

Verbs for sports and leisure activities



We **go** skiing every winter.

When we talk about sport in a general way, we usually use the verb 'do':

Do you **do** any sport?

Or, occasionally:

Do you **practise** any sport?

However, 'practise' has a different meaning. 'To practise' is to do something, perhaps regularly, in order to maintain or improve our performance or specific skills, maybe before a particular event or competition. For example:

Footballers practise taking free kicks.

He's giving his first presentation so he needs to practise using PowerPoint.

She's doing well in her English course but doesn't have much opportunity to practise.

I practise cricket every week. ❌

I **play** cricket every week. Sometimes we **practise** our batting or bowling. ✔️

I'm practising tennis today. ❌

I'm **playing** tennis today. I'm going to **practise** backhands because that's my weakness. ✔️

To speak about named sports and activities, we use a specific verb. For example:

to swim

to cycle

to run

to climb

to ski

Do you **do** any sport?

Yes, I **swim** and **cycle**.

Or the following verbs: 'to go', 'to play', 'to do'.

To go

We use the verb 'to go' for lots of sports as well as other activities. Here are some examples:

'to go' + gerund	'to go for a' + noun
running	a run
cycling	a bike ride
climbing	a swim
swimming	a walk
hiking	a stroll
skiing	a drink
horse-riding	a meal
skateboarding	
fishing	
dancing	
shopping	

We tend to use 'to go' when we give extra information:

"Do you **do** any sport?"

"Yes, I **ski** and **climb**. I **go** climbing twice a week and I'm **going** skiing with friends in February."

To play

<?xml:namespace prefix = "o" ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" /> to play	
Some competitive sports, especially those played with a ball	football tennis golf squash cricket rugby

Games Note that we also say 'to have a game of...'	chess Monopoly draughts cards
Console/computer games	PlayStation/X-box games on a PlayStation/X-box
Musical instruments	the piano the violin the drums the guitar

To do

<?xml:namespace prefix = "o" ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />	To do
A form of exercise or something we do at the gym	gymnastics aerobics spinning* weight-training* yoga pilates *[also used with 'go']
Martial arts	judo taekwondo karate kung fu
Something that we try to solve	a puzzle a quiz a crossword

See also **'Make' or 'do'?**

Examples

	
<p>Do you fancy going out for a walk later?</p> <p>No, it's too cold. Let's stay at home and play chess.</p>	<p>They love doing puzzles.</p>
	
<p>She plays the piano really well - she practises every day.</p>	<p>She does yoga before breakfast.</p>



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