

## REVIEW OF TENSES

Tense is the relationship between the form of the verb and the time when the action happens or the state it describes. There are simple tenses, continuous tenses where the verb is formed with the auxiliary 'be' and the present participles, and perfect tenses where the verbs are formed with the auxiliary 'have' and the past participle.

### 1. Present Tenses

#### 1.1. The Simple Present Tense

Regular and irregular verbs form the Simple Present with the addition of 's' or 'es' in the third person singular. They use the forms 'does' and 'do' followed by the bare infinitive for affirmative questions and answers, and 'doesn't' and 'don't' in negative questions and answers.

- *He pays rent to the landlord every month.*
- *Does he pay rent to the landlord every month?*
- *He doesn't pay rent to the landlord every month.*

#### The Simple Present Tense is used:

1- to express habitual actions:

- *Mr Brown generally leaves the house at eight o'clock in the morning.*

(Adverbs of frequency and adverb phrases such as *never, rarely, often, seldom, sometimes, usually, frequently,*

2- to express natural and scientific laws, and simple facts :

- *The sun rises in the east and sets in the west.*
- *Gas expands on heating.*
- *Mr Brown owns three houses in this street.*

3- for planned future actions often associated with travel:

- *Mr Brown's plane leaves at 8.30 tomorrow morning.*

4- instead of the Present Continuous form of certain verbs which are not used in the Continuous (stative verbs, these are verbs of opinion such as *believe, like, doubt,* and verbs of perception: *see, hear, know, understand,* etc.):

- *I believe this house is haunted.*
- *I often hear strange noises at night.*

5- sometimes for dramatic narrative, particularly when the action of a play or a sport is being described:

- *The batsman hits the ball hard and it goes straight through the window of the house.*

### **1.2. The Present Continuous Tense**

The Present Continuous Tense is formed with 'am / is / are' (or their short forms) followed by the Present Participle of the verb '—ing' in affirmative and question form. The negative is formed by 'isn't / aren't' followed by the Present Participle of the verb '—ing'.

- *They're redecorating the sitting-room again. (affirmative form)*
- *Are they redecorating the sitting-room again? (interrogative form)*
- *They aren't redecorating the sitting-room again. (negative form)*

#### **The Present Continuous Tense is used:**

1- for an action happening now:

- *The builders are mending the roof.*
- *Listen! The birds are singing outside.*

2- for an action not necessarily happening at the moment but occurring about this time:

- *My husband is rebuilding the garage.*
- *I'm quite busy these days. I'm working with my uncle on an interesting project.*

3- for the arranged future:

- *The nursery is sending the plants for the garden next Monday.*
- *I'm seeing the manager tomorrow morning.*

4- with always to suggest a frequently occurring action which annoys or surprises the speaker:

- *She is always leaving the front door open.*
- *That student is always talking during lecture.*

5- for a temporary habit:

- *He is paying extra premiums on his house insurance this month.*

### **1.3. The Present Perfect Tense**

The Present Perfect Tense is formed with 'has / have' (or their short forms) followed by the Past Participle in the affirmative and question forms. The negative is formed with 'hasn't / haven't' followed by the Past Participle.

- *Mr Brown has tried to mend the gate before.*
- *Has Mr Brown tried to mend the gate before?*
- *Mr Brown hasn't tried to mend the gate before.*

*N.B. Although this tense is described as a Present Tense, it really refers to a past that is in some way connected with the present.*

### **The Present Perfect Tense is used:**

1- for actions which happened in an indefinite past time, where the action is more important than the time:

- *The builders have finished the foundations of the new flats.*

2- for an action begun in the past and not yet finished:

- *The Smiths have lived in that house all their lives.*

3- with *just* to express a recently completed action:

- *The children have just come home from school.*

4- with *for* and *since* to denote a period of time extending into the present.

*Since* is used from a point of time in the past until now:

- *He has worked as a plumber since he left school.*

*For* is used as a period of time:

- *He has worked as a plumber for 10 years.*

5- with *ever* to express at any time in the past until now:

- *Have you ever been to South America?*

6- for an action which occurred in the past but may be repeated in the future:

- *He has built many beautiful houses.*

7- After 'It/That/This is/will be the first/second...time...'

