

## Do & Make: Confusing Verbs

Do and Make are two verbs which usually confuse ESL students. Let us learn about how to use each one properly and identify its meaning.

### Verb to Do

DO is a transitive verb which has an object, it is used as follows:

1- DO is used when talking about work, jobs or tasks. Note, “Do” do not produce any physical and real object.

- Sally Did her assignment before she slept.
- Jerah’s mom started doing the housework before she got out.
- All children like to act out the doctor’s job.

2- DO is usually used in order to refer to activities in general without being specific. In these cases, so, we normally use the indefinite pronouns, something, nothing, anything,

Everything etc.

- I need to do anything to save them.
  - She will do everything in her birthday party.
  - He was unable to do anything.
- 3- English speakers sometimes tend to use verb to do instead of the major verb when the meaning is clear or previously mentioned to avoid any redundancy.
- Do I need to do my hair? (Do = brush or comb)
    - S: Did you clean the car?
    - T: I do not need to do it.
  - She the slept before doing the dishes (washing)
  - Donna did the kitchen and her husband did the laundry (cleaned, washed)
- 4- Verb to do is used as an auxiliary verb for making questions:
- Do you speak English?
  - Did you see John?

## Verb to Make

1- Make is used to express the idea of producing, constructing, creating, or building something new. Verb to make is also used to refer to the substance or the material of which something is made or the country of manufacturing.

- This table is made of wood.
- Her ring is made of gold. It was made in France.

• His new car was made in Japan.

Note: when the thing is made of more than one material, we use the preposition “from” instead of “of”:

- This vase was made from glass, metal, and plastic.

2- Verb to make is also used for producing an action or reaction:

- Lightening may make fire.
- This news made her cry.
- Do not make me angry!

3- Verb to make is further used after some expressions forming collocations about plans and decisions:

- We made our arrangements for the trip.
- make a choice before it is too late.
- My professor returned the paper without making a comment.
- My neighbor’s kids always make noise.
- The president will make a speech?

4- Verb to make is always used with Food, Drink and Meals:

- My mom often makes a cake on Sundays.
- Can you make me a cup of tea?
- She made dinner for the whole family.

### Common collocations with Do and Make

A collocation is a combination of words or expressions used together to denote a certain meaning different than the individual words. The following expressions are collocations that use verbs do and make:

#### Verb to Do Collocations

The following expressions are commonly used with Do:

|             |                            |                            |               |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| A crossword | An assignment              | Good                       | The gardening |
| A dance     | Anything                   | harm                       | The housework |
| A drawing   | Badly                      | Laundry                    | The ironing   |
| A favor     | Business                   | The lawns                  | The dishes    |
| A job       | Chores                     | Nothing                    | The rest      |
| A painting  | Everything                 | Research                   | The shopping  |
| A project   | Damage                     | right<br>(the right thing) | The washing   |
| A service   | Exercises                  | Something                  | Well          |
| Work        | wrong<br>(the wrong thing) | Assignment                 | The best      |
| Hair        | Homework                   | The job                    | The nails     |

#### Verb to Make Collocations

The following expressions are commonly used with MAKE:

|                          |                   |                 |                |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Bed                      | A joke            | Alterations     | Famous         |
| A bet                    | Advances          | An appointment  | Fun of someone |
| A cake                   | A suggestion      | An announcement | Love           |
| A call                   | A statement       | An attempt      | Lunch          |
| A change                 | A speech          | An effort       | Inquiries      |
| A choice                 | A sound           | An error        | Peace          |
| A comment                | A scene           | An escape       | Possible       |
| A complaint              | A sandwich        | An exception    | Progress       |
| A confession             | A reservation     | An excuse       | Money          |
| A connection             | A request         | An impression   | Room           |
| A cup of coffee /<br>tea | A promise         | An observation  | Sales          |
| A date                   | A profit          | An offer        | Sense          |
| A decision               | A prediction      | Amends          | Someone rich   |
| A demand                 | A point           | Arrangements    | Someone smile  |
| A difference             | A plan            | Breakfast       | Sure           |
| A discovery              | A pass at someone | Certain         | Trouble        |



UNIVERSITY OF  
**ARKANSAS**  
SAM M. WALTON  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

A face

A fool of himself

A fortune

A friend

A fuss

A noise

A living

A loss

A list

A line

Clear

Dinner

Faces

A mistake

War

Her mind up

His way

A mess