

UNIT 1

Tenses

Present Forms

Present Simple

We use the present simple:

- a) for permanent states, repeated actions and daily routines.

He **works** in a bank.
(permanent state)
He **takes** the train to work every morning.
(daily routine/repeated actions)



- b) for general truths and laws of nature.

The sun **sets** in the west.



- c) for timetables (planes, trains, etc.) and programmes.

The plane from Brussels **arrives** at 8:30.



- d) for sports commentaries, reviews and narration.

- a) Peterson **overtakes** Williams and **wins** the race. (sports commentary)
b) Mike Dalton **plays** the part of Macbeth. (review)
c) Then the prince **gets** on his horse and quickly **rides** away. (narration)



- e) to give instructions or directions (instead of the imperative).

You **sprinkle** some cheese on the pizza and then you **bake** it. (Instead of: **Sprinkle** some cheese on the pizza ...)

The present simple is used with the following time expressions: *usually, often, always, etc., every day/week/month/year, in the morning/afternoon/evening, at night, at the weekend, on Mondays, etc.*

Present Continuous

We use the present continuous:

- a) for actions taking place now, at the moment of speaking.

He **is giving** the baby a bath at the moment.



- b) for temporary actions; that is actions that are going on around now, but not at the actual moment of speaking.

I'm looking for a new job these days.

(He is not looking for a job at the moment of speaking.)



- c) with adverbs such as: *always, constantly, continually, etc.* for actions which happen very often, usually to express annoyance, irritation or anger.

- a) I'm **always meeting** Sara when I go shopping. (action which happens very often)
b) You're **constantly interrupting** me when I'm talking. (expressing annoyance/irritation)



- d) for actions that we have already arranged to do in the near future, especially when the time and place have been decided.

They're **moving** into their new house next week. (The time has been decided.)



- e) for changing or developing situations.

*More and more species **are becoming** extinct.*

The present continuous is used with the following time expressions: *now, at the moment, at present, these days, still, nowadays, today, tonight, etc.*

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Note: We use the present perfect to put emphasis on number and the present perfect continuous to put emphasis on duration.

Compare the examples:

e.g. I've **typed** four reports so far.
I've **been typing** reports all morning.

Adverbs of Frequency

- ◆ Adverbs of frequency (*always, usually, often, sometimes, seldom/rarely, never, etc.*) come before the main verb (*read, work, etc.*) but after the verb to be, auxiliary verbs (*do, have, etc.*) or modal verbs (*can, should, etc.*). Adverbs of frequency go before the auxiliary verbs in short answers.

e.g. Susan **often goes** skiing at the weekend.
Kim **is sometimes** rude to other people.
You **can always** call me if you need help.
'Do you help your mother with the housework?'
'Yes, I **usually do**.'

- ◆ Expressions such as *every day, once/twice a week/month, etc., most mornings/evenings, etc.* go at the beginning or the end of a sentence. *Usually, often, sometimes, normally* and *occasionally* can go at the beginning or the end of a sentence for more emphasis.

e.g. We go on holiday **twice a year**.
Usually, I finish work at five.
I feel bored **sometimes**.

- ◆ The adverbs *never, seldom* and *rarely* have a negative meaning and are never used with the word *not*.

e.g. I **rarely** go to bed late. (NOT: ~~I rarely don't go...~~)

1 Underline the correct tense.

- The plane **leaves/has left** at four o'clock. We must be at the airport by two o'clock.
- It **gets/is getting** colder and colder every day.
- Have you seen Linda? I **have been looking/am looking** for her for almost an hour.
- Sam is a very interesting person. He **knows/has known** all kinds of unusual facts.
- First, you **are heating/heat** the oven to a temperature of 180°C.
- Have you heard the news? They **have just elected/have been electing** a new club chairman!
- Martha **is finding/has found** a new job. She is starting next week.

- The teacher **has been correcting/has corrected** essays for three hours.
- Michael's car broke down last week, so he **uses/is using** his father's for the time being.
- It rarely **gets/is getting** very hot in Britain.

2

Choose the correct answer.

