Chapter 1 The Present Tenses

1.1. THE SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE

FORMS OF THE SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE

The simple present has the same form as the infinitive but adds an “s” for the third person singular.

Examples:
- Infinitive: to talk
- Simple present: I work hard.
  You work hard.
  She works hard.
  He works hard.

The negative is formed with the present tense negative of the verb “to do” + the infinitive (without to) of the main verb:
- I do not work hard.
- You do not work hard.
- She does not work hard.
- He does not work hard.

Verbs ending in ss, sh, ch, x, and o add es, instead of s alone, to form the third person singular:
- I kiss, he kisses
- I box, he boxes
- I do, he does
- I rush, he rushes
- I go, he goes

Verbs ending in y following a constant change the y into i and add es:
- I carry, she carries
- I hurry, she hurries

but verbs ending in y following a vowel obey the usual rule:
- I obey, she obeys
- I say, she says
THE USES OF SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE

The simple present is used to express habitual actions:

   The man smokes.
   Dogs bark.
   Birds fly.

This tense does not tell us whether or not the actions is being performed at the moment of speaking, and if we want to make this clear we must add a verb in the present continuous tense:

   My neighbor is practising the violin; she usually practices at about this time.
   My dogs barks an awful lot, but he isn’t barking at the moment.

The simple present tense is often used with adverbs or adverb phrases such as always, continually, frequently, often, once, twice, periodically, repeatedly, usually, ever, never, rarely, seldom, hardly ever, on Mondays, etc. which are normally placed next to verbs. The adverbs of frequency are:

   placed after the simple tenses of to be:
   He is always in time for meals
   but before the simple tenses of all other verbs:
   They sometimes stay up all night.

Placed after the first auxiliary, when the tenses consists of more than one verb, and after auxiliary + subject when the tenses consist of interrogative verbs:

   Have you ever ridden a camel?
   He can never understand.
   You have often been told not to do that.

EXERCISE-I: Read the following sentence using the given adverbs:

   1. We drink tea for breakfast. always
   2. The class begins at seven o’clock. usually
   3. His sister lives in Jakarta. always
   4. We go to Bali. sometimes
   5. It rains here. never
   6. Miss Jane buys a new hat. often
   7. Mr John pays his bills. never
   8. That boy eats too much. often
   9. He makes himself ill with ice-cream. often
   10. The plane starts very early. always
   11. It arrives in the afternoon. usually
   12. He smokes in bed. never
   13. My aunt makes a nice cake. always
   14. She learns quickly. generally
   15. These children lose their pencil. often
EXERCISE-2: Add final -s/-es to the verb if necessary. Do not change any other words.

1. A bird sing.
2. Wood float on water.
3. Rivers flow toward the sea.
4. A mother worry about her sons.
5. A red cat run on the street.
6. The cat catch a rat.
7. Pesticides destroy insects.
8. A bird fly over the house.
9. The young little boy go to the market every morning.
10. The boy sit at the window and watch the traffic.
11. An animal find shelter when it rain.
12. My sister wash her hands and dry them on a towel.
13. A boy hit the dog with a stick when he are angry with it.
14. Do the man generally go to the theatre on Saturday evening, or do he stay at home?
15. The girl want to buy some toys, because her friend have a birthday tomorrow.

OTHER USES OF THE SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE

It is used, chiefly with the verb say, when we are asking about or quoting from books, notices or very recently received letters:

What does that notice say? It says, “No entrance.”

What does the book say? It says, “Cook very slowly.”

Shakespeare says, “Neither a borrower nor a lender be.”

Other verbs of communication are also possible:

Shakespeare advises us not to borrow or lend.

A notice at the end of the road warns people not to go any further.

It can be used for dramatic narrative. This is particularly useful when describing the action of a play, opera etc., and is often used by radio commentators at sports events, public functions etc.:

When the curtain rises, Juleit is sitting at her desk. The phone rings.

She picks it up and listens quietly. Meanwhile the window opens and a masked man enters the room.