- *It's the first time I've eaten such a delicious meal.*
- *This's the second time I've been in big troubles. (talking about past events)*

*It won't be the first time he has disagreed with his parents. (talking about future events)*

If the past simple is used instead of *is/will*, then the past perfect is used.

- *It was the first time I had called him on his personal number.*

### **1.4. The Present Perfect Continuous Tense**

The Present Perfect Continuous Tense is formed with 'has / have been' followed by the Present Participle '—ing' in the affirmative and question forms. The negative is formed with 'hasn't / haven't been' followed by the Present Participle.

- *The builders have been working hard for the last hour.*
- *Have the builders been working hard for the last hour?*
- *The builders haven't been working hard for the last hour.*

**The Present Perfect Continuous Tense is used:**

1- for an action which began in the past and is still continuing (see also Present Perfect), or a past action which the speaker feels has been continuous for a period:

- *I have been expecting a call from my solicitor all day.*

2- in the same way as the Present Perfect to express periods of time with *for* and *since* :

- *They've been waiting to be rehoused for six years.*
- *I've been living in this house since 1970.*

N.B.: This tense is commonly used to describe how long an action has been going on.

3- for an action which has only just finished (see also Present Perfect):

- *The painter has just been putting the final touches to the paintwork.*

**Exercises :**

**Present tenses:**

**Exercises:**

**Ex 1:** Put the verbs into the correct form, the present simple or the present continuous:

1. Let's go out. It..... (not / rain) now.
2. Julia is very good at languages. She..... (speak) four languages very well.
3. Hurry up! Everybody..... (wait) for you.
4. '..... (you / listen) to the radio?' 'No, you can turn it off.'
5. '..... (you / listen) to the radio every day?' 'No, just occasionally.'
6. The River Nile..... ( flow ) into the Mediterranean.
7. The river..... ( flow) very fast today- much faster than usual.

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Levels : L1+3

Department of Political Sciences

Time allotted : 2 sessions (1 Lecture + 1 Activities)

Teacher : Mr. HADJAJ Choayb

8. We usually..... ( grow) vegetables in our garden, but this year we  
..... (not grow) any.
9. A: How is your English?  
B: Not bad. I think it..... (improve) slowly.
10. Rachel is in London at the moment. She..... (stay) at the Park  
Hotel. She always..... (stay) there when she is in London.
11. Can we stop walking soon? I..... (start) to feel tired.
12. A: Can you drive?  
B: I..... (learn). My father..... (teach) me.
13. Normally I..... (finish) work at five, but this week I .....  
(work) until six to earn a little more money.
14. My parents..... (live) in Manchester. They were born there and  
have never lived anywhere else. Where..... (you parents /  
live)?
15. Sonia..... (look) for a place to live. She..... ( stay)  
with her sister until she finds somewhere.
16. A: What..... (your brother / do)?  
B: He's an architect, but he..... (not / work) at the moment.
17. (at a party) I usually..... (enjoy) parties, but I .....  
(not / enjoy) this one very much.

**Ex 2:** Complete each paragraph with one set of verbs, using the present simple or the present continuous.

go / organise / work (×2) - take / need / do / learn / get / be / provide/ organise -  
suffer / grow / starve / need /die / increase

1. Debbie ..... as an administrator at the university. She .....  
all the timetables and teaching schedules. She ..... very long  
hours because it's the start of the academic year but she ..... for a  
long holiday at the end of the month.
2. The International School for Languages ..... very well at the  
moment. About two hundred students ..... evening classes this  
term. Many of them ..... to learn a new language to improve their job

prospects but some of them ..... a new language purely for pleasure. The European languages ..... very popular but Japanese and Russian ..... more popular too. The school ..... good learning facilities and..... a range of study tours.

- The world population ..... still ..... rapidly. Many people in the world ..... already ..... and many more ..... from malnutrition. The population ..... fastest in the poorest countries where people ..... to have children to look after them in their old age and where many of their children ..... at a very young age.