- 'I met our new boss this morning.'
'I ... **C** ... him, too. He's very nice.'
A am meeting B have been meeting C have met
- '..... in a hotel?'
'No, but my parents did last summer in Rome.'
A Have you ever stayed B Did you ever stay
C Are you ever staying
- 'Who is in that new film?'
'Well, a young actress the leading role.'
A has been playing B plays C has played
- 'Is David at home?'
'Yes, but he a shower at the moment.'
A is having B has been having C has
- 'Why are you so upset?'
'I my favourite ring.'
A lose B have been losing C have lost
- 'Have you found a house yet?'
'No, I with my aunt at the moment.'
A stay B am staying C have stayed

3

Put the adverbs of frequency in the correct position.

- A: Do you wear sunglasses in the winter?
B: No, I do. (never)
No, I never do.
- A: Do you like fishing, Alan?
B: Yes, I go fishing at weekends. (sometimes)
- A: Do you go to the gym very often?
B: Yes, I go. (once a week)
- A: How often do you visit your parents?
B: I visit them. (every weekend)
- A: Do you eat in restaurants very often?
B: No, I do. (rarely)
- A: Do you like oysters?
B: I don't know. I have eaten oysters. (never)
- A: How often do you go on holiday?
B: I go on holiday. (once a year)
- A: When do you read your post?
B: I read it on the way to work. (usually)
- A: Shall I lock the door?
B: Of course. You should lock the door when you go out. (always)
- A: You are breaking things! (always)
B: I'm sorry. I don't mean to.

4 Identify the tenses, then match them to the correct descriptions.

- 1 The plane to Sydney **leaves** at eleven o'clock.
- 2 I **have written** two letters this morning.
- 3 They're **going** on holiday on Saturday.
- 4 Graham **has known** Errol for five years.
- 5 You're **always leaving** the door open.
- 6 We **are rehearsing** a new play at the moment.
- 7 George **has bought** a new car.
- 8 Lisa **has been cleaning** the house all morning.
- 9 Look! Alison **has dyed** her hair!
- 10 More and more people **are recycling** their rubbish.

- a actions which started in the past and continue up to the present
- b action which has recently finished and whose result is visible in the present
- c to put emphasis on the duration of an action which started in the past and continues up to the present
- d to express criticism or annoyance
- e timetables and programmes
- f actions that we have arranged to do in the near future
- g action which has happened within a specific time period which is not over at the moment of speaking
- h action which happened at an unstated time in the past
- i changing or developing situations
- j temporary actions

5 Put the verbs in brackets into the correct present form.

- 1 A: Tortoises ...*live*... (live) to be very old.
B: I've heard of one which is over a hundred years old.
- 2 A: Are you still busy?
B: Yes. I (read) this article for an hour and I still (not/finish).
- 3 A: More and more people (go) to university these days.
B: Yes. I think it's a good thing.
- 4 A: I (have) a party tonight. Do you want to come?
B: Yes. What time does it start?
- 5 A: Why are your shoes wet?
B: I (wash) the car.
- 6 A: What's the matter?
B: I (break) my ankle.
- 7 A: What do I need to do next?
B: You (add) the sugar to the mixture and you (mix) it well.
- 8 A: Who (use) my car?
B: I have.
- 9 A: Are you new here?
B: No. Actually, I (live) here for almost ten years.
- 10 A: Pete is playing his music very loud.
B: Again! He (always/do) that!
- 11 A: Have you made plans for Saturday yet?
B: I (go) to the cinema with Jack.
- 12 A: Mr Collins is a very good teacher.
B: Well, he (teach) Maths for twenty-five years, you know.
- 13 A: Are you going to the concert on Saturday night?
B: Yes. Actually, I (already/buy) the tickets.
- 14 A: Hello, Simon.
B: Oh! We (always/meet) each other in this supermarket.

6 a) Put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense.

Dear Kathleen,

I 1) ...*'m writing*... (write) to tell you my news. My school 2) (choose) me to spend six weeks at a school in the USA. I'm very happy about it!

At the moment, I 3) (pack) things for my trip, because I 4) (leave) next week. My mother 5) (book) the ticket.

I 6) (wait) for this opportunity for ages, so I'm very excited. I 7) (finish) reading two books about the USA and I 8) (borrow) another one from the school library. I 9) (become) more and more nervous every day!

Well, I must go now. I've got a lot of things to do. I'll write to you from the USA.