It can be used for a planned future action or series of actions, particularly when they refer to a journey. Travel agents use it a good deal:

We leave London at 10.00 next Tuesday and arrive in Paris at 13.00. We spend two hours in Paris and leave again at 15.00, etc.
It is used in conditional sentences, type 1:

If she comes, I will tell her the truth.
They will work hard, if you give them enough money.

It is used in time clauses:

I'll stay here till you get back.
We have to do the work manually till the machine works again.

EXERCISE-3: Read quickly in the singular:

1. The students know English well and can answer all my questions.
2. My friends do not understand when we speak quickly.
3. Must they leave before lunch or have they time to stay until my friends come?
4. The boys may go to London but they are not certain yet.
5. These books cost more than my friends want to pay.
6. The girls play tennis well but they cannot swim.
7. Where have they been today and where do they go next week?
8. When will these girls finish the exercises they were doing last week?
9. Little boys sometimes push little girls and pull their hair.
10. Can the police find the books they have lost?

EXERCISE-4: Read the following sentences in the singular:

1. They often go fishing and catch nothing.
2. My friends work in Bandung; they buy and sell cars.
3. They sit at the window and watch the traffic.
4. Their little girls thank them when they give them a present.
5. Animals find shelter when it rains.
6. They wash their hands and dry them on a towel.
7. They hit their dog with a stick when they are angry with it.
8. Do these ladies generally go to the theatre on Saturday evenings, or do they stay at home?
9. Birds build their nests in the summer and fly to the south in the winter.
10. They never find the money they lose.
11. The children play all the morning and sleep in the afternoon.
12. These apples are very green.
13. My friends like meat, but do not like fish.
14. They live in small houses which have only three rooms.
15. His brothers work hard all day, and want to rest in the evening.
16. They get new books from the library every week.
17. They have breakfast at seven o'clock and eat their lunch at half past one.
18. The postman brings the letters three times a day.
19. These chairs are very comfortable but they are too expensive.
20. They want to buy some toys, because their sons have a birthday tomorrow.
EXERCISE-5: Underline the verb in each sentence. Add final -s/-es to the verb if necessary. Do not change any other words.

2. Birds sing. → (no change)
3. Dust travel through air.
4. Pesticides destroy insects.
5. Music consist of pleasing sounds.
6. Mr. Smith watch game shows on TV every evening.
7. Mr. John ask me a lot of questions in class every day.
8. Mr. Lee teach Chinese at the university.
9. Airplanes fly all around the globe.
10. A student buy a lot of books at the beginning of each term.
11. My brother worry about me.
12. Rivers flow toward the sea.
13. Wood float on water.
14. The front page of a newspaper contain the most important news of the day.
15. Many parts of the world enjoy four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Each season last three months and bring changes in the weather.

1.2. THE PRESENT PROGRESSIVE TENSE

The present progressive tense is used:

For an action happening now:

- It is raining (now).
- I am listening to the radio.
- Why are you sitting at my chair?
- What is the boy doing? He is playing the toys.

For an action happening about this time but not necessarily at the moment of speaking:

- I am reading a novel by Thackery.
  (This may mean at the moment of speaking but may also mean “now” in a more general sense.)
- The man is teaching English and learning Arabic.
  (He may not be doing either at the moment of speaking)

When two continuous tenses, having the same subject, are joined by and, the auxiliary may be dropped before the second verb, as in the above example. This applies to all pairs of compound tenses.

For a definite arrangement in the near future (and is the most usual way of expressing one’s immediate plans):

- I am meeting Jean tonight. She asking me to the theatre.
- Tom: Are you doing anything tomorrow morning?
  John: Yes, I’m playing tennis with Ann.
Note that the time of the action must always be mentioned, as otherwise there might be confusion between present and future meanings. *go* and *come*, however, can be used in this way without a time expression.

Other possible uses of the present progressive:

With a point time to indicate an action which begins before this point and probably continues after it:

At six I am bathing the baby. (i.e. I start bathing him before six).

It can be used similarly with a verb in the simple present:

They are flying over the sea when one of the engines fails.

