



## SIMPLE PRESENT AND PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSES. ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY.

### 1. The Simple Present.

#### Form:

Affirmative Form: It has the same form as the infinitive but adds an 's'/'es' for the third person singular.

E.g. I work, you work, we work, they work.  
He / she / it works.

Negative Form:

'DO NOT' / 'DON'T' + *Infinitive*.  
'DOES NOT' / 'DOESN'T' + *Infinitive* (only 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular).  
E.g. I don't like your hair.  
She doesn't want to come with me.

Interrogative Form:

'DO' + *Subject* + *Verb*.  
'DOES' + *Subject* + *Verb* (only 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular).  
E.g. Do you go often to the cinema?  
Does it take you too long?.

#### Use:

- The main use of this tense is to express habitual actions:  
E.g. Cats drink milk.
- The simple present tense is often used with adverbs or adverb phrases such as: 'ALWAYS', 'NEVER', 'OCCASIONALLY', 'OFTEN', 'SOMETIMES', 'USUALLY', 'EVERY WEEK', 'ON MONDAYS', 'TWICE A YEAR', etc....  
E.g. How often do you wash your hair?  
I go to church on Sundays.
- ... Or with time clauses expressing routine or habitual actions. 'WHENEVER' and 'WHEN' are particularly useful.  
E.g. Whenever it rains the roof leaks.  
When you open the door a light goes on.
- It can be used for dramatic narrative. It is often used by radio commentators at sports events, public functions, etc.  
E.g. When the curtain raises, Juliet is writing at her desk. Suddenly the window opens and a masked man enters.
- It can be used for a planned future action or series of actions, particularly when they refer to a journey or timetable.  
E.g. We leave London at 10:00 next Tuesday and arrive in Paris at 13:00.
- It's used in time clauses when there is an idea of routine...  
E.g. As soon as he earns any money he spends it.

- ... Or when the main verb is in a future form, with time expressions such as *WHEN, AS SOON AS, IN CASE,...*  
E.g. When it stops raining we'll go out.

## 2. The Present Continuous.

### Form:

Present tense of 'TO BE' + *gerund* (-ING).

- E.g. I am eating.  
We aren't talking.  
Is it working?.

### Use:

- For an action happening now.  
E.g. It's raining.  
Why are you sitting at my desk?.
- For an action happening about this time but not necessarily at the moment of speaking.  
E.g. I'm reading a play by Shaw. (*This may mean 'at the moment of speaking' but may also mean 'now' in a more general sense.*)
- For a definite arrangement in the near future (the most usual way of expressing one's immediate plans). The time of the action must always be mentioned.  
E.g. I'm meeting Peter tonight. He's taking me to the theatre.
- With 'ALWAYS' , ... For a frequently repeated action, usually when the frequency annoys the speaker or seems unreasonable to him...  
E.g. He is always losing his keys.

## 3. Verbs not normally used in the Continuous Tenses (Stative verbs)

- Verbs of the senses (involuntary actions).

FEEL, HEAR, SEE, SMELL, NOTICE, OBSERVE, LOOK (in "He looks calm"), TASTE (in "The soup tastes terrible").

- E.g. She sees the ship in the harbour.  
I don't feel very well today.

- Verbs expressing feelings and emotions.

ADMIRE (= RESPECT), ADORE, APPRECIATE (= VALUE), CARE FOR (= LIKE), DESIRE, DETEST, DISLIKE, FEAR, HATE, LIKE, LOATHE, LOVE, MIND (= CARE), RESPECT, VALUE, WANT, WISH.

- Verbs of mental activity.

AGREE, APPRECIATE (= UNDERSTAND), ASSUME, BELIEVE, EXPECT (= THINK), FEEL (= THINK), FEEL SURE / CERTAIN, FORGET, KNOW, MEAN, PERCEIVE, REALISE, RECALL, RECOGNISE, RECOLLECT, REMEMBER, SEE (= UNDERSTAND), SEE THROUGH SOMEONE (= PENETRATE HIS ATTEMPT TO

DECEIVE), SUPPOSE, THINK (= HAVE AN OPINION), TRUST (BELIEVE / HAVE CONFIDENCE IN), UNDERSTAND.