Love,
Tracy

b) Which of the present forms in the text above are used to express:

- 1 actions which happened at an unstated time in the past
- 2 actions which started in the past and continue up to the present with emphasis on duration
- 3 actions happening at or around the moment of speaking
- 4 changing and developing situations
- 5 actions that we have arranged to do in the near future

UNIT 1 Tenses

State Verbs

State Verbs are verbs which describe a state rather than an action and therefore do not normally have continuous tenses. These include:

- verbs which express likes and dislikes: *like, love, dislike, hate, enjoy, prefer, adore, etc.* e.g. *I love chocolate ice cream.*
- verbs of the senses: *see, hear, smell, taste, feel, look, sound.* We often use *can* or *could* with these verbs when we refer to what we see, hear, etc. at the moment of speaking. e.g. *Jim must be at home. I can see his car parked outside.*
- verbs of perception: *know, believe, understand, realise, remember, forget, notice, recognise, think, seem, see (=understand), expect (=think), etc.* e.g. *I expect they will be late.*
- some other verbs such as *be, contain, include, belong, fit, need, matter, cost, mean, own, want, owe, have (=possess), require, weigh, wish, keep (=continue), etc.* e.g. *My uncle owns a hotel.*

Some of the above verbs are used in continuous tenses when they describe actions and not states. Study the following examples:

- I think* he's lying. (= believe)
I'm thinking about the plan. (= am considering)
- The food *tastes* delicious. (= has a delicious flavour)
He *is tasting* the food. (= is testing the flavour of)
- I can *see* some people. (= perceive with my eyes)
I *see* what you mean. (= understand)
I'm seeing my doctor tomorrow. (= am meeting)
- It *looks* as if they've finished the job. (= appears)
Mike *is looking* out of the window. (is directing his eyes)

- This perfume *smells* nice. (= has a nice smell)
He *is smelling* the milk. (= is sniffing)
- The baby's hair *feels* like silk. (= has the texture of)
She *is feeling* the baby's forehead. (= is touching)
- Bob *has* a Porsche. (= possesses)
He's *having a shower* at the moment. (= is taking a shower)
- The chicken *weighs* 2 kilos. (= has a weight of)
The butcher *is weighing* the meat. (= is measuring how heavy it is)
- This dress *fits* you perfectly. (= it is the right size)
We *are fitting* new locks. (= are putting in)
- He *appears* to be nervous. (= seems)
He *is appearing* in a new play. (= is taking part)
- He *is* a rude person. (= character - permanent state)
He *is being* rude. (= behaviour - temporary situation, usually with adjectives such as *careful, silly, (im)polite, lazy, etc.*)

Note: a) The verb *enjoy* can be used in continuous tenses to express specific preference.
e.g. *I'm enjoying this party a lot.* (specific preference)

BUT: *I enjoy going to parties.* (I enjoy parties in general.)

b) The verbs *look* (when we refer to a person's appearance), *feel* (= experience a particular emotion), *hurt* and *ache* can be used in either the continuous or simple tenses with no difference in meaning.
e.g. *You look/are looking great today.*

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Put the verbs in brackets into the present simple or the present continuous.

- A: Why *...are you smelling...* (you/smell) the soap?
B: It (smell) lovely. It's like roses!
- A: Why (you/taste) the soup?
B: To see if it (taste) good. I think it needs more salt.
- A: I (feel) very tired.
B: You should go to bed early.
- A: I (see) Andy this evening.
B: I (see). So, you don't want to come to the cinema with me, do you?
- A: How much (the bag of apples/weigh)?
B: I don't know yet. The man (weigh) the bag now.
- A: I (think) about buying a new car soon.
B: Why? I (think) your car is fine. You don't need a new one.
- A: What (you/look) at?
B: The sky. It (look) as if it's going to rain.
- A: I really (enjoy) home-made food.
B: So do I, and I (enjoy) every bit of this meal.
- A: Why (you/feel) the radiator?
B: It (feel) cold in here. Is the heating on?
- A: That famous opera singer (appear) at the opera house tonight.
B: Yes. He (appear) to be feeling better after his operation.
- A: Chris (be) a sensible person, isn't he?
B: Yes, but in this case he (be) rather foolish.
- A: My dad (fit) the old blind from the living room in my bedroom today.
B: Really? (it/fit) that window?
- A: My back (hurt).
B: Why don't you lie down for a while?