

Answers and explanations

Questions 1-6 | Match the requested form without rejecting valid alternatives.

1. Continuous be

Answer: They are planning the route now.

Are agrees with they and combines with planning to make the present continuous. Do cannot replace be before an -ing form.

Accept / discuss: Are is the answer from the supplied choices.

2. Perfect have

Answer: Sara has sent two invitations already.

Has agrees with Sara and comes before the past participle sent. Does takes a base verb, so does sent is not a possible verb phrase.

Accept / discuss: Has is required for the requested present perfect form.

3. Present question

Answer: Does Kai check the bookings every Monday?

Use does with a third-person singular subject in a present simple question. Check returns to the base form; do not keep the -s from checks.

Accept / discuss: A statement with question intonation can work in conversation, but this task checks the usual interrogative pattern with does.

4. Past negative

Answer: Hana did not send the reminder yesterday.

Did carries the past tense, so the following main verb is send, not sent. Keep the finished-time reference.

Accept / discuss: Hana didn't send the reminder yesterday.

5. Be: question and answer

Answer: Are they using the small room? No, they are not.

Move are before the subject. The short answer keeps are and replaces the people with they; it does not use do.

Accept / discuss: No, they aren't. / No, they're not.

6. Have: question and answer

Answer: Has Omar booked the tickets? Yes, he has.

Perfect has moves before Omar. A positive short answer ends with the full auxiliary has, not the subject contraction he's.

Accept / discuss: The requested short-answer form is Yes, he has. A full answer, Yes, he has booked the tickets, is grammatical but is not a short answer.

Answers and explanations

Questions 7-12 | Match the requested form without rejecting valid alternatives.

7. Modal: question and answer

Answer: Can Leah repair the bike? No, she cannot.

The modal can moves before the subject without do. It is also the verb in the short answer.

Accept / discuss: No, she can't.

8. Modal plus base verb

Answer: They should bring a notebook.

A core modal such as should takes a base verb without to. It does not add -s for a singular subject either.

Accept / discuss: Keep should as instructed; other advice expressions would test a different structure.

9. Prohibited or optional?

Answer: You mustn't enter the storage room. You don't have to bring your own pen.

Mustn't expresses prohibition. Don't have to means there is no obligation; it does not mean the action is forbidden.

Accept / discuss: Must not and do not have to are also correct. Cannot/can't and needn't can convey related meanings here, but the task supplies two specific choices.

10. Have as a main verb

Answer: Does Mina have a laptop? Yes, she does.

Have expresses possession here, so the requested question uses does plus base-form have. The short answer follows does, not has.

Accept / discuss: Has Mina got a laptop? Yes, she has is another valid possession pattern, but it changes the requested construction. Discuss it as an alternative, not an error.

11. Who is the subject?

Answer: (a) Who invited Omar? (b) Who did Mina invite?

In (a), who is the subject, so the ordinary positive question needs no do-support. In (b), Mina is the subject and who asks about the object; use did plus invite.

Accept / discuss: Who did invite Omar? can express emphasis in a different context. The neutral subject question requested here is Who invited Omar?

12. More than one auxiliary

Answer: (a) Have they been waiting outside? (b) They have not been waiting outside.

Move only the first auxiliary, have, before the subject in the question. In the negative, place not after have. Been and waiting stay in place.

Accept / discuss: They haven't been waiting outside. / They've not been waiting outside.

Choose the next practice

Suggested sequence | Treat the diagnostic as a small sample, not a level score.

Use this check after learners have met simple, continuous and perfect forms. It samples selected patterns; it is not a level or placement test. For an earlier class, choose only the items that match what you have taught.

1. Choose the scope: use items 1, 3-5 and 7-8 for a shorter review; add perfect forms, the meaning contrast and subject questions when appropriate. Do not interpret an untaught item as evidence of a learner deficit.
2. Give the selected diagnostic items without the reference page first. Allow about 10-15 minutes for all 12; adjust for reading and writing needs. Let learners underline the clue that guided each choice.
3. Compare answers using the explanations. Accept contracted or full negatives and distinguish an alternative construction from an incorrect form. Ask for a self-correction before providing a model.
4. Use the reference page for one focused repair, then run two of the paired speaking prompts. Listen for auxiliary choice, the form of the following verb and whether the short answer matches the question.
5. Finish with a fresh statement using the same pattern. Ask for its question, negative and short answer. Record the pattern that still needs practice; do not convert this small sample into a proficiency level.

Use the error pattern to choose a follow-up

Items 1 and 5: Be before -ing

Contrast They wait every day with They are waiting now. Ask the question for each and explain why do or are is needed.

Items 2, 6 and 12: Perfect have and first auxiliary

Underline has/have in a perfect statement before moving it. Keep the participle unchanged; with two auxiliaries, move only the first.

Items 3, 4 and 10: Do-support and base form

Mark tense once: Does she work? Did she work? Then contrast Does she have a laptop? with Has she booked it?

Items 7-9: Modal form and meaning

Make two club rules: one action is prohibited, another is optional. Ask learners to explain why mustn't and don't have to cannot be swapped.

Items 11: Subject versus object question

Write Mina invited Omar. Hide Mina, then hide Omar. Ask the missing-information question each time before naming the rule.

The six-question starter on the article

Keep this shorter check for retrieval: 1 Does; 2 have; 3 are; 4 call; 5 read; 6 main verb (possession). These are separate from the 12-item diagnostic above.

Pair-practice models

Possible exchanges | Learners may invent different facts and follow-up questions.

For these four prompts, check whether the question and short answer match, and whether the main verb has the required form. Do not require learners to copy a model word for word.

1. A routine

Does the club open on Saturdays? Yes, it does. What time does it open? It opens at ten.

2. Happening now

Are you waiting for the bus? No, I'm not. How are you travelling? I'm walking.

3. Already done

Have you booked the tickets? Yes, I have. How many have you booked? I've booked four.

4. Help or permission

Can you carry this box? Yes, I can. When can you help? I can help after lunch.

Access and adaptation

Read a prompt aloud, reduce the number of items or allow an oral response when needed. Give the reference sheet before practice for support; keep it back only when a first independent attempt would be useful. Avoid speed-based ranking.

References and classroom use

Original exercises, examples and teaching sequence by The Kingdom of English. Grammar references checked 4 October 2026; the linked publishers do not endorse this pack. Classroom and personal printing permitted.

[British Council LearnEnglish: Questions and negatives](#)

[Cambridge English Grammar Today: Do](#)

[Cambridge English Grammar Today: Modality - meanings and uses](#)

[Cambridge English Grammar Today: Must](#)

The article includes the full diagnostic, answer explanations and follow-up resource links:

thekingdomofenglish.com/articles/webhook/auxiliary-verb-list.php