

Lie / Lay

Lie

(to recline or be situated) never has a direct object.

present tense—	lie (lies)
past tense—	lay
past participle—	lain
present participle—	lying

Lay

(to put, place or prepare) always has a direct object.

lay (lays)
laid
laid
laying

Proper Use of *Lie*

George Constanza lies on the couch.
George and his girlfriend lie on the couch
— Proper. *lies / lie* are in the present tense.

George Constanza lay on the couch.
— Proper. *lay* is past tense of *lie*.

George has lain around all summer
— Proper. Past participle
indicating a completed action.

George is lying around all summer.
— Proper. Present progressive
indicating ongoing action.

Proper Use of *Lay*

George lays the food on the table.
George and Kramer lay the food on the table.

George laid the food on the table.

George has laid the food on the table

George is laying the food on the table.