**Ex 3:** Complete the gaps using the verbs from the box; each verb is used once as a stative verb and once as a dynamic verb. Put the verbs into the appropriate present simple or present continuous form. An example is provided.

See	think	admire	appear
<del>weigh</del>	look	be	represent
			have

- How much **do** you **weigh** ? About 60 kilos.
- We ..... dinner at the moment so I'll phone you back in half an hour if that's O.K.
- Harry's been in his room for ages. He ..... at all his old photographs.
- I really ..... Helen. She's an excellent manager.
- Penelope Fitzgerald ..... in a new production of Oliver in London's West End.
- I'm quite happy for your children to come to the party because I know they ..... very well-behaved.
- The snake in this picture ..... the forces of evil.
- They don't really like living here. They ..... of moving.
- ..... you .....that man over there with the grey suit on? He's my brother.
- I'm really looking forward to this holiday. The hotel ..... lovely in the photographs.
- I can't come out tonight because I ..... Paul.
- I'll do it if I can, but I ..... not ..... much time today.

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13. What ..... you ..... of the management's new proposal?
14. 'What are you doing in here?' ~ ' I ..... just ..... this painting.'
15. 'Where's the baby?' ~ 'They ..... her. Look, there she is on the scales.'
16. I haven't spoken to him much but he ..... to be a very nice man.
17. Look at John out in the garden. He .....really nice with the children.
18. 'I hope you have got a good lawyer.' 'Yes, Alison Medley ..... me at the trial. She's the best lawyer in town.'

**Ex 4:** For each situation, write two sentences using the words in brackets.( use the present perfect or the present perfect continuous)

1. Tom started reading a book two hours ago. He 's still reading it and now he is in page 53.  
(read / for two hours) He ..... for two hours.  
(read / 53 pages so far) He ..... 53 pages so far.
2. Rachel is from Australia. She's travelling round Europe at the moment. She began her trip three months ago.  
(travel / for six months) She .....  
(visit / six countries so far) .....
3. Patrick is a tennis player. He began playing tennis when he was ten years old. This year he is national champion again – for the fourth time.  
(win / the national championship / four times) .....  
(play / tennis since he was ten) .....
4. When they left college, Lisa and Sue started making films together. They still make films.  
(make / five films since they left college) They .....  
(make / films since they left college) .....

**Ex 5:** Write since or for.

1. It's been raining ..... lunchtime.
2. Sarah has lived in Paris ..... 1995.
3. Paul has lived in London ..... ten years.
4. I'm tired of waiting. We've been sitting here ..... an hour.
5. Kevin has been looking for a job ..... he left school.

6. I haven't been to a party ..... ages.
7. I wonder where Joe is. I haven't seen him ..... last week.
8. Jane is away. She's been away ..... Friday.
9. The weather is dry. It hasn't rained ..... a few weeks.

**Ex 6:** Put the verbs in brackets in the present perfect simple or the present perfect continuous. Tim Bryant, a magazine journalist, is interviewing Margaret Rodwell, the founder of a successful company.

TB: So why do you think your company..... (be) so successful?

MR: Well, our products..... (fill) a large gap in the market and I think one of the most important things is that we ..... (always listen) to our clients and we ..... (act) on their comments and suggestions.

TB: And what's a typical day for you?

MR: Well, take today for example. I ..... (interview) candidates for a marketing executive post.

TB: And how many ..... (you / interview)?

Er, I ..... (interview) four so far. And I ..... (talk) to clients on the phone on and off all day. I seem to spend a lot of time on the phone. I ..... (discuss) some new ideas with them for the transportation and delivery of our products.

TB: Mm, it sounds like a very busy day.

MR: Oh, that's only part of it. I ..... (have) two meetings, one with Union representatives and one with departmental heads. And I ..... (also work) on a proposal for a new marketing strategy.

TB: And it's not two o'clock yet!

MR: No, but of course I ..... (be) here since seven o'clock this morning.

TB: And is it also true that you ..... (learn) Russian with a view to introducing your products there?

MR: Yes, I have, but I ..... (not learn) much yet; there's still a long way for me to go.



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