

The Simple Present Tense

Verbs have forms called **tenses** that tell you *when* the action happens. If the **action happens regularly, sometimes or never**, use the **simple present tense**.

We always **wash** our hands before meals.

Joe sometimes **lends** me his bike.

Dad **jogs** in the park every day.

We often **go** to the movies on Saturday.

Mr. Ross **takes** a train to work.

The simple present tense is also used to state **facts**.

The sun **rises** every morning.

Penguins **live** in the Antarctica.

Dogs **love** playing in water.

The earth **goes** around the sun.

Australia **is** an island.

Use the simple present tense to tell the events of **a story that is happening now**.

I **arrive** at school. I **see** another girl crying. I **ask** her why she **is** sad. She **says** she **hasn't** got any friends to play with. I **tell** her that she **can play** with me.

Use the simple present tense to talk about **things that will happen in the future**.

My little sister **starts** school tomorrow.

The new supermarket **opens** this Friday.

Next week I **go** on holiday to Japan.

We **fly** to London on Sunday.

The train **leaves** in five minutes.

My family **moves** to a new house next month.

am, is and are

The words **am**, **is** and **are** are the simple present forms of the verb **be**.

- Use **am** with the pronoun **I**.
- Use **is** with **singular nouns** like 'my dad' and 'the teacher', and with the pronouns **he**, **she** and **it**.
- Use **are** with **plural nouns** like 'my parents' and 'Jenny and Mary', and with the pronouns **we**, **you** and **they**.

I **am** twelve.

I **am** in the garden.

My mom **is** very tired today.

The teacher **is** tall.

She **is** also pretty.

Our dog **is** black.

The children **are** asleep.

Computers **are** very expensive.

My brother and I **are** upstairs.

We **are** in our bedrooms.

You **are** my best friend.

You and David **are** my best friends.

Here is a table to help you remember how to use **is**, **am** and **are**.

	singular	plural
first person	I am	we are
second person	you are	you are
third person	he is she is it is	they are they are they are

Notes

There are short ways of saying and writing **am**, **is** and **are** with pronouns. These short forms are called contractions.

full form	short form
I am	I'm
you are	you're
he is	he's
she is	she's
it is	it's
we are	we're
they are	they're

You can use these contractions to replace **am**, **is** and **are** when they are used with **not**:

full form	short form
I am not	I'm not
he is not	he isn't
she is not	she isn't
it is not	it isn't
we are not	we aren't
you are not	you aren't
they are not	they aren't

there is *and* there are

Use **there is** with **is** and **are** to say what exists or what you can have. Use **there is** with **singular nouns**, and **there are** with **plural nouns**.

There is **a tree** in our garden.

There is **a girl** called Farah in my class.

There is **fish** for dinner.

There is **nothing** to do when it rains.

There's **a cat** sitting on the bench.

There's **a boy** in my class who can walk on his hands.

There are **cows** in the field.

There are some very big **ships** in the harbor today.

Notes

The contraction for **there is** is **there's**.

Exercise 4

*Look at the pairs of subjects and verbs below. Then write a sentence using each subject with the **simple present** form of the verb. Remember that you can also use the simple present tense to talk about the future.*

Example: Dad goes to work on his bike.

subject	verb
1. Dad	go _____
2. My brother	ride _____
3. The dog	watch _____
4. The bus	leave _____
5. Tom and Sam	buy _____
6. We	eat _____
7. Aunt Grace	come _____
8. Our neighbor	like _____
9. The boys	start _____
10. My family	travel _____

Exercise 5

Complete the following sentences by writing **am**, **is** or **are** in the blank spaces.

1. The weather _____ beautiful today.
2. All the children _____ on the playground.
3. Boys! You _____ always late for class.
4. _____ you on the basketball team, too?
5. Nobody in my class _____ interested in football.
6. _____ this computer more expensive than that one?
7. Sally _____ my best friend.
8. Mom and Dad _____ downstairs watching television.
9. Paul and Henry _____ in the computer room.
10. The Eiffel Tower _____ the tallest monument in Paris.

Exercise 6

Read the following passage. Fill in **there's**, **there are**, **there isn't** or **there aren't** in the blank spaces.

I like playing in our park because _____ some great things to play on.
_____ a big chute to slide on and a huge sandbox to play in. _____
also some swings. Dogs are not allowed in the park so _____ no dogs to bother us.
_____ also a lot of space for us to run around. It sometimes gets hot because
_____ many trees to give shade, but _____ a fountain where we can drink
water. It's the best place in the town for children. _____ another place as good as
the park.

Exercise 7

Rewrite the following sentences using contractions. The first one has already been done to help you.

1. It is another sunny day today.

It's another sunny day today.

2. This is my sister. She is five.

3. I am not very interested in sports.

4. She is not my best friend. You are my best friend.

5. Cats are not as noisy as dogs.

6. We are busy doing our homework.

7. She is busy cleaning the car in the garage.

8. Our teacher is not very tall.

9. My parents are not home from work yet.

10. My friend is not very good at math.

The Present Progressive Tense

The present progressive tense is used to talk about **things that are continuing to happen**.

Make the present progressive tense by using **am**, **is** or **are** with a verb that ends in **ing**.

I **am learning** how to swim.

I **am eating** my lunch.

I **am watching** television.

She **is reading** a book.

Dad **is baking** a cake.

My sister **is listening** to music.

Uncle David **is cleaning** his car.

The dog **is barking** in the garden.

We **are singing** our favorite song.

My brother and I **are playing** a computer game.

The teachers **are showing** us a film.

They **are bringing** a television set into the classroom.

Notes

The **ing** form of a verb is called the **present participle**. You use the **present participle** with **am**, **is** or **are** to make the present progressive tense.

am + watching
(present participle)

is + listening
(present participle)

are + playing
(present participle)

The present progressive tense is also used to talk about **things that are planned for the future**.

I **am going** to the library tomorrow.

My sister **is giving** me her bike when she gets her new one.

We can't go to the movies tomorrow because my mom **is working**.

We **are having** a barbecue on Sunday.

All my friends **are coming** to my party next week.

We're **taking** my cousin to the zoo later today.

Exercise 8

Fill in the blank spaces with the present progressive tense of the verbs in parentheses. Try to use contractions such as *I'm*, *she's* and *they're* where you can.

1. We _____ (go) to the zoo tomorrow.
2. He _____ (fix) my bike in the garage.
3. I _____ (help) Mom in the kitchen.
4. My sister and I _____ (watch) television in our bedroom.
5. The train _____ (leave) in ten minutes.
6. They _____ (come) with us to the museum.
7. We _____ (paint) some pictures for Aunt Susan.
8. The boys and girls _____ (dance) in the hall.
9. The cat _____ (chase) some birds.
10. My brother _____ (tickle) me.

Exercise 9

Complete the following sentences with either 1) the **simple present form** of the verb, or 2) the **present progressive form** of the verb.

1. The teacher always _____ (give) us interesting project work.
2. The wind _____ (blow) very strongly today.
3. I _____ (like) chocolate ice cream.
4. Be quiet! We _____ (try) to listen to the radio.
5. Let's go inside now. It _____ (begin) to rain.
6. Penguins _____ (eat) fish.
7. Dad never _____ (let) us play in the street when it's dark.
8. The children _____ (go) swimming every day.
9. We're trying to catch the ball that _____ (roll) down the hill.
10. My teacher _____ (know) a lot about plants and animals.