E.g. Do you agree with her?  
He never forgets when is her birthday.

- Verbs of possession.

BELONG, OWE, OWN, POSSESS.

E.g. How much do I owe you?

- APPEAR (= SEEM), CONCERN, CONSIST, CONTAIN, HOLD (= CONTAIN), KEEP (= CONTINUE), MATTER, SEEM, SIGNIFY, SOUND (= SEEM / APPEAR).

E.g. It concerns us all.  
This box contains explosives.

#### 4. Adverbs of Frequency.

- (a) ALWAYS, CONTINUALLY, FREQUENTLY, OCCASIONALLY, OFTEN, ONCE, TWICE, PERIODICALLY, REPEATEDLY, SOMETIMES, USUALLY, etc.
- (b) EVER, HARDLY EVER, NEVER, RARELY, SCARCELY EVER, SELDOM.

Adverbs in both groups are normally placed:

- After the simple tenses of 'TO BE'.  
E.g. He's always in time for meals.
- Before the simple tenses of all other verbs.  
E.g. They sometimes stay up all night.
- With compound tenses they're placed after the first auxiliary, or with interrogative verbs, after auxiliary + subject.  
E.g. You've often been told not to do that.  
Have I ever been told to do that?.

#### Exceptions:

- 'USED TO' and 'HAVE TO' prefer the adverb in front of them.  
E.g. You hardly ever have to remind him; he always remembers.
- Frequency adverbs are often placed before auxiliaries when these are used alone, in additions to remarks or in answers to questions.  
E.g. I know I should take exercise, but I never do.

Adverbs in group (a) can also be put at the beginning or end of a sentence or clause (but 'ALWAYS' and 'OFTEN' are rarely found in these positions).

Adverbs in group (b), 'HARDLY EVER', 'NEVER', 'RARELY', etc. (but not 'EVER' alone) can also be put at the beginning of a sentence, but inversion of the following main verb then becomes necessary.

E.g. Hardly ever did they manage to meet unobserved.



## PAST AND PERFECT TENSES

### 1. Simple Past.

#### Form:

Regular Verbs: The simple past is formed by adding '-ED' to the infinitive form.

E.g. work - worked  
love - loved

Irregular Verbs: Their form vary and must be learnt (2<sup>nd</sup> column of irregular verbs).

E.g.	To eat	ate	eaten
	To leave	left	left
	To speak	spoke	spoken

Negative Form: 'DID NOT' / 'DIDN'T' + *Infinitive*.

E.g. I didn't eat much yesterday.

Interrogative Form: 'DID' + *subject* + *Infinitive* + ?.

E.g. Did you go to London last year?.

#### Use:

- The simple past is used for actions completed in the past at a definite time (it may be given or clear though not mentioned).  
E.g. When did you meet him?. I met him yesterday.  
The train was ten minutes late.  
My grandmother once saw the Queen.
- It's also used for a past habit.  
E.g. He always carried an umbrella.  
They never drank wine.
- Unreal past: after 'AS IF', 'AS THOUGH', 'IT'S TIME', 'IF ONLY', 'WISH', 'WOULD SOONER' / 'RATHER'.  
E.g. He behaves as if he owned the place.  
It's time we went.  
I wish I had more money.

### 2. Past Continuous.

#### Form:

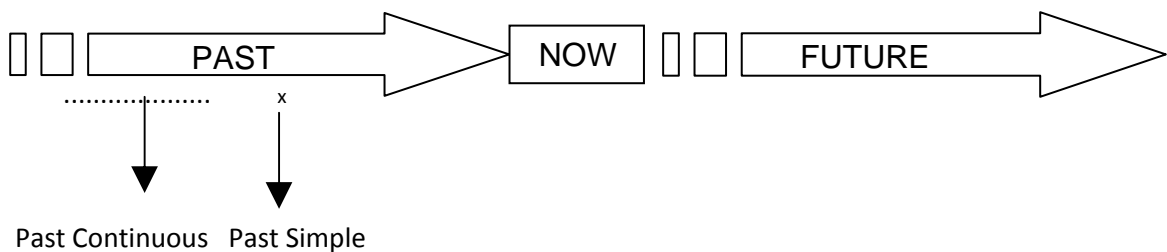
Past tense of 'TO BE' + *gerund* → 'WAS' / 'WERE' + (-ING).

