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English Language I-UBEN101

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English Grammar

Tenses

Present Tense

1- Simple Present Tense:

subject + **auxiliary verb** + **main verb**
Do **base**

Exceptions

- * For positive sentences, **we do not normally use the auxiliary.**
- * For the 3rd person singular (he, she, it), we add **s** to the main verb or **es** to the auxiliary.
- * For the verb **to be**, we **do not** use an auxiliary, even for **questions** and **negatives**.

	subject	auxiliary verb		main verb	
+	I, you, we, they			like	coffee.
	He, she, it			likes	coffee.
-	I, you, we, they	do	not	like	coffee.
	He, she, it	does	not	like	coffee.
?	Do	I, you, we, they		like	coffee?
	Does	he, she, it		like	coffee?

Look at these examples with the main verb *be*. Notice that there is no auxiliary:

	subject	main verb		
+	I	am		French.
	You, we, they	are		French.
	He, she, it	is		French.
-	I	am	not	old.
	You, we, they	are	not	old.
	He, she, it	is	not	old.
?	Am	I		late?

- ***How do we use the Simple Present Tense?***

- * We use the simple present tense when:

- The action is general.
- The action happens all the time, or habitually, in the past, present and future.
- The action is not only happening now.
- The statement is always true.

John drives a taxi.

past

present

future

It is John's job to drive a taxi. He does it every day. Past, present and future.

Look at these examples:

- I live in New York.
- The Moon goes round the Earth.
- John drives a taxi.
- He does not drive a bus.
- We do not work at night.
- Do you play football?

- Note that with the verb **to be**, we can also use the simple present tense for situations that are not general. We can use the simple present tense to talk about **now**. Look at these examples of the verb "to be" in the simple present tense—some of them are **general**, some of them are **now**:

Am I right? Tara is not at home. You are happy.		
past	present	future
■		
The situation is now.		

I am not fat.
Why are you so beautiful?
Ram is tall.

past

present

future

The situation is general. Past, present and future.

Present Continuous Tense

1- Simple Present Tense:

subject + **auxiliary verb** + **main verb**
be **base + ing**

	subject	auxiliary verb		main verb	
+	I	am		speaking	to you.
+	You	are		reading	this.
-	She	is	not	staying	in London.
-	We	are	not	playing	football.
?	Is	he		watching	TV?
?	Are	they		waiting	for John?

We use the present continuous tense to talk about:

* For action happening **exactly now**.

I am eating my lunch.		
past	present	future
—————		
	The action is happening now.	

* For action happening **around now**

The action may not be happening exactly now, but it is happening just before and just after now, and it is not permanent or habitual.

* **Look at these examples:**

- Muriel **is learning** to drive.
- I **am living** with my sister until I find an apartment.

John is going out with Mary.

past

present

future

■ ■■■■■ ■■■■■ ■■■■■ ■■■■■ ■■■■■ ■

The action is happening around now.

* We can also use the present continuous tense to talk about the **future**—if we add a **future word**! We must add (or understand from the context) a future word. "Future words" include, for example, **tomorrow, next year, in June, at Christmas** etc. We only use the present continuous tense to talk about the future when we have planned to do something before we speak. We have already **made a decision and a plan** before speaking.

I am taking my exam next month.		
past	present	future
	!!!	_____
	A firm plan or programme exists now.	The action is in the future.

- Look at these examples:
- **We're eating** in a restaurant tonight. We've already booked the table..
- They can play tennis with you tomorrow. They're not **working**.
- When **are** you **starting** your new job?

Present Perfect Tense

1- Simple Present Tense:

subject + **auxiliary verb** + **main verb**
have **past participle**
has

	subject	auxiliary verb		main verb	
+	I	have		seen	ET.
+	You	have		eaten	mine.
-	She	has	not	been	to Rome.
-	We	have	not	played	football.
?	Have	you		finished?	
?	Have	they		done	it?

I have	I've
You have	You've
He has She has It has John has The car has	He's She's It's John's The car's
We have	We've
They have	They've

*There are basically three uses for the present perfect tense:

- ***Present perfect tense for experience***

- We often use the present perfect tense to talk about **experience** from the past. We are not interested in **when** you did something. We only want to know **if** you did it:
- I have seen ET.
- He has lived in Bangkok.
- Have you been there?

past	present	future
—————	!!!	

- ***Present perfect tense for change***
- We also use the present perfect tense to talk about a **change** or **new information**:

I have bought a car.		
past	present	future
-	+	
Last week I didn't have a car.	Now I have a car.	

John has broken his leg.		
past	present	future
+	-	
Yesterday John had a good leg.	Now he has a bad leg.	

- ***Present perfect tense for continuing situation***
- We often use the present perfect tense to talk about a **continuing situation**. This is a state that started
- in the **past** and continues in the **present** (and will probably continue into the future). This is a **state**
- (not an action). We usually use **for** or **since** with this structure.

<p>I have worked here since June. He has been ill for 2 days. How long have you known Tara?</p>		
past	present	future
The situation started in the past.	It continues up to now.	(It will probably continue into the future.)

- **For & Since with Present Perfect Tense**

- We often use **for** and **since** with the present perfect tense. We use **for** to talk about a **period** of time—5 minutes, 2 weeks, 6 years. We use **since** to talk about a **point** in past time—9 o'clock, 1st January, Monday.

- I have been here **for** 20 minutes.
- I have been here **since** 9 o'clock.
- John hasn't called **for** 6 months.
- John hasn't called **since** February.
- He has worked in New York **for** a long time.
- He has worked in New York **since** he left school.