



Unit 1: Personal best

READING

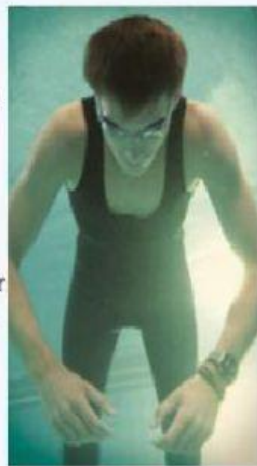


The human mind and body are capable of amazing things, especially when you train them hard. Meet two people who, thanks to their natural talent and to their effort, seem almost superhuman!

Tom Sietas

When people first see Tom Sietas, they don't usually notice anything special. He's not very tall, and he's not particularly well-built. But those factors help Tom to do something incredible. Tom has the world record for 'static apnea'. In other words, Tom can hold his breath underwater, without moving, for just over 22 minutes! He only discovered his ability by accident when he went diving in Jamaica at the age of 18.

Because he isn't very big it means that he doesn't need to get a lot of oxygen to his muscles. And it helps that his lungs are 20% larger than is usual for his height and build. But it isn't only a question of his body. His personality plays a big part in his success, too. Thought processes use a lot of oxygen. So it's important that Tom is calm and patient. Luckily, he rarely gets nervous in the water. In fact, Tom is so calm that he occasionally falls asleep underwater! Obviously he always trains very carefully to prepare for a new record because what he does is highly dangerous. We're waiting this year to see what he does next. Are we expecting another record attempt? Definitely!



Judit Polgár

'People are always saying that geniuses are born, not made. I want to prove that it is not true!' This was the obsession of a Hungarian teacher called László Polgár. To prove that he could make someone a genius, he took his three daughters out of school and started to teach them a specialist subject – chess. One of the three, Judit, is now the greatest female chess player of all time and the only woman so far to be in the world top 10! László himself wasn't a great chess player, but he was a clever teacher. At first, Judit's sisters were better than her, but she gradually became more serious about playing. At first, she played just ten minutes a day. When she was 12, it had increased to ten hours. At 15 she was the youngest grandmaster ever. To win at chess, you need to be confident, hard-working and a little bit selfish. Judit's wins include victories against 10 male world champions, including Kasparov and Karpov. Thanks to Judit, little by little, people are starting to pay more attention to women chess players. She now has children of her own but she isn't teaching them in the same way as her father. Her children don't play chess for hours every day. They only play for fun.



Are these statements True (T) or False (F). Write T or F

- 1 For what Tom does, it is important to be big and strong. T/F
- 2 Tom can swim underwater for over twenty minutes without breathing. T/F
- 3 Tom always knew about his natural talent for staying underwater. T/F
- 4 Mental qualities are also important to be good at static apnea. T/F
- 5 László Polgár had a theory and he proved that it was true. T/F
- 6 Judit's chess ability was easy to see right from the beginning. T/F
- 7 From the start, she played for hours and hours every day. T/F
- 8 After her experience, Judit doesn't want to teach her children chess. T/F

Present simple

FORM

Affirmative	I/You/We/They run . He/She/It runs .
Negative	I/You/We/They don't (do not) run . He/She/It doesn't (does not) run .
Question	Do I/you/we/they run ? Does he/she/it run ?
Short answers	Yes, I/you/we/they do . No, I/you/we/they don't . Yes, he/she/it does . No, he/she/it doesn't .

USE

We use the **present simple** to talk about:

- 1 regular habits and routines.
I do sport on Wednesday and Sunday.
- 2 things that are always or generally true.
A lot of people study English.
- 3 general and scientific facts.
The Earth goes round the Sun.

Present continuous

FORM

Affirmative	We're reading .
Negative	She isn't reading.
Question	Are they reading?
Short answers	Yes, I am . No, they aren't .

USE

We use the **present continuous** with time expressions such as *now*, *at the moment*, *currently*, etc. to talk about:

- 1 actions that are happening now or near the moment of speaking.
I can't talk now. I'm having a meeting with the head teacher.
- 2 temporary actions and situations.
I'm staying with my uncle and aunt this week.
- 3 changing situations.
I'm getting good at this computer game.
- 4 actions that happen very often and annoy the speaker.
My little brother is always shouting.

Present simple and present continuous

1a Read the sentences (a–g) and match them with the rules (1–7).

- a Little by little, people are starting to pay more attention.
- b Thought processes use a lot of oxygen.
- c Her children don't play chess for hours every day.
- d People are always saying that geniuses are born, not made.
- e I'm not sure what she's doing right now.
- f Athletes train hard.
- g This year we're waiting to see what he does next.

We use the present simple for

- 1 routines and habits.
- 2 things that are always or generally true.
- 3 scientific facts.

We use the present continuous for

- 4 actions that are happening now or near the moment of speaking.
- 5 actions that are temporary or not a normal routine.
- 6 actions that happen very often and annoy the speaker.
- 7 changing situations.