E.g. I was working.  
He wasn't studying.

Were you doing...?

**Use:**

- Past actions which continued for some time or with gradual development.  
E.g. It was getting darker.  
The wind was rising.
- Continuous past.  
E.g. At eight he was having breakfast.
- From two past actions, the one that takes more time.  
E.g. When I arrived, Tom was talking on the phone.
- Past future arrangement.  
E.g. He was busy because he was leaving that night.  
When you came I was studying.



**3. Present Perfect.**

**Form:**

Present tense of 'HAVE' + *past participle*.

- Regular verbs    'HAVE' / 'HAS' + (-ED).
- Irregular verbs    'HAVE' / 'HAS' + 3<sup>rd</sup> column of irregular verbs.

**Use:**

- The present perfect is used in actions occurring in an incomplete period. May be indicated by 'TODAY', 'THIS MORNING' / 'WEEK' / 'EVENING' / 'YEAR'...  
E.g. (At 11 am) Tom has rung up 3 times this morning.
- An action which started in the past and still continues, it's not finished.  
E.g. I've lived in London for two years. (I'm still in London)
- Result of a past action.  
E.g. I've lost my purse.  
We had an accident; I've broken my leg.
- Unspecified past. Usually with 'EVER' / 'NEVER' / 'LATELY' / 'RECENTLY'.  
E.g. Have you been to New York?
- Present perfect with 'JUST' for a recently completed action.  
E.g. He has just gone out.

- With 'FOR' + (*period of time*) and 'SINCE' + *date*.

E.g. I've lived here for two years.  
I've lived here since 1998.

#### 4. Present Perfect Continuous.

##### Form:

Present perfect of 'TO BE' + *present participle* (= *gerund*).  
'HAVE' / 'HAS' + 'BEEN' + *gerund* (-ING).

E.g. He has been waiting for hours.

##### Use:

- An action which began in the past and is still continuing. Emphasis on time makes it different from present perfect.

E.g. I've been studying for an hour and I'm tired.

\*Remember that some verbs can't be used in continuous forms.

#### 5. Past Perfect.

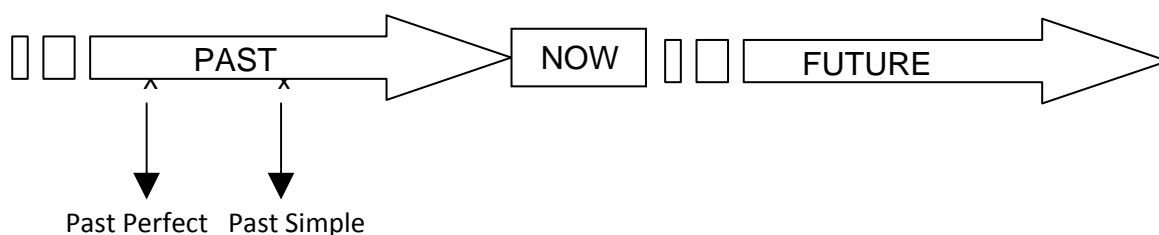
##### Form:

'HAD' + *past participle*.

E.g. I had worked.  
He hadn't worked.  
Had you worked?.

##### Use:

- The past perfect is the past equivalent of the present perfect.  
E.g. I had lost my case and had to borrow his pyjamas.  
Had you been here before 1980?.
- When there are two actions which took place in the past, the previous one (looking back on early action).  
E.g. When I arrived he had already left.
- Indirect speech (equivalent to simple past).  
E.g. He said he had given her the present the day before.



