded	sped, speeded
spell	spelt, spelled	spelt, spelled
spend	spent	spent
spill	spilt, spilled	spilt, spilled
spin	spun, span	spun
spit	spat, spit	spat, spit
split	split	split
spoil	spoilt, spoiled	spoilt, spoiled
spread	spread	spread
spring	sprang	sprung
stand	stood	stood
steal	stole	stolen
stick	stuck	stuck
sting	stung	stung
stink	stank	stunk
stride	strode	stridden, strid, strode
strike	struck	struck
string	strung	strung
strive	strove, strived	striven, strived
swear	swore	sworn
sweat	sweat, sweated	sweat, sweated
sweep	swept	swept
swell	swelled	swollen, swelled
swim	swam	swum
swing	swung	swung
take	took	taken
teach	taught	taught
tear	tore	torn
telecast	telecast	telecast
tell	told	told
think	thought	thought
thrive	thrived	thrived
throw	threw	thrown
thrust	thrust	thrust
tread	trod	trodden
underbid	underbid	underbid
undergo	underwent	undergone
understand	understood	understood
undertake	undertook	undertaken
underwrite	underwrote	underwritten

BASE (V)	PAST TENSE (V-ed_1)	-ed PARTICIPLE (V-ed_2)
uphold	upheld	upheld
upset	upset	upset
wake	woke, waked	woken, waked
wear	wore	worn
weave	wove	woven
wed	wedded, wed	wedded, wed
weep	wept	wept
wet	wetted, wet	wetted, wet
win	won	won
wind	wound	wound
withdraw	withdrew	withdrawn
withhold	withheld	withheld
withstand	withstood	withstood
wring	wrung	wrung
write	wrote	written

NOTE In BrE the verb *fit* is regular, but in AmE *fit* is an alternative to *fitted* in the past and the *-ed* participle. *Hang* has also the regular form *hanged* for the past and the *-ed* participle in the sense 'put to death by hanging'.

Primary verbs and modal auxiliaries

Verbs as operators

3.11 Auxiliaries have one important syntactic function in common: they become the OPERATOR when they occur as the first verb of a finite verb phrase (*cf* 3.19). The main verb BE and (sometimes, especially in BrE) the main verb HAVE are also operators when they are the only verb in the verb phrase. On the other hand, only the auxiliary DO is an operator (as in 'She *does* not know me'), not the main verb DO (as in 'She *does* a lot of work').

Operators share the following main characteristics:

(a) To negate a finite clause, we put *not* immediately after the operator. Contrast:

She *may* do it. ~ She *may not* do it.
She *saw* the play. ~ *She *saw not* the play.

(b) To form an interrogative clause, we put the operator in front of the subject (subject–operator inversion). Contrast:

He will speak first. ~ *Will* he speak first?
He plans to speak first. ~ **Plans* he to speak first?

Subject–operator inversion occurs also in sentences with introductory negatives or semi-negatives (*cf* 10.35*f*):

At no time *was* the entrance left unguarded.

(c) The operator can carry nuclear stress to mark a finite clause as positive rather than negative:

Won't you try again? ~ Yes, I WÌLL try again.
You must speak to the teacher. ~ I HÀVE spoken to him.

The function of this emphatic positive is to deny a negative which has been stated or implied.

(d) The operator functions in a range of elliptical clauses where the rest of the predication is omitted (*cf* 12.20). The clause is understood to repeat the omitted part.

Won't you try again? ~ Yes, I WÌLL.
~ No, I CÀN'T.

If there is no operator in a corresponding positive declarative sentence, the dummy (or 'empty') operator DO is introduced under the above conditions:

(a) She saw the play. ~ She *did not* (or: *didn't*) see the play.
(b) He plans to speak first. ~ *Does* he plan to speak first?
(c) You never listen to your mother. ~ But I DÒ listen to her.
(d) Do you drive a car? ~ Yes, I DÒ.
No, I DÒN'T.

The use of the operator DO is termed DO-SUPPORT.

The main verbs BE and HAVE are operators in these sentences:

I *haven't* a car. ⟨esp BrE⟩   *Is* she your sister?

[a] The enclitic particle *n't* can be attached to most operators as a contraction of the negative word *not*, eg: *isn't, didn't, won't* (*cf* 3.13*ff*). In addition, many operators have contracted forms:

BE: *am* ~ '*m*; *is* ~ '*s*; *are* ~ '*re*
HAVE: *have* ~ '*ve*; *has* ~ '*s*; *had* ~ '*d*
modals: *will* ~ '*ll*; *would* ~ '*d*

The final /t/ in the negative contraction is commonly not sounded. Notice that the contraction '*s* may represent either *is* or *has*, and that the contraction '*d* may represent either *had* or *would*.

[b] The contractions mentioned in [a] are simplified forms that are institutionalized in both speech and writing. They are to be distinguished from cases of phonological reduction only, eg /kən/ in the pronunciation of *can*.

Characteristics of modal auxiliaries

Certain characteristics additional to those listed in 3.11 apply specifically to modal auxiliaries:

(a) They are followed by the bare infinitive (*ie* the base form of the verb alone without a preceding *to*):

You *will ask* the questions.   They *might have* stolen it.