The present progressive is rarely used in this way except in description of daily routine and in dramatic narrative, but with the past continuous such combinations are very useful.

With *always* for a frequently repeated action, often one which annoys the speaker or seems unreasonable to him:

Tom always goes away at weekends (simple present tense) = Tom goes away every weekend (a literal statement).

Similarly, compare:

He is always doing homework (implying that he spends too much time on it in the speaker’s opinion) and

He always does his homework (simple present tense), which merely means that he does it regularly.

Sometimes, especially when used with the first person, *always* with the continuous tense implies that the action is accidental, while *always* with a simple tense would imply a deliberate action:

*I always do that* would imply a deliberate routine action but

*I am always doing that* would usually imply an accidental action.

**Verbs not normally used in the continuous tenses**

The continuous tenses are normally used only for deliberate actions. The following groups of verbs are, therefore, not normally used in continuous tenses:

1. Verbs of the tenses (involuntary actions): *feel*, *hear*, *see*, *smell*; also *notice* and *observe* (=notice).
   Exception: *feel* in some uses and *enjoy*.
   For verbs implying deliberate use of the tenses, *listen*, *look*, *smell*, *watch*.

2. Verbs expressing feelings and emotions, e.g. *adore*, *appreciate* (value), *care* (like), *desire*, *detest*, *fear*, *hate*, *like*, *loathe*, *love*, *mind*, *value*, *want*, *wish*. 
Exception:
1. long for, which follows the normal rules for continuous tenses.
2. feel, when followed by an adjective indicating the subject's emotions or physical or mental condition, e.g. well/ill, hot/cold, tense/relaxed, happy/sad, nervous/confident, anxious/relieved, angry/pleased, is normally used in the simple tenses, but can be used in the continuous also:
   How do you feel/are you feeling?
   I feel/am feeling better/quite well.
   He feels/is feeling much happier now.
3. Verbs of mental activity, e.g. agree, appreciate (=understand), believe, expect (=think), feel (=think), feel sure/certain, forget, know, mean, perceive, realize, recall, recognize, recollect, remember, see (=understand), see through someone (penetrate his attempt to deceive), think (=have an opinion), trust (=believe/have confidence in), understand.
4. Verbs of possession: belong, owe, own, possess.
5. The auxiliaries, except be and have in certain uses.
6. appear (=seem), concern, consist, hold (=contain), keep (=continue), matter, seem, signify.

Verbs which cannot be used in the continuous tenses have therefore only one present tense, the simple present:

- Don't you feel the house shaking?
- Do you see the rainbow? I value your support.
- I appreciate what you've done for me. I remember him very well.
- I don't mind waiting. I think I understand what he wants.
- I suppose you know what this means.
- I smell something burning.

Note on involuntary and deliberate verbs of the tenses.
The verbs see, hear, and smell are involuntary actions. If our eyes are open, we see — both pleasant and unpleasant sound. But the verbs listen, look, and watch are deliberate actions, entirely under our control. We listen, look or watch because we choose to. These verbs therefore follow the normal rule for continuous tenses:

- It's a nuisance if the phone rings when you are watching an interesting programme on TV.

smell an mean 'sniff at' and is then, of course, a deliberate actions:

- Why are you smelling the fish? Has it gone bad? but
- I smell gas. There must be a leak somewhere.

see, hear, smell, feel can also be used in some senses as deliberate actions. They can then be put into continuous tenses:
see can mean ‘meet by appointment’ (usually for business), ‘interview’:

*The director is seeing the applicants this morning.*
*I am seeing my solicitor tomorrow* (definite future arrangement).

see can mean ‘visit’ (usually as a tourist):

*Tom is seeing the town/the sights.*

see about = make arrangements or enquiries:

*We are seeing about a work permit for you* (trying to arrange this).

see to = arrange, put right, deal with:

*The plumber is here. He is seeing to the leak in our rank.*

see somebody out = escort him/her to their door
see somebody home = escort him/her home
see somebody to + place = escort him/her to + place

see somebody off = say goodbye to a departing traveller at the starting point of his journey (usually the station, airport.):

