

# GRAMMER TENSES

## PRESENT SIMPLE

Something happens all the time or repeatedly:

- We drive on the left in Britain.
- I always make the same mistake.

True in general:

- The pub opens at 10:30.
- I usually drink tea.

Do/does: to make questions and negative sentences:

- Do you like English Breakfast tea?
- He doesn't speak French.
- How do you do?

How often we do something:

- I never eat blue cheese.
- I rarely go to the cinema.
- I sometimes forget things.

**Certain verbs** (generally): need, want, like, believe, understand, mean, know, suppose, seem, belong, taste, smell, hear, see, promise, apologise, insist, agree, refuse, suggest, advise.....:

- I love you.
- I don't understand.
- What do you mean?
- I suppose you want me to pay for this?
- I don't belong here.
- You seem tired.
- It tastes good.
- I don't hear well.
- I see what you mean.
- I promise to do it today.
- I refuse to believe it.
- I agree up to a point.
- I apologise for that.

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- No, I insist.
- What do you suggest?
- I advise you to book now.

#### Permanent situation:

- I live in Vienna.
- London is the capital of England.

#### PRESENT CONTINUOUS:

##### For actions in progress:

- I **’m listening** to the radio.
- We **are improving** our English skills at English 4 Professionals.
- He **is working** on a project at the moment.

##### But not necessarily right now:

- I **’m learning** Spanish at the moment. (but not this very minute).

##### Today, This week, This year...

- Today, we are going to talk about ...
- This year, I am going to improve my English.

##### Changes around now: get, change, become, increase, rise, fall, grow, improve, begin, start...:

- I **’m getting** better.
- I **’m becoming** tired.
- My English is improving.
- I **’m beginning** to understand.

##### Temporary situations:

- I **’m living** in the 12<sup>th</sup> district of Vienna at the moment.

#### PAST SIMPLE:

##### Actions which are over:

- Yesterday, all my troubles **seemed** so far away.
- Last Christmas, I **gave** you my heart.

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## PAST CONTINUOUS:

An action that had started, was in progress but not finished:

- What **were you doing** at 3 o'clock this morning? I **was sleeping**.

Two actions – first action (continuous) in progress when second action (simple past) occurs:

- I **was watching** TV when suddenly the phone rang.

## PRESENT PERFECT:

Have/has + past participle

New information:

- **Haven't you heard?** John **has had** an accident.

Action in the past with a consequence now:

- I've **forgotten** my passport and now I can't check in.

Adverbs: just, already, yet, often, rarely, probably, ever, recently, so far, today, this week:

- I'm leaving. I've just heard it's been cancelled.
- Have you finished it yet? Yes, I've already done it.
- I have often thought about it.
- He has probably forgotten.
- I have rarely been so angry.
- Have you ever been to London?
- Have you spoken to Stuart recently?
- I haven't had time so far.
- I've had three cups of tea today.
- How many hours have you worked this week?

A period which continues until the present:

- I have lived here all my life.

When something has happened at least once:

- It's the third time I've won the lottery.

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## PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS:

An action which has recently or just ended with a consequence now:

- I've been working all day and now I'm exhausted.
- Have you been smoking again? I can smell it.

An activity which is still in progress:

- I've been learning English all my life but I still don't understand anything.

Extracts from: **English Grammar in Use**, Raymond Murphy, 2012, Cambridge/Klett, **Eats, shoots & leaves**, Lynne Truss, 2003. Profile books ltd and **Correct English**, J.E. Metcalfe and C. Astel, Clarion books.

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