

I. The Present Simple

We use the present simple to:

a) refer to something that is always true (facts)

Ex: *The earth goes around the sun.
Water boils at 100 degrees.*

b) talk about regular actions or experiences (habits)

Ex: *He always wakes up at 7 o'clock.
She never takes the bus.*

c) refer to states (Zustand)

Ex: *He doesn't like pizza.
This soup tastes nice.*

d) refer to the future when a timetable is involved

Ex. *The train leaves tomorrow.
The bus comes at 4 o'clock.*

Special uses for the present simple:

1) for headlines (newspapers, magazines, TV...)

Ex. *Two soldiers die in Iraq.
Cat kills dog with a bone.*

2) for instructions (recipes, manuals...)

Ex. *First, you roll out the pastry.
Then you take three eggs.*

Keywords: *Adverbs of Frequency / every...*

State verbs: BRAIN: *believe, forget, remember, realise, understand, know, mean*
FEELINGS: *hate, like, love, prefer, want, seem*
OTHERS: *belong, cost, contain, own*

II. The Present Continuous

We use the present continuous to:

a) refer to an action that is happening at the moment of speaking (in progress now)

Ex: *A: "Where are you?" B: "I'm sitting on the bus."
Look! That man is stealing your car.*

b) refer to an action that is in progress and not happening now (generally in progress)

Ex: *I am learning English at the LNW.
They are giving up smoking.*

c) refer to temporary situations (vorübergehend, breaking a habit)

Ex. *I usually walk home but today I'm taking a taxi.
We're staying with my uncle for a couple of days.*

d) refer to future arrangements (+ time expression)

Ex. *Next week we're visiting Spain.
I can't. I'm playing football tomorrow at 4 o'clock.*

Special uses for the present continuous:

1) for complaints about annoying habits (negative)

Ex. *The teacher is always complaining.
She is always pushing people around.*

2) for trends, changes and developments in our society

Ex. *More and more people are giving up smoking.
The crime rate is increasing.*

Keywords: *at the moment, now, currently / Look! Listen!*

State/Action Verbs that change meaning:

=> *have (besitzen vs essen/duschen/durchleben)* => *taste (Eigengeschmack vs abschmecken)*
=> *smell (Eigengeruch vs riechen)* => *weigh (Eigengewicht vs abwiegen)*
=> *see (sehen vs treffen)* => *appear (scheinen vs erscheinen)*
=> *be (sein vs benehmen)* => *think (glauben vs überlegen)*

III. The Past Simple

We use the past simple to:

a) refer to a finished action or event in the past.

Ex. We **met** in 2000.
She **left** a while ago.
We **lived** there from 1990 to 1992.

b) express actions that follow each other in a story (past).

Ex. John **opened** the door and **stopped**. He **heard** a noise upstairs.
He **went** into the living room and **hid** behind the couch.
Suddenly he **saw** a ghost...

c) describe habitual actions in the past.

Ex. Until I was thirty I **got up** at 7 every day.
He usually **liked** pizza. Now he is dead.
Reagan always **loved** his wife.

Keywords: last.../ ... ago / yesterday / in 19...

Useful information:

"When" + past simple: in questions about the past (point in time)

Ex. When did you leave? NOT: ~~When were you leaving?~~

"used to": remembering past habits (actions and states)

Ex. I used to smoke a lot when I was a teenager. (action)
I didn't use to have grey hair. (state)

"would": remembering past habits (actions only / not states)

Ex. Every week he would buy her flowers. (action)

IV. The Past Continuous

We use the past continuous to:

a) describe a continuing situation in the past(=>Past Continuous) which is often contrasted with a sudden event (=>Past Simple)

Ex. I **was having** lunch when Ruth phoned.
While / As / When I **was waiting** for the bus, I met Karen.

b) describe a number of continuing situations, as a background description. (parallel actions)

Ex. The airport was full of people. Some **were sleeping** on benches, some **were shopping**, others **were reading**.
As we were leaving, it was getting dark.

c) express that an activity was in progress at a particular time in the past. (When the action started or ended is irrelevant.)

Ex. Policeman: "Where were you at 7 o'clock last night?"
Man: "At 7 o'clock I **was having** dinner at home."
Many people were emigrating back then. (**past trend**)

Keywords: while / as / when (only if it introduces a longer background information)

Useful information:

"while" + verb: While we were sleeping... NOT: ~~During we were...~~

"during" + noun: During the match... NOT: ~~While the match...~~

Past Simple / Past Continuous : Sachverhalt

When I got home, he cooked dinner.
(First I got home, then he cooked dinner)

When I got home, he was cooking dinner.
(I got home and he was in the middle of cooking dinner)

"was/were going to" for intentions: you wanted to do sth but you didn't

Ex. I was going to phone you, but I forgot.

