



05 Present tenses overview

5.1 THE PRESENT SIMPLE AND THE PRESENT CONTINUOUS

The **present simple** is used to talk about permanent situations, regular occurrences, things that are always true, repeated actions, and ongoing states.

This is always true.
The sun **rises** in the East. 

The **present continuous** is used to refer to temporary situations, repeated actions around the present moment, and ongoing actions in the present moment.

This is a temporary situation.
It **is raining** in San Francisco right now. 

5.2 PRESENT TENSE QUESTIONS

Present simple questions with "be" are formed differently from other verbs.

Are you English?
The form of "be" comes before the subject.

Do you speak English?
"Do" or "does" is added before the subject.

Present continuous questions are always formed in the same way.

Is it raining?
The form of "be" comes before the subject.

! COMMON MISTAKES USING "S" IN THE PRESENT SIMPLE

"-s" is never added to the base form of the verb when asking a **question** or making a **negative** sentence, even in the third person singular ("he," "she," or "it").



AFFIRMATIVE

An "-s" is added to the base form in affirmative sentences.

He **starts** work at 7am. ✓

He **start** work at 7am. ✗

The base form without an "-s" is only used for "I," "you," "we," and "they."

The present simple and present continuous are used in different situations. There are different ways to form questions and negatives with these tenses.

See also:
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This is a repeated action.
Giorgio plays golf every weekend.



This is a continuing state.
Robert lives in London.



This is a repeated action happening around the present moment.
Julia is playing lots of golf these days.



This is an ongoing action in the present moment.
At the moment, Robert is watching TV.



5.3 PRESENT TENSE NEGATIVES

Present simple negatives with "be" are formed differently from other verbs.

I am **not** French.
 "Not" is added after the form of "be."

I **do not** speak French.
 "Do not" or "does not" is added between the subject and main verb.

Present continuous negatives are always formed in the same way.

It is **not** raining.
 "Not" is added after the form of "be."

QUESTION

The verb always goes in its base form in questions.

Does he **finish** work on time? ✓

Does he **finishes** work on time? ✗

"-s" or "-es" are not added to the main verb when asking a question.

NEGATIVE

The base form is used in the negative.

He **does not work** weekends. ✓

He **does not works** weekends. ✗

"-s" or "-es" are not added to the main verb in negative sentences.