## 6. Past Perfect Continuous.

### Form:

'HAD BEEN' + *gerund* (-ING).

E.g. I had been working.  
Hadn't you been working?.

### Use:

- It's similar to past perfect but more emphasis is given to time.  
E.g. By six o'clock he had repaired the engine. (*Action completed*)  
He had been repairing it for two hours when he finished.

## REVISION EXERCISES\_ PRESENT AND PAST TENSES:

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

1. Cuckoos (not build) nests. They (use) the nests of other birds.
2. You can't see Tom now: he (have) a shower.
3. He usually (drink) coffee but today he (drink) tea.
4. What she (do) in the evenings? ~ She usually (play) cards or (watch) TV.
5. I won't go out now as it (rain) and I (not have) an umbrella.
6. The last train (leave) the station at 11.30.
7. He usually (speak) so quickly that I (not understand) him.
8. Hardly anyone (wear) a hat nowadays.
9. I'm afraid I've broken one of your coffee cups. Don't worry. I (not like) that set anyway.
10. I (wear) my sunglasses today because the sun is very strong.
11. Although Tom is very ill, he (know) what (happen) around him.
12. 12 Of course I (understand) you, I (listen), aren't I?
13. 13 Why don't you comb your hair? It (look) awful.
14. 14 I (tell) the truth. Why (you/not believe) me?
15. 15 The girl you talked about (sit) over there. She (seem) nice.

### Put the verbs in brackets into the simple past or the past continuous tense.

- 1 I lit the fire at 6.00 and it (burn) brightly when Tom came in at 7.00.
- 2 When I arrived the lecture had already started and the professor (write) on the overhead projector.
- 3 I (make) a cake when the light went out. I had to finish it in the dark.
- 4 I didn't want to meet Paul so when he entered the room I (leave).
- 5 Unfortunately when I arrived Ann just (leave), so we only had time for a few words.
- 6 When I arrived she (have) lunch. She apologized for starting without me but said that she always (lunch) at 12.30.
- 7 He always (wear) a raincoat and (carry) an umbrella when he walked to the office.
- 8 What you (think) of his last book? — I (like) it very much.
- 9 I (share) a flat with him when we were students. He always (complain) about my untidiness.
- 10 He suddenly (realize) that he (travel) in the wrong direction.

**Put the verbs in brackets into the present perfect or the simple past tense. In some sentences the present perfect continuous is also possible.**

- 1 This is my house. - How long you (live) here? - I (live) here since 1970.
- 2 He (live) in London for two years and then (go) to Edinburgh.
- 3 Shakespeare (write) a lot of plays.
- 4 My brother (write) several plays. He just (finish) his second tragedy.
- 5 I (not see) him for three years. I wonder where he is.
- 6 He (not smoke) for two weeks. He is trying to give it up.
- 7 Chopin (compose) some of his music in Majorca.
- 8 When he (arrive)? - He (arrive) at 2.00.
- 9 You (lock) the door before you left the house?
- 10 I (read) his books when I was at school. I (enjoy) them very much.
- 11 I can't go out because I (not finish) my work.
- 12 I (write) the letter but I can't find a stamp.
- 13 The clock is slow. - It isn't slow, it (stop).
- 14 Here are your shoes; I just (clean) them.
- 15 I (leave) home at 8.00 and (get) here at twelve.

**Put the verbs in brackets into the present perfect or the present perfect continuous tense. (In some cases either could be used.)**

- 1 We (walk) ten kilometres.
- 2 We (walk) for three hours.
- 3 You (walk) too fast. That's why you are tired.
- 4 I (make) sausage rolls for the party all the morning.
- 5 How many you (make)? - I (make) 200.
- 6 That boy (eat) seven ice-creams.
- 7 He (not stop) eating since he arrived.
- 8 The driver (drink). I think someone else ought to drive.
- 9 I (pull) up 100 dandelions.
- 10 I (pull) up dandelions all day.