

Lie—Lay—Lain

How does it work?

Easy Peasy.

LIE: Present Tense

Lie-Lay-Lain: Ya hear it all the time; Lie being first in line, you know “lie” is present tense of that verb.

Lie is something you **do**. “I lie down on the bed.” (~;Easy to remember—Lie is something you do ;-) hahah-

Lay is something you **do to** something. “I lay the book down.” Lay requires an object and is the present tense of *that* verb.

Ya lay something down, including yourself, when you refer to yourself in the 3rd person:

I lay the book down. Now I lay me down to sleep.

Lay requires an object.

Lie requires no object (as a present-tense verb). “Lay lady lay across my big brass bed” is incorrect. Should be “lie lady, lie”—but that would change the meaning, wouldn’t it? (a whole different verb being the pivoting point. Artistic license—Bob chose the vernacular ;-)

LAY: Present Tense of a whole different verb:

If there’s an *object*, you start with Lay. “If there’s an object, there is no lie!” (hahah) so Lay is the beginning and laid is next (there is no “laid” in the object-less lie).

Lay—Laid—Laid:

Now I lay me down to sleep.

Yesterday I laid me down to sleep.


I have laid me down to sleep every night this week.

Lie—Laid—Lain:

I lie down right now.

Yesterday I lay down.

I have lain down every night this week.



Present Tense	Past Tense	Past Participle
Lie	Lay	Lain
Lay*	Laid	Laid

* Requires an object

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