

### 315 later and in

With a time expression, we generally use *later* to mean 'after that time', and *in* to mean 'after now'. Compare:

*She got married on her 18th birthday; six months later she was divorced. Penny's coming on July 1st, and Colin will arrive about a week later.*

*I'll see you in a few days.* (NOT *I'll see you a few days later.*)

But without a time expression, *later* can be used to mean 'after now'.

*Bye! See you later!*

### 316 lay and lie

There are three similar verbs that can be confused: *lay* (regular except for spelling), *lie* (irregular) and *lie* (regular).

#### 1 lay

*Lay* is a regular verb except for its spelling. Its forms are:

infinitive: (to) *lay* past: *laid*

-ing form: *laying* past participle: *laid*

*Lay* means 'put down carefully' or 'put down flat'. It has an object.

*Lay the tent down on the grass and I'll see how to put it up.*

*I laid the papers on the table.* (NOT *I lay...*)

Note the expressions *lay a table* (= put plates, knives etc on a table) and *lay an egg* (a bird's way of having a baby).

#### 2 lie (irregular)

The forms of the irregular verb *lie* are:

infinitive: (to) *lie* past: *lay*

-ing form: *lying* past participle: *lain* (used mostly in a formal/literary style)

*Lie* (irregular) means 'be down', 'become horizontal'. It has no object.

*Don't lie in bed all day. Get up and do some work.* (NOT *Don't lay...*)

*I lay down and closed my eyes.* (NOT *I laid down...*)

#### 3 lie (regular)

The regular verb *lie* (*lied*) means 'say things that are not true'.

*You lied to me when you said you loved me.*

#### 4 dialect forms

In many British and American dialects, different forms of *lay* and irregular *lie* are used. *Lay* is often used in cases where standard English has *lie*.  
*I'm going to lay down for a few minutes.* (Standard English ... *lie down* ...)