

Tenses in English

● (1) The Present Tense

There are **four present** tense **forms**:

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|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. The present simple tense | I work. |
| 2. The present continuous tense | I am working. |
| 3. The present perfect tense | I have worked. |
| 4. The present perfect continuous | I have been working. |

(1) The Present tense is the **base** form of a **verb**, e.g. **play, read, write, know, watch..etc. It is used :**

(A) ---to express **habits**:

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|--|------------------|
| 1. I usually <u>smoke</u> . | (habit) |
| 2. She only <u>eats</u> fish. | (=) |
| 3. They <u>watch</u> television regularly. | (=) |
| 4. He always <u>drinks</u> tea at breakfast. | (=) |

(B) ---- to express **facts**:

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|--|------------------------|
| 1. We <u>live</u> in Iraq. | (fact, truth) |
| 2. The sun <u>rises</u> in the east | (=) |
| 3. Water <u>boils</u> at 100 degrees. | (=) |
| 4. The earth <u>revolves</u> around the sun. | (=) |

(C) ---- to express **repeated actions** or **events**.

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|---|----------------------------|
| 1. They <u>go</u> to school every day. | (repeated events) |
| 2. We <u>visit</u> our mother every week. | (=) |
| 3. He <u>catches</u> the bus every morning. | (=) |
| 4. They <u>travel</u> to France every summer. | (=) |

Typical expressions with the present simple are **always, often, usually, sometimes, never/ever; every day/week/year ; once/twice a week ; in the morning, in the evening, at 10 o'clock, etc.**

● (2) The Present Continuous tense

The present continuous tense is used for **actions happening now** or for **an action that is unfinished**.

This tense is formed with:

subject + am, is, are + v + (- ing)

1. It is raining now.
2. She is calling from London.
3. Those people are waiting for a taxi.
4. I am writing an email at the moment.

Some typical expressions with the present simple are **now, at the moment, at present, just, already and still.**

● (3) The Present Perfect Tense

It is used to show that an action (event) has happened before now but it is not specified. This tense indicates a **link** between the **present** and **past**. It is formed using *has/have* + **past participle** of the main verb.

It is used : (typical uses)

(A) ---to describe an action or situation that **started in the past** and **continues in the present**. Examples are:

1. They **have lost** their bag. (= They still lose it.)
2. I **have lived** in Babylon city since 1995. (= I still live.)
3. She **has worked** in the bank for five years. (= She still works.)

(B) ---to describe an action or situation that **was completed in the very recent past**. Examples are:

1. I **have just finished** my work.
2. She **has already written** her email.
3. We **have just seen** her with her mother.
4. The visitors **have arrived**. (= They are here now.)

Typical time expressions with the present perfect are: **just, recently, lately, yet, still, already, today, for weeks/years, since.**

● (4) The Present Perfect Continuous Tense

The present perfect continuous tense shows that something **started in the past and is continuing at the present time**. We are interested in the process as well as the result and this process may still be going on or may have just finished. It is formed using the construction **has/have + been + verb (+ -ing)**.

It is used :

(A) ---to describe an action or situation that **started in the past** and **continues in the present**. Examples are:

1. She **has been waiting** for you all day. (= She is still waiting now.)

2. I **have been working** on this design since 8 o'clock. (= I still haven't finished it.)

3. They have been travelling since October. (= They aren't home yet.)

(B) ---to describe an action or situation that **have just finished**.

Examples are:

1. She **has been cooking** since last night. (= The food on the table looks delicious.)

2. It **has been raining**. (= The streets are still wet.)

3. Someone **has been eating** my chips. (= Half of them have gone.)

Exercise 1:

1. She _____ four languages.
 - a. speak
 - b. speaks
2. Jane is a teacher. She _____ French.
 - a. teach
 - b. teaches
3. When the water _____, will you make some tea?
 - a. boil
 - b. boils
4. I always _____ the window at night because it is cold.
 - a. close
 - b. closes
5. The food in Japan is expensive. It _____ a lot to live there.
 - a. cost
 - b. costs
6. His job is great because he _____ a lot of people.
 - a. meet
 - b. meets
7. He always _____ his car on Sundays.
 - a. wash
 - b. washes

Exercise 2

1. When _____ the school?

- a) have you joined.
- b) did you joined
- c) did you join
- d) have you ever joined

2. _____ **in England?**
- a) Did you ever worked
 - b) Have you ever worked.
 - c) Worked you
 - d) Didn't you have worked
3. **That's the best speech** _____
- a) I never heard
 - b) I didn't hear
 - c) I used to hear
 - d) I've ever heard.
4. **He's the most difficult housemate** _____
- a) I've never dealt with...
 - b) I never had to deal with.
 - c) I've ever had to deal with.
 - d) I've never had to deal with.
5. _____ **a contract last year and it is still valid.**
- a) We have signed
 - b) We signed
 - c) We haven't signed
 - d) We have sign
6. _____ **from a business trip to France.**
- a) I come back
 - b) I came back
 - c) I never came back
 - d) I've just come back.
7. **You** _____ **to a word** _____
- a) listened _____ I haven't said
 - b) didn't listen _____ I say
 - c) listened _____ saying
 - d) haven't listened _____ I've said.
8. **I can't believe that** _____ **the news.**
- a) you haven't read.
 - b) you didn't read
 - c) you don't read
 - d) you read not

Exercise 3

Make the present continuous, positive or negative.

- 1) (I / study at the moment)
- 2) (I / not / sleep)
- 3) (you / play badminton tonight)

- 4) (we / watch TV)
- 5) (she / not / work in Spain)
- 6) (we / not / go to the cinema tonight)
- 7) (you / not / read the newspaper)
- 8) (I / not / live in Paris)
- 9) (they / not / leave now)
- 10) (they / live in London)
- 11) (he / work in a restaurant now)
- 12) (she / not / drink tea now)
- 13) (she / play the guitar)
- 14) (we / cook)