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.

1 The plane ***leaves***/***has left*** at four o'clock. We must be at the airport by two o'clock.
2 It ***gets***/***is getting*** colder and colder every day.
3 Have you seen Linda? I ***have been looking***/***am looking*** for her for almost an hour.
4 Sam is a very interesting person. He ***knows***/***has known*** all kinds of unusual facts.
5 First, you ***are heating***/***heat*** the oven to a temperature of 180°C.
6 Have you heard the news? They ***have just elected***/***have been electing*** a new club chairman!
7 Martha ***is finding***/***has found*** a new job. She is starting next week.
8 The teacher ***has been correcting***/***has corrected*** essays for three hours.
9 Michael's car broke down last week, so he ***uses***/***is using*** his father's for the time being.
10 It rarely ***gets***/***is getting*** very hot in Britain.

2 Choose the correct answer.

1 '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

2 '..... 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

3 'Who is in that new film?'
'Well, a young actress ..... the leading role.'
A has been playing **B** plays **C** has played

4 'Is David at home?'
'Yes, but he ..... a shower at the moment.'
A is having **B** has been having **C** has

5 'Why are you so upset?'
'I ..... my favourite ring.'
A lose **B** have been losing **C** have lost

6 '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.

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

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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

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State Verbs

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

a) **verbs which express likes and dislikes: *like, love, dislike, hate, enjoy, prefer, adore*, etc.** *e.g. I **love** chocolate ice cream.*

b) **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.*

c) **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.*

d) **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:

1 I **think** he's lying. (= believe)
I'**m thinking** about the plan. (= am considering)

2 The food **tastes** delicious. (= has a delicious flavour)
He **is tasting** the food. (= is testing the flavour of)

3 I can **see** some people. (= perceive with my eyes)
I **see** what you mean. (= understand)
I'**m seeing** my doctor tomorrow. (= am meeting)

4 It **looks** as if they've finished the job. (= appears)
Mike **is looking** out of the window. (is directing his eyes)

5 This perfume **smells** nice. (= has a nice smell)
He **is smelling** the milk. (= is sniffing)

6 The baby's hair **feels** like silk. (= has the texture of)
She **is feeling** the baby's forehead. (= is touching)

7 Bob **has** a Porsche. (= possesses)
He'**s having a shower** at the moment. (= is taking a shower)

8 The chicken **weighs** 2 kilos. (= has a weight of)
The butcher **is weighing** the meat. (= is measuring how heavy it is)

9 This dress **fits** you perfectly. (= it is the right size)
We **are fitting** new locks. (= are putting in)

10 He **appears** to be nervous. (= seems)
He **is appearing** in a new play. (= is taking part)

11 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.*

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

1 A: Why ...*are you smelling*... (you/smell) the soap?
B: It ..... (smell) lovely. It's like roses!

2 A: Why ..... (you/taste) the soup?
B: To see if it ..... (taste) good. I think it needs more salt.

3 A: I ..... (feel) very tired.
B: You should go to bed early.

4 A: I ..... (see) Andy this evening.
B: I ..... (see). So, you don't want to come to the cinema with me, do you?

5 A: How much .....
..... (the bag of apples/weigh)?
B: I don't know yet. The man ..... (weigh) the bag now.

6 A: I ..... (think) about buying a new car soon.
B: Why? I ..... (think) your car is fine. You don't need a new one.

7 A: What ..... (you/look) at?
B: The sky. It ..... (look) as if it's going to rain.

8 A: I really ..... (enjoy) home-made food.
B: So do I, and I ..... (enjoy) every bit of this meal.

9 A: Why ..... (you/feel) the radiator?
B: It ..... (feel) cold in here. Is the heating on?

10 A: That famous opera singer ..... (appear) at the opera house tonight.
B: Yes. He ..... (appear) to be feeling better after his operation.

11 A: Chris ..... (be) a sensible person, isn't he?
B: Yes, but in this case he ..... (be) rather foolish.

12 A: My dad ..... (fit) the old blind from the living room in my bedroom today.
B: Really? ..... (it/fit) that window?

13 A: My back ..... (hurt).
B: Why don't you lie down for a while?

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