

# Confusing Verbs: win / beat / earn / gain

(PT: *ganhar, vencer*)

## 1. win (win / won / won)

This word is used for a person or team who is the best in a race or competition. The “winner” usually gets a prize. You “**win something**” (for example, a game, lottery or competition) or simply “**win**”.

*Examples:* Manchester United **won** the match yesterday!  
I hope I **win** the school race tomorrow.  
When they play Chess, Jeff sometimes lets his son **win**.  
John **won** the lottery on Saturday. He got \$3M dollars!

*Passive example:* The match **has been won** by Liverpool.

## beat (beat / beat / beat)(*synonym: defeat*)

This word is used for a person or team who is better than another person or team in a race or competition. You always “**beat somebody**”.

*Examples:* Do you think that Arsenal will **beat** Manchester City on Saturday?  
Simon **beat** James by two minutes in the road race.  
If I practise every day, I think I can **beat** him next year.

*Passive example:* Liverpool **was beaten** by Arsenal.

## 2. earn (regular)

This word is used to show that money or something else is obtained or deserved through work or services (for example, salary, respect, gratitude).

*Examples:* Roger **earns** \$50,000 per year.  
I **earn** over \$50 every week in tips.  
He has worked so diligently for so long. He **has earned** my respect.  
You didn't leave any food on your plate. You **have earned** a sweet.  
You **earn** 100 points at the end of every level in this video game.

*The above verbs require that the actor be “active”, i.e. you must “do” something before you “receive” something.*

## 3. gain (regular)

This word is used to indicate a benefit, usually making your life better.

*Examples:* He **gained** 30 minutes by taking the bypass.  
East Timor **gained** independence in 2002.  
I think I **gained** an advantage because I speak English.

*Passive example:* Brazilian Independence **was gained** on September 7<sup>th</sup>1822.

*Also used for weight:* She **gained** 2kg at Christmas.

*This verb usually require no “action” by the actor.*

**Exercise.** Complete with "win", "beat", "earn", "gain" or "get":

1. You're so good at tennis. I think that I won't \_\_\_\_\_ you!
2. I don't want to play chess with you because I never \_\_\_\_\_.
3. He's very skinny. I think he should \_\_\_\_\_ some weight.
4. A: How much do you \_\_\_\_\_? B: Around \$40,000 a year.
5. You can \_\_\_\_\_ him if you really try!
6. Scotland wants to \_\_\_\_\_ independence from the United Kingdom.
7. He \_\_\_\_\_ three gold medals in the Olympic games last year.
8. Liverpool never \_\_\_\_\_ Manchester United, since they are too good!
9. You have helped me so much recently, you \_\_\_\_\_ my gratitude.
10. This game is great. I \_\_\_\_\_ ten points every time I kill a troll.