*We’re leaving tomorrow. Bill is seeing us off at the airport.*

hear meaning ‘receive news of letter’ is used in the continuous form only in the present perfect and future:

*I’ve been hearing all about your accident.*
*You’ll be hearing about the news scheme at our next meeting.*

feel can mean ‘touch’

feel for can mean ‘try to find by touching’:

*Jane was feeling for the keyhole in the dark.*

be as part of a passive tense:

*The house opposite our college is being pulled down.*

be used to imply that the subject is temporarily exhibiting some quality:

*You’re being very clever today* would indicate that this was unusual.

have can be use in continuous except when it implies possession or obligation:

*I can’t open the door: I’m having a bath.*
*We are having a wonderful time (enjoying ourselves).*
*I’m having a tooth (taken) out tomorrow.*
like meaning enjoy:

How are you liking this hot weather?
But How do you like this hot weather? is equally usual.

It is just possible to use love, hate and loathe in the affirmative and in the same way:

Are you liking your new job?
No, I’m hating it or Yes, I’m loving it.

But it would be safer for the student to use the simple present tenses:

Do you like your new job?
No, I hate it or Yes, I love it.

expect when it means ‘await’:

I am expecting a letter today.
She is expecting a baby in January.

FORMS OF THE PRESENT PROGRESSIVE

STATEMENT:

I am eating lunch.

You are eating lunch.

We are eating lunch.

They are eating lunch.

He is running

It is running.

She is running.

Pattern: Subject + (is, am, are) + Verb-ing

NEGATIVE:

I am not eating lunch.

You are not eating lunch.

We are not eating lunch.

They are not eating lunch.

He is not running.

She is not running.

It is not running.
Pattern: \( \text{Subject} + (\text{is, am, are}) + \text{not} + \text{Verb-ing} \)

**QUESTION:**

Am \{ I eating lunch?
      you eating lunch?
      we eating lunch?
      they eating lunch?

Are \{ he running?
      she running?
      it running?

Pattern: \( (\text{Is, Am, Are}) + \text{Subject} + \text{Verb-ing} \)

**EXERCISE-6:** Complete the following sentences by using the word in parentheses. Use the Simple Present or the Present Progressive.

1. Keep quiet! my younger sister (sleep)\__________. She (sleep)\_________ for seven hours every night.
2. Right now, I’m in the bath room. I (take)\_________ a shower. I usually (take)\_________ a shower twice a day.
3. Joko (speak)\_________ Javanese. Javanese is his native language, but right now he (speak)\_________ English.
4. The manager (eat not)\_________ lunch in the cafetaria right now. He (eat)\_________ in the big restaurant.
5. It’s 6:30 P.M. Tina is at home. She (have)\_________ dinner. She always (have)\_________ dinner with her family araound seven o’clock.
6. It (rain not)\_________ right now. The sun (shine)\_________, and the sky (be)\_________ blue.
7. (Rain, it)\_________ a lot in Bogor.
8. My sister (read)\_________ a novel right. She usually (read)\_________ a magazine.
9. Yenny usually (take not)\_________ bus to school.
10. The young man (work)\_________ seven hours a day with his manager, but this month he (work)\_________ alone.

**EXERCISE-7:** Change the following sentences into negative and interrogative forms!

1. The boy is reading a novel.
   (-)\_________.
   (?)\_________.
2. My younger sister usually studies at night.

3. It rains a lot in western Java.

4. The students always come on time.

5. The boy often hears the sound of seagulls and the sound of the waves.

EXERCISE-8: Supply a suitable present tense of the given verb:

1. She (go) to school every day.
2. We now (learn) English.
3. The sun always (shine) in Egypt.
4. I (sit) on a cahir and (eat) a banana.
5. Bad students never (work) hard.
6. It (rain) in winter. It (rain) now.
7. I (wake up) at seven and (have) breakfast at half past seven.
8. He generally (sing) in English but now he (sing) in French.
9. The sun (rise) in the east; now it (set) and night (fall).
10. The man in the white hat who (walk) past the window (live) next door.