



- VERB PATTERNS : SAY , TELL , SPEAK , ASK , TALK GrammarRocks

What's the difference between these verbs??

INFINITIVE	SIMPLE PAST	PAST PARTICIPLE	3rd PERSON Sing aff present	VERB + SUFFIX - ING
SAY	SAID	SAID	SAYS	SAYING
TELL	TOLD		TELLS	
SPEAK		SPOKEN		SPEAKING
TALK	TALKED		TALKS	
ASK		ASKED		ASKING

SAY SAID SAID SAYS SAYING	"Say" means to express something with words. "WE SAY SOMETHING (sth)." "WE SAY SOMETHING (sth) TO SOMEBODY (sb)." "WE SAY HELLO / GOODBYE / PLEASE / THANK YOU / HAPPY BIRTHDAY / CONGRATULATIONS" WE USE "SAY" to REPORT SOMEONE'S WORDS: "He said "I love you". "She said she loved him." "See you soon," Linda said to him." "Say hello to your mum for me." "We said goodbye at the airport." "Did you say thank you to your teacher?" "Laura never says anything when asked." "Can you say your name again?" "Victor says he's exhausted." "They said that they would wait for me." "She didn't say what time she would be back." "He didn't say anything to me about the job."
TELL TOLD TOLD TELLS TELLING	"tell" means to give information to a person. "WE TELL SOMEBODY (sb) SOMETHING (sth)" "WE TELL THE TIME / THE TRUTH / A LIE / A STORY / A JOKE / THE NEWS / THE FUTURE / "WE TELL SOMEBODY to DO SOMETHING" = REQUEST = PEDIDO WE USE TELL with some QUESTION WORDS . WE USE TELL in INDIRECT QUESTIONS YOU TELL someone where something is, why something happened, when we want to do something: "Can you tell me where the bus station is?" "Can you tell me who called you?" "He told me where to go." "She told me where to go." "Tell me why you're so angry." "Please tell Tony that joke you told me. It was so funny!" "Has he told you the news?" "Could you tell me your name, please?" "They told me that they would wait for me." "She didn't tell me what time she would be back." "My father told (us) a very interesting story." "You must always tell (me) the truth." "John told (you) a lie." "No one can tell the future." "Can you tell the time in English?" "Tell him to meet us here."

CHECK THESE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TELL & SAY:

"What did he tell you?" (What information did he give you?)	"What did he say?"
"Tell Paul I said hi!"	"Say 'hi' to Paul for me!"
"I want to tell you something about our teacher."	"I want to say something about our teacher."
"I told them that their new house was beautiful."	"I said that their new house is beautiful."
"Did he tell you how it happened?"	"Did he say how it happened?"
"I told him that I would meet him on Sunday."	"I said that I would meet him on Sunday."
"Where are they going? She didn't tell me." (She didn't give me the information)	"Where are they going? She didn't say."
"Can you tell me your name again?"	"Can you say your name again?"

SPEAK SPOKE SPOKEN SPEAKS SPEAKING	"WE SPEAK a LANGUAGE" "WE SPEAK to SOMEBODY (sb)" "WE SPEAK WITH SOMEBODY (sb)" "WE SPEAK ABOUT SOMETHING/SOMEONE." "SPEAK LOUDLY/ LOUDER/ SOFTER / QUIETLY/ !" "Speak quietly, this is a library." "Can I speak with you?" "I speak many languages." "How many languages do you speak?"
TALK TALKED TALKED /t/ TALKS TALKING	"WE TALK ABOUT SOMETHING/SOMEONE." "WE TALK to SOMEBODY" "WE TALK with SOMEONE" "We talk on the phone every week." "Can I talk with you?" "Can we talk about your brother?"

"SPEAK" and "TALK" are synonyms, and most of the time you can use either one of these words interchangeably, which means it doesn't matter, you can choose either. There are a few slight differences in the way that they're used: "SPEAK" tends to be a bit more formal. It also refers to more general topics than "TALK". Usually when you use "TALK" you might add it with a proposition "about".

"TALK about something."

So it's a little more specific.

"SPEAK" you can use quite generally.

For example: "Can I speak with you?"

Now, this is quite general, we're not being specific about what we want to speak about. But it also sounds a bit more formal, it sounds important.

"Can I talk with you?"

So this is a little more casual, a little informal, it doesn't sound as important. And if we add "about" we can add some more detail.

"Can we talk about your brother?"



English Zone



EXERCISE: Complete the sentences with the correct form of **SAY , TELL or ASK** :

1. "Where's the park?" she _____.

told	said	asked
------	------	-------

2. He didn't know what to do, so I _____ him where to get the train.

told	said	asked
------	------	-------

3. Please _____ me how to use the printer.

tell	say	asked
------	-----	-------

4. My best friend _____ me to go to the cinema with him.

told	said	asked
------	------	-------

5. Michael _____ he'd be coming at 5pm.

told	said	ask
------	------	-----

6. Did you _____ "Happy birthday" to your cousin?

tell	say	ask
------	-----	-----

7. "I'm so tired!" _____ Martin.

told	said	asked
------	------	-------

8. Why don't you _____ your elder sister to help you?

tell	say	ask
------	-----	-----

9. They _____ us they'd be late.

told	said	asked
------	------	-------

10. He _____ her: "Come with me".

tell	said	asked
------	------	-------

**ASK
ASKED
ASKS
ASKING**

"WE ASK SOMETHING "

"WE ASK A QUESTION."

"WE ASK SOMEONE IF + SUBJECT + VERB" == ASK (SOMEONE) + indirect question

"WE ASK SOMEONE QUESTION WORD + SUBJECT + VERB" == ASK (SOMEONE) + indirect question

"WE ASK SOMEBODY to DO SOMETHING" = REQUEST = PEDIDO

"WE ASK FOR SOMETHING"

Mary asked (me) where I lived.

The guide asked (us) if we had visited the museum before.

Walter's mother told him to put away his toys.

The examiner asked me to speak louder.

Can I ask you a question?

I asked my friend to meet me at the café.

When Tom got lost, he asked for directions.