

A

We use **like** or **as if** to say how somebody/something looks, sounds or feels:

- ☐ That house **looks like** it's going to fall down. or
That house **looks as if** it's going to fall down.
- ☐ Amy **sounded like** she had a cold, didn't she? or
Amy **sounded as if** she had a cold, didn't she?
- ☐ I've just had a holiday, but I feel very tired.
I don't **feel like** I've had a holiday. or
I don't **feel as if** I've had a holiday.

You can also use **as though** in these examples:

- ☐ I don't **feel as though** I've had a holiday.

Compare:

- ☐ You **look tired**. (**look** + *adjective*)
- ☐ You **look like you haven't slept**. } (**look like** / **as if** + *subject* + *verb*)
- You **look as if you haven't slept**.



B

We say: **it looks like** ... or **it looks as if** ...
it sounds like ... or **it sounds as if** ...

- ☐ Sarah is very late. **It looks like** she isn't coming.
or **It looks as if** she isn't coming.
- ☐ **It looked like** it was going to rain, so we took an umbrella.
or **It looked as if** it was going to rain ...
- ☐ The noise is very loud next door.
It sounds like they're having a party.
or **It sounds as if** they're ...

You can also use **as though**:

- ☐ **It sounds as though** they're having a party.

It sounds like they're having a party next door.



C

You can use **like** / **as if** / **as though** with other verbs to say how somebody does something:

- ☐ He ran **like he was running for his life**.
- ☐ After the interruption, the speaker went on talking **as if nothing had happened**.
- ☐ When I told them my plan, they looked at me **as though I was mad**.

D

After **as if**, we sometimes use the *past* when we are talking about the *present*.

For example:

- ☐ I don't like him. He talks **as if he knew** everything.

The meaning is not past. We use the past (as if he **knew**) because the idea is not real: he does *not* know everything. We use the past in the same way with **if** and **wish** (see Unit 39).

We do not normally use **like** in this way.

Some more examples:

- ☐ She's always asking me to do things for her – **as if I didn't** have enough to do already.
(I *have* enough to do already)
- ☐ Joe's only 40. Why do you talk about him **as if he was** an old man? (he *isn't* an old man)

When you use the past in this way, you can use **were** instead of **was**:

- ☐ Why do you talk about him **as if he were** an old man?
- ☐ They treat me **as if I were** their own son. or ... **as if I was** their own son.
(I'm *not* their son)

Exercises

118.1 What do you say in these situations? Use the words in brackets to make your sentence.

- 1 You meet Bill. He has a black eye and blood on his face. (look / like / be / a fight)
You say to him: *You look like you've been in a fight.*
- 2 Claire comes into the room. She looks absolutely terrified. (look / as if / see / a ghost)
You say to her: What's the matter? You
- 3 You have just run one kilometre, but you are exhausted. (feel / like / run / a marathon)
You say: I
- 4 Joe is on holiday. He's talking to you on the phone and sounds happy.
(sound / as if / have / a good time)
You say to him: You

118.2 Make sentences beginning **It looks like ...** or **It sounds like ...**.

you should see a doctor
it's going to rain

there's been an accident
~~she isn't coming~~

they're having an argument
they don't have any

- 1 Sarah said she would be here an hour ago.
You say: *It looks like she isn't coming.*
- 2 The sky is full of black clouds.
You say: It
- 3 You hear two people shouting at each other next door.
You say:
- 4 You see an ambulance, some policemen and two damaged cars at the side of the road.
You say:
- 5 You and a friend are in a supermarket. You're looking for bananas, but without success.
You say:
- 6 Dave isn't feeling well. He tells you all about it.
You say:

118.3 Complete the sentences with **as if**. Choose from the box, putting the verbs in the correct form.

she / enjoy / it
~~he / need / a good rest~~
I / not / exist

I / be / crazy
she / hurt / her leg
she / not / want / come

he / not / eat / for a week
he / mean / what he / say

- 1 Mark looks very tired. He looks *as if he needs a good rest*.
- 2 I don't think Paul was joking. He looked
- 3 What's the matter with Lisa? She's walking
- 4 Paul was extremely hungry and ate his dinner very quickly.
He ate
- 5 I looked at Sarah during the movie. She had a bored expression on her face.
She didn't look
- 6 I told my friends about my plan. They were amazed.
They looked at me
- 7 I phoned Kate and invited her to the party, but she wasn't very enthusiastic.
She sounded
- 8 I went into the office, but nobody spoke to me or looked at me.
Everybody ignored me

118.4 These sentences are like the ones in Section D. Complete each sentence using **as if**.

- 1 Andy is a terrible driver. He drives *as if he were* the only driver on the road.
- 2 I'm 20 years old, so please don't talk to me a child.
- 3 Steve has never met Nicola, but he talks about her his best friend.
- 4 We first met a long time ago, but I remember it yesterday.