

Verbs of Location and Destination: “to put” and “to be”

LOCATIONAL VERBS

“to be” – verbs of position, location, confinement

Being verbs never take a direct object, they are intransitive.

Many of the *being* verbs are strong; notice the participles.

These *being* verbs show location.

liegen haben gelegen (preterit = lag)
be flat, lying down, other than a proper upright position

stehen haben gestanden (preterit = stand)
be upright, in a vertical position in relationship to gravity

sitzen haben gesessen (preterit = saß)
sit, be sitting, only for people

stecken haben gesteckt (preterit = steckte)
be enclosed, be inside of something, hidden from view

hängen haben gehangen (preterit = hing)
be suspended, be/hang on the wall, be dangling from a wire

other verbs with a locational sense:
arbeiten, schreiben, lesen, schlafen, etc.

DESTINATIONAL VERBS

“to put” – verbs of destination, target, goal

Putting verbs must always take a direct object, they are transitive.

These *putting* verbs are all weak; notice the participles.

All of these *putting* verbs show destination.

legen haben gelegt (preterit = legte)
lay something flat, put it down in a horizontal position, lay down

setzen haben gesetzt (preterit = setzte)
put something down in an upright position, stand, set it down

stellen haben gestellt (preterit = stellte)
put an object away, put it into the prescribed space

stecken haben gesteckt (preterit = steckte)
put an object into an enclosed space, put it out of sight, hide it

hängen haben gehängt (preterit = hängte)
suspend an object, put/hang or dangle something from a wire

other verbs with a destinal sense:
fahren, gehen, reisen, kommen, etc.

How do you remember the difference between *liegen* and *legen* ???

Easy: *liegen* is the one with the *i* in it, and *i* stands for *intransitive* (no direct object).

The *i* also stands for *irregular*.

The German vowel in *liegen* is pronounced like the English vowel in *be* and the verb *liegen* means *be*.

In English, the distinction is the same.

The verb *lie* is an intransitive verb (no direct object). The English verb *lie* means *to be*.

The transitive counterpart is the verb *lay*. The English verb *lay* means *to put*.