Linking verbs are verbs that couple the subject and an adjective or noun that follows the verb. The purpose of the linking verb is to provide a means whereby something can be said about the subject. In effect it acts as an equals sign, e.g., "he is good" means the same as "he-good." Since the linking verb does not convey action from a subject of an object, it can never have an object.

The most frequently used linking verbs are forms of be, become, appear, seem, look, smell, taste, sound, and feel. Care must be taken not to confuse linking verbs which pertain to the five senses with action verbs that are spelled the same.

**ACTION VERBS**

- He looked him up and down.
- I taste the food.
- He sounded the alarm.
- I feel the table.

**LINKING VERBS**

- He looked handsome.
- The food tastes good.
- The music sounded brassy.
- I feel good.
Verbs Quiz (Action & Linking) Key

Indicate whether the underlined verb is an action verb or a linking verb. (Red indicates action.)

1. I think that the course of action you are prescribing is wrong.

2. I hear the sounds of music.

3. Never have things appeared so ominous.

4. He is a dentist.

5. It sounds fine to me.

6. The flower smells sweet.

7. I feel a sense of disaster impending.

8. The story became very sad near its end.

9. He was very angry when he was told.

10. He looks very important in his new suit

Write a linking verb for each of the sentences.

1. The new Stevie Wonder album sounds great.

2. Two-day-old sandwiches are terrible.

3. Susan was the winner.

4. Tyrone is an A student.

5. They are in a good mood.

From Prentice-Hall Workbook for Writers and Writing with Confidence.
Verbs Quiz (Action & Linking) Key

**Action & Linking Verbs**

Identify the underlined words in the following sentences as action verbs (AV) or linking verbs (LV).

1. Tomorrow I **must paint** the new section of my fence.
2. Even a short stay at this island resort **will invigorate** you.
3. Our city **could have become** the major port of the Southeast.
4. Our company **produces** one of the finest computers on the market.
5. The two youngest children **are** hopeless bubble-gum addicts.
6. The leaves of my jade plant **turned** yellow.
7. Every evening Grandfather **works** the crossword puzzle in the local paper.
8. Your account of the fight **sounds** almost unbelievable.
9. The newly cut grass **smells** sweet.
10. The head buyer carefully **felt** the texture of the cloth.
11. The cloth **felt** quite rough.
12. Despite the intense heat, Celia **felt** stronger than she had in months.
13. The secretary **should have greeted** the police officers.
14. In an emergency a police officer **can be** your best friend.
15. You **should have read** only the first chapter.