V. The Present Perfect (always a connection/link with now)

VI. The Past Perfect

We use the present perfect:

- a) to talk about something that started in the past and still continues in the present (bis elo)

Ex. I've lived in France since 1998.
They have known each other for years.

- b) to talk about experiences in your life (no exact time) (bis elo am Liewen)

Ex. I've been to Italy and France. (Elvis was never in Wiltz)
She has already seen that movie.

- c) to explain a present situation (the cause is in the past) (Resultat elo)

Ex. I've broken my foot.
She has painted her room blue.

Keywords: just / already => in front of the main verb
(not)...yet => at the end of a sentence
for / since => Zeitdauer VS Zeitpunkt
ever / never => with things that are still alive
lately / recently => in letzter Zeit / vor kurzem
so far => bis jetzt

NOTE 1:

Ex. I **have been** to Italy. I went there and I am back home now.
Ex. I **have gone** to Italy. I went there and I am still there. (not back yet)

NOTE 2:

How long + Present Perfect => How long have you known him?

NOTE 3:

Present Perfect Continuous: (also true for the Past Perfect Continuous)

We use it to emphasize the length of time. (Attention: state verbs)

Ex. I have been waiting here **for** hours / **all** day / **all** morning.

We use the past perfect:

- a) when we need to make it clear that one event in the past happened before/after another event in the past. (Sachverhalt)

Situation A:

Sue left at 7 o'clock. We arrived at her house at 8 o'clock.
↳ When we arrived at Sue's house, she **had** (already) **left**.
(= We arrived at Sue's house after she left.)
(= Sue left the house before we arrived.)

Situation B:

We got to the cinema at 10 o'clock. The film started at 9 o'clock.
↳ The film **had** already started when we got to the cinema..

- b) with verbs of thinking:

=> to think / to know / to realize / to be sure / to remember / to understand

- I thought I **had seen** the film before, but I **hadn't**.
- He was sure that he **had locked** the door.
- When I got home I realized I **had lost** my wallet.

NOTE 1:

It is **not** necessary to use the past perfect simply because an event happened a long time ago. In that case we use the past simple.

Ex. The Chinese **built** the Great Wall over two thousand years ago.

NOTE 2:

Using the past simple or past continuous instead of the past perfect in sentences where the sequence of events (**what happened before what**) is important causes a difference in meaning.

When we got to the party, Jane left. (First we got to the party, then she left)
When we got to the party, Jane had left. (We got to the party. Jane wasn't there)
When we got to the party, Jane was leaving. (We got there. She was about to leave)

The will future

PLANS / INTENTIONS/DECISIONS

We use it for spontaneous decisions, intentions and offers about the future that are made at the moment of speaking or while we are speaking.

Examples:

A : "The phone is ringing."

B: "Don't worry. I'll answer it."
(spontaneous reaction)

B: "Is tomorrow your birthday? Really?
I'll buy you something."
(spontaneous decision)

PREDICTIONS

We use it for predictions that are usually not based on facts or evidence but on personal opinion. (hypothesis)

(Verbs: hope/believe/think/know/to be sure)

Examples:

A: "I hope we will win this game."

B: "Don't be scared. I am sure we will win."

A: "If she doesn't pay attention, she will have a baby soon."

ATTENTION: TIME CLAUSES

We cannot use the will future in time clauses. We normally use the present simple. We can use the present perfect to show that an action is complete.

Words that introduce time clauses are:

when / the moment / until / till / as soon as before / after / by the time

Ex. When she comes, I will tell her.

The going to future

PLANS / INTENTIONS/DECISIONS

We use it for plans, decisions and intentions about the future that have already been made before the moment of speaking.
(Often arrangements for that action have been made)

Examples:

A : "We are going to fly to Spain. We bought the tickets a month ago."

A: "Mom bought fresh tomatoes. She is going to cook spaghetti."

~~She is going to go~~

PREDICTIONS

We use it for predictions that are usually based on facts that are backed up by strong evidence. (certainty)

Examples:

A: "It's 67-103 and there is only one minute left. We are going to win this game!"

A: "Look at that sweet little belly. She is going to have a baby. Mary told me."

ATTENTION:

~~She is going to go~~

ATTENTION 2:

We use the **present simple** to refer to the future when we talk about timetables of means of transportation.

Ex. The train leaves at 8 o'clock.

The present continuous (future)

ARRANGEMENT + TIME EXPRESSION

The present continuous is usually used to express a future arrangement between people.

This tense is common with time phrases and diaries. (on Monday, next week, tomorrow, tonight...)

A: "I can't. I'm going to the dentist on Friday. I just checked my diary."

A: "We're going to the cinema tonight."

NOTE

Sometimes there is no difference between the *going to* future and the present continuous!

They are getting married.

They are going to get married.