

ENGLISH GRAMMAR 1

PRESENT TENSES

- Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990: pp. 47-50; 53-56
 - Blaganje and Konte, 1998: pp. 229-237
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Present Simple

1. **Instantaneous** present: refers to the moment of speaking

□ **Commentaries, demonstrations**

Black passes the ball to Fernandez... (now)

I press the red button, the door closes... (now)

□ **Special exclamatory sentences**
with an **initial adverbial** (word order is changed)

Up you go! Here comes the bride.

Present Simple

□ **Performatives** /performative

sentences: (we can't judge TRUE or FALSE, because they perform an action)

I apologize.

□ With **stative verbs** (glagoli "glave")

This soup tastes delicious. (even though we are tasting the soup now)

Present Simple

2. Timeless present: general, universal statements, eternal truths

- There is **no inherent limitation:**

The Earth revolves around the Sun.

- The **span is restricted** to some degree:

We live in Ljubljana.

- Often with **stative verbs:**

The Earth is round.

She knows several languages.

Present Simple

- Reference to written statements / **quotations:**

Jane Austen says that "life seems but a quick succession of busy nothings".
The last example shows that...

(although she is dead we use present simple, because is a quote, understood as a timeless, general statement)

Present Simple

3. Habitual present: actions repeated occasionally or regularly

- May or may not include a **frequency adverbial**:

They go home every weekend.

She makes her own dresses.

- Sometimes closely **resembles timeless present**:

Water boils at 100 degrees C. (can mean: vsakič. Ko pogreješ vodo do 100 stopinj bo vrela; ali: značilnost vode je, da ob 100 stopinjah vre)

- Both **stative** and **dynamic verbs**:

I never know the answer to his questions.

Present Simple

4. Past time reference:

- **Historic present:** (to make story more lively and interesting)

Just as we arrived, up comes Ben and slaps me on the back as if we're life-long friends.

- With **verbs of communication:**

I hear that you are well. (= I heard that you're well. I don't always hear that repeatedly, but once I did.)

He tells me that you have moved.

Present Simple

5. Future time reference:

- Indicates that an **event** is unalterably **fixed in advance**

The train leaves at 9 o'clock.

- In **conditional** and **temporal** clauses

If I see him, I will tell him.

When I see him, I will tell him.

Present Continuous/Progressive

1. **Actual /real present**: reference to the moment of speaking

□ An **action in progress** at the moment of speaking

What are you doing?

□ **Instantaneous** present: may be replaced by the present simple.

I now open the door.

I am now opening the door.

Present Continuous/Progressive

2. Extended present: indicates limited duration

□ **Temporary** engagements:

We are living in the country. *(for 2 days in the summer - temporary)*

We live in the country. *(always)*

□ Combined with the **habitual meaning**:

He is doing his own laundry this week.
(usually he doesn't, but now his wife is away)

Present Continuous/Progressive

3. General time reference - repeated actions which are in progress at a recurring point of time

Whenever I see her, she is working in the garden.

□ In combination with indefinite frequency adverbs (always, continually): **disapproval**

You are always interrupting.

Present Continuous/Progressive

4. Description of the setting:

When the curtain rises, Juliet is writing at her desk. Suddenly the window opens and a masked man enters.

(Present Simple = used for events)

(Present Continuous = activities in progress)

Present Continuous/Progressive

5. Future time reference:

- For **future arrangements:** (but not so much fixed as “The train leaves at 9 o’clock” – *glej future time references, Present Simple. This is a different type of arrangement, not so fixed*).

I’m meeting Mr Jones tomorrow.

- With **verbs of motion** (go, come)

She’s leaving in August. (not: “She is going to leave in August.” – it’s awkward!)
