

The Present Simple Tense (also called the Simple Present Tense)

Simple present tense with 'be':

The verb 'be' is different from the other verbs in this tense. Let's look at 'be' first:

Here's the positive form (positive means a normal sentence, not a negative or a question. This is sometimes called 'affirmative'):

Positive	Positive Short Form
I am	I'm
you are	you're
he is	he's
she is	she's
it is	it's
we are	we're
they are	they're

For example:

- I'm Scottish.
- She's hungry.
- They're always late.

Next, here's the negative. It's very easy. You only add 'not':

Negative	Negative short form
I am not	I'm not
you are not	you aren't
he is not	he isn't
she is not	she isn't
it is not	it isn't
we are not	we aren't
they are not	they aren't

For example:

- I'm not cold.
- He isn't from Spain.
- We aren't at home.

Here's the 'yes / no' question form:

Yes / No Questions
am I ?
are you ?
is he ?
is she ?
is it ?
are we ?
are they ?

For example:

- Am I next in the queue?
- Are you from Tokyo?
- Is he at the library at the moment?

If you'd like to make a 'wh' question, you just put the question word at the front:

Wh Questions
Where am I ?
What are you ?
Why is he ?
Who is she ?
When are we ?
How are they ?

For example:

- Where are you from?
- Who is that girl?
- Why are they still at work?

Present simple tense with other verbs:

With all other verbs, we make the present simple in the same way.

The positive is really easy. It's just the verb, with an extra 's' if the subject is 'he', 'she', or 'it'. Let's take the verb 'play' as an example:

Positive (of 'play')
I play
you play
he plays
she plays
it plays
we play
they play

For example:

- I play tennis every week.
- He likes chocolate.
- They usually go to the cinema on Fridays.

Don't forget the 's'! Even really advanced students do this!

For a few verbs, there is a spelling change with 'he', 'she' and 'it' before the 's'. For example, 'study' becomes 'studies'. (See spelling changes PDF for more information).

There are also few verbs which are irregular in the present simple:

- 'have' becomes 'has'
- 'do' becomes 'does'
- 'go' becomes 'goes'

To make the negative form, you need to use 'do not' (don't) or 'does not' (doesn't):

Negative (of 'play')	Negative Short Form
I do not play	I don't play
you do not play	you don't play
he does not play	he doesn't play
she does not play	she doesn't play
it does not play	it doesn't play
we do not play	we don't play
they do not play	they don't play

For example:

- You don't study very much.
- Julie doesn't like sport.
- We don't live in London.

We use 'do' or 'does' before the subject to make the 'yes / no' question:

Yes / No questions
do I play ?
do you play ?
does he play ?
does she play ?
does it play ?
do we play ?
do they play ?

For example:

- Do you work in an office?
- Does John play cricket every weekend?
- Do they like travelling?

Just like with 'be', if you'd like to make a 'wh' question, you put the question word at the front:

Wh Questions
Where do I play ?
What do you play ?
Why does he play ?
Who does she play ?
When do we play ?
How do they play ?

For example:

- Where do you live?
- What does she like to eat?
- Why do they work so hard?

Present Simple (1)

Form



Afirmative

I walk
You walk
He walks
She walks
It walks
We walk
You walk
They walk

Negative

I **don't** walk
You **don't** walk
He **doesn't** walk
She **doesn't** walk
It **doesn't** walk
We **don't** walk
You **don't** walk
They **don't** walk

Interrogative

Do I walk?
Do you walk?
Does he walk?
Does she walk?
Does it walk?
Do we walk?
Do you walk?
Do they walk?

Short answers

Affirmative

Yes, I / you / we / they **do**
Yes, he / she / it **does**

Negative

No, I / you / we / they **don't**
No, he / she / it **doesn't**

Third person singular

We add **-s** to the verb to form the third person singular (**he, she, it**).

I drink - he drinks

I run - he runs

BUT

- We add **-es** to verbs that end in **-ss, -sh, -ch, -x, -o**.

I watch - he watches

- With verbs ending in **consonant + y**, we change the **-y** to **-ies**.

I cry - he cries

But with verbs ending in **vowel + y**, we just add **-s** as usual.

I play - he plays

Use

We use the **Present Simple**:

- for **habits** and actions that we do regularly:
He **visits** his friends every Sunday.
She **goes** to school by bus.
- for **general truths**:
The sun **rises** in the East.
- for **permanent situations**:
He **lives** in Athens.

Expressions used with the Present Simple

Frequency adverbs: always, usually, often, sometimes, rarely, never
(they are placed before the main verb)

Time expressions: every day / week / Friday...
on Mondays / Sundays...
at the weekend...
in the morning / afternoon...
in winter / spring...
once a day / week...



A. Write the third person singular of the following verbs.

play _____

go _____

wash _____

teach _____

drive _____

carry _____

fly _____

start _____

help _____

kiss _____

watch _____

tidy _____

like _____

enjoy _____

cry _____

mix _____



B. Complete the sentences with the Present Simple of the verbs in brackets.

1. Peter and his friends _____ to school by bus. (go)

2. Elephants _____ leaves and grass. (eat)

3. David's father _____ in a hospital. (work)

4. The bank opens at 9.30 and _____ at 4.30. (close)

5. Tom and Jim _____ football every day after school. (play)

6. Mr Jones is a teacher. He _____ History. (teach)

7. Our lessons _____ at 9.00 and _____ at 3.30. (start / finish)

8. My pen friend _____ in Japan. (live)

9. Mary and her brother _____ cartoons every Sunday morning. (watch)

10. John _____ his room every day. (tidy)

C. Complete the blanks with the Present Simple of the verbs in the box.

go ~~work~~ ride deliver love jog rest fish walk

Mr Letty is a postman. He doesn't work in the post office. He always *works* outside in the streets.

He _____ letters to all the people in the neighbourhood every day. He doesn't _____ but he _____ his motorbike.

At the weekend, Mr Letty doesn't work.

He _____. He _____ the countryside, so he always _____ to his country house with his wife. Mr and Mrs Letty _____ in the river and they _____ in the woods every weekend.



D. Look at the pictures and write questions and answers, as in the example.

1. play / the guitar / in the afternoon

Does he play the guitar in the afternoon?

No he doesn't play the guitar in the afternoon.

He plays the accordion.



2. walk / after lunch



3. ride / their / bicycles / to work / every day



4. listen / to the radio / every Sunday



5. clean / the house / on Mondays



6. watch / TV / after school



E. Complete the blanks with the **negative** or the **interrogative** form of the Present Simple of the verbs in brackets.

Mark: Hi, Tess! What are you doing?

Tess: I'm watching the football team.

Mark: *Do you watch* (watch) them every day?

Tess: No, I don't. They _____ (not play) every day. They play four times a week.

Mark: _____ you _____ (have) a favourite player?

Tess: No, I _____ (not have) a favourite player. Everyone on the team is good.

Mark: _____ the attacker _____ (move) fast?

Tess: No, he _____ (not move) fast, but he's very clever. _____ you _____ (like) football, Mark?

Mark: No, I _____ (not like) it. I like basketball. It's a great sport.

