

Lecture 2 : The Present Tense

I. Present Simple :

Simple present tense with « be »

Positive	Positive (short from)	Negative	Negative (short from)
I am	I'm	I am not	I'm not
You are	You're	You are not	You're not
He is	He's	He is not	He's not
She is	She's	She is not	She's not
It is	It's	It is not	It's not
We are	We're	We are not	We're not
They are	They're	They are not	They're not

The positive Form: Other verbs:

- It is just the verb with an extra "S" if the subject is "he", "she", "it"
Eg: I play, she/he/it/ plays.
- Verbs ending in "ch, s, sh, x, or z" from the third -person singular (he, she, it) by adding **Es**. eg: watches , misses, mixes, buzzes).
Eg: I watch He watches.

Use: When to use the present simple?

1- We use the present simple to describe things which we feel are facts:

Eg: - People **need** food.

- British people **drink** a lot of tea.

2- We need to use this tense for a situation that we think is more or less permanent.

Eg: - She **works** in a bank

- He **drives** a bus (he is his driver).

3- To describe habits or things that we do regularly. (we often use adverbs of frequency such as **often** , **always** , **sometimes** in this case , as well as expressions like **every Sunday** , **twice a month**... Eg: I play tennis every Tuesday.

4- To describe a series of short immediate actions. The actions are so short that they are finished almost as soon as you have said the sentence.

Eg: Sport commentaries:

- He **takes** the ball, he **runs** down the wing, and he **scores**!

5- We also use the present simple to talk about the future after words like: **When, until, after, before, as soon as**.

Eg: I won't go out until it stops raining.

6- We use the present simple in the first and the zero conditionals.

Eg: - If it rains, we won't come

- If you **heat** water to 100 degrees, it **boils**.

* We use present simple to talk about timetable events:

Eg: The tour **departs** on October 11th.

II. Present continuous:

Formation: To be in the present (am, is, are) + present participle (stem+ing) (I am eating), (She is eating) (They are eating).

Negative form: - I'm **not eating**.

- They **are not eating**.

Interrogation form: - Is **she eating**?

- Are **they eating**?

Use:

1- The present continuous is used to talk about actions happening at the time of speaking.

Eg: - Where is Mary? She is having a bath.

* Common adverbs with this form are: **Now, just, still, and at the moment.**

2- The present continuous describes an action in progress at the moment of speaking or around the time of speaking. The action is likely to continue after the time of speaking, but is likely to stop at some point:

- I **am reading** a book, it's a nice book (it means=I am not necessarily reading it, I started reading it but I haven't finished it yet).

3- The present continuous may also be used to talk about something already decided in the near future (arrangements planning in the future). The use of present continuous indicates that the future event is quite certain to happen.

Eg: I am **working** next week.

4- We can use the present continuous with adverbs like **forever**, continually to talk about repeated action that happens very often:

- The baby **is always making** cute little noises.
- I **am always forgetting** people's birthdays.

Remember: There are verbs, which are normally not used in the present continuous. These verbs are called stative verbs.

III. Present perfect simple:

Formation:

Have + past participle of the verb

Has (he , she , it) + past participle of the verb

Use:

1- We use this tense when we want to talk about states or habits that started in the past and continue to the present. Usually we use it to say “**how long**” and we need “**since**” or “**for**”. We often use stative verbs.

Eg: - I **have known** Karen since 1994.

(Exact, fixed time, date...)

- She **has lived** in London for three years.
- I **have worked** here for six months (period of time)

* We use “**since**” with a fixed time in the past (2004, April 23rd, last year).
The fixed time can be another action, which is in the past simple
(Since I was at school, since I arrived).

- I have **known Sam** since 1992.
- I have **liked** chocolate since I was a child.
- She **has been** here since 2 pm.

* We use “**for**” with a period of time (02 hours, three years, six months).

- I have **known** Julie for ten years.
- I have **been** hungry for hours.
- She **has had** a cold for a week.

2- Life experience. These are actions or events that happened sometime during a person’s life they might happen again, and the person needs to be alive now.

Eg: - I **have been** to Tokoyo.

- They **have visited** Paris three times.

3- With an unfinished time word (**this month, this week, today**). The period of time is still continuing.

Eg: - I **haven’t seen** her this month.

- She **has drunk** three cups of coffee today.

* We can not use the present perfect with a finished time word.
(I’ve seen him yesterday=incorrect)

4- A finished action with a result in the present (focus on result)

- I have **lost** my keys.

5- We use the present perfect after superlatives:

Eg: - The best/worst, the greatest, the only....often followed by ever.

Eg: - It’s’ the worst sport programme, I **have ever seen**! (you should ever here).

* A number of adverbs are commonly used with the present perfect: **ever, often, seldom, never, so far, already, yet, still.**

6- We can also use the present perfect to talk about something that happened recently, even if there is not a clear result in the present.

Eg: - The queen **has given** a speech.

- I have **just seen** Lucy.

IV. Present perfect continuous:

Formation:

We form this tense with has/have+been+ present participle (ing form)

Use:

1- We use the Present perfect continuous to talk about an ongoing state or action, which began in the past and is still continuing or has just finished.

Eg: - Women **have been speaking** out on this issue for some time.

2- The simple form of the present perfect often focuses on the fact that an action is completed, while the continuous focuses on the fact that it is still ongoing.

Simple: I **have learnt** how to play chess= (I can play chess now).

Continuous: I **have been learning** how to play chess= (I am still learning).

* We use the continuous to focus on the duration.

3- With the adverbs lately and recently, we use the present perfect continuous to talk about new developments which may be temporary.

Eg: - Helen **has been spending** a lot of time at the club lately= (she didn't use to).

- We use the present perfect continuous with **for** to specify the duration of an activity which started in the past and is still continuing.
- I **have been learning** how to play chess **for** three years now.
- We use p.p.c to explain a present result, a situation or an appearance. The focus is on the activity rather than the result. In this case, we do not usually use a time adverb.

- Eg: This test result is much better, it is clear you have **been revising!!**