

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...)

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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.

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- 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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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

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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.

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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)

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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
B: The sky. It (look) as if it's going to rain.

- 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.*